

URGENT ACTION

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE DENIED MEDICAL NEEDS

Prisoner of conscience Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb has been denied his medication for hypertension and diabetes since March. He has also been denied supportive shoes which his doctor says are needed to help alleviate his back pain, which he has suffered from since his torture in 2011.

The family of **Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb** told Amnesty International that prison officers in Jaw prison, south of the capital Manama, have prevented him from receiving his medication for hypertension and diabetes and other vitamin tablets since the start of the Jaw prison riots in March 2015. The prison doctor told Mahdi Abu Dheeb that his family needed to bring this medication to the prison but when they have done so, the prison officers have refused to take it saying that they have not received orders allowing him medication from outside the prison.

Mahdi Abu Dheeb called his family on 23 August and said that the doctor told him to ask them to bring in supportive shoes for him to wear to help alleviate his back pain. The following day, his family brought shoes to the prison but the prison officers refused to take them using the same pretext as above.

Mahdi Abu Dheeb sustained back injuries, including a slipped disk, from his torture during the 64 days he was held in solitary confinement after his arrest on 6 April 2011. He has since found it difficult to walk without support and has had to occasionally use a wheelchair. He told his family that during the prison riots in March 2015, he was forced to stand for a prolonged period of time, and is now not able to walk without support.

Mahdi Abu Dheeb is currently serving a five-year prison sentence for participating in and leading the February 2011 anti-government protests. He is due for release in April 2016.

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

- Urging the Bahrain authorities to immediately allow Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb to receive his medication, vitamins and supportive shoes;
- Urging them to release him immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 OCTOBER 2015 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
Email: info@interior.gov.bh
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: <http://www.moj.gov.bh/en/default76a7.html?action=category&ID=159>
Twitter: @Khaled_Bin_Ali

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the tenth update of UA 227/11. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/060/2012/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb is the former president of the Bahrain Teachers' Association (BTA). He was sentenced before the National Safety Court of First Instance, a military court, on 25 September 2011 to 10 years in prison, alongside Jalila al-Salman, vice-president of the BTA, who was sentenced to three years. Both were charged with, among other offences, using their positions within the BTA to call for a strike by teachers, halting the educational process, "inciting hatred of the regime" and "attempting to overthrow the ruling system by force", possessing pamphlets and disseminating fabricated stories and information. On 21 October 2012, Mahdi Abu Dheeb's sentence was reduced to five years and Jalila al-Salman's to six months by the High Criminal Court of Appeal, a civilian court. He has since been serving his sentence in building 10 of Jaw prison.

Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb was detained on 6 April 2011 after a raid on his uncle's house. His family did not know where he was for 24 days. He spent 64 days in solitary confinement, during which he says he was tortured, including by being beaten on the head, back and legs and being forced to remain standing for prolonged periods of time. His family and lawyer were only allowed to see him during the first session of his trial on 7 June 2011. In April 2012, during a session of his appeal trial, Mahdi Abu Dheeb detailed acts of torture to which he was subjected by security officials and named the officers he said had tortured him, prompting the prosecution to open an investigation and question him in June about his torture. The same month, his lawyers complained that a medical examination of Mahdi Abu Dheeb was not "independent" and requested an examination by an independent medical practitioner in compliance with the Istanbul Protocol relating to the medical examination of alleged torture victims. The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is still yet to complete its investigations and the officers he accused of torturing him have yet to be brought to trial.

For further information see the November 2012 report *Reform shelved, repression unleashed* (<http://amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE11/062/2012/en/>) and the April 2015 report *Behind the rhetoric: Human rights abuses in Bahrain continue unabated* (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde11/1396/2015/en>).

Name: Mahdi 'Issa Mahdi Abu Dheeb

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 227/11 Index: MDE 11/2330/2015 Issue Date: 26 August 2015