

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 21 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.

April 26: [Gülden Aşık](#), a political prisoner suffering from thyroid cancer, was issued a hospital report saying she was fit to remain in prison.

April 27: [Mehtap Şentürk](#), a political prisoner suffering from multiple sclerosis (MS), is not provided proper treatment in prison and is unable to take care of herself, her husband announced to an MP.

April 29: The Human Rights Association (İHD) [announced](#) that there are 1,517 sick prisoners, with 651 of them in critical condition.

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

April 25: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) businessman and civil society leader Osman Kavala to life in prison on charges of attempting to overthrow the government by financing the 2013 Gezi Park protests.

April 25: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration at Boğaziçi University, detaining two people and injuring two others.

April 25: The police in İzmir briefly [detained](#) Nilay Güleser, an executive of an NGO established for solidarity with relatives of prisoners.

April 26: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) three people holding a protest march for prisoners on hunger strike.

April 26: An Eskişehir court [ruled](#) to acquit 16 people who stood trial over their participation in an LGBT pride parade in June 2021.

April 26: A governmental higher education agency [halted](#) the student loans of 12 people over their participation in women's rights protests.

April 27: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a protest against the conviction of civil society leader Osman Kavala, detaining 51 people.

April 28: The police in several provinces [detained](#) a total of 17 people holding protests for prisoners on hunger strike.

May 1: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in demonstrations held on the occasion of the International Workers' Day, detaining at least 164 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

April 25: Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into opposition MP Sezgin Tanrikulu over his tweet on the occasion of Armenian Remembrance Day.

April 25: An appeals court in Ankara [overturned](#) a prison sentence of two years, six months handed down to Kurdish politician Selahattin Demirtaş over his criticism of a member of high judiciary.

April 25: The Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that a 2011 court decision ordering Kurdish politician Hasip Kaplan to pay damages to then-prime minister over his remarks was in violation of his right to freedom of expression.

April 26: The police in Van [detained](#) a man for singing in Kurdish. The man was rear-handcuffed and severely beaten.

April 26: An Ankara court [sentenced](#) Turkish Cypriot journalist Şener Levent to one year in prison on charges of insulting the president of Turkey. The trial was held in Ankara after Turkey refused to recognize a Turkish Cypriot court ruling to acquit Levent of the charge in 2019.

April 26: The police in Batman [detained](#) a local inhabitant on terrorism-related charges, over a conversation with a politician about the Kurdish minority.

April 26: A Sakarya court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the pro-Kurdish Özgür Gelecek newspaper.

April 27: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) former HDP MP Halil Aksoy to one year in prison on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda in a speech.

April 27: The security detail of the mayor of Elazığ allegedly [assaulted](#) reporter Ardil Batmaz who was following up on news.

April 27: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a column which claimed that a judge overseeing a case about high-level government officials' alleged bank accounts in the Isle of Man was handpicked by officials close to those implicated in the allegations.

April 27: The authorities [released](#) journalist İbrahim Haskoloğlu who was arrested on April 19 after alleging that a government website was hacked.

April 28: An İstanbul court [issued](#) an arrest warrant for exiled journalist Metin Cihan over his remarks about the president's son-in-law.

April 28: The authorities [released](#) pending trial Alp Emeç, an opposition politician who was arrested in mid-April on charges of insulting the president on social media.

April 29: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalists Kerim Karakaya and Fercan Yalınkılıç who stood trial over a news report about the economic situation.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

April 25: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) businessman and civil society leader Osman Kavala to life in prison on charges of attempting to overthrow the government by financing the 2013 Gezi Park protests.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

April 25: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) businessman and civil society leader Osman Kavala to life in prison on charges of attempting to overthrow the government by financing the 2013 Gezi Park protests. Kavala was held in pretrial detention for more than four years on a series of shifting charges, despite a European Court of Human Rights order for his release.

April 26: Media reports [claimed](#) that Metin Yener, the president of the Court of Accounts, the government body responsible for auditing the accounts of public agencies and political parties, ordered auditors not to publish 2021 reports online.

April 27: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to a column which claimed that a judge overseeing a case about high-level government officials' alleged bank accounts in the Isle of Man was handpicked by officials close to those implicated in the allegations.

April 29: A lawyer [announced](#) that no indictment has been drafted in the past 21 months after an investigation was launched into an incident in which two Kurdish villagers were allegedly thrown from a military helicopter and tortured in southeastern Turkey.

KURDISH MINORITY

April 25: An appeals court in Ankara [overturned](#) a prison sentence of two years, six months handed down to Kurdish politician Selahattin Demirtaş over his criticism of a member of high judiciary.

April 25: A court [ruled](#) to arrest four pro-Kurdish politicians who were detained in Ağrı last week on terrorism-related charges.

April 26: The police in Van [detained](#) a man for singing in Kurdish. The man was rear-handcuffed and severely beaten.

April 26: The police in Batman [detained](#) a local inhabitant on terrorism-related charges, over a conversation with a politician about the Kurdish minority.

April 26: The guards in an Ankara prison verbally [assaulted](#) two inmates who greeted each other in Kurdish.

April 26: A Sakarya court [ruled](#) to block access to a web address used by the pro-Kurdish Özgür Gelecek newspaper.

April 27: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) former HDP MP Halil Aksoy to one year in prison on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda in a speech.

PRISON CONDITIONS

April 26: An İzmir prison [denied](#) treatment and medication to sick inmate Abdurrahman Yıldırım.

April 28: A prison administration in Aksaray [denied](#) video calls to political prisoners.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

April 25: The guards in a Manisa prison [tortured](#) and injured an inmate.

April 26: The police in Van [rear-handcuffed](#) and physically mistreated a man who was detained for singing in Kurdish.

April 26: The guards in an Ankara prison verbally [assaulted](#) two inmates who greeted each other in Kurdish.

April 27: The security detail of the mayor of Elazığ allegedly [assaulted](#) reporter Ardil Batmaz who was following up on news.

April 27: The guards in a Tekirdağ prison [strip-searched](#) inmate Hayri Güler who was involuntarily transferred from another prison.

April 29: A lawyer [announced](#) that no indictment has been drafted in the past 21 months after an investigation was launched into an incident in which two Kurdish villagers were allegedly thrown from a military helicopter and tortured in southeastern Turkey.

April 30: A construction worker at the Turkish government's housing agency [claimed](#) that he was beaten by worksite authorities for refusing to work overtime.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

April 27: Members of the far-right Grey Wolves movement [vandalized](#) a memorial dedicated to the victims of the Armenian genocide in Brussels.

April 29: Liberian authorities summarily [deported](#) to Ghana 12 Turkish and Azeri nationals sought by Turkey on account of their links to the Gülen movement.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

April 26: A governmental higher education agency [halted](#) the student loans of 12 people over their participation in women's rights protests.

April 28: The Council of State chief prosecutor [demanded](#) the reversal of a presidential decree that withdrew Turkey from the İstanbul Convention.