

# NEWSCLIPPINGS

JANUARY TO JUNE 2021

## KMC LOCAL BODY



## Urban Resource Centre

---

A-2, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Westland Trade Centre, Block 7&8, C-5, Shaheed-e-Millat Road, Karachi.  
Tel: 021-4559317, Fax: 021-4387692, Email: [urc@cyber.net.pk](mailto:urc@cyber.net.pk), Website: [www.urckarachi.org](http://www.urckarachi.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/URCKHI](https://www.facebook.com/URCKHI) Twitter: <https://twitter.com/urckhi>

### **Security of KMC building tightened**

City Administrator Laeeq Ahmed on Monday tightened security of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's (KMC) main building. KMC media chief Ali Hassan Sajid said that security guards and city wardens had been deployed at all entry and exit points of the head office building.

He said that as many as 48 closed-circuit television cameras were installed and surveillance was continued round the clock at the central security office.

He said that all cameras installed at the main gate and administrator corridor were functional while other faulty cameras were also being made operational.

He said that entry of all irrelevant vehicles was also banned as a security measure while every person and vehicle was being checked at the gate.

### **Road construction**

The official said the KMC's works and services department on Monday initiated construction and renovation work at the Mehmoodabad Road and Jigar Muradabadi Road.

He said the administrator took notice of the dilapidated condition of the roads and directed the department to repair and make them motorable.

He said the roads witnessed traffic 24 hours a day, which was why one track of the road would be constructed at a time.

He said the department concerned had also begun to fix street lights from Shaheed-i-Millat/Jail Chowrangi flyover to Tariq Road. The spokesperson said the use of standard material was ensured for long-lasting results and functioning of street lights.

He said the administrator had directed that the works should be completed at the earliest, especially where the traffic flow was thick.

He said the administrator had also directed the works and services department to continue conducting the survey so that decrepit roads and lights would be repaired forthwith.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 12/01/2021)

### **KMC to take welfare bodies on board to run graveyards**

City Administrator Laeeq Ahmed on Monday said that the cemeteries under the administrative control of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation were in very poor condition as "graveyards mafia" was ruling the burial grounds.

While presiding over a meeting to review the affairs of graveyards, he said that the burial process at KMC cemeteries should be done through one window.

The administrator said that graveyards' managing committees comprising of welfare organizations including Saylani, JDC, Edhi Foundation and Chhipa Foundation would be formed for betterment. The committees would manage the graveyards' affairs with the KMC, he added.

Saylani Welfare Trust president Yousuf Lakhani, JDC general secretary Zafar Abbas, representatives of Edhi Foundation, Chhipa Foundation and KMC officials were also present.

The administrator said that people should get graves on government-fixed rates and overcharging should come to an end. "We want welfare organizations to cooperate with the KMC for fixing issues at cemeteries," he said.

Mr Ahmed said that if some welfare organization wanted to take administrative control of graveyard, the KMC would cooperate with it.

JDC general secretary Zafar Abbas said that condition of cemeteries was worsening as graves were sold from Rs10,000 to Rs250,000. He said that graves were removed and replaced by another grave if the family members didn't turn up to visit the cemeteries.

Mr Abbas offered that JDC could establish a graveyard on the pattern of Wadi-i-Hussain cemetery if the KMC provided the land. Yousuf Lakhani said that condition of community graveyards was much better but the same were out of space.

He said that there was dire need to establish new graveyards in Karachi.

Edhi Foundation representative said that the cemetery at Mawach Goth, where dead bodies of people having no heirs were buried, was also out of space.

The administrator hailed the welfare organizations for their offer to cooperate with the administration and said that keeping in view increase in Karachi's population, new graveyards had to be established.

He said that all departments concerned would be taken on board for establishing new graveyards in Karachi's different localities as per requirement.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 19/01/2021)

### **CM Sindh approves Rs170m grant for KMC**

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Thursday vowed to make Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) a financially stable organisation by giving it a workable financial model and reorganising its various wings responsible for revenue collection.

The chief minister, for this purpose, constituted a committee, headed by Minister Local Government Syed Nasir Shah, Adviser for Law Murtaza Wahab, Secretary Local Government Najam Shah and Administrator KMC Laiq Ahmed to submit their recommendations to make KMC financially stable.

Murad Ali Shah took the decision while presiding over a meeting to review the financial condition of KMC. Syed Nasir Shah, Murtaza Wahab, PSCM Sajid Jamal Abro, Najam Shah, Laiq Ahmed and other concerned officers attended the meeting. KMC has failed to pay salaries to its senior employees from the months of November and December 2020.

The chief minister said that it was quite disturbing to know that Karachi, being the industrial hub of the country, was financially running the entire country but its metropolitan corporation had bogged down in the financial crisis and was unable to pay salaries to its senior officers.

"We have to overhaul various wings of the KMC, particularly those which are responsible for revenue collection," he said.

Nasir Shah said that the DMCs, under the guidance of the chief minister, have not only curtailed their non-development expenditures but have enhanced their revenue collection.

Quoting the example of the DMC South, Nasir Shah said that it used to collect Rs9 million from charged parking and has now increased the collection to Rs750 million.

"This is something to plug the pilferages," the chief minister said.

The minister also said that the DMC Korangi used to utilise Rs20 million on picking garbage from their area but have managed to curtail the expenditure to Rs9 million only due to better management.

Similarly, the DMC Central has enhanced its collection from shops and other such establishments.

The chief minister said that the KMC has valuable assets; beautiful parks in the city and huts along the beach. He questioned why the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was not operating KMC so that the assets would be maintained properly and would become a reasonable source of revenue.

The KMC administrator, briefing the chief minister said that there were around 1.4 million establishments from where the KMC collected Municipal Utility & Conservancy Tax (MUCT). However, this time it could have only collected Rs280 million from 35,000 units. He said the contractor had no printed receipts to collect the tax.

The chief minister said that the KMC has the potential to collect Rs1.5 billion only against MUCT and it could auction the services of its petrol pumps and marriage grounds to the highest bidders.

"I want you to prepare a financial model and present it within the next 15 days. After that I'll add necessary input to make the KMC a rich organisation," he said.

He also directed the Local Government Department to issue a notification to take back collection of tax from Mobile Phone Towers from SBCA and hand it over to KMC. "The collection whatever the SBCA has made so far should be paid back to KMC," he directed. The chief minister approved a Rs170 million grant for KMC so that it could clear salaries of its senior employees. He also said that he would be reviewing KMC's financial position fortnightly.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 22/01/2021)

### **Murad forms committee to financially stabilise KMC**

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Thursday vowed to make the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) a stable organization by giving it a workable financial model and reorganizing its various wings responsible for revenue collection.

For the purpose, he constituted a committee headed by Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Shah with Law Advisor Murtaza Wahab, Local Government Secretary Najam Shah and KMC Administrator Laeeq Ahmed as members.

He asked the committee to submit their recommendations to make the KMC a financially stable organization.

The CM took this decision while presiding over a meeting held to review the financial condition of the KMC which failed to pay salaries to its senior employees from November and December 2020.

The LG minister said the DMCs had not only curtailed their non-development expenditures, but also enhanced their revenue collection.

Quoting the example of the DMC South, Nasir Shah said it used to collect Rs9 million from charged parking and now it enhanced the collection to Rs750m.

The minister also said the DMC Korangi had cut its spending on lifting of garbage from Rs20m to Rs9m only.

Similarly, he said the DMC Central had also enhanced its collection.

Briefing the CM, the administrator said there were around 1.4m establishments/properties in the city, from where the KMC collected municipal utility and conservancy tax (MUCT), but this time it could only collect Rs280m from 35,000 units.

The CM said that the KMC had the potential to collect Rs1.5 billion only against the MUCT and it could auction the services of its petrol pumps and marriage grounds to the highest bidders.

"I want you to prepare a financial model and present it within the next 15 days and then I'll add necessary input to make the KMC a rich organization," he said.

The CM also directed the local government department to issue a notification to take back collection of tax from mobile phone towers from the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) and hand it over to the KMC. "The collection the SBCA has made so far should be paid back to the KMC," he directed.

The CM approved a Rs170m grant for the KMC so that it could clear salaries of its senior employees.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 22/01/2021)

### **KMC designates 60 acres of land for new graveyards**

City Administrator Laeeq Ahmed on Monday said that 60 acres land had been designated for establishing new cemeteries in the city and managing committees were also being formed to cope with the "graveyards mafia".

This he said while reviewing a meeting of the land utilization department of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation in which total 60 acres land was allocated for two new graveyards at deh Mawach Goth and deh Mauripur in district West.

Mr Ahmed said that welfare organizations were also ready to cooperate with the KMC for establishing "model cemeteries".

He said that all measures would be taken to take back the graveyards from the clutches of grabbers and save the new burial grounds from them.

The administrator said that a big cemetery would be established on 55 acres while another would be built on five acres of land. He said that allocated land would not be used for any other purpose and the local administration would facilitate the people in burial of their loved ones.

Mr Ahmed said that proper record would be maintained in new graveyards and encroachment would not be tolerated.

He also thanked Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah for approving establishment of new cemeteries on recommendations of allotment and reservation committee. The land was allocated under Government Land Act 1912.

The administrator said that new cemeteries would meet the demand of the city, adding that the KMC had already decided to introduce one-window operation for burial and documentation of graveyards under its administrative control.

He said that managing committees comprising of Chhipa Welfare Association, Saylani Welfare Trust, JDC Welfare Organization, Alamgir Welfare, Edhi Foundation and other welfare organizations were also being formed.

The administrator said that right now currently the lands were allocated in district West but there was need of new graveyards in other districts too.

Mr Ahmed also hailed the welfare organizations for cooperating with the KMC and said that their cooperation was very important as they are well aware of the issues.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 26/01/2021)

### SBCA, KMC in hot water

The Sindh Building Control Authority earned the Sindh High Court's ire on Friday over lack of emergency exits in buildings that causes a hazard when dealing with major fire incidents.



A two-member bench, headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and comprising Justice Amjad Ali Sahito, directed the relevant authorities to restore the emergency 1299 helpline immediately.

The bench was hearing a plea pertaining to fire incidents and legislation for emergency exit ways in buildings - a hindrance that has led to increased fatalities in the past, as witnessed in the case of the Baldia factory fire in 2012, and in several other fire incidents since.

More recently, three labourers were burnt to death in a thread factory in Baldia Town on Tuesday. There was only one exit and entrance point and just one staircase in the multi-storey building, fire officials had pointed out.

Responding to the court's summons, the SBCA director-general appeared before the court. He informed the court that rules regarding emergency exit ways are listed in Sections 13 and 15 of the SBCA rules.

"How do the builders construct buildings without emergency exit ways when there are laws for it," inquired Justice Mazhar.

To this, the SBCA DG replied that the issue is the implementation of laws.

Hearing the DG's reply, the court remarked that the regulatory body should improve its system and coordinate with the civil defence authorities.

During the hearing, the petitioner informed the court that an emergency helpline 1299 had been set up to address major accidents but the helpline has now been deactivated.

Irrked at the deactivation of helpline, Justice Mazhar directed the Karachi commissioner's representative to look into matters of public interest. Or else the court would suspend the payment of salaries of all of them (officials), warned Justice Mazhar.

Why is the helpline 1299 dysfunctional, the court inquired of the commissioner's representative.

The IT service is not working in commissioner's office, replied the representative.

"How is Karachi commissioner working if the service is not working," inquired Justice Mazhar.

To this, the representative replied that all affairs in the commissioner's office are being addressed through paper work and physical documents.

As the hearing progressed the court expressed its displeasure at the delay in repairing of fire tenders.

"What kind of system is this that the fire spreads everywhere and people get stuck inside the buildings," asked Justice Mazhar. The bench observed that people getting stuck in buildings indicates that the said buildings have been constructed illegally. Who is delaying the matter, inquired Justice Mazhar.

Following which, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's counsel informed the court that the KMC would be receiving 50 new fire tenders provided by the federal government soon.

Addressing the KMC's counsel, the bench observed that these affairs are priority. They should be addressed first, remarked the bench expressing annoyance over the delays.

The court sought a progress report on the repairing of fire tenders and directed the SBCA to define standard operating procedures after consultation with the chief fire fighter.

The court directed the authorities to restore the helpline 1299 and adjourned the hearing till March 17.

### Pedestrianisation of Burnes Road

Separately, the bench issued notices to the Sindh chief secretary and other parties over a plea challenging the pedestrianisation of Burnes Road.

The petitioner's counsel contended that the locals of the area were facing extreme inconvenience due to the restriction of traffic on Burnes Road after 6pm.

"Food Street is for the amusement of the citizens. Do you want to close it as well," remarked Justice Mazhar. Where would people go if there is no place for them to enjoy, he asked.

The counsel argued that blocking the road was illegal as the conversion according to the laws is required before turning the road into a food street.

The court issued notices to Sindh chief secretary and other parties, seeking their replies by March 9.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 13/02/2021)

### **KMC receives 24 fire tenders**

The much touted about fire equipment procured by the federal government was handed over to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and other bodies at a ceremony held at the Sindh Governor House on Sunday.

Addressing the event, former Karachi mayor Wasim Akhtar lauded the Centre's move and chided the Pakistan Peoples Party-led provincial government.

It is good news for Karachi that an effort has been made to improve the service of KMC's fire department, said Akhtar. It was the responsibility of the Sindh government but it did not pay attention to his request in this regard, added the former mayor, while thanking the federal government for taking the initiative.

"The provision of fire-fighting equipment is positive but, unfortunately, the KMC does not have enough drivers to drive them nor the money to buy diesel for them," remarked the Muttahida Quami Movement-Pakistan leader.

The former mayor demanded of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to immediately approve the summary of fire risk allowance, which, he claimed, has been facing delays for the past 13 months.

The government of Sindh has not been paying the share of the legally approved taxes for the past 13 years and the municipal corporation has not been receiving its complete share of octroi taxes either, decried Akhtar.

As many as 24 of the 50 recently imported fire tenders were received by the KMC while the remaining fire trucks and two bowsers were distributed between the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry, North Karachi Association of Trade and Industry, North Karachi Association of Trade and Industry, FB Area Association of Trade and Industry, Bin Qasim Association of Trade and Industry, SITE Association of Trade and Industry, Export Processing Zone Authority and Bin Qasim Park. Moreover, the Saylani Welfare Trust and Sindh Rangers were given two fire tenders each while the Korangi Creek Industrial Park and Karachi Chamber of Commerce received one each.

Handing over the 50 fire tenders and two bowsers to the different recipients, Sindh Governor Imran Ismail censured the provincial government as well.

The mayor of a city is called the father of the city but stripped of his powers and funds, the mayor of Karachi was rendered "helpless," said the governor. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader apprised that Rs460 million tax was waived off for the fire fighting equipment - that was imported from China at a cost of Rs1.4 billion under the Centre's Karachi package - after approval by the premier and the Federal Board of Revenue. Ismail added that Rs6.5m tax was also waived off by the Karachi Port Trust, where the fire equipment had first reached.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has given special instructions to meet the expectations of people regarding development works in the metropolis, said Ismail.

The governor further said that the PTI-led federal government has decided to employ public private partnership models for the betterment of the city. Industrial associations, Sindh Rangers and the Saylani Welfare Trust are the party's allies and it is to them that the Centre has decided to hand over the fire equipment, the governor said.

These allies are not investing but they have been assigned responsibilities, elaborated Ismail.

Moreover, the governor claimed that Rs24b have been earmarked for the Sindh Infrastructure Development Corporation and Rs11b have been spent on the Green Line Bus project in the past three years. Besides, Ismail said, hospitals are to be built in every district of Sindh after approval by the premier. A model hospital has already been set up in this regard, he said.

Karachi Administrator Laeeq Ahmed, the Chinese consul general and PTI lawmakers also attended the ceremony.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 15/02/2021)

### Without local bodies

LOCAL bodies are the building blocks of the Western democracies we want to emulate. Prime Minister Imran Khan appeared committed to having a revolutionary local bodies system when his party formed the government in KP in 2013. Not satisfied with the lowest tier of union council, he went to the grassroots with a new law which envisaged the village as the basic unit. With this law, 1001 union councils were converted to 3,501 village councils/ neighbourhood councils (for the urban areas) to take self-governance to the village level.



The first polls under the new law were held in 2015. Thirty per cent of development funds were promised to the village/ neighbourhood councils and 24 government functions/ departments were delegated. This utopian model came tumbling down immediately after its inauguration.

Even before the operation of the new system started, delayed by the absence of new rules, six of the 24 functions delegated to the local government were withdrawn. In a further amendment, the funds promised were withheld from the local body “to be routed through officers designated by government”. Ten more functions were withdrawn leaving only eight out of 24 promised in the LG Act of 2013.

More amendments in 2019 in the LG Act abolished the district elected organisation, replacing it with an elected tehsil council. But the move towards grassroots was neutralised by placing the elected tehsil council under the deputy commissioner as the provincial government’s principal representative.

*A detailed structure of the LG system must be laid out.*

The experimental system has been non-functional since August 2019. Recently, under pressure from the courts and the election commission, KP announced elections for September.

This erratic system indicating a lack of comfort with the local bodies is not only on display in KP but also in Punjab where 58,000 elected councillors were sent packing by a new law in May 2019. Even after 22 months there is no indication when the next elections will be held.

There is no local government in Balochistan and Sindh either, with halfhearted attempts for the next elections.

To be fair to the present government, the frequent, premature dissolution of local bodies is routine, and has happened 10 times since 1972 in Punjab. This is because of the conflict of interest in power-sharing between the local bodies and provincial governments. When a person is elected to the provincial assembly he does not want his constituents and voters to look towards anyone but him. Chief ministers want unfettered command of all they survey in the province, not to be shared with the nazim or chairmen of the local councils.

India despite having a very old panchayat raj system had the same problem. They fixed it in 1992 through two major and detailed constitutional amendments. The 73rd and 74th amendments were passed by its parliament in December that year.

Through these amendments the sanctity of local self-governance in rural and urban India was ensured. The local bodies — panchayats and municipalities — came under Part IX and Part XI of the constitution after 43 years of independence. This gave constitutional cover to panchayat raj institutions (rural) and the local bodies institutions (urban). The preamble of the new amendments notes the “absence of regular elections” and “prolonged supersessions”. It says “to enshrine in the Constitution certain basic and essential features of Panchayat Raj Institutions to impart certainty, continuity and strength....”

The amendments are so detailed they add two different parts IX and IX A, with 16 new articles and 11 new schedules for the 73rd amendment and a similar number of articles and schedules for the 74th amendment. The governor, who is the representative of the union, has a role in ensuring continuity.

By contrast, Pakistan has two brief articles about local bodies in its Constitution. Article 32 says “the State shall encourage local government institutions....” Article 140-A says “Each Provincial Government shall, by law, establish a local government system and devolve political, administrative and financial responsibility....”

Obviously, the treatment of the local bodies in our Constitution is cursory. Further, the responsibility of ‘encouraging’ the setting up of local bodies has been given to the ‘state’, a term subject to many interpretations in this country, rather than to a specific office, like in the case of India where the governor of the state as a representative of the union is responsible for ensuring continuity.

If the present government is really interested in ‘Naya Pakistan’, it should be thinking of amending our Constitution (even if it has to give some concessions to the opposition) to give a detailed structure of the local bodies and build in specific provisions to ensure continuity rather than leave it to political expediency. Without a predictable, continuing local bodies system in the country, good governance will remain a dream.

(By Tasneem Noorani Dawn, 07, 22/02/2021)

### SRB tasked with boosting KMC revenue

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah directed the Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) on Thursday to explore means for collecting local taxes on behalf of the Karachi Metropolitan so that it could be financially strengthened.

The CM issued the instruction while presiding over a meeting called to address issues pertaining to pensions in local bodies such as the KMC, district municipal corporations and Karachi Development Authority, among others.

In the meeting, the CM was informed that the KMC had 12,900 employees and their salary bill was more than Rs560 million. He was told the pension bill of KMC employees was Rs330 million, but recoveries remained low in comparison to expenditures.

Sindh Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah pointed out that while the KMC was paying pensions to former employees on a regular basis, it was facing problems in the payment of gratuity. The CM directed the local government department to resolve the issue after consulting the finance department and report to him.

Then, turning his attention to the issue of recoveries, the CM stressed the need for the KMC to boost its recoveries. "The finance department would provide it with necessary funds if there is a lack of funds for the payment of outstanding gratuity," he added.

Directing the SRB to explore means to start local taxes for the KMC, the CM asked the local government secretary to hold a meeting with the provincial revenue board for this purpose.

He mentioned the funds being paid to the KMC by the Sindh government under different heads and said, "We are fully supporting the metropolitan corporation, but it has to become a better organisation by rationalising its expenditures and improving its performance."

The CM directed the KMC to digitise its property data via geo-mapping and regularise its unregistered markets and shops.

Besides, the KMC should conduct a survey to improve its rental rates in accordance with the present market value, he said, adding that the local body should also consider setting up fuel stations and malls on lands owned by it in the public-private partnership mode.

When Sindh Agriculture Minister Ismail Rahoo apprised him of the pension issues of the retired employees of market committees and the Sindh Seed Corporation, the CM directed the chief secretary to provide one-time relief and then work out a plan to ensure that the said organisations paid salaries, pensions and gratuities from their accounts in future.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 26/02/2021)

### KMC seeks Sindh govt's nod for fresh recruitment to operate fire tenders

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court has summoned a senior government official after the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) submitted that it lacked manpower to operate all fire tenders and the department concerned had not responded to its letter yet.

A two-judge bench headed by Justice Mohammad Ali Mazhar also directed the commissioner office to file a report whether a reference was sent to the registrar of the SHC for appointment of magistrates at district level as provided in the civil defence laws.

The bench directed the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) to come up with a final progress report about a mechanism for approval of building plan after obtaining no-objection certificates (NOCs) from the civil defence and fire departments till April 8.

When the bench took up for hearing a petition seeking implementation of Building Code of Pakistan and Fire Safety Provisions 2016 across the province, Assistant Commissioner Aijaz Rind filed a compliance report on behalf of the commissioner office and submitted that a helpline number (1299) had been made functional to meet any emergency.

SBCA director environment and building Irfan Haider informed the bench that in compliance with its earlier order, the SBCA director general had convened a meeting with an official of civil defence and he placed some viable proposals including a provision of fire exit door to meet any emergency in each flat site and commercial as well as industrial buildings.

*SHC asks commissioner office to share details about appointment of magistrates as provided in civil defence laws*

KMC's Chief Fire Officer Mubin Ahmed said that he had also attended the meeting and submitted some proposals for incorporating in the approval letter for buildings. The bench directed the director-SBCA to come up with the final progress report on the next hearing.

The lawyer for KMC, Saeed Akhtar, submitted that 52 fire tenders had been provided by the federal government and 10 out of 30 damaged firefighting vehicles had been repaired.

The bench directed him to file a report about the remaining out-of-order fire tenders on the next date.

The counsel further argued that there was a lack of manpower to operate these vehicles and the metropolitan commissioner had already sent a letter to the local government secretary in this regard, but no action had so far been taken.

The bench asked the additional LG secretary to be in attendance on the next date of hearing along with latest update on the issue.



Focal person of civil defence Shahid Masroor said that as per civil defence laws, there was a provision of appointment of a magistrate at each district to take cognizance of non-compliance of the directions, but no such appointments had so far been made.

The assistant commissioner submitted that the appointments were to be made on the recommendations of the SHC chief justice.

The bench directed him to file a progress report whether the competent authority had forwarded a reference to the registrar of the SHC for appointment of magistrates.

Petitioner Nadeem Shaikh submitted that in view of the directive issued by the bench earlier, the task force for inspection of different buildings and implementation of fire safety laws had become functional at the district level.

The bench was further informed that the task force was conducting inspection vigilantly to make sure that all fire safety measures were being taken by all commercial and industrial establishments.

The bench directed the task force to continue it in future as well.

The lawyer for KMC said that there were 14 industrial zones in the provincial metropolis and 26 fire tenders had already been dedicated to such zones to meet any emergency.  
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 20/03/2021)

### Restoring LGs

THE Supreme Court of Pakistan made the right decision in ordering the restoration of local government institutions in Punjab and declaring their dissolution more than 22 months ago as unconstitutional. Opposition politicians might celebrate the ruling as a setback for the PTI government. But it is not a victory for them either. In fact, to some others, attempts to end or weaken local administrations may not be as important as cases where federal or provincial governments were overthrown via presidential putsch or gubernatorial action. But the decision is an important win for the people, whose mandate is frequently invalidated through the premature dissolution of LGs. It will go a long way in consolidating democracy in the country in general and deepening local democracy in particular. It isn't without reason that the attorney general of Pakistan equated a section of the Punjab Local Government Act, 2019, which empowered the provincial administration to dissolve LGs elected under the 2013 law, with the infamous, erstwhile Article 58(2)(b) of the Constitution that gave the president the authority to arbitrarily send elected governments home. Future governments will now think long and hard before daring to remove elected local body institutions on a whim. Though the court will record the reasons for its decision later on, the order closes the door on dissolution of LGs through administrative actions — even if this is provided in the law — as unconstitutional.

Autonomous LGs are considered the building blocks of a functional democracy the world over. No governance, financial and administrative reform can be successfully implemented in the absence of a strong, powerful and steady LG system. Sadly, our political parties and leaders have never felt comfortable with grassroots democracy because they do not want to share powers with locally elected representatives of the people in spite of the crucial role of LGs in service delivery. Hence, we repeatedly find them introducing new LG systems to suit their political interests and wind up existing ones on coming to power.

The present government is no exception. What it did in Punjab, and the tactics it has employed to delay local elections since May 2019 when a new law was introduced only reflects the prevailing mindset across political parties. If the PTI government is serious about consolidating local democracy as it claims, it is time it started working on strengthening the weak constitutional cover given under Articles 32 and 140-A to LG institutions to ensure their continuity, and financial and administrative empowerment by building on the court's decision. The effort requires strong buy-in from the opposition parties as well as the provinces. Without meaningful constitutional cover, the provinces and the political parties ruling them will continue to find ways of keeping LG institutions powerless and weak, and roll back local democracy whenever it does not suit their interests.  
(By Dawn, Editorial 06, 27/03/2021)

### Why is it so difficult to reform local government in Pakistan?

Like many issues, the decision that the local body elections are the lifeline of a democratic system sans which governance remains an incomplete project leading to civil unrest has failed to make a wave with the Pakistani politicians. Even Imran Khan, who has been thumping his chest in favour of the local government system when in opposition, has failed to give local government its due stature.



Ironically, either it has been the military government that leveraged local body elections to reach the masses, or the higher court of the country had to force the governments in all provinces to carry out this constitutionally mandatory exercise. There could be many reasons for this reluctance; however, one most quoted is bureaucracy's unwillingness to share its administrative domain with the political representative at the local level. Another common refrain has been the politicians' deliberate attempt to keep a large swath of population wallowing in the pain of poverty so that the former could amass wealth through corrupt practices. When the masses are poor, they are also usually uneducated with little or no

concept of making their representative accountable for their corrupt practices. In Pakistan, it seems both these reasons have been used in coordination to keep local elections from taking place.

Even when elections are held, power is hardly devolved to the last tier. Without devolution of power, which is linked to financial independence, local body elections have no value. Devolution of power can potentially help address inter- and intra-provincial grievances, the neglect of marginalised ethnic groups and their irredentist claims, and the problems of marginalisation and deprivation of vast segments of the country's population. Since its founding as a federation in 1947, Pakistan's history has been marked by periods of military rule, authoritarian political leadership, and centralised administration (even during periods of democratic government). Political patronage and elite-led development policies have done little to alleviate the inequitable distribution of resources across and within different regions of the country.

After independence, Pakistan's first serious attempt to focus on local governments came under the 1958 martial law, emphasising the need for representative politics at the local level while disbanding central- and provincial-level assemblies. During the British period, what became General Ayub Khan's local government system was controlled by the bureaucracy and the deputy commissioner's offices.

Another military-led government under General Ziaul Haq revived the local government system from 1977 to 1988. Like Ayub, Zia undertook political centralisation at the federal and provincial levels while instituting electoral representation at the local level. However, the increased political importance of local bodies was not complemented by the decentralisation of federal or provincial administrative functions, nor by the delegation of any significant financial powers to the local governments. Local governments continued to lack constitutional protections, and their creation and maintenance remained at the whim of the provinces, which retained suspension powers.

During the democratic period of 1988–99, four democratically elected political governments gained power, but none focused on the local government system. They preferred instead to rely on provincial elites using their local patronage systems to keep them in power. The next time Pakistan experimented with devolution was under General (later president) Pervez Musharraf. His devolutionary exercise was also a legitimising strategy for a centralised rule since it did not devolve power from the federal level to the provinces and instead focused on creating local governments on a non-party basis.

As per research, "the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment has divided the prerogatives of Pakistan's multi-tier governance at the federal, inter-provincial, and provincial levels by reviewing the Federal Legislative List Part I and Part II and repealing the Concurrent Legislative List. Afterwards, the central and regional governments' statutory and policymaking authorities were demarcated by handing over exclusive control of 53 items to the central government, 18 items to the Council of Common Interests (CCI), and all remaining items to the regional governments. Further restructuring of functions at the district, tehsil, and union council levels has been devolved to the regional governments under the policy framework articulated in Article 140(A) of the Constitution."

Moreover, "through the addition of Article 140(A), the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment clearly states: 'Each Province shall, by law, establish a local government system and devolve political, administrative, and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of the local governments.' This led to the provision of legislative, institutional, planning, and policy spaces to provinces to make the system of governance context-specific to provide better services at the grassroots level."

Criticisms of bureaucratic hassles and delays apart, the importance of local bodies cannot be discounted, especially in their role in the public delivery of services such as the Public Distribution System, pension schemes, mitigation of disease, outbreaks and disasters. While the ranks secured by the state are signifiers of the outcomes, primarily highlighting the efficacy of delivering services to the public today, scholars argue that decentralisation and people's participation increased since the 1970s, thanks to the socio-political movements. At this juncture, the presence of robust machinery at the local level is a measure of the health of democracy and people's participation. Its absence is bound to have an immense effect. In this context, the criticism of the government's laxity in holding the elections needs to be registered.

Local body elections strengthen political parties' organisational structures and enable them to stay closely connected with the voters. The numerous opportunities in terms of official posts that open up through local body elections allow political parties to give party workers from multiple backgrounds the opportunity to partake in government functioning. Narendra Subramanian, a professor of political science at McGill University, argues that such broad-based accommodation results in 'organisational pluralism', wherein, with intra-party pluralism, a given party's engagement with society changes its orientation towards an atmosphere of tolerance.

Put otherwise, in a diverse society like Pakistan's local bodies, it can serve as a means to usher in societal syncretism through broad-based representation. On another note, local bodies provide opportunities for the emergence of leaders at the local level outside of political parties.

The importance of elected local government in a democratic political system is undeniable. It is, in fact, the first step on the democratic ladder in any country.

(By Durdana Najam The Express Tribune, 15, 01/04/2021)

### Reinstating LGs

THE PTI government in Punjab is sending confused and conflicting signals to people when it comes to the critical issue of devolving power to the grassroots as promised by the ruling party in its election campaign. On the one hand, the prime minister is said to have finally approved a plan for developing south Punjab as a separate 'administrative zone' in the province with an all-powerful secretariat to tackle issues ranging from lack of resources to under-representation of the region in public-sector jobs. On the other hand, it is stalling the restoration of elected local governments in the province despite the Supreme Court order declaring their dissolution two years ago to be unconstitutional. The decision to establish an independent secretariat in south Punjab has come after the Buzdar government drew strong criticism from within and outside the PTI against its alleged attempt in March to roll back the few functions and powers it had reluctantly transferred to the newly created regional administrative set-up. However, the government does not

appear to be under much pressure to reinstate the dissolved local governments, the apex court decision and repeated pledges to take the financial and administrative powers to the local level notwithstanding.

Local governments or the lowest tier of government are considered crucial for a functional democratic set-up. No country can tackle the complex governance and public-service delivery issues in the absence of a strong, functional local democracy. Pakistan is no exception. If we desire to improve the quality of financial and administrative governance in the country, we will first have to strengthen grassroots democracy by empowering people through their locally elected representatives. Indeed, the establishment of an independent administrative set-up in south Punjab will go a long way in the resolution of issues facing residents of the region and ultimately in the creation of a new province. But neither a secretariat nor a new province can ever replace the LG system if the intent is to address structural problems in public service delivery. The sad part of the story is that our politicians and bureaucracy do not want to share authority with local representatives. Hence, we have seen governments frequently rolling back even powerless local governments. If the present PTI administration is genuinely interested in improving governance through transfer of powers to the people, it should strengthen the constitutional cover given to local governments.  
(By Editorial Dawn, 06, 13/04/2021)

### **KMC restricted from razing leased houses**

The Sindh High Court restricted the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, commissioner and other relevant authorities on Tuesday from razing leased houses near Gujjar Nullah.

A two-member bench, comprising Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Rashida Asad, was hearing a plea filed by residents of Liaquatabad area against the demolition of leased houses.

The petitioner's counsel apprised the bench that the court had declared the houses in question legal in 2015 but anti-encroachment teams had marked them for demolition.

The bench restricted the relevant authorities from demolishing leased houses till further notice and sought replies from the Karachi commissioner, the KMC and other parties by the next hearing.

#### **Missing children**

Meanwhile, another bench comprising Justice KK Agha and Abdul Mobeen Lakho rejected the report submitted by the provincial task force pertaining to missing children.

Where did the missing children go when they weren't detained by any agency, asked Justice Agha.

The bench observed that missing children could have been picked by human traffickers and asked why efforts were not being made for their recoveries.

The court directed the authorities to seek assistance from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for the recovery of missing children and to include a senior FIA official in the joint investigation team and the provincial task force.

The Central Investigation Agency DIG maintained during the hearing that efforts to trace the missing children are underway.

The bench directed the relevant authorities to recover the missing children and submit a report by June 10.

#### **Extension granted**

Another bench, comprising Justice Muhammad Iqbal Kalhoro and Justice Shamsuddin Abbasi, sought a progress report from the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) over former Sindh law minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar's bail plea in the graft inquiry against him.

The investigation officer informed the court that the inquiry against Lanjar has been completed and the report has been sent to the NAB headquarters for approval.

The NAB prosecutor apprised that a reply from the national anti-graft watchdog's headquarters is yet to be received. He moved the court to grant an extension for the submission of report.

The bench accepted NAB's request and granted an extension till May 25 while extending the bail of Lanjar and other accused.

#### **Bail extended**

The same bench granted NAB an extension to complete its inquiry against Pakistan Peoples Party MPA Sharjeel Inam Memon pertaining to illegal appointments in the Sindh information department.

During the hearing of Memon's bail plea, the NAB prosecutor maintained that the watchdog needed more time to complete its inquiry.

The court extended the former information minister's bail and granted NAB time till May 25. The bureau was directed to submit a progress report at the next hearing.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 14/04/2021)

### **NAB reference filed against former KMC official**

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Thursday filed a reference against Liaqat Ali Khan Qaimkhani, former director general of parks and horticulture of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), for having assets beyond means and his alleged role in the Bagh Ibne Qasim scam.

NAB had been conducting an investigation regarding illegal allotment of the amenity land of Bagh Ibne Qasim and its unlawful amalgamation with two plots of land of the KDA.

In the same case, NAB arrested a former executive district officer of the revenue department of Karachi, Sajjad Ali Abbasi, in June 2019. Mr Abbasi was part of the committee which granted the amenity plot to a private construction firm, besides being part of the Sindh Land Committee which regularised the land in favour of the company.

Later, NAB pardoned Mr Abbasi under Section 26 of the NAB Ordinance and made him a prosecution witness in the reference.

During the course of NAB's investigation into the scam, the sources claimed, the bureau found interesting facts that suggested the scam was managed and executed right from the top tracing its links to power corridors in the provincial administration, allegedly to the Chief Minister House.

Mr Qaimkhani was appointed adviser to the Karachi mayor after his retirement a few years ago. He served on key positions under former city nazims Naimatullah Khan and Mustafa Kamal.

In September last year, NAB seized eight vehicles, arms, property files, jewellery and official records of the KMC from his custody from the Qaimkhani House in PECHS.. The documents of seven bungalows in Karachi and Lahore were also found during the search of his house in PECHS, Block-6. 'Original files' of the KMC were seized from the suspect's house.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 05, 16/04/2021)

### **Court seeks replies from KMC's katchi abadis dept, others**

The Sindh High Court expressed on Monday inability to restrain demolition drives under way along Karachi's nullahs, stating that it could not overrule a Supreme Court (SC) order and the petitioner may approach the apex court on the matter.

A two-member bench, comprising Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Rashida Asad was hearing the plea challenging the demolition of leased houses under the guise of anti-encroachment operations along the city's nullahs.

The bench issued notices to the Sindh advocate general, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's (KMC's) katchi abadis department and other relevant authorities, directing them to submit their replies on the plea by April 23.

At the hearing, the counsel for the petitioner complained that the KMC had issued a single letter and declared all houses along nullahs encroachments.

"But how can the KMC's katchi abadis department lease a land [on which construction is] illegal?" inquired Justice Rizvi.

Besides, the court observed that the width of most nullahs used to be up to 600 feet before 1970, when encroachments began to appear and illegal construction started, but the current width of most nullahs was not even 200 feet.

Justice Rizvi added that a high court could not go against a SC order.

At that, the counsel for the petitioner maintained that the apex court's order on the matter was being "misrepresented."

"Encroachments can be removed, but how can they [the relevant authorities] raze houses built on leased land?" the counsel contended, referring to the top court's order.

The order has been issued by the SC and it is best that the petitioner approaches the top court for clarification, the court remarked.

When the counsel pointed out that houses built on leased land would be razed by the time they would approach the apex court, the high court bench stated that all relevant information was available online and the SC, too, could be approached immediately.

"The[high] court cannot restrict the anti-encroachment for now," the court stated.

Seeking replies from the relevant authorities, the court then adjourned the hearing till April 23.

### **Fake domiciles**

Separately, a two-member bench comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Arshad Hussain Khan declared a plea pertaining to the awarding of jobs on the basis of fake domiciles and permanent residential certificates (PRCs) admissible in the court. The plea, filed by Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan leader Khawaja Izharul Hassan, maintained that students in Karachi were not being issued domiciles.

"In 2000, people were being issued fake domiciles, but now, the domiciles are not being issued to eligible citizens," the plea stated. "It is a matter of the future of Karachi's students [and] the citizens of urban Sindh are being deprived of jobs due to fake domiciles."

The plea contended that jobs reserved for the citizens of urban areas in Sindh were being giving to the residents of rural areas, and moved the court to direct the relevant authorities to stop the issuance of fake domiciles.

Besides, Hassan prayed the court to order an inquiry into jobs awarded on the basis of domiciles thus far.

The court declared the plea admissible and fixed May3 for hearing the petition.

#### **Missing person case**

Meanwhile, a bench comprising Justice KK Agha and Justice Abdul Mobeen Lakho issued notices to the Sindh Home Department and other relevant authorities, seeking their replies on a plea pertaining to the disappearance of a missing person, Zeeshan.

Zeeshan's family maintained before the court that he had been whisked away by a law enforcement agency from Golimar 22 days ago. The family members said they did not have any information about Zeeshan's whereabouts since then.

The family moved the court to direct the relevant authorities to present Zeeshan in the court.

At that, the court issued notices to the Sindh Home Department, Sindh IGP, deputy attorney general and Sindh advocate general. (By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 20/04/2021)

### **KMC officials ordered to make rain emergency arrangements**

The Karachi administrator on Wednesday directed his subordinate staffers to make all necessary arrangements for monsoon rains before start of the rainy season.

"The existing dewatering pumps of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation should be kept ready and if more pumps are required, immediate purchase should be made. Full arrangements will be made all over Karachi for the monsoon season this year," Administrator Laeeq Ahmed said while addressing a meeting held to review measures for upcoming monsoon season.

Relevant officials attended the meeting. The administrator said that this time the entire responsibility of storm-water drainage and other matters had been handed over to the engineering department while other officers concerned and employees will work under it. Additional staff and resources will also be provided to the engineering department.

Mr Ahmed said that during the rains, all officers and employees, including himself, will be present on roads to assist citizens.

"Every effort will be made to complete the drainage process as soon as possible and remove the stagnant water safely," he added.

The administrator directed that planning for rainwater drainage should be carried out urgently for 11 underpasses and 106 roads managed by KMC so that any emergency situation could be dealt with in timely and efficient manner.

He said that trucks and other vehicles should also be arranged ahead of time to move the dewatering pumps from one place to another in case of emergency during rains.

He said that special attention should be paid to the tail-end areas where water accumulates.

"Arrangements should be made in the light of past experiences so that citizens can be protected from any untoward situation," he said.

He asked the director general of works to pay immediate attention to make roads motorable, especially in West district wherever necessary.

Laeq Ahmed directed the chief engineer electrical and mechanical to continue the maintenance and repair work of streetlights and special attention be paid to it during the monsoon season so that the roads remain well-lit and there would be no obstruction in drainage works.

The administrator said that the KMC would fulfil its responsibilities throughout the city with regard to the monsoon and every effort would be made to help citizens.

He asked the officers to immediately implement the given instructions and adopt a strategy that would resolve problems of people and enable them to enjoy the rains without facing any difficulty.

(By APP Dawn, 14, 29/04/2021)

### **KMC begins renovations at Khaliq Dina Hall**

Renovation work of the roof of the historic building Khaliq Dina Hall has been initiated and the affected part of the roof and the resulting leakage would be repaired in the next few days, officials said on Tuesday.

"The work cannot be halted by citing reasons for shortage of funds. Only joint efforts of all of us can preserve historic buildings and heritage," said Metropolitan Commissioner Danish Saeed.

The Metropolitan Commissioner was informed that Rs20 million had been earmarked for this work in 2018 after an advisory board and a technical committee was constituted by the government. He was informed that a work order was issued for work here in 2019 and was started by people with expertise in handling heritage but later funds were not fully provided due to which the renovation work on the roof of the building was halted.

He was informed that out of Rs20 million, Rs6 million has been spent thus far.

Saeed said that he hoped that the remaining funds would be received soon for this work. "It is imperative that historic assets be protected," he added. The metropolitan commissioner noted that special attention needed to be paid to finish the work on wood in the historic building to protect it from termites.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 05/05/2021)

### **Govt seeks public opinion on creation of Keamari dist under opposition's pressure**

After approving carving out a new Keamari district from Karachi's district West more than eight months ago, the Sindh government has decided to take "into consideration the public opinion" from certain areas of the new districts whose neighbourhoods are formally being converted from rural to urban areas.

The move has already attracted strong criticism from major political parties of the city which called it an attempt to divide the metropolis on ethnic lines and strengthen the political position of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

In a recent "public notice", the Sindh government's local government department had invited the residents of certain union councils of the newly carved out Keamari district to come up with their reservations, objections or suggestions, if any, on the move and guide the provincial authorities to address them. It had also given them 20 days to formally file their views in writing before they were declared parts of urban areas.

*'I warn the PPP leadership that they are in fact initiating the process of dividing Sindh'*

"It is mandatory to take into consideration the public opinion prior to the conversion of rural areas into urban area i.e. the union councils of District Council Karachi namely UC Mowach, UC Gabopat and UC Lal Bakhar and forming part of an urban area of newly created District Municipal Corporation Keamari as per Section 13 'Declaration of urban and rural areas' of the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013," said the notice.

The Sindh cabinet in its August 2020 meeting had approved carving out of a new district — Keamari — from Karachi's district West, and directed the Board of Revenue to submit a detailed proposal for the creation of more districts in the province which had big populations or areas. The cabinet had approved the creation of Keamari district, out of district West, comprising four sub-divisions — SITE, Baldia, Harbour and Mauripur — with a population of 1,833,864. Keamari district will have three circles, five tapas and 11 dehs. The decision was taken in the "larger public interest", the meeting was told.

Right after the decision, the major parties had rejected the decision calling it a political move by the ruling PPP. Following the fresh public notice from the provincial government seeking people's reservations and suggestions, many of them plan to come up with their opinions again.

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, which has also challenged the move in the Sindh High Court, slammed the PPP government for carving out the seventh district out of Karachi. It contended that it was not an administrative decision, but an attempt to divide the city on ethnic lines and strengthen the political position of the PPP.

MQM-P leaders Khwaja Izharul Hasan and Salman Mujahid, who had filed an application with a party supporter from Keamari to become an intervener in the petition already pending before the SHC challenging the notification issued in September last year to notify Keamari district, called it a politically motivated decision.

They said that the decision was made without consulting the stakeholders and the people of the area, adding that the decision was made to achieve political goals by the ruling party in Sindh as the final results of the population Census 2017 had not yet been announced while the delimitation of local government jurisdictions in the province had also not yet been carried out.

The Jamaat-i-Islami, which had run the city's local government through its elected mayor and city council, saw the PPP move as "a game" before the upcoming local bodies polls. The party's Karachi chief, Hafiz Naeemur Rahman, said that the district would bring about no change in the lives of the people of Karachi and it was only a "manoeuvre" before the local bodies polls.

"It's a history of the PPP government in Sindh that it always plays a game and manoeuvres things before an election," he said. "The fresh move is reflective of the same history. The party has lost its credibility in Karachi and other parts of Sindh. Their survival lies in fanning ethnic hatred, manoeuvring things before elections and exploiting their power and misuse of authority. These conspiracies, lies and corruption will never last long."

Former city mayor and founding chief of the Pak Sarzameen Party Mustafa Kamal also called the PPP move "a dangerous game" being staged on ethnic grounds, which would only trigger hatred and cause irreparable damage. He warned the Sindh rulers to review their decision before it's too late and the city's politics and peace both fell prey to ethnic hatred.

"We came with the message of peace and buried the politics of ethnicity," he said. "The PPP is giving a new life to that hatred and politics of violence. I warn the PPP leadership that they are in fact initiating the process of dividing Sindh. This move would lead to violence and bloodbath. This should stop here, otherwise, it would cost everyone dearly."  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 17/05/2021)

### **Magistrate recommends action against DC-East, three others for land-grabbing**

A judicial magistrate has recommended action against four government officials including the deputy commissioner-East for facilitating those who occupied a piece of land illegally.

Judicial Magistrate Mukesh Kumar Talreja made the recommendation against DC-East Mohammad Ali Shah, additional DC-II Younis Dahri, mukhtiarkar Wazir Chand Oad and sub-inspector Haji Iqbal in a report submitted to District and Sessions Judge (East) Khalid Hussain Shahani.

The DJ-East had appointed the magistrate for inspecting demolition of houses and usurpation of land in the Architect Engineering Cooperative Housing Society located in Gulistan-i-Jauhar Block 8.

In the report, the magistrate stated that he personally visited the plot number SB-13, measuring 400 square yards, near Commander CNG Station along with complainant Tufail Ahmed.

*The district and sessions judge (East) will take up the matter on 30<sup>th</sup>*

The report stated that assistant sub-inspector Mubarak Ali recorded the statements of three witnesses, who said in January the DC-East, additional DC-East, mukhtiarkar and alleged land-grabber Riffat Zaman Kiyani had demolished two houses and now Kiyani was in possession of the whole area selling the forged files of the plots.

The magistrate stated that he called reports from the Gulistan-i-Jauhar SHO, DC-East, superintendent, surveys of the Board of Revenue and director, urban planning and design of the Karachi Development Authority.

During the inspection, the complainant and his witnesses informed that sub-inspector Haji Iqbal along with Kiyani forcibly entered their house, maltreated and misbehaved with the family members and demolished their houses dispossessing them on Jan 6, 2021.

Later, Kiyani along with the DC-East and ADC-East, mukhtiarkar and SI Iqbal raised a boundary wall over three acres of the land, which include the property of the complainant, the report stated.

The magistrate stated that the SSP-East and Gulistan-i-Jauhar SHO tried to "mislead" by saying that the ADC-II East along with the team of the anti-encroachment cell had demolished the constructions of an alleged illegal marriage hall being run on the subject land, which was subsequently in possession of no one.

On the other hand, the director, anti-encroachment cell, denied having carried out any demolition operation on the subject land or having taken over possession of the same, the magistrate added.

He stated that the DC-East "smartly" skipped answering the questions and said a report might be called from some other department. The magistrate noted: "Such shrewd behaviour on the part of the government officials further strengthens the case of the complainant that they all in collusion with the proposed accused Riffat Zaman Kiyani have demolished the house, dispossessed the complainant and grabbed/occupied illegally over the subject property."

The magistrate said the BoR official in his report stated that the record of the subject property pertained to the KDA and there was no record available with the surveys department.

He said the official in charge of the BoR's microfilming unit filed a report stating that the lease documents in respect of the plot/property in question were genuine.

The report concluded that after evaluating the material collected during inspection of the site the contravention of Section 3 of the Illegal Dispossession Act, 2005 was made out against Kiyani, DC-East Mohammad Ali Shah, ADC-II East Younis Dahri, mukhtiarkar Wazir Chand Oad and SI Haji Iqbal.

He recommended taking action against them.

The magistrate further suggested legal action should also be taken against the urban planning and design director for not submitting a report despite issuance of repeated notices and show-cause notice, as the incumbent could not do the same due to lapse of the given time of inquiry.

DJ Shahani will take up the matter on June 30.  
(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 13, 24/06/2021)

### **Administrator approves surplus KMC budget with Rs26bn outlay**

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on Tuesday passed a tax-free budget of Rs25.982 billion for the next financial year 2021-22 with a surplus of Rs12 million and estimated expenditures of about Rs25.970bn.

In the absence of an elected set-up, KMC Administrator Laeeq Ahmed approved the budget using the powers of the City Council. No new tax has been imposed in the budget.

The administrator said that for the next financial year priority was given to those development schemes which were in the public interest.

“Non-development schemes are kept to minimum, new and ongoing projects of roads, gardens, playgrounds and sports complexes have been added to improve the infrastructure of Karachi,” he added.

*No new tax has been imposed in the budget for fiscal year 2021-22*

He said that under the Annual Development Programme (ADP) 200 schemes started during the outgoing financial year would be expedited and completed in the next fiscal year.

Mr Ahmed said that with the onset of the monsoon season, priority would be given to the schemes that were expected to provide relief to the citizens. “The process of cleaning the storm-water drains is underway and will continue in the future as well,” he added.

The administrator said that in order to provide recreational facilities, all important places of Karachi including zoo, Hill Park, Kidney Hill Park, Bagh Ibne Qasim would be improved while a total of 45 parks of KMC be developed.

#### **Sindh govt to give Rs15.07bn**

The largest source of revenue in the KMC budget is the Octroi Zila Tax (OZT) share and grant-in-aid of Rs15.07bn from the Sindh government while the District ADP is expected to stand at more than Rs5bn.

In the budget of the next financial year, a total of Rs2.451bn had been allocated for development works besides allocation of funds for district ADP.

The estimated collection from the revenue departments of KMC is Rs1.70bn and the estimated collection from the Municipal Utility Charges Tax (MUCT) is Rs1bn.

Outstanding dues of Rs1.85bn on K-Electric and Rs100m on the Karachi Port Trust are shown in the budget.

Similarly, in terms of expected revenue during the next financial year, Rs1.53bn from World Bank-funded project CLICK, Rs184.7m from culture, sports and recreation; Rs261.5m from transport and communication; Rs222.9m from veterinary services; Rs201m from municipal services; Rs100m in terms of income transfer from the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA); Rs95m from engineering department; Rs81.4m from medical and health services; Rs35.78m from parks and horticulture and Rs15.62m from enterprise and investment promotion was expected to be generated.

#### **Uplift projects**

The development projects for which funds have been allocated during the next financial year included Rs800m for construction of road from Machli Chowk to Kanupp Road; Rs300m for rehabilitation and development of Allama Shabbir Ahmed Usmani Road; Rs120m for cleanliness of drains; Rs100m for repair of extension joints of all bridges; Rs100m for supply and installation of drainage sewerage lines at the Zulfikarabad Oil Tankers Terminal; Rs81m for renovation and repair of hippodrome; Rs80m for improvement of fish aquarium; Rs80m for development and repair of roads, sidewalks and bridges.

An amount of Rs70m is allocated for Shahabuddin Market adjacent to Empress Market; Rs68m for purchase of ventilators in KMC hospitals; Rs60m for installation and repair of street lights on Mai Kolachi Road; Rs50m for roadside tree plantation; Rs50m for purchase of animals and birds in Karachi Zoo and Safari Park; Rs49m for purchase of medical, electrical and other equipment in KMC hospitals; Rs40m for development and improvement of Safari Park and zoo and Rs15m for construction of badminton court in Aga Khan Park.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 30/06/2021)