

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

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

July 7: The authorities did not [allow](#) jailed Kurdish politician Doğan Erbaş to attend his mother's funeral.

ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE

July 4: The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) [ruled](#) that Turkey violated the right to life by failing to conduct an effective investigation into the death of Muharrem Ali Al in 2013 while he was performing his compulsory military service.

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

July 3: The Antalya Governor's Office [banned](#) Pride Week events scheduled to take place between July 3 and July 9.

July 6: A Van court [handed down](#) a suspended prison sentence of eight months to a man named Bedir Yamaç who was detained during a demonstration in 2018, while acquitting 14 others who stood trial in the same case.

July 6: A district governor's office in İstanbul [banned](#) a concert to be given by Grup Yorum, a leftist music band, without providing a justification.

July 7: The Hakkari Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of 15 days.

July 8: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration about those who detained in police custody in the 1990s, briefly detaining 30 people.

July 8: The Adana Governor's Office [issued](#) a ban on all outdoor gatherings for a period of three days.

July 9: The police in Adana [intervened](#) in a pride event, detaining 18 people. An MP for the Green Left Party (YSP) was physically assaulted during the intervention.

July 9: The police in Şanlıurfa [intervened](#) in a protest against power outages, detaining 20 people.

July 9: The police in Eskişehir [intervened](#) in a pride march, detaining 18 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

July 4: An Ankara court [handed down](#) a suspended prison sentence of 10 months to poet Ahmet Telli on charges of spreading terrorist propaganda due to his participation in a press statement in 2017.

July 4: The police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) journalist Kadir Bayram.

July 4: Van prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into local journalist Siddık Güler on disinformation charges due to his reporting on an alleged incident of physical violence in a government building in the province. Güler was summoned by the police for a questioning as part of the investigation.

July 5: A secret witness testifying in the trial of 11 Kurdish journalists [admitted](#) that they worked for the Kurdish media outlets on behalf of the authorities. In politically motivated prosecution of government critics, Turkish courts regularly rely on secret witness testimonies as evidence of the defendants' purported links to terrorism.

July 6: The Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK), the broadcasting regulator, [imposed](#) a monetary fine and a seven-day broadcasting ban on the TELE1 TV station for remarks of journalist Merdan Yanardağ on the air. Yanardağ himself was previously arrested due to his comments about the isolation imposed on Abdullah Öcalan, the jailed leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

July 7: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit journalists Hazal Ocak, Olcay Büyüktaş Akça and İpek Özbey who stood trial over a news report about a presidential aide's allegedly illegal construction on foundation land.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

July 4: A Siirt court [sentenced](#) Vetha Aydın Yüksel, a member of the Human Rights Association (İHD), to six years, three months in prison on terrorism-related charges, due to his human rights advocacy.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

July 5: A secret witness testifying in the trial of 11 Kurdish journalists [admitted](#) that they worked for the Kurdish media outlets on behalf of the authorities. In politically motivated prosecution of government critics, Turkish courts regularly rely on secret witness testimonies as evidence of the defendants' purported links to terrorism.

July 5: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit eight lawyers who stood trial on terrorism-related charges over their meetings with Abdullah Öcalan, the jailed leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

KURDISH MINORITY

July 7: The authorities did not [allow](#) jailed Kurdish politician Doğan Erbaş to attend his mother's funeral.

July 7: A prison administration in Ankara did not [deliver](#) Kurdish-language books that were sent to inmate Ozan Alpkaya on the grounds that they were not able to review the books that are not in Turkish. The prison administration said that the inmate must request a translator and pay for the fees.

PRISON CONDITIONS

July 4: Opposition MP Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu [reported](#) that a total of 26 inmates died in Turkish prisons in the first six months of 2023. Gergerlioğlu said 15 of the inmates died under suspicious circumstances.

July 5: Reports [indicated](#) that an Adana prison was not regularly supplying inmates with water.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

July 3: Turkey [announced](#) that it rescued 95 migrants from three overloaded boats in the Aegean sea, accusing Greece of pushing back the dinghies from its shores.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

July 6: Gendarmes in Tokat physically [assaulted](#) a person named Osman Kale while detaining him and destroyed the phone of another person who was filming the incident. Reports also indicated that a local hospital refused to issue a medical report documenting Kale's injuries.

July 7: The guards in a women's prison in Diyarbakır [damaged](#) and confiscated personal items of inmates during ward searches and strip-searched inmates who were referred to the hospital. Reports also indicated that the prison administration forced inmates to go to the hospital in handcuffs.

July 9: The police in Adana physically [assaulted](#) Green Left Party (YSP) MP Perihan Koca during an intervention in a pride event.

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

July 5: [Emsal Koç](#), a Turkish national who went missing in Tajikistan on June 2, resurfaced in police custody in Turkey.

Reports indicated that Koç was extrajudicially rendered to Turkey and was arrested upon arrival over his alleged links to the Gülen movement.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

July 4: Reports [revealed](#) that men killed 136 women in Turkey in the first half of the year, while 114 died under suspicious circumstances.