

**Najib, Rosmah Spend An Hour With Hindu Community During Thaipusam Visit**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor spent an hour witnessing the 125th Thaipusam celebration at Sri Subramaniyar Swamy temple in Batu Caves here, which was attended by an estimated 1.6 million Hindu devotees and foreign tourists.

Upon their arrival, Najib and Rosmah spent several minutes at the second floor balcony of the temple management's office with its leaders, MIC president Datuk Seri G. Palanivel, vice-president Datuk M. Saravanan and former MIC president Tan Sri S.Samy Vellu.

Najib and Rosmah were later garlanded with Malai flowers while the temple committee's chairman Tan Sri R. Nadarajah placed golden scarves on the shoulders of the couple which is the traditional welcome for honoured guests to the festival.

In respecting the ceremony, Najib was dressed in a cream coloured traditional Indian kurta while Rosmah was in pink attire.

All of them later waved to greet the sea of visitors at the festival.

Najib and Rosmah also joined a breakfast reception with the leaders before leaving at 11.30am.

Sri Subramaniyar Swamy Temple honorary-secretary R.T. Sundaram told reporters the prime minister's presence showed the nation's top leader cared about the minority communities in the country.

"His presence is all the more meaningful because this our 125th anniversary of the Thaipusam celebration, more than a century. It also nurtures unity and solidarity among Malaysia's multi-racial society," he said.

This year's Thaipusam celebrations proceeded smoothly although there was a slight glitch when a power outage caused the lighted compound to descend into darkness last night.

Seen among the sea of Hindus today were kavadi carriers, bare-footed devotees and the shaving of heads in conjunction with the festival, which is an official event in the national tourism calendar.

Devotees thronged the Sri Subramaniyar Swamy temple there to fulfill their vows and to seek penance for their sins in conjunction with the festival. Members of the public and foreign tourists also thronged the venue to join in the festivities.

Thaipusam is a festival celebrated by Hindus in the world during the month of 'Thai' in the Tamil calendar to celebrate the birth of Lord Murugan.

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