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**Law No. (32) of 2006 Amending Certain Provisions of Legislative Decree No. (18) of 1973 regarding Public Meetings, Marches, and Gatherings**

We, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Having reviewed the Constitution,

Legislative Decree No. (18) of 1973 regarding Public Meetings, Processions, and Gatherings,

And the Penal Code promulgated by Legislative Decree No. (15) of 1976, as amended,

The Shura Council and the Council of Representatives have approved the following Law, which we have ratified and enacted:

Article One

The texts of Articles (2), (3), (4) paragraph two, (5) paragraph two, (8), (9), (11), (13), and (15) of Legislative Decree No. (18) 1973 regarding Public Meetings, Processions, and Gatherings shall be replaced with the following texts:

Article (2):

a. Anyone organising a public meeting must notify the Chief of Public Security in writing at least three days before the meeting.

b. If a breach of public security or public order occurs during the meeting or in the march for which notification was given, or if harm is caused to others or to public or private property, those responsible for the harm shall bear civil and criminal liability. If the meeting or march takes place without notification, the organisers of the meeting or march shall be jointly liable with those responsible for compensating the damages. A judicial ruling from the competent court must be issued to specify liability in both of the aforementioned cases.

Article (3):

a. The notification must specify the time, place, and subject of the meeting, and whether the purpose of the meeting is a lecture or a public discussion.

b. The notification must be signed by three persons.

c. The following conditions must apply to those who sign the notification:

1- They must be residents of the city or area where the meeting will be held.

2- Their place of residence must be in that city or village, or they must be well known among its people for their good reputation.

3- They must enjoy their civil and political rights.

3- Each of the signatories in the notification shall provide their name, description, occupation, and place of residence.

If the notification does not meet any of the aforementioned conditions, it shall be considered null and void.

The Chief of Public Security or their representative may change the time and place of the meeting for any reason that disrupts public order, provided that the applicants for the meeting are informed of this within two days at most from the notification, and that the postponement does not exceed one week.

Article (4) Second Paragraph:

The prohibition decision shall be communicated to the organisers of the meeting or one of them in person or at the place of residence indicated in the notification at least two days before the scheduled time of the meeting. The prohibition decision shall be posted on the door of the relevant police station. The organisers of the meeting may appeal the prohibition decision within fifteen days from the date they are notified of the decision before the competent court, which shall adjudicate the matter urgently.

Article (5) Second Paragraph:

In all cases, public meetings may not be held before seven o'clock in the morning or continue beyond eleven-thirty at night unless special permission is obtained from the Chief of Public Security or their representative.

Article (8):

For the purposes of this Law, any meeting held in a public or private place to which individuals have not been personally invited shall be considered a public meeting. A meeting shall be deemed public if the Chief of Public Security determines that, due to its subject matter, the number of invitations issued, the method of distribution, or any other circumstance, it does not qualify as a private meeting. In this case, the Chief of Public Security or their representative must notify the caller or organiser of the meeting to fulfil the obligations stipulated in this Law.

The following shall not be considered a public meeting for the purposes of this Law:

1- Religious meetings held in places of worship.

2- Meetings organised or called by the competent government authorities.

3- Meetings held by recognised private bodies for their members, such as unions, associations, clubs, and sports bodies, and the federations of these private bodies, for the purpose of discussing matters within their jurisdiction according to their constitutions.

4- Meetings, gatherings, and councils that are customary or necessitated by social occasions or holidays.

Article (9):

The provisions of Articles (1), (2), (3), (4), (6), and (7) of this Law shall apply to gatherings, marches, and demonstrations that are held or take place in roads or public squares for political purposes.

The Chief of Public Security or their representative may amend the route of the march or demonstration, provided that the organisers are informed of this in accordance with Article (4) of this Law.

If a march is organised for political purposes in connection with a funeral, the announcement issued by the public security authorities to prohibit the march or to specify its route shall be communicated to the funeral organisers from the deceased's family.

Article (11):

Demonstrations, marches, or gatherings may not take place or continue before sunrise or after sunset unless special written permission is obtained from the Chief of Public Security or their representative.

Furthermore, demonstrations, marches, or gatherings that are held or take place near hospitals, airports, shopping centres, or locations of a security nature are prohibited, and the Minister of Interior shall designate and announce these locations.

The use of vehicles in any march, demonstration, or gathering is also prohibited unless special written permission is obtained from the Chief of Public Security or their representative.

Article (13):

Without prejudice to any severer penalty provided for in the Penal Code or any other law:

a. Imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or a fine not less than one hundred dinars, or both penalties together shall be imposed on those who call for or organise, or who are members of committees for public meetings, marches, demonstrations, or gatherings that are held or take place without notification or despite a prohibition order.
The same penalty shall apply to anyone who continues to call for or organise such an event despite its prohibition.
Additionally, individuals who attempt to participate in such a meeting, march, demonstration, or gathering shall be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month, a fine not less than fifty dinars, or both penalties together.

b. Imprisonment for a term not exceeding four months, a fine not less than fifty dinars, or both penalties together shall be imposed on anyone who participates—despite a warning from public security—in a meeting, march, demonstration, or gathering that has not been notified, for which a prohibition order has been issued, or who disobeys an order to disperse the participants.

c. Imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month or a fine not less than fifty dinars, or both penalties together shall be imposed on anyone who uses a vehicle in any march, demonstration, or gathering without special permission from the Chief of Public Security or their representative.

d. Imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or a fine not less than two hundred dinars, or both penalties together shall be imposed on anyone who violates the provisions of paragraphs three and four of Article (6) of this Law.

e. Imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month or a fine not less than fifty dinars, or both penalties together shall be imposed on anyone who violates any of the other provisions stipulated in this Law.

Article (15):

The Minister of Interior shall issue the necessary decisions to implement the provisions of this Law.

Article Two

The following Articles shall be added to Legislative Decree No. (18) 1973 regarding Public Meetings, Processions, and Gatherings, namely Articles (6) paragraphs three and four, and (11) bis:

Article (6) Second and Third Paragraphs:

No person shall participate in a public meeting while carrying a weapon, even if they are licensed to carry it.

In applying the provisions of this Law, a weapon includes firearms and their ammunition, bladed weapons, incendiary and explosive materials, as well as sticks and hard or sharp objects not customarily carried under normal circumstances.

Article (11) bis:

Without prejudice to the right of citizens to hold public meetings and organise marches and gatherings in accordance with the conditions and provisions stipulated in this Law, the Governor may designate a number of public places within their governorate for holding public meetings or gatherings or for organising marches and demonstrations that have duly been notified.

Article Three

The word "marches" shall replace the word "processions" in the title of Legislative Decree No. (18) 1973 regarding Public Meetings, Processions, and Gatherings, and wherever it appears in the aforementioned Legislative Decree. The phrase "Chief of Public Security" shall replace the phrase "Director General of Police," and the phrase "public security" shall replace the word "police," wherever it appears in the aforementioned Legislative Decree.

Article Four

The Ministers—each within their jurisdiction—shall implement this Law, and it shall come into force from the day following the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

King of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

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