

Pejuang to attend special sitting, may walk out if it's not beneficial

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by SHAHEERA AZNAM SHAH

PARTI Pejuang Tanah Air's MPs will be attending the special Parliament sitting next week should the matters discussed during the sessions benefit the people, said its chairman Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

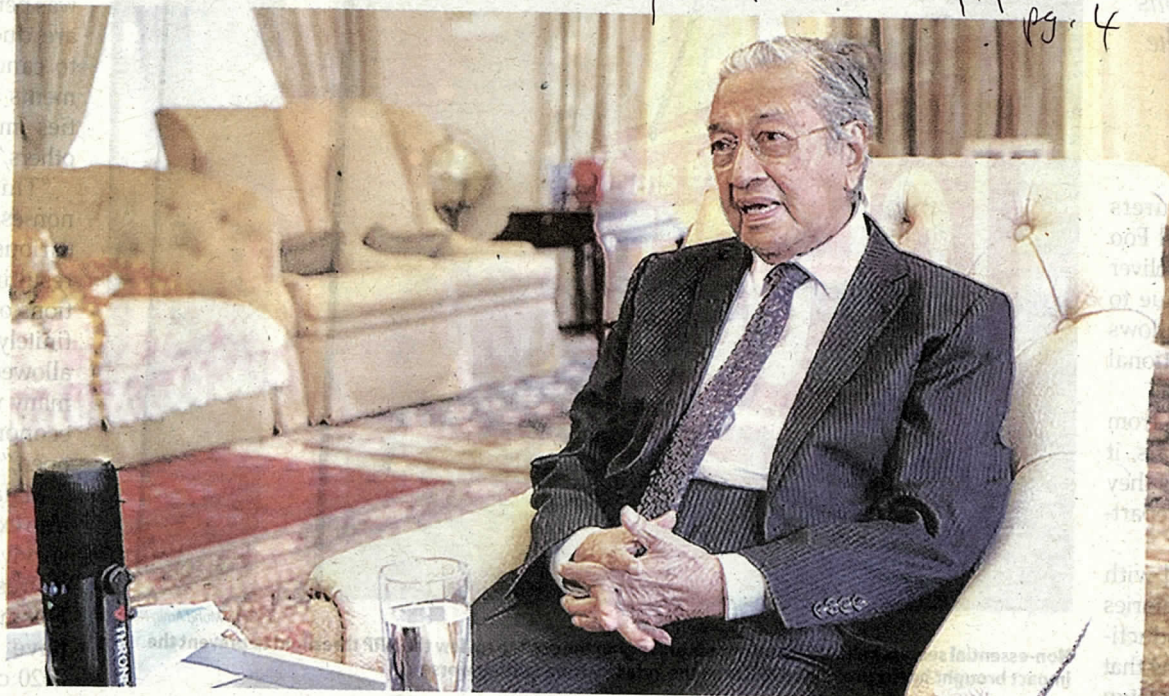
Pejuang MPs will decide on the day whether the matters discussed are of interest to the people or merely reinforcing the government's actions, the former prime minister (PM) said after chairing the party's executive meeting.

"We have decided to attend the special Parliament sitting, at least at the beginning of the session.

"If we find the 'explanation of government policies' just a briefing, we may decide at that time to leave the dewan.

"But we haven't decided fully on this yet, because we want to see how the government conducts the meeting. Are they going to talk about the suffering of the people or are they going to talk about legitimising the wrong things that they have done?" he said during a virtual media conference yesterday.

A special Parliament session is expected to convene starting July 26, which will see the lower house proceedings take place from July 26 to July 29 and Aug 2, while the Senate sits for three



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Source: Dr Mahathir's Office

days from Aug 3 to Aug 5.

The decision also came after repeated calls from Yang di-Per-tuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah on allowing the Parliament to reconvene in order to discuss the health and economic crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The former PM reiterated that the special meeting is only to satisfy the King's request and is unlikely to produce fruitful policies, as well as health and economic decisions.

"The invitation from the Dewan Speaker for the Parliament to convene is among what we discuss during the executive meeting and we feel it is not a Parliament session as the real session will begin on Sept 6 that will be opened with the King's speech.

"We have been told the session will include explanations to the actions taken by the current government so far, of which many of the actions are against the law.

"For example, in declaring an Emergency, the ordinance has to be laid before both houses of the Parliament, the lower house and the Senate. But, they did not do that and in fact, postponed the Parliament," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the party, Dr Mahathir said Pejuang deemed the special Parliament session to be a deceitful act by the current government.

Commenting on whether he was asked to be part of the National Recovery Council set up by the current government, Dr Mahathir said he believes his involvement

would not sit well with PM Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

"If the council is chaired by Muhyiddin, I do not think he will be accepting my ideas as he will always think about politics and that the idea is not coming from his party.

"Our aim should be on how to put off the pandemic as many people have died and many others are suffering.

"The current government has spent billions and I do not know where has the money gone," he said.

Previously, the former PM said Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, who has been appointed the Coordinating Minister for the National Recovery Plan, has met with him and approached for ideas related to tackling the pandemic.