

Ajil rep says he quit Umno 'out of sympathy' for former MB
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One of the Umno assemblymen responsible for the political crisis in Terengganu earlier this week said the main reason he quit the party was out of shock and frustration over the prime minister's decision to replace the state's menteri besar.

Ajil assemblyman Ghazali Taib said the reason for his actions on Tuesday was due to the surprise over Datuk Seri Najib Razak's move. Hence, he made the decision to quit the party alongside former menteri besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Said out of sympathy for the latter.

"I do not regret it because I was defending a friend at that time. I made the right move as I could not bear to see him upset," Ghazali told a press conference in Kuala Terengganu today.

Ghazali, Ahmad Said and Bukit Besi assemblyman Roslee Daud made a U-turn yesterday after promptly resigning from Umno to become independent representatives a day after Datuk Ahmad Razif Abd Rahman was sworn in as the new menteri besar on Monday night.

"I have never doubted my decision to follow him because I was confident he would fly off and find the right path," said Ghazali.

"I am very close to him. I am confident he would not sell out Umno for any title. I thought it didn't matter if I lost power, rather than lose a friend."

The political crisis in Terengganu sparked off on May 13, but was solved less than 48 hours later after all the assemblymen retracted their resignations.

Ahmad Said told reporters when met at his residence that the crisis stemmed from a misunderstanding between him and Najib over his daughter's wedding date.

He rescinded his resignation after the prime minister apologised to him for what happened.

Ghazali however said he had returned to Umno without having set any condition, and had only done so after Ahmad made the same decision.

"I made the U-turn not because I was offered any position, but because I have a bigger agenda.

"There was no guarantee or insurance. It was my decision," he added.

He also told reporters Najib had assured Ahmad Razif would not drop him from the state executive committee over the matter.

"I did the right thing at that time because I was fighting for something. I did it because of my principles. If this issue had not been solved, I would have quit my assemblyman post," he said.

His stance was similar to Ahmad Said's, who also mentioned he would give up his seat if the matter had remained unsolved.

The assemblymen's actions had triggered political turmoil in Terengganu as Barisan Nasional was left with fewer seats than Pakatan Rakyat, and this could have enabled the opposition pact to take over the state government.

But Ghazali said he resigned not to punish Umno, but because he was acting based on his principles.

"This is not an issue of feeling guilty or not. If we are unable to do something, we must be responsible and resign.

"We did not sacrifice Umno... Ahmad was to give up his position and if there was to be a by-election, he would have made sure Umno won," he said. – May 15, 2014.

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