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We remember Atatürk with gratitude, love, and respect



LAST WEEK IN TÜRKİYE

A weekly roundup of the top news and developments in Türkiye

Swipe

MARCH 19 PLATFORM
UNITED FOR DEMOCRACY IN TÜRKİYE

NOVEMBER 8, 2026

REMINDERS BY NUMBERS



587 DAYS

since Istanbul Mayor and opposition preseidential candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu was jailed. His trial is still ongoing.



20 DAYS

since journalist Murat Ağırel was jailed over a news he did not write.



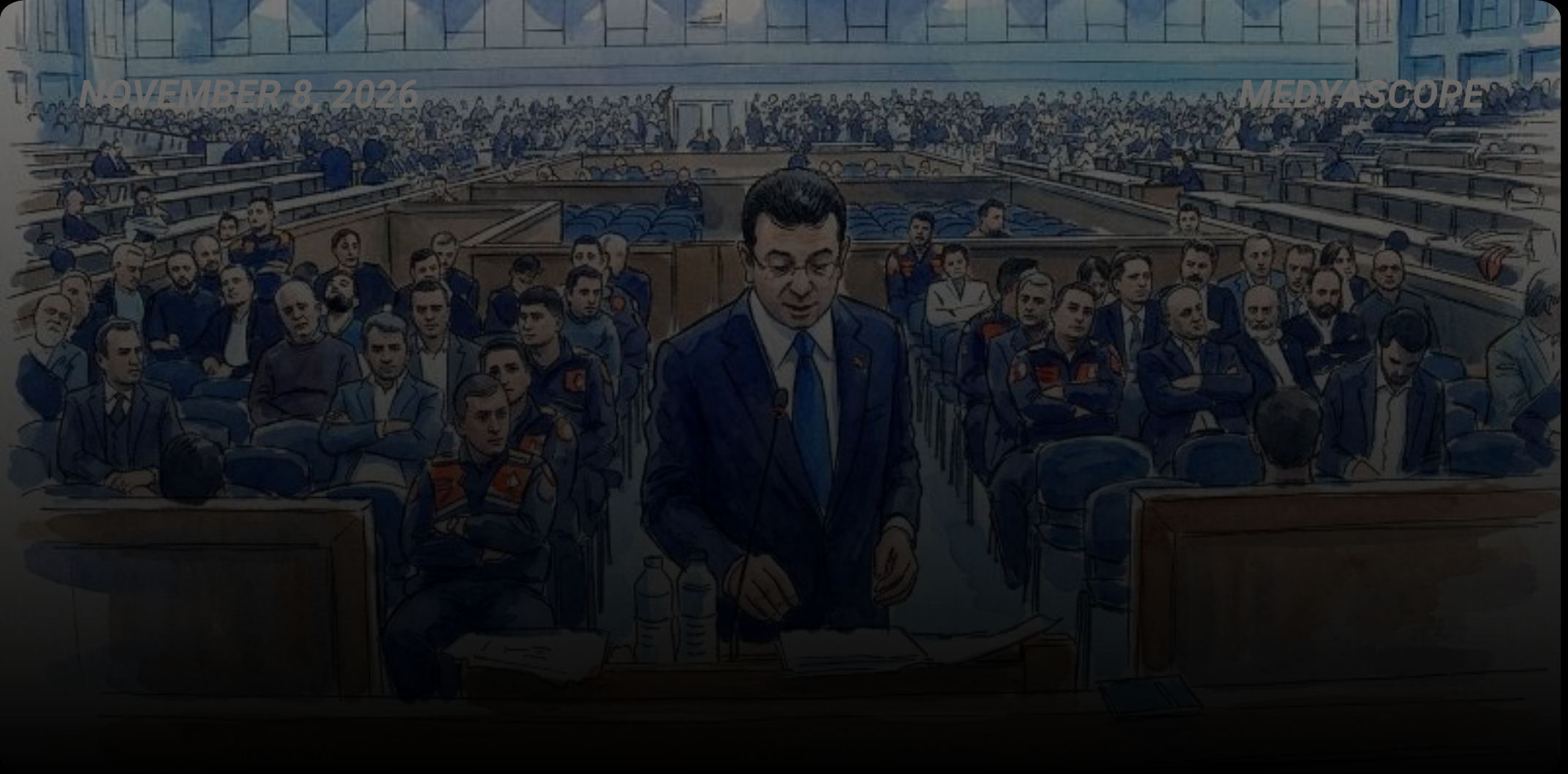
44 DAYS

since retired police officer Ali Şekeroğlu committed suicide during a protest over pensioners' financial struggles in front of the Constitutional Court



507 DAYS

since attorney Mehmet Pehlivan was arrested. He remains imprisoned despite the reported expiration of the maximum legal period for pretrial detention.



İMAMOĞLU CHALLENGES COURT AS WITNESSES ADMIT RELYING ON HEARSAY, RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE EVIDENCE

The third hearing in the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) trial resumed after a two-week break, with 435 defendants, including imprisoned Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, facing charges. Several complainants stated they had no complaints, while some witnesses acknowledged relying on hearsay rather than firsthand knowledge. Testimonies also revealed disputed allegations and inconsistencies. İmamoğlu challenged the proceedings, demanding that Istanbul Governor Davut Gül be summoned to testify about meetings central to the case.



FROM FACTORIES TO FARMLANDS: TÜRKİYE'S GROWING FIGHT FOR LABOR RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

According to Umut-Sen's October 2026 Resistance Map, 285 labor and community struggles were documented across Türkiye, including 47 newly recorded protests. Workers demanded unpaid wages and protested dismissals linked to union organizing, while villagers resisted mining and energy projects threatening their land. Farmers demonstrated against falling crop prices and rising production costs. Of 64 ongoing struggles, 41 have lasted over 100 days, reflecting sustained demands for labor rights, fair compensation, and environmental protection.

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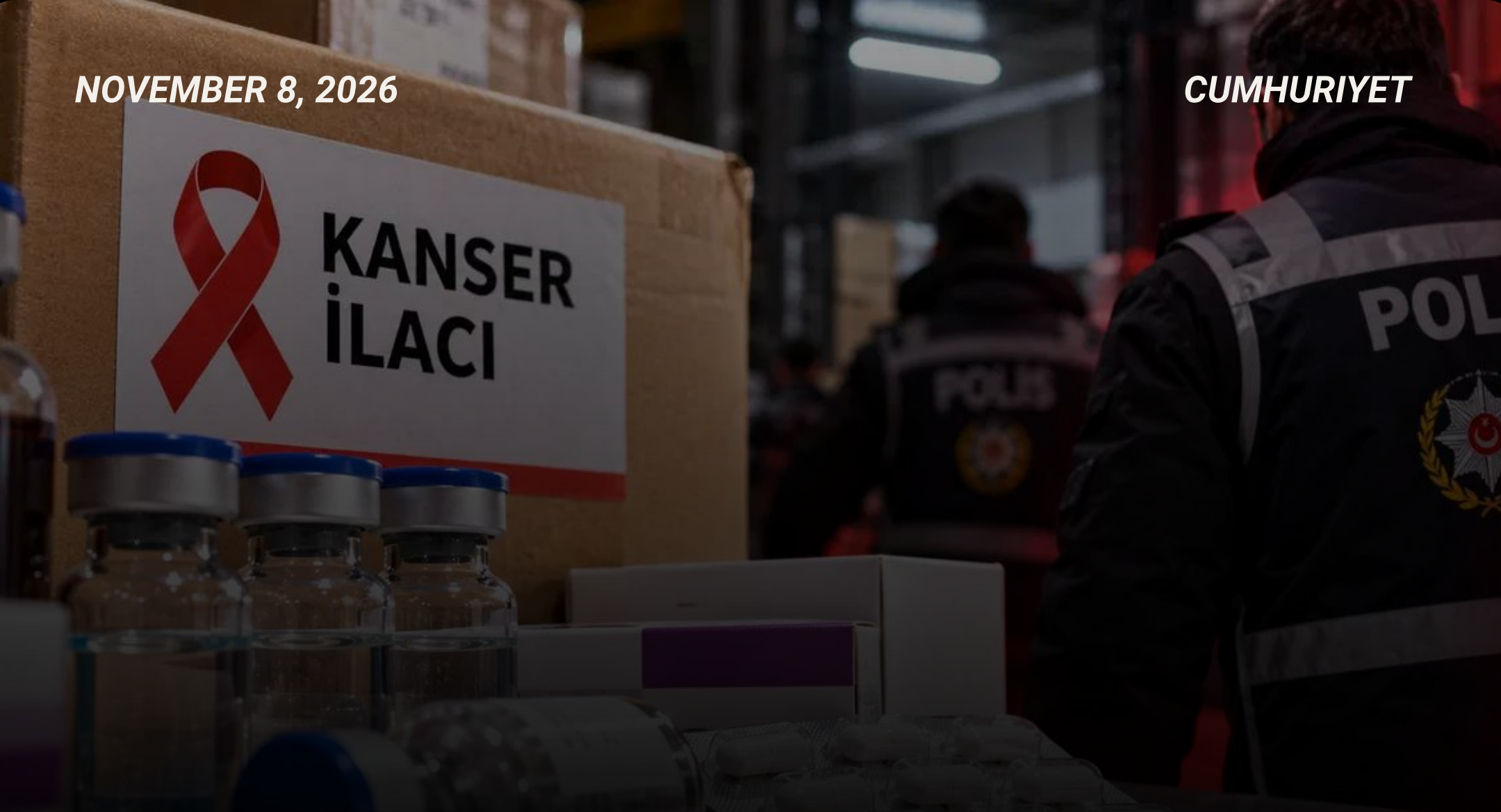
CUMHURIYET



CANCER DRUG SCANDAL IN TURKIYE: EXPIRED MEDICATIONS ALLEGEDLY REPACKAGED AND RESOLD

Turkish authorities detained 22 suspects in raids across 11 provinces over allegations that expired cancer medications were repackaged and resold domestically and internationally. Istanbul Chief Prosecutor Akın Gürlek announced that the investigation identified 24 suspects, including three public officials, four companies, and five businesses, with approximately 650 million TL in financial transactions. Authorities seized assets and bank accounts allegedly linked to the scheme, raising serious concerns about patient safety and pharmaceutical oversight.



FROM DEMİRTAŞ TO İMAMOĞLU: DEM PARTY CONDEMNS DETENTION OF ELECTED POLITICIANS

Marking the tenth anniversary of the arrests of former HDP leaders Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ, DEM Party co-chairs Tülay Hatimoğulları and Tuncer Bakırhan visited Edirne and Kandıra prisons. They demanded their release and compliance with European Court of Human Rights rulings. Hatimoğulları also condemned the detention of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu and other elected mayors, warning that government-appointed trustees, initially targeting Kurdish municipalities, have increasingly affected the broader opposition.



NEW REVELATIONS IN TÜRKİYE'S FUND SCANDAL: PRESIDENTIAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL MEMBER SIGNED RELIGIOUS COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATES

New revelations in Türkiye's investment fund scandal show that ten funds managed by four companies, including Tera, Pusula, Hedef, and Atlas, received certificates declaring compliance with Islamic finance principles. According to Serbestiyet, several certificates were signed by Professor Servet Bayındır, a member of the Presidential Economic Policies Council. The approvals permitted investments under specified religious restrictions, raising questions about oversight and accountability as the companies face scrutiny over alleged financial misconduct.

NOVEMBER 8, 2026 BIRGUN



INVESTMENT FUND SCANDAL DEEPENS: FORMER MINISTER FATMA BETÜL SAYAN KAYA ARRESTED

Former AKP minister, lawmaker, and deputy party chair Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya was arrested in Türkiye's expanding investment fund scandal. Prosecutors accuse her of criminal organization membership and violating capital markets legislation. Kaya and her husband allegedly earned 2.17 billion TL through transactions involving approximately 163 million TL in Özata Denizcilik shares. Reports indicate she withdrew funds one day before liquidation. Her husband, İlyas Kaya, and former Capital Markets Board chairman İbrahim Ömer Gönül were released under judicial supervision.

NOVEMBER 8, 2026 CUMHURIYET



73 YEAR-OLD TURKISH TEXTILE GIANT SHUTS DOWN PRODUCTION AMID RISING COSTS

Orta Anadolu, one of Türkiye's oldest textile manufacturers, permanently closed its Kayseri production facilities on October 12, ending 73 years of operations. Established in 1953, the company supplied denim fabrics to international fashion brands for decades. The closure, attributed to declining global demand and rising domestic production costs, resulted in employee contract terminations. Management announced that severance pay, notice compensation, and other legal entitlements would be paid by November 7, 2026.



TÜRKİYE'S BANKRUPTCY RULINGS SURPASS 2025 TOTALS IN JUST TEN MONTHS, WITH CONSTRUCTION AND TEXTILES HARDEST HIT

Corporate financial distress in Türkiye reached record levels in 2026, with 249 bankruptcy rulings and 1,597 rejected debt restructuring requests in the first ten months, surpassing 2025 totals. Bankruptcies rose 27%, while rejections increased 50.5% year-over-year. Construction and textiles were hardest hit, recording 121 and 119 temporary protection rulings, respectively. Agriculture followed with 63. Rising financing costs and cash flow difficulties continue to strain businesses and their supply chains.



AFTER 17 MONTHS BEHIND BARS, GAZİOSMANPAŞA MAYOR GRANTED HOUSE ARREST

Gaziosmanpaşa Mayor Hakan Bahçetepe, detained for 17 months, was sentenced to six years and three months in prison on bribery charges by Istanbul's 10th High Criminal Court. The court simultaneously ordered his release from prison under house arrest and judicial supervision. The case was separated from the broader Aziz İhsan Aktaş investigation. Following the ruling, Bahçetepe shared his first public message on social media: "Hello freedom, hello my neighbors..."



BRIBERY SCANDAL DEEPENS: FORMER FINANCIAL CRIMES OFFICIAL SAYS HE WARNED BANKING REGULATOR

Mustafa Alper Taş, a senior official at Türkiye's Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (BDDK), was arrested on bribery allegations linked to the ongoing investment fund investigation. Former Financial Crimes Investigation Board (MASAK) Deputy Chairman Ramazan Başak revealed that he had personally warned BDDK Chairman Şahap Kavcıoğlu about alleged misconduct approximately 18 months earlier. Başak criticized the failure to address these warnings, citing declining institutional integrity, inadequate merit-based appointments, and growing public distrust in financial regulators.



FROM DEFORESTATION TO CLIMATE SPONSORSHIP: CONTROVERSY SURROUNDS COP31 IN ANTALYA

As COP31 opens in Antalya on November 9–20, major Turkish conglomerates, including Cengiz, Kalyon, Koç, Sabancı, and Limak, face criticism over their environmental records despite being named climate partners. Environmental campaigners accuse several sponsors of deforestation, controversial mining operations, fossil fuel investments, and damage to agricultural lands. The controversy raises concerns about corporate greenwashing and the credibility of climate commitments, particularly as communities affected by industrial projects continue fighting to protect their land and livelihoods.



PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION ANNOUNCES: UNIVERSITY EDUCATION MAY BE REDUCED TO THREE YEARS

President of the Council of Higher Education Erol Özvar announced that Türkiye is considering reducing undergraduate university programs from four years to three, allowing students to enter the workforce earlier. The proposed reform would simplify curricula, reduce the number of courses, update course content, and incorporate artificial intelligence and digital skills into university education.



ATTACK ON ROJİN KABAİŞ'S UNCLE: "DROP THE ROJİN CASE"

Ahmet Kabaiş, uncle of Rojin Kabaiş, who died under suspicious circumstances in Van in 2024, was attacked in Istanbul by four masked individuals. According to the family's lawyer, the attackers beat and threatened him, saying "Drop the Rojin case," and also threatened Rojin's father, raising serious concerns about the family's safety and their pursuit of justice.

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