



Yemen: Suppression of Thought and Belief

A Human Rights Report on
Violations Against Preachers and
Minorities in Yemen (2014-2025)



Report #

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HUMAN REPORT

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Violations Against Preachers and
Minorities in Yemen (2014-2025)

RIGHTSRADAR |      

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Introduction

Preachers and social reformers represent one of the most influential segments of Yemeni society. They also have widespread respect due to their vital role in spiritual guidance, public awareness, and religious instruction. Furthermore, they play a vital part in promoting and consolidating the values of coexistence and social peace.

Following the September 2014 takeover of the capital, Sana'a, by "Ansar Allah" movement—commonly known as the Houthi militia group—after its coup against the internationally recognized government, the role of preachers and social reformers in fostering dialogue, coexistence, and peace became increasingly vital. However, these groups became primary targets of repression, persecution, and abuse. Such violations were driven by ideological, political, and occasionally retaliatory motives, specifically aimed at neutralizing their influence on public opinion.

In the wake of the Houthi coup, the deterioration of security and the widespread chaos placed preachers and religious minorities on the front lines of the conflict. These violations were not restricted to any specific intellectual or sectarian group; instead, field reports indicate they affected a wide range of ideological and sectarian groups and minorities, most notably the Baha'i and Jewish minorities. Such grave abuses have impacted all religious and sectarian communities, constituting a severe breach of human rights as codified in national and international laws, norms, and conventions.

Violations against preachers and minorities in Yemen have been characterized by their diverse methods and broad geographical reach across various governorates. These abuses have escalated from harassment and intimidation to severe curtailments of personal liberties, including arbitrary detention, abduction, enforced disappearance, and torture. This continuum of violence has further extended to violations on physical integrity and, ultimately, the deprivation of the right to life through killings, executions, and extrajudicial assassinations.

Given the profound humanitarian and societal significance of these groups, and recognizing that attacks on their dignity and lives undermine social stability and communal peace, Rights Radar has issued this report to shed light on the grave violations of their fundamental human and legal rights.

Rights Radar for human rights has made every effort to document all available information in accordance with both international and national legal standards, with the aim of strengthening advocacy efforts and promoting justice and legal redress for victims of such violations.



Report Methodology

This report, issued by Rights Radar Organization under the title “Yemen: Yemen: Suppression of Thought and Belief,” is based on a multidimensional methodology that combines field monitoring, documentation, and both qualitative and quantitative analysis. It aims to shed light on the violations committed against preachers and minorities in Yemen, encompassing individuals of various roles, including scholars, jurists, imams, preachers, khateebis (sermon preachers), Qur’an memorizers, muftis, and muezzins, as well as minority groups such as Baha’is and Jews. Covering the armed conflict in Yemen from September 2014 to December 2025, this report provides an analytical reading of the impact of these violations on the social fabric and the right to religious practice. It specifically documents the systemic harm directed at preachers and religious minorities during this period.

From a qualitative and thematic perspective, the report is based on an investigative approach, utilizing field inquiries and the examination of violation incidents. This involved tracking initial reports and conducting both direct and indirect interviews with victims, their families, and witnesses. Furthermore, the process included gathering testimonies from diverse sources, as well as the examination, verification, and documentation of data through available evidence, including sworn testimonies, official documents, and medical reports.

From a quantitative perspective, an analytical methodology was employed to analyze and interpret numerical data concerning victims and documented violations from September 2014 to December 2025. Data were categorized using rigorous criteria, including geographic distribution, violation types, targeted groups, methods of violations, and responsible parties, in a manner consistent with the report’s objectives. Violations were categorized into three main types: killing, injury, and detention. Each case was further classified according to (governorate – responsible party – religious status – intellectual affiliation – method and means of execution). This has enabled the development of a precise statistical framework to understand the scale and prevalence of the problem, and to link it to its political, social, and religious context, paving the way for reliable findings and practical recommendations.

The report is based on the methodological mechanism adopted by Rights Radar for documenting violations, which begins with collecting information through a network of field monitors operating across 20 Yemeni governorates. This is supplemented by receiving reports via phone, oral, and written communications from reliable sources. This phase is followed by a rigorous field verification process, complemented by the collection of documented evidence and testimonies. The data are then entered into a specialized electronic system for analysis, classification, and processing within an integrated database.

Throughout all its phases, the report strictly adheres to neutrality, objectivity, and credibility by ensuring comprehensive documentation covering all conflicting parties without selectivity, and by verifying that all data conform to internationally recognized monitoring standards. The findings have also been linked to previously documented indicators of violations against preachers and minorities over more than a decade of war in Yemen, using transparent verification tools that allow for independent review and validation by impartial human rights organizations.



Legal Characterization

The violations against preachers, minorities, and other segments of society in Yemen constitute a serious violation of a set of constitutional guarantees established in national legislation, as well as a clash with established principles in international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

At the national level: Article 42 of the Yemeni Constitution of 1991 and its amendments guarantees freedom of thought and opinion, which of course includes the right of preachers and minorities to practice their religious rituals and functions. Article 47 establishes the principle of personal criminal responsibility, stipulating that no crime or punishment may be imposed except on the basis of a legitimate legal text. The accused are guaranteed the presumption of innocence until a final judicial ruling is issued, and retroactive laws imposing penalties are prohibited. Article 48 guarantees public freedoms and prohibits their restriction except by a ruling from a competent court. It also safeguards human dignity, prohibits all forms of torture and inhuman treatment, and bans enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention.

With regard to the right to life, Articles 231 and 234 of the Yemeni Crimes and Penalties Law criminalize premeditated murder, while Article 254 of the same law criminalizes threatening to cause serious bodily harm to others.

In the context of abduction and enforced disappearance, Articles 249 and 250 of the Yemeni Crimes and Penalties Law stipulate that perpetrator of abduction shall be punished with imprisonment for varying periods of up to ten years. The penalty is increased to death if the abduction is accompanied by murder or torture. The penalties also extend to all participants or accomplices in the crime.

Additionally, the Yemeni Criminal Procedure Law No. 13 of 1994 provides a set of legal protections. Article 6 prohibits the torture of the accused, subjecting them to inhuman treatment, or inflicting physical or psychological harm to coerce confessions, and any statements made under duress are legally invalid. Article 7 prohibits arbitrary arrest.

At the international level: Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) guarantees the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including the freedom to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and disseminate information and ideas by any means.

Violations such as killing, injury, detention, and enforced disappearance also constitute clear breaches of Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which affirms that everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person. They further violate Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which recognizes the right to life as an inherent right of every human being. Arbitrary arrest or detention is explicitly prohibited under Article 9 of both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Practices of torture and ill-treatment violate Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which absolutely prohibit torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. This prohibition is further reinforced by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which prohibits violence to life and bodily integrity, while Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention classifies such acts as “grave breaches”.

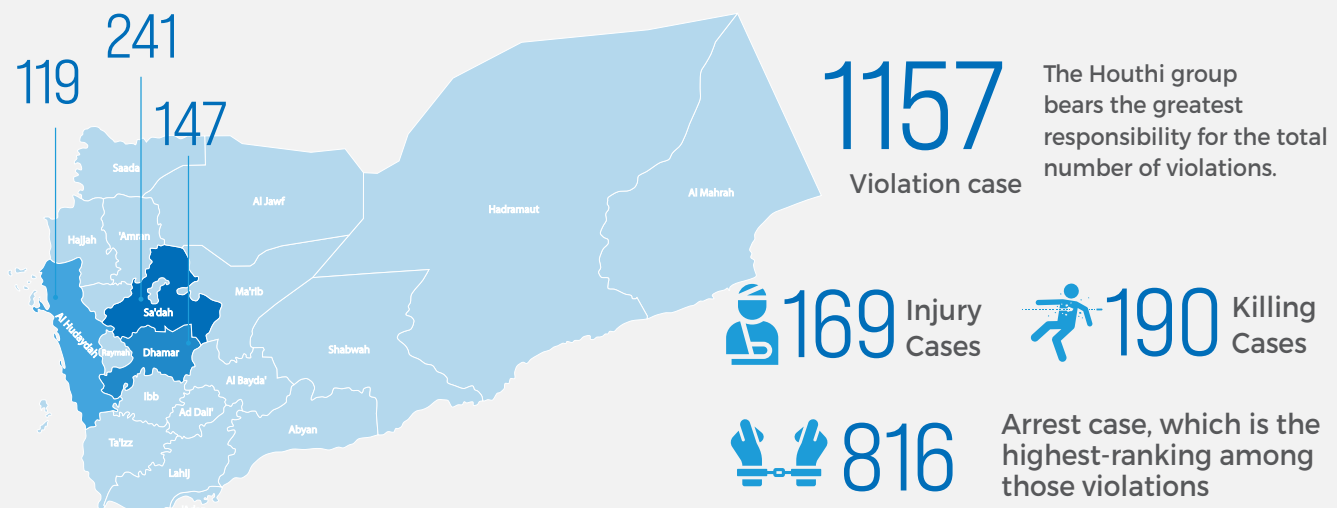
Enforced disappearance, when practiced in a systematic or widespread manner, constitutes a crime against humanity under Article 9 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. It also violates customary rules of international humanitarian law, particularly Rule 90, which prohibits torture, and Rule 99, which prohibits arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

Accordingly, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, abduction, enforced disappearance, and torture represent flagrant violations of the Yemeni Constitution and applicable national laws, as well as international legal frameworks and conventions.



Executive Summary

During the period covered by this human rights report on violations against preachers and minorities in Yemen—from September 2014 to December 2025—a total of 1,175 violations against preachers and minorities in Yemen were monitored and documented.



These violations were distributed as follows: 190 cases of killing, 169 cases of injury, and 816 cases of detention, representing the highest rank among these violations. The data indicate that the Houthi militia bears responsibility for the largest number of total violations with 956 cases of violations, while the rest of the violations were distributed among armed formations that are not under the authority of the internationally recognized government, Al-Qaeda, unidentified parties, agencies of the legitimate government, and the Arab coalition forces in Yemen.

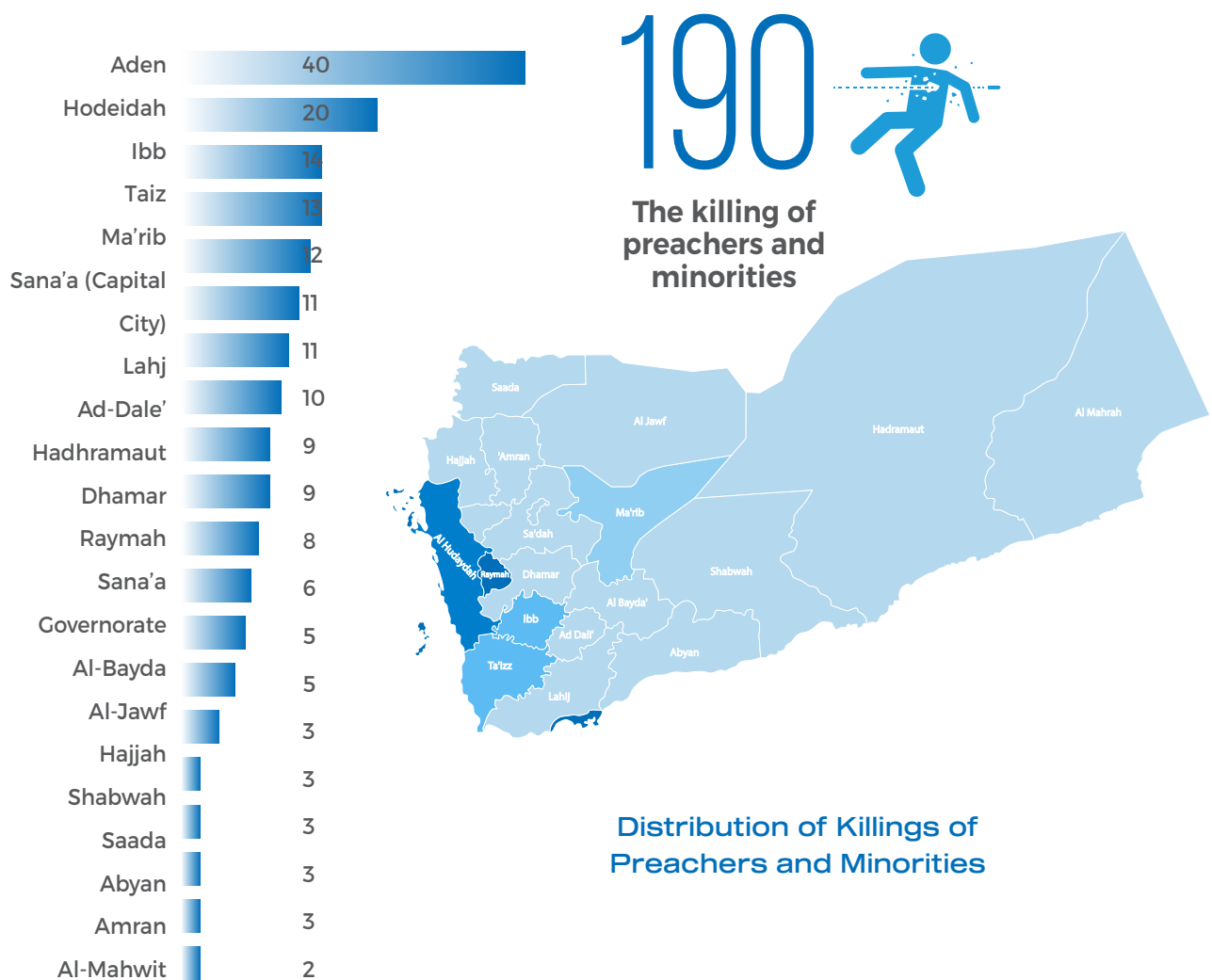
Geographically, the violations were distributed across 20 Yemeni governorates, with the capital, Sana'a, ranking first with 241 violations, followed by Dhamar Governorate with 147 cases, then Hodeidah Governorate, with 119 cases, which are areas under the control of the Houthi militia. In addition, many violations were documented in the governorates of Aden, Lahj, Taiz, and Ma'rib, which fall under the authority of the internationally recognized government.

In terms of affected groups, the highest cases of violations overall occurred in the category of memorizers of the Holy Qur'an, with 425 cases, followed by preachers (khateeb) with 270 cases, then mosque imams with 177 cases. Regarding political, ideological, and religious affiliation of those who were subjected to violations, most of the victims belonged to the Yemeni Islah Party, known for short as the Islah Party, as they represented the largest number of those affected by these violations, with 464 cases. They were followed by the Salafists, with 229 cases of violations, and independents with 223 violations. Minorities from the Baha'i sect were also affected, with 85 cases of violations, and the Jews, with at least two cases.

First: Violation of the Right to Life

The right to life is the foundation of all other rights and freedoms. It is the fundamental right without which no other right has meaning. This right is firmly recognized in international conventions, and respect for it constitutes the primary criterion for assessing the extent to which states and other actors comply with the principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL). Any violation of this right—whether through extrajudicial killings or executions carried out without a fair trial—constitutes a crime that requires accountability and represents a flagrant breach of the rights inherent to human life.

However, the current conflict in Yemen has shown the horror of the violation of this right by the parties to the armed conflict, whether for sectarian, political, or retaliatory motives. The right to life of preachers and minorities has been severely affected by deliberate killings, 190 cases during the period covered by the report. These killings can be examined from multiple perspectives.



Geographical Distribution of Killings of Preachers and Minorities

The data on the killings of preachers and minorities, collected by the monitoring team at Rights Radar, covers most of Yemen's geography. The cases are widely distributed across 20 Yemeni governorates, as shown in the following table:

Governorate	Number of Killings
Aden	40
Hodeidah	20
Ibb	14
Taiz	13
Ma'rib	12
Sana'a (Capital City)	11
Lahj	11
Ad-Dale'	10
Hadhramaut	9
Dhamar	9
Raymah	8
Sana'a Governorate	6
Al-Bayda	5
Al-Jawf	5
Hajjah	3
Shabwah	3
Saada	3
Abyan	3
Amran	3
Al-Mahwit	2
Total	190

Table No. (1): Geographical Distribution of Killings of Preachers and Minorities during the period from September 2014 to December 2025

This geographical distribution of killings of preachers and minorities shows that Aden, the temporary capital of the Yemeni government, ranks first among all other governorates with 40 cases. Hodeidah Governorate follows in second place with 20 cases, while Ibb Governorate ranks third with 14 cases. Taiz Governorate comes fourth with 13 cases, followed by Ma'rib Governorate in fifth place with 12 cases. Sana'a (the capital) and Lahj Governorate has recorded 11 cases each, while Ad-Dale' Governorate ranks seventh with 10 cases.

The remaining cases are distributed across several other governorates. The governorates of

Hadhramaut and Dhamar rank eighth with nine cases each, followed by Raymah Governorate with eight cases, then Sana'a Governorate with six cases. Al-Bayda and Al-Jawf governorates come in eleventh place with five cases each. The governorates of Abyan, Hajjah, Shabwah, Saada, and Amran share twelfth place with three cases each. Finally, Al-Mahwit Governorate has recorded two cases of killing.

Statistics show that the killing of preachers and minorities was not limited to areas of clashes between the conflicting parties, but also extended to relatively stable areas. This is evidence of a systematic policy of targeting them by the conflicting parties. Moreover, statistics indicate a high number of killings among preachers in Aden Governorate, which is evidence of the deliberate targeting. This also proves that the cases of violation are frequent. It also highlights the fragility of the security situation and the spread of armed formations operating outside state authority, including unidentified armed actors.

Categorical Distribution of Killings

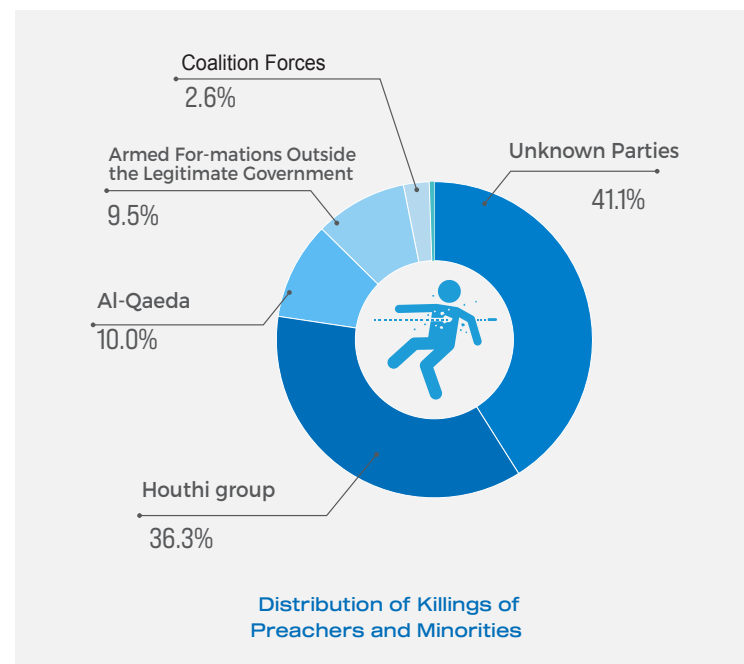
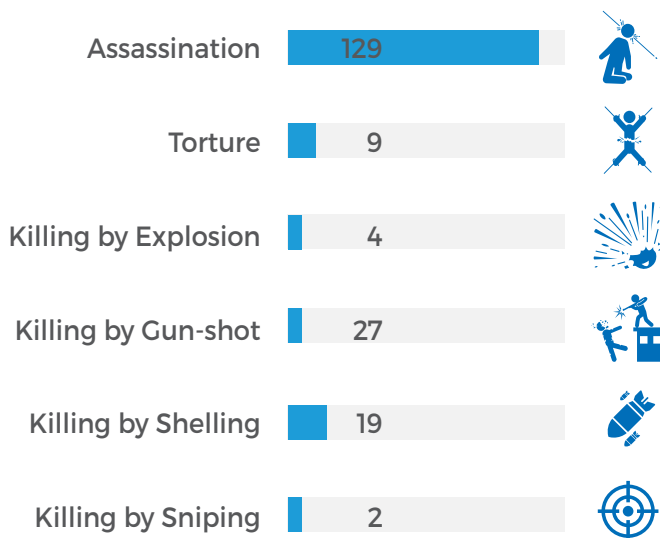
In this report, the term “preachers” includes a number of categories: imams, Quran memorizers (huffaz), mosque preachers (khateeb), jurists (fuqaha), scholars (ulama), muftis, religious guides (wua'z), and muezzins, as well as Baha'i and Jewish minorities.

Rights Radar monitoring team recorded killing violations against all of these categories. The most targeted category was mosque preachers (khateeb), with 62 killings. This indicates a deliberate and intentional targeting of influential religious figures, followed by the category of imams with 45 killings of mosque imams, reflecting a clear pattern of targeting mosque leaders and religious influencers. In third place come the category of religious guides (wua'z) with 37 cases, followed by Quran memorizers (huffaz) with 28 cases. This confirms that the violating parties seek to empty society of its sources of religious and educational guidance.

As for the remaining cases of killing, they were distributed among other categories including interpreters (mufassirun), muftis, jurists (fuqaha), and scholars. Despite the specificity of their roles, they were targeted less frequently. Furthermore, the killings extended to minorities, represented by Baha'is and Jews, with three killings. The following table shows the killing cases in the categories of preachers and minorities:

Category	Number of Killings
Mosque Preachers (Khateebbs)	62
Imams	45
Religious Guides (Wua'z)	37
Quran Memorizers (Huffaz)	28
Muezzins	6
Scholars (Ulama)	5
Minorities	3
Jurists (Fuqaha)	2
Muftis	1
Interpreters (Mufasssirun)	1
Grand Total	190

Table No. (2): Categorical Distribution of Killings of Preachers and Minorities during the period from September 2014 to December 2025



Parties Responsible for Killing Incidents

Rights Radar's field monitoring team deployed in the governorates covered by the report was able to document a number of parties responsible for the killing of preachers and minorities, as well as the methods and means through which these killings were carried out, as shown in the following table:

Responsible Party	Assassination	Torture	Killing by Explosion	Killing by Gun-shot	Killing by Shelling	Killing by Sniping	Total
Unknown Parties	74	2	-	2	-	-	78
Houthi group	30	7	-	16	14	2	69
Al-Qaeda	11	-	4	4	-	-	19
Armed Formations Outside the Legitimate Government	14	-	-	4	-	-	18
Coalition Forces	-	-	-	-	5	-	5
Legitimate Government	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Total	129	9	4	27	19	2	190

Table No. (3): Parties Responsible for Killings of Preachers and Minorities and Patterns of Violation during the period from September 2014 to December 2025

The collected and verified information indicates that six parties were responsible for the killing of preachers and minorities in Yemen during the reporting period since September 2014: the Houthi militia, armed formations operating outside the authority of the internationally recognized government, Al-Qaeda, the Arab Coalition forces in Yemen, the internationally recognized government, and unidentified actors classified in this report as a sixth category.

The distribution of violations among these parties varies. The Rights Radar team documented 78 killings carried out by unidentified gunmen—the highest number recorded—raising serious concerns among human rights observers and reflecting a pattern of impunity for perpetrators. In addition, 69 killings were attributed to the Houthi militia, 19 to Al-Qaeda elements, and 18 to armed formations outside the authority of the internationally recognized government. Five killings were attributed to Arab Coalition forces, and one case was attributed to the internationally recognized government.

As for the methods and means of grave violations leading to the killing or death of preachers and minorities in Yemen, they varied and included execution, assassination, torture, explosions, gunfire, shelling, and sniper attacks.

According to Rights Radar data, assassination was the most prevalent method, accounting for 129 cases out of the total number of victims. Responsibility for these assassinations is distributed in a deeply concerning manner, as many perpetrators are either unidentified, lack legitimacy, or operate outside any legal framework. Unidentified parties are responsible for the largest number of assassinations, with 74 cases, followed by the Houthi militia, which is responsible for 30 assassination cases.

In addition, armed formations operating outside the authority of the internationally recognized government were responsible for 14 assassinations, while Al-Qaeda was responsible for 11 cases. This pattern reflects a serious lack of accountability and transparency in investigations, reinforcing a climate of impunity. This situation persists despite the obligations under the Geneva Conventions, which require parties exercising control on the ground to ensure the protection of civilians, including preachers and minorities.

In the context of armed violence, 19 killings resulting from shelling were documented. The Houthi militia was responsible for 14 of these cases, while twenty seven were attributed to Coalition forces. Additionally, five killings by gunfire and two cases involving sniper attacks were recorded.

Torture as a cause of death among preachers and minorities raises serious human rights concerns. The number of deaths resulting from torture reached nine cases, with the Houthi militia responsible for seven of them, indicating the existence of systematic practices of torture leading to death. Two additional cases of death under torture were attributed to unidentified parties.

These cases underscore the urgent need for immediate and comprehensive investigations into all cases of extrajudicial death, particularly those resulting from torture, in order to ensure accountability and justice for the victims.

Examples of Cases of Killing of Preachers



Assassination of Sheikh Samhan Abdulaziz Al-Rawi in Aden

On January 31, 2016, Salafist Sheikh Samhan Abdulaziz Al-Rawi was assassinated. His body was found near the Suzuki roundabout between the Sheikh Othman and Khor Maksar districts in Aden Governorate. According to confessions made by some of the accused before the court, he was lured to the location and killed by gunmen acting on the orders of Hani bin Breik, a prominent leader in the Southern Transitional Council, which is loyal to the United Arab Emirates.

Sheikh Al-Rawi was a prominent Salafist preacher and served as imam and preacher at the Ibn Al-Qayyim Mosque in Aden Governorate.

Assassination of Sheikh Saleh Salem bin Hulaïs in Aden



On the afternoon of Monday, August 15, 2016, Sheikh Saleh Salem bin Hulaïs, imam and preacher of Al-Ridha Mosque and head of the judicial department of the Islah Party in Aden Governorate, was assassinated on Al-Qasr Street in front of the Al-Mansoura post office. The attack was carried out by four gunmen on motorcycles, believed to belong to an assassination cell linked to the Southern Transitional Council, which is financially and militarily supported by the United Arab Emirates. The four men, Ashraf Mohammed Rashid, Shaif Ali Shaif, Sameh Al-Nourji, and Mohammed Ali Al-Zaydi, were arrested and brought to trial.

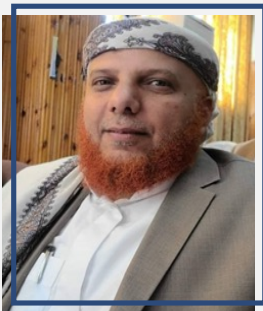
Based on the defendants' confessions before the court, which included the prosecution's investigation reports, witness testimonies, and statements from the victim's family, the assassination of bin Hulaïs was a premeditated murder. The second defendant, Ashraf Mohammed Rashid, fired several shots from an AK-47 assault rifle, five of which struck bin Hulaïs between the abdomen and arms. He was subsequently taken to Al-Naqeeb Hospital, where he later died from his severe injuries.

Assassination of the preacher of Al-Hazm Mosque in Hadhramaut

On the evening of Friday, June 19, 2015, in Shibam District, Hadhramaut Governorate - Eastern Yemen -, Sheikh Hussein Abdul-Bari al-Aidarus, the Imam and Khatib of Al-Hazm Mosque in the city of Shibam, was assassinated. Two unknown gunmen on a motorcycle opened fire on him while he was heading to the mosque to perform the Isha prayer. This led to his immediate death before he could be transferred to the hospital, while the perpetrators fled the scene.

It is noteworthy that Sheikh al-Aidarus was one of the religious figures close to the Houthi militia, and had survived several previous assassination attempts before being killed in this one. The Association of Yemeni Scholars, loyal to the Houthi militia, mourned him.

Assassination of Preacher Abdullah al-Bani on Eid al-Fitr



At exactly 8:30 AM on Friday, April 21, 2023—coinciding with the first day of Eid al-Fitr 1444 AH—gunmen affiliated with the formations known as the «Shabwa Defense Forces» carried out a field execution against the well-known preacher Abdullah Abdullah Abd Rabbuh al-Bani (63 years old), an imam and preacher, who served as director of the health office in Bayhan district of Shabwa Governorate. He was killed in front of his family and a number of his companions.

According to eyewitnesses, soldiers equipped with light and medium weapons, affiliated with the 6th Brigade of Shabwa Defense Forces, intercepted Sheikh al-Bani's car as he was returning home after finishing Eid al-Fitr sermon and prayer in Bayhan Square. This followed rejecting previous attempts by armed elements to prevent him from delivering the sermon. The gunmen fired a hail of live bullets toward his car, killing him instantly and wounding six of his sons and companions with injuries of varying severity. Then, they were subsequently transferred to Ataq City Hospital for treatment.

Attempts to prevent him from delivering the Eid sermon began at dawn that day, when two gunmen stormed the prayer ground and tried to forcibly remove Preacher al-Bani. A number of worshippers intervened and prevented them from doing so. However, he was targeted immediately after leaving the prayer ground. The nature of the attack indicates premeditation and planning, and is consistent with an agenda aimed at silencing influential religious voices.

This incident constitutes a grave violation of the right to life and a grave breach of the principles of International Humanitarian Law and international human rights conventions, particularly those related to the protection of religious figures, freedom of thought and expression, and the right to practice religious rituals without interference or repression. It also represents a clear example of the dangers posed by empowering irregular armed formations in Yemen and the resulting pattern of systematic extrajudicial violations.

Execution of Preacher Saleh Hantous by the Houthi militia



On the morning of Tuesday, July 1, 2025, the Houthi militia carried out a military operation that resulted in the field execution of Sheikh Saleh Hantous (70 years old), one of the most prominent teachers of the Holy Qur'an in As-Salafiyah District of Raymah Governorate. This followed a systematic campaign of threats and harassment that had persisted for more than three years, beginning after he refused to close a Qur'anic educational center that he had established through community efforts outside the control of the Houthi militia.

In a context of systematic escalation, the Houthi militia attacked the Qur'anic center in March 2022 and forcibly shut it down without judicial authorization. This was followed by the looting of its contents, including the library and furnishings, before the building was set on fire. Despite this, Sheikh Hantous continued teaching in the mosque, which exposed him to a series of direct death threats.

According to reliable information from local security meetings in June 2025, explicit directives were issued to get rid of Sheikh Hantous. The Houthi militia initially

attempted to forcibly displace him, but he refused. The following day, a military campaign consisting of seven armed patrols, accompanied by a women's unit, raided his village, forcibly displaced its residents, and shelled his house in an effort to isolate him from his surroundings and prevent witnesses.

The campaign targeted Sheikh Hantous as he was heading to perform the Fajr prayer, opening fire inside the mosque, which resulted in the injury and abduction of one of the worshippers. Sheikh Hantous survived and took refuge in his home near the mosque. After hours of armed siege, his house was subjected to heavy shelling using projectiles and medium weapons, leading to a fatal head injury. His wife was also injured in the leg, and the operation ultimately resulted in his death.

The killing of the preacher and Qur'an teacher, Saleh Hantous, was accompanied by a series of additional violations, including the abuse of his body. Armed Houthi elements reportedly lit fires near his body in celebration. His body was forcibly transferred to Al-Rubou' Hospital without the knowledge of his family. Furthermore, 12 individuals from his family and followers—some of whom were wounded—were arbitrarily arrested without judicial orders. His house was raided and completely looted, and his family was forced to bury him at night without documentation or the presence of local residents, while any photography or documentation of the incident was prohibited.

This incident constitutes a premeditated extrajudicial execution carried out with excessive and disproportionate use of force, and with the involvement of local security leaders. It also reflects a recurring pattern of violations targeting religious preachers with the aim of silencing influential voices and removing those not aligned with the Houthi militia from the religious field. The incident further represents a grave violation of the right to life, as well as the freedoms of thought and education, and constitutes a breach of the Geneva Conventions and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Assassination of Preacher (Khateeb) Omar Doukam



According to eyewitness accounts provided to Rights Radar, at approximately 1:00 PM on Friday, March 30, 2018, the Friday khateeb of Al-Isa'ey Mosque, preacher Omar Abdullah Abdulwahed Doukam (42 years old), was targeted in an assassination attack while leaving the mosque in central Taiz. The attack was carried out by two unidentified gunmen riding a motorcycle, who opened fire before fleeing the scene. The violation resulted in the immediate death of the person who was near him, teacher Rafiq Saeed Al-Akhali.

Doukam suffered from critical gunshot wounds to the abdomen and shoulder. He was transferred to hospital in critical condition and remained in intensive care until he died of his wounds three days later, on Monday, April 2, 2018.

Second: Violation of Physical Integrity

Since physical integrity is one of the fundamental rights guaranteed under national constitutions and legislation, as well as international human rights conventions and treaties, it is a right that extends to preachers and minorities alike. Any violation of this right constitutes an offense that requires taking appropriate legal measures to protect victims and safeguard society.

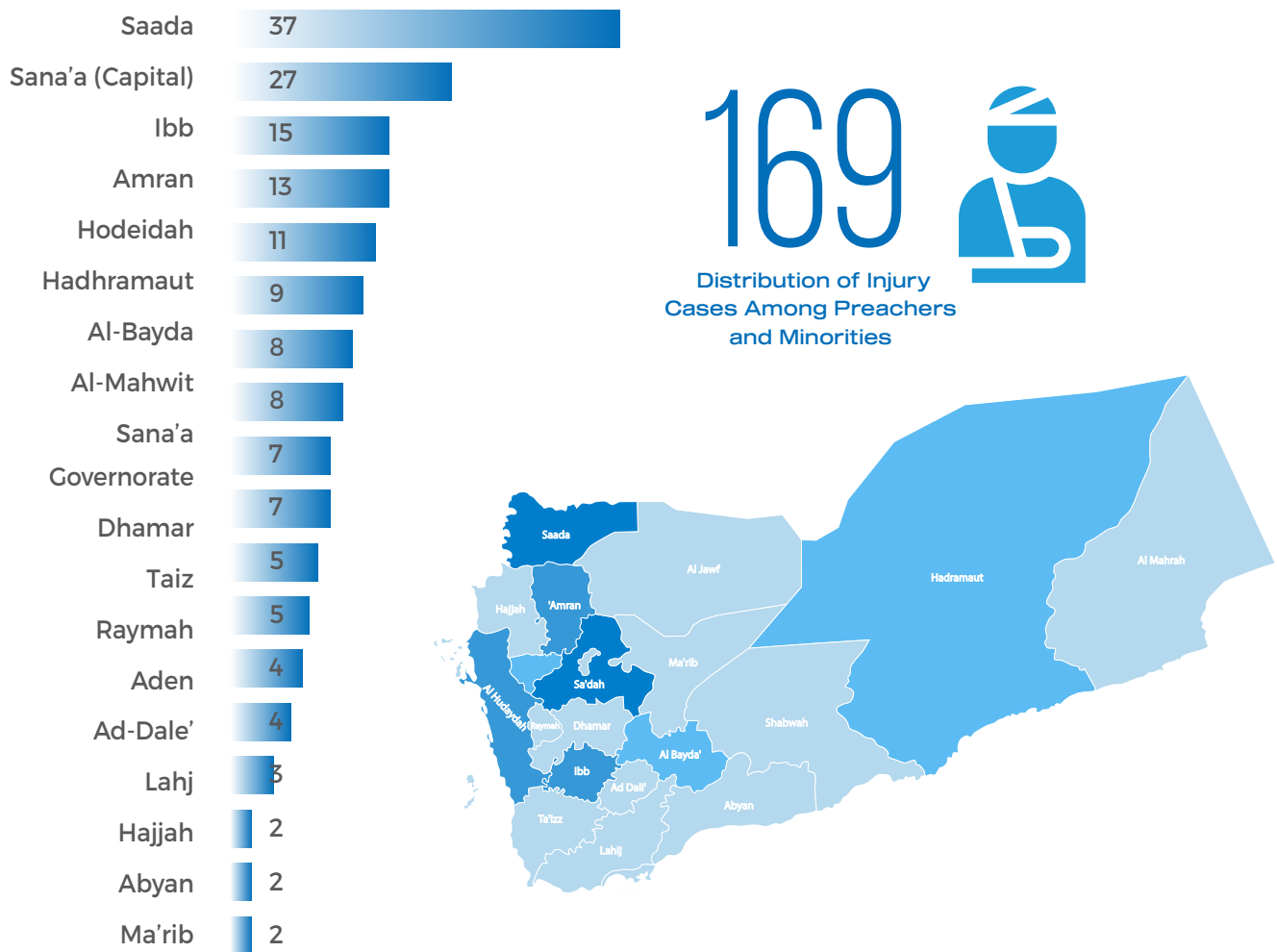
The number of violations of physical integrity targeting preachers and minorities in Yemen during the period from September 2014 to December 2025 reached 169 recorded cases of injury.

Geographical Distribution of Injuries among Preachers and Minorities

Based on the data monitored and documented by the Rights Radar team, the 169 cases of injury affecting preachers and minorities in Yemen were distributed among 18 Yemeni governorates. Notably, no injuries were recorded in the governorates of Al-Jawf and Shabwa, which are also covered by the report. This is shown in the following table:

Governorate	Injury Cases
Saada	37
Sana'a (Capital)	27
Ibb	15
Amran	13
Hodeidah	11
Hadhramaut	9
Al-Bayda	8
Al-Mahwit	8
Sana'a Governorate	7
Dhamar	7
Taiz	5
Raymah	5
Aden	4
Ad-Dale'	4
Lahj	3
Hajjah	2
Abyan	2
Ma'rib	2
Grand Total	169

Table No. (4): Geographical Distribution of Injury Cases Among Preachers and Minorities During the Period from September 2014 to December 2025



The data indicate that Sa'dah Governorate ranked first with 37 injury cases, followed by the Capital Sana'a with 27 cases. Ibb Governorate ranked third with 15 cases, while Amran Governorate came fourth with 13 cases, and Hodeidah Governorate ranked fifth with 11 cases. All of these areas are under the control of the Houthi militia, which suggests a pattern of systematic targeting of preachers and minorities. Abyan and Ma'rib—both under the control of the internationally recognized government—ranked last in terms of recorded injuries, with two cases each.

Categorical Distribution of Injuries among Preachers and Minorities

Information monitored by Rights Radar indicates that violations of the right to physical integrity affected all categories of preachers included in this report, including minorities, with the exception of the "Muftis" category, which recorded no injuries. This is shown in the following table:

Category	Injury Cases
Qur'an Memorizers	54
Mosque Preachers (Khateebbs)	40
Mosque Imams	33
Religious Guides (Wua'z)	15
Minorities	9
Jurists (Fuqaha)	6
Muezzins	5
Scholars (Ulama)	4
Qur'an Interpreters (Mufasssirun)	3
Grand Total	169

Table No. (5): Categorical Distribution of Injury Cases Among Preachers and Minorities During the Period from September 2014 to December 2025

Documented data indicate that the targeting of preachers and minorities in Yemen is not limited to a specific group, but rather affects multiple categories at varying rates. The most affected groups in terms of injury were Qur'an memorizers, preachers (khateebbs), and imams. Qur'an memorizers recorded the highest number of injuries, with 54 cases, followed by khateebbs with 40 cases, and imams with 33 injuries. This pattern indicates the systematic targeting of groups with direct influence on society—whether through memorizing and teaching the Holy Qur'an, delivering sermons, or leading prayers. These categories are closely linked to mosques, suggesting an intent to silence influential voices, spread fear, or impose a specific agenda on society. From a human rights perspective, such actions constitute violations of freedom of expression and thought, as well as the right to practice religious rituals freely and safely from a human rights perspective.

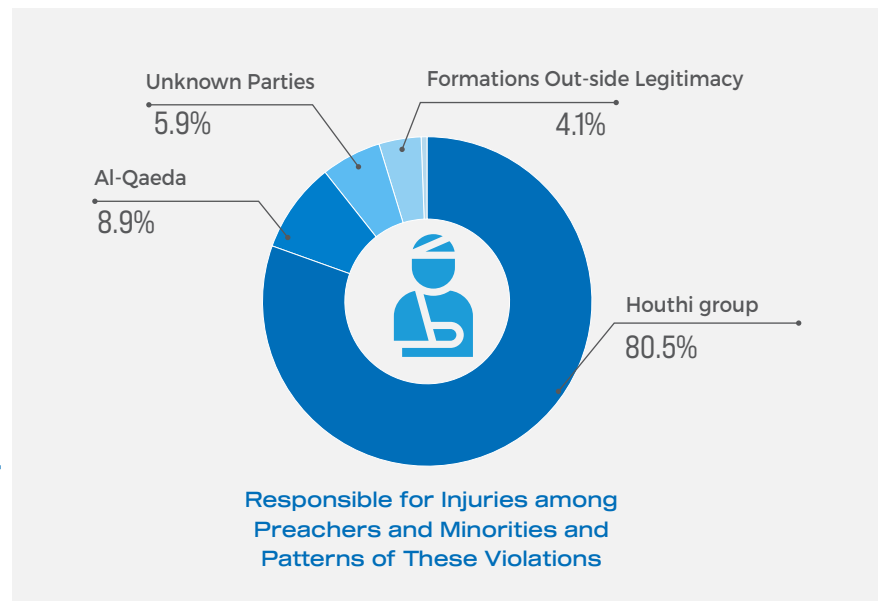
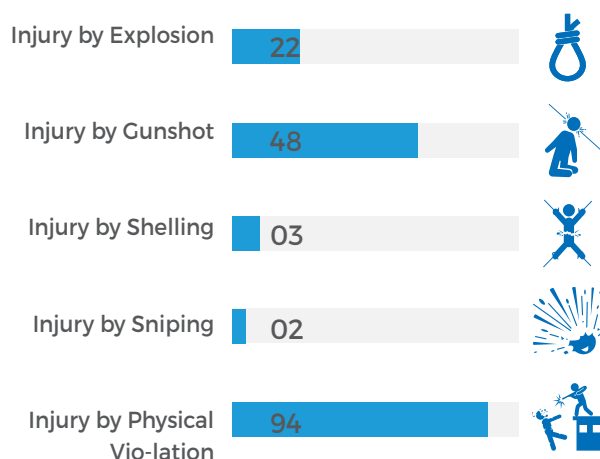
The Religious preachers (Wua'z) category ranked fourth with 15 injury cases, and their targeting reflects the attacking parties' efforts to silence influential voices that may not align with their agendas, and undermines individuals' rights to receive religious guidance freely in any forum.

Rights Radar also recorded nine injuries among minorities (Baha'is and Jews), a number that raises particular concern, and expresses the extent to which religious minorities are often targeted during fighting and violence in conflict areas, as well as the violation of their rights to practice their religious rituals safely. It also stresses the need to provide protection for them and ensure that they are not targeted.

Meanwhile, the categories of Jurists (Fuqaha), scholars, interpreters, and muezzins were the least injured among the preacher categories according to data monitored by Rights Radar during the reporting period. The Fuqaha category ranked sixth with six injuries, followed by muezzins with five, then scholars with four, and finally interpreters with three injuries. Although the number of injuries in these categories is lower than others, their targeting has serious repercussions on the structure of the religious community. As sources of religious and jurisprudential knowledge, targeting them undermines the freedom of scientific and religious research, and deprives society of its legal (Sharia) references. Furthermore, Muezzins also represent a symbol of daily worship, and targeting them affects the essence of religious practices.

Parties Responsible for Physical Injury Violations

After examining and reviewing the information and data collected by the Rights Radar monitoring team, the parties responsible for violations affecting the right to physical integrity of preachers were identified as five parties. The methods and means of violating this right were diverse, including: explosions, gunshots, shelling, sniping, and physical violation. This is shown in the following table:



Responsible Par-ty	Injury by Explosion	Injury by Gunshot	Injury by Shelling	Injury by Sniping	Injury by Physical Vio-lation	Grand Total
Houthi group	-	42	3	2	89	136
Al-Qaeda	15	-	-	-	-	15
Unknown Parties	6	4	-	-	-	10
Formations Out-side Legitimacy	1	1	-	-	5	7
Legitimate Gov-ernment	-	1	-	-	-	1
Grand Total	22	48	3	2	94	169

Table No. (6): Parties Responsible for Injuries among Preachers and Minorities and Patterns of These Violations During the Period from September 2014 to December 2025

Field-documented data by Rights Radar indicate that the Houthi militia is the party most responsible for injuries among preachers and minorities, accounting for 136 recorded cases. The patterns of these violations are marked by both diversity and brutality. Injuries resulting from physical violation alone reached 89 cases, reflecting the use of direct and arbitrary violence against victims. Such practices are often intended to intimidate and subjugate, and in many cases amount to torture or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment that undermines human dignity. This constitutes a flagrant violation of international human rights law.

Furthermore, injuries among preachers and minorities caused by gunshots by Houthi militia elements reached 42 cases. This reflects the use of lethal or excessive force, raising serious concerns regarding the intent behind these attacks and the extent to which the Houthis disregard the principles of necessity and proportionality in the use of force.

Additionally, three cases of injury resulting from Houthi shelling were documented, along with two cases caused by sniper fire. Although these figures are lower, injuries resulting from shelling and sniping indicate that preachers and minorities are being targeted in highly dangerous contexts, including in homes, mosques, and on public roads. This requires investigation into the extent to which such attacks comply with the rules of International Humanitarian Law, particularly those related to the protection of civilians.

Al-Qaeda ranked second in terms of responsibility for injuries to preachers, as its elements committed 15 injuries, all of which were the result of explosions as a primary pattern of targeting. This indicates the use of brutal methods aimed at causing the greatest possible amount of damage and losses and spreading terror among the population, which is a method that represents a serious violation of International Humanitarian Law.

As for the third place in the list of parties causing injuries to preachers, it was recorded against unknown parties. It caused 10 injuries that divided into six cases by explosions and four cases by gunshots. This indicates the presence of unidentified perpetrators who use dangerous methods of violence and are active during the conflict as a result of the unstable security conditions. This constitutes a major obstacle to achieving justice and accountability, and requires intensive efforts from the authorities to investigate and uncover these parties.

Armed formations outside the control of the Legitimate Government came in fourth place as the party responsible for injuring preachers, having committed seven injuries. The physical violation was the predominant pattern with five cases, in addition to one case of explosion and one of gunshot. This limited diversity suggests that these formations rely more heavily on direct violence and the abuse of preachers, which requires determining the nature of these formations and holding those responsible for them accountable.

Finally, the Legitimate Government was one of the parties responsible for the injury of preachers, with one case of injury by gunshot. However, it is essential to investigate the individuals affiliated with official agencies responsible for this injury to ensure accountability and prevent impunity.

In terms of the multiple injury patterns that affected preachers and minorities in Yemen, injury cases resulting from physical violation were the most prominent, ranking first with 94 cases. This shows that they were directly exposed to beating and physical abuse, representing cruel and inhuman treatment against them and an insult to and degradation of their dignity.

Gunshot injuries ranked second with 48 cases, followed by explosion injuries in third place with 22 cases. The lowest number of injuries was shelling injuries with three cases, and sniping injuries which reached two cases. These patterns are evidence of the use of excessive force against civilians by the conflicting parties, particularly the Houthi militia, which often tries to monopolize religious thought, in an indication of a breach and violation of International Humanitarian Law.

Third: Violation of the Right to Liberty

The right to liberty for preachers, like other intellectuals, is a fundamental and universal principle guaranteed by international conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It serves as a safeguard for preachers against any form of arbitrary deprivation of liberty. States are obligated to respect, protect, and ensure remedies for violations of this right, while adhering to international standards when imposing any necessary and legitimate restrictions.

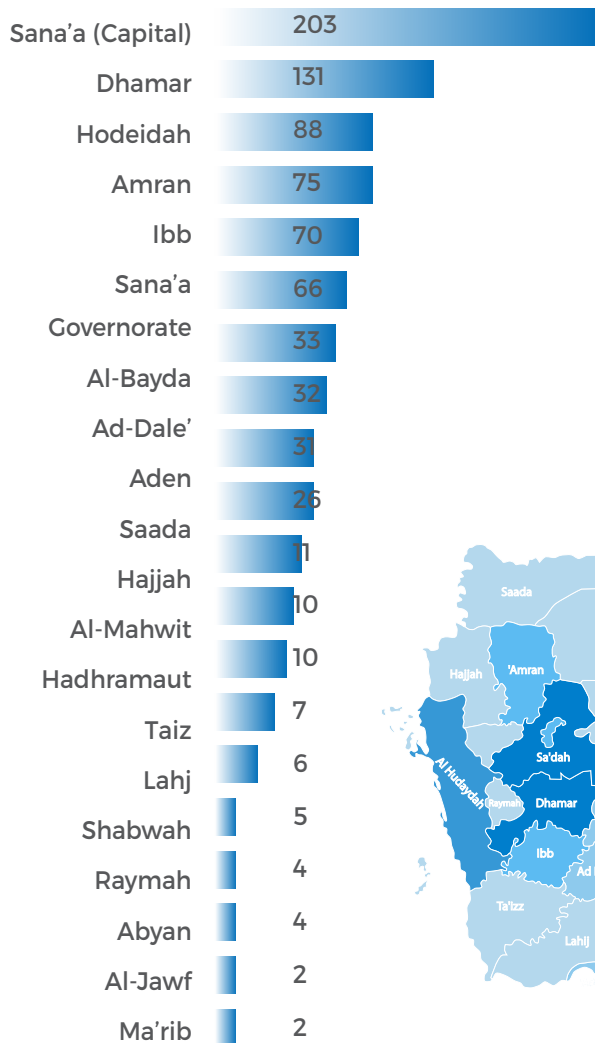
Any violation against preachers or minorities, whether through action or omission that leads to their unlawful or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, constitutes a grave breach of the principles of international human rights law. Violations affecting the liberty of preachers reached 816 cases between September 2014 and December 2025, representing the highest rate among all categories of violations..

Governorate	Cases of Liberty Violations
Sana'a (Capital)	203
Dhamar	131
Hodeidah	88
Amran	75
Ibb	70
Sana'a Governorate	66
Al-Bayda	33
Ad-Dale'	32
Aden	31
Saada	26
Hajjah	11
Al-Mahwit	10
Hadhramaut	10
Taiz	7
Lahj	6
Shabwah	5
Raymah	4
Abyan	4
Al-Jawf	2
Ma'rib	2
Grand Total	816

Geographical Distribution Cases of Violation of Liberty of Preachers and Minorities

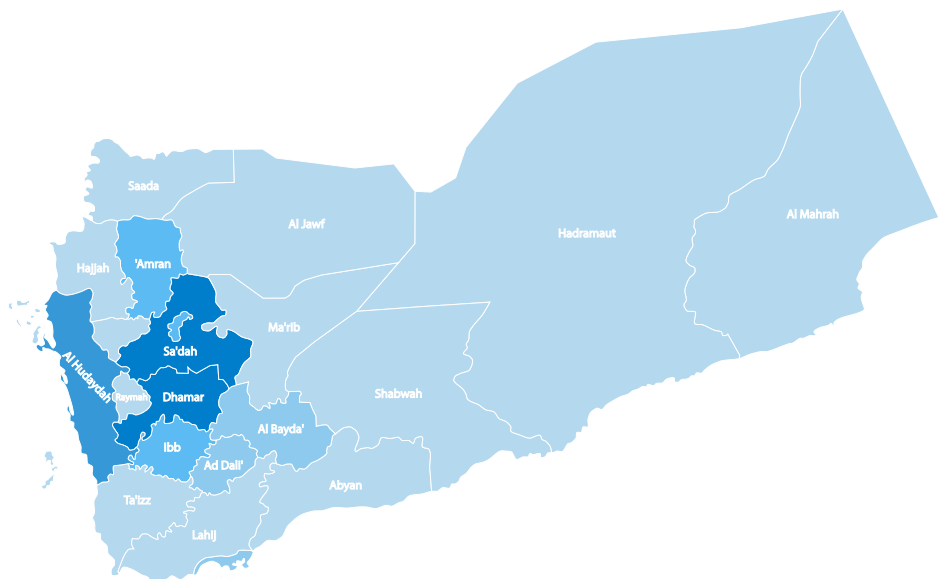
The liberty of preachers and minorities in Yemen was subjected to a number of violations totaling 816 cases. These violations were distributed over a wide geographical area covering 20 Yemeni governorates, according to Rights Radar data shown in the following table:

Table No. (7): Geographical Distribution of Cases of Violation of Liberty of Preachers and Minorities During the Period from September 2014 to December 2025



816

Cases of Violation of
Liberty of Preachers
and Minorities



The above data clearly that both the capital, Sana'a, and Dhamar Governorate are considered the main hotspots for violation of the liberties of preachers and minorities, recording the highest numbers. The highest number of violations was recorded in the capital, Sana'a with 203 violations, followed by Dhamar Governorate with 131 violations, constituting approximately 40% of the total cases. This strong concentration in these two governorates indicates that the Houthi militia, which controls them, adopts a systematic policy of targeting their liberties.

Documented statistics also show that the governorates of Hodeidah, Amran, Ibb, and Sana'a recorded high rates of violations on the liberty of preachers. Hodeidah ranked third with 88 violations, followed by Amran with 75 violations. Ibb Governorate ranked fifth with 70 violations, followed by Sana'a Governorate with 66 violations. These high numbers of violations confirm that the phenomenon of restricting the liberty of preachers is not limited to only two regions, but is widespread across several governorates, based on arbitrary actions without legal basis, violating the right to liberty.

Despite the varying numbers of violations of the right to liberty across the other governorates included in the report, the data shows that these violations affected preachers and minorities in almost the majority of governorates. In some governorates, the number of these violations was low, with the lowest being in Al-Jawf and Ma'rib governorates with two cases each, followed by Abyan and Raymah with four cases each. This extends to governorates with moderate numbers of violations, such as Al-Bayda with 33 violations, Ad-Dale' with 32 violations, Aden with 31 violations, and Saada with 26 violations. This large number of violation cases in this regard confirms that preachers and minorities in Yemen face the risks of deprivation of freedom of expression regardless of their geographical location, reflecting a general state of silencing voices and violating the constitutional principle of the right to thought.

The large total number of cases of violations of the right to freedom of expression among preachers and minorities, which reached 816 cases in 20 Yemeni governorates, indicates an attempt to suppress dissenting or independent voices. In many cases, it restricts freedom of expression, opinion, and religion, and is used as a means of intimidation and forcing submission to comply with specific agendas or to punish them for their religious or political positions. This constitutes a grave violation of the civil and political rights stipulated in local legislation and international conventions.

Categorical Distribution of Cases of Violation of Liberty of Preachers and Minorities

Statistics documented by Rights Radar show that the violations affecting the liberty of preachers and minorities were not limited to a specific category, but rather affected various categories at varying rates, as shown in the following table:

Category	Cases of Violation of Liberty
Qur'an Memorizers	343
Mosque Preachers (Khateebis)	168
Mosque Imams	99
Religious Guides (Wua'z)	86
Minorities	76
Muezzins	23
Jurists (Fuqaha)	8
Scholars (Ulama)	8
Qur'an Interpreters (Mufassi-run)	5
Grand Total	816

Table No. (8): Categorical Distribution of Cases of Violation of Liberty of Preachers and Minorities During the Period from September 2014 to December 2025

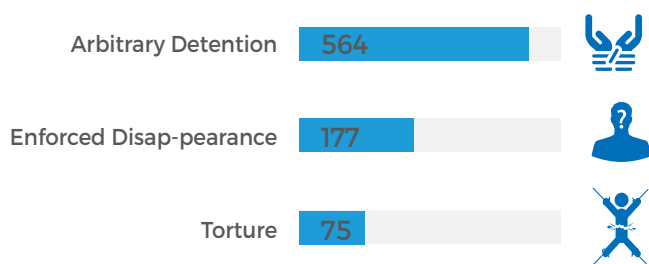
The data shows that the categories most targeted in their liberties are: Qur'an Memorizers with 343 violations, followed by preachers with 168 violations. These two categories are the most subjected to deprivation of liberty, with a large difference compared to the other categories. Qur'an memorizers and preachers together constitute more than 62% of the total violations of liberty.

Statistics indicate that the targeting of Qur'an Memorizers occurs within the framework of an attempt to weaken religious authorities that rely on Qur'anic memorization, and this may be with the aim of imposing specific views of a certain party or controlling the entire religious discourse. Targeting the category of preachers often aims to silence opposing voices, prevent the dissemination of certain ideas, and impose a specific political or religious agenda through mosque pulpits, which directly undermines religious freedom of expression and the public's right to receive diverse religious discourse.

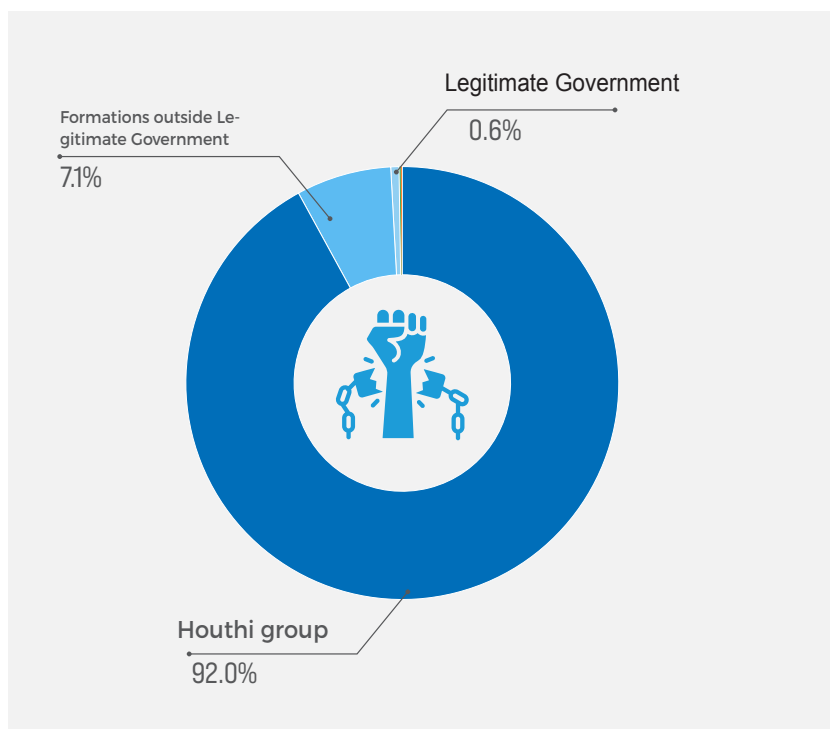
The categories of Imams and Religious Guides (Wu'az) fall into a moderate level in terms of targeting liberty, with 99 violations recorded in imam's category and 86 in religious guides category. The targeting of mosque imams constitutes a violation of their freedom to practice religious rituals, creating a disruption in the religious life of local communities. Meanwhile, religious guides possess significant influence in directing and teaching people; thus, targeting their liberties indicates an attempt to limit influential religious impact and restrict permitted discourse.

Religious Minorities also fall within the medium range regarding the scale of liberty violations, with 76 cases recorded against followers of minority groups. These violations raise particular human rights concerns, as the deprivation of liberties may not only be a violation of freedom of religion and belief, but may also involve discrimination based on religious identity, which requires special protection for these groups.

The categories of muezzins, scholars, jurists, and Qur'an interpreters faced a comparatively lower level of targeting of their liberties. The number of violations recorded for muezzins reached 23, while the categories of jurists and scholars each recorded eight violations, and Qur'an interpreters five. However, targeting these categories carries serious repercussions for the religious structure in Yemen, as they represent the scientific, jurisprudential, and intellectual pillars of the religious community. The deprivation of their liberty undermines freedom of religious and scholarly research and contributes to depriving society of its intellectual references.



Parties Responsible for Violations of Liberties of Preachers and Minorities and Their Patterns



Parties Responsible for Violating the Liberties of Preachers and Minorities

The report documented violations and suppression of the liberties of preachers and minorities by all parties except the Coalition forces, in various patterns including: arbitrary detention, abduction, enforced disappearance, and torture. The distribution of these violations varies, as shown in the following table:

Responsible Party	Arbitrary Detention	Enforced Disappearance	Torture	Total
Houthi group	514	167	70	751
Formations outside Legitimate Government	47	7	4	58
Legitimate Government	2	2	1	5
Al-Qaeda	-	1	-	1
Unknown Parties	1	-	-	1
Total	564	177	75	816

Table No. (9): Parties Responsible for Violations of Liberties of Preachers and Minorities and Their Patterns During the Period from September 2014 to December 2025

Responsibility for violations of the liberties of preachers and minorities, as well as acts of humiliation against them, is attributed to multiple parties. However, the Houthi militia remains the principal perpetrator, bearing the greatest responsibility for violations of liberty against

preachers. It accounts for 751 out of a total of 816 documented cases, representing the largest rate of total violations. This reflects a systematic and widespread policy aimed at suppressing the liberties of preachers in areas under Houthi control. Such practices constitute grave violations of the rights to liberty, freedom of expression, and freedom of religion and belief. In many cases, these practices amount to arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance, requiring an international investigation to determine whether they rise to the level of crimes against humanity.

The 751 violations committed by the Houthi militia against the liberties of preachers were distributed across multiple patterns. Arbitrary detention was the most prevalent, with 514 cases, indicating its use as a main tool of control, intimidation, and silencing opponents or religious voices that are not loyal to them. Enforced disappearance reached 167 cases, reflecting a deliberate policy of concealing the fate of preachers and minorities, which increases the suffering of their families and undermines the right to truth and justice. The Houthi militia also practiced torture against detainees. These documented violations reached 70 cases of torture, which constitutes evidence of cruel and inhuman treatment and the degradation of the dignity of detained individuals.

Armed formations operating outside the framework of the legitimate government constitute the second most significant actors in suppressing the liberties of preachers. They were responsible for 58 documented violations, a relatively large number that confirms the importance of identifying these formations, their affiliation, and their motives in order to ensure accountability for these violations. Many of the detention cases attributed to these armed formations are often extrajudicial and lack any legal basis, making them arbitrary detentions.

These 58 cases of violations of the liberties of preachers practiced by armed formations were distributed across various forms, including 47 cases of arbitrary detention, seven cases of enforced disappearance, and four cases of torture against preachers in their detention. This pattern of violation confirms that these armed formations operate outside the law and constitute a serious threat to human rights in Yemen.

With regard to the legitimate government, its responsibility for committing violations is limited, but it is present. A total of five violations against the liberty of preachers were documented, including two cases of arbitrary detention, two cases of enforced disappearance, and one case of torture. Although this number is comparatively low, it confirms the importance of ensuring accountability for official agencies involved in such violations. These incidents must be thoroughly investigated to prevent arbitrary detentions and violations of legal procedures, and to ensure that agencies affiliated with the legitimate government and law enforcement adhere to applicable legal standards.

Finally, Al-Qaeda ranked last, with one documented case of enforced disappearance, while the unknown parties were responsible for one case of abduction. Although this number of violations is low, any deprivation of liberty by these parties constitutes a grave violation, as it lacks any legal basis, directly threatens the safety and rights of the detainees, and even perpetuates a policy of impunity.

Detention of the Followers of the Baha'i Sect in Sana'a

Since the Houthi militia took control of the capital, Sana'a, in September 2014, members of the Baha'i community in Yemen have been subjected to a series of systematic violations characterized by religious discrimination and persecution based on belief, in a clear violation of the freedom of religion and belief guaranteed under the International Human Rights Law. The widespread targeting campaign against the Baha'is began in August 2016 when security forces affiliated with the Houthi militia stormed a youth gathering organized by two Baha'i organizations: "Excellence for Social Development" and "Call for Coexistence and Building". The gathering aimed to promote peaceful initiatives for community service. The Houthi campaign resulted in the detention of 67 followers of the Baha'i sect, including women and children. Although some detainees were later released because they did not belong to the Baha'i sect, many of them remained in detention for several months, while others were subjected to harsh restrictive measures, including house arrest. Furthermore, the leaders of the Bohra sect were forced into compulsory displacement outside the country.

In April 2017, the Houthi militia escalated its campaign against the Baha'i community, coinciding with the approaching elections for the Local Spiritual Assembly. They carried out massive raids on homes and arrested six individuals, some of whom were later released for various reasons, including international pressure exerted by the International Red Cross to release one of them on the condition that he should leave the country.

As a result of this systematic campaign, many Baha'is were forced to hide or leave Houthi-controlled areas, while others lost their sources of livelihood due to the social stigma promoted by the Houthi militia against them. Additionally, five leaders of the Baha'i sect were detained during the raids of 2016 and 2017 and they remained in Houthi detention until July 2020, when they were released on the condition that they be exiled outside the country. This occurred in a deal brokered by the United Nations with the Houthi militia, in exchange for the United Nations allowing six aircrafts loaded with medical aid to enter Houthi-controlled areas.

On May 25, 2023, forces affiliated with the Houthi militia carried out a violent raid on a peaceful Baha'i gathering in a house in Sana'a. This resulted in the detention of 17 people, including five women, without a judicial order or legal justification. This incident represented one of the episodes in the series of systematic violations targeting members of the Baha'i community based on their religious belief.

Following their detention, the detainees were subjected to enforced disappearance for approximately four months, during which their families were deprived of knowing their places of detention and prevented from communicating with them. This continued until their place of detention was revealed to be within the Houthi militia's Security and Intelligence centers in Sana'a.

During the period from June to December 2023, twelve detainees were released, including all five women, following increasing international pressure and demands from human rights organizations and the United Nations. Meanwhile, five Baha'is remain under arbitrary detention and their fate remains unknown until now. They suffer from the deprivation of their right to obtain legal assistance or contact their lawyers or families, in grave violation of international standards for a fair trial. These five individuals are: Abdel-Ilah Mohammed Al-Boni (30 years old), a humanitarian worker, Hassan Tariq Thabet Al-Zikri (28 years old), a humanitarian worker, Abdullah Al-Alfi (45 years old), a human rights activist, Mohammed Bashir Abdel Jalil (25 years old), and Ibrahim Ahmed Jaeel (49 years old).

This incident demonstrates the continuation of the pattern of religious persecution and systematic targeting practiced by the Houthi militia against the Baha'is through the use of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and the restriction of religious liberties. This is a clear violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, guarantees of freedom of religion and belief, and the right of individuals to peaceful assembly and the expression of their beliefs without fear of prosecution or reprisal.



Detention and Enforced Disappearance of Preacher Abdul Qader al-Shaibani

At the end of October 2020, gunmen in civilian clothes intercepted the Salafi preacher Sheikh Abdul Qader al-Shaibani (70 years old) in Al-Mansoura District of the temporary capital, Aden, while he was heading to Aden International Airport to travel to Egypt for medical treatment.

He was forcibly taken to an unknown place without any arrest order or formal charges, which constitutes a grave violation of all constitutional and legal guarantees, and all international conventions.

Sheikh al-Shaibani remained in a state of enforced disappearance for about ten months, during which he was deprived of communication with his family and lawyer, as well as access to necessary healthcare despite his old age and urgent need for treatment. Responsibility for this violation lies with armed formations operating outside the framework of the legitimate government that control the temporary capital, Aden—most notably the Southern Transitional Council, which receives military and financial support from the United Arab Emirates.

The abduction and enforced disappearance of al-Shaibani sparked widespread condemnation from human rights organizations and activists. His family also organized several protests in Taiz and Aden, demanding the disclosure of his fate and assurances of his safety, but these appeals were met with no meaningful response from the forces controlling Aden at the time.

On Tuesday, August 5, 2021, preacher al-Shaibani was released without any official explanation or investigation into his arbitrary detention, reflecting the ongoing climate of impunity surrounding the practices of armed formations in Aden Governorate. He died on Saturday, October 2, 2021, weeks after his release, in a hospital in Taiz, following a deterioration in his health condition.

Restrictions on the Practice of Religious Rituals and the Imposition of Sectarian Patterns

In addition to the violations targeting individuals due to their religious affiliation or activity, areas under the control of the Houthi militia have witnessed increasing interference in religious rituals in recent years. This has taken the form of restricting established worship practices performed by the majority of Yemenis, intervening in the manner in which collective acts of worship are performed, and increasingly imposing sectarian activities and events within both religious and public spheres. Documented incidents indicate that these practices are not limited to a specific governorate but have extended across several governorates under Houthi control, most notably Sana'a, Saada, Dhamar, Amran, Hajjah, Al-Mahwit, Raymah, and Ibb.

Restrictions on Religious Rituals Associated with Ramadan

Tarawih prayer has been one of the most restricted religious practices during the monitoring period. Measures banning or limiting its performance in several mosques have sparked widespread criticism both inside and outside Yemen. In May 2021, Al-Azhar condemned the prohibition of Tarawih prayers in mosques under the Houthi militia's control, affirming that imposing a single model of worship or restricting religious rituals contradicts the fundamental principles of freedom of religion and belief.

The Yemeni Ministry of Endowments and Guidance has accused the Houthi militia of banning Tarawih prayers, restricting l'tikaf and night prayers, and closing Qur'an memorization centers, describing these actions as an assault on religious practices deeply rooted in Yemeni society.

These indicators were further reinforced by the controversy surrounding statements attributed to Mohammed Ali Al-Houthi, in which he described Tarawih prayer as a Bid'ah (innovation). Critics viewed this as reflective of the ideological stance underlying the militia's approach to this religious practice.

Interference in the Performance of Collective Rituals

Interference has not been limited to prohibition and restriction; it has also extended to influencing the manner in which collective acts of worship are performed. In this context, the events at the Eid prayer ground in the city of Bayt Al-Faqih—the center of the largest district in southern Al-Hodeidah Governorate—on July 21, 2021, are notable. The Houthis imposed an imam for the Eid prayer in a manner inconsistent with the congregation's established beliefs, provoking widespread anger among worshippers, who forcibly expelled the individual. This led to tension between citizens and Houthi armed elements present at the site, followed by a campaign of detentions targeting several of those who objected.

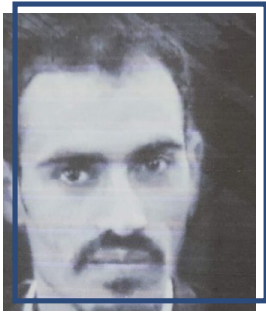
A similar incident occurred in Ibb Governorate during Eid al-Fitr in 2022, when Houthi authorities held Eid prayers using a sectarian form inconsistent with the practices to which the majority of the governorate's residents were accustomed. This sparked widespread anger and objection among worshippers, prompting many to leave the prayer ground in protest.

Imposition of Sectarian Religious Activities and Events

In parallel, the Houthi militia has expanded its organization and enforcement of sectarian religious events and activities across several governorates under its control, including Sana'a, Saada, Amran, Dhamar, Hajjah, Ibb, and Taiz. These activities include the revival of occasions considered alien to Yemeni society, such as "Wilayah Day," Ashura commemorations, and the Prophet's birthday (al-Mawlid al-Nabawi). Additionally, the militia has organized cultural courses and intellectual programs in schools, universities, and public institutions to ensure participation, often allocating official resources and facilities to support these events. These practices have drawn criticism from citizens and activists, who argue that they go beyond religious celebration and aim to establish a specific sectarian vision in the public sphere, marginalizing opposing beliefs and imposing a particular religious and cultural identity.

Impact on Coexistence and Social Peace

All these practices have collectively undermined the climate of religious and social coexistence in areas under Houthi control by imposing imported sectarian models on local communities, interfering in religious rituals, and provoking tensions among worshippers and members of local society. These interventions have also contributed to a growing sense of exclusion among large segments of the population and raised increasing concerns regarding freedom of religion, thought, and belief, as well as the negative impact on civil peace and social cohesion, which have historically characterized Yemeni society.



Detention of Jewish Citizen Marhabi Despite a Judicial Ruling for His Release

Since March 2016, the Houthi militia has continued to detain Yemeni Jewish citizen Libi Salem Mousa Marhabi on alleged charges related to smuggling archaeological manuscripts out of Yemen, in a case that lacks a sound legal basis.

Despite a final judicial ruling issued by the Court of Appeals in Sana'a on September 23, 2019, ordering his release, the Houthi militia's security apparatus refused to implement the decision and has continued to hold Marhabi in arbitrary detention up to the time of drafting this report. This constitutes a grave violation of the principle of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, as well as a breach of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which prohibits arbitrary arrest and guarantees the individual's right to liberty and security.

Inside the detention center, Marhabi has been subjected to harsh and inhuman conditions of detention. Available information indicates a deterioration in his health due to kidney and lung problems, in addition to the loss of all his teeth as a result of deliberate medical neglect and inadequate healthcare in prison.

Conclusion

The documented violations against preachers and minorities in Yemen during the period from September 2014 to December 2025 reflect the scale of the humanitarian tragedy experienced by civilians in the country. They reveal a systematic pattern of targeting various categories of preachers, who play a vital role in preserving societal identity and values, as well as religious minorities. The protection of these groups is not merely a national obligation, but a humanitarian duty that requires all parties to respect human dignity and support the rights to life, security, and freedom of thought. Accordingly, Rights Radar for Human Rights confirms that the general findings of this qualitative report are as follows:

- The Houthi militia bears the main responsibility for the violations committed against preachers and minorities in Yemen.
- The continued state of impunity has significantly contributed to the persistence of these violations.
- The absence of effective protection mechanisms for preachers and minorities at the national level has further enabled the continuation of such violations.

Recommendations

Based on the violations documented in this report against preachers and minorities in Yemen, and following an analysis of their nature, circumstances, and responsible parties, Rights Radar for Human Rights presents a set of recommendations addressed to the various parties concerned with the human rights matter in Yemen, as follows:

First: The Internationally Recognized Government

1. Release preachers and social reformers arbitrarily detained in prisons within areas under the control of the internationally recognized government, provided that no involvement in hostile acts against the state and its sovereignty has been established, while ensuring fair trials for those against whom credible charges exist.
2. Hold accountable all those responsible for violations committed against preachers, regardless of their affiliation or position, and ensure that they do not escape punishment.
3. Ensure legal and security protections for preachers and minorities, actively pursue perpetrators of violations against them, hold them accountable, and guarantee that they do not escape punishment.
4. Effectively implement comprehensive security measures to ensure the safety of preachers, their families, and children, so that they truly experience the state's commitment to their protection, both legally and physically.
5. Codify the legal and security rights of preachers within a statutory framework that safeguards their dignity and personal safety, while establishing criminal penalties for any violation against them.
6. Guarantee the right of victims to urgent and fair compensation, ensure justice by holding all perpetrators accountable, and impose penalties on both those directly responsible and any individuals who aided or incited such violations.
7. Intensify oversight and accountability over armed entities and formations affiliated with the Legitimate Government that are involved in violations against preachers and social reformers, and ensure that all perpetrators and accused individuals are handed over to competent authorities for prosecution.

Second: Houthi militia and Armed Formations Outside Government Control

1. Adhere to the Yemeni Constitution and laws, and fully comply with the principles established under International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law.
2. Release all detained, abducted, or forcibly disappeared preachers and members of minorities from all private and secret detention centers without restrictions or conditions.
3. Immediately launch a comprehensive, transparent, and independent investigation into all cases of assault, repression, and violations against preachers, social reformers, and members of minorities, and ensure such violations do not recur.
4. Guarantee justice, compensation, and redress for all victims of repression, assault, and violations, as well as their families.
5. 5. Conduct a thorough review of all detention cases involving preachers and minorities, provide clear justifications for detentions, and ensure fair trials for those proven to be involved in cases punishable by law.
6. Completely cease all forms and means of violations, including arbitrary detention, abduction, and enforced disappearance.
7. Respect and protect the freedom of expression, opinion, and thought for preachers and minorities, ensure these rights are not affected by any form of intimidation or oppression, and cancel any directives or circulars that restrict intellectual or religious expression.
8. Provide personal and legal protection for preachers and minorities in areas under the control of the Houthi militia or the armed formations outside the authority of the Legitimate Government, and take immediate and effective measures to ensure their safety and security.

Third: International Community and United Nations

1. Establish a professional, independent, and international investigation team to examine all cases of violations targeting preachers, social reformers, and members of minorities across all regions of Yemen, without exception.
2. Classify assassinations targeting preachers, social reformers, and members of minorities as crimes against humanity, hold the perpetrators legally accountable under international law, and place the responsible parties on international sanctions lists.





RIGHTS RADAR

WHO WE ARE?

Rights Radar foundation is a civil society organization for Human Rights, Non-Profit and Non-Governmental organization for monitoring, promoting and defending Human rights in the Arab world.

Founded by some Arab human rights defenders, and activists. Allocated for monitoring, documenting, and reporting violations against Human Rights, as well as providing advocacy, and legal support for victims and capacity building for human rights activists. It is focusing on all topics and areas of human rights, including freedom of expression, media and press freedom, women's rights, children's rights, disability rights, refugee rights, rights to justice.

Rights Radar working through a wide and professional network of reporters and monitors in the ground in most of the areas covered by its activities, using up-to-date techniques of monitoring and documenting human rights cases.

OUR OBJECTIVES:

- Monitoring and documenting violations against human rights in the Arab World.

- Providing advocacy and legal support for victims of human rights' violations.

- Networking and partnership with human rights organizations.

- Capacity building and leadership developing for human rights activists.

OUR VISSION:

Excellence in monitoring, documenting, and advocacy of human rights in the Arab world.

OUR MISSION:

A non-profit human rights foundation to defend Arab human rights and advocate their essential rights through monitoring and documenting violations, issuing statements and reports, networking and partnership with regional and international human rights organizations, as well as creating training and capacity building opportunities for human rights activists and leaders.

OUR VALUES

- Responsibility

- Credibility.

- Independency.

- Transparency.



OUR PROGRAMS

MONITORING

Rights Radar regularly monitors the human rights status and abuses in the Arab world, through local qualified monitors and reporters working to world-class standards and using cutting-edge techniques, as well as through collaborations with local human rights organizations that work in the same field with the same quality of work.

DOCUMENTING

Rights Radar documents human rights abuses committed by various parties, individual or collective, across the Arab world. Through a variety of approaches, we obtain material proof and documented evidence of the abuses of human rights to be used to bring the perpetrators to justice.

ADVOCACY

As part of our mission, Rights Radar provides advocacy and legal support, both material and moral support, for victims of human rights abuses in the Arab world, thanks to our capacity and expertise, and in collaboration with international organizations with complementary programs and aims.

NETWORKING

We achieve our objectives and goals through collaborating with a wide network of local, regional and international human rights organizations. Sharing experiences and working together, we drive outcomes and defend human rights through collective action and large-scale campaigns.

CAPACITY BUILDING

As well as defending human rights, Rights Radar is committed to training the human rights activists working as internal staff members as well as external organizations that share the same goal of defending human rights. Capacity building is a major part of our program and mission to improve human rights.



FIELDS OF FOCUS

Rights Radar believes the right to freedom of expression and justice, rights for women, children, people with disabilities and refugees are fundamental issues and represent the core topics of our work and activities.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

We advocate for freedom of expression to advance media freedom and public liberties, and promote its potential to play a vital role in developing democracy and protecting the public interest. We believe that democracy will not be fully achieved unless freedom of expression is guaranteed as a basic right.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Rights Radar promotes women's empowerment and supports their vital role and participation in society. We believe that society cannot reach its full potential unless women enjoy the same equal rights and opportunities as men, including education, health care, jobs, etc.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

We are working to enhance children's basic rights and assist them to fully enjoy their rights, including education, health care and protection. We look to children as our bright future, and this dream will not come true unless children are integrated fully into social development and public policies.

Yemen: Suppression of Thought and Belief

A Human Rights Report on
Violations Against Preachers and
Minorities in Yemen (2014-2025)

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