

**Who's calling the shots - Najib or Ascot Sports?**  
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'If the government is calling the shots, why is the PM twisting and turning his facts? Why can't he say, in simple and straightforward terms, whether Ascot will or will not be given the licence?'

Sports betting licence: On-off-on again?

Anonymous: What is happening to our country and our government? BN seems unable to maintain whatever policy they have announced and again we see another flip-flop. Tell me how can we trust the BN government? There are too many captains in one ship.

The rakyat should open their eyes and make sure it's time for a change. Don't make another mistake again and as it has already been 50 years of bad decisions.

Abil: Pathetic, now Prime Minister Najib Razak will reply that the earlier decision not to issue the sports-betting licence was made by the Umno supreme council, which has no power to do so. So the cabinet will soon decide to issue the licence, as agreed, to Ascot Sports.

Joe: Just last month, Najib announced that the government has withdrawn its approval to issue Vincent Tan a sports-betting licence - and that the decision is final.

Umno loves the pork-eating Chinese so much it is prepared to eat its own words to let us have sports betting even when the Chinese community has rejected it. So who is this gambling scheme for? For the 'haram' Chinese?

No, it's the Umno politicians - not the Chinese - who are after it. They are introducing this gambling venture for their own selfish ends. It's another money-making scheme of theirs to be operated through a crony. Our flip-flop PM is apparently dancing to the tune of Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Tkc: If we really must have sports betting to curb outflow of funds and illegal betting (yes, right!), why don't we model it after the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) instead of awarding it to Ascot Sports.

The HKJC is a non-profit organisation whose proceeds go towards taxes and charity. It is the largest taxpayer in Hong Kong, as well as the largest private donor of charity funds, contributing an average of over HK\$1 billion (approximately US\$130 million) annually over the past 10 years.

Mr Huang: Sports betting: deal or no deal ? Yes or no? A simple answer to a simple question is required here. There is no point beating about the bush. If you have given approval in principle, it means that you had the intention to give the licence to the applicant. If, on the other hand, you had no such intention, then why give the approval in principle?

Take the bull by the horns, PM. There is no use giving vague answers. The foreign investors may be watching your action and see whether your words carry weight. If you say, "yes, I shall give the licence", then stick to it and damn the consequences. You can never please everybody.

Teh: When it comes to the matter of sports betting, is the government calling the shots or is it Ascot Sports? If the government is calling the shots, why is the prime minister twisting and turning his facts? Why can't he say, in simple and straightforward terms, whether Ascot will or will not be given the licence?

Apco too has some explaining to do

Habib Rak: It's very comforting to read John Malott's views and observations. It's a clear and precise assessment and reflects the objective manner in which most Americans think and act. It reminds me of the days working in an American company where rewards were directly related to skills and contribution. No need to suck up and play the racial or religious card.

If I made a mistake or delivered something below par, I would be told off directly even by juniors and by bosses who are close friends. Do not mix responsibilities and tasks with personal relationships. Like Malott said, action speaks louder than words.

Umno will not appreciate what Malott is saying and will choose to ignore him as an Anwar Ibrahim sympathiser. Umno does not have the intelligence to receive objective and positive advice. If it had, it would not be in such dire situation.

In my view, only by being out of power and denied access to all government resources would Umno learn and make amends. Perhaps, it could make a comeback sometime in the far future.

Pemerhati: The American government and President Barack Obama know exactly what is going on in Malaysia as their embassy would keep them up to date. They know of the apartheid-type system and the Nazi-style supremacist policies practiced by Najib Razak and the Umnoputras.

But they are unlikely to bring this up with Najib because they would not want to jeopardise their Malaysian investments, the future lucrative sales of their products and the cooperation of the Malaysian government in their war against some very angry Muslims.

The Americans will only talk of morality and human rights when it suits them and when it does not do serious damage to their interests. A good example is their relationship with the Saudis.

The US needs their oil badly and hence it will not say or do anything to offend the vile and dictatorial regime of Saudi Arabia. All politicians take actions based on one main consideration - that is, how their actions will affect their chances at the polls.

Kgen: What has Apco done with the US\$23 million (RM74 million) in Malaysia? Don't be surprised if the bulk of the money is fed back to Najib and co. It's the way things work here. Umno has crafted the robbing of the public purse into a fine art.

Putting Anwar in jail after a kangaroo trial is very bad public relations but Najib thinks he can ride out the storm in the 13th general election. Can he? We shall see.

Umno's opinion of the people they govern is very low indeed. In their minds, they are still talking to village folks who accept everything the government tells them. The next general election may turn out to be their Waterloo.

Mikey: John Malott understands the situation well. As he so aptly puts it, at the end of the day, external parties and their opinions don't matter. It is the minds and opinions of Malaysians that matter. We are the ones who have to change what is not right.

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