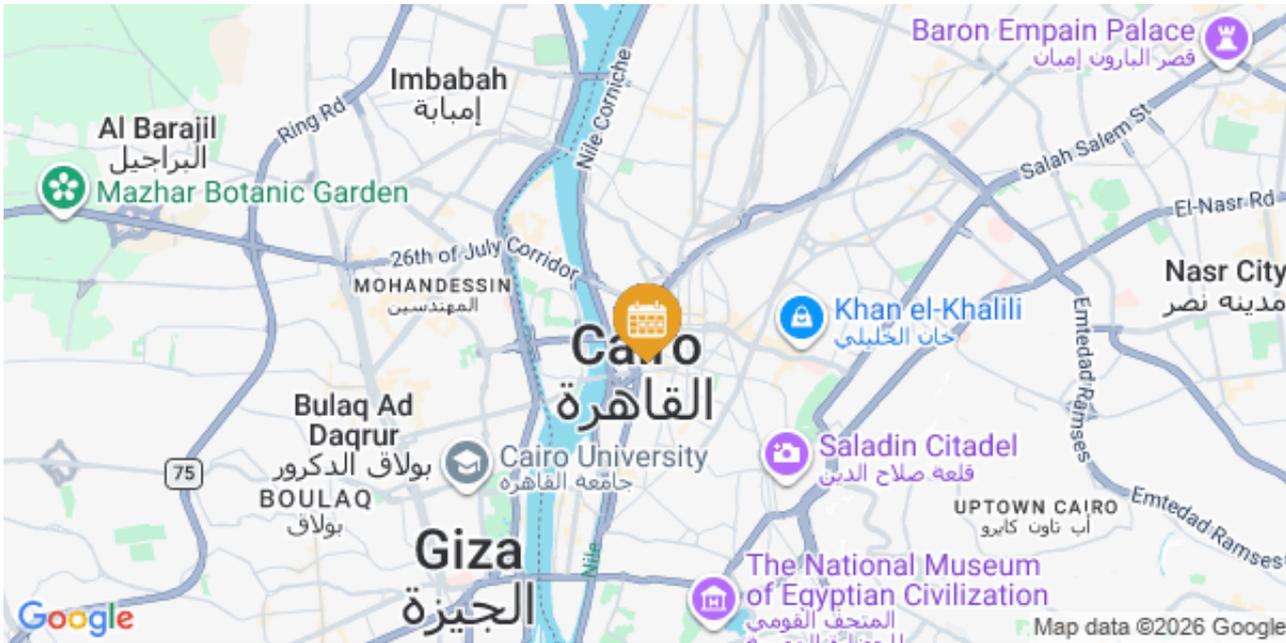


Holiday



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MENA Tactical: Ramadan to be observed across region around February 18 till March 20; maintain heightened vigilance

Current Situation:

- Ramadan will be celebrated in the MENA region from around February 18-19. It will conclude with Eid al-Fitr, which is slated to be marked around March 20.

Country-specific announcements:

- In **Kuwait**, the Civil Service Commission stated that the official workday during Ramadan would begin between 08:30-10:30, with four-and-a-half-hour shifts in the evening.
- In **Israel**, the **Jerusalem** Municipality announced changes to public transportation routes and traffic arrangements in the vicinity of the **Old City** during Ramadan. Road closures will be enacted near the Jaffa and Damascus Gates, and east of the Old City each Friday. The municipality advised individuals to avoid traveling in the area using private vehicles during this time.
- In **Jordan**, official working hours in government institutions and public bodies will be between 09:00-14:30 throughout Ramadan.
- In **Lebanon**, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam issued a memorandum declaring that official working hours would be between 09:00-14:00 on Monday-Thursday and 09:00-12:00 on Fridays.

Source: [ONA](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

MENA region

1. Ramadan is a significant month for Muslims, marked by fasting, prayer, reflection, and community service. Authorities in many countries in the MENA region typically implement reduced working hours in both the public and private sectors, resulting in disruptions to business continuity.
2. **FORECAST:** Restaurants, shopping malls, and public spaces will likely see heightened activity during the evening hours, when community gatherings for iftar meals are held to conclude the daily fast. Mosques are additionally expected to register increased attendance, particularly for evening prayers and on Fridays, which constitute a central component of Ramadan observance. This will contribute to increased congestion around these locales at this time.
3. During Ramadan, some states enforce strict regulations prohibiting eating, drinking, and smoking in public during daylight hours. Violation of these restrictions may result in punitive measures against both locals and foreigners who fail to comply, although foreign nationals are typically less likely to face severe penalties. Conversely, more secular states generally do not impose such prohibitions. Nevertheless, even in these environments, public consumption of food or beverages during daylight hours is likely to be perceived as culturally insensitive, and it is therefore advised to remain cognizant of, and adhere to, local norms.
4. The risk of **militancy** typically increases during the holiday period, primarily in countries with a higher frequency of terrorist activity. Militant groups may seek to exploit the symbolic significance of Ramadan to conduct attacks, including against non-Muslims and Westerners. **FORECAST:** In this context, authorities will likely bolster security measures across the region, particularly in the vicinity of places of worship and tourist sites. This is likely to thwart most such instances. However, as underscored by US advisories issued for Syria during Ramadan in [2025](#), concrete indications of an increased or imminent terror threat could prompt foreign authorities to issue travel warnings on short notice.

Israel & Palestinian Territories

1. Ramadan generally features a relatively elevated risk of **militancy** in Israel and the West Bank, particularly in Jerusalem's Old City, given the religious symbolism and sensitivities associated with this period. This also fuels the nationalist zeal of some Palestinians, increasing their motivation to conduct attacks. This threat is underscored by authorities' foiling of a terrorist plot intending to target transportation infrastructure and restaurants in Jerusalem with explosives during [Ramadan 2025](#).
2. However, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) data indicates that terrorist activity during Ramadan declined by [80 percent](#) from 2024 to 2025 overall. This significant decrease likely reflected the impact of a [strategic shift](#) in the scope of IDF counter-militancy operations in the northern West Bank, where militant groups are entrenched, an approach that has continued throughout 2025 with [Operation Iron Wall](#) and [Operation Five Stones](#). In turn, this has contributed to a broader reduction in militancy in the West Bank, which fell by [78 percent](#) from 2024 to 2025.
3. **FORECAST:** Taken together, this points to militants' reduced capabilities at the current juncture, which will likely limit the militant threat during the upcoming period this year. That said, the risk of lone wolf militancy will continue to challenge Israel's security apparatus, while terror groups will also aspire to conduct attacks. These threats will be undergirded by continued gaps along the security barrier separating Israel from the West Bank, and the strain Israel's security apparatus is facing in a multi-front arena of operations, particularly amid a heightened state of preparedness around tensions between the [US and Iran](#).
4. The risk of **civil unrest** also increases during Ramadan, primarily in Jerusalem's Old City and

around the al-Aqsa Mosque/Temple Mount Compound. Should Israeli authorities bolster security protocols here during this time, as recorded in [recent years](#) through screenings and installing barricades, this may reinforce perceptions that Israel is obstructing access to holy sites during a significant religious period, fueling grievances and the risk of unrest.

5. There will be several flashpoints for increased tensions during Ramadan. Firstly, the risk of unrest is generally heightened on **Fridays** when increased travel by Muslim worshippers is expected to occur, particularly if Hamas issues calls for mass gatherings in Jerusalem as seen in previous years. As indicated by the slated road closures around the Old City and near prominent gates on Fridays throughout the holy month this year, this is likely to cause disruptions to travel.
6. Another flashpoint for elevated tensions will be on March 2-3, when the Jewish festival of **Purim** will also take place, marking the convergence of Jewish and Islamic holidays, which has typically increased friction in the past.
7. Additionally, the final ten days of Ramadan carry even greater religious significance as they entail **Laylat al-Qadr** (Night of Power - expected to be marked around March 15), marking one of the holiest days in the Islamic calendar. During this time, worshippers typically stay in mosques overnight to dedicate themselves to prayer (I'tikaf). In recent years, this has sparked confrontation with Israeli authorities and youths who barricaded themselves inside the al-Aqsa Mosque.
8. Finally, increased friction may be recorded in the West Bank during this period, particularly amid a [surge in Israeli settler violence](#) toward Palestinians over the past year. Should this materialize, it would also raise the risk of retaliatory Palestinian militant attacks, which could create a threat of cyclical violence.
9. **FORECAST:** In light of these risks, Israeli authorities can be expected to bolster deployments and strengthen security protocols across the region. This is likely to be most visible around the al-Aqsa Mosque/Temple Mount Compound, with other measures expected in Jerusalem and major Israeli cities. Increased deployments may materialize in the West Bank, where Israel's security apparatus will intensify its monitoring and counter-militancy operations to reduce friction between Israeli and Palestinian communities, and thwart any terror plots emanating from terror group strongholds.

Recommendations:

MENA

1. Those operating, residing, or traveling to the MENA region throughout the Ramadan period are advised to remain cognizant of the level of adherence to the holiday and to local customs and norms. Consult with us for country-specific Ramadan recommendations.
2. Depending on the country, travelers and expats are advised to eat, drink, and smoke privately during daylight hours so as not to attract undesired attention. In some countries, business facilities offer public consumption of food and beverages.
3. Business may be conducted as usual while keeping in mind the reduced work hours and the daytime fast period. Arrange and confirm meetings beforehand to avoid any inconvenience and be cognizant of the sensitivities surrounding meetings during this timeframe.
4. Remain vigilant in areas surrounding government installations, police stations, security checkpoints, and religious centers, as these locations may be potential targets for militant attacks.
5. Remain cognizant of the likelihood of large gatherings during the evenings and at prayer times and the associated disruptions to travel.
6. Allot for disruptions to business continuity due to reduced working hours.

Israel & Palestinian Territories:

1. Those operating or residing in Israel are advised to avoid nonessential travel to Jerusalem's Old City on Fridays during Ramadan due to the increased tensions and associated, elevated risk of militancy and civil unrest.

2. Avoid all travel to the northern West Bank and Palestinian Refugee Camps in the region, given the entrenchment of terrorist organizations and the likelihood of Israeli counter-terrorism operations at these locales, which often devolve into armed clashes.
3. Avoid nonessential travel to the rest of the West Bank and East Jerusalem neighborhoods, especially on Fridays and during Islamic religious holidays, due to the elevated risk of militancy and civil unrest.
4. In Israeli cities, particularly Jerusalem, remain vigilant in crowded commercial areas or near public transport facilities as these locations have been targeted by militants in the past. Alert authorities to suspicious behavior or unattended items.
5. In outdoor leisure activities at night, favor sitting in restaurants and bars' inner area rather than the open-air section, which are more vulnerable to attacks. Refrain from large gatherings outside major nightlife venues and renowned nightlife hubs, such as Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street.
6. If an attack unfolds within your vicinity, immediately seek cover, and try to safely disengage from the area as quickly as possible. This is given the risk of secondary attacks and shooting towards assailants by security forces and armed civilians, which could cause collateral damage.