
ANTHONY ALBANESE: AUSTRALIA'S LABOR OPPOSITION ELECTS NEW LEADER

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Australia's Labor opposition has chosen Anthony Albanese as its new leader after the party suffered an upset in the nation's general election.

Previous leader Bill Shorten resigned on 18 May, immediately after conceding the election to incumbent Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

Mr Albanese, a veteran politician, was elected unopposed as his successor.

He vowed to rebuild Labor's vote, saying on Monday: "I am up for a hard job. I am up for hard work."

"I intend to do my best to work with the Australian people to ensure that we elect a Labor government next time."

Labor is reeling from the election which delivered Mr Morrison's conservative coalition a majority. The Liberal-Nationals had previously been in minority government.

Last week, Mr Albanese described the election loss as "devastating", after months of opinion polls had indicated that Labor was expected to win.

The 56-year-old MP, from Sydney, has held senior positions in past Labor governments.

He previously lost the last ballot for the Labor leadership to Mr Shorten in 2013.

Labor's challenge

Mr Albanese has promised a "reset" of Labor's policy agenda but said he would not be rushed.

The party had campaigned on a comprehensive set of reforms, including climate and tax policy changes.

However, that ultimately failed to appeal to voters, with Labor suffering a 1.08% swing away from it nationally.

It suffered its deepest losses in Queensland, where the party's vote was reduced to six seats of a possible 30.

Much of the post-election analysis has focused on Labor's reduced vote from its traditional working-class base.

In his first speech as leader-elect on Monday, Mr Albanese said he intended to build relationships with "those people who wanted to vote for us, who were open to vote for us, but who felt like they couldn't".

He emphasised his economic credentials, and said he was open to working with the government to achieve progress on climate change and indigenous issues.

"Some reforms require bipartisan support," he said.

The party's former deputy Tanya Plibersek, shadow treasurer Chris Bowen, and rising frontbencher Jim Chalmers were also eyed as potential leaders, but all withdrew from the race last week.

Ms Plibersek said she would not run for the role because of family reasons.

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