

18 SEP 1998

Anwar-Terengganu

ANWAR URGES DR MAHATHIR TO STEP DOWN

KUALA TERENGGANU, Sept 18 (Bernama) -- Former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to step down.

"Now, Anwar Ibrahim is officially calling on Dr Mahathir to resign as Prime Minister," he said when addressing a crowd of about 10,000 at Pantai Batu Buruk, here.

He also criticised Umno members who listen and believe everything the Prime Minister says.

They should instead think for themselves, said Anwar who was removed as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister on Sept 2 and expelled from Umno the following day.

Anwar, who has spoken at several rallies to deny allegations of moral misconduct, corruption and treason against him, for the first time admitted publicly that Umno Youth chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi had raised the issue of cronyism, nepotism and corruption at the last Umno general assembly at his behest.

He said that the Prime Minister was angry that the issue was raised.

Anwar arrived here at 3am after speaking at a ceramah at Peramu Jaya in Kuantan, last night.

He was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Wan Azizah Ismail, their children and supporters including Negeri Sembilan Umno Youth head Ruslan Kassim.

Members of the public and his supporters gathered at the rest house in Pantai Batu Buruk where he was staying since 8am.

Anwar was later seen leaving in a van proceeding to the Tuanku Ampuan Intan Zaharah Mosque in Kuala Ibai for Friday prayers.

He returned to the rest house soon after to speak at the ceramah.

Anwar said that the police had allowed him to speak at the ceramah without a permit.

He said that Dr Mahathir should from time to time listen to others and accept advice because he "couldn't know everything".

He also said that "people say that Anwar is out and finish, but I say Anwar is down but not out".

Anwar said that he did not dismiss the possibility of challenging Dr Mahathir in the Kubang Pasu parliamentary constituency in the next general election.

In his speech, he also praised the police for their cooperation in allowing him to speak at the ceramah.

He said that he still respected the police force except for a few officers who were investigating his case.

After the ceramah, he left for Kota Baharu where he is scheduled to attend another rally tonight. It was earlier reported that the organisers of the ceramah had failed to obtain a permit.

-- BERNAMA

SBS RM