

Pandikar to quit if 1MDB debate rules ignored

MalaysiaKini.com

Nov 3rd, 2015

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PARLIAMENT Dewan Rakyat speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia has threatened to resign if the conditions he set for the 1MDB debate are ignored.

The speaker wants DAP lawmaker Tony Pua (photo) to quit the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) or abstain from the investigation into 1MDB if he wanted to debate 1MDB president Arul Kanda Kandasamy.

As for Arul, Pandikar said, the 1MDB president cannot be called as a witness in the PAC investigation into 1MDB if he pressed ahead with the debate.

"If the government wants to proceed with the debate, I will not involve myself in this matter and I will step down as speaker," Pandikar told the Dewan Rakyat.

Pandikar had set the conditions for the debate based on House rules that bar any element of a PAC investigation to be made public before it is tabled in the Dewan Rakyat.

"If I allow the debate to go on, then there will be no need for the PAC or any other committee after this. Just settle things through debates," Pandikar said.

The speaker said this in response to a question from Anthony Loke (DAP-Seremban) who asked if Pandikar's ruling came after a meeting with the government.

Pandikar said this was a cynical question and stressed that he has a duty as speaker to ensure that the House rules are followed.

"If the government has an agenda, then it is the government's agenda," he said.

This is the second "quit" threat by the speaker. On May 19, Pandikar admitted submitting his resignation letter to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

However, Najib did not open the letter and promised to address his grouses and "transform" Parliament and therefore, Pandikar told reporters at his official residence in Kuala Lumpur that afternoon, he decided to stay put as speaker.

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