

# Dr M: I told Maszlee to step down

pg. 2

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**PUTRAJAYA:** There were "many reasons" which led to Dr Maszlee Malik's resignation as Education Minister, says the Prime Minister.

He confirmed that he had asked Maszlee to step down, saying that it was "necessary".

"By now, I think the letter that I wrote to him has been made public by some irresponsible people.

"As you can see, there are many reasons. I am not saying that he did many things wrong. There are some things that he did right.

"But because of the other reasons, I felt it was necessary for him to resign and he agreed," Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad told reporters after chairing a meeting of the Special Cabinet Committee on Anti-Corruption.

He did not elaborate on what the "other reasons" were, but denied that it was anything to do with a purported attempt by Maszlee to reopen the King Salman Centre for International Peace.

An online news portal had reported that Maszlee's attempt to reopen the centre had led to Dr Mahathir demanding his resignation.

The Saudi Arabia-backed centre, mooted in 2017 by the previous government, was cancelled by Pakatan Harapan after the 14th General Election.

Last weekend, a letter purportedly written by Dr Mahathir to Maszlee revealed that the former education minister had failed to heed Cabinet instructions and often put the government in difficult situations.

Maszlee resigned from his post effective Jan 3.

On the new education minister, Dr Mahathir said it would be announced at a later date and the decision would ultimately be his.

"It will be decided by me because it is my prerogative," he said.