

Saudi Arabia: Two more deaths from SARS-like virus (Update)

August 30 2013

Saudi Arabia's Health Ministry says two more people have died from an SARS-like virus, raising the total number of fatalities in the center of the outbreak to 44.

Friday's statement is expected to add further pressures on Saudi officials to try to battle the virus during the upcoming hajj, when millions of Muslim are to make the annual pilgrimage to Islam's holiest sites.

The ministry said two women, a 41-year-old expatriate health worker and a 79-year-old Saudi, were the latest to die from the virus, now called the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS.

About 50 died have died from the virus, most in Saudi Arabia.

The virus is similar to the SARS outbreak in 2003 that began in Asia and killed hundreds of people.

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