

BAHRAIN

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

Tyrants do not believe in natural (divine) laws

Tyrants believe in one thing; absolute and undiminishing powers. This fact is responsible for their imminent downfall. Generally tyrants deny the applicability of God's laws despite the persistent reminders by the Holy Quran of those laws. Many Quranic verses state clearly that oppression leads to destruction. Yet oppressors rarely take notice of this fact. They continue their oppression until the natural (divine) law catches up with them. Oppression is one of the ugliest sins. This is why God's message has always emphasised the need to establish justice. The lack of justice is a cause for destruction, obliteration of nations and downfall of power. This belief is behind the persistence of Bahrainis on challenging the Alkhalifa oppression, knowing that eventually their rule would crumble in accordance with God's laws. Oppression does not last, oppressors always perish, the oppressed prevail.

In geo-political terms, the situation in the region does not favour those who adopted sadistic revenge as a weapon against the pro-democracy protesters. It is safe to say that the counter-revolution forces are headed by Saudi Arabia which has staged conflicts and wars, supported extremism and financed terrorism. It was so fearful of the Arab Spring that it was ready to torch the region in order to save its antiquated monarchical system of government. Five years later, those conflicts have started to change course and the Saudis are on a course for total defeat on all fronts. Having beheaded hundreds of its citizens, fanned the flames of sectarianism in the Arab and Muslim World, turned the countries which had witnessed popular uprisings into battle grounds and hotbed for terrorism and waged relentless war on Yemen, the tide has now turned against the most tyrannical and reactionary regime in the region. Syria is on a decisive path to defeating terrorism. Iraq has regained the initiative in the war on terror and is about to liberate its second city, Mosul, from the hands of ISIS. Yemen has become a quagmire for the Saudi aggressors and their backers. Bahrainis have survived the Alkhalifa onslaught and are nearer now to defeating Alkhalifa dictators than at any time before.

Tyranny can only survive for a short period. It is against the natural law of societies and the will of God who created human

beings with deep instinct for freedom and liberty. To challenge the divine laws is political as well as moral suicide. In the past month Bahrain's regime has stood against the most basic of civil behaviour. It planned to persecute religious leaders including the most prominent scholar, Sheikh Isa Qassim. The Sheikh's case has backfired against Alkhalifa dictator who has been forced to backtrack from pursuing his dream of banishing the Sheikh and his followers from their native land. The gathering in the vicinity of his house has continued unabated for four months. The spirit of the Revolution has been re-inflamed with greater vigour and determination. Then came the Ashura commemorations that the natives have observed for more than a thousand years. Regime's forces attacked the participants, removed their flags and banners and threatened leaders of the Hussaini congregation halls with severe punishment if they did not toe the line of the tribal dictatorship. After the ten days commemoration several orators were summoned and reprimanded because they did not praise the regime's policies. Then came the most pathetic announcement that the Alkhalifa would confiscate AlWefaq's property and auction them. This followed the final judgement to disband the society because of its boycott of the regime's elections in 2014.

What does this imply? It certainly shows intransigence, arrogance and total contempt of basic norms of human decency, violation of principles of modern governance and lack of desire to undertake any kind of political reform. It is clear that the dictator has failed to read the local and regional situation. With the GCC's summit approaching there is widespread anticipation that it could herald a period of internal fragmentation of this shaky alliance totally dominated and subjugated by the Saudis. Other than the Alkhalifa who owe their existence to the house of Saud, other Gulf monarchies have deep worries and distrust of the Saudis and their plans. The War on Yemen has only confirmed those fears. The Sultanate of Oman has repeatedly angered the Saudis with its more constructive policies and initiatives. They were instrumental in arranging the nuclear pact between Iran

and the Western powers. They refused to join in the destructive aggression led by the Saudis on Yemen. These stands add to their veto over the Saudi plan to create "The Gulf Union" which was accepted only by the Alkhalifa. The GCC summit in Riyadh is thus likely to witness Saudi anger laid out in the open.

Other developments in the region also show the decline of Saudi political and military power. The passage of the JASTA law by the Congress has confirmed the link between the Saudis and the 9/11 terrorists. They sought legitimacy and influence, not through the ballot boxes or the rule of law, but through proxy wars and illegal violent activities. Iraq is battling with the terrorist groups who are armed and financed by Gulf sheikhs who want to use them as a weapon against their adversaries. It is likely that the Iraqis will defeat ISIS, liberate Mosul and drive terrorist groups out of Iraq. This is infuriating the Saudis and their allies. They have repeatedly urged the West to wage wars in the region. But those who agreed to engage in war have paid heavy price. David Cameron is accused of engaging in military operations against Gaddafi's regime but without proper plans for its aftermath. He had to leave politics in humiliation especially after losing the Brexit referendum. The Saudis also lost their credibility when the West refused to take military role against the Syria, where ISIS and other groups directly supported by the Saudis are facing devastating routing. The outcome of these developments are likely to lead to outburst of public anger against the Arab dictators especially those of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Bahraini people are thus well-positioned to feel relief and certain victory. Indeed the Alkhalifa hereditary dictators still enjoy British support. But UK, itself is facing a change of mood among the public against supporting those despots. There is wide spreading awareness of the need to disengage from those policies that have not really helped the political or economic situation. The historic British support is being challenged politically, morally and legally. Alkhalifa dictators have dodged the issues of reform for long, and time has now caught up with them. Their end is in sight.

Calls to remove Saudis from HRC, stop funding Alkhalifa torturers

As Saudi Arabia resumes its aggression on Yemen, following a brief lull imposed by Washington, calls have emerged to isolate its murderous regime. Washington-based Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) has called for removing Saudi Arabia from the Human Rights Council for its gross violations of human rights and its increasing war crimes in Yemen. Leah Schulz who is an Advocacy Fellow at ADHRB said: "The kingdom's continued membership is an affront to the council's mission of promoting and protecting human rights around the globe." This week, Saudi Arabia will be re-elected to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) for the fourth time, after another non-competitive election at the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The article added: "While serving its third term on the council, Saudi Arabia blocked international inquiries into its human rights abuses, punished Saudi citizens who worked in collaboration with the HRC, and threatened to cut critical UN funding after being called out for violating children's rights. Miss Shultz concluded; "It is time for member states to push back against Saudi threats and obstructions and demand greater accountability and transparency from their fellow council member. Otherwise, they risk becoming increasingly complicit in the very violations that the HRC was created to eradicate."

On 20th October Bahrain's Alkhalifa ruling family announced that it would auction the property it had confiscated from AlWefaq Society centres. Regime's mercenaries raided the four centres and seized their contents in reprisal for boycotting pseudo-elections of 2014 by AlWefaq and other political societies. The raids followed Alkhalifa decision in September to dissolve Alwefaq and liquidate its assets. Yesterday Amnesty International (AI)

issued a statement calling for the immediate and unconditional release of both Nabil Rajab and Fadhel Abbas, the Secretary General of the Wahdawi Society, both in jail for tweeting against the Saudi aggression on Yemen. Fadhel Abbas is serving five years for his tweet which he wrote last year. AI said: "Bahraini authorities must immediately and unconditionally release human rights activist Nabeel Rajab and opposition leader Fadhel Abbas, two prisoners of conscience who are facing long prison sentences for using Twitter to voice concerns about human rights abuses in the conflict in Yemen". Both men have criticized the killing of civilians in Yemen by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, which includes Bahrain. They have already been wrongfully detained for months and are expecting their respective court's verdicts in the next week. "It is an outrage that Nabeel Rajab and Fadhel Abbas have spent even one minute in jail – the Bahraini authorities cannot silence every last critic by throwing them behind bars. They must drop all charges against Nabeel Rajab and quash Fadhel Abbas' five year jail term, and immediately." The statement further added: "As well as calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Fadhel Abbas and Nabeel Rajab, we are urging the Bahraini authorities to repeal or amend laws that criminalize the peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression, in line with Bahrain's obligations under international law," said Samah Hadid. Nabeel Rajab is experiencing severe blood disorder with low white blood cells, indicating serious infection. There is widespread speculation that Alkhalifa torturers and their backers have plans to poison prominent political prisoners for their refusal to abandon their demands.

The Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) has documented at least 13 ar-

rests in the week 16-24th October. According to BCHR there were 42 marches in 26 towns, several of which were attacked by regime's mercenary forces using chemical and tear gases. Six people were sentenced to a total of 12 years for taking part in anti-regime peaceful protests. Two clerics had their sentences confirmed by Alkhalifa courts. Sayed Yassin Al-Mousawi and Sheikh Aziz AlKhadhran had been given one year each in jail for attending the sit-in outside Sheikh Isa Qassim's house. Sayed Alawi Sayed Hussain from Duraz was snatched by masked members of Alkhalifa Death Squads, and taken to the notorious CID headquarters. His family spent one day looking for him before his whereabouts were discovered. He is undergoing severe torture for attending the sit-in near Sheikh Isa Qassim's house in Duraz. Another young man, Mohammad AlDurazi, was kidnapped by Death Squads few days ago. He is Martyr Jaffar AlDurazi' brother who was murdered by the regime.

In London there is an outcry following the exposure that British taxpayers money has been used to prop up Alkhalifa regime which was found to adopt "systematic torture" as a policy. Maya Foa, a director of Reprieve, said: "It is shocking that Britain paid for Bahrain's police to learn how to whitewash deaths in custody. Bahrain's police have tortured innocent people like Mohammed Ramadan into confessing falsely to crimes that carry the death penalty, and intimidated relatives who try to complain. Meanwhile, the UK taxpayer is paying Bahrain's police to learn how to tell bereaved families that officers won't be prosecuted after deaths in custody. The FCO needs to urgently suspend NI-CO's work with Bahrain."

Bahrain Freedom Movement
26th October 2016

Saudi political, moral defeat in Yemen; Charles urged to cancel Bahrain

For the first time in the past two years, the Saudis have been dealt heavy blows by the international community for their crimes in Yemen. Both Washington and London, who had actively supported the Saudi aggression on Yemen, decided to change their stand and called for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. It is the first time that the US and UK have issued such a call despite abundance of evidence that the Saudis had committed heinous war crimes. The latest has been the recent attack on Kubra Hall in Sanaa where funeral services were being held. More than 140 people were killed and 600 injured. The Saudis said their crime happened because of "incorrect information" supplied by former president Hadi's group.

The Saudis were ordered by their American and British mentors to stop the war after it threatened to become quagmire for all. In a meeting at the Lancaster House in London on 16th October US Secretary of State, John Kerry said: "We cannot em-

phasize enough today the urgency of ending the violence in Yemen," adding the truce must be achieved "as rapidly as possible, meaning Monday, Tuesday." British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and the UN envoy to Yemen, were quick to reiterate Kerry's calls. "The conflict in Yemen is causing increasing international concern. The fatalities that we've seen there have become unacceptable... There should be a ceasefire that the UN should lead the way in calling for that," Johnson said. This marks the end of the Saudi dreams of a conclusive victory in Yemen.

On 17th October, Human Rights Watch (HRW) accused the Prince of Wales of not caring enough about the "crushing of dissent" in Bahrain as details of his trip to the Gulf state were announced. It also criticised the UK Government, which requested Charles and Camilla tour the region, for standing "squarely and cravenly" behind the Bahrain administration, which has been accused of a string of abuses since pro-

democracy protesters were violently suppressed during the Arab Spring of 2011. Also, Amnesty International UK called on Prince Charles to speak out about universal values like free speech and open debate when in the Middle East. HRW described Bahrain's human rights climate as remaining "highly problematic" on its website. It further added, "The country's courts convict and imprison peaceful dissenters and have failed to hold officials accountable for torture and other serious rights abuses". In the week 10-16th October the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) documented at least ten arbitrary arrests including one child. There were at least ten protests in seven towns, three of which were attacked by foreign mercenaries employed by the Alkhalifa dictators. Ten native Bahraini detainees were sentenced to a total of 52.5 years. An under-aged youth has been sentenced to six months imprisonment for what the regime called "illegal assembly".

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Calls for US, UK to stop arming Saudis who killed 150 Yemenis at funeral

On Saturday 8th October the Saudis committed one of the worst atrocities in the war. Its aircrafts attacked a funeral service at a meeting hall in San'aa. More than 150 Yemenis perished in the most horrendous war crimes of the Saudi aggression so far. Condemnations poured from all directions. The United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, said he supported demands for an international inquiry into whether the attack, which killed at least 140 people, was a war crime. "Despite mounting crimes by all parties to the conflict, we have yet to see the results of any credible investigations," he said. "This latest horrific incident demands a full inquiry." "Aerial attacks by the Saudi-led coalition have already caused immense carnage and destroyed much of the country's medical facilities and other vital civilian infrastructure," Mr. Ban said. "Excuses ring hollow given the pattern of violence throughout the conflict. Parties cannot hide behind the fog of this war. A man-made catastrophe is unfolding before our eyes. The United Nation's top human rights official, Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, called for an independent international inquiry, noting a sharp rise in civilian casualties since the collapse of Yemeni peace talks in August. The White House said: "In light of this and other recent incidents, we have initiated an immediate review of our already significantly reduced support to the Saudi-led coalition and are prepared to adjust our support so as to better align with US principles, values and interests."

In a new development that could jeopardise the American-Saudi relations, newly released WikiLeaks papers have revealed how Hillary Clinton felt about the Saudi role in financing international terrorism. In one thread of correspondence

from August 2014 Ms Clinton sent an eight-point plan to her campaign chair, John Podesta, at the time a counsellor to President Barack Obama, outlining a strategy on how to defeat terror group Isis which involved supporting Kurdish forces in Syria and Iraq with military advisers. The exchange also appears to show the presidential candidate identified the Gulf states of Saudi Arabia and Qatar as "clandestine" "financial and logistic" supporters of the terrorist group, despite surface cooperation between the US and the GCC states on combating the militants and other actions in Syria's multi-sided civil war. "While this military/paramilitary operation is moving forward, we need to use our diplomatic and more traditional intelligence assets to bring pressure on the governments of Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which are providing clandestine financial and logistic support to Isis and other radical Sunni groups in the region," Ms Clinton reportedly wrote.

In the week 3rd – 9th October the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights documented at least 20 arbitrary arrests including one child and one woman. There were 36 marches in 20 towns and villages. At least four of these were attacked by the foreign mercenaries. On 8th October two religious scholars (Sheikh Mohammad Jawad AlShehabi and Sheikh Fadhel AlZaki, were given two years jail sentence for attending the open gathering outside Sheikh Isa Qassim's house. The former President of the Scholars Council, Sayed Majeed AlMash'al was given one extra year in jail in addition to his earlier two years sentence. Alkhalifa courts ordered the deportation of a native Bahraini after he had served his three years prison sentence. Mahmood Khawari was forcibly removed from the country in continuation of Alkhalifa's policy of slow genocide of

the natives.

A journalist who is also a former detainee has been arrested for exposing the torture he had endured in custody in 2011. Faisal Hayat was detained at the peak of Alkhalifa attack on native Bahrainis when doctors, athletes, teachers and journalists were arrested en masse. Native journalists like Mr Hayat were targeted by the ministry of information headed at the time by Fawwaz Alkhalifa, the current ambassador in London. Two weeks ago Mr Hayat published an open letter addressed to the Alkhalifa minister of interior describing his ordeal at the torture chambers. Within days he was summoned by notorious CID apparatus and charged with criticising one of the worst vicious dictators of early Islam; Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah, the second ruler of the Umayyad tribal dynasty. He was arrested and detained for one week. Mr Hayat decided to tell his torture experience in response to Alkhalifa minister of interior who had said that people working in his ministry "are believers and fear God. Those who fear God don't oppress people."

Three human rights activists have been prevented from leaving the country. Abdul Nabi Al Ekri, the prominent veteran human rights activist, Mohammad Al Tajir, human rights lawyer and Radhi AlMousawi, the President of Transparency Society were stopped at the Saudi-Bahraini causeway and told they could not leave the country. Last month all human rights activists were banned from attending the 33rd session of the Human Rights Council. The regime has been emboldened by the US and UK support that resulted in sheltering it against criticism by international bodies such as the Human Rights Council.

Bahrain Freedom Movement

12 October 2016



Protesting
against
Dictator's
London
visit
26/10/16

Alan Davidson/SilverHub

Activists Arrested Protesting Bahrain King's Visit to Downing Street

26 October 2016 – Police arrested two activists protesting the meeting between Prime Minister Theresa May and King Hamad of Bahrain at 10 Downing Street today.

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, Director of Advocacy at the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), was among the two detained. They were subsequently released.

Earlier today, BIRD wrote to Theresa May urging her to raise human rights in the meeting. The letter stated: “The only way to positively impact the human rights situation there is to make use of your leverage and to criticise these issues in public. To do any less will reinforce the authoritarianism of the Bahraini king’s government.” (Read the full letter here.)

Margaret Ferrier MP also wrote to Mrs May, demanding that human rights tops the visit’s agenda. Anti-death penalty group Reprieve also called on the Prime Minister to raise the issue in the meeting. Multiple torture victims have been sentenced to death in Bahrain, with two having exhausted all appeals.

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei is a survivor of torture. In 2011, during Arab Spring protests, he was beaten by police, arrested, tortured and sentenced by a martial court. He later claimed asylum in the United Kingdom. He was present at the Pearl Roundabout, the epicentre of protests, on 17 February 2011 – “Black Thursday” – when police cleared the roundabout, killing four protesters.

Ali Mushaima, the second activist detained today, is the son of Hassan Mushaima, one of the “Bahrain 13”, a group of political and human rights activists sentenced by military court in June 2011. Hassan Mushaima is serving a life sentence in Bahrain and Amnesty International Considers him a Prisoner of Conscience.

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei: “It’s outrageous to see Bahrain’s dictator given a free pass when his security forces are responsible for murdering peaceful protesters. Nabeel Rajab is on trial for tweeting.

Nicholas McGeehan, Researcher at Human Rights Watch, said on twitter: “Instead of arresting Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, maybe UK police should be taking a look at evidence of torture in Bahrain and the government’s sinister guest list.”

The incident has highlighted the deteriorating situation in Bahrain and put pressure on UK’s government to stop propping up Alkhalifa dictators.

UK taught Bahrain police how to whitewash custody deaths

October 20, 2016

Bahrain’s police received UK training on how to tell bereaved families that officers will not be prosecuted after a loved one has died in custody, international human rights group Reprieve has found.

The training was part of a multimillion-pound Foreign Office aid program with the Gulf kingdom, whose security forces use torture and death sentences.

The revelations come amid concerns about Mohammed Ramadan, an innocent father of three who has been held on Bahrain’s death row since 2014 after he was tortured into making a false confession. An investigation into his mistreatment, launched in 2016, has been deeply flawed and failed to meet international standards.

An email shows that senior Bahraini police asked Northern Ireland’s Police Ombudsman in January 2016 for advice about how to present its handling of police complaints:

“Another topic for discussion which was raised is your use of Family Liaison Officers in maintaining the confidence of the deceased’s family in the investigation, and how they deliver difficult messages for example where prosecution is not being recommended. ([Name redacted] has asked if possible could the case of [one line redacted] be discussed? As this was an interesting case as your office vindicated the actions of the officer).”

The visit to Belfast was requested by the UK Foreign Office and organised by NI-CO, a company owned by the Northern Ireland government. The study visit fo-

cused on investigations involving deaths or serious injuries caused by police and how to liaise with families in these cases, according to emails obtained through freedom of information requests by Reprieve.

The Bahraini police delegation was from the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), an outfit that is meant to bring prosecutions against officers suspected of abuse. It has received UK training since 2014.

Human Rights Watch has criticised the SIU’s performance, saying that in the last three years, 138 abuse allegations were referred to the SIU, but it only successfully prosecuted one torture case.

Barely two months before the study visit, the SIU announced that the police officers who allegedly tortured France24 journalist Nazeera Saeed during the Arab Spring would not be prosecuted. They claimed that there was “insufficient evidence”, despite her providing three medical reports of her injuries.

Maya Foa, a director of Reprieve, said:

“It is shocking that Britain paid for Bahrain’s police to learn how to whitewash deaths in custody. Bahrain’s police have tortured innocent people like Mohammed Ramadan into confessing falsely to crimes that carry the death penalty, and intimidated relatives who try to complain. Meanwhile, the UK taxpayer is paying Bahrain’s police to learn how to tell bereaved families that officers won’t be prosecuted after deaths in custody. The FCO needs to urgently suspend NI-CO’s work with Bahrain.”

Saudi defeat in Yemen, *Continued from Page 2*

Mohamad Isa Mohammad Ali, 16 was arbitrarily arrested in July. Another human rights activist has been banned from travelling abroad. Zainab AlKhamis was on her way to travel when she was stopped at the airport and prevented from boarding the plane. This year almost all human rights activists were not allowed to travel to Geneva to attend the three sessions of the Human Rights Council.

Amnesty International has repeated its call for the release of Sheikh Ali Salman after Alkhalifa court of cassation quashed his earlier sentences. He was first sentenced to four years and increased to nine after he lodged an appeal. He is jailed because he led the boycott of the dictator’s elections in 2014 and refused to drop the people’s demands for an end to the tribal dictatorship. AI also issued an Urgent Action update on behalf of Ali Isa al-Tajer. His trial on trumpeted terrorism charges began on 23 August. The judge did not respond to the allegation that his confessions were extracted under torture. He is still awaiting to be examined by medical consultants following a referral in December 2015. He remains detained and the next trial session

has been set for 3 November.

Northern Ireland Co-operation Overseas (NI-CO), which is owned by Invest NI, the North’s economic development body, has been providing training to officials in Bahrain’s prison system for three years. The work has focused on strengthening oversight mechanisms. NI-CO, which carries out security contract work, was paid almost £1 million by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office last year to undertake the project. Reprieve, the human rights group, has said that the company is “irrationally secretive” and has reported it to the UK’s Information Commissioner’s Office for failure to respond to a freedom of information request on its operations. Amid allegations of widespread mistreatment and torture of inmates in Bahrain, Reprieve had requested details of NI-CO’s work with the nation’s prison authorities. Reprieve is supporting the case of Mohammed Ramadan, a policeman and father of three on death row in Bahrain who was tortured into confessing to a trumped-up charge to punish him for attending a pro-democracy rally.

Bahrain Freedom Movement
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