

# GOVT NEWS



## Sindh govt has included 14 mega projects for Karachi this year, says official

The Sindh government has allocated Rs8 billion for 14 mega development projects in Karachi in its 2017-18 budget. The projects include four flyovers along with roads, water drains and improvement of infrastructure.

Local Government Department Project Director Niaz Soomro said this on Sunday while talking to the media.

### Karachi Package projects to be completed by end of May

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"Roads leading to the Cantonment Railway Station will be rebuilt with a drainage system on modern lines. Roundabouts and roads from Kandawala Building on MA Jinnah Road to Garden will also be remodeled," Soomro informed the media, adding that modification and reconstruction of Zaibunnisa Street and Abdullah Haroon Road will also be undertaken.

"The ICI Bridge Intersection will be expanded with the installation of signals. Tipu Sultan Road will be reconstructed, while roads connecting the National Stadium to the New Town police station and Millennium Mall will also be widened," the project director revealed.

Soomro added that two flyovers will be constructed at the intersections of Shaheed-e-Millat Road and Tipu Sultan Road and Khalid Bin Waleed Road in order to provide signal-free access to commuters from Baloch Colony Flyover to the Jail Road Bridge.

### Mobile hospital launched under Gulshan Chowrangi flyover in Karachi

"A bridge will be constructed at Lea Market to decrease the traffic load. A flyover is also planned on Sunset Boulevard on Korangi Road as well," he maintained.

The project director informed the media that the roads alongside Korangi Nullah, Lyari River near Hassan Square, Chakora Nullah near Star Gate and the nullah near Habib Bank Chowrangi will also be repaired. Water pipelines will also be shifted from these locations, he added.

Under the Karachi Mega City Project 2016-17, the Sindh government started 15 development projects worth Rs9.58 billion. Around Rs6.2 billion has so far been utilised on these projects. Ten projects have been completed, while work on the remaining projects will be completed by July, 2017, Soomro said, adding that work on the Submarine Chowrangi Underpass will be completed by November this year.

### 2200MW nuclear power plants in Karachi to 'start generating electricity by 2018'

With the assistance of the Malir Cantonment Authority, a 200 feet-wide road will be constructed from Malir Cantt Gate 2 to the Super Highway via Memon Goth. The project will cost Rs350 million, he added. He also informed that efforts would be made to make Sharae Faisal into a model road.

The project director also clarified that the local government department had no role in the projects proposed by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) being not approved for the new fiscal year. "The planning and development department should be held responsible for the non-approval of development projects presented by the KMC and the KDA," he maintained.

(The Express Tribune 14, 03/07/2017)

## Sindh government to reduce IG's three-year tenure

The Sindh government has decided to amend the law to shorten the tenure of the provincial police chief. Sources privy to the development told The Express Tribune that the government is going to amend Section 4 of Civil Servants Act, 1973 to reduce the three year tenure of the IG in the wake of the ongoing tussle with Sindh IG Allah Dino Khawaja.



"The IG's case is in the court now where the judge can give Khawaja the benefit of a three year tenure fixed in the rules of business of the Establishment Code, 1986," said a former Sindh IG who wished to remain anonymous. To preempt such a development, the government is going to amend the law.

The tussle between the IG Khawaja and the Sindh government surfaced when the government had sent IG Khawaja on forced leave following differences that erupted over multiple issues, particularly over the transfer and postings of SSPs and SPs. However, the government later withdrew its decision and the IG took control of his office once more after the court intervened.

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### Stay on AD Khawaja's removal stays

IG Khawaja has already been approached to surrender his services but the decision has remained pending. The situation turned critical when a senior Pakistan Peoples Party leader, Sohail Anwar Siyal, resumed the charge of his office as home minister. Since tussle begun, the government has attempted to remove the IG on a number of occasions but this is the final attempt, as after this, the IGP will have no special powers, which will compel him to surrender his services.

The Sindh government has already decided to appoint a senior police official, Sardar Abdul Majeed Dasti, as IG Khawaja's replacement.

Sources believe that this is part of an ongoing agenda to remove the IG. A three member committee has also been formed to amend the law. Law Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar will head the team, while Home Minister Siyal and Advocate-General Zameer Ghumro are members of the team.

"We are not doing it as per our own wishes; it is the Supreme Court's decision," said Ghumro. "The Supreme Court has ordered that the IG's tenure should not be in the rule of business of the Establishment Code, 1986, rather it should be in the Civil Servants Act,

which is why we are amending it." Ghumro said that the government is going to make an amendment in Section 4 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973. "It will be decided what amendments we have to make, but we will surely fix the tenure in the amendment," he explained.

#### **AD Khawaja removal case: Cabinet endorses provincial govt's decision to replace IG**

Recently, the Sindh government withdrew the powers of the IG to transfer and post SPs and SSPs. (By Faraz Khan The Express Tribune 13, 07/07/2017)

### **Sindh govt empowers home minister to transfer, post senior cops**

For the first time, the Sindh government has shifted the power of transfer and postings of senior police officials to Sindh Home Minister Sohail Siyal.

"In pursuance of Rule-7 (ii) of the Sindh Government Rules of Business 1986 and with the approval of the chief minister Sindh, the transfer and postings of Superintendents of Police (BS-18), Senior Superintendents of Police (BS-19) and Deputy Inspector Generals (BS-20) and equivalent shall be issued by the Services, General Administration and Coordination Department with the approval of the Minister for Home Sindh," read a notification issued by Sindh Chief Secretary Rizwan Memon on Thursday.

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"This department's notification of even number dated 30.06.2017 whereby the transfer and postings of the SP and SSP and equivalent were to be issued by the Services, General Administration and Coordination Department with the approval of Chief Minister Sindh is hereby withdrawn," it adds.

Recently, the Sindh government had withdrawn from Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP) AD Khawaja's the power to transfer and post the SPs and SSPs in a move seen as a result of the ongoing tussle between the Sindh's top cop and the PPP-led Sindh government.

(By Faraz Khan The Express Tribune 15, 09/07/2017)

### **Conjugal rights: Sindh govt fails to implement apex court's order after seven years**

The Sindh government's decision to grant conjugal rights to convicted inmates, under which they would be allowed to meet their spouses at the prison, has been in limbo for the last seven years.



The government, while complying with the Supreme Court's order, had issued a notification in April, 2010, to grant the right to convicted inmates to meet their spouses for one day or night every three months but nothing has been done.

#### **Sindh's IG prisons likely to be removed soon**

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After the notification had been issued, the then prisons minister had announced that the government had started the construction of separate meeting rooms inside the jails and that all married prisoners would be asked to submit their marriage certificates. However, despite the passage of seven years, this process has yet to be completed.

Official sources in the home department said the government had allocated Rs140 million in the 2013-14 budget to initially establish the meeting rooms in seven jails, including Karachi, Sukkur, Larkana and Khairpur central jails, but there has been no progress in the matter.

"The funds were available and this system was supposed to be started this year, but officials of the jail department failed to complete this scheme. We have now learnt that the government has given a new deadline of 2020 to finish this scheme," said an official, requesting anonymity.

#### **Unlike male inmates, female ones do not have to sleep on floor: prisons IG**

Human rights activists Paryal Marri termed the concept of conjugal visits as an excellent idea, but believed it is difficult for one to visit the jail and meet an under-trial prisoner. "Right now, you cannot meet a person in jail without greasing the palms of jail officials.

I don't see how this will be a successful idea in our society. The government should first bring reforms in the jail system and get rid of corruption and then start work on such schemes," he said.

The prison department's data revealed that there are 24 jails, including three female prisons, in Sindh where around 20,000 inmates are languishing. The number of convicted inmates stands at 4,000, out of whom 16 are women. The data further revealed that more than 6,000 prisoners are housed in the Central Jail, Karachi and 939 of them are convicted. Similarly, 1,100 convicted inmates are in the Hyderabad jail, 608 in Sukkur, 262 in Larkana, 164 in Khairpur and 72 in Malir.

#### **Jailer suspended for facilitating militants**

"These were the jails where the government had to initially start this facility, but nothing has been done so far," said an official.

He added that 172 foreigners, who have been convicted in various cases, are also living in Sindh's jails. These foreigners are from India, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The newly-appointed prison minister, Ziaul Hasan Lanjar claimed to have 'no idea' about the scheme as he has recently joined the department. However, he said that the government will comply with the apex court's order. "We are bringing reforms in the jails [of the province] and have improved food, health and education systems inside various prisons," he said.

#### **Time well spent : Four districts get family rooms in jails**

Meanwhile, talking to The Express Tribune, Sindh Prisons IG Nusrat Mangan said that the work in seven jails is under way and meeting rooms are being built. "There were some technical issues due to which this scheme has been delayed, but now we have accelerated the development," Mangan said.

Commenting on whether terrorists living in the jails would be allowed this facility, Mangan said, "Initially we have been asked to allow only convicts involved in petty crimes, but there is no final policy on it, which can be drafted later by the government".

(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune 15, 13/07/2017)

### **Govt plans new law to directly appoint DSPs**

The Sindh government has decided to amend the Police Act, 1861 by introducing a provincial police authority chaired by the chief minister, a public grievances and redressal cell at police station, a change in the police cadre service by directly appointing deputy superintendents of police (DSP) and fixing the tenure of police officers.



A meeting was chaired by Law Minister Ziaul Hasan Lanjar where officials of the law, home and police departments discussed various amendments to colonial police act. "We have reviewed the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa model of police system and are adopting some clauses from it," said the law minister, adding that the provincial government is trying to make the police a community friendly force.

According to officials, the proposed provincial police authority headed by the chief minister will review the performance of the police and recommend necessary action. "The home minister will be its vice-chairperson with the inspector-general of police and home secretary as members," revealed an official privy to the development.

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The official added that complaints cells comprising retired police officers and bureaucrats will be set up at district levels to inquire into complaints lodged by people against police officials and recommend action against them.

#### **Efforts Acknowledged: Motorway police awards officers**

Sources said that in this law, which will be called the Police Act, 2017, the tenure of police officers from top to bottom will be fixed.

"Initially, it has been suggested to appoint the IG, additional IGs, SSPs, DSPs and even SHOs for a two-year period. The tenure will be subject to their performance and conduct," a law officer who was present at the meeting said.

Briefing about the police cadre, an official said that during the first government of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had directly appointed DSPs and Benazir Bhutto, in her second government, followed this practice where large number of kith and kin of PPP leaders were inducted as DSPs.

According to police records, a number of PPP leaders relatives were inducted as DSPs. They included Mohammad Ali Wasan, nephew of Manzoor Wasan, Zulfiqar Ali Talpur, a relative of Yousaf Talpur, Javed Zamir Farooqi, a relative of the late Makhdoom Amin Fahim, Ghulam Sarwar Bhayo, a relative of former MNA Mir Altaf Bhayo, Mohammad Brahmani, former president of the People's Student Federation in Dadu, Ali Sher Jakhrani, secretary to PPP leader Nisar Khuhro and Ashiq Ali Buzdar, son of former MPA Ghulam Mustafa Buzdar.

Jan Khalid Mustafa Kori, former political secretary to Asif Ali Zardari, Jam Zafarullah Dharejo, brother of ex-MNA Jam Safiullah Dharejo, Naeem Ara Panhwar, former president of the women's wing of PPP in Mirpurkhas, Aijaz Ali Shah, nephew of PPP leader Shafiq Hussain Shah, Pir Syed Ahmed Tariq Shah, grandson of former MNA Pir Abdul Qadir Shah and Abid Hussain Qaimkhani, brother of Perveen Qaimkhani who was in charge of the PM House in Naudero were among others who were appointed DSPs.

#### **Sindh government to reduce IG's three-year tenure**

"In present circumstances, the direct appointment of DSPs can be challenged in the court, which is why the government is going to insert a new clause in this law," sources said, adding that police constables, assistant sub-inspectors (ASI) and assistant superintendents police (ASP) who qualify the Central Superior Services (CSS) examinations can be directly appointed. After the upcoming law, DSPs will be recruited too.

“Public grievance and redressal cells at police station levels will address petty issues of people. A duty officer will be deputed at all police stations to hear the people’s minor disputes and resolve the same. This aims to discourage the practice of registering FIRs,” the spokesperson of the law department explained.

The option of community policing in the province and a fixed term for the investigation of cases was also discussed at the meeting, but these issues will be discussed again at another meeting to give it final shape. According to Lanjar, they will be finalising the Police Act, 2017 and will pass the same in the assembly soon. “The world has set new precedents in every field, but we are still following colonial laws. There is dire need to bring in reforms,” he said.

(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune 13, 21/07/2017)

### **Diversion of development funds**

THE federal Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) is one of the biggest engines of growth simply by virtue of the enormous resources that can be thrown into the economy through it. The revival of growth that the government presents as its signature achievement has in large part been achieved by sharply escalating development spending. In the outgoing year, for example, the government disbursed Rs744bn through the development budget. Although this amount was below the budgeted Rs800bn (for the federal PSDP only), it still represents enough money that goes directly into productive activities and that can shape the fiscal framework as well as the growth environment in important ways. But with this volume of money passing through government hands, it is crucial that proper oversight be maintained to ensure it is being directed towards the projects for which it is intended.

In the last fiscal year, as an example, revenue shortfalls necessitated a steep cut in the domestically financed component of the development budget, and the axe largely fell on the programmes marked to facilitate the return of temporarily displaced persons of the Waziristan operations. The amount allocated for this programme was Rs100bn, but it was cut by Rs38bn. From the remainder, around Rs24bn was then diverted to various expenditures not connected to the TDPs at all, such as paying for the contingent liabilities of the JF-17 Thunder contractual payments, as well as a ‘security allowance’ and raising a special security force.

Although these diversions were effected after obtaining the necessary approvals, they speak of the ease with which funds marked by parliament for one purpose can be diverted to another. It is not clearly known how much of the development budget gets diverted in similar ways since the reporting template for the programme does not include the relevance disclosure requirements. What is known, however, is that growing amounts from the development budget are now being directed towards funding projects related to CPEC, for which more than Rs1.1tr have been marked thus far and Rs180bn spent until June 2016. Given the sheer amounts involved, and the growing absorption of domestically financed projects meant for CPEC, parliamentary oversight is becoming ever more critical. Yet the development budget remains one of the least debated and scrutinised areas of public finance. Parliament must play a more active role in providing oversight in this crucial area.

(Dawn 08, 22/07/2017)

### **Sindh govt’s reply sought on contempt plea against clipping IGP’s powers**

The Sindh High Court on Friday directed the provincial government to file within a week its reply on a contempt of court application against withdrawal of powers of Inspector General of Police A.D. Khowaja to decide the transfers and postings of senior police officials in the province.

A two-judge bench headed by Justice Munib Akhtar also issued notices to the chief secretary and other provincial authorities and put off the hearing to a date to be later pronounced by the court’s office.

The application seeking contempt proceedings against the provincial authorities was filed by the civil rights campaigners who had earlier challenged the removal of the IGP.

The applicants submitted that the impugned order empowered the services, general administration and coordination department of the provincial government to issue the transfers and postings of SPs, SSPs and equivalent officers with direct approval of the chief minister.

“Chief Minister Sindh has been pleased to approve that the transfers and postings of Superintendents of Police (BS-18)/Senior Superintendents of Police (BS-19) and equivalent shall be issued by the services, general administration and coordination department,” read the order issued by Chief Secretary Rizwan Memon.

According to the notification, the order is in accordance with Rule 9(2) of the Sindh Civil Servants (Appointment, Promotion and Transfer) Rules, 1974.

The government’s order of Aug 9, 2016 whereby powers were delegated to the IGP for transfers and postings of SPs and SSPs “is hereby cancelled/withdrawn”, read the order.

The provincial government had in April sent IG Khowaja packing after it appointed another Grade-21 police officer already working in the province in his place.

The Sindh government had said it was 'surrendering' Khowaja's services to the federal government and, without waiting for Islamabad's nod, appointed Additional IG Sardar Abdul Majeed Dasti as the provincial police chief till "appointment/posting of [a] regular incumbent by the Establishment Division".

However, the SHC had suspended the provincial government's notification with regard to the removal of Khowaja.

The Sindh government has alleged that the petition being heard by the court was filed in collusion by the original petitioner, A.D. Khowaja and the federal government "to show the provincial government in a bad light".

In a recent hearing of the case, Mr Khowaja offered to leave his post, telling the SHC through his counsel that doing his job had become increasingly difficult under the current circumstances as he had been facing increasing hostility from political quarters, with the provincial government keen to send him packing as soon as possible.

(By Tahir Siddiqui, 17, Dawn, 05/08/2017)

### **Despite resigning, many MPAs still receive salaries**

Many members of the Sindh Assembly, who resigned after switching political parties, are still receiving salaries.



According to officials, the salaries are being released due to technical reasons, as the resignations of many MPAs, most of whom were elected on the ticket of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), have not yet been accepted. However, when contacted, those MPAs maintained that they should not be paid salaries and that they are not utilising the money.

Sources in the Sindh Assembly told The Express Tribune that Irum Azeem Farooque, who resigned as an MQM MPA after party founder Altaf Hussain's anti-Pakistan remarks in August, 2016, still gets paid around Rs73,000 per month as salary. She has recently jumped ship to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and has been criticising her former party. However, the salary is still deposited in her bank account. According to Farooque, the issue was not of her doing, as the salary was transferred to her account without her approval.

#### **'Poor' MPAs raise demand for salary increase, again**

"I have tendered my resignation twice. I have not withdrawn the salary [from the bank account] and will return it to the government. The speaker should accept my resignation," she said.

Bilquees Mukhtar is another former MQM lawmaker still receiving a salary. She resigned in April, 2016 from the reserved seat for women to join the MQM's dissident faction, the Pak Sarzameen Party (PSP). She also said the issue was not her fault, adding that the assembly secretariat should stop issuing her salary. "I have sent my resignation to the speaker but he has not accepted it yet," she explained. "The amount is added to my account, but I don't utilise the funds."

One former MPA, who has resigned, said, on the basis of anonymity, that he still gets the salary. "I am not a liar and always believe in the truth. The money is transferred to my account and I utilise the same," he said, adding that since he is no longer an MPA, the speaker should accept his resignation and stop the salary.

#### **50 MPAs have not spoken a word in Sindh Assembly in three years**

Another former MQM MPA is Abdullah Shaikh, who has resigned and has not been attending assembly sessions but is still receiving his salary. He was elected from PS-97, Gulshan-e-Maymar, in the last general election and resigned in March this year, joining the PSP.

MPAs Irtiza Khalil Farooqui and Khalid Bin Wilayat parted ways with the MQM and joined the PSP in April this year. The assembly records available with The Express Tribune reveal that both the former MPAs are still being remunerated for being members of the Sindh Assembly.

Syed Hafeezudin represented the PTI in the assembly but later joined the PSP and gave up his assembly membership. "I receive the salary, but it is not my fault. The speaker should accept my resignation and ask the Election Commission of Pakistan to announce by-polls on my seat. This chapter will be closed," he said in his defence.

#### **Throwing a fit: MQM-Pakistan boycotts Sindh Assembly session**

##### **Rule-breakers**

When contacted, Sindh Assembly Secretary GM Umar Farooq said that all these MPAs did not follow the prescribed rules when resigning from their seats. Hence, their resignations have not been accepted and they are still being paid. Moreover, since all of them are legally provincial assembly members, they will be receiving the increased salaries according to the new law passed by the assembly.

"The assembly has now passed a law to revise the salaries and allowances of the lawmakers. We have finalised the list and will increase the monthly salary of each MPA from Rs73,000 to Rs145,000. The MPAs whose resignations have not yet been accepted will be entitled to the increased salaries," said Umar.



The assembly secretary added that these MPAs have either faxed their resignations to the speaker or sent it through courier service, which is against the rules. "The rules are very clear on resignations. A member of the assembly should come to the speaker's office and submit their hand-written resignation to him but no one has followed these rules."

#### **PTI submits resolution in Sindh Assembly demanding resignation of PM**

However, Mukhtar did not agree with the assembly secretary. "We have resigned. I want to know why the assembly secretariat has not yet intimidated us if we have violated the rules in submitting resignations," she said, adding that the speaker and assembly staff have been adopting delaying tactics.

(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune 13, 19/08/2017)

### **Karachi to be transformed under Karachi Neighbourhood Improvement Project**

The government has devised short and long-term plans to transform Karachi into a beautiful city, which include development of roads and parks, restoration of old buildings and evolving a proper traffic management system.



Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said this while presiding over a meeting on the World Bank-assisted Karachi Neighbourhood Improvement Project (KNIP) at CM House on Friday. Karachi will get a new face after the project, which will be the face of prosperity, claimed the CM.

Shah said that the World Bank, at the request of the Sindh government, carried out a Karachi City Diagnostic (KCD) to support the provincial government in the implementation of the Karachi Transform Strategy through short-term and long-term engagements. The KCD estimated that at least \$10 billion would be required in the next 10 years to close the city's infrastructure gaps.

#### **Mayor announces development schemes for Karachi**

Planning and Development Chairperson Mohammad Waseem said that in the short-term the World Bank has agreed to support KNIP by focusing on fast, low-cost and high-impact involvements to respond to the emergent city needs. "At present, KNIP stands approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council [Ecnec] and the loan agreement has already been signed by the World Bank and government," he said.

Giving a presentation to the chief minister, KNIP Director Khair Mohammad Kalwar said that the project's cost is \$98 million, of which \$12 million will be funded by the Sindh government. The project aims at enhancing public space in targeted neighbourhoods, improving road infrastructure to enhance mobility and improving the city's capacity to provide selected administrative services, he added.

Talking about component-I of the project, the project director said it includes renewal of the city's downtown area in Saddar, enhancement of roads and public spaces in Malir and mobility improvement in Korangi.

#### **Chief minister blames Centre for delaying KCR**

In the renovation of Saddar, heritage buildings at Pakistan Chowk and its adjoining areas will be restored, while roads will be reconstructed with new water and sewerage lines. It has also been decided that different roads in the area will be made one-way for traffic and footpaths, with beautiful benches and plants, will be built.

The area from DJ College to the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi will also be developed on the same pattern with a one-way traffic route along with construction of parking lots and development of parks and open spaces with benches for visitors.

It was also decided in the meeting that parking along the roads will be strictly prohibited and the entire area would be monitored via closed-circuit television cameras.

#### **Civil society unhappy with Green Line extension**

The CM directed Karachi Additional IG Mushtaq Maher to work together with the KNIP director to develop the one-way traffic plans. Shah added that there is a dire need to manage growing traffic in the city, particularly in Saddar.

"This is the most important project for the restoration of the old city area. Therefore, it must be supported [by everyone] not only by the relevant agencies and government departments. I request each and every Karachiite to support and own it," the CM said.

Shah also proposed that compound walls of some important beautiful buildings in the old city be replaced by fences so that beautiful facade of such buildings could be enjoyed by every passer-by.

#### **More bridges and highways? No! We need bus lanes, elevated light rail and underground trains**

The CM also directed the Karachi commissioner to start removing encroachments from the entire area of the project's component-I so that it could be started within a month. He also directed the KNIP director to begin inviting tenders for the reconstruction work within two weeks.

Components II and III include automation of construction permits by the Sindh Building Control Authority, an integrated financial management system for the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and design and implementation of the Sindh Provincial Electronic On-Stop Shop, along with other projects.

(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune 13, 19/08/2017)

### **Sindh to launch WB-funded Rs10bn city beautification plan**

The Sindh government has chalked out short- and long-term plans to transform Karachi into a beautiful city by developing its roads, parks and evolving proper city management by launching the World Bank-funded Karachi Neighbourhood Improvement Project (KNIP) to give the metropolis a new face of peace and prosperity.

The Rs10 billion project consists of three components, which would be covered in the next 10 years. Component-I includes Saddar downtown, Pakistan Chowk and adjoining areas; Malir public spaces enhancement and Korangi neighbourhood where different roads would be made one-way for traffic so that footpaths and open green sitting places could be made available for students, visitors and people living in the vicinity.

The plan aims at enhancing public spaces, road infrastructure, inclusion and access to market. This was stated by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah while presiding over a meeting on the World Bank-assisted programme here at CM House on Friday.

He directed the Karachi commissioner to start removing encroachments from the entire project area — phase-I Saddar downtown — so that work could be started within a month.

“This is the most important project in terms of restoration of old city area, therefore, it must be supported not only by the agencies concerned and government departments but I would request each and every Karachiite to support and own it,” he said.

The CM said that the World Bank, on the request of the Sindh government, carried out the Karachi City Diagnostic (KCD) to support provincial government for implementation of the Karachi Transform Strategy (KTS) through short- and long-term engagements.

He added that the KCD estimated that at least Rs10bn would be required in the next 10 years to close the city’s infrastructure gaps. He said the short- and long-term plans to transform Karachi into a beautiful city included development of roads, restoring old buildings, developing parks and evolving a proper traffic management system.

Planning and Development chairman Mohammad Waseem said that in short term the World Bank had agreed to support the KNIP focusing on fast, low-cost and high-impact interventions to respond to the emergent city needs and establish a building block for long-term partnership with the Sindh government to transform the city. “At present, the KNIP stands approved from the ECNEC and a loan agreement has already been signed by the WB and the government,” he said.

KNIP Project Director Khair Mohammad Kalwar in his presentation said that the project cost was \$98 million while the Sindh government’s share was \$12m. “It is aimed at enhancing public space in targeted neighbourhoods, improvement of urban roads’ infrastructure to enhance mobility, inclusion and access to market and improvement of the city’s capacity to provide selected administrative services.”

Talking about component-I of the selected interventions — Public Space and Mobility Improvements, the PD said it includes Saddar downtown area revitalisation; Malir area road public spaces enhancement and Korangi neighbourhood mobility improvements. He said old buildings declared as heritage sites would be restored. The roads would also be reconstructed with new water and sewerage lines and ducts for other cables while area from the DJ College up to the Arts Council would also be developed on the same pattern with one-way traffic route, construction/arrangement of parking lots, development of parks, open spaces for visitors with benches, Victorian streetlights, open-space coffee shops, bookstores, etc, he added.

The meeting decided that parking along the roads would strictly be prohibited. The entire area would be covered through CCTV cameras.

The chief minister directed the Karachi police chief to work together with the KNIP project director for making one-way traffic plans. Component-II and III include design and implementation of a Provincial Electronic One-Stop Shop (PEOSS) for business licences and e-licensing by other provincial agencies to be hosted by the Sindh Board of Investment, and automation of construction permits by the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA).

An integrated financial management system for the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, support KMC in improving its municipal utility tax revenues by financing a survey in the South and Central districts to assess the potential tax base, design and development of web-based platform for the KMC and parking management study are also part of the plan.

The meeting was attended by provincial ministers Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani, Jam Khan Shoro, Syed Nasir Shah, Syed Sardar Shah, Chief Secretary Rizwan Memon, principal secretary to CM Sohail Rajput, finance secretary Hassan Naqvi, transport secretary Saeed Awan, local government Secretary Ramzan Awan and others (Dawn News, 17, 19/08/2017)

### **Govt breaks the bank for MNAs’ uplift schemes**

Despite being beset on all sides by political challenges, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government has disbursed all the funds earmarked for parliamentarians’ development schemes for the fiscal year 2017-18.

This is in stark contrast to less-than one per cent released for the rest of the country’s core development programme. Under the government’s own disbursement mechanism, 20pc each is released in the first two quarters, followed by 30pc each in the last two quarters.



In contrast, no funds have so far been released for the all-important 'Energy for All' and 'Clean Drinking Water for All' initiatives, which were allocated Rs12.5 billion each.

Similarly, no funds have been disbursed to special federal development projects, which were allocated Rs35bn. Full Rs30bn earmarked for parliamentarians' areas released in one go; no spending on energy, water projects under PSDP so far. The Planning Commission, which is now controlled directly by Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as minister in charge of planning and development, has said it had released a total of Rs53.6bn in development funds as of Aug 11, 2017.

This accounts for about 5.36pc of the total Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), worth just over Rs1 trillion, for the current fiscal year.

The disbursements include a lump-sum payment of Rs30bn for community development schemes on the recommendations of the parliamentarians, codenamed 'Prime Minister's Global SDGs Achievement' programme.

The government had allocated a total of Rs30bn for this head for the entire fiscal year, and it is very rare for all the funding under a particular head to be released in one go, that too in the very first quarter.

This programme consists of small community development schemes, prepared on the recommendations of parliamentarians, ostensibly aimed at improving the living standards of citizens through the provision of new roads, sewerage and water supply projects, etc.

Another Rs14.4bn was doled out of Rs70.5bn block allocations for three special areas under the federal government's financial control; Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan and the tribal areas.

Similarly, a sum of Rs3.2bn was released for another politically oriented scheme — 'Prime Minister's Youth & Hunarmand' Programme — against its full allocation of Rs20bn.

These three heads alone account for the bulk of total funds disbursed for the PSDP 2017-18, the utilisation of which stands at 5.36pc.

Apart from these three heads, expenses on core development expenditure during this period stood at a discouragingly low Rs5.08bn, just 0.5pc of the total PSDP for 2017-18.

This included PSDP funds released to all 38 federal ministries and divisions, against an annual allocation of Rs306bn, at a dismal disbursement ratio of 1.66pc.

Even here, only a handful of ministries managed to obtain disbursements. These included Rs2.6bn to the communications division, while seven other divisions, including climate change, finance, National Health Services, petroleum, planning, Suparco and the Nuclear Regulatory Authority received Rs350m on average.

Disbursements for areas dubbed as a priority for the PML-N government — electricity, highways and water — stood flat at zero. This is despite the fact that the government has allocated Rs62bn for the power sector, Rs326bn for national highways and Rs37bn for the water sector.

No funds had been released for these three priority areas as of August 11, 2017, against a total allocation of Rs424bn for the year. This disbursement was significantly lower than targets set by the federal government, under which it should have released about 10pc of annual allocations by now.

During almost the same period last year, the government had disbursed about Rs57bn against a total PSDP allocation of Rs800bn (By Khaleeq Kiani, Dawn, 01, 21/08/2017)

## **Senate passes right to information bill**

The long-pending Right of Access to Information Bill finally saw the light of day on Tuesday when the upper house of parliament adopted it unanimously.



If implemented, the bill would give people – including the media – access to public record. However, there will still be some limitations in obtaining access to the material that may be considered harmful to national security, relations with friendly countries, privacy of someone's life, home and family records.

Once it becomes law after the National Assembly also adopts it and the president signs it into an act, a citizen would have to make a request in writing to a public body for information.

### **Sindh Assembly sanctions Right to Information Act**

The designated official of a government organisation would be required to respond to such a request as soon as possible and that too within 10 working days of receiving the request.

This stipulated period could be extended for another 10 working days maximum in case the information sought required a search through a large chunk of records or records located in different offices or some kind of consultation is required with third parties or other public bodies.

Any information needed to protect the life and liberty of any individual would have to be provided within three working days, states another clause of the bill.

The bill also specifies the type of information that will be exempted from disclosure.

An applicant not satisfied by the decision of a designated officer of a public body from which the information was sought, could file an appeal to an information commission within 30 days.

The proposed three-member commission would have to decide the case within 60 days. The public body that fails to provide information, or provides insufficient information or fails to provide information on time, would bear the burden of proof to substantiate its action.

The commission comprising one member qualified to be a judge of a high court, one member who has been in service of Pakistan in BS-22 or equivalent, and one member from civil society having 16 years of education and experience of not less than 15 years in the field of social sciences would be appointed by prime minister for a term of four years.

#### **Right to information: Bill to be presented in Sindh Assembly**

Amongst these three, prime minister would appoint one as chief information commissioner. The chief information commissioner and commissioners could be removed from service in case of serious complains against them.

Such a complaint would be launched before a five-member parliamentary committee comprising two senators nominated by the Senate chairman and three members from the National Assembly to be appointed by the speaker.

#### **Offenses**

Any person, who is found wilfully obstructing implementation of the act by obstructing any information or record with the view to preventing exercise of the right provided in this law, or interfering with the work of the information commission or destroyed a record without lawful authority would be punishable with a fine up to Rs50,000.

In case any person who wilfully destroys a record was the subject of any application for access to information or appeal or otherwise obstructs access to information which is subject of an application or appeal with the intention of preventing its disclosure under this law, will be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine which shall not be less than Rs100,000 or with both.

Earlier during question hour, the Senate was informed that there are 3,193 civil servants working with different federal government departments whose spouses are foreign nationals.

Of those, 68 are gazetted officers while the rest are government employees in grade 1 to 16.

#### **Govt has fulfilled its pledge: Marriyum**

Minister of Information Marriyum Aurangzeb has said the PML-N government has fulfilled yet another pledge by bringing the legislation. "This bill is a consensus document which entirely covers Article 19-A of the Constitution," she said after the Senate adopted the bill.

#### **Right to information: K-P's law judged ahead of other provinces**

She observed that according to the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the bill was intended to promote two-way flow of information from the government to the people and vice versa.

"[It aims to] strengthen and safeguard the public's right to know, especially in the backdrop of Article 19-A of the Constitution which explicitly recognized this right as a fundamental right," she added.

Marriyum said that the former prime minister Nawaz Sharif had constituted a ministerial committee following which a select committee was constituted for further consideration of the bill.

"This bill at the federal level will ensure access to information to every citizen, promote good governance and oversight of the institutions as well as transparency in matters relating to governance," she added.

(The Express Tribune 03, 23/08/2017)

### **Sindh govt fails to establish information commission within prescribed time**

Dream of having access to information in matters of public importance continues to remain unfulfilled in Sindh.

The Sindh Assembly akin to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab passed the law in March this year promising to ensure citizen's access to information in government departments but the government has not yet taken measures to implement the law.

After the passage of Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act, 2016, the government was supposed to establish Sindh Information Commission within 100 days to regulate matters pertaining to right to information. However, there has been no progress on the law implementation even after five months.

According to the law, the Sindh Information Commission would comprise three members to be appointed by the government. The commission would be headed by chief information officer who would be a retired bureaucrat of at least grade-21.

#### **Activists demand effective right to information bill**

The law also decreed that the government would have division or district level information offices, under the supervision of divisional commissioners, with members from civil society and lawyer fraternity to look into public grievances related to their right to information.

"Anyone who believes that his request is not being entertained and government officers refuse to provide him the information, he will have right to lodge complaint with the information commission. The commission will decide every complaint within 45 days," read the law. "Any officer [who] fails to provide information to citizens will be punished with fine," the law maintained, adding that if any officer did so with mala fide intention, this would lead to a fine of up to 10% of his basic salary.

Moving the bill, Parliamentary Minister Nisar Ahmed Khuhro had said that people always accused the government for corruption and bad governance, as well as violation of laws, but after this bill, the government would be accountable to every citizen.

#### **'PML-N not implementing 18th Amendment'**

Commenting on the non-implementation of the law, Toufique Ahmed Wasan, provincial coordinator of Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, a not-for-profit civil society organisation, said that passage of the law was positive news as it showed the government's commitment to empower ordinary persons, but ironically the law remains only on papers like many other laws in Pakistan. "Sindh governor has given the assent to the bill and government also issued gazetteer notification but the information commission is still not formed," he said.

Dr Syed Raza Ali Gardezi, civil society activist who also played a role in drafting this law, said it was a people friendly law but unless the information commission is not set-up, it will remain a 'toothless effort'.

#### **Implementation of job quota stressed**

"I have written a number of letters to parliamentary minister and chief minister asking them to set-up the information commission but no one has heeded our plea," lamented Dr Gardezi.

However, when contacted, the parliamentary minister assured that the government is serious in implementing the law. We have started consultations to appoint the head of the information commission and rules will be drafted later, said Khuhro. "We will set up the commission within a few days," he affirmed.

(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune 13, 24/08/2017)

## **14 schemes worth Rs8.4 billion approved for Karachi Development Package Phase-II**

Out of Rs12 billion reserved for the Karachi Development Package Phase-II, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has approved Rs8.4 billion for 14 schemes of construction of roads, flyovers and drainage systems in the city.



The CM made this decision while presiding over a meeting at Chief Minister House on Thursday to review the progress of ongoing schemes launched under the Karachi Development Package Phase-I and approve new schemes for the phase-II of the package. The meeting was attended by Local Government Minister Jam Khan

Shoro, Planning and Development Board Chairperson Muhammad Waseem, Principal Secretary to CM Sohail Rajput, Finance Secretary Hassan Naqvi, Karachi Package Project Director Niaz Soomro and others.

The approved schemes include construction of a road from Tank Chowrangi to the Super Highway via Thaddo Nalo at a cost of Rs350 million, reconstruction of Tipu Sultan Road from Sharae Faisal to Karsaz at a cost of Rs280 million, construction of bridges at the intersections of Tipu Sultan and Khalid Bin Waleed roads at Shaheed-e-Millat Road at a cost of Rs1.5 billion and widening of Stadium Road at a cost of Rs270 million. The CM also approved the renovation of Lea Market, Jodia Bazaar, Sarafa Bazaar and Juna Market areas along with laying new water and sewerage lines. These schemes would cost around Rs644 million.

#### **Karachi needs creativity-led urban development**

The other schemes approved are remodeling of 12000 Road in Landhi, reconstruction of Cantt Station Road along with laying new sewerage and water supply lines, improvement of road from Fawara Chowk to Garden, construction of an interchange bridge at CCI Intersection and widening of the bridge over Korangi Nullah.

Construction of bridge at intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Gizri Boulevard has also been approved at the cost of Rs70 million, while a storm drain from Star Gate to Chakora Nullah will be constructed at a cost of Rs200 million. Funds amounting to Rs70 million will be spent on the construction of a storm drain at Hassan Square.

The CM also reviewed ongoing schemes of Karachi package phase-I. He directed the project director to expedite the work on Submarine underpass. "This is one of the most important schemes and I want to inaugurate it by the end of November," the CM said.

#### **Limofied marks Independence day with Karachi launch**

Shah also directed the local government minister to personally monitor construction of storm drains along Sharae Faisal and University Road from NED University to Safoora Chowrangi.

"I want you to complete all the formalities, including invitation of tenders etc. so that by the end of the current month, inauguration ceremony of phase-II could be held," the CM said.

(By Our Correspondent, The Express Tribune, 14, 08/09/2017)

### **AIIB ready to fund S-III, Malir expressway projects**

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has expressed its willingness to provide funds for four mega projects in Sindh to be completed with an estimated cost of Rs137.7 billion.

The four projects are construction of the Karachi Expressway/Ring Road, Greater Karachi Sewage Treatment Project, commonly known as S-III, lining of KB Feeder and construction of the Kandhkot-Ghouspur bridge on the Indus River.

A delegation of the AIIB led by Vice President D.J. Pandian met Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at the CM House on Wednesday.

The chief minister was assisted by ministers Hazar Khan Bijarani, Syed Nasir Shah, chief secretary Rizwan Memon and other senior officials.

Referring to the S-III project, the chief minister said that 500 million gallons a day (MDG) of sewage was generated in Karachi and was being directly disposed of into the sea without any treatment. "This is a very serious issue and I want to resolve it any cost," he said.

Recalling the details, Planning and Development chairman Mohammad Waseem said that work on Rs36.117bn project was in progress as the provincial government was investing Rs7.982bn from its resources to enhance the capacity of three treatment plants and to construct a new treatment plant of 200 MGD.

Lining of KB Feeder and construction of Kandhkot-Ghouspur bridge also on the cards

He said that as per the national environmental quality standards (NEQS) requirement, industrial units were required to undertake pre-treatment of industrial effluent before discharging it into municipal sewerage system.

Presently, 94 MGD industrial effluent was generated from five industrial estates of Karachi and disposed of directly into open drains. The CM said that due to escalation of the S-III cost, the provincial government needed Rs28bn to complete the project. "This is the most important project for the city of Karachi which will make our sea free of pollution," he said.

He said that with the establishment of five combined effluent treatment plants, the provincial government would be able to meet WTO requirements for seafood exports and other issues such as protection of natural water bodies from contamination, safeguarding of soil and groundwater and protection of agricultural crops from contamination would also be addressed. About lining of KB Feeder, special secretary irrigation Junaid Memon said that the design discharge capacity of the channel was 9,100 cusecs but due to silt it is only 7,500 cusecs.

Recalling the financial aspects of the KB Feeder project, Mr Waseem said that it would cost Rs20bn.

The CM also discussed the Malir Expressway/Karachi Ring Road project. He said that Karachi had a north-western bypass whereas a mega city like Karachi should have a proper ring road to facilitate traffic, hence there was an urgent need to construct a south-eastern bypass.

He added that the proposed corridor would provide efficient movement of vehicular traffic and goods from the Karachi port to other parts of the country.

He further said that the proposed Ring Road had two major settlements — DHA City and Bahria Town — which were developing at a very fast pace and required an alternative road network to alleviate the sufferings of commuters.

In addition to the two new townships, the Ring Road would also cater to the requirement of the Education City which had been planned to establish prominent educational institutions, he said.

Giving status of the project, Mr Waseem said that an expression of interest for construction of the road on a build-operate-transfer basis was invited by the local government department.

The environment impact assessment was under process and the PC-I was being prepared. An amount of Rs61bn was required for the construction of a 47.2-kilometre-long corridor (three lanes on either side).

Mr Bijarani said that the length of the present route connecting Ghotki-Ghouspur (Kandhkot) was 152km through Sukkur Barrage and 188km through Guddu Barrage. "If a bridge, Ghotki-Kandhkot is constructed, it would connect Indus Highway with National Highway and reduce the distance between the two cities to 127km."

Mr Waseem said the project would cost Rs6.452bn.

The AIIB delegation was also briefed on other projects. However, they expressed their interest in the above-mentioned four projects. The AIIB vice president urged the chief minister to send details, present status of the projects and concept papers to them so that they could present them in their board meeting.

He added that he and his team were satisfied with the four projects and would also support the provincial government to establish a desalination plant to provide drinking water to Karachiites.

(By Habib Khan Ghori, Dawn, 17, 14/09/2017)

## Digital registry launched to scale up immunisation coverage in Sindh

Having received encouraging results from a pilot project in Korangi, where it increased immunisation coverage to 54 per cent in six years, officials of the provincial health department with its partners announced on Tuesday that they would scale up the digital immunisation registry programme across Sindh.



Titled 'Zindagi Mehfooz Digital Immunisation Registry in Sindh', the programme was launched at a local hotel.

The registry developed by Interactive Research and Development (IRD), an international health delivery and research organisation, with the Indus Health Network (IHN) would help reduce child mortality from vaccine preventable diseases by enabling vaccinators to record routinely collected immunisation data on their mobile phones linked in real time to a web-based monitoring dashboard. 'Paper-based systems make it difficult to track and monitor a child's immunisation coverage'

The provincial scale-up is supported by WHO-Pakistan and Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation.

Speaking at the ceremony, Health Secretary Dr Fazlullah Pechuho admitted that there were gaps in government health mechanism. He said there were "quality issues" in data and that a government hospital in Badin had been given to the Indus Hospital (IH) team for better management.

According to him, the total number of "still missed children" [who fail to get anti-polio drops in campaigns] and refusals in Karachi was around 50,000.

"We believe that if community health workers and lady health workers have devices to track down and follow up cases, immunisation coverage would definitely improve in the province," he said.

Health Minister Dr Sikandar Ali Mandhro said that absolute success could be achieved only if the government staff put their hearts and souls into their work, apart from making use of technological innovations.

"We will get 100 per cent success if we go into the field and seek people's feedback on the services the government is providing them. It's good to make use of technology but if we are led by conscience and love for children, our efforts will produce more durable results," he said and thanked the IH and other partners for their support.

Dr Abdul Bari Khan, the chief executive officer of the IHN, shared some statistics on child mortality, highlighting the project's significance. Of every 1,000 live births in Sindh, he pointed out, 82 children were estimated to die before their first birthday. Most of these deaths were due to vaccine preventable diseases.

"Factors contributing to this situation include sub-optimal immunisation coverage, overburdened immunisation staff, inadequate health infrastructure, lack of awareness and wrong perceptions regarding immunisation among parents and paper-based systems that make it difficult to track and monitor a child's immunisation coverage," he said.

Sharing details of the Zindagi Mehfooz project, Dr Subhash Chandir, the director of the Child Health and Vaccines Programme at the IRD, said that it aimed to change the landscape of child health by engaging parents for timely immunisation, systemising vaccinator's job by creating centralised immunisation record, reducing time spent on paper-based reporting and creating more time and opportunities for vaccinators to immunise children.

"At the time of a child's visit to the EPI centre, the vaccinator will enrol the child in the registry by assigning a unique identification in the form of a quick response code and submitting the data to the web dashboard in real time," he said.

Highlighting other features of the application, he said the registry would also enable automated SMS reminders for parents about their child's upcoming vaccination and provide a decision support system for routine and catch-up immunisation.

The project was initially piloted in Karachi in 2012, later in Shikarpur in 2015 and now had been extended to 1,600 basic health units across Sindh, he said.

Project director Extended Programme for Immunisation (EPI), Sindh, Dr Agha Mohammad Ashfaq informed the audience about the successes achieved so far and said that immunisation coverage had increased from 35pc to 45pc owing to better monitoring. "Our target is to increase immunisation coverage by 80pc in five years," he said.

The programme concluded with the distribution of mobile phones equipped with applications to vaccinators and shields to guests. (By Faiza Ilyas Dawn 17, 04/10/2017)

## Killers of Perween Rahman nabbed, Supreme Court told

The Supreme Court was told on Tuesday that the principal accused behind the murder of director Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) Karachi, Perween Rahman, had been arrested and efforts were on to arrest 11 other absconding accomplices.



In a report submitted before the two-judge bench, headed by Justice Sheikh Azmat Saeed, Deputy Inspector General Police West Zone Karachi informed the court that the principal accused Mohammad Rahim Swati, who allegedly ran illegal hydrant business in Karachi, Ahmed Khan alias Papoo Kashmiri, and Mohammad Imran had been arrested and their cases were pending before the Anti-Terrorist Court-VII Karachi.

Ms Rahman who served as the director OPP Karachi was killed on March 13, 2013 while going home from her office. The assailants riding a motorbike opened fire on her car on the main Manghopir Road near Banaras Flyover wherein she received bullet injuries to her neck. Her driver rushed her to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries.

The court on Tuesday also ordered the Inspector General Police Sindh to provide protection to OPP staff members, counsel for the complainant involved in the trial, decide on the application written by Aquila Ismail, sister of slain Ms Rahman, and Zohra Yousuf, for re-investigation into the case by police, and interrogation of the investigating officers — sub inspectors Raja Ulfat Hussain and Ashfaq Hussain Baloch — for their alleged involvement in manipulating the initial investigation into the murder of Ms Rahman. OPP staff receiving threats from relatives of arrested suspects

The directions were issued when Aquila Ismail appeared in person to inform the court about the threats being received by the OPP staff from the family members of those who had been arrested.

Senior counsel Raheel Kamran Sheikh, who appeared on behalf of Aquila Ismail, told the court that even the lawyers of the trial court who represented the complainants were afraid because of the threats they were receiving.

Meanwhile, police in its report admitted that accused Rahim Swati was arrested in July 2016 after an encounter in the Manghopir area, and from his possession illicit weapons and explosives were recovered.

Swati also confessed before a joint investigation team (JIT) that he was an office-bearer of the Awami National Party and a councillor of UC-8 in PS-86. About the motive behind the murder, the report said that in 2011, Ayaz Swati sought assistance of Raheem Swati for opening a karate centre on the land owned by the OPP.

But Ms Rahman refused, the police report said, adding the scheme to kill Ms Rahman was conceived during a meeting between Raheem Swati, Ayaz Swati, Amjad Afridi and Ahmed Ali alias Papoo Kashmiri.

Ayaz Swati contacted by mobile phone Moosa — a local Taliban commander, and Mehfoozullah alias Bhaloo — then 'in-charge' of Kati Pahari area of Karachi.

On March 13, 2013, Raheem Swati told JIT that Ayaz Swati and Amjad Afridi informed him that Moosa, Bhaloo and Papoo Kashmiri had "accomplished the task".

Raheem Swati, to save himself from the clutches of law, went underground and started driving vehicles in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, police report stated.

During that period Moosa called him for the payment of Rs4 million and on failure his house was attacked with crackers. Qari Bilal and Bhaloo had already been killed by police in an encounter.

The court ordered police to arrest the absconders and submit a fresh report within a month.  
(By Nasir Iqbal Dawn 17, 11/10/2017)

### **CM orders to expedite work on Karachi package**

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that with the completion of Karachi package phase I and starting of its phase II soon, not only would the 'lights' of the metropolis be fully restored, but it would also become a beautiful city of the country.

These views were expressed by the chief minister while he was presiding over a meeting to review the progress of Karachi package here on Wednesday at CM House.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Planning and Development Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani, Local Government Minister Jam Khan Shoro, chairman of Planning and Development Mohammad Waseem, principal secretary to CM Sohail Rajput, project director of Karachi package Niaz Soomro and others.

Referring to the ongoing development works in the city, the chief minister said the development had changed the face of Karachi by restoring city lights, reconstruction of main arteries, installation of new lights on roads and revamping of traffic islands along the arteries.

"Life in the city is again flourishing while the Karachi package II is about to start and it would further beautify the city."  
Conceding delay in the completion of the underpass at Submarine Chowrangi, the chief minister stressed the need to complete the underpass at the earliest.

Local Government Minister Jam Khan Shoro informed the meeting participants that its one track would be opened to traffic on November 15.



Giving the progress on the bridge at intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Gizri Boulevard, Mr Shoro said all legal formalities of the project, which would cost Rs700 million, had been completed.

The chief minister directed the PD to start work by Nov 15 as he wanted to lay its foundation stone.

The PD, Niaz Soomro, said that the technical evaluation report had been uploaded on the Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority website and as per target the work would be started in November.

The other projects on which work would also start by November 2017 are: construction of Rs650m road from Fawwara Chowk to Garden via Abdullah Haroon Road and back to Fawwara Chowk via Zaibunnisa Street; construction of Rs350m road from Tank Chowk to the Superhighway via Thado Nullah (prequalification for the project has been completed); reconstruction of Rs280m Tipu Sultan Road from Sharea Faisal to Karsaz; construction of Rs1.5 billion bridge at Tipu Sultan and Khalid Bin Waleed intersection at Shaheed-i-Millat Road, widening of Rs270m Stadium Road from University Road to Rashid Minhas Road.

Construction of 12,000 Road (Landhi Korangi) for Rs1.5bn is also part of the package. On the road two bridges would also be constructed.

Improvement plan of Rs240m for roads at Cantt Railway station is included.

The chief minister said that two places were most important which affected the image of the city. They are the Cantt Station and the airport.

"When people from other cities and countries land at our airport or come out of Cantt Station they see the plight of roads. This is most important for me to develop both these areas."

He said he had a beautification plan for all flyovers and bridges of the city. The flyover at Jinnah Terminal is on the top priority.

The work on some storm-water drains from Star Gate to Chakora Nullah, Sharea Faisal of Rs200m and storm-water drain from Hassan Square to Lyari River of Rs70m would be started by the beginning of November.

The chief minister directed the PD of the Karachi package to expedite the works under phase I of the package.

#### **Development in other Sindh districts**

The chief minister also presided over a works and services department meeting where he was given a briefing that in other parts of Sindh six road development schemes were also being implemented.

The total length of the six schemes would be 328 kilometres and would cost over Rs22bn, to be carried out with the cooperation of the Asian Development Bank.

The work on these roads has already started.  
(Dawn 18, 12/10/2017)

### **Murad to inaugurate Karachi development package phase II on Dec 15**

Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah will inaugurate Karachi development package phase II, which costs Rs8 billion, on Dec 15 and on the same day, one track of the Submarine Chowk underpass will be opened to traffic.

These decisions were taken at a meeting presided over by the chief minister on Monday and attended by Local Government Minister Jam Khan Shoro, principal secretary to CM Sohail Rajput, local government secretary Ramzan Awan, Karachi Commissioner Aijaz Khan, Karachi package's project director Niaz Soomro and other officials.

Mr Shah, while reviewing progress of phase I, directed the local government department to complete all formalities to start work on phase II on the given date.

Submarine Chowk underpass will be opened to traffic on same day

Some of the prominent targets of phase II are: reconstruction of the bridge at Tipu Sultan Road and Khalid Bin Waleed Road intersection at Shaheed-i-Millat Rd, remodelling of Landhi Rd, improvement of the road from Fawwara Chowk to Garden via Abdullah Haroon Rd and back to Fawwara Chowk via Zaibunnisa Street, construction of a bridge at Sunset Boulevard and Gizri Boulevard intersection, improvement of water supply to Baldia Town, construction of storm-water drain from Hasan Square to Lyari River, reconstruction of Tipu Sultan Rd from Sharea Faisal to Karsaz, widening of Stadium Rd from University Rd to Rashid Minhas Rd and improvement of the road near Cantt Station.

Mr Shah asked the project director to open one track of the Submarine underpass on Dec 15 and on the same day start work on the flyover at Sunset Boulevard.

"I want you to finalise an alternative route parallel to Sunset Boulevard for convenience of the people of the area," he said.

Besides, the details of interchange bridge at ICI intersection and flyover at Lee Market have been hosted on the Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority website for technical evaluation report.

The chief minister was also briefed about the progress of phase I.

Mr Shoro informed him that work on University Rd from NED to Safoora, Mosamiat Rd, the road from Surjani to Madinatul Hikmat, construction of U-turn at Natha Khan bridge, widening of Sharea Faisal from Metropole to Star Gate, remodelling of Baloch Colony Rd and reconstruction of Karachi zoo was proceeding at a good pace.  
(Dawn 17, 21/11/2017)

### **Work on Karachi Package phase II to begin on December 15**

Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has asked the local government department to start work on 14 schemes of the Karachi Package's phase II from December 15. The cost of the mega schemes has been estimated at Rs8 billion.



The CM issued the directives while presiding over a meeting to review the progress of the Karachi Package's phase I and fix the deadline for the start of phase II. The meeting was attended by Local Government Minister Jam Khan Shoro, Principal Secretary to the CM Sohail Rajput, Local Government Secretary Ramzan Awan, Karachi Commissioner Ejaz Khan, Karachi Package Project Director Niaz

Soomro and others.

The schemes on which work has to start within a month include the road from Tank Chowrangi to the Super Highway via Thadho Nalo at a cost of Rs350 million, the Rs280 million scheme of the reconstruction of Tipu Sultan Road from Sharae Faisal to Karsaz, construction of bridges at the intersections of Tipu Sultan Road and Khalid Bin Waleed Road with Shaheed-e-Millat Road at a cost of Rs1.5 billion, widening of Stadium Road at a cost of Rs270 million, the Rs1.5 billion project to remodel 2000 Road in Landhi and widening the road at Cantt station at a cost of Rs240 million. The schemes also include the Rs200 million construction of the bridge over the Korangi Nullah, construction of a bridge at the intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Gizri Boulevard at a cost of Rs700 million, the Rs700 million project to construct a stormwater drain at Hassan Square, construction of a drain from Star Gate to Chakora Nullah at a cost of Rs200 million and the Rs400 million scheme to improve water supply to Baldia Town.

#### **14 schemes worth Rs8.4 billion approved for Karachi Development Package Phase-II**

The CM discussed the schemes with the participants of the meeting and finalised December 15 as the date the work on the schemes was to be started. "I will perform the launching ceremony and will not extend the date," he warned.

Shah also directed the opening of one way of the Submarine Underpass on December 15, which would also be the day when work would start on the flyover on Sunset Boulevard. He ordered the relevant authorities to finalise alternative routes for the people living near Sunset Boulevard.

The chief minister was also briefed about the progress of the Karachi Package's phase I during the meeting. He was informed by Shoro that 82% of the work on University Road between NED University of Engineering and Technology and Safoora Goth had been completed.

#### **One track of Karachi's Submarine Chowrangi underpass to be opened Nov 15**

Shoro informed the meeting that the work on the rehabilitation of Mausamiyat Road had been completed while 96% of the work on the road from Surjani Town to Madinatul Hikmat had been completed. Widening of Sharae Faisal from Metropole to Star Gate had been 83% achieved while the construction of the Drigh Road underpass had been 81% completed.  
(THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 13, 21/11/2017)

### **'If the govt fails to fulfill its duties, the judiciary will step in'**

The judiciary will have to intervene if the government fails to discharge its responsibilities, observed Chief Justice of Pakistan Mian Saqib Nisar.



In a democratic system, the judiciary plays the role of custodian and if any state institution fails to perform its duties, the Supreme Court will question it, the top judge said, expressing dismay over the failure of the Sindh government to provide clean drinking water and sanitation conditions across the province.

A three-member bench, which also comprised justices Faisal Arab and Sajjad Ali Shah, took up a case on Monday regarding the implementation of recommendations and suggestions of a SC-appointed judicial commission to provide clean drinking water, improve sanitation conditions and save the environment.

"During the course of [the] hearing, we find it expedient that in order to seek the implementation of the report submitted by the commission and to determine whether positive steps have been taken by the government in this context and, since a satisfactory reply in this regard is not forthcoming on behalf of the government of Sindh, therefore, we direct that the chief minister be present before this court on the next date of hearing," ordered the bench.

#### **Task force formed to clear rain water in District Central**

The provincial advocate-general informed that the CM would be in Islamabad today (Tuesday), which is the next hearing, the bench directed the provincial chief "to ensure his presence before the court on December 6 [tomorrow]."

The apex court wondered why 88% of the people in Larkana, the political base of the ruling party, were being supplied filthy drinking water. Expressing his dismay over the state of affairs in Sindh, the CJP remarked that the performance of the elected representatives was beyond his understanding.

He made it clear that the court was not against anyone. We do not want to issue any order to which someone might say 'why I was ousted,' he said, making an oblique reference to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's speeches targeted at the apex court since his disqualification in the Panama Papers case.

He told the law officer that the court will pass an order according to the law after hearing everyone.

#### **Sindh governor downplays Pakistan's water woes at international conference**

The CJP told the law officer that the matter related to the lives of the people, which cannot be ignored, adding that if the lives of the people were exposed to danger and the court could not remain silent.

The bench said the CM will be asked to explain what steps he had taken to resolve the problems related to supply of potable drinking water and sanitation, adding that the CM's presence in court will lead towards the resolution of these problems.

At the outset of the hearing, the petitioner, Advocate Shahab Usto, said that according to the commission's report, up to 80% people in Karachi, 85% in Hyderabad, 88% in Larkana and 78% in Shikarpur were drinking polluted water.

He told the judges that the toxic and hazardous sewage as well as the waste produced by hospitals and industries was being dumped into water tributaries. Usto alleged that the residents of the province's 29 districts were being forced to drink polluted water.

#### **Industrial effluent affecting underground water quality, experts say**

Justice Nisar observed that water and air are the two major blessings on Earth without which life cannot exist. "It is the duty of the state to discharge its responsibility in protecting [these blessings]," the top judge observed. "But, we have disturbed these blessings," he remarked with concern.

He noted that the pollution generated by factories was seriously affecting people's lives, be it in Sindh or Punjab, adding that air pollution was resulting in fatal diseases like cancer.

The top judge declared that serious problems like air and water pollution cannot be compromised on.

He observed that the judiciary had to intervene when the government failed to discharge its obligations.

The bench inquired from the provincial advocate-general and chief secretary as to the volume of funds that had been released by the provincial government for development schemes. It asked why those responsible for resolving these public issues were not resolving them.

The upset top judge questioned why those who go to the public and make tall claims and see the problems being faced by the people cannot provide clean drinking water to the citizens.

#### **Pakistan at threshold of water scarcity**

Usto said 80,000 people were suffering from hepatitis in Sindh. He said the government had set up the North Sindh Urban Services Corporation (NSUSC) to provide clean drinking water and improve sanitation conditions in six cities of the province but 800 appointments in the corporation were made on the basis of political affiliations.

Justice Nisar said the authorities concerned in the NSUSC will be held accountable for spending public money.

The bench members observed that the apex court wanted children of the province to get clean drinking water. They remarked that if the chief secretary was unable to resolve these problems, the court may summon the chief minister to answer its queries.

The bench members also expressed their displeasure over failure of the Sindh Assembly speaker to show members of the House a video made during inspections of various cities by the commission's head that depicted filth on the streets, sewage and industrial and hospital waste being dumped into the water bodies.

Justice Nisar said the court could order the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority to air the video on television channels if the authorities were not interested in showing the same to the legislators.

(By Naeem Sahoutara THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 13, 05/12/2017)

### **SC takes Murad Ali Shah to task**

The Supreme Court (SC) sounded on Wednesday its concerns and worries over deteriorating sanitary conditions and non-availability of potable water in almost all the districts of the province.

It expressed its regret over the failure of the provincial government to realise the importance of the issue as well as its failure to meet its basic obligations to provide essential and basic services to the people of Sindh.

Taking up the matter again on Wednesday, the SC bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Mian Saqib Nisar, made Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah watch a short documentary depicting the sorry state of affairs relating to water and sanitation in the province.

Justice Nisar then told the CM that the court had summoned him with great respect. "Our objective is only to rid people of this polluted water," he said.

However, Justice Nisar said he was deeply saddened by the state of affairs and the court wanted to change the situation. He said he wished Pakistan Peoples Party Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was also present in the court to witness the situation. "Give your children a good life before you leave [office]," he told the CM. "People are drinking water mixed with human waste," he remarked. "If you [agree], you and I can travel to Mithi and both of us will drink a glass of water from the stream," he said, adding that the video should be televised on all media channels to spread awareness about the state of affairs in the province.

#### **Karachi's water unfit for human consumption**

However, Shah disputed the video's content and said it exaggerated the conditions of drinking water supply and sanitation. "If I get an opportunity, I will present another video to the court very soon," he said.

Justice Nisar told Shah that while he might reject the video, he should read the commission's report. "Review the gravity of the situation from the report and try to find solutions through it," he told the CM.

Justice Nisar asked Shah not to take the matter negatively and said the provincial government could seek help from the court if need be. "We will [help] you, but give us a guarantee that the matter will be resolved," he asked.

Another bench member, Justice Faisal Arab, remarked that no cases against the Sindh government were filed during the previous government's tenure. "People turn to the court after witnessing failure of the government," the judge said, telling the CM that they were there to find a solution.

"You were elected [by the people] to solve issues," Justice Arab told Shah. "The court has no desire to use the administration's authority," the judge told the CM, adding that it was the duty of the government to resolve such issues facing the masses.

#### **Government fails to satisfy Supreme Court on treatment plants issue**

The CJP remarked on the gravity of the situation and said it was the responsibility of the provincial government to resolve the issue. "What future will we offer our children if we provide them water [contaminated] with human waste?" he questioned.

Justice Nisar, however, observed that no steps were taken until the Supreme Court's intervention. "This post is a responsibility. We do not want to say anything [about] who is responsible," he added.

"You have not said anything despite having said everything," Shah replied, causing laughter to fill the courtroom.

The top judge told the CM that the court was ready to shoulder his burdens with him. "Our shoulders are very powerful," he said. The provincial chief executive said: "We have come on the shoulders of the voters. We have trust in them." To this, another bench member Justice Sajjad Ali Shah said the voters also bring their problems to the court.

"We are bound by our conduct, that's why we do not want to answer to political statements. Otherwise, we too have answers," cautioned Justice Nisar. "We are playing a constitutional role in public interest," he maintained, but stated that "whenever the will be a void, the judiciary will continue to fill it."

#### **Safe water project: 116 filtration plants installed in different villages**

Justice Nisar asked Shah to point out any mistakes, if any, in the commission report, directing him to undertake before the court that the issue would be resolved. He told Shah, "Education and health now [lie] with you, the problems and the solutions as well."

When the CM said the issue was complicated and needed time to be properly addressed, Justice Nisar said the court was ready to give him a full year to resolve the matter. "Give us a timeframe," he said.

Prevaricating, Shah said other provinces also had problems and Sindh should not be the only one asked to resolve their issues. He said 73% of the population of Sheikhpura and 94% of Gujranwala were drinking polluted water.

Justice Nisar said the apex court was equally concerned with issues in other provinces and other provinces' governments were also being asked to provide clean drinking water to the people. "We will make this case a benchmark for the other [provinces]," the top judge told the CM.

Shah said he had received six summaries for implementation of the commission's recommendations, adding that they were being implemented and the funds were being released. He argued that under Article 175 of the Constitution, the judiciary and the executive had been conferred separate powers.

#### **'Polluted water being sold as mineral water'**

"We are the custodians of the rights of Pakistanis and the Constitution gives us such powers," remarked Justice Nisar, telling the CM that if he wanted to get into a legal discussion on powers then he will explain the judiciary's powers. Observing that Article 175 had nothing to do with the executive, he asked Shah to focus on how to protect the peoples' rights.

The CM assured the court that he would devise an executable plan and fully implement it. He requested time from the court to resolve the issue.

"Being the chief minister of Sindh, you will have to submit an affidavit to the court stating the time required for the task," the CJP told Shah. The CM said he would give the court a timeframe about the plan of action, methods, finances and resources needed for the job.

"You received votes from the people and you are the one who is answerable [to them]," the CJP told Shah.

To this, Shah said they had come into power through votes and their voters had very strong shoulders.

"Some court decisions are impacting the performance of the executive," Shah complained, prompting Justice Nisar to offer him the court's shoulders as a means to resolve the issues at hand.

The top judge reminded the CM that under the Constitution, water and sanitation issues fall into the domain of fundamental rights. "The court has the authority to intervene if the executive does not fulfill its duties," the judge clarified. (By Naeem Sahoutara THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 13, 07/12/2017)

### **Hundreds of civil servants still working as journalists**

Despite the Sindh High Court's (SHC) orders, more than 500 government employees, especially teachers, are still working as journalists in violation of the Sindh Civil Servant (Conduct) Rules, 2008.



According to official records available with *The Express Tribune*, these teachers, assistant professors, professors, principals of various colleges and even doctors and engineers are working as reporters, subeditors, news editors and even editors at daily newspapers and monthly and fortnightly magazines. With the exception of a few, the majority of these employees do not attend government offices and have given preference to their journalism careers.

"We have compiled a list of 200 primary and secondary teachers in various districts of Sindh. They draw their salaries but don't work as teachers," said an official in the education department.

#### **Exploiting employees: SHC takes notice of torture of labourer**

The SHC's Hyderabad Circuit Bench had directed in August this year all commissioners of Sindh to ensure that no government employee worked as a journalist or joined a press club as an office bearer or trade union of journalists in the province. The order was passed on a constitutional petition filed by a Nawabshah-based journalist.

Sources privy to the development told *The Express Tribune* that a news editor of a leading Sindhi daily, who also works as teacher at Hyderabad College, hardly visits the college. He had once started a campaign against the then education minister in 2012, when action was being taken against ghost teachers-cum-journalists.

"Pir Mazhar, as education minister, had submitted the district-wise list of these teachers to the Sindh Assembly in 2012. A day after the submission, a massive campaign was launched against him on television and in newspapers," said Mazhar's spokesperson.

#### **Police 'encounters' in Karachi need to be thoroughly investigated: SHC**

Official sources in the services, general administration and coordination department said that show-cause notices have also been served to teaching and non-teaching staff working as journalists in Karachi, Hyderabad, Badin, Sukkur, Larkana, Umerkot, Kashmore, Khairpur, Jacobabad, Naushero Feroz, Sanghar and Tharparkar districts, but no one has responded yet.

Education Minister Jam Mahtab Dahar said that they had asked district education officer and concerned commissioner to provide them with a final list of government employees working as journalists so that action can be taken against them. "No department will be spared. You will find many government employees in all departments working as journalists," he said, adding that after a final report, his department will decide the fate of these people.

On the other hand, the chief secretary issued on November 29 a notification and constituted divisional committees regarding complaints against teachers and other government servants who are working as journalists or performing duties in other departments.

#### **SC sets aside SHC order in temple occupation case**

"In each division, the committee will be headed by the commissioner with deputy commissioner and representative of schools, colleges and information department as its members," said the notification, adding that the committees will ensure that government teachers are performing their duties and no teacher or any other government employee is allowed to become a journalist, particularly when it is at the cost of their responsibilities as civil servants.

"The information department has been asked to not issue accreditation cards to these government employees," an official said.

Karachi Information Director Zeenat Jahan told *The Express Tribune* that she personally knows many government employees who work as journalists, but action can only be taken until a final policy is conveyed to her.

### **SHC CJ asked to reconstitute bench to hear pleas in K-Electric privatisation case**

"I have just received a notification about data being collected about these employees but no one has conveyed to me yet to cancel the accreditation cards issued by my department," she said, adding they would now add a new column to the accreditation form under which a government employee would not be entitled to become an accredited journalist.

(By Hafeez Tunio THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 13, 11/12/2017)

### **SHC orders immediate removal of finance secretary**

The Sindh High Court (SHC) directed on Friday the provincial chief secretary to immediately remove an officer, Syed Hasan Naqvi, who was reinstated on the post of the finance secretary after he entered into a plea bargain with the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

Headed by SHC Chief Justice Ahmed Ali M Sheikh, a two-judge bench told the chief secretary to submit a copy of the official notification regarding his removal during the course of the day.

The court noted that some officers, who were reinstated on posts in different government departments after they entered into a plea bargain and accepted NAB's voluntary return (VR) schemes, were still continuously working by not disclosing their identities.

Therefore, the court told the chief secretary to prepare a new list of all those officers, as the earlier list submitted to the court was not clear.

Earlier, the judges noted that Naqvi, who was reinstated after entering into a plea bargain and accepting the VR scheme, had yet to be removed from the post of the provincial finance secretary.

They expressed their extreme displeasure over non-compliance with the court's clear orders to remove such officers and inquired why the particular officer had not been removed yet from the post.

### **Sindh government removes 480 corrupt officers, SHC told**

Keeping the matter aside for some time, the bench members gave time till 1pm to the chief secretary to remove the finance secretary and submit a copy of the official notification in court.

The bench inquired from the chief secretary as to why he was hiding such officers and protecting them despite the court's orders to remove them. The chief secretary said he was not protecting anyone.

"What is your interest in protecting such officers?" the chief justice asked the top bureaucrat. "Are you happy to have such officers in Shikarpur and Sukkur districts?" the judge remarked.

The chief secretary and the additional advocate-general merely smiled instead of offering any explanation.

The next hearing was fixed on January 25.

### **Case history**

The issue came up during the hearing of a petition filed by Ghulam Mustafa Lund who had approached the court against alleged harassment by NAB authorities despite having voluntarily returned the amount misappropriated by him in a financial scam.

The petitioner, Lund, said he was serving as an accounts officer in the finance department in Thatta district in 2016 when NAB launched an investigation against him for possessing immovable assets beyond his known source of income.

### **SHC dissatisfied by NAB's investigation into officers' misconduct**

The petitioner confessed to his involvement in the scam and voluntarily returned Rs370 million as provided under Section 25 of the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999. Therefore, he was cleared of the charges and restored to his government job.

The judges were told that after some time the Federal Investigation Agency initiated an inquiry into the same scam in Dadu district, where he was posted as a district accounts officer. In the meantime, he alleged that NAB again jumped in and was harassing him by issuing a call-up notice despite the fact that he had voluntarily returned the amount.

### **NAB's stance**

At an early hearing, a prosecutor for the federal anti-graft watchdog had claimed that there were more than 500 officers who were found involved in corrupt practices in inquiries and subsequently opted to voluntarily return the embezzled money by entering into plea bargains with NAB.

The prosecutor said NAB had recovered a total of Rs16.6 billion from these officers under the voluntary return scheme.

### **Sindh government's statistics**

On the other hand, provincial advocate-general Barrister Zamir Ghumro had informed the court that there were 1,309 officers against whom inquiries were initiated but had been restored on their posts in the province after entering into plea bargains.



The court was further informed that 27 such officers were dismissed from their jobs while inquiries against around 100 other officers were still under way. The law officer sought more time to file a report about the fate of such inquiries.

The chief minister ordered on Friday the removal of the finance secretary and that the charge will be given to the additional finance secretary but no official notification was issued.  
(THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 13, 23/12/2017)

## **2017 – The year of judicial actions**

The year 2017 saw the superior judiciary – the Supreme Court (SC) and the high courts– taking up cases of public interest, especially those relating to basic amenities, despite their preoccupation with the constitutional litigation.

Concerned about the failure or shortcomings of governance, the superior courts seemed to be conveying the message that they would set things right, particularly in the education, health, water and sanitation sectors.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Mian Saqib Nisar's remarks about the role the judiciary intends to play might not have been well received by politicians and civil society, but in Sindh the judiciary played a vital role in the redressal of public grievances in the outgoing year.

The apex judiciary dealt with issues deeply rooted in the administration and its failure to safeguard the fundamental rights of the people. It issued directives to federal and provincial governments to put in place measures for the protection of the fundamental rights to 'life and property' of the residents of Sindh.

### **Water and sanitation**

The outgoing year witnessed a rare grilling of Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah by the SC, which showed him the 'thrust and filth' of the province in a short documentary as his party's second consecutive government failed to improve the provision of basic amenities – potable water, improved sanitation and a pollution-free environment.

### **Sindh govt summons names of corrupt officials**

In yet another rare move, the apex court constituted a judicial commission to carry out province-wide inspections to investigate the authorities' negligence in protecting freshwater sources, the environment and marine life.

The commission, constituted on a petition filed by Advocate Shahab Usto, highlighted the dismal state of basic amenities' provision and exposed the government's negligence improving them.

It also exposed corrupt practices rampant in public sector spending, as almost all the schemes meant to provide clean drinking water and improve sanitation were not completed while some had not even been initiated. Yet the money still continued to flow like blood into the veins of the administration.

CM Shah, who is heading the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) second consecutive government in the province since 2008, will now present a definite timeframe on the completion of such development schemes to the apex court. Chief Secretary Muhammad Rizwan, on different occasions, himself conceded before the court that 'now' work will be done only because of the Supreme Court's directives.

### **Water woes**

Another startling disclosure made in court this year was that up to 90% of water supplied in Karachi is unfit for human consumption due to the presence of bacterial contamination caused by mixing of the sewage and other factors revealed a report submitted to the judicial commission this year.

### **Accountability watchdog triumphs in six-hour game of 'NAB me if you can'**

The Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources conducted analysis of 118 drinking water samples collected from Karachi – 99 from surface water sources like supply systems, filtration plants and pumping stations, 13 from underground water sources, three from reverse osmosis (RO) plants and three from other ground and surface water sources.

On the commission's order, 460 water samples were collected from all over Sindh, 232 or 50.4% were collected from surface water, 179 or 39% from groundwater, 46 or 10% from RO filtration plants and three or 0.6% from mixed sources.

### **Marine pollution**

The apex court recently directed the additional attorney-general to communicate to the prime minister to do the needful to help the provincial government control growing marine pollution caused by dumping of 460 million gallons of toxic untreated industrial effluent and domestic waste into the sea every day.

The court passed this direction with regard to the recently approved joint plant of the federal and provincial governments to install five combined effluent treatment plants across Sindh for the treatment of industrial and domestic waste. The matter is still pending.

### **Encroached upon recreational spaces**

Nearly 35,000 amenity plots across the metropolis are under encroachment and are being used for commercial activities. The SC ordered the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) and Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) to retrieve such recreational spaces from land grabbers.

#### **Sindh govt not letting IG perform duties, court told**

This issue emerged surprisingly during the hearing of a case filed by Sabiha Parveen who had sought contempt of court proceedings against the KDA officials for allotting her an amenity plot in lieu of a residential plot.

Amazed at how a space originally earmarked for the purpose of recreational activities could be allowed by the authorities to be used for residential purposes, the judges had sought details of all the amenity spaces allotted by the KDA for residential or commercial use in violation of the SC's judgments and orders.

Submitting a report on the court's order, the KDA land director revealed that 35,000 amenity plots were under encroachment in the city.

To ensure that the fundamental rights concerning right to life and right to live in a better environment were protected, the apex court ordered on November 30 removal of all sorts of encroachments from the amenity plots within a deadline of two months. The matter is not yet finally disposed of.

#### **NAB's [clipped] powers**

As Pakistan faces an ongoing drive to purge the country of corruption, which also resulted in the disqualification of an elected prime minister, the SHC reserved its verdict in the controversial matter relating to operational jurisdictions of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the provinces.

#### **Water, sanitation conditions: SC seeks Sindh government's reply to contempt of court plea**

The PPP-led provincial government used its majority in the Sindh Assembly to pass the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 Repeal Act to clip the federal anti-graft watchdog's powers to operate in the province.

Playing the political card, opposition parties such as the Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League – Functional, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and rights campaigner Pasban Pakistan had challenged the Act that provided for transferring all the inquiries from NAB to the provincial anti-corruption authority.

In August, the SHC had allowed NAB to continue with pending inquiries and investigations initiated against former and sitting politicians and government functionaries till the final disposal of the case. The order in the case was reserved.

In a report, the NAB prosecutor disclosed before the court that the bureau was investigating corruption-related cases against 1,500 currently serving or retired government lawmakers and functionaries.

#### **Removing corrupt officials**

Nearly 500 corrupt officials, who got restored to their posts after entering into plea bargains and voluntarily returned appropriated money to NAB, are now facing removal from their posts.

While hearing a petition of a district accounts officer who was restored to his position after returning embezzled money, the judges had widened the scope of the case, calling names of all such officers enjoying official authority despite confessing to corruption and returning the plundered money to NAB.

#### **SHC suspends notification declaring 1,061 buildings as heritage sites IG's appointment case**

The Constitution guarantees safety and security of life to every citizen, but the Sindh police's inspectors-general themselves had no job security.

In a landmark case, the Sindh High Court (SHC) ruled this year that Sindh IG Allah Dino Khawaja will complete the tenure of his service, as already held by the Supreme Court in the famous Anita Turab case, in addition to exercising his full official authority and powers to effectively and efficiently handle the administrative affairs of his force.

The case was brought to the court by civil society members, including the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research Executive Director Karamat Ali, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum's General Secretary Saeed Baloch and others.

The activists' move came following a dramatic change of events, as the provincial government attempted to remove IG Khawaja in December 2016 reportedly for not following its orders.

The drama continued as the PPP-led government once again tried to get rid of the 'defiant' IG, but this time by unilaterally surrendering his services to the federal government and appointing Additional IG Abdul Majeed Dasti in his place.

#### **A thorn in their side: Court allows NAB to proceed with pending inquiries**

The move was once again blocked by civil society, which sought contempt of court proceedings against the authorities concerned. Finally, the judges passed a judgment declaring that the provincial government could not interfere in the administrative affairs of the police department, including removing the IG without completing his tenure.

#### **Un-terrorizing crime**

While deciding another high-profile case concerning law and order, the SHC's anti-terrorism appellate bench ruled that the case relating to the murder of Shahzeb Khan does not fall within the ambit of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Setting aside the death sentence awarded to Shahrukh Jatoi, Nawab Sajjad Talpur and life imprisonment to Siraj Talpur and their servant Ghulam Murtaza Lashari, the high court sent the case to the ordinary sessions court for re-trial.

The cold blooded murder of a police deputy superintendent's son by the accused over Lashari harassing the former's sister sparked country-wide protests and debate on whether the powerful would ever pay the price for their crimes in Pakistan. After showering praises on the system over the conviction of criminals, their release on bail after compromising with the victim's family has once again sparked a debate among Pakistanis on the social imbalances and poor governance in the country.  
(By Naeem Sahoutara THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 13, 31/12/2017)