

ISIS–East Asia (ISIS-EA)

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OVERVIEW

AS OF MARCH 2025

ISIS–East Asia (ISIS-EA) is a branch of ISIS that is based primarily in the Philippines and aspires to expand ISIS's self-proclaimed caliphate to Southeast Asia. ISIS officially recognized the group as an affiliate in 2016, and the group includes some veterans of older Southeast Asian terrorist or militant groups, such as the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah. ISIS-EA is organized into regional battalions in the Philippines.

Operating Area

Southern Philippines

Members

Fewer than 300 members

Tactics And Targets

ISIS-EA conducts attacks against Philippine military, police, Government, and Christian civilian targets using IEDs, suicide operatives, VBIEDs, and small arms. ISIS-EA has used female operatives to conduct suicide attacks, an unusual tactic for an ISIS element.

Terrorist Group Designation

The US Department of State designated ISIS-EA as a foreign terrorist organization in February 2018.

KEY LEADERS



Abu Zacharia [DECEASED]

Former amir; killed in June 2023



Salahuddin Hassan [DECEASED]

Former amir; killed in October 2021



ISIS–East Asia (ISIS-EA) *(continued)*

KEY LEADERS *(continued)*



Isnilon Hapilon [DECEASED]
Former amir; killed in March 2019

NOTABLE ATTACKS

3 December 2023

Marawi City, Lanao del Sur Province, Philippines

Operatives bomb a Catholic mass at Mindanao State University, killing 4 people and injuring dozens.

24 August 2020

Jolo Island, Sulu Province, Philippines

Two suicide bombers attack Philippine military personnel and police in a shopping area, killing at least 15 and wounding 77 others.

27 January 2019

Jolo Island, Sulu Province, Philippines

Two suicide bombers affiliated with ISIS-EA and the Abu Sayyaf Group kill 23 people and wound more than 100 at the Jolo Cathedral.

May–October 2017

Marawi City, Lanao del Sur Province, Philippines

ISIS-EA members occupy Marawi City and fight the Philippine military for five months before government forces liberate the city.

