

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 244/03 (MDE 11/003/2003, 15 August 2003) Ill treatment/health concern

BAHRAIN

Over 200 prisoners at Jaw Prison

The Bahraini authorities have informed Amnesty International that the hunger strike involving more than 200 prisoners at Jaw Prison, southern Bahrain is now over. The prisoners called off the hunger strike after negotiations involving the Interior Ministry, human rights groups and members of the parliament. It is not known whether any prisoners have received medical treatment following the hunger strike.

According to local human rights groups, some 200 prisoners reportedly occupied Camp Number Four at the prison and began a hunger strike around 5 August in protest at their ill-treatment and lack of access to lawyers and human rights organizations. However, the authorities have told Amnesty International that disturbances began after a prisoner assaulted a guard when he was refused access to unauthorized visitors.

The Bahraini authorities also wrote to Amnesty International about a previous hunger strike earlier this year, which allegedly led to the death of one hunger striker, Yasser Makki. The authorities claimed that an investigation into his death had concluded that it was natural and caused by a blood disease. Human rights groups allege that Yasser Makki died in detention as a result of being denied access to medical treatment for his deteriorating health. However, the authorities state that he was being treated in al-Salmaniya hospital in the capital Manama at the time of his death.

Many thanks to all who sent appeals. Amnesty International will continue to monitor this case. If possible, please send a final round of appeals, in Arabic or your own language:

- welcoming reports that the hunger strike by over 200 prisoners at Jaw Prison has been resolved;
- urging the authorities to ensure prisoners needing medical treatment following the hunger strike are granted access to adequate medical treatment immediately;
- calling on the authorities to ensure all prisoners access to relatives and lawyers when required;
- calling for an immediate, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into allegations of ill-treatment at the prison, with the results to be made public and anyone found to be responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
P.O. Box 1000, Manama, Bahrain

Telegram: Prime Minister, al-Manama, Bahrain

Telex: 9336 PROM BN or 7889 PMPO BN

Fax: + 973 533033

Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Shaikh Muhammad Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa
Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
P.O. Box 13, Manama, Bahrain

Telegrams: Minister of Interior, al-Manama, Bahrain

Telexes: 9572 PSMKT BN or 8333 ALAMAN BN

Faxes: + 973 276765 or 290526

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

His Highness Shaikh Hamad bin 'Issa Al Khalifa
Office of His Highness the Amir
P. O. Box 555
The Amiri Court, Rifa'a Palace, Bahrain

and to diplomatic representatives of Bahrain accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.