

→ E.C

NGO accreditation

ICH-09 – Form

Reçu CLT / CIH / ITH

Le 10 OCT. 2016
N° 0411



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

REQUEST BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION TO BE ACCREDITED TO PROVIDE ADVISORY SERVICES TO THE COMMITTEE

DEADLINE 30 APRIL 2017

Instructions for completing the request form are available at:

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms>

1. Name of the organization

1.a. Official name

Please provide the full official name of the organization, in its original language, as it appears in the supporting documentation establishing its legal personality (section 8.b below).

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain

1.b. Name in English or French

Please provide the name of the organization in English or French.

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain

2. Contact of the organization

2.a. Address of the organization

Please provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, e-mail address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled (see section 8).

Organization: Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain

Address: 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW Washington, DC 20036

Telephone number: 1(202) 621 6141

E-mail address: info@adhrb.org

Website: www.adhrb.org

Other relevant
information:

2.b Contact person for correspondence

Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this request.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):	Mr.
Family name:	Abdulla
Given name:	Husain
Institution/position:	Executive Director
Address:	1001 Connecticut Ave. NW Washington, DC USA 20036
Telephone number:	1 (202) 621-6141
E-mail address:	habdulla@adhrb.org
Other relevant information:	

3. Country or countries in which the organization is active

Please identify the country or countries in which the organization actively operates. If it operates entirely within one country, please indicate which country. If its activities are international, please indicate whether it operates globally or in one or more regions, and please list the primary countries in which it carries out activities.

<input type="checkbox"/> local
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national
<input type="checkbox"/> international (please specify:)
<input type="checkbox"/> worldwide
<input type="checkbox"/> Africa
<input type="checkbox"/> Arab States
<input type="checkbox"/> Asia & the Pacific
<input type="checkbox"/> Europe & North America
<input type="checkbox"/> Latin America & the Caribbean
Please list the primary country(ies) where it is active:
USA

4. Date of its founding or approximate duration of its existence

Please state when the organization came into existence, as it appears in the supporting documentation establishing its legal personality (section 8.b below).

2008-incorporated as 501(c)(3); 2009-tax exempt status

5. Objectives of the organization

Please describe the objectives for which the organization was established, which should be 'in conformity with the spirit of the Convention' (Criterion C). If the organization's primary objectives are other than safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, please explain how its safeguarding objectives relate to those larger objectives.

Not to exceed 350 words; do not attach additional information

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) seeks to raise awareness in our community on key issues concerning human rights in Bahrain and the wider Gulf through research and advocacy. We provide in-depth information on human rights issues in Bahrain and the wider Gulf, addressing numerous issues including structural inequalities faced by marginalized communities and government suppression of freedom of expression. We host events with an emphasis on bringing speakers from the Bahraini-American community and from Bahrain to the US to meet with lawmakers, US government officials, and other non-profit organizations. Internationally, we work with activists and NGOs to raise awareness of the human rights situation in Bahrain and the Gulf among UN officials, state representatives to the European Union, and European Parliament leaders. Through public and congressional events, cooperation with other NGOs, and through our own independent research and fact-finding missions, ADHRB aims to both raise awareness about human rights violations and advocate at local, national, and international levels to push for change.

ADHRB serves as a source of expertise in interviews and written publications. Our work is aimed at building an inclusive society in the Gulf by raising awareness about marginalized communities, which are part of the social fabric of a country. Our research, coordination with on the ground activists, and relationships with policy makers has contributed to raising concern about government discrimination facing specific communities in the Gulf.

ADHRB sees to protect freedom of expression and promote democracy by emphasizing the importance for an inclusive government representative of the population. ADHRB seeks to promote intercultural understanding in Bahrain by raising awareness about the institutional discrimination faced by marginalized communities in the Gulf. We are committed to human rights and believe in the fundamental importance of intercultural dialogue, which helps facilitate awareness and builds cohesive societies.

6. The organization's activities in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage

Sections 6.a to 6.d are the primary place to establish that the NGO satisfies the criterion of having 'proven competence, expertise and experience in safeguarding (as defined in Article 2.3 of the Convention) intangible cultural heritage belonging, inter alia, to one or more specific domains' (Criterion A).

6.a. Domain(s) in which the organization is active

Please tick one or more boxes to indicate the primary domains in which the organization is most active. If its activities involve domains other than those listed, please tick 'other domains' and indicate which domains are concerned.

- oral traditions and expressions
- performing arts
- social practices, rituals and festive events
- knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- traditional craftsmanship
- other domains - please specify:

6.b. Primary safeguarding activities in which the organization is involved

Please tick one or more boxes to indicate the organization's primary safeguarding activities. If its activities involve safeguarding measures not listed here, please tick 'other safeguarding measures' and specify which ones are concerned.

- identification, documentation, research (including inventory-making)
- preservation, protection
- promotion, enhancement
- transmission, formal or non-formal education
- revitalization
- other safeguarding measures – please specify:

6.c. Description of the organization's activities

Organizations requesting accreditation should briefly describe their recent activities and their relevant experience in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, including those demonstrating the capacities of the organization to provide advisory services to the Committee. Relevant documentation may be submitted, if necessary, under section 8.c below.

Not to exceed 550 words; do not attach additional information

The organization engages in advocacy at the local, national, and international level, having established relationships with key politicians and representatives to major governing bodies including the US government and European Parliament. We have engaged in advocacy work at the Human Rights Council where through our work, we have been successful in passing five joint statements on Bahrain, each bringing attention to the government suppression of basic human rights especially actions used to silence opposition or criticism, directly impinging on individuals freedom of expression used to silence.

ADHRB's board of directors consists of professionals from the Bahraini community. They have insight into Bahraini cultural heritage and serve as sources for primary information. Along with this, our on the ground contacts in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have expertise in collecting oral history from local residents, all the while documenting the social and cultural history of these ethnic communities.

ADHRB has worked with minority communities in the Gulf, working to raise the awareness and push for change for individuals facing economic disclusion, cultural marginalization, and media discrimination. ADHRB has published two extensive reports on institutional discrimination against the Shia community in Bahrain, highlighting the government's marginalization of the community through various methods including the destruction of Shia mosques and places of worship along with restrictions on engaging in cultural practices. ADHRB staff has gained significant knowledge on Baharna and Shia Bahraini culture and traditions through our work researching for the Shia discrimination reports.

ADHRB works towards the Economic and Social Council's Sustainable development goals, specifically goal 16 aimed at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. We believe the targets of this goal are of great importance in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. In the years since the Arab Spring, Gulf states have significantly rolled back the realization of human rights. Punishment for peaceful political expression remains consistent. Journalists and human rights advocates remain in constant risk of disappearance, detention, and torture.

ADHRB has filed numerous complaints with the Special Procedures on human rights and cultural rights issues in the Gulf. Our complaint program preserves and protects vulnerable communities including the Baharna, the Ajams, and the Shia communities. Our on-the-ground contacts engage in preserving oral history as they document ongoing abuse and discrimination faced by these ethnic communities. Our work calls attention to ongoing destruction of religious, cultural, and

historical sites in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. ADHRB used this documentation in our complaint program and our reports in raising awareness and spreading knowledge about these ethnic communities and their situations. Our complaint program has done excellent work, and we have been teaching other organizations how to build effective complaint programs.

Our work aims to bring awareness to human rights violations committed by state actors. In many GCC countries, states actively work to diminish popular representation through silencing dissent and criminalizing opposition. GCC countries have marginalized many communities, including the Shia and migrant communities. We work with on-the-ground contacts who provide us with information, which is then used in our reports and advocacy work. We also engage in legal work through our well-respected United Nations complaint program. The aim of our work is to create positive steps towards justice and equality for those in the GCC region and all of humanity across the globe.

6.d. Description of the organization's competence and expertise

Please provide information on the personnel and membership of the organization, describe their competence and expertise in the domain of intangible cultural heritage, in particular those demonstrating the capacities of the organization to provide advisory services to the Committee, and explain how they acquired such competence. Documentation of such competences may be submitted, if necessary, under section 8.c below.

Not to exceed 200 words; do not attach additional information

We maintain a network of personnel and volunteers who actively engage with cultural heritage sites in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia in particular, as well as personally experience hinderances to enjoying these sites. Most have lived in Bahrain or Saudi Arabia their entire lives and have spent much of their time documenting the destruction of cultural and religious sites. Their personal accounts of being denied access to cultural heritage sites, especially religious sites, are invaluable to our work in documenting abuses. As the governments of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are the main proponents of the destruction of cultural heritage, especially intangible heritage, and both governments preside over closed, restrictive societies, our in-country contacts are essential. Government propogated accounts of the state of tangible and intangilble cultural heritage are unreliable and biased. While the governments tout their achievements in preserving heritage, our contacts are able to give us first-hand accounts of daily life. Those on the ground in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia provide data on the destruction of religious sites as well as education policies and programs that are religiously and culturally biased towards one group.

7. The organization's experiences cooperating with communities, groups and intangible cultural heritage practitioners

The Committee will evaluate whether NGOs requesting accreditation 'cooperate in a spirit of mutual respect with communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage' (Criterion D). Please briefly describe such experiences here.

Not to exceed 350 words; do not attach additional information

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) works to bring awareness and educate the international community on issues faced by marginalized communities in the Gulf. We do this by interacting, interviewing, and supporting on the ground activists. We provide a platform for the voices of marginalized communities to be heard. We have an established and well-respected United Nations complaint program where we file hundreds of complaints to the special procedures on human rights issues.

ADHRB's on the ground contacts engage in preserving oral history of marginalized communities including ethnic communities such as the Baharna and Ajam. Our contacts document ongoing abuse and discrimination faced by these ethnic communities. Our work calls attention to ongoing destruction of religious, cultural, and historical sites in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. ADHRB used this documentation in our UN complaint program and our report work in raising awareness and

spreading knowledge about these ethnic communities and their situation as well as the current state religious, cultural, and historical sites.

ADHRB has a large presence within the Bahraini-American in Alabama. In its efforts to preserve Bahrain culture and heritage in America, we provide support and assistance to new Bahraini to help them assimilate into the new community while still preserving their cultural and historical roots. ADHRB accomplishes this through our community center, which hosts cultural events to ensure protection and promotion of Bahraini heritage. During the month of Ramadan, ADHRB also holds a public iftar in DC.

8. Documentation of the operational capacities of the organization

The Operational Directives require that an organization requesting accreditation submit documentation proving that it possesses the operational capacities listed under Criterion E. Such supporting documents may take various forms, in light of the diverse legal regimes in effect in different States. Submitted documents should be translated whenever possible into English or French if the originals are in another language. Please label supporting documents clearly with the section (8.a, 8.b or 8.c) to which they refer.

8.a. Membership and personnel

Proof of the participation of the members of the organization, as requested under Criterion E (i), may take diverse forms such as a list of directors, list of personnel and statistical information on the quantity and categories of members; a complete membership roster usually need not be submitted.

Please attach supporting documents, labelled 'Section 8.a'.

8.b. Recognized legal personality

If the organization has a charter, articles of incorporation, by-laws or similar establishing documents, a copy should be attached. If, under the applicable domestic law, the organization has a legal personality recognized through some means other than an establishing document (for instance, through a published notice in an official gazette or journal), please provide documentation showing how that legal personality was established.

Please attach supporting documents, labelled 'Section 8.b'.

8.c. Duration of existence and activities

If it is not already indicated clearly from the documentation provided for section 8.b, please submit documentation proving that the organization has existed for at least four years at the time it requests accreditation. Please provide documentation showing that it has carried out appropriate safeguarding activities during that time, including those described above in section 6.c. Supplementary materials such as books, CDs or DVDs, or similar publications cannot be taken into consideration and should not be submitted.

Please attach supporting documents, labelled 'Section 8.c'.

9. Signature

The application must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of the organization requesting accreditation. Requests without a signature cannot be considered.

Name: Husain Abdulla

Title: Executive Director

Date: 21/09/2016

Signature:



Part VII Compensation of Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, Highest Compensated Employees, and Independent Contractors

Check if Schedule O contains a response or note to any line in this Part VII

Recu CLT / CIH / ITH

Section A. Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees

1a Complete this table for all persons required to be listed. Report compensation for the calendar year ending with or within the organization's tax year.

Le 10 OCT. 2016

- List all of the organization's current officers, directors, trustees (whether individuals or organizations), regardless of amount of compensation. Enter -0- in columns (D), (E), and (F) if no compensation was paid.
 - List all of the organization's current key employees, if any. See instructions for definition of "key employee."
 - List the organization's five current highest compensated employees (other than an officer, director, trustee, or key employee) who received reportable compensation (Box 5 of Form W-2 and/or Box 7 of Form 1099-MISC) of more than \$100,000 from the organization and any related organizations.
 - List all of the organization's former officers, key employees, and highest compensated employees who received more than \$100,000 of reportable compensation from the organization and any related organizations.
 - List all of the organization's former directors or trustees that received, in the capacity as a former director or trustee of the organization, more than \$10,000 of reportable compensation from the organization and any related organizations.
- List persons in the following order: individual trustees or directors; institutional trustees; officers; key employees; highest compensated employees; and former such persons.

Nº *DULL*

Check this box if neither the organization nor any related organization compensated any current officer, director, or trustee

(A) Name and Title	(B) Average hours per week (list any hours for related organizations below dotted line)	(C) Position (do not check more than one box, unless person is both an officer and a director/trustee)						(D) Reportable compensation from the organization (W-2/1099-MISC)	(E) Reportable compensation from related organizations (W-2/1099-MISC)	(F) Estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations
		Individual trustee or director	Institutional trustee	Officer	Key employee	Highest compensated employee	Former			
(1) HUSAIN A. ABDULLA PRESIDENT	40.00 0.00	X		X			8,000	0	0	
(2) TRACEY L. ABDULLA VICE PRESIDENT	5.00 0.00	X		X			0	0	0	
(3) ABBAS ABDULLA SECRETARY/TREASURER	5.00 0.00	X		X			0	0	0	
(4) OSAMA ALARADI DIRECTOR	2.00 0.00	X					0	0	0	
(5) DOUGLAS WHITE DIRECTOR	1.00 0.00	X					0	0	0	
(6) SAYED AHMED ALWADAIE DIRECTOR	15.00 0.00	X					0	0	0	
(7) LUBNA ALI DIRECTOR	1.00 0.00	X					0	0	0	
(8) KANDAKAR SHAFI DIRECTOR	2.00 0.00	X					0	0	0	
(9) QASIM OMRAN DIRECTOR	2.00 0.00	X					0	0	0	
(10)										
(11)										

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) Permanent Staff:

Husain Abdulla	Executive Director
R. James Suzano	Acting Director of Advocacy and Legal Affairs
Michael Payne	International Advocacy Officer
Kate Kizer	U.S. Advocacy Officer
Ellen Duthoy	Advocacy Associate

Reçu CLT / CIH / ITH

Le 10 OCT. 2016

N° 0411

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRACY & HUMAN RIGHTS IN BAHRAIN, INC.
(a nonprofit corporation)

For the purpose of forming a nonprofit corporation under the Alabama Nonprofit Corporation Act and any act amendatory thereof, supplementary thereto or substituted therefor (hereinafter referred to as the "Act"), the undersigned incorporator does hereby sign, verify and adopt these Articles of Incorporation, and, upon the filing for record of these Articles of Incorporation in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Mobile County, Alabama, the existence of a nonprofit corporation (hereinafter referred to as the "Corporation"), under the name set forth in Article 1 hereof, shall commence.

ARTICLE ONE

1.1. The name of the Corporation shall be "AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRACY & HUMAN RIGHTS IN BAHRAIN, INC."

ARTICLE TWO

2.1 The duration of the Corporation shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE THREE

3.1. Subject to the limitations set out in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 below, the purposes for which the Corporation is organized are:

- (a) The Corporation is organized exclusively for religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue law (the "Code") including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following specific purposes: to promote the establishment and continuation of the democratic form of government in the Country of Bahrain, and to encourage the recognition and observance of human rights in such Country. In addition, the Corporation shall seek grants and other funding to further its above-stated goals and to establish and maintain programs to assist refugees from Bahrain and other countries to acclimate to life in the United States.

- (b) In connection with the foregoing actively to solicit, accept, receive, maintain and disburse contributions, and income therefrom, and to apply for, accept and expend grants in accordance with their requirements.
- (c) To engage in any other educational, charitable, eleemosynary, or religious activities, or any lawful act or activity for which a corporation may be organized under the Act, provided that such act or activity is one permitted by an organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder (the "Regulations").

3.2. The Corporation shall be subject to the following restrictions and limitations, notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles:

- (a) The Corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and the Regulations, or by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Code and the Regulations as the same now exist or as they may be hereafter amended from time to time.
- (b) No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and no activities of the Corporation shall be participating in, or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- (c) No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private person, director, or officer of the Corporation, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Corporation affecting one or more of its purposes).
- (d) If the Corporation should be classified as a private foundation within the meaning of Section 509 of the Code, the officers of the Corporation shall:
 - 1. Distribute all income of the Corporation at such times and in such manner as not to subject the Corporation to tax under Section 4942 of the Code.
 - 2. Refrain from causing the Corporation to engage in any act of self dealing as defined in Section 4941(d) of the Code.
 - 3. Refrain from retaining any excess business holdings as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Code in a manner that would subject the Corporation to tax under Section 4943(a) of the Code.
 - 4. Refrain from making any investments in such manner as to subject the Corporation to tax under Section 4944 of the Code.

5. Refrain from making any taxable expenditure as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Code.

3.3. Upon the liquidation or dissolution of the Corporation, whether voluntary or involuntary, no private person, director, or officer shall be entitled to any distribution or division of its remaining property or its proceeds, and the balance of all money and other property received by the Corporation from any source, after the payment of all debts and obligations of the Corporation, shall be used and distributed exclusively for purposes within those set forth in paragraph 3.1 of these Articles (as limited by the provisions of paragraph 3.2 of these Articles) and within the intendment of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and the Regulations as the same now exist or as they may be hereafter amended from time to time.

ARTICLE FOUR

4.1. The Corporation shall have no members and shall not issue any shares of stock or certificates or any other evidence of membership.

ARTICLE FIVE

5.1. The address and location of the initial registered office of the Corporation shall be 7250 Belle Chase Drive, Mobile, Alabama 36695.

5.2. The initial registered agent at such address shall be Husain Abdulla.

ARTICLE SIX

6.1. The number of directors constituting the initial Board of Directors shall be three (3).

6.2. The names and addresses of the persons who are to serve as directors until the first annual meeting of directors or until their successors are elected and qualify are:

Husain Abdulla
7250 Belle Chase Drive
Mobile, Alabama 36695

Tracey Abdulla
7250 Belle Chase Drive
Mobile, AL 36695

Abbas Abdulla
9601 Oak Forrest Place
Mobile, AL 36695

ARTICLE SEVEN

7.1. The name and address of the incorporator is:

Husain Abdulla
7250 Belle Chase Drive
Mobile, Alabama 36695

ARTICLE EIGHT

The following provisions for the regulation of the business and for the conduct of the affairs of the Corporation and the directors thereof are hereby adopted:

8.1 The initial bylaws of the Corporation shall be adopted by the Board of Directors. The power to alter, amend or repeal the bylaws or adopt new bylaws shall be vested in the Board of Directors, except to the extent provided in the bylaws. The bylaws may contain any provisions for the regulation and conduct of the affairs of the Corporation and the directors not inconsistent with the Act or these Articles of Incorporation.

8.2 All corporate powers of the Corporation shall be exercised by or under authority of, and the business and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed under the direction of, the Board of Directors. The number of directors comprising the initial Board of Directors shall be three (3). Directors shall be elected in the manner provided in the bylaws. The number of directors of the Corporation shall be fixed from time to time by the bylaws, or, in the absence of such a bylaw provision, the number of directors shall be four. The number of directors may be increased or decreased from time to time by amendment to the bylaws or in the manner provided for therein, provided that the Board of Directors shall consist of not less than three, and that no decrease shall have the effect of shortening the term of any incumbent director. The term of each director in office shall be one year and until his or her successor shall have been elected and qualified.

8.3 In amplification and not in limitation of the provisions of applicable law:

- (a) Pursuant to Section 10-11-1, *et seq.*, Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, all non-compensated directors, trustees, members of governing bodies, and officers of the Corporation shall be immune from suit and shall not be subject to civil liability arising from the conduct of the affairs of the Corporation except when the act or omission of such person that gives rise to the cause of action amounts to willful or wanton misconduct or fraud or gross negligence.
- (b) The Corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed claim, action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, including appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the Corporation), by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, partner, employee or agent of another

corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with such claim, action, suit or proceeding if he or she acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of any claim, action, suit or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

- (c) The Corporation shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed claim, action or suit by or in the right of the Corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, partner, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the defense or settlement of such action or suit if he or she acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Corporation and except that no indemnification shall be made with respect to any claim, issue or matter as to which such person shall have been adjudged to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her duty to the Corporation unless and only to the extent that the court in which such action or suit was brought shall determine upon application that, despite the adjudication of liability but in view of all circumstances of the case, such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for such expenses which such court shall deem proper.
- (d) To the extent that a director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit or proceeding referred to in subsections (a) and (b), or in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, he or she shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection therewith, notwithstanding that he or she has not been successful on any other claim, issue or matter in any such action, suit or proceeding.
- (e) Any indemnification under subsections (a) and (b) (unless ordered by a court) shall be made by the Corporation only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the director, officer, employee or agent is proper in the circumstances because he or she has met the applicable

standard of conduct set forth in subsections (a) and (b). Such determination shall be made (1) by the Board of Directors by a majority vote of the directors who were not parties to, or who have been wholly successful on the merits or otherwise with respect to, such claim, action, suit or proceeding, or (2) if a majority of disinterested directors so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion.

- (f) Expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred in defending a civil or criminal claim, action, suit or proceeding may be paid by the Corporation in advance of the final disposition of such claim, action, suit or proceeding as authorized in the manner provided in subsection (d) upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the director, officer, employee or agent to repay such amount if and to the extent that it shall ultimately be determined that he or she is not entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation as authorized in this Section.
- (g) The indemnification authorized by this Section shall not be deemed exclusive of and shall be in addition to any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any statute, rule of law, provision of articles or certificate of incorporation, bylaws, agreement, vote of disinterested directors or otherwise, both as to action in his or her official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding such office, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a director, officer, employee or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.
- (h) The Corporation shall have power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, partner, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against him or her and incurred by him or her in any such capacity or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not the Corporation would have the power to indemnify him or her against such liability under the provisions of this Section.

8.4 The Corporation reserves the right from time to time to amend, alter or repeal each and every provision contained in these Articles of Incorporation, or to add one or more additional provisions, upon a vote of a majority of the directors in office.


IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness the hand and seal of the undersigned incorporator on this the 21 day of October, 2008.


HUSAIN ABDULLA

STATE OF ALABAMA
COUNTY OF MOBILE:

I, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, hereby certify that HUSAIN ABDULLA, whose name is signed to the foregoing instrument, and who is known to me, acknowledged before me on this day that, being informed of the contents of the foregoing instrument, she executed the same voluntarily on the day the same bears date.

Given under my hand and seal this 21st day of October, 2008.


NOTARY PUBLIC
My commission expires: 5-2-2010

This instrument prepared by:
John J. Crowley, Jr
COALE, DUKES, KIRKPATRICK & CROWLEY, P.C.
2610-B Dauphin Street
Mobile, Alabama 36606
Telephone: (251) 471-2625

© Copyright 2008 by the Alabama State Bar Association. All Rights Reserved.

State of Alabama-Mobile County
Certify this instrument was filed on
October 21, 2008 at 11:28 AM
ABSTRACTING FEE \$25.00
S.P. FEE \$2.00
RECORDING FEES \$1.00
TOTAL AMOUNT \$28.00

CD800544F
Don Davis, Judge of Probate

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
Probate Court of Mobile County, AL
Don Davis, Judge

Signature 
Joe McFarland, Jr., Chief Clerk

Date 10/21/08

STATE OF ALABAMA
PROBATE COURT OF MOBILE COUNTY
Incorporation/Amendment/Dissolution Certificate

I, *Don Davis*, as Probate Judge in and for Mobile County, Alabama, do hereby certify that the forgoing Articles, duly signed and verified pursuant to the provisions of Alabama Statute, have been received and recorded in this office and are found to comply with law in such matters. Accordingly, the undersigned Probate Judge, by the authority so vested, hereby issues this Certificate

Given under My Hand and Official Seal of the Probate Court of Mobile County, Alabama This *Tuesday, October 21, 2008*



Don Davis, Probate Judge
Mobile County, Alabama

Recorded at Book 6453
Page 1178
Clerk PCML06



INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **AUG 14 2009**

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRACY & HUMAN
RIGHTS IN BAHRAIN INC
C/O MARK A PAWLOWSKI
5905 AIRPORT BLVD STE B
MOBILE, AL 36608

Employer Identification Number:
26-3730000
DLN:
17053012301039
Contact Person:
GERALD MINK ID# 31228
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
SEPTEMBER 30
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
YES
Effective Date of Exemption:
OCTOBER 21, 2008
Contribution Deductibility:
YES
Addendum Applies:
NO

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Letter 947 (DO/CG)

-2-

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRACY & HUMAN

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Choi".

Robert Choi
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

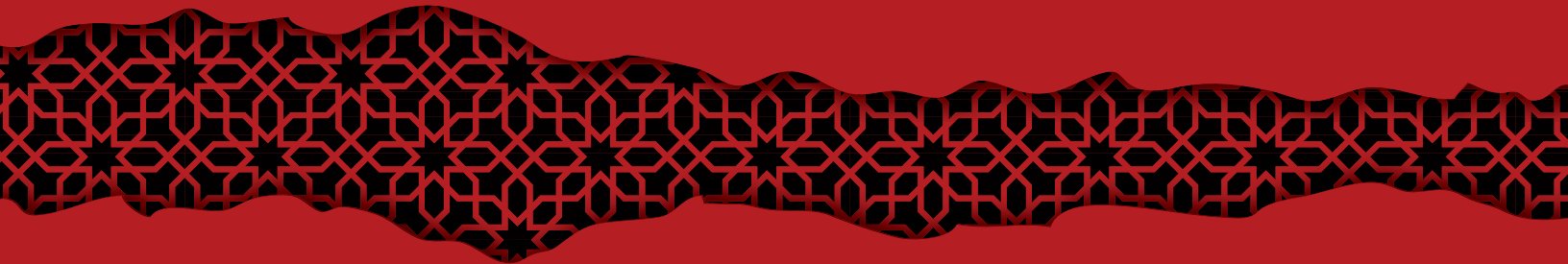
Enclosures: Publication 4221-PC

Letter 947 (DO/CG)



Apart in Their Own Land

GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST SHIA IN BAHRAIN



VOLUME I

Violence, Political Disclusion, and Attacks on the Shia Religious Establishment



Americans for Democracy
& Human Rights in Bahrain



Apart in Their Own Land

GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST SHIA IN BAHRAIN

VOLUME I

Violence, Political Disclusion, and Attacks on the Shia Religious Establishment

February 2015

©2014, Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD). All rights reserved.

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization based in Washington, D.C. We seek to foster awareness of and support for democracy and human rights in Bahrain and the Middle East.

The Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, registered with the Bahraini Ministry of Labor and Social Services since July 2002. Despite an order by the authorities in November 2004 to close, the BCHR is still functioning after gaining a wide local and international support for its struggle to promote human rights in Bahrain.

The Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy is a London, UK based non-profit organization focusing on advocacy, education and awareness for the calls of democracy and human rights in Bahrain.

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain
1001 Connecticut Ave. Northwest, Suite 205
Washington, DC 20036
202.621.6141
www.adhrb.org

Bahrain Center for Human Rights
www.bahrainrights.org

Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy
www.birdbh.org

Table of Contents

Foreword	4
Methodology	5
Introduction	6
Violence Against Shia	8
Excessive Force against Peaceful Protests	8
Excessive Force in Bahraini Prisons	11
Denial of Access to Medicine and Attacks on Healthcare Workers	13
Conclusion	14
Political Discrimination	16
The Government’s Exclusionary Structure	16
Asymmetric Districting	17
Demographic Manipulation, Legalistic Coercion, and State Violence.	19
Conclusion	22
Religious Discrimination	23
Violence against Shia Clergy and Religious Members.	23
The Destruction of Mosques and Other Religious Sites.	24
Legal Actions	26
Education and School Curricula.	27
Conclusion	28
Conclusion	29
Recommendations	31

FOREWORD

In Bahrain, it's not uncommon to hear talk of the government perpetuating a "Shia genocide" against its people. Such statements are either political hyperbole or grossly misinformed; although the government has committed extrajudicial killings – largely against Shia – in the past, government violence has never approached that which occurred in Rwanda or Srebrenica. Yet the fact that the Shia population in Bahrain speak in such terms denotes that the most substantial swath of the Bahraini population feels like its own country considers it the enemy.

That feeling appears to be accurate. It's been over 200 years since the majority population of Bahrain effectively ruled itself, and discriminatory policies against the Shia have largely been the hallmark of the al-Khalifa dynasty since it conquered the island nation in the late 1700s. In the 1990s, it appeared that the government might turn a new leaf when then-Emir Hamad announced a return to a constitutional monarchy. The ten years that followed were perhaps the least violent in recent Bahraini history, as the government curtailed its use of arbitrary arrest and torture against the Shia opposition. As the political situation stymied over the next decade, however, tensions rose within a Shia population promised but never receiving a substantial voice in the government. These feelings culminated in the protest movement in February 2011, which, while not exclusively manned by Shia, significantly fed off of Shia resentment.

The al-Khalifa dynasty responded to the protests by going back to its old bag of tricks. While the early 2000s were marked by government restraint in at least its security policies towards the Shia, the period after 2011 has seen anything but, and allegations commonly arise that the government has arrested and detained political leaders, tear-gassed Shia villages, and tortured Shia youth. In 2011, the government went so far as to dismiss several thousand Shia from their jobs, and even bulldozed 38 Shia religious structures, including some 30 mosques. Shia remain almost wholly outside the decision-making and legislation-authoring sections of the government, and are barely represented in government emergency sector personnel, including the government security forces and military.

"Shia genocide" is a mischaracterization of the situation in Bahrain. Shia are not killed wholesale, and there are no concentration camps in the country. However, Shia are kept separate from the political structure, and often forced to live in small villages, are routinely targeted by security forces for arbitrary detention and torture, are fired for expressing their political views, are arbitrarily rendered stateless by Bahraini courts, and have seen their places of worship destroyed as part of a government-sponsored campaign of violence and intimidation. Were the Shia considered a race instead of a religious sect, their situation would almost exactly fit the definition of apartheid promulgated by the 1976 convention on the subject; while "Shia genocide" is political hyperbole, "Shia apartheid" is closer to the truth than the Bahraini government would want to admit.

The following report conclusively shows that the government has historically and is still carrying out a systematic policy of discrimination against the Shia of Bahrain. It presents itself in two volumes; this first volume focuses on state violence against Shia actors, the disclusion of Shia from the political process, and government discriminatory acts against the Shia religious establishment itself. By carrying out acts of violence against Shia protesters, keeping Shia removed from actual political power, and directly targeting the Shia religious establishment, the government has succeeded in not only subjugating over half of its population, but also in motivating fringe elements of Shia society into violence, thereby justifying a self-authored sectarian narrative. In order for Bahrain to reverse course and restabilize, the government will need to fully re-examine its policies regarding the Shia with the aim of better inclusiveness and respect for the human rights of all of its people.

Husain Abdulla
Executive Director, ADHRB

METHODOLOGY

This report is the product of extensive research on the ground, accomplished by examining government records, interviewing involved actors, and personally recording events taking place in the country. Such research is significantly supplemented by a literature review taken from a wide variety of reputable sources, including well-established newspapers, magazines, and journals. When possible, the report provides a citation to a publicly-available source. In such instances where the interests of confidentiality force us to anonymize information or redact our source, the report may omit the source and indicate the need for confidentiality. Such sources may be available privately upon request.

Introduction

In 1783, the al-Khalifa family invaded Bahrain, conquering the small island in the Persian Gulf and subjugating its historically Shia population to Sunni rule. While the island's former Persian rulers attempted on multiple occasions to re-assert their dominance over the country, the al-Khalifas successfully defended their claim, and the country would remain under unstable al-Khalifa rule for the next two decades. In 1802, the al-Khalifa government entered into a legitimizing treaty with the British Empire, and Bahrain has remained under the effective governance of the al-Khalifa family in some ever since. When Britain left the Persian Gulf in the 1970s, the al-Khalifas remained, and though the island nation has undergone several governmental changes in the decades since, the country's majority-Shia population has found itself under the rule of the Sunni family since the original invasion in the 1700s.¹

Present estimates place Bahrain's population at approximately 70% Shia² and 30% Sunni, with other religious groups dominating the marginal percentages.³ The reign of the al-Khalifa family has largely been characterized by peace between these two groups but animosity between the Shia and the government; many Shia still regard the al-Khalifa family as conquerors, and resent the government's marginalization of their voice and power within society. On the other side, the al-Khalifa government has typically discriminated against the Shia in the country, oftentimes to the benefit of those citizens and residents that share their faith.

This dynamic came to a head in February 2011, when nearly half of the Bahraini population protested for a more representative government and greater respect for human rights. While the government likes to characterize the protests as Shia-led, independent observers documented a substantial Sunni presence within the uprising,⁴ and most populations within the country were represented. That the subsequent government violence significantly targeted Shia protesters is telling; while the population of Bahrain is ready to live together, the government's discriminatory policies continue to drive them apart.

Modernly, the government discriminates against the Shia in a multitude of ways. Government security forces still single out Shia villages and protesters for acts of violence and the excessive use of force, as Shia-led protests still occur on a daily basis. As during the violence following the 2011 protests, the government also continues to utilize enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and torture against Shia political prisoners, most often by obtaining coerced confessions and using them as evidence to secure convictions in Bahraini courts.⁵

The government's discrimination against the Shia additionally extends to the political sphere, where the government has engineered the system in such a way as to make it impossible for the

- 1 Minority Rights Group International, "World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples." Bahrain Overview. February 2012. Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.minorityrights.org/4096/bahrain/bahrain-overview.html>.
- 2 Religion Freedom Report, Bahrain, Accessed January 18, 2015. <http://religion-freedom-report.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/country-reports/bahrain.pdf>.
- 3 Kirkpatrick, David. "Power Struggles in Middle East Exploit Islam's Ancient Sectarian Rift." July 5, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/06/world/middleeast/power-struggles-in-middle-east-exploit-islams-ancient-sectarian-rift.html?_r=0
- 4 Aslan, Reza. "Bahrain's Fake Sectarian War." Foreign Affairs. (June 30, 2013). Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/features/letters-from/bahrains-fake-sectarian-war>.
- 5 Human Rights Watch, "Bahrain: Reject Confessions Linked to Torture." Bahrain: Reject Confessions Linked to Torture. June 21, 2012. Accessed January 20, 2015 <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/06/21/bahrain-reject-confessions-linked-torture>.

Shia to obtain political power within the country. The King, his Cabinet, and the Shura Council account for the vast majority of legislative and executive power; Shia sit on a minority of these seats, as the government opposition states that Shia accounted for 17 of 40 seats in the 2010-2014 Shura Council and just six of 29 cabinet members.⁶ With regard to the elected lower house of Bahraini parliament, electoral districts are drawn in such a way that a Sunni district may contain 700 people while a Shia district contains 7,000; both districts elect just one member of parliament. While the government has recently redrawn the districts, it still does not acknowledge the principle of “one person, one vote,” and Shia still find it impossible to obtain a majority in the parliament.

Finally, the government has actively discriminated against the actual Shia religious establishment. Following the events of February 2011, government forces destroyed 38 mosques and other religious sites, all of which belonged to the Shia population.⁷ While the government pledged to rebuild the mosques, thus far it has failed to do so, and those mosques that have been rebuilt were completed entirely with funds from the Shia population. In some cases, the government has annexed the land on which these mosques were built,⁸ and has refused the Shia request to re-allocate the lands towards their original purpose. In other cases, the government has even gone so far as to re-demolish mosques a second time after the Shia population itself attempted to rebuild.⁹ The government also discriminates against the Shia faith in other, less noticeable ways, oftentimes attacking Shia religious figures, failing to incorporate Shia beliefs into educational curricula, and at times dissolving Shia religious organizations.¹⁰

The net effect of the government’s discriminatory policy has been to set the Shia population apart in their own land. At a time when the government accuses its population of espousing sectarianism, this report shows just the opposite: while Bahrain’s Shia and Sunni populations are ready to co-exist, the government itself fans the flames of sectarianism to justify its oppression of the Shia majority.

6 Al-Wefaq. *مساواة والمواطنة أساس الديمقراطية* [Equality and Citizenship are the Foundation of Democracy]. 2013. Accessed January 30, 2015. http://alwefaq.net/uploadfiles/files/Tameez_3Oct2013.pdf.

7 Mabon, Simon. “The Battle for Bahrain: Iranian-Saudi Rivalry.” *Middle East Policy* 19, no. 2 (2012): 84-97. Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.mepec.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/battle-bahrain-iranian-saudi-rivalry?print>.

8 Bahrain Center for Human Rights, “Bahrain: In Complete Disregard to Religious Freedom, Authorities Decide to Turn Site of demolished Historical Mosque into a Park.” *Bahrain Rights*. (July 6, 2013), Accessed January 29, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/6213>.

9 Bahrain Center for Human Rights, “Mosques Under Construction Re-Demolished by Authorities in Bahrain.” *Bahrain Rights*. (December 9, 2012), Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/5550>.

10 Bahrain Center for Human Rights, “Bahrain: The Authorities Continue to Oppress the Shia Sect.” *Bahrain Rights*. (June 2, 2014), Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://bchr.hopto.org/en/node/6904>.

Violence Against Shia

As the Government of Bahrain continues to repress protests in the wake of the 2011 movement, it most heavily relies on violence as its primary method of censure. The vast majority of this violence targets the Bahraini Shia citizenry, either as direct retaliation against specific acts of dissent or as collective punishment against the Shia population as a whole.

Government-sponsored violence against Bahraini Shia comes in many forms, both obvious and more discrete. As this report documents, Shia experience violence in the form of police action against protests, arbitrary detention in government holding centers and prisons, government torture largely to extract false confessions, tear gas employed against villages, interference with the freedom of movement, and denial of medical care.

Excessive Force against Peaceful Protests

Bahraini security forces consistently use excessive force when dealing with opposition protesters. Since the renewal of opposition protests in February 2011, protests have been a part of daily life for many Bahrainis, and it is not uncommon for members of the political opposition to march every night to register their discontent with the government. Although not all opposition parties are tied to religion, Shia Muslims make up a majority of protesters, and many of these protests take place in Shia towns. Security forces specifically target Shia protesters and protests.¹¹

The government disrupts these protests through a variety of non-lethal methods, the most prominent of which is the widespread dispersal of tear gas. Tear gas, also known as ‘CS’ Gas, is any number of lachrymatory agents used as a non-lethal method of dispersing protesters. However, according to the NGO Physicians for Human Rights, the term “tear gas” is a misleading euphemism for a potentially deadly mix of chemicals. The use of tear gas is even outlawed under the Chemical Weapons Convention for use during wartime, although the document makes an exception for domestic “riot control.”¹² Security forces in Bahrain routinely misuse tear gas, repurposing it as a deadly weapon against the political opposition as well as the Shia Muslim community. In just the past three years, there are countless incidents where tear gas was inappropriately used to target Shia Muslims, and independent sources linked at least 39 deaths to the misuse of tear gas from 2011-2014.¹³

11 Aboudi, Sami. “Protesters Injured in Bahrain Clashes: Witnesses.” Reuters (January 6, 2015) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/06/us-bahrain-protests-idUSKBN0KF1UO20150106>. See also “Bahrain: Serious Injuries among Protesters Due to Continued Use of Excessive Force by Riot Police” Bahrain Center for Human Rights (September 21, 2012) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/5428>; “Bahrain: Dozens of Protestors Arrested and Injured on the 2nd Anniversary of Foreign GCC Peninsula Shield Deployment in Bahrain” Bahrain Center for Human Rights (March 15, 2013) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/5681>; “Document - Bahrain Must Ensure Accountability for Child Killed during a Protest.” Amnesty International (May 23, 2014) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE11/016/2014/en/81b2544e-5c9f-41f2-902c-aa488c4a719f/mde110162014en.html>; “Bahrain Police Fire Tear Gas, Grenades on Protesters during ‘Martyrs Day’ Rally.” RT News (December 18, 2012) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://rt.com/news/bahrain-clashes-martyrs-day-212/>; Gladstone, Rick. “Relief Group Stops Work in Bahrain After Raid.” The New York Times (August 5, 2011) Accessed January 22, 2015. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/06/world/middleeast/06bahrain.html?_r=0; “Bahrain Forces Attack People Protesting Shia Cleric’s Arrest VOB.ORG.” Voice of Bahrain (January 6, 2015) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://english.voiceofbahrain.org/?p=2840>; “Dozens of Shia Protesters Injured in Firing by the Security Forces , While a Policeman Also Injured By a Fire.” Jafria News (July 22, 2013) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://jafrianews.com/2013/07/23/dozens-of-shia-protesters-injured-in-firing-by-the-security-forces-while-a-policeman-also-injured-by-a-fire/>.

12 “Facing Tear Gas.” Chemical Weapons Convention. Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://facingteargas.org/bp/35/chemical-weapons-convention>.

13 Ali, Ahmed. “SHIPMENT STOPPED” Bahrain Watch. January 7, 2014. Accessed January 20, 2015. <https://bahrainwatch.org/blog/2014/01/07/south-korea-halts-massive-tear-gas-shipment-to-bahrain/>.

In one recent example, tear gas was used to attack a Shia mosque during Muharram, the most sacred month in the Shia calendar. During this month, Shia Muslims gather to commemorate the death of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. In a video of the incident posted on the internet, women are seen coughing and gasping for air inside the mosque as men outside break windows in an attempt to rescue them. As the cameraman enters the mosque, tear gas hangs in the air in every room. On the inside of the building, one can see women who have collapsed from the smoke. In a similar incident, security forces fired tear gas into a Shia mosque in the town of Sanabis. At the time, worshippers at the mosque were attending the funeral of another protester who had been killed.¹⁴

The government additionally often uses tear gas as a form of collective punishment against Shia villages. The safe and responsible use of tear gas mandates firing tear gas at the outskirts of crowds in order to herd them away from sensitive areas, and to avoid firing tear gas at groups of people. Bahraini state practice disregards safe practice, instead firing tear gas canisters directly into crowds, oftentimes causing not just respiratory injuries related to inhalation of tear gas but also concussive injuries when tear gas canisters strike protesters. Bahraini security forces have also been known to fire tear gas canisters into enclosed spaces, such as vehicles or houses, oftentimes firing canisters at point-blank range so that they have enough kinetic force to break windows.¹⁵ Finally, Bahraini security forces have also been known to blanket entire Shia villages in tear gas, actions the Bahraini Shia interpret as collective punishment against protesters.¹⁶

The excessive use of tear gas has caused several deaths related to respiratory failure. On 25 March 2011, Bahraini security forces fired tear gas directly into the home of 71-year-old Shia male Isa Mohammed Ali Abdullah. Abdullah was 71-years-old at the time, and suffered from respiratory issues. As a result of the Bahraini security forces firing tear gas into the enclosed space of his home, Abdullah breathed in a concentrated dose of tear gas. He developed respiratory issues and perished.¹⁷ On another occasion on 9 November 2011, Bahraini security forces blanketed the Shia village of Bilad al-Qadeem with tear gas, endangering the lives of any persons with compromised respiratory systems in the village, including children and the elderly. On the third day of the government campaign, a five-day-old infant named Sajida Faisal Jawad and her three-year-old sister Sarah Faisal Jawad inhaled large amounts of tear gas and could not breathe. Sajida's skin turned blue, and her family took both children to the hospital, where they were both pronounced dead.¹⁸

The use of tear gas primarily leads to respiratory injuries. However, the canisters themselves can

14 Williams, Alan. "Videos of recent attacks on unarmed Shia by Bahraini security forces." *Communities Digital News*. (November 13, 2014) Accessed January 30, 2015, <http://www.commdiginews.com/world-news/middle-east/videos-of-recent-attacks-on-unarmed-shia-by-bahraini-security-forces-29320/>.

15 Bahrain Center for Human Rights. "Bahrain: Bassil al-Qattan; Extensive Use of Tear Gas by Bahrain's Authorities Claims Another Victim." Last accessed February 6, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/5585>.

16 Aboudi, Sami. "Tear Gas and Birdshot Fired at Demonstrators as Violence Erupts at Protests Rallies in Bahrain." *The Independent*, August 14, 2013, Middle East sec. Accessed January 1, 2015. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/tear-gas-and-birdshot-fired-at-demonstrators-as-violence-erupts-at-protest-rallies-in-bahrain-8762088.html>.

17 Physicians for Human Rights, *Weaponizing Tear Gas: Bahrain's Unprecedented Use of Toxic Chemical Agents against Civilians* (August 2012), available at https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/Bahrain-TearGas-Aug2012-small.pdf (Last Accessed 31 December 2013).

18 Kerr, S., *Baby's Death Threatens Bahrain Reform Agenda*, *Financial Times* (12 December 2012), available at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/8969c42a-24b2-11e1-ac4b-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1gME82cz3> (Last Accessed: 31 December 2014)

cause deadly injury when fired from a high velocity gun.¹⁹ In August 2011, 14-year-old Shia Ali Jawad al-Sheikh was struck in the head and killed by a tear gas canister fired from close range. When his father arrived at the hospital, he clearly saw the shape of a tear gas canister imprinted on the back of his son's neck. When al-Sheikh's family called for accountability, the government denied that it was responsible for the death, and even offered a reward for information leading to the arrest of those responsible. In a documentary recently released about Bahrain, al-Sheikh's father criticized this attempt to cover up the reason for his Ali's death, "they were saying there would be a reward to catch the killer. He was the first child to be killed and the first to be shown on national TV. They know who killed him. They killed him."²⁰ Al-Sheikh's father was later injured himself by a tear gas canister in November 2014, when a high-velocity canister struck him in his face, permanently dislodging his eye from its socket and causing concussive injury.²¹ All told, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights has documented that at least 38 people – all Shia – have perished as a result of the misuse of tear gas.²²

Besides tear gas, government security forces often employ ostensibly non-lethal shotguns in dispersing Shia protests. These shotguns often cause permanent injury, and their misuse can even lead to the death of protesters. Most recently, Bahraini security forces utilized shotguns to extra judicially kill 14-year-old Shia male Sayed Mahmood Sayed Mohsen Sayed Ahmed by firing buckshot at his heart at point blank range. The pellets entered through his chest and perforated his heart, causing his death. Pictures of his body show a 6-inch spread of shotgun pellets around the area of his heart. The Bahrain Center for Human Rights has documented that at least 18 people have died as a result of shotgun-related injuries since the beginning of the February 2011 protests.²³ All of them have been Shia.

Security forces have also used their vehicles as weapons against Shia protests. Footage from protests often shows SUVs driven by members of the security forces speeding towards protesters in the clear attempt to hit them.²⁴ This is exactly what happened to Ali Aziz Bedah, who was struck by a security vehicle while attending a protest in 2011. The vehicle surprised the protesters late at night, striking Ali and pinning him up against a wall. Fellow protesters watched in horror as the vehicle struck Ali multiple times, crushing him to death. When Ali's father inquired about who was driving the car, he learned that the driver, a member of the security forces, was not from Bahrain, and that after the incident he was deported back to his home country.²⁵ On 18 November 2011, Ali Youssef Bagdar, a 16 year old Shia youth, was fatally wounded when a security vehicle

19 Ahangar, Ab Ghani, Hakeem Zubair Ashraf, Mohd Akbar Bhat, Abdul Majeed Dar, Ifat Irshad, Gh Nabi Lone, Shyam Singh, and Mohd Lateef Wani. "Vascular Injuries Caused by Tear Gas Shells: Surgical Challenge and Outcome." *Iranian Journal of Medical Science* 36, no. 1 (2011): 14-17. Accessed January 18, 2015. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3559117/pdf/IJMS-36-14.pdf>; *see also* Abrar, A. Wani, Javeed Zargar, Altaf U. Ramzan, Nayil K. Malik, A. Qayoom, A.r. Kirmani, Furqan A. Nizami, and M.a. Wani. "Head Injury Caused by Tear Gas Cartridge in Teenage Population." *Pediatric Neurosurgery* 46, no. 1 (2010): 25-28. Accessed January 26, 2015. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20453560>; Altindis, Emrah, M. Ali Alpar, Emre Aksay, Jonhatan Beckwith, Christian Bokel, Robert Curl, and Robert Darnell et al. (2013), "Turkey Must End Violent Response To Protests." *Science* 341 (6143): 236-236. doi:10.1126/science.341.6143.236-a.

20 Vice News. "Bahrain: An Inconvenient Uprising." YouTube video, 30:40. (November 10, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fVF0qQU3kc>.

21 Confidential Source.

22 Bahrain Center for Human Rights, "Individuals Killed By Government's Excessive Use of Force Since 14 February 2011" (May 22, 2014) Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/3864>.

23 Ibid.

24 Vice News. "Bahrain: An Inconvenient Uprising." YouTube video, 30:40. (November 10, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fVF0qQU3kc>.

25 Ibid.

ran him over as he protested near the US Navy base on the island.²⁶ The Ministry of Interior later released a statement claiming “rioters” had poured oil over the road, which led the vehicle to skid out of control. Just days after the death of Ali Youssef Bagdar, security forces killed another man when a vehicle crashed into a car outside the Shi’a village of A’ali.²⁷

The government also uses force to interfere with the Shia freedom of movement in an effort to repress protests. After the 2011 protests, the government set up a series of security checkpoints, most of which were placed on the roads leading out into the Shia villages. Most of these checkpoints remain in place. The government has also completely cordoned off entire villages ahead of major protests. In August 2013, government security forces placed concrete barriers and barbed wire around several Shia villages, including the larger town of Bilad al-Qadeem.²⁸

Excessive Force in Bahraini Prisons

Shia Muslims in Bahrain face excessive police brutality for expressing their political discontent in public. However, once in the custody of security forces, they face even greater danger, as Bahraini security forces carry out a systematic policy of torture against members of the Shia Muslim community.²⁹ The use of torture is not limited to the top leadership of the political opposition, but is used against protesters, activists, politicians, and even doctors who come from this religious group. Some of those tortured are average Bahraini Shias arrested for taking part in protests. In November 2014, a video surfaced online showing the torture of a young Bahraini protester.³⁰ In the video, two Bahraini security officers hold the man down while another officer beats him in the face, neck, and chest. During this beating, the officer insults the man’s Shia faith.³¹

The use of torture by security forces is so widespread that some individuals are targeted simply due to their faith. On 15 March 2011, shortly after King Hamad of Bahrain declared a state of

26 Al Jazeera, “Bahrain Teenager Killed by Police Vehicle.” Al Jazeera, (November 19, 2011), Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/11/20111119155730885124.html>.

27 Al-Akhbar, “Bahrain protests flare after two deaths.” Al-Akhbar, (November 23, 2011), Accessed January 30, 2015. <http://www.commdiginews.com/world-news/middle-east/videos-of-recent-attacks-on-unarmed-shia-by-bahraini-security-forces-29320/>.

28 Al-Akhbar, “Bahrain Cages in Villages with Barbed Wire Ahead of Rally.” Al-Akhbar, (August 13, 2013), Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/16710>.

29 Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry. By Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni, Nigel Rodley, Badria al-Awadhi, Philippe Kirsche, and Mahnoush H. Arsanjani. Manama, Bahrain. 2011. pp. 299-300

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain and Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, “Subservient and Unaccountable; A Shadow Report on the Bahrain Ministry of the Interior’s Ombudsman and Bahrain National Institute for Human Rights”. July 2014.

“Shia Activists Tortured in Bahrain Jails.” Shia Rights Watch (September 19, 2012) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://shiarightswatch.org/en/middle-east/bahrain/6-shia-activists-tortured-in-bahrain-jails.html>.

“Bahrain: 50 Shi’a Activists Sentenced amid Torture Allegations.” Amnesty International (September 30, 2013) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/bahrain-50-shi-activists-sentenced-amid-torture-allegations-2013-09-30>.

“Capital of Torture: Bahraini Shiite Majority Demands Democratic Rule.” RT News (May 11, 2013) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://rt.com/news/thousands-march-torture-bahrain-129/>.

“Bahrain: Police Brutality, Despite Reform Pledges.” Human Rights Watch (April 29, 2012) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/04/29/bahrain-police-brutality-despite-reform-pledges>.

“UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Gives a Speech about Torture in Bahrain” Bahrain Center for Human Rights. (June 29, 2014) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/6937>.

30 Bahrain Center for Human Rights, “France24: Video Depicts Bahrain Police Abuse - But Will Inquiry Lead Anywhere?” Bahrain Rights. (November 19, 2014), Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/7174>.

31 Ibid.

emergency, security forces effectively took over the administration of Salmaniya Hospital, the largest public hospital in the country. During the early morning of 2 April, officers woke up four physicians sleeping in a break room at the hospital. After asking the names of each physician, they ordered one Sunni Muslim to leave the room while the remaining Shia doctors stayed behind. The officers then began interrogating the three physicians, asking them why there was no picture of the prime minister hanging up in the break room. The physicians responded that they did not take the picture down and had no idea what had happened to it. At this, the officers started to beat the physicians, calling them “traitor doctors.” When the officers heard more physicians passing by in the hall, they brought them into the room and inquired about their religious sect. For the next hour, the officers made the Shia physicians stand next to one Sunni physician while the officers lectured them on why the Sunni was a more respectable medical worker. The officers threatened that if they even looked at the Sunni physician they would be killed, and that if they missed just one day of work they and their families would be sent to prison and tortured.³²

Bahrain’s prisons and detention centers have understandably been the site of some of the worst cases of torture. ADHRB alone has documented approximately 150 allegations of torture and other abuse in Bahraini prisons in 2014.³³ When the Bahrain National Institute of Human Rights (NIHR), a government agency created to monitor human rights abuses, toured Dry Dock Detention Center in 2013, it found that nearly 150 prisoners were kept in 14 rooms. Interviewed inmates claim that security officers carried out regular beatings and torture, and many prisoners complained that they were targeted by prison guards explicitly because of their Shia faith.³⁴

While these human rights agencies are permitted to inspect official prison facilities, there is evidence to suggest that many detainees are kept at makeshift ‘secret’ prisons around the country. It is in these secret locations where the worst practices of torture are carried out against members of the Shia Muslim community.³⁵ One man’s tale of his arrest reveals how torture is carried out on a mass scale against Shia prisoners. On the morning of 31 July 2013, security forces raided this individual’s home and took him to what he thought was the Central Intelligence Directorate. After observing his surroundings, he soon realized that he was not in a traditional prison. The walls were made of plywood, and guards tried to give the illusion that the building was bigger than it actually was. This individual was kept in a cell standing with his hands cuffed behind his back for five days. After being escorted to the bathroom by a guard, the prisoner observed that there was a hierarchy of punishment in this facility: “prisoners with a green Post-it on their door were not allowed to sit or sleep; a yellow Post-it meant you were allowed to sleep at night; no Post-it on the door of your cell meant you were allowed to sit.”³⁶

32 Atkinson, Holly, and Richard Sollom. “Under the Gun: Ongoing Assaults on Bahrain’s Health System.” Physicians for Human Rights, 2012, Accessed January 20, 2015. <http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/library/reports/under-the-gun-ongoing-assaults-on-bahraains-health-system.html>

33 Confidential sources.

34 Bahrain National Institute for Human Rights. “Annual Report of the National Institution for Human Rights 2013 – Kingdom of Bahrain” (2014), Accessed January 29, 2014. [http://en.nihr.org.bh/Media/pdf/NIHR_ANNUAL_REPORT_2013_\(ENG\).pdf](http://en.nihr.org.bh/Media/pdf/NIHR_ANNUAL_REPORT_2013_(ENG).pdf)

35 VICE News RSS, “Bahrain: An Inconvenient Uprising.” (November 10, 2014), Accessed January 20, 2015. <https://news.vice.com/video/bahrain-an-inconvenient-uprising>.

36 Hassan, Mohamed. “Prison in Bahrain: A Tale of Torture.” Global Voices. (November 11, 2014), Accessed January 1, 2015. <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2014/11/11/prison-in-bahrain-a-tale-of-torture/#>.

Denial of Access to Medicine and Attacks on Healthcare Workers

In Bahrain's constitution, access to public healthcare is celebrated as the right of all Bahraini citizens regardless of ethnicity or religious sect.³⁷ However, Shia protesters in need of medical treatment were specifically targeted because of their injuries.

The government most alarmingly violated the Shia right to health during the February 2011 protests. According to a report by Physicians for Human Rights, Bahraini security forces prevented medics and ambulances from accessing the Pearl Roundabout during the suppression of the February 2011 uprising.³⁸ Medical professionals reported that security forces targeted ambulance personnel and their vehicles, sometimes posing as medics in order to arrest members of the opposition.³⁹ After this initial crackdown and the subsequent declaration of a state of emergency on 15 March 2011, the government erected dozens of roadblocks around majority Shia areas.⁴⁰ Security officers questioned persons with Shia names and promptly arrested anyone with signs of injury.

Immediately following the 2011 uprising, the government imprisoned and allegedly tortured 48 medical professionals, 47 of whom were Shia,⁴¹ due to their alleged involvement in protests and for providing medical assistance to protesters.⁴² The military courts convicted some of these doctors for instigating sectarian hatred, suggesting that they provided preferential medical care to Shia.⁴³ During the state of emergency, most of the patients entering the Salmaniya Medical Complex were people injured in the protests, themselves overwhelmingly Shia. At least three medical professionals are still in prison on charges related to the 2011 events.⁴⁴

A delegation from Physicians for Human Rights visited health care facilities around Bahrain and reported that medical staff and injured alike feared being arrested if they traveled to medical centers. As the director of one medical facility outside of Manama recounted to investigators, most of her 19 staff members were Shia, and they feared going to work because of the roadblocks.⁴⁵ Physicians for Human Rights additionally recorded numerous testimonies from injured Bahrainis who either were tortured when they attempted to receive medical treatment, or who avoided treatment because they feared arrest.⁴⁶

37 Kingdom of Bahrain Constitution, Article 8(a). Accessed January 29, 2015. <http://confinder.richmond.edu/admin/docs/Bahrain.pdf>.

38 Sollom, Richard. "Do No Harm: A Call for Bahrain to End Systematic Attacks on Doctors and Patients." Physicians for Human Rights, (2011), Accessed January 21, 2015. https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/bahrain-do-no-harm-2011.pdf.

39 Ibid.

40 Sollom, Richard. "Do No Harm: A Call for Bahrain to End Systematic Attacks on Doctors and Patients." Physicians for Human Rights, (2011), Accessed January 21, 2015. https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/bahrain-do-no-harm-2011.pdf.

41 Atkinson, Holly and Richard Sollom. "Under the Gun: Ongoing Assaults on Bahrain's Health System." Physicians for Human Rights. p.6. (May 2012) Accessed January 20, 2015. https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/Bahrain-militarization-may-2012-under-the-gun.pdf.

42 *Bahrain: Attack on the medical profession as doctors and nurses are arrested, detained, abducted and ill-treated*, Front Line Defenders (26 May 2011), <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/15168>.

43 "I don't regret doing my duty." Dr Ali Al Ekri, Front Line Defenders, <http://www.frontlinedefenders.org/node/19943>.

44 The three are Ibrahim Al-Demistani, Secretary General of the Bahrain Nursing Society, Dr Ali Al Ekri, a surgeon, and Hasaan Matooq, a nurse. *Bahrain – Medical professionals subjected to ill treatment in prison to set up body of Medics for Human Rights*, Gulf Center for Human Rights (11 November 2013), <http://www.gc4hr.org/news/view/529>.

45 Ibid.

46 Sollom, Richard. "Do No Harm: A Call for Bahrain to End Systematic Attacks on Doctors and Patients." Physicians for Human Rights, (2011), Accessed January 21, 2015. https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/bahrain-do-no-harm-2011.pdf.

While the government no longer openly prevents Shia from obtaining medical care, government policies regarding the arrest of injured protesters force many Shia away from the hospitals. Many Shia report that government security officers continue to monitor hospitals and other health facilities throughout the country, targeting and arresting Shia that show signs of injuries sustained during police suppression of protests. As a result, Shia are often forced to seek medical care in understaffed and underequipped underground clinics.⁴⁷

Prison authorities have also deprived Shia detainees of necessary medical care.⁴⁸ On 2 April 2011, the government announced that Hasan Jassim Mohamed Maki had died from complications of Sickle Cell Anemia. However, his family claimed that he had never shown serious symptoms of the disease, and that it is easily treatable. Other inmates at the prison reported they heard Maki's groans as he slowly suffered from lack of treatment. In October 2013, an anonymous Bahraini Shia perished from AIDS-related complications after the government allegedly denied him access to his medicine during his time in prison.⁴⁹ The government has also denied medical care to notable Shia leader Abdulwahab Husain, who suffers from painful and life-threatening medical conditions including injuries suffered as a result of torture. ADHRB often receives similar reports from other anonymous sources, citing that the government refuses to treat injuries such as broken ribs and concussions that resulted from torture at the hands of Bahraini security agents.

Conclusion

In committing acts of violence against the Shia population of Bahrain, the government has displayed access and willingness to employ a wide variety of tools. From tear gassing protests and villages to torturing protesters and medics, the government conducts a targeted campaign of violence against its Shia citizenry. Sometimes, these attacks are in response to protests. However, in many other instances, Shia Muslims who had nothing to do with the protest movement were targeted simply because of their faith. Evidence of new acts of violence emerge daily, to the point where many international human rights institutions have difficulty keeping up with documentation. Being victimized by violence is quickly becoming a way of life for Bahraini Shia.

While violence very rarely seems deliberately calculated to destroy human life, government recklessness in its utilization of violence has at times caused extrajudicial death, especially against the weak and infirm. Both infants and elderly persons have died as a result of government security forces blanketing villages with tear gas, while a not insignificant number of Bahraini youth have perished as a result of security officers recklessly using force to suppress peaceful protests. Impunity is common, and in some cases prominent government officials have been quoted as remarking positively on these and similar events.⁵⁰

With the Bahraini government utilizing such a wide spectrum of violence against the Shia, and with the government committing such acts of violence so frequently, a systemic government

⁴⁷ Confidential Source.

⁴⁸ Bassiouni, Mahmoud, Nigel Rodley, Badria Al-Awadhi, Philippe Kirsch, and Mahnoush Arsanjani, "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry. (December 11, 2011), Accessed January 21, 2015. <http://www.bici.org.bh/BICIREportEN.pdf>.

⁴⁹ Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain and Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, "Subservient and Unaccountable; A Shadow Report on the Bahrain Ministry of the Interior's Ombudsman and Bahrain National Institute for Human Rights." July 2014.

⁵⁰ "Bahrain: Prime Minister to Officer Acquitted on Torture Charges: "Thank You for Your Work"" Bahrain Center for Human Rights. (July 10, 2013), Accessed January 21, 2015. <http://bahrainrights.org/en/node/6219>.

policy of violent acts against the Shia seems an obvious conclusion. And while the government exercises its pervasive violence with a level of restraint seemingly calculated to avoid loss of life, the irresponsible exposure to violence will inevitably lead to casualties easily ascribed to government activity. These policies will need to end before the government can be seen as neutral, accountable, and legitimate.

Political Discrimination

Held in late November 2014, Bahrain's first parliamentary elections since the 2011 uprising engendered considerable debate. Opposition leaders and government representatives did not contest the official results; in the aftermath of an opposition boycott sparked by deep-seated dissatisfaction with the nation's most recent electoral reforms, they instead disputed government estimates of voter turnout. The Ministry of Justice reported that "51.5 percent of voters" participated.⁵¹ Al-Wefaq, a Shia-oriented political society and the nation's largest opposition body (formal political parties are prohibited), estimated that actual turnout hovered around 30 percent.⁵² Perceptions of the system's intrinsic favoritism drive the debate over process. Since the 2002 reconstitution of the Council of Representatives, the National Assembly's lower elected body, the Government of Bahrain has engaged in political engineering to ensure the underrepresentation of the Bahraini Shia population in the nation's only elected body.

This report presents the scope of Bahrain's political engineering apparatus and the manner in which it is utilized to suppress the political will of the Shia majority. After outlining the Bahraini government's exclusionary structure, the report studies unfair redistricting practices, highlights the effects of demographic manipulation and legalistic coercive measures, and offers a conclusion with specific recommendations for righting these inequities.

The Government's Exclusionary Structure

The Bahraini government is divided into three branches: the executive branch, as represented by the king and his appointed Council of Ministers, the judiciary branch, as appointed by the king, and the legislative branch, itself formed of the appointed Shura Council and the elected Council of Representatives. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa maintains significant executive authority, which he exercises in part through his political appointments in all three branches.⁵³ He appoints all members of the Cabinet,⁵⁴ the executive body which includes the office of the Prime Minister, his deputies, and the heads of all government ministries (including Foreign Affairs, Interior, Defense and Justice). As a result, executive branch is governed significantly by the royal family; as of 2013, members of the al-Khalifa dynasty held fourteen of thirty-five Cabinet positions,⁵⁵ while Shia persons held just six Cabinet-level positions.⁵⁶ The king also maintains the exclusive right to appoint judges and judicial officers. As a result, Shia accounted for just 12% of the judiciary in 2013.⁵⁷

The king additionally chooses all 40 members of the National Assembly's more powerful upper house, the Shura (or Consultative) Council; in 2013, a Shia occupied 17 out of the 40 seats.⁵⁸ The

51 Associated Press, "Bahrain opposition blasts electoral turnout figures," *The Washington Post*, (November 23, 2014) accessed November 25, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/bahrain-opposition-blasts-electoral-turnout-figure/2014/11/23/095cf766-731f-11e4-95a8-fe0b46e8751a_story.html.

52 "Polls close in boycotted Bahrain elections," Al Jazeera, (November 23, 2014) accessed November 25, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/video/middleeast/2014/11/polls-close-boycotted-bahrain-elections-20141122202857153287.html>.

53 "Bahrain," *Freedom House*, 2012, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/bahrain-0#VH8z8THF8UA>.

54 Ibid.

55 "Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members: Bahrain," Central Intelligence Agency Library (April 23, 2013) accessed December 3, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/BA.html>.

56 Al-Wefaq. "مساواة والمواطنة أساس الديمقراطية" [Equality and Citizenship are the Foundation of Democracy]. 2013. Accessed January 30, 2015. http://alwefaq.net/uploadfiles/files/Tameez_3Oct2013.pdf.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

Council of Representatives, consisting of members serving four year terms, is the only elected governing body.⁵⁹ Thus, as a result of the king's extensive influence, the upper echelons of the government are effectively dominated by Sunni appointees.

There is no formal separation of powers within the Sunni-dominated government. The king reserves the right to set law via Royal Decree, a power outside any formal check and not requiring the approval of the elected legislature. The Cabinet, despite forming part of the executive branch, also possesses legislative powers and drafts most laws.⁶⁰ The Representative and Shura Councils can propose legislation, but the Shura Council must approve any legislation drafted by the Council of Representatives before it is submitted to the king,⁶¹ providing the appointed body with veto power over electoral action.

Asymmetric Districting

During the 2006 and 2010 parliamentary elections, Bahrain's opposition societies chose to engage in the electoral process. As a result, turnout for these elections was high.⁶² However, although al-Wefaq won a strong plurality of voters in the 2010 elections, the political society only garnered eighteen of forty seats in the Council of Representatives.⁶³ This was largely due to the problems created by Bahrain's asymmetric districting program.

The international community often conflates the Bahraini government's unbalanced redistricting scheme with commonplace gerrymandering, considered an unfortunate ill afflicting many democratic societies.⁶⁴ What occurs in Bahrain, however, is not analogous to the redistricting which takes place within a republican system. Successive parties do not cyclically redraw proportional electoral constituencies. Rather, the governing elite centered around the royal family asymmetrically set and reset electoral rules with every election. Non-proportional districts unequally weight votes and the "winner-take-all" format constrains the power of political parties, resulting in a discriminatory electoral process.

Since 2002, non-proportional voting districts have constituted the largest obstacles to the realization of fair elections in Bahrain. Traditionally, the government has separated the districts into five larger governorates which represent geographically contiguous zones of the island: Capital, Muharraq, Northern, Southern, and Central. These governorates are imbalanced along sectarian lines, hemming many of the nation's Shia, who predominately populate the island's northern-third, into high-density districts in the Capital and Northern Governorates. Meanwhile, Sunni voters have mostly comprised lower-density constituencies in the Southern and Muharraq Governorates. Central has been more evenly split.

Historically, variation between the districts' population levels has been stark. During the

59 "Bahrain," Freedom House, (2012), accessed January 20, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/bahrain-0#.VH8z8THF8UA>.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

62 "Voter Turnout Data for Bahrain," International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, accessed November 25, 2014, <http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=BH>.

63 Fahad Desmukh, "Gerrymandering in Bahrain: Twenty-one persons, one vote," Bahrain Watch, February 11, 2013, accessed November 28, 2014, <https://bahrainwatch.org/blog/2013/02/11/gerrymandering-in-bahrain-twenty-one-persons-one-vote/>.

64 Implementation of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry Report, House of Representatives, 112 Cong. (2012) (Statement of Rep. Dan Burton).

2006 election cycle, the Joint Committee of Monitoring Elections, comprised of the Bahrain Transparency Society and the Bahrain Human Rights Society, reported that the 1st District of the Northern Governorate (Northern 1) held 15,499 eligible voters, the vast majority of which were Shia. The smallest constituency, the 5th District of the Southern Governorate (Southern 5), contained 1,175, most of whom were Sunni.⁶⁵ The disparity widened four years later. During the 2010 election cycle, Northern 1 and Northern 9 held over 16,000 eligible voters each. The smallest constituency, Southern 6, contained some 750 voters; constituents in Southern 6 enjoyed a voting power over 20 times stronger than constituents in Northern 1.⁶⁶

The “winner-take-all” election format, which allocates one parliamentary representative per district, amplifies Sunni voices at the expense of Shia voters. In 2010 the Sunni-heavy Southern Governorate, while only holding 6.8 percent of total voters, contained six districts. The Shia-heavy Northern Governorate, containing 31.9 percent of voters, had three more districts, translating into only three more representatives out of forty for a population nearly five times larger.⁶⁷

The combined manipulations undermine the principle of “one man, one vote.” As the Joint Committee of Monitoring Elections wrote in its 2007 report, “the ballot of a voter in the 5th District of the Southern Governorate equals 13.15 votes in the 1st District of the Northern Governorate.”⁶⁸ The voting power ratio between the largest and smallest district increased to 1:21.1 in 2010. That someone in a southern district is nearly guaranteed to be Sunni, while a voter from the northern district is likely Shia, indicates a conscious government effort to lessen the value of the Shia vote.

The two engineering methods effectively contain what Shia political expression the system permits. After winning districts containing a total of 181,238 eligible voters in 2010, versus districts totaling 137,430 voters for all other parties and individual candidates combined, al-Wefaq gained 18 seats out of 40.⁶⁹ If Bahrain instituted a winner-take-all system with districts of equal size, a party representing 56 percent of all eligible voters could expect an outcome akin to a twenty-two or twenty-three seat majority. Furthermore, these unequal, sect-based districts shrink the electoral map for contending parties. In 2010, al-Wefaq contested only thirty-one of a possible forty seats,⁷⁰ judging the remaining nine as uncontestable.

In 2014, the King promulgated a set of modest electoral reforms whose implementation did not seriously challenge the position of pro-government representatives. The Central Governorate was abolished, and the Southern subsumed much of its population.⁷¹ The average district size increased from 7,967 to 8,743 voters, there were more districts per governorate, and the 16,000 person mega-districts were eliminated.⁷² These modifications, however, stopped well short of

65 “REPORT ABOUT Parliamentary and Municipal Elections HELD ON 25th November and 2nd December 2006,” The Joint Committee of Monitoring Elections, (February 2007) accessed November 26, 2014, <https://www.ndi.org/files/Bahrain-2006-elections-report.pdf>, 8.

66 “Electoral Map 2010,” al-Wasat, accessed November 26, 2014, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/elections/2010/>.

67 “Bahrain,” Freedom House, (2012), accessed January 20, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/bahrain-0#.VH8z8THF8UA>.

68 “Report about Parliamentary and Municipal Elections,” Joint Committee, 8.

69 Fahad Desmukh, “Gerrymandering in Bahrain: Twenty-one persons, one vote,” *Bahrain Watch*, (February 11, 2013) accessed November 28, 2014, <https://bahrainwatch.org/blog/2013/02/11/gerrymandering-in-bahrain-twenty-one-persons-one-vote/>.

70 “Bahrain Majlis Al-Nuwab (Council of Representatives): Last Elections,” *Inter-Parliamentary Union*, accessed November 28, 2014, http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2371_E.htm.

71 “Electoral Map,” Directorate of Election and Referendum, accessed November 28, 2014, <http://www.vote.bh/En/ElectoralMap?cms=iQRpheuphYtI6pyXUGiNqChNlcwVZKE>.

72 “Districts Gerrymandering analysis for 2010,” al-Wefaq, accessed November 28, 2014.

righting the population imbalances between areas traditionally loyal to the government and those more supportive of the Shia opposition. The electoral quarantining of the opposition continued. The Capital and Northern Governorates contained seventeen total districts thought loyal to opposition parties; the Muharraq and Southern Governorates contained one between them.⁷³ Additionally, the former two governorates included a total of 209,816 voters spread across twenty-two districts, while the latter two—covering areas with sizable Sunni majorities—accounted for 139,897 voters spread across eighteen districts.⁷⁴ In the Shia-dominated Northern Governorate, nine of twelve districts exceeded the national average in terms of population size, four by more than 2,000 voters. In the Southern, only one of ten exceeded the 8,743 average, and that by only 45 persons.⁷⁵ These numbers demonstrate that, in aggregate, the value of a Sunni vote continues to outstrip that of a Shia by a significant margin.

Beyond containing Shia political aspirations, this asymmetric districting process carries other hidden costs for the Shia community. Representatives of majority-Shia districts must attempt to provide services for their oversized and underserved constituencies. Human rights violations and housing and employment discrimination disproportionately affect Bahraini Shia, leaving them in need of pressing assistance.⁷⁶ These deprivations contribute to an “out of control” number of constituent meetings, and politicians in the opposition must sacrifice the basic work of governing in order to respond adequately to the citizens they represent.⁷⁷ Shia politicians must work harder than their Sunni counterparts even as the system ensures that they yield less.

The sectarian electoral format also imposes costs on Bahrainis attempting to transcend these intra-societal divisions. The government-enforced Sunni-Shia binary disadvantages smaller political societies, such as the National Democratic Action Society (Waad), the largest secular party in Bahrain. Despite advancing nearly all its candidates to the second round of voting in both the 2006⁷⁸ and 2010⁷⁹ elections, Waad did not gain a single seat. The only formal political societies to win seats in 2006 in 2010 had religious orientations: al-Wefaq, the Sunni-Islamist al-Menbar, and the Salafi al-Asalah. Independent candidates loyal to the ruling elite filled the remainder of the parliament. Thus, government-backed candidates and Islamists shut out Waad in the south and in Muharraq while the popularity of al-Wefaq precluded them from gaining a foothold in the north.

Demographic Manipulation, Legalistic Coercion, and State Violence

While the government can cite minor modifications to asymmetric redistricting as efforts at reform, it makes no attempt to defend other actions which tip the electoral scales in its favor. A dual campaign of re-engineering the demographic makeup of Bahraini society while suppressing opposition politicians and activists further elevates the political power of the Sunni minority at the expense of the Shia majority.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

76 U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *2013 Report on International Religious Freedom*, (2014)

77 Ebrahim Matar, Matar. Personal interview. 24 July 2014.

78 “Parliamentary and municipal elections in Bahrain 2006: Islamic Sunnis are leading the second elections in Bahrain,” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, (December 13, 2006) accessed November 28, 2014, <http://www.constitutionnet.org/files/No.%2014%20Parliamentary%20and%20municipal%20elections%20in%20Bahrain%202006.pdf>.

79 “The results of parliamentary and municipal elections in 2010,” Al Wasat, (2010), accessed November 28, 2014, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/elections/results/>.

In the last decade, Bahrain has begun supplementing its Sunni population with foreign-born Sunni citizens. As a matter of policy, Bahrain recruits Sunni foreigners to serve in their military and police forces.⁸⁰ These foreign nationals are then offered a “fast track” to citizenship.⁸¹ These Sunnis come from cultures seen as amenable to the ruling Al Khalifa family, primarily Sunni Bedouin tribes in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, Jordan, and Baluchistan, although many also originate in Pakistan⁸² While Bahrain does not publish official numbers, estimates of these naturalized Sunni citizens meet or exceed 50,000,⁸³ amounting to around an 8% portion of an island whose citizenry hovers around 600,000. Pakistani expatriates alone account for between 25,000 – 30,000 naturalized Bahrainis.⁸⁴

At the same time, the government has continued to deny citizenship to hundreds of eligible persons on account of their membership in a Shia sect. The nationality law stipulates that the government must provide citizenship rights to any GCC nationals with three years of residence in Bahrain. These numbers climb to 15 years for Arabs and 25 years for non-Arabs to obtain Bahraini citizenship. A 2008 study estimated that 2000 stateless families resided in Bahrain, many of whom were Shia families that qualified for citizenship under the Bahraini law.⁸⁵ While an updated figure is not available, new stories regarding such families continue to emerge in the local media.⁸⁶ Further, the government has periodically revoked the citizenships of prominent political activists and youth, many of whom are Shia.⁸⁷ While denaturalization efforts have not proceeded at nearly the same pace as the government’s broader naturalization campaign, the combined practices of naturalizing Sunni expatriates, ignoring Shia families eligible for citizenship, and denaturalizing Shia leaders and youth have all had the effect of lessening the impact of the Shia population in their homeland.

Short-term coercive measures supplement long-term demographic manipulation as a means of securing the political space for the ruling Sunni elite. These measures often adopt arbitrary legal justifications. Opposition societies and candidates largely representing the Shia population are subject to constantly changing rules which expand or contract their effective space of action. As societies threatened to boycott the 2014 elections, the government countered by publicly considering penalties for eligible citizens who did not vote, including preventing non-voters

80 Shirin Sadeghi, “Intricacies of Bahrain’s Shia-Sunni divide,” *Al Jazeera*, (September 2, 2011) accessed December 1, 2014, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/08/2011829104128700299.html>.

81 Aryn Baker, “What Lies Beneath: Bahrain’s ‘New Citizens’ Fuel Unrest,” *Time*, (March 11, 2011), accessed December 1, 2014, <http://world.time.com/2011/03/11/what-lies-beneath-bahrain-s-new-citizens-fuel-unrest/>.

82 Omar al-Shehabi, “Demography and Bahrain’s Unrest,” *Sada*, (March 16, 2011) accessed December 1, 2014, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/03/16/demography-and-bahrain-s-unrest/gbpy>.

83 Ibid.

84 Unnikrishnan, Raji. “University Soon for Pakistani Expats.” *Gulf Daily News*. (December 13, 2014). Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=391874>.

85 Grewal, Sandeep. “AHN: More Than 2,000 Families Waiting To Become Bahrain Citizens.” Bahrain Center for Human Rights. (May 13, 2008), Accessed January 21, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/2158>.

86 الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود لم 3 من أكثر وتوقيفه الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود أم. محمود خوري بصفر ال البحرينية الوسط صحفية " البحرينية الجنسية على تحصل ولم قرن لصف من أكثر عاشت "، صحيفة صفر ال August 31, 2014. Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4376/news/read/916339/1.html>. [Al Safar, Suhaila. “I lived more than half a century and did not get Bahraini citizenship.” *Middle Bahraini Newspaper* الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود لم 3 من أكثر وتوقيفه الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود أم. محمود خوري بصفر ال البحرينية الوسط صحفية " البحرينية الجنسية على تحصل ولم قرن لصف من أكثر عاشت "، صحيفة صفر ال August 31, 2014. Accessed January 22, 2015. http://www.alwasatnews.com/mobile/news-911442.html#comment_form. [Khoury, Mahmoud. “Um Mahmoud Khoury shows fear of deportation for her son not having a passport more than three months after he was arrested,” *Middle Bahraini Newspaper* الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود لم 3 من أكثر وتوقيفه الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود أم. محمود خوري بصفر ال البحرينية الوسط صحفية " البحرينية الجنسية على تحصل ولم قرن لصف من أكثر عاشت "، صحيفة صفر ال August 31, 2014. Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/2687/news/read/360465/1.html>. [Viral messages and posts by readers,” *Middle Bahraini Newspaper*]

87 “Bahrain revokes 31 opposition activists’ citizenship,” *BBC*, (November 7, 2012), accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20235542>.

88 الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود لم 3 من أكثر وتوقيفه الجواز امتلاكه لعدم ترحيله من تخوفاً بُدِي خوري محمود أم. محمود خوري بصفر ال البحرينية الوسط صحفية " البحرينية الجنسية على تحصل ولم قرن لصف من أكثر عاشت "، صحيفة صفر ال August 31, 2014. Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/2687/news/read/360465/1.html>. [Viral messages and posts by readers,” *Middle Bahraini Newspaper*]

89 “Bahrain revokes 31 opposition activists’ citizenship,” *BBC*, (November 7, 2012), accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20235542>.

from acquiring a government job.⁸⁸ According to Matar Ebrahim Matar, a former al-Wefaq representative, government officials also openly considered removing non-voters from voting rolls and instituting a cumbersome re-registration process in order to depress future Shia voter numbers while simultaneously inflating the voter turnout rate, which the government judges off of eligible registered voters and not off of the general citizenry.⁸⁹ Such measures would inordinately punish the many Shia that boycotted elections out of frustration.

As calls for a boycott gained momentum, the government responded by suspending al-Wefaq for three months and threatening to proscribe the same punishment to Waad.⁹⁰ The Ministry of Justice suspended the Shia society in October for “irregularities,” a lack of transparency, and for holding “illegal” assemblies.⁹¹ In July 2014, authorities interrogated al-Wefaq leaders Shaikh Ali Salman and Khalil al-Marzooq after the two freely met with Tom Malinowski, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Authorities eventually charged them with violating the 2005 Law for Political Societies.⁹² In both cases, government officials levied punishments against opposition members who attempted to act outside of the government-determined political space.

On 27 December 2014, the Bahraini government arrested al-Wefaq Secretary-General Shaikh Ali Salman on charges of inciting hatred against the government and advocating for the violent overthrow of the government. The arrest came two days after Shaikh Salman was re-elected to al-Wefaq’s top position during a meeting of the organization that had been banned by the government. International human rights organizations condemned Shaikh Salman’s detention, and some political analysts speculated that the move may be designed to increase extremist violence in the country so as to further justify political crackdowns.

For politically active citizens who choose to abandon the government’s carefully-managed channels of expression, authorities respond with outright violence. In the run-up to the most recent elections, one Shia opposition group organized an alternative referendum in which Bahrainis could vote “yes” or “no” on “choosing a new political regime in Bahrain under the supervision of the United Nations.”⁹³ In November 2014, the government arrested thirteen women alleged to be the referendum’s organizers, subjected them to torture, and prevented them from accessing legal counsel.⁹⁴ For the government, state violence is a ready option when intimidation and de-legitimization fail.

88 Mohammed Al A’Ali, “Penalties plan for not voting,” *Gulf Daily News*, (November 21, 2014) accessed December 1, 2014, <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=390418>.

89 Matar Ebrahim, Matar, Comments made at Bahrain Working Group (October 2014).

90 Farishta Saeed, “Bahraini opposition group suspended for three months,” Reuters, (October 20, 2014) accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/10/29/us-bahrain-wefaq-idUSKBN0IH1CV20141029>.

91 Al Monitor, “Bahrain wields judiciary against civil society,” (October 30, 2014) accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/10/bahrain-alfafaq-political-opposition.html#>; “Bahrain: Court issues order to suspend the largest political group in Bahrain,” *Bahrain Center for Human Rights*, (November 3, 2014) accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/7155>.

92 Bahrain Center for Human Rights, “Bahrain: Ministry of Justice Files Lawsuit to Suspend Al-Wefaq, the Largest Political Party in Bahrain” (July 21, 2014) accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/6971>.

93 “Bahrain opposition activists set up alternative vote ahead of elections,” *Middle East Eye*, (November 21, 2014), accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/bahrain-opposition-activists-set-poll-self-determination-ahead-elections-136064934>.

94 Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, “Bahrain: Women Targeted in Mass Arrests Over ‘Popular Referendum,’” (November 14, 2014) accessed December 3, 2014, <http://adhrb.org/2014/11/bahrain-women-targeted-in-mass-arrests-over-popular-referendum/>.

Conclusion

Through a combination of asymmetric districting, demographic manipulation and legalistic coercive measures, the Bahraini government maintains an electoral system which allows for limited participation while forestalling the election of a representative parliament which could veto laws produced by the executive branch. The unrepresentative nature of the current government marginalizes the society's majority Shia population even as it further concentrates power in the hands of the Sunni ruling family and their supporters. Bahrain, however, need not continue along a path of heightened sectarian tension. By instituting a series of obvious, fair, and common-sense reforms, the government can liberalize the political space while maintaining internal stability and respecting the popular will.

Religious Discrimination

For several years after obtaining independence from the British, it appeared as if the Sunni dominated government of Bahrain was willing to accept the Shia community into the political order. Sheikh Abdul Amir al-Jamri and Sheikh Isa Qassim, both prominent Shia clerics, served in parliament as representatives of the Islamist “religious bloc.” However, the parliament and constitution were suspended in 1975 when the legislature rejected a security law which would have granted security forces indiscriminate powers. For the rest of King Isa bin Salman’s reign, Bahrain was effectively ruled by decree. This political regression, and the crackdowns which followed, led to an exodus of Shia religious figures from Bahrain.

When King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa acceded to the Bahraini throne in 2001, observers hoped that his reign would bring about an era of political liberalization. At the beginning of reign, King Hamad put forward the National Action Charter, which would return Bahrain to the constitutional monarchy stipulated in the 1973 constitution. In a public referendum, over 98% of Bahraini voters chose to ratify this document. In response to Hamad’s conciliatory approach, many exiled Shia clerics chose to return. In 2001, many of these clerics joined together to form the al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, a Shia Islamic coalition which has since become the single largest political society in Bahrain. Thus, the Shia religious establishment became intrinsically tied with the community’s political representatives.

In the time since the Shia clergymen returned to Bahrain, the government has significantly regressed on many of its previous moves towards political unity. As the political structure of the country shifts towards further alienating the Shia, the Shia opposition has responded with increasingly stronger rhetoric and increasingly numerous protests against the government. The government has responded in kind with a specific targeting of the Shia religious establishment, violently targeting Shia religious leaders, legally dissolving Shia religious organizations, and physically destroying Shia religious structures.

Violence against Shia Clergy and Religious Members

In the immediate aftermath of the 2011 protest movement, Bahraini authorities targeted influential leaders of the political opposition in addition to average citizens-protesters. The most famous of these political prisoners are the “Bahrain 13,” a group of unaligned opposition leaders who were arrested immediately after the government assaulted the pro-democracy demonstrations. Six members of the Bahrain 13 are widely considered to be outstanding members of the Bahrain Shia clergy by the Shia community, including Hassan Mushaima, Abdulwahab Hussein, Abduljalil al-Miqdad, Mohammed Habib (al-Miqdad), Saeed Mirza al-Nouri, and Abdullah Isa al-Mahroos. Their stories generally follow the same theme: shortly after the government moved on the Pearl Roundabout in March 2011, the government arrested the members of the Bahrain 13, including the six clergymen named above. The government tortured several of the clergymen before eventually convicting them of crimes related to the freedoms of expression and association. Their sentences ranged from several years to life in prison.⁹⁵

During the February 2011 protests, other members of the Shia religious establishment not associated with the Bahrain 13 were also targeted. Sheikh Maytham al-Salman is a Shia cleric who leads the Bahrain Interfaith Center, an organization that promotes religious tolerance in Bahrain.

⁹⁵ “Bahrain 13.” Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy. Accessed January 21, 2015. <http://birdbh.org/bahrain-13/>.

Although he was not involved in the protest movement, he was arrested on 18 March 2011 and detained for six months. Prison authorities claimed that he was detained for attending an illegal rally. Additionally, the government tried cleric Aqeel Ahmed al-Mafoodh in absentia for activities related to his media coverage of the February 2011 uprising. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison.⁹⁶

Since the February 2011 protests, other religious leaders have found themselves victimized by government persecution. In April 2014, Sheikh Hussein Najati, who is considered the most senior Shia cleric in Bahrain, was interrogated and informed that his Bahraini citizenship had been revoked. Police officers gave Najati 48 hours to leave the country for Iraq. In December of the same year, government security forces arrested Shaikh Ali Salman, a Bahraini cleric and the leader of Bahrain's largest opposition movement, on account of political statements he made earlier in the year. He potentially faces up to 15 years in prison. Since 2011, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights has identified at least 31 Bahraini Shia clerics persecuted on account of their political statements or religious affiliation, including Shaikhs Salman and Najati. More than half of them remain in prison.

The Destruction of Mosques and Other Religious Sites

Government violence against the Shia establishment has not stopped at the clergy. The government has also directly targeted the physical structures of the Shia religion. In retaliation against the protest movement of February 2011, which the government characterized as predominately populated by Bahraini Shia, security forces bulldozed and demolished 38 Shia mosques around Bahrain. Many of these buildings were culturally as well as religiously significant. While the government has promised to rebuild a number of these mosques, progress on their rebuilding has been stagnant, with the Shia community itself rebuilding the only mosques that have been completed.

The first such demolition occurred on 30 March, when *Masjid Kowaikebat* in the town of Tubli was burned, along with the sacred objects contained in the building. The second and arguably most important mosque to be demolished was the *al-Barbaghi* mosque, which stood along the causeway between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Built in 1549, *al-Barbaghi* stood as a symbol of Shia Islam's role in Bahrain's history and predated the arrival of the al-Khalifa family to Bahrain by more than 200 years. The mosque also held the tomb of Ameer Mohammed al-Barbaghi, a historically important Shia religious scholar. *Al-Barbaghi's* location along the route from Saudi Arabia to Bahrain is significant, because some Bahrainis have suggested that the destruction of Shia mosques was encouraged by Saudi officials who wanted to erase Shia heritage from the most visible locations.

Indeed, the location of a mosque seemed to be an important factor in deciding whether or not it would be targeted. The Shia majority area of al-Barboura has been the site of historical clashes between the al-Khalifa family and Shia discontents. During the period from March 30th to April 27th, 10 mosques were destroyed in the al-Barboura area, in what opposition activists contend was a symbolic act of revenge against the Shia community. Other mosques were apparently destroyed due to their location in publicly-exposed areas. *Masjid al-Alawaiyat* was one such mosque, being publicly visible on the route to the country's only public hospital.

⁹⁶ Bahrain Center for Human Rights, "Updates: Harsh Sentences to 21 Prominent Oppositional Leaders and Human Rights Defenders. (July 5, 2011). Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/4029>.

Between 30 March and 27 April 2011, the government destroyed a total of 38 mosques. These included:

Abou Thir al-Ghiffari mosque in Barboura;
Abu Dharr mosque in Nuwaidrat;
Abu Talib mosque in Hamad town;
Ain Rastan mosque in A'ali;
Al-Baqei in al-Lozy District;
Al-Barbaghi mosque in Barboura;
Al-Douweira mosque in Barboura;
Al-Imam al-Baqer mosque in Barboura ;
Al-Imam al-Hadi mosque in Barboura;
Al-Imam al-Hadi mosque in Hamad town;
Al-Imam al-Hasan mosque in Barboura;
Al-Imam al-Jawwad mosque in Barboura;
Al-Imam al-Sajjad in al-Lozy district;
Al-Imam Sadeq mosque in Salmabad;
Al-Khadr mosque in Bani Jamra;
Al-Rasool al-Adham mosque in Karzakan;
Al-Sheikh Youssef mosque in Barboura;
Al-Watiya mosque in Mahooz;
Al-Wattiya mosque in Mugaba;

Fadak al-Zahra mosque in Hamad town;
Fatima al-Zahraa mosque;
Imam al-Jawad mosque in Hamad town;
Imam Ali mosque in Sadad;
Imam Baqer mosque in Nuwaidrat;
Imam Hasan al-Askari mosque in Hamad town;
Imam Hassan mosque in Nuwaidrat;
Kareem Ahl al-Bait mosque in Hamad town;
Kowaikebat mosque in Kawara;
Mo'min mosque in Nuwaidrat;
Salman al-Faresi mosque in Barboura;
Salman al-Farsi mosque in Nuwaidrat;
Sayyeda Zainab mosque in Hamad town;
Shaikh Mohammed al-Wasti mosque in Sitra;
Shaikh Abid mosque and Shrine in Sitra;
Shaikh Ibrahim mosque in Zinj;
Shaikh Mohsin al-Saboor mosque in Zinj;
Sheikh Maytham al-Bahrani mosque; and
Um al-Baneen mosque in Hamad town;

Since the destruction of these mosques, the Government of Bahrain has restricted access to many of the sites where they originally stood. Security forces erected a fence around the site of the Barbaghi mosque and prosecuted individuals who attempted to pray at the location. On 31 December 2013, religious scholar and member of the Islamic Scholars (Olamma) Council Fadhel al-Zaki was interrogated by police officers on charges of “participating in a gathering that was not notified about” after leading prayers at the site. Similarly, TV director Yasser Nasser was arrested on December 30th 2013, because he did not have “a permit to perform prayers in the site.”

Following the expiration of the national period of emergency in June 2011,⁹⁷ the Bahraini government created the Bahrain Independent Commission on Inquiry (BICI) in order to investigate government wrongdoing following the February 2011 protests. The BICI found

97 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, New York, (December 16, 1966), United Nations Treaty Series, available from <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CN/2011/CN.430.2011-Eng.pdf>.

that the government had illegally destroyed 28 mosques and 2 other religious sites, although conceded that the government may have destroyed further structures that the BICI members had been unable to access. While the government accepted the BICI findings and committed to rebuilding the demolished structures,⁹⁸ progress has been stagnant. In the three years since accepting the findings of the BICI, the government claims to have officially rebuilt only four of the mosques, although interlocutors report that these mosques were instead recompleted by the Shia community after receiving permission from the government. In some cases, however, the government has opted to relocate the mosques and repurpose the original land. On the site of the *Abu Dharr* mosque, which was more than three centuries old at the time of its destruction, Bahraini authorities constructed a children's playground.

Since February 2011, the government has continued to target Shia religious structures. On 1 December 2012, the government demolished four mosques in the process of reconstruction. At least three of the mosques had attained the proper building permits, while the final mosque had been under construction with permission from the municipality as well as the Ministry of Islamic Affairs.⁹⁹ The United States Department of State reported in 2012 that the government had additionally halted the construction on several new Shia mosques throughout the year, and that Shia makeshift structures for religious worship were routinely destroyed by security forces.¹⁰⁰

Legal Actions

Since 2011, the Government of Bahrain has targeted Shia religious groups with lawsuits designed to curtail their religious and political activities, in some cases dissolving them entirely.

Following the February 2011 protests, the government targeted the Shia-aligned Islamic Action Society (AMAL) for dissolution, filing a lawsuit against both it and the al-Wefaq Islamic Society for their roles in the protest movement. In April of that year, a Bahraini court ordered the dissolution of both AMAL and al-Wefaq. Due to international pressure, an appellate court ultimately vacated the decision. However, many members of AMAL were arrested for participating in the protests, and some allege that they were tortured in government custody. Further, the government raided AMAL's headquarters in March 2011, with members of the Bahraini security force either vandalizing or stealing equipment in the building. The government would again target AMAL the following year, when, On 3 June 2012, the Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs filed a lawsuit to dissolve AMAL for "grave breaches of the provisions of Bahrain's constitution and law." Seven days later, a Bahraini court ordered AMAL's final dissolution.¹⁰¹

The government continued to target Shia religious societies when it filed a suit against the Islamic "Olamaa" Scholars Council, the largest organization of Shia clerics and religious leaders in Bahrain.¹⁰² The government determined that the Olamaa had failed to obtain the necessary legal permits and accused its members of exploiting the organization for political ends, moving

98 Al-Monitor, "Sectarian Tensions Rise in Bahrain Amid Mosque Attacks." (July 23, 2013). Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2013/07/bahrain-sectarian-crisis-mosque-attacks.html#>.

99 "Mosques Under Construction Re-Demolished by Authorities in Bahrain." Bahrain Center for Human Rights. (December 9, 2012), Accessed January 21, 2015. <http://bahrainrights.org/en/node/5550>.

100 USDOS Human Rights Report 2012

101 Rafique, Mohammed. "Court Dissolves the Islamic Action Society." Twenty Four Seven News, (July 10, 2012), Accessed January 21, 2015. <http://www.twentyfoursevennews.com/bahrain-news/court-dissolves-the-islamic-action-society/>.

102 Freedom House, "Bahrain." 2014. Accessed January 22, 2015. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2014/bahrain-0#.VKQj-SvF-8o>.

for its dissolution. On 29 January 2014, a Bahraini court sided with the government, ordering the liquidation of the Olamaa's assets and the closure of its headquarters.¹⁰³

Education and School Curricula

The Government of Bahrain further discriminates against the Shia religious establishment in its education system. The Maliki school of Sunni jurisprudence forms the basis of all K-12 and university curricula taught at public and private schools, while the popular Shia Jafaari tradition espoused by the majority of the Bahraini population remains absent from all educational texts in the country.¹⁰⁴ There are many significant differences between Shia and Sunni beliefs, including details regarding worship practices and prayers, pilgrimage, marital issues, and conducting business. However, pupils in public or private schools, including pupils belonging to Shia families, are not informed of the existence of many Shia traditions, and are instead obligated to receive their education solely on the basis of Sunni traditions. As a result, Shia children and youth are raised by the Bahraini education system to believe in traditions and practices oftentimes outside of the traditional Shia faith, and in many cases the Shia faith within Bahrain has been surreptitiously altered to incorporate Sunni beliefs.

Beyond replacing Shia traditions with Sunni practice, the educational system often directly demeans Shia beliefs. Some educational materials directly denounce Shia followers as infidels; others are less obvious, instead stating that many Shia beliefs are themselves blasphemous.¹⁰⁵ For example, as part of their educational curriculum, Bahraini high school students learn that Muslims may only direct petitions to Allah, and that petitioning persons outside of Allah is an act of blasphemy. This interpretation conflicts with Shia practice, which states that Muslims may direct their petitions towards highly respected figures, such as the Prophet Mohammed or Issa. Shia Muslims believe that these persons maintain great rank within their religion, and may assist in petitioning Allah towards the resolution of a request. The government curriculum also teaches that other Shia practices, such as placing one's forehead on a piece of soil, praying at mosques that are built around graves of highly respected figures, or participating in a temporary marriage or "Mutah," constitute acts of blasphemy against Islam.¹⁰⁶

In an effort to end the discrimination against Shia in the education system, in 2005 the House of Representatives considered a motion to teach five sects of Islam, including four Sunni sects and the single Shia sect, at all schools within the country. The predominately Sunni parliament voted against the motion.¹⁰⁷ In 2007, the Islamic "Olamaa" Scholars Council, the largest Shia religious foundation in the country, conducted a study on the violations and weaknesses in state

103 Fayad, Kamal. "Bahraini Cour Dissolves Islamic Scholars Councils." Al-Monitor, (January 30, 2014), Accessed January 18, 2015. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2014/01/bahrain-court-decision-resolve-islamic-council.html>.

104 Embassy of the United States Manama, Bahrain, "International Religious Freedom Report". 2013. Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://bahrain.usembassy.gov/policy/religious-freedom-report.html>.

105 <http://www.moe.gov.bh/e-content/6/33/index.html#/27/>

106 "المضيفة الوطنية التربوية والأهداف الإسلامية التربوية مناهج". سلمان سالم. (December 25, 2014) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4492/news/read/947330/1.html>. [Sulaman Salam, "Islamic Education and Curriculum Goals and Nationalism Curricula," *Bahrain Middle East Newspaper*]

107 Bahrain Ministry of Education. "Religious 101." Last accessed February 6, 2015. <http://www.moe.gov.bh/e-content/6/33/index.html#/27/>.

curricula and submitted a report to the Ministry of Islamic Affairs,¹⁰⁸ seeking sweeping changes to the curricula in order to provide students with education pertaining to the five sects of Islam referenced in the prior parliamentary motion. The request did not prompt any government action. The Islamic Scholars Council continued to coordinate public efforts to teach the Jaafari traditions until January 2014, when a Bahraini court dissolved the Council for exercising unmonitored political activities.¹⁰⁹

Conclusion

Open discrimination against the Shia faith in Bahrain is nothing new. Since the island nation obtained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1971, the government has targeted the Shia establishment with political violence, most notably by detaining, torturing, and exiling prominent Shia clerics throughout the latter decades of the 20th century. However, the degree to which the Shia religion experiences discrimination in Bahrain today is unprecedented. While the violence and detention continue, with many prominent Shia clerics now the subject of political detention instead of exile, the destruction of 38 mosques and religious sites following the February 2011 protests openly displayed the Bahraini government's animosity towards its Shia citizens. As of today, only four of these mosques have been rebuilt, and the government has even further demolished attempts to rebuild four others. The violence against Shia religious leaders, combined with the destruction of mosques, the universal teaching of Sunni doctrine, and the dissolution of Shia religious societies paints a clear picture of systemic government discrimination against the Shia religious establishment.

108 "البحرينية الوسط صحيفة" تغييرها ينتظر و «الوزارة» لـ «الدين» مقررات بشأن ملاحظاته رفع العلماني: الغريفي" (September 2, 2006) Accessed January 22, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/1457/news/read/648265/1.html>. [“Griffey: Secular raises his remarks on the decisions of «religion» in the «Ministry» and waits for change. “*Bahrain Middle East Newspaper*]

109 "الوسطي حسين" الاستئناف» تويد حل المجلس العلماني" الوسط" (June 16, 2014), Accessed January 26, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4301/news/read/896126/1.html>. [Al-Wasati, Hussein “Appeal: Court Rules to Dissolve Secular Islamic Council,” *Al Wasat Newspaper*]

Conclusion


The Government of Bahrain often claims that the country is experiencing sectarian tension in the form of a Shia population violently struggling against its Sunni neighbors. It's true that Bahrain is currently marked by political violence. As documented by multiple independent observers, a minority of Bahraini youth growing increasingly frustrated with the government often employ weapons of convenience such as Molotov cocktails and burning tires in demonstrations against security personnel and government institutions. The government points to this violence as evidence of sectarianism within Bahrain's population. This is a mischaracterization of Bahrain's minority violent opposition. Shia-led sectarian violence would target Sunni institutions, such as Sunni mosques or Sunni neighborhoods. Bahraini violence has not targeted these areas, instead choosing to attack government institutions. The violence in Bahrain is political, not sectarian, and is largely reacting to the government's own use of force and other discriminatory policies against the Shia majority population. In this, the government is half-right; sectarianism exists in Bahrain. However, Bahrain's brand of sectarianism is not espoused by the general population, but is instead a one-sided narrative promulgated by a government utilizing sectarian rhetoric to justify the oppression of its majority Shia population. As a result, the Shia population in Bahrain is increasingly forced to live apart from their Sunni neighbors.

As the February 2011 protests showed that the people of Bahrain, both Shia and Sunni, are capable of living in harmony with each other. Immediately afterwards, the subsequent violence primarily targeting Shia protesters, activists, and villages displayed the government's animosity towards its majority population. In the time since the uprising, the government has continued its discriminatory policies against the Shia while actively favoring Sunni citizens, even going so far as to artificially alter the demographics of the country to better balance the scales in the favor of Sunni citizens. These are not the actions of an impartial government, but rather one actively engaging in a sectarian agenda.

The government most obviously promotes sectarianism through state-sponsored violence against the Shia. The vast majority of government non-lethal force is discharged against Shia, either at protests against government power or as collective punishment against entire villages. These ostensibly non-lethal methods have even been used to extra judicially kill Shia citizens, at times suffocating them in their own homes and at others causing internal injuries with shotgun blasts. The government also uses force against Shia in prisons, with Shia accounting for the vast majority of torture victims. Many Shia political leaders are in prison on terrorism-related charges, while a substantial swath of Shia youth find themselves imprisoned for illegally protesting.

The government has all-but eliminated the Shia presence in the government. While some Shia enjoy positions in government agencies, the vast majority of political power is concentrated with the Sunni al-Khalifa royal family and their vassals. The political system is designed in such a fashion that the best representation available to the Shia is a minority voice in the mostly-powerless lower house of parliament.

If that weren't enough, the government has at times even directly discriminated against the Shia faith itself. Following the 2011 uprising, the government exclusively bulldozed Shia mosques in an act of collective punishment against the Shia population. Although Sunni protesters took part in the uprising, the Sunni religious establishment was left untouched. Despite a government commitment to rebuild the mosques, many of these mosques remain demolished, and the Shia population themselves funded those that have been reconstructed.



In some ways, the situation mirrors apartheid in South Africa; the government consistently commits acts of violence against the Shia, interferes with their movement, prevents them from gaining power in the government, and destroys their religious establishments. In fact, Bahraini government behavior towards its Shia population meets many of the factors propagated by the Apartheid Convention, including legislative measures designed to ensure that Shia do not gain a substantial voice in the government, the torture of Shia based on their religious affiliation, and the extrajudicial killing of Shia during times of civil unrest. Were the Shia a race instead of a religion, one could make the case that their situation is covered by the Apartheid Convention.

Ending sectarianism in Bahrain will require an honest commitment from the government to end its discriminatory policies towards the Shia and better incorporate them into the electoral process and government. As the majority population in the country, the Shia are entitled to the right to self-determination, and should have no less nor more than a voice in the government proportional to their size. With such empowerment, all of the other issues should come to a halt. As they've demonstrated before, the Shia, Sunni, and all other populations in Bahrain are capable of both living and working together, so long as the government does not stop them from doing so.

Recommendations

In light of the above findings, we make the following recommendations:

To the Government of Bahrain:

- 1. Wholly re-examine the systematic use of violence against those who subscribe to the Shia faith:**
 - a. Curtail the use of violence against Shia protests by government employees, including Ministry of Interior employees and state security officers, by educating government employees on internationally-recognized acceptable standards for the use of force and best practices for the use of non-lethal force;
 - b. Eradicate the use of torture against all Shia and any other persons in Bahrain, especially those currently incarcerated in government detention centers;
 - c. Reform state anti-terrorism laws to better provide for the freedoms of expression and assembly, including the freedom to publicly criticize the government or peacefully dissent against government action;
 - d. Release any and all political prisoners currently incarcerated in Bahraini detention centers; and
 - e. Fully investigate any and all credible claims of torture, including those made by Shia protesters, with the goals of prosecuting any persons found to have authorized or committed acts of torture and retrying any persons whose convictions were attained by relying on evidence obtained through acts of torture
- 2. Reconcile the Shia population with the Bahraini political process:**
 - a. Appoint a proportional number of Shia representatives to the Shura Council in line with the Shia makeup of the population;
 - b. Reform political districts in Bahrain under the doctrine of “one person, one vote,” so as to better allow for Shia representation in the elected lower house of the Bahraini parliament;
 - c. Appoint Shia representatives to the Council of Ministers;
 - d. Immediately reincorporate any political parties dissolved by the government on political grounds, including, but not limited to, the *al-Wefaq National Islamic Society*;
 - e. Cease the practice of naturalizing foreign-born Sunnis for the purposes of changing the political makeup of the country;
 - f. Immediately release any political leaders incarcerated on political grounds, including Ibrahim Sharif and Shaikh Ali Salman; and
 - e. Consider re-examining the political structure of Bahrain to disaggregate political power into the Bahraini population.

3. Cease all discriminatory policies against the Shia religious establishment and faith:

- a. Immediately release all Shia religious leaders incarcerated on political grounds;
- b. Immediately cease the further demolition of Shia religious structures and mosques;
- c. Recommit to rebuilding any and all religious structures destroyed in retaliation against the Shia community for its involvement in the peaceful protest movement in 2011;
- d. Rebuild the *al-Dharr* mosque in its original location, and compensate the Bahraini Shia community for any resources it spent in rebuilding mosques destroyed by the government; and
- e. Reincorporate any religious societies dissolved on political grounds, including the Islamic “*Olamaa*” Scholars Council.

To the United Nations:

1. Pressure the Government of Bahrain to end its discriminatory policies against its Shia population:

- a. Consider passing a resolution at the United Nations Human Rights Council condemning the human rights situation in Bahrain and specifically noting the government discrimination against Shia;
- b. Examine in a report the consequences of government disclusion on extremism, and consider using Bahrain as a case study in such a report;
- c. Incorporate the subject of discrimination against the Shia into the next country visit by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and include an examination of the subject into any permanent mandate;

2. Facilitate the missions of the Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council:

- a. Demand that the Government of Bahrain honor its commitment to allow the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, unusual, or degrading treatment or punishment to visit the country to conduct an assessment on Bahrain’s commitments towards the elimination of the use of torture;
- b. Request that the Government of Bahrain issue a standing invitation to all Special Procedures wishing to visit the country;
- c. Encourage the Special Rapporteur on religious freedom and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous persons to request access to Bahrain;

3. Consider amending the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid* to allow it to apply to extremely discriminatory situations of a non-racial character, including situations in which persons face apartheid-like conditions on account of their religion or faith.

To the International Community, including the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States:

1. **Pressure the Government of Bahrain to end its campaign of discrimination against the Shia population by instituting measures against Bahrain similar to those that ended apartheid in South Africa:**
 - a. Place an embargo on the Bahraini purchase of any and all weapons, including both military-grade weapons and non-lethal weapons purposed towards riot-control;
 - b. Institute trade sanctions against Bahrain specifically targeting high-end luxury goods generally consumed by elite government officials and the ruling family;
 - c. Demand the release of all Shia political prisoners;
 - d. Consider hosting multilateral talks between the Bahraini government and the Shia majority with the goal of creating a permanent and inclusive solution;
2. **Cease any and all military training programs provided to the Kingdom of Bahrain until such time as the Bahraini military fully integrates the Shia population;**
3. **Consider passing a resolution condemning the Bahraini campaign against its Shia population in the United Nations General Assembly, the European Parliament, the US Congress, and the European Parliament;**
4. **Broaden policy on Bahrain to include bilateral and multilateral approaches to human rights issues and discrimination against specific populations within Bahrain;**
5. **Provide assistance with training programs to the Bahraini government on best practices to ensure the Shia population is included in government jobs and other areas where the Shia population is not fully represented;**
6. **Include analysis on the subject of Shia discrimination in any human rights reports released in 2015, including the United States Department of State Human Rights Report and the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth Office Report; and**
7. **Consider amending the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid* to allow it to apply to extremely discriminatory situations of a non-racial character, including situations in which persons face apartheid-like conditions on account of their religion or faith.**



Americans for Democracy
& Human Rights in Bahrain



Apart *in Their* Own Land

GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST SHIA IN BAHRAIN



VOLUME II

Economic Disclusion, Cultural Marginalization, and Media Discrimination



Americans for Democracy
& Human Rights in Bahrain



Apart in Their Own Land

GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST SHIA IN BAHRAIN

VOLUME II

Economic Disclusion, Cultural Marginalization, and Media Discrimination

September 2015

©2014, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD). All rights reserved.

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) fosters awareness of and support for democracy and human rights in Bahrain and the Middle East.

The Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, registered with the Bahraini Ministry of Labor and Social Services since July 2002. Despite an order by the authorities in November 2004 to close, the BCHR is still functioning after gaining a wide local and international support for its struggle to promote human rights in Bahrain.

The Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy is a London, UK based non-profit organization focusing on advocacy, education and awareness for the calls of democracy and human rights in Bahrain.

Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain
1001 Connecticut Ave. Northwest, Suite 205
Washington, DC 20036
202.621.6141
www.adhrb.org

Bahrain Center for Human Rights
www.bahrainrights.org

Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy
www.birdbh.org

Credit and source for cover photos, from left to right:

Al Jazeera English, Flickr;
Thomas Doerfer, Wikimedia Commons;
February 14 Media Group, Wikimedia Commons

Table of Contents

Acronyms	4
Methodology	5
Foreword	6
Introduction	8
Media Discrimination.....	9
The State Information Services	9
Discrimination in the State Media	10
Discrimination and State Influence in the ‘Independent’ Media.....	14
Conclusion	20
Cultural Marginalization	21
Recognition of Shia History and Practices	21
Landmarks and Physical Cultural Constructs	23
Conclusion	25
Economic Disclusion.....	26
Employment	26
Education	30
Government Programs.....	32
Land Ownership and Commercial Restrictions.....	35
Conclusion	39
Conclusion	40
Recommendations.....	41

Acronyms

ADHRB	Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain
BCHR	Bahrain Center for Human Rights
BICI	Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry
BIRD	Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy
BTV	Bahrain National Television
BNA	Bahrain News Agency
BTA	Bahrain Teachers Association
IAA	Information Affairs Authority
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NSA	Bahrain National Security Agency

Methodology

This report is the product of extensive research on the ground, accomplished by examining government records, interviewing involved actors, and personally recording events taking place in the country. Such research is significantly supplemented by a literature review taken from a wide variety of reputable sources, including well-established newspapers, magazines, and journals. When possible, the report provides a citation to a publicly-available source. In such instances where the interests of confidentiality force us to anonymize information or redact our source, the report may omit the source and indicate the need for confidentiality. Such sources may be available privately upon request.

Foreword

When we first published Volume I of *Apart in Their Own Land* over six months ago, my staff and I thought that we were documenting the nadir of governmental discrimination and reprisal against Bahrain's Shia majority. Even as we worked exhaustively to catalogue the violence suffered by peaceful Shia protesters, the destruction of Shia mosques, and an electoral field tilted against Shia politicians and voters, we did so with the knowledge that these acts were unsustainable. To maintain these policies, the Government of Bahrain would risk alienation abroad and a metastasizing political conflict at home. Rational leadership, we assumed, would at least pull back from suppressing a full two-thirds of its population so harshly, even if it refrained from implementing the pluralist reforms that we presented.

The last half-year, however, has weakened our confidence that Bahrain's leadership can reason prudently about the long-term. The government has not just failed to reconstitute a national dialogue capable of delivering needed social and political reforms; it has taken the opposite tack, waging a campaign against Shia, Sunni, and secular figures central to the opposition. The arrest and prosecution of top activists and leading political society members can only be read as an attempt to stir up chaos within these organizations, thereby forestalling both dialogue and any resultant reform.

This government recommitted to this campaign in earnest in March 2015, when Ministry of Interior officials decided that the government had suffered enough nonviolent criticism. Authorities arrested Fadhel Abbas, Secretary-General of the secular al-Wahdawi political society, for online remarks that opposed the GCC's military intervention in Yemen. A week later, police detained Nabeel Rajab, president of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, for condemning the Yemeni war and daring to disclose official brutality against the inmates of Jau Central Prison. As summer arrived, courts sentenced Sheikh Ali Salman, Secretary-General of the Shia opposition party al-Wefaq, to four years in prison; they swiftly allotted five to Fadhel Abbas. Then, publicly undermining its own clemency, the government re-arrested Ebrahim Sharif in July, three weeks after cutting short his prison term. In the interim, Waad's Secretary-General had shocked no one by calling for peaceful protests that would force the government back to the negotiating table.

As we send this report to print, the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate. Both Khalil al-Marzooq, al-Wefaq's assistant secretary, and Sheikh Maytham al-Salman, an interfaith activist at Bahrain Human Rights Observatory, have been hauled in for questioning. A deplorable act of terrorism in Sitra has prompted blanket harassment of the Shia community, both in print and in the street, instead of the targeting of the attack's specific perpetrators. Even the mid-July release of Nabeel Rajab comes tinged with uncertainty, as criminal charges for his political speech still hang over him and his family.

This renewed suppression of a cross-sectarian opposition has one purpose: to oppress a Shia population that would, if it truly shared power, help likeminded Sunnis channel resources from an opulent minority to a struggling majority. For a government that values prejudice over equality, cronyism over merit, and division over reconciliation, such an outcome is unconscionable.

So, in support of equality, merit, and reconciliation, ADHRB, BIRD, and BCHR release the second volume of a report detailing a *de facto* system of apartheid in Bahrain. Where Vol. I focused on violence and discrimination in the political sphere, Vol. II demonstrates what this disclosure yields. For Bahrain's Shia, economic inequality, cultural erasure, and media demonization stem, terribly yet unsurprisingly, from the lack of representation previously detailed. In Bahrain as elsewhere, absolute governance is hardly beneficent, and those outside of the ruling clique can expect neither equality nor charity.

Still, despite these last few months, we remain optimistic that change will come. The discrimination documented in this volume, though persistent and troubling, is not permanent. No number of politically-motivated arrests or prosecutions can shift the calculus for King Hamad, Premier Khalifa, and the rest of Bahrain's leadership. Whatever their private hopes, they cannot succeed where South Africa and countless other exclusionary governments have failed. And when they come to the table, their political concessions will not only engender fairer representation, but equitable economics and cross-cultural respect as well.

Husain Abdulla,
Executive Director, ADHRB

Introduction

In February 2015, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), and the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) released *Apart in Their Own Land: Government Discrimination Against Shia in Bahrain*, Volume I. The report studied the marginalization of Bahrain's Shia majority through a largely political lens, covering the persecution and prosecution of peaceful protesters, the suppression of a legitimate opposition, and the faux-democratic elections borne of asymmetric redistricting. These exclusionary political tactics had immediate, and frequently violent, outcomes. Doctors who treated demonstrators suffered torture in their own hospitals, individuals were arbitrarily arrested for tweets, and mosques fell under bulldozers and wrecking balls.

A population's inability to participate in the formation of its government relegates its members to second-class status outside the political sphere. Cadres of elites do not arrest the self-determination of large populations through political oppression alone, but through institutionalizing its resulting inequalities. In order to establish lasting divisions between rulers and ruled, the marginalized must be disadvantaged in every facet of daily life. Government policy must make their historic occupations precarious and their culture alien. State-sponsored media must define patriotism along sectarian and ethnic lines. These are old tactics that, both before and after the democratic movement of 2011, the Bahraini government has applied to its Shia citizens.

The Bahraini government directs a campaign of media discrimination against its Shia citizens. In the wake of 2011's pro-democracy movement, Bahrain state television broadcasts anti-Shia propaganda. Under government influence, newspapers declare which citizens are loyal and which are traitors. They reduce the tens of thousands who descended upon the Pearl Roundabout seeking justice and reform to armed agents of a foreign power, ignoring the protesters' national aspirations and nonviolence.

This campaign of present-day media discrimination directly supports a larger effort to marginalize the Shia majority's cultural and historical influence on Bahrain. The government, both before and after the events of 2011, has sought to deny that its majority population has made any contribution to Bahraini society. Tourists are funneled from visiting heritage sites, security forces do not respect Shia funeral rites, and textbooks promote Al Khalifa historical narrative above all others.

This cultural marginalization and media discrimination helps cover the perpetuation of regressive economic policies that disproportionately harm the Shia community. In recent years, the government has engaged in coastal "land reclamations" that have spoiled ocean habitats and restricted access to public land, thereby denying thousands of mostly-Shia workers their traditional employment. University students have lost their seats, and professors their positions, for even mild political activism. Many government jobs, particularly in the national security and defense forces, remain off-limits to Shia men and women.

Many authoritarian governments subdue certain minorities; only apartheid-promoting states take on the bulk of their population with the sophistication and reach of the Bahraini government. The following report holistically addresses this intricate apparatus of discrimination, attempting to demonstrate just how thoroughly Bahrain's governing elite have set Shia apart in their own land. By doing so, the report demonstrates that the government does not limit its oppression to temporary upheavals, but that it continuously seeks to build its power on the backs of the island's oldest continuous communities.

Media Discrimination

As part of its broader campaign to constrain the development of an independent civil society in Bahrain, the government has worked to establish central control of the public exchange of information. To this end, the government has continually restructured its extensive regulatory infrastructure in order to consolidate its authority over the Bahraini media and further supervise all forms of domestic communication. The current network of government-affiliated entities involved in the transmission of information—to which this chapter will collectively refer as the state information services—has increasingly used its influence over a variety of media sources to manipulate public perception of the pro-democracy movement and reconfigure the Shia majority population as an existential threat to Bahraini security.

The State Information Services

In 2010, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued a set of royal decrees that downsized the Ministry of Culture and Information¹—Bahrain’s former regulatory body—and created a separate, dedicated supervisory mechanism called the Information Affairs Authority (IAA).² Under the IAA, the king incorporated the entirety of Bahrain’s disparate state or state-sponsored information services, including the Human and Financial Resources Directorate, the Bahrain News Agency (BNA), and the Directorates of External Information, Press, Governmental Press, Radio, Television, News, Art, and Publications and Publishing.³ The IAA has also reportedly started a “unit [to] monitor social media and foreign news websites.”⁴ In 2012, the king issued Royal Decree No. 40, formally establishing the Ministry of State for Information Affairs (MSIA) to house the IAA and further centralize the regulatory function of the state. According to the Ministry of State for Information Affairs (MSIA), the IAA operates as the executive body for the new ministry,⁵ enacting “the policies, strategies, and legislations regulating the media and communication sector, implementing the media programs and initiatives, in an aim to shape professional and credible media.”⁶

In reality, the MSIA and the IAA work together to ensure that the Bahraini media operates under the strict censorship and direction of the Bahraini government. This steady concentration of regulatory power in the state information services has meant that nearly every news outlet in Bahrain explicitly supports the government. The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) has officially documented the degree of government influence, concluding, “it is clear that the media in Bahrain is biased towards the GoB. Six of the seven daily newspapers are pro-government and the broadcasting service is State-controlled” via the government-owned Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation (commonly known by the name of its subsidiary network,

1 These decrees renamed the Ministry of Culture and Information the Ministry of Culture. In 2015, Royal Decree No. 10 renamed the institution again, entitling it the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA).

2 “His Majesty issues decrees,” Gulf Daily News, July 9, 2010, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=281924>.

3 Ibid.

4 “Freedom on the Net 2014 – Bahrain,” Freedom House, accessed August 17, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2014/bahrain>.

5 “FAQ,” Ministry of State for Information Affairs, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.mia.gov.bh/en/The-Ministry/FAQ/Pages/default.aspx>.

6 “Vision, Mission and Goals,” Ministry of State for Information Affairs, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.mia.gov.bh/en/The-Ministry/Pages/Vision-Mission-and-Goals.aspx>.

Bahrain National TV or BTV).⁷

With the onset of civil unrest in 2011, the government has worked to further leverage the state information services as part of its militarized reaction to the pro-democracy movement. In particular, the government has used the media to target and vilify the disenfranchised Shia majority. At the same time, it has deployed security forces, working within the strategic parameters set by the MSIA, to intimidate, arrest, and prosecute dissenting journalists and activists; authorities even forcibly detained a CNN news crew reporting near the Shia neighborhood of Bani Jamrah.⁸ Since 2011, independent media outlets have also faced fines, state-takeovers, and forced closures simply for providing coverage of the Shia community or the civil unrest. As recently as February 2015, the IAA moved to “halt the activities” of the Alarab TV Station after it ran an interview with Khalil al-Marzooq, a Shia member of the al-Wefaq opposition party.⁹ The state information services have overseen this discrimination in standard media coverage of the Shia community, coverage of ongoing civil unrest, and in “independent” and social media.

Discrimination in the State Media

Standard Coverage

Through BTV, the state effectively dominates the audiovisual broadcasting service in Bahrain.¹⁰ BTV runs five of the seven domestic (or terrestrial) broadcasting stations, and BBC reports that the private Al-Ayyam and Al-Ittihad TV channels are firmly pro-government.¹¹ According to a report published by *The Atlantic* in 2011, the consequent “lack of foreign press coverage means a virtual monopoly on airwaves for state-run BTV.”¹² The government has exploited this broadcast monopoly in order to institute its official messaging organ, the BNA, as both the official mouthpiece of the Sunni governing elite and the chief source of public information in Bahrain.¹³ Consequently, since its original inception as the Gulf Daily News in 1978, this “extension to the Information Affairs Authority”¹⁴ has gradually acquired the unique capacity to determine whether information falls within the national news scope, and thus monopolizes how it should be covered.

For the Shia community, already excluded from mainstream Bahraini society, the BNA’s power has meant an additional exclusion from the mainstream national news cycle. BNA news reports seldom provide coverage of Shia individuals or their activities, and almost always lack general Shia-related information. According to ADHRB and BIRD’s contacts in Bahrain, it is even rare for individuals to speak the Arabic dialect common to Bahraini Shia on official channels. Tellingly, the MSIA’s official description of Bahrain’s “Population and Demographics” asserts that the country “is

7 Mahmoud Bassiouni, Nigel Rodley, Badria al-Awadhi, Philippe Kirsch, and Mahnoush Arsanjani, “Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry,” Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, <http://www.bici.org.bh/BIClreportEN.pdf>.

8 Karen Leigh, “The Anti-al-Jazeera: Bahrain’s Notorious State-Run TV Channel,” *The Atlantic*, April 19, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/04/the-anti-al-jazeera-bahrains-notorious-state-run-tv-channel/237462/>.

9 “Bahrain suspends newly launched Alarab news channel,” *Al Jazeera*, February 9, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/02/bahrain-suspends-newly-launched-alarab-news-channel-150209155209829.html>.

10 Bassiouni, et. al., “Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry,” Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry.

11 “Bahrain Profile – Media,” BBC News, November 26, 2014, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14541053>.

12 Leigh, “The Anti-al-Jazeera: Bahrain’s Notorious State-Run TV Channel,” *The Atlantic*.

13 “About BNA,” Bahrain News Agency, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/aboutbna>.

14 Ibid.

known historically as a model of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among all cultures, religions and sects,” but nowhere on its website does it actually note the presence, let alone the proportion, of Shia in Bahrain.¹⁵

The state media’s basic failure to acknowledge the Bahraini Shia extends beyond simple indifference; it constitutes an implicit rejection of Bahraini Shia culture and religion. Although Friday prayer is an important occasion for all Muslims, the state media has almost never broadcast any Shia prayer service, even in part.¹⁶ In contrast, BTV provides complete coverage of Sunni mosques, including religious oration and the prayers themselves.¹⁷

Similarly, the state media has declined to broadcast any faith-based television shows that espouse Shia belief systems. Though there is a disproportionate number of Shia in Bahrain, all Islamic television programs are explicitly and intentionally rooted in Sunni theology. While Internet streaming technology has made it possible for tech-savvy Bahrainis to circumvent the Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation’s broadcasting restrictions, the IAA has simultaneously advanced an ambiguous cybersecurity doctrine that interprets Shia religious expression as sectarian incitement.¹⁸ Using this justification, the state information services have blocked access within Bahrain to over 1,000 websites, including that of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR)¹⁹ and the opposition news site *Bahrain Mirror*.²⁰ In 2013, the government also blocked ‘matam.tv’, a Shia religious website that livestreams sermons and festivals from Bahrain’s *matams* (traditional Bahraini Shia congregation halls) in order to avoid the *de facto* broadcasting ban on Shia television programming.²¹ Its censorship signaled the government’s resolve to deny Shia even private access to online coverage of their religious and cultural heritage.

Coverage of Civil Unrest

Since emergence of the pro-democracy protest movement in 2011, BTV and the BNA have supplemented their negligence of the Bahraini Shia community with a campaign of explicit, anti-Shia defamation. In the absence of a publicly recognized Bahraini Shia identity—an absence expressly manufactured by a state policy of neglect—this campaign has advanced a demonized caricature of Bahraini Shia culture as a means to isolate Shia reformers and delegitimize their political grievances. The state information services have sought to characterize broad, secular social discontent as criminal disorder, factional sedition, and/or long-standing sectarian rivalry. Ali al-Saffar, a Middle Eastern specialist at the Economist Intelligence Unit in London, quoted in *The Atlantic*, states that “the narrative the government wants to put across, which is powerful, is that this is a sectarian conflict, different than [the popular uprisings of] Egypt and Tunisia. And the vehicle it chose to do that with is BTV.”²² To this end the MSIA and the IAA, primarily through

15 “Population and Demographics,” Ministry of State for Information Affairs, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.mia.gov.bh/en/Kingdom-of-Bahrain/Pages/Population-and-Demographic-Growth.aspx>.

16 Bassiouni, et. al., “Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry,” Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, 24.

17 Confidential source.

18 “Bahrain: The ‘Cyber Safety Directorate’ Monitors Internet Activity In Style Similar to Big Brother,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights, November 25, 2013, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/6624>.

19 Ibid.

20 “Access to blocked sites restored by Reporters Without Borders,” BBC News, March 12, 2015, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-31836330>.

21 “Bahrain: The ‘Cyber Safety Directorate’ Monitors Internet Activity In Style Similar to Big Brother,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights.

22 Leigh, “The Anti-al-Jazeera: Bahrain’s Notorious State-Run TV Channel,” *The Atlantic*.

BTV and the BNA, have propagated an ever-evolving anti-Shia narrative of the Bahraini civil unrest.

The state media has grounded this narrative in a historical anti-Shia prejudice. According to the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, the “Sunni government and its loyalists use [history] today when they brand the Shia opposition as ‘Safavid loyalists of Iran.’”²³ The government regularly invokes the past rule of Bahrain by the Persian Safavid Dynasty as a means of pseudo-historical exclusion; at the same time, it uses it to appeal more broadly to modern anxiety over Iranian influence. Within this expansive framework, the state media has been able to recast the Shia as fundamentally non-Bahraini, and thus inherently threatening to the Bahraini state. At their most severe, these tactics have laid a foundation for wider dehumanization of the Bahraini Shia by normalizing pejorative designators for Shia groups and ultimately displacing the Shia from shared national history.

Since the original Pearl Roundabout protests began in 2011, the state media has employed these ingrained biases as the basis for its coverage of the demonstrations, equating dissent with “Shiism” or Iranian aggression. Karen Leigh of *The Atlantic* states: “the narrative that BTV keeps driving is one in which Sunnis should fear the mostly Shi’ite protesters, with an implicit warning -- if they win, you are in danger.”²⁴ As the most established of its discursive tools, the state media has relied on accompanying anti-Shia stereotypes to further this narrative. In this widening sectarian divide, official journalists have openly referred to individual demonstrators as “terrorists,” “saboteurs,” and “Iranian infiltrators,” while some average citizens take the cue further, describing their “Shi’a neighbors as ‘cockroaches’ that ‘must be put down.’”²⁵

While the state information services have generally misrepresented the unrest, they have also worked to actively manipulate ongoing events.²⁶ Masked BTV crew members have planted evidence, including knives and guns, at protest sites, only for camera crews and correspondents to turn around and film this evidence of protester “violence.”²⁷ ADHRB and BIRD interlocutors on the ground in Bahrain also relate that pro-government media outlets publish the pictures and names of these “criminal” Shia as a matter of policy (see Figure 1), something that is rarely done for alleged Sunni offenders.²⁸

In instances of clear government abuse, state and pro-government media attempt to shield security forces from scrutiny, refusing to broadcast images of government violence. At Bahrain’s Salmaniya Hospital, for example, the security forces have imposed draconian measures on medical personnel since the original protests in 2011, forcing them to report any wounded protestors to the authorities and beating or arresting those who do not comply.²⁹ A nurse at Salmaniya told Leigh that when a BTV news crew arrived at the hospital, security officials stopped beating him

23 Geneive Abdo, “The New Sectarianism: The Arab Uprisings and the Rebirth of the Shi’a-Sunni Divide,” The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings, April 2013, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2013/04/sunni%20shia%20abdo/sunni%20shia%20abdo>.

24 Leigh, “The Anti-al-Jazeera: Bahrain’s Notorious State-Run TV Channel,” *The Atlantic*.

25 Ibid.

26 “Bahrain Profile – Media,” BBC News.

27 Leigh, “The Anti-al-Jazeera: Bahrain’s Notorious State-Run TV Channel,” *The Atlantic*.

28 YouTube Video of Bahrain News Agency Report, “كشفت شبكة اراهابيه تستهدف امن واستقرار مملكة البحرين,” September 4, 2010, accessed August 14, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDSPFmz_dsQ.

29 Sayed Abu al-Shifa, “For treating protesters, Bahrain’s government made me an enemy of state,” *Middle East Eye*, July 28, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/columns/treating-protesters-bahrain-s-government-made-me-enemy-state-733675005#sthash.Wq3uopWC.dpuf>.

and his colleagues so that the crew could film “a happy doctor walking unscathed through the doors of the ER to freedom.”³⁰ As soon as the crew was finished filming, however, the security forces resumed the abuse.³¹



Fig. 1. Akhbar al-Khaleej report showing names and pictures of alleged Shia terrorists

Programs devoted to social and political commentary complement this television reporting. Shows like *Al-Rased* (The Observer) and *Hiwar Maftouh* (Open Dialogue)—while providing disclaimers against sectarian generalization—have consistently promoted a causal link between the core of Shia theology, Iranian expansionism, and violent extremism.³² Each episode of *Al-Rased* examines the involvement of different individuals from different sectors of Bahraini society in the Pearl Roundabout protests. The targeted individuals, which have included activist Nabeel Rajab and journalist Mansoor al-Jamri, are then openly maligned by the show’s hosts; these figures are not allowed to respond on-air to these attacks.³³ On other occasions, *Al-Rased* has functioned as a

forum for the government to publicly denounce the Shia community. During one such discussion, an *Al-Rased* anchor compared the Shia to “a military organization.”³⁴ He proceeded to argue that the Shia community functions as a strict religious hierarchy that ultimately takes orders from the Iranian theocratic establishment. The anchor’s guest replied, “no, it is worse.”³⁵ The episode ended with a notably insincere concession: Bahraini Shia are not individually to blame for their inclination toward sedition, they are simply following Tehran’s orders.³⁶

In the show *Hiwar Maftouh*, host Saeed al-Hamad has frequently used religious terminology to denigrate the pro-democracy movement. He commonly accuses its members of seeking to establish *Welayat al-Faqih*, thereby linking them to Iran.³⁷ Based on his own accusations, and the prevailing state-sanctioned pseudo-history, he has argued that Shia are traitorous by nature and cannot be meaningfully included in the Bahraini national dialogue.³⁸ As evidence for these claims, on the first episode of *Hiwar Maftouh* the host highlighted a human chain demonstration that

30 Leigh, “The Anti-al-Jazeera: Bahrain’s Notorious State-Run TV Channel,” *The Atlantic*.
 31 Ibid.
 32 “Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation is responsible for Bahrain TV turnover as a sectarian provocation platform,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights, May 26, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/4121>.
 33 Ibid.
 34 “برنامج الراصد عن الوسط” AlWasat Newspaper Al Rasid Bahrain TV,” YouTube, April 2, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gst1ClyASBU>.
 35 Ibid.
 36 Ibid.
 37 A form of government espoused by Iranian religious leaders in which Shia jurists directly administer the state; for more information, see “What is Wilayat al-Faqih?” Al-Islam.org, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://www.al-islam.org/shia-political-thought-ahmed-vaezi/what-wilayat-al-faqih>.
 38 Confidential source.

reached from the Pearl Roundabout to the Sunni al-Fateh mosque, where many pro-government groups hold gatherings. Though demonstration's stated aim was to call for unity, the host of *Open Dialogue* characterized the event as an attempt to antagonize "the other component in the country"—Sunnis.³⁹

BTV has also worked to extend the reach of the anti-Shia narrative into basic entertainment programming. On the Bahrain Sports channel, for example, one program dedicated an entire evening to determining athletes' political and sectarian affiliations. During this show, the hosts and guests praised Sunni athletes for their supposed role in the "political crisis", noting the enduring loyalty of Sunni players—simply by virtue of being Sunni. Shia players, conversely, were castigated and accused of treason in overtly sectarian language.⁴⁰

As the civil unrest has persisted into 2015, BTV and the BNA have declined to provide consistent coverage of the pro-democracy movement. Instead, they have intensified their already-disproportionate coverage of pro-government supporters. When the BTV presents footage of rallies held by loyalist organizations like al-Fateh Political Society, which the government has permitted to continue demonstrating, it has even provided patriotic musical accompaniment.⁴¹ If BTV programming addresses the initial civil unrest, it commonly uses selected images of low-turnout gatherings in order to suggest that "the numbers [of anti-government protestors] are not thousands as has been stated,"⁴² and that the original uprising was in fact a loose collection of Shia insurrectionists.⁴³

Discrimination and State Influence in the 'Independent' Media

State media has perpetuated this anti-Shia language with the complicity of many independent outlets. Since the initial government reaction to the Pearl Roundabout demonstrations, independent news outlets have increasingly adopted the use of sectarian hate speech in their own coverage of the civil unrest. The central influence of the IAA has effectively ensured that the state media's anti-Shia discourse pervades print, Internet, and basic social media interaction.

'Independent' Publications

According to the BICI, six of the seven major newspapers in Bahrain have displayed a clear government bias: *Ahkbar al-Khaleej*, *Al-Ayam*, *Al-Watan*, *Al-Bilad*, *Gulf Daily News*, and the *Daily Tribune*.⁴⁴ In making this determination, the BICI "viewed a selection of material from national television, radio and print media."⁴⁵ It concluded that "much of this material contained derogatory language and inflammatory coverage of events."⁴⁶ This coverage has been directed

39 "برنامج حوار مفتوح مع سعيد الحمد - الحلقة الاولى", YouTube, April 19, 2011, accessed August 17, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fMsGTr8pM>.

40 "BTV Show on Sport Violations الرياضيين", YouTube, April 4, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXd6UQ5MAds>.

41 "مسيرة الفاتح تصوير جوي", YouTube, March 1, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ty94kOcIpKc>.

42 "ناصر الفضالة شحوال دوار مجلس التعاون "دوار اللؤلؤة"س", YouTube, October 20, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oi0_kKQTNEM.

43 "تقرير عن فضيحة الشيعة بدوار مجلس التعاون البحرين", YouTube, May 7, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRGlz-F95Qk>.

44 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

toward the pro-democracy movement, generally, and the Shia community, specifically.

A recurring column in the *Al-Watan* newspaper by Sawsan al-Shaer is representative of the BICI's broader findings. In it, the author regularly catalogues the supposed terroristic and subversive tendencies of Bahraini Shia. Her column in the 2 December 2013 issue, for example, directly associates all of the region's "Arab Shia" with Iran.⁴⁷ Al-Shaer writes that there is a "lesson" to be learned about "Arab Shia who rushed to be carpets under the feet of Iranian clerics to enter their countries."⁴⁸

More recently, after an explosion killed two police officers in Sitra on 28 July 2015,⁴⁹ *Al-Watan* published an article by columnist Hisham al-Zayani that accused the Shia community of condoning the attack.⁵⁰ Prior to the reported findings of any investigation, al-Zayani wrote that the incident is proof of "systematic Shia terrorism" and urged the government to take action against "Shia terrorists" by possessing their homes, depriving them of all government services, and employing force against them. He went on to compare the violent bombing to the actions of Shia doctors at Salmaniya Hospital, who treated wounded protestors during the 2011 demonstrations. Al-Zayani referred to those doctors who resisted the authorities' seizure of the hospital and impartially provided medical services as terrorists. Though Shia opposition groups like al-Wefaq condemned the Sitra attack, al-Zayani claimed that they were liars who routinely engage in deception. He concluded the article with a call to exclude the Shia majority from employment in major businesses and ministries, lest they go on strike and undermine key components of Bahraini society.⁵¹

Though the Government of Bahrain retains centralized control over the distribution of print and online media, it has failed to levy this influence to create a climate of inter-sect tolerance and instead creates tension. Conversely, the country's sole neutral newspaper, *Al-Wasat*, has faced years of government sanction.

In 2011, during the original Pearl Roundabout protests, BTV's *Al-Rased* dedicated a two-and-a-half-hour special to the open defamation of *Al-Wasat* and its editor-in-chief, Mansoor al-Jamri.⁵² *Akhbar al-Khaleej* also published a cartoon that depicted *Al-Wasat* as a gun, shooting and killing a personified Bahrain (see Figure 2). *Al-Wasat*'s printing press was attacked and its journalists harassed. On 2 April, during the state of national emergency, the government closed its offices for a day. *Al-Wasat* was allowed to resume publishing on 4 April, following the resignation of al-Jamri and other editorial staff. A court charged them with "spreading false news which tarnished the image of Bahrain."⁵³ Bahrain's High Criminal Court sentenced al-Jamri, managing director Walid Noueihed, local news editor Aqeel Mirza and editorial board secretary Ali al-Sherify to separate BHD 1,000 fines.⁵⁴ Ali al-Sherify and *Al-Wasat* Development Manager Raheem al-Kaabi, both Iraqi nationals, were then deported from Bahrain on the basis that they posed a threat to the

47 Sawsan al-Shaer, "مآمال أعيش"، *Al-Watan*, 2013, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwatannews.net/ArticleViewer.aspx?ID=mzlwQTeO9vM43Mc4smpDKw933339933339>.

48 Ibid.

49 "Bomb kills two policemen in worst Bahrain bombing in months," Reuters, July 28, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/28/us-bahrain-security-blast-idUSKCN0Q20HJ20150728>.

50 "هشام الزباني.. حاصرتهم «داعش».. وتركتهم إرهاب الحوالمش", *Al-Watan*, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwatannews.net/ArticleViewer.aspx?ID=Pu833338phJzoF2HSz7BJN1hOYA933339933339>.

51 Ibid.

52 "Al-Wasat Newspaper Al-Rasid Bahrain TV برنامج الراسد عن الوسط", YouTube.

53 "Bahrain regime continues to target freedom of expression by taking journalists and photographers to trials," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, October 16, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/4767>.

54 Ibid.

state.⁵⁵ The management of *Al-Wasat* has also received anonymous threats, and its employees have been subjected to repeated physical attack.⁵⁶ In April 2011, *Al-Wasat* cofounder Abdulkarim Ali Ahmed Fakhrawi died in security force custody. According to the BICI, security officials tortured Fakhrawi to death while he was in custody. Though a Bahraini court later found two police officers responsible for the killing, the defendants have since appealed and had their original seven-year prison sentence reduced to three.⁵⁷

On 7 August 2015, the IAA “temporarily suspended *Al-Wasat* newspaper until further notice... due to its violation of the law and repeated dissemination of information that affects national unity and the Kingdom’s relationship with other countries.”⁵⁸ In its official suspension of the newspaper, the IAA failed to either cite a particular law or fulfill its technical obligation to seek judicial approval. Though the suspension was lifted on 9 August, the IAA has reportedly required “the newspaper’s management team to rectify past legal and regulatory failings, and [commit] to meet the necessary standards in future.”⁵⁹ At time of writing, the details of both *Al-Wasat*’s “legal and regulatory failings” and its rectification agreement with the IAA remain ambiguous.



Fig. 2. An Akhbar al-Khaleej cartoon accusing *Al-Wasat* of betraying and attacking Bahrain.

“in the name of the king.”⁶⁰ Unwilling to conflate his Sunni faith with his profession, he states that he left the job and returned to Egypt after a few weeks.

Social Media

The state information services have also strictly regulated social media usage in Bahrain. In 2014, Freedom House assigned Bahrain an internet freedom rating of “Not Free,” estimating the government’s “internet penetration” at 90%.⁶¹ As they have worked to supervise and censor internet

Finally, foreign journalists have acknowledged the sectarian bent of Bahrain’s print media. In a column discussing the difficulties of a long career in journalism, the Egyptian writer Mohammed Mousa relates his brief employment at an unnamed Bahraini newspaper. After only a few days at the position, he writes, he discovered that the outlet for which he worked was published primarily to attack the majority Shia population,

55 Confidential source.

56 “Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation is responsible for Bahrain TV turnover as a sectarian provocation platform,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights, May 26, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/4121>.

57 Ibid.

58 “Bahrain suspends publication of Al Wasat newspaper,” Gulf News, August 7, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/bahrain/bahrain-suspends-publication-of-al-wasat-newspaper-1.1562665>.

59 “Bahrain lifts brief ban on opposition paper: agency,” Reuters, August 9, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/09/us-bahrain-opposition-paper-idUSKCN0QE05P20150809>.

60 “ننجل اي ف نوي ف حص د جوي ال,” Al-Shorouq, August 5, 2015, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://www.shorouknews.com/columns/view.aspx?cdate=05082015&id=c7c7d8d5-5c75-41f8-bdea-975038bb03a7>.

61 “Freedom on the Net 2014 – Bahrain,” Freedom House, 2014, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2014/bahrain>.

communication, however, the IAA and the state telecommunications institutions have recognized the medium's unique messaging opportunities. With the help of individual social media users, the government has utilized its near-absolute control of the internet to foster more persistent, "grassroots" support for the anti-Shia narrative. In the same way the MSIA has integrated the majority of independent newspapers into its broader narrative strategy, the government's discriminatory cybersecurity policies have censored moderate dialogue and dissent, effectively translating sectarian hate speech into a form of accepted social media interaction.

Despite its commitment to evenly "apply the law against users whose accounts incite hatred, violence, and cause harm to the nation, as well as its leaders and security forces," it has used the cybersecurity and press laws to target non-violent activists and Shia dissidents. Freedom House notes that between 2013 and 2014 a "government initiative to censor 'terrorist materials' resulted in the blocking of at least 70 websites, including many that feature content from political opposition or Shiite religious groups."⁶² According to contacts on the ground, the Shia al-Wefaq opposition party, for example, has faced regular prosecution for sending standard online invitations to peaceful events. The BBC noted in 2014 that the government continues to use "the 2002 Press Law to restrict the media from publishing criticism of Islam or the king, inciting actions that undermine state security, or supporting regime change. Maximum punishment is five years in prison and some well-known journalists and bloggers are currently behind bars."⁶³

The government's two-pronged approach to cybersecurity is most evident in its repeated prosecution of Nabeel Rajab, a human rights activist and president of BCHR.⁶⁴ In August 2012, a Bahraini court sentenced Rajab to three years in prison on charges related to "involvement in illegal practices and inciting gatherings and calling for unauthorised marches through social networking sites."⁶⁵ Rajab was released in May 2014⁶⁶ after an appeal won him a shortened sentence,⁶⁷ but on 2 April 2015, a large group of armed security officers arrested him at his home on charges related to a new set of tweets. The first tweet—for which he was initially charged in October—described the security forces as an "ideological incubator" for ISIS (see Figure 3); the other tweets documented the recent riot and the ongoing torture in Bahrain's Jau Prison. In May, an appellate court upheld Rajab's six-month sentence for "insulting a public institution" with the former tweet.⁶⁸ Though Rajab was recently pardoned of this conviction, having served four months of the sentence, the government is pressing additional charges against him that could carry up to 15 years in prison.⁶⁹

62 Ibid.

63 "Bahrain Profile – Media," BBC News.

64 Ibid.

65 "Nabeel Rajab sentenced to 3 years imprisonment," FIDH: 2012, August 16, 2012, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.fidh.org/International-Federation-for-Human-Rights/north-africa-middle-east/bahrain/Nabeel-Rajab-sentenced-to-3-years>.

66 "Bahrain: End imprisonment of democracy campaigner Nabeel Rajab," Index on Censorship, May 11, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2015/05/bahrain-end-imprisonment-of-democracy-campaigner-nabeel-rajab/>.

67 Sara Yasin, "Bahraini activist acquitted of Twitter charges but remains in prison," Index on Censorship, August 23, 2012, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2012/08/bahraini-activist-acquitted-of-twitter-charges-but-remains-in-prison/>.

68 Gianluca Mezzofiore, "Bahrain upholds prison sentence for Nabeel Rajab over 'IS defection' tweet," International Business Times, May 14, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/bahrain-upholds-prison-sentence-nabeel-rajab-over-defection-tweet-1501261>.

69 "ADHRB and BIRD Cautiously Welcome Pardon of Nabeel Rajab," Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, July 13, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://adhrb.org/2015/07/adhrb-and-bird-cautiously-welcome-the-decision-to-pardon-nabeel-rajab/>.



Fig. 3. Tweet for which Nabeel Rajab was sentenced to six months in prison

activists like Nabeel Rajab have tolerated and even rewarded exponents of anti-Shia hate speech.

On 14 January 2014, then-Minister of State for Telecommunication Affairs Shaikh Fawaz bin Mohammed Al Khalifa held a meeting with Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and a group of pro-government Bahraini social media users.⁷¹ According to the BNA, the Prime Minister “praised the efforts of those who use modern technology and means of communication to defend Bahrain’s ruling system and society, expressing deep regret over the ungratefulness of those who use social media networks to post destructive criticism of the homeland, government and people.”⁷² He then told the audience of “patriotic” social media users to “face whoever posts tweets to target Bahrain,” urging the audience “to expose those who allow themselves to be used by foreign sides against the nation.”⁷³ Among this audience was the individual who runs the Twitter handle @khalidburshai, a username known specifically for its demeaning verbal attacks on Bahraini Shia. Both on the popular messaging site and on *Safa*, a television program that espouses Sunni extremist views, @khalidburshai has contributed to the multifaceted and contradictory discourse on Bahraini Shia origin—commonly used to discredit the *Baharna* heritage.⁷⁴ The user @khalidburshai has speculated that the Bahraini Shia were foreigners who were imported to serve affluent Sunni families, or that they traveled from Iran in onion sacks. The user has even referred to the Shia community as Bahrain’s Ku Klux Klan,⁷⁵ alleging that the major Bahraini Shia imams are racists and killers.⁷⁶

The government has extended this tolerance for anti-Shia hate speech from civilian users to former officials who helped make it policy. Mohammed Khalid, an ex-member of Bahraini parliament known as @boammar, has openly used the derogatory terms *Majoos* (Magi) and *Rafadhi* (rejectionist) to attack Shia on Twitter. He has even called for direct violence against the Shia community, demanding that *Safawi* (Arabic for Safavid) ‘terrorists’ be punished with

While the government increasingly employs strict cybersecurity and press legislation to criminalize dissent and anti-government expression in social media, Freedom House has found that “online hate speech against religious figures dignified by Shia Muslims often takes place with impunity.”⁷⁰ Frequently, the same authorities that punish

70 “Freedom on the Net 2014 – Bahrain,” Freedom House.

71 “HRH Premier calls for the need to use social networks to defend the nation,” Bahrain News Agency, January 14, 2014, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/597534>.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 See Chapter 2 for further historical background.

75 “حملة جند الفاروق- عاشوراء في البحرين بين الشعائر الدينية والوظيف السياسي - خالد بورشيد”, YouTube, November 23, 2013, accessed August 14, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_jv4OjCO4U.

76 “خالد بورشيد إساءة و إزدراء للشيعه في البحرين”, YouTube, August 28, 2014, accessed August 17, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUaMJ_GZr8Q.

amputation.⁷⁷ A separate tweet read: “teargas will not help with the terrorist Iran slaves who want to kill security men. Shotgun, live bullets and deportation is the medicine they deserve.”⁷⁸

As sectarian tensions have continued to escalate across the Gulf, government officials and their supporters have intensified this rhetoric. Immediately following the ISIS suicide bombing at the Shia Imam Hussein Mosque in Dammam, Saudi Arabia on 29 May 2015,⁷⁹ Jassim al-Saidi, another former member of Bahraini parliament, praised anti-Shia violence on Twitter. In one post al-Saidi wrote, “O Allah, destroy the Magi and their Jew and the Christian’s supporters...Amen,” while in another, he stated, “To heretics and infidel Magi, you are Christians and Jews’ dogs and donkeys... Iran’s agents in the Arabian Gulf.”⁸⁰

On 25 July 2015, after Ayatollah Khamenei said he would continue to support “oppressed” nations like Bahrain,⁸¹ the government announced it had shut down an arms smuggling operation allegedly undertaken by two Bahraini nationals with connections to Iran and had recalled its ambassador from Tehran.⁸² As part of the greater government response, the Ministry of Interior



Fig. 4. Tweet posted by Ahmed al-Malki in reply to the blocked opposition site Bahrain Mirror’s criticism of MOI statement

(MOI) released its own statement condemning Khamenei’s remarks and initiated a Twitter campaign on social media and internet news sites under ‘#NoForIranianInterventions.’ Many prominent Bahraini officials and public figures took part in the campaign, posting derogatory anti-Shia remarks under the hashtag, generally characterizing the Bahraini Shia community as an Iranian proxy force. Ahmed al-Malki, a member of the government’s Prisoners and Detainees Rights Commission, a government body responsible for ensuring the humane treatment of prisoners in Bahrain, tweeted, “You cannot win Zionists’ loyalty, that’s why Hitler decided to exterminate them and the British established a colony for them in Palestine; and this is what we should do with *Welayat al-Faqih*.”⁸³ Though he later deleted the tweet, a screen capture can be viewed at Figure 4, left.

77 @boammar, “الإرهاب الصفوي في البحرين لن يخشى من الإبتكارات .. طبقوا فيهم القصاص بقطع الأيدي والأرجل وستجدون النتائج العجيبة..ولكم في القصاص حياة” (Twitter: 2015). Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/boammar/status/56429979661411232>

78 @boammar, “مسيلات الدموع لن تنفع مع الارهابيين عبيد إيران الذين يريدون قتل رجال الأمن.. الشوزن والرصاص الحي والترحيل الدواب الذي يستحقونه #البحرين” (Twitter: 2013). Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/boammar/status/366258084550688772>

79 Greg Botelho and Paul Cruickshank, “ISIS claims 2nd Saudi mosque attack,” CNN, May 29, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/05/29/middleeast/saudi-arabia-mosque-blast/>.

80 “حريات الوفاق: ٥٤١ احتجاج و٣٤ حالة قمع وانتهاكات أخرى كثيرة في الأسبوع الأخير من مايو” Bahrain Mirror, February 6, 2015, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://bmirror.no-ip.org//news/24318.html>.

81 “Bahrain summons Iranian diplomat over leader’s comments,” The Daily Star, July 20, 2015, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Jul-20/307422-bahrain-summons-iranian-diplomat-over-leaders-comments.ashx>.

82 Maha El Dahan and William MacLean, “Bahrain says foils arms smuggling bid, recalls Iran envoy,” Reuters, July 25, 2015, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/25/us-bahrain-iran-idUSKCN0PZ0HD20150725>.

83 Twitter feed of Ahmed al-Malki, “أحمد المالكي @butalalbhr,” (Twitter: 2015), retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/butalalbhr>.

Former MP al-Saidi also participated in the government's social media campaign, urging his followers on Twitter to "beware the Iranian Safavid Magianism cells in the GCC...there are multiple political and military wings" and rejecting the notion that "Iranians become ministers, judges, members in Shura council and parliament, merchants, and immoral."⁸⁴ After the Sitra bombing, Nabeel al-Hamer, a consultant to the king, also posted a tweet suggesting that Bahrain is the target of concerted Shia terrorist operations: "Yes, this is sectarian Shia terrorism backed up by Iran. Bahrain is exposed to sectarian Shia terrorism. This is our reality. All Sunni and Shia should fight it."⁸⁵

Conclusion

In its most recent assessment of press and media freedoms in 2014, Freedom House classified Bahrain "Not Free", ranking it as the tenth most restrictive country for the press in the world.⁸⁶ That same year, *Reporters Sans Frontieres* dubbed Bahrain the "kingdom of disinformation."⁸⁷ Through a complex but increasingly centralized network of state information services, the government has assumed effective control of television, print, and social media. It has systematically employed this influence to exclude any substantive representation of Bahraini Shia identity or voice from mainstream cultural discourse.

With the most recent outbreak of civil unrest, the government has exploited its authority over the media to sustain a distorted Bahraini nationalism predicated on Shia marginalization and discriminatory security measures. As the Government of Bahrain has demonstrated the absolute capacity to censor state, independent, and social media, it has also demonstrated its refusal to do so consistently. Instead, it has used an inherently prejudiced system to isolate, intimidate, and dehumanize both a non-violent pro-democracy movement and the country's majority Shia population. To serve the monarchy's shortsighted interest in authoritarian stability, the government has purposefully instigated deepening sectarian enmity and legitimized extremist hate speech, allowing it to permeate nearly all public mediums of information exchange and social interaction.

84 Twitter feed of Jassim al-Saidi, "D.jasm Saidi @jassimalsaeedi," (Twitter: 2015), retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/jassimalsaeedi>.

85 Ibid.

86 "Freedom of the Press 2014 – Bahrain," Freedom House, 2014, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2014/bahrain#.Vaf6bflViko>.

87 "Bahrain Profile – Media," BBC News.

Cultural Marginalization

Both before and after the protest movement of 2011, the Government of Bahrain has sought to erase the influence of Shia culture within Bahrain. Textbooks and official historical narratives deemphasize or ignore entirely the role played by Shia political and religious movements in the centuries before the Al Khalifa conquest. Heritage sites of cultural and historical significance to Shia inhabitants are unrecognized or renamed, when they are not demolished. Additionally, since 2011 Bahraini security forces have actively antagonized public funeral processions of the Shia community.

Recognition of Shia History and Practices

Historic Marginalization

Shia heritage is deeply-rooted within Bahrain's history. The *Baharna*, Bahrain's indigenous Shia, are the longest continuous inhabitants of Bahrain.⁸⁸ Today's *Baharna* are thought to be the descendants of both a pre-Islamic east Arabian community and Muslim migrants fleeing persecution during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates.⁸⁹ In the 1600s, Bahrain joined the Iraqi city of Najaf and Jabal Amel in modern Lebanon as a major center of Shia theological education and jurisprudential scholarship.⁹⁰ For most of the period between 900 and 1783 CE, many local Shia dynasties ruled Bahrain and its surrounding territories.

State-sponsored histories marginalize this past, instead focusing on Bahrain's recent development under Al Khalifa rule. In doing so, the government fails to present Bahrain's social and cultural variation and multiple traditions. This narrative is set at the highest levels. In 1994, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, then Crown Prince, authored *First Light: Modern Bahrain and Its Heritage*.⁹¹ The text's narrative revolves around Al Khalifa history before and after their conquest of Bahrain in 1783, minimizing or outright omitting entire periods of Bahraini history that saw Shia governance or in which Shia played major leadership roles. The Qarmatians, a Shia dynasty that ruled Bahrain from the 9th to 11th centuries, merit only a brief mention as a transitory occupier despite their near-200 year rule.⁹² The book then ignores the role played by the Shia Safavid Empire in dislodging the Portuguese from Bahrain in the early 1600s. It does, however, highlight a brief period of cooperation between the Portuguese and the Safavids in the 1500s, framing it as an example of "the sort of policy that foreign powers have pursued in the past and still do today to create conflicts between Iran and the Arab Islamic countries."⁹³

Bahrain National Museum, a work published in 1992 that presents the country's historical trajectory through work of the Bahrain National Museum, also erases Shia influence. It provides

88 James Belgrave, *Welcome to Bahrain*, Augustan Press, London, 1953, eight edition, 1973, 16.

89 Cole, Juan, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam*, I.B. Taurus, 2002, 45; Frederic M. Wehrey, *Sectarian Politics in the Gulf: From the Iraq War to the Arab Uprisings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 12.

90 Geneive Abdo, "The New Sectarianism: The Arab Uprisings and the Rebirth of the Shi'a-Sunni Divide," The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings, April 2013, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2013/04/sunni%20shia%20abdo/sunni%20shia%20abdo>, 9.

91 Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, *First Light: Modern Bahrain and its Heritage* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1994).

92 "Qarmatian: Shi'ite sect," Encyclopaedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Qarmatians>.

93 Al Khalifa, Hamad bin Isa, *First Light: Modern Bahrain and its Heritage*. (Kegan Paul International: 1994), p. 24.

an extensive description of Bahrain under Portuguese rule, but it fails to mention the subsequent 116 years of Safavid control of the islands, or the decades of regional instability which preceded the Al Khalifa conquest of Bahrain.⁹⁴ Authorities only make reference to the Safavid period when seeking to label organized Shia groups as “Safavid loyalists of Iran,” a trope that, as the previous chapter demonstrated, still resonates today.⁹⁵

Educational Erasure

Though the two books discussed above are now twenty years old, the official historical narrative has changed little since their publication and is dominant within the Bahraini educational system. One high school textbook printed for the 2014/15 school year, *The Modern and Contemporary History of Bahrain and the Gulf*, presents a typical portrayal of Bahraini history. Lesson nine, “Al Khalifa in Zubara and Bahrain, 18th-19th Centuries,” gives a detailed political history of the rise of the Al Khalifa family, providing an overview of the town on the modern Qatari shore that they ruled, the conflict between Zubara and the Persian governor of Bahrain, and the Al Khalifa conquest of Bahrain.⁹⁶ Whole portions of Bahrain’s history prior to the arrival of the Al Khalifa family, with which many Shia have an emotional connection, are not discussed, suggesting that the only relevant history is that which has occurred since Bahrain came under Al Khalifa rule.

Beyond erasure from the state-accepted historical narrative, government policy prevents the vast majority of Shia children from receiving a Shia religious education within their schools. As detailed in *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, state-run elementary, secondary, and tertiary schools heavily integrate the precepts of the Maliki school of Sunni jurisprudence into their curricula, and Muslim practices and beliefs unique to Shia are denigrated.⁹⁷ Additionally, the Government of Bahrain permits only one Shia-specific school, the Jaafari Institute, to operate legally within the country. The Jaafari Institute enrolls some 1,200 in elementary and secondary-education programs.⁹⁸ In a nation containing several hundred thousand Shia citizens, the government has created an infrastructural shortfall in which only a small fraction of their children and adolescents can access, at any one time, a Shia-specific education.

Suppression of Funerals

Bahraini authorities have disrupted or otherwise intervened in Shia funeral rites. In the aftermath of 2011, funeral processions and commemorations have become a rallying point for Shia protesters and their Sunni supporters, thereby inviting a significant security presence. This interference has led to intermittent clashes. On 15 February 2011, 2,000 Bahrainis amassed to attend the funeral procession of Ali Abdulhadi Mushaima, the first protester to be killed by security forces.⁹⁹ As

94 Bahrain National Museum, *Bahrain National Museum*, Immel Publishing Ltd, 1993, pp. 87-106.

95 Geneive Abdo, “The New Sectarianism: The Arab Uprisings and the Rebirth of the Shi’a-Sunni Divide,” The Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings, 9.

96 Ministry of Education, *Tarikh al-Bahrain wal-khaleej al-arabi al-hadith wal-m’asir: lil-marhala al-ghanawiya*, Code: 201, 2014, pp. 46-9.

97 *Apart in Their Own Land: Government Discrimination against Shia in Bahrain*, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, and the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, Vol. I, February 2015, http://adhrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ADHRB_Apart-in-Their-Own-Land_web.pdf, 27.

98 “Bahrain 2013 International Religious Freedom Report,” U.S. Department of State, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2015/08/10/saudi-arabia-prominent-writer-detained>, 4.

99 “Bahrain protests: King announces probe into two deaths,” BBC News, February 15, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12468336>.

the procession continued to swell, riot police confronted the mourners, firing tear gas and bird shot.¹⁰⁰ Police shot and killed another Shia protester, Fadhel Ali Matrook, during the procession.¹⁰¹ After investigating the incident, the BICI concluded that the use of lethal force by the police was unjustified.¹⁰²

Despite King Hamad's initial promise to rein in security personnel's excessive use of force, authorities continued to interfere with Shia funerals. On 4 November 2011, police set up barricades to block Bahrainis from attending the funeral of Ali al-Daihi, the father of a prominent al-Wafaq member who had died from wounds sustained during a protest.¹⁰³ Interference of this kind repeatedly instigated clashes between police forces and mourners, including incidents that broke out during or after funerals on 3 October 2012,¹⁰⁴ 16 February 2013,¹⁰⁵ and 22 May 2014; during this last incident, 14-year-old Sayed Mahmood died after police shot him with birdshot from a distance of less than six meters.¹⁰⁶

Landmarks and Physical Cultural Constructs

Sectarian Designations

The Government of Bahrain has displayed a pattern of naming culturally-significant heritage sites and historical events in a sectarian manner. For many Shia Bahrainis, this begins with the official framing of the nation's founding. The government refers to the 1783 conquest as *Fath al-Bahrain*, which translates to "the opening of Bahrain." In this context, "opening" (or "*fath*") carries an explicitly religious connotation; traditionally, a Muslim ruler "opens" another nation by bringing Islam to its people. To describe the conquest of Bahrain as the opening of its people to Islam implicitly devalues the archipelago's preexisting Shia population. That Bahrain's Grand Mosque bears the name "*al-Fateh*,"¹⁰⁷ a title placed upon Bahrain's first Al Khalifa emir, Ahmed ibn Mohamed ibn Khalifa, is seen as highly contentious by members of the majority-Shia population.

The Bahraini ruling family, however, has not limited itself to appending the names of its predecessors on specifically Sunni sites; it has sought to rename whole tracks of Bahraini land after its living members. In recent years, as members of the ruling family monopolize more of the Bahraini coastline and smaller portions of the archipelago, they have begun to name islands after themselves, attempting to displace their traditional titles. For example, the ruling family renamed

100 Bilal Randeree, "Deaths heighten Bahrain tension," Al-Jazeera, February 15, 2011, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121571645551445.html>.

101 "Document – Bahrain: Two die as protests are violently repressed: 'Ali 'Abdulahdi Mushaima, Fadhel 'Ali Matrook," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, February 15, 2011, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://bahrainrights.org/en/node/3731>.

102 Mahmoud Bassiouni, Nigel Rodley, Badria al-Awadhi, Philippe Kirsch, and Mahnoush Arsanjani. "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry." (Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry: 2011). Retrieved from: <http://www.bici.org.bh/BICIREportEN.pdf>, 229.

103 "Bahrainis clash with police at funeral," Reuters, November 4, 2011, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/04/us-bahrain-funeral-idUSTRE7A35N220111104>.

104 Umberto Bacchi, "Bahrain: Protesters and Police Clash at Ali Ahmed Mushaima Funeral," International Business Times, October 3, 2012, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/bahrain-protesters-clashes-police-funeral-mushaima-salmaniya-390721>.

105 Elizabeth Dickinson, "Police and mourners clash at Bahrain funeral of teen killed in protest," The National, February 16, 2013

106 "Bahrain: Gunshot Deaths Require Swift Investigation," Human Rights Watch, June 11, 2014, accessed August 13, 2015, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/06/11/bahrain-gunshot-deaths-require-swift-investigation>.

107 http://www.alfateh.gov.bh/ahmed_al-fateh.html.

Umm al-Suban, an island lying adjacent to Bahrain's northwest coast, "Mohammediya" after it was purchased by Sheikh Mohammed Al Khalifa, the uncle of King Hamad and brother of Premier Khalifa.¹⁰⁸

As development in Bahrain proceeds apace, there is a further effort to rename areas traditionally inhabited by Shia with names that purposefully marginalize their heritage. In the aftermath of the February 2011 protests, one writer for *Al-Watan* newspaper, Naja al-Mudhaki, encouraged the government to "Correct Bahrain's Regions."¹⁰⁹ Warning of a "Safavid" plot to claim areas of Bahrain for Shia, the writer pressed the government to supply Bahraini regions with "Arab names that prove the history of the Al Khalifa," pointing to the al-Fateh suburb and Hamad Town as strong examples of this naming process.¹¹⁰ Yet, the Government of Bahrain only established Hamad Town in 1991.

In addition to renaming Shia sites, the government has placed a sectarian spin on places that carry cross-sectarian significance. The clearest example of this policy came following the demolition of the Pearl Roundabout. Security forces destroyed the roundabout during the state of emergency in March 2011, after it had become the center of the pro-democracy uprising in February 2011. Bahraini authorities paved over the location of the Pearl Roundabout and rebuilt it as a traffic-light junction called the "Al Farooq Junction." The name refers to Caliph Umar "al-Farooq" (634-44 CE), the second of the four "Rightly Guided Caliphs," who ruled when the early Muslims conquered Persia. As independent observers have noted, the name is intended as a slight to a protest movement that the government seeks to paint as exclusively Shia.¹¹¹

Tourism

In 2015, the World Travel & Tourism Council forecasted that tourism would contribute 552,500,000 dinar to the Bahraini economy, or 5.7% of its total GDP.¹¹² In 2014 alone, the tourism sector added 31,000 jobs within Bahrain.¹¹³ While international consultants with a stake in Bahrain's tourism industry extol the islands' beaches,¹¹⁴ the Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities also expends significant effort in advertising heritage sites.¹¹⁵

Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities refrains, however, from promoting Shia heritage sites. The ministry channels travelers interested in learning about Bahrain's cultural inheritance to Sheikh Salman bin Ahmed al-Fateh Fort, wherein "lives the memory of the ruling family of Bahrain, the Al Khalifas." The ministry also promotes the Sheikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa house, which "offers insight into the royal life of the 19th century." The al-Fateh mosque in Manama is also centrally highlighted.¹¹⁶ Nowhere, however, does the ministry list a mosque or pilgrimage site

108 Maryam al-Khawaja, "My Parents' Bahrain," *Jadaliyya*, August 12, 2013, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/13532/my-parents-bahrain>.

109 تصحيح مناطق البحرين, *Al-Watan*, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://alwatannews.net/ArticleViewer.aspx?ID=10Knol8833338dJCN3Tsr2p2dw933339933339>.

110 Ibid.

111 "Bahrain: The Unauthorized Tour," *Bahrain Watch*, accessed August 14, 2015, <https://bahrainwatch.org/tour/>.

112 "Travel & Tourism : Economic Impact 2015 Bahrain," World Travel & Tourism Council, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic%20impact%20research/countries%202015/bahrain2015.pdf>, 3.

113 Ibid., 4.

114 Lina Stahl, "Could You Find Bahrain on a Map?" *The Huffington Post*, August 11, 2015, accessed August 13, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lina-stahl/could-you-find-bahrain-on_b_7961348.html.

115 "Visiting Bahrain," Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities, <http://culture.gov.bh/en/visitingbahrain/destinations/>.

116 "Bahrain Touristic Map," Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities, http://culture.gov.bh/en/visitingbahrain/bahrain_map/.

directly relevant to the Shia community. This omission may bear some relation to the government's destruction, in March and April 2011, of 38 mosques, shrines, and other religious places significant to Shia, many of which Shia had built and used well before the arrival of the Al Khalifa. The al-Barbaghi mosque, a destroyed Shia center of worship that housed the remains of a prominent Shia scholar, predates the arrival of the Al Khalifa by more than 200 years.¹¹⁷

Conclusion

The Government of Bahrain pursues policies that delegitimize traditional Shia customs and the Shia majority's impact on the islands' history and culture. Frequently, this de-legitimization adopts a purposefully sectarian posture, as officials attack public Shia funerals or rename locations of shared importance with titles specific to the legacy of the ruling family. Even when a sectarian motivation is not obvious, as in the near-erasure of Bahrain's pre-Khalifa history in official records, it has the effect of preventing the Shia majority from fully engaging with its past.

117 *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, 24-25.

Economic Disclusion

Shia in Bahrain have long seen themselves as second-class citizens who are deprived of a proportionate share of power and prosperity. Many of the demands of the 2011 protests focused on the lack of jobs and economic opportunities for Bahrainis, problems that still contribute to unrest today.¹¹⁸ Official corruption, crony capitalism, and a general lack of transparency have led to uneven development and a vast disparity in wealth; while these practices have harmed Bahrainis from multiple populations, they have disparately impacted members of a Shia community more likely to belong to the nation's lower socioeconomic strata.¹¹⁹ Unequal treatment of Shia manifests itself in many economic sectors, but this chapter will specifically focus on employment, education, housing, government programs, land usage, business practices, and law. A review of discrepancies between Shia and Sunnis in these areas reveals systemic economic discrimination.

Employment

Employment of Shia citizens in security forces

Bahraini Shia have long maintained that systematic sectarian discrimination has permeated in-country hiring practices. Bahrain's security services provide a case in point. The MOI and various security forces serve as some of the largest employers in Bahrain, and they generally refuse to hire Shia Muslims.¹²⁰ While representing a majority of Bahrain's population, an extremely limited number of Shia serve in security-related government agencies such as the Bahrain Defense Force (BDF), National Security Agency (NSA), and police forces.¹²¹

Estimates place Shia employment in the security services at approximately 2-5 percent of all security personnel, compared to a Shia population of at least 60-70% in the nation.¹²² While the BDF does not produce official employment figures, the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) estimated BDF personnel to be at around 12,000, including a significant number of non-nationals. Educated guesses put the percentage of Shia citizens in the BDF at less than ten percent.¹²³ A 2009 leak from the NSA additionally suggested that the percentage of Shia in its workforce did not exceed four percent, and that the majority of those employed worked in non-supervisory positions.¹²⁴

Shia presence on the police force remains small. Outsiders estimate that the MOI currently employs approximately 30,000 individuals, of which 2-3,000 are Shia. Most Shia employees within the police force work in administrative roles. While Shia are employed in the community police,

118 Kenneth Katzman, "Bahrain: Reform, Security, and U.S. Policy." Congressional Research Service, 2014: 1.6.

119 Tahiyya Lulu, "The real story of Bahrain's divided society," *The Guardian*, March 3, 2011, accessed July 14, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/mar/03/bahrain-sunnis-shia-divided-society>.

120 Maryam al-Khawaja, "Beneath Bahrain's Shia-versus-Sunni narrative, only the tyrants benefit," *The Guardian*, October 27, 2012, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/oct/27/bahrain-shia-versus-sunni-narrative>.

121 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry.

122 Ian Siperco, "Bahrain's Sectarian Challenge," Middle East Policy Council, accessed July 14, 2015. <http://www.mepc.org/articles-commentary/commentary/bahrain-s-sectarian-challenge?print>.

123 Brian Dooley, "Bahrain's Soldier Sailor Sunni Shia Struggle," *The Huffington Post*, February 7, 2014, accessed August 14, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brian-dooley/bahrains-soldier-sailor-s_b_4745595.html.

124 "Bahrain: Dangerous Statistics and Facts about the National Security Apparatus," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, March 8, 2009, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/2784>.

established following the protest movement of 2011. The community police, however, play only a ‘marginal’ policing role,¹²⁵ and no evidence exists to suggest that the government has taken any steps toward integrating the BDF, NSA, or private security services.¹²⁶

This disparity is only heightened by the large number of foreign-born Sunnis employed by these agencies.¹²⁷ National security personnel in Bahrain continue to be drawn inordinately from Sunni communities both at home and abroad. Over the past two decades, tens of thousands of Sunnis from places like Syria, Jordan, Yemen, and Pakistan have received citizenship in Bahrain.¹²⁸ These foreign-born Sunnis tend to find employment in the security and defense forces, while Shia Bahrainis frequently cannot exercise the right to serve in their own armed forces.¹²⁹

Rights groups and political activists criticize this policy of hiring non-national Sunnis as a form of political naturalization aimed at altering the demographics of Bahrain. In recent years, the government has hired and thereafter naturalized a significant number of non-nationals into the state security services. The policy, first revealed in the ‘Bandargate’ scandal in 2006,¹³⁰ has led to the naturalization of over 100,000 Sunni foreigners in the last 15 years, with an accelerated pace of naturalization since 2011.¹³¹ During the state of emergency between March and May 2011, the Government of Bahrain recruited over 2,500 ex-military servicemen from Pakistan into both the BDF and the police service, which Al-Jazeera reported as a 50% increase in Bahrain’s security personnel.¹³² None of the new recruits were Shia.¹³³ Not only do these emigres assume government jobs to the detriment of general Shia employment, but naturalized Sunnis are also guaranteed government housing and social benefits.¹³⁴

The MOI pledged in March 2011 to help remedy the situation by creating 20,000 new jobs in the Coast Guard, Traffic Directorate, and Civil Defense, among other agencies, as well as hiring at least 1,000 new community service police officers.¹³⁵ The Ministry claims these hires were drawn from a cross-section of the population, though demographic information on officers is not public. However, the government reportedly requires new hires to produce proof of sect.¹³⁶ Recent employment ads for the MOI request that applicants submit marriage certificates for themselves and their parents. This is not a standard practice of employment; marriage certificates are among the few documents that clearly show proof of sect.¹³⁷

125 “One Year Later: Assessing Bahrain’s Implementation of the BICI Report,” Project on Middle East Democracy, November 2012, <http://pomed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/One-Year-Later-Assessing-Bahrain-Implementation-of-the-BICI-Report.pdf>, 13-14.

126 Ibid., 14-15.

127 *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, 20.

128 Al-Khawaja, “Beneath Bahrain’s Shia-versus-Sunni narrative, only the tyrants benefit.”

129 Lulu, “The real story of Bahrain’s divided society.”

130 “Al-Bandar Report’: Demographic engineering in Bahrain and mechanisms of exclusion,” BCHR, September 30, 2006, accessed August 13, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/528>; the al-Bandar papers, leaked by a civil servant, revealed an inter-ministry plan to employ foreign Sunni nationals and grant them citizenship at a fast rate, thereby proportionally reducing the Shia demographic from a majority to a minority.

131 Justin Gengler, “Bahrain Drain: Why the King’s Sunni Supporters are Moving Abroad,” *Foreign Policy*, accessed July 16, 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2014-09-05/bahrain-drain>.

132 Mujib Mashal, “Pakistani Troops Aid Bahrain’s Crackdown,” Al Jazeera, July 30, 2011, accessed August 10, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/07/2011725145048574888.html>.

133 Confidential Source.

134 Ibid.

135 “One Year Later,” Project on Middle East Democracy, 14.

136 Ibid.

137 Confidential Source.

The government additionally announced a plan in January 2012 to recruit five hundred new officers annually from all segments of society. Little demographic information exists on the new recruits. One officer from the graduating class of 2012 claimed that approximately 75% of the class was Shia, though the government has complained that it is difficult to attract Shia recruits.¹³⁸ Since the government does not disclose demographic information on new officers, questions remain as to whether the new officers proportionally represent the Shia majority.¹³⁹

Employment in the security forces heavily favors Sunni citizens of Bahrain. Those Shia who find employment in government positions often occupy non-sensitive roles in the lower rungs of the hierarchy. The security forces continue to overwhelmingly employ Sunnis, contributing to Shia grievances stemming from a lack of job opportunities.¹⁴⁰

Post-Uprising Dismissals

Following the uprising in February and March 2011, the government dismissed thousands of Bahrainis from their jobs and suspended university employees for their alleged support of protests.¹⁴¹ Shia employees who participated or were suspected of participating in the demonstrations constituted the majority of victims of these unlawful dismissals. Some have testified to having stayed at home for various reasons, either due to safety concerns or an inability to travel to work because of the road blockades and traffic jams common during the uprising, only to be fired on suspicion of attending protests.¹⁴² Others appear to have been dismissed for their familial and marital relations to prominent activists. The BICI found that some employers treated Sunni employees preferentially, choosing not to dismiss them if they were absent during the protests.¹⁴³

A man identifying himself as Sayed Ahmad, spokesman for a committee formed by activists to aid workers who lost their jobs, estimates that the government dismissed close to 4,000 Shia workers after protests began in February, fired either for missing work to join demonstrations or because they did not want to leave home during the clashes.¹⁴⁴ The BICI report states that at least 2,000 public sector employees and 2,400 private sector workers lost their jobs for supporting the protests.¹⁴⁵

The Government of Bahrain has promised to reinstate all those dismissed from work or school for participating in protests, but observers disagree on the extent to which this promise has been kept.¹⁴⁶ The government states that it has fully met its commitment to those dismissed related to exercising their right to freedom of expression, having rehired 99 percent of the more than 4,500

138 *Implementation by the Government of Bahrain of the Recommendations by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry*, U.S. Department of State, 2013.

139 "One Year Later," Project on Middle East Democracy, 14.

140 Brian Dooley, "Bahrain's Soldier Sailor Sunni Shia Struggle," The Huffington Post.

141 Brian Murphy, "Bahrain Mass Job Dismissals: Shiite Majority Claim Discrimination," The Huffington Post, September 8, 2011, accessed July 16, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/08/bahrain-jobs-shiite-protests_n_954298.html.

142 "Flawed Reforms: Bahrain Fails to Achieve Justice for Protesters," Amnesty International, 2012, http://files.amnesty.org/archives/3858_Bahrain_REPORT_web.pdf, 45.

143 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, par. 1428-56.

144 Murphy, "Bahrain Mass Job Dismissals: Shiite Majority Claim Discrimination."

145 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, paras. 1390, 1454.

146 "Flawed Reforms: Bahrain Fails to Achieve Justice for Protesters," Amnesty International, 9-41.

people dismissed in 2011. Other sources put the number closer to 95 percent. Responding to the government's claim of resolving 99 percent of reinstatement cases as of November 2013, the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions (GFBTU) asserted that several hundred cases had not yet been resolved.¹⁴⁷

The GFBTU additionally reports that some private sector companies have not reinstated their former employees, and that others have rehired workers into lower-rank positions. Since 2011, businesses have also dismissed employees who miss work on protest days and anniversaries.¹⁴⁸ Other workers have reported reduced salaries upon their return to work or have been forced to sign loyalty pledges.¹⁴⁹ Some employers have refused to award back pay for unfair dismissal and have forced unionists to disengage from their activities after returning to their jobs.¹⁵⁰ Additionally, many Shia have encountered difficulties in attempting to obtain certificates of good conduct from their employers. Employers typically require these certificates from applicants, rendering many Shia completely dependent upon their current employers.¹⁵¹

During the 2011 uprising, security forces targeted medical professionals for providing aid to injured protesters.¹⁵² The BICI report specifically examined events that took place at Salmaniya Medical Complex (SMC), a public hospital two kilometers from the Pearl Roundabout. According to the report, the Ministry of Health prevented ambulances from accessing the roundabout during protests. Security forces arrested and detained medical personnel as well as protesters receiving medical treatment. Between 16 March and the end of May 2011, security forces detained a total of 64 medical professionals. In June of that year, a national safety court charged 28 with misdemeanors and 20 with felonies. Government accusations against medical personnel included colluding with opposition groups, protesters, and foreign powers.¹⁵³

Bahraini courts found all those charged with felonies guilty, despite credible allegations that security forces used torture to extract confessions. Sentences ranged from five to fifteen years in jail.¹⁵⁴ In June 2012, nine medical professionals were acquitted, and others had their sentences reduced.¹⁵⁵ Pressure on doctors, however, has not completely abated. In April 2014, the Public Prosecutor's Office questioned Dr. Fatima Haji on accusations of insulting the MOI in an interview with France24 regarding the use of tear gas in Bahrain. Another doctor previously charged with a felony, Dr. Saaed al-Amahiji, received a one year jail sentence for insulting the king based on remarks he allegedly made at a funeral in 2013.¹⁵⁶ Doctors have not escaped harsh treatment by security forces and have been prevented from fulfilling their obligation to treat wounded protesters.

147 U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *2013 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 2014.

148 U.S. Department of State, *Implementation by the Government of Bahrain of the Recommendations by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry*, 2013.

149 "One Year Later," Project on Middle East Democracy, 19.

150 *Ibid.*, 14.

151 "ما الذي دار في لقاء الحقوقي نبيل رجب مع رئيس مكتب التظلمات التابع لوزارة الداخلية؟" Bahrain Mirror, December 5, 2014, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://bahrainmirror.com/news/20724.html>.

152 "Bahrain: Human Rights Violation in 2014," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, February 13, 2015, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/7312>.

153 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, para. 703

154 *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, 12-13.

155 "Bahrain Government Renews Attacks on Bahrain Medics," Human Rights First, April 8, 2014, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/press-release/bahrain-government-renews-attacks-bahrain-medics>

156 *Ibid.*

Education

In addition to persecuting trade unionists and medical professionals, the Bahraini government strongly sanctioned the men and women studying and working within its educational sector. As with the aforementioned cases, this sanctioning has taken two forms: violent suppression and mass dismissal from teaching positions and student enrollments.

Teachers

Bahraini authorities targeted teachers from the earliest days of the 2011 protests, after educators emerged as active members of the pro-democracy movement; in February 2011, the Bahrain Teachers Association (BTA) organized a 5,000-strong strike in response to the 17 February security force attack on protesters in the Pearl Roundabout.¹⁵⁷ In March 2011, after the BTA attempted to organize a second strike in response to security-force raids on schools, the Ministry of Social Development ordered its dissolution and the arrest of its members, accusing the union of “issuing statements and speeches inciting teachers and students.”¹⁵⁸ Officials further accused Mahdi Abu Deeb, BTA leader, of delivering speeches inciting against the regime.¹⁵⁹ Other members of the organization were targeted next.¹⁶⁰ The homes of Mahdi Abu Deeb, his deputy Jaleela al-Salman, and nine other members of the association, all Shia, were unlawfully raided. The authorities arrested, disappeared, and tortured them.¹⁶¹

In total, Bahraini authorities arrested over 100 Shia teachers as a result of the protests. The majority of teachers reported being subjected to torture, including beatings with different objects, being forced into stress positions, and sexual harassment. Security forces humiliated them with sectarian insults. The Ministry of Education treated Shia teachers with suspicion and subjected them to degrading and provocative interrogations, leading to the dismissal of approximately 150 teachers and the suspension of dozens more.¹⁶² Additionally, officials withheld the salaries of more than 100 teachers for months and cut off others’ salaries entirely.¹⁶³ Ministry of Education officials transferred dozens of teachers to other schools in different areas on short notice.¹⁶⁴ Shia teachers constituted the majority of those affected.¹⁶⁵

Furthermore, many unemployed university graduates in Bahrain are qualified to work as teachers but cannot find positions due to discriminatory hiring practices. Though official statistics do not delineate by sect, sources on the ground relate that the majority of unemployed university

157 “Teachers ordeal in Bahrain: arrested, tortured, sacked, suspended and prosecuted,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights, July 14, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/4387>.

158 Ibid.

159 وزارة التنمية الاجتماعية تحل جمعية المعلمين البحرينية وتوقف مجلس إدارة جمعية الأطباء, Bahrain News Agency, April 4, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bna.bh/portal/news/451949>.

160 Justin Gengler, “Bahrain Re-Opens to (Pseudo-) Academics,” Religion and Politics in Bahrain, May 6, 2013, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://bahrainipolitics.blogspot.com/2013/05/bahrain-re-opens-to-pseudo-academics.html>; see also “Bahrain: End the violations against teachers, unionists and students,” Education International, October 24, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, http://www.ei-ie.org/en/uas/uaa_details/31.

161 “Teachers ordeal in Bahrain: arrested, tortured, sacked, suspended and prosecuted,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights.

162 “Teachers in Bahrain on World Teachers Day: Jailed, tortured, prosecuted, and dismissed from work for political reasons,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights, October 5, 2011, August 14, 2015, <http://bahrainrights.org/en/node/4720>.

163 Ibid.

164 أولياء أمور يحتجون أمام <<مدرسة قرطبة>> اعتراضاً على الإساءة لبناتهم, Al-Wasat, March 10, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/3107/news/read/531554/1.html>.

165 “Teachers in Bahrain on World Teachers Day,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights.

graduates are Shia. Instead of employing these Bahrainis, the government has hired teachers from other countries, such as Egypt and Jordan. In 2014, a state official announced that the government employed 302 Egyptian teachers.¹⁶⁶ In April 2015, the Jordanian Teachers Union stated that 1,200 Jordanian teachers were candidates for teaching positions in Bahrain.¹⁶⁷ In February 2015, the Ministry of Education opened up teaching vacancies to candidates from Gulf countries. Previously, one of the conditions for hiring was that the candidate had to be Bahraini.¹⁶⁸

Students

As the 2011 demonstrations continued, security forces began to carry out reprisals against schools. Following the army's attack on protesters at the Pearl Roundabout and the declaration of martial law, security forces reportedly targeted more than ten schools.¹⁶⁹ They assaulted teachers and students alike inside campuses. The events that took place at Yathreb Intermediate School provide an example. A band from the National Guard chose to perform in the majority-Shia school, an act seen as provocative by the local community. Security forces surrounded the school and sent policewomen on patrols inside the halls. After allegations of anti-government chanting, police started assaulting both teachers and students.¹⁷⁰ They entered every classroom in an attempt to identify those who allegedly chanted. The officers took the girls to the school yard and forced them to stand facing the wall while they subjected them to beatings and sectarian insults.¹⁷¹

Other students that did not suffer the direct effects of violence could not escape the long-term economic consequences of dismissal. Following the 2011 protests, the University of Bahrain and Bahrain Polytechnic dismissed more than 500 students, a majority of them Shia, depriving them of their right to education. Additionally, authorities arrested, tortured, and tried in military court more than 70 Shia university students. Several were sentenced up to 15 years in prison.¹⁷²

Suppression of the protest movement also triggered a third discriminatory policy against Shia students: the prejudicial allocation of scholarships. Prior to 2011, scholarships were distributed based on academic merit, and scholarship recipients were always published in local newspapers. In 2011, however, the government fully changed the mechanism for scholarship distribution. The Ministry of Education formed a selection committee and began conducting interviews. In the screening process, academic achievements now account for 60% of the selection criteria while interviews account for the other 40%.¹⁷³ Some students alleged that the questions asked in the

166 <http://www.egyptianpeople.com/defaultnews/2014-09-02/237776#sthash.ABXIeDLf.dpbs>

167 <<التربية>> فتحت باب الترشح للعاطلين البحرينيين خلال فبراير ولم تعلن عن موعد الامتحان, Al-Wasat, April 15, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4603/news/read/981765/1.html>.

168 <<التربية>> تفتح باب التوظيف أمام مواطني <<الخليج>>, Al-Wasat, February 23, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4552/news/read/964299/1.html>.

169 "Bahraini medical centers and schools 'raided,'" Al Jazeera, April 26, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/04/2011426205632924276.html>.

170 مدرسة يثرب: إذاعة البحرين أججت الوضع في المدرسة, Al-Wasat, March 11, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/3108/news/read/531720/1.html>.

171 "Students paid the price of belonging to the majority sect and were targeted along with their teachers in a vengeance campaign pr [sic]," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, August 4, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://bahrainrights.org/en/node/4466>.

172 "Bahrain: Reinstate Ousted Students, Faculty," Human Rights Watch, September 24, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2011/09/24/bahrain-reinstate-ousted-students-faculty>.

173 <<مقابلات البعثات>> انتقادات طلابية تطل, Al-Wasat, July 7, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/3225/news/read/571265/1.html>.

interviews focused on their political and religious beliefs.¹⁷⁴ Many Shia students alleged that the scholarships were unjustly distributed. For example, in 2012 a Shia student ranked fifth in the nation was given her tenth choice of scholarship.¹⁷⁵

Following 2015's national scholarship distribution, Bahrainis took to Twitter to express their resentment and anger about the unfair distribution of scholarships. More than 12,000 tweets were posted under the "massacre of scholarships" hashtag, which criticized the Ministry of Education's discrimination toward Shia students in granting scholarships.¹⁷⁶ For example, one Shia student, who obtained a GPA of 99.1%, put medicine as her first choice but was provided a grant of only BHD400—which did not cover half her tuition fees. Another who earned a 99.1% GPA, wanted to study medicine but was given a scholarship to study nutrition. On the other hand, some students reported that their Sunni classmates with GPAs of 90% were given scholarships to study medicine.¹⁷⁷

The arrest and intimidation of Shia students, and their dismissal from their programs of study, causes immediate harm to their future job prospects. Coupled with the unequal distribution of scholarships and the prioritized hiring of teachers from Sunni-majority states, it is apparent that economic discrimination against the Shia majority in Bahrain begins in the classroom.

Government Programs

Housing

Inadequate access to housing remains one of the most prominent complaints of the Shia majority.¹⁷⁸ The housing crisis intricately ties to the larger problem of land distribution, an issue that has grown more contentious in recent years. Lower-income citizens of the kingdom rely on state-subsidized housing, which is plagued by delays in project implementation and accusations of government favoritism.¹⁷⁹ Citizens living in underprivileged areas often find themselves without houses, adequate sewage systems, and water supply.¹⁸⁰ Residents of poor suburbs and villages suffer from a general lack of proper infrastructure.¹⁸¹ A 2011 Gallup poll indicated that 41% of Bahrainis reported not having enough money to provide adequate shelter for their families over the preceding 12 months.¹⁸² In August 2015, the Ministry of Housing confirmed that it had roughly

174 "Discrimination in scholarship distribution," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, September 27, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/4680>.

175 «التربية» يدعو بالبعثات ومصدمون بالبعثات ويدعون «التربية» للإصاف Al-Wasat, July 24, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/3242/news/read/574006/1.html>; see also «أهلاً بكم في البحرين: ٨٩٪ تمنحك رغبتك السادسة لا غير! (٢٠١٢)» Bahrain Mirror, August 15, 2014, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://abbas-alsameea.no-ip.info/news/18007.html>.

176 <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23D9%85%D8%AC%D8%B2%D8%B1%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%AA&src=typd>

177 "Discrimination And Lack of Transparency in the Distribution of Scholarships in Bahrain," Bahrain Center for Human Rights, July 27, 2015, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/7584>.

178 Siperco, "Bahrain's Sectarian Challenge."

179 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, para. 63

180 Frederik Richter, "Bahraini Shi'ites feel neglect in government housing crunch," Reuters, October 13, 2010, accessed July 16, 2015, <http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/middle-east/129121/bahraini-shias-feel-neglect-in-housing-crunch->

181 Bassiouni, et. al., "Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry," Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, par. 63

182 Sarah Chayes and Matar Matar, "Bahrain's Shifting Sands," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 13, 2013, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2013/02/13/bahrain-s-shifting-sands>

53,000 outstanding housing requests.¹⁸³

In August 2015, the Ministry of Housing confirmed that it had roughly 53,000 outstanding housing requests.¹⁸⁴ For several years, the ministry has been developing thousands of housing units to meet this high demand. The government is addressing the problem, however, along sectarian lines, privileging mixed and majority-Sunni districts over majority Shia ones. Nowhere is this better seen than in the differential treatments afforded the populous Northern and Southern governorates. The Northern Governorate contains over 194,000 citizens,¹⁸⁵ the majority of whom are Shia, and has voted overwhelmingly for al-Wefaq and other opposition parties in parliamentary elections;¹⁸⁶ the Southern Governorate contains over 32,900 citizens,¹⁸⁷ is majority Sunni, and often votes in government-backed candidates during parliamentary elections.¹⁸⁸

In of 2012, the Ministry of Housing acknowledged that it had received 18,045 housing requests from the Northern Governorate and 3,779 from the Southern.¹⁸⁹ As of today, the Bahraini government has completed the construction 1,271 new units in the Southern Governorate, as opposed to 1,017 in the Northern.¹⁹⁰ Though the ministry has pledged to build 15,000 residential units in a planned “Northern City,” this project has not advanced since its conception in 2012.¹⁹¹

Shia face many obstacles in their attempts to acquire state-owned housing. When the government does complete new housing projects, these houses often go to foreign-born Sunnis while ordinary Bahrainis remain unassisted.¹⁹² Nabeel Rajab, founder of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights, asserts, “Most Shi’ites feel that their situation is caused by discrimination and because nationalised foreigners are taking up most of the housing projects.”¹⁹³ In towns like Riffa, the traditional home of the Al Khalifa family, Shia have difficulty renting and buying homes and purchasing land. Maryam al-Khawaja of the Gulf Center for Human Rights likens the housing situation of Shia living in Bahrain to that of apartheid.¹⁹⁴

This problem is not new. Some Shia citizens have reported waiting as long as 20 years to receive government housing.¹⁹⁵ Unemployed Shia sometimes have to wait ten or fifteen years longer than

183 “<<مسألة وقت>>” Al-Wasat, August 17, 2015, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4727/news/read/1017148/1.html>.

184 “<<مسألة وقت>>” Al-Wasat, August 17, 2015, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://www.alwasatnews.com/4727/news/read/1017148/1.html>.

185 “Population by Governorate, Nationality and Sex – 2010 Census,” Bahrain Central Informatics Organisation, accessed August 14, 2015, http://www.cio.gov.bh/cio_ara/English/Publications/Census/Population/2.pdf.

186 *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, 17-19.

187 “Population by Governorate, Nationality and Sex – 2010 Census,” Bahrain Central Informatics Organisation, accessed August 14, 2015, http://www.cio.gov.bh/cio_ara/English/Publications/Census/Population/2.pdf.

188 *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, 17-19.

189 “البحرين استقبلت 04 ألف طلب إسكاني خلال الـ 01 سنوات الماضية,” Al-Ayam, June 9, 2012, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.alayam.com/alayam/Parliament/170650/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AA-40-%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A8-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%80-10-%D8%B3%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A9.html>.

190 “Past Projects,” Ministry of Housing, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://www.housing.gov.bh/en/Projects/Pages/Old-Projects.aspx>.

191 “Future Projects,” Ministry of Housing, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://www.housing.gov.bh/en/Projects/Pages/Future-Projects.aspx>.

192 Richter, “Bahraini Shi’ites feel neglect in government housing crunch.”

193 Ibid.

194 Al-Khawaja, “Beneath Bahrain’s Shia-versus-Sunni narrative, only the tyrants benefit.”

195 Al-Khawaja, “Beneath Bahrain’s Shia-versus-Sunni narrative, only the tyrants benefit.”

foreign-born Sunnis employed in the security services to get housing.¹⁹⁶ The extreme wait time exasperates Shia who believe that the government gives priority in housing to Sunnis.¹⁹⁷

In 2014, Bahrain's parliament launched an investigation into the housing crisis. The investigation aimed to address the failure to implement criteria approved by the Cabinet in 2013 that would have eased restrictions on housing access.¹⁹⁸ In June 2015, Housing Minister Bassim bin Yaqoub al-Hamer stressed the ministry's "keenness" to provide adequate and affordable housing to all citizens, highlighting a policy that looked to satisfy all housing demands on waiting lists.¹⁹⁹ Whether or not the government will take concrete steps to address discrimination in housing, or the housing crisis more broadly, remains to be seen.

Social Welfare Programs

Though the government does offer welfare programs that provide financial assistance to families and individuals in need, extremely selective eligibility criteria prevent many Bahrainis from accessing these programs. The Ministry of Social Development recently established a "comprehensive program" that provides 50 million BD in assistance to eligible low income families. However, a strict definition of citizenship accompanied by many other restrictions on eligibility prevents many families from obtaining these benefits. The government continues to deny citizenship to hundreds of eligible persons on account of their sect. A 2008 study estimated that 2000 stateless families resided in Bahrain, many of whom were Shia families that legally qualified for Bahraini citizenship.²⁰⁰ Additionally, the government's revocation of citizenship as a tool to punish dissenting voices means that one of the most basic qualifications for government programs, citizenship, can easily be stripped from Shia.²⁰¹

Bahrainis widely view educational, social, and municipal services in Shia areas as inferior to those afforded to Sunni communities.²⁰² The poor living conditions in Shia villages help to fuel resentment by Shia who see foreign-born Sunnis receiving housing, healthcare, and other government benefits.²⁰³ Regardless of sect, all Bahraini citizens contribute to a national pension fund. A Carnegie Endowment report notes that the fund has been heavily criticized for making unwarranted investments in banks and businesses connected to the ruling family, writing off loans, and transferring assets to friends of the Al Khalifa family without proper compensation. Those who benefit from these transactions represent a small class of elites tied to the ruling family by religion or self-interest.²⁰⁴ The evidence demonstrates that few social programs operating in Bahrain provide Shia with equal benefits as other Bahrainis.

196 Siperco, "Bahrain's Sectarian Challenge."

197 Richter, "Bahraini Shi'ites feel neglect in government housing crunch."

198 "Bahrain's Housing Crisis to be Probed," Trade Arabia, February 26, 2014, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www.tradearabia.com/news/MISC_252831.html.

199 "Minister Highlights 'Social Housing' Projects," Bahrain News Agency, July 5, 2015, accessed July 14, 2015. <http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/676526>.

200 *Apart in Their Own Land*, Vol. I, 20.

201 *A Follow-Up Report on Bahrain's UPR Second Cycle*, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, January 2014, 52-53.

202 U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *2013 Report on International Religious Freedom*, 2014.

203 Richter, "Bahraini Shi'ites feel neglect in government housing crunch."

204 Chayes and Matar, "Bahrain's Shifting Sands."

Land Ownership and Commercial Restrictions

Land Reclamation Program

Over the last 30 years, Bahrain's physical makeup has undergone dramatic changes. Between 1987 and 2013, the total land mass of Bahrain grew from roughly 690 square kilometers to 760 square kilometers, according to World Bank statistics.²⁰⁵ These changes have come as a result of a burgeoning land reclamation program spearheaded by the Government of Bahrain that has modified as much as 80% of Bahrain's original coastline. As part of the process, contractors have dredged sand from the sea floor to be added to the Bahraini coast at public expense. Shia fishing communities have suffered reduced access to the coast, and the construction has degraded underwater wildlife habitats.²⁰⁶ Observers blame land reclamation for damaging the fishing industry and marine environment.²⁰⁷

In the last decade, Bahrain's fish stocks have dwindled by 80%, threatening a collapse of the fishing industry. Over just two years, between 2004 and 2005, Bahrain's fishing exports plunged by 90%, and the value of shrimp sales fell from \$11 million USD to \$95,000 USD.²⁰⁸ The Fishermen's Protection Society (FPS) claims that land reclamation has been a significant factor in the steep fall of the fishing industry, and has taken action against reclamation in the past. In 2009, the society called a week-long strike in protest of reclamation. The strike ended when Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman personally met with the FPS and pledged to follow up on its demands.²⁰⁹ A few months later, however, the FPS threatened legal action against contractors over dredging.²¹⁰

Land reclamation has most affected traditional Shia fishing villages, which have suffered reduced access to the sea after the building of palace complexes on the western coast. The Shia village of Shahrakan in the center-west of the Bahraini archipelago, for example, lost its traditional coastal fishing locations after the construction of the Safriyah palace complex directly between the village and the coast.

Despite protests against land reclamation by different sections of society, the government only appears to hear those made by traditional Sunni allies of the royal family. The residents of the predominantly Sunni town Zallaq led a partially successful protest movement in 2014 against an illegal reclamation project that would have privatized a public beach for luxury housing. The town has close ties to the royal family, and residents claim that King Hamad's father Emir Isa gifted them the al-Dosari majlis, a prominent local landmark.²¹¹

Zallaq citizens protested in late August 2014 that the public beach, in the past a 7-kilometer-long stretch used by fishermen and residents alike for their livelihood and recreation, had been

205 "Land area (sq. km)," The World Bank, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.TOTL.K2?page=5>.

206 Chayes and Matar, "Bahrain's Shifting Sands."

207 Basma Mohammed, "Reclamation Costs Bahrain Millions," Gulf Daily News, March 7, 2009, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=245058>

208 Elham Fakhro, "Land Reclamation in the Arabian Gulf: Security, Environment, and Legal Issues," *Journal of Arabian Studies: Arabia, the Gulf and the Red Sea* 3:1 (2013): 47.

209 Benjamin Millington, "Bahraini Fishermen End Strike," Arabian Business, February 28, 2009, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/bahraini-fishermen-end-strike-79674.html>.

210 Andy Sambidge, "Bahrain's Fishermen in legal threat over dredging," Arabian Business, March 5, 2009, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/bahrain-s-fishermen-in-legal-threat-over-dredging-65551.html#.Vlh3eDGsWLF>.

211 Raji Unnikrishnan, "Save our beach..!" Gulf Daily News, August 25, 2014, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/bahrain-s-fishermen-in-legal-threat-over-dredging-65551.html#.Vlh3eDGsWLF>

reduced to just 100 meters.²¹² Just a week after the protest, the government announced major changes in the planned Zallaq project, including plans for a one-kilometer stretch of public beach and a specialized harbor for fishermen. Despite these changes to the development plans, residents continue to express cynicism over the extent to which the beach can be public when private companies own portions of the one kilometer stretch.²¹³ The partial success of the Zallaq protests do not extend to Shia-led protests against reclamation, which have at times antagonized members of the government and royal family. The evidence appears to fit well within the pattern of preferential treatment shown towards loyalist Sunni areas in comparison to the general disregard of Shia-specific discontent.

Corruption in Land Reclamation

Anger over the control of national resources by networks connected to the ruling family provided fuel for the 2011 protests, and land remains a divisive issue in the country. The government has essentially given away millions of tons of sand to developers while an exploding population remains confined to less than half of Bahrain's land mass. Many have accused developers of profiteering by selling dredged land that they have acquired free of cost.²¹⁴ The enormous swath of properties owned by the ruling family, combined with international military facilities that are off-limits to ordinary Bahrainis, further contribute to the overcrowding and housing shortages experienced by the population at large.²¹⁵

Many claim that the government has unfairly distributed land that has been reclaimed over the past decades, especially the approximately 70 kilometers of new coastline.²¹⁶ The BICI report estimates that more than 90% of reclaimed land has been transferred to private hands, despite its potential to be used for public projects that benefit local communities. Some have pointed out that these lands could have been a solution to the acute housing crisis that Bahrain still faces.²¹⁷ The Shia opposition specifically cites the extensive property holdings of the Al Khalifa family, with references to its stakes in developments on newly reclaimed land on the northern coast, as an aggravation of the housing shortage.²¹⁸ Most of the new land instead becomes upscale residential areas and large private real estate projects.²¹⁹

The privatization of land typically follows a common procedure. The Land Registration Board, headed by a government-appointed director, re-registers lands to members of the ruling family, often changing the classification of the land in question to allow for new development purposes. The recipient then gifts the land to developers at a symbolic price in exchange for a share in the future venture.²²⁰ In March 2011, a report emerged showing that the Prime Minister of Bahrain had acquired prime reclaimed real estate for the price of one Bahraini dinar.²²¹

212 Raji Unnikrishnan, "More support for beach rally," Gulf Daily News, August 28, 2014, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=384748>

213 "\$9m beach project on track in Bahrain," Trade Arabia, September 3, 2014, accessed July 16, 2015, http://www.tradearabia.com/news/CONS_264848.html.

214 Mohammed, "Reclamation Costs Bahrain Millions."

215 Chayes and Matar, "Bahrain's Shifting Sands."

216 Kenneth Katzman, "Bahrain: Reform, Security, and U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, 2014: 21, 64.

217 Mohammed, "Reclamation Costs Bahrain Millions."

218 Richter, "Bahraini Shi'ites feel neglect in government housing crunch."

219 *BICI Report*, par. 64.

220 Chayes and Matar, "Bahrain's Shifting Sands."

221 Frederik Richter, "Special Report: In Bahrain, a symbol at the heart of revolt," Reuters, June 16, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/16/us-bahrain-gfh-idUSTRE75F4LF20110616>; see also "Bahrain: The One Dinar Protest," Global Voices, March 7, 2011, accessed August 14, 2015, <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2011/03/07/bahrain-the-one-dinar-protest/>.

Two reports on the land reclamation program estimate that 65 square kilometers of public land, valued at between 40 and 60 billion American dollars, have been transferred to private hands without proper payment to the public treasury since 2003.²²² An additional 100 square kilometers cannot be accounted for. Reports identify the prime minister himself as one of the top beneficiaries of these land exchanges.²²³ The land in question totals approximately one fourth of the land mass of Bahrain. The failure to fairly sell reclaimed lands likely caused the government to miss out on millions of dollars that could have been used to support the fishing industry, help solve the housing shortage, or contribute to financial assistance programs.²²⁴

Shia Lands and Businesses

Shia in Bahrain lack even basic control over their religious endowments. The Shia Endowment Authority (*Awqaf al-Jaffariya*) oversees the operation, management, maintenance, and development of all Shia endowments in the country, yet its actions have earned the disapproval of other Shia scholars. In fact, government officials choose the members of the council. The Minister of Justice himself has the power to appoint certain members.²²⁵

The Shia Endowment Authority has consistently faced problems with theft and embezzlement. Senior officials and appointees to the council tend to be the perpetrators of these offenses. A former head of the council has urged Shia scholars to rescue the organization, stating, “Do you believe that a ground that is 170 square meters has a monthly rent of only 375 fils, making the yearly rent 1 dinar and 670 fils (less than five dollars)?”²²⁶

Shia businesses have struggled disproportionately compared to their Sunni counterparts. In November 2013, certain Shia business owners made public complaints of not being able to rent outlets at a new shopping mall in Muharraq, a Sunni-dominated island.²²⁷ During 2011, shoppers boycotted stores owned by a Shia family company, including clothing stores, restaurants, cafes, and express shopping stores, on a sectarian basis. Groups of civilians armed and under the protection of the security forces attacked and looted such stores more than 60 times.²²⁸ One store owner claims to have reported the attacks and provided CCTV evidence to the authorities, but the authorities did not hold anyone accountable. Some of the video evidence appears to show police officers participating in the attacks and robberies.²²⁹

In April 2011, the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCCI) dismissed two out of the four Shia members of its board on allegations that they committed a “breach of [their] stature as [members] of the Chamber of Management, or offensive to the status or its reputation.”²³⁰ The board promptly replaced them with two Sunni members. The expelled Shia, as well as several

222 “خليل: توصيات ”برلمانية املاك الدولة“ لم تنفذ” Al-Wasat, November 16, 2013, accessed July 14, 2015. <http://www.alwasatnews.com/pdf/index.php?issue=4088&cat=fir>

223 Chayes and Matar, “Bahrain’s Shifting Sands.”

224 Mohammed, “Reclamation Costs Bahrain Millions.”

225 Kingdom of Bahrain Ministry of Justice & Islamic Affairs, Jaffaria Waqf Directorate, accessed July 16, 2015. http://www.jafwaqf.com/view.php?page=home_en.

226 “The Persecuted Shia Majority in Bahrain,” Salam Human Rights, December 11, 2014, accessed July 15, 2015. <http://bahrainsalam.org/?p=593>.

227 “مجمع تسوق في المحرق يميز بين المواطنين و يمنح بعضهم من استئجار محلات” Al-Wasat, November 4, 2013, accessed July 15, 2015.

228 “القبض على متهم بالاعتداء الأخير على أسواق ٤٢ في البسيتين الاعتداءات بالتخريب على ”مجموعة جواد التجارية“ تتواصل منذ ٩١ شهرا” Al-Wasat, September 18, 2012, accessed July 15, 2015.

229 “Continuation of the policy of impunity and the participation of security forces in the assaults on private property and funds,” Bahrain Center for Human Rights, May 8, 2012, accessed July 14, 2015, <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en/node/5247>.

230 Kareem Hamad, “مجلس ادارة الغرفة يقرر في جلسته امس: فصل حسين المهدي من رئاسة لجنة التدريب و كافة مناصبه,” Akhbar al-Khaleej, May 8, 2011, accessed July 15, 2015, <http://www.akhbar-alkhaleej.com/12098/article/441979.html>.

other businessmen, protested the decision and demanded reinstatement.²³¹ They eventually regained their positions in April 2012.²³² While evidence of discrimination in land management and business tends to be more anecdotal, Shia have disproportionately suffered its effects.

The Undue Impact of Labor Laws on Shia Employment

Economic discrimination against Bahraini Shia is sometimes the unintended result of codified law. The Labor Law of 2012 contains several provisions that produce such an undue impact on Shia. Article 2 stipulates that provisions of the law do not apply to employees of the government and public entities, whose conduct is governed by a separate law. Since Shia employment in government positions remains low, this means that in practice, separate laws often apply to Shia and Sunni workers. Article 20 of the Labor Law requires that employment contracts contain the material details of the parties to the contract, including “nationality and personal particulars of identification” and “other particulars to be determined by a resolution of the Minister.” This provision essentially allows employers to require workers to disclose sectarian affiliation. Article 177 additionally enables officers delegated by the Minister of Labor to access records related to workers and to seek the “necessary information” to undertake inspection duties.²³³

A separate law, Law 48 of 2010 Promulgating the Civil Service Law, applies to civilian employees in government entities. The provisions do not apply to security personnel in the BDF, the MOI, the National Guard, and the NSA, except for those agencies’ civilian employees. Article ten stipulates that appointments to senior positions and positions “construed as equivalent” shall be made by a decree or prime ministerial resolution; in other words, the prime minister controls sensitive appointments in the civil service. Article 11 goes on to require that appointees may not have been convicted of a criminal offense or received a custodial sentence for a dishonorable crime. Regardless of whether the prime minister would actually appoint Shia to positions of power, Shia tend to be the victims of security force abuses and would be much more likely to have been convicted of a criminal offense.²³⁴

Legislative decree number 41 of 2002, which addresses the Kingdom’s policies and guidelines related to privatization, carves out an additional sphere of economic influence for the government. Article 4 allows for the privatization of “certain tourist areas,” a provision that allows the government to privatize reclaimed coastal areas that Shia communities rely on for fishing. A separate provision allows the Council of Ministers to establish “a separate share to which some private rights shall be attached in order to protect the national interest, and this is in exemption from the general rules applicable to the companies.” These provisions enable the government to act with impunity in the privatization of lands with public-use purposes.²³⁵

231 Bahrain Mirror, July 4, 2012, accessed July 14, 2015.

232 Kareem Hamad, “الدعوى العالِيّ” و “الدعوى الاداريّة” الى مجلس الادارة, Akhbar al-Khaleej, April 9, 2012, accessed July 15, 2015.

233 Kingdom of Bahrain, Ministry of Labour, *The Labour Law for the Private Sector, Law No. 26 of 2012*. http://www.rrc.com.bh/media/141168/labour_law_2012_1_.pdf

234 Kingdom of Bahrain, Civil Service Bureau, *Law Decree No. 48 of 2010 Promulgating Civil Service Law*. <https://www.csb.gov.bh/en/civil-service-legislation/civil-service-law/law-48-20101.html>

235 Kingdom of Bahrain, *Legislative Decree No. 41 of 2002 With Respect to Policies and Guidelines of Privatization*. <http://policy.mofcom.gov.cn/english/flaw?fetch.action?id=c99f18ff-8037-4e4f-a4aa-ec77dc60ab19>

Conclusion

Shia in Bahrain continue to face systematic discrimination in the economic sphere. The Government of Bahrain has failed to adequately integrate the Shia community into the security services, and the continued employment of migrant and naturalized foreign-born Sunni citizens in the BDF and MOI has exacerbated tensions between the government and the Shia population. Meanwhile, students have faced prison time and lost study grants in response to their alleged political activities. The Shia community additionally does not have equal access to government-subsidized housing. Foreign-born Sunnis employed in the security services are granted housing much sooner than Shia Bahrainis, who sometimes have to wait up to 20 years to get housing. Anecdotes suggest that discriminatory policies persist in many Bahraini businesses and business associations, especially those owned or run by the government. Finally, laws governing employment practices leave loopholes for the government to act with impunity and unfairly scrutinize employees on the basis of sect.

Conclusion

Throughout both volumes of this report, ADHRB, BIRD, and BCHR have consistently drawn parallels between the Government of Bahrain's discrimination against Shia and a system of apartheid. This comparison has not been made lightly. A detailed analysis of the multiple, interlocking regimes of oppression affecting Bahrain's Shia population reveals that its members suffer from the political manifestation of deeply-rooted prejudice. Whereas religious faith should allow individuals to connect to communities from which they can draw strength and social support, in contemporary Bahrain, Shia belief has promised its practitioners a counterbalancing level of marginalization.

This marginalization has pervaded every aspect of Shia life in Bahrain. In their daily routines, Shia are consistently reminded of their insecure status as potential enemies from within. The media in Bahrain, both state-owned and state-influenced, compounds these two trends by frequently questioning the loyalty of Shia citizens. In the wake of 2011, television and print media have insinuated, and occasionally stated forthrightly, that Shia form a fifth column within Bahrain. Television anchors and newspaper columnists have purposefully employed sectarian language to present Shia as tools of Iran and "Safavid" aggression, and not as aggrieved citizens seeking greater inclusion and self-determination within their country of birth.

Culturally, the Government of Bahrain has oscillated between ignoring Shia contributions to Bahrain's history and actively seeking to antagonize Shia along sectarian lines. Government schools promote the Al Khalifa narrative while neglecting or even denigrating Shia history and religious practice, and Shia-specific educational options are unavailable to most Bahraini children and adolescents. Security forces heighten tensions and stir clashes with Shia mourners at public funerals. Public officials and private government supporters have utilized nomenclature to displace the islands' pre-1783 history.

In the economic sphere, the government refuses to fully integrate Shia into its expansive public sector. Public and private employers have dismissed Shia men and women for participating in peaceful political protest, a practice that has particularly impacted Bahrain's Shia teachers and students. Additionally, development policies have followed a crony capitalist model; land reclamation projects have benefited the ruling family and their supporters even as they have decimated the traditional fisheries that allow many Shia families to subsist.

Despite apartheid-mimicking policies designed to sow division within a multicultural and multi-faith society, Shia and Sunnis within Bahrain have repeatedly rejected these governmental tactics. Although the discriminatory practices outlined in Volumes I and II of *Apart in Their Own Land* greatly impact Shia communities, their negative effects are disproportionate, not absolute. Many Sunnis suffer the ramifications of land reclamation alongside their Shia neighbors, and disadvantaged Sunnis can hardly reap the benefits of unequal political representation when their politicians are more responsive to the wants of ruling family members than to needs of their local communities.

A full accounting of sect-based discrimination in Bahrain cannot, and must not, end with a call for retrenchment and further separation, or for solutions that only serve one side. Anti-Shia discrimination will not end until equality reigns, a difficult but worthy effort that only King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa can set in motion.

Recommendations

In light of the above findings, we make the following recommendations, several of which mirror reforms put forward at the end of Vol. I:

To the Government of Bahrain:

1. Remove economic barriers that negatively impact employment and wealth accrual within Shia communities:

- a. Cease the active importation of foreign labor to fill positions within the teaching and civil defense professions;
- b. Temporarily halt all coastal land reclamation projects and work to ameliorate their damaging ramifications by rehabilitating fisheries, expanding public beaches, and removing control of the reclamation process from the oversight of the royal family;
- c. Integrate Shia in the nation's security forces so that they are represented proportionally;
- d. Reinststate the Bahrain Teachers Association and ensure that all teachers and students are protected from violence while on school grounds;
- e. Ensure the extension of social welfare benefits to stateless families;
- f. Prosecute real estate owners that refuse to lease retail space to Shia businesses;
- g. Reform provisions contained within the Labor Law, the Civil Service Law, and Legislative Decree No. 41 that instigate undue economic impact against Shia communities.

2. Reconcile Shia heritage within the larger Bahraini cultural and historical tradition:

- a. Permit local communities to democratically determine the names of neighborhoods and cultural sites;
- b. Reform textbooks and curricula so that they discuss, in a neutral but inclusive manner, Shia jurisprudence and the significance of Shia historical figures, both religious and political;
- c. Accelerate the reconstruction of Shia mosques destroyed in reaction to the 2011 protest movements;
- d. Adopt a non-interference policy toward public Shia funeral processions, and prevent attendant security personnel from wielding arms at these commemorations;
- e. Direct the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities to promote awareness of, and organize tours to, heritage sites significant to the Shia community.

3. End sectarian coverage of Shia protesters and opposition groups within broadcast and print media:

- a. Direct Bahrain Television and the state information services to pull openly-discriminatory shows such as *Al-Rased* and *Hiwar Maftouh* from the air;
- b. Protect the development of an open and independent media, and refrain from sanctioning *Al-Wasat* or any other private media outlets that are not explicitly loyal to the government;

- c. Prevent the use of disparaging sectarian terminology, such as “*Safawi*,” on state-sponsored broadcast and print outlets;
- d. Allot equal airtime to the broadcasting of Shia and Sunni sermons and religious ceremonies;
- e. Cease cultivating contacts with social media users who engage in hardline sectarian rhetoric.

To the United Nations:

- 1. Pressure the Government of Bahrain to end discriminatory policies against the Shia community:**
 - a. Consider passing a resolution at the United Nations Human Rights Council condemning the human right situation in Bahrain and specifically noting the government discrimination against Shia;
 - b. Examine in a report the consequences of government disclusion on extremism, and consider using Bahrain as a case study in such a report;
 - c. Incorporate the subject of discrimination against the Shia into the next country visit by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and include an examination of the subject into any permanent mandate.
- 2. Facilitate the missions of the Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council:**
 - a. Encourage the Special Rapporteur on religious freedom and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous persons to request access to Bahrain;
 - b. Encourage the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, to request access to Bahrain;
 - c. Encourage the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights to request access to Bahrain;
 - d. Request that the Government of Bahrain issue a standing invitation to all Special Procedures wishing to visit the country.
- 3. Consider amending the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid* to allow it to apply to extremely discriminatory situations of a non-racial character, including situations in which persons face apartheid-like conditions on account of their religion or faith.**

To the International Community, including the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States:

1. **Pressure the Government of Bahrain to end its campaign of discrimination against the Shia population by instituting measures against Bahrain similar to those that ended apartheid in South Africa:**
 - a. Place an embargo on the Bahraini purchase of any and all weapons, including both military-grade weapons and non-lethal weapons purposed towards riot-control;
 - b. Institute trade sanctions against Bahrain specifically targeting high-end luxury goods generally consumed by elite government officials and the ruling family;
 - c. Demand the release of all Shia political prisoners;
 - d. Consider hosting multilateral talks between the Bahraini government and the Shia majority with the goal of creating a permanent and inclusive solution;
2. **Cease any and all military training programs provided to the Kingdom of Bahrain until such time as the Bahraini military fully integrates the Shia population;**
3. **Consider passing a resolution condemning the Bahraini campaign against its Shia population in the United Nations General Assembly, the European Parliament, the US Congress, and the European Parliament;**
4. **Broaden policy on Bahrain to include bilateral and multilateral approaches to human rights issues and discrimination against specific populations within Bahrain;**
5. **Provide assistance with training programs to the Bahraini government on best practices to ensure the Shia population is included in government jobs and other areas where the Shia population is not fully represented;**
6. **Include analysis on the subject of Shia discrimination in any human rights reports released in 2015, including the United States Department of State Human Rights Report and the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth Office Report; and**
7. **Consider amending the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid to allow it to apply to extremely discriminatory situations of a non-racial character, including situations in which persons face apartheid-like conditions on account of their religion or faith.**



Americans for Democracy
& Human Rights in Bahrain

