



Updates on the Crackdown on Human Rights in the Gulf

Enclosed a special section about Yemen & Saudi Arabia

Inside:

- Saudi-Led Coalition Airstrikes Target Civilian Yemenis
- Saudi Arabia Steps Up Ruthless Crackdown Against Human Rights Activists



BAHRAIN
EXECUTES
THREE
SHI'ITES



Bahrain Carries out First Death Penalties against Political Dissenters since Eruption of Feb 14 Uprising in 2011

The authorities in Bahrain **executed** three Bahraini dissidents over their alleged role in the killing of an Emirati officer and two other policemen in a political trial that based its convictions on confessions extracted under torture.

The regime in Manama carried out the death penalty against the political detainees, who were arrested in 2014 over a bombing in Daih, on Sunday (January 15, 2017). They are the first death sentences to be implemented since the eruption of the February 14 uprising in 2011.

The Public Prosecution announced that the execution of 27-year-old Abbas Al-Samee', 42-year-old Sami Mushaima' and 21-year-old Ali Al-Singace was carried out by a firing squad, after the Court of Cassation rejected the appeals of the defendants and upheld their death sentences, claiming that "the legally prescribed measures were taken and the Public Prosecutor requested the implementation of the verdict."

The International Community Expresses its Concerns Following the Execution



Tom Brake

[Tom Brake](#), Liberal Democrat MP in the UK Parliament, called on his country's government to interfere to stop the execution of death sentences issued against 3 Bahraini dissidents.

"Abbas Al-Samea, Sami Mushaima, Ali Al-Singace at risk of execution in Bahrain. All 3 say were tortured by Police," Brake posted on his own Twitter account, calling on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to act in order to put an end to this measure.

[UK Members of Parliament](#) called on the British Foreign Office to file a complaint against the Bahraini government, and to call for an investigations into torture in the Kingdom. They also demanded their government to interfere concerning the death sentences of Mohammad Ramadan and Hussein Ali Moussa.

"The UK is firmly opposed to the death

penalty, and it is our longstanding position to oppose capital sentences in all circumstances. The Bahraini authorities are fully aware of our position and I have raised the issue with the Bahraini government" UK Foreign Secretary, [Boris Johnson](#), said.

However, international human rights organization [Reprieve](#) has criticised the response of the UK Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, to Bahrain's execution of three men. It considered that the statement did not confirm whether the Government took steps to prevent the executions, and did not address concerns, raised by Reprieve, over the risk of UK complicity in the executions and other abuses such as torture.

Earlier this month, Reprieve had [denounced](#) the three death sentences against three Bahraini men Abbas al-Samea, Sami Mushaima, and Ali al-Sin-



THAT THE EXECUTION OF 3 BAHRAINI POLITICAL DE- TAINÉES IS A “REGRESSIVE STEP” FOR BAHRAIN

Samah Hadid

gace. “All three were tortured into signing false ‘confessions’ that were used against them in court”, it said.

The [European Union](#) said on Sunday (January 15, 2017) that it expressed concerns that the 3 dissidents executed by the Bahraini authorities did not receive their right to fair trial. The EU said in a statement “This case is a serious drawback given that Bahrain had suspended executions for the past seven years. Concerns have been expressed about possible violations of the right to a fair process for the three convicted.”

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial Executions [Agnes Callamard](#) described the Bahraini regime’s execution of the three political detainees Abbas Al-Samee’, Ali Al-Singace and Sami Mushaima’ as extrajudicial killings. Callamard stressed on her official Twitter account on Sunday (January 15, 2017) that the three Bahraini dissenters were subjected to torture, deeming their trial unfair and based on flimsy evidence. She had also

[urged](#) the Bahraini authorities on Saturday (January 14, 2017) to stop the executions.

[Amnesty International’s](#) Deputy Director for Campaigns in Beirut, Samah Hadid said that the execution of 3 Bahraini political detainees is a “regressive step” for Bahrain.

“This is a dark day for human rights in Bahrain. These executions - the first to be carried out since 2010 - are a deeply regressive step for a country whose authorities’ have repeatedly trumpeted their commitment to human rights,” Hadid noted.

In a press conference held by the State Department on Tuesday (January 17, 2017), [John Kirby](#) said “we’ve seen the Bahraini Government’s announcement that it executed three people. Violent attacks against the police, such as the one that took the lives of the three officers in this case originally are reprehensible, of course, and deserve condemnation.”

Answering a question on whether US



John Kirby

concern was because the executions took place at a moment of tension in Bahrain, Kirby said "US has expressed concerns about these executions and the information in which we have about the way these individuals were detained and were coerced into confessions. And we have raised those concerns repeatedly with the Bahraini Government. We're certainly also concerned about the context in which they took place."

In a press conference held on Tuesday (January 17, 2017), the [United Nations](#) urged Bahrain "to impose a moratorium on the use of the death penalty and to ratify the second optional protocol of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that aims to abolish the death penalty definitively."

Rupert Colville, Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said "We are appalled at the execution by firing squad of three men

in Bahrain on Sunday. The men had been convicted of a bombing in Manama in 2014 that killed three police officers. They were found guilty after being allegedly tortured into making false confessions and their lawyers were not given access to all the evidence against them nor allowed to cross-examine prosecution witnesses during court hearings."

"The way the trials were conducted raises serious doubts whether the accused were provided with the right to fair trial, guaranteed by the ICCPR in particular by Articles 9 and 14,"he further stated.

"Bahraini authorities must immediately commute the death sentences of two men at imminent risk of execution" [Amnesty International](#) said on Wednesday (January 18, 2017) and warned that the harsh response to protests against three executions carried out by firing squad on 15 January risks plunging the country into a human rights crisis.

WARNINGS OF IMMINENT RISK OF EXECUTION OF 2 BAHRAINI DETAINEES

Human Rights Watch said that two Bahrainis, Mohammad Ramadan and Hussein Mousa, appear to be at imminent risk of execution despite the authorities' failure to properly investigate their allegations of torture.

In a statement issued on Monday (January 23, 2017), HRW said "The January 15, 2017 executions of three other Bahrainis in a similar case have raised concerns that King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa will approve the executions of Ramadan and Moosa, who face the death penalty for a February 2014 bombing that resulted in the death of a policeman."

Human Rights Watch explained "analysis of their trial and appeal judgments found that their convictions were based almost exclusively on their confessions, which both men retracted."

Two United Nations human rights experts have appealed, on Wednesday (January 25, 2017), to the Government of Bahrain to spare the lives of Mohammad Ramadan and Hussein Moosa, who are at risk of imminent execution, and to ensure a re-trial of the defendants in compliance with international standards.

In a statement, the two UN experts said that the two convicts, who had their death sentences confirmed in late



2015, were allegedly tortured while in prison, coerced to confess their crime, and not allowed to have proper legal assistance.

"Under international law, there is an absolute prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," said the UN Special Rapporteurs on summary executions, Agnes Callamard, and on torture, Nils Melzer.

The British Reprive Organization published a petition on its website saying that "we have to do everything we can to save the man who may be next Mohammed Ramadan after the authorities executed on Sunday (January 15) three men - the first executions in the country for six years."

The signatories have become more than 14,920 so far.

The petition says that Ahmad, 7 years old, asks Theresa May to help him remove his father's name, Mohammad, from the death penalty list.

CRACKDOWN AT DAWN: Bahrain Special Forces Raided Diraz Protest Site



Mostafa Hamdan

The Bahraini regime's security forces [raided](#) the open protest site held in the village of Diraz at around 3 am on Thursday (January 26, 2017).

Protestors woke up in panic to see a band of government security forces 20 meters away from them. The forces were dressed in black, firing shots. The attackers were not members of riot forces. They were from the Special Forces, dressed in black and masked. They were holding shotguns and firing at people.

The masked forces shot directly at the youths leaving a number of injuries, including the 17-year-old youth Mostafa Hamdan who sustained the most dangerous injury in his head after a bullet lodged in his skull. The forces, also, took 6 protestors into custody.

The family of injured Diraz protester, Mostafa Hamdan, said that he was [transferred](#) to the International Hospital of Bahrain at 3 am, yet the hospital refused to provide treatment. The family then had to transfer him in a private car to the Salmaniya Hospital, instead of providing an ambulance for them. Mostafa's CT scan showed a bullet resting in his skull. He is still under [anaesthesia](#) and artificial ventilation. Doctors couldn't extract the bullet due to Hamdan's young age and body weakness.



The Bahraini Authorities Tighten the Grip on Bahraini Citizens

An official in the Bahraini judiciary announced on Monday (January 30, 2017) that the court adjourned looking into the case of [Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim](#) until February 27, 2017, at the request of the Public Prosecution. Bahrain News Agency (BNA) quoted the official confirming that the next hearing will be the final hearing in the case.

Bahraini Authorities arrested on Sunday (January 15, 2017) [Mounir Mushaima'](#), brother of political prisoner Sami Mushaima' who was executed earlier in January.

Bahrain's third minor court started on Monday (January 23, 2017) looking into the case of human rights defender and president of Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, [Nabeel Rajab](#), in which he is accused of disseminating false news and rumours about Bahrain's internal situations. This accusation is linked to television interviews given by Rajab in 2014 and 2015, the lawyer said, adding a request to free him had been rejected.

Rajab was not brought to first court hearing. None of his lawyer attended the session, however, representatives from foreign embassies did.

Social media activists said that the Bahraini authorities summoned activist [Ibtisam Al-Saegh](#) for interrogation on Sunday (January 22, 2017) at Muharrag police station.



Ibtisam Al-Saegh

The family of detainee [Fadel Abbass](#) said that they were unable to see him since his arrest 117 days ago, indicating that the last call they received from him was in December 10, 2017, when he was still held in the criminal investigations directorate (CID) building.

An eyewitness said that detainee Sayed Alawi Sayed Hussein al-[Moussawi](#) is being transferred via a wheelchair due to severe torture. Sayed Alawi has been detained for more than 80 days, and denied chance to meet his family or lawyer.

Activists on social media said that the Emirati authorities arrested on (January 8, 2017) citizen [Ahmad Al-Ojaimi](#) from Karana while transiting through Dubai International Airport.

A [child sustained an eye injury](#) on Wednesday (January 11, 2017) morning due to the tear gas canisters fired by the security forces at Awal Primary Intermediate Boys School in Sitra.

An [old lady from Diraz](#) experienced a very difficult situation due to the security siege on Diraz that has been imposed since about 200 days. The old lady underwent eyes surgery in Salmaniya Medical Complex and the hospital decided to drive her home through an ambulance. When arriving to one of the deployed checkpoints at Diraz's entrances, the security forces did not allow the ambulance to enter the village. All the attempts to convince the forces to allow the ambulance drive the lady to her house were in vain, despite that they were told that the lady is old and sick and can't walk from the checkpoint to her house.

The Bahraini regime forces [launched](#) wide raid campaign in Bani Jamra village on the dawn of Monday (January 2, 2017) that led to the arrest of about 18 citizens.

Bahraini Human Rights Organisations

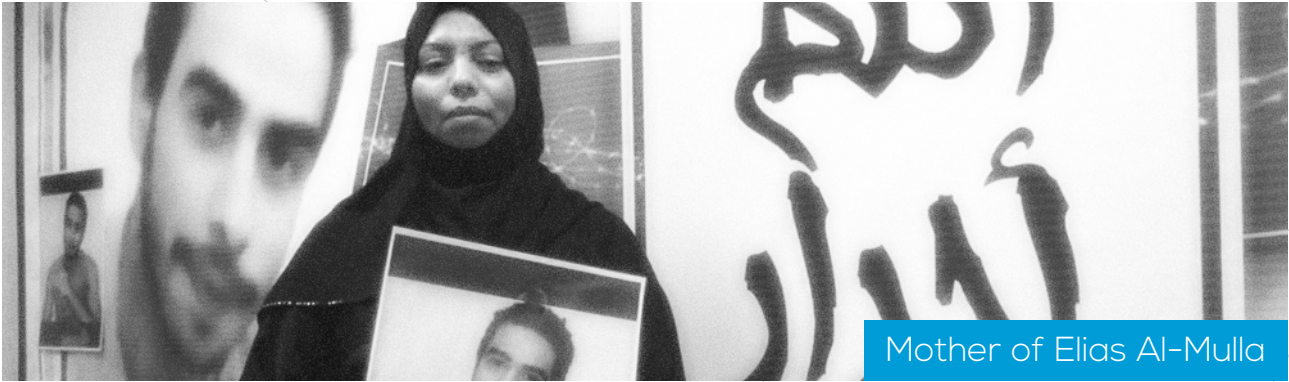
SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights, Bahrain Center for Human Rights, Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Bahraini German Organization for Human Rights, Bahrain Human Rights Observatory, Bahrain Human Rights Society, Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, and The European-Bahraini Organization for Human Rights dispatched an [urgent letter](#) to the new United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres regarding the impending death penalties against Bahrainis Sami Mushaima, Ali Al-Singace, and Abbas Al-Samea'.

The letter implored Mr. Antonio Guterres, in light of the strong claims that these death penalties are being carried arbitrarily and discriminately, especially against political prisoners Sami Mushaima, Ali Al-Singace, and Abbas Al-Samea', to urgently intervene in this matter, help release these prisoners, and oblige Bahrain to properly follow standards and laws set out by international human rights laws.

Four Bahraini human rights organisations (Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Salam for Democracy and Human Rights, Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights and Bahraini German Organization for Human Rights and Democracy) said in a [joint statement](#) "No representatives from the National Institutions for Human Rights that supported the execution sentence against three Bahraini youths (Sami Mushaima, Abbas Al-Samie and Ali Al-Singace) attended any of the execution victims' court sessions that lacked guarantees for fair trial. Besides, the NIHR is supposed to follow the torture complaints submitted by the victims."

The [Bahrain Human Rights Society](#) said it followed up the incident of masked civilian armed forces attacking protesters staged near Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim's house in Diraz, on Thursday dawn (January 26, 2017).

"We followed with grave concern the implications of the unjustified Diraz siege as it enters day 222, and the continuous assault of security forces against peaceful protests. We call on competent authorities to reassess the security measures, which have escalated recently," the society said.



A [joint statement](#) signed by Bahrain Human Rights Observatory, Bahrain Forum for Human Rights, Salam for Democracy and Human Rights, Bahrain Center for Human Rights, Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, European Bahraini Organization for Human Rights and German Organization for Human Rights and Democracy indicated that Diraz has been on siege since 221 days. This comes in violation of article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. They said that the authorities' sudden attack on the protestors outside Sheikh Isa Qassim's house, leader of Shiite sect, left a number of injuries due to the excessive use of live shots and shotguns by the security authorities, indicating that citizen Mosataf Hamdan (17 years) sustained a fatal injury."

The [Bahrain Centre for Human Rights](#) (BCHR) demanded that detainee Elias Al-Mullah (25 years old), who suffers from stage 3 cancer, receives proper medical treatment, and that his family is given his recent up-to-date medical reports on his condition.

In a statement (January 8, 2017), the BCHR said it "expresses great concern over the wellbeing and access to medical care of the detainee Elias Faisal Al-Mulla, who is suffering from stage 3 colon cancer, and whose family is unable to get consistent up to date reports of his medical status."

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) and European Centre for Democracy and Human Rights [condemned](#) the death penalty against the detainees Abass Al-Samei, Sami Mushaima and Ali Al-Singace (accused of killing an Emirati officer during clashes with protestors in a village east of the capital, Manama, in March 2014).



SAUDI-LED COALITION AIRSTRIKES TARGET CIVILIAN YEMENIS

At least [66 people were killed](#) in Yemen on Sunday (January 22, 2017) after the Saudi Arabia-led coalition fighting rebel forces in the country conducted airstrikes, AFP reported.

Saudi warplanes have [targeted a civilian vehicle](#) carrying 14 passengers in Yemen's southwestern province of Ta'izz, killing all of its occupants.

The charred bodies of the victims were discovered after the Saudi airstrike late on Friday (January 27, 2017).

Saudi airstrikes against civilian targets and urban infrastructure on Friday overall claimed the lives of 30 people and injured 10 others in Ta'izz, Sana'a, and Mareb provinces.

Saudi Arabia steps up ruthless crackdown against human rights activists



Abdulaziz al-Shubaily

Saudi Arabia's authorities have begun the year with an intensified crackdown against human rights activists dealing another heavy blow to the last vestiges of the country's embattled civil society, said [Amnesty International](#).

On Friday (January 10, 2017) Abdulaziz al-Shubaily, a human rights defender and a founding member of the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), a now disbanded independent human rights organization, appeared before the Specialized Criminal Court which deals with counterterrorism cases. He was sentenced again to eight years in prison in connection with his human rights work. He had faced a number of different charges including "communicating with foreign organizations" and providing information to Amnesty International for use in two of its reports. Every other member of ACPRA has been prosecuted or jailed.

On 8 January, Essam Koshak, a human rights defender, was summoned for interrogation by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Mecca around 5pm local time. He immediately went to al-Mansour police station but was detained and never made it back home. Amnesty International has learned that Essam Koshak was not allowed to appoint a lawyer and is being questioned about his Twitter account, which he mainly used to tweet about human rights issues in Saudi Arabia.

On 5 January Ahmed al-Mushaikhass, a founding member of the Adala Centre for Human Rights, an independent human rights organization which was not permitted to register in Saudi Arabia, received a phone call from the CID asking him to report to al-Qatif police station for questioning. On 8 January he was transferred to al-Dammam police station where he remains in custody. He has been under interrogation by the Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution (BIP) since then. Ahmed al-Mushaikhass is a human rights defender known for his work including helping families and relatives of those detained in the Eastern Province to raise their cases with the authorities.



Ali Adubisi

Saudi Authorities Start Demolishing Historic Al-Masora Neighborhood

The Saudi authorities began the process of demolishing the historic Al-Masora neighborhood in the town of Awamiyah in Qatif. The neighborhood dates back to 400 years and is resided by about 2000 people. Saudi activist Ali Adubisi described the measures taken by the authorities as "crime". He said on his own Twitter account "cutting off the electricity in the neighborhood since 4 days is a crime committed by Saudi Arabia against poor families. The government left many families without alternative accommodation."

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

Bahrain: Accelerated Repression Jeopardizes Activists

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/01/12/bahrain-accelerated-repression-jeopardizes-activists>

Xindex
the voice of free expression

Bahrain renews detention of human rights activist Nabeel Rajab

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2017/01/bahrain-renews-detention-human-rights-activist-nabeel-rajab/>

REPRIEVE

Three executed in Bahrain – Reprive comment

<http://www.reprive.org.uk/press/three-executed-bahrain-reprive-comment/>

Bahrain uses torture evidence to sentence three more to death

<http://www.reprive.org.uk/press/bahrain-uses-torture-evidence-sentence-three-death/>



Bahrain: execution of three men is 'dark day for human rights' in the country

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/bahrain-execution-three-men-dark-day-human-rights-country>

Bahrain: Human rights on the brink of crisis

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/01/bahrain-human-rights-on-the-brink-of-crisis/>

Bahrain: postponement of Nabeel Rajab's verdict for sixth time is blatant harassment

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/bahrain-postponement-nabeel-rajabs-verdict-sixth-time-blatant-harassment>

Bahrain: Further Information: Fate and Whereabouts of Bahraini Unknown: Al-Sayed Alawi Hussain Al-Alawi

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/5581/2017/en/>



CPJ calls on Bahrain to allow Al-Wasat to publish freely

<https://cpj.org/2017/01/cpj-calls-on-bahrain-to-allow-al-wasat-to-publish-.php>



RSF calls for human rights defender's release

<https://rsf.org/en/news/rsf-calls-human-rights-defenders-release>

Bahrain urged to drop charges against correspondent

<https://rsf.org/en/news/bahrain-urged-drop-charges-against-correspondent>



Bahrain: Spy Agency Regains Arrest Powers

<https://freedomhouse.org/article/bahrain-spy-agency-regains-arrest-powers#.WHFrn0F60bB.twitter>

Bahrain: Halt Violence against Protesters

<https://freedomhouse.org/article/bahrain-halt-violence-against-protesters#.WzLiDSUaq8.twitter>

The Telegraph

Bahraini authorities execute three Shia Muslim men convicted of killing an Emirati police

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/15/bahraini-authorities-execute-three-shia-muslim-men-convicted/>

theguardian

Human rights abuses in Bahrain cast shadow over £2m UK aid support

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jan/13/human-rights-abuses-bahrain-cast-shadow-over-2m-uk-aid-support>

Activist faces prison for saying journalists are banned from Bahrain

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2017/jan/26/activist-faces-prison-for-saying-journalists-are-banned-from-bahrain>

Bahrain executes three Shia men in first death sentences since 2010

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/15/bahrain-three-men-death-sentence-shia-muslims-gulf>

HUFF
POST

Prisoners Wait for Bahrain King to Decide if They Live or Die

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/5882c7eae4b011ea60b9644?-timestamp=1484977451540>

The
Economist

Bahrain is still hounding its Shia

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/5882c7eae4b011ea60b9644?-timestamp=1484977451540>



THE CONVERSATION

A triple execution in Bahrain has provoked national outrage – and international silence

<http://theconversation.com/a-triple-execution-in-bahrain-has-provoked-national-outrage-and-international-silence-71367>



MIDDLE EAST EYE

UK trains Bahraini troops as May puts trade before human rights

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/uk-troops-trains-bahrain-security-forces-despite-theresa-may-promise-417497573>

Bahrain: Truth, lies and a voice under threat

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/truth-lies-and-voice-under-threat-bahrain-1540455862>

Bahrain court hears Twitter 'evidence' against activist

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/bahrain-court-hears-twitter-evidence-against-activist-422826808>



Waiting on a King: Will Bahrain Unjustly Execute Two More Men?

<http://muftah.org/waiting-king-bahrain-unjustly-execute-two-men/#.WJn4kxsrKUn>



Britain is Wading into a Dangerous Sectarian Conflict

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/12/12/britain-is-wading-into-a-dangerous-sectarian-conflict/>

The Washington Post

Bahrain executes three Shiite men convicted in fatal attack on police officers

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/bahrain-executes-three-shiite-men-convicted-in-fatal-attack-on-police-officers/2017/01/15/c49d954a-db40-11e6-b2cf-b67fe3285cbc_story.html?utm_term=.c670fb03ad6e

Global Voices

Bahrain Intensifies Media Crackdown Ahead of Protest Anniversary

<https://globalvoices.org/2017/01/19/bahrain-intensifies-media-crackdown-ahead-of-protest-anniversary/>



Executions are latest rights violations in Bahrain

<http://www.dw.com/en/executions-are-latest-rights-violations-in-bahrain/a-37151973>



GULF INSTITUTE
for Democracy and Human Rights



Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR), is a civil non-governmental and non-profit organization aiming to promote the respect for democratic principles, as well as establishing the human rights and social justice principles, and stopping the human rights violations in the Gulf Region in general and in Bahrain in particular. Headquartered in Sydney, Australia GIDHR has the right to open branches in other regions, has legal character and independent financial disclosure. GIDHR is seeking to be in the ranks of the major organizations defending democratic and human rights principles and values through contributing to achieve peace and justice for all in the Gulf States.

 +61413984959 | +61424610661 | +61421237922

info@gidhr.org