

**Thaipusam Celebrations: Najib's Presence Does Not Contradict Islamic Law - JAKIM
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 6 (Bernama) -- The presence of prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak during the Thaipusam celebrations in Batu Caves on Tuesday did not go against Islamic laws.

Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) director-general Datuk Othman Mustapha said the matter had been clarified by Perak Mufti Tan Sri Harussani Zakaria in 2012 who said that it did not contradict the law as long as there was no intention of celebrating or being pleased with the acts of other religions.

"The presence of the prime minister at the Thaipusam celebration in Batu Caves will continue to be an issue every time it is held. The National Fatwa Committee's discussion on April 12 2005 had produced a guideline for Muslims who attend religious functions of non-Muslims.

"As the country's leader, the prime minister is aware of the limits and guidelines," Othman said in a statement in Kuala Lumpur, Friday.

He said therefore, there was no issue that the prime minister could not attend a non-Muslim celebration because it went against Islamic laws as claimed by certain parties.

Regarding the clothes worn by the prime minister during the ceremony, Othman said even that did not go against the guidelines as the 'kurta' was a traditional clothing worn by Indian men during official ceremonies and did not break any Islamic rule.

"I wish to advise all Muslims to be careful in discussing issues that they are not clear on so that the spreading of issues like this, especially those relating to religious law, are avoided to prevent slander and accusations among the public," he said.

Last Tuesday Najib spent some time to observe the 125th Thaipusam celebrations at the Sri Subramaniyar Swamy Temple in Batu Caves, and as a sign of respect, wore a cream-coloured traditional Indian kurta.

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