

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 27 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.

March 19: The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has [faulted](#) Turkey over the pretrial detention of Ayşenur Parıldak, a reporter for the now-closed Zaman daily, following a failed coup in Turkey in 2016 due to her alleged links to the faith-based Gülen movement, finding an absence of sufficient grounds for her detention.

March 19: An executive, Bekir Boydak, from the Kayseri-based Boydak Holding was [detained](#) in İstanbul on Tuesday to serve a sentence handed down on terrorism-related charges due to his links to the faith-based Gülen movement.

March 20: Turkish police have [detained](#) a former governor of Turkey's eastern Iğdır, Ahmet Pek, province whose 11-year prison sentence for alleged links to the Gülen movement was upheld by an appeals court and who has been at large for several years.

March 21: Although the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has in several cases made clear that use of the ByLock messaging app does not constitute a criminal offense, Turkish police on Wednesday [detained](#) 14 people due to their use of the application.

March 23: Hatice Yıldız, an ailing 75-year-old woman who had been [sentenced](#) to four years on charges of "financing a terrorist organization" because she sent money to her jailed daughter and her cellmate, was taken to an İstanbul prison on a stretcher.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

No news has emerged of [Yusuf Bilge Tunc](#), 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

March 21: On March 20 and 21, 2024, at least 57 people including 2 children were [detained](#) in house raids in İzmir, Ankara and Afyon on the grounds of slogans they chanted, scarves they wore and social media posts they made during Newroz celebration in İzmir on March 17, 2024.

March 22: 206 people, including 38 children, were [detained](#) on the allegations of 'making propaganda for an illegal organization' and 'violating Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations' after the Newroz events held in Newroz Park in Bağlar district of Diyarbakır.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

March 19: At least 3 news articles on the complaint to the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) by judicially-appointed concordat commissars, including some prosecutors working at the Tekirdağ Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, on the grounds of misconduct and

interference in the judiciary by carrying out activities within the judiciary in an organized manner, were [blocked](#) from access by the Tekirdağ 1st Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

March 19: At least 3 news articles and social media content about Prof. Dr. Berat Apaydın, a faculty member of Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Medicine, Department of General Surgery, entering the surgery without gloves, mask and cap were [ordered](#) to be blocked and deleted by the decision of the Association of Access Providers.

March 19: The Bakırköy 7th Criminal Judgeship of Peace [ruled](#) to block access to and delete four content on the Engelliweb website dated October 7, 2021, October 11, 2021, October 20, 2021 and December 9, 2021, on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

March 21: A retiree, Y.B., who wore a T-shirt at a Justice and Development Party (AKP) rally that protested low pensions was [detained](#) and subsequently charged with insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

March 22: At least 3 news reports on the allegation that AKP Elazığ Yazıkonak mayoral candidate Aydın Ayaz damaged the municipality during his term as mayor between 2016 and 2019, and that no action was [taken](#) by the Elazığ Governorship despite the report of the inspectors on "abuse of office", were blocked from access by the Elazığ 2nd Criminal Judgeship of Peace on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

KURDISH MINORITY

March 18: At least 7 people (Ayşegül Ceylan, Yakup Durak, Reşit Umut Çağlı, Agit Şerifoğlu, Ayşe Soysal, Rojhat Karaviş and an unnamed person) were [detained](#) during house raids in Şırnak. The reason for the detentions could not be learned.

March 18: At least 32 people, including DEM Party İzmir Çiğli Co-Chair Leyla Tufan, were [detained](#) in house raids in İzmir. The reason for the detentions could not be learned.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

March 19: Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) member Nezir İlek and his family members who were [detained](#) in a house raid in Mazıdağı district of Mardin were subjected to

physical violence of the police and their belongings were scattered by the police.

March 20: Prisoners Ardıl Çeşme, Hacire Çay, Saime Karakuş, Mizgin Özatiz, Ziynet Sağlam and Nurcan Aslan in Tarsus T Type Prison No 1 were [transferred](#) to Erzincan Women's Prison against their will and their families were not informed about the transfer.

March 21: E. E. (17, m), who was [detained](#) in Diyarbakır on the allegations of hitting a police car with a car he was driving without a license and causing injury to 1 police officer, was subjected to physical violence in the police car where he was detained and was wounded in the head.

March 22: Elif Kardağ, a prisoner in Mersin Tarsus T Type Women's Prison was [transferred](#) to Kayseri Women's Prison against her will.

March 22: A. Ş., a prisoner in Iğdır S Type Prison, [suffered](#) from stomach ailments and was not taken to infirmary and hospital or his transfer procedures were delayed.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

March 20: At least 996 women in Turkey have been [killed](#) by men since the country's 2021 withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, an international treaty aimed at combatting domestic violence, while 748 women have died under suspicious circumstances.