

**On Teachers' Day, Dr M recalls the awe they once attracted**  
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**Teachers were held in high esteem by the community and played a role in every form of social development in the old days, says ex-PM.**

PETALING JAYA: In his Facebook post to mark Teachers' Day today, Dr Mahathir Mohamad recalled his childhood in Kedah when teachers were not only held in awe but also respected by the community.

The son of a school headmaster, Mahathir wrote of the time when he and some mischievous friends once played in the padi fields while on their way home from tuition class despite having been warned not to do so.

"However, my friends and I were more fearful of being spotted by the tuition master or a passing school teacher because we knew what the consequences would be," said the longest-serving prime minister of Malaysia.

"What's more, if my teachers had reported me to my father, who was a headmaster, I would have been disciplined further. Had it happened before? Most definitely!"

Mahathir, now 91, said teaching was a profession that was held in high esteem in those days.

"In villages, teachers were looked upon as the most intelligent people. They were so highly respected to the extent that they had a role in every aspect of social development."

Also, he said, teachers in those days played a significant role in politics.

"Because of that, the community was truly built on a strong foundation or values.

"It's different nowadays. Politics is now controlled by people crazy about doing business and making profits for themselves.

"In the end, there is no longer any value because their teacher is money!" said Mahathir, who has returned to active politics and now leads PPBM as its chairman.

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