**Winching the country out of crisis**

[**Malik Muhammad Ashraf**](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/malik-muhammad-ashraf)

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Needless to emphasise that Pakistan is facing a crisis situation of unprecedented magnitude. The onset of corona devastated almost all the economies of the world besides taking a toll on human lives including in Pakistan. There was an outcry for global cooperation to deal with this global threat to human lives and their livelihoods. Prime Minister Imran Khan was the most vociferous among the world leaders to call upon the affluent nations to give moratorium to the poor nations on their debt payment and if possible, to write-off the loans taken by them. Consequently, the G-20 countries agreed to give a six-month reprieve to the developing countries.

Pakistan however, managed to minimise the impact of corona in its first phase by creating a balance between saving the lives and livelihoods of people through smart lock-downs, one-time cash payments to vulnerable sections of the society and the announcement of multiple incentives for the revival of the industrial sector, particularly the construction industry. Consequently, the country was able to mitigate the debilitating impact of the pandemic in its first phase. The success of this strategy was universally acclaimed and appreciated.

[Japan extends Middle East defense mission for one year](https://nation.com.pk/11-Dec-2020/japan-extends-middle-east-defense-mission-for-one-year)

However, as feared, the world is in the grip of the second wave of the virus. Pakistan is no exception. This time, its intensity seems far greater than the first phase, as is evident by the surge in the cases on a daily basis. Mindful of the impact of the new wave on the livelihoods of the people and state of the economy, the government has unequivocally announced that it would not shut businesses and industries but would fight with the virus through smart lockdowns and strict enforcement of the SOPs. Keeping in view our economic and social realities the approach is beyond reproach. Its success however would depend on impregnable support of all segments of the society by observing the SOPs and the preventive measures prescribed by the government. People will have to wear masks, observe social distancing and avoid gatherings if the pandemic is to be contained to avoid its devastating consequences in terms of human lives.

In this regard it is hard to contest the contention of the government that public rallies are the greater spreaders of the virus as is corroborated by the exponential increase in the number of cases in the cities where these public rallies were held. The government has rightly imposed a ban on holding these rallies.

[Twitter unamused as Time magazine picks Biden-Harris duo as 'person' of year](https://nation.com.pk/11-Dec-2020/twitter-unamused-as-time-magazine-picks-biden-harris-duo-as-person-of-the-year)

But the PDM in defiance of this ban and being unmindful of the resultant loss of human lives, is bent upon going ahead with its planned public rallies and agitation against the government. It is indeed a very worrying situation. Irrespective of the fact whether the parties in the PDM have a righteous cause or not for holding these rallies and continuing with its agitation, they need to give precedence to human lives over their political agendas. In this hour of national crisis, it is incumbent upon them to play their role in overcoming the pandemic.

The existing political polarisation and ambience of intense confrontation between the government and the opposition parties will not only harm the efforts to control the virus but would also scuttle the ability of the state to deal with the security challenges on our eastern and western borders. The situation demands impregnable national unity. It is the right time for our political entities to rise above their narrow political ends and establish their credentials as guardian of the national interests and security of the country.

[EU DisinfoLab's report reveals Indian hybrid war against Pakistan: FM Qureshi](https://nation.com.pk/11-Dec-2020/eu-disinfolab-s-report-reveals-indian-hybrid-war-against-pakistan-fm-qureshi)

In a democratic dispensation, the political parties in the opposition have the right to protest against policies of the government or hold public rallies to enlist support for their political agendas and it is also guaranteed by Article 15 and 16 of our constitution. Nobody would grudge it if it is exercised in normal times free of crisis of a national nature.

Consolidating the gains of democracy, ensuring rule of law and preserving sanctity of the constitution is the collective responsibility of the ruling as well as the opposition parties. But unfortunately, our history of the last seven decades belies the existence of that political culture. The country is victim of the self-inflicted tragedies that came about due to the political instability triggered by the irresponsible behaviour of the political forces. It has almost become visceral for the parties losing elections to declare them rigged. Instead of seeking redress of their complaints from respective legal forums they have invariably resorted to launching campaigns to bring down the incumbent government which have even led to wrapping up the system by the military dictators, pushing the country further away from the envisioned democratic path.

[PM Khan appoints Sheikh Rashid as Interior Minister in cabinet reshuffle](https://nation.com.pk/11-Dec-2020/pm-khan-appoints-sheikh-rashid-as-interior-minister-in-cabinet-reshuffle)

Regrettably they have not learnt their lessons from history and continue to stick to their anti-democratic antics. The PDM campaign is also very much similar to the previous such adventures. It is my considered view that it will not bring out any winners but will further push the country towards the edge of a precipice.

Under the given situation it would be advisable for the opposition parties represented in the PDM to revisit their course of action and allow the government to complete its tenure to end the vicious circle of fomenting political crisis. Let the people be the judge of its performance. That is the spirit of democracy. If the government does not perform well or fails to promote their well-being as promised by the ruling party, they would give their verdict with the ballot. While asking others to give respect to vote, they themselves must give it respect by accepting the result of the elections and wait for the judgment of the people in the next elections. If it is felt that there are certain inbuilt flaws in the system of elections which facilitate rigging, the best way to deal with them is to sit together and use collective wisdom to fix the maladies afflicting the system so that in future nobody could have resort to machinations designed to pull down the government on the pretext of rigging and consign the country to perennial instability.

[Virgin Atlantic's first flight to Pakistan lands in Islamabad](https://nation.com.pk/11-Dec-2020/virgin-atlantic-s-first-flight-to-pakistan-lands-in-islamabad)

In this regard the ruling party has greater responsibility to create an environment of dialogue among the political forces to eradicate inadequacies in the system of governance and the way we elect the public representatives. This will not come about without a national dialogue. That is the only way to winch the country out of the perennial crisis.

Malik Muhammad Ashraf

The writer is a freelance columnist. He can be reached at ashpak10@gmail.com.