

**PM could go sooner than later: Lim  
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The unrepentant Bukit Bendera Umno division chief Ahmad Ismail's over-growing support from his party colleagues over his racist remarks has put Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on shaky ground, DAP veteran Lim Kit Siang said.

Yesterday, 13 Penang Umno divisions made a startling decision, choosing to stand by Ahmad Ismail over his alleged Malaysian Chinese are "squatters" remarks.

Thus, the DAP stalwart wondered if the 'virus' would spread to other Umno divisions in other states, hence affecting its relationship with other Barisan Nasional component parties.

scah ipcmc talk 181207 lim kit siang "Will Umno leadership as well as the other BN component parties, particularly MCA, Gerakan, MIC, Supp take a strong stand to denounce Ahmad's offensive and insensitive (remarks)?," Lim asked in a statement today.

A strong signal to see Abdullah out the door as prime minister and Umno president earlier than his self-imposed June 2010 deadline, added Lim, would happen if the Penang Umno example is emulated by Umno divisions in other states.

Lim said the power-transition plan to hand over to his deputy Najib Abdul Razak in June 2010 would likely be the most affected, forcing him into an earlier departure.

He described the action by Penang Umno divisions as a direct challenge to the political and moral authority of Abdullah as Umno president and prime minister, "as it is shaking the very basis of his power base in Umno."

**'Disgusting and disturbing'**

Meanwhile, Gerakan deputy secretary-general Lum Weng Keong described the support Ahmad Ismail received from other Penang Umno leaders as 'disgusting and disturbing'.

"It will only create ill feelings among the people and disunity among BN component parties," he said.

Lum also asserted that the party would "get out of BN if Umno leaders do not change their attitude".

"Umno and BN must institute political, economic and social reforms quickly or else our days are numbered. The people are waiting for changes and not just empty talk," he said.