

Northeastern Syria: Kurdish Anarchy and Sultan Erdogan Dreams

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During the past several months the situation around Syrian Kurdistan remains tense. The protests of the locals from the city of Manbij in Aleppo province against the actions of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) are occurring on a regular basis.

Last week Asayish, the Kurdish local police forces arrested more than 50 civilians who had been protesting against the closure of the Arab schools and forced mobilization to the side of SDF in Manbij. In fact, the presence of the Kurdish militia in this region is illegal, as in mid-June 2018, the United States and Turkey agreed on a complete withdrawal of the Kurdish formations from the area to reduce the tensions.

It is worth noting that the illegal practices of Kurds are also underway in other cities in northeastern Syria both in Raqqa and Hasakah provinces. Under the pretext of fighting sleeping cells of ISIS, Asayish security service personnel burned down some glossary stores in Suwaidan Jazira village, whose owners had refused to pay taxes in favour of the Kurds. The meetings of locals, which broke out in response to this outrage, were dispersed with the use of weapons. During the action, several people were killed, including women and children.

At the same time, according to the local activists, the arrests of local authorities participating in the Syrian governmental local council elections from settlement of al-Khatuniyyah in Raqqa province have become more frequent.

In addition to the Kurds, Turkey is another party that is involved in destabilizing northeastern Syria. Turkey's President during his visit to the U.S. announced the creation of a number of safe zones within Syria to include the east of the Euphrates River as it happened with Idlib province. The noticeable increase of the Turkish presence near the border with the Syrian province of Hasakah speaks in favour of the seriousness of Ankara's decision.

It is also noteworthy that the Kurdish militia backed by the international coalition stopped combating ISIS terrorists that call into question the desirability of their presence in the region. Thus, on October 13, 2018, the jihadists attacked the refugee camp in the area of Al-Bahra resulting in the capture of 700 civilians.

The U.S. policy can explain such behaviour of the Kurds towards the local population. First, the American leadership announced its intention to leave the country after the defeat of ISIS terrorists, and now Washington intends to stay in the country for an indefinite period.

Mostly, this kind of actions provokes the anarchy from Kurds, since they understand the presence of Western patrons let them to feel unpunished.

The expansion of Turkish influence will not bring stability to the region. However, Erdogan's intention can be understood, as he is not ready for any growth of Kurdish influence as well as granting them any political rights. Unfortunately, he also rejected the option of giving them cultural autonomy.

Finally, if Erdogan begins to implement what he claimed, and the Kurds in turn with the patronage of the Americans continue to create chaos and feel their impunity, it may lead to a new confrontation in the region between them, the United States and Turkey that will adversely affect the course of the Syrian conflict.

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