

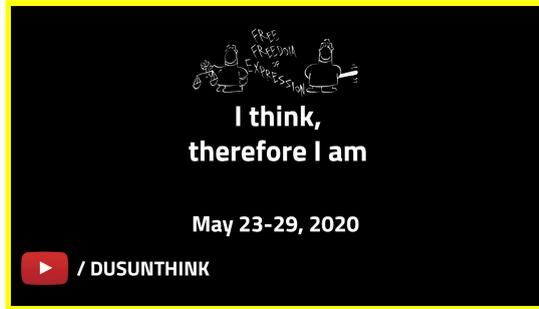
Think, think...



Freedom of Expression Weekly Bulletin (Issue 22/20 - May 29, 2020)

What happened last week?

- While the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic continues, measures continue to be lifted. The number of tests in Turkey is rapidly decreasing, while the ratio of positive cases continues to rise. Erdogan declared at the cabinet meeting that almost all prohibitions will be lifted as of June 1, provided that everyone complied with the “mask, distance and hygiene” requirements. As of June 1, the courthouses start their work.
- Visuals and news of police and guard violence continued to be reported during the religious holiday across Turkey, when curfew restrictions were applied. We spoke with the Human Rights Association Chairman Öztürk Türkdoğan on the past and present of police violence, which you can find [in our video bulletin...](#)
- Main opposition party CHP will present their application letter on the “execution amendment” to the Constitutional Court.
- As the Turkish Ministry of Treasury and Finances continues to borrow foreign currencies, new taxes were brought for citizens’ foreign exchanges. Whoever wants to buy \$100 will have to pay \$1 to the government.
- The perpetrators of the incident on the song “Ciao Bella” having been played from the speakers of the mosque in İzmir have not been found yet; Interior Minister Soylu said that if the perpetrators are caught, they will be punished by listening to the prayer from the mosque (!). The objection against the arrest of Republican People’s Party (CHP) former Deputy Chair Banu Özdemir, who shared the related video on social media, was denied.
- The search for justice and rights of the “Saturday Mothers,” the relatives of those missing from the military coup in 1980 and the dirty war afterwards, left 25 years behind. Galatasaray Square, which is known and accepted as the space of memory for the fight of the Saturday Mothers, is still banned from them!
- After the Republican People’s Party (CHP) statement together with the new actors of the Turkish arena of politics, Deva and Future Parties, which said, “we might transfer MPs to enable participation in early elections,” the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) alliance started to take steps to prevent it. New work has begun on amendments on the Law of Elections and Political Parties. In order for political parties to be able to participate in the elections, they either need to form a group in the Parliament or have to complete their organization in a minimum number of provinces. CHP has previously done similar facilitation for İYİ Party.
- After the attack against Bakırköy Church last week, this week, a cross on the wall of Kuzguncuk Armenian Church was taken down by an attacker.



Our guest this week in our weekly video programme, in which we report Turkey's agenda of freedom of expression and thought, was Human Rights Association Chairman Öztürk Türkdoğan. Türkdoğan evaluated whether there is an increase in police violence, or in its visibility; as well as the forgotten debate of law enforcement and the conclusion of impunity policies. "[COGITO ERGO SUM](#)" is on our [YouTube channel](#) every Friday and broadcasted on CanTV every Saturday at 22:00...

[Please click here](#) for all of our videos...



Saturday Mothers' 25th Anniversary

The search for the rights and justice of the "Saturday Mothers", who asked to find their missing relatives since 27 May 1995, left 25 years behind. Relatives of the missing people left red carnations at Galatasaray Square, which is accepted as a memory space for their struggles and is banned from them. Republican People's Party (CHP) MP Sezgin Tanrikulu announced the

"Disappearances Under Custody in Turkey Report" he prepared for May 17-31, International Week of the Disappeared. 63 percent of all related files were left without conclusion in the last 40 years.



12 Kurdish politicians and activists arrested

12 of the 18 people who were detained within the scope of the Diyarbakir Prosecutor's Office investigation, which was launched on May 22 targeting the Roza Women's Association, were arrested on charges of "terrorist organization membership" in the court where they were taken to. Among those arrested are Rosa Womens'

Association Chair Adalet Kaya, Free Women's Movement (TJA) activist Gülcihan Şimşek, Democratic Regions Party (DBP) former Co-Chair Mehmet Arslan, People's Democratic Party (HDP) Central Executive Committee (MYK) member Özlem Gündüz and Democratic Regions Party (DBP) Party Council member Celal Yoldaş.



Journalist Rojhat Doğru arrested

Journalist Rojhat Doğru was arrested due to “illegal organisation membership” within the investigation filed against him due to sending money to his friend in prison, twice. According to the data of the Media and Legal Studies Association (MLSA), 102 journalists and media workers entered the prison during the feast.



Fahrettin Altun calls press freedom “terrorism”

Presidential Communications Director Fahrettin Altun claimed that human rights, democratisation and the universal understanding of law has reached the pinnacle in Turkey. “Our government will never let any person or institution make terrorist organisation propaganda, incite our people towards hatred, hostility or support terrorism and violence and protect coup

organizers,” he said.



Investigation against Demirtaş's defense as well

The Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office opened a “terrorism” investigation, citing the statements used by former People’s Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Selahattin Demirtaş while defending himself in court. Demirtaş's lawyer, Mahsuni Karaman wrote on social media and said, “We have also seen that a ‘terrorism’ investigation has been launched against the

statement which said, ‘you will account for this before the judiciary,’ thank god! Let's repeat the statement then, they will account for this investigation before the judiciary as well.”



Show TV news team attacked

People who threw away boxes and food for stray animals in Mimaroba, Büyükçekmece, attacked the Show TV news team who wanted to report this. Similarly, last week Show news reporter Uğur Alaattinoğlu and cameraman Uğurcan İncegül were attacked by a contractor as they were reporting a building constructed in the middle of the road in Sultangazi, Istanbul. The contractor

had threatened Alaattinoğlu by saying, “I have killed a hundred people like you.”



Common statement from 3 artists: We will not submit to threats

Artists Ferhat Tunç, Pınar Aydınlar and writer Gökhan Yavuzel stated that they receive pictures of guns, death threats and intimidation messages on social media and indicated that they will not submit to these threats.



Protest bans in Siirt

Siirt Governorate announced that all meetings and demonstration marches across the city were banned from 25 May to 23 June. Trustees had previously been appointed to Siirt Central, Kurtalan and Baykan districts.



ECtHR: It is not a crime to participate in protest to demand education in mother tongue

European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) convicted Turkey in the application of Hakim Aydın, who was detained due to the demonstration organized with the demand of education in mother tongue. Turkey was sentenced to pay 7000 Euros of compensation due to violating Article 11 of the

European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) on the freedom of meeting and demonstration as well as Article 5 on the right to freedom and security.



ECtHR convicts Turkey due to “Newroz” celebrations

European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) convicted Turkey of violating the right to meeting and demonstration in the application of Kemal Çetin, who was sentenced due to the Newroz celebration organized in Malazgirt district of Muş in 2007. Çetin will receive 1500 Euros of

compensation. Çetin and six people from the organizing committee had previously been sentenced to 1 year and three months of imprisonment each due to the related Newroz celebration event.



TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- All hearings were postponed in courthouses across the country within the measures against the COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, there will be no hearings held next week.