



GULF INSTITUTE
for Democracy and Human Rights

UPDATES ON THE CRACKDOWN ON
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE GULF

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BAHRAIN ACTIVIST WHO WAS JAILED AFTER CRITICISING FORMULA ONE SAID SHE WAS RAPED & ABUSED IN PRISON



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50 CHILDREN WERE SENTENCED TO PRISON OVER POLITICAL CHARGES IN 17 MONTHS

Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR) documented the sentences which were issued against the Bahraini children over political-motivated cases during the period ranging from January 2018 until May 2019. The children were sentenced to a period not less than 3 months and 15 years in some cases, in addition to fines and stripping of citizenship.

The statistics showed that 20 children were sentenced to prison between January 2018 and December 2018, while 30 children were sentenced to prison between January 2019 and May 2019:

- In January 2018: 1 child was sentenced to 15 years in prison, fined, and stripped of his citizenship
- In February 2018: 4 children were sentenced, all to 3 years in prison but one for a single year behind bars
- In June 2018: 2 children were sentenced; one to 6 months in prison, while the other for 3 years in prison and his citizenship was

revoked

- In August 2018: 1 child was sentenced to 3 months behind bars
- In October 2018: 1 child was sentenced to 3 years in prison
- In November 2018: 4 children were sentenced; 1 of them to 10 years and the other 3 to 7 years in prison and a fine
- In December 2018: 7 children were sentenced as following; 4 to 6 months behind bars, 1 for 15 years in prison and his citizenship was revoked, 1 for 7 years, and 1 for 3 years in prison
- In February 2019: 7 children were sentenced to 6 months in prison for "gathering and riot"
- In March 2019: 1 child was sentenced to 6 months behind bars
- In April 2019: 14 children were sentenced to 6 months in prison and were charged of gathering
- In May 2019: 8 children were sentenced to 6 months behind bars and were charged of gathering and riot.

> Bahrain

BAHRAINI ACTIVIST WHO WAS JAILED AFTER CRITICISING FORMULA ONE SAID SHE WAS RAPED & ABUSED IN PRISON

(The Independent): Najah Yusuf, a former civil servant who was fired over her jail sentence, was imprisoned in April 2017 after condemning the Bahrain Grand Prix and human rights abuses in the wealthy Gulf state on Facebook.

The mother-of-four, who was pardoned and freed from prison in August, said she still lives in fear of being forced to return to jail at any moment.

The 42-year-old, whose treatment has been denounced by the United Nations, called for Formula One and Lewis Hamilton to acknowledge the human rights violations she has suffered and urge the authorities to launch an investigation into her treatment.

“Formula One should not be racing in a country when abuses occur,” she told *The Independent* in her first interview since leaving jail. “I was concerned about this and the government’s attack on freedom of expression and their treatment of protesters and citizens so I spoke out.”

Ms Yusuf said she was called into the police station with her 14-year-old son and a member of the Bahraini intelligence services forced her to unlock her mobile

phone before interrogating her about her involvement in politics.

She said: “I was terrified for my own safety and that of my son. I was asked to work with the authorities as an informant but I refused. Their attitude totally changed then. They became very aggressive. Over the next four days, I slept at home but would go back to the Muharraq police station each day where officers beat me and threatened me with rape.

“They also threatened to kill me and told me they would kill my children. They said they would fabricate an accident which happened to the children but kill them – saying ‘everything will look normal. We can do this to you’.

“While being interrogated in police custody, I was also raped. My dignity was destroyed. At one point I was thinking of killing myself and throwing myself from a window so I could end the suffering. But I thought even though they are already keeping me in hell, I do not want to kill myself. I was shocked the person who was the head of police station where I was sexually assaulted and tortured was the beneficiary of a British taxpayers scheme.”





BAHRAINI DETAINEES STILL SUFFER THE DEPRIVATION OF THEIR RIGHTS

Information from the Bahraini prisons report that prisons' authorities are arbitrarily denying the prisoners urgent medical care, refusing to refer them to specialists, failing to disclose medical examination results, and withholding medication as a form of punishment.

A number of death row inmates at Bahrain's Jaw Prison have reportedly gone on hunger strike demanding better treatment in detention. The prisoners are asking for at least two one-hour visits per month and the removal of glass partitions, which are designed to prevent detainees from having any kind of physical contact with visiting family members.

One of the death row inmates, Moosa Abdulla Jaafar, has appealed to the International Committee of the Red Cross to help him and other hunger strikers attain their demands. In an audio recording Jaafar confirmed his participation in a mass hunger strike involving more

than a dozen detainees on death row. "I announce that I am on a hunger strike because of the poor conditions in prison dating back to 2017," Jaafar said.

A number of the hunger strikers fainted while others were experiencing low blood sugar levels, where they were denied medical treatment.

In the same context, Bahrain's security authorities rejected a request by the lawyer of the three detained sisters, Amal, Iman and Fatima Abdullah, to replace the sentence against them through alternative penalty law, noting that they are arrested along with their husbands over political cases, in violation of the law that does not allow the arrest of husbands and wives at the same period if they have children. Activists urged authorities to free Fatima Ali Abdullah under the so-called Alternative Punishment Law after her son was hospitalised.

192 AIRSTRIKES & 612 BOMBINGS WERE CARRIED OUT DURING OCTOBER

Yemen Centre for Human Rights issued a report documenting the crimes and violations committed by the Saudi-led coalition forces in Yemen.

According to the report, October 2019 witnessed:

- 192 airstrikes
- 612 bombings
- 5 cluster-bombs' explosions

The military operations targeted 28 residential neighbourhoods and

destroyed 24 residential buildings, leaving:

- 12 dead: 4 children, 7 men, and a woman
- 29 injured: 8 children, 6 women, and 12 men

The Saudi-led coalition directly targeted a civilian car, on the 21st of October, and committed a genocide after killing 4 people were in the car, including 2 children and a pregnant woman.

NEW FUEL CRISIS DEEPENS SUFFERING FOR HUNGRY YEMENIS

Fuel shortages in Yemen are threatening thousands of lives. Drivers are queuing for two to three days to fill up, and the knock-on effects are being felt throughout the country, with food, water and other necessities in short supply.

"The income I made was hardly enough to buy food and other basic commodities, but we just about managed to survive. But with a new fuel crisis since late September, nowadays I can't work at all. Cooking gas has disappeared from the markets. The prices of flour, sugar, cooking oil have all increased over the last few weeks, and the main reason is that we are experiencing a fuel shortage. Life is worsening, and I can't afford to work or buy food,' a

Yemeni citizen explained.

Fuel is needed not just for cars but also for water pumps, hospital generators and to transport goods around the country. In some parts of the country, the water supply in urban centres has been forced to stop completely for up to two weeks. Poor sanitation and a lack of safe water is increasing the risk of deadly diseases such as cholera, where 15 million people have had their water supplies severely cut, putting them at risk of deadly diseases like cholera because of a fuel crisis, analysis by aid agencies, including Oxfam, has shown.

Access to clean water is a matter of life and death in Yemen, particularly for the more than seven million

> Yemen

people already weakened by malnourishment, as water borne diseases are rife.

Muhsin Siddiquey, Oxfam's Yemen Country Director said: "This fuel crisis is affecting every area of peo-

ple's lives but none more crucial than the lack of clean water. For millions of Yemenis already struggling to survive hunger and disease, clean water is a lifeline that is now being cut."

YEMEN IN OCTOBER 2019

192 ✈️

AIRSTRIKES

💣 612

BOMBINGS

5 ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡

CLUSTER-BOMBS' EXPLOSIONS

28 🎯

RESIDENTIAL
NEIGHBOURHOODS
WERE TARGETED

🏠 24

RESIDENTIAL
BUILDINGS
WERE DESTROYED

12 🏠💀

WERE KILLED
INCLUDING 4 CHILDREN
7 MEN & A WOMEN

🩹 29

WERE INJURED
INCLUDING 8 CHILDREN
6 WOMEN & 12 MEN

4 🚗💣

WERE KILLED IN A CIVILIAN CAR
INCLUDING 2 CHILDREN & A PREGNANT WOMEN



“HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS: THE FAKE FACE OF SAUDI REFORMS”

Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR) cooperated with University of New South Wales (UNSW) Law and the Australian Institute for Human Rights to organise a seminar highlighting the deteriorating human rights situation in Saudi Arabia, which took place on 30th October.

The seminar brought together:

Julian McMahon, AC SC, a barrister working on criminal law, often in homicide and terrorism matters. Julian is the President of Capital Punishment Justice Project, an organisation working to have the death penalty abolished worldwide

Fatima Yazbek, the head of the committee on studies and reports of the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights

Rawan Arraf, an Australian lawyer working to develop Australia's domestic prosecutions of international crimes and serious human rights violations. She is director and founder of the Australian Centre for International Justice.

Rawan Arraf, gave a quick glance about the current situation in Saudi

Arabia, especially after MBS ended the world's only ban on women's drivers, reopened cinemas and allowed men and women to attend concerts. At the same time, writers and women activists are imprisoned, and the Saudi-led coalition is accused of numerous war crimes in Yemen.

Julian McMahon discussed the use of death penalty in Saudi Arabia, in the light of the grievous human rights violations committed in the country. He raised important points about taking advantage of the Terrorism Act and the wide definitions of terrorist activities to punish the dissidents. He also considered that Saudi authorities use collective executions to spread an atmosphere of fear and horror in the country and to deflect the world's attention from the single execution carried out throughout the year.

From her side, Fatima Yazbek shed the light on the women's situation in the Kingdom as MBS tries to promote himself as a women's rights reformer while female activists are still behind bars, tortured and sexu-

> Saudi Arabia

ally harassed. She also discussed the Saudi role in crushing the Bahraini opposition following the entry of Saudi army to Bahrain. Moreover, she pointed to the role of Saudi

forces in the human rights violations and war crimes committed in Yemen either through airstrikes and bombings or through the enforced siege on all the Yemeni borders.

159 EXECUTION WERE CARRIED OUT IN 2019 SO FAR

Saudi Press Agency reported that more than 150 executions were carried out since the beginning of 2019 by Saudi authorities.

Saudi Arabia has set a new record in its history of executions. The number of carried out executions in 2019 exceeds any previous record of executions carried out through a whole year.

In addition to using death penalty as a form of punishment for its dissidents, taking advantage of the wide

definition of terrorism in its law, Saudi Arabia is using capital collective punishment without considering the right to life.

In April 2019, 37 Saudi men were executed following unfair trials and torture allegations. Information reported that Saudi authorities have been withholding the bodies of 83 dissidents, including minors, killed since 2016 and have refused to hand them over to their families.



> Saudi Arabia



MORE THAN 100 ORGS CALLED ON EMIRATI AUTHORITIES TO RELEASE AHMED MANSOUR AHEAD OF HIS 50TH BIRTHDAY

The authorities in the United Arab Emirates must immediately end the unlawful imprisonment of Ahmed Mansour, said more than 100 organisations including Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR), in an open letter to President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al Nahyan published today.

The letter said that Mansour's imprisonment is part of a larger and growing pattern of repression in the UAE. Since 2011, the authorities have embarked on an unprecedented campaign of repression on freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association in the country, shrinking the space for peaceful

dissent to near-obliteration. Authorities have used privately manufactured technologies, such as those made by NSO Group, for the unlawful targeted surveillance of human rights defenders, including Mansour, in order to monitor and clamp down on dissent. The authorities have arrested, detained, and prosecuted activists, human rights defenders and other critics of the government, including prominent lawyers, judges and academics, on broad and sweeping national security-related or cybercrime charges and in proceedings that fail to meet international fair trial standards.



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.

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.

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