

**1000 Haj pilgrims died due to heat in Saudi:
658 of them from Egypt, 70 from India
This year 1.75 lakh Indians went to Haj**





Pilgrims who reached Saudi Arabia for Hajj are dying due to the heat. Among the dead are citizens of Iran, India, Indonesia, Egypt and Tunisia.

Why in NEWS?

1000 people who had gone to perform Hajj in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, have died due to the heat. An Arabic diplomat said that among those killed, about 658 pilgrims were from Egypt alone. And 1400 people are still missing.

However, like Saudi Arabia, no confirmation has been made so far regarding the number of deaths. Amidst the scorching heat in the Middle East, the temperature in Mecca was recorded at 51.8 degrees Celsius on June 17. Whereas on June 18, the mercury remained at 47 degrees with some relief.



The picture is of Mecca, where the pilgrims who came to perform Haj are seen suffering from the sun and heat.

According to the report, 70 Indian pilgrims have also died during Hajj which ran from June 12 to 19.

According to Haj Committee of India, this year a maximum of 1,75,000 Indians reached Mecca for Haj pilgrimage.

Kerala Haj Minister Abdurrahiman on Wednesday demanded the Central Government to take necessary steps for the safety of Indians.



Haj pilgrims in Mecca have fallen ill due to the scorching heat.

18.2 thousand people from Kerala went to perform Haj

According to media reports, for this Haj Minister wrote a letter to Foreign Minister S Jaishankar and the Indian Consulate in Jeddah. About 18 thousand 200 Hajis from Kerala had gone to Saudi Arabia.

Minister Abdurrahiman wrote that after reaching Jeddah, the pilgrims had to face a lot of problems. They had to wait for hours to get to Assisi, 30 km away. Apart from this, the arrangements for staying there were also not made properly.

According to AFP, among the pilgrims who died are citizens of Indonesia, Jordan, Iran and Tunisia. Saudi diplomats told news agency AFP that the number of Egyptian pilgrims among those who died is high because many of them had not registered for Haj.



Pilgrims reach Saudi Arabia for Hajj even without visa

Every year there are thousands of pilgrims going for Hajj who do not have visa for it. Due to lack of money, such travelers reach Mecca by wrong means. Earlier this month, Saudi Arabia had removed thousands of unregistered Hajj pilgrims from Mecca.

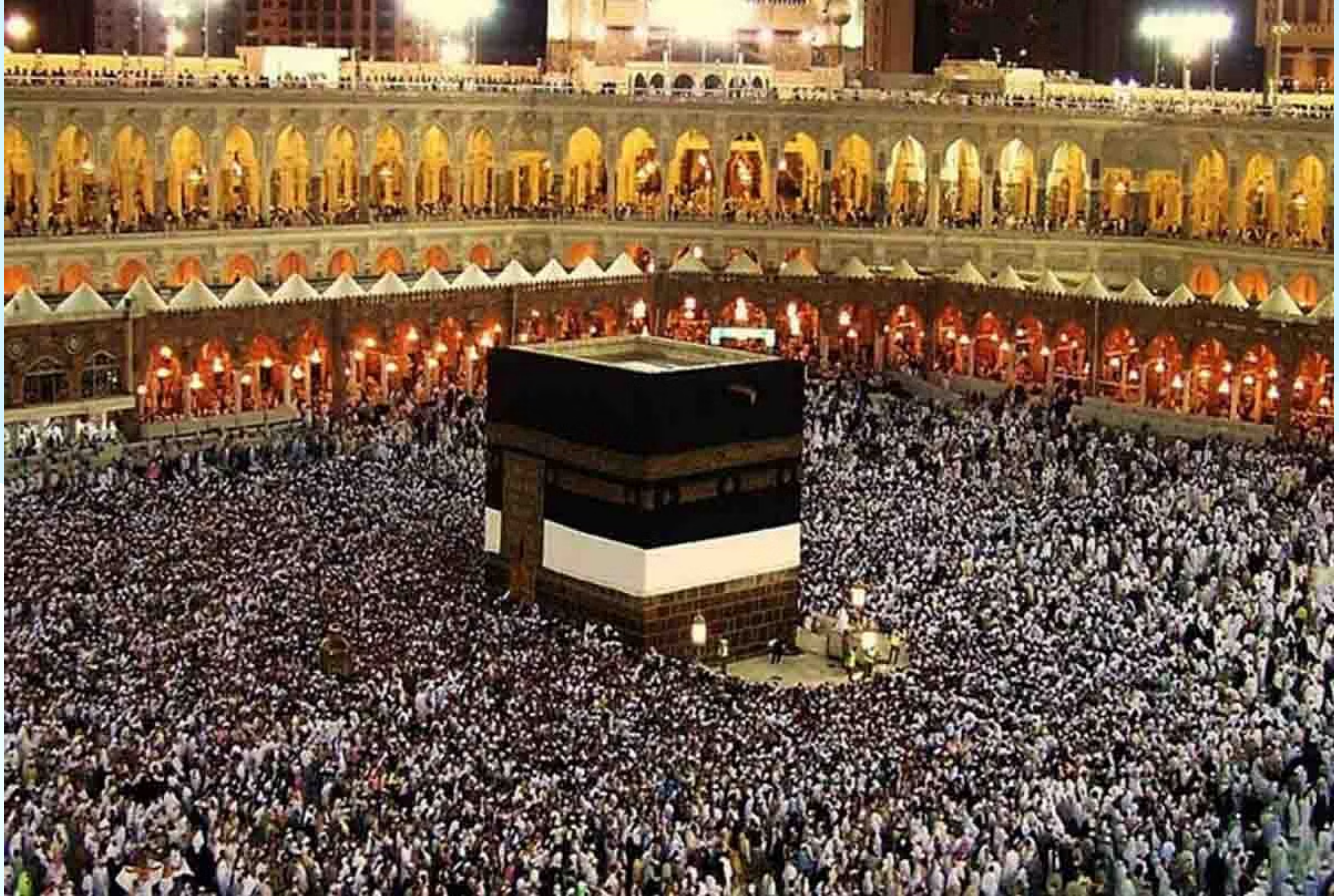
According to Saudi Arabian officials, climate change is having a deep impact on Mecca. The average temperature here is increasing by 0.4 degrees Celsius every 10 years. Last year, 240 Haj pilgrims died on Haj. Most of these were from Indonesia. This year around 18 lakh Haj pilgrims have arrived for Haj. Of these, 16 lakh people are from other countries.

What is Hajj?

Hajj is one of the five duties in the religion of Islam. According to beliefs, every Muslim person has to fulfill this duty at least once in his life. According to BBC News, in the year 628, Prophet Mohammad started a journey with his 1400 disciples. This became the first pilgrimage of Islam and in this journey the religious tradition of Prophet Ibrahim was reestablished. This is called Hajj.

Every year Muslims from all over the world reach Mecca in Saudi Arabia for Hajj. Hajj takes five days and ends with Eid al-Adha or Bakrid. Saudi Arabia prepares Hajj quota according to each country.

Among these, Indonesia has the highest quota. After this comes Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nigeria. Apart from this, Haj pilgrims come from many countries including Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Ethiopia. Hajj pilgrims first reach Jeddah city of Saudi Arabia. From there they go to Mecca city by bus.



It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is considered a central part of Muslim religious life

○ Five Pillars:

- **Shahada (Faith):** The declaration of faith in the oneness of God and the acceptance of Muhammad as God's prophet.
- **Salah (Prayer):** Performing the five daily prayers facing the Kaaba in Mecca.
- **Zakat (Charity):** Giving a portion of one's wealth to those in need.
- **Sawm (Fasting):** Fasting during the month of Ramadan.
- **Hajj (Pilgrimage):** Making a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca at least once in a lifetime if one is physically and financially able.

5 Pillars of Islam

Shahada
Faith



Salah
Prayer



Sawm
Fasting



Zakat
Almsgiving



Hajj
Pilgrimage



- Dhu al-Hijjah is the twelfth and final month of the Islamic calendar. It is considered one of the most sacred months in the Islamic year and is seen as a time of renewal, spiritual growth, and reflection, and is considered an important time to strive for greater closeness with God.
- Participating in the Hajj is seen as a way to demonstrate one's devotion to God and to earn spiritual merit, and it is a source of great pride and inspiration for many Muslims.

How is Hajj Pilgrimage Promoted by India?

Ministry of Minority Affairs is the **nodal ministry** to conduct Hajj pilgrimage in India.

Hajj pilgrimage for the Indian Pilgrims is conducted either through Hajj Committee of India (HCoI), which is a statutory organization under the administrative control of Ministry of Minority Affairs or through the **Hajj Group Organisers (HGOs) dully approved by Ministry.**

Also, the Hajj pilgrimage is promoted by various **religious organizations, Islamic cultural centers,** and other government agencies.

- The pilgrims wear simple white garments (Ihram) to symbolize equality and purity.
- The pilgrims circle the **Kaaba**, a black cubic structure at the **Grand Mosque**, seven times in a counter-clockwise direction, and kiss or touch the **Black Stone** on its corner.
 - This ritual is called **Tawaf**, which means "going round and round" in Arabic.