



## Capture of Mosul from Islamic State

### Why in news?

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The capture of the Grand al-Nuri Mosque in Mosul by Iraqi forces, from where Islamic State (IS) proclaimed the caliphate nearly three years ago, marks the end of the 'caliphate' in Iraq.

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### Where did IS come from?

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  - It started out as the Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, established by the Jordanian Al-Zarqawi in 1999.
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  - In 2004, al-Zarqawi took an oath of loyalty to Osama bin Laden, and his organisation became the **al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)**.
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  - Al-Zarqawi was killed in 2006, but AQI continued to hold significant territory in Iraq.
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  - It began to call itself 'Islamic State in Iraq' and, after taking parts of Syria in 2013, the '**Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham**', or ISIS.
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  - Since al-Sham, the area around the eastern Mediterranean Sea (including Syria) is translated in English as "the Levant", ISIS became '**Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant**', or ISIL.
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  - ISIL gained prominence in early 2014 when it drove Iraqi government forces out of key cities, followed by its capture of Mosul.
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  - In June 2014 it announced the formation of the global Islamic "Caliphate".
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  - ISIS/ISIL thus dropped the geographical connotations to its name, and

became just the '**Islamic State**', or IS.

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## What is their ideology?

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- ISIL is a theocracy, proto-state and a Salafi or Wahhabi group.
- It follows an **extremist interpretation of Islam**, promotes religious violence, and regards Muslims who do not agree with its interpretations as infidels or apostates.
- It represents the **restoration of the caliphate of early Islam**, with all the political, religious and eschatological ramifications that this would imply.
- A caliphate is an area containing an Islamic Leader known as a 'Caliph' a person considered a religious successor to the Islamic prophet, Muhammad, and a leader of the entire Muslim community.
- When the caliphate was proclaimed, all who do not believe in the group's interpretation of the Quran will be killed.

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## What is their source of revenue?

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- Proceeds from the occupation of territory - including control of banks, oil and gas reservoirs, taxation, extortion, and robbery.
- Kidnapping for ransom.
- Donations from Saudi Arabia and Gulf states, often disguised as meant for humanitarian charity.
- Material support provided by foreign fighters.
- Fundraising through modern communication networks.

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## Why were they successful?

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- Unlike al Qaeda, ISIS has proven to be more brutal and more effective at controlling territory it has seized.

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- In spite of their medieval ideology, **they run a modern and an effective administration.**

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- ISIL is headed and run by **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi**. Advising him is a **cabinet of senior leaders**, while its operations in Iraq and Syria are controlled by **local governors**.

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- Beneath the leaders are councils on finance, leadership, military matters, legal matters - including decisions on executions.

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- From the cabinet and the governors to the financial and legislative bodies, ISIS' bureaucratic hierarchy looks a lot like those of some of the Western countries.

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## What are some of the important events?

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- 2004: Abu Musab al Zarqawi establishes al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).

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- April 2010: Abu Bakr al Baghdadi becomes the leader of ISI.

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- July 2012 - July 2013: ISI launches its **“Breaking the Walls” campaign**. It carries out 24 bombings and eight prison breaks, freeing jihadists who had participated in AQI attacks.

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- March 2013: **Raqqa falls** to the Syrian opposition, and the IS started operating in Raqqa.

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- December 2013: ISIS militants in Iraq take control of Fallujah and parts of Ramadi.

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- **June 10: ISIS takes over Mosul, launching its largest offensive to date.**

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- May 2015: ISIS take overs Ramadi, Iraq and seizes the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra.  
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- **June 2017:** Iraqi government troops captured the ruined mosque at the heart of the IS's de facto capital Mosul, and the Iraq PM has declared the end of caliphate.  
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### **What is the significance of Mosul recapture?**

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- Iraqi PM has managed to **stitch together a difficult alliance** to fight the jihadists.  
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- Despite conflicting interests the joint front they (between Iraq, Iran & US) forged against the IS could be a **replicable model elsewhere**, especially in Syria where the IS still controls territories.  
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**Source: The Hindu**

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