

Women's Revolution

Monthly Newsletter on the development and agenda of the women's revolution in North and East Syria



August 2024



KONGRA STAR
مؤتمر ستار



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In our newsletter for the month of August 2024, we inform you about the activities of Kongra Star and events related to the women's movement in North and East Syria. The month of August was another month of struggle and resistance. In another targeted attack on the women's revolution, our friend and companion at Kongra Star, Xalîde Îsa and her son Hejar Silêman were attacked by an act of violence by the Turkish state and was martyred.

We also received sad news about the death of journalists Gülistan Tara and Hiro Behdîn, who were murdered by a Turkish drone attack in Suleymania, Iraq. Both incidents show us that Turkish fascism is afraid of women and their collective striving for freedom, on which this revolution lives and breathes. Kongra Star has issued a statement on behalf of the women's movement on the death of the women journalists, excerpts of which are reproduced here.

The 3rd Congress of the Women's Council of the Democratic Union Party also took place in August, which we report on here. Furthermore, panels of the Democratic Autonomous Administration were held under the motto "Organizing the revolutionary struggle of women within the Democratic Autonomous Administration".

Finally, we report on Kongra Star's participation in the "No to Execution - Yes to Free Life" campaign against the execution of Pakshan Azizi and Sharifeh Mohammadi in Iran.



Kongra Star shows solidarity with the struggle of Afghan women

On the third anniversary of the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan on 15th of August, Kongra Star expressed its solidarity with the struggle of Afghan women: "Our full solidarity is with the struggle of women in Afghanistan who are fighting a determined battle against the systematic violation of women's rights being committed by the Taliban". With this statement Kongra Star joined the campaign launched by the Window of Hope women's movement in Afghanistan.

In addition to the campaign, Kongra Star and the Afghan women's movement RAWA have a long-term tradition of cooperation. This is because women in the Middle East often have very similar social experiences, they also share a fearless and combative attitude in their struggles for freedom. Kongra Star therefore states: "The struggle of women in Afghanistan is an existential struggle, a life and death struggle aimed at protecting the gains of women and upholding the flag of freedom in the face of tyranny. In the 21st century, women's voices are rising everywhere to demand freedom and justice and to challenge reactionary patriarchal regimes. But these regimes, whether in Afghanistan, Iran, Yemen, Tunisia, Iraq, Turkey or Syria will not be able to silence our struggle, because we at Kongra Star believe that women's voices are invincible, and their will cannot be broken.

Any attack on the rights of one woman is an attack on all women. Women's achievements are the common heritage of all women, regardless of place and time. We cannot rely on the same states and actors that created all this oppression to undo it. As Abdullah Ocalan said, 'Women's self-defense is a very serious issue that cannot be left to the mercy of men'. The fact that the patriarchal systems will always oppose freedom means for us that it is necessary to organize ourselves and to defend ourselves against them.

Here you can read the whole statement: [Link](#)



Women take a stand against the attack on Gülistan Tara and Hiro Behdın

On 23th of August we learned with great sadness and anger that the Kurdish journalists Gulistan Tara and Hiro Behdinan were martyred in Sulaymaniyah as a result of a cowardly attack by the fascist Turkish state.

In a statement Kongra Star condemned this attack of the fascist Turkish state and the collaboration of the PDK on the vehicle of the Çeter press company and wished recovery to the six other journalists that were injured.

In its statement Kongra Star expresses: "The fascist Turkish state is waging a systematic war against female politicians, journalists and vanguards of society. Fascism is most afraid of women's freedom and women's vanguard. Targeting women journalists is an attempt to silence the voice of truth. These acts are war crimes and human rights violations. [...] These kinds of attacks cannot weaken the will and strength of women. We promise to step up our fight against racist and fascist attacks and make it clear that nothing can stop our struggle. In order to realize the dreams of Gülistan Tara and Hiro Behdın, we will resist and defeat the regimes that are hostile to women and kill them. We condemn this act of inhumanity once again and say: With the philosophy of Women's Life and Freedom, we will defeat the genocidal and fascist attacks."

In the days after the attack, demonstrations took place in Afrin and Sheba, Qamishlo and other places with a large turnout. It shows that no attack on us will go unanswered and we will only continue to expand our struggle!

Here you can read the whole statement: [Link](#)



3rd Congress of the Women's Council of the Democratic Unity Party (PYD) took place

The 3rd Congress of the Women's Council of the Democratic Unity Party (PYD) took place under the slogan "With the philosophy Jin, Jiyân, Azadi we guarantee an ethical, political and democratic society".

Around 400 delegates from the councils of the regions of North and East Syria, South Kurdistan and other countries as well as representatives of the YPJ, the self-administration, TEV-DEM, the Syrian Democratic Council and Kongra Star took part in the congress in Heseke.

After discussing the political situation and explaining the organizational mechanisms of the party's Women's Council, the delegates elected their 32 representatives in the subsequent council elections. The congress finally ended with a statement read out by Eyşe Hiso, member of the PYD General Council. The statement said:

"Many decisions were made at the congress, including that we want to advance the work for the unity of the women of Syria and in particular to push for the liberation of the occupied territories. The work in the liberated cities and the further development of the family law were also decided at the congress. In the future, the organization of women based on the philosophy of Jin, Jiyân, Azadi is to be promoted in open education. The development of the work of the HPC (People's Defense Forces) and the development of communal projects in the field of economy were decided. The development of the work of young women, their education and the work of the women's councils were discussed and evaluated. Finally, the Women's Council of the PYD was founded with 32 women."

One week after the PYD's autonomous women's congress in Heseke, the party held its joint congress. Founded in 2003, the PYD is the leading party in North and East Syria, which is oriented towards the paradigm of democratic modernity and is committed to plurality, democracy and a value-based society in North and East Syria. It also strives for peace in and for the whole of Syria.



Panel series of the Women's Department

The Women's Department of the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North-East Syria held several workshops in 7 regions entitled "Organizing the revolutionary struggle of women in the Democratic Autonomous Administration". In August panels were held in the Regions of Minbic, Firat, Afrin-Shehba and Cizre.

The panel was divided into two sessions. The first session concerned the topic of „Women's rights, the negative attitudes of society towards women and its impact on women's struggle“, the second session „The role of women in self-government and the importance of promoting the achievements of the women's revolution“.

At the end of the panel in Qamishlo the participants made suggestions, how to continue their works: All sections of the society should be given educations about the struggle of women's autonomy and strength. Efforts should be strengthened towards women's economic project, the implementation of women's laws. And the relations between women's organizations around the world should be strengthened.

In the panel the gathered women expressed their decisiveness: "As we defeated Daesh, we will also defeat the conscience of the elderly and protect the achievements of women". With the panels of the Women's Association of the Democratic Autonomous Administration a clear sign was sent against the attacks on women and the Women's Revolution.





No to Execution - Yes to Free Life: Campaign against the execution of Pakshah Azizi and Sharifeh Mohammadi

In a public statement in Kobane, Kongra Star has spoken out against the Iranian regime's death sentence against the two women's rights activists Pakshah Azizi and Sharifeh Mohammadi. In doing so, Kongra Star is supporting the urgent campaign No to Execution - Yes to Free Life, which was launched by supporters in Iran.

Kongra Star's representative from the Fırat canton, Peyman Elûş, spoke in her statement about the important role of women in the resistance and in the struggle for a liberated future. In North and East Syria, women have led the revolution and are vanguards in the fight against the patriarchal mentality that still prevails. In Iran, too, it was and is women who led the uprisings in response to the murder of Jina Amini. The Kongra Star declaration states:

"Jina, who carried freedom in her heart and in her mind, was not prepared to turn back time thousands of years. Today, women have an ideology, self-confidence, their own organization and their own army. We say that anyone who has dedicated their heart to freedom must take a stand against the inhumane acts against women in Iran. We strongly condemn the death sentences against Sharifeh Mohammadi and Pakshah Azizi. We call on the murderous regime to immediately remove its dirty hands from the women and overturn the sentences. At the same time, we have still not received any news from Werîshe Muradî. This raises fears of the worst.

The most inhumane crimes are being committed against women in the Middle East and we must step up our fight against them. It is the duty of every woman to revolt against the inhumanity of the states that shed the blood of their peoples and to build the struggle as women. To stop the executions in the Middle East and around the world, a comprehensive and determined struggle is needed. As women, we are at the forefront of this struggle. Ultimately, we must fight all forms of violence by the patriarchal state. We say: It is time to take responsibility for the struggle for women's liberation, for the defense

of nature and all humanity!”

The No to Execution - Yes to Free Life campaign is currently being joined by people around the world who do not want to accept the injustice done to Pakhshan Azizi, Sharifeh Mohammadi, Werîshe Muradî and other women in Iran. Kongra Star is calling on people to join the campaign.

The link to the campaign can be found here: <https://x.com/notexecution>





Protests in India carry the slogan “Jin, Jiyan, Azadî”

Since the rape and murder of a young doctor on 9 August in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), eastern India, the country has been in turmoil. Hundreds of thousands of women have been marching through Indian cities for days with candlelight marches under the slogan „Reclaim the Night“ to protest against the lack of security for women and to demand harsher penalties for acts of violence. Over the weekend following the incident, more than a million doctors across India went on a general strike in several regions.

During the marches the slogan Jin, Jiyan, Azadî was shouted, and it appeared on a huge banner among the protesters. During the marches, the slogan Jin, Jiyan, Azadî was shouted and appeared on a large banner among the marchers. It is another example of how the slogan is spreading around the world. Everywhere it expresses the basic philosophy that women are not only the preservers of life but are also ready to defend it and thus themselves.

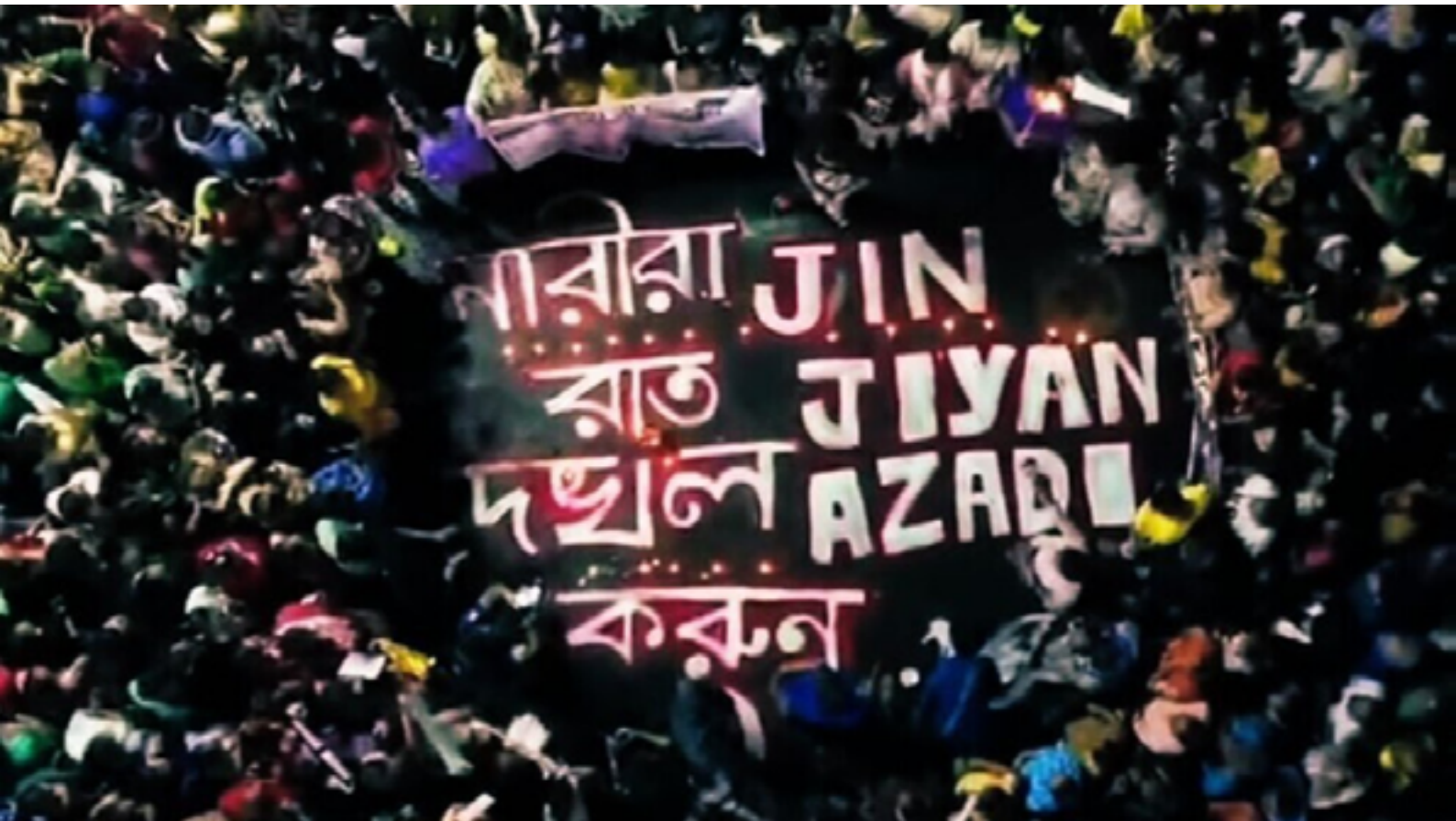
In a statement Kongra Star wrote: “If we have been living a women’s revolution in Rojava for 12 years now, it is also because we know that we as women can never stop fighting for freedom. Because as long as patriarchy, state violence and occupation, sexism and the dominant male mentality are hegemonic, neither we women nor our societies will be free. Today, when thousands of doctors in India take to the streets and go on strike under the slogan “Jin Jiyan Azadî”, it is because we understand that we have to defend ourselves together against all the attacks of this hegemonic masculinity, which is spread all over the world and protected by patriarchal systems in institutions and the state.

As long as it is a daily reality that women like the politician Gülistan Kılıç Koçyiğit in Turkey are beaten up for their commitment to democratic processes and solutions in parliament; as long as it is an everyday reality that a young woman like Moumita Debnath, a junior doctor, can be raped and murdered during her break in a hospital in Kolkata, India; as long as it is

a daily reality that women activists like Pakhshan Azizi are tortured and sentenced to death for their political and social activism in Iran, we as women must fight together against this patriarchal system and its mentality.”

The statement ended with a reminder of the common struggle, be it against the patriarchal mentality in India, Iran or North-East Syria. Outside Kongra Star, the Women’s Defense Units YPJ and the students of Rojava University’s medical faculty also showed solidarity with the protesters.

Here you can read the whole statement: [Link](#)





Educations in the Month of August

In August there were once again education sessions for women on various topics. In the canton of Sheba, a 20-day education was held on the subject of health. Being able to look after your own health and that of your community is seen as an important building block of societal self-defense. In the Sheba and Afrin canton in particular, which is largely occupied by the Turkish state, the health care situation is often poor. The educational topics were therefore wide-ranging and included first aid, examining vital functions, dealing with heat, health policy, burns and fractures, women-specific illnesses and the use of syringes.

A training course also came to an end in the canton of Afrin and Sheba, in which women from various areas of Kongra Star took part. The content of the training included the concept of the natural society, the history of the Middle East, the history of Kurdistan, gender and sexism, women's history, Jineoloji, politicizing feelings, ecology and the idea of the democratic nation. Regarding the reality of North and East Syria, the women learned about the organization of Kongra Star and dealt with the topics of family law and the co-presidential system. Afterwards, an education on self-defense was given.

In Qamishlo, a 15-day open education program was held at the Şehîd Beng Academy in August, which dealt with the ideological foundations of the Kurdish movement and women's revolution. According to Ibtîsam El-Hisên, a member of Kongra Star's education commission, the aim of the education was to impart knowledge about their own history, to strengthen the power of women and to challenge the millennia-old mentality of patriarchy. The education was dedicated to Şehîd Sîwan Fatemî, who died in July as a result of patriarchal violence. In a closing speech on education, those responsible once again emphasized the necessity of education for the existence of an intact society: "We need education, just as we need water, bread and air to breathe".

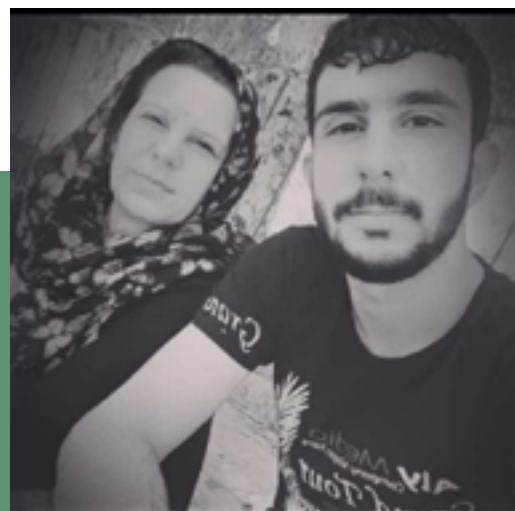


Attack on the women's movement by the Turkish state and the resistance against it

On August 28, a car carrying a member of Kongra Star was attacked by the Turkish state. Xalide Mihemed Şerif and her son Adnan Hejar Sileman were martyred in the attack. This attack is the result of the Turkish state's intensive attacks on the civilian population and the democratic system established here with the women's vanguard.

Xalide Mihemed Şerif comes from a political family that has always been active for the freedom of the Kurdish people. She has been active since the beginning of the women's revolution in Rojava and has also raised her children according to democratic values. Xalide has been co-chair of the community for many years and has served the people in her community. As a longtime member of the Kongra Star women's movement, she has always advocated for the rights and concerns of women in the community and throughout the region. A few weeks ago, she was elected Kongra Star coordinator for the city of Qamishlo and was attacked by a bomb on August 28 while walking home from the Kongra Star center with her son.

Here is the Kongra Star statement on the attack: [Link](#)



On the same day of the attack, people in North and East Syria took to the streets against the ongoing attacks in order to oppose the fascist Turkish state's attempt to undermine the revolution in Rojava.



On August 29, hundreds of residents of the city of Qamishlo buried the martyr Mihemed Şerif and her son Adnan Hejar Silêman in the Delil Sarokhan martyrs' cemetery.



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