

TURKEY RIGHTS MONITOR



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ARBITRARY DETENTION AND ARREST

Throughout the week, prosecutors ordered the detention of at least 36 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 23: The police [detained](#) 65 people across the country as part of investigations into Kurdish political networks. On May 25, the police [detained](#) 32 more.

May 24: The police in Mersin [detained](#) a man named Oktay Avcu for filing a criminal complaint against the president.

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

May 22: The police in five provinces [detained](#) 17 people, including executives of the HDP, as part of an Ankara-based investigation into Newroz celebrations.

May 23: The police in five provinces [detained](#) 24 people as part of an investigation into a Kurdish NGO for solidarity with the families of political prisoners.

May 24: The police in İzmir [detained](#) 11 people on terrorism-related charges due to their attendance in a Green Left Party (YSP) election event.

May 24: The police in Mardin [detained](#) four people, including members of the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK), on terrorism-related charges.

May 24: The police in İzmir [detained](#) five people due to their attendance in a left-wing commemorative event and the flags that they carried during the demonstration.

May 25: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) eight people who protested the Interior Minister's election campaign.

May 26: The police in Ağrı briefly [detained](#) 35 people due to their attendance in a demonstration in 2014.

May 26: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) HDP executive Koray Türkay to pay a fine due to a demonstration.

May 26: An İstanbul court [ruled](#) to acquit 14 people who stood trial over their attendance in a demonstration about enforced disappearances.

May 27: The police in İstanbul [intervened](#) in a demonstration to seek justice for those who disappeared in police custody in the 1990s, detaining 18 people.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

May 23: Prosecutors [indicted](#) former HDP MP Selma Irmak on charges of insulting the president in remarks on a TV program in 2015, seeking up to eight years in prison.

May 23: A court [handed down](#) a suspended prison sentence of 11 months to journalist Mustafa Mert Bildircin

on charges of insulting the president in a report he published.

May 24: The police [detained](#) Kurdish journalist Ferhat Çelik.

May 24: Ankara prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into journalist Yüstra Batuhan over her reporting on the earthquakes.

May 24: İstanbul prosecutors [launched](#) an investigation into 34 people, including journalists Sevilay Yılmaz and Zübeyde Sarı, due to their social media posts about election results.

May 25: An İstanbul court [sentenced](#) journalist Furkan Karabay to pay a fine due to a report about a former lawyer for the president.

May 25: A Zonguldak court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports covering an alleged incident of child abuse in the province.

May 25: A Diyarbakır court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports covering allegations that a number of election observers were not provided with necessary documentation.

May 25: Turkish customs authorities [denied](#) entry to Switzerland-based journalist Irina Allemann who travelled to Turkey to cover the second round of the presidential election. The journalist disclosed on social media that she was banned from entering Turkey for a duration of five years.

May 26: The police in Bingöl [detained](#) six people on charges of disseminating terrorist propaganda on social media.

May 26: The police in İstanbul [detained](#) one person for making the opposition's hand gesture while the Interior Minister's election campaign bus was passing by.

May 27: An Ankara court [ruled](#) to block access to three news reports covering bribery allegations implicating high ranking Health Ministry officials.

May 27: Immigration authorities [decided](#) to deport Russian rapper Asya Alizade on the grounds that her music videos encouraged drug use.

May 28: A ruling party election official in İstanbul physically [assaulted](#) and injured journalist Fatoş Erdoğan who was covering election news.

May 28: İstanbul prosecutors [ordered](#) the detention of five social media users due to their commentary on the elections.

May 28: The police in Batman [detained](#) at least 20 people for doing victory sign to ruling party supporters who were celebrating the election results.

JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE & RULE OF LAW

May 24: Mersin prosecutors [ordered](#) the detention of a man named Oktay Avcu for filing a criminal complaint against the president.

KURDISH MINORITY

May 22: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish politician Gülşen Özer to 15 years in prison on two separate terrorism-related charges.

May 22: The police in five provinces [detained](#) 19 people, including executives of the HDP, as part of an Ankara-based investigation into Newroz celebrations.

May 23: The police [detained](#) 65 people across the country as part of investigations into Kurdish political networks. On May 25, the police [detained](#) 32 more.

May 23: Prosecutors [indicted](#) former HDP MP Selma İrmak on charges of insulting the president in remarks on a TV program in 2015, seeking up to eight years in prison.

May 23: Airport police in Diyarbakır [detained](#) Kurdish musician Şêrko Kanîwar upon his arrival from Germany. Kanîwar was released the next day.

May 24: The police in Mardin [detained](#) 11 people as part of an investigation into the HDP's youth network.

May 24: The police in Manisa [carried out](#) house raids to detain local Kurdish politicians Gülsüm Tozan, Ayşe Karagöz and Kardelen Çetin. The detainees were released on May 26.

May 24: The police in İzmir [detained](#) 11 people on terrorism-related charges due to their attendance in a Green Left Party (YSP) election event.

May 24: The police in Gaziantep [detained](#) four people, including local Kurdish politicians.

May 24: The police [detained](#) Kurdish journalist Ferhat Çelik.

May 26: A Diyarbakır court [sentenced](#) Kurdish politician Feridun Çelik to six years, three months in prison on terrorism-related charges.

May 26: A Van court [sentenced](#) Kurdish politician Rojbin Çetin to 10 years in prison on terrorism-related charges.

May 28: Ruling party supporters who gathered outside the presidential palace for the president's election victory speech [shouted](#) slogans demanding the execution of jailed Kurdish leader Selahattin Demirtaş.

May 28: A HDP district office was [vandalized](#) by unidentified individuals who wrote racist slogans on the walls.

PRISON CONDITIONS

May 22: An Eskişehir prison [obstructed](#) sick inmate Devrim Ayık's hospital referral due to his refusal to undergo a mouth search.

May 23: [Kamil Turanoğlu](#), an inmate incarcerated in Elazığ, lost his life at the hospital after suffering a heart attack behind bars.

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

May 25: Fire brigades who intervened in a house fire in İstanbul [found](#) the dead body of Tahir Khan, a 42-year-old Pakistani citizen. Reports on the media indicated that Khan was murdered prior to the fire and that he was found with his hands tied.

May 27: Immigration authorities [decided](#) to deport Russian rapper Asya Alizade on the grounds that her music videos encouraged drug use.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

May 22: A Düzce prison [placed](#) amputated inmate Sinan Turmaz in a one-person cell.

May 22: The guards in an Eskişehir prison [strip-searched](#) inmate Nagehan Yüksel who was transferred from another

prison in İstanbul. The prison administration confiscated a letter Yüksel wrote about the incident and launched a disciplinary investigation into her.

May 23: The police in Mersin [mistreated](#) a man named Özkan Yalçın while detaining him during a house raid.

May 25: [Metin Sucu](#), a man who was detained in connection with a child abuse investigation in Zonguldak, lost his life while in police custody. An eyewitness testimony claimed that Sucu was tortured to death. Three police officers were detained in connection with the incident.

May 25: Media reports [revealed](#) that Duygu Koral, an inmate who died in a Kocaeli prison under suspicious circumstances in March 2023, suffered violence prior to her death. According to the reports, Koral's body carried marks of physical violence. She also reportedly told her mother in their last phone conversation that she was being subjected to violence.