



Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Medina & Qatif Mosque Attacks

Terrorism

Near East > Saudi Arabia > Riyadh

7/4/2016

The United States Embassy notes media reports of suicide bombings at the Al-Haram al-Nabawi Mosque in Medina and the Sheikh Faraj Al Omran Mosque in Qatif. Reports indicate that two attackers died after attempting to enter the Al Omran Mosque in Qatif. At the Al-Haram al-Nabawi Mosque, reports indicate that several individuals, among them Saudi security forces personnel, were killed or injured when an explosive device detonated near the mosque. The Embassy has not received reports of other injuries or fatalities at the Al Omran Mosque in Qatif.

This security message updates the earlier security message from today of media reports of a suspected suicide attack near the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah, which occurred in the early morning hours of July 4. There were no casualties or injuries among U.S. Consulate staff. Media reported two Saudi police officers were injured.

The U.S. Embassy in Riyadh and Consulates in Jeddah and Dhahran remain in close contact with the Saudi authorities as they investigate the incidents.

All U.S. citizens are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings, and take extra precautions when travelling throughout the country. The Department of State urges U.S. citizens to carefully consider the risks of traveling to Saudi Arabia and limit non-essential travel within the country. Please note that travelers holding pilgrimage visas issued by the Saudi government are strictly prohibited from travel outside of the cities of Mecca, Medina and Jeddah.

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U.S. government personnel and their families are restricted from traveling within 50 miles of the Yemeni border, and to the cities of Jizan and Najran, without permission. U.S. government personnel are similarly prohibited from traveling to the city of Qatif in the Eastern Province and its surrounding suburbs, including Awamiyah, and to the town of Hofuf and its surrounding suburbs in the Al Hasa Governorate due to violent episodes that have occurred there in the past.

Regardless of where you are, it is always advisable to keep your security and situational awareness levels high. Please follow these good personal security practices:

Avoid crowds or large gatherings when traveling in public;

Know where you are going and have a plan of what to do in the event you encounter demonstrations or violence; Identify safe areas (for example police stations, hospitals, Saudi Government buildings) in your area and how to get to them quickly; Tell co-workers or neighbors where you're going and when you intend to return; Minimize your profile while in public;

Always carry a cell phone and make sure you have emergency numbers pre-programmed into your phone such as the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh (011-488-3800), U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah (012-667-0080), and U.S. Consulate General in Dhahran (013-330-3200). The emergency number for the Saudi Police, Fire, and Rescue is 999. Please keep in mind that most emergency dispatchers and personnel do not speak English;

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Be prepared to postpone or cancel activities for personal safety concerns; Report concerns you may have to the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, the U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah, or the U.S. Consulate General in Dhahran.

For further information:

U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs website, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country Specific Information can be found. The U.S. Embassy also encourages U.S. citizens to review "A Safe Trip Abroad," which includes valuable security information for those both living and traveling abroad. Follow us on Twitter and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on Facebook as well. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or outside the United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

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