

18 JUN 1999

Umno-Reaction (Zahid)

ZAHID ACCEPTS IN GOOD FAITH REPROACH BY PM

KUALA LUMPUR, June 18 (Bernama) -- Former Umno Youth chief Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi considers the reproach he got from Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as one given by a father to his son.

"As a son who is loyal to his father, I accept the reproach in good faith," he told reporters after the opening of the Umno general assembly by Dr Mahathir, who is party president, at the Putra World Trade Centre here today.

In his policy address, Dr Mahathir had mentioned the attempt by former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to cloud the country's economic situation so that the people, especially delegates to the Umno general assembly last year, would lay the blame on the government and induce the party president to withdraw.

Dr Mahathir said Zahid, the then Umno Youth chief, had been vocal in accusing the government of practicing nepotism, cronyism and others.

Zahid said the matter was "an old chapter" in his political life.

"I have now opened a new chapter to rejuvenate Umno's strength in the new millennium," said Zahid who attended the general assembly as head of Umno Bagan Datoh division.

Zahid said he had directed Umno members in his division to close ranks to ensure the party's victory in the upcoming general election.

Apart from attending to party matters in the division, Zahid is now concentrating on his masters degree in a local university.

-- BERNAMA

AZZ RON THG