

Dr M: I personally asked Salleh to resign

PUTRAJAYA: Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he had personally asked Tun Salleh Abas to resign from his post as Lord President in 1988 as he thought it was the best move.

He said Salleh had first agreed to step down but a few days later refused to do so, which prompted the Government to take the necessary action to remove him.

"He agreed first, then later on, I don't know how many days

later, he decided that he should not step down.

"Then of course the Government was forced to take action," he said, adding that Salleh did not give reasons as to why he had decided against stepping down.

Dr Mahathir was responding to a statement by Salleh yesterday, where he claimed he was asked to resign by the former premier.

Salleh also claimed he was

offered a high paying job as a director of an Islamic bank in Jeddah if he resigned.

When asked about the job offer, Dr Mahathir said since Salleh had refused to resign, it meant he did not want to take up the job.

When asked if there was indeed such a job offer, Dr Mahathir said he could not remember what he had exactly offered.

"I don't remember exactly

what I offered him but I did ask him to step down so as to prevent any scandal or necessity to take action (against him)," he said, adding that he later started the necessary process to remove Salleh as the Lord President.

"Removal of a judge requires a decision by his peers as required by the Constitution, so we have to abide by the Constitution,

"The Agong thought that it

was just a matter of dismissal by me.

"I don't have the power to dismiss anybody, any judge," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who is the new president of Perkim, was speaking to reporters here after breaking fast with Perkim members at the Perdana Leadership Foundation here yesterday.

At the event, 40 converts also received cash aid and goodies.