

## **Gov't backs Zahid on supporting Paul Phua**

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**By Ram Anand**

The federal government is satisfied "in principle" with explanations provided by Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi regarding his action of writing a letter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) vouching for alleged gambling kingpin Paul Phua.

This was revealed by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Shahidan Kassim, in a written answer in Parliament.

Shahidan said this in response to a question from Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Gelang Patah), who asked the prime minister why no action was taken against Zahid for writing such a letter without the approval of the cabinet.

Previously Zahid claimed that the cabinet was satisfied with his explanations about his actions vouching for Phua (left), who was arrested in Las Vegas for allegedly running a illegal gambling racket there.

"However, the government has never defended a criminal regardless of the person being a Malaysian citizen or a foreigner," Shahidan added.

In the letter, Zahid claimed that Phua, a Malaysian citizen, had helped Malaysia in "national security matters".

The details of the security matters had not been revealed to date, as Zahid claimed the details have been classified under the Official Secrets Act (OSA).

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