

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 57 | July 19-25, 2021

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

July 20: The European Court of Human Rights [faulted](#) Turkey over the pre-trial detention of a former police officer due to his alleged use of the ByLock mobile messaging application, seen by Turkish authorities as a sign of terrorist organization membership.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunç](#) and [Hüseyin Galip Küçüközyiğit](#), former public sector workers who were sacked from their jobs by decree-laws during the 2016-2018 state of emergency and who were reported missing respectively as of August 6, 2019 and December 29, 2020, in what appear to be the latest cases in a string of suspected [enforced disappearance](#) of government critics since 2016.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

July 19: The police in Adana [blocked](#) a demonstration to commemorate the victims of an ISIS attack in 2015, briefly detaining 19 people.

July 19: The Adana Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

July 19: The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

July 19: The Van Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

July 19: The Siirt Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

July 19: The Tunceli Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 30 days.

July 20: The police in İstanbul [used](#) tear gas and rubber bullets to block a demonstration to commemorate the victims of an ISIS attack in 2015, detaining 62 people.

July 20: The police in Ankara [intervened](#) in a demonstration to commemorate the victims of an ISIS attack in 2015, briefly detaining 23 people.

July 20: The police in İzmir [intervened](#) in a demonstration to commemorate the victims of an ISIS attack in 2015, briefly detaining 10 people.

July 21: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration to commemorate the victims of an ISIS attack in 2015, detaining a number of people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

July 19: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports about allegations that a relative of the interior minister had sold medical material to a state agency.

July 19: The police in Mersin briefly [detained](#) local opposition politician Ahmet Serkan Tuncer on the charge of insulting the president.

July 19: Official statistics [revealed](#) that a total of 45,000 investigations were launched into individuals on allegations of insulting the president or government officials, with 9,773 of them standing trial in 2020.

July 21: Presidential Communications Director Fahrettin Altun [announced](#) that a new regulation will be implemented for media outlets that receive financial support from overseas. The announcement came in

response to recent news about the foreign funds received by some independent media outlets in Turkey.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

July 19: The Turkish parliament [approved](#) a new bill extending state of emergency regulations governing the dismissal of civil servants, the pre-trial detention periods for people who are taken into custody as part of terrorism investigations and the seizure of companies allegedly linked to terrorist groups.

KURDISH MINORITY

July 18: The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) musician Hozan Arhat for singing in Kurdish during a wedding ceremony.

July 19: A mob in Afyon [attacked](#) a group of workers for speaking in Kurdish, wounding seven people.

July 21: A Kurdish man was [killed](#) and two others were wounded in an allegedly racist attack in Konya.

MISTREATMENT OF CITIZENS ABROAD

July 19: A Turkey-funded mosque in New York [denied](#) religious funeral services for deceased Turkish-American businessman Muharrem Atmaca due to his alleged links to the Gülen movement.

July 20: The European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that Bulgaria violated the rights of a Turkish journalist by deporting him without examining his asylum request.

July 21: The German Federal Police [warned](#) exiled Turkish journalist Celal Başlangıç of a planned assassination targeting him based on a hit list including the names of 55 Turkish journalists living outside Turkey.

July 22: Reports revealed that German authorities [rejected](#) the asylum applications of Jülide Çetin and Şeyma Demirel, two Turkish teachers who worked for schools with ties to the Gülen movement, taking action to deport them to Bulgaria where it is feared that they could face extradition to Turkey.

PRISON CONDITIONS

July 22: Inmates and their families [voiced](#) protests as contact visitation in Turkish prisons was not allowed for

the fourth religious holiday in a row due to pandemic-related measures.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

July 19: Main opposition leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu [vowed](#) to send Syrian refugees back to Syria if his party comes to power.

July 23: The Turkish defense ministry [announced](#) that a migrant boat carrying 45 people sank off southwest Turkey.

July 23: Media reports [noted](#) an increase in hate speech against refugees on Turkish social media amid a new wave of refugee arrivals from Afghanistan.

July 24: Palestinian journalist Musab Yousef was physically [assaulted](#) and insulted by restaurant employees in İstanbul.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

July 19: The police in Şırnak [battered](#) eight months pregnant woman Hatice Baykara during a house raid.

July 19: The guards in an Erzurum prison physically [assaulted](#) inmate Yaşar Gümüşlü.

July 22: The police in Van physically [assaulted](#) two people who were detained while protesting at a local courthouse.