

**Arul: I respect Rafizi, but speaker has last say**  
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1MDB president Arul Kanda Kandasamy said today he will not debate with PKR's Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli, who has been asked to step in for DAP's Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua.

Arul Kanda said this was out of respect for Dewan Rakyat Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia, who ruled that any debate should take place after the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) hearings on 1MDB.

"I respect Rafizi as a worthy opponent. He is a good debater, orator and gentleman. I enjoyed sparring with him in our younger days.

"However, the speaker is the ultimate authority on all matters relating to Parliament.

"He (the speaker) has made his ruling on my responsibility as a PAC witness and that any debate should only take place after the PAC hearings," Arul Kanda added in a statement today.

However, he said, 1MDB would respond to the questions Pua has listed for Arul Kanda to respond in the now scrapped Q&A session between the two.

Pandikar earlier said Pua (photo) must resign as a PAC member if he wants to take part in the debate, as the PAC hearing on 1MDB is still pending.

DAP said it would not be worth it for Pua to resign his PAC post to debate Arul Kanda.

Pua and Arul Kanda were supposed to duel tomorrow, live on television.

If Pua really wanted to make good his attack against him, the 1MDB chief said, Pua should have instead offered his place in the PAC to Rafizi.

That way, Pua could continue with the duel that the MP "aggressively harrassed me" to accept, Arul Kanda said.

He added that as a two-term MP, Pua was only playing political games, since he already knew parliamentary procedures.

"It was specifically YB Tony Pua who challenged me. He made it personal, and used mocking words like "I will not punch him", "my allegations", "embarrassing me", etcetera.

"There was never any question of a debate with Pakatan Harapan, which has now appeared out of nowhere, in a desperate and last-minute attempt, to save YB Tony Pua from embarrassment.

"These are clearly political games which I, as a professional, will not be drawn into," Arul Kanda added.

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