

**Najib drums up support for Utusan
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The Prime Minister gave Utusan Malaysia his endorsement when he urged government departments, government-linked companies (GLCs) and Bumiputera firms to advertise more in the Umno-owned Bahasa Malaysia daily to ensure the newspaper's capability to compete in the long term.

Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the 75-year-old newspaper cannot rely solely on circulation to stay in business and that advertising is needed to keep it afloat.

Najib also said that Jalan Enam at Chan Sow Lin, where the newspaper office is located, will be renamed Jalan Utusan.

"Jalan Enam has no meaning. It will be renamed Jalan Utusan," he announced at the opening of the newspaper's new building today.

The Umno mouthpiece has been strident in defence of Putrajaya and had gone to great lengths to discredit the party's detractors.

Following Barisan Nasional's dismal outing, Utusan Malaysia ran a provocative report headlined "Apa lagi Cina mahu (What else do the Chinese want?)" in what appeared to be an attempt to shape the results of Election 2013 as a Chinese-vs-Malay vote.

Analysts had said data from voting trends showed the outcome of Election 2013 was not simply the result of a "Chinese tsunami" as Najib had claimed but a major swing in the urban and middle-class electorate that saw Malaysia's urban-rural rift widen.

The newspaper had also blamed the DAP for race politics, and said the secular party wanted Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as prime minister so that it could rule the country.

Among the Pakatan Rakyat leaders who took Utusan to court for defamation and won are former Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Nizar Jamaluddin, Penang Chief Minister and DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In July, the Kuala Lumpur High Court awarded Mohammad Nizar RM250,000 as damages in his suit against Utusan Malaysia over the WWW1 car registration number issue.

In February, the Court of Appeal upheld a High Court decision ordering Utusan to pay RM200,000 in general and aggravated damages to Lim over a defamatory article.

Lim, who is Bagan member of parliament and Air Putih assemblyman, had sued Utusan for defaming him in an article entitled, "Kebiasaan Guan Eng" published on December 20, 2011.

In January, Anwar won a suit against Utusan after High Court judge Datuk V.T. Singham found that the daily had defamed him in two articles.

In that judgment, the court ruled that the articles, which had implied that Anwar had intended to legalise homosexuality, was a gross mistaking of facts in complete disregard to

the plaintiff's reputation.

The court also found that the news article was lacking in responsible journalism and that the defendants took high risk in publishing them on the front page, without verifying the truth.

Najib said Utusan has done well in upholding the Malay agenda and upholding Malay nationalism.

"Utusan has remained strong and has never backed down in defending our race. It has played a role in opening up the minds of the rakyat to current information, be it in politics, crime, entertainment, and many other areas.

"Utusan hones and challenges the minds of its readers," he said. - September 13, 2013.

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