

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/bahrain-blogger-gets-jail-time-for-11-04-2014,46132.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Bahrain

Absurd charges

## Blogger gets jail time for misusing information technology

11 April 2014

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Reporters Without Borders is outraged by the 30-month jail sentence that a Bahraini court passed on the blogger **Ali Maaraj** on 8 April on charges of "insulting the king" and "improper handling of information technology".

RWB condemns these absurd charges and demands his immediate release and the quashing of his sentence. The Bahraini authorities have yet again demonstrated their contempt for freedom of information and their mistrust of publication tools.

[The police arrested Maaraj at his home](#) on 7 January, seizing his computer. His brother was simultaneously arrested at his workplace. He was released six weeks later.

Maaraj posted articles critical of Bahrain's monarchy on the [Luluwa Awel](#) blog. He also posted reports and other information about Bahrain's anti-government demonstrations.

[The prosecutor said](#) "*he intentionally caused trouble to other people as a result of improper handling of information technology.*" He was given six months in prison for this, plus two years for "insulting the king". No defence witnesses were allowed to testify at the trial, which was took just three hearings to complete, despite the severity of the sentence.

The Bahraini authorities often target news providers and human rights defenders. The 26-year-old photographer **Ahmed Humaidan** [was sentenced to 10 years in prison](#) on 26 March for allegedly taking part in "an attack on a police station in Sitra" in April 2012 although he was at the scene just to photograph the use of violence by the security forces.

Bahrain is ranked 163rd out of 180 countries in the 2014 [Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#). It is also on the [Reporters Without Borders list of "Enemies of the Internet"](#).

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