

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/bahrain-despotic-regimes-continue-to-01-09-2011,40886.html>

Middle East & North Africa - Yemen

Indiscriminate brutality

## Despotic regimes continue to obstruct coverage of revolutions

1 September 2011

### SYRIA

Reporters Without Borders condemns the beating that **Samer Al-Shami**, a photographer for the SANA agency, received on 30 August and the previous day's arrest of **Amer Abd Al-Salam**, a journalist specialized in business reporting.

Shami was abducted from his home in the western province of Homs at 5:30 a.m. by five gunmen who beat him with rifle butts, took him away in their car and interrogated him about his work and the supposed links of some of his relatives with the Moslem Brotherhood. He was released after several hours.

**Najati Tayara**, a human rights activist who was arrested in Homs on 12 May, was released on 29 August. **Anas Al-Morawi**, a blogger who was arrested on 1 July in a Damascus suburb, was released on 28 August.

The following are still detained:

- **Omar Al-Assad**
- **Sami Al-Halabi**
- **Hanadi Zahlout**
- The bloggers **Jehad Jamal**, **Rudy Othman** and **Asim Hamsho**
- Several netizens including **Abd Qabani** and **Ammar Sa'ib**
- **Manaf Al Zeitoun**
- **Mohamed Tahan Jamal**
- **Abd Al-Majid Tamer** and **Mahmoud Asem Al-Mohamed**

### LIBYA

As well as Muammar Gaddafi's whereabouts, media attention has dwelled on the abusive treatment that foreign journalists have received. Meanwhile, many Libyan journalists are still missing. They include:

- **Mohamed Assahim**
- **Habib Al-Amin**
- **Rabi' Sharir**
- **Ahmed Al-Kadiki**

There is also no information about the current status of **Arish Saeed**, who was arrested with US journalist **Clara Morgana Gillis** on 5 April in Brega, and **Mohamed Al-Shoueydi**, who was arrested at the same time as *MBC's* **Hassan Zeitouni** on 6 April. **Atef Al-Atrash**, who was kidnapped in February in Benghazi, was freed on 24 August, the day after Tripoli was liberated by the rebels. He was able to contact his family the next day. He had been held in Tripoli by the pro-Gaddafi forces.

### BAHRAIN

The authorities have blocked access to Twitcam (<http://twitcam.livestream.com/>), a website that allows users to stream video live in tandem with simultaneous communication with

viewers via *Twitter*. Bahrainis have found *Twitter* to be a particularly useful tool for reporting human rights violations by the security forces.

Nokia Siemens Network (NSN) has been accused of providing the monitoring technology that the Bahraini authorities have been using to spy on the emails, mobile phone conversations and text message of dozens of human rights activists. Ahmed Al-Doseri, director of information and communications at Bahrain's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, confirmed that Bahrain is using this kind of sophisticated monitoring technology (<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-...>).

## YEMEN

Five baltajiyas (pro-government thugs in civilian dress) attacked *BBC* correspondent **Abdallah Ghourab** and his cameraman, **Zine Al-Siqaf**, with clubs at a gas station on Riqas Street in Sanaa as they were filming a report about fuel shortages on the evening of 26 August. Their camera was destroyed. The two journalists left the hospital during the night. Ghourab has received 15 telephone threats since the start of the uprising. He now has to live in hiding.

Copies of the independent newspapers *Al-Omana* and *Al-Thawry* have been seized and burned at checkpoints and, as is often the case, their distributors have been physically attacked. Republican Guard members confiscated 200 copies of *Al-Omana* in Al-Hoban, a district on the outskirts of the city of Taiz, and copies of *Al-Thawry* on Al-Khamseen Street in the district of Hadda.

*Suhail TV* cameraman **Ahmad Firas**, who was arrested on 12 August (<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-violence-...>), and **Abdul Ilah Haydar Shae**, a journalist who was supposed to have been released under a presidential decree in February (<http://en.rsf.org/yemen-french-fore...>), are still being detained unjustly.

## OMAN

The second hearing in the trial of the well-known journalist **Yousef Al-Haj**, due to have been held in Muscat on 28 August, has been postponed until 7 September. He is charged with insulting the justice minister and his under-secretary and trying to create divisions within Omani society in an article about alleged corruption within the justice ministry. The trial began on 14 August.

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