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# Fitness centre owner: It was an honour to be mentioned by PM

**KOTA KINABALU:** Yesterday turned out to be “great” for Benreza Hezery Uzair when he attended the opening of the Gathering of Rising Entrepreneurs, Act Together (Great) 2017.

The proprietor of a fitness centre known as “Ben Uzair” was mentioned by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak as an exemplary citizen and managed to steal a moment with the prime minister.

“You mentioning me in your address this (yesterday) morning had me... speechless!

“Though we don’t agree on some issues of our great nation, I must sincerely thank you for all the immense opportunities and

empowerment you and the leaders of Malaysia have given to build a great entrepreneurship ecosystem in our great country.

“I am forever a grateful Malaysian,” Benreza said in his Facebook posting where he shared a wifie with Najib.

He said while it was an honour to be mentioned, he could not take all the credit as his team and clients also contributed to the success of the Juara Sports Village in Putatan — which houses a futsal and badminton arena and a gym centre.



*Benreza Hezery Uzair*

In his Facebook posting, Benreza said he was seated at the same table with Najib during lunch and they discussed topics such as entrepreneurship in Sabah and the fitness industry in Malaysia.

“We talked about the health-consciousness of Sabah folk and Malaysians, gym equipment (I joked about securing our orders before the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax), innovation and the minimum wage.

“Also US-Malaysia diplomatic relations and the recent US elec-

tion (the prime minister is very well versed with issues in the United States, including discussing Donald Trump’s supporters in Tennessee and Kentucky — areas I am familiar with), gun control and security,” said Benreza, who had studied and worked in Tennessee for 11 years before returning to Malaysia, in his Facebook account.

The 37-year-old who was trained in business administration said he did a lot of studies on nutrition and observed that Najib ate well and was healthy, noting that “he had a generous serving of brown rice, plenty of vegetables, minimised his oil and fat intakes, chowed on fresh fruits

for his dessert, and a cup of green tea”.

Benreza said he had extended an invitation to Najib to visit Juara Sports Village in the future.

Benreza, who first started his project in 2011, has a dream to see his hometown of Putatan become one of the healthiest districts in the state.

“Putatan aspires to be a municipal council by 2025. What’s the point of having great infrastructure if we don’t have healthy residents? We (Juara) want to be the sports hub of choice in the district,” said Benreza, who aspires to set up a sports academy involving children in future.