

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Torture / Medical concern

20 April 1994

BAHRAIN

Mohammed Jamil 'Abd al-Amir Al-Jamri
'Abd al-Jalil Khalil Ibrahim
Seyyid Ja'far Al-Alawi
Ali Ahmed Jassim Al-Dayri
Nabeel Baqir

Amnesty International is deeply disturbed by reports that political prisoners in Jaw Prison No. 1, including the five named above, were tortured after a radio was discovered during a cell inspection on 9 April. There are fears that the torture may be continuing.

The reports state that the radio was found during an inspection by Security and Intelligence Service officers, and led to a number of prisoners, including the five named above, being transferred to Al-Qala'a Prison. They were reportedly placed in incommunicado detention and tortured to extract information regarding the source of the radio. Some of them were transferred to hospital for urgent medical treatment, before being returned to Al-Qala'a Prison where it is feared the torture continues. In protest, at least 16 other political prisoners held in the prison began a hunger-strike on 9 April. Several of them were subsequently transferred to hospital following a deterioration in their condition. Amnesty International is further concerned about reports that the prisoners have been denied access to lawyers and family members.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In recent years, suspected political activists in Bahrain have been subjected to arbitrary arrest, torture, and incommunicado detention. Many have served or are continuing to serve prison sentences imposed after unfair trials.

Amnesty International has longstanding concerns regarding at least two of the above named prisoners. In 1990 Mohammed Jamil 'Abd al-Amir al-Jamri, a 34-year-old civil engineer, was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment having been convicted of spying for Iran, a charge which he denies. Despite assurances from the authorities that he received a fair trial and was not subjected to torture following his arrest in 1988, the organization has not received details of any investigations into his torture allegations. At the same hearing, his brother-in-law, 'Abd al-Jalil Khalil Ibrahim, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for alleged membership of an illegal organization following an unfair trial.

Seyyid Ja'far Al-Alawi was among a group of 73 prisoners sentenced to long periods of imprisonment for their part in an alleged coup attempt in 1981. Nabeel Baqir was reportedly arrested in 1986 and accused of alleged membership of an illegal organization.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English, Arabic or in your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that these five prisoners have been tortured and urging the authorities to take immediate action to ensure that they and other prisoners on hunger-strike receive the appropriate medical treatment.
- requesting that they are granted immediate access to a lawyer of their own choosing and members of their families;

- urging that a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into this incident be initiated and that its findings are made public.
- urging that those law enforcement officials found responsible for these violations are brought to justice;
- seeking assurances that these and other prisoners will be humanely treated in accordance with international human rights standards.

APPEALS TO

His Highness
 Al-Shaikh 'Issa Bin Salman Al Khalifa
 Office of His Highness the Amir
 P.O. Box 555
 The Amiri Court
 Rifa'a Palace, Rifa'a, Bahrain
Telexes: 8666 Qasar, BN 8500 Qasar BN
Telegrams: His Highness the Amir, Manama, Bahrain
Faxes: +973 668884
Salutation: Your Highness

His Excellency
 Al-Shaikh Mohamed Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa
 Minister of Interior
 PO Box 13, Manama, Bahrain
Telexes: 9572 PSMKT BN or 8333 ALAMAN BN
Telegrams: Minister of Interior, Manama, Bahrain
Faxes: +973 276765 or 290526 or 754303
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

His Excellency
 Al-Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa
 Prime Minister of Bahrain
 PO Box 1000, Manama, Bahrain
Faxes: +973 533033

and to diplomatic representatives of Bahrain accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 June 1994