

Saudi Arabia opens Umrah pilgrimage to vaccinated foreigners

Saudi Arabia says it will begin receiving Umrah pilgrimages from vaccinated foreign worshippers starting on August 9.

The announcement on state media only on Sunday came about 10 months after the kingdom closed its borders to foreign pilgrims due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Saudi Press Agency and authorities in the ministry that coordinates foreign pilgrims will from Monday begin "receiving Umrah requests from various countries of the world".

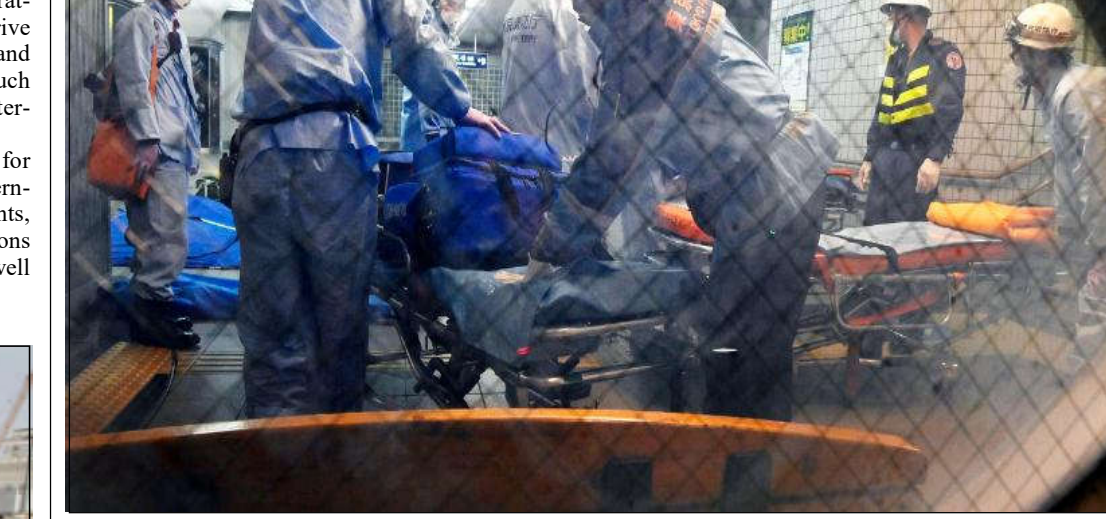
Pilgrims will initially be granted to 60,000 Umrah pilgrims per month, but that number will gradually be increased to two million per month, the report said.

Overseas pilgrims will have to include a statement of COVID-19 vaccination certificate along with their Umrah request, it said.

Vaccination certificates along with statements on Saudi Arabia's no entry will be subject to international quarantine upon arrival, it added.

The Umrah is a pilgrimage to Islam's two holiest sites in the cities of Mecca and Medina and can be undertaken at any time of the

At least 10 people injured in stabbings on Tokyo train



Ten people were stabbed Friday night on a train in Tokyo by a man with a sick, according to the Tokyo Fire Department.

The department responded to a call at 8:38 p.m. and found victims on a train platform.

Police and media gathered at Sodegaura Station in Tokyo on Friday following the incident.

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Hezbollah will retaliate to any Israeli attacks, Nasrallah warns



The head of Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, Hassan Nasrallah, has promised a "sustainable and proportionate" response to any Israeli air strikes on Lebanon after a flare-up at the border this week.

Israel carried out its first air raid on Lebanon since 19 years on Thursday, prompting Hezbollah to fire rockets back at Israel for the first time.

"Our response was limited to the number of rockets fired against south Lebanon for the first time in 15 years," Nasrallah said on Saturday in a televised speech ahead of the anniversary of the end of the last war with Israel in 2006.

"We wanted to tell the enemy that any air strike by the Israeli force on Lebanon will inevitably draw a response, though in

Covid-19: Quarantine-free travel to France resumes as UK rules change

Fully vaccinated people can now visit France without quarantining on their return to the UK, after travel rules change came into force at 04:00 BST.

Britney Ferry, said it had received a "large" of bookings following the change announced on Thursday.

But travel agents said the relocation of quarantine for one of the UK's most popular destinations came "too late to save the summer".

Meanwhile, travellers in Manchester had to rush back to avoid being quarantined.

Under the latest changes to the UK's travel light system for travel, the rules have been relaxed for a shorter period.

France moved from its own amber plus category into the amber list, which means children and fully vaccinated passengers do not have to quarantine on their return, although unvaccinated travellers still have to self-isolate at home for 10 days.

Londoners Kyle Frank is among those who booked a trip after the change was announced. He plans to visit his niece because he feels it is safer than taking a plane, and he can bring his puppy with him.

"It would have been great to have been changing so rapidly if I had to understand where we will be able to travel. So I'm trying to go now while I can," he said the BBC.

"There's no quarantine when I get back so I can get straight back to work."

Mercat from not to number a small difference and testing requirements were still putting

Iranian opposition party accuses Tehran of assassinating one of its leaders in Erbil

The Iranian opposition Kurdistan Democratic Party, the oldest Kurdish group in Iraq and active in Iraqi Kurdistan, accused Iran on Saturday of assassinating one of its leaders in Erbil in Iraq.

The party, which Tehran considers a "terrorist and separatist organization," was banned after the 1979 revolution.

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The party issued a statement that Mass Babakhan, a member of the Central Committee of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, was assassinated by a terrorist affiliated with the Islamic Republic of Iran in the city of Erbil.

The statement added that Babakhan was kidnapped last Thursday by two terrorists and was found dead in a jail house on Saturday with signs of torture.

According to the statement, the Iranian Kurdistan Democratic Party, which accuses Tehran of assassinating one of its leaders in recent years, Babakhan born in 1981 in Kermanshah, had been changing so rapidly if I had to understand where we will be able to travel. So I'm trying to go now while I can," he said the BBC.

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