

# SAUDI ARABIA'S EXECUTION CAMPAIGN INTENSIFIES

REPRIEVE



**MEDC**  
Middle East  
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Despite promises by Saudi authorities to reduce the use of the death penalty and reserve it for only the most serious crimes, **executions in the country have surged in 2025**. Saudi Arabia has significantly increased executions for non-lethal offenses, particularly drug-related offenses committed by foreign nationals. Saudi authorities also executed Jalal al-Labbad and Abdullah al-Derazi, who were prosecuted for alleged crimes committed when they were children. In an alarming escalation, **the kingdom executed prominent journalist Turki al-Jasser** in June. This ongoing execution crisis raises serious concerns for the lives of detainees in Saudi Arabia, including political prisoners, many of whom have not been afforded due process and have faced abuses behind bars.

## KEY FIGURES

IN 2025, SAUDI ARABIA IS ON COURSE TO  
**BREAK ITS OWN EXECUTION RECORD**

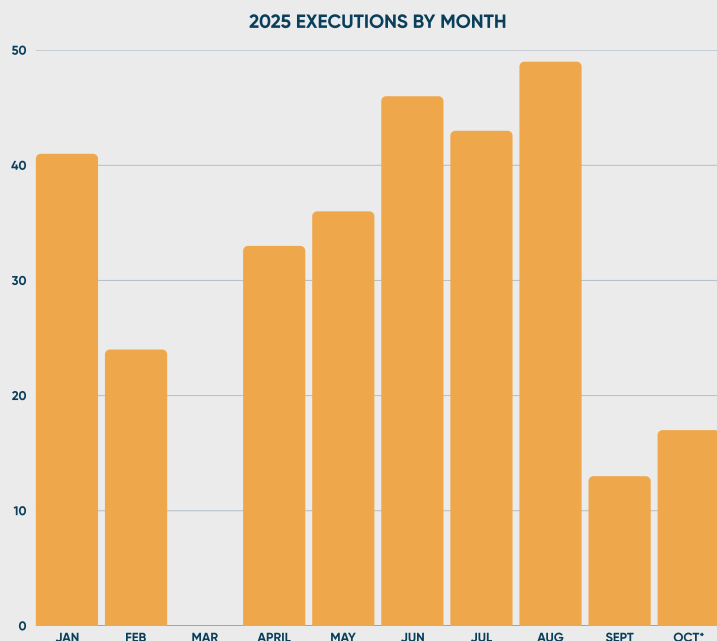
**302**

Individuals **executed**  
so far in 2025

**345** Individuals  
**executed**  
in 2024

According to Reprieve and the European Saudi Organization for Human Rights (ESOHR), Saudi Arabia recorded the **highest number of executions in the kingdom's recent history** in 2024, a dramatic increase from its previous record of 196 executions in 2022.

### 2025 EXECUTIONS BY MONTH



SOURCE: REPRIEVE & ESHOR

\*Executions through October 21

Executions peaked in August at **1.58 executions per day**.

Gender breakdown: **298 men, 4 women**

# Foreign Nationals Disproportionately Targeted

- Foreign nationals represent **42%** of the population in Saudi Arabia.
- **56%** (169/302) of all executions were of foreign nationals. Of these cases:
  - **94%** (159/169) were for non-lethal drug offenses.
- There are at least **12 Indian nationals** on death row in Saudi Arabia.
- Egyptian, Ethiopian, Kenyan, Nigerian, and Pakistani men are also on death row, as are **women** from the Philippines and Indonesia.

## Key Trends and Human Rights Concerns



### EXECUTIONS FOR HASHISH

- There have been 90 executions solely related to hashish, a low-level cannabis product often carrying light punishments, or even decriminalized, in many countries around the world.
- 2025 has already seen more than three times as many executions for hashish compared to 2024.
- **45%** of executions for drug-related offenses and **30%** of all executions are related to hashish.
- One of Reprieve's clients, Egyptian national Rami al-Najjar, was executed on September 15, 2025, just for possessing 8 grams of hashish.



### EXECUTIONS OF CHILDREN

- On August 21, 2025, Saudi Arabian authorities executed child defendant **Jalal al-Labbad**, whose detention was determined to be arbitrary by UN experts who called for his release. The alleged offenses he was charged with—related to attending demonstrations and funerals—occurred when he was 15 years old.
- On October 20, 2025, **Abdullah al-Derazi** was the second child defendant executed by Saudi Arabia this year. Reprieve's analysis suggests many of the offenses al-Derazi was charged with date back to when he was 17 years old.
- At least six others are at risk of execution for alleged crimes committed as minors, in direct violation of international and Saudi law; most of them for attending protests.



### EXECUTIONS TO SUPPRESS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- Political executions within Saudi borders have been extremely rare since the execution of prominent Saudi Shia cleric **Nimr al-Nimr** in 2016.
- However, on June 14, 2025, prominent Saudi journalist **Turki al-Jasser** was executed after a secret trial and seven years of imprisonment, a dangerous escalation of the use of the death penalty to suppress freedom of expression. Saudi authorities executed Saudi political analyst **Abdullah al-Shamri** in February 2024 under vague legal grounds of "threatening the stability and endangering the security" of Saudi Arabia.
- Saudi prosecutors are currently seeking the death penalty against several detained prominent figures, including **Salman al-Odah** and **Hasan al-Maliki**.