

Slim Victory For New Singapore President A Reflection Of People's Mindset?

Bernama

August 28, 2011

By Tengku Noor Shamsiah Tengku Abdullah

SINGAPORE, Aug 28 (Bernama) -- The slim victory which saw former deputy prime minister Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam pull through to become Singapore's new president may be a reflection of changes in the thinking and mindset of its citizens to determine the future.

Tony Tan has become the island state's seventh president, winning the four-corner election by 7,269 votes or a 0.34 per cent margin, following a recount.

He secured 744,397 or 35.19 per cent of the total valid votes while Dr Tan Cheng Bock received 737,128 or 34.85 per cent.

Tan Jee Say garnered 529,732 votes or 25.04 per cent and Tan Kin Lian obtained 103,931 votes or 4.91 per cent.

The Elections Department had ordered a recount of all votes cast after the first tally showed the two front-runners were less than two per cent apart.

Saturday's presidential poll was the first contested election since the 1993 election when Ong Teng Cheong won in a straight fight.

It was also the first multi-candidate presidential race for Singapore.

Gone are the days when the people could easily be swayed by sugar-coated talk and promises to win their heart and mind.

This time around, the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) must run full gear in its quest to become the people's party by implementing its promises made in the last General Election.

It cannot be denied that the ruling party has taken various measures to fulfil its promises to Singaporeans, in the wake of an economic downturn which led to high inflation and increasing standard of living on the island-state.

Thus, Singapore's new president must play an effective role to fulfill promises made during the campaigning period.

In his campaign, Tony Tan, who has vast experience in the economic and financial sector, confidently said he could help Singapore weather the next financial and economic crisis.

He noted that the president did not have executive powers, except in five areas clearly specified in the Constitution.

"The president is not the centre of power in Singapore. Only the government is. They make the economic decisions, not the president.

"But this does not mean the president does not have influence. He has access to the prime minister, Cabinet ministers and all Cabinet papers," he added.

"(If elected,) I will encourage Singaporeans to strike out in new areas, and give them

opportunities to try new ventures and new ideas. I can help encourage their dreams and bring them to reality," he pledged.

As many are aware, Tony Tan, dubbed the most favourite candidate of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, is widely associated with the ruling party.

He can play a great role in assuring Singaporeans that PAP is still relevant and sincere in its quest to uplift the lives of its citizens.

--BERNAMA

Copyright © 2011 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newspolitic.php?id=610883>