

URGENT ACTION

JAILED ACTIVISTS DENIED MEDICAL TREATMENT

Hassan Mshaima' and Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, two of the 13 jailed prominent Bahraini opposition activists, have been denied urgent medical treatment. They are prisoners of conscience.

Hassan Mshaima', a diabetic and former cancer patient, needs regular hospital check-ups. In about February 2013 the prison doctor said he needed an examination by a specialist in a hospital and would probably need surgery. The prison authorities have been refusing to take him to a hospital unless he wears the prison uniform. Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace has also been refused treatment for deterioration in his eyesight and rapid heartbeat.

The 13 opposition activists have been refusing to wear the prison uniform, saying it is only worn by criminals and to wear the uniform would be to admit criminality. Because they are well-known political and religious figures in Bahrain they have been allowed to wear civilian clothes, including during visitation by family members and relatives, since their arrest. However, since mid-March the prison authorities have insisted that the 13 must wear prison uniform during visits allegedly to humiliate them in front of their families. The 13 have refused to wear the uniform and thus have not been able to see their families. Every time families go to the prison they are told they cannot visit because the prisoners are "refusing prison instructions". Until now all 13 have been allowed to wear their normal civilian clothes inside the prison. The prison authorities have also been denying them access to the prison shop where they buy basic personal necessities such as soap, shampoo, shaving material and telephone cards for their regular calls to their families.

The High Criminal Court of Appeal in the capital, Manama, issued its verdict on 4 September 2012, upholding their convictions and sentences of between five years and life in prison on charges including "setting up terror groups to topple the royal regime and change the constitution". The Court of Cassation upheld their convictions on 7 January.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the Bahraini authorities to provide Hassan Mshaima' and Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace with any medical attention they may require, including access to regular check-ups in specialised hospitals.
- Urging them to release all 13 opposition activists immediately and unconditionally, since they are prisoners of conscience, convicted solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Urging the Bahraini authorities to allow them immediate access to their families, lawyers and to any adequate medical treatment they require.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 JULY 2013 TO:

King

Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa

Office of His Majesty the King

P.O. Box 555

Rifa'a Palace, al-Manama, Bahrain

Fax: +973 1766 4587 (keep trying)

Salutation: Your Majesty

Minister of Interior

Shaikh Rashid bin 'Abdullah Al Khalifa

Ministry of Interior

P.O. Box 13, al-Manama, Bahrain

Fax: +973 1723 2661

Twitter: @moi_Bahrain

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs

Shaikh Khalid bin Ali bin Abdullah Al

Khalifa

Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs

P. O. Box 450, al-Manama, Bahrain

Fax: +973 1753 1284

Email: minister@justice.gov.bh

Twitter: @Khaled_Bin_Ali

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the eleventh update of UA 139/11. Further information: <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/053/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

An Amnesty International delegation visited Jaw Prison on 24 January 2013 and met Hassan Mshaima'. He complained about the medical treatment he was receiving, which he said was inadequate. Hassan Mshaima' who fears that his cancer may have returned has not been given any test results, though he insisted on receiving them. He said, "It is harassment as when I go to hospital for the treatment that lasts up to six hours, my face is covered and I cannot see the doctor or the medical staff." For further information see the report "*Freedom has a price: Two years after Bahrain's uprising*", <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/005/2013/en>.

Fourteen opposition activists were arrested between 17 March and 9 April 2011. Most were arrested in the middle of the night by groups of security officers who raided their houses and took them to an unknown location, where they were held incommunicado for weeks. Many of the 14 have alleged they were tortured during their first few days of detention when they were being interrogated by officers from the National Security Agency (NSA). None of the 14 was allowed to see their lawyers during NSA interrogations just after they were arrested. Some saw their lawyers during questioning by the military prosecutor ahead of the trial, while others were only allowed to see them during the first court hearing in May 2011, which was the first time any of the activists had seen their families since their arrest.

On 22 June 2011, Bahrain's National Safety Court, a military court, announced its verdict and sentenced them to between two years and life in prison on charges including "setting up terror groups to topple the royal regime and change the constitution". Seven of the 14 activists were sentenced to life imprisonment: Hassan Mshaima', Abdelwahab Hussain, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad, Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad and Sa'eed Mirza al-Nuri. Four people, Mohammad Hassan Jawwad, Mohammad 'Ali Ridha Isma'il, Abdullah al-Mahroos and 'Abdul-Hadi 'Abdullah Hassan al-Mukhodher, were sentenced to 15 years in prison. Two people, Ebrahim Sharif and Salah 'Abdullah Hubail al-Khawaja, brother of 'Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, were given five-year prison terms while Al-Hur Yousef al-Somaikh received a prison sentence of two years.

On 28 September 2011, in a session that lasted only a few minutes, the National Safety Court of Appeal, a military appeal court, upheld all the convictions and sentences imposed on the 14 opposition activists. On 30 April 2012, the Court of Cassation in Manama ordered the retrial of the men before a civilian court. On the same day it reduced Al-Hur Yousef al-Somaikh's two-year sentence to six months. He was immediately released as he had already served his sentence. However, the other 13 remained behind bars in Jaw prison. Their appeal before a civilian court of appeal started on 22 May 2012.

On 14 July the Appeal Court ordered the press not to report any information relating to the case of the 13 opposition activists and stated that future hearings would take place behind closed doors. The final verdict on the case was due to be announced on 14 August 2012 but the session was further postponed until 4 September. Dr Ghanim Alnajjar, an internationally recognised human rights expert, who observed the court proceedings on behalf of Amnesty International, said, "The decision to postpone the final verdict is unjustified, and is tantamount to a denial of justice." Amnesty International sent Ahmad Nashmi al-Dhaferi, a Kuwaiti lawyer, to observe the court hearing on 4 September 2012. For more information on this case and others see the report *Flawed Reforms: Bahrain fails to achieve Justice for protesters*: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE11/014/2012/en>

Names: Hassan Mshaima', Abdelwahab Hussain, Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, Dr 'Abdel-Jalil al-Singace, Mohammad Habib al-Miqdad, Abdel-Jalil al-Miqdad, Sa'eed Mirza al-Nuri, Mohammad Hassan Jawwad, Mohammad 'Ali Ridha Isma'il, Abdullah al-Mahroos, 'Abdul-Hadi 'Abdullah Hassan al-Mukhodher, Ebrahim Sharif, Salah 'Abdullah Hubail al-Khawaja
Gender m/f: All male

Further information on UA: 139/11 Index: MDE 11/019/2013 Issue Date: 14 June 2013