



## **Aljazeera's Hypocrisy Exposed**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Has Qatar-based Aljazeera finally been unmasked as nothing but a shill for the oil-rich emirate's absolute rulers?**

The Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Thani, recently approved the first semi-democratic elections for the country's parliament (the Shura Council), which are to be held in October 2021. In the past, the emir himself has appointed the 45 Council members. He is now ready to allow the popular election of 30 of them, though he is retaining the power to appoint the remaining 15.

Ostensibly, this is a positive step toward democracy in the autocratic emirate of Qatar. Yet many have argued that these reforms are intended for Western consumption ahead of the soccer World Cup, which is to be held in Qatar next year.

As a criterion for participation in the planned elections, it was determined that anyone whose original citizenship is Qatari and who has reached the age of 18 will have the right to vote. Those who have received Qatari citizenship, meaning individuals who have been naturalized and are not originally Qatari, will not be eligible to participate.

According to Article 1 of the Qatari Nationality Law, original Qataris are those who settled in the emirate before 1930. As such, it effectively divides Qataris into first- and second-class citizens. This provision is especially discriminatory against the Mora tribe, one of Qatar's largest, which only recently regained its citizenship after it was stripped for having supported the current Emir's grandfather when he was deposed by his son in 1995.

Small wonder, then, that the Nationality Law has infuriated the people, who have taken to the streets in protest. The demonstrations have resulted in many

arrests. This is the first time such demonstrations have been seen in the Persian Gulf in many years.

During the “Arab Spring,” the Qatari cable news network Aljazeera incited people across the Arab world to rise up against their regimes, from Egypt to Libya to Syria to Yemen. The network urged the Arab masses to take to the streets and unseat leaderships in the name of democracy, individual rights, and freedom.

For over a decade, Aljazeera fomented Arab civil disobedience and restiveness in the name of human rights and democracy. But today, it is refusing to report on protests that are taking place two minutes from its own studios. The network is completely silent on the Qatar protests, offering no coverage of them at all. Arab social networks are coming out loud and clear against Qatar and the lack of coverage of the events taking place there. Aljazeera reports on the entire Arab world, but when demonstrations reach its own backyard, it remains conspicuously silent, revealing its blatant hypocrisy.

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