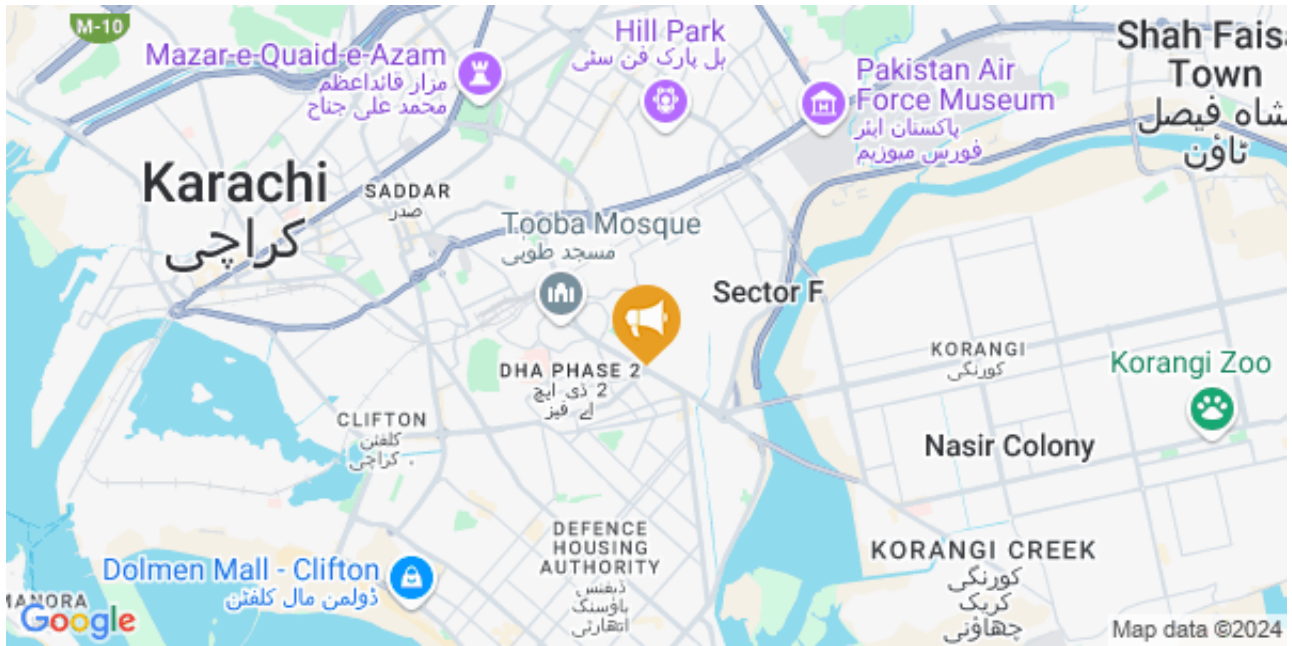


Protest



31

DEC
6:08 UTC

Pakistan Tactical: ASWJ to protest across Karachi from 15:00 (local time) on December 31; maintain vigilance

Current Situation:

- The Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), an Islamic religious organization, announced sit-in protests across 60 locations in Karachi from 15:00 (local time) on December 31.
- The locations include Liaquatnagar, Nazimabad, Hydari Market, Sakhi Hasan Mobile Market, Nagan Chowrangi, 4k Chowrangi, Sohrab Goth, Karimabad, Sarah e Faisal, Lasbela Chowk, Civic Centre, Gulshan Chowrangi, Mosmayat Chowk, Baloch Colony, and Akhtar Colony, among others.
- Other notable locations for the sit-ins include the Defense Mor, KDA flats in Surjani Town, M9 Motorway, and several key roundabouts and intersections.
- The protests are being held in response to the ongoing protests by Majlis-e-Wahdatul-Muslimeen (MWM), who are holding nationwide protests, including in Karachi, to demand justice for the alleged violence against the Shiite population in the Kurram District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Source: [Ary News](#), [The Express Tribune](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. The overall participation in the slated protests is expected to reach the low hundreds, considering

the mobilization capabilities of the group and the endorsement by the senior leadership of ASWJ. However, the turnout will likely increase if other ideologically aligned organizations, such as MWM, decide to join the protests. Notably, MWM has been engaged in similar demonstrations since December 26. Considering the high number of slated protest locations, turnout at each location is expected to be in the low dozens. Given the growing momentum surrounding the issue and the expected turnout, the authorities are liable to bolster security measures in the vicinity of the aforementioned protest locations and across the city to oversee the proceedings. These measures will include deploying additional security personnel and setting up barricades.

2. There is a latent risk of localized scuffles between protesters and the authorities, particularly if protesters become unruly, attempt to breach security measures, or block nearby roads. In such cases, the authorities are likely to resort to baton charges and the use of tear gas to maintain law and order and also enforce roadblocks near the protest locations. This is especially considering the authorities' low tolerance for the widespread traffic disruptions caused by the ongoing protests over the issue. However, the authorities are unlikely to undertake a heavy-handed approach as the negotiations between the protesting group and the authorities are ongoing, as of writing. Nevertheless, significant disruptions to vehicular traffic are anticipated in the aforementioned locations due to the slated citywide protests on December 31.

Recommendations:

Those operating or residing in Karachi on December 31 are advised to maintain vigilance due to the slated protests and associated risk of localized scuffles while allotting for travel disruptions.