

## SINGAPORE

**Date of Elections:** 22 December 1984

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament following the premature dissolution of this body on 4 December 1984. General elections had previously taken place on 23 December 1980.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral Parliament of Singapore consists of 79 members elected for 5 years.

### **Electoral System**

All Singaporean citizens resident in the country and at least 21 years of age are entitled to vote. Disqualified from this right are persons owing allegiance to a foreign State, those under sentence of death or serving a sentence of imprisonment for a period in excess of 12 months, the insane, persons convicted of election-connected offences and persons on active duty with an armed force not maintained out of moneys provided by Parliament, unless possessing a domicile in Singapore.

Electoral registers are revised at the latest three years after the last general election. Voting is compulsory, failure to vote resulting in the offender's name being expunged from the register. However, the voter's name will be reinstated if the cause of his absence is acceptable or if he pays a fine of S\$5.00.

Candidates for Parliament must be qualified electors who are residents of Singapore at the time of their nomination and have been so resident for periods totalling at least 10 years, and who are able, with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable them to take an active part in the proceedings of the Parliament, to read and write at least one of the following languages: English, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil. Not qualified to be members of Parliament, however, are undischarged bankrupts, persons sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than one year or to a fine of at least S\$2,000, and persons who have been candidates or election agents to candidates and who have failed to lodge a return of election expenses as required by law. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with an office of profit in Singapore.

Each candidate's nomination paper must be signed by two persons as proposer and seconder and by not less than four other persons, all of whose names must appear on the register of electors for the candidate's electoral division. A candidate must make a deposit of S\$ 1,500, which is reimbursed if he obtains more than one-eighth of the total number of votes polled in his division.

For election purposes, Singapore is divided into 79 divisions, each returning one member by simple majority vote. Provision is also made for the election of up to three non-constituency members in the event the opposition political parties fail to win at least three seats in the general election.

By-elections are held to fill parliamentary vacancies occurring between general elections.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

The election date was announced on 2 December 1984. Two days later, Parliament was dissolved - one year before the expiry of its full five-year term.

During the nine-day campaign, the thrust of the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) was to demonstrate its achievement over the last 25 years, particularly the country's impressive economic growth and the high standard of living enjoyed by the people. The eight opposition parties focused on certain issues such as the raising of the withdrawal age of the Central Provident Fund savings, priority in school admission for children of graduate mothers and the increase in the prices of Housing and Development Board flats. In 30 constituencies, PAP candidates were unchallenged. For the remaining 49 seats of the enlarged Parliament, the opposition fielded a total of 48 candidates; three independents were also in the running.

In the 1984 elections, more than half of the electorate was under the age of 35. On polling day, PAP captured all but two seats, marking the seventh consecutive time the party was returned to power. Nevertheless, its vote in percentage terms dropped from 75% to 63%. Among the PAP members, many were newcomers to Parliament.

On 31 December, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew announced a reorganized Cabinet.

## Statistics

1. Results of the Elections\* and Distribution of Seats  
in Parliament

Number of registered electors. . . . .	944,624	
Voters. . . . .	902,980	(95.6%)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	26,384	
Valid votes. . . . .	876,596	

\* In the 49 constituencies where polling took place.

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained		Number of Seats
People's Action Party (PAP) . . . . .	79	568,310	62.94	77
Workers' Party (WP) . . . . .	15	110,939	12.29	1
Singapore United Front (SUF)	13	87,197	9.66	—
United People's Front (UPF) . . . . .	8	27,217	3.01	—
Singapore Democratic Party (SDP)	4	32,102	3.55	1
<i>Barisan Sosialis</i> (BS). . . . .	4	24,212	2.68	—
Justice Party, Singapore (JPS) . . . . .	2	10,906	1.21	—
Singapore Malays' National Or- ganization (PKMS). . . . .	1	4,768	0.53	—
<i>Angkatan Islam</i> (AI). . . . .	1	359	0.04	—
Independents . . . . .	3	10,586	1.17	—
				79*

••Four seats added since last elections.

2. Distribution of Members of Parliament  
according to Professional Category

University professors and lecturers. . . . .	12
Journalists. . . . .	7
Lawyers. . . . .	6
Doctors. . . . .	5
Architects. . . . .	2
Accountants. . . . .	2
Others (trade unionists, businessmen, teachers, politicians, former civil servants, etc.) . . . . .	45

**79**

3. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex*

Men . . . . .	.76
Women . . . . .	.3
	79

4. *Distribution of Members of Parliament  
according to Age Group*

30-39 years. . . . .	22
40-49 » . . . . .	40
50-59 » . . . . .	.12
60-69 » . . . . .	5
	<b>74</b>