

Zaid: UMNO-PAS alliance good for Najib, bad for nation

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Former UMNO minister Zaid Ibrahim says as the two biggest Muslim parties in the country, they have a strong chance of getting the most votes in GE14.

PETALING JAYA: UMNO president Najib Razak may have rebirthed one of the strongest alliances by partnering with PAS, said former law minister Zaid Ibrahim.

This alliance should be of concern to the opposition as its chances of winning the next general election was growing slimmer by the day, he added.

Zaid, who joined the DAP in February, said the reason was obvious as Muslims made up the majority of the country's population.

"UMNO is the biggest Muslim party in the country. And PAS is the second (biggest). Logically, when the two are combined, they will become a really strong force," he told FMT.

"So the opposition should view this seriously. That's why I keep telling the opposition not to be over-confident by saying anyone is a better prime ministerial candidate than Najib.

"We are now facing a strong opponent and this has never happened before. All this while, PAS has been with the opposition. So, it's an entirely different dynamic now."

For this, Zaid congratulated Najib, saying the latter had done the right thing in order to win the 14th general election.

But he also warned that this would result in the elections being heavily centred along racial and religious lines, which in the long run would probably "destroy the country".

"In the long term, Malaysia will become very radicalised and a very Taliban-like country.

"From the election point of view, however, Najib did the right thing because it (joining forces with PAS) will make him stronger."

Asked as to how he believed the other component parties of the Barisan Nasional (BN) would take the Umno-PAS partnership, Zaid said there would only be objections if the two Malay parties formed a formal alliance.

Since this was highly unlikely, BN components such as the MIC, MCA and Gerakan might just let both UMNO and PAS come to their own silent arrangement that could guarantee the coalition's political survival, he added.

"For us (Pakatan Harapan) to have even a small chance, Dr Mahathir's (Mohamad) position is very crucial," said Zaid, in reference to former Prime Minister Mahathir, who is now the chairman of PPBM.

Zaid has repeatedly stated that Mahathir was the only one with the ability to sway the Malays to Pakatan Harapan, saying his recipe for the coalition's success was the 92-year-old as prime minister.

Najib, in his speech at UMNO's 71st anniversary bash last week, openly displayed a growing affection for its former enemy, PAS.

The UMNO president did this by citing excerpts of a speech he said was made by PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang to show how the two had and would continue to unite on issues concerning public interests.

"Hadi said the cooperation between PAS and UMNO now is mature politics. Because we don't argue and instead we politicise for mutual interest.

"Hadi also said in politics we can have differences in opinion, but on issues involving the people and the country, we have to unite and work together," said Najib.

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