

Singapore reserves next presidential contest for Malays

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Singapore will reserve the position of the country's president for the Malay community in the presidential contest due next year.

This was announced by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong as part of reforms to the country's presidential system.

"That means if a qualified Malay candidate steps up to run, Singapore will have a Malay president again... this would be our first after more than 46 years, since our first president Encik Yusof Ishak," he was quoted as saying by Singapore's *Straits Times*.

Under the proposed reform, Singapore plans to reserve the position of Singapore's president to a racial group which has not occupied the position for five continuous terms.

Lee said this is to ensure minority representation.

"Every citizen, Chinese, Malay, Indian, or some other race, should know that someone of his community can become president, and in fact from time to time, does become president," he was quoted as saying.

The proposed changes will require the Singapore Parliament to amend the country's constitution.

Singapore has had Chinese and Indian presidents since 1991 when the elected presidency system came into force, but no Malay president.

This means the Malay community has not had a president for five continuous terms.

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