**International Firefighters Day**

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The leading Emergency Service of South Asia Rescue 1122 is observing International Firefighters Day with a commitment to making the public aware of fire safety and ensuring the implementation of The Punjab Community Safety Buildings Regulations 2022. These Regulations have been notified under Punjab Community Safety Act 2021. Rescue 1122 introduced a prompt Fire Emergency Response trend in 2007 in Pakistan and today Fire Rescue Service saved losses worth over Rs 611 billion in over 2 lac fire incidents by improved fire Emergency Response and professional firefighting on modern lines. In this short history of professional response, Firefighters even lost their lives while saving the lives and properties of others. Now it’s the time to promote fire safety, especially in high-rise buildings for which the building’s owners need to cooperate with the Emergency Service and contribute towards the safety culture in Pakistan.

Every year, 4th May is observed as International Firefighters Day to pay tribute and show solidarity to fire rescuers, who serve for the protection and safety of the communities. The date chosen for International Firefighters’ Day was linked to the feast day of ST Florian, who was the first known commander of one firefighting squad in the Roman Empire. He along with his colleagues lost their lives in one of the tragic wildfire incidents in Australia.

[President, PM condole demise of ARY’s Salman Iqbal’s daughter](https://www.nation.com.pk/06-May-2023/president-pm-condole-demise-of-ary-s-salman-iqbal-s-daughter)

These silent defenders, true sons of the soil and unsung heroes are known as Fire Rescuers. Fire rescuers are respected all over the world due to the nature of the unique and risky job they perform. The firefighting profession is highly technical, structured and supplied with various artifacts, which help to decide actions in unpredictable and complex situations. It involves special skills to fight flames, rescue trapped victims and save properties. Formal training related to firefighting helps to minimize risk by practicing safety procedures and getting command over them.

History reveals that developed countries had also faced major fire incidents. One of the major fire incidents in the history of the United States occurred at James Town in 1608, leaving large losses of lives and properties. The great fire of London Sept 1666 ruined many buildings including 13,200 houses, and 87 churches and left many direct and indirect losses. Similarly, Boston City experienced ravaging for the administration to give serious thought to firefighting and fire prevention consequently new courts and rules regarding firefighting including laws pertaining to the uses of open spaces and fire-resistant building materials were developed. Firefighting departments were also established. Likewise, Major terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington DC witnessed the firefighters as the primary first responders responded to the incident and more than 300 firefighters lost their lives while responding to an attack on the World Trade Center. West fertilizer co-explosion on 3 May 2013 highlighted the tough and volatile work of firefighters.

[IHC extends stay on by-polls for NA-95 seat](https://www.nation.com.pk/06-May-2023/ihc-extends-stay-on-by-polls-for-na-95-seat)

In Pakistan, in the tenure of Ch Pervaiz Elahi as CM Punjab Rescue 1122 Service was started in 2004 as an ambulance service under the leadership of Dr Rizwan Naseer DG of Rescue Punjab. The Service earned respect and public trust within a short span of time. Resultantly, the challenge of establishing a fire service was also given and with the support of the Scottish Parliamentarian and Ch Muhammad Sarwar and Hanzala Malik Rescue Officers received international fire and rescue training, which was replicated to all fire staff at the Emergency Services Academy and started Fire Rescue Service in 2007. As per data from the Emergency Service of last year, the Fire Rescue Service is managing an average of 43 fire incidents daily in Punjab and short circuits, negligence and carelessness have become leading causes of fire emergencies.

It is also pertinent to mention that immediate safety measures like fire exits and stairs separated by fire doors, fire alarm systems, external fire hydrants for firefighting, and sprinkler systems in multi-story buildings may be installed to prevent fires. Moreover, fire emergencies caused by negligence can be prevented with little vigilance and care while using gas heaters, kitchen stoves, candles and domestic accessories. Always Use standardized electrical and Gas appliances, Shut off all appliances before sleeping and going out from the building. Furthermore, a degree program related to firefighting and fire safety needs to be started to increase the number of professionals in this field and promote safety in the country.

[TTP making nexus with Baloch separatists, militants, warn experts](https://www.nation.com.pk/06-May-2023/ttp-making-nexus-with-baloch-separatists-militants-warn-experts)

On this special day, I would like to pay a rich tribute to 13 Shaheed fire Rescuers of the Ghakhar Plaza disaster, who sacrificed their lives during the fire and rescue operation and changed the firefighting history in the country. These unsung heroes were from Pakistan Ordinance Factory Wah, Rescue 1122, City Fire Brigade, and Civil Aviation Authority. They proved that firefighters do not only sprinkle water on the flames from outside rather they are passionate and even can sacrifice their lives for protecting others. Their countless efforts to transform this profession shall always be remembered. May Allah rest their souls in Heaven, who sacrificed their lives to save others and salute the real heroes of the nations from all over the world for their countless efforts for developing safer communities in their respective countries.