

PAP's Central Executive Committee elections to take place on Sunday

By S Ramesh | Posted: 01 December 2012 1937 hrs

SINGAPORE: Party cadres from Singapore's ruling People's Action Party (PAP) will choose members for the party's highest policy-making body, the Central Executive Committee (CEC), when the party holds its biennial conference on Sunday.

It will be the first PAP conference after the May 2011 General Election.

All eyes are on how far the party has transformed itself and on its postmortem of the party's performance in the last General Election, said Nominated MP, Assistant Professor Eugene Tan from the Singapore Management University.

Asst Prof Tan said: For me, one of the major things I look at is how well is the party going to address diversity -- the diversity of views -- the fact that people no longer look to the PAP as the answer for all their problems.

"There is now the increased competitiveness in our political landscape and Singaporeans see the value in a more competitive landscape.

"In a way, they have internalised what the PAP government has always preached, that good governance is of vital importance and for many Singaporeans, their view is that good governance would require the political landscape to be a lot more competitive and diverse."

On their part, PAP MPs said there has been more engagement with party members on the ground.

MP for Chua Chu Kang GRC, Mr Zaqq Mohamad, said: "This is where I think that a change in the approach in terms of having engaged the branches, going to party seminar and then going to party convention, the approach is a lot more different from the past, because in the past, the perception of the PAP is top down.

"There is a lot more engagement today.

"There is a greater need for consensus not just with Singaporeans, but also within the party in terms of how we want to shape our future together."

Trade and Industry Minister of State Teo Ser Luck said: "It is also very important that the voices of the people are heard and also when it is heard, (whether they are) taken seriously and how can it be a channel of feeder of opinions into the revision of policies.





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"That's very important because the demographics are slowly changing as well. We have a greying population, but at the same time the younger generation have their point of view -- they are more well informed and shape their own thoughts differently."

Apart from Party Secretary-General and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, several other party members, are also expected to speak.

Elections to the CEC are held once every two years and political watchers feel a good number of those expected to form Singapore's fourth generation of leadership team would be vying for places in the CEC.

And the decision as to who will make it to the CEC is in the hands of the party cadres, who will cast their votes at the start of the day's proceedings on Sunday morning.