

PM cites Wan Saiful's case to defend Zahid's DPM appointment

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PARLIAMENT | Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has once again defended his decision to appoint Umno president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi as deputy prime minister despite the latter being on trial for corruption.

This time, the premier compared Zahid's situation to that of Wan Saiful Wan Jan (Perikatan Nasional-Bukit Gelugor) who was charged with corruption this morning.

"Today one of the MPs was charged. Does he need to resign from all his party posts? Surely the answer is no.

"My stand on this issue is the same," he said in the Dewan Rakyat today.

He was responding to a question from Ahmad Fadhli Shaari (PN-Pasir Mas) on whether Zahid's appointment fits the good governance values of Anwar's Malaysia Madani programme.

Zahid is on trial for two corruption cases - one of which involved RM31 million of funds from Yayasan Akalbudi.

The High Court acquitted him on his second corruption case involving the Foreign Visa System (VLN) - but the prosecution is appealing the acquittal.

Meanwhile, Wan Saiful - who is Bersatu information chief - was charged with soliciting a bribe of an unspecified amount and for receiving a bribe of RM6.96 million between July 8, 2022, and Sept 30, 2022.

Continuing his defence of Zahid, Anwar told Parliament that the deputy premier had been following the principles of good governance set out by the administration.

He gave an example of how several government-linked companies (GLCs) under Zahid's purview had asked for immediate action without tender.

"Zahid wrote (in reply), 'abide by the prime minister and cabinet's directive, everything must go through tender'," Anwar said.

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