
**121st Session – ICCPR
State of Bahrain
Shadow Report submitted by**

**Salam for Democracy and Human Rights
Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights
Bahrain Forum for Human Rights**

**Bahrain's Compliance with the
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**



24 July 2017

Introduction

The Government of Bahrain ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention against Torture (CAT), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). However, despite its ratification of the international treaties and commitment to defend human rights, the brutal human rights abuses have been continuously reported.

A worrying new set of methods repressing the human rights of the Bahraini citizens has come into practice. The government have continued to curtail civil rights, particularly freedoms of expression, association and assembly through various unlawful measures.

By revoking nationality of more than 350 Bahrainis, the government has been wielding 'citizenship' as a weapon of control and oppression. It has also criminalised freedom of assembly and expression, by implementing unnecessary restraints and inappropriate regulations on peaceful assembly.

Prison officers; who had not given any proper training on the lawful use of force, have physically assaulted a number of detainees.

The security apparatus, also, has continued to use torture to extract false confessions. Regrettably, children have been no exception from becoming victims of human rights abuses, and have been routinely detained without clear charges, which often results in ill-treatment on a serious level.

Assessment

Article 6. Death Penalty

Bahrain ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) on September 20, 2006 (Opening sentence). Article 6 of ICCPR clearly states that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life. It also emphasises that the death penalty would be imposed only for the most serious crimes.

However, the government of Bahrain, have deployed the death penalty as a tool of political revenge. Since the civil unrest in 2011, Bahrain's courts have continued to confirm a number of death sentences, some in marital courts and others in criminal courts.

Most recently, on 10 May 2017, Bahrain's High Appeals court upheld the death sentence of Maher Al Khabbaz, on charges related to his alleged role in the murder of a police officer in February 2013.

Additionally, on 9 January 2017, the Bahraini authorities upheld the death sentence against three activists – Sami Mushaima, Abbas Al-Samea, and Ali Al-Singace, who were arrested in 2014, being accused of killing three policemen in a bombing incident, known as 'Al-Daih Blast'. After exhausting all legal procedures, on 15 January 2017, the three activists were immediately executed.¹

The execution of the three activists was the first executions of Bahraini citizenship holders since 1996, although the victims were technically stateless after being stripped of their citizenship. This proves the serious retrogression of human rights in the country in the last two decades.

¹ Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, "Bahrain Executes Three Stateless Torture Victims Following King Hamad's Authorisation," 15 January 2017, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/8434>.

The Constitution of Bahrain does not refer to the death penalty, and it is unclear whether the death penalty is mandatory for any offence in Bahrain.² Nevertheless, the death penalty in Bahrain has been carried arbitrarily and discriminately, especially against political dissidents.

Besides, the Bahraini courts have continued to disregard evidence and proofs that the security apparatus is involved in death cases, torturing prisoners, extracting false confessions and firing live rounds during its crackdown on peaceful protests.

All those sentenced to death have complained of the same or similar treatments and processes, including arbitrary arrests, harsh torture, and trials based on obscure and questionable evidence. The typical practices endured by death row inmates include blindfolding, long periods of forced standing, electrocution, insults, sleep and deprivation, etc.³

These measures strongly indicate and illustrate a political scheme, which the government implements against the citizens.

So far, the total number of Bahraini citizens on death row is five; all coming from politically related backgrounds. All of them have suffered mistreatment, torture, and unfair trials, as a retaliation for their activism demanding rights and reforms, following the uprisings in 2011.⁴

² Cornell Centre on the Death Penalty Worldwide, <https://www.deathpenaltyworldwide.org/country-search-post.cfm?country=Bahrain#f14-2>.

³ Salam for Democracy and Human Rights (2017), "Systematic Torture in Bahrain," http://www.salam-dhr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Systematic-Torture-in-Bahrain_-22-Mar-2017.pdf.

⁴ Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, "Bahrain Court of Cassation Upholds Death Sentence against 3 Torture Victims," 9 January 2017, <http://www.adhrb.org/2017/01/11579/>.

Article 7. Freedom from Torture and Other Inhuman Treatment

Article 7 of the ICCPR stipulates that No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.⁵

Widespread Torture in Bahrain

Despite its ratification of the international treaties, including the ICCPR, and commitment to fight against torture during the BICI investigation in 2011, Human Rights Council mechanisms, the brutal torture cases have been continuously reported in Bahrain.⁶

According to the Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission (PDRC) report in 2015, prison officers; who had not given any proper training on the lawful use of force have physically assaulted a number of prisoners.⁷ (SS)

The Criminal Investigations Directorate (CID), Dry Dock Prison and Jau Central Prison, in particular, have been ill reputed prisons, for coercive interrogations and human rights abuses. A number of former detainees have given testimonies that they were subject to physical assault, including electric shocks, suspension in painful positions, compulsory standing for prolonged periods, exposure to extremely low temperature, sexual assaults and abuses, and other forms of torture. Most of them were not permitted to contact their families, nor request proper legal assistance. This is also a serious violation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which aims at preventing the occurrence of enforced disappearance, adopted by the United Nations, in 2006.

⁵ <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf>

⁶ Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry Report substantially discussed cases of torture. For instance, look at p.225, 241-246, 432-478, <http://www.bici.org.bh/BICIreportEN.pdf>.

⁷ Prisoners & Detainees Rights Commission (2015) "Report on the Unannounced Visit to the Jau Rehabilitation & Reformation Centre (JRRRC), http://pdrc.bh/mcms-store/pdf/75846ed3-8c59-4daf-a7b6-c4111f45a6b9_Jau-English-Final.pdf.

Use of Torture to Extract False Confessions

The Bahraini security apparatus has continued to practise torture against detainees to extract false confessions. All prisoners who are sentenced to death have complained of the same or similar conducts and processes of torture, including among others, blindfolding, long periods of forced standing, electrocution, insults and humiliation, sleep deprivation, etc.

The three victims of the recent execution in January 2017, Sami Mushaima, Abbas Al-Samea, and Ali Al-Singace were severely tortured by police, and were forced to sign false confessions under duress.

For instance, although being illiterate, Sami Mushaima was forced to sign documents. Besides, Mushaima was known that he had never been involved in activism, though he had a family member who was a prominent opposition politician.

Furthermore, Abbas al-Samea, a teacher who was at school at the time of the blast incident, had been admitted to hospital for surgery after interrogation due to torture.

The third victim, Ali Al-Singace was convicted in absentia. Al-Singace was arrested as a teenager, and was harshly tortured using electric shocks.⁸ (SS)

Lack of Impartial Instrument for Investigation

Although the ill-treatment of detainees has been continuously reported, there has been almost no proper prosecution of senior officers who have been accused of being in charge of torture. Since 2012, the government of Bahrain has established three instruments to investigate cases of torture and mistreatment—the Ombudsman, Special Investigations Unit (SIU), and Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission (PDRC)—as recommended by the BICI report.

Despite the establishment of these bodies, there have been no appropriate convictions in alleged cases of torture. Only between May 2015 and April 2016, up to 992

⁸ Reprieve, “Three Executions in Bahrain Imminent Without Urgent Action,” 14 January 2017, <http://www.reprieve.org.uk/press/three-executions-bahrain-imminent-without-urgent-action/>.

investigation case requests were made to the Ombudsman, which was formed to receive complaints in order to investigate torture and ill-treatment cases; yet no appropriate conviction was handed out against any senior officer with all cases generally dismissed.⁹ In addition, the Special Investigation Unit SIU has never taken serious measures to investigate these complaints, preferring form over substance rather than any practical steps to protect detainees and prisoners.

Likewise, the authorities have impeded investigations of the international community on torture in Bahrain. In 2012 and 2013, the government of Bahrain postponed the scheduled visit of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture. It has been also reported that the government provides false information to third parties.

For instance, with regards to a torture case of the 32-year-old detainee, Muhammad Ramadan, the Bahraini authorities responded to a question raised by the UK government that there had been no such allegation, contradictory to several independent and documented human rights reports.¹⁰

On top of that, a number of state perpetrators of torture have been promoted with impunity. For instance, Bassam Al-Muraj, who has been accused of supervising the systematic torture for years, was promoted to be the General Director for Anti-Corruption, Economic and Electronic Security in the General Directorate in 2013, without any investigation of torture allegations.¹¹

Article 9. Arbitrary Arrest and Enforced Disappearance

Article 9 of ICCPR states that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention, and anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him.

⁹ Human Rights Watch, "Bahrain: Lagging Efforts to End Torture," 13 June 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/06/13/bahrain-lagging-efforts-end-torture>.

¹⁰ The Guardian, "Bahrain Torture 'Ignored' by UK-Funded Monitor," 16 July 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/16/bahrain-torture-foreign-office-criticised>.

¹¹ Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, "Bahrain: An Oasis of Torture," 26 June 2013, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/6193>.

Nonetheless, the government of Bahrain has continued to arrest citizens, without presenting a warrant or informing them of any charges. Furthermore, most of the former detainees have given testimonies that they were not permitted to contact their families, nor request proper legal assistance upon arrest. This is a serious violation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance that aims to prevent the occurrence of enforced disappearance, adopted by the United Nations in 2006.

For instance, Khalil al-Marzooq, a former Member of Parliament of the largest dissolved opposition bloc Al Wefaq, was arrested after his call for peaceful protests in 2013. His lawyer was not able to meet him before the trial.¹² Likewise, since June 2016, a prominent human rights activist Nabeel Rajab has been arrested, without a warrant at his home, and no reason was given.¹³ The list goes on.

Article 10. Treatment in Detention

A proper treatment of prisoners is essential as illustrated in Article 10 of the ICCPR. However, a number of human rights organisations have continued to receive many reports and testimonies about prohibiting detainees, especially those who suffered from torture, from medical care and psychological rehabilitation. Many are forced to wait for treatment or operation for more than months to no avail, which seriously has led to a critical deterioration of their health conditions.

For example, the victim of torture, Akbar Ali, who was recently released, was prevented from his right to treatment by the administration of 'Jau Central Prison', despite his deteriorating psychological condition due to the severe torture he had been subjected to. Akbar Ali had survived several suicide attempts before his release, as a result of the condition he sustains during his arrest.

¹² Amnesty International, "Urgent Action: Prominent Bahraini Opposition Member Jailed," 19 September 2013.

¹³ Front Line Defenders, "Case History: Nabeel Rajab," <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/case-history-nabeel-rajab>.

Muhammad Faraj is sentenced to seven years in prison. As a result of the chronic disease, he suffers from Multiple Sclerosis (MS), which needs periodic and regular treatment. The administration of Jau prison has declined to offer him a medical treatment, which has led to multiple health complications.

Elyas Faisal Al Mulla who serves a 15 years imprisonment, is also a victim of torture. Although he has developed cancer, he has been denied medical treatment that caused health complications. The prison administration has deliberately delayed his treatment, ignoring the fact that both local and international laws guarantee the proper medical treatment, and as stipulated in the Constitution of Bahrain. (SS)

Jaafar Oun was tortured in the head area, which caused complications, the most recent of which was a swelling of the head. He has repeatedly asked for treatment, and to be diagnosed by a specialist doctor, outside the prison clinic. However, the prison administration of Jau Prison has procrastinated his transfer to a specialised hospital, which may cause serious health complications.¹⁴

The absence of treatment after relentless torture has occasionally taken away the lives of various inmates. In November 2014, a 35-year-old prisoner, Hasan Majeed al-Shaikh had been severely beaten to the extent of having his skull and jaw broken and kidney ruptured. He had been placed in solitary confinement without proper medical treatment, which eventually resulted in his death.

In March 2017, Muhammad Sahwan, a victim of excessive torture, died in the infamous Jau Prison, due to heart failure. Sahwan was shot by security forces in 2011, but had never been treated for the 80-birdshot pellets in his head. He had been denied full treatment despite his life was at risk, which resulted in a sudden cardiac arrest, and his death in custody, on 17 March 2017.¹⁵

¹⁴ Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, "Bahrain Must Provide Prisoners with Full Access to Adequate Medical Care," 5 August 2016, <http://bahrainrights.org/en/node/8051>.

¹⁵ Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, "Mohammad Sahwan Dies in Jau Prison, Police Attack His Funeral," 17 March 2017, <http://www.adhrb.org/2017/03/12002/>.

Article 12. Freedom of Movement

Article 12.2 maintains that everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own.

Travel ban

The government of Bahrain does not comply with Article 12 of the ICCPR which stipulates that everyone has the right to liberty of movement and shall be free to leave any country, including his own.

Since 22 August 2016, the government imposed a travel ban on around 20 human rights defenders attending the 32th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. Although it was temporarily lifted after the session, since March 2017, the government of Bahrain have enhanced the surveillance and travel bans against human rights defenders, which resulted in the enforced absence of Bahraini activists from the 34th and 35th Session of the UN HRC.

On both occasions, the authorities, including the Public Prosecutor, accused the activists of fabricated allegations, such as their attendance at illegal gatherings in the besieged village of Duraz, the area which has been sanctioned for non-residents to enter for almost over a year, after the revoking the citizenship of its resident Shaikh Isa Qassim. As a result of the counterfeit charges, more than 50 political and media activists, and human rights defenders remain under a travel ban for an indefinite term.

Article 14. Rights to a Fair Trial

Article 14 of the ICCPR expounds in details the citizen's right to be impartially tried.

Subjective and Biased Verdicts

Article 14 of the ICCPR ensures rights to a fair trial without undue delay, and without any external pressure. The courts of Bahrain have exhibited a clear bias towards politically-motivated verdicts, relying on false testimonies, issuing massive sentences, and giving green-lights for death sentences despite international condemnation.

Shaikh Ali Salman, the Secretary General of Al-Wefaq, the most influential and largest dissolved political group in Bahrain, has been sentenced in July 2015 to four years in jail, after being convicted of inciting hatred and calling for forceful regime change. His sentence was bizarrely intensified to nine years after an appeal by his defence counsel.¹⁶ In the same year, former MP Jameel Kadhim, chairman of the consultative council of Al-Wefaq, was arrested for '*making false allegations that undermined national elections*,' after criticising the role of political money in decision-making and sentenced to 6 months in jail.¹⁷

In 2011, two medics were put on a military trial, and sentenced between 5 and 15 years, under charges of felony and misdemeanours. For instance, Dr Ali Al-Ekri, a renowned paediatric orthopaedic surgeon working at the Salmaniya Medical Complex for more than 20 years, was sentenced to 15 years, later reduced to 5 years after appeal, being accused of a felony. During the protests in February 2011, he offered emergency treatment at the medical tent that had been set up at the 'Pearl roundabout'; the central protest's site. Al-Ekri, further, helped in evacuating women and children, after the raid on the site, which caused his arrest in the following month.¹⁸

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Bahrain: 9-Year Sentence for Opposition Leaders," 2 June 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/06/02/bahrain-9-year-sentence-opposition-leader>.

¹⁷ Reuters, "Bahrain Confirms Six-month Sentence for Opposition Official-Lawyer," 15 February 2015, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-bahrain-court-idUKKBN0LJOWI20150215>.

¹⁸ Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, "Dr. Ali al-Ekri Completes Sentence, Released from Prison," 10 March 2017, <http://www.adhrb.org/2017/03/dr-ali-al-ekri-completes-sentence-released-prison/>.

Enactment of Laws Prohibiting Military Courts from Trying Civilians

With regards to a fair trial, on the contrary to its commitment to enact laws that would prohibit civilians being tried in military courts, the government of Bahrain has empowered the military institution, in March 2017.

By approving a constitutional amendment to Article 105(b), military trial for civilians has been legalised, which is a serious violation of international fair trial standards. The government of Bahrain has empowered its security agencies; consequently has facilitated the political persecution of the opposition and civilians, under the pretext of *'fighting terrorism.'*¹⁹

Article 18. Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion

Article 18 emphasise on the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

The government of Bahrain have increased restrictions on freedom of religion and conscience of Bahraini citizens, especially depriving the majority of Shiites population of their rights to worship and practice their religious belief. This is a serious violation of Article 18 of the ICCPR, which stipulates that everyone has right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the freedom to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

Violation against Religious Freedom and Restrictions on Religious Activities

A number of religious scholars have been detained (synonyms usage) simply for their expression of opinion. Many of them have been banned from organising religious activities. This has been demonstrated by the political dissolution, disguised under a judicial judgement against the religious authority, the Ulama Islamic Scholars Council, in 2014, as a part of the ongoing systematic prosecution against the Shiites citizens.

¹⁹ Human Rights Watch, "Bahrain: Proposed Military Trials of Civilians," 23 February 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/23/bahrain-proposed-military-trials-civilians>.

In 2016, the authority accused the prominent religious leader, Shaikh Isa Qassim, of money laundering, revolving around khums, an annual payment made by Shiites Muslims to assist the poor. By charging the highest cleric of religious practice with collecting *'illegal'* donation, the regime is criminalising religious practice of Shiites Muslims.²⁰

Furthermore, the government of Bahrain have (collective noun) failed to implement the commitment to rebuild the 38 demolished Shiites mosques. Despite its pledge to complete reconstruction of some of Shiites mosques by 2014, the government have continuously delayed the plan, and by 2015, only 12 out of the 38 mosques were reconstructed.

Moreover, there were several other places of worship have been destroyed since its acceptance of the BICI and the UPR recommendations. The government have further permanently confiscated lands where demolished mosques used to stand.²¹

Discrimination in Education

Education is a basic human right, guaranteed and safeguarded by all international covenants, conventions and agreements. It is a fundamental right of all human beings, without discrimination based on affiliation, race, colour, language, religion or other reasons. Nonetheless, in Bahrain, since 2011, the Ministry of Education has increased the level of discrimination in the curriculum, employment and promotions, and distribution of scholarships. The government has been targeting Shiites citizens, especially, as a method of reprisal for their participation in public protests calling for reforms.

²⁰ Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, "Government of Bahrain Must Drop Charges, Reinstate Citizenship of Sheikh Isa Qassim," 19 May 2017, <http://www.adhrb.org/2017/05/government-bahrain-must-drop-charges-reinstate-citizenship-sheikh-isa-qassim/>.

²¹ The Centre for Academic Shi'a Studies, "The Destruction of Places of Worship in Bahrain," September 2014, <http://www.shiaresearch.com/Doc/The-Destruction-of-Places-of-Worship-in-Bahrain.pdf>.

The government of Bahrain has deliberately imposed a biased curriculum for religious education, in all public and almost all private schools, based on the Islamic Sunni Doctrine. The government have ignored various religious diversities in the country, in particular the Shiites citizens who represent 65-70 % of the demographic population.

Shiites (Standard term of Shiaa) specialist teachers have been obviously marginalised in the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Directorate, while no other sects or beliefs than Sunni doctrine are permitted to be taught in the official curriculum.

Employment discrimination has seriously caused public grievances in the past years. It was reported in 2016 that 1,573 Bahraini teachers, all of whom are Shiites, were unemployed, while foreign teachers have readily been employed, representing 20 percent of the total number of employees in the educational sector.

Furthermore, a number of Shiites employees in education have been arbitrarily transferred to lower positions or positions that do not come within their area of expertise, or assigned tasks that do not match their job title.²²

Likewise, scholarships represent one of the manifestations of blatant discrimination and sectarian oppression in Bahrain. Shiites students have been deprived of their educational rights, amid a sharp increase in discrimination in the distribution of scholarships. In 2015 alone, 34 percent of the high-achieving students were deprived of scholarships, which has caused observers to rightly accuse the government of distributing educational support based on the students' political or sectarian affiliation.²³

²² Bahrain Teachers Society, "Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review 27th Session of the UPR Working Group: Discrimination in Education," 22 September 2016, https://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/bahrain/session_27_-_may_2017/bta_upr27_bhr_e_main.pdf.

²³ Ibid.

Article 19. Freedom of Expression

Article 19 highlights the right to freedom of expression.

The government of Bahrain has criminalised and sabotaged freedom of expression through various unlawful measures and manipulation of relevant domestic laws. They have implemented unnecessary restraints and inappropriate regulations, and arbitrarily interpreted the law, which infringes Article 19 of the ICCPR.

As a consequence, a worrying new set of methods repressing the human rights of the Bahraini citizens has (refers to set) come into practice. A number of political and religious leaders, journalists, human rights activists, and bloggers have been sentenced merely for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

The persecution of former Members of Parliament has been particularly serious, since 2011. The vast majority of them have moderate and peaceful views, in regard to their justifiable demands for political reform, transparency, rule of law, and the empowerment of Parliament, etc. These demands have been branded by authorities as 'extremist and radical' propaganda.

As a result, a number of former MPs have been targeted and punished for their political views, many of whom come from different backgrounds and sections of society. Khalil Marzooq, Matar Matar, Osama Al-Tamimi, Hasan Sultan, Hasan Isa, Jawad Fairouz, Jalal Fairouz, Khalid Abdilaal, Sayed Jamil Kadhem, Majeed Al-Sabi', and Sheikh Ali Salman have been targeted by the government due to their critical stance against the government.

Their cases clearly illustrate the extent the Bahraini authorities are going to ensure a constricted policy on freedom of opinion and expression against all citizens, and is further proof of the absence of democracy in Bahrain.

Instead of protecting rights of citizens, the government of Bahrain enhanced regulations that criminalise the legitimate exercise of rights to freedom of expression. The government, further, have approved amendments to Article 364 of the Penal Code which would increase the penalty for *'insulting' Parliament, security forces, judges or*

public interests to two years' imprisonment, and increased the punishment for publicly encouraging others to *'defame' to three years*' imprisonment, or longer for slander in the media.²⁴

Article 21. Freedom of Assembly

Article 21 stipulates that the right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (*ordre public*), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.²⁵

The government of Bahrain have restricted practices relating to freedom of assembly by manipulating relevant domestic laws. To illustrate, the government of Bahrain have criminalised and sabotaged peaceful assembly, including the Duraz sit-in, in solidarity with Shaikh Isa Qassim, the prominent religious Shiites leader, whose citizenship has been revoked since June 2016, and who has been rendered stateless to date.

Since June 2016, the security apparatus has entirely sieged the village of Duraz, whose population reaches 18,000. The authorities have used excessive force against citizens in the area, who merely call for reform and justice, in response to the citizenship revocation of Shaikh Qassim.

In early 2017, the Bahraini security forces have launched a new phase of a harsh crackdown on Duraz village, using the excessive force against citizens who were calling for reform and justice. The 18-year-old Mustafa Ahmed Hamdan was died on 24 March 2017, after being shot in the head with the internationally prohibited shotgun pellets.²⁶

²⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Interfere, Restrict, Control: Restraints on Freedom of Association in Bahrain," 20 June 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/06/20/interfere-restrict-control/restraints-freedom-association-bahrain>.

²⁵ <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf>

²⁶ Reuters, "Young Bahraini Dies After Being Shot Outside Shi'ite Leader's House: Activists," 24 March 2017, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-bahrain-security-death-idUSKBN16V2E8>.

On 23 May 2017, hundreds of security forces launched another repressive measure to disperse peaceful protesters, resulting in the deaths of five and dozens of injured.

Article 22. Freedom of Association

Article 22 illustrates that no restrictions may be placed on the exercise of the right of freedom of association than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society.

Since 2006, the following human rights NGOs, cultural, and political societies been dissolved: Bahrain Centre for Human Rights, the Ulama Islamic Scholars Council, Al Resala Cultural Society, Islamic Enlightenment Society (Taw'iyā), Islamic Action Society (Amal Party), Al Wefaq National Islamic Society.

Most of all, the forceful dissolution of largest political society, Al-Wefaq, has irritated the vast majority of the Bahraini public. There was a brief and opaque court procedure, which concluded with a severe and highly inflammatory result to close the party, to seize (spelling) and sell off its assets. No proper and fair appeal process was permitted to contest the decision – with the party's secretary-general, Sheikh Ali Salman, undergoing an intensified sentence after appealing to reconsider the judgment against him.²⁷

While other long-standing societies, Taw'iyā and Al Resala (usage of different spelling), were also closed and their assets were seized.

The most influential liberal party, Wa'ad, has also been targeted, with numerous suspension orders handed to it over the last few years. In March 2017, a case has been lodged to dissolve the party.²⁸

²⁷ Aljazeera, "Bahrain Dissolves Main Shia Opposition Al-Wefaq Party," 17 July 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/bahrain-dissolves-main-opposition-party-160717132556468.html>.

²⁸ BBC News, "Bahrain Court Dissolves Main Secular Opposition Group," 31 May 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-40104731>.

Article 24. Rights of Children

Article 24.3 emphasis on the right of the child to have to acquire a nationality.

The government have revoked nationality of more than 350 Bahrainis, wielding citizenship as a weapon of control and oppression. This unlawful measure causes a serious violation of Article 24 of the ICCPR, which demonstrates that every child has the right to acquire a nationality, as the citizenship revocation may render numerous children in statelessness.

The impacts of citizenship revocation are especially harmful to children. They may be born stateless or fall into such predicament later in life, as a result of the revocation of a parent's legal status. They become deprived of fundamental rights to safety and security, and denied access to basic medical care and education.

Conclusion

As investigated, despite its ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), there has been no meaningful compliance with the most of its Articles. The government of Bahrain have increased restrictions on freedoms of expression, assembly, association and religion to all of its citizens, targeting whoever raise their voices against the government, calling for democracy and demanding due rights. The arbitrary measures of the authorities have resulted in numerous victims of torture, travel ban, revocation of citizenship, and the death penalty.

Therefore, continued support, encouragement and pressure are in urgent need to be exercised, by the UN human rights bodies, influential governments, international and local NGOs, and activists. No doubt, an effective and collaborative work would ensure that the government of Bahrain implements its commitments and pledges, and that the systematic policy changes for the real promotion and protection of all human rights, and

thus for the welfare of all Bahraini citizens, complying with the international norms and standards, including the ICCPR.