

# DR M: I'M A MALAY MUSLIM

This is clear based on my MyKad and birth certificates, says ex-PM

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**T**UN Dr Mahathir Mohamad made history yesterday as the oldest statesman ever to testify in court.

The former prime minister was accompanied by his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, his son, Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, and several officers.

Mahathir, 99, as the plaintiff, testified in his defamation suit against Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who, in 2017, alleged-

ly claimed that Dr Mahathir's real name was "Mahathir a/l Iskandar Kutty".

The proceedings began with Dr Mahathir taking an oath in Bahasa Malaysia, followed by examination-in-chief by his lawyer, Muhammad Rafique Rashid Ali.

In his witness statement, Dr Mahathir said he was born a Malay Muslim, but has paternal roots in Kerala, India.

"My name is Mahathir bin Mohamad and I am Malay and Muslim since birth, and this is clear based on my MyKad and my old and new birth certificates.

"My father's name is Mohamad

bin Iskandar, and my mother's is Wan Tempawan binti Wan Hanapi.

"My father was from Penang and was Malay, with ancestors who had roots in the southern Indian state of Kerala.

"My mother, on the other hand, was from Kedah, and both her parents were of pure Malay descent," he said before judicial commissioner Gan Techiong.

The plaintiff said Zahid, who is Umno president, lied to his party members when he claimed he had a MyKad bearing the name "Mahathir a/l Iskandar Kutty".

"Since birth, throughout uni-

versity and during my career as a doctor, nobody has ever called me Mahathir a/l Iskandar Kutty.

"I am taking this action to state that the defendant (Zahid) has defamed me."

During cross-examination by Zahid's lawyer, Mohd Shahrul Fazli Kamarulzaman, Dr Mahathir said Zahid's statement was aimed at him.

However, Dr Mahathir struggled to understand the lawyer's question about the technicalities of the clip showing Zahid making the remarks.

The hearing encountered a hiccup when Dr Mahathir's hearing

aid malfunctioned, prompting the lawyer to speak louder and more slowly.

Dr Mahathir said he did not care about the issues Zahid spoke about during the meeting, as he was concerned only with the alleged defamatory statement.

Zahid was present, but left the courtroom about 11.15am.

On July 20, 2022, Dr Mahathir filed the suit, naming Zahid as defendant.

His suit states that the plaintiff genuinely believes that the defendant's reference in the alleged defamatory statement to "that person", "he", and "Mahathir, the son of Iskandar Kutty", explicitly refers to him.

He said his reputation as a statesman and a political figure was tarnished as a result.



*Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad*