# Maryland Couple and Others Among 1,300 Pilgrims Dead in Hajj Tragedy



**Maryland Couple Among 1,300 Pilgrims Dead During Hajj in Saudi Arabia**

Alieu Wurie, 71, and Isatu Wurie, 65, from Bowie, Maryland, were among the more than 1,300 pilgrims who died during the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The incident occurred amid extreme temperatures exceeding 120 degrees Fahrenheit (48.9 degrees Celsius) on June 17, 2024.

The couple was traveling with Ehajj and Umrah Tours, a Maryland-based company that reportedly lacked the necessary certifications and failed to provide adequate transportation and accommodations. Relatives claimed that the Wuries had to wait nearly four hours for transportation to Mount Arafat and eventually decided to walk, which resulted in their deaths.

In a separate case, Abdelzaher Abdo Salem, an 81-year-old Egyptian, died during the pilgrimage under similar circumstances involving an unauthorized travel agency, highlighting a broader issue of unlicensed operators leading pilgrims under hazardous conditions. Saudi authorities noted that many of the deceased were unauthorized pilgrims who walked long distances without adequate shelter as temperatures reached 125 degrees Fahrenheit (51.7 degrees Celsius).

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and U.S. Senate candidate Angela Alsobrooks expressed condolences for the Wuries, recognizing their dedication to their community. Saudi Arabia has faced criticism for inadequate measures to protect pilgrims, with overcrowding and extreme heat posing ongoing challenges.

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