

**UndiMsia gets 'em rockin'**  
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**By K.C. Boey**

MELBOURNE, April 15 — The Twitter Generation was sceptical going into the Orange Room of the Melbourne Multicultural Hub yesterday. But in no time they were “rocking” in there. After four hours, they came out “rolling”.

The previous night, UndiMsia prime mover Edmund Bon had promised them “the best four hours you will ever spend in your life”.

It was a bold claim to make to the more than 30 Malaysians in the diaspora, given his repeated challenge throughout the evening to “come tomorrow” if you want to learn how to make a difference for a better Malaysia.

Edmund Bon: We denigrate political parties and politicians. — Picture by K.C. Boey  
Did the “sacrifice” of a Saturday measure up to expectation?

“I was blown away,” Monash University law student Liow Jie Hui told The Malaysian Insider. “IdolaDemokrasi could add nothing to my passion, but it taught me how to make my drive count.”

Fellow university student Farah Ayesha Abdul Rahman said she never realised she could be a “power of one”.

“It does not have to have anything to do with ‘politics’. It could be about why full-fee-paying international students in Melbourne are not entitled to student concession travel on metropolitan public transport,” said the final-year accounting and marketing student who heads the committee on international students at the student union.

“What was most inspiring to me was the initiative of Edmund and (associate) Hasbee to leave politics out of their gaming but instead open the minds of the people to help them realise how much power they have as an individual.”

Zaim Mohzani: “Natural instinct” of people — same anxieties, same aspirations. — Picture by K.C. Boey

Law student Zaim Mohzani, who helped facilitate the game, said participants were initially hesitant in their group interaction. As they were rotated from group to group, they warmed to their “natural instinct” that people were the same all over, with the same anxieties and aspirations.

Bon and Sarawakian-born Hasbeemasputra Abu Bakar leave for home tonight after this last stop in their five-city swing to sensitise Malaysians to UndiMsia’s “action” initiative refined as the “IdolaDemokrasi gameshop” to identify with the generation hooked on “American Idol”.

They took UndiMsia’s brand of “new politics” that Bon and Hasbee had developed over the past six months to the diaspora in London, Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds, finishing with

the gameshop in Melbourne.

At the "teaser" forum the previous night, Bon and Hasbee, coordinator of IdolaDemokrasi, took questions on events in Malaysia and what UndiMsia was doing about sentiment.

Most among those at the forum organised by Saya Anak Bangsa Malaysia Australia (SABMoz) Melbourne were the "Twitterers" of the following morning. Among older Malaysians was the Consul-General in Melbourne, Dr Mohamad Rameez Yahaya, and Faizal Ibrahim, Second Secretary at the Malaysian High Commission in Canberra.

Facebook, Twitter and wall posters promoting the event described Bon as "fiercely non-partisan". "What I want to say from the outset . . . is that UndiMsia is fiercely non-partisan," said Bon, partner in Chooi & Co, chair of the human rights committee of the Bar Council, and regular contributor to the Loyar Burok portal.

"No matter what people may say about my background . . . we (UndiMsia) have and always will be non-partisan. We do not support any political party, Barisan Nasional or Pakatan, we do not have any sympathy for them.

Hasbee setting out Naomi Wolff's "10 steps to close an open society": Applies to Malaysia, except for "subvert the rule of law". — Picture by K.C. Boey  
"We do not in any of our gameshops talk about any political party. In fact, what we do, we denigrate political parties and politicians. We think political parties and politicians are a lot of the problems in Malaysia.

"I won't give you the solutions (at the gameshop); we are 'solutionists'. You will find the solution (to your problem) when you come tomorrow (for the gameshop)."

Bon said what UndiMsia was about was "real people power, real democracy . . . This is an idea of the future, this is an idea for a better Malaysia."

Ranjeet Singh: The personal is political. — Picture by K.C. Boey  
Hasbee scribbled "10 steps to close an open society" on butchers paper before asking how many among them the audience could identify with.

All 10, the audience was at one. If there were detractors, they did not raise their voice. Except for "subvert the rule of law", a voice piped up, "because there is no rule of law (to subvert; in Malaysia)", to guffaws from the audience.

Hasbee was quick with his disclaimer. He had picked up "10 steps" from Naomi Wolff's book The End of America, and the documentary film it inspired, likening Bush America to fascist 1930s Germany.

Transport and logistics consultant Ranjeet Singh was affirmed in his philosophy. "Everything starts from the personal," the self-described "card-carrying" Malaysian who came to Australia to study economics in 1971, told The Malaysian Insider after the forum.

"And everything personal is political. It is in developing ourselves as an individual that we develop as groups. It is from the bottom up, not from the top down."

Michelle Mary Lim: "Lang ai chor hoh . . ." — Picture by K.C. Boey  
Penang complementary medicine practitioner Michelle Mary Lim can relate to the UndiMsia message, as an "international citizen" now travelling the world to see how people live.

Independently of student Farah Ayesha, she has had her convictions on people confirmed.

"As a person, you want to do good; not do evil," multilingual Lim told The Malaysian Insider in her mother Hokkien.

The UndiMsia forum inspired her to post on Facebook: "Thank you, Edmund & Hasbee, and also all the Organisers of last night 13th April and not forgetting my dear David.

"It was a really a good night. Keep it up boys & girls, recruit as much as you can (sic). You all Boleh, young, Energetic, Malaysia Boleh. We all need you," said the grandmother who has spent the past five years in Victoria.

The David that Lim refers to is SABMoz Melbourne president David Teoh, who guided Lim to the Melbourne Multicultural Hub, across the road from the Queen Victoria Market, after Lim came to know of the IdolaDemokrasi event while surfing the Internet.

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