



## Democracy is the Root Cause of Corruption

In a declined society hit by crisis after crisis, the first signs of revival are caused by the crisis itself. What the crisis does is shake the society into thinking about what went wrong. Although this thinking process is spread across the whole of society, it is generally more refined among the intellectual circles and thought leaders. Societies can turn crisis into opportunities but the prerequisite is correct diagnosis of the problem and correct thinking.

And that is the problem surrounding the discussion about the Panama Papers leaks.

The disgusting and abhorring fight we are witnessing among Pakistan's political parties has its roots in the wrong diagnosis of the problem, which we face as a society - that politics is about the individuals, and financial corruption is an individualistic phenomenon. The opposition and government agree on this diagnosis. Therefore each is trying to discredit the leadership of the other through accusations and slurs in a race to the bottom of morality and ethics.

The Panama Papers have revealed a massive trove of information which indicates that corruption is a global phenomenon. Any discussion about the Panama Papers thus cannot and should not be divorced from this global trend. That corruption is a global phenomenon indicates that it is systematic and not individualistic. Therefore targeting individuals and presenting them as a problem will never solve the issue of corruption. At best it will get rid of one corrupt individual to be replaced by the other. And the cycle will continue as long as the diagnosis is not corrected.

The root cause of corruption is democracy, or man's right to make laws. Panama Papers is perhaps the biggest proof of this. There can be no rule of law in democracy, because the law keeps on changing. The financial and business elites around the globe enter politics because they want to either make laws themselves or influence the process of legislation. Pakistan's Prime Minister boasts of his business background, PTI's central leadership constitutes of businessmen who are billionaires, David Cameron's father had business interests, Russia and China's presidents had business associates who were mentioned in the Panama leaks. These elites want low taxes, state subsidies, legal routes to transfer money abroad, government building infrastructure which suits their business interests. Can there be a more easy way to make money if you get laws made which make you rich?

Islam gets rid of the problem of corruption by not just penalizing corrupt individuals but by taking the right to make laws out of the hands of human beings. In the Islamic Khilafah State (Caliphate), law derived from Quran and Sunnah is implemented which has detailed rules related to economic and financial transactions being done in a society. Thus no one can amass massive wealth by bending laws for laws are not allowed to be bent.

Crisis can be a blessing but only if we invest in them properly. We need to address the root cause of corruption. Abolish Democracy, Establish Khilafah.

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