

Hajj 2026: Dos and don'ts for Bangladeshi hajjis

It stands as one of the fundamental pillars of Islam. Hajj remains a deeply spiritual journey that every faithful Muslim cherishes the desire to perform. Because of its immense significance, executing this pilgrimage in a fair, fluent, and religious manner requires a meticulous plan. Hajj management is inherently a cooperative, bi-national operation. While the government of Bangladesh takes all necessary steps to support its citizens, the entire framework is ultimately guided by the regulations, timelines, and roadmaps strictly established by the Saudi government.

According to the official Hajj roadmap, the dedicated Hajj flights from Bangladesh have commenced. The departure window will remain open until the final flight leaves on 21 May, 2026. The holy Hajj is expected to take place on or around 26 May 2026, subject to the physical sighting of the moon.

This year, a total of 78,500 pilgrims from Bangladesh will be making the journey. For those already registered, almost 100 per cent of pilgrim visas have already been successfully processed and completed.

Medical fitness is no longer optional

In a bid to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, the Saudi government has instituted a strict ban on performing Hajj without certified medical fitness. Individuals suffering from severe chronic conditions are strictly prohibited from making the pilgrimage this year.

The restricted list specifically includes those with severe heart disease, liver cirrhosis, kidney disease requiring dialysis, mental illness, risky pregnancies, tuberculosis, cancer patients actively receiving therapy, and advanced age conditions resulting in dementia or the inability to walk independently, etc.

Pilgrims are strongly advised to take this rule seriously. The Saudi

government has warned that any traveller found lacking medical fitness upon arrival will be immediately repatriated from the airport.

Pre-flight logistics and luggage rules

Every registered pilgrim must hold a valid Bangladeshi passport with an expiration date no earlier than 30 November 2026. Before heading to the airport, ensure you have downloaded the visas from the e-hajj portal or successfully obtained them from the hajj agency concerned.

Timely arrival at the Hajj Camp in Dhaka is mandatory to ensure smooth boarding and immigration. Dhaka-based pilgrims must arrive at least six hours prior to their flight, and the rest must arrive at least one full day before their flight.

Free accommodation is available at the hajj camp hostel, though food must be purchased from the canteen at one's own expense.

Luggage dimensions and limits

A pilgrim can carry a total of 46 kg of luggage in two trolley bags or any other bag or carton with a maximum of 23 kg each as check-in luggage. A handbag weighing 7 kg can also be carried as cabin luggage.

The check-in luggage should be 65 cm in length, 45 cm in width, and 25 cm in height, while the cabin luggage should be 45 cm in length, 35 cm in width, and 20 cm in height.

To avoid complications or fines at airport check-ins, pack strictly according to those dimensions.

Pro-tip for luggage

Always keep a fresh set of ihram clothes and basic daily essentials in your carry-on cabin bag. This ensures you have your

ritual garb ready, even if your check-in luggage experiences delivery delays. Furthermore, if you require medication for conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure, you must pack at least a 50-day supply along with your official prescriptions.

To facilitate finding lost luggage, clearly write the pilgrim's name, nationality, passport number, PID number, roaming mobile number, Hajj agency name, and the guide's mobile number in English on the bags.

If the luggage is lost, it must be reported to the Bangladesh Hajj Office in Jeddah, Mecca, or Medina directly or through the agency's representative or the hajj guide.

Strictly illegal items

Do not pack intoxicating medicines, tobacco leaves, zarda, gul, shutki (dried fish), jaggery, cooked food, or perishable items. Carrying these will result in legal action and tarnish the national image.

Codes of conduct and protocols in Saudi Arabia

To maintain public order and ensure a smooth spiritual experience, pilgrims are expected to observe specific behavioural guidelines.

Upon landing, the Makkah Route Initiatives Service will ensure your check-in luggage is delivered directly to your hotel or designated home. While in the Kingdom, security and protocol are paramount. You must always carry your Nusuk card, Moyalleem card, hotel card, and PID card.

Walking outside your hotel without your Nusuk card makes you liable for arrest by Saudi police.

Political activities, public demonstrations, begging, and any immoral or

criminal acts are strictly forbidden and heavily penalised. Cooperate fully with law enforcement; obstructing or disrespecting Saudi officers carries severe punishments.

You will be assigned a certified Hajj guide (1 guide per 46 pilgrims). Rituals in Mina, Arafah, Muzdalifah, and Jamara must be performed collectively with your guide. Do not attempt to go throw stones at the Jamara alone, as the risk of getting lost or injured in the crowd is exceptionally high.

Healthcare and emergency support

If any pilgrim falls ill, free medical care and medications are available at dedicated clinics set up by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Mecca, Medina, and Jeddah. General treatment is also accessible at Saudi Government Hospitals, if required.

If you happen to lose your way or find yourself separated from your group, you need not panic. You should try to find out the Bangladesh Hajj Mission office, Makkah or press the SOS button on the 'Labbaik' mobile apps or call the local emergency hotline directly at 009668001160029.

Return protocol

As your holy journey concludes, please ensure your return luggage does not exceed the weight limits enforced during your arrival.

Be explicitly aware that carrying Zamzam water inside your personal checked or carry-on luggage is strictly banned by the Saudi government. You do not need to risk packing it; a 5-litre container of blessed Zamzam water will be directly supplied to every pilgrim at the landing airport upon arriving back home in Bangladesh.

Hajj is a journey of discipline and devotion. By following these regulations, pilgrims can ensure their focus remains where it belongs: on their spiritual fulfilment.

By Md Abubakor Siddik

The writer is a public relations officer, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Photo: Collected

