

## **Bangladeshis with Sinopharm vaccine can now perform Umrah**

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Dhaka: Bangladeshi travellers with Sinopharm vaccines can now enter Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah as the country has approved both Sinopharm and Sinovac vaccines for coronavirus immunisation.

The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Health on August 25 said that people who had completed their vaccination with Sinopharm and Sinovac are to be accepted in the country.

However, it also said that travellers with Sinopharm vaccine have to receive a booster shot of a vaccine approved by Saudi Arabia.

With this, a total of six corona vaccines have been approved in the country. The others are Oxford-AstraZeneca, Pfizer-Biontech, Johnson & Johnson and Moderna.

In late July, Saudi authorities announced that only foreign tourists who have received a full dose of the vaccine approved by the Saudi government will be able to enter the country from August 1.

Earlier in August, Saudi Arabia announced that the country would begin accepting applications for Umrah pilgrimage from foreign worshipers who have received the full dose

of the approved vaccines.

The Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh recently requested a diplomatic effort to enable Bangladeshis, who received the Sinopharm vaccine, to perform the Umrah pilgrimage this year.

They wanted the cooperation of the state minister of religion and the Saudi ambassador in this regard as there is confusion over Sinopharm or Sinovac vaccine.

Uncertainty still exists over the issue as booster dose has not yet been introduced in Bangladesh, said HAAB.