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Description

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The Singapore Democratic Party (abbreviation: SDP) is a social liberal political party in Singapore. Having peaked at three seats after the 1991 general election, the party currently has no seats in Parliament since 1997.

It was founded in 1980 by Chiam See Tong, who as Secretary-General became the party's first Member of Parliament (MP) in 1984 when he was elected in the constituency of Potong Pasir. At the 1991 general election, SDP members Ling How Doong and Cheo Chai Chen won their seats at Bukit Gombak and Nee Soon respectively, giving the party a total of three MPs. However, Chiam fell out with the party's Central Executive Committee in 1993 and subsequently left the party in 1996 for the splinter Singapore People's Party (SPP), destabilising the party. He was succeeded by Chee Soon Juan, who has remained the Secretary-General ever since.

A centrist to centre-left political party, the SDP ideologically draw upon both liberalism and social democracy. The party has been led by different factions at various points, with Chiam and Chee's respective leaderships characterised by very divergent party objectives. Members of the party have its own ideological bent, many of which leaning towards the centre-left and others the centre and some even the centre-right. Since the 2000s, the party has since focused more on a liberal human rights agenda.

The party has called for a few reforms to the Constitution. Among others, it emphasises stronger protections for civil liberties and promotes social liberal approaches to issues as well as changes to education, healthcare and housing policies. It also favours more social welfare spending for Singaporeans and decreasing the rates of immigration. The party is both a member of Liberal International and the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats.

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