

**Najib: Haj photo manipulated for political ammo**  
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today said a photograph circulating on Facebook, of him during his haj last November is being used to cast aspersions on him.

The image, Najib said, showed him surrounded by several military personnel when his entourage was performing the tawaf, an Islamic ritual during the haj.

"I was given military protection just like all other heads of state who perform the haj, no less, no more. I never requested for it," he said.

"A sacred ritual performed with sincerity was used by ill-intentioned individuals for political purpose," he said at the National Gathering of Ulamas, Islamic Scholars and Virtual Writers in Kuala Lumpur.

Netizens had questioned the need for the premier to have such military protection during the haj when such heavy protection was not even accorded when he is in Malaysia.

Another example, he said, was when an edited version of that picture was circulated in cyberspace, where the crowd behind him had been edited out.

"The people around us were erased to create the impression that only I could perform the tawaf while other pilgrims were prevented from doing so," he said.

Using this as an example of how quickly untruths can spread on social media, Najib urged bloggers who were present to quickly respond to them when they arise.

'All good with Perak mufti'

Meanwhile, Najib appeared to make peace with Perak mufti Harussani Zakaria who had earlier criticised the premier for compromising his faith by participating in the Thaipusam celebration at Batu Caves, Kuala Lumpur.

"When he (Harussani) made the statement, I was surprised, so I met him. He hugged me and I hugged him and I explained what happened.

"I was only in the hall and my speech was on social economic issues to the Indians who were Hindus,

"I never participated in any religious ritual and the mufti later said it was not against the Syariah or any fatwa," he said.

"I will always protect my akidah (faith) and my role as a Muslim leader," he added.

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