

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue 128 | November 28-December 4, 2022

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 69 people over alleged links to the Gülen movement. In October 2020, a UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) [opinion](#) said that widespread or systematic imprisonment of individuals with alleged links to the group may amount to crimes against humanity. Solidarity with OTHERS has compiled a detailed [database](#) to monitor the Gülen-linked mass detentions since a failed coup in July 2016.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

November 30: The United Nations Human Rights Committee released an [opinion](#) which faulted Turkey in the case of Gökhan Açıkkollu, a teacher who was allegedly tortured in police custody and subsequently died in August 2016.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunç](#), a former public sector worker who was sacked from his job by a decree-law during the 2016-2018 state of emergency and who was reported missing as of August 6, 2019 in what appears to be one of the latest cases in a string of suspected [enforced disappearance](#) of government critics since 2016.

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND ASSOCIATION

November 28: The police in Manisa [detained](#) 10 people as part of an investigation into a Newroz demonstration.

November 29: The Mardin Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

December 1: The Siirt Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

December 2: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration staged outside a courthouse, detaining four people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

November 28: An İstanbul court [handed down](#) prison sentences to journalists Şahin Alpay, Mümtaz'er Türköne, Ahmet Turan Alkan and Ali Bulaç on terrorism-related charges due to their work for the now-shuttered Zaman newspaper. Bulaç, Alpay and Turan were sentenced to two years, six months in prison while Türköne was sentenced to three years, nine months. The journalists were retried after their previous sentences were overturned by the Supreme Court of Appeals (Yargıtay).

November 28: The police in Manisa [detained](#) seven people, including local HDP executives, due to slogans shouted at Newroz celebrations and social media messages.

November 30: The police in Ankara [detained](#) two foreign nationals due to a video posted on social media in which they were seen tearing Turkish lira.

November 30: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to an opinion column on drug trafficking allegations implicating a high judiciary member.

December 1: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit actor İlyas Salman who was standing trial on insult charges due to his social media posts.

December 2: An Erzurum court [sentenced](#) former MP Mahmut Alınak to one year, two months in prison on

charges of insulting the president in an opinion column. The judgment was delivered in a retrial after Alınak's initial conviction was overturned by an appeals court.

December 2: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports on allegations that a hotel administration subjected a female employee to a strip-search.

December 2: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to three news report on allegations that the İstanbul municipality was facing debt enforcement proceedings due to debts from the time the mayor was from the ruling party.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

November 29: A Bulgarian court [rejected](#) a request from Turkey for the extradition of retired colonel Mustafa Levent Göktaş on the grounds that he might not face a fair trial. Göktaş is a suspect in the murder of academic Necip Hablemitoğlu in 2002.

KURDISH MINORITY

November 28: The police in Manisa [detained](#) 17 people, including local HDP executives, due to slogans shouted at Newroz celebrations and social media messages.

November 29: The police in 14 provinces [detained](#) 19 people, including HDP executives.

November 30: The authorities [interrupted](#) the hospital visit of inmate İhsan Uğur after he spoke to someone in Kurdish at the hospital. Uğur was taken back to prison without completing his examination.

December 1: The authorities [mistreated](#) 18 Kurdish political activists who were detained six provinces. One of them, Figen Ekti, was physically assaulted at the Ankara police headquarters.

OTHER MINORITIES

December 3: A trans woman named Melis Yağmur Hanzade was physically [assaulted](#) while performing music on the street in İzmir.

PRISON CONDITIONS

November 28: Reports indicated that a Konya prison had been [holding](#) inmate Cengiz Akkaya in a one-person cell for the last three months.

November 30: The authorities [interrupted](#) the hospital visit of inmate İhsan Uğur after he spoke to someone in Kurdish at the hospital. Uğur was taken back to prison without completing his examination.

November 30: Sick inmates in an Ankara prison were [given](#) medication without examination and were not referred to a hospital. In the same facility, a diabetic inmate was not provided with a diet meal that he required.

November 30: An Eskişehir prison [denied](#) needed surgery to sick inmate Mukadder Alakuş.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

November 28: A video that widely circulated on social media [showed](#) asylum seekers from Turkey being mistreated by Greek law enforcement officers.

November 30: The police in İstanbul [threatened](#) Uyghurs outside the Chinese Consulate in İstanbul who were staging a protest with detention and deportation to China.

November 30: [Mohammad Bagher Moradi](#), a dissident Iranian journalist who disappeared in Ankara in May, resurfaced in the custody of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). He was reportedly kept in informal detention in Turkey for five months before being deported to Iran.

December 2: Greek authorities forcibly [pushed back](#) five Turkish political asylum seekers who crossed the border to flee persecution.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

November 28: A law firm announced that their client Gülten Matur was [tortured](#) in a military zone after being detained by the police in İstanbul.

November 30: The guards in an Eskişehir prison [strip-searched](#) four inmates.

November 30: The United Nations Human Rights Committee released an [opinion](#) which faulted Turkey in the case of Gökhan Açıkkollu, a teacher who was allegedly tortured in police custody and subsequently died in August 2016.

December 1: The authorities [mistreated](#) 18 Kurdish political activists who were detained six provinces. One of them, Figen Ekti, was physically assaulted at the Ankara police headquarters.

December 3: Gendarmes in Niğde [mistreated](#) a man named Koray Türk who was in their custody.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

December 2: Sweden [extradited](#) Mahmut Tat, a man who was sentenced to imprisonment in Turkey for alleged membership in the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Tat was arrested upon his arrival in Turkey. His asylum application was rejected in Sweden in 2015. The development came amid Turkey's pressure on the Nordic country for the extradition of a number of people sought on terrorism-related charges in return for Ankara's approval of Sweden's NATO membership.