



kaabaNews

...Reporting The Cradle of Islam ISSUE 07 OCTOBER 2025 N1000

**NIGERIA'S 2026 HAJJ
ROADMAP:**

The Planning, Pledges, Push for 66,910 slots

**FCT,
Lagos,
others race
against
time**

**Jaiz Bank strengthens partnership with
HSS to enhance pilgrimage experience**

**Hajj Fare: How over
30,000 Nigerian
Pilgrims are priced out
of paradise**





RC: 1029236

EMINASTA

TRAVELS AND TOURS LTD



HAJJ AND UMRAH



SOME OF OUR SERVICES

- Air Ticketing
- Visa Processing
- Hotel Reservations
- Hajj & Umrah Packaging

No. 450A Tukuntawa quarters,
Off Zoo Road, Kano State.

CONTACT US NOW:

08099996712

RECOMMENDED
Best Travel



RC 476637



Dear Esteemed Customer,

The National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) has announced the approved fares and initial deposit requirement for the 2026 Hajj as follows:

- i. **Borno, Adamawa, Yobe & Taraba (Northeast): NGN 8,118,033.67 per pilgrim**
- ii. **Other Northern States: NGN8,244,813.67 per pilgrim**
- iii. **Southern States: NGN8,561,013.67 per pilgrim**

All intending pilgrims are required to complete payment on or before 31st December, 2025.

To help you plan ahead with ease, Jaiz Bank invites you to join thousands of Muslims already securing their Hajj dreams through our Shariah-compliant Hajj Savings Scheme (HSS).

Don't delay!

Access online via the link below or visit any Jaiz Bank branch to get started.

hajjsavings.jaizbankplc.com

Scan to begin





jaiz bank
WITH YOU FOR LIFE

In collaboration with



Connect with us on:


www.jaizbankplc.com

For more information and complaints, call:

07007730000



Recently, at the Malam Aminu Kano International Airport, the air carried more than the usual bustle of arrival and departure. It carried a message of discipline, preparation, and hope. Professor Abdullahi Saleh Usman, chairman and CEO of the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON), had just returned from a high-stakes trip to Saudi Arabia with what he calls “results, not promises. The Commission is now charting a new course—one marked by foresight, reform, and a deep commitment to the welfare of Nigerian pilgrims. Upon arrival, he unveiled a series of transformative achievements that promise to reshape the Hajj experience for thousands of intending Pilgrims across the country.

The six bold steps he highlighted aren’t abstract policies; they’re the threads of a national plan to ensure Nigerian pilgrims experience a safer, smoother, and more affordable Hajj in 2026. According to him, these are:

Intensive staff training ahead of 2026 Hajj operations

Training is the quiet engine behind any big operation, and NAHCON is pulling no punches. Usman spoke of comprehensive training programs designed to strengthen the Commission’s workforce, ensuring that every clerk, coordinator, and field officer can translate

Hajj 2026: NAHCON unveils strategic plans, key preparations and deadlines



policy into a better pilgrim experience. One officer noted, “When you know your role inside out, you move with confidence; the pilgrims feel that confidence too.” The result, Usman said, is a more professional, responsive team ready to handle the complexities of large-group travel, camp logistics, and on-ground welfare in Saudi Arabia.

Inaugurated the Hajj Tour Operators Screening Committee

The newly minted screening committee signals a shift toward accountability and quality control. Only qualified operators will serve Nigerian pilgrims, a move Usman described as “the days of shortcuts and cutting corners are over.” For many families, this means safer transport, reliable tour management, and fewer shocks during the journey. In the words of one tour operator hopeful, “If you want to walk with us, you’ll have to earn your place.”

Secured Madinah Markaziyya accommodations and feeding at fair rates

Accommodation and meals are not mere logistics; they’re the daily rhythm of the



pilgrimage. NAHCON has secured Markaziyya-area hotels and feeding arrangements in Madinah at competitive rates, a critical piece of making the 2026 Hajj experience comfortable without breaking the bank. A local hotel manager who spoke on condition of anonymity said the arrangement could relieve the pressure on pilgrims who worry about quality and proximity during the rites. Pilgrims’ families often tell stories of crowded stays and inflated prices; these contracts aim to rewrite that narrative.

Engaged the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in discussions on preparations

Diplomacy behind the scenes matters as much as the public announcements. NAHCON’s engagement with the Saudi Ministry underscores a shared commitment to aligning timelines, standards, and protocols. A Saudi official familiar with the talks emphasized that Nigeria’s preparations will be measured by strict adherence to timelines and compliance with regulations, with no exceptions this year. For Nigerians watching from home,



this collaboration translates to clearer guidance, better coordination, and more predictable outcomes.

Signed service contracts with Mashariq Dhahabiya (Masha’ir) and Daleel Al-Muaalim (Transport)

Two cornerstone partnerships stand out. Mashariq Dhahabiya will provide Masha’ir services at the holy sites, while Daleel Al-Muaalim will handle transportation. For pilgrims and their families, these contracts offer a closer alignment between promises and performance—clear routes, better movement within sacred spaces, and a tighter link between service levels and costs. A travel planner who follows Hajj operations remarked, “When service providers have a proven track record and binding contracts, the pilgrim’s journey becomes less about surprises and more about devotion.”

Claims to have saved over 19 billion from Hajj fare to reduce the fare by ₦200,000 per pilgrim

Perhaps the most tangible news for many intending pilgrims is cost reduction. Usman announced a cost reduction of over ₦200,000 per pilgrim, translating to a total relief of more than ₦19 billion for Nigerian pilgrims with 66,910 slots assigned to the country. This aligns with President Tinubu’s Renewed Hope Agenda, signaling that national priorities can translate into meaningful, real-world benefits for ordinary citizens preparing for one of life’s biggest spiritual journeys. A new anglo, groom who had vowed to

sponsor his wife on Hajj in Kano has just saved ₦200,000. He commented, “If the price drops and the process is transparent, it makes the dream feel closer than ever.”

As families across Nigeria watch the clock toward December 31, 2025—the final deadline for full payment of 2026 Hajj fares—these six achievements serve as good news for all intending pilgrims. They’re the kind of updates that illuminate the heart, give hope, shape expectations and future conversations about hajj cost, and good management in Nigeria.



Nigeria's Hajj Roadmap

— Planning, Pledges, and the Push for 66,910 Slots

When Prof. Abdullahi Usman stood before reporters in Kano and delivered a date, it landed with the weight of both a calendar and a compass. December 31, 2025. That is the final deadline for full payment of the 2026 Hajj fares for intending Nigerian pilgrims. A date steeped in logistics, contracts, and lives of families who are counting the days toward their spiritual journey.

But this deadline isn't just a line on a timetable. It's being pitched by NAHCON, the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria, as a pillar of orderly preparation — a way to secure early camp bookings, seal stronger contracts, and ensure smoother service delivery for the next pilgrimage year. It's also a signal of what Ghana's neighbors, Egypt's peers, and the world's pilgrims see as the practical heartbeat of Nigeria's Hajj program: planning that respects faith and finance alike.

In Kano, Usman spoke with a blend of pragmatism and pride. He had just returned from Saudi Arabia on September 22, bearing the fruits of months of negotiations. The message was loud and clear: Nigeria is not improvising its way to 2026; it is building it from the ground up — with numbers, timelines, and transparent costs.

One critical piece of the plan concerns payments. State Pilgrims' Welfare Boards are to remit 50 percent of total fare deposits by October 8, 2025. By December 31, 2025, every pilgrim must have completed payment. These aren't arbitrary deadlines. They are described as "pillars" of a system designed to enable orderly camps, reliable contracts, and steady service delivery. In a sense, the deadlines are the backbone of a process that touches families preparing for a once-in-a-lifetime journey.

The financial landscape of 2026 Hajj in Nigeria is framed not just by dates, but by savings and relief. Usman highlighted a sizeable achievement:



through vigorous negotiations with state boards and Saudi partners, NAHCON secured a reduction of over N200,000 per pilgrim in service costs. With 66,910 slots allocated to Nigeria, that relief translates into a total cost saving of more than N19 billion for Nigerian pilgrims. For families listening to the news in markets, mosques, and living rooms across the country, that is a number with real meaning.

The cost relief dovetails with national priorities. Usman connected these gains to President Bola Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda, emphasizing that easing the financial burden of the pilgrimage is part of broader efforts to lift citizens'

pockets. And to make good on these plans, NAHCON has signed contracts with service providers for Masha'ir services and transportation, while finalizing arrangements for accommodation and feeding in Madinah at competitive rates. The 2026 Hajj is being shaped as a well-orchestrated operation, rather than a leap into the unknown.

Behind the numbers, there are stories. There are families who have already made deposits, young people who dream of stepping onto Saudi soil with a group of friends, and elders who remember the calls to prayer echoing through their town during hajj seasons past. For them, the deadlines are real — not just bureaucratic: a deadline to secure a seat, to lock in a price, to ensure that a child, parent, or guardian can plan for the required arrangements and travel.

The Lagos narrative adds another thread to the national tapestry. Lagos State's Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board announced the 2026 fare at N8,561,013.67 for the Southern zone, with regional variations for Maiduguri-Yola and other Northern states (N8,118,33.67 and N8,244,813.67, respectively). The board emphasized that the fare announcement clears any lingering apprehension and equips intending pilgrims and stakeholders with the means to plan. A practical detail: payment could be made in three installments via bank drafts to the Lagos board, reflecting a willingness to accommodate different financial rhythms.

And while Lagos charts the price and plan for the South, Kano's board has its own

axiom: October 8, 2025, is the 50 percent remittance deadline for Kano's allocation, followed by a December 31 cut-off for full payment. The harmonization of deadlines across states underscores a national strategy: align the timelines, synchronize the contracts, and ensure a coherent national pilgrimage experience. Amid these headlines, the broader human



story persists. Pilgrims and their families are navigating not just fare amounts but also the realities of travel, lodging, and the logistics of moving large groups through a pilgrimage's spiritual corridor. The 2026 Hajj fare levels, the timing windows, and the contracting of service providers all translate into the experience of a pilgrim: a smoother journey, safer accommodations, and a more reliable schedule for prayers and rites.

The press briefings also reflected a shift in tone. Usman stated, with an almost veteran's note of finality: "The days of shortcuts and cutting corners are over." The message is explicit: a more disciplined, foresighted approach is in play, aimed at preserving the integrity of the pilgrimage and the dignity of Nigerian pilgrims.

As the year turns toward 2025's end, and 2026 looms on the calendar, what remains clear is that the Hajj plan in Nigeria is being built around human-centered goals: clear deadlines to stabilize planning, cost relief to ease financial strain, and robust partnerships to deliver quality services in Saudi Arabia and back home. For intending pilgrims and their families, the timeline, the money, and the promises all converge into a single, sacred objective: a dignified, well-organized journey to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, guided from Abuja to Madinah with careful, conscientious steps.

In short, this is more than a bureaucratic timetable. It is a community's shared map toward a spiritual milestone, with the 66,910 slots representing a doorway opened through negotiation, discipline, and collective resolve.

If you're an intending pilgrim or a family member planning ahead, here are a few practical takeaways:

Mark the key dates: October 8, 2025 (50% remittance deadline in Kano; other states have similar milestones), and December 31, 2025 (full payment deadline).

Expect different fare bands by region: South-



ern states, Maiduguri-Yola zone, and other Northern states have distinct price points.

Prepare for three-installment payment options where offered, via official channels (e.g., bank drafts to the state pilgrims board).

Track contracts and accommodations in Madinah and the Masha'ir services as they are finalized, to understand where you will stay and how you will move during the pilgrimage.

The 2026 Hajj season is being guided by a



deliberate plan — one that authorities say will deliver more predictable outcomes for Nigerian pilgrims and a more disciplined, transparent process for everyone involved. In the words of Usman, what you see now are not just promises but results — a message that, for many families, matters as dearly as the spiritual journey itself.

Every year, millions of Muslims from around the world embark on the sacred pilgrimage of Hajj, a spiritual journey that is meant to be a great equalizer—where race, nationality, and wealth fade in the face of devotion. Yet, for many Nigerian pilgrims, the cost of this journey has become a heavy burden, raising questions about fairness, transparency, and efficiency in Hajj administration.

The National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) recently proposed a tentative fare of ₦8.5 million (approximately \$5,800) for the 2026 Hajj. President Bola Tinubu immediately reacted ordering immediate review of the hajj fare. As at press time, stakeholders were still consulting and calculating what the final Hajj fare would look like. In stark contrast, Bangladeshi pilgrims pay \$3,800 with government-managed package, while Nigeria Pilgrims pay as much as \$5,400. This disparity is especially glaring when one considers that both countries offer strikingly similar services to their pilgrims.

Nigeria and Bangladesh - Same Journey, Same Services

Despite the price gap, Nigerian and Bangladeshi pilgrims share nearly identical experiences on the ground in Saudi Arabia: Accommodation: Both groups stay in the Misfalah area of Makkah, just 800–850 meters from the Grand Mosque. Duration: Pilgrims from both nations typically spend 38 to 42 days in the Kingdom. Services: Visa processing, transportation, and meals are comparable in quality and scope. So why the price difference?

By streamlining logistics and negotiating better deals, Bangladesh has managed to keep costs low without compromising service quality.

Given the similarities in services, many



Nigerian stakeholders are calling for a reduction in Hajj fares. A seasoned Tour Operator argues that Nigerian pilgrims should not be paying more than ₦6 million, especially when the actual cost breakdown suggests a more modest figure:

Hajj fare: How many Nigerian pilgrims are priced out of paradise

(BTA): \$800 (~₦1.24 million)

Total offshore components in Dollars = \$2,659.59 amounting to ₦4,122,364

Return flight ticket which is onshore and calculated in naira is usually less than ₦2million and even if we approximate it in view of other hidden charges, the total cost would be ₦6,122,364. Even after accounting for administrative costs, airfare, and contingencies, a ₦6.5 to ₦7 million fare seems more aligned with the actual service value including \$800 BTA for pilgrims.

The complication of the State Pilgrims' Boards is hard to ignore, as they are responsible for accommodation and feeding in Makkah for approximately 30 to 35 days out of the entire 42-day pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. Their opaque service charges—particularly those related to feeding, Ziyarah, and hotel accommodation negotiations—significantly drive up the overall fare. All stakeholders, including the regulatory body NAHCON, are involved in determining everything that



His breakdown includes:

Visa processing fee: SAR600

Mashair services: SAR2,898

Madinah accommodation: SAR1,000

Makkah accommodation: SAR2,000

Transport: SAR981

Feeding: Less than SAR1,000

Hadiya: SAR500

Total in USDD = \$1,859.59

Basic Travel Allowance

constitutes the total Haj fare.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) adds to the financial burden of pilgrims by imposing a 2% service charge on their funds, amounting to roughly \$90 per person. That's nearly ₦135,000—an amount that could easily cover several days of accommodation or meals during the pilgrimage.

In line with President Bola Tinubu's directive to reduce Hajj fares, all stakeholders must collaborate to eliminate unnecessary costs and negotiate better service deals for pilgrims. Each year, the number of registered pilgrims continues to decline, primarily due to the high cost. While Hajj is a spiritual obligation that transcends monetary value, principles of prudence and sound financial manage-



ment must still apply. That is precisely why a dedicated management team is in place.

If this trend persists, Nigeria risks losing part of its Hajj allocation. Saudi Arabia may reduce the number of slots due to consistent underutilization—a development that would be both a national embarrassment and a spiritual setback for thousands of Nigerian Muslims.

Transparency is essential. Pilgrims deserve to understand what they are paying for, and why. The National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) must enforce clear pricing standards and conduct thorough audits of state pilgrims' boards. Likewise, the CBN should reconsider its

service charges, particularly for religious travel.

Above all, the system must remember that Hajj is not a luxury, it is a sacred duty. Making it accessible should be a shared priority.

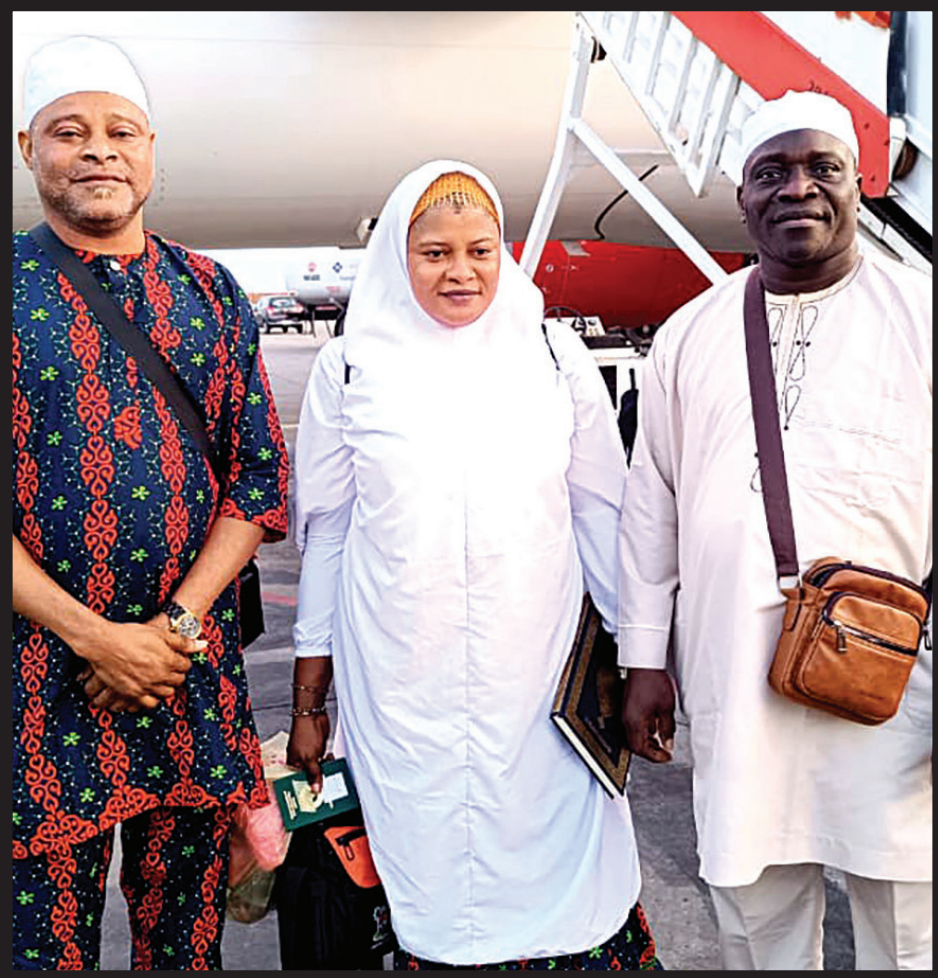
For many Nigerian families, sending a loved one on Hajj is a once-in-a-lifetime dream, often funded through years of savings or community support. The current fare structure risks turning this spiritual obligation into a luxury few can afford. It also raises concerns about transparency and accountability in

how funds are allocated and spent.

Nigeria has an opportunity to rethink its Hajj management model, drawing inspiration from countries other countries. By prioritizing cost-efficiency, transparency, and pilgrim welfare, NAHCON, State Pilgrims Boards, and Agencies can restore faith in the system and make Hajj more accessible to the average Nigerian Muslim. In a journey meant to humble and unite, no pilgrim should feel priced out of paradise.



Lagos pilgrims at Hajj 2025



Nigerians pray at Arafat 2025





On a quiet morning in Abuja, Fatima stood at her kitchen window counting the days. Her son, Yusuf, had spoken about the pilgrimage for months, sharing stories of devotion and community. Now, with the Hajj 2026 call approved, a single figure looms large in their plans: N8,244,813.67. That is the exact fare required for the journey—eight million, two hundred and forty-four thousand, eight hundred and thirteen naira and sixty-seven kobo—a number that represents more than money; it stands for faith, sacrifice, and a family's dream.

The news came from the FCT Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board Abuja, a lifeline for many families who've saved with care and waited with hopeful hearts. In a public statement, Mallam Kadiri Edah, the Board's director, spoke with a calm urgency that felt personal to anyone standing at their own doorstep, counting the days until December when payment must be completed to secure a seat for 2026.

For Fatima and Yusuf, the December deadline handed down by the Hajj Commission isn't just a line on a calendar; it's the moment to decide whether they will be part of the hujjaj in 2026.

But the path is strictly laid out. All payments must be made via bank draft—no cash transactions would be entertained. This rule, said Mallam Edah, helps the Board compile an accurate list of intending pilgrims and ensures funds are properly remitted to NAHCON, the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria.

There is a promise tucked into the procedural notes: if anyone finds they've paid more than the actual fare, they can have the excess refunded direct to their bank account. Cash refunds are not allowed, but the Board will return the surplus to the account holder—a small mercy for families who've stretched tight to meet the goal.

Those who've already completed payments were urged to forward their international passports and the completed forms to their Area Officers. For Fatima and many like her, this means their traveling documents can be processed ahead of the deadline, turning a dream into a concrete plan rather than a distant possibility.

Beyond the numbers and deadlines, there is a shared thread among the community—renewed hope. The Board's



L-R: Director, Public Affairs, Mr. Taofeek Lawal; Secretary, Lagos State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board, Mr. AbdulHakeem Ajomagberin; Ag. Executive Chairman, Agege LGA, Hon. Abdul-Ganiyu Obasa; Director Operations, Mr. Adekola Akanni and Alh. Azeez Saheed, a consultant to the Board, during the visit to Agege LGA, recently

FCT, Lagos, Kano, others race against time

director reaffirmed a commitment to serving the FCT contingent in line with the Renewed Hope Agenda of the President Tinubu led-administration, a pledge that the journey will be supported with dignity, efficiency, and respect for every pilgrim's devotion.

For families like Fatima's, the Hajj is more than a rite. It's a testament to perseverance, faith, and her heart desire through months of saving, praying, and preparing. As December approaches, voices in homes across the Nigeria rise in hope, putting not just naira and kobo together, to meet the deadline so that they can stand in prayer on the plains of Arafat, side by side with fellow pilgrims, to answer the call of their Creator.

In Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Kaduna, Kano, FCT, and many other state pilgrims boards, announcements of the fee have been made with deadlines for payment. For instance, if you're part of the FCT community, here's what to know:

The Board asked intending pilgrims to settle payments by the end of December, offering the option to deposit now and complete the balance by the deadline—an invitation to begin the process without delay.

Fare for Hajj 2026: N8,244,813.67 (eight million, two hundred forty-four thousand, eight hundred thirteen naira and sixty-seven kobo)

Deadline: Complete payment by December 2025 (end of December)

Payment method: Bank draft only (no cash)

Extra refunds: Excess payments refunded directly to the payer's bank account

Next steps for those who've paid: Send international passport and completed forms to your Area Officer to expedite travel documents

This is more than a financial checklist; it's a family's narrative of faith, patience, and shared purpose. As December draws nearer, the boards, the families, and the communities all wait with hopeful hearts, ready to embark on a journey that means so much more than mileage—it's a pilgrimage of the soul.

Jaiz Bank strengthens partnership with Hajj Savings Scheme to enhance pilgrimage experience

Abuja - The Executive Director-led team of Jaiz Bank paid a courtesy visit to the Hajj Savings Scheme (HSS) office in Abuja, marking a significant step in fortifying their existing partnership. The meeting, held on a recent date, focused on key areas of improvement and strategic planning for a successful Hajj 2026.

Led by Hajia Wafiyah Mustapha, the HSS team engaged in productive discussions with the Jaiz Bank delegation, exploring ways to bolster their collaboration. The Hajj Savings Scheme, designed to facilitate pilgrims' savings for the holy pilgrimage, has been instrumental in helping Nigerian Muslims prepare financially for the journey.

This partnership is particularly crucial, given the rising costs associated with performing Hajj. In 2025, the cost ranges between N8.3 million to N8.7 million, while the 2026 hajj fare has been projected between N8.2million to N8.5 million for Nigerian pilgrims.

The HSS aims to mitigate these costs by providing an avenue for prospective pilgrims to save gradually over time for the once-in-a-lifetime spiritual rites.



NAHCON visits Lagos Pilgrims Board, inspects facilities for 2026 Hajj operations

The National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) has begun preparations for the 2026 Hajj exercise by inspecting the Lagos State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board's facilities. Led by Lagos Zonal Coordinator Alhaji Mustapha Wasiu Adetoro, the team assessed the board's readiness to support pilgrims.

The inspection aims to ensure a smooth operation for Nigerian pilgrims traveling to Saudi Arabia. NAHCON is working to finalize arrangements for the pilgrimage, emphasizing timely preparations to guarantee a successful event.







Why Nigeria must reject the weaponised lie of 'Christian Genocide'

In the face of rising propaganda and psychological warfare aimed at destabilizing Nigeria and demonizing Islam, it is time that every reasonable Nigerian speaks with clarity, conviction, and courage.

The recent surge in claims, particularly from Western political figures and media outlets that Nigeria is witnessing a "Christian genocide" is not only false, it is dangerous. It is a deliberate distortion of reality, designed to fracture our national unity, vilify Muslims, and serve foreign geopolitical interests.

Let us begin with the facts—facts that are being ignored, manipulated, or erased by those pushing this narrative. The bulk of terrorism-related atrocities in Nigeria have occurred in Muslim-majority regions.

States like Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Adamawa, and Sokoto have borne the brunt of Boko Haram's violence. These are not Christian enclaves. These are Islamic heartlands, where mosques have been bombed,

Qur'anic schools destroyed, and Muslim scholars assassinated. Entire Muslim communities have been displaced, orphaned, and massacred. To claim that Christians are being targeted more than Muslims is not just inaccurate, it is a grotesque inversion of reality. It is a slap in the face to the thousands of Muslim families who have buried their loved ones, fled their homes, and endured unspeakable suffering. It is a narrative that weaponizes grief for political gain.

In the Middle Belt—particularly Plateau and Benue—the violence is rooted in ethnic and political tensions, not religious animosity. These conflicts stem from land disputes, resource competition, and governance failures. Reducing them to a simplistic Christian-versus-Muslim binary is intellectually dishonest and morally reprehensible.

Terrorism is not religious — It Is a Shared Tragedy

One distorted notion held by certain Western bigots is the belief that terrorism is synonymous with Islam. Despite their civilisation, they have failed to distinguish between Islam as a religion and the universal tragedy of terrorism.

Terrorism in Nigeria is not about Islam, Christianity, or any faith. It is a scourge that affects all communities indiscriminately. The characteristic of any soft targets does not include a particular faith, rather has to do with where and how people gathered to cause devastating damage on them. Boko Haram, ISWAP, and bandit groups have targeted churches and mosques alike. They have killed

imams and pastors, bombed religious gatherings, and attacked civilians without regard for creed. Their ideology as we will always say is a perversion of any faith which they may be seen to profess. It is utterly rejected by every credible Islamic scholar and institution.

To label their crimes as "Islamist" is to engage in a propaganda that seeks to equate Islam with violence. It is a narrative that fuels Islamophobia, justifies foreign intervention, and undermines the peaceful coexistence that millions of Nigerians strive to uphold.

The Western Hypocrisy: A smokescreen for global injustice

The loudest voices accusing Nigeria of "Christian genocide" are not humanitarian advocates—they are political opportunists. Figures like Senator Ted Cruz, Bill Maher, and Van Jones have amplified these claims without evidence, while remaining silent on the suffering of Muslims in Gaza, Yemen, and other conflict zones. Their selective outrage is a smokescreen—a distraction from their own complicity in global injustices.

Western governments and media outlets have long used the narrative of Christian persecution in Nigeria to serve their geopolitical agendas. It is a tool of psychological warfare, designed to demonize Islam, justify foreign interference, and sow division within Nigeria. It is part of a broader campaign to decimate Islam through propaganda, infiltration, and ideological subversion and perversion.

Qur'anic schools destroyed, and Muslim scholars assassinated. Entire Muslim communities have been displaced, orphaned, and massacred. To claim that Christians are being targeted more than Muslims is not just inaccurate, it is a grotesque inversion of reality.

A prime example of one of the most insidious elements of this campaign is the covert operation by the certain organisations to infiltrate Muslim societies and distort Islamic teachings. This is not speculation, it is a documented strategy. This group of individuals employ multiple tactics to penetrate Arab and Muslim communities, both within the Middle East and across the global diaspora.

Every true Muslims who is current with the developments in the region knows the game plan. It was gathered a certain University in the war torn area posing to teach Islamic creed, but not truly a center of Islamic learning. The truth is that the facility is designed to manufacture pseudo-Islamic scholars who serve Zionist objectives. These pseudo-scholars are trained to twist Islamic principles, spread confusion, and divide the Ummah from within.

The deception goes further when you see some personalities addressing Muslims in fluent Arabic, quoting hadith and Qur'anic verses to justify Zionist aggression. This is not outreach, it is manipulation and falsification. It is propaganda dressed in religious garb, aimed at turning Islam against itself. The same idea is being propagated by those who cry "Christian Genocide" in Nigeria.

Nigeria must not be silent

In the face of such injurious narratives, the Nigerian government must not remain silent. Silence is dangerous. Silence will further strengthen the wings of this false narrative, allows it to soar unchecked, until it ultimately erode the very foundation of our beloved nation. Our leaders must rise to defend the truth, protect our unity in diversity, and reject foreign attempts to rewrite our history. Nigeria is not a battleground for Western ideological wars. We are a sovereign nation with a rich tapestry of faiths, cultures, and peoples, where none superior, none expendable.

The government must issue a clear and unequivocal statement rejecting the false narrative of "Christian genocide." It must demand accountability from foreign governments and media outlets that spread misinformation. It must invest in accurate data collection, transparent reporting, and interfaith dialogue to counter propaganda with truth.

To our Christian brothers and sisters: your pain matters. But so does ours. Let us not allow foreign powers to pit us against each other. Let us stand together, Muslims and Christians, to reject lies, resist division, and reclaim our shared humanity.

Islam teaches justice, compassion, and truth. It is time to embody these values—not just in prayer, but in action. Let us expose the lies, confront the manipulators, and defend the dignity of our faith and our nation.

All visa holders now eligible to perform Umrah as Saudi Arabia upgrades accommodation licensing ahead of Hajj 2026

****Says: Application of licenses closes by Feb 1, 2026***

this process excludes hotels with existing year-round licenses.

By linking licensed facilities to the Nusuk platform, the new system facilitates coordinated bookings and boosts capacity during peak pilgrimage periods. These efforts under-

score the government's dedication—under the leadership of King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman—to providing pilgrims with a spiritually fulfilling and logistically smooth experience at the Two Holy Mosques.

In a bid to enhance the pilgrimage experience, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has announced two major initiatives aimed at broadening access to Umrah and improving accommodation standards for Hajj pilgrims.

First, the ministry confirmed that holders of all types of visas—including personal, family visit, e-tourist, transit, and work visas—are now eligible to perform Umrah rituals while in the Kingdom. This inclusive policy reflects Saudi Arabia's commitment to welcoming Muslims from around the world and aligns with the broader goals of Vision 2030, which seeks to enrich religious tourism and streamline pilgrim services.

To support this expansion, the ministry has launched the Nusuk Umrah platform, a digital gateway that allows pilgrims to select packages, book services, and obtain Umrah permits electronically. The platform offers a seamless experience, enabling users to customize their spiritual journey with flexibility and ease.

In parallel, preparations for the Hajj season of 2026 are underway with the introduction of a temporary hotel licensing system for pilgrim accommodations in Makkah and Madinah. Developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Municipalities and Housing, this system is designed to elevate hospitality standards and ensure safe, organized lodging during the pilgrimage.

Prospective accommodation providers must apply through the Nusuk Masar platform and secure licenses via the Ministry of Tourism's electronic portal before the deadline of 13 Sha'ban 1447 AH (February 1, 2026). Notably,

Nusuk hits 30m users in 190 countries, set to become world's leading Islamic digital platform

In what can be described as a remarkable convergence of faith and technology, the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah of Saudi Arabia announced that the Nusuk app, the kingdom's official digital gateway for pilgrims has surpassed 30 million downloads.

The figure is more than double the 12 million users recorded in 2024, marking an impressive surge of over 150% in under a year.

Nusuk now serves travelers from more than 190 countries, with international users comprising more than 90% of the base. This growth underscores how a single app can bridge distances and support seekers on their sacred journeys—whether for Hajj, Umrah, or visits to the holy sites.

Connected to every stakeholder in the Hajj and Umrah ecosystem, Nusuk offers over 100 digital services that accompany pilgrims at every stage. The app helps with planning and booking for Umrah and Rawdah Al-Sharifah visits, access to the Haramain high-speed train, flight and hotel reservations, maps, itineraries, and cultural tours. Recent updates



have added day-to-day spiritual resources such as Quran readings, supplications, prayer times, and Qibla direction.

The ministry highlighted that a major update is on the horizon to deliver a smoother, more intuitive user experience, aligning with global standards in technology and design. Nusuk's



evolution is framed as part of its mission to become the world's leading Islamic digital platform.

"Nusuk is more than an app; it's a window that connects the pilgrim's spiritual path with the modern world," said a senior ministry official.

Another official added, "We aim to make the journey from planning to standing before God as seamless and secure as possible, with an experience that respects the sanctity of this rite."

A major upgrade is planned in the coming months to further refine usability and interdisciplinarity, reflecting Nusuk's commitment to accessibility for Muslims worldwide. The ministry envisions Nusuk not only as a digital tool but as a catalyst for a more inclusive, streamlined, and spiritually uplifting experience.

At the intersection of devotion and digital progress, Nusuk stands as a bridge between steadfast faith and contemporary convenience. As Saudi Arabia continues to develop this digital pathway, users and pilgrims alike move one step closer to the House of God with clarity, confidence, and prayer.

Dentures: The glittering trade of gold teeth in Madinah

DURING the peak seasons of Umrah and Hajj, the city of Madinah witnesses a unique and thriving business trend. Amidst the spiritual fervor and devotion, a lucrative industry has emerged, catering to pilgrims seeking to adorn their smiles with gold and silver teeth.

For many pilgrims, the journey to the holy city is an opportunity to not only seek spiritual enlightenment but also to indulge in a symbol of wealth and status. Gold and silver teeth, often adorned with intricate designs,

have become a sought-after accessory among some pilgrims.

The business of fixing gold and silver teeth in Madinah has become a notable phenomenon, with numerous clinics and individual practitioners offering their services to cater to the demand. Skilled artisans and technicians work tirelessly to create custom-fit designs, ranging from simple gold crowns to elaborate silver frameworks.

This trend has sparked interesting discussions among pilgrims and locals alike, with

some viewing it as a form of self-expression and others seeing it as a deviation from the spiritual essence of the pilgrimage.

Regardless of perspectives, the demand for gold and silver teeth in Madinah continues to grow, driven by the city's influx of visitors from around the world. As the pilgrimage seasons approach,



this unique industry is expected to thrive, adding a touch of glamour and extravagance to the spiritual journey of many pilgrims.

Clinic Teeth



Gold, Silver, Diamond & With Other Types

Abu Hazim

+966555405767

AIMadina AIMunawarah



5th Hajj conference to hold Nov 9-12, to spotlight tech, services

JEDDAH: The Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, in partnership with the Pilgrim Experience Program, will hold the fifth Hajj Conference and Exhibition in Jeddah from Nov. 9 to 12, under the theme "From Makkah to the World."

The event will feature more than 80 sessions and 60 workshops, with participants including academics, researchers, and representatives of Hajj affairs offices and diplomatic missions.

Additionally, more than 2,400 trainees from around the world are expected to attend, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Wednesday.

More than 260 exhibitors from 137 countries will showcase the latest technologies and services related to the Hajj and Umrah ecosystem.

This year's conference is expected to launch high-impact initiatives. And officials will sign new agreements to enhance the integration of technology, urban development, and services for pilgrims.

On Monday, Makkah Deputy Gov. Prince Saud bin Mishal bin Abdulaziz met with Minister of Hajj and Umrah Tawfiq Al-Rabiah in Jeddah to review pilgrim services.

The officials also discussed final preparations for the conference, which will include representatives from the public and private sectors.



A life, legacy, lively celebration: Alhaji Abdulfatai Dawodu turns 90

RECENTLY, the Arcade Hall of Eko Club in Surulere, Lagos, shimmered with warmth as friends, family, and admirers gathered to honor Alhaji Abdulfatai Dawodu on a milestone that feels both personal and public: his 90th birthday. The hall was filled to the brim, a testament to a life that has touched many individuals, Lagos society and beyond.

The evening carried a purposeful warmth, that brought both gratitude and fun combined. The chairman of the occasion, Retired Major General Tajudeen Olanrewaju, framed the night as a double celebration: the remarkable milestone of ninety years and the launch of a memoir that chronicles a remarkable life and the family's enduring legacy.

He spoke with a quiet gravitas, beginning with a tribute to the tireless work Dawodu poured into producing the memoirs of the Mabinuori family, a project that binds generations and preserves stories that might otherwise fade with time. The gathering, he explained, was not merely to celebrate a

life but to launch a memoir on his behalf, a symbolic gesture that binds the past, present, and future into one ongoing narrative.

In a moment of civic candor, he reflected on Lagos with frankness that resonated beyond the hall: "We the sons and daughters of Lagos state are not happy. The Lagos state that is bequeathed to us is not where we want it to be. Lagos state is slipping off our hands." It was a gentle prompt to the audience about responsibility—an invitation to protect heritage and to learn from the experiences of their father, who has made himself an open book for those willing to read. The message suggested that Dawodu's life offers practical wisdom about resilience, service, and the importance of documenting and sharing family and community stories, a reminder that the elder's journey can guide the younger generations toward a more mindful future.

The evening offered a tapestry of moments that linger far beyond the banquet table. An entrancing Indian dance performance lit up

the room, as a young woman in traditional Indian attire graced the stage and treated guests to a sequence of elegant steps.

The centerpiece of the night, the "Book Lunch," featured the memoir authored by the celebrant himself and reviewed by LASU's former Vice Chancellor, Prof Olanrewaju Fagbohun. Guests contributed generously to the launch, their contributions signaling broad recognition of a life woven into Lagos's social, civic, and cultural fabric. The ceremonial moment of cutting the cake punctuated the evening, a traditional rite that felt both celebratory and reflective—a symbolic pause to honor nine decades of service, community, and family.

The guest list read like a who's who of La-

gos's civic and cultural corridors. Among those present were the former Inspector General Muslim Smith, the President of Eko Club Sirajudeen, LASU's former Vice Chancellor Prof Olanrewaju Smith, the past chairman of the Yoruba Tennis Club, and HRH Oba Riliwanu Akiolu of Lagos, represented by Olori Oloye of Lagos, Chief Lateef Aderibigbe. Also in attendance were Chief Adisa Abisogun, the chairman of the occasion Retired Major General Tajudeen Olanrewaju, the Lagos Island Club President Prince Olosoye Matins, and Taofeek Abdurasaq. Their presence lent the evening a resonance that stretched across the Arcade's halls of power and culture, weaving together institutions that have helped shape the city's civic and social life over decades.



The new nonagenarian, Alhaji Abdulfatai Dawodu Mabinuori and wife (middle) flanked by President of Eko Club, Barrister Surajudeen Adejeji Lawal; (2nd left) and Vice President, Prince Babatunde Adele (2nd right) and other members of Eko Club during the 90th Birthday celebration and Book lunch of one of them Alhaji Abdulfatai Dawodu, held at Arcade Hall, Eko Club, Surulere recently.

Diplomacy

in action:

How Nigerian Pilgrims escaped death penalty in Saudi Arabia

When the flight landed in Jeddah, the three Nigerian pilgrims were simply hopeful travelers chasing a spiritual journey. They never imagined their names would be stitched into a tangled web of a drug trafficking scandal, one that would unfold across continents and test the mettle of diplomacy, law enforcement, and the bond between nations.

Weeks later, in the quiet moments after the announcements, their families could finally breathe again. The Nigerians—Mrs. Maryam Abdullahi, Mrs. Bahijja Abdullahi, and Mr. Abdulhamid Saddieq—were freed after four long weeks in custody, a development that rolled out like a much-needed sunrise over anxious households and worried communities.

Their story is not just a correction of a painful misstep; it's a testament to perseverance, international cooperation, and the quiet courage of those who never lose faith in the face of fear.

In Abuja, Brig.-Gen. Buba Marwa (retd.), the Chairman of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), spoke with measured conviction about how diplomacy and determined investigation can clear the air for people who were only seeking a sacred pilgrimage. He was represented at the briefing by Mr. Femi Babafemi, the NDLEA's Director of Media and Advocacy, who conveyed the key messages to the press.

On the ground in Saudi Arabia, the General Directorate of Narcotics Control (GDNC) led the containment and resolution effort. Their cooperation with the NDLEA underlined a shared commitment: that no innocent person should bear the burden of punishment for

crimes they did not commit.

The Nigerian government's team of high-level supporters was broad and active: President Bola Tinubu, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice Prince Lateef Fagbemi (SAN), Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Yusuf Tuggar, Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development Festus Keyamo (SAN), and the National Security Adviser Mallam Nuhu Ribadu. Their names may be tucked into official records, but their impact was felt in the release of three hopeful travelers.

The NDLEA's investigation uncovered a drug syndicate operating out of Kano's Malam Aminu Kano International Airport (MAKIA). The syndicate had allegedly tagged illicit drug-laden bags with the names of unsuspecting pilgrims traveling on Ethiopian Airlines flight ET940 from Kano to Jeddah on August 6, 2025, for the lesser hajj.

The mastermind behind the scheme was Mohammed Ali Abubakar, 55, also known as Bello Karama. He was arrested along with three accomplices—airline officials named Celestina Yayock, Abdulbasit Sagagi, and Jazuli Kabir. Charges were filed in Nigeria as the investigation unfolded.

Armed with the findings, the NDLEA engaged Saudi authorities in a sustained, multi-layered dialogue that spanned official channels and diplomatic corridors. The aim was not only to clear the names of the Nigerian pilgrims but to bring the truth to light and prevent any unjust punishment.

The families' petitions sparked a probe that set the wheels in motion. The NDLEA's persistence paid off: one of the detainees was released on September 14, and the remaining

two followed on September 15.

NDLEA officials emphasized that the outcome was achieved by presenting evidence that supported the innocence of the pilgrims and by demonstrating that the alleged crime did not involve them.

Brig.-Gen. Marwa underscored the importance of international collaboration in safeguarding Nigerians abroad. He stated that the MoU between the NDLEA and GDNC reflected a mutual commitment to partnership and due process.

He also highlighted the "no Nigerian should suffer unjustly in a foreign land" principle, a pledge echoed by the President's steadfast support and the coordinated efforts of Nigeria's top legal and security minds.

The release was described as a victory not only for the families but for a system that strives to protect the vulnerable in a globalized world.

Diplomats and investigators described the outcome as a demonstration of what can be achieved when nations align their resources and legal frameworks to protect innocent people and uphold the rule of law. The NDLEA leadership offered a strong reminder: "No Nigerian will be unjustly punished for crimes they did not commit anywhere in the world."

As the three Nigerians walk back into ordinary life, the headlines fade but the human thread remains: a community's relief, a country's resolve, and the enduring hope that kindness and justice, when joined by persistence and partnership, can prevail even through the most tangled of international puzzles.

Brig.-Gen. Buba Marwa (retd.),
Chairman NDLEA

Saudi health requirements for 2026 Hajj pilgrims

By Fatima Sanda Usara

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has released the 2026 Hajj health requirements and guidelines for pilgrims. The guidelines, issued for Hajj 1447 AH (2026), outline the mandatory and recommended medical conditions that intending pilgrims must meet before embarking on the pilgrimage.

According to the circular, all countries, including Nigeria, are to ensure that their citizens performing Hajj are physically fit and free from ailments that could affect their health or that of others during the pilgrimage. The Saudi Ministry of Health listed severe heart, lung, or kidney diseases, advanced chronic illnesses, and mental or psychological disorders as conditions that may prevent an individual from performing Hajj.

The circular mandates full compliance with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Health medical fitness requirements for attending Hajj, including a certificate from medical authorities of the pilgrims' countries confirming that they are free of the following conditions:

- major organ failure (heart, lungs, liver, or kidneys)
- neurological or psychiatric disorders that impair cognition or are accompanied by severe motor disabilities;
- senility accompanied by dementia;
- high-risk pregnancy at any stage;
- cancer patients receiving chemotherapy, biological, or radiological treatment;
- and active infectious diseases with a public health impact such as tuberculosis and hemorrhagic fever)

MANDATORY VACCINES:

On vaccination, the Saudi health authorities reiterated that all intending pilgrims must present valid certificates of vaccination against

COVID-19, meningitis, polio, and yellow fever before entering

the Kingdom. Specifically, the following were outlined:

COVID-19:

All pilgrims and Hajj workers must show proof of full vaccination with vaccines approved by Saudi Arabia. The most recent dose must have been administered between 2021 and 2025, and at least two weeks before travel.

Meningococcal Meningitis (ACWY):

Every pilgrim must be vaccinated against meningitis with the ACWY vaccine not more than five years and not less than ten days before arrival in Saudi Arabia.

Polio: Due to ongoing global surveillance, pilgrims from Nigeria are required to receive a dose of the Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (IPV) or Oral Polio Vaccine (bOPV/novel OPV2) at least four weeks before travel. Proof must be recorded in the International Certificate of Vaccination (Yellow Card).

Yellow Fever: All travelers above nine months of age must present a valid Yellow Fever vaccination certificate upon entry.

COMPLIANCE MONITORING:

To ensure effectiveness of the guidelines, Saudi authorities will conduct health screenings at all entry points to ensure compliance with the set requirements. Any traveler who fails to meet these health standards may be denied entry, isolated, or subjected to further medical evaluation. The Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has that, "No pilgrim from the listed be allowed to health certificate be thoroughly before and arrival in the

emphasized suffering diseases will travel, and icates will verified upon King-

dom." , the circular asserted.

The Kingdom also disclosed that additional measures may be taken if there are global disease outbreaks or international public health emergencies during or prior to the Hajj exercise, in coordination with the World Health Organization (WHO).

Consequently, the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) urges all intending pilgrims to take note of these requirements and ensure they complete the necessary vaccinations and health checks well ahead of the 2026 Hajj season. Similarly, NAHCON and the State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Boards and Licensed Tour Operators will work together to enforce compliance as provided to avoid travel disruptions at the point of entry into the Kingdom for Hajj.

See below the translation of the full text of the circular:

Health Requirements and Guidelines for Pilgrims from the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Hajj 1447 AH (2026)

1. Health Fitness and Diseases Affecting Public Health

Countries must ensure that intending pilgrims are physically fit and free from diseases that hinder the ability to perform Hajj rituals. The following health conditions prevent participation:

- Severe heart, lung, or kidney diseases.
- Advanced chronic illnesses or disabilities that impede movement or self-care.
- Mental or psychological disorders that could cause safety risks to oneself or others.
- Contagious or epidemic diseases that pose public health threats.

2. Recommended Vaccinations

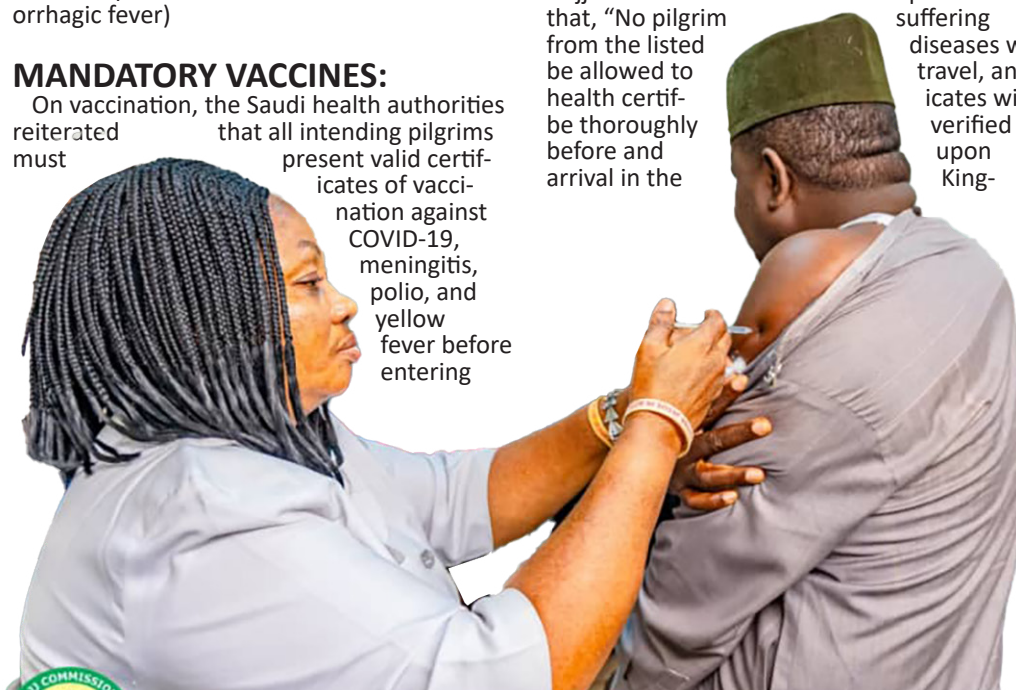
a. COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)
All intending pilgrims and Hajj workers must have valid proof of COVID-19 vaccination in accordance with the health requirements of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The vaccination must be among those approved by Saudi Arabia.

The most recent dose must be administered within the period 2021–2025, and documentation should show proof of immunity or vaccination at least two weeks before travel.

b. Meningococcal Meningitis (ACWY Vaccine)

All pilgrims and workers arriving for Hajj are required to present a valid vaccination certificate against meningococcal meningitis (serogroups A, C, W, and Y).



ORGAN DONATION:

Medical expert speaks on procedures, benefits, others

By Tajudeen Balogun

NIGERIAN Muslims have been encouraged to show interest and participate actively, in organ donation to the needy, just as the gesture is recognized by Islam as an act of charity. Similarly, when participating in the process, the faithful, including medical experts and donors have been urged to be conscious of their intention and follow Islamic principles, so as to earn the full reward in life and hereafter.

Dr Muhammed-Isa Abdul Mujeeb Tosin, made the call while delivering lecture titled: "Navigating The Complexities Of Organ Donation And Harvesting: Legal, Ethical and Islamic Perspectives, at The Companion (Association of Muslim men in business and the professions) Lagos District 2025 Midterm Conference Public Lecture, on Saturday. Speaking on the Islamic principles relating to the process, the Medical practitioner stated that, Islam gives credence to life and body, that the human body is a trust, and as such, it's expected to be accorded respect in life and death.

He affirmed that Islam allows organ donation, as it encourages seeking legal cure; recognizes the principle of necessity - which accommodates "daurura" - a ruling which allows exceptions to general rules, especially when human life is at stake.

The Physician stressed on intention of the action - asserting that organ donation motivated by altruism and saving of lives, aligns with the Islamic values of charity and compassion. While noting that the mostly donated organs, include: kidneys and lungs, among others, Dr AbdulMujeeb Tosin stated that the Islamic rulings on the act, provide that the donation must not cause harm to the donor and the process must be with the valid consent - permission from donor or family. Besides, the Medical Director and Chief Executive Officer of "Our Friend Hospital", warned that organ donation should not be for profit making, just as Islam prohibits organ trading or to be done for financial incentives.

He added that Islam rules that there should be medical necessity - a clear need for organ transplantation with no alternatives. The Convener, "Our Friend Health Foundation" listed the benefits of organ donation which include: saving of life; restoring health; giving emotional reward to donor and impacting positively on the society. Ultimately, Dr AbdulMujeeb Tosin encouraged Muslims to be positively disposed to ethical organ donation, as it is considered under the Islamic rulings as an act that save life; an act of charity and a charity gesture which rewards

to donor is everlasting - described in Islam as "Sadaqah Jariyah".

The Chairman of the Conference Public Lecture, Barrister Hassan Taiwo Fajimite, in his welcome address noted that as the Science continues to break new grounds, human being is faced with serious questions - "not just about what can be done, but what should be done properly with the fear of Allah". While responding to journalists during an interview, Fajimite who is the Managing Partner, Inukan Chambers cautioned that both the donor and medical practitioners should follow legal procedure while giving consent for donation and harvesting, so as to avoid being caught by hands of the Laws. He recalled the saga of a former Senator in Nigeria, describing it as a tragic story of a father trying to save his daughter, but taking the wrong route, adding that the event reminded the world that when ethics are ignored, compassion can turn criminal.

Barrister Fajimite commended Lagos State House of Assembly over recent passing the Bill on Human Organ Harvesting and Tissue Transplantation into Law, noting that it was a response to the new realities, affirming that the gesture, alongside the National Health Act

2014 are bold steps.

The senior Lawyer said: "We are beginning to see clearer structures that protect both donors and patients", adding that for Muslims, "the law is only part of the picture - our compass must also be the Quran and Sunnah".

The Lagos District Amir of The Companion, Alhaji Abdul Kabir Olayiwola Baruwa in his welcome address said that the theme of the public lecture - "Advances in Medical Sciences: Ethical Considerations" with the topic, is in furtherance of the 3rd pillar of the group's core mandate of Education Advancement. He said: "We are all living in times that are evolving and rapidly advancing with scientific breakthroughs, medical research and innovations, deployment of cutting edge technologies with disruptive capabilities, Bio and Nano technological development that have expanded human knowledge and horizons.

"The cumulative effects of these technological and medical advances have changed not only our perception but our collective realities on how we interact and embrace the use of these technologies.

"As Muslims, it is imperative to evaluate the appropriateness of the deployment of these technologies and interrogate their ethical considerations using Islamic lens and standards". Alhaji Baruwa reiterated that the choice of the conference topic was largely predicated on the need to beam a search light on this development, adding that it is worrisome that there's been reported cases of incidences of organ harvesting and sales especially amongst the youth demography. He lamented that the development has reached an alarming scale that requires urgent intervention from policy makers, while the various law making bodies should come up with stringent measures to counter this pervasive threat to the health and well being of our young people. "A country with unregulated and loose standards for organ donation, transplant and procurement is a recipe for a health disaster with devastating consequences for future generations. Organ harvesting, especially when done illegally or without consent, is one of the most disturbing human rights issues of our time" Alhaji Baruwa warned.

He stressed that the multi-dimensional

poverty in Nigeria is a systemic challenge that requires coordinated and sustained efforts across all sectors and levels of government. Baruwa specified: "Tackling it is not just a humanitarian imperative but a key to national stability, economic growth, and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is germane to emphasize that government at all levels should collaborate to ensure that well articulated policies and programmes are implemented to reduce the effect of the high inflationary pressures on the most vulnerable segment of the society. This will go along way in reducing the number of our population that are currently experiencing multi-dimensional poverty".

The Lagos group's head thanked participants for attending the conference, wishing them a resourceful session. The Lecture was graced by The Companion and Criterion's executives and leaders, at the National, District and local levels, as well as representatives of different organizations, such as Federation of Muslim of Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN).

Among The Companion leaders who attended the Conference were former National Hajj Commis-

sion of Nigeria (NAHCON), Ustadh Sikirullahi Hassan, former National Amirs of the organization, Alhaji YKO Abdul Kareem, Dr Tunde Popoola; former District Amirs, Alhaji Jumai Alli-Oluwafuyi, Ustadh Abdul Fatai Abdul Majeed and Alhaji Abdul Ganiyu Abdul Majeed, a former District Financial Secretary, Alhaji Lukmon Ayan-tayo, among others.

The Criterion (The Companion women's wing) members were led to the lecture by the Lagos

District Naibatul Amirah (Deputy Head), Dr Khadijah Abdul Salam. She was joined by Alhaja Fatimah Fajimite, Risquot Mumuni, Nimotallah Baruwa, among others. The public lecture was later followed by the plenary session, which was attended by The Companion members and featured discussions and engagements on the activities of the present executives in the last one year.

Tajudeen Balogun is the Public Affairs Secretary of The Companion.

The cumulative effects of these technological and medical advances have changed not only our perception but our collective realities on how we interact and embrace the use of these technologies.



Dr Muhammed AbdulMujeeb Tosin

By Nasir Danladi Bako, PhD

Last Thursday in the University town of Oxford, some 48 miles North West of London the Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies celebrated its 40th anniversary with the King of England Charles III superintending over the event. It was headlined by the speech of the very venerable King and also climaxed with the Annual General Meeting of the Board of Trustees as well as a tree-planting ceremony at the Centre's garden.

Sultan of Sokoto, Saad Abubakar III extolled the Centre and its management for the remarkable achievements recorded in the last 40 years which has witnessed visits, lectures, seminars and speeches by very important dignitaries like former President Nelson Mandela and former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan. Sultan Saad lauded the administration of the Centre and expressed hope that the rest of the world especially the developing world would emulate the foresight and vision of the founding fathers of the Islamic Centre. He expressed delight at the highly intellectual endeavor and community service both local and international that the Centre has become synonymous with.

Over the last four decades the Centre has become a citadel of learning incorporating lectures, seminars, provision of scholarship, research, fellowship, and engaging a multi-racial and multi-religious congregation as its students and clientele. A huge number of visiting lecturers from the world over, are available to the academic faculty of the Centre.

Similarly, its Board or Trustees reflects variegated, ethnic, racial and cultural diversity with both Muslim and non-Muslims co-habiting successfully on the Board.

While Saudi Prince Turki Al Faisal sits stop the board as Chairman, Sultan Nazrin Shah of Malaysia occupies the seat of Vice Chairman, Sheikh Mohammed Al Sabah former Prime Minister of Kuwait remains one of the pillars of the Centre.

There is also a strong British membership on the board, Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC is former Attorney General for England and Wales, Sir Martin Donnelly KCB is former Permanent Secretary at the Department of International Trade as well Dr Catherine Swales, Director Clinical, Medical Sciences Division University of Oxford.

This array of Distinguished personalities on the board is further dignified by the inclusion and membership of the only African on the leadership of the Centre in the person of His Eminence Sultan Muhammad Saad Abubakar III.

The achievements of the Centre include the Research components of its study programme focusing on "the social and intellec-

As OCIS clocks 40, Sultan Sa'ad extols centre



HRH King Charles III

tual history of the Muslim world, the social and economic development of Muslim societies, science, technology and environment in Muslim societies and Muslims in Britain". Similarly, the Centre witnessed the emergence and growth of its publications, "The Journal of Islamic Studies" and the "Makers of Muslim Civilization". The Lectures and Roundtables have also been a major highlight, while in the area of teaching the Centre has promoted multi-disciplinary study of culture and Islam and contemporary Muslim societies through fellowships like The King Charles fellowship, Nelson Mandela Fellowship, the Globe Fellowship and Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Fellowship among twenty others. The Director of the Centre Farzan Nizami in highlighting some of the story behind the success stated the centre proudly launched an Exhibition of "Lines of Faith: Astronomy and the Art of the Astrolabe in the Islamic World".

Two highly intellectual lectures that brought recognition to the Centre in the last one year are that of Lord Neuberger (former President



Sultan of Sokoto, HRH Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III

of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom) "Threats to the Rule of Law" and that of Professor Philippe Sands of the University College London titled "On Genocide: Then and Now". It is remarkable as well as instructive that the Centre came into existence in 1986 in a wooden hut on St Cross Road and grew tremendously into the oak it is today, ensconced on a beautiful piece of land on Martson road in the heart of Oxford town vigorously propagating interfaith dialogue and inter-civilization co-habitation as well as social harmony and general well-being of the human race. Without doubt with the continued commitment of the Centre's Grand patron King Charles III and the unique, sagacious capacity of its African monarch Sultan Saad of Sokoto the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies is bound to continue to grow in leaps and bounds probably surpassing the successes of the last 40 years in another 40 years.

Nasir Danladi Bako PhD, OON, writes from Kogunan, Sokoto

The Reality of Death!

By Imam Murtadha Gusau

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah. I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

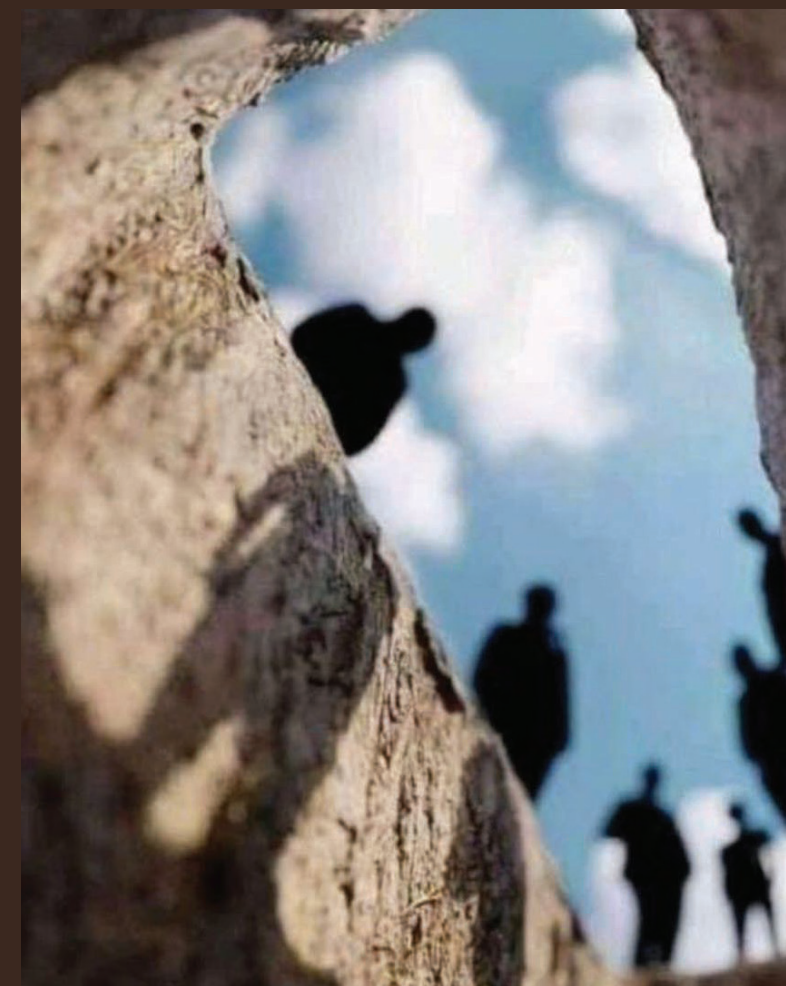
Dear brothers and sisters! I enjoin you and myself to fear Allah, for it is the provision and safety in this world and the Last Day: "The day when neither wealth nor sons will avail, except him who brings to Allah a clean heart." [Surah Ash-Shu'ara: 88-89]

Allah the Most High says: "Everyone shall taste death. And only on the day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the fire and admitted to Paradise he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing)." [Surah Ali-Imran: 175]

Such is the reality of death and what comes after it. Every one of us shall taste it whether poor or rich; healthy or sick, old or young; leader or led and none of us can escape it. Allah the Most High says: "Wherever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in a fortress built up strong and high." [Surah An-Nisa: 78]

Respected brothers and sisters! Death, as manifested in its character and effects is one of the mysteries that dazzle human intelligence because it has to do with the soul.

And Allah the Almighty says: "And they ask you (O Muhammad) concerning the spirit. Say: 'The spirit is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.'" [Surah Al-Isra: 85] One of its mysteries is that you see a youth who was full of health and energy suddenly falls dead without warning; thereby making that youthfulness



and energy fade away, bringing all his senses to a complete standstill. That youth might even be an erudite scholar, an eloquent author, a skilled physician or brilliant inventor but it is absolutely out of the question that this quality should prevent death from overtaking him when his time is due.

Allah the Almighty says: "When their term is reached, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment)." [Surah Yunus: 49]

Amr Ibn Abdullah used to mount the pulpit and say: "Many a person who has seen the beginning of a day but would not see its end. And many a person who has expected morning but would not live to see it. If only you had known your appointed time and how it comes to pass, you would have detested nursing hope for worldly materials and its

deception." While man enjoys his good health, playing and merrymaking, moving about in haughtiness, commanding and forbidding, death and illness suddenly attacks him, weakens his body, makes his limbs lifeless and then closes his record.

How near is death! Every day it becomes closer to us and no sooner has the book reached its appointed time that we belong among the dead. Then it becomes clear that life is really like flowers that bloom then afterwards wither or like a lamp that illuminates then afterwards dies down. Let those who crave for this

world and its pleasures ponder over these scattered graves all over the place and realise that the way to pleasures and lustful things, though decorated with beautiful roses inevitably leads to the present condition of those buried in these graves. Happiness is for him whom a messenger of death has opened his eyes to reality before he died, and whoever does not heed to the warning of the Qur'an and death, even if mountains were to thrust one another in front of him, he would not heed.

Dear brothers and sisters! What we witness in the cemeteries is a great lesson for us. The carrier of the bier to the cemetery today is taken back there tomorrow (as a dead person) and is left there only with his deeds either good or evil. It is also very unfortunate that in these days we see some among those who escort the deceased laughing and playing or attending the funeral for showing off. This phenomenon is due to the heedlessness that has hardened people's hearts and made them forget the Last Day and the frightening conditions of the grave. May Allah awaken us from this heedlessness! Ameen.

Every one of us shall taste it whether poor or rich; healthy or sick, old or young; leader or led and none of us can escape it. Allah the Most High says: "Wherever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in a fortress built up strong and high." [Surah An-Nisa: 78]



The Reality of Death!

Dear brothers in faith! It is expected of him who knows that he will die, be buried, raised up on the day of Resurrection and enters Paradise or Hell to always remember death, prepare for it and reflect on it. He is in fact expected to regard himself among the dead. This is because all that is coming is near and when the angel of death comes neither your wealth nor your people or your bodyguards can prevent him from taking your soul. Where are those who achieved their aims and none were comparable to them in that? They collected but could not eat what they collected; they built mansions but could not live there! We on our part are still swimming in the pool of life as if we are meant to live here forever. Uwais Al-Qarni said:

"Remember death when you sleep and always think of it when you are awake."

Fellow Muslims! It is a fact that this world and its tribulations appear insignificant in the eyes of him who always remembers death, for, he has lofty aims and strong resolutions; he is far from hypocrisy and always yearns for the everlasting bliss in the eternal Paradise.

Dear brothers and sisters!

Remembering death does not in any way make one's life loathsome to him; forcing him to sit in his home and leave all means of sustenance. It is rather meant to deter him from committing sins and soften his hard heart. We remember death in order to have good preparation for it and for all that follows it by doing righteous deeds, obeying Allah and increasing one's efforts in all acts of worship. Abdur-Rahman Ibn Mahdi said: "If Hammad Bin Salamah is told, 'You will die tomorrow.' He will not be able to increase anything in his deed, because his time is full of worship and remembrance of Allah."

Dear brothers and sisters! How do we prepare for death? We prepare for death by shunning all abominable things and returning trusts and Amanah to their rightful owners. We prepare for death by eliminating hatred and enmity from our hearts. We prepare for death by being good to the kith and kin.

Ibn al-Mubarak said that Salih Al-Mariy used to say: "If the remembrance of death leaves me for an hour my heart becomes spoilt."

It is also said that: "Whoever frequently remembers death is honoured with three things: quick repentance, self-contentedness and energy in doing acts of worship; and whoever forgets death is punished with three

things: delaying repentance, lack of contentedness and laziness in acts of worship."

When will one who always follows his lustful desires and moves wantonly in his heedlessness remember death? When will one who has no regard for Allah's injunctions in Halal or Haram remember death? When will one who deserts the Qur'an, prays not Fajr in congregation, usurps people's property unlawfully, takes usury, and commits fornication, remember death? How can one whose habit is abusing, insulting, attacking, slandering and backbiting others, whose heart is full of rancour and envy remember death?

The Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) used to say while he was healthy, 'No Prophet died until he saw his place in the Paradise, he was then given the choice between that place and remaining in this world.'

Fellow Muslims! The Prophets, whenever death came to them were given a chance of choosing between remaining on this world and moving to that noble position. It is beyond doubt that every Prophet would select the everlasting bliss. This happened to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), as narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Aishah that she said: "The Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) used to say while

he was healthy, 'No Prophet died until he saw his place in the Paradise, he was then given the choice between that place and remaining in this world.' So when he was dying and his head was on my thigh, he fainted for a while then regained his consciousness. He stared at the ceiling, then said, 'O Allah! I choose the Highest Companionship.' I then said, 'He was not preferring us.' It was then that I understood statement he used to tell us and it was true. She said, 'The last word he uttered was: Oh Allah, I choose the Highest Companionship.' During death and its pain; in the grave and its darkness; and the Day of Resurrection and its horror people fall into two groups. A group shall remain firm; secured from fright and given glad tidings of Paradise while the other group shall suffer disgrace and ignominy.

Allah the Most High says: "Verily, those who say, 'Our Lord is Allah (alone) and then stood straight, on them the angel will descend (at the time of their death saying,) 'Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised.'" [Surah Fussilat: 30]

Angels shall descend upon the believers who are straight in their religion during death in their graves and when they are resurrected in order to assure them of security and to allay their fears of the horror of the day of judgement. The angels will be telling them, 'Do not fear about what you are going to meet and do not grieve over what you will be leaving behind of children, family and wealth.'

The angels will also say, 'We have been your friends in the life of this world and (are so) in the hereafter.' [Surah Fussilat: 31] i.e. we will also be your friends in the hereafter, keeping your company in your graves and when the horn is blown, we will also assure you of security on the day of resurrection.



TAJBank
Our only interest
is you.



Let your **Dollar card** handle the bills while you focus on **unforgettable vacation moments**.

Making international memories with your family has become **10x easier** with the **TAJBank Dollar Mastercard**.

Walk into any of our branches to begin.



f t i @tajbankltd tajbank.com

Put your money to work the right way.

Our **Mudarabah savings account** grows your wealth through proper investments, allowing you to focus on what matters the most to you.

Visit any of our branches near you to start.



@tajbankltd



tajbank.com