Topic: Some people believe it is often necessary, even desirable, for political leaders to withhold information from the public. Others believe that the public has a right to be fully informed.

The speaker asserts that political leaders should withhold information from the public. I agree with the author’s statement as critical information may reach the foes and might be misused. However, for information that does not pose any risk, a political leader must share it, so that masses may be able to know the steps which are being taken in their best interest.

Admittedly, the sharing of all information with the public is risky and sometimes even harmful to the public interest. Consider the case of strategy to deal with the terrorist. If such a strategy is made public prior to the action, terrorists would become aware of it and would adopt the countermeasures to escape from arrest or punishment. Similar is the case of drug traffickers and smugglers. A policy to deal with them, if disseminated to the masses, these criminals will become aware of it and would be successful in saving themselves from legal actions. In addition, sharing of information about the private and personal lives of the political leader serves no useful purpose and does more harm than good. We can consider the case of Martin Luther King Jr. who had licentious nature but was promulgating excellent political goals. Had people known much about his personal lives, they would have been reluctant to support him, thus, seriously undermining the political cause he was pursuing.

Aside from the foregoing provisos; I believe that political leaders should share information with the public. After all, the foundation of a democratic society is based on freedom of information—people should be kept informed about what government and leaders are doing in the interest of the public as a whole. Such information is useful in keeping a check on misuse of authority by the office-holders and also allows the voters to make a decision in favor of the better candidate. Such freedom also allows human rights activists and civil society to raise their concern if some human rights violations are being done or the interest of the people is being neglected by the decision-makers.

In sum, it is the very spirit of democracy that people should be kept informed about the decision and actions, their leaders are taking as this is one of the core distinctions of democracy from the undemocratic counterpart. However, care must be exercised to avoid sharing such information which might be detrimental to the nation and public cause.