

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir



- ❖ Born: 17 August 1938;
- ❖ Leader of: Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid;
- ❖ "Teacher Abu" ran the Al-Mukmin boarding school in Ngruki, Central Java, which he co-founded with Abdullah Sungkar in 1972.
- ❖ He was in exile in Malaysia for 17 years during the secular New Order administration of President Suharto resulting from various activities, including urging the implementation of Sharia law.
- ❖ Intelligence agencies and the United Nations claim he is the spiritual leader of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and has links with Al-Qaeda.
- ❖ In the past Bashir has expressed sympathy for [Osama bin Laden](#) and Saddam Hussein, but that he didn't "agree with all of their actions," in particular "total war." He further said "...If this occurs in an Islamic country, the fitnah (discord) will be felt by Muslims. But to attack them in their country (America) is fine." He also claimed that the 9/11 attacks were a false flag attack by America and Israel as a pretext to attack Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- ❖ In a speech following the Bali attacks Bashir stated, "I support Osama bin Laden's struggle because his is the true struggle to uphold Islam." He is portrayed strongly in Western media as an extremist who inspires deadly actions. He stated his belief that Indonesia must adhere to Sharia law and has renewed his calls for an Islamic state in Indonesia, saying "There is no nobler life than to die as a martyr for jihad. None. The highest deed in Islam is Jihad. If we commit to Jihad, we can neglect other deeds, even fasting and prayer".
- ❖ He founded the Indonesian Mujahedeen Council (MMI), a coalition of Islamist groups promoting the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia. In August 2008, Bashir resigned his position as the Council's supreme leader, charging that the groups internal democratic structure contradicted Islam, and stated that he should have absolute power within the organization.

- ❖ On 16 June 2011, Bashir was convicted of supporting a jihadi training camp following a four-month trial. Bashir was charged for involvement in plans of terror and military training in Aceh. The charge against him of inciting others to commit terrorism, carries the death penalty. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison.
- ❖ In August 2014, he publicly pledged allegiance to [Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi](#), leader of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and his declaration of a caliphate.

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