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`The Economist' taken to task in Malay media

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BERITA Harian and Utusan Malaysia agreed over the weekend that political interests could be behind the article in The Economist that belittled Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

They felt some quarters were out to undermine the Prime Minister by making light of his integrity and success.

Utusan Malaysia front-paged a report that the distribution of The Economist here would be reviewed if the magazine refused to apologise to the Government.

It quoted Deputy Home Minister Datuk Chor Chee Heung as saying that the Government would not send any protest to the London-based magazine for its insulting report entitled "A qualified success" by Christopher Lockwood.

Utusan Malaysia's Awang Selamat, in his weekend Bisik-Bisik Mingguan column, analysed the magazine's motives.

He expressed surprise that some were out to tarnish Dr Mahathir's image despite the fact that he was stepping down in October.

Meanwhile, Berita Minggu reported that Lima 03 from Sept 30 to Oct 3 would be more exciting with the confirmed participation of the Red Arrows team from Britain.

The paper also published an interesting story which rarely happens - a woman in Taiping not only gave her husband permission to take a second wife but arranged the marriage herself.

Rokiah Mohd Amin, 48, "selected" Salbiah Daud, 33, to marry her husband Omar Makhtar, 54. The RM3,000 wang hantaran (dowry) and wedding ring were also provided by her.

"It is fated," said both women of the marriage, which the writer concluded would not go down well with proponents of the "One Husband One Wife" campaign.

Meanwhile, the Finance Ministry disclosed that Malays formed the majority of bankrupts till the end of last year, with 51 per cent from 104,770 cases, reported Berita Harian on Saturday.

The percentage was far higher than other races, with Chinese at 39 per cent, Indians (nine per cent) and others (one per cent).

Still on money, what would you do with a RM60,000 cash prize won in a contest?

Go on holiday, buy yourself lavish gifts, or get yourself the car you always wanted?

Nothing so frivolous for Sunway College student Khatijah Khalilur Rahman, 19.

She donated the whole sum to Mercy Malaysia to fund its charity work in Iraq.