

Saudis Reportedly Ignored Warnings Ahead of Mecca Tragedy



Tehran, September 26 (RHC)-- A well-known Saudi on-line activist says the kingdom's authorities had been warned against overcrowding and a lack of organization prior to the crush that reportedly killed some 2,000 pilgrims in Mina, in one of the worst tragedies to hit the Hajj pilgrimage.

On Saturday, the activist known as @mujtahidd on Twitter wrote that closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras had recorded the excessive number of pilgrims nearly two hours before the September 24 stampede in Mina, located about five kilometers east of the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The activist added that the Saudi officials in charge had contacted high-ranking authorities ahead of the disaster, calling for reinforcements to maintain safety and manage traffic and crowds, but all to no avail.

Mojtahed further noted that Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has also issued an order that footage from police cameras as well as all telephone conversations remain under seal.

The revelations come as a host of pilgrims have stated that they are terrified to continue the ritual stoning of the devil in Mina due to what they call lack of organization and incompetency of Saudi security personnel in handling the affairs.

The tragedy has cast doubt on the ability of Saudi authorities to manage the large influx of pilgrims into the kingdom during the Hajj pilgrimage season every year.

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