

## **Anwar is Utusan fave but portals love Najib**

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**By Aidila Razak**

Blue-eyed boys or favourite whipping boys, the media's relationship with the country's top two politicians has all the markings of a love-hate relationship.

A media study has found that Utusan Malaysia's sulky infatuation with PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim forced them to break ranks with other print media.

The print media including New Straits Times, Star and Sinar Harian highlighted BN chairperson Najib Abdul Razak.

NONE

Anwar topped the bill at Utusan. But far from being its darling, he was battered black and blue in reports studied during the media monitoring period of April 7 to May 7, 2013, with practically no saving grace.

In oft-accused pro-Pakatan Rakyat news portals Malaysiakini and The Malaysian Insider, meanwhile, his nemesis Najib was top of the pops.

However, here, Najib was simultaneously tarred and polished, the study by University of Nottingham and the Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ) has found.

The study conducted over the 13th general election campaign period found that in online media, Najib was at once most attacked and most negatively-covered, as well as most positively-portrayed.

In Malaysiakini's English pages, it noted, "Najib... received the most of all kinds of coverage (positive, negative, neutral and attacked), followed by Anwar".

NONE

Anwar was second in line for attacks in Malaysiakini, behind Najib.

Also joining them in the Malaysiakini 'most-attacked charts' were Sarawak Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud, former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim.

Both online portals had attacked the BN the most, but when it came to positive coverage, it was BN that was displayed under the brightest lights.

All-out against Pakatan

Utusan went all out against Pakatan and its component members with almost all negative coverage, and all positive coverage dedicated to the BN.

While Utusan mentioned Anwar in 26.77 percent of articles monitored (a significant 11 percent more than Najib), it scarcely had a kind word to say about him.

"In terms of tone of mentions and politicians and political figures, Anwar received the most negative coverage (41.99 percent) and was attacked the most often (36.45 percent) by a very significant margin...

NONE"Notably, BN political figures were very rarely attacked and were never covered negatively," the report card on Utusan noted.

Najib was most positively portrayed by a "very significant margin - all others trail by a huge margin" in Utusan.

In the portals, coverage was found to be fairly even-handed in terms of volume and coverage.

However, Malaysiakini's was found to skew slightly to Pakatan in terms of volume, with the Bahasa Malaysia section dedicating 54 percent of its reports to Pakatan and the rest to BN and others.

NONECoverage by Malaysiakini's English section was split at 49 percent Pakatan, and 43 percent BN.

Najib aside, the study also noted that the portal had rarely used BN sources, but noted this could have been due to limited access to Umno press conferences.

Overall, 28 percent of the portal's reports during the study period was sourced from BN politicians, 38 percent from Pakatan politicians, and 34 percent from independent sources like the man on the street.

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