



CASE STUDY OF KHALIL AL-JANAHI

“We were afraid that something bad might have happened to him, that he might have been tortured. We called the prison but they would respond: “Be patient, the investigation is not finished.” I cried: “Let me just hear my husband’s voice”. His disappearance was so sudden... Me and my family kept asking ourselves: Why is it happening?”

Wife of Khalil al-Janahi



On 26 April 2007, **Khalil ‘Abdul Rahman ‘Abdul Karim al-Janahi**, aged 37, a Bahraini-born United Arab Emirates (UAE) national and a student of Shari’a (Islamic law) in Saudi Arabia, went to Riyadh to catch a plane back to Bahrain to see his wife and attend the marriage of his niece, only to be arrested at passport control and taken to ‘Ulaysha Prison. He is one of thousands of people who have been arrested in Saudi Arabia since September 2001 and held for years without access to lawyers or the courts.

KHALIL AL-JANAHI WAS HELD IN INCOMMUNICADO DETENTION:

“When he did not arrive home at 10pm and he was not answering me on his mobile, I began to worry and called the police in Bahrain and asked if they know anything about his whereabouts, but without success.

After four months and numerous attempts, someone informed me that Khalil was in ‘Ulaysha Prison. I looked for the phone number of ‘Ulaysha Prison to check and called it many times. At first they denied he was there but after several attempts they admitted he was there. I would call the prison, sometimes even in the middle of the night and plead for them to let me at least hear my husband’s voice. Many times they would respond that he didn’t stay in this prison at all, or they would give rude answers. Sometimes they would admit he is there, but they were still investigating his case, so he is not allowed to be contacted by anyone. This was terrible.

When we learned that he was in ‘Ulaysha Prison, I along with several members of the family went to visit him. We started our journey at dawn and we arrived at ‘Ulaysha at about 11am. We asked the guards at the gate of the prison if Khalil was there and they said he was there but we could not see him because we did not have permission... We returned home without seeing him. I continued to phone the prison and ask to speak to Khalil. But their answer was always that we were not allowed to speak to him before the end of the investigation...

Following another call I made to the prison the respondent informed me that the investigation with Khalil had finished but he was not able to let me speak with him without the permission of the officer, without explaining who the officer was... One day in August I called the prison again while I was crying and begged the prison staff to let me speak with my husband. One of them felt sorry for me and put me through to him for about five minutes. During the conversation Khalil informed me that the investigation with him had concluded and asked me to apply for permission for visits.”

Wife of Khalil al-Janahi

At least four months elapsed after Khalil ‘al-Janahi’s arrest before he was allowed visits. He did not, however, receive any clarification of the reasons for his detention. He is said to have been interrogated about his religious views, particularly whether he considered that some Muslims should be declared “non-believers”. Like most other detainees, he was denied trial and access to legal assistance.

KHALIL AL-JANAHI WAS HELD IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND ILL-TREATED:

It was our first visit in ‘Ulaysha Prison... It shocked us to see him in such a bad condition. He was miserable. He suffered a lot. Just looking at him was more than enough to explain to us what had happened to him here. He was in a difficult state, physically and emotionally.

My husband had been kept in solitary confinement. The cell was tiny (1m x 1m). He was handcuffed in this cell for four months. He wasn't allowed to speak to anyone for 25 days. On top of this, they didn't let him go to the toilet. He would knock on the door to call one of the guards so he could go but they would act as if they didn't hear anything. They would only come after three or four hours. They knew he suffered from stomach disease. Just before he was arrested he had had an operation.

Wife of Khalil al-Janahi

Khalil al-Janahi may also have been tortured during his detention in Saudi Arabia. Detainees in Saudi Arabia are frequently tortured or otherwise ill-treated even though Saudi Arabia is a state party to the UN Convention against Torture.

KHALIL AL-JANAHI'S FAMILY FACED DIFFICULTIES IN TRYING TO GET HIM RELEASED BOTH IN SAUDI ARABIA AND AFTER HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE UAE:

We called on many officials regarding my brother's release...It seemed we used up all possible ways of acting on the matter. The officials say they will get back to us, but they never do. There is still no response from the different bodies we addressed. This is why we decided to publicize the affair. Maybe our voice would reach the judges and the officials and help us to clear up the picture.

Sister of Khalil al-Janahi

On 24 November 2008, without warning or explanation, the Saudi Arabian authorities handed over Khalil 'Abdul Rahman 'Abdul Karim al-Janahi to the authorities of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in breach of the principle of *non-refoulement* which requires that states should not return individuals to countries where they are at risk of torture or other serious human rights violations. He was detained in the UAE, and his place of detention was not disclosed to his wife, until 11 June 2009 when he was released uncharged and untried. He was held incommunicado throughout his detention and was only allowed a few closely-monitored and controlled phone calls to his wife. His relatives asked the authorities in the UAE to clarify his whereabouts and allow them to visit him, but without success. It is unclear whether Khalil al-Janahi was tortured during his detention in the UAE. Other detainees held as possible terrorism suspects in the UAE have been kept incommunicado, denied access to lawyers and tortured or otherwise ill-treated, especially in Abu Dhabi.

Khalil al-Janahi was released uncharged by the UAE authorities shortly after Amnesty International issued an Urgent Action appeal on his behalf. See [Urgent Action UA 142/09](#), Incommunicado detention/Fear of torture or ill-treatment (Index: MDE 25/005/2009), 08 June 2009 and [Further Information on UA 142/09](#) (Index: MDE 25/007/2009, 11 June 2009). Khalil al-Janahi's story is one among thousands of people who have had their human rights violated in the name of counter-terrorism. Many of them continue to be detained in virtual secrecy. It is time to act now to end such violations.

HOW CAN I HELP?

1. Please WRITE LETTERS IN ARABIC, ENGLISH OR YOUR OWN LANGUAGE, MAKING THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- end all arbitrary arrests and detentions, and the practise of transferring people to countries where they are at risk of torture or other serious human rights violations;
- provide fair, prompt and public trials to all detainees charged or held, including on suspicion of terrorism-related offences;
- investigate thoroughly and impartially all allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and bring those found responsible to justice.

2. Also PROVIDE EXAMPLES IN YOUR LETTERS of people who are currently suffering some of these human rights violations as highlighted in the Amnesty International report, *Saudi Arabia: Assaulting Human Rights in the Name of Counter-Terrorism*, (Index: MDE 23/009/2009) published on 22 July 2009.

SEND YOUR APPEALS TO:

KING AND PRIME MINISTER

His Majesty King 'Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty the King, Royal Court
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Fax: (via Ministry of the Interior) +966 1 403 1185

Salutation: Your Majesty

SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Saud
Ministry of the Interior
PO Box 2933, Airport Road
Riyadh 11134, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Salutation: Your Royal Highness

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