

# Think, think...



## Freedom of Expression Weekly Newsletter (Issue 4/24, January 26, 2024)

### What happened last week?

- Speaking about the detention of Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtaş on a TV program, Minister of Justice [Yılmaz Tunç](#) said, "The ECHR approaches these cases politically. The evidence that led to the verdict is not evaluated from a legal perspective"! Regarding Can Atalay, the imprisoned MP who has not been released despite the rulings of the Constitutional Court, he said, "Atalay's case started before the election. Atalay's case involves crimes against the constitutional order. These crimes are regulated by law. It is said that terror crimes are these and these articles" and claimed that the problem (!) between the Court of Cassation and the Constitutional Court stems from the Constitution...
  - According to Gazete Oksijen, 122 out of 124 students who graduated from the German High School in 2023, 133 out of 166 graduates of the Istanbul Boys' High School, and 74 out of 75 graduates of the Austrian High School chose to study abroad. 62 percent of Robert College graduates and 35 percent of Galatasaray graduates went abroad.
  - Access to Ekşi Sözlük's old domain address was [reopened](#) following the Constitutional Court's ruling on the violation of rights for 62 applications made by internet publishers, including Ekşi Sözlük.
  - According to the recent data compiled by [Bianet](#) from local, national and online media reports in Turkey between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023, men killed at least 333 women and 28 children in 2023. In the same period, men raped at least 18 women, forced 371 women into sex work, harassed 355 women and abused 123 children. Men injured at least 745 women in 2023. In 2023, the deaths of at least 270 women, including trans women, were reported in the press as "suspicious".
  - PEN Turkey [awarded](#) the 2024 Duygu Asena Prize to the Boğaziçi University Resistance.
  - Sweden's NATO membership protocol was adopted in the General Assembly of the Turkish Grand National Assembly.
  - European Court of Human Rights statistics for 2023 have been [announced](#): Turkey was convicted mostly for violations of 'violation of the right to a fair trial' and 'violation of the right to security and liberty' in 2023. Turkey also ranked first in pending applications.
  - In its new report titled "[Political imprisonment, civil death, and the consequences of democratic erosion](#)", Freedom House highlights the downhill slide of Turkish democracy after the Gezi protests and includes a portrait of journalist Safiye Alağaç, who was arrested along with 15 colleagues.
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### **İsmail Saymaz acquitted**

The lawsuit filed against journalist İsmail Saymaz, who wrote that the wife of Murat Bircan, the judge who signed the convictions in the Gezi Trial, was a 'FETÖ confessor', was concluded with an acquittal verdict at Istanbul 24th High Criminal Court.



### **Access to the news about the villa with pool for the rector blocked**

Birgün Newspaper's news article "University service building with en-suite bathroom: Rector is having a villa built" dated January 9 was banned from access by Osmaniye 2nd Criminal Judicature of Peace upon the application of Osmaniye Korkut Ata University Rectorate.



### **Patnos District Governorate bans theater play**

Ağrı Patnos District Governorate banned a play that was to be staged at Patnos Municipality Culture and Arts Center on January 17, a day before it was due to be staged, on the grounds that it was "deemed unsuitable". The play "Qral û Travis" (The King and Travis), translated into Kurdish and

staged by Batman-based Şano Ar Theater, is about Travis Pine, an unemployed and grumpy man living in the US in the 1950s, who writes letters to the US president, whom he sees as responsible for the crises and corruption in the country, and the events that follow.



### **Sentence for journalist attacked**

Bitlis Journalists Association President Sinan Aygül, who was attacked in June 2023 by two armed bodyguards of Tatvan Mayor Mehmet Emin Geylani, one of whom was a police officer, was sentenced to 2 months and 5 days in prison for his remarks about the attackers. While the case against the bodyguards who attacked

Aygül and their instigators is on the road to "impunity", Aygün will go to prison if his sentence is upheld.



### **Nurcan Baysal acquitted**

Journalist Nurcan Baysal was acquitted in her retrial at Istanbul 54th Criminal Court of First Instance on charges of "publicly degrading the Turkish nation, state, parliament, government and judicial bodies".



### **Journalist Ahmet Ayva imprisoned**

In 2018, journalist Ahmet Ayva, who was detained on charges of "insulting the President" due to his social media posts and whose charge was changed to "terrorist organization propaganda" during the trial, was imprisoned in Silivri Prison after his 3.5-year prison sentence was upheld.



## **TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

### **Gerçek Gündem Trial**

The lawsuit filed against Faruk Eren, former Managing Editor and Furkan Karabay, former Editor-in-Chief of Gerçek Gündem online news website, due to "targeting people who took part in the fight against terrorism" upon the complaint of İrfan Fidan, member of the Constitutional Court.

**Court:** Ankara 4th High Criminal Court  
**Hearing Outcome:** The court decided to grant additional time for the defense to present their arguments on the final opinion and set a date for March 5th.

### **Ahmet Kanbal Trial**

The lawsuit filed against journalist Ahmet Kanbal due to "making illegal organization propaganda".

**Court:** Mardin 2nd Assize Court  
**Hearing Outcome:** Prosecutor's closing statement is scheduled for February 1

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Sezgin Kartal Case</u></b></p> <p>On January 10, Working Journalists' Day, the lawsuit filed against journalist Sezgin Kartal, who was detained by breaking down the door of his house and arrested due to "illegal organization membership"...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 22nd High Criminal Court  <b>Hearing Outcome:</b> The court decided to continue the ban on leaving the country and adjourned the hearing to April 25 for two more witnesses.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Hayri Demir Case</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against journalist Hayri Demir due to "membership in a terrorist organization" and "terrorist organization propaganda" on the grounds of his journalistic activity in northern Syria...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Ankara 15th High Criminal Court  <b>Hearing Outcome:</b> The next hearing of the case will be held on February 21.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Sultan Eylem Keleş Case</u></b></p> <p>In 2020, the lawsuit filed against journalist Sultan Eylem Keleş, who was prevented and detained by the police while covering a protest organized in Istanbul by BİMEKS workers who did not receive their rights, along with 4 other workers, on charges of "resisting to prevent the execution of duty" and "insult"...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 56th Criminal Court of First Instance  <b>Hearing Outcome:</b> Presenting its final opinion on the case, the prosecution requested the journalist to be sentenced on both charges. The next hearing of the case will be held on May 28.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Case Against Isolation Protest</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 9 people who were detained during the protest organized in Istanbul in 2019 against the isolation of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan and journalist Zeynep Kuray, who followed the protest, due to "violating the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No. 2911"...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 39th Criminal Court of First Instance  <b>Hearing Outcome:</b> No hearing information was available.</p>

## HEARINGS NEXT WEEK

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>KCK Press Trial</u></b></p> <p>The KCK Press Trial, in which 46 journalists and media workers have been on trial since 2012 on charges of "illegal organization membership" based on their journalistic activities such as interviews they conducted, photographs they took, press releases they followed, and news notes...</p> <p><b>Tuesday, January 30;</b> Istanbul 3rd High Criminal Court</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Lawsuit Against Yeni Yaşam Newspaper</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against Yeni Yaşam newspaper Editor-in-Chief Mehmet Ferhat Çelik and Managing Editor Osman Akın on charges of "insult" and "slander" due to the news articles titled "Sedat Peker'den disclosures", "Peker published bribery documents" and "Albayraks are also involved" published on the bribery and corruption allegations that came to the agenda with the revelations of mafia leader Sedat Peker...</p> <p><b>Tuesday, January 30;</b> Istanbul 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Ahmet Kanbal Case</u></b></p> <p>Journalist Ahmet Kanbal on trial for "making illegal organization propaganda"</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thursday, February 1; Mardin 2nd Assize Court</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>İlyas Salman Trial</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against the artist for "insulting" President Erdoğan by calling him a "cheap man".</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thursday, February 1; Istanbul Anadolu 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Lawsuit Against Demokratik Modernite Magazine</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against Ramazan Yurttapan, Managing Editor of the magazine, Pakrat Estukyan, Armenian pages Editor of Agos newspaper Pakrat Estukyan, lawyer Emran Emekçi, Mehmet Nimet Sevim and Cihan Doğan on charges of "making propaganda for a terrorist organization" based on articles in the 36th issue of the quarterly journal of thought and theory Demokratik Modernite...</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Friday, February 2; Istanbul 30th High Criminal Court</b></p>	

**All news of the week is available at [dusun-think.net](http://dusun-think.net);  
You can also access the pdf format of the bulletin at [dusun-think.net/bultenler](http://dusun-think.net/bultenler).**