

NEWSCLIPPINGS

JULY TO DECEMBER 2025

KMC LOCAL BODY



Urban Resource Centre

A-2, 2nd floor, Westland Trade Centre, Block 7&8, C-5, Shaheed-e-Millat Road, Karachi.
Tel: 021-34387692, Email: urckhi@yahoo.com, Website: www.urckarachi.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/URCKHI Twitter: <https://twitter.com/urckhi>

Mayor blames TMCs, gas utility for city's crumbling roads amid rains

As Karachi reels from battered streets and traffic chaos following the first spell of monsoon rains, a fresh political storm is brewing over the partnership between the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and the city's town administrations for an ongoing infrastructure revamp, as the city mayor claims the arrangements between the two sides have turned vast swathes of the metropolis into dug-up trenches.



In a sharply worded letter addressed to Sindh's Minister for Local Bodies, Saeed Ghani, Mayor Murtaza Wahab has openly voiced his displeasure, highlighting what he terms a "matter of public importance" and levelling serious allegations against the Town Municipal Corporations (TMCs).

In the letter, the mayor asserts that although billions have been collected by towns in the name of "road cutting charges" from utility companies — most notably SSGC — little to no rehabilitation work has followed. The result: roads in ruins, growing public outrage and a post-rain mess that could have been avoided, he says.

"It appears that despite receiving huge amounts, repair work has not been carried out by the respective towns," the mayor writes, calling the condition of the roads "dilapidated" and blaming the worsening situation on the inaction of town administrations.

According to sources within the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), this is not the first time the mayor has flagged the issue. But this time, his tone is unmistakably direct — and accusatory. The letter does not merely highlight mismanagement; it hints at a deeper rift over jurisdiction and authority.

At the core of the controversy lies SSGC's wide-scale infrastructure upgradation, which involves road cutting across the city. While SSGC has been paying hefty sums to towns for permission and restoration work, Mr Wahab contends that much of this is taking place without the involvement of KMC — despite many roads being under its jurisdiction.

"In numerous meetings with the Honourable Chief Minister Sindh, the matter was raised that funds collected for road restoration should be used solely for that purpose." Yet, he alleges, towns have not only failed to restore the roads but have also overstepped their authority by charging fees on roads legally under KMC's control.

Insiders suggest that the letter is the culmination of months of simmering tensions. While towns argue they are coordinating directly with SSGC to ensure a speedy infrastructure rollout, the KMC views the arrangement as a circumvention of its authority — and a recipe for administrative chaos.

"The roads are being dug up with impunity," a KMC official said on condition of anonymity. "And when citizens complain, it's KMC that takes the blame — despite the towns pocketing the funds."

The mayor's letter is seen by many as an attempt not only to call out inefficiencies but also to distance his administration from the growing public anger over the city's crumbling road network.

TMCs reject criticism

Meanwhile, the towns dismissed the mayor's concerns as "politically motivated" and accused the KMC of attempting to usurp their legitimate administrative authority.

In a joint statement issued on Monday, New Karachi Town Chairman Muhammad Yousuf, North Nazimabad Town Chairman Atif Ali Khan and Model Town Chairman Zafar Ahmed Khan held the mayor and the local government minister responsible for the situation that emerged in the aftermath of Karachi's first spell of monsoon rains.

The town chairmen stated that the mayor, in his letter to the provincial local government minister, had levelled baseless accusations against town officials in an attempt to deflect blame from the mismanagement and incompetence of the KMC.

Expressing deep concern over the prevailing conditions, the local government representatives urged the mayor to fulfil his responsibilities rather than engaging in a "dirty blame game".

They asserted that the KMC was responsible for cleaning all major drains, while both the KMC and the local government department were tasked with reconstructing major roads ahead of the monsoon season. However, they said, both entities had failed to carry out their duties in time.

The statement further noted that Rs600 million had been allocated for the drainage and cleanliness project, but the work was delayed and not completed before the rains. "Had the two bodies completed their work on time, the current situation could have been avoided," it read.

Addressing the allegations regarding road reconstruction after SSGC's excavation, the town chairmen clarified that such work was only to be undertaken after the gas utility completed its installations — and would be initiated in due course accordingly.

"The mayor cannot simply shrug off his responsibilities by blaming others for his own shortcomings," the town chairmen added. (By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 01/07/2025)

Parking fee on 46 KMC-controlled roads ends

Citizens of Karachi can park their vehicles on 46 roads under the administrative control of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation completely free of charge from Tuesday (today).

The decision to abolish the parking fee was taken by Mayor Murtaza Wahab in February and a formal notification in this regard is expected soon.

An official confirmed that parking charges have been officially scrapped from 46 of the city's 106 major roads, which fall under the jurisdiction of KMC. The remaining roads are either managed by other local bodies or are under review for potential inclusion in the policy.

"KMC no longer needs Rs40-50 million in the head of annual parking fees. We are now standing on our own feet financially," he said, adding that the KMC's fiscal condition has significantly improved, with reserves fully stabilised, enabling such bold public welfare measures

While the six cantonment boards in the metropolis continue to charge parking fees in their respective jurisdiction, the mayor issued a stern warning against any individuals or groups who might continue to collect fees unlawfully on the roads under KMC control.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 01/07/2025)

105 development schemes worth Rs11bn to be launched soon, says mayor

In a significant push towards enhancing urban infrastructure, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) is set to launch 105 development schemes worth Rs11 billion during the month of July.

The announcement came during a meeting held on Tuesday at the KMC head office, chaired by Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, to review the progress of ongoing and upcoming development initiatives for the current fiscal year.

The session was convened in light of the recently passed KMC budget for the fiscal year 2025-26, which prioritises infrastructure rehabilitation, drainage improvements, road reconstruction and civic services across Karachi's urban sprawl.

The KMC's development budget, amounting to Rs42.2bn, reflects a strong developmental agenda, with a substantial portion earmarked for capital expenditure and infrastructure uplift.

KMC's Director General Technical Services, Tariq Mughal, briefed the mayor and senior officials on the comprehensive development roadmap.

He revealed that the corporation had secured a record Rs29 billion worth of development schemes from the Sindh government for the current fiscal year — an affirmation of provincial support for Karachi's municipal needs.

"One hundred and sixty-six schemes will be completed within this fiscal year without delay," Mr Mughal assured, adding that KMC had successfully completed 73 development schemes in the previous fiscal year. He further noted that 45 additional schemes are currently under way and are expected to reach completion in the coming months.

The Rs11 billion worth of schemes scheduled for July include major roadworks, drainage improvements and other civic infrastructure initiatives spanning multiple districts of the city.

The month-long execution drive is expected to significantly accelerate the pace of development and provide visible relief to citizens grappling with poor urban infrastructure.

Only last week, the KMC approved its Rs55.28 billion budget for the fiscal year 2025–26 through a majority vote during the City Council session chaired by Mayor Wahab.

However, despite the approval of the budget, the political divide within the council remained evident, as members on the opposition benches abstained from voting, voicing serious concerns over what they described as discriminatory and uneven allocation of development schemes.

During the Tuesday meeting, the mayor appreciated the efforts of the technical services team and underscored the need to ensure high standards of construction, fiscal transparency and timely delivery.

"Our commitment is to deliver tangible results to the people of Karachi," the mayor said. "There can be no compromise on quality. Every development scheme must be executed with full accountability and strict quality control."

The mayor also issued directives for heightened vigilance during the ongoing monsoon season. He stressed the importance of proactive planning and field monitoring to prevent waterlogging, road damage, or risks to public safety.

"We cannot allow rain-related disruptions to derail progress or endanger citizens. Every department must remain alert and responsive," he said.

The meeting was also attended by key municipal officials, including Municipal Commissioner S. M. Afzal Zaidi, Financial Advisor Gulzar Abro, Director Media Daniyal Siyal and senior members of the technical and planning departments.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 02/07/2026)

KMC retains parking charges at 11 designated covered sites

While the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) formally abolished charged parking at dozens of its designated facilities in the metropolis, it notified on Tuesday 11 locations where parking charges are still applied.

According to a notification, parking fees will be charged at Sindbad in Gulshan-i-Iqbal (boundary wall); A.O Clinic Parking, Nazimabad (boundary wall); Hydri Market Parking & Sunday Motorcycle Bazaar (boundary wall); in front of Nazimabad Driving Licence Branch (boundary wall); Clifton Centre (covered area); Sassi Arcade Clifton (covered Area); Paradise Centre Clifton (covered area); Polo Ground on Dr Ziauddin Ahmed Road (covered area); Crystal Court Clifton (covered area); Plot Between Beach View Parking in Clifton (covered area); Hyper Star, Beach View Parking in Clifton (covered area).

Parking fees waived at 32 locations

"The KMC is pleased to announce that parking fees will no longer be charged at 32 designated KMC-managed parking sites across the city," said a KMC statement.

Ends roadside paid parking across city

"This initiative aims to provide financial relief and improved public convenience to the citizens of Karachi. The decision will be implemented with effect from 1st July 2025," it added.

The KMC notification issued to announce the development also included a list of the spots where the parking facility has now been made free.

The East district areas include Fariya Mobile, Raza Mobile Rashid Minhas Road (Al-Ghafoor to Firdous Shopping Mall); KDA Market (Gulshan Flyover to Disco Bakery, Allama Shabbir Ahmed Usmani Road); Chase Value Centre opposite Alladin Park, Rashid Minhas Road (Service Road); Mashriq Centre to Kareem Plaza, Sir Shah Suleman Road, N.I.B.D Hospital to United King Bakery, Sir Shah Suleman Road; Service Road, Sharea Faisal (Karsaz Flyover to Quaideen Flyover and return); Al-Khaleej Tower to Kababjee (Service Road of Shaheed-i-Millat Road), Service Road from Hardees to Chase-Up Jail Chowrangi, Shaheed-i-Millat Road; Civic Centre, University Road & Sir Shah Suleman Road (Gate to DMC East Office); Imtiaz Store, Gulshan-i-Iqbal, Rashid Minhas Road; Gulshan View Mobile Market, Abul Hassan Isphani Road, Home Plus, Red Apple to Maskan Roundabout (both sides of Shabbir Ahmed Usmani Road), in front of Ruffi Shopping Mall; Main University Road, in front of Chase Plus, Safoora, Main University Road, in front of Usmania Hospital and Jail Road.

District Central areas include Sareena Mobile Market and Haroon Shopping Mall; Liaquatabad Super Market to Liaquatabad No.10; S.M. Toufeeq Road; Chase Super Store, Shahrah-i-Pakistan, F.B. Area; Centrum Shopping Mall, Rashid Minhas Road; Kifaya Omega Mall, North Karachi,

South district: In front of Jillani Centre Mobile Market, in front of Naz Plaza to Amma Tower, Kousar Medico to Civil Signal, Lighthouse Signal to M.W. Tower), M.A. Jinnah Road.

Areas under the Korangi and Malir districts include Raza Mobile Market to Nadra Office, Main National Highway, Malir; in front of Aman Tower, Main Korangi Road Crossing; in front of Jhanghir Petrol Pump, Quetta Namkeen, Rafiq Market (Chaman Plaza), in front of Mobile Market No.4, Main Korangi Road; Model Park Korangi No. 3½, in front of Cut Price Shop to Sindh Govt. Hospital, Main Korangi Road; in front of Chase Value, Shaan Chowrangi and Korangi Mehran Highway.

The West and Keamari districts areas include KPT Gate No.01, Keamari near Shell Petrol Pump, M.A. Jinnah Road; Sharjah Shopping Mall to Kohinoor Marriage Hall, Hub River Road.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 02/07/2025)

Workers' union to challenge fresh postings in KMC, TMCs

A representative body of workers in the local bodies has decided to approach the court over dubious appointments and postings in the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and the Town Municipal Corporations (TMCs).

Sajjan Union said trainee officers have been appointed on senior posts while many senior officers have been sidelined and forced to stay home.

Sajjan Union Central President Syed Zulfikar Shah has directed the union's legal team to prepare a petition for filing in the court against the illegal recruitments, adjustments, and postings in KMC and TMCs over the past three months.

In a statement issued on Thursday, he said that the legal discourse will be taken without bias, regardless of whether it affects any union official, worker, leader, or their family member. Shah said that the Sindh government has recruited municipal commissioners, accounts officers, and engineers through the Sindh Public Service Commission and appointed them to senior positions despite them still being under training. This has resulted in senior officers being sidelined. A petition is being prepared against these trainee officers, which will be filed in court along with the affected officers.

The union is also working towards implementing a court judgment that requires the deployment of Grade 19 SCUG officers and later Grade 18 officers, after removing Municipal Commissioners appointed in Grade 17 without an approved Schedule of Establishment. Affected officers have been asked to contact the union immediately.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 04/07/2025)

World War II relics stolen from KMC's Frere Hall office

Unknown thieves stole several antique items related to World War II from a Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) office inside Frere Hall during the Muharram holidays, it emerged on Saturday.

Five World War II memorial shields, a DVD player and a speaker were stolen from the office of the director general of the KMC's parks department, according to an FIR lodged by a KMC official at the Artillery Maidan police station under Section 380 (Theft in dwelling house, etc) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

The complainant, a deputy director of the KMC parks department, told the police that the DG office is situated inside Frere Hall on Fatima Jinnah Road. When it was reopened on July 7, staff found a broken window at the back of the office and upon inspection, the theft was discovered.

South DIG Syed Asad Raza told Dawn that an investigation had been launched. "Efforts are underway to arrest the suspects and recover the antiques," he said, adding that CCTV footage was being reviewed to help identify the culprits.

He said the contractor under whose supervision the stolen items were kept in the room, has also been called for investigation. Further information is to be obtained from the director of DG Park, who has yet to appear, as well as from the complainant, who said he would visit on Monday.

In addition, local scrap markets within the Frere police remit have been checked and informants have been tasked accordingly. The DIG said a "breakthrough" was expected soon.

The DIG added that police had recently written a letter to KMC authorities regarding rising security concerns, including illegal vendors and frequent motorcycle thefts in and around Frere Hall.

"The park once meant for peaceful recreation, has now unfortunately become a hub of unlawful activities. Local residents and visitors are deeply concerned about a host of issues there," the letter stated, adding: "There is no designated parking space, encouraging haphazard parking and facilitating theft."

The police recommended the KMC to install CCTV cameras at strategic locations in and around the park to take action against any suspicious activity.

The KMC was also asked to ensure coordination with the local police station for regular patrolling in the area in order to curb crime and ensure public safety.

(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 13, 13/07/2025)

Karachi roads crumble as civic bodies pocket billions from SSGC

Although the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) claims to have paid Rs11.9 billion in advance to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, town municipal corporations and cantonment boards for permission to lay underground lines, most of the dug-up roads in the metropolis remain in a dilapidated condition, with no repair work having been carried out by the concerned civic bodies.

Sources in the SSGC said that the gas utility had made payments to the KMC and TMCs before the road cutting for laying infrastructure of its distribution network, which had become old and corroded, leading to heavy gas leakages.

They said that the details of the payments disbursed to the KMC and TMCs for road digging and restoration (copy of which is available with *Dawn*) had been sent to Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, who had blamed the gas utility and the TMCs for the city's crumbling roads.

According to SSGC data, the highest payment — Rs3.55bn — was made to TMC New Karachi. TMC Model Colony received the second-highest payment of Rs2.10bn, while TMC Lyari received Rs1bn.

TMC Jinnah was paid Rs737 million and Rs625m to TMC Malir. TMC Saddar and TMC Chensar each received Rs260m, while TMC Landhi was paid Rs210m.

The SSGC paid Rs490m to the KMC for road-cutting and restoration works. The lowest amount of Rs227,000 was paid to TMC Gulshan.

The utility has also paid over Rs51m to the Karachi Development Authority, Rs166m to Cantonment Board Korangi and Rs96m to Cantonment Board Karachi

A spokesman for the gas utility said that the purpose of paying the "Road Restoration Charges" to the competent authorities was to financially assist the local governmental authorities in reinstatement of roads and other infrastructure, damaged during the different level of pipeline construction activities.

"SSGC after seeking written permission / NOCs from each of the respective civic authorities, made advanced payments for road cutting / reinstatement / restoration charges," he added.

Karachi Contractors Association chairman Syed Naeem Kazmi told *Dawn* that Rs11.9 billion was a huge and more than sufficient amount for the restoration of dug-up roads. "Double of the dug-up roads can be repaired and restored with such a huge amount," he claimed.

The SSGC spokesman said that the gas utility would continue to plan and execute these rehabilitation projects of its pipelines network as part of its broader strategy to modernise its infrastructure.

He said that over the years, considerable part of SSGC's gas distribution network had become old and corroded, leading to heavy gas leakages. "With an objective to minimise consumer complaints from residents of such areas, the SSGC has constantly been upgrading its gas distribution network by executing a comprehensive rehabilitation plan in which the age-old metal-based gas pipeline network has been / is being replaced with the best international practices of PE [polyethylene] pipes, which is a strong and thin plastic material," he added.

The spokesman said that the SSGC had embarked upon a massive rehabilitation drive of overall distribution network across its franchise area.

"In FY2024-25, the company has laid more than 2,500km distribution network (as compared to 1,700km during FY2023-24) in Sindh to improve the gas delivery pressures generally around the cities / towns and specifically improving the delivery of gas at the tail end of the network," he added.

(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 14/07/2025)

Mayor orders action against addicts damaging civic infrastructure

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Sunday ordered an immediate and citywide crackdown on drug addicts occupying roads, footpaths and other public spaces.

He issued such directives in response to several public complaints regarding damage to municipal infrastructure and rising incidents of theft from flyovers and bridges, public buildings, poles and boundary walls in the city.

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation Spokesperson Daniyal Siyal said that the addicts were damaging critical infrastructure through theft. For the sake of a few rupees, they are putting the beauty, safety, and public property of Karachi at risk, he added.

He said that the mayor ordered that drug addicts found in public spaces be safely shifted first to the headquarters of the city wardens and then to rehabilitation centres.

"Dedicated teams have been deployed in every district to ensure that the process is carried out in a secure, humane and structured manner with a strong focus on preventing repeat occupancy of these public areas," he said.

This issue has repeatedly come up in various meetings, especially concerning the theft and damage to public infrastructure.

The KMC has already offered land for the development of large-scale rehabilitation centres as part of a long-term solution. It remains committed to restoring order in public spaces, preserving public assets, and working towards the social reintegration of affected individuals through comprehensive rehabilitation efforts, he added.

(By App Dawn, 13, 14/07/2025)

KMC cracks down on drug addicts stealing iron rods, bridge railings

In response to multiple public complaints regarding the rising incidents of theft of iron bars and railings from bridges, public buildings, poles, and boundary walls across the city, Mayor Murtaza Wahab directed a citywide crackdown on drug addicts occupying roads, sidewalks, and other public spaces. He ordered for drug-addicted individuals, found in public spaces, to be safely shifted to the City Wardens Headquarters and then to rehabilitation centres. Spokesman Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), Daniyal Siyal, revealed that dedicated city warden teams have been deployed in every district to ensure the process is carried out in a secure, humane, and structured manner, with a focus on preventing repeat occupancy of public areas.

The issue in question has repeatedly come up in various high-level meetings chaired by the mayor, especially concerning theft and damage of public infrastructure. KMC has already offered land for the development of large-scale rehabilitation centres as part of a long-term solution. However, on the mayor's directives, the matter is also being taken up as a high-priority project.

Siyal stated "these individuals are not only damaging critical infrastructure through theft, they are also tearing at the social fabric of our city.

For the sake of a few rupees, they are putting the beauty, safety, and public property of Karachi at risk."

In regards to this, KMC remains committed to restoring order in public spaces, preserving public assets, and working towards the social reintegration of affected individuals through rehabilitation efforts.

Substance abuse victims

Mubina Town police, in response to reports of drug addicts gathering in the area, detained 13 individuals. According to SHO Chaudhry Nawaz, information was received about the presence of drug addicts around University Road and nearby areas, in response to which a police team conducted raids at the reported locations and took the individuals into custody, transferring them to a rehabilitation centre for treatment and recovery.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 14/07/2025)

KMC moves ahead with plan to float municipal bonds to finance city's uplift

In a major shift in the approach to financing city infrastructure — if approved by the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) — City Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Thursday gave a nod for the launch of 'municipal bonds' to raise funds to finance public projects and urban development schemes.

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) in a statement said: "The bold step is a leap towards financial innovation, sustainability, and self-reliance under the dynamic leadership of Mayor Wahab".

The approval for the municipal bonds follows the mayor's recent visit to the PSX, where he had expressed his commitment to "modernising Karachi's infrastructure through innovative financial instruments and public-private participation," the statement added.

"This landmark initiative marks a significant transformation in how cities like Karachi can fund their infrastructure and development needs. By moving away from conventional reliance on limited fiscal allocations, the KMC is embracing capital market tools that are widely used in developed economies to fund city projects in a transparent and sustainable manner."

Mayor approves 'landmark' initiative to modernise city's infrastructure

The statement said that municipal bonds are 'structured debt instruments' issued by local governments to finance specific development projects.

"These instruments allow structured repayment through dedicated revenue streams, reducing dependence on external subsidies," it added.

"The initial bond issuance will finance the development of a commercial market on KMC-owned land, a project designed to generate a steady stream of rental income. This income will be earmarked exclusively for the servicing and repayment of the bond. The underlying land will serve as collateral, fully aligning with asset-backed financing regulations and ensuring investor confidence," said the statement.

"Once the bond is repaid, the KMC will retain full ownership of the commercial asset, ensuring long-term revenue inflows that will strengthen the corporation's financial independence," it said.

"The municipal bonds will be floated through the PSX via a competitive bidding process, ensuring maximum transparency, investor confidence, and market participation. The bond structure will remain fully Shariah-compliant, with oversight from a dedicated Shariah advisory board to cater to ethical investment guidelines."

In accordance with procedural requirements, the KMC statement said, the bond issuance proposal has been legally vetted to confirm its compliance with the Sindh Local Government Act 2013, along with all applicable bylaws and financial regulations.

The finalised proposal had been submitted and formally approved by the mayor of Karachi.

"Following the mayor's approval, the KMC will publish an Expression of Interest (EOI) to invite bids and formalise the bond execution process. This will be carried out with full transparency and in accordance with procurement rules, ensuring the best possible outcomes for citizens of Karachi," said the statement.

"This pioneering initiative represents a bold and forward-looking governance model aimed at reshaping Karachi's financial landscape and accelerating urban development. By unlocking the power of municipal finance, the KMC is setting a precedent for other cities across Pakistan to follow," it added.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 18/07/2025)

Hub Canal, Korangi causeway among six projects to be ready in weeks, says mayor Karachi

While the Pakistan Peoples Party's provincial government has been accused of neglecting Karachi's development, the ruling party claims to have undertaken a wave of multi-billion-rupee infrastructure projects that are nearing completion and are set to open one after another in the coming weeks.

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, who is also a spokesperson for the Sindh government, has expressed confidence that at least six mega development initiatives will be completed in the next three to four months. Three of these projects are expected to become operational as early as next month.

The most imminent among the upcoming projects, officials say, is the completion of the Hub Canal Project — undertaken by the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) — which is expected to be inaugurated on August 14.

The project aims to improve Karachi's water supply by constructing a new 100 MGD (million gallons per day) canal from Hub Dam to Karachi and rehabilitating the existing one.

Says days of hardship for district Central residents are almost over as Karimabad underpass set to be opened on Sept 30

"The old canal supplying water from Hub Dam to Karachi is almost half a century old. Due to leakage and seepage, it was no longer capable of delivering the full 100 MGD of water. That's why we had decided to build a new canal to address the city's water shortage issues," said Mayor Wahab.

"Not only will this new canal ensure a reliable supply of 100 MGD, but the existing canal will also be repaired to provide additional water to various areas of the city," he said.

As part of road infrastructure development, the one-kilometre-long new Jam Sadiq Bridge is also expected to open by the end of August, according to officials.

The project gained significant momentum after March 2025 and is now on track for completion within weeks.

"In March 2025, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah visited the site to review the project's progress," an official said.

"The bridge, designed to provide a dedicated route for DHA and Korangi traffic on Shahrah-i-Bhutto, was originally scheduled for completion later in the year. However, the chief minister directed that the timeline be advanced, cutting the deadline short by at least two months to ensure its opening by the end of August."

The upcoming inauguration of TP-1 (Treatment Plant 1), also known as the Shershah treatment plant, under the West Karachi Recycling Water Project marks another transformative milestone in Karachi's water management strategy.

Speaking about the development, a senior KWSC official said that the TP-1 was not just a treatment plant, it's a breakthrough in the approach to urban sustainability.

"By delivering 35 MGD of industrial-grade water to SITE, we're significantly reducing the pressure on our freshwater reserves and ensuring that industry continues to thrive without compromising residential supply," said Mayor Wahab.

"We are committed to completing the work on the secondary treatment of 35 million gallons of raw sewage by August 30. Thereafter, we will work on utilising this water with further purification for industrial use," he said, adding: "We had some issues but we are grateful to the chief minister of Sindh for assuring full and complete support for this landmark initiative which can possibly and hopefully resolve the water issues of our city."

He also said that the Karimabad underpass in district Central would be inaugurated on September 30.

Launched by caretaker chief minister Maqbool Baqar in June 2023 under the supervision of the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) with the funding of the Sindh government, the project was initially approved with Rs1.35 billion budget, but it saw a significant rise in the cost by Rs3.8 billion due to the "additional" digging work.

"But the days of hardship and inconvenience are now almost over. The Karimabad underpass will be opened on September 30, which will prove to be a major convenience especially for the residents of Central district, and generally for the entire city," said Mayor Wahab.

The construction work on the Korangi Causeway Bridge near Qayyumabad and the Murghikhana Bridge over the Malir River along the N-5 Highway is progressing on the fast track, officials said, adding that clear directives have been issued to the contractors to ensure completion within the stipulated time.

"So by October 30, the Korangi Causeway Bridge will be open to traffic, and by December 31, Karachiites can expect the Murghikhana Bridge to be fully operational," the official added.
(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 20/07/2025)

CM Murad announces new corridor to boost Karachi port access

In a significant move to enhance Karachi's infrastructure, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday announced the development of a new corridor along the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Malir Expressway, also known as Shahrah-i-Bhutto, extending from Qayyumabad to Karachi Port.

This initiative aims to facilitate efficient port traffic access to the motorway and is expected to be a game-changer for the country's logistics and transportation network, the CM said while chairing a meeting at the Chief Minister House.

"Apart from the link road, which connects the National Highway with the motorway, the new corridor along Shahrah-i-Bhutto from Qayyumabad to the port will cater to port traffic heading to the motorway," he said.

The chief minister shared that the entire Shahrah-i-Bhutto, from Korangi Causeway to Kathore, would be opened to the public by the end of Dec 2025. The link road connecting the National Highway to the motorway, which caters to industrial traffic from areas such as Port Qasim, Landhi and Korangi, will also be opened soon.

Passageway from Qayyumabad will cater to port traffic heading to motorway

He highlighted the urgency of constructing the critical stretch from Karachi Port to Qayyumabad, which will provide direct and seamless access to the motorway for port traffic.

A private firm has reportedly submitted a proposal for the project under a design-finance-operate-transfer (DFOT) model. The proposal outlines a 16.5-kilometre road segment from Jam Sadiq Interchange to Karachi Port, including a 10.4-kilometre elevated section toward the port. The proposed construction will connect Qayyumabad to Boat Basin and further to Ziauddin Chowrangi and East Wharf.

In addition to the corridor plans, a traffic study has already been conducted in line with the chief minister's earlier directives. He mentioned that Shahrah-i-Bhutto would serve as a main artery, equally feasible for heavy and light traffic, with interchanges designed to accommodate nearby residential areas.

Reiterating the government's commitment to improving Karachi's infrastructure, CM Shah noted that work on the Red Line BRT infrastructure has been expedited, alongside redesign efforts for the Sohrab Goth roundabout, aimed at alleviating traffic congestion.

He concluded by assuring the public that once these development projects are completed, they will not only enhance accessibility but also transform the overall look and functionality of the city, ultimately benefiting its residents.

Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani, Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Special Assistant to the CM on Investment Qasim Naveed, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Chairman P&D Board Najam Shah, Karachi Commissioner Hassan Naqvi, Secretary Local Government Waseem Shamshad, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, Project Director Niaz Soomro and other officials attended the meeting.

Reviews digitisation of land revenue records

CM Murad Ali Shah directed the Board of Revenue (BoR) to integrate the e-mutation system with the e-registration system and expedite progress on the e-transfer system to improve service delivery.

He issued these directives while chairing a meeting of the Land Administration and Revenue Management Information System (Larmis) at CM House on Wednesday.

He said that Larmis was established to provide citizens with computerised access to land records and related services throughout the province. With 27 dedicated People's Service Centres (PSCs) across all district headquarters and a comprehensive online platform via the Board of Revenue's official website, the system ensures easy access to vital land information.

During the briefing, the CM was informed that modern IT infrastructure supports daily operations, while a state-of-the-art data centre located at Revenue House, Clifton, serves as the central repository for digitised land records. Moreover, a Disaster Recovery Centre (DRC) in Hyderabad guarantees service continuity during emergencies.

The digitisation process, which commenced in 2010 with the scanning of old records from 1985 to 2010, secures Forms VII-A, VII-B and Form II collected from all Mukhtiarkar offices. Continuous scanning and indexing of post-2010 records at the Provincial Record Centre (PRC) in Hyderabad ensure ongoing public accessibility through integrated networks. Larmis has further expanded its capabilities by offering digital access to government offices and statutory bodies for land title verification, the CM was told.

The introduction of e-registration services at PSCs has enhanced service delivery, with plans underway to integrate an e-mutation system.

Launched in Feb 2024, the e-registration system currently operates across 51 sub-registrar offices, facilitating registration services through PSCs. By July 2025, over 100,000 documents and deeds had been successfully registered through this system.

Furthermore, the Board of Revenue Sindh is collaborating with Sukkur IBA University on the development of an e-transfer of property system. This initiative aims to secure revenue records through blockchain technology, thereby making property transactions more transparent and user-friendly.

The meeting was attended by Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, Secretary Local Government Waseem Shamshad, Members Board of Revenue Omar Farooq Bullo and Saleem Baloch, Secretary-cum-Director Larmis Saifullah Abro and others.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 24/07/2025)

Sindh govt abolishes roadside charged parking across Karachi

The Sindh government on Friday officially abolished all roadside charged parking across Karachi — a practice that had long been seen by Karachiites as a gross exploitation of taxpayers, carried out on city roads for the past 25 years. The decision comes into effect at once.

The Sindh local government department, acting on the directives of the chief minister of Sindh, issued a notification announcing the end of parking fees on public roads throughout the city's 25 Town Municipal Corporations (TMCs).

As per the new policy, no municipal body or private entity is allowed to collect any parking fee from vehicles parked on roads anywhere in Karachi.

However, the move also granted the councils of the TMCs the authority to designate any 'specified area' within their remit as a charged parking space.

According to the notification, the Sindh chief minister "imposed a ban on charged parking fees from roads. The charged parking fees can be collected only on plots / plazas / areas specifically maintained by the specific Councils for such purposes".

TMCs given authority to designate 'specified area' as charged parking space; fee collection will continue in cantonment board areas

Effective immediately, all Town Municipal Administrations (TMAs) have been ordered to stop the collection of parking fees and begin implementation of the policy without delay.

The local government department has also launched a formal campaign to enforce this directive, with warnings of strict action against violators. Importantly, the ban applies strictly to public roads.

Parking fees will now only be legally permissible in designated parking plazas, private plots, or specific council-approved zones. These areas are expected to be clearly marked to avoid confusion.

"This step has been taken purely in public interest," said City Mayor Murtaza Wahab.

"Karachi's residents have long demanded and at times suffered at the hands of illegal and arbitrary parking fee collection. This administration has delivered on its promise of transparency and accountability, ensuring that public roads remain public spaces — free to use."

However, an official clarified that the charged parking would continue within the jurisdiction of six cantonment boards in Karachi. The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) sources revealed that the concept of charged parking in Karachi was first introduced in the year 2000.

The initiative was envisioned by the then director general of the Karachi Development Authority (KDA), retired brigadier Abdul Haq, as part of a broader strategy to generate municipal revenue. At that time, he was overseeing the city's infrastructure development and urban planning, and saw paid parking as a potential tool to fund civic services and manage growing vehicular congestion in the metropolis.

In February 2025, Mayor Murtaza Wahab hinted at abolishing the charged parking across Karachi as part of his broader vision to ease the financial burden on citizens.

However, the initiative faced delays due to existing contractual obligations, as several entities held valid charged parking agreements, which were set to expire in June.

During this period, the KMC continued to generate an average yearly revenue of Rs40 to 50 million from parking fees.

The abolition has been hailed by citizens and commuters as one of the most significant urban relief measures in recent years.

For decades, unauthorised contractors and so-called "parking mafias" had monopolised prime city spots, often charging arbitrary fees without any legal basis or standardised rate.

The KMC, which previously managed parking on 46 main roads, had already suspended such fees under a citywide policy revamp. Now, all 25 TMCs fall under the same directive, having a level playing field across the city.

The decision, the officials say, also reflects growing confidence in the financial stability of the KMC and other urban bodies, who are now able to carry out their operations without resorting to street-level revenue generation tactics that burdened citizens.

"No institution other than KMC in designated areas, and that too under regulation, can now engage in fee collection. The days of extortion in the name of parking are over," said a KMC spokesperson, adding that the government had also directed all municipal commissioners to ensure compliance, with a clear warning that failure to implement the order would result in immediate disciplinary measures.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 26/07/2026)

KMC initiates rainwater harvesting plan

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has initiated the establishment of multiple water tanks at key locations across the city in a move towards sustainable urban water management and flood prevention.

A statement issued on Wednesday said that this development comes as a result of a high-level meeting of the KMC Engineering Department, chaired last month by Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab.

"To ensure the proper channeling of rainwater, prevent accumulation on main roads and reduce the risk of urban flooding, the KMC has begun the initial phase of the project by creating water tanks at strategically selected sites," it said.

These include, the statement added, the KMC Head Office, Polo Ground, the area adjacent to the Sindh Secretariat and Burns Garden.

According to KMC spokesperson Daniyal Siyal, the construction teams have already commenced work at these sites, with completion expected in the near future. "The primary objective is to ensure efficient usage of rainwater, which will no longer be left to stagnate on streets or damage public infrastructure," he said.

The KMC, he added, is actively identifying additional locations across the city to expand the initiative.

"There are several sustainable options for utilising rainwater, including urban gardening, rainwater harvesting and other non-potable purposes. This approach not only promotes environmental responsibility but also strengthens Karachi's resilience to seasonal rains."

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 31/07/2025)

KMC, DMC ordered to pay Rs9.9m as compensation for death of woman, infant son during 2022 rains

Senior Civil Judge (Central) Zaheer Hussain Mangi has directed the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and District Municipal Corporation (DMC) Central to jointly pay total Rs9.9 million as compensation to the legal heirs of a woman and her infant son who had drowned in an uncovered nullah in Shadman Town in 2022.

Muhammad Danish — husband of the deceased woman, Samman, and father of their two-month-old son, Azlan — had filed two identical civil suits through his counsel, Usman Farooq, before the senior civil judge (Central) seeking compensation under the Fatal Accidents Act, 1855, from the KMC and DMC Central over their deaths due to their negligence.

After the filing of the suits, notices were issued to the defendants. However, the court noted that the municipal bodies chose not to contest the matter. As a result, the proceedings were carried out ex parte.

After examining the evidence, the court, in two identical orders, directed the KMC and DMC Central to jointly pay Rs5.2 million in compensation to the legal heirs of Samman and Rs4.7 million to the legal heirs of infant Azlan under the Fatal Accidents Act, 1855.

Both drowned in an uncovered drain in Shadman Town in 2022 during rain

"It is a settled principle of law under the Fatal Accidents Act, 1855, that when death is caused by a wrongful act, neglect, or default, the legal heirs of the deceased are entitled to compensation for the loss of dependency, emotional trauma and related damages. The defendants, being public authorities charged with maintaining the city's sewerage and drainage systems, had a legal and statutory duty of care owed to the general public. The unchallenged testimony of the plaintiff and the supporting material on record sufficiently establish that the deaths occurred due to the failure of the defendants to fulfill their statutory obligations," the court observed.

According to the counsel of the plaintiff, on July 17, 2022, during heavy rainfall near Qalandria Chowk within the remits of Shahra-i-Noor Jahan police station, Samman, 24, and infant Azlan, two-month old, had lost their lives after falling into an open and uncovered drainage nullah. The incident occurred while the plaintiff was travelling on a motorbike along with his wife and child. The counsel added that due to heavy rainfall and lack of visibility on the road, they fell into the drain.

"The record clearly demonstrates that the incident resulted from gross negligence and failure on the part of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and District Municipal Corporation (DMC) in discharging their statutory responsibilities. The defendants failed to cover, maintain and secure the drainage system, nor did they place any warning signs, diversion boards, or protective barriers at the hazardous location, especially during the monsoon season when the danger of such occurrences is elevated," the court observed.

In his submission, counsel Farooq contended that the KMC officials were informed before the incident but even after passage of considerable time, no steps were taken by the defendants to obviate the danger.

The counsel had argued that Samman was "24 years old, healthy and could have lived up to the age of 70", had the tragic incident not happened. Counsel Farooq further said that following Samman's death, the plaintiff and his surviving daughter, Zoya, had been left alone and suffered "huge losses".

The counsel had pleaded with the court to decree each suit, in the sum of Rs57,352,000, against the defendants to pay as damages/compensation to the plaintiff.

He had further requested the court that profit/mark-up at the rate of 21 per cent per annum should also be paid to the plaintiff. (By Sumair Abdullah Dawn, 13, 05/08/2025)

Mayor defends KMC's drainage efforts

Mayor Murtaza Wahab, addressing a press conference at the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) Head Office on Friday, defended the corporation's performance during the recent spell of monsoon rains, stressing that the city's major drains had been cleaned in advance and helped in draining out more than 300 millimeters of rainfall.

He said Karachi has around 600 drains, of which 46 fall under KMC's jurisdiction, while the rest are managed by Town Municipal Administrations. "Water was not drained out by tankers but through the same channels that had been cleared. If Gujjar Nullah, Mehmoodabad Nullah, or Orangi Nullah had not been cleaned, adjoining areas would still be under water," he said, citing areas like Sharea Faisal, Tariq Road, Clifton, Gizri, and Gurumandir that cleared quickly due to these efforts.

Wahab said water drainage on roads such as Korangi Road, University Road, Rashid Minhas Road, and Sher Shah Suri Road was only possible because the relevant nullahs had been cleared. He highlighted that Yousuf Goth, historically devastated by rains, remained safe this year due to the construction of a new drain on the directives of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

Taking aim at Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, the mayor said they were holding press conferences on clear roads only to spread negative propaganda.

He added that Town administrations under their control had already been given Rs27 billion, yet no acknowledgment was made of work done in places like Gulshan-e-Iqbal's Block 13-D, which remained dry.

Responding to criticism from Farooq Sattar, Wahab said: "As a former MNA, he should get the federal government to declare Karachi a disaster-hit city. Problems are not solved through words alone. During his tenure, the first allotment of New Karachi Nullah was carried out, and today he criticizes the very system he created."

The mayor admitted shortcomings in traffic management on the first day of heavy rains, saying that when Sharea Faisal was blocked, the entire city was affected. "I accept that traffic was mismanaged. Even I took two and a half hours to reach Nursery. For the three to four hours that citizens suffered, I apologize. The people's responsibility is mine, and I will not hide behind excuses of lacking authority."

Wahab said drains were also deliberately blocked in some areas as part of "conspiracies" to undermine his work. "My honor lies with Allah. I invite everyone to stop talking and start working together. Out of hatred for the PPP and the mayor, Karachi's image is being damaged, but I will not back away from responsibility."

Paying tribute to municipal and civic staff, he thanked sanitary workers, Water Corporation teams, solid waste management staff, police, traffic police, city wardens, and PDMA personnel for their efforts during the rains.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 05, 23/08/2025)

SHC voids KMC move to rent out nine parks, playgrounds

The Sindh High Court has ruled that conversion of amenity parks and playgrounds for commercial use and renting them out under the public-private partnerships is illegal and without any lawful authority.

The court has also set aside the agreements inked between the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and private parties for renting out nine parks and playgrounds of the city.

A two-judge bench comprising Justice Muhammad Iqbal Kalhoro and Justice Mohammad Abdul Rahman on Thursday noted that the land for these public spaces, including Jheel Park, Hill Park, Umer Sharif Park, Bagh Ibne Qasim, KMC Sports Complex, Hosh Muhammad Shaheedi Park in KDA Scheme 5 and three parks / amenity plots in Block 2 of Clifton was owned by the Karachi Development Authority or the ministry of housing & works, and that the KMC has no right to administer such parks and playgrounds.

Overturing an impugned resolution of City Council regarding renting out parks and playgrounds under public-private partnerships, the SHC ruled that the KMC has no authority to regulate such parks or playgrounds under the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013 and it also lacked jurisdiction under the Karachi Development Authority Order.

City Council resolution authorising the corporation to rent out the amenity plots also overturned

The bench gave these rulings while allowing a petition filed by opposition leader in the City Council, Saifuddin Advocate, along with Jamaat-i-Islami's chairmen of TMCs, including New Karachi, Liaquatabad, Gulberg, Nazimabad, North Nazimabad, Model Colony, Gulshan-i-Iqbal and Landhi, as well as a member of the City Council, in July challenging the City Council's decision to allow the conversion of amenity park plots for commercial use on a rental basis allegedly in collusion with private parties.

The judgement, authored by Justice Rahman, said that a perusal of the functions indicated that KMC has been entrusted with regulating Zoological Garden, Safari Park, Aquarium, Sports Complex and beaches; and it did not have the right to regulate amenity plots which were designated as parks or playgrounds.

It also observed that in the Sindh Local Government Act, the 'zoological garden' referred to zoo and a reference was made to 'Safari Park' and such reference was not meant to parks in general but to the Karachi Safari Park.

"It would therefore seem that the jurisdiction that has been exercised by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation in the Impugned Resolution is in excess of the functions entrusted to it under the provisions of the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013," it added.

The judgement further noted that the KDA Order, 1957 had been repealed by the Sindh Development Authorities (Laws) Ordinance, 2002 and revived by the Karachi Development Authority (Revival and Amending) Act, 2016 restoring the administration of the statutory body to areas under its administrative control.

It would, therefore, seem that after the re-enactment of that statute, the provisions of Article 52 A of the KDA Order, 1957 would once again be invoked to regulate the usage of amenity plots within the area administered by it.

The bench in its judgement said that each and every public-private partnership agreement entered into by the KMC authorising maintenance of parks was in excess of its jurisdiction, illegal and cannot be sustained. It also stated that the bench did not need to consider secondary question as to whether the agreements were entered into in violation of the provisions of the Sindh Public Procurement Act, 2009 and make any opinion on the same.

“Suffice to say that each of those “Public Private Partnership Agreements” are illegal and void as being entered into by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation in excess of the jurisdiction conferred to it under the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013,” it added.

The judgement further noted that the parks/playgrounds identified by the petitioners apart from the KMC Sports Complex, have been put to a use other than for what they were originally designated and which act cannot, therefore, be ratified under the relevant provision either.

“For the foregoing reasons we hereby declare that the impugned resolution, the ‘Public Private Partnership Agreements’ that have been entered into by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on the basis of the impugned resolution and any amenity plots that have been ‘rented’ by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on the basis of the impugned resolution, being in excess of the functions of that authority as indicated in Part I of Schedule II read with Section 72 of the Sindh Local Government Act, 2013 are illegal and void and that the usage of amenity plots specifically designated for use other than as a ‘playground’ e.g., as an ‘amusement park’ ‘park’ a ‘public building’ and a ‘high school’ being put to use as ‘playgrounds’ in violation of the provisions of Article 52 A of the Karachi Development Authority Order, 1957 is also illegal and are set aside.

Earlier, the petitioners had submitted that the KMC, in collusion with private entities, was unlawfully converting amenity plots for parks into commercial ventures under the guise of public-private partnership agreements.

They also contended that such commercial activities included establishing sports grounds and charging exorbitant fees for their use, parking for water tankers and conducting other profit-driven operations.
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 05/09/2025)

PML-N withdraws support to mayor Karachi after tensions boil over in KMC

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Friday formally announced its decision to withdraw support from the Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP)-led local government set-up and Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, citing his ‘poor’ performance, unfulfilled commitments and their exclusion from key administrative processes as the reason for the critical move.

Speaking at a press conference, PML-N parliamentary party leader in the City Council Feroz Khan strongly criticised the PPP for what he described as a “complete betrayal of promises” made prior to the mayoral election.

With 14 members in the City Council, the PML-N leader lamented that despite voting in favour of the PPP candidate for mayor — a decision influenced by their alliance at the Centre — the party was sidelined in key decisions and governance matters in Karachi. “There was a clear understanding between our leaderships, but that agreement was never honoured once Murtaza Wahab assumed the office,” he claimed.

Mr Khan clarified that while the PML-N remained in alliance with the PPP at the federal level, the situation in Karachi had reached a “tipping point”. “The dynamics in the Centre are different, but locally, the party cannot be part of a government that ignores our mandate, excludes us from governance, and fails to deliver on public issues.”

He added that the party’s decision to move to the opposition benches in the City Council was made after consultations with senior party leadership.

Hours after the press conference, Mr Khan along with other party members of the City Council reached out to the Jamaat-i-Islami, signalling a political realignment in the City Council.

A PML-N delegation visited the office of the JI’s Idara Noor-i-Haq and met City Council Opposition Leader Advocate Saifuddin. The two sides discussed various options, including the possibility of a no-confidence move against Mayor Wahab.

With 130 members, the JI is the second largest group in the City Council. However, a potential alliance between the PML-N and JI would unlikely threaten Mayor Wahab’s position, as he holds a simple majority in the City Council with support from over two dozen PTI dissidents, in addition to his party’s 155 members and some others.

At the press conference, the PML-N leader strongly criticised the mayor and the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) for what he termed their “abysmal” performance in resolving the city’s civic problems.

He pointed to mounting piles of garbage across major neighbourhoods, calling them a clear sign of neglect and administrative failure by the city authorities.

"The people of Karachi are being forced to live in unacceptable conditions while the KMC continues to make hollow claims," he said, demanding immediate action and accountability from the city's leadership.

"When the PPP needed our support to elect Murtaza Wahab as mayor, they promised the moon. But after securing the seat, they forgot every commitment made to us. This is not just political opportunism it is a breach of trust."

He said that the PML-N had high hopes that the alliance would deliver on promises to address Karachi's pressing problems, but instead, the PPP's city administration reduced itself to "photo sessions and press statements" with no tangible improvement on the ground.

"Mian Nawaz Sharif's vision was to restore Karachi as the city of lights, a city that drives Pakistan's economy and represents its diversity. Unfortunately, that vision is not being respected by those currently in charge of the city," he added.

"We took this step after months of patience and repeated attempts to get our concerns addressed. This is not a hasty decision; it is a necessary one for the people of Karachi and for the credibility of our party," he added.

The PML-N leader emphasised that the party would now play the role of a "constructive opposition" in the City Council.

"We will not obstruct for the sake of opposition. Our goal is to ensure that the people of Karachi are served. We will raise every public issue and hold the city administration accountable," he added.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 06/09/2025)

Mayor Murtaza Wahab blames Karachi's monsoon woes on high tides, poor infrastructure

As the city grapples with the latest spell of [monsoon rains](#), Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab on Monday painted a grim picture of the metropolis's battle against nature and public panic, citing limited infrastructure capacity, full-moon-driven high tides choking sea outflow, and thousands of residents flooding the streets in a frenzy to get home.

While the Met Office issued an advisory for heavy rains and urban flooding, the mayor conceded that despite precautionary measures, it was inevitable the city would take "a few hours" to recover after each downpour.

Speaking at a press conference, he outlined the city's preparedness, limitations and political landscape amid the ongoing monsoon spell predicted to continue through Sept 8-10.

He addressed a wide range of challenges — from overflowing drainage systems and rising sea levels to political infighting and what he called "opposition hypocrisy."

Claims all 46 major drains cleaned, relief machinery deployed

He warned that high tides, combined with a recent lunar eclipse, were complicating water drainage, with the sea potentially refusing to absorb storm water.

"The sea level is high — it might not take the water," he explained, adding that this natural phenomenon was among the city's biggest challenges during heavy rainfall.

"We inspected outfall drains, including Nehr-i-Khayyam, which is currently reversing flow due to pressure from the Churna Creek," he said.

The mayor urged residents to remain calm and patient, advising them not to rush out during the rain.

"Panic only worsens the situation. Traffic congestion slows down the entire relief operation," he said, asking Karachiites to wait at least two to two-and-a-half hours after heavy rain to allow for water drainage.

He, however, reassured citizens that the administration was fully mobilised but stressed that public cooperation was essential.

"This is a city of 20 million. It will take a few hours to clear the water after each rainfall. Please don't spread panic or misinformation — let us do our job," he added.

Highlighting the city's preparedness, the mayor said that all 46 major drains (nullahs) under Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) leading to the sea had been "cleaned", including the Gujjar, Orangi and Mehmoodabad nullahs.

"Additional pumps have been installed, machinery deployed, and 120 water and sewerage vehicles are active across the city," he said.

Relief camps have been set up at key choke points to provide stranded citizens with water and biscuits, and municipal staff leave has been cancelled to ensure 24/7 field presence.

Mr Wahab also confirmed that both the Sindh chief minister and chief secretary had been consulted on the city's emergency response plan.

In a strongly worded rebuke, he took aim at Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) leaders and other opposition parties. Referring to his Aug 22 press conference, he said funds had been allocated to nine JI-led town committees, leading to a visible shift in their activity.

"They used to complain about lack of powers and resources, but after my press conference regarding the allocation of funds they have started working. It was never about resources — it was about intent," he said. He, however, congratulated the town chairmen for finally acting.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 09/09/2025)

KMC nearly doubles municipal utility charges for industries, shops

In a move drawing sharp criticism from the opposition for allegedly violating "defined legal limits", the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has increased the rates of the Municipal Utility Charges and Taxes (MUCT) for industrial and commercial users from Rs400 to Rs750.

Members of the business community complained that they were being charged nearly double the previous amount in the head of the MUCT.

The MUCT are collected via K-Electric bills from its consumers living within the jurisdiction of the KMC.

Leader of the Opposition in the City Council Advocate Saifuddin of the Jamaat-i-Islami has sent a legal notice to KE Chief Executive Officer Moonis Alvi, demanding that the power utility immediately withdraw the increase in the MUCT, which was made "unlawfully" without the approval of the elected City Council.

The notice highlighted that the KE raised MUCT rates to Rs750 per month for commercial properties, despite the last City Council resolution, which fixed the rate at Rs400 per month in June 2024. A subsequent proposal to increase the rate to Rs550 was deferred in 2025, and no new resolution has been passed since then, read the notice.

"The KE, which only acts as a collection agent on behalf of the KMC, has no legal authority to alter or enhance MUCT rates," said Mr Saifuddin.

He said the arbitrary hike not only burdened citizens of Karachi, but also undermined the authority of the elected City Council and insulted the public mandate.

City Mayor Murtaza Wahab, however, expressed his "wonders" over "unawareness" of the opposition and its leaders about the "facts and procedures".

"This increase has in fact been approved by the City Council in the budget session," he told *Dawn*. "So this argument doesn't stand that it's a violation of the rules."

He continued: "Secondly we only increased slab for the industrial and commercial users. The reason is this segment of the city is more prone to fire and other incidents where the municipal resources and utilities are spent more. We should not mislead people only for political point scoring."

'No new charges'

KMC officials claimed that no new charges were being imposed under the MUCT head.

"Historically, industrial and commercial consumers were charged up to Rs5,000 under the same category," said an official.

The slab for industrial and commercial consumers had initially been reduced to Rs400 by the mayor, but it was being revised upward in the latest budget, he added.

"The funds collected through this municipal tax will be utilised for essential services, including the fire brigade and road maintenance," added the official.

The KMC in August 2024 formally notified the collection of MUCT through K-Electric.

The KMC and the KE had signed an agreement in June 2022 which finally became effective from July 2024 after the City Council approved the levy.

The consumers are charged as per category, which is notified by the KMC from time to time.

Referring to different slabs of the MUCT, an official said that the KE consumers receiving bills of up to 100 units remain exempted from the taxes and those consuming units between 101 and 200 pay Rs20 every month.

Those consuming units between 201 and 300 pay Rs40 and those consuming between 301 and 400 units pay Rs100 through their KE bills.

The KE consumers consuming 401-500 units pay Rs125, the consumers of units between 501 and 600 pay Rs150, the consumers of 601 and 700 units pay Rs175 and those consuming more than 700 units pay Rs300 in their monthly bills.

All categories of commercial and industrial consumers pay Rs400 each with their electricity bills.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 15/09/2025)

Mayor hints at challenging SHC ruling against commercialisation of city's parks

Mayor Murtaza Wahab has hinted that the city government intends to challenge a Sindh High Court ruling that declared illegal the conversion of amenity parks and playgrounds into commercial spaces under public-private partnerships.

He defended the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's (KMC) move to convert amenity parks into commercial spaces and said that it was all done in good faith to "save the facilities from destruction" and in line with the approval given by the City Council and the Jamaat-i-Islami —which filed the petition against the commercialisation of the parks — was part of that entire process.

As Karachi grapples with the damage caused by the latest spell of monsoon rains, political tensions are boiling over between the Pakistan Peoples Party and the JI, as Mayor Wahab held a fiery press conference and accused the opposition party of hypocrisy and using the monsoon-related chaos to launch a smear campaign against his party.

"Jamaat-i-Islami filed a case against KMC regarding commercialisation of parks, and the court has issued a decision," he said. "We have the legal and moral right to appeal that decision. Those accusing me are the same people who, back in 2003, were the first to commercialise Karachi's roads and tore apart the city's master plan. This is a matter concerning my city, and hypocrisy will not be tolerated here."

He said that it was the JI that had commercialised Karachi's main roads, and parks had become havens for drug addicts where "immoral activities" took place when it was in control of the city government under Naimatullah Khan Advocate.

"We decided to introduce recreational activities in the parks. We took the matter to the City Council and consulted on restoring the parks by reviving sports activities. For example, Bagh Ibn-i-Qasim was closed, but we restarted sports activities there, and the park was restored," added Mayor Wahab.

He referred to the "propaganda" being spread by political opponents after the recent rains. They, he said, claimed that the Hub Canal and Shahrah-i-Bhutto were washed away by the recent rains. He said that reports of massive infrastructure collapse were exaggerated by the opposition and referred to claims made by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf Sindh chapter president Haleem Adil Sheikh.

"Haleem Adil Sheikh claimed the entire Hub Canal was washed away, but in reality, only a 20-meter section was damaged — and we repaired it within 48 hours," he insisted.

The mayor said that political differences often lead to misinformation, which damages the city's image. He urged people to engage in politics but not to mislead others. He added that there is a perception that nothing gets done in the city.

"But we have decided not only to work but also to demonstrate our achievements," he added.
(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 14, 16/09/2025)

PPP sweeps local govt by-polls in Karachi, 13 other districts

Amid low turnout, the Pakistan Peoples Party has won a majority of seats during the local government by-elections in Karachi and 13 other districts of Sindh.

Polling for the by-elections on 28 seats — six seats of UC chairman, seven posts of vice-chairman, two district council members and on 13 seats for general councillors — began at 8am in Karachi, Hyderabad, Matiari, Thatta, Ghotki, Sukkur, Khairpur, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, Dadu, Jamshoro, Hyderabad and Badin and continued till 4pm in a largely peaceful manner.

According to unofficial and unconfirmed results, the PPP won a total of 20 seats, followed by Tehreek Labbaik Pakistan's two, Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA), Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf-backed candidate and an independent candidate got one seat each.

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan did not contest the by-polls.

Around 160 aspirants contested the by-polls amid a low turnout and allegations of rigging by the opposition parties against the ruling PPP.

PPP wins four, JI one in Karachi

In Karachi, the by-elections were held on five seats — one UC chairman, three vice chairmen and a general member seat.

According to the unofficial results, the PPP won the sole seat of UC chairman and three seats of vice chairmen in Karachi while the JI emerged victorious on the general member seat.

According to provisional results, PPP's Shahnaila Amir secured 3,801 votes and won the UC-1 chairperson seat in Orangi Town against TLP's Muhammad Ali who bagged 1,787 votes.

Mohammad Faisal of PPP has been elected vice chairman from UC-8 (Saeedabad) Baldia Town in Keamari district by securing 3,132 votes, followed by PTI-backed Hasnain Chohan with 1084 and JI's Yasir Hayat obtained 769 votes.

Another aspirant of PPP Sheraz Ahmed has won the election for vice chairman from UC-8 (New Sabzi Mandi) TMC Sohrab Goth in East by securing 1,790 votes and PTI-backed independent aspirant Jaleel Ahmed stood second with 166 votes.

The PPP's Stephen Masih emerged as the returned candidates from UC-10 (Lyari Expressway Resettlement Project) TMC Manghopir in West district with 891 votes while ANP's Ahsanullah was runner-up with 324 votes.

Jl's Bilal Naseer has won the general member seat in UC-7 (Shah Waliullah Nagar) TMC Orangi Town in West district with a narrow margin of 40 votes against the PPP's aspirant.

Mixed result in Hyderabad

By-elections were held on six seats in Hyderabad and the PPP and TLP won two seats each, while the remaining two seats were secured by independent candidates.

According to the unofficial results, the PPP got a seat of UC chairman and general member; TLP secured two posts of general member; an independent candidate was elected as vice chairman while a PTI-backed independent candidate won a seat of general member.

According to unofficial/provisional results, PPP's Murtaza Shoro was elected as chairman UC-94 in TMC Sachal Sarmast Latifabad with 2,050 votes and the seat of vice chairman UC-106 of the same TMC was won by independent candidate, Qazi Khalil, by bagging 494 votes.

In UC-39 of TMC Paretabad, PPP's Khadim Hussain Bhutto won seat of general member, TLP's Mahfooz Ahmed and Saleem Abbasi secured seats of general member in ward-2 UC-50 of the Paretabad town and ward-3 in UC-106 of TMC Sachal Sarmast Latifabad respectively while PTI backed candidate Syed Mubashir Jaffari won the seat of general councilor ward-4 of UC-112 of TMC Shah Latifabad.

In Sukkur, PPP candidates Nazeer Ahmed and Mohammad Soobal won the seats of vice chairman and general member in Sukkur.

In Dadu, PPP's Fateh Khichi and Sadam Hussain emerged victorious on both seats of district member and general member.

Ayub Buriro and Mumtaz Shaikh of PPP were elected as chairman and general member from Khairpur district. In Mirpurkhas, PPP's aspirant Bahar Ali won seat of UC chairman and independent candidate Awais secured the seat of general member.

PPP's Khalid Ahmed won seat of UC chairman in Ghotki while Raza Hameed and Ali Gohar Talpur of PPP and Faqir Daim Mangrio of GDA have won the seats of chairman, district member and general member in Umerkot respectively.

The PPP candidate Nazir Khaskheli has won the election of UC chairman in Badin while both posts of general members have also been secured by the PPP's aspirants Abdul Basit Memon and Abdul Kareem Memon in Jamshoro district.

PTI alleges rigging

The turnout remained very low at the start of the day in the metropolis as polling stations largely wore a deserted look, but voters started to come out of their homes when the polling time neared conclusion.

PTI Karachi president Raja Azhar accused the PPP of carrying out widespread rigging and said that its MPAs and elected local government representatives freely visited almost all the polling stations with their armed guards and supporters, disturbing the polling process and influencing the polling staff.

He alleged that while the number of votes cast at a polling station (Al-Hamza School) in UC-8 (Saeedabad) Baldia Town was 149, the provisional result showed that PPP's candidate secured 282 votes from the same polling station.

Mohammad Hussain Khan in Hyderabad, Waseem Shamsi in Sukkur, Qurban Ali Khushik in Dadu, A.B Arisar in Umerkot and Muhammad Hashim Khan Bhurgari in Badin also contributed to this report.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 25/09/2025)

KMC to spend Rs28b on city's uplift this year: Wahab

City Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab has announced that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) will spend Rs28 billion on development projects in the metropolis this year, while the overall portfolio of ongoing schemes amounts to Rs400billion.

Speaking to the media during a visit to Begum Khursheed Road in District Korangi, Wahab said that unlike those who "wake up late to hold press conferences and spread hopelessness," his team was working round the clock for the city's progress. He was accompanied by Parliamentary Leader in City Council Karamullah Waqasi and other elected representatives.

The mayor highlighted that Rs70billion has been allocated for the K-IV water project, while new bridges are being built at Murghi Khana, Shah Faisal Colony and Cattle Colony. Work on the ICI Bridge will also commence soon, he added.

Wahab said 106 roads damaged by recent rains are being restored and would be completed within the next 60 days. "Even at 2am. our teams are working so that citizens wake up to find newly built roads," he added.

He further stated that KMC has already initiated work on Empress Market, Preedy Street and Sharae Faisal, in addition to schemes in Malir and Khokhrapar. Though Model Colony roads fall under the town administration, KMC is undertaking their repair as well, he said.

Wahab stressed that funds are also being provided to major hospitals including Indus Hospital, SIUT and NICVD, underscoring KMC's commitment to health and infrastructure. He urged institutions to shun negative politics and work together for Karachi's development.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 29/09/2025)

KMC to take 60 days to repair rain-hit roads, says mayor Karachi

City Mayor Murtaza Wahab has launched a major project for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of 106 rain-affected roads under the administrative control of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), promising their complete restoration within 60 days.

He strongly criticised his political opponents while announcing a development expenditure of Rs28 billion by the KMC this year, accusing his critics of spreading negative propaganda instead of working for the city.

Speaking to the media in Korangi district, the mayor said: "Some people wake up at 11am just to hold press conferences and spread despair among the public, while we are working day and night for the city".

"I will not let anyone engage in hypocritical politics. We are not sitting in Islamabad but are among the people of Karachi, serving them," he added.

Mr Wahab, providing details, stated that Rs28bn has been allocated in this year's budget for urban improvement, while the total volume of the city's projects stands at Rs400bn.

Wahab criticises opponents for 'spreading despair' instead of serving citizens

He highlighted major ongoing works, including a Rs70bn investment in the [K-IV water project](#) and the construction of bridges at Murghi Khana, Shah Faisal Colony and Cattle Colony. He also confirmed that work on the ICI Bridge would commence shortly.

Accompanied by City Council Parliamentary Leader Karamullah Waqasi, the mayor defended the administration's strategic decisions, such as the installation of costly paver blocks in areas prone to drainage issues. He described it as a "sustainable solution" and stressed that political will was more important than financial constraints.

"Money is not the issue; the real issue is intention. Words accomplish nothing; we must take practical steps," he said.

Mr Wahab reiterated that the KMC is restoring 106 roads across the city following the recent rains, with work to be completed within 60 days. "When our people wake up in the morning, they will find newly built roads. Even at 2am our teams are working," he said, adding that repair projects were active in all districts of Karachi.

Highlighting his personal commitment to the projects, he said: "Wherever work is being carried out late at night in the city, I will inspect it."

Later, the mayor visited Empress Market in Saddar to personally inspect the reconstruction of Shahrah-i-Liaquat. He said that work had already begun at Empress Market, Preedy Street and Sharea Faisal, while KMC had also constructed roads at Malir Kala Board and Khokhrapar.

Appealing to the public for vigilance and participation, the mayor urged citizens to report any negligence they observed. "We request citizens to contact us wherever they see any shortcomings," he said.

He also underscored his administration's commitment to accountability, stating: "I am answerable to the people of Karachi, and there will be no compromise on transparency."

Mr Wahab pointed out that KMC was also working beyond its jurisdiction. "The people of Karachi have the right to question us, and we are bound to answer them, because this is our city and we are its real custodians," the mayor added.

Although the roads of Model Colony Town fall under the town administration, KMC was undertaking this work as well, he said. If a few billion rupees were allocated to Model Colony Town and utilised properly, he added, the area's condition could improve significantly. Sewerage work would also begin soon, with the foundation to be laid next week.

The mayor also said that funds were being provided to institutions such as Indus Hospital, SIUT and NICVD so that citizens could have access to the best healthcare facilities.

Declaring that he was proud to be a Mohajir, Mr Wahab said the people of Karachi were his own. He appealed to all institutions and representatives to avoid negative politics and to work together for the development of the city.

On site, staff from the KMC Engineering Department gave the municipal chief a detailed briefing on the scope and progress of the ongoing restoration works across Karachi.

(By Dawn Reporter, 13, 29/09/2025)

Karachi mayor asks PM to allocate Rs200bn for city's uplift

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Tuesday urged the prime minister to allocate at least Rs200 billion for Karachi's development, stating that the Rs20bn "lollipop" announced by the federal government was grossly insufficient to meet the city's growing infrastructure and civic needs.

Speaking to the media during the inauguration of the newly developed Imam Mehdi Park and Sports Ground in New Rizvia Society, Mayor Wahab criticised the federal government for making "symbolic gestures" without addressing the real issues faced by the city.

"Sitting in Islamabad will not solve Karachi's problems. This city needs continuous, on-ground efforts and a serious financial commitment," he said.

The mayor said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) planned to spend Rs28bn on development projects this year, with an additional Rs10bn allocated for town-level initiatives.

Inaugurates renovated park in New Rizvia Society

"This city belongs to its citizens, not contractors. Unfortunately, the priorities of the federal government seem to be aligned more with contractors than with the people of Karachi," he added.

Referring to past governments, Mayor Wahab said those who couldn't build roads in nine years now claimed to be the voice of the people.

Highlighting the transformation of the area, Mayor Wahab announced that Imam Mehdi Park had been developed on 5.5 acres of previously neglected land, which was once used as a garbage dump.

The park, completed at a cost of Rs150 million, now features a walking track, football and cricket grounds, floodlights, and other modern recreational facilities.

"Where there was once garbage, today there is greenery. From both a religious and social point of view, this is a form of ongoing charity. It's a gift to the citizens of Karachi," he said. "When intentions are pure, Allah helps. We have delivered on our promises and will continue to do so to make Karachi a hub of development and prosperity."

Mayor Wahab credited the "vision" of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari for the ongoing transformation in the city. He cited the rapid progress on the [BRT project on University Road](#), efforts to resolve water and sewage issues, and post-rain infrastructure restoration as key initiatives currently underway.

He assured the people that this year would mark significant improvements in Karachi's infrastructure, including the completion of flyovers, underpasses, and long-overdue drainage systems.

Reaffirming his commitment to the PPP manifesto, Mr Wahab said that guided by the PPP chairman's vision, his team was working across all districts to ensure real, measurable change in the lives of Karachi's residents.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 01/10/2025)

Mayor inaugurates country's 'largest' trampoline park

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Sunday inaugurated a trampoline park in Safari Park, in what the KMC claims is "Pakistan's largest and most modern facility of its kind".

Talking to reporters at the inauguration ceremony, the mayor said that Safari Park had become deserted in recent years due to the lack of facilities.

"However, the positive outcomes of KMC's hard work over the past two years are now visible. Today, hundreds of families visit Safari Park on weekends, which reflects the citizens' trust in the KMC's dedication and planning," he claimed.

He further said that initiatives were being taken to promote sports and recreational activities in various parts of Karachi.

Wahab says initiatives are being taken to promote sports in Karachi

"There are two other trampoline parks in the city, but the facilities at Safari Park are of highest standard and are available to the public at affordable rates," he added.

He said that the administration was sincerely focusing on improving recreational spaces in the city so that citizens — especially children and youth — could enjoy healthy entertainment opportunities.

"In continuation of these efforts, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation is promoting sports activities across the city," Mayor Wahab said.

He said that opponents were quick to criticise but failed to take any practical steps themselves.

"They even take our projects to court, but we remain steadfast in our mission to serve the people," he added.

He said PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, during the floods, not only represented Sindh but advocated for the entire country on the global stage.

"He personally accompanied the UN Secretary-General to Larkana and other cities to highlight the plight of Pakistan's flood victims at the international level. Our government has built 2.1 million houses for flood-affected people — a historic example of public service," the mayor added.

Accompanied by Deputy Mayor of Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad, and others, the mayor said despite various pressures, the government delivered results in Karachi.

"I also like to congratulate the people of New Karachi, where development projects have now commenced. The Pakistan Peoples Party, driven by the spirit of service, will continue working for the city's development and prosperity," he added.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 06/10/2025)

Mayor launches Rs281m development projects for city

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Thursday announced the launch of major road rehabilitation and paver block installation projects worth over Rs281 million in District Central, under Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC)'s ongoing citywide service drive.

Addressing the foundation-laying ceremony, the mayor said that internal roads in UC-7 and UC-8 are currently under construction, while carpeting and paver block work is progressing rapidly in New Karachi Phase-II, particularly in UC-3, UC-9B, and sectors 11-E and 11-D.

"These development schemes will improve commuting convenience and ensure better traffic flow for thousands of daily road users. It's part of our broader vision for Karachi's complete infrastructure overhaul," he said.

According to project details, 50,000 cubic feet of sub-base course have already been completed, while 350,000 cubic feet of aggregate base course will be laid. Furthermore, 330,000 square feet of carpet work and over 350,000 square feet of paver blocks will be installed as part of the rehabilitation plan.

In the Kala School area of New Karachi, an additional 250,000 square feet of paver blocks are being laid to enhance travel facilities for residents.

Mayor Wahab also shared that road improvements are underway in Hyderi near Madni Mall on Hashim Raza Road, while new roads and stormwater drains are being constructed in North Nazimabad — an area previously neglected despite collection of over Rs2.5 billion on account of road-cutting fees.

In addition to Central district projects, the mayor also highlighted broader initiatives across the city, including work on Manghopir Road, discussions with the federal government for flyovers at Power House and 4K Chowrangi, and enhancement of the e-ticketing system, which will now be extended to heavy vehicles.

He announced that Pakistan Peoples Party-led city administration will spend Rs28bn this year on Karachi's infrastructure, with development work now visible across multiple neighbourhoods.

Addressing the ceremony, Barrister Wahab criticised political opponents for making empty promises and said the PPP, under the guidance of party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's vision, is delivering real and practical improvements.

"Our mission is to serve every area of Karachi without discrimination. We are committed to building a cleaner, better and more modern city," he said.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 10/10/2025)

PTI expels 32 members for supporting PPP in City Council

More than two years after the Karachi mayoral elections, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday expelled 32 of its City Council members from the party for defying directives issued by party founder Imran Khan by abstaining from the polling process — a move that ultimately paved the way for Barrister Murtaza Wahab to become Karachi's first-ever mayor from the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

Speaking to the media at the party's city office, called Insaf House, PTI's Karachi chapter spokesperson Fauzia Siddiqui described the action as part of the party's "renewed campaign" to enforce discipline and send a clear message that those who defied Mr Khan's directives had no place in the party.

"The party has begun setting things right from the top," she told Dawn, adding: "You may have noticed that even at the central level, measures are being taken to strengthen party discipline. Here in Karachi, we've finally put our own house in order by expelling all 32 of those members."

On June 15, 2023, Barrister Wahab was elected the mayor of Karachi after a day marred by controversy, recriminations and protests. The mayoral election was expected to be a tough contest between Mr Wahab and Jamaat-i-Islami's Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, both of whom claimed numerical superiority in the run-up to the election.

The PPP had formed an alliance with the PML-N and JUI-F, taking their combined strength to 173, while the JI had the support of 61 PTI members, bringing the expected number of votes for Mr Rehman to 192. However, while Barrister Wahab secured all 173 expected votes, Mr Rehman managed only 160 after 32 PTI-affiliated union council members did not participate in the polling process. The slot of deputy mayor also went to the PPP's Salman Abdullah Murad, who bagged 173 votes, while JI's Saifuddin Advocate received 160.

Ms Siddiqui said that the PTI had formally written a letter to the Karachi mayor declaring its disassociation from the 32 City Council members.

"The letter stated that these members no longer have any affiliation with the PTI and should be considered independent," she added.

However, the PPP seems unaffected with the development. Mayor Wahab said he would "proceed accordingly" after legally examining the content of the letter sent to him by the PTI.

"I will legally examine the contents of the letter and proceed accordingly," he told Dawn in response to a query. (By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 29/10/2025)

Ruckus as Karachi City Council members reject heavy traffic fines

The City Council on Friday exploded with ruckus over a resolution against the implementation of new traffic violation fines as high as Rs50,000 through e-challan system.

The resolution expressed strong reservations over heavy fines imposed through e-challan for traffic rule violations in Karachi and demanded that the Sindh government withdraw the notification.

Although the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party members, who spoke on the resolution, tried to justify the government decision of the increase, their colleagues joined hands with the opposition local government public representatives of Jamaat-i-Islami and Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf.

The two opposition party members also held separate protest demonstrations in and outside the KMC Head Office Building, chanting slogans against the implementation of e-challans in the metropolis.

Opposition Leader Advocate Saifuddin, who tabled the resolution against the new e-challan system, slammed the provincial government for jacking up the traffic-violation fines.

The resolution expressed grave concerns over the Sindh government's decision of raising traffic-violation fines in the metropolis. It said that the streets and major roads in the city, either under the administrative control of the KMC or towns, were in dilapidated conditions and there were no traffic signs or directions for speed limits and other traffic rules.

The City Council members through the resolution demanded of the provincial government to immediately withdraw the notification of the enhanced traffic-violation fines.

The resolution demanded that the e-challans be issued only as warning to the traffic laws violators. It also demanded that traffic police be deputed to regulate traffic and train road users instead of harassing them.

The resolution said that the streets and roads be repaired so people were not compelled to adopt an otherwise wrong way. It also demanded that the cameras installed in the city be used to contain crime.

Rejecting the provincial government's decision, PTI's Saad Khan jibed that the roads in the city were "like in Afghanistan", while the challans were "like in Azerbaijan".

Jl member Junaid Mukati asked why Karachi was singled out for the implementation of e-challan system.

He also asked as to why no action was taken against dumper mafia, claiming that the provincial authorities were involved in the menace.

Justifying the government decision, PPP member Najmi Alam said that the results of the new e-challan system were now visible at least on Sharea Faisal as people had started abiding by the traffic laws.

While the debate on the resolution against the e-challan was still continuing with an opposition member speaking on it, the deputy mayor adjourned the session to a date to be announced later.

Public projects named after PPP leaders

A resolution passed by a majority vote allowed the KMC to name the Karimabad underpass after PPP leader Dr Asim Hussain in recognition of "his personal interest and efforts in the project".

It also asked KMC to invite Dr Asim Hussain or his representative to the inauguration ceremony to publicly acknowledge his contributions.

Similarly, the overhead bridge on Khalid Bin Waleed Road was approved to be named after the late Muhammad Umar Jat, former PPP District Malir President and former Nazim of Bin Qasim Town.

Other resolutions included approval of the improvement/restoration plan for Jehangir Road, the rehabilitation of the storm-water drain from Gurumandir to Teen Hatti, the construction of the Natha Khan Bridge Grade & Link Road from Sharea Faisal to Habib University, land utilisation plans for Khaleelabad and Bilalabad, the upgradation of posts of Chief Fire Officer, Team Leader/Commander, and Deputy Chief Fire Officer in the KMC Fire Brigade and USAR Department, and recommendations for upgrading operational staff positions in the Fire Brigade Department.

Other resolutions

Earlier, the council approved 20 resolutions, eight of them unanimously.

At the outset of the proceeding, a condolence resolution was unanimously adopted to condole the demise of former Speaker of Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Durrani.

Another resolution, passed unanimously, strongly condemned India's illegal occupation of Kashmir and expressed solidarity with the Kashmiri people.

Among other resolutions passed by a majority vote, the Council approved recommendations related to KMC's Department of State and Accommodation by-laws.

The council also approved naming the underpass at Golimar Chowrangi after the late Qadir Bakhsh Bakkak in recognition of his valuable services to local governance, naming the Lyari Family Park after the slain PPP leader Waja Kareem Dad, and launching a citywide tree plantation campaign in all roads, parks, schools, hospitals, and recreational areas to control environmental pollution.

Through a unanimously approved resolution, the Council granted approval for establishing a bus depot named "KMC General Bus Stand" on Plot No. 108, Sheet No. K-28, Manghopir Road (Gutter Baghicha) and entrusted its operation, maintenance, and upkeep for 10 years to "The Silk Route Transport Company".

Another unanimously passed resolution approved granting Plot No. ST-13, Sector 15/16 (Gulistan-i-Mazdoor) to The Citizens Foundation on an annual lease for the construction and operation of a primary and secondary school for purely educational purposes.

Another unanimously passed resolution called upon the government to bring Kiran Hospital Road and Suparco Road under the administrative control of the KMC to address public complaints arising due to the Red Line project on University Road and to ensure proper maintenance of these roads.

It was also agreed to name Kiran Hospital Road after Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, the benefactor of Pakistan.
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 01/11/2025)

KMC admits misunderstanding over traffic fines resolution

A misunderstanding occurred during a council session held on Friday regarding a resolution related to traffic fines in the city, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation has acknowledged.

Upon review of the council's official records, it was observed that the said resolution – though tabled by certain council members – was not properly discussed or debated during the session.

Further, the document was mistakenly signed and recorded as "passed" due to administrative oversight, despite the fact that it had not undergone the necessary deliberation process.

The resolution concerning traffic fines has, therefore, not yet been approved, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation has clarified.

The resolution currently holds no official status. The matter is to be formally re-tabled in the next council meeting, where it will be presented, properly discussed, and decided upon in due process and in accordance with established rules.

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation states that it remains committed to maintaining transparency, procedural accuracy, and accountability regarding all council affairs.

Measures are all being taken to ensure that similar administrative oversights or procedural errors do not occur in the future, the Corporation assures.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 03/11/2025)

50pc of sanctioned posts at three Karachi zoos vacant due to ban on govt recruitment, SHC told

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on Thursday informed the Sindh High Court that nearly 50 per cent of the sanctioned posts in its three city zoos — Karachi Zoological Garden, Safari Park and Landhi-Korangi Zoo — were vacant due to a ban on recruitment.

In a report submitted before a two-judge bench headed by Justice Muhammad Iqbal Kalhoro, the KMC stated that there were 233 sanctioned posts in the three recreational facilities, which are the backbone of zoo management and daily animal care operations, but 116 of them, including of vets, are currently vacant.

It submitted that the latest ban on recruitment was imposed through an order issued in June last year by the additional chief secretary, local government department, but it had been making continuous efforts to fill the vacant posts.

In compliance with the SHC's earlier order regarding relocation of zoo bear Rano, the senior director-zoo filed a report and stated that the bear had been shifted to a sanctuary in the federal capital and all possible efforts were being made for the welfare of animals housed under the care of the KMC.

The director stated that the recreation department of KMC is consisted of Karachi Zoo, Safari Park and Landhi-Korangi Zoo responsible for the conservation and management of wildlife including.

The report said that as per the establishment set-up formed nearly six decades ago, the recreation department has three sanctioned positions for veterinarians — two for Karachi Zoo and one for Safari Park. However, only one vet, an assistant director, was currently working as two other posts were vacant.

The report maintained that not only the post of veterinarian but also other key operational positions such as head zookeeper, assistant head zookeeper, zookeepers and mahawat remained vacant.

It said that these positions formed the backbone of the zoo management and daily animal care operations.

It said that as per Council Resolution No. 675 dated Feb 24, 1997, a panel of veterinary consultants was created to assist and help the council's vet and institutions in case of emergency and at present, three senior most veterinarians were on the panel as consultant.

It said Austria-based animal welfare and rescue group Four Paws has also been the primary consultant for the elephants since 2021 in line with the earlier orders of the SHC.

The report stated that the KMC had also constituted a technical committee headed by Dr R.C. Rajapaksa, director general National Zoological Department, Sri Lanka, as chairman and co-chaired by Dr Amir Khalil, director Four Paws.

The report said in January Dr Khalil personally examined Rano and confirmed that the female bear was a Syrian species, characterised by a whitish claw, distinguishing it from all other bear subspecies worldwide.

"Keeping in view the assessment and confirmation by international experts who have extensive experience working with bears globally, it is surprising how certain local NGOs are claiming that the bear in question is a Himalayan species," the KMC official wondered.

During the hearing, petitioner's counsel Jibran Nasir claimed that beside shortage of staff, the X-ray machines and operation theatres were also out of order.

The bench came down hard on the authorities over alleged mismanagement and directed them to fix the X-ray machines and other equipment.

The bench also remarked that the zoos should be converted into national parks.

It warned that if these issues were not addressed, the same would be referred to the National Accountability Bureau for investigations.

The bench adjourned the hearing for two weeks and directed a committee formed by the chief minister on court orders to file its progress report on the next date.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 07/11/2025)

LG constitutional amendment

SOMETHING extraordinary, if not unprecedented, has happened in the parliamentary history of Pakistan. The Punjab Assembly passed a unanimous resolution on Oct 28, with significant support from the PTI-aligned opposition, proposing that the national parliament amend and expand Article 140-A of the Constitution in order to strengthen the constitutional framework for local governments (LGs) in the country.

Although there had been more than one proposal to amend Article 140-A in the past, these came either from civil society, political parties or individual legislators. This is the first time that a provincial assembly made this demand, with its Speaker holding a press conference the next day to lend strong support to the idea of a constitutional amendment to end the near-dysfunctional state and, in some cases, the total absence of elected LGs for long periods of time.

A constitutional amendment bill drafted by the renowned constitutional lawyer Shahid Hamid, at the request of the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency, was introduced by PTI senator Dr Sania Nishtar in the Senate in July 2023 to strengthen LGs in the country. The bill proposed the expansion of Article 140-A to include such details as elections taking place 60 days prior to the expiry of the LG term and the Sixth Schedule listing 36 subjects to be delegated to the LGs. The bill is pending before the Senate.

The MQM-P also introduced a constitutional amendment bill in the National Assembly in October 2024 to expand Article 140-A. The bill proposed the devolution of 42 subjects to the LGs. It called for a minimum guaranteed percentage of provincial revenue to be allocated to LGs and possibly directly transferred from the federal divisible pool to them. This bill also proposed the holding of LG elections before the expiry of their term.

There is a growing realisation in Pakistan that Article 140-A needs to be expanded.

The demand for a constitutional amendment to strengthen LGs started gaining momentum after almost 70 years of neglect of the LG system — a demand that was reinforced after the passage of the 18th Amendment in 2010 when significant powers were devolved from the federation to the provinces, precisely demarcating the powers between the federation and the provinces.

But the devolution from the provinces to the LGs was mentioned only in general terms through the insertion of the brief new Article 140-A (of 41 words). The new article provided that “each province shall establish a local government system and devolve political, administrative and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of the local governments”, but, unlike in the case of the provincial governments, it gave no specific framework of LGs, such as the minimum powers, financial resources, term and elections. All these details were left to the provinces to decide through the LG laws to be framed by the respective provincial assemblies and, in the case of Islamabad, the parliament.

Although 15 years have passed since the 18th Amendment, LGs in the country remain ineffective and powerless. Usually, ineffective LG laws are framed by the provinces and amended frequently — the Election Commission of Pakistan is unable to keep pace with the changes and thus unable to hold elections.

A case in point is the election for the Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation where the last LG existed till 2021. Since then, whenever the ECP completed the demarcation of the LGs and announced the election schedule, the government amended the law changing the number of union councils, thus forcing the ECP to start the process of demarcation afresh. The ECP narrated its tragic tale of failures in a press release issued in May this year where it summed up how it had conducted delimitation of constituencies five times and the election schedule was issued thrice, only to be cancelled later because of last-minute changes in election laws.

There is an inherent conflict of interest between the provincial and local governments.

Provincial governments do not want to let go of their powers and financial resources which have significantly increased since the passage of the 18th Amendment and the seventh NFC award. Generally, about one-third of the annual development funds are supposed to be spent through the LGs. No provincial government is, however, willing to part with these funds. In the absence of effective elected LGs, members of the national and provincial assemblies exercise considerable influence on local development spending and, therefore, are not keen on empowering LGs.

Neighbouring India faced a similar situation in the initial 42 years after enacting its constitution in 1950. In 1992, the Indian parliament passed two constitutional amendments inserting two full-fledged parts running into approximately 20 pages in the constitution. The 73rd amendment dealt with the panchayats or rural tier of the LGs and the 74th amendment was about the municipalities.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of these amendment acts reveal considerable similarities between present-day Pakistan and pre-1992 India. The statement says: “In many states local bodies have become weak and ineffective on account of a variety of reasons, including the failure to hold regular elections, prolonged supersessions and inadequate devolution of powers and functions. ... Having regard to these inadequacies, it is considered necessary that provisions relating to urban local bodies are incorporated in the Constitution... .”

No wonder there is a strong and growing realisation in Pakistan too that Article 140-A needs to be expanded to outline details, making it impossible for provinces to deny the establishment of effective LGs.

One may make the case that the LGs are a provincial subject and, therefore, expanding Article 140-A may run counter to provincial autonomy. The reality is that no one is suggesting the removal of ‘local governments’ from the provincial legislative list but as the insertion of Article 140-A was not a violation of provincial autonomy in 2010, further expansion of this article providing a basic outline of LGs will not interfere with provincial rights either.
(By Ahmed Bilal Mehmoob Dawn, 06, 08/11/2025)

Clifton residents in Karachi protest commercialisation of neighbourhood parks

Residents of Clifton Block 5 held a peaceful protest on Saturday evening at The Justice Rana Bhagwandas Family Park to oppose the conversion of neighbourhood parks into padel courts and the commercialisation of quiet residential areas.

The Justice Rana Bhagwandas Family Park and Dr Fareduddin Sethna Family Park were renovated in 2022 under the World Bank-funded Karachi Neighbourhood Improvement Project (KNIP) using public funds.

The residents expressed concern that these newly upgraded parks — complete with walkways, greenery, benches, and lighting — are being dismantled for private purposes, bringing late-night lights, noise, and traffic to peaceful residential areas.

“These parks were built for the community, not for commercialisation,” said a resident representative from the Save Bhagwandas Park Campaign. “Millions were spent under KNIP to create safe, family-friendly spaces. It’s unacceptable that public parks are being torn down just two years later.”

Oppose plan to convert family parks into padel courts

It may be noted that the Sindh High Court and Supreme Court have both ruled that public amenity land — including parks — cannot be leased, granted, or converted for private or commercial use.

Residents have also become parties to a constitutional petition at the SHC to legally halt all commercial construction and ensure that these parks remain public, peaceful, and non-commercial spaces.

Boundary walls of Beach Park, Bagh Ibn-i-Qasim demolished

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has torn down the outer walls of the Beach Park and Bagh Ibn-i-Qasim in Clifton to “show green beauty vibrantly and openly to the public like parks in other countries”.

A KMC spokesperson told *Dawn* that the decision would only be applied to the two parks facing Clifton Beach.

Regarding a video that went viral on social media showing some people taking out iron bars from the rubble, he said that it was KMC staff and the iron bars will be used in future infrastructure projects.

Meanwhile, Opposition Leader of the Karachi City Council Advocate Saifuddin strongly condemned the demolition of the protective walls of Bagh Ibn-i-Qasim and Beach Park, calling the move a criminal act.

He has sent an official letter to Municipal Commissioner Afzal Zaidi, with copies forwarded to Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah and mayor Murtaza Wahab.

In his letter, Mr Saifuddin demanded an immediate halt to the demolition and the reconstruction of the destroyed walls, stressing that tearing down park walls built with millions of rupees in public funds is a gross misuse of authority.

He questioned, “Who can authorise the demolition of properties worth crores? The parks are being destroyed, and now their beautiful walls are being razed as well. Without these protective boundaries, how will the park’s safety and demarcation be ensured?”

He termed the action incomprehensible and regrettable, calling for a thorough investigation and strict punishment for those responsible.

Such a major decision cannot be made without the City Council’s approval, he said and reiterated that Bagh Ibn-i-Qasim is a landmark of Karachi, and protecting and maintaining it is the primary responsibility of municipal authorities.

(By Newspaper’s Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 09/11/2025)

Sindh High Court decides to examine ‘whole concept of keeping zoos and caging animals’

The Sindh High Court has ordered formation of a new committee to visit zoos across the province and suggest steps for improvement as well as sending the exotic animals to their natural habitats.

Inviting suggestions to phase out zoos in the entire province, a two-judge SHC bench comprising Justice Mohammad Iqbal Kalhoro and Justice Syed Fiaz-ul-Hassan Shah declared that the court had decided to examine the whole concept of keeping zoos and caging animals.

The remarks were part of a written order issued on Saturday regarding the Nov 6 hearing of a petition seeking shifting of lone female bear Rano from Karachi Zoological Gardens to Bear Sanctuary, Islamabad Wildlife Management Board.

The order stated that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and other respondents filed statements and reports and submitted that Rano had been successfully transported to the federal capital on Nov 5 in compliance with the orders issued by the bench earlier.

However, the bench enhanced the scope of the petition from Rano to the welfare of all animals kept in zoos and invited suggestions as to how to phase out zoos in the entire province.

Sindh Wildlife Conservator Javed Ahmed Mahar proposed that a committee may be constituted with the municipal commissioner, forest & wildlife secretary, wildlife conservator and KMC’s senior director-zoo as its members.

Representing the petitioner, Mohammad Jibran Nasir also suggested that philanthropist Ava Ardeshir Cowasjee, Dr Uzma Khan from Asia lead for WWF Pakistan, Advocate Nazia Hanjrah, Zhalay Sarhadi and petitioner/animal rights activist Jude Allen Preira may also be made part of the committee.

The bench ordered constitution of the committee and inclusion of all the names suggested by the wildlife conservator and the petitioner’s counsel.

The bench in its order stated: “In addition, the committee shall be given mandate to co-opt experts of the subject fields, who shall visit the zoos in the province and suggests steps for improvement in the zoos and identify issues being confronted by them at the moment to resolve them as a short term measure. As a long term measures, they shall recommend steps to be taken which may include but not limited to sending the exotic animals to their natural habitat.”

It further stated that as per the petitioner’s counsel the committee, constituted by the chief minister for shifting of Rano, had visited Karachi Zoo and found all the medical equipment out of order.

The bench stated that Zoo Director Aklaq Ahmed Yousufzai had undertaken to replace all out-of-order machines immediately and to outsource vets for treatment of the animals.

The hearing was adjourned till Nov 21.

At a previous hearing, the bench had directed the committee formed by the CM to visit the Karachi zoo and prepare a detailed report about the number of animals kept there as well as their physical and mental health.

It also asked the committee to examine the circumstances under which animals are being kept as well as to identify the animals as natives or exotic and must also make recommendations for improving the situation if it found the animals were kept in improper conditions.

The bench further ruled that since the issue was not of one bear but hundreds of animals being kept in captivity apparently just for entertainment of people and court has decided to examine the whole concept of keeping zoos and caging animals.
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 09/11/2025)

KDA transfers Benazir Park to KMC

Karachi Development Authority (KDA) has transferred administrative control of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Park, Clifton, to Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), confirmed KDA Director General Asif Siddiqui on Monday.

Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Park is one of the three parks in Clifton where the KMC is demolishing the outer walls. The other two parks are Bagh Ibn-e-Qasim and Beach Park.

A controversy has arisen over suddenly demolishing the boundary walls of these parks. Residents of Clifton have started to protest against the KMC move. They fear that the move is aimed at the commercialisation of these parks. However, the KMC spokesperson, Danyal, has dismissed such apprehensions, saying that the outer walls of the parks are being erased only to improve the beauty of the city.

According to the KMC record, all the three parks are among the largest parks of the city. The Bagh Ibn-e-Qasim is the biggest one that spreads over 130 acres of land.
(By Razzak Abro The Express Tribune, 05, 18/11/2025)

Mayor announces Rs9.5bn plan to make inroads into rival TMCs

Amid growing complaints from residents about deteriorating infrastructure, Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab has announced a Rs9.5 billion initiative aimed at making inroads in areas currently run by rival Jamaat-i-Islami town chairmen.

According to the initiative, more than 26 major streets under the Town Municipal Corporations (TMCs) will be rehabilitated by the Pakistan Peoples Party-led Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), apparently seeking political mileage.

The Sindh government is providing funds to the KMC under its Special Karachi Development Grant (SKDG) so that the civic body executive development works in areas mostly run by the opposition JI.

Mayor Wahab chaired a meeting on Wednesday, which was attended by Local Government (LG) Secretary Waseem Shamshad, Commissioner Syed Hassan Naqvi, Municipal Commissioner Afzal Zaidi and other senior officials.

Rehabilitation and repair of 26 major arteries in towns mostly controlled by Jamaat to be undertaken through special funds provided by Sindh govt

The mayor was briefed about the "extensive plan" to rehabilitate, rebuild and repair more than 26 major streets falling under the jurisdiction of the TMCs, said a statement.

During the meeting, a comprehensive review of various development schemes and urban improvement programmes was also conducted.

"It was decided that all shortlisted schemes would be finalised and forwarded for approval under the Special Karachi Development Grant, ensuring swift initiation of work across the city," it said.

The meeting was informed that the rehabilitation plan focuses on the most burdened and frequently used arteries across different districts and on roads that are central to daily commuter movement but have long suffered from wear, congestion and inadequate maintenance.

"These initiatives are part of KMC's broader vision to modernise Karachi's infrastructure and address chronic urban challenges through sustainable and long-term planning," the statement added, noting that the development package will significantly ease travel for "millions" of residents, reduce congestion, and enhance safety and accessibility across all towns of the city.

The statement also named the key roads which have been identified for rehabilitation, including Hashim Raza Road, Al-Amna Avenue, Shahrah-i-Usman to Shahrah-i-Noor Jahan, among others, in the Central district, while in the West district, Orangi Link

Road, Gulshan-i-Ghazi, 19-D Road, Faqir Colony roads, and additional internal connectors have been marked for the upcoming project.

In the East district, Sehba Akhtar Road, Sardar Usman Ali Sabri Road, Nash Kazmi Road and other key routes connecting residential and commercial neighbourhoods would be rehabilitated under the KMC initiative, and in the South district, Garden Road, Mirza Adam Road, Sarwar Shaheed Road and adjoining streets would be rebuilt and rehabilitated.

In Korangi district, Jinnah Square Road, Liaquat Market Road, multiple adjoining access routes, and in Malir district, Malir Khokarpar Road, Mehran Depot arteries and additional roads forming the core Malir traffic grid would be made part of the initiative.

Giving the break-up of the project estimates, the statement said that the estimated cost for road rehabilitation across these districts amounts to Rs5.5bn, while under additional proposals approved for the development package to ensure holistic urban improvement, KMC has also proposed Rs1bn for sewerage infrastructure rehabilitation and Rs2bn for citywide street-light rehabilitation and enhancement.

“The development package will significantly ease travel for millions of residents, reduce congestion, and enhance safety and accessibility across all towns of the city. The proposed over Rs9 billion special grant reflects a strong commitment to improving Karachi’s infrastructure and ensuring that development is visible, impactful, and equitable,” the statement quoted Mayor Wahab as saying.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 20/11/2025)

KMC invokes CB jurisdiction against regular bench’s decision to review concept of zoos

A constitutional bench of the Sindh High Court on Friday issued notices on an application filed by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) seeking to review the order of a division bench that enhanced the scope of a petition from relocation of brown bear Rano to examine the whole concept of keeping zoos and caging animals.

Earlier, a regular bench of SHC while hearing the main petition filed by an animal rights activist had decided to examine the whole concept of zoos and also sought suggestions how to phase out zoos in the entire province and sending the exotic animals to their natural habitats.

After the enactment of 27th Amendment and promulgation of a gubernatorial ordinance, all the petitions filed under Article 199 of the Constitution have been sent to constitutional benches (CBs) of SHC.

When the matter came up for hearing on Friday, a two-judge constitutional bench headed by Justice Adnan Iqbal Chaudhary issued notices to the parties concerned for Jan 18.

SHC issues notices and put off the matter till January 18

The KMC in its application submitted that the petition in question was exclusively pertaining to shifting of Rano and pursuant to an order of the SHC passed last month, the zoo bear was successfully shifted on Nov 5.

It argued that the petition had effectively served its purpose and ought to have been disposed of accordingly, but the division bench in its impugned order enhanced the scope of petition to include welfare of all the animals kept at zoos.

The KMC stated that the division bench had exceeded its jurisdiction by enhancing the scope of the petition and stated that the bench under Article 175 (2) of the Constitution lacked jurisdiction.

It further submitted that in the impugned order, the SHC had also constituted a committee to visit zoos across the province and suggest steps for improvement as well as sending the exotic animals to their natural habitat.

However, the KMC stated that the formation of such a committee and conferral of an extended mandate fell outside the scope of the original petition and therefore, the same was also beyond the bench’s jurisdiction.

The KMC pleaded to review and amend the impugned order and dispose of the petition.

Meanwhile, petitioner Jude Allen Pereira also filed an application seeking changes in his petition in the light of the SHC’s earlier order.

The court put the zoo authorities as well as officials of KMC on notice on his application.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 13, 22/11/2025)

Mayor gives contractors 15 days to rebuild damaged roads

Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Saturday issued a warning to officials and contractors, declaring that those who failed to perform their duties would face strict action. He gave them a 15-day deadline to complete the repair work on city roads, which had been damaged in the last monsoon rains.

Chairing a meeting of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) Engineering Department, the mayor made it clear that negligence, delays, or substandard works would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

In the meeting, which was attended by municipal commissioner S.M. Afzal Zaidi, financial adviser Gulzar Abro, senior director engineering Junaid Ullah Khan, director media Danial Siyal, and others, the mayor reviewed the status of ongoing development projects and situation of funds release.

A statement issued after the meeting said that the mayor reiterated that no project bill should be passed without third-party verification, stressing that transparency and quality were non-negotiable.

Orders expeditious solarisation of street lights

Officials briefed him on the District Annual Development Programme (ADP) schemes, Provincial ADP initiatives, CLICK projects, and various emergency works.

Senior director engineering Junaid Ullah Khan presented updates on current schemes, while financial adviser Gulzar Abro confirmed that the Sindh government had released the necessary funds.

"With funds available, there is no justification for delays," the statement quoted the mayor as saying.

"Any officer or contractor showing negligence will not be spared. All departments have to ensure the completion of all schemes by June 30 to provide maximum relief to citizens."

The City Council in June 2025 approved a Rs55.28bn KMC budget for the year 2025-26. The total expenditures were estimated at Rs55.13bn, showing a surplus of Rs146.272m.

The city budget allocated investments in the medical and health services (Rs7.29bn), development projects, including the World Bank-funded CLICK (Competitive and Livable City of Karachi) project (Rs7.43bn), municipal services (Rs5.30bn) and infrastructure under the district ADP schemes (Rs9bn).

He also ordered the expeditious solarisation of street lights, calling it an essential step for improving urban services. Addressing the condition of roads damaged in the recent rains at the meeting, the mayor said all such roads must be fully repaired within 15 days, adding that those failing to meet the deadline "should be ready to go home".

Mr Wahab, the statement said, emphasised that the development of Karachi must remain top priority, and any compromise in this regard would invite immediate action.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 23/11/2025)

SHC restrains KMC from accepting bids of fee collection contracts at zoos

The Sindh High Court has restrained the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) from accepting any bid for collection of entrance and parking fees at three city zoos till Dec 3.

A two-judge bench of the SHC headed by Justice Mohammad Iqbal Kalhoro also issued notices to the KMC and other respondents as well as the advocate general of Sindh for the next hearing.

M/s Shahzad Enterprises, through its counsel Kanwar Mujahid Ali Khan, petitioned the SHC and submitted that his client was a contractor and interested in acquiring the contract for collection of entrance and parking fees from Karachi Zoological Garden, Safari Park and Landhi-Korangi Zoo.

The petitioner's lawyer argued that the KMC issued tender notices for development / beautification of entrance and parking facility for visitors at zoos, but another item "collection of fees from Karachi Zoo entrance gate and parking" was included in the form uploaded online despite the fact that it was a separate issue and did not come within the definition of beautification.

He submitted that the term of such contract had also been extended from one to three years in violation of the rules and such actions had been done with mala fide intent only to award the contract to blue-eyed contractors of the KMC and to defeat fair competition.

After the preliminary hearing, the bench issued notices to the respondents as well as advocate general for Dec 3.

The bench in its order said: "Meanwhile, no bid on account of the aforesaid three tender notices in respect of item No. 8 i.e. collection of gate entrance fees and parking fees from Karachi Zoo, Safari Park and Landhi-Korangi Zoo shall be accepted till the next date of hearing."

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 23/11/2025)

3 lion cubs born at Karachi Zoo

Three lion cubs have recently been born at Karachi Zoological Gardens and they are in "excellent health and active".

An announcement to this effect was made by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) on Tuesday. It said following their birth on Nov 16, the cubs underwent a thorough medical examination by the in-house veterinary team at the zoo.

According to the zoo's medical staff, all three cubs are in excellent health, active and showing strong early signs of growth and vitality. Their mother is also reported to be healthy and is receiving continuous care.

The KMC took around 10 days to announce the birth because lion cubs are very vulnerable in their first few weeks, as they are born blind and entirely dependent on their mother for care, a zoo official said, adding: "Hence, it's important to protect them from outside interference and help the mother strengthen her bond with the babies."

Mayor Wahab says birth reflects KMC's strengthened commitment to better habitat management, veterinary care

In August 2024, two lion cubs were born at the zoo and the officials had said that it was the first birth among the big cats in more than 12 years at the facility.

While the birth of the three lion cubs is expected to attract significant public interest, particularly among families, children, and wildlife lovers, the zoo management said that public viewing will be limited initially to ensure their safety and to avoid any stress during their early nurturing period.

"Once the veterinary team deems it appropriate, the cubs will gradually be introduced for public viewing," it added.

Happiest moment for Karachi Zoo: mayor

Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab expressed great happiness over the birth of the cubs.

He directed the zoo administration to ensure special care, enhanced monitoring and a dedicated treatment plan for the cubs, underscoring the importance of providing them with an optimal environment during their early developmental stages.

He further emphasised that every possible measure must be taken to maintain proper nutrition, security and veterinary supervision for both the cubs and their mother.

"This is one of the happiest moments for Karachi Zoo and a testament to the improved standards of animal welfare under the KMC," the mayor stated. "The birth of the lion cubs reflects the zoo's strengthened commitment to better habitat management, veterinary care, and overall conservation practices."

The KMC administration noted that the birth of the cubs is not only a source of pride for the city but also a promising indicator of the zoo's ongoing efforts to reform and uplift its wildlife facilities.

Over the past year, the statement said, Karachi Zoo has implemented several key improvements, including upgraded enclosures, enhanced veterinary services, nutritional management plans and better environmental conditions for various species.

The KMC reaffirmed its commitment to further strengthening wildlife conservation efforts, upgrading zoo facilities and continuing to provide humane care to all animals housed at the Karachi Zoo.

The administration has pledged to carry forward these improvements with the same dedication, ensuring that the zoo remains an educational, recreational, and conservation-focused space for residents of Karachi.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 26/11/2025)

KMC plans five new graveyards as existing cemeteries run out of space

Amid a burial-place crisis that could leave Karachi with nowhere to bury its dead by the year 2040, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has decided to establish four 500-acre graveyards on city outskirts and a new 25-acre graveyard within the metropolis.

The Sindh government has in principle agreed to this proposal and is likely to approve it soon.

The KMC's plan came to the fore after repeated warnings that almost all city graveyards have run out of space for burial.

The situation has not only set off alarm bells but also exposed a set of troubling facts that are fast turning into a new challenge for Karachiites.

The sources said Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab pushed for the plan which got the provincial authorities' nod after which the KMC could acquire plots at different locations.

"In recent meetings and back-to-back discussions between the two sides [the KMC and the Sindh government] it was finally decided that four major locations measuring around 500 acres each would be marked for the KMC graveyards at different city outskirts. A 25-acre piece of land has also been sought within the city which is also expected to receive a go-ahead from the Sindh government. The land within the city is expected to be marked near the newly built Shahrah-e-Bhutto," said an official.

A KMC official said that the city has nearly 220 graveyards, of which 192 are formally allotted. Among the allotted graveyards, 173 are for Muslims and 19 for non-Muslims which included 12 Christian cemeteries and five Hindu cremation grounds.

"Of these allotted sites, 46 are overseen by the KMC, 20 are run by the Defence Housing Authority, various cantonments and government bodies, while 112 — 99 Muslim and 13 non-Muslim — are managed by social organisations, community groups and private entities. An additional 14 graveyards are operated by various institutions or individuals," he added.

He said that amid complaints that old graves were being demolished to make room for new burial spaces, the KMC had already imposed a ban on burials in several major graveyards of the city, including Society Graveyard near Tariq Road, Model Colony Graveyard, Paposh Nagar Graveyard, Korangi No. 6 Graveyard, Yaseenabad Graveyard and Azeempura Graveyard. However, he acknowledged that the ban was not being fully enforced on any of these graveyards in practice.

With least focus of the law-enforcement agencies and deteriorating situation at most graveyards, the burial grounds are also fast becoming safe havens for drug traffickers and criminals, he added.

Another official said that the growing control of “mafias” on the city graveyards was not only a problem for Karachiites, but also had led to encroachments and illegal plotting, commonly known as “China-cutting”.

“The reality is that there is no space in the city’s well-known and traditional graveyards and this is the fact which KMC officials and certain other elements are exploiting,” said the official.

“If a family wishes to bury its loved one in a specific graveyard, only grave-related expenses can reach Rs100,000 Rs150,000. Most people are not even aware that at KMC-run graveyards, the grave and burial fee is just Rs9,300. But due to fast shrinking space, this job has become a mafia’s business. If the plan prepared and proposed by the Karachi mayor meets the reality, it would be a great relief for the Karachiites.”

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 30/11/2025)

Karachi mayor seeks special financial audit of all 246 UCs

Just a day after he hinted that he is prepared to take action and demand full accountability of towns and union committees, Mayor Murtaza Wahab on Thursday sought a special financial audit of all union committees of the city for the last three fiscal years.

The decision was taken with a view to strengthening financial transparency, ensuring public accountability, improving municipal governance and guaranteeing effective utilisation of public funds, according to an official communique.

In letter to the Director General, Local Council Audit, with copies to the auditor general of Pakistan and chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Sindh, the mayor requested an urgent and comprehensive audit of all 246 UCs operating across the city.

According to the letter, the Sindh government provides Rs1.2 million per month to each UC, amounting to a significant recurring expenditure from the public exchequer. Despite this substantial allocation, there is currently no concrete mechanism or verified system to assess how these funds are being utilised at the UC level.

“In the absence of a structured financial audit conducted by the Auditor General of Pakistan, the performance, expenditure patterns and financial discipline of UCs cannot be properly evaluated.

Says lack of oversight not only creates loopholes, but also prevents service delivery at grass-roots level

“The lack of oversight not only creates loopholes but also prevents identification of gaps that could undermine service delivery at the grassroots level,” he said.

“The objective is not merely to audit accounts, but also to ensure that public funds are being utilised efficiently, transparently, and for the welfare of Karachi’s citizens. A special audit will help ascertain actual expenditures, highlight weaknesses, and strengthen the overall financial governance of the UCs.”

He further emphasised that Karachi’s residents deserve clarity on how their tax-funded resources are being spent, especially when the city’s basic municipal services require substantial improvement.

Only couple of days ago, Mayor Wahab had come out in the open in the ongoing tussle between the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)-governed Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and Jamaat-i-Islami-led town municipal corporations (TMCs), accusing the opposition party of receiving a staggering sum of Rs14 billion from the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) for road-digging permissions, yet leaving the streets completely torn and dug-up, and hinting that he is now prepared to take action and demand full accountability.

His latest move is widely seen as reflection of the firm stance of the city administration to keep a check on the financial affairs of towns and the UCs. Many believe the initiative may also set a new precedent for routine and independent auditing of local government bodies, an aspect long criticised for being overlooked.

“If implemented effectively, such audits could help uncover systemic weaknesses, streamline expenditure, and restore public trust in municipal institutions. It should be seen as a corrective measure rather than a fresh flashpoint in Karachi’s already tense local governance landscape,” said an official.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 12/12/2025)

Forgotten clock towers in Karachi wait to tick again

The metropolitan city of Karachi, is often portrayed in headlines as chaotic and overwhelmed by modern sprawl.

But scattered among the skyscrapers, traffic-choked roads, and dense informal settlements stand reminders of a different city — a port once celebrated for its order, elegance, and architecture.

Among the most striking relics are Karachi's historic clock towers — orange and rose-pink structures from the late 19th and early 20th centuries — that once guided the city's rhythms.

Today, many are crumbling, forgotten, or overtaken by encroachments, leaving historians and conservationists worried that a rare chapter of the city's past may soon disappear.

In the heart of downtown Saddar, squeezed between Chinese dental clinics and corner grocery shops, stands the 19th-century clock tower of the Eduljee Dinshaw Charitable Dispensary — now a Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) facility.

The Victorian-era structure, built in 1882, is still in use as a dispensary, but its once-white wooden windows are now blackened by exhaust. The clock mounted above its entrance has no hands - frozen for decades. On a recent morning, pigeons perched wearily on its weathered stonework as health workers inside carried out free dengue tests.

At the back, emergency staircases crumble, paint long stripped away. Rusting spiral steps toward the tower's top recall a time when caretakers wound the clock every day.

A few kilometers away, the Lea Market clock tower — once a favorite public gathering place — sits in even worse condition.

A makeshift vegetable market sprawls through the building, while dozens of auto rickshaws treat the entrance as a permanent and illegal terminal.

"This was a favorite gathering place for everyone in the area, both young and old, until the 1980s," said Mukhtar Baloch, a 70-year-old retired teacher.

"I still remember the days when this place was a hub for political and social discussions and public meetings. But over time, it's lost its glory, just like many of our other heritage sites."

Forgotten city's heartbeat

Karachi-based heritage researcher Shaheen Nauman said that around 11 clock towers were documented across the city until 2019, most built between 1882 and 1931.

Recent surveys uncovered four more in the southern districts, bringing the known total to 15, including Merewether Tower (1884), Holy Trinity Cathedral (1885), Empress Market (1889), Poonabai Mamaiya (1889), Sydenham Passenger Pavilion (1913), Lakshmi Building (1924) and Lea Market (1927).

Of these, only three still function, Nauman said, and the rest are waiting for official attention.

"These towers were built between the late 19th century and early 20th century, when watches were a luxury that very few could afford," she explained.

Urgent preservation needed

There are glimmers of hope. At Empress Market — a centerpiece of colonial-era Karachi — the clock tower has come back to life thanks to the passion of local artist and technician Bilal Asif.

Once buried beneath hundreds of illegal vendor kiosks, the market regained its historic facade after a sweeping anti-encroachment drive in 2018. But its iconic clock remained broken until Asif stepped in.

"It was a huge challenge to bring back to life a clock that had stopped decades ago," he told Anadolu.

"But I accepted the challenge and made it tick again. It took weeks of hard work, but I'm glad we managed to successfully restore it."

Today, this is the only hybrid-powered tower clock in Karachi. Among the other clock towers that still function the one at the KMC head office requires weekly winding, whereas the Merewether Tower clocks are solar powered.

Despite occasional restoration efforts, experts fear the broader picture is bleak.

Architect and heritage advocate Marvi Mazhar called for structured intervention. "These clocks must be declared heritage property. There should be monthly checks and the notes must be logged, so that there can be accountability and inquiries, if needed," she said.

Nauman agreed that if one tower can be revived, others can too. "These forgotten clock towers were once the heartbeat of the city.

They symbolize time itself, and its deep significance in human life," she said. "When the clock at Merewether Tower or the KMC building chimes, its sound takes us back a hundred years — to a time when it was the only guide for setting the rhythm of daily life."

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 05, 15/12/2025)

Cotton Exchange Building belongs to KMC, declares Karachi mayor

A fresh twist has emerged in the unfolding controversy over the historic Karachi Cotton Exchange Building (KCEB), as the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has openly rejected the claims of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), throwing its weight behind the Karachi Cotton Association's (KCA) stance in the high-profile ownership dispute.

Clarifying his position without any ambiguity, City Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab told *Dawn* that the building belongs to the KMC, calling the recent joint action by the FIA and ETPB "unjustified".

"The KMC owns the building," the mayor said when contacted, distancing the city government from the federal agencies' assertion that the property was evacuee or trust land.

Asked whether the city administration stood by the KCA's version of events, Mayor Wahab responded briefly but firmly: "Yes, they are right," lending significant weight to the association's claim that it, under a valid lease arrangement, occupies the invaluable building, given its prime location, historical significance and continued commercial use.

Only last week, the FIA and the ETPB had claimed to have "recovered" and "vacated" the KCEB located on I.I. Chundrigar Road in a "joint operation," declaring it a federal trust property.

In a joint statement, the FIA and ETPB had stated that the KCEB is a trust property as per federal government's gazette notification, and hence the title of this property is vested in the federal government.

During the operation, the statement said, it was found that the KCA had been illegally occupying the premises, keeping multiple tenants inside the building and charging them rent without any lawful authority.

The two agencies stated that the premises were secured in the presence of FIA and ETPB officials as well as representatives of the KCA.

"All occupants and tenants were offered an opportunity to safely retrieve their personal belongings before the premises were sealed under their lock and key," the statement said, adding that arrangements had been made to facilitate the retrieval of remaining valuables and records through a formal application and verification process.

The FIA and ETPB reiterated that they are "fully cognizant that valuables and records may be lying inside" and reaffirmed their commitment to protecting federal assets and taking action against illegal occupation.

However, KCA Secretary Aftab Alam maintained that the association is in lawful possession of the building under a long-term lease issued by the KMC, valid until 2081, and that this fact had been formally conveyed to the ETPB before the operation. Despite this, he said, a joint raid was conducted on Dec 12 without regard to the subsisting lease or the KMC's ownership of the property.

The KCA official traced the legal history of the property, stating that the land was originally leased by the KMC for 99 years in 1883, and was later purchased by the KCA Limited in 1936 through a registered conveyance deed, well before Partition. The transfer, he said, was duly entered in the official land records, and following the expiry of the original lease, the KMC renewed it for a further 99-year period from 1982 to 2081, under which the association continues to occupy the premises.

Rejecting the classification of the building as evacuee or trust property, the KCA argued that since the association was incorporated under the Indian Companies Act, 1913, and the property was transferred prior to 1947, it cannot be treated as abandoned or evacuee property under the Evacuee Trust Property Act, 1975.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 16/12/2025)

Karachi Mayor forms 'proactive' vigilance committees to identify, oversee road repair works

City Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Thursday directed immediate formation of independent vigilance teams to monitor repair works on major roads across the metropolis and ensure that small issues were resolved within 24 hours after they were reported.

He issued the directive during a high-level meeting of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's Engineering Department at the KMC head office, to review progress of ongoing development projects, an official statement said.

The mayor said the vigilance teams would proactively inspect roads, identify defects and report problems to the Engineering Department without waiting for public complaints.

"These teams will regularly visit roads, submit progress reports and directly inform higher authorities. It is the responsibility of officials, not citizens, to identify and report minor road-related issues," the mayor said, adding that each district must have an active vigilance team.

Tells KMC Engineering Department to ensure minor issues are resolved within 24 hours

Mayor Wahab said that separate emergency tenders for minor repair works had already been executed, and funds allocated from municipal taxes were readily available.

"Since both resources and funds are in place, there should be no delay in resolving complaints," he stressed, warning that strict action would be taken against the Engineering Department in case of non-compliance or failure to meet the 24-hour deadline.

During the meeting, officials also briefed the mayor on the progress of development schemes under the District Annual Development Programme (ADP), the Provincial ADP, and World Bank-funded Competitive and Livable City of Karachi (Click) projects.

Senior engineering officials informed him that mega projects under the Click programme had achieved over 70 per cent progress, with several expected to be inaugurated before March next year.

The mayor also directed departments to expedite and complete all codal formalities for schemes on Natha Khan Road and Jahangir Road.

Emphasising accountability and service delivery, he said citizens had high expectations from the city administration, and that "tangible improvements were already visible".

"Our focus remains on timely execution, transparency, and visible progress," he said.

The meeting was attended by Municipal Commissioner Syed Mohammad Afzal Zaidi, Financial Adviser Gulzar Abro, Senior Director Engineering Junaid Ullah Khan, Senior Director Coordination Akhlaq Ahmed and other officials.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 19/10/2025)

Mayor Wahab favours vertical expansion in Karachi

As Karachi is expected to become one of the 10 largest cities in the world by 2030, Mayor Murtaza Wahab Siddiqui has favoured the expansion of the metropolis through vertical development, stating that ample space is available where such projects can be planned and executed.

He acknowledged that vertical development is a costly option but insisted it is the way forward, citing examples of Dubai, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. He added that vertical expansion can be undertaken in newer parts of Karachi where infrastructure can be built afresh.

Murtaza Wahab was speaking at the [Pakistan Population Summit](#), organised by Dawn Media, on Tuesday.

He said informal settlements would also need to be transformed, which would require "out-of-the-box" solutions. The conventional approach, he warned, would lead to financing and legal complications. "We need to adopt a policy that recognises vertical planning as the way forward," he stressed.

Speaking on "Population Challenges for a Highly Urbanised Pakistan in 2050", the Karachi mayor said: "We need to move beyond discussions and shift to action mode, which is unfortunately lacking in the country. We need coherence and cohesiveness in our approach to formulate solutions. We must start trusting people, as disliking opinions leads to inaction, and inaction is never good for society."

Highlighting Karachi's complex governance structure, he noted that 38 entities currently operate in the city — 26 provincial and 12 federal — which creates multiple challenges. "There must be a structure that enables all entities to respond to the city's leader, who is accountable and answerable. This is where we are lacking," he said.

He added that a master plan is under preparation to help the city council coordinate with all these entities. While provincial bodies are relatively easier to manage, the city faces difficulties in dealing with federal entities. "We want a meaningful solution that allows each entity to work within its domain," he said.

Calling Karachi the only true cosmopolitan city of Pakistan, he said it bears the burden of the country's rapidly growing population. In 1951, Karachi's population was one million; by 1995 it had reached 8.5 million; and according to the 2023 census, it has now surged to 20.3m.

He lamented that the state has not prioritised the issue of population growth, even though the city's population has increased twentyfold in about seven decades. No alternative urban centres were developed, he said, forcing people from across Pakistan to move to Karachi in search of economic opportunities.

He added that if Gwadar had been developed 50 years ago, or a port at Zulfikarabad in Sindh had materialised, population pressures would not have been concentrated solely in Karachi. He called for the development of more coastal cities.

Mr Wahab said that migration from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Punjab, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan has led to unplanned urbanisation because the state failed to complement rising population inflows with affordable housing.

He said the Sindh government is working on building 2.1 million climate-resilient houses and is focusing on providing free land to people to encourage development of proper settlements and improve living conditions.

Architect and urban planner Arif Hasan highlighted major trends in urbanisation. "The major trend is social, which is, of course, a result of economic change," he said.

Recalling past promises by governments to build housing, Mr Hasan remarked: "Nobody has produced any significant number of houses." Referring to the PPP's one-room housing initiative for flood-affected people, he said: "Let's see how it works out."

Asked about pressing challenges, he identified flooding as the biggest, stressing the need to control population density and calling for major land reforms to address these issues.
(By Amir Ahmed Dawn, 03, 03/12/2025)

KMC holds BRT, departmental store responsible for toddler's death in manhole

The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has held Red Line BRT authorities and the management of Chase Up responsible for the death of three-year-old Ibrahim, who fell into a manhole near Nipa Chowrangi in Gulshan-e-Iqbal on Sunday night. The child's body was recovered after a 14-hour search near Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology.

According to the KMC report, submitted to the Secretary of the Local Government Department, the tragedy occurred because excavation work for the Red Line BRT project had severely damaged the drainage system. Temporary two-foot covers placed over the drains were inadequate to prevent accidents.

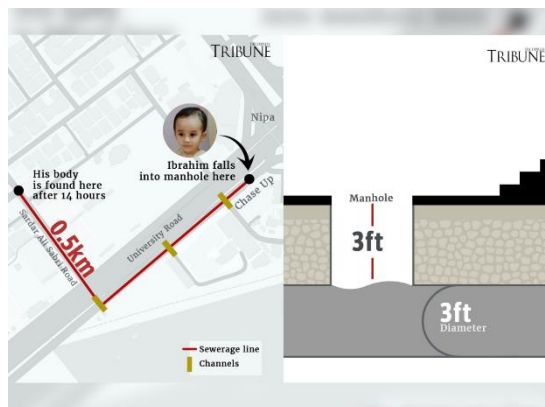
The Express Tribune has recovered CCTV footage of the incident. It shows the manhole was inside the bike-parking area, not clearly seen, but with no construction work visible. Excavation only began after the incident to recover the child.

The report emphasised that the BRT authorities had not informed KMC before starting the work, and that such unsafe practices—using substandard temporary covers and leaving manholes open—had never been employed by the municipal corporation. KMC said negligence on the part of BRT was a key factor in the child's death.

However, this was not the first time a child had died after falling into an open manhole in Karachi. In January 2025, eight-year-old Ibad Asad fell into an uncovered manhole near a wedding hall in Shah Faisal Colony and died despite rescue efforts. Last year alone, at least 19 people lost their lives due to open sewers, highlighting a persistent issue of oversight and the failure of local authorities to ensure basic public safety measures. Similarly, in September 2021, two-and-a-half-year-old Hamza died in Garden West after the manhole cover near his grandfather's house had been missing for 15 days, with residents reporting that nearby construction activity had damaged it.

Ibrahim, the only child of Nabeel and his family, slipped into the open manhole around 11pm on Sunday while walking ahead of his mother between parked motorcycles outside the store. His body traveled nearly half a kilometre through three internal sewage channels before being recovered. His mother reportedly fainted, and his grandfather, Mehmoodul Hasan, received the body.

Locals and volunteers joined the search but faced delays due to a lack of machinery and sewerage maps. Ibrahim's father and grandfather even spent Rs15,000 on private excavation before KMC teams resumed operations. BRT machinery arrived nearly 16 hours after the fall to excavate the main drainage line.



Political leaders, including MQM's Dr Farooq Sattar and Jamaat-e-Islami's Hafiz Naeemur-Rehman, criticised authorities and highlighted the safety risks posed by uncovered drains and manholes. Mayor Murtaza Wahab expressed condolences and said relevant authorities, including the Karachi Water & Sewerage Board (KWSC), had been instructed to investigate.

Following the incident, an investigation committee formed on the instructions of the Sindh Chief Minister visited the site, accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Gulshan-e-Iqbal Syed Amir and local police. The committee inspected the store and the location where Ibrahim's body was recovered. It will determine the causes of the accident and submit its findings to the Chief Minister.

The incident also sparked protests at Nipa Chowrangi, where residents blocked roads, burned tyres, and halted traffic. Some protesters damaged media vans, prompting police to divert vehicles

to nearby routes. Lawyers, journalists, and residents expressed distress on social media platforms, including X, urging authorities to take urgent measures to prevent similar tragedies.

The Sindh Assembly erupted in protest over Ibrahim's death, with opposition lawmakers condemning municipal negligence. MQM's Iftikhar Alam questioned how long children would remain at risk from uncovered drains, while JI's Muhammad Farooq demanded accountability from the mayor and town officials, citing this as the third incident along the BRT Red Line. PTI's Rehan Bandukda highlighted the emotional toll by holding up the child's photo.

Senior Sindh Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon expressed sorrow, assured strict action, and noted that 88,000 manholes have been covered this year. The tragedy also triggered legal action as two petitions were filed in District East seeking a criminal case against Mayor Murtaza Wahab and other municipal officials, citing repeated complaints by Ibrahim's family and delays that forced them to hire a private search team.

(By Naeem Khanzada The Express Tribune, 04, 04/12/2025)

Karachi's 246 UCs to get Rs100,000 per month for manhole lids, lights

In one of the major neighbourhood-level interventions since the new local government system came into place in 2023, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) has approved nearly Rs300 million per year —Rs100,000 per month each — for 246 union committees (UCs) to exclusively maintain manhole covers and streetlights.

The decision came in a move triggered by a public outrage after a three-year-old boy drowned in an uncovered nullah near NIPA.

“And this is in addition to the manhole covers placed by the KWSC (Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation) and the streetlights fixed by the KMC,” Mayor Murtaza Wahab told *Dawn*, clarifying that the city administration is not abdicating its responsibility for covering manholes and fixing streetlights, but is instead giving some financial powers to the UCs to help keep them maintained.

The announcement came directly from Mayor Murtaza Wahab, who said that the new mechanism had been designed to give fiscal space to the union committees, which are currently receiving Rs1.2 million each per month, an amount recently enhanced from half a million rupees.

Under the new summary approved by Mayor Wahab on Monday, each of the 246 UCs across the city would receive additional Rs100,000 every month to maintain the manhole covers and streetlights in their neighbourhoods.

Mayor Wahab says KMC is financially empowering UCs for infrastructure upkeep

Although the manhole covers are provided by both the KWSC and the KMC, he said, it was deemed necessary to take an additional step. Therefore, the KMC has decided to provide additional money to every UC, specifically and exclusively for streetlight maintenance and manhole cover requirements, he added.

An official told this reporter that according to the newly-passed summary by the mayor, the KMC would disburse Rs24.60 million every month to 246 UCs across the city and almost Rs300 million in a year for the maintenance of manhole covers and streetlights.

“The KWSC has already notified all towns and UCs for smooth supplies of the manhole covers and for the public-level engagement. The mayor has also set up helpline 1334 and email complaint@kmc.gos.pk, asking people to identify any open manholes and report them,” he added.

The move marks the first direct financial intervention by the KMC at the UC level since June 2023, when the current local government system was put in place. Since then, the KMC has largely relied on departmental coordination and inter-agency mechanisms to manage routine tasks, avoiding decentralised financial allocations to the UCs.

The decision comes against the backdrop of intense public outrage following the NIPA tragedy, which reignited criticism over the local government system's failure to maintain essential civic infrastructure. However, despite releasing funds to the UCs, the authorities have not shared any mechanism to monitor or ensure that the money is spent for its intended purpose.

The official said the new allocation will be released from the Municipal Utility Charges and Taxes (MUCT) account, enabling each UC to respond quickly to the complaints, improve neighborhood infrastructure and deliver essential municipal services more effectively. Implemented in August 2024, the KMC aims at generating an annual income of Rs4 billion through the MUCT being collected through K-Electric (KE) bills.

Mayor Wahab hopes that the fresh initiative would help prevent “unfortunate incidents” in the city and to ensure that municipal issues at the local level are addressed promptly and effectively.

“The safety and well-being of Karachi's citizens remain the city administration's top priority, and this decision marks another stride toward building a safer, well-lit, and efficiently managed Karachi,” he added.
(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 09/12/2025)

UCs to receive Rs100,000 monthly for manhole covers, streetlights

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has announced that each Union Committee (UC) in the city will receive Rs100,000 per month specifically for the maintenance of streetlights and the installation or replacement of manhole covers. The initiative, approved for implementation from December, is aimed at improving municipal services and addressing local infrastructure issues.

Under the new local government system, which includes the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), towns, and Union Committees, UCs had previously received Rs 500,000 per month. Several committees had reported that the previous allocation was insufficient for routine maintenance and local projects.

In response, the Sindh Government and the Pakistan Peoples Party leadership approved an increased allocation of Rs 1.2 million per month for each UC. Mayor Wahab said the additional Rs 100,000 per UC is intended exclusively for streetlight upkeep and covering open manholes, despite these responsibilities being shared with the Karachi Water & Sewerage Corporation (KWSC).

JI criticises the announcement

Deputy Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi and Opposition Leader KMC Advocate Saifuddin has criticised the announcement, accusing the mayor of using such announcements for political point-scoring. Saifuddin noted that a similar Rs 100,000 allocation had already been announced in the June council meeting, yet no funds had been released to UCs six months later. He added that installing 50 manhole covers in UCs with populations of 50,000 would not solve the city's systemic issues. Saifuddin said

that having been in office as mayor for two years, and previously serving two years as administrator, Wahab should resign for failing to address Karachi's core problems during his four-year tenure.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 09/12/2025)

Manhole fund

As a response to the recent tragedy of a three-year-old child falling to his death in an open manhole, the mayor of Karachi has announced a Rs100,000 monthly fund for Union Committees (UCs) across the city, dedicated to streetlight maintenance and installation or replacement of manhole covers. Mayor Murtaza Wahab claims that this initiative is meant to commence from December and will improve municipal services and infrastructural issues.

But as per the pattern of governance in Karachi, the mere announcement of fund allocation is never a holistic answer to most civic problems. Problem-solving in this financial hub has to go through multiple blockades, including delays, corruption, bribery, cross-organisational cooperation and finally, execution. Therefore, it would be foolish to celebrate this announcement, which has already been accused of pandering to public sentiments and being a political point-scorer by the opposition, amidst city-wide calls for the mayor's resignation.

It is also incumbent on the public to recall multiple other infrastructural lapses that can turn deadly, which still exist and are neither being acknowledged nor improved upon. Do citizens have to sacrifice one innocent life per problem for the authorities to take action? Do broken roads, non-functional traffic signs, mismanaged pole wires and unsafe streets must first effectuate civic unrest?

Throwing money at a problem and then stepping back will never solve it. There must be systems in place that ensure fair allocation of funds, as well as traceable maps of accountability. The mayor should personally see to the implementation of his initiatives, along with subsequent follow-ups that will also address the problem of stolen manhole covers. Until and unless such systems are developed, announced and enacted, the opposition proves to be right in saying that fund allocation is a mere political point-scorer rather than a meaningful fix.

(By Editorial, The Express Tribune, 14, 10/12/2025)

UC chairmen left holding manhole covers

The metropolitan city's 246 Union Committee (UC) chairmen have suddenly been saddled with a heavy responsibility. The Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), under Mayor Murtaza Wahab, has announced a monthly allocation of Rs100,000 per UC—a total of Rs25 million—for repairing manholes and fixing streetlights.

The move, critics say, is KMC's way of washing its hands of one of the city's most dangerous problems. From now on, if a manhole causes an accident, the blame will fall squarely on the UC chairman.

Payments have already begun, with KMC insisting that chairmen ensure transparent use of funds and full accountability. While some UC chairmen welcomed the decision, many expressed concern, calling the amount insufficient for the scale of the crisis.

The decision comes in the shadow of public outrage after a tragic incident in Gulshan-e-Iqbal, where a child fell into an open manhole and died.

(By Naeem Khanzada The Express Tribune, 04, 10/12/2025)

Sindh Assembly calls for modernisation of Karachi's fire-fighting system

The Sindh Assembly on Tuesday voted unanimously in favour of an opposition-sponsored resolution that called for the comprehensive modernisation of Karachi's inadequate and substandard firefighting system.

MPA Qurat-ul-Ain of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, who moved the resolution on 'private members' day', told the house that Karachi presently had only 20 fire stations, 36 fire tenders, four snorkels and roughly 700 staff.

She said that the city of over 20 million people actually needed at least 200 stations and 34,000 staff.

She pointed out that Karachi's population and the number of highrise buildings were growing, while the existing fire brigade system remained substandard and inadequate to handle any emergency.

The MPA highlighted the urgent need to upgrade equipment, improve response times and expand staffing to better protect the city's residents from fire hazards.

She said that a modern, well-equipped fire service was essential for public safety and urged the provincial government to allocate the necessary resources without delay.

She called for swift implementation of the resolution once passed.

Supporting the opposition member's resolution, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Zia-ul-Hasan Lanjar conceded that the fire brigade in the city was in dire need of modernisation.

"All efforts will be made to improve the system," he assured the house.

The resolution noted that Karachi, as the country's largest metropolis and its financial hub, was exposed to significant fire risks because of its dense population, bustling commercial activity and a complex basic infrastructure.

It said that there was an urgent need to modernise the existing system so that emergencies arising from fire outbreaks could be responded to effectively.

"This house resolves to urge the provincial government to upgrade the firebrigade system, take immediate steps to meet international standards and strengthen its capacity to handle disasters", the resolution concluded.

The resolution was put to a vote by the chair and it was carried unanimously.

Martyrs of East Pakistan remembered

At the outset of the proceedings, the house offered fateha for the martyrs of the Army Public School Peshawar and the East Pakistan tragedy.

The house, through a resolution of an opposition member, unanimously paid a heartfelt tribute to the martyrs of the 1971 war and to the Bihari community, who fought alongside the Pakistan Army and gave their lives defending the nation.

Supporting the resolution, tabled by MQM-P's Ejaz-ul-Haq, Minister Lanjar paid tribute to the martyrs of East Pakistan.

However, Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah expunged some remarks of the MQM-P member after Pakistan Peoples Party member Ghulam Qadir Chandio said that the opposition member's speech had given an impression that only one community had made sacrifices.

Resolution for empowered LG system withdrawn

MQM-P's parliamentary party leader Taha Ahmed Khan withdrew his resolution calling for amendments to Article 140-A of the Constitution to strengthen constitutional guarantees for local governments after the law and parliamentary affairs minister assured the house that a committee would be formed to examine the issue.

A resolution, tabled by MQM-P's Syed Adil Askari, seeking establishment of a general university in Karachi was rejected with majority votes.

The house also rejected a resolution of MQM-P member Muhammad Aamir Siddiqui regarding concerns over the condition of streets and internal roads across the city.

Besides, the resolution of MQM-P Qurat-UI-Ain Khan seeking enactment of laws to prevent immorality in the society was also rejected by the house with majority vote.

Later, the house was adjourned to Friday.
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 17/12/2025)

Sindh CM okays Rs9.2bn for road repairs in industrial areas

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has approved Rs9.282 billion for the urgent repair and maintenance of roads and allied infrastructure in Karachi's industrial areas.

In his meeting with representatives of Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI), Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE), Bin Qasim Association of Trade & Industry (BQATI) and the Landhi Association of Trade & Industry (LATI), the CM reviewed progress and finalised a roadmap for the development and rehabilitation of basic infrastructure across all industrial zones of the city.

He approved the funds, including Rs2bn for the SITE Association of Trade & Industry, Rs700 million for both phases of SITE Superhighway, Rs721.74m for the North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI), Rs860.55m for the F.B. Area Association of Trade & Industry, Rs2bn for LATI, Rs2bn for KATI (including the Pakistan Tanners Association) and Rs1bn for the BQATI.

"I want you to start development works from Monday and complete them within six months so that another similar development package can be given to industrial areas," he said.

Funding will be arranged through infrastructure development cess, Murad tells industrialists

The meeting, held at the CM House, was attended by Minister for Industries Jam Ikram Dharejo, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Zubair Motiwala, Zahid Saeed, Muhammad Ikram, Zubair Chhaya, Faisal Moiz, Rayyan Ashraf, Zain Bashir, Ahmad Azeem, Shakeel Ashraf, Sheikh Tahseen and others.

The meeting was briefed on the first-phase proposal, amounting to Rs9.282bn, for the urgent repair and maintenance of roads and allied infrastructure in Karachi's industrial areas. The plan has been rationalised after extensive

consultations led by the Karachi commissioner, in line with the chief minister's directions, to ensure equitable, need-based allocations for each zone.

The chief minister said that the scheme will be financed through the Infrastructure Development Cess collected by the Excise & Taxation Department, a substantial portion of which has been accumulated from Karachi's industrial zones. Industrialists emphasised that, in line with past practice, execution and disbursement should be carried out through a grant-in-aid rather than an Annual Development Programme scheme to ensure faster implementation.

The CM reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to strengthening Karachi's industrial base, noting that improved infrastructure is critical for productivity, exports, and employment generation. The meeting concluded with consensus that timely rehabilitation of industrial infrastructure will significantly ease logistics, reduce business costs, and restore investor confidence in Karachi.

(By APP Dawn, 13, 20/12/2025)

Karachi municipal commissioner barred from flying abroad at last minute

The Federal Investigation Agency Immigration stopped Karachi Municipal Commissioner Afzal Zaidi from travelling abroad after his name was found on the Exit Control List.

According to sources, Afzal Zaidi was scheduled to travel from Karachi to Istanbul on Turkish Airlines flight TK-709 late Saturday night. However, immigration officials denied him clearance at the counter and offloaded him from the flight due to his inclusion on the Exit Control List (ECL).

Immigration authorities informed him that he could not travel abroad unless his name was removed from the list or he obtained prior permission from a court. Sources added that dozens of officers have been placed on a special watch list due to various allegations, restricting their foreign travel.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 04, 21/12/2025)

Mayor inaugurates Rs200m drainage scheme in New Karachi

City Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Saturday inaugurated development projects worth Rs400 million including a Rs200m drainage system in district Central.

In New Karachi Town, he inaugurated a Rs200m scheme in Khamiso Goth with the support of the Karachi Development Authority (KDA). He also laid the foundation stone for pumping stations in North Karachi Town (Union Committees 1 to 5) with an estimated cost of Rs200m.

A statement stated that these projects include the restoration of the drainage system, road construction and the laying of foundations for modern water pumping stations at Khwaja Ajmer Nagri and Al-Ahmad water pumping stations.

Addressing the ceremony in New Karachi Town, the mayor said that the projects would restore the drainage system and complete road construction, providing relief to locals from long-standing problems.

He added that the purpose of his visit was to present the people with the gift of development works.

He noted that a resident told him that such work had never been done before in the area, which is proof that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) is taking practical steps for public service.

Mr Wahab said that, according to the vision of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, resources are being spent on public welfare, adding that the PPP firmly believes in resolving public issues.

He said that whenever he seeks assistance from the Sindh chief minister and the local government minister, they provide full cooperation, enabling development work in the city.

Providing details, he said that a 6,000-foot sewage line has been restored at a cost of Rs200m, and 190,000 square feet of paving blocks have been laid.

Mr Wahab congratulated the KDA team and engineers for successfully completing the project, emphasising that residents' cooperation was crucial for its success.

He further said that the concerns of New Karachi residents were being addressed promptly.

The mayor announced that the reconstruction of Saba and Ajmer Nagri pumping stations will also begin soon to provide long-term solutions.

Later, he visited the under-construction Karimabad underpass, where he reviewed ongoing development work and instructed officials to expedite construction so that the project could be completed at the earliest for the convenience of citizens.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 21/12/2025)

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation told to stop breeding of exotic species at zoo

The Sindh government has directed the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) to immediately take steps to stop the breeding of exotic species at the Karachi zoo, with particular emphasis on big cats.

The directive was issued by Sindh Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah while chairing a meeting of officials representing the KMC, zoo and relevant departments.

The meeting reviewed the existing conditions, management practices and future planning related to exotic animals housed at the zoo.

Mr Shah emphasised that the government was committed to ensuring animal welfare, ethical management and compliance with international best practices concerning captive wildlife.

He stated that uncontrolled breeding of exotic species, especially big cats, posed serious challenges in terms of animal welfare, space constraints, safety and long-term management, and needed to be addressed without delay.

During the meeting, the KMC and zoo authorities were directed to initiate immediate measures to halt the breeding of exotic animals and develop a clear, time-bound plan in consultation with qualified wildlife experts.

The chief secretary underscored the need for expert guidance to ensure that all actions taken were scientifically sound, humane and aligned with conservation principles.

He further instructed that a comprehensive assessment of existing exotic animals at the zoo be carried out, including their health, habitat conditions and future care requirements.

"The focus should remain on responsible wildlife management, discouraging unnecessary captivity and breeding of exotic animals, and promoting practices that prioritise animal well-being and public safety," he noted during the meeting.

It might be recalled that three lion cubs were born at the zoo last month.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 22/12/2025)

KMC to complete 799 uplift schemes by June: Karachi mayor

The Sindh government on Monday planned to launch a province-wide comprehensive survey of heritage buildings to strengthen the protection, preservation and documentation of the province's cultural assets.

Officials said that the decision, aimed at creating an up-to-date inventory of historic structures, was taken at a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Heritage in Sindh, chaired by Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah.

They added that the survey would enable the provincial government to take more effective conservation measures and ensure that the province's rich architectural legacy is safeguarded for future generations.

Among others, the meeting was attended by representatives of the culture and works and services departments, director generals (DGs) of the Sindh Building Control Authority and the Antiquities Department, Advisory Committee member Hameed Haroon, renowned heritage expert Dr Kaleemullah Lashari and architectural consultant and committee member Sohail Ahmed Kalhoro.

The chief secretary noted that the previous province-wide heritage survey, carried out in 2017, identified and officially designated 3,371 structures as protected heritage properties.

He said that, as time had passed, it had become crucial to re-evaluate the present condition of those structures, identify additional heritage sites and secure their legal and institutional safeguarding.

The chief secretary added that heritage buildings represented the cultural identity and historical legacy of Sindh, and that their preservation required updated data, strong technical capacity and effective enforcement of laws.

He instructed that the Sindh Secretariat's support for the heritage department's technical committee be strengthened, ensuring more efficient decision-making and oversight.

The meeting also decided to bring in skilled professionals from the private sector to enhance the Secretariat's support for the technical committee, so that the expertise needed for heritage conservation, restoration and regulatory work is readily available.

It was also decided to make heritage protection laws more stringent and effective to prevent illegal alterations, encroachments and damage to heritage properties across the province.
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 30/12/2025)

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation declares sealing of cotton exchange building by ETPB, FIA 'unlawful'

Amid ongoing dispute over the Karachi Cotton Exchange building, Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab has challenged the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), declaring their recent sealing of the heritage cotton exchange building on I.I. Chundrigar Road "unlawful" and claimed that the building is municipal land owned by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC).

In a letter addressed to the FIA, the mayor asserted his constitutional role as the custodian of the city's assets and institutions, stating that he was duty-bound not only to protect KMC property but also to safeguard organisations that play a critical role in the national economy.

His intervention comes days after the FIA and ETPB carried out a joint operation claiming to have "recovered" the Karachi Cotton Exchange building, describing it as a "federal trust property".

According to the mayor's letter, a meeting was recently held with representatives of the Karachi Cotton Association (KCA) and officials of the KMC Land Department, during which it was disclosed that an FIR had been registered on December 13, 2025, on the complaint of the ETPB through its administrator.

Mayor writes to FIA, saying record shows the property is 'municipal land' transferred to KCA in 1936, lease renewed by KMC in 1982

In the FIR, the ETPB claimed that the KCA was not in lawful possession of the property bearing Plot No. 6 SR-4, Sarai Quarters, now known as I.I. Chundrigar Road.

However, the KMC land department, the mayor said, categorically confirmed that the property is municipal land and was transferred in favour of the KCA on July 31, 1936. The lease of the land was subsequently renewed by the KMC in 1982, and according to official municipal records, the property stands in the name of the KCA.

"Therefore, the contention of the ETPB that the property belongs to it does not have any factual or legal basis," the mayor wrote, rejecting the federal agency's claim outright.

He further pointed out that a long-standing dispute between the KMC and the KCA over payment of various municipal charges had already been litigated through Suit No. 293 of 2006 in the Sindh High Court. Significantly, he noted, the ETPB never lodged any claim in those proceedings, a fact which, in his view, clearly establishes that the property never belonged to any individual or evacuee entity whose assets would vest in the ETPB after the Partition.

"If the property belonged to the ETPB, they would have asserted their claim before the court much earlier," the letter stated, adding that their silence over decades spoke for itself.

Barrister Wahab also underlined the broader economic implications of the FIA's action, stressing that the KCA plays a pivotal role in Pakistan's cotton economy. He noted that banks, insurance companies, textile mills, exporters, ginners and growers across the country rely on the KCA's daily cotton price fixation mechanism carried out under approved regulations.

The FIA and ETPB earlier this month had claimed that the KCA was illegally occupying the building and renting out offices to tenants without lawful authority. The KCA strongly rejected the allegation, asserting that it was incorporated before Partition, purchased the property in 1936 and holds a valid lease renewed up to the year 2081.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 31/12/2025)

Mayor urges public to not politicise child's manhole death

A day after an eight-year-old boy drowned in an uncovered manhole in Korangi's Mehran Town, Mayor Murtaza Wahab urged people not to politicise the issue, saying that the child fell because the manhole cover "had been removed and put on the side".

Speaking to the media on Tuesday after laying the foundation stone of a modern Rs200 million Bird Aviary at Kidney Hill Park, he said: "The reports I have so far received from locals, I am in touch with the child's family, indicate that it was not that there was no cover at all, but that it had been removed and placed on the side."

He maintained that the issue could not be looked at through a "political lens".

"The first thing I checked was if the union council [...] was given the additional Rs100,000 I had announced? Yes, the money was disbursed," he said, adding: "The point being that we did whatever was in our capacity, but if someone removed the cover and put it on the side, then it is a problem that cannot be seen through a political lens."

Earlier, the mayor laid the foundation stone of the bird aviary.

He said the project will play an important role in the conservation of birds as well as in promoting tourism in Karachi.

He said that the aviary has been designed in complete harmony with the natural environment to provide birds with a safe and nature-friendly habitat.

"We have seen that many native bird species are gradually disappearing. In this situation, such projects are not only a source of recreation but are also extremely important for environmental protection and awareness," he said.

"We have set the target of completing this bird aviary within two months. The aviary will cover approximately 1.5 acres and will be around 40 feet high," he said.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 31/12/2025)