

LARGE GATHERING: A MANAGEABLE THREAT

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The world is getting smaller and travel time is becoming shorter due to the ever improving means of transportation. These factors and others has led to the that certain unwanted passengers namely bacteria and viruses moves faster from one country to the other. These passengers never did believe in geographical nor political boundaries. The number of international travelers is increasing dramatically every year. This mass movement unless controlled poses a dangerous health threat to various parts of the world. Large gatherings mainly occur during vacation seasons. However, the largest congregation in the world takes place on Makkah during the annual pilgrimage. The Saudi health authorities are entrusted with providing optimal preventive and curative health services to the pilgrims. International health regulations were developed in order to provide healthy environment. This paper aims at elucidating the methods adopted by the Saudi health authorities during this event. It will also outline the measures which could form the basis upon which various health authorities can rely in coping with large gatherings such as the Annual Pilgrimage to Makkah.