

Egyptian Islamic State Affiliate kills 40 In Sinai Attacks



Family Members of Egyptian Security Forces Killed in Sinai by Ansar Beit Al Magdis

Source: AP

The menace of the Islamic State (Daesh in Arabic) has spread to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. *Gulf News* [reported](#) that Ansar Beit Al Maqdis attacked police and military facilities in the Northern Sinai killing more than 40 security and military personnel and civilians. Another 36 wounded have been reported by health authorities, "prompting President Al-Sisi to cut short his trip to Ethiopia.". *Gulf News* provided details:

The provincial security headquarters, intelligence buildings and an army officers club as well as a newspaper office and army checkpoints were all hit by mortar fire and car bombs, security officials said.

The militant group, which last year pledged allegiance to the jihadist militia, claimed responsibility for the attacks – the deadliest blow to Egyptian security forces in years.

On a website used by the Daesh for official announcements, the group said it had targeted an army base and a security compound in Al Arish, the capital city of northern Sinai, with three car bombs and "infiltrators."

The group, now calling itself the Sinai Province of Daesh,

also claimed to have hit eight checkpoints in Al Arish, the town of Rafah on the border with the Palestinian Gaza Strip, and elsewhere in the area.

For more insight, into what is occurring in Egypt's Sinai we offer this exchange with Dr. Raymond Stock, Shillman Writing Fellow at the Middle East Forum in a forthcoming interview with him to be published in the February New English Review:

Gordon: Has the Islamic State supplanted the Salafist and Muslim Brotherhood movements?

Stock: In a sense, yes, but the situation is actually quite complex. Ideologically, IS-like al-Qa`ida-is an extension of the Salafist movement and the MB (itself established as a Salafi organization in the Salafi library in Ismailiya, Egypt in 1928). IS, because of its uncompromising Islamist purity, harshness, brutality and its dramatic seizure of so much territory in Iraq and Syria, coupled with its incredibly savvy use of social media, has largely eclipsed all of its predecessors in recruitment of fighters to the Middle East. It also outpaced all of them in its creation of lone wolves and sleeper cells in Europe, America and elsewhere. That includes Egypt, where the MB-and-AQ aligned Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM) organization is responsible for most of the attacks in the country over the past two years. ABM, along with its allies controls much of North Sinai and has declared its allegiance to IS. The MB, as noted, still retains a very strong base, as does the Salafi al-Nour Party which has pragmatically allied itself with Al-Sisi. The appeal of IS may frustrate their ability to draw younger members-yet it is far from clear that IS will do any better in the long run. So have many of the Islamists in Libya, the eastern half of which IS now controls, and may soon run Tripoli as well. The stunning success of IS provides further inspiration to groups like Boko Haram, which has overrun much of northeastern Nigeria and has

recently spread into Cameroon, as well as al-Shabaab in Somalia. IS also now has a presence in southern Afghanistan and beyond. Unless it is destroyed militarily in the very near future—which is virtually impossible so long as Obama is President—IS threatens every state with a significant Muslim population, as well as the West, which is its ultimate target.