

Think, think...



Freedom of Expression Weekly Newsletter (Issue 28/24, August 2, 2024)

What happened last week?

- The Information Technologies Authority (BTK) blocked access to Instagram from Turkey. In a statement, BTK claimed that there were actions on the social media platform within the scope of catalog crimes. Despite the blocking of access to the platform, President Erdoğan's Instagram account shared a "Good Friday" post, which was soon deleted. In a recent statement, Presidential Communications Department Head Fahrettin Altun condemned Instagram's blocking of posts condemning the killing of Hamas leader Haniyeh.
- Minutes after BTK's decision to block access to Instagram, the Constitutional Court announced on its X account that it canceled the authority to fight disinformation granted to the Directorate of Communication by the Presidential Decree. After a while, the Constitutional Court first deleted this tweet and then blocked access to the Constitutional Court page.
- A few days after President Erdoğan addressed Israel with the words "We can come suddenly one night, as we did in Karabakh, Syria and Libya", Israel killed Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas Political Bureau Chief, who was in Iran. One day of mourning was declared in Turkey. In Batman, a group protesting against Israel attacked Starbucks and McDonalds stores.
- AKP MP Y. Tuğrul Türkeş, Head of the Turkish Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, visited Gezi Trial detainees Osman Kavala, Tayfun Kahraman and Can Atalay, Çiğdem Mater Utku and Mine Özerden in their prisons. Earlier in the week, the Constitutional Court ruled that the imprisoned Hatay MP Can Atalay's "deprivation of his parliamentary seat is null and void".
- The "traffic warnings in Kurdish" that the Peoples' Democratic Party (DEM Party) governed municipalities in Kurdish provinces have started to be erased and removed with security measures taken by law enforcement forces. The municipalities continue to renew the removed writings and signs. 15 bar associations from the region reacted to the removal of the Kurdish warning signs and called for 'abandoning these practices that harm social peace'.
- The law allowing the slaughter of stray dogs by the local administration was hastily passed in the General Assembly of the Turkish Grand National Assembly; the Parliament went on vacation.
- As the Turkish Grand National Assembly went into recess, former Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu petitioned the parliamentary presidency to "lift his immunity". It is stated that Soylu, whose name is mentioned in many investigations and crime reports, should - if he is sincere(!) - make his application for the lifting of his immunity not to the Parliament, but to the judicial authorities conducting the relevant investigations.



Constitutional Court ruling on violation of rights

The Constitutional Court ruled on the application of Abdurrahim Kılıç that the punishment for wearing a T-shirt with the word "Kurdistan" was a "violation of freedom of expression". Kılıç was prosecuted and sentenced to a judicial fine for "making propaganda for a terrorist organization" for wearing a T-shirt with the

word "Kurdistan" and the emblem of the Mesopotamian Sun with 21 fringes between red and green stripes.



RTÜK sanctions Climax

The Radio and Television Supreme Council ordered digital broadcasting platforms MUBİ and BluTV to remove the Gaspar Noe film Climax from their catalogs and imposed administrative fines. RTÜK also ordered Netflix to remove the animated production "Sausage Party" from its catalog,

which was previously broadcast on Prime TV and removed from its Turkish catalog.



“Halay” detentions continue

Five people were arrested and a warrant was issued for two people in Diyarbakır's Dicle district on the allegations of "making terrorist organization propaganda" for dancing to a song popularly known as "guerrilla halay".

In Istanbul, 13 people were detained on the allegation of "making terrorist organization propaganda by singing songs praising/supporting PKK/KCK Armed Terrorist Organization" at a wedding they attended.

Local music band performing at a wedding in Hakkari, wedding videographers and wedding party owners were also detained on the same charges. 4 members of the local music band were arrested at the court with the demand of arrest.



"Herne peş" investigation

An investigation was launched against 13 DEM Party members and executives who protested the appointment of a trustee to Hakkari Municipality in İdil, Şırnak, for singing the song "Herne pêş" during the protest. On the instruction of Şırnak Chief Public Prosecutor's Office, 13 people including DEM Party Hezex Co-Mayor Doğan Adıbelli, DEM Party District Co-Chair Songül Erden, Peace Mothers' Assembly, Free Women's Movement (TJA) and municipality council members testified.



TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

No cases will be heard due to the judicial holiday.

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You can also access the pdf format of the bulletin at dusun-think.net/bultenler.