

**Singapore's Tony Tan Wins Presidential Election With Thin Margin**  
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SINGAPORE -- Singapore's former deputy prime minister Tony Tan won the presidential election to be the country's seventh president, the returning officer announced early Sunday morning.

Tan will be sworn in as president on Sept. 1 for a term of six years.

The results were announced after a recounting of the votes on late Saturday night and early Sunday morning following initial results showing that the two candidates finished very close in the race.

#### NECK-AND-NECK RACE

Tan, 71, won 35.19 percent of the votes cast in Singapore in the polls on Saturday, in a surprisingly close race of four contestants. Runner-up Tan Cheng Bock, a former lawmaker of more than 20 years known for being outspoken, finished in the second place with 34.85 percent of the valid votes.

Tony Tan has had support from many senior government officials, union organizations and trade associations. He had been tipped to be by far the forerunner ahead of the polls on Saturday.

Tan Cheng Bock said after the results of the initial vote counting that it was a close neck-and-neck race.

Analysts here said that Tan Cheng Bock, the first to declare his intention run, has had a good strategy of campaigning to "think of Singaporeans first" and uniting the people of the country.

The president is the ceremonial head of state in Singapore, with custodial powers on the state reserves and veto powers on certain key appointments. But after a landmark general election in May, the presidential race also turned out to be closely contested, a sharp contrast with past elections.

#### SERVE EACH AND EVERY ONE

Tony Tan thanked his supporters, including the traditional support team and the social media supporters, after the returning officer declared him the winner of the election.

He said that the four candidates have given Singaporeans choices by running for president and pledged to serve all the people of the country.

"The president is a president for all Singaporeans. Not only for those who have voted for me, but also even for those who have not voted for me. I pledge to work for each and every one of you," he said.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong also urged the Singaporeans to come together to take the nation forward, now that the presidential polls is over.

The presidential election has been the most contested since the presidential polls were conducted in 1993. Incumbent President S R Nathan won two elections uncontested as the only qualified candidate in 1999 and 2005, respectively.

#### FINANCE AND ECONOMIC EXPERIENCE

In his campaign, Tony Tan said that he could help Singapore weather the next financial and economic crisis.

"Our president has access to the prime minister and the cabinet ministers. Our president has access to all cabinet ministers. So a wise, experienced and steady president will be able to make a contribution to help Singapore get through the next financial and economic crisis," he said.

Tan had asked voters to think who would best represent Singapore, at home and abroad, and who would have the right temperament, character and courage to remain calm at times of turbulence.

With his trademark thick square-rimmed spectacles and silver swept-back hairstyle, Tan has been known for his experience in economy and finance. He headed different ministries such as education, trade and industry, and finance. He was also once chairman and chief executive of OCBC Bank. He was most recently the deputy chairman and executive director of sovereign wealth fund Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC).

(Xinhua)

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