



2 million pilgrims arrive in Makkah to perform Hajj

JEDDAH, August 31st – With the annual Hajj pilgrimage having officially started, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has announced the arrival of 2 million pilgrims to the Holy City of Makkah.

Saudi Arabia shoulders the responsibility of organising and conducting the pilgrimage, under the supervision of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, as well as Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

“Hosting Hajj each year is an honour and a great responsibility for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, one we hold dear to our hearts. We spare no effort when it comes to the well-being of pilgrims and our number one priority is to welcome individuals from all over the world as they seek to fulfil their religious and spiritual duty,” said HE Dr. Awwad Alawwad, Minister of Culture and Information.

Welcoming the world

This year, pilgrims have come from over dozens of countries. Among other nationalities, Saudi Arabia has to date welcomed:

- 184,000 pilgrims from Pakistan
- 170,000 pilgrims from India
- 127,000 pilgrims from Bangladesh
- 90,000 pilgrims from Turkey
- 41,200 pilgrims from Malaysia
- 23,500 pilgrims from Russia
- 12,700 pilgrims from China
- 6,000 pilgrims from the Philippines
- 3,500 pilgrims from South Africa

Hajj by the numbers

About 94 per cent of pilgrims have arrived by air. In order to reduce congestion and facilitate smooth passenger movement, the airports in Jeddah and Madinah have built dedicated terminals for pilgrims.

Some pilgrims travel by bus, minivan and car. This year, more than 30,000 vehicles have arrived. There are over 17,000 special buses operated by more than 22,000 drivers that transport pilgrims within the venue.

During Hajj, over 2.64 million meals are distributed daily. More than 2,000 Saudi Red Crescent Authority personnel have been deployed in Makkah, Madinah and other holy sites to provide ambulance services for pilgrims.



According to the Saudi Ministry of Health, more than 2,100 free medical procedures have already been performed on pilgrims.

Humans of Hajj

Beyond the impressive numbers and the logistical endeavour that managing the logistics around Hajj represents, the pilgrimage is both a deeply individual and a communal spiritual moment, as Muslims, regardless of their age and background, come together to observe their faith.

One of this year's oldest pilgrims is 104-year-old Mariah Marghani Muhammad from Indonesia. For her, as for others a wide range of services has been made available to ensure their comfort during their stay in Saudi Arabia.

Modern technology

Even though Hajj is one of the world's oldest pilgrimage, it incorporates modern technology to enhance the experience of pilgrims and ensure their safety and well-being. To this end, every pilgrim has been given an electronic identification bracelet containing personal and medical information to enable the Hajj authorities to identify individuals and provide necessary care.

The water-resistant and GPS-enabled bracelets that inform the pilgrims about prayer times also feature a multi-lingual help desk for non-Arabic speaking pilgrims.

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Culture and Information has launched two portals - Hajj2017.org and SaudiWelcomesTheWorld.org - to provide further assistance to pilgrims, as well as keep the rest of the world, including global media, informed and updated during this period.

Hajj concludes on September 4.

Media Contact

For any queries, please contact:

The Center for International Communication (CIC), Ministry of Culture and Information, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Telephone: +966 53 839 3535, email: cic@moci.gov.sa, Twitter: @CICSaudi