

Tunisia to Deploy 1,000 Armed Police Around Tourist Sites



Tunis, June 29 (RHC)-- Tunisia says it is going to beef up security around tourist sites following a deadly terrorist attack at one of its seaside resorts. The Tunisian Tourism Ministry on Sunday confirmed government plans to deploy 1,000 armed personnel at the country's tourism sites, starting July 1st. Tunisia's tourism police, who were unarmed till now, will be also armed in the future.

The armed officers will be deployed "inside and outside hotels," on the seaside and archaeological sites, and wherever tourists pass their time during their visit, the ministry said in a statement. Government authorities had previously announced plans to tighten security at tourist sites and shut down extremists' centers blamed for inciting violence.

On Friday, a Tunisian student disguised as a tourist pulled out an MK 47 assault rifle concealed in a beach umbrella and opened fire on tourists at the Riu Imperial Marhaba Hotel in Port El Kantaoui, near the city of Sousse south of the capital Tunis.

Eyewitnesses described the incident as a sight of sheer terror, with the gunman mowing down screaming tourists who ran for their lives. The gunman, who was shot dead by police, only targeted tourists, yelling to locals to "Stay away," adding: "I didn't come for you."

So far, police have identified 18 of the 38 people killed as 14 Britons, a German, a Belgian, a woman from Ireland and another from Portugal. Three months ago, another terrorist attack claimed the lives of 21 tourists and a policeman at the Bardo National Museum in Tunis.

Both attacks were claimed by the ISIL Takfiri group, which has seized control of parts of Syria and Iraq and carried out a wave of terrorist attacks there and elsewhere around the world.

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