

# BAHRAIN

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

## Act against Al Khalifa before it is too late

Whether the Saudi occupation of Bahrain is a success or failure is still debated by its supporters in Washington and London. However in Bahrain the people have given their verdict clearly and decisively. More than six weeks have now elapsed since the Saudi tanks and armoured vehicles crossed the causeway between the two countries to crush the Bahraini Shia. Has this single act of aggression and brutality achieved its goals? The situation may seem to be stagnated but the reality is that the Al Khalifa are now in a deeper hole than they had been prior to the Saudi occupation. In addition to relinquishing their sovereignty, which is in itself an admission of failure, the Bahrainis have not been defeated. On the contrary they have now come more resolute than before the occupation on crushing the joint Saudi-Al Khalifa aggression. They have shown themselves to be extremely resilient to the regime's changing tactics and forms of aggression. They have not looked for assistance to come from outside the borders of the country of which they are the natives, but help seems to be coming from everywhere. Even those who had either kept silent on the Saudi occupation or had abetted it, are now finding themselves under enormous pressures to change their stands. The White House has repeatedly changed its position with regards to Bahrain. At the beginning President Obama told Bahrain's dictator to stop attacking Bahrainis and to let them express their opinion freely and protest without intimidation or attack. But after the Saudi occupation the State Department issued statements giving legitimacy to that occupation and Hillary Clinton repeatedly took stands in support of the Al Khalifa and Al Saud hereditary dictatorships. It has now transpired that Mr Obama had called Bahrain's dictator to reprimand him and order him not to execute four Bahraini innocent young men falsely accused of a crime that never existed. It was one of those twists that could have more serious consequences to tyrannical rule.

The all-out war against the people of Bahrain and their revolution by the unholy alliance of the Al Khalifa, Al Saud, USA, UK and Israel has failed to dislodge them from pursuing their legitimate demands.

For the past several weeks the pro-democracy activists have remained steadfast and refused to give an inch or compromise their demands. The Al Khalifa have thus lost their popular legitimacy and their treacherous stands against Bahrain including rescinding the sovereignty to the Al Saud has been met with total defiance by the Bahrainis. While Washington and London sought to deflect the attention away from the Gulf region, the Bahrainis have succeeded in keeping their revolution among the headlines of the world media. The American newspapers, satellite channels and human rights bodies have reacted positively and called on the Obama administration to take a stand on the ongoing genocide by the Al Khalifa and Al Saud killers. The crisis in Libya and Yemen have solidified the notion that USA and UK have chosen to remain on the wrong side of history, hoping that these crisis would ultimately disappear and that the voices of the people would disappear. That has not happened. As the situation in both Libya and Yemen stalled due to the political and military engineering by the counter-revolution forces it was becoming clear by the day that the moral war was being lost by those forces and that the Spring of Arab revolutions was blossoming despite the enmity of the West. The more they talked about Iranian involvement in support of the revolutionary movements the stronger the popular objection to the double standards adopted by USA and UK. And as the Israeli involvement in the planning of the counter-revolutionary activities in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and Bahrain, the West became more erratic in its approach to the unstoppable tide of revolutions.

Today, Bahrainis can stand up, high-headed, dignified and strong, to claim the highest of the moral grounds as they see themselves becoming the target of six armies of the GCC and the political support of both USA and UK. They have succeeded in interna-

nationalising their cause to the extent that they have almost shadowed the royal wedding in London. The invitation of the Al Khalifa crown prince offered them a chance to air their grievances and one of the most outrageous killers among the guests was thus rebuffed and told in the strongest terms that he would not be welcome to attend. It was one of the strongest blows to his image especially that he had always attempted to present himself as a reformist. The Al Khalifa then committed a second and more serious mistake by insisting that their ambassador to London, the former head of the National Security Agency who is accused of most serious crimes against humanity be invited to attend. His presence served only to highlight his crimes and to present the Al Khalifa within the same class of repressive regimes of Libya and Syria. They attracted several protests outside Buckingham palace while TV and Radio shows debated what appeared to be a political problem within the British establishment. How could it possible that Tony Blair and Gordon Brown were not invited while the Al Khalifa ambassador be allowed to attend. In this debate his role in torture was repeatedly highlighted, paving the way for an eventual international trial of the Al Khalifa torturers.

It may possible to repress the people, but can dictators escape justice? Can they ever remain in peace and in positions of power as their citizens are subjected to killing and torture? The clock has turned against the Al Khalifa tyranny as the people have become more emboldened in their anti-regime activities. The worry is that if Washington and London do not heed the calls for more serious stands to remove the Al Khalifa from power, the ground may be set for more dangerous means including violence that could also unseat the other Gulf dictators. The West is now urged to sacrifice the Al Khalifa in order to protect the rest; failing to take a new and more serious stand may lead to more fundamental changes of mood that could be catastrophic to the Western interests in the region.



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## Beginning of international awareness amid more anti-Shia campaign

As the ramifications of the Al Khalifa snub to Catherine Ashton, European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs threaten serious rifts between Europe and GCC, the international pressure on Bahrain's dictatorship has already been stepped up. Yesterday UK's Foreign Secretary, William Hague has criticised the Al Khalifa for their human rights abuses and attacks on free speech and medical rights of citizens. He defended the rights of Bahrainis to protest peacefully and express their views. Ms Ashton had earlier called for the immediate release of political prisoners whom Amnesty International had considered "prisoners of conscience", and the right of Bahrainis to determine their destiny. The United States has yet to declare a clear stand on the ongoing revolution in that country and stop its double standard policy. Washington has expressed less negative stands to the pro-democracy protests in other countries; Libya, Yemen and Syria but supported the Saudi invasion and the violent crackdown against the pro-democracy movement in Bahrain. The Western media, meanwhile has also shown a positive approach to the events in this Gulf state. The Guardian has published several articles and reports over the past week highlighting the repression of the Al Khalifa regime. It has highlighted the plight of tens of Bahraini students at British universities after their scholarships had been terminated by the regime in revenge to their participation in anti-regime demonstrations. The Foreign

Office has also reacted by stressing that those students had done nothing wrong when they expressed their views freely and peacefully. Their scholarships should not have been stopped, FCO said. Today, On Thursday 21 April, The Independent newspaper dedicated its front page to the deteriorating situation in Bahrain under the title: "Bahrain's secret terror" which highlighted the various policies of the regime towards Shia activists, including the arrest of doctors, nurses, artists, footballers, teachers, women and children. In addition to the printed media, American media has taken a keen interest in Bahrain's revolution which has been totally disowned by the US. CNN, NBC, Washington Post and others have published positive reports on the situation. This sudden awakening of the conscience is positive and has been welcomed by Bahrainis who have felt abandoned by the governments of the "Free World".

Meanwhile, two renowned international bodies have attacked the Bahraini rulers for violating the basic rights of the medical staff including doctors and nurses. The Massachusetts-based Physicians for Human Rights said: "As doctors in Bahrain treat protesters and wounded civilians, they have seen evidence of the atrocities committed by the authorities," the Massachusetts-based group said in an e-mailed report. It further added: "This knowledge has made them targets. At least 32 health care professionals have been abducted over the past two months and are being held incommunicado by security forc-

es." Hans Hogrefe, Washington Director of Physicians for Human Rights, said: "hard evidence of systematic and coordinated attacks against medical personnel because of their efforts to provide unbiased care for wounded protesters," the group said. "These attacks violate the principle of 'medical neutrality' and are grave breaches of international law." On 7th April, Doctors Without Borders said that "Bahrain turned hospitals into places to be feared".

Meanwhile the situation on the ground is deteriorating as more acts of revenge against the majority Shia Muslims continued. More mosques have been demolished in the past few days, bringing the total to more than 27. The people, however, have continued their anti-regime protests. On Thursday night, several demonstrations were held in various towns. Pro-democracy protesters held candle vigils while thousands others raised their voices on the roof tops chanting "God is great". In Al Eker town the scene of the protest was inspiring. Death Squads and hooded militias attacked the town aiming at those reciting prayers at mosques. People of Arad had also participated in peaceful protests but the ruthless hooded forces attacked and arrested scores of them including: Maryam Ali Al Mutawwa', Ahmad Abdul Mutallib Al Sayegh, Redha Jassim Radhi, Jassim Al Darawgha, Zuhair Mohammad Radhi and Ali Ibrahim Khalil.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
23rd April 2011

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## International help sought to stop sectarian cleansing of Shia natives

As the situation in Bahrain takes more an uglier face of state persecution, more calamities have been unfolding. The body of Karim Fakhrawi, 49, a father of three summarised the tragedy that has befallen the Bahraini people at the hands of the Al Khalifa regime. He had been arrested ten days before his mutilated body was handed on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April on the condition that no one was allowed to take images at the morgue. However the angry youth managed to take few shots that have shaken the hearts of whoever saw them. Although they could not see the martyr's back as he had already been shrouded with the customary white cloth, the images of the horrific wounds to the shoulders, eyes, nose, stomach and thighs, left everyone wondering whether his attackers were humans or beasts. Martyr Fakhrawi, a well-known man of



literature has run a chain of bookshops bearing his family name "Fakhrawi Bookshop", was a man of honour, good behaviour and extreme piety. His only crime was belonging to the majority Shia native population who are now targeted by the Al Khalifa. The sectarian cleansing had already claimed three more lives of people detained earlier. All bodies has the same pattern of ill-treatment of extreme forms of torture. These are in addition to the 27 men and women who were shot dead during peaceful demonstrations or mutilated by the Death Squads wielding swords and axes. Clear and plentiful images are available on the internet for anyone to witness these crimes whose perpetrators are being protected by the Western refusal to condemn the Al Khalifa brutal regime.

This is only part of the story. The persecution of the Shia native majority has continued unabated at other levels. In the early hours of this morning Mohammad Al Tajir, a renowned human rights lawyer was arrested by hooded members of the Death Squads who had raided his home at 2.00 am. He has been taken away to an un-

known destination to supplement more than 650 political prisoners rounded up after the occupation of Bahrain by the Saudi forces. The Al Khalifa military junta has carried a grudge against Al Tajir for speaking out against torture last Autumn when more than 400 Bahrainis were detained prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> February revolution. Scores of Bahrainis are detained daily as the raids on homes continue. In the past 24 hours several prominent professionals and artists were detained. The actor, Fawzi Al Biladi was arrested by plain-clothed security personnel. During the arrest he was shouted at by one of them saying: You are an actor, yet you attend the mosque with them? In the early hours of yesterday Faiza Al Farsani, the sister of the body-building champion, Tariq Al Farsani, was arrested. Nothing has been heard of her where-about yet. The Al Khalifa's investigation committee has decided to target 150 Shia athletes and ban them from sports. At the same time, Dr Kholood Al Durazi, the most famous Tube babies female specialist in

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## Carnage and genocide under Saudi occupation

As the Bahraini crisis deepens, an international outcry is developing against the American and British support of the Saudi occupation and the ethnic cleansing being implemented against the Shia Muslim natives. Both Washington and London have granted legitimacy to the invasion and occupation by the Saudis who are now imposing on the country their Wahhabism, which is directly linked to the cultivation of terrorism and extremism. 15 out of the 19 suicide bombers who attacked the World Trade Centre in 2001 were Saudis groomed by the Muslim schools financed by the ruling Al Saud family. In the past three weeks Bahrainis have been attacked by hooded militias armed with swords and axes reminiscent of the tactics adopted by the Saudi-based terrorists who had beheaded foreigners. The latest martyr, Sayyed Hameed Sayyed Mahfoodh, 57, from Saar Town had part of his neck cut, probably by a sword. Images of his wounds have confirmed that Saudis may have been involved in his abduction and killing on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April. He was kidnapped as he made his way to a nearby shop. His body was dumped the following morning with severe wounds inflicted with a knife or sword. Meanwhile the Al Khalifa family has continued its criminal acts against Bahrainis. Homes are raided on daily basis especially at the early hours of the day when families are asleep. On 5<sup>th</sup> April, the house of Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace, a

leading opposition figure arrested shortly after the Saudi invasion, was ransacked and its contents destroyed. These acts have been condemned by the European Parliament which debated the ongoing revolutions in the Arab world. Apart from USA and UK other Western countries appear less sympathetic to the state terrorism being implemented by the Al Khalifa against native Bahrainis. Even their crown prince, who has been able to present a fake personality as a reformist could not resist the temptation to kill, torture and maim Bahrainis. Yesterday he gave a hollow address on the official TV only to confirm that more attacks on civil liberties would take place. He insisted on persecuting those who had expressed their opinion in peaceful way during the mass demonstrations of recent weeks. Unlike in previous appearances, he has become more hawkish, bloodthirsty, trigger happy dictator. His remarks were blessing in disguise as he could fool no one any more that he stood for dialogue.

As more sympathetic opinion worldwide develops, the Al Khalifa and their Saudi, American and British backers are being gradually cornered by serious charges including war crimes, crimes against humanity, extra-judicial killings, attacks on civil liberties, violations of the rule of law, repressing all public freedoms and, most serious of all, genocide. Today, every sectarian apartheid has become the doctrine of the regime. Shia Muslim natives who constitute over 70 percent of the population

are being targeted and denied basic needs for survival. Hundreds have been dismissed from their jobs, many more denied their salaries, and hundreds jailed and tortured. Major human rights bodies such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and UN Human Rights Council have taken close interest in what is happening in Bahrain.

Meanwhile more Bahrainis have been detained for expressing their opinion. This morning several houses at Dair village were raided and several people arrested. Among them were Musa Madan and Kamel Hassan Ta'an. From Hamala Ali Nasser Harim was arrested. More arrests include: Hussain Mohammad from Aali town, Sayyed Noor Sayyed Jawad Al Wada'ei, Ali Ibrahim from Ma'amir. Two young boys Hassan and Hussain the sons of Abdul Amir Rahdi from Ma'amir were arrested and their car confiscated. A Bahraini woman, Khadeeja Ali Ahmad Al Gazzaz, was arrested at one of the cheque points when she refused inappropriate handling by Saudi soldiers. Fifa is reported to have complained about the arrest by the Al Khalifa of many footballers including Alaa and Mohammad Hubail.

More than 100 taxis were crushed in the past few days because their owners took part in a demonstration last month.

Today, demonstrations took place in many countries in support of Bahrainis, including Egypt, Iran, Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, Kuwait. They were calling for ending the occupation and a regime change.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
8 April 2011

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## Bell Pottinger's Bahrain brief suspended amid crisis

Bell Pottinger's controversial work on behalf of the Economic Development Board of Bahrain has been suspended, PRWeek has learned.

The account, thought to be worth well in excess of seven figures annually, has been suspended during the three-month period of emergency rule declared last month.

Bell Pottinger has come under fire from a small group of protesters for its work in Bahrain, which has seen violent uprisings in recent weeks.

Lord Bell, chairman of Chime Communications, confirmed the suspension of the account, but stressed this did not necessarily point to a permanent disengagement.

'We had different contracts with the Bahrain government - most of them have been suspended,' he said. 'Clearly it is not possible to attract inward investment at this time.' He added that the situation would be revisited as and when the period of emergency rule ended and that the agency continued to work for a number of clients in Bahrain.

Meanwhile, Good Relations, part of the Bell Pottinger group, has won the UK and European consumer tech and b2b PR account for Research in Motion. The makers of BlackBerry previously used Hotwire

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## International help sought: *Continued from P 3*

the Gulf was arrested after her home was raided and smashed. From Karzakk the arrests included Azhar Ali Al Majed, 19 was arrested from her work at the City Centre in Manama.

Two nights ago, at least thirteen people were arrested from the town of Karbabad; Ali Nasser Al Mu'athen, Mahmood Al Singace, Mahdi Hassan Awal, Aziz Hassan Shamlan and his brother Zuhair and his cousin Ali Abdulla Shamlan, Abdullah Saeed Jassim, Khalil Ibrahim Khamis and his brother, Jaffar, Murtadha Mohammad Naji, Sadeq Jaffar Kadhem, Ali Wald Ahmad, and Mhammod Jaffar Khamis. The number of detained Shia from Al Malikiya town has now reached 40. The Bahrain Centre of Human Rights has a list of 630 detainees, including 26 women and 23 disappeared. The youngest political prisoner is Ahmad Abbas Thamer who is only 12 years of age.

Meanwhile the health of Zainab Al Khawaja, 27 has deteriorated further as she continued her hunger strike in protest against the violent arrest of

her father, Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja, her husband and her sister's husband. The three were attacked in a raid at their home at 3.00 am on Monday, beaten up severely before being led away. Zainab's seven months old baby is suffering lack of milk as a result. Mr Al Khawaja is a world renowned human rights activist and was the regional director of Frontline until two months ago.

These ferocious attacks on public liberties and rights have only consolidated the people's determination to achieve a comprehensive change as the Al Khalifa rulers have only proven beyond any reasonable doubt that they are as ruthless as the regimes of Gaddafi and probably more systematic in their sectarian cleansing and Apartheid. The protests have continued in various forms, including nightly slogans from rooftops, candle vigils, weekly marches after Friday prayers and civil disobedience tactics wherever possible.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
16<sup>th</sup> April 2011

# We must speak out about brutality in the Gulf

The guardian.co.uk  
The Observer  
17 April 11

## *To have different levels of tolerance for different despots raises awkward questions*

One obvious lesson for the west from recent upheaval in the Middle East is that propping up authoritarian regimes on the grounds that they make stable allies is a terrible policy.

The stability procured by despotism is an illusion. Brittle police states can contain, but never satisfy, a captive people's appetite for better lives. Eventually, they shatter and the more rigid the apparatus of repression, the more explosive the change when it comes.

That has been demonstrated clearly enough in North Africa and yet the west struggles to apply the lesson to the Arabian Peninsula. The contagious spirit of democratic springtime that provoked protests in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya also reached Bahrain, Yemen, Saudi Arabia. But there the west has been markedly less inclined to cheer it on.

The Observer carries the chilling testimony of a young Bahraini caught up in the small Gulf kingdom's brutal crackdown on civil dissent. It is a story that struggles to be heard as foreign media are increasingly denied access to the country and the local press is muzzled.

As many as 30 people are thought to have been killed as anti-government demonstrations have been violently suppressed. Hundreds of protesters have been detained and employees have been dismissed from state-owned enterprises in a move to purge dissent.

As our report makes clear, the unrest is increasingly sectarian in character. The Khalifa royal family and ruling elite are Sunni, while the majority of the population is Shia. That religious, cultural and economic division was politicised before the current crackdown, with the main parliamentary opposition coming from Shia parties. The government has flirted with a plan to ban those groups on the grounds of "disrespect for constitutional institutions". There has been widespread intimidation and abuse of Shia communities, carried out in part by security forces "invited" from neighbouring Saudi Arabia.

It would be unfair to say that the violence carried out by Bahraini authorities has passed entirely without comment from the UK. There have been pained expressions of discomfort and urgings of restraint on all sides.

Elsewhere in the region, those noises were precursors to more robust lan-

guage. But in the Gulf there is a subtle difference of tone. In a statement to Parliament, William Hague, foreign secretary, was keen to recognise "important political reforms" which he welcomed in the context of "the long friendship between Bahrain and the UK".

Why does this Gulf regime get the benefit of the doubt when other authoritarian Arab rulers do not? Clearly, there is no question of intervention in Bahrain or in any other state where protest is being crushed. The entanglement in Libya leaves no appetite for giving active support, whether diplomatic or military, to other rebellions. If only one villain in the region had to be singled out for attack, Colonel Gaddafi was surely the most deserving candidate. But to have different levels of tolerance for different despots still raises awkward questions about Britain's role in the region. It plainly compromises the government's credentials as an advocate for democracy.

There are many reasons for western reluctance to criticise Gulf rulers, but two stand out: oil and Iran.

The latter's aspirations to be a regional superpower, armed with nuclear weapons, is the source of perpetual anxiety in much of the Middle East and in every western capital. Iran has a proven record of exporting aggressive Shia fundamentalism, chiefly by sponsoring Hezbollah in Lebanon, but also by fomenting insurgency in southern Iraq. As a result, Sunni Arab regimes and their western allies assume Iranian mischief when Shia communities get restive – as in Bahrain.

That fear is eagerly stoked by the Gulf monarchies and emirates, largely without evidence, but safe in the knowledge that Washington and London are allergic to the suggestion of Tehran's advancing influence.

The main strategic bulwark against Iranian power is Saudi Arabia, which happens also to be the world's largest oil exporter. It is hardly a coincidence that the Saudis are keen buyers of British military exports and close partners in antiterrorism operations. It is easy enough to see the immedi-

ate utility of this relationship, but it is ultimately toxic. The Saudi regime is an unstable mix of ferocious religious zealotry and hypocritical monarchial decadence. It has no interest in or agenda for democracy and yet it is our key ally in the Middle East.

That partnership has a corrupting influence on commercial relationships and moral judgements. It is the reason why Saudi troops can enter Bahrain and carry out thuggish acts with impunity. Their weapons might well have been made in the UK. There is nothing new in the accusation that the west operates "double standards" in foreign policy. Plainly it does. The only defence is that inconsistency does not rule out an authentic aspiration to do the right thing, at least some of the time. It is surely better to encourage the spread of democracy where strategic calculations allow than to abandon it as a goal altogether because it cannot be universally applied.

That is not an excuse for turning a blind eye to repression in Bahrain. The policy contortions and contradictions Britain has been forced into in recent weeks must serve as a warning. Our reliance on regimes that fear and despise democracy is no more sustainable than those regimes are themselves stable. Weaning ourselves from that strategic dependency is the work of many years, possibly decades. But some exit route must be mapped.

Meanwhile, it is not sufficient to mutter only mild disapproval when our allies murder their citizens.

When first confronted by Arab political revolutions, Britain vacillated, reluctant to abandon useful and grubby friendship with corrupt regimes. It should never have required such a complicated effort of calculation to support vocally and unequivocally those forces in oppressed societies who want civil rights, political pluralism and democracy.

Having belatedly found that voice in North Africa, it would be a strategic error and a moral failure immediately to let it fall silent in the Gulf.

Zakariya Al Ashiri, martyred under torture and died on 11th April. Three others were killed Under torture

