

Nelson Mandela – a life in pictures

Civil rights activist, prisoner, President – these titles cannot convey the full flavour of the rich, varied and accomplished life of Nelson Mandela, commonly called Father of the South African nation. Similarly, this photo gallery does little more than provide a few glimpses of the man revered as one of the most renowned statesmen of our era.



Nelson Mandela as a young man



Nelson Mandela in traditional wear



Mandela set up a law practice with Oliver Tambo to provide free and affordable legal representation for blacks.



Mandela was one of several ANC leaders put on trial for conspiracy, sabotage and treason in what became known as the Rivonia Trial. He was sentenced to life in prison.



Mandela in conversation with Walter Sisulu in the Robben Island prison courtyard where he spent 18 of his 27 years in captivity.



Mandela walks free from prison on 11 February 1990



After three centuries of white rule, he became the first black President of South Africa on 10 May 1994.



During the 1995 World Cup in South Africa, Mandela donned the Springbok jersey, once the most stark symbol of apartheid. It became a symbol of a country united and the Rainbow nation was born.



Mandela: “Though this statue is of one man, it should in actual fact symbolise all of those who have resisted oppression, especially in my country.”

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