

07 SEP 1998

Zahid-Anwar

ZAHID REJECTS CALLS TO RESIGN AS UMNO YOUTH LEADER

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today rejected calls for him to resign as Umno Youth leader over the movement's stand on the dismissal of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim from the Cabinet and the party.

Zahid said in a statement that he had no intention yet to resign because he had no strong reason to do so.

"For the past few days, there had been various assumptions and allegations on Umno Youth's position and stand relating to the dismissal of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"As to my post, it was elected at the Umno Youth general assembly on Oct 9 1996. Only the delegates who have democratically elected me can decide on my position," he said.

Zahid said this in response to calls from Federal Territory and Sabah Umno Youth chiefs that he resigns for failing to declare his stand on Anwar's dismissal.

Anwar was sacked as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister last Wednesday and from Umno a day later on allegations of sexual misconduct, bribery and leaking national secrets.

He has repeatedly denied all the allegations, claiming that they are part of a conspiracy against him.

Zahid also explained his presence in the home of the ousted deputy prime minister together with others supporters.

He said he was there to express his sympathy to Anwar's family.

His presence should not be interpreted as anything else since the Umno Youth stood with the decision of the Barisan Nasional Youth at its meeting last Thursday to stand solidly behind the leadership of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as Prime Minister and Umno President.

--BERNAMA

AU ABG