

TUN HUSSEIN DATO' ONN

FATHER OF UNITY

THIRD PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

(1976 - 1981)

BIRTH

Tun Hussein Onn was born as the eldest of eight children on 12th February 1922 in Johor Bahru to Dato' Onn Jaafar (founder of UMNO) and Datin Halimah Hussein.

1922

SCHOOL

He attended primary school at the Telok Kurau English School and secondary school at the English College, Johor Bahru (now known as Maktab Sultan Abu Bakar). He finished his Senior Cambridge School Certificate but his studies were interrupted by World War II.

1929

MILITARY

Tun Hussein Onn served as a cadet in the Johor Military Forces (JMF). Later, Tun Hussein, his close friend, Tun Ibrahim Ismail and his cousin, Ungku Ahmad Abdul Rahman, were selected to train at the prestigious Military Academy of India in Dehradun.

1940

1941

WWII

After graduation, Tun Hussein served in the 19th Hyderabad Regiment in India where he was second lieutenant in the British Indian Army.

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

When WW2 spread to Asia, he was called back to serve in the Military Intelligence Department of the British Military HQ in New Delhi.

1943



WWII ENDS

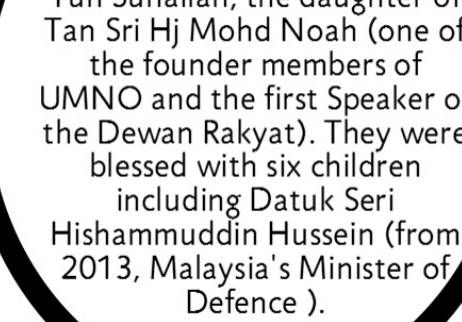
Tun Hussein returned to Malaya and became the Commandant of the Police Depot in Johor Bahru, then entered the Malay Administrative Service.

1945

YOUTH CHIEF OF UMNO

Dato' Onn Jaafar, Tun Hussein's father, set up UMNO to protest against the Malayan Union. He became UMNO's first President and his wife, Datin Halimah, headed the Women's division. Tun Hussein joined UMNO and became its first Youth Chief.

1946



MARRIAGE

On 12th February, he married Tun Suhailah, the daughter of Tan Sri Hj Mohd Noah (one of the founder members of UMNO and the first Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat). They were blessed with six children including Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein (from 2013, Malaysia's Minister of Defence).

1948

EMERGENCY (1948 - 1960)

A national emergency was declared in 1948 due to communist attacks. Tun Hussein with Tun Ibrahim trained more than 10,000 villagers in the use of weapons as defence against the Communists.

1949

UMNO, FULL-TIME

Tun Hussein resigned from the Civil Service to concentrate on UMNO full-time.

1950

IMP

Dato' Onn Jaafar resigned from UMNO to set up the multi-racial Independence of Malaya (IMP). Tun Hussein followed his father into IMP which did poorly in the 1952 elections.

1951

PARTI NEGARA

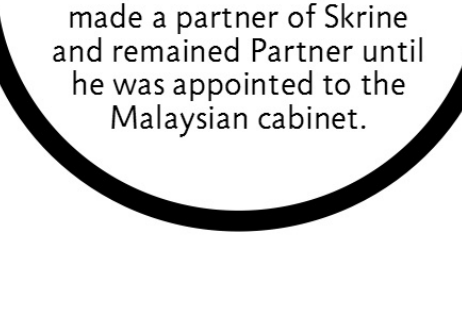
Dato' Onn and his followers set up Parti Negara. The party only managed to win one seat in the 1959 elections.

1954

FATHER'S DEATH

On Friday, 18th January, Dato' Onn Jaafar, founder of UMNO, passed away at the age of 67 at the Johor Bharu General Hospital. He was given a state funeral and eulogised by the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman.

1962



CAREER IN LAW

Tun Hussein started his career at the law firm of Bannan & Bailey as Legal Assistant.

1963

SKRINE & CO

When the firm closed down, he followed a few of the partners to establish Skrine & Co. He was soon made a partner of Skrine and remained Partner until he was appointed to the Malaysian cabinet.

1968

BECOMING MP

In the 1969 General Elections, Tun Hussein Onn won handsomely against DAP Johor Chairman, Lee Ah Meng.

1969

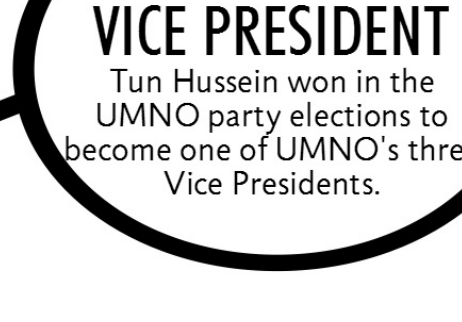
REJOINING UMNO

Tun Hussein rejoined UMNO on the persuasions of Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister.

1970

EDUCATION MINISTER

Tun Hussein was appointed as Minister of Education in Tun Abdul Razak's Cabinet.



SCIENCE SCHOOLS

To promote science and technology, the government built ten science-based boarding schools. Admission quotas to vital courses in universities such as Law, Medicine, and Engineering were implemented.

1971

UMNO'S VICE PRESIDENT

Tun Hussein won in the UMNO party elections to become one of UMNO's three Vice Presidents.

1972

DEPUTY PM

After the death of Tun Dr. Ismail Abdul Rahman, Tun Hussein was appointed Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia.

1973

PRIME MINISTER

On 14th January, Tun Hussein Onn became the third Prime Minister of Malaysia after Tun Abdul Razak passed away due to leukemia. He appointed Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad to be his Deputy Prime Minister.



1976

POLICIES

Tun Hussein made passes in Bahasa Malaysia compulsory for the high school certificate (MCE). Tun Hussein also carried on with Malaysia's non-aligned principles when it came to international relations, and established a closer trade and business relationship with Japan.

THIRD MALAYSIA PLAN

The Third Malaysia Plan (1976 - 1980) continued to emphasise development and security. Real GDP averaged 8.6% growth between 1975-1980.

1978

UMNO PRESIDENT

Two years after he took over as Prime Minister, Tun Hussein was elected President of UMNO.

1978 ELECTIONS

Tun Hussein called for an early General Election in 1978 in which BN won 94/114 seats (Peninsular) and an additional 37 seats (East Malaysia).

Members of UMNO's Supreme Council 1978-1981
Source: Perdana Library & ANM

HEART BYPASS

Tun Hussein suffered health problems and left for London on 31st January for a heart bypass operation.

1980



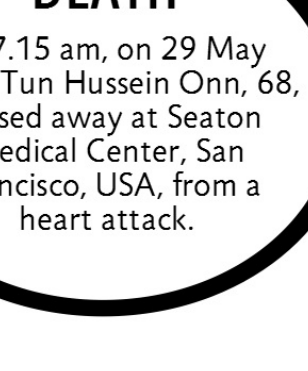
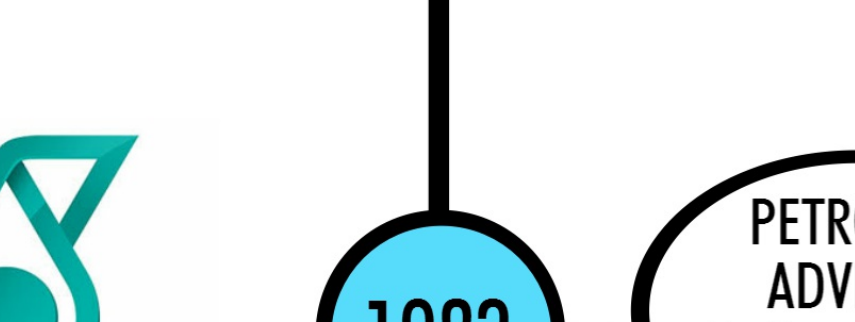
ASNB

On 20th April 1981, Tun Hussein launched Amanah Saham Nasional Bumiputera, a scheme to attract Bumiputera investments in equity via unit trusts.

1981

RESIGNATION

On 17th July, Tun Hussein Onn officially resigned as Prime Minister of Malaysia and President of UMNO due to health reasons and was succeeded by Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. Given his commitment to national unity, Tun Hussein is remembered as the 'Father of Unity'.



1983

PETRONAS ADVISOR

Tun Hussein Onn was appointed as Advisor to PETRONAS.

DEATH

At 7.15 am, on 29 May 1990, Tun Hussein Onn, 68, passed away at Seaton Medical Center, San Francisco, USA, from a heart attack.

1990

A HERO'S BURIAL

Tun Hussein Onn was given a Royal Burial at the Warriors' Mausoleum, National Mosque. He was buried next to his brother-in-law and Malaysia's second Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein.

