

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 44/84/95

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Date: 10 August 1995

MEDICAL CONCERN

Attacks on prisoners TURKEY

On 20 July 1995, more than 20 remand prisoners accused of membership of the illegal militant separatist group Rizgari (Kurdistan Liberation Party) were beaten as they were taken from Buca Prison to the State Security Court in Izmir, apparently because of the refusal of the prisoners to allow an examination of their shoes. (This security practice had previously been suspended since the 1980s.) Some were reported to have been taken into court unconscious; others showed various wounds. As a result of the state of the prisoners, the hearing of charges against them was postponed. The State Security Court prosecutor ordered that the prisoners be sent to the Forensic Medical Institute for examination but this was only done after some delay and only for some of the prisoners. The day following the attack, six prisoners had been sent to hospital and three had been admitted as inpatients. One prisoner, Murat Satik, had a fracture in vertebra L4 and a crack in L5; Terzan Adibelli had 10 ribs fractured; Kadir Satik also had fractured vertebrae and was said to be unable to walk; and Ya_ar Awei reportedly had a suspected rupture of the liver. The attacks came four days after the escape of four prisoners from Buca Prison.

On the same day, guards are also reported to have entered the women's wing of the prison and to have beaten some of the inmates, injuring seven women quite badly. The reason for the ill-treatment is not known, although it is thought to have been punitive and linked to the escapes from the prison.

Three days after the beatings, family members and journalists visiting Buca prison were arrested. AI does not know the reason for the detentions. The family members were released the same day and the journalists were later also released.

Amnesty International has been informed that the office of the Izmir Public Prosecutor has initiated an investigation into the allegations against the wardens, but as yet no action has been taken in respect of the gendarmerie. Amnesty International is urging the Turkish authorities to undertake a full and impartial inquiry into this incident and to make public its findings. The authorities should ensure that prisoners' security is protected and should issue instructions to prison and security personnel that, under no circumstances, should violence be used against detainees.

Background

Amnesty International has had long-standing concerns about conditions in Turkish prisons and the treatment of prisoners undergoing transfer to and from prison. In 1993 AI appealed in the case of prisoners who were beaten following the discovery of an escape attempt from Nevşehir prison; they were subsequently transferred to Yozgat prison where they were beaten again. [See *[Prisoners] on hunger strike in Yozgat prison*, EUR 44/24/93, 12 March 1993]. Prisoners are usually transferred from prison to prison and from prison to court by gendarmes. Such transfers have, in the past, frequently resulted in allegations of ill-treatment. In October 1994, 12 prisoners taken to Istanbul State Security Court No 3 were severely beaten in the corridors of the court by police who had brought them to a trial hearing. The attack came after prisoners, who had already been searched once, refused a second search before entering the court rooms. The attack was witnessed by three lawyers who reported that the gendarmes shouted "Get the lawyers out, we are going to kill this lot". The prisoners - who were handcuffed - were beaten with truncheons for an estimated eight minutes on court premises and then taken into a yard where they were kicked and punched.

Health care in prisons in Turkey has also been a major concern to AI. In Buca prison, reports received by AI suggest that access to medical care is inadequate due, at least in part, to the refusal of the prison authorities to allow prisoners in need to be rapidly seen by prison medical officers. According to fellow prisoners, in April 1995, Salih Isik, an inmate in Buca, died without access to a doctor. He had been complaining of chest pain and headaches and, although fellow prisoners had expressed their concern and asked that he be seen by a doctor, he received no medical attention due to inaction by prison staff. Although there were doctors in the prison, he died reportedly without medical aid.

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To: Medical professionals
From: Medical Office / Europe Regional Program
Date: 10 August 1995

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

Attacks on prisoners TURKEY

Keywords

Theme: ill-treatment / death in detention / medical care

Summary

On 20 July 1995, more than 20 remand prisoners accused of membership of the militant separatist group Rizgari (Kurdistan Liberation Party) were beaten as they were taken from Buea Prison to the State Security Court in Izmir. After a significant delay, six prisoners were taken to hospital; two were admitted with fractures and one with a suspected ruptured liver. On the same day, several women in the female wing of the hospital were badly beaten and injured. It was only with considerable delay that the prisoners received medical attention. In April 1995 a sick prisoner died in Buea - reportedly after the prison authorities failed to ensure he received prompt medical attention. AI is calling for an investigation of the recent attack on prisoners and for guarantees for their security.

Recommended Actions

Letters from health professionals, preferably written in English or your own language, should be sent to the addresses below:

- expressing concern about the reported assault on prisoners being transferred from Buea prison to Izmir State Security Court on 20 July 1995
- urging that an impartial inquiry be established to look into the circumstances of the incident in which at least three prisoners were hospitalised with serious injuries
- seeking information about the current state of health of all the prisoners transferred that day
- seeking the reason for the detention of family members and journalists trying to visit Buea prison
- urging that the authorities take measures to ensure that the security of all prisoners is protected

Addresses

Prime Minister
 Mrs Tansu Çiller
 Office of the Prime Minister
 Ba_bakanlik
 06573 Ankara
 Turkey
Fax: +90.312.417.0476

Local Prosecutor
 Melih Tari
 Cumhuriyet Ba_savciligi
 Izmir Adliyesi
 Konak
 Izmir
Fax: +90.232.425.2406

Inspector of Prisons
 Cezaevi ve Tevkifhaneleri Mudurlugu
 Ministry of Justice
 Adalət Bakanligi
 06659 Ankara
 Turkey
Fax: +90.312.425.4819

Copies

Please send copies of your letters to:

Turkish Medical Association
 Mithatpasa Cad 62/15-18
 06420 Yeni_çhir, Ankara
 Turkey

Prison governor
 Buca Cezaevi Muduru
 Buca Cezaevi
 Buca
 Izmir
 Turkey
Fax: +90.232.4871.366 (Phone first and say "singal verin, lütfen")

and to the nearest diplomatic representative of Turkey