

## **To be 'cool', PM must implement Bersih's demands**

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If Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak fails to keep his reform promises made last Thursday, the campaign to give him a 'cool' image will come to naught, PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail says.

"I cannot comment on his apparent 'coolness', but he must institute his reforms immediately," Wan Azizah said when met at the Kuala Lumpur court complex yesterday.

What would make Najib even "cooler", she said, was for the premier to undertake reforms proposed by electoral reform pressure group Bersih 2.0.

Bersih 2.0 coalition has made eight demands to the Election Commission in order to improve the electoral process.

More than 10,000 protestors - mostly youths - took the streets on July 9 to back Bersih 2.0's demands but they were met by riot police who arrested nearly 1,700 people.

Similarly, Wan Azizah's husband Anwar Ibrahim when asked about Najib's 'cool' image branding strategy replied that the prime minister must not delay reforms.

In recent days, Najib has been intensifying efforts to appeal to the younger generation by attempting to portray a "cool" image and as a prime minister who is committed to reforms.

Najib made waves by announcing the scrapping of the much maligned Internal Security Act 1960 (ISA) last Thursday, and promised to create more democratic space for the country.

Two days later, he adopted an obvious change of tact when he urged delegates at the Selangor BN convention to adopt a "cool" approach so that the "bro's" would support the coalition.

### **Part of a re-branding effort?**

Later that Saturday evening, he made a surprise appearance at the SuaraKami 2011 concert, which featured numerous international acts, including Grammy award winning rapper Nelly.

Najib immediately took cognisance of comments on Twitter, which said that the concert appearance was a "cool" move.

Taking it a step further, Najib appeared on morning programmes on three radio stations yesterday, providing light-hearted interviews and taking part in a radio game show.

All the radio stations are owned by Astro Malaysia Holdings Sdn Bhd, which also owns the company that organised the SuaraKami 2011 concert.

On the radio shows, Najib had a go with youth lingo, dropping words such as sempoi (cool), which elicited surprise from the radio deejays.

On Monday, Malaysian Insider reported that the Najib administration had spent millions of ringgit on a group of political strategists, including the team behind Tony Blair's "New Labour" campaign, to promote him as a progressive leader.

The adoption of the new team reportedly comes after the Najib administration dropped multinational public relations firm Apco Worldwide as its main image consultant.

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