

Think, think...

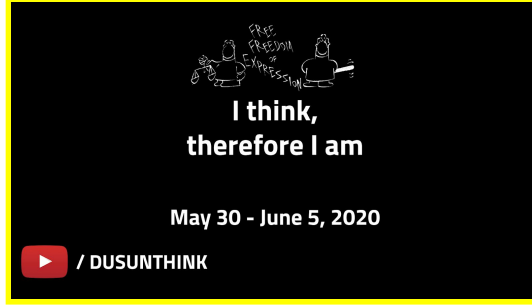


Freedom of Expression Weekly Bulletin (Issue 23/20, June 5, 2020)

What happened last week?

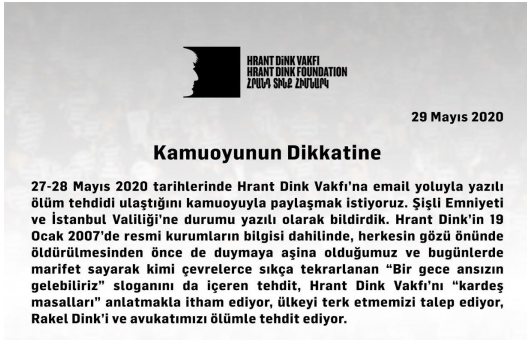
- Another case and image of torture was added to increasing cases of police violence was added this week from the Diyarbakır Security Office. Photos of torture against the suspect of an incident, which caused the death of a police officer in Bağlar district on May 30th, was shared on social media by a Parliament member advisor from the Nationalist Movement Party. Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu attempted to turn the killing of two police officers in Diyarbakır and Bursa into an opportunity and “targeted those criticizing police violence.”
- A mass grave cave was found in Mardin Dargeçit, where many "unsolved murders" took place in the 1990s, during the search of a relative of a missing person. While Mardin Governorate claimed that the bones are "archaeological findings"; HDP demanded a Parliamentary investigation.
- According to the expert report included in the file regarding the evacuation of the Iranian drug baron and gang leader Zindaşti and subsequently his fugitive, about 1 million TL has been transferred to the account of the judge Cevdet Özcan. Former AKP deputy from Istanbul and member of the Turkish Parliament Constitutional Commission. Dr. Burhan Kuzu has admitted that he had been calling Özcan to decide on his release after years of denial. The case is almost a satire on the relationship between mafia, politics and law!
- As Turkey loosens measures in the battle against Covid-19, the Turkish Parliament also started its short working session before the legislative vacation. The first agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly will give the guards new powers!
- Parliament memberships of Republican People’s Party (CHP) MPs Enis Berberoğlu and People’s Democratic Party (HDP) MP Leyla Güven and Musa Farisoğulları were taken off due to finalized judicial decrees against them. CHP and HDP described the fast summaries against the three MPs as a “coup against the Parliament.” Warrants were issued against the three names on the same day, so they were arrested and sent to prison before the day ended.
- Threats continue against the Dink Family and the Hrant Dink Foundation. The individual, who’s been indicated to have sent his second threat message to the foundation, was arrested by the court he was taken to. Another person had been arrested in the investigation opened on the first threat message sent to the foundation.
- Artists Pınar Aydınlar, Ferhat Tunç and Gökhan Yavuzel made another common statement and stated that death threats against them are increasing every day. [Please click here](#) for the full statement...

- According to the data announced by the Interior Ministry, 520 social media users were detained and 11 were arrested due to their posts on the Coronavirus during the outbreak.



Our weekly video programme “[COGITO ERGO SUM](#)” in which we follow Turkey’s agenda on freedom of expression and thought are on our [YouTube channel](#) every week...

[Please click here](#) for all of our video bulletins...



Solidarity with Hrant Dink Foundation

Intellectuals, writers, artists, activists, journalists and politicians have protested threats against the foundation [with a common declaration](#). The statement, signed by 209 names, underlined that “discriminatory languages and behaviour divide society” and stated, “We do not adopt an understanding that raises a murderer from a baby and a system where this dominates.”



1273 signatures for Timtik and Ünsal

[A statement](#) was issued with 1273 signatures to support the demands that caused the ongoing indefinite hunger strikes of Contemporary Lawyers Association member lawyers Ebru Timtik and Aytaç Ünsal. The declaration, signed by rights advocates, academics and artists draws attention to the universality of the right to a fair

trial.



Imprisonment against journalists based on “clear, concrete and imminent danger”!

Reasoned decisions for imprisonment sentences against Yeni Asya Daily’s Editor-In-Chief Kazım Güleçyüz and Managing Editor Halil İbrahim Özdebak due to “making illegal organisation

propaganda” were announced. The reasoned decree claimed that sharing, words, writings and cartoons that are the subject of the case were not within the scope of freedom of expression on the grounds of “open, concrete and imminent danger”! Journalists were accused of trying to dilute the investigations and trials against the Gülen Community as persecution. Güleçyüz was sentenced to 1 year and 8 months; Özdebak was sentenced to 1 year, 6 months and 22 days of imprisonment within the lawsuit.



3-year imprisonment claim against Banu Özdemir

A lawsuit was filed against Banu Özdemir, who was arrested and released for sharing visuals of music being broadcasted from the mosque in İzmir, with up to 3 years of imprisonment due to "incitement to public hatred and hostility." According to the prosecutor, Özdemir had to condemn the images! The first hearing will be

held on September 17.



Sentence against journalist Boğatekin approved

The 1-year 15-day imprisonment sentence issued against Gerger Fırat Daily’s News Director Özgür Boğatekin was approved by the 8th Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court. The journalist had been sentenced due to his writings which criticised Adıyaman Gerger District Governor

Ömer Bilgin in 2013 and 2014. On the other hand, the appeal application on the judicial fine sentenced to journalist Boğatekin in 2018 with the claim that he has insulted Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was denied by the 9th Criminal Chamber of Gaziantep Regional Court.



Imprisonment sentence against journalist Metin Uca

Journalist Metin Uca was sentenced to 1 year, 2 months and 17 days in prison for sharing results of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections on Twitter, which contradicted the data previously announced by Anadolu Agency (AA). In the lawsuit filed by AA General Manager Şenol

Kazancı and Deputy General Manager Mustafa Özkaya, Istanbul 52nd Criminal Court of First Instance sentenced Uca to imprisonment due to "insulting a public officer for his duty".



Censorship against letters of Demirtaş

Başak Demirtaş announced that the letters of the former Chairman of People's Democratic Party (HDP) Selahattin Demirtaş, who is currently in Edirne Prison, were censored. Demirtaş shared the censored letter pages on social media and said, "Face to face meetings are banned. Video calls were removed. Now, there's censorship. What's

next?" she asked.



Grup Yorum's concert application denied

Istanbul Governorate didn't give permission for the concert application of Grup Yorum. Band members Helin Bölek and İbrahim Gökçek had started an indefinite hunger strike to end concert bans and both have lost their lives. Gökçek had ended his protest shortly before his death, following the promise that concert bans will be revoked.



21 people detained during commemoration for Ethem Sarısülük

The police intervened in the group who wanted to commemorate Ethem Sarısülük, who lost his life with a police bullet during the Gezi Park protests in Ankara. Güvenpark was surrounded by the police and 21 people were detained in the first intervention.



Intervention against police violence protest

The police intervened young people, who took action to protest police violence that increased during the pandemic period. More than 20 people were detained in Kadıköy, Istanbul.



Intervention against exile protest in Batman

The police intervened in the press statement to be made against the exile of 3 Health and Social Workers' Union (SES) member social workers in Batman. 8 people were detained.



Access bans

The news on Esenler Municipality transferring the worship area to the Ministry of Treasury and Finance in return for its debt was banned to access following the application of Esenler Mayor (AKP) Tevfik Göksu.



AKP Mayor threatens journalists

Zonguldak Kozlu District Mayor Ali Bektaş threatened journalists who made negative news about him during the show he attended on a local TV channel. Bektaş spoke about the news about his assets and said, "I will do whatever is necessary. No one will be able to walk on the streets easily, if it's a threat, I'm threatening."



'Torture' statement from the governorship

Diyarbakır Governorate made a statement on the torture against Şeyhmus Yılmaz and his wife, Menace Yılmaz with dogs during house raids after a police officer had lost his life in Bağlar district on May 30. The Governorate claimed that Şeyhmus Yılmaz has kicked the dog and the dog showed a "reflex reaction."



TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- All hearings were postponed in courthouses across the country within measures against COVID-19 except "urgent matters." Therefore, no hearings will be held next week.