



Harvest of the Profiles in Persecution: Systematic Human Rights Violations in Bahrain

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Introduction:

Since the beginning of the popular movement demanding reform and democracy in Bahrain in 2011, the authorities deliberately suppressed peaceful movements in all forms without any deterrence, including legitimizing Bahraini human rights violations to confront these demands and rights. Repression became an approach against citizens, which resulted in prisons filled with prisoners of conscience, political prisoners, and human rights activists. The judiciary took the role of the victim’s executioner. It issued arbitrary sentences that took the lives of dozens of detainees with death and life penalties and imprisoned others for years, taking the bloom of their ages. Among these sentences were those that affected women and even minors.

Since its inception, Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) has worked to monitor and document the violations faced by these victims since 2011. Among these victims were activists and opposition leaders, as well as working citizens, employees, and school and university students. The documentation also covered cases of women persecuted out of political revenge, as well as minors and children. These cases have been published in a series for seven years since 2017, every week under the title “Profiles in Persecution.” As of the date of publication of this report, their total amounted to 284 profiles, all of which showed a systematic pattern of violations against political prisoners in Bahrain. This pattern starts from the moment of summons and arrest and continues through interrogation, investigation, trials, and issuance of sentences. It does not end even after their release.



In light of this pattern of systematic violations, the absence and failure of government institutions to fulfill their designated roles have become evident. Some of these institutions were established based on the recommendations of Bahrain's Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), also known as the "Bassiouni Committee," created by the King of Bahrain on 29 June 2011. This committee was tasked with examining incidents that occurred during the protests in February and March 2011. These institutions were assigned to monitor the outcomes of these events, with the responsibility of independently observing, monitoring, and investigating violations and allegations of torture. However, they had taken it upon themselves to whitewash violations, and their role had been limited to promoting alleged prison reforms.

This report presents information, data, and charts based on comprehensive documentation and clear narration in this weekly series over the years. To highlight all these violations, we have tried to include in the chosen sample all kinds of breaches suffered by political prisoners who have been arrested, convicted, and tried with charges of opinion or political background. We divided the Profiles in Persecution into groups with similarities in terms of the covered category (such as being a minor, a female activist, or an opposition leader, among others). We also divided them in terms of the specific violations the detainee experienced (such as being deprived of medical treatment or subjected to particular violations, and so on).

The total number of selected sample cases is 60, distributed across different years since the beginning of the documentation of the Profiles in Persecution in the weekly reports. The sample is distributed as follows: (3) cases from 2017, (6) cases from 2018, (9) cases from 2019, (9) cases from 2020, (7) cases from 2021, (9) cases from 2022, (15) cases from 2023, and (2) from 2024. This sample was chosen to represent all the cases that constituted the "Profiles in Persecution" section and reflected a systematic pattern of violations and sentences shared by several political prisoners. After selecting the 60 cases and categorizing them into groups, we proceeded to review these violations in a



chronological sequence, covering the moment of arrest, the trial stage, and lastly, the prison stage, divided into two parts:

- **Part I:**

The first sub-section covers the illegal arrest and detention, investigation involving torture, denial of attorney access or communication with families, and the detainee's subjection to enforced disappearance and signing confessions without knowing their content. Consequently, this sub-section covers the trial and sentencing hearings, the Public Prosecutor's Office's (PPO) judges' and the court's judges' ignorance of evidence and testimonies confirming allegations of psychological, physical, and sexual torture inflicted on the defendant. Lastly, this sub-section covers the suffering and violations suffered by the convict after the sentencing period, such as solitary confinement, beatings, medical neglect, and denial of the detainee's fundamental human rights.

The second sub-section covers the subsequent stage of monitoring and documenting violations that persisted within prisons after the trials. These include ongoing torture, solitary confinement, enforced disappearance, denial of communication with the outside world, deprivation of fundamental rights such as practicing religious rituals and pursuing education, and deliberate medical neglect that deprives detainees of their right to medical care.

- **Part II:**

This part discusses the international laws and conventions violated by Bahrain, along with the failure of government institutions to fulfill their designated roles. These institutions have become tools to whitewash violations, distort facts, and portray the victim as the perpetrator.



Part I: Systematic Pattern of Violations

1. Violations Before the Issuance of Verdicts

Given the systematic repressive role played by all government institutions in Bahrain with the aim of revenge and silencing all opposition voices, coupled with a policy of impunity, political prisoners and prisoners of conscience face a series of violations that begin from the moment of their arrest and continue during the investigation and pre-trial detention and does not end after the issuance of the verdicts.



Stage I: The Arrest

Methods of arrest used

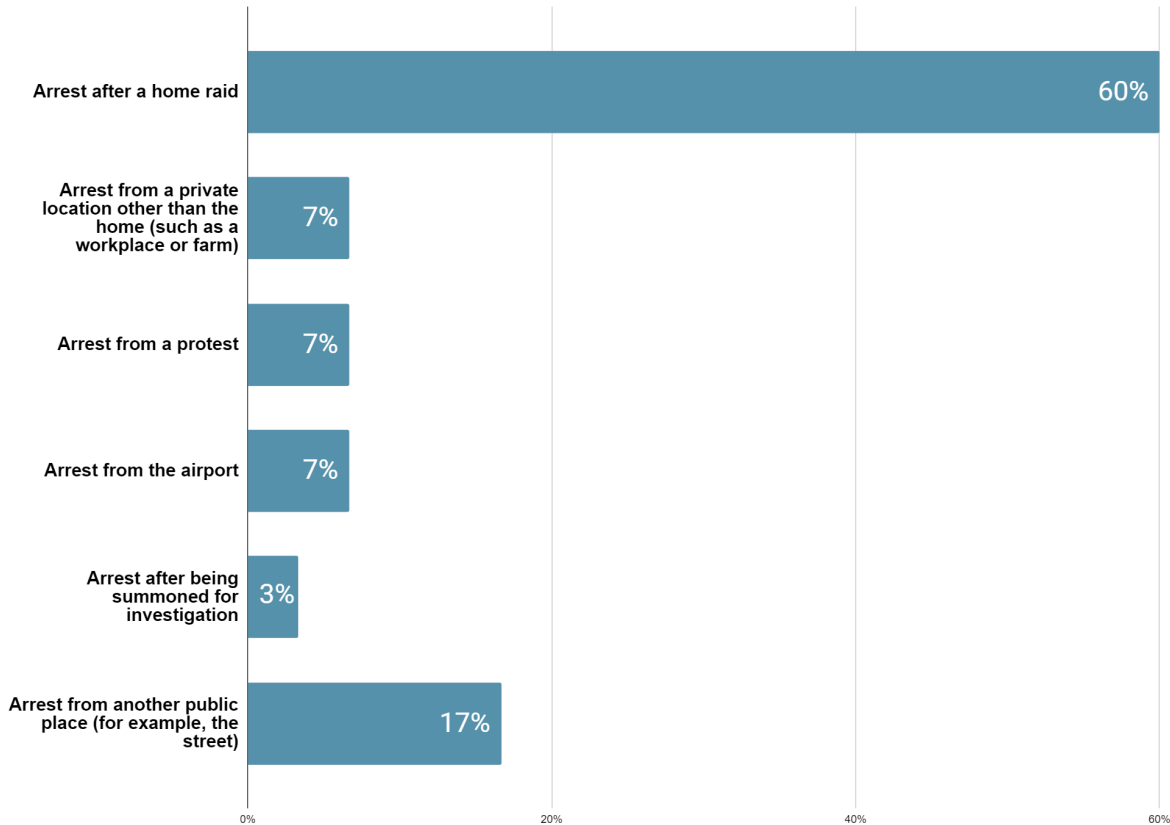


Chart No. (1): The systematic pattern of arrests for political prisoners

According to the organization's monitoring of arrests from 2011 until today, all these arrests are characterized by arbitrariness, as they consistently occur without presenting an arrest or search warrant. In addition, the arrest stage is marked by a long series of violations. Most of the time, plainclothes officers carry out the arrests without any visible official insignia, identifying themselves, or presenting any job card. They also sometimes wear masks to cover their faces. For example, "On 3 November 2015, masked men in civilian clothes, along with men wearing black clothes and military personnel, broke into the house of the young man [Mahmood Saeed Abdulla](#)- who's currently serving his life



sentence- and raided it without a warrant". Also, Officers in security or military attire conduct arrests without identifying themselves nor specifying their affiliation and without presenting any job card indicating their position and the unit they belong to, as has happened to [Husain Ali Mohamed](#)- a young Bahraini man awaiting the execution of his death penalty- who was apprehended by unidentified security personnel without an arrest warrant. His family doesn't know whether these officers were from the National Security Agency (NSA), or one of the security agencies under the Ministry of Interior (MOI).

A lot of times, officers conduct raids on the homes of the wanted individuals during late-night hours or in the early morning while residents are asleep and women are without their hijab, instilling fear in the hearts of the occupants and their neighbors and disrupting their peace. *For example, officers entered the home of [Hasan Ateya Mubarak](#) - who's currently serving a 10-year prison sentence - at around 3:00 AM on 6 August 2017, through the window of his bedroom without knocking on the doors and before his wife could put on her hijab.*

After the raid, officers proceed to search the homes, violating their sanctity, assaulting those inside, and seizing personal belongings, disregarding the privacy of the residents. *For instance, At 2:00 A.M. on 21 September 2016, police forces from the Ministry of Interior, officers in civilian clothes, as well as officers from the National Security Agency, raided the house of [Saeed Abdulla Alaali](#) - who's currently serving a 17-year prison sentence - and whose prison sentence was reduced by placing him in open prisons on 9 April 2024- without presenting any arrest warrant. They were looking for a bag but did not state its contents, and they confiscated the family's personal phones and mobile devices.*

Officers also smash the front doors of the houses and destroy their furniture during the raids. *One of the most prominent examples is what happened with the political leader and opposition symbol, Mr. [Abdulwahab Husain Ismaeel](#), during his arrest on 17 March 2011 when Bahraini security officials, consisting of armed commandos and military forces, as well as individuals in civilian clothing broke through his front door, searched the entire house,*



ruined furniture, and assaulted individuals in the house. They did not have a warrant, nor did they give a reason for his arrest, so they took Abdulwahab away.

ADHRB also documented home raids done by the security forces even several days after the arrest. *For example, at dawn on 2 March 2018, investigation officers raided the home of [Jasim Mohamed AlMahroos](#) - who is currently serving a life sentence - three days after his arrest on 27 February 2018 and stormed into all the rooms quickly without allowing the women to wear their Hijab and transferred them all to one room where they grouped them and prohibited them from leaving it while yelling and threatening them.*

The situation develops into using weapons or threatening to use them against the detainee's family members during the raid while assaulting them. *For example, at midnight on 24 May 2015, riot police and masked officers in civilian clothing raided the home of the minor detainee [Husain Ali Khairalla](#) - who was sentenced to more than 100 years in prison before being released under the royal pardon issued on 8 April 2024- a few minutes from his arrest in another place and threatened his family members at gunpoint, especially his mother after she refused to hand over her son's phone and asked to see her son.*

ADHRB also documented some cases where the defendant was forced to act out a specific crime and filmed him committing it to use it as evidence of his involvement. *Among these cases is what happened with [Hasan Abdulghani Farhan](#) - sentenced to 17 years in prison - who was transferred to an unknown location after his arrest and was beaten and forced to dig for weapons and explosives.*



Stage II: The Investigation

The systematic pattern of violations against detainees

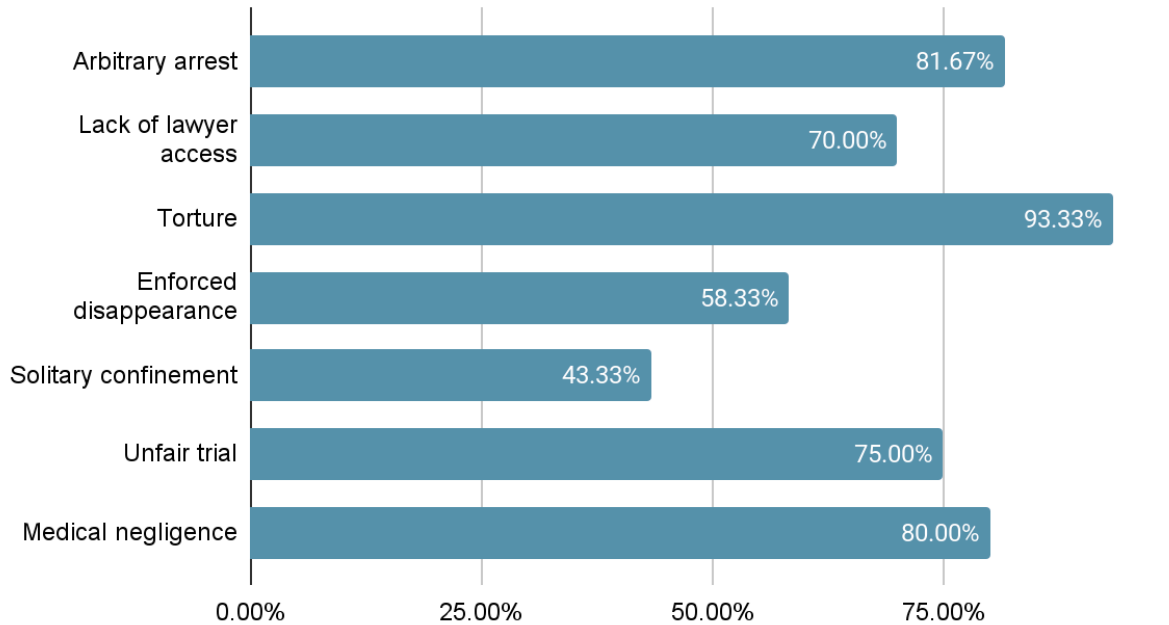


Chart No. (2): The systematic pattern of violations against detainees

Following the arbitrary arrest, the detainee is transferred to the investigation phase, where charges against him are formulated. In retaliation for the detainee's peaceful activism, the defendant is subjected to the most severe forms of physical, sexual, and psychological torture, forced disappearance, and solitary confinement. Subsequently, the defendant is coerced into making false confessions, often by signing statements without knowing their content. This signing of confessions frequently occurs while the victim is blindfolded. The detainee consistently feels compelled to sign or make false confessions out of fear of ongoing torture or the threat of further torture, as well as the implementation of threats involving arrest, torture, rape, or harm to a family member or friends.



The detainees' situation becomes more challenging as they are denied the right to appoint a lawyer during this stage. Additionally, they are prohibited from communicating with their families, leaving them helpless and unable to convey their voice, object, or defend themselves. Examples of this are numerous, with one of the most prominent being the case of the political detainee and prominent religious figure [Sheikh Mohamed Habib al-Miqdad](#). He was sentenced to 68 years in prison on politically motivated charges, experienced forced disappearance during the investigation, and was unable to contact his family or lawyer. The officers made him sit naked and deprived him of sleep. They sexually assaulted him with sticks and forced him to gargle his own urine after he was taken to hospital for treatment. Moreover, they electrocuted his whole body and his genitals, spat in his mouth, and forced him to swallow. They also forced him to kiss their shoes and pictures of the king. Due to the intensity of the torture, he used to lose consciousness. When that happened, officers would spray him with water so he would wake up. Sheikh Mohamed would wake up terrified and surrounded by officers.

After the defendant signs the false accusations, the authorities finalize the fabricated file against him, aiming to present the arrest as non-arbitrary by depicting it as an outcome of an investigation in which the defendant confessed to specific crimes. However, consulting non-governmental sources on the case details, arrest circumstances, and interrogation violations reveals the arbitrary nature of the detainee's arrest and false accusations.

After the investigation, the detainee is presented before the PPO, which charges him with the charges brought against him during the inquiry. If the detainee attempts to inform the PPO's representative about the torture he endured, the judge often ignores this matter. In some cases, officers may return the detainee to further interrogations, exposing him to more torture to confess before the PPO judge in the next session. Despite the authorities' denial of such information and its absence from the interrogation records, the facts, testimonies of detainees, the visible injuries resulting from torture, and the chronic health and psychological problems that accompany the detainees after their arrest and detention prove otherwise. For example, *on 4 October 2014, officers transferred the detainee*



[Husain Ali Khamis Barbar](#) - who was sentenced to 17 years and six months in prison before being released under the royal pardon issued on 8 April 2024 - to the PPO building, where he was accused of arson. When he refused to confess, they returned him to the Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID) for an additional five days. “Officers repeatedly tortured him by hitting him on sensitive areas, pouring cold water on him, and suspending him by the wrists from a ceiling fan, among other methods. Additionally, his lawyer was not allowed to attend. As a result of the severe torture he endured, Husain suffers from memory loss, recurring headaches, back pain, fainting spells, seizures, tantrums, and psychological problems that have transformed him into an introvert. The family asserts that Husain did not suffer from any of these conditions or symptoms before his arrest. After a total of ten days of torture, Husain confessed under duress and was transferred to the Dry Dock Detention Center on 9 October 2014”.

Stage III: Torture

This stage is always accompanied by the investigation stage. However, it often begins from the moment of arrest. For example, *on 25 February 2015 at dawn, plainclothes officers raided the farm where detainee [Jasim Mohamed Ajwaid](#) was sleeping and proceeded to torture him with beatings and electric shocks inside the farm for two hours until riot police showed up and put him on a 16-passenger bus.*¹

Torture does not stop after the end of the investigation stage, as sometimes it proceeds even after the issuance of the verdict, a matter that we will address later. Torture is the first step used by Bahraini authorities in the course of fabricating charges against detainees, intending to break the defendant physically and psychologically and prompt him to surrender to the charges against him. In case this torture ends inside or outside of prison, its physical and psychological [effects](#) often accompany the victim to death. In this regard, ADHRB monitored that several detainees have been suffering from various chronic

¹ Jasim Mohamed Ajwaid was released under a [royal pardon](#) issued on 8 April 2024, which included 1584 convicts.



physical and psychological problems after the end of torture or even after being released from prison. These problems include, but are not limited to, hypertension, nervous spasms, and chronic pain in various body parts. They also include urinary and stomach problems such as bleeding, tumors in different parts of the body, and hearing and vision problems that may lead to the loss of hearing or vision. Furthermore, these problems include difficulties talking, tasting, walking, standing, and using hands. Moreover, torture very often leads to chronic psychological issues such as hallucinations, introversion, bouts of anger and depression, and attempted suicide. There are three types of torture practiced inside Bahraini prisons: physical, psychological, and sexual torture.

a) Physical Torture

Physical torture is considered one of the prominent violations used against political prisoners.

This includes severe beatings, kicking to the head, face, and sensitive parts of the body, foot-stomping, dragging the detainee on the ground, and subjecting him to long hours of interrogation to the point of fainting. An example of this is the case of the detainee [Mohsen Ali Baddaw](#), who fainted and had to be transferred to the military hospital on the first night of interrogation. Detainees are often restrained with belts, beaten, their hands and feet cuffed, placed in freezing rooms, pepper sprayed, suspended from the ceiling, and physically assaulted. An example of this is the case of the detainee [Husain Ali Moosa](#), who endured three days of torture with beatings using batons. In addition, Bahraini authorities frequently resort to electroshocking the detainee on various parts of his body, including sensitive areas, while restraining him and preventing him from using the toilet, exposing him to torture if he refused their commands not to use the toilet. Some detainees were also blindfolded during interrogation, such as [Mohamed Yusuf AlAjmi](#), who developed an infection in his eyes as a result of being blindfolded for long periods. ADHRB documented that officers deprived detainees of sleep or detained them in an overcrowded cell without space to sleep, in addition to depriving them of food, drink,



sunlight exposure, and changing their clothes for an extended period that may exceed two weeks.

The forms of torture to which detainees are subjected

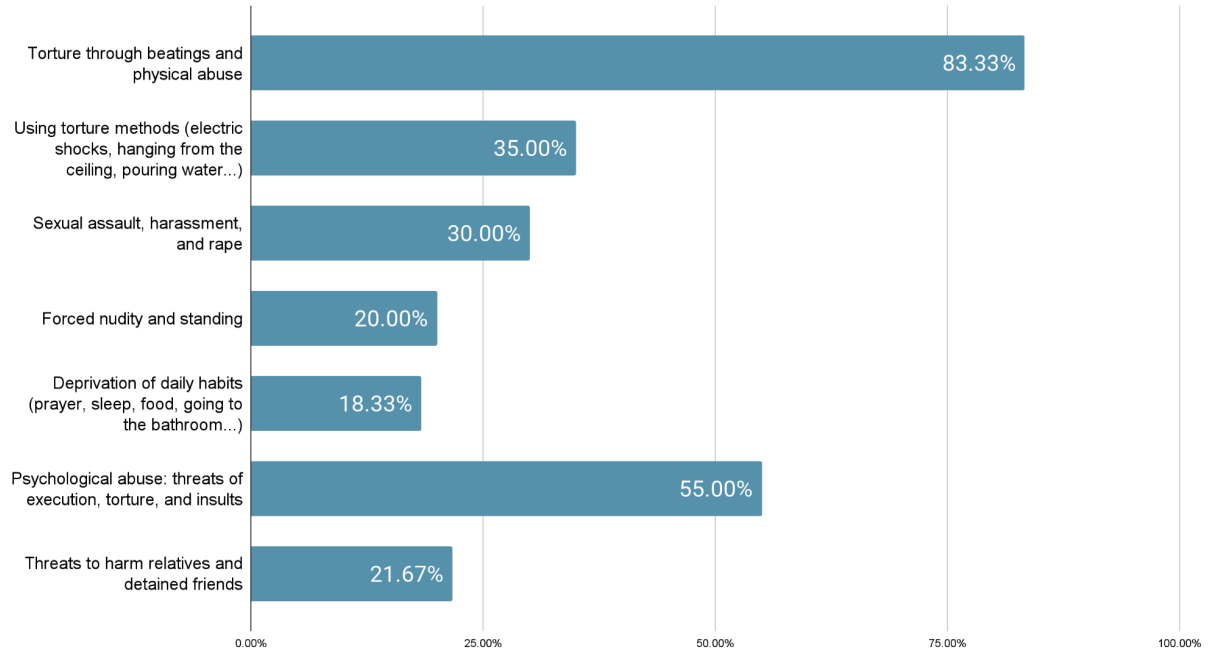


Chart No. (3): The forms of torture to which detainees are subjected

b) Psychological Torture

Detainees of different ages suffer from various types of psychological torture. This includes several procedures that aim to break the detainee's morale, frustrating him and eliminating any hope he may have. This takes various forms, the most important of which are bullying the detainees and mocking their suffering in prison, exposing them to insults, and tarnishing their reputations. An example of this is the case of [Sayed Ahmed Fuad](#)



[AlAbbar](#), whose pictures were published in the media as the suspect in a murder case. Additionally, detainees are subjected to cursing and insulting their family members with threats to attack them and spreading rumors about them, especially the female family members. Furthermore, detainees endure cursing and insulting their religious sect and religious and political authorities and symbols and mocking their religious and political beliefs. Moreover, those detained experience isolation for an extended period in solitary confinement and enforced disappearance, cutting them off from the outside world for a long period. They are also deprived of phone or video communication and private visits and are stripped of their clothes during interrogation and investigation.

c) Sexual Torture

Sexual torture is considered one of the prominent violations used against prisoners in Bahrain with the aim of physically and psychologically breaking them to coerce them into false confessions, regardless of their gender or age. This includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, threats of sexual violence, threats of raping the detainee or a family member, gender-based insults, forced nudity, and beatings in sensitive areas.

One of the notable cases in this regard is the one of the prominent human rights activist [Ebtisam AlSaegh](#), who was sexually assaulted, threatened with rape, and photographed while naked while officers threatened to publish these photos. The case of the prominent political prisoner [Mohamed Hasan Abdulla \(AlRamal\)](#) is also highlighted in this regard, who experienced sexual harassment, insults, and threats to go after his mother and wife by CID officers.

2. Issuance of Verdicts



Sentences issued against political prisoners

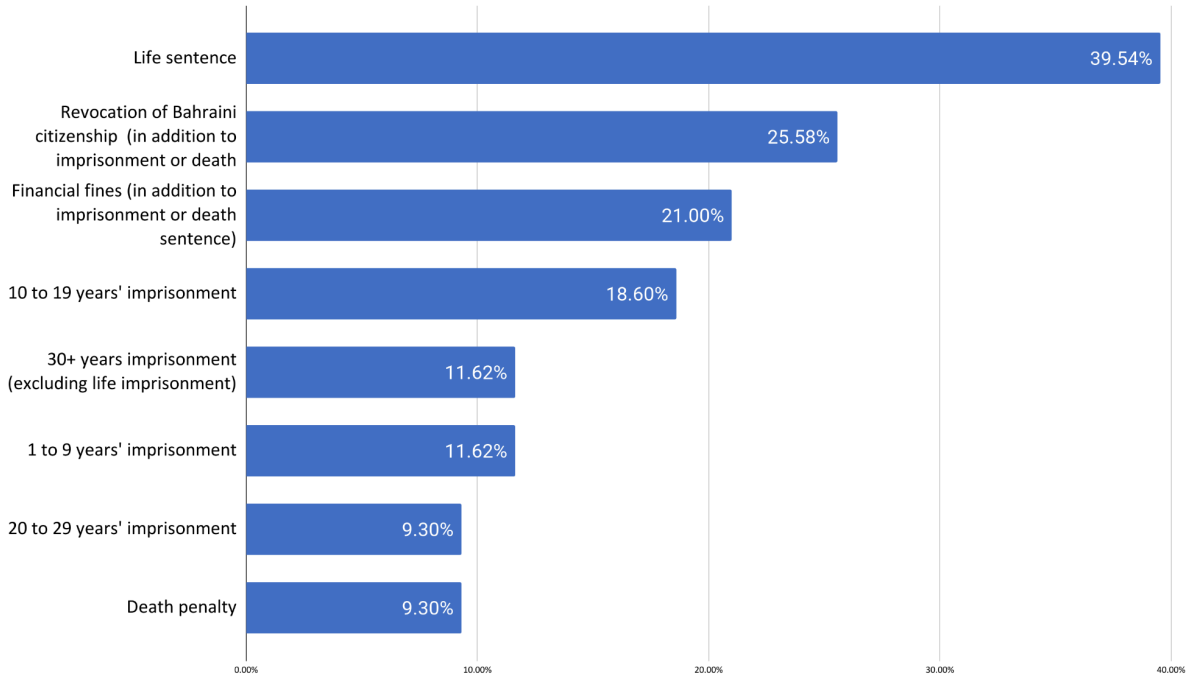


Chart No. (4): Sentences issued against political prisoners

Once the investigation stage is over, the detainee moves to a new, more serious, and fateful stage.

At this stage, the detainee's trial sessions begin after a long wait, generally accompanied by unjustified procrastination by the authorities. Through ADHRB's monitoring, an apparent similarity was found in the cases of all detainees in terms of sentencing. Most of the time, the detainee is denied his right to access his lawyer during the trial sessions and before the hearings. This hinders the lawyer's ability to review the merits of the case, hear from the defendant, and obtain sufficient documents and evidence to submit to the court to refute the charges against the detainee if the detainee is allowed to appoint a lawyer. Subsequently, if the defendant is unable to appoint a lawyer, Bahraini courts often neglect to carry out their duty to appoint a lawyer to represent the detainee. This makes it more difficult for the detainee, as he has to legally defend himself by himself. Moreover, if the



lawyer is allowed to attend some trial hearings, this permission is often only related to the sentencing hearing, where his presence is a formality. If the lawyer succeeds in pleading for his defendant, the court always ignores the evidence he presents, whether related to his defendant's lack of responsibility for the crimes he is accused of or to the victim's confession to the alleged crimes under torture.

The sentences issued are arbitrary and vindictive because they rely on confessions extracted under duress and because of the severity of their punishment. Many UN expert offices, in particular the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, have adopted opinions on cases brought by ADHRB concerning arbitrary detention, torture, unfair trials based on confessions extracted under torture and lacking due process, and other violations. According to the ADHRB's monitoring, all political detainees in Bahrain were sentenced to rulings ranging from the death penalty to life imprisonment or imprisonment for very long and illogical years with high fines, in addition to the revocation of citizenship or deprivation of some civil and political rights. Furthermore, about 40% of the victims were sentenced to life imprisonment, about 19% to between 10 and 19 years in prison, and about 12% to 30 years and above (excluding life imprisonment). Around 12% of the victims were sentenced to between one and nine years in prison, 9.3% to between 20 and 29 years in prison, and 9.3% to the death penalty. Other sentences were imposed on some detainees, as about 26% were sentenced to revocation of Bahraini citizenship, and 21% were sentenced to financial fines.

Bahraini courts often resort to convicting political detainees of terrorist crimes, such as attempting to kill or detonate and joining a terrorist group to disturb public order, overturn the constitution and public order, and destabilize national unity and civil peace. Convictions include possessing and manufacturing explosives, weapons, and fireworks and training on their use or inciting violence, rioting, intelligence, or espionage. This is done by using charges extracted under torture, aiming to sentence the detainee to the maximum possible penalty, silence his voice for as long as possible, and take extreme revenge on him. This is indeed the case of the prominent political leader [Abdulhadi](#)



[Al-Khawaja](#) and prominent cleric [Sheikh Zuhair Abbas \(Ashoor\)](#), who are sentenced to life imprisonment on terrorism charges related to their peaceful opposition activism. For the same purpose, Bahraini courts convict detainees of other felonies, such as theft, murder, harboring fugitives, and arson. However, it is remarkable that these courts convict the detainees on charges that are already legitimate rights enshrined in Bahraini and International laws, such as gathering and participating in demonstrations, as happened with [Jaafar Habib Kadhem](#) and [Ahmed Maki AlHadi](#). For instance, according to our selected sample, 86% of prisoners were sentenced on terrorism charges. In comparison, about half of the sample (49%) were convicted on charges related to illegal assembly and participation in demonstrations, 21% were convicted of rioting, and 19% were convicted of joining an unlicensed political association. Furthermore, 19% were convicted of assaulting a public official, 17% were convicted of attempting to overthrow the regime or attempting to overthrow the government, and 17% were convicted of incitement.



The most cases in which political prisoners in Bahrain were convicted

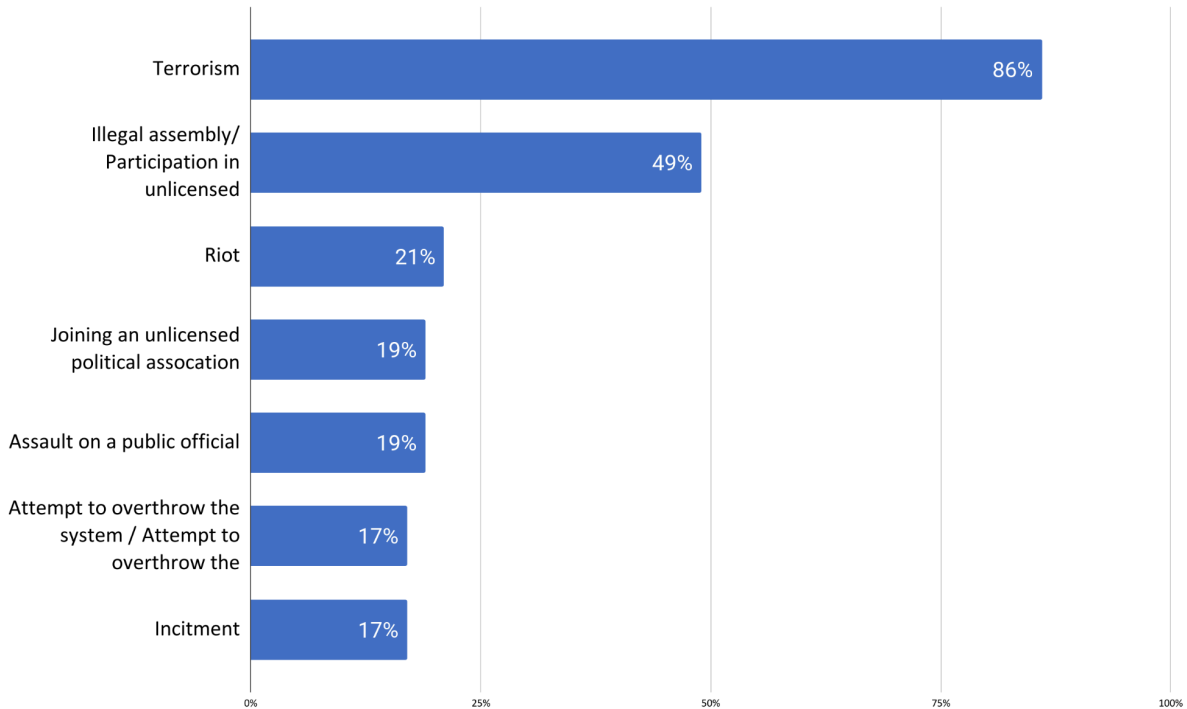


Chart No. (5): The most cases in which political prisoners in Bahrain were convicted

The most dangerous thing is that a large number of these sentences were issued in absentia after the detainee was not informed of the dates of his trial sessions, in clear violation of the most basic principles of fair trial. The practice of mass trials of political prisoners in Bahrain accused of terrorism charges extracted under torture is also widespread, in clear and explicit violation of essential elements of a fair trial. One of the most prominent examples is the mass trial known as the “Zulfikar Brigades” case, in which the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issued an [opinion](#) on twenty Bahraini citizens convicted in this trial, considering their detention arbitrary. Moreover, trials take place in an entirely non-independent judicial system that ignores all evidence refuting the charges against the detainee. Additionally, this judicial system often threatens the defendant with



re-torture if he refuses the charges against him and provides evidence that confirms that he was tortured, thereby reinforcing a culture of impunity. This is what happened with the released detainee [Jasim Mohamed Ajwaid](#), who informed the judge during one of the trials that he was coerced into confessing under torture. However, the judge threatened to send him back to interrogation. It is noteworthy that Bahraini courts prosecute minors by adopting the same standards as in adult trials, in clear violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Among the most prominent examples are the detainee [Sayed Mohamed Mostafa Mohamed \(Al-Tublani\)](#), who was sentenced to 31 years in prison despite being a minor, only to be later reduced to 26 years, and the detainee [Hasan Ahmed Radhi Mohamed \(Sarhan\)](#), who was sentenced to 31 years in prison despite his young age.² In addition, Bahraini authorities deny minors the right to be retried before the court specialized for minors under Bahraini law, which is the Children's Restorative Justice Court established in the Restorative Justice Law for Children and the Protection of Children from Mistreatment. An example of this is what happened with the minor detainee [Mohamed Ali Adel Maki](#) - sentenced to 10 years in prison - who was threatened with death after demanding his right to a retrial before the Children's Restorative Justice Court. Maki was surprised by the PPO's representative telling him: "You've been sentenced to 10 years when it should have been a death sentence!"³

² Hasan Ahmed Radhi Mohamed (Sarhan) was released under a [royal pardon](#) issued on 8 April 2024, which included 1584 convicts.

³ On 9 April 2024, Mohamed Ali Adel Maki was included along with 46 other prisoners in the Open Prisons program under a [decree](#) issued by the General Directorate of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing.

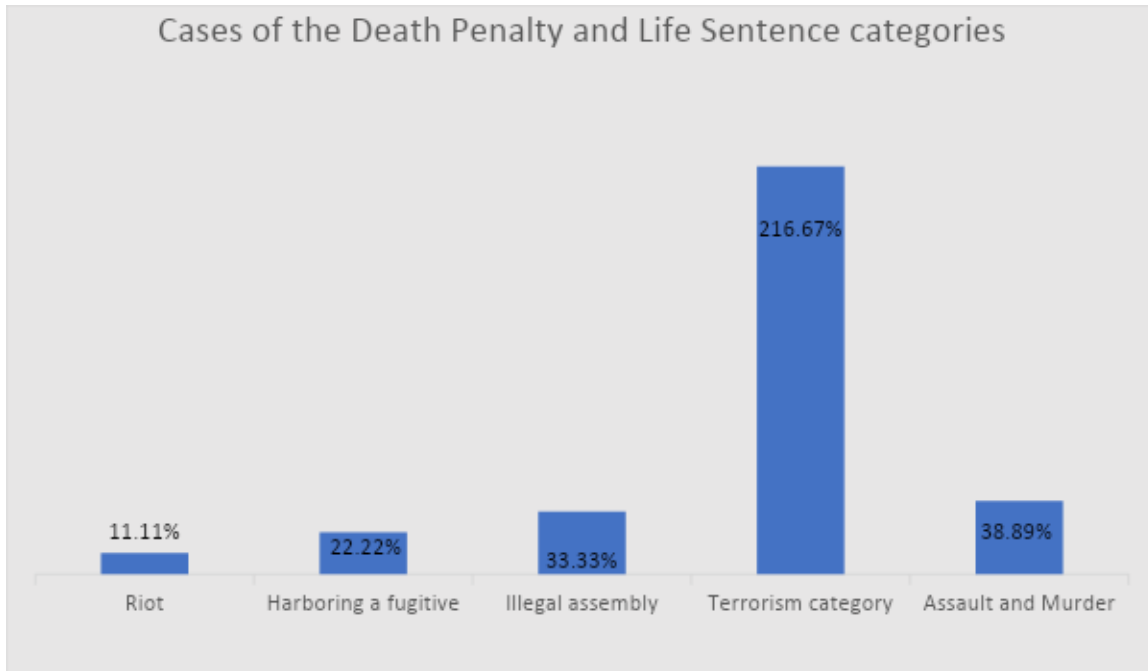


Chart No. (6): Cases of the Death Penalty and Life Sentence categories

3. The Violations Inside Prisons

After the initial court ruling, a new phase of violations begins, which the convict must now face from inside the Dry Dock Prison (for convicts under 21 years old) or from inside the overcrowded Jau Central Prison. The most difficult violations faced by convicts are beatings and torture once again, even if the effects and consequences of previous torture have not yet been healed. The methods of torture to which political prisoners are subjected after being transferred behind bars to serve their sentences vary, and we have monitored the Bahraini authorities' use of a number of them through:



a) Physical Torture:

Physical torture of political prisoners continues after their sentencing. This includes severe beatings, kicking, stomping, and dragging on the ground, all of which are used to force a prisoner to submit to and abide by the officers' orders and to remain silent about any measures depriving them of their rights or violating these rights.

Prison officers typically greet newly arrived prisoners with a series of physical and psychological tortures. The prisoner endures relentless beatings all over their body, administered through various means such as slapping, kicking, punching, and beating with batons or rubber hoses. Additionally, they may be subjected to humiliating acts such as having their head shaved, being forced into degrading positions, and enduring bullying. Prison authorities may also transfer the prisoner to a cold room, lowering the temperature with the air conditioner in winter and leaving them isolated for several days. Alongside the physical abuse, insults are hurled at the prisoner, often targeting sectarian affiliations. The severity of torture may intensify and decrease depending on the case in which he is charged. Furthermore, mistreatment does not cease with the passage of years behind bars; instead, it escalates based on the prisoners' determination to secure their rights or their success in exposing the abuses they endure.

Here are some examples that reflect the prevailing pattern of such torture in prison:

After being sentenced in the 14 February 2013 coalition case, [Hasan Ahmed Radhi Mohamed \(Sarhan\)](#) was transferred to Jau Prison, where he was subjected to severe beatings and repeated harassment by security officers. Consequently, he sustained a broken hand. The harassment against Hasan persisted, leading him to raise his voice and demand an end to the ill-treatment of him and his colleagues. As a result, the prison administration [transferred him](#) and a group of 13 political prisoners to the isolation building in 2022, dragging them with the handcuffs they were constantly bound with. Later, in January 2023, a prison officer punched and kicked Hasan Ahmed Radhi Mohamed (Sarhan), pepper sprayed him, and stepped on his neck in a clear violation of



International Law. On the same day, Hasan's family received a call stating that 4 January 2023 had been designated as the day to visit him. However, she received another call on the eve of the same day informing her that the visit had been canceled due to the violent beatings he had suffered, and when asked why, she was told that it was for administrative reasons.

[Husain Abdulla Mohamed \(Juma'a\)](#) was also tortured after the sentencing and transferred to the Dry Dock Prison, where officers forced him to strip naked, threw objects on him, beat him, and subjected him to solitary confinement.

Following the events and protests that erupted in Jau Prison in 2015, activist and human rights defender [Naji Ali Fateel](#) sustained numerous injuries and wounds on his back as a result of the torture he was subjected to. He also suffered from a broken leg and nose, among many other injuries. Naji continued to be subjected to physical and psychological torture due to his ongoing activism inside Jau Prison until his release under a royal pardon on 8 April 2024. He was isolated for six months and denied practicing his religious rituals.

When he was in Jau Prison, building 10, in 2015, [Sheikh Zuhair Jasim Abbas \(Sheikh Zuhair Ashoor\)](#) was accused of participating in riots during the 2015 Jau Prison events. Consequently, he was subjected to systematic physical and psychological torture, after which he was unable to even identify his daughter after her first visit due to the severity of this torture. Moreover, during his detention in Jau Prison's Building 14, Sheikh Zuhair was ill-treated and beaten.

b) Psychological Torture



Detainees of all ages suffer various types of psychological torture. This includes several measures aimed at breaking the detainee's morale, frustrating him, and destroying hope for him. This method also targets prisoners who object to or reject violations against them or who demand their rights. This consists of several forms, the most important of which are solitary confinement or isolation, effectively cutting them off from the outside world for an extended period. It also includes denying them contact via phone or video, although authorities may relent under the condition that the detainee remains under surveillance or accompanied by a police officer. Furthermore, they are denied private visits, or if allowed, visits occur from behind glass barriers with communication through speakers. Additionally, their families may be subjected to degrading forced inspections and forced to wait in long lines outside the building for several hours in the sun.

Moreover, prison officers practice severe restrictions aimed at isolating prisoners, including confiscation of belongings, restricting access to television, radio, and books, and limiting newspapers to pro-government newspapers only. All these methods are used to further isolate and cut off prisoners from the outside world.

Among the cases, we mention the punitive [measures](#) to which [Mr. Hasan Mushaima](#) was subjected, causing him suffocating psychological pressure. For example, at the Kanoo Medical Center, he complained of provocation at the center, and an altercation took place between him and the police officers in March 2022. Mr. Hasan remained at the center to monitor his medical condition, and his extended stay was used as an excuse to isolate him at the center after he refused the alternative verdict instead of providing him with the necessary medical care. In addition, he has been denied the right to contact his family. Mr. Hasan was demanding to return to Jau Prison, describing his stay at the medical center as solitary confinement.

Furthermore, among the rights demanded by [Dr. Abduljalil Alsingace](#) during his ongoing hunger strike since July 2021 is the return of his book, which was confiscated after four years of work. The book focuses on Bahraini culture and dialects. Additionally, he demands that his new passport and ID be handed over to his family and that he be allowed to contact



them via video call. Moreover, he insists on being provided with medicines prescribed by doctors, which are available outside Salmaniya Hospital and the Kanoo Medical Center. He also requests the transfer of his MRI images taken at the military hospital, the provision of crutches, a warm bottle of water for his back, and permission to receive photos of his family.

While detained in Jau Prison, Building 14, [Sheikh Zuhair Jasim Abbas](#) (Sheikh Zuhair Ashoor) was subjected to ill-treatment, beatings, and deprivation of food and medical care. Additionally, he, along with a large group of detainees in the prison, was denied access to bathing facilities. Moreover, in July 2020, Sheikh Zuhair participated in a mass strike involving hundreds of prisoners in Buildings 13 and 14. Their demands included providing appropriate medical and health care to prisoners, ending the policy of severe handcuffing during transfers to the clinic, and ceasing harassment of prisoners during calls and visits. The demands also included providing personal hygiene supplies in the canteen and allowing prisoners to practice their religious rituals freely. On 9 August 2020, Sheikh Zuhair participated in a hunger strike campaign to protest the negligence of the prison administration and the ban on religious rituals before Ashura. The following day, Sheikh Zuhair, along with Ali AlWazeer, Naji Fatil, Sadeq AlGhasra, Mohamed Fakhrawi, and Mohamed Sarhan, were transferred to Building 15 on charges of "inciting inmates to strike". Each prisoner was placed in a cell with three immigrant prisoners from different cultures and languages. This move was perceived as reprisal against the prisoners, as it prevented them from performing religious rituals during the month of Muharram. Additionally, their legs and hands were continuously tied, they were forbidden from accessing the yard or purchasing items from the canteen, and they were subject to constant insults. Furthermore, officers confiscated Sheikh Zuhair's religious books, including those he was in the process of writing. The Sheikh's family [recounts](#) what he was subjected to in solitary confinement: he was deprived of sleep for seven days, his hands and feet were chained with iron chains for the same duration, food was passed to him through a small opening under the cell door, and he was provided water only twice a day. Additionally, he endured continuous kicking and beatings with water



hoses, was prohibited from praying, using the bathroom, or showering, and was subjected to insults and threats of imminent execution. As a result of these violations and mistreatment, Sheikh Zuhair is unable to move normally, and his health has deteriorated due to torture.

Among the cases, we also highlight the situation of the minor detainees [Sayed Mohamed Mostafa Mohamed \(Al-Tublani\)](#) and [Hasan Ahmed Radhi Mohamed \(Sarhan\)](#), who were among 14 prisoners transferred on 10 August 2022 to the isolation building. There, they endured beatings, torture, and various violations. Furthermore, they were deprived of time outside the cell and were unable to contact their families for an extended period. They have been enduring severe psychological pressure and systematic harassment since the beginning of their isolation, persisting even after being cut off from the outside world. It is crucial to note that the isolation building in Jau Prison houses prisoners from diverse cultures, languages, and religions. Prisoners regard this practice as a form of isolation utilized by authorities to segregate prisoners without openly placing them in solitary confinement cells. Additionally, the 14 prisoners in the isolation section were intermittently denied their right to communicate with their families and the right to receive visits. Despite filing complaints with the Ombudsman, they were prevented from contacting their families for 45 days.

c) Discrimination based on religious belief

Discrimination based on religion and belief is a dominant pattern in Bahrain's prisons. This includes restraining detainees and depriving them of the right to practice religious rituals, in addition to insulting religious beliefs and symbols, leading to the confiscation of religious and other books. The following are the most critical aspects adopted in this pattern:



- Prohibition of freedom of worship
- Prohibition from practicing various religious rituals
- Discrimination on the grounds of belonging to the Shia sect
- Prohibition of reading religious books relating to the Shia community and punishment where such readings occur
- Prohibition of performing congregational prayers
- Closure of the place of worship in the prison complex

d) Denial of medical treatment

This arbitrary measure is a systematic violation used by the prison administration with political prisoners to increase pressure and restrict them and is shared by all detainees, especially those sentenced to long years in prison or serving a life sentence. In this paragraph, we mention some of these cases that have been subjected to denial of treatment and restriction of their right to access the necessary medicines and medical examinations, to be detailed later on this violation:

The policy of medical negligence has indeed led to deaths inside the prisons, with the latest victim of medical neglect being Husain Khalil Ebrahim, who passed away on 25 March 2024 as a result of being deprived of medical treatment. Among them is the case of political detainee [Sayed Kadhem Abbas](#), who tragically died in February 2020 after suffering fatal cancer as a result of medical negligence during his detention in Jau Prison between 2015 and 2018. Furthermore, the political detainee [Abbas Malallah](#), who [suffered](#) for two years from heart problems, stomach ulcers, and colon problems without receiving treatment, remained in prison from 2011 until his death in April 2021.

Nevertheless, the policy of medical negligence against those sentenced to death or life imprisonment continues. For example, [Mohamed Ramadan](#), who has been sentenced to



death, has been suffering for months from severe pain, starting from his neck, where he felt a tumor, and then the pain spread to his face without any action from the prison administration. He was subjected to medical neglect and slowness in subjecting him to X-rays to diagnose the nature of the tumor or gland in the neck. On the other hand, since the date of his arrest, [Mohamed AbdulNabi Abdulla \(Al Khood\)](#), who was sentenced to life imprisonment, has been subjected to deliberate medical negligence. Mohamed's health began to deteriorate in July 2020, as he began to suffer from pain in his joints and ears and was no longer able to do any work that required specific effort. Moreover, the policy of medical negligence threatens the life of [Mohamed Hasan Abdulla \(AlRamal\)](#), who is sentenced to life imprisonment. AlRamal suffers from stomach pain, general weakness in his health, and blood coming out with stool, and he also needs glasses instead of broken ones. AlRamal has gone on repeated hunger strikes to protest the cancellation of his medical appointments, including an operation that was scheduled for December 2023.

Medical negligence is also used as a punishment against opposition leaders:

[Mr. Hasan Mushaima](#): He faces various restrictions and has been deprived of his fundamental rights, including his right to receive appropriate medical treatment. Hasan, who has recovered from cancer, suffers from several chronic diseases, including hypertension and diabetes, and has been denied access to medications and regular check-ups for a long time, including diabetes and blood pressure medications. Continuously, [painkillers](#) and prescription drugs have not been adjusted according to his needs. Moreover, the prison administration continues to cancel his appointments. His medical tests showed a severe rise in his blood sugar and blood pressure levels, unspecified damage to his kidneys and stomach, swelling in his eye, and a heart muscle problem. However, he did not receive the required treatment. Since last December, Mushaima's health has been seriously deteriorating as his kidney failure nears its final stage. With the prison administration withholding medical records, his life is in [extreme danger](#) due to the denial of treatment.



[Dr. AbdulJalil AlSingace](#): He experienced discomfort in his left shoulder and pain in his left rib due to the beating he endured from the officers. Furthermore, his carpal tunnel syndrome further deteriorated because he was forced to stand on his leg with his hands raised and cuffed. Nonetheless, the prison administration prevented him from receiving appropriate medical treatment, and medical negligence prevented him as well from receiving prescriptions that included medical devices. Additionally, in July 2021, Dr. AbdulJalil began a hunger strike to protest the confiscation of a book he had been working on for four years, focusing on Bahraini culture and dialects. As a result of the strike, he suffered headaches, dizziness attacks, shortness of breath, and low oxygen levels. Moreover, he lost more than 20 kilograms of weight, and his blood sugar level dropped to 2 mmol/L. On 8 January 2024, Dr. AlSingace escalated his protest step and [announced](#) a comprehensive hunger strike (except for water) after his family was mistreated during their visit to the Kanoo Medical Center. Back then, an altercation occurred with a policewoman who prevented his family members from approaching him or touching his hand during the visit, which did not exceed half an hour. This escalation [portends](#) the worst for Dr. AlSingace's health as the prison administration and the relevant state agencies ignore his demands.

[AbdulHadi Al-Khawaja](#): He was denied proper medical treatment, despite his deteriorating health. In addition, multiple hunger strikes to protest his mistreatment led to weight loss and deteriorating health conditions. As a result of torture and medical negligence, AbdulHadi suffers from severe back pain from the beatings and cannot sleep for long periods due to his pain. He also developed many other health complications, including visual impairment, and his doctor warned him that these symptoms could lead to blindness. In March 2023, Al-Khawaja was prevented from seeing a cardiologist after suffering an irregular heartbeat, which necessitated his transfer to the hospital due to a heart condition. Moreover, in September 2023, he went on a hunger strike after the prison administration canceled his appointment with an ophthalmologist, which prompted his family to [sound the alarm](#) about his loss of sight or even his death in prison.



[Sheikh AbdulJalil Radhi Maki \(al-Muqdad\)](#), who still suffers from leg pain, was also forced to endure back pain and did not receive serious treatment or an accurate diagnosis despite constant demands. Furthermore, Sheikh AbdulJalil suffers from severe and persistent headaches that have also not been treated. Sheikh al-Miqdad has been suffering from foot pain since his arrest in 2011 and is not receiving treatment. In November 2022, he underwent an eye exam and was not given glasses despite paying for them out of his own pocket. Sheikh Al-Miqdad was subjected to an attempted assault by officers in September 2022 after refusing to sign a paper claiming that he refused to receive treatment. This happened following his refusal to attend a doctor's appointment when the doctor was absent. In April 2023, he was denied his scheduled hospital appointment, forcing him to sit in the prison yard holding a banner demanding the right to treatment.

[Sheikh Mohamed Habib al-Miqdad](#): He suffers from severe stomach pain as well as difficulty eating, which has exacerbated to the point of continuous vomiting. Sheikh Mohamed was in [dire need](#) of hernia surgery, heart surgery, and urology examination, but authorities denied him treatment, citing the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse. After two years of suffering, he finally [underwent](#) these operations. Moreover, Sheikh Mohamed also continues to suffer complications in his head and foot due to torture and is not receiving appropriate treatment.

[AbdulWahab Husain Ismaeel](#): The Jau prison administration imposes restrictions on him despite his advanced age and the need to lean on crutches to walk. The prison administration always cancels his medical appointments in external hospitals, which has led to a severe deterioration of his health. Due to the restrictions, he was denied treatment for his nerve problem before he was imprisoned and his appointments with a nephrologist, although his kidneys were affected by his irregular blood sugar levels. In addition, because of his irregular blood sugar levels, he needs to take insulin needles. Moreover, his dental treatment also stopped, which considerably worsened his situation.



e) Ongoing violations

In addition to the violations we mentioned during the detention and investigation phase, arbitrary measures against detainees continue until after the trial and the issuance of verdicts. Among these are ongoing violations, as detainees are subjected to continuous torture, restrictions, beatings, humiliation, denial of treatment, and other methods that violate the fundamental rights of detainees. Here are some examples:

In December 2018, [Mahmoud Saeed Abdullah](#) was transferred to solitary confinement in the isolation building of the New Dry Dock prison for approximately nine months until August 2019. Mahmood and his inmates in solitary were deprived of going out in the sun, except for only 15 minutes while they were handcuffed. Mahmood suffered from multiple harassments during his detention, such as officers going through his personal belongings and unrightfully confiscating some of them.

In May 2019, the authorities transferred [Salah Saeed Saleh AlHammar](#), along with two other prisoners, to [the isolation building](#) in Jau Prison without providing any justification for this referral. On 15 August 2019, Salah and 14 other prisoners participated in a hunger strike to protest poor prison conditions and the isolation policy. Salah's health condition deteriorated during his hunger strike. However, instead of transferring him to the clinic, on 28 August 2019, the authorities transferred him and two others to solitary confinement in reaction to the strike, isolating them from the outside world.

On 17 April 2021, riot police [carried out](#) an attack on prisoners in buildings 12, 13, and 14 in Jau Prison, and some detainees were injured during the attack. This was in retaliation against prisoners who protested poor prison conditions, and punitive measures were taken against detainees in Buildings 12, 13, and 14, including being locked in their cells 24 hours a day and stopping phone calls. In addition to being beaten, several prisoners were reported to have been repeatedly thrown face down on the ground. One of the prisoners, Sayed Alawi AlWadaei, lost consciousness after suffering a deep wound to the head and was said to have bled profusely. Another detainee, Saeed Abdullmam, was seen being transferred by



police. Their family members were unable to contact them, and the prison authorities refused to reveal any information about them or their whereabouts.

On May 14, 2023, many political prisoners sentenced to death were beaten, including [Mohamed Ramadan and Husain Moosa](#), which led to injuries and burns, according to prisoners' statements. Mohamed was taken with another prisoner to an unknown destination outside the building. This incident occurred after members of the corrections officers raided the building under the pretext of searching and proceeded to vandalize the prisoners' belongings. Because some protested against the vandalization of their belongings, the guards responded by violently beating them. After this latest attack, Mohamed Ramadan's news and family contacts were cut off. Later, Mohamed told his wife that among the violations he was subjected to were being chained in the form of a cross to the corridor for about three hours, being pepper-sprayed along with other prisoners, enduring beatings, solitary confinement with his hands and feet shackled for two or three days, and being placed in a severely cold room.

Based on the aforementioned incidents and our ongoing monitoring and documentation of various violations, which are presented within the "Profiles in Persecution" section, we have compiled a list of some arbitrary and illegal measures to which convicts are subjected in prison, as outlined below:

- Cancellation of medical appointments without explanation
- Placing the convict in solitary confinement for days
- Placing the convict in solitary confinement while restraining him with iron chains
- Placing the convict with criminal prisoners convicted in severe cases and drug cases
- Placing the convict with foreign prisoners with whom he does not share religion and language



- Depriving the convict of his right to communication
- Inspecting convicts in a degrading manner
- Randomly and provocatively inspecting their personal belongings and confiscating some of them
- Severe beating to the point of breaking bones
- Punishing convicts by depriving them of family visits
- Chaining the convict in the form of a cross for hours
- Iron chaining the convict's hands and feet for hours and sometimes days
- Chaining the convict until prayer time
- Placing the convict in a frigid room
- Depriving the convict of a quilt, bed, or mattress
- Spraying pepper in the faces of convicts
- Preventing the convict from showering and changing his clothes for an extended period that exceeds two weeks
- Riot police officers attacking the convicts
- Dragging the convict out of the cell and beating him in front of his colleagues
- Detention in an overcrowded cell with no space to sleep
- Monitoring phone calls
- Monitoring family visits



- Detaining the convict inside his cell all day, with the possibility of allowing him to leave the cell for one hour a day

4. Monitoring patterns of violations by categories

A quick tour through the pages of the “Profiles in Persecution” section, which publishes the most prominent types of violations against detainees, automatically leads us to identify the various categories of Bahraini victims who were subjected to these violations. Accordingly, we can divide the breaches into the following categories:

1. The category of opposition leaders and symbols and human rights defenders: This category includes a pattern of systematic violations committed against Bahraini opposition leaders and symbols, as well as human rights defenders.
2. The category of female activists: This category includes the pattern of systematic violations practiced against female activists and human rights defenders.
3. The category of minors: This category includes the pattern of systematic violations practiced against minor detainees.
4. Medical negligence category: This category includes the prison administration’s use of medical negligence as a means of collective punishment against political prisoners.
5. The category of repeated summonses: This category includes violations that affect detainees who have been released but are still subject to summonses and continuous harassment.



a) Category of opposition symbols and human rights defenders

Since the start of the revolutionary demand movement in Bahrain in 2011, the Bahraini government, represented by its various security and military agencies, has deliberately suppressed the popular movement demanding reform and democracy. The authorities retaliated against their citizens through arrests, summonses, and investigation campaigns. At the forefront of those targeted were opposition leaders and human rights defenders, who were subjected to several violations targeting their role and peaceful activism. In addition to arrests, they were subjected to torture and unfair trials and most of them are still subject to arbitrary measures to this date.

This category includes, but is not limited to: [Sheikh AbdulJalil Radhi Makki \(Al-Muqdad\)](#), [Sheikh Mohamed Habib Al-Miqdad](#), Mr. [Hassan Mushaima](#), [Dr. AbdulJalil AlSingace](#), human rights defender [AbdulHadi Al-Khawaja](#), Mr. [AbdulWahab Husain Ismaeel](#), [Sheikh Zuhair Jasim Abbas \(Sheikh Zuhair Ashoor\)](#), and human rights defender [Naji Fateel](#).

The analysis shows a systematic pattern of violations against opposition leaders and symbols, as it was found that 87.5% of this category were subjected to severe beatings and torture, 50% of them were subjected to solitary confinement as a means of reprisal and punishment, and 37.5% were subjected to enforced disappearance. Furthermore, 100% of this category were subjected to insults and targeting of their religious beliefs, and 100% were subjected to medical negligence, including denial of health care and medications and postponing their medical appointments. 37.5% of this category were subjected to threats of torturing a family member, including threats of assault and rape, and 62.5% of this category were subjected to sexual assault or threats of rape.

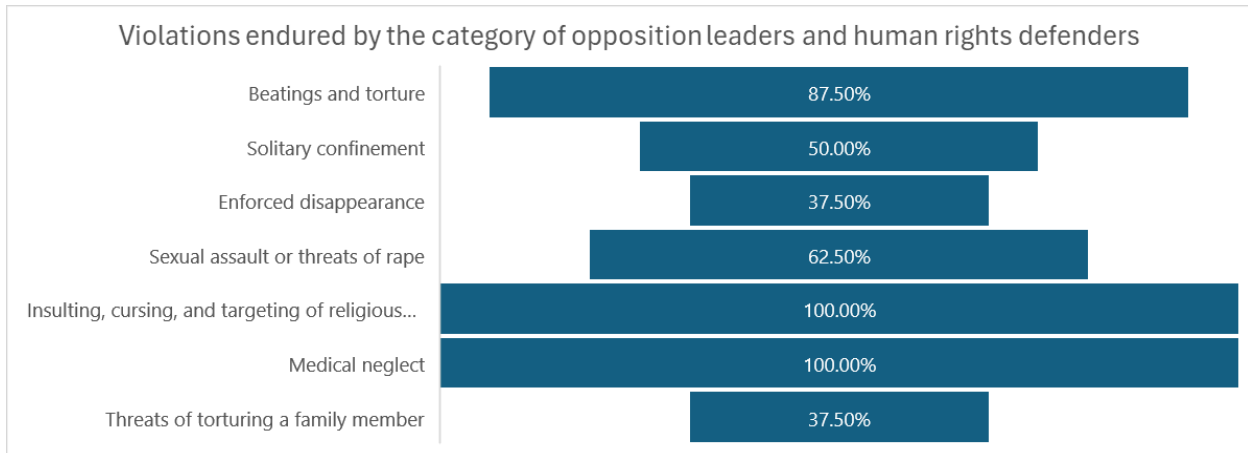


Table No. (7): Violations against the category of opposition leaders and human rights defenders

Sheikh AbdulJalil Radhi Makki (Al-Muqdad): He is a prominent 62-year-old Bahraini cleric and political activist who has been serving a life sentence in Jau Prison since 2011. He was subjected to deliberate medical neglect and torture, including sexual assault and insults to his family and his sect. He was also beaten, insulted, and forced to stand for long periods. He was thrown to the ground and flogged with a leather belt, water was poured on him, and he was placed in solitary confinement. Additionally, an officer spat in his mouth and forced him to swallow. Moreover, he was blindfolded and punched in the head. Furthermore, a wooden board on which he used to sleep to relieve the pain caused by the torture was confiscated.

Sheikh Mohamed Habib Al-Miqdad: He is a Bahraini-Swedish cleric and social activist serving his 68-year prison sentence in Jau Prison. He was arrested for the first time in 2010 for criticizing the Bahraini government. Then, he was arrested in 2011 for joining the Bahrain 13 group, a group of activists that played a role in leading the 2011 protests.

He was subjected to torture and mistreatment, including enforced disappearance, solitary confinement for two months, being stripped of his clothes, and enduring beatings all over his body. He was also insulted and humiliated, taken to the underground “AlQala’a



Prison,” hung upside down and beaten on his legs with hoses for hours, and sexually assaulted. Furthermore, he was forced to sit naked, deprived of sleep, forced to gargle his own urine, and electroshocked on his entire body and genitals. Moreover, prison officials spat in his mouth, forcing him to swallow their spits, and obliged him to kiss the king’s pictures and their shoes. His hands were tied, his eyes were blindfolded, and he was beaten. Due to the severity of the torture, he lost consciousness, and the officers sprayed him with water until he woke up. When he used to fall to the ground, officers would lift him and beat him until blood ran all over his body. Despite the pain, he was not transferred for treatment, and his abdominal pain was left to worsen for years.

Mr. Hassan Mushaima: He is a 74-year-old Bahraini opposition leader and political prisoner. He has been serving his life sentence in Jau Prison since 2011 after he was convicted of trying to overthrow the government due to his role in pro-democracy demonstrations. He has been subjected to mistreatment, torture, and medical neglect by the authorities since his arrest. The prison administration continued to cancel his medical appointments without informing him. The authorities prevented him from undergoing Positron Emission Tomography (PET) examinations on a regular basis. He was deprived of his right to obtain medications and undergo regular examinations for an extended period. Furthermore, he does not receive consistent access to diabetes and hypertension medications, his painkillers and medications are not adjusted to his needs, and neither he nor his family are allowed to see his medical records. As a result, he suffers from unspecified damage to his kidneys and stomach, swelling in his eye, and a heart muscle problem. He stated in one of his calls that he was facing slow death due to the neglect he was subjected to and the deprivation of the necessary treatment. In 2021, he rejected an offer of an alternative sentence by the authorities in exchange for his silence and concession. Consequently, he is still serving his life sentence.

Dr. AbdulJalil AlSingace: He is a prominent human rights defender and a university professor and engineer. He has been serving his life sentence in Jau Prison since 2011. He was arrested and tortured by security officers after leading and participating in pro-democracy



protests in 2011 at the age of 49. The medical neglect he suffered over the years led to a deterioration in his health. He was subjected to physical and psychological torture while he was blindfolded and handcuffed. They dragged him while he was in his underwear and without his glasses, holding him at gunpoint. They beat him on the head with their fists and sticks, sexually assaulted him, and threatened to rape his daughter or his wife. Pointing a gun at his head, the officers forced him to lick their shoes and stand for long periods. They forced him to stand without using his crutches and kicked him on his healthy leg until he fell to the ground. He was placed in solitary confinement for two months. The authorities did not allow the pads of his crutches to be replaced until after numerous international advocacy campaigns. Additionally, his eyesight deteriorated after he was deprived of his glasses.

His suffering persists at the Kanoo Medical Center as he continues his hunger strike for the second consecutive year without any response from the authorities. Dr. Al-Singace initiated the hunger strike in response to the mistreatment by the prison administration and their refusal to deliver his historical research - for which he dedicated four years- to his family.

AbdulHadi Al-Khawaja: A prominent Bahraini-Danish human rights activist and defender, has been serving a life sentence in Jau Prison since 2011. AbdulHadi was 50 years old when he was arrested. He was severely tortured and then tried for his human rights activism and criticism of the government. Prison officials dragged him by the neck and inflicted many injuries on him, leaving a trail of blood behind them. He also received a solid blow to the face that broke his jaw and was blindfolded. He was subjected to psychological torture, and security personnel threatened him with sexual assault and execution. He was subjected to isolation, including confiscation of belongings and restricted access to television, radio, and books.

He was subjected to deliberate medical negligence, and as a result of torture, he suffers from severe back pain due to beatings and is unable to sleep because of pain. He also suffered



from many health complications, including poor eyesight, and the doctor warned him that these symptoms could lead him to blindness.

In August 2023, Al-Khawaja joined about 800 other detainees in a [hunger strike](#) to protest dire prison conditions and denial of health care. AbdulHadi stopped eating on 9 August 2023 to protest his continuous arbitrary detention and denial of access to medical care. On 11 August, he [suffered](#) a severe heart rhythm disorder and was transferred to the military hospital, where he was placed in the intensive care unit. Two hours later, he was administered intravenous medication, his heart rate stabilized, and he was returned to his prison cell, where he resumed his hunger strike.

AbdulWahab Husain Ismaeel: A 69-year-old opposition leader, he was a member of a group called “Bahrain 13,” a group that includes thirteen religious leaders, political opposition leaders, and human rights defenders who were arrested in March 2011 for leading peaceful pro-democracy protests in February 2011. He is serving a life sentence in Jau Prison, where he was subjected to enforced disappearance and torture during his interrogation. Officers violently beat him, kicked him, spat in his mouth, forced him to stand for a long time, and put him in cold water, in addition to other types of torture. The Bahraini authorities did not allow physicians to examine him for evidence of torture and, in turn, did not provide him with appropriate treatment and care and denied him family visits. The prison administration required him to be handcuffed while going to the hospital, denied him treatment for nerve and dental problems, and canceled his appointments with the kidney specialist.

Sheikh Zuhair Jassim Abbas (Sheikh Zuhair Ashoor): Is a dissident Shia cleric and professor at a seminary for Islamic studies. He was arrested on 18 July 2013 and is still detained in Jau Prison, serving his life sentence. He was subjected to torture, including severe beatings with water hoses, and electric shocks until he fainted. Furthermore, he was forced to stand continuously and was deprived of sleep for several days. He was also subjected to insults and threats of torture if he did not sign the already prepared confessions while blindfolded. After being transferred to Jau Prison, he was subjected to



additional torture, deprivation of medical treatment, and various forms of harassment in retaliation for his opinions and activism demanding prisoners' rights. He was also subjected to enforced disappearance from 7 July 2020 to 17 January 2021.

Naji Fateel: He is a human rights defender, blogger, movement activist, and president of the Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights. Fateel was arrested in 2013. He was subjected to torture and mistreatment, including electric shocks and severe beatings throughout his body, until he suffered a broken leg and nose, hearing loss, and other injuries. He also endured deprivation of food and sleep, threats of rape, electric shocks in his genitals, attempts to drown him, verbal insults, and threats to publish private photos of his wife. He was placed in solitary confinement and prohibited from praying.⁴

⁴ Naji Fateel was released under a [royal pardon](#) issued on 8 April 2024, which included 1584 convicts.

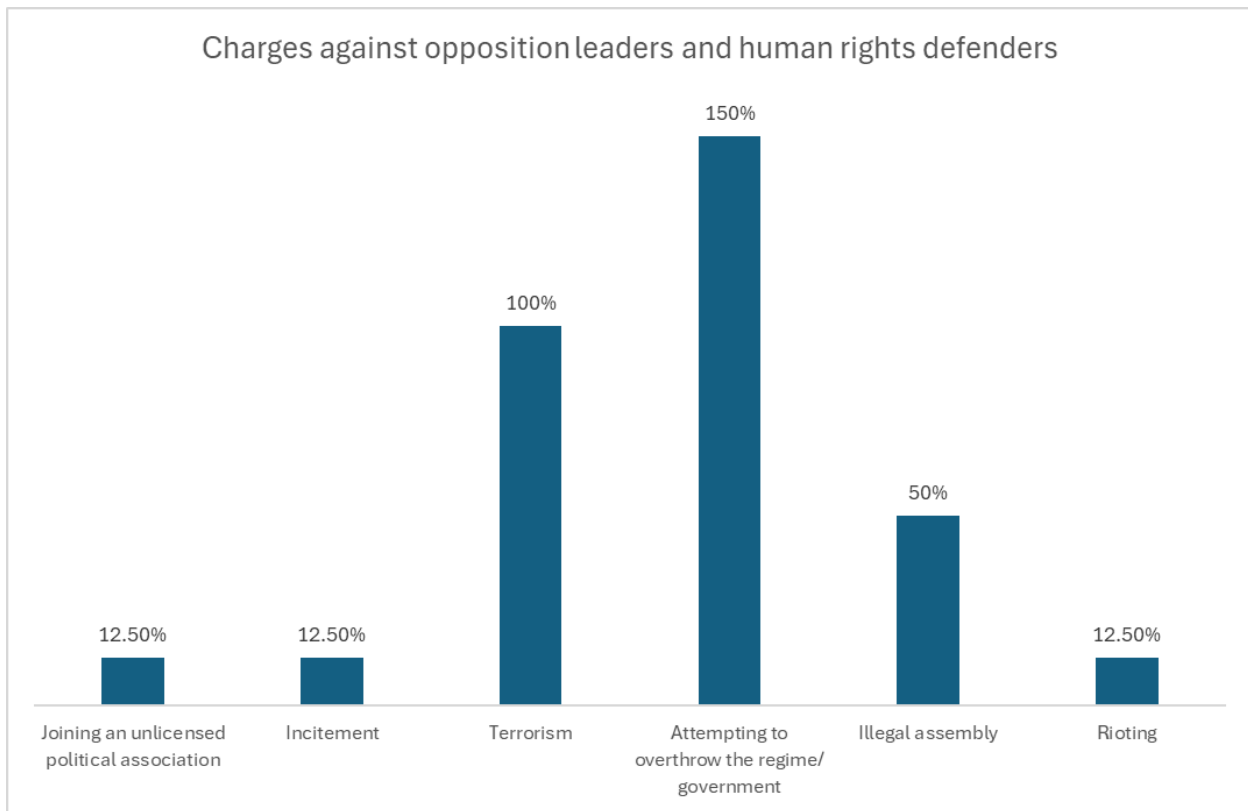


Table No. (8): Charges that opposition leaders and human rights defenders were convicted of

b) Category of Female Activists

What distinguished the peaceful demands movement that began in Bahrain in 2011 was that it brought together various social segments. In this movement, women were alongside men in demanding fundamental and legitimate rights. The names of several female activists and human rights defenders have emerged in this regard, and ADHRB has [documented](#) a number of their cases. In the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data, a unified pattern of violations suffered by Bahraini female human rights activists emerges. Of the seven instances selected within the sample, 100% of female activists were subjected to sexual assault while in prison, while 71.429% of them were subjected to torture. This is in addition to various types of [mistreatment](#), including solitary confinement, forced



standing, confinement in dark or cold rooms, and standing in a painful manner for several hours.

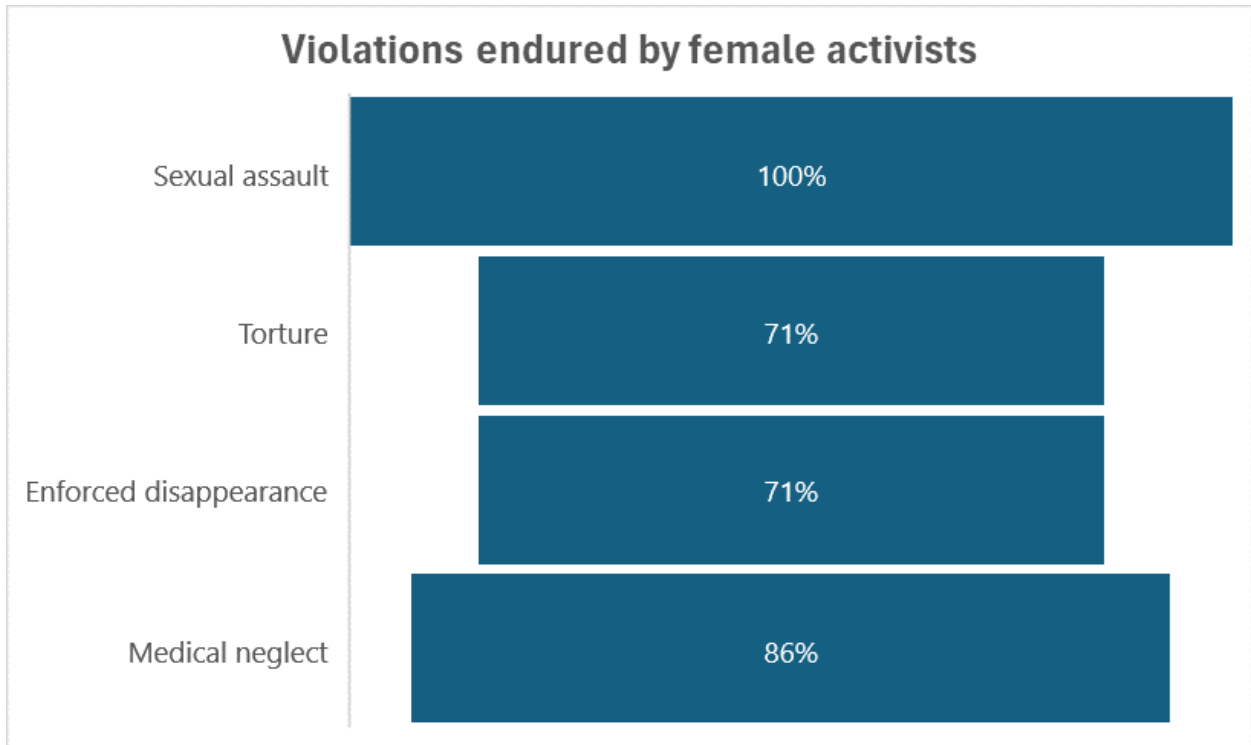


Table No. (9): Violations against female activists

Among these cases, human rights activist Ebtisam AlSaegh was sexually assaulted during her investigation in the Muharraq complex after refusing to work as an informant. She was stripped naked, photographed, and severely beaten. Activist Najah Yusuf was also sexually assaulted during the same investigation. Among other prominent victims of torture is the human rights activist Medina Ali, who, along with her cellmate Hajar Mansour, was subjected to physical and sexual assaults. Medina [says](#): “They beat me all over my body and hit my head against the wall until I suffered serious bruises, the effects of which are still present when I touch my forehead. The prison director punched my back, so the pain remained for several days.”



Among these violations, solitary confinement stands out as a means of retaliation for activism. In this regard, the exposure of detainee [Zakeya Isa AlBarboori](#) to solitary confinement is notable, as she was held in solitary confinement for 28 days. Among the systematic violations, the enforced disappearance that Zakeya was subjected to for more than three weeks is notable, which is considered a standard method of reprisal used in Bahraini prisons. 71.429% of the female detainees we have featured in the “Profiles in Persecution” section were subjected to enforced disappearance.

The number of women who were imprisoned on the grounds of their political or human rights activities exceeded 300, and some of them were sentenced to unfair five-year prison sentences. During these years, they suffered harsh prison conditions, [including](#) denial of health care, restrictions on both family visits, and time spent outside the cells, in addition to the threats and “degrading” searches they were subjected to. Mrs. Ali says: “There was one incident in which I was searched during a visit to my family. I was asked to take off all my clothes, and it was very humiliating. The prison was a very painful experience.”

These violations extend to all aspects of the rights of female detainees. Their right to meet their families is restricted; a glass barrier separates mothers and their children, and they are denied visits from relatives. What increases their isolation and loneliness is the long hours of imprisonment inside their cells, which reach 23 hours a day. In addition, female detainees are deprived of other rights, such as participating in religious rituals, exercising freedom of worship, and being deprived of studying. For instance, Fatema Dawood Juma, a 19-year-old [student](#), was subjected to arrest and enforced disappearance for 28 days, which caused her to miss her end-of-year exams.

However, among the most dangerous of these violations is the deliberate policy of medical negligence that has claimed the lives of a number of political prisoners and is threatening the lives of others suffering from chronic diseases. Female political prisoners suffered from this arbitrary policy and were deprived of receiving treatment, which exacerbated the suffering of several female detainees who suffered from chronic diseases. Among these cases is the case of former detainee Faten Nasser, who has diabetes and blood



pressure disorders. As for the two detainees, Hajar Mansour and Medina Ali, they suffered from excruciating pain as a result of the torture they were subjected to. Hajar suffered from a deteriorating health condition due to a tumor in her chest. Added to these pains was her injury resulting from the beating she was subjected to, with bruises all over her body. As for Medina, she suffered from uterine bleeding that lasted for more than a month and was deprived of receiving treatment.

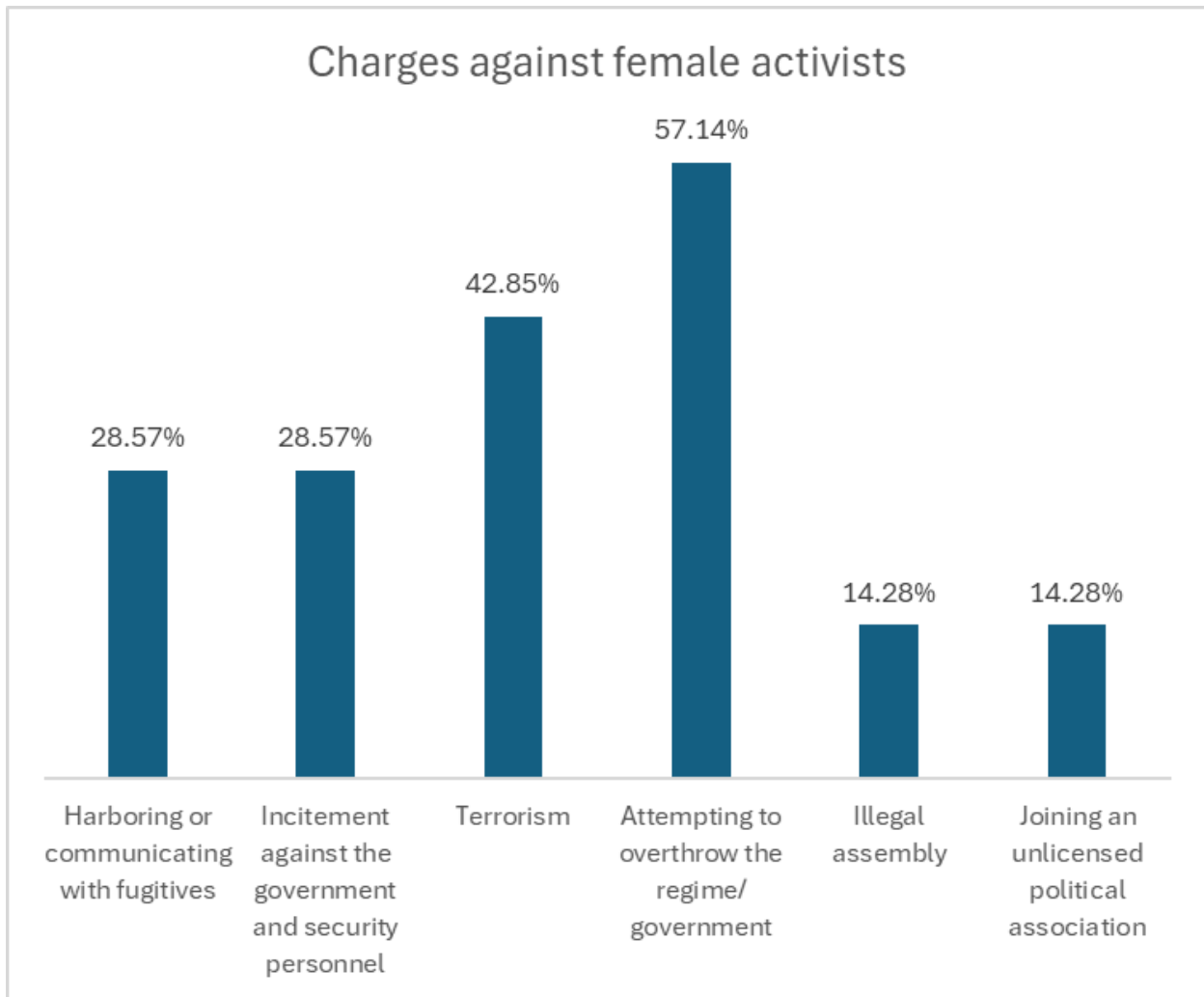


Table No. (10): Charges against the category of female activists



c) The Category of Minors:

The Bahraini government did not differentiate between older people, young adults, and minors in its violations. Minors faced extensive violations similar to those experienced by other political prisoners. Despite their young age, these children encountered various forms of torture from the moment of their arrest. The selected sample shows that 90% of the detained minors were subjected to torture, and 80% of them endured enforced disappearance. Additionally, 50% of the minors were exposed to solitary confinement. These statistics highlight the extent of the violations suffered by children who should be in schools.



Table 11: Violations faced by the category of minors

Among the selected samples, we note, for example, what [Ali Husain AlTaraifi](#) endured. He was arrested at the age of 18. He is a former volleyball player for Bani Jamra Club. Ali was subjected to repeated arrests, torture, enforced disappearance, solitary confinement,



sectarian-based insults, deprivation from practicing his religious rituals, retaliation, blackmail, and denial of contact with his family before being sentenced to ten years in prison in November 2020. Another case is that of [Mujtaba AbdulHusain Ali Ahmed](#), who was a 16-year-old high school student when arbitrarily arrested in August 2019. Mujtaba was brutally tortured and placed in solitary confinement for eight days. He was severely beaten and kicked all over his body, especially in sensitive areas, stripped naked, and sexually harassed. He also experienced enforced disappearance and prolonged solitary confinement and was deprived of his right to a fair retrial before the Children's Restorative Justice Court. He's serving an 18-year and 7-month prison sentence. As for [Sayed Mohamed Mostafa Mohamed \(Al-Tublani\)](#), he was 16 years old when security forces started pursuing him, and due to the torture he endured, he was unable to move, with bruises and beating marks visible on his body. The three detainees were forcibly disappeared and isolated from the outside world for periods ranging from two to ten days. Additionally, both Ali Husain AlTaraifi and Mujtaba AbdulHusain Ahmed were subjected to solitary confinement in the isolation building at the Dry Dock Prison designated for young convicts.

On 17 September 2023, 28 Bahraini young convicts [began](#) a hunger strike in protest against ongoing violations committed against them and their deprivation of fundamental human rights. These rights include the right to education, medical care, family visits, and others. This collective strike was a continuation of individual hunger strikes undertaken by detainees, such as [Ali Isa Jasim](#), who [went](#) on many hunger strikes, including two hunger strikes within one month, and protested his denial of the right to education. Another example is [Mohamed Jaafar Mohamed Ali \(AlShamali\)](#), whose family [reported](#) that despite paying his educational fees to the prison administration annually, he was denied enrollment in university under the pretext that the prison administration had selected a specific number of students. Likewise, the [detainee](#) Jameel Mohamed Abdulameer went on a hunger strike to protest mistreatment, denial of education and exercise, medical neglect, and poor food quality.



The deprivation of the right to medical care is one of the most prominent violations committed against young convicts, and it is one of the demands raised by them. Among these cases, on 17 June 2023, six young convicts went on a hunger strike to [protest](#) their denial of medical care for scabies due to the prison administration's failure to provide hygiene supplies. Additionally, the detainees suffer from medical neglect resulting from torture, which is evident in the case of [Haider Ebrahim Mulla Hasan](#). He was arrested at the age of 16 and sentenced to 23 years imprisonment for three different cases. As a consequence of torture and medical neglect, he now suffers from respiratory problems, chronic headaches, hearing loss in one ear, and stomach pains, to the extent that he vomits and defecates blood.

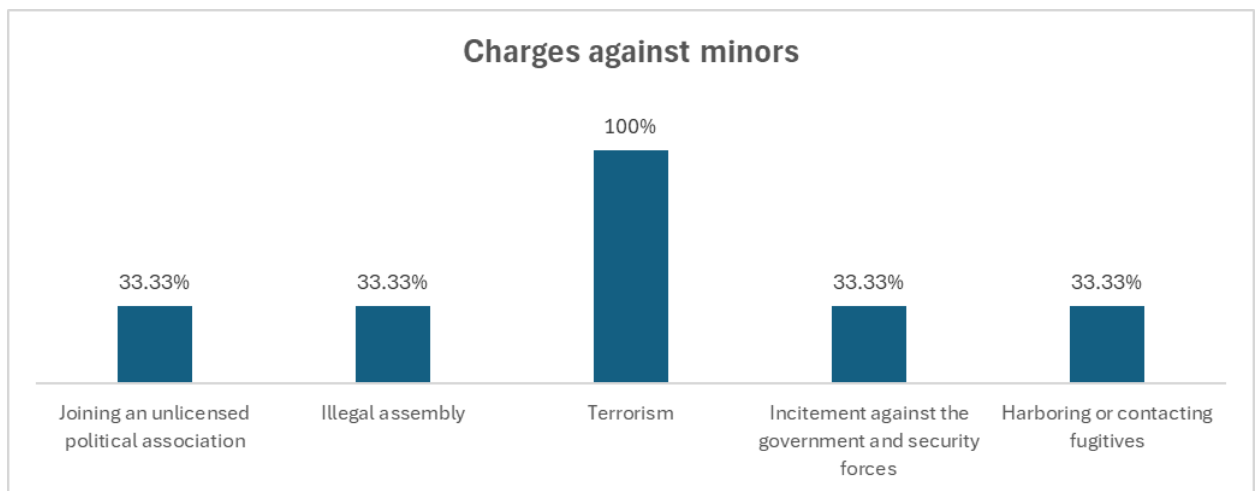


Table 12: The cases charged to the category of minors

d) The Medical Neglect Category:

As evident from the provided examples, medical neglect has become one of the retaliatory measures employed by the Bahraini authorities. Various entities carry the



responsibility, including the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Public Prosecution (PPO), the Ombudsman, and the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), due to their failure in oversight and accountability.

During our work in the “Profiles in Persecution” section, we observed the use of the denial of medical care as a retaliatory tactic against all political prisoners, regardless of their age or category. This policy includes deprivation of medical examinations, denial of medical appointments, deprivation of treatment and medications, and other arbitrary punitive measures. This policy is applied to the following categories:

1. Individuals who did not have any health issues before their arrest. However, they sustained injuries during detention, interrogation, or due to the miserable health conditions within the detention facilities.
2. Those who had health issues, but their conditions worsened due to medical neglect.
3. Individuals who are suffering from chronic illnesses that require continuous care and close monitoring. The lack of proper medical attention directly threatens the lives of these detainees.

The policy of medical neglect has exacerbated the health conditions of political prisoners, making demands for healthcare and the right to treatment fundamental aspects of every protest by detainees and their families. This collective punishment has led to deteriorating health conditions for several detainees, resulting in 10 recorded deaths within prisons. Three notable cases are [Sayed Kadhem Abbas](#), [Abbas Malallah](#), and [Husain Khalil Ebrahim](#). Sayed Kadhem passed away after authorities released him due to his severe health deterioration. However, Abbas Malallah died in prison from a heart crisis. He had suffered intentional medical neglect and was denied treatment by the prison administration throughout the ten years he spent in jail.

As for the details of the case of the political prisoner [Sayed Kadhem Abbas](#), who tragically passed away in February 2020, he had a fatal cancer due to medical neglect



during his detention at Jau Prison between 2015 and 2018. Despite numerous calls to provide proper medical treatment, Sayed Kadhem endured a brain tumor without receiving adequate medical treatment.

Sayed Kadhem's suffering began during his time at Jau Prison. He experienced an abnormal swelling in his nose and face, accompanied by severe headaches, an inability to stand, and the inability to bear any kind of smell. Despite his prominent symptoms, such as nausea, dizziness, continuous vomiting, and pain in the stomach, back, nose, and urinary tract infections, as well as losing approximately a quarter of his weight in May 2018, the prison administration did not take these symptoms seriously. Even when they did provide treatment, it was neither comprehensive nor accurate in diagnosing his condition or offering necessary and appropriate healthcare. He was transferred to the Department of Abdominal Disease, where doctors prescribed painkillers and intravenous drips to treat his symptoms. However, these medications led to hallucinations, memory weakness, lack of focus, and an inability to read anything that is more than a meter away.

In June 2018, Sayed Kadhem fell unconscious in prison. He was urgently rushed to the military hospital, where an MRI confirmed a brain tumor. An emergency surgery was performed, during which a tube was placed to drain fluids from his head and relieve pressure on his brain. He was later readmitted to the surgery room to change the tube in order to prevent infections. On 2 July 2018, the tumor was surgically removed. However, after the procedure, Sayed Kadhem's vision was deeply affected, and he lost the ability to distinguish between people. The prison administration didn't provide him with adequate treatment, leading to his death. His case adds another chapter to the systematic violations that have claimed the lives of several political prisoners.

The policy of medical neglect threatens the life of [Mohamed Hasan Abdulla \(AlRamal\)](#), who is serving a life sentence after his arrest in November 2015. His case stands as a prominent example of how the prison administration uses a retaliation policy against political prisoners by denying them medical treatment. Mohamed suffered from stomach problems, and his condition deteriorated due to a lack of pills and denial of examinations



by a specialist. Since his arrest in 2015, Mohamed, now 61 years old, has been suffering from a deteriorating health condition, reaching the point of vomiting blood. He was transferred to Salmaniya Hospital, where he stayed from 16 November 2020 till 22 November 2020. However, he was not examined by a specialist to diagnose his condition. AlRamal experiences stomach pains and needs eyeglasses replacing the broken one. He has engaged in repeated hunger strikes to protest the cancellation of his medical appointments, including a scheduled operation in December 2023. Additionally, AlRamal has faced repeated assaults from prison officers, leading him at some point to boycott his medical appointments in protest against being beaten by officers assigned to protect him during hospital transfers.

Since his arrest, [Mohamed AbdulNabi Abdulla \(Al-Khoor\)](#), who has been sentenced to life imprisonment, has been subjected to deliberate medical neglect. His health began deteriorating in July 2020, manifesting in joint and ear pain, rendering him unable to perform tasks requiring physical effort. Despite his condition, he did not receive medical treatment, was not transferred to a hospital, and was not examined by a specialist physician. Instead, the prison administration only resorted to prescribing painkillers for him during clinic visits. In January 2021, he entered an open hunger strike due to the prison administration's stalling in providing him with appropriate medical treatment. When Mohamed was about to die due to the decrease in the blood sugar level, reaching 3% as a result of the strike, activists joined his strike in solidarity with him, and he was subsequently [transferred](#) to AlQala'a Hospital. However, the doctor did not order an X-ray that would determine the causes of the pain in the joints and the ear. Therefore, Mohamed refused the treatment. [As a result](#), he was transferred to Building 16 of the Dry Dock Detention Center, which is designated for medical isolation. However, Mohamed refused to be diagnosed since he believed that he would not be adequately treated and that this visit would not have any outcomes other than whitewashing the prison administration's page and violations. On that same day, the Dry Dock Detention Center's administration met with Mohamed and [asked him to sign](#) a form saying that he refused to



be medically treated. He refused to sign, and instead, he reconfirmed his demand for actual treatment under the supervision of specialized doctors.

The case of minor detainee [Ali Mahdi Alaiwi](#) shows another significant example of the treatment faced by detainees within Bahraini prisons. Ali, who was arrested at the age of 17, was “psychologically tired,” as reported by his family. He exhibited symptoms of hallucinations. He became short-tempered, yelled for no reason, quarreled with his cellmates, and refused family visits when he was in prison before releasing him under the royal pardon issued on 8 April 2024. Ali did not have any medical conditions before entering prison, but since February 2019, his mental health has deteriorated significantly. Despite this, prison authorities have taken no action to allow him to see a specialist during his detention. As a result, Ali now suffers from a condition known as “trichotillomania,” as he compulsively shaves his hair and eyebrows and plucks his eyelashes.

Among the cases of medical neglect is that of [Isa Jaafar AlAbd](#). He has undergone numerous heart surgeries due to his heart condition since birth. Despite the authorities’ knowledge of Isa’s heart condition, he received no medical care during the first six months of his imprisonment. He was finally taken to a doctor upon the deterioration of his health. Although several surgeries were performed, they were all unsuccessful, leading to a further decline in his health. For the past two years, he has been denied proper medical care.

Four months before his arrest, [Habib Ali AlFardan](#) had undergone surgery to remove a large brain tumor in January 2015 in Germany. Before the surgery, he suffered from frequent headaches, difficulty concentrating, and memory weakness. After the surgery, doctors advised him to avoid physical and psychological stress and undergo MRI scans every three months. However, the prison administration continues to deprive him of proper treatment, resulting in the deterioration of his condition. His family has reported a recurrence of the tumor’s growth, which may require another surgery. His ongoing symptoms include memory weakness, difficulty in concentrating, unconsciousness,



seizures, frequent headaches, and pain in the head and eyes, which have left him bedridden due to his persistent [pain](#).

The case of [Mansoor AbdulWahed AlDolabi](#) also falls under the category of medical neglect. He suffers from severe childhood burns on his legs that significantly limit his mobility. Additionally, this political prisoner has a brain tumor that impairs his vision. As part of the retaliatory measures, he was placed in an [“isolation building”](#) due to signs of an allergic reaction to some food. He was then moved into solitary confinement for four days, where he was shackled the entire time and eventually transferred to a quarantine unit. Despite his condition, the prison administration didn't treat his allergy and suspended the medication for his tumor.

Similarly, [Osama Nezar AlSagheer](#) has been subjected to deliberate medical neglect. As a result of continuous torture, Osama suffers from chronic headaches and has lost mobility in his right ring finger. Despite being taken to the prison clinic on four different occasions, he did not receive adequate treatment. Though he was examined once in the hospital, he was still denied treatment despite having shrapnel scattered throughout his body. He continues to experience severe pain due to the absence of adequate treatment.

e) The Category of Repeated Summons:

Among the categories that have been observed, we can discuss violations affecting released political prisoners who remain under surveillance, continued pursuit, and ongoing restrictions. Typically, this group faces restrictions due to their activities in exposing prison violations, expressing their opinions on public matters, or simply because a family member is detained or pursued.

As an example of this category, [Haj AbdulMajeed Abdulla Mohsen](#), known as Haji Samood or Abu Al-Thawra (Father of the Revolution), is continuously arrested during any of his activities supporting the popular demand movement, especially participating in gatherings or protests. There is also Haj Munir Mushaima (brother of the detainee



executed by the Bahraini authorities for political reasons, [Sami Mushaima](#)) and Haj Tahir ALSamea (father of the detainee executed by the Bahraini authorities for political reasons, [Abbas al-Samea](#)). Additionally, former detained activist [Ali Muhana](#) (father of the detainee [Husain Muhana](#)) faces [repeated](#) summons, investigations, and detention as part of a continuous campaign of targeting and restriction against activists and the families of detainees in Bahrain.

There is also the case of [teacher Ali Mohsen Muhana](#), a Bahraini activist and the father of the political prisoner [Husain Muhana](#), who is also an ex-political prisoner. After being tortured and imprisoned for participating in the Duraz demonstrations in 2017, he has [repeatedly faced](#) legal measures from summons to detention as acts of reprisal against his activism and demands for the release of prisoners of conscience. He was terminated from his job, and his active participation in assemblies and demonstrations made him a target of the Bahraini authorities. Ali is continuously summoned, and he is often forced to delete content from his social media accounts or sign [pledges](#) that prevent him from participating in protests.

Among the targeting of families of detainees, Mr. [AbdulHadi Saleh AlMeshaimea](#) stands out. He is the father of the young man Ali AlMeshaimea, who was shot and killed by security forces due to his participation in the pro-democracy protests in 2011. AbdulHadi was one of ten individuals arrested on 12 October 2018, alongside [Sayed Saeed Isa](#), the father of Sayed Hashem, a child also killed by Bahraini security forces during a peaceful protest in Sitra Town. Both AbdulHadi and Sayed Saeed were charged with participating in protests and publicly speaking out about the targeting and killing of their sons. During Mr. AlMeshaimea's detention in the Dry Dock Detention Center, he suffered from low blood sugar levels and even fainted due to being deprived of his medications.



Part II: Violation of Laws and the Failure of Governmental Organizations in Pursuing their Roles:

1. The local and international laws that are violated

The Bahraini authorities' policies contradict several local laws and international principles. They primarily violate the Bahraini constitution and other international treaties and agreements that Bahrain has signed or ratified.

- **Articles 19B and 19D on personal freedom in the Bahraini constitution:** They explicitly prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention, physical or psychological torture, and any degrading treatment. Specifically, paragraph (d) declares the nullity of “any statement or confession obtained under torture, inducement, or threat thereof.”
- **Article 20 on Criminal Trials from the Bahraini constitution** emphasizes the innocence of the accused until proven guilty “in a legal trial that ensures necessary guarantees to practice the right of defense at all stages of investigation and trial according to the law.” It also prohibits physical or psychological torture of the accused and emphasizes the importance of a lawyer for each defendant, ensuring their right to a fair trial.
- **Articles 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights(UDHR)** prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention, affirm the right of individuals to seek recourse in competent national courts, and emphasize the need for a fair trial through an impartial and independent court. Notably, the accused must be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- **United Nations Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors (1990):** These principles were developed to ensure and enhance the effectiveness, neutrality, and fairness of prosecutors in criminal proceedings.



- **Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR):** This article asserts the right of every individual to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- **Articles 2(3), 5, 7, 9, 10, 14, 17, and 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):** These articles emphasize the necessity for individuals to enjoy the highest degree of dignity, including freedom of opinion, expression, religion, belief, fair trial, and legal remedy. They also prohibit torture and degradation of human dignity while emphasizing equality among all humans.
- **United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules):** These rules aim to enhance humane conditions in prisons.
- **Articles 2, 11, and 15 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT):** These articles prohibit torture unequivocally, regardless of the circumstances. They also prohibit the use of statements extracted under torture as evidence in trials.
- **Article 5, Paragraph 7 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD):** This paragraph emphasizes the right to freedom of thought, belief, and religion and the prohibition of discrimination based on these grounds.
- **Article 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):** This article prohibits arbitrary detention and torture of children and ensures their right to communicate with their families. It also safeguards them from unfair trials and sentencing, including the death penalty or life imprisonment.

2. Failure of government institutions



After the international criticism directed at Bahrain against the backdrop of the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in the country, Bahrain announced the formation of the “Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry” (BICI) by a royal decree to investigate violations against demonstrators demanding political reform. The committee, headed by Professor Mahmood Cherif Bassiouni, issued its report on 23 November 2011, concluding that the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Ministry of Interior (MOI) followed systematic practices of physical and psychological ill-treatment, amounting to torture in several cases, including a large number of people detained in detention centers. In conclusion, it also criticized the spread of the culture of impunity among those affiliated with the MOI and issued 26 recommendations. Per these recommendations, the government has established three bodies since 2012 that were charged with eliminating torture in investigation and detention centers. These bodies are: “The Ombudsman” affiliated with the MOI, the “Special Investigation Unit (SIU)” affiliated with the PPO, and the “Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission,” all of which are charged with eliminating torture in interrogation and detention centers.

Bahrain promoted reforms by establishing these government bodies, saying that their goal was to reform the judicial system and activate oversight bodies that would ensure that human rights were not violated in the country. However, the shortcomings of these institutions and their ineffectiveness quickly became apparent because they were not independent in their decision-making, given their subordination to the MOI headed by Rashid bin Abdulla bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, a member of the royal family. It has so far failed to demonstrate its ability to hold those involved in torture accountable.

Regarding this, [Amnesty International](#) says: “Sadly, these reforms remain woefully inadequate. Torture and other ill-treatment by security forces persist within a system of entrenched impunity marked by the lack of an independent judiciary”. Regarding the effectiveness of both the Ombudsman and the SIU, it adds, “True change needs to be more than cosmetic. Bahrain’s authorities cannot continue to mislead the world with a



mere veneer of reform when accountability for violations has been scarce, and critics and human rights defenders continue to be arbitrarily arrested and unfairly tried, convicted and imprisoned, banned from traveling abroad or stripped of their nationalities”.

This prompted several human rights organizations, including [Human Rights Watch](#), to recommend that the Bahraini authorities establish a civilian oversight committee, including well-regarded independent experts, to scrutinize the work of the SIU and ensure its independence from the MOI and the PPO.

The Ombudsman: It is a body affiliated with the MOI that has been mandated to receive any verbal or written complaint of human rights violations committed against any person by any member of the Public Security Forces on the occasion of, during, or because of the exercise of their jurisdiction.

The Ombudsman was assigned to investigate violations by members of the MOI in a manner that is supposed to be in line with the principles of “independence, credibility, impartiality, accountability, and transparency.” However, it has failed since its establishment to punish any security personnel responsible for serious and widespread violations at the level of democracy and human rights in Bahrain. Among the selected sample, 23.256% submitted complaints to the Ombudsman.

National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR): It is a government body established in 2009. It is [portrayed](#) as an independent entity charged with promoting and protecting human rights in Bahrain. Of the selected sample, 6.98% submitted complaints to the National Institution for Human Rights.

The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) affiliated with the PPO: It is a government body established in 2012. It says that its mission is to enhance the protection of human rights and ensure the principle of accountability within the framework of establishing the rule of law. It claims to follow an independent and impartial mechanism to hold accountable government officials who committed illegal acts or negligently caused cases of killing, torture, and ill-treatment of civilians. It claims that this mechanism aims to take legal and



disciplinary measures against these persons, including those in leadership positions, whether civilian or military, under international standards, including the Istanbul Protocol on the investigation of torture. Of the selected sample, 2.326% submitted complaints to the SIU.

The selected sample revealed the ineffectiveness of these institutions in following up on violations and holding perpetrators accountable. Specifically, 83.34% of individuals who filed complaints did not achieve any resolution. Among these, 56.25% did not receive any response, showing a complete disregard for their complaints. Additionally, 10.42% had their complaints rejected either due to a purported lack of evidence or because the institutions considered there was no sinful act. For another 10.42%, although the institutions initiated investigations, these were ultimately halted without reaching any conclusion. Moreover, 6.25% of complainants not only received no response but also faced retaliation from the institutions after filing their complaints. Only 4.17% of those who filed complaints saw their issues wholly resolved, while for 12.5%, the problem subject to the complaint was either partially resolved or the institutions formally responded.

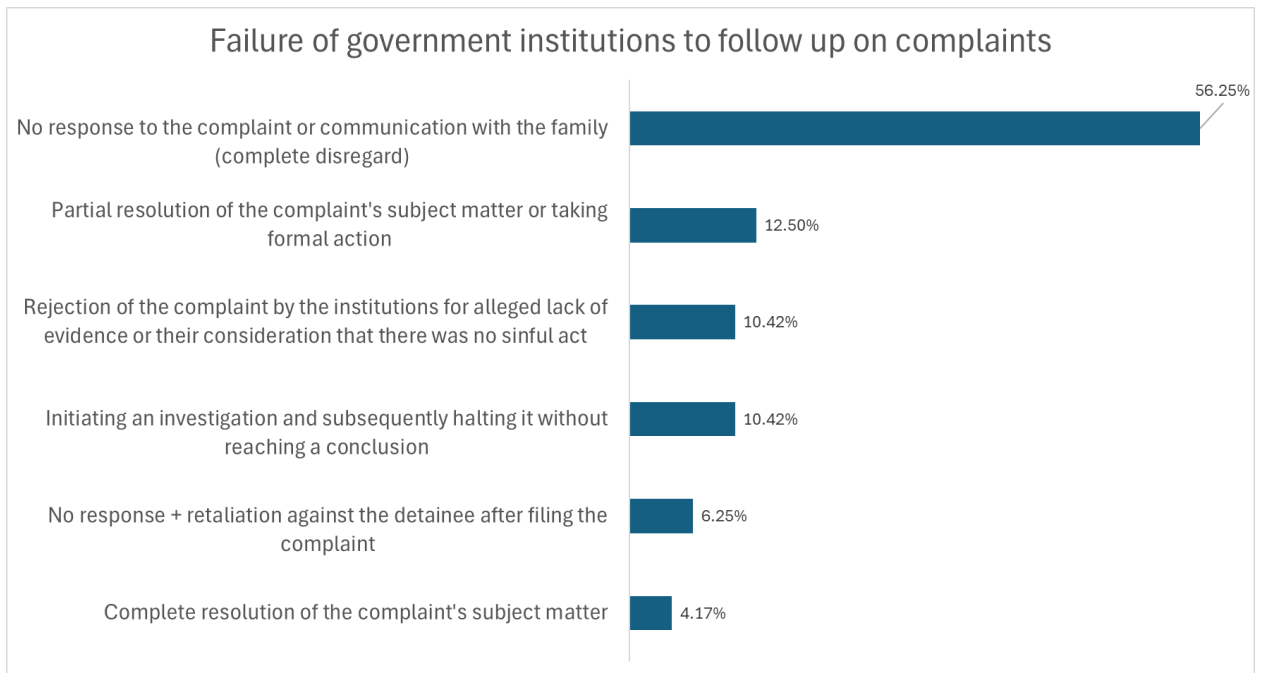


Chart No. (13): Failure of government institutions to follow up on complaints

Among the letters and complaints submitted to these three official bodies, we mention:

[Sheikh Zuhair Jasim Abbas](#) (also known as Sheikh Zuhair Ashoor), whose family communicated through official channels such as the Ombudsman and the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) after receiving no news of him and being unable to establish communication with him. Despite numerous statements issued by these government bodies on social media and through their official website, they received no response other than the government's claim that Sheikh Zuhair was on a communication strike. However, when four United Nations experts sent a [letter of allegation](#) to the government of Bahrain regarding the violations he and his colleague endured in prison, his fate was finally revealed.

In response to the riots that broke out in Jau Prison on 10 March 2015, [Naji Ali Fateel submitted](#) several complaints to the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), the Public



Prosecutor's Office (PPO), the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), the sentence enforcement judge, and the Public Prosecutor. However, there was no follow-up on these complaints. Additionally, Naji and his wife filed a complaint with the Ombudsman in 2014, which has not yet been investigated. In 2013, the President of the Law Society [sent](#) a letter to King Hamad expressing deep concern about Naji's arbitrary arrest and detention. Neither the first letter nor the one sent in 2015 was investigated.

[Mohamed AbdulNabi Abdulla \(Al-Khoor\)](#) submitted two complaints on 29 October 2015 and 26 February 2016 to both the Ombudsman and the NIHR; however, they did not yield any results. Additionally, his family sent a letter to the UK Ambassador to Bahrain on 9 February 2016, expressing their concern about Mohamed's trial and ill-treatment throughout his arrest, interrogation, and detention.

[Mohamed Yusuf AlAjmi](#), whose family repeatedly complained to the Ministry of Interior's Ombudsman that their son had an eye infection and demanded that he be taken to a specialist; however, no response was received until many months later after Mohamed had recovered from the illness and suffered greatly from the pain and discomfort.

[Salah Saeed Saleh AlHammar](#) and his family requested assistance from the Ministry of Interior's Ombudsman and the NIHR several times regarding his exposure to solitary confinement and deprivation of visits and communications; however, all of their requests were left untreated or unanswered.

[Mahmood Saeed Abdulla](#), whose family submitted several complaints to the Ombudsman in December 2015 and another in April 2017 regarding the whereabouts of their son and the ill-treatment and torture he received. However, the family did not receive any consideration or response to these complaints except for one phone call to Mahmood's father regarding the first complaint.

[Mohsen Ali Baddaw](#), whose family attempted to communicate with the prison administration and the MOI to provide him with healthcare, but he suffered without



treatment for six months. They also submitted several complaints to the Ombudsman protesting against poor prison conditions and punitive measures taken against him; however, they did not receive a satisfactory response. Consequently, Mohsen's family participated in a [sit-in](#) in April 2021, protesting against the confinement of detainees inside their cells 24 hours a day and the cessation of phone calls.

[Osama Nezar AlSagheer](#) filed a complaint with the Ombudsman requesting treatment for his chronic headaches and loss of ability to move his right finger. Still, he remained for 19 months without receiving any medical treatment and was eventually forced to sign a form falsely stating that he had received treatment.

[Mansoor AbdulWahed AlDolabi](#), whose lawyer filed complaints with the Ombudsman and the NIHR regarding his torture and subsequent deprivation of medical care, but neither of these government agencies responded.

[Sayed Mohamed Mostafa Mohamed \(Al-Tublani\)](#) was transferred on 10 August 2022 to the isolation building with 13 other prisoners as retaliation for their use of legal texts to demand their rights or to object to violations. On Tuesday, 6 September 2022, an Ombudsman delegation visited the isolated prisoners in Jau Prison to conduct investigations related to the allegations they received. However, the condition of the prisoners did not change after that visit, and they remained in isolation. On 21 September 2022, an agency affiliated with the CID imposed solitary confinement on all 14 prisoners. After not hearing from him for an extended period and canceling visits to him without administrative reasons, Sayed Mohamed's parents filed several complaints with human rights institutions, including the NIHR. However, their efforts only succeeded in visiting him once.

[Sayed Kadhem Ali Abbas](#) died as a result of the prison administration's deliberate negligence of his health condition. His family had repeatedly tried to appeal to government agencies to treat their son, but to no avail. On 6 March 2017, the family filed a complaint with the Ombudsman against police violations. Despite the doctor's documentation of the injury, the Ombudsman stated that the Ministry of Interior



employees did not commit any violations in this case. In May 2018, the family submitted another complaint to the Ombudsman due to the continued poor treatment of Sayed Kadhem and deprivation of appropriate treatment and pointed out that the symptoms indicated that he had a brain tumor. On 24 June 2018, the family filed another complaint regarding the violations against their son, including depriving him of treatment. It is noteworthy that on 18 September 2019, four offices of the United Nations Special Procedures sent a [letter of allegation](#) to the Government of Bahrain regarding the deprivation of prisoners from adequate medical care in Jau Prison, which included details of the deprivation of medical care for ten Bahraini prisoners, including Sayed Kadhem Abbas.

[Mohamed Hasan Abdulla](#)'s family initially chose not to file any complaint due to their fear of punishment by the authorities. However, it later submitted a complaint to the Ombudsman on 20 January 2021 due to the deterioration of his health but did not receive any response. On 3 February 2021, his family went to the NIHR to review the number of complaints they had submitted to the Ombudsman and to obtain the complaint number for the complaint submitted to the NIHR, but no response was received. It is noteworthy that on 14 October 2019, five United Nations Special Procedures offices sent a letter of allegation to Bahrain regarding the trial of Bahrainis in the case of the so-called "Zulfiqar Brigades," which included details about enforced disappearance, torture to extract forced confessions, and unfair trial practices. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention also issued an [opinion](#) on this case, and Mohamed was among those included in the opinion.

[Ali Mahdi Alaiwi](#)'s family submitted a complaint to the Ombudsman on 24 February 2019, requesting that he be referred to a specialized psychiatrist or neurologist due to his poor psychological condition, in addition to the deterioration of his mental health, but to no avail. On 14 March 2019, the family filed a complaint with the NIHR regarding Ali's detention conditions.



[Habib Ali AlFardan](#)'s family filed several complaints with the Ombudsman, expressing their fears about the size of the tumor in his brain that has doubled again and his suffering from memory weakness, difficulty concentrating, bouts of loss of consciousness, recurring headaches, and pain in the head and eyes. However, the Ombudsman responded that his condition was stable and he did not need a surgical operation.

[Husain Ali Mohamed](#)'s family and lawyer sought redress with Bahrain's supposed reform and monitoring institutions for the torture and medical neglect he was subjected to (the MOI's Ombudsman and the SIU), but with no effect.

[Ali Sabah AbdulMohsen Mohamed](#) submitted several complaints over the years about receiving appropriate medical treatment and adequate meals, but to no avail.

In addition to resorting to these government institutions, some detainees' families carried out protests and went directly to the MOI's building. Among these, a demonstration was carried out by the family of the detainee sentenced to death, [Mohamed Ramadan](#), in front of the Office of the Crown Prince, where they tried to send a message of protest, but the family's pleas were ignored. Among the efforts to communicate with the official authorities was a complaint filed by [AbdulHadi Al-Khawaja](#) about the strict and unfair measures against him in a letter to the MOI, but the Ministry ignored the letter and responded by depriving him of the right to make phone calls for some time.

Conclusion: Summary and Recommendations

Summary

- Since the start of the popular pro-democracy and reform movement in Bahrain in 2011, the authorities have suppressed peaceful gatherings in various regions without any restraint, legitimizing violations of Bahraini human rights to counter these demands and



rights. Repression became a common practice used against citizens, resulting in prisons being filled with prisoners of conscience, political prisoners, and human rights activists.

- All the arrests monitored by ADHRB in Bahrain are arbitrary, as none of them occurred with the presentation of an arrest or search warrant. Additionally, plainclothes officers often conduct arrests without displaying any insignia and without presenting themselves or their job cards to the victim. Officers also frequently raid the homes of wanted individuals late at night or in the early hours of dawn while they are sleeping, when women are present without a veil. They terrorize the inhabitants of the home of the wanted individuals and their neighbors, disturbing their comfort. Subsequently, the officers search the victims' homes, violating the sanctity of the homes, assaulting those inside, and seizing personal belongings, disregarding the privacy of the residents. This may escalate into the use of weapons or violence against the detained family members during the raid and assault on the family members.
- During the investigation stage, the defendant is subjected to severe physical, sexual, and psychological torture, in addition to enforced disappearance and solitary confinement. The victim is coerced into making false confessions, often by signing confessions without knowing their content, and in many cases, this signing is done while blindfolded. The detainee always finds himself compelled to sign or give false confessions out of fear of continued torture or for fear of an increase in the frequency of torture and the implementation of threats to arrest, torture, rape, or kill a family member or friend. The situation becomes more difficult for the detainee because he is denied access to a lawyer during this stage, in addition to being deprived of communication with his family.
- The culture of torture prevails in Bahrain, and it commences from the moment of arrest and does not cease with the issuance of the sentence. Even if the torture ends in prison or after leaving it, its medical and psychological effects often persist with the victim until death. Torture is categorized into three types: physical, psychological, and sexual, all of which are widespread behind Bahraini bars.



- The detainee is deprived of the right to access his lawyer during the trial sessions and before the sessions are held, hindering the lawyer's ability to review the merits of the case and plead in case the victim was allowed to appoint a lawyer. If the defendant is unable to appoint a lawyer, Bahraini courts often fail to fulfill their duty to appoint a lawyer to act on behalf of the detainee. Even if the lawyer was allowed to attend some trial sessions, this permission is often merely formal and related to the sentencing session. If the lawyer succeeds in defending his client, the court frequently ignores the evidence presented. Moreover, the sentences issued are arbitrary and vindictive due to their reliance on confessions extracted under duress and the severity of their punishment.
- All political detainees in Bahrain have been sentenced to varying terms, ranging from death and life imprisonment to very long and unjustified prison sentences with hefty fines. Additionally, they often face revocation of citizenship or deprivation of certain civil and political rights. Bahraini courts consistently convict political detainees of terrorist crimes based on confessions extracted under torture, aiming to impose the maximum possible penalty to silence their voices for as long as possible. The practice of trials in absentia and mass trials is widespread, constituting a clear violation of the most basic principles of a fair trial. Furthermore, Bahraini courts try minors using the same standards applied in adult trials, sentencing them to long prison terms that may amount to life imprisonment, which is a blatant violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
- After the issuance of the initial ruling by the court, a new phase of violations begins, which the detainee must face from inside the prison. The most prominent of these violations are torture in its various forms, discrimination based on religious belief, denial of treatment, reprisals through solitary confinement, enforced disappearance, denial of communication, visits, and treatment, as well as confiscation of books.
- 87.5% of the category of opposition leaders and symbols were subjected to severe beatings and torture. 50% of them were subjected to solitary confinement as a means of retaliation and punishment. 37.5% were subjected to enforced disappearance, and all of



them were subjected to insults, curses, targeting of their religious beliefs, and medical neglect, including denial of healthcare, postponing medical appointments, and denial of medications. 37.5% of this category were subjected to threats of torture against a family member, including threatening to expose them to assault and rape, and 62.5% of this category were subjected to sexual assault or threats of rape.

- All female activists in Bahraini prisons were subjected to sexual assault while in prison, while 71.429% of them were subjected to torture. This is in addition to various types of ill-treatment, including solitary confinement, forced standing, confinement in dark or cold rooms, and standing in painful positions for several hours.
- All minor detainees were subjected to torture, and 67% of them were subjected to solitary confinement.
- The policy of medical negligence prevails in Bahraini prisons, resulting in deteriorating health conditions for political prisoners. The demand for healthcare and the right to treatment has become a necessary item with every protest carried out by detainees and their families. This collective punishment has led to a deterioration in the health conditions of several detainees to the point where many deaths have been recorded inside prisons, among the most prominent of whom are Sayed Kadhem Abbas and Abbas Malallah.
- Within the monitored categories, there is a group of released political prisoners who are still facing violations and remain under constant surveillance, prosecution, and harassment. This group is often targeted due to their activities in exposing violations inside prisons, expressing their opinions on public issues, or simply because they have a family member who is detained or persecuted.
- The policies of the Bahraini authorities violate several local laws and international principles. They primarily contravene the Bahraini Constitution and international laws and conventions that Bahrain has signed or ratified, namely the Universal Declaration of



Human Rights (UDHR), the UN Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors of 1990, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). They also violate the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, known as the Nelson Mandela Rules, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

- Since the 2011 uprising, Bahrain has purportedly promoted reforms by establishing government bodies aimed at reforming the judicial system and activating oversight bodies to ensure human rights are not violated in the country. However, the shortcomings and ineffectiveness of these institutions quickly became apparent because they were not independent in their decision-making, being subordinate to the Ministry of Interior headed by Rashid bin Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, a member of the royal family. So far, these bodies have failed to demonstrate their ability to hold those involved in torture accountable. Instead, they have been used to whitewash, cover up violations, distort facts, and portray the victim as the perpetrator.

Recommendations

Based on the above, ADHRB proposes several recommendations to various stakeholders to end the violations against Bahraini activists and detainees, hold perpetrators accountable, and put an end to the culture of impunity.

At the Local Level:

1. The necessity of immediately and unconditionally releasing political prisoners and compensating them for what they were exposed to inside prisons, with a commitment to ending torture in prisons, ending the policy of impunity, and holding those responsible for violations accountable, regardless of their rank, and imposing the most severe penalties against them.



2. Bahrain must commit to implementing international resolutions and calls issued by the highest human and international institutions, such as the [resolutions](#) of the European Parliament, the [communications](#) of the UN Special Procedures Offices, and other calls condemning human rights violations and calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience in Bahrain.
3. Amend the Bahraini constitution and laws to fully comply with the UDHR and international laws, ensuring accountability and transparency and putting an end to the culture of impunity.
4. Establishing a special and impartial investigation committee to investigate all violations recorded in Bahraini prisons.
5. Amending the role of government institutions concerned with following up on violations (the Ombudsman, the NIHR, and the SIU) and liberating them from the influence of the government and the Ministry of Interior, enabling them to carry out their oversight and accountability roles without obstacles. This will allow them to hold perpetrators accountable and end the policy of impunity.
6. Restructuring the country's security and judicial agencies to ensure respect for human rights, enhance transparency, and increase accountability.
7. Ending discrimination against Shia citizens in the country.
8. Ending the policy of medical negligence in prisons and ensuring that all detainees receive appropriate health care.
9. Ensure a fair retrial for all minors before the Children Restorative Justice Court under Bahraini law.
10. Bahrain's ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.



At the International Level:

1. Activating the role of UN Special Procedures, especially the Special Rapporteur on Torture, by intensifying requests for visits to Bahrain and emphasizing obtaining dates for visits from the Bahraini government to monitor the human rights situation in the country and report on all violations.
2. Prosecuting those involved in human rights violations in Bahrain before the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.
3. The European Union should follow up on Bahrain's violations and adopt stronger stances toward them, potentially including the issuance of sanctions.
4. It is the responsibility of major countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom to pressure the Bahraini authorities to halt their violations and release all political detainees as an essential step to improve the human rights situation in the country. They should closely monitor the human rights situation in Bahrain and prioritize it in cooperation with the US. The US should utilize the Magnitsky Act against the perpetrators responsible for these violations, regardless of their rank, starting with King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad, and the Ministers of Interior and Justice, down to judges and prison officials.
5. All countries must cease exporting weapons to the Kingdom of Bahrain, as they are widely used in arbitrary arrests and torture.