

Perkasa tells Zahid to come clean over letter to FBI
Malaysian Insider
Jan 6, 2015

Malay rights group Perkasa has urged Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to explain issues surrounding his letter to the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defending an alleged gambling kingpin.

The group's secretary Azrul Akmal Saharudin said the home minister's credibility was at stake over the letter, which can be regarded as his support for Paul Phua Wei Seng, currently facing trial in the US on bookmaking charges.

"Perkasa has been receiving barrage of questions from the people, who were concerned that the letter may or may not have elements of graft or abuse of power," said Azrul.

"We were made to understand, from the details provided in the media, that many people were of the impression that the letter was a sort of 'support' rendered by the home minister to Phua," he said.

Azrul, citing a phrase in the letter, "as such we are eager for him to return to Malaysia", questioned whether Zahid was trying to use a diplomatic approach to bring Phua back to Malaysia.

"The question now is why would Zahid do that? Is it because he received 'something' like what he accused Perkasa vice president Tan Sri Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman of not getting recently?" he asked.

Azrul, who is also Perkasa supreme council member, was referring to Zahid's belittling of the former Election Commission (EC) chairman for being critical of the government.

Last month, Zahid suggested that Rashid's sudden change of stance could be due to him not getting "something", which further angered Perkasa.

Azrul said Zahid must come clean on the issue because his silence fuelled negative perception and raised more questions.

"If it is true, then Perkasa believes this is the worst kind of treachery that will ruin the integrity and good name of Malaysia, as maintained by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak," he said.

"Both corruption and abuse of power are the worst kind of crime, especially so when it is used to help someone involved in criminal activities that can pose a potential threat to the country's security," he said.

Azrul also asked if Zahid had consulted Attorney-General, Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail,

before issuing the letter, or if the A-G was aware of it.

"Did he forward the letter to the Inspector-General of Police (Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar) before submitting it to the FBI?," he asked.

Opposition leaders and social media users have urged Zahid to explain the letter since it was revealed by a South China Morning Post report on New Year's Eve.

The report said Zahid wrote to the FBI stating that Phua was not a member of Hong Kong's 14K Triad.

The SCMP also reported that in the letter, addressed to FBI deputy director Mark F. Giuliano, Zahid claimed that Phua had assisted Putrajaya on national security projects.

The report said Phua, 50, and his son were accused of running an illegal gambling operation from suites at the Caesar's Palace Hotel in Las Vegas during the World Cup in Brazil in July 2014.

An online message found on his computer during a police raid suggested that bets of the alleged operation reached HK\$2.7 billion (RM1.22 billion), according to court documents.

American federal prosecutors alleged the group made a profit of US\$13 million (RM45.5 million) in June and July on football bets.

Phua's lawyers are challenging the admissibility of evidence, including the online message in court.

SCMP said the allegation that Phua was a triad member was based on an FBI internal document previously submitted to the court.

It said Malaysian police were reported to have informed the FBI's representative in Kuala Lumpur of Phua's ties to the criminal organisation.

This, however, was denied by Umno lawyer Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who claimed Zahid did not vouch for Phua as his letter was merely a response to Phua's lawyer.

He said Zahid was in the best position to enquire with the police to find out if Phua was linked to Hong Kong's 14K Triad. – January 6, 2015.

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/perkasa-tells-zahid-to-come-clean-over-letter-to-fbi>