

PRESS NOTE

Subject: Information for Umrah Pilgrims and Travel Agents

It has been informed by the General Directorate of Passport (Jawazat) of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that the Umrah Pilgrims overstayed their visas and seeking job over there. To avoid this situation, the following action has to be taken against the defaulters.

1. In case of overstay of Umrah pilgrims, a fine of SR 50000 will be imposed by the Saudi Government.
2. The overstay will cause to imprisonment for 6 months before deportation in addition to fine of SR 50000.
3. In case of failure to deposit the fine of SR 50000, additional imprisonment will be faced
4. The tour operators will be responsible for any missing persons while on Umrah.
5. License of the tour operators will be cancelled along with other strict penal actions if the Umrah pilgrims are not returned within the schedule period

پریس نوٹ

عنوان: اطلاع عام برائے عمرہ زائرین و ٹریول ایجنٹس

ڈائریکٹریٹ جنرل پاسپورٹ (ویزا) مملکت سعودی عربیہ نے مطلع کیا ہے کہ عمرہ زائرین اپنے ویزے کی میعاد سے زیادہ وقت گزارتے ہیں اور کام حاصل کرنے کی کوشش کرتے ہیں۔ اس صورت حال میں مملکت سعودی عربیہ مندرجہ ذیل کارروائی عمل میں لائے گی:-

1. زیادہ ٹھہرنے والے عمرہ زائرین کو سعودی حکومت پچاس ہزار سعودی ریال جرمانہ کرے گی۔
2. پچاس ہزار سعودی ریال جرمانہ کے ساتھ ساتھ چھ ماہ قید بھی ہوگی۔
3. جرمانہ پچاس ہزار سعودی ریال نہ دینے کی صورت میں قید کا دورانیہ بڑھ سکتا ہے۔
4. عمرہ کے دوران غائب ہونے والوں کی ذمہ داری ٹورز آپریٹرز پر ہوگی۔
5. عمرہ زائرین کی وقت مقررہ پر واپس نہ آنے کی صورت میں ٹورز آپریٹرز کے لائسنس منسوخ کرنے کے ساتھ ساتھ دیگر سخت اقدامات کیے جائیں گے۔

Fax Message

From : Parep Riyadh
To : Foreign Islamabad
Rptd to : M/O RA & IFH; Parep Jeddah
No : Pol-II/1/2/2018
Date : 5 June 2018

Rptd to: DG(ME) from First Secretary (Political)
Additional Secretary, M/O RA & IFH; DCG, Parep Jeddah

Subject: Saudi Arabia to Impose Hefty Fine and Jail Terms for Umrah Overstayers

In an important announcement, the General Directorate of Passports (Jawazat) has said that Umrah pilgrims who stay in the Kingdom after the expiration of their entry visas will be fined SR 50,000 each and imprisoned for six months before deportation. The directorate has called on all Umrah pilgrims to adhere to their travel schedules and leave the Kingdom before the expiration of their entry visas.

2. The Jawazat also said that those coming on Umrah visas are not allowed to travel outside Makkah, Jeddah and Madinah. It warned citizens and residents against transporting, employing, sheltering or hiding those with expired Umrah visas.

3. Separately, the General Authority for Statistics (GaStat) issued a report on Tuesday informing that 19,079,306 pilgrims performed Umrah in 2017. The statistical report quoting the registered data of the Ministry of Haj and Umrah said that 6,532,074 Umrah pilgrims came from outside Saudi Arabia. The GaStat Umrah statistics bulletin for 2017 also showed that Ramadan is considered a top season during which Umrah is performed by people from inside Saudi Arabia, as 53.6% of total pilgrims performed Umrah in the holy month of fasting.

Mission's Recommendation

4. The imposition of SR 50,000/- fine and imprisonment term of six months for overstayers of Umrah visas is a significant development and needs to be conveyed to all concerned quarters in Pakistan. It is well known fact that some of the Pakistanis do opt for this route of entering Saudi Arabia on Umrah visas (which are free of cost) and then work illegally. Initially, there were no fines and jails terms and the violators were normally deported from the deportation centres after completion of due formalities. This, however, might not be the case now as they would face hefty fines and jail terms. Considering that the majority of the

violators are from poor backgrounds, they would not even be able to pay their fines resulting in further extension of their jail terms.

5. It is, therefore, important that the Ministry of Religious Affairs circulate this information widely in all local newspapers and channels as well as to all Umrah tour operators so that such potential risk seekers could be discouraged in Pakistan rather than facing a difficult situation in Saudi Arabia. The government may also consider imposing fines or cancelling licenses of those Umrah tour operators, whose clients violate the rules.

Warm Regards,



(Omer Manzoor Malik)