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Kuwaiti handed 7-year sentence for tweets

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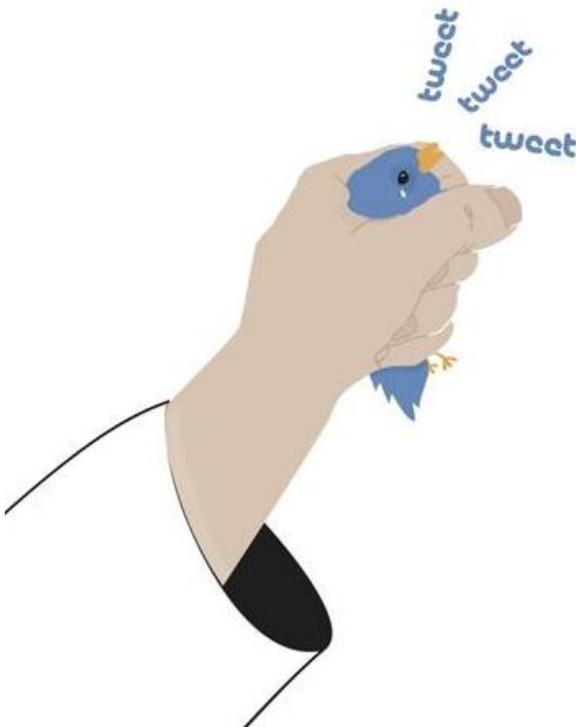
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The daily newspaper Kuwait Times said Mohammad Al-Mulaifi was sentenced on April 9 with imprisonment, a KD 50 fine ($179) and 'temporary compensation' of KD 5,001 ($17,913).

"Al-Mulaifi was accused of broadcasting untrue news on his Twitter blog about the existence of racial and sectarian division within the Kuwaiti community, and of accusing some citizens of affiliations to foreign countries. Al-Mulaifi was found guilty of undermining the Shiite doctrine and insulting Shiite scholars," the report said.

Before being sentenced, Mulaifi reportedly apologised to Shiites if they felt offended.

The Kuwaiti government has prosecuted others for online remarks deemed offensive or divisive to the country. Another Kuwaiti man has been charged with defaming Islam on Twitter, which he denies doing, and is facing calls for his execution, Reuters recently reported. Two others were jailed for three months each for "sectarian remarks" on Twitter, the Daily Star in Lebanon wrote.

In its latest rankings, Reporters Without Borders placed Kuwait at 78 out of 179 in terms of press freedom.

"There are effectively some "red lines" that the emirate's journalists cannot cross," the organisation says on its website. "The person of the head of state and members of the royal family or people holding key posts all remain sensitive subjects that are not raised."

Source: Reports

CONTACT DETAILS
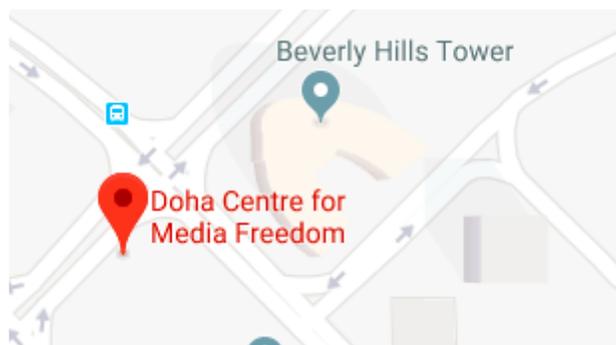
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