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# TH: Haj security stepped up

**SAFE:** Scanner machines at all hotels where Malaysian pilgrims are staying, says official



**MADINAH**

**T**ABUNG Haji (TH) is confident that the Saudi government has taken security measures

to ensure the safety of haj pilgrims, including those from Malaysia.

Its deputy consul and operations director for Madinah, Mohd Zawawi Bostan, said security had become paramount, especially after the terror bomb attacks in Jeddah, Qatif and here on July 4.

"We have noticed increased police presence in mosques and strategic areas," he said at the Malaysian Pilgrims' Affairs office in here last night.

Zawawi said TH had discussed security with operators of the hotels

housing the 22,320 Malaysian pilgrims.

"These hotels have taken note of our concerns. Every hotel entrance where our pilgrims are staying will have scanner machines."

Special assembly areas have also been designated for Malaysian pilgrims in the event of an emergency.

The July 4 attacks had occurred near the United States consulate in Jeddah, a Shia settlement in Qatif and a security



**Mohd Zawawi Bostan**

checkpoint near the iconic Masjid Nabawi here.

Four security officers were killed and five others were wounded in the attacks that evoked global condemnation from Muslims and non-Muslims.

Zawawi advised pilgrims to keep hydrated and take precautions to avoid falling ill due to the extremely hot weather here.

Temperatures range between 42°C and 45°C. According to reports,

it could go beyond 50°C during the haj season.

The first batch of Malaysian pilgrims will arrive on Aug 4.

Of the total number, 11,796 will land at Madinah International Airport while the rest via King Abdullah Airport in Jeddah.

There will be 47 flights ferrying Malaysian pilgrims into Saudi via the two airports.

Zawawi advised pilgrims to not dabble in political activities and abide by all rules while performing their haj.