

# TURKEY: MONTHLY HUMAN RIGHTS DIGEST

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## A MOTHER'S PLEA FOR HELP: THE TUMOR IS SPREADING, MY DAUGHTER IS SICK



On February 27, 2018, Sevgi Sezer, a critically-ill primary school teacher, was imprisoned for 7 years and 6 months due to her affiliation with the Hizmet Movement. After nearly two years, Sezer continues to suffer from a malicious tumor on her back while forcedly sharing an overcrowded prison cell with 16 other women prisoners. Sezer was denied medical attention for a long time despite making many requests while the tumor on her back, a constantly growing vascular malformation, went undiagnosed for 9 months. Sezer's deprivation of medical assistance led to the painful growth of the tumor, causing her immense suffering and severely limiting her mobility. The Turkish appeals court continues to stall action on Sezer's case as she suffers despite concrete medical evidence that warrants close medical attention and release from imprisonment. Teacher Sezer's mother made an emotional appeal to authorities: "I could not hug my daughter in my last visit because the tumor spread all over her back. I am calling government officials to take action; my daughter is sick and in pain. She needs treatment."<sup>1</sup>

## 70 TURKISH AIR FORCE ACADEMY CADETS RECEIVE LIFE SENTENCE FOR 'COURTROOM BEHAVIOR'

On January 3, 2020, the 24th Istanbul High Criminal Court sentenced 70 Turkish Air Force Academy Students, aged 18-23, to aggravated life imprisonment. The Turkish Court charged all 70 of the cadets with violating the constitution, merging their cases under the overarching July 15 Coup Attempt trials. While the cadets' involvement in the coup attempt has not been evidenced, the court found the cadets guilty of intent to aid and abet the coup attempt.



Moreover, the presiding judge amended his original sentencing consideration to a lifetime sentence and defended his decision by blaming the allegedly contrarian behavior of the defendants during court proceedings. While the cadets can appeal the court order, the hysteria revolving around the July 15 failed coup attempt has effectively eliminated all avenues of justice and exoneration.<sup>2</sup>

## PHILANTHROPIST MELEK IPEK, "ANGEL MOM", SENTENCED FOR HIZMET AFFILIATION

On January 9, 2020, the 24th Ankara High Criminal Court sentenced Melek Ipek and her son Cafer Ipek to 12 and 79 years of imprisonment, respectively. The overarching case brought against billionaire Akin Ipek and the Ipek Family Estate found all family members guilty for providing financial support to the charity activities of the Hizmet Movement. Since five family members had escaped Turkey due to the undue political and judicial process, the Ankara court put their cases on hold while charging Melek Ipek with "opposition to tax law", a bogus charge that, as it now appears, has been included to target the Ipek family's vast financial estate. The court ordered for the seizure of all financial assets, dividends, and shares of all Ipek family members who hold stock in the Ipek Holding Company.<sup>3</sup>





## FORMER TEACHER FROM ADANA SENTENCED 7.5 YEARS FOR TEACHER'S UNION MEMBERSHIP

On January 8, 2020, the Adana 12th Heavy Criminal Court found Mehmet Onuk, a former school teacher, guilty and sentenced him for 7 years and 6 months. According to the court order, Mr. Onuk's alleged crimes consist of using ByLock, a mobile chat application, holding religious study circles in his home, and being a member of a government-sanctioned worker's union. Mehmet Onuk, like countless others, was charged for these crimes as part of the ongoing persecution campaign against the Hizmet Movement.<sup>5</sup>



References:

1. <http://magduriyetler2.blogspot.com/2019/12/hasta-tutuklu-sevgi-sezerin-annesi.html>
2. <http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/1712336/70-eski-hava-harp-okulu-ogrencisine-muebbet.html>
3. <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/koza-ipek-davasinda-karar-cikti-melek-ipeke-verilen-ceza-belli-oldu-41415875>
4. <https://www.ensonhaber.com/feto-suclamasiyla-isten-cikarilan-spor-spikeri-dert-yandi.html>
5. <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/adanada-feto-sanigi-eski-ogretmene-7-5-yil-hapis-cezasi-6118156>

## ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE HYSTERIA: LEFT-LEANING SPORTS REPORTER FIRED FROM JOB

On January 8, 2020, Fatma Karaagac, a left-leaning former sports reporter for Haberturk TV, gave an interview regarding her termination. In her remarks, Karaagac complained that she was fired for international political reasons while the company firing her blamed her alleged affiliation with the Hizmet Movement without legal action. The hysterical persecution directed against the Hizmet Movement continues to ransack the lives of thousands of people. The unquestioned vilification of the Hizmet Movement by the Turkish government allows for opportunists and people with personal vendettas to accuse anyone and anytime of Hizmet affiliation to cause serious damage to their lives. Fatma Karaagac is recent and prime example.<sup>4</sup>

## TURKEY'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN NUMBERS

<b>612,347</b> INVESTIGATED	<b>160K+</b> ARRESTED	<b>130K</b> PUBLIC SERVANT DISMISSED	<b>62,669</b> POLITICAL PRISONERS	<b>4,000</b> WOMEN POLITICAL PRISONERS	<b>780</b> CHILD POLITICAL PRISONERS	<b>161</b> JOURNALISTS JAILED
<b>3,003</b> SCHOOLS & DORMITORIES SHUT DOWN	<b>15</b> PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES SHUT DOWN	<b>301,878</b> BOOKS DESTROYED	<b>1.8M</b> TEXTBOOKS DESTROYED AND REPRINTED	<b>6,021</b> ACADEMICS DISMISSED	<b>1,600</b> UNIONS & NGO SHUT DOWN	<b>200</b> MEDIA OUTLETS SHUT DOWN
<b>51</b> SUSPICIOUS DEATHS IN PRISON	<b>4,463</b> JUDGES & PROSECUTORS DISMISSED	<b>2,718</b> TORTURED & ABUSED	<b>128</b> ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES IN TURKEY & ABROAD	<b>1,539</b> ATTORNEYS TRIED IN COURT	<b>580</b> ATTORNEYS IMPRISONED	<b>109</b> RANK ON RULE OF LAW INDEX