



GULF INSTITUTE
for Democracy and Human Rights

UPDATES ON THE CRACKDOWN ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE GULF

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www.gidhr.org
info@gidhr.org



BAHRAINI DETAINEES DEPRIVED FROM THEIR BASIC RIGHTS & CONCERNS RAISED OVER THEIR HEALTH

Mohammad Khatim, a formal employee at Bahrain's Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, who was repeatedly arrested as he staged protests over being unable to find work due to economic reprisals and discrimination in the country. Khatim started a hunger strike, on early September, for over a week and was hospitalised following the strike.

Family of cancer patient detainee Elias Al-Mullah expressed concerns regarding the new symptoms that appeared on him, calling to allow him receive treatment without delay. The family demanded to have a copy of the blood tests he underwent more than a month ago.

Human rights activist Ebtisam Al-Sayegh reported the complaints of a number of political prisoners in some of Jaw Central Prison's buildings due to the continuous water outage. She also stated that prisoners who knocked on the doors to protest against the lack of water had been subjected to punitive measures such as denial of contact with family, transfer to solitary confinement or

charges of incitement of rioting.

The family of Mohammed Faraj, a patient who suffers from multiple sclerosis, confirmed that he has been without medication for about a week. He said in a telephone conversation that he was suffering from head and eye pain because he was deprived of his medication. In addition to the fact that the prison administration is taking the prisoners out into the open field at noon, despite extremely high temperatures.

On 11 September, activists reported that Sadiq Rida Hassan Abbas Aborwais was being brutally beaten and electrocuted by guards at Bahrain's Dry Dock Detention Centre. Aborwais was arrested at a police checkpoint in August 2018 without proper cause.

Bahraini detainee Habib Allawi is being refused access to medical treatment for his eye injury, which he sustained after being struck by birdshot pellets. The prison authorities refused to take him to his previously scheduled doctor's appointment.

WOMEN DETAINEES SUBJECTED TO SEVERE PRESSURE

According to Bahraini activist Ahmed al-Wadaei, the director of Women's Prison in Hamad town attacked 3 female detainees; Hajar Mansoor, Madina Ali and Najah Yousef. The three detainees were assaulted and beaten and held incommunicado detention for attempting to join religious festivities.

The sister of Bahraini detainee Amira Al-Qashaami said in a Twitter post that the glass partitions which were installed last year at the visitation centre of the Isa Town Women's Prison are prohibiting any kind of physical contact between detain-

ees and their visitors. She also insisted that these measures are part of a broader campaign aimed at subjecting inmates to severe pressure. She added that the prisoners' communication with the outside world is being disrupted and that cell doors are only kept open for a quarter of an hour each day.

Bahraini detainee Madina Ali said, in a letter presented to the UN Human Rights Council, she have been denied her basic rights inside Isa Prison and is suffering from violations even after her unfair trial and detainment.



BAHRAINI AUTHORITIES ARE TIGHTENING GRIPS ON RELIGIOUS RITUALS

Bahraini Security forces forcibly removed all the displays, black flags and slogans of Ashura commemorations from several Bahraini villages.

The Bahraini authorities summoned Shiite clerics, who were taking part in commemorating Ashura rituals, and obsequies organisers for investigation under pretext of inciting hatred against the government.

On 19 September 2018, a number of Shiite citizens, who performed prayers in Manama and participated in the mourning processions of 10th Muharrum eve, were summoned for interrogation.

The authorities are tightening grips on the Shiite sect that commemorates the occasion of Ashura. However, lawyer Abdullah Al-Shamlawi said that what is presented by the preachers is taken from books of Muslims, and derives its legitimacy from established customs, which the Constitution of Bahrain recognises. He noted that the ongoing interrogation and at times imprisonment of preachers is considered a siege imposed on religious rites, which is a crime against state security since it represents a violation of the constitution.

INTERNATIONAL CALLS URGING BAHRAIN TO HALT VIOLATIONS AGAINST POLITICAL DETAINEES AND ACTIVISTS

MP in the **British Parliament**, Lord Scriven had asked the Foreign and Commonwealth office about reports concerning the 3 political prisoners Hajer Mansoor, Medina Ali and Najah Ahmed Yusuf who are suffering in their cells from second-hand smoke and are banned from taking part in activities related to the Muharrum religious festival, and inquired about assurances they have received that they will be moved to another cell and allowed

to observe Muharrum fully. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon answered saying: "Our Embassy in Bahrain and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office continue to monitor the case of Hajer Mansoor, Medina Ali and Najah Ahmed Yusuf," noting that their cases have been raised at a senior level with the Government of Bahrain.

On 26 September, Brian Dooley reported in a **tweet** that he called Isa Town Women's Prison to ask



about Hajar Mansoor, after reports she was assaulted. Dooley said that a woman answered and said in perfect English: "Sorry I don't speak English, please call later", noting that he tried to call several times later but no one answered him.

British Liberal Democrat MP Tom Brake called on Bahrain to grant detained Bahraini opposition leader Hassan Mushaima access to adequate medical care. "It's imperative that Bahrain authorities improve basic rights and conditions and allow urgent treatment for Hassan," he wrote on his Twitter account.

Brake is leading a movement in the UK Parliament calling for the adoption of a **motion** for ending degrading treatment against political prisoners in Bahrain, suspending technical assistance programs to Bahrain and release of all political prisoners, including opposition leaders. Responding to a written question raised by Irish MP Seán Crowe regarding the health deterioration of political prisoners and being denied access to sufficient health-care, including Hasan Mushaima,

and if he will raise this issue and the case of Mushaima with his Bahraini counterpart, **Simon Coveney**, Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, said "I am aware the individual in question, and other prisoners, have been denied adequate health-care in prison," stressing that "Ireland attaches great importance to safeguarding the human rights of all prisoners, with due regard for the international standards enshrined in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners." Coveney expressed his concerns about the deteriorating human rights situation in Bahrain. He added "Although Bahrain has repeatedly stated its commitment to improving its human rights record and safeguarding human rights as enshrined in the Bahraini Constitution, there are ongoing instances of violations of fundamental freedoms there, including violations of freedom of opinion and expression."

In its annual **report on counterterrorism and countering violent extremism in the world** in 2017, the

US State Department considered repression the main reason for the increase in terrorism in Bahrain. The State Department linked in its report the practices of the Bahraini authorities with the increase in violence, in particular the closure of Al-Wasat, the only independent newspaper in the country, which restricted the space of opposition voices in the country. In the context, the report mentioned the dissolution of two opposition political societies, Wa'ad and Al-Wefaq, along with government suppression of peaceful protests, stating that they

exacerbated political tensions, which could increase the risk of radicalization to violence.

Leading international authors lent their voices in support of jailed Bahraini opposition leader Hassan Mushaima, demanding that he be treated with "dignity". "This is a right that should be accorded to all prisoners," a number of writers including Margaret Atwood, Elif Shafak and Claire Tomalin said in an open letter to Bahrain's monarch Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. "We urge you to restore Mr Mushaima's dignity by returning his books."

WESTERN DELEGATES AT HRC39 URGE MANAMA TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PROTECT FREEDOMS

Western delegates at the 39th session of the UN Human Rights Council are continuing to articulate their concerns over the deteriorating human rights situation in Bahrain. The Norwegian delegate expressed particular alarm about the state of civil society in the kingdom and urged Manama "to create a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders, protect

the freedom of expression, and allow the media to operate freely."

Meanwhile, the Danish envoy called for the "release of all arbitrarily detained persons in Bahrain, including the Danish-Bahraini citizen Mr Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja".

Moreover, the French delegate listed Bahrain among a group of states where "human rights defenders are too often silenced."



BAHRAINI HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS

SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights revealed serious violations in Jaw prison against political prisoners who have been practicing Ashura rites. "We received testimonies from Jaw prison about prisoners being beaten for practicing religious rites," stressed Salam, adding that they have stated that "some were punished in the courtyard outside the building and were kept under the scorching sun, beaten by senior officers in prison and demanded to insult and curse the leaders of the Shiite sect in Bahrain."

GIDHR ACTIVISM

Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR) organised along with SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights in cooperation with international and academic organisations including: Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Article 19, a conference in the Belgian capital of Brussels.

The conference focused on deprivation of citizenship in the Gulf, as the Gulf governments are using the deprivation of citizenship as a tool to punish its opponents.

The research papers highlighted the "Bidoons" cases in Kuwait. The Bidoons, or the stateless, are not legally considered Kuwaiti nationals and not granted the Kuwaiti nationality. They are deprived from their rights to public schools, working in the public sector, and housing, as well as their political rights.

THREE YOUTHS **KILLED BY SAUDI SECURITY FORCES IN QATIF**

On 26 September 2018, three Shiite youths were shot and killed in Saudi Arabia's Qatif region during a raid by the Saudi security forces.

Information reported that the security forces raided a house and left a number of people injured, including some elderly.

Saudi Arabia has recently stepped up politically-motivated arrests, prosecution, and conviction of peaceful dissident writers and human rights campaigners.

Saudi officials have also intensified security measures in the kingdom's Shiite-populated Eastern Province.

Eastern Province has been the scene of peaceful demonstrations since February 2011. Protesters have been demanding reforms, freedom of expression, the release of political prisoners, and an end to economic and religious discrimination against the oil-rich region.

The protests have been met with a heavy-handed crackdown by the regime. Regime forces have increased security measures across the province.

Over the past years, Riyadh has also redefined its anti-terrorism laws to also target activism

SAUDI FORCES **ATTACKED MUHARRUM TENTS IN QATIF**

Activists have reported through social media that at least 20 tents have so far been attacked and vandalized by Saudi forces in the first 3 days of Muharrum. The forces have also been removing Shia signs under the pretext of ridding the region of what they call "visual pollution." Social media users shared photos of the aftermath of the Saudi raids.



> Saudi Arabia

REPRESSION IN SAUDI ARABIA HAS REACHED A NEW LEVEL

Saudi dissidents who fled abroad to escape repression at home are looking over their shoulders. On October 2nd Jamal Khashoggi, a prominent Saudi journalist and government critic, went to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul to file paperwork for a new marriage. As **The Economist** went to press on October 4th, his fiancée was still waiting for him to return. Turkish customs officials were scouring the ports with his photograph, fearing the Saudis had

kidnapped him.

Since Muhammad bin Salman became crown prince of Saudi Arabia last year, thousands of dissidents have been jailed, often for offences as slight as failing to tweet royal talking points. The geographical scope of the repression is also expanding. Last month a Saudi satirist in London claimed he had been beaten by thugs from the Saudi embassy.

RIGHTS GROUP CALLS FOR END OF ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA

Human Rights Watch is calling for an immediate end to all arms sales to Saudi Arabia in the aftermath of the bombing of a schoolbus last month that killed 51 people, including 40 children.

In a **report** released on 2 September 2018, the HRW called the attack an "apparent war crime," saying it only added to the Saudi-led coalition's "already gruesome track record of killing civilians at weddings, funerals, hospitals and schools in Yemen."





A FURTHER 1 MILLION CHILDREN AT RISK OF FAMINE, SAVE THE CHILDREN SAID

A further one million children at risk of famine as food and fuel prices soar across the country.

Any disruption to food and fuel supplies coming through Hodeidah port could cause starvation on an unprecedented scale, warns **Save the Children**.

An additional one million severely food insecure children in Yemen risk falling into famine as families struggle to afford basic food and transport to health facilities for treatment. This brings the total number of children in Yemen at risk of famine to 5.2 million. Already, more than two-thirds (64.5 per cent) of Yemen's population don't know where their next meal is coming from.

Food prices are up by an average of 68 per cent since 2015. The Yemeni Rial (YER) has depreciated nearly 180 per cent in the same period. It now costs 600 YER to buy one US dollar, up from 215 YER when the conflict escalated more than three years ago. The price of fuel commodities like petrol, diesel and cooking gas has increased by 25 per cent between November last year and September 2018. The price of food has doubled in some parts of the country in just a matter of days.

> Yemen

Bahrain in NGOs



Torture and executions in Bahrain

<https://reprieve.org.uk/update/torture-and-executions-in-bahrain/>

The death penalty in Bahrain: what you need to know

<https://reprieve.org.uk/update/the-death-penalty-in-bahrain-what-you-need-to-know/>

Video: Call on Bahrain to stop the execution of torture victims

<https://reprieve.org.uk/update/video-call-on-bahrain-to-stop-the-execution-of-torture-victims/>



Authors send letter to His Royal Highness Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2018/09/authors-send-letter-to-his-royal-highness-hamad-bin-isa-al-khalifa/>

Bahrain: Ali Mushaima vows to continue fighting for his imprisoned father

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2018/09/bahrain-ali-mushaima-%e2%80%8fvows-to-continue-fighting-for-his-imprisoned-father/>



Bahrain: Medical negligence leaves prisoners in agony, puts lives at risk

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/09/bahrain-medical-negligence-leaves-prisoners-in-agony-puts-lives-at-risk/>

Bahrain in the Media



Bahrain's intolerant prince is now poster boy for regime whitewashing

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/how-bahrain-whitewashing-religious-rights-abuses-1199037518>



GULF INSTITUTE
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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.

معهد الخليج للديمقراطية وحقوق الإنسان
منظمة غير ربحية وغير حكومية، تم تأسيسه في أستراليا ويهدف إلى تعزيز ونشر ثقافة الديمقراطية، كما يسعى لتحقيق مبادئ حقوق الإنسان والعدالة الاجتماعية وإيقاف الانتهاكات في دول الخليج. وله الحق في فتح فروع أخرى في مناطق أخرى، ويكون له شخصية اعتبارية وذمة مالية مستقلة ولا يستهدف من نشاطه جني الربح التجاري. يسعى معهد الخليج للديمقراطية وحقوق الإنسان لأن يكون في مصاف كبرى المنظمات المدافعة عن حقوق الإنسان عبر المساهمة في تحقيق السلام والعدالة في دول الخليج.

+61413984959 | +61424610661 | +61421237922

email: info@gidhr.org