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Haj pilgrims to undergo stringent health screening

WOULD-BE haj pilgrims will have to undergo more stringent health screening due to the outbreak of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in Saudi Arabia, said Lembaga Tabung Haji chairman Datuk Seri Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim. He said Tabung Haji, with the help of the Health Ministry, will ensure that would-be pilgrims are in good health before leaving for the holy land to prevent them from contracting the virus. "Tabung Haji has the best health screening system for would-be pilgrims and wants to avoid them from succumbing to illness while performing the pilgrimage," he told reporters after opening an entrepreneurship seminar in Kota Baru yesterday. The MERS-CoV has claimed 168 lives in Saudi Arabia since September 2012. Abdul Azeez said despite stringent health screening, Malaysia's pilgrim quota will not be affected and added that over one million people are on the pilgrim waiting list. — *Bernama*