# Over 1,300 Deaths Reported in This Year's Hajj Pilgrimage Due to Extreme Heat



Saudi Arabia has reported that 1,301 people died during this year’s Hajj pilgrimage, with the majority succumbing to extreme heat. The pilgrimage took place amid temperatures soaring over 120 degrees Fahrenheit in Mecca. Over 83% of the deceased were unauthorized pilgrims who walked long distances under direct sunlight without adequate shelter. Among the fatalities were also several elderly and chronically ill individuals.

The annual Hajj, which saw over 1.8 million Muslims participating this year, is a religious obligation for able-bodied Muslims. However, obtaining an official license for the pilgrimage is expensive, leading many to attempt the journey without proper authorization or support. This lack of preparation often results in inadequate access to water, food, and air-conditioned transportation.

Countries like Egypt have reported significant losses, with unofficial reports suggesting up to 600 Egyptians may have died. The Egyptian government has responded by revoking licenses of 16 travel agencies for facilitating unauthorized pilgrimages and has referred their managers to prosecution.

In addition to the high temperatures, poor infrastructure and lack of organization were cited by some as contributing factors to the fatalities. The Saudi government stated efforts were made to raise awareness about the dangers of heat stress, but the number of deaths highlights the challenges in managing such a large event under extreme weather conditions.