

Bahrain: Terrorising citizens into submission

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Tension is rising as the regime decides to throttle the people to death, denying them the rights of speech, assembly and association. Despite getting along with the regime's political agenda for several years, the political societies were snubbed this week when they announced that they were holding a peaceful demonstration scheduled for this afternoon. The ruling family rejected the request and threatened to kill demonstrators. Two weeks ago Alkhalifa Death Squads fired at demonstrators causing injuries and panic. Their policy is to terrorise the people so that they submit to their will. The situation has become so polarised that Bahrain has entered the final phase of the struggle for change. The situation is likely to escalate from now onward.

The sentencing by the Alkhalifa court yesterday of a child to one year imprisonment has shocked the human conscience and exposed the real nature of this oppressive regime. Ali Hassan is only 11 years of age, yet the regime decided to lock him up for one more year for taking part in a peaceful demonstration. He had already been detained for 25 days before international condemnation forced his release. The latest decision is a clear violation of the most basic of human decency, dignity and human rights.

This tragic development came on the day when another child was summarily hanged by members of the Death Squads, operated by the royal court. He was found dead by his family, hanged in his room shortly after Death Squads had been reported to have attacked houses and ransacked some of them. It has now been confirmed that the dictator, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, has a fully-fledged team of special forces whose aim is to target key figures in the opposition. Among their victims is Salah who was kidnapped, tortured and skinned on the day Formula 1 started the race in Bahrain on 21 April 2012. They are also responsible for kidnapping, torturing to death Yousuf Mawali earlier this year. His body was then dumped on seaside while the regime claimed that he had drowned. Post-mortem carried out by a special Turkish doctor confirmed that he had received electric torture before his death.

At the World Conference on Human Rights, the American delegation on 3 July delivered a statement outlining US policy in the world. The statement said that the Bahrainis Government "needs to hold accountable officials responsible for human rights violations, including deaths in custody resulting from torture, to drop charges against all persons accused of crimes based on their political expression, and to ensure fair and expeditious trials in appeals cases, such as those of the medical professionals. The Government of Bahrain also needs to prevent the use of excessive force by the police and to diversify police forces to reflect the communities in which they serve. We also urge the Government to respect its citizens' rights to free expression, free association and free assembly, and to facilitate access to Bahrain for journalists and civil society organizations."

Another victim of state terrorism is Abdulla Zain, a young Bahraini citizen who was kidnapped earlier this week. He was taken to a horse stable at Budayya Road, severely tortured and then dumped at a remote area. Meanwhile Ali Mawali who was shot two weeks ago at a peaceful demonstration is still fighting for his life as doctors struggle to get him out of coma. He was targeted as he tried to defend a senior political figure at a demonstration on Friday 22 June.

Collective punishment has continued unabated. Death squads are roaming the streets, attacking Bahrainis, targeting their homes, ransacking their contents and arresting citizens. The towns of Jid Ali, Duraz, Sitra, Samaheej and other places were savaged by regime's brutality. Many citizens were arrested from their homes in the past few days.

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