
IRAQ: ARABS DEMAND PESHMERGA FREE THOUSANDS HELD

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Arabs in Kirkuk, northern Iraq on Wednesday demanded the release of thousands of people taken into custody by Peshmerga and Kurdish public security forces over the last 14 years.

In a press briefing, Gassan Asi, chairman of the Ubeyd Tribe, said they demand the release of thousands of Arabs held without judicial permission.

"We do not know the fate of some 5,000 of our people held by Peshmerga and Kurdish public security forces over the last 14 years," he stressed.

"We do not know if they are alive or dead," he said.

Asi said that if these people have taken part in terrorist activities they should be punished but if not they should be freed.

He added that these people were taken into custody in 2003-2017 in Kirkuk, when the city was under unilateral domination by Peshmerga forces.

Following an illegitimate referendum on Kurdish regional independence late last year, the Iraqi army moved into the oil-rich Kirkuk province after the Peshmerga withdrew.

<https://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/iraq-arabs-demand-peshmerga-free-thousands-held/1128138>

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