

NEWSCLIPPINGS

JULY TO DECEMBER 2018

KMC LOCAL BODY



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World Bank plans investment in Karachi's development, says mayor

Mayor Wasim Akhtar said on Friday that Karachi, with 50 per cent of its population living in slums, was facing series of civic issues and the World Bank's (WB) cooperation in resolving them was a good omen.

"The city's critical problems should be given priority which would help solve the basic issues negatively affecting Karachi," said Mayor Akhtar while chairing a meeting with the WB representatives.

The officials were visiting Karachi during which they held meetings with the authorities in the Sindh government and the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) to work out a comprehensive plan to initiate development projects of importance in the city.

The mayor said the sprawling city was suffering mainly because of poor water supply and drainage system with improper sanitation conditions and broken roads.

He added that those problems were posing serious hurdles in the way of realistic development of the city. Mayor Akhtar urged the delegation to accord top priority to rehabilitation and construction of roads and bridges, and provision of machinery and equipment for cleaning of storm drains and emergency works.

He ordered the KMC officers to provide all possible help and support to the World Bank team in their study of the city projects.

He said the elected leadership of the metropolis was making all possible efforts to solve its problems and for that matter many plans were under consideration.

A KMC spokesperson quoted the World Bank representatives as saying that the world body was making \$60 million to \$80m investment in Karachi and in this connection under the Karachi integrated urban management project 2018, they were working on the city's drainage basin, locations and capacity of the city's main rivers, and depth and dredging requirements with the help of computerised software and through digital elevation model.

Officials said the study focused on the protection from floods and to prepare a workable plan in this connection.

Mayor Akhtar assured all possible cooperation in the World Bank's projects and said it was top priority of his administration to provide better facilities to citizens of Karachi.

Fyzee Rahamin gallery

The city mayor said Fyzee Rahamin Art Gallery was an important cultural heritage of the city and its land was gifted by renowned education and culture personality Begum Atiya Fyzee to the KMC for the citizens of Karachi.

He dispelled the impression that the land or building of the art gallery was being handed over to some organisation or individuals.

"As the sole trusty of this land, the KMC, under the trust deed, will continue to maintain and run this cultural centre and organise cultural and literary activities here," said the mayor while speaking at a briefing given to him on the Fyzee Rahamin Art Gallery project.

Mayor Akhtar asked the officers that the land and building of the art gallery would only be utilised in accordance with the trust deed signed in 1952.

He said a huge modern auditorium named Aiwan-i-Riffat adjacent to the gallery was under construction and would soon be completed.

Earlier, the meeting was briefed that Begum Atiya Fyzee and her husband, Samuel Fyzee Rahamin, were invited by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to shift to Karachi from Bombay (Mumbai) after independence.

The celebrated couple was allotted a piece of land in Burnes Garden where in 1952 they constructed a building known as Aiwan-i-Riffat and decorated it with all their valuable collections and treasures of art and culture. Later, they gifted the place to the citizens of Karachi under a trust deed.

The KMC accepted the trusteeship vide its council's resolution No 138/52 dated May 29, 1952, according to which the corporation had to maintain the building in proper repairs and preserve the exhibits and permit the public at large to visit the museum and picture gallery and ensure the use of this building for only the purpose described in the trust deed.

Mayor opens road in Orangi

City Mayor Wasim Akhtar on Thursday claimed the city was facing, what he described as, a 'stepmotherly' treatment from Islamabad as the metropolis which provided billions of rupees in revenue to the Centre was not getting even 'peanuts' to meet its requirements for development.

"It is the duty of the elected authorities to solve problems of their citizens. All efforts would be taken to solve the issue pertaining to scarcity of water in Orangi," said the mayor while speaking to reporters after inaugurating a newly-constructed road in union council 22 of Faqir Colony, Muslimabad.

He also visited various parts of the sprawling Orangi neighbourhood.

He said citizens had trusted and elected their local representatives in hope to get rid of everyday problems. He added that provision of potable water, better sewerage system, sanitation and road infrastructure formed basic rights of the people and it was their duty to solve those issues.

The elected representatives and notables of the area and senior officials of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation accompanied the mayor.

Mayor Akhtar said Karachi was the backbone of the national economy and the city was running the whole country.

"Yet," he added, "Karachi has been kept deprived of basic facilities and the governments must think on it before patience of citizens reach the saturation point."

He expressed the hope that the newly-constructed road would provide comfort to the people in their daily life.

He said solving citizens' problems was the top priority of the elected representatives.

He added the lifting of garbage was also a major issue and it was time "we start thinking about this because poor sanitation and leakage from sewerage mains cause various diseases in the city".

(By Hasan Mansoor Dawn 17, 20/01/2018)

Amid uproar, City Council asks Sindh govt to increase funds for UCs

The City Council's session on Wednesday lasted for only 20 minutes and was adjourned by Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar after the house adopted three resolutions amid continuous uproar by members from both sides of the aisle.



The session, held at the council hall in the Old KMC Building, began with usual decorum for a while before Junaid Makati of the Jamaat-i-Islami stood up and asked Mayor Akhtar, who was in the chair, to devote the sitting to problems being faced by various union committees of the city.

His demand was supported by Opposition Leader Karamullah Waqasi, who said the order of the day should be scrapped and the session's time be spent on the hardships being faced by various neighbourhoods of the metropolis.

Mayor Akhtar said the business of the day reflected the problems of the city. Besides, he offered to the opposition parties that they could raise their issues one by one once the scheduled business was over.

Opposition members lodge a noisy protest claiming mayor denied debate on city problems

His words lacked the impact to pacify the opposition benches. Members of all the opposition parties, some of them climbing over their desks, kept on chanting slogans and thumping desks.

Members of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, which dominates the council, responded to the opposition with their own slogans and thumping of desks only to add to the pandemonium. Their members too climbed over the desks.

Between all this, Mr Waqasi said the quorum was not complete for the session to continue. The mayor rejected his claim by saying there were 132 members in the house while it required presence of 102 members for the quorum.

The mayor, however, showed little worry in working out the business in hand and put three resolutions before the house separately.

Through one resolution, the Sindh government was asked to increase funds for every UC from Rs200,000 to Rs600,000 to help the UCs effectively perform routine works and solve problems of their constituents.

Contract for charged parking approved

In another resolution, the contract of collecting charged parking fee on 27 locations for the current year was approved and the council gave approval of the surrender of grant-in-aid amount of Rs1 million from a budget head and its re-appropriation in another budget head for purchase of chemicals and medicines for the KMC sports complex.

The members, predominantly belonging to the MQM-P, supported the resolutions and got them passed with majority votes.

Mayor Akhtar said the elected representatives were making all-out efforts to solve the city's problems and improvement was being made in the affairs of various departments.

He said in the past the amount recovered from the charged parking fee was embezzled.

He said the resolutions passed were all aimed at making the KMC financially strong.

Mr Akhtar said the resolution demanding an increase in the UCs' funds would be sent to the provincial government for further action.

He said the elected representatives were doing their best to provide relief to the residents of their constituencies despite the fact that conditions were not favourable.

He had to end the session quickly after passage of the resolutions when the pandemonium in the house refused to die down.

(By Hasan Mansoor Dawn 17, 01/03/2018)

Court summons Karachi mayor in cases related to May 12

An antiterrorism court summoned on Wednesday Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar asking him to turn up on March 17 in four cases pertaining to the May 12 mayhem.

The Karachi mayor, two MPAs of his party Muhammad Adnan alias Adnan Batuk and Kamran Farooqi, and other suspects have been booked in cases related to rioting, murder and attempted murder lodged at Airport police station during the chaos of May 12, 2007.

Earlier, the court had granted bail to Mr Akhtar and also allowed another application seeking exemption from personal appearance.

When the cases came up for the hearing before ATC-II judge on Wednesday, the court fixed the cases for indictment on March 17 and summoned the mayor with directions to ensure his presence at the next hearing.

According to the charge sheet, Mr Akhtar, who was the then advisor to chief minister, had allegedly admitted his involvement before the police during interrogations, and on a lead given by him one of the key suspects, Aslam alias Kala, was arrested.

The investigating officers further contended in the investigation reports that the police had recovered a weapon allegedly used in the killings during the riots from Aslam.

Around 50 people were killed and over 100 wounded in attacks on rallies by different political parties and legal fraternity which were going to receive the then deposed chief justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry at Karachi airport to attend a lawyers' gathering, but he was forced to fly back to Islamabad after nine hours' restricted stay at the airport.

Sharjeel Memon's proposed surgery

An accountability court was informed that a private hospital has recommended European countries as best suited for a proposed spinal surgery of detained former provincial information minister Sharjeel Memon, it emerged on Wednesday.

Mr Memon, who was recently shifted back to prison from a hospital on the directive of Supreme Court, along with the then provincial information secretary Zulfiqar Ali Shalwani and others, had been charged with allegedly committing corruption between 2013 and 2015 while awarding advertisements of provincial government's awareness campaigns in electronic media that caused a loss of around Rs3.27 billion.

In a previous hearing, the court had sought a second opinion from a private hospital about the proposed spinal surgery of the former minister after a medical board contended that proposed treatment was not available in the country.

The private hospital in its report said that "disc replacement surgery" was a complex and high-risk procedure and not performed at the hospital for the time being.

"However, it can be confirmed that the field of medicine is quite advanced in European countries and they would be best suited to undertake a complex and high-risk surgery of disc replacement surgery", it added.

Last month, a seven-member medical board, constituted to examine the former minister, in its second report said, "The overall condition of Mr Memon remains unsatisfactory as there is a need for surgery as soon as possible failing which he may suffer permanent disability on account of spinal pathology."

The chairman of medical board Prof A.R. Jamali had informed the court that Prof Raza K. Rizvi, co-chairman of the medical board, has advised "disc replacement surgery" to the former minister, but JPMC has no facility to conduct the proposed surgery, adding that there was insufficient expertise for this procedure in the country.

(Dawn 18, 08/03/2018)

Apex body decides to rename 60 buildings, roads honouring Altaf

The civil and military leadership of Sindh on Thursday agreed that founding chief of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Altaf Hussain was against the state and did not “deserve any kind of honour or memorial” and decided to rename more than 60 buildings and roads in Karachi dedicated to the London-based leader and his family members, said an official statement.



The fresh “resolve” came at the 22nd Apex Committee meeting, which was presided over by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah. It was attended by provincial ministers Sohail Anwar Siyal, Syed Nasir Shah, Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Chief Secretary Rizwan Memon, Corps Commander of Karachi Lt Gen Shahid Baig Mirza, Pakistan Rangers Sindh director general Maj Gen Mohammad Saeed and senior civil and military officials.

The hours-long meeting took up many agenda items. It took decisions on several and issued directives for others to be looked into their progress at the next meeting of the Apex Committee. The most significant of the decisions emerged about the names of 62 roads, buildings and some institutions attributed to Altaf Hussain and his family members.

“At the meeting it was pointed out that there were still 62 buildings and roads in the city with the name of Altaf Hussain and his family members,” said the statement issued by CM House after the meeting. “The meeting resolved that those who are against the state do not deserve any kind of honour or memorial. The chief minister told the meeting that the cabinet has already taken such a decision. The chief secretary was directed by the Apex Committee to rename the identified buildings and roads.”

Legal reforms to be introduced for speedy trials of street crimes cases

The other agenda items of the meeting, the statement said, included discussion on a draft of madressahs’ law, Karachi Safe City Project, cybercrime, detention powers under the ATA, trial of street crime cases, issues of land grabbing, security of banks, installation of trackers in motorcycles, security audit of shrines, standard registration number plates, operation in the katcha area.

Delayed Safe City Project

The meeting expressed “reservation” over delay in the Safe City Project for Karachi due to recent intervention by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

“The meeting took up the issue of Safe City Project and expressed reservation on its unnecessary delay,” said the statement. “The meeting was told that the project was started with hiring of a consultant but with the start NAB Sindh wrote a letter to the concerned officers. The [cost of] consultancy is Rs40 million, therefore, the concerned officers put the project on the back burner.”

The Apex Committee said that the project was most important and it must be implemented as it had been conceived. At this, the statement said, the chief minister directed the chief secretary to hold a meeting of an IT team and other relevant officers and take NAB into confidence on starting the project afresh.

Street crime cases

The matter of trial of street crime suspects in antiterrorism courts was also taken up at the meeting, but it was pointed out that the judiciary was of the view that such cases could not be tried in the ATCs.

After deliberation and discussion on the subject, the statement said that the chief minister decided to introduce legal reforms in consultation with the Sindh Judicial Academy for speedy trials and conviction in cases of street crimes.

"I want street criminals [to] be dealt [with] severely, we have restored peace in the city with heavy price and now the street criminals would not [be] allowed to keep the citizens harassed, insecure and afraid," the statement quoted CM Shah as saying. He also directed the law minister to expedite the process of consultation and bring the matter to the cabinet and the assembly.

About the operation against land grabbing, the meeting was told that the exercise was in progress and it was also producing results.

"The land grabbing issue is being watched, dealt [with] and bulldozed," the statement said, referring to the briefing of the law enforcement agencies' officials to the members of the committee.

The meeting also decided to launch a targeted operation against criminals and dacoits in the katcha area though it was conditioned with the preparation of the relevant agencies.

The chief minister, the statement said, also decided to revive the border force, which was created with 1,000 constables in 2006 but later merged into the police department. The revival would not affect the merger and the deployment of policemen would be made with the support of Pakistan Rangers, Sindh. (Imran Ayub Dawn 17, 09/03/2018)

KMC officers brief WB team about city's drains

A delegation of the World Bank comprising urban specialists and analysts visited the headquarters of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) on Wednesday to obtain the details and data about major city drains, officials in the KMC said.

They said a briefing was given during their meeting with the senior KMC officials in a bid to provide the World Bank team all necessary details and information about the 30 major drains of the city including their locations, routes and flooding situation in nearby areas during rains.

The World Bank team represented by senior urban specialist Yoo Hee Kim, specialist Sohaib Akhtar and analyst Kabir Dawani which has already surveyed Gujjar Nullah and Orangi Nullah now plans to survey Korangi Nullah and Soldier Bazaar Nullah.

Officials said a World Bank package included developing the city's drainage infrastructure and rehabilitating and remodelling of drain routes to solve the issues associated with the present structure of the storm-water drains and sewerage system.

KMC director general works Shahab Anwer and other officials with district and zonal chief engineers helped the team analyse the situation and work out the package.

They said Mayor Wasim Akhtar had directed them to extend full cooperation to the World Bank in their study of city's drainage system and preparation of a development package. (Dawn 18, 15/03/2018)

Mayor asks councillors to perform despite 'limited resources'

Mayor Wasim Akhtar on Wednesday said the elected leadership of the city would have to work beyond politics, no matter how difficult the obstacles in providing comfort to the people of Karachi were.

"Difficulties will come our way but we have to face them courageously by continuing our efforts for the benefit of Karachi," said Mayor Akhtar while addressing a programme where he was invited to meet elected local government representatives of Korangi district in Shah Faisal Town.

City council's parliamentary leader Aslam Shah Afridi, chairman of the District Municipal Corporation, Korangi, Syed Nayyar Raza, vice-chairman Syed Ahmer Ali and chairmen of various union councils of the district were among those who attended the programme.

Mayor Akhtar said that the event was arranged to review the overall progress of the municipal activities in the district by getting updates vis-à-vis development works etc.

He complained that funds were released by the competent authority for development schemes in the city much after the municipal bodies presented their budgets for the current fiscal.

“Thus,” he added, “many of our schemes could not be included in the final development plan.”

Mr Akhtar said the municipal bodies in Sindh had very limited resources; still, all elected local government representatives were performing commendably.

He said Korangi district had 37 union councils out of which 34 were won by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement; adding that the elected representatives were making sure that maximum uplift works could be done with the available resources.

“We'll never relent and do our part to get the city out of the mire of problems.”

He said development works worth Rs2.5 million by each union council were already under way; besides, district ADP development schemes would also be tangible to everyone soon.
(Dawn 19, 29/03/2018)

Karachi Ittehad opposition alliance emerges during City Council session

Amid an exchange of loud accusations by parties on both sides of the aisle, the City Council approved 14 resolutions on various issues. Some 11 of the resolutions were passed unanimously while the remaining three were approved with majority votes.

Before the council's meeting, Mayor Wasim Akhtar held a meeting with the representatives of four opposition parties and independent members on the opposition benches and convinced them to attend the session.

The unscheduled meeting between the mayor and the representatives of the PTI, PML-N, JUI-F and ANP was held after the former received information that the opposition members had decided not to complete the quorum by abstaining from the council meeting.

With the ongoing tiff between the two factions of the MQM-P, several members of the ruling party were not attending the council session, forcing the mayor to get the opposition parties on board to complete the quorum.

K-Electric criticised for loadshedding, further burdening consumers

Some 154 of the 308 members are required to complete the quorum for the council meeting.

During the meeting between the two sides at the mayor's office, which the key opposition party, the PPP, and Jamaat-i-Islami skipped, the mayor was quoted as assuring the four parties and five independent members on the opposition that their complaints vis-à-vis development works in their constituencies would be taken care of.

After the meeting, those opposition parties said they had formed an alliance of their own, called Karachi Ittehad, at the municipal level, which would not be part of the combined opposition parties led by the PPP.

Officials in the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation said the Karachi Ittehad would coordinate with the ruling MQM group through two of the latter's members.

When the council met, some 175 members were in the hall in the KMC building.

The members of the PPP and the JI initially attended it but they walked out after a few minutes chanting slogans against the mayor.

On the other hand, the members of the MQM and other opposition parties raised slogans against the PPP criticising its rule in the province.

“The people of Karachi have elected us for resolving their problems; therefore proceedings of this council should be carried out in a better and constructive way,” said the mayor.

He added that those who believed in sabotaging proceedings of the council were in fact against the public good and “want us to fail in our effort to perform fittingly”.

He said we would not allow anyone to “usurp the public funds and all such funds will only be utilised on development schemes”.

The meeting, presided over by Mayor Akhtar, continued for more than two hours in which it passed 14 resolutions.

Extra burden on power consumers

Through a resolution, the council expressed concern over the plans of new electricity tariffs and procedure which, it said, was meant to put an extra burden on the consumers in Karachi.

Mayor Akhtar expressed concern over the prolonged loadshedding in the city, saying it had made life hard for the people when the weather had turned sizzling.

They said according to K-Electric’s policies, three-phase meters would be installed on 120-yard houses and busbar meters would be installed on plots where four meters were installed and the cost would be borne by the consumers.

“This meeting rejects such discriminatory act by K-Electric,” said the resolution.

Mayor Akhtar criticised the power utility for increasing loadshedding with the first hot spell of summer, adding that hours-long daily loadshedding had made people’s life miserable.

Development works in city

On the issue of development works in the city, Mr Akhtar said the uplift works were not only for Liaquatabad or Nazimabad but the areas of Keamari and other parts of the city would also get development projects.

“All efforts will be made to get the development schemes approved in the next two years which were previously sent by us and had not been approved by the provincial government.”

Parliamentary leader in the council Aslam Shah Afridi, chairman of the works committee Hassan Naqvi, parliamentary leader of the PML-N Aman Khan Afridi, chairman of the law committee Advocate Arif Khan, Tehsin Abidi, Hanif Surti, Zahid Mehmood, Alam Zaib Aalai and others expressed their views during the proceedings of the council.

The council also approved the resolutions about purchase of security cameras and approval of imprest account for the security section.

Other resolutions were regarding the approval of recovery of fee for the sale of raw skins, re-appropriation of budgetary allocation, concession of 25 per cent to consumers of municipal and utility tax, approval of a contract for supply of uniforms for city wardens and an increase in the city wardens’ imprest account and issues involving surrender of budgetary allocation and re-appropriation.

Through a resolution, the council also appreciated the holding of successful PSL final in Karachi by the PCB. It also congratulated the winners Islamabad United.
(By Hasan Mansoor Dawn 17, 30/03/2018)

Sindh govt opposes mayor's move to hand over Frere Hall

A bid to manage and maintain one of the city's most iconic colonial era structures has gone awry, pitting the mayor of Karachi against the provincial government.

The city's mayor, Wasim Akhtar, signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a guardian board to take care and oversee the maintenance of Frere Hall. The signing took place on Friday and the 19-member board, which includes prominent businessmen and philanthropists such as Shahid Feroz, Jameel Yousuf, Amin Hashwani, Arshad Taib Ali and Muhammad Saleem Khan, was also present.



Under the MoU, the heritage building of Frere Hall, its adjacent park and garden will be taken care of by the board instead of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC). Speaking to *The Express Tribune*, Akhtar claimed that all the Sindh government and KMC laws regarding heritage were reviewed before the decision to hand over maintenance of Frere Hall to the board. According to him, they will restore the lost glory of Frere Hall as the board members have agreed to pool in monetary resources for its refurbishment and maintenance.

Replying to criticism that the move was 'illegal', the mayor said that he, as head of the KMC, will get the decision approved by the City Council before forwarding it to the Sindh government.

Heritage Foundation calls for restoration of Calcutta House in Karachi

However, in a press release issued on Friday, Antiquities and Archaeology Director-General Manzoor Ahmed Kanasro said that the signing of the MoU for the conservation, preservation and development of Frere Hall by the mayor was illegal. "The MoU will have no legal value if it's not approved by the advisory committee on heritage, whose chairperson is the provincial chief secretary," reads the press statement.

Frere Hall a heritage building that dates back to the early British Colonial era in Sindh. It was completed in 1865 and is a protected monument under the Sindh Cultural Heritage (Preservation) Act, 1994 and Antiquities Act, 1975.

Kanasro said that under Section 20 of the Antiquities Act, 1975, it is illegal to conduct any work such as the repair, conservation or renovation of immovable antiquities on declared heritage sites or buildings without prior approval of the advisory committee constituted for the purpose.

According to the statement, whoever contravenes the provisions of the Act shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with a fine or both.

Former provincial antiquities secretary and one of the members of advisory committee on heritage Dr Kaleemullah Lashari said, "The change of use of heritage property is not acceptable under the law without the approval of the committee on heritage."

Culture dept wants control of Frere Hall, Aiwan-e-Riffat auditorium

According to him, the KMC, being the caretaker of maintaining the park, has no authority to decide the fate of the heritage building of Frere Hall.

Dr Lashari said there was already work going on at Frere Hall and that work would continue. An ongoing scheme to maintain the library, Sadequain Art Gallery and museum of epigraphy is already in

progress, he said, adding that the scheme has been sent for revision to include replacing the rooftop with a copper one as part of its renovation programme.

The move to hand over maintenance of the park to private persons also drew criticism from Culture, Tourism and Antiquities Minister Sardar Ali Shah. He warned that the Sindh government would challenge the MoU in court.

But this is not the first time the Sindh government and the KMC have clashed over this issue. The ownership rights of the Frere Hall still reside with the KMC but the issue is contentious. Official sources told *The Express Tribune* that some time ago a summary was moved to the chief minister by the culture and heritage department seeking ownership of the building. The chief minister, instead of using his executive powers or making a decision, sought the opinion of the local government department and mayor on the issue.

“The LG department supported the handing over of the building to the culture department, but the mayor opposed it,” sources said, adding that the chief minister delayed a final decision on the matter due to the mayor’s objections.

Ongoing food festival: KMC, Sindh govt at odds over use of Frere Hall

Kanasro said that the building was in a dilapidated condition and the culture department, with the help of the advisory committee on heritage, has preserved it. “In its library rare books are available, but unfortunately the books are diminishing with each passing day. We are also working on the conservation of the library scheme,” he said.

Another stir was caused in January, 2017 when the KMC rented out the hall’s gardens for the Karachi Food Festival. The Sindh government made it a point to point out the illegality of the matter, something the mayor later admitted was the result of negligence on the KMC’s part.

(By Mudaser Kazi *The Express Tribune*, 04, 07/04/2018)

Judicial commission fires metropolitan commissioner

The Supreme Court-mandated water commission on Monday removed the metropolitan commissioner and directed the provincial government to appoint a cadre officer of good repute in his place within a week.

The commission, headed by retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim, ruled that there was no provision of law which allowed a non-cadre officer to hold charge of a cadre post after Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar informed the commission that the appointment of Dr Asghar Shaikh as metropolitan commissioner was an interim arrangement and conceded that it was a cadre post and the officer held “acting” charge.

Contractor’s competence questioned

The commission also directed chairman of the task force Jamal Mustafa Syed to hold an inquiry through the Hyderabad commissioner into the competence of a contractor tasked with executing the work on two reverse osmosis (RO) plants, adding that if the Hyderabad commissioner was satisfied the contract could continue, otherwise appropriate suggestions be given while a timeline for the execution of the work be made essential.

The commission, formed to implement the apex court orders regarding the provision of potable water and improving the worsening sanitation conditions in Sindh, came down hard on the additional managing director of the Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) as he failed to give any plausible explanation for awarding two contracts of RO plants to contractor Tanzeel.

Wants vacancy filled with a cadre officer of good repute within a week

During a recent visit to Hyderabad, the commission noticed that the contractor was incompetent and had no professional background to undertake such a job, and added that merely low bidding was hardly a ground to award a contract to an otherwise incompetent person.

It further said that the department concerned was required to satisfy the competence of the contractor before awarding any contract.

Meanwhile, the head of Pak Oasis has given an undertaking that the RO plants at Satellite Town and Shamsabad will function round the clock in the future.

SSWMB's absentee staff

The commission also directed the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) to ensure that the employees transferred from the DMCs worked with the contractor and the SSWMB initiate departmental proceedings as well to stop the salaries of those employees who did not turn up to work.

The commission deplored that the contractor had failed to comply with the terms of agreement by not employing the requisite manpower as per the contract and ruled that from today [Monday], the amount of salaries of employees who were supposed to be employed but have not been employed by the contractor, shall be deducted or adjusted by the SSWMB till the contractor employed all manpower as per the agreement.

Justice Muslim also directed the SSWMB to immediately release all arrears and in the future expedite the bills of the contractor in terms of the contract subject to providing all the details by the contractor, which were necessary for the verification of the waste lifted by him.

Asif Haider Shah, a member of the task force, informed the commission that since the SSWMB did not have any district-wise monitoring system, he interacted with the deputy commissioners and they consented to facilitating the monitoring cell by providing a room within the compound of their offices while they have already been directed to act as coordinators within their districts.

The commission also ordered that the machinery and equipment, which the contractor was required to deploy/utilise for lifting solid waste, should be made available and put to use within a month.

Justice Hani deplored that the required machinery had still not been provided by the contractor and directed him to hire the same from market and start work with full swing within three days.

The commission also directed the Sindh chief secretary to ensure that the required landfill site for the disposal of solid waste was identified and allocated with required standards immediately.

Storm-water drains

Mayor Akhtar informed the commission that his team was working on all storm-water drains in their domain and would inform the commission about the details on Tuesday, adding that a meeting in that regard was convened by Asif Haider and attended by all stakeholders while the civic agencies would submit a report about relocation of pipes/wires crossing over drains.

The KDA officers, executing work on the Gujjar nullah, also turned up and the commission came down hard upon them for poor professional capacity and incompetence.

At one stage, Justice Muslim wondered how the KDA chief engineer could be holding a BE degree as he remained clueless about the questions asked by the commission.

The commission observed that a consultant hired by the KDA also appeared to be unfit to undertake a hydraulic design efficiently and deplored that it was unfortunate that the execution of work on the Gujjar drain had been assigned to the KDA which ex facie did not have the capability of completing the project.

Since the chief secretary was busy in a cabinet meeting, this issue will be taken up on Tuesday.

Malir River Sunday bazaar

Meanwhile, Barrister Salahuddin Ahmed moved an application asking the commission to revisit its earlier order about banning Sunday bazaars on the bank of the Malir River near Qayyumabad. However, the

commission asked the counsel to satisfy it on the issue on April 23, but ruled that its previous order would remain in the field.

Several residents from different parts of the city also turned up during Monday's proceedings and made complaints regarding non-provision of potable water. After examining their grievances, the commission passed directives to the officials concerned to address the issues and also referred some complaints to the task force.

After the hearing, Justice Muslim visited different parts of Orangi Town and heard complaints of area residents about a shortage of water. An MPA and some representatives of union councils briefed the commission. The former apex court judge directed the officials concerned to provide water to the residents of Raees Amrohvi Colony.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 17, 17/04/2018)

On court orders: Anti-encroachment operation conducted at KMC's sports complex, surroundings

On the directives of the Supreme Court (SC), an anti-encroachment operation was carried out around Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) Sports Complex and China Ground on Kashmir Road on Tuesday.



Mayor Wasim Akhtar inspected and reviewed the operation. As many as five wedding halls, mixture plants and other encroachments were removed.

For the past 20 years, Akhtar said, the sports complex was used for commercial purposes. "We will renovate the sports complex and bring back sports activities here," he said, requesting the land grabbers to stop encroaching land in the port city.

SC orders removal of all encroachments from public parks, plots

Akhtar assured that the sports complex would be made better and more facilities for sports training and sports competitions will be provided so that young sportsmen and students could avail the best training facility inside the complex. "The trees and grass lawns in the complex will be protected in this operation against encroachments and the parks will be made even greener and beautiful," he said.

Since its inception, the sports complex has offered facilities for various sports disciplines, including swimming, tennis, hockey, roller hockey, squash and indoor games for the youth and emerging talent.

According to the mayor, Karachi suffered a lot due to land grabbing and encroachments in every nook and cranny of the city.

Earlier in the month, SC had ordered the KMC and Karachi Development Authority to demolish all illegal buildings and offices built on land reserved for public parks and playgrounds in the metropolis.

Sindh government told to provide funds to remove encroachments

A two-judge bench, comprising justices Gulzar Ahmed and Maqbool Baqar, further ordered the city's authorities to tear down wedding halls, political parties' offices and other illegal buildings across the city and restore the playgrounds and public parks to their original position.

The bench was hearing a petition filed by former Karachi mayor Naimatullah Khan at the SC's Karachi Registry.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 25/04/2018)

Only 4% of mayor's Rs27b budget for development

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) unveiled on Tuesday a predictably surplus budget for the fiscal year 2018-19, amid protests from the opposition at the Old KMC building on MA Jinnah Road.



Unveiling the budget with an outlay of Rs27,170.97 million, Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar told the council that they had managed to save Rs9.63m in the current fiscal year. He added that more funds were earmarked for development projects in the new budget.

"No new tax has been imposed," Akhtar announced, adding that 194 schemes would be completed at a cost of Rs5,629m. The KMC's focus, according to Akhtar, was to improve the existing sources of revenue and make the budget realistic and balanced.

He added that despite severe financial constraints, they had managed to present a Rs1.15b development budget which included several schemes suggested by elected representatives of the council.

Speaking about development works carried out in the current fiscal year, Akhtar said that 206 schemes were completed at a cost of Rs4,327.1m. "We plan to bring 194 new schemes next year, bearing a price tag of Rs5,629m to raise the development portfolio," he promised. "In order to make the required resources available, we raised the issue of negligence by the previous governments and senior leaders of the country. As a result of our efforts, Karachi got the Rs25b Prime Minister's Package under which many development schemes will be executed next year."

These schemes include renovation of Manghopir Road from Jam Chakro to Banaras, construction of a flyover alongside Shershah Suri Road, Sakhi Hassan, Five Star Roundabout and KDA Chowrangi and renovation of Nishtar Road from Teen Hatti to Napier Road, besides the rehabilitation and improvement of KMC's current firefighting system. Akhtar also assured the council that he would write to the local government department to make a case for an increase in funds allocated to Union Councils.

Sindh Assembly approves budget for fiscal year 2018-19

For the next fiscal year, the KMC has earmarked the lion's share for medical and health services at Rs4,168.69m, while Rs3,192.18m have been allocated for the municipal department and Rs966.352m for parks and horticulture department.

The revenue department will receive Rs969.28m, while the culture, sports and recreation department (CSR) has been allocated Rs749.26m. The transport and communication department will get Rs430.47m.

In his briefing, the mayor shed light on major development schemes completed in the current fiscal year. "Several roads in different areas of Gulberg have been constructed," he said, adding that the road from Jail chowrangi to Hassan Square had also been completed.

Akhtar also promised to construct at least two graveyards in each district, besides a model graveyard in Surjani Town. "We are also working to build new fire stations," he said.

The mayor demanded the Sindh government to hand over control of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) to the KMC.

The opposition members of the council were, however, not too pleased with the mayor's claims. They tore copies of the budget documents, shouting slogans of "The mayor is a thief." Jamaat-e-Islami's Junaid Mukati claimed that the funds allocated in the previous budget were never spent on the city. "The funds in the new budget will also land in corrupt hands," he added.

Meanwhile, the elected representatives of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) engaged in sloganeering of their own, calling the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman, Asif Ali Zardari, a thief.

(By Oonib Azam THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 04, 27/04/2018)

KMC wants its revenue sources restored

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation has asked the provincial government to restore its main revenue sources such as property and local taxes to untangle its financial woes.

While confiding this to Dawn on Tuesday, informed sources said the financial constraints plagued the municipal services provider to the extent that it was not even able to make payments for patients' food and repair of medical equipment at its hospitals, besides repair and maintenance of street lights.

"There are no funds for medicines for poor patients and repair and maintenance of parks in the city," they said.

The sources said it was decided in a meeting chaired by the chief secretary that Rs200 million which were being deducted from grant-in-aid of Rs500m and paid to the Karachi Development Authority per month would be released to the KMC.

However, they said, the provincial government released only Rs430m, despite the fact that the local government in its summary to the chief minister had recommended to increase the grant by Rs200m for payment of salaries to the KMC employees exclusively.

The sources said the provincial government enhanced Octroi Zila Tax (OZT) by 15 per cent on account of salaries on cumulative basic pay to all local councils from Dec 2010, but KMC was ignored.

They said Mayor Wasim Akhtar wrote to the provincial government to enhance the KMC grant-in-aid to the extent of Rs500m and direct the quarters concerned to facilitate KMC funds' generation through the revenue sources devolved to the district municipal committees.

The sources recalled that earlier licence fee on mulching of animals, parking charges, toll tax from link road between National Highway and Superhighway, commercialisation fee on KMC roads and fee on BTS towers were collected by the KMC and now these revenue sources were devolved to DMCs.

(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 15, 02/05/2018)

'KMC has moved SC for local bodies' empowerment'

Mayor Karachi Wasim Akhtar said on Thursday that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation has moved the Supreme Court for getting the powers of local bodies under the Constitution and to strengthen the local bodies system in the country.

He said that the prevailing system of local bodies would not be proved effective till it received powers at the grass-root level.

The mayor was talking to a delegation of district and taluka chairmen, union council nazims and councillors from different cities of the province, including Jamshoro, Hyderabad, Ghotki and Matiari.

He said that the municipal body had to rely on grants from the provincial government for obtaining funds whereas its own resources had been made limited through the SLGO 2013. "Sindh government withheld Rs40 billion from the Octroi OZT share of KMC during the last eight years which is an injustice to this city", he lamented.

The mayor said that KMC had only 33 per cent land control in Karachi and other 17 organisations control the remaining area which caused a great deal of difficulty.

Tree plantation drive

Meanwhile, the mayor planted a sapling in the garden of Frere Hall while taking part in a plantation drive.

He said we need to plant as many trees in our city as possible in order to save the environmental from pollution and to bring improvement in it.

The mayor thanked the representatives of NGO Shehri for carrying out the plantation campaign in the city and said all good suggestions and proposals in this connection will be welcomed.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 18, 18/05 2018)

No plans: KMC, district administration unprepared to deal with heatwave

The current heatwave has reminded a resident of Ancholi near Sohrab Goth, Muhammad Abbas, the horrors of the heatwave that claimed the lives of 2,200 people in Sindh in 2015.



“The chillers of Edhi mortuary stopped working, while the influx of corpses kept on mounting,” he recalled, adding that the entire area reeked of rotten bodies.

The 65 bodies, which according to the Faisal Edhi have arrived at the Edhi mortuary since Saturday, reminded him of the summers of 2015.

Three years down the line, when intense heat has struck the port city again, the authorities still seem to still be ill-prepared. As parts of Sindh remained in the grip of high temperature for the fourth consecutive day on Tuesday, the provincial and local governments have yet to come up with some emergency plans besides setting up heatwave camps across the city.

Notification replacing municipal commissioner stirs hornet's nest

The heatwave continued in Karachi on Tuesday, with the highest temperature recorded at 43.3° Celsius for the fourth consecutive day.

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, hot and slow winds from the north blew, while the humidity level in the air remained 8%. On Monday, the humidity was 7%.

Earlier, on Tuesday morning, the temperature was recorded at 37°C.

Quoting relatives of the deceased on Monday, Edhi Foundation head Faisal Edhi said over 60 people have died due to the heatwave since Saturday in Karachi.

Despite this, no government-run heatwave camp with first aid equipment can be seen in city.

Pakistan's Karachi hit by sweltering heat wave

In the years 2016 and 2017, several camps were established throughout the city during the summers. In such camps, a doctor, oral rehydration salts (ORS), glucose sachets, drips, wet towels and several cold bottles were made available so that instant first aid could be provided to heatstroke victims.

Those suffering from the heat kept thronging the camps in search of water. Each camp used to have 10 water cans of 17 litres each. The non-governmental organisations in the city are still, however, operating these camps in different areas.

Jafria Development Center (JDC) has established camps in Golimar, Numaish and Gulistan-e-Jauhar. “Faisal bhai called us last night and told us to be prepared,” said JDC General Secretary Zafar Abbas.

“In 2015, we set up a temporary morgue at main Numaish Chowrangi, where we received 128 bodies,” he said. This time, they are setting up four temporary morgues, one each in Malir, North Nazimabad, Numaish and Orangi Town.

Over 60 reported dead in Karachi heatwave

However, when it comes to the government, no measures seem to have been taken. A resident of Kher Muhammad Goth, Rehmatullah told *The Express Tribune* that his village is very far from the city in Gadap Town. “There is no government heatstroke camp near our village,” he said, adding that even the basic health unit in his village closed down after 1pm.

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) Health Director Birbal Genani told *The Express Tribune* that they have already declared an emergency in all the 11 KMC-owned hospitals in the city. Apart from this, he said KMC's rescue 1122 team is on standby and will help in case of any emergency.

However, he accepted that this time no heatstroke camp was established in the city.

Karachi to touch 44 degrees for third consecutive day

Commissioner Ejaz Ahmed Khan, who directs his deputy commissioners in all six districts every year gave no such directions this year. When contacted by *The Express Tribune* for a comment, he was unavailable.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 23/05/2018)

Governing Karachi

The political climate in the country is heating up as we move closer to the general elections. The key actors have started outlining the issues that could give them maximum political mileage. Taking cue from those demanding a South Punjab province, the MQM has echoed a similar demand asking for southern Sindh to be made a separate province based on the grievances of this part of Sindh. The belligerent reaction from the ruling PPP is understandable given that acceding to such a demand would have dramatic implications for the party. The MQM has been trying to emphasise that its demand is based on administrative grounds. It will be interesting to analyse whether the demand for a separate province on administrative grounds makes sense or not.



Such demands for separate provinces, historically speaking, are aired by those belonging to outlying regions, which are far away from the core or the locus of power for resources and networks. A sense of deprivation is reinforced by state policies that widen the social and economic gap. At times, identity groups try to push their agenda by asserting that the preservation of their culture and language can only be done through a separate province.

The situation in the case of southern Sindh, however, is contrary to any such assertion. Economic and social indicators in this densely-populated area are quite robust and well ahead of the rest of the province. The south is already the seat of the provincial capital and enjoys proximity to all key government and state institutions. The culture and the language spoken here are under no threat. In fact, the cultural-markers of this area have diffused well into the landmass of Sindh, while at the same time there has been little effort from the other end to imbibe the Sindhi language. The demand for a separate province on administrative grounds also seems out of place. It is divisions and districts that are created on administrative grounds, while as a student of public policy, I believe that creation of provinces is essentially politically driven.

Let us now look at the chances of success of such a move. Creating a new province will require an amendment to the Constitution by a two-thirds vote. This will further need to be backed by a resolution by the provincial legislature concerned, also by a two-thirds majority. There is little chance that political forces backing such a move can muster such numbers in the foreseeable future. What is the way out, then?

The existing loathsome state of affairs in southern Sindh, and specifically in Karachi, where the delivery of basic services has come to naught cannot be tolerated any longer. Karachi needs an altogether different dispensation as conventional ploys cannot work anymore. This may require ingenuity without straying into constitutional improbabilities. There is a need now to come up with what I would call the 'Greater Cities Empowerment Order' through a piece of legislation to address several immediate concerns. Any city with a population exceeding 10 million should qualify for this statutory order, which means that it would be as relevant to Lahore as it would be to Karachi. Through this order, these cities

and their elected elders will be vested with all those powers and responsibilities that impact the life of the common man.

It would be noteworthy to see what is available in Karachi's toolbox at this particular moment. The city has a metropolitan corporation where the existing law entrusts it with a vast array of powers and responsibilities. These powers range from land-use planning, site development, road engineering, building control, to water supply, sanitation, refuse and waste collection, and so on. The law also empowers the metropolitan corporation to manage professional medical colleges and tertiary hospitals. However, this law also has a caveat. Section 72 of the Local Government Act stipulates that no corporation will undertake such functions as are assigned and performed by any agency under the law. This basically makes room for a backdoor ingress for the provincial government to preside over several municipal functions such as building control, water and sewerage control, and urban area development while leaving the mayor and his team high and dry.

What we now see are burgeoning parastatals like the Sindh Building Control Authority, and the water and sanitation board calling the shots. This takeover by the province is inconsistent with the preamble of the Local Government Act 2013. The preamble envisaged devolved decision-making by elected representatives through a participative mechanism for effective delivery of services. The empowerment order for mega cities that I'm proposing should override such caveats as cited above. The order should bring all such agencies under an elected mayor with there being close and constructive provincial oversight. The Karachi chapters of all such bodies should be delinked from the provincial set-up.

Coming to another critical area, the steady and assured flow of financial resources is a prerequisite for effective and meaningful governance of any mega city. The metropolitan corporation, during the next financial year, with a budget of Rs27 billion could set apart Rs7 billion for development works. Such an amount provides some space for development work, and will be additional to the formula-based fiscal transfers from the provincial divisible pool. It is time now to lay the basis of an affirmative action mechanism to meet Karachi's ever-growing development needs. In this regard, of all the provincial taxes, the sales tax in the services sector is the most robust assignment that sees exceptional growth. It is pitched at Rs115 billion for the next financial year. Collected from port and terminal operations, banking, insurance, the stock exchange and some other key retail sectors, this residence-based tax is largely mopped up from Karachi.

It is time now to set apart at least 15 to 20 per cent of the sales tax as allocable to the city over and above its share from the divisible pool. This should be a tied transfer grant for creating capital assets through a rolling plan. This should take place in consultation with the provincial government. The whole arrangement may require legislative cover. This may only look like a modest start but it would certainly provide a positive direction to Karachi's development paradigm, and can also turn out to be a test for the city's leadership. Karachi's elders need to realise that they are on the same ladder which also threw up distinguished figures like Joko Widodo in Jakarta and Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul. They need to grab every opportunity at their disposal besides creating new ones for themselves in order to bring Karachi on the same plane as other major global metropolitan centres.
(By Tariq Mahmud The Express Tribune, 17, 02/06/2018)

Mayor reviews charged parking sites

Mayor Wasim Akhtar on Thursday directed the charged parking department to ensure better management in the parking of vehicles alongside roads particularly at all busy commercial centers, main markets, taraveeh gatherings and mosques to facilitate citizens.

While reviewing charged parking sites management in the city, he said that people should not have any difficulty in parking their vehicles and in their movement in these places during Ramazan.

The mayor was also given briefing by the officers concerned of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation.

He was informed that the KMC was recovering parking fee at various locations in the city. These areas included Tariq Road from McDonalds to ABL Roundabout (both sides), Service Road Shahrae Faisal, Hill Park, Naheed Chase Store only at Service of Shaheed-i-Millat Road (on contract), Al-Khaleej Tower, Kababjee (service road of Shaheed-i-Millat Road; on contract), Civic Centre only at University Road, and Sir Shah Sulemen Road from gate of Civic Centre to DMC East Office, service road of University Road from Hassan Square to Nipa Flyover (on contract), Rashid Minhas Road (from Al-Ghafoor Mobile to Firdous Shopping Mall), Sindbad Gulshan, KDA Market (from Gulshan Flyover to Disco Bakery, Allama Shabbir Ahmed Usmani Road), Chase-Up and World Mobile at Nipa University Road, Chase Value Centre opposite Allama Rashid Minhas Road, Imtiaz Store Gulshan-i-Iqbal Service Road Rashid Minhas Road, in District Central, the Hydri Market parking lot, Hydri Sunday motorcycle bazaar (within parking lot), SM Toufeeq Road Liaquatabad Super Market to Liaquatabad No10, SM Taufeeq Road Sindh Government Hospital Liaquatabad, Sareena Mobile Mall and Haroon Shopping Mall Buffer Zone, parking lot in front of Nazimabad driving license branch, parking lot in front of AO Clinic Nazimabad in District South, the Paradise Centre, Zoo, Faizee Rehimeen (Art Gallery parking lot), Beach Park parking Clifton, Clifton Centre, Crystal Court, Sasi Arcade in District Korangi, Main Korangi Road whereas new sites are also running by KMC on experimental basis including at NIBD Hospital to United King Bakery (District East), From ending wall of National Sports Complex to Kareem Plaza, Service Road in front of Magnet Mall Karimabad Shahrae Pakistan (District Central), Sunday Bachat Bazaar near Time Square opposite Metro Cash & Carry University Road (District East), Jama Cloth Signal to Denso Hal Signal MA Jinnah Road, MA Jinnah Road from Pehelvi Restaurant to Tibet Centre and opposite Tibet Centre to Sindh Sports Board Ground, University Road in front of Ibne Seena Hospital (District East), and Open Plot near Pedestrian Bridge Imtiaz Store Rashid Minhas Road (District East).

KMC officials said that the parking fee for car was Rs20 and for motorcycle Rs5.
(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 18, 08/06/2019)

SC gives 30 days to Karachi municipal bodies to clean storm-water drains

The Supreme Court on Saturday directed the municipal authorities to clean sewers and storm-water drains across the city within a month.

Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar said that strict action would be taken if the authorities failed to comply with the court order within the stipulated period.

A three-judge SC bench, headed by the CJP and comprising Justice Faisal Arab and Justice Sajjad Ali Shah, was hearing a set of petitions and suo motu proceedings including non-provision of potable water and worsening sanitation conditions in Sindh, marine pollution, environmental hazards, verification of academic record of airlines' staff at the Supreme Court's Karachi registry.

When the bench asked Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar about the time frame for completion of the cleaning drive of sewers and storm-water drains, the mayor said the drive would begin from June 14.

The CJP imposes a ban on construction of walls for commercial outdoor advertisements in Karachi

The chief justice expressed displeasure over the delay and directed to complete it within a month and warned of severe action in case of non-compliance.

The court also directed the provincial government to provide required funds after Mr Akhtar said that there was a fund shortage.

Water commission term extended till December

The bench extended the term of the Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation till December.

Advocate Shahab Usto, who had petitioned the apex court over non-provision of potable water and worsening sanitation conditions in the province, submitted that the tenure of water commission, headed by retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim, would end next month. He requested the court to extend it till December 2019.

However, the chief justice said that he was retiring in January next year and can only extend it till December this year.

PMDC told to inspect medical, dental colleges

The bench directed the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) to inspect medical and dental colleges across the country.

A report regarding inspection of the Jinnah Medical and Dental College (JMDC) produced in court disclosed that the teaching facility was not complying with the regulations of 2012.

The apex court issued a notice to the chief executive of the JMDC directing him to appear in court on the next hearing along with his reply in this regard.

It also directed the PMDC authorities to continue to carry out inspections of the medical and dental colleges across the country.

An official of the Federal Investigation Agency informed the court that the private medical colleges had received around Rs750 million in the head of excessive fees from students.

Addressing senior lawyer Makhdoom Ali Khan, CJP Nisar in a lighter vein remarked that the institutions were acknowledging him for taking suo motu notices, but Mr Khan was objecting to the powers of the suo motu.

The FIA official submitted that the management of some colleges was also threatening the students. He submitted that some colleges had been receiving huge donations, but they were still charging heavy fees from the students.

The officer added that some colleges charge up to Rs1.8m fee from each student while some others gave admission to local students on seats reserved for foreigners.

He said that the condition of some of the private medical colleges operating in Sindh was even worse. The chief justice remarked that the future of the students would not be allowed to be spoiled, adding that the excessive fees received by the colleges would be refunded.

The chief justice remarked that the PMDC was working actively and impartially, as former federal minister Dr Asim Hussain was no more part of the national regulatory body.

Order to demolish advertisement wall on Sharea Faisal

The apex court directed the authorities concerned to demolish a wall built on Sharea Faisal for the purpose of displaying commercial advertisements.

It also imposed a ban on constructing such walls and using them for any commercial outdoor advertisements in future.

The chief justice inquired from the chief executive officer of the Cantonment Board Karachi as to who had built such walls in his area. The officer said that the cantonment board had issued notices to the private advertising firms.

CJP Nisar remarked that merely issuing notices to advertisers would not serve any purpose. Petitioner Ashraf Saeed informed the judges that a wall had been built near FTC building on Sharea Faisal and several other such walls had also been raised in various areas.

He said such walls were defacing the beauty of the city and asked the court to order the authorities concerned to demolish them.

Foreign content on TV channels

The court directed the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority to take strict action against all those private TV channels showing more than 10 per cent foreign content allowed under the law.

The chief justice remarked that these channels would be airing vulgar content on the eve of Eid. Therefore, he directed the Pemra chief to take action against them before Eid.

Earlier, the Pemra chairman, through the additional attorney general, submitted a report that the authority had issued licences to 38 entertainment channels to operate in the country, adding 23 of them were showing foreign content.

The chief justice observed that cable operators also aired Indian movies throughout the day and inquired from the Pemra chief as to why no action was taken against such channels' management.

The court also directed him to take action against the cable operators.

The Pemra chief said that action was taken against the management of television channels, but they obtained stay orders against the authority.

The CJP directed all the high courts' chief justices to ensure all the cases assailing the orders/notices by Pemra should be disposed of within 10 days.

It directed the office to facsimile a copy of the order to the registrars of all the high courts.

Over 3,000 degrees verified

The bench directed the Civil Aviation Authority to submit a report within six weeks after completion of the verification of the academic record of pilots and staff of all airlines.

The bench was informed that two private airlines — Shaheen and Serene — had submitted record of pilots and staff to the CAA, adding that out of 132 degree/academic certificates of Serene 92 had so far been verified while over 135 out of 245 degrees of Airblue staff had been confirmed.

The officials said out of over 5,800 degrees, around 2,900 degrees of pilots and staff of the Pakistan International Airlines had so far been verified.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 17, 10/06/2018)

Parks to be restored to original plan within two months: mayor

City Mayor Wasim Akhtar on Tuesday directed officials of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) to complete renovation and improvement works at all city parks and playgrounds including Hill Park, Jheel Park and Malir Park within two months.

Official sources told Dawn that the mayor expressed extreme displeasure over the reported encroachments on amenity plots and said that no one would be allowed to grab the land of parks and playgrounds.

They said that the mayor directed KMC officials to restore all recreation places, including parks, to their original plan.

The mayor also visited city parks along with chairman of parks committee Khurram Farhan and other officers concerned, and gave necessary directives for improving recreation facilities while inspecting the condition of parks.

He went to Hill Park, Jheel Park and Malir Park to review their conditions and inspected the renovation.

The mayor said that development works under way in different parks and their renovation and improvement work would be completed in next two months. He said large-scale tree plantation would also be done in these parks along with addition of more greenery.
(B The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 18, 13/06/2018)

Sindh seeks \$200m loan from WB for Karachi's municipal infrastructure

The Sindh government has submitted a request to the World Bank for a loan of \$200 million for enhancing the institutional performance and management capacity of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and District Municipal Corporations (DMCs) and improve provision of municipal infrastructure in the provincial metropolis.

Sources said on Monday that the WB agreed in principle to sanction the loan and a process in this regard had begun.

The project will totally be financed by the International Development Association (IDA), an affiliate of the World Bank group.

Karachi's local governments have limited financial management capacity and limited authority over major sources of revenue. The city needs an estimated investment of \$9 billion to \$10bn over the coming years to close the infrastructure and revenue gap, yet infrastructure spending is well below these requirements.

The poor level of urban infrastructure and basic service provision in the city reflects two underpinning challenges. These are financial constraints for capital investments, due to poor own-source revenue (OSR) generation and very low cost-recovery for services; and low institutional capacity, as a result of institutional fragmentation, weak systems and capacity for urban governance and service delivery agencies, and unclear and overlapping responsibilities.

The loan will be used for strengthening institutional and financial capacity of KMC and six DMCs

Inadequate availability of financing is largely due to very low collections of the urban immovable property tax in Sindh. Like in other provinces, such tax is collected by the provincial government and then partly transferred to various municipal entities. Capital expenditure represents only eight per cent of the KMC and 18pc of DMCs' budgets.

The local governments are financially weak with a high dependence on fiscal transfers from the Sindh government and have limited authority over major sources of own-source revenue such as property taxes.

The project will address local governments' weak municipal management capacity and limited financial resources for capital expenditure. It would focus on strengthening the institutional and financial capacity of the KMC and six DMCs to deliver and maintain critical urban infrastructure and services. It builds on analytical work and consultations conducted by the bank on the identification of critical needs of the city.

The project has identified storm-water drainage as a critical infrastructure investment with a large-scale impact. A capital development grant would be provided to the KMC to support metropolitan-level flood management and rehabilitation of the urban drainage infrastructure. Specifically, a hydraulic master plan for the city will be developed in addition to an investment programme for drainage rehabilitation and expansion and feasibility studies for works in other basins.

Under the project, the World Bank will provide technical assistance for devolution of urban immovable property tax to the DMCs. It will support a roadmap to implement the devolution and set up an institutional model to provide an efficient structure for administration of local taxes.

The proposed project will aim to substantially strengthen environmental and social safeguards capacity of the DMCs and KMC. Specific actions will be based on the findings of an institutional and capacity assessment that will be carried out during project preparation. Specifically, the option will be explored to incentivise the KMC and DMCs to improve performance on environment and social management by the project, through the use of performance grants mechanisms.

Karachi is drained by 41 natural and engineered drains, functioning as a combined storm water-waste water system. However, due to poor management and lack of maintenance, the hydraulic performance of the drainage networks is inadequate. The system is largely blocked by uncollected solid waste and unplanned low-income settlements along drainage channels.

This has increased the frequency and intensity of flooding in certain neighbourhoods. Many roads experience reduced life cycles given the undermining of soil-based materials by annual flooding conditions. The city lacks a full assessment of the drainage system's conditions and performance required to develop an adequate city flood management plan.

Karachi is also one of the least liveable cities in the world. The city ranks 134 out of 140 in the 2017 Global Liveability Index. During the last few decades, the city has suffered infrastructure neglect and has experienced lower access and quality of urban services. Karachi's urban planning, management and service delivery has been unable to keep pace with the needs of the growing population.

Currently, only 55pc of water requirements are met; less than 60pc of the population has access to public sewerage; 60pc of solid waste never reaches a dump site; most of the local road network is in poor condition; and over half of residents are living in katchi abadis. Karachi's high risk to climate disasters, particularly recurrent floods, adds to these challenges.
(By Amin Ahmed Dawn, 17, 26/06/2018)