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S'wak only state providing assistance to Haj pilgrims

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Datu Putit Matze, MIS president

Saiful Bahari

KUCHING: Sarawak remains the only state in Malaysia to provide assistance to its Haj pilgrims.

The special service provided by the State Islamic Council (MIS), which started in the 1990s, is solely aimed at rendering guidance to those unclear on the pilgrimage flow and procedures.

According to MIS president Datu Putit Matzen, officers selected for the special service were picked from agencies such as MIS, State Mufti Office, Judicial Department, State Islamic Religious Department (Jais), Sarawak Baitulmal Fund, Pejabat Imam Besar Sarawak and MIS Education Service Bureau.

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conducted since early January this year and those interested will need to sit for a test. Shortlisted candidates will need to sit for an interview. They will then be selected from among the best," said Putit.

He was speaking at the 'Al-Wida' ceremony cum presentation of uniforms to MIS Haj assistant officers at its office yesterday.

On the officers, he pointed out that it was important for them to be conversant in various local dialects in order to be able to communicate effectively with the pilgrims.

"The main issue is some of the pilgrims, especially those from

the rural areas, are unable to understand 'Bahasa Malaysia' used by Tabung Haji officers, since most converse in local dialects. This was among the main reasons why MIS came up with this service," he said.

The three persons selected to become MIS Haj assistants are Mustapha Kamal Ahmad from MIS, Rahman Nudin from the Syariah Judicial Department and Alsagap Beli from Jais.

The ceremony was also attended by State Imam Jorji Suhaili and state Tabung Haji director Hamid Awang.



HAJ ASSISTANT: Putit (third right) helps Mustapha put on the uniform as Jorji (right), Hamid (second right) and others look on.