

How Global Research Broke Mainstream Media Complicity on Bahrain Torture Scandal

By [Global Research](#)

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Irish Times and Royal College of Surgeons Ireland Exposed Over Shameful Silence on Bahrain

THE silence of Irish medical organisations – the Irish Medical Council (IMC), the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO) and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) – in the face of Bahrain medics reportedly tortured and charged with serious offences has drawn criticism from many individual medics. There has been particular criticism of the mute response of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) as three of those medics are graduates of the RCSI in Dublin while many international medical organisations have condemned the Bahrain authorities' actions.

Most of the quality Irish media has also written critically on this silence, especially concerning the “accusations of greed and moral cowardice” of the RCSI which has a €100 million circa investment in Bahrain. But the behaviour of The Irish Times, whose freelance stringer in Bahrain, Finian Cunningham, reported on the doctors' maltreatment in the first place, has been inexplicable.

Cunningham broke the story about hospital staff, including the three RCSI graduates, being assaulted and arrested via the IT on March 28 last and he followed up with queries to the RCSI about their attitude to these developments. He received the same baffling response as Goldhawk (see The Phoenix 20/5/11), ie a determined no comment and a studied refusal to condemn the Bahrain authorities. The journalist was then surprised to find himself in dispute with the IT's foreign desk whom the RCSI had contacted with a request that the newspaper back off a sensitive situation.

Cunningham then researched an investigative article for the website Global Research detailing the RCSI's €100 million investment in Bahrain, the college fact-finding team's failure to contact relatives of the detained RCSI graduates when they visited Bahrain and their refusal to criticise the authorities. The Global Research article was posted on April 21 and was a world exclusive [1]. In turn, the IT told Cunningham to drop his pursuit of the RCSI and its silence on Bahrain medics.

Incensed at the IT's refusal to support his inquiries with the RCSI, Cunningham complained to the then editor Geraldine Kennedy about the blocking of his story in the IT and accusing it of being “derelict in covering the crimes” in Bahrain. Cunningham added that the IT had tried to “quash an important story regarding human rights violations in Bahrain with significant Irish complicity in these violations”.

Cunningham provided Kennedy with a link to his article on the Global Research website which contained details of the RCSI investments and their failure to even contact the relations of the RCSI graduates. The Global Research story was sent to the IT editor on May 12 - a week before Goldhawk broke the RCSI/Bahrain investment story for the first time in Ireland (see The Phoenix 20/5/11). However, the IT failed to follow up the story that so exercised the rest of the Irish media in the following weeks, only reporting on it after it had broken elsewhere.

More recently, the IT has declined to publish letters on the Bahrain/RCSI story from medics like Dr Ruairi Hanley, a columnist with the Irish Medical Times, and Professor Muirir Fitzgerald, former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, UCD.

Despite spurning the offerings of Cunningham, who had been reporting directly from Bahrain for the newspaper for some months, the IT had no hesitation in publishing an appeal from a global human rights group funded by Denis O'Brien, seeking the release of the detained medics and the dropping of charges against them.

The Irish Times charged Frontline €25,000 to purchase a broadsheet page for its petition.

NOTES:

[1] Finian Cunningham is now working as a Global Research Correspondent based in Belfast, Ireland.

The story on the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland and its silence over the detention and torture of Bahrain medics was first published by Global Research:

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=24449>

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For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca