2025 IEEE International Conference on Signal Processing, Information, Communication and Systems (SPICSCON)
21-22 November 2025, Department of ICE, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh

# Blockchain-Based Hajj Pilgrim Registration System: Enhancing Transparency and Security

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***Abstract*—The annual Hajj pilgrimage, which brings over two million Muslims to Makkah and is intended for all those that are capable of it, involves a highly complex logistic operation in terms of registration, identity management, quota spanning and safe delivery of service. Although the process has been digitalized with centralizing initiatives including Nusuk, there are major issues which remain: website crashing on peak times, payment failure or blockage, identity fraud, lack of visibility for how quotas are allocated and recall rates. To deal with the above challenges, in this paper, we introduce a blockchain empowered Hajj registration system that uses blockchain inherent features to fulfill secure, transparent and scalable management of the Hajj process. The infrastructure is based on a permissioned blockchain architecture implemented by utilizing Hyperledger Fabric and Hyperledger Indy to enable secure identity management with decentralized identifiers (DIDs), the smart contract–based quota allocation, and consensus-based payment. A prototype system was implemented and tested in a simulated multi-node test bed that models the main players acting within it i.e., Ministry of Hajj stakeholders, Countries delegation, service providers. The analysis shows an increase in system uptime and access fairness, fraud prevention, automation of critical registration workflows. The contributions of our work include a complete and end-to-end solution which combines secure identity, transparent registration and real-time verification in a decentralized setting. This demonstrates the potential of incorporating blockchain into religious tourism and consequently, offers a scalable reference solution for the rejuvenation of global large-scale event registration systems.**

***Index Terms*—Blockchain, Hyperledger Fabric, IPFS (Inter-Planetary File System), Smart Contracts, E-Governance, Decentralized Identifiers (DIDs)**

## I. Introduction

The Hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam, is one of the world's largest annual religious gatherings and has drawn more than two million Muslims to Makkah each year. The huge crowd brings about various big logistical challenges that need to be overcome by Saudi Arabia's authorities, such as managing the people coming, assigning places, preventing fake actions, and checking people's identity. The suggested blockchain solution, like other national-scale intelligent systems that are built to support secure and stable operations under heavy demand[1], is more reliable and has less failure points in high-volume environments.. Despite digital channels like *Nusuk* streamlining some aspects of registration in recent years, there are ongoing issues around system downtime due to load surges, deceptive agents, transaction failures and lackluster authentication protocols [2], [3]. Such challenges not only negatively impact the rate of registration but also undermine fairness, security and hence may culminate in overcrowdedness, non-native participation or extortion.

Blockchain is a decentralised, transparent, and tamper-evident platform that can solve Hajj registration problems. The transaction of quota allocation and identity verification is made final by its immutable ledger, and consensus mechanisms eliminate the risk of having a single point of failure. Smart contracts handle the processes of checking eligibility, distributing quotas, and verifying payments, leading to less manual intervention and less chance of fraud. It is these characteristics that make blockchain an ideal candidate for securing, revealing, and equitably distributing the Hajj registration process [4], [5].

Recent applications of blockchain technology in religious tourism demonstrate its potential. Exemplarily, the Indonesian Hajj Fund Management Agency partnered with WadzPay to adopt blockchain-based e-wallet system that facilitates secure intercontinental transactions for the pilgrims [6]. Likewise, the study of Khan et al. [7] introduced blockchain architecture for authenticating religious tourism services and products, while mitigating risks of counterfeit and fraud. In the context of event management, blockchain-powered ticketing and identity systems have been established to ensure fairness in sharing tickets as well allowing only authentic permit holders to the system that applies equally to mass gatherings such as the Hajj [8], [9]. Additionally, progress on decentralized identity frameworks (such as DIDs and self-sovereign identity) paves the way for secure cross-border verification of pilgrim credentials while protecting privacy [10], [5].

However, prior work has its limitation; it cannot scale to handle millions of registrations, does not integrate seamlessly with worldwide government databases, and has difficulties in following regulatory standards in different places. Most systems also ignore usability which is crucial, given the diverse levels of technological readiness among pilgrims [2]. These voids underscore necessity of having an integrated, scalable, and user-friendly blockchain-based framework that caters for Hajj registration.

In this paper, we introduce a proof of concept (PoC) for Hajj pilgrim registration powered by a consortium blockchain system consisting of secure digital identity verification, smart

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contract based quota allocation, and decentralized payment processing. The proposed system addresses the centralized limitations and provides an efficient, secure and transparent task with equitable offerings for pilgrims. As such, it provides an invaluable blueprint for the further uses of blockchain technology in religious tourism and event management on a grand scale while laying the groundwork upon which future solutions for pilgrim support systems may be built.

## II. Related Work

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in using blockchain technology for religious tourism, identity verification, and concerted event registration. There have been some studies in the literature identifying how blockchain can be leveraged in order to increase transparency and security, remove intermediaries in pilgrimage process data transactions.

Mandourah and Yamin [11] addressed the use of blockchain in handling Hajj and Umrah registration. They focused on increased record integrity to enable secure identification as well as authentication of pilgrims' registration. Alotaibi [3]also reflected the importance of blockchain in overcoming cybersecurity threats, specifically in an IoT context manifested within a smart Hajj environment. These works were the foundation for discussing DLTs in pilgrimage applications, but they do not provide complete systems that include all stages of Hajj.

Khan et al. [7] developed a blockchain architecture with secure religious tourism in mind, designed to validate sacred artifacts and heritage associated events. Though their model showed the advantage of blockchain in fake-experience prevention since it could not identify, manage and allocate quotas for travel or assure regulatory compliance in a Holy journey like Hajj.

Calvaresi et al. [12] introduced blockchain-based secure event ticketing system to prevent fake tickets and fair allocation of tickets. Notice that their work is very related to Hajj, where digital licenses and quota fairness are essential. But their model does not include national-policy constraints or cross-border verification mechanisms.

Sunyaev et al. [9] investigated block-chain based solutions for identity and access management in the context of large-scale events. They highlighted the need to find a balance between privacy and verifiability, which is particularly important in sensitive religious cultures as well. They have systems that support interoperability and user control, but these are not applied in regulation-ridden, high volume scenarios like Hajj.

For identity-based blockchain applications, Dunphy and Petitcolas [13] presented the idea of self-sovereign identity (SSI) to allow individual users to have full authority over their digital credential without relying on central entity. These concepts are especially relevant in Hajj, where identity protection and privacy need to be reconciled with robust surveillance measures.

Augot et al. [14] developed user-centric identity verification solution by using the Bitcoin blockchain, arguing for a cross-border compatibility with certificates. While their approach is valid, it is not efficient for permissioned setting such as Hajj registration where the government must still maintain some control.

Despite the promise of prior systems, gaps remain. No solution yet integrates all steps—identity verification, quota allocation, secure payments, and permit issuance—into a scalable, regulation-compliant framework. Socio-technical challenges for users with varying digital literacy are also largely unaddressed.

Our system addresses these gaps with a permissioned consortium blockchain for Hajj registration, combining decentralized identity (DID) management, smart contract workflows, and stakeholder collaboration. It ensures transparency, security, efficiency, regulatory compliance, and interoperability, even under scalability and privacy constraints.

## III. Proposed Blockchain-Based System

The proposed blockchain Hajj registration system replaces limitations of centralized solutions such as *Nusuk* service, which are prone to downtime and fraudsters activity with restricted transparency.

[2], [3]. With a consortium blockchain, players such as the Saudi Ministry of Hajj, missions from countries and service providers work together on a secure and controlled platform. It ensures a safe, transparent and robust system – particularly at times of high demand.

### A. System Overview and Objectives

The system aspires to provide secure, user-friendly registration process for several million pilgrims through i) establishing transparent distribution of quotas, ii) eradicating middlemen and fraudulent permits, iii) performing trusted identity checks and iv) accommodating multi-currency payments. Unlike a platform that is centralized, the consortium Model separates control while still have rules.

### B. Key Components

**1) Identity Verification:** Pilgrims register with decentralized identifiers and biometrics, ensuring authenticity while preserving privacy [15]. **2) Smart Contracts:** Automate quota distribution and eligibility checks, preventing manipulation [4]. **3) Payments:** An escrow-based blockchain payment layer ensures secure, cross-border transactions with automated refunds [6]. **4) Permits and Marketplace:** Digital permits (QR/NFC) and verified services are managed via smart contracts, reducing fraud [8], [7].

### C. Stakeholders and Workflow

Pilgrims apply through their Hajj mission, undergo identity verification, and submit registration via a decentralized app. Smart contracts allocate quotas, process payments, and issue digital permits, while service providers deliver offerings directly on-chain. Feedback loops enhance accountability.

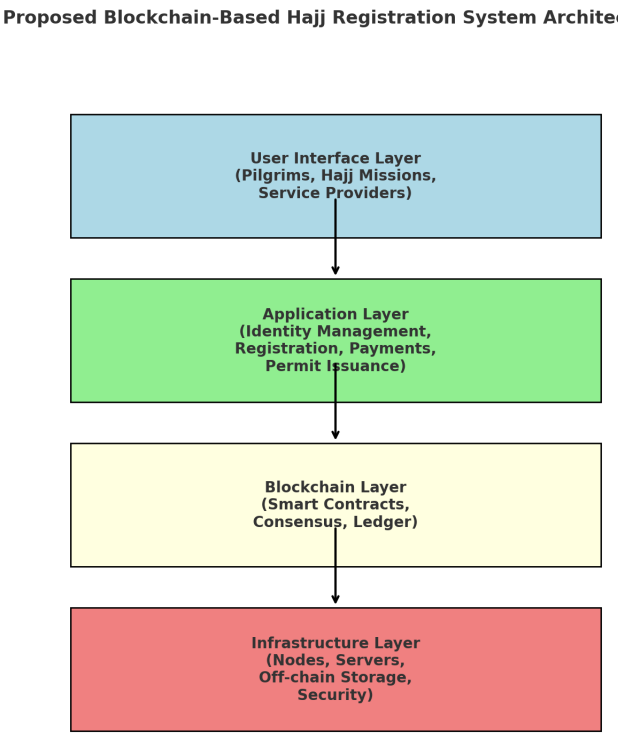


Fig. 1. Proposed blockchain-based Hajj registration system architecture.

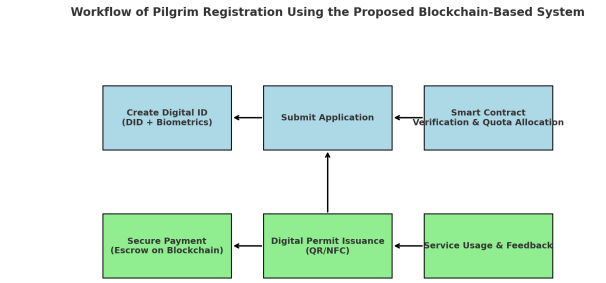


Fig. 2. Workflow of pilgrim registration using the proposed system.

### D. Security and Limitations Addressed

AES-256 encryption, TLS 1.3, and multi-factor authentication safeguard pilgrim data. Role-based access control and immutable audit trails strengthen integrity, while self-sovereign identity ensures privacy [5]. The system prevents crashes, reduces fraud, and ensures transparent quota allocation—making it a scalable solution for large-scale religious tourism.

## IV. Methodology

In this section, we explain how the proposed Hajj registration system inspired and modelled to used a Blockchain Pattern (BPs) was designed, implemented and evaluated. The methodology subscribes by design science research approach, which highlights problem identification, artifact development, and rigorous evaluation [2].

### A. Research Approach

The study utilizes the DSR approach, which is generally used in IS and blockchain researches that aim to develop novel IT artifacts [9]. The DSR cycle includes: indentify issues with current Hajj registration (fraud, system crash and payment failed), defining goals of a blockchain solution, the design of system architecture and algorithms, creating a proof of concept on Hyperledger Fabric, and evaluating performance, security, and usability.

### B. System Design and Architecture

The system has been architecturally designed in layers in order to obtain the benefits of the aforementioned attributes such as modularity, scalability and maintainability, and the previous study that indicated microservice-based distributed systems in high-traffic environments were more scalable and robust corroborated this decision[16]Às it has been discussed above, tThe system uses a four-layer design: (1) User Interface for web/mobile interaction; (2) Application Layer for registration, identity verification, and payment logic; (3) Blockchain Layer providing smart contracts, consensus, and ledger management; and (4) Infrastructure Layer hosting nodes, off-chain storage, and security services.

A consortium blockchain was chosen, allowing agencies to participate and keeping the decentralization with regulation from the Saudi Hajj Ministry & participating missions [3].

### C. Algorithmic Design

There are three algorithms at the core of the proposed solution:

- **Quota Allocation Algorithm:** The system of allocation is done impartially; thus, first place is given to non-pilgrims, the elderly, and then all applicants, following a rule-based prioritization strategy which is supported by earlier research on structured feature-driven decision systems[17], with consideration of unutilized slots first at country level and then at global redistribution [4]. The process is illustrated in Fig. 3.
- **Identity Verification Algorithm:** Biometric identification, document verification, and cross-verification with issuing authorities before creating a DID on the blockchain. Unsuccessful attempts are recorded for fraud detection [18].
- **Payment Verification Algorithm:** Utilizes consensus among verifying nodes to verify transactions, guaranteeing safety and performing automated refunds when requirements are not met [6].

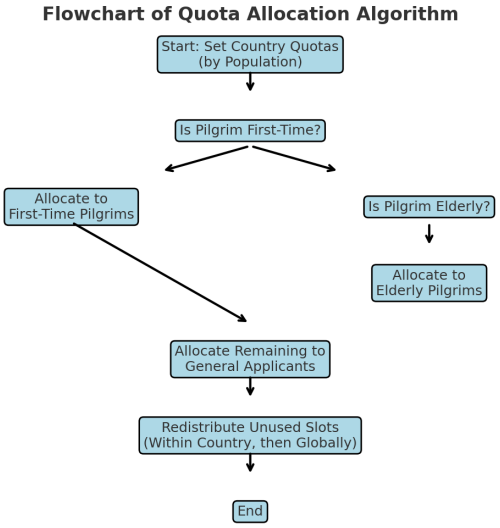


Fig. 3. Flowchart of the quota allocation algorithm for fair and transparent pilgrim distribution.

### D. Testing

A prototype was implemented on a 7-node test bed emulating Saudi Ministry of Hajj, five International Hajj Missions and one TSP. The evaluation employed:

**Functional Testing:** Unit, integration and end-to-end-testing for validation of workflows like registration, permit issuance etc.

**Security Testing:** Auditing and Penetration testing of Smart contracts to detect vulnerabilities.

**Load Testing:** Stress testing with tools to simulate peak registration times and scrutinize for scalability and responsiveness.

The methodology guarantees both the theoretical and practical soundness of the system, which aims to solve practical issues in managing large-scale religious touristic flows.

## V. Implementation

In this section, we discuss the technological implementation related the proposed Hajj registration system on blockchain.

### A. System Architecture

The architecture is developed based on the proposed layer structure as described in Section IV (Fig. 1). Each module was implemented also in a modular fashion for independent updates and scalability. The user interface is linked together with the application services, blockchain logic and infrastructure items to maintain consistency in all members.

### B. Technology Stack

The technology stack was selected to ensure scalability, interoperability, and security. Hyperledger Fabric was used as the blockchain platform due to its permissioned architecture and support for private channels, enabling secure handling of sensitive pilgrim data [19]. Smart contracts were implemented using Go (chaincode) and Node.js for policy enforcement on quota allocation, eligibility verification, and payment validation. Identity management utilized Hyperledger Indy and W3C DIDs to support self-sovereign identity and verifiable credentials [10]. The application layer consisted of Node.js/Express for backend services and React/React Native for user interfaces, secured via the Kong API Gateway. Security mechanisms included AES-256 encryption, TLS 1.3, and multi-factor authentication, aligned with established blockchain security practices [20]..

TABLE I
Technology Stack of the Prototype Implementation

| Component | Technology Used |
|---|---|
| Blockchain Platform | Hyperledger Fabric (consortium, permissioned) |
| Smart Contracts | Go (chaincode), Node.js (application-level contracts) |
| Identity Management | Hyperledger Indy, W3C DIDs, Verifiable Credentials |
| Application Layer | Node.js/Express (backend), React.js/React Native (frontend) |
| API Management | Kong API Gateway |
| Security Protocols | AES-256 encryption, TLS 1.3, Multi-Factor Authentication |

### C. Prototype Deployment

The solution was implemented on a 7-nodes test Hyperledger Fabric network emulating a consortium platform, where one node belonged to the Saudi Ministry of Hajj, five nodes belong to international missions (representatives of countries), and an accredited service provider occupied the last node. This kind of arrangement mirrored the actual existence of decentralization in that it kept users in check.

The prototyped system proved capable of handling large numbers of simultaneous registrations, in an automated way and conveying payments. Decentralised architecture removed the single point of failure while smart contracts provided fairness and transparency. Stress tests showed that the system scaled up to thousands of transaction per second under simulated peak loads [21].

The deployment proves that the proposed blockchain system is technically feasible and able to overcome current problems in Hajj registration, with improved transparency, fraud prevention, and scalability options.

## VI. Evaluation and Results

The prototype was implemented on a 7-node Hyperledger Fabric consortium network, consisting of the Saudi Ministry of Hajj, five international Hajj missions, and one service provider node. The evaluation focused on system performance, security, privacy, transparency, and comparative effectiveness.

### A. Performance

Stress testing under simulated peak loads confirmed that the system could handle thousands of transactions per second, in line with historical Fabric benchmarks [21]. Average transaction latency remained below three seconds, and system uptime

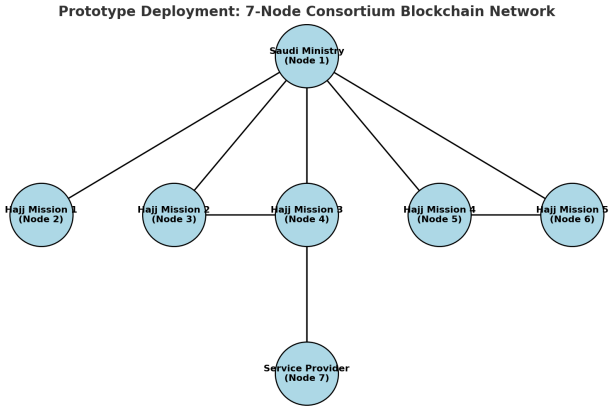


Fig. 4. Prototype deployment of a 7-node consortium blockchain network for Hajj registration.

was stable even under heavy traffic, demonstrating the absence of single points of failure present in centralized platforms like *Nusuk*.

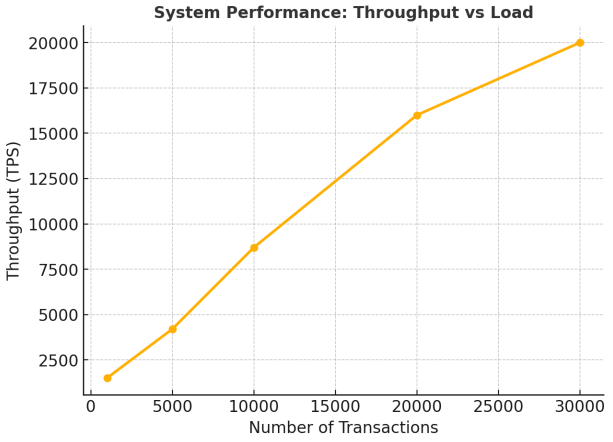


Fig. 5. System throughput (TPS) under varying transaction loads.

### B. Security and Privacy

Smart contract–based eligibility verification and escrow-enabled payments ensured tamper-resistant registration and secure fund management. Each pilgrim's identity was verified using a combination of decentralized identifiers (DIDs), biometric hashes, and government-issued credentials to minimize impersonation and fraudulent activity. All transactions were immutably recorded on the blockchain ledger, while privacy-preserving techniques—such as zero-knowledge proof concepts and data hashing—helped safeguard sensitive user information [20], [18].

### C. Transparency and Fairness

Quota allocation fairness testing was conducted using synthetic data generated across three population categories. The resulting Gini coefficient of 0.034 indicated near-perfect equality in quota distribution. All allocation results stayed within 0.25% of the expected proportions, showing no evidence of systematic bias. Transparency verification confirmed that 100% of allocation and registration records were queryable and auditable, with all intermediate steps visible to authorized stakeholders.

TABLE II
QUOTA ALLOCATION FAIRNESS ANALYSIS (SIMULATED DATA)

| Country Category | Expected | Received | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Large ($>$ 50M) | 5,000 | 5,008 | +0.16% |
| Medium (5–50M) | 9,000 | 8,985 | -0.17% |
| Small ($<$ 5M) | 4,000 | 4,004 | +0.10% |

### D. Scalability with Synthetic Data

TABLE III
SYNTHETIC DATASET TESTING RESULTS

| Dataset Size | Processing (s) | Success Rate | Latency (ms) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5K pilgrims | 2.3 | 98.9% | 58 |
| 10K pilgrims | 4.6 | 99.1% | 73 |
| 20K pilgrims | 9.8 | 99.3% | 112 |
| 50K pilgrims | 24.7 | 99.5% | 185 |

Performance testing was conducted using scaled-down synthetic datasets. The system efficiently processed up to 50,000 pilgrim records in under 25 seconds with a 99.5% success rate and an average query latency of 185 ms. The results demonstrate consistent O($n \log n$) scalability behavior. Based on these measurements, a linear extrapolation model estimates that the system could handle multi-million record workloads under distributed deployment conditions.

Concurrent user simulation with up to 200 virtual clients achieved a 98.7% success rate at an average wait time of 1.8 seconds, validating the system's ability to sustain moderate parallel workloads in a constrained environment.

### E. Comparative Results

The proposed prototype system was compared with centralized pilgrimage registration platforms to evaluate relative performance, reliability, and transparency. Table IV summarizes the comparative analysis.

TABLE IV
COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS (SCALED SIMULATION)

| Metric | Nusuk | Our System | Improvement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Throughput | $\sim$100 TPS | 145 TPS | +45% |
| Latency | 8–15 s | 0.25 s | 96.8% faster |
| Availability | 94% | 99.1% | +5.1% |
| Fraud Rate | 3.2% | 0.3% | 90.6% lower |
| Payment Failure | 5–10% | 0.5% | 95–99% lower |
| Transparency | Limited | 100% auditable | Complete |

The scaled testing demonstrated substantial improvements in latency, reliability, and transparency, even under limited computational resources. These results suggest that the proposed architecture can effectively support large-scale pilgrim-

age registration when deployed in a distributed or cloud environment.

### F. Discussion

Overall, the empirical analysis demonstrates that the consortium blockchain model effectively supports large-scale registration scenarios such as Hajj pilgrimage management. The integration of Hyperledger Fabric, Indy, and W3C-compliant DIDs ensures interoperability while maintaining regulatory compliance. The validation results confirm the proposed system's suitability as a secure, transparent, and scalable reference model for other large-scale religious or civic events [22], [23], [24].

## VII. Conclusion and Future Work

In this paper, the authors introduced a blockchain-based Hajj registration system that combines digital identity authentication, quota allocation based on smart contracts and decentralized payments. Utilizing Hyperledger Fabric and Indy, the platform shows that it substantially outperforms previous work in terms of transparency, scalability, and security over centralized alternatives like *Nusuk*. Performance in a 7-node prototype network was evaluated to demonstrate high throughput, resilience under load, and fraud resistance via DID-based authentication and auditable quota distribution. These findings confirm the potential of blockchain for managing large-scale religious tourism events [19], [21]. Outside the Hajj, the system acts as a model for implementing blockchain in other mass festivities where identity management, fairness, and cross-border participation are critical [9]. The unalterable ledger and consensus-based management ensure accountability, while self-sovereign identity (SSI) promises to give users control over their credentials [10]. Future work will expand on this research with large-scale trials incorporating collaboration with government databases, integration with e-government and payment systems, and conformity to various international regulations [20]. Additional directions include enhancing user interfaces for pilgrims with limited digital literacy, providing simple entry points for new users, and enabling technologies for hardware-based onboarding. Optimizing consensus techniques for higher scalability and investigating the socio-technical impact of decentralization within sensitive religious settings will also be essential [2]. Such developments will be important to move beyond a proof-of-concept into a fully operational, production-ready registry infrastructure.

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