

BAHRAIN

A monthly newsletter issued by the Bahrain Freedom Movement

Licence To Torture

The US Championed The Al Khalifa Cause To Whitewash Their Inhumane Practices

On 3rd March 1993, the chief American delegate at the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations tabled a motion to lift the international monitoring of the human rights situation in Bahrain. The motion was approved and the Al Khalifa government of Bahrain was given a clean bill of health as far as violations of human rights are concerned. The American move came at the annual meeting of the Commission in which the situation in Bahrain was reviewed. In February 1992 the government of Bahrain was put under international monitoring by the Human Rights Commission following years of persistent violation of human rights in that country. These violations included unlawful and arbitrary arrests and detentions, psychological and physical torture of young men that had led to the death of six people and unfair trials which had always been short of the international standards.

The imposition of international monitoring of the human rights situation followed intensive efforts by the opposition over the last fifteen years, and numerous reports by reputable international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, Article 19, Middle East Watch, Arab Organisation for Human Rights and Third World Monitor. It took the UN Human Rights Commission a long time to believe that the situation in Bahrain had warranted a process of monitoring to ensure improvement of the situation. The Americans, it now seems, were not happy to have one of their allies accused of indulging in nasty policies, and consequently subjected to international monitoring. The Americans are in full force in Bahrain and were often accused by the opposition of abetting or at least turning a blind eye to the violations of human rights in that country.

It had been expected that under the Clinton's administration the situation in the Gulf region would improve as far as the internal situation is concerned. More freedom had been anticipated, less violation of human rights had been expected and process of political participation had been hoped for. It now appears that these expectations had been premature, and may never materialise. Mr. Shafel, on behalf of the US delegation to the UN Human Rights Commission, wasted no time to lodge his motion following the report on the internal situation in Bahrain compiled by the acting committee which had been charged with following the task. Although the committee had reported marginal improvement in the situation, it was well aware that this was due to the international pressure brought about by the monitoring procedure. In fact, the committee proposed to continue the

international monitoring for one more year, a proposal that was rejected by the American chief delegate.

The question of whether there had indeed been an improvement in the situation of human rights in Bahrain is a tricky one, and the real question is whether any improvement could be considered a result of a new governmental policies or an attempt by the regime to get the monitoring process removed. In this respect there have been three developments in the 1992. The first was the two "Amiri orders" allowing the return of 121 Bahraini exiles to the country. The total number who returned is around 12 percent of the total. More people submitted application to be allowed back hoping the Amir would use the "National Day" on 16th December 1992 to announce the "pardon", but were rebuffed. The main aim behind the two Amiri orders was clearly intended to boost the chances of the removal of monitoring. If the monitoring had continued more people could have benefited from the "Amiri offers". Those who had returned faced the grim reality of the situation as they had to wait for months before they got their passports or any official recognition of citizenship.

The second was the "relaxation" of the execution of the State Security Law which empowers the Minister of the Interior to order the arrest of anyone suspected of being a threat to the security of the country for up to three years without charge. Arrests never ceased, but their frequency and duration were reduced. For example, instead of arresting a young man for a month, he would be asked to appear daily for thirty days at the headquarters of the special branch for interrogation, torture and abuse, but would be allowed to go back home at night. Tens and perhaps hundreds of people went through this experience which did not really look like the normal form of arrest, but was in fact more painful. There was never a relaxation of the tight controls on the freedom of speech, meetings, or political participation. In some instances the torturers would tell their victims: "you know our hands are tied up at the moment, but not for long".

The third development was the formation of the "Consultative Council", or the "OK Council" as the British members of the Bahraini Special Branch call it. In a step intended to abolish the 1973 Constitution, the Amir, Sheikh Essa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, announced the creation of the council in the wake of international pressure to develop the political system towards a more representative regime. There were protests from every corner of the country

against the suspension of the constitutional articles calling for the election of the "National Assembly", and many arrests were made during the year-long campaign to reinstate the election process. A major petition was handed to the Amir in mid November last year signed by the elite of the society and calling for the implementation of the Constitution. The Amir and his brother, the Prime Minister, resisted the call for elections and insisted on the formation of the "Consultative Council" whose members were selected by the Amir. The people were not to have a say in the selection because of "or traditions and norms" as the Al Khalifa regime would often put it.

These three development which might have been designed outside the country to ease the international pressure on the Al Khalifa do not amount to a real change of policy of the regime. As an observer has recently commented: "these cosmetic changes were similar to the American attempts to salvage the Israeli government by suggesting a solution short of the full implementation of the UN resolution 799 calling for the immediate return of all the Palestinian deportees". This process of finding excuses and marginal solutions could not lead to a lasting peace and tranquillity in the region. Mr. Shafel should have consulted Tom William (see Voice of Bahrain, issue No. 15, March 1993) to realise the gravity of the situation in Bahrain. Last month, for example, the government intervened physically to prevent the convening of a seminar which was to be addressed by two prominent figures, Sheikh Abdul Amir Al Jamri and Dr. Abdul Latif Al Mahmood at one of the local mosques. Members of the security forces surrounded the mosque and prevented the people entering the mosque. Since the people of Bahrain did not believe in violence people preferred to disperse and not to confront the police. On 18th March a similar seminar was also targeted and Sheikh Al Jamri was not allowed to deliver his speech. He was later summoned by the Special Branch for interrogation.

It is sad to see the US in the position of propping up the oppressive policies of the Al Khalifa regime of Bahrain. A more humane policy would have meant the continuation of the monitoring process for at least a year to make sure a return to the tense years of the eighties would not happen. Bill Clinton will have his reputations at stake if he continues his support to this regime which ignores the calls of moderation based on insistence on the rule of Law as embodied by the Constitution. The US has to define its real objectives in the Gulf region.

Al Mahmood: These Are the Differences

The most detailed study of the differences between the Consultative Council appointed by the Government of Bahrain and the elected parliament as detailed by the Constitution was presented last month by Dr. Abdul Latif Al Mahmood, an assistant professor at the Bahrain University and one of the sponsors of the November petition signed by 300 personalities. In the study nine major differences were highlighted by the study as follows:

1. The Shura Council is consultative while the National Assembly is legislative.
2. The Shura Council is appointed while the National Assembly is freely elected by the populace.
3. The Shura Council is for offering suggestions while the National Assembly is for enacting laws and monitoring.
4. The Shura Council is for recommendations while the National Assembly is for implementation of policies.
5. The provisions of the Shura Council is "for information" while those of the National Assembly are binding.

6. Members of the Shura Council represent themselves while members of National Assembly represent all citizens.

7. The Governments' presence in the Shura Council is secondary, while in the National Assembly it is integral.

8. Presidency of the Shura Council is appointed whilst that of the National Assembly is elected.

9. Sessions of the Shura Council are held in secret while those of the National Assembly are public.

These are the main differences between the two establishments; the Shura Council which was appointed by the Amir in December 1992 and the National Assembly which was prescribed by the 1973 Constitution, and which has been banned for the last 17 years. These significant differences have knock-on effects on the preservation of public and individual rights and duties, described by Chapter 2 & 3 of the Constitution. They are hindrances to the progress and development of the country and its human resources.

Khalifa Tightens His Grip With New Appointments

The expectations of many Bahrainis have now come true. The Prime Minister, Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, has scored new points against his arch-enemy, his nephew and heir apparent, Sheikh Hamad Bin Essa Al Khalifa. Last month cabinet appointments confirmed Khalifa's men in two vacant ministerial posts. The first one, the Ministry of Transport, has been vacant since January when Mr. Ibrahim Humaidan was appointed to take up the post of the Chairman of the appointed Shura Council. The PM had always feared that after his death, none of his sons would inherit his power. His eldest and most dear son, Mohammed, died in the seventies while studying in the United States. He was left with a younger son, Ali, who enjoyed no intellectual ability or political qualities.

Now Ali is the Minister of Transport having spent several years as the Under Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior. While in that post he assumed a bigger role than the post would merit. He attended important meetings and met dignitaries from other countries. He was presented by the Media in the second line of leadership after the troika of the Amri, Prime Minister and the Heir Apparent. This has intensified after Hamad's son graduated in 1991 from the US, and was appointed deputy to his father. Now that he is at the Ministry of Transport it remains to be seen whether his appointments would mean less hostile relations among the feuding lords at the House of Al Khalifa.

The second appointment was that of Mr. Ibrahim Mohammed Al Mutawwa who has become the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs. The position had been held by Yousif Al Shirawi who is the Minister of Industry and Development. Mr. Mutawwa held a position equivalent to Undersecretary because he was the Manager of the Prime Minister's office. This is therefore one shot for the benefit of Khalifa who has always surrounded himself with loyal servants.

The new Manager of the PM's office is now

Abdul Latif Al Ruma'hi whose position now is equivalent to that of an undersecretary. More positions are being created by the Prime Minister to accommodate high positions for the ever-increasing numbers of the Al Khalifa.

A third decree appointed Rashid bin Hamad Al Khalifa to the position of Assistant Undersecretary for Immigration and Passport affairs at the Ministry of the Interior.



Ibrahim Humaidan: relegated

These appointments have disappointed many who had been waiting for a cabinet reshuffle in order to give the country and the government an upliftment after more than 20 years of stagnant governmental policies. That has not materialised, and is unlikely to be forthcoming soon.

Meanwhile, Mr. Ibrahim Humaidan is managing the Consultative Council under the direction of the Prime Minister who dictates the agenda of the anti-constitutional entity. The country is far from stability and development as long as the government refuses to give the people a role in running the affairs of their country on the basis of equal opportunities for all.

Continuing Henderson's Campaign

Security forces have been on the offensive since Ian Henderson assumed all responsibilities of public security in addition to the intelligence service. Henderson forces felt relieved by the decision taken in February by the UN Human Rights Commission to remove Bahrain from states put under surveillance of human rights abuses. The decision sponsored by the US delegation ended one year of observation by the Commission.

On 13 March, Mahdi Al-Saeed was arrested for few days. Mohammed Al-Rayyash on 18 March and was ordered to attend for several days to be interrogated. Mr. Mohammed Jawad Kadhem Al-Demstani was arrested after returning from Iran. After two years of detention, he was deported to Oman. A lawyer, Mr. Ahmed Al-Shamlan was ordered to hand-in his passport after participating in a pro-democracy debate in Sharjah, UAE. Mr. Ali Al-Jamri (of Sanabis) continues to attend interrogation sessions at the intelligence head-quarter. He was ordered to work as informer. As he refused, he had to suffer. On 28 February, Mr. Husain Al-Daihi was arrested while driving his car in Al-Ma'aridh Street. Abdul-Hadi Al-Mukhowder was detained on 24 February and was ordered to work as informer. On 8 March, the security forces arrested the following people who attended a lecture at Mo'min mosque: Sami Abu Hamad, Zuhair Mohammed Jawad Al-Alqam, Husain Barakat, Adel Al-Saqay, Thamer Saif, Majid Al-Aradi, Mahdi Al-Saeed, Abbas Al-Aradi, Mansoor Al-Aali, Mohammed Abdul-Nabi and Jaafar Sabah. They were intimidated and ordered not to attend in any mosque activity. They were released after three days in detention. Five people who wondered around Al-Khamis police force while Sheikh Al-Jamri was interrogated, were detained, interrogated and released. They were: Ismail Ibrahim, Aqeel Naji, Hamza Eid, Mohammed Nusaif and Habib Khalil Ibrahim.

Once Upon a Time Continued From Page 4

Sheikh Mohammed challenges his brother the Amir. What he hates most is being told "no" to an offer to buy a business. He does not like the rich and especially those close to the Amir who normally have goals to achieve.

Certainly, he does not succeed always. One case stands clear. When he decided to go after al Hadad for the profitable Mercedes Benz agency. To avoid a direct confrontation, Al Hadad invited the head of the Amiri court, Mr. Al Dossary, for co-owning the agency. Al Dossary is the closest to the Amir than any other person. Mr. Al Dossary who loves travelling to Cairo, is widely respected because of his position to the Amir. Informed people say that Salman the father of the Amir has asked that Al Dossary receive VIP treatment by the Amir.

Some have suggested that the Amir and his mother are not on good terms because of the Amir's "tough" position on his brother Mohammed. Often times, Mohammed's behaviour insults the Amir's dignity and authority. The profiles of the three leaders indicate the type of government in Bahrain, which is reminiscent of backward regimes.

Amnesty International: Children Are Tortured in Bahrain

The Working Group For Children of Amnesty International issued an appeal to protect innocence and vulnerability of children in the worst 27 countries around the world. Bahrain was one of these countries. It is No 16 in the list of countries abusing children for political reasons.

According to AI, "several young people were arrested for distributing leaflets in various towns and villages. In Bahrain, political detainees are commonly held for prolonged periods in uncommunicado detention; Bahrain permits detention without charge or trial for a period of up to three years, renewable. Many detainees held under this law have been tortured in order to extract information or confessions."

This latest communique by Amnesty International invalidates the argument that the Government of Al Khalifa has shown any sign of openness or respect of International laws and conventions.

The "OK" Council is "Functioning"

This is how the intelligence community in Bahrain calls the newly-appointed Council. Especially, the British officers look at the Consultative Council as nothing but a talking shop and a rubber stamp for the government. Members are paid BD 3000 (US\$ 9000) monthly if they have no other source of income otherwise the pay is half of that.

So far the major achievement has been as follows: Some members proposed to issue a condemnation of the Israeli action of deporting 400 Palestinians. That proved an untenable task. The Egyptian Legal expert, Dr. Ashmawi, protested that intention saying it was not the duty of the Council to issue such statements. He tried to validate his argument by listing the various Amiri decrees related to the Council and insisted these decrees do not permit engaging in such activities.

One of the members, Abdul Nabi Al Shu'la shouted in anger: What are we here for then?

The government relented to the demand and the Council scored a point. A statement was in support of the deportees.

People in Bahrain exchanged jokes about this action and enquired whether a similar statement could be issued in support of the Bahraini deportees whose numbers increases by the day.

For example; last month one of the Bahraini deportees, Aziz MashaAllah Mohammed passed away after enormous pressure for being away from his family in Bahrain. Mr. MashaAllah was being treated in a Copenhagen hospital for injuries sustained some years ago during two years of detention and torture. He was deported to Iran from where he travelled to Syria, Algiers and finally, Denmark.

This is in addition to those who are continuously deported on their arrival at the airport, the latest of whom Mr. Mohammed Jawad Kadhem Al Demestani. (see other news).

Freedom of Expression Banned

The latest violation of the freedom of expression in Bahrain came last month as Bahraini people were engaged in activities related to the month of Ramadhan. The tradition has been to organise intellectual seminars in various parts of the country. People have often enjoyed these seminars since they provide them with both ideological and social satisfaction.

This year, however, the situation was different. On 6th March 1993, a seminar was planned to take place at Al Khawaja Mosque in the Capital, Manama. Two people were to debate contemporary issues relating to the popular demand for the enactment of the Constitution. Dr. Abdul Latif Al Mhamood and Sheikh Abdul Amir Al Jamri had been invited to present their views on matters relating to their meeting with the Amir, Sheikh Essa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, January 1993. In that meeting the two were accompanied by four others (see Voice of Bahrain No. 14) and were attempting to receive a formal response to the petition they had sponsored in mid November calling for democratic elections according to the Constitution.

The meeting was stormy. The Amir refused to acknowledge the need for an elected parliament and insisted on his form of "consultative council". When the six presented their case he was so upset that he abruptly brought the meeting to a swift end. Since then, there has been popular demand for increased activities to speed up the democratic process. A detailed study was prepared by Dr. Al Mahmood (an assistant-professor at the Bahrain University) in which nine major differences between the appointed Council and the elected parliament were highlighted in a legal form.

The meeting was called to explain the view of the opposition in a peaceful way. But the Government took the matter seriously and intervened at the highest level to cancel the seminar. Subsequently, the security service took charge of the situation and ordered the police to take a high profile on the night of the seminar. Police had hanged the mosque with a prohibition notice declaring the seminar had been banned. They were put on full alert later in the day in case the organisers insisted on convening the seminar.

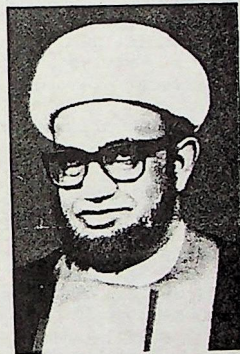
Both speakers were contacted on the morning Saturday 6th March and warned of arrest if they tried to reach the mosque in the evening. They were asked to order the youth to stay away or face unknown reprisals. The government eventually succeeded in banning the seminar but left deep resentment in the country.

Furthermore, the government again intervened on 18th March to ban a programme which had been planned to take place at Mo'men Mosque in Manama. This time, the theme was a general discussion of the Palestinian problem and the current position of the holy city of Jerusalem.

Without warning, the security forces surrounded the house of Sheikh Al Jamri who was one of the speakers, and attempted to arrest him. People gathered as the news spread around and after a series of heated exchanges succeeded to foil the pre-planned arrest. The situation remained tense throughout the night and deteriorated further in the days which followed.

On Saturday 20th March, Sheikh Al Jamri was served with a notice to attend one of the Police stations (at Al Khamis Police Fort) for questioning. There, he was interrogated by a police officer, who told him to stop lecturing without prior permission from either the Interior or Justice Ministries. He was told the Security Service would summon him for further interrogation after the month of Ramadhan.

This deterioration in the state of public freedom is worrying to say the least. The Bahraini opposition has refrained from any activity that may jeopardise the state of peace in the country. It has tailored its demands down to the constitutional rights. The government has however, resorted to the use of force to prevent any expression of opposition to the despotic rule of the Al Khalifa. The situation is volatile and outburst of anger could lead to disorder at a time when people were expecting an openness following the Kuwaiti crisis. So far, only Kuwait has managed to retain some form of a limited constitutional democracy.



Al Jamri: Banned

Token steps are being adopted by the government to prevent the situation getting out of hand. Last month, 15 people were released after serving 12 out of a 15-year prison sentence. Although the prisoners had almost finished their full prison sentences the Amir tried to present the releases as yet another "Amiri gratitude" on the day of Eid (the Muslim feast at the end of the holy month of Ramadhan).

Unless some serious measures are taken to ensure respect for human values by repealing the State Security Law, releasing all political prisoners, allowing the unconditional return of the political exiles, allowing freedom of expression within the constitutional framework and preparing for free elections, the situation is likely to deteriorate. The government has been engaged in a systematic programme of spreading fear through detention, interrogations, and threats to use force. In 1992 hundreds of young men were interrogated and briefly detained under the State Security Law, despite the fact that Bahrain had been under UN monitoring of human rights situation. The future is not bright for a healthy political environment. The government has to choose between peace, prosperity and harmony or confrontation with the people of Bahrain.

Once Upon a Time There were Three Brothers

The Amir, Prime Minister and the most feared man in Bahrain. The three are the sons of Bahrain's last ruler who effectively control Bahrain's government and much of its resources. The three love making money. The eldest is the Amir who is engaging in extramarital affairs in particular, while the other two are busy making illegal profit. The Amir's funds are secured through the oil industry and dues paid by the U.S. Army for using Bahrain's soil for military purposes. The Amir succeeded his father on 16 December 1961 (hence the National Day). In 1981 he felt the urge for the transfer of power to his son, the crown prince. The move angered the prime minister who later brought about a period of instability, enough to force the Amir to call off the initiative. Premier Khalifa then accused a group of more than 70 people of plotting to overthrow the monarchy through the help of Iran. The prime minister and the crown prince are locked in behind-the-scene rivalry for control over the country's destiny should the Amir die. Isa's well-being is not stable at best. Mohammed (the youngest of the three) remains busy adding more investments to his ever growing financial empire. He is exempt from any regulation.

Khalifa has been the first and thus far the only prime minister since independence in 1971; Mohammed was the head of police until 1966 (when he was replaced by the now-retired British Director General for Public Security Jim Bill). Today Mohammed is possibly the richest and certainly most aggressive person in the country.

Power and greed for money are the two common attributes of the three. They are known for exploiting their status as top members of the "ruling" family to make profit from all possible sources. In brief, Mohammed likes money more than anything else. Khalifa enjoys power while Isa loves foreign white women. May be because he has financial stability.

The Amir is happy but concerned. Isa entertains his female guests in his mansions and resorts. Still, he enjoys public life and makes a point to meet visitors to the country, no matter how junior they are. The official explanation in the media is that the Amir's meetings with the dignitaries is initiated by the visitors who insist on seeing the Amir by taking opportunity of their visit to the country. He is perceived as the most "compassionate". Mohammed is isolated concerned about money and properties. Khalifa hates seeing people and the same holds true of the crown prince. Khalifa is normally out of the country during major holidays such as the National Day (this has been the case for all the years of the Eighties). Some say the prime minister departs the from the public life during ceremonies to avoid shaking hands with well wishers because of sickness. The argument is fair.

The most critical income for the Amir stems from the oil industry. Oil was discovered in Bahrain in 1932, the first among the Gulf Cooperation Council members. The money for the Amir is generated from the Abu Sa'fa oil field which is shared, if run, by the Saudis. There is a wall of secrecy surrounding the Abu

Sa'fa operation.

The 1981 conspiracy was fabricated by the prime minister. December 1981, marked the 20th anniversary of Amir's being in throne. The story goes that Isa has decided to have his son Hamad, or the crown prince, replace him in the authority. The move angered the prime minister, the Amir's brother. Khalifa has always felt that he and only he should be the crown prince plus his post of premier. He takes the case of Sheikh Saad of Kuwait as the best defence for his logic. At any rate, Khalifa objected to the Amir's intention by all means including bringing about a period of instability. First, Khalifa tried to bring about a revolt in the military establishment. The move was uncovered leading to the arrest of several high ranking military officials. The prime minister does not control the military as that's the domain of the crown prince. Khalifa has control over the interior ministry and security forces.

Furthermore, Khalifa has always hated Iran and the Shia (who form the majority in Bahrain) in particular and continues to hold those beliefs. Conversely, he has been regarding the Iraqi dictator as his model; he remains in good terms with Saddam and only in the summer called for the restoration of diplomatic ties with the "people of Iraq."

The asserted plot. Through a carefully planned design, Khalifa's security apparatus accused a group of seventy or so Shia youth of plotting to overthrow the regime through the help of Iran. Teheran vehemently denied any role or knowledge of the issue. Moreover, Bahrain's regime which spends no less than quarter of the state revenues on internal security cannot be thrown by 70 young men.

Khalifa had multi-purpose goals. They included fulfilling his hatred towards Iran especially because many Gulf subjects would believe Khalifa's interpretation; Saddam was helped in many ways as a result. In fact, all of Iran's enemies entailing the U.S. were pleased with the prime minister's assertion. Above all, by creating the atmosphere of instability, the prime minister averted the Amir's plan for having the transfer of power to his son. Khalifa reckons that he can function while Isa is in power but not when his nephew Hamad, play boy, is the boss. Khalifa has never been quoted referring to Hamad, the crown prince, by his official title. Hamad, like his father, has mansions spread throughout the country, and is keeping busy with extra-marital affairs.

It is not known of Hamad participating in the weekly cabinet meeting. In fact to avoid contact with the prime minister, in late 1980s, Hamad created the post of minister of defence placed by him personally. Nevertheless, Hamad realizes that Khalifa is very sick. Had it not been to the advanced state of medicine, the prime minister would have been dead for many years. Khalifa was extremely corrupted during his youth years. Persons with direct access to Khalifa's circle say that since the 1980s the prime minister has been banned by his doctors from drinking alcoholic beverages and engaging in sexual contact. He visits his doctors regularly for blood checking among other things.

Khalifa is in charge of the day to day official business. Certainly, he is the prime minister but more importantly he means it literally. Everything must go through him, no matter how minor. Khalifa avoids travelling except for treatment or accompanying the Amir. The prominent exception is Khalifa's heading of Bahrain's delegation to the Gulf Cooperation Council's summit in Qatar in 1990. At the time, the Amir was in the U.S. for treatment. Khalifa did not miss to drive the point home that he and not the crown prince headed the country's delegation. The prime minister has an empire of wealth. Khalifa has trusted advisors, headed by Jameel Wafa, non of who happen to be nationals. Khalifa's investments are in the hotel industry (as he owns the Hyatt Regency Intercontinental), other tourism related businesses such as travel all but not mentioning his real estate. He owns several buildings in Bahrain's business district known as the diplomatic area. Several government bodies take from his high rises as the headquarters thus giving him a smooth earning. Several businesses face unfair competition from the prime minister who has unique privileges. Al Khalifa members do not pay custom duties, utilities and many other burdened charges.

Whenever a new venture is found to be profitable, the prime minister jumps in and starts his own of this type in a much forceful way. What makes Khalifa's business unique is his reliance on advisors and his direct absence from business deals unlike his other brother Mohammed. There is growing rivalry between the eldest sons of Khalifa and Hamad. Salman Hamad and Ali Khalifa attempt their best to have more patronage in the official functions and the media. Salman got married in the late 1980s while Ali only this summer. Several millions of dollars were spent on the ceremonies of the relatively old Ali Khalifa. Apparently, Ali was pressured by his father to get married and start reproducing so then to have children for future purposes. Hamad has several wives and thus many children.

Mohammed, the youngest is the most aggressive businessman. He either starts a new venture or he buys existing ones; he happens to like the later. When buying he is in a transaction by choice or force, no preference by him. He has a high handed behaviour and gets personally involved in his ever growing empire. Sheik Mohammed is involved in fish catching, agriculture crops, constructing shopping malls and hotels. He owns many hotels including Al Jezza, Athary and the newly built Gulf Gate Hotel. He loves buying farms mostly through coercion. Mohammed is a government within an existing one. His behaviour is unique in the whole region. He has his own little prison for those objecting him. At times in the past, he has even used weapons to suppress his enemies (who have not caused any harm to him). Since he does not pay all sorts of taxes and fees, his tenants of the shopping centers and the likewise do not pay for government utilities.

However, they must pay Mohammed a fee for protection.

Continued on Page 2