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State's Haj pilgrims the best, says official

BY NUR AIN OTSMAN

KUCHING: Haj Pilgrims from Sarawak have been considered the best because they never have conflicts with pilgrims from other states while being in the Holy Land Mecca.

According to the Islamic Affairs Officer from the Planning and Research Section of the Sarawak Islamic Department, Ustaz Hazimin Shakir Said, all the Haj pilgrims from Sarawak this year were ready to perform their Haj pilgrimage and *umrah* and not just going there for the sake of touring.

"While being in the Holy Land, all our Haj pilgrims had done their best and did not involve in any conflict or having problem with

pilgrims from other states or countries," he said.

He made the comment when being interviewed by *New Sarawak Tribune* upon their arrival at Kuching International Airport (KIA) in the early hours of Monday morning.

Hazimin who is advisor to the Haj pilgrims of Sarawak Islamic Council added, the state's Haj pilgrims always listened to advice and were very cooperative apart from giving each other mutual help.

"This excellent attitude shown by our pilgrims has resulted in the best pilgrimage implementation without any untoward incident and free of conflict or problem with other contingents.

Meanwhile, five of this year's pilgrims from Sarawak were rushed to

the hospital and one from Bekenu, Miri died.

"One pilgrim died but luckily God willing, managed to completely performed the Haj. For that matter all the pilgrims succeeded in performing their Haj and *umrah* this year," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, he said he felt very honoured for having able to help the pilgrims from Sarawak in performing their Haj and *umrah* despite being given the task for the first time as advisor and guide to the pilgrims.

Also present at KIA to welcome the pilgrims early Monday morning were President of The Sarawak Islamic Council Datu Haji Misnu Haji Taha and Director of Lembaga Tabung Haji Kuching, Haji Rozimin Ahamed Kamil.

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HAJ pilgrims hug their family members upon their arrival at the KIA on Monday. PHOTO: ANDRE OLIVEIRO