

# ISSUE #46- AUG 2024

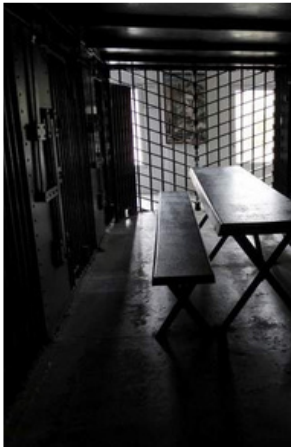
## Highlights on the Crackdown on the Human Rights in the Gulf

**BAHRAIN**

**YEMEN**

**SAUDI ARABIA**

**600,000 Yemeni Children Suffer  
Malnutrition**



**Violations Against  
Political Prisoners  
Continue**

**Executions  
Increased by 75%**



## Violations Against Political Prisoners Continue

The administration of Jaw Prison continues to deny political prisoners their basic needs. It persists in cutting off electricity, providing inadequate meal portions, and restricting access to clean drinking water. The loss of electricity results in the shutdown of air conditioning in extremely high temperatures within overcrowded cells, rendering the prison environment unbearable.

"They cut off the electricity and all the means of life," a Bahraini detainee said to Middle East Eye. "The air conditioning is gone. We are now sitting in the heat and darkness. We even don't have cold water," he continued.

Furthermore, three UN human rights experts have called upon Bahrain to ensure safe, healthy, and hygienic detention conditions for all individuals currently held in Jaw Prison. "Particularly worrying are allegations that authorities have cut air conditioning, exposing prisoners to extreme heat, with temperatures arising to 50°C," the experts said. "Such conditions of detention – individually or by cumulation – imply obligations to prevent torture and/or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and could prove fatal for some detainees," the experts warned.

In response to those appeals, authorities started negotiations asking prisoners to end their sit-in, in exchange, the authorities will release inmates from isolation, leave cell doors open for up to 12 hours per day, allow detainees to receive family visits, and have the freedom to communicate with the outside world. Although some buildings in the prison agreed and end its protest, no improvements were recorded.

## More Arrests During August

A group of Bahraini citizens arrested in July had their detention extended twice during August. Ali Muhana, Karar Ali Radhi, Jamsheer Fairouz, and Shiite cleric Sheikh Issa Al-Qaffas are among them.

Moreover, over 20 citizens were arrested during August. Some were detained upon their arrival in the Kingdom, while others were summoned for questioning and subsequently held, and some were arrested following raids on their neighborhoods or homes. The majority of these arrests were related to participation in protests advocating for the release of political prisoners or expressing solidarity with Palestine. Notably, there is the case of the minor Ali Matrouk, who was interrogated and brought before the public prosecutor without being granted access to legal representation.

Furthermore, MP Mohammed Rafiq Al Hussaini has been stripped of his Bahraini citizenship. This action followed a court ruling that found Al-Hussaini guilty of violating the Constitution by running for office without disclosing his possession of a foreign passport. Prior to this decision, he had publicly called for the release of Sheikh Ali Salman and other political prisoners. Consequently, the MP was expelled from parliament, arrested, and is now facing deportation to Pakistan.



## Executions Increased by 75%

There has been a 75% increase in the number of executions by the end of August 2024 compared to the same timeframe last year. Till end of August,

Saudi authorities have executed 176 individuals compared to 95 during the corresponding period in 2023. This significant rise was particularly evident in July and August, with 39 and 41 executions recorded respectively, compared to just 13 in June.

Kenneth Roth, the former director of Human Rights Watch and a current professor at Princeton's School of Public and International Affairs, stated, "Some executions are not even for recognized common crimes, but for such political offenses as endangering national unity or undermining societal security."

Additionally, 27 individuals were executed for alleged crimes under counterterrorism legislation. Such crimes should not be subject to the death penalty. Furthermore, the vague and broad definitions within this law make it being easily misused against human rights advocates, writers, and bloggers, as confirmed by the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights.





## Mohammad Al-Ghamdi Trial is Unjust

The Specialized Criminal Court of Appeal has overturned the death sentence imposed on 55-year-old retired educator Mohammad bin Nasser

Al-Ghamdi, deeming this decision a significant triumph for human rights. Al-Ghamdi had been sentenced to death based on unfounded terrorism-related allegations stemming solely from his online expressions on X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube. This situation underscores the unjust nature of Al-Ghamdi's trial, indicating that his continued detention is unwarranted.

“Mohammed bin Nasser al-Ghamdi’s so-called ‘crime’ was expressing his opinions on social media. He should have never been prosecuted let alone sentenced to death in the first place. While quashing his death sentence is a great relief for him and his family, the court must now end his long and painful ordeal by quashing his conviction and ordering his immediate and unconditional release. If the Saudi authorities are serious about their stated commitment to human rights reform, they must also immediately and unconditionally release all those detained for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression and take effective steps to end the crackdown on dissent and the widespread use of the death penalty,” Dana Ahmed of Amnesty commented.



## 600,000 Yemeni Children Suffer Malnutrition

For the first time, Yemen's West Coast is facing "extremely critical" levels of acute malnutrition, as reported by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Technical Working Group. The group also noted a significant surge in malnutrition rates in the southern regions.

The most recent IPC Acute Malnutrition Analysis indicates that the number of children under five years old suffering from acute malnutrition has increased by 34% compared to the previous year. Currently, over 600,000 children are malnourished, including 120,000 who are severely malnourished. This alarming increase is attributed to the combined effects of disease outbreaks (such as cholera and measles), high levels of food insecurity, limited access to safe drinking water, and economic decline.

“The report confirms an alarming trend of acute malnutrition for children in southern Yemen,” said UNICEF Representative to Yemen, Peter Hawkins. “To protect the most vulnerable women, girls and boys,

an investment in and scale-up of prevention and treatment efforts are more critical than ever. We will continue to do everything we can including building on the existing multisectoral response to fight the life-threatening forms of malnutrition so that children can survive and grow to their full potential.”

"The alarming rise in acute malnutrition among children under 5 in areas underscores the severe impact of disease outbreaks, high food insecurity, and poor access to essential services. FAO remains committed to supporting the sustainable restoration and diversification of agricultural livelihoods to help address the urgent needs," said Dr. Hussein Gadain, FAO Representative in Yemen.

UNICEF further reported that Hodeidah and Taizz, which exhibit the highest prevalence of acute malnutrition, have also been grappling with the highest rates of stunting, or chronic malnutrition. This situation indicates that repeated deprivations are exacerbating chronic malnutrition among children in these regions.

Dr Arturo Pesigan, WHO Representative to Yemen, stated, “The rising level of acute malnutrition in children aged under 5 years in Yemen also indicates that diseases are of concern. Integrated health and nutrition services, including childhood illness management and to ensure up-to-date immunization and appropriate feeding practices, are crucial to address health and nutrition emergencies.”

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.





## 200,000 Patients Require Urgent Medical Treatment Aboard

Dr. Mutaher Al-Darwish, the head of the Supreme Medical Committee, has expressed serious concern regarding the increasing number of Yemeni patients requiring urgent medical treatment abroad. According to ministry statistics, the total number of patients in need to medical travel has surpassed 200,000 individuals.

Dr. Al-Darwish emphasized that the only viable solution to this predicament is the full and unrestricted reopening of Sanaa International Airport, arguing that the addition of a single flight to Jordan is inadequate, particularly in light of the coalition's delays in establishing routes to India and Egypt.

Furthermore, the situation has worsened as Saudi Arabia has barred Yemen Airways from utilizing its airspace, contravening the UN agreement announced in July. The Director of Sanaa International Airport reported that Saudi authorities obstructed a Yemen Airways flight from Sanaa to Queen Alia International Airport, forcing the aircraft to return to Sanaa despite having completed all required procedures. Moreover, he noted that a flight to Amman, which had been coordinated with the Jeddah center, was also denied access. Many passengers on these flights were either ill or in transit, resulting in significant distress and losses as they missed their connecting flights.