

# At least 235 dead after 'militants' set off bomb and open fire in mosque

At least 235 people have been killed today when suspected militants set off a bomb and opened fire at a mosque in Egypt.

Dozens were injured and killed in Sinai during one of the country's deadliest attacks in recent memory, state media and eyewitnesses said.

Eyewitnesses reported ambulances ferrying casualties from the scene to nearby hospitals after the Al Rawdah mosque in Bir al-Abed, west of Arish city, was targeted.

Witnesses said bomb explosion ripped through the Rawda mosque as worshippers gathered for weekly Friday prayers.

At least a further 109 people were wounded in the attack, which is unprecedented in a four-year insurgency by Islamist extremist groups.

President Abdel Fattah al Sisi convened an emergency security meeting soon after the attack, state television reported.

Government officials have announced three days mourning.

The Islamic State group's Egypt branch has killed hundreds of policemen and soldiers, and also civilians accused of working with the authorities, in attacks in the north of the Sinai peninsula, over the years.

They have also targeted followers of the mystical Sufi branch of Sunni Islam as well as Christians.

The victims today included civilians and conscripts praying at the mosque.

A tribal leader and head of a Bedouin militia that fights IS said that the mosque is known as a place of gathering for Sufis.

The Islamic State group shares the puritan Salafi view of Sufis as heretics for

seeking the intercession of saints.

The jihadists had previously kidnapped and beheaded an elderly Sufi leader, accusing him of practising magic which Islam forbids, and abducted Sufi practitioners later released after 'repenting.'

The group has killed more than 100 Christians in church bombings and shootings in Sinai and other parts of Egypt, forcing many to flee the peninsula.

The military has struggled to quell the jihadists who pledged allegiance to IS in November 2014.

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Source: <http://metro.co.uk/2017/11/24/at-least-155-dead-and-80-injured-as-bomb-r-ips-through-mosque-in-egypt-7105847/>

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