



Divide Between Government And People Deepening In Iran

Monday, 07/03/2023 3 minutes

Author: Iran International Newsroom

[Iran](#) [Politics](#) [Iran Protests](#)



An Iranian sociologist who was an adviser to reformist President Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005), says Iranians perceive the current power structure as an alien entity.

"When the government is perceived as a stranger, the society cannot tolerate its shortcomings." **Hossein Valeh said in an interview with Roiuydad24** on Saturday. The government has lost trust because of its aversion to being inclusive, he added.

What is worse is that "The regime has widened the gap between itself and the nation instead of trying to fill it." It has become less attentive to popular

demands.

Pervasive political instability in Iran began in 2017, when after years of deteriorating relations with the West and international sanctions, the economy became stagnant. Anti-regime protests that started in December of that year in fact never stopped and in September 2022 millions of disenchanted people came out into the streets nationwide, posing the most serious challenge to the clerical regime in four decades.

Valeh, a former diplomat and a current assistant professor at the Department of Philosophy of the Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, also told Rouiydad24: "Generally, when there is a divide between the government and the nation, the country becomes polarized."

Iranian sociologist Hossein Valeh

"In such a situation, no one hears the voice of truth and instead, everyone will listen to those who reduce the other side to the level of an enemy," Valeh said, adding that each side perceives any positive news about itself as a fact and any negative statement as a lie without bothering to establish the truth."

The sociologist maintained: "The gap between the government and the nation is currently deep and wide. As a result, we tend to believe any fake news which supports our point of view or rules out the other side's opinion." He added: Maciavelli has taken over our collective unconscious."

Under these circumstances expectations from the government will rise. The people will minimize its achievements and maximize its shortcomings in their

perceptions.

He explained that there are accumulated divides in Iran based on religious versus non-religious, traditional versus modern and liberal versus despotic dichotomies. Valeh added that since the 18th century, these accumulated dichotomies have been the driving force of political developments while also creating social conflicts.

The people's distrust of the government will increase the cost of governance and make progress difficult. It will eventually erode the government's legitimacy altogether. Meanwhile, in the absence of public trust, the government cannot make up for its inefficiency.

Particularly dangerous is the divide between the very young generation and the aging clerics supported by the Revolutionary Guard who try to keep the society within the bounds of their isolationist religious ideology.

Along the same line, highlighting the divide between the state and the nation, **former government spokesman Ali Rabiei wrote** in Etemad Online that it appears there is a tendency in the government to oppose people's happiness. "Regrettably the government has forgotten the events that took place during the protests in the fall of 2022, and that is dangerous.

He pointed out that the government tends to ignore all the explanations and reasons that have been highlighted for last year's events, and it does not understand the people's concerns about the present and the future. The result, he said, is an unhappy and frustrated society.

Rabiei added: "The political depression reveals itself as lack of interest in political participation within the system and a tendency to protest."

Iran Protests