

In the Last Two Weeks in Turkey

1-15 September 2023

15 September 2023

Attack Case Against Journalist Sinan Aygöl



Following the news on corruption and irregularities regarding Bitlis Tatvan Municipality, the trial in which municipality employee Yücel B., who attacked Bitlis Journalists Association President Sinan Aygöl (June 17, 2023), and police officer EK, who prevented the people around him from intervening, started at Tatvan 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance, on Friday, September 15, 2023.

The defendants claimed that Aygöl insulted them and the President, and also attacked them. However, no evidence in the footage of the attack recorded on security cameras

could confirm such a claim. During the hearing, it was revealed that Yücel B. and police EK were relatives of Tatvan Mayor Mehmet Emin Geylani. The court decided to release the defendants and postponed the hearing to December 14, 2023.

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/tatvan-da-gazeteciye-saldiranlar-ilk-durumada-tahliye-edildi-284048>

16 September 2023, Saturday

A 10-day ban on all actions and activities in Şırnak, from rallies to concerts, from visiting cemeteries to flying wish lanterns or balloons

Şırnak Governorship banned all kinds of public actions and activities throughout the province for ten days, excluding activities carried out by public institutions. The Governorship announced that activities organized in line with the traditions and customs of established institutions only will be allowed.

According to the official announcement, "Except for events deemed appropriate by the Governorship and District Governorship authorities, programs organized by public institutions and organizations, official holidays, official commemoration days, official ceremonies and celebrations, and programs to be held by these institutions according to their traditions and customs, sports activities, all actions and events such as open ground meetings and demonstration marches, mass welcoming and farewell ceremonies, press releases by institutions and organizations outside their own buildings, sit-in protests, rallies, setting up tents, signature campaigns, opening stands, mass funeral ceremonies and cemetery visits, memorial ceremonies, festivals, concerts, entertainment, play performances, shows, etc., in line with the above-mentioned purposes; all kinds of audio and visual activities that can be done with audio broadcasting tools; all kinds of aviation activities such as sky lanterns, balloon kite flying, drone, para-motor etc., and activities such as distributing flyers, stickers, brochures, etc., hanging posters and banners, etc., excluding the commercial activities of private law legal

entities with a commercial identity, are banned within all provincial borders, including Şırnak city center and districts (Geographical Area-Provincial Center, Districts, Gendarmerie and Police responsibility areas), for 10 days from 00:01 on 16.09.2023 to 23:59 on 25.09.2023.

Şırnak Governorship - <http://www.sirnak.gov.tr/yasaklama-karari-16092023>

BirGün Newspaper - <https://www.birgun.net/haber/sirnak-ta-yuruyus-konser-ve-kitlesel-cenaze-merasimlerini-10-gun-yasak-469227>

Journalist detained at the airport upon her arrival in Turkey

İlknur Bilir, a journalist working in Germany, was detained at Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen Airport upon her arrival to Turkey from abroad on September 16, 2023, due to her social media posts during the earthquake period. The journalist, whose passport was taken away, was released after a while. Bilir announced on her social media account that the reason for her detention was conveyed to her as a complaint against her for "the crime of publicly disseminating information that misleads the public " (Turkish Criminal Law 217/A).

BirGün Newspaper - <https://www.birgun.net/haber/gazeteci-ilknur-bilir-havalimaninda-gozaltina-alindi-468917>

17 September 2023, Sunday

Public rally targeting LGBTI+ people in Istanbul

The rally, named "Great Family Meeting," organized by circles targeting LGBTI+ people, was held in Saraçhane Square in Istanbul on Sunday, September 17.

Participating in the rally with a video message, İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University Rector Prof. Dr. Saffet Köse described LGBTI+ existence as an intentional project [conspiracy]. He called on everyone to "be of one heart and use common sense against the LGBT imposition", saying that "These unnatural projects are a threat not only to our nation but to all humanity, a challenge to the natural order, and an attempt at social subversion."



"I invite all statesmen and administrators in the decision-making mechanism to immediately take the necessary actions against these initiatives that draw humanity into such a vortex," he added. Üsküdar University Rector Prof. Dr. Nevzat Tarhan also mentioned the "importance of fixing" LGBTI+ people, which he referred to as "a situation seen in weak families." Alexander Dugin, a strategist close to the Kremlin and known as the ideologist of Eurasianism, said in his video message at the rally: "Dear Turkish friends, I am thrilled that you organized this meeting against the normalization of LGBT. [...] I am happy to see people from different parties and political movements here together, because this is not just an issue of religious people trying to preserve traditional Islamic values. I am very happy that people from all walks of life in Turkey, regardless of political parties, whether a leftist or a rightist, participated in this protest."

The Minister of National Education Yusuf Tekin also targeted LGBTI+ individuals in a television program he attended on September 11, 2023. The Minister said that the LGBTI+ issue should be discussed and fundamental human rights should be focused on, mentioning that this issue is also related to the curriculum.

He emphasized that the Ministry is working on a new course called "Family in Turkish Society" to be included in the new curriculum and that the family holds a priority among social values.

The Radio and Television Supreme Council had decided, by a majority vote, that the promotional announcement video calling to the rally held with the same demands (in September 2022) qualified as "a public ad serving public interest", with the official recommendation to broadcasting organizations to air it. The lawsuit filed by the Kaos-GL Association against this administrative decision last year was concluded in July, with the court dismissing the case on the grounds that "It is the state's most natural duty to protect the family institution."

The organizers of the rally, the Great Family Platform, announced that on September 30, they sent a petition with 150 thousand personal and corporate signatures to the Parliament pleading a ban on LGBT propaganda and the closing down of LGTBTI+ organizations, and calling on political parties to attend to the matter as well. Associations and foundations such as TÜGVA, MÜSİAD, Birlik Foundation, and Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi Foundation are among the platform founders, known for their affiliations with and/or support for the government or Islamist/conservatism, as well as associations such as TGB (Turkish Youth Union) and Republican Women's Association. Eryılmaz, the Secretary General of the Platform, formed by 15 associations and foundations, said: "We want the activities of the LGBT organizations in our country to be stopped immediately. They are founded by global gangs, to destroy our families, deplete our generations, stop reproduction, and create a genderless human type." Eryılmaz listed the Platform's demands as follows: "First, prohibiting propaganda and advertising activities in media organs, all kinds of mass media, social media platforms, etc. Second, closing associations, foundations and platforms belonging to [these] socio-cultural terrorist structures. Third, prevention of [their advocacy] activities in public areas, [at] all kinds of institutions and organizations, schools, universities and public transportation vehicles, and adoption of relevant legal regulations."

Serbestiyet - <https://serbestiyet.com/haberler/sarachanedeki-lgbt-karsiti-mitinge-rus-milliyetcisi-duqinden-destek-mesaji-bu-normal-iliskivi-korumaya-calisan-tum-insanlarin-mucadelesinin-142775/>

Yeni Şafak Newspaper - <https://www.yenisafak.com/qundem/rtuku-dava-eden-lgbtliilere-mahkemededen-emsal-olacak-karar-aile-kurumunu-korumak-devletin-qorevidir-4542683>

Artı Gerçek - <https://artigercek.com/quncel/bakan-tekin-hem-lgbtleri-hedef-aldi-hem-aile-vurgusu-yapti-turk-toplumunda-aile-264831h>

18 September 2023, Monday

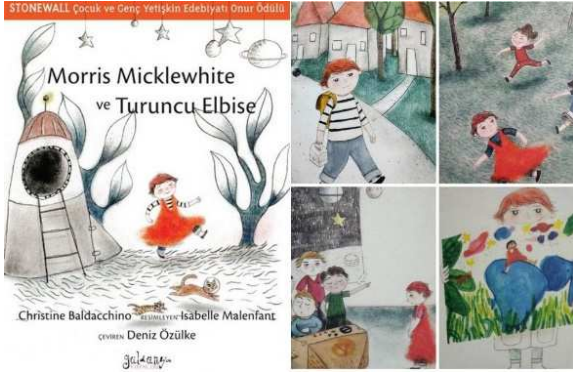
Police intervention in KDP protest in Yüksekova and Izmir

A public demonstration protesting KDP was held in the Yüksekova district of Hakkari. DTK, DBP, HDP, Green Left Party representatives, and MPs attended the demonstration. The police intervened with force, pressured water and pepper gas. Two demonstrators were detained. The police also intervened with force demonstrators in another rally held in İzmir protesting, the KDP attacks and detained several people.

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yuksekovadaki-kdp-protostosuna-polis-mudahalesi-haber-1638353> : <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/izmirde-kdp-protostosuna-mudahale-cok-savida-gozalti-var-haber-1638346>

Umut Newspaper - <https://umutgazetesi43.org/arsivler/105195>

Censorship and "harmful to minors" label on a children's book



The Board for the Protection of Minors from Obscene Publications, under the Ministry of Family and Social Services, decided and decreed a censor Christine Baldacchino's book "Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress" (translated by Deniz Özülke), a laureate of the Stonewall Children's and Young People's Literature Honor Award.

According to the decision, the book can now only be sold "in an envelope or a bag not showing through" and to those over the age of 18. The package will not have any

writings or pictures on it other than the name of the peace and the phrase "It is harmful to minors," and it will not be displayed in shopwindows, show cases and similar places. The book will not be allowed in schools.

"Güldünya Publications," which published the book, is named after Güldünya Tören, who was shot in the middle of the street by her two older brothers in 2004 and later murdered by her brothers in the hospital where she was under medical care.

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/odullu-cocuk-kitabina-muzir-nesriyat-sansuru-284135>

19 September 2023, Tuesday

Journalist Writer Celalettin Can Was Not Released



78's Initiative Spokesperson, journalist, and writer Celalettin Can was arrested on August 31, 2023, for his solidarity with Özgür Gündem Newspaper within the scope of "Editor-in-Chief on Duty." The Marmara No. 5 L Type Closed Prison Administration and Observation Board rejected his request for release on probation. It was later disclosed that the Board rejected Can's request for probation on the grounds that "he has no remorse," "he is not of good behavior," and that "the risk of committing a crime again and menace to society continues."

Celalettin Can noted that the Board made its decision without meeting with him.

Human Rights Association (IHD) determined that prison administration and observation boards have prevented the release of at least 313 prisoners more than once, for 3 to 6 month periods, since the beginning of 2021. IHD stated that, as far as they could determine, 48 prisoners were released with delays and only after decisions to extend their imprisonment at least once or several times repeatedly. IHD also emphasized that 88 of the prisoners whose releases have been prevented are on the sick prisoner lists, and 42 are seriously ill.

Gazete Münevver - <https://www.gazetemunevver.com.tr/celalettin-canin-tahliyesi-reddedilme-gerekcesi-topluma-zarar-verme-riskinin-devam-etmesi>

20 September 2023, Wednesday

Defendant police officers did not attend the hearing of litigation on child torture

The first hearing of the case filed against İ.A., E.Ö., G.B., A.O., and H.Ç. regarding the kidnapping and torture of 14-year-old Y.D. in the Lice district of Diyarbakır on March 21 was held at Lice Criminal Court of First Instance. The defendant police officers, who were accused of "depriving a person of his freedom by using force and threats" and "damage to property," did not attend the hearing.

Journalists were not allowed to attend the hearing, on the grounds that "the courtroom is small." The court also rejected the request of the Diyarbakır Bar Association and Human Rights Association Diyarbakır Branch to participate in the case officially as a party to the litigation process.

At the first hearing, Y.D. explained the torture [s/he] experienced in the presence of a pedagogue. At the lawyers' request, the child was removed from the courtroom. Y.D.'s lawyers stated that the incident was a crime of torture, saying that it was a mistake not to prepare the indictment accordingly, and demanded that the case be taken to criminal court, the investigation expanded, and the defendants arrested.

The court decided to get the statements of the defendant police officers by an order, rejecting the request for their arrests, continuation of the measures of their judicial control, ruling for their attendance -habeas corpus - at the next hearing, and to write a warrant to the Provincial Police Department to obtain the vehicle camera recording. The next hearing was scheduled for January 24, 2024.

Evrensel – <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/499369/cocuqa-iskence-davasi-sanik-polisler-ilk-durummaya-katilmadi>

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/cocuqa-iskence-davasi-sanik-polisler-durummaya-katilmadi-haber-1638650>

Hrant Dink Murder Case Continues

The case against 11 defendants, 5 of whom are police officers, previously tried and convicted for the murder of Agos Newspaper Editor-in-Chief Hrant Dink, continued in Istanbul.

At the hearing held by Istanbul 14th High Criminal Court, the only detained defendant in the case, Adem Sağlam who was the Deputy Chief of Trabzon Police Department Anti-Terrorism (TEM) Branch at the time [of the crime], was released.

Defendants are charged with "attempting to overthrow the constitutional order", "voluntary manslaughter", "membership of an armed terrorist organization (FETO)", and "intentionally killing people through negligent behavior." Adem Sağlar, Ahmet İskender, then Police Intelligence C-5 Branch Manager; Istanbul Intelligence Branch Director Ali Fuat Yılmaz (detained in another case), Erhan Tuncel, Ersin Yolcu, Faruk Sarı (fugitive), Ramazan Akyürek, Tuncay Uzundal, Trabzon TEM Branch former Director Yahya Öztürk (fugitive), Yasin Hayal and Zeynel Abidin Yavuz are on trial. The case will continue with the next hearing on December 6, 2023, at 10:00.

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/ramazan-akyurek-hrant-dink-cinayetinden-istanbul-emniyeti-ve-jandarmasini-sorumlu-tuttu-284264>

Supreme Court Member Yüksel Kocaman had the news about him blocked

Yüksel Kocaman, a Member of the High Court of Appeals, managed to secure a judicial decision blocking internet access to 26 individual contents [media reports] about allegations that Ayhan Bora Kaplan, head of a criminal organization - allegedly close to the former Minister of Internal Affairs Süleyman Soylu - had bribed Kocaman by buying him a villa and a car. The decision was made by Ankara 10th Penal Court of Peace. The blocked content includes news articles about the activities and connections of the criminal organization in question, by T24 writer Tolga Şardan, and newspieces containing information from an interview held with Kocaman himself. Kocaman also had the news of his interview banned and removed from broadcasting sources. Gazete Duvar, T24, Halk TV, Evrensel, BirGün, and Cumhuriyet are among the sites whose had issued various content on the matter which have all been blocked from public access.

Cumhuriyet - <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/turkiye/ismi-cete-lideryle-anilan-yargitay-uyesi-26-icerigi-erisime-engelletti-arasinda-kendi-soylesisi-de-var-2121301>

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yargitay-uyesi-yuksel-kocaman-hakkindaki-haberleri-engelletti-haber-1638613>

Artı Gerçek - <https://artigercek.com/quncel/mafyan-villa-aldigi-iddia-edilen-yargitay-uyesi-yuksel-kocaman-hakkinda-cikan-265851h>

Cumhuriyet - <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/turkiye/ismi-cete-lideryle-anilan-yargitay-uyesi-26-icerigi-erisime-engelletti-arasinda-kendi-soylesisi-de-var-2121301>

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yargitay-uyesi-yuksel-kocaman-hakkindaki-haberleri-engelletti-haber-1638613>

Artı Gerçek - <https://artigercek.com/quncel/mafyan-villa-aldigi-iddia-edilen-yargitay-uyesi-yuksel-kocaman-hakkinda-cikan-265851h>

21 September 2023, Thursday

“Deniz Gezmiş” raid in Antalya: 24 people detained

In Antalya, 24 members and managers of the Labor Party, Community Centers, Turkish Workers' Party (TİP), SOL Party, DİSK/Emekli-Sen, and Eğitim Sen were detained during house raids in the early morning hours.

SOL Party and TİP stated that participation in the commemoration held for Deniz Gezmiş, Yusuf Aslan, and Hüseyin İnan on May 6th was cited as grounds for the detentions.

Among those detained are Eğitim Sen Antalya Branch President Nurettin Sönmez, Branch Secretary Çiğdem Altıntaş Peker, former managers Kadir Öztürk, Hasan Taşkın and workplace representative Yaşar Sarıpınar.

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/antalyada-deniz-gezmis-baskini-24-kisi-gozaltina-alindi-haber-1638733>

SOL Party (Twitter) - <https://x.com/solpartibilgi/status/1704767499063976094?s=20>

TİP (Twitter) - <https://x.com/tipantalya/status/1704759078688264218?s=20>

Hacettepe University administration closes LGBTI+ Student Organization

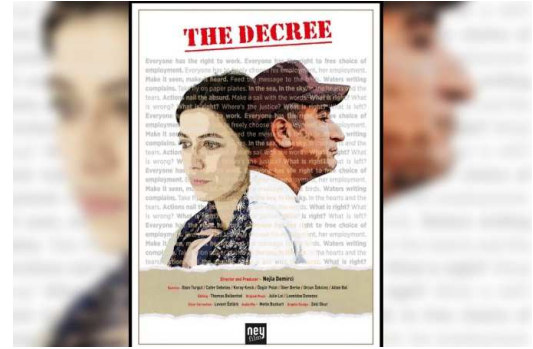
Hacettepe University administration closed down Queer Studies Student Organization/Community at the Hacettepe University on the grounds that "they have been inactive during the past year."

Evrensel - <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/499508/hacettepe-universitesi-lgbti-ogrenci-topluluğunu-kapattı>

22 September 2023, Friday

Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival, which was to be the 60th of the annual tradion, gets canceled before it could even start.

At the Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival, the documentary film "Kanun Hükümü (Act of Law)" was excluded from the selection of documentaries to compete in the documentary category. The documentary conveyed the experiences of two public servants, a medical doctor and a teacher who were dismissed from public service and from practicing their profession by the infamous Statutory Decree [*Executive Orders with Power of Law, issued during the State of Emergency Rule that was imposed for two years from 20 July 2016 until 17 July 2018, with repeated extensions of the initial term of 6 months*] and their struggle seeking remedy and the restoration of their rights. Festival director Bpıacıođlu claimed that the film was excluded from the selection the aim to "not affect the impartiality of the judicial process".



The decision triggered outcry from the public and across cinema circles. Nejla Demirci, the director of the film, stated that the claim that the trial process of one of the people in the documentary is continuing was false and unfounded and argued that it was a pretext for censorship. The 20 jury members of festival stated that they refuse the approach of seeking criminal elements in films and reject such censorship, announcing that they withdraw from jury membership until and unless the movie "Kanun Hükümü" is re-instated within the documentary selection. Following the jury's decision, the producers and directors of 27 films to screened at the festival decided to withdraw their films from the festival. Upon these developments, the festival organizers announced that the film was re-included in the documentaries selection.

However, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Youth and Sports announced, on September 28th and 29th respectively, announced withdrawal of their support to the festival. The Minister of Justice said, in a separate statement, that "Propaganda for a terrorist organization is absolutely unacceptable in a festival that has become a tradition". The crisis culminated on September 29, when Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, the host and patron of the festival, announced the cancellation of this year's festival. Along with the festival organization manager, many employees from the artistic team were dismissed.

The 60th of Turkey's longest-running and most prestigious film festival, which was first held in 1964, was to be held between 7-14 October, had it not been canceled just a week before its opening.

On September 14th, the Constitutional Court decided on the individual application of the documentary's director Demirci, who had encountered various difficulties, threats, and obstacles during production and editing, and filed against the Bodrum District Governorship for denying permission for filming within in its jurisdiction. The Court's ruling stated that the District Governorate's action was a 'violation of freedom of expression'.

Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival - <https://www.antalyaff.com/tr/news/detail/219>

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/yonetmen-ve-yapimcilar-altin-portakaldan-cekildi-285453> | <https://bianet.org/haber/nejla-demirci-nin-khk-belgeselinin-engellenen-aym-ihlal-dedi-267136> | <https://bianet.org/haber/nejla-demirci-bir-aym-karari-yasadigimiz-seyleri-degistiremez-267193> |

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/altin-portakalda-sansur-kultur-ve-turizm-bakanligi-tavrimiz-net-haber-1639979>

Prosecution charges journalist Yılmaz with membership in a terrorist organization, given his narrow record of bank transactions

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office filed a lawsuit against Mezopotamya Agency editor and BIA children's library author Sedat Yılmaz, who has been detained in Sincan Prison since May 3, on allegations of "membership and leadership of a terrorist organization (TCL 314 1 and 2)".

The 44-page indictment, which dedicates the initial 41 pages to explaining the history and structure of the PKK/KCK, Sedat Yılmaz's name is mentioned merely four times. In the indictment, including also a report by the Financial Crimes Investigation Board (MASAK), prosecution claims that Yılmaz had not made any bank wire transfers after March 2017 and no cash withdrawal/deposit transactions after 2018, which are described as "organizational secrecy". Yılmaz's Facebook profile, which he has not posted since 2017, is also referred to as grounds for the accusations.

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/az-sayida-bankacilik-islemi-orgut-uyelig-i-suclamasinin-gerekcesi-oldu-284384>

25 September 2023, Monday

Gendarmerie bans entry and exit to privately owned land, with the attempt to obstruct Akbelen protest vigil

Locals and environmentalists continue the on-site vigil against the coal mine that Limak Holding wants to expand into the Akbelen Forest in Muğla, Milas. Having forcibly expelled people gathered for forest watch from their camp site earlier on September 12, the gendarmerie closed the privately owned land lot that the protesters had moved into to vehicle entry and exit on September 25.

Bahadır Altan, a villager of Akbelen, said "Article 46-2 of the Gendarmerie Regulation stipulates that 'In order to use the authority to intercept and suspend an activity, there must be a reasonable cause. This authority cannot be imposed continuously and in any way that creates a *de facto* situation and arbitrariness. The gendarmerie is obstructing the villagers arbitrarily. It is violating the regulations."

Altan stated that gendarmerie's attitude towards those who continue the protest watch to protect the forest from further destruction and destruction by coal mining is aimed to protect Limak Holding. He added that "All this is done by the demand of Limak, which wants to cover up its crimes. However, we will continue our watch without giving up despite these pressures. We will continue to protect Akbelen Forest".

Bahadır Altan (Twitter) - <https://x.com/BahadrAltan1/status/1705978401821991138?s=20>

Gazete Duvar - <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/jandarma-akbelende-kanun-yonetmelik-taniyor-sahis-arazisine-arac-yasagi-haber-1639340>

Child Injured by gunfire in the air dies

Kübra Çoban (14), who had been injured by gunfire in the air on May 28th, in Eyyübiye district of Urfa during the celebrations of Erdoğan's election as president, died in the hospital on 25 September 2023.

At celebrations on May 28th in Urfa, five people had been shot and 14-year-old Emirhan Gergil had eventually died in the hospital on June 1, 2023.

Evrensel - <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/499682/akpinin-secim-kutlamasi-sirasinda-vurulan-14-yasindaki-kubra-yasamini-yitirdi>

26 September 2023, Tuesday

Warehouse workers protesting in front of Trendyol Headquarters were detained



Trendyol warehouse workers who had been fired in response to their efforts to unionize and join trade organizations gathered in front of Trendyol Headquarters in Maslak, Istanbul, and made a press statement. The workers said they would not leave the site until the company addressed them. Police detained the workers who attempted for a sit-in protest following the press statement.

Warehouse, Port, Shipyard, and Maritime Workers Union (DGD Sen) Chairman Neslihan Acar, PTT Sen Chairman Süleyman Şen, and 15 workers were detained. They were released later that night, after their depositions were completed.

Evrensel - <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/499810/trendyol-genel-merkezi-Onude-eylemde-olan-depo-iscileri-gozaltina-alindi>

Artı Gerçek - <https://artigercek.com/emek/trendyol-iscileri-serbest-birakildi-266666h>

Kaos GL removed the movie from broadcast due to death threats



Kaos GL announced that, due to death threats against the actors and the production company, the organization took down the posting of the movie "Hand in Hand against Hate" from its social media accounts, where it was published with the tag "Public Ad".

State Railways (TCDD) of the Transportation and Infrastructure Ministry filed an official complaint to Küçükçekmece Prosecutor's Office for litigation against the act of "deceiving the management of Marmaray" (the public commute rail, running under the Bosphorous between the two sides of Istanbul), in order to get permission for the filming, back in 2019. Stating that the permission was granted without detailed inquiry about the content, on the assumption that it was a commercial ad for social media and thus constituted private interests and the filming was carried out in a train, not in use at the time. TCDD refers to the filming of this LGBTI+ rights advocacy ad on its [public facility] premises and its posting on social media as "the incident" in its complaint, claiming that it "is against our social values and is in no way supported by the general directorate [and] is an attempt to harrass a sensitive segment of our society" and "to drag Marmaray management into efforts to polarize our country".

Kaos GL (Twitter) - <https://x.com/KaosGL/status/1706613566160130058?s=20>

Cumhuriyet - <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/turkiye/sikayet-dilekcesi-ortaya-cikti-tcdden-marmarayda-cekilen-lgbt-kamu-spotuna-suc-duyurusu-2123453>

Art Freedom Monitoring Platform - <https://www.reportare.com/soz/haber/kaos-gl-olum-tehditleri-nedenyle-filmi-yayindan-kaldirdi/>

27 September 2023, Wednesday

Rectorate dismisses space reserved for a conference on evolution at university's congress center

The 18th of the annual conferences on evolution, organized by the Biology and Genetics Society BİYOGEN, a student club/organization in the Middle East Technical University for the past 17 years, was to be held on 6-7 December 2023 at the university's Culture and Congress Center. However, the rectorate reported that the reservation made for the activity at the center was canceled. BİYOGEN members who inquired about the reason for the cancellation were told that there would be renovations in the congress center; therefore, pre-booked events were canceled, and the schedule for the rest, essential programs, was changed. The message posted on BIYOGEN social media account students said: "Despite the attacks on scientific production, we do not give up and we announce that we will hold the 17th Aykut Kence Evolution Conference."

Back in 2019, the Rectorate had also canceled the place reserved for the same conference months in advance, again with the excuse of renovation. The evolution conference had been transferred to in a wedding hall at the time, with the efforts of the students. No renovation activity had eventually been observed at the congress center on the specified dates however, and instead, President Erdoğan had given a speech at the facility for the opening of an Informatics and Innovation Center.

ODTU BİYOGEN (Twitter) - <https://x.com/odtubiyozen/status/1706384614258819312?s=20>

Sendika.org - <https://sendika.org/2023/09/odtude-evrim-konferansinin-engellenen-karsi-aciklama-alarinarinizi-kisiltanmasini-kabul-etmeyen-693048>

Eight people were detained following the trial of PSAKD executives

The hearing of the case filed against Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Association (PSAKD) Sarıyer Branch President Beyhan Gün and Branch Secretary Şimal Deniz following their detention and arrest in December 2022 was held at the Istanbul 14th High Criminal Court.

At the hearing, the court decided to continue the detention of Gün and Deniz. The police attacked those who attempted make a press announcement after the hearing. The eight people who were detained were released later the same day, in the evening.

A number of Alevi organizations, including the Alevi Bektashi Federation (ABF), the Federation of Alevi Associations (ADFE), Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Associations (PSKAD), made a press statement in Istanbul Şişli on September 28, to protest the detentions and rear-handcuffing of PSAKD Chairman Cuma Erçe and accompanying Alevi institution representatives.

İleri Haber - <https://www.ilerihaber.org/icerik/psakd-yoneticilerini-yargilandi-gi-dava-sonrasi-8-gozalti-159603>

Pirha - <https://pirha.org/erce-polis-hincini-gosterdi-bu-bir-gozdagi-karsiliksiz-birakmayacagiz-video-395610.html/28/09/2023/>

Thursday, 28 September 2023

Supreme Court decision regarding the verdicts in the Gezi Case

The 3rd Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Appeals approved the sentence of imprisonment of rights advocate and philanthropist Osman Kavala for life, and the 18-year prison sentences for lawyer Can Atalay, recently elected to the Parliament, Tayfun Kahraman, city planner and an executive of the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers & Architects, film producer Çiğdem Mater and filmmaker Mine Özerden in the

"Gezi Park case". The court overturned the sentences for philanthropist and entrepreneur Yiğit Ali Ekmekçi, architect Mücella Yapıcı, and Hakan Altınay, former director of Open Society Foundation in Turkey, ruling for their release with the continuation judicial control measures. Following the hearing, Ekmekçi, Yapıcı, and Altınay were released from prison.

The deputyship of Lawyer Can Atalay as a member of the Parliament elected in the general elections last May, is expected to also be revoked once the ruling of the Supreme Court of Appeals is read in a session of the Parliament.

Although Can Atalay has not been released since the elections in May, a similar litigation process against the former CHP Istanbul Deputy Enis Berberoğlu has been stopped. After the sentences for Berberoğlu (and Erdem Gül) were overturned by the 3rd Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court of Appeals, the case was heard again in the Istanbul 14th High Criminal Court, resulting in a ruling to suspend the trial against Berberoğlu on the grounds that he had been a member of Parliament and thus had parliamentary immunity at the time.



In 2019, the ECtHR concluded that Kavala's detention and detention conditions were in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and decided that he should be "released immediately." The ECtHR's Kavala decision has been on the agenda of the Committee of Ministers, the decision-making body of the Council of Europe, since 2020. The Committee of Ministers is expected to address the issue more comprehensively in the upcoming weeks, or months. The issue is also mentioned in the Turkey reports of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), with PACE rapporteurs visiting Kavala in prison earlier this year.

Kavala was selected as one of the three finalists in the Vaclav Havel Human Rights Award, which is given annually to human rights defenders by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The winner of the Vaclav Havel Award will be announced during the PACE general assembly meetings to be held in Strasbourg between 9-13 October 2023. The award was given in 2017 to former YARSAV president Murat Arslan, who was tried with the charges of membership of the Gülen organization. Ankara had reacted to this decision and had reduced the country's contribution to the budget of the Council of Europe.

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/yargitay-onadi-kavala-ya-muebbet-atalay-mater-kahraman-ve-ozerden-e-18-yil-agir-hapis-285532> | <https://bianet.org/haber/yargitaydan-toplum-muhendisligi-karari-285553>

MEDYASCOPE - <https://medyascope.tv/2023/09/28/yargitayin-gezi-davasi-karari-osman-kavala-ve-can-atalayin-cezasi-onandi-mucella-yapici-ve-ali-hakan-altinay-evacuated/>

"Silent Shoes" March against Small-Arms Ownership by Civilians

The "Silent Shoes March" organized by Umut Foundation annually on September 28, Individual (Civilian) Disarmament Day was held in Istanbul.

According to the information provided by Dr. Akcan, a Board Member of the Foundation, 2,607 incidents of armed violence and assaults were reported in the press in Turkey during the period from the beginning of the year until September 25. In these incidents of armed violence, 1,616 people were killed, and 2,675 were injured. In 385 of the said incidents, various kinds of sharp tools/objects - mostly knives - were used as weapons; in 549 incidents, all kinds of rifles, including long-barreled ones; in 1,672 cases, various types of pistols, including 70 common guns, and in one case, a bomb were used.

Overall, in more than 85 percent (85.23%) of the reported incidents of armed aggression, firearms were used, with fine-edged, piercing objects deployed in the remaining 15 percent.

According to data compiled by the Umut Foundation, an average of 6 people have been killed in armed violence and aggression every day in the first nine months of 2023.

BIANET - <https://bianet.org/haber/son-bir-yilda-2-bin-607-silahl-siddet-olayinda-bin-616-kisi-oldu-285522>

Umut Foundation - <http://www.umut.org.tr/istatistik-ve-raporlar/>

Notes from the case hearings followed:

Van-Hakkari Medical Chamber Case (September 18, 2023)

In October 2021, healthcare workers gathered to make a press statement for Dr Rümeyşa Şen, who died in a traffic accident on the way back from her shift at the hospital. The hearing of the case filed against the then Van-Hakkari Medical Chamber president Hüseyin Yaviç and TIHV Van representative Sevim Çiçek at the Van 4th Criminal Court of First Instance on the allegation of "violation of the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations" was held on Monday, September 18. The court ruled for acquittal because the elements of the crime in Article 34 of the Constitution were not met.

"We cannot shelter!" Trial (September 20, 2023)

Students who came to Ankara from various provinces to express their housing problems were detained at the city entrance on December 12, 2021. A lawsuit was filed against 46 students and three journalists on the allegation of "opposition to the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations." Two of the students are also on trial for insulting a public official. The fifth hearing of the case was held at Ankara 15th Criminal Court of First Instance. It was decided to wait for the execution of the arrest warrant against some defendants and to hold the next hearing on December 6, 2023.

Eren Keskin Case (II) - 25 September 2023

A group of lawyers made a press statement on August 20, 2019, in order to protest the dismissal of Diyarbakır, Mardin, and Van Metropolitan mayors and municipal council members. The trial initiated against them on the charge of "violation of the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations" continued at the Istanbul 58th Criminal Court of First Instance. The next hearing of the case, where the opinion on the merits will be prepared, will be held on April 1, 2024.

Case on Protest Against Cancellation of Istanbul Convention (September 26, 2023)

In Izmir, many women from women's organizations, unions, and political parties were prevented and detained by law enforcement officers while they wanted to make a press statement to protest Turkey's withdrawal from

the Istanbul Convention regarding femicide and violence against women. The defendant's lawyers excused themselves and did not attend the hearing of the case filed against them at the Izmir 44th Criminal Court of First Instance on Tuesday, September 26, on the grounds of "violation of the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations." The hearing of the case will continue at the next hearing on January 16, 2024.

Firat Akdeniz Case (September 29, 2023)

The fifth hearing of the case filed against more than thirty people, including Firat Akdeniz, a former manager of the HRA Diyarbakır branch, who staged a sit-in protest on July 17, 2017, to protest the dismissal of employees of public institutions by administrative measures, on the grounds of "violation of the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations," was held at Diyarbakır 10th Criminal Court of First Instance. In his opinion, the prosecutor requested the acquittal of the other defendants, except for two defendants. Some defendants' lawyers requested time to make their defense. The next hearing date has been set for October 20, 2023.