

**Prove 'foreign agent' claim or apologise, Pua tells Zahid**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**January 03, 2012**  
**By Clara Chooi**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 3 — DAP MP Tony Pua today demanded Datuk Seri Zahid Hamidi prove his "foreign tool" accusation against him and charge him for treason, failing which he said the minister must apologise for his remarks.

"Treason as accused by the defence minister is a crime of the highest order in Malaysia and is punishable by death... the accusation... is as serious as it is outrageous, and such contemptuous behaviour is completely unbecoming of a minister," the Petaling Jaya Utara MP said in a statement.

According to Pua (picture), Zahid had called him a "tool to a former professor who has become a professor in a foreign country", adding that "the foreign country is the puppet-master of a particular party in Malaysia".

In the transcript of Zahid's statement carried in several Chinese-language dailies yesterday, the minister had also claimed to have "documentary proof" to back his claims.

"Given the severity of the allegations that I am compromising the nation's security, I challenge Zahid to come up with the so-called 'documentary proof' that I am a 'tool' of a professor in a foreign university and charge me accordingly.

"However, if the minister fails to furnish the proof, then he should immediately withdraw the remarks and make a public apology for making such unfounded statements," Pua said.

He also accused Zahid of relying on pro-Umno blogger Papagomo, "an obsessive liar without any morals and ethics", as his "intelligence officer".

"Malaysians should be terribly concerned that our Defence Minister who wields great powers, can be so gullibly compromised by a writer of unbelievable and outlandish fiction," he said.

He pointed out that this was the second time Zahid had made such false accusations against him. In March last year, the minister had reportedly falsely accused Pua of being arrested and fined for an offence in Singapore.

Pua said the allegations arose due to continued pressure placed on the Defence Ministry over its controversial arms purchases, especially in light of a poor assessment by Transparency International (TI).

TI, he pointed out, had given Malaysia only 4.5 points out of the maximum 12 or only 37 per cent in its "Transparency of Defence Budgets Report" launched in November last year.

Pua cited TI's International Defence and Security Programme director Mark Pyman as saying during the launch that "Malaysia ranked far below other countries, where the budget lacked details and no audits were undertaken of the secret programmes".

The Malaysian Insider

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