

Hajj pilgrims to receive over Tk 30 million refund in 2026: Religious Affairs Adviser

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Dhaka: Religious Affairs Adviser Dr. A. F. M. Khalid Hossain has announced that Bangladeshi Hajj pilgrims will receive refunds totaling more than Tk 30 million after completion of the 2026 Hajj.

Speaking at a press briefing titled “Religious Affairs Ministry under the Interim Government in the Last One and a Half Years” at the Ministry of Religious Affairs conference room at the Secretariat on Tuesday afternoon, the adviser said significant cost reductions have been achieved across multiple Hajj packages.

He stated that under Hajj Package-1, hotel rents in Makkah and Madinah have been reduced by nearly 1,000 Saudi Riyals per pilgrim, while transportation costs have been lowered by 100 Saudi Riyals per pilgrim. As a result, pilgrims under both Package-1 and Package-2 will

receive refunds exceeding Tk 30 million after the 2026 Hajj.

Dr. Khalid Hossain said the government has worked diligently to meet public expectations for performing Hajj at a reasonable cost. Through repeated negotiations with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, airfare was reduced by around Tk 27,000 during the 2025 Hajj and by approximately Tk 13,000 for the 2026 Hajj. He described the cumulative reduction of about Tk 40,000 in airfare over the past two years as a notable achievement.

Highlighting improvements in Hajj management, the adviser said service charges under Hajj Package-3 were reduced by nearly 600 Saudi Riyals per pilgrim following effective negotiations with service provider companies. By reallocating savings from service charges, accommodation rent, and transport costs between hotels and the Haram Sharif, pilgrims under this package have been provided lodging closer to the Haram Sharif. This has eased travel difficulties and enabled pilgrims to perform all five daily prayers at the holy mosque.

Dr. Khalid further said that over the past one and a half years, the ministry has focused on transparency, accountability, and integrity in carrying out its responsibilities, resulting in positive changes across the Ministry of Religious Affairs and its affiliated departments and agencies.

Referring to initiatives by the Islamic Foundation, he noted that 163 vacant positions have been filled, while recruitment for 197 positions could not be completed due to ongoing legal cases. He expressed hope that the recruitment process would be finalized swiftly once the cases are resolved. Additionally, 29 officials in ninth grade and above and 32 officials in grades 10 to 20 have been promoted in accordance with rules. The process of general recruitment for vacant ninth-grade and above positions is also underway.

The adviser also briefed journalists on the activities of various departments and agencies under the Ministry of Religious Affairs over the past one and a half years and thanked media professionals for their cooperation and professionalism.

Religious Secretary Md. Kamal Uddin, Additional Secretary of the Hajj Wing Md. Ayatul Islam, and Additional Secretary of the Budget and Grant Wing Md. Fazlur Rahman, among others, were present at the briefing.

