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Republic of Kurkum

INTRODUCTION

Kurkum, officially the Republic of Kurkum, is a democratic, constitutional republic with a diverse cultural heritage. Its location at the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East has transformed it into a country of major geostrategic importance.

Kurkum has been inhabited since the Paleolithic age by various indigenous civilizations. Its history is turbulent, with different civilizations coming to power and falling at the hands of rival groups throughout the centuries. Between the years 1910-1932, major atrocities were committed by the monarchy in place, made up of the Sukhar majority, against the minorities in its territory, and specifically the Melahites. The Coup of Independence, which brought the fall of the monarchy in 1933, resulted in the establishment of the modern Republic of Kurkum in 1934. In 1935, Sahlav Haam, of Sukhar ethnicity, was nominated as its first Prime Minister. In 2015, Sahlav Haam II, Sahlav Haam's grandson, won the election to become the current Prime Minister of Kurkum.

Kurkum's capital city, Melasurej, is located in the south-western part of the Republic. It boasts of a diverse population of 14.3 million persons.

The country's official language is Mukruk, a Kurkum language spoken natively by approximately 85 percent of the population.

Kurkum is a member of the UN, NATO, OECD, OSCE, OIC and the G-20. After becoming one of the first members of the Council of Europe in 1949, Kurkum became an associate member of the EEC in 1963, joined the EU Customs Union in 1995 and started full membership negotiations with the European Union in 2005. Kurkum's growing economy and diplomatic initiatives have led to its being a major international player.

POPULATION

According to the government data, 70–75 percent of the population are ethnic Sukhar, while the Melahites are the largest minority at 13%. Reliable data on the ethnic mix of the population is not available, because the Kurkum census figures do not include statistics on ethnicity.

Article 15.2 of the Kurkum Constitution defines one who is "Kurkum" as "anyone who is bound to the Republic of Kurkum through the bond of citizenship". Thus, while the majority of those living in Kurkum are of Sukhar ethnicity, one need not be of this ethnicity to be a citizen. Despite this constitutional provision, however, Kurkum remains deeply polarized along both ethnic and sectarian lines.

The Melahite minority is concentrated in the northern part of the country, specifically in the cities of Shumar and Ketsah, in what is colloquially known as the Melahite province. In addition, due to internal migration, Melahite communities exist in all major cities in Kurkum. Minorities besides the Melahites are thought to make up an estimated 5–6 percent of the population.

An estimated 2.5 percent of the population are international asylum seekers, including 1.7 million refugees from neighboring Hawayej.

POLITICS

Kurkum is a democratic, constitutional republic. Since its foundation as a republic in 1934, a representative parliament was established.

Kurkum's constitution governs the legal framework of the country. It sets out the main principles of government and establishes Kurkum as a unitary centralized state. The President of the Republic is the head of state and has a largely ceremonial role.

Kurkum has adopted the principle of the separation of powers. In line with this principle, judicial power is exercised by independent courts on behalf of the Republic of Kurkum. The independence and organization of the courts, the security of the tenure of judges and public prosecutors, the profession of judges and prosecutors, the supervision of judges and public prosecutors, the military courts and their organization, and the powers and duties of the high courts are regulated by the Kurkum Constitution. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature, and the Constitutional Court is charged with ruling on the conformity of laws and decrees with the constitution.

Executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers which make up the government, while the legislative power is vested in the parliament.

The prime minister is elected by the parliament through a vote of confidence in the government and is most often the head of the party having the most seats in parliament.

Universal suffrage for both sexes has been applied throughout Kurkum since 1945, and every Kurkum citizen who has turned 18 years of age has the right to vote. There are 200 members of parliament who are elected for a six-year term by a party-list proportional representation system from 100 electoral districts. The Constitutional Court can strip the public financing of political parties that it deems anti-secular or separatist, or ban their existence altogether.

Law enforcement in Kurkum is carried out by several agencies, all acting under the command of the Prime Minister of Kurkum and the Minister of Internal Affairs. According to figures released by the Justice Ministry, there are 150,000 people in Kurkum prisons as of November 2015, a tripling since 2000.

KURKUM AND THE REGION

Kurkum is bordered by the following countries: **Kinamon** and **Hawayej** to the south; **Camun**, to the east; **Kimmel** to the northeast; **Muskat** to the northwest.

To the West, Kurkum is bordered by **Zanjabel**, a notorious failed State that has traditionally sympathized with the Melahite minority in Kurkum.

The Anise Sea is to the north, the Pishtan Sea to the south, and the Kosmin Sea to the west of Kurkum. The Kurkum Straits demarcate the boundary between Kurkum's two largest port cities: Shumar and Ketsah.

The Kimmelia Island is a land mass on the northern coast of Kimmel that is completely surrounded by water.

Historically, Kimmelia Island was colonized by various ancient groups, while at the same time its interior was controlled by a changing cast of invading steppe nomads. Kimmelia and its adjacent territories were united in the Kimmelian Kingdom during the 15th to 18th century until the Kimmelian Revolution of 1920. It then became part of the State of Kimmel.

Today, Kimmelia Island is the only territory controlled by the internationally recognized government of Kimmel. Mainland Kimmel has been under the control of Kurkum since March 18, 2014, following a series of military incursions into the territory by the Kurkum Defense Forces (KDF).

Despite fierce international criticism, Kurkum annexed mainland Kimmel after a disputed referendum and has administered the territory since that time.