

NEWSCLIPPINGS

JANUARY TO JUNE 2019

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

Two Chinese firms hired to lift garbage in city

The City administration launched a three-day cleanliness campaign on Thursday in those parts of the city where garbage was disposed of by the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB).



Official sources said that a decision to this effect was taken at a meeting chaired by Commissioner Iftikhar Shallwani in his office.

They said the meeting was also attended by representatives of SSWMB, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, district municipal corporations, deputy commissioners concerned and both the Chinese companies awarded contract for garbage collection in districts South, West, Malir and East.

The sources said that it was decided in the meeting that Changyie Kangjie Sanitation Company would collect waste in districts South and East districts, while Hangzhou Jinjiang Company would manage garbage in districts Malir and West.

The two contractors were told in the meeting that they were bound to carry out manual sweeping, mechanical sweeping and mechanical washing of the streets and roads.

They were also told that they were responsible for lifting of garbage from door to door free of cost in their assigned districts and later its transfer to the designated stations for further disposal into the landfill sites.

The companies are also bound to put the garbage containers and trash cans at various spots in their respective districts.

The sources said that the meeting decided that a three-day cleanliness campaign would be started in selected areas of the four districts in consultation with the respective deputy commissioners.

They said that the commissioner asked the deputy commissioners to monitor the work of lifting and disposal of garbage as per contract made with the companies being carried out.

The sources said that it was also decided that the deputy commissioners would submit their respective reports on the performance of the two Chinese companies with their comments to the commissioner in next meeting to be held next week.

They said that the deputy commissioners' reports and comments would be forwarded to the Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah.

350 more shops razed

The Anti-encroachment Estate & Enforcement department of the Karachi Development Authority continued its grand anti-encroachment operation on its land in Korangi No 5 ½ and razed 350 more shops illegally constructed on drains.

Over 300 shops constructed illegally on KDA land and drains in the area were demolished on Wednesday when the grand anti-encroachment operation to retrieve illegally occupied city land was launched in the neighbourhood.

Officials sources said that the operation against encroachments and illegal building constructed on the KDA land was continue under the supervision of Director General Samiuddin Siddiqui.

They said that Director Estate and Enforcement Dildar Hussain Shah was monitoring the operation.
(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 05/01/2019)

Setting up of six garbage stations, master plan for water distribution in Karachi recommended

The Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation in Sindh recommended the establishment of six garbage transfer stations on scientific lines, a master plan for water distribution in the provincial capital and sought timely completion of treatment and effluent plants.



In its final progress report, placed before the Supreme Court, the commission, headed by retired Justice Ameer Hani Muslim, made several recommendations, including proper disposal of garbage, improvement in water distribution and sanitation, revamping of environmental body and establishment of a centralised complaint cell in Karachi to address complaints about civic issues.

The commission, which was established in January last year, and is set to complete its tenure on Jan 15, in its final report said that the recommendations were based on its directives passed from time to time and the undertakings/commitments given by various departments, agencies and individuals.

Judicial commission places final progress report, making various recommendations, before Supreme Court

Solid waste

The commission suggested the establishment of six garbage transfer stations in Karachi on scientific lines and said that this scheme had been included in the annual development programme (ADP) of 2018-19 and required a follow-up and implementation by the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB).

Another scheme about development and transformation of landfill sites to meet international standards has also been made part of ADP 2018-19 and the provincial government needed to identify and set up such landfill sites for all districts in Sindh for proper disposal of solid waste.

The SSWMB has to carry out waste-to-energy projects through the ADP schemes during the current fiscal year, it added.

The report further said that the SSWMB would be activated in other divisional headquarters of Sindh during the current financial year.

Water and sanitation

The commission observed that the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board must prepare a water distribution and sanitation master plan to meet the existing and future needs of the city.

The existing water supply schemes needed to be rehabilitated and the government should come up with a phased plan within three months. Improving the quality of drinking water by rehabilitating and updating the existing water filtration plants through close monitoring and the task of monitoring may be assigned to the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources after proper evaluation and fulfilment of formalities, it added.

The commission urged the provincial and federal governments to address the issues related to K-IV on a priority basis and said that water losses, which consumed about a quarter of Karachi's total water resources, must be checked while flow meters at all important water supply stations must be in place by June 30.

It also underlined the need for timely completion of a number of water supply schemes in the provincial metropolis and recommended setting up a centralised complaint cell at the commissioner's office to address public complaints regarding all civic issues in Karachi.

The final report further stated that the completion/rehabilitation of treatment plant-I (TP-I) and TP-III must be completed by July and December 2019, respectively, and TP-IV be completed as per schedule (at the end of 2020).

The commission also asked Defence Housing Authority to complete a 2MGD treatment plant at Seaview by April and to ensure that no untreated waste was discharged in the sea after the completion of the said TP.

The TP-V is committed to be installed by the Karachi Port Trust within two years near the Mai Kolachi Bypass and the combined effluent treatment plant at Nooriabad SITE should be completed by June 2019 while similar effluent plants at SITE in Hyderabad and Sukkur must be completed by December 2019, subject to budgetary allocations.

Environment

The commission recommended a complete overhauling of the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency by strengthening its physical, technical and academic capacity. The Sepa DG has suggested the establishment of climate change, research and development and law enforcement wings, it added.

The provincial government should take steps to establish environmental laboratories, set up Sepa offices at district level and Sepa must complete the survey of all industrial areas.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 15, 11/01/2019)

Govt may cancel Chinese firm's contract to lift garbage from West, Malir districts

The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) is learnt to have decided to issue a final 15-day show-cause notice to the Chinese company tasked with the disposal of solid waste in districts West and Malir for rescinding the contract due to the company's poor performance.



Well-placed sources told Dawn on Sunday that the notice to the Hangzhou Jinjiang Group Sanitation Services Company Ltd, which was awarded the contract in Oct 2017 for front-end collection and disposal of garbage in the city's two districts, would be third in row as earlier notices were issued on July 18 and Dec 5, 2018, respectively, for unsatisfactory performance.

They said that over 2,400 tonnes garbage was generated daily in West district, while the contracting firm was collecting only half of it before it suspended its operation a week ago.

The SSWMB is going to issue a final show-cause notice to the Hangzhou Jinjiang Group

A spokesperson for the SSWMB said that the final notice to the Chinese firm would be issued in a couple of days as it was still under legal process and approval from the competent authority.

Violation of agreement

She said that the contracting firm did not make investment for solid waste management as per the agreement. "They inducted only 40 per cent machinery and 20 per cent staff", she added.

The spokesperson said that the performance of the contracting firm had never been satisfactory as there were always heaps of garbage in the two districts.

She said that the SSWMB was managing the disposal of garbage in the vicinity through alternative resources with the assistance of the district municipal committee-West to ease out the situation.

They said that the Supreme Court-mandated water commission had also taken notice of the low performance of the company and called its chief executive officer for explanation.

SSWMB Managing Director A. D. Sanani told Dawn that the Chinese firm did not perform as per standards set in the contract. "It also failed to bring required machinery and gear for solid municipal waste despite assurance before the water commission," he added.

The sources said that the contracting firm had requested the water commission for one-month time for improving its working in March, but it did not show any substantial improvement.

They said that the door-to-door component of front end collection of solid municipal waste was the core item of the contract with the Chinese firm.

The sources said that the contracting firm was required to do extensive and unceasing operations to removal of garbage from the doorsteps of people and sweeping of main roads, streets, lanes, footpaths and open spaces, and to bring the garbage to dustbins for further disposal to the 500-acre Jam Chakro landfill site, some 30-35 kilometres from the city's centre.

They said that no proper mechanism for public awareness for proper garbage disposal devised by the contractor as per agreement, causing poor waste management.

The sources said that the machinery, vehicles, equipment, containers and bins were very short of quantity as per the agreement with the contractor.

They said that the containers and bins were also short of the specified quantity mentioned in the contract and their unplanned placement on different places also increased the severity of the issue.

Garbage lifting not even begins in four islands

The sources said, the contractor did not start its operation in four islands — Shamspar, Baba, Bhit and Salihabad — within the limits of West district as per the agreement.

According to a representative of the Chinese firm, the operation in the islands could not start due to issue of transportation of municipal solid waste from there.

He said that the firm suspended its operation due to non-payment of its dues to the provincial authorities. "We will resume our operation, once our dues are cleared", he said.

Residents of West district said that piles of garbage were playing havoc with their lives as manual sweeping of primary roads, secondary main roads, streets and narrow lanes was not carried out for days.

Unsatisfactory performance in Malir

As for Malir, the sources said that the company's performance was also unsatisfactory as it did not meet the required standards at any stage since the execution of the contract.

They said that there was a huge shortage of at least 200 sanitary workers in the Malir district, while most of the machinery of the company was out of order.

The city's solid waste management was extricated from the hands of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation by the provincial government in 2014 through the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Act-2013 adopted by the Sindh Assembly.

The SSWMB contracted out garbage collection, taking it to the landfill sites, as well as sweeping streets, to a Chinese company for two districts, East and South, and to another Chinese company for Malir and West, out of total six districts of the city for a period of seven years.

The garbage collection and disposal of districts Central and Korangi is being carried out by their respective DMCs.
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 01/04/2019)

Call to integrate donkey cart owners in solid waste management system

Speakers at a programme organised on Wednesday at a local hotel highlighted the critical role donkeys and their owners play in the management of the city's solid waste, while expressing concern over the health risks communities and animals associated with the job had to face.

They also shared a number of recommendations to help improve the situation, one of which pertained to the integration of these 'workers' into the city's waste management system, recognition of marginalised communities and enforcement of animal welfare laws.

The programme titled 'Silent helpers — Role of donkey carts in waste management system of Karachi' was organised by Brooke Pakistan, the local chapter of a worldwide non-governmental charity organisation aiming at ensuring working equine animals get the living and working conditions they deserve and support livelihoods of poor communities.

The event opened with a briefing by retired Brigadier Rashid Siddique, the chairman of the NGO's board of trustees.

The organisation, he said, was very much keen to work with the solid waste management system authority in Karachi. The collaboration, he said, would help alleviate the sufferings of marginalised communities and animals engaged in refuse collection and transportation business.

Giving a presentation on the key findings of a study focusing on the role of donkeys and their owners in the city's solid waste management system, Naeem Abbas representing Brooke, said that only 40 per cent out of the total 12,000 tonnes of solid waste generated in the city daily was removed by local authorities. The rest was taken care of by the poor and their donkeys.

"Most of the solid waste in Pakistan is still managed by marginalised and unrecognised communities that collect garbage at household levels. The business is supporting livelihoods of 25,000 people in Karachi alone," he told the audience.

The majority of waste pickers (64pc) were below the age of 18. Of them, 75pc were below the age of 14. Twenty-six per cent of solid waste dumping sites within the city were unofficial.

"The health and hygiene of waste collectors is at high risk as they are exposed to many toxic substances and chemicals," he said, while suggesting integration of cart owners with the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB).

Former MPA Mehfooz Yar Khan, the chief guest who spoke on behalf of Karachi mayor, appreciated services of the non-governmental organisation especially with regard to the lives of donkey cart owners and their animals.

"The local government will become the voice for the needy donkey owning communities whose role in cleaning the city is undoubtedly significant," he noted.

Sharing similar sentiments, Asjad Mehmood of SSWMB gave an assurance on behalf his department to integrate donkey cart owners into the formal system and do the needful for the rehabilitation of these communities.

Mahmood Cheema, the country head of International Union for Conservation of Nature, called for collaboration among various stakeholders for compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"Cart donkeys are not only managing waste in the city but also supporting to protect the ecosystem. There is a need to work collaboratively instead of working in silos for the compliance of SDGs," he remarked.

Expressing her concern over the involvement of children in refuse collection business in large numbers, Zahida Jamali of Unicef said that this problem highlighted in the study needed immediate attention of authorities concerned.

These children should be in schools and enjoying their childhood instead of working as labourers to support their families, she noted.

Other speakers included representatives from World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan, World Health Organisation and HANDS. They supported the concept of 'One Health and One Welfare', which meant that the health and welfare of humans and animals was interconnected and linked with the environment.

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 05/04/2019)

Karachi donkeys' role

NO one would argue that Karachi doesn't have a serious garbage crisis. The sticking point, however, is how to solve the megacity's solid waste management problem. Sindh's political class has so far responded to the issue in two ways: implement large internationally funded projects spearheaded by foreign and local consultants, or outsource this essential public service to private foreign and local firms. Both methods have proved disappointing, costly and unsustainable, as they neglect meaningful engagement with civil society, academia and impacted communities, and fail to account for the existing undocumented infrastructure of garbage collection. But another solution, one that acknowledges ground realities as opposed to taking a top-down approach, was recently proposed by the local chapter of an equine welfare charity. Highlighting the vital role Karachi's donkeys play in moving the city's

refuse, particularly in underserved areas, as well as the risks to donkeys and their owners, it proposed not only providing adequate support and services to these informal workers, but also integrating them with Karachi's municipal and solid waste management authorities.

The suggestion is sound, as it manages to address several overlapping issues at once: providing public services to vulnerable communities; regularising informal livelihoods; and building a culture for animal welfare. Tens of thousands of Karachi's households rely on the operations of donkey carts. Relatively small-scale interventions such as veterinary care for working donkeys, social safety nets for their owners, and training and resources to limit exposure to health risks, can mean the difference between sustainable livelihoods and deeper poverty. This, of course, is only one part of the equation to resolving Karachi's garbage crisis. But, given the pollution-linked and vector-borne diseases associated with it, policymakers must acknowledge that accountable, responsive governance is not brought about through flashy infrastructure projects alone. A pro-poor strategy that recognises the needs of marginalised communities can be both efficient and humane.

(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 07/04/2019)

Three factory workers die after falling into chicken feed pit filled with toxic waste

Three labourers died after falling into a pit carrying toxic chemical and animal waste for producing chicken feed in the Ibrahim Hyderi area on Monday, officials said.

The incident occurred when one of the labourers fell in the pit and two others went in to save him. However, they all fell unconscious and slipped into the pit and died of inhaling toxic fumes.

"This is an industrial unit which produces chicken feed," said Inspector Syed Salahuddin, the SHO of the Ibrahim Hyderi police station. "It appears to be an accident but we have detained the factory owner for questioning. If any negligence is found on part of the company's management, the law would take its due course."

He said that all the victims, aged between 35 and 40, originally hailed from Chitral. "They have been identified as Iqbal Deen, Zar Wali and Darwesh. The bodies were moved to the Edhi morgue after medico-legal formalities at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre."

Unknown assailants shoot a former traffic cop to death upon resistance to robbery bid

The incident came as a grim reminder of a similar episode in April 2015 when six people had died after inhaling toxic gases emitting from an underground tank containing a chemical substance being used in making pickle in a food factory set up in a residential area of Korangi.

In 2016, three workers had died while two others were rescued after they fell into a chemical tank of a textile factory in Bin Qasim industrial area.

In 2017 four workers had met the same fate after inhaling toxic fumes in an underground tank of an industrial unit in the same industrial area.

Ex-policeman shot dead in Baldia

A former official of the traffic police was shot dead by unidentified assailants at his restaurant in Baldia Town.

"Two youngsters on a motorbike pulled up outside a roadside restaurant near Pakora Chowk in Baldia Town," said an official at the Ittehad Town police station. "One of them entered the facility, pulled out a pistol and demanded cash and valuables from owner Mohammad Siddiq. As the owner resisted, he fired multiple shots leaving him dead on the spot. The armed men then managed to speed away."

Two other people also sustained bullet wounds and were shifted to the Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi where they were said to be stable and out of danger.

The deceased man, he said, was a retired sub-inspector of the Karachi traffic police and running his restaurant for the past few years in the area.

Woman slaughtered in Sachal

In Sachal area, a woman was killed allegedly by her brother-in-law over some monetary dispute.

The area police said that 44-year-old Nasreen was found lying in a pool of blood inside her home. Area people informed the police about the incident.

"The woman's throat was slit by some sharp metal," said Inspector Javed Abro, the SHO of the Sachal police station. "The woman's husband is out of the city and she was living with her three children."

He said that eyewitnesses' and family members' statements suggested that her brother-in-law Umeed Ali came to see her early in the morning. They had some monetary dispute. Their arguments turned violent when Ali hit her in the head with a stick and then slit her throat with a sharp-edged weapon. He then managed to escape, the area SHO said.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 15, 09/04/2019)

SSWMB to work on 'safe' disposal of medical waste

Geo-mapping of hospitals, clinics, laboratories, blood banks and other related institutions has been commenced in all districts across Sindh in order to gather data that will help the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) collect medical waste.

This was informed in a meeting on Sunday presided by the SSWMB Managing Director Dr AD Sanjani, in which a delegation from the Sindh Health Care Commission (SHCC) gave a detailed report on the proper disposal of medical waste.

The SHCC representatives also informed that a strategy to adopt protective measures to prevent pollution and diseases resulting from medical waste from all hospitals, clinics and other institutions was being prepared, which would not only protect the staff and those associated with it from diseases but also prevent environmental pollution as the waste will be disposed of far away from the city.

In the first stage, they informed, work will be started from the larger hospitals of Sindh. The SSWMB staff will weigh the medical waste, assess its properties and then transport it to a facility located at the landfill site for destruction. They will be provided coloured bags so that the waste can be kept separate as per its nature and properties. Also, the staff will be provided gloves and other protective items.

The meeting was attended by SHCC representatives Dr Faiza Erum Bhutto and Dr Amir Hussain, SSWMB Secretary Nadir Khan, landfill site director Sohail Khan, Global Testing Service (GTS) Director Ali Raza and others.

Dr Sanjani, assuring his full cooperation, said that one part of the land fill site will be assigned for destroying the medical waste. He directed the relevant officers to present a report in this regard and to provide technical guidance to the staff.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 15/04/2019)

Industrialists seek govt support for waste treatment

Sharing their grievances at an Earth Day programme held on Monday, representatives of industries sought government support in setting up effluent treatment plants as, they said, majority of small and medium-size industrial units neither had the resources nor space to establish such facilities.

The event was organised by the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) at the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (Kati) office.

Welcoming the guests, Mohammad Danish Khan representing Kati briefed the participants about the history of the association and its contribution to the economy.

Being the largest industrial association in the country, Kati represented around 4,500 industrial units, he said, adding that 35 percent of leather goods were routed from this area for export.

‘Presently, Kati is contributing [millions] to the national exchequer daily,’ he said, emphasising the need for collaboration for the cause of environment.

During the course of the programme, a detailed update on the problems being faced by the industrial units in Korangi was given according to which small and medium-size units were unable to implement the directives of the Supreme Court mandated water commission, requiring establishment of effluent treatment plants in their respective jurisdictions.

These units, it was claimed, did not have resources and sufficient space to set up such facilities.

There was also a call from industrialists that the government remove hurdles and make procedures easier so that business could grow. There was a specific reference to ‘official delays’ in granting environmental NOCs and it was suggested that some clauses of the Sindh Environmental Protection Act 2014 should be revisited through a committee comprising relevant stakeholders.

Masood Naqvi, former Kati chairman, spoke about the different aspects of environmental degradation and the constraints being faced by industrialists.

He underscored the need of a proper and centralised mechanism for garbage collection and its disposal. Former Kati chairman Gulzar Feroz urged Sepa to revisit the Sindh Environmental Quality Standards and make them ‘realistic and practical’.

Director General Sepa Naeem Mughal highlighted agency’s role and the environmental challenges being faced in the province.

‘This year’s Earth Day theme ‘Protect Our Species’ draws attention towards the rapid extinction of species which is directly linked to human activities,’ he said, emphasising that everyone had a role and responsibility towards the environment.

Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Development Nawabzada Taimur Talpur expressed the government’s commitment towards people’s welfare and environment.

‘The government is ready to address each and every genuine grievance but won’t tolerate violation of law,’ he said, while seconding the opinion that a close liaison between the government and industry was required.

The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board would be asked to provide an update on the status of garbage transfer stations, he said.
(By Our Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 23/04/2019)

Officials asked to ensure cleanliness in city

Sindh Chief Secretary Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah has asked Commissioner of Karachi Dr Iftikhar Shallwani to monitor cleanliness, including garbage disposal in the metropolis, ensuring that each and every district of the city should be clean properly.

He also asked the commissioner and deputy commissioners to ensure that human resources, machinery and equipment are properly utilised under the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB).

The chief secretary also said that he would personally monitor the activities of SSWMB.

The chief secretary, who was presiding over a meeting held here on Tuesday to review the performance of SSWMB, also directed deputy commissioners to keep their respective districts clean on priority basis.

At the meeting the chief secretary advised the secretary of services to provide relevant staff to the SSWMB in consultation with the MD of the board.

(By The Newspaper’s Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 25/04/2019)

Mayor calls for removal of garbage from drains

City Mayor Wasim Akhtar said on Friday that the municipal administration would not be able to clean storm-water drains completely until removal of all garbage in the city by the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB). ‘If the storm-water drains are not cleaned, it could lead to a big problem in the upcoming monsoon season,’ he added.

The mayor expressed these views while inspecting different uplift works in District Central and during a visit of the Karachi Institute of Kidney Diseases (KIKD).

He said the KMC was cleaning 40 major drains in the city; however, the situation remained the same due to nonlifting of all garbage which was being dumped in the drains again.

Therefore, the mayor said, the SSWMB must remove all garbage generated in the city so those drains could be cleaned completely.

He said hospitals in the city were in bad condition due to wrong government policies depriving people of better healthcare facilities.

During his visit to the KIKD, he said the institute was established with the cooperation of the city’s well-off people where 75 patients received dialysis facility free of cost on a daily basis, adding that ‘we want to increase the number of machines here for which we have already made an appeal to such people again’ Digging up roads The city administration has warned civic and utility departments not to dig up streets and roads without obtaining permission from the deputy commissioner concerned.

Official sources told Dawn that the contractors of the civic and utility departments would be booked in criminal cases if they dug up the roads without the city administration’s prior permission.

They said that a high-level meeting with Commissioner Iftikhar Ali Shallwani in the chair was held to review the issue to dig up streets and roads in the city and decided to take action against the unauthorised digging of roads.

Officials said representatives of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB), K-Electric, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), Karachi Development Authority (KDA), cantonment boards and deputy commissioners of all districts participated in the meeting.

They said that it was decided in the meeting that the utility departments concerned would pay the cost of road repairs before road cutting or digging.

The officials said the commissioner also expressed grave concern over the digging up of University Road.

(By Our Staff Reporter Dawn, 16, 27/04/2019)

Supplemental waste

A recent report in this newspaper highlighted how 76 government colleges in Sindh obtained a combined Rs150 million in additional funding in FY2017-18 despite only having a few dozen students enrolled in each. The funds were approved without much of the required due diligence or oversight.

One example is of the Government Girls Degree College Punjabi Club in Karachi, which was given an additional Rs3.8 million above its approved budget of Rs5.47 million. The college only has 48 students enrolled. Shaheed Benazirabad's Government SS College was given Rs5.5 million on top of the Rs6.9 million allocated budget in the same fiscal year, despite a modest 333 enrolled students. For comparison, the Government Degree College Gulshan-e-Iqbal's revised allocation helped double its budget to Rs5 million, despite the college having slightly more than 4,000 students on roll. The PECHS Government College for Women only increased its allocated budget from Rs3.2 million to Rs5 million in 2015-16, from Rs7.3 million to Rs11.3 million in 2016-17 and from Rs11 million to Rs11.5 million in 2017-18 despite having around 3,000 students enrolled in each of these years.

While an inquiry is now ongoing, it is quite clear that the additional allocations were all over the place, and so was the criterion, if any. Also of interest is the fact that in many cases, the additional funds were far greater than the claimed additional expenses against which they were allocated. The story is an unfortunate reflection of the many problems plaguing Pakistan's education system. While many parents go to court to protest the unaffordable fees in private schools, public schools, which are affordable, are being misallocated funds which, if properly audited, could be used to drastically improve the standard of education and give students and parents a viable alternative. It is not that public education doesn't need more funding — it emphatically does. But education managers also need to use the funds already available more responsibly.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 03/05/2019)

Mayor asks CM to stop SSWMB from dumping garbage into drains

City Mayor Wasim Akhtar on Friday asked Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to direct the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board to ensure removal of garbage in a timely manner as its dumping in the storm water drains would create havoc during the upcoming monsoon season.

In a letter to the CM, the mayor said that unfortunately about 30 per cent of solid waste generated daily in the city reached the designated landfill sites and the remaining was thrown into the storm water drains due to absence of appropriate mechanism by the SSWMB, which was created to establish 'Integrated Solid Waste Management System across the province'.

The mayor wrote to the CM: 'Keeping in view of the above and in the best interest of the smooth flow of water and to avert any untoward situation during the upcoming rains, instructions may be given to the SSWMB to ensure removal of garbage in timely manner and also discourage the dumping of garbage in nullahs'.

Talking to Dawn, he pointed out that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation had initiated the cleaning and de-silting of major and minor drains during the financial year 2018-19 on the orders of the Supreme Court and funds for the task were allocated by the provincial government as 'Grant-in-Aid'. He said that the storm water drains which were being cleaned by the municipal government had been filled with garbage due to continuous dumping of garbage in them.

The mayor said that the SSWMB must take measures to prevent dumping of garbage by people in storm water drains.

He said that the investment made for cleaning of the storm water drains would go into the drain if immediate measures were not taken to discourage people from dumping garbage in drains.

Earlier on May 16, he had asked the CM to direct the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) to take immediate measures to save the city from further deterioration and damage to newly constructed roads in different areas of the city.

Faulty sewerage system He wrote to the CM that the situation could get further worsen in the coming monsoon season because of faulty sewerage system.

The mayor in his letter said that the investment made by the provincial government, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and District Municipal Committees on construction, repair and maintenance of the city roads would face delays if no immediate measure was taken to correct the situation.

He said that all storm water drains in Karachi were being used as sewerage drains and have no capacity to drain the storm water.

While talking to Dawn, SSWMB managing director A. D. Sanjani conceded that garbage was being dumped in to drains by people in parts of the city.

He, however, categorically denied that any contractor of the SSWMB threw garbage in any of the drains. 'It is impossible because payment to the contractors is made on the slips they get from the landfill site after dumping the garbage there'.

As for the issue of the garbage disposal in District West, Mr Sanjani said that over 2,200 tonnes of garbage was generated daily in the district, while the contracting firm was collecting only half of it before it suspended its operation in March.

'We have made stopgap arrangements and collecting garbage through big vehicles and making all-out efforts to clear the backlog,' he said.

The SSWMB chief said that over 2,500 tonnes of garbage was lifted during the past 24 hours.

(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 15, 25/05/2019)

Hospital waste recycling

The Lahore city administration has moved against recycling of hospital waste, also known as bio-hazardous and infectious waste. The action against those involved in recycling of the highly dangerous practice started the other day, and raids are being conducted on factories engaged in recycling of the hazardous waste. The step is commendable. The need for such campaign was being long felt. During a raid on a factory, the raiding party found stocks of hospital waste being recycled for manufacturing baby plastic feeders, nipples, utensils, shopping bags and other such items. According to reports, so far five such factories have been raided and large amounts of hospital waste have been recovered. The seized hazardous waste has been shifted to a hospital for incineration. At some factories raiding parties faced resistance.

Since hospital waste is highly dangerous for human, animals and birds, these bio-hazardous waste materials are incinerated to protect living beings and the environment. Across the world every year, more than two million tonnes of hospital waste are generated. Given governmental apathy, corruption and lack of awareness about the hazardous nature of hospital waste in Third World countries, the possibility of unscrupulous elements recycling the hazardous waste into usable items cannot be ruled out.

Some hospital waste contains heavy metals which are very harmful to health. This and all hospital waste pose serious hazard to health, so they all are to be incinerated and even the residue left after incineration is to be buried in landfills to protect human health and the environment. Now there is no economical way to recycle hospital waste. The existing process is not worth the effort and the cost involved. The best way is incineration. We hope other provinces will follow suit and launch drives against recycling of hospital waste. So far we have heard nothing either about recycling of the dangerous waste and action against this practice from other provinces.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 29/06/2019)