

# TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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## ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 70 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.

**May 3:** [Abdulahit Tuncay](#), a former police officer who was dismissed from public service in the aftermath of a coup attempt in 2016 and was subsequently jailed, died of cancer after his belated release from prison.

## 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

**May 3:** The gendarmes in Rize [detained](#) one person protesting against the construction of a stone quarry.

**May 6:** The police in İstanbul briefly [detained](#) four people protesting the construction of a stone quarry in a natural area.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

**May 3:** A quarterly report [found](#) that 12 journalists were attacked and a radio presenter were killed in the first quarter of 2021.

**May 3:** An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to block access to seven tweets posted by MP Ahmet Şık about bribery allegations involving a former presidential aide.

**May 4:** A Mersin court [sentenced](#) journalist İsmail Çoban to two years in prison for allegedly smuggling newspaper clippings into his prison ward.

**May 4:** The police in Ağrı briefly [detained](#) two minors for allegedly writing things in a school courtyard.

**May 4:** The European Court of Human Rights [ruled](#) that Turkey violated the rights of journalist Banu Güven by imposing a blackout on information about a parliamentary inquiry into graft allegations against four former government ministers.

**May 5:** Turkey marked the highest number of threats and attacks against female journalists in the world in the first quarter of 2021, with at least 114 documented cases of legal harassment, detentions and attacks in the field across the country, according to a [report](#) released by the Coalition for Women in Journalism.

**May 6:** The police briefly [detained](#) Syrian refugee Munip Ali on the charge of inciting hatred among the public, for tweeting criticism of a police raid on a mosque. Immigration authorities launched a procedure for Ali's deportation.

**May 6:** One journalist was [fired](#) while another resigned in protest at the Habertürk TV after the station was harassed by politicians from the far-right MHP.

**May 6:** Istanbul prosecutors [indicted](#) İlker Başbuğ, a former chief of the Turkish General Staff, seeking up to three years in prison on charges of inciting hatred and enmity among the public, over remarks about a military coup in 1960.

**May 6:** A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to web addresses used by the JinNews and Mezopotamya news agencies.

**May 8:** The police in Çanakkale briefly [detained](#) local left-wing activist Ahmet Saymadi on the charge of insulting the president on social media.

## FREEDOM OF RELIGION

**May 4:** The police in Adana [raided](#) a mosque and detained Alparslan Kuytul, leader of an anti-government religious group, along with dozens of his followers while performing a religious ritual peculiar to the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

**May 9:** The son of human rights defender and former MP Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu [said](#) prison officials deemed letters sent to his father to be “risky” and did not share them with him.

## KURDISH MINORITY

**May 4:** The European Court of Human Rights [fined](#) Turkey for violating the freedom of expression of HDP MP Filiz Kerestecioğlu by lifting her parliamentary immunity over her speech at a party meeting.

## OTHER MINORITIES

**May 7:** Reports revealed that Caner Sarmaşık, a conscript, [died](#) allegedly by suicide while on guard duty, after he was the target of hate speech by his commander for being a Roma.

## PRISON CONDITIONS

**May 4:** A prison administration in Edirne is reportedly [denying](#) medication to imprisoned lawyer Aytaç Ünsal.

**May 5:** [Halil Şimşek](#), a dismissed academic arrested over alleged links to the Gülen movement, died in prison

of COVID-19, less than three months before he was due to be released on parole.

**May 5:** A letter sent by an inmate in Ankara [said](#) that prison authorities are not delivering the magazines and books that they buy and that their letters are censored.

**May 6:** A prison administration in Diyarbakır [denied](#) treatment to sick inmate Yusuf Boz.

**May 8:** [Muaz Bahadır](#), a 2-year-old boy who had to stay in prison for 13 months with his mother, still suffers from an eye problem known as esophoria after his treatment was delayed during the imprisonment.

## REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

**May 6:** Immigration authorities [launched](#) deportation procedures for Munip Ali, a Syrian refugee who was briefly detained by the police after he tweeted criticism of a police raid on a mosque.

**May 9:** The gendarmes in Van [tortured](#) five Afghan migrants who entered illegally from Iran. The migrants were deported to Iran.

## TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

**May 7:** The guards at an Ankara prison physically [assaulted](#) inmate Mehmet Dersulu.

**May 9:** The gendarmes in Van [tortured](#) five Afghan migrants who entered illegally from Iran. The migrants were deported to Iran.

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

**May 5:** A monthly report [found](#) that 17 women were murdered by men in April and 12 more died under suspicious circumstances.