



Jafaar Al Hasabi (Bahraini, tortured in Bahrain)

“My concern is that the torturers are getting away from justice. The time which it takes to get any form of justice is so long, and there is a lot of procrastination. What is happening [things like the Torture (Damages) Bill] are good insofar as they concern guilty people, but the punishment is so soft that the guilty don't care about it, and because it takes so long as well. I think it would bring justice to the victim to see their attackers punished. If these matters were treated more seriously it would help to prevent other torture taking place.”

Jafaar's Story

“In 1994 I was a computer technician with my own business. I was politically active against the Sunni government, printing small booklets and distributing them to people through the mosque. This was illegal in Bahrain.

“They called me in to the Al-Q ala'a to be interrogated. Oh my god you can't believe it. For two hours one guard is slapping, one is kicking, one is punching me. I fall down twice but I am picked up. They say if you don't confess we will put you in a water tank with a stone on your leg and nobody would know. I knew that anyone who went into that place might never come out again.

“They released me after three days and put a spy on me. We carried on publishing. After three months they knew who was in our group and I knew I had to leave. I got some clothes and my uncle took me to the airport. Thank god they did not put my name on the border. They took more than seven of our group, put them in jail and tortured them very badly.

“Ten years later when I see a police man I still shake. The torturers are still there. The king has given them immunity. Nobody can touch them.

“I will continue to be politically active until my people are free from this dictatorial regime. Here we are free. We can do what we want and practice what we want – this is human. If you are repressed you are not human. You work, maybe you have a family but you don't feel human. Because we are here and we can do whatever we want, we must give light to the people who live in the dark.”

Taken from: REDRESS, Torture: Stories of Survival' (June 2005)