

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/turkey-occupy-gezi-protests-lead-to-wave-06-06-2013,44732.html>

Europe/Ex-USSR - Turkey

Cracking down harder

"Occupy Gezi" protests lead to wave of arrests of news providers

6 June 2013

Reporters Without Borders is very worried by the growing number of news providers being arrested in connection with the continuing anti-government protests in Turkey.

"The arrests of news providers throughout the country is a source of deep concern," Reporters Without Borders said. "We urge the authorities to act with restraint and stop carrying out such arrests, which are so disproportionate that they seem designed to intimidate. Exercising freedom of information and freedom of assembly should not be criminalized."

34 cyber-activists arrested

At least 34 young Twitter users were arrested in the western city of Izmir on the night of 4 June on charges of "incitement to commit a crime" under article 214 of the criminal code and "incitement to disobey the law" under article 217. All except one were released yesterday evening.

Reporters Without Borders calls on the authorities to urgently provide information on the status of the one still in police custody.

Those arrested had posted tweets with the phone numbers of doctors and lawyers ready to provide assistance to demonstrators in distress. According to Imdat Atas, a lawyer who represented some of the detainees, they were accused of exchanging information about the actions being taken by the police to disperse protesters.

He said they also posted a photo showing policemen dragging a young woman by her hair in the Izmir neighbourhood of Kordon.

"We did not see anything that could have constituted a crime," he said. "Most of those charged do not even know each other. There is nothing serious in their case files. We think that [their arrests are the result] of the [prime minister's comments about Twitter](#)."

The offending content includes the following Tweets: "Here are the Wi-Fi codes to use during the demo," "We are gathering in Gündoğdu Square at 7:30 pm," "There are cops in Lausanne Square and on Cyprus Martyrs Avenue," "They have fired tear gas, don't go there" and "The TOMA [riot vehicles] are there, they are firing gas, they are using their batons."

Two TV journalists arrested

Mustafa Kaya, a reporter for the nationalist TV channel *Ulusal Kanal* (National Channel), and his cameraman, **Serkan Bayraktar**, were arrested in Ankara yesterday while covering the police in the process of breaking up a demonstration.

Plain-clothes police stopped them broadcasting and seized their material. The two journalists were arrested when protesters tried to intervene. The Turkish Union of Journalists (TGS) said they were taken to the anti-terrorism section of the Ankara Security Directorate and were released at the end of the day.

French student facing possible expulsion

Lorraine Klein, a French journalism student attending Istanbul's Galatasaray University under the Erasmus exchange programme, was violently arrested on the night of 3 June while covering demonstrations and photographing barricades in the Istanbul district of Beyoglu.

After a night in police custody and visits to hospital for inspection of her injuries, she is now being held at the Kumkapi detention centre and is facing the possibility of being deported from Turkey and banned from returning for five years.

Daily ransacked by police

The police ransacked the Ankara offices of *Sol* (Left), a daily published by the Turkish Communist Party (TKP), in the course of a raid on the night of 3 June on the building that houses not only newspaper but also TKP headquarters and the Nazim Hikmet Cultural Centre.

The newspaper's Ankara representative, **Hatice İkinci**, reporter **Fatos Kalaçay**, and *Sol* website (www.haber.sol.org.tr) editor **Can Soyer** were all manhandled in the course of the raid. The police used tear gas and water cannon inside the building for ten minutes.

Read our previous statements on "Occupy Gezi":

- [At least 14 journalists injured by security forces since start of protests](#) (4 June 2013)
- [Authorities must stop use of excessive force by Istanbul police](#) (31 May 2013)

Photo : Aris Messinis / AFP

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