

Weekly Report – 1 to 7 February

Arrests:

According to the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, security forces [arrested](#) 32 individuals, including three children and one woman.

Trials:

Bahraini criminal and appeal courts altered, upheld convictions, and sentenced 15 individuals to more than 43 years in prison, collectively. Moreover, 96 individuals had their trials postponed.

Last week, Bahraini courts reviewed several cases of misuse of social media related to exercising the right to free speech on the Internet.

Bahraini courts [upheld](#) a one-year sentence against former Member of Parliament Khalid Abdulaal. In April 2014, the Ministry of Interior accused him of posting tweets that were deemed insulting to the MOI. Khalid confirmed that he posted these tweets; however, he told the court that his tweets were not insults but rather criticism of some of the MOI's practices.

The low criminal court [postponed](#) the trial of Ebrahim Karimi, whose citizenship was revoked by the authorities in 2012, to 7 February 2016 and [again](#) to 15 February 2016. Ebrahim was illegally arrested in 2015 and accused of insulting a neighboring country over Twitter. The same court [postponed](#) the trial of Dr. Saeed Samaheji to 17 February 2016. Saeed faces the same charge of "insulting a neighboring country over Twitter." Similarly, the trial of the owner of the Twitter handle "HajiAhmed" was [postponed](#) to 18 February 2016. He too was charged because of his Twitter activity after he criticized the Saudi coalition's involvement in the war in Yemen.

The high criminal court [upheld](#) a 9-month prison sentence against human rights activist Zainab al-Khawaja on charges of entering a restricted area in Jau Prison and insulting officers. Zainab has been sentenced to more than three years in prison in several cases and is awaiting the court's ruling in others.

On 3 February 2016, the criminal court upheld photographer Ahmed al-Fardan's three-month prison sentence. Ahmed was convicted on charges of "attempting" to participate in an illegal gathering. He denied the charges and told the court that it was part of his job to cover protests.

Protests:

Dozens of protests and sit-ins took place in different areas of Bahrain. Security forces used teargas and shotgun pellets against protesters, which resulted in several injuries.



[Abu Saiba](#)

Collective punishment/ use of force:

Security forces continue the use of force and excessive use of tear gas and shotgun pellets to suppress peaceful protests.



[Sitra](#)

Others:



Sayed Ali and his sister

Sayed Ali Sayed Qasim, who is only days old, was born [stateless](#). The Bahraini government revoked his father's citizenship on 31 January 2015. According to Bahraini law, children are not granted Bahraini citizenship if the father is not Bahraini, even if the mother is. Sayed Ali's mother and older sister are Bahraini; however, the Bahraini authorities are depriving him of his right to a citizenship after revoking his father's citizenship.

The MOI's Special Investigation Unit [stated](#) that it received 17 complaints of torture and ill treatment during January. It reportedly interviewed 54 victims and witnesses, interrogated 26 defendants, and had three complainants seen by the forensic doctor.

The detained political leader Hasan Mushaima was [taken](#) to the hospital to undergo an unannounced operation, without informing his family. The authorities then transferred him back to the prison only a half hour after the operation. His family expressed their concern over his health and wellbeing.

The Ministry of Information [issued](#) a decision on the standards of supervision and censorship of media content. Punishments under this law include: warning, public apology, removal of the violation, and suspension or cancelation of the license. The standards and criteria required of media content include, among others: respecting the regime, its figures, and institutions; refraining from publishing news, information, and content that could harm relationships with other countries or be considered intervening in their internal matters, especially GCC, Arab, and friendly countries; not publishing anything deemed offensive to figures and officers of GCC, Arab, and friendly countries; and addressing events in a way that achieve objectivity and impartiality.