

## **Litmus test of good politics? Whether Singapore and Singaporeans benefit: Chan Chun Sing**

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SINGAPORE - As Singapore reviews its political system, the Government's concern is not whether the People's Action Party (PAP) will rule forever but whether Singapore will last, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Chan Chun Sing.

This focus on bettering the country is also at the core of the Government's approach to accommodating the increasing diversity of voices, added the labour chief on Monday (Jan 18) at a panel on collaborative governance.

In his speech, Mr Chan stressed that the litmus test of good governance is whether it results in the lives of Singaporeans being improved.

Good governance should also involve people taking action together to achieve shared goals, and continuously groom good leaders for the future of the country, he said at the annual Institute of Policy Studies Singapore Perspectives conference.

"Our concern is not whether the PAP will rule forever. Our larger concern is whether Singapore will last forever. That is our concern," he said in response to a question from fellow panelist, political commentator and law don Eugene Tan. He asked how Singapore can be prevented from going through a systemic collapse if the ruling party declines.

Mr Chan replied that this was a concern of the PAP as well: "Institutionally, how do we bring in people from diverse perspectives? How do we design stabilisers in the system? We must constantly check ourselves."

There will also be greater desire for plurality of views to be heard as society becomes more diverse, Mr Chan acknowledged.

He said that good governance included meeting these aspirations for greater plurality.

This was why the Government created the Nominated Member of Parliament and Non-Constituency Member of Parliament schemes, he said. Both schemes guarantee a minimum number of non-PAP MPs in Parliament, even if the PAP should win all 89 elected seats.

The 90-minute panel was chaired by Mr Warren Fernandez, the editor of The Straits Times. Other panelists included Lianhe Wanbao editor Lee Huay Leng and Mr Kok Heng Leun, artistic director of the Drama Box.