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MP: Tapes of meetings being widely circulated

reports on "Dewan Rakyat" by Alex Choong; Hayati Hayatudin AN Opposition MP spoke yesterday of how discussions at "closed-door" meetings have found their way into tapes that are now widely circulated.

Mohamad Sabu (Pas-Kubang Kerian) said tapes of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's discussion with Menteri Besar, and even Umno supreme council's meeting prior to the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, had been made public.

"This is a very unhealthy trend although it may be interesting to listen to the tapes," he added.

Mohamad said he would not be surprised if similar tape recordings of important Pas meetings and decisions were now available.

Debating at the committee stage of the Supply Bill 1999 in relation to allocations to the Home Ministry, he said the Ministry should seriously look into this.

Two other MPs sought to know the progress of the report on Anwar's claim that he was beaten up while in police custody.

Abdul Hadi Awang (Pas-Marang) asked why the investigation into Anwar's alleged beating took so long.

"This has raised a lot of doubts and speculations among the public over the investigation," he added.

Referring to demonstrations carried out by the reformasi movement, he added: "We have received reports that undercover policemen were involved in taking part and were responsible in urging demonstrations and violence among the people."

Husni Hanadziah (BN-Tambun) questioned why it took so long for the investigation into Anwar's claim to be completed.

"If it involved only four or five people, then the independent investigation team should not have any problem to complete their finding early," he said.

He said the sacking of Anwar had also changed the political "landscape" in the country.

"Demonstrations carried out by the reformasi movement had caused anxiety among the people and Cyber-politics has taken a new role in the Internet," he added.

Husni had earlier said that political stability and the peaceful environment in the country must be defended at all cost. "We must tackle the problems at source," he added.

Datuk Abu Zahar Nika Ujang (BN-Kuala Pilah) said he would continue to support the ISA that would ensure national security.

He, however, urged the authorities to use the ISA only when they had enough evidence to warrant its application.

Abu Zahar, formerly a senior police officer for 15 years, said the role of the Special Branch in gathering information was sophisticated in dealing with national security.

"The department needs to be protected," he added.

Mohd Isa Sabu (BN-Kangar) asked what steps were being taken to fight the dadah menace.

He said the Government had increased its allocation for rehabilitation and treatment of dadah addicts and yet there were reports of riots at Camp Serenti.

Datuk Mohd Zihin Hassan (BN-Larut) urged the Government to probe the so-called foreign observers and journalists.

"The police should investigate the activities of these people. If they have run foul of the law, they should be arrested or asked to leave the country immediately," he added.

Abdul Rahman Sulaiman (BN-Parit Buntar) reiterated that Malaysians were angered by US Vice-President Al Gore's speech supporting the reformasi movement.

He also urged the Ministry to monitor non-governmental organisations which were believed to be receiving foreign financial support to carry out activities that could be detrimental to national interest.

"If necessary, the Government must come out with a White Paper."

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