

Egypt police trap and kill top militants

Cairo

Egyptian police have killed three top Islamist militants in two separate operations, including two caught trying to move to a new hideout on Cairo's outskirts, the government said Tuesday.

The interior ministry said the two militants killed in New Cairo were senior members of the Hasam group -- an extremist movement the government accuses of links to the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood.

The third man, a jihadist who was gunned down in the restive North Sinai province, was a leader of a militia affiliated with the Islamic State group, the ministry said in a separate statement.

In the first operation, authorities had acted after learning that some of Hasam's leaders were about to move "equipment and weapons" to a new hideout in New Cairo, outside the capital's ring road, the ministry said.

Security forces set up checkpoints on roads to the area and as forces approached a suspect car, "its passengers opened fire" on police and were killed in retaliatory fire.

The two were identified as students aged 24 and 21 who were "among the most prominent leaders in the Hasam terrorist group," the ministry said.

In the vehicle, police found seven automatic weapons, two other firearms, a large



Egyptian policemen inspect the scene of shooting near Badrasheen

amount of ammunition, masks and radio equipment.

The ministry did not say when the shootout took place, but said the group had been planning to move locations on Tuesday.

The militants who died were said to have been behind attacks including a shootout in early May in which three policemen were killed and five wounded near the Cairo ring road.

The pair had carried out attacks on the orders of "their leaders who have fled abroad," the ministry said.

The government says Hasam is linked to the Muslim Brotherhood movement of former Islamist president Mohamed Morsi who was overthrown by the army in 2013.

The militia has previously claimed responsibility for deadly attacks against security forces as well as assassination attempts

targeting a pro-government Muslim cleric and Egypt's deputy prosecutor general.

The group said on Twitter Monday it has killed 27 people from "military occupation militias", a reference to Egypt's security forces, since its launch a year ago.

Egypt has been fighting an insurgency by an IS affiliate which is based in North Sinai province, where hundreds of soldiers and policemen have been killed since Morsi's ouster.

Following deadly church bombings claimed by IS, on April 10 President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi declared a three-month state of emergency, which has since been extended.

In North Sinai on Tuesday, security forces killed Ahmed Hassan Ahmed al-Nshou, a senior member of IS's Egyptian affiliate, in a gunfight, the ministry said in a separate statement. (AFP)

Renovated Tsarist hostel re-opens in Jerusalem

Jerusalem

A Jerusalem hostel for Christian Orthodox pilgrims that became a symbol of imperial Russia's presence in the Holy Land re-opened Tuesday after six years of renovation work.

Israel handed the Sergei Courtyard in the city's Russian Compound back to Moscow in 2008 after a long legal battle and an intervention by President Vladimir Putin.

The complex was funded by an uncle of Tsar Nicholas II and built in 1890 by the Imperial Orthodox Society of Palestine to house pilgrims.

It became famous for its architecture, enclosed garden and a tower in one corner that resembles a chess rook.

But Ottoman authorities requisitioned it in World War I after going to war with Russia, and British then Israeli

Sergei Compound in Jerusalem



authorities went on to house administrative agencies there.

Until recently it was home to Israel's nature protection society.

On Tuesday, Russian diplomats and representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in the reopening ceremony.

The 36,000 square metre (390,000 square feet) building was funded Grand Duke Sergei

Alexandrovich, brother to Tsar Alexander III, and built with imported Russian stone.

It houses a library, a cafe and restaurant and guesthouse for pilgrims and other visitors, a short walk from the holy sites of Jerusalem's Old City.

Russian mystic and courtier of Tsar Nicholas II, Grigori Rasputin is thought to have stayed at the hostel, Israeli public television reported.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Introduction of water services applications

with stamp of licensed plumber

Effective 1/9/2017, all applications for

water services/requests must be signed & stamped by

the licensed plumber. Applications received without the stamp

signature of a licensed plumber will not

be accepted in EWA offices

For more information, please contact

Electricity & Water Conservation Directorate

Water Conservation Section

Phone No.: 17991485 / 17991488

or

Offices of Customer Services Directorate

Saudi airline says US laptop ban lifted

Riyadh

Saudi Arabia's national carrier said a US ban on laptops and tablets in the cabins of its US-bound planes had been lifted yesterday.

The kingdom's civil aviation authorities informed Saudia that the ban had been lifted after a US team inspected security measures at airports in Riyadh and Jeddah, the airline's spokesman Abdulrahman al-Taieb said.

Washington in March barred all electronic devices

Representational image



larger than a mobile phone in the cabins of direct flights to the United States from 10 airports in Turkey, the Middle East and North Africa, only allowing them in hold luggage.

The ban was brought in after intelligence officials learned of efforts by jihadists from the Islamic State group to produce a bomb that could be hidden inside such devices.