

Excerpt



Workers' Party leader Low Thia Khiang (back) joins his fellow candidates to await results for Aljunied GRC.

Winds of change waft across political scene

[SINGAPORE] The numbers may hint at only a mild setback for the ruling party which was returned to power, but Singaporeans awoke yesterday to a country whose political realities had shifted during the night.

With people voting for change and handing six seats to the Workers' Party, including the Aljunied GRC, it was left to ruling party leaders to acknowledge that the environment had altered.

Reflecting on a victory that saw the People's Action Party win 81 out of 87 seats, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said: "I think many (voters) desire to see more opposition voices in Parliament to keep a check on the PAP government." He added: "This election

marks a distinct shift in our political landscape which all of us must adjust to."

Mr Lee's own popularity soared to new heights as the team he led in Ang Mo Kio GRC swept 69.3 per cent of the valid vote. Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong faced a tougher fight, with his team securing just 56.6 per cent of the valid vote in Marine Parade GRC, which has been uncontested since 1992 when PAP won 72.9 per cent of the vote.

"You know that there is a sea change in the political landscape. It's a new landscape," said Mr Goh yesterday. "We can feel the tide. People want to have alternative voices in Parliament. So, that tide was very strong."

DECEMBER 17-18, 2011

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MARCH 14, 2011

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