



SINAI

Foundation for Human Rights



Monthly Human Rights Report

- June 2021 -

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Summary

The Sinai Foundation for Human Rights recorded 6 abuses during June of 2021, with ISIS committing 5 of those abuses. During this month, the official authorities brought two children before the court after 17 months of enforced disappearance, which is a violation of a number of rights granted by the law to those younger than 18 years of age.

On the other hand, the ISIS-affiliate Sinai Province group targeted a number of civilians claiming that they worked in economic projects related to the military. The group also abducted and killed civilians this month, claiming that they were in cooperation with security forces.

During June, the Sinai Foundation for Human Rights recorded the murder of four civilians and the injury of two others in several ISIS abuses. The foundation team also met with five eyewitnesses or people closely related to the victims.

Details of the abuses

Egyptian authorities and law enforcement forces abuses

The Sinai Foundation for Human Rights recorded on 10 June 2021 the presentation of the children Abdul-Rahman Ibrahim Suliman Zuraiy and Shady Samy Suliman Zuraiy, 16, before the Supreme State Security Court in Cairo after a period of enforced disappearance that lasted 17 months.

Both children come from one family which lived in al-Muqataa village southern al-Sheikh Zayed in North Sinai. It was one of the families that moved from southern al-Sheikh Zwayed to live in Ras Sedr in South Sinai governorate, due to armed clashes between the Egyptian military and ISIS in the area.

On 23 February 2018, the family was surprised by the security forces arresting the two aforementioned children when they were both 13 years old, alongside the arrest of their fathers and grandfather in clear violation of the Egyptian constitution and law number 12 of 1996 Child Law. After their arrest, the children were held for a week with no legal action, then they were both brought before public prosecution, which repeatedly renewed their incarceration for a year and a half. The court then ordered their release on 16 November 2019, but security forces refused to release them despite the court order, and instead kept the children in an unknown location for 11 months, which is a crime of enforced disappearance, according to the Egyptian constitution and law.

Later, on 25 October 2020, the two children were brought before the public court under new charges, and the court renewed their incarceration for two months before ordering their release for the second time

on 12 December 2020. The order was again refused to be carried out by security authorities who kept the children for 6 months since the order of their release for the second time and till they appeared again on 10 June 2021 before the Supreme State Security Court in Cairo under charges of belonging to a terrorist group (ISIS) in case number 620 for the year 2021, and they were subsequently imprisoned in Tora Istiqbal (reception) prison in Cairo.

This incident is a violation of a number of rights provided by the Egyptian law, where article 7-bis (b) of the Child Law states that: “The State shall ensure the protection of the life of the child, his safe and secure upbringing away from armed conflicts, and ensure that he shall not engage in any acts of war. Furthermore, the State shall, in cases of emergency, disasters, wars, and armed conflicts, ensure the respect of all his rights, and shall take all necessary measures to prosecute and penalize any person who commits against the child any acts of war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity”. The Public Court’s rulings to release the minors were also not carried out, instead, the security forces kept the minors in an unknown location for 17 months, and according to Article 54 of the Egyptian Constitution: “Personal freedom is a natural right which is safeguarded and cannot be infringed upon. Except in cases of in flagrante delicto, citizens may only be apprehended, searched, arrested, or have their freedoms restricted by a causal judicial warrant necessitated by an investigation. All those whose freedoms have been restricted shall be immediately informed of the causes therefor, notified of their rights in writing, be allowed to immediately contact their family and lawyer, and be brought before the investigating authority within twenty-four hours of their freedoms having been restricted. Questioning of the person may only begin once his lawyer is present. If he has no lawyer, a lawyer will be appointed for him...”

ISIS-affiliate group, Sinai Province, abuses

1 - The abduction of 5 civilians in Bir al-Abd

“Associated Press” agency cited on 8 June 2021 Egyptian officials on the abduction of five civilians (3 engineers, a laborer and a driver) who work in a project southwest Bir al-Abd by militants who intercepted their vehicle and led them to an unknown location.

The explosion happened when the girls were playing in front of the house in Qatia village in Bir al-Abd, where they found a foreign object thought to have been left behind by ISIS following their retreat from the villages of the green triangle (Qatia, Iqtiya, al-Ganayen, and Rabea) in early October 2020. The two girls played with the foreign object without realizing how dangerous it was until it exploded. Amal was hit by shrapnel in her eye and was transferred to the university hospital in al-Ismailia for treatment, while Sarah was hit by shrapnel in different parts of her body and was transported to Bir al-Abd central hospital where she died 25 days after the injury.

Egyptian officials say IS militants abduct 5 people in Sinai

By ASHRAF SWEILAM June 8, 2021



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EL-ARISH, Egypt (AP) — At least five Egyptians were abducted by Islamic State militants on Tuesday in the restive northern part of the Sinai Peninsula, security officials said.

The five were driving to their workplace in the small town of Bir al-Abed when the militants from the Islamic State group stopped their vehicle and took them to an unknown place.

The five include three engineers, a laborer and their driver, said the officials. They all work at the el-Salam canal project that moves the Nile Delta drainage water to be reused in agriculture in the peninsula.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. The two security officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Egypt has been battling militants, now led by the Islamic State group, in the northern part of Sinai for years. Violence and instability there intensified after the 2013 military's ouster of Egypt's elected but divisive Islamist president, Mohammed Morsi, amid nationwide protests against his year in power.

IS has carried out numerous attacks, mainly targeting Egyptian security forces, the country's minority Christians and those whom the militants accuse of collaborating with the military and police. They have also kidnapped people, mostly Christians and Bedouins, sometimes for ransom.

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Civilian abductions are a pervasive problem in Sinai. ISIS group is used to abducting civilians and keeping them for long periods of time as part of a strategy they follow with the aim of asserting their dominance and punishing anyone they deem as supporters of the Egyptian authorities. The International Humanitarian Law prohibits strategized ab-

ductions and enforced disappearances. The United Nations declaration on enforced disappearances, unanimously approved, states that enforced disappearances are a violation of a range of rights, including the right to recognition as a person before the law, the right to liberty and personal security, the right not to be tortured or treated or punished in an inhuman or degrading way, and it also states that they violate the right to life, or pose a serious threat to it. The International Criminal Court also considers it to be “a crime against humanity”.

2 - Random attacks kill two civilians and injure others in Bir al-Abd

The Sinai Foundation for Human Rights recorded on 21 June 2021 the murder of two civilians and the injury of another by an explosive device explosion in a truck they were riding. The device is thought to have been planted by ISIS in one of the mines related to military financial projects in Sinai.



According to information gathered by the foundation team, the victims are:

The deceased:

Said Ahmed Said Ahmed, 37.

Adel al-Aarag al-Husainy, 55.

The injured:

Alaa Galaal Abu-Malik, 28.



Said Ahmed Said Ahmed



Adel al-Aarag al-Husainy

The foundation team spoke with an eyewitness who said:

“Said Ahmed is a martyr who died to secure food for his family. Said and I were friends for a long time. He was 37 years old, from upper Egypt, specifically Beni Suef. He left his family and moved to Sinai 25 years ago because chances of a better life are better here. He was married and had two kids aged 10 and 11.

Said worked as a microbus driver. He was like any other man his age; he wasn’t involved in anything. He worked hard to secure an honest living to raise his kids. A week before the incident, he went to Beni Suef and worked at a car wash. A few days after leaving, he called his friends in al-Arish and told them he couldn’t live in Beni Suef and that he wanted to go back to al-Arish and asked them to find him any job. His friends found him a job as a driver at a mine in al-Maghara where they break rocks. The place was around 80 kilometers away from al-Arish, in a desert moun-

tain area. Phone coverage in that area is very weak, so he had to walk for about 3 kilometers to get a connection and make a call.

On the day of the incident, Said took 3 people with him in the car; Hajj Adel al-Husainy, the accountant Alaa Abou-Malik, and a 14-year-old kid who assisted Said at work. They went to call their families and check on them. Said called his wife and asked about his kids and told them he was going home soon. After they were done with their phone calls, they moved exactly two meters then the device exploded and Mr. Adel and Said died, may Allah have mercy on their souls. Alaa, the accountant, was riding in the middle between Mr. Adel and Said. He was severely injured. I saw him in the hospital, the bones were protruding out of his legs and his back was broken. The child that was sitting in the back of the truck flew out of the truck when the explosion happened and thank goodness he wasn't hurt. His parents are old and he's their only child."

In another incident that took place on 25 June 2021, a civilian called Abdullah Said Mousa, 20, from Bir al-Abd, was injured due to members of the ISIS-affiliate group, Sinai Province, shooting at his car while he tried to escape from a security ambush set up by the group near al-Maghara area in central Sinai. Abdullah was with his brother, Mohamed, on their way to work in a mine in cooperation with the military on roadwork projects.



Abdullah Said Mousa



Mohamed Said Mousa

The foundation team spoke with a relative of the victim's who said:

"On Friday, 25 June 2021, at 10 AM, Abdullah Said Mousa, 20, went out with his brother, Mohamed Said Mousa, 17, from the city of Bir al-Abd towards al-Maghara, about 50 kilometers away, where they work as contractors at the mines.

On their way, they were surprised by armed militants wearing military uniforms on the "Bir al-Abd al-Maghara road". The militants had a car and they'd created an ambush. They knew the ambush wasn't a military ambush because the car wasn't a military car and because the location of the ambush was in a low area that wasn't very visible, which is unlike the military in Sinai. Abdullah was driving. He hit the brakes and turned the car around to go back. The militants opened fire very heavily. I think they wanted to steal the car to use in their terrorist attacks, and when Abdullah turned around, they fired at them very heavily. Abdullah was hit in the shoulder, and thank God Mohamed wasn't hurt. The car was completely destroyed, though. It only took them as far as one and a half kilometers, then they stopped by a military ambush. The soldiers called an ambulance to transfer Abdullah to the hospital and a force from the ambush moved toward the militants' ambush, but they didn't find anyone there."

3 - Extrajudicial murder in al-Amouria village in Bir al-Abd

In another incident that took place on 31 May 2021, the foundation team reported ISIS's publishing of a photo on its official Telegram accounts stating the murder of Hussein Suilem Farhan, 37, from Amouria village in Bir al-Abd, and Ahmed Bady Mubarak, from Ezbet Nasir in al-Qantara Sharq, claiming that they were in cooperation with the military.



Hussein Suilem



Ahmed Bady Mubarak

dent where ISIS spread the news through its al-Nabaa weekly magazine in issue 289 stating that members of the Sinai Province group killed Ghuraiqid Ghanim Salman, from Amouria village in Bir al-Abd, claiming that he was in cooperation with the military.

The Sinai Foundation team met with one of Ghuraiqid's relatives who said in his testimony:

“The group abducted Ghuraiqid on 25 March 2021. They went into his home and took him. We thought then that what happened was a tribal problem between families, but when we learned that 15 men from the village were abducted, we realized that it had to do with the group. Ghuraiqid is in no way in contact with the military, but what happened is, days before his abduction, he was in Balouza village, and he recognized a green pickup truck that had been stolen by the group and saw ISIS members riding in it. He took a photo of the truck and sent it to a journalist on Facebook who notified the military and the military killed members of the group because of that tip. Ghuraiqid made a mistake when he commented on one of that journalist's posts on Facebook and the comment showed that he was the source of that tip. The reason behind the abduction of a large number of men from the village was probably that ordeal with Ghuraiqid, because the men were questioned about that incident before 12 of them were released. We learned that Ghuraiqid was killed through the internet when the group shared a photo of him dead. Unfortunately, they killed him in a terrible way, slitting his throat with a knife and separating his head from his body.”

It is worth mentioning that on 25 March 2021, the Sinai Foundation for Human Rights recorded the abduction of 15 civilians from al-Dawaghra village by ISIS with the claim of their cooperation with Egyptian security forces in Amouria village in eastern Bir al-Abd, and published that in its report on abuses taking place in March. According to testimonies and interviews conducted by the foundation, most of the abducted are related and work as fishermen.

The International Humanitarian Law dedicates protection to civilians from being targeted during conflicts, as the Geneva conven-

tions concerned with armed conflict have agreed in article 3 on the prohibition of “violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds” of civilians and those unable to fight, as well as dedicating special protection to minorities. Extrajudicial murder is a gross violation of Human Rights that is recurring in Sinai, and it is an inherent practice by ISIS. Arbitrary deprivation of the right to life is a violation of article 6 of The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The African Charter on Human Rights also stated in article 4 that civilians’ right to life is to be safeguarded at all times, including during conflict, while the African Commission on Human Rights considered it to be a pillar of all rights that is non-derogable.

Recommendations:

1-To the Egyptian authorities

- a. Conducting transparent investigations into the incidents in which members of the military and security forces were part, that led to the fall of civilian victims.
- b. Lifting discriminatory and illegal restrictions off business and fishing and movement in Sinai and offering immediate and fair compensations to citizens who were harmed by said restrictions.
- c. Complying with principles of the International Humanitarian Law by the military and security forces is an important basis that guaranties professionalism in performing their duties. Officers and military personnel should be taught those rules and trained to abide by them through curricula in the military academy and other training courses.
- d. Inviting and accepting visitation requests from UN special procedures mandates to Sinai, and allowing them unhindered access, and guarantying the safety of those who cooperate with them from punishment.
- e. Modifying laws and systems that grant unlimited authority to the security and military forces, including the state of emergency and the counterterrorism law, and implementing mechanisms that guarantee judicial and legal supervision on law-enforcement authorities

2. To all conflicting parties, including Sinai Province militants:

- a. Taking all possible precautions to protect civilians, according to the International Humanitarian Law, during any military land or air raids.
- b. In areas where the unlawful side to the conflict is the ruling force, all necessary precautions are to be taken to protect the rights of all inhabitants without discrimination and ensure all basic needs of civilians.

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