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Many keen to learn about haj management

MALAYSIA continues to be held in high esteem for the efficient management of its haj pilgrims each year.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said that some European and African countries, the United States and Canada are keen to learn the system used by Lembaga Tabung Haji (TH).

He said representatives from these countries expressed their intention to him at a reception organised by the Saudi Arabian government on the second day of Aidiladha last week.

"It so happened that this year, there were pilgrims from these countries. They wanted to have a closer look at the approach used by TH, which is more systematic," he told reporters upon arrival at KL International Airport yesterday.

Jamil Khir said there were fewer Malaysian pilgrims admitted to hospital, at 132 compared with over 200 in previous years.

"Some were admitted to Tabung Haji-owned hospital while the rest to Saudi hospitals as they required intensive treatment and more sophisticated medical equipment," he said.

Jamil Khir said 31 Malaysian haj pilgrims were also reported to have died at the Holy Land.

The first group, comprising 320 Malaysian haj pilgrims were expected to arrive at KLIA yesterday on a Saudi Airlines flight.

Jamil Khir said 77 chartered flights would depart from Jeddah to KLIA, Penang, Kota Kinabalu, Kuching and Kuala Terengganu.

The last flight back was expected to arrive on Nov 29 if all the flights arrived according to schedule.

— Bernama