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PM gets into character

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Najib sportingly dons a hoodie, cracks jokes at digital event

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KUALA LUMPUR: It was a light-hearted moment at the Wild Digital Conference when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak traded his suit for a “hoodie” and shared his passion for music, food and social media.

Some 450 of South-East Asia’s leading digital entrepreneurs, investors and top senior executives had a pleasant surprise when Najib readily agreed to don the hoodie with the words ‘#DaBOSS’ embossed on the back.

Catcha Group co-founder Patrick Grove presented the hoodie to Najib on stage before the start of a 40-minute question-and-answer session with him to mark the launch of the conference.

Grove, who is also iflix chairman, candidly threw several questions to Najib including if he had bought anything online lately.

“Yes, I bought some music from iTunes but I’m not going to tell you what songs they are,” he said, drawing laughter from the crowd.

Najib went on to say that he enjoyed Motown and music from the 1970s but also liked to listen to contemporary singers such as Bruno Mars.

Grove, who kept the pace of the questions lively, asked Najib of his experiences in getting a drive with US president Barack Obama in his personal limousine, the “Beast”, and meeting Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg.

Najib quipped that the ‘Beast’ was more comfortable than his Proton and that the bullet-and-bomb-proofed car could hold a conference of four.

“I was told that apart from his wife, the only two persons who ever rode in the Beast with Obama were you and Jerry Seinfeld,” Grove said.



Fitting gesture: Grove presenting Najib with the customised hoodie during the conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Najib was also asked to relate his experience with Zuckerberg during his trip to the United States.

Najib jokingly said that he thought Zuckerberg didn’t look very smart in appearance owing to his casual style of dressing and work pace of those working in the IT industry there.

“My initial reaction; he doesn’t look very smart. But actually, he is very smart. He is super smart but doesn’t look very smart,” the Prime Minister said.

“But when you talk to him, you begin to realise that this guy has really got it in him,” Najib said, drawing laughter from the crowd.

Najib told the audience that although he had a media team to handle his social media posting, he usually personally posted his tweets.

On a more serious note, Najib called on Malaysian youth to become global players in the e-commerce industry.

He cited an example where a *kek-lapis* (layered cake) seller he met in Sarawak recently had a thriving online business that helped pay for her overseas holidays.

Grove later invited Najib to pose for a selfie with the crowd, and Najib later twitted it with the message ‘Rocking at Wild Digital @ PatrickGrove in my new hoodie #daboss