

# TURKEY: MONTHLY HUMAN RIGHTS DIGEST

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## A TEACHER'S FINAL WORDS: THEY ARE KILLING PEOPLE



On December 20, 2019, Engin Erol (41) passed away from cancer after three years of inhumane imprisonment in Artvin and Erzurum prisons. Erol, a teacher, husband, and father of three, began experiencing severe health problems within three months of imprisonment and requested proper medical care from the Turkish courts. The prosecutor on the case ignored more than 20 appeals from Erol, delaying his diagnosis for months, and denying him access to medicine as his condition rapidly progressed to its end stage. He was kept in Erzurum, one of the coldest cities in Turkey, during winter months while “the new warden turned the heat off” for months despite the below freezing temperature. Erol pleaded for help in his final words: “They are killing people in there. There are two people suffering from my condition. Pray for them.”

## MOTHER & 7-YEAR OLD CHILD WITH DOWN SYNDROME SENTENCED FOR HIZMET MOVEMENT AFFILIATION

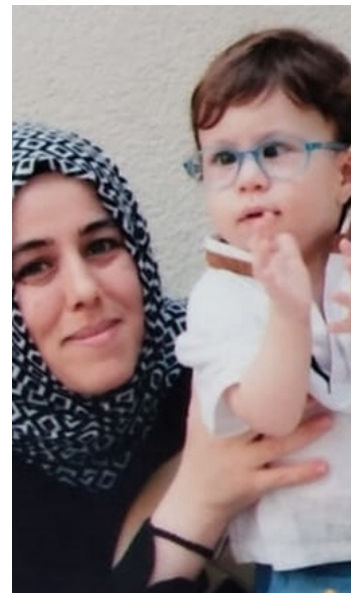
Nuran Dilber and her daughter Nalan (7) have been sent to an İstanbul prison over their alleged links to the Hizmet Movement. Nalan, a child with down syndrome, requires special medical and educational attention. Prior to her arrest, Nalan had just begun to learn how to read and write, bathroom etiquette, and social interaction. Left with no one else to take care of her, Nalan continues to be imprisoned along with her mother.



Nalan continues to be imprisoned along with her mother. Their story came to fore thanks to HDP Parliamentarian Omer Faruk Gergerlioglu who voiced his opposition to the arbitrary arrests and emphasized the gravity of the trauma that Nalan has been through. Gergerlioglu criticized the detention of the Dilber family with strong words: “Where is your conscience?”<sup>2</sup>

## A BABY IN PRISON: MUAZ'S FIRST BIRTHDAY

On December 7th, 2018, only 60 days after giving birth to her baby, Nurhan Erdal Bahadır (38) was arrested as part of Turkey's routine imprisonment of all dissidents and put in Tarsus Women's Prison. Bahadır's baby, Muaz, suffers from a genetic heart condition and a vision problem that caused permanent damage to the alignment of his eyes. The young mother's request for a pair of glasses as well as an instant pot for her child's health were denied for months while Muaz received neither medical care nor supplemental baby food during the first year of his life. Forced to sleep in a ward with 15 other women, Bahadır was only given a bunk bed to sleep with Muaz. When Muaz fell off the bed, the mother's plea for help was met with a recommendation from prison guards to “tie the baby's foot to the bed.” During her postpartum period, Mrs. Bahadır and Baby Muaz faced harsh winter conditions without proper heating and rationed food portions, compounding the cruelty of the prison conditions. In December 2019, Muaz celebrated his first birthday behind bars.<sup>3</sup>





## MEMBERS OF FLORYA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SENTENCED: 26 BUSINESSMEN BEHIND BARS

On December 27, 2019, the Istanbul 23rd High Criminal Court tried 26 businessmen for their official membership to Florya Chamber of Commerce, a local organization in Istanbul. The court sentenced 9 defendants to 7 years and 6 months, and 14 defendants to 6 years and 3 months of prison time for “their affiliation with the Hizmet Movement. While the court refused to provide an explanation for their reasoning, defendants’ appeals made no difference in the court’s sentencing decision<sup>5</sup>.



References:

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- [3. https://turkeypurge.com/mother-7-year-old-daughter-with-down-syndrome-sent-to-prison-on-terror-charges-report](https://turkeypurge.com/mother-7-year-old-daughter-with-down-syndrome-sent-to-prison-on-terror-charges-report)
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- [5. aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/fetonun-is-dunyasi-yapilanmasi-davasinda-karar/1685891#](http://aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/fetonun-is-dunyasi-yapilanmasi-davasinda-karar/1685891#)

## ANOTHER VICTIM OF THE HYSTERIA: CHP MAYOR IN PRISON FOR FORMER ROLE

On December 12th, 2019, Ibrahim Burak Oguz, a member of the main opposition party in Turkey, was found guilty for his alleged association with the Hizmet Movement because of his former role on the executive board of the Izmir Young Entrepreneurs Association (IGID). Oguz’s arrest came only six months after his electoral victory on March 21st where he beat the leading party’s candidate and became the Mayor of Urla. While no specific charges have been leveled against Oguz, he has been sent to prison in Izmir for his alleged links<sup>4</sup>.

## TURKEY'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN NUMBERS

<b>612,347</b> INVESTIGATIONS	<b>160K+</b> ARRESTS	<b>130K</b> PUBLIC SERVANT DISMISSALS	<b>62,669</b> POLITICAL PRISONERS	<b>4,000</b> WOMEN POLITICAL PRISONERS	<b>780</b> CHILD POLITICAL PRISONERS	<b>161</b> JAILED JOURNALISTS
<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> JUDGE & PROSECUTOR DISMISSALS	<b>2,718</b> CASES OF TORTURE & ABUSE	<b>128</b> ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES IN TURKEY & ABROAD	<b>1,539</b> ATTORNEYS ON TRIAL	<b>580</b> ATTORNEY PRISONERS	<b>109</b> RANK ON RULE OF LAW INDEX