



Trend Alert

Djihadists Attacks During Ramadan

Ramadan is the most sacred month in Islam guarded by pillars in which Muslims have to adhere to fasting, praying, recital of faith, charity and pilgrimage. It is a period in which Muslims tend to cultivate a sense of inner peace and spiritual devotion to Allah. To Islamist extremists groups who mostly claim to be rightful custodians of Islam ironically tend to contravene the decree of Islam by trespassing on the Holy Month's sacredness. To them, martyrdom during the holy month of Ramadan may have greatest special reward to any of its seekers through administering terror.

In line with the above, the al-Furqan media unit of the Islamic State (IS) released a 31 minutes audio message called '*That They Live By Proof*' on 4 June 2016, two (2) days before the beginning of Holy Ramadan on 6 June 2016. In the audio, IS called for its adherents to carry attacks globally during this month of Ramadan. Some countries have notified their citizens to be vigilant of potential terrorists' attacks during this Ramadan period, notably the USA, UK and Australia.



Outrageous as the insanity of Ramadan-inspired attack is, some Islamic extremists groups may indeed observe Ramadan as a period of intensified jihad. ISIS declared its first caliphate on the first day of Ramadan on 28 June 2014 and proclaimed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the first Caliph of Islam. Also fresh to our minds is the Sousse resort attack in Tunisia on 26 June 2015 where Islamic extremists opened fire and killed 38 people during Ramadan period. Two (2) days before Ramadan of 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey an explosion in a busy tourist area occurred killing at least four (4) people and recently on 12 June 2016, in Orlando, USA, a gunman opened fire in a nightclub killing at least fifty (50) people. These could be further acts to the evolving trend of Ramadan-inspired attacks by extremists across the globe.

For the past two (2) years, terrorist attacks during and around the month of Ramadan and Eid Al-Fitr augment the Ramadan-inspired attacks hypothesis in Africa. In 2014, there were 61 attacks and a total number of 644 people were killed in Africa while in 2015 118 attacked were carried out and 1419 people were killed as a result.

It is in view of this analysis that, while celebrating the special Holy Month of Ramadan, it is also important to be cautious of possible terror attacks.