



Think... think...

What happened in Turkey in April 2018

*** Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli called for early elections. President Erdoğan decided to hold the early elections on 24 June 2018 despite his early statements, insisting that early elections are not on the agenda until Bahçeli's call. Hence, Turkey will enact a system change predicting a Presidential regime within two months.

*** The State of Emergency has been extended for three more months. The State of Emergency application left 20 months behind after seven extensions. The Turkish nation will go to the ballot boxes once again under the conditions of the State of Emergency.

*** The Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed (MAZLUMDER) prepared a report on the rights violations during the State of Emergency, indicating the emergency decrees have paved the way for arbitrary applications. President Erdoğan defended the State of Emergency. *"There is no restriction on rights and freedoms,"* said Erdoğan. The President bragged with the current State of Emergency to the business world, comparing it with the past State of Emergencies. *"At that time, factories were constantly on strike, we intervene at once,"* said Erdoğan.

*** State of Emergency Applications Monitoring Commission announced the conclusion of 12 thousand applications out of the 108,660 made at the Commission; only 310 were accepted.

*** *"State of Emergency"* and *"coup"* were debated in the special session at the Parliament due to April 23, National Sovereignty and Children's Day. Main opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu stated that Parliamentary authorities are transferred to the President with the State of Emergency coup. President Erdoğan defined the debate as a *"disgrace"* and left the Parliament.

*** Erdoğan spoke on the post-election period after June 24. *"It will be a period with more democracy, more peace, richness, wider freedoms and stronger state of law,"* said Erdoğan.

*** The Council of Europe launched their annual Progress Report, indicating that Turkey is straying away from the EU specifically in terms of the supremacy of law and basic human rights. The Council called Ankara to *"end the State of Emergency at once."* Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly called Ankara to postpone the June 24 elections and *"end the State of Emergency application"* due to the current elections' *"inconsistency with European criteria."*

*** 15 MPs from the Republican People's Party (CHP) joined the Good Party. Thus, possible obstacles against the Good Party to form a group in the Parliament and to join the elections were removed. *"There is currently a very weird scenario,"* said Erdoğan. Opposition parties Republican People's Party (CHP), Good Party, Felicity Party and Democrat Party decided to join the elections in an alliance after their search for a common candidate failed. People's Democratic Party (HDP) did not take place in the alliance.

*** Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office prepared a summary against Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kılıçdaroğlu due to 'insulting the President.' People's Democratic Party (HDP) MPs Osman Baydemir and Selma Irmak lost their seats in the Parliament due to the definitive convictions against them. Hence, the number of HDP members who lost legislative membership increased to 11 and the number of HDP members in the Parliament decreased to 48.

*** On the 56th anniversary of the establishment of the Constitutional Court, Chief Judge Zühtü Arslan criticized the lack of application of the verdict of right violation issued for Mehmet Altan and Şahin Alpay. Arslan repeated the warning that Constitutional Court decisions are binding. The Constitutional Court (AYM) shared statistics of violation verdicts issued for the fifth anniversary of the right to individual application. According to the statistics, verdicts of violation focused mostly on violations against the right to fair trial; followed by others against the right to property, right to protect privacy and family life, right to personal freedom and security, right to freedom of expression and the right to life.

*** The Turkish Lira has lost 8% against the U.S. Dollar and 8.7% against Euro within the past month. *"They are playing games on the economy,"* said President Erdoğan, further adding, *"They can't tame us with exchange currencies."* Global credit rating company Standard & Poor's lowered Turkey's credit grade for the second time in two months. The Turkish Lira's exchange rate with US Dollar and Euro then continued to fall. The Lira lost a value of 1.5 percent in one day.

*** The Syrian government was asserted to have used chemical weapons against the opposing forces in the city of Duma in Eastern Ghouta. The US, UK and France organized a missile attack against Syria with the allegation that a chemical attack is used in Douma. Tensions rose in the international zone; whereas President Erdoğan stated that they find the operation "positive." French President Macron said, *"We separated Russians and Turks from these attacks."*

*** Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov stated their hope that Afrin will be left to administration by the Syrian government. Replying to the statement, President Erdoğan said, *"We know very well who we will leave the administration to... The timing of that is up to us, we determine that as well."* Human Rights Watch indicated the civilians in Afrin, who ran away from the military operation conducted by Turkey, are cornered in regions where clean water and medical resources are insufficient. The organization further stated that those who stayed in Afrin are getting worse due to looting and destruction.

*** Teacher Ayşe was imprisoned together with her six-month-old baby after saying, *"Children are dying, don't be silent."*

*** The Cumhuriyet case was concluded with the newspapers executives, writers and workers as defendants. 15 defendants were sentenced to a total of 81 years and 45 days of imprisonment.

*** 10 more academics were convicted of 'making terrorist organization propaganda' after signing the petition, *"We will not partake in this crime"* launched by the Academics for Peace.

*** 13 Boğaziçi University students were arrested after being targeted by President Erdoğan.

*** Turkish Journalists Association announced the number of arrested journalists and

media workers as 149 by April 19. Turkey regressed two steps in the 'World Press Freedom Index' by the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and ranked 157th among 180 countries.

*** Human Rights Association (IHD) launched 2017 rights violations report. The report indicated, "*The State of Emergency rule has almost become permanent... The human rights axis in Turkey has shifted.*"

*** Amnesty International launched a report on violations against rights advocates, entitled, "*Battling the Storm: Defending Human Rights in the Climate of Fear in Turkey.*"



Seventh extension on State of Emergency

The State of Emergency in Turkey was extended for three more months. Being extended for the seventh time since its declaration following the coup attempt on 15 July 2016, the State of Emergency will continue as Turkey will go for

early elections on June 24 after President Erdoğan's decision.

The State of Emergency period has been ongoing for 20 months despite all reactions, with 31 Statutory Decrees issued within. 160 thousand people were detained, arrest warrants were issued against 228,137 people and investigations were opened against 155 thousand people due to 'armed terrorist organization membership.' 112,679 people were dismissed from public service, including 5,705 academics. Custody period was extended to 30 days. This limitation was applied until the end of 2016 and was decreased back to 14 days after warnings by the Council of Europe.

50 newspapers, 20 magazines, 32 TV channels, 34 radio channels, 30 publishing houses and distributors were shut down during this period. It was made possible for trustees to be assigned to municipalities. Trustees were assigned to 99 municipalities; 94 of those municipalities were of the Democratic Regions Party (DBP). According to the April 2017-March 2018 data of the Ministry of the Interior, 45,415 social media accounts were examined in total and legal actions were taken against 17,089 people.

108,650 applications were made at the State of Emergency Applications Monitoring Commission during this time. The Commission was established to evaluate objections against State of Emergency applications and was considered as a "domestic remedy" by the European Court of Human Rights as well. 10 thousand of such applications were concluded, with only 310 accepted.

A report was prepared by the Human Rights Common Platform (IHOP) with numbers on the ongoing State of Emergency applications and regulations. For the full report: <https://goo.gl/JXS82L>



Teacher Ayşe imprisoned with her baby after saying “Do not let children die”

Teacher Ayşe Çelik had been sentenced to 1 year and three months of imprisonment due to ‘illegal organization propaganda’ by saying, “Do not let children die,” referring to the curfews in Kurdish provinces on a TV show she participated to via phone call. Çelik was jailed on April 29 together with her six-month-old baby Deran, then sent her baby back to her family on April 27 due to the conditions in prison. Baby Deran can only see her mother once a day for 30-45 minutes with Prosecutor permission.

On the other hand, the application of measure made for Çelik at the Constitutional Court was denied. Çelik’s lawyer Mahsuni Karaman announced the news on Twitter: “*The Constitutional Court has denied out claim for measure on the stay of execution of teacher Ayşe within her individual application, due to lack of conditions for measure.*”

The petition campaign started for teacher Ayşe continues. More than 120 freedom of expression advocates launched a call for the campaign within the roof organization IFEX (International Freedom of Expression Exchange). More than 22 thousand people have signed the petition so far since its beginning a few days before teacher Ayşe was imprisoned. The target is 100 thousand signatures. Please click to sign the petition: <https://goo.gl/AvZDw4>



Decision in ‘Cumhuriyet Case’: 81-year, 45-day imprisonment

The decision was announced in the Cumhuriyet Case with a total of 20 defendants, two of them arrested, including the newspaper’s executives, writers and workers. Istanbul 27th Assize Court sentenced 15 defendants to a total of 81 years and 45 days of imprisonment due to ‘aiding a terrorist organization’; three defendants were acquitted. The files of Can Dündar and İlhan Tanır were separated from the case.

Cumhuriyet Foundation Chief Executive Officer Akın Atalay, who was arrested within the case, was sentenced to 7 years, 3 months and 15 days; journalist Orhan Erinç to 6 years and three months, the newspaper’s Editor-In-Chief Murat Sabuncu to 7 years and six months, the newspaper’s editorial consultant Kadri Gürsel to 2 years and six months, readers representative Güray Öz to 3 years and nine months, caricaturist Musa Kart to 3 years and nine months, journalist Aydın Engin to 7 years and six months, journalist

Hikmet Çetinkaya to 6 years and three months, journalist Ahmet Şık to 7 years and six months, lawyer Mustafa Kemal Güngör, writer Hakan Kara, the foundation's executive Önder Çelik to 3 years and nine months each, the newspaper's accountant Emre İper to 3 years, 1 month and 15 days, lawyer Bülent Utku to 4 years and six months, Ahmet Kemal Aydoğdu was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment. Turhan Günay, Bülent Yener and Günseli Özeltay were acquitted. Akın Atalay was released with the decision, while Twitter user Ahmet Kemal Aydoğdu remains arrested. The court further decided for judicial control for all convicted defendants.



Convicted 'Peace Academics'

Five more academics were convicted of 'making terrorist organization propaganda' after signing the petition, "We will not partake in this crime," launched by the Academics for Peace.

Istanbul 32nd High Criminal Court sentenced dismissed Assoc. Prof. Erhan Keleşoğlu from Istanbul University, dismissed Research Member Irfan Emre Kovankaya from Yıldız Technical University and Asst. Prof. Sharo İbrahim Garip from Van Yüzüncü Yıl University to one year and three months of imprisonment each; the announcement of the sentences were deferred. Istanbul 32nd High Criminal Court sentenced Dr. Stefo Benlisoy from Istanbul Technical University and Asst. Prof. Dr. Yasemin Gülsüm Acar from Özyeğin University to one year and three months of imprisonment each; deferring the announcement of the sentences.

Thus, the number of convicted academics reached 12. 187 scientists have stood trial so far within the lawsuits filed separately against the signatory academics. In the finalized judgments, 12 academics were sentenced to a total of 15 years of imprisonment. The sentence against Prof. Dr. Zübeyde Füsün Üstel was not deferred.



13 Boğaziçi University students arrested after targeting by Erdoğan

Operations were organized against students targeted by President Erdoğan due to reacting against those distributing Turkish delight at Boğaziçi University for those killed during the Afrin Operation, saying, "There is no delight in massacre." Three more students were arrested

and the number of arrested Boğaziçi University students reached 13.

On the other hand, an investigation was started against Evrensel newspaper reporter Cansu Pişkin after reporting the investigation which led to the arrest of the students. The news reported that the Prosecutor, who was conducting the investigation against the students, was replaced on April 3, the day on which 15 students in custody were sent to the courthouse. Pişkin further reported that the newly-assigned Prosecutor had previously described the People's Democratic Party (HDP) as "the party making politics in the direction of a terrorist organization" in an indictment. The journalist was charged with 'targeting people undertaking duty against terror' due to the related news.



Summary against Kılıçdaroğlu due to 'insulting Erdoğan'

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office prepared a summary against Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kılıçdaroğlu due to 'insulting the President.' The Prosecutor's

Office claimed for Kılıçdaroğlu's Parliamentary immunity to be revoked so that he can stand trial with an imprisonment claim for up to four years and eight months due to the speech he gave at Beşiktaş Municipality on January 5th.

Kılıçdaroğlu had given a speech after the Beşiktaş Mayor was dismissed by the Ministry of Interior Affairs. In his speech, Kılıçdaroğlu pointed out the "Isle of Man documents" and "December 17-25 corruption investigations" and replied to the accusations against Mayor Murat Haznedar related to "FETÖ membership." *"Aren't you the one who handed the governors, district governors and security directors to FETÖ members? I know very well what a nice FETÖ member you are,"* said Kılıçdaroğlu.



HDP MPs Irmak and Başdemir lose seats at Parliament

People's Democratic Party (HDP) MPs Osman Baydemir and Selma Irmak lost their seats at the Parliament due to the definitive sentences against them. The number of HDP members who lost legislative membership increased to 11 and the

number of HDP members in the Parliament decreased to 48.

Baydemir was sentenced to 1 year, five months and fifteen days of imprisonment due to committing the offence of 'insult' against the police officers on duty during the incidents in front of Diyarbakır Governorate building in 2012. Hakkari MP Selma Irmak, who is still arrested in Silivri Prison, was sentenced to 2 years of imprisonment due to 'making illegal organization propaganda.'

On the other hand, Mardin 3rd Assize Court sentenced HDP Mardin MP to seven years and six months of imprisonment due to 'illegal organization membership.' Yıldırım is charged due to a funeral and arrested since 4 November 2016.



Imprisonment sentence against Figen Yüksekdağ due to violating election bans

Erciş 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance sentenced former People's Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Figen Yüksekdağ to six months of imprisonment due to 'violating election bans' with the speech she

gave on 27 October 2015 during the bus terminal opening in Van, before the November 1 elections. The Court of Cassation revoked Yüksekdağ's party membership and Parliament membership. This penalty is the first in Turkey sentenced against a political party leader due to 'violating election bans'.



Press Report: More than 105-year imprisonment sentences in total against journalists in April

Pressure on journalists and media institutions continued in April with lawsuits and penalties. According to the data compiled by Karınca Newspaper, at least 20 journalists were taken into custody within the

one-months period; with 11 of them arrested. New lawsuits and investigations were opened against many journalists. 22 press workers were sentenced to more than 105 years of imprisonment in total. Two arrested journalists were released. Here are some of the prominent news of April:

'Özgürlükçü Demokrasi' operation: Afrin Operation coverage is reason for trustee assignment

The decision to assign a trustee for Özgürlükçü Demokrasi Newspaper and Gün Printing House was officialized nine days after the operation. The decision was indicated to be made by Istanbul 7th Criminal Judicature of Peace in accordance with the authority given to the court by the Statutory Decree No. 674. The newspaper and the printing house were charged with 'illegal organization membership' and 'making illegal organization propaganda.' The news covered on the newspaper related to the Afrin Operation were

considered crime evidence; the printing house was charged due to printing Özgürlükçü Demokrasi newspaper as well as 112 books printed by them being withdrawn from shelves with lawsuits against the owners of the publications.

Eight of the printing house workers, who were taken into custody during the operation on March 28th, were arrested with the allegation of 'willfully and intentionally aiding an illegal organization without being members' and 12 were arrested with allegations of 'illegal organization membership and propaganda.' The newspaper's owner İhsan Yaşar and Managing Editor İshak Yasul, who are currently in custody, were transferred to the court with claims of arrest due to 'illegal organization membership' and 'illegal organization propaganda.' As the bulletin was being prepared, the legal proceeding against the two names were ongoing. On the other hand, editors and other employees of the newspaper are still in custody. The number of custodies within the operation had reached 33 in total.

Journalist Hasan Cemal had stood trial due to his article series, "*Withdrawal Diary*" published on a website on 15 May 2013 and was acquitted; following the appeal court reversing the verdict of acquittal, he stood trial once again. Cemal was sentenced to a year, six months and twenty two days of imprisonment this time. Convicting Cemal of 'making illegal organization propaganda,' Istanbul 24th High Criminal Court decided for the sentence execution to be served for three months and twenty two days in jail, considering another sentence of imprisonment for one year and three months issued previously against the journalist due to the same charge at Istanbul 22nd High Criminal Court. The sentence was deferred.

Journalist Yeliz Koray, who was on trial due to her column discussing the July 15 Coup Attempt, was sentenced to one year and three months of imprisonment. The sentence was deferred. Kocaeli 2nd Criminal Court of Peace convicted the journalist of 'inciting people to resentment and hostility' due to her column published on a website in July.

A lawsuit was filed against journalist Ahmet Kanbal at Izmir 2nd High Criminal Court after interviewing Afrika Newspaper's Editor-In-Chief Şener Levent. Afrika Newspaper was previously targeted by President Erdoğan due to a headline published on the newspaper regarding the Afrin Operation. Kanbal has prepared a news article on the Cyprus-based newspaper after it was attacked following the statements of Erdoğan. The news article, entitled, "*Afrika Newspaper Editor-In-Chief Şener: Conquest for them, Occupation for me*" was shared on the social media as well. The journalist was charged with 'making illegal organization propaganda' with a claim of imprisonment for up to nine years.

Journalist İsmail Küçükaya and lawyer Fidel Okan were sentenced to 16 months and 20 days of imprisonment each in the lawsuit against them filed with the charge of 'denigrating the institutions of the government of the Republic of Turkey' and 'publicly insulting a public officer'. The two names were on trial at Bakırköy 18th Criminal Court of First Instance with their allegation that the spouse of Family and Social Politics Minister Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya was a user of "ByLock" application. The court has deferred the sentences against the two names.

Court of Appeals approved the 3000 TL judicial fine sentenced against Özgür Gündem Newspaper Co-Chair Eren Keskin. Keskin has been sentenced to six months of

imprisonment by Istanbul 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance due to ‘denigrating the institutions and organizations of the government of the Republic of Turkey’ with her column, entitled, “*Radical Malice*” published on 19 April 2016;” the sentence was turned into a judicial fine. There are 143 lawsuits against Eren Keskin and she was sentenced to a total of 355,920 TL judicial fine with 105,920 TL approved. There is a total of 250 thousand TL judicial fine and 12,5 years of imprisonment sentence against Keskin awaiting approval of the Court of Appeals.

A lawsuit was filed against Evrensel Newspaper due to ‘insult’ and ‘slander’ following the complaint of Energy and Natural Resources Minister Berat Albayrak after covering the documents, ‘Paradise Papers’ on the offshore accounts of more than 120 politicians and businessmen from 50 countries, including Turkey. The documents involved the name of Albayrak and his brother as well; further revealing that the two sons of Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım are owners of ‘offshore’ companies. The news on the matter were published on the newspaper on its 8 November 2017 issue with the title, “Albayrak and his brother revealed in Paradise Papers records” as well as on its 9 November 2017 issue with the title, “*Paradise Papers: Paradise for them, hell for people.*” Due to the news, the newspaper’s former Editorial Manager Çağrı Sarı faces an imprisonment claim for up to six years. The related news also included statements and evaluations of one MP from the People’s Democratic Party (HDP) and the Republican People’s Party (CHP) Deputy Chairman. In the indictment presented to Bakırköy 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance, the Prosecutor’s Office asserted that the topics in question of the news are not based on concrete data and they carry the purpose of creating a negative public perception by publishing the same issue two days in a row.

Mezopotamya Agency reporter Seda Taşkın stood trial in the first hearing of the lawsuit against her after being taken into custody and arrested on January 22 in Ankara. Taşkın has previously been taken into custody in Muş on 20 December 2017 due to “serious denouncement” and was released with judicial control. She was later arrested following the objection of the Prosecutor’s Office. Taşkın’s release claim was denied in the hearing at Muş 2nd Assize Court and the next hearing was scheduled to 2 July 2018. The Prosecutor claimed that Taşkın is “aiming to isolate the government of the Republic of Turkey in the international ares.” The indictment involves social media posts by Taşkın on arrested colleagues, phone calls she made with People’s Democratic Party (HDP) MPs and a photograph of the microphone of Dicle News Agency (DIHA) which was shut down with an emergency decree as crime evidence.

A lawsuit was filed against 1HaberVar Platform reporter Fuat Yaşar due to ‘making illegal organization propaganda’ with his social media posts. The indictment, accepted by Diyarbakır 9th Assize Court, involves Yaşar’s social media posts on the funeral of Taybet İnan being left waiting on the street for days after his killing during the curfew, as well as a photograph of him posing in front of a riot control vehicle.



Courtrooms

Artists, writers, social media users were again at courtrooms in April due to 'insulting Erdoğan,' 'making illegal organization propaganda' and 'illegal organization membership.' More than 800 investigations were opened against social media posts only in the last four weeks. Those arrested due to their posts on Afrin faced sentences. Here are some of the prominent news

of April:

Journalist-writer Nurcan Baysal has been taken into custody on January 22 due to the anti-war posts she made on her social media account related to the Afrin operation and was released two days later by the court. The investigation conducted against Baysal was completed. The indictment prepared by Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor's Office claimed an imprisonment sentence against Baysal for up to three years due to 'public incitement towards resentment and hostility.' Diyarbakır 7th Criminal Court of First Instance accepted the indictment.

Labour Party (EMEP) member Sinan Niron was sentenced to one year and six months of imprisonment due to 'making illegal organization propaganda' and was released after the deferral of the sentence. Niron had been taken into custody during the house raids within the operation organized against those who called for peace against the Afrin operation on the social media and was arrested by the 4th Criminal Court of Peace.

Gaziantep 8th Assize Court sentenced EMEP Deputy Chairman Mehmet Türkmen to house imprisonment and issued a ban on leaving the country due to 'illegal organization propaganda' through his social media posts against the Afrin Operation. Türkmen was released after two and a half months under arrest following the announcement of the verdict.

Istanbul 24th Assize Court sentenced historian-writer Ayşe Hür to one year and three months of imprisonment due to 'illegal organization propaganda' through her Twitter posts; the sentence was deferred. Hür was on trial due to her post on Twitter: *"I indicated my opinion repeatedly: 'PKK is not a terrorist organization, it's a guerilla/people movement using terrorism widely.'" Hür announced the conviction against her with the statement: "The court sentenced me from the fixed list due to my only tweet involving a sociological definition."*

Istanbul 26th Assize Court convicted theologian-writer İhsan Eliaçık to six years and three months of imprisonment due to 'making illegal organization propaganda.' Eliaçık was on trial due to a speech she gave during a conference organized by the Democratic Islam Congress in 2014. The court did not abate the penalty and issued judicial control provisions for twice a week together with a travel ban outside of Istanbul and abroad.

Artist Suavi was sentenced to 11 months and 20 days of imprisonment due to ‘insulting the President’ with a speech he gave during an event on 29 October 2016. Izmir 33rd Criminal Court of First Instance turned the imprisonment sentence into 14 thousand TL judicial fine. In the related speech, Suavi had criticized the current political power and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with acting in collaboration with the Gülen Community.

Academic-writer Koray Çalışkan was sentenced to 1 year, 6 months and 22 days of imprisonment with the allegation of making “FETÖ propaganda” on his social media account. Çalışkan had been taken into custody together with many other academics within the “FETÖ operations” organized against Boğaziçi and Medeniyet Universities in July last year and was later released with the acceptance of the indictment against him by Istanbul 24th Assize Court.

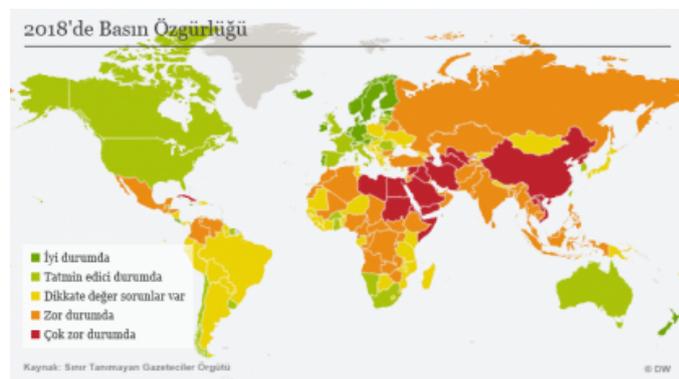
Van Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office started an investigation against artist Ferhat Tunç due to the speech he gave during the rally organized by People’s Democratic Party (HDP) on 20 September 2017. The artist commemorated murdered journalist-writer Musa Anter in his speech, saying, “25 years ago, they contemptibly planned and massacred the great people dervish. I am one of your brothers, who experienced the great honour of having known Apê Musa. All the tales he left for his children have turned into a great freedom saga today.” In his speech, Tunç further reacted against the attack against the funeral of Aysel Tuğluk’s mother, Hatun Tuğluk as well as against the State of Emergency applications of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). The artist testified within the investigation, pointing out that he is behind all he’s said during the speech.



Book by Nihat Behram banned 25 years later

Writer Nihat Behram announced that his book, entitled, “*Deadly May: Life and death during the Turkish resistance*”, explaining the life of İbrahim Kaypakkaya, was banned. Behram wrote on Twitter to announce the news: “*The book I’ve written 40 years ago, which stood trial for 15 years*

and was acquitted and is free for 25 years, was banned once again.”



Reports

In the annual World Press Freedom Index launched by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Turkey regressed two steps and was ranked 157th among 180 countries. Describing Turkey as “*the world’s largest prison for journalists*”, RSF indicated many journalists started to stand trial consequently after remaining arrested in prison for more than a year after the coup

attempt. The organization further stated that press freedom in Turkey regressed to a level that was not seen for more than 30 years. The report further stated, “*the supremacy of law is only a fading memory now,*” referring to the state of law in Turkey. According to the latest data announced by the Turkish Journalists Association, 149 journalists and media workers are imprisoned in Turkey. For the full World Press Freedom Index: <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>

Amnesty International launched a report on violations against rights advocates, entitled, “*Battling the Storm: Defending Human Rights in the Climate of Fear in Turkey.*” The report was prepared with the subcategories: “arbitrary detainments and arrests,” “shutdown of NGOs” and “targeting of rights advocates.” It expressed that those who continue to raise their voices for human rights in the conditions of the ongoing State of Emergency are paying a heavy price for their actions. According to the report, arbitrary anti-terror laws are used to criminalize opposing opinions. Besides being exposed to threats, slander and exhaustion, human rights advocates are publicly accused of being ‘terrorists’, ‘coup defenders’, ‘traitors’, ‘foreign spies’, ‘enemy supporters’, ‘spies’ and ‘enemies of the government’ or of being against national or moral values. Such statements by the authorities encourage violence against human rights, causing rights advocates to face a serious risk of attack. For the full report: <https://goo.gl/zPqyCr>

The Association for Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed (MAZLUMDER) Istanbul Branch launched a report on the rights violations experienced during the State of Emergency, indicating ‘worrisome developments.’ The report pointed out arbitrary applications and regulations against some basic rights, which were considered untouchable even in the most extraordinary circumstances, allowed with emergency decrees during the State of Emergency declared following the coup attempt. It was indicated that the basic principles of law were “wounded” during this period and that this situation has created victimhood that are extremely difficult, perhaps even impossible to compensate. The association stated, “*The Constitutional Court must at least monitor the Statutory Decrees within the State of Emergency in regards to basic rights and freedoms, annulling regulations which cause human rights violations,*” demanding for the fight against the coup to be conducted within the limits of law, for the State of Emergency to end as soon as possible as it created serious rights violations with potential to create more, and for applications damaging untouchable rights to be avoided. For the full report; <https://goo.gl/QvgTBZ>

Human Rights Association (IHD) launched the report on rights violations in 2017 due to State of Emergency applications. Speaking at the press meeting organized at the headquarters of the association, IHD Co-Chair Öztürk Türkdoğan pointed out that the human rights axis in Turkey shifted during 2017 under the uninterrupted State of Emergency rule, and that this leads to a change in regime that is based on a one-man power. According to the data presented in the report, 33 people were extrajudicially executed, 656 people lost their lives during armed clashes, 2,268 people were exposed to torture and mistreatment, 12,145 people were taken into custody and a total of 3,125 years of imprisonment were sentenced against 528 defendants last year. Moreover, 213 journalists are kept in Turkish prisons as arrests or convicts. There are currently more people imprisoned in Turkey than the total population of 13 Turkish provinces. For the full report; <http://www.ihd.org.tr/2017-insan-haklari-ihlalleri-raporu-ohal-altinda-gecen-bir-yil/>

Republican People's Party (CHP) Deputy Chairman for Information and Communication Technologies Onursal Adigüzel prepared a report, entitled, "Issue of Accessing Internet in the Age of Internet - Turkey's Examination with Censorship." The report points out that the right to access the Internet is systematically being violated by the government in the past years; internet users facing "direct" or "indirect" censorship applications. According to the data presented by the report, 36,603 websites were banned to access in 2015, 86,351 websites in 2016 and 99,952 websites in 2017. Turkey requested Twitter to remove more than 7000 content in 2017 and 712 Facebook posts were banned to access from January to June 2017. According to the Ministry of the Interior, 10,250 social media accounts were examined and legal actions were taken against 3,679 people within the last three months. Moreover, the method to "reduce bandwidth" against the social media has become a routine application of censorship, particularly on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

Hrant Dink Foundation launched the "Hate Speech and Discriminative Speech in the Media" report, prepared within the Hate Speech in the Media Project. According to the report, 2,994 columns and 2,119 news were identified in 2017 to be targeting national, ethnic and religious groups. 6,782 hate speech content were identified in these texts, targeted against 79 different groups. 'Yeni Akit' and 'Milli Gazete' stood out, as in previous reports, with 257 and 231 hate speech content respectively within the national media. Within local publications, 'Istiklal' in Ankara and 'Yeni Konya' in Konya involved the most number of hate speech with 94 and 90 texts respectively. In the distribution of hate speech against certain groups, Jewish people were the target of the most number of hate speech content, with 1251 texts targeting them; followed by Syrians with 1,148 texts and Armenians with 855 texts. For the full report: <https://goo.gl/UqttGQ>



Turkey to pay 11.6 million Euros compensation after not applying more than 1500 ECtHR decrees

Council of Europe announced Russia and Turkey being the top countries in the non-application of European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) decrees in 2017. Russia is ranked first in the list, followed by Turkey with more than 1500 decrees not applied yet. Russia has also been the country paying the highest amount of compensation last year with 14 million 600 thousand Euros. Turkey has been the third country paying the highest compensation with 11 million 600 thousand Euros, following Italy.

You may find details and more on <http://www.dusun-think.net/?dil=en> and read our weekly bulletins on <http://www.dusun-think.net/?s=bulten>