

## **Dr M Insists Salleh Abbas Sacked On Agong's Orders, But Says Evidence Lost**

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(MMO) – Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad repeated today his denial of responsibility for removing Tun Salleh Abas as the Lord President in 1988, insisting this was done under instructions from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong then.

Speaking at Pakatan Harapan's inaugural weekly "Policy Talk" today, the former prime minister said he was prepared to swear on the Quran that his name had been used by the Attorney-General then, Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman, in order to distance the Agong from the matter.

He also maintained that Salleh's removal was prompted by the Agong's displeasure over a letter Salleh had allegedly written to the monarch regarding construction noises from the Ruler's nearby private home, which was also copied to the other Malay Rulers.

"That was very improper for a senior government officer. He should have met the Agong and made the request. The Agong called me in and said he wanted me to sack him (Salleh) and passed me a copy of the letter.

"This letter of Salleh Abas had something written on the side by the King and I took that to Cabinet," he said.

Dr Mahathir claimed that the matter was discussed by his Cabinet then, which decided on a tribunal to remove Salleh as Lord President as they could not otherwise sack him.

"After the tribunal was set up, the letter was given to the officials but now the letter cannot be found," Dr Mahathir said.

Last Saturday, the Pakatan Harapan chairman called for, among other things, the restoration of the judiciary.

His call led rivals to accuse him of hypocrisy, after they reminded him of his role in the 1988 judicial crisis from which the legal community said the judiciary has never recovered.

Dr Mahathir also claimed today that the judiciary and legislature were now swayed by the government, citing as example the classification of three reports related to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) as official secrets.

“We suspect the judiciary may be influenced... It is also clear that the legislative body has been influenced by the executive body. You cannot hide evidence,” he said.

When asked if he had more substantial evidence to support his version of the 1988 judicial crisis, Dr Mahathir asked: “Would you believe me if I said I told the truth?”

“You won’t, especially the opposition of that time wouldn’t believe me. I was painted as a monster back then, yet now I have been accepted by those who painted me as a monster.”

Dr Mahathir later said PH will take up Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s legal bid for the Federal Court to nullify the constitutional amendments that removed the requirement for royal assent in the passage of laws. Coincidentally, it was Dr Mahathir’s administration that removed the power of the Agong to decide if a law should be passed.

Yesterday, PKR president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail filed the suit on her husband’s behalf.

Anwar sought leave under Article 4(4) of the Federal Constitution from the Federal Court to challenge the validity of a amendments made in 1983, 1984, and 1994 that removed the Agong’s powers to give the final approval for Bills passed by the Dewan Rakyat.

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