

BN assemblymen stage walkout as Umno's Azhar suspended
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GEORGE TOWN - Eleven Barisan Nasional (BN) assemblymen staged a walkout following the Penang Opposition Leader Azhar Ibrahim's six-months suspension for his alleged seditious utterance.

Azhar, also Penang Umno secretary, has been suspended from the state assembly for six months for allegedly uttering seditious words and issuing "May 13" threats in an assembly sitting on May 7.

The Star reported that all 11 Barisan Nasional assemblymen staged a walkout Monday after Azhar's suspension, which took effect from Aug 17, was supported by the majority of the House during the afternoon session.

However, they returned to the hall after escorting Azhar to the opposition room.

The suspension was recommended by Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng and conveyed to the assembly by state assembly Speaker Abdul Halim Hussain.

Lim said Azhar was given an opportunity to do but "has refused to do so."

Malaysiakini reported that Azhar had claimed that the procedure used was incorrect as it should have been proposed and debated prior to referring him to the committee.

He also said that the charges against him were neither clear nor specific.

He pointed out that he had withdrawn his statement when ordered to do so by the speaker.

When met outside the hall, Azhar, who is Penang assemblyman, said Teluk Bahang assemblyman Dr Hilmi Yahaya would take over as Opposition Leader during his suspension that would end in February.

Azhar had reportedly warned of racial riots and suggested the army to take over the police force if the public lose confidence over the latter.

He had also mentioned about a group called "Tiga Barisan" who he claimed not afraid to go against against the Pakatan Rakyat state government.

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