PAP Faces Biggest Contest In Decades
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SINGAPORE -- Singapore's ruling People's Action Party (PAP) is facing its biggest contest in decades in the general election, with walkover only for the five parliamentary seats in the Tanjong Pagar group representation constituency, according to results of the nomination on Wednesday.

Candidates from the political parties and individual candidates in Singapore filed their nomination papers on Wednesday morning. The PAP fielded candidates for all the constituencies, while the opposition parties filed nomination papers for 82 of the 87 seats.

The team of five PAP candidates led by the Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew won without a contest in the Tanjong Pagar group representation constituency. The opposition managed to put together a team to contest there but missed the deadline at noon when they filed the nomination papers.

"I would welcome contest in Tanjong Pagar because I work there since 1955. And you see that now Tanjong Pagar has changed into a pinnacle. Indeed the whole of Singapore has changed since 1959 when I became the first prime minister. I am gonna show you I will look after you for the next five years," the minister mentor told supporters in a speech after the returning officer declared that he has won without a contest.

Lee, leader of Singapore for decades before his retirement as prime minister in 1990, first became a lawmaker since 1955. He has won without any contest since 1991.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is leading a team of six to stand in Ang Mo Kio group representation constituency. He thanked the supporters after the nomination process is complete.

"This is a very important election. It depends on your support for us to work together and for the PAP to win and work for Singapore together and secure our future together," Lee said, adding that he has been in Ang Mo Kio for about 27 years.

"We are glad there is a contest and we will work hard to get the support of the people in Ang Mo Kio," he told reporters.

The opposition Workers' Party fielded a team of five that is regarded as "strong," including the party's secretary-general Low Thia Khiang, chairman Sylvia Lim and corporate lawyer Chen Show Mao, who has been regarded as a "star catch" of the opposition.

Low said the Workers' Party is confident to win a group representation constituency and will strive to make a "first-world parliament."

The polls will be held on May 7.

The PAP is believed to remain the strongest party. It has been the ruling party since the independence of Singapore in 1965 and took 82 of 84 seats in the general election in 2006. The opposition has not won any group representation constituency since it was introduced in 1988 to make sure ethnic minorities will be represented in the parliament.

(Xinhua)

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