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Bahrain detains student, teachers over Koranic recitation to music

Reuters (11.03.2015) <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/03/11/us-bahrain-koran-idUSKBN0M71UL20150311> - Bahrain's public prosecutor has charged a high school student and two teachers with insulting Islam in connection with a video showing the student reciting verses from the Koran to musical accompaniment, state news agency BNA reported on Wednesday.

According to Islamic tradition, tajweed, the recitation of Islam's holy book, adheres to strict rules of intonation which vary according to a number of recognized reading styles.

Footage allegedly showing the student reciting Koranic verses while a teacher played an instrument to accompany him were posted on social media, BNA said.

The Ministry of Education investigated the video and found that the school had entered a competition for Koranic recitation, commonly held for children around the Muslim world.

Two teachers and the student were subsequently questioned by the public prosecutor.

"The public prosecution ... charged them with violating the Islamic religion and insulting its rituals," the agency said. "It also ordered them detained protectively over the case."

Western-allied Bahrain has a Shi'ite Muslim majority and is ruled by the Sunni Muslim al-Khalifa dynasty. Although Bahrain has more liberal laws compared to neighboring Saudi Arabia and some other Gulf Arab countries, it still has deeply religious and conservative sections in its society.

The small island kingdom has been suffering political turmoil accompanied by mostly small-scale unrest since 2011, when Shi'ite-led mass protests erupted, calling for reforms and more representation in government.

Bomb damages Bahrain mosque as police detain "terrorist cell"

JP (23.02.2015) - A homemade bomb hidden inside a Bahraini village mosque exploded after a suspect apprehended by police led authorities to it, the ministry of interior said on Monday.

"The bomb squad arrived at the scene to secure the area but the bomb exploded, causing damage to the mosque," the ministry said in a statement.

The explosion appeared to rip through the bathroom and partially destroy the roof of the

Muqsha village mosque, west of the capital Manama, according to a photograph published by the ministry. No casualties were reported.

Seven people suspected of involvement in deadly bombings targeting Bahrain's security forces were apprehended, the public prosecutor's office said on its Twitter page on Monday.

Bahrain, which is home to the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, was swept by unrest during the 2011 "Arab Spring" uprisings when the majority Shi'ites demanded political reforms.
