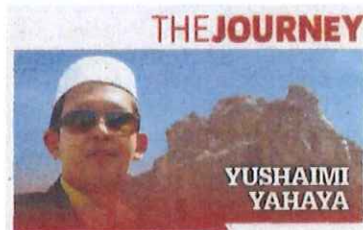


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2,208 to perform haj under special packages



MECCA: A total of 2,208 Malaysian pilgrims will perform their haj under the special private packages offered by 16 Malaysian agencies.

Haj Package Organiser Operations director Mat Admara Alang Azizdin said of the total, 847 had chosen packages run by TH Travel and Services Sdn Bhd.

"These pilgrims had registered with Tabung Haji (TH) just like the rest and were given offer letters. However, instead of opting for the muassasah package, they have chosen the special packages."

The packages are available for between RM22,000 and RM220,000.

This is compared with the muassasah package for which a pilgrim pays RM9,980 each, while another RM8,910 is footed by TH.

Mat Admara said the difference between the muassasah and special packages were the distance to Masjidil Haram and the Jamrah areas,

food and beverages, rooms and tents at Ararat and Mina.

On the agencies, he said the number had dwindled from a total of 32.

"This was due to the lower number of pilgrims using the services and also because we did not renew the annual licences of some of agencies," said Mat Admara.

He said those who failed to get their licences renewed had committed offences, such as taking in more pilgrims than promised in their brochures and breaching their building capacity.

"We constantly monitor the packages. Demerit points will be given to agencies that commit offences."

Those who failed to get a score of 80 per cent would not have their licences renewed. Mat Admara advised pilgrims to use only the services of TH-approved agencies.

"Those with complaints against these agencies must report to us while still here. This will allow us to verify the complaints. This is also to ensure fairness, as there have been cases where the complaints were inaccurate."



Mat Admara Alang Azizdin