**Aftermath of Election 2024**

**Pakistan is passing through the most critical period in its over seven decades and a half old history.**

[M. Fazal Elahi](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/m-fazal-elahi)

February 16, 2024

[Opinions](https://www.nation.com.pk/opinions), [Columns](https://www.nation.com.pk/columns), [Newspaper](https://www.nation.com.pk/newspaper)

At a presser held after the Central Executive Commit­tee (CEC) Meeting of the par­ty held on February 13 the Chair­man Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto cat­egorically stated that his party will extend full support to PML-N in forming the government at the Centre. In the same breath, Bilawal also cate­gorically stated that his party will not join the cabinet.

On the contrary, PPP co-chair­man and former President of Pak­istan, Asif Ali Zardari speaking at a presser held at the residence of the PML-Q President, Chaudhry Shujat Hussain on February 13, participat­ed by PML-N President Mian Sheh­baz Sharif, member of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and incumbent Chairman Senate of Pakistan Sadiq Sanjrani, MQM-P Convener/lead­er Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Istehqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) leader Abdul Aleem Khan, cogent­ly said “We have decided today that we will get together and form the government to lift Pakistan from difficulty.” The conspicuous ab­sence of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehm­an, who has always been a part of the past alliances including the last Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government, was visibly felt. None of the leaders present at the presser could cogently respond to media’s query about Maulana’s absence at the presser.

[Sesame exports surge to $407m in 2023, making Pakistan 5th major exporter](https://www.nation.com.pk/17-Feb-2024/sesame-exports-surge-to-dollar-407m-in-2023-making-pakistan-5th-major-exporter)

Though vague, one has to admit that the stance of Co-chairman PPP Asif Ali Zardari is a little dif­ferent from the party’s chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. While Bi­lawal Bhutto has been utterly blunt in venting his views on the issue of PPP’s role in the coali­tion government in the making, Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has been comparatively subtle and diplomatic. This compels one to conclude that basically both are on the same page. When co-chair­man PPP, Asif Ali Zardari makes a vague statement “We have decid­ed today that ‘we will get togeth­er’ and form the government to lift Pakistan from difficulty,” it is evi­dent that he, like party chairman Bilawal Bhutto, clearly means that PPP will support PML-N in the for­mation of the government but will not be a part of the cabinet of the said government, and will sit in the opposition.

Should this move of chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto and Co-chair­man Asif Zardari be termed as smart? Yes, it should. By making this smart move, the People’s Par­ty has played it safe. It has astutely maneuvered the situation in its fa­vour. But such moves are absolute­ly contrary to what the country badly needs today. It is known to all and sundry, Pakistan is passing through the most critical period in its over seven decades and a half old history. What the country dire­ly needs today is political stability, so as to be able to steer itself out of its gargantuan socioeconom­ic and political predicaments. Un­ambiguously, this profoundly vi­tal need cannot be fulfilled unless all the stakeholders in the political arena rise above self, keep the in­terest of the country foremost in their agendas, and join forces to collectively address particularly the country’s critical economic sit­uation. And, do so to put it on the path to progress and prosperity.

[UN calls for ‘full, credible and transparent investigation’ into death of Navalny](https://www.nation.com.pk/17-Feb-2024/un-calls-for-full-credible-and-transparent-investigation-into-death-of-navalny)

That PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto appreciates that the coun­try is confronting an unparalleled crisis, and also asserts his party’s principal decision to take Pakistan out of the current crisis, but at the same time he is not prepared to take equal responsibility and be an integral part of the cabinet of the coalition government. He says his party will sit in the opposi­tion, and will support the govern­ment on issue to issue basis. Isn’t all this a little too confusing? How can one sit in the opposition and at the same time outrightly sup­port the policies and plans of the government in the saddle? This is something beyond one’s stretch of imagination to understand.

What does the prevailing scenar­io in the political arena of the coun­try reflect? For sure, it doesn’t, in any manner, reflect optimism. It speaks volumes of the chaos and anarchy that is going to confront the country in the days and months to come. This thought sends shiv­ers down the spine of the people. It seems the political forces have become totally oblivious of the gi­gantic economic predicaments that confront the country today. It seems they have not learnt a lesson from the past. One expected, they would rise above self and party in­terest, hold the country’s interest paramount, and work in unison to steer the country out of its present economic crisis. All this now seems to be a far cry. How very sad, after having spent billions of tax payers’ money (over Rs.17 billion as re­ported in the media) on the recent­ly held national elections, we are back to square one.

[Mari Petroleum Company announces gas discovery at Mainwand X-1 ST-1 Well located in Block-28, Balochistan](https://www.nation.com.pk/17-Feb-2024/mari-petroleum-company-announces-gas-discovery-at-mainwand-x-1-st-1-well-located-in-block-28-balochistan)

The brewing political crisis can­not, repeat cannot be amicably re­solved by the political forces by themselves. History bears testi­mony to the fact, they have not been able to do so in the past, they would not be able to it now. One is compelled by circumstances to say that time has come for those who possess the capacity to exercise its influence on the political forces of the country, to act briskly and bring them together on one platform in the larger interest of this country. If this is not done, one clearly sees burgeoning political instability and chaos in the country. And, under no circumstances, can Pakistan’s bru­tally battered economy bear such gut-wrenching situation.

**M Fazal Elahi**  
The writer is a columnist and analyst based in Islamabad and can be contacted at geniousfazal@hotmail.com