

Pandikar upset over lack of toilet, prompting resignation, says BN leader

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By Eileen Ng

The lack of toilet facilities in his office could be one of the reasons which had prompted Parliament speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia to submit his resignation, revealed Barisan Nasional Backbenchers Club (BNBBC) chairman Tan Sri Shahrir Samad.

"That may be the final thing, how can you not pay respect or due regard to the Speaker. It's the final thing," he said when asked on the matter although he stressed the toilet was later constructed.

Pandikar Amin's office was moved to the temporary Parliament building as the current building is undergoing a massive renovation.

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had on Saturday told a forum that Pandikar Amin, who was appointed Speaker after the 2008 general election, was dissatisfied with the facilities in his office.

"He said he was not happy with the furnishings in his room," the statesman had said.

Shahrir, the Johor Baru MP, said Pandikar Amin also faced numerous problems, including with the Senate and the minister in charge of Parliament, which by protocol, is deemed to be of a higher position than the Dewan Rakyat Speaker.

"It's not just Shahidan," he said in referring to Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim who is the parliamentary minister, adding "it's also about the Senate. You have the Senate, the Lower House, the Dewan Rakyat, the parliamentary department, the minister in charge of Parliament – it's a mixture of many things."

In his press conference today, Pandikar Amin lamented that the upgrades he was looking to implement in Parliament since he took up the post has not materialised.

This includes abolishing the post of minister in charge of Parliament, introduction of a parliamentary bill committee and establishing a ministerial time session as practised in other parliaments to enable MPs to ask ministers questions on current issues.

In clearing the air over his resignation, Pandikar Amin today also said he submitted his resignation letter to Datuk Seri Najib Razak but decided to stay put after the prime minister agreed to address his complaints.

That being the case, he decided to continue as Parliament Speaker.

Pandikar Amin said he had met Najib for a meeting at the Parliament building on March 19 and the prime minister agreed to his suggestions on improving

parliamentary proceedings. "Najib at the time did not read my (resignation) letter... he didn't even want to hold it. Instead, he asked me what problems I had as speaker," he said today.

Pandikar Amin made the announcement during a press conference at his official residence in Kuala Lumpur, a day after Dr Mahathir said the Speaker was trying to "shame" him by denying his intention to resign in a private meeting between both men.

Dr Mahathir had dropped the bombshell about Pandikar quitting in a forum on Saturday but this was refuted by the Speaker hours later. – May 19, 2015

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