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Al-Qaeda Seizes Iraq's Mosul, Moves on Kirkuk

By Jason Ditz

June 10, 2014



Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) is pressing its military success in northern Iraq, seizing the oil rich city of Mosul and moving eastward toward the Kirkuk Province, overrunning more towns along the way.

Months of fighting in Anbar Province hadn't gone well, but troops in the north seem even less up to resisting the militants, as many simply dropped their weapons and fled in the face of the offensive.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is calling for an immediate declaration of a state of emergency by parliament, accompanied by an Interior Ministry statement confirm Mosul is entirely outside of government control now.

The situation in Iraq's Sunni Arab regions had been growing more and more dire for months now, but now seems to be at a tipping point, where AQI is in a position to seize territory wholesale, and Iraq's military seems to be struggling mightily to do anything about it.

The territory in Iraq is only part of AQI's holdings now, which also include a broad swath of northern and eastern Syria, giving them a more or less contiguous empire from the outskirts of Aleppo to Fallujah and Mosul.