



Think, think...

Freedom of Expression Weekly Bulletin

(Issue 26/18, 29 June 2018)

What happened last week?

*** The unofficial results of the June 24 elections announced Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as the “*first leader of the Presidential government system*” with 52.5 percent of votes. Justice and Development Party (AKP) became the first party in the Parliament with 41.85 percent of the elections for Parliament members, whereas could only win the majority in the Parliament due to its alliance with the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). Main opposition party Republican People’s Party (CHP) lost votes, Good Party received 9.89 percent of the votes. 191 Parliament members were elected from the alliance formed by CHP. People’s Democratic Party (HDP) exceeded the threshold, becoming the third party in the Parliament after AKP and CHP.

*** President Erdoğan and Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Bahçeli held a meeting immediately after the elections. In the summit on the roadmap of their alliance, the topics of the State of Emergency, paid military service, Parliamentary Speakership and new cabinet topics were indicated to have been discussed.

*** Bahçeli launched an advertisement, targeting journalists, writers, research company owners and academics criticising himself and his party during the electoral process. **(Details in the bulletin...)**

*** Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) election monitoring board announced their preliminary report on the June 24 elections. Underlining unequal conditions for candidates during campaigns, OSCE representatives pointed out the effects of the State of Emergency on the campaign process and that transparency and impartiality were not provided in the elections. **(Details in the bulletin...)**

*** Human Rights Association (IHD) and the Human Rights Violation of Turkey (TIHV) reported the violations experienced during the entire election propaganda. According to the report, HDP was attacked and experienced right violations for 93 times, Good Party and CHP for 12 times, Felicity Party for 8 times, AKP for 2 times. Four people have lost their lives in the incidents and 90 were injured or beaten. **(Details in the bulletin...)**

*** European Union (EU) announced that a new chapter in membership negotiations with Turkey or an update on the customs union agreement is not on the agenda, recording that the regressions in Turkey on the supremacy of law, basic rights and freedom of expression are quite worrisome.

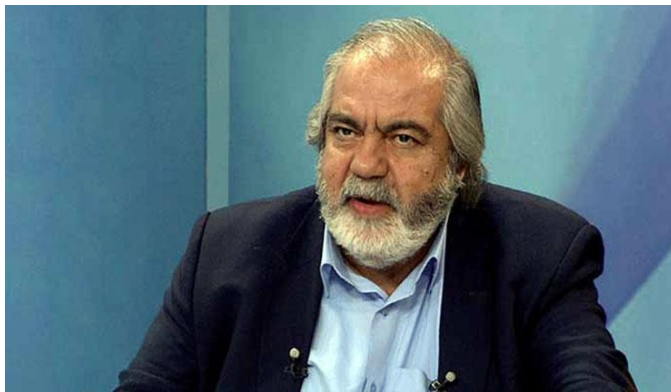
*** People’s Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Pervin Buldan announced that Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu has called her on the phone and claimed HDP responsible of a murder committed in Ağrı, saying, “*We will let you know your place. No more right to live for you.*” Making a statement on the matter, Soylu admitted having threatened and targeted HDP.

*** Interior Minister made statements targeting the Republican People’s Party (CHP) as well. Accusing CHP on HDP exceeding the electoral threshold, Soylu announced that he

has ordered Governors not to include CHP in the protocol during funerals of soldiers and police officers. *“There are the funerals of PKK terrorist organization members. We let them hold the funerals of those carcasses quite frequently. If they are together in the ballots, they will be together in the funerals as well,”* said Soylu.

*** Court of Appeals issued the release of Mehmet Altan, who was arrested for 21 months despite a Constitutional Court decree on him. ***(Details in the bulletin...)***

*** The number of files concluded at the State of Emergency Applications Monitoring Committee reached 21,500 with only 1300 applications concluding positively. 87,405 applications are still under examination by the committee.



Mehmet Altan released

2nd Criminal Chamber of Istanbul Regional Court of Justice issued the release of journalist Mehmet Altan, who was recently sentenced to heavy life imprisonment in the case he was on trial related to the July 15 Coup Attempt. The verdict referred to the right violation verdict issued by the

Constitutional Court (AYM) on Altan and that the verdict is binding.

The other defendants in the case, e.g. Ahmet Altan, Nazlı Ilıcak, Fevz, Yazıcı, Yakup Şimşek and Şükrü Tuğrul Özşengül will remain arrested. The appeal proceeding will start on September 21st. The Constitutional Court had issued Altan’s release due to “right violation” after 21 months under arrest; whereas Istanbul 26th Assize Court has not complied with the decree.



OSCE: “Elections were not transparent and impartial”

Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) election monitoring board announced their preliminary report on the June 24 elections. Underlining unequal conditions for candidates during

campaigns, OSCE representatives pointed out the effects of the State of Emergency on the campaign process and that transparency and impartiality were not provided in the elections. The observers further indicated that they have experienced worry of safety in Turkey for the first time.

The report stated that Erdoğan and the Justice and Development Party (AKP) used government resources disproportionately by obtaining unlawful advantage through pro-government public and private media organizations. Freedom of meeting and expression were also indicated to have been restricted under the conditions of State of

Emergency. Emphasizing the significant influence of the restrictions on basic rights and freedoms on the elections, OSCE monitoring board coordinator Ignacio Sanchez Amor stated, *"We are hoping that such restrictions in Turkey will be revoked as soon as possible."* Indicating that the observers were prevented from examining ballot boxes, Amor criticized the denial of German Leftist Party MP Andrej Hunko and Swedish MP Jaber Karim Amin inside the country border. *"It is unacceptable that our two members were prevented from observing the elections based on claims of terrorism,"* Amor stated.



IHD and TIHV launch right violations report

Turkey went through the elections to vote for the 13th President of the Republic and the 27th session Parliament members. The unofficial elections results announced Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as the *"first leader of the Presidential government system"* with 52.5 percent of votes.

Justice and Development Party (AKP) became the first party in the Parliament with 42.5 percent of the elections for Parliament members, whereas could only win the majority in the Parliament due to its alliance with the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). Main opposition party Republican People's Party (CHP) lost votes, Good Party received 10 percent of the votes. 191 Parliament members were elected from the alliance formed by CHP. People's Democratic Party (HDP) exceeded the threshold, becoming the third party in the Parliament after AKP and CHP.

On the other hand, Human Rights Association (IHD) and the Human Rights Violation of Turkey (TIHV) reported the violations experienced during the entire election propaganda. According to the report, HDP was attacked and experienced right violations for 93 times, Good Party and CHP for 12 times, Felicity Party for 8 times, AKP for 2 times. Four people have lost their lives in the incidents and 90 were injured or beaten.

26 HDP members and 2 Felicity Party members were exposed to torture and mistreatment during the election campaigns. The report further stated that all of the 33 people who were exposed to torture and mistreatment outside of custody centers were members of HDP. 387 people were taken into custody during this process, with 361 of them HDP members. 15 people were arrested, with 13 of them HDP members. Independent MP candidate Mahmut Konuk, on the other hand, was taken into custody for exactly 11 times on separate dates. 17 events organized by HDP and 2 by CHP and Good Party were banned.

IHD further announced denouncements on violations during the voting procedure in Urfa, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, İzmir, Siirt, İstanbul, Ankara, Batman, Siirt, Mardin and Denizli. 10 people, including journalists and members from the French Communist Party board to track the elections in four provinces, were taken into custody.



MHP leader Bahçeli targets journalists and writers

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) Chairman Devlet Bahçeli targeted people who have allegedly “*defamed, accused and imputed*” his party with a full-page advertisement published on daily newspapers. Bahçeli published

a list of names consisting of journalists, writers, research company executives and academics who have criticized him or his party during the electoral process and wrote, *“If people like you haven’t existed, how the truth, dignity, integrity, morality and humanity would be evident and easily distinguishable... We will never forget what these people have done, written, destroyed with their comments.”*

Publishing a declaration on the matter, Turkish Journalists Association stated that it is impossible to talk about democracy in Turkey in case political party representatives lists to target journalists and writers who write news and commentaries they don’t like.

Turkish Journalists Union indicated that Bahçeli has a right to respond against the criticisms, stating, *“... whereas, it is out of line to accuse our colleagues with conducting a ‘defamation campaign..’ We are not afraid of those who target journalists by publishing name lists.”*



CHP MP Eren Erdem arrested

25th and 26th session Republican People’s Party (CHP) Istanbul MP Eren Erdem was arrested after being taken into custody after being taken into custody in Ankara following the order of Istanbul 35th Assize Court.

Istanbul 35th Assize Court has recently accepted the indictment against Erdem with an imprisonment claim for up to 22 years due to the allegation of aiding Fethullah Gülen community structure; the first hearing of the case was scheduled to September 19th and Erdem was banned from travelling abroad. The indictment against Erdem charges the MP due to the allegation of possessing and distributing the summaries on the National Intelligence Trucks operation as well as supporting Zaman Newspaper by going to the office on the day the operation against the newspaper was held. CHP did not show Erdem as candidate in the June 24 elections.



Artist Hozan Cane arrested

Artist Saide İnaç, known publicly as “Hozan Cane,” was arrested due to her social media posts. The artist, who is a citizen of Germany, has been taken into custody in Edirne as she was there for People’s Democratic Party (HDP)’s electoral campaigns.

Edirne 1st Criminal Judicature of Peace arrested the artist and charged her with ‘making illegal organization propaganda.’



Nine HDP members released after arrest during election period

The indictment against 10 People’s Democratic Party (HDP) members, who were arrested on May 3rd by Istanbul 5th Criminal Judicature of Peace with the allegation of ‘making illegal organization propaganda’ after

being taken into custody with a raid organized against the electoral meeting in HDP Güngören district building in Istanbul on April 28th, was completed.

Accepting the indictment, Istanbul 23rd Assize Court issued the release of nine people, including HDP Istanbul Provincial Co-Chair Cengiz Çiçek. The party’s Güngören District Co-Chair Ömer Özkan remains arrested; the first hearing of the case will be held on August 3rd.

 Yolcu Tiyatro
@yolcutiyatro

Takip ediliyor

Oyuncumuz Cenk Dost Verdi bu akşam Süreyya Opera’sının önünde #NuriyeveSemih 'e destek için yapılan basın açıklamasında gözüktüğüne alınmıştır



Penalty against stage actor over social media posts

The imprisonment sentence against Yolcu Theater actor Cenk Dost Verdi was approved by the Court of Appeals. Verdi’s social media posts were examined following a denouncement and an investigation was opened against him due to illegal organization propaganda. Later in

the lawsuit filed related to the investigation, Verdi has been sentenced to 2 years and six months of imprisonment. The sentence was abated to 10 months and fifteen days of imprisonment.

The actor made the announcement on the social media. “They considered it a crime for us to witness the honorable fight of Nuriye and Semih, to burn inside when remembering

Berkin Elvan, to miss our brother Aziz Güler after the absence of his funeral for 59 days, to protect the legacy left to us by Gezi martyrs, to hum songs of Grup Yorum after their instruments were plundered, to be unable to remain silent against all discrimination and violence, to multiply with the unifying and creative power of the arts,” wrote Verdi.



Lawsuit against column due to ‘insulting Erdoğan’

A lawsuit was filed against Evrensel Newspaper writer Kamil Tekin Sürek due to his column, entitled, “*Fascist Dictatorship.*” The indictment, accepted by Bakırköy 2nd Criminal Court of First Instance, charges Sürek with insulting President Erdoğan with his expressions: “*In fascist*

dictatorships, lawsuits would be filed against you with your slightest criticism against the government, you would be dismissed from profession and even be announced a terrorist. However, any illegal act of the people in power are not subject to trialing. How do we know this? From the history. Hitler, Mussolini, Salazar, Franco, Pinochet, Saddam, bin Ali all governed their countries like this.”



Ankara Governorate bans screening of ‘Pride’

Ankara Governorate banned the screening of UK-movie ‘Pride’, organized by Communist LGBTIs group within the 26th Pride Week, within the State of Emergency. The governorate claimed that the screening would ‘incite towards resentment and hostility’ and may

lead to provocations and issued the ban based on “*social sensitivities.*”



Investigations against 256 social media users in one week

Ministry of the Interior announced investigations have started against 256 people within the last week (June 18-25) due to their social media posts. These investigations were opened following examinations on 346 social media accounts; the

users were charged with ‘making illegal organization propaganda,’ ‘insulting government authorities,’ ‘incitement to resentment, hatred and hostility’ and ‘intending

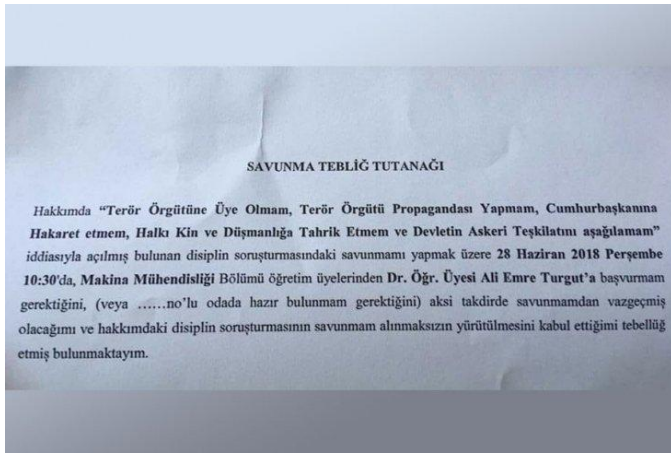
against the indivisible integrity of state.’ On the other hand, four people were arrested in Edirne, Urfa and Elazığ this week due to their social media posts.



1-year 3-month imprisonment against social media post due to ‘illegal organization propaganda’

Kayseri 2nd Assize Court sentenced Ahmet G, who was on trial due to his social media posts, to 1 year and three months of imprisonment due to ‘making terrorist organization propaganda.’ The announcement of the sentence against the defendant, who is charged with *“legitimizing, praising and encouraging terroristic organization methods involving violence, force and threat.”*

Kayseri 2nd Assize Court sentenced Ahmet G, who was on trial due to his



Investigation against two METU students due to ‘illegal organization propaganda’ and ‘insulting Erdoğan’

‘making terroristic organization propaganda,’ ‘insulting the President,’ ‘incitement to resentment and hostility’ and ‘denigration of the military organization of state.’ The administrative investigation was revealed to be related to the police operation conducted on February 22nd in Ankara. Students, who were taken into custody during the operation, have been released after standing trial at the court.

A disciplinary investigation was opened against two students at the Middle East Technical University (METU) with the allegations of ‘terrorist organization membership,’



Sosyal Politikalar Cinsiyet Kimliği ve Cinsel Yönelim Çalışmaları Derneği

SPoD LGBTI office to remain closed for awhile due to attacks and threats

SPoD LGBTI announced all events planned to be organized at the association’s office were postponed due to security reasons and that they had to cancel the events organized within the Pride Week as well.

The office was attacked in the evening of June 26th, during a meeting related to a training on sexually transmitted diseases. The police searched the office upon arriving with a permission from the Prosecutor instead of intervening the attackers. The

association announced that their office will remain closed for a while due to threats, attacks and the police acting together with the attackers.



TRIALS OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- Proceedings of the Academics for Peace continued on June 26th and 28th at Istanbul 34th and 35th Assize Courts. The next hearings were scheduled to October 18th and 22nd, and June 24th.
- Defendants including Ahmet Altan, Yasemin Çongar, Yıldray Oğur, Mehmet Baransu and Tuncay Opçin stood trial in the hearing on June 27th at Istanbul 13th Assize Court within the Taraf Newspaper Case. The next hearing was scheduled for October 17th.
- Journalist Deniz Yücel stood trial on June 28th at Istanbul 23rd Assize Court. The court decided for Yücel to testify at a court near the location of his residence abroad. The next hearing was scheduled for December 20th, at 09:30.
- 22 Özgür Gündem workers have stood trial in the hearing on June 29th at Istanbul 5th Criminal Court of First Instance due to 'resisting and insulting to prevent duty.' The hearing had not concluded as the bulletin was being prepared.

Hearings Next Week

- The second hearing of the case in which arrested journalist Seher (Seda) Taşkın is on trial, charged with illegal organization membership, will be held on July 2nd at Muş 2nd Assize Court.
- Proceedings of the Academics for Peace continue this week as well. The academics will stand trial on June 3rd, 5th and 6th at Istanbul 32nd, 34th and 36th Assize Courts.
- Former People's Democratic Party (HDP) Co-Chair Figen Yüksekdağ will stand trial in the case she is on trial after the merging of seven different summaries against her due to 'managing a terrorist organization,' 'making terrorist organization propaganda,' 'violating the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations,' 'incitement towards resentment and hostility' and 'incitement to commit crime' on July 6th at Ankara 16th Assize Court.
- Ferhat Tunç will stand trial at Büyükçekmece 14th Criminal Court of First Instance on July 6th, starting at 09:10 within the lawsuit filed against him on April 18th due to 'insulting the President' with an imprisonment claim from 1 year and five months up to 5 years and eight months.