

Reporters Without Borders

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Europe/Ex-USSR - Turkey

Continuing crackdown

Police attack journalists again at Gezi Park demonstration

8 July 2013

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Reporters Without Borders condemns renewed police violence against journalists in Istanbul's Taksim square and on the narrow streets of the surrounding district of Beyoglu on 6 July. At least 12 journalists were physically attacked and at least two are still in police custody.

The latest police violence occurred when journalists went to cover Gezi Park's reinauguration after the authorities cancelled plans to tear it down and build on it.

"We deplore the continuing abuses by police, who are still using teargas, water cannon and rubber bullets, still insulting and beating and journalists and still sometimes forcing them to delete their photos and video footage," Reporters Without Borders said.

"The authorities continue to accuse journalists of organizing riots. The government must, as a matter of urgency, put a stop to the persecution of journalists and bloggers and punish those responsible for these abuses.

"Several journalists critical of recent government policy have been fired, publications have been banned, media have been prevented from working, and many foreign journalists have been arrested and ordered to leave. We condemn this censorship, as well as the self-censorship that is now widespread."

The journalists attacked by police on 6 July included **Yunus Dalgıç** and **Arif Balkan** of the liberal daily *Milliyet* (Nation), **Gökhan Biçici** of IMC TV, **Elif Akgül** of the online newspaper *Bianet*, **Baris Yarkadas** of the news website *Gerçek gündem*, **Dilem Tastan** of the daily *Sol* (Left), **Sengül Derin** of *Ulusal Kanal* (National Channel), **Onur Erdem** of the daily *Birgün* (Day), **Makbule Cengiz** of *Halk TV* (People TV), **Özcan Yaman**, **Evrin Kurdoglu** and **Tugçe Tatari**.

Bestegül Öneren and **Selçuk Özmen** of the left-wing nationalist daily *Aydinlik* (Clarity) have reportedly been in police custody since 6 July. Italian photographer **Mattia Cacciatori** was released today after being arrested while covering the clashes outside Gezi Park.

More than 50 police attacks

Four journalists -- **Alpbugra Bahadır Gültekin**, **Ipek Izci** and **Elif Ekinci** of the newspaper *Radikal* and **Elif Akgül** of *Bianet* -- were the targets of police violence during a demonstration in Istanbul on 22 June to pay tribute to all those who had been killed or injured since the start of the protest movement.

Milliyet journalist **Ceren Büyüktekik** was injured on 21 June when three rubber bullets fired by the police struck her head. That evening, *Halk TV*, a station critical of the government, was prevented from working during a live broadcast.

Swedish journalist **Sarah Olsson** spent 48 hours in police custody before being deported. She said she intended to refer her expulsion to the European Court of Human Rights.

In Ankara, a police riot vehicle [aimed a water cannon](#) at *Russia Today* reporter **Tom Barton's** camera while *CNN International* reporter **Ivan Watson** said police insulted him. **Mahmut Serdar**

Alakus of AA (Anatolia Agency), **Tahsin Güner** of DHA (Dogan News Agency) and **Osman Özgan** of IHA (Ihlas News Agency) were attacked and injured by demonstrators.

Ulas Yildiz of the newspaper *Mücadele Birliği* (Combat Union) was briefly arrested in the southern city of Adana on 21 June. Then he was rearrested three days later and was held for four days. Although finally released, he will probably be prosecuted.

A delegation consisting of representatives of the Union of Journalists and the Association of Turkish Journalists went to see Istanbul prefect Hüseyin Avni Mutlu on 26 June to express their concern about police attacks on journalists and media employees.

According to these organizations, a total of 54 media personnel were [attacked](#) during three weeks of demonstrations throughout Turkey, and 34 were [arrested](#).

Photo: Bulent Kilic / AFP

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