

Egypt police kill African at Israel border

Contributed by Egypt News
Wednesday, 23 September 2009

Egyptian security sources reported Wednesday that Egypt's police shot dead an Eritrean migrant as he tried to slip across the border into Israel in an upsurge of violence that has left seven migrants dead this month

One other Eritrean migrant was wounded and in a critical condition after police fired first in the air and then at the migrants after they ignored orders to stop and ran toward the Jewish state. Four Ethiopian migrants were also detained.

Police have stepped up efforts to control the sensitive border with the Jewish state since May, ending a six-month lull in known fatalities as authorities responded to what security sources say is an increased flow of human traffic through Egypt.

At least 15 migrants have been killed since May. Egypt's border with Israel is a main transit route for generally unarmed African migrants and refugees seeking work or asylum in Israel, although Egyptian police complain the smugglers who ferry the migrants to the border region sometimes fire on security forces.

Egypt, which for years tolerated tens of thousands of African migrants on its territory, is under Israeli pressure to halt the flow of migrants.

Egyptian authorities also say they are concerned the flow of migrants at its Sinai border could pose a security threat in an area where Islamist militants sometimes find refuge.

Analysts and aid workers say the flow of migrants from the Horn of Africa through Egypt to Israel has increased in recent months as it has become more difficult to travel on other northward routes, such as via Libya to Europe. [ID:nLS359973]

Eritreans are the single largest group of migrants attempting to cross into Israel from Egypt, although Ethiopians and Sudanese also make the trek.

