**Another way to die**

[**Usama Asghar**](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/usama-asghar)

April 12, 2023

Thomas Hobbs, an English philosopher and political scientist once enunciated his notion of the state of nature in which he elucidates the behaviour of the people if there is no social contract between the people and the state. He concocted a hypothetical state in which every person strives to live. There is drastic competition out there and no one cares for another. One inclines toward another day to live even if they have to kill someone. Hobbs believes that if people are given utmost liberation they will create chaos and perhaps war scenarios. Plenty of times Pakistan comes into the realm of the state of nature despite being the social contract that the state will protect its citizens. When the recent flood-hit Pakistan, and vandalized 80 percent of crops it was noticeable that the country will suffer a depletion of food and malnutrition will further be augmented. If we look at the latest report of the Global Hunger Index, Pakistan already stands at 99 out of 121 countries.

[PDM united over holding simultaneous elections after term completion](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Apr-2023/pdm-united-over-holding-simultaneous-elections-after-term-completion)

According to the consumer price index, the prices of commodities were up 35 percent in March from one year earlier. With 80 percent of damaged crops and increasing prices of staple food items, the undersupply of food was inevitable and these stampede incidents that occurred in many cities were inexorable. There is not one quagmire that Pakistan is currently standing up to. It is going through the nastiest economic crisis, security crisis, political crisis, and now the judicial crisis as well. It seems like one crisis is forming its branches that lead the country to another vulnerable crisis. If there is one crisis that is considered the root of all other crises is the political crisis or its instability.

We have caught a glimpse of the failure of governance in recent stampede incidents in Karachi where 11 people were killed and also in KP where 3 people were killed and several injured. These are the on-record incidents that occurred and there is a tangible probability that many incidents go under the carpet. Government entities aren’t focusing on these issues as their eyes are closed off to the other concerns which are essential to look over but we cannot ignore the fact that they are the governing bodies. The incumbent administration is constantly failing to deliver people relief. Their major concern and the focus of attention is to rely on the elections and for that, they are fighting with the institutions and it is ushering in an institution vs institution fight. Even if the current regime successfully manages to delay the elections till October, still they have to come to the public to ask for votes. It is a simple sensation if you haven’t delivered relief to the public, you would not get their votes.

[MQM-P delegation meets govt ministers, join hands to resolve census issues](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Apr-2023/mqm-p-delegation-meets-govt-ministers-join-hands-to-resolve-census-issues)

Pakistan has been coaxing the IMF since early February for its bailout tranche of the amount of 1.2 billion dollars but the deal hasn’t been locked in yet. Pakistan is already on the cusp of default and if the IMF doesn’t release the bailout package there is a significant likelihood that Pakistan would default. Commodities and food items that are highly expensive to buy will vanish from the markets and will be sold in the black market. Stampede incidents will be increased and they will happen on a daily basis. Queues that we are noticing today are still strenuous to supervise but the post-default queues will have unimaginable upshots that will lead the country to the Hobbs hypothetical state of nature in which people will get the wheat flour or ration over the dead bodies of their fellow queue mates. Because it is all about survival and one has to survive even if it comes at the cost of killing intentionally or unintentionally doesn’t matter.

Before taking initiatives of such mass drives to distribute ration and wheat flour, the state should have known that with the current inflation rate the definition of poor has been changed for this country, now middle-class families also fall into this category. Amid all other crises, the state overlooked the food crisis and started distribution without having any concrete plan. They failed to comprehend the size of the population which resulted in the stampede. Things could have gone smoothly and not escalated if the state had examined the population of the particular areas to figure out how many people would need the wheat flour and ration and then they should have distributed the ration according to the population survey.

[‘Pakistan's sports need govt, corporate sector support to grow’](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Apr-2023/pakistan-s-sports-need-govt-corporate-sector-support-to-grow)

Similarly, if the food crisis is exacerbated it will crumble the state no matter how they are haggling with other crises. The people of this country are already suffering the worst. The recent stampede deaths in Pakistan are a tragic reminder of the urgency of addressing food insecurity and hunger. Hunger is a fundamental issue that affects millions of people around the world. We need to prioritize policies and actions that address food insecurity, promote sustainable agriculture, and support local communities. Let’s not give another reason for people to die in search of a meal.