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Highlights on the Crackdown on the Human Rights in the Gulf

BAHRAIN

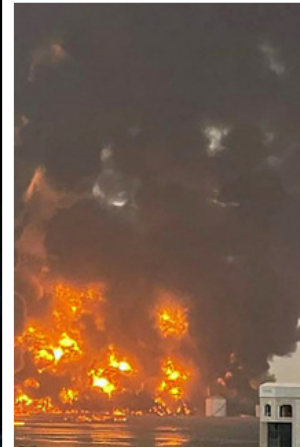
SAUDI ARABIA

YEMEN

Five Political Executions In Last Two Months



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Prisoners Protesting**



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Political prisoners have continued their peaceful sit-in, which started on 26 March, however, Jaw Prison administration escalated its crackdown on

the protesters. In early July, instability in distributing meals was recorded in several buildings where political prisoners are housed. For example, one building received only one meal on the first day and two meals on the next, while another building received two meals on the first day and none on the following day. Additionally, the political prisoners have confirmed a significant decrease in the portion size of meals.

Another form of punishment observed in early July was refraining from taking trash. Political prisoners ensured that trash was no longer collected from buildings where they staged their sit-in. Furthermore, any detainee who leaves his building for medication or a family visit is then transferred to another building.

On 11 July, electricity was cut off from several buildings. The power outage during extreme high temperatures poses a danger to the lives of detainees, especially those suffering from cardiovascular diseases. Additionally, detainees were deprived of access to clean drinking water for days.

Despite the filing of several complaints and multiple protests by the families of political prisoners, addressing the authorities, no improvements have been mentioned.



Prisoners Are Being Denied Medication & Practicing Religious Rites

The suffering of prisoners with medical negligence continues. The elderly political prisoner Mohammad Hassan Al-Raml was “transferred from the military hospital back to isolation, where he was placed in an uninhabitable cell infested with insects, to which he is allergic. This has caused him to vomit and secrete blood," as was stated by his family on 8 July.

Al-Raml’s family added that as a result of the aforementioned details, Mohammad’s health deteriorated and was transferred to the same hospital to perform another hernia operation. The family confirmed that after the surgery, he was denied access to proper medication.

Furthermore, in late July, Al-Raml family announced that a discectomy surgery which was scheduled for Mohammad was canceled without explaining the reasons. According to the family, he has been suffering from back pain for 8 years, and he needs surgery, but it has been postponed for all this time without clear reasons.

On the other hand, twelve death row inmates launched a hunger strike on 4 July protesting against denial of freedom of worship and other forms of harassment. The restrictions on practicing religious rituals were imposed as Ashura started. On 8 July, the 12 detainees announced the end of their strike as they received promises to be allowed to freely take part in Ashura commemorations.



34 Arrest Monitored in July

In July, there was a notable increase in human rights violations, amounting to 46 incidents as reported by the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR). Since the onset of the month, Bahraini authorities have engaged in a series of summons, arrests, and travel bans. This intensified crackdown appears to be linked to the Ashura commemorations, during which the authorities typically impose heightened restrictions on mourners.

GIDHR documented 34 arrests and an additional 8 summons for interrogation without subsequent detention. Furthermore, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Atish and reciter Mahdi Sahwan were prohibited from traveling to London in early July. The majority of these violations were associated with participation in religious observances.

Another significant human rights infringement recorded in July was the shooting of protester Hussein Habib. The 16-year-old Hussein was among protesters in Diraz calling for the release of political prisoners. Footage from the protest reveals that the peaceful demonstrators were merely chanting slogans when security forces intervened and shot Hussein in the head.



Five Political Executions In Last Two Months

Since the beginning of the year, Saudi Arabia has witnessed a sharp increase in the rate of executions. This spike comes after the country received several recommendations during the UPR concerning the death penalty, including appeals for a moratorium.

The execution rate has increased by 61% compared to the same period in 2023, with 126 individuals executed from 1 January 2024 to 31 July 2024. The lack of transparency, fairness, and independence in the judiciary system raises red flags regarding this escalation.

The Saudi authorities persist in utilizing the broadly defined acts categorized as “terrorism” to carry out executions of political prisoners. During June and July 2024, 5 political prisoners were executed under terrorism law. Mojtaba Al-Ismael was executed on 3 June 2024, after charges including financing terrorism were fabricated against him. Abdullah Al-Mohaishi and Mohammad Al-Shakhori were executed during June, while Mohammad Al-Atek and Mohammad Abed Al-Jabbar were executed during July. It is noteworthy that the discourse surrounding political executions often omits critical details. Statements regarding political executions fail to specify the names of any terrorist organizations or the identities of officials purportedly killed, as well as the dates on which these alleged crimes occurred. In contrast, statements concerning criminal executions typically provide the names of the victims, the dates of the offenses, and additional details.



UN: Saudi Arabia Continue to Violate International Law

The UN working group on arbitrary detention found that Mohammad Al-Ghamidi, former teacher who was sentenced to death, is being held arbitrarily and should be released immediately. Moreover, it insisted that Mohammad had been detained for exercising his lawful right to free expression, and his arrest was “completely inconsistent with human rights law”.

The working group noted that, over its 30-year history, it had found Saudi Arabia in violation of international human rights obligations 75 times and voiced concern that this indicated a systematic problem with arbitrary detention in the kingdom.

"Widespread or systematic imprisonment or other severe deprivation of liberty in violation of the rules of international law may constitute a crime against humanity," the group wrote.



Civilian Facilities Serve As a Target of Airstrike

Civilian facilities were the target of Israeli airstrikes in Yemen. On 12 July, about 40 airstrikes attacked Hodeida Airport, in a blatant violation of international law. In addition, on 20 July, an airstrike targeted oil storage facilities at Hodeida port, which resulted in the death of 3 civilians, and the injury of 87 others. The airstrike led to a huge fire in the facility.

These incidents represent attacks on civilian facilities, which are prohibited by international law. However, no actions were taken against those responsible for these crimes. Moreover, they contribute to the overall siege imposed on Yemen. Prior to these attacks, travel restrictions were imposed at Sanaa airport. Airport officials confirmed that ticket issuance and reservations were not allowed from Sanaa Airport last month. The last flight for patients only had 12 passengers.

"Unfortunately, we are forced to turn away citizens from our offices and have been unable to provide our services. We understand their pain and empathize with their suffering," officials said. "There are patients who cannot bear the journey from hospitals in Sanaa to the airport, so how can they reach Aden to obtain a travel ticket?"