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Deputy Speaker rejects Kit Siang's motion to adjourn House

DEPUTY Speaker Datuk Juhar Mahiruddin yesterday rejected a motion by Opposition leader Lim Kit Siang for the House to be adjourned to discuss the Government's proposal to establish the National Economic Action Council to find solutions to the current economic problems.

He said the proposal was only announced recently and the establishment would therefore take some time.

Juhar said he agreed that the motion was specific and of public importance but felt there was no need for the House to be adjourned to discuss it.

"This is because the Standing Orders only allows for a one hour debate on any specific issue.

"The motion involves matters which are very detailed and therefore one hour would be insufficient," he said.

Juhar said he was rejecting the motion because only last week Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim made a Ministerial statement in the House to explain the various measures being taken to overcome the current economic problems faced by the country and also by other countries in the region.

"Besides, several MPs have also spoken on the matter during the debate on the Supply Bill 1998 in October and November."

Tabling the motion, Lim said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had on Nov 20 announced the proposal to establish the NEAC and added that until today it was yet to be established.

He said the Government should reconsider its decision to form the NEAC because it was not clear whether the Council would have executive powers or would just be playing an advisory role.

At a Press Conference at Parliament lobby later, Lim said he would seek a meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to ask him to reshuffle the Cabinet and appoint a National Economic Crisis Cabinet (NECC) of technocrats.

He said he would also call on Dr Mahathir to establish an Opposition-headed National Economic Crisis Consultative Council (NECCC).

Lim said the NECCC could comprise representatives from all political parties, Government and Opposition, industry, commerce, trade unions, professional bodies, non-Governmental organisations so that it could be a nationally unifying force to unite and mobilise all Malaysians behind a national economic recovery programme to tide the country through the economic problems in shortest time possible.

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