

Pilgrims' welfare a top priority

Dr M: Malaysians lucky with Tabung Haji's effective services

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SEPANG: The welfare of Malaysian Muslims performing the haj will remain a top priority thanks to Tabung Haji's effective preparations, says Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said Malaysian pilgrims were among the luckiest compared to other countries as Tabung Haji would provide its services from the beginning until the end of the haj pilgrimage.

"I believe that it is not an easy task. It requires detailed attention at all levels of preparation covering the needs of the pilgrims before flying off, their welfare in the holy land and until they return home," he said.

"Before Tabung Haji, the pilgrimage process was long and hard. Some were forced to take a boat for months and there was no proper place to stay when they arrived at the holy land," he said in his speech at the sending-off ceremony at Movenpick Hotel & Convention



Praying for a safe journey: Pilgrims praying at the sending-off ceremony of Malaysian pilgrims at the Tabung Haji Complex in Sepang. — Bernama

Centre where a total of 483 pilgrims will be leaving for Mecca.

Also present were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa and

Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Azmin Ali.

Dr Mahathir said the country is proud of Tabung Haji's effort, which was also praised by the Saudi go-

vernment and other Muslim countries.

He also advised pilgrims to look after their health as the haj pilgrimage requires physical and emotional strength.

"All of you will go back and forth to the mosque, apart from performing the *tawaf*, *saie*, the stoning ritual and other *sunat* prayers. For this, a healthy body is needed," he said.

The *tawaf* is an act of circling the Kaabah seven times in counter-clockwise direction, and the *saie* refers to walking seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwah beside the Kaabah.

Dr Mahathir also urged them to follow all the health and dietary guides of the Tabung Haji and the Health Ministry.

"The journey requires everyone to be more patient, tolerant and caring regardless of race, language, cultural background," he said.

Watch the video
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