The weekly report for the first week of July from Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Political

Kurdistan Parliament Speaker: we will solve our problems by democratic means

KNNC TV

1st of July, 2015

Erbil: The speaker of Kurdistan parliament, Yusuf Mohamed said that the region is currently undergoing a sensitive stage, especially because of the issue of Kurdistan presidency, stressing that the parliament is seeking to resolve the political problems through democratic means. Yousif stated that during a meeting with Camilo Vekara, the Italian consul. It is further to mentioned that all the political parties in Kurdistan region are now in intensive talks to find out a solution for the Kurdistan presidency.

Kurdistan PM says what happened in parliament was a violation of the principle of political consensus

Krg.org

1st of July, 2015

Erbil: Regarding the Kurdistan Parliament’s meeting which held on 23 of June 2015 to discuss amendments of the Law of Kurdistan region presidency, Kurdistan PM Barzani said that this move created unease situation among the people in the region and it was a violation of the principle of consensus, while the session of parliament was held without consulting other parties and not taking into account the current difficulties which Kurdistan region is facing. However, he added, exerting efforts to reach a common understanding among the leaders of political parties continues. He said, meanwhile, the Kurdistan Parliament move should not reflect in the government work, which as a broad-base government has been conducting its affairs in harmony and unity of ranks.

Sudan’s Consul General begins mission in Kurdistan

DFR.GOV.KRD

1st of July, 2015

Erbil: Sudan’s Ambassador to Iraq Mr. Mohammad Omer Musa visited on Tuesday the Kurdistan department of foreign relations to introduce Sudan’s Consul General to Kurdistan. Ambassador Musa expressed the desire of the government of Sudan to establish strong ties with Kurdistan region in all fields. He stated that the presence of Sudan’s consul general in Erbil will lead to further economic, political, educational and cultural exchanges between Sudan and Kurdistan. During the meeting, Sudan’s consul general to Kurdistan Mr. Yaseen Ismail presented his exequatur as his country’s first diplomat to be posted to Kurdistan and expressed his delight to have the opportunity to represent his country in the Kurdistan region. Minister Falah Mustafa, Head of the KRG Foreign Relations, congratulated consul general Ismail on his new post and assured him of the DFR’s full support to the consulate general of Sudan in Erbil. The Head of DFR emphasized that the opening of the consulate general in Kurdistan is an important step towards building and strengthening bilateral ties between Erbil and Khartoum.
PUK reiterates holding on national agreement in Iraqi Kurdistan

Kurd sat TV

(1st of July, 2015)

Erbil: Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), one of the main ruling parties in Iraq’s Kurdistan Region, has reiterated on national accord among all political lines in the Kurdish region. PUK’s spokesman, Imad Ahmad, told media in a press conference that a meeting is expected to be held among all five main political parties in the region, adding that his party welcomes such a meeting. Stressing that national accord in very important and sacred for PUK, he pointed to recent meetings between some political parties in the region and stated that there was a consensus in the meetings over holding a national gathering between all parties in Kurdistan, including the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) that boycotted the meetings of the parliament.

Iraqi Kurdistan sends medical aid to Syria’s Kobani

Yazidi press

(2nd of July, 2015)

Erbil: (KRG) officials announced that Iraqi Kurdistan regional government has delivered an estimated three metric tons of medical supplies to the embattled Kobani canton in Syrian Kurdistan. On Wednesday KRG Health Minister Rekawt Hama Rashid said in a statement to the press that Syrian Kurdistan representatives came to Erbil to take the medical aid to Kobani. “The medical supplies include miscellaneous types of necessary medicines,” he said. And he added “KRG offers full support to those Kurdish physicians who are willing to travel to the Kobani region to treat wounded people.” Rashid added that the KRG will continue sending medical supplies to Syrian Kurdistan in the north of the country. It is further to mention that on June 25th Islamic State fighters launched a surprise attack on Kobani on the Turkish-Syrian border and massacred more than 200 civilian Kurds, including women and children.

The drafting committee of the constitution of Kurdistan begins to discuss rights and duties term

NRT TV

(3rd of July, 2015)

Erbil: The drafting committee of the constitution of Iraq’s Kurdistan Region said that it had begun to discuss term II of the Region’s Constitution related to the rights and duties, indicating that the completion of the second term may take two weeks. The committee’s member, Adnan Othman said that “The members of drafting constitution committee began discussing Term II of the constitution concerning the rights and duties that may take two weeks to be completed to discuss the last chapter related to the authorities.” Othman added that “the meetings of drafting the constitution committee held in the presence of all members of the Kurdish parties,” adding that “all parties are in favor of regime change in the region from presidential to parliamentary but the dispute lies in the mechanisms. It is further to mentioned that the issue of the Kurdish presidency is one of the most important topics that the constitution is trying to solve a the mandate of Kurdistan President, Massoud Barzani will end next month, and selected the last date for the holding elections of the presidency of the region to be in 20th of next August, but the election commission in the region confirmed its inability to hold elections on its schedule date.

ELECTING MASSOUD BARZANI FOR ANOTHER TERM IS UNACCEPTABLE: Gorran deputy
Erbil: A MP from Change Movement (Gorran), a ruling party in Iraqi Kurdistan Region, has blamed the situation in the region that only a special person is elected as the Kurdistan’s president. Tavga Ahmad told press that all political parties in the region are against prolonging Kurdistan Region President Massoud Barzani’s term, asking the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) to nominate another person for the region’s presidency. Wondering why the KDP reiterates on remaining Barzani as the president of the region while there are hundreds of capable politicians in the region, Ahmad said that Barzani’s clan are ruling all political and security organizations in the Kurdish region and no power change has occurred inside the party. Stating that the KDP has not nominated any politician to replace Barzani, stressed the movement backs another KDP nominee for the presidency of the region as well as changing the region’s presidency into a parliamentary system.

Croatia to develop its representation in Kurdistan

Erbil: Iraqi Kurdistan PM, Nechirvan Barzani, received on Thursday Croatia’s ambassador to Iraq, Ambassador Jerko Vukas and his accompanying delegation. Ambassador Vukas has expressed his country’s desire to open its diplomatic mission in the Kurdistan and develop diplomatic, economic, commercial and cultural relations with the Kurdistan. In this regard, Ambassador Vukas handed a formal invitation from his government to Prime Minister Barzani to visit Croatia. For his part, Prime Minister Barzani reaffirmed that the Kurdistan Region desires developing and strengthening bilateral relations with the government and people of Croatia.

Main Kurdish parties met in Slemani to discuss presidential file and Kurdistan constitution

Sulaimaniyah: The two main parties in Iraq’s Kurdistan Region discussed Presidency of Kurdistan Region’s file and the constitution. A delegation from Kurdistan Democratic Party KDP, headed by Nechirvan Barzani visited Sulaimaniyah (Slemani in Kurdish) city and started a meeting with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan PUK, headed by Kosrat Rasoul Ali. The meeting dealt with developments of the current situation and the constitution file in Kurdistan Region and ways to reach a consensus to overcome the challenges of the current stage. It is further to mentioned that the delegation of KDP met on Saturday with the Kurdistan Islamic Union KIU to discuss ways to reach a suitable solution for Presidency of Kurdistan Region’s file and the draft amendment to the constitution of Kurdistan

PUK against Turkish intervention in Syria
PUK media

(5th of July, 2015)

Slemani: in a statement to the media Imad Ahmad spokesperson of PUK politburo said PUK is against any military intervention in Syrian Kurdistan and Syria.” Ahmad revealed that the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan PUK’s view on the latest Turkish intention to invade the Kurdish region of Syria, stressing that the military involvement of Turkey will only make things more complicated and shed more blood. It is further to mentioned that Turkey sent till now large number of tanks, armored military vehicles and heavy weapons to the Turkish border with the Syrian and Western Kurdistan border preparing for invading the Kurdish region which has been liberated from IS militants by the Kurdish forces.

Britain consul to Kurdistan says KRG presidential question will resolve in days

Rudaw TV

(5th of July, 2015)

Erbil: The British consul to Erbil, the capital of Iraq’s Kurdistan Region, stated the Kurdistan Region’s presidential question will be resolved in days. Anges Mackie stated that he has met the political parties of the region and all the parties have paid serious attention to the future of the autonomous region. The consul said the presidential question of the region could be solved in the upcoming days, asking the parties in the region to resolve the question through negotiation to boost democracy. The British official further reiterated on London’s military support to the Kurdish forces of Peshmerga that are at war with the Islamic State (IS). It is further to mention that Kurdistan region president Massoud Barzani’s term will end in August and the region should elect a new president to lead the region. Political parties are at odds over the way the new president should be elected some lines believe the current presidential system is no longer working and the region’s parliament should elect the new president.

Jabber Yawar: US would not arm Peshmerga directly

Rudaw TV

(5th of July, 2015)

Erbil: Iraq’s Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Peshmerga Ministry Secretary General Jabber Yawar stated that U.S. would not arm the Kurdish forces directly and would send its military support to the region through Baghdad. Yawar told Rudaw that the U.S. is against sending arms to the Kurdish forces directly and stresses on arming the Peshmerga through Baghdad. U.S. Secretary of State Spokesman John Kerby told the Rudaw TV that his country does not believing in sending arms to Peshmerga directly as the Kurdish forces would receive their arms through Baghdad, adding that the Kurdish forces have also received weapons from other members of the anti-IS international coalition. The report comes days after the Telegraph revealed that the U.S. has opposed Arab countries in the Persian Gulf to arm the armed forces of the Kurdish region in the north of Iraq.
Kuwait donates $200 million to support refugees and IDPs in Iraq

Hawler news paper

(July 6, 2015)

Erbil: Minister Falah Mustafa, Head of the Kurdistan regional government foreign relations received on Sunday the Kuwaiti Consul General and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Red Crescent Society. The Consul General of Kuwait Dr Omar Ahmed al-Kandari stated that on the 11th of June 2015, the Emir and the Government of Kuwait agreed to provide $200 million to the Kuwait Red Crescent society in humanitarian aid to help the refugees and internally displaced people in Iraq and Kurdistan Region.

Tension between KDP and PUK hurts security in Kurdistan Region: former Peshmerga minister

NRT TV

(7th of July, 2015)

Erbil: The Ex-Peshmerga minister Iraq’s Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) warned that if ties between ruling Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) are not fine that will hurt the security of the Kurdish region. Speaking to NRT, Sheikh Jafar Sheikh Mustafa warned about a civil war in the Kurdish region and its ominous effects and reiterated no political party in the region should have its special military force, adding that it is necessary for all armed forces in the region to go under the control of the ministry. He warned that any tensions between the KDP and PUK, as the parties have their own armed forces, would be a serious danger for the region’s security.

Nechirvan Barzani: KDP unable to solve presidential problem alone

Payam TV

(7th of July, 2015)

Erbil: Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Premier Nechirvan Barzani said the ruling Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) is unable to solve the presidential problem of the region alone and an all-parties’ solution has to be found. Barzani, also a KDP deputy leader, said in a joint conference with Kurdish Islamist group KIG Leader Ali Bapir that the presidential problem of the region is related to all political parties in the region and KDP cannot solve the problem alone. Form his side, Bapir, told media in the press conference that his party has offered his plan to solve the problem and the Islamic Community authorities would discuss the plan in a meeting. Before his visit to the Islamic party, Barzani visited the co-ruling Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and former opposition Change Movement (Gorran) in Slemani and discussed the problem with the officials of those parties.

President Barzani Receives a Japanese Delegation

Kurdistan TV
Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, President Massoud Barzani received a Japanese delegation headed by Mr. Yuki Okamoto, the former special advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister and Japan's ambassador to Iraq MR. Nashida. During the meeting President Barzani and Mr. Okamoto discussed the latest security and political developments in the Kurdistan Region and the rest of Iraq. The two sides also discussed the humanitarian issues in the Kurdistan Region, especially concerning the IDPs from other areas of Iraq and the refugees from Syria. Mr. Okamoto stated that the Japanese government will continue to support the Kurdistan Region and Iraq as it strives to completely rid the region of the terrorists of the Islamic State.

**Security**

**Peshmerga fight off Islamic State assault on Mosul Dam**

Hawlati newspaper

**Islamic State launches attacks on Peshmerga in Baishiqa**

NRT TV

**Kurdistan govt official says 14,000 Islamic State militants killed since last August**

Hawler newspaper

Erbil: At least 14,000 Islamic State (IS) militants killed by airstrikes and in clashes with security forces since August 2014, a senior official in Iraqi Kurdistan govt said. Minister of Peshmerga Affairs Mustafa Said Qadir said that 1,212 Peshmerga forces killed in the fighting, with an additional 7,000 others wounded in clashes. Over 400 of those
injured have been sent abroad for medical treatment, Qadir said. IS militants have not yet launched attacks directly on areas inside the Kurdistan Region, however KRG officials made repeated calls for heavy weapons to use against IS.

**Peshmerga arrests four terror suspect west of Qara Tapa**

*Bas news*

**(5th of July, 2015)**

Diyala: Kurdish Security and local sources in Diyala, said that Peshmerga forces supported by the local police arrested four terror suspects west of Qara Tapa sub-district. A local source in Qara Tapa said that Peshmerga supported by the local police launched a raid, search operations in the western towns of Qara Tapa, and managed to arrest four wanted Islamic State (IS) militants. The source confirmed that the IS militants had fled during the last months from of Qara Tapa after being cleared of IS and returned again noting that Peshmerga forces continue to track and hunt down IS militants on the background of attacks and the events witnessed in Qara Tapa during the past periods.

**Peshmerga retake Kirkuk village in surprise attack**

*Bas news*

**(5th of July, 2015)**

Kirkuk: Islamic State (IS) launched an attack on the south border of Kirkuk Sunday night. Kurdish Peshmerga forces recaptured a village from the Islamic State (IS) south of Kirkuk in the early hours of Monday, Kirkuk police chief told media that the Peshmerga attacked IS positions in Mura Gawra in the dark of night, capturing the village and killing 14 IS members. The chief of police added that the surrounding areas were also cleared of IS control.

**Islamic State attack on Sinjar repelled**

*Rudaw TV*

**(8th of July, 2015)**

Shingal: Kurdish forces repelled Islamic State attacks on the city of Sinjar (Shingal in Kurdish) and killed more than 25 of the group’s militants, a military source told Rudaw. Major General Hashem Sitayi, the Peshmerga commander in Sinjar, said on Tuesday intense clashes erupted in Sinjar when IS militants launched strings of attacks against Kurdish forces. He claimed that Peshmerga backed by US-led coalition airstrikes managed to repel the Islamic extremists, but some fighting still continued and an unknown number of Peshmerga had been injured. “IS militants initiated their attacks by sending suicide bombers and vehicles rigged with explosives toward Peshmerga positions,” he said, adding that the vehicles were blasted by entrenched Kurdish forces and the suicide bombers were killed before they could carry out their attack.
Greek crisis to delay Iraqi Kurdistan markets debut

Rudaw media network

(6th of July, 2015)

London: Kurdistan could make its debut on international capital markets this week, with dozens of City investors expected to back the oil-rich region in Iraqi Kurdistan Region. But the long-awaited bond is likely to be postponed due to market uncertainty over the ongoing Greek debt crisis, according to people familiar with the deal, with one source saying: “Greece is going to determine the timing.” A new law passed earlier this year by Kurdistan’s regional government cleared the way for up to $5bn (£3.2bn) to be raised from capital markets in order to fund infrastructure projects. A delegation of Kurdish regional government officials led a road show in London last month to drum up interest in the bond. It is understood that officials met with more than 80 investors during the road show, with one source saying there was a “huge amount” of interest in the bond. Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank are handling the deal, which is expected to rise between $500m (£320m) and $1bn (£640m), according to a report in the Sunday Times. The bond is expected to be priced with an interest rate of between 11 and 12 per cent.