

Think, think...



Freedom of Expression Weekly Newsletter (Issue 33/24, September 6, 2024)

What happened last week?

- Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi paid a visit to Ankara upon the invitation of President Erdoğan. 17 agreements were signed between Egypt and Turkey. Erdoğan had said that it was impossible for him to meet with Sisi, who overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood government in Egypt with a coup d'état.
- In Cankurtaran neighbourhood of Hopa district of Artvin, citizens who intervened against those who cut down trees for the construction of an 'accommodation facility' were opened fire. In the attack, a nature defender named Reşit Kibar was killed and two citizens were wounded. Muhammet Ustabaş, who murdered Reşit Kibar, was arrested; Fikret Merttürk, who owned the gun and was present during the attack, was released on judicial control conditions. Kibar's funeral was held with the participation of hundreds of people; the timber workshop belonging to the family of the perpetrator Ustabaş was set on fire.
- The assets of the Migration Monitoring Association, whose executives were acquitted in the trial on charges of illegal organisation membership, were frozen due to the association's alleged links with the PKK/KCK organisation. The closure case against the association is still ongoing.
- In the trial of 28 suspects, including Dilan Polat and her husband Engin Polat, who were arrested on charges of money laundering and establishing an illegal betting gang and were sentenced to imprisonment for up to 40 years; arrested defendants Engin Polat, Sezgin Polat, Kürşat Polat and Ahmet Gün were released.
- US warship docked at Izmir harbour. Two US soldiers wandering in Izmir bazaar were detained with sacks on their heads by 12 youth members of the Turkish Youth Union. Ten of the detained youth were arrested.
- The 3-year road map of the Turkish economy was announced. According to the medium-term plan shared with the public, the inflation target was raised while the growth target was lowered.
- At the graduation ceremony of the Turkish Military Academy, newly graduated soldiers gathered in the area after the official programme and chanted 'We are the soldiers of Mustafa Kemal'. The video caused discomfort in circles close to the government; the Ministry of National Defence announced that an investigation was launched against the students concerned.
- Hakim Lokman, a Kurdish businessman from Duhok in Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government, was attacked by 12 people in Istanbul for speaking Kurdish; Lokman was stabbed in the heart and died.



Two trade unionists detained

Independent Mine Workers' Union President Gökay Çakır and the union's Organising Coordinator Başaran Aksu were detained when they tried to go to the front of the mine to support the miners laid off by Fernas Mining in Soma.



A citizen was detained in a sermon dispute

The fact that the Directorate of Religious Affairs did not mention Atatürk's name in the 30 August sermon turned into a controversy in a mosque in Gaziantep. A member of the congregation who asked the imam to recite Fatiha for Atatürk was detained because another member of the congregation said 'Fatiha cannot be recited for the soul of an infidel'.

In Islamic religious terminology, an 'infidel' is a person who is considered to have apostatised by committing blasphemy or who has never been a Muslim.



Lawyer Dilek Ekmekçi arrested

Lawyer Dr Dilek Ekmekçi was detained and arrested on charges of slander and insulting a public official on the pretext of her social media posts. In the post subject to arrest, Ekmekçi had asked questions about the relations between Presidential Chief of Staff Hasan Doğan and İsmail Kartal, with whom Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor Gökhan Karaköse had taken a photograph.

Ekmekçi had filed a criminal complaint against some executives of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and the Grey Wolves' Hearths on the grounds that they had played a role in the murder of Sinan Ateş, former President of the Grey Wolves' Hearths, and had threatened him.



Intervention against 1 September demonstration in Adana

The police intervened the group gathering in Adana to make a demonstration for 1 September World Peace Day. IHD Adana Branch Chair Yakup Ataş and IHD Adana Branch Executive Hasan Karabulut,

who were wounded during the police intervention, were taken to hospital for treatment after the protest.



Party statute warned of ‘unconstitutionality’

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office sent a warning to the Socialists Party (SOLDEP) and demanded the removal of the phrases ‘The party defends the constitutional and legal guarantee of the fundamental rights of oppressed nations, especially the Kurdish people’ and ‘The right of nations to

self-determination’ from its statute. In its statement, the prosecutor's office claimed that these phrases contradict the Constitution.



Intervention against Menemen Municipality workers' protest

Workers who were dismissed by Menemen Municipality wanted to make a statement in front of the municipality building on the 101st day of their protest. The police did not allow the workers to march and dispersed the group with an intervention.



No arrests in 1 May protests

The last 4 detainees in the group detained after the Istanbul 2024 1 May demonstrations were released by the court.



Journalist Güleş acquitted

Mezopotamya News Agency (MA) reporter Mehmet Güleş was acquitted of ‘making propaganda for a terrorist organisation’ on the grounds of his social media posts at Diyarbakır 4th Assize Court.



TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Burhan Ekinci Trial

The lawsuit filed against journalist Burhan Ekinci due to 'making illegal organisation propaganda' through his Twitter posts...

Court: Istanbul 30th Assize Court

Hearing Outcome: The trial will continue on 24 December.

Istanbul 1 May 2024 Trial

The lawsuit filed against 34 people, including Gazete Patika reporter Ali Kadir Güler, who were detained during house raids on the morning of 21 May against those who wanted to march from Saraçhane to Taksim on 1 May...

Court: Istanbul 47th Criminal Court of First Instance

Hearing Outcome: 4 arrested defendants were released. The trial will continue on 4 December.

Osman Akın Veysi Sarısözen Trial

The lawsuit filed against former Yeni Yaşam newspaper Managing Editor Osman Akın and columnist Veysi Sarısözen due to 'making illegal organisation propaganda'...

Court: Istanbul 13th High Criminal Court

Hearing Outcome: The trial will continue on 4 March.

HEARINGS NEXT WEEK

Can Ataklı Trail

The lawsuit filed against journalist Can Ataklı due to 'inciting or insulting the public to hatred and hostility' over his remarks about the father of a soldier who lost his life in the clash in the Claw-Lock Operation region...

Tuesday, 10 September; Istanbul 5th Criminal Court of First Instance

Lawsuit Against Elvan Family

The lawsuit filed against the mother and father of 16-year-old Berkin Elvan, who lost his life with a gas canister fired by the police during the Gezi Park protests, due to 'insulting the President' because of the statements they made in front of the courthouse after the trial on the death of their child...

Tuesday, 10 September; Istanbul 43rd Criminal Court of First Instance

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Compensation Case Against Evrensel Newspaper</u></p> <p>The 200 thousand TL compensation lawsuit filed by Turkuvaz Media Group official Serhat Albayrak against Evrensel newspaper and its writer Ceren Sözeri for the article ‘Who made AKP lose votes?’...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 11 September; Istanbul 2nd Commercial Court of First Instance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>87 TİP Members Trial</u></p> <p>87 members and executives of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP) who were beaten and detained during a demonstration after it was revealed that the Red Crescent had sold tents in the days following the February 6 earthquakes...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 11 September; Istanbul Anadolu 44th Criminal Court of First Instance</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Saturday Mothers Trial</u></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against 46 people, who were detained during the 700th week meeting of Saturday Mothers demanding justice by staging sit-in protests at Galatasaray Square since 1995, due to ‘violating the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No. 2911’...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday, 13 September; Istanbul 21st Criminal Court of First Instance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Kızılkaya & Çaralan Trial</u></p> <p>The lawsuit filed against journalists İnan Kızılkaya and İhsan Çaralan due to ‘insulting the President’ through a news article published in Özgür Gündem newspaper...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday, 13 September; Istanbul 2nd 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.