

**PKR: Pandikar's threat unlawful, exposes blatant bias  
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By Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

KUALA LUMPUR, June 11 — The Dewan Rakyat Speaker's threat to drop Pakatan Rakyat (PR) elected representatives as Members of Parliament is unlawful and exposes his blatant bias towards the opposition, PKR has blasted.

Party vice-president N. Surendran (picture) argued that Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia has no legal ground to issue the threat, claiming that the Parliament Standing Orders clearly compel the Secretary of the Dewan Rakyat to administer the oath to any MP who has yet to do so.

"Pandikar's threat is unlawful and in blatant breach of Dewan Rakyat Standing Orders and the Federal Constitution. Under the standing orders, the Setiausaha of the Dewan Rakyat is bound to administer the oath to any MP who has not yet taken the oath.

"This is clear from Rule 5(2) of the Standing Orders which states that 'a member who has not previously taken the oath may present himself at the table' and the 'oath shall be administered to him'," Surendran said in a statement.

This morning Pandikar said opposition elected representatives will be dropped as MPs if they choose to boycott the swearing-in process, citing the Federal Constitution in claiming that any lawmaker who misses the swearing-in process without valid reasons will be automatically dropped in six months.

According to the Speaker, the Standing Order also states that the swearing in cannot take place beyond the stipulated time, which is the first day of the sitting.

"It is shocking and unprecedented for the Speaker to make such unlawful threats against MPs duly elected by the rakyat.

"Pandikar's outrageous threat exposes his blatant bias against Pakatan MPs and disgraces the high office he occupies," blasted the first-term MP.

The accusations of bias against the Sabah-born Speaker is not new. During the 12th parliamentary sitting, Pandikar's tenure as the House Secretary was marred with questionable decisions including the suspension of several PR lawmakers at the time.

He was also notorious for dismissing opposition motions including on issues deemed neutral, prompting PR lawmakers to accuse him of being "a Barisan Nasional (BN) spokesman".

Surendran reminded Pandikar that he has the duty to perform his duty impartially in accordance to international standards.

"It is a basic principle of democratic Commonwealth parliaments that the Speaker must act impartially in presiding over the House," he said.

Meanwhile, PKR Batu MP Chua Tian Chang has described the threat as unbecoming of an "interim" Speaker, reminding him that he is not yet appointed to the post and that his appointment is made by MPs.

"He is not even the Speaker. He was the Speaker for the 12th sitting and it is not him who will swear us in but we will have him sworn in.

"The Speaker is produced by the parliament. He has not even been sworn in and he's already making this arrogant statement. It is very unbecoming," Tian, who is also a PKR vice-president, told The Malaysian Insider.

PR anchor party PKR had recently suggested that the opposition snub the swearing-in process in protest against alleged fraud in Election 2013.

The mainstream media, however, published reports claiming that the opposition coalition had decided to proceed with its plan to shun the sitting although Chua later clarified that no official decision has been taken as of now.

PKR's allies DAP and PAS, however, have openly voiced their objection to the boycott idea and said that there was never any consensus to shun the swearing-in process.

Pandikar blasted the suggestion as an insult to parliamentary democracy and the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, saying this was the first time such an idea was being mooted since independence.

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