

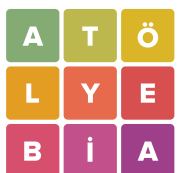
How would bianet report them?

Author
Semra Kardeřođlu

Managing Editor & Project Editor
Vecih Cuzdan



IPS İLETİŐİM VAKFI



JULY 2024

How would bianet report them?

Author

Semra Kardeřođlu

Managing Editor & Project Editor

Vecih Cuzdan



This publication has been prepared with the financial support of the European Union. The publication is entirely under the responsibility of IPS Communication Foundation / bianet and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.



In the report titled “Hate Speech in Print Media in Turkey,” five articles containing hate speech targeting specific segments of society were rewritten by journalist Semra Kardeşođlu. These rewritten articles were edited by Vecih Cuzdan, the Managing Editor of bianet.org and project editor.

The articles, written through the right-based approach and a peace language perspective, were purged of sexist language. At the end of each news article, it is specified how the articles were rewritten from the originals in Turkish language to serve as examples of good journalism in combating sexist and discriminatory language.



42% Interest for Citizens, 9% for the State

Economist Erman Dinçel stated that increasing the monthly delay interest rate for public receivables to 3.5% and the annual rate to 42% does not align with the concept of a ‘social state.’

With the Presidential Decree published in the Official Gazette on November 14, 2023, the delay interest rate for public receivables was increased from a monthly rate of 2.5% to 3.5%, and annually from 30% to 42%.

However, there was no change in the interest rate applied to citizens’ receivables from the state, which remains at an annual rate of 9%.

Economists evaluated the decision

Economist Erman Dinçel argued that the practice does not conform to the understanding of a ‘social state.’ He noted that citizens’ debts to the state increased by 50% overnight. Dinçel continued:

This means interest on top of interest. Isn't taking interest on top of interest usury? Where is the social state? Why aren't minimum wages and pensions increased at the same rate? If interest is now being compounded, then special tax amnesties or tax reductions for some businessmen should not be allowed either. If public funds are tight, then why not cut spending? Why not avoid waste?

When Dinçel mentioned “unlimited financial aid to refugees,” we asked, “Do you have any data to support that unlimited financial aid is being provided to refugees and asylum seekers?” However, Dinçel did not answer the question.

How Did We Rewrite The News?

We wrote the news from a rights-based perspective and with a peace journalism approach:

- The original headline was “Then why are you giving tax amnesty to businessmen?” The term ‘businessmen’ was changed due to its gendered language, and the sentence was rephrased.
- The economist’s opinion included in the existing news was directly quoted, which was not appropriate for news language. The context in which the economist provided this opinion was not clear. First, we researched the context of the economist’s opinion and added this information at the beginning of the news.
- Economist Dinçel’s statements like “Why is unlimited financial aid still given to refugees and illegals?”, “Where is the social state? Is the T.C. [Republic of Turkey] only a social state when it comes to refugees and illegals?” were not suitable for peace journalism language. These statements targeted a specific group, reflecting societal hate speech. We emphasized that Dinçel’s remarks about refugees and asylum seekers were allegations.
- In the original news, the person whose statements were quoted was not asked about the basis of their claim regarding unlimited financial aid to refugees. However, based on rights-based

journalism and ethical journalism, we thought it necessary to ask whether there was any data or concrete example to support this claim. While rewriting the news, we incorporated this by hypothetically including the question. We wrote the text as if this question had been asked by the news organization and no answer was received.

- We wrote the headline and the lead to summarize the topic.
- We simplified the language to ensure every reader could understand the news. We removed unnecessary details. We broke down the economist’s opinion into shorter sentences and paragraphs, interspersed throughout the text.



Defense Draws Criticism in Trial for “Murdering Wife”

Y.A.M.A., who is on trial for the premeditated murder of his five-month-pregnant wife N.M.T. and faces a life sentence, made a defense in court that sparked criticism.

The first hearing of the case, where Y.A.M.A. is being held in custody, was held yesterday (December 31, 2023) at the 4th Heavy Penal Court of Bursa Courthouse. The defendant denied the accusations in his defense.

When the judge asked, “The forensic report states that the marks on N.M.T.’s neck were caused by strangulation. Who did it then?” Y.A.M.A. replied, “It could be from kissing her.” N.M.T.’s family, representatives of women’s organizations following the case, and lawyers reacted to the defendant.

Sema Doğan, a lawyer from the Women’s Rights Association, who is following the case, said, “As in every femicide case, the defendant is almost mocking the court. The sentences given encourage female murderers.”

What Happened?

According to the indictment prepared by the Bursa Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office, Y.A.M.A. strangled and killed his religiously wedded wife N.M.T., who was five months pregnant, in July 2023 in Yıldırım, Bursa. The indictment stated that Y.A.M.A. “committed the crime by strangling and killing N.M.T., knowing she was pregnant.”

According to bianet’s Male Violence Monitor, 330 men killed 333 women in 2023.

We wrote the news with a rights-based perspective and a gender-focused journalism approach:

- We highlighted the criticism of the defendant’s statement, “It could be from kissing her,” without sensationalizing, dramatizing, or romanticizing the incident.
- To avoid legitimizing violence, we changed the headline to emphasize the lawyer’s reaction instead of focusing on the defendant’s statements.
- To highlight the systemic nature of male violence, we provided background information and data on violence. Therefore, we included a box titled “What Happened?” for this news.
- We removed information regarding the defendant’s nationality to prevent associating the crime with the country of origin.



Fatih Erbakan Targets LGBTI+ Community

Fatih Erbakan, leader of the New Welfare Party, claimed that LGBTI+ people are a “foreign project” and stated that they would close their organizations if they came to power.

Fatih Erbakan, leader of the New Welfare Party, met with citizens in İzmit, Kocaeli, during his local election campaign, and later attended a promotional meeting for mayoral candidates.

In his speech, Erbakan targeted LGBTI+ people, stating, “Moral municipalities will protect our generations and cities from drug and LGBT attacks.” He claimed that LGBTI+ people are a “foreign project.”

Erbakan also said, “We will never allow [LGBTI+] propaganda or events to be held in the halls, stages, buildings, institutions, and billboards for their propaganda and activities.” He added that they will close LGBTI+ organizations if they came to power in the 2028 general elections.

Human Rights Association Filed a Criminal Complaint

The Human Rights Association (İHD) LGBTI+ Rights Commission filed a criminal complaint with the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office regarding the New Welfare Party’s video titled “Where There is No Morality, There is LGBTI+,” published on January 24, 2024, which contained discriminatory remarks against LGBTI+.

İHD, highlighting the hate speech of Fatih Erbakan and the New Welfare Party, stated in its complaint that their statements violate Article 122 of the Turkish Penal Code and Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which prohibit discrimination:

“The statements of the party leader and officials contain continuous discriminatory remarks. These statements, which create discrimination within society, pose an imminent threat.”

We wrote the news with a rights-based perspective and a gender-focused journalism approach:

- We removed the statements propagandising party's ideology.
- To make the news understandable to all readers, we eliminated unnecessary long sentences and reduced long quotes from Erbakan.
- We distanced the text from hate speech, removing phrases containing the word "perversion."
- To emphasize that the statements of a party leader targeting a group constitute a human rights violation, we included the perspective of a human rights organization. We also noted that the New Welfare Party had previously made similar statements and that the İHD had filed a criminal complaint against Erbakan.



Fenerbahçe Official Discusses "Atatürk Banner Crisis" in Super Cup

A Fenerbahçe Club official spoke to our newspaper about the banner tension in Saudi Arabia, stating, "A warning from a Turkish Football Federation (TFF) official to the teams to 'stay in the hotel' prevented the crisis from escalating."

The Super Cup final between Galatasaray and Fenerbahçe, scheduled to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was canceled due to the teams' request to enter the field with banners and T-shirts of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

A Fenerbahçe Club official explained the cancellation to our newspaper:

Local authorities did not allow Fenerbahçe President Ali Koç's banner saying 'Peace at Home, Peace in the World.' Officials from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Sports did not approach the problem constructively. They came to the Fenerbahçe dressing room without any permission and took the banner. We later learned that they also attempted to enter the Galatasaray dressing room. TFF staff and Galatasaray officials did not allow it.

Message from the Royalty to the Teams

The official described the meetings between TFF officials and Saudi Arabian Ministry of Sports officials:

A person claiming to be speaking on behalf of the royalty approached us and said, 'Either Galatasaray brings the banner, or we will enter and take it by force.' Thereafter there was a short-lived tension. To prevent the tension from escalating, Galatasaray officials handed over the banner. At this point, a TFF staff member sent a message to both teams' hotels, saying, 'Do not send the teams to the stadium to prevent further tension.' This message prevented the situation from escalating into an international crisis.

How Was the Crisis Averted?

The same official shared how the events concluded:

Following the orders of the person claiming to speak on behalf of the royalty, military personnel positioned themselves in front of the T zone at the stadium. As you know, the T zone is an area to where one can access with special access permissions according to international football rules, and contains the changing rooms of team players, officials, and referees according to international football rules. We learned that the official ordered the military personnel to search the teams upon arrival and prevent them from entering the field if they saw Atatürk or the 100th-anniversary logo. The message from the TFF official to the players and officials at the hotel to 'stay away' prevented the situation from turning into an international crisis. Around the same time, together with Galatasaray officials, we decided not to participate in the match, saying, 'If Atatürk is not present, neither are we.'

How Did We Rewrite The News?

We wrote the news with a rights-based perspective and a peace journalism approach:

- We removed the term "Arabs," which blamed an entire nation for the events, and distanced the text from hate speech.
- We eliminated phrases containing insults and targeting a nation, such as "disgrace," "attitude bordering on arrogance," "Arabs barging into FB's dressing room," "Arabs seeking to provoke," "Arab soldiers lining up in the T zone," "inevitable brawl between TFF staff and Arab security forces," "flipped the table, thwarted the game."
- The original news lacked sources; to rewrite the news, we added a fictional news source. We called a fictional Fenerbahçe Club official who was present during the events and included information based on their statements.



MP Aydın: Unemployment Problem in Trabzon Remains Unsolved

İYİ Party MP Yavuz Aydın stated that Trabzon could not escape being a "city of emigration" and accused the AKP of making unfulfilled promises.

İYİ Party Trabzon MP Yavuz Aydın, in his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM) on the 106th anniversary of the end of the War of Independence on the Trabzon front, said the biggest problems of the city are unemployment and emigration.

"106 years have passed since our liberation, but the unemployment problem has still not been solved," said Aydın, adding:

Trabzon has unfortunately not been freed from the unfulfilled promises of the AKP government. Despite

having at least one minister from Trabzon almost every term, Trabzon has unfortunately not received the necessary services. Our city has been managed by AKP mayors for years, but it has failed to receive the necessary services and investments.

Addressing the AKP government, İYİ Party's Aydın declared, "We want you to know that you can no longer deceive Trabzon and our fellow citizens with your false promises, and we announce that we will introduce our good municipal governance to Trabzon and its districts to serve our people."

Traffic and Parking Problems

İYİ Party MP Aydın asked two questions in the General Assembly: "Where is the rail system you promised for years? When will the traffic and parking problems be solved?"

Aydın listed the unfulfilled promises and district problems of the AKP government as follows:

- » *Before the 2023 General Elections, you held a groundbreaking ceremony for the South Ring Road in Mersin Mahallesi, Akçaabat, but you didn't even leave the 'T' of the foundation.*
- » *You promised to build a logistics center in Trabzon, but then you moved this project to another city.*
- » *In 2019, you announced in the Official Gazette that you would establish an investment island in Arsin, but there has been no progress yet.*
- » *You filled the Beşirli coast as part of the Gülcemal Project, leaving the work unfinished, as well as cutting off our citizens' access to the sea.*
- » *You overlooked the irregularities committed by the operator at the Sürmene Çamburnu Shipyard and gave a superficial response to my parliamentary question on the matter.*

District Problems

In his speech, İYİ Party's Aydın listed the unresolved issues in the Büyükliman region's districts of Beşikdüzü, Çarşıbaşı, Tonya, Şalpazarı, and Vakfıkebir.

Şalpazarı

- » *Electricity and water cuts have become the biggest problem in our district. What does it mean to be deprived of water in a place that receives rain in all four seasons? How do you explain constant power cuts during heavy rains in this day and age?*
- » *Our district's sports club, Şalpazarıspor, does not even have a stadium to play its matches and holds the title of the only sports club without a stadium among 18 districts.*
- » *In this day and age, the district's sewage still flows openly into the stream, which is an unprecedented disgrace.*

Beşikdüzü

- » *During every election period, AKP representatives promised to convert Beşikdüzü Vocational School into a four-year faculty, but you haven't made any progress.*
- » *You disturbed the balance of nature with the sea filling operation in the port area, causing an ecological disaster in the area where red mullets breed.*
- » *The water of Ağasar Stream flows into Beşikdüzü Port due to the sea filling operation, leaving the breakwater where boats are moored buried in sand, making it difficult for ships to enter the port.*
- » *Is there any other district with a prison but without a courthouse?*

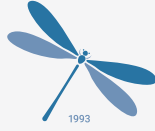
Vakfıkebir

- » *There are no cardiology and neurology doctors in the cardiology and neurology clinics at Vakfıkebir State Hospital.*
- » *Beşikdüzü, Şalpazarı, and Çarşıbaşı districts' burden is unfortunately borne by Vakfıkebir Courthouse, causing our citizens to suffer.*

How Did We Rewrite The News?

We wrote the news with a rights-based perspective and a peace journalism approach:

- We removed antagonistic phrases such as “the atrocities committed by Greek gangs” and “the pressures applied by the Russians.” We purified the text from hate speech.
- To prevent the news from turning into party propaganda, we omitted the politician's one-sided and ideological statements, instead focusing on the issues faced by the districts.
- To ensure every reader could understand the news, we shortened long sentences, removed unnecessary expressions, and added subheadings.
- We changed the headline to avoid militaristic language and added a summary.



IPS İLETİŞİM VAKFI

bianet
BAĞIMSIZ İLETİŞİM AĞI

