

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 200 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.

June 25: Twenty-one bar associations and civil society organizations [issued](#) a joint statement calling on the authorities to release Mehmet Emin Özkan, a 83-year-old inmate who suffers from severe health problems.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

June 21: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that there was no rights violation concerning the imprisonment of former police intelligence chief Zeki Güven who was found dead in his prison cell in Ankara 40 days after his detention in 2018. Güven was imprisoned over alleged links to the Gülen movement.

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

June 21: The police in İstanbul [attacked](#) a picnic organized by LGBT groups, briefly detaining one person.

June 21: The police in Ağrı briefly [detained](#) local HDP executive Cemal Akar for making a speech at a demonstration to protest last week's attack on the party's İzmir office.

June 21: The Ağrı Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

June 22: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) against a street concert organized to protest a controversial decision announced by the president to ban music after midnight, briefly detaining seven people.

June 23: The Youth and Sports Ministry [canceled](#) the student loans and scholarships of at least 100 university students because they participated in protests against the appointment of a pro-government figure as the new rector of İstanbul's Boğaziçi University in January.

June 24: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) 10 people, including members of the HDP, for having participated in demonstrations to protest last week's attack on the party's İzmir office.

June 24: Turkish law enforcement [intervened](#) in 320 peaceful demonstrations across the country and detained at least 2,123 people between January and May 2021, according to an İstanbul-based rights group.

June 24: The İstanbul Governor's Office [banned](#) an LGBT pride march scheduled for June 26. After the organizers went ahead with their plan and held the

march as expected, the police violently [blocked](#) it, detaining 47 people.

June 26: A district governor's office in İstanbul [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a day. The decision came following calls for a demonstration outside a courthouse.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

June 22: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a tweet posted by journalist Erk Acarer about allegations that a pro-government charity organization sent aid to a jihadist group in Syria.

June 22: İbrahim Akkuş, a reporter based in Samsun was physically [attacked](#) by the employees of a construction company after reporting on the alleged deficiencies in a hospital building.

June 22: A mob in Kocaeli [attacked](#) journalist Mustafa Uslu while following up on local news.

June 22: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to two web addresses used by the JinNews website.

June 23: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalist Mustafa Sönmez of the charge of insulting the president. Sönmez stood trial over his social media messages.

June 24: An İstanbul prosecutor [demanded](#) prison sentences for journalists Hazal Ocak, Vedat Arık, Olcay Büyüктаş Akça and İpek Özbey for allegedly "pointing anti-terror officials as a target" and "violating the privacy of personal life," over their reports about a presidential aide's alleged illegal construction on land belonging to a foundation.

June 24: The authorities [decided](#) to block access to the YouTube channel as well as Twitter and Instagram accounts of Sedat Peker, a mob boss who has been making revelations on state-mafia relations since early May. The platforms, despite having recently appointed Turkey representatives to comply with a controversial online censorship legislation, are yet to implement the decision.

June 25: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to tweets about money laundering allegations about a businessman close to the government.

June 25: An İzmir court [ruled](#) to block access to news reports and tweets about an allegations that the assailant who carried out last week's attack on the HDP İzmir office used to frequent a hotel run by the İzmir Governor's Office.

June 26: Bülent Kılıç, an AFP photographer, was detained for several hours while covering an LGBT pride march in İstanbul. Images on social media [showed](#) Kılıç being held on the ground by officers, who were pressing down on his body with their knees.

June 27: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the Etkin news agency.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

June 22: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) Hatice Onaran, a provincial executive for the Human Rights Association (İHD), as part of an Edirne-based investigation.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

June 22: [Süleyman Özışık](#), a journalist known for his close ties to the ruling party, claimed that he was involved in the reinstatement of thousands of people who were removed from their state jobs over alleged links to the Gülen movement following 2016 coup attempt. Rights groups and international organizations frequently criticized the Turkish government's massive post-coup purge of public sector workers for not respecting due process and the lack of effective remedies for those removed from their jobs.

KURDISH MINORITY

June 21: The police in Ağrı briefly [detained](#) local HDP executive Cemal Akar for making a speech at a demonstration to protest last week's attack on the party's İzmir office.

June 21: The Constitutional Court [accepted](#) the indictment seeking the closure of the HDP.

June 24: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) 10 people, including members of the HDP, for having participated in demonstrations to protest last week's attack on the party's İzmir office.

MISTREATMENT OF CITIZENS ABROAD

June 27: Orhan İnandı, a Turkish-Kyrgyz educator who was reported missing in Bishkek on May 31, remained unaccounted for throughout the [fourth week](#) into his disappearance. His family members suspect that he is being held against his will at the Turkish Embassy in Bishkek. On June 23, a lawyer representing İnandı [posted](#) photos of a former Kyrgyz official suspected of involvement in the disappearance.

OTHER MINORITIES

June 26: A police officer who was involved in the violent attack on an LGBT pride march in İstanbul [posted](#) a social media message in which he called LGBT people “sexually handicapped.”

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

June 23: A fire that broke out at a repatriation center in İzmir [claimed](#) the life of Ahmed Maslem, a 21-year-old Syrian migrant.

June 23: Amnesty International released a [report](#) which said that Greek border forces are violently and illegally detaining groups of refugees and migrants before summarily returning them to Turkey, contravening the country’s human rights obligations under EU and international law.

June 23: Reports [indicated](#) that many refugees in Turkey have been left out of the country’s Covid-19 vaccination campaign because of language barriers and a lack of knowledge about their rights.

June 24: Reports [revealed](#) that migrants brought into Turkey from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran by human traffickers are often condemned to reside in empty barns or unfurnished homes in an eastern province before they can travel westward.

June 24: The EU is [considering](#) 3.5 billion euros for Turkey to continue hosting Syrian refugees until 2024, according to reports.

June 27: Two irregular migrants were [killed](#) and 12 injured following a shoot off between a suspected human smuggler and gendarmerie forces in the southeastern province of Siirt.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

June 21: A Sivas court [sentenced](#) journalist Aslıhan Gencyay to six months, seven days in prison for “preventing a civil servant from performing their duty,” over her resistance to strip searches while she was held at a Sivas prison.

June 22: The police in İstanbul physically and verbally [assaulted](#) five people during house raids to detain them as part of an investigation into a leftist political group.

June 24: The guards at a Şırnak prison physically [assaulted](#) an inmate during a body search.

June 24: An [annual report](#) released by the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey said that 404 people were tortured in Turkey last year.

June 26: Municipal police officers in Bursa physically [assaulted](#) a street peddler after an argument.

WOMEN’S RIGHTS

June 24: Opposition deputies [quit](#) a parliamentary commission on violence against women, on the grounds that the commission’s goal was to justify President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s controversial decision to withdraw Turkey from the İstanbul Convention.