

PAC to press on without speaker's blessing
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Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) hearings on 1MDB, which are scheduled to resume next month, should not be delayed, says PAC deputy chairperson Dr Tan Seng Giaw.

Tan, who is Kepong MP, in a statement today also gave his assurance that the hearings scheduled for three days, beginning Tuesday, would be conducted fairly and justly to safeguard the integrity of the PAC.

"Such hearings should not be delayed. We should consider the desire of Malaysians to know the truth about 1MDB," he said in the statement.

"I notice that Dewan Rakyat deputy speaker Ronald Kiandee said the present structure of the PAC does not reflect the composition of the political parties in the Dewan Rakyat and that PAC should seek the opinion of speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia as the custodian of Parliament.

"Under the current Malaysian political whirlwind, the appointment of four PAC members as deputy ministers is unprecedented, resulting in various interpretations on the work of the PAC. Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind," added Tan (right in photo).

He hopes Pandikar would make a ruling on PAC's position and allow the continuation of the 1MDB investigation in the best interest of the public.

Kiandee was reported to have told The Star that PAC should consider getting Pandikar's views before starting proceeding next week, since the committee now consists of four BN MPs and five opposition MPs.

Former, current 1MDB chiefs due to testify

The deputy speaker cited Standing Order 82(1), which says that every select committee shall be, so far as practicable, reflect "the balance between the parties within the House".

The former 1MDB chief executives Shahrul Ibrahim Halmi, Mohd Hazem Abdul Rahman and current CEO Arul Kanda Kandasamy are due to testify during the three days.

However, PAC member and DAP national publicity secretary Tony Pua (photo) said there is no need to ask Pandikar for any special permission to continue the investigation into the 1MDB allegations.

"There is absolutely no reason at all for anybody, executive or the speaker, to interfere with the scheduled investigations by the PAC," Pua said at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

In fact, the standing orders state that if the PAC chairperson cannot attend, for any reason, a new chairperson can be appointed by its members to chair the session, he said.

He also dismissed Kiandee's remarks that PAC had to reflect the balance in the parliamentary representation, saying there was no precedence for it to do so in exact proportions.

"The PAC is legally constituted," Pua said.

Hence, the witnesses must attend their scheduled hearings, he stressed.

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