**The land of plenty**

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Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery was one of the most prominent and successful British commanders of the Second World War. Affectionately known as ‘Monty’, he commanded the Allies in North Africa and the subsequent invasions of Italy and Normandy. He had heroic battles with Field Marshal Rommel in North Africa, which Rommel lost due to a host of reasons, and lack of military resources was one of the main reasons. There are books and books written on these heroes depicting their lives on the battlefront: planning offences, visiting their officers and soldiers in Sahara heat while covered in dust, mud, and sand, and living on rations served to the ordinary soldiers. Their passion and zeal not only fired up their troops but also endeared them.

So much discussed above is history well-known to the general public fond of reading history, especially military history. However, I am now talking about an anecdote that I read in a magazine quite a few years back. Post WWII, there were floods in England which caused a lot of damage. Lots of houses were swept away, and people were applying for loans/government grants to rebuild their homes and hearths. The Field Marshal, a war hero of WWII, was also affected by the floods as his house was also damaged. Since he did not have money or savings to repair the house, he applied for a government loan. There was a long waiting list; hence, he wrote to the Ministry of Defence that he was a war hero and should be given preferential treatment in awarding government grants. The minister of defence refused the application of Montgomery and wrote that he (Montgomery) merely did his duty and was paid for it!

[Bajwa asked me to decry Ukraine attack after Russia visit: Imran Khan](https://www.nation.com.pk/14-Feb-2023/bajwa-asked-me-to-decry-ukraine-attack-after-russia-visit-imran-khan)

Now, we come to our beloved Pakistan: the land of the pure and the land of plenty; the home of the torch-bearers of Islam, where everything is up for grabs. We do not have to wait for our turn for the award of grants/loans. One can even get the awarded grant, in tunes of billions of rupees, waived-off and still be called Sadiq and Ameen and get the privilege to represent-through selection, the people of Pakistan in parliaments. One can get allotted acres and acres of state land for a pittance, as we have everything in plenty. Further, we have cushy jobs and positions where one retires with perks and privileges which would put the privileges of former presidents of the USA at shame. While former USA presidents have to work after retirement, our people retiring from privileged positions again get re-hired to continue providing their invaluable services to the people of the land of the pure. And these people continue serving the land of pure, till their end. However, there is a catch: to enjoy the aforementioned privileges, one has to be from the privileged class (please read heroes: politicians, bureaucrats, and some others) who have rendered great sacrifices and services for the country. For an ordinary Joe (person), the story in the land of the pure has been nothing short of a nightmare for the last seventy-five years.

[Court dismisses hedge fund’s claim on Broadsheet’s $29m Pakistan money](https://www.nation.com.pk/13-Feb-2023/court-dismisses-hedge-fund-s-claim-on-broadsheet-s-dollar-29m-pakistan-money)

The country is in a dire economic mess. Inflation is skyrocketing, and there are but clear signs of another Sri Lanka chaos for ordinary Joe. However, instead of reining in governmental expenditures, reducing cabinet sizes, giving up plush government accommodations, chauffeurs, mighty cars, and free petrol, utilities, plots and lands, our heroes (the privileged class) ask the ordinary Joe to render sacrifices. Recently, for ordinary Joe the petrol was increased by Rs 35 per litre, now the electricity is proposed to be increased by another Rs 7 per unit, while gas has already been increased exorbitantly. The government tells the ordinary Joe that its coffers are empty but has recently approved a 150 percent executive allowance for all officers in the secretariat with the excuse to bring parity and remove discrimination. If a person is not satisfied with a government job, then s/he may leave and work in the private sector. Now all these expenditures of the privileged class come at the cost of the ordinary Joe, whose family is getting hungrier by the day. Now the question is: whether the privileged class of this nuclear-armed country corrects its follies tout-suite or waits for a complete meltdown.