

# No truth in rumours of PM (P) quitting: STAR 20 AUG 198 Anwar

KLANG, Tues. — Education Minister and Umno Youth chief Anwar Ibrahim today dismissed rumours that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would step down soon.

He said there was "no truth whatsoever" in a report in a Chinese newspaper on rumours that a "high-ranking government leader" would quit at the end of the month or early next month.

Encik Anwar accused certain politicians of circulating the rumours.

"This is probably the work of mischievous and desperate politicians frustrated by the Barisan Nasional's resounding win in the general election," he said.

He was speaking to reporters after presenting certificates to about 200 graduates of the Workers' Institute of Technology in Pandamaran here.

Encik Anwar said many people had been asking him about the rumours after a Chinese newspaper carried a story on it two days ago.

He added that Dr Mahathir was aware of the rumours and had dismissed them as "of no significance."

Encik Anwar saw no reason why Dr Mahathir would want to quit after the "big mandate" given to him by the people in the election.

He said Dr Mahathir's leadership was still needed and added that the rumours were started by "desperate politicians who are power-crazy and are trying to erode public confidence in the newly-elected government."

"These politicians are like professional gamblers who survive on gambling or betting as to who would fall," he said.

Encik Anwar pointed out that before the election, some groups were talking of a leadership crisis but after the Barisan's landslide win, they were resorting to "dirty politics" by spreading such rumours.

Asked if the rumours could be the work of groups within the Barisan, he said: "It could well be the work of the Opposition as it was the Opposition that tried and failed to deny the Barisan a two-thirds majority in Parliament."