

Parliament takes a mid-term break, to reconvene on May 7

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Parliament will start its mid-term break from Tuesday (Apr 3) and will reconvene on May 7.

This break, known as a prorogue, marks the mid-point of the Government's term. Singapore's 13th Parliament began on Jan 15, 2016 after the 2015 General Election.

At some point before Parliament reconvenes, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is expected to reshuffle his Cabinet to give younger ministers more exposure and responsibility.

Mr Lee had said in February that he had asked fourth-generation ministers to draft the Government's agenda for the President's Address when the new parliamentary session opens in May.

The President's Address, which will be delivered by Mdm Halimah Yacob at 8.30pm on May 7, will kick off the second session of Parliament. She will announce the priorities, policies and programmes of the Government for its remaining term of office.

The House will then discuss these policies and programmes in its debate on the Motion of Thanks for the President's Address.

Political analysts expect more continuity than change when Parliament reconvenes.

"I would expect significant continuity in terms of the thrust of the Government's policies - whether we're looking at continued economic advancement and the promotion of a compassion and caring society. These are the themes that will continue to underlie the next Cabinet," said Associate Professor of Law Eugene Tan from Singapore Management University.

The younger generation of leaders, however, will need to navigate a more complex global landscape, noted Dr Gillian Koh from the Institute of Policy Studies.

"We have different generations of Singaporeans in play - the older generation of Singaporeans who are familiar, comfortable and even acquiesce of a certain method of doing policies by the PAP.

"We have the younger generation ... they want to see more inclusion, questions of how we deal with diverse people groups, orientations to value issues. It may be a tough situation for the 4G to deal with because of the changing complexity of the policy and political environment," she added.

Parliament has been prorogued 12 times since independence.