

**Gambling licence : Yong responds to Najib's allegation**  
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Sapp president Yong Teck Lee has lashed out at Umno leaders saying that they do not have the moral authority to speak on the issue of gambling in Sabah because they bring up such matters only when it suits their purposes.

MCPX

In a statement today, Yong revealed that in the April 2007 Ijok by-election, Deputy Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak, using the mobile phone of Sabah state minister Raymond Tan "requested me to cut short my conference overseas in order to quickly return to Malaysia to make a statement in Ijok to attack (PKR de facto leader) Anwar Ibrahim on the subject of the lottery licence."

"I made the trip, stated the facts and returned to Sabah," Yong said in response to Najib's comments on the lottery issue.

yong teck leeThe Sapp chief said the facts also remain that, from 1996 to 1998 (when he was Sabah chief minister), it was only the state government which held firm in its stance to resist the federal licence granted to a 4-digit lottery company to operate in Sabah.

None of the federal Umno leaders at the time lifted a finger to help the Sabah BN state cabinet overcome the "table slamming and files throwing" by the then deputy premier and Umno deputy president.

It was also Anwar who, as part of the BN promises of 1994, reduced the number of 4-D gaming outlets by 150 outlets and cut the number of slot machines per club from ten to five.

After the 1997 meeting in Sandakan (between Anwar and the then state cabinet on the gaming licence issue), Yong met then premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his office and presented the stand of the state government on gaming, complete with the statistics of gaming licences in all the states and FTs and an analysis of the social ills of gaming.

Mahathir then left the matter to the state government, Yong said .

"Unknown to him (Dr Mahathir) at the time, in my pocket was my signed resignation letter addressed to the PM (also BN chair) in case I was instructed to approve the state licence to the gaming company, which I would be unable to do as that would be against the interests of the state and people. Anwar did not pursue the matter anymore," Yong said.

**Licence approved in 2001**

"Till this day, I am grateful to the state cabinet ministers of 1997 (from Sabah Umno, Sapp, Upko, PBRS and Akar) who stood by me as chief minister in overcoming this difficult episode with the central government.

"But to the dismay of Sabahans, in 2001 the BN government issued the licence at both the state and federal levels to the lottery company concerned.

"Further, to add insult to injury, slot machines were increased from five per club to ten per club. If any Umno leader wishes to pursue this matter, I can volunteer the facts and sequence of events in more detail," Yong added.

najib and anwar ibrahimOn Wednesday, Najib claimed that Anwar Ibrahim, when he was deputy prime minister once slammed the table and threw files to demand the Sabah government approve a licence for a four-digit lottery to a company he had an interest in.

"He (Anwar) wanted the licence because his elder brother was the chairman of the company concerned," Najib said when campaigning for the BN in Permatang Pauh.

The DPM said he was proud of the action of the Sabah government in upholding its principles to deny the unprincipled Anwar the licence.

"Now he (Anwar) is talking about forming a society of high moral values but before, demanded for a gambling licence to be approved," he said.

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