

Umno chieftain showed 'total lack of remorse'
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To Ahmad Ismail - the Penang Umno chieftain who was embroiled in a racial slur controversy over the past two weeks - the decision made by the party's supreme council to suspend him was a mere inconvenience.

It was much like 'water off a duck's back', according to veteran opposition leader Lim Kit Siang.

At a press conference immediately after the emergency supreme council meeting yesterday, Ahmad appeared unfazed and defiant.

umno mt meeting on ahmad ismail 100908 ahmad ismail.jpgThe local party strongman has sarcastically referred to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's decision as "brave", and vowed to remain adamant in refusing to apologise for his allegedly racist remarks made on a number of occasions.

Ahmad also declared that his 'suspension' would not stop him from being active in the party.

"If my division is smart enough and creates a new post, such as division advisor, I can still be advisor," he told journalists.

He also announced an immediate plan to tour the country and explain to party divisions about the controversy and stated that he intended to "make a comeback to Umno".

Is he backed by Umno top guns?

"Ahmad's defiance and total lack of remorse is not just individual bravado but clearly had powerful Umno backing as indicated by the fact that he held his immediate press conference at the Umno headquarters at PWTC, which was attended by the Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor," said Lim in a press statement.

"Tengku Adnan's presence at Ahmad's press conference ... is most extraordinary and telling, for it could only mean that Ahmad has official Umno support or blessing..."

Lim also lamented the "conspicuous failure" of the Umno supreme council in taking action against the 13 Penang Umno division chiefs who had supported and egged on Ahmad in his inflammatory racist rants.

pinang umno tear up koh tsu koon photo 080908 zainol abidin hashimAmong them was former state liaison committee member Zainol Abidin Hashim, who had ripped BN chairperson Dr Koh Tsu Koon's photo from the wall of Umno headquarters in Penang and tore it to shreds.

In addition, no action was also taken against state secretary Azhar Ibrahim, who had said that the journalist who first reported Ahmad's racist remarks should be killed.

Interestingly, those who had backed Ahmad in the controversy include Abdullah's own division in Kepala Batas, which is located in the mainland.

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