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Tapper explains true situation to PM

TELLING THE TRUTH... Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad meeting rubber tapper Kasim Osman during a visit to Kampung Jeragan, near Jitra, Kedah, yesterday.

Kassim, 68, who had been at the centre of a report in Pas official paper, Harakah, which had depicted him as living in a dilapidated hut, met the Prime Minister to explain the true situation.

The report was apparently intended to portray Dr Mahathir as being an irresponsible leader.

Kassim told Dr Mahathir that the dilapidated hut in Kampung Lamterom, Mukim Temin, portrayed in the report was only a hut for fruit pickers while he lived in a proper house with all the basic amenities in Kampung Jeragan.

He said he was an old man and did not understand their real motive when two reporters from Harakah met him and told him that they wanted to do a story on him for the newspaper.

"I did not expect them to write a story saying that we live a hard life so I gave them an interview," said Kasim, who has lived alone since his wife died. His four children are staying elsewhere.

Harakah had published a picture of the hut measuring 4m by 2.3m and 2.6m high in the report saying that there was only 0.2m space above Kasim's head when he prayed.

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