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# 'Don't abuse umrah visa'

**OVERSTAYING IN SAUDI ARABIA:** Actions of Malaysians may affect the haj quota for our country, says Jamil Khir

**ROSHIDI ABU SAMAH**

**T**HE act by some Malaysians to overstay in Saudi Arabia, by abusing their umrah visa, will only erode the trust and confidence of the Saudi Arabian government towards the Malaysian government.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said he feared that such action might also affect the haj quota for Malaysia.

He said many Malaysians caught overstaying in the kingdom had planned to perform the haj using their umrah visa.

"In their eagerness to perform the haj, they must be reminded that they should not cheat in any way.

"This is something that Malaysi-

ans need to take heed of seriously as we do not want the Saudi Arabia government to perceive Malaysians as problematic," he said at the World Conference on Islamic Thought and Civilisation 2012 here yesterday.

*"In their eagerness to perform the haj, they must be reminded that they should not cheat in any way."*

**Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom**

He was commenting on a news report that an attempt by a group of 250 Malaysians to overstay in Saudi Arabia by abusing their umrah visa was foiled after their travel agency reported them to authorities in the kingdom.

Jamil, however, said Tabung Haji was not responsible for issuing the umrah visa for Malaysians.

Previously, the Saudi Arabian government had considered to restrict or suspend the entry of haj and umrah pilgrims from Malaysia following the opposition-backed Bersih demonstrations in Mecca and Madinah on April 26.