

We must have 'nambikei', Najib tells Indians
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If they want more for themselves, Indians must have 'nambikei', or "trust and belief" in the government, said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

"We need a partnership between Indians and the government, between Indian NGOs and the government," he told thousands of Malaysian Indians at the national Thaipusam celebration in Batu Caves today.

najib thaipusam batu caves 070212 "If we have partnership... There is more that we can do. We must have nambikei, trust and belief.

"You help me, and I can help you. Nambikei. You trust me and I trust you," the premier offered, to the cheers of the audience.

He reminded them that his government had given them the Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M), the RM100 assistance to schoolchildren and RM200 book vouchers for students.

More, he claimed, will be in store for the Indians if the nambikei and partnership between Indians and the BN-led government are forged.

As a teaser, he also announced a RM2 million special allocation to help kick-start the development of an Indian cultural centre and community hall at the Batu Caves temple complex.

This he said, will be part of a series of more allocations that will be given later on to finance the building of the cultural centre.

The cultural centre was part of a four-point request read out by Batu Caves temple complex board of trustees chairperson R Nadarajah.

Four-point request

In his speech preceding Najib's, Nadarajah had requested for:

- * An Indian cultural centre and hall at Batu Caves,
- * Special unit under G Palanivel for Hindu temple affairs,
- * Funds for the special unit to operate, and
- * One extra holiday during Deepavali for "poor Indians" who have only a one-day holiday unlike the Chinese for Chinese New Year and Malays for Hari Raya Puasa who had two days for both annually.

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Nadarajah, who called himself a "BN man" who had followed former MIC president S Samy Velly for 45 years, said that he never supported the Selangor PKR-led state government and said that since he has been "labelled as BN", they had "caused trouble".

He also called upon Najib to give money "from his side" to the temples without going through the federal government as normal.

“Datuk Seri, you give from your side to my side. Don’t go through the government. I don’t want to beg, beg, beg... We have a very powerful temple, if you give, then what you want, you will get,” he offered.

Najib, however, kept mum on Nadarajah’s other requests in the latter’s over one-hour speech, which drew some catcalls from the crowd impatient to hear the premier speak.

MIC president G Palanivel also addressed the Hindu devotees, calling upon Najib to continue to help support the Indian temples which play a huge part in Indian culture and life.

“We Indians are intoxicated by the devotion of our devotees.

“That is why in India, kings build temples bigger than their palaces, and here we build temples bigger than our houses,” he said, urging Najib to honour that tradition.

Prior to the speeches, Najib and his wife Rosmah Mansur were draped in silk cloth and Malai flowers.

Najib, who arrived decked in a traditional Indian garment, the kurta, as was his cousin Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein, joked about it in his speech.

“This is the first time for me and for Hishammuddin to wear the kurta, such that we look more Indian than ethnic Indians,” said Najib.

Similar honours were accorded to the slew of BN and Indian leaders that accompanied him which included Senator Koh Tsu Koon, MIC deputy president Dt S Subramaniam, MP SK Devamany and others.

Also present was the Indian High Commissioner, as well as special ambassador for infrastructure S Samy Vellu.

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