

BAHRAIN

Report of the Trial Monitor in the Ma'ameer and Adary Park Cases, Bahrain, 2010

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Manama, Bahrain: Bahraini women protesting against the government.

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Preface

The IHRC sent Abed Choudhury to monitor the verdict hearing of ten Bahraini men, from the village of Ma'ameer, charged with the murder of a migrant worker. The hearing was held on 5th July 2010. On a previous visit he had visited the village of Ma'ameer to collect information on the treatment of the ten men in prison¹. He also observed trial proceedings of four Bahraini men charged with arson attacks in Adary Park, Manama.

This is a report of his observations and conclusions, as well as his observations pertaining to a visit to the village of Ma'ameer.

Introduction

During my last visit to Bahrain, in October 2009, I had observed the verdict hearing of 19 men charged with the murder of a police officer. All 19 men were found innocent. The verdict was historic in that the judge acknowledged the extensive use of torture in that case and found that the confessions were unsound as a result. This was an unprecedented finding on the part of a senior judge especially one who has strong family ties with the ruling family of Bahrain.

The initial excitement amongst Bahraini human rights / political activists about the possibilities this judgment opened Bahrain up to, was soon quashed. On 28th March 2010, the Supreme Appeal Court overturned the judgment of the lower court and sentenced the 19 men to 3 years in jail each. The appeal court refused to recognise the use of torture against the 19 men and stated that there were other explanations for the bruises and wounds documented by doctors.

The Bahraini regime continues to arrest and detain actual as well as alleged protestors and political opposition members (one such case is the Adary Park case discussed below). Detainees continue to allege mistreatment at the hands of the police as well as the use of torture before being forced to make a confession.

At the time of writing this report, Dr Abdul Jalil Singace, the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the Haq Movement, was under arrest on national security grounds which included projecting a negative image of the government abroad. Dr Singace was arrested on 13th August 2010, at Manama Airport as he returned from the UK after visiting family and taking part in various human rights seminars/meetings including a meeting held at the House of Lords. His lawyer has yet to make contact with him at the time this was written².

Adary Park Case

The Bahraini Grand Prix was held on April 12-14 2010. During this period large numbers of protestors burnt tyre stacks so that the dark clouds of smoke would attract the attention of the visitors and the international media present on the island. One of those protests took place in Adary Park, which is a short distance from the Formula 1 circuit. On the night of 14th April a large stack of tyres was set on fire in Adary Park. No one was hurt by the fire.

Though no one was seen or caught in or around Adary Park at the time of the fire, the police arrested four young men whom they accused of setting fire to the tyres. Three of the men were arrested in their homes while the fourth was arrested at a hospital where he was being treated for burns to his hands and arms. A fifth man was charged with providing false information to the police. All five men were brought before a special court set up to hear political cases.

On 4th July 2010 all five men were brought before a judge in Manama. It was the second hearing in the case. There were two aspects of the case that raise serious concerns i.e. the processing and the treatment of the suspects.

Processing

- At the time of the arrest, the suspects were not allowed to see or instruct a lawyer for periods ranging from 3-6 weeks.
- Family members were not told which police station the suspects were held in and given incorrect information forcing them to go from one police station to the next to make enquiries about the suspects.
- The special court was set up to deal with cases in minimal time. In the Adary Park case the 4th July hearing was the second hearing during which the defence lawyers were expected to make their submissions in writing after which the judge would withdraw to deliberate. This, despite the fact that the defence lawyer had received all the relevant documents from the court only four days before the hearing (two of those days are when most offices are closed).
- One of the suspects was under the age of 18 at the time of his arrest yet he was being tried as an adult.

Treatment of suspects

- Two of the suspects suffered from sickle cell disease. A third suspect had burns to his hands and arms. The conditions in the prison were exacerbating their ill health, but they all reported that they had not received any medical attention. One of the suspects, Qasim, reported that at the time of the hearing he had been denied his medication for treating his sickle cell disease for over a week.

At the hearing the Judge entered the court room along with his advisors and the Public Prosecutor. The defence lawyer, Mohammed Al-Tajer, made his submissions. He argued that he had not been given sufficient time as the papers had arrived only four days before. He also argued that key evidence was missing from the file he received from the court and he wanted this evidence to be made available to him before he made his submissions. With regards to the suspects' detention, he asked the Judge that he should consider granting the five men bail or moving them to prisons with better conditions as the prison conditions were aggravating the poor health of the suspects.

The Judge then retreated to his chambers followed by the Public Prosecutor. I was later informed by the defence lawyer that the Judge refused to grant bail or allow the suspects to be transferred to another prison. He did agree to the defence demands for important evidence to be made available before they made their submissions.

Suspect case study- Sayed Al-Noiami

Sayed visited Skheer Park with a group of friends- Skheer Park is a popular destination for Bahraini campers.

The group had lit a camp fire during their stay at Skheer Park. During the evening Sayed tripped and fell into the fire. He was fortunate as his hands and arms fell into the fire first so he was able to push himself out of the fire quickly. Most of the burns were across his hands and arms. He was taken by his friend, Qasim (the fifth suspect charged with providing false information), to the nearest hospital.

The police visited the hospital on the first day of his stay at the hospital. They were looking for people with burns. They questioned Sayed, insisting that he speak to them without a lawyer present.

Sayed was kept under observation by the police throughout his stay at the hospital. As soon as Sayed was discharged the police arrested him.

The police made no attempt to investigate Sayed's version of events to explain his burns. He never confessed to being at Adary Park. Nor is there any evidence linking Sayed to Adary Park on 14th April 2010. He is not linked to the other three suspects accused of the arson attack. But the three have "confessed" that Sayed was present during the attack. All three have subsequently stated that these confessions were extracted by force.

It seems Sayed is being charged based on the fact that he has burns on his hands and arms and the burns were sustained around the same time as the Adary Park protests.

Meeting with Public Prosecutor

Pete Weatherby (Bar Human Rights Committee) and I attended a meeting with Nuaf Hamza, Head of Prosecution, in Manama on 4 July 2010.

Mr. Hamza was asked to explain how judges are appointed. Mr. Hamza explained that the judges are drawn from amongst lawyers and public prosecutors. They are chosen by a judicial council (which is made up of judges and public prosecutors) who then make recommendations to the King. The King makes the appointment based on their recommendation. He has the power to reject their recommendation but in practice he does not do so.

Mr. Hamza was then asked whether Public Prosecutors can approach a judge privately to discuss a case without the presence of the defence lawyer. He stated that a Public Prosecutor can never discuss a case in private with a judge before or after a court hearing.

Mr. Hamza was asked about what would happen if a suspect was unable to afford a lawyer to represent him in a case. He explained that where a person is suspected of / charged with a crime that carries a penalty of three years in jail or more and the individual is unable to afford a lawyer, the state appoints and pays for a lawyer for him. This is not the case for crimes that carry a penalty for less than three years.

Mr. Weatherby asked how independent Public Prosecutors were from the judicial service. At this stage Mr. Hamza apologized as he was unable to fully understand or explain the issues being discussed as he felt his English was too basic. He felt it was better if we made a written request for a meeting so these matters could be discussed with somebody more proficient in English. No subsequent meeting was arranged.

Impressions of meeting

Mr. Hamza, contrary to his last statement, seemed to understand our questions and concerns very well. It seems Mr. Hamza felt the questions were heading in a direction that he was not very comfortable with. In all fairness to Mr. Hamza the meeting was not pre-arranged and we turned up at his office unannounced to discuss these issues.

Mr. Hamza presented a professional and modern public prosecutors' office. He understood the need for independence of the public prosecutors' office as well as financial assistance for suspects who could not afford a lawyer.

But his answers hid the reality. Prosecutors are, based on observations and statements from defence lawyers, intimately linked with the judges they work with. They make private submissions to judges and enter and leave the court room with the judge and his entourage.

Though financial assistance is available to suspects who could not afford to pay for a lawyer, Mr. Hamza failed to mention the fact that it is a one off payment that was so small, most lawyers went out of their way to avoid taking on such clients as there was no profit to be made. A case could drag on for months or even years that the sum paid out would barely cover the lawyer's admin fees let alone court attendance/ research/ submissions and other costs. Most lawyers defending political activists/ protestors worked pro bono as it was not worth making the application (like in the Adary Park and Ma'ameer cases).

Ma'ameer

I initially visited Ma'ameer in October 2009. I decided to visit the village again on 4th July 2010, the day before the Ma'ameer trial. During this visit the environmental conditions in and around the village were brought to my attention. Though such matters are beyond the scope of this report, I wish to give a short description of what I observed.

Ma'ameer is a small village on the main island in Bahrain, right next to the sea. The village is cut off from the rest of Bahrain by a major highway to its north, the sea to its east and is surrounded by heavy industry in the south and west.

The heavy industries based in and around Ma'ameer have led to a decrease in the quality of life enjoyed by the people of Ma'ameer. Residents have for years blamed pollution from nearby factories for cases of cancer, miscarriages, and breathing (asthma) and skin problems. The pollution from the factories has seeped into the water and has left the water surrounding Ma'ameer polluted and dead. Where once people made a decent living from fishing in these waters, today there is no life to be found.

The major culprit is thought to be the oil refinery based to the east of Ma'ameer, across the sea on the island of Sitrah. The refinery is run by the state owned company BAPCO. The fumes and smell the oil refinery gives off has had a negative impact on the day to day lives of its neighbours. Residents of Ma'ameer report that in 2005 a gas leak had a severe impact on the locals. People complained for several days of severe skin rashes. Four cases of miscarriage and around 50 cases of suffocation, burns and vomiting were also attributed to the gas leak.

In February 2010 there was a second incident in which mysterious fumes enveloped much of Bahrain. Several areas were affected by the fumes including Ma'ameer. Ma'ameer residents claimed BAPCO was to blame for the overwhelming stench. People locked themselves in their homes, fearing suffocation. Four residents of Ma'ameer nearly suffocated and had to be rushed to hospital.

The BAPCO refinery is not the only culprit involved, but is one of the most prolific polluters in the area. The other factories are situated around the village in close proximity to the residents' homes and schools. The noise, dust and smells given off by these industries have added and exacerbated the situation.

There have been calls for the residents to be relocated. The residents find this an unacceptable proposition and are demanding that the factories be relocated further away from residential homes. The families trace their roots to the area to 200 years back when they were originally forced out of their homes in the north of Bahrain and forced to relocate in Ma'ameer. They argue that the factories, as newcomers, should never have been built so close to residential homes and so should be forced to go elsewhere. Though they accept the refinery cannot be relocated due to its size, it must be made to invest in combating the effects of the pollution the refinery creates.

The government and BAPCO have done little to acknowledge the existence of a serious problem or to assist the people of Ma'ameer overcome the problems they are facing.

Ma'ameer trial

The Ma'ameer verdict hearing was held on 5th July 2010. It was heard by the same judge who heard the Karzakan case in October 2009³.

As I entered the court building I observed a group of 80-100 people who had turned up to show their support for the Ma'ameer suspects. There were a large number of security officers outside the court building as well as outside the courtroom. Inside the courtroom I observed up to 30 male and female security officers. The room filled up quickly with lawyers, journalists as well as family members of the Ma'ameer suspects.

The 7 suspects who were detained entered the courtroom (two were free on bail and were present in the courtroom and a third had absconded for fear of being arrested and tortured). The 7 detained suspects appeared more subdued than the suspects of the Karzakan case when they had entered the same courtroom back in October 2009. The seven men spoke to their lawyers who later informed me that the reason they were quiet was that as they had left for the court building earlier that morning, they were informed by the security officers accompanying them that they would be transferred to a prison straight after the hearing. The implication being that the men knew they would be found guilty before they had even set off for the court to hear the verdict.

The Judge entered the courtroom followed by his advisors as well as the Public Prosecutor. The verdict was a short affair; he read out the names of the suspects and declared whether they were innocent or not. The two on bail and the suspect who had absconded were found innocent, the remaining seven were found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.

At this point the Judge got up and left and the courtroom exploded with shouts and screams. The family members of the 7 detainees started crying and trying to make their way over them to hug them. They were being stopped by security officers. The detainees themselves were all shouting. The security officers managed to drag away 5 of them using force. 2 of the detainees seemed particularly agitated and were shouting, jumping and refusing to be pushed away by the security officers. One of them, who I later found out was Jassim Hasan, was pushed against the wall by up to 5 or 6 officers and beaten with fists and batons until he stopped resisting. At which point he was dragged out of the room.

At this point my attention turned to the family members within the courtroom. The security officers were using considerable force to push them out of the courtroom. The sister of one of the convicted men was arguing with the female security officers. I was later informed by her brother that as I left the courtroom she was beaten by the female officers. As I left the court building I observed her in the courtyard of the court building, she had fainted and was being attended to by female relatives. I was later informed by her brother that though she had sustained bruising and had fainted there was no serious or permanent damage.

As I stepped out of the courtroom the situation became more volatile. A large number of security officers as well as police officers had gathered and some were brandishing their batons. There was a large crowd outside the courtroom- I was unable to distinguish between family members of the Ma'ameer detainees and the lawyers and journalists in the crowd. One of the fathers of the detainees, Ali Sarhan, started to shout at the police/security officers. He then walked away. As he was walking away a senior police officer, whom I later came to know as Captain Isa Al-Qattan, ordered that he be arrested. A group of police officers ran after him and dragged him to the floor and started to beat him. People from the crowd came forward, I assume to assist him, but the crowd was pushed back by police officers brandishing their batons.



Protestors outside the court building



Security outside the court building

At this stage I heard a loud bang, I was later told by Mohammed Jawed, who was part of the group gathered outside the court building, that the noise was police officers firing tear gas to disperse the crowd outside the court building. At the same time around 15 police officers in riot gear, carrying shields and various types of weapons including tear gas, shot guns and batons run up and stood in front of where Ali Sarhan was pinned to the ground. The riot police then slowly moved forward pushing people away. I observed that Ali Sarhan was arrested by the police officers and was able to walk away with them.

Impressions of events

The use of force in the courtroom and outside was heavy handed. Inside the courtroom, they had used far more force than necessary to subdue the detainees. The attack on a female relative was also excessive as she was agitated but not a serious threat to security. The attack on Ali Sarhan was a shocking incident to observe. To see an elderly man dragged to the floor and beaten while other police officers threatened and pushed the crowd back was frightening. He had not resisted arrest and so such force was unnecessary. Though I am unsure as to why they had fired tear gas at the crowd outside, all the reports I received indicated that there was no violence or threats from the crowd, yet the police felt the need to use tear gas to disperse the crowd. It seems the authorities had not done any risk assessment in terms of how things were organized yet they resorted to heavy handed violence as soon as they felt slightly uncomfortable with the reaction of family members and supporters.

Ministry Of Interior meeting

On 5th July 2010 Pete Weatherby and I met with representatives of the Ministry of the Interior. Present at the meeting were Col. Brig. Tarek Bin Danieh, Undersecretary to the Minister of the Interior; Naji Al-Hashel, General Manager of Manama Security; Col. Mohammed Bu-Hammoud, Assistant Undersecretary for Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Interior and Captain Isa Al-Qattan, the senior police officer who had ordered the arrest of Ali Sarhan earlier that day.

Firstly we discussed the relationship between the Public Prosecutors and the judges. Does the Public Prosecutor get to see the judge on his own and talk to him in private? All four stated unequivocally that the Public Prosecutor does not spend any time alone with the judge. It was pointed out to them that we observed the Public Prosecutor enter the courtroom with the Judge in the Ma'ameer case earlier that morning. Col. Mohammed Bu-Hammoud answered this point as he had been a Public Prosecutor for 18 years. The reason was because of security concerns - it is not safe for a Public Prosecutor to enter the courtroom via the public entrance as he may be placed in danger. Col. Bu-Hammoud stated that the Public Prosecutor goes to the floor above the courtroom and takes a staircase which winds itself down to where the Judge's office is. He then lets the Judge know that he has arrived and that it is time to go to the courtroom after which he follows the Judge into the courtroom. Bu-Hammoud was adamant that the Public Prosecutor does not discuss anything with the judge when he comes down the staircase to meet the judge and does not discuss a case privately with the judge before or after the court hearing. He went further and stated that in all his time as a Public Prosecutor he never discussed a case with a judge outside the court room.

The discussion then turned to the appointment of judges in Bahrain. The answers we received were extremely confusing but the basic substance of what was said was that a candidate needed a BA (undergraduate degree) in Law. A prospective candidate may join as a court admin staff and slowly learn the job by observing judges and later appointed as a judge. Also lawyers/Public Prosecutors may apply to become a judge.

When asked why there were so many foreign judges in Bahrain, Col. Brig. Bin Danieh said there were two main reasons: Egyptian judges are more qualified and more experienced than Bahraini judges; there were not enough qualified Bahrainis to fill all the judicial posts in Bahrain.

The focus then moved to the rules relating to questioning suspects when they are arrested and detained by police officers. They explained:

- A suspect has to be told why he has been arrested and detained;
- An officer will speak to him in the police station. The police may ask some questions but it must not be an investigation as that is the Public Prosecutor's job;
- The police can only arrest a person if they see a crime taking place or if they have an arrest warrant from the Public Prosecutor's office;
- A suspect will be told that he has the right to see a lawyer, the right to silence and the right to make a call at the time of his arrest;
- A suspect has the right to see a lawyer at any time during his arrest;
- A suspect will be asked to give a statement of what happened, this may be in writing or orally.

Mr. Weatherby spoke about the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and how that introduced the use of recorded interviews during the arrest and detention period in the UK. All four stated that this was never done in Bahrain except in very important cases as they needed the permission of the Public Prosecutor's office before they could record an interview. Without the Public Prosecutor's permission it is not admissible as evidence.

When it was explained that the reason it was introduced in the UK was to protect the suspects from being mistreated and it also stopped the police from being falsely accused of mistreatment, their response changed. At this stage Col. Bu-Hammoud stated that they do record interviews to protect police officers from being falsely accused. Captain Isa Al-Qattan stated that such tapes had been used very recently to prove that accusations of mistreatment were false- he himself had conducted the interview in question. The Minister for Interior does want to introduce audio and video recorded interviews in the police station to protect police officers from accusations of mistreatment. They are planning to introduce them into Manama police station very soon. It was pointed out to us, however, that even with a recording, only a confession before a Public Prosecutor is admissible as evidence- anything said before the police is just a statement. They all agreed that recording interviews are a good idea as it protects officers from accusations of mistreatment and they only accepted that it also protects suspects from torture and mistreatment when it was pointed out that this was also one of the benefits of recording interviews.

Ma'ameer

We then asked about the Ma'ameer case. We pointed out that those convicted earlier that day all claimed they had been tortured and mistreated. Col. Brig. Bin Danieh replied that in 99% of cases people claimed mistreatment especially crimes that had a political dimension to them. People make these claims to further attack and undermine the Bahraini regime. When asked if he was concerned by the claims made in the Ma'ameer case, he replied that he did not have any concerns about the Ma'ameer case.

Col. Brig. Bin Danieh then asked us if people would be allowed to demonstrate outside UK courts similar to the way people had done so outside the Manama court earlier that day. We replied that there would be some restrictions imposed. Col. Brig. Bin Danieh said they nonetheless had allowed these people the opportunity to demonstrate. We responded by saying that the response to the demonstrators was heavy handed but they all disagreed. We gave the example of how one of the Ma'ameer detainees had been physically manhandled in the courtroom earlier that day. Captain Al-Qattan said that the detainees had been repeatedly asked not to get violent. He claimed that the security officers had tried to reason with them but they lashed out at them so they had to use force to restrain them. We raised the issue of Ali Sarhan (father of one of the Ma'ameer detainee) who had been forced to the floor and dragged along before being beaten by officers in front of us. Captain Al-Qattan stated that he had given the instructions for the arrest as Ali Sarhan had used profanity against one of the officers which is a criminal offence. The reason force was used, according to Captain Al-Qattan, was because Ali Sarhan had resisted the arrest. He then went on to say that he understood Ali Sarhan had spoken this way as he was upset by the sentencing of his son and would be released later that day (I can report that Ali Sarhan was released later that same day).

We persisted with our questions about the issue of torture. Mr. Weatherby stated that he was worried by the consistency in the claims being made by all the detainees for example all of them stated that there had been a long delay before they were allowed to see a lawyer. Col. Brig. Bin Danieh stated that these claims needed to be verified and could only be done by a Public Prosecutor. He stated that in most political cases a large number of lawyers turned up to assist the suspects. The lawyers made these claims as it raised the profile of the case and gave the lawyers publicity. He admitted that there is a consistency in what these defence lawyers were saying, but that was because it was the same lawyers using the same tactics to get publicity for themselves.

At this stage we presented a picture of one of the Ma'ameer detainees showing bruises to his face. We had been informed by his family that the bruises were the result of torture and mistreatment while in detention. The picture was passed around and all of them stated that the picture cannot be real. Captain Al-Qattan's first reaction was: "I swear to God this never happened in Bahrain".

It was pointed out to us that the picture could not be real as lawyers and relatives are not allowed to take cameras / camera phones into visits with detainees at the police station. Col. Bu-Hammoud also stated that these had no real value as evidence as they were "pictures". Captain Al-Qattan stated the pictures looked like they had been 'photoshopped' (they all found this amusing and seemed to agree that it could not be real). *Captain Al-Qattan stated that had he wanted to torture someone he would have done it in a way that would not have left any marks and not in a way that left visible marks like in the picture which to him appeared almost amateurish.* Col. Bu-Hammoud stated that even if a confession had been obtained by the police under torture, as claimed in the Ma'ameer case, this would be inadmissible as only confessions made before the Public Prosecutor are admissible as evidence. Col. Brig. Bin Danieh gave the example of the recent Human Rights Watch (HRW) report on torture in Bahrain. He stated that all the cases in the report claimed that torture had been used yet they had not presented any evidence to confirm this.

At this stage Col. Brig. Bin Danieħ asked if we wanted to see a video relating to the Ma'ameer case and we agreed. The film showed rioting taking place. We asked if this was Ma'ameer and were told no these were just examples of rioting in Bahrain. One segment showed a police car being attacked and set on fire. Col. Brig. Bin Danieħ pointed at an individual and said: "That is Singace" (I assumed that was a reference to Dr Abdul Jalil Singace⁴). They then paused the tape when a picture of a burnt car came on the screen. Col. Brig. Bin Danieħ explained that this was the car in which Mohammed Riaz was attacked in Ma'ameer. When asked if he had video evidence of the actual attack against Riaz, Col. Brig. Bin Danieħ replied that he only had the video of the burnt out car. He then decided not to show us the rest of the tape showing the burnt car as he felt it would be "unethical".

Impressions of meeting

I left that meeting with a feeling that I had been plunged into a Kafkaesque paradigm; one where what I heard from the Ministry representatives did not match the reality I had observed in Bahrain.

The four men seemed to know exactly what to say to quash any doubts we may have had about the Bahraini regime. They described a police force that was modern and understood what due process was and what rights a suspect should be entitled to. They presented a judicial system that was fair and impartial and their portrayal of the Public Prosecutor's office showed it to be modern, independent and well aware of how to protect individuals from torture and mistreatment. In short, the four men were well trained in the art of public relations and understood the language of human and civil rights.

But their words left me with a deep sense of unease. Captain Al-Qattan's words that had he wanted to torture someone he would have used a method that did not leave marks was disturbing. To hear such a menacing statement from a senior police officer was extremely worrying.

Their description of the arrest procedure did not match the reality reported by large numbers of individuals. They stated that suspects were told they could see lawyers as soon as they were arrested. Yet defence lawyers and suspects reported that it could be up to six weeks before a suspect had the chance to speak to a lawyer.

Their response to the allegations of torture as well as the picture we showed them sent alarm bells ringing in my mind. They refused to acknowledge the abuse and went as far as to mock the allegations as a way of dismissing their legitimacy. One would think they would have a more substantial response to such serious allegations; instead all they presented was a refusal to acknowledge the torture, and derision.

Concluding thoughts

Bahrain has come a long way in the last ten years. It has signed nearly all the important international human rights treaties. Yet the evidence on the ground is little regard is paid to those treaties by the authorities.

To move forward the IHRC calls on the Bahraini government to investigate claims of torture seriously. The attitudes displayed by senior Ministry of Interior figures showed a reckless almost malevolent and spiteful attitude towards suspects and lawyers that alleged torture.

With the above in mind, we also call on better training to be provided to police officers to avoid the use of torture as well as stronger sanctions imposed on those found guilty of the use of torture. Bahrain must rid itself of the culture of torture that is systemic in its criminal justice system / police force.

Notes

¹ A. Choudhury, *Report of the Trial Monitor in the Karzakan and Ma'ameer Cases Bahrain, 2009* (Islamic Human Rights Commission , 2009)/
[http://www.ihrc.org.uk/attachments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL2\(2\).pdf](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/attachments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL2(2).pdf)

² 22nd August 2010

³ A. Choudhury, *Report of the Trial Monitor in the Karzakan and Ma'ameer Cases Bahraan, 2009* (Islamic Human Rights Commission , 2009)/
[http://www.ihrc.org.uk/attachments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL2\(2\).pdf](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/attachments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL2(2).pdf)

⁴ See introduction.

⁵ A. Choudhury, *Report of the Trial Monitor in the Karzakan and Ma'ameer Cases Bahrain, 2009* (Islamic Human Rights Commission , 2009)/[http://www.ihrc.org.uk/attachments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL2\(2\).pdf](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/attachments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL2(2).pdf)

“Captain Al-Qattan stated that had he wanted to torture someone he would have done it in a way that would not have left any marks and not in a way that left visible marks like in the picture which to him appeared almost amateurish.”[1]

This is the response from the Captain Isa Al-Qattan, a senior police officer in Manama Bahrain, when asked to respond to a picture of an injured detainee by IHRC’s Abed Choudhury and the England Wales Bar Human Rights Committee’s Pete Weatherby. The IHRC sent Abed Choudhury to monitor the verdict hearing of ten Bahraini men, from the village of Ma’ameer, charged with the murder of a migrant worker. The hearing was held on 5th July 2010. On a previous visit he had visited the village of Ma’ameer to collect information on the treatment of the ten men in prison . He also observed trial proceedings of four Bahraini men charged with arson attacks in Adary Park, Manama.

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