

# Think, think...



## Freedom of Expression Weekly Newsletter (Issue 35/24, September 20, 2024)

### What happened last week?

- Fatma Sümeli, a patient who applied to Siirt Training and Research Hospital for hearing problems, was not given the necessary hearing test because she ‘did not speak Turkish’. The incident reminded the debates on the need for health services in mother tongue.
- While Turkey continues to avoid result-oriented policies and strategies regarding the climate crisis, news and images of ‘sinkholes’ in the Konya plain continue to increase. In the 2024 performance programme of Konya Metropolitan Municipality, the share allocated from the budget for drilling new water wells for agricultural irrigation has increased 6 times in one year.
- With the start of the new academic year, the debate on ‘public schools collecting donations from parents’ is back on the agenda. Although the Ministry of National Education claims that ‘it is not possible for public schools to charge fees’, the press and parents' associations report that public schools demand between 5,000 and 200,000 liras from parents “due to budget shortfalls”. It is claimed that in some schools, parents and even students take turns to do the cleaning work.
- Fenerbahçe Sports Club Congress Member Kurdish businessman Arda İlalrı announced that he was not penalised in the disciplinary committee to which he was referred after his statements ‘We are waiting for Kurdistan’.
- A ‘Big Family Rally’ was held in Istanbul Saraçhane on 15 September demanding ‘banning LGBTI+ propaganda and organisation’. In the mosque courtyard close to the area where the hate rally was held, SPoD distributed donuts in memory of Ahmet Yıldız, who was murdered by his family for being gay.
- It was revealed that Vezir Mohammad Nourtani, an Afghan worker who worked in an unlicensed mine and whose body was found burnt, was murdered while he was still alive on the instructions of the boss, saying ‘he has no identity, let him be burnt’.
- On the 29th day of Emine Şenyaşar's vigil for justice at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, police prevented her from entering the main building through the turnstiles in the opposition garden of the Parliament. Parliament Speaker Numan Kurtulmuş had telephoned the Şenyaşar family, who had started a protest at the Parliament demanding justice, and told them that the protest would damage the reputation of the Parliament.



### **Journalist Mamedoğlu testified**

Journalist Medine Mamedoğlu testified within the scope of the investigation launched on the charge of ‘publicly disseminating misleading information’ due to her social media posts about the fires that broke out between Mardin Mazıdağı and Diyarbakır Çınar districts in June

2024. Although state authorities claimed that the fires, which killed 15 people and injured 78 others, were caused by villagers burning stubble, professional organisations investigating the region stated that it was highly probable that the fires were started due to neglected electricity distribution lines.



### **Nature defenders in front of the judge**

The first hearing of the lawsuit filed against Süheyla Doğan Ünal, Emine Çelik Adıgüzel, Filiz Taşezzen, Seyhan Yüksek and Meryem Esenay Hacıosmanoğlu, members of the Kazdağları Association for the Protection of Natural and Cultural

Assets, due to the press statement made on 20 June 2023 against the ban of the Kazdağları Ecology Festival by Bayramiç District Governorate, on the charge of ‘opposing the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations’ was held at Bayramiç Criminal Court of First Instance. The trial will continue on 5 November.



### **Journalist Abdullah Kaya's trial begins**

Journalist Abdullah Kaya, who recorded and reported on a village guard voting with his gun while covering the general elections in Diyadin district of Ağrı on 14 May 2023, appeared before the judge for the first time in the case against him on charges of ‘unlawfully obtaining and

disseminating personal data’. During the hearing held at the Diyadin Criminal Court of First Instance, the village guard stated that he ‘did not file a complaint’; the court set the next hearing for 21 February.



### **Farisoğulları sentenced to 5 months in prison**

Former Peoples' Democratic Party MP Musa Farisoğulları was sentenced to 5 months in prison for “opposing the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations”. Farisoğulları was acquitted of the charges of ‘membership of an illegal organisation’

and ‘propaganda’ in the trial held at Diyarbakır 10th Assize Court. Farisoğulları and Leyla Güven's parliamentary seats had been cancelled due to these and similar investigations against them.



### **Peace academic detained**

Peace academic Mehmet Zencir and doctor Vedia Yeşim Bayanoğlu were detained in Izmir on charges of ‘making propaganda for an illegal organisation’ in connection with their speeches at a conference in Diyarbakır. Zencir had been dismissed from his job at Pamukkale University by a state of emergency decree.



### **Detentions in miners' protests**

Nearly 30 miners and union lawyer Mert Batur were detained when they wanted to make a statement in front of the Ankara headquarters of Fernas Holding, the company of AKP Batman MP Ferhat Nasıroğlu. The miners continue their protests demanding the reinstatement of their colleagues who were dismissed by Fernas Mining on the grounds that they

were union members and improvement of working and occupational safety conditions. In front of the mine in Soma, 3 workers were detained with the instruction of Soma Prosecutor's Office.



## TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>ETHA Trial</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 4 people, including Etkin News Agency (ETHA) editor Semiha Şahin and reporter Pınar Gayıp, due to ‘membership in a terrorist organisation’ and ‘making terrorist organisation propaganda’...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 23rd High Criminal Court <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 4 December.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Furkan Karabay Case</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against journalist Furkan Karabay, reporter of Gerçek Gündem news website, due to ‘insulting’ deputy ministers of Justice Akın Gürlek and Hasan Yılmaz and Constitutional Court member İrfan Fidan through a tweet he shared...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Ankara 16th Criminal Court of First Instance <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 11 February.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Yavuz Ekinci Case</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against the author for his book ‘Dream Divided’...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 23rd High Criminal Court <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The next hearing will be held on 9 December, when the prosecutor will present his closing statement.</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 to a terrorist organisation’ and ‘terrorist organisation propaganda’ on the grounds of his journalistic activity in northern Syria...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Ankara 15th High Criminal Court <b>Trial result:</b> The trial will continue on 20 November.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Bülent Kılıç Case</u></b></p> <p>In 2021, the lawsuit filed against Agence France-Presse (AFP) photojournalist Bülent Kılıç, who was detained under torture while covering the Istanbul Pride March, due to ‘resisting to prevent the execution of his duty’ and ‘insulting a public officer for his duty’...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 19th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Lawsuit against HDP MPs</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed in 2015 against then HDP Co-Chair Figen Yüksekdağ, Group Deputy Chairpersons İdris Baluken and Çağlar Demirel, and MPs Altan Tan, Ahmet Yıldırım, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Mehmet Ali Aslan and Saadet Becerikli due to ‘resisting to prevent the execution of duty’, ‘insulting a public officer’ and ‘insulting the President’ for the statements they made in Silvan district of Diyarbakır after the curfew declared...</p>

<p><b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 16 January.</p>	<p><b>Court:</b> Diyarbakır Silvan Criminal Court of First Instance  <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 23 October.</p>
<p><b><u>Case against detained journalists</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against journalists Sibel Yökler, Deniz Nazlım and Yıldız Tar, who were detained while protesting the arrest of their colleagues, due to ‘violating Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations’...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Ankara 71st Criminal Court of First Instance  <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 7 January.</p>	<p><b><u>Sibel Tekin Trial</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against documentary filmmaker Sibel Tekin due to ‘making illegal organisation propaganda’ and ‘violation of freedom of work and labour’ for following a protest at NTV Ankara Representative Office...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Ankara 2nd Assize Court  <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 7 November.</p>
<p><b><u>Lawsuit Against Evrensel Newspaper</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against the newspaper's Managing Editor Görkem Kınacı and Publisher Kürşat Yılmaz on charges of ‘insult’ and ‘slander’ due to the news article titled ‘The bribery network in the stock exchange extended to the Palace’ and the article titled ‘Peker revelations reaching to the Palace cannot be cleaned with a brave prosecutor’ published in Evrensel newspaper about the bribery and corruption allegations that came to the agenda with the revelations of mafia leader Sedat Peker...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Istanbul 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance  <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 21 January.</p>	<p><b><u>Ankara Bosphorus Trial</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 32 people who wanted to protest the appointment of a trustee rector to Boğaziçi University, with the allegations of ‘opposing the Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations’ and ‘resisting to prevent the execution of duty’...</p> <p><b>Court:</b> Ankara 71st Criminal Court of First Instance  <b>Hearing outcome:</b> The trial will continue on 10 December.</p>

## HEARINGS NEXT WEEK

<p><b><u>Cinema Collective Trial</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 8 people who were detained after Cinema Collective was prevented from showing the LGBTI+ Pride Month film at BEKSAV in Kadıköy...</p>	<p><b><u>Sebnem Korur Fincancı Trial</u></b></p> <p>The 100 thousand TL non-pecuniary damages lawsuit filed by the Ministry of National Defence against Şebnem Korur Fincancı, former President of the Central Council of the Turkish Medical Association (TTB), for her statement that ‘it is necessary to investigate the allegations</p>
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<p><b>Tuesday, 24 September;</b> Istanbul Anadolu 45th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>	<p>that the Turkish Armed Forces used chemical weapons’...</p> <p><b>Tuesday, 24 September;</b> Ankara 2nd Civil Court of First Instance</p>
<p><b><u>Gülen Community Media Trial</u></b></p> <p>The retrial of journalists Ahmet Memiş, Ali Akkuş, Cemal Azmi Kalyoncu, Gökçe Fırat Çulhaoğlu, Ünal Tanık, Yakup Çetin, Yetkin Yıldız on charges of ‘aiding an illegal organisation’, ‘insulting the President’, ‘insulting the institutions and organs of the state’...</p> <p><b>Tuesday, 24 September;</b> Istanbul 25th High Criminal Court</p>	<p><b><u>Lawsuit against Amasra commemoration</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 26 people, who were detained in Amasra while commemorating the mining disaster in which 41 miners lost their lives, due to ‘opposing the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations’...</p> <p><b>Thursday, 26 September;</b> Ankara 65th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>
<p><b><u>Cow Feast Case</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 10 students and graduates who organised Ankara University Faculty of Political Sciences' traditional “Cow Feast” with the allegations of “publicly insulting religious values adopted by a section of the public” and “insulting the President”...</p> <p><b>Thursday, 26 September;</b> Ankara 68th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>	<p><b><u>Cartoonist Zehra Ömeroğlu Trial</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against Zehra Ömeroğlu on charges of ‘obscenity’ due to a cartoon on Covid effects published in Lemn magazine...</p> <p><b>Thursday, 26 September;</b> Istanbul 1st Criminal Court of First Instance</p>
<p><b><u>Mehmet Shah Oruc Case</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against journalist Mehmet Şah Oruç, who was detained and arrested on 25 April within the scope of an investigation conducted by Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, due to ‘being an illegal organisation member’...</p> <p><b>Thursday, 26 September;</b> Bitlis 2nd Assize Court</p>	<p><b><u>Pehlivan and Yurtoğlu Case</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against Cumhuriyet daily writer Barış Pehlivan and former Managing Editor of the newspaper Ozan Alper Yurtoğlu due to ‘insulting the President’ and ‘insulting a public officer’...</p> <p><b>Thursday, 26 September;</b> Istanbul 15th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>
<p><b><u>Asena Tunca and 76 Left Parties</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 76 SOL Party members, who were detained while protesting against the government and the Red Crescent after the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, and BirGün reporter Asena Tunca, who was detained while she was in the area to follow news...</p>	<p><b><u>Case Against Bosphorus Protests</u></b></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 7 students due to ‘inciting public hatred and hostility’ on the grounds of the Kaaba image and LGBTI+ flags in an exhibition organised as part of the protests against Melih Bulu, who was appointed rector of Boğaziçi University...</p>

**Friday, 27 September;** Istanbul Anadolu 14th  
Criminal Court of First Instance

**Friday, 27 September;** Istanbul 21st Criminal  
Court of First Instance

**Cihan Kolivar Case**

The President of the Bread Producers' Union, Cihan Kolivar, during a discussion on the price hikes in bread prices on a television programme, said: 'Bread is the staple food of stupid societies. Since our society is saturated with bread, such rulers have been in charge for 20 years.' The lawsuit filed against him for "insulting the President", "publicly insulting a section of the public" and "publicly insulting the Turkish nation" *will be dropped due to Cihan Kolivar's death on 4 September 2024.*

**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).**