

# NEWSCLIPPINGS

JANUARY TO JUNE 2022

## WATER SUPPLY



## Urban Resource Centre

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A-2, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:urc@cyber.net.pk), Website: [www.urckarachi.org](http://www.urckarachi.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/URCKHI](https://www.facebook.com/URCKHI) Twitter: <https://twitter.com/urckhi>

### **Centre, Sindh agree on improved coordination for K-IV project**

Despite claims from the authorities that the long-awaited Greater Karachi Water Supply Scheme, commonly known as K-IV, would be completed by the end of 2023, the federal and Sindh governments on Sunday agreed that the mega project had been suffering "serious issues" and there was a need to improve coordination for execution of its conveyance systems and augmentation.

The consensus between the two sides emerged during the sixth meeting of the Coordination Committee, set up in September 2020 between the federal and Sindh governments, held at Chief Minister House.

The meeting agenda included establishment of the combined effluent treatment plants on public-private partnership mode, augmentation of K-IV to be carried out by the provincial government, issuance of no-objection certificate (NOC) for the Mauripur Expressway and ICI Interchange project and vacation of Malir Halt and Mousamiyat Depots by Pakistan Rangers for the launch of BRT Red Line.

*Corps Commander says Rangers will vacate two depots when transport dept launches work on Red Line*

The meeting was attended by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, IT and Telecom Minister Syed Aminul Haque, Karachi Corps Commander Lt Gen Muhammad Saeed, Chief Secretary Mumtaz Shah, provincial ministers Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Karachi Administrator Murtaza Wahab as well as senior federal and provincial officials.

A statement issued after the meeting said that progress of the synchronisation in conveyance system and augmentation coordination points on K-IV were discussed.

"During deliberations it was observed that K-IV project has serious issues and in order to address them, it was decided to develop a better coordination between the Centre and provincial government for execution of both conveyance systems and augmentation of K-IV," the statement said, adding: "The meeting was told that revised PC-1 will be placed before Ecneec."

The chief minister said that as far as the installation of a 50MW power plant was concerned, he would discuss the issue with his team. However, the meeting decided to direct all the federal government agencies to issue NOCs for the augmentation project of K-IV to be executed by the Sindh government."

#### **Effluent treatment plants**

The meeting was told that Sindh industries department was the sponsoring agency of a Rs11.79 billion project to install five combined effluent treatment plants (CETP) in which the 33 per cent and 67pc share would be borne by the of federal and provincial governments, respectively.

The project was approved by Ecneec and its administrative approval was accorded on March 12, 2018. "The cost estimates of the components of CETP-2 and CETP-4 with interceptors have exceeded the estimates of the different components in the revised PC-1.

The CETP-1, 2 and 4 have been included in Phase-1 of the project as these have no land issues for treatment plants or pumping stations can be initiated without any impediments. The revised PC-I of Rs18.143bn is under approval process," the meeting was told. In a meeting held in Sindh planning and development board, it was decided to execute the project on public-private partnership (PPP) mode. "Therefore, the coordination committee decided to prepare a proper presentation for executing the project on PPP mode," the statement said.

#### **Relocation of Rangers for BRT project**

The meeting discussed the Red Line bus rapid transit project, which was being implemented with the assistance of Asian Development Bank. The project cost was \$235 million in July 2019 and a PC-1 of the project was cleared for Rs78,38bn (\$493.51m). Subsequently, the loan signing ceremony took place on June 18, 2020 which became effective from Oct 6, 2020.

The issue of vacation of Malir Halt and Masumiyaat depots by Pakistan Rangers was discussed.

At this, the corps commander told the meeting that the Rangers would vacate the depots when the provincial transport department would start work on the Red Line BRT project.

The Sindh government urged the federal ministers to direct the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to allot 12-14 acres of land, out of identified 52 acres of land under its possession, for immediate relocation of Rangers to avoid penalties anticipated due to occupation of depots.

Minister Asad Umar assured the chief minister that the matter would be solved through his office.

The meeting was also briefed about the initiatives taken to remove garbage from the city. It was said that the cleaning of all the districts of Karachi, except district Central, had been outsourced and the process of handing over cleaning of district Central was under way.

It was also decided that matter for regulating the garbage generated in the cantonment boards areas and clearance of outstanding dues of Sindh Solid Waste Management Board would be resolved.

The meeting was told to decide land related issues/NOC pertaining to the Karachi Port Trust, National Highway Authority, Pakistan Railways, etc for Mauripur Expressway & ICI Interchange project.

The meeting was told that there were certain issues in the encumbrance free access of the site at different locations of the project. The coordination committee directed the navy, KPT, PR and NHA to issue NOCs so that the project could be kicked off.

Regarding development and redesigning of Karachi nullahs, the participants of the meeting discussed the matter at length and decided to reduce the right of way (RoW) along the nullahs from 30 feet to 20 feet in which a wall would be constructed within two feet and two-lane road would be constructed on 18 feet for vehicular traffic.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 12, 10/01/2022)

### **DHA residents approach SHC for adequate supply of potable water**

The Sindh High Court on Monday issued notices to the defence secretary, director general of military lands & cantonments, Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC) on a petition against inadequate supply of clean drinking water and an additional levy in Defence and Clifton.

A two-judge bench headed by Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi issued notices to the respondents as well as a federal law officer subject to maintainability of the petition.

It directed the respondents to file their replies/parawise comments preferably within 30 days and asked its office to fix the matter after four weeks.

Some residents of DHA and Clifton moved the SHC stating that they had been paying the annual water levy, but the respondents had failed to provide adequate quantity of water to them and other residents in flagrant violation of Article 38(d) of the Constitution and judgements of the apex court.

*Court asks defence secretary, CBC, DHA to file their replies within a month*

They said that the authorities had been charging additional amount against each water tanker.

Representing the petitioners, Advocate Jibran Nasir argued that the petitioners had regularly been paying requisite taxes including the annual water tax and entitled to be granted utility of water, but sufficient water was not being provided to them despite receiving additional charges.

He stated that the CBC had been claiming to provide water through additional bowsers via a mobile application, but the residents including the petitioners were repeatedly informed that no water bowsers were available despite the fact that Rs750 charges per bowser was paid in advance.

The counsel submitted that the CBC was seen operational on roads delivering water bowsers to certain households in what appeared to be a preferential system for various influential residents, who were being prioritised over other inhabitants.

While referring to a judgement of the Supreme Court, he maintained that the provision of drinking water is a right to life.

However, the lawyer argued that the CBC had failed to provide five water bowsers with no additional cost to the houses where water was not adequately supplied through pipelines.

He said only two bowsers with additional charges were being occasionally provided leaving the petitioners and a vast majority of resident with no option but to purchase water privately at exorbitant rates.

Advocate Nasir contended that the lack of water metering system within the jurisdictions of DHA and CBC had allowed the latter to charge an annual water tax based on the size of the property instead of actual water consumption, which was in violation of Article 25 of the Constitution.

The petitioners asked the court to declare additional charges against each water bowser as illegal and unlawful as well as contemptuous of the apex court's orders.

They sought a restraining order against levying and collecting additional charges for supply of tankers.

They further sought directives for the respondent to provide five water bowsers to all residents including the petitioners and to provide actual statistics about supply of potable water to the residents through pipelines and bowsers.

The petitioners further sought implementation of the national water policy 2018 and installation of water meters within a period of one year.

After establishing the metering system, the respondents be directed to supply water through pipelines and stop the supply through tankers/bowsers, the petitioners requested the court.  
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 25/01/2022)

### **K-IV project inches a step closer to reality**

After much back and forth, it appears that the federal government's final approval for the K-IV mega water project is finally on the cards, and due for announcement in a matter of days.

However, the Sindh government has given the red light to the mega project siphoning all of the additional 650million gallons of water per day (MGD) from the River Indus. Instead, it has agreed to only allocate 260 MGD of water to the K-IV project.

The settlement has led the federal government's Central District Working Party (CDWP) to approve only one phase of the three-phased K-IV project. This will cost Rs126 billion, and the project will now be presented at ENEC, after which construction is expected to begin in March-April of this year and will take 20 months to conclude.

According to an official of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) speaking on conditions of anonymity, while Karachi's population has grown manifolds in the last 14 years of the Pakistan People's Party's government in Sindh, the city has failed to receive a single additional droplet of water from the Indus River. "Other water projects are also facing delays due to which the water crisis in Karachi has intensified. We started design work for the K-IV project as early as in 2007, but the mega project has since lingered in doldrums for various reasons," the official told.

Speaking further he informed that the centre and the Sindh government had approved the K-IV project in the year 2015. The plan presented by the Sindh government to the federal government on the matter acknowledged a daily supply of 650 million gallons of water, which was to be completed in three phases by the year 2023.

The project's Phase I consisted of 260 MGD, Phase II comprised 260 MGD and Phase III promised 130 MGD. The Sindh government started work on Phase I 260 MGD in 2016 which was to be completed in 2018. The original cost was Rs25 billion which the federal government and the Sindh government had to pay on an equal basis. However, due to the incompetence of officials, rampant corruption, and flawed project design by the Sindh government, the construction cost of the K-IV project increased from the initial Rs25 billion to Rs150 billion, rendering the project to come to a halt.

Per federal government sources, Prime Minister Imran Khan transferred the project from the Sindh government to the federal government's Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA) in 2020, which rebuffed the Sindh government's designs. "The design under which the canal system was being built was declared invalid. On a transparent basis, WAPDA appointed a new consultancy firm, Techno Consult International, which designed the 650 MGD additional water supply project, prepared a new feasibility report and a fresh PC-I," revealed the federal government source.

Addressing the claim, a WAPDA official speaking on conditions of anonymity said that the plan was presented by WAPDA at a CDWP meeting in Islamabad last month. Briefing the meeting, WAPDA officials maintained that the K-IV project would be installing a pipeline network to siphon water, instead of constructing a canal system. The reason they offered was that the canal system was not profitable due to ground structure and route geography. "With the new plan, the proposed cost of the project will also come down to something around Rs200 billion. Whereas, installation of pipes will also control water theft in the future. However, the Sindh government will have to provide a quota of 650 million gallons of water from the Indus River," the WAPDA official said, explaining the project.

According to WAPDA General Manager Farhat Kamal, WAPDA has designed the 650 MGD project for water supply in Karachi. The CDWP meeting has already approved Phase I of the project consisting of 260 million gallons per day. He said that the position of the Sindh government in the meeting was that water is not available yet so 650 million gallons daily cannot be provided.

The Express Tribune tried several times to contact the provincial minister for local government Nasir Hussain Shah for the Sindh government's position on that matter, but he remained unavailable to comment.  
(By Syed Ashraf Ali The Express Tribune, 04, 01/02/2022)

### **KWSB shelves plan to set up water hydrant in Saadi Town after protests**

The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board on Tuesday shelved a controversial plan that envisaged setting up of a water hydrant in Saadi Town to meet the requirement in Keamari after it attracted strong criticism both from political and social circles raising question over the proposed facility for a densely populated area at a place more than 30-kilometre away from it.

They also questioned the logic behind setting up the hydrant for catering to the water needs of hundreds of thousands of residents of one locality by depriving people of another area.

The KWSB, though failed to provide any reason behind the move and offer any argument to prove its effectiveness, insisted that the plan was being prepared in the 'larger interest' of Karachiites.

However, following strong protests by the people it had to call off the move.

*Sale of water thru tankers was proposed for Keamari from hydrant 30km away*

The KWSB had issued a tender notice seeking bids for setting up a hydrant in Saadi Town — a fast-growing housing scheme in Scheme 33 stating that the facility would provide water via a tanker/bowser service to residents of Keamari — an area located at least 30 kilometres away from Saadi Town.

"A separate hydrant has been proposed for Keamari district which will be set up over a water line called GK in Saadi Town," said a brief KWSB statement.

It did not explain that who actually 'proposed' the idea to set up the hydrant at a place more than 30 kilometres away from its supply destination.

### **Allegations of corruption**

The controversial plan with no sound explanation made the proposal further disputed and invited strong reaction from different segments of the society.

"This is absolutely unacceptable," said Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly Haleem Adil Sheikh.

"There must be a reason behind this childish proposal. And the people of Karachi and other parts of Sindh know it well that there will be some sort of corruption and an opportunity to extort money from people and a chance to misappropriate funds, which has provoked the Pakistan Peoples Party government to design such a foolish plan," he said.

Later in the day, a number of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf workers led by party MNA Aslam Khan converged on the KWSB head office on Sharea Faisal to stage a protest against the proposed hydrant.

Carrying placards and chanting slogans against the KWSB, the protesters vowed to resist the move, which they said, would not only deprive the people of other areas of water, but also damage roads and put the people at the mercy of the 'tanker mafia'.

Within a couple of hours, the KWSB came up with an urgent announcement for the bidders waiting for the tender to be opened on Tuesday.

"Due to unavoidable circumstances, the technical proposal for auction of potable water supply through tankers to district Keamari from North East Karachi pumping station, Saadi Town KWSB Karachi has been cancelled," it said without mentioning any reason behind the fresh and sudden decision.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 09/02/2022)

### **World Water Day**

JUST three years... That's the time left before taps in the country probably run dry as Pakistan faces "absolute water scarcity", warn experts. With over 80pc of the population already facing "severe water scarcity" for at least one month a year, by 2040, the UN predicts, critical shortages will affect each and every person in the country. The warning is not new. Neither is the fact that the water level in Tarbela dam has reached dead level well before summer. And yet, there is no sense of urgency or even a half-hearted attempt at salvaging matters. Our own National Water Policy states that the "water crisis is descending like a thunderbolt". It highlights the fast depletion of our groundwater, which is responsible for meeting 70pc of our national and 50pc agricultural needs, according to the World Bank. The extent of reliance on groundwater for water-intensive farming can be assessed by the fact that over 95pc of the total water available is consumed by this sector alone, with 5pc left over for domestic use.

Depleting groundwater resources are also the focus of this year's World Water Day, being observed today. An outdated approach to water conservation and use, obsolete and water-intensive agricultural practices, and unchecked urbanisation have contributed to Pakistan's severe water crisis. Climate change has aggravated the situation as have the poor coping mechanisms of the federal and provincial water management bodies that remain ill-equipped and under-resourced. The fact that, in all these years, these bodies have failed to curb even the high transmission losses of 60pc of surface water speaks volumes for their inefficiency. These circumstances cost the national exchequer at least \$12bn a year, with implications for food and economic security. The government must act fast by, first, realising the gravity of the crisis and making the public aware of it. Secondly, alternatives must be found to water-intensive crops and farmers should be incentivised to accept the shift. Lastly, expert consultation is needed to upgrade and implement the National Water Policy immediately.

(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 22/03/2022)

### **KWSB asked to ensure 9MGD water supply to DHA, SHC told**

The Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC) on Tuesday informed the Sindh High Court that it had asked the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) to ensure provision of allocated quota of nine million gallons of water daily to it.

The CBC submitted that currently it was receiving an average of 4.6MGD and requested the KWSB to supply 9MGD as agreed between the utility and the Defence Housing Authority (DHA).

When a two-judge bench headed by Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi took up a set of petitions filed by residents against additional levy and inadequate facility of potable water in DHA and Clifton, the counsel for DHA and CBC sought time to file comments.

However, the lawyer for CBC submitted a copy of the letter sent to the KWSB chief asking for supply of agreed quota of 9MGD.

The letter stated that the CBC had enhanced the pumping capacity and already capable to pump bulk supply by 12MGD in normal condition, and requested KWSB to ensure allocated quantity of water so that the residents of CBC and DHA might not suffer from the acute shortage of water.

The CBC also produced details of water bowsers being provided to one of the petitioners in compliance with an earlier court order.

Former attorney general Anwar Mansoor Khan, who is one of the petitioners, filed a bill of Rs9,000 issued by the CBC and DHA claiming service charges for supply of water through bower.

The bench adjourned the hearing till April 11, and restrained the CBC and DHA from claiming any water supply charges from Mr Khan till the next date.

Around 95 residents of DHA and CBC filed three petitions in the SHC stating that they had been paying annual water levy, but the respondents had failed to provide adequate facility of water to them and charging additional amount against each water bower.

They submitted that they had regularly been paying requisite taxes, including the annual water tax and were entitled to be granted utility of water, but sufficient water was not being provided despite receiving additional charges.

The petitioners pleaded to declare the additional charges against each water bower as illegal and unlawful as well as contemptuous of the apex court orders, and sought restraining order against levying and collecting additional charges for supply of tankers.  
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 23/03/2022)

### **Three held for running illegal hydrant in SITE**

Police on Sunday sealed an illegal hydrant in the SITE area and arrested three suspects.

The action against the illegal hydrant was taken by the anti-theft cell of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) with the help of Mochko police.

Officials said that suspects Muhammad Khalid, Israr and Waqar had established an underground water tank to steal water from the main line and were illegally selling it through tankers.

They said that the suspects were also mixing water not fit for human consumption from ponds and puddles with the line water and supplying it to people in different parts of the city.

The KWSB directed the anti-theft cell of the water utility to expand its operation against illegal hydrants and water theft in the city and take strict action against the culprits.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 11/04/2022)

### **Water shortage**

FOR the past couple of weeks, news reports have been indicating an acute water shortage in the country. According to officials, water supplies in the past 10 days have been the lowest in the past five years — possibly more — as the water level in the two largest dams — Tarbela and Mangla — has been at dead level since February. The Tarbela Dam reached dead level on Feb 22, while the Mangla Dam has now reached less than 1pc of its total capacity. Consequently, the Kharif season has begun with at least a 40pc water shortage, giving rise to fears of a severe drought as the monsoons are still a couple of months away. The Sukkur and Kotri barrages, whose command areas are mainly dependent on the Tarbela Dam, have also reported more than a 40pc reduction in the volume of irrigation water. This month, a shortage of nearly 42pc and 37pc has been reported in Sindh's Nara and Rohri canals respectively, while a shortage of up to 53pc was recorded at Kotri.

According to officials, the crisis has been engendered by an unpredictable dry spell, which has resulted in 26pc less snowfall in the winter months and no rainfall since March. Moreover, despite the early onset of summer this year, snow hasn't melted at a comparable pace, because most of the snowfall took place at higher altitudes. This disturbing situation should not come as a surprise. Global bodies have been warning for some time that, by 2025, Pakistan would be facing a serious shortage of water on account of shifting rain patterns resulting from climate change, poor management of water resources and an outdated transmission infrastructure. The authorities need to realise that water scarcity is perhaps the foremost national challenge, costing the national exchequer nearly \$12bn a year and having grave implications for the country's overall food and economic security. The authorities need to immediately take stock of the situation and take swift measures to upgrade and manage the country's water distribution system while also finding innovative ways of storing groundwater.  
(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 12/04/2022)

### **Falling water level in rivers**

The gravity of the water availability situation in Pakistan can be gauged from the fact that it ranks 14<sup>th</sup> on the list of 17 countries hard hit by water shortage. Every summer water shortage in the country aggravates due to a variety of reasons. One important reason is the run-away rise in population. This year, summer has set in early. It is only April and the tidings as to the availability of water in the country's major rivers are not encouraging. The water level in rivers and dams has fallen to alarming levels due to the absence of rain in March.

What is making matters worse is that in the previous winter only 37 inches of snow fell against the annual average of 50 inches. This snow is melting at an excruciatingly low speed. All this has resulted in diminishing the amount of water in the country's major rivers. Till a few days ago, Mangla Dam had only 3,54000 acre feet of water against its capacity of seven million acre-feet. Now there is only 90,000 cusecs of water in all big rivers, including the Indus, against the past-decade average of 137,700 cusecs. Snow on the

mountains will likely melt in the next two months improving the availability of water in the rivers and dams. In the rainy season, the situation is expected to improve further.

For an agricultural country like Pakistan, the ever-worsening shortage of water is a grave issue. It is impacting the economy seriously as the country has to import large amounts of food commodities like wheat, lentils, edible oil and sugar. The international commodity prices have increased to record levels due mainly to the Russia-Ukraine war. The two warring nations are major producers of wheat, oilseeds and fertiliser, so the food import bill of countries like Pakistan would increase further. The growing water shortage in Pakistan is also due to the effects of climate change. The country lacks water storage capacity too as one-third of the rainwater that it receives either flows into the sea or evaporates. Unfortunately, this has been going on for years.  
(By Editorial, The Express Tribune, 14, 13/04/2022)

### **Thanks to KWSB, Karachi may not have water on Eid, too**

Failing distribution and supply system of clean water in the city that has hit almost every part of Karachi during Ramazan is bound to pile miseries on people during the days of Eidul Fitr mainly due to dilapidated infrastructure and inaction of the officials of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB), it emerged on Monday.

While the reports of acute shortage of clean water kept on pouring from every neighbourhood of the city, insiders in the water utility said the transmission and distribution system was not capable to cater to the needs of people as it had completed the designated economic life leading to losses of up to 40 per cent.

There are areas in the city where water had not flowed through the main pipelines for weeks and residents had no option, but to be fleeced by mushrooming water tanker mafia.

While the official rate of a small water tanker is Rs1,300, the tanker mafia has been selling it for Rs2,600.

*Residents believe water scarcity is being artificially created to help thrive business of 'tanker mafia'*

A resident of Gulshan-i-Iqbal, Block 13-D, Asif Ali, said his locality had run out of water for a long time and people were compelled to buy water through water tankers at exorbitant prices.

"Water used to flow in pipeline for a couple of hours daily a couple of weeks ago, but now it flows only for an hour and that too only once a week," he said and added that water could not be obtained in any part of the city without applying suction pumps.

Another resident claimed that water scarcity was being artificially created to help thrive the business of the tanker mafia. "It is obvious that the tanker mafia is mushrooming in the city with the active connivance of the KWSB officials," he said.

Residents of several localities also complained that the water utility was supplying unhygienic water putting their lives at risk.

"The water utility has made our lives miserable, especially during Ramazan, as we do not get clean water even for ablution," a resident of Qayyumabad said.

He said that the main pipeline passing through Malir River from Qayyumabad was in a very dilapidated condition and the water flowing through it was mixed with industrial waste from the Korangi Industrial Area.

Another resident, who did not wish to be named, said people lodged several complaints with the KWSB, but to no avail. He said the KWSB staff at pumping stations was also involved in corrupt practices. He alleged that water utility staff did not release water to the vicinity until their palms were greased.

(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 03/05/2022)

### **Karachi getting less than half of 1,000MGD demand, Murad told**

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday conceded that the city's water distribution system was so defective that some areas of the city received water round the clock while various others had to wait for weeks.



"This system needs to be made judicious," he said and directed the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) to prepare a zoning plan for water distribution at the water trunk main level and town distribution network to provide the commodity up to the tail-end consumers.

Presiding over a meeting of the KWSB, Mr Shah also decided to launch a vigorous operation against water theft so that water could be supplied to the starving areas of the city.

"The KWSB has to improve its overall performance by ushering in the best professional practices in its entire system right from the administration to water distribution, revenue collection to enhancement in revenue resources, reduction line losses to completion of its projects in time," he said.

*CM says tankers stealing water from system; orders KWSB to reduce line losses, curb water theft*

Mr Shah said that the water utility was responsible for transmission and distribution of water to the people of Karachi.

The meeting was attended by Local Government Minister Nasir Shah, Labour Minister Saeed Ghani, Administrator Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, CM's Special Assistant Waqar Mehdi, KWSB vice chairman Najmi Alam, LG Secretary Najam Shah and others.

### **City receiving 406 MGD**

The LG minister informed the meeting that the overall water supply to Karachi was around 406 million gallons per day (MGD) against the demand of 1,000 MGD.

He added that the distribution network outlived the water system laid decades ago. "Weak water pipe joints causing wastages and leakages of water."

He said the KWSB took 450 MGD water from Dhabeji, 100 MGD from Hub and 30 MGD from Gharo. "In this way we have 580 MGD, of which 30 per cent, or 174 MGD, goes waste in line losses that means 406 MGD is available for the city," he calculated.

Forty gallons of water per capita for 25 million population/water users of Karachi comes to 1,000 MGD.

According to the LG minister, the last addition in bulk water supply source was made in 2007 of 100 MGD through the K-III project.

"The power breakdowns at Dhabeji, Gharo or Hub result in immediate reduction in supply," he said and added that the change of land use from residential to commercial had unbalanced the amount of water drawn from the existing inventory in street/roads.

The meeting was told that the water demand in each district/town had increased twice against the water supplied and the consumers close to water mains/pumping stations drew water of their need, but tail-enders or consumers in elevated areas were not getting water because of short supply.

### **Six 'legal' hydrants in city**

When asked by the CM as to how people were getting water when there was such a huge shortage of 594 MGD in the city, he was informed that they were getting water through tankers.

The CM said that it meant water was available in the system from where the tankers were supplying water to meet the demand.

The LG minister said that all the illegal hydrants had been eliminated and only six legal hydrants were in operation.

CM Shah said tankers did not fetch water from Keenjhar Lake or the Indus. "They are stealing water from the water board system," he remarked.

He directed the chief secretary to coordinate with Rangers, police, and other agencies to launch a decisive operation against water theft in the city.

"I want you [KWSB] to take action against consumers who have installed heavy pumps over water supply pipes or taken illegal water connection from the main pipes," he said.

He also directed the water board administration to expedite their schemes for adding more water in the system and upgrade the distribution system and replacement of old pipes with new ones.

"A 65 MGD additional water supply scheme of Rs9.1 billion, rehabilitation of Hub canal and installation of five MGD desalination project under the public-private partnership mode should be taken up at a fast pace," he said and added the KWSB must improve its performance to handle the entire operation.

(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 07/05/2022)

### **Murad sets up task force for crackdown on water theft in Karachi**

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Sunday formed a high-powered task force to take action against the menace of water theft as well as illegal hydrants and to plug leakages in the system of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB).

In less than a week, Mr Shah chaired a second meeting on the issue of water shortages in the city at the CM House and instructed the members of the task force to launch operation in next two days.

He made Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Shah as the head of the task force. Other members would include Karachi police chief, commissioner, deputy commissioners concerned, CM's Special Assistant Waqar Mehdi, KWSB vice chairman Najmi Alam and others.

It was decided that the task force would be accompanied by police, Rangers and officials of the anti-encroachment departments to take a decisive action against illegal connections and water hydrants.

*CM annoyed over KWSB for presenting 'hypothetical figures'*



The meeting was attended by provincial ministers Saeed Ghani, Nasir Shah, Sharjeel Memon, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Planning and Development chairman Hassan Naqvi, LG Secretary Najam Shah and other senior officials.

Briefing the meeting, the LG secretary said that the KWSB infrastructure started from Keenjhar Lake to bulk water supply network taking water to reservoirs and pumps for distribution.

KWSB officials replied in the negative when the chief minister asked them about installation of meters at the main source. The CM observed that all the figures of receiving water and line losses or theft were hypothetical.

He directed the KWSB to start installing meters to gauge the water being provided to the city from Keenjhar up to the distribution system so that accurate figures could be obtained to calculate the losses.

He was of the view that a monitoring system for justified water supply across the city based on number of population of every neighbourhood was badly needed.

He directed the water board to prepare a town-wise water distribution plan keeping in view the population of the area. "If a town has more population, it should be given more water than the town having less population," he said.

The CM said that a similar meter system should be established right from Hub source up to its distribution system in district West.

He also directed the KWSB to prepare a monitoring and data logging system.

Mapping of areas based on existing demand and supply may also be established with the help of NED University, he said, adding that alternative design for ample water supply for all the areas based on population demand using hydraulic modelling was the way forward to resolve the water issue of the city.

He also directed the water board to develop a GIS (Geographic Information System) based application for water management for KWSB water supply system.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 09/05/2022)

### **Severe water crisis**

FOR almost two months, warnings were being sounded by experts about the impending water shortages in the country. The prognosis was expected after the country received 26pc less snowfall last winter compared to previous years, followed by a completely dry spell in March and April. That the slower melting of glaciers would intensify the shortages had not been taken into account.

Together, these factors meant that Pakistan's rivers would run dry. In fact, the two largest reservoirs, Tarbela and Mangla, hit dead level much earlier than expected. Thus, it is not surprising that the lower riparians in southern Punjab and Sindh are facing their worst shortages in decades, with water from the mighty Indus reduced to 40pc of its normal flow.

Pictures of swathes of parched agricultural land and livestock carcasses dotting the bone-dry bed of the Indus in parts of Sindh and south Punjab underscore the severity of the crisis that farmers are struggling to handle. The situation is precarious as a very large number of people in the affected districts are on the verge of losing their crops and animals.

Worried about their crops, livestock and looming hunger, smallholders are staging protests in Sindh. There have also been isolated reports of attacks on Sindh irrigation staffers by angry farmers. The worst part of the story is that even when the glaciers start melting in the next few days, filling rivers and dams, and the monsoon season sets in, most affected farmers will not be able to recover their livelihood losses.

It is almost certain that the current water shortages will persist beyond summer into winter and we may not have enough water for the Rabi crops, especially wheat, in the reservoirs, putting food security at risk.

The current situation is just another reminder that Pakistan may become the most water-stressed nation in the region by 2040 because of multiple factors, including climate change, population explosion, mismanagement of the water economy, primitive irrigation practices, an obsolete water transmission infrastructure, lack of reservoirs, etc. The country already ranks 14th among the 17 'extremely high water-risk' regions in the world, a list that includes hot and dry countries like Saudi Arabia.

Pakistan's water troubles are not confined to surface water. Groundwater resources are also severely overdrawn for irrigation. Yet no government has shown any urgency to deal with the formidable challenge to food and the long-term economic security of the country's 220m residents.

The present crisis should be a wake-up call for federal and provincial authorities. It is time they took stock of Pakistan's biggest existential challenge and crafted holistic policies to improve governance in the water sector, built reservoirs for times of shortages, and improved the water transmission infrastructure.

The authorities must realise that we are running short of time and options, just like we are running out of water.

(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 14/05/2022)

## SHC seeks water distribution, planning details for Karachi

The Sindh High Court (SHC) has sought details of water distribution and planning across Karachi on a petition pertaining to water supply to the residents of Defence and Clifton.

A two-member bench headed by Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi heard the petition.

The Cantonment Board's counsel argued that the Clifton Cantonment Board can provide water to the residents as per the quantity it receives from the Water Board. It is not possible to supply water more than the quantity supplied by the water board.

Defence and Clifton are not considered part of Karachi. There is no water supply plan in these areas.

Petitioner's counsel stated, "Nine million gallons of water is allotted for our area but we get only 4.5 MGD. Half of the water received from the water board is lost due to line losses."

The court had earlier ruled that charges should not be levied on residents who were not being provided water.

The cantonment board lawyer stated, "If the residents want we will disconnect the water connection and will not charge."

This is ridiculous. Providing water is the responsibility of the state. Cantonment board should install the meter. Where water usage is zero, no charges should be levied.

The court remarked that the problem could be solved if the people were capable, had good intentions and corruption was eradicated. Petitioner's counsel stated that when a tanker is ordered from a private company, charges of Rs9,000 are levied. Inspired by the private tanker mafia, cantonment boards have started supplying water through water bowsers.

The court inquired about the number of pumping stations for water supply in DHA and Clifton. The chief engineer of water board said that there is only one pumping station at Pipri to supply water to the entire city. No new project for water supply to Karachi has been launched since K4.

Justice Syed Hassan Azhar Rizvi remarked that if K4 project is not completed in 10 years then management will not be able to provide water.

The court asked, how is it possible that there is water in other areas but not in DHA? Will you decide by looking at the face of someone who is to be provided water and who is not?

The court, while seeking reply from the water board officials, asked them to tell who decides whether to supply water to any part of the city or not.

The court sought details of water distribution and planning for Karachi.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 05, 18/05/2022)

### **Report on DHA, Clifton water supply sought**

The Sindh High Court on Tuesday directed the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board to file a comprehensive report regarding the policy and planning to provide water to different parts of the city, especially the areas of Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC).

A two-judge bench headed by Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi also sought replies from the water utility and the CBC along with the personal affidavits of the KWSB chief engineer and executive officer of CBC on one of the identical petitions till the next hearing.

When the bench took up for hearing three identical petitions filed against an additional levy on water and inadequate facility of clean water in DHA and Clifton, the CBC filed a statement in compliance with an earlier order about bowser service charges, map of hydrants in CBC, detail of pumping stations, location of underground/overhead tanks with capacities and bulk flow diagram.

It took the statement on record and copies were provided to the lawyers for the petitioners.

*SHC wants to know who determines water quantity to be supplied in different city areas*

The bench in its order said that a KWSB official had failed to answer the query made by the judges regarding the supply of adequate water in the area of DHA.

However, the KWSB chief engineer assured the bench that a comprehensive report related to policy and planning of supply of water to different parts of the metropolis particularly in the areas of DHA and Clifton will be filed on the next date of hearing.

The bench directed the KWSB that the report must also contain the parameters of water supply to the city and whether supply of water was being made on the basis of the population of the areas or any other ground.

"Who is the authority to determine to supply water and its quantity in the different areas? Name and designation of such authority is to be submitted in the report regarding supply of water in different areas of Karachi particularly the area of DHA/Clifton," the bench stated in its order.

The CBC in its report stated that there were 58 pumping stations and 44 vehicles for the bowser section and around 770 bowzers being delivered daily while 25 underground and 18 overhead tanks got the capacity of 13,255 MGD.

Per trip cost of a bowser is around Rs900 and a subsidy of Rs150 per trip is being offered to the residents, it added.

The bench adjourned the hearing for a date to be later fixed by its office and said that the earlier interim order on the application of a former attorney general to continue till the next hearing.

Former attorney general Anwar Mansoor Khan, who is one of the petitioners, had filed a bill of Rs9,000 issued by the CBC and DHA claiming service charges for supply of water through water bowzers and the bench through an interim order had restrained the CBC and DHA from claiming any water supply charges from Mr Khan till next hearing.

Around 95 residents of DHA and CBC filed three petitions in the SHC stating that they had been paying annual water levy regularly, but the respondents failed to provide adequate water to them and other residents.  
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 18/05/2022)

### WB asks Sindh to finalise water policy

World Bank officials have asked the Sindh government to finalise its water policy by August to ensure funding for the Sindh Water and Agriculture Transformation (SWAT) project.

SWAT Project Head Greg Browder during a meeting with Sindh Minister for Irrigation Jam Khan Shoro said it would be difficult to process the project without finalising water policy.

Shoro informed the World Bank team that draft of Sindh water policy is under process and very soon it will be finalised by taking into confidence all the stakeholders. "Sindh water policy is an important matter and we are facing lots of different inter-provincial issues and it is connected with the future generation of Sindh," he said.

Shoro further said, "we couldn't finalise the Sindh water policy without the consultations and consensus of stakeholders including organisation of farmers and others." Browder and other members of World Bank team, Francis Onimues and Josses Moeabi discussed the status of SWA project, Sindh water policy and the implementation of Sindh Barrages Improvement Projects in detail with Shoro. Meeting was attended by the concerned officers of Irrigation department, Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority (SIDA) including Managing Director, SIDA Pritam Das, Muhammad Ehsan laghari and others.

The SIDA MD said that Sindh Irrigation Department had initially prepared a PC-1 of Rs300 millions for the resettlement action plan to rehabilitate the areas which are located near Akram Wah and in this regard, Sindh government had approved it in the Annual Development Scheme. "Moreover, Rs200 millions has been added for PC1 under SWAT project for the resettlement action plan as well," he added.

### Tarbela Dam hits dead level

The Sindh Irrigation Minister Jam Khan Shoro has expressed deep concern that the Tarbela dam, which supplies water to Sindh, has reached dead level because the Indus River System Authority has opened TP and CJ link canals. In a statement on Monday Shoro said IRSA was conveyed apprehensions of Sindh in advance about the depleting level of Tarbela because of supply of water to Taunsa-Panjanad and Chashma-Jhelum canals.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 24/05/2022)

### Karachi's water crisis

PERHAPS for the first time, a newly elected prime minister on his maiden visit to Karachi reviewed the progress of various stalled development schemes. Upon his arrival in the city last month, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a meeting to understand two chronic problems of the city: potable water and public transport.



The latter more or less depends on accelerating the planning and execution of ongoing projects and the availability of funds. The former, however, has so far proven to be an interminable problem. Mr Sharif ordered the completion of the Greater Karachi Bulk Water Supply Scheme, commonly called the K-IV project, by the end of 2024. But even after its completion, providing water for human consumption and industrial use will remain a huge challenge since supplies depend on the volume available in the Kotri barrage pond — Karachi's only source of water.

Karachi's water allocation was increased to 1,200 cusecs in the late 1980s to meet the carrying capacity of channels under the K-III project. However, unchecked population growth, besides transmission and distribution losses of 30 per cent to 35pc owing to the mushrooming of the 'water mafia', have compounded the woes of citizens. The K-IV project was designed to add 650 million gallons

of water per day through a separate channel drawn from the Keenjhar reservoir. But to operate this, an additional 1,200 cusecs are required every day downstream Kotri.

Though the Sindh government has consented to allocate 600 cusecs, water for human consumption in Karachi has always received precedence over other usages. A judicious analysis of water availability and allocations to the canals emerging from the Kotri Barrage during the dry season (November to May) reveals that the K.B. Feeder has received more water than its proportional share at the cost of the livelihood of farmers in lower Sindh. This situation will only worsen once the daily water allocation to Karachi reaches 2,400 cusecs, especially since none of the barrages in upper Sindh release water for the city during the lean period, putting more pressure on already water-stressed tails of the canal network downstream Kotri.

*The authorities must prepare for prolonged dry spells.*

Although Sindh had insisted upon additional water allocations for Karachi during the inter-provincial water apportionment negotiations in 1991, its pleas were ignored by the federal government. In fact, the 1991 accord itself is not being implemented in the way it was meant to be. In addition, the required flow of a minimum of 10 MAF of water to save the Indus delta is not maintained.

Sindh's, especially Karachi's, dilemma is that the subsoil water is too alkaline for industrial use. Hence, industries end up consuming a huge share of the available water supply, leaving lower Sindh farmers high and dry. In this regard, the Sindh government has moved the Council of Common Interests for allocation of additional water resources, but so far there has been no headway. Moreover, the water crisis of Karachi will only aggravate when as many as 70 big and small dams and reservoirs (many built without Sindh's consent) on the Indus river, its tributaries in Gilgit-Baltistan down to Haripur, and on its right bank from Chitral to the Darawat dam in Jamshoro are finally operationalised. Besides, the forced opening of the Chashma-Jhelum link canal in violation of the water accord and the existence of thousands of tube wells, pumping machines and lift channels between Panjnad and Amri will surely create an acute water shortage at the head of Kotri Barrage during dry spells.

Unfortunately, it appears that Karachi's political pundits are either ignorant or least concerned about the effect of the onslaught of water projects and theft of water from the Indus. How else can one explain their indifference to the recent protests held by farmers against a common cause: construction of dams on the Indus and its tributaries, and the violation of the 1991 water accord by Punjab? The costly operationalisation of the K-IV water project might provide Karachiites some relief, but unabated population growth, the unstoppable effects of climate change and the shrinking flows of the Indus river are bound to affect water quantities upstream Kotri in the coming years.

The authorities must prepare for prolonged dry spells, while also finding new feasible sites that fill up when the Indus overflows in the flood season, to store water. In this regard, the possibility of converting the Sonda depression, near Jheruk (Thatta), into a retaining dam must be revisited. Similarly, the Hadero lake between Haleji and Keenjhar lakes is an ideal site for a reservoir.  
(By Meer Muhammad Parihar Dawn, 07, 24/05/2022)

### **'1,000 to 1,200 children taking up smoking daily'**

An estimated 1,000 to 1,200 schoolchildren between six and 16 years of age are taking up smoking every day in Pakistan, where 160,000 people die every year due to tobacco-related diseases.

Successive governments made a compromise on public health as they didn't impose high taxes on the tobacco industry — a strategy which has brought significant reduction in smoking in other countries.

These points were shared on Monday at a media orientation session on the impact of tobacco smoking on children organised by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (Sparc), Karachi, at a local hotel.

Highlighting how successive governments ignored the gravity of growing tobacco use, Sadia Shakeel of Sparc said that big tobacco industry caused a whopping Rs153 billion loss to the national exchequer between 2016 and 2019 by being awarded low tax rate and through price adjustments of their most sold brands.

"Almost 90 per cent of all brands consumed in Pakistan were taxed as "low" tiers under the previous tax system (FY 2016-17). Big tobacco companies share 75pc of the total market, which means they were able to sell 120 billion cigarettes in the same period," she said.

Sharing the WHO statistics, Dr Farah Iqbal, a senior professor and chairperson of the Karachi University's psychology department, said that tobacco was the only legal drug that killed many of its users.

"The WHO estimates that tobacco use (smoking and smokeless) is currently responsible for the death of about six million people across the world each year with many of these deaths occurring prematurely. This total includes about 600,000 people who die from the effects of second-hand smoke," she said.

Smoking caused, she pointed out, more deaths each year than alcohol misuse, HIV, illegal drug use, motor vehicle injuries and homicides combined.

Highlighting how tobacco damages health, Prof Iqbal said that there was more to cigarettes than just nicotine as they contained over 4,000 chemicals, over 50 of which were known to be toxic in nature.

“As adolescent brains are still developing, nicotine exposure during youth and young adulthood can change the way the brain works, leading to a lifetime of addiction and may cause long-lasting effects such as increased impulsivity and mood disorders,” she said, adding that smoking was associated with a host of other risky behaviours and most doctors agreed that smoking should be classified as a medical condition.

### **Smoking becoming popular**

On Pakistan, she referred to 2013 WHO data and said that 19pc of adults aged 18 and above smoked tobacco and among youth of age between 13 and 15 years, around 34pc reported being exposed to second-hand smoke in public places and 27pc report exposure at home.

“Smoking is becoming popular among schoolchildren and it is estimated that smoking in Pakistan has increased by 30pc over the last decade.

“The Pakistan Paediatrics Association has estimated that 1,000 to 1,200 schoolgoing children in the age group of six to 16 years take up smoking every day in the country,” she said.

Zahid Thebo of Sparc focused on the role of anti-smoking campaigns in educational institutions and said that the organisation had been working to push the government to increase taxes on tobacco products.

“Reduced smoking results in better health and reduced cost on health budget,” he said, regretting lack of implementation of anti-smoking laws.

Earlier, Kashif Mirza of Sparc presented an introduction on the session and defined the role of media with respect to social issues.

Presenting some data on passive smoking, he said that 70pc people in Pakistan had to experience second-hand smoking at indoor workplace, which was equally damaging.

He also spoke about the use of shisha and said that it’s a misconception that it’s a safe alternative to cigarettes.

He cited some statistics according to which the smoke from a shisha or water-pipe contained numerous toxicants that caused numerous diseases including cancer.

The session attended by several journalists ended with a vote of thanks by Sparc manager Shomaila Waheed.  
(By Newspaper’s Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 02/06/2022)

### **Women in poverty**

AS Pakistan goes through turbulent times on the political and economic fronts, women sink deeper and deeper into poverty. No one seems to care, least of all those leaders who are responsible for the public chaos, the economic uncertainty and insecurity they have created by their casual stance on serious issues.



Tehrik-i-Niswan, whose commitment to the women’s cause has never slackened, has come to the fore in these critical times. Last Friday, it organised a ‘peace table’ on women living in poverty. The Tehrik’s founder, Sheema Kermani, set the stage for a serious discourse with an enchanting musical performance in honour of women. This was a significant move. In fact, Sheema’s role in the women’s movement in Pakistan has been quite remarkable. She launched the Tehrik-i-Niswan in 1979 at a time when women in Pakistan were in dire straits.

The Hudood Ordinances, the chaadar and chaardiwari and other such tools of oppression and suppression were being used by Gen Ziaul Haq to crush women.

Creating the Tehrik proved to be a smart move. Its goal was the liberation of women and the medium used was music. Music is universally acknowledged to have a deep impact on the psyche and is a powerful medium for mobilising people for resistance. Sheema has a brave record of dancing for defiance. She has continued to lead this process of systemic change for more than three generations. Why a peace table? This concept was initiated by some global women claiming that women play the role of peacemakers and have their own inclusive perspective on issues in times of conflict. They must be included in peace negotiations. In that context, Friday’s event was important. It had an array of women speakers who impressed and inspired — Azra Sayeed, Tahira Abdullah, Hoorunnisa Palijo. They reassured us that women activism is as alive today as ever before.

*Today, 75pc of those living below the poverty line are women.*

The peace table was indeed timely. With so many women now visible in the media and on the political stage, we tend to forget that the really disadvantaged among them are not even visible though they constitute a huge number.

Unemployment, food insecurity, ill health, illiteracy, denial of reproductive health rights and violence have driven women to poverty. Today, 75 per cent of those living below the poverty line are women who are exploited and oppressed. The speakers laid out these facts. With activists like Veeru Kohli around nothing was left unsaid.

What next? Unlike earlier practice, a list of demands was drawn up and circulated. They mainly focused on registering and documenting women's contribution to the national economy and society. This would require calculating the GDP differently by taking into account women's unpaid work and disaggregating by sex all statistics related to labour and social welfare. Then there is the demand to revitalise the First Women Bank that was launched by Benazir Bhutto in her first term as prime minister and was providing useful services to women. It mainly financed women-initiated projects.

Some of the demands reiterate the rights of women that have long been ignored, such as ensuring women's access to assets and ownership of property. The list included the demand for the registration of women-headed households.

The list of demands confirmed a healthy shift in the orientation of the women's movement in the last seven-plus decades. Starting out by performing acts of charity and philanthropy, the women's movement developed in the next stage as a drive to educate women and give them awareness about themselves. That was the conscientisation of women to create awareness of their own potential. This was the first step towards the empowerment of women by preparing them to enter the workforce. Thereafter, it has been the phase of consolidation, confirmation and winning public acceptance.

This process should not be underestimated given the fact that as the movement grew, a backlash was created by the misogynist, obscurantist and patriarchal section of society. Since by then enlightened and progressive-minded men had become a part of the feminist movement, feminism began to lose its gender hue.

Some of the demands for the registration and documentation of women's economic activities come at a vital time. This is the time when the need for documentation of the national economy is being seen as a 'must do' measure that will be timeliest.

PS: Isn't it strange that in the current melee in the country today, women have no voice in decision-making? The women who are seen on television are either party spokespersons or party leaders mostly guarding their family's political legacy. They do not have an independent position of their own. Where is the women's parliamentary caucus that had been set up in the National Assembly more than a decade ago? It is in times of such polarisation that women's voices are sadly missing.

(By Zubeida Mustafa Dawn, 07, 03/06/2022)

### **Water shortages**

THIS summer has unpredictably turned out to be the driest in most parts of the country in many decades. No wonder Pakistan is faced with an unprecedented water shortage of around 50pc, the highest ever since 1991 when the provinces agreed to share the water available in the Indus river system under the Water Apportionment Accord. A dry spell resulting in approximately 26pc deficit in snowfall during the winter months as well as negligible rainfall in the last several months saw the current Kharif season begin with at least 40pc water shortage against an annual average deficit of 14pc for the last three decades. That the snow is not melting at a comparable pace in spite of the early onset of summer has drastically increased shortages in the system and drained the two largest reservoirs — Tarbela and Mangla. This should not come as a surprise to anyone. The hot and dry weather has already shrivelled the wheat output, and is likely to adversely affect cotton and rice production in Punjab and Sindh. It has also revived old tensions between the two provinces, with Sindh complaining it has suffered 14pc higher shortages than Punjab and demanding additional supplies for its growers.

Pakistan's looming water crisis has been in the making for many years and is of increasing concern. Many international research studies have predicted that Pakistan might run dry by 2025 as water scarcity is rising to alarming levels. A new White House report, US Action Plan on Global Water Security, forecasts that Pakistan will be among the world's most water-stressed countries, along with other regional states, by 2040. Yet the authorities in Islamabad have shown criminal negligence towards the approaching crisis that can quickly morph into a broader food, economic and national security issue if corrective measures are not implemented. The first step towards ensuring water security for posterity has to be a meticulous and thorough review of the 1991 accord to incorporate into it water conservation, governance, storage and usage strategies. The complexity and scale of the looming water crisis call for a response that is based on actual availability of the resource and not on hypothetical data. The ruling coalition government, with its member political parties representing the will of different provinces and regions, has an excellent opportunity to achieve a fresh consensus on how to deal with the crisis threatening food and economic security, and inter-provincial harmony.

(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 04/06/2022)

### **Sindh's water woes run deeper**

The province of Sindh appears to have been met with a double-pronged water crisis. On one end, there is a growing shortfall in the Indus River system which has brought the region on the brink of running dry. On the other end, it faces contamination of existing water from irresponsible disposal of industrial and sewage waste into the waterbodies hydrating the province. While the water shortage in the Indus system can be considered a product of climate change, the latter issue is more of an administrative concern, the onus of which rests upon the provincial government.

According to the last Environment Audit Report of the Auditor General of Pakistan, pollutants enter the Indus basin from different locations in the province; including municipal, industrial and agricultural wastes from Punjab that eventually flows down to Guddu and Sukkur barrages. Municipal and industrial effluents of Sukkur and Rohri are also dumped into the river.

In addition to that, the report highlights that water from Manchar Lake that is rich in pesticides, nitrates chromium, lead, copper, zinc, hazardous medical waste, and discharge from power plants and coal industries also joins the river upstream of Kotri. While the main source of pollution downstream of Kotri tends to be untreated sewage and industrial effluents from urban areas of Hyderabad and Kotri.

It has also been observed that the Irrigation Department, which is required to ensure waste treatment, has been negligent of its duties, failing to set up any waste treatment plants in Sindh's industrial zones.

Per the report, the water pollution in some areas is due to unchecked release of industrial pollutants from core industries like sugar mills. This, the report suggests, needs to be overseen by the Sindh government and curbed through effective system of monitoring and protecting quality of surface and ground waters.

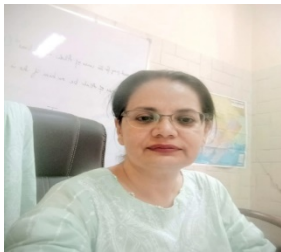
The water quality deterioration is largely caused by discharge of hazardous wastes. Main industrial estates of Karachi, kotri, Hyderabad and Sukkur are seen as the key culprit of increasing pollution in natural streams, rivers and the sea. "No strategies have been developed by the SIDA (Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority) for improvement of irrigation and drainage services, integrated water management, food protection, prevention of sea water intrusion, water distribution in times of drought and wetland management" the report emphasized.

Speaking in the regard, SIDA Chairperson Abdul Basit Soomro opined that the issues of discharge of waste water into fresh water and untreated industrial effluent exists in the province due to different reasons. He said that there are several residential schemes near canals that have been discharging their waste into the fresh water for decades. "They have no alternate drain for disposal of waste water," he added.

He further claimed that the government had asked all factories to install treatment plants but they have still not implemented the government's directives. Speaking further, the SIDA chair also accused the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) for not completing its drainage project, Right Bank Outfall Drain (RBOD) despite years in the works.

"The early completion of the project will resolve disposal of industrial waste. Industrial waste is not only polluting surface water but also contaminating underground water in the province," he commented, while speaking to The Express Tribune.  
(By Razzak Abro The Express Tribune, 04, 08/06/2022)

### **First woman police surgeon appointed**



Senior medico-legal officer Dr Summaiya Syed became the first woman who has been appointed as the police surgeon.

According to a notification issued on Wednesday, Dr Syed, senior medical officer (BS-19), presently posted as additional police surgeon (BS-19), was assigned to hold additional charge of the police surgeon (BS-20) till further orders.

Former police surgeon Dr Qarar Ahmed Abbasi said that after late Prof Farhat Mirza, Dr Syed was the first female police surgeon who had expertise in forensic science .

He said that Dr Syed had a vast experience in medico-legal cases.

He said it was a long-standing demand of MLOs that the post of police surgeon should be given to relevant technical expert.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 09/06/2022)

### **K-IV is no more a pipe dream — three Rs98.5bn contracts signed**

The Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) on Thursday awarded three contracts of Rs98.5 billion for construction of Phase-I of Greater Karachi Water Supply Scheme — also known as K-IV — to supply 260 million gallons per day (MGD) of water to Karachi.

The contract signing ceremony between Wapda and three contractors was witnessed by Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshheed Ahmed Shah, acting Wapda chairman Naveed Asghar Chaudhry and Wapda members for water and power Javed Latif and Jamil Akhtar and representatives of consultants and the construction firms.

Two contracts worth Rs81.116bn were awarded to a consortium comprising M/s China Harbour Engineering Company Limited and AL-Fajr International while the third contract of Rs17.4bn was awarded to Descon Engineering.

A Wapda general manager explained that Phase-I of the K-IV project would be constructed in district Thatta and Karachi's districts Malir and West with approved estimated cost of Rs126.5bn to supply 260 MGD of water to Karachi.

*First phase work is scheduled to be completed in Oct 2023*

The K-IV first phase will be constructed through eight packages of which two contracts had already been awarded while three contracts were awarded on Thursday.

Contracts for two remaining packages will be awarded within the next 10 days. Two contractors have already been mobilised to the site and construction of the project will commence in the first week of July.

The phase-I of the K-IV is scheduled to be completed in October 2023.

Under the first contract signed on Thursday, 129.4-km-long “pressurised water transmission pipelines” would be laid and allied works would be carried out involving jointing of 84-inch and 52-inch pipelines.

The Rs52.27bn worth of contract involves completion time of 17 months. Contract was signed by representatives of M/s China Harbour Engineering Company Limited and M/s AL-Fajr International (the contractors) and project director K-IV of Wapda.

The second package worth Rs28.846bn was awarded to the same consortium.

The length of the pipeline of this package is about 80 kilometres and involved pipelines of 84- and 64-inch diameters. The package has to be completed in 16 months.

The third package of Engineering Procurement & Construction (EPC) Turnkey Contract of Pumping Station 2 x 130 MGD (Civil, Electrical & Mechanical Works) was signed with Descon Engineering at a cost of Rs17.4bn.

This involves about two pumping stations of 130MGD each and 12 pumps of 32.5MGD each, including four for standby arrangement. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Shah said the K-IV was a vital project for Karachi and would help address the issue of water supply to the cosmopolitan city and economic hub of Pakistan.

He expressed the hope that the project would be completed within the timeline to ensure its benefits to the people at the earliest.  
(By Khaleeq Kiani Dawn, 13, 10/06/2022)

### **K-IV progress**

AFTER several delays and unfulfilled promises, the K-IV water project — designed to deliver an extra 260 million gallons of water per day to Karachi in phase-1 — has finally gotten off the ground. Formally launched in 2011, and on the drawing board for many years before that, Wapda on Thursday awarded contracts for the first phase of the scheme, which will hopefully be completed by October next year. The K-IV project in particular, and infrastructure schemes for Karachi in general, have long been neglected by the federal and provincial governments. In the meantime, residents of the metropolis have struggled to find water to drink, bathe with and use for household chores. According to estimates, the city needs around 1,100MGD; it receives around half of that volume as the rest is pilfered, or lost in transmission. And while the rich can afford tankers, it is the poor living in urban slums who have to suffer the most, spending a high percentage of their meagre incomes buying water. In this context, progress on the K-IV scheme should ease the water woes of the metropolis somewhat.

While multibillion-rupee projects such as K-IV are of course needed to upgrade Karachi’s decrepit water system, more needs to be done by the authorities to prevent theft, and encourage water conservation. It is hardly a secret that while law-abiding citizens who pay their bills are deprived of water from the mains, the ‘tanker mafia’ has ample access to the precious resource. Of course, such criminal elements that steal water cannot function without help from those within state departments. Therefore, the government needs to crack down on all those who steal water and sell it for unholy profits, as well as those who aid and abet them. Moreover, water scarcity is a nationwide concern, and there are valid questions about where the extra water for Karachi will come from. The state, then, must encourage conservation of water and penalise those who waste it, while also replacing the leaky infrastructure that adds to the losses.

(By Editorial, Dawn, 06, 11/06/2022)

### **City needs more public sources of drinking water**

There was once an age when drinking fountains and water dispensers, were a part of urban life in the port city.

However, these public sources of clean, drinking water have become endangered at a time when their existence can make the difference between life and death.

Being out in the sun for long hours during Karachi’s searing summers can leave anyone dehydrated to the point of exhaustion, but the recent heatwave has only matters more terminal. In such circumstances, access to cold, drinking water can be a lifesaver.

While the government is yet to relaise this, the people of Karachi, who have always been first to come to the city’s aid, are seen installing water dispensers on the city’s baked sidewalks or placing coolers and mud vessels filled with water, out of their own pocket, as an act of public welfare.

According to Kaleem Ahmad Usmani, who identifies as a social activist, the reason for Karachi’s endangered water dispensers is the government’s ignorance. “These water dispensers were probably installed many years ago, but it seems there was no plan for their upkeep and maintenance. So over time, they have either run dry or the fixtures are broken or become clogged. Some have disappeared altogether, because there was no one to keep an eye on them,” told Usmani, adding that he has seen some working dispensers but they don’t cool and the water than pours out of them is often boiling hot under the sun.

This drinking water crisis most severely impacts the city’s poorest communities, that includes homeless people, laborers and daily wagers who rarely have any reprieve from the sun. “While the rich can cool off in the comfort of their cars or buy a bottle of cold drinking water from any shop when hot, the poor can’t afford such luxuries and rely on public coolers and dispensers,” remarked Tarannum Kamal, a welfare worker.



Dr Muhammad Shoaib Khan, who is a senior physician at a government hospital, says that access to clean, drinking water for every citizen is imperative during the harsh weather conditions that the region is facing. "Hydration is one thing that stands between life and death in case of heat waves, so it is advised people either avoid being in the sun or take necessary precaution to avoid heatstroke," he told.

Speaking in the regard, Sindh Chief Minister's Advisor Waqar Mehdi said that the demand for water has increased in Karachi due to rising heat. "The government is trying to set up cold water dispensers or water camps in public places with the help of charities. Practical steps in this regard will be seen soon," he told The Express Tribune, urging the citizens to use water carefully.  
(By Aamir Khan The Express Tribune, 04, 25/06/2022)