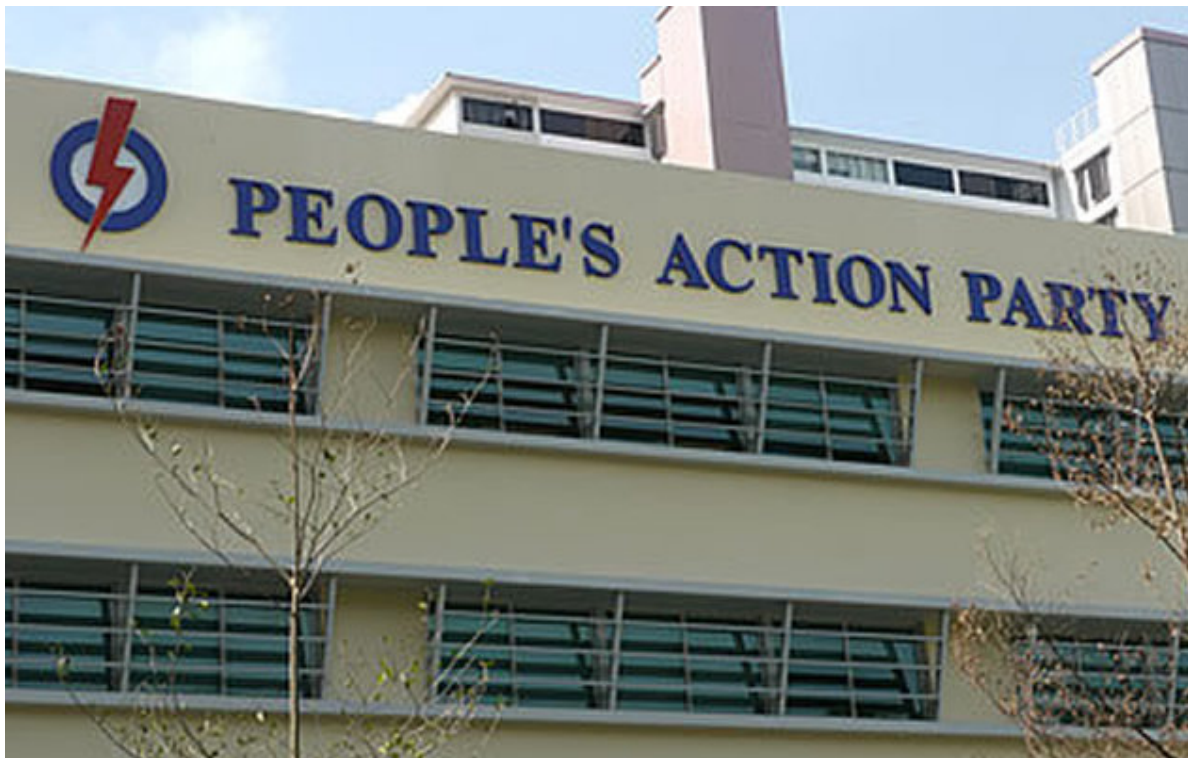


PAP elects new Central Executive Committee

YAHOO! NEWS

By Elizabeth Soh

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Yahoo! Special Projects/Yahoo! Photo - PAP elects new CEC committee

Party cadres from ruling party People's Action Party (PAP) selected the members for its Central Executive Committee (CEC) on Sunday.

The twelve who were elected included Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Minister for Home Affairs Teo Chee Hean, Finance Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Minister for National Development Khaw Boon Wan, Foreign Affairs and Law Minister K Shanmugan, Health Minister Gan Kim Yong, Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Communications and Information Yaacob Ibrahim, Labour Chief Lim Swee Say and Senior Minister of State Grace Fu.

Also inducted to the CEC were Senior Minister of State for Defence Chan Chun Sing and Minister for Education Heng Swee Keat. Acting Manpower Minister Tan Chuan Jin and

Environment Minister Vivian Balakrishnan were co-opted into the committee.

Already CEC members before this election, Chan, Heng, and Tan had been appointed to the CEC in November 2011 to replace three of the six positions left empty after the General Elections.

Not re-elected into the CEC was MP for Moulmein-Kallang GRC Denise Phua, who was known for her dissenting voice, as well as MP for Marine Parade GRC Seah Kian Peng.

The newly-elected CEC is widely regarded by political watchers to be an indication of Singapore's fourth generation of leadership, and all eyes have been on how the PAP would transform itself after its record-low performance in the last General Election.

Held once every two years, the CEC is PAP's highest policy-making body, and its choice of members set the tone for the Party's approach to governance for the next four years.

Assistant Professor of Law at the Singapore Management University Eugene Tan felt that while the CEC seems to be taking party renewal seriously, member diversity is lacking.

"The election of Education Minister Heng Swee Keat and Minister Chan Chun Sing indicates that the PAP is actively renewing its leadership," said Tan.

"The fact that the PAP CEC now predominantly comprises of people in their 40s and early 50s suggests that the party is adapting to changing demographics and recognises that the party needs to reach out to younger voters."

However, he added that the party could have been more diverse in its selection.

"With only one woman CEC Member (Grace Fu) and given that almost half the electorate are women – is one area they should look into. Most of the CEC party cadres are also political office holders and the committee seems to lack party cadres who are also fairly critical of government policies, who challenge mainstream positions."