

# Aggrieved and forgotten: The tragic story of 78-year-old Kurdish prisoner Sise Bingol

by Duygu Yildiz - 29/01/2018 08:59



On 6th of April, 2016, police operation units got intelligence that high-ranking members of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) gathered together in a small village called Badan in eastern Mus province of Turkey. One of these 'terrorists' had a million Turkish lira-price on his head.

The operation unit raided the local authority Ali Riza Sahin's house and took four inhabitants of into custody including Sahin with the accusations of being a member of the terrorist organisation.

77-year-old Sise Bingol was among them. She found herself in Mus E Type Prison even she has not found out why.

Next day, state-funded Anadolu Agency (AA) [reported](#) that 'A woman terrorist, referring to Sise, was captured alive by the security forces'.

Most of the mainstream media captioned the capturing of the 'separatist terrorist', heralding the 'success' of Turkish operation units.

A 77-year-old 'separatist terrorist'! Don't be surprised by her age, 'Sisi code-named terrorist' was able to take many dangerous actions against the Turkish state. She was allegedly supplying food, shelter and material to PKK members. A dangerous target who was neutralised by Turkey's 'heroic soldiers'.

That is how the state-funded media and the governor of Mus [responded](#) to objections of her arrest.

Turkey is a country where the security forces can find 'terrorists' at the age ranging from 7 to 77. Sometimes, even older. According to the authorities, her age is not an obstacle for committing serious crimes against the state.

The European Court of Human Rights and many other international human rights organizations have condemned Turkey for the thousands of human rights abuses. Many judgments are related to systematic executions of Kurdish civilians, torturing, forced displacements, destroyed villages, arbitrary arrests, murdered and disappeared Kurdish journalists, activists and politicians.

The ruling party, the AKP, has promised a new beginning for the Kurds, talking of a softer, more tolerant approach.

But it was the AKP which passed the severe anti-terrorism law.

All Kurdish protests are presumed by the state to be organised by the PKK. And membership of the PKK is a terrorist offence. Under the penal code, terrorism offences apply even to young teenagers and old people like Sise Bingol.

'How can an old woman has never left the village she was living in her lifetime separate the country?' asks Sise Bingol's grandson, Zeynel Ali Bingol. 'She is a separatist, I can say, she was separating her bread and her love to share,' he said.

Bingol was later brought to another prison in southern Mersin province without the legal authorities informing her family. During the transfer, she had to stay in the military vehicle for three days despite she is old and has severe health problems.

She was later released due to her severe health condition ten months after the court's final decision. After her release, the court decided that 'she was guilty of willingly helping a terrorist organisation' and sentenced another four years of imprisonment. Her son also founded guilty of the same accusations, and both were imprisoned in Mus.

Let's go back to get a more in-depth impression about the life of this 'terrorist'. She

was born in Kurdish populated Baden village, in Varto district of Mus, eastern Turkey. She is 78 years old now. Her life story is full of agony and poverty. She lost two sons in the Varto Earthquake. On top of that, she lost another son due to poverty.

Later, two of his survived children joined PKK, and they died in the clashes with the Turkish army. She buried five sons side by side. Probably, the strongest 'evidence' of her guilt: a mother who let her children join a 'terrorist organisation'.

Sise Bingol had a heart attack one month ago and received a report proving that prison conditions are highly risky for her life. However, she is still in prison. A few days ago, she talked to her daughter Hasbike Kanmaz and said that she lost her hope.

'Give my best to everyone. I don't believe that the court will release me. I will be able to go out of prison only when I die. I lost my hope.' said Sise Bingol.

Now, Turkey has a '78-year-old terrorist' in prison. A 'treat' against unity and existence of the state was restrained.

She lost five children. She lost her freedom. Unfortunately, day by day, she is losing her hope, too.