

**Perkasa: Najib went to Batu Caves with 'unity torch'**  
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Despite the Perak mufti's statement that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's visit to the Thaipusam celebration at Batu Caves is against Islamic teaching, Perkasa chief Ibrahim Ali today tried to justify Najib's action, saying it might be an effort to unite the people.

"According to the understanding of some people, Thaipusam is a religious celebration, the same as Wesak Day and Christmas. I was told that Muslims cannot attend because it contravenes the aqidah and syariah.

"But the prime minister's attendance at Batu Caves should be seen in the context that he wanted to be seen as a premier who pays attention to all races," he told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

Elaborating, he said maybe Najib attended the celebration with the intention of bringing the "torch of unity".

"Maybe he didn't have time to consult religious views. If he did, he might give his observation," he added.

The Independent MP for Pasir Mas then took a potshot at PAS spiritual leader Nik Aziz Nik Mat whom he claimed also attended religious events in Buddhist temples.

"If you ask PAS, they will say he is preaching (in the temples)... When Nik Aziz does it, it is right, but when Najib does it, it is wrong," he said.

Last week Perak mufti Harussani Zakaria had told news portal The Malaysian Insider that Najib's visit to Batu Caves for the Thaipusam festival - the third time since 2010 - has "sacrificed his faith".

Describing it as an "idolatrous act", he said the minister in charge of Islamic affairs or a religious advisor should have advised Najib not to attend the event on Feb 7.

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