

Discussion on Jihadi online forums indicates a possible terrorist attack around December 11, 2008; Possibly in Iraq

Jihadi organizations tend to attribute great importance to certain dates in Islamic history that have religious significance. For example, according to the Muslim calendar, the terrorist attack against the American embassy in the capital of Yemen on September 17, 2008 was planned for the 17th of the month of Ramadan. It was on this date in 624 A.D that the battle of Bader took place, led by the Prophet Muhammad. Even though they had fewer forces than their opposition, the battle was an important moral victory for the Muslims. In addition, the month of Ramadan itself is considered a holy month in Islamic tradition, during which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. In this case, as in others, the date of the terrorist attack was carefully chosen and planned ahead of time to convey symbolic significance to the Muslim world.

In light of this trend, it is important to note the veiled threats of possible attacks that have recently been found scattered across Jihadi online forums. On November 24, a forum member named "Gadocost" posted a message on the "Al-Boraq" Jihadi forum warning that the countdown had begun and that only 17 days remained until "Allah will sentence the infidels and the separatists from Islam to hell." He even asks in an obscure manner if "the holiday gift is coming soon??!!"¹ From his post, it appears that a terrorist attack is planned for around December 11, 2008. This date coincides with the four-day Muslim "Festival of Sacrifice" (Eid Al-Adha), which starts on the tenth day of the month of Dhu Al-Hijjah – December 8, 2008.

¹ <http://www.alboraq.info/showthread.php?t=76127>

Along with these veiled threats, Gadocost included a number of drawings to illustrate the threat, all of which appear to be taken from the Iraqi Jihad arena:



This announcement was met with calls of joy from other forum members. In response, Gadocost asked Allah to strike the "infidels" with a great blow during the holiday.² Another forum member named Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak expressed his hope that an attack against the enemies of Islam would be successful.³ A forum member named "Iraq Al-Islam" said that only one week remained until the expected event, and that he hoped that the terrorist attack and actions of the "Qanas Baghdad" (Baghdad Sniper)⁴ would receive wide publicity.⁵

Gadocost attached additional photographs related to the Iraqi arena, possibly in order to make an association between the threats and the region. Iraq's former ruler, Saddam Hussein, was executed on the first day of the Festival of Sacrifice, increasing the likelihood that discussions on the online forums are directly linked to the Iraqi arena. On the other hand, this may simply be wishful thinking or an attempt to divert attention from the real target of a terrorist attack.



The headline in the photograph:
"Baghdad Sniper' is an unforgettable

² <http://www.alboraq.info/showthread.php?t=76127&page=2>

³ A Member of the online forum since March 2006. The post was written on November 27, 2008.

⁴ See: <http://www.baghdadsniper.net/>, <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=1604797>.

⁵ This post was published in December 1, 2008:

<http://www.alboraq.info/showthread.php?t=76127&page=4>