

08/12/1999

Bernama denies allegation of tampering with picture

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Bernama, the national news agency, today vehemently denied allegations made by the Pas party organ, Harakah, that it had doctored the picture of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad being welcomed by the people of Perlis in Kangar on the evening of Nov 27.

The picture, published in the front page of Berita Minggu on Nov 28, was alleged to have been doctored to show that the crowd welcoming Dr Mahathir was bigger than it actually was.

Harakah, in its latest edition dated Dec 6, had reproduced the front-page picture and had circled two faces claiming that both images were that of the Prime Minister.

The Pas party organ in its report also challenged New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd group editor-in-chief Datuk A. Kadir Jasin to apologise if he was ethical.

Today, Bernama issued a statement denying the allegation.

Bernama acting general manager/editor-in-chief Syed Jamil Jaafar regretted the allegations of the Pas official organ.

The text of the statement issued today:

"The National News Agency (Bernama) strongly denies an allegation by the Pas party organ Harakah dated Dec 6, 1999, that a Bernama picture carried on the front page of Berita Minggu edition (Nov 28, 1999) on the visit of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Perlis on Nov 27 is a doctored picture to depict a larger welcome crowd than was actually the case.

"Bernama would like to categorically state that the picture is a genuine one without any tampering whatsoever. It was taken by a Bernama photographer who sent it to Kuala Lumpur via wire transmission shortly after the event.

"The Bernama headquarters upon receiving the picture at 6pm began disseminating it to all its clients via its electronic transmission network without further handling.

This was done within 20 minutes leaving no room for any doctoring as suggested by Harakah."

(END)