

The Monthly report from Kurdistan region of Iraq for December 2015

Political

Masrour Barzani: The best solution to the problems between Iraqi and Kurdistan is to become good neighbors

Bas news

(1st of December, 2015)

Erbil: Masrour Barzani, the Chancellor of Iraqi Kurdistan Security Council, stressed that the best solution to the outstanding problems between Baghdad and Erbil is to become good neighbors. A statement to the Council quoted Barzani as saying, "during a meeting with Ambassador of Norway to Jordan and Iraq Cecil Berry and her accompanying delegation that the solution to the problems in Iraq lies in looking at the real reasons for them". Barzani said that the components to solve their problems through dialogue and understanding, and that the best solution for all existing problems between Baghdad and Erbil is to become good neighbors."

Massoud Barzani hold talks with Saudi King

(2nd of December, 2015)

Millet press

Riyadh: Iraqi Kurdish president Massoud Barzani met with Saudi King Salman, at his palace in Riyadh. They discussed ways to further enhance bilateral cooperation between the Kingdom and Iraq, in addition to issues of mutual concern. The King also hosted a luncheon banquet in honor of Barzani and his accompanying delegation. Barzani launched his tour on November 28 and his first destination was the United Arab Emirates. Experts see connections between his visit and as United Arab Emirates' Dana Gas **wins \$1.98 bln** Iraqi Kurdistan judgment. A tribunal of the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA) ordered the Kurdistan government to pay over \$1.98 billion to its consortium within 28 days.

Kurdistan Parliament Speaker: There are people and political parties who consider themselves above all laws

KNN TV

(6th of December, 2015)

Brussels: Head of the Kurdistan Parliament, Yusuf Mohammed confirmed that deposing MPs and minister of Change (Gorran) Movement from the government's formation and the parliament and prevent him from entering Erbil shows that there are people and political parties in the region considers themselves above all laws. Yusuf, who is currently visiting Europe, said in an address from the headquarters of the European Parliament, that what happened with the members of his party in Parliament and in the government in 12 October are examples confirm that there are some people and some parties are above all laws, and that means the decisions of political offices of these parties will be a substitute for laws. The crisis erupted after Massoud Barzani, whose term as Kurdistan President ended on August 20, 2015 but refused to step down and remains unofficially in office.

Speaker of Kurdistan Parliament called on Europe to help the Region to declare a Kurdish state

KNN TV

(6th of December, 2015)

Brussels: Speaker of Iraq's Kurdistan Parliament Yusuf Mohammed called on the European Parliament to help the Region to establish a Kurdish state.

Iraqi Kurdistan govt spokesperson's statement on Turkish military movement near Mosul

KRG.ORG

(6th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Regarding Turkey's transfer of military equipment to a military training base in Mosul governorate, Kurdistan Regional Government, KRG, spokesperson, Mr. Safeen Dizayee, made the following statement: Within the framework of the international coalition against the Islamic State "terrorist" organization, IS, Turkey opened two military training bases for Peshmerga forces in the end of 2014 in Soran and Qalacholan districts, in the Kurdistan Region. It has also, during the same period, opened a training base for other Iraqi forces in Mosul governorate and provided military assistance. In the past days, military equipment and logistics have been transferred to this base in order to expand the capacity of the training base in Mosul governorate. Iraq top officials **demand** the immediate withdrawal of Turkish troops that are reportedly on a training mission near the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

Massoud Barzani to visit Turkey on Wednesday: media

Kurdistan TV

(7th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdish president Massoud Barzani is scheduled to visit Turkey on Thursday for a series of meetings with senior officials in Ankara. Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told Turkish Media that Barzani will visit Ankara on Wednesday November 9th to discuss a range of issues with officials. Barzani visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia last week.

Massoud Barzani denies getting financial aid from Saudi Arabia

KRP.ORG

(7th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdish president Massoud Barzani denied getting financial aid from Saudi Arabia during the visit to some gulf state last week. A statement by Massoud Barzani's office said that "at the kind invitation of the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia the KDP leader Massoud Barzani visited the two countries to strengthen relations

between them and the Region and Iraq and its components and between the two countries.” The statement added that “the visit, discussed many files, in the forefront of the war on Islamic State, and the economic and diplomatic relations between Iraq in general and especially the Kurdistan and with the two countries and the issue of displaced persons and refugees in the region. He said that “some parties and media had published news about the region on obtaining financial aid from Saudi Arabia, and in the time that the issue of displaced people needs aid efforts, but these are baseless news.

Massoud Barzani: the entry of Turkish troops was in coordination with Baghdad, we are not a part in the issue

Kurdistan TV

(8th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdish president Massoud Barzani announced that the presence of Turkish troops near Mosul city has been in coordination with Baghdad government. Ankara insists that sending its forces to the outskirts of Mosul is for training purpose and was in agreement with the Iraqi government. But Baghdad has denied this issue in more than one occasion and gave a time limit for the withdrawal of these troops. Barzani said “according to my information, Turkey had previously conducted coordination with Baghdad and agreed with the local government in Mosul to send troops to train the Arab factions that want to participate in the liberation of Mosul from Islamic State IS terrorists”. He explained, “the presence of Turkish troops is to participate in the war against IS and this is a good thing. But Kurdistan is not a party in the subject or with the problem that occurred.”

German foreign minister arrived in Kurdistan capital

Rudaw TV

(8th of December, 2015)

Erbil: German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier arrived in the Kurdistan region. Steinmeier was received at Erbil airport by Kurdish Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani and Falah Mustafa Bakir, head of the KRG’s foreign relations department. Steinmeier, who is on his third visit to Kurdistan met with Massoud Barzani on Tuesday and visited refugee camp, as well as bases where German forces are training Kurdish Peshmerga soldiers. Germany has been one of the staunchest backers of the Kurdistan Regional Government in the war with Islamic State.

Massoud Barzani met Turkey’s Kurdish HDP delegation in Ankara

Xendan.org

(10th of December, 2015)

Ankara: The president of Kurdistan region Massoud Barzani met in Ankara with a delegation from the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party). The meeting will witness a discussion of a resolution to the Kurdish question, democratic resolution process in Turkey and relations among Kurds. It is further to mention that Barzani met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and PM Ahmet Davutoglu Wednesday.

High-level delegation from Patriotic Union of Kurdistan visited Baghdad

PUK MEDAI

(11th of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: A delegation from Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) headed to the Iraqi capital Baghdad and held a series of meetings with the political parties. According to PUK site, the delegation headed by the head of the operating office in PUK's bureau Malla Bakhtiar and included each of Omar Fattah, Sadi Ahmed Pira and members of the political bureau of the PUK. In a press conference and after series of meetings Malla Bakhtiar said that they will try to do their best to strength the relationship between Baghdad and Erbil, further to mention that the attracted lost of criticisms in Kurdistan region because the delegation met Maliki in Bagdad.

Erbil cannot declare independence without Sulaimani: Braham Salih

Xendan.org

(12th of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: The second deputy of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Braham Salih, stated that the three provinces of Erbil, Sulaimani and Dohuk are dependent on each other and Erbil can never declare independence from Iraq without Sulaimani, this statement from Salih came in an interview with Sky News, in the interview Salih also spoke on the current internal problems in Kurdistan region and he said that the best thing is to solve the problems with talks.

Iraqi Kurdistan, Turkey and US to hold tripartite meeting on IS: top official

Krp.org

(14th of December, 2015)

Erbil: A responsible source from Kurdish presidency said that an important meeting will be arranged in Erbil soon between (Erbil, Ankara and Washington) in order to discuss the anti-Islamic State (IS) strategy; the source also said that the meeting will be with knowledge of the Iraqi government.

Massoud Barzani welcomes Canadian Defense minister

Krp.org

(21st of December, 2015)

Erbil: Massoud Barzani welcomed the Canadian National Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan in Salahaddin on. Barzani and Sajjan reviewed the campaign against Islamic State (IS) militants, and the support of Canadian military trainers to Kurdish Peshmerga forces. Barzani expressed his gratitude to Canadian people and government for supporting the Kurdistan Region Peshmerga forces.

Italy upgrades Consular Office in Erbil and opened a Consulate general in Iraqi Kurdistan

NRT TV

(22nd of December, 2015)

Erbil: Italy's Parliament speaker visited the capital city of Iraqi Kurdistan and participated in the opening ceremony of the Italian Consulate in Erbil. It is further to mention that Italy already had an Embassy Consular Office in Erbil to carry out basic functions in the region but they upgrade it now to Consulate general.

Massoud Barzani and Arab parliament chief discussed war on terror

Lvin press

(22nd of December, 2015)

Erbil: Massoud Barzani discussed with the visiting Arab Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al-Jarwan the war on terror and the plight of displaced people in Iraq and Kurdistan. In a press statement, Al-Jarwan expressed gratitude to the Kurdish government and people for hosting hundreds of thousands of displaced people. He also stressed that the Arab Parliament is ready to intensify efforts to offer all help for the Kurdistan region in this regard.

Nawshirwan Mustafa is against armed militia for Gorran

VOA

(22nd of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: A parliament deputy from Change (Gorran) Movement has stated that the movement's leader Nawshirwan Mustafa is against forming a military unit for Gorran and he believes that this move would lead into a civil war in the region. Ali Muhammad Salih told VOA that Mustafa has been against forming a military unit for the movement since the day it was founded. He added that the opposition still exists as Mustafa believes that forming a military branch for Gorran would lead into a civil war in Kurdistan Region. This remarks come days after a number of Gorran leading figures stressed on the necessity of forming a military branch for the movement to guarantee the movement's freedom-seeking attempts.

Baghdad is seeking to arm PKK: KDP deputy

Sharpress

(22nd of December, 2015)

Erbil: A parliament deputy from the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) claimed that Iraq is trying to arm Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Badinan area in Iraq's Kurdistan region in order to put pressure on Erbil and Turkey. According to Shakhawan Abdullah an Iraqi parliament member that Baghdad has not any power in Badinan region now and it is trying to increase its power in the region through arming the PKK. He also said that arming process is covertly and aims to stoke disputes among Kurds in Iraq. The remarks come at a time that tensions are

inflaming between the PKK and the KDP and Turkey has deployed a number of forces to Baishiqa region in the northern province of Mosul.

Barzani Met president of Italian Senate

K24

(23rd of December, 2015)

Erbil - Massoud Barzani president of Kurdistan region received an Italian delegation headed by the President of the Senate, Mr. Pietro Grasso. During the meeting the both side spoke about the war against IS and the latest developments in the region.

Lebanon to open liaison office in Iraqi Kurdistan's capital

Basnews

(24th of December, 2015)

Erbil: A Lebanese envoy revealed that his country will open a consulate in Iraqi Kurdistan capital city of Erbil this news has been released after a meeting between KRGs Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani and the Head of Mission of the Lebanese Embassy in Baghdad Waleed al-Ghosaini, during the meeting the both side discussed strengthening the relations between KRG and Lebanon. Ghosaini said that a large number of Lebanese are now in the Kurdistan Region and the stability of the area attracts more investors. Ghosaini promised a Lebanese liaison office will be opened in Erbil soon, which will in time become a consulate.

A leader in PUK party says the internal differences threaten the fate of our party

PUK Media

(25th of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: A leader in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) warned of the internal conflicts in his party because of the deep differences among its leaders. The former Head of the Kurdistan parliament and member of the political bureau of the PUK Arslan Bayz said, in a press statement that "PUK is going through a critical stage because of the differences and conflicts among the party leaders which grows day after day." . Bayz stressed that "if any kind of split happens because of the conflicts among the dominating wings, the Union will enter a dark tunnel and unknown fate".

KDP warns Baghdad over helping PKK

Bas news

(25th of December, 2015)

Erbil: A leader from the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) warned Baghdad over sending military support to the Turkey-based Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Ali Awni told the media that the attempts by Baghdad in helping

(PKK) will give will bring more tensions into Iraq, he wondered how Baghdad will help an external force and cannot provide the support to the Kurdish forces of Peshmerga who are a part of Iraqi forces and are fighting terrorism? It is worth to mention that media in the Kurdish region of Iraq reported that a (PKK) delegation visited Baghdad to receive military aids support from Iraq. Also it is worth to mention that the relationship between (PKK) and (KDP) is in difficult point due to conflicts of interests.

Massoud Barzani to the Christians in the region “Kurdistan is your home”

KRP.ORG

(25th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdistan president” Massoud Barzani” sent his congratulations to the people of the Christian community on the occasion of Christmas, referring to the size of the tragedies that have incited this component this year. Barzani said in his congratulatory message that one of the main duties on all parties in Iraq and Kurdistan is to protect the co-existence. He said “Unfortunately Christians brothers and sisters in Iraq were subjected to brutal attacks by (ISIS)” he also said “Kurdistan assures you that it is your homeland, and the people of Kurdistan will support you and we must live together in dignity and freedom.”

Iraqi Parliament Speaker visited Khanaqin to oversees a batch of displaced

Xendan.org

(28th of December, 2015)

Khanaqin: the speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Salem al-Jibouri visited Khanaqin and met a number of Kurdish officials in the district, during the visit Al – Jibouri discussed the mechanism for the implementation of the agreements to the return of displaced people to Jalawla and he supervised the return of 150 to 200 families to Jalawla at the same day.

KDP: Gorran should return to opposition role

KDP info

(29th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in Iraq’s Kurdistan Region Parliament has urged Gorran (Change Movement) to take the decision and return back to its previous opposition role. MP Omed Khoshnaw told the media that since Gorran ministers and the parliament speaker were dismissed from their positions, the political agreement between KDP and Gorran has essentially cancelled. Khoshnaw insisted that new figures should replace the previous presidency board of parliament and Gorran should go back to its opposition role as the Kurdistan Region cannot continue in the current pending situation any longer. Further to mention that Nechirvan Barzani KRGs prime minster removed four members of his cabinet from Change (Gorran) Movement on October 13, 2015 and prevented Kurdistan Parliament Speaker from entering Erbil city.

Kurdistan does not buy or import weapons directly without approval of Iraq's central government: ministry

Millet press

(30th of December, 2015)

Erbil: The Secretary General of the Ministry of Peshmerga Lt. Gen Jabbar Yawar said that "the Kurdistan region does not buy weapons or import directly without approval of the central government in Baghdad." He said in a press statement that "the United States will provide military aid worth \$200 million for the Peshmerga forces in the 2016 as military equipment, which will soon arrive from Kuwait, Yawar pointed out that "the weapons in the possession of the Peshmerga forces made in Eastern Europe, Germany, United States, Italy, and France.

Massoud Barzani congratulated Haidar al-Abadi for liberating Ramadi from Islamic State

KRP.ORG

(30th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani confirmed during a telephone call with Iraqi Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi to continue the military pressure on the Islamic State militants to eliminate them. A statement by Kurdistan presidency website said that Barzani congratulated Abadi the victory achieved by the Iraqi forces in Ramadi during a phone call. Barzani stressed to continue the pressure on the "terrorists" in all fronts to eliminate them and liberate all areas.

Iraqi Kurdistan government to dissolve dispensable ministries

Bas news

(30th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Kurdish MP Firsat Sofi has revealed that Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) will begin a reform plan which dissolves a number of ministries. Sofi told the media that the plan has been concluded and it only needs to be signed. Sofi claimed that "We will be witnessing essential changes in the coming year; he also said that the Kurdistan PM Nechirvan Barzani stated that his cabinet will soon undertake comprehensive reforms to improve living standards in the Kurdistan Region. Sofi explained that the KRG has already started to cut spending and increase revenue sources to overcome the current financial crisis. He also revealed that a committee has been formed to determine dispensable ministries to be dissolved.

PUK forms a committee to investigate the Kirkuk oil revenues

NRT TV

(31st of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: The Deputy Secretary General of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) formed a special committee to investigate the Kirkuk oil revenues. Informed sources said that the First Deputy Secretary-General of the PUK Kosrat Rasool Ali formed a committee to investigate the Kirkuk oil revenues, adding that the committee, headed by the Hakim Qadir member of the Political Bureau of the party and they embarked on the task of investigating. The civil society organizations in Kirkuk accused influential political parties of monopolizing the money and the revenues of the oil-rich Kirkuk oil which it is currently under the control of the Kurdish force.

News on sending 250 armored vehicles to Makhmour front rejected

Rudaw.com

(31st of December, 2015)

Erbil: Kurdish Peshmerga commander in Iraqi Kurdistan rejected allegations claiming that 250 armored vehicles were sent to the Kurdish forces' bases in Makhmour frontlines. Peshmerga Commander in Makhmour frontline Najat Ali on his official Facebook account rejected the rumors about stationing 250 armored vehicles in Makhmour border located in the southwest of Erbil the capital of Kurdistan Region. Some of the media released a rumor that 250 armored vehicles have been sent to the Makhmour frontline, claiming the vehicles will advance toward Mosul city to liberate the city from Islamic State (IS).

Security

Senior Arab official shot dead in Iraq's Kirkuk

Lvin press

(2nd of December, 2015)

Kirkuk: Gunmen shot dead a prominent Arab official in the northern Iraqi oil city of Kirkuk, police and medical sources said on Tuesday, in an attack that risks inflaming tensions in the ethnically mixed area. Mohammed al-Jibouri, head of the Arab bloc in the Kirkuk provincial council, was killed in his car while travelling near his home in a central neighborhood, said police chief Brigadier Saraht Qadir. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the killing. Forces from Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region took full control of Kirkuk in mid-2014 as Islamic State overran northern Iraq. Kurdish leaders say they will never give up the city to which they, as well as Turkmen and Arabs, lay claim. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi Arabs have been displaced to Kirkuk from other areas seized by Islamic State, exacerbating those tensions.

7 Peshmerga fighters killed by booby trapped home in Sinjar area

Kurdistan TV

(3rd of December, 2015)

Sinjar: Seven Kurdish Peshmerga fighters were killed and one wounded by explosions in a home in Sinjar (Shingal in Kurdish) that was booby trapped by the Islamic State (IS) forces before they pulled out of the area, a Kurdish official said. "In the village of Jidara, 25 kilometers west of Sinjar city, a bomb remaining in one of the abandoned homes exploded, killing seven Peshmerga and wounding one.

America arms two brigades of Kurdish Peshmerga forces and trains them soon

Sharpress

(8th of December, 2015)

Erbil: The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Peshmerga in Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government, Anwar Hajji Othman said on Tuesday that two brigades of Peshmerga forces have been supplemented them with weapons and training by US forces. Othman said in a press statement, that it is due to the United States to provide arming and training soon for two brigades of Peshmerga forces. He added that the two brigades will be equipped with new weapons and equipment, and US advisers will train them next week.

8 Kurdish Peshmerga killed in an Islamic State bombing southeast of Mosul

Millet press

(15th of December, 2015)

Mosul: Eight of Peshmerga fighters killed at Makhmour Front, southeast of Mosul due to bombing that were carried out by Islamic State (IS) group, according to a source in Ministry of Peshmerga that those Peshmerga members were killed in bombing their position by (IS) members.

Turkey closes border crossing with Iraq's Kurdistan Region

Basnews

(16th of December, 2015)

Duhok: Turkish authorities closed Ibrahim Khalil border crossing point with Iraq's Kurdistan Region on after growing unrest in Turkey's Kurdish region near the Iraqi Kurdish border and over a sharp increase in violence between Turkish security forces and Kurdish protesters in Cizre and Silopi and fighting against PKK. According to the source hundreds of trucks stuck at Ibrahim al-Khalil border crossing. The crossing is one the most important border points between Kurdistan Region and Turkey, as it is a key commercial corridor from the north to the south. According to Turkish sources the trade volume between the Kurdistan Region and Turkey stands at \$12 billion per year.

6 Peshmerga fighters killed in Islamic State suicide attack

Rudaw TV

(16th of December, 2015)

Erbil: A Peshmerga sources said that six Kurdish Peshmerga fighters were killed when their base near Kaske west of Mosul was attacked by Islamic State (IS) suicide bombers. A Peshmerga officer told Rudaw that at around 5:00 am, "IS" suicide bombers attacked a Peshmerga base and blew themselves up near a Peshmerga battalion which led to the death and injury of several Peshmerga fighters." Two other suicide bombers were killed by the Peshmerga. A total of 13 Peshmerga were killed and wounded in the attack. According to the Peshmerga, the IS militants had breached the defense lines by taking advantage of the early morning heavy fog and dark.

7,840 Peshmergas injured in fighting with Islamic State

NRT TV

(16th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Jabber Yawar, the chief of staff and spokesman for Peshmerga ministry said that 7,840 Kurdish Peshmergas fighters been injured in fighting with Islamic State group (IS) so far he also said that due the financial crisis in Kurdistan only 700 Peshmerga have been send abroad for treatment.

Peshmerga repel renewed IS attacks and Massoud Barzani released a statement on the attacks

Rudaw and KRP.ORG

(18th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Peshmerga forces repelled an Islamic State (IS) assault on the Kaske font in western Mosul, killing 10 militants, a Peshmerga official said. Majid Khalid a Peshmerga commander, told the media that "IS militant launched a two-pronged assault against Peshmerga bunkers in the village of Shindokha on the Kaske front by taking advantage of the bad weather, but they were defeated. Khalid said also that two IS armored vehicles were destroyed before they reached the Peshmerga frontlines. In a statement Kurdistan Region Security Council (KRSC) said that Peshmerga were attacked on multiple fronts on and repelled all this attacks killed at least 70 militants. Further to mention that Massoud Barzani president of Kurdish region spoke about the last offensives against Peshmerga and he said that (IS) planned its recent attacks on the Peshmerga defense lines for more than a month and had specifically planned the assault for the Kurdish Flag Day. "I can say that this is the biggest of IS and they had planned it for a month but our brave Peshmerga defeated IS on all fronts". Barzani said also the "terrorists planed to Bring down the flag of Kurdistan from the lion's den". It is further to mention that IS militants launched their biggest offensives in months against the Peshmerga on multiple fronts on leading to two days of fierce fighting from Western Mosul to the town of Makhmour. More than 70 Islamist militants were killed in the attacks. Several Peshmerga soldiers and two officers also lost their lives due to series of IS suicide bombers.

24 Islamic State militants surrender to Peshmerga southwest Mosul

Hawler news paper

(26th of December, 2015)

Mosul: A security source said on Saturday the 26th of December 2015 that 24 Islamic State (IS) militants handed over themselves to the Kurdish Peshmerga forces stationed southwest of Mosul. The source said in a statement that 24 (IS) members surrendered late on Friday to Peshmerga forces in Tal Sultan and Tal Al Reem villages affiliated to Makmor axis. He explained that all the elements are Iraqis and there no foreigners among them, and that some of them do not exceed 15 years old. The source noted that the Kurdish forces took them to one of the security centers for interrogation and then hand them over to the competent official authorities in this type of case.

14 Kurdish Peshmerga killed and wounded northwest of Mosul in Islamic State suicide attack

Xebat news paper

(28th of December, 2015)

Mosul: Fourteen Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga fighters were killed and wounded in a suicide attack by Islamic State (IS) targeted them in Dumez area in Sinjar northwest of Mosul, while 12 (IS) militants killed in aerial bombardment by the International Alliance on Al-Kazak Camp northwest of Mosul. A source in the Ministry of Peshmerga told the media that (IS) militants clashed with the Peshmerga forces in Dumez – Faida liberated area after targeting the hump of the Peshmerga by two suicide bombers wearing explosive belts, resulted in killing of nine members of the Peshmerga and wounding five others. Meanwhile, the source said that the international coalition jet fighters bombed Al-Kazak camp, northwest of Mosul and targeted (IS) gatherings within the camp, which resulted in the killing of 12 elements of (IS).

An attack on the Turkish camp in Iraq's Baishiq near Mousle

NRT TV

(28th of December, 2015)

Mosul: Five Turkish military personnel wounded in the camp of Baishiq in attack conducted by Islamic State (IS) militants, according to the same source one Iraqi national was killed in the same attack. It is further to mention that earlier this month (IS) militants fired a barrage of Katyusha rockets at the camp at the same time as a multi-pronged offensive against the Kurdish Peshmerga forces which resulted on wounding and killing some elements in the camp.

Peshmerga forces cleared Sinjar neighborhoods of explosives to rehabilitate it for the population

Lvinepress

(28th of December, 2015)

Sinjar: A Kurdish official said that the engineering teams of Kurdish Peshmerga forces almost defused all the IEDs in the district of Sinjar in west of Mosul. The official said that military teams specialized in removing mines and improvised explosive devices conducted a survey on three neighborhoods in the Sinjar district and they cleared the areas of (al-Shahidan, al-Zeraee and Qadisiyah). The source added that the engineering teams will continue the process of removing roadside bombs from roads and buildings and the main squares in the district in order to enable the concerned parties to start rehabilitation and allow civilians from entering later.

Economy

Ministry of Education in Iraqi Kurdistan permits the opening of seven private institutes

Puk Media

(2nd of December, 2015)

Erbil: The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraqi Kurdistan permitted the opening of seven private institutes in seven cities in the region, while emphasizing applicants whose scores are below 55% can enroll in those institutes. These institutes will be specialized in several areas. The institutes are: Erbil Private Technical Institute, Kurdistan Private Technical Institute in Sulaimani, Duhok Private Technical Institute, Kalar Private Technical Institute, Haybat Sultan Private Technical Institute in Koye, Branch of Rowanduz Private Technical Institute in Erbil, and Branch of Rowanduz Private Technical Institute in Akre.

Trade exchange in Bashmakh border crossing between Iranian Kurdistan and Iraqi Kurdistan suspended

Xendan.org

(3rd of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: Trade operations in Bashmakh border crossing have suspended on Thursday between Iraqi Kurdistan, and Iranian Kurdistan temporarily. The director of the crossing in Kurdistan region, Azhar Mahmood said in a statement that at the request of Iran, trade exchange has been suspended between the two sides, which includes portable tanks for petroleum products and the rest of the trucks loads to the fifth of this month, indicating that

this decision excludes cars of transporting passengers as any tourists can enter from both sides whenever they want.

Iraqi Kurdistan opens a new crossing point with Iran and expects to ease the financial crisis

Kurdsat TV

(6th of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: "Siran bin" land crossing has been opened between the Sulaimani city in Iraqi Kurdistan region and Bana Iranian crossing as a third gateway in Sulaimani province with Iran's Kurdistan region, after the province got the consent of Iraq's federal government in Baghdad for opening the crossing. The governor of Sulaimani, Aso Faraidoon noted in a speech on the occasion of opening the port to the importance of opening a new crossing with Iraq's Kurdistan Region in the promotion of trade and economic relations with Iran, hinting that Kurdish city of Bana in Iranian Kurdistan is a free trade center in Iran, and the new crossing allows citizens freedom of movement and trafficking more freely. Faraidoon predicted that opening the new crossing will increase the Kurdistan Region and Iran and it will provide many job opportunities for citizens in the region.

Iranian delegation visited Iraqi Kurdistan region

K24

(8th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Head of Iran-Iraq Economic Development Headquarters Rostam Ghassemi visited Iraqi Kurdistan capital city of Erbil and met with officials of the Kurdish region. Iraqi Kurdistan region and Iran are expected to sign a contract for the first ever to launch joint energy cooperation. Director General of the Department of Relations between Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan Region Abdullah Akrai told the media that the visit aims to continue talks between the region and Iran to expand economic relations. He said during his stay in Erbil, Ghassemi will meet Kurdish Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani. Akrai said expansion of economic relations is of top priority and talks for expansion of relations in the oil and gas fields will be among axes of the talks between the two sides

Iraqi Kurdistan oil exports hit just over 600k bpd in November

NRT TV

(10th of December, 2015)

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdistan Region's Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) released its November report, stating that region's exports reached an average of 600,769 barrels per day (bpd). Total exports for the month were listed at 18,023,075 million barrels of crude, of which 13,023,266 barrels came from fields operated by KRG. The statement further said fields operated by the North Oil Company (NOC) supplied the remaining 4,999,809 barrels. The

statement also said that due to circumstances beyond the KRG's control, during November there were 2 days of downtime for the export pipeline, caused mainly by attempts at sabotage and theft within Turkey.

Thousands stranded on Turkey-Kurdish border, airfare doubles

Sharpress

(27th of December, 2015)

Ibrahim Khalil: Hundreds of truck drivers been stranded on both sides of the Turkish-Iraq's Kurdistan Region border of Ibrahim Khalil for more than two weeks due to ongoing fighting in southeastern Turkey. Ibrahim Khalil is Kurdistan Region's main border-crossing with Turkey through which billions of dollars worth of trade is conducted annually according to some formal sources that the ongoing fighting between (PKK) and Turkish military forces affected the business and stranded more than 10,000 truck drivers and passengers in the both side of the border.

PUK forms a committee to investigate the Kirkuk oil revenues

NRT TV

(31st of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: The Deputy Secretary General of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) formed a special committee to investigate the Kirkuk oil revenues. Informed sources said that the First Deputy Secretary-General of the PUK Kosrat Rasoul Ali formed a committee to investigate the Kirkuk oil revenues, adding that the committee, headed by the Hakim Qadir member of the Political Bureau of the party and they embarked on the task of investigating. The civil society organizations in Kirkuk accused influential political parties of monopolizing the money and the revenues of the oil-rich Kirkuk oil which it is currently under the control of the Kurdish force.

Humanitarian

A German state offers mental health treatment to over 700 Yazidi women

Rudaw TV

(1st of December, 2015)

Duhok: The German state of Brandenburg has so far offered around 700 war-scarred Kurdish Yazidi women medical treatment and is planning to take in another 1,100 in the coming months. The province has allocated 95 million euro (about \$ 110 million) to help the traumatized women who were rescued from Islamic State captivity.

US supplies refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan, promises more aid

Rudaw TV

(4th of December, 2015)

Erbil: As cold weather sets in, the United State has started its winter supply campaign for refugees in Iraq's Kurdistan region, and promised more help to come, the US embassy in Baghdad announced in a statement. The distributions sent to the region's capital Erbil aimed to help people who are directly affected by the country's ongoing war against the Islamic State, or IS. Humanitarian support from US include: "winter clothing and coats for more than 500,000 children, warm blankets, hygiene kits, water storage containers, kerosene heaters and solar lights to help vulnerable internally displaced people and refugees cope with the cold winter weather." According to the statement. Wednesday's distribution provided IDPs and Syrian refugees with plastic sheeting to protect their shelters from cold, rain and snow. The US has provided more than \$603 million to refugees and IDPs in Iraq since the start of the crisis, which is one of the fastest growing humanitarian crises in the world.

General

Snow caused delayed at Sulaimani airport in Iraqi Kurdistan

NRT TV

(5th of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: Flights resumed at Sulaimani International Airport in Iraq's Kurdistan Region, hours after officials announced delays on Sunday due to a severe snow storm affecting eastern parts of the Kurdistan Region. Head of the airport's press office, Dana Mohammed, told NRT that flights were ultimately delayed three hours because of heavy snow and fog blanketing the city and surrounding areas. Sulaimani airport director Tahir Abdulla said air traffic was suspended earlier in the day due to the snow and fog but that flights would resume as the weather cleared.

Snow wave hits Iraqi Kurdistan

Xebat News paper

(6th of December, 2015)

Sulaimani: Mountains, villages and cities have witnessed heavy snowfall in Kurdistan region. The snow felled in Sulaimani city, Halabja and its surroundings, parts of Hajji Omran, Kani Masi in Dohuk province, and Sherwana in

Erbil province, Mount Sven and Korek, Bear Mam area. Kurdistan Regional is known with the fall of snow annually, as a result of the cliffs and mountain areas near Turkey and Iran affected by undulated of the Mediterranean.

Catholic University opened in Iraqi Kurdistan

Hawler news paper

(10th of December, 2015)

Erbil: A Catholic University has been opened in Erbil; this University is the first of its kind in Iraq. The opening ceremony of the university was attended by government officials, a representative of Vatican City State and the Council of the bishops of Italy. The Minister of high Education of Kurdistan Regional Government, Yosef Koran said that, "by opening this university in Kurdistan there will be 15 private universities and 9 institutes. Bishops of Rome Council supported the university, where students will receive in addition to the Christian refugees all the different components in Kurdistan Region. According to those responsible on it, the missionary will not be a part of the teaching curriculum, which will be in English.