

BAHRAIN

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

Revolution pushes forward after F1 saga to end dictatorship

They wanted it a "declaration of victory" but God had other plans. The Alkhalifa/Alsaud unholy alliance paid millions of dollars to ensure that enough was paid for the organizers of the Grand Prix and that under no circumstances they would afford to cancel it. So they did hold it despite the worldwide demand for its cancellation. The Alkhalifa had a lot a stake and had three aims in mind. First they wanted to tell the world that the Revolution had been defeated. Second their spin machine aimed at giving false impression of normality in the country, and third; they knew that if it was cancelled for the second year running, they would have no other chance to get it back for years to come. The teams had varying views. Some of them possessed human feelings and expressed unease at the prospect of racing in bloody Bahrain, others had delegated their moral responsibility to the F1 management team, and pretended that it was not their problem. At the end the race was convened and the drivers were able to cross the finishing line without physical injuries. However, Bahrain 2012 Gran Prix will haunt them for the rest of their lives. By now they must have realized that they had been deceived into believing that it was normal to race in a country whose regime kills, maims, tortures, arrests and hate its citizens. The hearts of some of them had become rock-hard and insensitive to normal human feelings. Money to them is everything, others including journalists and politicians had another degree of humanism. Ed Milliband, the Labour Party leader inscribed his name in history as the most senior British politician to oppose holding the race in bloody Bahrain. But there are also other Members of Parliament and Peers who called for the cancellation of the race.

It is now clear that convening the race or cancelling it became a technicality and both the Alkhalifa hereditary dictatorship and F1 had won the technical part of the race but lost the substance, essence and morality. What is now more painful to them is that Sebastian Vettel is not the real winner; but the Bahraini people had comprehensively won the race. Prior to 20th April, the day of the opening of the race, the international media, politicians and world population were largely igno-

rant of the reality in the small Gulf island of Bahrain. Today, the international public opinion has, for the first time in a year, become more aware and pro-active with regards to the events in Bahrain. The amount of coverage the Bahraini Revolution received in the ten days prior and during the event was a dream to a people who have always felt that the forces of the counter-revolution had been able to sideline their movement and ignore their plight. Pages upon pages of media coverage were filled with harrowing facts and figures about the events of Bahrain and the struggle of its people for decades against probably the most vicious, backward and murderous hereditary dictatorship in the world. Many viewed the event had been fuelled by the blood of the victims of Alkhalifa state-terrorism. Not a single media coverage was able to overlook the sounds and smoke of the daily events in that country. The regime, advised by the two discredited cops; the American John Timony and the British John Yates, had decided to take a firm stand against independent media and banned several renowned world media. It immediately backfired. It gave more justification to the opposition for their anti-regime stands. The Alkhalifa lost the moral war decisively. Their public relations campaign was brought to a standstill. The millions of dollars they had spent on promoting themselves, their regimes and their policies went in tatter.

Now that the dust has settled on the F1 saga the Al Khalifa are on the defensive, once again as ever. They have to justify to the world why the Revolution is still continuing, why more people are falling martyrs at the hands of their killers and why the country is not back on its feet in terms of political and economic development and progress. The Bahrainis, on the other hand, have become more aware of the nature of the regime. Hundreds of people were rounded up in dawn raids on their houses and taken to torture chambers. Both Timony and Yates have acted in most outrageous and disgraceful manner as they threatened to use force, abduct demonstrators and ransack whole villages. The attack on Duraz on Tuesday night (24th April) was an affront to human decency. It is a blow to those in Washington and London who have continued to defend

the indefensible of crimes, dictatorship and what sometimes amounted to genocide. The cold-blooded killing of the activist, Salah Abbas Habib on the day the formula started and the subsequent discovery of how he had been tortured to death after being wounded with a shotgun has shocked the world. But it also made the people of Bahrain more insistent on regime change as they have now been completely convinced that the Alkhalifa regime is beyond reform. Many journalists who returned from Bahrain have expressed regret that they had not given Bahrain's revolution the attention it deserves and that they had ignored the pleas of the injured, the tortured, the widowed and the orphaned when they called for help.

Six months after Bissioni issued the BICI report those supporting the regime in Washington and London have been reduced to peripheral figures in the fight against tyranny and injustice. They are viewed as complicit in the Alkhalifa crimes and are gradually being cornered by the facts linked to the crimes to their allies. What makes the problem more acute to them is the unfolding social and political discontent in neighbouring Saudi Arabia on whom they had depended to invade Bahrain, kill its people, destroy their mosques and defeat the Revolution. They may have dampened the interest in Bahrain for a full year adopting false claims but what would they now say about Saudi Arabia? The Saudi occupation of Bahrain has now haunted the Al Saud and is threatening their despotic rule. The publication of a recent film depicting the Al Saud as backward, blood-thirsty invaders and backward looking and thinking flock has angered Riyadh and left the politicians in Washington and London speechless. The Revolution in Bahrain is thus entering a new phase with the determination of the people, a demoralized enemy and weakened adversaries. It can thus be said that victory of the blood over the sword is not far away and that those who had killed, tortured, maimed and destroyed will soon be made to account for their crimes. The people's will is prevailing and the plots of the forces of counter-revolution will backfire and destroy the plotters, the dictators and the torturers.

Carpet Gassing by Timoney, Yate's forces

Repression has been greatly intensified in the past week, especially after the end of the most controversial F1 race last weekend. The use of what is now termed "Carpet Gassing" of residential areas is causing alarm on international level after more than 30 people were killed as a result of excessive inhalation of chemical gases fired by security forces. In addition to this people are routinely stopped, checked and intimidated at cheque points along the main roads and at entrances of towns and villages. Reports have suggested that the hated duel; John Timony and John Yates have decided to create a blood bath in the country after they had been accused of failure to stem the protests or bring the situation under control. Demonstrations have been taking place on daily and nightly basis with men and women taking to the streets amid rising tension following the fiasco of the Formula 1 racing. International media has concluded that the Bahrainis Revolution is the winner of the race as it has placed itself back on the international scene. Journalists now speak of "the Forgotten Revolution" after they had witnessed its extent and determination.

The killing of a Bahriani activist on Saturday 21st April by Alkhalifa-run Death Squads has further undermined the regime which had repeatedly claimed to have "reformed" its security forces since the arrival of the torturous duel; Timony and Yates. Salah Abbas Habib, 37, was tortured to death after he was hit with a

shotgun which sprayed his body with small pellets causing bleeding and pain. He was then subjected to most horrific treatment; subjected to sadistic torture in which acid was poured on his body; his hands broken at the wrists and his neck and the back of his skull also broken with severe tools. Bernie Ecclestone has also been heavily criticised for mishandling the situation and assuring the world that "all was quiet" thus giving the Alkhalifa an opportunity to take revenge from their adversaries in the middle of the night as the race was underway. The regime's Death Certificate only mentioned that the cause of death had been shotgun wounds. But independent doctors who examined the body in the mortuary confirmed the administering of the sadistic torture. Both Dr Taha Al Durazi and Dr Ali Al Ekri gave their firm verdict that the victim had been severely tortured before his death.

The fate of the human rights activist, Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja, has remained a mystery since he had last spoken to his family on Saturday. His whereabouts are unknown as his family, friends and supporters continued their vigil to locate him. His lawyer, Mohammad Al Jishi has repeated the possibility that he may have been killed or passed away by the notorious security men run by John Timony and John Yates. His wife could not visit him and when she called to inquire about her husband she was blatantly told that he was not there. No solid information has yet come through, but fear is rising for his

own safety. Today is his 76th day of his hunger strike which caused him a weight loss of at least 12 kilograms. Ban Ki Moon, Catherine Ashton, Navi Pillay and others have called for Mr Al Khawaja's immediate release but the Al Khalifa have refused. He is reported to be entering a decisive moment in his life as he had stopped drinking water few days ago.

The case of Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja has become a symbol of Bahrain's revolution and exposed much of the regime's brutality, its inability to reform and the seriousness of the opposition in working to end its reign. This may explain to some extent its all-out war against the population and its intensification of repression in recent days. With almost every corner of the country witnessing political strife in the form of protests and mass rallies, the allies of the regime are becoming increasingly uneasy about the prospect of its downfall. It had been hoped that with time, the protests would be wound down by a combination of political fatigue, new police repressive tactics and the weakening of the opposition by neutralising some factions. But the holding of F1, the strike of Al Khawaja and the killing of Salah Abbas Habib (together with two babies in the wombs of their mothers who died as a result of excessive inhalation of chemical gases) have brought Bahrain's revolution to the surface on international level. It is now expected that repression and killings may be intensified by the hated duel; Timoney and Yates.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
27th April 2012

Martyr buried, F1 misguided decision and state anarchism

The body of Martyr Ahmad Ismael, 22, who was buried today bore the clear marks of gun shots which proved, beyond doubt, that he had been assassinated. Being in a position of power, John Timoney and John Yates are among the suspects behind this criminal act. The body has been lying in the regime's mortuary for more than two weeks as the family of the martyr refused to accept a false death certificate. They insisted that it should confirm the cause of death as live bullets, in line with the post-mortem doctor's report. The Alkhalifa clique was eventually defeated by the steadfastness of the family and agreed to issue the required document. Thousands of mourners participated in the funeral with slogans such as "People want regime change" and "Down with Hamad". Calls have been made to the UN human rights officials to take action against officials who are implicated in the murder of this Bahraini young man. Meanwhile, Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja, remains on his death bed as his condition continued to deteriorate. His lawyer, Mohammad Al Jishi, repeated concerns for

his Khawaja's life as communications with him stopped four days ago. He expressed fear that he might have passed away. Earlier in the week, Danish Prime Minister, describe Khawaja's condition as "very critical". Almost every decent politician and human rights body has called for the immediate release of Khawaja, except the American officials. The White House and State Department called for a "humanitarian" solution, not release. That is preposterous to be so mean and in not calling for the release of a political prisoner who his wrongly detained, tortured and left to die.

Amnesty International said it considered Khawaja and 13 other prominent Opposition activists held with him to be prisoners of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly, and who have not advocated violence.

"These 14 men should all be immediately and unconditionally released - but instead the Court of Cassation has adjourned their appeal and denied them bail," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty Deputy Pro-

gram Director for Middle East and North Africa. "In the case of Khawaja, this delay will have potentially disastrous consequences for his health, which continues to deteriorate as a result of his hunger-strike," Sahraoui said, adding that Amnesty holds the Bahraini authorities responsible for his condition.

Human Rights Watch has this to say: "The silence of the EU and the US on the matter is absolutely inexcusable. It is one thing to have a double standard with regard to human rights, it is quite another to not even to raise one's voice when a courageous human rights defender, and an EU citizen, is dying in a prison where he is unjustly held.

In London, two Bahraini activist are on hunger strike in solidarity with Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja and Hassan Mushaima who suffers from cancer but denied treatment while in jail. Ali Mushaima and Moosa Abd Ali started their action on Friday 5th April and have camped themselves outside the American Embassy since Tuesday 9th April.

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Timoney and Yates threaten to kill Bahrainis to facilitate F1

The race between human values and evil is intensifying as the F1 prepares for its most controversial race in what has now become widely known as "Bloody Bahrain". The anger of the people has never been greater as scores of activists are swiftly rounded up, tortured and locked up by the forces of John Timoney and John Yates. Their aim is to forestall serious protests, disturbances or any kind of revolutionary act. In the past week more than seventy people have been arrested, tortured and detained.

The people, however, have become more defiant. On Wednesday many people protested in Manama calling for the unconditional release of the political prisoners especially Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja and Hassan Mushaima. They were severely attacked by Alkhalifa thugs with many casualties reported. The 14th February Alliance has called for a week-long political strike under the slogan "No to Formula1" and the revolution appears to be re-invigorated in many places. Today, thousands upon thousands marched against the regime as Yates killers waged relentless campaign against them. The people of Bahrain have decided to remove the Alkhalifa dictatorship at any cost. No power on earth will be able to

defend the decaying regime any longer. Almost all major international newspapers and networks have taken stands against holding F1 race in Bahrain. On Wednesday, The Times published an article by David Mepham, the Director of Human Rights Watch London office titled: "Don't fool yourselves; Bahrain hasn't changed" in which he obliterated the argument presented by Bernie Ecclestone that Bahrain is quiet and peaceful. More conscientious objectors are likely to boycott the event which will now become one of the most controversial in the race's history. The ruling family has prevented foreign journalists from entering the country such as those of Reuters and Associated Press. For the first time in the history of the Al Khalifa the London Embassy of Bahrain became the centre of attention as two Bahraini protesters took position at its roof for 24 hours. At 1.30 pm Monday 16th April Ali Mushaima and Moosa Abd Ali climbed a scaffolding on a nearby building and walked their way to the two prominent jailed leaders; Hassan Mushaima, who has cancer and Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja who is on his 70th day of hunger strike. The lives of both are under threat while the Alkhalifa regime continues to ignore international calls to release them. The two Bahraini

activists have been on hunger strike for two weeks, spent five nights outside the US Embassy in London before occupying the roof of the Embassy. Their action was a sign of determination to achieve the release of Bahraini prisoners whose imprisonment and ill-treatment have only solidified the people's resolve to remove the Alkhalifa from power. Their antiquated regime has become a liability even to their own allies whose support is the determining factor for their survival.

An Early Day Motion (EDM) has been signed by more than twenty Members of Parliament calling for the cancellation of the Grand Prix scheduled to be held in Bahrain over the weekend. The All Party Parliamentary Group for Democracy in Bahrain sponsored the EDM which "believes that the Formula One race will be used by the Bahrain government as an endorsement of its policies of suppression of dissent". At the same time as that news was filtering through to teams out here, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Democracy in Bahrain published an open letter which it has sent to some of **Formula One's** biggest sponsors, urging them to boycott this race.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
20th April 2012

Bahrain hunger striker emerges as uprising idol

Agence France-Presse, April 29, 2012

A nearly three-month long hunger strike has turned activist Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, awaiting a final court ruling on Monday along with 14 other jailed activists, into a symbol of Bahrain's uprising that began last year.

One of their lawyers told AFP on Sunday that he expects the case, now in Bahrain's highest appeals court, the Court of Cessation, to be reviewed.

The 52-year-old father of four, on hunger strike since February 8, is among 21 activists - seven of them tried in absentia - who were convicted in June of plotting to overthrow the Gulf kingdom's rulers.

Seven of them, including Khawaja, have been jailed for life while 14 others were sentenced to between two and 15 years in prison. Khawaja, arrested in last April shortly after the Sunni regime crushed a month-long Shiite-led uprising, will continue his hunger strike - the fourth since his arrest - until he is "released or dead," sources close to him say. I "don't know if he's alive, don't know if he's awake, don't know if he's in Bahrain . . . I don't know anything about him," his wife Khadija Moussawi told AFP.

She said she has not heard from her husband since April 23, two days after he decided to stop drinking water.

Authorities have repeatedly said that Khawaja is in good health. But Moussawi, who met her husband for the first

time in London 30 years ago, doubts it.

"They say he is in good health, but if that's true, then why won't they let me speak to him, why won't they let me see him?" she asked. Their daughter Zeinab was also arrested on Saturday after taking part in an anti-government sit-in.

Khawaja's determination has prompted demonstrators across Bahrain to chant his name and brandish his portraits during protests that have intensified over the past month. His name also resonates abroad. The United Nations, Western governments and rights groups have all voiced concerns over the situation of Khawaja, a Shiite with dual Danish and Bahraini nationality. Bahrain by contrast has lashed out at foreign countries and asked them to stay out of its "internal affairs."

The kingdom had also rejected a request by Denmark to receive the activist.

Khawaja's hunger strike will likely "not have an impact on the Bahraini regime . . . but it creates awareness internationally," said Bahraini rights activist Nabil Rajab.

"It has brought attention to Bahrain and shows how much the government is repressive," Rajab told AFP. At the early age of 18, Khawaja was forced into exile over his human rights activities, said Rajab, who has known him since 1997.

Khawaja and Rajab, along with a couple other individuals, co-founded the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights.

From 2008 to 2011, Khawaja served as

Front Line Defenders' Middle East and North Africa Protection Co-ordinator, according to the Irish NGO's website.

More than 120 human rights defenders from across the region signed an appeal for his release within days of his arrest.

"In his work with us over three years, he demonstrated . . . how committed he was to protecting human rights," said Front Line Defenders director Mary Lawlor, who described Khawaja as having a "very gentle manner" and a "sparkle in his eye."

Monday's verdict might be crucial in determining the course of events in Bahrain, where 35 people were killed in the regime crackdown on protests between mid-February and mid-March 2011, according to an independent probe. The previous verdicts were "void," said one of the lawyers of the 14 defendants Mohammed al-Tajer. "I expect the rulings which were made by a military court to be reversed and the case to be taken to the Criminal Appeals Court."

King Hamad announced a state of "national safety" ahead of last year's mid-March crackdown, in which many activists arrested were tried in special courts. It was later lifted and scores of opposition activists and protesters, handed stiff punishments including several death sentences, were tried again by civil courts. Amnesty International says at least 60 people have been killed in connection with protests since February 2011.



It's time to stop dealing with Bahrain

Bahrain is still rife with human rights abuses, torture and political imprisonments, says Sara Yasin. No wonder the world was "hostile" to its Grand Prix

Streets of rage: an anti-government protester hurls a teargas canister at riot police Photo: REUTERS

By Sara Yasin

26 Apr 2012

In the pages of The Daily Telegraph on Monday, John Yates, the former assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police now working in Bahrain advising the government on police reform, claimed that "Bahrainis are bewildered by the world hostility", and by headlines that suggested a serious safety risk to Formula One teams.

Last weekend, all eyes were on Bahrain, and not for the reason the government had hoped. Coverage of Sebastian Vettel's victory in the Bahrain Grand Prix was drowned out by a mess of stun grenades, burning tyres, tear gas and Molotov cocktails. Bahrain's ongoing unrest pushed human rights organisations to call for the race to be cancelled.

Yates says the F1 teams' safety was never at risk – but in the lead up to the race he claimed that live rounds could be used to make ensure their cars could speed around the Sakhir track. Does Yates seriously expect the world's press to ignore incidents that included a Force India team mechanic narrowly avoiding

being hit by petrol bombs during a clash between protesters and police?

F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone and Bahraini officials insisted that the show must go on, saying that sport has nothing to do with politics. Sports journalists were left to cover the violent crackdown on protesters and death of one protester – Salah Abbas Habib – on Saturday. His death and the death earlier in the month of another protester are a testament to the failure of reforms in the country.

Those who defend Bahrain's government claim it is improving – acting to protect human rights, regulate policing and create more transparency. But as we saw this weekend, the situation on the ground is deteriorating. The country has been plagued by protests, peaceful and violent. The protesters do not believe reform is coming.

The Bahrain Independent Commission for Inquiry (BICI) was created by King Hamad to investigate human rights violations in the months following the start of unrest on 14 February last year. The Commission's report, released on 23 November, was met with scepticism from activists and members of civil society. I went to Bahrain for the report's launch, hoping it would prove more than an elaborate PR exercise. Although government officials are quick to point to the number of committees established and the long list of international experts enlisted in helping the regime move past the problems of last

year, there has been no real progress. Not a single senior figure has been held to account.

Bahrain should be congratulated for recognising the appalling human rights violations committed during last year's crackdown and for proposing reforms but it now needs to make good on those proposals. Words are yet to be put into actions. Promises of reform carry little weight when the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) reports that approximately 600 political prisoners have yet to be freed, despite the commission's call for their release.

Maryam Alkhwaja, head of the Foreign Relations Office at BCHR, has warned that without the international community holding Bahrain accountable for human rights violations, the country will see "the same kind of excessive force, systematic torture, and daily human rights violations" documented by the organisation during the past year. Alkhwaja added that if international bodies do take action, activists "might be lucky enough to see a different approach for Bahrain".

Bahrain has been given the space and time to take implementation seriously, and the international community must place pressure on the government to reform where it counts. This means that we shouldn't be doing business with the regime, and we most certainly should not be selling them arms or inviting them to lunch.

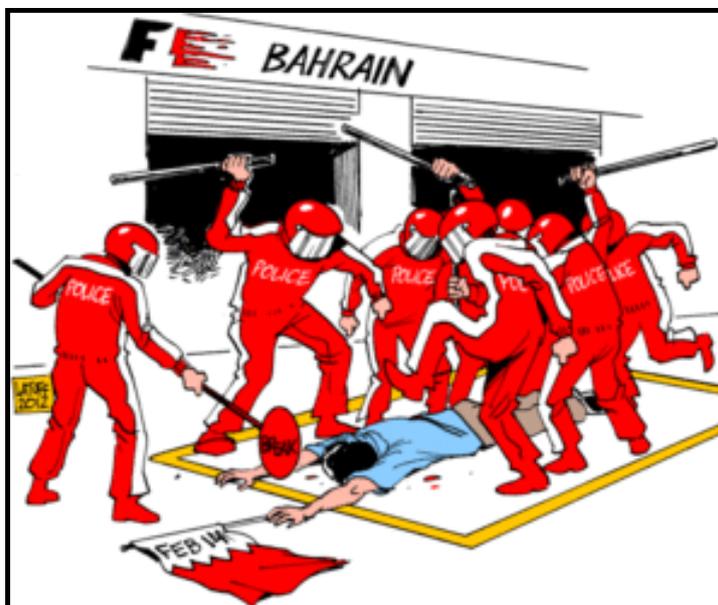
Sara Yasin works for Index on Censorship. She tweets at @

Martyr buried, F1 misguided, *Continued from Page 2*

Yesterday Mr Abd Ali collapsed and was taken to St Mary's Hospital where he was treated. He joined his colleague at the scene and are still continuing their strike in protest at the American unequivocal support to Alkhalifa state terrorism.

On another level, the decision by the Formula1 management today to go ahead with holding the race in Bahrain has been outrageous. Their decision is in contrast to the view of international human rights bodies which have called for boycotting "Bloody Bahrain" as the situation remains volatile. The Alkhalifa clique, aided by their spinners like Yates and others, have adopted a programme of deception to mislead the world about the reality on the ground. In a country which witnesses at least twenty demonstrations everyday, it is wrong to suggest that it is stable or peaceful. The next week will see a

sharp increase in the political strife in Bahrain and the management of F1 will be dealt with a serious blow in its public relations image as it has failed to steer the race away from serious political and ethical controversy.



One of the most shocking videos containing live images of state-sponsored vandalism, looting and lawlessness has shaken the human conscience to the core. The crime took place on 10th April. The place is Alba Roundabout. The intended target: Jawad Stores. A CCTV recording tells a story of a different kind, unheard before.

The armed militia members stormed the store, armed with sticks, metal bars, some of them in balaclavas while others bare-chested. They set upon the store adopting the most vicious of anarchic behaviour, breaking its contents and looting cigarettes and other valuable contents. This happens under the eyes of the police who appear directing the operation. Here are the links to the most outrageous act of state-vandalism.

<http://youtu.be/IRrsOdhrrsc>
<http://youtu.be/qN018DYIZ4I>

Bahrain Freedom Movement
13th April 2012