## Prominent Bahraini Rights Activist Nabeel Rajab Goes on Trial for Twitter Remarks

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## By Reuters

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http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-prominent-bahraini-rights-activist-nabeel-rajab-goes-on-trial-for-twitter-remarks-2027714

Prominent Bahraini rights activist [**Nabeel Rajab**](http://www.dnaindia.com/topic/nabeel-rajab) went on trial on Sunday over remarks published on his Twitter account that were critical of state institutions, his lawyer said, in a case that has drawn criticism from international civil society groups.

Rajab is one of the most high-profile pro-democracy campaigners in the Arab world, and founder of the **[Bahrain](http://www.dnaindia.com/topic/bahrain)** Centre for Human Rights. The hearing began on Sunday afternoon, where the court refused to release Rajab, according to his Twitter account. The hearing was adjourned until October 29.

At the beginning of the month, Bahrain's Ministry of Interior said that Rajab had been summoned for questioning by the General Directorate of Anti-corruption and Economic and Electronic Security "regarding tweets posted on his Twitter account that denigrated government institutions".

An associate of Rajab, writing on the activist's Twitter account, said on October 2 that Bahrain's Public Prosecution had ordered Rajab held for questioning for one week.

The Public Prosecution confirmed it had charged a person and had detained him for questioning, although it did not name the individual. The Public Prosecution also said, via its own Twitter account, that the detained person had confessed to publishing the offending comments after a complaint from the Interior Ministry.

Rajab took a leading role in Shi'ite-led mass demonstrations in Bahrain in 2011 which, inspired by other pro-democracy uprisings in the Arab world, asked for reforms in the Sunni-ruled Gulf Arab kingdom. He was jailed in May 2012 on charges of organising and participating in illegal protests. He was released in May 2014.

Bahrain, where the US Navy's Fifth Fleet is based, quelled the 2011 protests but has since struggled to resolve political deadlock between the government and the opposition.

Many Shi'ites complain of political and economic discrimination, a charge the authorities deny.

Rajab had recently returned to Bahrain from a trip abroad.

Speaking after his release in May, Rajab called for a "genuine dialogue" between the ruling authorities and the opposition to reach a solution in the US-allied country.

Last week, 20 civil society groups in and outside Bahrain sent a letter to US Secretary of State [**John Kerry**](http://www.dnaindia.com/topic/john-kerry) urging him to publicly press for Rajab's release, according to a statement by Americans for Democracy & [**Human Rights**](http://www.dnaindia.com/topic/human-rights) in Bahrain, one of the signatories.