

2000

Murat Dil

According to a statement in Atilim (Surge) newspaper in May, Murat Dil, a political prisoner who had been sentenced to 21 years and 8 months' imprisonment by Istanbul State Security Court for membership of TİKB (Revolutionary Communists' Union of Turkey), had received no treatment despite the fact that he was suffering from liver cancer. It was stated that Murat Dil, who was transferred to Bayrampaşa State Hospital, was given only painkillers. Six months previously he had been diagnosed with hepatitis B and inflammation of the gall bladder, but it was subsequently discovered that a tumour had developed in his liver.

His lawyer Mihriban Kırdök made a statement in June, stating that Dil had applied to the Justice Ministry and to the office of the prosecutor under article 399 of the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code. Murat Dil's elder brother Niyazi Dil stated that his brother had lost considerable weight and had begun to lose consciousness. Justice Minister Hikmet Sami Türk, in a statement of 3 June, stated that Dil would be treated.

However, in a press conference held at the Istanbul branch of the Human Rights Association on 5 June, lawyer Sevim Akat stated that Murat Dil had not been released as a consequence of omissions in the Health Committee Report on his situation. Akat said that subsequent to an examination at Istanbul University Çapa Medical Faculty Hospital, a report was given describing the presence of "apparently necrotic cells of a malignant tumour" but that in spite of this, the Office of the Public Prosecutor had not initiated release procedures because of omissions in the Health Committee Report issued by the hospital. Murat Dil's mother Zöhre Bad stated that she had not been permitted to speak to her son, and that when she went to the hospital soldiers [insensitively] said to her: "Have you come to visit that bedridden fellow?"

On 8 June Dil was taken from Bayrampaşa Prison Hospital to the Forensic Medicine Institute, and on the basis of a positive report issued by its Specialist Chamber No 3, the execution of Dil's sentence was postponed for one year under article 399 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Dil was taken for treatment at Istanbul Beyoğlu Training and Research Hospital.

Murat Dil, released from Bayrampaşa Hospital on 9 June, died on 6 July.

Halef Özer

70 year old Halef Özer, a political prisoner at Aydın E-type Prison, died on 30 January. In 1998 the Human Rights Association had launched a campaign for the treatment of Halef Özer who suffered from heart and prostate disease, diabetes and high blood pressure. Halef Özer was on several occasions transferred to hospital, and given reports stating that he "could not be treated in prison" but applications on his behalf to the Forensic Medicine Institute produced no result.

2001

Mustafa Coşkun

3 October: Died as a result of the wrong feeding tube being used at the hospital to which he had been transferred for cancer treatment. When Coşkun died, he was on hunger strike. Mustafa Coşkun was being treated at Ankara Numune Hospital, but after violent operations to transfer prisoners within the prison system, he was sent from Malatya Prison to Ermenek (Konya) Prison. Coşkun was taken to Ankara Numune Hospital for treatment for throat cancer, and it was revealed that he died as a result of the wrong feeding tube being inserted during treatment. Mustafa Coşkun, who had worked on Partizan Sesi (Voice of the Partisan) and Halkın Günlüğü (People's Daily) newspapers, had been arrested in 1999 on charges of

“membership of TIKKO” (Peasants and Workers’ Army of Turkey) and was sentenced to imprisonment under article 168/2 of the Turkish Criminal Code.

Death of Engin Huylu

Two legal actions opened against prison officials and medical staff allegedly responsible for the death of convicted prisoner Engin Huylu on 6 February 1999 were postponed by Çankırı Primary Court under the Law on Conditional Release [a partial amnesty law].

The prison director Ali Rıza Yıldırım, assistant directors Nevzat Koraman, Hürrem Yazıhan, İbrahim Fakı, Aziz Güner, Düzgün Çakmak and prison nurse Hüseyin Kaş had been indicted with “negligence of duty” under article 230 of the Turkish Criminal Code. Doctors Selim Engez and Cüneyt Uzunlar were subject to administrative *something missing here/bir sey eksik

Kerem Payat

Kerem Payat (19) who had been arrested in Şirvan, Siirt, on 4 April subsequent to a common criminal incident, died on 17 June at Diyarbakir E-type Prison. The lawyer Abdulhekim Gider stated that his client had had difficulty in describing his problems because he did not speak Turkish, that he had not eaten for days, and that even when he was in a coma, he had been chained to the bed by his feet. The lawyer Abdulhekim Gider stated that Kerem Payat’s death on 17 June at Diyarbakir E-type Prison had arisen from the negligence of the authorities. Kerem Payat had been wounded in the leg and foot as a result of a dispute in the Şirvan district of Siirt on 4 April. He was treated for one day at Batman State Hospital, and then sent to Batman Prison.

The lawyer Gider stated:

“My client was held for 14 days in Batman Prison. But no surgical measures were undertaken. For a reason that we are unable fully to fathom, he was referred to Elazığ Mental and Neurological Hospital. Since he could not understand Turkish he was unable to answer the questions put to him. Ten days later he was sent to Elazığ E-type Prison. When I went to speak to him there, he was brought to the interview room between two prisoners. Even though I spoke to him in Kurdish he made no response. His wounds had not healed in any way, and no intervention had been made. His clothing was filthy. He had lost a considerable amount of weight. The prisoners who accompanied him said that he had eaten nothing for five days. When I went to the prison administration to press for an intervention, I was told ‘Our prison has become a 'transit station'. A lot of people ill in this way have died.’”

Kerem Payat was held for two months in Elazığ without any treatment being carried out. However, the lawyer Abdulhekim Gider stated that Payat was taken to hospital when he went into a coma: “I learned that my client had been taken to Diyarbakır Dicle University Hospital on 26 May. I went with his father Salih Payat, but since he was in a coma, we were unable to speak to him, only to see him. Even in this state his feet had been chained. When I spoke to Dr Ali Akçiçek, he said that it was impossible to undertake any surgical intervention, that it was possible that there had been a brain haemorrhage, that they could only treat it with medicines, that he should be released.” Gider applied to Şirvan Primary Court for the arrest order to be released, but this was rejected.

Gider continued: “On 4 June we went to see Kerem. His father stayed with him for 3-4 days. He fed him and cleaned him. During this period there were signs of improvement. But my client was then moved to Diyarbakir E-type Prison on 11 June on the grounds that he had “got better.” When I went to visit him five days later, a guard approached me to say that Kerem

had become very ill. I went to the Chief Warder Hacı Recep. The Chief Warder said that they could not refer him to hospital, that an order had come from the prosecutor for his transfer to Batman E-type Prison, and that for him to be referred to hospital there would have to be a letter from the ministry. Shortly after, Kerem Payal died.”

Mehmet Ali Yaprak

On the night of 4 January the well-known drugs smuggler Mehmet Ali Yaprak (54) entered a diabetic coma at Kartal Special Type Prison, and died at the hospital to which he was subsequently taken. Because his life was deemed to be at risk at Bayrampaşa Prison, Yaprak had been transferred to Kartal Special Type Prison. His son Ahmet Yaprak reported that the authorities had refused to refer his father for hospital treatment in the face of medical reports [recommending such treatment]. Ahmet Yaprak stated “We applied on several occasions for him to be treated in hospital. Since he was diabetic, he should have been provided with special diet foods. Eventually they were able to produce the diet, but still they did not transfer him to hospital. We will make a formal complaint against the prison director and the other officials.”

Mehmet Ali Yaprak, former owner of Yaprak TV, a local Gaziantep station, was abducted by people, who introduced themselves as police on 25 May 1996. It emerged that Yaprak had been kidnapped by the “Susurluk Gang” and he was shortly after released. Nine defendants, including Haluk Kırıcı of the Susurluk trial and the Bahçelievler massacre, were indicted with kidnapping Yaprak because he “had not paid his [extortion] dues from his drug smuggling profits.” However, because Yaprak did not complaint, and was unable to identify the defendants, the case ended in acquittal. Yaprak was tried for the killing of the lawyer Burhan Veli Torun on 14 May 1997, and sentenced to 9 years and 4 months’ imprisonment. After his release, Yaprak changed his name to Yalçın, and was arrested in connection with narcotics seized at a medicine factory in Gebze.

Cumali Başaran

Convicted prisoner Cumali Başaran who was held in prison in the Aralık town of Iğdır province died on 31 March. According to reports, Başaran became ill and was transferred to Iğdır State Hospital and died in the early morning.

Hıdır Demir

Convicted prisoner Hıdır Demir was referred from Sincan F-type Prison to Ankara Sanatorium Hospital with a diagnosis of tuberculosis, and fifteen days later on 27 April died. Hıdır Demir had been sentenced to 12 years and 6 months on charges of “membership of TİKKO.”

Osman Arslan

Convicted political prisoner Osman Arslan, held at Urla prison, in Izmir, died on 23 May. Osman Arslan had a short time earlier been operated on for a brain tumour at Yeşilyurt State Hospital. He had been sentenced to 12 years’ imprisonment on charges of “membership of the PKK” and was about to complete his sentence and be released on 24 July.

2003

Hacer Kaya

Hacer Kaya (24) who was held at Bakırköy Prison for Children and Women, died of cancer on 4 April. Her father Rüstem Kaya stated that his daughter had not been released in spite of a medical report [recommending this course of action]. Hacer Kaya’s lawyer Okan Yıldız stated

that a demand for Hacer Kaya's release had been made at Istanbul State Security Court, but that this had been rejected. Kaya was buried on 5 April in Gebze. Hacer Kaya was a student at Marmara University, but had been arrested in April 2001 on charges of "membership of KADEK."

İsmet Baycan

PKK/KADEK member İsmet Baycan died at Muş E-type Prison on 24 May. İsmet Baycan reportedly became ill with a heart complaint in the hours of the evening, and was not taken promptly to hospital.

A statement by other prisoners stated that Baycan had not had any health problem. The statement said that Baycan's referral to hospital was delayed by half an hour on the grounds that "the vehicle was not ready" and "soldiers are busy with the evening roll-call," and that a doctor remanded in custody in the next cell had not been permitted to attend him. Baycan was eventually taken to Muş State Hospital, and died at 7.30 while arrangements were being made to take him to Van.

İsmet Baycan had surrendered himself on 1 October 1999 with the "First Peace and Democratic Solution Group" at the recommendation of PKK/KADEK leader Abdullah Öcalan. Together with Ali Sapan, Seydi Fırat, Mehmet Şirin Tunç, Yaşar Temur, Sohbet Şen, Gülten Uçar and Yüksel Genç, Baycan had been sentenced to 12 years and 6 months' imprisonment by Van State Security Court.

2004

Ahmet K

It was reported that Ahmet K, a convicted prisoner at Kartal E-type Prison, died at the beginning of September at Dr Lutfi Kırdar Training and Research Hospital, having been "referred for treatment of asthma."

Ali Şahin

Ali Şahin (22), a convicted prisoner at Bayrampaşa Hospital, died on 21 May. His elder brother Cemal Şahin had earlier applied to the Istanbul branch of the Human Rights Association, stating that Ali Şahin, who suffered from blood cancer, had been referred to Istanbul University Çapa Medical Faculty and Marmara University Training and Research Hospital for bone marrow transplant but the referrals had been rejected since the hospitals "did not have wards for convicted prisoners," and that for this reason his brother had been held at Bayrampaşa Hospital. Cemal Şahin stated that his brother had died on the 238th day of a hunger strike, a victim of Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome.

Asef Sarı

Convicted political prisoner Asef Sarı died on 19 June at Izmir Yeşilyurt Hospital where he was being treated following his provisional release. The lawyer Zeynel Değirmenci, president of TAYD-DER Izmir Branch, stated that Asef Sarı who had been extradited from Romania, had been held first at Bayrampaşa, and then at Çankırı Prison. Değirmenci stated that although Sarı was known to be ill, he was released late as a result of the prison authorities' attitude, and had therefore received inadequate medical treatment.