



■ DR MAHATHIR: Won first Dewan Rakyat seat in 1964.

In charge of the nation's health

^{Amir}
DATUK Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad became the fourth Prime Minister in July, 1981, succeeding Tun Hussein Onn who stepped down for health reasons.

Born in 1925 in Alor Star, he had his early education at a local Malay school and the Sultan Abdul Hamid College.

In 1947, he entered the King Edward VII College of Medicine at the University of Malaya in Singapore.

On completion of his housemanship in 1954, he served the Government, first in his hometown, and then Langkawi and Perlis. He set up private practice in Alor Star in 1957.

He became active in politics

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in 1945, making his way into Umno after short stints with various other parties of that time, including the Kesatuan Melayu Kedah, Seberkas and Kesatuan Pemuda Melayu Kedah.

He won his first parliamentary seat at Kota Star Selatan under the Alliance banner in the 1964 general elections. In the following elections, five years later, he lost the seat to retired PAS president Haji Yusof Rawa.

He was appointed a Senator in 1973 but relinquished office in order to contest the 1974 general elections. He regained the seat under the Barisan Nasional ticket.

In a Cabinet reshuffle that

followed, Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak appointed him Education Minister. In the Umno elections the following year, he was elected one of the party's three vice-presidents.

In 1976, Tun Hussein appointed him Deputy Prime Minister and in the Umno polls of 1978, he became the party's deputy president.

At the general assembly in June, 1981, Umno delegates confirmed him as their fifth president and three weeks later on July 16, Tun Hussein retired to pave the way for Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir is married to Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Ali and they have three sons and two daughters.