

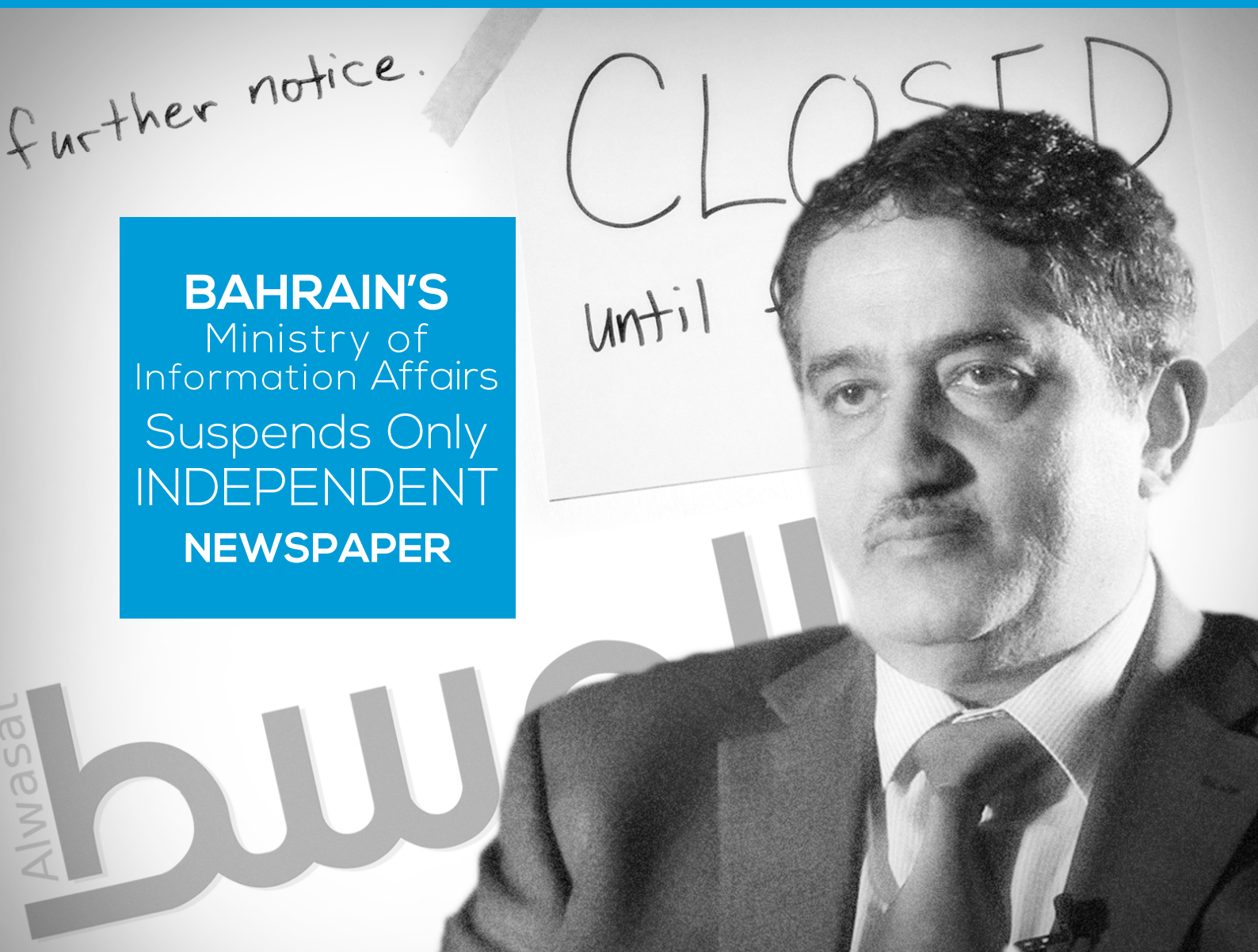


GULF INSTITUTE
for Democracy and Human Rights

Updates on the Crackdown on Human Rights in the Gulf

Inside:

- KSA: Targeted A Car Carrying Two Activists
- Severing the Ties of the Gulf States with Qatar Violates the Human Rights Principles



BAHRAIN'S
Ministry of
Information Affairs
Suspends Only
INDEPENDENT
NEWSPAPER



Bahrain's Ministry of Information Affairs Suspends Only Independent Newspaper

Bahrain's Ministry of Information Affairs suspended Al Wasat newspaper until further notice.

The authorities justified its decision to suspend Al-Wasat saying that it violated the law and re-disseminated what would stir divisionism within the community and undermine the Kingdom of Bahrain's relations with other countries for publishing in its edition of 4 of June an article on page 19 that included a defamation of one of the sisterly Arab countries.

Bahrain Press Association (BPA) said that "the 5384 edition of Al-Wasat included an article to the journalist Kassim Hussein entitled "Protests in the Moroccan Al-Hoceima Re-launched", adding that "the article did not contain any irregularities that contradicts with the values of journalism or professional writings."

The association considered the decision of Information Affairs Authority a "planned and retaliatory targeting," adding that "it is a continuation to the restriction polices and eradication of freedoms of opinion and expression". It stressed that this move is a direct violation of the provisions of the Constitution and international laws and treaties that Bahrain has already signed and pledged to abide by.

The newspaper sent a [statement](#) to employees saying it had to let them go after the decision of its suspension.



Ibtisam Al-Saegh

Bahrain's National Security Agency Commits Breach Violations against Activists

Amid the ongoing campaign of reprisals against human rights defenders and political activists, Bahrain's National Security Agency (NSA) was re-empowered.

A group of human rights and political activists were summoned to interrogation at the National Security Agency; they were threatened and subjected to torture.

Ibtisam Al-Saegh, who has accused Bahrain's security services of torturing and sexually assaulting her during her previous arrest in May, was detained during a night-time raid on Monday (3 July 2017) by about 25 security officers after she tweeted criticism of the country's ruler and security forces.

Also Bahraini authorities arrested at dawn Tuesday (4 July 2017), Bahraini activist Mohammad Khalil, after breaking into his house in Karzakan, South West of Manama.

On 23 of June, the NSA summoned Mohammed Hassan Sultan, son of Al-Wefaq leader and former MP Sheikh Hassan Sultan. The NSA investigated with Mohammed about the activity of his father to disclose information on him. He was stripped naked during the investigation and forced to stand for a long time and was severely beaten and threatened to be sexually assaulted. He was banned of travelling by decision of the NSA.

Health Condition of Sayed Majeed Al-Mashaal is Deteriorating

Family of Head of Ulama Islamic Council [Sayed Majeed Al-Mashaal](#) complained to the Ombudsman about the deteriorating health condition of Al-Mashaal after holding him in solitary confinement, in response to his protest against Diraz massacre and raid carried out on Sheikh Isa Qassim's house.

The family said that there are fears over Sayed Al-Mashaal's health who is being banned from Iftar meals in the solitary confinement, explaining that he started to feel numbness in his peripheral limbs. The family added that he is also banned from receiving the needed treatment.



Sayed Majeed Al-Mashaal

Bahraini Authorities Remain the Grip Tightened over Activists

The authorities in Bahrain International Airport prevented on Saturday, 3 June, 2017 a delegation from the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Union (GFBTU) from traveling to Geneva to participate in the works of 106th session of International Labour Conference. Meanwhile, the authorities did not give the delegation any reason behind this surprising decision.

The Bahrain Centre for Human Rights stated on its website that its president, Nabeel Rajab, whose health is deteriorating, was prevented from having immediate access to his family and lawyers. His family reported that they had not been able to have contact with him

since last week.

"Rajab's health condition has steadily worsened during his lengthy detention; on 5 April he underwent surgery for bleeding ulcers. In that instance, he was allowed a minimum time in the medical facility before he was sent back to his prison cell. Due to the unhygienic detention conditions, Rajab developed a post-surgery infection and was rushed back to the Ministry of Interior hospital three days later. He has been slowly recovering ever since. Recently, however, his family reported that Rajab was facing harassment in the hospital and new orders to be transferred back to prison so he can be sentenced," BCHR said.

UN Slams Bahrain for Refusing Special Rapporteurs Visits

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein](#) on Friday (2 June 2017) called on the Government of Bahrain to promptly launch an independent, effective investigation into the deaths of five protestors during a security operation took place in May.

In addition, in a [speech](#) he delivered in the opening of the UN Human Rights Council 36th session in Geneva on Tuesday (6 June 2017), he slammed Bahrain for refusing the visits of UN Special Rapporteurs to the country, for over 5 years.

According to "Bahrain Mirror", information reported that the Bahraini government imposed conditions that it should be informed about all the [Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) delegation's meetings inside the country. The delegation, however, refused this condition, which therefore led to the government to cancel the visit.

International Calls Expressing Concerns over Human Rights Situation in Bahrain

[Chair of the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights](#) expressed concern over the reports about deteriorating health condition of prominent human rights defender Nabeel Rajab, demanding his immediate release.

On the anniversary of Nabeel Rajab's arrest, [37 Members of the European Parliament](#) (MEPs) from different political groups sent an open letter to the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, urging her to call for his immediate release.

[France](#) said on Friday (2 June 2017) that increasing tension in Bahrain was preventing national reconciliation efforts in the Gulf Arab state after a decision to dissolve the main secular opposition group, which has alarmed human rights campaigners.



Bahraini Human Rights Organisations

Five human rights organizations (Salam for Democracy and Human Rights, Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, The European-Bahraini Organisation for Human Rights, Bahrain Forum for Human Rights and Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights) issued a [report](#) about torture in Bahrain in which they recounted the patterns of systematic torture practiced against political prisoners in Bahraini prisons and the activists summoned by the Intelligence to force them stop their activities.

The report named a number of torture victims, mentioning details of what they were subjected to.

The organisations condemned in the report issued on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on 26 June 2017, the involvement of the judiciary in covering up and justifying the torture of victims who testified themselves inside courtrooms. They also expressed their deep regret at the failure to hold accountable, stop and expose such illegal and internationally prohibited practices taking place at the Criminal Investigation Department, Jaw Central Prison, the NSA's Security Facility in Muharraq City or other detention centres.



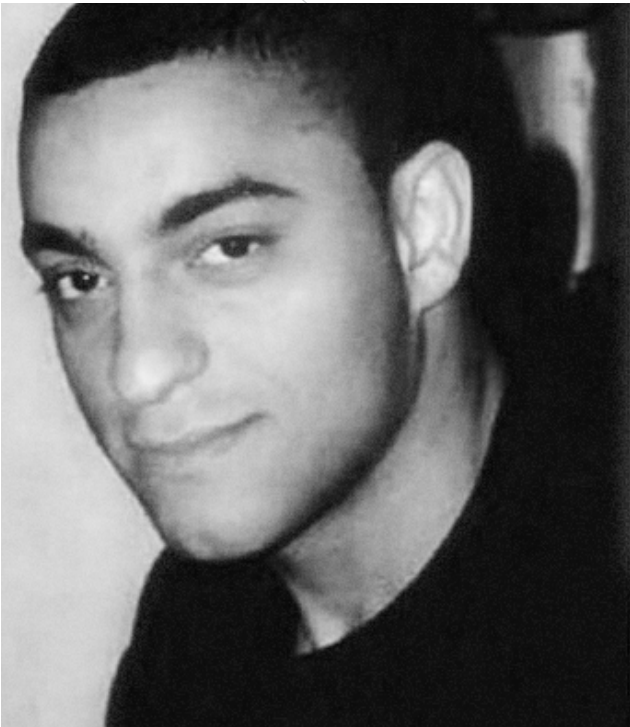
Severing the Ties of the Gulf States with Qatar Violates the Human Rights Principles

On 5 June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and a number of countries have cut off diplomatic ties with the State of Qatar and closed all land, sea and air ports to and from it. The three countries ordered Qatari nationals to leave their territories within 14 days, and prevented their citizens from travelling, living and passing through Qatar, and demanded that their nationals' return, salinizing penalties against any citizen who does not comply.

Such a political decision affects the social, economic and civil repercussions and can inflict on the peoples of the region as a whole. It violates the right of movement as well as confiscates the right of expression.

Many civil rights have been violated, such as the right to education and the right to work.

There are many marriages between Qatari nationals on the one hand and Saudis, Emiratis or Bahrainis on the other hand, and they will be obliged to stay away from each other under this decisions, where children will be the ones most affected.



Fadel Al Hamada



Mohammad Al-Samuel

Saudi Activists: Authorities Targeted a Car Carrying 2 Activists

Activists confirmed that the Saudi security authorities targeted a car carrying two anti-regime activists “Fadel Al Hamada and Mohammad Al-Samuel”. Meanwhile, several narratives were issued about the way the authorities targeted the car, whether using RPG or Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (Drone).

A resident contacted by telephone by Reuters said he had heard a blast and saw smoke rising above an area that police had blocked off. Saudi authorities were not immediately available for comment.

For its part, the [Saudi Ministry of Interior](#) said that the security forces spotted a security wanted Toyota Sequoia car in Al-Qatif Governorate. The security authorities took necessary action in such a situation. The car was damaged, caught fire and exploded.” The ministry added that “Investigation is underway to reveal the identity of those two individuals.”



Almost One Death per Hour as Cholera Epidemic Spreads like Wildfire

A [cholera epidemic](#) is spreading like wildfire across war-ravaged Yemen, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has said, with a total of 100000 suspected cases identified around the country.

A total of 798 deaths have now been attributed to the disease, which is affecting people in 19 of Yemen's 22 provinces – equivalent to almost one death every hour since 27 April, Oxfam said, adding to the suffering of Yemen's 27-million strong population.

INSIDE A YEMENI PRISON

Torture, harsh interrogations, secret detentions - these activities were carried out in a clandestine network of Yemeni prisons overseen by the United Arab Emirates' military, according to first-person accounts obtained by the [Associated Press](#). At one of the prisons, near where U.S. Special Forces are based in the fight against al-Qa-ida, witnesses said some detainees were handed to Americans for further interrogation.

Yet at one main detention complex at Riyan airport in the southern Yemeni city of Mukalla, former inmates described being crammed into shipping containers smeared with faeces and blindfolded for weeks on end. They said they were beaten, rotated on a spit and sexually assaulted, among other abuse. A member of the Hadramawt Elite, a Yemeni security force set up by the UAE, spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity to discuss the workings at the base. He said American forces were at times only yards away.



Omran Al-Radwan

Serious Human Rights Violations in Al-Rezin Prison

The International Centre for Justice and Human Rights (ICJHR) said that it has been informed that on Thursday 25 May 2017, the authorities of [Al Razeen prison](#) ordered Nepali guards to break into the prisoners' wards at 2 am particularly, ward no. 7, where prisoners of conscience, political opponents, bloggers and human rights activists are detained, and asked them to take off all their clothes and cover their intimate body parts with only a towel. The guards later ordered the detainees to stand facing the walls and touched all parts of their bodies while searching them in an insulting and degrading manner.

Following this violation, the human rights defender [Omran Al-Radwan](#) along with other political and human rights activists started a hunger strike as response to the beating and humiliation they were subjected to. Al-Radwan was also searched in a very degrading manner and all his body parts were deliberately touched by Nepali guards.

UAE authorities continue to violate Dr Nasser Bin Ghaith's right to a lawyer visit

The administration of Al-Rezeen prison continues to harass [Dr Nasser Bin Ghaith](#) deprives him of necessary care for hunger strikers, and prevents him from any family or lawyer visits. According to the International Centre for Justice and Human Rights (ICJHR), the authorities refused the lawyer's request to provide him with a copy of

the court decision and denied his representation of Dr Nasser Bin Ghaith despite his appeal and pleading before the State Security. They also refused his request to visit his client in Al-Rezeen prison fearing that he would convince Dr Bin Ghaith to exercise his right to appeal against the court judgment.

Bahrain in International Human Rights Organisations



Bahrain: Joint Open Letter to UN Members and Observer States to Call for the Release of Nabeel Rajab

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/6495/2017/en/>

fidh

Bahrain: Arbitrary arrest and detention of Mrs. Ebtisam Al-Saegh

<https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/human-rights-defenders/bahrain-arbitrary-arrest-and-detention-of-mrs-ebtisam-al-saegh>

**HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH**

Bahrain: Only Independent Newspaper Shut Down

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/06/18/bahrain-only-independent-newspaper-shut-down>



Bahrain must stop media intimidation & closures

<https://www.nuj.org.uk/news/bahrain-media-intimidation-closures/>

**f FRONT LINE
DEFENDERS**

Ebtisam Al-Saegh Tortured and Sexually Assaulted

<https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/ebtisam-al-saegh-tortured-and-sexually-assaulted>

Xindex

the voice of free expression

Bahrain: Nabeel Rajab's son talks to Index about his father's "unbreakable" spirit

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2017/06/nabeel-rajab-adam-rajab/>

Bahrain: Press freedom groups call for lifting of Al Wasat suspension

<https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2017/06/bahrain-press-freedom-groups-call-lifting-al-wasat-suspension/>

Bahrain in Media

COUNCIL *on* FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Danger Grows in Bahrain

<https://www.cfr.org/blog-post/danger-grows-bahrain>



INDEPENDENT

The Middle Eastern kingdom of Bahrain is quietly heading towards a 'total suppression of human rights'

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/bahrain-unrest-protests-banning-political-parties-waad-wefaq-shia-sheik-isa-qassim-a7771351.html>

theguardian

Activist who accused Bahrain security forces of sexual assault is rearrested

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/06/activist-rearrested-bahrain-risk-torture-amnesty-international-ebtisam-al-saegh>

**HUFF
POST**

What Human Rights Abuses Are Happening At Bahrain's Mu-harraq Police Station?

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/59307a83e4b06adb927efecd>

Another Light Goes Out In Bahrain As Al Wasat Closes

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/594fd93ce4b0326c0a8d0945>

ALMONITOR

Bahrainis' shrinking political space

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/06/bahrain-crackdown-shi-ite-opposition-trump-iran-waad.html>

npr
news

Human Rights Activists Warn Of Worsening Situation In Bahrain

<http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/06/06/531216993/human-rights-activists-warn-of-worsening-situation-in-bahrain>

New Internationalist
People, ideas and action for global justice

An interminable trial for tweeting – when will it end?

<https://newint.org/blog/2017/06/13/an-interminable-trial-for-tweeting-when-will-it-end/>

VICE
News

Bahrain jailed activists over tweets but still gets U.S. arms deal

<https://news.vice.com/story/bahrain-jailed-activist-over-tweets-but-still-gets-u-s-arms-deal>

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12



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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.

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