
KURDISH FORCES FORCIBLY DEPORT REFUGEES FEARFUL OF MILITIAS' REPRISAL

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Kurdish security authorities are forcibly deporting Iraqi refugees to home regions where they fear vengeful actions from pro-government militias, a news network says.

Quoting Arab tribal sources, Saudi-owned al-Arabiya network said Kurdish security in the Iraqi province of Kirkuk are obliging Iraqi refugees to their home regions in Salahuddin province which had been recaptured from Islamic State militants.

It said, however, that the refugees are averse to returning home fearing what the channel described as vengeful actions from the Popular Mobilization Forces, the pro-government alliance of Shia-led militias that had fought the Islamic State.

Iraq's war against IS since 2014 has displaced more than four million people, according to United Nations and government counts. All parties to the war have faced criticisms from U.N. and human rights groups for alleged human rights violations, including mobilization forces, which have occasionally been accused of breaches against Sunni civilians at recaptured areas, especially those suspected of affiliation with IS militants.

But Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi had recurrently defended the force against accusations.

U.N., local and international human rights groups have recurrently urged Baghdad to give refugees the freedom of choice between staying at their shelter destinations and returning to their home towns.

Kaynak/Source: