

Pua: Which Standing Order does 1MDB debate violate?

MalaysiaKini.com

Nov 3rd, 2015

Adrian Wong

"Which clauses of Parliament's Standing Order will be violated if the 1MDB debate goes on?"

This was the question posed by DAP Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua to Dewan Rakyat speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia today.

The speaker told Pua to resign from the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) or withdraw from the investigation into 1MDB if Pua wanted to debate with 1MDB president Arul Kanda Kandasamy on the state of the beleaguered company on Friday.

"This is unfair to me. The statement I sent this morning clearly states that the questions I will pose will be irrelevant to the PAC.

"These are questions that are of public concern. How can they violate any rules (in Parliament)?" Pua asked when speaking to reporters after attending an economic forum in Kuala Lumpur.

Pandikar (photo) also ruled that Arul Kanda can no longer be a witness in the PAC investigation if the debate goes ahead.

"This is more terrible. The debate is beneficial to the people. How can PAC lose the opportunity to interview Arul Kanda because of the debate?" Pua said.

He said he would verify the matter with Pandikar in the Dewan Rakyat and left immediately for the House sitting.

RTM offer declined

Earlier, on the offer by Communications and Multimedia Minister Salleh Said Keruak that the debate be hosted by state-owned RTM this Friday night, Pua said this was unnecessary.

"Why is he meddling in this? This is between me and Arul Kanda. Our teams will discuss the format, time and venue. This is not the minister's decision," he said, though he thanked Salleh for the offer.

Pandikar has threatened to resign if the conditions he set for the 1MDB debate are ignored.

"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.

DAP party whip Anthony Loke has said the party will discuss with its allies PKR and

Amanah in order to find a replacement so that the debate remains on track.

Will abide by speaker's ruling

Later at a press conference at the Parliament lobby, Pua said: "I read through the relevant section used by the speaker and I can't find any part of it for which I need to resign (from PAC), abstain from the probe, or that prohibits Arul Kanda from appearing at the PAC's hearing into 1MDB.

"It doesn't make sense. For very simple reason, I asked 1MDB questions outside (Parliament); does that mean I cannot ask questions inside the House? I don't quite catch the conflict (of interest theory)."

Pua said the 10 questions posted to Arul Kanda (photo) were not plucked from the contents of PAC's hearing into 1MDB, but based on publicly available information.

He refused to accept the cliché and excuse that his participation at the live debate might breach the Standing Order.

"If I reveal the contents of PAC hearing, then (it is okay for) you to kick me out. This is not about prejudging (me), this is about many things, about whether they want to investigate 1MDB.

"If the speaker's ruling stands, however unfair I think it is, I will have to abide by the ruling as I do not want to be the cause of jeopardising the probe," Pua said.

He said he would have no choice but to give up the chance to debate with Arul Kanda face to face.

"I can't let a debate jeopardise the massive investigation carried out by PAC today."

He said he will also get clarification from the speaker as to how the appearance of Arul Kanda in a live telecast debate can prohibit him from appearing in the PAC hearing.

"How could this happen? He (Arul Kanda) is the most important witness in PAC's hearing into 1MDB. It means the speaker is helping him to escape from coming to PAC. I can't allow that," Pua said, adding that he would decide his next move after meeting the speaker.