

Najib's presence at Thaipusam not unIslamic after all, says Perak Mufti
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BANGI, Feb 15 — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's attendance of Thaipusam celebrations at Batu Caves recently was not against Islamic doctrine, Bernama Online reported Perak Mufti Tan Sri Harussani Zakaria as saying today.

His comments come after Najib personally spoke to him about his role on the day.

Harussani told the news portal this involved a speech by the prime minister and at no time was the latter involved in a religious procession nor did he enter the cave temple.

The Perak mufti went on to say that as a national leader, it is not wrong for Najib to join other races for festive celebrations so long as he does not endorse or participate in the rites of other religions.

On February 10, Harussani had expressed dismay over the prime minister's decision to "sacrifice his faith" to attend the said celebrations, saying his presence was against Islamic doctrine.

Harussani back-pedalled on criticism over Najib's decision to wear a kurta as well, echoing the prime minister's recent comments that it is a form of traditional attire that is widely embraced by Muslims in India.

He expressed instead his disappointment with PAS during Thaipusam celebrations in Perak in which he said party members set up stalls and flew the party flag, giving the impression that they were celebrating the occasion too.

The Perak Mufti also warned against divisions within the Malay community, saying "each group is always looking for an opportunity to hit out at the others over the slightest fault.

"I hope our people (Malays) return to their roots ... having different political ideologies shouldn't be a problem."

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