

# PM from minority race 'a matter of time'

The possibility of Singapore having a non-Chinese prime minister was raised at a dialogue yesterday.

Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam believes it is just a matter of time before the country gets "a minority prime minister – Indian, Malay or Eurasian or some mixture".

"We've got a meritocracy; it is an open system. It is just a matter of time," Mr Tharman said, noting that the common space shared by Singapore's races was growing.

But, he was quick to add: "Let me say I am not interested."

He was speaking at a session chaired by Washington Post columnist Fareed Zakaria at the SG50+ conference organised by the Institute of Policy Studies and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

At a later panel, Ambassador-at-Large Tommy Koh asked Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong if a Malay could be elected president. Mr Goh said it might be difficult, but added that "if good candidates came along... the time will come when the Malay candidate would be elected".

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