
Even The Ruling Power Was More Truthful Than The Media It Controlled!

Valuable press member,

As a part of our struggle for freedom of thought, expression and press in Turkey, we hereby share with you the 45th edition of our monthly “Media Monitoring Report,” which we record the censorship, threat-violence, detention-trial, violation of personal rights against our colleagues and manipulations and oppressions on the news.

In this month, we felt the need to change the method of our monthly reports as we decided to record the primary data about the developments rather than detailing the incidents in our future issues. The reason for this change is that Progressive Journalists Association has started to publish its own magazine “Çağdaş Dergi” as of January. With the Çağdaş Dergi, we aim to provide a detailed perspective to the questions, problems and developments concerning the press that we have been covering with our reports.

The summary of statistical data in the light of the developments reflected in our report for the first month of the year, provided that the topics we will be highlighted in the next issues of ÇAĞDAŞ DERGİ are as follows:

In January,

22 members of the press were appeared at the court for the 14 different cases, 13 of which are ongoing and 1 of which is new.

2 journalists were sentenced to a total of 13 years and 4 months in prison.

3 journalists were detained; 1 journalist, Sedef Kabaş, was arrested.

2 journalists were threatened.

Journalist and anchorwoman Sedef Kabaş was detained on January 22, 2022, and arrested afterwards for “insulting the President” by uttering a proverb in a TV show on January 14. Our Association followed her arrest as a sensitive issue in terms of journalistic principles and freedom of expression.

It is one of the primary indicators of democracies that no restrictions should be placed on the expression of thoughts. No matter how contentious it may be, expression of any opinion that does not include violence or restrict anyone’s freedom is both a fundamental human right and insurance of democracy, not not a threat. In this context, it is indisputable that Sedef Kabaş’s words do not contain threats and are within the limits of freedom of thought, and her arrest is not legal.



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One of the highlights of our January report was the broadcasts of pro-government media outlets that were violating the principles of journalism. The outlets covered or omitted the news such as energy price hikes, inflation, the increase in salaries, the problems in the supply of natural gas, Turkey's mediation mission attempt in the Russia-Ukraine crisis, the change of duty in the Ministry of Justice, the problems experienced due to snowfall, President Tayyip Erdoğan's letting a child call main opposition CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu a "traitor". The news in the pro-government media about the issues mentioned above showed once again that dependence which is the most significant danger for journalism completely detaches the journalist from their responsibility of conveying the knowledge of the apparent reality. Not seeing the hikes in consumer products; highlighting the increase in salaries; ignoring the problems caused by snowfall in the areas under the responsibility of the government and focusing on what happened in the areas of responsibility of the opposition municipalities; blaming the child instead of discussing letting a child insult on the stage... The violation of principles of journalism has come to the point that it becomes a problem even for the government. In the process where even the spokespersons of the government accepted the facts from time to time, the media proved with their broadcasts that they had completely lost their sense of reality both professionally and humanly.

Other developments that should be underlined in January are;

The Constitutional Court decided that the 9th article of Law No. 5651 on "the Regulation of Broadcasting on the Internet and Combating Crimes Committed Through These Broadcasts", which constitutes the basis for the access bans to the internet, should be rearranged due to the lack of fundamental guarantees regarding the protection of freedoms of expression and press. This article was one of the biggest obstacles in front of the society to learn the facts, with the arbitrary decision taken by the judicial organs in line with the views of the political power.

The press members working at BBC Turkish Service went on a strike after receiving a negative response to their demands for improvement in their personal rights, especially wages. And the positive result of the strike, once again, showed the necessity of an organized struggle for all press workers. Both individual journalists and organizations have a great responsibility to make the gains made under the leadership of the Journalists' Union of Turkey (TGS) to be spread to the other press organizations. We know that if we, press workers, pave the way, neither fake news nor power-capital exploitation will be possible.

Progressive Journalists Association General Board of Directors



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