

PKR: Adam Adli suspension hurts UPSI more than banner incident
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 10 — PKR said today Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris' (UPSI) suspension of Adam Adli Abdul Halim has brought more disrepute to the institution than the student activist's recent act of lowering a banner bearing the likeness of Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar said in a statement today the three-semester suspension was oppressive and politically motivated to bar students from airing their views.

"It is the disciplinary committee's punishment on Adam yesterday that has brought disrepute to the honour and name of UPSI," the Lembah Pantai MP said.

Adam Adli (picture) was reportedly suspended after a one-hour disciplinary hearing at the university yesterday.

"One-and-a-half-year suspension in the cause of academic freedom is more noble than a year in jail for corruption," the chairman of Legasi Mahasiswa Progresif, a coalition member of SMM, said in an immediate response on Twitter.

Nurul Izzah said youth should be given room to think critically, discuss matters in depth and to voice their views clearly.

"Where else can students have this space if not in university? Even if a mistake was made, action taken should have been instructive, not to create a culture of fear among the young," she said.

Adam Adli, 22, had lowered and then raised a banner of Umno president Najib outside the party's headquarters here on December 17, immediately drawing criticism from the public and some government officials.

The incident occurred after about 100 student activists had marched to the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) to hand over a six-point memorandum on academic freedom to Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah.

But over 34,000 people have so far backed a Facebook campaign called "We Are All Adam Adli" created in support of the student activist.

Fellow campaigners also organised a sit-in at UPSI's campus in Tanjung Malim on New Year's Eve, which saw several students injured when police moved to disperse the assembly.

During the ensuing exchange, Movement for Academic Freedom (Bebas) chairman Safwan Anang claimed he was punched and kneed by policemen, resulting in him being hospitalised.

Police have, however, denied assaulting the students, and insisted there was "no scuffle" when arrests were made.

SMM has said it would challenge Adam Adli's suspension in court.

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