

Dr M says Parliament speaker quit, deputy speaker refutes claim
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Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia is no longer the parliament speaker, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad told a forum in Ipoh today.

The country's longest serving prime minister said that the speaker had resigned and that his duties will be undertaken by his deputy.

"He came to see me. He said he does not want to carry on, so now the speaker is his deputy," Dr Mahathir said.

Parliament will convene for its second meeting for the year on Monday.

Dr Mahathir did not disclose the reason why Pandikar Amin had quit as speaker.

He announced Pandikar's resignation after he was asked if it was possible to remove Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak through a motion of confidence in Parliament.

Dr Mahathir said it would be quite difficult to do this as Umno did not have the numbers and would need the support of other BN MPs.

Pandikar's resignation as speaker has been a subject of much speculation as rumours swirled that he was unhappy with the way Putrajaya conducted its business in the Dewan Rakyat.

Sittings had been pushed into the small hours to ensure that bills were passed with many MPs from the backbench and opposition expressing unhappiness over such practice.

Dr Mahathir urged the public to reject their division leaders who were openly pledging support for Najib.

He also warned that if Najib led the Barisan Nasional at the next general election, the ruling coalition would lose. This would throw the country into chaos as there was no real alliance in Pakatan Rakyat, the opposition pact.

In an immediate response, deputy speaker Datuk Ronald Kiandee told The Star Online that the Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia called it quits was pure speculation.

"Even in the last meeting, the talk of his resignation emerged but he was on official leave. He turned up at the end," he was quoted as saying by the news portal.

Kiandee told The Star Online that last week Pandikar Amin had chaired the preparatory meeting of Commonwealth Speaker's Conference to be held in January next year in Kota Kinabalu.

Pandikar Amin was last seen in public when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak launched a people's housing project last Sunday in Kota Belud, Pandikar's hometown. – May 16, 2015.

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