

Ahmad's supporters protest at Umno emergency meeting
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About a dozen of Ahmad Ismail's supporters have mounted a protest outside the Umno headquarters in Kuala Lumpur as top party leaders meet to decide on the fate of its errant Bukit Bendera division chief.

The group carried a number of banners, among others, 'MT pertahankan maruah Datuk Ahmad Ismail' (Supreme council, defend Ahmad Ismail's dignity) and 'Kami sokong Datuk Ahmad Ismail' (We support Ahmad Ismail).

umno ahmad ismail mt meet 100908 hishamuddin greet protestorThe protestors also shouted 'Hidup Melayu' (Long Live the Malays) as top Umno leaders arrived at the 39-storey tower block which housed the party headquarters.

The chants of 'Hidup Melayu' picked up volume when Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is Umno president, emerged from his car.

The 48-member Umno supreme council - the party's highest-decision making body - is expected to kick off its meeting at 2.30pm.

The emergency meeting was called in the wake of the controversy sparked by a spate of racist remarks made by Ismail, a powerful Penang Umno politician.

Ahmad had insulted the minority Chinese community by allegedly calling them "squatters" and telling them not to be like American Jews, who seek both economic and political power.

The Barisan Nasional supreme council, which was helmed by Umno, had yesterday decided to leave it to the ruling party to determine Ahmad's fate.

'We represent KL Malays'

umno ahmad ismail mt meet 100908 banner 1Meanwhile, the protestors' spokesperson Rahim Harun told reporters that his group was not politically linked but represented Kuala Lumpur Malays.

"We fully support Ahmad for stating a historical fact, but we don't question the citizenship rights of the Chinese community. Perhaps the reporter misunderstood what he meant," he said.

However, their target audience - Umno supreme council members - paid scant attention to the protestors, save for Umno Youth chief Hishamuddin Hussien who went to greet the crowd.

Umno president Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his deputy Najib Abdul Razak however appeared to have completely missed the banner carrying protestors as they were both surrounded by their bodyguards.

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