

Ismail bin Dato Abdul Rahman (1915-1973), Politician

The Ismail bin Dato Abdul Rahman Private Archives dated from 10 February 1938 to 7 December 1982, consists of his private and personal correspondence, diary, notes, memoir, copies of “Siaran Akhbar” and a few photographs of him and his family.

Tun Dr Ismail, a medical doctor trained in Singapore and Melbourne, entered Malaysian politics in 1951 when he was elected vice-president of the United Malays National Organisation, the dominant Malay political party. An active participant in the negotiations that led, in 1957, to the independence of Malaya, he served in various government offices during the last days of colonial rule before being sent as his country's first ambassador to the United States and representative to the United Nations, from 1957 to 1959.

He returned to Malaysia and was made Minister of External Affairs, Internal Security, and Home Affairs successfully but resigned because of ill health in 1967. He was recalled to government in 1969 after the serious racial riots of that year and the consequent suspension of the parliamentary process, he did much to defuse racial tensions and to lead the country back to normalcy. He was appointed Deputy Prime Minister in 1970 and died in office three years later.