

# Incidents of Anti-Shiism in May, 2017

## **May 2017 Monthly Analysis**

There were more than 128 deaths and over 50 injuries in the month of May. This month has also witnessed the first incident of direct violence against Shia in the nation of Madagascar. Anti-Shiism remains an urgent issue that needs to be addressed by the international community.

This report will analyze a data of Shia deaths, injuries, and arrests in the month of May. Data was gathered via international news sources as well as on the ground Shia Rights Watch advocates. Authenticity and relevance of news were evaluated via corroborations from Shia Rights Watch advocates on the ground.

In the month of May, Shia rights have been violated in seven nations: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Bahrain, and Madagascar. Incidents of vandalism and targeting of Shia have additionally occurred in Sweden, Philippines, and Syria. Violations include arrests, vandalism, deaths by unnatural means, and injuries. It is important to note that Shia rights violations listed in this report are a summary of incidents that have reached SRW. Violations are not limited to those in this report. More information can be found on [ShiaRightsWatch.org](http://ShiaRightsWatch.org).

Following the detainment of Shaikh Isa Qasim, sit-ins and protest continue in Diraz, Bahrain. Fear of social unrest has government forces limiting town members in resources as well as clashing with peaceful protesters. The ongoing struggle for recognition makes Bahrain a location of concern for Shia Rights Watch.

The Saudi siege on the town of Awamiya remains ongoing, making it a highlighted incident, as well. As Saudi forces maintain their siege on the Eastern province, resources such that of water, food and medical resources deplete, leaving the town in desperate need of international support.

## Saudi Arabia

Early May, Saudi forces invaded the town of Awamiya beginning at 3 am. All entrances to the city were closed as forces began shooting at infrastructure. Sources report 400 houses and buildings have been demolished. With claims of renovation, the Saudi forces entered the Mosawara neighborhood with bulldozers, helicopters, and armored tanks. The Eastern province is historically home to Shia Saudi population. The area is rich in heritage centers and cultural landmarks. Despite the UN's warning against the demolition of historical sites in Awamiya, the Saudi government has made a point to remove the culture of "resistance," a memory of Shaikh Nimr al- Nimr, a leader in peaceful protest who was executed last year.



The death toll in Awamiya has risen to five. Over 14 people have been arrested. Those targeted and killed by forces are mainly youth within the community. Among those killed are Javad al- Dagher, a two-year-old along with his father.

On the 25th of May, 14 activists were sentenced to the death penalty due to their participation in the protests. Arrests were followed by psychological and physiological torture. Those prosecuted were denied access to lawyers. Names of defendants can be accessed on the Shia Rights website.

The siege has left the town without water and electricity. Restrictions on travel in to and out of town further limitations. One resident reports, "No one has been able to leave their houses to go to work, school or even get food as people are afraid to move" as a result of the numerous armored tanks and forces that roam the town.

## **Iraq**

The death toll in Iraq rose with yet another attack in Karrada Iraq. On Memorial Day, the explosion of two bombs in busy areas of Karrada led to the death of 80. Over 50 were wounded in the incidents. The first of two bombs was detonated in an ice cream parlor in the commercial district. The second explosion was in the form of a car bomb on the al-Shahada Bridge, near the public pension's office during rush hour.

Karrada is not a new target for terrorist organizations. In July of 2016, a car bomb in Karrada left 324 dead and was considered the largest single incident in Iraq in the past decade. The reoccurrence of attacks points to a lack of security by officials. Despite initial promises, officials have not increased security measures in Karrada. The fact that the second explosion was near a government building, one may claim, is a sign of escalation and perhaps taunting of government by ISIS.

In total, 115 people were targeted for their Shia identity. The death toll consists mainly of women and children as attacks were centered in public areas such that of markets, neighborhoods and, in the case of Karrada, ice cream parlors. The setting of these attacks points to a targeting of Shia civilians by extremist groups.

## **Syria**

Despite increased international attention on the case of unrest in Syria, targeting of Shia Muslims continue in this nation. The extent of anti-Shia sentiment within the Islamic state is publicized in an incident of anti-Shiism in Hama, Syria.

Fifty members of the Shia village were found dismembered in Hama- 24 of those killed were women and children. Coroner reports death by blunt force trauma to the head and dismemberment by blunt objects. Only a small number of bodies were retrieved as the state of the bodies left no room for recognition or recovery. The aggression behind the deaths point to deliberate targeting and hate towards the group.

Shia Rights Watch emphasizes the need for recognition in the state of the Shia minority in Syria.

## **Sweden**

Imam Ali Mosque, the largest Shia mosque in Sweden was left in ruins after an arson attack. The exterior of the mosque was charred, sources report.

This incident of vandalism is not the first anti-Shia targeting in Sweden or Europe. In 2016, a mosque in Malmo, Sweden was vandalized and set on fire. While arrests were made, occurrence of hate-crime points to an increase in anti-shia sentiment in the nation.

Shia mosques are easy targets for anti-Shia propagators as they are open to the larger communities. However, the increase in targeting of Shia Muslims in the West calls for augmented recognition of the minority's status,

## **South East Asia: Philippines and Pakistan**

The month of May witnessed an increase in incidents of Shia targeting in the nations of Pakistan and the Philipines. Sarfaraz Hussain along with his guard were killed as they patrolled their post in Kurram Pakistan by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, mid-May. Hussain's death is yet another targeting of Shia officials in the nation of Pakistan, where a surge in the targeting of Shia members in high tiers of society has been seen in the past few years.

Philipines alone has had four deaths as a result of explosions. In the case of Nasser Abinal, a bomb was delivered to his office by a delivery man, killing his aid and injuring six others. Abinal was a government tax official in the city of Manila. In a separate incident, five Shia were killed and six others were wounded.

While city officials reject extremist involvement, the Philipines have seen an increase in militants pledging alliance with the Islamic State. Incidents of anti-Shiism in this nation point to a spread of anti-Shia sentiment in the region.

## **Bahrain**

Anger at the sentencing of Shaikh Isa Qasim stirs unrest in the town of Diraz. Clashes between Bahraini forces and protestors has led to the death and arrest of tens of civilians.

After Sheikh Qasim's arrest, demonstrators assembled in sit-ins around the Sheikhs house. Protestors claim allegations against Sheikh Qasim are false and

just another way to target and limit the Shia of Bahrain. Since the uprising in 2011, many have been stripped of their citizenship- Sheikh Qasim was revoked of his citizenship in 2016.

In addition to direct violence, Bahrain’s government pressures dissent in many ways. Sources report that internet and phone lines were cut by government force, limiting those services to a few hours in the day. Further, pro-democracy activists living outside Bahrain report their family membered being harassed by officials. In a number of cases, family members were arrested with our due cause and forces to call activists and ask that they refrain from supporting democracy in or out of Bahrain.

Later this month, 17 were sentenced to imprisonment on grounds of involvement in dissent. Five were given life sentences, three were sentenced to a minimum of ten years in prison, while eight were revoked of citizenship. Discrimination against Shia Muslims in Bahrain extend post death as seen in attacks on commemorations held for Diraz martyrs. Sources report many bodies were not given to the deceased’s family and were buried in an unknown location

Fears of escalation exist within the region after increased arms availability to Saudi Arabia and its Gulf associates. The Bahraini First High Administrative court has ordered the liquidation of assets pertaining to the National Democratic Action Society and the dissolution of the party. Actions against political parties in Bahrain are a sign of political and economic regression.

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<b>Killed</b>	<b>Arrested</b>	<b>Citizenship Revocations</b>
5	286	8

## **Madagascar**

Armed assailants kidnap Yanish Ismail, a prominent member of the Shia community in Madagascar. The incident took place as Yanish was making his way home from a funeral when he was attacked by masked assailants. His whereabouts remain unknown.

Madagascar is the site of newfound increase in the targeting of Shia Muslims. While anti-Shiism has been limited to education, Ismail's disappearance is the reason for concern as it may be their watch list in fear of a possible escalation in trends of anti-Shiism.

## **Conclusions**

In the month of May, anti-Shiism as a direct effect of international affairs was seen. New arms deal with Saudi Arabia instills fears of an escalation of direct violence in Gulf nations such that of Bahrain. In addition to the availability of weapons, the recent arms deal with the United States has projected a message that crime against humanity by Saudi Arabia will be regarded as insignificant by western democratic nations.

Incidents of anti-Shiism may be expected to rise in the month of Ramadan as ISIS leaders call for war on "unbelievers" on its supporters. A month of communal gathering, Muslims join in the month of Ramadhan, making this month a fertile time for mass targeting. Shia Rights Watch calls for increased security in Shia-populated areas and asks governments to be aware of the dangers that target their Shia constituents.

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## **Anti-Shiism in the First quarter of**

# 2017

The First quarter of 2017, have witnessed over 296 tragic deaths, more than 875 wounded most of which were in Iraq. Anti-Shiism also continued in the form of detainment in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. Anti-Shia efforts furthered in revocation of citizenships of Bahraini pro-democracy advocates and kidnapping of Shia Muslims in Madagascar. The Systematic violence against Shia professionals in Pakistan has left many families without husband and father.



# First Quarter of 2017

Shia Muslims have been victims of violence in most of MENA (The Middle East and North of Africa).

Bahrain



Iraq



Pakistan



Madagascar



Saudi Arabia



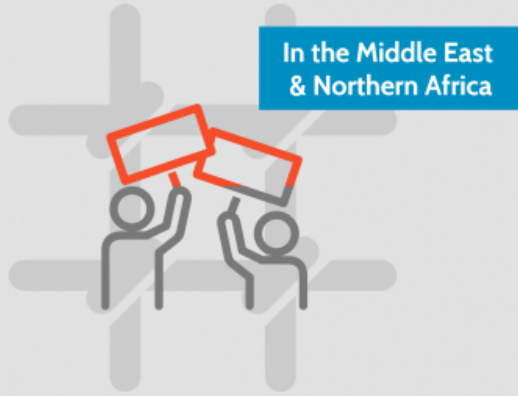
Syria



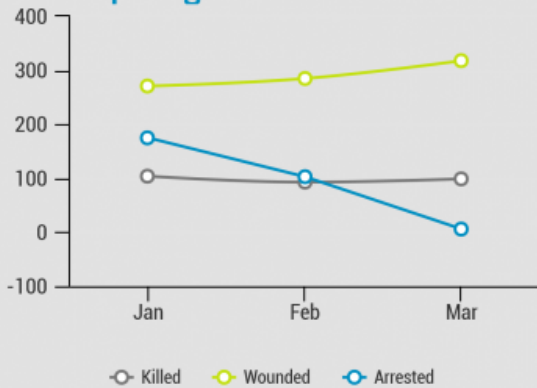
Afghanistan



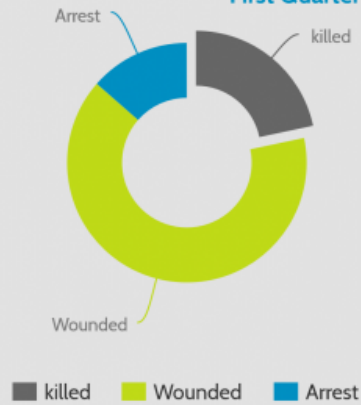
Algeria



## Comparing the Years...



## First Quarter of 2017



## Shia Muslims victims of systematic violence

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[WWW.ShiaRightsWatch.org](http://WWW.ShiaRightsWatch.org)





# Incidents of Anti-Shiism in September, 2016

## **Iraq**

Death count in Iraqi Shia has totaled 372 in the month of September. Baghdad topped the charts with the majority number of Shia killed, with Madain following second. Targeting of Shia Muslims in Madain has been on a particular rise in the year 2016. The majority of deaths has been due to IED's, suicide bombings and gunfire.

As the number of injured exceeds the casualty count, one can understand that the aim of Shia targeting is not only elimination of this population but also induction of fear. The majority of attacks, 99%, were targeted at not religious centers, but at everyday destinations, such as cafe's or marketplaces and shopping centers.

Incidents of particular concern have been a chain of explosions in densely populated areas of Baghdad, particularly the neighborhoods of Hurriya, Husainiya, Diyala bridge, and Abu-Dashir . Attacks were claimed by ISIS. ISIS targeting of Shia-populated areas have been ongoing since their reign and little attention has been given to them. Anti-Shiism sentiment adopted by ISIS has held a long history in Wahhabi extremism.

## **Saudi Arabia**

This year, September began in unison with the Muslim Hajj season. In light of last years targeted abuse of Shia Muslims in the Hajj processions and in efforts to reduce anti-Shiism, Shia Rights Watch issued a travel advisory warning Shia Muslims of possible tensions and encouraging reports of human rights violation. Total transparency on the part of Saudi Arabian forces and Shia pilgrims was also encouraged.

However, Shia rights abuse continued to persist as a total of 17 Shia Muslims were detained unjustly. In addition, many Shia report having to undergo extra process in entering the Kingdom. Thirteen of the 17 arrested were Bahraini citizens, which raises concern as hajj processions are a religious rituals with the aim of creating unity among the global Muslim community and spreading peace. With their arrests, Saudi forces have disrupted the peace and have used hajj as a means of political control in the region.

Ala Taha, an Iraqi scholar was also arrested in this years Hajj procession. In mid-September, Taha was sentenced to three-month incarceration and a total of 300 flagellations. With the efforts of Shia Rights Watch legal and advocacy team, and the Iraqi Embassy, Taha was released before the end of hajj processions.

Three other Shia scholars Sayed Zainedin, Sayed Jafar Mosavi and Abo-Hamed Yousofi were also detained upon their entrance to the Medina airport.

Anti-Shiism in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is systemic as scholars and religious leaders in the nation have encouraged hatred. One example of this is the twitter post of Mufti A'eth al-Gharni, in which he denounced 80 million Shia earlier this month.

## **Pakistan**

On the eighth of September, punjabi police forces raided a women's seminary in Hussainabad, sahiwal, without warrant. Anti-Shiism sentiment has been on the rise in southeast Asia, specifically Pakistan. In the past, anti-Shia actions were carried out by extremist groups such as LeJ or SeS in forms of targeted bombings or shooting of Shia in prominent social classes. The recent rise in unwarranted raids of Shia Islamic seminaries is a sign of escalating anti-Shiism tension in Pakistan. Shia Rights Watch has and continues to warn the rise of such sectarian hatred as little justice has been displayed. Justice must be served and recognition of wrong doing must be announced by responsible parties in order to reduce sectarian conflicts in not only Pakistan, but also the region.

## **Bahrain**

Conditions in Bahrain continue to be striving for Shia citizens. Abbas Abdul-Nabi, an activist has been placed in solitary confinement. Abdul-nabi has been critically ill as result of police brutality on peaceful protest. Abdul-Nabi has been denied medical attention.

If not detained, numerous activist have been denied leaving the nation, one such being Sharaf al-Mousawi. Ahmed Reda, a journalist, has also been restricted from traveling outside of Bahrain- no reasons have been announced for said restrictions.

Upon the return of Hajj, many Bahraini travelers have had their passports withheld.

## **Mauritania**

A prominent Mufti in Mauritania has called for action against the growth of the Shia religion in this country. This outright denouncement of Shia community is a display of an expansion of anti-Shiism in this country, and more importantly in the region. Shia Rights Watch strongly condemns any isolation of minority communities in Mauritania and urges peaceful action against hatred.

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## **Incidents of Anti-Shiism in August, 2016**

# Incidents of Anti-Shiism in August, 2016

This monthly report will analyze the data compiled on Shia deaths, injuries, and arrests that occurred between August 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016. This month there were 334 deaths, and 67 wounded in the Shia community. Also 47 to 50 cases of arrest were reported. Anti-Shia violations were reported in 9 countries during this month, however the reporters are aware that violations are not limited to what is being reported here.

As usual Iraqi Shia face the highest number of casualty and fatality due to bombing and explosions.

Bahrain has highest number of arrest as 31 Shia, including 16 clerics, were arrested.

In August, Shia Muslims were targeted in 9 countries; Bahrain, Iraq, Pakistan, Madagascar, Kuwait, Egypt, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia.

The data for this report was gathered from a variety of different sources. The most well-known incidents of anti-Shiism were retrieved from stories that are reported to Shia Rights Watch by eyewitnesses, each incident is thoroughly evaluated for both authenticity and relevance. For an incident to be included in this report it has to show clear intent to target Shia Muslims and their communities.

Increasing pressure to Shia clerics in different countries such as Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan worries human right activists as they are the leaders of their communities.

## Incidents of Anti-Shiism in August, 2016

Country	Killed	Wounded	Arrest	Body Found	Kidnapped
IRAQ	251	12		19	
PAKISTAN	79	55			
BAHRAIN			30		
AFGHANISTAN	3		16		
SAUDI ARABIA			2		
EGYPT					
KUWAIT			1		
MADAGASCAR	1				1

ShiaRightsWatch.org

## Afghanistan

Three Shia killed and One arrested in Afghanistan during August. Beside historically high violation toward Hazarah community, violation to Shia clerics has increased in Afghanistan. A Shia cleric, Yonus Alawi, was shot to death while returning from daily prayer at local mosque in Herat, And according to local Afghan media sources Taliban beheaded a Hazara, Khair Mohammad, student of Faryab College on August 21, 2016. He was travelling by bus when Taliban stopped the bus near Shirin Tagab, and after identifying him as Shia, dragged him out and beheaded him on spot.

In addition, Sheikh Ghorban Gholampour was arrested by Afghan authorities on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. No detail is available on his case yet.

A mass arrest happened on August 31<sup>st</sup>, as authorities arrested 12 to 15 activists and journalist from Hazara community during a protest about a major power transmission line during a visit to the area by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. Witnesses report forces assaulted reports and arbitrarily detained them for 24 hours.

## Bahrain

Systematic oppression of the Bahraini Shia continues on in the month of August but mostly in a form of arrest and pressure to Shia clerics. 30 Shia, including 16 Shia clerics, were arrested, one center attacked and 47 clerics summoned during

this month.

On August 2nd, a Bahraini court postponed activist Nabeel Rajab's trial until the 5th of September and denied his request for bail. Rajab's defense team had requested his release over concerns about his health, but the court denied the petition.

On August 4th, a Bahraini court arrested and sentenced 2 Shia clerics to 15 days for participating in peaceful assembly in the neighborhood of Addar.

Bahraini police have arrested four Shia clerics. Sheikh Issa Momen, the Friday prayers leader of Khayf Mosque in the village of Dair, east of the capital Manama, was taken into custody on Saturday. According to the report, police forces also detained Sheikh Ali al-Hamli, Seyyed Mohsen Qarifi and Sheikh Fazil Zaki in eastern Manama for questioning.

On August 8th, 12 people have been detained and charged with unlawful assembly over demonstrations near the home of a Shia cleric. They were arrested in Diraz in a sit-in in support of Sheikh Isa Qassim, who lost his citizenship in June.

On August 14th, Hani Basira was detained after being summoned for interrogation as the result of his participation in campaign that advocates for Shia clerics.

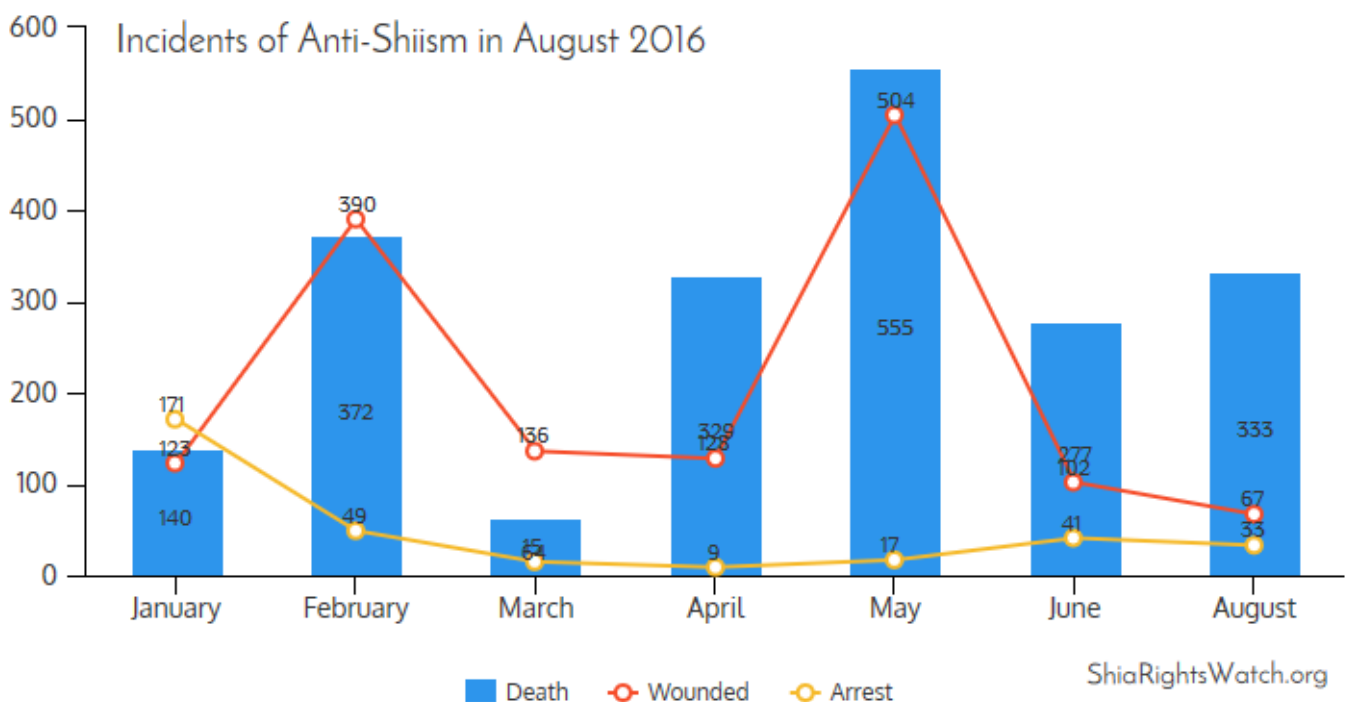
On August 15 Bahrain court charged Sheikh Maytham Al-Salman and activist and medic Dr. Taha Al-Derazi with illegal gathering accusation. Al-Salman has been released on bail, while Al-Derazi is remanded in custody. Numbers of other activists were arrested following the sit-in of August 14th, however no detailed information is available on their cases.

In another violation, Ra'as Roman, a Shia center was attacked and the management access to the center was limited since the locks on the door was changed.

- Sayed Majeed Al-Mashaal
- Sheikh Mohammad Jawad Al-Shahabi
- Sheikh Mounir Al-Maatouk
- Sheikh Ali Hmaidan

- Sheikh Ali Al-Jufairi
- Sheikh Imad Al-Shaala
- Sheikh Abdulaziz Al-Khidran
- Sheikh Hussein Al-Mahrous
- Sayed Yassine Al-Mosawi

Increased pressure of Shia clerics in Bahrain is threatening the leadership among Bahraini Shia. SRW believe such leaders could be helpful resources to bring peace back to Bahrain only if this kingdom stops violating their rights.



## Iraq

On average 8 Shia were killed in Iraq as this country continues to have highest number of casualty rate among all countries with Shia rights violation. Explosion and gunfire are mostly used methods of killing Shia civilians.

Iraq suffered 44 attacks in different cities this month alone. Most of the attacks occurred in Baghdad. Besides Baghdad, Mahmudiyah, Yousefye, Karbala, and Madaen were also highly targeted. 251 Shia were killed as the result of explosions and another 12 wounded. As many as 19 bodies also found mainly in Baghdad worrying Shia community even more.

The deadliest suicide bombing killed 23 in Ain al- Tamur, a town 40 kilometers west of the city of Karbala on August 30th. According to sources four suicide

bombers had planned to explode their vest in different areas of the city; however officials arrested three of them after one bomb exploded.

Also, thousands of bodies found in more than 72 mass graves throughout Iraq on August 31st. Graves are located in different areas such as isolated mountains. Human rights activists believe ISIS is only group capable of such crime and victims belong to minority groups such as Shia Muslims. In addition to violation toward Iraqi Shia in their country, they are subject to violation elsewhere too. Shia Iraqi pilgrims were subject to verbal abuse, humiliation and unnecessary search in Medina airport, Saudi Arabia. Saudi authorities also arrested number of group counselors because they found The Rules of The Pilgrimage book in their belongings. In some cases their luggage were ripped to be searched for Shia prayer books.

## **Saudi Arabia**

Reportedly 9 Shia minors that are threatened currently on death row. They are:

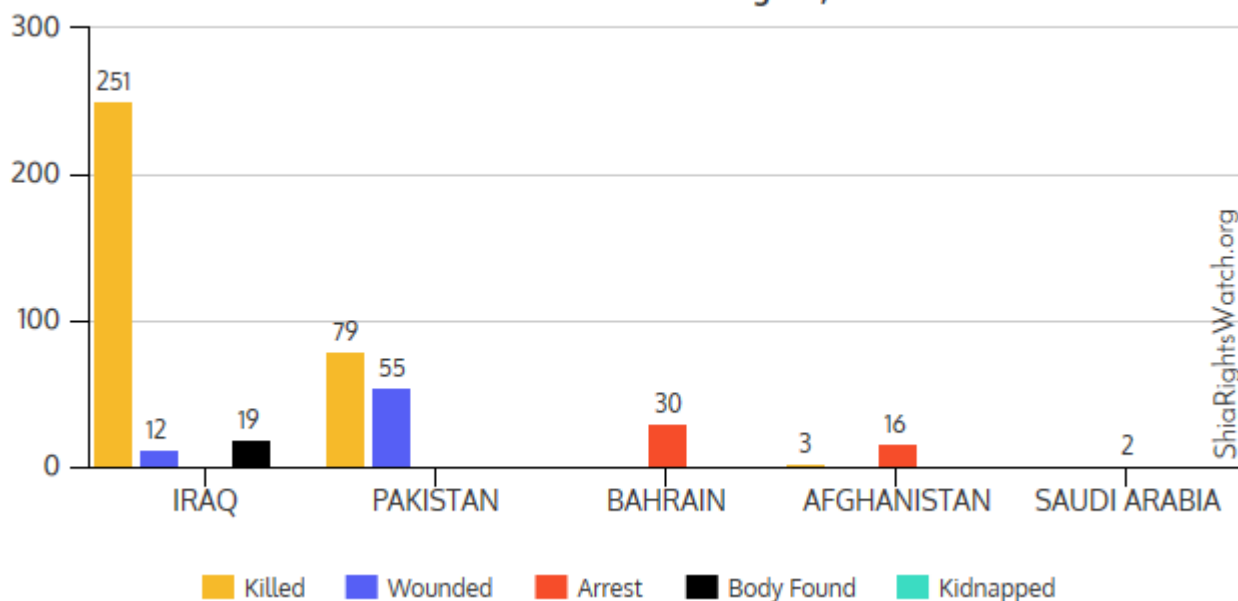
- Ali al-Nimir
- Abdullah alZaher
- Dawood al-Marhoon
- Hussein Ali alBata
- Saeed Mohammed alSkafi
- Salman Amin al-Koraysh
- Mojtaba alSuwaiket
- Abdullah Salman Al Surih
- Hassan Abdul Wahab Al Jazer

On August 31st, two Shia clerics were arrested in Qatif, Saudi Arabia. Mohammad Zain Alhdon and Jaafar Alawi were arrested, no explanation is given yet.

Shia rights violation is expected to increase in Saudi Arabia during Hajj season. In number of cases Saudi Shia were not give permission to participate in Hajj pilgrimage as Saudi authorities denies and limits their right to religion.



Incidents of Anti-Shiism in August, 2016



## Pakistan

79 Pakistani Shia killed and 55 wounded in 4 separate attacks to Shia community in Pakistan.

On August 1st, a targeted attack killed Ghulam Nabi and Mohammad Nabi, two Hazara community members. No group or individual has claimed responsibility as of now.

August 4th, another attack to a bus, in Balochistan, carrying Shia pilgrims to Iran wounded 5 people.

The deadliest attack was on August 8th, as 76 people have been killed and over 50 others injured when a bomb exploded near Civil Hospital in Quetta on Monday. The blast, followed by firing was heard after president of Balochistan Bar Association Advocate Bilal Anwar Kasi was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Quetta

August 13th, Pakistani Shia residence of Dera Ismail Khan reported receiving a threat letter signed by ISIS demanding them to convert to Islam or be killed.

August 22nd, Targeted shooting in Pakistan claimed another Shia life as a 32 year old man was shot and killed on August 22nd.

## **Egypt**

According to number of news outlets, The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR) issued a report on July 21 showing that there were 70 incidents of assault against Egyptian Shia during the period from January 2011 to May 2016. However no detailed report is available to activists. SRW contacted EIPR to obtain a copy of the report but received no response yet. Activists believe the agency is not willing to publish the report due to increased anti-Shia activities in Egypt and elsewhere. It is believed such report will endanger Shia population and the agency even more.

## **Kuwait**

Kuwait court has sentenced a Shia Muslim lawmaker, Dashti, to 14 and half years in prison for criticizing the ruling families in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. He strongly criticized the Bahraini regime's repression of the opposition and Saudi Arabia's deployment of troops in 2011 to Bahrain to assist the Al Khalifah regime in its crackdown on the peaceful anti-regime protests.

In May 2015, the Dashti called for the foreign minister to be questioned over Kuwait's involvement in the Saudi-led air strikes on Yemen, which he said violated the constitution.

## **Madagascar**

Madagascar has reported its first Shia killing as 19 year old was killed on August 9th. No group has claimed responsibility yet. Investigations are still underway.

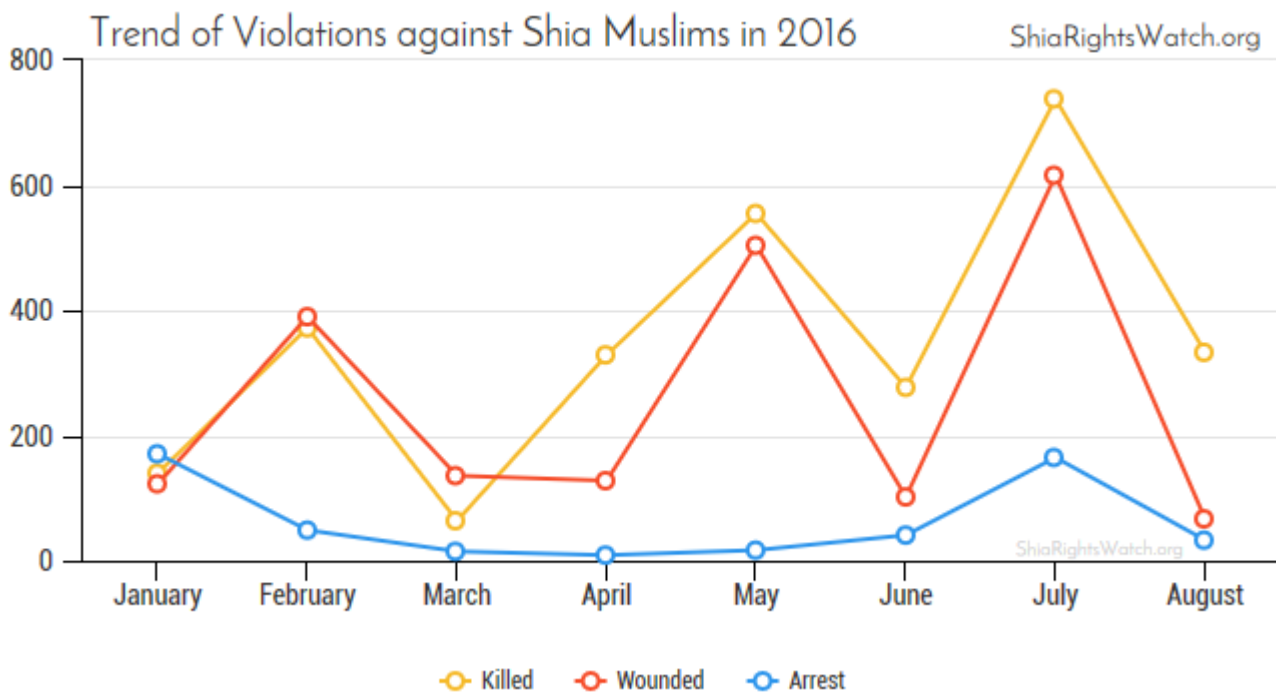
Another Shia man, Eric Daya, was kidnapped on August 30th. There is no update on his case.

Shia community has lost members due to kidnapping previously. Oun Alac, another Shia man, was kidnapped last year and war never found. His family believe he is dead.

## **Malaysia**

Anti-Shia cleric and a member of Kedah Deputy Mufti Sheikh Marwazi Dziauddin suggested based on the Security Offences Act (Special Measures) 2012 (Sosma)

law must be improved in order to stop spread of Shia teachings in the country. “Generally, we know even the police could not take action against individuals involved in the Shia teaching due to the legal constraints, therefore it is more appropriate that Sosma be amended to enable the authorities to do so” he stated in the National Security Dialogue Session at the Home Ministry Hall in Alor Setar. Anti-Shia activities have increased dramatically in Malaysia although freedom of religion is observed for all other minorities in this country.



## Conclusion

As many as 334 Shia killed, 67 wounded and, 47 to 50 arrested and 47 summoned during the month of August in 9 different countries. Anti-Shia violations also included attack to Shia centers, threat to be killed and call for more pressure on Shia communities.

Anti Shi'ism is on the rise in many countries. Shia Rights Watch condemns these acts of violence and urges the international community to put pressure on these governments who are violating these human rights. We must ensure that minorities are able to live a safe, fair, and just life within the communities they live all over the world.

\*Note:

Shia Rights Watch has issued a [Hajj 2016 Advisory](#) to help Shia pilgrimage during

their visit to Saudi Arabia as Shia rights violation increases during Hajj every year.

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## [Incidents of Anti-Shiism in July, 2016](#)

# **Incidents of Anti-Shi'ism in July 2016**

### **Introduction:**

Shia Muslims experienced some of the worst attacks in the month of July than in all of 2016 so far. 775 Shia lost their lives and 616 were injured in the month of July alone. That averages to about 25 killed and 20 wounded *everyday*. Most of these senseless deaths can be attributed to the increased violence of the Islamic State. As they lose ground, IS is becoming steadily more violent, both within the Middle East and abroad. However, many others blame the governments and governmental leaders for allowing the violence to escalate to such a level that civilians cannot even go to the store anymore without the fear of being killed. Shia Rights Watch condemns the hatred that fuels these senseless acts of violence and unnecessary killings, and urges the international community to come together to stop the ever-growing hatred that is threatening our global way of life.

## Incidents of Anti-Shi'ism in July 2016

Country	Killed	Wounded	Arrested	Travel Ban	Damages	Total
Iraq	737	355				1048
Saudi Arabia			4		Damaged mosque	4
Bahrain	1		158	19	Dismantled political party, Halted Friday Prayer	178
Afghanistan	80	260				340
Nigeria			1			1
Kuwait			1			1
Pakistan	2	1				3
<b>Total</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>1626</b>

ShiaRightsWatch.org

### Afghanistan

Afghanistan bared witness to one major incident of anti-Shi'ism on the 24th of July. A joint suicide bombing against peaceful Shia Hazara protesters resulted in a reported 80 killed and 260 wounded. The Shia Hazara are constantly under threat of anti-Shia extremism. ISIS claimed responsibility for this attack. This has been the worst attack in Kabul for months in terms of casualties.

### Bahrain

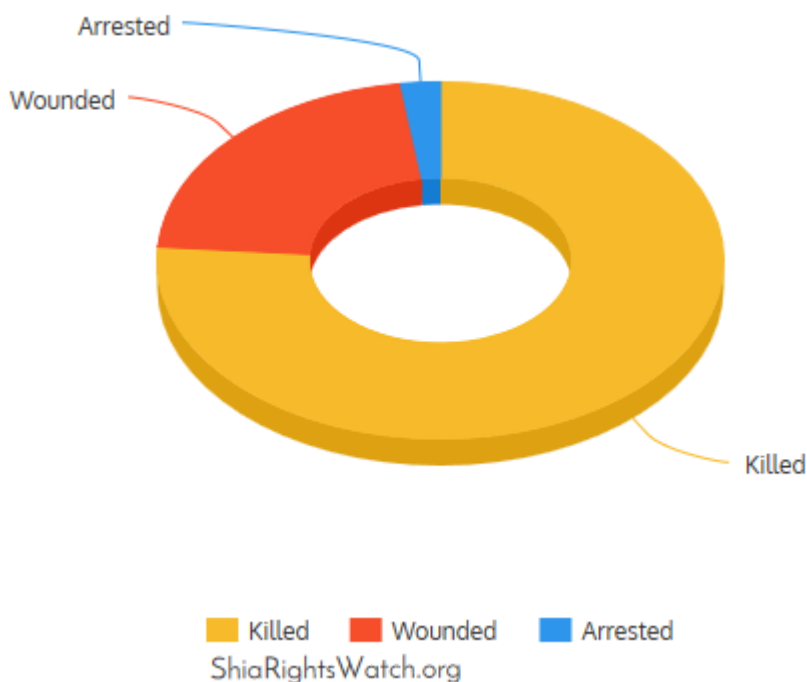
Systematic oppression of the Bahraini Shia continues on in the month of July. A total of 158 were arrested, and a total of 19 were issued travel bans, with a variety of anti-shi'ism incidents, and one death. On June 5th, Manama the Bahraini High Criminal Court sentenced 11 defendants to 7 years in prison and 5 others to 3, over charges of assembling in Sitra. Two days later reports from Diraz revealed government officials disabled internet and cellular connections while also surrounding the town with checkpoints to stop people from leaving or entering the city. On July 14h, inside reports revealed the Bahraini government has also issued travel bans to a cohort of scholars. This follows travel bans issued one month ago to human rights activists attempting to fly to Geneva for a UNHRC assembly. Reports claim that at least 19 people including doctors, lawyers, academics, journalists have been issued the travel ban.

Additionally, Shia clerics and Imams have postponed their prayers to end the holy month of ramadan in honor of Sheikh Isa Qassim, who was arrested and is awaiting trial. Later in the month at least three shia clerics and one poet were

arrested for peaceful demonstration. On July 25th Bahraini authorities referred 138 people to be later tried for “spying for a foreign country”, these are in addition to the continuous arrests under the recent crackdown. Bahraini government faultily accuses protesters of spying for a foreign country in order to cover up its human rights violations.

The last friday of july showed injustice, as leading cleric Sheikh Sankour, was banned from leading friday prayer for a second time. An additional detainee of Bahrain died while imprisoned on July 31st after being taken to the Salmaniya Medical Complex; Bahrain has faced several accusations of torturing its prisoners. Lastly, the previously arrested top Shia cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim faced trial July 27th. The verdict accused him of money laundering and funneling money. Protests have spurred in Diraz after his arrest only to be met with greater crackdowns.

### Shia Muslims July 2016 Killed, Wounded & Arrest



## Iraq

Iraq suffered 39 attacks in 15 different cities this month alone. 24 of those attacks, 62%, occurred in Baghdad. Besides Baghdad, Karrada, Balad and Mosul were also highly targeted. 60% of victims were killed by suicide bombers, 24% by IEDs or gunfire, and 16% by execution.

On July 2nd, Baghdad experienced the deadliest attack in Iraq since the 2003

invasion. ISIS claimed responsibility for the car bomb that left 297 civilians dead and 175 wounded, but some citizens blame the Iraqi government for not acting sooner to stop the violence. A minivan packed with explosives was detonated in a busy shopping center filled with Shia preparing for the Eid-al-Fitr celebration. Days later, rescue workers were still trying to pull bodies from the rubble; some of whom had to be identified by DNA testing. As the bomb was detonated near a 3 story shopping center filled with stores and restaurants, many of the victims were children. ISIS stated that the suicide bomber was targeting Shia, although Iraqis of various backgrounds, such as Christians, were killed. Many citizens blame the Iraqi government for failing to protect its citizens from this horrific atrocity.

The violence continued on July 7th, when ISIS suicide bombers targeted a Shia shrine in Balad, killing 40 and injuring 74. Two men detonated their suicide vests near the shrine, targeting worshipers, and a third man was killed by security personnel before he could detonate his vest. Then, on July 12th, another car bomb killed 25 and injured dozens at a crowded market in Baghdad. The vegetable market, located in the area of Rashidiyah, was full of Shia shopping during rush hour.

## **Pakistan**

In July, Pakistan saw 2 major incidents of anti-Shi'ism, both resulting in death. The first incident occurred on July 6th, when Shia advocate Syed Shahid Shirazi was shot and killed by pro-ISIS takfiri. Armed takfiri terrorists of Ahl-e-Sunnat-Wal-Jamaat (ASWJ), aka Sipah-e-Sahaba shot the advocate on Eid day near the University Wensam College at Multan Road in Dera Ismail Khan. The second incident occurred 3 days later on July 9th in Islamabad. Three armed men entered the house of Sagheer Ahmed Saifi, a Shia cleric. At 10:30pm, the gunmen opened fire, killing his wife Sobia Saifi and injuring the cleric.

## **Saudi Arabia**

Anti Shia sentiment has continued during the month of July in Saudi Arabia. A suicide bomb was detonated outside a Shia Mosque on July 4th in the town of Qatif. Luckily no one in or around the Mosque was injured, though some structural damage to the Mosque occurred. The bomb went off just as people were leaving the Mosque to break their fast. Saudi authorities also arrested Sheikh Mohammad Hassan al-Habib, a prominent cleric in the Safavi region in

Qatif on July 12th. Three companions traveling with Habib were also arrested. All were taken in for questioning. Habib is known for anti-regime protests and for his vocal criticism of the government and its policies toward the Shias. As the kingdom continues to impose more restrictions on religious activities of people in its oil-rich east, tens of Shia community members fell victim to home raids, arrests, and beatings while protesting peacefully on July 25th in Qatif.

## **Kuwait**

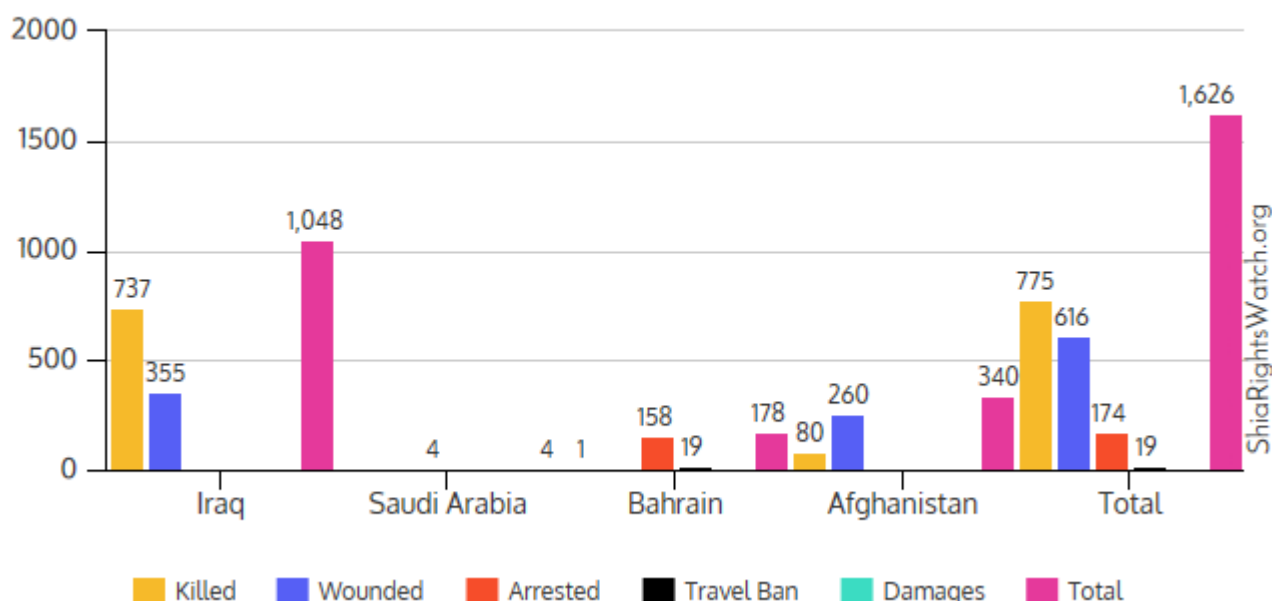
Abdulhameed Dashti, a Kuwaiti lawmaker was sentenced to 14 years and 6 months for remarks he made about fellow gulf states Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. He has been accused of endangering the diplomatic ties with the two countries. Dashti has been living abroad for some months in Britain. The MP has been a strong supporter of the Shia population and is known for his criticism of the royal families of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Dashti has no plans of returning to the oil rich country.

## **Nigeria**

The official inquiry came out 28 July accused Sheikh Ibraheem El Zakzaky of being responsible for the clash that occurred between the Nigerian Army and the Islamic Movement of Nigeria. The attack to Shia community in December 2015 resulted in killing of more than thousand people and disappearance of hundreds. It is worthy to note that Shia community were not armed, the governmental officials attacked their gathering without any notice, and the attack lasted 48 hours. A peaceful Shia leader, El Zakzaky was arrested and is still in prison and in need of medical attention.



## Incidents of Anti-Shi'ism in July 2016



### Conclusion

July has proven to be the most deadly month thus far in 2016 for the Shia population. In just this month alone, 737 people have been killed and 355 wounded in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Scores of Shia minorities have fallen victim to anti-Shia acts such as false imprisonment, beatings, travel bans, arrests, and Mosque defamation. Most acts of anti-Shi'ism occurred in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Anti Shi'ism is on the rise in many countries. Shia Rights Watch condemns these acts of violence and urges the international community to put pressure on these governments who are violating these human rights. We must ensure that minorities are able to live a safe, fair, and just life within the communities they live all over the world.

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## [Incidents of Anti-Shiism in June, 2016](#)

In the month of June, over 278 Shia lives were lost as a result of Shia targeted killings in countries such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Syria and Nigeria. Revocation of citizenship and detainment on basis of pro-democracy efforts not only has been continued, but also increased in Gulf nations such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain.

In the month of June, attacks in the nations of Bahrain, Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Nigeria have resulted in the death count of 277, wounded count of 102 and arrest count of 41.

Country	Killed	Wounded	Arrested
Bahrain	0	0	16
Iraq	234	31	0
Pakistan	4	36	0
Saudi Arabia	1	0	1
Syria	20	24	24
Nigeria	18	10	0
Total	277	89	41

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## Bahrain

Arrests in Bahrain top the charts. In comparison the month of May, the number of arrests have doubled. Further, the number of citizenship revocations have increased extensively.

The month of June coincided with the Muslim Holy month of Ramadhan. However, there was no sign of peace in Bahrain. In fact, tensions rose as Bahraini officials aimed to control affairs of Shia communities.

Despite his pardoning, Nabeel Rajab was detained. Sources state Rajabs deteriorating health as a result of unethical conditions under which he is held in.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, the al- Khalifa regime announced a statement to religious authorities in the country that khoms, a Shia religious taxation, must be announced to the government. Shia leaders and scholars have strongly denounced said statement by the government and condemned the official's

involvement with the group's religious affairs. Khoms consists of 20% of Shia individuals savings and is donated to leading Shia scholars to be used for public use (ie. reduce poverty, increase education availability, etc).

A day later, Bahraini officials renounced the citizenship of Shaikh Isa Qasem, a prominent Shia leader and scholar. Following Qasems arrest, hundreds gathered in the streets of Diraz, Qasem's home town, and protested this injustice.

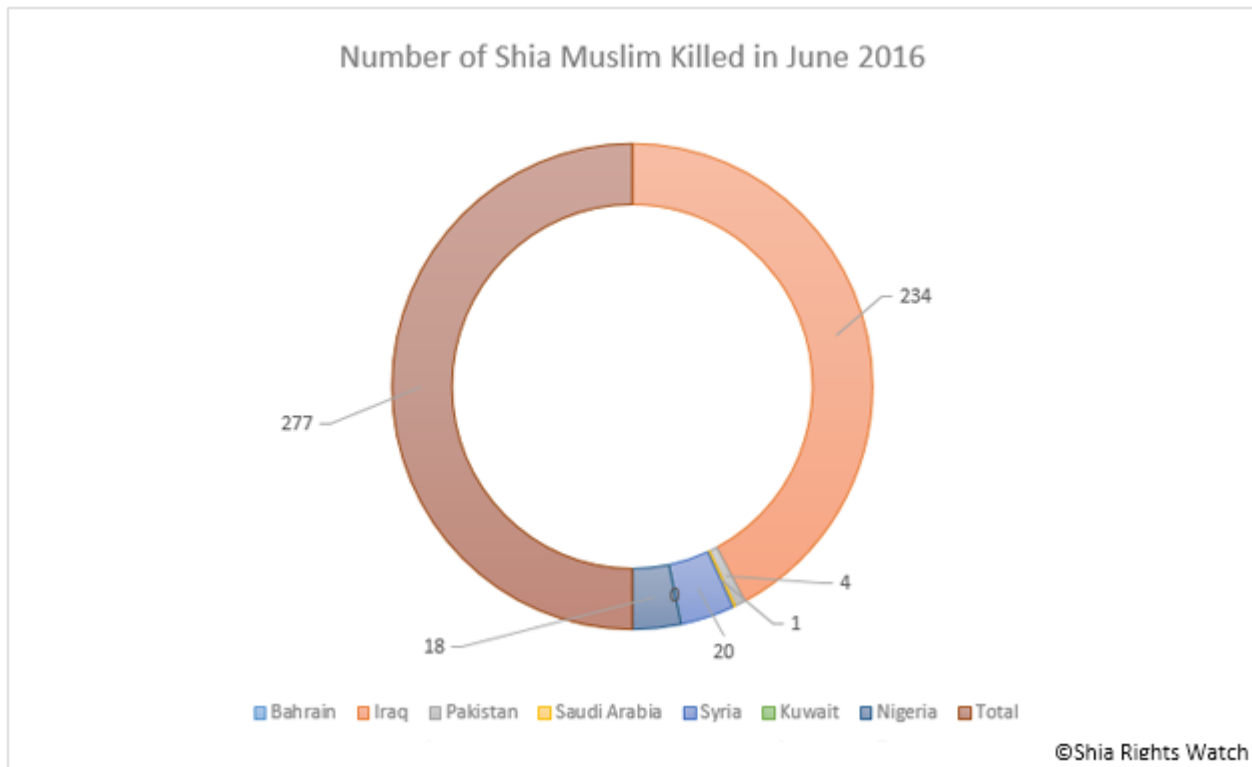
The congregation of Shia mosque Imams ceased Friday prayers at their mosques, citing a lack of safety and security for members of their service.

In order to quell pro-democracy efforts, Bahraini officials have increased their pressure on the Shia Muslim community by arrested and revoking citizenship of senior members of this community. Which has failed in its efforts, and has increased tension among masses.

## **Iraq**

Over 84% of Shia casualties were results of targeted attacks occurring in Iraq- the majority in Baghdad, the capital of Iraq. As a result of regional turmoil, and Iraq's lack of strong central government authority, there is little security.

The largest and most alarming attack occurred on June 7<sup>th</sup>, on which a car bomb detonated five kilometers away from the two holy shrines central to the city of Karbala, 80 kilometers southwest of Baghdad. Eight people were killed and 24 others were wounded. While not the largest in magnitude, this attack caused unparalleled fear as the two shrines are held central to the Shia faith.



## Pakistan

As anti-Shia sentiment continues to thrive in Pakistan, four are killed and 36 others are left wounded. The largest of attacks occurred in Quetta by an explosive device left on a bicycle in the Almo Chowk marketplace. The explosion caused extensive damage to nearby stores and homes. This bomb was strategically placed in the marketplace as it targeted civilians who would be preparing for eid al-fitr festivities as the month of Ramadhan comes to an end.

It must be mentioned that one other bomb was found before its detonation in a separate event. In comparison to previous months, attacks targeting Shia population of Pakistan continues steadily with little signs of reduction.

## Saudi Arabia

Structural violence in Saudi Arabia becomes direct as a Shia individual lost his life as a result of raids in the Eastern province. The Eastern Province is home to the largest Shia density in Saudi Arabia.

Abdul-Rahim al-Faraj was shot by Saudi forces raided his home in late June. The al-Faraj family have been prominent pro-democracy activists- Abdul-Rahim was the fifth of his extended family to be killed by forces since the initiation of the Arab Spring in 2011.

In addition, Shiakh Jafar Sweileh, a prominent cleric in Qatif was arrested and detained for his pro-freedom of speech and religion writings.

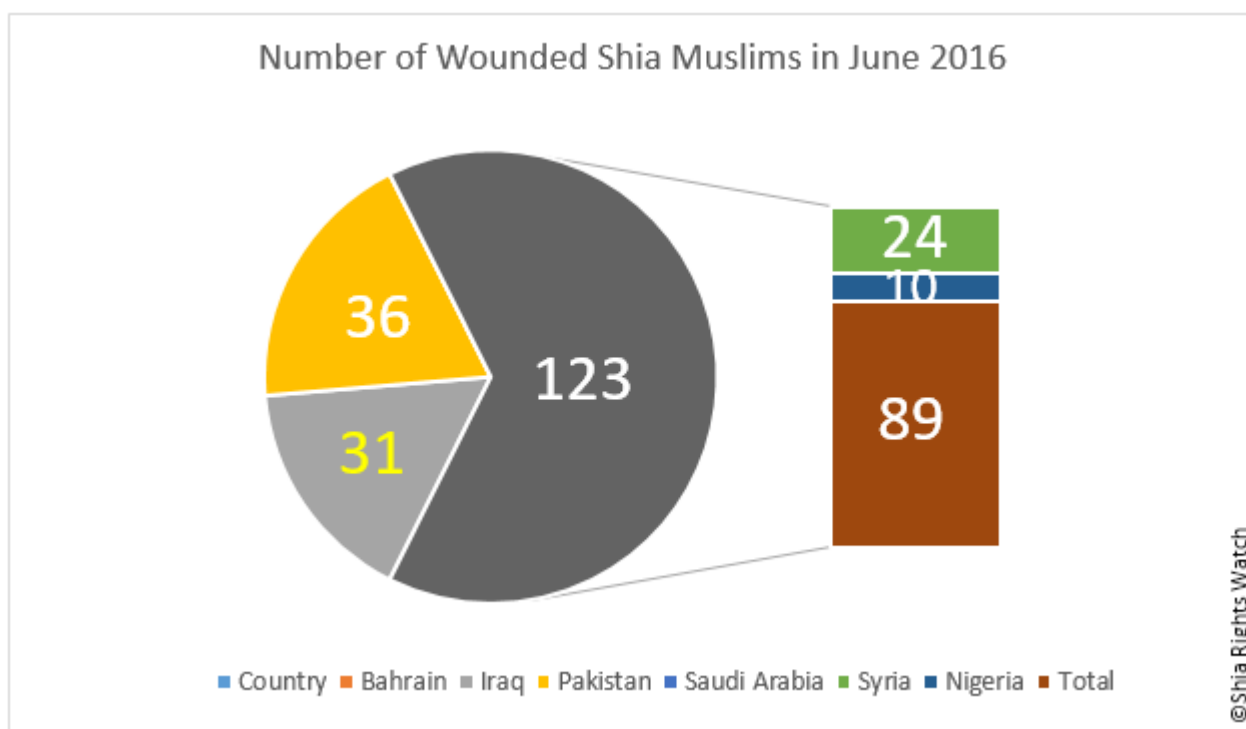
Systemic violence against Shia Muslims have become out right. For decades, Shia Muslims have been treated as second class citizens and have been denied their rights to fair education and job opportunities. Any form of dissent has been met with direct violence.

## Syria

Since April 2016, Shia death in Syria have increased by at least 25%. The environment of entropy in this nation as a result of revolution the war against ISIS has led to the death of millions of civilians. This environment of chaos has allowed for less accountability for crimes against religious minority, and thus has led to an increase in targeted killing of populations such that of the Shia minority.

Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, the town of Zainabiya, located outside of Damascus has been the target of attack as it is the central- most Shia dense area of Syria. Further, this location is the destination of many religious pilgrims as they visit the shrine of Sayida Zainab, Prophet Muhammad's granddaughter.

June's largest casualty incidents was on the 11th, when two suicide bombers and one car bomber detonated their explosives in a busy street in Zainabiya. This incident lead to the death of 20 and the wounding of over 24 others.



## **Nigeria**

Nigeria is home to one of the largest and fastest growing Shia populations in the African region of the world. Along with expansion, however, has been an increase in targeting of this religious minority. Anti-Shia sentiment fueled by the Wahhabist ideology has spread throughout the nation and its officials.

In 2015, Shaikh Zakzaky was ruthlessly detained and hundreds of his followers were killed and disposed of in a shallow unmarked grave. Since then, the targeting of Shia pockets in Nigeria has continued and in some cases has escalated. While extremist groups do exist, many of the acts against Shia have been carried out by government forces.

## **Conclusion**

Over six months into the year 2016, Shia targeting does not seem to slow down. All over the world, Shia Muslims are sought out, and targeted on the basis of their religious belief systems. Shia Rights Watch (SRW) condemns any and all attacks against Shia Muslims as well as any acts against humanity.

Shia Rights Watch asks all governments to promote religious education and tolerance. This NGO also urges them to take necessary steps in order to prevent future Shia rights violations.

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# **Incidents of Anti-Shiism in May, 2016**

The month of May was witness to over 562 tragic deaths, most of which were in Iraq. Anti-Shiism also continued in the form of detainment in the Kingdom of Bahrain and Nigeria. Anti-Shia efforts were furthered in revocation of citizenships of Bahraini pro-democracy advocates and demolition of seminaries in Azerbaijan.

Where have Shia been targeted?

In May, Shia Muslims were targeted in Iraq, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Bahrain, and Nigeria. A total of 562 deaths, 544 injuries, and 15 arrests have been reported.

Country	Deaths	Injuries	Arrests
Iraq	556	544	0
Bahrain	0	0	25
Pakistan	5	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>25</b>

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## Iraq

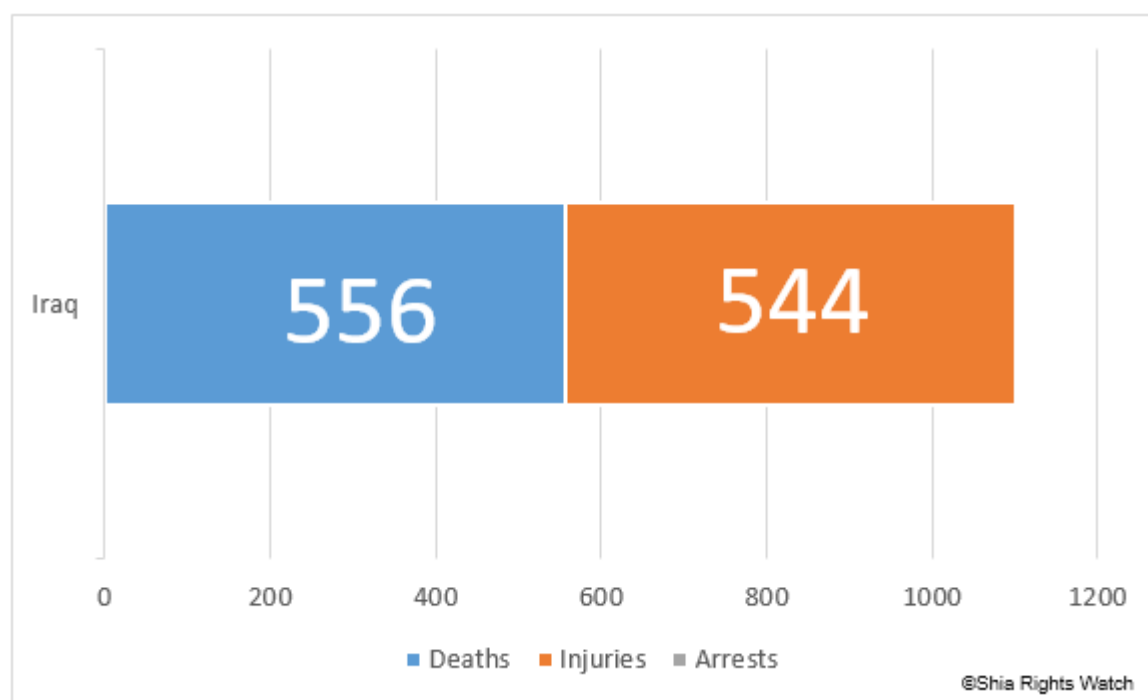
Iraq, continues to top the charts in anti- Shia targetings by terror organizations such as ISIS. The death count in Iraq is 556 of the total 562 Shia killed, and 544 injuries were also reported. The major cause of the aforementioned statistics are gunfire and improvised explosive device (IED) detonation in Shia dense areas of Baghdad. The largest attack in the month of May was on the 17th, where a series of three explosions, rocked the neighborhood of Shaab, Dora and Sadr City of Baghdad. Initially, an explosion occurred in an open market in Shaab, then a suicide bomber targeted in the same location targeting those who had come to aid victims of the first attack. Next, an explosive device detonation occurred in a market located in the city of Dora. Finally, a car bomb was set off in Sadr City. The numerous attacks on the 17th of May resulted in the death of 92 and injury of over 100 civilians.

The second largest attack occurred on May 11 in Sadr City where a bomb located on a pickup truck filled with fruits and vegetables was detonated leading to the death of 70, including a bride preparing for her wedding in a local bridal salon; 100 others were injured on that day. Both the attacks were taken on by ISIS terror organization.

The month of May ended with yet another attack by which over 20 lives were lost and 50 were reported injured as a result of three detonated car bombs and suicide bombs Shia populated areas of Sadr City and Shaab district.

## Azerbaijan

Efforts to reduce public display of Shia presence in Azerbaijan continued in the month of May as yet another seminary was demolished in the city of Nadaran. On afternoon of May 2nd, Azeri government forces destroyed Imam Zaman Seminary (located near Rahimah Khatoon Shrine) claiming to have the goal of “expanding the street”. This violence was denounced by local and international activist as this seminary is located in an alley end and its demolition cannot allow for actual street expansion.



## Nigeria

Anti-shiism efforts were furthered in Kundana State, Nigeria when 91 Shia individuals were sentenced to death by Kunduna High Court officials. Sources report that an arraignment date has been announced in the first of June of 2016.

Nigeria is home to one of the largest and fastest growing Shia densities in the African region. Yet, anti-Shia sentiment fueled by wahhabi education has lead to the targeting of this group.

There has yet to be any development on the detainment of prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Zakzaky.



## Pakistan

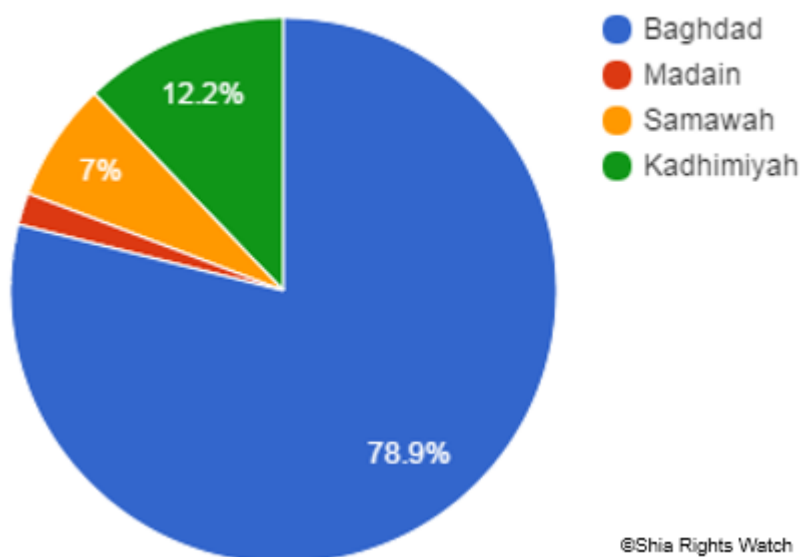
Anti-Shia sentiment continues as two separate incidents occurred targeting Shia individuals in prominent cities in Pakistan, leading to the death of five.

On the seventh of May, Syed Khurram Zaki, editor of the Let Us Build Pakistan (LUBP), a political analysis website was targeted by an armed gunman outside of a tea shop in Karachi. Zaki was 40 years old and was widely known for his public denouncement of extremism.

A second attack occurred on the 12th of May in Khurram Valley resulting in the death of four by the Pakistani Frontier Constabulary. This too was a shooting targeting peaceful protesters asking for removal of a ban (by government) on speakers invited for a local birth celebration of the Shia third Imam.

Justice has yet to be granted for the five pakistani victims killed in the month of May.

May: Iraqi Cities with Major Death Count



## Bahrain

Arrests in the month of May totaled 17 as pro-democracy efforts were furthered by the Kingdom of Bahrain. On May 11, Ebrahim Karimi was revoked Bahraini citizenship, sentenced to 25 months detainment and fined 2100 Bahraini dinar (5570 USD) for “allegedly insulting Salman and Saudi Arabia”. Hassan Alawi Shahrakani, a poet was also arrested for his involvement in pro-democracy efforts. Both of these individuals have been targeted numerous times before by

government officials.

On May 24, Sheikh Mohammad al-Mansi was sentenced to a year in jail after detainment of over one month. Days later, 14 other pro-democracy activists were arrested and sentenced 3 - 15 years in jail. On the 30th, 10 others were detained and sentenced to imprisonment for life while 12 others were stripped of their citizenship. Two defendants were charged with 200.000 Dinars (530,448 USD) and all others were fined 10,983 Dinars (29,129 USD).

In addition, the sentence for Sheikh Ali Salman was increased from four to nine years. Sheikh Salman was arrested in late 2015 on charges for allegedly “disturbing the peace and explicit incitement toward disobeying the law”.

Pro-democracy efforts continue to be impeded by government forces, mainly with imprisonment of prominent activists and revocation of citizenship.

## **Conclusion**

The ever prominent Shia rights violations point to an existing and escalating anti-shia narrative in numerous countries around the world. Efforts to effectively eradicate anti-Shia sentiment has yet to be taken by any individual nations. Shia Rights Watch calls for further development of rights based recognition of Shia Muslims all over the world.

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## **Incidents of Anti-Shiism in April, 2016**

Month of April had at least 553 deaths; most of which took place in Shia communities of Iraq. Iraq has been on top of the violation chart against Shia Muslims for 2015 and evidence thus far predicts same for the year 2016. After Iraq, Syrian and Pakistani Shia lives were lost the most. Unfortunately, there are no clear records of the number of wounded individuals in some of the countries due to limitation of access. Shia Muslims also faced unlawful arrests and lifelong

imprisonment sentences in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Azerbaijan. Other violations noted include anti-Shia protests in Indonesia, Fatwa (religious statement) against this population in Malaysia, the forced surrender of passports in India and the banning of Friday prayer in Nigeria.

Country	killed	Wounded	Arrested/Sentenced	Anti-Shia protest	Shia Prayer Limited
<b>IRAQ</b>	291	345			
<b>INDONESIA</b>				1	
<b>BAHRAIN</b>	1		45		
<b>NIGERIA</b>					2
<b>BANGLADESH</b>	1				
<b>SAUDI ARABIA</b>			1		
<b>SYRIA</b>	15	80			
<b>PAKISTAN</b>	4				

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## Overview

This report will analyze the data compiled on Shia deaths, injuries, and arrests that occurred between April 1st and April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The data for this report was gathered from a variety of different sources. The most well-known incidents of anti-Shiism were retrieved and reported to Shia Rights Watch by eyewitnesses. Each incident is thoroughly evaluated for both authenticity and relevance. For an incident to be included in this report it has to show clear intent to target Shia Muslims on the basis of religious beliefs. The subsequent sections will present and analyze the data gathered by Shia Rights Watch for April.

## Where have Shia Muslims been targeted?

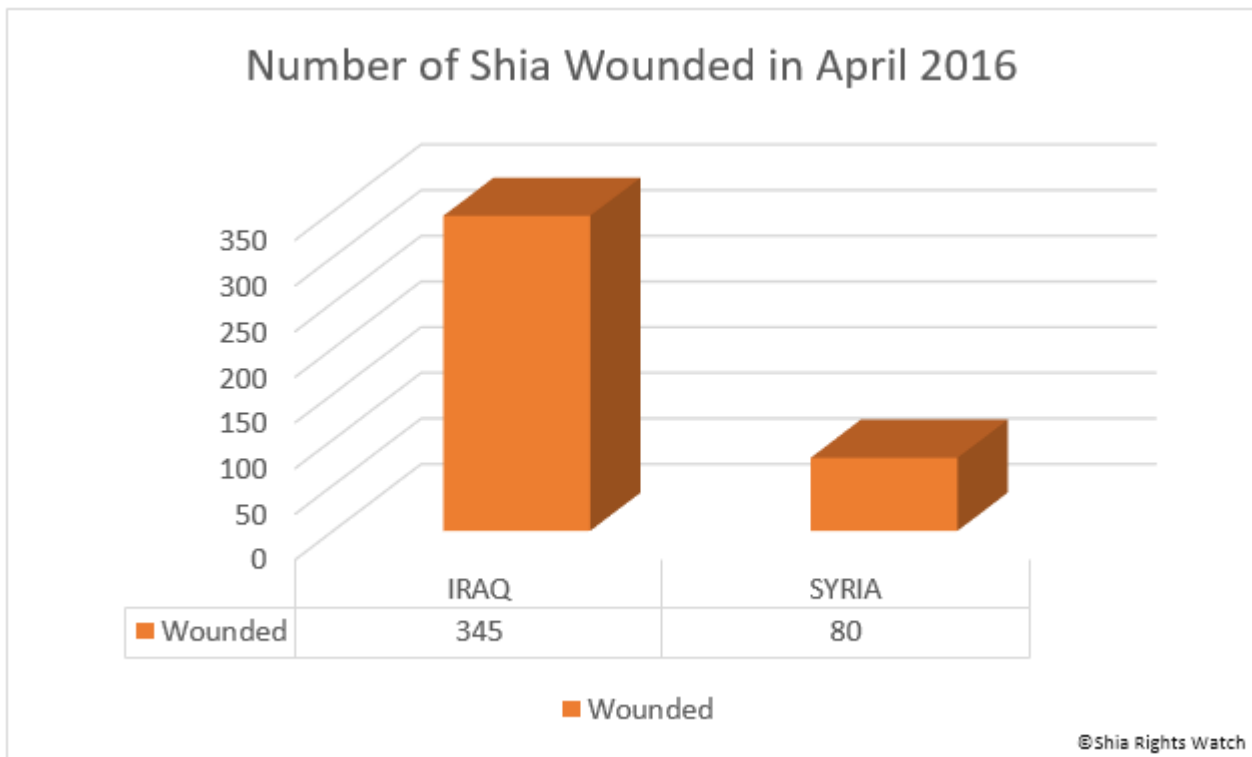
In April, Shia Muslims were victims in many countries however this report details violations in: Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Nigeria, Bahrain, India, Indonesia, Azerbaijan and Malaysia. There were a total of 553 Shia deaths, dozens of injuries, four life sentences and thirteen people imprisoned this month.

## Iraq

Nearly fifty-nine anti-Shia attacks took place in Shia populated cities and neighborhoods of Iraq killing 534 people in the month of April. Baghdad in particular has been the most dangerous place for Shia Muslims as it continues to have the most deaths and injuries of every Iraqi city. Killings and attacks were in the form of gunfire, bombs, and suicide explosions. After Baghdad, Iraqi Shia in Madain, Basra, Nasiriya, Mahmudiya, Baquba, Samarra, Najaf and Karbala were

attacked the most.

The presence of ISIS and unstable political system adds to the vulnerability of Shia Muslims living in Iraq.



## Nigeria

Nigerian security agents prevent Shia Muslims from attending Friday prayers in Katsina and Kebbi. This rule was started Friday April 1, 2016 which prohibits Shia Muslims from holding Friday prayer in these towns.

Update on December 2015 mass Shia killing:

Approximately four months passed since the killing of more than 1000 of Nigerian Shia in December 2015 by state army. According to activists approximately 730 went missing since the incident. Based on our findings, during the early attack to the Shia Mosque in December and recently confirmed by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, the army brutally killed more than 400 Shia men, women, and children and buried bodies in a mass grave to prevent further investigation by families. More mass graves are recovered, worrying families who are still awaiting for their missing family member to come back.

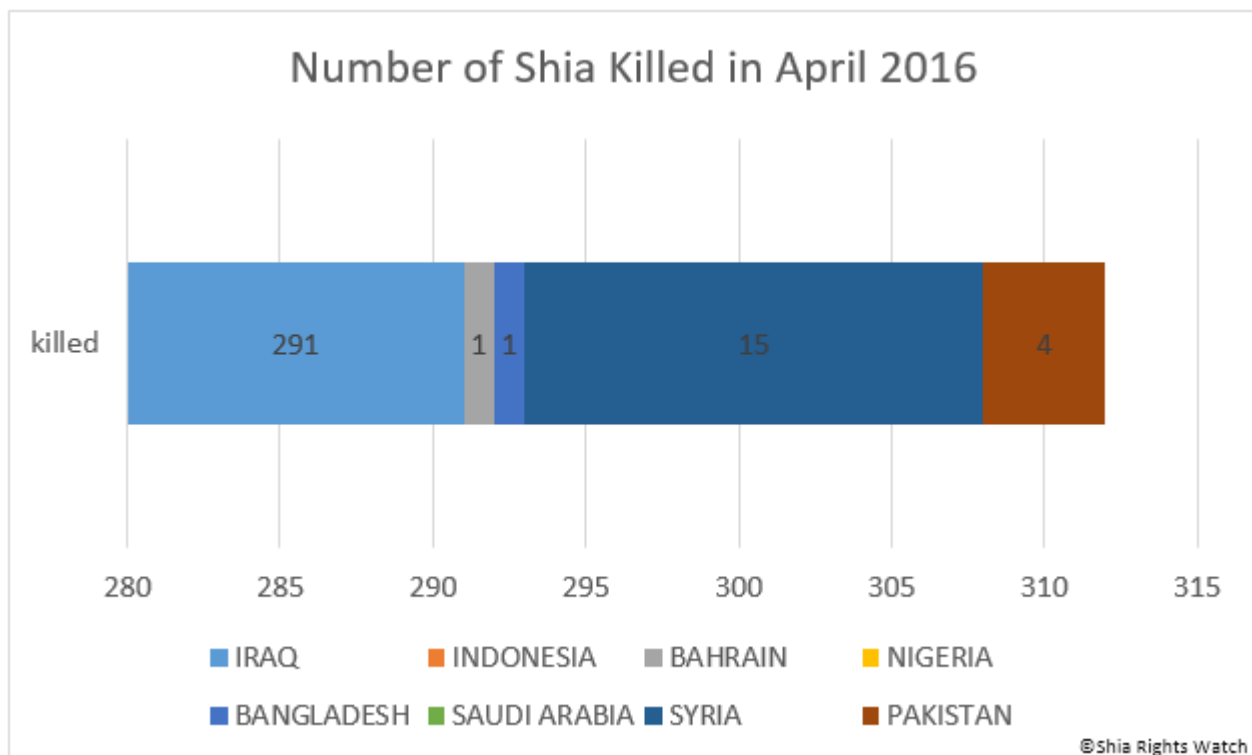
Nigerian army has been trying to cover up the evidences. Local Shia stressed that

a contingent of soldiers had been deployed to keep guard at the site of the mass grave in an effort to prevent the uncovering of the hundreds of bodies buried there.

After the attack the military sealed off the areas around Zakzaky's compound, the Hussainiyya and other locations. They took bodies away, removed rubble, washed bloodstains and removed bullets and spent cartridge from the streets.

Witnesses saw piles of bodies outside the morgue of Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital in Zaria. Latter 191 corpses were transferred from the Nigerian Army Depot in Zaria to a burial site in the Mando area of Kaduna, a further 156 corpses were taken from the Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital in Zaria to the same burial site.

According to local activists, the burial in Kaduna was based on a court order by the state government. The depressing fact that the army killed hundreds of unarmed civilians in a forty-eight hour time-frame clearly states that this action was based on some official order resulting in a substantial loss of life at the hands of the military.



## **Bahrain**

Shia Muslims continue to face violations by authorities in Bahrain.

On April 30th, Bahraini authorities arrested 35 Shia Bahraini from Karbabad. There yet to be any explanations for the arrest.

Also in this month, Ali Abdulghani, a young Bahraini Shia man, died on April 4, 2016 due to his injuries he received on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 after being run over by the police in the city of Manama during an anti-government protest. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the police supposedly stormed his aunt's house to arrest him, but he fled.

The Bahraini regime also detained Shia cleric Mohammed al-Mansi, who works as a leader of the Islamic Clerics council. The regime used the excuse that he held prayers without the permission of the Al Khalifa regime in order to arrest him. The cleric has been known for speaking out against the destruction of forty-three Shia mosques by the Manama regime. Before his sentencing he was subjected to a 48 hour interrogation.

Moreover, Bahraini court has sentenced eight people to life in jail after convicting them of "terrorism". Another five people were jailed on 27th of April with similar accusations. It is important to note that Bahrain charges pro-democracy advocates as terrorists and most of them are Shia.

## **Indonesia**

A group of Wahhabis protested in front of a Shia private property as they were holding a ritual in Bangil. The protestors threatened the Shia with racial slurs and demanded cancelation of the religious ritual taking place. According to an activist volunteer, police had to protect the participants and prevent the crowd from entering the private property.

'Bangil' is the name of the region and city in East Java, Indonesia which consists of eleven rural district and four villages. Wahhabis are influential in East Java and since the year 2000 they have been responsible for many murders, burned homes, and displaced Shiite Muslims in Sampang.

## **India**

On April 1, 2016, Indian authorities in the district of Lucknow told Shia cleric,

Kalbe Jawad, he must hand in his passport within the following ten days. In a statement on the issue by Jawad, he says, "A revenge is being taken against me as I have been raising my voice against anomalies committed by the district administration in the Hussainabad Trust".

Indian Shia have faced violations in the past as the government used tear gas to interrupt their rituals in 2015 and asked them to remove their banners from advertisement boards on streets.

## **Pakistan**

Three Shia Muslims were shot by terrorists of Ahl-e-Sunnat-Wal-Jamaat (ASWJ) near Shafiq Mor area of Karachi on Friday April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The three victims whose names were Hashim (40 years old), Ali Sajjad (27 years old, and Shamim Rizvi (30 years old), were returning from Friday prayers at Shah Najaf Imambargah in Bafarzone when suspects intercepted them.

Hashim and Ali died instantly and Shamim joined them later on when he died from his injuries in a nearby hospital. It is being speculated that this attack was in response to members of ISIS recently being killed in combat, suggesting these two terrorist groups have close ties.

Also, on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 a religious scholar of the Shia School of Thought named Allama Imdad Hussan Jafri was slaughtered in Hyderabad, Pakistan. Unknown armed terrorists illegally entered the scholar's home and slaughtered him to death.

Pakistani Shia have lost valuable members of their community due to their Shia faith and the government has yet to take any action to protect them.

## **Saudi Arabia**

Ali al-Nimr, Dawoud al-Marhoun and Abdullah al-Zaher wait to be executed after being given the death sentence. The victims were accused of participating in pro-democracy protests back in 2011 and 2012. According to activists, the inmates were not appointed lawyers and forced to confess under torture where they had been forced to sign blank papers on which their "crimes" were later written down.

Ali and Dawoud were 17 and Abdullah was 15 at the time of their arrest. The three men are currently being held in Dammam Mabahith Prison.

Also, on Monday April 23rd, Saudi Arabia approved of the death sentence for Shia activist Yusof al-Mosheykhas, in the city of Awwamiyah in the eastern region of Qatif

## **Azerbaijan**

In Lankaran, Azerbaijan, large numbers of Shia leaders were arrested unfairly. Police raided the homes of clerics and activists, including Karbalayi Qismat, Syed Nazem and Seyed Waqar, taking them into custody, according to reports by the Caucasus Cultural Center. Shia Muslims make up 85% of the country, yet are still extremely discriminated against.

## **Malaysia**

Recently, Abdullah Din, a well-known Malaysian scholar, suggested forbidding marriage between Shia and non-Shia Malaysians despite the fact that these populations intermarried throughout their history and coexisted in harmony. This anti-Shia scholar also stated "I hope the religious departments and mufti from all states will issue a clear edict on whether it is allowed for Muslims to consume food served by Shiites [Shia], including whether animals slaughtered by Shiites are halal and so on."

Anti- Shia clerics and scholars have freedom to spread hateful messages against Shia Muslims in Malaysia, yet they express acceptance toward other minority groups. Malaysian Shia have been banned from publishing their books and keeping any Shia publications in public places.

## **Syria**

On Monday April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 many people were killed via car bomb near the revered Shia shrine of Sayyida Zeinab in the town of Al-Diyabiyah, which is a common place for Shia to visit on religious pilgrimages. As many as fifteen people were killed and eighty were transported to a nearby hospital.



Syrian Shia have been slaughtered, killed and violated against by numerous anti-Shia groups in Syria including ISIS. Unfortunately many of the violations are not reported due to limited coverage by media and access by human rights NGOs.

## **Conclusion**

Anti-Shiism is spreading and on the rise in many countries. It is up to the international community whether organizations or just regular people to oust the prejudice and misinformation when the governments of these countries cannot bring themselves to do so. Shia Rights Watch condemns the acts committed against Shia Muslims around the world, and urges the authorities to take action and protect this minority in their homelands.

Shia Rights Watch believes Anti-Shiism is a growing trend that will continue to gain notoriety until the international community addresses the issue.

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# **Incidents of Anti-Shiism in March, 2016**

## **Overview:**

This report will analyze the data compiled on Shia deaths, injuries, and arrests that occurred between March 1st and March 31st, 2016. This month there were 466 deaths within the Shia community. Also 15 cases of arrest were reported. Anti-Shia violations were reported in seven countries during March 2016.

As it was expected Iraq has the highest number of civilian killing due to bombing and explosions. Highest number of arrest took place in Bahrain and most deportations are from Kuwait.

Beside killing, arrest and deportation, attack to religious gathering, and ban of

Shia call to prayer was reported.

In March, Shia Muslims were targeted in ten countries; Bahrain, Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kuwait, Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia.

The data for this report was gathered from a variety of different sources. The most well-known incidents of anti-Shiism were retrieved from stories that are reported to Shia Rights Watch by eyewitnesses. Each incident is thoroughly evaluated for both authenticity and relevance. For an incident to be included in this report it has to show clear intent to target Shia Muslims on the basis of religious beliefs. The subsequent sections will present and analyze the data gathered by Shia Rights Watch for March.

## Where have Shia Muslims been targeted?

Country	Deaths	Arrests	Injuries	Other Violations
Bahrain		12		7 families and 1 individual deported;
Bangladesh	1			
Iraq	377		793	
Pakistan	3	1		
Saudi Arabia	1	2		Religious prayer limited
Kuwait				74 people deported
Nigeria				1 religious procession halted.

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## Bahrain

Pressure on pro-democracy advocates continues Bahraini authorities arrest and detain peaceful protestors on daily bases. In month of March daughter of political activist, Zainab al-Khawaja, and her one year old baby were detained by the Bahraini government.

In addition, Bahraini autoritaires arrested ten people during a protest in Manama. The arrested individuals were found guilty of being involved in « terrorist plots », and resisting police. Four of them were given lifetime sentences while the rest of them were given between 3 and 15 years.

Déportions also continues as the government deported several Lebanese on the accusations of them having ties to militant groups. According to reports, so far 7 Lebanese families were deported on grounds of this. Dr. Masood Jahroomi was

forced deportation by the government after having his citizenship taken away. He was arrested in 2011 and was detained five months before being given a sentence. Bahrain has been on human rights activists's radar since the Arab Spring and violations has not decreased nor prevented since.

## **Bangladesh**

Tuesday March 15, 2016 Top Shia preacher, Abdur Razzak, aged 48, was hacked to death on his way home from his shop in Kaliganj town in Jhenaidah district. Although the attack was later claimed by ISIS. police say it wasn't ISIS. He was declared dead later that night at Kaliganj Upazila Health Complex.

According to the head of the Shia School in the district, Abdur Razzak has been a member of the Shia community at least 20 years. Right before the murder, he received threatening calls from drug dealers who believed him to have helped arrest them months previously.

Bangladesh is not known to have large Shia population. Any violation must be carefully examined in order to prevent future crises.

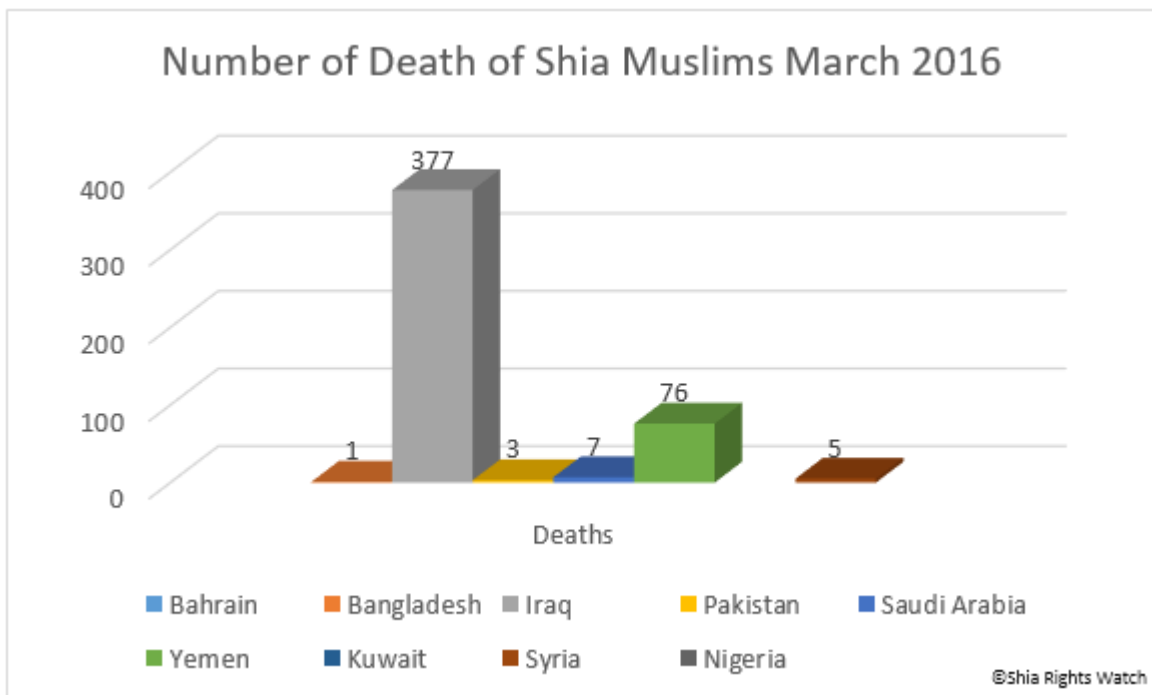
## **Iraq**

Iraq continues to top the list for violence against Shia Muslims, and this could be a result of the majority Shia population and present of ISIS in this country.

As many as 377 civilians have been reported killed in Iraq in the month of March. Improvised explosive device (IED), gun fires, execution by ISIS, road bombs, and suicide bombers are responsible for the death toll. Violators use busy markets, funerals and religious gatherings to target civilians.

Iraq had the highest death toll in 2015 and 2016 is expected to be the same.

In 2015 more than 5000 people were killed and another 5000 injured in Iraq and the trend continues this year. The government and anti-ISIS coalitions have failed to protect civilians so far.



## **Pakistan**

This month Pakistan had three murders, one arrest, and one injury according to our reports. The violation in Pakistan mainly occurred by gunfire against Shia activists. In the most devastating incident, Professor Abid Raza, school principal of ICMS school system was shot by four terrorists of Ahle-E-Sunnat-Wal-Jamaat. He was attacked on his motorcycle by another cyclist. Video of the attack can be accessed by contacting SRW, but won't be published due to graphic scenes. Another two Shia were killed in Dera Ismail Khan and one was attacked and killed in Charsadah.

Rizwan Haider was arrested under blasphemy laws and sentenced to 13 years in prison.

Shia rights violations have long history in Pakistan. Shia minority have always been attacked and killed on daily bases and the government has not taken steps to prevent the killings.

## **Saudi Arabia**

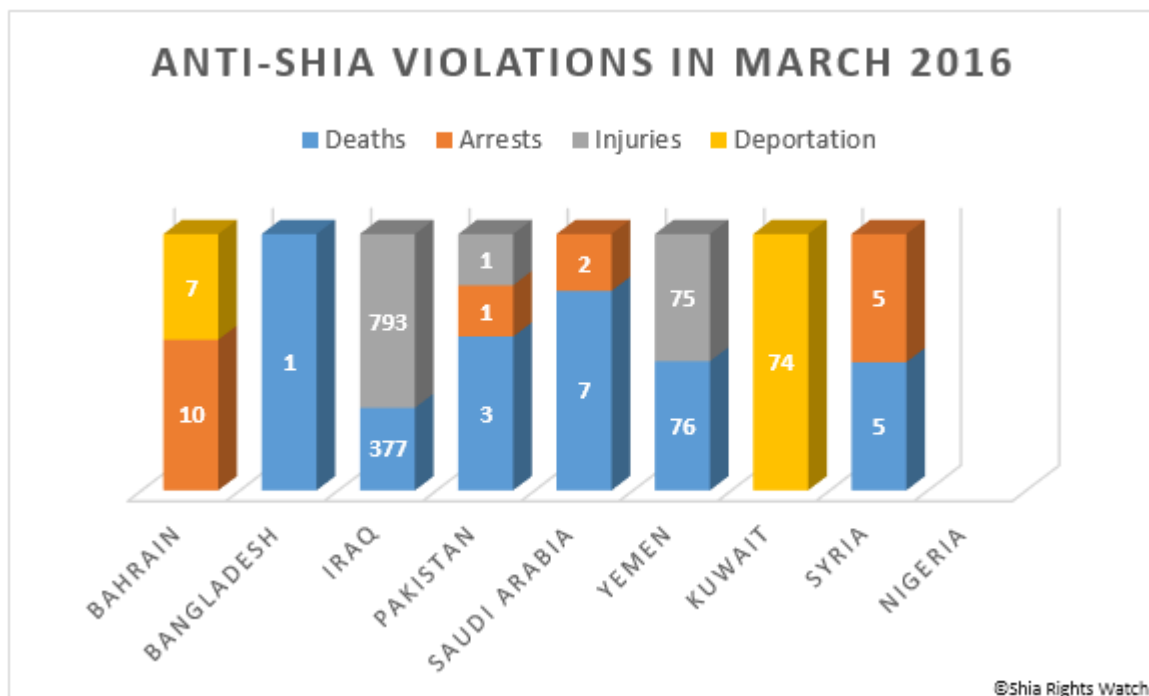
This month Saudi Arabia had seven deaths, two arrests, and a case of limited religious prayer

Makki Ali was arrested at the checkpoints and then detained in Awwamiyya district police station without any explanation. Securities denied his detention at

first, but released his dead body after four weeks of his death. SRW's investigation on the body revealed that Makki was subjected to severe tortured before he was killed.

The gouvernement also arrested a Shia cleric , Hussein al-Radhi, shortly after he led prayers in the al-Ahsa oasis region of Eastern Province. The detention came after the senior cleric wrote an article in which he criticized the authorities for jailing and executing critics and dissidents, including Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr who was beheaded in January. Saleh Ghanim is another detainee who was arrested because he expressed the need to protect SHia mosques in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is known for its support to ISIS and anti-Shia ideologies.



## Kuwait

This month, the Kuwait government deported 74 Shia Muslims. All people deported are falsely accused of ties to Hezbollah. Most of those deported had Iraqi and Lebanese nationalities. This country has deported number of Shia Muslims in the past with the same accusation. Such accusations were never investigated and proved.

## **Nigeria**

This month the Nigerian government was guilty of blocking a religious procession in honor of Muhammad's daughter. The violation occurred Wednesday March 30, 2016. The procession, named the Sayyada Zahara Maulud procession, is an annual event by the movement to commemorate the birth of the prophet's daughter, Fatima. According to the movement's leader, ten armed security guards rolled up to the protest and started taking away their flags, signs, etc., making people very fearful. The governor stated that he did not mean to deny their religious freedom, but they could not tolerate religious events at public property. The procession began at 8am at the central mosque.

## **Conclusion**

Causality cases against Shia Muslims were increased during March compared to February. Bahrain, Pakistan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia that are covered in this report, have known history of violations against Shia. Thousands of Shia Muslims have lost their lives in mentioned countries combined and hundreds, including minors, are unlawfully detained.

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# **Incidents of Anti-Shiism in February 2016**

## **Overview:**

This report will analyze the data compiled on Shia deaths, injuries, and arrests that occurred between February 1<sup>st</sup> and February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This month there were 372 deaths within the Shia community. Compared with last month's analysis, the death rate has greatly increased, which is a negative sign for the future wellbeing of this minority group. In fact, the death toll more than doubled from last month. There were several events which resulted in large death rates.

One such event were suicide bombing in several suburbs of Damascus, Syria on February 21<sup>st</sup>, which killed 140 people. Another was a suicide bombing in Baghdad Iraq on February 28, 2016 which resulted in 78 deaths, 112 injuries, and 5 missing persons. The data for this report was gathered from a variety of different sources. The most well-known incidents of anti-Shiism were retrieved from stories that are reported to Shia Rights Watch by eyewitnesses. Each incident is thoroughly evaluated for both authenticity and relevance. For an incident to be included in this report it has to show clear intent to target Shia Muslims on the basis of religious beliefs. The subsequent sections will present and analyze the data gathered by Shia Rights Watch for February.

## Where have Shia Muslims been targeted?

Incidents Against Shia Muslims February 2016				
Country	Deaths	Injuries	Arrests	Other Damages
Malaysia			4	
Bahrain			21	
Iraq	227	190		5 people missing
Pakistan	1			
Syria	143	200		
Saudi Arabia	1		30	

In February, Shia Muslims were targeted in six countries; Malaysia, Bahrain, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria and Saudi Arabia, There were a total of 315 deaths, 390 injured, and 55 arrested, as a result of anti-Shia hate crimes. Although Shia human rights were violated in other countries across the world as well, this report lists those countries in which numerical proof of murders, injuries, and arrests are present.

### Malaysia

This month Malaysia fell victim to four unlawful arrests. Although Malaysia did not make it into January's monthly report, it has been a source of many Shia rights violations in past months. Four Malaysian Shia were charged under sections nine and twelve of Syariah Criminal Offences Enactment of 1997 for practicing their religion.

### Bahrain

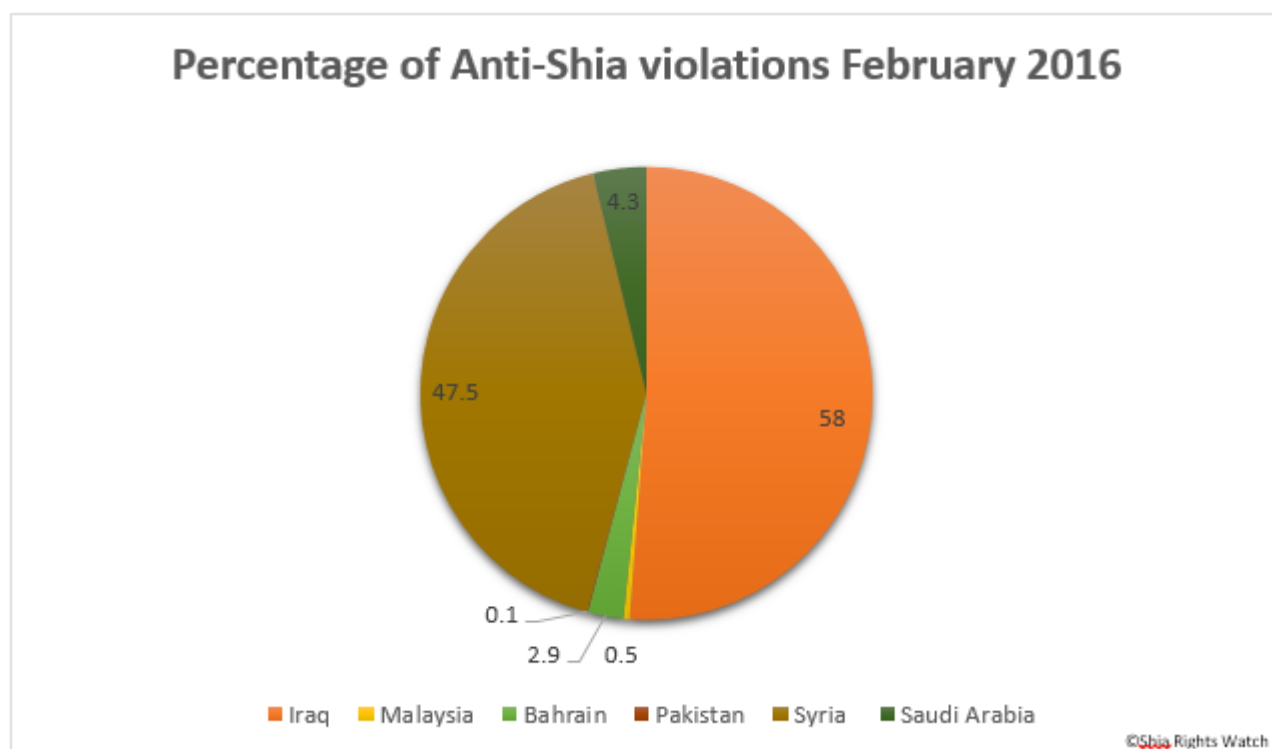
This month twenty-one people were arrested in Bahrain. The arrestees were accused of blocking the road during protests, and/or of terrorist activities. The

five people arrested February 29<sup>th</sup> were also charged a sum total of 17,000 dinars on top of their fifteen year jail sentences. There are no proof of terrorist activities occurring.

## **Iraq**

With a grand total of 227 deaths and 190 injuries, Iraq by far has the greatest amount of human rights violations against the Shia minority in the month of February. The amount of casualties in Iraq has increased exponentially since January with death rates being multiplied by four. The attacks consisted of a combination of gunfire, suicide bombings, and other improvised explosive devices.

The February bombings occurred in various places including mosques, funeral services, markets, and grain silos. Baghdad has been the main city where anti-Shia attacks have occurred this past month.



## **Pakistan**

This month Malik Iftikhar Ali Haideri, was killed in Pakistan. He was murdered via gun by two unknown men on motorcycles.

## **Syria**

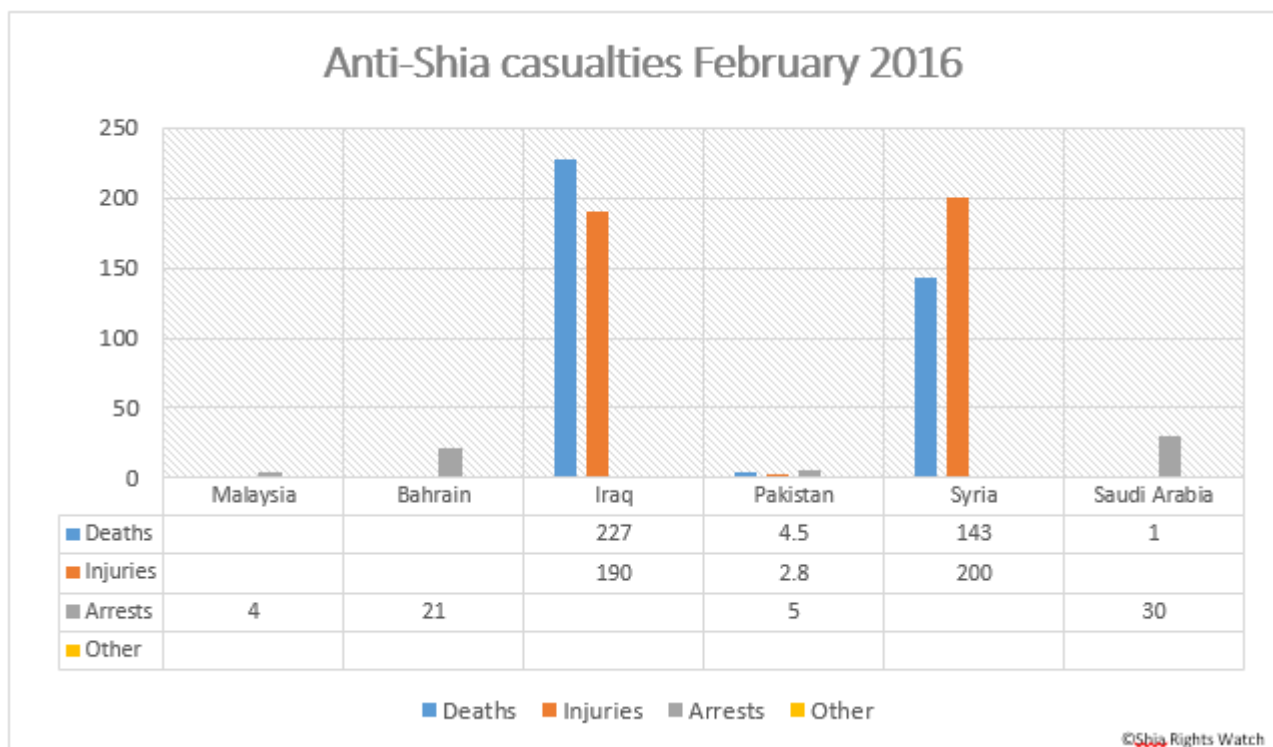
This month a total of 143 Syrian Shia were killed and 200 were injured. This



makes it the second highest for number of Shia rights violations this month after Iraq. The number of casualties has increased since January with the number of people injured and killed doubling. The most deaths occurred on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 which two incidents happening, a series of four bomb blasts which struck a suburb of Damascus called Sayyida Zeinab killing 83 people, and a bomb explosion in another suburb called Homs in which 57 people were killed. These bombings also resulted in many injuries making February 21<sup>st</sup> the worst day this month for Syrian Shia Muslims.

## Saudi Arabia

This month there was 1 Saudi Shia death and 30 unlawful arrests. The Saudi government was responsible for both of these cases. The arrests were due to unfounded accusations that thirty-two Saudis were spying for Iran (this number consists of thirty Shia). These individuals were detained back in 2013 but were just put on trial this year. It should be noted that trial was kept private and lacked due process of law; both of these suggest huge government corruption as both of these practices in court are illegal. SRW urges international powerhouses such as the UN to make sure that each and every nation uses fair and legal practices in all criminal court cases.



## **Conclusion**

This month anti-Shia casualties have increased exponentially from last month, which means that despite the relatively good start to 2016, the Shia population across the world is still not doing well. Iraq was responsible for the most human rights violations against Shia Muslims, with Syria trailing closely behind. Malaysia, Bahrain, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia are also mentioned in this report, but there is not nearly as much written about these places. This could mean that these places had less violations, but it could also mean that their other violations have not been released yet. The majority of deaths were caused by IED explosions, suicide bombings, and gunfire. Suicide bombings occurred in markets, mosques, funeral services, and more. There were also a large number of people arrested on grounds of "terrorism." However, there is no proof of any sort of terrorist activities.

Although many of the perpetrators are unknown, ISIS has claimed responsibility for a great deal and the Saudi government was responsible for many within their own kingdom. Increased measures need to be implemented in order to combat ISIS, and the UN needs to be more responsible in making sure that the Saudi government cannot continue making obvious human rights violations.