

'Our driver is going too fast': Sister's last tragic text from back of taxi before it crashed, killing British Muslim family of five on pilgrimage to Mecca... but baby miraculously survived

- **One-year-old baby survived but his heavily pregnant mother, father, aunt and grandparents killed**
- **The child was found 'miraculously' alive in arms of dying grandfather who 'saved his life'**
- **Aunt, due to marry days later, sent last text saying driver going 'too fast'**
- **Taxi driver 'fell asleep' at wheel with three generations of same family in car**

By Emily Davies

A passenger who died in a car crash which killed five members of a British family on a pilgrimage to Mecca sent a desperate text message moments before the accident saying the car was travelling 'too fast'. Only one-year-old Mohammed Eisa Daniel Hayat, who was found cradled in the arms of his dying grandfather Shaukat Ali Hayat, 56, miraculously survived the crash after the taxi they were travelling in left a motorway and hit a concrete bridge.

Shortly before, his soon-to-be-married aunt Saira Zenub Hayat sent the text from her mobile phone saying the car was speeding.



Saira Hayat (left) was due to be married this weekend and her sister-in-law Bilques (right) was heavily pregnant



Grandfather Shaukat Hayat (left) saved Mohammed's life but the father Mohammed Issaq (right) was killed

She died in the crash along with her mother Abida, 47, and 33-year-old brother Mohammed Isshaq Hayat.

Mohammad's heavily pregnant wife Bilques – who was baby Mohammed's mother – was also killed.



Grandmother Abida Hayat was killed in the crash along with five family members

The child was taken to hospital where he was treated for a dislocated shoulder, broken arm and ribs. Mr Hayat's brother Sma said the one-year-old had been dubbed the 'Saudi miracle baby', and added that he was only alive because of his grandfather's actions.

'He saw what happened as the car went out of control,' the 58-year-old said. 'He grabbed the baby, clutched him in his arms and cushioned him.'

'His actions saved the child's life. The boy has lost everyone but luckily he has pulled through.' The Hayat family, from Newport, South Wales, had been in Saudi Arabia for the wedding of 29-year-old Saira and were performing the Mecca pilgrimage while they were there.

As part of their trip, they had also decided to visit family in the city of Jeddah and hired a taxi for four hours to undertake the journey.

They set off from Mecca at around 5am on Friday. Shortly afterwards, Saira texted a relative to say that she was worried about the vehicle's speed.



The Hayat family had travelled 3,000 miles from their home in Newport, south Wales to Mecca in Saudi Arabia

The taxi then ran straight into a concrete bridge, somersaulted off the road and came to rest on its roof in a ditch. Rescuers rushed to their aid and thought that the whole family had perished, until they found Mohammed miraculously still alive.

His family – including 30-year-old mother who was seven months pregnant – were buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi cemetery in Medina shortly after the accident.

Twenty relatives have flown out to Saudi to visit the Hayats' resting place and bring the little boy home.

The crash has been blamed on the driver going to sleep at the wheel. An investigation is underway. Mr Hayat, originally from Pakistan, was a teacher and well-known member of the Muslim community in Newport. His daughter Saira worked as a pharmacist while her brother Mohammed had hoped to do a PhD in neuroscience at university. He was described as an excellent student.

The family were also involved in a charity work and in 2010 they helped raise funds for victims of flooding in Pakistan. Ron Jones, councillor for the Pillgwenlly Ward of Newport, said: 'They were a tremendous family. They were deeply involved in the community and were absolutely upstanding, there are a lot of people who are going to feel their passing very deeply.'

'It's an massive and unbelievable tragedy, it's awful when one member of a family dies but when five die like that, it's a whole lot worse.'

A spokesman for the Foreign Office said: 'We are aware of a tragic accident in Saudi Arabia. We can confirm that British nationals were involved in the crash and we are providing consular assistance at this difficult time.'



Millions of Muslims travel to Mecca in Saudi Arabia each year to perform their Hajj pilgrimage