

BAHRAIN

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Regional realities will help democratic transformation

New realities in the region indicate some movement forward for the people, but history informs that change will not come without more rational sacrifices. Dictators are vicious, cruel and inhumane and will not abandon their offices without fierce resistance. But the natural desire for freedom also forces itself on those realities and has often succeeded in bringing tyrants to their knees. The conflict is historic so is the process of change that made history as mobile as the people themselves. The return of Britain to the Middle East signifies the process of change despite the fact that UK is not known for its keenness to promote democracy or human rights. In reality, the British recent history in the Middle East is shameful, to say the least. By the time UK withdrew its forces from all areas East of Suez, there was not a single school that had been built by the British in the region after at least 150 years of colonialism. In Bahrain, the Shia Muslim natives collected their own funds to establish their first school in 1926. The British did not work to establish democratic systems in the region, but, instead, their legacy speaks of cruel security regimes embodied by the notorious Ian Henderson who died two years ago.

Now that the British have decided to go back to the region, will they change their old imperial policies and work to establish democracy and respect of human rights? The indications are not in that direction. The UK's Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, has unashamedly defended the Alkhalifa torturers at every regional and international forum. In order to justify his policy he invented the unfounded claim that "Bahrain moving in the right direction". It was an outrageous claim that infuriated human rights bodies worldwide, especially in UK. So what will he do next in pursuit of defending the undefendable in terms of democracy and human rights? His latest visit to Iran following the rapprochement with Tehran did not show any change of heart with regards to democratization of the region. If anything, his remarks in the Iranian capital suggest that the UK's policy with Iran would be closely linked to achieving security for the Zionist occupiers of Palestine and the GCC dictators. This is not a good start for the British newly-

established presence in the most volatile region in the World. So far, the UK Government has failed to tame their Alkhalifa allies or stop their excesses. Empowered by Philip Hammond's undertaking to defend the regime to the last, Alkhalifa interior minister laid bare his tribal manifesto to deal with the people's Revolution. At a public function last month he threatened to widen the spate of arrests, detention and torture to anyone who dares criticize the hereditary dictatorship. Emboldened by the presence of the Saudi occupiers and troops from UAE, Pakistan and Jordan the regime is now more poised to pursue what the BICI's report warned against; systematic torture, collective punishment and overtly sectarian policies against the majority native population.

Bahrain's people, on their part, have proven their resilience. Despite the daily cruel attacks on towns and villages and the detention of almost anyone who exhibits patriotic feelings or stands. AlWefaq society has been targeted by Alkhalifa for revenge and punishment. This is because it chose to deprive the dictator, Hamad bin Isa Alkhalifa, of the popular legitimacy he was seeking through meaningless and hollow elections for powerless councils. Without British support the dictator would not have dared to touch AlWefaq Secretary General, Sheikh Ali Salman or any of his lieutenants. UK had previously warned that it would stop contacts with AlWefaq if it chose to boycott the Alkhalifa elections. The regime did exactly that.

What is next? The UK's return to the region has come in different political environment than when they came in the Eighteenth century. Today, the people's power, although suppressed, will exhibit itself through the Civil Resistance campaign launched shortly after the eruption of the Revolution on 14th February 2011. With mounting casualties and uncapped human rights abuses on daily basis, the situation is expected to burst into public anger, not only in Bahrain but elsewhere in the Arab World. The counter-revolution has inflicted great human and political damage on the Arab opposition forces and pro-democracy groups but the public spirit aspiring for democracy and resisting tyranny is on the rise. It is gradually becoming a known fact that the rise of extrem-

ism, terrorism and sectarianism was the making of those counter-revolution forces. This is likely to inflame the feelings of the people and push them on the revolutionary path, once again. This time they will achieve victory. The Arab dictatorships, led by Saudi Arabia, are on the wane. The British presence in the Middle East can be made into a force for good by supporting the pro-democracy movements and challenging the status quo dominated by those authoritarian regimes. But the temptations of the billions of petro-dollars and the total submission of those dictatorships to the Western political agenda have dwarfed the present British politicians and turned them into defenders of dictatorship.

Does that contribute to the interest of the British people? The recent experience of appeasing regimes that have groomed, financed and manipulated terrorist networks to wreak havoc on Arab and Muslim World. The West cannot be sheltered from those ill-effects. The crisis of refugees attempting to reach the shores of Europe is testimony to the undesirable consequences of the Western policies of supporting dictators and conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa. The GCC regimes that have been unequivocally been supported by the West, especially the British have become a liability to their supporters with their support of those terrorist networks and refusal to modernise their political system to incorporate modern norms of democracy and human rights. Thousands of pro-democracy activists languish in Bahrain's jails including senior figures from the political opposition that had embraced the dictator's political programme before the Revolution. Time has now come for the Western people to put pressure on their government to change track and disengage from their decades-long policy of appeasement of dictators and despots. Supporting the Saudi and Alkhalifa torturers amounts to complicity in their heinous acts. This is not what decent people in the West want. The UK is well-placed to take the lead in severing its links with its colonial past, unholy alliances with tyrants and despots and declare support for the pro-democracy movements in the Middle East especially the Gulf region.

Religious, political persecution intensified by Alkhalifa, Saudi regimes

After 160 days on hunger strike, the case of Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace has become an international embarrassment for Alkhalifa regime and its Washington and London backers. Many NGOs have signed a petition calling for his immediate and unconditional release after 54 months of illegal incarceration. There is great pressure on UK's Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, to call for his release given his earlier claims that the regime was "moving in the right direction" He risks being accused of misleading the public about the true nature of a regime that had been proven by its own Commission of Investigation (BICI) to have adopted "systematic torture" against native Bahraini prisoners of conscience. On Thursday 27th August, human rights activists representing many NGOs will protest outside Mr Hammond's workplace at the Foreign Office in London. The United States is urging Bahrain's dictator to ensure that a prominent political opponent is treated properly amid reports of a hunger strike. State Department spokesman Edgar Vasquez says the U.S. is aware of the reports about Bahraini prisoner Abdul Jalil al-Singace, who has been held since 2011. Al-Singace's protest concerns prison conditions.

In the week 17th-23rd August at least 25 native Bahrainis were detained and taken to torture chambers by the regime's security forces. In the early hours of this morning masked members of the regime's Death Squads snatched two brothers from Muharraq. Isa Ahmad Taqi and his brother, Hussain, have been taken to an unknown location. From Dair Town Ahmad Jaffar Moosa, 27, has also been detained. Hassan Mahmood Zainal, has been arrested in a dawn raid on his home. His brother

had been snatched earlier. On 24th August, Hussain Abdul Redha was snatched from his home at EIEkr Town by masked members of regime's Death Squads and taken to an unknown location. Two children, Hassan Samir and Amjad Abdulla from Daih Town were also detained for taking part in anti-regime protests.

In one of most embarrassing episodes to the Alkhalifa and their backers, the trial of Ibrahim Sharif, former Secretary General of the National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), turned into a trial of the Alkhalifa hereditary dictatorship. His case was laid bare and it became clear that he was being targeted for revenge because of his refusal to abandon his natural rights of free speech. The kangaroo court was transformed into a farce, pushing the "judge" who is a highly-paid servant of the torturers to adjourn it until 12th October. Before the show trial Amnesty International (AI) had issued a Press Release stating that he had been detained after delivering a speech calling for reform in Bahrain. AI said: His prosecution demonstrates the authorities' dogged determination to quash dissent and curtail freedom of expression in the country. Human Rights Watch has again criticised the show trial of Sheikh Ali Salman saying it is politically-motivated. "The behavior of the court in Sheikh Ali Salman's case shows again that Bahrain's justice system has been incapable of delivering justice," Sarah Leah Whitson said.

After the Alkhalifa dictators had dealt ruthlessly with the political societies, they have now turned their attention to the religious circles. A new round of religious persecution is looming. After detaining several religious scholars, including Sheikh Hassan Isa from AlWefaq Society, the Alkha-

lifa interior minister announced his family's decision to crackdown on non-conforming religious leaders. Two days ago he said that no religious scholar would be allowed to talk publicly without the approval of the ruling family. The Shia religious establishment reacted with anger and defiance. The Shia Endowment Directorate has become the latest tool against the majority Shia Muslim natives. It is now under total control of the regime implementing its policies and orders. The latest is the banning of holding prayers at Sheikh Aziz mosque. Scholars have issued a statement signed by more than 100 of them saying that they would continue to undertake their religious duties as they have been doing for centuries before the Alkhalifa occupation of Bahrain regardless of the consequences. Religious persecution has been rife especially against the native Shia Muslims. To offset this crime and neutralize the outside world, the Alkhalifa pretended to "respect" other religious minorities while persecuting the majority natives. For the past 17 days the under-aged Bahraini boy, Muntadar AlUjaimi has endured severe torture and solitary confinement. He has also been subjected to sleep deprivation. The father of Martyr Ahmad Abdul Amir has been held for the past two weeks for demanding that the killers of his sons be brought to justice and accusing the regime of shameful cover-up.

On the issue of revoking citizenship of native Bahrainis, Physicians for Human Rights has stated that "Revoking citizenship is just yet another tool to scare people and deter them from asking for their rights."

Bahrain Freedom Movement
26th August 2015

Saudi, Alkhalifa, Emirati regimes escalate repression, torturing citizens

The Saudi authorities arrested 27 Christians in the Eastern Province for holding prayers for Virgin Mary. They could face religious persecution and deportation. Non-Wahhabis are generally not allowed to practice their faith in the Saudi kingdom. On Tuesday 18th August The United Arab Emirates arrested a prominent Emirati economist who has previously supported calls for democratic reform in the oil-rich Gulf state. State security arrested Nasser bin Ghaith at his work in Abu Dhabi and took him to Dubai where security service agents searched his home for over four and a half hours. He was then taken to an unknown location. Ghaith is an Emirati economist who has lectured at the Abu Dhabi campus of the Paris-based Sorbonne University. He also works as an economic and legal consultant to the UAE army.

In the week 10-16th August at least 29 native Bahrainis were arrested by the Alkhalifa regime, mostly for taking part in peaceful protests. Yesterday, Tuesday 18th August, a leading AlWefaq figure, Sheikh Hassan Isa was arrested at the airport and

is likely to be charged with opposing the hereditary dictatorship. On 17th August Mahmood Hassan Al Hamar, 20, was arrested in a raid on his home at Dair Town. He had previously been detained and tortured and is in bad physical health. On 17th August, Salman Ali Salman, from Dair Town, was also detained. On 13th August, Ayman Salam was detained at the airport and taken to one of the torture houses operated by the regime outside official prisons. On 11th August, Mohammad Yousuf was detained while trying to cross the causeway to Saudi Arabia.

Basket Ball player, Hussain Taqi, has been detained for his alleged role in a recent bombing at Sitra. But he was at his work when the incident happened. On 13th August Ali Mohsin Baddaw, a grandfather from Duraz, was arrested and taken to the torture chambers for unspecified reasons. All his children are in detention. With his arrest only his wife and a disabled child are left behind. Sayed Adnan AlKhabbaz has been sentenced to five years jail. This means he won't be able to continue his secondary education. Denial of the right to

education has become a tool against the native Baharna citizens. Abbas MalAllah who has been in prison for some time has been on hunger strike for two weeks in protest against ill-treatment and regular beating. For the seventh time, Taiba Dawish has been remanded in custody for two more weeks. Repeated detention without trial amounts to harassment and human rights violation.

This year the Independence Day has been marked by Bahrainis with great enthusiasm inside the country and outside. While the people organised large protests and attempted to reach the Pearl Roundabout to mark 14th August, there have been several activities outside. In London, a Press Conference was held by Lord Avebury on Wednesday 12th August. On Thursday, 13 August, the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy and Human Rights Watch held a roundtable discussion regarding concerns regarding human rights in Bahrain and UK policy towards the country. It was attended by the major human rights bodies in UK.

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Fukuyama: Release AlSingace, US approves military sales to Alkhalifa

As Bahrain's Independence Day approaches the Alkhalifa regime has intensified its crackdown on native citizens. In the week 3rd-9th August at least 34 people were arrested. This morning regime's Death Squads snatched Hajji Ibrahim Helal from AlMa'amir in dawn raids on the town. Also a leading human rights activist has been summoned by the torture directorate (PPS) for expressing his views on the current situation. Dr Maitham Al Salman has now been accused of "inciting against the regime". Anyone who criticises Alkhalifa crimes is likely to be accused of this unforgivable "crime". He is expected to be jailed in the next few weeks. Furthermore the case of the jailed liberal activist, Ibrahim Sharif, has been presented to one of the Alkhalifa courts. He will appear at that kangaroo court on 24th August for the second time in four years. He is charged with inciting to change the hereditary dictatorship.

A Bahraini poet, Hamed Hayat was arrested last week for speaking out against the regime. Two women were detained from Sitra; Siddiq AlBasri and Siddiq AlAlawi. AlBasri was later released on bail. Among the recent detainees from Sitra are: Sadiq Jaffar Hassan and Sayed Mohammad Sayed Radhi. From Eskan Mahazza, the arrests involved: Mohamad Ali AlShami, Hassan Ali AlShami, Sayed Adel Sayed Mahamood, Sayed Adnan Sayed Dhiya, Hassan Abdul Karim Marzooq, Isa Abdul Karim AlAkrawi, Mohammad Mansoor Eid, Mohammad Ali, Yousif Jassim AlRoumi, Ali Jaffar Khamis, Ahmad Jaffar Jassim, Mohammad Radhi Abdulla Hassan, Mohammad Ibrahim AlTawq, Ali Abdul Karim Marzooq, Redha Abdulwahhab AlKhayat, Jassim Mohammed Saleh, Ali Mahdi Ebrahim, Sayed Mahmood Ali, Mohammed Jaffar Jassim, Abdulla Isa Khudhair, Khalil Ibrahim Tawq, Ali Ahmed AlFersani, Hussain Isa Abdulla. From Sitra Wadyan: Hussain Jaffar Taqi, Hassan Ebrahim Kwaïd, his brother Jaffar and Ali Makki Edraboh. On 5th August Mohammad Suor from Markh Town was arrested. He had earlier been sentenced to six months in one of those unfair trials. From Duraz, under-aged Hassan Saleh was arrested at the airport. One of the youngest native Bahrainis to be sentenced to long term imprisonment is Ammar Yasser Abdulla Abbas, 13. He has been sentenced to six months jail for participating in anti-regime protests.

Last week's decision by Bahrain's dictator to suspend the publication of AlWasat newspaper caused severe embarrassment to his backers in Washington and London. He was subsequently forced to revoke his decision. It was one of the most disastrous decisions by the hereditary dictatorship as it confirmed beyond any doubt that it simply cannot be reformed. People like UK's Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, were caused severe embarrassment. A

regime that cannot tolerate a small moderate newspaper cannot be described as being "on the right track of reform". The catastrophic decision encouraged several Congressmen to table a bill calling on the Administration to stop arming Alkhalifa regime. In London, the rapid ascent of Jeremy Corbyn, the life-long supporter of the Bahraini people, is also causing embarrassment to the establishment which has adopted unwise decisions to continue supporting the most reactionary and oppressive regimes in the world; those of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. He is the favourite to win the Labour Party's leadership perhaps from the first round. If that happens he will most likely win the next general elections.

Anger is rising after the American decision to supply the Alkhalifa torture regime with weapons that can be used against innocent civilians. Last week Washington approved the sale of \$150 million worth of equipment to Alkhalifa to maintain their fleet of Lockheed Martin Corp F-16 fighter jets, even as two U.S. senators introduced legislation to reinstate an arms sales ban that

was lifted by the Obama administration in June. The President of Human Rights First, Brian Dooley, said that the US can protect its reputation among Bahrainis if it revokes its decision to supply Alkhalifa dictators with weapons.

In USA the faculty and 2015 fellows of the Draper Hills Summer Fellows Program at Stanford University signed an open statement calling for the immediate release of Dr Abdul Jalil AlSingace. They said: "We call for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace in addition to all human rights defenders and activists in Bahrain who are detained in violation of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bahrain is a state party. We urge that Dr. Al-Singace receive full and immediate access to specialized medical attention as a matter of urgency. We remind Bahrain of its obligations to comply with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners."

Bahrain Freedom Movement

12th August 2015

Saudi, Alkhalifa, Emirati escalate repression, Cont from P2

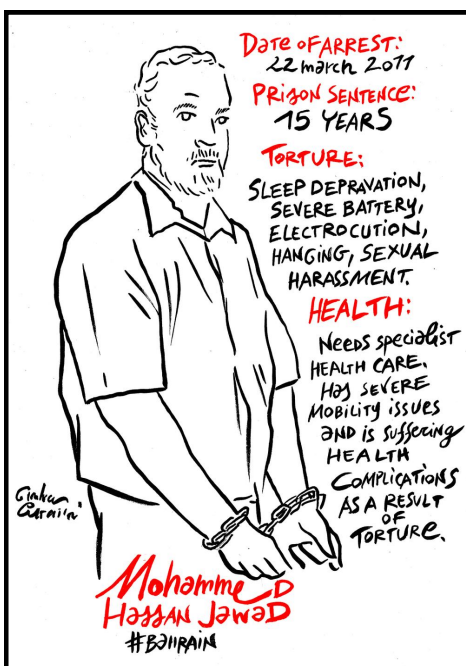
Chaired by Nicholas McGeehan, Gulf researcher at Human Rights Watch (HRW), the discussion also included speakers Shane Enright, Global Trade Union Adviser at Amnesty UK, Kevin Laue, Legal officer at Redress and Isa Al-Aali, a Bahraini torture survivor recently granted asylum by UK court. The discussion was attended by representatives from a number of organisations including Amnesty International, Index on Censorship, Reprieve, NASUWT, English Pen and Chatham House amongst others. On 7th August, Nine-year-old boy, Mohammed Mahmood Ali Habib, was shot in the eye. While he

was walking from his grandfather's house to his house in the Bani Jamra area Mohammed was shot in his left eye by the occupants of an armoured vehicle operated by regime's Death Squads. He was wounded with one pellet in the left eye. A number of cars parked in the same area were also damaged. There were no reports of any protests in the area.

Under the title "When Bahrain Says You're Not Bahraini Anymore" Natasha Bowler wrote an article yesterday on Foreign Policy website. She said: "The Bahraini government began revoking citizenship shortly after the Arab Spring engulfed large sections of the Middle East, Bahrain included, in 2011. On Feb. 14 of that year, both Shiite and Sunni Bahrainis took to the streets to demand the same rights and political freedoms for the majority Shiite population as for their Sunni compatriots. The regime of the ruling Al-Khalifa family, who are Sunnis, sent in troops to put down the movement. But four years later, demonstrators still protest every night on the streets of the country's Shiite villages. "The regime is running out of options. It has tortured people, starved thousands to death, openly killed hundreds of people in the street, and yet Bahrainis are still adamant on achieving change," says doctor and activist Saeed Al-Shehabi, who was made stateless in 2012. "Revoking citizenship is just yet another tool to scare people and deter them from asking for their rights."

Bahrain Freedom Movement

19th August 2015



When Bahrain Says You're Not Bahraini Anymore

Afraid of losing its grip on power, the regime is using citizenship as a weapon.

By Natasha Bowler, August 18, 2105

"I was asleep when I found out," recalls former Bahraini citizen Taimoor Karimi. "My kids came in and woke me up. All they could say was, 'Dad, we've got bad news. You're on the list.'" His nationality had just been revoked. Karimi is one of 159 people made stateless by the Bahraini government since 2012. On three separate occasions, with no prior warning, the state has published lists of people whose citizenship has been annulled.

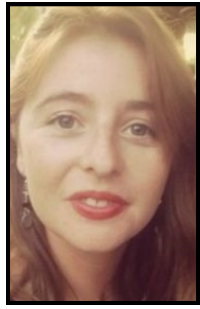
"If you lose your citizenship in Bahrain, you may as well be dead," explains Abunulnabi al-Ekry, president of the Bahrain Transparency Society. "You can't do anything if you're stateless. You can't buy or sell anything; you can't use state services like health or education. Your private finances are done for. You're told to leave the country, and if you disobey them, they'll arrest you for being an illegal immigrant."

Stateless people no longer possess identity papers and become invisible in the eyes of the law. Without these documents, simple day-to-day tasks become impossible. For instance, a person is unable to work legally or open a bank account. Likewise, without identification, a person cannot register to get married, see a local doctor, or attend a school. Before he lost his citizenship, Karimi was a well-respected lawyer. "After they took my citizenship, they took my law license so I had to close my firm," he says. "Since then I've been jobless, I can't work, and I have three kids that I'm unable to support. They've forced all the banks in Bahrain to close our accounts. We're suffering a lot."

The Bahraini government began revoking citizenship shortly after the Arab Spring engulfed large sections of the Middle East, Bahrain included, in 2011. On Feb. 14 of that year, both Shiite and Sunni Bahrainis took to the streets to demand the same rights and political freedoms for the majority Shiite population as for their Sunni compatriots. The regime of the ruling Al-Khalifa family, who are Sunnis, sent in troops to put down the movement. But four years later, demonstrators still protest every night on the streets of the country's Shiite villages.

"The regime is running out of options. It has tortured people, starved thousands to death, openly killed hundreds of people in the street, and yet Bahrainis are still adamant on achieving change," says doctor and activist Saeed Al-Shehabi, who was made stateless in 2012. "Revoking citizenship is just yet another tool to scare people and deter them from asking for their rights."

Most people made stateless in Bahrain are from the Shia majority, whose members often find themselves protesting systematic discrimination at the hands of the gov-



ernment. Despite making up two-thirds of the population, the Shiite occupy virtually no jobs in the army, the government, the judiciary, or other top positions. Because the Sunni regime is fearful that the Shiites will one day overthrow it, it continues to search for ways to suppress them. Revoking citizenship is one such tactic. (The Bahraini govern-

ment declined to comment on the policy despite requests addressed to the Bahraini Interior Ministry and other official offices.) Bahraini officials suspect that Shiite Iran was partly responsible for inciting the protest movement of 2011 by training Shiite opposition activists. But an independent investigation by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry – which was primarily set up to investigate whether human rights abuses were committed in Bahrain in February 2011 and afterwards and make recommendations – found no evidence to back this up.

Nevertheless, many Bahrainis who have had their citizenship revoked have either distant Iranian heritage or have travelled to Iran for one reason or another. "Most of the stateless Bahrainis are of Iranian origin," says Nedal Al Salman of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights. "But they've been in Bahrain for over two hundred years and consider themselves as such. That's longer than the Al Khalifa family." The government clearly aims to further discredit Shiites by casting them as part of an Iranian fifth column in the country.

Hussain Khairulla Mohammed, a metalworker by trade who is now stateless, had his passport taken away after he returned from a trip to visit his brother in Iran. "I've actually had problems with the regime since 2011 when I was one of those giving first aid to people protesting at the Pearl Roundabout," says Mohammed, referring to a spot in the capital Manama that became a symbolic center of the protest movement. "I was put in jail for four months for that. And I've been watched and intimidated by the state ever since."

The first citizenships were revoked in late 2012 when the Interior Ministry issued a statement notifying 31 people that they were no longer Bahrainis under article 10(3) of the Bahraini Citizenship Act. In July 2014, amendments were made to Article 10 that gave the authorities additional power to revoke citizenship. This law was used to make 72 people stateless in January this year, and then a further 56 citizens, including nine minors, on June 15. All 128 of this year's cases were accused of terrorist-related activity.

"When the Bahraini government publishes these lists of revoked nationalities, they are a mix of innocent people and actual Daesh [Islamic State] terrorists," says Mohammed Altajer, a Bahraini human rights lawyer who

represents many of the country's stateless people. "The majority of the people on the list are just regular Shiite academics, human rights activists, lawyers, clerics and business people. But by placing them on a list with actual terrorists, the government hopes to discredit those who have done nothing wrong."

Professor Masaud Jahromi, who was made stateless earlier this year, says the government's discrimination against Shias is creating divides between Shiites and Sunnis. "In the past, there were no issues between Sunnis and Shias and other minorities living in Bahrain. We used to work together, live together, we intermarried – but unfortunately the government is doing its upmost to end this," he says. Altajer agrees that the government's strong-arm tactics are creating ethnic tensions. "Sunnis and Shiites have always co-existed peacefully here," he said. "The government is taking this country to a very dark place."

Brothers Jalal and Jawad Fairooz, both former members of parliament for Al-Wefaq, the opposition party, have lived in exile in Britain since they were made stateless in 2012. The authorities have targeted al-Wefaq, like so many of the opposition groups in Bahrain, for several years. Its present leader, Ali al-Salman, is currently behind bars.

Speaking from his home in North London, Jalal Fairooz says that the Sunni government's effort to maintain power goes much further than just spreading hate against Shias and revoking their nationalities. "For the past few years, the government has been giving out Bahraini citizenship to thousands and thousands of Sunnis from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria and many more," Jalal explains. "Their goal is to permanently alter the country's demographics so that Bahrain goes from a majority-Shia country to a Sunni one."

In 2006, Dr. Salah Al Bandar, a former government official, published the 240-page Al-Bandar report, which made a detailed case that discriminating against the Shiite majority is official state policy. The report also confirms that the state hands out Bahraini nationality to Sunnis from different countries as a way to change the demographics of the population.

Altajer, the human rights lawyer, believes the number of Bahraini passports given to Sunnis from various countries in the Gulf, the Middle East, and Asia to be as many as hundreds of thousands. He concedes that it is hard to know the precise number, since the government does not openly discuss it.

"Given the scale of it and the fact there are just 1.3 million people in Bahrain, it won't take long for it to have a drastic effect, and that risks only making the divisions between Sunnis and Shias here worse," says Altajer. "Many of these Sunnis end up working for the security services, like the Pakistanis, and are able to get their Bahraini passports within weeks. Bahrain is heading