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'I met Dr M to talk of political issues'

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'NOT QUITTING':

Dewan Rakyat speaker says Dr M's statement 'taken out of context'

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Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia says he does not wish to see the matter prolonged to the extent of creating a political crisis

TAN Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia said rumours of him quitting as Dewan Rakyat Speaker as claimed by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad should not be blown out of proportion as he had already denied it.

He admitted that he had met the former prime minister but only to talk about current political issues.

He said the meeting was not uncommon as Dr Mahathir was a mentor and guru to the country's political leaders.

"It was a meeting between leaders. The discussions were on what is happening in the country.

"However, when he said I wanted to quit, it could be because I had expressed my disappointment over many trivial things that were being brought up in parliament these days. I have my disappointments... that was what I voiced out to Tun (Dr Mahathir). But I have made a press statement yesterday

(Saturday) that I am not quitting," he said, adding Dr Mahathir's statement (on Pandikar Amin's supposed resignation) which went viral on social media and news portals might have been "taken out of context".

Pandikar Amin said he heard of such news when he was at his hometown here but he did not know what was actually being reported until 10.30pm on Saturday.

"According to what was reported, I had quit but I did not hear what was said by Dr Mahathir from his own mouth," he said, adding it was not for Dr Mahathir to address the resignation of such an im-

portant position in the first place. "As far as I know if someone resigns, it would be done through the proper channel and then it depends whether the prime minister accepts it or not... and if he accepts it, then an announcement will be made," he added.

Pandikar Amin said he did not wish to see the matter being prolonged to the extent of creating a political crisis.

Meanwhile, in Putrajaya, Barisan Nasional Backbenchers Club chairman Tan Sri Shahrir Abdul Samad said Dr Mahathir's statement on Pandikar Amin's purported resignation could be considered as an attack against the institution of parliament.

He said the former prime minister was not in the position to make such an announcement as it should only be made personally by Pandikar Amin.

Shahrir added that Dr Mahathir should not drag the institution into the limelight when his personal problem was with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's leadership.

"This (Dr Mahathir's statement) may be aimed at weakening or creating doubts towards the institution which is unhealthy,

"As a statesman, he should help in strengthening the political institution as it would lead to greater stability in the country."

Shahrir said the Malaysia Development Berhad issue, which was Dr Mahathir's bone of contention, had already been referred

to the Public Accounts Committee and Auditor-General, which allowed greater consolidation of the institutions involved.

"It is unreasonable to drag the Speaker into the matter and it is sad to see someone spreading untruths when there were people ready to believe them, and having the Speaker to deny the resignation."

"It is unbecoming of a statesman to say something untrue and he should not be doing that to satisfy his personal agenda," he said after taking part in a friendly golf match between members of the Backbenchers Club and Media Prima Berhad's (MPB) top management team at the Palm Garden Golf Club, here, yesterday.

Present were Deputy Dewan Rakyat Speaker Datuk Ronald Kiandee, Kubang Pasu parliamentarian Datuk Wira Mohd Johari Baharum, MPB group managing director Datuk Seri Amrin Awaluddin, New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad chief executive officer Datuk Mohammad Azlan Abdullah, and NST group editor Mustapha Kamil, among others.

Meanwhile, Ronald said Pandikar Amin had never raised the issue of resigning.

"His statement (to deny the resignation) has debunked wide speculation and I am confident that tomorrow (today), he will preside the parliamentary sitting as usual," he said.