

Zahid vows to use PCA if 'not enough evidence'

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PARLIAMENT Home Minister Zahid Hamidi today vowed to use the Prevention of Crime Act (PCA), which provides for detention without trial, against suspected illegal gambling operators if the government cannot gather enough evidence to prosecute them in court.

“We will arrest them, including under PCA.

“They (the opposition) may say that it is detention without trial but it is because there is not enough evidence to bring them to court.

“It is not that we want to abuse the law,” Zahid told Parliament during Question Time this morning.

He was responding to a question from Johari Abdul Ghani (BN-Titiwangsa) who asked about the persistence in illegal gambling activities despite crackdowns.

He also appealed to MPs to support his proposed amendments to several laws to combat illegal gambling which were withdrawn after being tabled in Parliament last year due to opposition.

This, he said, would include new powers for the government to confiscate premises that are repeatedly used for illegal gambling.

Zahid said some 2,500 people have been prosecuted for illegal gambling activities, with 1,753 convictions in the last two years.

He also concurred with Johari’s proposal to set combating illegal gambling as a key performance indicator (KPI) for the respective district police chiefs.

“I will bring this up with the inspector-general of police,” he said.

He also appealed to the respective government agencies to facilitate combating illegal gambling, including the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC).