

Biography

Dr Tony Tan has been married to Mary Chee Bee Kiang since 1964. They have four children (three sons and one daughter).

Until 1 July 2011, he was the Executive Director and Deputy Chairman of the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC) and Chairman of Singapore Press Holdings Limited (SPH). He also serves as Chairman of Singapore's National Research Foundation (NRF) and Deputy Chairman of the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council.

Dr Tan is the patron of many social and charitable organizations, including the Singapore Dance Theatre, the Singapore Computer Society, SJI International, the Duke-NUS Medical School, the Singapore Swimming Association and the MIT Club of Singapore. Most recently, in May 2011, he was named as the first patron of Dover Park Hospice.

Education

Dr Tony Tan was a Singapore Government State Scholar and earned a First Class Honours Degree in Physics from the University of Singapore. He obtained his Masters degree at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) as an Asia Foundation scholar, and a PhD at the University of Adelaide. He later lectured in Mathematics at the University of Singapore.

Banking Career (1969-1979 and 1992-1995)

In 1969, Dr Tony Tan left the University to begin a career in banking with Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation (OCBC), where he rose to become General Manager, before leaving the bank to pursue a career in politics in 1979.

In 1991, Dr Tan returned to the private sector and re-joined OCBC as the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer from 1992–95.

Public Service: Sembawang Constituency (1979-2005)

Dr Tony Tan entered Parliament in 1979, representing Sembawang constituency. From the lease extension of the mosque Masjid Petempatan Melayu Sembawang to conceptualisation of the Woodlands waterfront, Dr Tan served the community tirelessly as its Member of Parliament for 27 years.

Public Service: Education (1979-1981 and 1985-1991)

Dr Tony Tan became Senior Minister of State in the Ministry of Education in 1979, before joining the Cabinet in 1980. In the same year, he helped establish the new National University of Singapore and served as its first Vice Chancellor. He served in the Cabinet as the Minister for Education (1980–81 and 1985–91).

Dr Tan was instrumental in revamping the education system to allow all students to go on to secondary schools. The ITE was also repositioned as a post-secondary institution.

The local university sector flourished under his tenure. The percentage of each cohort entering university in Singapore continued to rise year on year: from 3% in 1965 to 5% in 1980 to 26% in 2010. In addition to his work with the National University of Singapore, Dr Tan expanded the Nanyang Technological University to include three new schools (Biological Sciences; Physical and Mathematical

Sciences; Art, Media and Design). He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Singapore Management University and the Singapore University Technology and Design,

Dr Tan continued to take a keen interest in education even after he left Cabinet and the government. He chaired two very important groups, the National Research Foundation and the International Academic Advisory Panel (IAAP).

Public Service: Trade and Industry (1981–86), Finance (1983–85) and Health (1985–86)

Dr Tony Tan served as the Minister for Trade and Industry (1981–86), Minister for Finance (1983–85), and Minister for Health (1985–86).

Public Service: Defence (1995-2003) and National Security (2003-2005)

In 1995, Dr Tony Tan was asked to return to Cabinet as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence. In 2003, he became the first Co-ordinating Minister for Security and Defence, while retaining the post of Deputy Prime Minister.

While he was the Defence Minister, it was widely acknowledged that his greatest contributions were the revamp of the SAF Military Officers' and SAF Warrant Officers' and Specialists' (WOSE) career propositions. Dr Tony Tan also spearheaded the SAF 2000 modernisation that greatly increased the fighting capabilities of the SAF.

He also helped formalise defence and intelligence agreements with several countries, including Australia, France, Indonesia, South Africa and the United States.

Dr Tan stepped down from Cabinet in 2005.

Labour Union Involvement

Dr Tony Tan's association with the Labour Movement started in 1979 when he served as Chairman of NTUC's Investment Committee. In 1980, he was appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees of NTUC Income.

Dr Tan also served as the advisor to Singapore Sembawang Shipyard Employees' Union from 1979-2008.

Independence of Mind

While serving as the Minister of Education, Dr Tony Tan reviewed and abolished the highly contentious Primary One Registration Scheme (commonly known as the "Graduate Mothers Scheme"), which allowed children of graduate mothers to gain undue advantage over other children in seeking admission to primary schools.

Dr Tan was also opposed to the formation of the "integrated resorts" with their attached casinos and has suggested alternatives to the structure of government scholarships with long bonds.

Recognising the public's need for information, his tenure at GIC was marked by significant moves towards increased transparency in the investment fund's activities.