

University professor kidnapped by occupying militias in Afrin

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A professor at the University of Afrin was kidnapped by members of a Turkey-backed militia in Afrin earlier this week, the Center for Documenting Violations in Northern Syria reports.

Dr. Riyad Mulla was a professor in the economics department at the University of Aleppo before the war in Syria began. When the University of Afrin was opened in 2015, he began to teach there. According to ANHA, he also [founded](#) the Ahzar Afrin School, a private school in Afrin Canton.

He was kidnapped from his home near the center of Afrin City in the middle of the day on Tuesday.

Kidnappings have become a grim epidemic in occupied Afrin, with individuals who worked in local or regional government, had ties to the democratic self-administration or the YPG, or whose families could afford to pay significant ransoms being specifically targeted. Those who survived detention in prisons administered by

Turkey-backed rebels described abhorrent conditions, and the United Nations is investigating deaths in custody in at least one prison near the Syrian-Turkish border.

Graphic videos depicting severe torture at the hands of militia members have circulated on social media for several months. The most recent video, leaked this week, shows members of Ahrar al-Sharqiya, a Turkey-backed Islamist group, beating a civilian and demanding a \$25,000 ransom for his release.