

BIOGRAPHY OF THE HONOURABLE DATO SERI DR MAHATHIR BIN
MOHAMAD THE PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

② Profile

Dato Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad became the fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia on 16 July 1981.

Dato Seri Dr Mahathir was born on 20 December 1925 in Alor Setar, the capital of the State of Kedah. He has his early and secondary education in his home town. In 1947 he gained admission into the King Edward VII College of Medicine in Singapore.

Upon graduation he joined the Malaysian Government Service as a Medical Officer. He left government service in 1957 to set up his own practice in Alor Setar.

Dr Mahathir has been active in politics since 1945. He has been a member of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) since its inception in 1946. Dr Mahathir was first elected as a Member of Parliament following the General Elections in 1964. However, he lost his seat in the subsequent General Elections in 1969.

Owing to his keen interest in the country's education he was appointed Chairman of the first Higher Education Council in 1968, Member of the Higher Education Advisory Council in 1972, Member of the University Court and University of Malaya Council, and Chairman of the National University Council in 1974.

In 1973 Dr Mahathir was appointed a Senator. He relinquished this post in order to contest the 1974 General Elections where he was returned unopposed. Following the elections Dr Mahathir was appointed Minister of Education.

In 1976 Dr Mahathir was appointed Deputy Prime Minister in addition to his Education portfolio. Following a Cabinet reshuffle in January 1978 he relinquished the Education portfolio for that of Trade and Industry. As Minister of Trade and Industry he led several investment promotion missions overseas.

Dr Mahathir was elected as one of the three Vice-Presidents of UMNO in 1975. In 1978 he was elected the party's Deputy President and in 1981 was appointed President of the party. He was returned unopposed as President in 1984. In the 1987 party elections Dr Mahathir defeated his challenger to retain the Presidency.

Under his leadership the ruling party, the Barisan Nasional (National Front), won landslide victories in the 1982, 1986 and 1990 General Elections.

Dato Seri Dr Mahathir is married to a doctor, Dato Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah, and has four sons and three daughters.