

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



Issue No. 216 | Date 5-11 August

ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 16 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.

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 EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

7 August: Turkish authorities have [blocked](#) access to Roblox, a popular online game platform, shortly after imposing a similar ban on Instagram.

7 August: The Istanbul Anatolian 9th Criminal Judicature of Peace ruled that various news articles about President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's son Ahmet Burak Erdoğan be [blocked](#) from access and deleted on the grounds of violation of personal rights.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

8 August: The Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) [suspended](#) O.A., the presiding judge of the İstanbul 15th High Criminal Court, along with court members A.A. and V.G. after being accused of accepting a \$720,000 bribe to free associates of a notorious Dutch drug lord.

KURDISH MINORITY

6 August: Kurdish-language traffic signs in Diyarbakır province were [removed](#) once again following a directive by the governor's office.

6 August: In Osmaniye, 5 people, including Peoples' Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party) Osmaniye Central District Co-Chairs Sevgi Aydın and Faruk Kahraman, were [detained](#) on the grounds that they danced halay playing Kurdish music at a wedding.

10 August: In Istanbul's Esenyurt district, a police [raid](#) on a wedding in Pınar Mahallesi, allegedly due to "Kurdish political songs," resulted in the detention of 8 people.

PRISON CONDITIONS

8 August: Unlawful strip searches have [become](#) increasingly common in Batman Prison, sparking concerns about systematic human rights violations in the facility.

8 August: A recent visit by the Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (TİHEK) to Aydın Prison has revealed severe [overcrowding](#) and poor living conditions, highlighting the systemic issues plaguing the country's penal institutions.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

5 August: In Denizli Sarayköy Municipality July Assembly Meeting, it was decided to [increase](#) the marriage contract fee, which is 300 TL excluding VAT for citizens of the Republic of Turkey, to 30 thousand TL excluding VAT by 100 times for foreigners, and to regulate the address and numbering certificate fee as 30 thousand TL excluding VAT for foreigners.

8 August: After the racist attacks targeting refugees/asylum-seekers, which started in Kayseri and continued in various provinces of Turkey, approximately 3000 Syrian refugees/asylum-seekers [left](#) Kayseri and at least 24 workplaces owned by Syrian refugees/asylum-seekers or in which they worked were closed down.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

8 August: Osman Çağlar, an ailing inmate whose health is deteriorating while in prison, [remains](#) in prison without proper medical treatment.

8 August: During a traffic inspection on Haydar Aliyev Boulevard in the central district of Kahramanmaraş, a quarrel broke out between local shopkeeper Y. E. D. and traffic police officer U. K. for an unknown reason and U. K. sprayed [tear gas](#) chemical agent to Y. E. D. and used verbal and physical violence.

8 August: Vahdettin Erdemci, an ill prisoner in Konya Ereğli High Security Prison, was [subjected](#) to physical violence of the wardens on duty in the prison and was injured in various parts of his body.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

6 August: A total of 205 women were [murdered](#) by men in Turkey in the first six months of this year, while 117 died under suspicious circumstances, according a report by the We Will Stop Femicides Platform.