Press Release

DEHLI REMAINED PART OF PUNJAB TILL 1922
'FEAR & VENGEANCE IN 1857' EXHIBIT CONCLUDES

Lahore, June 10, 2018

The exhibition 'Fear and Vengeance in 1857,' organized by the Punjab Archives Digitization Project of the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) and the Archives and Libraries Department, S&GAD, together with the Information Technology University (ITU) concluded at the historic Anarkali's Tomb at the Civil Secretariat Lahore here today.

The weeklong exhibition showcased selections from the Mutiny Records housed at the Punjab Archives. These records not only pertain to the Punjab proper, but also cover the siege of Delhi and the trail of Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, as Delhi was attached to the Punjab till 1922.

This exhibition--the first of a three-part show--highlighted the human element during the events of 1857. While explaining the selections, curator Sadaf Chugtai said, 'We know about the battles, who won and who lost. But what about the people, their feelings of fears, concern and ultimately revenge?' The exhibition revolved around eight steel engravings which have been enhanced in size and hung around the Tomb. These hangings feature the element of fear, as the British evacuate their women and children, trepidation, as they do not know which sepoys are going to remain loyal, which sepoys are going to attack, and the final craze of vengeance where anyone suspected of collaborating with the mutineers was tried summarily and executed. 'This is of course the British view of the events of 1857, since we are working with a government archive,' noted Research Head Abraham Murad, nothing that research needs to be conducted on both sides of the Great Revolt.

Dr Umar Saif, Chairman, PITB remarked that 'the events of 1857 are an important part of our history, and yet we do not know much about its particular events. The opening up of the Punjab Archives under this project, brings out its treasures—long hidden—for public viewing, knowledge, and interaction,' Dr Saif said. 'Pakistan's educational system, especially in the humanities, will only be strengthened when we engage fully with our past, and the archive is a central piece in this puzzle,' Dr Saif emphasized and added that this exhibit has benefited the archive lovers, historians, academia, students and revived the pages of history for the future generation, which would remain preserved for centuries to come through their digitalization.

The exhibition also highlighted the use of the telegraph, first introduced in the Punjab just months before the summer events of 1857. 'We chose the note on press censorship precisely because it highlighted the continuing theme of press control today,' said Abraham Murad during the curatorial walkthrough. The telegrams further show British planning and coordinated military attacks, which finally overwhelmed the rebellion, and brought about its end.

The exhibit opened by Additional Chief Secretary Omer Rasool, and Secretary Archives, Tahir Yousaf was visited during the week by several dignitaries including, Professor Salima Hashmi, Professor Naazish Ataullah, Dr James Tebbe, Rector, FC College, Prof Sajjad Kausar, Ms Farida Shaheed, Ms Qudsia Rahim, Mr Tahir Jahangir, Professor Iram Zia Raja, Dr Shabnam Khan, researches, media groups, senior journalists, students and others.