

## **As PAP's 4G faces upcoming GE, Chan Chun Sing says his vision for Singapore is to 'defy the odds of history'**

**The trade and industry minister put forth his views along with the DPM at the Institute of Policy Studies' conference which was attended by 1,120 people**

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Singapore—At the annual conference of the Institute of Policy Studies' (ISP) Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat and Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing put forth their vision for the future of the country, as the fourth generation of leaders head to the upcoming General Election (GE) to prove their mettle.

Mr Chan said, "What's my vision for Singapore? Defy the odds of history, show the world how a small city state without natural resources, without a common ancestry can come together, add value to the world, contribute to the world and bring forth people with a common set of values and visions."

The 4G leaders are also considering the legacy they are building for future generations. He talked about "our stewardship to leave behind something better for the next generation just as the previous generation has left us with what we have today. That every generation of Singaporeans will not fear because they will start from a higher platform to scale a higher peak, that every generation will lend our shoulders to the next to stand taller and see further."

Around 1,120 people attended ISP's conference, including members of civil society groups, leaders, businessmen, academics and public servants.

In his speech, DPM Heng promised that ruling People's Action Party (PAP)'s leaders will "make every effort to build a future of progress for Singaporeans in the coming decades." He also asked Singaporeans to stay united, in spite of the current political climate of division all over the world.

"The key imperative for our politics should be to manage our differences, expand our common purpose to engender a greater sense of 'we', and ensure that society can progress as one – together," he added.

Another speaker at the conference was Dr Lam Peng Er, a senior research fellow at the East Asian Institute of the National University of Singapore. He looked at how PAP has diverted from Duverger's life cycle theory, where "the dominant part wears itself out in office" and decreases momentum.

He said that PAP should evolve and adapt from "politics of survival" to "survival of aspirations."

He asked, "Can PAP afford a team B without tearing itself apart? Can the PAP's governance evolve from a small elite circle to greater political participation and transparency in governance?"

Moreover, as he ended his talk, he asked whether the country's opposition parties will be able to attract talent to offer a feasible alternative to the ruling party.

As for Zuraidah Ibrahim, South China Morning Post's deputy executive editor, she said that Singaporean voters have accepted the fact that the opposition sees itself not as an alternative government waiting for its turn, but as an entity that provides a check to PAP.

"We have seen the opposition make surges that spark speculation about whether we are on track to a 1.5-party system; only to have the electorate course correct and vote more conservatively in the following election. Clearly, the electorate wants some opposition. But either too much or too little makes the public nervous."