

Hajj flight begins between Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia

- A Monitor Report

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Dhaka : This year's first Hajj flight from Bangladesh arrived at the Hajj Terminal of King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on April 29. The flight operated by Saudia Airlines carrying 414 pilgrims arrived at the airport at 7:30 am local time, said a press release issued by Bangladesh Embassy in Saudi Arabia.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Md Delwar Hossain welcomed the pilgrims at the airport. Consul General of Bangladesh in Jeddah, Md Mainul Kabir and Hajj Counsellor Md Zahirul Islam, along with other officials of the mission were present at the airport, among others.

Saudi Civil Aviation Advisor Engineer Mazen Jawahar, Director of the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah Salman Al Belabi, and other ministry officials were also present at the airport to welcome the pilgrims.

Earlier in Dhaka, Religious Affairs Adviser Dr AFM Khalid Hossain

formally inaugurated the Hajj Flight-2025 operations at the Ashkona Hajj Camp in the capital.

Religious Affairs Secretary AKM Aftab Hossain Pramanik presided over the inaugural ceremony, while Additional Secretary of the Hajj Division Md Matiul Islam delivered the welcome address.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Adviser Sheikh Bashir Uddin, Civil Aviation and Tourism Secretary Nasreen Jahan, Chargé d'Affaires of the Saudi Embassy in Dhaka Abdulaziz Fahad M Al Ibrahim, Chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh Md Monjur Kabir Bhuiyan, and Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh President Syed Golam Sarwar, and Secretary General Farid Ahmad Majumder also spoke as special guests.

On the first day, 10 flights of Biman Bangladesh Airlines and Saudia transported a total of 4,180 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia-eight flights to King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah and two flights to Prince Mohammad bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Madinah.

This year, Bangladesh's national flag carrier Biman, along with Saudi Arabian airlines Saudia and Flynas, will operate a total of 232 pre-Hajj flights to transport Bangladeshi pilgrims.

Bangladesh Biman will operate 118 flights carrying 44,307 pilgrims, Saudia will run 80 flights transporting 32,740 pilgrims, and Flynas will operate 34 flights for 13,065 pilgrims.

Pre-Hajj flights are scheduled to conclude by May 31, with return flights set to begin on June 10 after completion of the Hajj rituals.

A total of 87,100 Bangladeshi pilgrims are expected to travel to Saudi Arabia this year, including 5,200 under government management and 81,900 under private arrangements.

Subject to moon sighting, Hajj is likely to be observed on June 5.

A new mobile application featuring transport and other essential services for pilgrims has been launched this year. Additionally, pilgrims are being provided with pre-paid Hajj cards and mobile SIM cards with roaming facilities.