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Umno to release tape of Sept 3 proceedings

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Umno supreme council tonight decided to make public the tape recordings of its Sept 3 meeting which discussed the sacking of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim so that the people would know the truth.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said this was because the edited version of the tapes had been circulated, aimed at portraying Anwar in a positive manner.

"The original recordings are much longer than the circulated ones. We found out that parts of Anwar's speech revealing his character had been edited to improve his image.

"So as the (edited) tapes have now been circulated, we decided to make them (original tapes) public to allow everyone to listen to all the speeches of not only Anwar but also other council members, as well as the decision made by the council that night," he said at a Press conference after chairing a supreme council meeting at the party headquarters at Menara Dato Onn.

With the release of the entire recordings, Dr Mahathir said it was hoped that there would be no more attempts to clear "someone's image".

He said the tapes could be purchased from secretary-general Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, who had been directed to release them as soon as possible.

On whether Umno would lodge a police report over the leak of the recordings, he said it would not as they had already been circulated.

Asked if there would be an investigation to determine who leaked the recordings, Dr Mahathir said: "No, we can't find (them). It's very difficult. Nowadays people are so clever, technology is so good and even when I speak sometimes I have to whisper, fearing that other people will overhear."

On whether tonight's meeting touched on the vacant position of Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir said it had been raised by several council members.

"We discussed it openly but I do not have to reveal the details."

Dr Mahathir said the supreme council also condemned attempts by United States Vice-President Al Gore and currency trader George Soros to interfere in the internal affairs of the country.

On whether Soros' statement calling for his removal as Prime Minister would hamper the Government's efforts to regain the confidence of foreign investors, Dr Mahathir said they would continue to invest in Malaysia "when they have the chance to make money".

"I have no worries about that. Soros can speak until he turns blue in the face. It makes no difference."

On the party's special general assembly on Sunday, Dr Mahathir said the supreme council decided that the amendments to the party's constitution would be tabled by vice-president Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak while the winding-up would be handled by another vice-president, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

He said delegates would not be allowed to raise issues other than the proposed amendments.

The council also endorsed the recommendations of its disciplinary and management committee to sack two members for their involvement in anti-party activities.

Najib, who is the committee joint chairman, said the two members were Wan Jusoh Wan Kolok of the Kuantan division and Baharuddin @ Sibadar Abdullah of the Sepang division.

Beaufort division Youth head Abdul Rahman Yaakub has been suspended while another 11 had been warned.

Najib said the fate of the remaining members issued show-cause letters had not been decided. The committee had issued 47 show-cause letters to members suspected of supporting the Reformasi movement.

Asked if those warned included former Umno Youth head Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Tumpat division chief Datuk Kamaruddin Jaafar, Najib said they were still under "observation".

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