

Give Arul chance to defend 1MDB in PAC, Gerakan tells Rafizi
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PKR secretary-general Rafizi Ramli seems to have misunderstood the statements of 1MDB president Arul Kanda Kandasamy and Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia on the much-anticipated 1MDB debate, Gerakan's Simpang Renggam MP Liang Teck Meng said.

"I do not know what Rafizi understood from the speaker's and Arul Kanda's statements," Liang, who is a member of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), said in a statement yesterday.

"But this is what I understood: the speaker clearly said that Arul Kanda is not allowed to debate publicly before the PAC hearing or he will be disqualified as a witness," he explained.

Arul Kanda has the right to defend 1MDB's case without prejudice in the PAC hearing, he said.

"Don't deprive him of this right," Liang (*photo*) added.

Alternatively, he suggested that Rafizi could try persuading the speaker to allow the 1MDB boss to debate without voiding his right to appear as a witness.

Liang also pointed out that Arul Kanda's unconditional [acceptance](#) of the debate challenge was only to debate with DAP's Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua, who is also on the PAC.

"Arul Kanda responded due to the many challenges and childish taunts made by Pua.

"Rafizi should know he is not Pua and should not put words into Arul's mouth," Liang said.

Even two days ago, the Pandan MP seemed hesitant to debate Arul Kanda, Liang said, with the "strange excuse" that two bald men should not debate on television.

Rafizi should not feel that he needs to redeem his honour by replacing Pua in the debate challenge after being ridiculed for his "bald men" excuse, he said.

"He (Rafizi) should not be the 'bridesmaid' to Pua or be the 'Diet Coke' to Pua's 'real deal Coca-Cola'.

"He is better than this. Let Pua fight his own battles," he said.

Rafizi can replace Pua in PAC

However, Liang said another solution would be for Rafizi to replace Pua on the PAC to allow Pua to fulfil his challenge to Arul Kanda.

"As a member of the PAC, I would personally support Rafizi to do this, as I have no doubt that he is equally as competent as Pua (*photo*), if not more, and will be an asset to the PAC," he said.

A PAC inquiry is the best platform to seek the truth, he maintained, going on to lament that certain politicians seem to want to gain political mileage out of it.

He urged all politicians to give the PAC the space to do their jobs in probing the 1MDB issue.

Pua had challenged Arul Kanda to an interview on a live talk show, which the 1MDB boss had initially accepted on the condition that Pua quit his PAC position, citing conflict of interest.

When Pua refused to quit, Arul Kanda eventually retracted the condition.

However, the Pandikar then forbade the debate, unless Pua abstained from the 1MDB investigation by the PAC, and also said Arul Kanda cannot be called as a witness in the investigations if he debated with Pua.

Pakatan Rakyat then **announced** that Rafizi would be replacing Pua in the debate, to override the speaker's condition imposed on Pua.

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