

Together to create a better practice of Human Rights

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WELCOME

It is not a secret to anyone that the choice of freedom, democracy and human rights is a solid constant unanimously acknowledged by the developed nations and peoples in order to build their community project.

We, In the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), believe in the necessity to achieve our vision, mission and strategic objectives. Therefore, we strive to create balance and integration in the performance of our duties and work according to two paths. The first one involves the development of rights-related knowledge, awareness and culture among all community members so that they can claim and defend them peacefully and legally in ways approved by international conventions on human rights, which is the best way to preserve man's dignity and rights and protect them from violation. The second involves accountability of any party whatsoever for actions and abuses violating human rights, since there is no authority above the rule of law and accountability.

Accordingly, we consider ourselves responsible for rooting and promoting the culture of human rights in accordance with NIHR's Strategy and Action Plan (2013/2016).

The second issue of Human Rights Newsletter highlights NIHR's news, events and activities. We put this newsletter between your hands hoping that you will participate in it via suggestions, contributions and topics related to human rights.



NIHR's Council Of Commissioners Convenes It's 6th Ordinary Meeting

The Council of Commissioners of the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) convened its sixth meeting at NIHR's head office at the Seef District under the chairmanship of Dr. Abdul Aziz Hassan Abul. The NIHR's Council of Commissioners endorsed a proposal to amend the Nationality Law in favour of granting the Bahraini woman an equal right as man regarding the nationality of her children, which is to be submitted to the concerned authorities.

The Council of Commissioners also discussed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by NIHR and the International Bar Association (IBA) and the Environment Friends Society. Moreover, the NIHR's Council of Commissioners reviewed the monthly report on complaints received by NIHR as well as requests of assistance.

Vision

"Human rights culture is a lifestyle"

To believe that the human rights issue is of the national constants, and recognize that civil, political, economic, social and cultural, as well as individual or collective, rights and public freedoms represent a commitment to the values of justice, equality and human dignity of all human beings without discrimination.

Mission

"Together to create a better practice of human rights"

Work on developing, promoting and protecting human rights of citizens and residents in the Kingdom of Bahrain, through providing protection and support for individuals, enabling them to gain various knowledge with regard to the exercise of their legitimate rights, and determining their needs and how to claim and defend them. This can be achieved by spreading the culture of human rights by all means available.

NIRH's Chairman receives The British Ambassador to the Kingdom



The NIHR's Chairman, Dr. Abdul Aziz Hassan Abul, met with the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, H.E. Iain Lindsay, at NIHR's head office at the Seef District.

During the meeting, the NIHR's Chairman welcomed the British Ambassador and informed him about the role undertaken by NIHR in boosting and developing human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The NIHR's Chairman also informed the British Ambassador about the procedures followed by the Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee and the role of NIHR General Secretariat's Complaints Offices, as well as the way of handling citizens' and residents' complaints in order to solve them and communicate with official bodies with respect thereof.

Towards the conclusion of the meeting, the NIHR's Chairman underscored the importance of constant coordination and exchange of bilateral viewpoints and visions in the field of human rights, and praised the support received by the NIHR from the UK relative bodies with regard to boosting capabilities and setting up overall strategies for the NIHR's work in order to reinforce and protect human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

NIHR's Chairman Meets German Ambassador



The NIHR's Chairman, Dr. Abdul Aziz Abul, met with Ambassador Sabine Taufmann of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Bahrain at NIHR's head office at the Seef District.

During the meeting, Dr. Abul briefed Ambassador Taufmann on the NIHR's role in bolstering and developing human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the procedures followed by the Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee, as well as the NIHR's General-Secretariat's Complaints Office, in addition to means of handling citizens' and residents' complaints and discussing them with the official authorities.

The meeting discussed aspects of joint cooperation in the area of human rights and how to benefit from the German experiences in transferring knowledge and developing capabilities in order to promote the NIHR's achievements and steps in this respect.

NIHR Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-Up Committee Holds Its 6th Meeting



The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR)'s Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee held its sixth meeting under the chairmanship of Abdulla Ahmed Al-Dirazi and in the presence of Ahmed Abdul Rahman Al-Sa'ati and Maria Antoine Khouri.

During the meeting, they approved the minutes of the previous meeting and discussed a report on a visit to a detainee in the Dry Dock Detention Centre to investigate a complaint about mistreating him there. Discussions also focused on a court hearing attended by the Committee recently.

Moreover, the meeting reviewed the complaints and requests for assistance received by NIHR recently and the actions taken thereon. The Committee came out with a number of decisions that would be implemented.

NIHR's Committee of Civil & Political Rights Holds its 6th Ordinary Meeting



NIHR Committee of Civil and Political Rights held its 6th meeting, under the chairmanship of Jameela Ali Salman and membership of Fareed Ghazi Rafea.

During the meeting, the panel approved the minutes of the last meeting, and reviewed the latest developments regarding its recommendation to hold a workshop on civil and political rights. The Committee also continued its discussions on raising the child age in the Child Law to 18 years, and reviewed a number of remarks and recommendations regarding the National Childhood Strategy.

NIHR Chairman receives CIPCR Director



NIHR Chairman, Dr. Abdul Aziz Hassan Abul received the Director of the Causeway Institute for Peace-building and Conflict Resolution (CIPCR) Mr. Kingsley Donaldson.

During the meeting, they discussed areas of cooperation and joint coordination between the NIHR and the CIPCR in the fields of human rights and Bahrain-Northern Ireland's exchange of expertise regarding the peace process, national reconciliation and ways of taking advantage of the internationally-recognized Irish experience.

The meeting also focused on the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain and NIHR's role in this context.

NIHR Vice-Chairman receives EU Delegation for Human Rights



NIHR Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee, Abdulla Ahmed Al-Dirazi received this morning the Special Representative of the EU for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, and Head of EU delegation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ambassador Adam Colakh at NIHR's headquarters at the Seef District.

At the beginning of the meeting, NIHR's Vice-Chairman welcomed the visit of the members of the delegation, which comes within the framework of the cooperation and communication with the international bodies, and to exchange points of view. He highlighted that NIHR aspires to promote cooperation and exchange experiences in the area of human rights and benefit from them in strengthening its achievements in this respect.

NIHR's Vice-Chairman briefed the delegation on the NIHR's role in bolstering and developing human rights in the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as the most important mechanisms applied to achieve its goals in protecting all rights.

For his part, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, stressed the interest of the EU in promoting and developing cooperation with NIHR in the area of human rights, commending its important role in spreading the culture of human rights in the Kingdom.

Mr. Lambrinidis welcomed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between NIHR and the Institute of Human Rights at the International Bar Association.

The meeting was attended by the Head of the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Committee, Dr. Fawzia Saeed Al-Saleh, and the Secretary General Dr. Ahmed Abdulla Farhan, and from the European side, the Political Counselor of the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Michelle Rio, and First Secretary for Political Affairs at the EU Delegation, Mrchia Mikko.

NIHR meets ALBA to Discuss Workers' Outstanding Issues

NIHR Vice-Chairman and Head of the Complaints, Monitoring and Follow-up Committee, Abdulla Ahmed Al-Dirazi, met with the Senior Manager of Human Resources and Public Relations Department at Aluminum Bahrain B.S.C (Alba), Abdul Rahman Mohammed Janahi, in the presence of Alba's Head of Labour's Relations Department, Hamad Ibrahim Al-Shaiba at NIHR's headquarters at the Al-Seef District.

The meeting reviewed the complaints received by the NIHR, especially those related to the reinstatement of Alba's discharged employees and the Company's opinion in this respect.

Alba welcomed the initiative of NIHR as a contributing mediator in reaching a solution, and expressed its readiness to cooperate with NIHR and willingness to reach a settlement that achieves the interests of both parties.

In order for NIHR to achieve its goals as per Royal Order No. 46/2009 as amended by Royal Order No. 28/2012 regarding the Establishment of the National Institution for



Human Rights, it undertakes, among other things, receiving and studying complaints relating to human rights, referring them to the competent authorities and effectively following them up, or enlightening the concerned bodies regarding the procedures to be followed and assisting them in finding suitable actions.

NIHR and Specific Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights Explore Strategy to Respond to International Reports on Domestic Affairs

The Specific Permanent Committee on Human Rights at the House of Representatives held a meeting with the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) represented by its Chairman Dr. Abdul Aziz Abul and the accompanying delegation, and discussed a proposal to be informed about the Government's strategy in responding to human rights reports pertaining to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Head of the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, Abdul Hakeem Al-Shammari (MP), praised the clear role undertaken by the NIHR to promote the human rights and humanitarian aspects in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

During the meeting, they discussed the national strategy proposal and applicable mechanism in responding to regional and international reports on human rights in order to boost human rights aspects commensurate with aspirations of citizens and residents, particularly in the light of some misrepresented reports issued from human rights organizations or countries regarding the course of local events. Al-Shammari pointed out that this meeting comes in order to confirm the legislative authority's keenness on ensuring the most important and best practices to be followed so as to expose and correct falsified reports or disinformation, if any.

This is the second meeting between both sides in this regard which confirms the keenness on the part of the legislative authority to play its serious, important and key role in serving the overall attitude of human rights sector in the Kingdom. It has been agreed that the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights will receive replies from the NIHR in this regard within the next few days.

Signing of A Memorandum of Understanding between NIHR and The Environment Friends Society



The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) signed a memorandum of understanding with the Environment Friends Society at the NIHR's headquarters at the Seef District.

The MoU was signed by Dr. Ahmed Abdulla Farhan, NIHR's Secretary-General, and Dr. Khawla Khalil Al-Mohannadi, Chairperson of the Environment Friends Society.

The signing of the MoU comes in the context of the NIHR's desire to activate its functions regarding the dissemination and promotion of human rights culture and cooperation with international organizations and regional, national and relevant institutions concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights, so as to contribute to the achievement of NIHR's objectives and development of relations with these bodies and organizations.

The signing of this MoU also comes in order to foster cooperation between the two parties to spread the culture of human rights and educate members of the community through the organization of courses, conferences, seminars and workshops, and exchange of publications, literature and studies relating to human rights and the environment.

NIHR Praised Cabinet's Adoption of A Commission for The Rights of Prisoners and Detainees

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) lauded the adoption of the Council of Ministers in its ordinary weekly meeting, which was held on Sunday, July 21, 2013, of an independent national mechanism that permits monitoring prisons, detention centres and detainees by the Commission for the Rights of Prisoners and Detainees.

The NIHR stressed that the adoption of such mechanism is an evidence of the continuity of the State's efforts in supporting and developing the mechanisms of human rights protection and integrating them within the policy that aims to activate the international conventions on the national level, considering torture a crime according to the international law and a totally prohibited act. Torture is also unjustifiable under any circumstances according to all relevant international conventions. The adoption of such mechanism is considered an expression of the commitment to the recommendations of Bahrain Independent Fact-Finding Commission, and is also consistent with the recommendations of Human Rights Council in its periodical review, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Article (20), Paragraph (d), of Kingdom of Bahrain's Constitution stipulated that "it is forbidden to harm an accused person physically or mentally". Bahrain also acceded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, under the Decree Law No. 4 for the year 1998.

Marking the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on June 26th 2013, the NIHR called on the government to establish an independent national mechanism to monitor prisons, detention centres, care centres for juvenile and detainees, and other places where people are likely to be detained, such as hospitals and psychiatric centres. The aim of such mechanism is to monitor the conditions of detainees and the treatment they receive in order to ensure that they are not subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, which is provided for in the Geneva Recommendations during the discussion of the Bahrain's 2nd National Report in the Universal Periodical Review (UPR) held in May 2012, to complement the legal system in the Kingdom.

The NIHR has recently dispatched a number of its staff to participate in a training course on the supervision and inspection mechanism over prisons and detention centres held by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons in the United Kingdom.

On this occasion, the NIHR calls on the need for concerting all efforts by the government and civil society organizations to effectively work and cooperate to reinforce and protect human rights, work on combating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and help and rehabilitate victims, punish perpetrators, and combat this crime.

Statement of NIHR on The Occasion of The International Day In support Of Victims of Torture

The statement coincides with the anniversary of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, held annually on June 26, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in its resolution No. 52/149 on December 12, 1997. The resolution aims to completely eradicate torture and ensure effective functioning of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1984, where torture is considered a crime according to the international law, and is totally prohibited. Torture is also unjustifiable under any circumstances according to all relevant international conventions. Moreover, the prohibition of torture is part of the customary international law, as it is binding on all members of the international community without regard to whether the State has ratified the conventions that explicitly prohibit torture or not.

Article (20), Paragraph (d), of Kingdom of Bahrain's Constitution stipulated that "It is forbidden to harm an accused person physically or mentally" where Bahrain acceded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, under the Decree Law No. 4 for the year 1998 as evidence of the Kingdom's support for human rights. The Kingdom integrates such rights within the policy that aims to activate the international conventions on the national level, considering torture a serious crime that must be combated

and eliminated, especially that the Convention confirms that the crime of torture shall not lapse by prescription.

The NIHR urges the government to speed up the accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, under which the Sub-Committee against Torture was established. It also encourages the government to establish an independent national mechanism to monitor and visit the declared and non-declared places of detention, which came within the Geneva Recommendations during the discussion of the Bahrain's 2nd National Report in the Universal Periodical Review (UPR) held in May 2012, to complement the legal system in the Kingdom.

This request comes to complement the view of the national legislator under the amendment to the Penal Code, which was issued by Law No. (52) for the year 2012. The amendment covered the definition of torture in Articles (208) and (233) to expressly emphasize that the crime of torture shall not lapse by prescription.

The NIHR calls on the need for concerting all possible efforts by the government and civil society organizations in addition to various UN agencies to effectively work and cooperate to reinforce and protect human rights, work on combating torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and help and rehabilitate victims, punish perpetrators, and combat this crime at local, regional or international level.

NIHR's Statement on The Extraordinary Meeting of The National Assembly

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) commends Royal Order No. 33 for the year 2013 promulgated by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of Bahrain, inviting the National Assembly to convene in response to a request made by the National Assembly's Chairman Khalifa bin Ahmed Al-Dhahrani, expressing the desire of the National Assembly's members to hold an extraordinary session to discuss toughening punishments in Law No. 58 for the year 2006 on the protection of society against terrorist acts, and to discuss the current national and security situation on the domestic scene.

NIHR expressed its deepest appreciation of the recommendations reached by the National Assembly at its extraordinary session held on Sunday July 28 - 2013, believing in the responsibility of the legislative authority to undertake its legislative and oversight duties in order to protect the Kingdom's gains and future generations and face the recent dangerous escalation that aims at pushing the country to unrest and political tension, which is contrary to the Islamic values and international norms, conventions and treaties.

NIHR also expresses its extreme concern and attention regarding the unfortunate developments taking place in the Kingdom of Bahrain, caused by illegal acts. In this respect, the NIHR:

First: Calls for the need to stand behind the Kingdom's wise leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain in order to continue the reformist approach and lead the Kingdom to a desirable and promising future in all areas. The NIHR emphasizes the ability of His Majesty the King to contain the domestic developments as he represents the symbol of national unity who protects the provisions of the Constitution.

Second: Praises the National Assembly's stance that demands maintaining security, stability and social unity. The NIHR also appreciates the efforts to maintain the national gains and achievements and develop capabilities for boosting the Kingdom of Bahrain, and emphasizes the ability of people of Bahrain to contain the developments of the internal situation and maintain security and stability in the country.

Third: Demands the government to always observe its international promises and commitments stressing the respect for human rights. It also demands the government to take into accounts the application of the law in line with the Constitution and National Action Charter.

Fourth: Calls upon all concerned parties to exercise self-restraint, to assume national responsibility to protect the national gains and constants, and to work to make all the people line up alongside their leader and ensure internal unity.

Fifth: Calls upon wise people in society to face violence and terrorism by taking unified and effective positions and measures to stop all illegal acts, and to resort to all available means to reduce them.

Sixth: Stresses the importance of continuing to heal the rift and dissent experienced by the Kingdom as a result of these illegal acts. This can be realized through the efforts of all parties, both formal and informal, and through the emphasis on the role of civil society organizations in this respect in order to continue the construction process and internal reform, stress on the national constants, and support the reform process pursued by His Majesty the King in this context. This is also aimed to show respect for Human Rights to life and live in a healthy environment without any threats to his security and stability. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly stated in Article 3 that: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

The NIHR stresses the Kingdom's ability to overcome the crisis through national unity and activation of the role of law in the consolidation of security and national stability, both at the security and social levels, without allowing any abuses in this context.

For its part, the NIHR emphasizes the respect for human rights and commitment to the international conventions and treaties. It closely monitors domestic developments without prejudice to any of its responsibilities and tasks provided for in Royal Decree No. 46 for the year 2009 as amended by Royal Order No. 28 for the year 2012 on the Establishment of NIHR.

In Cooperation with The BFA, NIHR organizes The "Together" Ramadan Tournament for Football Senior Players



In a Ramadan fantastic football evening, the National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), in cooperation with the Bahrain Football Association (BFA), organized the first "Together" Ramadan tournament for senior players with the participation of 8 teams representing Riffa, Al-Ahli, Muharraq, Isa Town, Al-Najma, Malkiya, Al-Shabab and Budaya' clubs.

The championship aims to strengthen the national unity and to encourage the spirit of accord and tolerance among all classes and categories of the Bahraini people.

Isa Town Club won the first place after defeating Al-Shabab Club in the final match in the shootouts with a goal for nothing score. The goal was scored by Isa Al-Muqahwi after the match ended at the original time with a goalless draw.

In the end, Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, the BFA's Chairman of the Board, and Dr. Abdul Aziz Hassan Abul, NIHR's Chairman, awarded Isa Town Club the Champion Cup and gold medals.

Mr. Hassan Ismail, BFA Secretary-General, Mr. Abdulla Al-Dirazi, NIHR's Vice-Chairman, Mr. Yaser Saqr Al-Shirawi, NIHR's Executive Director for Joint Resources and Services, and Mr. Nawar Abdulla Al-Mutawa, NIHR Director of

Communications, participated in the ceremony of awarding teams.

Trophies and commemorative cups were awarded to the outstanding players and administrators in the sevens. Adel Al-Marzouqi of Riffa Club won the Best Player Cup. Abdul Karim Dawood of Al-Shabab Club won the Best Goalkeeper Cup. Mahmood Hanafi of Al-Najma Club won the Champion's Top Scorer Cup. The prominent player Hamad Mohammed won the Ideal Player Award. The Riffa Club team got the third place medals. Al-Najma Club won the Ideal Team Cup. Al-Shabab team members were honoured with second place medals. Moreover, sponsors, heads of sports supplements in local newspapers, Bahrain TV Sports Channel, and Al-Kass Sports Channel were also honoured.

The participating senior players expressed their utmost happiness for participating in such tournaments which aim to gather senior players under one roof and significantly contribute to the consolidation of social relationship among them. They stressed that the NIHR in close cooperation with the BFA have managed to organize that tournament, adding, at the same time, that the tournament should be continued in order to achieve more objectives in the coming years.

NIHR In Cooperation with Environment Friends Society Organizes an Awareness Event for Children on Environmental Rights

The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR), in cooperation with the Environment Friends Society, organized an environmental awareness event for children about environmental rights under the title "Young Ambassadors of Environmental Rights" within an initiative aiming to shed light on the environmental rights. The event was held in the headquarters of the Fishermen Society in Muharraq, with the participation of 60 boys and girls in the age group 10-17 years.

Mr. Abdul Jabbar Al-Tayyeb, NIHR member, emphasized the importance of the partnership between the NIHR and Environment Friends Society in order to formulate a joint role

planned across a range of current and future activities for the development of a systematic plan and in a comprehensive communal partnership to raise awareness of environmental rights.

The workshop focused on the concept of children's environmental rights in order to spread awareness about environmental rights and stimulate children to defend them. Participants were divided into working groups under the supervision of Environment Friends Society's specialized members of university professors and members of the committees concerned with the dissemination of environmental awareness.