

BBC

CATEGORIES

TV

RADIO

COMMUNICATE

WHERE I LIVE

INDEX

SEARCH

BBC NEWS

You are in: World: **Middle East**

Monday, 11 March, 2002, 18:02 GMT

## Schoolgirls die in Mecca stampede



Front Page

World



Africa

Americas

Asia-Pacific

Europe

Middle East

South Asia

-----  
 From Our Own  
 Correspondent

Letter From

America

UK

UK Politics

Business

Sci/Tech

Health

Education

Entertainment

Talking Point

In Depth

AudioVideo

COMMONWEALTH  
GAMES

BBC SPORT

BBC Weather

SERVICES

Daily E-mail

News Ticker

Mobiles/PDAs

Feedback

Help

-----  
Low Graphics

At least fourteen girls have died at a school in Saudi Arabia as they tried to flee a fire.

More than 50 others were injured.

Eyewitnesses said the pupils were trampled to death as they tried to get through the school gate, which was locked.

Girls' schools in Saudi Arabia are usually locked to ensure full segregation of the sexes.

### 'Overcrowded'

About 800 pupils were reported to have been at the school in the holy city of Mecca when the incident occurred early on Monday.

The school gate was locked to prevent girls leaving without permission, and to stop strangers coming in.

Witnesses said the key was with a male guard, who was not there to open the gate.

The official Saudi news agency said the fire was caused by an electrical short circuit.

Relatives were quoted as saying the three-storey school was overcrowded and lacked proper safety facilities.

Mecca governor Prince Abdul Majeed bin Abdul Aziz visited the injured girls in hospital and later inspected the school.

[✉ E-mail this story to a friend](#)

**Links to more Middle East stories**

### See also:

- ▶ 08 Nov 01 | South Asia  
Women's vital peace role
- ▶ 26 Jan 01 | Americas  
UN critical of Saudis on rights
- ▶ 07 Mar 02 | Country profiles  
Country profile: Saudi Arabia

### Internet links:

- ▶ Saudi news agency
- ▶ Saudi information site
- ▶ Saudi newspaper

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

### Top Middle East stories now:

- ▶ Israel reopens talks with Palestinians
- ▶ Arab ban proposed in Jewish areas
- ▶ Iran court slaps ban on dancer
- ▶ Israel 'okays El Al sale'
- ▶ New Palestinian constitution in force
- ▶ Egypt spy chief on Mid-East mission
- ▶ Palestinian sacking sparks more protests
- ▶ Egypt reclaims stolen antiquities

**Links to more Middle East stories are at the foot of the page.**



[^^ Back to top](#)

[News Front Page](#) | [World](#) | [UK](#) | [UK Politics](#) | [Business](#) | [Sci/Tech](#) | [Health](#) | [Education](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Talking Point](#) | [In Depth](#) | [AudioVideo](#)

---

[To BBC Sport>>](#) | [To BBC Weather>>](#)

---

© [MMIII](#) | [News Sources](#) | [Privacy](#)