

PM's reformist credentials still intact, says The Economist
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PETALING JAYA: The campaign for electoral reforms in Malaysia goes on but Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak emerges from this year's fracas with his reformist credentials intact, not much worse for the wear, *The Economist* said.

"It is clear that Bersih won't be able to dominate the moral high ground – at least not on the score of one weekend's theatrics – as they did last year," it said in an article titled "Protest in Malaysia – It's That Time of Year".

The May 1 article said the political impact from the rally this round would probably be "very little" compared to last year's.

The Economist said although there were more people who participated in the rally this time, the smaller number of protesters in last year's protest was more impactful.

"As there will almost certainly be a general election in the coming months, perhaps the high level of interest wasn't that surprising," it said.

It described the rally as "more of a score-draw" that although there were reports of police brutality, the violent actions of the demonstrators attacking a police car "played into the Government's hands".

"The violence may even tarnish the broader movement for democratic reform a bit. And (Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim) had some explaining of his own to do.

"He was caught on video near one of the police barricades talking to one of his colleagues; critics allege that he was inciting supporters to push aside the barriers. Anwar himself says this is nonsense," it said.

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