

THE RISE AND FALL OF ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA (ISIS): AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE



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**THE RISE AND FALL OF ISLAMIC
STATE OF IRAQ AND SYRIA (ISIS): AN
INDIAN PERSPECTIVE**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled **“The Rise and Fall of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS): An Indian Perspective”** submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Geopolitics and International Relations of Manipal Academy of Higher Education is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

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CERTIFICATE

I recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AQ	Al-Qaeda
AQI	Al-Qaeda in Iraq
AQIS	Al-Qaeda In the Indian Subcontinent
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
COSQC	Central Organization for Standardization and Quality Control
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CSCC	Centre for Strategic Counter-terrorism Communications
DIY	Do-It-Yourself
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IGC	Iraqi Governing Council
ISF	Iraqi Security Force
IS-K	Islamic State Khorasan
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province
IS	Islamic State
ISI	Islamic State in Iraq
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISWAP	Islamic State West Africa Province
J&K	Jammu and Kashmir
JeM	Jaish-e-Mohammed
JTJ	Jama'at alTawhid wal-Jihad
Let	Lashkar-e-Taiba
MSC	Mujahideen Shura Council
MSM	Majilis Shura Al-Mujahidin
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIA	National Investigation Agency
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
SIC	Security and Intelligence Council
SJM	Salafi-Jihadist Movements
TFTFWG	The Foreign Terrorist Fighter Working Group
TGIFCT	The Global Internet Forum to Counter-Terrorism
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
YPG	People's Protection Unit, Syria

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an attempt to approach the understanding of ISIS, its future, and what relevance it holds from an Indian perspective, methodically and comprehensively. The purpose of this study is to shed light on the entirety of ISIS and the reasons behind it becoming the world's most violent terrorist organization at one point in time. Drawing from the group's history, their actions, and consequent global reactions, to their current state, an effort is made to map the future challenges they pose to the fight against terrorism. By discussing ISIS's distinctive operation style, its military and political organization, and its strong digital presence, this work aims to trace their journey and rise to prominence. ISIS moved into dangerous territory when they declared themselves a state, robbing them of the traditional terrorist organization refuge- of being a stateless, formless, and unpredictable entity that wreaked havoc and functioned devoid of logic or rationality. There is limited study on the implications of the fall of ISIS and the repercussions it has outside of the region, especially its growing presence in South Asia. Most importantly, a terrorist organization with a strong ideological presence is not completely defeated just by the killing of its members and the group being dormant, though they might have fallen. According to several pieces of works of literature, ISIS is seen as an inspiration by many other extremist groups and is said to be responsible for the re-emergence and resurgence of various terrorist groups around the world, in different forms and factions. The analysis done in this paper has revealed that even after effective and successful counter-ISIS efforts by regional and international actors, the terrorist organization is still actively reorganizing in Iraq and Syria, where it had a full-blown presence until 2017. Another concerning fact is the growing prominence of their extended factions in Africa and Asia. Despite being weakened systematically over the years, ISIS has not been defeated and is on the verge of resurgence, only in more unpredictable forms and in no timely manner. The onset of the pandemic and the resultant geopolitical shifts in the world, have only strengthened their efforts and exposed them to dangerous avenues that they can easily take advantage of if nations do not pay heed to the looming danger they pose and act accordingly.