

Voice of

BAHIRATUN

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Arab and UN human rights bodies censure Bahrain Awaiting Enthronement and Deliverance

While the "Waiting Game" continues, everyone is holding his/her breath in the hope that the maiden policy speech by the new Amir will deal directly with the prevailing political issues once and for all. Failing that, the crisis will continue. It may not take the shape and form it has taken over the past five years, but it will certainly remain as a serious threat to the stability of the country.

The main issues have remained the same for the past six decades. The changing of the guards does not usually necessitate a total change of direction, but it surely has a bearing on the political situation. Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa will be enthroned at a time of great expectations, not only from those who had struggled with zeal and conviction unparalleled in the history of this small Gulf island, but even from friendly governments.

It is understood that the British and American politicians have recently met at a certain location in Bahrain to coordinate the policies of the two countries vis-a-vis the situation in the island. It is also understood that the two governments have been lobbying secretly with the Al-Khalifa ruling family to introduce a degree of reform in the country.

They know how seriously flawed the political situation in Bahrain, and are anxious to see a managed transformation from the ancient form of government compatible with herds, into a modern civil society governed by constitutional laws and civil institutions. So far the regime has turned down any request for political reforms. However, the rise of Sheikh Hamad to the throne following the death of his father, has provided a golden opportunity for a fresh change.

The friends of the Al-Khalifa; friendly governments, objective consultants, family wise-men, have all realised the importance of change as a way to stability. The old guards, however, seem to have a different agenda. Their main aim is to maintain their lifestyle which can only be guaranteed if they are seen by their bosses as necessary for security.

While the Waiting Game goes on, numerous problems arise here and there. The

strong show of commitment by the people for security and peace in their country is becoming an embarrassing phenomena to the security forces. Ian Henderson has survived as the head of the State Security Service (SIS) only because of the turbulent political situation in the absence of the rule of law. The prime minister has always believed in the use of force against dissidents, and has ruled the country over the past thirty years as an arrogant dictator. This led to the evolution of a society undeterred by the use of excessive force, which led eventually to the eruption of the country-wide uprising.

Now that the opposition has called again for a political solution based on goodwill gesture, the forces of terror within the ministry of the interior are finding it extremely dangerous for their long-term interests to allow a change to political rule based on the country's constitution. It is here where outside pressure needs to be exerted by friendly countries.

Sheikh Hamad is a new ruler, relatively young compared with his predecessors and could possibly opt for a political solution, something the prime minister has always rejected. The SIS has inflamed the situation by insisting on its harsh measures and is likely to continue this policy for the foreseeable future.

The Americans and the British can, therefore, exert enough pressure on the new Amir to see through some changes leading to the reinstatement of the Constitution. The issue of human rights is also of paramount importance. When Bahrain is classified in the same rank as other oppressive regimes in regards to human rights, the situation is thus so confused to say the least, that a quick remedy becomes a necessity.

In Casablanca, Bahrain was castigated for its poor record on human rights alongside Iraq and Libya. It was the first time that an Arab country hosts a human rights forum and allows activists in the field to air their views openly and to criticise their governments. The Moroccan Government of Abdul Rahman Al Yousufi has broken a taboo in the Arab politics by allowing people with grievances to talk freely in this manner. This is likely to infuriate most

Arab rulers who cannot tolerate this kind of "insult". It was a useful experience for Bahraini human rights activists to take part in the seminar which lasted three days last month.

The issue of human rights cannot be solved in isolation from the main political situation. For human rights to be respected a change in mentality, laws, law enforcement agencies, culture and attitudes have to be changed. Under a totalitarian dictatorship human rights violations are more likely to occur than under a democratic regime. The Bahrain's constitution endorses the principles of freedom and human rights, in addition to some form of democratic participation in decision-making.

A strong friendly appeal to the Amir of Bahrain to reinstate the constitution is likely to produce the desired effect. The young generation of rulers in the region can be persuaded to abandon the centuries-old attitudes towards governance and leadership. The consequences of a lack of action by the new Amir will lead to further complications and possibly violence. No one in Bahrain or elsewhere likes to see a return to disturbances, but that could only be averted if Sheikh Hamad is strongly advised against complacency in dealing with the people's just demands.

The 55th session of the UN Human Rights Commission which was held last month in Geneva proved the strength of the case of Bahrain. Many non-governmental organisations raised their concerns about the degrading human rights situation in Bahrain and called upon the government to review its policies.

Moreover, the UN Special Rapporteurs on Torture, Arbitrary Detention, and Extra-Judicial Killings produced strong reports against the Government of Bahrain and two of them called for a visit to Bahrain. It is unlikely that a visit will be granted in the near future, but the point has been made, giving enough armaments to the do-gooders to approach the new regime in Bahrain with vigour and enthusiasm. Human and Democratic rights cannot be separated but they go hand-in-hand. We hope to have a better news after the Amir's enthronement in June.

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Dry-Dock Prison Camp

The Dry-Dock prison has become the regime's concentration camp for Bahrainis. Prisoners' condition in this prison became unbearable. It was reported that the notorious Fahad Al-Fadalah stepped up his torture campaign against detainees. Al-Fadalah has now started to sexually-abuse several detainees in his quest to inflict more physical and psychological pain.

On 31 March, Al-Fadalah and his gang stormed the cells in the Dry Dock concentration camp. The detainees were then beaten and their belongings destroyed or stolen. Prisoners who protested were tortured severely and then placed in section (B). Section (B) lacks any sanitary or electric facilities. It is known among detainees as the "the graveyard of the living".

Protesting against the inhuman treatment, the prisoners in the Dry-Dock went on a three-day hunger strike and demanded to see the prison director Ali Al-Thani and his assistant Zahir (a Pakistani). Al-Fadalah ignored their demands and escalated his campaign of torture by selecting several of the prisoners, some of whom reported the sexual-abuse that was personally conducted by Al-Fadalah.

Sickness and disease is spreading amongst prisoners in the Dry-Dock as a result of the lack of proper treatment. One of the prisoners, Fawzi Ali AlMu' alim, is in urgent need for treatment. It was reported that he throws up blood and that his face is covered with scars and protuberances. Also his lips were badly inflated. As a result he can neither sleep nor eat and he was not allowed medication or to see a doctor.

The following are some of the 450 detainees who are in need of urgent medical attention: Mohammed Abdul Karim Al Nashit (heart problems), Jawad Abdula (stomach ulcer), Sadiq Muhsin Ali (epilepsy), Mahmood Ali Ebrahim, Hussain Abdula Abdul Karim (kidneys), Suhail Abdula Maki (dyspnea), Yousif Hassan Ali (psychological), Maytham Badi Al Shaikh (stomach ulcer), Basim Mohammed Ali, Abbas Ali Salman (dyspnea), Ali Hassan (spinal), Qasim Abd Ali (lose of hearing), Taysir Mahdi (allergy), Husain Mahdi (paralysis), Basim Ahmed Eid (stomach ulcer), Isa Ahmed Ebrahim (sight problems), Mohammed Ali Abdula (kidneys), Mohammed Mansoor (sickle cells), Salman Abdul Aziz (sickle cells), Talib A'yish (diabetes), Nabil Ahmd (sickle cells), Abbas Al Shu'la (sickle cells), Mohammed Khudir Abas (legs problems), Abdull Salam Mohammed (stomach ulcer), Seyed Hussain Seyed Shubar (sickle cells), Musa Jaffar (bone marrow deficiency), Hussain Abdula Ahmed (stomach ulcer), Jassim Hamza Abbas (sight problems), Abdula Hussain Abdula (bone marrow deficiency), Saeed Mansoor (sickle cells), Mohammed Saeed Abdula (sever headache), Ahmed Jassim Al Qash'ami (rheumatism), Hussain Ali Mohammed (efflorescence), Ali Ahmed Hasan (sickle cells), Mahdi Ali Ahmed

(stomach ulcer), Maytham Abbas (sickle cells), Yahya Ali Salman, Jaffar Hussain Mohammed (psychological) and Jassim Hassan Abbas (bone marrow deficiency).

Reports from Dry-Dock prison indicated that a new wave of torture against detainees by the prison officers had taken place last week. The officers supervised the torturing of the detainees were Adel Al Dawsari, Ali Khamis, Ali AlZu'bi, Fahad Abdula Al Fadalaha. Amongst those tortured were: Rida Ahmad Ali, Ahmad Ali Ahmad, Abd Al Rida Ebrahim Hussin (From Arad), Murr Makki Abdulla, Ahmad Juma'a Jawad, Abdulla Ahmad, Jalal Mohammed Ahmad Al Sami'a, (from Iskan A'li), Hussain Mohammed Khair, Hussain Fatil (From Bani Jamra), Qasim Mohammed Ali (Karana), Abdul Zahra Ali, Yahya Ali Ahmad, Hussain Al-Basri, Khalil Ebrahim Kuwi, Nabil Ahmed Habib, Saeed Abdulla Habib, Ebrahim Abdul Nabi (Sitra), Mohammed Jasim (Karzakan), Seyed Haider Seyed Mohammed, Seyed Mohammed Seyed Abdul Nabi, Ali Ahmad Mohammed (Sar), Mohammed Habib (A'li), Hani Ammar Abbas (Nuaim), Nayif Yousif Ahmad (Isa Town), Ali Ahmad Hassan, Isa Yousif (from Ikir), Abdula Salim (Jid Ali), Ismael Abdula Ahmad, Mahdi Ali Ahmad (Mutqsh'a), Yasir Abdul Hussain Al Mutghawwi (Duraz), Abdula Hassan (Samahij), Hussain Ahmad Al Buri (from Buri), Khalil Ebrahim Rida and Khalil Isa Ahmad.

Black Saturday

The 1st of April is the day termed by locals as "Black Saturday". It was on this day in 1995 the security forces deployed thousands of paratroops in Bani Jamra, encircled the house of Sheikh Al-Jamri, shot dead two citizens, injured fifty people and imposed a 2-week house-arrest. After that house arrest, Sheikh Al-Jamri was taken away for a 5-month detention. During this period he stuck an agreement with the interior ministry to call for calming down the situation in return for releasing detainees and discussing legitimate demands. The release of Sheikh Al-Jamri for 4 months heralded a quite period of celebrations. Following this period, the security forces re-launched several attacks and re-arrested Sheikh Al-Jamri. Since the eruption of events in December 1994, Sheikh Al-Jamri had been out of detention for a total period of ten months.

Columnists

Racist persons are provided with columns in the newspapers, and these have intensified their racist-based commentaries. Some of them even called on the new Amir not to release any prisoner. It is believed that the powerful Prime Minister is opposing the release of prisoners and many who benefited from the old reign are calling for continuing the present policies.

However, one columnist, Sawsan Al-Sha'ir changed her earlier attitude. On 4 April the columnist outlined the govern-

ment's incompetence in tackling the problem of unemployment in the country. She warned of more instability as high unemployment keeps shooting up. Low wages were categorised as one of the foremost reasons that contribute to this problem. She said that professional Bahrainis are some of the worst groups who are underpaid. "These wages are considered as pocket-money in other countries" she commented. The government has declined to enforce a minimum wage saying that this would drive businesses out of the country. Most professional Bahrainis have their wages ranging between BDI100-120 per month (\$365-438). It is well known that women in Bahrain receive even lower wages than their male counterparts.

In the article, Al Sha'ir brought to surface the authorities' policy of denial of the right to education for Bahrainis. She said that "students who achieved scores higher than 90% were denied the opportunity to undertake further education at the University of Bahrain. This issue has already been highlighted by the opposition and had been taken up by international human rights bodies. Those who were denied access to further education were from ethnic and religious groups that are not favoured by the regime.

Unemployment

Local newspapers reported that on 6 April "more than 9,500 Bahrainis found jobs last year, according to official figures released yesterday. They were helped by the Governments jobs shop and by implementation of Bahrainisation laws, said Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdulnabi Al Shoala. He said 9,540 Bahraini job-seekers found employment last year, up by 14.3 per cent over 1997. Nearly a quarter of them were women. The figure includes 3,968 who found work through the ministry's Employment Services Bureau and another 5,572 who were employed directly by companies and businesses as a result of the implementation of Bahrainisation laws."

He said "Job-seekers registered at the ministry now totalled 10,764," which "includes 5,318 people who registered before the end of 1997, 4,145 who registered for the first time last year and 1,301 who left their jobs last year and re-registered. A total of 6,796 people were registered by the bureau as job-seekers last year. The number of people in Bahrain's labour force is 294,735."

These are disputed by experts. The labour minister intended to impress the new Amir to keep his job. He together with the Minister of Oil & Industry were expected to be relieved from their jobs next June. The last reshuffle was in June 1995. Early June is the expiry of the official mourning period of three months.

To many in the business community the figures are a mockery. Some employers register locals as employees only to get permit for their expatriates. The process involves asking a student to accept a one-

time pay in exchange for allowing the employer to make alternation to the CPR (ID) card of registration. Then the employer informs the ministry that a Bahraini has been employed and in return can be granted a permit for importing an expatriate. This is happening widely.

In 1998, about 5,000 entered the job market. The figure released by the minister is close to double that. In reality, crude unemployment is on the rise. The government conducts summary trials

10 April: The State Security Court sentenced seven people to terms ranging between 3 and 15 years imprisonment. One of them Ebrahim Yousef Al-Smaheji was sentenced to 15 years in absentia. The interior ministry claimed that he ran away from prison last year.

Others known to be in the case were: Mahdi Mohammed Ali Al-Ekri, 7 years imprisonment; Jaffer Makki Al-Jaziri, 7 years imprisonment; Arafat Yaqoub Yousef, 3 years imprisonment; Abd Ali Ibrahim Al-Habbash, 3 years imprisonment

Media anticipation

The Business Middle East magazine published an article in its 1st-15th April issue entitled "Change of atmosphere". It said that "before his accession, Shaikh Hamed had shown little interest in Business, unlike Shaikh Khalifa, who owns a number of hotels in Bahrain. The new Emir has preferred horseriding, camel races, Arabic poetry and other traditional pursuits. As crown prince, he took barely any part in day-to-day government affairs—not least because Shaikh Khalifa was effectively running the country. That lack of experience my tell against him in any confrontation with the prime minister. But it may bring the chance of an end to the political unrest that has troubled Bahrain since 1994."

The Gulf States Newsletter of April 1999 stated "On the surface, Sheikh Isa's death did not cause too many ripples in Bahraini politics. His son and Crown Prince, Sheikh Hamad, was rapidly declared Emir. The interesting question that remains to be resolved is the balance of power between Emir Hamad and his uncle, the Prime Minister. The two men have disagreed over policy in recent years, in particular in relation to the opposition."

Trial of Al-Jamri not held The health of Sheikh Al-Jamri deteriorated sharply and he had been transferred (week beginning 12th April) for a short period to the military hospital. Sheikh Al-Jamri, who is placed in solitary confinement and prevented from meeting with his lawyers, had been subjected to a continuous torturing process commanded by intelligence security officers. These officers are saying to Sheikh Al-Jamri that they had already passed a long-term sentence against him and the State Security Court will merely announce the already passed long-term sentence. The torturers are angry at the statements made by Sheikh Al-Jamri during the first session

of his trial on 21 February, during which he reiterated that he only demands "the restoration of the National Assembly".

The BFM reported on 10 April that the second session of the trial of Sheikh Al-Jamri was scheduled for 11 April. The second session of the trial did not take place. Speculation of when will it take place is being treated by the Bahraini authorities as a guarded secret. The Bahrain government adjourned the trial of Sheikh Al-Jamri to avoid coinciding with the month Muharram (starting next week) which witnesses mass procession in Bahrain. The trial of Sheikh Al-Jamri is expected to resume towards the end of April and beginning of May.

A trip to London

A team of security officers and torturers are heading for London (week beginning 19th April) in what seems to be an upstaging of security service activities against the pro-democracy opposition in London. The Bahraini intelligence established contracts with some individuals and firms in London. The mission of the team of torturers to London is a matter of concern for human rights campaigners who are calling for bringing these types of people to trial for their abuse of human rights.

Three UN bodies request to visit Bahrain

In Geneva, Rapporteurs and experts from three bodies belonging to the UN Human Rights Commission requested the Government of Bahrain to allow them to visit the country and investigate the violation of human rights.

These are the experts responsible for monitoring violations of human rights in the areas of arbitrary detention, torture, and independence of judiciary. The representative of the Bahraini government has up until now refused to positively respond to these requests.

The fifty-fifth session of the UN Commission on Human Rights which started its annual meeting on 22 March (and continues until 30 April) witnessed several interventions by non-governmental organisations on the situation in Bahrain. Several UN Rapporteurs including those on arbitrary detention, torture, and independence of judiciary and extra-judicial killing mentioned Bahrain.

Questions of concern were raised over the violations of the Bahraini authorities of civil and political rights of Bahrainis such as disappearance and summary executions. Special Rapporteur, Ms. Asma Jahangir, submitted a report pursuant to Commission on Human Rights Resolution 1998/68 on the extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions. Ms Jahangir said that she continued to receive "reports of extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions resulting from excessive use of force by the security forces." She said that during the period under review communications had been received that showed that "poor sanitation facilities and the denial of proper

medical care within the prison system has led to deaths."

Ms. Jahangir transmitted cases on behalf of three persons regarding violations of the right to life. They are Nooh Khalil Al Nooh, Abd Ali Jasim Isa Yousef, Mohammed Al Sayyih. Communications received from the government to the special Rapporteur concerning the killing of three other Bahrainis claimed that Bashir Abdulla Ahmed Fadhel (beaten to death by the security forces), Abdul Zahra Ibrahim Abdullah Ebrahim (beaten to death by the security forces), Ali Mirza Ali Al-Nachas (who died as a result of lack of medical attention).

Sir Nigel Rodley, the Rapporteur on Torture transmitted scores of cases of people being tortured in Bahrain. The lengthy reported ended with a statement saying "The Special Rapporteur is sufficiently concerned about persistent allegations of torture to have requested from the Government an invitation to visit the country".

NGOs raise the case of Bahrain before the UN

On the question of torture and detention a written statement was submitted by North South XXI, a non-governmental organisation. It said "the phenomena of detention and imprisonment are natural phenomena when it is within a reasonable scale within the rule of law. In accordance to the internationally recognised norms. But in Bahrain 2,111 political detainees were interviewed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 23 detention centres. With a population of about 400,000, this means 1 political detainee for every 200 citizens, which is appalling."

The statement continued "the prisons in Bahrain have not been empty of political prisoners or detainees, but since the initiation of the constitutional movement on a mass scale in late 1994, thousands of Bahraini people have been arbitrarily detained. In addition to expanding existing prisons such as Jaw, Al Kala, Al Adlia, Makeshift detention centres were established quickly, such as Dockyard, and new prisons are under construction. The security and intelligence forces are being beefed up through the recruitment of expatriate mercenaries. In 1994, it was estimated that there were 15,000 members of the security services for a population of about 650,000."

Jose Ndjenoti Asadho, of International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) expressed concern about the human-rights situation in Bahrain and called on the Commission to investigate human-rights violations in the country.

Mohammed Fayek, of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights, said that "numerous regrettable human rights violations had occurred in Bahrain amongst other countries." He said that human rights organisations had been a target of a cam-

paign of criticism, and human rights activists workers had been arrested. The Commission should adopt an "effective programme to implement the United Nations Declaration regarding the protection of human rights defenders."

The US-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) submitted an important intervention to the UN Commission on Human Rights, which currently hold its fifty-fifth session at the UN headquarters in Geneva. HRW said "Our organisation continues to receive reports of arbitrary detention and physical abuse by security forces. The government provides no information concerning the numbers or identities of persons detained, including those held without trial under the State Security Law and those convicted and sentenced, or in some cases acquitted, following unfair trials before the State Security Court.

No human rights groups are permitted to operate in Bahrain. The government has denied requests by international human rights groups to conduct fact-finding missions, and reportedly threatened to disbar defence lawyers if they provide information about arrests and security court trials to the press or international monitors. Human Rights Watch calls on the Commission to urge the government of Bahrain publicly to set an early date for the visit of the Working Group and to accord it full co-operation and access to witnesses as well as government

officials."

Another intervention was submitted by Dr. Charles Graves of Interfaith International. Dr. Grave said that "there are about 2000 political prisoners in Bahrain according to the report for 1998 of the International Committee of the Red Cross." He continued "this is an average of one political prisoner for every 200 persons in the country." Moreover, he said "Bahrain is the only state which forces its citizens who are political opponents into exile and bars them re-entry to their homeland. Some families are in refuge abroad for up to three generations, denied their Bahraini documents." Dr. Graves emphasised that the Bahrain government "must show the international community by its deeds rather by only promises, what it plans to do about prevailing human rights violations against citizens. He ended his intervention by saying "the protection of political prisoners should be a major concern of Bahrain and the Commission, and as a first step along this line, the government of Bahrain should immediately fulfil its promises made to the Sub-Commission, lifting its reservation on Article 20 of the Convention on Torture and inviting without delay the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to visit its country."

Interfaith International stated on 9 April "in Bahrain, the prominent religious leader, judge and ex-MP, Sheikh Abdul-

Amer Al-Jamri, has been in detention since April 1995, even surpassing the 3-year term of administrative detention stipulated by the State Security Law. His fault seems to have been advocating constitutional reform in Bahrain and his calling for the termination of the government's sectarian policy against the Shi'a majority in the country. Sheikh Al-Jamri's theological school has been closed since his arrest and he has been dismissed as a judge for the Shi'a religious court. We believe, Madame Chairperson, that the Bahraini government should respect all of the religious elements within Bahrain Society."

The International Commission of Jurists submitted a damning intervention on 9 April saying, "The inadequate judicial guarantees for the independence of judges or the failure to respect these guarantees are affecting the judiciaries in many countries. The lack of security of tenure for contract judges [Egyptian judges], makes them afraid of rendering impartial decisions"

The International Organisation Against Torture "OMCT" reminded (on 9 April) the UN Human Right Commission of the statements made by the Bahraini Foreign Minister last year and the promises offered by the Bahraini government to allow access to UN experts and expressed its concern that all such promises are not fulfilled. Instead, human rights violations continue to be reported.

Opposition calls for restoration of rights

The new Amir, Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa stated to local media on 28 April that "Bahrain is entering an era of change for the better in all areas," and pledged "progress in partnership with all loyal Bahrainis, without discrimination." He said "at the top of our priorities are national unity and interior security, through solidarity of all Bahraini citizens, without discrimination, whatever their origin or creed. There are no differences among citizens, either in rights or obligations. All citizens are equal under the law."

On 3 April, the new Amir visited the interior ministry and shook hands with senior security men including two British officers, one of whom was Ian Henderson. The visit to the interior ministry is a significant indicator to the approach of the new reign as this ministry is considered to be the king-pin of the old regime under Sheikh Khalifa.

On 6 April, he visited the Defence Ministry and stated that "in Bahrain people are not judged on their racial or religious background".

The opposition welcomes the reiteration that all citizens will be treated equally. This policy needs to find its way to implementation to end the hitherto racist-sectarian policies that are implemented in all walks of life in Bahrain. However, many people did not welcome the statement that "internal security" is a top priority. This buzzword

has traditionally meant more repression and oppression. Internal security can be achieved through the restoration of constitutional rule of law. The Amir resorted to the articles of the constitution upon the death of his late father in order to assume the rule of the country.

However, the country's constitution contains many other provisions and the first article specifically mentions "political right" for citizens. Internal security can easily be achieved through the restoration of the entire constitutional process.

Local papers said on 28 April that the government has codified one of its repressive policies that has already been implemented in the past four years. The papers said that citizens accused by the unconstitutional State security Courts of "sabotage" will face prison and the bill for the damage under new laws. If they do not meet court orders to pay for the damage, they will face extra time in prison on top of their original sentence. There is a lack of due process and the administration of justice has been condemned by international human rights organisations.

These are conflicting indicators for the political situation. These messages are representative of the present state of affair. The prime minister, who still controls many organs of power wishes to say that his policies will continue and his influence will not be affected by the arrival of the new Amir. The codification of oppressive measures contradicts the Amir's statement that he wishes to see a change in policy.

Human rights abused

1 April: Mr. Hussain Salman Al Ali, 28, was arrested on his way back to Bahrain from pilgrimage to Mecca. The reasons for his arrest are still unknown. Likewise, another person from Kharanah arrested.

2 April: Abdul-Sallam Al-Ansari, chief of Manama police and a well-known human rights abuser, summoned the religious scholar who leads the prayers in Khawajah grand mosque in Manama.

3 April: The wife of Mr. Mohammed who was sentenced to 40 years imprisonment was brutally tortured last week beginning 12th April. Mrs. Mohammed (a mother of four children) was summoned to the torture centre and was beaten on her ears until they bled. She was later released without being treated for her injuries.

15 April: Hassan Ali Abdul Wahab Al-Asfoor (from Duraz) returned to Bahrain from Qum (Iran) in mid April. He had earlier been issued with a renewed passport from the Bahrain Embassy in Tehran. Mr. Al-Asfoor returned with his wife and daughter through the UAE and then to Bahrain through the causeway joining Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Upon his arrival, the security officers separated the family. The wife was forcibly deported to Lebanon. The father and the baby were forcibly deported to the UAE. This ill treatment of citizens continues while thousands of mercenaries are imported into Bahrain and granted full citizenship.