

Grey Wolves fascists attack leftist students at a university in Ankara, Turkey

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Students at Hacettepe University's Beytepe Campus in Ankara, Turkey were physically attacked last week by a fascist group calling themselves the "Hacettepe Grey Wolves Organization." The masked group entered the university with machetes and meat cleavers to attack students, and at least one was reported injured. University students have staged protests against a new "reservation system" introduced in the cafeteria.

The injured student was admitted to Bilkent City Hospital for treatment. In a statement issued by the Ankara Medical Association (ATO), it was said that despite the attending physician's decision to keep the student under observation while his treatment continued, he was requested to be taken to the police station. Meanwhile, 28 other students who wanted to visit their injured friend at the hospital were detained. The injured student was also detained later that day.

On Monday, October 27, the day of the attack, the far-right group held a "handover ceremony" by unfurling a banner of Alparslan Türke?, the historical leader of the fascist movement in Turkey, at a café opposite the Faculty of Literature. The attack sparked anger among students against the university administration and private security units. Students demanded an explanation as to how the group was able to enter the school with such weapons. The university administration has not yet made a statement.

Türke? played an active role in the military coup in 1960 that resulted in the execution of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and two of his ministers. In 1969, he founded his fascist Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). Türke?, who also served as NATO Branch Director of the Land Forces during his military service, led fascist terror targeting the rise of the labor movement and the leftist tendencies in the period leading up to the 1980 military coup and served as deputy prime minister in

Süleyman Demirel's governments.

In a statement published by the Hacettepe University administration in 2024, it was stated that the group named "Hacettepe Grey Wolves Organization" is not an officially established and active student group, and that the students involved in this group have taken actions that have negatively affected educational activities and peace within the university for nearly three years. However, there is no information indicating that the university administration has taken any measures against the fascist group or imposed any penalties.

The attackers at Hacettepe University have a direct link to the Grey Wolves (Ülkü Ocaklar?), an organization founded by Türke? and affiliated with the MHP. Utku Sürenler, who is said to be the Ankara Grey Wolves Provincial Deputy Chairman in charge of universities, posted a threatening message on his social media account saying, "This flag will not fall to the ground, not until we die, last lamb." Fatih Aydın, Deputy Chairman of Grey Wolves, claimed responsibility for the attack, posting, "Greetings to the brave grey wolves of Hacettepe."

The increasing crackdown on universities has been a key part of the construction of a presidential dictatorship in Turkey by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's government, together with its de facto partner, the MHP. Government-aligned figures were appointed to university administrations, suppression of left-wing students intensified, and leftist academics purged on a large scale. The NATO-backed 2016 military coup attempt was used as a pretext for this unlawful crackdown.

In the recent period, universities have been the scene of significant protests. Students played a major role in the mass demonstrations that began with the arrest of

Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) Mayor and Republican People's Party (CHP) presidential candidate Ekrem İmamoğlu on March 19. The government responded by sending riot police to the universities.

Two years ago, on October 25, 2023, protests erupted in the western city of Aydın following the death of a university student, Zeren Ertaş, who lost her life when an elevator malfunctioned due to negligence at a state-run dormitory. These protests spread across the country, and riot police attacked students to suppress demonstrations at universities.

The ongoing climate of repression at universities, police operations, or fascist attacks carried out under the supervision of the police and private security units—as in the case of Hacettepe University—confirm that the fragile negotiations between Ankara and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) have no connection whatsoever with “peace and democracy.” These negotiations, in which Erdoğan and MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli have been declared “doves of peace,” are supported by almost the entire political establishment.

The so-called democratization process is reflected at the universities in the form of increased police violence and more fascists entering campuses. Yet Tayip Temel, Deputy Chairman of the Kurdish nationalist People's Equality and Democracy Party (DEM Party), stated on Halk TV's Rota program that “Mr. Bahçeli is the leader most aware of the Kurdish issue,” and that imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan had said, “After Atatürk, there is only one statesman, and that is Bahçeli.”

As the *World Socialist Web Site* has explained from the outset, the negotiations between Ankara and the PKK have emerged under pressure of the growing rivalry between Turkey and its ally, Israel. This is a reactionary attempt by the Turkish and Kurdish bourgeoisie to reach an agreement in line with US imperialism's “new Middle East” plan. The negotiations, taking place amid the genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, an imperialist-backed regime change in Syria, and an imperialist-Zionist attack on Iran, are accompanied by increasing attacks on political opposition, including the CHP, and democratic rights in Turkey.

The increased repression at universities is not unique to Turkey. As the crisis of capitalism deepens,

increasing social inequality and intensifying global imperialist war have led to a growing drive to authoritarianism worldwide. For example, in May, 78 students from Columbia University in the United States were violently detained for protesting against the genocide carried out by Israel in Gaza. The State Department revoked the visas of thousands of students who were said to have participated in the Gaza protests.

As explained in a statement by the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Turkey, all the fundamental problems facing workers and youth are international problems stemming from capitalism. The way to oppose increasing police repression and fascist violence on campuses lies in the revolutionary mobilization of the international working class against capitalism and for socialism. Join the IYSSE to fight for an end to genocide, war, and dictatorship, and for a socialist future where people can live humanely and in peace.



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