

ETHICS

BIASED REPORTING
BY FOREIGN MEDIA

The reports are often skewed to bring down a government, writes
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THE foreign media has always been known to be biased in favour of the opposition. Under the pretext of press freedom, it will go to great lengths to cause the downfall of the ruling government.

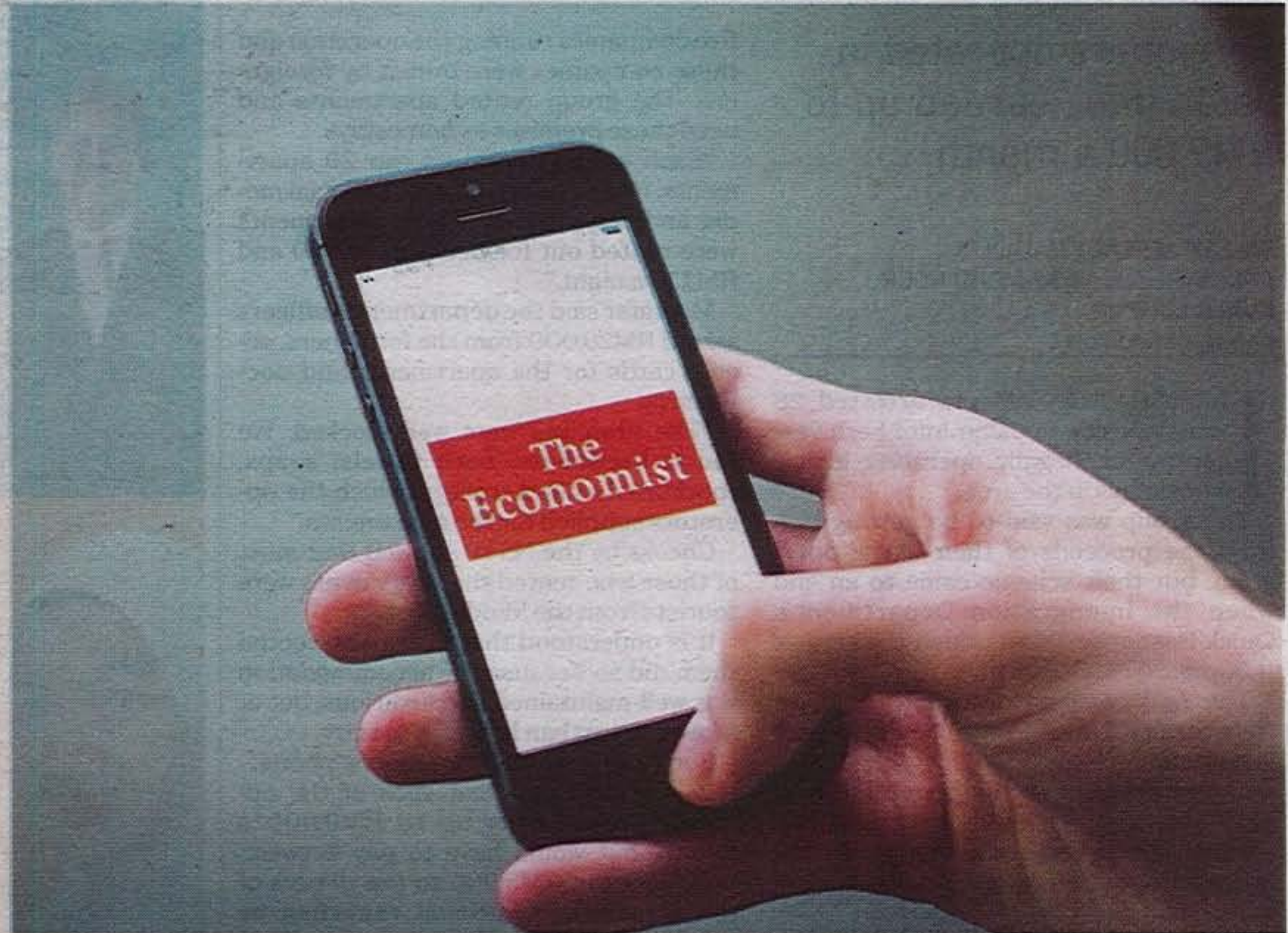
Whatever good the government implements for the wellbeing of the nation is hardly given due regard by the foreign media. Even the government's efforts expended in the search and rescue mission of MH370 were ridiculed, accusing it of not being serious enough. Such reports have put Malaysia in a bad light.

Human rights issues have also become the focus of foreign media attacks when Malaysia adopted a tough stand against the Western model. The West has always been uncomfortable about Malaysia's implementation of human rights.

The human rights practices in this country take into account the different faiths and cultural practices of its multiracial composition. Western rights activists claim that Malaysia is not promoting the "real human rights". They cannot be more wrong.

A case in point is the recent article by *The Economist* stating that the prime minister "is about to steal an election", which has gone viral. But, there is nothing new in the report nor did it reveal any new evidence — it is just a continuation of the foreign media's malicious intent to cause the downfall of the current leadership.

The report also cast doubt on Barisan Nasional's victory in the last election due to the popular vote factor while criticising the electoral system which it claimed was unfair. This criticism is unfounded because the electoral practice the country uses is the



A report by *The Economist* cast doubt on Barisan Nasional's victory in the last election and criticised the electoral system, calling it unfair. But the American electoral system is similar to Malaysia's.

"first past the post" or simple majority system. It is the system that is most suitable for a country with a multiracial society and could be easily understood by the people. The system has proven able to unite the people of various races since it was practised after Merdeka.

The American electoral system is almost similar to Malaysia's as it, too, does not use the popular vote system. Instead, it uses the representation system, where an area is divided into a number of geographically defined voting districts, each represented by a single elected official. If popular votes were taken into account in the last presidential election in November 2016, there is no way Donald Trump could have won. Trump secured 62,984,825, or 46.4 per cent, while Hillary Clinton garnered 65,853,516, or 48.5 per cent. But because of the first past the post system, Trump won with 306 votes compared with

Clinton's 232 votes.

Such are the ways of the foreign media. They highlight certain issues that are damaging to a country, but do not pay similar attention to their own shortcomings.

Such reports have given the opposition ammunition to criticise the government. As a matter of fact, the article was picked up by a pro-opposition portal which could give a negative impression to readers. It cannot be denied the opposition has often referred to international media reports in their campaigns to undermine the government. Besides, reports such as this are hawked as campaign fodder to woo voters.

It is ironical that opposition leaders who were once critical of foreign media are now fawning over them. It appears that they believe and unquestionably accept what is reported, warts and all.

If we recall during the "reformasi" years after the dismissal of former deputy prime minister

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the foreign media became the judge and champion of the country's political situation. The "reformasi" movement was given extraordinary treatment by the foreign media. One magazine even had the opposition leader on its cover.

As we approach GE14, foreign media reports are looked forward to by the opposition as they are seen as an instrument to overthrow the government. Technology has made it easier for foreign news to go viral on the various social media platforms.

What is worrying is that there is a movement in the opposition which is using the foreign media as a tool to wreak havoc on governments and countries. This is unethical and it must be stopped in the name of harmony.

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