

# BAHRAIN

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

## **Alkhalifa tyranny is destined to go; no dictator remains**

The years come and go, and with them the lives of people start and perish. With the consequential passage of time the rule of the tyrants begins and ends. None of the above is eternal. Everyman or woman is aware that he/she has a beginning and end. The tyrants, however, often think they are eternal and that they are there to remain. This logic that defies the most basic rules of this universe underlines the ongoing human crisis. In Yemen the whole world is telling the Saudi-led evil forces and their backers in London and Washington that famine in that country would be imminent and that more than 20 millions could be affected by hunger and disease. Yet the tyranny that is often created by the false feeling of power and strength forces them to ignore the calls to stop the illegal war on the civilian population. Those who stood behind these tyrants were pushed into a corner when the Saudi crown prince (Mohammad Bin Salman, MBS) ordered the gruesome murder of one of his countrymen for showing signs of rebellion. MBS has not shown any remorse. His main backers in Washington have also been reluctant to take any moral stand to punish the killers. The Saudi king has now been forced to remove his notorious foreign minister to adopt a new approach to those who had attacked his son for killing Khashoggi. The House of cards will gradually crumble as the winds of change sweep the politically, morally and politically empty Arabian deserts destroyed by the House of Saud.

Despite this the universal rule that nothing will remain on this earth forever, those tyrants will always act in a way indicative of their deep belief that they will live forever and that the power they possess will remain intact and enable them to do whatever they want. This is bad news for the vast majority of the inhabitants of this planet. Those in power in today's world are likely to remain in their position and continue the policies they had inherited from their predecessors. They will refuse to accept that temporal power limited in its strength and duration, that their cycle in government is limited in terms of both time and space and that the dispossessed who are being subjugated and enslaved also possess power that could unseat those tyrants. The rulers of Riyadh still believe that their overwhelming financial dominance will enable them to remain in their places and crush their foes. They ignore many

facts around them. The 38th summit held in Riyadh last month was a total failure despite the enormous budget allocated to ensure its success. The absence of Qatar's Emir dealt a fatal blow to an already fragmented alliance. Also the harsh retributions adopted by Saudis, Emiratis and Alkhalifa have either reached the limit of their influence, stalled or backfired. Both The Saudis and the Alkhalifa have suffered major blows to their Middle East strategy. With the Yemenis led by the Houthis making gains and inflicting heavy losses on the enemy, the aggressors have been comprehensively defeated and subdued. The outcome of last month's meeting in Stockholm has shown the world how the civilised approach to solving the regional crisis. The Bahrainis need to learn from the experiences of their Yemeni crisis. The people of the Gulf have also learnt that their leaders are not capable of maintaining the order of their house. The rift between Saudi Arabia, UAE and Bahrain and Qatar has not shown any sign of subsidence. The enmity towards Qatar has persisted with no signs of a compromise. The looming alliance between Qatar and Turkey has infuriated the Saudi-led group which is facing failure at every level of diplomacy, military combat and their programme revolving around terrorism.

What is next? After eight solid years of non-stop political strife in Bahrain, it is time for the Bahraini groups in the diaspora, to show a degree of solidarity that will enable the groups inside the country to resist the Saudi-led aggression. The year ends with an overwhelming solidarity with the people of Yemen; a feeling that has hindered the Saudi advance into Hodeida. At the same time the Houthis have learnt the lesson; not to give in to tyranny, dictatorship or occupation. They have taught the Saudis sour lessons in combat refusing to budge an inch from their land. They may be hungry and sick but their morale have enabled them to defeat the forces of the 14-nation alliance that the Saudis had assembled against Yemen. The end of this alliance is now in sight. The past year has been a nightmare for the aggressors. To add salt to the injury the Saudi rulers committed one of most outrageous and heinous crimes of modern history, the killing of Khashoggi. The Saudis are now on the wane. What

about the Emiratis? This "aspiring" statelet has suddenly risen from the ashes to claim the leadership of the Arab world. Its crown prince, Mohammad bin Zayed has undertaken major tasks that will lead to his downfall. The UAE is not party to many areas of contention; starting with their military intervention in Bahrain, the UAE went on to support terrorism in Iraq and Syria. They supported the military coup in Egypt that deposed the elected president, Mohammad Morsi and marched towards the Horn of Africa. There they have now established a military empire only to confirm the suspicion that they are working in liaison with the Israelis.

As the shifting sands of Arabia remain turbulent those acting to save it from the evil of tyranny, foreign hegemony and tribal mentality, the Arab people are planning to stage a come back of the revolutionary change. The events of the year also indicate that the political and security engineering by the enemies of change has not altered fundamentally the balance of power in the region. The Arab Spring syndrome will continue to haunt the Arab dictatorships. The year witnessed a rise in internal strife against those dictatorships. The people of Jordan engaged in anti-regime protests for several weeks and only subsided with the use of force and promises by the officials. The events of Sudan have continued with scores of protesters killed or maimed as the security forces used armed ammunition to quell the protests. Although the initial cause of the protests was the rising food prices the people chanted against the military ruler, Omar Al Bashir. They have continued to shout: The people want regime change. This is one of the main slogans of the Arab Spring revolutions eight years ago. There is great unease among the Arab dictators as the Sudanese people persist in their activities. Although the events in Sudan are probably symbolic, the implications are far-reaching for the Gulf dictators. These mass movements could rekindle the nostalgic feeling for mass movement to topple tyranny and dictatorship. This may appear far-fetched but it is realistic to expect major changes in the Arab world in the new current year. Alkhalifa have to tune down their enthusiasm and accept the people's verdict; they must go.

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## Saudis must pay for their evil policies, as persecution of Bahrainis escalates

The call by US president for the Saudis to finance the reconstruction of Syria has shocked many who were stunned by the call. The Saudis have been financing and grooming the terrorists who were seeking the destruction of both Syria and Iraq. Yet the Saudis had no choice but to accept Mr Trump's call especially in the shadow of Jamal Kashoggi's murder which is widely believed to have been ordered by the country's crown prince. It is almost certain that the Saudis and Emiratis will also be forced to finance the reconstruction of Yemen which they have destroyed by their criminal war. To add salt to the injury, the Saudis have been humiliated into accepting a ceasefire in the Yemeni port of Hodeida in accordance to the outcome of the Stockholm peace talks. The Yemenis, led by AnsarAllah Movement (the Houthis) have achieved moral and political victory to supplement their military victory over the aggressor Saudi, Emirati and Alkhalifa forces. These developments are likely to impact on the domestic politics of the House of Saud. The international community has now become more aware of their domestic and international crimes.

The theme of the Saudi-led aggression on Yemen was taken up yesterday by The New York Times. After describing some details of the American involvement in the war, the article quoted Daniel L. Byman, a professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service who said that a more robust policy toward Saudi airstrikes would not just be good for Yemeni civilians — it would also help the Saudis. "This war has been a strategic disaster for the Saudis," he said. The airstrikes have shown no sign of defeating the Houthis, and the Houthis' foreign ally, Iran, has gained from Saudi Arabia's clumsy prosecution of the war. "The United States needs to use its power to promote peace

and stability in Yemen," Mr. Byman said. Calls from all over the world have been made for Nabeel Rajab to be released immediately and unconditionally. The Alkhalifa dictator is urged to take Nabeel's appeal on 31st December against the earlier decision to order his release. Decisions to jail or release native Bahrainis are usually made by the dictator's office and are often taken in revenge against the native population which wants him to go. The daily chants of "Down with Hamad" have infuriated and made him enemy of Bahrainis.

At least nine native Bahrainis were arrested in the third week of December by Alkhalifa vicious forces. They are likely to face torture and lengthy jail sentences for opposing the regime's dictatorship. Yesterday, Alkhalifa court confirmed the death sentence passed on native Bahraini, Moosa Abdulla Jaffar, from Karranah and the life sentences on 13 others. The rulings were based on confessions extracted under torture. Another youth, Sayed Redha Khalil was given a life sentence for a crime he had not committed. There are now 23 native Bahrainis condemned by Alkhalifa dictator to death on trumpeted charges. Alkhalifa court yesterday re-confirmed the 10 Alkhalifa court yesterday re-confirmed the 10 years prison sentence on Khalil Al Halwachi who has been behind bars since 2014. Yesterday his daughter, Fatima, delivered a baby who will not be seen by his grandfather. Fatima tweeted: I am grateful for my son who is my Christmas gift. I wish my father could hold my baby. We are happy despite the verdict and will continue to work till he is out... till Bahrain's freedom has been secured.

The case of Hakeem Al Oraibi, the Bahraini athlete who is threatened with deportation by the Thai authorities has created more damage to Alkhalifa than good. Although the Interpol has rescinded

its red alert on him in the first few days after his arrest at Bangkok airport, pressure is mounting to cleanse its operations and prevent authoritarian regimes from exploiting it against their legitimate opponents. Bahrain's dictators have inundated Interpol with requests to arrest genuine political figures who are adamant to replace the tribal rule with democratically-elected political system. AFC (Asian Football Committee) President Sheikh Salman is a member of the Bahraini royal family. Despite numerous entreaties from the global football community for him to speak out on behalf of al-Araibi, he has remained silent. Former Socceroo and SBS football expert Craig Foster told The New Daily the Sheikh was failing in his responsibility to the game and its players. "His obligations are very clear. We would understand if he felt conflicted, but that's his issue. It's not football's and it's certainly not Hakeem's" Foster said. "He has only one obligation as AFC president and that is to urge his own Bahrain government to withdraw their extradition order immediately. He needs to support publicly FIFA's "If through his relationship with the Bahrain government and if because of his history with Hakeem — having been criticised by Hakeem for his alleged role in the Arab spring crackdown — if these things place him in a position of conflict he should step aside."

On 18th December more than 20 native Bahrainis who had been sentenced to death by Alkhalifa regime were attacked by prison torturers, had their hands tied behind their backs and forced to stand for long hours. They were repeatedly told by the torturers that they would soon be executed and they were living their last days. Their personal belongings were confiscated.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
26th December 2018

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## US Senate rebukes Trump on Saudis, Bahrainis mark Martyrs Day

The US Senate delivered a rare double rebuke to President Donald Trump on Saudi Arabia on Thursday 13th December, voting to end US military support for the war in Yemen and blame the Saudi crown prince for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. In a historic move, Senators voted 56-41 to end US military support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen's civil war. The votes were largely symbolic because to become law the resolutions would have to pass the House of Representatives, whose Republican leaders have blocked any legislation intended to rebuke the Saudis. In another symbolic rebuke of Saudi crown prince, the US Senate unanimously adopted a new resolution to hold Mohammed bin Salman accountable for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Last month The CIA concluded that MBS ordered the assassination. Although these decisions may not have immediate impact on the US-Saudi relations, the

Saudis were furious that this assertion had been made. Two years ago they were angered by the Jasta law that allows victims of the 9/11 terrorist attack to seek compensation from the Saudi government.

Nabeel Rajab is being intimidated daily as his appeal court on 30th December approaches. His cell was thoroughly searched twice in a month and his belongings scattered. The torturers attacked him verbally knowing that one day they would be in the docks answering for their crimes. There is worldwide campaign to force Alkhalifa dictator to order Nabeel's immediate and unconditional release especially as the Saudi-led aggression on Yemen which he had criticised has been defeated. Meanwhile 53 NGOs have signed an open letter addressed to Bahrain dictator demanding that Nabeel Rajab be set free and his trumpeted charges dropped. The letter said: We urge Bahraini authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Nabeel Rajab, quash his

convictions and sentences, and drop all charges against him; and undertake a prompt, impartial, independent and effective investigation into his allegations of ill-treatment. The findings of the investigation must be made public and anyone suspected of criminal responsibility must be brought to justice in fair proceedings.

As the predicament of Bahraini athlete, Hakeem Al Oraibi continues, pressure is mounting on the Thai authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally. He has been in detention since his arrival with his wife for their honeymoon last month. His lawyers are demanding that Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton grant him emergency Australian citizenship. Latifa al-Haouli of Sabelberg Morcos Lawyers lodged a request with the Home Affairs Department on December 10, but she is yet to hear back from Mr Dutton. "This request requires emergency government intervention and marks Aus-

## GCC summit in Riyadh a failure; as Alkhalifa intensify repression

The 39th GCC summit which was held on 9th December in the Saudi capital, Riyadh was one of the worst in the history of this regional alliance, in terms of attendance, achievement or the public perception. The sudden downfall of the Saudi moral and political leadership contributed to the lack of media or political enthusiasm to this annual gathering of the heads of the six states comprising the Gulf Cooperation Council. Qatar snubbed the Saudis by sending a junior minister while Sultan Qaboos of Oman did not show up. Since its inception in 1981 the Saudis have endeavoured to make the GCC and its annual summit their political flagship. But their policies in recent years have contributed immensely to its virtual collapse. Three months ago they formed with the UAE rulers a joint coordinating council heralding the beginning of serious fragmentation of the GCC. Last year the leaders of Saudi Arabia, UAE and Bahrain boycotted the summit which was held in the Qatari capital, Doha following the ill-fated decision to ostracize Qatar. It is now widely believed that the GCC's days are numbered and with it the days of the Saudi monarchy. No major policies were issued by the summit which was dominated by the absence of Qatar. Amnesty International issued a statement calling on the GCC leaders to release political prisoners. In the fallout from the Khashoggi murder case, some Saudi activists in the US and Canada have told Channel 4 News they believe they've been actively targeted by Saudi authorities – from new passports denied, to educational funding withheld, to what they perceive as attempts made to lure them back home. They say they fear for their own safety – following the death of Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post

journalist who was murdered in the Saudi embassy in Istanbul. The Crown Prince continues to deny any involvement in the murder. This week CNN exposed evidence contrary to what the Saudis had claimed. There is wide belief that Saudi crown prince, Mohammad bin Salman had given the orders to kill Khashoggi. The world has reacted angrily to the Thai government's decision to arrest a Bahraini athlete on his arrival at Bangkok's airport. Hakim Al Oraibi has been a political refugee in Australia since 2011 following his detention and torture by the Alkhalifa dictators. He was granted refugee status by the Australian authorities who were convinced that he would face a second round of torture should he had been sent back to Bahrain. He has now remanded in custody for 60 days pending further investigation. The Thai authorities have been heavily and widely criticised by the international community for arresting Mr Oraibi and his wife and threatening to send them back to the murderous Alkhalifa regime in Bahrain. The couple had travelled from Australia to Thailand to celebrate their honeymoon. The Australian foreign ministry has intervened and asked the Thai government to allow him to return to Australia. The international football league (FIFA) have also called for Mr Hakim's immediate and unconditional release. Amnesty International issued a statement confirming that "Hakeem Ali al-Araibi is in imminent danger of deportation from Thailand. Despite his status as a recognized refugee in Australia, Thai authorities detained Hakeem while he was travelling there based on an INTERPOL Red Notice. His forcible return to Bahrain would violate international law." It said that if deported to Bahrain, Hakeem faces imprisonment based on his prior unjust conviction

and is in serious danger of torture and/or other ill-treatment. Hakeem has been outspoken about human rights violations in Bahrain since he sought refuge in Australia several years ago. There are demands that he be granted Australian citizenship. The regime's kangaroo courts have continued issuing harsh sentences against native Bahrainis. Last week the total prison sentences of 11 years imposed on Sayed Nazar Al Wadaei were confirmed by those courts. He is the brother-in-law of human rights activist, Sayed Ahmad Al Awadei. Another native, Mohammad Al Khatam who has been campaigning to be employed has been arrested again. Since his release from jail few years ago the regime has "banned" him. This means he cannot be employed locally by any company. He has a large family and cannot feed them. He has repeatedly protested and had been arrested despite the fact that his protest is related to his living conditions.

A jailed prominent activist has started a hunger strike to protest denial of medical care and medicine at Alkhalifa torture chambers. Hesham Al Sabbagh suffered major injuries during torture sessions when he was detained in 2014, including a broken jaw. He had several botched operations but still needs more care and medicines. He is serving 15 years sentence. His blood level has dropped sharply to 3.4 and his general health has also deteriorated. A woman political prisoner, Faten Abdul Hussain, has also been subjected to horrific treatment. The 41 year old mother of four had been detained, tortured and sexually molested for allegedly giving refuge to one of her relatives. There are ten women who are being persecuted by Alkhalifa dictator.

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tralia's stance on protecting legitimate refugees," she said. Thailand would also be in breach of international law if it proceeds with extradition.

Two native Bahrainis are approaching a critical point in their hunger strike protesting their ill-treatment at the hands of Alkhalifa torturers. Naji Fateel, a human rights activist and Ali Hajji have been asking for proper medical health as the regime's torture lieutenants continue to deny them basic health care. Their predicament has become worse after they had smuggled footage from jail about their situation to the outside world. Symptoms of fatigue have recently surfaced and calls were made to them to seek alternative ways of forcing the regime to listen to their grievances. Their health is deteriorating at a faster pace having experienced the worst possible treatment at the hands of foreign occupiers.

Yesterday Maryam Al-

Khawaja was chosen by FrontLine Human Rights Defenders to receive the prize they had been awarded by the United Nations. The UN Prize for Human Rights 2018 has been awarded to several human rights activists: Rebeca Gyumi of Tanzania; Joënia Wapichana of Brazil; FrontLineHRD of Ireland & Asma Jahangir (posthumously) of Pakistan. FrontLine Human Rights Defenders said: "Before Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja was tortured & sentenced to life in prison for demanding justice in Bahrain, he was our MENA Coordinator & friend.

Today we accepted the UN Prize for Human Rights, with Abdulhadi's daughter Maryam Al-Khawaja representing us on the UN stage."

The Martyrs Day (17th December) commemorations this year have taken a step forward in terms of determination and presence in the streets, inside and outside Bahrain. Despite pre-emptive campaign of arrests and intimidation by the Alkhalifa forces, people went ahead with their plans to mark the day in their own styles of demonstrations, visits of the graves of martyrs and solidarity with their families. Similar activities were held in several countries. In London activists organized an exhibition at Marble Arch on Sunday and a seminar and press briefing at Parliament on Monday. The message has remained unchanged; The only way to stop regime's violence and dictatorship is to achieve fundamental political change.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
19th December 2018



## HRW: 'Extradition of Hakeem Al-Araibi would be completely unacceptable'

A Bangkok court on Tuesday 11th December extended by 60 days the detention of a former Bahrain international footballer who is facing possible extradition to his home country. Hakeem Alaraibi says he was arrested and beaten at the start of the Arab Spring protests in Bahrain in 2012. He was granted refugee status in Australia five years later.

The 25-year-old was stopped by Thai immigration on November 27 after arriving in Bangkok for a vacation with his wife and detained upon a request by the Bahraini government. His lawyer, Nadthasiri Bergman, told the AFP news agency on Tuesday that she was optimistic about his chances of avoiding extradition to Bahrain.

"I think he has a good chance not to be extradited because we have evidence" that he will face abuses back in Bahrain, Bergman said. The court denied a bail request after the detention order.

Prior to Tuesday's court decision, Minky Worden of Human Rights Watch spoke to DW about the case.

DW: What do you make of the fact that a court in Thailand could order the extradition of Hakeem Al-Araibi in the coming weeks. Is this acceptable in terms of human rights?

Minky Worden : First of all it would be completely unacceptable to extradite Hakeem Al-Araibi, a football player, who has said that he and his brother were tortured in Bahrain. This is also consistent with Human Rights Watch documentation of the unjust arrest and torture of many of the Arab Spring youth.

He was detained on a red notice (an international alert seeking the arrest of a person wanted by a judicial authority or an international tribunal with a view to his/her extradition), which was not correct because Interpol has a rule that you may not detain asylum seekers or refugees who are fleeing repression or torture.

Is Al-Araibi a refugee in the legal sense of the term?

He would clearly qualify as a refugee. It is very clear that he has been detained for political reasons, on the orders of Bahrain. Because he has already been a whistleblower and acted as a defender of human rights, he is at greater risk should he be returned.

He claims that he fears for his life if he is returned to Bahrain. Are these fears justified?

Yes. He believes if he is returned, he is in danger of being tortured and that his life depends on his being returned to Australia. Human Rights Watch had a telephone conversation with him

from the detention center in Thailand on December 5. He asked Human Rights Watch to continue to speak out about and shed light on his case if he doesn't make it back to Australia. He has also told other human rights monitors that if he is returned (to Bahrain) he may be forced to say certain things, and that these should not be believed.

How credible are Al-Araibi's claims that he has been subjected to torture in the past in Bahrain?

They are completely credible. Human Rights Watch's latest annual report on Bahrain says that the human rights situation there is continuing to deteriorate, that courts convict and imprison peaceful dissenters, human rights defenders, and then they also file charges against their relatives. The case against Hakeem Al-Araibi rests on a confession by his brother, that he believes was obtained by torture.

What is the role of FIFA Vice President Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa, who is also the president of the Asian Football Confederation and a former president of the Bahrain Football Association in this case?

Hakim Al-Araibi came forward and gave interviews with ESPN, the New York Times and others at the time of the FIFA (presidential) election and said that Sheikh Salman had failed to protect players from torture and abuse. So there is good reason to fear that he could be punished. Sheikh Salman is part of the ruling family, the ruling family is seeking to extradite a football player who is a former national team player in Bahrain and is a player in Australia.

Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa ran for FIFA President in 2016

The Football Federation Australia, which is a member of the Asian Football Confederation is now calling on Thailand to return

him (Al-Araibi), so I think things are getting quite desperate.

Shouldn't FIFA be getting involved?

Since 2015, FIFA has put in place an elaborate system of protecting human rights; they have put human rights into Article 3 of their statutes, they set up a human rights policy in June of 2017, and they have a human rights manager, whose job it is to work on such cases. Yet it took almost a week for FIFA to issue a statement calling for the release of this player. HRW's position is that because Sheikh Salman, a FIFA vice president, is involved, there is every reason that FIFA should tell him to call off the case against this kid.

Is there anything about this case that gives you hope that Al-Araibi will be released?

We have worked very hard to put in place the system of human rights protections at FIFA – for just such a case. The question is: what is (FIFA President) Gianni Infantino doing on this, when your vice president could be involved in an illegal extradition. I think it's really an ethics matter for FIFA.

Hakeem Al-Araibi, 25, is a football player who came forward in 2012 claiming that authorities in Bahrain arrested and tortured him, allegedly for his brother's political activities. He fled Bahrain in 2014, escaping to Australia, where he was granted refugee status in 2017. While on vacation with his wife in Thailand last month, he was arrested on an Interpol "red ticket" seeking his extradition to Bahrain.

Minky Worden is director of Global Initiatives at Human Rights Watch, where she oversees the organization's activities on human rights and sports.

*The interview was conducted by Jörg Strohschein.*

