

Prerogative of PM to call meeting

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THE PRIME Minister can request for a special meeting of Parliament to discuss matters of "public interest."

The Prime Minister may do so by notifying the president of the Dewan Negara and the Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat of the intended meeting, a Parliament official said in Kuala

Lumpur yesterday.

He was commenting on the Government's plan to table an amendment to the Federal Constitution in January.

The official said the special meeting is to enable the amendments to be discussed while Parliament is adjourned.

The second session of the Dewan Rakyat was adjourned last month while that of the Dewan

Negara is due next week.

The official explained that the third session of the sixth Parliament is only due to meet in March.

Notice

The prerogative of the Prime Minister to call for such a meeting is provided for in Rule 11 (3) of the Dewan Rakyat Standing Orders and Rule 10 (3) of

the Dewan Negara Standing Orders.

Rule 11 (3) of the Dewan Rakyat Standing Orders states "if, during an adjournment of the House, it represented to Tuan Yang di-Pertua by the Prime Minister that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier date than that to which the House was adjourned, Tuan Yang di-Pertua

shall give notice thereof forthwith and the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice.

"The business set down for the day shall be appointed by the Prime Minister and notice thereof shall be circulated not later than the time of the meeting."

Provision for such a meeting is also spelt out in Rule 10 (3) of the Dewan Negara.

He said there was nothing unusual in the calling for a special meeting as the provision has been invoked in many occasions, the latest one being the introduction of standard time for the country.

However, Parliament has not been notified of the meeting yet.