

BAHRAIN

Issued by the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" to promote human and constitutional rights

International intervention sought to save Bahrain's natives

What may appear to the foreign visitor as serene, tranquil and stable is a deceptive Bahrain that could not be any further from reality. It is the goodness of people that is helping the Al Khalifa regime to present such deception to the outside world. The Bahrain of today has no resemblance to that of few decades ago when the natives main concerns were the achievements of political and economic rights. These natives are now engaged in a bitter conflict with the ruling family that is taking wider boundaries and more complicated dimensions. They are fighting for mere survival in the face of an all-out war by the Al Khalifa occupiers, led by the most corrupt of their numbers. To illustrate this fact it suffices to reiterate few of their blunders, thefts, scandals and heavy handedness when dealing with local affairs. Last month the ruler, Shikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa was in London to review the new economic empire he has always dreamt of creating. He is an ambitious dictator who stops at nothing to achieve them even at the cost of killing and maiming the native Bahrainis. He is investing heavily in real estate in the British capital, hoping to rival the Qataris and the Kuwaitis who have put their money in better uses. More than half the country's revenue is off the budget while the ruler endeavours to widen the scope of his empire to reach the edges of geography, politics and reason.

The Grosvenor House and the Four Seasons Hotel, both in Park Lane, London are the latest additions to the real estate belonging to Sheikh Hamad & Co who have plundered Bahrain of its wealth and dignity. They form only a slight portion of his wealth; yet they have cost the country up to two billion dollars. Their business empire which is financed by the people's wealth is owned by the ruler and his sons. This is the rape of a country by the people who are supposed to be its protectors. This is in addition to the confiscation of the country's land and oil wealth. More than half of the country's land are occupied by Sheikh Hamad and his clique while tens of thousands of families are denied decent housing. In the past decade the poverty level has risen sharply as natives became unemployed as a result of the official policy of politicising public life. A programme of

sea land reclamation provided housing to the tens of thousands of the naturalised foreigners. This has happened at the cost of massive environmental losses. Coral reefs have been destroyed and several species of fish have become extinct as they sought suitable habitat away from Bahrain's fishing waters. The deforestation of the country has ended what had been considered the "paradise of Eden" in old times and turned the country into large sways of lifeless lands, deprived of water, plantation, clean air or healthy sealines. The Al Khalifa have occupied 90 percent of the sea shores leaving the natives enclosed away from the sea which had been their life line for centuries as fishermen and pearl catchers.

Bahrain has never been ruled by a dictator similar to the present ruler. The country's wealth has been lavishly spent on members of the ruling family, their allies and mercenaries. Whilst many of those foreigners have been recruited to suppress the people's aspirations for a modern form of government elected by the people, many others have been paid for their services to market a false image of the ruler and his despotic regime. Journalists working for major news organisation, including the Arabic Service TV and Radio are on the payroll. Last December a BBC team were "hired" to record the proceedings of a seminar at the House of Lords, not as part of the BBC's professional work but to be handed to Al Khalifa's torture apparatus. Five days after the event on 16th December 2009, the president of Bahrain's Society, Peter Sincock, who was filmed by the hired BBC team attending the House of Lords seminar met Bahrain's interior minister. It was one of the most outrageous duties undertaken by a professional body, funded by tax payers money. The BBC has yet to give a plausible explanation for that suspicious act. Other international bodies, including Amnesty International, have been accused by Bahraini opposition of caving in to the financial attractions offered by the Al Khalifa who have expropriated Bahrainis people's wealth.

Although they are determined to pursue their goal of ending the hereditary dictatorship by a regime of occupation, the

people of Bahrain are now facing an uphill struggle in their challenge to this antiquated regime. They feel bitter about the continued and persistent support by Washington and London to the Al Khalifa who have failed in their political and human duties to modernise their rule and respect the right of self-determination of the Bahraini natives. The past decade has taken the country back several decades as the ruler built a personality cult after declaring himself a king and installing as his prime lieutenant the most-hated sectarian figure in the country, Khalid bin Ahmad Al Khalifa. Both have turned Bahrain into a human wreck that could not reform itself without massive sacrifices. In today's world, where slogans of human rights and democracy are often camouflaged by massive programmes of deception paid for by people's usurped wealth. It is paradoxical that big powers continue to ignore people's pleas especially when torture and repression have been documented and where acts of genocide against the natives have been exposed. The demographic engineering programme of sheikh Hamad and his clique cannot be understated, and the plea of the Bahraini natives must not be ignored. The big powers ignore these cries for help at their perils. They have failed to exhibit the level of moral leadership expected from powers and bodies whose declared aims are to safeguard the security and stability of the world. These cannot be achieved if basic rights of whole societies and natives are ignored to this extent. This is a wake up call from the natives of Bahrain (Shia and Sunni) to the world to intervene against the excesses of the Al Khalifa antiquated regime. Please act before it is too late.



Bahrain: UK government urged to stop the theft of the Four Seasons Hotel by the Al Khalifa after they had snatched the Grosvenor House

Human rights activists and supporters of the people of Bahrain have called for a serious stand by the British Government against the persistent use of torture by the government of Bahrain, as UK's Prime Minister met Bahrain's dictator in London. Sheikh Hamad is on a visit to London to open the Four Season Hotel which he has purchased with the looted money of Bahrainis. Activists have shamed the Coalition Government to take up the issue and block the take over of the prestigious hotel, accusing the Al Khalifa rulers of Bahrain of theft, extortion and torture. "This money does not belong to the Al Khalifa; it has been snatched by the ruler and his clique from the oppressed people of Bahrain", said one of the political activists monitoring the take-over of the Park Lane hotel. His family also bought the Grosvenor House Hotel for which they paid more than £700 millions stolen from Bahrainis. The ruler has kept his UK visit secret in order not to avoid the embarrassing prospects of counter demonstrations and protests. He is considered to be among the worst rulers who have ever ruled the country, especially in the way he occupied large swaths of land including the large island of Umm Al Na'ssan, Hwar and the various residences on the main land. Bahrainis have been confined to small dwellings at best; many seeking rented accommodation in building complexes owned by the Al Khalifa occupiers.

Following the oppressive court verdict last week that sentenced seven innocent Bahrainis to life behind bars has led to spiralling protests in many areas of Bahrain. Today, the people of Sanabis

demonstrated on the main road against the continued imprisonment of the Bahraini hostages. The main road leading to Al Dana Mall was completely closed for 45 minutes. Several demonstrations took place in various parts of the country in the past few days. On Wednesday 14th July, the families of the hostages staged a protest at Al Ma'amir town where the group came from. They marched in the streets of the town and ended near the main town's entrance. The participants expressed their anger and protest by sitting on the ground, with women wearing white shrouds as an expression of defiance and readiness to die at the hands of the Al Khalifa Death Squads, notorious for merciless attacks on Bahraini men and women. On Tuesday 13th July, those Death Squads went on the rampage in Sitra island. Several houses were raided and youth arrested. The aggressors, who were mostly foreign mercenaries were accompanied by a bus for to transport the hostages to the torture chambers. More than seven youths were arrested. The arrests came in attempt to quell the rising unrest in the country. Two young Bahrainis were arrested earlier in the week: Jaffar Abdul Hamid and Ali Abdul Hamid. A third brother, Jaffar Abdul Hamid was subsequently arrested and taken to a secret jail.

The anger is rising throughout the country in response to the intensive use of shot guns against protesters. The latest victim was Ali Al Saeed who was severely injured by the Death Squads. He was taken to Salmaniya Hospital last week. When protesters went to visit him, the hospital was encircled by the riot police for hours. They were led by a cleric, Sheikh Mo-

hammad Habib Al Miqdad who was also targeted and injured with a rubber bullet to his back. The injured victim was subsequently snatched from the hospital bed by members of the Death Squad and taken to an unknown destination. His crime is his participation in a pro-democracy protest. It has been confirmed that Kumail Hussain Al Manami has been transferred to solitary confinement for more than a week. He has been suffering a state of depression following his ordeal of torture and persistent threats. He has also been threatened that his wife would be raped in front of his eyes.

Last week a big demonstration took place in the heart of the capital, Manama. It was held under the slogan "Together against the illegitimate constitution and marginalisation of the natives". Demonstrators held banners and placards with slogans like: "No to imported people", "No to mercenaries", "Yes to national identity, yes to the native people". It was attended by scholars, writers, men and women. The final communiqué was read by a young cleric, Sheikh Saeed Al Nouri in which he held the Al Khalifa the responsibility of the continued unrest. He called for an immediate halt of political naturalisation that amounts to genocide. Towards the end of the demonstration, a recorded statement by Mr Hassan Mushaime, the Chairman of Haq Movement, who is receiving treatment in London for cancer, was read to the people. The main roads were blocked by the mercenaries of the riot police and people were intimidated and threatened as a way to dissuade them from participating.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
16th July 2010

Life imprisonment for seven innocent victims as notorious SSC re-instated

A new crime against Bahrainis has been committed by the Al Khalifa hereditary dictatorship. The royal court has decided to jail seven young people for life for a crime they had not committed. It is a clear revenge for three things. The first is its failure to quell the political unrest that caused their regime to be listed within the "not free" category by Freedom House. The second is its disastrous performance in terms of human rights to the extent that several international reports were issued to condemn its black record of violations, torture and maltreatment of prisoners. The third is the decision by one its courts to release earlier this year the hostages of the Karzakan case. Their release gave the opportunity to register their testimonies of torture to Human Rights Watch that subsequently issued its damning report titled

"Torture Redux". The Al Khalifa have now decided to keep the prisoners of Ma'amir locked up in torture cells for the rest of their lives to prevent them revealing the extent of the torture they had endured, and prevent the debacle in the Karzakan case. Today's court hearing was attended by two international lawyers representing the UK Bar Human Rights Committee and the Islamic Commission for Human Rights. They had come to the country to attend the trial of ten people from the town of Ma'amir who have been behind bars for more than two years, accused of causing the death of Mohammad Riyadh, one of the mercenaries in the riot police force. It had been confirmed that the victim had died at hospital as a result of sickness, and had not been attacked by demonstrators. The Bahrainis were arrested, held for more than two years, subjected to various forms

of torture and denied proper medical examination.

The two British lawyers witnessed several events. First they listened to the defence lawyers who demanded several documents from the prosecution but were denied their request. Second, they saw how the verdict and sentencing were read-made and had only to be delivered by the "judge" who acted as a messenger between the royal court and the victims. Third, the lawyers saw the vicious attack by the foreign-staffed riot police and Death Squads on the families of the victims when they protested the harsh sentences passed on their innocent sons. Three were released after enduring more than two years of torture, solitary confinement and humiliating treatment. They are Mohammad Ahmad Haram,

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Views of Congressmen on the political situation in Bahrain

The following are excerpts from correspondence with some members of the US Congress about the situation in Bahrain. It is clear that at least of the members of the American legislative body are aware of the human rights abuses being committed by the Al Khalifa occupiers and have shown interest in standing against such abuses. The names of those noble members have been abbreviated to conceal their identity.

Date: 16 June 2010 13:59

Dear B....

Thank you for contacting me regarding the human rights situation in Bahrain. It was good to hear from you.

Our Declaration of Independence states that human rights come to us from the Creator, that they are self-evident and that they are for all people. Based on this principle I believe that it is the responsibility of the United States to stand for freedom for all people and to pursue policies to help everyone enjoy their God-given liberty.

As you may know, there have been reports of torture of political prisoners and members of the opposition by the government of Bahrain. On March 28, 2010 a Bahraini appellate court convicted nineteen men of murder. Reports by government doctors found that most of the men accused had injuries consistent with abusive interrogation techniques. The United States and the international community should continue to apply pressure on the government of Bahrain to improve their human rights record. I will certainly support efforts in Congress to improve the human rights situation in Bahrain.

Again, thank you for taking the time to contact my office. It is a privilege to represent you and I hope that you will not hesitate to contact me regarding any matter where I might be of assistance. Please visit my website, where you can find more information on current issues, share further thoughts with me via email and subscribe to my e-newsletter for updates on issues you care about.

Sincerely,

T. A. (Member of Congress)

Date: 4 June 2010 10:01

Dear Mr. A...

Thank you for taking the time to share your views on Bahrain. I assure you that your thoughts or concerns on this issue have been taken into account.

Recently, a hearing was held by Congresswoman Donna Edwards, who has an outstanding record of defending Human rights around the world and will be attended by representative from State Department, Amnesty International and many organizations, including Human

Rights Watch, who will presented their latest report on Bahrain.

Excerpts from the Human Rights Report show 'The Bahraini government restricts basic civil liberties, freedoms of speech, press and assembly, and many religious associations and practices. The government further condones domestic violence against women and children as well as consistent discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, nationality and sect, specifically against the majority Shia Muslim population.'

There is much more work to be done in this Congress over the coming months. As we discuss, debate, and vote on this and other similar issues, I will keep your correspondence in mind.

Thank you, again, for your letter and for the privilege of serving you in Washington.

Very truly yours,

G.K. B (Member of Congress)

June 16, 2010

Dear Mr. A...

Thank you for contacting me about Bahrain. It is good to hear from you and I apologize for the delay in my response.

As you know, Bahrain is a close ally to the United States. Bahrain is especially important to United States foreign policy because of its location in the Middle East. In a tumultuous region with significant natural resources, Bahrain provides a safe harbor for American military personnel and equipment.

Efforts to improve human rights in Bahrain have received international accolade. Despite these advances, new reports from Human Rights Watch (HRW) indicate that significant work remains. On March 31, 2010, Joe Stork, deputy director of HRW Middle East and North Africa division wrote, "an event publicizing serious human rights abuse in the Kingdom would not have been possible 10 or 15 years ago, a testament to the durability of some reforms and to persistent Bahraini human rights activism. In our investigations, we found solid evidence that torture, for the purpose of securing confessions, is back in the repertoire of Bahrain's General Directorate of Criminal Investigations. By all accounts, Bahrain had successfully ended the use of torture for a good part of the last decade." Mr. Stork referred to Bahrain as a "poster child for political reform in the Middle East" in the past, but this new revelation is troubling and the United States must continue to pressure Bahrain to improve their human rights record as the relationship between our nations continues to grow.

Like you, I believe that it is of the utmost importance that the U.S. work to foster international human rights. I agree that increasing international development and security efforts are essential to reducing human rights violations. I believe it is time

for our country to revitalize our foreign relations policy and place more emphasis on diplomacy and development. The United States has taken the lead in raising the issue of religious freedom in the U.N. General Assembly, the U.N. Human Rights Commission, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. I am proud that we have taken these steps to defend human rights, but I know we need to do more. Rest assured that I will support and encourage legislation to make human rights and religious freedom a central part of our foreign policy in the Middle East.

Again, thank you for sharing your views. Your opinion matters to me. If I can be of service to you in any other way, please do not hesitate to let me know. As a security precaution, all mail sent to Congress is first irradiated. This process causes significant delays. To ensure the fastest response, I encourage all constituents who have access to the internet to contact me through my website at <http://tammybaldwin.house.gov>.

Sincerely,

T. B. (Member of Congress)

Life imprisonment: *Cont from P2*

Ibrahim Ja'ffar and Ali Ahmad. It is unlikely that they will be compensated for their ordeal.

When the official decision to imprison them for life was announced, the Bahrainis shouted slogans of defiance. Kumaili Al Manami said "God is Great" he was attacked viciously by ten heavily-armed mercenaries. Then Jassim Hassan Issa was attacked by seven mercenaries for protesting the beating of his colleague. Five mercenaries attacked Tawfiq Hassan Ali, whose brother, Jassim is among the hostages. There was a mayhem at the court when the women started crying. That was enough for the police women to attack the Bahraini women. A woman lawyer, Balqis Al Manami fell unconscious after being attacked, and was taken to hospital. Another hostage, Hassan Issa Sarhan was also attacked and his father became hysterical when he saw his son being set upon by the mercenaries. The father was attacked by nine mercenaries. The protesters outside the court were also attacked.

Meanwhile, the people of Bahrain have commemorated the demise of Grand Ayatullah Sayyed Mohammad Hussain Fadhullah who passed away yesterday. A symbolic funeral was held today, while many mosques have organized their own services to pray for his soul. He is accredited with providing religious guidance over half a century and had visited the country more than once.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
5th July 2010

IHRC: 7 of 10 Ma'ameer detainees found guilty and sentenced to life

5 July 2010

IHRC Trial Observer witnesses excessive use of police force against convicted men, their relatives and supporters inside and outside court; Tear gas and rubber bullets used to disperse demonstrators outside court room

Islamic Human Rights Commission Trial Observer, Abed Choudhury has reported the judgment (0830 GMT) in the case of the Ma'ameer 10 in Manama[1]. Seven of the ten men have been found guilty of murdering a Pakistani truck driver, despite numerous investigations by human rights groups, including IHRC, which found that evidence used against the suspects was either non-existent or suspect in itself. In some cases the police interrogators used torture and threats to extract confessions. All the men were activists against the on-going discrimination against Bahrain's majority Shi'a community.

A life sentence in the context of Bahrain usually means 25 years.

The verdict and sentencing in this trial was only a few minutes long, and no explanation behind the judgement was given, reports Choudhury. He further states that as the judge left the room, the courtroom erupted into emotional scenes:

"The convicted men began chanting Al-lahu Akbar (God is Great) while relatives and supporters began shouting in protest at the sentences. At this stage, police in the courtroom became very heavy handed. I saw some 10 – 15 police officers pushing one prisoner Jasim Hassan Ahmed, against a wall and using extreme force against him. Likewise relatives and supporters including women, were surrounding by disproportionate numbers of officers using force.

"Immediately outside the courtroom, police were trying to push back supporters and relatives. One of the convicted men's father Ali Farhan shouted at a police officer. Again some 10 – 15 police officers followed him, and threw him on the floor and arrested him. Many of the supporters rushed to him to help and more police officers then rushed in.

"In the meantime riot police arrived and tried to disperse the protestors. As this was going on we heard a loud bang and were told that tear gas had been fired."

By 0845 GMT, Choudhury reports that the demonstrators were mainly dispersed, but he has received reports that tear gas and rubber bullets had been used by riot police to move supporters.

Choudhury also came upon the sister of one of the convicted men receiving help and treatment from other supporters. One witness that the woman, herself a lawyer, had confronted police officer about the convictions, and was then set upon by female police officers and beaten. More information on the sentencing and aftermath to follow. For more infor-

mation and to talk to the IHRC Observer directly, please call (+44) 7877400112. For comment from the IHRC office in London, please call (+44) 20 8904 4222 or (+44) 7958 522196.

Notes to Editor:

[1] The Ma'ameer 10's case has been monitored by IHRC. To read a short report into one of the previous hearing please visit: Report of the Trial Monitor in the Karzakan and Ma'ameer Cases Bahrain, 2009 [http://ihrc.org.uk/attach-](http://ihrc.org.uk/attach-ments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL.pdf)

[ments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL.pdf](http://ihrc.org.uk/attach-ments/9137_KarzakanMaameerFINAL.pdf) pages 9- 10.

[2] Jassim Hasan Ahmed's arrest was also a violent affair. He was beaten in front of his young nephew during his arrest even though he did not resist arrest. He was left hanging from the ceiling at the police station for several days; they also used pepper spray on him. Jasim's case is extremely worrying as his family claim that the public prosecutor, Usama Al Asfoor, threatened to rape Jasim's wife and personally torture Jasim unless he signed the confession.



Bahraini authorities detain, question opposition Shiite clergyman

Manama, Bahrain - Bahraini authorities Monday briefly detained and questioned one of two opposition Shiite clergymen wanted for their alleged role in spearheading a march earlier this month, which ended in clashes.

Sheikh Mohammad Habib al-Mugdad said he was detained by police, with his charity organization offices being stormed by heavily-armed police executing the arrest warrants issued a day earlier against him and Sheikh Mirza Al Mahroos Al Mahroos is expected to be questioned on Tuesday.

"I was questioned about the proceeding that left from the mosque to visit a youth at a nearby hospital after he was shot and injured by police," Sheikh al-Mugdad told the German Press Agency dpa.

The march took place on July 9 following evening prayers at Al Sadiq mosque. Scores of people had joined the two clergymen to a nearby hospital to visit the injured youth.

Anti-riot police moved in to disperse the march and briefly clashed with those taking part in it, before chasing some of them inside the hospital.

Sheikh al-Mugdad was slightly injured and requiring treatment at the same hospital

after he was hit in the back with a rubber bullet.

"The charges centered on unlawful gathering and calling for an unauthorized march and I have denied the charges. The public prosecutor took my statement and then released me," he told dpa.

Al-Mugdad said he had demanded that charges against the interior minister over his injury be pursued, but the prosecutors refused.

"That is why I refused to sign the last page of my integration and will move ahead with plans to sue the minister in courts outside Bahrain if the local courts refuse to consider the case," he said.

On Sunday, a statement by the Public Prosecution office said that the warrants for the two clergymen had been issued after they failed to adhere to summons issued for questioning.

The two clergymen, who arrived at the prosecution office accompanied by their lawyer on Sunday, left after they waited for an hour to be questioned. Prosecutors said that they were half an hour late.

The statement also cited testimonies from officers indicating that the two had lead the July 9 protest.