

Think, think...



Freedom of Expression Weekly Newsletter (Issue 24/24, July 5, 2024)

What happened last week?

- In Kayseri, businesses and residences belonging to Syrian migrants were looted and set on fire under the pretext that a Syrian migrant child was abused by his relative. The incidents that started in Kayseri spread to other parts of the country such as Gaziantep, Kilis, Adana and Istanbul. In these provinces, migrants could not even go out on the streets or open their workplaces, while a 17-year-old Syrian migrant boy was stabbed to death in Antalya. Anti-Turkey protests were also organized in Syrian cities such as Azaz and Idlib, which are under the control of the Turkish Armed Forces.
- The new judicial package has been submitted to the Presidency of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. The package does not include the controversial "influence agency" regulation. The regulation "prohibiting women from using their maiden name alone after marriage" is included in the package.
- With the announcement of the July inflation figure, the salary increase rate of civil servants and civil servant retirees became clear. Accordingly, the salary increase of SSK and Bağ-Kur retirees was 24.73 percent, while the salary increase of civil servants and civil servant retirees was 19.31 percent.
- Dicle Fırat Journalists Association published its June 2024 report. According to the report, at least 2,950 news items were blocked from access.
- Ankara Heavy Penal Court No 4 sentenced perpetrators Yakup Şahin and Yüksel Tunç and defendants Hakan Şahin, Resul Demir, İbrahim Halil Alçay, Hacı Ali Durmaz, Erman Ekici, Talha Güneş and Metin Akaltın to heavy life imprisonment in the case against 103 people who were killed in the bomb attack organized by ISIS on October 10, 2015 at Ankara Train Station Square. The court decided to separate the case in terms of fugitive perpetrators.
- The trial on the murder of Sinan Ateş, former President of the Grey Wolves, started to be held. Although the defendant Doğukan Çep confessed in his statement that they had killed five people during the Gezi Park protests, the court did not take any action on this statement. Sinan Ateş's wife Ayşe Ateş testified that her husband had told her that senior MHP executives were looking for a hit man to kill him; she accused MHP Deputy Chairpersons İzzet Ulvi Yönter and Semih Yalçın of "instigating the murder". In her testimony, Ayşe Ateş admitted that - despite her objections - many people, including journalists, were beaten on Sinan Ateş's orders.





11 detained at Istanbul Pride March

The Istanbul Pride March, whose time and place was not announced this year due to police attacks and the Governorate's blockade, was held in Kadıköy Bağdat Street and other locations around the city. The Governorate closed all roads leading to Taksim, the traditional address of the Pride March, and 11 people were detained across

the city.



Two journalists acquitted

In 2015 and 2018, journalists Haluk Kalafat and Elif Akgül, who were charged with "publicly degrading the Turkish nation" (Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code) due to their news reports published on bianet about research books on the Armenian

Genocide, were acquitted.



37 educators detained

The 37 members of the Private Sector Teachers' Union, who have been staging a sit-in protest in front of the Ministry of National Education, were detained.



Açık Radyo's broadcasting license revoked

The Radio and Television Supreme Council revoked the broadcast license of Açık Radyo. The decision was made on the grounds that the 5-day broadcast suspension imposed by RTÜK after a guest used the phrase "Armenian genocide" in a radio program was not implemented. The radio station announced in a

statement that "the first installment of the fine imposed along with the broadcast suspension has been paid" and that it will apply to the judiciary for the annulment of the decision.



Pehlivan and Büyüksipahi acquitted

Journalist Barış Pehlivan and former Cumhuriyet Editorial Coordinator Mustafa Büyüksipahi were acquitted at the Ankara 19th Criminal Court of First Instance on charges of "insulting a public official" for their news reports on Hamit Kocabey, a member of the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors.



Ankara Pride March Trial

Ankara 52nd Criminal Court of First Instance acquitted all defendants in the lawsuit filed against 42 people who were beaten and detained during the Pride March in Ankara in July last year, on charges of "violating Law No. 2911 on Meetings and Demonstrations".



Eight journalists sentenced

The verdict was announced in the lawsuit filed against 11 journalists, including 9 journalists arrested in the operation against Mezopotamya Agency and JinNews, on charges of "illegal organization membership" based on 149 news articles published in Mezopotamya Agency, the protests they followed and their social

media posts. Ankara 4th High Criminal Court acquitted journalists Habibe Eren, Ceylan Şahinli and Mehmet Günhan and sentenced Diren Yurtsever, Berivan Altan, Selman Güzelyüz, Hakan Yalçın, Emrullah Acar, Zemo Ağgöz, Deniz Nazlım and Öznur Değer to 6 years and 3 months in prison.



Released in May 1 trial

8 of the protesters arrested after the May 1 demonstrations in Istanbul were released during the first hearing at Istanbul 25th Criminal Court of First Instance. There are still 33 arrestees under two other indictments prepared in connection with the protests.



TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

<p><u>Sebnem Korur Fincancı Trial</u></p> <p>The 100 thousand TL non-pecuniary damages lawsuit filed by the Ministry of National Defense against Turkish Medical Association (TTB) Central Council President Şebnem Korur Fincancı for her statement that "it is necessary to investigate the allegations that the Turkish Armed Forces used chemical weapons"...</p> <p>Court: Ankara 2nd Civil Court of First Instance Hearing outcome: The trial will continue on September 24.</p>	<p><u>ETHA Reporters Trial</u></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 23 people, including Etkin News Agency (ETHA) reporters İsmi naz Temel and Havva Cuştan, Law Office of the Oppressed (EHB) lawyers Sezin Uçar and Özlem Gümüşt aş and Socialist Party of the Oppressed (ESP) members, on charges of "membership to an armed terrorist organization" and "making propaganda for an illegal organization"...</p> <p>Court: Istanbul 27th Assize Court Hearing outcome: Özlem Gümüşt aş's signature obligation was lifted, while Sezin Uçar's obligation to sign twice a month continued. The trial was adjourned to November 13th.</p>
<p><u>Metin Cihan Case</u></p> <p>On April 30, 2020, the lawsuit filed against journalist Metin Cihan, accused of "insulting" President Erdoğan's son-in-law Berat Albayrak in a social media post....</p> <p>Court: Istanbul 36th Criminal Court of First Instance Hearing outcome: The court decided to await the execution of the arrest warrant against journalist Cihan and adjourned the trial to November 21.</p>	<p><u>Journalists' "insult" Trial</u></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against journalists Barış Terkoğlu and Barış Pehlivan, authors of the book 'Metastasis 2: Cendere', and Can Bursalı, Gökmen Karadağ, Doğan Akın, Nevzat Çiçek, Can Özçelik and Fatih Portakal, who interviewed them about the book, on charges of "public insult" and "slander" upon the complaint of President Erdoğan's former lawyer Mustafa Doğan İnal...</p> <p>Court: Istanbul 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance Hearing outcome: The trial will continue on November 28.</p>
<p><u>Case Against Bosphorus Protests</u></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 51 students and journalist Yağmur Kaya, who were detained at Çağlayan Courthouse where they gathered for their friends who were detained for carrying the rainbow flag at Boğaziçi University...</p>	<p><u>Av. Eyüp Akıncı Case</u></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against him due to "publicly disseminating misleading information" for his social media post criticizing the bribery allegations in Küçükçekmece Courthouse...</p> <p>Court: Küçükçekmece 23rd Criminal Court of First Instance Hearing outcome: The trial was in progress.</p>

<p>Court: Istanbul 17th Criminal Court of First Instance</p> <p>Hearing outcome: The trial will continue on October 11.</p>	
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HEARINGS NEXT WEEK

<u>Hayko Bağdat Trial</u>	<u>Hakki Boltan Case</u>
<p>The lawsuit filed against journalist Hayko Bağdat due to "insulting the President" and "public incitement to hatred and hostility"...</p> <p>Wednesday, July 10; Istanbul 50th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>	<p>The lawsuit filed against journalist Hakkı Boltan, who was charged with "insulting the President" and "insulting a public officer for his duty" for a statement he made in 2016 about journalist Rohat Aktaş, who was killed during the curfew period...</p> <p>Thursday, July 11; Diyarbakır 12th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>

All news of the week is available at dusun-think.net;
You can also access the pdf format of the bulletin at dusun-think.net/bultenler.