

**Minister is not telling the truth, PM must act**  
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YOURSAY 'Simply put, Zahid's letter says it all, in black and white too.'

**Zahid denies defending alleged kingpin**

Odin: One can grant Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi the benefit of the doubt had he been a person worthy of some respect. However, he has been seen as an obnoxious, ill-bred individual and thus unworthy of even an iota of it.

Only birds of his feather would hold him in awe. And his obvious association with Paul Phua, who, based on the reports connected with this case, cannot be described as an upright person even if one wanted to be kind, has totally destroyed what scant credit he might have had to his character.

Anyone with a level of intellect that commensurates with sufficient maturity would infer that Zahid has tried to defend Phua by writing his infamous letter. His denial is patently bare.

Zahid has tried to induce the US authorities into releasing and repatriating Phua post-haste to Malaysia by stating that the latter had been involved with projects that had to do with national security, implied that the latter still was and would still be, and that, also by implication, a project is in progress and Phua's involvement is critical.

We have just learned today that the Malaysian police are unaware of such projects. One can deduce that if indeed Phua has been and is involved in any projects, they have been and are activities that have nothing to do with Malaysia's security.

The Umno Baru-linked lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah's claim that Zahid wrote his letter to correct mistakes in the Malaysian police report given to the FBI was nothing more than a pure attempt to extricate Zahid from the most embarrassing position that he has put himself in.

The report, which was relayed to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2008, informed that the 14K triad did operate in Malaysia, that there were three Malaysians involved, and that Phua was one of the trio.

Honest, ordinary Malaysians have been taken for fools and insulted by Zahid, an action that is, of course, completely in his character, and they would have to stomach this sordid business - for PM Najib Razak will do nothing.

Najib's total silence in the matter is indicative of his inability to deal with it. And informed Malaysians can, with complete ease, figure out why he is unable to do so.

Kim Quek: After two weeks of deafening silence, Zahid's public defence yesterday is a miserable flop and a virtual admittance of guilt.

Let us re-cap the gist of what he wrote to the FBI. First, he said, "Mr Phua is neither a member nor is he associated with the '14K Triad'."

Second, effectively lauding Phua as a valuable and indispensable asset to Malaysia's national security, he said, "As such we are eager for him to return to Malaysia."

Finally, appealing to the US authorities to let Phua off, Zahid said, "We extend our many thanks for your understanding and assistance and look forward to your reply."

But in yesterday's press conference, Zahid denied he was trying to help Phua, but only to clarify the status of Phua and the existence of the 14K triad in Malaysia. Is it not crystal clear from the above extracts of Zahid's letter that Zahid had blatantly lied when he said he was not trying to help Phua?

His dual claims of Phua not being a 14K triad member and Phua's numerous contributions to Malaysia's national security are highly dubious, as the police had already indicated otherwise, as reported by Malaysiakini, to which Zahid has not rebutted.

Now that Zahid's criminal misconduct is virtually confirmed, Najib cannot afford to remain silent. He has to openly account to the nation now.

FranklyX'roy: Zahid thinks he is governing a nation of fools, he is lying through his teeth and he expects us to believe it. Anyone who read the letter will agree he provided a testimonial for Phua.

Why did he issue the letter without first checking with his police chief? Why did he issue the letter without going through Wisma Putra? Is he assuming he is as powerful as the PM? He very well may.

Commentable: Simply put, Zahid's letter says it all, in black and white too. He cannot blame journalists for misquoting him or spinning what he said.

But what was appalling yesterday was his attempt to blame "pro-opposition online portals". Just what is there to blame? A serious wrong has been committed and his action reflected badly on the reputation of the Malaysian government.

The important lifeline for Zahid is Wednesday's news that the cabinet had "accepted" Zahid's story, which was a clear signal for him to issue yesterday's statement.

A classic 'wayang' (show) by the actors in the cabinet team, considering that Zahid had to wait two weeks for the story director to glue together a plausible tale for him to tell.

The explanation given is flimsy indeed as it missed out the crucial reasons why Zahid said all those things vouching for the alleged kingpin.

Rupert16: Zahid's attempt to clear his name only confirms that he is protecting an alleged gangster considering that he took the trouble to write the letter to FBI for this one guy.

Second, his letter provides more than necessary details to try to convince FBI that the alleged gangster is indeed "clean". Needless to say, there is a motive. All these prove, beyond a doubt, that Zahid is lying.

Anticonmen: These are shameless people in power who arrest innocent Malaysians on flimsy charges but jump to defend criminals who are gambling kingpins, pimps and gangsters.

AB Sulaiman: Najib's golfing buddy US President Barack Obama once said, "If the people cannot trust their government to do their job for which it exists - to protect them and to promote their common welfare - all else is lost."

Zahid has appeared not to have done his job (i.e. to protect and promote the people's welfare), he has done the complete opposite. Najib, are you not at all bothered by this?

Anonymous\_1408265047: I am reminded of Sir Walter Scott: "Oh what a tangled web we weave, when we practise to deceive."

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