

# NEWSCLIPPINGS

*JULY TO DECEMBER 2021*

## WATER SUPPLY



## Urban Resource Centre

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### Dangerous water supply

SOME half a dozen deaths of people infected with *Naegleria fowleri* — the lethal 'brain-eating' amoeba that thrives in freshwater sources — has prompted the Pakistan Medical Association to issue a warning to the public to take preventive measures. In the past few days, at least six people have died from this deadly illness, all of them in Karachi. One of the victims hailed from Balochistan while the rest were from the city. Though the number of deaths are relatively small, the PMA representatives fear that the actual number may be much higher since many cases tend to go unreported. *Naegleria fowleri* is usually found in freshwater reservoirs, such as those built for supplying water to domestic consumers, and is transmitted when contaminated water goes up the nose during ablution, washing or bathing. The amoeba enters the brain, causing meningoencephalitis, and is fatal in 95pc of cases. Symptoms can include body ache, high-grade fever, drowsiness, fainting and coma.

The PMA is right to raise the alarm since the emergence of cases indicates that the city's water supply is not adequately chlorinated, putting a large number of people at risk at a time when a pandemic is already testing their resilience. According to a recent report of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, 70pc of pumping stations supply water with either no chlorine or very low levels of it. The samples were collected from hydrants, reservoirs at University Road and Kidney Hill, two functional Dumlottee wells and pumping stations. This report belies the claim of KWSB officials that chlorine evaporates from the water supply lines. The authorities must immediately act on the warning of the medical authorities. Chlorination of water reservoirs is a relatively simple and cheap task that needs to be executed without any delay to prevent further loss of life from a lethal infection. If they do not, the number of cases will only grow in a city whose healthcare resources are already stretched to the limit.

(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 16/06/2021)

### Gulshan pipelines remain dry after three months

A collusion between top water board officials and the tanker mafia has created an artificial water crisis, leaving taps to run dry in several neighbourhoods of Karachi's Gulshan-e-Iqbal area.

The water crisis, that has been a bane for area residents for the past three months, also found no reprieve in the holy month of Ramadan.

According to water board engineers, speaking on conditions of anonymity, top officials have illegally redirected Gulshan's water supply to a nearby hydrant at Nipa Chowrangi. This has left residents at the mercy of expensive water tankers; with not a single drop being siphoned through the government pipelines

Although, based on the water rotation policy, the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) was supposed to hydrate these areas four days a week. The policy, however, was only seen to be implemented until the winters, while the onset of summers heralded disarray in the clockwork of the water board system, leaving the policy to fizzle out.

A survey conducted by The Express Tribune revealed that the severity of the water crisis varies in different parts of Gulshan-e-Iqbal. The areas where the situation is most severe are 13 D-1, 2, 3, Block-1 and Block-5; where even the area's mosques and imambargahs have received no pardon from the crisis. Owing to which, residents here are left with either the option to consume contaminated ground-water or buy water tankers that can burn a hole in most wallets.

KWSB supplies water to residential areas of the city through two of its departments: Water Trunk Main (WTM) and the local distribution department. WTM monitors and repairs bunk water supply line installed in the city and supplies water to the local distribution system on a rotation basis. The local distribution department then supplies water to residential places through its own water lines.

An engineer with the water board's local distribution department shared that the department provides water four days a week on a rotation basis.

"It is obligatory to provide water till one o'clock but only one to two hours of water is provided in the water trunk, which provides water to the residents living in the beginning of Gulshan, but not to the residents living at the end," alleged another engineer speaking on conditions of anonymity.

According to the KWSB engineers, the distribution system installed in Gulshan-e-Iqbal is mostly in good condition, with the exception of 13 D1-3, Baloch Goth lines. "But new lines are being installed there too with the funds of National Assembly member Alamgir Khan.

The development work in this regard will come to an end this week. Following which the water board could supply water from its system to other areas of Gulshan-e-Iqbal," he told.

Speaking to The Express Tribune the engineer further alleged that illegal connections have also been made in the bulk lines of the trunk main department with the connivance of water board engineers and police. All these illegal connections have been provided to commercial units. If these illegal connections were to be removed and transparency was established in the water hydrant system, the engineer said that it is likely that the water crisis in Gulshan-e-Iqbal would come to an end.

On the other hand, a representative of MD Water Board Media Cell corroborated that there is a clear gap in supply and demand of water in terms of the city's population. Acknowledging that the city is only being hydrated with a bare 45 per cent of its water need, the spokesperson said that the minister for local government and MD Water Board has directed all the concerned engineers of Water Board to ensure equitable supply of water and resolve the grievances of the citizens on a priority basis.

(By Syed Ashraf Ali The Express Tribune, 04, 02/07/2021)

### Water shortage

It is the season of animal sacrifice, it is the season of goat sacrifice, and it is the season of scapegoating. With Eidul Azha at hand, the whole of Karachi is experiencing an acute shortage of water, making it difficult for those who have to take care of animals they have bought to sacrifice on the occasion. Water shortage is a perennial issue for the city residents, and the paucity of the precious commodity only keeps changing in intensity as the demand for it rises and falls. The city has long been facing a shortage of 600 million gallons daily water— with more than half its need left unmet by the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB). Ironically, the shortfall in piped supply of water is fulfilled by tanker and can sellers. Plenty of water is available in tankers and cans. Now it is evident that only those who have money can drink water and get it for other uses. There are three contending parties to the issue: the KWSB, K-Electric, and hapless and helpless consumers.

The last one is left to suffer as the water board and the electric supply company are engaging in buck passing blaming each other for the acute shortage of water. The KWSB is blaming K-Electric for depriving people of water in the extremely hot weather, saying the shortage has been caused due to non-availability of electricity at its pumping stations. It claims that three water pipelines burst as a result of four electricity breakdowns in the current month. These prolonged power outages caused a major disruption in water supply to the entire city. In this situation, it would take another 48 hours to restore normal water supply. K-Electric denies the allegation and described it as an attempt by the KWSB to hide its own incompetence. Considering that power supply in the city has improved in recent months, the KWSB's argument is hardly convincing; an attempt at scapegoating others for its own failing. Scapegoating, however, gives a feeling of confidence.  
(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 14, 16/07/2021)

### **Sindh seeks UN help to supply drinking water in rural areas**

Sindh Information and Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has sought the United Nations-Pakistan support and technical help for ensuring supply of potable water in rural areas.

Speaking to Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of UN in Pakistan Julien Harneis, who called on him at Ali House, he said PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had given a warning to the Sindh government to complete the task of supplying potable water to rural areas.

UN provincial head Sindh Aftab Bhatti, member Advisory Board International Trade Centre (UN) Shahjahan Shah also accompanied the UN coordinator, according to a statement issued here.

The minister lauded the cooperation of the UN and said that the Sindh government was keen to further strengthen the partnership to provide basic services to people of rural areas.

"The Sindh government is prepared to implement the recommendations of UN," the minister said.

Mr Harneis said that the Sindh government should focus on providing clean drinking water in rural areas as vast areas lacked the facility of potable water.

He said he visited Umerkot and Tharparkar the other day and checked the quality of water being supplied.

He added that not only treatment of water was the need of the hour, but treatment plants also required proper management.

Parliamentary secretary health MPA Qasim Siraj Soomro taking part in the discussion apprised the UN officials that more than 700 reverse osmosis plants were installed in Tharparkar.

He added that megaprojects of water supply to Achhro Thar of Sanghar district had been completed by laying pipeline from Khipro to border areas.

He said that modern methods had been adopted in water supply schemes in Umerkot to address water contamination issues.

He added that latest techniques had also been followed in water supply schemes in Umerkot, but old distribution system in the city caused contamination.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 31/07/2021)

### **Contaminated water**

SHINY new high-rises and sprawling gated communities are a superficial yardstick of 'development', and yet are often touted as a barometer of progress. Real development takes into account the well-being of people, which is an amalgam of several factors. One of them is the very key to life: water. On this score, Pakistan is falling appallingly short. The government on Monday made a shocking revelation in the National Assembly. According to the results of tests carried out by the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources on underground water in 29 cities, there are 20 cities where water collected from various sources was found to be more than 50pc unsafe for drinking. In three of these urban centres — Mirpurkhas, Shaheed Benazirabad and Gilgit — the underground water, as per PCRWR data, is 100pc unsafe. Following close behind are Multan (94pc), Karachi (92pc), Sargodha (83pc), Bahawalpur (76pc) and Muzaffarabad (70pc), to cite just the top eight in the list. The water was found to be contaminated mainly with arsenic, iron, fluoride and bacteria.

This is a dire situation, warnings about which have been coming thick and fast. Bacteria is a major factor in diseases of the intestinal tract — some of them potentially fatal especially for children and infants, among whom diarrhoea is the leading cause of mortality. Prolonged exposure to contaminants like arsenic in drinking water can lead to cancer and skin lesions; and is also associated with cardiovascular disease and diabetes. In utero and in early childhood, it may even have a negative impact on cognitive development. A report by the Pakistan Medical Association released at the end of last year stated that the poor quality of drinking water is responsible for nearly 30pc of diseases and 40pc of deaths in the country. As it is, an IMF report in 2018 ranked Pakistan as third on a list of countries facing acute water scarcity; according to it, our per capita water availability is 1,017 cubic metres, just a notch higher than the scarcity threshold of 1,000 cubic metres. A combination of factors has led us to this pass. These include population growth, urbanisation, climate change, poor water management such as outdated irrigation methods, indiscriminate dumping of industrial waste, untreated sewage contaminating water mains, and a lack of political will to put in place sustainable solutions. We are hurtling headlong into disaster. And unless drastic measures are not taken immediately, there will be no turning back.  
(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 11/08/2021)

### **KWSB chief issued notice on plea for potable water supply to rural areas**

The Sindh High Court on Friday issued notices to the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) on a petition against non-provision of potable water to the city's rural areas.

A two-judge bench headed by Justice Irfan Saadat Khan put the KWSB managing director and director-finance as well as the advocate general Sindh on notice for Sept 22.

Some residents of Malir district moved the SHC submitting that the KWSB had issued certain notifications in 2016 for providing drinking water to the people residing in the rural areas of the provincial metropolis.

However, the counsel for the petitioner argued that the same was not done and thereafter a petition was filed in SHC in 2019 and the same was decided in October 2020 with a direction to the KWSB to implement its notifications and directives were also issued to the petitioners to approach the water utility.

The petitioners further maintained that they had approached the respondents for implementation of the notifications, but no concrete step had so far been taken to provide water to the rural areas.

*The SHC upholds 10-year imprisonment handed down to two officials in a Dadu land scam case*

The petitioners' lawyer argued that access to clean drinking water was the fundamental right of his clients as guaranteed under the Constitution.

He added that the KWSB had already endorsed these notifications before the SHC and the water utility could not take away the rights of petitioners.

He further maintained that the failure on part of the KWSB to implement its notifications as well as the directives of the SHC was illegal and unconstitutional.

He sought directives for the respondents to implement its notifications as well as the earlier order of the SHC and provide water from Hawkesbay, Gadap, Ghaggar and till Ibrahim Hyderi along with the benefits of 2016 notifications.

#### **Conviction of mukhtiarkars upheld**

Another division bench on Friday dismissed the appeals of two former officials of the Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) against their conviction by a trial court.

An accountability court had handed down 10-year imprisonment to mukhtiarkars Asadullah Solangi and Ali Akbar for tampering with the record and making fake entries regarding over 370 acres in Dadu.

The convicts, through their counsel, had filed their appeals against the judgement of the trial court and after hearing both sides and examining the record and proceedings of the case the two-judge bench headed by Justice K.K. Agha dismissed the appeals.

#### **No clue to child missing since 2018**

The SHC has directed the police to recover a child, who went missing from the OPD of the Civil Hospital Karachi (CHK) in 2018.

The investigating officer submitted that he was making efforts for the recovery of the missing child and steps had been taken to record the statement of the petitioner while police had also interrogated a woman working in the CHK.

The IO maintained that he visited all the orphanages of the city and sought more time to inspect the remaining orphanages of the province in order to locate the whereabouts of the child.

While adjourned the hearing till Oct 13, a two-judge bench headed by Justice Salahuddin Panhwar asked the IO to take all possible efforts to ensure recovery of the child.

A woman had moved the SHC in 2018 stating that she took her three-year-old son to the CHK on May 8, 2018 for a check-up, but he went missing when she was busy in obtaining a token in the OPD.

Earlier, the SHC had directed the provincial authorities to release funds to install equipment and facilities at the CHK in order to rectify the deficiencies highlighted in a judicial inquiry conducted by a district judge on the directive of the SHC issued in October 2018 after the hospital administration admitted that the CCTV cameras installed in the OPD block were not functioning.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 28/08/2021)

### **Jl stages protest sit-in at KWSB office over water shortage in Karachi**

The city chapter of the Jamaat-i-Islami on Wednesday organised a big demonstration and staged a sit-in outside the offices of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) in protest over the problem of water shortage in the metropolis.



Leading the evening protest, JI Karachi chief Hafiz Naeemur Rahman said that the KWSB was a government institution responsible for water distribution across Karachi but the citizens here were not getting water the way it should come to them.

"The concept of receiving water through pipes is vanishing and everyone is getting this basic necessity through tankers, which is wrong. The system of providing water through tankers has become a mafia, which seems to be working with the KWSB," he said.

"The water pumping stations are not working properly and are often down. There are also KWSB's issues with K-Electric," he said, adding: "When KE doesn't pay Sui Southern Gas Company's bills the latter keep supplying KE gas, but here when the water board falls behind on paying KE they shut off supply and the entire city is affected as a result of that."

*Hafiz Naeem regrets the PPP govt in Sindh does not own Karachi*

#### **'Karachi's needs 1,400MGD'**

"The water distribution system is also wrong because water lines have been diverted to the industrial area of Karachi. Supplying water to the industry is the government's job. They should have water treatment plants and recycling of water that the industry can use. But here water for residential areas is also being diverted to the industrial areas," he said.

“Karachi has a population of 30 million and it is growing. The realistic requirement of water here is 1,400 million gallons of water per day [MGD], but what we are getting is 550 MGD. And there is no equal distribution thanks to corruption within the government and its institutions,” he said.

“The K-IV project, conceived by former Karachi mayor Niamatullah Khan, never saw the light of day also due to corruption and incompetence of the departments,” he said. “Some 16 years have passed after Niamatullah Khan and all political parties have ruled here but not even [former Karachi mayor] Mustafa Kamal, who was considered quite powerful, nor the PPP government or any other has been able to complete the K-IV project in order to give some relief to the citizens of Karachi.”

He said: “Now there is a new issue of K-IV’s design being faulty. It has been sent for review to Wapda but the new design being talked about also does not seem feasible and Karachi’s population is the biggest loser here. They remain thirsty.”

“Nothing is being done for water in Karachi. There was nothing in the federal budget this year for K-IV. Meanwhile, the Sindh government also doesn’t know what it is doing about water. We need 650 MGD from the quota of water reserved for Karachi from the federal government, but we are getting only 260 MGD. Sadly, the current PPP government does not own Karachi,” Hafiz Naeem said. Other speakers at the protest demonstration also added that corruption in the KWSB had reached lowest ranks.

“The valve man too takes a bribe here to provide water to an area,” said one protester, adding that sometimes there was water coming to an area twice a week, sometimes once a week and sometimes never.

“Then maintenance is so poor that all the old areas of the city don’t get piped water, as lines are broken or cracked. This also causes leakage,” said another protester.

(By Shazia Hasan Dawn, 13, 09/09/2021)

### Water theft network busted

A large water theft network running in connivance with the officials of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) was caught on Kashmir Road.

The Municipal Commissioner took immediate action on report of illegal hydrant on the KMC land. On the orders of the Municipal Commissioner, Director City Wardens Raja Rustam conducted a successful raid and sealed the illegal hydrant. During the operation, three tankers, pipes and other equipment used in water theft were seized.

According to sources, the water mafia had set up the illegal hydrant for the last several months with the connivance of KMC officials. Millions of gallons of water a day were stolen from the said illegal hydrant and sold to the citizens by tankers at exorbitant prices.

Sources said that the KMC officers were receiving extortion of millions of rupees per month from the operators of illegal hydrants. Sources said that water was stolen from the water board’s conduit by a nexus of hydrant mafia and KMC officers while the place where the tankers were filled is also owned by the KMC.

Sources said that residents of the area had repeatedly complained to the authorities about illegal hydrants but the authorities kept their eyes closed due to personal financial gains. The sources further said that some officials of the Karachi Water & Sewerage Board along with the KMC are also involved in the patronage of the said hydrant.

On the other hand, after the illegal hydrant on the land owned by KMC came to light, senior officials of the KMC have demanded strict legal action from the KMC administrator and the Municipal Commissioner against the officers who are sponsoring water theft.

(By Newspaper’s Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 13/09/2021)

### DHA residents in Karachi paying hefty water tax despite getting no supply via lines

It is still early in the day. Just like a systematic and efficient production line-up, the blue and white sweet water bowsers or tankers of Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC) are aligned for their fill at a busy hydrant under the big gray overhead water tank off Khayaban-i-Ittehad in Phase VI of Defence Housing Authority (DHA).

As is said about this posh area of Karachi, spanning eight phases, not to mention DHA City, the underground tanks are usually empty unless you get a tanker to do the needful. Water in DHA only gathers when it rains. Then what to talk of the tanks when even the basements are full.

A sense of right and wrong tells you that if you cannot supply piped water to your residents, who are already paying hefty water taxes, which is included in their property tax, then at least make sure they get that water through other means, such as through tankers. It also used to be like that. At least until some years ago but then CBC started charging for their tankers.

“I remember a time when we used to get four free tankers in a month from the CBC to make up for what we were not getting through the water lines. Then it was three and now two, which also cost Rs750 each,” a resident of Phase VI told Dawn. “And there also you get a tanker on a ‘first come first serve’ basis. I call, I also book through the CBCare mobile app.

*Citizens say CBC used to provide four free water tankers every month but now it charges Rs750 for one tanker*

“And just two tankers of 1,000 gallons only are not enough for a month even for a small family of four. The only good thing about it is that it is sweet water. Otherwise this price is comparative to the market rates,” he added.

Dr Nasreen, who did not know about the app, said that even getting a tanker is very difficult. “Previously we used to fill out a form every month for two small tankers. But now the form is valid for just a day. If you can’t get the water the same day, you have to start the process all over again,” she said.

**Water tax termed unfair**

Kamran, another DHA resident, said that it was unfair of the CBC to be charging water tax when they cannot deliver water through the lines and were also charging for their tankers. "I am paying Rs18,000 per annum as water tax and still besides that also paying for the CBC tankers, if I can get those, as well as the commercial tankers," he said.

"We are told that there is always a shortfall in the supply from the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board [KWSB] but I think that both the CBC and DHA are working in cahoots. Water is as big a business here as it is in the rest of the city," he said.

Hanif, who lives in a small apartment in DHA, says his water expenditures amount to Rs6,000 to Rs7,000 every month besides the annual tax. "There used to be no issue of water shortage in my area some 15 years ago but now there is not a drop of water coming through the lines and we are forced to buy it through tankers," he said.

Mirza Aleem said he feels there is corruption in all departments of DHA and CBC. "We are charged for water in CBC bills but only a few get water from them. And what is happening with that desalination plant," he questioned. "Either remove water tax or apply nominal charges for it. Besides, many of the CBC water tankers are rusted and in bad shape. They are also short of tankers. They need at least 50 more."

Sultan Durrani, a senior resident of DHA who had only just come out of the CBC office on Khayaban-i-Rahat after paying his property tax, said that the lines in his area were laid some 40 years back. "They were not treated or insulated to withstand the nature of soil here. Therefore, the lines corroded and turned brittle so we are no longer getting any water through them," he said.

But he also pointed out that it was more expensive to get water from tankers. "There are vehicles that need to be driven by someone. They also run on fuel, which costs. And they need regular maintenance to remain in service. So the amount being charged for each tanker may be also justified," he said.

**'Scarce water still comes through lines'**

When *Dawn* tried to reach out to CBC to explain the reason for charging for the tankers besides the water tax, we were asked to speak to either Superintendent Khalid Mahmood or Naeem Akhtar, both of whom could not be reached as their phones were constantly busy.

Later, a nameless timid voice at the other end explained that the Rs750 per tanker were water delivery charges while the tax includes line charges. "The bowser system is separate," it was announced.

When asked then what were residents paying water tax for when they have to pay for bowsers or tankers, the person said that there is still some water that comes through the lines though very scarce.

"There has been a severe shortage since September 1 only, which is due to KWSB. But if you are just not getting any water, you need to see the water supervisor in your area so that they can get your lines checked," it was advised.

(By Shazia Hasan Dawn, 13, 30/09/2021)

**Minister orders feasibility for dams around city**

Sindh Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Public Health Engineering Syed Nasir Hussain Shah directed officials concerned to prepare a feasibility report of projects to construct small and big dams in the vicinity of Karachi for the conservation of rainwater.

The minister issued these instructions while presiding over a meeting held at the office of the Sindh Local Government Department. Talking to officials of the Sindh Local Government Department and Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB), Nasir Shah said there is a need to utilise all natural resources to meet the water needs of Karachi.

He said it was necessary to collect rainwater and review the construction of various small and big dams in the vicinity of Karachi in the style of Hub Dam. He sought a feasibility report for this project. The participants of the meeting reviewed various development projects of Karachi city in detail.

The meeting was attended by Sindh Local Government Secretary Najam Ahmad Shah, KWSB Managing Director Assadullah Khan, Finance Department Public Private Partnership Head Khalid Mehmood Sheikh, district municipal commissioners of Karachi, deputy commissioners and other officers. The minister directed officials of KWSB, Sindh Local Government and Irrigation departments to work expeditiously to collect rainwater with the help of various small and big dams and prepare a feasibility of appropriate projects to cater the need of the water of big cities like Karachi. APP  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 14/10/2021)

**K-IV project designs closer to finalisation**

Karachi's water crisis, which has been a bane for its citizens for the past 15 years, saw a glimmer of hope a decade ago with the launch of the Greater *Karachi* Water Supply Scheme. Dubbed as the K-IV project, the multibillion rupee scheme was to offer the city a 650 MGD supply and amend Karachi's long-standing water shortage, but was plagued with delays and became less a reality and more a distant dream for Karachiites.

However, after many years of back and forth, it appears the project has finally reached the concluding stages of its design, under the supervision of the National Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), and is slated to be fully drafted by sometime next week. After the preparation and approval of PC-1, the development work will start from January next year, and the project itself is expected to be completed in two years.

According to the details, the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, an institution of the *Sindh* government, started design work on the additional water supply project K-IV in 2007. The project was finally approved in 2015 after several rounds of red tape due to the inattention of the federal and provincial government bureaucracies.

The plan submitted by the Sindh government to the federal government included 650 million gallons of water per day under the approved project; the project was to be constructed in three phases. Phase One consisted of 260 MGD, Phase Two 260 MGD and Phase Three 130 MGD. The entire project was to be completed by 2023.

Construction work on Phase One 260 MGD surplus water supply project was to begin in 2016, and reach completion by 2018 at the cost of 25.5 billion rupees, which had to be paid equally by the federal and Sindh governments. Due to the inattention of the Sindh government however, construction work on the project was stopped in 2018.

Sources allege that this was due to poor planning, poor design and an increase of Rs150 billion in construction costs. Some Rs11 billion was spent during this period, and 40 per cent of construction work was done.

In any case, on the long-standing demand of the citizens of Karachi, the Prime Minister of *Pakistan*, Imran Khan, handed over the project from the Sindh government to the federal government agency WAPDA in 2020.

A WAPDA official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the biggest flaw in the old design was that it was being constructed under a canal system that was extremely unsuitable due to the mountain ranges in the area.

"We have appointed consultant firm Techno Consult International for preparation of new designs on merit under the tender process. Its subsidiaries are ILF Austria and MM Pakistan. The three companies have designed an additional 650 MGD water supply project in four months, the tip of which is being repaired," informed the WAPDA official.

Speaking further, he said that the project's cost could not be ascertained yet, but is likely to be around Rs200 billion.

Project Consultant Team Leader Dr Mohammad Bashir Lakhani told *The Express Tribune* that the design of the K-IV project had been prepared at 650 MGD, and the whole plan is based on the Pip system. "The canal system was not profitable due to the topography and geography of the route. Under the new design, the length of the project has been reduced from 121km to 110km, which will affect the cost."

Per Lakhani, the special feature of this design is that the old design covered 260 MGD, and the new plan spans 650 MGD, which is great for the citizens of Karachi. He said the project would be constructed on the old route that starts from Keenjhar Lake and will reach Karachi via Super Highway.

Speaking in the regard, WAPDA General Manager Farhat Kamal said that the project's design is in the final stage and will be ready by next week. Construction work will start from January next year and will be completed in 2 years. "Excavations had been carried out for the construction work under the old design, and it would be taken advantage of," he told *The Express Tribune*.

(By Syed Ashraf Ali The Express Tribune, 05, 14/11/2021)

### **Asad Umar says K-IV project to be completed in 22 months**

Work to construct the Greater Karachi Water Supply Scheme, commonly known as K-IV project, will start in next three to four months and likely to be completed by October 2023, said a senior member of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government on Friday.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar chaired a meeting in Islamabad to review the progress of the mega project, which had recently been taken over by the federal government from the Sindh government.

Additional secretary-development Abdul Aziz Uqaili, project director Amir Mughal, and project consultants Dr Bashir Lakhani and senior officials attended the meeting.

"The project director briefed the minister about the revised PC-1 of the K-IV project, its components, and design details," said a statement issued after the meeting.

*Five 84-inch mild steel pipes to carry total 650 MGD*

"It was informed in the meeting that Wapda has completed the revised design of 650 MGD K-IV to be executed in phases. All planning, design, and procurement activities are as per the project timeline, and the construction of this project will be completed by October 2023," it added.

The federal minister also advised the officials to ensure uninterrupted power supply to operate pumping stations and to supply water to the proposed reservoirs.

The project director informed him that the design of the K-IV project had been developed with a modular approach in which five pumping stations with as many large mild steel pipes of 84 inches each carrying 130 MGD with a total capacity of 650 MGD had been planned to be executed.

The meeting was informed that Wapda has submitted PC-1 with a modified design of 650 MGD K-IV Project with various options for execution of the project, which can be done in phases.

Mr Umar directed the Planning Division to expedite processing of the revised PC-1 to get it approved as early as possible from Central Development Working Party (CDWP) and Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec).

The minister expressed satisfaction over the pace of the progress and work on the development of revised planning and design of this project which is in line with the prime minister's commitment to ensuring water availability to residents of Karachi.

Last month, Wapda chairman retired Lt Gen Muzammil Hussain had visited the project site.

The multibillion-rupee scheme was meant to meet the water needs of Karachiites but it remains a distant dream even after more than 10 years of its formal launch in 2011.

Multiple causes delayed its completion and increased the estimated cost to Rs150bn. The federal government had finally taken over the project from the provincial government.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 04/12/2021)

## Sindh, IFC sign deal on potable water supply

The Sindh government and International Finance Commission (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, signed a landmark agreement on Tuesday at the CM House to help the provincial government structure a public-private partnership project that would provide clean drinking water to nearly one million people of Karachi.

The signing ceremony was held here under the chairmanship of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah. The ceremony was other senior officials.

The chief minister said that with a population of over 16 million, Karachi, the capital of Sindh, was Pakistan's largest city, economic hub, and main seaport. "However, it has struggled to maintain a reliable fresh water supply." He added that under the agreement, IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, would advise the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) on structuring and tendering a project to build new infrastructure to boost the city's supply.

The project, to be executed by a private company, would include water treatment facilities and a bulk water conveyance system, Shah said. He continued that the system would supply Karachi with 65 million gallons of water per day from Keenjhar Lake, some 140km from the city.

"By bringing in the private sector to develop and operate a bulk water supply system, more people will have access to the water they need," the CM said. "The project will provide the framework for future greenfield water infrastructure projects. " It may be noted that Pakistan ranks third, globally, for acute water shortages, according to the International Monetary Fund.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 08/12/2021)

Tuesday's signing follows another landmark public-private partnership for an advisory agreement between IFC and KWSB last year. This included the rehabilitation and maintenance of a 100 MGD canal, a water treatment plant, and a pumping station. The project is Pakistan's first greenfield water supply initiative carried out under a public-private partnership.

IFC Senior Vice President Stephanie von Friedeburg, speaking on the occasion, said that water scarcity in Karachi had affected residents and hampered businesses for years. He asserted that improved infrastructure was critical to fix this issue.

She added that the project demonstrated the power of the private sector to help governments modernise infrastructure, jumpstart economic growth and improve the lives of everyday people. "The project is part of the World Bank Group's strategy in Pakistan to support private sector development and accelerate improvements in public service delivery."

She said it also complements the World Bank-sponsored \$1.6 billion Karachi Water and Sewerage Services Investment Project, which aims to improve KWSB's efficiency and sustainability. On behalf of the Sindh Government Water Board MD Asadullah Khan signed a Public Private Partnership Advisory Agreement for 65 MGD Karachi Bulk Water Supply Project with IFC Regional Vice President Hela Cheikhrouhou. The signing was witnessed by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and others.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 08/12/2021)

## Body to regulate groundwater extraction, KWSB tells court

The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board has informed the Sindh High Court that a licensing committee has been constituted to review, regulate and monitor the business of subsoil water in the metropolis.

The KWSB in its comments, filed in response to a petition against extraction of subsoil water for commercial purposes, submitted that the committee was recently constituted in pursuance of an order of the Supreme Court issued in December 2018.

Without providing further details, the water utility maintained that in the light of the apex court's order the Sindh government had issued a notification in September this year after which the KWSB constituted the subsoil water licensing committee vide an order dated Nov 16 to deal with all matters relating to subsoil water for industrial/commercial use.

A two-judge bench headed by Justice Aftab Ahmed Gorar took the statement of the KWSB on record and again issued notices to some private respondents running the businesses of subsoil water for Feb 7.

Over 30 petitioners filed a petition before the SHC stating that extraction of subsoil water for commercial purposes and its supply through waterlines and tankers without obtaining a licence in term of Subsoil Water (Extraction and Consumption) Regulation 2018 were being made in different parts of provincial metropolis.

They further submitted that instead of taking any action against the persons involved in illegal extraction of subsoil water, the KWSB and other official respondents were issuing permissions and no-objection certificates for road cutting to lay subsoil water pipelines and supply of illegally extracted water.

They argued that the extraction of subsoil water and its supply through pipelines to industries was in violation of the apex court's order that had directed the government to regulate and price the groundwater be it industrial or agriculture use.

Referring to a judgement of the SHC handed down in January this year, the petitioners said the court had held that if the extraction of subsoil water in huge quantity was allowed the same will certainly disturb aquifer and environment of the area concerned. They sought directives for competent authorities to look into the gravity of the situation and take appropriate action.

They pleaded to declare extraction of subsoil water for commercial purposes without obtaining a licence illegal, all NOCs/permissions issued by the respondents in contravention of law be declared unlawful and also sought restraining order against private respondents from extracting subsoil water for commercial purposes and official respondents to take strict action against extraction and supply of such water for commercial purposes.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 25/12/2021)



### **Karachi water woes**

The much-needed action against those involved in operating illegal hydrants, theft of water and its sale is now underway in Karachi. Several unauthorised water hydrants have been sealed in district Malir, and the Sindh local government minister, who is also chairman of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, has said the scope of the operation will be widened to cover the whole city. High government officials are personally supervising the campaign.

The city of 20 million is receiving only 550 million gallons of water daily against its needs for around 1,200mgd — the gap between demand and supply is more than half. This shortfall is met by tankers, and in many cases, by those who sell water in cans. Water in tankers and cans are sold at exorbitant prices. Residents of many localities in the city meet their need for potable water by purchasing water. For years, home taps in these areas have remained dry, but people regularly receive their water bill. Observers say most private water sellers steal water from KWSB pipelines and its system. Besides, pipelines have become worn out which causes leakage; and as a result considerable amount of the precious commodity is lost. At several places, water gets mixed up with sewage causing dangerous diseases.

There are legal hydrants too. Water requirement of some areas, like the DHA where piped water is not available, is met by water tankers. However, water supply through tankers results in damaging roads and water pipelines too. Water tankers are also reported to be involved in accidents. According to media reports, water tankers and motorcycles are involved in both fatal and non-fatal accidents. Some tanker drivers are reportedly untrained or they are in the habit of driving recklessly. There are several other issues with Karachi's water supply, like chlorination of water has not been done for several years. All these issues need to be addressed on a war footing.

(By Editorial, The Express Tribune, 14, 28/12/2021)