

Speculation rife on April-May polls date

PRESS DIGEST

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NEWS that the first meeting of the sixth session of the 13th Parliament will be held from March 5 to April 5 has prompted another round of speculation on the polls date, with some believing that it will be held at the end of April.

However, there are also those who think it will only be held after Parliament has reached its full term on June 24, the Chinese press reported yesterday.

The 14th general election (GE14) must be held by Aug 24, as Parliament automatically dissolves on June 24. By law, the Election Commission (EC) must call for elections within 60 days of the dissolution.

According to the Dewan Rakyat secretary's notice to MPs, the lower house will meet for 20 days and the upper house for nine days from April 16 to 30. As such, many MPs predict that GE14 will be held either at the end of April or after June 24.

DAP Segambut MP Lim Lip Eng confirmed to *China Press* that he had received a notice of the meeting via email.

He did not discount the possibility that GE14 being held after Hari Raya Aidilfitri, which falls on June 16, but before June 24 when the Parliament reaches full term.

He said, this is because the senate will meet after the Dewan Rakyat ends its meeting on April 5, and Ramadan begins on June 16.

"The prime minister is expected to announce some goodies for the rakyat before Hari Raya or some good news for bumiputras and civil servants to win more votes," he said.

He said the government will seek the passage of EC's electoral boundary redelineation proposals at the coming Parliament session and not through a special parliamentary session as speculated in the media earlier.

MCA Tanjung Piai MP Datuk Wee Jeck Seng said: "We don't want to predict when the election would be held, as MCA is ready for it any day".

Meanwhile, some political analysts have discounted a March election, saying it will most likely be held between the end of April and mid-May.