

Al Jazeera seeks explanation over Astro censorship

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International news network Al Jazeera is demanding an explanation from Malaysian broadcaster Astro as to why its coverage on the Bersih 3.0 rally last Saturday was allegedly censored.

In a statement emailed to Malaysiakini from Al Jazeera English's head office in Doha, Qatar, the network said Astro has to date not informed them about the possible cuts made to its news programmes.

toh ching hong tigongkia at bersih rally 3.0"Our news report was a factual account of events that day, and intrusion in our editorial process is unwarranted. We have not been censored in this way by another distribution platform anywhere in the world," it said.

The network adds that it will also be demanding that Astro spell out how its correspondent Harry Fawcett's report on the day had breached "local content regulations".

"(Astro) would need to outline exactly what these alleged breaches were and how they arrived at their decision," it said.

It is still unclear which parts of Fawcett's report on Bersih were tampered with, as claimed by whistleblower website Sarawak Report.

Stopped from filming police assault

Fawcett had reported on police violence on the day, describing police as "extremely heavy handed" and that they had "busted" Al Jazeera's camera.

NONEHe later told Malaysiakini that Al Jazeera cameraman Ray Jones was punched on the head while Fawcett was grabbed by police who were stopping them from filming other officers assaulting the protesters.

Al Jazeera is the second international news network to lodge a formal complaint with Astro over censorship of its reports on the Bersih 3.0 rally.

British broadcaster the BBC had also made "urgent enquiries" into the matter, following censorship of a two-minute report on Bersih on BBC World which is available on Astro.

Astro yesterday admitted to censoring the BBC's report, but said it did so to comply with national regulations.

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