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### A Nation Wrought With Pain

Humanity in Egypt is in crisis. Humankind, government and society are falling apart at the seams. Many innocent people are dying, everything is in turmoil, and the government is in shambles. Just recently, on August 14<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of supporters of the ousted Islamist President Mohammed Morsi died, being named the bloodiest day in Egypt since the uprisings to eject Hosni Mubarak in 2011.

What began as a hopeful turn for Egypt after the removal of Mubarak has reversed completely. However, these “promises” of a better life have been thwarted with political failure and economic crisis. The younger generation realized that there was no room for them in the new order, no jobs and broken promises by President Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood wanted to change Egypt into an Islamist state, but many Muslims did not share their vision of a new Egypt. In addition, the economy was failing.

When examining this conflict from the outside, all I see is the pain and suffering of fellow humans – of mothers and fathers, who are trying to keep their families together, of children, whose childhood is being snatched away from them, of young adults, who feel as if their voices are not being heard, and of the elderly, who are also suffering. This is an urgent call for help, and it is our dharma to help those who are less fortunate and suffering for things that they are not even necessarily directly involved in.

In order to apply principles of Sanatan Dharma to this crisis, I look to *Ramayana*. In this epic, Lord Rama embodies the ideals of true leadership and noble virtues. Firstly, the next leader of Egypt should learn from Lord Rama – from his humility, his honesty, and pursuit of dharma. One of the great lessons from the *Ramayana* is the value of a promise. Egypt should keep its promises to its people, just as King Dashrath kept his promise of granting two boons to Kaikayi, who wanted Lord Rama to be exiled, and that her son, Bharat, be crowned prince. Her boons were accepted, because the value of a promise is far greater than the personal satisfaction of the people in charge. This is

similar to the fact that the government of Egypt should satisfy the promises they made, rather than discrediting them because they are inconvenient to the individuals making the choices.

Another method to utilize in order to resolve this crisis is to apply the idea of *satya* and adherence to one's word. The government should not break their own rules to benefit the wishes of the high officials. This also comes hand in hand with of allowing injustice. This is seen in the *Ramayana* with Bharat's behavior with Lord Rama. He knows that he has been unjustly crowned, and ends up acting as a representative of the kingdom, but refuses to take the title that is rightfully Lord Rama's.

The *Ramayana* is filled with a multitude of stories that exemplify the greatest of human virtues and leadership ability. If the government and helping nations can apply these lessons and rationale to resolving the tumultuous conflict in Egypt, the country can restart on its path to a better future. Of course, this cannot be instantaneously, and with solely the virtues of the *Ramayana*—there needs to be direct action by the people, for the people, with the people.