

BAHRAIN

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

Moral compromises help tyrants, dictators; Bahrain as an example

Decent people in this world often ask: Why do tyrants remain in power? Why do not the international condemnations of their action lead to their downfall? Is it the destiny of this world to be ruled by dictators? Or is it the fate of the good people to remain in torture cells for all their lives? Recently the longest-jailed Palestinian prisoner was released after forty years. Is this the divine will? Or is the world being run by devils and Satans? God created people in order to enjoy life, cultivate the earth and protect it from evil. Yet what is clear in the minds of those languishing in jails for their opinion is that the reality is totally different. So why is this happening? Why aren't the sacrifices of the political prisoners, the martyrs, the dispossessed and the strugglers defeating evil? Indeed this evil is powerful, but could it really absorb the challenges of the vast majority of people who loath it and sacrifice their lives to defeat it? Or is it borrowed power? Is it the outcome of the unholy alliance with the enemies of humanity and values? Whatever it is the world has been subjected to most horrible treatment by greedy groups whose main aim is to accumulate wealth, achieve political and social dominance and remain in control of the poor, the dispossessed and the weak.

In the context of the Gulf region, several suggestions may be presented to explain the continued presence of the evil regimes that continue to oppress the people. In addition to their iron-fist policies that observe no international rule or convention or abide by divine principles, and the fact they have abundance of petrodollars, the support they receive from outsiders especially in the West is vast. This support takes the form of security, military, political or moral forms. At the same time their opponents receive no real help from the "free world" except what the human rights bodies offer in the condemning the torturers and the human rights abusers. The governments in the West have long abandoned the moral principles and adopted what they term "pragmatic" policies that allow them to side with the oppressors, dictators and torturers. The conduct business as usual with those who had committed murder, plundered the wealth of their people and committed the most heinous human rights abuses against innocent people. What

makes this even more painful is their audacious attempts to whitewash child killers, rapists and most evil torturers. It is in this context that status quo has been maintained. Most of these powers hate change in the Middle East. They feel any positive change could lead to a new political order that does not help them maintain their grip on the region's wealth. It may even lead to upheavals against the occupiers of Palestine.

When people like King Charles continues his business as usual with known to administer "systematic torture" in Bahrain, receive their "dignitaries" dines and wines with the khalifi dictators and entertain them at the Windsor Horse Show, the picture becomes clearer. There is no separation between business and politics. There are no good men among the elites who rule people by force, who inherit political power on the basis of their tribal links and consider political power "divine right". Of course senior figures like the King do not make decisions on their own. The establishment is part of the decision-making process in relation with Bahrain and other dictatorship. When President Biden abandons his own promises and pledges that he had uttered during his election campaign and continues business as usual, significant blows are dealt the principles and values that are being defended by those languishing behind bars in under the most vicious regimes in the world. Here, humanity is another victim alongside those on the receiving end of the blows of the heavily-built torturers. Infact these people, themselves, may have received training from the graduates of Hendon police academy or the cadres who had been trained at Sandhurst. Is it then surprising to claim that torture is institutionalized? Is it outrageous to suggest that those who possess power and are entrusted with keeping law and order in the world have, themselves become the villains, the enemies of justice and the allies of evil?

It is these hard facts that create pain and sorrow among the people of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and others who have suffered enormous amounts of pain and humiliation in the past half of a century or more. The "free world" could have adopted different policies that would have led to a safer world and a more principled political

environment. Instead they chose to please their former friends whom they consider to be more faithful to the colonialists. When a former British officer challenged a Bahraini protester in Central London in December, he said words that would have been uttered by other members of the colonial elites. The establishments that are in charge of the affairs of big nations have endeavoured to cover the heinous acts of its officers for long, but it has become clear over the past decades that they are reluctant to put things right. They have tethered when confronted by hard realities that expose evil inherent characteristics revolving around evil and corruption. The main victims of their policies have been the noble people on the surface of this planet, who have struggled to achieve justice and defeat the evil of despotism. The governing elites in our region have shown little notice or respect of the masses; thereby encouraging others to undermine their sanctity or rights.

A respectable nation will be respected by others. The people of Bahrain have always believed that they can play constructive roles in recreating the sovereignty of their country. But they also believed that their role can only be secured if their freedom is secured and protected. No one must be allowed to have more rights than others or entrusted with more power, stronger roles or unlimited freedom. The aim of those who pour onto the streets raising the slogans of freedom, rights and justice deserve to be respected. Many of them end up behind bars, at the mercy of their jailers and torturers. Generally their imprisonment is an indication of their dedication to their noble cause of establishing justice, defeating dictatorship and creating modern statehood. In the process most of them would have suffered retributions at the hand of the tyrants. But they are confident that their cause has been noble and that they were chosen to shoulder the responsibility to raise their banners of freedom and justice. They deserve to win the battle; their foes must not be allowed to prevail in the war of wills. Our people deserve victory after decades of relentless and uncompromising struggle. Isn't it time for Western leaders to reconsider their moral stands?

Bahraini prisoners cry for help, Ronaldo must condemn Saudi HR abuses

The courts in Bahrain have issued prison sentences on several native Bahrainis including three children for up to 10 years. In addition to the four from Duraz: Mohammad Habib Baddou, Ahmad Abdulla Marhoon Hassan Mohammed Muslim and Hussain Isa Abu Rwais, the khalifi court sentenced others. Three young men from Nuwaidrat Town were given ten years: Mansoor Abdullah Abdul Jabbar, Fadel Abba Abdulla and Abdul Jabbar Isa Abdulla. Three others from Karranah Town were also sentenced. Faris Hussain Habib, 10 years, Abdulla Jaffar, 3 years and Hassan Ali Rashid, 3 years.

In the past week many Bahraini political prisoners spoke out loudly about their ill-treatment. They smuggled out of their torture chambers numerous appeals to the world for help describing the horrific treatment at the hands of the khalifi dictators as horrible, inhumane and torturous. Among them were: Mohammad Hassan Salman who said that diseases are spreading due to lack of medical treatment, medicines and proper diagnosis. Shakir Hani Ali confirmed the bad conditions of the detainees. Sayed Abbas Mahdi said prisoners are denied their rights to mourn their relatives when they die. He mentioned two detainees who were prevented from attending the funerals of their relatives the two brothers, Hussam and Jaffar Suroor. Among the prisoners who have spoken out and confirmed the disgusting treatment of the political detainees by the khalifi dictators include Hassan Ibrahim Ali, Ahmed Saeed Mahdi, Hassan Al Sadadi, Sayed Ali Sayed Alawi, Fadel Mohammad, Ali Mohammad Al-Arabi, Jassim Al Iskafi, Yousuf Hassan Mohammed, Hussain Fadel Al Biladi, Hussain Ali Mohammad, Ali Hassan Isma'il, Yousuf Hassan Mohammed, Hussain Ali Mohammed, Ali Hammad,

Hussain Mohammed Ahmed and Mohammed Abdulla Al Dahif, Prisoner, Salman Ali Salman who is serving life sentence is asking for a transfer from his cell with the common law criminals to the political wings, because he does not feel safe. From his cell at Bloc 1 of Jau Prison. Salman saw cases of rape and suicide attempts. His ill-treatment is intensifying.

On 18th January, Hussain Fadel Al Biladi, one of the 14 political detainees who were severely tortured and disappeared has told his family a glimpse of what he has endured in recent days. His brother, Qassim said that the search before the visit was intrusive although the family was separated from the prisoner with a glass screen. He said that Hussain's small finger in his right foot was broken. The hand of another detainee, Hussain Al Mu'min was also broken. On 3rd January the 14 prisoners had refused to be moved to empty cells without beds or TV set. They were kept in solitary confinement until 16th January.

King Charles's charity has been urged to perform "proper due diligence" if it continues work on a major property development in Bahrain despite the country's human rights violations. Amnesty International UK said that the Prince's Foundation has a responsibility to "avoid complicity in human rights violations", after the Daily Mail reported that the charity would proceed with work in the Gulf country. The Prince's Foundation, an urban design and architecture charity established by King Charles, posted a job advert for an urban design assistant to help with its new town project in Bahrain. But human rights groups have spoken against the current Bahraini ruling family, who last November banned opposing parties from the elections for the regime's "parliament", which advises King Hamad. In a statement Amnesty Interna-

tional called the banning of opposition parties "a flagrant violation of the right to freedom of association".

The wife of Saudi activist, Mohammed Al Qahtani, Maha said that her husband, Mohammed had competed three months under enforced disappearance, and called for an end to this sad episode.

The Saudi judiciary has issued a 10-year prison sentence against Dr Ismail Al-Hassan, the Director of Sheikh Safar Al Hawali's office. The Saudi High Criminal Court issued a 17-year prison sentence against businessman A'bid bin Nasser Al Mashal. Also, activist Ibrahim Al Dahman (Abu Lujain) was detained for unspecified reasons.

Amnesty International has called on the former Manchester United player, Cristiano Ronaldo to use his celebrity to highlight the Saudi Arabia's "appalling" human rights record. This followed his description of the kingdom as "amazing country" – on arrival last week at his new club Al Nassr. He signed a deal worth £177m a year until 2025, making him the highest-paid footballer in history. Amnesty's Middle East researcher Dana Ahmed said: "Al Nassr's signing of Cristiano Ronaldo fits into a wider pattern of sportswashing in Saudi Arabia. It is highly likely that the Saudi authorities will promote Ronaldo's presence in the country as a means of distracting from the country's appalling human rights record. Shei added: "Instead of offering uncritical praise of Saudi Arabia, Ronaldo should use his considerable public platform to draw attention to human rights issues in the country". Saudi Arabia regularly executes people for crimes including murder, rape and drug smuggling.

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Bahrainis face harsher persecution, Saudis escalate repression

On 15th January regime's court issued harsh sentences on four native Bahrainis. Hassan Mohammad Muslim was given ten years, Ahmad Abdulla Marhoon, 10 years and \$300,000 fine, Mohammad Habib Yahya, 3 years and Hussain Isa Zuhair, 5 years and \$300,000 fine. The court also issued prison sentences on three other youths from Karranah Town: Faris Habib, 10 years, Abdulla Jaffar, 3 years and Hassan Ali Rashid, 3 years.

A Bahraini political detainee has launched a hunger strike to protest the denial of access to desperately needed medical treatment. Haider Al-Mulla said he suffered stomach hemorrhage and is grappling with other gastrointestinal problems but is only being treated with Panadol. Officials at the Jau prison have targeted a Bahraini prisoner of conscience who had been handed by Serbia. Ahmad Jaffar told his family that they are harassed on daily basis. The regime's torturers called on their cells in the early hours of the morning almost eve-

ry day and wreak havoc in the cells. It is an act of aggression, torture and provocation that must be stopped.

A group of political prisoners at Bloc 10 of Jau Prison have written to the authorities urging them to provide humane treatment and end the daily aggression muted on them by the regime's torturers. They asked for real change in the prison conditions: ending the policy of isolation of detainees, allowing them to exercise their religious duties including mass prayers, and extending the family visits to two hours from half an hour now.

On 16th January, Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace turned 61 years old, of which he has so far spent over 12 years behind bars. Scholars at Risk (an NGO campaigning in support of persecuted scholars around the world, said: "Today is Dr. Al-Singace's 12th birthday. He is detained and on a hunger strike when he should be free, at home with his family, and receiving the medical care he urgently needs." English PEN tweet-

ed: Today, Dr Abduljalil Al-Singace, winner of the 2022 PEN Pinter Prize for an International Writer of Courage, is spending yet another birthday in detention in Bahrain. Join us in sending messages of solidarity and continuing the call to Free AlSingace". Amnesty International and Human Rights First issued similar statements.

A joint letter has been signed by 20 human rights organizations and addressed to the King of Bahrain and the Crown Prince and Prime Minister. It calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace. It also calls on the regime to ensure he is held in conditions that meet international standards, receives his medication without delay and has access to adequate healthcare, in compliance with medical ethics, and to ensure that his arbitrarily confiscated research is immediately transferred to his family members.

Amnesty International (AI) is taking up the case of 14 Bahraini political prisoners who

Persecution of Bahraini academic, NGOs urge EU to investigate Saudis

Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace has completed a year and a half of his hunger strike. For 550 days, this great opposition figure and human rights defender has relied only on an IV drip, tea, milk, sugar, water, and salts for survival. He demands the return of his confiscated literature work. He is being held in a room at Kanoo medical centre, in total isolation that amounts to solitary confinement. He is not allowed to go outside the room or be exposed to the sun. He suffers severe joint pains in his shoulders and hips. Dr Al Singace also suffers shaking muscles and enlargement of the prostate. Scholars At Risk (SAR), an organization that campaigns for jailed intellectuals said in an article published this week: Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace has been on a hunger strike for 1.5 years to demand the return of his confiscated research. Despite worsening health, authorities continue denying him medical treatment, including MRIs, medication, and new crutches. SAR calls for letters, emails, and faxes respectfully urging the appropriate authorities to ensure Dr. Al-Singace's well-being while in custody, including proper access to medical care and visits with his family, that any charges or convictions related to Dr. Al-Singace's peaceful exercise of protected human rights are lifted, and that in the interim, his case is addressed in a manner consistent with internationally recognized standards of due process, fair trial, and detention, in accordance with Bahrain's obligations under international law.

The brother of Bahraini political prisoner Muhammad Hassan Al-Raml is warning that the 62-year-old is in a life-threatening condition amid his ongoing hunger strike. Al-Raml started the hunger strike on December 25 to protest his lack

of access to medical treatment. Political prisoner Reda Khalil, who is serving a life sentence on trumped-up charges, has announced that he was going on hunger strike over the denial of his right to education. Another young Bahraini detainee Ali Issa Abdul Ithna-ashar has been on hunger strike for more than ten days. The teenager being held in Dry Dock prison is demanding access to winter clothing, regular family visits and longer video calls to his family. Former Bahrain political prisoner and torture victim, Jaafar Marhoon is, once again, back behind bars following his arrest on December 31. Mr Marhoon was snatched from the court room, outside the public prosecutor's office before being sent to the Dry Dock prison.

On 5 January 2023, imprisoned Bahraini human rights defender, Abdul-Hadi Al-Khawaja, sent a voice note from Jau Prison, in which he dictated a letter addressed to the president of the Second High Criminal Court of Appeal in Bahrain. He has been denied access to attend his own trial and appeal sessions. He instructed his legal defence lawyer to withdraw if the authorities fail to bring him to court to attend the trial or if they deny his lawyer a visit to him prior to the hearing.

On 6th January it was confirmed that Saudi journalist Ziyad Al-Sufyani, who works as an editor on "Wikipedia" was arrested by the Saudi authorities He is falsely accused of providing information criticizing the persecution of political activists in Saudi Arabia. It has been confirmed that a 13-year prison sentence has been issued against Sheikh Ghassan Bahaa El-Din Zureik, the Executive Director of the Hand-held Qur'an Project. Political prisoner, Dr. Mohammed al-Qahtani has not been allowed to contact his family. He has served his full 10-year sentence but his wherea-

bout is unknown. Saudi authorities have forcibly disappeared him since 24 October.

On 5th January it was reported that Saudi Arabia had infiltrated Wikipedia and jailed two administrators in a bid to control the content of the website, weeks after a former Twitter worker had been jailed in the US for spying for the Saudis. One administrator was jailed for 32 years, and another was sentenced to eight years. An investigation by parent body Wikimedia found the Saudi government had penetrated Wikipedia's senior ranks in the region, with Saudi citizens acting or forced to act as agents, two rights groups said.

Under the heading: Brussels court should authorise investigation into Saudi Arabia's crimes against humanity, ten international NGOs signed an open letter in support of the victims of Saudi repression. They called on the Saudi authorities to "end any abusive practices. Accountability efforts are also critical to achieving justice for victims." They ended the letter saying: We support victims of repression in Saudi Arabia in their efforts to pursue different accountability avenues. The letter was signed by: Amnesty International, AVAAZ, Fairsquare, Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR), Human Rights Foundation, Human Rights Watch, International Center for Justice and Human Rights (ICJHR), International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), Organisation Mondiale Contre la Torture (OMCT) and Reprieve.

Pressure is mounting on the UAE authorities to release a political prisoner who had served his prison sentence almost six months ago. Mohammed Al-Roken, a lawyer, continued to be held in UAE jails despite completing his ten year sentence for his human rights work.

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are severely persecuted. On 11th January it received a letter from their families about their predicament. On 3rd January prison guards attacked 3 detainees at Bloc 3 of the notorious Jau prison. They dragged them from their cells, threw them on the ground and set upon them kicking and hitting them. The torturers stepped over the necks of two of them. Later the 14 were removed from that Bloc, including the three. They were cut off from the outside world and banned from communicating with their families. When three other detainees talked to the regime's ombudsman office they were subjected to severe treatment. AI calls on the regime to bring those torturers to justice.

Pressure is mounting on the Moroccan Government not to hand an activist to the Saudi regime. Hassan Mohammad Al Rabi' from Qatif Province was detained at Marrakesh airport on 15th January on his way to Turkey. He had stayed one month in the country as he pondered his future. He had escaped to avoid execution.

On 15th January Amnesty International issued an appeal to the Saudi government to release a woman activist. On 9th August Salma Al Shehab had been given a harsh jail sentence of 34 years to be followed by travel ban for another 34 years. She was a PhD student at Leeds University and was active on social media. English Pen tweeted: "Salma al-Shehab was sentenced to 34 years in prison for tweeting in support of women human

rights defenders in Saudi Arabia. Two years on from her arrest we stand in solidarity with her and demand her release."

A Saudi court has sentenced a senior cleric to death for speaking out against the regime. Sheikh Awadh Al Qarni has been in jail since September 2017 when the crown prince waged an all-out war against critics. The appeal court also increased the prison sentences on three sons of another cleric, Sheikh Safar Al Hawalli. Abdul Rahman, Abdulla and Abdul Rahim had their sentences increased from seven to 17 years for defending their father sine his incarceration in 2017. They protested the new sentences and started a hunger strike. Four members of the family were arrested in July 2018 in addition to their father over a book their father had written in which he criticized the royal family. Meanwhile, the Court of Appeal increased the sentence issued against Sheikh Saadallah Al-Hawali, from 4 to 14 years. He is the brother of Sheikh Safar Al-Hawali,

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Profile in Persecution: Ahmed Abdulla Marhoon Rashed



Ahmed Abdulla Marhoon Rashed is a 34-year-old Bahraini from Diraz, who was the goalkeeper for Al-Itifaq club and the Bahraini national football team. He was warrantlessly arrested from his home, charged in the terrorism case known as "Al-Ashtar Brigades," and is currently detained at Dry Dock Detention Center awaiting the court verdict.

Ahmed was initially arrested on 7 August 2012 by armed officers. They raided his house at dawn and arrested him under the pretext that he was wanted by the police. Following his arrest, his family called the Criminal Investigation Directorate (CID), the Public Prosecution Office (PPO), and the Roundabout 17 police station, who all reported that Ahmed was not with them. Two days after his arrest, Ahmed called his family asking for clean clothes to be brought to him at the Dry Dock Detention Center. After this, he was transferred to the CID where the officers there tortured him. They prevented him from sleeping, forced him to stand for more than 6 days, and falsely accused him of a role in the "Diraz explosion" case.

One year after his arrest, he was sentenced to 5 years and 6 months imprisonment. However, this sentence was increased after the events of 16 August 2013 at the "ward 10" of Dry Dock Detention Center, where prison officers attacked the prisoners and severely harmed them. This coincided with a government security crackdown against demonstrations occurring across the country. After the August 16th attack, the prisoners didn't receive any medical care, but were instead falsely accused of assaulting police officers. As a result, Ahmed was sentenced to an additional 3 years in prison bringing his total sentence to 8 years and 6 months. He spent 7 years in prison and was released under alternative sentencing on 18 March 2019. He worked for 6 months at Al-Aarin reserve as an alternative punishment.

On 22 November 2021, in the early hours of dawn, a group of officers in civilian clothing raided his house and arbitrarily arrested him for the second time. During transport in a police bus, officers beat Ahmed and threatened to rape him. Hours

after his arrest, he was allowed to call his family to inform them that he was at the CID but then not allowed calls with them for about 2 more weeks. During interrogations, officers tortured Ahmed, beating him to the point of death and threatening to electrocute him. Moreover, he was denied access to his lawyer during the interrogations and forced to sign a pre-prepared interrogation report under the threat of death and without reading its contents. Authorities then transferred him to Dry Dock Detention Center and prevented him from place phone calls and visitation rights.

Ahmed was charged with joining a terror-

ist cell, possession of explosive devices, weapons and ammunition, military training, and receiving and delivering money from the terrorist cell, but his sentence will not be issued until January of 2023 in a mass trial.

Ahmed's warrantless arrest, torture, and unjust trail constitute a direct violation of International Convention Against Torture (CAT), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), both of which Bahrain is party to. Thus, ADHRB demands that Ahmed be immediately and unconditionally released and that his torture be impartially investigated to hold perpetrators accountable.

King Charles charity plans major development in Bahrain despite HR abuses

*By Jacob Thorbrn for MAILONLINE
And Richard Eden for DAILY MAIL
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King Charles's charity will forge ahead with plans for a major property development drive in Bahrain, it was revealed today

The project's senior design manager, Leslie Ohomele, is an intriguing figure who waded into the Lady Susan Hussey 'race row' on social media. She tweeted back in December: "'Where are you from?' is not the same as 'No, where are you REALLY from?'" Those of us who've been asked both questions know the difference.'

Bahrain has been routinely criticised by human rights campaigners for its violent response to pro-democracy protests.

Despite concern over the Gulf state's violent response to pro-democracy protests,

King Charles has maintained close relationships with the Kingdom's rulers, including hosting King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa at Buckingham Palace last September

In November, Bahrainis took part in elections for the lower house of parliament that advises King Hamad but no opposition candidates were permitted to stand.

Amnesty International warned the polls would take part in an 'environment of political repression'.

Despite this, Charles has maintained close relationships with the Kingdom's rulers over the years, including hosting King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

at Buckingham Palace last September.

The monarch faced similar backlash after it was first revealed his architecture charity signed a deal to advise Bahrain on a 4,000-home development in 2013.

The Prince's Foundation is looking for an urban design assistant to help with its new town project in Bahrain

According to the Crown Prince of Bahrain's website, the King's charitable foundation has taken up an advisory role in the development of housing projects in the Gulf state.

It states: 'The Prince's foundation has overseen large-scale housing projects in the UK and is currently advising on homes in Bahrain's southern governorate and other development projects across different parts of the Kingdom.'

The King's charity was also at the forefront in planning, designing and constructing of the model village of Poundbury.

Poundbury is King Charles' vision of an utopian idyll where private and affordable housing mix with boutique shops, places of work and services like the local school and medical centre within walking distance.

Building work began in 1992 and it is due for completion in 2025 by when it will have 2,500 homes and a population of 6,000.

The news comes amid the latest Royal Family row which has seen Prince Harry launch a blistering attack on his closest relatives via his recently leaked memoirs, 'Spare'.

