

Najib should not don Hindu attire, garlands, says Perlis mufti
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Datuk Seri Najib Razak's advisers should be stricter in enforcing the rules set by Islam when the prime minister attends non-Muslim celebrations, the Perlis mufti said.

Datuk Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin said the prime minister's advisers should be firm with the event organisers to protect the sanctity of Islam.

"The prime minister's advisers should also inform the organisers not to present a garland to Najib or request that he wear Hindu attire when celebrating a religious festival," he told Malay-language daily Sinar Harian.

"They should be firm in this matter and inform the organisers of the Thaipusam celebration in Batu Caves that Najib will attend on the condition that he not take part in any Hindu ritual.

"This is what Islam forbids. Muslim leaders are not prohibited from attending other religious festivals, but there are rules and limits," he said.

He said Najib could attend the Thaipusam celebration in Batu Caves, as part of his duty as the prime minister, but should not participate in any religious ritual as it was against Islamic teachings.

"Najib can appear there dressed in a suit. There is no harm in that. What matters is that Najib attends the Hindu religious festivals because he is the Malaysian prime minister and he cares for all Malaysians," said Asri.

As an example, Asri said the Muslim police officers on duty in Batu Caves for the Thaipusam festival were not necessarily celebrating it.

"The police are protecting the public and ensuring the celebrations go on peacefully. They are not celebrating the festival, but only carrying out their duty of maintaining public peace and security."

He added that as the prime minister who cared for the interests of all race and religions, Najib should attend the religious celebrations of non-Muslim faiths.

Two years ago, Perak Mufti Tan Sri Harussani Zakaria claimed Najib had "sacrificed his faith" by attending the Thaipusam celebration, and said he advised the prime minister each year not to attend such events as it was an "idolatrous act".

But Harussani later back-pedalled on his criticism after Najib spoke to him personally, and said the prime minister had not flouted Islamic doctrine as he was not involved in a religious procession nor did he enter the cave where the main religious activities are conducted. – February 6, 2015

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