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## 1988 crisis triggered by 'Umno 11' after party polls

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THE 1988 crisis can be traced back to the 1987 Umno election when 11 members sought to nullify the party election results after the then Umno president and prime minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad (now Tun), retained his post.

The 11 were supporters of Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, who had challenged Dr Mahathir for the presidency.

Their contention was the election results should be nul-

lified since some of the party's delegates came from branches which had not been registered under the Societies Act.

Judge Datuk Harun Hashim, who presided over the case, decided in their favour and declared Umno an "unlawful society".

In 2006, Tun Salleh Abas set out the incidents which he claims led to his sacking.

He said he was called to Dr Mahathir's office following the "Umno 11" case and was

accused of being biased in the discharge of his judicial duties.

Salleh wrote to the then Yang di-Pertuan Agong on behalf of the judiciary, expressing disappointment about accusations Dr Mahathir had made against the judiciary.

In May 1988, Salleh was suspended and then chief judge of Malaya Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Omar was appointed acting lord president.

Salleh was charged with misconduct before a tribunal chaired by Hamid.

Salleh filed a suit to challenge the constitutionality of the tribunal.

He also applied for an interim stay against the tribunal, but it was denied.

Meanwhile, then Supreme Court judges Tan Sri Azmi Kamaruddin, Tan Sri Eusoffe Abdoolcader, Tan Sri Wan Hamzah Mohamed Salleh, Tan Sri Wan Sulaiman Pa-

wanteh and Datuk George Seah convened and granted Salleh his interim order.

This order was, however, set aside and on Aug 8, 1988, Salleh was removed from the post of lord president.

The five judges who had granted the interim order against the tribunal were suspended.

In October 1988, Wan Sulaiman and Seah were sacked while the three other judges were reinstated.