

BAHRAIN

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

The point of no-return as US Ambassador sides with dictators

Bahrain will not be the same after the atrocities being directed at the native population of this troubled land that is suffering under the continued Al Khalifa enemy. The recent flare up of the situation began with the arrest of Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace at the airport on his arrival from UK where he had spent the holidays with his family. It soon became clear that the arrest was part of a plan hatched by the Al Khalifa and the American Ambassador in Manama. Three days prior to the first arrest, both the dictator, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Ambassador Adam Erlie, issued statements urging Bahraini opposition to come back and conduct their opposition from their homeland. This was a trap by both of them that claimed up to 200 detainees, being held under the most severe forms of torture. The American Ambassador is now considered an accomplice in the torture being inflicted on those powerless individuals whose only weapon is their word against injustice. Regardless of the worthless accusations by the Al Khalifa enemy, the world, apart from the American Ambassador, has refuted the Al Khalifa claims and insisted that the detainees are freedom seekers who had employed no other means than their responsible, yet principled, discourse.

While the enemy of the people insists on the use of "terrorism" to describe the peaceful civil resistance acts of defiance, protests, sermons and lectures, it has failed to convince anyone of substance of its case. Where are the weapons? Where are the training camps? Where are the victims of this terrorism? The reform movement has successfully presented its case to the world in many forms, while the Al Khalifa enemy has disastrously failed to present a cohesive logic to justify the aggression against native Bahrainis. In the past two weeks at least 16 Bahrainis have given testimonies in the local websites detailing the horrific treatment they had received at the hands of members of the "Death Squads" operated by the royal court who had kidnapped them for up to two days. The enemy failed to refute their authentic stories and chose to brush them aside. No inquiries have been ordered to fully examine their mutilated bodies to discover the cause of this grievous bodily harm. The plain-clothed armed gangs, often clad in black and hooded, have roamed the streets, picking

their prey from among the Bahraini youth, kidnapping them to remote areas while blindfolded, torturing them until they reach the brink of death before dumping them in remote areas. Who is responsible for these messengers of death?

The other image that is also emerging and which has painted even a more horrifying picture is that of heatless torturers inflicting horrific pain on the detainees. Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace is the first hostage to be brought to the prosecutor's office since his kidnap on 13th August, and the first time to meet his lawyer. It has now transpired that the torture inflicted on him is beyond belief. Despite his permanent disability (he is bound to a wheel chair for life) he was beaten, tortured with electric shocks, stripped off his clothes, forced to stand for two days on the only functional leg and made to hear the cries of other detainees while being tortured. This is a crime beyond belief. The world will be deprived of its humanity if it fails to act immediately against Bahrain's dictator who has ordered these crimes. The American Ambassador will be directly implicated in Dr Al Singace's ordeal because he is the once who uttered the words to convince the world that Bahrain is a safe place to

conduct political opposition without fear of retribution or jail. It is clear that the Al Khalifa enemy is now determined to use any immoral method at its disposal to subdue the political opposition to its autocracy. Torture has become a routine practice, confirmed by human rights bodies. Last February, Human Rights Watch confirmed that torture had been reinstated as a policy in dealing with opponents. Their 70-pages report titled "Torture Redux" detailed the ill-treatment of 20 former detainees in the previous two years. With their mask removed, the Al Khalifa enemies returned to their natural inclination; the inhumane treatment of their foes regardless of the cost. Surely the explicit blessing of the American Ambassador has emboldened their resolve to undertake this course, fearing no retribution from their closest ally.

Where is the country heading to? This time it looks that both sides are intent on holding their grounds to the end. After decades of dictatorship, oppression and genocidal policies, the Bahrainis have had enough of this hereditary dictatorship. The Al Khalifa have proven themselves to be the real enemy of the people of Bahrain. The way they have dealt with Dr Al Singace is indicative of the psychological state of the ruler and his lieutenants, and their feeling of alienation from the natives. When a regime picks on the most respected elements of the society, strips them naked and humiliates them in the most audacious way, no room may remain to build any trust between the two sides. For the Al Khalifa, decades of opposition have proven to them that there is no hope of reconciliation with the natives and that the only way is to exterminate them. This forms the basis of their policy of genocide, the evidence of which is becoming abundant. The struggle will thus continue and the dream of the enemy of exterminating Bahrainis will never be materialized. It is an evil design that must not be allowed to materialize. The talk about terrorism and violence is self-defeating to the Al Khalifa as the evidence is mounting against them as perpetrators of violence and state terrorism. Bahrain has now entered a potentially -decisive phase of its existence, and with God's blessing, the end of dictatorship, oppression and heroes of genocide will not be far away.

UK national under torture

Jaffar Jassim Al Hasabi, 40, is still behind bars in the Al Khalifa torture chambers since his arrest on Monday 16th August. He was returning to Bahrain from a holiday with his family in the City of Mashhad in Iran when he was detained at the airport and taken to an unknown destination. Nothing has been heard of him since his arrest, and the British Embassy in Manama has, so far, done little help him. After meeting the Al Khalifa minister of the interior on 26th August, the Ambassador was reported by local press to have "praised" the Al Khalifa police who are notorious for using torture on detainees.



Widespread anger against Death Squads as Al Khalifa succumb to Iran

As the number of the kidnapped and the disappeared increases, appeals have been made by victims of Death Squads to the international community to intervene and stop this blatant aggression. Today, Sayyed Kadhem Al Sammak was kidnapped by members of those Death Squads to an unknown destination where he is expected to be treated with savagery meted on tens of other Bahrainis by those vicious criminals. Bahrain's dictator, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, has let them loose to prey on innocent victims, and many Bahrainis have been injured or maimed. There are now 15 confirmed cases of kidnapping; four in the town of Arad, one from Dair, two from Duraz, three from Bani Jamra, one from Demestan and three from Saar. Their descriptions of their ordeals have painted a unified picture of what happened in the one or two days in each case. The person would be surrounded by plain clothed persons, handcuffed and transferred unknown to them. There they would be tortured, abused and stripped off their clothes. They would then be threatened against taking part in any protest. They would then be dumped in remote areas. The police have refused to receive complaints from victims or transfer them to the prosecution office. The victims have kept medical reports to prove their claims. Two more youth were kidnapped yesterday from Jidhafs, beaten up until they reached the brink of death before being dumped near the graveyard of the town. Death Squads inaugurated their dirty war against Bahrainis in 1998 when

they kidnapped Nooh Khalil Al Nooh, tortured him to death and dumped his mutilated body at the doorsteps of his house.

Meanwhile, houses of several Bahrainis were raided in the past 24 hours. Sayyed Aqil Al Saari, a young cleric from the town of Saar was seized, beaten on all parts of his body and taken away to an unknown destination. This tactic is being used on daily basis. The houses of the detainees have been raided in ways intended to create fear in the hearts of children and women. It is a collective punishment meted by the Al Khalifa occupiers. The family of Sheikh Mohammad Habib Al Miqdad, who had been detained ten days ago, have issued a statement complaining of the vicious attack on their home recently. During the raid, several items were seized including computers and cameras. They urged people to be united to repel this unprovoked aggression.

The aim of terrorising the Bahrainis is to deter them from protesting against the occupation of their land by the Al Khalifa and the new settlers. Five more people are being sought for arrest and torture by the Death Squads. Ali Al Manami, who has been defending the Al Ma'amir detainees and the brother of one of the hostages; Kumail, has been pursued for arrest. Hssan Al Sahlawi, Jaffar Kadhem (Abu Hud) from Demestan, Sami Naji from Hamala and Abdul Amir Dawood from Bani Jamra are in hiding to avoid falling into the hands of those Al Khalifa vicious criminals.

In a disturbing development, Mohammad Abbas from Sitra, has been taken as a hostage to force his brother, to hand himself to the torturers. Three others from Ma'amir and one from Sitra are also being sought. Their homes have been raided in the past few days.

These developments have led to more angry responses from the youth. The Bahraini youth have taken to the streets in several places, burning tyres and blockading the streets to stop the Death Squads and security men carrying their cruel attacks on towns and villages of Bahraini natives. Fires were seen near the Bahrain Exhibition Centre and near the Elite Suites Hotel. Smoke columns were seen from far distances.

In a serious setback to the plot hatched by the regime, the Al Khalifa have been forced to "drink the poison" and announce that the Bahraini hostages are not linked to Iran in anyway. This admission has defeated the purpose of the whole plot. The official announcement two days ago came after the Iranian government threatened the Al Khalifa of grave consequences if they attempted to implicate Iran in its domestic crisis. They were ordered by the Iranians to issue a clear and unambiguous statement to this effect. They had no choice but to succumb to this order. Diplomats in Manama have now started to ridicule the Al Khalifa for their attack on Bahrainis and predicted their political and propaganda failure as the natives steadfast against them.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
24th August 2010

Disturbing images of victims shot by Death Squads as arrests continue

As the ruling family continued its aggression against the people of Bahrain, more international human rights bodies have condemned their barbaric actions. The total number of Bahrainis detained in the past week has now risen to 57. In none of these cases has there been arrest warrant. In all the cases the Al Khalifa have failed to provide the legal protection required by law. Lawyers have expressed dismay at the lack of the due process of law, warning that these actions are leading the country into the abyss. The arrests which began with the seizure of Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace from the airport as he returned home on Friday 13th August, have included minors whose rights have been bypassed.

Over the past 24 hours new Bahrainis have been snatched from their homes. They include: Hussain Omran, Abdul Amir Dawood,

both from Bani Jamra Town, Ali Jawad Al Fardan from Karzakkan and Ahmad Jamshir from Isa Town. Sayyed Qassim Sayyed Ibrahim, 27 and Ahmad Al Hakim 24 from Bild Al Qadim were arrested as they sat at a house listening to the recitation of the Holy Quran. They were charged with "congregation without permission"! Today disturbing images were circulated of three young Bahrainis, the youngest is 16, who were shot by the Death Squads outside their home. They were told by members of the Al Khalifa killers to run, and were sprayed with shotguns as they did. The images show blood streaming from their wounds. They were targeted not for any thing they did, but to create fear in the hearts of Bahrainis.



The Bahrain Centre for Human Rights has issued a call for the bloggers to report the closure of their blogs. In a desperate attempt by the ruling family to silence all

opposition and impose a blackout on news, it ordered the closure of many electronic sites. It has also invested heavily in training professional hackers to target the pro-democracy sites. Several bloggers were persecuted in the past for running "unauthorized blogs".

The renowned body of journalists "Reporters Without Borders" has today issued an Urgent Action calling for the immediate release of Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace titled "Unacceptable arrests of human rights activists".

<http://en.rsf.org/bahrain-unacceptable-arrests-of-human-20-08-2010,38186.html>
The statement said: "We call for the immediate release of these activists as all they did was criticise their country's violations of basic freedoms... These arbitrary detentions are designed to silence those whose statements and public stances are annoying the authorities... Al-Singace's arrest is particularly intolerable because of his precarious health."

Bahrain Freedom Movement
20th August 2010

Call for Urgent Action for Detained Mechanical Engineering Professor Abdul Jalil Al-Singace of Bahrain

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Scholars at Risk (SAR) is gravely concerned about the arrest and detention of Professor Abdul Jalil Al-Singace, a mechanical engineer at University of Bahrain in Isa Town. SAR asks for letters, faxes and emails urging authorities to explain publicly the reasons for Prof. Al-Singace's detention, disclose the whereabouts of Prof. Al-Singace and ensure his access to medical care, family and legal counsel.

Scholars at Risk is an international network of universities and colleges dedicated to promoting academic freedom and to defending the human rights of scholars worldwide. Scholars at Risk invites interventions on behalf of scholars suffering the most serious threats to their academic freedom or their exercise of their fundamental human rights including, as in this case, detention without charge and incarceration in an undisclosed location.

Professor Al-Singace is a scholar of mechanical engineering who has worked at University of Bahrain since 1995. He is also the Director of the Human Rights Bureau of the Haq Movement for Civil Liberties and Democracy, an opposition political movement. Scholars at Risk has learned that Professor Al-Singace was arrested on August 13, 2010 at Bahrain International Airport, upon his return from the United Kingdom, and taken to an undisclosed location. This followed his address on August 5 to the British House of Lords during which he reported on Bahrain's human rights situation. Reports also indicate that Professor Al-Singace has not been permitted regular visits with his family or lawyer; indeed we understand that his lawyer was able to see him for the first time only recently. Although Bahraini law dictates that detainees are brought before the public prosecutor or formally charged with an offense within 48 hours, Professor Al-Singace has yet to be formally charged. Furthermore, Scholars at Risk understands that Professor Al-Singace suffers from poliomyelitis. In light of this, his prolonged detention without regular access to counsel, family or adequate medical support would appear to constitute a reckless disregard of his health and well-being.

This disregard, coupled with the suddenness and lack of any clear basis for his arrest, raises concerns that this case appears to involve retaliation against one

scholar's peaceful exercise of fundamental rights, which are guaranteed under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bahrain is a party. Scholars at Risk therefore joins with the many national and international academic associations, human rights organizations and individual scholars that respectfully urge that the government of Bahrain examine the circumstances of Professor Al-Singace's detention and to disclose his location. SAR urges authorities to intervene to ensure his well-being including ensuring immediate and regular access to legal counsel of his choosing, to family

and to any necessary medical treatment. Given the public reports surrounding Professor Al-Singace's detention, we further urge you to explain publicly the reasons for his detention or absent this, to arrange for his earliest release.

Scholars at Risk invites letters, emails and faxes be sent:

-respectfully calling on the authorities to examine the circumstances of Professor Al-Singace's detention and to disclose his location;

-respectfully calling on authorities to intervene to ensure his well-being including ensuring immediate and regular access to legal counsel of his choosing, to family and to any necessary medical treatment; and

-given the public reports surrounding Professor Al-Singace's detention, respectfully urging authorities to explain publicly the reasons for his detention or absent this, to arrange for his earliest release.

Harrowing details of Singace's torture

Part of his ordeal has now come to light, the treatment he has received defy the human imagination and includes the following:

1- He has been kept in solitary confinement for the past fortnight. He was blindfolded from the moment of his arrest until he was taken to the Public Prosecution last night.

2- He has not seen the face of any of his captors or interrogators. This is a tactic to shield those who administered the torture.

3- As he is permanently disabled, relying on wheelchair most of the time and two crutches for small distances, his crutches were taken from him for the whole of that period.



4- He was made to stand up on only one leg. His disability meant that he has one normal leg and one shorter and disabled leg. He suffered greatly as he was forced to stand on one leg for two days.

5- He was repeatedly slapped on his face as a means of disorientating him. As a result one of his ears has been damaged.

6- He has sustained serious injury to his back as a result of long standing while disabled without crutches, rough handling of his body and repeated kicking.

7- In his solitary confinement, his hands were handcuffed behind his back, while seated on the floor.

8- He was made to sign statements written by his abductors.

9- He was forced to listen to the cries of other prisoners while being subjected to torture. This caused him enormous pain.

10- His nipples and ears were pulled by electric machines that cause shocks and pain.

11- He was stripped naked, laid on his face on the ground, beaten up repeatedly until he almost lost consciousness.

12- The only time that his lawyers were allowed to see him was yesterday morning between 3.00 and 7.00 am while being interrogated at the Prosecutor's office. He retracted many of the "confessions", but it is now feared that he would face more torture in the absence of the lawyers.

Jail for decrying torture

The Al Khalifa imposed a ban on press from publishing anything about its attack on liberties and use of torture. Those violating the law could be fined or jailed for up to one year. The ban imposed by Attorney-General Dr Ali Al Buaneen is effective from August 26, the day Dr Singace was allowed for the first time to speak to his lawyers. The A statement by the Public Prosecution said the ban was necessary to maintain the confidentiality and smoothness (i.e. the use of torture) of investigations. The attorney said that official statements issued on the subject would not come under the ban, warning that violators will be prosecuted under article 246 of the penal code which jails those who

Bahrain Crackdown Escalates Sectarian Tensions

The New York Times

By THANASSIS CAMBANIS

Published: August 26, 2010

MANAMA, Bahrain — The three women in head scarves and black abayas surged into the main atrium of the Seef Mall at 11 p.m. the other day, unfurling a banner outside the Next clothing boutique that read, “It is forbidden to arbitrarily arrest and detain people.”

A picture was taken, and in less than a minute they had dispersed. As they tried to leave, more than a dozen plainclothes and uniformed police officers surrounded one of them, Fakhria al-Singace, pinning her spread-eagled on a cafe table.

“You have no right to arrest me!” she shouted. “Shut your mouth!” a female officer said as she tried to handcuff Ms. Singace, pulling off her abaya, a cloak-like garment, in the process. Officers shooed shoppers away and questioned a journalist.

The arrest at one of Bahrain’s busiest late-night spots occurred in the second week of a sweeping crackdown in this island kingdom, a strategic American ally that is home to the United States Navy’s Fifth Fleet and that appears to be reconsidering its decade-long flirtation with reform.

Contentious parliamentary elections, in which the Sunni governing family could lose some power to the restive Shiite majority, are scheduled for Oct. 23. Bahrain’s rulers worry that tensions between the West and Iran could provoke instability here, partly because of the close ties between the Shiites and Iran, and partly because of the American naval base, though Bahrain has said it would not allow any attack on neighboring countries from its soil.

Initially, the arrests seemed to single out high-profile Shiite political and human rights leaders, but by Thursday the number of detainees had swelled to 159, and appeared to include many young men not known as activists.

The government said the detainees were suspected of security and terrorism violations, and were not being held for expressing dissident political views. “The king said 10 years ago we would have freedom,” said Sheik Mohammed Ali al-Mahfoodh, a Shiite cleric and opposition leader who supports an election boycott. “The experiment is now over.” Many detainees have been held without charge or access to lawyers and family members, human rights advocates said. Local Web sites — blocked this week by the government but accessible through proxy servers — chronicled clashes with riot police officers and allegations of torture, supported by photographs circulated almost instantaneously by BlackBerry.

Supporters of the government have been clamoring for tough action all year. “The only thing the government did

wrong was that it went too easy at first,” said Jamal Fakhro, a member of the Shura Council, a body appointed by the king to limit the power of the elected Parliament. “The government has taken hard measures to reinstate security and stability. The people want order.”

At 3 a.m., around the same time Ms. Singace was being questioned at the Sanabis police station, Mr. Fakhro received a picture on his BlackBerry of her hoisting the protest banner. The government said this week that it would no longer tolerate unrest among the Shiite majority, who make up about two-thirds of the population but are barred from many government jobs and face a chronic housing shortage.

Detainees can be held in secret for 15 days under Bahrain’s anti-terrorism statutes, which are applied to people who criticize the government or take part in riots and the country’s numerous tire burnings. Those convicted of compromising national security or slandering the nation can be deprived of health care and other state services, the government said. “The reform project leaves no excuse or justification, whatsoever, to illegally express opinions that harm the nation,” Deputy Prime Minister Ali bin Khalifa al-Khalifa said.

Bahrain’s royal family ruled under a state of emergency until the current king, Sheik Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, took power in 1999. He created a Parliament, and his security forces disavowed torture. The kingdom beefed up its security forces with naturalized Sunnis, who are housed in brand new subdivisions in the island’s interior. Shiite opposition groups estimate that 65,000 to 100,000 Sunnis were added to voter rolls in the last decade as part of what they say was sectarian gerrymandering.

“If the Shias took control of the country, they would pop one eye of every Sunni in the country,” said Amed Abdallah al-Boainain, 21, a resident of Askar, a coastal settlement for Sunnis employed by the security services and the royal court. Two of his brothers work for the police and he is applying to join them.

Opposition leaders say the government is using a small number of acts of vandalism to fan public hysteria and justify taking down

political rivals. “The government wanted only decorative democracy,” said Khalil Ibrahim al-Marzook, a member of Parliament from the opposition Shiite party Al Wefaq, which holds 17 of the 40 seats. “Now it is hijacking everything.”

Allegations of torture

and police brutality circulate daily

A 23-year-old man nicknamed Abu Maryam showed marks on his ankles and feet, which he said were struck with hoses, a torture known locally as falaka, when he was interrogated about tire burnings. Still, Shiite youth are continuing to sett the fires that so frustrate the government, burning electricity pylons, wiring and traffic lights as well as tires. On a recent night, one 24-year-old said the crackdown would only intensify Shiite anger. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he takes part in the nightly operations, posting photographs of burnings and clashes to opposition Web sites. “We aren’t provoking violence,” he said. “All we do is burn tires. We don’t hurt anybody. The government won’t give us permits to protest peacefully.”

Shiite clerics and Wefaq leaders have condemned such acts but have rallied the anger of constituents against the government, which they maintain treats Shiites as second-class citizens.

Earlier this year, opposition politicians united across sectarian lines to investigate official corruption. Sunni and Shiite legislators collaborated on a report that accused the royal family of illegally appropriating one-tenth of Bahrain’s scarce public land. Opposition leaders have also accused the United States of turning a blind eye. “Bahrain is important to the United States for security issues,” the American ambassador, J. Adam Ereli, said in a telephone interview. “But that doesn’t mean we don’t raise human rights issues as well.” The crackdown began on Aug. 13, when the opposition leader Abduljalil al-Singace was arrested after returning from a conference at the House of Lords in London, where he criticized Bahrain for human rights violations. The arrests of three other prominent Shiite activists followed, and his sister Fakhria was later detained at the Seef Mall. Twelve days after Mr. Singace’s arrest, his daughter Zahra said that neither relatives nor his lawyer knew who was holding him. “We don’t even know if he’s alive,” she said.

“The government is using anti-terrorism laws, but only against opposition members and human rights activists,” said Nabeel Rajab, director of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights. “Bahrain should be in the Guinness Book of World Records. This is a country that has discovered 20 supposed coup attempts in the last 20 years.”

