

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



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The Way to Democracy

Democracy is considered to be the best form of government, but it is also the most difficult to attain. History shows that though democratic system of government was formed in many countries, it failed in several of them and ultimately turned into something close to dictatorship. Therefore, it is important to comprehend that there are certain conditions that must be achieved and maintained by the societies to acquire true democracy.

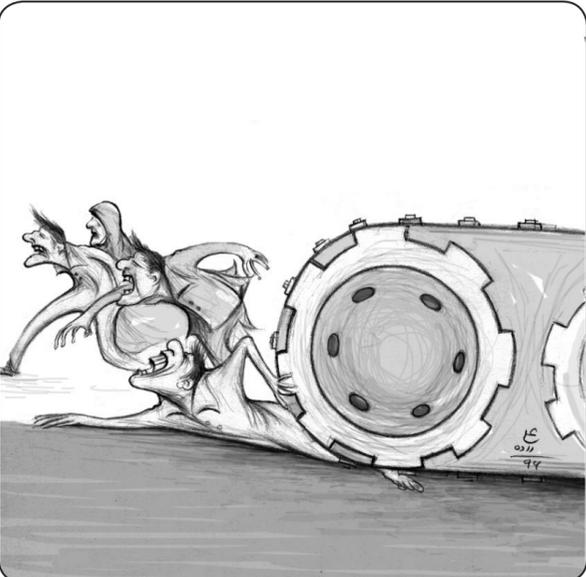
Enlightened citizens are the most important prerequisite for democracy. In fact, democracy and enlightened citizenship go together. In democracy, the citizens must be alert and enlightened or properly educated. They should be motivated and aware enough to participate actively in public affairs. They should be ready to stand firm for their rights and resist any infringement on their freedom. Simultaneously, they should pursue their duties honestly. They should consider their selfish interests secondary to national or collective interests. They must be helpful, unselfish and nationalistic.

Closely linked to active citizenship is the character and capability of the common masses. It is basically the character, attitudes and behavior of the common men that take democracy towards a success or a failure. In democracy, common men must be sufficiently interested in public affairs and must comprehend them. They must not be won over by emotions. Then again, their opinion, to a certain extent, should be based on sound practical ruling, broad-mindedness and unselfish devotion to public welfare. They should actively participate in the affairs of the government of his country. A democratic government is well-maintained through active criticism. Therefore, every citizen must be ready to protest and criticize the injustice and tyranny of the government, for democracy thrives when the people are eloquent; it breathes its last when they are dumb and voiceless. Furthermore, the people should be ready to fulfil their functions in minor spheres of life with eagerness, honesty and skill. Every man should be keenly interested in the welfare and happiness of his fellow-men and ready to help overcome the difficulties. In other words, civic sense is a necessary condition for the success of democracy.

It has been justly believed that the price of democracy is eternal vigilance. A democratic society demands much from its citizens. The people should be alert, vigilant and active in order to preserve their democratic institutions and enjoy their rights and liberty. When the people are indifferent, inactive and indolent in public matters, crafty politicians, clever demagogues, rich plutocrats and such other enterprising persons capture political power and abuse it for their selfish ends. Along with vigilance and intelligence, democracy needs a spirit of tolerance and a sense of responsibility among all its citizens. Tolerance and the spirit of give and take are essential for democracy. Democracy is necessarily a rule of the majority. But if the minority party or parties are irreconcilably opposed to the laws and policy laid down by the ruling majority, democracy would fail to work; hence the need for tolerance or a spirit of give and take. It relies on the methods of peaceful persuasion. It presumes an agreement on fundamentals acceptable to all citizens, whether they belong to the majority or minority parties. They may agree to disagree but not to disunite. Democracy is in daily practice the acceptance by the minority of the majority rule.

Education is indeed the first requisite for the success of democracy. Education is necessary to make common citizens good, intelligent, honest, active, responsible, public-spirited, tolerant and vigilant of their rights and duties. Education, at least, up to secondary level should be free, universal and compulsory and should be such as to equip the citizens for the performance of their civic duties and responsibilities. Democracies demand not only the passive consent of the citizen but also his active and constant participation and cooperation which should be the end of a democratic educational system. It must make him thoughtful, intelligent and critical person who would be bold enough to criticize the government, tolerant of the views of his opponents and honest enough not to abuse public office for selfish ends. Democracy requires organization and leadership. Indeed, the problem of organization and leadership is more urgent for democracy than for other forms of government; firstly, because modern democracies are vast and complex societies, and, secondly because democracy is inherently a government by and for common men and women. Ordinarily, common citizens are neither adequately educated nor sufficiently interested in public affairs and problems. They also do not have enough time or leisure to devote themselves to public matters. Hence the need is to inform and educate them, to arouse their interest and to organize them for public action. This important task is performed by political leadership. In order to fulfil this task, the leaders must themselves be honest, intelligent and public-spirited. They must be men of initiative, imagination and courage who can see and foresee the needs of the people and problems of their country.

Moreover, they must dwell among the people in order to understand their needs and difficulties. They must also be self-reliant, honest and responsible persons. Keeping in consideration the above requisites, Afghan authorities and people must work for democracy in the country as without acquiring them, it would be really impossible to attain true democracy or even to dream about it.



Radicalism's Outcome and Mechanism

By Mohammad Jawad Sorosh

Radicalism contemporary to the emergence of terrorism in twenty-first century, and the escalated violence have changed into a serious dilemma at international level and world's political relations. Terrorism and radical activities are highly menacing rather than being declined with the passage of time. The emergence of the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Middle East turned to global threat transcending the international borders. Although ISIL is losing its territory in the Middle East, it is feared that this group will extend its reach in the region through attracting the allegiance and financial aid of its intra-national allies. Afghanistan is also prone to religious radicalism and people fear ISIL's firm foothold in this country after losing ground in the Middle East.

Afghanistan is beset by terrorism for several decades and considered one of the major victims in the world.

The emergence of the ISIL group besides the Taliban in Afghanistan is a matter of great concern and triggered a sense of anxiety within political and cultural circles. Considering its practices in the Middle East, ISIL has nothing in common with Afghanistan's culture or national values. In spite of this fact, its recruitment in some parts of the country and a spate of attacks carried out by this group on Enlightenment Movement, Achin district of Nangarhar, people's houses in Logar province, Baqir-ul-Ulum Mosque, Sakhi Shrine, Al-Zahra Mosque, and Jawadiah Mosque in Herat reflect ISIL's presence in the country.

However, the government's role in curbing the escalated radicalism in the country is a cause for greater concern. The question is that how the government will be able to pave the ground for co-existence and prevent from religious radicalism? Bringing changes in religious perception will be one of the remedies. Mobilizing religious scholars and preachers for preaching the true spirit of Islam, prosecuting the perpetrators, supporters and stimulators of terrorist activities via security institutions, bringing change in the content of religious chapters taught in universities, monitoring the sermons of mullahs in Friday's prayers and mosques for tackling the threats posed by radicalism will be preventive measures against the extension of radical mindset and terror.

It is believed that only military mechanism for combating religious radicalism and putting military pressure on terrorist networks such as the Taliban and ISIL group will not be effective enough. The root causes of radicalism and fundamentalism

should be pondered upon and main grounds and hotbeds must be targeted. Educational institutions – be it universities or religious centers – will have to preach promoting moderation and combating terrorist groups, mainly regarding their recruitment and spreading radicalism, in terrorist-dominated areas.

It is further believed that the youths and teenagers will be able to realize the wrong path of radical mindsets preached by terrorist groups through media or any other means if they are taught the true knowledge which will promote their insight. Subsequently, this will impede their success in recruitment. Terrorist groups seek to target uneducated or less educated individuals in their recruiting process. Therefore, the under-aged people are highly vulnerable to this issue and easily fall for the bogus claim and wrong preaches of terrorists.

Hence, they exploit the naïve teenagers and use them as a vehicle for their political aims. For example, a number of teenagers are taught in Pakistan's seminaries by the Taliban who implement wrong ideology in their minds under the mask of religious teachings and train them militarily.

Religious scholars are responsible to preach in their Friday's sermons that religion in general and Islam in particular will not encourage horror and terror and the practices of terrorist networks are against religion. It should be noted that divine religions are the messengers of peace and tranquility and the main reason behind jihad in Islam is to adopt preventive measures and invite to peace. None of divine religions, including Islam, have recommended the issues being exercised in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, etc. Exploiting religious symbols by terrorist groups in Islamic territory is a great tragedy.

What compounds the public anxiety is that the approach of religious scholars within the past decade and half and their campaign against terrorist groups have not been serious enough. The pregnant silence of some religious scholars in condemning the practices of terrorist groups have emboldened them more than ever before. The emergence of radical slogans from the most significant educational centers such as universities, raising voice in supporting and justifying the Taliban's acts under the legitimate government, flagrant support from the Taliban via some media under the term of freedom of speech have aggravated the continuation of death and horror.

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The Gulf Crisis: Qatar's 2022 World Cup Moves into the Firing Line

By James M. Dorsey

A French investigation into possible corruption in business deals related to Qatar's winning of World Cup hosting rights moved the 2022 tournament a step closer to becoming enmeshed in the two-month-old Gulf crisis.

Taken together with the almost simultaneous announcement of the milestone transfer to Qatar-owned French club Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) of Brazilian star Neymar, the two events highlight Qatar's perennial difficulty in capitalizing on its massive investment in sports as part of its public diplomacy and soft power strategy. The investigation casts a shadow on Mr. Neymar's transfer from FC Barcelona at a record-breaking cost of \$260 million as a demonstration of Qatar's ability to resist the two-month old UAE-Saudi-led diplomatic and economic boycott of the Gulf state; move ahead with its infrastructure plans, including World Cup-related projects; and continue to heavily invest in a multi-pronged soft power ploy of which sports is a key pillar.

The investigation links former French president Nicolas Sarkozy to millions of euros involved in business deals that were allegedly part of a three-way deal to ensure French support for Qatar's World Cup bid as well as the vote of one-time French star Michel Platini, who headed European soccer body UEFA and was a member of FIFA's executive committee before being banned from involvement in soccer on corruption charges.

Qatar's successful World Cup bid has been mired in controversy from day one. Allegations of wrongdoing in the bid, enhanced by FIFA's multiple corruption scandals that have rocked the world body for the past seven years, and criticism of the Gulf state's controversial labour regime that have been revived by the Gulf crisis, meshed with Eurocentric assertions. Eurocentric critics charged that Qatar did not deserve to host the World Cup because it was too small, boasted temperatures not conducive to performance, and had no soccer legacy. The criticism of Qatar, although never convincingly countered by the Gulf state, had largely faded into the background until June when a UAE-Saudi-led diplomatic and economic boycott of Qatar raised questions of Qatar's ability to move ahead with preparations for the tournament. The questions were fuelled by feeble attempts by Qatar's detractors to revive the criticism and suggest that it should be deprived of its hosting rights.

Qatar, while denying any wrongdoing in its bid, has taken several steps to counter criticism of its controversial kafala or labour sponsorship regime, including becoming the only Gulf state to engage with its critics, and legal reforms that were welcomed by human rights groups and trade unions, but deemed not far-reaching enough. Qatar faces a crucial hearing in November by the International Labour Organization (ILO) that will serve as barometer of the Gulf state's response to the criticism of the living and working conditions of migrant workers, who constitute the majority of its population. The ILO's conclusion is likely to take on added significance against the backdrop of the Gulf crisis. Human rights groups have argued that the crisis offers Qatar an opportunity to secure a moral high ground by abolishing rather than reforming the kafala system.

Qatar, in a move designed to reassure expatriates and project itself as being in the forefront of labour reform, said earlier this month that it would offer permanent residence to a select group of expatriates. The offer that does not apply to the vast majority of migrant

workers is unlikely to deflect the criticism.

Alongside the looming revival of attention on labour, the French investigation revives the focus on the integrity of the Qatari World Cup bid that already is the subject of a Swiss enquiry and looms large on the background of the indictment on corruption charges in the United States of numerous FIFA officials.

France's interference in the FIFA vote on the Qatari World Cup bid was documented in a lengthy expose in French soccer magazine France Football. The magazine detailed a meeting engineered by then president Sarkozy in 2010 between Mr. Platini, then Qatari crown prince and current emir Sheikh Tamim bin Haman Al-Thani, and a representative of PSG. The three-way deal cut at that meeting allegedly involved Mr. Platini agreeing to vote for the Qatari bid in exchange for Qatar acquiring the French club, creating a French sports television channel, and investing in France.

Britain's The Daily Telegraph reported that French investigators were examining whether Mr. Sarkozy may have received funds from deals linked to the 2010 meeting, including the sale to Qatar of a five percent stake in French water management company Veolia as well as the purchase in 2010 of PSG by Oryx Qatar Sports Investments, believed to be a Qatari government investment vehicle. The British paper, quoting French sources, reported that €182 million "may have been siphoned off the side lines" of the deals and also used for payments to World Cup officials. A spokeswoman for the National Financial Prosecutor's Office in Paris said they were "carrying out two separate preliminary inquiries" into Veolia and the World Cup bid. She said there was no established link between the two inquiries and Mr. Sarkozy was not "formally and personally targeted at this stage."

The investigation coupled with the revival of the labour issue and the looming ILO hearing moves Qatar's hosting of the 2022 World Cup into the firing line in the Gulf crisis. Qatar was so far able to deflect concern that the crisis would affect its ability to host the tournament because it would take place 5.5 years from now by which time the crisis would have long been resolved, and that it was able to move ahead with preparations despite a rise in the cost of construction materials because of the UAE-Saudi-led boycott. The French investigation and the labour issue, however, opens opportunity for a new line of attack.

Perhaps, a silver lining for Qatar in the looming battle over its World Cup hosting rights is the fact that this line of attack, like much else in the Gulf crisis, would have a pot-blames-the-kettle character. Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other Gulf states have labour regimes like that of Qatar.

US intelligence officials have asserted that the UAE engineered the Gulf crisis by orchestrating the hacking of a Qatari government website that created the excuse of the boycott of the Gulf state. Much of the sabre-rattling in the Gulf crisis focuses on influencing policymakers and international public opinion with efforts to resolve the crisis stalemated and the international community unwilling to support the anti-Qatar alliance's demands that target the Gulf state's sovereignty and ability to chart its own independent course. The emergence of the World Cup as a new battleground offers Qatar an opportunity to grab the bull by the horns. It's an opportunity Qatar has so far availed itself only half-heartedly.

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