



Think... think...

What happened in Turkey in July 2018

*** Supreme Electoral Council announced the final results of the June 24 elections. With 86.22 percent participation in the elections, President Erdoğan won 52.58 percent of votes. The results of the Parliamentary elections announced 295 MPs from Justice and Development Party (AKP), 146 from Republican People's Party (CHP), 67 from Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), 49 from Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and 43 from Good (İYİ) Party.

*** Parliamentary system in Turkey has officially ended with the vow of President Erdoğan. Turkey is now being governed with the new presidential system. Authorities of law decree and the Council of Ministers were assigned to the President. Erdoğan collected all administrative power upon himself and now has the authority to make any legal regulation and assignment he pleases as the first President of modern Turkey with such authority. **(Details below...)**

*** The State of Emergency has officially ended two years after its declaration. Right before the end, one last emergency decrees were issued and 18,632 people were dismissed from public service, 4 media institutions and 12 associations were shut down. **(Details below...)**

*** With amendments on the Anti-Terrorism Law, Law on Meetings and Demonstrations and Law for Provincial Administration, the applications of State of Emergency were effectively extended for three more years. Therefore, the ended State of Emergency was replaced with a "Permanent State of Emergency." **(Details below...)**

*** Erdoğan announced his cabinet; his son-in-law Berat Albayrak was assigned as Minister of Treasury and Finance and Chief of General Staff Hulusi Akar was assigned as Minister of National Defense. Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu, Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Justice Minister Abdülhamit Gül were remained in their positions.

*** Currency value of the Turkish Lira started to fall once again after the announcement of the new cabinet and the decree that increased the influence of the President on the Central Bank. Minister of Economics Albayrak announced that "they will not go against the market." However, the Central Bank did not change interest rates despite market expectations, leading to the fall of the currency. Dollar currency value exceeded 4,97 TL.

*** The "People's Alliance" established by the Republican People's Party (CHP), Good Party (İYİ Parti) and Felicity Party (SP) ended effectively. Debates on a congress meeting started within the main opposition party. Internal turmoil inside the Good Party brought the party in a process of extraordinary congress; Republican People's Party (CHP) has divided into two as those who 'want change' and those who don't.

*** The application made by arrested MP Enis Berberoğlu due to obtaining Parliamentary immunity once again after his election as MP was denied by the Court of Appeals.

Berberoğlu decided to protest the court verdict by not holding interviews, not using his right to defense during hearings and cutting all interaction with the outside world.

*** Board of Judges and Prosecutors assigned staff to the open positions at Court of Cassation and Council of State due to the emergency decree issued last year. The judge of Cumhuriyet Case, who has ignored a Constitutional Court decree, as well as the judge who released convicts in the corruption operation were assigned as members of the Court of Cassation.

*** American pastor Andrew Brunson, who was arrested pending trial due to “*espionage*,” was released with house imprisonment. The release claim for Brunson was denied in the hearing last week; Trump reacted against the verdict by calling it a “*disgrace*.” Immediately after, the U.S. Senate brought an application of financial restrictions against Turkey into agenda. The crisis between the two countries deepened following the allegations that Turkey is using Brunson as a tool for negotiation.

*** Three peace petition signatory academics were convicted of ‘making illegal organization propaganda.’ Thus, the number of convicted “*peace academics*” reached 19. **(Details below...)**

*** An investigation was started against Republican People’s Party (CHP) leader Kılıçdaroğlu and 72 other CHP MPs due to ‘insulting the President’ after sharing the cartoon, “*World of Tayyips*”, which lead to the arrest of METU students. **(Details below...)**

*** European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) decided that the provision in the Turkish Penal Code, that states, “*a person who aids an illegal organization is penalized as an illegal organization member*” to be “*unpredictable and interpreted extremely widely*.”

*** The State of Emergency Applications Monitoring Commission has concluded 26 thousand of more than 100 thousand applications so far. 22,400 applications were denied; only 1560 applications concluded positively.

*** The police blockade around the Human Rights Monument, which was “*in custody*” due to being the symbol of State of Emergency protests, was removed. However, the mobile police station right next to the monument remains.



“Law of Permanent State of Emergency” passes Parliament

The law draft that would effectively extend the ‘State of Emergency’ for at least another three years has passed the GNAT on 25 July 2018. With amendments made in many law articles including those within the

Turkish Anti-Terrorism Law, the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations and the Law for Provincial Administration; which further conflict many provisions guaranteed in the Constitution, the State of Emergency will effectively continue, however informal. Some amendments in the new regulation are as following:

- With a temporary clause added to the Turkish Anti-Terrorism Law, the period of custody (which was 24 hours in ordinary circumstances) was increased to 48 hours. The period will be 4 days in mass crimes and will be able to be extended for up to 12 days.
- With an amendment on the Law for Provincial Administration, governorates, who already possessed the authority to declare curfews and ban protests, are now assigned further authorities such as controlling/banning entrances and exits to provinces, bringing individual restrictions as well as deciding where, when and how people may wander around within the provinces.
- Dismissals in public service will continue for 3 years. Authority on such dismissals, made with Statutory Decrees issued within the State of Emergency, was assigned directly to the ministries. Members of the judiciary will be able to be dismissed by the Council of Judges and Prosecutors, academics by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) and other personnel with no relation to a ministry by an authorized officer.
- With an amendment made on the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations No. 2911, restrictions involving vague descriptions with no definitions in the law, such as “disruption of public peace” was added another term, that states, “not making daily lives of citizens excessively and unbearably difficult.” Such vague statements, which do not correspond to any definition in the law, make banning the use of the right to meeting and demonstration even easier.
- With amendments made on the Law of Criminal Procedure; Repeating custody procedures within the same file (which could previously only be ordered by the Prosecutor’s Office) will be able to be ordered by the security forces with a written warrant. Objections against arrest warrants, which previously concluded within three days, will now be able to be processed for up to 30 days; monitorings on arrests, which were previously conducted monthly, will now be conducted once in 90 days. Confiscation and examination of computers and digital data, which could previously only be made with a court order, can now be ordered by prosecutors.
- With an amendment on the Code of Administrative Procedure, prosecutions will be able to be renewed through friendly settlements within applications at the European Court of Human Rights or through one-sided declarations. Thus, decrees of violation and sanctions to be issued by the European Court of Human Rights will be able to be postponed and/or avoided.
- With an amendment on the Law on the State Intelligence Services (MIT), the Intelligence Services were excluded from the scope of the Right to Information Act.



Parliamentary system ends, new presidential system starts

With the vow of President Erdoğan at the GNAT, the new presidential government system was officially enacted. The expressions, ‘Prime

Ministry' and 'Council of Ministers' taking place in legal regulations were changed with the word, 'President' with the adjustment laws issued immediately before the vow. Erdoğan is now able to conduct legislative actions without Parliamentary approval and will be able to issue decrees without being bound to the restrictions stated in Article 104 of the Constitution in extraordinary situations; the cabinet members he assigned will only be responsible to the President himself.

The President is also the only decisive authority in all processes of assignment and dismissal that were previously only possible with a Council of Ministers decision or with special laws. The President now has direct authority on almost every matter, including the staff at universities, identification of risky areas, issuing cultural regulations, tax regulations, citizenship processes and intelligence work of the police. The application of receiving the suggestions and opinions of related ministries and institutions was removed. The budget, that predicts the investments, expenses and income of state within the following year, will also be prepared by the President himself.

The way for deputy ministers to be Constitutional Court and Council of State members was paved. According to the new system, Constitutional Court has the authority to supervise presidential decrees. However, 12 of the 15 members of the Constitutional Court is assigned by the President himself. The number of members selected by the Parliament for the Constitutional Court is only two.

The Undersecretary for the Ministry of Justice is a natural member of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) as stated in Article 159 of the Constitution; whereas the presidential decree brought a deputy minister to replace the undersecretary. Thus, a bureaucrat the Constitution hasn't foreseen will be able to govern the judiciary as a HSK member. Another rule was brought that administrative courts may not issue verdicts that would restrict the enactment of execution in accordance with the method and principles indicated in Presidential decrees.

The President will be able to assign any public officer as a mayor, without any conditions. Mayors will be the representatives of the President. Rectors will be assigned by the President and will no longer require a title of professorship. Offices and presidencies established with Presidential decrees were added to the exceptions included in the Public Tender Act. General Directorate of Press Information, which was bound to the Prime Ministry, was shut down and its authority was assigned to the Presidency.

With the first Presidential decrees, Chief of General Staff, Ministry of Communication and Transport, National Security Council General Secretariat, National Intelligence Organization (MIT) Authority and the Wealth Fund were bound to the Presidency. Promotions at Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) from colonel to brigadier general and commodore, as well as other assignments to a higher rank as general or admiral will have to be made by the President himself. Central Bank (TCMB) Chairman and deputies will also be assigned by the President. Erdoğan has become the sole authority on all areas, from the procedure and principle on the determination of medicines to the State Theaters.



35th Emergency Decree issued before the end of State of Emergency; 18,632 dismissed, 4 media institutions and 12 associations shut down

Statutory Decree No. 701 within the State of Emergency was enacted with a publication on the Official Gazette.

18,632 people were dismissed from public service; Özgürlükçü Demokrasi, Welat, Halkın Nabzı Newspapers, Avantaj TV Channel and 12 associations were shut down.

The decree is the 35th decree issued within the State of Emergency, which was declared on 21 July 2016 with seven extensions so far. The number of shut-down media institutions due to “*acts against national security*” has reached 178 and the number of shut-down associations has reached 1425 with this last emergency decree. 18 of the 199 academics dismissed from public service are signatories of the notice, “*We will not partake in this crime.*” The number of total dismissed ‘Peace Academics’ reached 404.

The State of Emergency, which was declared on 21 July 2016, has ended. The State of Emergency, which was extended seven times for three-month periods each, left behind a two-year past full of custodies, arrests, bans, dismissals, censorship, pressure, torture, shutdowns, impunity and right violations. The country was governed with emergency decrees, during this period. Many judicial changes were thus enacted with these decrees without legislative or judicial supervision. The principle of separation of powers was destroyed; instead all authority was transferred to one person, Erdoğan. All these regulations were then used as a weapon against anyone who is in opposing views to the government or who were seeking their rights.

According to official data, 160 thousand people were taken into custody, more than 70 thousand people were arrested and investigations were opened against 155 thousand people due to membership to an ‘armed terrorist organization.’ According to the data launched by Human Rights Common Platform, the number of arrests exceeded 228 thousand. Legal actions were taken against 17,089 social media users; more than 134 thousand public officers were dismissed. 70 newspapers, 25 radio channels, 20 magazines and 18 TV channels were shut down. Doors of thousands of associations were sealed. Strikes, press statements, demonstrations were banned. Parliament members were arrested; trustees were assigned to municipalities.

At the end of the second year, the State of Emergency was not extended; whereas a 25-article law draft to continue the applications of State of Emergency for three more years was presented to the Parliament. The draft predicts parallel regulations to the State of Emergency applications including custody period, testimony and interrogation process and arrest to continue for at least three more years.



1-year 3-month imprisonment each against three 'Peace Academics'

Three more academics, who were on trial due to 'making terrorist organization propaganda' by signing the petition, "We will not partake in this crime," were convicted.

Istanbul 32nd Assize Court sentenced Asst. Prof. Dr. E.B. from Koç University, Research Member G.M. from Kadir Has University and Research Member Canan Özbey from Marmara University (dismissed) to 1 year and three months of imprisonment each. The sentences were deferred.

Thus, the number of academics who were sentenced to 1 year and three months of imprisonment each has reached 19 in the legal process that started on 5 December 2017. The announcement of all sentences, except the ones against Prof. Dr. Zübeyde Füsün Üstel and Prof. Dr. Büşra Ersanlı, were deferred. 256 scientists have individually stood trial in lawsuits filed separately against them.



Four METU students arrested after custody due to banner

Four of the students, who were taken into custody due to 'insulting the President' with the banner they carried during the graduation ceremony at the Middle East Technical University (METU), were arrested by

the Criminal Judicature of Peace they were transferred to. The banner carried by the students showed a cartoon, entitled, "World of Tayyips" with Erdoğan depicted as an elephant, giraffe, monkey, camel, frog, snake, cow and duck.

The cartoon was published on the cover of Penguen Magazine on its 24 February 2005 issue following the penalty issued against Cumhuriyet cartoonist Musa Kart over drawing him has a cat tangled in yarn. The judicial process started by Erdoğan with 40 thousand TL compensation claim was denied by Ankara 1st Civil Court of First Instance in 2006.

Republican People's Party (CHP) Chairman Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu shared the cartoon from his Twitter account. Kılıçdaroğlu's post stated, "You will tolerate criticism and humour, you have to! You can't prevent criticism and humour by imprisoning people." Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office started an investigation against Kılıçdaroğlu due to 'insulting the President.'



BIA 3-month 'Media Monitoring Report' launched

Independent Communication Network (BIA) launched the 'April-June 2018 Media Monitoring Report'. According to the report, 127 journalists entered July in prison; 33 of them are still on

trial and investigations against 40 have still not turned into lawsuits. 315 journalists, columnists, editorial executives and cartoonists standing trial within the three-month period faced a total of 47 heavy life imprisonments, 1 life imprisonment, 3,034 years and six months of imprisonment and a total of 4 million and 40 TL of material or moral compensation. 2 heavy life imprisonment sentences and imprisonment sentences for a total of 137 years, 2 months and 19 days were issued in 33 cases concluded within the three-month period.

16 journalists stood trial due to 'insulting the President' with their writings, opinions or criticisms. Two new lawsuits were filed against the journalists and investigations against six are ongoing. Only in the last three-month period, 22 journalists have become defendants and suspects of the charge of 'insulting Erdoğan.' As the access ban on Wikipedia continues on its 14th month; 32 news articles, 77 tweets, 22 Facebook posts and 5 YouTube videos were censored within the April-May-June 2018 period. 2 newspapers and 1 TV channel were shut down with emergency decrees. Two reporters and one media office were attacked; Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli publicly targeted 59 journalists who criticized his party during the election period. Arrested criminal organization leader Alaattin Çakıcı, who was previously visited by Bahçeli at a hospital, threatened six Karar Newspaper writers with death. [Please click here](#) for the full report.



Press cases

Pressure against journalists continued in July as well, following the end of the State of Emergency period. According to the data compiled by news in the press, at least five journalists were taken into custody and one was arrested within the one*month period.

Nine journalists and writers were sentenced to a total of more than 60 years of imprisonment. Two journalists were threatened due to their news coverage, one journalist was physically attacked while tracking news information. One agency office was raided by the police; new investigations and lawsuits were filed against at least one media organization and one journalist. The only positive development within the one-month period was the release of three arrested journalists. Here are some of the headlines of this month:

Six Zaman writers sentenced to 56-year 3-month imprisonment in total

The lawsuit filed against 11 media workers, four of them arrested, including Zaman Newspaper writers due to “coup attempt” and “FETÖ membership” was concluded. Zaman was previously shut down with an emergency decree.

Istanbul 13th Assize Court sentenced Şahin Alpay, Ali Bulaç and Ahmet Turan Alkan to 8 years and nine months each, İbrahim Karayeğen to 9 years, Mümtazer Türköne and Mustafa Ünal to 10 years and six months of imprisonment each due to ‘illegal organization membership.’ The court issued the acquittals of İhsan Dağı, Lale Sarıbrahimoğlu, Mehmet Özdemir, Nuriye Akman and Orhan Kemal Cengiz and released Alkan and Karayeğen. Türköne and Ünal will remain arrested.

2-year 3-month imprisonment against Cumhuriyet reporter Canan Coşkun

Istanbul 26th Assize Court sentenced Cumhuriyet Daily reporter Canan Coşkun to 2 years and three months of imprisonment due to ‘targeting those on duty in the fight against terrorism.’ The sentence was not deferred. The journalist was on trial due to covering the Prosecutor interrogations of lawyers, who were taken into custody within an investigation against DHKP-C.

1-year 3-month imprisonment against journalist over coverage of guard violence

Erciş 1st Criminal Court of First Instance sentenced journalist Idris Yılmaz to 1 year and three months of imprisonment due to ‘slander and insult through press’ in the case filed against him due to his coverage of news and visuals in which guards are applying violence to a child. Yılmaz was arrested in January within another investigation against him due to ‘illegal organization propaganda’. He is at Van Erciş Type-A Prison since.

Lawsuit against JinNews news director after complaint from BTK

Following the criminal complaint made by the Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) against JinNews after eight access bans on its website, a lawsuit was filed against news director Safiye Alağaç. The indictment, accepted by Diyarbakır 4th Assize Court, charges Alağaç with ‘making illegal organization propaganda’ due to news on the military operation in Afrin as well as the content in the column, “*Woman’s Pen.*” Alağaç faces an imprisonment sentence for up to five years. The first hearing of the case will be held on 11 December 2018.



Courtrooms

Artists, writers, MPs, social media users; hence citizens from all parts of the society were in courtrooms facing charges like ‘insulting Erdoğan,’ ‘making illegal organization propaganda’ and ‘illegal organization membership.’ Students were arrested due to holding a banner. Lawsuits

were filed against movies, song lyrics. Conscientious objectors were penalized due to using their rights, which were recognized by the court they stood trial at. Even criticising

investigations against MPs were made subject for investigation. Here are some headlines of the month:

Penalty against conscientious objector Şendoğan Yazıcı

Artvin Borçka Criminal Court of First Instance sentenced conscientious objector Şendoğan Yazıcı to 62 days of imprisonment due to 'violating the Law of Military Service.' The sentence was turned into 640 TL of judicial fine. The court recognized the right to conscientious objection in the reasoned decision, which differed from similar cases. However, it was claimed that Yazıcı did not apply to the administration with an official letter while announcing his conscientious objection, therefore "*not using his right to conscientious objection in accordance with the legal procedure.*" The court further indicated that international conventions are binding even in case they conflict with domestic law, in accordance with Article 90 of the Constitution; and that despite a clear provision in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) on the matter, that the right to conscientious objection was recognized in precedents of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

Investigation against HDP Co-Chair Buldan due to 'criticising investigation'

Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office started an investigation against People's Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Pervin Buldan due to her speech, criticizing the investigations against HDP MPs.

Investigations have previously been opened against HDP Diyarbakır MPs Remziye Tosun and Musa Farisoğulları as well as HDP Batman MPs Feleknaş Uca and Mehmet Rüştü Tiryaki due to participating in the funerals of PKK members who were killed during operations. In her speech during her party assembly meeting in Van on July 21st, Buldan has stated, "*It is in our culture to participate in funeral ceremonies. This is our biggest duty and responsibility. There is a great fight we are a part of, so that people don't lose their lives any more. If people lose lives in this clashing process, it is within our responsibility to stand together with the families of those people.*"

Imprisonment sentence against Zuhale Olcay due to 'insulting Erdoğan'

2nd Criminal Chamber of Istanbul Regional Court sentenced artist Zuhale Olcay to 11 months and 20 days of imprisonment due to 'insulting the President.' Deferring the sentence, the court of appeals decided for Olcay to be judicially monitored for 1 year and six months.

The lawsuit has been filed against Olcay following the criminal complaint of someone who asserted that she has "made a hand gesture that would imply an insult against the President" during a concert she gave on 5 August 2016 in Kadıköy, Istanbul. Istanbul 46th Criminal Court of First Instance has then sentenced Olcay to 10 months of imprisonment due to 'insulting Erdoğan,' not deferring the sentence due to the artists' previous conviction on insulting a public officer. Following the verdict, the file was carried to the court of appeals.

New lawsuit against Ezhel due to same charge he previously acquitted of

Rapper Ömer Sercan İpekçioğlu, publicly known as "Ezhel," has been arrested in May with the allegation of 'abetting the use of drugs' and was acquitted in the first hearing of the case against him after staying in prison for 26 days. A new lawsuit was recently filed

against the rapper with the same charge. The indictment, accepted by Istanbul Anatolian 59th Criminal Court of First Instance, claims an imprisonment sentence against the artist for up to 10 years due to the lyrics of his songs, “Şehrimin Tadı [The Taste of My City]”, “Küvet [Bathtub]” and “Alo.” The first hearing of the case will be held on 6 November 2018.

Lawsuit against movie “My Suburban Tale”

A lawsuit was filed against the director of movie, “*My Suburban Tale*,” Yunus Ozan Korkut and five actors in the movie with the allegation of ‘praising the offence and offender.’ Korkut announced the first hearing of the case on Twitter, stating that it will be held on 30 January 2019 at Ceyhan Courthouse. The movie, written and directed by Korkut, depicts the stories of the residents in a ‘suburban’ area in Ceyhan district of Adana. The resident characters’ stories are told first-hand by the characters themselves.

Investigation against Baran Tursun Foundation Chairman due to TCK Article 301

An investigation was opened against Tursun Foundation Chairman Mehmet Tursun in accordance with Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK). Tursun Foundation was established by the Tursun Family in 2007 on behalf of Baran Tursun, who was shot dead in Izmir by the police, who claimed that he hasn’t obliged with the “stop” warning. The foundation conducts work for families, who lost their relatives in incidents across Turkey with police involvement.

Chairman Tursun is charged with ‘publicly denigrating the military or security organization of the state’ through his speeches and social media posts within the investigation. “An investigation was opened against a father, whose son was shot dead by the police, due to describing the data in the court records as a ‘cry’. We are now brought into such a situation, that we are scared of even saying, ‘the police killed our son,’” Tursun said.



Social media operations

Custodies, investigations and lawsuits continued on full-speed in July. According to the data announced by the Ministry of the Interior, legal actions were taken against more than a thousand social media users in the last month. Here are some of the headlines of the month:

Lawsuit against Berna Laçın with allegation of ‘denigration of religious values’

A lawsuit was filed against actress Berna Laçın with an imprisonment claim for up to one year due to her tweet against capital punishment. Laçın reacted against the debates to bring capital punishment back after continuous news on child abuse, writing on Twitter: *“If the death penalty was a solution, then the lands of Medina would not break records in the number of rape incidents. Let scientists, neurologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, social scientists and lawyers find solutions in collaboration. Governments don’t build societies with*

voices from tribunes.” Due to this tweet, Laçın was charged with ‘public denigration of religious values adopted by a part of society.’

In the indictment, accepted by Istanbul Anatolian 59th Criminal Court of First Instance, the Prosecutor’s Office stated that disrespectful attitudes against religious values must be avoided while expressing opinions and that statements on a city that is considered holy by Muslims carry a quality that is intending to disrupt public peace. Laçın spoke about the investigation against her on the matter, saying, *“Why do you correlate Medina directly with Islam instead of considering it an Arabian province? Would I be insulting Christians if I said something negative about Sweden?”*

‘Peace Academic’ arrested over social media posts

Academic and lawyer Hanifi Barış, who is also a signatory of the Academics for Peace notice, *“We will not partake in this crime”*, was arrested due to the news he shared on the social media. Barış was summoned to testify at a police station within the investigation opened against him due to the news he shared on the social media from foreign news websites as well as the photographs used in these news. The academic was later arrested by Istanbul 10th Criminal Judicature of Peace due to ‘making terrorist organization propaganda’.

Imprisonment against journalist due to social media post

The hearings of two separate lawsuits against journalist Serdar Altan and Fuat Yaşar due to their social media posts were held at Diyarbakır 9th Assize Court. The court sentenced Altan to 1 year, 6 months and 20 days of imprisonment due to ‘making illegal organization propaganda’ and deferred the sentence for five years. Yaşar, who was on trial with the same charge, was acquitted.

“Pinochet” investigation against Pucca

An investigation started against Pınar Karagöz, known publicly with her alias *“Pucca”* with her blogs and books, due to her tweet, *“I have only one hope left, the matter of Pinochet,”* during the June 24 elections. Karagöz is charged with ‘provoking the public to hatred and hostility’ within the investigation.

Karagöz explained that movie *“No”* depicted that the media initially presented coup organizer general Pinochet was winning, whereas the ultimate result was against Pinochet. *“It should not be concluded, from the post, that I desire a coup. I only wrote that because I hoped that even though the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan seemed to be winning during the counting of votes, that the results could change by morning,”* Karagöz said.



Access ban decrees

The first action of Mustafa Varank after being assigned as Minister of Industry and Trade was to bring a media blackout on the news related to himself. Assigned as minister on July 9th, Varank banned access to news published on four websites, including

Evrensel and Cumhuriyet, dated 2014. The banned content involved voice tapes allegedly belonging to Varank together with the allegations that “*he has ordered AKtrolls of Erdoğan to tweet supporting him*” and “*allowed for arms transfers with Turkish Airlines planes.*”

Hürriyet Daily’s reader representative Faruk Bildirici announced that the number of access bans brought by Criminal Judicatures of Peace against the newspaper’s content since 2014 has reached 2047. The latest news banned by Ankara 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace and Istanbul 8th Criminal Judicature of Peace on the newspaper’s website were entitled, “*Building assigned to TURGEV turns out land* and “*Names of 140 Court of Cassation members with custody warrants against them.*”

Minister of Treasury and Finance Berat Albayrak issued an access ban on the solidarity calls made by Turkish Journalists Association (TGS) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) on Twitter via court decree after filing a lawsuit against Cumhuriyet reporter Pelin Ünker due to reporting the names involved in the “*Panama Papers.*” The calls banned by Istanbul 3rd Criminal Judicature of Peace were made on the lawsuit filed against Ünker, who stood trial in the first hearing on June 21st, with the hashtag “*GazetecilikSuçDeğildir [JournalismIsNotACrime].*”

Nine different website URLs, including the ones of BirGün Daily and gazeteduvar.com.tr, were banned by Ankara 3rd Criminal Judicature of Peace after reporting the news of the train accident in Çorlu district of Tekirdağ with 24 people dead. The ban decree was announced on Twitter by Prof. Dr. Yaman Akdeniz and was revealed to have been given after the claim by Unitek Construction Industry and Trade Inc.

An access ban was brought on the news related to the lawsuit against media proprietor Mehmet Fatih Oflaz, who was recently sentenced to imprisonment due to sexually abusing his daughter, following the claim of Oflaz. Istanbul 3rd Criminal Judicature of Peace censored news published on many websites, especially on HaberTürk. The court issue stated that the news are “no longer newsworthy” and “do not carry the quality of news coverage.” The reasoned decision of the case on the 18-year and 9-month imprisonment sentence against Oflaz, claimed by the Judicature to be “no longer newsworthy,” was only issued last May.

You may find details and more on <http://www.dusun-think.net/?dil=en> and read our weekly bulletins on <http://www.dusun-think.net/?s=bulten>