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Jamil Khir: PM'S intervention sought to resolve Haj quota

KUALA LUMPUR: Proactive measures are being taken by the government to ensure the opposition-backed Bersih demonstrations held in Mecca and Medina last 26 April will not affect the Haj quota for Malaysia, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom.

He said many potential pilgrims had raised concerns that the incident could adversely affect their chances of going for the haj pilgrimage this year.

This followed reports that the Saudi Arabian government was considering restricting or suspending the entry of Haj and Umrah pilgrims from Malaysia following the incident.

Jamil Khir said he would seek the assistance of Prime Minister

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, whose has good relations with the Saudi Arabian government, to resolve the problem.

"I will request the Prime Minister to help us by contacting King Abdullah and the Saudi Arabian government so that this year's Haj quota for Malaysia will be as expected because we have made the necessary preparations," he told reporters after a meeting with the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Malaysia Fahad Al Rashid at the Tabung Haji building here yesterday.

Jamil Khir said Fahad brought to his attention that countries with problems, like Egypt, Libya and Iraq, did not bring their problems to the holy cities.

During the meeting, Jamil

Khir said he informed Fahad about Malaysia's concern on the Haj quota and hoped that an announcement on the matter would be made before the fasting month.

He said that that currently 930,000 people had met the conditions to perform the Haj and were on the waiting list, while the Haj quota was limited to only 28,000 people.

Jamil Khir said he would also write a letter to the Saudi Arabian Minister of Haj and Wakaf on the matter.

The letter would be personally handed to the Saudi Arabian minister by Tabung Haji Senior General Manager of Haj, Datuk Syed Saleh Syed Abdul Rahman, next week, he added. - Bernama