

Headlines:

- **Islam considers Election Boycotters to be Sinners: Dar al-Ifta**
- **Saudi Arabia claims Anti-Corruption Purge Recouped \$100bn**
- **Taliban Threaten 70% of Afghanistan, BBC finds**

Details:

Islam considers Election Boycotters to be Sinners: Dar al-Ifta

The highly-ranking Egyptian Muslim institution Dar al-Ifta Al-Misriyyah issued a Fatwa [ruling on an Islamic law] on Monday that any citizen who refrains from voting during any election is considered a “sinner” who is acting “dishonestly.” Dar al-Ifta is assigned to draw upon the Quranic scripture and prophets’ teachings, and has consulted jurists throughout history to help Muslims live their lives according to the principles of Islam. On those refraining from casting votes in elections, the authority highlighted that Islam ordered Muslims to be honest and to follow ‘Shura’ principle: Which means democracy is considered a necessity in Islam, in order to raise well-educated generations. Therefore, it said, every Muslim should cast his vote to choose his or her rulers. The upcoming presidential election in Egypt that is scheduled to be held March. Currently, only two candidates are expected to be running: Current President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and the Chair of Ghad Party, Moussa Mustafa Moussa, who submitted his official papers minutes before Monday’s candidates’ deadline. [Source: Egypt Independent]

Dar al-Ifta Al-Misriyyah has issued a fatwa to make what is a clear haram halal. It is well known that voting for parties that stand for non-Islamic principles and participating in a ruling system (be it democracy, dictatorship, monarchy), which makes man the legislator is haram. The command to rule is exclusive to what Allah has revealed: ﴿وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ﴾ “And so judge between them by what Allah has revealed.” [TMQ 5:49]. There is a stark warning against ruling by other than what Allah has revealed: ﴿وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ﴾ “...and follow not their vain desires” [TMQ 5:49]. Also Allah (swt) warns against compromising on any detail of Sharee’ah, no matter how small: ﴿وَاحْذَرُوا أَن يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ﴾ “...but beware of them lest they turn you far away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you.” [TMQ: 5:49] Hence, it is not allowed to participate or vote in a system that places man at the center of legislation.

Saudi Arabia Claims Anti-Corruption Purge Recouped \$100bn

Saudi Arabia claims to have recouped more than \$100bn (£70bn) through its anti-corruption purge and jailed up to 56 high-profile royal family members and businessmen who refused to surrender their wealth in return for freedom. On Tuesday morning, the attorney general, Sheikh Saud al-Mojeb, announced the end of a three-month investigation that ensnared some of the kingdom’s best-known figures, who were alleged to have siphoned off billions from state revenues. He said 400bn riyals had been forfeited by as many as 325 people detained in the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Riyadh, where their personal finances were examined by forensic accountants. The figure, which is impossible to verify, included the value of real estate, business, cash, shares and other assets that many of those detained

had signed over during negotiations with the state. It is more than double estimates made by senior Saudi officials in the early days of the operation, which was ordered by King Salman and launched by his son and heir, Mohammed bin Salman, the crown prince. The saga has shaken the establishment of the conservative kingdom, removing protections from powerful figures who had long benefited from systemic corruption that riddled business dealings and all levels of governance for decades. Alwaleed bin Talal, one of the world's richest men, was released from detention at the weekend after coming to an agreement with state officials. In an interview with Reuters before his release from a hotel suite purported to have been his home for the past three months, the prominent investor in Newscorp, Apple and Twitter described the situation as a "misunderstanding" and denied allegations of corruption. His detention, and that of others including the former head of the Saudi royal court, Khaled al-Tuwaijri, has sorely tested alliances between the ruling Saud family and other powerful clans, who have collectively stewarded the modern kingdom for decades. [Source: The Guardian]

The type of anti-corruption crusade followed by Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) is no different to the extortion and racketeering followed by the mafia. MBS is going after the corrupt wealth of his peers, while his own ill-gotten wealth is immune from prying eyes of the so-called corruption committee. This duplicity will only destabilize MBS's rule, as ordinary Saudi's seek to hide their wealth from the government.

Taliban Threaten 70% of Afghanistan, BBC finds

Taliban fighters, whom US-led forces spent billions of dollars trying to defeat, are now openly active in 70% of Afghanistan, a BBC study has found. Months of research across the country show how areas the Taliban threaten or control have surged since foreign combat troops left in 2014. The Afghan government played down the report, saying it controls most areas. But recent attacks claimed by Taliban and Islamic State militants have killed scores in Kabul and elsewhere. Afghan officials and US President Donald Trump responded by ruling out any talks with the Taliban. Last year Mr Trump announced the US military would stay in the country indefinitely. A network of BBC reporters across Afghanistan spoke to more than 1,200 individual local sources, in every one of the country's 399 districts, to build up a comprehensive picture of all militant attacks over that period. These conversations happened either in person or by telephone and all information was checked with at least two and often as many as six other sources. In some cases BBC reporters even went to local bus stations to find people travelling in from remote and inaccessible districts in order to double check the situation there. The results show that about 15 million people - half the population - are living in areas that are either controlled by the Taliban or where the Taliban are openly present and regularly mount attacks. The BBC study shows the Taliban are now in full control of 14 districts (that's 4% of the country) and have an active and open physical presence in a further 263 (66%), significantly higher than previous estimates of Taliban strength. In the areas defined as having an active and open Taliban presence, the militants conduct frequent attacks against Afghan government positions. These range from large organised group strikes on military bases to sporadic single attacks and ambushes against military convoys and police checkpoints. [Source: The BBC]

The US and its allies have for several years tried to suppress the true picture about their defeat in Afghanistan. The frequent attacks in the heart of Kabul bear testimony that the US has more or less lost control, and her occupation is looking ominously grave.