

Protest

**01**

APR

12:36 UTC

Netherlands Tactical: Quran-burning protest to be held in front of Courthouse in Arnhem at 12:30 (local time) on April 3; avoid nonessential travel

Current Situation

- A Quran-burning protest held by the anti-Islam organization Patriotische Europeaer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes (Pegida) will take place in front of the Courthouse, located at 2-4 Walburgstraat, in Arnhem at 12:30 (local time) on April 3.
- The protest is being organized to show the opposition to Islam, which Pegida perceives as a threat to security, democracy, and freedom of speech. According to Pegida, their choice of methods, including actions like Quran burning, stems from frustration over perceived restrictions on their ability to hold peaceful demonstrations due to alleged intimidation, violence, and opposition from authorities and counterdemonstrators.



Source: [X/Twitter](#)

Assessments & Forecast

1. Given the social media estimates, the protest is likely to witness a turnout ranging from the mid to high hundreds.
2. Although such protests have not been announced as of this writing, counterprotests by anti-racism groups and Muslim community members are expected to take place, likely resulting in unrest in the form of physical attacks, including throwing rocks at the police and Pegida protesters, as seen during a previous Quran-burning protest on February 4. As such, the protest carries an elevated potential for unrest in the form of clashes between police officials, protesters, and potential counter-protesters.
3. Given this, a bolstered security presence is expected to be deployed near the slated protest location as a precautionary measure. Authorities are also liable to keep riot police on standby and will respond with forcible crowd control measures, such as the use of batons, tear gas, and mass arrests, in the event of escalating unrest.
4. Significant vehicular and pedestrian movement disruptions, including road closures, are anticipated near the Courthouse from the early afternoon hours onwards.
5. **FORECAST:** Furthermore, given previous calls for attacks against countries allowing Quran-burning protests by jihadist terrorist groups like the Islamist State (IS) in 2023, the protest is liable to lead to similar calls for attacks against the Netherlands. Further, the potential for jihadist attacks during the protest itself also remains, including vehicle rammings and stabbings. This is supported by the stabbing attack targeting a right-wing, anti-Islam rally in Mannheim, Germany on May 31, 2024. The targeting of individuals involved in Quran-burning protests is also evident in the January 29 suspected assassination of Salwan Momika, an Iraqi national who carried out multiple Quran-burning protests in Sweden.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Arnhem on April 3 are advised to avoid nonessential travel near the

Courthouse from the early afternoon hours onwards due to the elevated risk of violent unrest at the slated Quran-burning protest.

2. Travelers are advised to remain cognizant of their surroundings, including any suspicious behavior of individuals, as well as items that look out of place, such as bags or containers, due to the latent potential for terrorist attacks.
3. Alert authorities immediately upon witnessing suspicious items or behavior. If a potential stabbing, shooting, explosion, or vehicle ramming manifests, leave the area immediately if possible, or take shelter at a secure location.
4. Move away from large groups to mitigate the risks of a stampede and of presenting a bigger target for a possible secondary attack.