

**Be cautious when paying for haj packages using invitation visas, pilgrims reminded**

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Tourism Agency Association (MATA) has advised prospective haj pilgrims to exercise caution before making any payment to parties offering haj packages using the invitation visa.

MATA president Datuk Dr Mohd Khalid Harun warned that some parties may make various promises to attract pilgrims to purchase their haj packages.

"Every year, we hear various news about pilgrims stranded at Kuala Lumpur International Airport or Jeddah International Airport and so on.

"MATA urges pilgrims not to make any payments until they receive confirmation that their application for the invitation visa has been accepted."

Khalid said the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Haj provides an official online platform for pilgrims to purchase their accommodations in Mekah and Madinah, tents in Arafa, and transportation.

He also noted that the invitation visa is typically accepted at the last minute. — Bernama