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Rais-Time

MONITORING OF FOREIGN MAGAZINES TO CONTINUE

KUALA LUMPUR, March 14 (Bernama) -- The government will continue to monitor the foreign publications and would not hesitate to take action if they publish inaccurate reports and distort facts concerning Malaysia.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim said the apology tendered by Time magazine regarding its report on Malaysia did not mean that the government would not take action against the publication of reports which breached the Printing Presses and Publications Act 1984.

With the apology tendered by the magazine, the whole world knew that Malaysia was in the right, he said when met at the Parliament lobby, here today.

The apology was received in writing via a letter released by the Time Headquarters in Lancaster, London which was signed by its international publisher, Andrew Butcher who expressed his deepest regret over the report.

In its Feb 11 issue, Time carried the Malaysian flag but replaced the star with the image of Osama bin Ladin and placed crossed automatic rifles in front of the flag which tried to portray Malaysia as a terrorist nation.

This had raised protests from various groups to the extent that there were calls for the government to terminate the placing of tourism advertisements on Malaysia in the Time magazine.

When asked whether the apology was sufficient compared to the damage done by the report to the country's image worldwide, Rais said: "The government feels it is sufficient because it was done in writing, not merely over the telephone or interview which was not recorded."

In addition, Time magazine was willing to cooperate with Malaysia and giving an opportunity for the national leader to write a feature to be published in the magazine, he said.

"This shows a change in attitude on their part...with the change in attitude and stand, we should accept it with an open heart," he said.

He said that by accepting the apology, Malaysia, which had extensive international relations with other countries, could prove that the country and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad adopted a friendly policy with everyone.

-- BERNAMA

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