

# Singapore has strong chance of thriving in the next 50 years, says academic Chan Heng Chee

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Singapore academic and diplomat Chan Heng Chee. -- PHOTO: ST FILE

**BY KASH CHEONG**

SINGAPORE - Singapore has a strong chance of surviving, and indeed thriving, well into the future even with the passing of its founding father Lee Kuan Yew, but bold policies are needed to tackle increasingly complex realities, according to Singapore academic and diplomat Chan Heng Chee.

"We have as strong a chance as any country after the departure of the giant of a leader, of continuing into the future," said Ms Chan at the 22nd Singapore General Hospital Lecture and Gala Dinner on Saturday.

She spoke of the late Mr Lee's emphasis on building institutions that would outlast himself, a strong civil service with good men and women who possessed integrity and competence.

Singapore and its leaders have weathered many tests, even when Mr Lee stepped down as Prime Minister in 1990 and took a back seat. For instance, in the 2008 economic crisis, Singapore policy makers came up with the Jobs Credit Scheme where the government funded 12 per cent of the first \$2,500 of wages of employees. This helped many Singaporeans keep their jobs in the economic downturn, much to the envy of her American colleagues, Ms Chan said.