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Tabung Haji to find ways to absorb Haj cost

MECCA: Lembaga Tabung Haji will find ways to absorb the haj pilgrimage cost for muassasah pilgrims due to rising cost of accommodation in Mecca and Madinah, including through long-term rental agreement, said its Chief Executive Officer Datuk Ismee Ismail.

He said Tabung Haji was able to maintain the rental of the accommodations through long-term agreements of between five and 10 years.

Although it is still too early to make a study on the rising cost of haj pilgrimage, he said Tabung Haji would take steps to offset the increase as being done before.

"Tabung Haji had been able to absorb the rising cost of air fares due to higher fuel prices and rental of accommodations in the Holy Land for the past three years.

"The actual cost of performing the haj currently is RM15,150, but a pilgrim had to pay only RM9,980 while the remainder was absorbed by Tabung Haji through profits derived from our investments," he said here Saturday.

Saudi Arabia is embarking on a massive development of Mecca and Medina by tearing down old buildings to make way for hotels for pilgrims.

Ismee said Malaysian pilgrims might have to stay further from Masjidil Haram (Grand Mosque) here if the hotels they used to stay were demolished to make way for five-star hotels. - Bernama