

**Religious freedom proves gov't is fair: Najib**  
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said the freedom of religion practiced in the country proved that the government is fair to all.

He said the facilities and assistance provided to religious bodies also reflected the government's aspiration in seeing the people live in peace and harmony.

"We can see today Hindu devotees celebrate the Thaipusam freely throughout the country," he said at the Thaipusam celebration at the Subramaniya Swami Devasthanam Temple in Sungai Petani last night.

The prime minister said the government's stand in maintaining racial and religious harmony could be seen clearly through the 1Malaysia concept which was based on unity.

"Our future will be stronger, or we will lose if we reject this strong bond," he added.

Najib said he believed that people would not be narrow-minded to reject the 1Malaysia concept even though the Selangor state government prohibited the use of the logos.

On Thaipusam, he said if BN were to win the next general election, Thaipusam would be declared a public holiday in Kedah.

"If the state is ruled by the same party, then it is easier for us to negotiate," he said.

Najib said the government would consider applications for financial assistance to upgrade the temple.

About 50,000 Hindu devotees attended the celebration at the temple last night.

- Bernama

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