

NEWSCLIPPINGS

JANUARY TO JUNE 2019

SEWERAGE & DRAINAGE



Urban Resource Centre

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Report sought on sewage treatment for gardening

The Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation in Sindh on Monday directed the local government secretary to hold a meeting with authorities concerned regarding public parks and submit a report about the feasibility of a scheme to convert sewage into grey water for gardening.



The commission, headed by retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim, gave one month to the LG secretary to file his report.

Justice Muslim visited the Fateh Park in North Nazimabad on Jan 12 on the request of the chairman of the district municipal corporation Central, where a registered society had introduced a scheme, Green Initiative, for converting sewage into grey water, which could be utilised for any purposes other than human consumption.

The commission said that not only the park in question, but other areas could also benefit through treated water.

DMC Central chairman Rehan Hashmi informed the commission that he introduced this scheme and was also planning to initiate it in different parks within the district.

The commission said that such schemes could make a huge difference if introduced in big parks and would also ease pressure on potable water as grey water can be utilised for gardening and maintenance of green patches.

It observed that the provincial government was required to examine the feasibility of converting sewage into grey water.
(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 09, 15/01/2019)

Burst sewerage line at Jail Chowrangi causes hours-long traffic jam

Commuters were left stranded for hours due to the traffic gridlock near Jail Chowrangi on main University Road on Thursday after a sewerage water line burst in the vicinity.



The sewerage line, which burst on Wednesday night, flooded major thoroughfares including main University Road, New MA Jinnah Road and their adjoining streets. The water caused hours-long traffic blockades at University Road, New MA Jinnah Road, New Town, Pir Sibghatullah Rashidi Road, Shaheed-e-Millat Road, Jail Chowrangi, Kashmir Road, Sharaf Quaideen and Sir Shah Suleman Road, among others.

The worst hit were commuters on the way to work in the morning rush hour and those returning home after office hours. Several ambulances also remained stuck in the traffic jam, with patients in need of emergency care stranded amid the sea of cars and motorcycles. In some cases, vehicles ran out of fuel due to the long wait times and had to be pushed to the side of the ride.

The damage

A huge pit, several feet wide and deep, was formed where the sewerage line burst. Multiple motorcyclists were injured when they accidentally fell into it. Other commuters helped the injured motorcyclists out of the pit.

Stuck in the jam for several hours, several enraged citizens started shouting slogans against the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) and the traffic police. "It's been several hours since the sewerage line has burst, but they haven't been able to fix it yet," said one motorcyclist.

First winter rain a bittersweet experience for Karachiites

Another commuter lambasted the traffic police, saying no diversion or alternative traffic routes had been devised despite being aware of the situation. "They could have informed citizens of the situation," he said, adding that traffic was being diverted to different roads after people were already stuck in the jam.

Later, Sindh Police chief IG Dr Kaleem Imam took notice of the situation and ordered the Traffic DIG to make concerted efforts to clear the gridlock. He also directed the zonal DIG of the operations police to cooperate with traffic police personnel and divert traffic to alternative routes.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 25/01/2019)

Search continues for body of minor who fell in drain

The body of a child who fell in an open sewerage drain in Swati Mohalla has not been recovered even after the passage of over 24 hours. In the absence of any official action, locals made ad hoc attempts to recover the child but they remained unsuccessful. Several hours later, after protests and noise by the locals, the municipal institutions finally took notice of the incident and heavy machinery was brought on Sunday to recover the child but to no avail.

The nine-year-old child, identified as Muhammad Arif son of Ghulam Rasool, fell into the drain on Saturday morning. Speaking to *The Express Tribune*, Rasool said that Arif was the eldest of five siblings and had gone out to walk the goats. His siblings had

accompanied him, he said, adding that Arif had been standing on a pipeline near the nullah when he lost his balance and fell in the drain. The grief-stricken father said that several hours passed before the authorities made any efforts to recover his child.

Aggrieved residents

The locals also maintained that no official rescue efforts were made till several hours after the incident. They protested near Gul Ahmed Chowrangi and shouted slogans to call the attention of the authorities and expressed their disappointment at the lax rescue efforts when Malir District Municipal Corporation (DMC) Chairperson Jan Muhammad Baloch reached the site and then went back.

According to the locals, Baloch had come only to take pictures. They were of the opinion that the chairperson should have brought the machinery at that time if he actually wished to do something. The protesters dispersed once the municipal bodies eventually took notice and the rescue efforts were initiated.

The residents of the area said that other children had also met their deaths in the same drain and most of the bodies were never recovered. They further complained that poisonous water from Karachi's industrial zone also flows into this drain thus causing it to fill up.

Search operation

The rescue operation by the municipal organisations began much later in the day on Saturday and stopped at nightfall. An excavator was arranged and the operation resumed on Sunday but the efforts remained unsuccessful and the child has not been recovered as yet.

Politicking

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MPA Haleem Adil Sheikh took this incident as an opportunity to take jibes at the provincial government. "The Sindh government is sleeping. It wakes up only when their [Sindh government's] leaders are distressed," he said.

"It is our duty to reach the scene in such cases," said the MPA, adding that all relevant representatives should have arrived at the scene. Not only is the sewerage water from the residential area disposed in this nulla but water from Landhi's industrial area also collects in this drain, said Sheikh. He questioned as to where the welfare funds for areas near the industries go. The MPA requested the Pakistan Navy to send their divers to recover the body of the diseased child.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 25/02/2019)

Centre, Sindh govt departments owe KWSB over Rs65b in arrears

A list of defaulters released by the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) has exposed several departments of the federal and Sindh governments, which owe the board a cumulative sum of over Rs65 billion. Along with residential and commercial consumers, the list, a copy of which is available with The Express Tribune, includes 540 departments of the federal government and 572 of the Sindh government.

KWSB Deputy Managing Director Asadullah Khan told The Express Tribune that the utility provider is determined to collect the unpaid dues. Action will be taken against defaulters regardless of who they are, he warned. According to Khan, the KWSB has no other source of revenue generation as it does not receive any subsidies from the government except funds for mega projects.

KWSB rehires officials dismissed by Water Commission

"KWSB is an independent organisation and funds are necessary to maintain its vast operations," said Khan. He said that the KWSB has over 11,000 kilometres of waterlines spread across the city and a large sum of money is required for their upkeep and repairs. Besides, the KWSB's system begins from Chilya, Thatta, and expands over a distance of 150km till it reaches Keamari, said Khan, adding that funds were needed to stay afloat.

The defaulters

Among the list of defaulters from the federal departments are Pakistan Steel Mills which owes the KWSB over Rs8 billion, Port Qasim BW Supply which owes more than Rs1b, Karachi Export Processing Zone in Landhi over Rs220 million, PSO Oil Terminal over Rs5m, Pakistan Rangers' headquarters nearly Rs60m, the Faisal Cantonment Board over Rs18m, while the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) owes nearly Rs25m. Besides, the Sui Southern Gas Company owes the KWSB nearly Rs14m, the Printing Corporation of Pakistan nearly Rs35m, the Navy Housing Scheme at Karsaz has nearly Rs17m in unpaid dues, Expo Centre owes over Rs31m, the commander of Naval Museum Karsaz owes KWSB over Rs18m, while the Karachi Port Trust owes more than Rs228m and the Pakistan Post Office owes more than Rs10m. Furthermore, Karachi Shipyard and Engineering owes nearly Rs14m, Excise and Sales Tax Central Superintendent owes over Rs44m, Pakistan International Airline owes over Rs26m. Other major defaulters include Pakistan Railways with Rs4m, and Karachi Airport with nearly Rs160m in unpaid dues.

KWSB maintains that several notices have been issued to these federal departments but their dues have not been paid yet.

On the provincial front

There are 572 departments of the Sindh government with unpaid dues of more than Rs30b. These include schools, colleges, police offices, municipal officers and others. Among the defaulters, there is Peer Serhandi Village District Council with over Rs256m in unpaid dues, Malir District Jail owes over Rs216m, Karachi Jail owes over Rs18m, Police Training College, Baldia, owes Rs40m, Ibrahim Hyderi chairperson owes nearly Rs100m and schools and colleges functioning under the Sindh

government owe Rs600m. Other departments with unpaid dues include offices of East SSP with more than Rs30m, different police stations in the South district, West SSP's office and the Lyari Community Development project. Besides, the Supreme Court Registry owes nearly Rs700,000 and the Chief Minister House has more than Rs1.4m in unpaid dues while the Sindh Assembly Building owes KWSB Rs50,000.

(By Naeem Khanzada The Express Tribune, 04, 11/03/2019)

Two boys drown in Nusrat Bhutto Colony drain

Two boys drowned in a storm-water drain in North Nazimabad on Tuesday evening.

Four scavengers, aged between 10 and 12 years, fell into the drain and after hours-long search one of them was rescued while efforts were ongoing to find the fourth boy.

Officials said that area people in Nusrat Bhutto Colony near Shahrah-i-Noor Jahan came to know that four boys fell into the drain. The people first tried on their own to retrieve them and later called the police and local administration for help.

"The police called the search and rescue unit of the fire department which was later joined by Edhi volunteers," said an area police official. "Within a few minutes of the incident a boy was rescued alive. He was unconscious but out of danger and shifted to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for treatment."

He said a couple of hours later rescuers found the bodies of two boys. "The search for the fourth one is still on." He said the exact cause behind the incident was not yet clear. But some witnesses told the police that the boys had fallen into the nullah after an already-cracked concrete slab had broken.

He said the police had spotted the exact point where the children met the tragic incident.

"The darkness and heavy flow of sewage hindered the rescue operation for the search of the fourth boy," he said.

The names of the victims could not be immediately ascertained.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 10/04/2019)

SC summons mayor, others on plea to clear Nehr-e-Khayam

The Supreme Court (SC) wrapped up on Friday the case regarding commercial activity on military land near Do Talwar in Karachi, after it was informed by the Attorney-General that the permission for commercial activity had been cancelled.

A two-member-bench, headed by Justice Gulzar Ahmed and comprising Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhel, was hearing the plea pertaining to constructions on military land near Do Talwar.

A day earlier, the court had summoned a report from the attorney-general regarding the implementation of its orders. AG Khan submitted the report in court on Friday, in which he maintained that they were cancelling the permission for commercial activity on the said land. He also assured the court that the commercial construction of any kind would not be allowed on the land, which would be used for the correct purposes.

The court concluded the plea after taking on record the AG's statement. The plea had originally been filed by residents of the area, who had complained that two acres of land had been allotted for commercial purposes.

Nehr-e-Khayam

The same bench issued notices to Karachi Mayor Waseem Akhtar, Sindh Advocate-General and others in a case for protection of parks and removal of illegal occupants from Nehr-e-Khayam – a storm water drain in the city's upscale Clifton area.

The two-member bench was hearing the plea filed by a private organisation at the Supreme Court's Karachi registry. The petitioner's counsel argued that more than 12 schools and other businesses, including Indus Academy, Humayun Studios, Arts Bar and others were being run on residential plots in Clifton.

The illegal occupation from Nehr-e-Khayam hadn't been removed yet, adding that at least the government plots, which haven't been illegally occupied yet, should be protected. The parks and grounds could be protected from being occupied by planting trees and greenery, the counsel argued.

The court issued notices to Karachi Mayor Waseem Akhtar, Sindh Advocate-General and others after hearing the arguments and sought replies from the parties.

Building ownership dispute

The SC directed the Board of Revenue's (BoR) senior member to complete their investigations within a month regarding the dispute over the ownership of Moosa Building located on Akbar Road.

The counsel, representing Irfan who claims to be the owner of the building, argued that his client had bought the building in 2010, while the same was leased in 2015 through his fake signatures and CNIC. The building has 33 residential apartments and 18 shops. The sub-ordinate courts have also announced the verdict in his favour.

The BoR's senior member asked for one month's time to carry out the investigations. The court accepted his request and ordered him to submit the report within a month.

Bail granted

In a separate case, the same bench accepted the bail plea of Fazal Mola, who was accused of smuggling 250 kilograms of Hashish. The court ordered the accused Fazal Mola to submit Rs500,000 as surety.

The accused's counsel, Advocate Shaukat Hayat, argued that the case hadn't proceeded for the last five years, and he should therefore be released on bail. The accused, Mola, was arrested five years ago from Landhi.
(By Nasir Butt The Express Tribune, 04, 11/05/2019)

Sindh CM vows to make Centre pay its share for Greater Karachi Sewerage Plan

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the federal government has backed out of its commitment to share 50% of the total expenditure of the Greater Karachi Sewerage Plan (S-III) which is an injustice with the people of Sindh.

He said that for the interest of the people of Karachi, he would fight to ensure the Centre keeps its commitment.

This he said on Monday while presiding over a meeting regarding completion of S-III project at Chief Minister's House.

Briefing the CM, Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani said that the S-III project was aimed at improving environmental and sanitation conditions of Karachi through a well-integrated system of collection, treatment and disposal of sewage. He added that the existing sewage disposal system lacked treatment facilities and requires conveyance network to divert sewage to the treatment plants which is currently being disposed into the sea.

Planning and Development Chairperson Naheed Shah said that the project was approved by the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) for Rs7.98 billion in September 2007 under which the federal government had to share 50% of the cost of the project and the remaining 50% was to be borne by the provincial government.

The scheme was revised and approved by ECNEC at Rs36.11 billion on February 7, 2018. The project has two components which include the Lyari River Basin of Rs21.31 billion and Malir River Basin of Rs14.799 billion.

The scope of the S-III project has been enhanced in the revised version and that's why its cost has increased. The project encompasses the transmission of flowing sewage in Lyari and Malir River Basin through underground RCC conduit and its treatment at the sewage treatment plants, before its ultimate disposal into the sea.

In Malir and Lyari Rivers Basin, along with enhancement and construction of treatment plants, Malir Trunk Sewer, Lyari Trunk Sewer, upgradation and capacity enhancement of sewage treatment plant at Haroonabad SITE from 51 to 100 MGD will also be done. Upgradation and capacity enhancement of sewage treatment plant at Maripur from 54 to 180 MGD and construction of new sewage treatment plant at Korangi of 180 MGD is also included in the plan.

Murad was informed that the rehabilitation of Treatment Plant-III (TP-III) for 77 MGD has been completed. Five different packages of Sewage Transmission are complete for the most part. The contract package of LS-1, LS-2 & LS-III of 13.169km were awarded in March. In case of the contract package of TP-1, 55% of the rehabilitation phase and 12% of stage-II expansion works has been completed.

Malir River Basin

The contract packages of MS-1 to MS-III for sewerage transmission, for an overall length of 14.950km, have been advertised and its bid evaluation reports have been posted on the website of Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority.

The contract packages of MS-4 to MS-6, for sewerage transmission of 10.091km, have also been advertised and the bids received have been sent to the procurement committee for evaluation report. The bid for contract package TP-IV on design, build and operate basis has been cancelled and now retendering is being made on construction contract basis.

The CM said that Lyari River Basin, where 77 MGD was being treated, should be treated further and provided to SITE for industrial purposes. He also directed Chief Secretary Mumtaz Shah to talk to the Public Private Partnership Unit and work out a plan to invite private partners for tertiary treatment of effluent for industrial consumption. Murad said that with the completion of S-III, there would be clean coastal water which would improve the overall health and hygiene conditions and thus boost fishery exports. It would also help in conservation of marine ecology.

The meeting was attended by Finance Secretary Najam Shah, Local Government Secretary Khalid Hyder Shah, Planning and Development Member Services Khalid Mahmood, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) acting Managing Director Ghulam Qadir, Hanif Baloch PD S-III and other related officers.

Excise meeting

While presiding over another meeting, Murad directed the excise and taxation department to introduce readable digital cards in place of vehicles registration books.

He said that the registration books of vehicles have become obsolete around the world. "We should take the benefits that modern technology offers and introduce readable cards on the pattern of banks so that their details can be read during checking," he said.

Excise Minister Mukesh Chawla told the CM that the excise and taxation department was given a recovery target of Rs72,872 million which they would achieve by the end of this month.

The department collects seven taxes, including motor vehicle tax, excise enactment, infrastructure cess, cotton fee, professional tax, property tax and entertainment duty.

The meeting was attended by Excise Secretary Raheem Shaikh, Finance Secretary Najam Shah, Narcotics Director-General (DG) Shoaib Siddiqui, Excise DG Shabir Shaikh and others.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 04/06/2019)

Environmentalists urge Centre to reconsider decision to delete S-III from PSDP

The National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH) expressed serious dismay over the deletion of the Greater Karachi Sewage Treatment Plan (S-III) from the new Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). The forum said that due to the absence of the scheme, the marine and coastal environment of Karachi would continue to be harmed by untreated sewage that is discharged into the sea every day.

In a statement issued on the eve of World Environment Day, NFEH President Naeem Qureshi said that the federal government should not back out from its solemn commitment to share half of the cost of S-III project as this scheme is vital for reversing the environmental degradation faced by Karachi.

He said that environmentalists in Karachi, who were all set to mark World Environment Day, would surely be dejected after learning about this latest government decision. "A government, which conducted a countrywide tree plantation campaign and came to power to fight the issues of environmental pollution and climate change, should not delete the S-III scheme, which is solely meant for safeguarding the Karachi's marine ecosystem and environment," said Qureshi.

He said that the Sindh chief minister had rightly pointed out in the recent meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC) that the deletion of the S-III from the PSDP was tantamount to penalising the people of Karachi.

Qureshi said that the continued financial support for schemes like S-III would simply prove that the federal government's claim that it was genuinely concerned about the issue of environmental degradation in Karachi and was also taking practical steps to reverse it. "But when support and commitment are absent, then it simply means that the government is doing mere lip service," he said.

"On the one hand, our PM seems very concerned about Karachi's environment when he emphasises on adopting a new master plan for the city and promoting urban forestry, but on the other hand his government altogether deletes a vital scheme like S-III from the PSDP". He added that the PM should know the issue of environmental degradation in the metropolis could never be reversed if 450 MGD of sewage continues to be dumped into the sea without any treatment.

Another massive source of environmental pollution was the discharge of untreated industrial effluents from industrial estates of the city, said Qureshi, adding, "Equally damaging is the undue delay in completing the scheme to build combined effluent treatment plants at industrial estates of the city".

Qureshi said, "Now, with the S-III scheme altogether dropped from the federal developmental plan, it is feared that serious deterioration of Karachi's environment would become irreversible". He called upon the related environmental activists, researchers, scientists, and like-minded non-governmental organisations in the city to come together and jointly raise their voice in favour of the S-III scheme and demand its restoration the new annual developmental plan.

(By PPI The Express Tribune, 05, 05/06/2019)

PTI MNA leads rally outside KWSB head office

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) MNA from NA-247 Aftab Siddiqui on Friday led a peaceful protest rally of the residents of his constituency outside the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) head office against water shortage in his constituency and demanded a third-party audit of the water board.

Addressing participants of the rally, he demanded of the federal government to intervene in the affairs of Sindh as the provincial government was taking "undue advantage" of the 18th Amendment.

Referring to Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani's point of view that there was no immediate solution to the water crisis in Karachi, Mr Siddiqui asked the minister if he was only elected nine months ago. He pointed out that Saeed Ghani's government had been in power for over 11 years in Sindh and demanded that he ought to resign.

The PTI leader said that today's protest was only a "trailer" and the full film regarding shortage of water in the constituency was yet to be screened. He recalled that Hub Dam was filled to capacity, but its distribution was not just as no one was aware where its water was being used.

He said that under a 1998 agreement, the water board was supposed to supply nine million gallons of water to the constituency, but only three million gallons was being supplied to the locality.

He said this was only a peaceful demonstration but if they failed to understand this time, next time they would show them how a protest was staged.

Speaking on the occasion, PTI MPA Khurram Sherzaman said the citizens of Karachi were being "punished" under a calculated move and warned that if Karachi was not given its due rights, they would take the protest rally to the CM House.

The water board had become a den of corruption and nepotism and Karachi was being deprived of its due share of water forcibly, he said.

If the government took care of the water problem immediately, it would be better for it, he added.

Another MPA, Shahzad Qureshi, asked the Sindh government to stop fooling people. If the water issue was not resolved, the next target would be the offices of the local government minister and then the CM House, he warned.

Ramzan Ghanchi said that for the past 17 years, his locality (Lyari) was facing water problem where water was supplied from tankers, but not through pipelines.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 15/06/2019)