

The Iraqi Protest Bloodbath: When Will We Realise that the Democratic Experiment Doesn't Work?

News:

On October 7, the media reported that the death toll from recent ant-government protests in Iraq, according to the Iraqi Interior Ministry, had reached 109, with over 6000 wounded in less than a week. However, doctors commented that the government was understating the true fatalities. Protesters, numbering in their thousands, have been demanding the fall of the regime due to the huge scale of political corruption in the country, as well as the dire state of the economy, marked by mass unemployment, a crippling level of poverty and abysmal state of public services. Youth unemployment alone, for example, has reached 25% according to the World Bank, and over 300,000 graduates are thought to be unemployed. Despite Iraq enjoying monthly oil revenues of over \$6 billion, pervasive government corruption, and the appalling scale of mismanagement of the economy by successive Iraqi leaderships, has resulted in very little building of schools, hospitals or the general infrastructure of the country, as well as a chronic shortage of electricity and even water in some cities. Security forces responded to the protests by firing tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition at the demonstrators. The government also imposed an internet ban in the state.

Comment:

We have seen the political and economic quagmire afflicting Iraq played out in Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Algeria and land after land in the Muslim world. So when will we realise that the foreign, western-inspired, 'Democratic' system imposed upon our lands is defunct and not fit for purpose? The only thing that the Democratic System offers is a graveyard of broken promises and shattered hopes and dreams. And the only thing that it provides is more of the same – more corruption, more poverty, more insecurity, more unemployment, more backwardness, more oppression! For how much longer will we bear the humiliation of being thrown crumbs of reform from our political leaders hoping to create the impression of change to stem public anger and buy more time for their stint in power, while such reforms achieve nothing for the people, except further desperation and despair? For how much longer are we going to accept the façade of free and open elections of our leaders, which in truth are simply a method to install the next western-serving ruler into power in our Muslim lands who will fulfil their interests at the expense of the needs of the people? And for how much longer are we going to repeat this cycle of failure by putting our hopes in this this flawed democratic system before we realise that this political model will only ever work for the ruling and wealthy elite, enabling them to pillage the wealth of the people, amass their private assets and enjoy lavish lifestyles, while the ordinary masses suffer?

Some argue that if we do 'Democracy' better, in a different way, with a different leader then prosperity, justice and progress will be ours. But what they fail to realise is

that any man-made system of legislation is inherently flawed and will inevitably fail, regardless of the intelligence, sincerity, and integrity of the leadership. This is because the human being by nature is weak and limited in their knowledge of how to organize the affairs of humankind in a just and harmonious way, and will be inclined to make laws to benefit his own interests. Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi's government of technocrats came into power a year ago, promising an end to the corruption and wealth gap between the elite and ordinary people. However, once again, as with all his western-installed predecessors, he followed their legacy of failure. In fact, he cut deals with these same political elite who put him into power, unwilling to push back against them, fearing the loss of their support. Indeed, in the world's oldest democracies, such as Britain, the scale of rising poverty, homelessness, reliance on foodbanks, wealth inequality, unemployment and violent crime – highlights once again the failure of this system and the inability of human beings to govern a society in a manner where the needs and rights of all are met. It is hardly surprising then, that so many in the west have become disillusioned with their politicians and political system.

The idea therefore, that 'Democracy' is the silver bullet to prosperity, justice and progress is nothing but a hoax and a mirage! It's nothing but a lie and deception to lull the people into a false sense of hope for change, while in reality maintaining the status quo. Surely its blatantly clear that providing the people the right to elect their leaders and representatives, while the system remains a hole-ridden sinking ship, will never solve the political, economic and social problems of the Muslim world.

Prime Minister Mahdi stated in response to the protests that there was no "magic solution" to Iraq's problems. This is true. However, what there is, is a realistic, credible, time-tested divinely ordained solution to Iraq's problems as well as all our Muslim lands. It is a solution that made the land of Iraq a flourishing, just and prosperous civilization that was the centre of learning of the world and a global leader in innovation, development, scientific progress and healthcare. This was the Khilafah (Creator) based upon the method of the Prophethood, the System of Allah (swt), the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. It was an Islamic leadership based on accountability and guardianship and fair distribution of wealth, rather than one that robbed the people of their wealth and served the interests of foreign powers. So if we want to see real change in our lands, we need to break this cycle of failure by discarding democracy, and instead embracing the system defined by our Rabb and Creator (swt), Who alone has the knowledge of the path to success. Allah (swt) says,

﴿إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“The response of the believers, when they are invited to Allah and His Messenger that he may judge between them is only to say: We hear and we obey; and these it is that are successful.” [24:51]

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