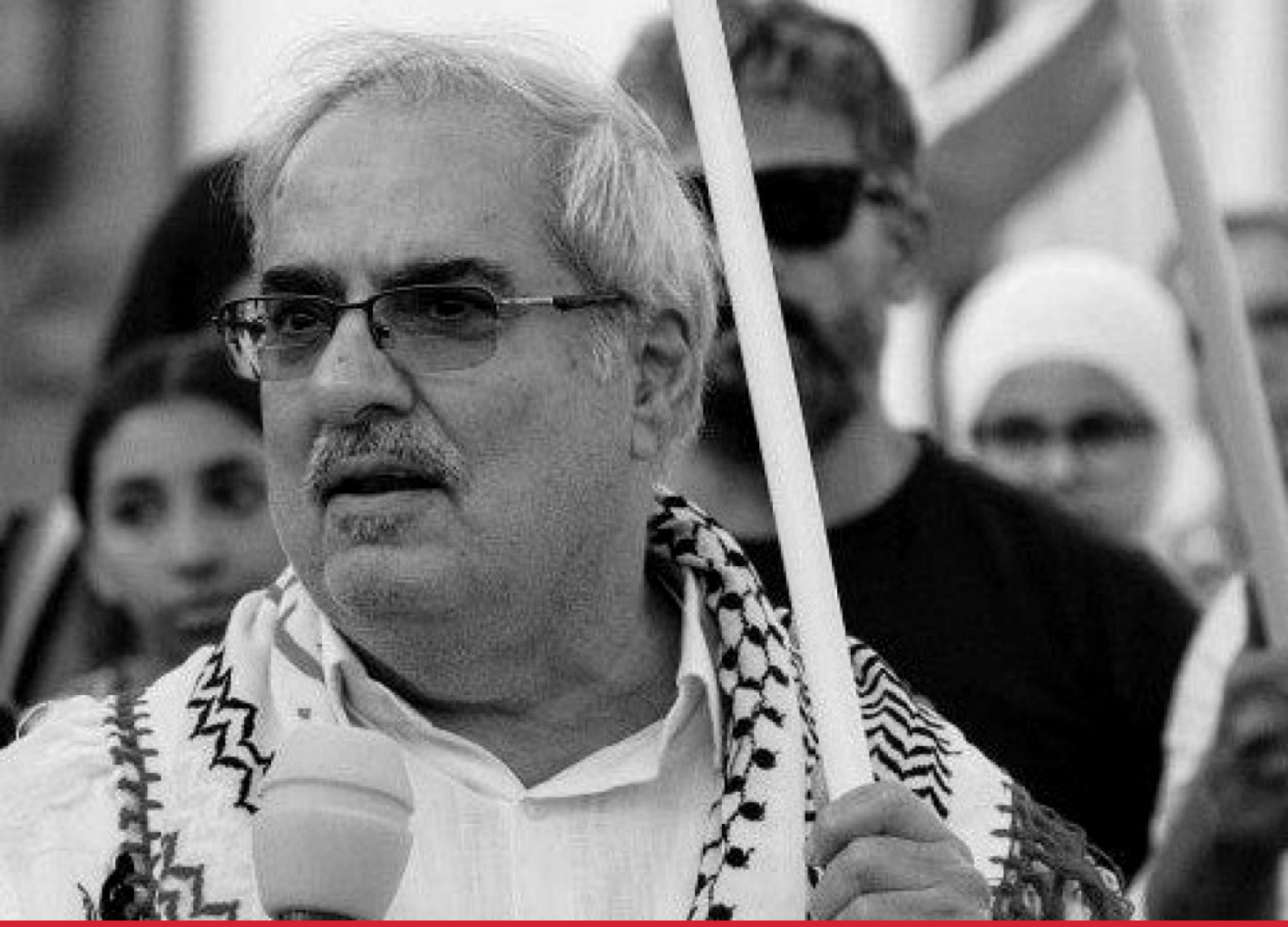


ADVOCACY DOSSIER

EBRAHIM SHARIF

إبراهيم شريف

At liberty **Bahrain**

Ebrahim Sharif is a former secretary general of Bahrain's National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), an opposition group dissolved by court order in 2017. Since 2011 he has been arrested at least ten times for peaceful political speech and criticism of government policy. His latest sentence, six months in prison, was for comments he made on LuaLua TV, and he was released on 17 February 2026, when the appeal court upheld the conviction but replaced prison with weekly reporting to the Alternative Penalties Centre.

HuMENA.

Prepared by HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement · 8 November 2026

Case reference HM-BH-2025-002

01

THE CASE AT A GLANCE

Ebrahim Sharif is a former secretary general of Bahrain's National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), an opposition group dissolved by court order in 2017. Since 2011 he has been arrested at least ten times for peaceful political speech and criticism of government policy. His latest sentence, six months in prison, was for comments he made on LuaLua TV, and he was released on 17 February 2026, when the appeal court upheld the conviction but replaced prison with weekly reporting to the Alternative Penalties Centre.

STATUS	**At liberty**
ARRESTED	**12 Nov 2025**
COUNTRY	**Bahrain**
SENTENCE	**Six months in prison plus a fine of 200 Bahraini dinars (approximately $530).**
CHARGES	**Spreading false news on social media** **Making statements deemed offensive to Arab states and their leadership**

WE CALL ON THE AUTHORITIES TO:

WHAT WE ASK

01 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Ebrahim Sharif and on any family members affected by the same order.

02 Restore valid travel documents and remove any border-watch flags placed in connection with peaceful human rights work.

03 Comply with the ICCPR Article 12 guarantee of freedom of movement.

Latest updates on this case
Scan the code or visit:
https://humena.org/defenders/ebrahim-sharif/

02

DOCUMENTED VIOLATIONS

	INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
Arbitrary detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9
Denial of family visits	UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rule 58
Enforced disappearance	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Article 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 9, 16
Judicial harassment	UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12
Prolonged pretrial detention	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9(3)
Torture	Convention against Torture, Articles 1, 2 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 7
Travel ban	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 12
Trial before an exceptional court	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14
Unfair trial	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14

03

HOW THE CASE UNFOLDED

2011

ILL-TREATMENT

Torture and ill-treatment in custody

During incommunicado detention, Sharif was subjected to torture including sleep deprivation, beatings, and sexual abuse. He was denied access to family members prior to his first court appearance.

2011

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IMPOSED

Tortured and held in solitary confinement

He was tortured and held in solitary confinement for 56 days without access to a lawyer or any contact with his family.

17 March 2011

ARREST

First arrest during 2011 uprising

Security forces arrested Sharif during Bahrain's pro-democracy uprising for participating in peaceful protests calling for political reform. He was held incommunicado for months and sentenced to five years in prison by a special military court.

22 June 2011

CONVICTION

Military court sentences Sharif

A special military court sentenced Sharif to five years in prison on politically motivated charges for his participation in peaceful protests.

September 2012	APPEAL: JUDGMENT UPHELD	**Five-year sentence upheld on appeal** An appeal court upheld his five-year prison sentence.
19 June 2015	RELEASE	**Released under a royal pardon** He was released under a royal pardon after four years and three months in prison.
19 June 2015	PARDON	**Royal pardon** The king pardoned him before the end of his five-year sentence.
11 July 2015	RE-ARREST	**Rearrested three weeks after release** He was arrested again over a speech at a memorial for a teenage protester killed in 2012, and accused of inciting hatred and promoting the overthrow of the government.
February 2016	CONVICTION	**Sentenced to one year for inciting hatred** A court sentenced him to one year in prison for inciting hatred, over his July 2015 speech.
July 2016	CONDITIONAL RELEASE	**Released and placed under travel ban** Sharif was released after one year in detention and placed under a travel ban.
13 November 2016	ARREST	**Arrested after Associated Press interview** Sharif was arrested after telling the Associated Press that a visit by Prince Charles risked whitewashing Bahrain's crackdown on dissent.
15 November 2016	RELEASE	**Charges dropped, released** Charges related to the Associated Press interview were dropped and Sharif was released after two weeks in detention.
March 2017	RE-ARREST	**Rearrested over social media posts** Sharif was arrested again on accusations related to social media posts deemed critical of the government.
31 May 2017	CONTEXT	**Court dissolves his party, Wa'ad** A court dissolved the National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad). The ruling was upheld on appeal in October 2017.
2019	INVESTIGATION OPENED	**Prosecuted for peaceful expression** Sharif was prosecuted again in connection with peaceful expression on social media.
December 2023	CONTEXT	**Briefly detained for criticising government policy** He was held for a short time for criticising government policy.
March 2024	CONTEXT	**Briefly detained again** He was held for a short time on similar grounds.
12 November 2025	ARREST	**Arrested at Bahrain International Airport** Sharif was detained upon his return from Beirut, where he had attended the Arab National Conference. The Ministry of Interior accused him of spreading false news and uttering phrases offensive to Arab states.

13 November 2025

PRETRIAL DETENTION ORDERED

Public Prosecution orders pretrial detention

The Public Prosecution ordered Sharif's detention pending investigation into charges of false news and offensive statements.

8 January 2026

CONVICTION

Lower Criminal Court convicts Sharif

The Lower Criminal Court sentenced Sharif to six months in prison and imposed a fine of 200 Bahraini dinars for an interview he gave to LuaLua TV criticizing Arab governments for failing to support Palestinians and for normalizing relations with Israel.

17 February 2026

APPEAL: JUDGMENT UPHELD

Appeal court upholds the conviction and replaces prison with a weekly reporting pledge

17 February 2026

CONDITIONAL RELEASE

Released; must report weekly to the Alternative Penalties Centre

Released after 97 days; must report weekly to the Alternative Penalties Centre

04

THE FULL STORY

Background and Political Work

Ebrahim Sharif is a former secretary general of the National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), a licensed opposition group until a court dissolved it on 31 May 2017. For more than a decade he has advocated for democratic reform through public speeches, social media commentary, and participation in peaceful political gatherings. His activism forms part of the pro-democracy movement that emerged during Bahrain's 2011 uprising. His work has remained consistently nonviolent.

The 2011 Arrest and Torture

In 2011 Sharif participated in peaceful protests calling for political reform. He was arrested and held incommunicado for months. During this period he was subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment, including sleep deprivation, beatings, and sexual abuse. He was denied access to family members prior to his first court appearance. A special military court sentenced him to five years in prison. He was released under a royal pardon on 19 June 2015.

The Pattern of Re-Arrest

Three weeks after his 2015 release, Sharif was arrested again for delivering a peaceful speech critical of government policies. Authorities accused him of inciting hatred and encouraging the overthrow of the government. He was released one year later and placed under a travel ban.

In November 2016 he was arrested after telling the Associated Press that a visit by Prince Charles risked whitewashing Bahrain's crackdown on dissent. Charges were dropped two weeks later, but he was rearrested in March 2017 on similar accusations related to social media posts. Between 2017 and November 2025 he was prosecuted or arrested at least three additional times, in 2019, 2023, and 2024, each time in connection with peaceful expression on social media.

The 2025 Airport Arrest and Latest Sentence

On 12 November 2025 Sharif was arrested at Bahrain International Airport upon his return from Beirut, where he had attended the Arab National Conference. The Ministry of Interior announced that he had been detained for spreading false news on social media and uttering phrases offensive to Arab states and their leadership. The following day the Public Prosecution ordered his detention pending investigation.

On 8 January 2026 the Lower Criminal Court sentenced him to six months in prison and imposed a fine of 200 Bahraini dinars. The conviction relates to an interview he gave to LuaLua TV in Beirut, in which he criticized Arab governments for failing to support Palestinians and for normalizing relations with Israel. According to a Public Prosecution statement on Instagram, Sharif allegedly made false and offensive

statements about Arab states, accusing them of collusion and calling on their populations to resist their governments.

On 17 February 2026 the appeal court upheld the conviction but replaced the prison term with weekly reporting to the Alternative Penalties Centre, and he was released.

This is at least the tenth time since 2011 that Bahraini authorities have arrested, interrogated, or prosecuted Sharif for peaceful political expression.

Due-Process Violations

The recurring use of broadly worded national security laws, including charges of inciting hatred, spreading false news, and offending foreign states, demonstrates the absence of effective safeguards for freedom of expression in Bahrain. Sharif's 2011 trial before a military court violated international fair-trial standards. The repeated prosecutions for speech-related offenses constitute a pattern of judicial harassment aimed at deterring him from engaging in political activity.

05

SAMPLE LETTER

Copy it, adapt it and send it from your own address.

Your Excellency,

I am writing to demand the immediate lifting of the arbitrary travel ban imposed on Ebrahim Sharif, former secretary general of the National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), dissolved in 2017; peaceful advocate for democratic reform in Bahrain.

In brief: Ebrahim Sharif is a former secretary general of Bahrain's National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), an opposition group dissolved by court order in 2017. Since 2011 he has been arrested at least ten times for peaceful political speech and criticism of government policy. His latest sentence, six months in prison, was for comments he made on LuaLua TV, and he was released on 17 February 2026, when the appeal court upheld the conviction but replaced prison with weekly reporting to the Alternative Penalties Centre.

I respectfully urge your authorities to:
1. Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Ebrahim Sharif and on any family members affected by the same order;
2. Restore valid travel documents and remove any border-watch flags placed in connection with peaceful human rights work;
3. Comply with the ICCPR Article 12 guarantee of freedom of movement.

I will continue to monitor this case until Ebrahim Sharif's freedom of movement is restored.

Respectfully,

[Your name]
[Your city, country]
8 November 2026