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Those going on umrah urged to heed health advisory

PETALING JAYA — Malaysians planning to perform their umrah have been urged to heed the advice and alert pertaining to the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV).

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said yesterday Malaysia had neither imposed any restriction nor advised the

people to postpone their umrah.

"I read that the Saudi Arabian government has advised the people to possibly postpone their umrah trips," he said after witnessing the presentation of the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) accreditation to Sunway Medical Centre.

"The Saudi Arabian

government has given such advice, so it is up to our people to listen to the advice and make a wise decision on their safety and health."

Gulf Daily News said several haj and umrah pilgrimage establishments in Saudi Arabia had ceased accepting applications from pilgrims aged over 60, as well as children,

following a health ministry advisory which was recently circulated.

MERS-CoV has claimed more than 100 lives in Saudi Arabia.

On April 13, Malaysia recorded its first death related to MERS-CoV after a 54-year-old man contracted the MERS-CoV while performing umrah in Mecca.

The victim from Batu Pahat, Johor, died at the Sultanah Nora Ismail Hospital of severe pneumonia from MERS-CoV infection, the first casualty reported in the country and region.

Sunway Medical Centres the first hospital in Southeast Asia to be accredited to the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.