



**Biography of  
Dr. Shashi Tharoor,  
Member of Parliament from Thiruvananthapuram**

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Author, peace-keeper, refugee worker, human rights activist, a former Minister of State for External Affairs and now a member of the Indian Parliament from the Thiruvananthapuram constituency in Kerala, Shashi Tharoor straddles several worlds of experience.

His UN career began in 1978, when he joined the staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva, and included key responsibilities in peace-keeping after the Cold War and as a senior adviser to the Secretary-General, as well as the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. Dr. Tharoor left the UN on 31 March 2007.

Dr. Tharoor is also the award-winning author of eleven books, as well as hundreds of articles, op-eds and book reviews in a wide range of publications, including the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, the International Herald Tribune, Time, Newsweek, The Times of India and The Hindu. He has served for two years as a Contributing Editor and occasional columnist for Newsweek International.

His six non-fiction books are: *Reasons of State* (1981), a study of Indian foreign-policy making; *India: From Midnight to the Millennium* (1997), which was cited by President Clinton in his address to the Indian Parliament; *Kerala: God's Own Country* (2002), with text by Shashi Tharoor and paintings by the renowned M. F. Husain; *Nehru: The Invention of India* (2003), a biography of India's first Prime Minister; a collection of literary essays, *Bookless in Baghdad* (2005) and another essay collection, *The Elephant, the Tiger and the Cellphone: Reflections on India in the 21st Century* (2007). His three novels are the classic *The Great Indian Novel* (1989) which is required reading in several courses on post-colonial literature; *Riot* (2001), a searing examination of Hindu-Muslim violence in contemporary India, and *Show Business* (1992) which received a front-page accolade in the New York Times Book Review and has since been made into a motion picture, "Bollywood". He has also authored a collection of short stories, *The Five-Dollar Smile* (1990) and a photobook, *India*, in collaboration with photographer Ferrante Ferranti (2008). Shashi Tharoor's books have been translated into French, German, Italian, Malayalam, Marathi, Polish, Romanian, Russian and Spanish.

Dr. Tharoor is an internationally known speaker on India's recent transformation and future prospects, globalisation, freedom of the press, human rights, literacy, Indian culture, and India's present and potential influence in world politics.

Born in London in 1956, Dr Tharoor was educated in India and the United States, completing a PhD in 1978 at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where he received the Robert B. Stewart Prize for Best Student.

Recently Dr. Tharoor received the Pride of India Award from the Zakir Husain Memorial Foundation, Nagpur. The Hakim Khan Sur Award for National Integration was presented to him by Maharana of Udaipur on March 15, 2009.