

Egypt's state prosecutor killed in bomb attack in Cairo

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Cairo: Egypt's Prosecutor General, who has referred thousands of Islamists to trial in recent months, was today killed after militants targeted his convoy in a powerful bomb attack, the senior-most official to be assassinated since violence erupted after the ouster of Mohamed Morsi in 2013.

Hisham Barakat, 65, died from injuries sustained in the revenge attack by Islamist militants that targeted his convoy near his house in Misr el-Gedida district in Cairo.

Barakat suffered ruptures to the nose and left shoulder, and internal bleeding in the lungs and stomach, health ministry spokesperson Hossam Abdel-Ghaffar told Ahram Online. He was taken to the operating room at Al-Nozha hospital in Heliopolis, where he succumbed to his injuries hours after the attack.

Earlier it was reported that he had sustained minor injuries in the attack but later it emerged that he had succumbed to his wounds in a hospital after undergoing a critical surgery.

Nine people, including two drivers, one civilian and five members of the security forces, were injured when the bomb hit the prosecutor's convoy near the military academy in Heliopolis, Abdel-Ghaffar said.

President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi met with Interior Minister Magdy Abdel-Ghaffar after the attack. Sisi urged the ministry to tighten security and find the perpetrators of the attack.

Islamist militants, who have primarily targeted security forces since the removal of Morsi, have also attacked several judges.

In May, three judges and their driver were killed when gunmen opened fire on their vehicle in the North Sinai city of Al-Arish.

In March, a small bomb was left in front of the house of judge Fathi Bayoumi, who probed graft charges against Hosni Mubarak-era interior minister Habib El-Adly.

Supporters of the banned Muslim Brotherhood accuse Egypt's judiciary of issuing politicised sentences, including against the group's supreme guide Mohamed Badie and former president Morsi. Both were among tens of the now banned group's members who have been sentenced to death during the past year.

Barakat was sworn in as Egypt's top prosecutor under the rule of interim president Adly Mansour in July 2013 following the resignation of Abdel-Meguid Mahmoud. Barakat has referred thousands of Islamists to trial since the overthrow of President Morsi. He has received death threats in the past.

The Egyptian affiliate of the Islamic State group recently called for attacks on the judiciary, after the hanging of six militants.

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