

NEWSCLIPPINGS

JULY TO DECEMBER 2017

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT



Urban Resource Centre

A-2, 2nd 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, Website: www.urckarachi.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/URCKHI Twitter: https://twitter.com/urc_karachi

City without cleanliness, garbage collection system

The Sindh High Court (SHC) sought on Monday arguments from the parties on a plea seeking a daily hearing of the Karachi mayor's petition seeking devolution of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC).



A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Munib Akhtar, will hear arguments from the additional advocate-general and the lawyer representing the Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan and its mayor on July 28.

During Monday's proceedings, Barrister Farogh Naseem for the petitioners pleaded to the court to conduct an early hearing on the petition, as it was a matter of urgency. He argued that the whole system of cleanliness and garbage collection in the largest city of the country had become ineffective.

Advertisement

An oasis of knowledge in the midst of a garbage dump

He said neither were treatment plants operating nor was clean drinking water available to residents of the city, adding that heaps of garbage had piled up all over the metropolis, resulting in an outbreak of diseases such as chikungunya.

Barrister Naseem argued that the establishment of the solid waste management board by the provincial government was illegal, as was observed by the Supreme Court, which had ordered to dissolve the same.

Meanwhile, AAG Barrister Ghulam Mustafa Mahesar filed a reply on behalf of the managing director of the solid waste management board.

He opposed the plea for an urgent hearing of the petition, arguing that the matter did not involve any urgency. He said the petitioners were pressing the issue for their own political gain.

During Ramazan: Arrangements finalised for cleanliness

The bench fixed the matter on July 18 with direction to the lawyers representing the parties to come prepared to argue on the point whether or not the matter involved urgency. The judges will decide whether or not the matter should be heard on a daily basis on the next date of the hearing.

Case history

Jointly filing a petition with his party, MQM-Pakistan, Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar had maintained that the SSWMB was established under the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014 with functions to cater to the needs of the people and was being run by the Sindh government since its establishment.

The mayor had referred to a Supreme Court ruling where the apex court had ordered that the 'non-functional board [SSWMB] has never performed and should be devolved to the local bodies as provided under the rules of business'. He had contended that despite the directives of the Supreme Court, the relevant provincial authorities had not taken any steps to transfer the functions of the board to the elected local bodies.

Waste management: Need for more landfill sites stressed

Akhtar had pleaded to the court to direct the concerned authorities to transfer all the assets falling under the umbrella of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014 to the local government institutions. He had further requested the SHC to direct the respondents to give complete details of all the funds they had received for the purpose of solid waste management and to appoint a reputable auditor to ascertain the facts.

(The Express Tribune 13, 11/07/2017)

Mayor blames solid waste board, KWSB for choked drains

Mayor Waseem Akhtar has asked the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) and the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board to direct their staffers not to dump garbage in storm-water drains keep sewers clear so that rainwater could drain out easily without creating problems for Karachiites.

Briefing reporters after visiting the city on Sunday, he said that the staff of the SSWMB dumped garbage in city's storm-water drains, which choked these natural waterways resultantly the rainwater spilled over on roads and other low-lying areas creating problems for the people.

He warned if the practice of dumping solid waste was not stopped then he would take stern legal action against those responsible and their bosses.

Expresses concern over death of people from electrocution

He said that the KWSB was not responding and its staffers were not cleaning sewers regularly owing to which not only the sewage but the rainwater also overflowed and submerged the areas.

Advertisement

The mayor asked the KWSB to ensure that sewers were cleared and the people would not face any problems.

He said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation in cooperation with district municipal corporations had set up rain emergency and rescue teams, which were cleaning the storm-water drains so that rainwater could drain easily into the sea without choking at any point.

He also expressed concern over increasing incidents of electrocution during rains and asked the power utility to upgrade its network, which collapsed and live wires fell on roads as soon as rain started.

He said that KMC teams had also cleared the Liaquatabad and Nazimabad underpasses and now rainwater would not accumulate there.

He urged the people to contact the KMC's rain emergency centre on 0332-2685090 and 0335-7553976 to lodge their complaints.

The mayor also directed the officials to repair a damaged pedestrian bridge on the University Road immediately and also hold an inquiry to find out how it was damaged and who was responsible so that stern action could be taken against those responsible.

Deputy Mayor Arshad Vohra, DMC-Central Chairman Rehan Hashmi and other senior officials accompanied the mayor during his visit.

Meanwhile, Karachi Development Authority Director General Nasir Abbas claimed that his department's team had cleared accumulated water in various KDA schemes.

He was briefing media persons after visiting various KDA schemes on Sunday. Earlier, KDA chief engineer Ram Chand briefed the KDA chief regarding efforts being made to drain out rainwater at different areas.

(By Bhagwandas Dawn 16, 17/07/2017)

SHC seeks arguments in SSWMB transfer case

The Sindh High Court (SHC) sought on Tuesday arguments on whether it could pass an order to transfer the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) when the matter has been pending in the Supreme Court (SC).

A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Muneeb Akhtar, asked the lawyer representing Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar and the provincial advocate-general to present arguments tomorrow (July 20). The bench was hearing a petition jointly filed by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan and the city mayor, which sought devolution of the SSWMB to the KMC.

During the proceeding, the petitioners' lawyer, Barrister Farogh Naseem, argued that while the SC had ruled that the SSWMB should be handed over to KMC by the Sindh government, the same had not been complied with, despite the lapse of four months.

Advertisement

Ad

SHC seeks government's reply on mayor's petition seeking devolution of SSWMB

The judges inquired how the high court could interfere in a matter in which the apex court had already given its observations. An additional advocate-general (AAG) of the provincial government contended that the provincial government had already filed a review application in the SC in this regard.

However, Barrister Naseem informed the bench that the SC had yet to pass any order on the government review plea that could bar the high court from passing an order in this regard.

Govt announces three new waste management projects in Sindh

The AAG maintained that the SC had not passed any order regarding the transfer of the waste management board to KMC. He added that the apex court had just given its recommendations. "It is not binding on the provincial government to implement those recommendations," the law officer reiterated the stance which has been taken by the Sindh government since the petition was filed in the SHC.

Meanwhile, Barrister Naseem insisted that the apex court had not given recommendations, but it had clearly ordered the provincial government to hand over SSWMB to KMC. He argued that the apex court had also directed the Sindh government to strictly implement the rules of business. The barrister argued that the act of not devolving the SSWMB to the metropolitan corporation was a violation of Article 140 of the Constitution on the part of the provincial government.

Justice Muneeb observed that the petitioners may approach the SC to seek clarification of its observations made in the matter.

Mayoral powers: MQM-Pakistan to approach SC soon

The bench also clarified that it will hear the matter since it involved the public interest at large. However, it will not pass any order to extent of the SC's observations on transfer of the board to the KMC.

The judges directed the petitioners' lawyer to argue whether the high court could pass an order in light of the observations made by the SC. The court also directed the Sindh AG to attend the next hearing which has been fixed tomorrow (July 20).

Case history

The Karachi mayor had filed a petition in the SHC in which he had maintained that the SSWMB was established under the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, and was being run by the Sindh government since its establishment.

'There are two mayors in Karachi – Wasim Akhtar and Murad Ali Shah'

The mayor had referred to a SC verdict where it had been observed that the 'non-functional board [SSWMB] has never performed and should be dissolved to local bodies as provided under the rules of business'. He had contended that despite the directives of the SC, the relevant provincial authorities had not taken any step to transfer the functions of the board to the elected local representative bodies.

Akhtar had pleaded to the court to direct the relevant authorities to transfer all the assets falling under the umbrella of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, to the local government institutions.

He had further requested the SHC to direct the respondents to give complete details of all the funds, which they had received for the purpose of solid waste management, and to appoint a reputable auditor to audit the financial matters of the board. (The Express Tribune 13, 19/07/2017)

Sindh police shake-up

MANY of the country's law and order problems can be traced to the fact that the police department as an institution in Pakistan is not geared towards public service; rather, it seeks to please its political bosses. In fact, politicisation of the police can be described as the biggest factor that contributes to the law-enforcement body's lack of performance. When the department is stuffed with cronies and political supporters, it is naive to expect it to deliver. The Sindh administration, it seems, is particularly adamant about clipping the wings of the police department and bringing it under its thumb. On Monday, a major shake-up in the province's police hierarchy was announced as several senior officers, including the Karachi police chief, were changed. However, while transfers and postings of officers are nothing out of the ordinary, in this case what was particularly odd was that Sindh police chief A.D. Khowaja was not consulted by the PPP government. As reported, Mr Khowaja wrote to the Sindh chief minister saying he had "serious reservations" over the shake-up. Over the past few months, relations between Sindh's rulers and its police chief have been strained,

with the political administration unhappy with the IGP for not 'toeing the line'. This is the latest in a series of moves to isolate the police chief, as a few weeks ago the Sindh government took away the IGP's powers to appoint SSPs and SPs. But Sindh is not alone in treating the police department like a political appendage. On Tuesday, the Lahore High Court suspended a government notification appointing the acting IGP as the province's permanent police chief. It criticised the Punjab government for "taking the court frivolously"; the IGP had been appointed after the court's third deadline while he has only a few months left before retirement.

It would be wishful thinking to imagine that crime and lawlessness in Pakistan can be controlled without an independent, competent police force. However, if political forces insist on creating blockages in the way of the police's independence, these goals will be impossible to achieve. Instead of constantly meddling in the police's work, the Sindh government should empower the IGP and give him the independence he needs to do his job. While oversight is necessary, micromanagement is undesirable. Punjab should also take the task of appointing a permanent IGP seriously and do the needful without delay. (Dawn 08, 19/07/2017)

Sindh Solid Waste Management Board dissolution case hearing adjourned till July 23

The Sindh High Court (SHC) adjourned till July 25 the hearing on Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar's petition seeking dissolution of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) after partial arguments from his lawyer.



Resuming his arguments from where he had left on Thursday, Barrister Farogh Naseem said that the Sindh government should strictly adhere to the Constitution's articles 137, 140-A and 142, which define the province's limits to legislate and also bind it to devolve powers, functions and authority to the local governments.

SHC seeks arguments in SSWMB transfer case

Advertisement

Ad

He questioned the utility of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) if it even lacked the powers to collect garbage.

The bench, headed by Justice Munib Akhtar, observed that there were other problems facing the city that the KMC should also attend to.

However, the lawyer argued that the funds required to perform the tasks had not been given to the KMC deliberately.

SSWMB devolution case: Provincial govt cannot assume local govt powers, argues MQM lawyer

Barrister Naseem said the Supreme Court (SC) had already given its observations regarding non-functioning of the SSWMB and devolving the same to the KMC.

He argued that under the Article 140-A of the Constitution the province was bound to provide funds to the local government, adding that the KMC needed both funds and authority to deal with the issue of garbage.

Govt announces three new waste management projects in Sindh

Justice Munib asked the lawyer whether the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014 under which the board had been established by the provincial government, was a special law.

Barrister Naseem informed the bench that the apex court had clearly interpreted the authority of the provincial legislature in its verdict and further clarified that any law wherein the provincial assembly will overstep its authority will be considered wrong.

SC concerned over Sindh's waste disposal agreement

"In the present case, even the local government's authority to collect garbage had been taken away by the provincial government," the mayor's lawyer alleged.

Naseem said that according to his knowledge, the SC had not mentioned in its decision that the local government's authority could be taken away.

City without cleanliness, garbage collection system

While the lawyer continued his arguments, the bench rose for the day, fixing the matter on July 25, when Barrister Naseem will resume his arguments.

Case history

The mayor had filed a petition in the SHC in which he had maintained that the SSWMB was established under the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, and was being run by the Sindh government since its establishment.

The mayor had referred to a SC verdict where it had been observed that the 'non-functional board [SSWMB] has never performed its duties and should be dissolved to local bodies as provided under the rules of business'.

SHC seeks government's reply on mayor's petition seeking devolution of SSWMB

He had contended that despite the directives of the SC, the relevant provincial authorities had not taken any steps to transfer the functions of the board to the elected local representative bodies.

Akhtar had pleaded to the court to direct the relevant authorities to transfer all the assets falling under the umbrella of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, to the local government institutions.

Performance report: One hundred days of ineptitude in Karachi

He had further requested the SHC to direct the respondents to give complete details of all the funds had received for the purpose of solid waste management and to appoint a reputable auditor to audit the financial matters of the board.
(The Express Tribune 15, 22/07/2017)

Govt to submit reply on SSWMB dissolution today

The Sindh High Court (SHC) granted on Wednesday one day to the provincial government to file its reply on the Karachi mayor's petition seeking dissolution of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) and the transfer of its powers to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC).



A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Munib Akhtar, fixed the matter on Thursday (today).

At the outset of the hearing, the assistant advocate-general, Ghulam Mustafa Mahesar, informed the bench that the advocate-general, Barrister Zamir Ghumro, was busy before the Supreme Court at its Karachi Registry, therefore, could not submit reply. He sought time to enable the key government law officer file a reply to the arguments advanced by the petitioners' lawyer, Barrister Farogh Naseem.

Sindh Solid Waste Management Board dissolution case hearing adjourned till July 23

Granting the request, the bench directed the AG to submit reply by Thursday (today).

On the last date, concluding his arguments, Barrister Naseem had argued that the Sindh government's

He had reiterated that the Supreme Court had clearly directed the government to transfer the functions of the SSWMB to the local government institutions but the respondent had failed to implement the order, despite the lapse of four months.

Barrister Naseem had argued that waste management and cleanliness are the responsibilities of local governments all over the world, but in Sindh this was not the case.

Govt announces three new waste management projects in Sindh

Opposing the plea, the provincial government has been insisting that the SC had just made an observation in its order and no directive was passed to hand over the solid waste management board to the KMC.

Later, it was informed that the Sindh government had approached the SC by filing a review application to seek clarification of the apex court's bench about its order to which the Karachi mayor was referring to seek dissolution of the SSWMB and its transfer to the KMC.

Case history

The mayor had filed a petition in the SHC in which he had maintained that the SSWMB was established under the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, and was being run by the provincial government since its establishment.

City without cleanliness, garbage collection system

The mayor had referred to an SC verdict, where the apex court had observed that the 'non-functional board [SSWMB] has never performed and should be dissolved to local bodies as provided under the rules of business'. He had contended that despite the directives of the SC, the relevant provincial authorities had not taken any step to transfer the functions of the board to the elected local representative bodies.

The mayor had pleaded to the court to direct the devolution of power and ask the authorities to transfer all the assets falling under the umbrella of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, to the local government institutions.

He had further requested the SHC to direct the respondents to give complete details of all the funds, which they had received for the purpose of solid waste management, and to appoint a reputable auditor to audit the financial matters of the board.
(By Our Correspondent, The Express Tribune, 15, 03/08/2017)

SHC seeks replies on petition against releasing industrial waste into sea

The Sindh High Court (SHC) issued on Wednesday notices to the Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC), Defence Housing Authority (DHA), Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) to file replies on a petition against the dumping of sewage and industrial waste into the Arabian Sea.

A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, also asked that the petitioner to nominate the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) as a respondent for being the regulatory authority responsible for taking measures for the protection of the environment.



The bench was hearing a petition jointly filed by the World Wide Fund for Nature – Pakistan, Shehri – Citizens for a Better Environment, Pakistan Animal Welfare Society and private citizens, including Maheen Zia, Mahera Umer, Yaminay Choudhary and Waqar Ahmed. The petitioners sought a ban on the release of industrial waste and sewage into the sea.

Karachi's water unfit for human consumption

The petitioners, represented by barristers Murtaza Wahab and M Jaffer Raza, argued that the acts and omissions of the respondents, the DHA, CBC, KMC and KWSB, were destroying the marine life and disturbing the ecological balance. They argued that the respondents' neglect was also affecting the health of citizens who visit Sea View.

The court was told that due to the water pollution, locals commonly find dead species of endangered animals such as green turtles and other cetaceans along the coast. "Pictures taken from Google Earth clearly show that the water at Sea View appears dirty and dark in colour whereas water at the beaches of other coastal areas of Pakistan such as Gwadar looks blue and clear," the petitioners said.

The petitioners added that the pictures taken of the site and from Google Earth showed that the sewage and industrial dumps were placed on the beach approximately 50 metres away from the sea. "From the said dumps, industrial waste and sewage openly flows into the sea, merging with the seawater and contaminating it," they said, adding that the flow of industrial waste and sewage is open and uncovered, which besides contaminating the sea also creates an unbearable stench in the entire area, which is an infringement of the fundamental rights of citizens.

In Rawal Lake : Residents complain about growing pollution

The lawyers told the court that the Sea View beach is one of the prime recreational spots not only for Karachi residents but also for people from across Pakistan. They informed the court that the water pollution at Sea View had been posing serious health risks to visitors. Oral consumption of sewage-contaminated water could cause deadly diseases such as hepatitis and dermal exposure to such water could result in infection of open cuts, rashes and other skin diseases, the court was told.

The petitioners pleaded to the court to direct the respondents to permanently stop dumping sewage and industrial waste into the sea
(By Our Correspondent, The Express Tribune, 14, 10/08/17)

Federal-run hospitals to disclose medical waste disposal measures



The judicial commission summoned on Saturday the heads of federal government-run hospitals along with reports on measures taken by them to provide clean drinking water at their health facilities and to ensure safe disposal of infectious medical and nuclear waste.

Justice Muhammad Iqbal Kalhoro, who headed the Supreme Court-appointed judicial commission to investigate poor water and sanitation conditions in Sindh, passed this direction and sought reports by August 26.

At the outset of the proceedings, Assistant Advocate-General Barrister Ghulam Mustafa Mahesar sought more time on behalf of the provincial advocate-general to argue on the point whether the commission had jurisdiction to issue contempt of court notices against the government officers for their failure to comply with orders passed by the Supreme Court. But, the petitioner, Shahab Usto, objected to the adjournment request. However, the commission adjourned hearing on this point till August 26.

Advocate-general to argue on judicial commission's jurisdiction on July 15

The standing counsel, Asim Mansoor Iqbal, informed the commission that in compliance with its directives, he had issued notices to the directors of the Atomic Energy Medical Centre (AEMC), Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), KIRAN, NIMRA, NORIN, LINAR and civil surgeon of the Pakistan Secretariat, Karachi for a preliminary meeting before the commission's proceedings to get knowhow of the steps taken by them to provide clean drinking water and manage disposal of medical, infectious and nuclear waste. But, they failed to attend, he added.

The commission issued notices to the directors of these hospitals to personally appear on August 26. They were also directed to bring the material showing the quality of water being provided to the people at the hospitals under their control and steps taken to manage infectious and nuclear waste.

Effluent control

Iqbal also filed a statement regarding Rangers patrolling to curb sand-lifting from the Malir River's bed.=

Judicial commission orders testing of water supplied to citizens in Sindh

Dr Saeed Qureshy, focal person to the chief secretary, said in compliance with the commission's directives, a meeting was held last week to discuss implementation of the master plan to control the flow of effluent going directly into water bodies. He said some outlines had been agreed upon, but to finalise the steps to execute the master plan another meeting was scheduled next week. He undertook to submit the complete scheme to execute the master plan with specific outlines.

Justice Kalhoro reminded the officer to take this as his last chance to submit the executing plan.

Representatives of the Sukkur and Hyderabad electric supply companies assured that all pending electricity connections to the new water and drainage schemes will be energised within the next 15 days, if a list of the same was provided to the departments concerned. The commission directed the representatives to energise all such connections to water and drainage schemes pending in their respective areas within 15 days and submit a compliance report.

Court wants update on Sindh Healthcare Commission

The provincial public health engineering department's secretary said that on the commission's directives they had carried out some homework on functioning of rural water supply schemes and a preliminary plan had been prepared.

He said a meeting of stakeholders was held last week to execute the plan, but the final plan to rehabilitate all rural water supply schemes will be chalked out during another meeting next week. Thereafter, a progress report will be submitted to the commission with a specific outline for finalising the work, he assured.

The chairperson of the task force also undertook to extend his support and coordinate with the public health engineering secretary and other departments in this connection.

Dr Ghulam Murtaza, a member of the task force, filed a report on compliance of the commission's directives to undertake a visit to the combined effluent treatment plant in Kotri to ascertain its functionality. According to him, as per analysis report of water samples collected from the plant on August 1, no significant improvement in quality of outlet effluent from the inlet was evident yet.

Judicial commission rejects task force's report on water, sanitation

Citing the reason for such deplorable situation, he observed that it was because of ineffective biological activation process and improper dosing of chemicals. However, he asserted that biological activation process at the plant had been started for the last couple of days and it will take at least four to six weeks to produce the desired results.

The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board's managing-director undertook that the plant would be made fully functional within four to six weeks, as the laboratory to check outlet effluent was being established and after that all the parameters will be maintained in accordance with the international standards.

He requested time to submit a report showing the full working of the plant. The Sindh Industrial Trading Estate will also file a report on the same day.

(By Naeem Sahoutara The Express Tribune, , 13, 13/08/2017)

KMC property firm ink MoU on removing piles of garbage in city

Mayor Wasim Akhtar on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding with real estate tycoon Malik Riaz to launch a joint initiative to clean the city of garbage.

The mayor and the Bahria Town chief signed the agreement at the KMC building for removal of garbage from the city. They exchanged documents and the mayor gave away a shield to the latter.

He appreciated the real estate mogul for taking part in bringing improvement in the existing conditions of the city and offering Rs10 billion support to the municipality for public welfare works.

Under the agreement, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation will take the lead role with the mayor in the driving seat to remove the piles of garbage within its territorial jurisdiction with the assistance of M/s Bahria Town.

Malik Riaz says Bagh Ibne Qasim controversy arose due to some 'misunderstanding'

Officials said the total generation of garbage in the city was approximately 13,000 tonnes per day while the capacity of the district municipal corporations (DMCs) to remove the garbage was a mere 40 per cent, thus leaving a heavy backlog in the city on a daily basis.

The estimated backlog across Karachi is around 1.1 million tonnes, according to officials.

The KMC and DMCs will participate in the initiative through their available resources and manpower. Both parties agreed to coordinate and cooperate with each other to make the lives of citizens better.

Mayor Akhtar said the KMC and Bahria Town would begin the drive after Eidul Azha from Karachi's Central district. Other districts would witness similar activity once district Central was cleaned.

He said the chairmen and elected representatives of all the districts would equally take part in the whole scheme.

Deputy Mayor Arshad Vohra, chairmen of DMCs Central, East and Korangi, City Council's parliamentary leader Aslam Shah Afridi, chairpersons of the City Council committees and KMC officers were also present.

Mayor Akhtar said the KMC would not pay anything to Bahria Town for its contribution to the removal of garbage backlog from the city as it was a voluntary effort on part of the property firm.

He said the initiative would not encroach upon the mandate of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board or violate its rules as "we are just removing garbage which causes immense trouble to the citizens of Karachi".

He said the agreement was just for removal of garbage, piles of which were accumulating in the city, and to make such efforts sustainable in the longer term, the Sindh government should come up with financial support and administrative measures, for which he offered all sorts of cooperation and guidance to them.

Speaking on the occasion, Malik Riaz said he was ready to provide any support and cooperation to the mayor in his endeavours to make Karachi a better, liveable city.

He said former president Asif Zardari too had advised him to work with the mayor for betterment of Karachi.

He said his organisation would manage or run in a better way if any school or hospital was handed to it by the mayor. The same offer stood for the KMC if it desired to construct or repair roads, he added.

About a recent controversy involving Bagh Ibne Qasim, Mr Riaz said it was due to "some misunderstanding".

"The fact was that we were not going to take control of the park and were only playing our role in improving it."

(By Hasan Mansoor, Dawn, 17, 24/08/2017)

Mayor questions Sindh govts plan to lift offal from only two Karachi districts

Expressing concern over the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board's (SSWMB) plan to lift sacrificial animals' offal from only two districts during Eidul Azha, City Mayor Wasim Akhtar has raised the question as to who would lift the waste from the rest of the metropolis.

Speaking to journalists at the KMC head office on Thursday after chairing a meeting held in connection with the offal collection plan, he said that while the SSWMB, as its name suggested, was for the entire province, it had given contract for lifting the entrails from only two districts.

He said that while the SSWMB was being provided full budget, it had given contract to lift offal from two districts only while the rest of the metropolis had been abandoned.

However, he assured citizens that although the SSWMB had abandoned them, their elected representatives in the local bodies, despite having insufficient resources, would serve them and would ensure that all animals' waste was collected and disposed of in a scientific manner during the Eid days.

He said that last year over 1.7 million animals had been sacrificed and this year, with an increase of between 10 to 15 per cent, nearly two million animals were expected to be sacrificed.

He said that offal collection points had been designated in different districts/towns and trenches had been dug in different districts to bury the entrails.

He said that municipal staffers would be used for collecting guts and wherever required additional staffers and equipment/machinery would also be hired for quick lifting and disposal of offal.

The mayor urged city councillors to be vigilant during Eid and monitor the situation in their respective areas and ensure that the staffers were working efficiently and the waste was being lifted in time.

He also urged the people not to throw animal guts in drains, sewers, etc, which would choke them.

He said such practices caused drains and gutters to overflow resulting in inundation of low-lying areas creating hardships for residents.

He said that complaints regarding offal collection could also be lodged at telephone number 1339. Earlier, the mayor chaired the meeting that was attended by municipal commissioner Nawaz Nasim, DMC Central chief Rehan Hashmi, DMC East chief Moeed Anwer, Korangi district chief Nayyer Raza, Izhar Khan, Ghulam Farid, Aslam Afridi and others. (Dawn, 18, 25/08/2017)

SC questions legal status of solid waste management board

The Supreme Court (SC) called on Monday details from the provincial advocate-general and others regarding the legal status of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) set up by the Sindh government to handle the solid waste in the province.



A three-member bench, headed by Justice Mushir Alam, asked the petitioner and others to file their comments to the review plea, at the SC's Karachi Registry Branch.

The Sindh government had filed a review application, asking the apex court to review its observations made in its March 16 order regarding the solid waste management board.

Sindh Solid Waste Management Board dissolution case hearing adjourned till July 23

Advocate-general (AG) Barrister Zamir Ghumro said in the apex court's order passed during the proceedings in a case regarding the non-provision of clean drinking water and sanitation conditions in Sindh, it had observed that the 'non-functional board [SSWMB] has never performed its duties and should be dissolved to local bodies as provided under the rules of business.

He argued that SSWMB was lawfully established under the provisions of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014. Therefore, the same cannot be dissolved, he insisted.

He argued that the apex court had made its observations, but no specific order was passed for dissolving SSWMB.

Mayor criticises waste management board's offal disposal planning

Justice Alam questioned the law officer that wasn't the solid waste management board a municipal body, which the provincial government was running. He further inquired on why SSWMB had not been handed over to the local government if it was a municipal body.

Justice Faisal Arab, another bench member, observed that the situation of solid waste was known to everyone, so why was the government unable to see the piles of garbage.

The bench directed the AG to submit a reply of the provincial government containing details on the legal status of SSWMB. He will also explain how the provincial government was running a municipal body in the presence of the local government.

Mayor's petition

A petition filed by Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar is currently pending disposal in the Sindh High Court (SHC), seeking directions to the Sindh government to dissolve the solid waste management board and transfer it to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC).

Waste management board establishment was illegal, argues mayor's lawyer

In the plea, the mayor had also referred to a SC verdict where it had been observed that the 'non-functional board [SSWMB] has never performed its duties and should be dissolved to local bodies as provided under the rules of business'.

He had contended that despite the directives of the SC, the relevant provincial authorities had not taken any steps to transfer the functions of the board to the elected local representative bodies.

Akhtar had pleaded the court to direct the relevant authorities to transfer all the assets falling under the umbrella of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, to the local government institutions.

Waste management: Need for more landfill sites stressed

He had further requested the SHC to direct the respondents to give complete details of all the funds that had been received for the purpose of solid waste management and to appoint a reputable auditor to audit the financial matters of the board. (By Naeem Sahoutara The Express Tribune 13, 29/08/2017)

'Rain disaster exposes poor roadworks, drain cleaning, waste disposal'

Absence of measures to properly de-silt all drains of the city, ensure proper disposal of waste, flaws in recent roadworks along with the fast decline in city's green cover are some major factors which caused urban flooding during the rains, said urban planning experts on Friday.

Speaking about the city's vulnerable civic infrastructure that collapsed due to the heavy showers, the experts called for immediate evacuation of those stranded in low-lying areas, especially those along Lyari and Malir rivers, as the situation would worsen in case of more rain.

Regretting lack of government preparations ahead of monsoon, Dr Noman Ahmed, who heads the Department of Architecture and Planning at the NED University of Engineering and Technology, said the city had been a victim of poor governance for a long time.

“Such an exercise [drain cleaning] should have been conducted at least six to seven months prior to the monsoon season. What aggravated the situation, however, is the continued absence of a proper waste disposal system in the city as well as the recently carried out poor road re-carpeting and repairs,” he said.

Flaws in roadworks

Dr Ahmed, who visited different parts of the city to observe how they were being affected by rain, said the repairs lacked sound technical approach, as the size of the drain inlet along University Road from Nipa to Hasan Square had been made too small.

“There are serious flaws in the recent reconstruction/repairs of roads. For instance, water collected near the Urdu University was not going into the drain.

“Similarly, the drainage on the stretch from Civic Centre up to Jail Chowrangi flyover was being affected by waste dumps and other obstructions,” explained Dr Ahmed. He added that the absence of a drainage system near Karachi City Railway Station also led to flooding on I.I. Chundrigar Road.

“Unfortunately, this site has been without a drainage system since 2006 when it was completely redone during the city’s beautification plan. The then officials concerned were informed about the flaw but they didn’t do anything to fix it,” he said.

The senior architect found the newly re-carpeted roads damaged at many places, exposing the use of low quality material. “Also, the level of roads is uneven, which affects water flow. A simple principle is to keep neighbouring streets and lanes a little above the main road which should be connected with drain/s. This helps prevent flooding of residential areas,” he said.

Blame game

Dr Ahmed described the whole situation as unfortunate. “Nobody is ready to take the responsibility. Some officials blame the Provincial Disaster Management Authority for the mess but when you talk to them, they would say the department is only responsible for relief and rescue and not for development and rehabilitation.

“On the other hand, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation complains of funds’ shortage. It seems to have no coordination with the local district municipal corporations,” he said.

In response to a question about strategy the government should adopt for rain emergency, he said immediate focus should be the areas more vulnerable to flooding such as Malir and Saadi Town which had suffered massive damage. Also the areas along Malir and Lyari rivers required early attention for which the government should mobilise the community and evacuate people from there before the situation turned worse, he added.

“The government should act fast as rain spell is expected to continue. The KMC should work on a maintenance plan, find out missing elements in the city’s infrastructure and fix them.”

Trained volunteer force

The city, he believed, didn’t need more development projects. Rather, there should be concerted effort to keep the infrastructure that we already have in good shape. “The government should also learn from other countries fighting flooding and set up a trained volunteer force to combat such situations. It’s not the Rangers’ job to carry out rescue operation in rain emergency.”

Concrete jungle

Farhan Anwar, senior urban planner who heads Sustainable Initiatives, a non-governmental organisation, pointed to the sharp decline in city’s green cover and said that it acted as a filtration basin. “Such spaces absorb water and help prevent flooding. Such spaces have been lost at an alarming rate while the city has expanded tremendously over the years,” he said, adding that massive encroachment on city’s major drains also contributed to flooding.

“And, there are many areas which lack proper drainage. For instance, one track of Tariq Road was flooded today while the other was clear, suggesting technical flaw in road designing,” he said.

Most of the recently constructed drains in the DHA, he said, carried sewage though they were meant for rainwater.

(By Faiza Ilyas Dawn 15, 02/09/2017)

SWWB to build 1,000 flats for workers

Sindh Workers` Welfare Board (SWWB) has begun drafting a PC-I for construction of some 1,000 flats in labour colonies across the province, it emerged on Friday.

“The plan will be implemented in various labour colonies dotted [across] Sindh aiming at benefiting workers [in] the province, said a senior official in the SWWB.

He said to ensure transparency in allotment of those flats, a committee comprising some eminent personalities in labour unions had been formed for oversight. Besides, another committee of experts would provide related engineering education to workers` children.

Officials said the board had recently successfully removed encroachments from the labourers` flats in Gulshan-i-Maymar after several years of illegal occupation by unauthorised people.

They said in a recent meeting of the SWWB presided over by Sindh Minister for Labour, Human Resources, Information and Transport Nasir Shah, members of the Sindh Assembly, senior officials and representative of workers and employers discussed at length the services provided to labourers and their children by the board.

Minister Shah said to ensure transparency, due representation of workers and employers in all committees including development, finance, investment, human resources, and technical etc would be made to provide maximum facilities to workers and their children.

He asked secretary labour Rasheed Solangi and secretary of the board Asif Memon to take concrete steps for this.

Officials quoted the board secretary as informing the meeting about various steps being taken by the board and facilities being given to workers.

He spoke about future projects for betterment of workers, which included death compensation, marriage grants, and scholarships.

This also included provision of sewing machines and bicycles to female workers and disabled children. All such projects would be taken care of at a cost of Rs7.22 billion which had been approved by the board.

The board would also purchase new furniture for establishment of IT labs, and textbooks for workers' children in addition to providing them uniforms.

Moreover, provision of solar-powered electricity and RO plants in workers' schools would also be made.

Officials said some 20 new development schemes had been planned for the current fiscal year which would cost Rs1.34bn.

Besides, another Rs6bn would be spent on purchase of land for constructing flats, and improving infrastructure of schools and colleges. The government has asked the board to upgrade workers' primary school to high school and rehabilitate the labour colony in Thatta as recommended by MPA Rukhsana Shah.

The matter of encroachment of land in Jacobabad's labour colony was taken up in the meeting and it was decided that the deputy commissioner and the SSP of Jacobabad would be approached for removal of illegal occupation.

The officials said areas for new schools and colleges for workers' children had been identified at New Karachi, Korangi, SITE in Karachi; and Sukkur and Mirpur Mathelo in Ghotki district.

Besides, a hospital for workers would be set up at Arore in Sukkur district.
(By Hasan Mansoor Dawn 16, 02/09/2017)

How the mighty fall: District Central in disrepair as garbage piles up



Once upon a time there was a district in Karachi, which was very different from the other five districts of the city. It had proper infrastructure, a working municipal system and the largest population of all Karachi's districts. The district comprised Federal B Area, North Nazimabad, Nazimabad, New Karachi, North Karachi, Buffer Zone, Surjani Town and Liaquatabad.

It was ruled by the mighty Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) from its headquarters Nine Zero.

Now the district is in a state of disrepair. Its roads have dilapidated and no one seems to care. The district is caught in between a tug of war between the local and provincial governments.

Residents claim that the district, which has a population of nearly three million, was better off when the MQM was in power. The area around Nine Zero and its founder Altaf Hussain's residence was maintained at least.

Now piles of garbage engulf the district's parks, playgrounds and other open spaces.

Road accidents claim over a dozen lives

The District Central deputy commissioner may have launched a 'three-day mega campaign' last week, but according to residents, not a single trash pile was shifted.

Muhammad Waseem, a resident of Buffer Zone, said they are tired of false promises. "The truth is that none of us have any hope left that the authorities will do anything. We know they are here to fill their pockets with our taxes while we suffer when it rains and have to live with dilapidated and inundated roads and broken sewerage lines," he lamented.

"It's shameful that a city like Karachi, the revenue engine of the country, had to call in the military to drain rainwater while the municipal departments and government were busy blaming each other," said Waseem.

In most areas the situation surrounding the government offices is usually better but in District Central the roads leading to the deputy commissioner's office is a mess. The roads coming from the Water Pump intersection to People's Chowrangi and from Ziauddin Hospital to Karimabad are broken as well as inundated with sewage and garbage.

Karachi's eight underpasses underwater

The district has a large storm water drain, large enough to sustain heavy rainfall, but it has been filled with garbage, explaining why the area experienced urban flooding during the recent spells of rainfall.

Another resident, Jawad Raza, who lives in North Nazimabad shared that he has been living here for the past 30 years. North Nazimabad was once considered one of the most well planned towns, with its wide roads and a network of open storm water drains, however, now it looks like we are living in a rural area, he lamented.

He added that for the past few years, residents have been suffering due to the construction of the Green Line Bus Rapid Transport System. They do not believe it will be completed any time soon, said Raza, adding that traffic in the area has suffered greatly due to the construction. The recent rain was also shocking for him, as he has seen much heavier rain in the past but the situation never became this dire.

The authorities defended themselves by reiterating the same song and dance.

District Central Deputy Commissioner Fariduddin Mustufa said garbage collection and sanitation is the responsibility of the district municipal corporation (DMC), which has failed to perform their duty. He said the mega cleanliness drive that failed to impress the residents of the area was simply a post-Eidul Azha cleanliness drive to support the DMC's regular operation. The responsibility, of course, lies with the DMC.



He said soon the responsibility for garbage collection in the area will be given to the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board, which he believes can do a better job than the DMC.

DMC Central Chairman Rehan Hashmi said his district is one of the largest in Pakistan and the funds he receives from the provincial government, around Rs200 million, is only enough to pay the salaries of 13,000 employees.

Sindh CM to inaugurate Drigh Road underpass on July 20

He said when he took over the office there were only 75 pieces of machinery available including a dumper, shovel, arm roller and bobcats, whereas hundreds of machines were in the warehouse and not usable. We have now repaired at least 75 machines, he said.

Hashmi said at least a thousand units of such machinery are required at minimum to cope with the issues in DMC Central. Give me just 5% of the funds that were given to the district in Musharraf's era and see how I handle things, he vowed.

(By SHEHARYAR ALI THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 15, 18/09/2017)

Residents move court against garbage dumping in Jam Chakro

The Sindh High Court (SHC) issued on Tuesday notices to the authorities concerned in the provincial local government, the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB), the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and deputy commissioners (DCs) of districts Malir and West on a petition seeking the halting of garbage dumping in a landfill site in the Jam Chakro locality of Gadap Town.

A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, also directed the law officers for the provincial government, the KMC and the district municipal corporations (DMCs) to file their comments by October 24.

A group of the residents of Jam Chakro deh, Gadap Town, had approached the court against the secretary of the provincial local government department, KMC, the DCs of District Malir and District West, the survey superintendent of the provincial board of revenue, along with the chairperson and managing-director of SSWMB.

Mayor criticises waste management board's offal disposal planning

The two-judges were informed that, on a daily basis, large quantities of garbage, hazardous waste and rubbish were seen being dumped in the vicinity of the petitioners' residential premises, where a dump yard exists on a huge plot of land.

The petitioners also produced photographic evidence, saying that this practice of dumping garbage and waste near their residential premiss has had adverse effects, such as polluting the environment, emission of hazardous substances, along with huge amounts of smoke and fumes flowing from the same and a spread of dangerous diseases.

Apart from this, they said the garbage dumping was also destroying their peaceful occupancy and possession and that the property value of their land.

The court was told that not only was the garbage being dumped, it was later illegally burnt on a daily basis for its disposal, which emitted large clouds of smoke that made its way to the surrounding areas, including the residencies of the petitioners.

Waste management board establishment was illegal, argues mayor's lawyer

The petitioners said they had come to know that that the local government department had allotted or was about to allot more land adjacent to the existing dump yard for more activities relating to the disposal and burning of garbage. They apprehended that truckloads of garbage will be dumped and burnt at any time, which would only add to the existing dismay of the petitioners.

It was argued that in the terms of the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013, it was a compulsory function and responsibility of the KMC and DMCs to remove waste and rubbish from all buildings, land and streets situated in their jurisdictions.

The court was told that as per the Solid Waste Management Board Act, 2014, SSWMB was responsible for the removal and disposal of solid waste from the land affected by such dumping.

However, they alleged that due to inaction on the part of the respondents, the residents were exposed to a polluted environment, catastrophic health hazards, widespread diseases and constant emissions of hazardous fumes.

New garbage transfer station likely to be hazardous for Karachi

"The petitioners are, therefore, also being deprived of their rights to life and peaceful enjoyment of their property, which are basic fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution," argued their lawyer.

The lawyer argued that the unjustifiable dumping within the vicinity and in such close proximity to the residential premises is a blatant violation of the said fundamental rights and renders the respondents liable for their inaction and unconstitutional behaviour.

The court was pleaded to direct the respondents to immediately stop the dumping of garbage and solid waste.

A direction was sought for the local government department to restrain from allotting, designating, earmarking and using sites, areas or pieces of land close to the petitioners' residences.
(THE EXPRESS TRIBUNE 14, 04/10/2017)

Deal inked with Chinese company to lift garbage from two Karachi districts

Two more district municipal corporations (DMCs) of Karachi on Friday inked an agreement with a Chinese sanitation service group to lift piles of garbage in their limits as the Sindh local government minister hoped that the work would begin from next month.



The DMCs of Malir and Karachi West through their chairman and administrator, respectively, signed the agreement with the Hang Zhou Jin Jiang Group Sanitation Service Company Limited at the office of LG Minister Jam Khan Shoro.

Officials said that the agreement was signed after the two DMCs formally agreed to hand over the garbage lifting responsibilities to the Chinese sanitation group. The DMC Malir's council adopted a resolution as per the law, while the DMC West's administrator and the municipal commissioner agreed to the deal as it had not yet got its chairman because of controversy during the election.

Sindh Solid Waste Management Board to oversee the process

The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board would be taking care of the whole process. The managing director of the board was also present during the signing ceremony and signed the document as the parent organisation to oversee the operations.

Another Chinese sanitation company was lifting garbage from the limits of DMCs South and East. However, the remaining two districts — Central and Korangi — could be included in the plan once their councils passed the mandatory resolutions.

Details of agreement

According to the agreement, the Chinese firm would charge \$26 per metric ton of the garbage it would lift from the assigned land.

More than 200 vehicles and equipment would be used to dispose of the garbage, including thousands of tons of backlog waste.

The officials maintained that the existing sanitation staff of the two DMCs — as is being practiced in DMCs South and East — would be involved in the operations and they would get substantial increments on the basis of their performance.

Minister Shoro said on the occasion that the Pakistan Peoples Party's provincial government was committed to the promises it had made with the people for improving sanitation conditions in the city.

"Today's agreement signed by the Chinese firm and two more DMCs reflects the same endeavour," he said, adding that the remaining districts would sign similar agreements with reputed international firms in near future.

He said the relevant authorities' first preference would be to clear out the backlog as well as getting rid of the trash generated on daily basis by shifting the waste to the designated garbage stations.

He said similar work in Karachi's South and East districts was continuing satisfactorily and the new agreement would help the city get cleaner and offer better hygienic conditions to its millions of citizens.

He said the Chinese sanitation group would complete the feasibility work of the two districts in a few days before the latest equipment arrived and formal operations were launched.

"We are trying our best to offer modern ways to turn the city into an attractive place for its citizens."

He said the people of Karachi would soon witness an improvement in the state of the metropolis, which was the first priority of the government.

'Crown of Sindh'

"It is just the beginning," said the minister. "Karachi deserves the best, for which we have great plans. This city is the crown of Sindh and Pakistan," he added.

He said the Sindh government was making similar plans for other cities of the province. According to him, cleanliness should be the foremost priority of the government of the day, which was what the leadership of the PPP sought to achieve as per its vision.

The minister said the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board was working on ways to expand similar operations to the remaining two districts of the city.

He said the people in Karachi South and East had already noticed a positive change in their areas where the Chinese firm was involved in better sanitation services.

He said time was not far when all citizens of Karachi would observe the city being cleaned through modern methods.

He said the provincial government was keenly seeking the support of all stakeholders in the city to make sure the metropolis was better served.

(By Hasan Mansoor Dawn 17, 07/10/2017)

Garbage politics

ONCE again we are hearing of two more agreements with a Chinese company to manage solid waste in Karachi. This time it is the district management councils of districts Malir and Karachi West that have authorised the agreements under the provincial government's Solid Waste Management Board. One question that immediately leaps to mind is this: what happened when the last such arrangement was announced with a lot of fanfare? Districts South and East had inked similar agreements in the recent past, but the garbage problem in both areas failed to improve. It is the PPP-led government, which insists on retaining the responsibility of solid waste management and steadfastly refuses to devolve the task to the mayor's office for its own political reasons, that must be blamed for the ineffective contracts they have entered into. Its neglect has allowed garbage to pile up in huge quantities around the city.

The consequences are gruesome for the poor citizens who have to suffer the brunt of this colossal failure of governance. Informal contractors currently collect the garbage from various areas and prefer to dump it in empty lots where it is burned once the piles become too large, sending vast plumes of toxic smoke wafting over entire neighbourhoods. Alternatively, garbage is also dumped into the sea by unscrupulous contractors; it washes ashore as the tide turns, leaving the city's beaches littered with waste. The sheer indifference that the authorities have shown towards this horrific situation is now emblematic of the Sindh government's style of politics, which revolves mostly around rallies, rhetoric and rackets. Karachi is littered with examples of deep misgovernance, while the Chinese are being asked to fill the vacuum. This is a deeply flawed and unsustainable model, and one suspects that those directing these arrangements through the DMCs know this but could not care less. No foreign enterprise can solve the governance problems of Karachi if the city authorities themselves remain indifferent to their responsibilities.

(Dawn 08, 08/10/2017)

City waste: SSWMB, KWSB among agencies blamed for not fulfilling duty

Notwithstanding the judicial commission's active interest in matters of pollution and contamination in drinking water, officials representing the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) and Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) at a meeting held on Thursday failed to share any concrete plan or make any commitment on behalf of their respective departments on how to ensure safe disposal of the city's waste.

The meeting, attended by representatives of the public and private sector, was organised by the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) at its offices to discuss the pollution affecting Karachi's beaches.

While there was no input from the KWSB representative on the three non-functional treatment plants, Dr A.D. Sajnani heading the SSWMB said that the province faced an uphill task to "satisfy the (judicial) commission".

"The waste issue has taken a serious form because it remained on the back burner for decades," Dr Sajnani explained, describing the issue as "alarming".

According to him, the "solution is very simple" if the 19 agencies transported the solid waste, around 15,000 tonnes daily, generated in their respective jurisdictions to the landfill sites.

"Except a few, most of them are not fulfilling their responsibility, which include the Civil Aviation Authority and the Pakistan Railways. Four out of six cantonment boards are throwing their garbage into water bodies," he observed, adding that many agencies had not responded to the board's multiple reminders.

A few participants, however, disagreed with this approach and said that solid waste should be collected and segregated at source instead of taking it to a landfill site that also involved wastage of time and money, besides being an exercise carrying risk for human health and environment.

"Dumping garbage at landfill sites is no solution to the problem. We should be talking of garbage segregation at source, its reuse and recycling, if we really want to address the problem," said retired Lt Colonel Najm-us-Saeed representing the DHA.

The issue of improper medical waste was also raised but couldn't receive any specific recommendations.

There was also a call for a major public awareness drive to encourage individual participation, create public ownership and improve civic conduct.

Speaking on the need for calling the meeting, Baqaullah Unar, the secretary environment, climate change and coastal development also having the additional charge of Sepa, said that improper disposal of waste posed serious risk to human life and every agency had to play its role in tackling the issue as environment was a shared responsibility.

"We have tolerated enough and now it's time for action," he said, adding that Karachi's beaches had turned polluted mainly because relevant agencies were not fulfilling their responsibility.

"They include the KWSB, the SSWMB, the local government as well as the Karachi Port Trust, the DHA and the various cantonment boards," he observed.

Sharing information about the actions Sepa has taken against polluters, he said the agency had fined government departments as well as more than 40 polluting factories and had sent their (factories') cases to the environmental tribunal.

He also talked about the restaurants lining the beach in the Seaview area which were dumping their untreated waste into the sea and warned them of action.

The environmental watchdog, he said, had also set up, for the first time, a sustainable development fund and a sustainable development board.

"The department is opening its offices in 10 districts and we need government support."

Responding to a question on banning plastic, Sepa deputy director Imran Sabir said that the department was making efforts to ensure implementation of environmental regulations pertaining to the use of Oxo biodegradable plastic since 2014.

"Though there is still a long way to go, we have been able to encourage local and international companies and departmental stores to make use of this plastic. Last year, seven million kilograms of this biodegradable plastic was manufactured here," he noted.
(By Faiza Ilyas Dawn 18, 03/11/2017)

SHC seeks comments on petition seeking ban on garbage disposal in Malir River

The Sindh High Court on Friday directed the city mayor, director general of Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) and others to file their respective comments on a constitutional petition seeking imposition of ban on disposal, burning or smouldering of solid waste and garbage in Malir River or on its banks at Korangi Causeway.

The petition was filed by Yasir Khurshid and 41 other residents of Air Force Officers Housing Society (AFOHS), Dadabhai Town, Mehmoodabad, Shehri-Citizens for a Better Environment and others who impleaded the chief secretary, city mayor, inspector general of police, SSWMB, Sindh Environmental Protection Agency, Cantonment Board Faisal, District Municipal Committee Korangi and DMC East as respondents.

The petitioners, represented by Advocate Zubair Ahmed Abro, challenged the dumping and disposal through open burning/smouldering of hazardous, hospital, industrial and municipal solid waste in Malir River at Korangi Causeway resulting in adverse environmental, security and health impacts on the residents of the area, including the petitioners.

They submitted in their petition that 12,000-plus tons of solid waste was being produced every day in the city and despite such huge load, the city had no garbage transfer stations (GTSs).

The petitioners stated that 7,000-plus tons solid waste was being dumped in nullahs (drains) every day, which ended up in the sea or was burnt openly.

They said that open burning of garbage released several hazardous pollutants.

The petitioners said that the impact and velocity of the dumping and open burning of solid waste in Malir River at Korangi Causeway could be judged from the Google images from year 2005 to 2017.

They submitted that the acts of the respondents put life of the petitioners and other residents in great danger of respiratory diseases, especially children who were most susceptible.

The petitioners said the most alarming fact is the effect of air pollution through open burning of solid waste on infants and children residing in the area.
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn 17, 16/12/2017)