

Haj Committee of India

(Statutory body constituted under the Act of Parliament No.35 of 2002)
Under Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India.

Ref.No.HC-13/167/2020-21.

27th May, 2021.

CIRCULAR

Haj-2021

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In continuation of this Office Circular No.4 dated 15th April, 2021 regarding Health Advisory issued by Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Haj-2021.

2. New advisory has been issued by the Saudi Health Authority for Haj-2021 (copy attached). As such, Haj Committee of India seeks details from the Haj applicants who are willing to perform Haj-2021 under the ongoing pandemic period.

3. It is requested to submit following information on the website of Haj Committee of India hajcommittee.gov.in :-

- i) Vaccination details i.e. Number of Doses taken with Vaccine Name (Vaccination Certificate to be uploaded);
- ii) Have ever been hospitalised during last 6 months? (Health certificate to be uploaded);
- iii) Whether interested to proceed for Haj-2021 (under Pandemic Period).

4. It is, however, clarified that yet no official communication with respect to allocation of Haj Quota to Indian Haj Pilgrims has been received from Saudi Government. All the process of Haj-2021 will be subject to approval of Saudi authorities.


(Dr. Maqsood Ahmed Khan)
Chief Executive Officer.

1. The Executive Officer, All State / UT State Haj Committees.
2. The Joint Secretary (Haj), Ministry of Minority Affairs, New Delhi.
3. The Deputy Secretary (Haj), Ministry of Minority Affairs, New Delhi.
4. Computer Section, HCOI for uploading on website.

Expansion in the implementation of protocols and procedures suitably matching the number of Hajjis and spaces of tents at the utilities of Holy Mashair sites.

Introduction

Referring to the telegram of His Royal Highness, Adviser to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Governor of Makkah Region Al-Mukarramah No. 920026 Meem Ba Seen dated 06/22/1442 AH, based on the telegram of His Royal Highness the Minister of Interior, Chairman of the Supreme Hajj Committee No. 166200 dated 12/09 /1442H recommending therein a number of recommendations including enhancing the utilization of health protocols and precautionary measures implemented by government agencies participated in the Hajj in 1441 AH, through the Ministry of Health in coordination with the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah and the Royal Commission for the city of Makkah and the holy sites to study the feasibility of implementing these protocols and procedures in proportion to the number of pilgrims, the spaces of the tents, and the facilities in the holy sites and submit the conclusion to the Supreme Hajj Committee.

Whereas, the number of pilgrims for this year has been fixed to sixty thousand pilgrims, with a review of what comes later in the epidemiological situations locally and globally, and where this year has developed the availability of effective and approved vaccines against the emerging corona virus epidemic, which was in the process of laboratory and clinical studies during the same period last year.

Therefore, it is necessary to formulate protocols consistent with the existence of effective and approved vaccines and utilization the policy of obliging all candidates for this year's Hajj, in addition to all those concerned to work in the Hajj areas and including it among the necessary preventive requirements during the Hajj season 1442 H.

Procedures before arriving to the Hajj regions

Health requirements to enable those wishing to perform Hajj for the 1442 season:

- ✓ The age group allowed to perform the Hajj this year 1442, is from 18 years to 60 years,
- ✓ Good health condition, candidates should be free from acute chronic diseases (ensure that they had not undergone dialysis or had chronic diseases that required hospitalization during the period of past six months period), with a medical report proving they are in good health as part of the requirements to get permission for Haj.
- ✓ Vaccines and PCR examination for the new Corona virus before coming to Hajj areas which will be as follows:

Firstly: External Hajis: This is to endorsing what has been mentioned in the minutes of the meeting held on 4th Shawwal 1442H and implementing what has been mentioned in the cable of His Highness under No. 55163 dated 24th Ramadan 1442H regarding the proposal of vaccines and the necessary mechanism in relation to Hajj (attached) and that includes the following:

- The pilgrims must have received the full doses of approved Covid-19 vaccines in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, all pilgrims are required to present a certificate proving the same which are attested from the official health authorities in their countries and the gap between the last dose of two doses vaccine or the first dose of the single dose should not be less than 14 days.
- All pilgrims must present a PCR examination certificate with a negative result that they are free of the emerging corona virus, issued by a reliable laboratory from country of the pilgrims. This should not exceed 72 hours from the sample collecting time until departure to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Pilgrims without certification of negative test will not be permitted to board the plane.

Secondly: Domestic Hajis:

- For applying to perform Hajj, at least one dose is required for the applicant from an approved vaccine 6 - 8 weeks ago and it is necessary to take second dose as soon as the initial acceptance is obtained for Hajj, for a period of not less than two weeks before proceeding to the Hajj regions.
- Also, a swab test is requested to make sure that it is free from infection with the new Corona virus within 48 hours before heading to the Haj regions.

Procedures on arrival in Haj regions

Approved procedures of arrival points of Haj for both external and internal Hajis.

1. Ensure all necessary health documents to verify their compliance by making use of electronic connectivity (Tawakkalna App)
2. Review and verify vaccination certificates
3. Perform visual screening procedures
4. Providing the necessary educational messages
5. Grouping of Hajis within the lanes designated for transport area of Haj areas (Buses or trains) considering the approved precautionary procedures (keeping distance/wearing mask/sanitization of hand).

Procedures at the accommodations of Hajjis

1. Applying the procedures of visual and thermal screening at the time of their entry and exit.
2. Allocating the pilgrims' accommodation (hotels) in Makkah and Madinah, provided that they are in conformity with the requirements required by the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Hajj, and other authorities concerned with monitoring the pilgrims' housing. Taking into account the application of procedures to prevent congestion inside the rooms and the provision of catering services for each pilgrim in his room without a need to gather in dining halls and prevent open buffets.
3. Institutional quarantine for pilgrims abroad for a period of three days upon arrival in the Kingdom in their residence and the PCR swab performed during it.
4. Applying the mechanism of the health advisor (health leader) from the concerned authority throughout his stay of the pilgrim in the Hajj areas and during his travels to ensure the implementation of preventive behaviors and measures.
5. Educating pilgrims that if there are suspicious symptoms, they should go to consult a doctor directly in the interest of their safety and the safety of Muslims coming to perform the Hajj.

Procedure in Holy sites, Haramain, Markazia area in Makkah & Madinah

The grouping of pilgrims:

The grouping of pilgrims in all its stages shall be in smaller batches than what was applied during previous years ensuring the spatial distancing, in addition to creating tents and screening points in the pedestrian road and the area Jamarat and train stations.

Night stay in Mina:

Residential Buildings and Tents:

- Bags of the guests should be disinfected, the luggage trolley should be periodically disinfected and assigning a worker for that duty.
- Security guards are assigned to organize the exit of pilgrims according to the time allotted to them.
- To adhere the protocol of tourist accommodation facilities.

Movement to Arafat:

- Each group shall a bus and a seat number assigned to each pilgrim during the entire Hajj trip with the follow-up to achieve the precautionary measures when getting on and off the buses.
- Pilgrims should not be allowed to stand during the trip.
- Allowing families to sit together
- Stopping work on the bus until complete disinfection, in the event that a passenger is confirmed to have a disease Covid-16
- The number of passengers should not exceed 50% of the total bus capacity, and to leave at least a seat free between each passenger.
- Passengers must carry their luggage.
- Also adhere to the bus protocol issued by the National Center for Disease Prevention.

Arafat Day and Stay in Muzdalifa:

- Must stay in the designated places and not deviate from the previously allocated path by the operator.
- Emphasize the obligation to wear masks
- It should be limited to pre packed food only.
- Prevent gatherings and maintain social distancing
- The number of pilgrims must not exceed more than 10 pilgrims for 50 square meters of the area of the tents.

Stay in Mina and Throwing in Jamrat:

- Providing stones to the pilgrims in disinfected bags packed by the organizer.
- The pilgrims' departure to the Jamarat shall be scheduled so that the number does not exceed fifty pilgrims for each floor of the Jamarat or according to the capacity ensuring the distance of 1.5 meter between individuals and according to the allotted time that has been booked in advance for each group.
- Providing adequate masks and sanitizing materials in prominent places.

Makkah & Madinah Haram

The continued presence of the relevant authorities at the borders of the Grand Mosque in Makkah and the Civil Campus and prevent persons who are not authorized to enter,

and to apply thermal screening at the gates of the two Holy Mosques under the supervision of the Presidency of two Holy Mosques, in addition to:

- A permit to perform the Hajj through the electronic Hajj portal or via an E-application.
- Ensure that there is a safe distance between all people and prevent overcrowding.
- Fix the entry and exit doors to prevent interference between them.
- Providing thermal cameras to take the temperature at the entrances and in the event of rise in temperature or suspicion, they shall be prevented from entering and shall be referred to the specialists in the Ministry of Health.
- A warning shall be given to worker not to attend the duty who has symptoms or has been in contact with a positive case within 14 days and confirm this by reviewing Tawakkalna App for employees and workers.
- Permission to enter those coming to Haram provided not to exceed the specified percentage of the capacity.
- Removing carpets from prayer areas and pray on marble and to restrict the prayer on clear floor stickers to determine the locations of the worshipers to achieving the physical spacing (approximately 2 meters).
- Providing services in a way that meets health requirements in ablution areas and providing sterilizers and avoid chairs for the prayer (except for chairs for people with special needs) and continue lifting of Qur'an, flasks and Zamzam.
- To continue ban on carrying food to the Two Holy Mosques.
- Continue to suspend the classes and and Quran memorization sessions.
- Providing awareness materials to the pilgrims and to publish special signboards related with preventive measures and procedures.
- Health education for workers from all participating sectors.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched tools and surfaces.
- Providing sanitizers by all participating authorities.

Remarks to be considered:

- Continue prayer ban in the outside halls due to the impossibility of applying visual screening outside the boundaries.
- Failure to issue permits to individuals under the age of 18 or over 60 years.
- The first floor is assigned to awaf for the people with special needs.
- The movement of external pilgrims is prohibited outside the holy sites, or their movement to other regions.
- Create a checkpoint at all entrances ensuring taking the temperature and asking about symptoms.
- Pilgrims must wear masks at all times during the Hajj journey.

- Waiting for pilgrims at assembly points must be organized by placing visible signs on the ground to ensure a distance of 1.5 meter between individuals.
- Providing Zamzam water with single-use containers.

Markazia area in Makkah & Madinah

- Recommending the formation of a joint committee from the relevant authorities to follow up on operating requirements hotels, restaurants and commercial centers in Markazia area according to the protocol approved for tourist accommodation.
- With regard to restaurants in Markazia area, the same necessary requirements for restaurant must be applied by prohibiting sitting inside and only to have parcel requests, with an obligation to provide all requirements for distance and adherence to sanitizing and the required precautionary measures.
- The competent authorities shall determine the most suitable place for parking and issue a curfew decision in Markazia area and setting specific penalties for that.

Services providers

- The seasonal employment protocols must be applied to workers during the Hajj season and be completed and to ensure that they receive the Corona vaccine at least 14 days before the start of the season.
- The allocation of 5000 workers in case the number of pilgrims is less than 60 thousand.
- It is prohibited to enter the holy sites (Mina, Muzdalifah, Arafat) without Tasreeh, w.e.f 29/11/1442 H until the end of the 15th day of the month of Dhil-Hijjah, 1442 AH.
- The temperature of all service providers must be taken and recorded daily
- Tawakalna application will be used to check the health status of all service providers on a daily basis, with regard to Covid-19 disease, it is prohibited the presence of any person with a positive case, or contact with a positive case as indicated in the application.
- The suspected and confirmed cases of the workers will be dealt according to the procedures for dealing with cases in the workplace.
- Care must be taken to wear masks always for those in-charges in Haj path and all workers throughout the Hajj.
- The disinfection of environmental surfaces and toilets should be committed on a scheduled periodic basis with an emphasis on places with high potential for contact and after every use.
- Distribute hand sanitizers and place them in prominent places

- Ensure good ventilation
- Congregational (Jamaath) prayers are permitted, with an emphasis on keeping a distance between worshippers and referring to protocols of mosques.
- Providing drinking water in single-use bottles.
- Removing or deactivating all refrigerators
- Prevent crowding in toilets and ablution sinks by placing floor stickers or deactivating the use of a number of bathrooms or sinks, with the necessity of presence of supervisors.

Mechanism of Action

- ❖ Strengthening the mechanisms of cooperation and coordination between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah and government sectors that provide health services during the Hajj season and all Relevant sectors regarding the implementation of health plans during the Hajj season in applying protocols and procedures in proportion to the number of pilgrims this year 1442H by achieving the necessary precautionary measures to prevent the spread of epidemic diseases.
- ❖ Develop a preparedness and response plan and ensure that the plan is aligned with the comprehensive national plans for emergency preparedness and response in general and Covid-19 in particular.
- ❖ Epidemiological investigation of Covid-19 cases related to Hajj rituals and monitoring, containing, spreading the virus, treating the sick people, and spreading awareness messages about Covid-19 in culturally appropriate ways in the languages of the pilgrims.
- ❖ Establish a clear command and control path to enable to effective situation analysis and to take efficient and effective decision-making.
- ❖ Capacity assessment, resources and provision of human resources, medical consumables, isolation rooms Etc., in close coordination with other relevant authorities.
- ❖ Setting up a hospital in Mina (Mina al-Wadi) and two health centers in Mina, adjacent to the headquarters assigning it to accommodate pilgrims, and setting up a hospital in Arafat (Jabal Al-Rahma) and two health centers in Arafat within the pilgrims' camps.
- ❖ Setting up a health center in Muzdalifah.
- ❖ And take advantage of the presence of emergency teams equipped in all locations of pilgrims and during their travels.