

Max Security Alert
Bahrain: Widespread protests expected for October 22
October 17, 2011, 13:20 UTC

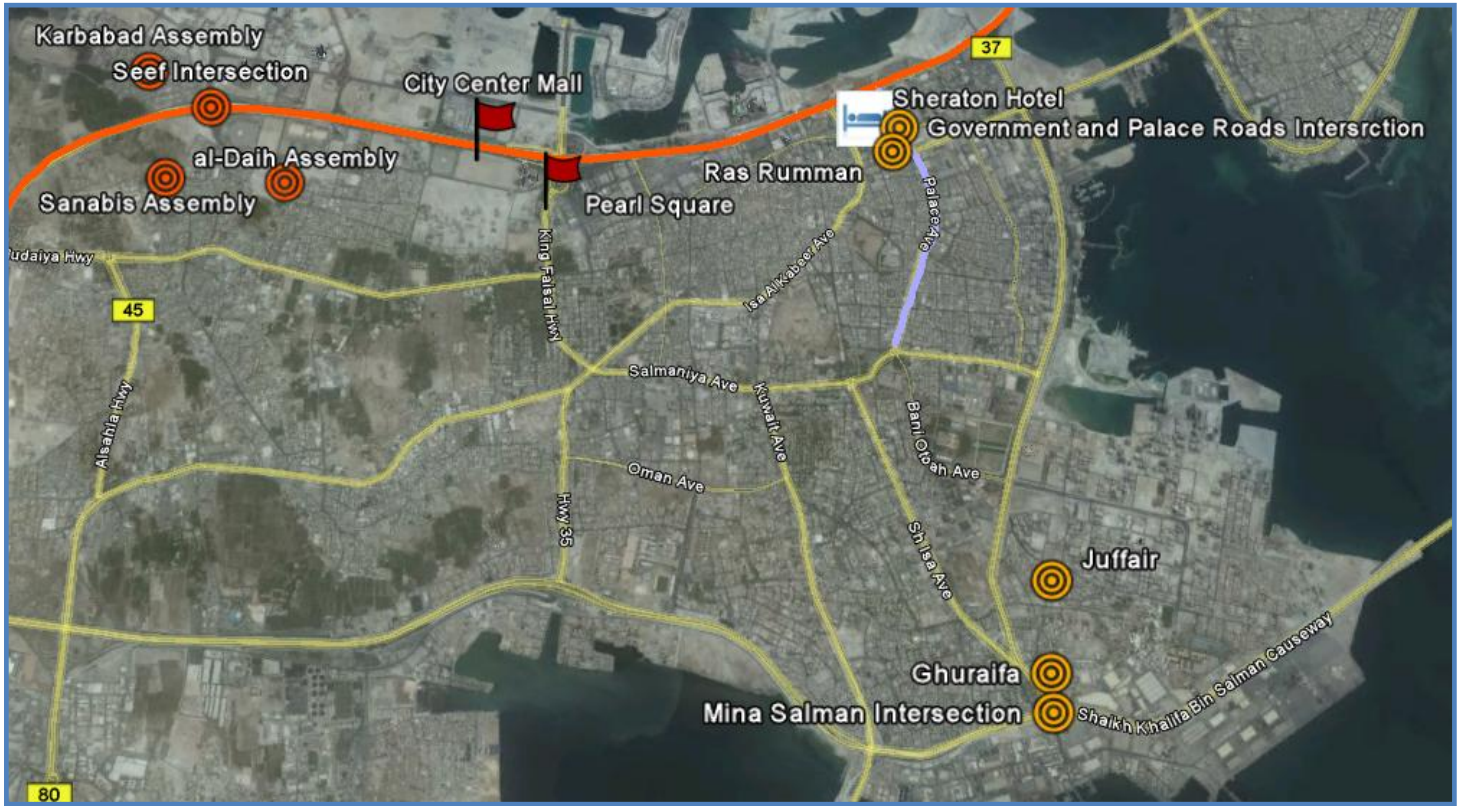
Current Situation

The Bahraini opposition is planning to carry out widespread protests on Saturday, October 22. The campaign, called 'Dignity arrows', will take place throughout the country, including the capital, Manama.

- The protester's main goal is to stage a sit-in at Seef-Mall intersection in Manama. They will march to the location from the three surrounding areas: Sanabis, al-Daih and Karbabad.
- Following the sit-in at Seef, protesters will attempt to block main roads and intersections in the capital.
- Attempts will be made to block the government and palace roads, as well as streets in the Diplomatic area throughout the day.
- The central roads leading to Mina Salman (Manama's port) intersection are also expected to be blocked throughout the day.
- Other main roads and highways around the country are expected to be persistently blocked.
- The protesters' tactic is to block roads, while avoiding direct conflict with security forces, repeating these actions again and again ('Block, Run and Repeat').
- Roads in the vicinity of hospitals and clinics are not expected to be blocked by the protesters.
- At 15:00 local time, there is a plan for thousand of cars to clog the 'February 14' road (also known as the Sh Khalifa Bin Salman road), in what has been previously dubbed 'the dignity belt'
- Children, women and the elderly were requested to avoid the sit-in out of fear for their safety.
- The exact time and locations have yet to be announced, probably in order to mislead the security forces.

Assessment and Recommendations

1. Security Forces will try to prevent protesters from reaching strategic locations in Central Manama. Initiated raids on opposition members houses, as well as preliminary arrests should be expected in Manama's outlying areas, most notably in Sanabis, al-Daih, Karbabad, Ras Rumman, Juffair and Ghuraifa.
2. The Bahraini opposition has so far proved its stamina and persistence, energized by failed attempts from the government's end to answer their demands. The opposition has been gearing up for this event for the past two weeks, with previous successful attempts to disrupt traffic in Manama and its outskirts on October 4-6. The protesters were also recently inflamed by the killing of a Shiite teenager in the village of Abu-Saiba.
3. It is thus likely that the hard core of activists from the opposition will at some point clash with the security forces during October 22. The calls for women, children and the elderly not to attend the protests support this assessment.
4. This group of protesters may try to reoccupy the pearl roundabout, dubbed the Shuhadaa' (Martyrs') Square by the opposition.
5. The security forces will likely take precautionary measures to secure Central Manama and the Diplomatic district. At this point, travel to Central Manama may continue on Saturday October 22, while avoiding the potential friction zones as described above. Westerns are not likely to be directly targeted by demonstrators, however clashes with Security Forces may turn violent.
6. Allow for added travel time during morning and afternoon rush hours on October 22.
7. Do not document any demonstrations, traffic disruptions, checkpoints or security personnel.
8. Stay tuned for Max Security alerts on October 22.



(Map Created Using Google Earth)

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