

HUMAN RIGHTS MONITOR



AMMAN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES

**Weekly Press Monitoring of Human Rights News
in The Middle East and North Africa**

NOVEMBER 1-7, 2021

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Attack on military hospital in Kabul

On the 2nd of November, **an attack** using explosives and gunfire at Afghanistan's largest military hospital left at least 25 people dead and 50 injured.

The attack was **claimed** by the Islamic State in Khorasan Province ISKP (ISISI-K). The organization said through its telegram channels that "**five Islamic State group fighters carried out simultaneous coordinated attacks**" on the site.

According to hospital officials, two explosions hit the hospital's entrance. These were followed by a series of gunshots. According to ISIS, a suicide bomber set off an explosive belt at the hospital entrance before five attackers stormed the hospital.

The Taliban government's deputy minister of information and culture, Zabihullah Mujahid, said Taliban special forces killed five of the attackers. The attacks lasted less than 15 minutes.

Maulvi Hamdullah, Taliban military commander and member of the Haqqani network, was **killed**. The United Nations Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) condemned the attack and called for the prosecution of the perpetrators.

Taliban prohibits women from administering humanitarian aid

On the 4th of November, **Human Rights Watch** published an article illustrating the Taliban's restrictions on women working in the humanitarian sector.

After reviewing a document from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Human Rights Watch states that the Taliban has reportedly allowed women in the humanitarian sector to work unconditionally in only 3 of 34 provinces. The other 31 provinces are reportedly subject to restrictions.

Women in the humanitarian sector are banned from working in Badghis province, while they are only allowed to operate for needs assessments with beneficiaries in Bamiyan and Daikundi provinces. In 16 other provinces, women are required to be accompanied by a male member of the household. The Taliban also imposed sectoral constraints in 11 provinces assigning women to humanitarian operations related to education and health

On October 28, provincial leaders in 5 communes imposed written constraints on women aid workers, while the remaining 26 relied on oral constraints, leaving the Taliban with a wider margin of enforcement.

Three Algerian truckdrivers killed, reigniting Algerian-Moroccan conflict

On the 1st of November, three Algerian truck drivers were killed in a bombing by the border area between Mauretania and Western Sahara, confirmed by the [UN](#). During the last week, Algerian officials made a statement in Algerian news Wednesday, accusing the Moroccan authorities of being behind the assassination. They call the incident a 'cowardly assassination' and that it '[will not go unpunished](#)'.

The relationship between the two countries is already inflamed, as Algeria supports the movement Polisario Front which fights for Western Sahara and the Sahrawi people's independence. During the last year, several incidents have sparked the conflict, and the assassination of the three Algerians is only the latest of many. Some of the central political disputes have been Morocco normalizing ties with Israel, to gain support from the United States for Morocco's superiority of Western Sahara. Furthermore, Algeria closed their air space for Morocco's civil and military aircraft, in response to Morocco's support of the organization "Movement for the Self-Determination of Kabylia (MAK)", which Algeria sees as a terrorist organization.

In spite of the heavily increasing hostility between the countries, experts believe there will not be an armed conflict in [sight](#). Neither country can afford an armed conflict, and the most likely scenario is therefore the current bilateral conflict stagnating.

So far, the Moroccan authorities have not officially responded to the accusation of killing the three Algerian truck drivers, but an informed source from the Moroccan kingdom said to Al-Jazeera that Morocco would never target Algerian [civilians](#).



Journalist and activist arrested over Twitter post

The prominent Egyptian human rights activist and journalist, Hossam Bahgat, has been arrested after making a tweet on his personal Twitter account in December 2020. He has been accused of insulting Egypt's electoral procedure, spreading false news in a tweet where he insinuates alleged electoral fraud during Egypt's parliamentary elections in **December 2020**. Bahgat is being charged for insulting a public institution, spreading false news with malicious intent and using an account on social media to commit the two aforementioned **crimes**. If convicted for these crimes, Bahgat could face up to 3 years of prison and pay a fine of 300.000 Egyptian pounds.

On the 2nd of November, Bahgat attended a court session at the Third Circuit for Misdemeanours of the Cairo Economic Court, which causes the human rights organization, FIDH to react. FIDH calls on individuals to put pressure on the Egyptian government and stop their judicial harassment of Hossam Bahgat. They see this harassment as widespread repression of civil society in Egypt, where executing legitimate human rights activities are considered a crime. This is not the first time Hossam Bahgat is being harassed by the authorities. Through his work at Mada Masr, an independent news media in Egypt, Bahgat has been through multiple encounters with the police. In 2015 accused of spreading false news and planning to overthrow the government, which lead to a 3 days detainment in prison.

The verdict of Bahgat is scheduled to be announced on the 29th of November.

IRAQ

Iraqi prime minister survives assassination attempt

Early morning the 7th November, a drone attack targeted the Iraqi prime minister, **Mustafa al-Kadhimi**. The drone flew to the prime minister's residence, wounded 6 bodyguards but left no casualties. Initially, three drones were launched, but two shot down before reaching the residence. The prime minister resides in the Green Zone, alongside government buildings and embassies, where the security is high and was under control Sunday.

While nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, tensions are increasing and have been the last couple of weeks since the Iraqi election. Saturday, violent clashes occurred in Baghdad between Iran-supported political parties and government forces. The Iranian-supported political parties lost a lot of power in the election on the 10th of October and have since then been demonstrating in the streets of Baghdad. The police have responded heavily with tear gas and weapons, consequently killing a civilian at one of the **demonstrations**. A couple of hours after the attack, al-Kadhimi appeared on Iraqi television condemning the attack, and urging for calmness and **restraint**.

Rights group: at least six prisoners executed during the week

According to data from the rights group Iran Human Rights, at least six prisoners have been executed during the week (1st to 7th of November): **Mohammad Eghbal-Riasi, Manouchehr Kazemi-Valmaleh, Javad Ghaljaji, Yasser Gargij** and two men reported to be identified as **Saeed** and **Abdullah**.

Five of the executed prisoners were sentenced to qisas (retribution-in-kind) on allegations of murder. The sixth, Yasser Gargij, a Baluchi man, was executed on drug-related allegations.

According to Iran Human Rights, at **least 254 prisoners** have been executed in Iran in 2021.

KUWAIT

Drastic decrease in number of migrant workers on labour market

A report released by the **Kuwait Society for Human Rights** reveals a significant decline in the number of migrant workers in the Kuwaiti labour market. It reports the withdrawal of 250,000 migrants between June 2020 and June 2021 from the Kuwaiti labour market.

According to the report, 205050 of these losses would come from the private sector while 41202 would come from the public sector.

Kuwait Society for Human Rights the report calls for the abolition of the Kafala system used to monitor migrant workers in Gulf Cooperation Council member countries. This system, by requiring sponsorship of workers by a migrant visa official who is often the employer, would encourage administrative expulsion and exploitation by providing oppressors with a form of legal immunity.



Image Source: EPA

HRW: Crisis response needed for asylum seekers and refugees

On the 3rd of November, Human Rights Watch called on the Libyan authorities and European states to respond to what is described as a "**humanitarian emergency**" among more than 2000 refugees and asylum seekers, camping in front of a shuttered UN facility.

The refugees and asylum seekers have been camping in precarious conditions in front of the UN facility Community Day Centre (CDC) since early October when armed groups that were linked to the Ministry of Interior conducted raids and shelter demolitions on refugee facilities in Tripoli. This has left thousands homeless.

In a comment, HRW's Libya director, Hanan Salah, said that "[b]y demolishing migrants' and asylum seekers' makeshift shelters, Libyan authorities manufactured a humanitarian crisis, leaving thousands of people fending for themselves in the streets".

PALESTINE

Rights groups call on France and US to support Palestinian organisations after recent Israeli crackdown

On the 4th of November, 26 French and international organisations **called** on the French government to support six Palestinian NGOs that recently were designated as "terrorist organisations" by the Israeli authorities. The day after, three organisations, including Amnesty USA made similar **calls** to the American administration.

On the 22nd of October, the Israeli authorities designated six Palestinian NGOs as "terrorist organisations": Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Al-Haq Law in the Service of Man (Al-Haq), Bisan Center for Research and Development, Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCI-P), Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) and Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC) over their alleged ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

In the two calls for support to Palestinian NGOs, the organisations called the designation "abusive" and expressed "their full solidarity with the six targeted Palestinian NGOs, which denounce human rights violations in Palestine and which the Israeli government is seeking to silence".

Monitoring group: seven civilians killed by landmine

On the 5th of November, a landmine **killed** seven civilians from the same family. This, Syrian Network for Human Rights has reported. The family was killed by an when they were passing by a car west of the city of Tadmur in Homs governate, controlled by the Syrian regime. The source of the landmine is unknown.

TURKEY

Human Rights Watch calls for an end to pressure on Turkmen nationals in Turkey

In a **statement** released on the 2nd of November, Human Rights Watch calls for the protection of the rights of Turkmen nationals in Turkey by the Turkish authorities.

The statement notes a deterioration in the conditions under which Turkmen migrants are treated in Turkey. In particular, Human Rights Watch notes an increase in refusals by Turkmen consulates abroad to renew passports for Turkmen nationals, forcing them to leave Turkey or host countries and return to Turkmenistan. These practices are contrary to Turkmen law and international law.

The report also reveals an increase in the number of threats of deportation of peaceful Turkmen activists protesting against these practices as well as the number of arbitrary detentions of Turkmen civilian activists by Turkish police.

The Human Rights Watch statement said the threat of detention and repression applied to opponents of the Turkmen government if they returned to Turkmenistan.

Turkey has more than one million Turkmen nationals, who should be able to remain without a visa.



Image Source: Human Rights Watch

HRW calls for UN investigations in war crimes

In a [statement](#) from the 3rd of November, Human Rights Watch called on the UN Human Rights Council to renew the mandate of an investigative mechanism of violation against international in the war in Yemen. This came in reaction to after the Council last month rejected renewing its mandate.

The Group of Eminent Experts (GoEE) has since 2017 been investigating alleged violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. However, at the UN Human Rights Council's session in October, a majority in Council [voted against](#) its renewal.

On the 29th of October, the Dutch ambassador to the UN Human Rights Council delivered a [joint statement](#) on behalf of 37 member states, calling for the renewal of the GoEE's mandate. This led to a Saudi-drafted [statement](#), welcoming the rejection of the renewal of the GoEE's mandate.

There are numerous allegations of war crimes in the war in Yemen. In September, this led lawyers from the law group Guernica 37 to [call on the International Criminal Court](#) to investigate crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by the Saudi-led coalition in the country.



Image Source: Human Rights Watch



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ABOUT ACHRS

ACHRS is an independent non-governmental Think Tank center advocating for the enhancement of democracy and human rights in Jordan and the MENA region. The Center's five priorities are the right to life, the right to speak, the right to think, the right to participate and women's rights.

ACHRS has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

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