

Four Decades in Politics, Najib Continues To Fight For People and Nation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 21 (Bernama) -- After four decades of life in the political arena, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak remains steadfast in his desire to continue the struggles of his father, the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein in looking out for the people and the nation.

From his first involvement in politics in 1976, at the age of 22, after his father, the second Prime Minister of Malaysia, died, Najib who is now close to 63 years of age is still set on serving the nation.

Born on July 23, 1953 in Kuala Lipis, Pahang, Najib was the eldest of eight children of Tun Razak and his wife, Tun Rahah Tan Sri Mohamad Noah.

He received his primary and secondary education at the St. John's Institution, Kuala Lumpur from 1960-1967, before going on to study at the Malvern College in Worcestershire, United Kingdom in 1968 and went on to the University of Nottingham where he received a bachelor's degree in industrial economics in 1974.

Najib then returned to Malaysia where he joined Petronas as its public relations manager from 1974 to 1976, and was later appointed as chairman of the Malaysia Livestock Authority from 1976 to 1978.

Najib's political journey began after he took over the Pekan parliamentary seat from his late father, in a no-contest by-election in February 1976, making him, at the age of 22, the youngest parliamentarian then.

Two years after the victory, Najib was appointed Deputy Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Post, becoming the youngest Deputy Minister in Malaysia then.

In 1980, he was made Deputy Education Minister before being appointed as the 11th Menteri Besar of Pahang in 1982, thus becoming at the age of 29, the youngest Menteri Besar in the country.

After serving his home state for four years, in 1986 Najib was appointed as Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, then became Youth and Sports Minister from 1987 to 1990, Defence Minister (1990-1995), Education Minister (1995-1999) and again as Defence Minister (1999-2008), before becoming Finance Minister (2008-till now).

During his first stint as Defence Minister from 1990 to 1995, Najib developed security and defence policies as a global agenda, playing a major role in mobilising the nation's security forces under the United Nations' (UN) banner.

Under his leadership, Malaysia continued to play an active role as part of the UN's peace force, especially in the operations in Somalia in 1993, while not neglecting the welfare of the armed forces personnel.

During his tenure in the Education Ministry, Najib introduced many changes, including the re-structuring of the ministry, the corporatisation of tertiary institutions, review of the Education Act 1996, setting up the National Council of Higher Education, and the National Education Fund which are all aimed as preparation for 21st-century education.

Given the opportunity to lead the Defence Ministry once again from 1999 to 2008, Najib continued his programme to develop the national armed forces in line with current times and Malaysia's global role as UN's peace force.

Najib's political career started to peak when he was appointed the ninth Deputy Prime Minister in 2004 by then-Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. At that time, he also held the post of Defence Minister.

In 2008, Najib took over the Finance Ministry from Abdullah who became Defence Minister, while both retained their respective portfolios as Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister. April 3, 2009 was a historic day for Najib when his political career reached its peak with his appointment as Malaysia's sixth Prime Minister, a post he has held till today.

Meanwhile, within UMNO, Najib's involvement began in the party in 1976, rising up the ranks until he reached the top post of party president.

Throughout that period, he held several posts in the party and had served at the division, state and wings level, until he reached the national stage of UMNO Malaysia.

Among the posts he held were as Pekan UMNO Youth head, deputy chairman of Pahang UMNO Liaison, UMNO supreme council member, chairman of Pahang UMNO Liaison, UMNO vice-president, UMNO deputy president, and as UMNO president.

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