

Shahidan dispels Dr M's remarks, says parliament speaker hasn't quit
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By Diyana Ibrahim

The Najib administration has denied that parliament speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia has resigned from the job, hours after Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad dropped the bombshell announcement in Ipoh.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said he would have been informed if the two-term speaker quit his post.

"This is not true. If it had happened I would have been informed about this. The secretary to the parliament has told me no letter of resignation had been sent in," he told The Malaysian Insider today.

Shahidan said both him and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak would have been the first to know.

"I don't know where Dr Mahathir received his news. But up to now as an official source I can tell you this has not happened," he said.

Earlier today at a forum, Dr Mahathir told his audience 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.

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

Dr Mahathir did not disclose the reason why Pandikar resigned.

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.

In an immediate response, 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.

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 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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