

Statement by NIHR on its Visit to Correction and Rehabilitation Centre in Jaw

Manama on July 25, 2020

Based on cases monitored in a number of social media sites and some phone calls on what has been called “a strike by a number of inmates of the Correction and Rehabilitation Centre (Jaw Prison) to contact their families due to depriving them from practicing their religious rites and lack of treatment and hygiene materials”, a delegation of the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) has conducted a field visit to the Jaw Prison, based upon the legal and supervisory role of the NIHR on the ministries and institutions of executive authority in accordance with the broad powers emphasized by the NIHR Incorporation Law, in order to determine the validity of those allegations.

The NIHR delegation was actually informed about the conditions of the inmates to ensure that they enjoy their established rights and that they are not subjected to maltreatment, in accordance with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and the executive regulations of correction and rehabilitation centres, where a number of inmates were interviewed, and it became clear that they were not subjected to any violations, maltreatment or deprivation of rights in accordance with the regulations of the Reform and Rehabilitation Centre. In addition, a number of inmates who have been interviewed by the NIHR delegation expressed their satisfaction with the level of services and facilities provided by the Centres to ensure their continued practice of their religious rituals. The NIHR delegation was briefed on a previous documentation of inmates practicing their rituals on the ground in such a way that did not constitute harm or violation of the freedom and privacy of other inmates of all religions and sects and guaranteed the security and safety of the inmates and staff.

The NIHR delegation also contacted dermatology consultants from Salmaniya Medical Complex, who stated that inmates are being examined by them on a regular basis, and appropriate treatment is given to each case as appropriate, stating at the same time that there are no serious skin conditions such as scabies, as cases are limited to eczema or normal skin allergy. Inmates appreciated the precautionary measures taken to limit the spread of the Coronavirus (Covid-19), especially the provision of video communications in previous months. It is worth noting that the NIHR’s reports emphasize that necessary measures have been taken to refer about 925 inmates over the past weeks to doctors and consultants, whether in the medical clinic in Jaw or through videoconference medical consultations.

The NIHR states that it shall continue its field visits to the correction and rehabilitation centres to ensure that everyone’s rights are guaranteed in health, cultural and religious areas, especially in the coming period, to ensure that inmates practice their religious rites.

The NIHR expresses its regret for the actions of some organizations and entities that claim to be committed to defending human rights, which are publishing misleading media statements that are in themselves a violation of human rights and an approach that is contrary to reality, which lacks evidence, objectivity and credibility and aims to raise concern of the inmates' families.

Accordingly, the NIHR is calling again on all to abide by the noble values and principles of human rights, apply the standards and controls set by the UN as a framework in accordance with the community partnership system, obtain information from reliable sources and adhere to principles that are appropriate for human rights action.