

Pandikar refutes Dr M, says still parliament speaker
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Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia has refuted Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's announcement that he quit his post as parliament speaker, after the former prime minister made the shocking revelation in Ipoh today.

"I have not resigned as parliament speaker as how it was reported by certain quarters. I will be on duty as the speaker when Parliament reconvenes for the second time this year from May 18 to Jun 18," Pandikar said in a brief three-paragraph statement today.

He said he will be chairing the swearing-in ceremony of the new Rompin and Permatang Pauh members of parliament as well as other matters in the Dewan Rakyat as scheduled for May 18.

He added that he would also chair the debate on the 11th Malaysian Plan by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak on May 21.

Dr Mahathir told his audience at a forum today that Pandikar quit as parliament speaker.

The country's longest serving prime minister said that the speaker resigned and that his duties would 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.

But he did not disclose the reason why Pandikar resigned.

He made the announcement after he was asked if it was possible to remove Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak through a motion of confidence in Parliament.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim quickly dismissed Dr Mahathir's remark, saying he would have been informed if the two-term speaker quit his post.

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.

Deputy Speaker Datuk Ronald Kiandee told The Star Online that Pandikar's resignation 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.

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

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