

URGENT ACTION

GRAND PRIX PROTESTORS TORTURED

Nafeesa al-'Asfoor, a mother-of-two, was arrested along with Rayhana al-Mousawi on 20 April as they were peacefully protesting near the Formula One Grand Prix circuit in Manama. They are both to be tried, have been tortured and Nafeesa al-'Asfoor is being denied the medical care she requires.

Nafeesa al-'Asfoor, 31, and **Rayhana al-Mousawi**, 38, were arrested on 20 April near the Manama Formula One Grand Prix circuit, while participating in a protest against the imprisonment of prominent Bahraini political activists, including Zainab Al-Khawaja. The two women told their families that they had been tortured or otherwise ill-treated by the police during interrogation. They were forced to sign confessions which they later withdrew when interrogated by the Public Prosecution. They have both been charged with "attempting to plant an exploding device at the race circuit" and "membership of a "terrorist" group". Their case is currently under investigation by the Public Prosecution. Rayhana al-Mousawi is being tried in another case known as the "the 14 February Coalition Cell". During the first session of the trial in early July Rayhana al-Mousawi told the court that she had been tortured, including by being threatened with rape. The trial has been adjourned till September. Nafeesa al-'Asfoor and Rayhana al-Mousawi are held in a women's detention centre in 'Issa Town, south-west of the capital Manama.

Nafeesa al-'Asfoor is being denied adequate medical care as she has found suspicious breast lumps and suffers from other health conditions, including migraines that require regular medication. Her family have requested several times that the prison administration refers her to the Salmaniya Medical Complex for treatment. She has only been granted preliminary medical examinations at the Bahrain Defence Force military hospital and has so far not been informed of the results.

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

- Urging the Bahraini authorities to provide Nafeesa al-'Asfoor, with any medical attention she may require, including access to specialised hospitals;
- Urging the Bahraini authorities to release Nafeesa al-'Asfoor and Rayhana al-Mousawi immediately and unconditionally if they are held solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly;
- Urging the authorities to order an immediate and independent investigation into Nafeesa al-'Asfoor and Rayhana al-Mousawi's allegations of torture and bring anyone found responsible for abuses to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 02 OCTOBER 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
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 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
Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The “February 14 coalition” is a movement of several Bahraini youth groups, named after the date of the beginning of Bahrain's uprising in 2011, and led by anonymous individuals who organise protests mainly via new-media sites.

In the run up to the April 2013 Formula One Grand Prix in Bahrain, clashes between protesters and security forces increased and continued during the event, resulting in dozens of arrests. Later on 24 April the Bahraini government cancelled a planned visit by the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on torture for a second time in two years.

More than two years since the uprising in Bahrain and the subsequent fanfare of reform, prisoners of conscience (including many arrested during the protests) remain behind bars and the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly are still being suppressed. In recent months more people have been jailed simply for daring to express their views, whether via Twitter or during peaceful marches. Bahraini courts have appeared more concerned with toeing the government's line than offering effective remedy to Bahrainis and upholding the rule of law.

In response to a recent increase in violence, and in anticipation of planned large demonstrations by the opposition, Bahrain's parliament held an extraordinary session on 28 July at which it submitted 22 recommendations to the King, Shaikh Hamad Bin 'Issa Al Khalifa; the recommendations toughen punishments laid out in the 2006 anti-terrorism law. The King welcomed the recommendations the next day, and ordered the prime minister to ensure that they were urgently implemented by the government.

The King issued two emergency decrees on 6 August 2013. One of them amends the 1973 Law on Public Gatherings and Demonstrations, to ban demonstrations, sit-ins, marches and public gatherings in the capital, Manama. The 1976 juvenile law was also amended and now stipulates that if anyone under 16 years of age takes part in a demonstration, public gathering or sit-in, his or her parents will be warned in writing by the Ministry of Interior. If six months after the warning the juvenile is found in a new demonstration his or her father could face jail, a fine or both. Amnesty International fears that these draconian measures will be used, as was the case on 14 August, to crack down on anti-government protests.

Name: Nafeesa al-'Asfoor; Rayhana al-Mosawi

Gender m/f: F

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