

BAHRAIN

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

Era of hereditary dictatorships must be terminated

Optimism is the name of the game for the Bahraini people who have been striving to achieve democratic transformation. Dictators and despots are finding the noose around their necks gradually tightening and reaching the point of total suffocation. The Bahraini regime is at the forefront of those regimes whose downfall is becoming imminent. The only meaningful support to the Alkhalifa dictatorships has been coming from UK, whose Conservative government as been adamant on propping up the most vicious and reactionary system in the region. It is outrageous to see how Prime Minister, David Cameron, and his foreign policy team, have been unable to see that they are betting on a losing horse. For the past four years Bahrainis have proven to the world that their political movement is formidable, resilient and most courageous. These activists have succeeded in turning the UK's public opinion against Gulf dictators especially the Saudis and the Alkhalifa. Mr Cameron himself has experienced the humiliation resulting from his inability to comprehend the depth of psychological transformation with the British society. The gradual economic downturn over the past two decades has widened the gap between the haves and the have nots. The elite members of the establishment are becoming fewer as more middle class become less able to sustain decent standards of living. The house prices have meant that their ability to own property is rapidly shrinking while the threats of terrorism have increased. The public is also becoming more aware of the sources of terrorism.

In recent TV interviews with the Prime Minister, David Cameron, the polarisation of opinion has led to uncomfortable situation with UK's strongest man. The reason is simple; he has chosen to ally himself with the most vicious two regimes in the Middle East; those of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. To add salt to the wound, the media has suddenly turned its fire on those dictators, having realised their roles in propping up extremism and international terrorism. Mr Cameron's embarrassment could not be hidden when he was grilled by Jon Snow of Channel 4 who questioned him about his alliance with the Saudis, the most hated by the liberal

trends in the UK. He was simply unable to answer. The same applies to UK's links to Alkhalifa of Bahrain. It is clear that the opposition activists have been able making headway in influencing public opinion and gaining support among the news media, NGOs and the traded unions. When a notorious member of the Alkhalifa was pushed to stand for FIFA presidency his dynasty became the subject of criticism and grilling. Salman Alkhalifa is seen as a senior member of a hated regime that will only bring FIFA to humiliating disrepute. The international football association is already under scrutiny following the departure of its president, Sip Blatter, on allegations of financial irregularities. The soccer world is just unable to stomach more scandals of more serious dimensions. If its new president is a senior member of a regime that had been proven to have employed "systematic torture" by its own investigation commission, then FIFA will have four disastrous years that could herald deeper scandals. There are serious claims that the Saudis are using their petro-dollar cash to win favours and positions on the international arena. The support of big countries like UK is crucial for Alsaud and Alkhalifa to gain those positions. It is expected that UK will become under deeper scrutiny by the media if it allows Alkhalifa to become its next president.

The Bahraini people deserve a better regime than the present dictatorship. UK can help the democratic transformation that the people have demanding. But this can only be achieved if David Cameron draws a line under his previous policy of appeasing dictators, despots and torturers. Since leaving office, Tony Blair has been fighting to justify his policies and actions in especially in Iraq, Libya and Saudi Arabia. What the present leaders of the major parties have failed to comprehend is the fact there have been deep changes within the British society against the excessive imperialist policies that have contributed to their economic downturn. Only people like Jeremy Corbyn and people in the media and the human rights world can contribute positively to the democratic transformation in troubled countries like Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. They must be encouraged to play positive role in enlight-

ening the British public and leading the way to fundamental foreign policy changes. Contrary to the claims made by David Cameron to Jon Snow, security of UK and the world cannot come from Saudi "intelligence". The crimes committed on 11th September 2011 and 7/7 in London are testimonies to the Saudi role in international terrorism. These are facts that must not be brushed under the carpet by corrupt politicians who have thrived on perks from Gulf dictators.

Motivated by feelings of arrogance, the Saudis have reacted against the UK's cancellation of the contract to training prison officers in their own ways. They cancelled a proposed visit by a delegation of British MPs to Riyadh scheduled for this month. Their ambassador to London expressed anger at the stinging media reports and political statements against the Saudi justice system. They are likely to use their terrorist groups to target British interests and then claim it to be the result of security cooperation from the Saudi side. But the fact is clear; the Saudis and their Gulf allies are becoming more flamboyant, arrogant and despotic. The UK may experience short term tension with Riyadh, but exerting moral, political and military pressures on these dictators may lead to positive changes in the region that has remained largely undeveloped in almost every aspect of human life. Unfortunately the world is not capable of linking the ills of the region (and those of the world especially in matters of security, rise of terrorism and extremism and lack of democratic practices) with the ongoing phenomena of dictatorship and despotism. In wars vicious regimes would resort to use "dirty weapons" including chemical weapons and indiscriminate shelling. Such dictators also have dirty weapons against peaceful activists. These include torture, extremist ideologies, sectarianism and corruption. These are WMDs that are now deployed against those seeking democratic transformation. This vicious cycle of violence, degradation of human dignity and insecurity, can be ended if the world powers cling to some of the noble values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The world will be safer place if humans are respected and valued.

Saudis to crucify another AlNimr, Anger mounts against corrupt FIFA

Another verdict of execution and crucifixion has been confirmed by one of the Saudi kangaroo courts. Sheikh Nimr Al Nimr who was sentenced to death last year has had his conviction upheld causing a new furore in the world. There has been widespread anger around the globe when the young nephew of the cleric had been condemned to execution and crucifixion. Saudi Arabia is now seen both as pariah and rogue state for its cruel and violent behaviour domestically, regionally and internationally. While the world awaits the decision of the ailing king, news came of a serious war crime by Saudi air force. They have just bombed a hospital in the Yemeni city of Sa'ada, run by Doctors Without Borders. Earlier the Saudi Ambassador in London had relayed implicit criticism of UK Government for its decision to cancel a contract worth under six million Pounds for penal reform programme to change the notorious Saudi torture dungeons. It is hoped that these developments will gradually lead to the isolation of the Saudi regime which is the main source both for grooming and funding terrorism. Meanwhile the Saudi-supported terrorist network of ISIS has claimed responsibility for bombing Isma'ili mosque at Nejran in South West Arabia. Several people were killed when the Saudi terrorist detonated his explosive belt.

The football world has been shocked to learn that one of the candidates for the presidency of the International Federation of Football Association (FIFA) is linked to a regime that had been accused of "systematic torture". Salman Alkhalifa, a senior member of the Alkhalifa ruling tribe in Bahrain has announced his candidacy for the post that had been riddle with corruption scandals. There has been a flur-

ry of calls and statements from many organisations, media bodies and professional footballers calling for rejecting the candidacy. Bahraini activists have vowed to continue their campaign to expose the truth of Alkhalifa torturers, and hope that FIFA will eventually get rid of this individual who is linked to the arrest and subsequent torture. The Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy and the Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain said in a joint statement that Sheikh Salman "played a key role in Bahrain's retaliation against athlete-protesters. Throughout the government crackdown, he allegedly examined photographs of the protesters, identifying Bahraini athletes for the security forces." According to Mike Gibson of the Guardian "A document published in April 2011 and still available in Arabic on the Bahrain News Agency website outlines the creation of a special committee to identify athletes who took part in the demonstrations that it said would be headed by the Asian Football Confederation president. Sheikh Salman on Tuesday dismissed allegations against him of human rights abuses."

The International Trade Union Confederation has expressed severe concerns over the move to appoint Salman Al-Khalifa as the next president of FIFA. It said: "Salman, who headed the Bahrain Football Association during the crackdown on pro-democracy activists in 2011, is closely linked to the systemic arrest and torture of footballers in Bahrain." Sharon Burrow, General Secretary of the ITUC, said that it is "inconceivable" and "not credible" that Salman could fill the void in FIFA amidst the corruption scandals engulfing the organisation. She further questioned the politics at FIFA and raised concerns over the

imprisoned athletes and unionists in Bahrain. Human Rights Watch said: "FIFA members should look long and hard at the Al Khalifas' use of torture and allegations that Sheikh Salman failed to protect footballers from abuses, and ask themselves if this is a family they want to represent them at the highest level."

The confirmation of one year prison jail sentence of Zainab AlKhwaja for tearing the picture of Bahrain's most notorious dictator has been received with outrage and disgust. She is also ordered to pay a fine of \$8000. If she does not pay the fine, her prison sentence will be extended to 18 months. In a statement shortly after her sentence on 21st October, Amnesty International said: "If she is imprisoned, she will be a prisoner of conscience." Following a defiant programme of religious processions over the ten-day period of Ashura, Bahrain's dictator has started exacting revenge on native Bahrainis. Scores of people have either been summoned for interrogation or detained. Yesterday morning at least three people were arrested from AlDaih Town. A public orator, Mulla abbas Mulla Atiya, was arrested and remanded in custody for one week for addressing the people and condemning Alkhalifa policy of genocide. The trial of Khalil AlHalwachi has been adjourned until 8th December. He is accused of "criticising the judiciary". In the past week six trials were adjourned and five native Bahrainis were each given ten years imprisonment.

As the conditions at Jaw Prison continued to deteriorate at least 8 cases of TB have been reported. It is feared that these illnesses could be contagious, thus putting the health of hundreds others in jeopardy.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
28th October 2015

Saudi terrorists bomb Shia mourners; Alkhalifa forces fire on congregation

Once again Saudi terrorists committed a major crime against native Shia Muslims, killing at least five of them on Friday night 16th October. The attack took place by two armed and booby-trapped terrorists who attacked the Haidari Centre at Saihat in the Eastern Province. The martyrs include a female student of medicine in her fifth year. One of the attackers was killed, the other captured. This follows two lethal attacks on Shia Muslim mosques earlier this year. The first was in the town of Qudaih on 22nd May when a suicide bomber attacked the worshippers at Imam Ali mosque, killing at least 22. The second happened one week later when a man dressed as a woman attempted to bomb the women section of Imam Hussain mosque in Dammam but was intercepted. He blew his bomb killing himself and four others.

On Friday 16th October, native Bahraini Shia Muslims were also targeted. Two congregation halls were hit by unknown assailants. It is widely believed that the crime was committed by members of the regime's Death Squads to induce fear

among the people who have been engaged in relentless efforts to end Alkhalifa dictatorship. In 2011 forty mosques were demolished by regime's forces in revenge for the Revolution that had exposed the savagery of the ruling family. No one has been arrested in connection with any of the attacks on the religious symbols of the natives who form the majority of the population. Tension has been rising over the past few weeks as commemorations of Imam Hussain's martyrdom in 680 AD, began. There have been countless attacks by regime's forces on religious processions and congregations. From Sitra to Karzakan, Sadad and Malikiya the foreign-staffed armed police and militias have been waging merciless attacks on the people, beating them and removing the black flags that are raised along the route of the processions and on the congregation halls. It is one of the most flagrant attacks on religious rights of the majority natives and most outrageous forms of religious discrimination.

Last week the trial of Sheikh Ali Salman

was, once again, adjourned until 12th November. Amnesty International has called for his immediate release and urged people to write: Calling on the Bahraini authorities to release Sheikh 'Ali Salman immediately and unconditionally and quash his conviction as he is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression; Urging them to uphold the right to freedom of expression and repeal laws that criminalize the peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly

Human rights organisations have reacted with alarm to the nomination of Salman bin Ebrahim al-Khalifa to succeed Sepp Blatter as Fifa president, citing his family's role in the brutal suppression of the country's pro-democracy demonstrations in 2011. Salman, the Asian Football Confederation president, is expected to announce his candidature this week after the suspension of the Uefa president, Michel Platini, over an alleged "disloyal

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Mr Cameron cornered for supporting Saudi and Bahraini dictators

Anger is being expressed by political and human rights activists at the UK's decision to prop up the Saudi regime and shelter it from international criticism in a similar way as they did with Alkhalifa of Bahrain. David Cameron's government had agreed a contract of more than 5 million Pounds to help run the overcrowded Saudi torture dungeons. Under the pretext of "reforming" the justice and prison systems, the British had supported Bahrain's regime to repress Bahraini opposition activists. Since this "support" began four years ago, there has been sharp increase in the abuses, arrests and torture. The British support has emboldened the regime to detain political figures like like Sheikh Ali Salman, Nabeel Rajab and Ibrahim Sharif. The UK's involvement includes lobbying with other states at the Human Rights Council to shield the Alkhalifa from international criticism by states or organisations. It is one of the most outrageous follies by the UK at a time when people were looking for real transformation from dictatorship to democracy. Pressure is mounting on David Cameron and Philip Hammond to stop supporting Alkhalifa torturers. On 8th October the European Parliament (EP) adopted an Urgency Resolution that condemns the imminent execution of Ali Mohammed al-Nimr and calls on King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to "grant pardon or to commute his sentence." Saudi authorities arrested al-Nimr when he was 17 years old for participating in protests in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. He is sentenced to death by beheading and crucifixion.

As the Ashura season approaches the annual struggle between the native Bahranis and the Alkhalifa occupiers intensifies. It is a story of the epic that took place in the year 680AD between Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Mohammad and the hereditary dictatorship of the Umayyads, represented at the time by the tyrant Yazid. While it is a source of inspiration to the public to stand up for justice and challenge dictatorship and despotism, the regime views it differently and attempts to contain its influence. First the Alkhalifa issued orders banning orators from addressing the people without their approval. Then they dispatched members of their Death Squads to remove the black banners associated with the occasion. Thirdly, they summoned the heads of the congregation halls (matams) to warn them of any political slogans by the mourners. Fourthly, the regime has banned orators from Iraq. For decades prominent orators had been hired to address the congregations with useful lectures. Fifthly, Local orators have been either arrested or intimidated. Among them is Abd Ali AlAbbasi who is now in jail. These measures are the most outrageous manifestations of religious discrimination against the native majority.

Meanwhile at least 250 political prisoners at Jaw Torture Centre have started hunger strike to protest their ill-treatment at the hands of the Alkhalifa regime and the ban on religious commemorations of Ashura. They have been warned by the torturers and prison officers of more punishment if they did not stop their action. Those warnings were given by officers like Lieutenants Abdulla Isa, Mohammad Abdul Hamid, Saudi Abu Falah and Khalid AlTami-mi were accused of threatening the prisoners. The strike has continued as more detainees were added to the overcrowded cells. At least 13 native Bahranis were arrested in the week 5-11th October. They include four under-aged children. While 40 detainees had their trials postponed, at least 12 have been sentenced to a total of 86 years for participating in anti-regime activities. Among the newly-detained victims is Abbas Ali AlAbbasi who was remanded in custody for one week. It has been disclosed that a woman detainee, Taiba Darwish, had her custody renewed 12 times as punishment for giving refuge to native activists. She has two young daughters and a son and is sick woman. Two under-aged boys were snatched by masked members of Alkhalifa Death Squads. Jassim Mohammad and Sayed Mustafa Sayed Mohsin were arrested at

the town of AlKharijiya, Sitra. Human rights activists believe that the regime is intentionally keeping a detained riddled with cancer so that he perishes slowly. Ilyas Al Mulla has had an operation to remove a tumour from his head but his condition is deteriorating. News have also been scarce about Ibrahim Jaffar Al Mo'min since his detention three weeks ago. He is believed to be held at one of the private houses where torture is routinely administered.

A leading member of AlWefaq, Sheikh Hassan Isa, has had his detention renewed for another two weeks. Another leading figure, Majid Milad, has had his trial adjourned until 27th October. Human Rights Watch has called on the ruling Bahraini regime to immediately release two prominent opposition leaders, saying dialogue must replace suppression. Joe Stork, the New York-based rights NGO's deputy Middle East director, lashed out at Bahrain for its treatment of Sheikh Ali Salman, the secretary general of al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, and Ibrahim Sharif, the secretary general of the National Democratic Action Society (Wa'ad), the country's largest leftist political party.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
14th October 2015

Martyrs fathers persecuted by Alkhalifa torturers

Fathers of the martyrs are becoming a thorn in Alkhalifa eyes. They want justice to be done for the crimes committed against their children. They were at the forefront of a march on Ashura eve with pictures of their lost ones. Anti-regime chants were raised and calls for torturers and killers to be tried in a neutral court of law. Dictator Hamad's henchmen summoned them and threatened them with detention and torture. But they insisted that whatever happens they won't be cowered

into submission to the killers and torturers. They were asked to appear for another interrogation.

Alkhalifa regime has failed to implement most of the BICI recommendations issued by the commission that the dictator himself had financed in 2011. Four years have now passed and the US says that only 5 of the 26 recommendations have been implemented. This dictatorship cannot be reformed. In modern day and time people will not accept this.



Sheikh Salman 'headed committee targeting athletes in Bahrain protests'

- Fifa candidate denies being involved in taking action against athletes
- Sheikh Salman named in document announcing setting up of committee

Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al-Khalifa was elected president of the Asian Football Confederation in 2013 with the backing of the Fifa president, Sepp Blatter, and is now standing to replace him at elections in February.

Owen Gibson

Tuesday 27 October

Information published by Bahrain's official government news service appears to cast doubt on claims by the Fifa presidential candidate Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al-Khalifa that he was not involved in taking action against athletes involved in pro-democracy demonstrations in 2011, the Guardian can reveal.

A document published in April 2011 and still available in Arabic on the Bahrain News Agency website outlines the creation of a special committee to identify athletes who took part in the demonstrations that it said would be headed by the Asian Football Confederation president. Sheikh Salman on Tuesday dismissed allegations against him of human rights abuses.

The communique announces that Sheikh Nasser Bin Hamad al-Khalifa, the son of the King and head of Bahrain's Olympic Committee, is "to form an official investigation committee to look into violations committed by some of those who affiliate to the sport movement".

"Sheikh Nasser Ben Hamad al-Khalifa, chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sport, head of the Olympic Committee issued a decision to form an official investigation committee to look into violations committed by some of those who affiliate to the sport movement during the deplorable events witnessed by Kingdom of Bahrain recently," it said.

"Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim al-Khalifa, General Secretary of Youth and Sport, will lead the investigation committee," it adds, before going on to list the others on the so-called Commission of Inquiry.

At the time Sheikh Salman was general secretary of youth and sport and head of the Bahrain Football Association.

The Bahrain News Agency is the government's official news service, which amalgamated with Bahrain's Ministry of Information in 1985.

In 2013 Sheikh Salman was elected president of the Asian Football Confederation with the backing of the Fifa president, Sepp Blatter, and he is now standing to replace him at elections in February.

But the prospect has provoked an outpouring of concern from human rights groups and trade unions over his alleged links to the brutal crackdown in 2011,

and concern over freedom of expression in the Gulf state.

The Guardian has seen a letter from the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy in which it, in 2014, called on Michael Garcia, then head of the investigatory unit of the Fifa ethics committee, to investigate Sheikh Salman's alleged role in "systematically targeting and mistreating athletes who have taken part in anti-government protests".

Associated Press reported in 2011 that more than 150 athletes, coaches and referees were jailed after a special committee, which it said was chaired by Sheikh Salman, who was then head of the Bahrain Football Association, identified them from photos of protests. BIRD claimed that in doing so he had broken Fifa's Code of Ethics.

But Garcia, who in December 2014 resigned in protest at the treatment of his report into bidding for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, wrote back in January 2014 to

say the claims made by BIRD were outside the investigatory chamber's jurisdiction.

In addition to the 150 athletes, who included at least six international footballers, being targeted, six Shiite football clubs were fined \$20,000 each and suspended from the domestic league. Those fines are also documented on the Bahrain News Agency website.

Sheikh Salman on Tuesday dismissed allegations against him of human rights abuses. "I cannot deny something that I haven't done," he told BBC Sport. "Such accusations are not just damaging, it's really hurting. Some people have agenda on their table. It's not just damaging me, it's damaging the people and the country. These are false, nasty lies that have been repeated again and again in the past and the present."

Sheikh Salman had also addressed the issue of the 2011 crackdown while standing for the presidency of the AFC, backed by Blatter and Platini, in 2013. He said then: "I would like to reiterate that in my capacity as the president of the Bahrain Football Association I have always been committed to manage, control and develop our game independently and autonomously without any kind of outside interference.

"I can assure anyone that the BFA is being guided according to the highest possible governance standards of integrity and transparency – fully in line with the AFC and Fifa statutes, and no action has been taken under my direction against any member of the football com-



Saudi terrorists bomb Shia mosque, Continued from Page 2

payment" from Blatter, who has also been suspended by world football's governing body. Athletes and human rights activists have expressed anger at the prospect of appointing an individual linked to a regime accused officially of "systematic torture". This will open the door wide open for accusation of worst kinds of corruption in the international body.

At the European Parliament, the case of Dr Abdul Jalil AlSingace has been raised. Marian Harkin (ALDE) asked the Parliament the following questions: Could the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following: 1. What action will be taken to ensure that Dr al-Singace obtains access to the medical attention he requires? 2. On 9 July 2015, the European Parliament passed an urgent resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the 'Bahrain 13' and other prisoners of conscience in Bahrain. What steps have been taken in the light of the points and recommendations made in this resolution?

Yesterday Sheikh Abdul Zahra Al Mubasher was detained for addressing people during

the ongoing Ahsura congregations. Bahrain's dictator had warned preachers against addressing the crowds without his tribe's approval. Several people have been arrested over the past few days as Bahrainis refuse to abide by Alkhalifa orders. Calls for democratic transformation have continued despite the repressive attacks on people. Since their arrest on 14th October there have been no news about the four brothers from Muharraq; Ismail Khalil Darwish and his brothers; Mohammad, Qassim and Ibrahim. They are among hundreds of native Bahrainis who have been under constant persecution with their nationality withdrawn and their natural rights denied. It has been confirmed Ibrahim Yousuf Al Samahiji and his brother, Maitham were tortured at the notorious CID headquarters. They were denied the right to see lawyers during their interrogation. In the past few weeks 340 native Bahrainis were given jail sentences totalling 2783 years.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
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