

Najib makes a mark with market visit
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MALACCA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak was a big hit with residents when he toured Melaka Sentral market and met customers and traders.

"I told him I was buying my groceries. I was shocked when he gave me RM10 for my purchases. It was unexpected and I'm grateful for his kindness."

Najib then had a light breakfast of kuih and kopi-O. He asked several people to sit at his table.

Abdul Rahim Ahmad, 54, and wife Zaiton Sarwi, 53, were among the lucky ones.

Rahim, who lives in Bukit Panjang, Singapore, said he was in town to visit his family in Kandang near here.

"I didn't expect to have breakfast with the Malaysian premier. I felt honoured.

"While some leaders think they are above the public, it's clear that Najib is comfortable among the people. He is very friendly."

Fatimah Lawrance, 30, from Peringgit, had been disappointed that she couldn't get a proper picture of Najib during his visit to the market.

Little did she know that she would sit in front of him.

"My family and I were having breakfast at the cafeteria and I had gone to get drinks when the prime minister asked me to join him. I was very happy to do so. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and yes, I finally got a good picture of him," she said with a laugh.

Najib was ferried on a Panorama bus from Melaka Sentral to Jalan Hang Tuah, before he took a trishaw to the Urban Transformation Centre in Jalan Tan Chay Yan for its launch.

Jalan Hang Tuah was closed for the Jelajah Janji Ditepati (JJD) programme, held in conjunction with the launch of the centre.

The street was filled with booths from government departments and government-linked companies, street performers and visitors who braved the traffic and heat to enjoy the carnival-like atmosphere.

Malacca Federation of Rental Car and Taxi Associations president Aziz Ahmad, 64, said 1,246 members of the 17 associations that made up the federation had attended the UTC launch and the JJD programme to support Najib and his leadership.

Today is a historic day for Malacca, as well as Malaysia, with the launch of the country's first UTC.

The one-stop centre, which houses more than 70 government and non-governmental organisations, provides many services in one place, making it convenient for the people.

Saravanan Suparamaniam, 31, a school bus driver, said he had visited the booths and found them interesting.

"The Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing Ministry booth was offering lessons on how to blow darts using a blowpipe."

He said there was a cheerful and celebratory atmosphere at the event.

"People of all races came here to enjoy themselves, all in the spirit of 1Malaysia."

Romeo Lim, 52, said many of the products were sold at reasonable prices.

"Like the 1Malaysia People's Shops (KR1M) across Malaysia, the booth has almost everything you need, all at prices lower than the market price.

"I hope the government will continue with its initiatives for the people."

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