

Sunday Trust Interviews Sheikh Zakzaky

Sayed Ibraheem Yaqoub Zakzaky, Islamic scholar and activist, is the leader of the Islamic Movement in Egypt.

Since then, he has been engaged in learning, teaching and Islamic activism. Due to his Islamic activism, he has been imprisoned several times.

You have just marked your 60th birthday. How has life been in the last 60 years?

I have to first say that I am 60 years-old according to the lunar calendar. In the Islamic calendar, we use the lunar calendar.

My life from birth till the age of 16 was characterised by two things: attending Islamic school and helping my father in his work.

Afterwards, from 1980 up to this time, it has been engagements in learning, teaching and da'awa. And I have been imprisoned several times.

Having graduated with a first class degree in Economics, it was expected that you would get a good job.

Well, I must say that it was more or less the will of God and of course, the actions of those who thought that Islam was a religion of the past.

But when I went to the university, I found out also the life of lecturers was far more attractive than that of a student.

But with my good background of Islamic knowledge, I know they were accusing Islam of what it is innocent of.

We found out that there were Muslim children who themselves are ignorant of the Islamic religion and

I must say during the university days that was how it started. Of course, it appeared that they didn't want

In the course of doing your da'awa you received so many threats, particularly death threats right from

Sometimes, when I was kept in Kiri-Kiri maximum prison, I thought that I didn't do what I should have

After all, we have confidence in Allah (SWT) that our protection is from Him. Throughout my life, I have

We want to know how you feel about your aggressors, those who arrested and jailed you and even the

I would answer you the way I answered someone who was a director of prison in the then Rivers State

Instead, they want to blackmail us and called us bad names, saying these are the trouble makers; the

You also asked me how do I see them (aggressors). They are people who actually do not want the change

We want an insight into your life as a contemporary scholar in a conservative society. Part of this is your

One needs to understand the religion and understand his time. A lot of these so-called Islamic scholars

Those who know the time would agree with us that we know the time but they may not know the religion

You warned prior to the elections that politicians who are secular were trying to instigate Muslims against

That is true. They knew that they were not going to win the elections. So they wanted a sort of crisis to

It is easier to foment trouble along religious or ethnic lines. These politicians, this time around, said that

Similarly, a lot of people, perhaps, are just practicing religion in that same way. They just become Muslims

Source: Sunday Trust of 17

of August 2011

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