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 AP BLOOMBERG BBC
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WORD LEADING TO DEATH



رابطة الصحافة البحرينية
 Bahrain Press Association

July 2011



The First Report on Press & Journalism in Bahrain
From 1 January to 15 July 2011

THE BAHRAIN PRESS ASSOCIATION
ISSUE DATE: JULY 2011

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BPA GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE CONTRIBUTION OF ALL PARTICIPANTS
WHOSE VALUED CONTRIBUTIONS WERE BEHIND THE RELEASE OF THIS REPORT

SUMMARY

The Bahraini authorities have arbitrarily detained, deported, and in the worst cases murdered scores of local and foreign journalists since the pro-democracy protests erupted back in February. Needless to say that journalists were abused during interrogation. It is shocking how they are facing further abuse and harassment. This has amounted to a «frozen status» in the face of free expression in the tiny island Kingdom that has been the subject of many other human rights abuses.

This report documents how the Bahrain security agencies in most cases arbitrarily detained journalists, depriving them from the right to see neither their lawyers or family members while held incommunicado and confiscating their equipment and in some cases tortured them with some murdered while in detention. In many cases also foreign media people were denied entry or forcefully deported for unknown reasons. The abuse witnessed by journalists in Bahrain is a clear reflection of punishing any voice critical of the regime and preventing free speech on coverage related to political reforms with the state exerting firm control over journalists to cover the ongoing incidents reporting peaceful protests.

The report also refers to many situations where journalists have been assaulted by the Bahraini forces, and in some cases regime-led thugs, for the reporting period. However, other violations against journalists are set to be the subject of future.

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FOREWORD

It feels more painful than the wound the families of Publisher Karim Fakhrawi and Blogger Zakariya Al-Ashiri suffered upon receipt of their beloved corpses just days after being arrested. It feels more painful than a scene of a less-than-thirty-year-old journalist who is sent to the gallows to pass out. It feels more painful than having press people of different specializations in custody facing the most brutal torturing ever with their feet tied up and with being forced to bray like a donkey and walk like animals in the ministry of interior's national security detention stations. On the contrary to all such violations, the regime may, with full confidence, that freedom of press is guaranteed by the sovereignty of the constitution and the unmatched care of the leadership for media and media people.

What has been mentioned is but depictions of more detailed cruelty reports documented by international press-concerned organizations in their media statements. Other violations are being documented by the Bahrain Press Association. These documentations are awaiting confirmation from those journalists and media people who are abused against to give their go-ahead for their relative information to go public; such individuals are in fear of reprisals by security forces inside Bahrain. The Bahrain Press Association is working on compiling all such violations to file a lawsuit against those who committed them inside and outside Bahrain.

The release of this report was put on hold for several times. The BPA's Verification & Inspection Committee was insisting that there have always been cases which are anew and exclusive to be documented and constitute part of this publication. However, we found this timing, though critical, to be perfect for it to be publicized with a much comprehensive one to be released by the year end.

What we truly seek to have from all governments and concerned bodies in democratic countries along with international and regional unions and organizations is to pay much focus on, and show interest in, the press dilemma inside the territories of Bahrain. Such organizations are called upon and urged to participate in defending all media people against the state systemic torture.

BAHRAIN PRESS ASSOCIATION

Chapter I: Pre-February 14th Era

Bahrain has an accumulated record of predation and intimidation on the freedom of expression and of the press despite the regime boasting about otherwise. The so-called political openness that came at the wake of the National Referendum endorsement in 2001 and the reinstating of a constitutional life in 2002, did not grant press freedoms. This was coupled with many local newspapers seeing light like Al-Wasat, Al-Methaq, Al-Waqet, Al-Watan, and Al-Bilad. However, the launch of a liberated press environment based on democracy is yet to flourish with so many factors appearing on the surface that lead to a reverse direction.

Both in Bahrain and abroad, the freedom of expression and of the press were among the most controversial topics, especially in the sessions of the elected house of the two chambers and the appointed Shuraa Council in the Kingdom to discuss the newly issued Press Law. This Law received much criticism by reports and indices released by international organizations concerned with the freedom of the press.¹

Such reports and indices are remarkably contradictory and overlapping with some that regard Bahrain as a country qualified to host an unmatched environment full of press freedoms while other reports emphasize otherwise. Such reports indicate that Bahrain is infertile to produce a liberated environment for the press with journalists, bloggers, and activist are being put on trial repeatedly in the Bahraini courts.

The main obstacles that handicapped the realization of the freedom of the press in the period up to February 14, 2011 can be summarized as follows:

I. Law No. 47 of 2002 Pertaining to the Regulation of the Press, Printing, and Publishing

The issuance of Law no. 47 of 2002 is the prominent controversy that kept the will of a true press environment frozen. Press people have long labeled such law as “notorious” as it allows the trial of journalists in criminal rather than civil courts and adopts imprisonment as a punishment. The Law is deeply rooted in much firm law, i.e. the Punishment Law with sentences in prison up to 25 years.

Despite the King’s personal promise to draft a new law allowing much room for the freedom of the press with no imprisonment

punishment for journalists, the royal promise remains unfulfilled. The Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs continues to make further amendments on the law and ties it to the Punishment Law which means that journalists’ fear for being behind bars is still alive. Journalist Rahdi Al-Mosawi, editor-in-chief of Al-Democrati Newsletter was the first to be detained during the interrogation in 2002. The King then was personally linked to imposing a ban of imprisonment against press people through special understanding, a ban got halted with the February 14 uprising. Lifting such imprisonment ban led to the murdering of Blogger Zakaryia Al-Asheeri and Publisher Kareem Fakhrawi while in detention houses.²

Journalists in Bahrain were brought actions against by ministers, officials, and The Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs, which is the body that oversees the press in the Kingdom. The list of those journalists who were persecuted includes Mansor Al-Jamri, editor-in-chief of Al-Wasat Newspaper; Anwar Abdulrahman, editor-in-chief of Akhbar Al-Khaleej Newspaper; Isa Al-Shayjee, editor-in-chief of Al-Ayam Newspaper; Journalist Husain Khalaf of Al-Wasat Newspaper; Journalist Mohamed Al-Sawaad of Al-Waqet Newspaper; Rashid Al-Ghayab of Al-Ayam and Al-Bilad Newspaers; Journalist Maryam Al-Shorooqi of Al-Wasat Newspaper; and Jaffer Al-Jamri of Al-Wasat Newspaper. Prosecutions in light of the notorious law were stretched to include bloggers and activists posting their views on social networking websites like Twitter and Facebook. The prominent incident is the case brought Blogger Mahmood Al-Yousif by Ex-minister Mansoor Rajab.

II. Government Monopoly on Broadcast Media

The government has firm monopoly on broadcast media means since independence in 1971 until today despite on-going individuals and corporate interest to establish radio and television stations. Such interest has been met with deaf ears on the grounds that there exists a gap in legislation to regulate the license.

Eight years have passed with the same clichés being repeatedly heard by any applicant desirous of filing a requisition to establish a broadcast station and the regime still refuses to grant any license to establish a station to third parties with both press people and the national economy suffering from accumulated losses incurred as such. *This was also the factor that forced some televised-media corporations to flee their home bases after it became difficult to be in Bahrain.* In so doing, this further supported the firm fist of the regime on information and manipulating it politically, economically, and

socially denying the Bahraini community the opportunity to benefit from a neutral source of information.

III. Restrictions on Newspaper Licensing and : on Government Advertisement Allocation

Press Law no. 47 of 2002 has a complex process to found newspapers in Bahrain especially with the financial guarantee amounting to BD one million (US\$ 2,666,000). This complexity is intended to keep station license applications restricted but to plutocrats who have mutual commercial interest with the regime. This restriction worked as a buffer line denying political parties the will to establish their independent journalism channel. The restriction ensures that daily newspapers’ capitals are the gateway by which the state further intervene in such newspapers and monitor their content. Nevertheless, such obstacles did not block the way to found two daily papers, Al-Wasat and Al-Waqat, distinguished for being independent and backed by a majority of financiers.

Another tool used by the regime to put much pressure on the aforementioned papers whose tone is believed be singing out of the regime’s flock through the ban of official advertisements from ministries and government bodies. Suffering from this ban that eliminated the funding yielded by advertising, Al-Waqat Newspaper was liquated.

IV. State interference in Media Content of Daily Newspapers

The Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs directly gets involved in the printed content of Bahraini papers by pressurizing editors-in-chief, their deputies, and the chairs of local media unites and dictates that certain issues not to be released or challenge some published issues.

Usually, the said Ministry avoids written orders in this respect but imposes its recommendations building on the directives issued by the leadership as represented by the Royal Court in particular.

V. Orders of Publication Ban

Bahrain has witnessed many complicated security and political incidents in the period stretching from 2004 to 2011. The regime used its absolute power to arbitrarily impose orders to ban the disseminating of certain details like those related to the Bandergate scandal, a scandal named after a British citizen of Sudanese origin who worked as an adviser to the Cabinet Affairs Ministry. The scandal reveled regime-led conspiracy with the aim to foment sectarian strife in the country. The other case banned was the administrative corruption and manipulating of public funds case of the

Minister Mansoor Bin Rajab. Despite the fact that some legal actions received conviction rulings, unlawful publication ban remained operative. Some journalists were brought before the court after they disseminated facts of cases but not the interrogation process. The list of journalists who got prosecuted in this regard includes Mohamed Al-Sawaad and Ahmed Al-Aradi of Al-Waqat Newspaper who jointly circulated a media coverage related to the Bandergate scandal although a judgment was issued.

VI. Blockage of News Websites

Blocking news websites, professional blogging posts, Facebook & Twitter pages, and websites of political societies is among the most intimidating tools on media inside Bahrain. Net surfers in order to overcome this blockage tend to use proxies and other routing techniques to bypass such websites blockage. This practice has forced so many users to attend internet cafes instead.

While the Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs disavowed the responsibility for blocking websites and this complex issue remains afloat with no authority acknowledging it despite the fact that all blocked websites are routed to Ministry’s website. The list of blocked websites includes Bahrain Online, Waad’s Website, Al-Wefaq’s Website, and Amal Society’s Website. This clamp on websites aims to block civil society and political societies websites and any independent news websites and other blogging posts disseminating facts or newsfeeds critical of the state or state figures, even if such criticism does not address political issues.

VII. Legislative Gap of the Freedom to Obtain Information

The right to obtain information and impart it is a genuine right as stipulated by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Media means in Bahrain suffer a great deal from of information scarcity and the negative attitude by all government bodies pertaining to information disclosure.

An opinion poll, done by the now-dissolved Al-Waqat Newspaper in January 2009 and conducted on journalists of various local dailies, showed that 95% of Bahraini journalists had a pressing need to have in place a legislation covering the right to obtain information.

¹ Please refer to press statements of the International Federation of Journalists in the period from 2004 to 2010. Also refer to the index of Reports Without Borders for the said period

² Please refer to Appendix I



Chapter II: Red Freedom/Post- February 14th Era

Media people, photographers, and cyber-dissidents in Bahrain are intimidated by violations, mass arrests, and mass dismissals amid the crackdown on the country that broke out in March 15 onwards after the state head declared martial laws in response to a popular uprising started as of February 14 demanding political, economic, and social reforms. Ever since that law was declared, pro-democracy campaigners faced vicious crackdowns with Saudi and UAE troops augmenting Bahrain's mercenary corps. The Kingdom has witnessed countless violations of human rights. The plight of the popular uprising in Bahrain is made worse by the fact that most foreign media is banned from local coverage. Added to this, most of regional media – seen as a cheerleader for the uprisings else where of the Arab Spring waves – has deliberately censored any coverage of the tiny but strategically Arabian Gulf's island.

The brutal crackdown resulted in the termination of Publisher Kareem Fakhrawi and Blogger Zakariya Al-Asheeri who were got murdered under mysterious circumstances while in custody.³ After they were both announced dead, the Bahrainis authorities alleged in an official statement that they the death cause was due to chronic diseases they both suffered from. The statement content was later vigorously denied by the martyrs' families and was evidenced by the pictures released by CNN Channel in a report showing

signs of severe beating on the chest, back, and legs of Mr. Fakhrawi.

In addition to this, tens of journalists, photographers, and cyber-dissidents were arrested and interrogated in the detention houses of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense. Testimonies of those released show that they were all tortured with different levels of severity. They were no exception from the arbitrary job dismissal targeted at anyone whose participation or sympathy for the revolution has been suspected as approved by the Bahrain Trade Union and many other neutral international reports.

The role of international organization concerned with human rights and defending journalists and bloggers helped in limiting such violations. Nevertheless, the Bahraini authorities still detain some bloggers and photographers. Prominent Bahraini Blogger Ali Abdulemam was sentenced to 15 years life imprisonment in absentia as well as Blogger Abduljalil Al-Sangice.⁴

Recently released journalists, cyber-dissidents, and photographers are awaiting being put on trial in the criminal courts to face sentences ranging from three to five years. Tens of journalists were arbitrarily dismissed due to their political views and posts on local and international media along with social networking websites.⁵

Information available, up to this report drafting, shows that the clamp on media people is led directly by the Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs. Observers link the visit by the such MICA's minister, Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohamed Al-Khalifa, to the chief commander of Bahrain Defense Force, Shaikh Khalifa Bin

⁴ Bahrain News Agency

⁵ Please refer to violation table faced by media people in Bahrain in

Chapter IV .

Ahmed Al-Khalifa, on April 5, 2011 to represent the green-light go behind all media people arrests. on April 7, Journalist Faisal Hayat was arrested and this arrest was the start of violating press people's rights. Of the worst experiences, Journalist Hayder Mohamed faced a hanging mockery as his fault was that he requested the interrogators of the national security function to respect the World Press Freedom Day and stop the physical harassment he was under. Mr. Mohamed fainted on the spot and was later released without any accusation being charged against him.

A crackdown on press people was broadcast live by the state-run television channel following the Journalists Protest in the Pearl Roundabout and the martial law declaration. The shows aimed to slander and incite hatred against press people using defamatory language. A list of those targeted includes Mansoor Al-Jamri, editor-in-chief and co-founder of Al-Wasat Newspaper; Abbas Busafwan, editot-in-chief of Aswaq newspaper; Adel Marzooq, head of political and local affairs and development department in Al-Bilad Newspaper; Hayder Mohamed, a journalist of Al-Wasat Newspaper; and journalist Faisal Hayat a sports-media specialist.

Journalists behind bars & before criminal courts

Twelve press people fled the country to live in exile after their receipt of arrest threats by security authorities. The regime responded coldly to pressures and criticism it received by international organizations to set some press people free. Press people have been charged with ludicrous crimes such as inciting hatred against the monarchy, publicizing false information and pictures that might harm the national security, and assembling in a public domain.

Journalist Abbas Al-Marshed has been charged with a new accusation (incitement of the public to disdain the monarchy, as per Article (165) of the Punishments Law that stipulates "A person is punished by prison or penalty if found guilty of incitement of the public to disdain the monarchy or disfavoring it" along with the typical charges every journalist faces. Journalists Faisal Hayat, Abdulla Alaawi, and Jasim Al-Sabagh of Al-Bilad Newspaper face similar charges. It is worth mentioning that the national security function denied detained journalists access to their lawyers and respected no constitutional or legal provisions normally applied to detainees.

All charges are derived from the Bahraini Punishment Law at a time Bahrain suffers no

legislative gap pertaining the regulation of printing and publishing, the sentences to the charges above range between six months to three years imprisonment. Observers indicate that the reliance of the military prosecution on the Punishment Law rather than Law no. 47 which has exclusive jurisdiction to matters related journalism, print, and publishing, is a clear intent of it to impose the maximum degree of punishment against press people.

Alwasat Newspaper: Plotted targeting to eliminate an opposing voice

In the same context, Dr. Mansor Al-Jamri, editor-in-chief of Al-wasat three other colleagues, Waleed Nuwaihd the editing manager, Aqeel Mirza head of local news, and Ali Al-Shareefi the editing secretary, were all accused with the charges of publicizing fabricated information to challenge stability in Bahrain. Defenses made by the paper show that an 'anonymous' body put the whole organization in a stalemate condition in the period from 25 to 29 March as all workers and editors were not able to leave their homes. Moreover, the printing house of the paper was attacked by armed thugs, which made reporters work from home. At this critical time as the country went on a martial law status with curfew applied, such fabricated news, amounting to 5 pieces of news, was planned to revenge against the paper. This was carried by the establishment of a fake news center in Riyadh, the Saudi capital, that sent the bunch of fabricated news such that the paper publicized it. Investigations later found that all the fabricated news came from one source and was traced to be one IP address registered in Saudi Arabia.

Responding to the pressure of the Alwasat board of directors, the-editor-in-chief was forced to step down and the other accused were suspended. Inside informers of the regime confirmed that "the series of terminations and the appointment of a state-loyal editor-in-chief were long-wished by the authorities because Alwasat took the lead in publicizing all facts and violations practiced by the security authorities since its inception".

Dismissals of Journalists and Photographers from Media Outlets

Journalists got involved in the daily coverage of the events as of February 2011 onwards, either by way of their job requirements, via making statements to local papers or satellite channels, by corresponding on-spot reports, or by way of posting or tweeting on social networking websites and blogs.

95 professional and amateur press people of

³ Please refer to statements by The IFJ and RWB in

Appendix I.

various specialties that include journalists, photographers, or bloggers, were collectively dismissed from work on an arbitrary basis in obvious violation to all local and international laws.⁶ The vast majority of such people were the subject of different intimidation threats by the regime and its subsidiaries along with state-loyal bodies.

Arbitrary dismissals practiced by all daily newspapers in Bahrain. Alwasat terminated the services of 4 of its cadre by a board resolution with further dismissals of other journalists after the newly-appointed board of directors took over. Albilad paper, chaired by the Bahraini Journalists Society vice-president Mones Almardi, sacked 14 journalists, chief typists, and photographers. Later on, Alayam, chaired by Isa Alshayji, the president of the Bahraini Journalists Society, sacked 8 press people. The MICA, in its television broadcasting division, has either terminated the contracts of or sacked 18 media personnel. Al-Watan Newspaper sacked 28 employees of which 18 were press personnel.

Bahrain Photography Society: Mass Arrests

10 authorized photographers who are registered under the umbrella of Bahrain Photography Society are jailed with arrest dates spanning from March 23 to May 22, 2011. Many testimonies of those released affirm their being tortured by police officers in detention houses.

Photographers are charged with the same accusation of that of the journalists. After the King declared an investigation commission be formed to look into civil rights violations inside Bahrain, some photographers were set free while the judicial authorities still hold their cases in trials, which implies that they might face imprisonment sentences.

Sever Violations: From Hayder Moahamed to Nazeeha Saeed

At the dawn of Sunday, April 24, a gang consisting of 30 masked men attacked the house of Journalist Hayder Mohamed, working for Alwasat Newspaper whose PC and camera were confiscated as well. On May 3, while in the interrogation room, Hayder asked the officer to show some respect to the World Press Freedom Day and stop torturing him. The officer then convinced Hayder that he was on a real trial and he shall be sentenced to death by hanging. The officer acted as if it was real with all procedures to execute and a rope was put around Hayder's neck. At that time, Hayder

passed out of panic. Hayder was then released on May 22 without being charged.

Another sorrowful story is that of Nazeeha Saeed, a local reporter for France 24 and Radio Monte Carlo, who was summoned on Sunday, May 22 at around 12.30 for interrogation in Al-Riffa police station. While in the interrogation room was brutally beaten and assaulted without any charge or reason. She was forced to drink a bottle of urine with baton beating over her back.

The French Embassy in Manama then sent Nazeeha to receive medical treatment in Paris promptly after the incident. After a statement by the IJF and so many other organizations and international commissions, the Bahrain Ministry of Interior declared that it would take action against those held accountable for these assaults. The reporter told her ordeal chapters before the military general prosecutor who investigated the case. Up to date, the authorities released no particulars in this respect.

on July 19, the Committee to Protect Journalists ("CPJ") issued a statement calling on the Bahraini authorities to end harassment and legal prosecution of fabricated criminal charges against those journalists critical of the monarchy. The CPJ confirmed that criticizing journalists were exposed to threats, interrogations, and slandering by regime-owned, pro-regime publications, or regime-loyalists.

The statement also includes the story of Journalist Reem Khalifa who was targeted as part of a coordinated slandering campaign, against journalists critical of the regime. In this regards, Ms. Khlifa was accused of verbally abusing and physically assaulting a government supporter. This came amid a press conference held by an Irish delegation of medical and human rights practitioners. The press conference was to be prematurely ended with pro-government medial practitioners and journalists bullying delegation members. Ms. Khalifa was targeted with fabricated legal proceedings of slapping a physician on the face and was summoned to attend a questioning session.

Both the Bahrain Press Association and the CPJ have affirmed, after thoroughly reviewing the video footage, other still photos, and testimonies by the Irish delegation and journalists that the physician's allegation is void and comes as part of a series of journalists intimidating campaign. The BPA and CPJ have issued statements to declare their stands and calls on the official authorities to end the



harassment against journalists.⁷

Chapter III: Foreign Press Under Ban

Bahraini security forces paralyzed the work of foreign reports working for international media outlets with well-established and world-class reputation via many means to influence their job in transmitting the events have been running in Bahrain since last February.

The means and methods used have been different. One incident shows that a sniper from a hovering chopper fired a gun shot on Michael Slackman, a reporter of the New York Times Newspaper and Patrick Ferl, the paper's photographer who were in the middle of covering the crushing of protesters in the Pearl Roundabout in the capital city of Manama on February 18.⁸

The regime spared no effort to use all possible means to put restrictions on foreign reporters entry to the country. This has been clearly revealed by a reporter working for France 24 to Reporters Without Borders. "We approached Bahrain in the early morning of February 19 at around 1.00 and were forced to spend our first night at the airport and were denied access to the country. It was not until the afternoon of the next day that we were granted entry to the island." The lady reporter was quoted as narrating her story. She added "Our equipment was confiscated and this had

not been the case for all press people with some facing no obstacles at entry. We were fortunate enough to get a two-week visa while others got only a 72-hour visa, this was the case of the crew of France 2. Upon entry, we saw the BBC reporter being held and his equipment seized."

She further added "On the contrary of what seemed to be a promise by the Bahraini authorities, our equipment, that was seized, was not returned back until now. We were unable to broadcast any live reports and instead our media coverage was uploaded on the internet.⁹

The Bahraini authorities deported CNN reporter Moahmed Jamjoom, on March 16 with no justifications given.¹⁰

On March 16, masked men of the Bahraini National Guards arrested Wall Street Journal reporter Alex Delmar-Morgan as he was heading towards the Pearl Roundabout. He faced three-hour detention before being set free. On the same day, the authorities attacked CBS Radio Channel reporter Ms. Tula Fiaho in the accompanying crew.¹¹

On March 30, the security forced detained CNN reporter Amber Lyon and the accompanying crew in front of the house of human rights advocate Nabeel Rajab. The detainees were questioned for five uninterrupted hours and at the end of session Ms. Lyon was officially warned not to film anything in Bahrain without

⁶ Please refer to violation table faced by media people in Bahrain in appendix no. <<<<<<>>>>

⁷ Please refer to Appendix I.

⁸ http://en.rs.org/magreb-et-moyen-orient-media-continue-to-be-targets-as-23-02-2011_39604.html

⁹ http://en.rs.org/magreb-et-moyen-orient-overview-of-media-freedom-08-03-2011_39693.html

¹⁰ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtRj05aHkLU>

¹¹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwDghM-RZr4>

a prior permission.¹²

The Bahraini authorities refused to give entry permission to foreign reporters of the following media outlets:

1. The New York Times
2. The Guardian
3. The Telegraph
4. France 24
5. CNN
6. Financial Times
7. BBC
8. Wall Street Journal

Some other reports were granted permitted entry to the country but on complex terms under security forces' control and with such reporters being escorted by two persons representing the Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs. The BBC broadcast a report stating that the restriction on permitting foreign reporters to enter the country was operative since February 19.

Other foreign reporters were exposed by a systematic clampdown on social networking websites by a group recruited by the regime working behind the scenes. The first target of this attack was the New York Times columnist Nicholas D. Kristof who was in Bahrain reporting on the spot in from the Pearl Roundabout at the first security raid on it. Mr. Kristof was also present at the Salmaniya Medical Complex reporting the events very accurately. Mr. Kristof is still a subject of the said pro-regime gang.

In early days of April, the regime deported two were Iraqi nationals who were employees in Al-Wasat Daily Newspaper. Waleed Nuwaih, a Lebanese national, the editing manager of the same daily is facing charge of circulating fabricated information along with the daily's editor-in-chief after the Bahraini authorities filed a lawsuit against the daily. Evidence shows that the fabricated information was prepared in one of the official bodies of the government and sent from the Saudi capital with the intent to eliminate the only-independent and objective daily in the Kingdom.

The Bahraini authorities order an Irishman Finian Cunningham, who has been living in Bahrain for years, Irish writer and journalist who had been living in Bahrain for a to leave the country. Reporters Without Boards confirmed that Cunningham was back home on 19 July.¹³

The regime in Bahrain applies, amid its seizure of the Pearl Roundabout, indirectly censorship

¹² <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2j3DHu18HE>.

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/04/11/bahrain detain/index.html?ref=allsearch>

http://www.ifex.org/middle_east_north_africa/2011/06/24/cunningham_deported

on the local media content through focusing on international coverage broadcast and ignoring local news coverage dealing with the on-going pro-democracy protests with the aim to marginalize them in the press arena.

The Bahrain Center for Human Rights has condemned the clampdown on foreign press reporters and the harassment they go through. In a detailed report, the Center publicized a series of harassments and assaults faced by foreign reports since the protests broke out in late February.¹⁴

Below is a list publicized by the Bahrain Center for Human Rights through its website on the foreign press reports harassment account:

1. Physically-assaulted Journalists & Reporters:

- ABC News reporter Miguel Marquez – Beaten by thugs armed with batons (February 17, 2011).¹⁵

- CBS Radio News reporter Tola Vlahou – Confronted by riot police with rubber bullets fired and smashed his vehicle (March 17, 2011).¹⁶

*The referenced-to video footage presents Bahrain Foreign Minister challenge the event.*¹⁷

- DPA reporter Mazin Mahdi and Nazeeha Saeed – Both were tortured and physically assaulted while in police custody (May 22, 2011).¹⁸

2. Arrested Journalists & Reporters:

- DPA reporter Mazin Mahdi – arrested for a short period of time for taking pictures of armed thugs who were vandalizing shops in the city of Riffa (March 11, 2011).¹⁹

- Wall Street Journal reporter Alex Delmar-Morgan – Arrested by members of the National Guards (March 16, 2011).²⁰

¹⁴ <http://www.bahrainrights.org/ar/node/4375>

¹⁵ http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gjbkV9uYKA_QJtwvfbx8guF104Hg?docId=CNG.68e525354daffd868eac000986513f10.151, <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/video/abcs-miguel-marquez-beaten-bahrain-protests-revolts-government-police-journalist-attacked-violence-middle-east-12936174>

¹⁶ http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503543_162-20044298-503543.html

¹⁷ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpxSPY5ZPCM>

¹⁸ <http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-france-24-correspondent-tortured-30-05-2011,40374.html>; <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/bahrain-police-detain-2-reporters-for-foreign-media>; and http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/middleeast/news/article_1640917.php/Bahrain-police-detain-dpa-reporter

¹⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpxSPY5ZPCM>

²⁰ <http://en.rsf.org/+wall-street-journal-reporter-alex+.html> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpxSPY5ZPCM>

- CNN reporter Amber Lyon and her fellow crew – Arrested and interrogated with their camera content erased (March 30, 2011).²¹
- The National reporter Bradely Hope and France 24 reporter Nathalie Gillet – Arrested and their camera content inspected (July 3, 2011).²²

3. Expelled Journalists & Reporters:

- CNN reporter Mohamed Jamjoom – Expelled (March 16, 2011).²³
- Press TV reporter Johnny Miller – Expelled (March 16 2011).²⁴
- Reuters reporter Fredrick Richter – Expelled (May 10, 2011).²⁵
- Irish Times reporter Finian Cunningham – Expelled (June 19, 2011).²⁶

4. Journalists & Reporters Denied Entry to Bahrain:

- Al-Jazeera reporter Bilal Randeree – Denied entry arriving at Bahrain Airport (February 17, 2011).²⁷
- Freelance Journalist Omar Chateriola – Denied entry arriving at Bahrain Airport (March 17, 2011).²⁸
- Al-Jazeera reporter Soraya Lennie – Denied entry arriving at Bahrain Airport (April 9, 2011).²⁹
- El Mundo journalist Monica G. Prieto – Denied entry arriving at Bahrain Airport (May 9, 2011).³⁰

pomed.org/blog/2011/03/photo-wsjs-alex-delmar-morgan-arrested-in-bahrain.html/

²¹ http://articles.cnn.com/2011-04-11/world/bahrain detain_1_bahrain-center-entering-bahrain-military-vehicles/2?_s=PM:WORLD and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8oZpwyf_3k

²² [Twitter: @bradleyhope](https://twitter.com/bradleyhope): inside the police station near Sanabis in #Bahrain. Detained since 4 p.m for walking on street. They are analyzing photos.

²³ [Twitter: @nat_gillet](https://twitter.com/nat_gillet): Just freed from police station in Bahrain with reporter @bradleyhope. Kept there for 2 hours. They checked my camera. Back in the hotel now

²⁴ <http://www.cpj.org/2011/03/bahrain-expels-cnn-reporter-harasses-journal-corre.php> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtRj05aHkLU>

²⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/10/us-bahrain-reuters-idUSTRE7494LR20110510> and <http://afreuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFTR74G41220110517>

²⁶ <http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-journalist-deported-others-tried-22-06-2011,40503.html>

²⁷ [Twitter: @bilalr](https://twitter.com/bilalr): I arrived@ #Manama airport this morn- was told by immigration that no more visa on arrival for #aljazeera ppl- return to #Doha soon

²⁸ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ruejlep43hix6NjYRTCvhcpcpPGxo8h0Eqz2Iz7Z7eTQ/>; <http://storify.com/omarc/rejected-by-bahrain>

²⁹ [Twitter: @pizzazzgabor](https://twitter.com/pizzazzgabor): being deported from #bahrain with another guy who lives in Doha called reza. Pity he has a shia name.

³⁰ <http://bahraincenter.blogspot.com/2011/05/el-mundo-journalists-are-not-welcome-in.html>

Chapter IV: Detailed List of Reprisals of Bahraini Press People*

| | Name | Media Shop | Position | Currently detained? | Comments |
|----|--------------------|--|--|---------------------|--|
| 1 | Mansour Al Jamry | Al Wasat | Editor-in-Chief | | The Newspaper was targeted and he was forced to resign after the board of directors of the newspaper was put under pressure. He is currently subjected to criminal investigation at the hands of the attorney general of the army. He has been classified as a traitor, a classification that puts him as a security target. Fabricated news was sent to the newspaper about the 14th of February Revolution from outside Bahrain with names of some political activists during the state of general safety. After the publishing of this news, a TV episode was dedicated and the newspaper was shutdown for one day. The prosecution has refused to reveal the source of the information via IP tracing. |
| 2 | Walid Nuwayhid | Al Wasat | Editing Manager | | The newspaper was targeted and he was arbitrarily let go by the newspaper owners. He is currently subjected to a criminal investigation by the attorney general of the army |
| 3 | Aqil Mirza | Al Wasat | Ex-Board member of the Bahraini Journalists' Association | | Was arbitrarily fired by the newspaper owners and is currently subjected to a criminal investigation by the attorney general of the army. |
| 4 | Adel Marzouk | Al Bilad | Head of Local Affairs and Ex-VP of Bahrain Journalists' Association | | Adel was classified as 'Traitor' and listed in the 'Traitors' List'; a list circulated by the security forces. He is wanted by the police. |
| 5 | Mohammad Al Sawad | Al Bilad | Journalist | | Mohammad was classified as 'Traitor' and listed in the 'Traitors' List'; a list circulated by the security forces. |
| 6 | Hussein Khalaf | Al Bilad | Journalist | | He was dismissed. He has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group) |
| 7 | Hussein Marhoon | Al Waqt formerly, an activist in electronic journalism | Blogger, A journalist who wrote many articles in Arab newspapers about the 14th of February revolution in Bahrain. He's also active online on Facebook and Twitter | | A warrant was issued in his name; he is currently outside Bahrain. He has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group). |
| 8 | Faisal Hayyat | Al Bilad | Journalist | Since 8-Apr-11 | Was arrested after the king's speech |
| 9 | Ali Jawad | Al Bilad | Journalistic Director | Since 20-Apr-11 | He was dismissed and arrested right after that. |
| 10 | Hussein Ali Khalaf | Al Bilad | Journalist in the sports section | | He was dismissed |

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|----|------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 11 | Abbass Al Jamry | Al Bilad | Editor | | He was dismissed |
| 12 | Baker Zain Al Din | Al Ayyam | Journalist | | He was dismissed |
| 13 | Ali Al Bazzaz | Al Ayyam | Caricaturist | | He was dismissed |
| 14 | Hussein Al Sabbagh | Al Ayyam | Journalist | | He was dismissed |
| 15 | Ismat Al Mousawi | Al Ayyam | Journalist, column writer, and a Founding member in the Bahraini Journalists' Association | | She was dismissed and has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group). |
| 16 | Hussein Abd Al Al | Al Bilad | Director | | He was dismissed |
| 17 | Abbass Abu Safwan | Aswak | Editor-in-Chief | | A warrant was issued in his name; he is currently outside Bahrain. |
| 18 | Hussein Abd Ali | Al Watan | Journalistic Director | | He was dismissed |
| 19 | Nada Al Wadi | Al Wasat | Journalist | | Nada was summoned to appear at a police station and was forced to sign a statement of alleged representation that she called for the overthrow of the regime. |
| 20 | Hayder Mohammad | Al Wasat | Journalist | | Hayder was arrested from April 25 to May 22. He was tortured and listed on the 'Traitors' List'. |
| 21 | Wafa' Al Amm | Radio and Television | TV Anchor | | Wafa was summoned to appear at a police station |
| 22 | Ahmad Al Haddad | Al Bilad | Editor | | Ahmad was summoned to appear at a police station |
| 23 | Mohammad Al Makhoulouk | Al Bilad | Editor | | Mohammad was summoned to appear at a police station |
| 24 | Hussein Al Ghudayri | Al Bilad | Head of the Disc department | | Hussain was detained for one day. |
| 25 | Ali Al Diri | Bahraini Ministry of Education | Blogger & Auother | | Ali received threats and listed in the 'Traitors' List'. |
| 26 | Ali Al Jalawi | | Poet and Political activist. | | Ali received threats and listed in the 'Traitors' List'. He is currently outside Bahrain. |
| 27 | Sadiq Marzooq | | Member of the Bahrain Society of Photography & photographer | | He is on the run and his house was broken into twice. |
| 28 | Jaffer Al Halwachi | | Member of the Bahrain Society of Photography & photographer | | Jaffer was arrested from 2 to 5 April. |
| 29 | Hussain Al Khal | Bapco | Member of the Bahrain Society of Photography & photographer | | Hussain was dismissed from work. He was then arrested from March 27 to July 2. |

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|----|---------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 30 | Mahmood Hasan | | Member of the Bahrain Society of Photography & photographer | | Mahmood was arrested early in April and released on June 20. |
| 31 | Zuhair Al Shamaa | | Member of the Bahrain Society of Photography & photographer | | Zuhair was arrested on April 16 and released later on. |
| 32 | Hani Al Fardan | Al Wasat | Journalist and Founder of online news | | He has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group). |
| 33 | Abbas Al Murshid | Bahraini Ministry of Education | Journalist and researcher. | | He was arrested on May 14 and set free on July 10 after being listed in the 'Traitors' List'. |
| 34 | Rim Khalifa | Al Wasat | Journalist active on twitter (before crackdown) | | She has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group). |
| 35 | Lamis Dhaif | Gulf newspapers | Blogger, Column writer in many newspapers | | She has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group), her house was attacked with Molotov cocktails |
| 36 | Qassem Hussein | Al Wasat | Journalist | | He has been classified as a traitor (a targeted group). |
| 37 | Muna Al Nashaba | Al Watan | Journalist | | She was fired. |
| 38 | Basima Al Kassab | | Blogger, Writer in many Arab newspapers, author | | She was interrogated 3 times at work, fired from her job at ministry of education , interrogated at a police station |
| 39 | Issa Ibrahim | Al Wasat | Press Photographer | | He was barred from leaving Bahrain. He has been interrogated. |
| 40 | Mahmoud Al Yousif | | Blogger | | Arrested for 2 days (3031- Mar 2011), banned from any electronic media action. |
| 41 | Mohammad Al Maskati | | Blogger | | Arrested for a week (30Mar-8Apr 2011), banned from any electronic media action. |
| 42 | Amani Al Maskati | Al Wasat | Journalist | | She was arrested at the airport, and forced to sign a confession including an attempt to overthrow the regime. |
| 43 | Ali Al Shirifi | Al Wasat | Secretary Editor (Iraqi) | | Arbitrary lay-off and forced to deport country. |
| 44 | Rahim Al Ka'bi | Al Wasat | Head of Development (Iraqi) | | Arbitrary lay-off and forced to deport country. |
| 45 | Mujtaba Al Mu'min | | Blogger | | Apprehension for 7 hours at the airport. Banned from traveling. |
| 46 | Fadel Anan | Al Bilad | Journalist | | Fired from his part time job/ Under investigation at the Ministry of Education (his primary job) |
| 47 | Yasmin Khalaf | | Blogger, Journalist activist online (Formerly worked at Al Waqt) | | Her house was raided on the 26th of April. No confirmed information about her arrest. |

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|----|------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 48 | Karim Fakhrawy | | Media Activist, Publisher, & Shareholder of Al Wasat Daily | | Karim was murdered while in custody three days after he was arrested. |
| 49 | Zakariya Al Aushayri | | Online activist, Founder and Adminrator of Al Dair online forum | | Zakariya was murdered while in custody few days after he was arrested. |
| 50 | Huda Al Mashakihl | Radio and Television | Program design and archives. | | She was fired |
| 51 | Rajaa Rahma | Radio and Television | Program design and archives. | | She was fired |
| 52 | Ahmad Al Fardan | Radio and Television | Program design and archives. | | He was fired |
| 53 | Hussein Al Hulaybi | Radio and Television | Program design and archives. | | He was fired |
| 54 | Mohammad Al Faka | Radio and Television | Program design and archives. | | He was fired |
| 55 | Jaafar Al Alawi | Radio and Television | Program design and archives. | | He was fired |
| 56 | Fadel Al Marzouk | | Online activist & Co-Founder of online forum www. maameer.org | Since 28-Mar and released early in July | Arrested |
| 57 | Hani Al Tayf | | Cyber Activist, runs website of Al-Manar forums http://www.manarcom.com | Since 27-Mar-11 | Arrested |
| 58 | Nabeel Rajab | Bahrain Center for Human Rights | International human rights activist, member of many international organizations | | His house was targeted with tear gas. Faces court martial under allegations of spreading instigating news on Twitter. |
| 59 | Foreign correspondents | CNN - BBC | | | Subjected to attempts to stop them from doing their jobs, delayed at airports, and some foreign journalists were apprehended and later released. Review human rights organizations reports (Bahraini Center for Human rights/International Federation for Human Rights). |
| 60 | Mohammad Al Makhrek | Al Wasat | Press Photographer | | He was assaulted by security forces personnel while performing his job as a photographer. |
| 61 | Al Wasat Newspaper | | The newspaper's printing house in Al Rifa' | | The building was attacked and machines were destroyed by police in civilian cloths. |

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|----|---|----------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| 62 | Habib Abdullah | Al Ayyam | Journalist | | He was fired. |
| 63 | Hussein Al Darazi | Al Ayyam | Journalist | | He was fired. Also arrested (23 May - 2 Jun 2011) |
| 64 | Amir Al Bakali | Al Ayyam | Journalist | | He was fired. |
| 65 | Mohammad Al Maghni | Al Ayyam | Journalist | | He was fired. |
| 66 | Salah Al Hayiki | Al Bilad | Editor | | He was fired. |
| 67 | Saeed Abbass | Al Bilad | Editor | | He was fired. |
| 68 | Hussein Al Saeed | Al Bilad | Journalistic Director | | He was fired. |
| 69 | Muhammad Al Ghasra | Al Watan | Journalist | | He was fired. |
| 70 | Abdullah Alawi | Al Bilad | Journalist | Since Apr-11 | He was fired/arrested |
| 71 | Jasem Al Sabbagh | Al Bilad | Editor | Late in March to early June | Was arrested after the king's speech |
| 72 | Ahmad Yusif al-Dairi | | Online Activist, co-founder http://www.aldair.net/forum/ | From April 1 to early July | Arrested |
| 73 | Hamza Ahmad Yusif al-Dairi | | Online Activist, co-founder http://www.aldair.net/forum/ | From April 1 to early July | Arrested |
| 74 | Hussein Abbas Salem | | Cyber Activist, Freelance photographer | From March 28 to early July | Arrested |
| 75 | Mohamed Marhoon | | Blogger | | Arrested for 1 day (2829- Apr 2011), no activity after that |
| 76 | Jaffar Abdalsjad abdulHussain Al Abbas | | Online Activist, Co-Founder of online forum www.maameer.org | Since 28-Mar-11 | Arrested |
| 77 | Hussain Abdalsjad abdulHussain Al Abbas | | Online Activist, Photographer, Co-Founder of online forum www.maameer.org | Since 28-Mar-11 | Arrested |
| 78 | Mujtaba Salmat | | Freelance Photographer with online activity | | was arrested for about a month, released on April 27, 2011 |
| 79 | Anmar Kamal Aldeen | | Blogger and photographer, active on twitter | | was arrested for for 24 hours on May 12 |
| 80 | Ali Omid | | Online activist, Moderate online forum (http://alialasghar.us/vb/), blocked since 2009 | | Arrested (1022- May 2011) |

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|----|----------------------------|----------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| 81 | Mohammed Salman Al-Sheikh | | Photographer, Head of the Bahrain Society of Photography | From May 9 to July 2 | Arrested |
| 82 | Saeed Abdulla Dhahi | | Photographer | | Arrested for about 24 hours (1516- May) |
| 83 | Ali AbdulKarim Alkufi | | Photographer | | Arrested (1520- May) |
| 84 | Hasan AlNasheet | | Photographer, VP of the Bahrain Society of Photography | | Arrested (1520- May) |
| 85 | Hasan Salman Al-Ma'atooq | | Photographer and a nurse | Since 23-Mar-2011 | Arrested |
| 86 | Salman AbdulHadi Almakhraq | | Photographer | Since 29-Mar-2011 | Arrested |
| 87 | Zuhair Alshama'a | | Photographer, member of Bahrain Society of Photography | Since 16-Apr-2011 | Arrested |
| 88 | Hasan Qambar | | Photographer | Since 18-Apr-2011 | Arrested |
| 89 | Jameel Hasan Alshuaikh | | Photographer of AlWefaq political society | From 21-Apr to 10-July | Was beaten then arrested - video of his arrest http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCWm4KPCecl |
| 90 | Mohamed Ali Alaradi | Al Bilad | Photographer | Since 8-May-2011 to 30-June | Arrested |
| 91 | Abdullah Hasan | Al Watan | Photographer | Since 14-May-2011 | Fired from his job and then arrested |
| 92 | Abdullah Ahmed Salman | | Photographer | Since 17-May-2011 | Arrested |
| 93 | Nedhal Nooh | | Photographer, One of founders of Bahraini Society of Photography, Head of Technical committee of Bahraini Society of Photography | From 20-May to 16-June | Arrested (18 May- 16 Jun 2011) |
| 94 | Sadiq Ja'afar Aldurazi | | Photographer, member of Bahrain Society of Photography | Since 19-May-2011 | Arrested |
| 95 | Hussain Ali AlQumaish | | Photographer | | Arrested (2226- May) |
| 96 | Fadhel Habib | Al Wasat | Columnist | | Arrested at a checkpoint (2023- May) |

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|-----|----------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| 97 | Naziha Saeed | MONTE CARLO Radio | journalist | | summoned by police for interrogation for more than 12 hours on 22 May 2011, reportedly tortured |
| 98 | Mazen Mahdi | DPA | Photojournalist | | summoned by police for interrogation on 22 May 2011 , released with the chance of being called back in again, reportedly tortured |
| 99 | Hussein Ali Makki | | Cyber Activist, Administrator of the Pages (RASAD NEWS) on Facebook and Twitter. | Since 9-June-2011 | Arrested |
| 100 | Abdulla Hassan | alwatan newspaper | News accidents and head of photography | | He was fired |
| 101 | Hasa Ali | alwatan newspaper | photography | | She was fired |
| 102 | Jawad al Khabaz | alwatan newspaper | photography | | He was fired |
| 103 | Fahad Ebrahim | alwatan newspaper | photography | | He was fired |
| 104 | Zinab Abdullameer | alwatan newspaper | Journalist | | He was fired |
| 105 | Ali Alaly | alwatan newspaper | Journalist | | He was fired |
| 106 | Swsan Dhmem | alwatan newspaper | Acting Head of local department | | He was fired |
| 107 | Taha Alawi | alwatan newspaper | journalist | | He was fired |
| 108 | Abulla Ashoor | alwatan newspaper | head of sport department | | He was fired |
| 109 | Sayed Kathem Abdulla | alwatan newspaper | Acting Head of sport department | | He was fired |
| 110 | Isa Abass | alwatan newspaper | Journalist | | He was fired |
| 111 | Mohammed Taqawi | alwatan newspaper | Journalist | | He was fired |
| 112 | Younes Mansoor | alwatan newspaper | Journalist | | He was fired |
| 113 | Hamed Hayat | alwatan newspaper | Director of production department | | He was fired |
| 114 | Aziz Abdulrasool | alwatan newspaper | head of archive department | | He was fired |
| 115 | Amar Mahdi | alwatan newspaper | officer at archive department | | He was fired |
| 116 | Hasa Albnnai | alwatan newspaper | Officer, Department of Printing | | He was fired |
| 117 | Ahmed Sarhan | alwatan newspaper | Port, Department of Production | | He was fired |

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|-----|---------------------|-------------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| 118 | Ismael Asaqi | alwatan newspaper | Port, Department of Production | | He was fired |
| 119 | Zakariya Almobasher | alwatan newspaper | employee, Department of Printing | | He was fired |
| 120 | Ali Mohana | alwatan newspaper | employee, Department of correction | | He was fired |
| 121 | Hussain Almajed | alwatan newspaper | employee, Department of correction | | He was fired |
| 122 | Mohamed Aljaber | alwatan newspaper | employee, Department of correction | | He was fired |
| 123 | Husain Alasfoor | alayam newspaper | Journalist | | He was fired |
| 124 | Hussain Alaly | alayam newspaper | Employee data in the updated website of the newspaper | | He was fired |
| 125 | Zahra Humaidan | akhbar alkhaleej | Journalist | | Her salary was deducted |
| 126 | Shaker Alarady | akhbar alkhaleej | Journalist | | His salary was deducted |
| 127 | Fatema ali | akhbar alkhaleej | Journalist | | Her salary was deducted |
| 128 | Maki Hasan | akhbar alkhaleej | Journalist | | His salary was deducted |
| 129 | Ahmed haydar | al wasatnewspaper | photographer | | he was fired |

* There might have been inaccurate information in certain names and dates of detention and release due to the security grip by the regime against journalists. Some journalists, due to fear of persecution, refused to declare any information pertaining to their assault or document their violations. The BPA will make sure to revise all available data periodically before being incorporated and released in its annual report.

Chapter V: Report Calls

We are calling on the United Nations, Heads of States, Governments, all International communities and associations especially those concerned with human rights to take rapid and effective measures based on the documentations contained herein to prevent and repress the occurrence of torture against press people, defend their rights, and hold those who committed violations against them accountable for their actions.

Calls to reach:

- 1.The King of Bahrain,
Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa – Royal Court
- 2.The Premier of Bahrain,
Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa – Prime Minister Court
- 3.The Crown Prince of Bahrain,
Salman Bin Hamad Al-Khalifa – Crown Price Court

1-The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

IFJ Calls for End to Intimidation Campaign against Journalists in Bahrain

18 May 2011
<http://mena.ifj.org/en/articles/ifj-calls-for-end-to-intimidation-campaign-against-journalists-in-bahrain>

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) today condemned the widespread intimidation campaign targeting journalists who work for newspapers which are critical of the Bahraini government. The IFJ accuses the authorities of systematic harassment of media in the wake of recent anti-government protests and says that at least 68 journalists working for two leading Bahraini newspapers, Al Wasat and Al Bilad, have been singled out for sacking, arrests and charges for treason. Others were forced into exile to escape arrest in the on-going clampdown.

"There is an appalling campaign to silence dissent in Bahrain and journalists have become the prime targets," said Jim Boumelha. "The authorities are resorting to interference in media affairs and blatant intimidation to control information and stifle independent reporting. This must be exposed and resisted."

Reports say that the Bahraini authorities have embarked on a hunt for the government's critics and arrested several journalists, on allegations of betraying the country. One report on the media crackdown in Bahrain entitled 'Journalists in Bahrain: The murder of Free Speech and the Siege of Freedom' says that those arrested include the Al Wasat reporter Haidar Mohammad and blogger Zakariya Al Oushayri who is reported to be one of the two journalists who died while in detention.

More journalists were sacked from their jobs after management of public and private media in Bahrain, particularly Al

Appendix I: Press statements and reports issued by IFJ, RWB, CPJ, BCHR, Amnesty, The Independent, and Pen International

Wasat and Al Bilad newspapers, came under severe political pressure, including banning advertising in Al Wasat, to get rid of staff members who opposed political interference. Senior journalist Mansour Al Jamry, editor-in-chief of Al Wasat and his colleagues Walid Nuwayhid, the paper's editing manager and Akil Mirza, member of the Bahraini Journalists Association (BJA), an IFJ affiliate, lost their jobs in this campaign which affected at least 68 media staff, according to the report.

Mansour will go on trial this week along with three other senior staff charged with publishing false information about the police crackdown, a charge which carries a one-year prison sentence, media reports say.

The IFJ is deeply concerned by the situation of the Bahraini journalists who have been caught up in this crackdown, whether they are in detention, awaiting trial or on the run in exile and calls on the government to rescind all measures which violate the rights and the independence of media.

"We urge the authorities to re-establish the climate of respect for press freedom which the right of the public to accurate information requires," added Boumelha. "This won't happen unless and until all detained journalists are set free, outstanding warrants of arrest and charges cancelled, the ban on advertising in Al Wasat lifted, journalists who have been unfairly dismissed reinstated and an independent commission of inquiry set up to investigate reports of journalists' deaths in detention."

In the meantime, the massive dismissals of workers suspected of involvement in the anti-government protests have prompted the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to warn the Bahraini government that these measures threaten to tarnish the country's record of "progressive policies towards labour in the Gulf region". The organisation has, however, welcomed the decision to establish a joint committee to review all dismissals.

"Bahrain stands out as a country with an independent trade union movement," ILO Deputy Director General Guy Ryder told

Al-Jazeera. "The ILO is doing whatever it can with the government and other social partners to find a way forward so that people can return to their jobs."

IFJ Condemns Brutal Assault of Journalist by Police in Bahrain

26 May 2011
<http://mena.ifj.org/en/articles/ifj-condemns-brutal-assault-of-journalist-by-police-in-bahrain>

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) today joined its affiliate in Bahrain, the Bahrain Association of Journalists (BJA) in condemning the savage beating and inhuman treatment of reporter Nazeeha Saeed who was arrested on 22 May over the story she had filed about the repression of anti-government protesters. The female reporter, who was covering the uprising in France24 and Radio Monte Carlo in the Douar el loulou area, suffered severe injuries at the Rafa police station where she was badly beaten by her interrogators. She also bore torture marks, according to the reports.

"We are appalled by this senseless and cruel treatment of a working journalist and we urge the Bahraini authorities to hold accountable the officers involved," said Jim Boumelha, IFJ President. «The brutal behaviour of security forces towards Saeed shows there is no end to media repression in Bahrain and the world must make it clear that these gross violations of peaceful protesters, women's and journalists' rights will not go unpunished».

Media reports say that Saeed was summoned to the Rafa police for questioning over her report on the death of Ali Abdelhassan who was allegedly killed by security forces during the anti-government protests of 17 February 2011. She was detained for 12 hours during which she reportedly was savagely beaten up and tortured. After her release, the French consulate arranged for the journalist to receive medical treatment in France due to the gravity of her condition. The BJA has also called for a full investigation into the allegations of torture

and requested from the authorities a copy of the complaint made by the reporter, stressing the need for transparency and independence in the investigation in this case.

The IFJ has accused the Bahraini government of widespread intimidation and systematic harassment against journalists which have already led to the arrests and sackings of at least 68 media personnel in the country since the start of the protests for political reforms.

The Federation is taking part in a protest visit to the embassy of Bahrain in Brussels today. The protest, jointly organised by the IFJ, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Education International (EI) and the Belgian trade unions ACV/CSV, ABCC/FGTB and ACLVB/CGSLB. The organisers will deliver a letter calling ,among other measures, for the immediate release of all detained trade unionists, teachers, journalists and workers as well an end to all harassment against trade unions leaders and activists and respect for press freedom.

2-REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Bahraini and Syrian authorities try to impose news blackout, kidnapping in Yemen

4 April 2011. Updated on Thursday 26 May 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahraini-and-syrian-authorities-04-04-2011,39946.html>

Reporters Without Borders condemns the Bahraini government's attempts to impose a news blackout on the ongoing demonstrations and the police crackdown. Closure of opposition media, forced resignation of senior media personnel, harassment of local journalists and foreign TV crews, intimidation of Bahrainis who talk to foreign journalists, arrests of bloggers, government propaganda and military court orders – the authorities are resorting to all possible means to limit coverage of the protests and to smear their organizers and participants.

Yesterday, the information ministry announced the closure of Al-Wasat, an opposition newspaper founded in 2002. Access to its online version was also blocked. The day before, the national television programme "Media Watch" had accused Al-Wasat of trying to harm Bahrain's stability and security and of disseminating false information that undermined the country's international image and reputation.

The Information Affairs Authority, the government agency that regulates the media, subsequently gave Al-Wasat permission to resume publishing from today but three of its most senior journalists – editor Mansour Al-Jamari, managing editor Walid Nouhid and local news editor Aqil Mirza – were forced to resign. The board of directors announced the appointment of Abidily Al-Abidily to replace Jamari as editor.

Jamari told the Associated Press that the government was trying to silence independent media in Bahrain.

The International Federation for Human

Rights (FIDH) meanwhile reported that the military prosecutor general issued a decree on 28 March – Decision No.5 of 2011 – under which the publication of any information about ongoing investigations by military prosecutors was banned on national security grounds (<http://www.fidh.org/Bahrain-risk-of...>). The decree reinforces the arsenal of measures that authorities can use to silence any reporting about human rights violations. CNN journalists Scott Bronstein and Taryn Fixel were briefly detained on 29 March while interviewing Nabeel Rajab, the head of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, at his home.

Reporters Without Borders also condemns the harassment of Bahraini bloggers. Photos of bloggers and human rights activists labelled as "traitors to the homeland" have been circulating on the Internet for several days. They include Mahmood Al-Yousif and Manaf Al-Muhandis, who were arrested on 30 March and were released the following day.

Mohamed Al-Maskati, who blogs under the name of Emoodz, is still being held in an unknown location since his arrest also 30 March. After blogging actively in the past few weeks and posting videos of recent events on his blog (<http://emoodz.com/>) and on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/emoodz>), he was threatened by a presumed member of the royal family, Mohd Al-Khalifa (<https://twitter.com/#!/MohdSAlkhalifa>). Since his arrest, he has been able to contact his family only once, on 31 March.

Khalifa meanwhile continues on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/#!/MohdSAlkhali...>) to threaten anyone calling for Makati's release: "#FreeEmoodz anyone that's living in Bahrain and is supporting the terrorist emoodz, will have his IP address taken and will get arrested!"

There is still no news of Ali Abdulemam and Sayid Yousif Al-Muhafdah, two bloggers who disappeared on 16 March, and Abduljalil Al-Singace, a blogger who was arrested the same day. The blogosphere has reported the silence of several of its members without knowing

whether they have been arrested or have gone into hiding to escape the police crackdown. Reporters Without Borders urges the government to end its hate campaign against bloggers and to immediately release all those it is holding.

No concessions to media as indiscriminate repression continues in countries with pro-democracy protests

12 April 2011. Updated on Wednesday 6 July 2011
<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-no-concessions-to-media-as-12-04-2011,40009.html>

Reporters Without Borders strongly condemns netizen Zakariya Rashid Hassan's death in detention on 9 April, six days after his arrest on charges of inciting hatred, disseminating false news, promoting sectarianism and calling for the regime's overthrow in online forums. He moderated a now-closed forum providing information about his village of origin, Al-Dair. His family has rejected the interior ministry's claim that he died as a result of sickle cell anemia complications. Three other netizens are still detained. They are Fadhel Abdulla Ali Al-Marzooq (arrested on 24 March), Ali Hasan Salman Al-Satrawi (arrested on 25 March) and Hani Muslim Mohamed Al-Taif (arrested on 27 March). Marzooq and Taif moderated forums in which Internet users could discuss the ongoing events. Satrawi was a forum member. There is no news of Abduljalil Al-Singace, a blogger arrested on 16 March.

Reporters Without Borders is also worried that Nabeel Rajab, the head of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, has been accused by a military prosecutor of posting a "fabricated" photo of the injuries inflicted on Ali Isa Saqer, one of two people who died in detention on 9 April. Rajab posted the photo on Twitter the same day, saying Saqer had died as a result of mistreatment while in police custody.

As previously noted, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

reported that the military prosecutor general issued a decree on 28 March – Decision No.5 of 2011 – under which the publication of any information about ongoing investigations by military prosecutors is banned on national security grounds. The decree reinforces the arsenal of measures that authorities can use to silence any reporting about human rights violations.

The public prosecutor meanwhile decided yesterday to press charges against the three senior Al-Wasat journalists who were fired on 3 April for alleged "serious abuses" including publishing fabricated news that undermined the country's international image and reputation. The three – editor Mansour Al-Jamari, managing editor Walid Nouhid and local news editor Aqil Mirza – said they had been sent a summons by fax by the Information Affairs Authority, a government agency that regulates the media.

Their problems began on 2 April, when the national television programme "Media Watch" accused the newspaper, which was founded in 2002, of trying to harm Bahrain's stability and security. The next day, the information ministry announced its closure. After the three had been forced to stand, the Information Affairs Authority reversed this decision and announced that Al-Wasat could resume publishing and distributing on 4 April. Two Iraqi journalists who had worked for the newspaper since 2005, Raheem Al-Kaabi and Ali Al-Sherify, were deported the same day.

Reporters Without Borders has learned of the arrests of two photographers last month. They are Mujtaba Salmat, who was arrested on 17 March, and Hussain Abbas Salim (also known as Hussain Al-Khal), who was arrested on 28 March. Both are members of the Bahraini Photography Association. They had been taking photos of the demonstrations in Pearl Square. Salmat had posted some of them on Facebook. The sports journalist Faisal Hayat was arrested on 8 April for participating in the 14 February movement. His photo was displayed on state TV with the label "traitor."

Co-founder of independent newspaper dies in custody in Bahrain, some journalists freed in Syria and Libya

18 April 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-co-founder-of-independent-18-04-2011,40037.html>

Reporters Without Borders hails the release of the Syrian blogger Wassim Hassan by the authorities in Damascus. He had been held since 14 April.

The press freedom organization also notes the release of the Syrian journalist Rana Akbani in Libya. Her family says the Libyan authorities freed her on 14 April. A resident in Libya for the past 15 years or so, Akbani works for the arts and culture section of the Libyan newspaper Al-Shams. In the Al-Libya TV interview, which has been posted online (<http://almanaramedia.blogspot.com/2...>), presenter Hala Misrati accuses her of lacking objectivity, lying in her coverage of street demonstrations in Benghazi and of collaborating with foreign countries. (read <http://en.rsf.org/libya-syrian-jour...>)
 BAHRAIN

Reporters Without Borders is outraged to learn that Karim Fakhrawi, one of the founders of Bahrain's only independent newspaper, Al-Wasat, and a member of its board, died in custody on 12 April, one week after his arrest. The exact cause of death has yet to be established.

"A total of four people have now died in custody," Reporters Without Borders said.

"Bahrain's authorities are responsible for all these places of detention. They must account for these deaths and respond to the allegations of systematic mistreatment or even torture of detainees. We call for an independent investigation into the exact causes of Fakhrawi's death. Those responsible must be arrested and tried."

A Shiite businessman and member of the opposition party Al-Wefaq, the 49-year-old Fakhrawi, died of kidney failure, according to the authorities, but his family disputes that, insisting that he was in good health at the time of his arrest.

While his body was being taken for burial in the Hoor district of Manama

on 13 April, people removed the clothes to verify the torture allegations. Photos and video posted online show his body covered with cuts and bruises.

Founded in 2002, Al-Wasat was banned on 3 April, one day after the national television programme "Media Watch" accused it of trying to harm Bahrain's stability and security and disseminating false information that undermined the country's international image and reputation. The Information Affairs Authority, a government agency that regulates the media, reversed this decision and gave Al-Wasat permission to resume publishing on 4 April but three of its most senior journalists were forced to resign and were summoned for questioning by the agency (<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-no-conces...>).

As previously reported, the netizen Zakariya Rashid Hassan died in detention on 9 April, seven days after his arrest on charges of inciting hatred, disseminating false news, promoting sectarianism and calling for the regime's overthrow in online forums. He moderated a now-closed forum (<http://www.aldair.net/forum/>) providing information about his village of origin, Al-Dair. His family has rejected the interior ministry's claim that he died as a result of sickle cell anemia complications (<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-no-conces...>).

Seizures of newspapers, smear campaigns against journalists in Yemen, arrests in Bahrain

27 April 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-seizures-of-newspapers-smear-27-04-2011,40111.html>

BAHRAIN

Haider Mohamed Al-Noaimi, a blogger and journalist who works for various media including the opposition newspaper Al-Wasat, was arrested by about 30 men who came to his home on the evening of 24 April and confiscated his computer and cameras before taking him away. They reportedly hit him during the raid. His Facebook profile, where he

posted his articles, has been blocked since 3 April. Another Al-Wasat journalist, Nada Al-Wadi, was detained and questioned for around 10 hours on 20 April.

Ahmed Yousif Al-Dairy, a netizen who has been detained with his two sons since 1 April, has apparently not been getting the treatment he needs for his diabetes. His lawyers have not been able to see him and the authorities continue to say nothing about the case. Like Zakariya Rashid Hassan, who died in detention on 9 April after being tortured, he was one of the moderators of the forum Aldair (<http://www.aldair.net/forum/>). His family fears he may have suffered the same fate.

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King Hamad Ben Aissa Al Khalifa

3 May 2011. Updated on Friday 29 April 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-king-hamad-ben-aissa-al-khalifa-03-05-2011,40139.html>

Since the start of the country's pro-democracy movement, the government has tried to control news about the protests and the excesses of police and troops. Foreign journalists have been arrested and deported, others have been unable to get entry visas and Bahrainis wanting to tell them what is happening have been threatened. Free-speech activists have been hounded and prosecuted, photographers, bloggers and netizens arrested (one of them dying in prison), journalists forced to resign from the main opposition paper and called before the state prosecutor, and printing any news about ongoing investigations by the military prosecutor banned for supposed national security reasons. The media blackout has been accompanied by a big regime propaganda campaign, through media it controls, against major protest leaders, who are dubbed traitors or terrorists. Hamad Ben Aissa Al Khalifa, as king of Bahrain, is responsible for all this violence and abuses.

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A few releases in Syria, foreign media still targeted in Bahrain

11 May 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-a-few-releases-in-syria-foreign-11-05-2011,40268.html>

Reporters Without Borders condemns yesterday's decision by the Bahraini authorities to expel German journalist Frederik Richter, the Reuters correspondent in Manama since 2008, for alleged bias in his coverage of the pro-democracy protest movement. He has been given a week to leave. "Reuters regrets Bahrain's decision to expel its correspondent," editor-in-chief Stephen Adler said, adding that the agency stood by his reporting.

The Information Affairs Authority nonetheless insists that it is not closing down Reuters' operations in Manama and is prepared to accredit another correspondent appointed by the agency. Monica Pietro of the Spanish daily El Mundo was denied entry on arrival at Manama airport on 9 May and was sent back to Spain the next day. Read her account in Spanish: <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2011/...>

Reporters Without Borders strongly condemns the government's attempts to obstruct news media that are trying to cover the pro-democracy protests in Bahrain and urges it to allow foreign journalists to enter the country and work without any restrictions.

Ali Omid, a young blogger and activist who heads the Ali AlAsghar Society and moderates its online forum (<http://alialasghar.us/vb>), which has been blocked in Bahrain since 2009, was arrested at his home in Muharraq at 1:30 a.m. yesterday and was taken to an undisclosed location. A solidarity page has been created on Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/ke1pOG>

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News photographers among crackdown's latest targets

17 May 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-news-photographers-among-crackdown-17-05-2011,40301.html>

Many photographers who have been covering the pro-democracy protests taking place in Bahrain since mid-February have been arrested in the past few days. By carrying out these targeted arrests, the Bahraini authorities are trying to limit media coverage of their crackdown on the protests, especially coverage in the international media.

Reporters Without Borders calls for the immediate release of these photojournalists and all the other people who have been arrested for circulating information about the demonstrations and the ensuing government crackdown. Mohamed Salman Al-Shaikh, a freelance photographer who heads the Bahrain Society of Photography, was arrested in his home in Sanabis, a village west of Manama, on 11 May. He is a member of several international photography organizations and has won many international prizes.

Three photographers were arrested on 15 May. One was Saeed Abdulla Dhahi, who was arrested at his home in Juffair, southeast of the capital. His photographic equipment was seized during searches of his home and the home of his fiancée. He was freed the next day.

The other two arrested on 15 May were Ali Abdulkarim Al-Kufi, a member of the Bahrain Society of Photography, and Hassan Al-Nasheet.

The third hearing in the trial of 21 human rights activists and opposition members was meanwhile held yesterday. The defendants present in court, who including the blogger Abduljalil Al-Singace, pleaded not guilty to trying to overthrow the government. Fellow blogger Ali Abdulemam, regarded as one of the country's Internet pioneers, is also one of the defendants but he is being tried in absentia.

The trial was adjourned until 22 May to give the defence a chance to examine the

evidence presented by the prosecution. The defendants are being tried before a special Manama court under martial law. The same court sentenced four demonstrators to death last month.

The head of the pro-democracy and civil liberties movement Al Haq, Singace used his blog to denounce the deplorable state of civil liberties in Bahrain and the discrimination against its Shiite population.

Anmar Kamal Al-Dine, a 24-year-old netizen who blogs on the social network Twitter as @anmarek, was meanwhile arrested on 12 May and was held for 24 hours. He has been posting photos of demonstrations on Twitter, especially the funerals of demonstrators in March and April during which many arrests were made. His Twitter account has been inaccessible since his arrest.

Abbas Al-Murshid, a prominent freelance columnist and writer who also participates in several online forums, was arrested after being summoned for questioning at 6 p.m. yesterday. He managed to contact his family today to let them know that he is being held. He is well known for the views he has expressed on sensitive subjects in recent months. In 2009, he was injured in the right eye by a rubber bullet fired by riot police.

Mattar Ibrahim Mattar, a parliamentary representative of the Al-Wefaq party who often talks to the international media about the current repression in Bahrain, was arrested on 2 May, after giving an interview to Al-Jazeera the previous day in which he stressed the danger of opposition leaders being arrested.

The following are still detained:

- Faysal Hayyat, Ali Jawad, Abdullah Alawi and Jasem Al-Sabbagh, who were arrested after being forced to resign from the newspaper Al-Bilad.
- Ali Omid, Hani Al-Tayf, Fadel Al-Marzouk, Hossein Abdalsjad Abdul Hossein Al-Abbas, Jaffar Abdalsjad Abdul Hossein Al-Abbas, Hamza Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairi and Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairi, who are all online forum administrator or moderators.
- Al-Wasat journalist Haydar Mohamed.
- Photographer Hossein Abbas Salem.

Amid international indifference, targeted repression continues in Bahrain and Yemen

24 May 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrein-amid-international-indifference-24-05-2011,40337.html>

In the past few days, the authorities have arrested more photographers and photo-journalists who had been covering the pro-democracy demonstrations taking place in Bahrain since mid-February. The aim of these targeted arrests is to limit the dissemination of news reports, photos and video of the protests and the government crackdown.

Reporters Without Borders calls for the immediate release of these photographers and of all the other people who have been arrested for circulating information about the protests and repression. The press freedom organization also calls on the courts to overturn the conviction of Hassan Salman Al-Ma'atooq, a photographer who has been sentenced to three years in prison.

Reporters Without Borders has learned that a military court imposed the sentence on Ma'atooq on 12 May after convicting him on four charges including two relating to his work as a photographer – fabricating photos of injured people and disseminating false photos and information. Aged 29, he has been held since 23 March.

Reporters Without Borders has also learned that Mohamed Ali Al-Aradi, who works for the newspaper Al-Bilad, was arrested on 8 May, and that, Abdullah Hassan, who was recently fired from the newspaper Al-Watan, was arrested on 14 May. He had been injured on 13 March while covering clashes between demonstrators and the security forces. Mohamed Salman Al-Sheikh, a photographer who heads the Bahrain Society of Photography, is meanwhile still being held. He was arrested at his home in Sanabis, a village

west of Manama, on 11 May. Photographer Nedhal Nooh, a member of the Bahrain Society of Photography, was summoned for interrogation on 18 May in West Riffa (a city to the south of the capital). He has been held ever since.

Fadel Habib, a columnist who writes mainly about educational issues for Al-Wasat, was arrested at a check-point on 20 May and was released last night. Naziha Saeed, a journalist who works for Radio Monte-Carlo and France24, was summoned and interrogated for nearly 12 hours on 22 May. She has often talked about the government-orchestrated repression in the foreign media in recent months.

The photo-journalist Mazen Mahdi was summoned and questioned for two hours on 22 May, mainly about his Twitter activities during demonstrations, his work for DPA and his alleged links with Lebanese and Iranian media. He was handcuffed and blindfolded, beaten several times and threatened with torture. Mahdi was previously detained briefly in March for taking photos of thugs smashing shop windows.

Reporters Without Borders has learned that Ali Abdulkarim Al-Kufi, a member of the Bahrain Society of Photography, and Hassan Al-Nasheet were released on 20 May after being held for five days. Al-Wasat journalist Haydar Mohamed was released on 22 May.

The trial of three of the opposition newspaper Al-Wasat's most senior journalists – editor Mansour Al-Jamari, managing editor Walid Nouhid and local news editor Aqil Mirza – began before a criminal court on 18 May. They are accused of disseminating false information that undermined the country's international image and reputation (<http://en.rsf.org/bahraini-and-syri...>). Jamari told Reuters that the prosecutors have added the charge of intending to cause instability in Bahrain, which carries a two-year sentence. They pleaded not guilty.

Jamari acknowledged to Reuters that six articles with false information did appear in Al-Wasat but he said all six were emailed

to the newspaper together with bogus phone numbers from the same IP address in what appeared to be a deliberate plot to get the newspaper to publish wrong information.

Founded in 2002, Al-Wasat was banned on 3 April, one day after the national television programme "Media Watch" accused it of trying to harm Bahrain's stability and security. The Information Affairs Authority, a government agency that regulates the media, reversed this decision and gave Al-Wasat permission to resume publishing on 4 April under new editors. The newspaper's board initially announced that the newspaper would close, but subsequently said it would continue operating.

Another hearing that was held on 22 May in the trial of 21 human rights activists and opposition members. After witnesses gave evidence, the court adjourned until 25 May. The defendants present in court included the blogger Abduljalil Al-Singace. Fellow blogger Ali Abdulemam, regarded as one of the country's Internet pioneers, is also a defendant but he is being tried in absentia. Despite the judge's instructions to the contrary, it seems that most of the detainees have been in solitary confinement.

The following are still detained:

- Faysal Hayyat, Ali Jawad, Abdullah Alawi and Jasem Al-Sabbagh, who were arrested after being forced to resign from the newspaper Al-Bilad.

- Ali Omid, Hani Al-Tayf, Fadel Al-Marzouk, Hossein Abdalsjad Abdul Hossein Al-Abbas, Jaffar Abdalsjad Abdul Hossein Al-Abbas, Hamza Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairi and Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairi, who are all online forum administrator or moderators.

- Photographer Hossein Abbas Salem.

- Abbas Al-Murshid, a freelance journalist and writer who contributes to several online forums. He was arrested on 16 May.

Crackdown continues in Bahrain, bloggers go on trial in Emirates

16 June 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-crackdown-continues-in-bahrain-16-06-2011,40467.html>

Regime officials have reportedly taken over the Facebook and Twitter pages of Rasad News, a major source of news about human rights violations in Bahrain, and are posting anti-protest and pro-regime material after the arrest on 9 June of Hussein Ali Makki, administrator of the pages. Rasad News has since opened a new Facebook page to continue its work. PalTalk, an audio and video chat group that was becoming increasingly political, especially one chatroom called Bahrain Nation, has been blocked since the beginning of the month.

Access to a new anti-government news site, <http://bahrainmirror.com>, has been blocked since 5 June.

Ali Omid, administrator of an online forum arrested on 10 May, was released on 22 May but is still liable for prosecution.

Mattar Ibrahim Mattar, a member of parliament for the Al-Wefaq party and leading pro-democracy activist, was charged by a military court on 12 June with "calling openly for the overthrow of the ruling system, disseminating tendentious rumours and taking part in illegal gatherings." He had been arrested on 2 May after warning of the possible arrests of opposition leaders in a interview with Al-Jazeera.

Hussein Al-Durazi, a sports reporter for the daily Al-Ayam arrested after a police summons in Riffa on 23 May, was freed on 2 June. The paper has reportedly dismissed him.

The trial of the editors of the newspaper Al-Wasat has been postponed until 19 June. (<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/m...>).

Journalist deported, others tried in Bahrain, reporter kidnapped, others hounded in Yemen

22 June 2011.
<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-journalist-deported-others-tried-22-06-2011,40503.html>

Finian Cunningham, an Irish journalist and writer who has been living in Bahrain for years, was “invited to leave” by the Bahraini authorities, Reporters Without Borders has learned. He returned to Ireland on 19 June. Ever since the start of the pro-democracy movement in mid-February, he had been actively commenting on developments, especially the government-orchestrated crackdown, and had been giving many interviews.

Cunningham told Reporters Without Borders he had a tourist visa that was due to expire in July, but the authorities notified him that it had been cancelled because of his journalistic activities. They warned him that he could be summoned for interrogation if he did not leave within 48 hours.

The trial of Jameel Hassan Al-Shuwaikh, a photographer for the opposition group Al-Wefaq, began before a military court on 14 June. He is charged with “taking photos with the aim of changing and fabricating facts” and sending them to foreign organizations outside the country with the aim of discrediting the government. His family has not been able to visit him since his arrest in the town of Sar on 21 April, when security agents and masked gunmen surrounded his car. Reporters Without Borders is relieved to learn of photographer Nedhal Nooh’s release on 16 June. A member of the Bahrain Society of Photography, he was arrested on 18 May. As previously reported, Hassan Salman Al-Ma’atooq, 29, a photographer (and nurse), was arrested on 23 March and was sentenced by court martial on 12 May to three years in prison on four charges,

two of which were linked to his work as a photographer: fabricating photos of injured people and disseminating false photos and information.

Many journalists, photographers and cyber-dissidents are currently detained in Bahrain. Those still held include:

- Faysal Hayyat, Ali Jawad, Abdullah Alawi and Jassem Al-Sabbagh, who were arrested after being forced to resign from the newspaper Al-Bilad.
- Ali Omid, Hani Al-Tayf, Fadel Al-Marzouk, Hossein Abdalsjad Abdul Hossein Al-Abbas, Jaffar Abdalsjad Abdul Hossein Al-Abbas, Hamza Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairi and Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairi, who were online forum administrators and moderators.
- Hossein Abbas Salem, a photographer.
- Abbas Al-Murshid, a freelance journalist, writer and contributor to several online forums, who was arrested on 16 May.
- Mohamed Salman Al-Sheikh, the president of the Bahrain Society of Photography, who was arrested on 11 May.
- Mohamed Ali Al-Aradi, a photographer with the newspaper Al-Bilad, who was arrested on 8 May.
- Abdullah Hassan, who had recently been fired from the newspaper Al-Watan. He was arrested on 14 May.
- Hussein Ali Makki, the editor of the Facebook and Twitter pages of Rasad News, an important source of news about human rights violations in Bahrain, who was arrested on 9 June 2011.

One blogger sentenced to life imprisonment, another to 15 years in jail

22 June 2011.
<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-one-blogger-sentenced-to-life-22-06-2011,40507.html>

Reporters Without Borders is shocked by the long jail sentences that a military court passed today on 21 activists accused of belonging to terrorist organizations and trying to overthrow the government. Eight of them, including human rights activist and blogger Abduljalil Al-Singace, got

life sentences. Thirteen others received sentences ranging from two to 15 years in prison. Ali Abdulemam, a blogger who was tried in absentia, was given 15 years. “The only crime committed by Abdulemam and Al-Singace was freely expressing opinions contrary to those of the government,” Reporters Without Borders said. “These sentences, handed down at the end of trial that flouted defence rights, are typical of the intransigence that the authorities have been showing towards those identified as government opponents, who have borne the full brunt of their repression. The international community must call the government to account on its strategy of stifling all dissent.” The head of the pro-democracy and civil liberties movement Al Haq, Singace was rearrested on 16 March after being held from September to February. He was previously arrested in 2009 for allegedly trying to destabilize the government because he used his blog (<http://alsingace.katib.org>) to denounce the deplorable state of civil liberties and discrimination against Bahrain’s Shiite population.

Abdulemam is regarded by fellow Bahrainis as one of his country’s Internet pioneers and is an active member of Bahrain Online, a pro-democracy forum that gets more than 100,000 visitors a day despite being blocked within Bahrain. A contributor to the international bloggers network Global Voices, he has taken part in many international conferences at which he has denounced human rights violations in Bahrain. He was also detained from September to February but avoided being rearrested and has been in hiding for several months.

Human rights activists reported many irregularities during this trial and have been calling for an end to trials before special military courts now that the state of emergency has been lifted. According to the defendants themselves or their families, some of the defendants were tortured or mistreated while in detention.

Massacres continue far from cameras in Syria and Yemen, situation stabilizes in Bahrain

7 July 2011. Updated on Friday 8 July 2011.
<http://en.rsf.org/massacres-continue-far-from-07-07-2011,40614.html>

BAHRAIN

Reporters Without Borders hails King Hamad Ben Issa Al-Khalifa’s announcement on 29 June that the prosecution of civilians before military courts is being ended and that their cases are being transferred to civilian courts. The press freedom organization calls on the authorities to drop all charges, including civil charges, against journalists and all other persons who were arrested during protests.

The organization also urges the courts to quash the jail sentences that a military court passed on 22 June on 21 defendants accused of belonging to “terrorist” organizations and trying to overthrow the government. Eight of them, including the human rights activist and blogger Abduljalil Al-Singace, received life sentences. Thirteen others received sentences ranging from two to 15 years in prison. The blogger Ali Abdulemam, who was tried in absentia, also received a 15-year jail sentence.

Reporters Without Borders has learned of the release of the following journalists and bloggers in the past few days:

- Hamza Ahmed Youssef Al-Dairy and his father Ahmed, both administrators of the Aldair.net forum (<http://www.aldair.net/forum/>), were released on 3 July, more than three months after their arrest on 1 April. Ahmed was not taken before a judge but his son is still charged with illegal assembly and damaging public property.
- Bahrain Society of Photography president Mohamed Salam Al-Sheikh, who was arrested on 11 May, was freed on 2 July. He is now to be prosecuted before a civilian court.
- Hossein Abbas Salem, a photographer arrested on 18 March, was released on 2 July.

•Mohamed Ali Al-Aradi, an Al-Bilad photographer who was arrested on 8 May, was released on 29 June.

The obstacles to media freedom and journalists' freedom of movement had not however ended. Two foreign journalists were detained for two hours on 3 July.

BAHRAIN : Disturbing wave of prosecutions on eve of national dialogue

30.06.2011

English : <http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-disturbing-wave-of-prosecutions-on-30-06-2011,40556.html>

Reporters Without Borders accuses the authorities of continuing to crack down on journalists and media freedom in violation of the spirit for the national dialogue that King Hamad Ben Issa Al-Khalifa wants to begin tomorrow with the aim of relaunching political reforms after the unrest that began last March and the ensuing repression.

Journalists and media are still being prosecuted before military courts, although the state of emergency was lifted on 1 June. The authorities are also maintaining strict control over the circulation of news and information and are pumping out propaganda aimed at both Bahraini and foreign media.

Reporters Without Borders calls for a response from the international community that includes the dispatch of a United Nations special rapporteur to Bahrain.

Bahrain Society of Photography president Mohamed Salman Al-Sheikh, a freelance photographer who was arrested on 11 May, was brought before a military court in Riffa, the second largest city, on 28 June. His family was not told about at the hearing and therefore was unable to organize his defence. No information has been released about the charges being pressed against this journalist, who has won many international awards.

Abbas Al-Murshid, a freelance journalist and writer who was arrested on 16 May, was brought before a judge on 27 June and was told that he was charged with

participating in illegal demonstrations, disseminating false information on online forums and inciting hatred against the government. His request to be freed on bail was denied. Security officers present in the courtroom refused to let his wife and lawyer talk to him although the judge had given his permission. He is to be tried by court martial on 7 July.

Abdullah Alawi and Jassem Al-Sabbagh, two journalists who were arrested after being forced to resign from the newspaper Al-Bilad, are being prosecuted on charges of publishing false information and photos, and participating in illegal demonstrations. The second hearing in their trial was held on 23 June.

As already reported, a military court imposed jail sentences on 22 June on 21 people accused of belonging to terrorist organizations and trying to overthrow the government. Eight of them, including the human rights activist and blogger Abduljalil Al-Singace, were given life sentences. The other 13 got sentences ranging from two to 15 years in prison. The blogger Ali Abdulemam, who was tried in absentia, got 15 years (<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-one-blogg...>).

The authorities are keeping reporting about the ongoing trials under strict control, maintaining a ban on coverage of national security cases. The government news agency BNA publishes a daily summary of some of the ongoing trials, but trials involving any journalists other than those with Al-Wasat are usually ignored.

The authorities announced on 14 June that they were going to bring a lawsuit against British journalist Robert Fisk, the London-based Independent's Middle East correspondent, in the United Kingdom for waging a "defamatory and premeditated media campaign" against Bahrain and for alleged bias and unprofessionalism in his coverage of recent events.

Fisk has repeatedly criticized the trials of doctors and nurses accused of supporting the anti-government protests. He also reported that Saudi military forces invaded Bahrain without waiting for an invitation from the Bahraini authorities.

Reporters Without Borders hails the release of Faysal Hayyat, a sports journalist who was arrested on 8 April, although he is still facing charges of "sports crimes."

A military prosecutor issued a statement saying he would be tried according to established legal procedures. No trial date has so far been announced.

The blogger Ali Omid has also been released but seven other netizens and eight journalists, including three photographers, continue to be detained. To read: <http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-disturbing-wave-of-prosecutions-on-30-06-2011,40556.html>

MIDDLE-EAST : Preventive arrests and "German chair" for detainees in Syria

26.07.2011

English : <http://en.rsf.org/preventive-arrests-and-german-26-07-2011,40696.html>

French : <http://fr.rsf.org/bahrein-arrestations-preventives-et-chaise-26-07-2011,40695.html>

Bahrain

During a news conference at Manama's Ramada Hotel on 14 July, the journalist Reem Khalifa was violently attacked by government supporters, who accused her of using violence. Like many other journalists, Khalifa is constantly harassed by the regime's supporters and often gets telephone death threats.

She has been a target ever since a news conference by foreign minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa on 17 February at which she expressed outrage at the government's violent crackdown on the initial demonstrations and talked of a "massacre." The secretary-general of the Gulf Cooperation Council attended the news conference.

France 24 correspondent tortured for covering pro-democracy demonstrations

Monday 30 May 2011.

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-france-24-correspondent-tortured-30-05-2011,40374.html>

When Nazeeha Saeed, the Bahrain correspondent of France 24 and Radio Monte Carlo Doualiya, was summoned to a police station in the city of Rifa'a for questioning at midday on 22 May, she expected to be back home two hours later and had no inkling of the nightmare awaiting her.

On arriving at the police station, she took a seat and waited calmly. Other women, mainly nurses, were also waiting, sitting on the floor.

An hour later, she was called. She entered an office where there was a male officer. In a quiet but unsettling voice, he told her to answer the questions that would be put to her. He then left her with a female officer, who accusing her of "lying" in her reports and told her to admit her links with the Hezbollah TV station Al-Manar and the Iranian Arabic-language TV station Al-Alam. "You must confess," the woman kept repeating, going on to accuse her of participating in the pro-democracy demonstrations that have taking place in Bahrain since March.

An hour later, she was taken to another office. There, a woman police officer mocked and insulted her. When Nazeeha ignored her, the policewoman grabbed her by the chin, held it hard, and slapped her with the other hand. "You must tell me the truth," she screamed, continuing to slap her and then seizing her by the hair and throwing her to the ground. Four policewomen proceeded to slap, punch and kick her repeatedly. One of the women took her shoe and forced it into her mouth. "You are worth less than this shoe," she said.

With the shoe still in her mouth, she was dragged to yet another office, where she was blindfolded and was initially made to stand. Then she was forced to kneel

on a chair, facing the back of the chair, exposing her back and the soles of her feet, which were now beaten repeatedly with a piece of flexible black plastic tubing. As she cried out with pain, a police officer kept shouting "Shut up and answer my questions" without asking any questions or without giving her time to say anything.

She continued to be accused of lying and of "harming Bahrain's image." The blows kept on coming. The blindfold finally fell from her eyes and she noticed the male officer, the one who had spoken to her initially, coldly observing the scene.

Nazeeha was then taken to a room where there were other women, nurses, who were awaiting their turn to be interrogated.

After a while, she was taken back for another interrogation session. The nightmare resumed. Blindfolded again, she was told to bray like a donkey and to walk like an animal. A new humiliation. And she was beaten again. At one point, a woman held a plastic bottle against her mouth. "Drink, it's urine," the woman cried, pressing her lips against the mouth of the bottle. Nazeeha managed to knock the bottle out of the policewoman's hand, but the policewoman picked it up and poured part of its contents over her face. Nazeeha did not know what it was, but it stung her face.

She was taken to another office and was forced to kneel on a chair again. The soles of her feet, her back, her arms and her head were again beaten with the plastic tube.

She was taken back to the room where other women were waiting and the blindfold was removed. When she recovered the use of her eyes, she saw that it was past midnight. All the women, including Nazeeha, were now allowed to go to the toilet and were brought food. They were also brought documents to sign, without being able to read them. Nazeeha signed.

The policewoman who had initially received her at the police station checked all the women with a stethoscope and told them they would be sent to prison

for 45 days, pending trial.

The head of the police station nonetheless asked to see Nazeeha. He told her he was very surprised to find her there and pretended not to know she had been interrogated. She was allowed to phone her mother and was finally allowed to return home. But she has not yet recovered from the ordeal. She continues to suffer physical and psychological after-effects.

The interior ministry subsequently announced proceedings against those responsible for the mistreatment. Nazeeha gave an account of her ordeal to the military prosecutor in charge of the investigation.

She is currently in France receiving medical care and is due to return to Bahrain tomorrow.

Reporters Without Borders is appalled by the way this journalist was mistreated and urges the authorities to carry out an independent and transparent investigation that sheds all possible light on this shocking and disgraceful episode. Those responsible should be charged and tried, as should those in the chain of command who were involved.

This young woman's case gives a glimpse of the treatment of journalists by security forces in Bahrain. The list of detained reporters, photographers and cyber-dissidents keeps on getting longer amid complete indifference on the part of the international community.

3-CPJ

Al-Wasat founder dies in custody in Bahrain



New York, April 15, 2011
<http://www.cpj.org/2011/04/al-wasat-founder-dies-in-custody-in-bahrain.php>

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on Bahraini authorities today to conduct an immediate and transparent investigation into the death in state custody of Karim Fakhrawi, left, founder and board member of Al-Wasat, the country's premier independent daily.

Fakhrawi died Tuesday, a week after he was apparently taken into custody, according to news reports. Human rights defenders told CPJ that Fakhrawi had gone to a police station on April 5 to complain that authorities were about to bulldoze his house.

Earlier this month, the government accused Al-Wasat of "deliberate news fabrication and falsification." Since then, the government has announced it will file criminal charges against three of the paper's senior editors and has deported two other senior staffers.

Fakhrawi is one of numerous investors in Al-Wasat, local journalists told CPJ. He is also a book publisher, the owner of one of Bahrain's biggest bookstores, and a member of Al-Wefaq, Bahrain's chief opposition party.

Bahrain's official news agency said on its Twitter feed that Fakhrawi died of kidney failure. Photographs published online, however, show a body identified as that of Fakhrawi with extensive cuts and bruises. "The crackdown on dissent in Bahrain has taken a deadly turn with two deaths in custody in unexplained circumstances in less than a week," said Mohamed Abdel Dayem, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. "The Bahraini authorities must clarify how they reached the conclusion that Karim Fakhrawi died of kidney failure when photographs show his body covered in cuts and bruises."

Online journalist Zakariya Rashid Hassan al-Ashiri also died under mysterious circumstances while in government custody. Authorities claimed that al-Ashiri, who died April 9, had suffered complications from sickle cell anemia. Al-Ashiri was the first Bahraini journalist to die in direct relation to his work since CPJ began keeping detailed death records in 1992.

Bahrain expels CNN reporter, detains WSJ correspondent

New York, March 17, 2011
<http://www.cpj.org/2011/03/bahrain-expels-cnn-reporter-harasses-journal-corre.php>

Bahraini authorities expelled a CNN reporter and briefly detained another international reporter on Wednesday amid an intensified crackdown on political unrest. The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns the Bahraini government's ongoing obstruction of news media and calls for authorities to allow journalists to cover this story of international import. Elsewhere in the region, anti-press attacks and harassment continued to be reported in Morocco, Yemen, and Libya.

"Governments in Libya, Bahrain, Morocco, and Yemen are obstructing or attacking journalists in an effort to prevent local and international audiences from accessing critical information," said Mohamed Abdel Dayem, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. "We call on the authorities in these countries to stop harassing the media and release all detained journalists."

Bahrain's Ministry of Information expelled CNN correspondent Mohammed Jamjoom on Wednesday after he had reported on the forcible dispersal of protesters in Manama, the journalist reported on air. "We kept trying to find out why; they would not say. They insisted that I had to go," Jamjoom reported, saying an information ministry official escorted him to the airport. Other CNN journalists remain in Bahrain, the network said. Also Wednesday, Bahraini soldiers detained Wall Street Journal reporter Alex Delmar-Morgan, the newspaper reported.

He was freed after three hours. Numerous cases of harassment and obstruction have been reported in Bahrain this week after the government invited Saudi and United Arab Emirates troops to help contain demonstrations by the country's Shiite majority. A crackdown on protests in Manama and the arrests of several opposition leaders have followed. A local journalist told CPJ that police and military forces blocked access to areas where protesters were being cleared. The journalist, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal, said mobile telephone service appeared to be interrupted near Pearl Square, a main protest site.

As unrest bubbles, Bahrain and Yemen obstruct press

New York, March 14, 2011
<http://www.cpj.org/2011/03/as-unrest-bubbles-bahrain-and-yemen-obstruct-press.php>

Authorities in Yemen and Bahrain are continuing to obstruct news coverage of ongoing political unrest, the Committee to Protect Journalists said today as it called on the two governments to allow journalists to work without reprisal. In Yemen, at least six international journalists were expelled since Saturday, according to news reports and CPJ interviews. In Bahrain, security forces and plainclothes men attacked an Al-Wasat photojournalist covering a demonstration in the capital, Manama.

Yemeni security forces today raided a Sana'a apartment shared by four international journalists, The New York Times reported. The Times identified the journalists as Oliver Holmes, a contributor to The Wall Street Journal

and Time magazine; Haley Sweetland Edwards, a contributor to the Los Angeles Times; Joshua Maricish, a photographer; and Portia Walker, a contributor to The Washington Post. The four were brought before immigration authorities who ordered their expulsion for "national security reasons." The Times identified Holmes and Walker as British, Maricish and Edwards as American.

"I'm positive that this is related to the fact that all four of us have been reporting about the upswing of violence against protesters," Holmes told the Times by phone from the airport. Edwards said their expulsion was a clear indication that the crackdown against protesters will intensify "and there's no one here who's going to see it."

Reporter Patrick Symmes and photographer Marco Di Lauro, on assignment for Outside, a U.S.-based travel and adventure magazine, were detained Saturday by security agents, Symmes told CPJ. Although they had press visas, they were put on a flight to Istanbul. "It is obvious that we are being expelled simply to prevent the chance that we are in any way capable of learning what is happening in Sana'a," Symmes told CPJ in an e-mail. Symmes said they were working on a travel article and had repeatedly emphasized to authorities that "we have not asked to cover demonstrations, and have not done so."

Government supporters continue to intimidate local reporters. On Saturday, a group of about 20 people believed to be government supporters went to the Journalists Syndicate in Sana'a and threatened to burn it down, according to two local journalists and an item posted on the syndicate's website.

"We are alarmed by the expulsion of foreign journalists and fear that it may

be the prelude to intensified repression of local journalists seeking to cover the protests in Yemen," said CPJ Deputy Director Robert Mahoney. "We call on the authorities to revoke these expulsions and allow all journalists to work freely."

In Bahrain, security forces and men in plain clothes beat Mohammed al-Mukharaq, a photographer working for the independent daily Al-Wasat, according to news reports and local journalists. Mukharaq, wearing a vest that carried the name of his newspaper, told CPJ he was covering a demonstration on Sunday in Manama when a group of 20 or more men approached, beat him, crushed his camera and mobile phone. Mukharaq said he suffered extensive bruising.

Local journalists told CPJ that a list called the "Bahrain list of dishonor," is circulating online and identifying 25 people as "collaborators aiming to sell their country." The author is unclear. CPJ, which reviewed the list, found the names of at least nine critical journalists, including Mansour al-Jamri, editor-in-chief of Al-Wasat; Abduljalil Alsingace, a Bahraini blogger and human rights activist; Ali Abdel Imam, a Bahraini blogger; and Qasem Hussein, a critical columnist. One journalist whose name appears on the list told CPJ: "I don't feel safe anymore. I'm receiving threats via phone telling me that they will stab me in the back and my name is also on the list." The journalist asked not to be identified for fear of reprisal.

"Reports of the existence of a 'Bahrain list of dishonor' are deeply troubling," CPJ's Mahoney said. "The authorities must condemn this list and ensure the safety of all journalists."

Bahraini blogger dies in custody; journalists under attack



New York, April 12, 2011
<http://www.cpj.org/2011/04/bahraini-blogger-dies-in-custody-journalists-under.php>

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on Bahraini authorities to launch an immediate and thorough investigation into the death of a blogger while in state

custody. Bahraini authorities, meanwhile, announced that they would file criminal charges against three senior editors at the Gulf kingdom's premier independent daily, continuing a months-long pattern of violence, harassment, and intimidation against journalists covering widespread civil unrest. CPJ documented other attacks on the press in Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

The blogger, Zakariya Rashid Hassan al-Ashiri, who moderated and wrote for a website that covers news and other developments in his village of al-Dair, died under mysterious circumstances while in government custody on Saturday, regional and international media reported. Security forces arrested al-Ashiri on April 2, according to the same press accounts. He was charged with disseminating false news and inciting hatred, the BBC reported. Although the site is inaccessible inside Bahrain, according to local journalists, CPJ viewed the website and found no basis for the government's allegations. Government claims that al-Ashiri died from complications of sickle cell anemia were vigorously denied by his family, CPJ research shows.

"The circumstances of Zakariya al-Ashiri's death raise numerous questions about his treatment," said Mohamed Abdel Dayem, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. "The government's claim that he died from a pre-existing condition—which is disputed by the family—does nothing to answer any of those questions."

Bahrain's public prosecutor, Ali al-Buainain, will be filing criminal charges against three former editors at the independent daily Al-Wasat, the official Bahrain News Agency reported on Monday. Editor-in-chief Mansoor al-Jamri, Managing Editor Walid Nouwaihith, and Local News Director Aqeel Mirza will be charged with "publishing false reports" and "harming the interests of the country," the news agency said. All three stepped down on April 3 in what al-Jamri described as an effort to save the newspaper. On April 4, another Al-Wasat editor, Ali al-Sharifi, and columnist Rahim al-Kaabi, both Iraqi nationals, were deported from Bahrain.

"If the case against Al-Wasat and its journalists is not a politicized witch-hunt, prosecutors must seriously investigate the paper's claims that they were duped into publishing false information, which was later used as a pretext for manipulating the country's premier independent publication," CPJ's Abdel Dayem said.

Al-Jamri conceded that the news items called into question by the government had been "printed in error," but maintained that the newspaper had not deliberately published misleading information, AFP reported. He told Human Rights Watch that an internal investigation revealed that all six false news leads, which described alleged government misconduct, had come from different email accounts, but had all originated from the same IP address. Human Rights Watch added that the false leads "appeared to have been sent also to other Bahraini newspapers, making them appear more authentic, but with small mistakes in the addresses so that, in fact, Al-Wasat was the only recipient."

Journalists targeted in Bahrain, Yemen, and Libya

New York, February 18, 2011
<http://www.cpj.org/2011/02/journalists-targeted-in-bahrain-yemen-and-libya.php>

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on authorities today in Bahrain, Yemen, Libya to cease their attempts to prevent media from reporting on anti-government demonstrations. Bahraini authorities used live ammunition—including fire from a helicopter—against peaceful protesters and journalists, according to news reports. Pro-government thugs attacked at least two journalists in Yemen, and the Libyan government appeared to be shutting down Facebook, Twitter, and Al-Jazeera's website as a means of silencing reporting on protests.

"Security forces firing on journalists from a helicopter is a dangerous escalation in Bahrain's attempt to censor media

coverage of the political turmoil," said Mohamed Abdel Dayem, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. "The authorities must cease all hostile acts against journalists immediately and allow the press to work freely and securely."

Bahrain:

- According to the New York Times, "forces in a helicopter that had been shooting at the crowds opened fire at a Western reporter and videographer who were filming a sequence on the latest violence." The targeted journalists were Times reporter Michael and Times video producer Sean Patrick Farrell, the paper reported.

- Sixteen foreign journalists from BBC, CNN, McClatchy Newspapers, CBS, and other media outlets were detained at the airport and not allowed to enter the country for several hours, according to local journalists and news reports.

- A local journalist speaking on the condition of anonymity told CPJ that independent journalists are receiving threats via phone and text messages to stop reporting on the crackdown.

- An unidentified foreign photographer was injured and seen being taken to a hospital, according to local journalists.

Yemen

- Today pro-government supporters attacked the bureau chief for Al-Arabiya in Yemen, Hamoud Munser, and the station's unidentified cameraman, who was taken to a hospital, according to local journalists. A correspondent for the Iranian station Al-Aalam TV, Awsan al-Qaatabi, was also attacked and beaten along with Qatar TV cameraman, Yaser al-Maamari. Wadah al-Yemen Abdel Qader, a reporter for Hadith Al-Madina, was detained today in Taiz governorate in central Yemen, local journalists told CPJ.

- On Thursday, Tom Finn, the U.K. Guardian's correspondent in Sana'a, was attacked by a group of men who tried to confiscate his camera.

Libya

- Twitter, Facebook, and Al-Jazeera's website were blocked, according to multiple news reports.

- Al-Jazeera's broadcast was jammed on

Arabsat, the network reported on the air. It continues to broadcast from other satellites.

•Protesters in Benghazi took over a state radio station and are broadcasting live online, according to Foreign Policy. “The radio commentary itself is gripping, with breathless amateur announcers calling on the international media to cover what ‘the criminal Qaddafi’ is doing and warning fellow Libyans about ‘foreign mercenaries,’” the magazine reported.

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In Bahrain, extraordinary tribunal sentences bloggers to life

New York, June 22, 2011

<http://www.cpj.org/2011/06/in-bahrain-extraordinary-tribunal-sentences-bloge.php>

The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns today’s politicized verdict in which 21 bloggers, human rights activists, and members of the political opposition were found guilty of plotting to topple the monarchy. Today’s court ruling further cements 2011 as the worst year for press freedom in Bahrain since the island kingdom declared its independence in 1971.

Among the 21 men convicted are two bloggers, Abduljalil Alsingace and Ali Abdel Imam, as well as prominent human rights activist Abdulhadi al-Khawaja. Alsingace and al-Khawaja were sentenced to life imprisonment, while Abdel Imam was sentenced to 15 years in prison in absentia, the official Bahrain News Agency said. They were found guilty of 12 anti-state charges, most significantly “organizing and managing a terrorist group for the overthrow and the change of the country’s constitution and the royal rule” and “attempting to incite and solicit the overthrow and change the country’s constitution and royal rule by force.”

“The charges against Alsingace, Abdel Imam, al-Khawaja, and their 18 codefendants are nothing more than political score-settling,” said CPJ Middle East and North Africa Program

Coordinator Mohamed Abdel Dayem. “Through its actions, the government of Bahrain has displayed a stunning disregard for due process and basic human rights. It is now incumbent on the international community, and particularly the kingdom’s closest allies, to unambiguously convey to Bahrain that such blatant contempt for basic rights will not be tolerated.”

The trial, ongoing since early May, has been plagued by legal and procedural shortcomings, CPJ research shows. Local, regional, and international rights groups have also documented irregularities.

The accused were tried by the Court of National Safety, an extraordinary tribunal made up of civilian and military judges established after the imposition of martial law in Bahrain in March. The court, described by some legal experts as unconstitutional, has continued to operate after the lifting of martial law in May. Additionally, family members of the detained men, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, and international human rights groups have reported that the court refused to hear testimony or examine evidence of torture. International observers said they were not allowed to attend multiple sessions of the trial, despite government assurances that they would be able, CPJ research shows.

Abdel Imam, a leading online journalist, was initially arrested in September on charges of spreading “false information” while Alsingace, a blogger and human rights activist, was detained in August after accusations of having abused “the freedom of opinion and expression prevailing in the kingdom,” an unnamed security official told local media. Both were released as part of a royal amnesty in late February after the eruption of social unrest. Both men were then rearrested in March. Al-Khawaja, one of Bahrain’s most prominent human rights activists, is the founder and former director of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights. He is also the former regional director of the Dublin-based international human rights organization Frontline Defenders. He has been arrested and tortured in relation to

his human rights advocacy multiple times in recent years, according to CPJ research. CPJ has documented dozens of cases of journalist detentions in Bahrain, the death in custody of two journalists, the shutdown of the country’s premier independent daily, arbitrary deportations, an orchestrated smear campaign against independent journalists and activists, and a large number of physical assaults against reporters since mid-February.

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Kings, queens, and torture in Bahrain

<http://cpj.org/blog/2011/06/kings-queens-and-torture-in-bahrain.php>

Queen Margrethe II of Denmark visited Bahrain in February at the invitation of King Hamad ibn Isa Al Khalifa. As part of the official program, the queen honored Hamad with the “Storkorset af Dannebrog,” the second highest Danish royal order. Although the visit took place about two weeks before Bahraini authorities began a violent crackdown on protesters, Bahrain has long had a troubled human rights and press freedom record. The current crackdown includes serious attacks on the press.

The queen’s visit was not the only recent event in Bahrain creating headlines in Danish news media and in the human rights community. As CPJ reported last week, bloggers Abduljalil Alsingace and Ali Abdel Imam were convicted alongside prominent human rights activist Abdulhadi al-Khawaja in the Bahraini Court of National Safety, a special tribunal composed of civilian and military judges established after the imposition of martial law in March. Back in 1991, al-Khawaja obtained political asylum in Denmark and later received Danish citizenship. Al-Khawaja and his family returned to Bahrain in 2001, news reports said, and he continues to hold dual Bahraini-Danish citizenship.

Alsingace and al-Khawaja were sentenced to life imprisonment, while Abdel Imam was sentenced in absentia to 15 years in prison, the official Bahrain News Agency said. During the politicized trial it was

clear this was not a simply a case against bloggers, human rights activists, and members of the political opposition. This was a trial intended to silence critical voices such as that of al-Khawaja, who has a long record defending the Bahraini people’s rights.

Al-Khawaja founded the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, which has been characterized by the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) as a strong defender of press freedom and the freedom of expression in Bahrain.

Al-Khawaja has defended the rights of the bloggers he has now been convicted alongside. In 2005, he said: “Ironically, the old press law did not include electronic media. But when the term ‘electronic media’ was inserted into the 2002 press law, this gave the authorities capacity to control electronic media without clear constraints.”

Last year, according to Danish-based International Media Support (IMS), al-Khawaja led the IMS-supported Arab Working Group in monitoring Bahraini media’s coverage of the country’s elections in October 2010. Jesper Højberg, executive director of IMS, described al-Khawaja as “a key player in the fight for human rights and a free and fair media in Bahrain.”

Al-Khawaja, who was arrested and badly beaten on April 9, was one of 21 people found guilty of antistate charges, most significantly “organizing and managing a terrorist group for the overthrow and the change of the country’s constitution and the royal rule” and “attempting to incite and solicit the overthrow and change the country’s constitution and royal rule by force.”

In May, Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch, said: “It appears that Abdulhadi al-Khawaja’s jailers tortured him during the month they held him in incommunicado detention.” Human Rights Watch has documented the routine use of torture by Bahraini security officials during similar interrogations in political and security-related cases.

According to the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, al-Khawaja told his family

about one of the instances of abuse when he was given a few minutes to talk with them after a May 16 hearing. That week, al-Khawaja said, he was driven to an undisclosed location where he was questioned, in a room with a video camera, by a man who said he represented the king. The man asked al-Khawaja repeatedly to apologize to the king. When al-Khawaja refused, he was taken to another room where four men threatened to rape him and rape his daughter, human rights defender Maryam al-Khawaja. The four men undressed themselves and groped al-Khawaja, he said.

Back in February, the Danish newspaper Politiken said, the Danish queen told reporters at a press conference in Bahrain that she did not see “any reason” to reconsider her visit in the country. The queen continued: “In Bahrain, it is obvious they worry about the situation in the entire region. It was evident; the King is paying attention to what is going on.”

Bahrain detains columnist; 4 located in Libya

New York, April 25, 2011

<http://www.cpj.org/2011/04/bahrain-detains-columnist-4-located-in-libya-yemen.php>

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on Bahraini authorities to disclose the whereabouts of Haidar Mohammed al-Nuaimi, a columnist for daily newspaper Al-Wasat. Roughly 30 uniformed and plainclothes police raided al-Nuaimi’s family home in Manama today, dragging him into the street and beating him, local journalists told CPJ.

Al-Nuaimi was then taken to an unknown location, according to the same accounts. A Facebook page in support of Al-Wasat recounts the same events in Arabic.

On Thursday, Amani al-Muskati, another reporter with Al-Wasat, was detained at the Bahrain International Airport upon her return from Egypt. Al-Muskati was later transferred to a Manama police station for interrogation and then released a few hours later, local journalists told CPJ.

Earlier in April, the authorities accused Al-Wasat of “deliberate news fabrication and falsification.” Since then, the government has announced it will file criminal charges against three of the daily’s senior editors and has deported two other staff members. Karim Fakhrawi, founder and board member of Al-Wasat died in state custody on April 12 under suspicious circumstances. Zakariya Rashid Hassan al-Ashiri, who moderated and wrote for a website that covers news and other developments in his village, also died under suspicious circumstances while in government custody on April 9.

“We are concerned for the safety of Haidar Mohammed al-Nuaimi,” said CPJ Middle East and North Africa Program Coordinator Mohamed Abdel Dayem. “The Bahraini government must clarify the reasons for his arrest and account immediately for his whereabouts. This is doubly urgent after a publisher and a blogger died in state custody and the authorities failed to convincingly explain the two deaths.”

Elsewhere in the region:

In Libya, American photographer James Foley, who was detained near Brega on April 5, was permitted to call his family on Saturday for the first time since his capture, Global Post reported. He told his mother that he was being treated well and was uninjured, according to the same report. Spanish photographer Manuel Varela, who was detained with Foley, was also able to call his family, his father told CPJ.

Anton Hammerl, a freelance South African photographer and Clare Morgana Gillis, an American freelancer, appeared in government custody on Friday and are apparently in good health, CPJ research shows.

On Sunday, Yemeni security forces surrounded the home of Mohammed al-Lawzi, a reporter for independent daily Akhbar Al-Yawm, according to the Yemeni Journalists’ Syndicate. Local journalists told CPJ that no one was arrested and that authorities gave no reason for the three-hour-long siege.

Yemeni authorities, in an echo of past

arbitrary confiscations, seized shipments of several independent publications. On Friday, Republican Guards confiscated a shipment of unknown size of the independent weekly Al-Shahid, and 8,000 copies of the independent weekly Al-Yaqeen in the southern cities of Aden and Taiz, the Yemeni Journalists’ Syndicate said.

Bahrain manipulates daily; attacks in Libya, Iraq, Yemen

New York, April 4, 2011

<http://www.cpj.org/2011/04/bahrain-manipulates-critical-daily-attacks-in-liby.php>

The Bahraini government continued its attempts at muzzling critical media with the Ministry of Information ordering the country’s premier independent daily temporarily shut down on Sunday. The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns the Bahraini government’s strong-arm tactics, which effectively forced a change in a prominent paper’s editorial management. In Libya, Iraq, and Yemen, independent and critical media continue to be targets for government intimidation and harassment, CPJ research found.

Al-Wasat did not appear on newsstands on Sunday and its online edition was disabled, according to local and international news reports. The Information Ministry accused Al-Wasat of “deliberate news fabrication and falsification during the recent unrest that gripped the Kingdom of Bahrain,” the official Bahrain News Agency reported. On Monday, president of the Information Affairs Authority, Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohammed al-Khalifa, lifted the ban after the paper’s editor-in-chief, Mansoor al-Jamri, Managing Editor Walid Nouwaihidi, and Local News Director Aqeel Mirza stepped down.

“Resigning was a difficult decision but it is what was needed to safeguard the newspaper and the livelihood of its staff,” al-Jamri told CPJ. “The paper has been subjected to a relentless campaign of intimidation by the authorities.”

Bahrain has intensified its crackdown on media since imposing a state of emergency last month, CPJ research shows.

“Alleging bias in Al-Wasat’s coverage without providing credible evidence to support such a claim is laughable,” said Mohamed Abdel Dayem, CPJ’s Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. “Bahrain has previously hurled unsubstantiated accusations of bias in order to silence critical media, most prominently against Al-Jazeera last year when the government wanted to shut the channel’s local bureau.

Lotfi al-Messaoudi, one of four Al-Jazeera journalists detained by Libyan authorities, was released and arrived in Tunisia on Sunday night, the Qatar-based news station reported. Al-Massaoudi, along with colleagues Ahmed Vall Ould Addin, Kamel Atalua, and Ammar al-Hamdan, were arrested in mid-March and freed on Thursday only to be re-arrested on the same day. The three journalists remain in custody, according to Al-Jazeera. At least seven local journalists who spoke critically of government policies remain missing amid wide speculation that they are in the custody of forces loyal to Qaddafi.

“We are relieved that Lotfi al-Messaoudi has been released, but remain concerned about the fate of the other missing and detained journalists in Libya,” said CPJ’s Abdel Dayem.

On Sunday, Libyan authorities ordered London’s Daily Telegraph correspondent Damien McElroy to leave Tripoli, according to news reports. The Libyan government provided no justification for its action. On Wednesday, the government expelled Reuters correspondent Michael Georgy, who had been covering the conflict for several weeks. Again, no reasons were given for the expulsion.

In Iraq today, security forces arrested Murtadha al-Shahtour, media director of Al-Nasiriyya’s police department and a regular contributor to the independent daily Azzaman and other news websites. On January 2, al-Shahtour published an article on the website Kitabab in which he criticized government policies

related to security issues. Kitabat said that al-Shatour's detention stems from the January 2 article; the Journalistic Freedoms Observatory (JFO), a local press freedom group, concurred.

Security forces arrested Raya Hama Karim, a correspondent for the independent weekly *Hawlati* and Niyaz Abdullah, a journalist and a board member of JFO, in Iraqi Kurdistan today, news reports said. Both were covering student protests at a university in Arbil. In Yemen, Ahmad al-Aghbry, a journalist working for the official SABA News Agency and a member of the Yemeni Journalists' Syndicate, told CPJ that he received an email that it interpreted as a threat. In the email, the sender accuses al-Aghbry of possessing information about an upcoming terrorist attack, adding that he would be held accountable for it, al-Aghbry told CPJ. The syndicate condemned the threat, and called on the Interior Ministry to seriously investigate this and similar previous threats. CPJ has documented dozens of threats made against journalists during the past two months in person, on the telephone, and over email.

Reuters said that Syrian authorities freed its Damascus-based photographer Khaled al-Hariri on Sunday, six days after detaining him. Al-Hariri was the last of five Reuters journalists who had been detained incommunicado by Syrian authorities in the past two weeks. All have since been released. On Friday, two correspondents for The Associated Press were ordered to leave the country with less than an hour's notice, the news agency reported. CPJ continues to track the cases of a handful of local journalists who have been rounded up in Syria, either while reporting or from their homes.

Journalists detained in Bahrain, Egypt

New York, March 30, 2011

<http://www.cpj.org/2011/03/journalists-detained-in-bahrain-egypt.php>

A CNN crew was detained today in Manama while interviewing a prominent Bahraini human rights defender, according to a Twitter posting by the network and a CPJ interview. The detentions come amid a recent series of repressive actions by the Bahraini government, which included today's arrest of a well-known blogger. Anti-press actions were also reported in Egypt, Syria, and Libya, CPJ research shows.

CNN tweeted this evening from Bahrain that a crew had been detained at the home of Nabeel Rajab, president of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights. Rajab told CPJ that the crew included CNN journalists Scott Bronstein and Taryn Fixel, along with an unidentified cameraman. He said a fourth journalist, an unidentified documentary filmmaker, was also detained.

Rajab said masked men in seven police cars descended on his home. "They pushed me against the wall, insulted me and ordered me not to say a word," Rajab told CPJ. "Then they proceeded to ask the journalists who they worked for and told them that they would be taken for interrogation." The journalists were freed hours later, a CNN spokesman said.

Prominent Bahraini blogger Mahmood al-Yousif was also detained today, according to a local journalist and the blogger's brother. On his blog, al-Yousif regularly wrote about Bahraini politics, society, and recent demonstrations. Police arrested al-Yousif at his home around 3 a.m., according to his brother, Jamal, who posted details on Twitter.

Al-Yousif was among the first journalistic bloggers in Bahrain, according to CPJ research. He was also the administrator of JustBahraini, a website that featured a campaign against sectarianism and was closed by the government in 2009, according to Jillian York, a U.S.-based

blogger and Internet freedom advocate.

"We call on Bahraini authorities to release our detained colleagues without delay," said Mohamed Abdel Dayem, CPJ's Middle East and North Africa program coordinator. "Government officials must recognize that journalists don't create unflattering news; they simply report it." Editor's note: This alert was updated in paragraph three to report the release of the four journalists in Bahrain.

CPJ calls on Bahrain to end harassment of critical journalists

New York, July 19, 2011

<http://cpj.org/2011/07/cpj-calls-on-bahrain-to-end-harassment-of-critical.php>

The Committee to Protect Journalists calls on Bahrain to end harassment and contrived legal proceedings against critical journalists. Since February, critical journalists have been intimidated, interrogated, smeared in government-owned and -aligned publications, and harassed and sued by government supporters.

Reem Khalifa, a journalist for the much-harassed Arabic-language daily *Al-Wasat* and a contributor to other local and international media, has been the target of harassment, intimidation, and a coordinated smear campaign; most recently she was also charged with verbally abusing and physically assaulting a government supporter, according to local news reports.

"Bahrain's government has a responsibility to protect journalists from those who resort to threats of violence, intimidation, or fabricated criminal charges to influence coverage," said CPJ Middle East and North Africa Program Coordinator Mohamed Abdel Dayem. "The government should halt the smear campaign in pro-government publications against critical journalists."

Khalifa was at a press conference held by an Irish delegation of medical, political, and human rights practitioners at a

Manama hotel on Thursday evening. The press conference ended prematurely after government supporters and journalists with state media outlets bullied delegation members, as well as independent and critical journalists, according to CNN. When Khalifa tried to interview a member of the delegation she was repeatedly interrupted by a small group of pro-government medical practitioners, who followed and taunted her, according to Khalifa and corroborating testimony by other journalists who were present.

An argument ensued and Khalifa reached to take a camera away from a woman who was haranguing and filming her. Described by various news outlets as a physician or a nurse, Hind al-Fayez claimed that Khalifa had hit her. CPJ's review of the video footage and still shots from it indicate that Khalifa did not strike al-Fayez. On Sunday, Khalifa was summoned by the public prosecutor for questioning and was released pending an investigation, according to local news reports. Khalifa denied all accusations and filed a counterclaim for insult and invasion of privacy.

Meanwhile, state media have engaged in a smear campaign against Khalifa, reporting on the incident as if she had committed a crime and had been found guilty of it. *Al-Watan*, *Al-Ayyam*, *Akhbar al-Khaleej*, *Al-Bilad*, and the official Bahrain News Agency all described her as an assailant and most attached misleading still shots from the video that insinuate that Khalifa had struck al-Fayez.

Khalifa has frequently been a target of government supporters on social networking sites. In some instances, anonymous individuals wrote entries tracking her whereabouts, indicating where she could be harassed. In one posting, a Twitter user announced when and where Khalifa picks up her children from school, imploring readers to "go say hello."

Khalifa is not alone; CPJ research reveals that numerous critical journalists have been subjected to the same tactics, including local journalists Maryam al-Shrooqi, Lamees Dhaif, Naziha Saeed,

Mazen Mahdi and international journalists Mohammed Fadel and Fredrick Richter.

Al-Shrooqi, who has been subjected to politicized legal proceedings in 2009 for exposing institutional discrimination against Shia and writing about other politically sensitive topics, has faced intimidation in recent months. On July 7, al-Shrooqi, who is also employed by the Ministry of Education, was summoned for interrogation at a school by the director of private education, the journalist said. For three and a half hours, she was aggressively questioned about an alleged allegiance to Shia citizens and about her writings for the daily Al-Wasat, the journalist said.

Thousands of Bahrainis have been demonstrating since February, calling for increased political rights and an end to discrimination against the Shias, who constitute the majority of the population are politically underrepresented.

Aside from the campaign of harassment and intimidation against these critical journalists, since the uprising began, CPJ has documented dozens of cases of journalist detentions in Bahrain; the death in custody of two journalists; lengthy prison terms for critical bloggers; the shutdown of the country's premier independent daily; arbitrary deportations; government-sponsored billboards and advertisements to smear journalists and activists; and a large number of physical assaults against reporters.

4- Others

Front line

Journalist harassed after press briefing in Bahrain

Posted on 2011/07/17

<http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/15539>

I to r, Khalid Ibrahim, Senator Averil Power, Professor Eoin O'Brien Dsc, MD, FRCP(Lond), FRCP(Edin) and Professor Damian McCormack Mch, FRCS Orth. Following a press briefing organised by the Irish delegation of medical, political and human rights figures at the end of their visit to Bahrain on 14 July 2011 the journalist Ms Reem Khalifa was surrounded by pro-Government protesters and abused and harassed. The protesters then called the police and claimed one of their number had been struck on the jaw. Eye witnesses to the encounter have testified that no person was struck and that it was Ms Reem Khalifa who was the victim of harassment and that she then walked away from the confrontation in the hotel lobby.

Further Information

The Irish delegation press briefing had been disrupted by a small group of women who shouted repeatedly. Delegation members were interviewed by a number of journalists including Reem Khalifa at the end of the briefing. When Reem Khalifa went to exit through the lobby of the Ramada Palace Hotel she was surrounded by a small group of women who shouted abuse at her, seemingly because she had been undertaking her legitimate journalistic activity and interviewing members of the delegation.

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Bahrain Center for Human Rights

Bahrain: Continued harassment of journalists

<http://bahrainrights.hopto.org/en/node/4396>

16 July 2011

The Bahrain Center for Human Rights condemns the continued harassment of journalists in Bahrain. Journalist Reem Khalifa was recently harassed, insulted, and had her privacy violated by pro-government members while attending a press conference in Manama on 14 July 2011.

Journalist Reem Khalifa has been increasingly targeted after speaking openly at a press conference^[1] of the Bahraini Foreign Minister Sheik Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa on 17 Feb 2011. Khalifa said in front of local and international media attending the conference that what happened in Bahrain, referring to the attack on peaceful protestors at 3am on 17 Feb 2011, was a massacre and called on the King of Bahrain to intervene and put an end to the crisis. Amid her emotional speech, she said that she was "shivering" because of what happened. The FM tried to silence her as she spoke and her intervention was removed from the playback on the State TV. The UAE Foreign Minister and Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council also attended the conference.

Since then, Reem Khalifa has been continuously targeted by pro-government supporters, particularly in social media, and received a death threat by telephone. She had to close her original twitter account (@reemkhalifa17) in February.

The latest harassment directed at her took place on 14 July 2011 while she was attending the Irish delegation to Bahrain press conference around 7.30 pm at the Ramada Palace Hotel, Manama, Bahrain. Ten to 15 pro-government

doctors and reporters for the state-run media interrupted the Irish delegation as they were briefing the press. The press conference was abruptly brought to a halt when a pro-government group of men and women[2] interrupted with objections. The group provoked Reem Khalifa by forcing a confrontational encounter with the journalist, encircling her and using abusive language, such as, "you are the shivering and weeping lady," in reference to her intervention at the 17th Feb conference. One woman started filming Khalifa, and continued to do so despite calls from her to stop. When Khalifa tried to turn off the camera phone, the woman claimed to be hit. Because the situation was heated, Khalifa left the hotel.

According to witnesses[3], the woman, who was laughing when Khalifa left the hotel, claimed that she was hurt and punched in the jaw by Khalifa. She was encouraged to convert laughter into weeping, and then called the TV crew to record an interview of her giving an account of what happened.

The BCHR has learnt that the woman has filed a case against Reem Khalifa accusing her of physical and verbal assault. Khalifa has also filed a case against the woman for verbal assault and for assault on her personal privacy through persistent filming of her and publishing the video on the internet without permission.

The Bahrain Press Association (London) has issued a statement [4] to condemn the continuation of the regime's provocative practices against journalists to hamper their work of professionalism and impartiality." It also said that "what happened with Reem Khalifa is a repeat of previous incidents where the state deliberately sabotaged many press conferences."

•Journalists in Bahrain: The Murder of Free Speech and the Siege of Freedom

•Foreign journalists face continued harassment and restrictions by Bahrain authorities

[1]<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKNVIVpnUoQ>

[2]<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/>

meast/07/14/bahrain.irish.delegation/
[3]<https://twitter.com/#!/MazenMahdi/status/91563720412631041>

<https://twitter.com/#!/MazenMahdi/status/91610583274749953>

<https://twitter.com/#!/HussainMJawad/status/91800049809489920>

<http://bahrainmirror.com/article.php?id=1411&cid=74>

[4]<http://bahrainmirror.no-ip.org/article.php?id=1397&cid=73>

Amnesty

Amnesty International: **Bahrain: Further information:** **Bahraini poet released**

15 July 2011

<http://amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE11/039/2011/en/a540f86e-b40a-411c-91d4-ebed74a507b3/mde110392011en.html>

A Bahraini poet sentenced in June for reading a poem was released on 13 July. However, there are reportedly conditions attached to her release and Amnesty International is calling on the authorities to remove any that have been imposed, to annul her conviction and to clarify her current legal status.

Ayat al-Qarmez, a poet and university student at the Faculty of Teachers in Bahrain, sentenced to one year in prison for reading a poem, was released on 13 July. Shortly after her release Amnesty International talked to her lawyer and family, who said that Ayat was well and happy to be free. However, her release is reportedly conditional on not travelling outside Bahrain or speaking to the media about her detention. The Military Prosecutor said that her release was at the request of the lawyer. The family received a phone call from a police station in Issa Town asking them to pick up Ayat on 13 July, but without providing any further information on Ayat's current legal status. In February, while attending a pro-reform rally in Manama, Ayat al-Qarmez read out one of her poems, which she said was addressed to the King of Bahrain. Its lyrics include the lines "We are the people who

will kill humiliation and assassinate misery / Don't you hear their cries, don't you hear their screams?" Ayat al-Qarmez was forced to turn herself over to the authorities on 30 March and was sentenced on 12 June by Bahrain's National Safety Court of First Instance – a military court – to one year in prison for taking part in illegal protests, disrupting public security and inciting hatred towards the regime. Ayat alleges she was beaten and tortured with electric shocks while she was imprisoned and held in solitary confinement for the first 15 days of her detention.

Amnesty International considered Ayat a prisoner of conscience and called for her immediate and unconditional release and for charges against her to be dropped.

Independent

Independent: Poet jailed in protests claims she was beaten by Bahraini royal

Ayat al-Gormezi says she was tortured while in jail for reciting a poem at a pro-democracy protest. Patrick Cockburn reports

18 July 2011

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/poet-jailed-in-protests-claims-she-was-beaten-by-bahraini-royal-2315431.html>

A female member of the al-Khalifa royal family in Bahrain has been accused of repeatedly beating the 20-year-old student poet Ayat al-Gormezi when she was in prison accused of reciting a poem at a pro-democracy protest rally criticising the monarchy.

In an interview with The Independent, Ms Gormezi, who became a symbol of resistance to oppression in Bahrain, said that although her interrogators had tried to blindfold her, "I was able to see a woman of about 40 in civilian clothes who was beating me on the head with a baton". Ms Gormezi later described her interrogator to prison guards, who, she said, promptly named the woman as being one of the

al-Khalifas with a senior position in the Bahraini security service.

"I was taken many times to her office for fresh beatings," Ms Gormezi said. "She would say, 'You should be proud of the al-Khalifas. They are not going to leave this country. It is their country.'"

The guards explained that it was not her regular job, but she had volunteered to take part in questioning political detainees.

Ms Gormezi was detained on 30 March at her parents' house after spending two weeks in hiding when the government, backed by a Saudi-led force, started a brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protests in mid-March. She had been targeted by the authorities after she read out a poem at a rally in February which contained the lines: "We are the people who will kill humiliation and assassinate misery. We are the people who will destroy injustice."

Addressing King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa directly, she said of the Bahraini people: "Don't you hear their cries? Don't you hear their screams?" As she finished speaking the crowd roared: "Down with Hamad!"

Subjected to nine days of torture after her detention, Ms Gormezi described how she was beaten across the face with electric cables, kept in a tiny, freezing cell and forced to clean lavatories with her bare hands. All the while, she was beaten on the head and the body until she lost consciousness. "Many of the guards were Yemenis and Jordanians," she said. The recruitment of members of the Bahraini security forces from foreign Sunni states is one of the grievances of Bahrain's Shia majority, which says it is excluded from such jobs.

In a phone interview after her release, Ms Gormezi said she does not regret reading her poem in Pearl Square, the centre of Bahrain's democratic protests in February and March. "What I said was not a personal attack on the King or the Prime Minister but I was just expressing what the people want. I have written poetry since I was a child, but not about politics. I did not think it was dangerous at the time. I was just expressing my opinion."

After the crackdown on protesters in Bahrain started in mid-March, the tall monument in Pearl Square was demolished and even the Bahraini coin showing it was withdrawn. Anybody supporting the protests was in danger of detention and torture. Ms Gormezi's family sent her to stay with relatives, which she "did not want to do. But after two weeks the security forces threatened my family and I had to give myself up. As I was taken away in a car, my family were told to pick me up at a police station the following day, so they thought it was not serious".

Her mistreatment started immediately. She said: "There were four men and one woman in the car, all wearing balaclavas. They beat me and shouted 'you are going to be sexually assaulted! This is the last day of your life!' They also made anti-Shia remarks. "I was terrified of being sexually assaulted or raped, but not of being beaten."

The vehicle she was in, escorted by the army and police, did not immediately go to the interrogation centre but drove around Bahrain. Another woman, whom Ms Gormezi said was a member of the teachers' organisation, was arrested and put in the boot of the car. Eventually, it reached the interrogation centre, which evidently doubled as a prison. Ms Gormezi said the beatings never stopped: "Once they told me to open my mouth and spat in it." The first night she was put in a tiny cell. "It smelled awful and I could not sleep because of the screams of a man being tortured in the next cell."

The second night she was placed in another cell with the two vents for air conditioning producing freezing air. She was taken out for regular beatings. "I was very frightened," she said. "But I did not think they would kill me because every time I lost consciousness from the beatings, they called a doctor."

Surprisingly, for the first four or five days, the interrogators did not ask Ms Gormezi about reading out her poem in Pearl Square. They abused the Shia in general, saying they were "bastards" and not

properly married (the accusation stems from the Shia institution of temporary marriage and is often used as an insult by Sunnis).

"When they did ask me about the poem, they kept saying: 'Who asked you to write it? Who paid you to write it?'" Ms Gormezi said. They insisted she must have been ordered to do so by Shia leaders in Bahrain or was a member of a political group, which she denies.

The interrogators also kept saying she must owe allegiance to Iran. An obsessive belief that Shia demands for equal rights in Bahrain must be orchestrated by Tehran has long been a central feature of Sunni conspiracy theorists. "They kept asking me: 'Why are you loyal to Iran? Why are you not loyal to your own country?'" Ms Gormezi said. "I said it was nothing to do with Iran. I am a Bahraini and I was only trying to express what the people want."

After nine days in the interrogation centre, Ms Gormezi was taken to a second prison in Isa town in Bahrain. For a week she was in solitary confinement and was given medication so the signs of her beatings were less visible. She was then taken to a more general prison where physical mistreatment stopped and there were four other women. "After 16 days they let me talk to my family," she said. "It was meant to be for three minutes but they let me talk for 10. Once they took me back to the first interrogation centre to record a video apologising to the King."

International protests and ensuing bad publicity for the Bahraini monarchy led to her treatment improving, according to her family. Ms Gormezi was brought before a court on 12 June and sentenced to one year in prison, a shorter sentence than her family had feared. Last week she was called to an office in the prison and told she was to be released on the condition that she should not take part in other protests.

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Aljazeera

Arrests force Bahrain's writers into exile

Journalists say they have been targets of government repression since pro-democracy protests began earlier this year.

by: Matthew Cassel
15 Jul 2011

<http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/features/2011/07/2011715122752588509.html>

Writer Ali al-Jallawi says he was lucky to end up in exile and not in prison after leaving his native Bahrain in April.

Speaking by phone to Al Jazeera from a UK border agency detention facility outside London, al-Jallawi, a published novelist and poet, said he would rather leave his country than go to prison again. In 1993, al-Jallawi was arrested and imprisoned for six months at the age of 17 for a poem he wrote criticising the monarchy. In 1995, he was again arrested and served three years for campaigning for civil and political rights in Bahrain, he said.

"To get arrested for a third time is too much," said al-Jallawi. "I have a ten-year-old son who I want to spend time with. It's too much to spend more time in jail."

Bahraini writers - journalists, academics, novelists, poets, bloggers, and others - have been targets of state repression since pro-democracy protests began in February.

The Sunni monarchy, a close ally of the US and Saudi Arabia, has accused the mostly Shia protesters of being sectarian and trying to spread Iranian influence in the country.

Shias in Bahrain, who make up a majority of the population, are excluded from most high-level political positions and the security forces.

After one month of protests, the government declared martial law on March 15 and invited troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to help quell the demonstrations.

Sending a message

On March 30, 20-year-old Ayat al-Qarmezhi was arrested weeks after reading a poem at Pearl Roundabout, the epicenter of the protest movement. In her poem, al-Qarmezhi read the words: "We are the people who kill humiliation and assassinate misery. We are the people who will destroy the foundation of injustice."

Al-Qarmezhi also criticised the nation's monarchy and led chants condemning sectarianism calling Sunnis and Shias "brothers". After her arrest, Amnesty International said that freedom of speech and assembly was "brutally denied to ordinary Bahrainis".

On April 2, blogger Zakariya Rashid al-Ashiri was arrested for spreading "false news" and "inciting hatred." After a few days in prison al-Ashiri died, authorities claimed that the cause was complications related to sickle cell anemia.

On April 5, Karim Fakhrawi, a publisher, board member of the independent daily al-Wasat and friend of al-Jallawi, was arrested and died days later under similar circumstances while in detention. Authorities claimed his death was the result of kidney failure.

However, relatives and human rights advocates in Bahrain presented images showing bruises on the bodies of both Fakhrawi and al-Ashiri, and accused authorities of killing the men in detention. Al-Jallawi said about his friend's death: "They want to send a message to anyone who tried to be against them: 'we will kill you. Go f**k off and shut up.'"

The Bahrain government didn't respond to Al Jazeera's questions regarding its treatment of journalists.

Chasing the "wanted"

Since the protests began, pro-government groups posted the names and pictures of individuals "wanted" by the state on various websites. Many were called "traitors," and accused of "inciting violence" and "promoting sectarianism". Many of those who didn't turn themselves into authorities went into hiding. "Wanted" men left their wives and children to seek refuge, and others

stayed at home waiting for the inevitable middle-of-the-night police raid to take them.

Al-Jallawi, who like al-Qarmezzi was guilty of reciting a poem at the Pearl Roundabout, went into hiding with the start of emergency law. After seeing «wanted» images of himself online, followed by a visit by security forces to his parents' home, he decided it was time to leave Bahrain.

Unable to flee by land - the causeway, the only land exit, had been closed since Saudi troops entered over it - al-Jallawi and others could leave only from the airport. To his surprise, Al-Jallawi and at least seven other writers who he knows were all able to leave.

The writers began their trip into exile by traveling through Arab countries where they didn't need visas to visit. Eventually, many ended up buying plane tickets to destinations that transferred in London, where they could go to airport authorities and declare themselves political refugees seeking asylum. London has long been home to a community of exiled Bahrainis, all dissidents forced to leave the country over past decades.

The asylum process worked for most. But al-Jallawi, who had a visa to Germany to attend a writers' conference, was detained by the UK border agency. Speaking to Al Jazeera on Tuesday, al-Jallawi said, «Unlike Bahrain, here it's by law. They insult you by law, deport you by law, detain you by law. They take all your human rights by law.»

«I didn't expect any of this. I thought I came to a country where they would respect me as a writer, where the police

respect your rights as a human,» al-Jallawi said. «It's not justice here but it's the law, even if they kill people or separate them from their families.»

One day later, the British government deported al-Jallawi to Germany, where he now waits in limbo as authorities there decide his fate.

Halting journalism

With many now outside Bahrain, writers and journalists are organising themselves with the hope of one day returning home. On July 9, a group of exiled journalists met in London to form the Bahrain Press Association to counter the government's attacks on the media.

Co-founder and general secretary Nada al-Wadi told Al Jazeera, «We felt the need [as journalists] to unite ourselves ... our main purpose is to speak on behalf of journalists inside and outside Bahrain and spread the word about what's happening to them.»

Al-Wadi, a journalist who had reported for the daily USA Today and other publications during the protests, was detained in April and released only after signing a paper saying that she would not write on or engage in any political activities.

Al-Wadi said that, «when detaining journalists the authorities didn't treat them as journalists, [they were treated] as protesters». Journalists were detained and tortured, she said, and writers have either had to stop practicing their profession or leave the country.

On Thursday, rights groups in Bahrain said that around 200 detainees were released from prison, among them the poet Ayat al-Qarmezzi who remains under house arrest.

The release comes as the government is trying to engage the dialogue with some of the opposition. Groups and individuals who were part of the protest have criticised dialogue attempts, demanding greater representation and the release of hundreds still in prison.

For al-Wadi, any dialogue between the government and opposition groups «can't be successful without critical and independent voices» being heard in the nation's media.

Too soon to return

Some of the journalists who left Bahrain during the crackdown have since received invitations from the government to return, al-Wadi said. However, most feel it's unsafe to return.

If the exiled writers were to go back then «they'll tell the true story, and I don't know if [everyone in] Bahrain is ready to know what happened,» she said.

Al-Jallawi said that something similar happened in the 1990s when exiled dissidents were invited back to the country, many of whom accepted the invitation have now been imprisoned during the recent protests.

Before he would accept an invitation to return home, al-Jallawi wants the government to address the demands of demonstrators and offer equal rights to all Bahrainis.

Until then, al-Jallawi said: «It's like a house that's going to fall, and you say to me, «come live in the house you will be safe.» I'm not going to trust you. Fix that house and then ask me to come and I will come with pleasure!».

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PEN INTERNATIONAL

BAHRAIN: poet and writer arrested; fears for safety.

7 June 2011

<http://www.internationalpen.org.uk/go/news/bahrain-poet-and-writer-arrested-fears-for-safety>

The Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) of PEN International is deeply concerned about the arrests of poet and student Ayat Al-Gormezi (f) and writer and journalist Abbas Al-Murshid who have been held since 30 March and 15 May 2011 respectively. They are believed to be detained for their peaceful dissident activities and have reportedly been tortured in detention. PEN calls for their immediate and unconditional release and seeks urgent guarantees of their safety. It reminds the Bahraini authorities of their obligations to protect the right to freedom of expression as guaranteed by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bahrain is a state party.

According to PEN's information, Ayat Al-Gormezi, 20, was arrested on 30 March 2011 after reading a poem at a pro-democracy rally in Pearl Square in which she criticised the ruling family and asked for transparency. She was forced to turn herself in when masked police threatened to kill her brothers unless she did so. She has not been seen since her arrest, although her mother spoke to her once by telephone and Ayat said that she had been forced to sign a false confession.

Her mother has since been told that her daughter has been in a military hospital after being tortured.

Al-Gormezi appeared on 2 June 2011 before a military tribunal in Manama on charges of «insulting the king, taking part in banned gatherings, and spreading false information.» The trial has been adjourned until 12 June 2011, when a verdict is expected to be delivered. She is the first woman to go on trial following the unrest and it is feared she will face a heavy prison term if convicted. An excerpt of Ayat al-Gormezi's poem follows, translated from the Arabic by Ghias Aljundi:

We do not like to live in a palace
And we are not after power
We are the people who
Break down humiliation
And discard oppression
With peace as our tool
We are people who
Do not want others to be living in the
Dark Ages

Abbas Al-Murshid, a well-known Bahraini writer and researcher, and a frequent contributor to the Bahraini daily *Al-Waqt* as well as numerous online publications. He has written about Bahrain's social unrest, corruption, institutional discrimination and other topics considered sensitive by the government. He was summoned on 15 May 2011 to appear at Al-Naeim police station for interrogation and has not been seen since. No charges have yet been made against Al-Murshid. On 16 May 2011, he called his family to tell them that he had been placed under arrest and then the line was disconnected. Al-Murshid has been previously arrested on several occasions in relation to his writing and many of his books have been banned in Bahrain. At the end of January 2009, Al-Murshid was hit above his eye with a rubber bullet in a targeted attack and as a result he had to be admitted to hospital.

Background

Protests led by Bahrain's majority Shia community against the government's policies have been underway since mid-February 2011. The Bahraini security forces

have responded with excessive force, using tear gas and live bullets to disperse demonstrators. Dozens of civilians have reportedly been killed and many more wounded. The Bahraini government declared a State of Emergency on 15 March 2011 and brought in troops from neighbouring Gulf countries including Saudi Arabia to help suppress dissent. The State of Emergency was lifted on 3 June 2011 but the detainees arrested under that law are still in detention.

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WORD LEADING TO DEATH



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