TIMELINE OF KEY DATES IN SINGAPORE’S HISTORY

Adapted from “Singapore profile – Timeline,” BBC News, May 10, 2018,

1819  Sir Stamford Raffles of British East India Company establishes trading post on Singapore island.

1826  Singapore, Malacca, and Penang become British colony of the Straits Settlements. Singapore becomes the capital of the Straits Settlements.

1942-5  Singapore falls to Japan, which renames it Syonan (Light of the South). After World War II, Singapore under British military administration.

1946  Singapore becomes separate British crown colony.

1959  Self-government attained with Lee Kuan Yew as prime minister, but the last British military forces don’t withdraw until 1971.

1963  Singapore joins the Federation of Malaysia.

1965  Singapore pulls out of the Federation of Malaysia and becomes an independent republic and joins the United Nations.

1984  Two members from the opposition party are elected to parliament for the first time.

1990  Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew stands down after 31 years, replaced by Goh Chok Tong. Constitution is amended to allow for a directly elected president.

1993  Ong Teng Cheong becomes first directly-elected president.

1998  Singapore slips into recession for the first time in 13 years during Asian financial crisis.

1999  S R Nathan becomes president without election as he is declared only candidate eligible.

2001  The first legal demonstration outside election campaign. General election landslide victory for governing People’s Action Party which secures all but two of the 84 seats.

2002  Japan, Singapore sign free trade agreement and in 2003, Singapore becomes first Asian nation to sign free-trade deal with US.
2004  Lee Hsien Loong, eldest son of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, is sworn in as prime minister. In 2006, his People’s Action Party wins general elections which are seen as the first real test of the prime minister’s popularity.

2009  Singapore emerges from its worst recession on record after the economy expands at an annualized rate of 20.4% between April and June.

2011  Ruling People’s Action Party (PAP) wins all but six seats in parliament, but opposition parties make unprecedented gains.”. Tony Tan is elected president, first in 18 years.

2012  Singapore experiences its first strike since the 1980s as Chinese bus drivers walk out complaining their pay is lower than local or Malaysian drivers. Strikes result in protests and riots throughout 2013.

2015  Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong unveils stiffer measures against corruption after a number of high-profile graft scandals. The governing PAP wins a snap election.

2015  The government reduces the number of banned publications from that 250 to 17. In 2016, Parliament approves a new contempt law which could see offenders jailed for up to three years.

2017  Large protest against the electoral process as an uncontested Halimah Yacob is declared president.

2018  Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat became PAP’s first assistant secretary-general, suggesting he will become Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong’s successor in 2021.

2019  Singapore increases efforts to protect itself against rising sea levels, proposing to spend S$100 billion (US $73 billion).