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Haitham Ghoneim



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TURKEY- ISTANBUL

Bahçelievler, Yenibosna Mh 29 Ekim Cad. No: 7 A2 Blok 3. Plaza D: 64
Tel/Fax: +90 212 227 2262 E-Mail: info@eis-eg.org

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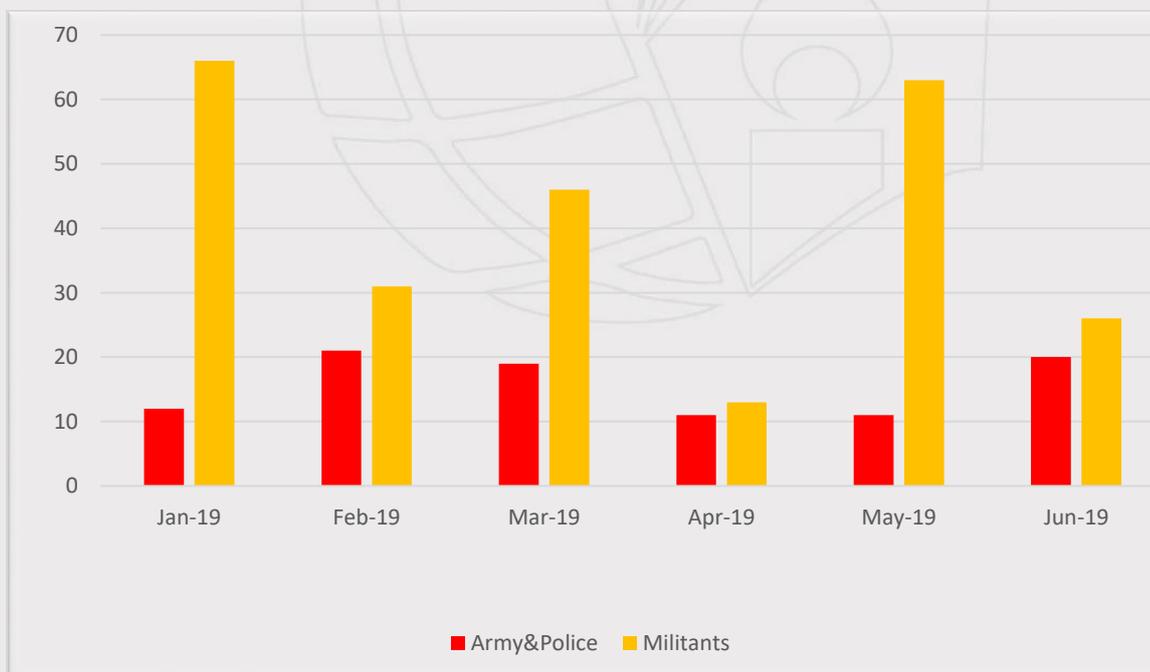
Development of the military situation in Sinai – June

Haitham Ghoneim

The month of June witnessed many attacks carried out by the Islamic State's local affiliate, Sinai Province, against the Egyptian police forces both in the center and outskirts of the city of El Arish, North Sinai. In this report, we will review the course of military and security operations during June in the Sinai Peninsula, as follows:

Military and security developments

The following graph shows a comparison between the military losses of the two conflicting parties during the last six months, according to sources from both parties as well as the monitoring of the [Egyptian Institute of Studies](#):



First: Casualties and losses as declared by the Army and militants

- Following are the casualties and losses during June 2019 disseminated through the Egyptian Army communiques and the statements declared by militants as well as media reports:

1- Casualties and losses as declared by Egyptian Interior Ministry

the military spokesman did not issue any military statements during April, however, the Egyptian Ministry of Interior issued two statements: (1) (2), where the first (11 April) announced the liquidation of 11 people under the pretext of being militants that resisted arrest in the area of Abu Eita in Arish, and the second statement (12 April) announced that the security forces succeeded in responding to an armed attack targeting the Oyoum Mousa security checkpoint and killed two of the attackers.

Although the military spokesman did not issue any statements related to operations in the Sinai Peninsula throughout the month, however, the Egyptian Interior Ministry issued three statements during June, (1), (2), and (3), announcing liquidation of 26 citizens claiming that they were among participants in the attack on the Batal 14 checkpoint in the Arish village of al-Seel. However, the truth is that the Egyptian Interior Ministry always resorts to liquidating detainees after any militant attack against army or police forces. According to an investigation conducted by Reuters News Agency in April, Egyptian security forces had shot dead hundreds of suspected militants in what the Egyptian Interior Ministry said were gun battles, but which bereaved families said were extrajudicial executions. A [Reuters](#) analysis of the ministry statements showed

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that deadly shootouts often followed an attack by militants. The regime used to claim that it killed terrorists in clashes after each terrorist operation, while killing citizens that are already captured and kept in detention camps.



2- Casualties and losses as declared by militants and media reports

According to what was monitored by the [Egyptian Institute for Political and Strategic Studies](#) in June, the casualties and losses of the army and police forces **were as follows:**

- At least 20 military personnel, including 2 officers, were killed,
- Some 7 citizens working in construction of El Arish security wall were killed,
- At least 5 soldiers were injured.

At the level of operations, we have noticed that there is continued increasing activity of the Sinai Province around the city of Arish, where the IS local affiliate launched 2 attacks in the El Arish, including one in the center of the city. In

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addition, the militant organization engaged in 3 armed clashes with the army forces in the areas of Rafah and Sheikh Zuwaid, where personnel landmines were used in one of them. During the month, we monitored the use of sniper weapons by the IS twice, as well as the use of 8 anti-tank and 4 anti-personnel explosive devices. The attacks resulted in destroying 6 military vehicles.

Second: Overview of the developments of the military campaign in Sinai Peninsula

Following is an overview of the developments of the military operations in Sinai Peninsula during June 2019:

The Islamic State's local affiliate in Sinai stepped up its operations against the police forces and was able to inflict severe blows against them, which explains why the police and military casualties and losses during June was significantly high compared to the past two months.

On the other hand, the police forces continue to use the policy of physical liquidation of suspected detainees in response to the casualties and losses inflicted on them. After the 5 June attack on the Batal 14 checkpoint that left 8 policemen dead, including an officer, a non-commissioned officer and 6 conscripts, the Interior Ministry's National Security Service liquidated 26 citizens in retaliation, on 5, 7 and 8 June.

- On June 22, Sinai Province launched an armed attack on citizens working in the construction of the El Arish wall, killing 7 workers, and setting two cars on fire. The militant organization justified this by alleging that they had warned the workers more than once not to participate in the building of the wall.

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- On 25 June, the Sinai Province organization was able to launch an attack in the center of El Arish city, where four militants clashed with 3 checkpoints of the Central Security Forces, leaving one officer and seven policemen dead, while one officer, one non-commissioned police officer and several soldiers were wounded.

On 27 June, the IS local affiliate launched an attack on bases of police forces on the coastal road in Al-Masa'id area, west of the El Arish city, without ascertaining the size of injuries.

- In terms of attacking economic targets, the Sinai Province targeted electricity towers in the area of "Jo'al" that supplies army factories with energy, which led to suspension of work in 4 factories temporarily.

- The IS al-Hesbah (Islamic police) has also reappeared, seizing and burning a quantity of hashish and drugs that were prepared for smuggling into Gaza from the city of Rafah.

- There were intensive air raids on areas to the west and south of Rafah and areas south of Sheikh Zuwaid and the eastern and southern belt of El Arish city.

Third: Israeli drone attacks and violation of sovereignty

In June, the same approximate rate of Egyptian and "Israeli" air raids on areas of Rafah and south of Sheikh Zuwaid and El Arish in North Sinai. We were able to monitor three "Israel" aerial surveys, as follows:

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- On 13 June, an Israeli drone penetrated the Egyptian air space coming from over Gaza Sea and made aerial surveys over the village of Yamit, west of Rafah, North Sinai.
- On 14 June, an Israeli drone penetrated the Egyptian air space coming from over Gaza Sea and made aerial surveys over the coastal areas of the cities of Sheikh Zuwaid and Rafah in the governorate of North Sinai.
- On 22 June, an Israeli drone penetrated the Egyptian air space coming from over Gaza Sea and made aerial surveys over the Helweh area, to the south of the city of Rafah in northern Sinai.

It is noteworthy that intervention of "Israeli" drones in Sinai has been taking place on a regular basis since 2011, and Egypt began to pay attention to the use of these drones since 2016.