

Good Relations With Saudi Arabian Govt Benefits Malaysian Haj Pilgrims

One of several hotels in Makkah rented by Tabung Haji for the accommodation of Malaysian Haj pilgrims - Bernama picture KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 26 (Bernama) -- The good relations between the Pilgrims' Fund Board (TH) and the Malaysian government with the Saudi Arabian government facilitates the smooth management of Malaysian haj pilgrims.

TH Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Datuk Seri Johan Abdullah said the Malaysian government and the agency often met with the Saudi Arabian government for meetings to continue to improve the mechanism for haj management.

He expressed appreciation for the noble efforts of the King of Saudi Arabia and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and the Saudi Arabian government, in helping to further improve the haj management.

Johan recalled that King Salman, who arrived here today for a four-day official visit to Malaysia, had praised Malaysia for its haj management as among the best in the world.

We expressed our appreciation and gratitude to King Salman, the Saudi Arabian government, the Saudi Arabian Haj Ministry, the Southeast Asia Muassasah and Adilla Muassasah for their assistance , especially during the annual haj operation, he told Bernama.

Datuk Seri Johan Abdullah

The visit by King Salman is the first since His Majesty ascended the throne on Jan 23, 2015. The visit is at the invitation of Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman told reporters two days ago that matters pertaining to the haj and quota issues and strengthening cooperation in related areas would be at the top of the agenda for the visit.

Johan said the approval for an increase in the haj quota for Malaysia would be TH's priority to enable more Malaysians to perform the pilgrimage and to shorten their waiting time.

"The registration to perform the haj pilgrimage in Malaysia has reached 2.4 million people and the waiting time is up to 100 years," he said, adding that the request for additional quota was also in tandem with the increase in Malaysia's population.

Early this year, TH, in a statement, said that the haj quota for Malaysian pilgrims had been restored to 27,900 for 2017, compared to 22,230 previously.

According to Johan, TH was also looking into the possibility of building a centralised accommodation complex in Makkah and Madinah to further improve its service for Malaysian pilgrims.

He said an annual meeting was held recently with the Saudi Arabian Haj Minister and was attended by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom, TH chairman Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim and himself.

"After this, we will arrange several discussions with the Saudi Arabian Haj Ministry, the Adilla Muassasah in Madinah and the Southeast Asia Muassasah in Makkah to ensure a smooth haj operation," he added.

Established in a 1963, TH is a manifestation of the government's concern for the welfare Malaysian haj pilgrims and on efforts to improve the economy of Muslims in the country.

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