



## Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - Sinai Province



The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - Sinai Province, or ISIL-SP, is a militant Islamist group active in the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt.

Ansar Bait al-Maqdis (ABM) has been part of the Sinai insurgency and had been active especially the Sinai since 2011 after the deterioration of security in the Sinai, focusing its efforts on Israel and the Arab gas pipeline to Jordan. After former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi was deposed in the 2013 Egyptian coup d'état, Egypt also began conducting a crackdown on jihadist groups in Sinai and elsewhere.

ABM and other jihadist groups intensified their campaign of attacks on Egyptian security forces. On 13 November 2014, ABM pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and adopted the name Sinai Province (Wilayah Sīnā') claiming to be a branch of ISIL.

The leader of the group is Abu Osama al-Masri, but not much personal information is available.

During 2014, Ansar Bait al-Maqdis (ABM) sent emissaries to ISIL in Syria to seek financial support, weapons and tactical advice. On 10 November 2014, many members of ABM took an oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIL. It adopted the name Sinai Province and has since carried out attacks, mostly in North Sinai, but also in other parts of Egypt. Security officials say militants based in Libya have established ties with Sinai Province.

#### **Campaign of violence:**

The group has killed hundreds of Egyptian security personnel, and has also been responsible for attacks on civilians, including the killing of Croatian engineer Tomislav Salopek, on August 2015.

-On 1 July 2015, the group launched a large scale assault in and around the Sinai town of Sheikh Zuweid, eventually being driven back by Egyptian security forces after at least 100 militants and 17 soldiers were killed in the fighting. According to Brian Fishman of the New America Foundation, the tactics used by the attackers - suicide bombers backed up by direct and indirect fire, mortar fire in combination with small arms, and simultaneous assaults in multiple locations - suggested a transfer of knowledge from ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria.

-The group claimed to have shot 3 grad rockets on 3 July 2015 from Sinai to southern Israel near the Gaza Strip. Two rocket hits were confirmed in Eshkol, which did not result in any injury or property damage. Israel did not respond to the attack.

-On 16 July 2015, the group claimed responsibility for a rocket attack at an Egyptian Navy patrol boat along the northern coast of Sinai, close to the Gaza Strip.

-The group claimed responsibility for bringing down Russian aircraft Metrojet Flight 9268, carrying 224 passengers. It was flying to Saint Petersburg from Sharm-el-Sheikh on 31 October 2015, when it broke up over Hasna (Egypt), killing all on board. Data obtained from the airplane black boxes gives credence to the idea that there was a bomb attack. On 17 November 2015, Russian President Vladimir Putin confirmed that a bomb attack brought down the aircraft.

-One of the group's leaders, Ashraf Ali Hassanein Gharabali, was shot and killed in a shoot-out with Egyptian security forces in Cairo on 10 November 2015. The Egyptian Interior Ministry linked Gharabali to a string of attacks including an assassination attempt on the Interior Minister.

-The group claimed responsibility for an attack on the Arab gas pipeline on 7 January 2016.

-In December 2016, the group revealed the name of its governor (or wali, or leader) to be Abu Hajar al-Hashemi.

-On February 2017, ISIL-linked operatives launched four Grad rockets from Egyptian territory in Sinai peninsula on the Israeli southernmost city of Eilat, prompting Israeli Iron Dome system to intercept three of the rockets, with no physical casualties or damage reported, though 11 civilians were brought to Eilat Josephtal Hospital to be treated for shock.

-In March 2017, the group released a video titled "The Light of the Islamic Law", which they were shown blowing up Egyptian patrols, destroying TV sets, desecrating and detonating graves, executing prisoners and captured Egyptian soldiers, and lastly beheading two old men (one an elder who voiced opposition to ISIL, and the other a street magician performer).

-It was reported on 21 April 2017 that an Egyptian air raid killed 19 ISIL fighters, including three unnamed leaders.

-On 24 November 2017, In bir al-Abed attack jihadists killed 311 people and injured at least 122.

-On 19 December 2017, one officer was killed and two were injured in a failed assassination attempt on the Minister of Interior Magdi Abdel-Ghaffar and the minister of defense Sedki Sobhy.

-On 29 December 2017, 11 was killed in Saint Mena church attack on the Mar-Mina church in Helwan (south of Cairo).

Source: /Wikipedia

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