

**Opposition MPs walk out on Najib**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Jun 30, 2008**  
**Fauwaz Abdul Aziz**

Opposition parliamentarians today staged a walkout from the Dewan Rakyat to protest against Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's ministerial statement that elaborated on the 9th Malaysia Plan mid-term review.  
MCPX

They were protesting against Speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia for allowing Najib to provide details left out by Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in his mid-term review speech last Thursday.

The opposition MPs argued that Najib's ministerial statement was against the standing order and parliamentary convention.

raja petra court case 060508 lim kit siangDAP veteran leader Lim Kit Siang (DAP-Ipoh Timor) called Najib's ministerial statement a "reckless disregard" of parliamentary practices, procedures and rules as Najib had already seconded the Abdullah's motion and speech - but was now seeking to make additions.

He said further that Najib was being allowed to misuse Standing Order 14 (1)(i) to make his ministerial statement on his support of the mid-term review report, which he should have done when he seconded Abdullah's review last Thursday.

"What the deputy prime minister wants to do is make up for a missed opportunity to give (further) arguments. So why did he second the motion tabled by the prime minister?" Lim asked.

"Even if he seeks to compensate, it should be by taking part in the debate and not (by issuing a ministerial statement) now through Standing Order 14 (1) which, surely, if we review according to parliamentary practice, should not be at this time."

Mahfuz Omar (PAS-Pokok Sena) chipped in, arguing that allowing Najib to issue the ministerial statement implied that the premier's explanation was inadequate.

"Does it mean that the deputy prime minister's explanation signifies that the prime minister's explanation was inadequate?" Mahfuz asked.

As Barisan Nasional MPs loudly urged the speaker to ignore the opposition's objections - Pandikar said he would allow Najib's ministerial statement under Standing Orders 14 and 25.

parliament speaker pandikar amin pc 250608 05Pandikar (right) also said he was empowered to exercise his powers of discretion as contained in Standing Order 99.

The bottom line, said Pandikar, is that the deputy premier's statement would allow for wider discussion of the mid-term review. If there are objections, these can be raised in during the debate.

"Our task is to debate. Here we are faced with a (presentation) by the deputy prime

minister which is being presented for the people's interest. Whoever is unsatisfied (with the presentation, debate it! Isn't that our task? To debate?" said Pandikar.

"What is wrong (with allowing a ministerial statement) if it is for the interest of society? Is it for my benefit? Or is it in the interests of all us?"

To Pandikar's suggestion that those who disagreed with him could seek a review of his decision, Lim said there was no point submitting any such motion - as provided under Standing Order 43 - as the answer will only be received two days later when an immediate decision is required.

The walkout of Pakatan MPs, led by Lim, was accompanied by jeers and hoots of approval by Barisan Nasional ministers and backbenchers.

Najib, meanwhile, smiled and commented that "it would now be easier without the opposition (in the House)".

### **Strong police presence**

In his blog site updated after the incident, Lim said: "For reasons best known to Najib, the deputy prime minister did not say anything when he stood up to second the prime minister's speech."

Lim also said a proper subject for ministerial statement today would have been the government's position on Anwar Ibrahim's plight, as the PKR de facto leader had sought shelter in the Turkish embassy for "personal safety". (He has since left the building.)

There was a heavy police presence around Parliament today, due to a PKR protest against the purportedly government conspiracy against Anwar.

PKR elected representatives and supporters gathered in Parliament at 1pm to protest the alleged assassination threat against Anwar.

gobind singh deo and pakatan mp walkout of parliament 300608 02Two Federal Reserve Unit trucks were stationed along the access road to the Parliament building while two more were within the parliamentary compounds.

About 40 to 50 people from various groups and NGOs were briefed by top PKR leaders on Anwar's situation.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/85300>