

Haj-17/12/2024-HAJ-MoMA
Government of India
Ministry of Minority Affairs
Haj Division

11th Floor,
Antyodaya Bhawan,
CGO Complex, Lodi Road,
New Delhi – 110 003,
Dated 5th August 2024.

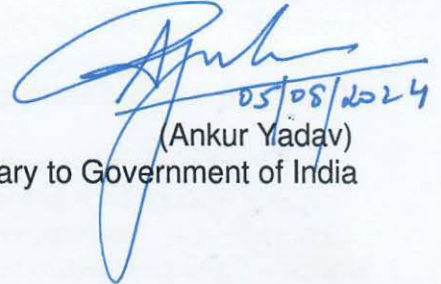
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Announcement of Haj Policy- 2025-reg.

The Haj policy-2025 has been approved by the Competent Authority, after detailed consultations with different stakeholders and taking into account the norms and guidelines received from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

2. A copy of the Haj Policy 2025 is enclosed herewith for reference, wide circulation and further necessary action.
3. Any change or addendum to the said policy, if required, as a consequence of the sovereign Annual Bilateral Agreement, to be signed between India and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or other administrative contingencies, shall be announced in due course.

Enclosure: As above.


05/08/2024
(Ankur Yadav)

Deputy Secretary to Government of India

Copy for information and necessary action:

1. Chief Secretaries of all States/ UT (as per list)
2. Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi
3. Ministry of Civil Aviation, New Delhi
4. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi
5. Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi
6. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, New Delhi
7. Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, New Delhi
8. Consulate General of India, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
9. CEO, Haj Committee of India, Mumbai
10. Executive Officer, State/UT Haj Committees (as per list).

Copy for information to:

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister, Minority Affairs
2. PS to Hon'ble MoS, Minority Affairs
3. Sr.PPS to Secretary, MA

Haj Policy, 2025

1. Division of Haj Seats between Haj Committee of India (HCoI) and Haj Group Organisers (HGOs)

The Government of India (GoI) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) sign the Haj Agreement every year, in which the number of Haj seats allocated to India is incorporated. Out of the total number of quota allocated to the Government of India (GoI), 70% will be allocated to the HCoI and the remaining 30% will be allocated to HGOs.

2. Once in a lifetime, Haj through HCoI

Those who have performed Haj earlier through HCoI will not be eligible to apply.

Haj is an arduous and strenuous pilgrimage involving walking up to 25 km in a day in extremely harsh climatic conditions of KSA and hence it would be mandatory for pilgrims aged 65 or above (including such LWM pilgrims) to be accompanied by a companion.

In the case of "Mehram" for lady pilgrims and companions of the pilgrims aged 65 years or above, including Ladies Without Mehram (LWM) pilgrims aged 65 years or above, repeaters will be allowed on payment of additional charges as applicable from time to time.

The age of the "Mehram" and companions accompanying pilgrims aged 65 years or above must be 18 to 60 years as on the date specified by HCoI. However, companions accompanying LWM pilgrims aged 65 or above must be female and between the age of 45 to 60 years.

A lady pilgrim or pilgrims aged 65 or above, utilising the services of a repeater as "Mehram" or companion as the case may be, must give a solemn undertaking to the effect that no first time "Mehram" or companion, as applicable, is available in the family

3. Haj Suvidha App

A dedicated 'Haj Suvidha' App has been launched during Haj-2024 with the objective of leveraging Information Technology towards providing greater ease and convenience to the Indian Haj pilgrims by facilitating access to training content, accommodation/flight/baggage details, emergency helpline (SOS), grievance redressal, feedback, language translation and miscellaneous information related to the pilgrimage.

All pilgrims are expected to familiarise themselves with this App. Advisories on the functionality of the App will be issued from time to time by HCoI.

4. Availability of Haj Application Forms (HAFs)

The Haj Application Forms (HAFs) can be filled by the pilgrims through the website of the HCoI at hajcommittee.gov.in which can also be accessed on mobile phones.

5. Eligibility for Haj

As per general Saudi guidelines on eligibility to perform Haj or Umrah, Haj pilgrim should be fit in various aspects: financial, physical, behavioral, and mental. As such, any Muslim citizen of India can apply for Haj pilgrimage except:

- a. Persons not in possession of machine-readable, valid Indian international passports as per HCoI guidelines
- b. Ban on Repeaters: A person who has performed Haj earlier in his/her life through HCoI except for permitted categories of "Mehrams" and those accompanying a pilgrim aged 65 or above including such LWM pilgrims (details at Clause- 6) on the basis of an appropriate solemn declaration and undertaking.
- c. Any person found to have furnished false information shall not be allowed to proceed for Haj. In such cases, he/she will be disqualified at any stage and de-boarded even at the embarkation point. The entire amount deposited by him/her shall also be forfeited. Besides, he/she may be prosecuted for making an incorrect/ false declaration. These restrictions will also apply for concealing the fact of having performed Haj earlier as well as for Haj-e-Badal pilgrims.
- d. Those with severe medical conditions such as terminal cancers, advanced cardiac, respiratory, liver, or kidney diseases; infectious tuberculosis disease, or senility.
- e. Ladies not accompanied by Sharia Mehram, except ladies covered at Clause 6.
- f. Ladies in the advanced stage of pregnancy: In the case of pregnant women in the advanced stages of pregnancy, international flying standards will be followed.
- g. Any person against whom a court order prohibiting travel abroad exists.

h. Consent of parents / legal guardian is mandatory for undertaking Haj by any applicant below the age of 18 years

6. Ladies travelling without their Mehrams

Ladies aged 45 or above, who wish to go for Haj but do not have a male Mehram and their school of thought (Maslak) permits, are allowed to travel in groups of 4 or more ladies.

Subject to the terms of KSA, single ladies may also apply, and HCoI may form a grouping with the ladies who applied under the category. Consulate General of India, Jeddah will also facilitate separate living arrangements for women traveling alone for the Pilgrimage.

In order to bring parity between other pilgrims aged 65 and above with LWM pilgrims in the same age bracket, and also in view of the arduous nature of the Haj pilgrimage, it has been decided that a female companion aged 45 to 60 years is a must for LWM pilgrims aged 65 or above and no LWM pilgrim aged 65 or above will be registered individually. Further, the conditions mentioned in Clause 12(a), (b) & (c), as applicable to pilgrims aged 65 or above, shall also apply to LWM pilgrims aged 65 or above.

7. Cover Size

The size of the Cover shall be minimum 1 (one) and Maximum 5 (five) Adults + 2 (two) Infants. (If the number of family members exceeds five (excluding 2 Infants), applications should be made in more than one cover).

Notes:

- i. 'Infants' are those applicants who would not have completed 2 years of age by the date of arrival of the last return Haj charter flight, which will be specified by HCoI. Infant travel is not free of cost and they will be charged 10% of the full airfare (decided by Ministry of Civil Aviation), which will be communicated in due course.
- ii. An applicant above 2 years of age will be charged as an adult pilgrim and full amount of airfare and Haj Amount has to be paid by them accordingly.

8. Composition of Cover – only Family Members & Near relatives

A maximum number of five (5) applicants along with a maximum of 2 infants comprising the family members or near relatives can apply in a single cover. The head of the cover shall be responsible for payment for the persons included in the cover. Under no circumstances, persons other than family and near relatives should be included in the cover. It is in the interest of pilgrims to ensure that only family members having blood relation or near relatives are included in the cover. In case a few pilgrims under one cover intend to prepone/postpone the date of flight, it would

not be permitted. Accommodation would be allocated gender wise in conformity with KSA's laws and applicable guidelines. If the head of cover himself cancels his application for Haj pilgrimage, he should indicate the name of another person from amongst the male members of such cover, as the head of the particular cover. If a male applicant, who is Mehram of the female applicant of cover, cancels his application for Haj pilgrimage, he must indicate the name of the other applicant from among the male members of the cover as "Mehram" along with his relation with the female applicant(s) of that cover, otherwise, application(s) of the female applicant(s) shall also be treated as cancelled. Change of Mehram is allowed only in specific cases on account of death/medical grounds.

9. Solemn declaration and undertaking for applicants aged 65 or above

The applications received in 65 or above age category are given top priority allocation of seats for that State/UT. However, in case more Haj applications are received in 65 or above age category than the allotted quota for state/UT, a draw of lots will be conducted among the 65 or above age category applicants as explained in clause 12 of the policy. This is to enable and facilitate assured seats to elderly and aged senior citizens desirous of performing Haj pilgrimage. Applicants in 65 or above age category shall submit a solemn declaration and undertaking in the format prescribed by HCoI. If the solemn declaration and undertaking is not enclosed or found incomplete or not in the format given, the Haj application shall be summarily rejected.

10. Solemn declaration and undertaking for General Category

In view of the "once in a life time Haj through HCoI" policy, all general category pilgrims shall submit a solemn declaration and undertaking in the format prescribed by HCoI. Solemn declaration and undertaking should be in English only. If the solemn declaration and undertaking is not enclosed or found incomplete or not in the format given, Haj Application shall be summarily rejected.

11. Order of Priority

While allotting seats of each state, the order of priority will be:

1. 65 or above Category including Ladies without Mehram (LWM) of 65 years or above (applicant along with companion).
2. Ladies without Mehram (LWM) between 45 and 65 years of age.
3. General Category;

12. 65 or above aged Applicant

It is decided that considering the arduous nature of the Haj pilgrimage, a companion is a must for pilgrims aged 65 or above and no pilgrim aged 65 or above will be registered as a lone member under reserved category. The pilgrims of 65 years and above will be registered under Reserved Category, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Applicant who completes 65 years or more as per the cut off date which will be specified by HCoI in the Haj Guidelines.
- b. One companion is a must for pilgrims aged 65 or above and no pilgrim aged 65 or above will be registered alone under reserved category. In case of LWM pilgrims aged 65 or above, a female companion of the age 45-60 is a must.
- c. For non-LWM pilgrims of the age of 65 or above, one companion is allowed who should be immediate relative namely Husband / Wife / Brother / Sister / Son/ Daughter / Son-in-law / Daughter-in-law, Grandson / Grand Daughter and Nephew / Niece. No other relation will be allowed to travel as companion. Neither the pilgrim aged 65 or above nor the companion will be allowed to travel alone. The age of the companion must be below 60 years on the date specified by HCoI.
- d. If husband and wife are travelling in a cover under reserved category, and both are aged 65 or above, they will be allowed two companions, who will be blood relation of the pilgrims.

13. Distribution of Quota

The pilgrim quota for HCoI should be 70% of the total Haj Quota of India. The following procedure for allocations will be followed by HCoI :

Stage - I.

Out of the total quota allocated to India in the agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Government of India, 70% must be allocated to the HCoI and the remaining 30% should be allocated to HGOs.

Stage - II.

Out of the total seats allocated to HCoI under Stage-I, **quota for State Haj Inspectors (SHIs) in the ratio of one SHI for one hundred and fifty pilgrims shall be subtracted from the overall Haj quota.** The remaining seats shall be distributed across all the States and Union Territories in proportion to their Muslim population.

Stage - III

The distribution of the different States and Union Territories quota shall proceed as in the current policy through qurrah (draw of lots). In case there are surplus seats generated by under-utilised quotas of States, the seats shall be distributed as provided in Stages IV and V.

Stage – IV

The surplus seats shall first be utilised for providing up to 500 seats for Mehram. If seats are still available after this, the UT of Jammu and Kashmir will be allocated up to 2,000 seats as a special measure. The remaining surplus seats will be used for groups of ladies without Mehram and distributed among the States and Union Territories that received 500 or fewer Haj Application Forms (HAF) but were unable to accommodate all applicants, in ascending order of the number of applicants.

For the States/ Union Territories where there is a marginal increase in the number of applications by up to 5% compared to previous year, a quota restricted to 500 seats shall be provided.

Stage – V

The remainder of the surplus seats after Stage IV (if any) shall be allocated to the States and Union Territories in proportion to the number of applications received.

14. Qurrah

Qurrah refers to computerized draw of lots. In the States/Union Territories where the number of Haj Applications received exceeds their quota, pilgrims shall be selected provisionally by Qurrah conducted on the covers. The Qurrah shall be conducted by the HCoI online based on randomisation. The date and other details of Qurrah shall be publicised by HCoI. Immediately after Qurrah, the selected and waitlisted applicants will be informed by HCoI.

15. Principles of Qurrah (Draw of Lots)

The order of priority for confirmation of the seats in a state/UT is as follows:

Category-1: 65 or above age category including such LWM;

Category-2: Ladies without Mehram below age of 65;

Category-3: General Category

- (a) If the applications under Category-1 are more than the quota of the state/UT, then the qurrah (draw of lots) will be conducted within Category-1, state/UT wise. Pilgrims in Category-1 will be given first priority for allocation of seats. A waiting list for Category-1 would be prepared in this case.
- (b) The second priority would be given to Category-2. If the remaining quota, after allocation to Category-1, is less than the applications in Category-2, then qurrah shall be done for Category-2, state/UT wise. In this

case, a separate waiting list shall be prepared for Category-2.

- (c) After the Category-1 and Category-2 applications have been exhausted, the qurrah (draw of lots) will be held state/UT wise among the general category applicants for the remaining seats. Another waiting list, called as General Waiting List (GWL) or Category-3 waiting list will be prepared by conducting qurrah (draw of lots) among those applicants who applied under the general category but could not get a confirmed seat.
- (d) From among the three waiting lists, viz. Category- 1 WL, Category-2 WL and GWL, the applicants from the Category-1 WL will be given confirmed status first, followed by Category-2 WL and thereafter, GWL against any future available seats.

If the applications under Category-1 are equal to the quota of a particular state/UT, the entire quota will be utilized for Category-1 and all other Category-2 and general category applications will be put under Category-2 WL and GWL respectively, drawn on the basis of qurrah (draw of lots).

16. General Wait List

A separate Qurrah (draw of lots) of non-selected covers shall be held state-wise/UT-wise in the state/ UT that receives Haj applications in excess of its quota to allocate a wait list number to all such covers. The confirmation of seats with respect to wait-listed pilgrims shall be communicated by the respective State Haj Committee/UT Haj Committee as and when a vacancy arises due to the cancellation of the journey by the selected pilgrims. If the selected pilgrim wants to cancel the journey for any reason, he should submit a cancellation letter to the concerned State Haj Committee /UT Haj Committee. The State Haj Committee/UT Haj Committee should mark the cancellation and select the wait listed pilgrim as per serial number on the basis of the first cancelled seat for the first wait-listed applicant. The order of the waiting list will be strictly followed without any deviation. Once marked, cancellation cannot be revoked for any reason. The wait-listed pilgrims should remain in contact with the HCoI, State Haj Committee/UT Haj Committee about the current status of their seat confirmation.

17. Rules of Cancellations and Refunds

Only cancellations on the grounds of death or serious ailment of the person concerned will be allowed. In case of cancellation on any other ground, penalties will be imposed as per guidelines and amendments thereto by HCoI.

The HCoI shall make arrangement for refund of amount deposited by applicant preferably within a period of one month.

18. Payments by pilgrims

All provisionally selected pilgrims will be allotted a unique bank reference number, which must be quoted compulsorily for depositing advance and balance Haj amounts in the State Bank of India through the core banking system.

19. Cancellation

If the selected pilgrim wants to cancel the journey for any reason, he/she should submit a cancellation letter to the concerned State Haj Committee/UT Haj Committee. In case of failure to submit any document/ information and/or payment in a timely manner, the selection of the pilgrim will be summarily cancelled.

20. Accommodation

As per Saudi Regulations, accommodation has to be arranged for the pilgrims in advance through the Consulate General of India, Jeddah. The detailed KSA regulations with respect to accommodation would be communicated by HCoI. Pilgrims who want and are entitled to stay in Rubat will be allowed to stay in Rubat, subject to KSA norms, and no charges for their accommodation will be levied by HCoI, or if charges are levied, they will be refunded to those pilgrims who use Rubat facility.

21. Medical Screening and Fitness Certificate for every Applicant

A medical check-up report for the pilgrims is mandatory. In order to ensure that only healthy pilgrims proceed for Haj, a two-step medical screening has been introduced one at the application stage (on the reverse of the Haj application) and another of the selected pilgrims at the embarkation stage. Every applicant should fill out the medical history, get examined, and obtain a Medical Screening and Fitness Certificate from Government allopathic doctor, on the reverse of his/her Haj Application.

The Health Certificate to be issued to the pilgrims by Medical Officer shall have information related to mandatory vaccinations. The digital medical health certificate will be issued to selected Haj pilgrim in collaboration with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

Haj is an arduous and strenuous pilgrimage involving walking up to 25 km in a day in extremely harsh climatic conditions of KSA. In view of the same and looking at the higher vulnerability and health risk to pilgrims aged 60 or above, a special screening shall be done for every pilgrim aged 60 or above as per criteria to be prescribed by MoHFW in the interest of the health of senior citizens.

22. Health and Training (HAT) Card for Selected Pilgrims only

Every selected pilgrim shall obtain a Health and Training (HAT) Card and Haj Guide from the State Haj Committee/Union Territory Haj Committee upon submission of pay-in-slip for the advance Haj amount.

23. Vaccination Certificate: Inoculation of Meningitis /Quadruple Inoculation

All selected pilgrims (more than 2 years of age) are required to possess a certificate of inoculation with a single dose of the cerebrospinal meningitis vaccine. Pilgrims, therefore, must get themselves inoculated against meningitis and obtain a vaccination certificate on the Health and Training (HAT) Card before proceeding to the Embarkation Point. The certificate should be signed by the district health officer. Incomplete and bogus certificates shall not be entertained. Arrangements are made every year by the State/UT Haj Committees for inoculation and the issue of the certificate to individual pilgrims after they have been examined by the Medical Officer. Similarly, the State/UT Haj Committee and District Administration make such arrangements for the inoculation of the pilgrims in the respective States/UTs throughout the country.

The HCoI, in coordination with the State/UT Haj Committees, will ensure that the pilgrim gets dosages of all required vaccines as per medical protocol. The Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA), in collaboration with MoHFW, will ensure timely availability of all vaccines for Haj pilgrims.

A contingent of medical personnel will be deputed in collaboration with MoHFW, to Saudi Arabia to cater to medical needs of Haj pilgrims.

24. Oral Polio Vaccination

It is mandatory to give oral polio vaccine to all pilgrims six weeks before the start of the Haj journey and obtain the oral polio vaccine certificate from the concerned health authorities on the Health and Training (HAT) Card. They will be given another dose of oral polio vaccine at the time of their disembarkation in KSA.

25. Embarkation Points (EPs)

The pilgrims will be required to give two preferences for EP in order of priority. The details of EPs for Haj-2025 are as under:

1. Srinagar
2. Gaya
3. Guwahati
4. Indore
5. Bhopal
6. Aurangabad
7. Jaipur
8. Nagpur
9. Delhi
10. Mumbai
11. Kolkata
12. Bengaluru

13. Hyderabad
14. Cochin
15. Chennai
16. Ahmedabad
17. Lucknow
18. Kannur
19. Vijayawada
20. Calicut

In case of number of passengers travelling from an EP goes above or below the economic operation of the air charter services, MoMA reserves the right to reallocate the passengers to any other EP in the interest of smooth air charter operations and air safety protocols.

In addition to 20 EPs, MoMA may also consider the requests for inclusion of other Airports as EPs with the approval of competent authority and subject to approval of Ministries such as Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Home Affairs and also authorities of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

MoMA in coordination with Ministry of Civil Aviation will ensure that selection of Airlines for Haj operations is done through a transparent process following due process.

26. Duration of Stay in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The duration of stay of pilgrims may be up to 40-45 days and may vary as per schedule provided by the airlines and approved by General Authority of Civil Aviation, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Accommodation units in Makkah Mukarramah are hired for the entire Haj season. Buildings are not hired on daily rental basis. The rate charged is for the entire Haj season irrespective of the duration of stay. Hence, all pilgrims are charged uniformly. Therefore, no pilgrim is entitled for any refund based on the duration of stay.

27. In Case of Death

In case of death, due to natural causes or accident during the Haj period, burial rituals may be performed as per prevailing practice in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The original Death Certificate is directly, sent to the next of kin of a deceased pilgrim by the Consulate General of India (CGI), Jeddah, after the completion of Haj season.

28. Adahi (Qurbani)

Adahi (Qurbani) is permitted only through entities authorised by KSA for the same. Pilgrims should not fall prey to fraudsters in the name of Qurbani. Adahi through authorised entities will be arranged by HCoI for the covers who opt for it (all pilgrims of a cover have to opt together). Once exercised, the option cannot be revoked. The Adahi(Qurbani) coupons will be optional.

The HCoI will issue an advisory in format of dos & don'ts for pilgrims which will also have information about Adahi coupon (how does it look, colour, features etc).

29. Legal Status of the Pilgrim

The HCoI, constituted under the Act of Parliament (No.35 of 2002) renders service to pilgrims without any consideration. HCoI works on a "no profit, no loss" basis. It collects the exact amount from pilgrims required for payment of various facilities and services to the concerned agencies. Nothing extra is being charged from the pilgrims except the Miscellaneous dues towards Administrative Expenses including dues of the State/UT Haj Committees as provided in the Guidelines. HCoI, as such, does not come under the purview of **the Consumer Protection Act, 2019**. The pilgrims, therefore, cannot claim any compensation against HCoI under the Consumer Protection Act or under any other law for the time being in force for any deficiency in the service rendered and/or any act of commission and/or omission beyond the control of HCoI.

30. State Haj Inspector (SHI) [Earlier Known as Khadim-ul-Hujjaj (KuH)]

Ministry of Minority Affairs sets apart seats to send SHIs from all States/UTs to help and assist the Consulate General of India in Jeddah in looking after the welfare of Indian Haj pilgrims in an organised manner. The SHIs should be Government servants selected by the State/UT Haj Committees as per the norms laid down by MoMA.

To optimise the facilitation of assistance to pilgrims, the CGI, Jeddah may hire locals in KSA and women Khadims from existing Indian diaspora.

31. Persons with Special needs

- i. The persons with benchmark disability/disabilities who cannot travel alone, as certified by the medical authorities, applying for Haj must be accompanied by an able-bodied person during all stages of the Haj journey.
- ii. He/ She should be the blood relative/ spouse of such a person.

Assistance to Divyangjan and elderly pilgrims will be provided by the Indian Haj Mission on a need basis. In spite of the extra-territorial nature of the Haj pilgrimage, the Government would endeavour to provide best possible accessibility to Divyangjan pilgrims including on a payment basis.

The Supreme Court of India, in its April 16, 2013 judgment, barred all courts and authorities from interfering with the Haj process.
