

Malaysia to have 92-year-old leader

12th May, 2018



Malaysia's former leader Mahathir Mohamad has staged a remarkable political comeback to end the six-decade rule of the Barisan Nasional (BN) party. It is still unclear when Mr Mahathir, 92, will be sworn in as Malaysia's next prime minister. When he

assumes power, he will be the world's oldest elected leader. Mahathir was Malaysia's prime minister from 1981 to 2003. At that time, he was leader of the BN party, which came to power in 1957 after Malaysia gained independence from British colonial rule. He was instrumental in his country's economic success and in making Malaysia an "Asian tiger". He was also accused of being an authoritarian leader who used security laws to imprison his opponents.

Official polling results show Mahathir's Pakatan Harapan party has won 113 seats. This is sufficient to form a simple majority in the country's 222-seat parliament. Mahathir came out of retirement and joined the opposition party. In an often bitterly-contested election race, he defeated his former protégé Najib Razak. Mr Najib had been beset by allegations of corruption and a multi-billion-dollar financial scandal. Mahathir told reporters that he wanted to put Malaysia back on the right track. He said: "What we want to do is to restore the rule of law." When reporters asked about his advancing years, he joked about age. He said his new cabinet would be, "a gathering of men and women, including a young person".

Sources: scmp.com / freemalaysiatoday.com / bbc.com

Writing

Older leaders are better leaders. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

leader / remarkable / comeback / decade / power / elected / independence / security / results / party / retirement / opposition / allegations / corruption / scandal / law / age

True / False

- Malaysia's Barisan Nasional party ruled for around 60 years. T / F
- Mr Mahathir will be sworn in as prime minister on Monday. T / F
- Mr Mahathir was Malaysian prime minister in the 1980s and 90s. T / F
- People have accused Mr Mahathir of putting his opponents in jail. T / F
- Malaysia's parliament has 113 seats. T / F
- Mr Mahathir's opponent was accused of corruption. T / F
- Mr Mahathir said he never joked about his age. T / F
- Mr Mahathir said his cabinet would be full of young people. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. former | a. key |
| 2. remarkable | b. reinstate |
| 3. assumes | c. foes |
| 4. instrumental | d. extraordinary |
| 5. opponents | e. trainee |
| 6. sufficient | f. ex- |
| 7. protégé | g. plagued |
| 8. beset | h. assembly |
| 9. restore | i. takes over |
| 10. gathering | j. enough |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about Mahathir Mohamad?
- What do you think of the leader of your country?
- Why is Mahathir Mohamad's comeback so remarkable?
- What is the biggest comeback you know of?
- Would you be a good leader?
- Do you think you can be too old to be a leader?
- What would you do if you were prime minister?
- In what ways are older leaders better leaders?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Mohamad has staged a remarkable | a. colonial rule |
| 2. end the six- | b. opponents |
| 3. Malaysia gained independence from British | c. years |
| 4. accused of being an authoritarian | d. decade rule |
| 5. imprison his | e. of retirement |
| 6. This is sufficient to form | f. contested election race |
| 7. Mahathir came out | g. leader |
| 8. an often bitterly- | h. political comeback |
| 9. put Malaysia back | i. a simple majority |
| 10. reporters asked about his advancing | j. on the right track |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- How interested are you in election results?
- Would you come out of retirement to work again?
- What makes a good leader?
- What corruption stories are there in your country?
- Why is the rule of law so important?
- Who are the world's best leaders?
- What questions would you like to ask Mahathir Mohamad?

Spelling

- a remarkable laitolcpi comeback
- end the six-cdeaed rule
- nowsr in as Malaysia's next prime minister
- British oloinlca rule
- He was inttlanusmer in his country's...
- imprison his eponotpsn
- This is ifuiensftc
- form a simple tomjyrai
- Mahathir came out of tmntreerei
- Najib had been beset by oglsietlana
- a multi-billion-dollar naiancfli scandal
- his new bcaietn

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. e	8. g	9. b	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Youth

You think youth is most important for a leader. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): experience, qualifications or looks.

Role B – Experience

You think experience is most important for a leader. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): youth, qualifications or looks.

Role C – Qualifications

You think qualifications are most important for a leader. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): experience, youth or looks.

Role D – Looks

You think looks are most important for a leader. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): experience, qualifications or youth.

Speaking – Leadership

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things for a leader to have at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| • charisma | • youth |
| • qualifications | • ideas |
| • looks | • energy |
| • nerves of steel | • experience |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.