**Crushed common man and the failed parliamentary system**

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It has been over 74 years since the founder of our nation Mr Jinnah gave the formative address to the newly constituted assembly of Pakistan. In this historic speech, he made clear to the members of the house that their duty first and foremost was to “maintain law and order so that the life, property and religious beliefs of its subjects are fully protected by the State. And that he would always be guided by the principles of “justice and complete impartiality”.

In this time, we have gone through numerous setbacks and are still seeking to develop a cohesive and effective system of governance. The tragedy of the failings of our current system of governance has meant that the nation’s progress has largely stalled and we are struggling to provide a better tomorrow for our common man. In this regard, it cannot be said we have lived up to Mr Jinnah’s decree. After partition as a nation we are still struggling for our independence and sovereignty; the life of the common man is plagued by fear, fear of being unable to afford basic needs, fear of a law-and-order situation that is deteriorating, and fear that their children will not have a future better than their own. Poverty is rampant in life away from the busy cities and in the outskirts of our provinces, and at a level that is scarcely imaginable. The common man’s plights are dictated by a group of elites who have little regard or interest in their betterment and they are called the electables and they rule law, rather than the law ruling them. The false promise cycle continues every year, with every administration becoming more detached from performance and delivery and instead increasingly interested in how they may keep their positions of power. It seems there is little chance to act on the voice of the poor common man. We need and honest and open discourse with respect to our systemic governmental failures.

[Govt to increase restrictions if Covid-19 SOPs not followed: Asad Umar](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/govt-to-increase-restrictions-if-covid-19-sops-not-followed-asad-umar)

Our system is that of parliamentary democracy, where the right to be elected, and to make decisions is no longer available to the common man but rather only those of an elite political class who have bought their way through ill-gotten money and influence and seek to perpetuate this system as it works for those few and not the many. No longer can we afford to continue ignoring our populace, no longer can we continue to prop up a system that is failing us and pushing our country to darkness, leaving little chance for our future generations.

We have not seen a single election where results have not been called into question, where they have not been heavily disputed by whatever party of movement has lost. If we are unable to discharge the most basic and centric principles of our democracy, then who in the positions of power can ever claim they have fulfilled their duties under the constitution? The parliament is because of the constitution and the parliament is the weakest institution as its decisions are not mandatory for the government to implement.

[China’s Xi to attend Biden’s climate change summit](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/china-s-xi-to-attend-biden-s-climate-change-summit)

A decision maker has to give thought to whether it is really a sustainable and equitable way to govern our people when the members of these parties can only be selected according to standards set in dark rooms by a select few. The common man asks questions from the Election Commission as to how this system can continue to endure, where members are brought to assemblies by political parties who hand over their resignations in advance, having little regard for public offices, to be used as and when required by their political masters.

The eyes of the common man still look towards these ‘Shahi’ families and some mafia members who feed certain politicians for their protection, and the common man remains a slave in the hands of the powerful, which reminds one of the stone age and not the present century. There is a need for reform in our system ensuring that political parties adhere to the same standards that are befitting a functioning progressive democracy. A manner in which this could be accomplished is to ensure that intra-party elections are carried out in the same manner that they are in European democracies to ensure fair and proper representation. It is with these measures that we can restore confidence and credibility in our system and restore the confidence of Pakistani masses which are under stress due to multiple miseries created by the present ‘Shahi’ democratic system.

[European Super League already showing cracks](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/european-super-league-already-showing-cracks)

Unfortunately, our political parties get funding from various sources including millions of dollars from single and multiple sources including foreign countries; I plan to conduct proper research and will produce unchallengeable documents and to the annoyance of many. We want leaders who do not have ulterior motives and a large burden of deals and compromises. Further, our political parties’ and elections’ expenditures have never been investigated seriously. Let the decision maker know that the public is watching the incompetency and endless corruption very closely.

The words of our founder once again ring eerily prophetic in nature, in his historic opening address he had said: “Black marketing is another curse. Well, I know that black marketers are frequently caught and punished. Judicial sentences are passed or sometimes fines only are imposed. Now you have to tackle this monster, which today is a colossal crime against society, in our distressed conditions, when we constantly face a shortage of food and other essential commodities of life. A citizen who does black-marketing commits, I think, a greater crime than the biggest and most grievous of crimes. These black-marketers are really knowing, intelligent and ordinarily responsible people, and when they indulge in black-marketing, I think they ought to be very severely punished, because the entire system of control and regulation of foodstuffs and essential commodities, and cause wholesale starvation and want and even death.”

[PM to perform groundbreaking of low-cost housing project in Nowshera today](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/pm-to-perform-groundbreaking-of-low-cost-housing-project-in-nowshera-today)

How true is this now when long queues are seen to buy a kilo of sugar and wheat for hungry families. The day is not far when the public may react to this “Shahi parliamentary democratic system”—close to monarchy—and successive undemocratic elections for want of their rights. The miseries of the common man are adding to distress and dissatisfaction on a daily basis. The price hike is forcing an already disenfranchised populace into more dire straits, indeed there has been some credibly reporting of the poorest being forced to take their own lives as the harsh reality they face every day is so appalling. There seems to be no plausible route for the common man to enter into the ‘hallowed’ chambers of our democracy, never has it been more difficult and financially impossible for a common man to fight an election campaign, to beat the near insurmountable odds and pressure from money men. Growth of leadership from the lower and middle class is not emerging as it has become way too expensive to be a leader of any level in our country.

[Punjab govt resumes Metro bus service in Lahore](https://nation.com.pk/21-Apr-2021/punjab-govt-resumes-metro-bus-service-in-lahore)

The procedures and system should give opportunities to everyone in the party to contest elections, whereas the common man still cannot contest elections in our country unless he has considerable backing, and of course should this happen, then there is no guarantee that such a person would still be able to fulfil their oath and do their duty to the people. 74 years since becoming independent but we still need to move on from the feudal mindset and get rid of the prevailing mafia system to march towards a more democratic mindset with equality. Also people in our country are overwhelmingly supporting this “modern Shahi parliamentary System” where they vote for their mighty lords while the lords do not speak for them in the parliament for their betterment to improve their lives. This is the reason why we have seen such a systemic breakdown of law and order across the country, it is why we are seeing disenfranchisement from the most vulnerable in our populace causing them to turn to more extreme viewpoints as the centre, the traditional democratic bastions of power will not heed their call. As such the question must be asked; how long can the masses endure this? Can this system of buying and selling votes, of elected officials being incredibly compromised or in some cases inherently dishonest subsist?

The ‘success’ of the present “Shahi parliamentary democracy” can be seen from the increasing number of homeless people on the roadsides, beggars around your cars, corruption in government offices, the rate of commission in the contracts, the power of land, petrol and drug mafias and daily suicides by poor people, unable to feed their children. Respect and honour are visibly on sale out of sheer poverty in front of the big malls and the back dark streets of the markets. It is time to mourn this “Shahi parliamentary democratic system” of governance which is unable to provide protection and respect to our country and its peoples. It has not provided the space for our people to even breathe with honour. I appeal to the parliamentarians and the decision-makers of my country to look objectively at the needs of the common man and fix priority to it before it is too late and the crushed masses may take their fate into their own hands. The common may take revenge from this growing heartless society crushing them and pushing them into the corner.

The views expressed above are solely mine and in the national interest and do not necessarily represent the views of my party.