

On World Children's Day, 197 children in prison on terror charges in Turkey

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Under Turkey's strict anti-terror laws, Kurdish youth have been routinely arrested at protests where some threw stones at police. As young as 12, the so-called "stone-throwing kids" were sentenced as adults for supporting terrorism.

Some 197 children are in prison on terror charges, and a total of 2,767 children between the ages of 12 and 18 are in jail, according to the report of the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Houses.

Opportunities at home decayed during their imprisonment and gaps in education make the already difficult prospect of integrating into the society almost impossible.

Impunity for torture and maltreatment

Civil Society Association in Penal Execution System (CISST) pointed out that NGOs were not allowed make any observations in prisons by visits to report on the claims of

violence cases, rights violations against child prisoners.

The organisation also underlined that the ministries addressed the issue in prisons only with reference to "peer violence" yet peer violence covered only a tiny portion of all violence cases in jail such as maltreatment and torture.

Complaints lodged against torture and maltreatment ended up with no punishment, according to CISST.

"Between the years of 2010-2015, 64 investigations were launched. Within these 64 investigations, proceedings have been initiated with regards to 484 personnel, but only one person was sentenced to prison in the end".

The reports of CISST demonstrate that between March 2009 and March 2017, 18 children have lost their lives behind bars. 10 of these 18 children were under arrest.

Between November 2015 - June 2017, six children lost their lives in prisons. Five of these children died due to fire that broke out / that was started in their wards. The other child committed suicide.