

Fortune magazine hails S'wak Report editor for 1MDB expose

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New York's Fortune magazine has named infamous Sarawak Report editor Clare Rewcastle-Brown as one of 'The World's 50 Greatest Leaders' for her role in the exposure of the 1MDB scandal.

According to Swiss NGO Bruno Manser Fund (BMF), the Sarawak-born sister-in-law of former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown was among the names in Fortune's latest list published this week.

The list includes those in various fields whom, according to the magazine, "are transforming the world and inspiring others to do the same".

BMF in a statement today called the honour a "surprise move".

"Through her website Sarawak Report, London-based journalist Rewcastle-Brown has become an irritant in the corridors of power in Malaysia," BMF quoted Fortune saying in its profile.

"Her exposés on state investment fund 1MDB [...] have made her a hero and a villain in the country, depending on whom you ask.

"The government has tried to arrest her for 'activities detrimental to Parliamentary democracy' and has banned her website, a move that prompted advocacy group Reporters Without Borders to unblock access and help get her revelations out," wrote the magazine.

The controversial journalist is ranked 49 in Fortune's starry list.

Global impact

The whistleblower website had been a thorn in the government's side for its relentless articles alleging corruption primarily in the Sarawak government.

However, Sarawak Report's focus on Prime Minister Najib Razak and the 1MDB scandal over the past year finally caused the government to block local access to the website.

BMF congratulated Rewcastle-Brown on the honour and lauded her efforts in highlighting corruption allegations that have global implications and urged her to persevere and "continue disclosing corruption and injustice".

"Clare's investigations have had a profound effect on the perception of corruption in Malaysia and have exposed the role of leading global banks in accepting and transmitting the proceeds of corruption.

"Her disclosures have led to official investigations or criminal proceedings in Malaysia, Switzerland, the US, the UK, Singapore, and other jurisdictions," said BMF.

Rewcastle-Brown shares her honours with other notable women on Fortune's list - German chancellor Angela Merkel and Myanmar NPD party leader Aung San Suu Kyi, ranked No. 2 and No. 3 respectively.

"Demagoguery, pandering, even populism aren't leadership. Here's what is," wrote Fortune of their third list this year, which is topped by Amazon chief executive officer Jeff Bezos.

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