**NOVEMBER 09, 2011**

**Press Statement: For Immediate Release**

**BPA: Journalist and Blogger Jaffer Al Alawi Arrested**

**-          It is part of the on-going media professionals intimidation in Bahrain**

**LONDON, November 9, 2011 – Bahrain Press Association ("BPA"), the London-based association concerned with defending and addressing issues related to Bahrain media and press people, condemns the arrest of the ex-anchor who was arbitrarily dismissed from his post in the state-run and only television channel in the country, Mr. Jaffer Al Alawi (27 years old) from his house in the village of Boori located to the south of the capital city of Manama.**

**On November 8, 2011, armed security forces surrounded the house of Mr. Al Alawi, the leader of the Youth Cultural Programme "Taa Al Shabab", which is a programme run by the Bahraini ministry of culture. The house raiding came as a result of the security forces quelling a protest in the neighborhood. Soon after that, Mr. Al Alawi was summoned a notice by Hamad Town police station for interrogation. The arrest was later confirmed with Mr. Al Alawi calling his family from the ministry of interior headquarters (known as "The Castle" or in Arabic "Al Qala'ah').**

**The BPA is very much concerned with the health of Mr. Al Alawi and demands his immediate releae. This arrest forms part of an organized crackdown led by the regime against Bahraini journalists, photographers, bloggers, and other media professionals. The crackdown has thus far claimed the lives of two media professionals namely Mr. Kareem Fakhrawi and Zakaria Al Asheeri who were murdered while in police detention amid the declaration of the state of national security (martial laws) back in March. The brutal crackdown was coupled with the mass arrests and dismissals of media professionals who were subjected to severe torture inside detention houses at the hands of the notorious department of the national security and ministry of interior personnel.**

**The BPA is hereby calling upon the International Federation of Journalists ("IFJ"); Reporters Without Boarders ("RSF"); the Committee to Protect Journalists ("CPJ") along with all regional and international organizations and associations concerned with defending human rights and the freedom of press and publication to intervene at once to stop the crackdown against media professionals in Bahrain. Such media professional inside Bahrain are severely intimidated by regime bodies. Added to this, tens of media professionals, who were arbitrarily dismissed, are deprived of their livelihood due to the refusal of the public and other pro-regime media outlets to reinstate them to their jobs. The ministry of interior has not yet announced the investigation results that was promised by the minister himself in the torturing faced by media professional Nazeeha Saeed in the Riffa police station while she had been interrogated. Furthermore, bloggers Dr. Abduljaleel Al Sangeece and Ali Abdulemam were severely sentenced to life imprisonment and 15-year imprisonment, respectively, in a trial labeled by the UN as "Unfair Trials".**

**The Bahrain public prosecution has withdrawn the records of the criminal lawsuits filed against some journalists, photographers, and bloggers before the Bahraini criminal courts and the national security court, a special tribunal formed to look into cases related to the martial laws period. Retrial of the lawsuits to such withdrawn records remains unknown.**

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