

# January 2018

*NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 29TH TO FEBRUARY 4TH 2017*

## ***DENSE FOG DISRUPTS LIFE IN PUNJAB***

Business Recorder, January 29, 2018

Lahore: Dense fog and poor visibility during the night and morning hours continue to disrupt life as the Highway Police has warned the commuters against unnecessary travelling to avoid fatal accidents.

The Met office has said that weather remained cold and dry in most parts of the country on Sunday. Dense fog prevailed over plain areas of Punjab and Sukkur division. Dense fog is likely to occur in plain areas of Punjab and upper Sindh during the night and morning hours on Monday.

As the blanket of fog disrupted normal traffic on motorways and national highways in Punjab and Sukkur division it also disrupted flight and train schedule due to poor visibility.

With regard to synoptic situation the Met office said that a westerly wave is likely to enter western parts of the country tonight and likely to grip upper parts on Monday. It may persist over northern areas till Tuesday.

Predicting rain/snowfall on Monday and Tuesday, it said rain/thunderstorm is expected at scattered places in Malakand, Hazara, Mardan, Quetta, and Zhob divisions, Fata, Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir while at isolated places in Bannu, Peshawar, Kohat, Kalat, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha divisions and Islamabad on Monday/Tuesday.

Snowfall is also expected in Malakand division, Gallyat, Naran, Kaghan, Murree,

Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during the period.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/01/29/5-page/696776-news.html>

## **SOME 20,000 PREMATURE DEATHS LINKED TO AIR POLLUTION**

The Express Tribune, January 29th, 2018.

Pakistan's urban air pollution is among the worst in the world. The horrific impact of air pollution is causing more than 20,000 premature deaths among adults and almost 5,000,000 cases of illness among children each year, according to the World Bank's report titled, 'Cleaning Pakistan's Air: Policy Options to Address the Cost of Outdoor Air Pollution'.

"Pakistan is [one of] the most urbanised countries in South Asia, and it is undergoing rapid motorisation and increasing energy use... Air pollution, particularly in large urban centres, damages the population's health and quality of life and contributes to environmental degradation," the report states.

It mentions that the concentrations of particle pollution — or particle matter (PM) — in Pakistan's urban areas are much higher than those experienced in other regional countries such as Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka. In addition, while these countries have adopted a number of measures that have resulted in reduced urban air pollution, Pakistan has yet to follow suit and is paying the costs of increasingly high outdoor air pollution.

The study reveals that — from 2007 to 2011 — the reported levels of PM, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and lead (Pb) were many times higher than the World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guidelines.

However, former Pak-EPA Director General Asif Shuja Khan adds that the report was commissioned in 2014, and the alarming figures may have been increased since — keeping in mind the impact of the smog in 2017 on health, economy and agriculture. “Currently, the impact of climate change is making matters worse, which we witnessed in the form of the dense smog last,” says Khan. “But it's important to understand that smog alone cannot be controlled at a local level, as it requires regional cooperation.”

Pakistan's economic hub — Karachi — is perhaps the worst hit. Its population is exposed to outdoor ambient air concentrations of PM that are much higher than WHO guidelines. Annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> ambient air concentrations are estimated at 88 micrograms per cubic meters. “Nearly 80% of the 9,000 premature deaths caused each year in Pakistan by high PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations are in Karachi,” reads the report. The report outlines a broad spectrum of research on Pakistan's air pollution challenges and identifies a comprehensive set of steps to improve air quality. The Express Tribune outlines some of the significant findings from the report:

#### Street smart?

The number of vehicles on Pakistan's streets have jumped from approximately two million to 10.6 million over the past 20 years — an average annual growth rate of 8.5%. The number of motorcycles grew more than 450% and motor cars close to 650%.

#### Toxi-cities

Emissions from large-scale facilities such as cement, fertiliser, sugar, steel and power plants — many of which use furnace oil that is high in sulfur content — are a major contributor to air quality.

#### Where there's smoke...

More than 54,000 tons of solid waste are generated daily, most of which is either dumped in low-lying areas or burned. Moreover, farmers in Pakistan burn sugarcane fields to ease harvesting.

Predominately, dry weather in arid conditions and strong winds also generate substantial dust in most parts of Sindh and southern Punjab, elevating PM<sub>10</sub> levels in the air.

#### Health hazard

The worst impact of poor air quality was witnessed on the health sector. Outdoor air pollution alone causes 80,000 hospitals admission per year; nearly 8,000 cases of chronic bronchitis; and almost five million cases of lower respiratory cases among children under the age of five.

It's the economy, stupid

By 2005, the direct cost of the damage associated with outdoor air pollution was estimated at 1.1 % of Pakistan's GDP (US \$1.07 billion).

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1620862/1-20000-premature-deaths-linked-air-pollution/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 22ND TO JANUARY 28 TH 2018

300 MANGROVE SAPLINGS PLANTED

The Express Tribune, 26 January 2018

A mangrove plantation campaign was launched on Thursday by World Wide Fund for Nature – Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) in collaboration with Artistic Fabric and Garment Industries (AFGI), as part of Earth Hour 2018.

The launch ceremony was held at the WWF-Pakistan Wetland Centre at Sandspit in which participants from both the organisations planted 300 mangrove saplings. WWF-Pakistan and AFGI also committed on the occasion to achieve plantation of 27,000 mangrove saplings in Karachi by March 24 this year.

Speaking at the ceremony, WWF-Pakistan Sindh and Balochistan Head Dr Babar Khan said according to National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the year 2017 was among the three warmest years on record. He added that in the wake of climate change, there was a dire need to collectively work for a sustainable future.

Pakistan has the highest annual deforestation rate in Asia and its forest cover is now less than 2.5% of the country's total land, Dr Khan lamented. He stressed need for initiating massive plantation drives in and near metropolitan cities like Karachi to reduce adverse impacts of the climate change. The heatwave of 2015 in Karachi which caused more than 1,000 deaths was a result of climate change, he said.

Dr Khan informed the gathering that although Pakistan was not contributing to climate change in a significant way, it did rank among the top 10 countries most vulnerable to adverse impacts of the climate change. He urged the private sector to participate in environment-related projects in the country.

AFGI Director Ahmed Javed said he hoped that the mangrove plantation campaign would continue. He further expressed hope for similar partnerships in the future.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1618262/1-300-mangrove-saplings-planted/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 15TH TO JANUARY 21ST 2018

REMOVAL OF GARBAGE ORDERED IN PARTS OF HYDERABAD ON SHO'S PLEA

A subordinate court in Hyderabad gave on Monday a deadline of seven days to officials of the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (HMC) to remove encroachments and garbage from parts of Hyderabad. The order came on a complaint filed under Section 133 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc) by the SHO of the Market police station, Munir Abbassi.

Civil Judge and Judicial Magistrate Junaid Faiz Memon warned the municipal commissioner and HMC anti-encroachment cell director that failure to comply will result in a stringent order.

In his plea, SHO Abbassi pointed out localities in the limits of his police station, including Liaquat University Hospital, where garbage and untreated solid waste from the hospital were being dumped in the open. He also identified several places where donkey carts, fruit carts, illegal stalls of vendors and vehicles of transport companies obstruct the roads

“... by this conditional order the respondents are directed to dispose of garbage and remove illegal obstructions over the public way,” the order reads, giving the officials a week for compliance and submission of a report. “You are further directed to show cause within span of seven days as to why final order under CrPC 133 shall not be passed against you and in terms of failure final order in terms of Section 136 of CrPC.”

Under the Section 136 of the CrPc, whose penalty is contained in Section 188, the court can order one-month jail term and Rs2,500 penalty to the officials. If convicted, the two officials, Shahid Ali Khan and Tauheed Ahmed, will also be dismissed from service.

The HMC, which consists of 96 union committees of the city and Latifabad talukas of Hyderabad, is headed by Mayor Syed Tayyab Hussain who belongs to the Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan. The corporation is engaged in a tussle over financial resources with the Pakistan Peoples Party-led Sindh government.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1609407/1-removal-garbage-ordered-parts-hyderabad-shos-plea/>

## NEW ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL APPROVES LAST YEAR’S SEQS

Faiza Ilyas

Dawn, January 17, 2018

KARACHI: The Sindh government finally fulfilled a mandatory requirement under the Sindh Environmental Protection Act 2014 when it held the first-ever meeting of the Sindh Environmental Protection Council on Tuesday.

The meeting chaired by Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Development Mohammed Ali Malkani approved the Sindh Environmental Quality Standards (SEQS) notified last year.

It is important to mention here that the provision of setting up an environmental council had been a legal requirement since 1997 when the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act was formulated. In 2014, Sindh came up with its own environmental law, which also required establishment of the council.

The council, a policy making and supervisory body under Section three of the law, has wide ranging powers. The council’s absence, according to experts, had been a legal lacuna, often used by industries to get stay order and prevent action against them. The environmental law, they pointed out, also called for setting up advisory bodies for each sector, which were still pending.

The Tuesday's meeting was attended by secretary of environment, climate change and coastal development department/director general Sindh EPA Baqaullah Unnar, secretary of irrigation Syed Jamal Mustafa, secretary of industries Abdul Raheem, commissioner of Sukkur Division Dr Mohammed Usman Chachar and other ex-officio members, representative of Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, SITE Association, Korangi Association of Trade and Industry, non-governmental organisations, members of academia and technical experts.

The council approved the SEQs notified earlier vide Gazette Notification No. EPA/TECH/739/2014 dated Jan 28, 2016.

The council chairman also formed a sub-committee to review the SEQs and propose necessary amendments within a period of one month.

The sub-committee will be chaired by secretary of environment, climate change & coastal development department and will comprise 11 members: Gulzar Feroze of FPCCI, representatives of KCCI, SITE association, KATI, Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ghulam Murtaza representing Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources, environmental expert Shahid Lutfi, Prof Rasool Bux Mahar of Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Jamshoro, Prof Shabbar Ali of NED University, additional director general of Sepa Waqar Hussain Phulpoto and director regional office Sepa Ashique Ali Langah.

Mr Malkani directed Sepa to prepare a draft on council's rules and procedures within 30 days for review of the council members.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1383347/new-environmental-council-approves-last-years-seqs>

**GREEN CAMPUS PROJECT: NED UNIVERSITY TO PLANT 2,500 TREES, PLANTS**  
The Express Tribune, January 18, 2018

**FRESH AIR:** The company involved in planting the trees will also be responsible for maintaining these trees for a year. **PHOTO: EXPRESS**

**KARACHI:** The NED University of Engineering and Technology has initiated a green campus project in view of the university turning 100 years old in 2021. Under the project, a campaign has started to plant 2,500 plants and trees, out of which 100 have already been planted.

The site plan of the project has been prepared in which 16 types of plants and trees will be planted. Initially, 70 date trees have been planted from the central door of NED till the walls of Karachi University (KU).

Other projects were also initiated which includes changing the lighting at the varsity to LED lighting. The expenditure of the projects will be borne by the alumni of the varsity.

An ex-student, Sohail Bashir, who works for a Japanese company has taken the responsibility of planting date trees and has already planted 70 of them. The company involved in planting the trees will also be responsible for maintaining these trees for a year.

The date trees will be planted as far as the wall that unites NED with KU. Inside the university, the plantation will take place in the soccer field, car parking area, vicinity of Habib Bank Limited and National Bank of Pakistan, tennis court, basketball complex and other places.

According to the plan, Royal Palm, coconut palm, washing to new palm, Senegal date palm and traveler palms and other types of trees and plants will be planted.

NED University Vice Chancellor (VC) Sarosh Lodi said that a graduate of the varsity, Asad Jafar, works as the chief executive officer of a company that has agreed to install LED lighting. Lodi said talks were held with Jafar, who agreed to install the LED lights without any profits. Funds for the installation are being arranged, Lodi said.

The VC said that details of the project will be published on the website soon and everyone can choose a position of their choice to plant a tree with their name. He said those cooperating with the university include two alumni members, Ajmal Farooqi and Bashir from Saita Corporation. Others include Arif Raza from Amcorp Engineering and Construction (Pvt) Limited, Faisal Naqvi from Gasco Engineering, Ameerul Islam from Jersey Precast, Kazim Mansoor from Soilmat Engineers and Ghulam Farooq and Farhat Adil.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1611285/1-green-campus-project-ned-university-plant-2500-trees-plants/>

#### MURAD ORDERS DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST AREA ON 20,000 ACRES

Dawn, January 20th, 2018

**KARACHI:** The Sindh government has decided to develop a forest area over 20,000 acres between Karachi and Hyderabad to improve the overall environmental conditions in both cities where huge land belonging to the forest department is lying barren.

This emerged at a meeting presided over by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday at CM House.

Issuing the necessary directives to the forest department for developing forests blocks, the CM said each block should be spread over 10,000 acres. This would not only improve the environmental pollution of Karachi and Hyderabad, but also result in increasing the surface area of forest covered land, which is at present 3.3 million acres, in the province amounting to 10 per cent of the total land.

He said the forests could be watered through drip irrigation system.

The meeting was attended by chief secretary Rizwan Memon, principal secretary to CM Sohail Rajput, chief conservators and other officers concerned. Giving a presentation, forest & wildlife secretary Asif Hyder Shah said that the total forest land in the province of Sindh is 3.3 million acres which comes to 10 per cent of Sindh's surface area. The forest includes mangroves or coastal forests, barrage area agricultural sustainability through trees/forestry, riverine forests and irrigation plantation (IP) and range lands — desert-trees as tools for drought management.

He showed a base map of 140,914 square kilometers of forests which include irrigation plantation over an area of 202,622 acres, riverine forests over 595,511 acres, range lands over 1,129,000 acres, and mangroves of 1,500,000 acres.

Talking about the achievements of the forest department, the official said that mangroves have been planted over an area of 175,000 acres during the last five years. “We broke the Guinness world record of planting trees in one day in 2009, and again set a new record by planting 847,275 in 2013. On this the chief minister gave him a new target of planting one million mangroves in March. “I would personally launch the drive on March 23,” the chief minister said.

Giving details of major achievements of the forest department during 2017-18, the forest secretary said that 21,000 acres or 8.92 million mangrove plants were planted in six months, another 21,000 acres would be planted in June 2018, and in order to protect the new plants a community watch and ward system has been developed. He added that natural regeneration of about 180 to 200 million plants has been made.

The chief minister was told that riverine forests over 5,000 acres or 100 million seeds have been broadcasted. New IPs have been made over 1,000 acres which come to 700,000 plants; 12 million container plants in the nurseries have also been developed. The forest department has also carried out linear plantation over an area of 400 kilometres.

The chief minister directed the secretary for forest to issue notices to the lessees who have violated lease conditions. He also directed him to remove encroachment from the land of forest.

Taking serious notice of huge expenditures on payments of pensions, CM on Thursday ordered for a ‘high level’ investigation into the issue.

He issued the order while presiding over a meeting of the three-year budget strategy, 2016-17 to 2020-21, at CM House.

The meeting was attended by the principal secretary to the CM, and all the concerned officers of finance, planning and development and Sindh Revenue Board (SRB).

During a presentation, the chief minister was told that during 2015-16 fiscal, pension payments were recorded at Rs52.8 billion and they went up to Rs70bn in 2016-17. They continued to show the increase this fiscal year when it was counted as Rs76bn. On this the CM said the amount being spent on the payment of pension was extraordinarily huge and “seems to be dubious”.

He ordered his principal secretary to constitute a high-power inquiry and audit committee to investigate the payments. “The audit and inquiry should be launched from the districts where huge payments have been made,” he said.

He added the audit must be carried out professionally and in a transparent manner.

“You can hire the services of any professional auditor, if you need it,” he said.

The chief minister also directed the finance department to computerise the entire pension system, along with the payments, and number of pensioners.

Mr Shah was told that in 2015-16 the development expenditure was Rs137.3bn, in 2016-16 it swelled to Rs210.1bn, and in 2017-18 it was Rs344.1bn.

The meeting was told that during the last three years the revenue receipts had shown an increase of 8.9 per cent while the next year an increase of 14pc was expected.

The chief minister asked his finance and planning and development team to make budget strategy, particularly relating to development as per projected figures.

It was also pointed out that in the head of services on sales tax Rs61.5bn were received in 2015-16, Rs78.5bn in 2016-17, and Rs100bn were expected in 2017-18; while in 2018-19 it would be more than Rs115bn.

CM Shah, during a meeting with the Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing who called on him at CM House, said the people of Karachi were expecting work on the much-anticipated Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) project to begin. He said he had discussed its financial cost with the CPEC authorities, but it could not be started on the birth anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

The visiting ambassador was quoted by a spokesperson of CM House as telling the chief minister that the KCR was in the pipeline and its financial close was expected by the end of next month.

The chief minister said his team was in China and with the support of Ambassador Yao Jing, it would be approved.

He hoped the work on the KCR project would begin on March 23.

“I am going to give the good news to the people of Karachi in March who need KCR so dearly,” he said.

In the meeting they also discussed other projects including the Dhabeji Special Economic Zone, and Keti Bandar Power Project. The spokesperson said the Chinese ambassador on the invitation of the chief minister promised to visit Thar next month.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1384005>

## NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1ST TO JANUARY 7TH 2018

### MANGROVE DEPLETION

The Express Tribune, January 1st, 2018.

While the president of the world’s most powerful country actively denies climate change, more wisdom prevails over a local, uneducated fisherman in Pakistan, who recognises that depleting mangroves along the coastline correlate with catastrophic weather events such as tsunamis and cyclones. It is a tragic fact that along with this type of natural habitat, marine life is being disturbed, which will result in heavy impact on ecological systems of the Indus River and Arabian Sea.

The diminishing populations of various fish and crustaceans is proof. Whether one is for or against the capturing of crustaceans and fish from mangroves, it must scientifically be acknowledged that there is a vicious cycle that follows, impacting livelihoods, marine life, and the larger ecological system.

Mangroves should be reviewed to determine the magnitude of threat after being acquired by the Sindh Forest Department. Until a centralised body with executive power steps in to rescue mangroves, the



depletion will continue. Private housing schemes with purely financial profiteering interests continue to exert control and kill the ecology of the Indus River system. Reforestation is against the interest of housing developers and thus, the situation is rendered helpless unless control is taken or stipulations for mangrove preservation are enforced against them.

Organisations working for the protection of mangroves such as Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum must be supported. Others such as the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency and Sindh Forestation Department require enhanced oversight to ensure fair practices are followed and there are honest intentions to protect mangrove forestation.

It is time for individuals and organisations to abandon selfish mindsets. Once the mentality of working for the betterment of the country and its people becomes the driving factor, only then will Pakistan's flora and fauna flourish.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1597623/6-mangrove-depletion/>

#### MINISTER BLAMES INDIA FOR ALARMING SMOG LEVEL

Business Recorder, January 3rd, 2018

Abdul Rasheed Azad

Federal Minister for Climate Change, Mushahidullah Khan has said that neighboring India is responsible for increasing smog level in Pakistan, adding he has already written a letter to the Foreign Office to take up the issue with India. While talking to media persons here on Tuesday he stressed that concerted efforts are needed to protect the country from increasingly devastating fallouts of manmade climate change problems.

The minister also urged media to join hands to boost resilience against adverse climate change impacts, which are posing dangers to the country. The minister said that the government will soon unveil the Wildlife Policy which will focus on joint efforts to enhance forest cover in all the provinces. He said the government intends to constitute Climate Change Authority (CCA), adding the four-member authority would be headed by an expert. He said that over 100 subject specialists would also be included in the CCA.

Mushahidullah Khan said, "Pakistan has taken a number of important steps towards climate-friendly development including ratification of Paris Agreement and passing of Climate Change Act while steps are being taken to establish provincial climate change centers as well." The National Climate Change Policy 2016 gives legal effect to meet Pakistan's obligations under international conventions relating to climate change. The policy document in any field is a living document and requires continuous update and incorporation in the country's planning documents.

"We must join hands today to mitigate the climate risk to the world by bringing together businesses, governments and public bodies to accelerate sustainable development, advance the green economy and promote use of natural resources with sanity," he said. The common global menace of climate change, which has put the sustainability of the planet earth at risk, cannot be tackled alone and everyone should play its due role in enhancing awareness about the hazards of environment change, he said and added that the incumbent government has already devised forestry policy.

He said that he has suggested to the government to allow import of wood to avoid cutting of trees. He said he has issued directives to plant 100 trees to replace every single tree cut down. Responding to a question, he said the claims of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government of planting 1.08 billion saplings is appreciable.

In response to another query, he said former President Asif Ali Zardari was not a political personality as he had never remained associated with any student movement or any political movement. The statement of Asif Ali Zardari terming Pakistan Awami Tehreek chief Tahir-ul-Qadri as replacement of Nawabzada Nasrullah was simply lamentable.

He said he has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Pakistan Tobacco Company to sponsor the construction of boundary wall of Botanical Garden being constructed on 785 acres of land at Bani Gala, Islamabad. The inauguration ceremony for constructing boundary wall around Botanical Garden would be held on January 10 and the project would cost Rs 80.5 million.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/01/2018010332361/>

‘18TH AMENDMENT ALLOWED PUNJAB TO ADDRESS HEALTH, HYGIENE ISSUES’  
Dawn, January 03, 2018

Ikram Junaidi

ISLAMABAD: The 18th constitutional amendment, passed in 2010, has received a lot of criticism from lawmakers and think tanks over the years.

But on Tuesday, a representative of the Punjab government told the National Assembly Standing Committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination that the watershed legislation had not only empowered the provinces, but was leading to improvements in health and hygiene standards.

“Before the amendment, we used to have to run from pillar to post in the federal capital the sake of minor issues, but no one bothered to address them. However, after the 18th amendment, Punjab has addressed a number of health-related issues itself,” Irfan Khaliq, deputy secretary of the Punjab Livestock and Dairy Development Department told the committee.

Speaking in response to a briefing by Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (Drap) CEO Dr Mohammad Aslam – who had suggested that provinces should not be allowed to make policies as it was creating problems and was against international practice – the official from Punjab noted that Drap had failed to deliver.

Dr Aslam alleged that provincial legislation was making it difficult for Drap to implement its policies. “Though all provinces are represented in Drap, but they are now considering issuing licenses for medicine and fixing prices on their own, which will create problems. There should be only one policy across the country,” he had suggested.

But Mr Khaliq noted that the country was plagued by a host of issues when it came to health and hygiene standards, particularly where food was involved, and no effort had even been made to look into these issues and correct them.

He was of the opinion that not only had the health of Pakistanis been compromised, but the country was also losing out on opportunities to earn foreign exchange by exporting locally-produced meat.

Due to a lack of conducive policies, he said Saudi Arabia was not interested in importing meat from Pakistan, and was getting its supplies from countries such as Somalia.

“Here, hormones are given to livestock to increase the production of milk, but these create problem for human beings. Vegetables are being cultivated in contaminated water; there was no livestock policy for the past 70 years,” he lamented, adding that after the 18th amendment, Punjab had been able to formulate its first-ever livestock policy.

“According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan, the country’s annual production of milk is 54 billion litres, but actually, the annual production is closer to nine billion litres... the rest of the milk is prepared with formalin, urea and whey powder, which is causing more and more people to develop cancers,” he claimed.

He claimed that three-quarters of infectious diseases were transferred from animals to humans, but deplored that this problem was left unaddressed by policy-makers.

“Due to power outages, formalin is being used to preserve cooked food in the absence of proper refrigeration facilities... the use of formalin was stopped in the US in 1906, but it is still being used here,” he maintained, adding that Punjab was using its power under the 18th amendment to take remedial measures.

In Canada, medical practitioners have to obtain separate licenses to practice in different states, Mr Khaliq said, highlighting how in many countries, standards differed from region to region.

He also highlighted how Drap, in certain cases, provided legal cover to medical stores who were selling substandard medicine.

“Whenever we take action against such stores, they show us Drap approvals... but we have no way of verifying them. We are not satisfied with Drap, and I’m sure quite a few irregularities will be revealed if some investigative agency is directed to probe its affairs, he said.

“We are not in favour of empowering Drap; the provinces are not a hurdle to be circumvented,” he said, responding to the contention made by the Drap CEO.

Lawmakers such as Sardar Mohammad Shafqat Hayat Khan and Rana Mohammad Hayat Khan also suggested that provinces should legislate to improve health standards and ensuring food quality.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1380504>

KPT SPENDING RS500M MORE ON SHIPS’ MAINTENANCE BECAUSE OF SEA POLLUTION, SENATE BODY TOLD

Dawn, January 3rd, 2018

Jamal Shahid

ISLAMABAD: The Karachi Port Trust (KPT) is spending between Rs350 million and Rs500 million extra on maintenance of its ships due to increasing pollution in the sea, KPT chairman Rear Admiral Jamil Akhtar told a parliamentary committee on Tuesday.

“We have to dock our boats and tugs to clean the propellers and the shafts of plastic and polythene bags. Pakistan Navy is facing the same problem of having to spend five times more on maintenance of its ships. It will not be long that foreign ships stop coming to our harbours,” Jamil Akhtar told the Senate Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs.

The committee met for a briefing on steps taken to clean the polluted water containing sewage and industrial waste that is fatal for marine life, poisoning seafood and degrading human environment.

Describing himself a victim, Rear Admiral Jamil Akhtar said that increasing sea water pollution had created an emergency situation that demanded immediate action.

“Seeing is believing. We will like to invite the committee to see the disaster happening on the ground,” Jamil Akhtar said.

The director general of Ports and Shipping, Asad Chandna, shared similar concerns when he told the committee that from 450 million gallons and 500 million gallons raw sewage was being discharged daily directly into the sea without any solution in sight to stop the pollution.

“It has caused severe degradation for our eco system, marine life, and destruction of mangroves and causing damage to naval ships anchored and operational in and around naval jetty and dock yard,” said Asad Chandna.

According to the official, the severity of inflow of solid waste and slurry material into the navigational channel was so high that the KPT required Rs1.5 billion annually to dredge the harbour. The department has also hired four boats which scoop the inorganic waste and floating marine debris from the water on a daily basis including polythene and plastic. Approximately five to ten tons of debris is collected from the navigational channel daily which costs the KPT Rs10 million annually, the official lamented.

Asad Chandna informed the Senate committee that following the Supreme Court’s order, a judicial commission had been formed that had now made its personal issue to solve the problem of increasing pollution. “The commission summons a progress report from all departments concerned fortnightly,” he said.

The commission also published a report spread on 300 pages highlighting the seriousness of the pollution along the coast where the once red sandy beaches have now turned grey and black.

The official read some excerpts from the report for the committee, saying that all 6,000 industrial units including the 1,400MW thermal power plant and Pakistan Steel Mills, one of the largest industrial units, were dumping their untreated waste directly or indirectly into the Karachi and Ghara Creek areas. Approximately 500MGD industrial and domestic waste water was being generated and discharged through Lyari and Malir rivers into coastal areas, the report said.

“Untreated industrial and domestic waste water are a source of serious hazard to the coastal areas of Karachi, which is one of the highly polluted coastal belts in the world resulting in massive economic losses to the country through decrease in the export potentials of fisheries. Industries are continuously discharging untreated effluent and appear to refuse to conform to the Sindh Environmental Protection Act,” Asad Chandna quoted from the report submitted with the Supreme Court.

The chairman of the committee, MQM Senator Muhammad Ali Khan Saif, accepted the invitation of KPT chairman Rear Admiral Jamil Akhtar to visit the ports and harbours to examine the situation on the ground.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1380419/kpt-spending-rs500m-more-on-ships-maintenance-because-of-sea-pollution-senate-body-told>

## February 2018

*NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 26TH TO MARCH 4TH 2018*

### **CANADIAN HUNTS HIGHEST-RATED ASTORE MARKHOR**

Dawn, February 27th, 2018

GILGIT: A Canadian citizen hunted the highest-rated Astore markhor on Sunday, paying 58,000 US dollars to the Gilgit-Baltistan wildlife and parks department.

Conservator GB parks and wildlife department Yaqoob Ali told Dawn on Monday that Canadian citizen, Adam, had obtained permit for hunt of Astore markhor.

The foreign hunter with support of a Pakistani guide and Astore conservation community members hunted the animal in Dashkin community controlled hunting area in Astore on Sunday.

The hunter killed the animal in a single shot, he said, as only one shot with a specific gun was allowed for trophy hunting.

The hunted markhor's horn measured 43 inches and it was an aged animal, said Mr Ali.

GB wildlife department had on Sept 21, last year had auctioned permits for the hunting of 113 rare species under the trophy hunting programme 2017-18, with the hunting of endangered Astor markhor fetching the highest licence fee of \$100,000 in the history of trophy hunting.

Licences for hunting four Astor markhorns, 14 blue sheep and 95 ibex were awarded.

Hunting permits for four Astor markhorns were auctioned for \$68,000 to \$100,000, 14 blue sheep for \$8,000 to \$10,000 and 95 ibex for \$3,600.

The hunting season in the region begins in November and ends in April.

According to the officials, the trophy hunting quota was created on the basis of annual surveys conducted by wildlife experts.

The GB parks and wildlife conservator said so far 45 Himalayan ibexes and six blue sheep had been hunted at various places in the current trophy hunting season.

The official said the previous trophy hunting programme fetched \$248,000, adding trophy hunting fees for national, international and local hunters varied.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1392030/canadian-hunts-highest-rated-astore-markhor>

## UNHYGIENIC CONDITIONS AT WATERWORKS, HOSPITALS IN JACOBABAD, SHIKARPUR IRK JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Dawn, March 1st, 2018

SUKKUR: Retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim, head of the one-man Supreme Court-appointed commission on water quality in Sindh, expressed anger over supply of contaminated water to citizens of Jacobabad and uncleanliness at Shikarpur Civil Hospital during his visit to the two districts on Wednesday.

Justice Muslim visited a filter plant near Jacobabad and was visibly annoyed when he found out the plant was supplying contaminated water to citizens. Slow pace of work on mega water supply project launched in collaboration with USAID also irked the judge.

He asked director general of works department Masroor Ali Arbab about it and he shifted the blame to contractors for failure to complete the project in time. Besides, he said, laying of water supply lines up to peoples' houses also created hiccups in the project, he said.

Justice Muslim asked whether they faced shortage of funds and the DG said there was no issue of funds because it was a USAID-funded project, the Sindh government was only to provide required machinery.

The judge directed officials to ensure completion of the project by November 2018 and ordered them to appear before the commission in Karachi along with relevant record, detailing reasons why the water supply scheme which was built at a cost of Rs1.5 billion during the Musharraf government, was not working.

Advocate Shahab Usto, whose petition was instrumental in the formation of the commission, told journalists that they had inspected the same project a year ago and found no progress on it since.

He said that contaminated water was being supplied to citizens and urged people not to cast votes again for the candidates who did not care for them and their families.

Since technical staff, officials and contractors were passing the buck over slow pace of work, they had been asked to appear before the commission along with relevant record in Karachi, he said.

In Thull town, Justice Muslim ordered Jacobabad deputy commissioner to launch inquiry into use of substandard material in work on water supply scheme for the town and submit his report.

He also ordered officials of irrigation department to stop release of sewage into a canal passing through the town. During his visit of the town, people made complaints to him about massive corruption in water supply scheme.

The judge was accompanied among others by secretary of public health engineering department Syed Asif Hyder Shah, secretary of irrigation Syed Jamal Mustafa Shah, director of local government department Qamar Baloch, SSP Sarfaraz Nawaz Shaikh and others.

SHIKARPUR: Earlier during his visit of Rai Bahadur Udhodas Tara Chand Civil Hospital here, Justice Muslim expressed annoyance at the level of insanitation at the healthcare facility.

He admonished Dr Khursheed Ahmed Qazi, medical superintendent, and asked him why incinerator was out of order.

The officer could not come up with a satisfactory answer.

He noticed a couple of government vehicles gathering rust on the hospital premises and directed District Health Officer Dr Zulfikar Ali Abro to write a letter to the health department high-ups and ask them to get rid of the vehicles through auction so that the state of cleanliness could be improved at the healthcare facility.

He found a 600kV generator sitting idle in a corner and directed DHO, MS and contractor to ensure the generator functioned adequately in future.

He directed the MS to get all faulty machines at the laboratory repaired so that they could be used to carry out tests and save poor people extra expenses.

Justice Muslim instructed chief municipal officer to release salaries to sanitation workers on time and remove white-collar sanitation staff from service if they did not want to do their job.

He asked Deputy Commissioner Syed Hassan Raza to immediately shift cattle pens from the city to cattle colony.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1392343/unhygienic-conditions-at-waterworks-hospitals-in-jacobabad-shikarpur-irk-judicial-commission>

#### PLANTATION CAMPAIGN INAUGURATED AT KU

The Express Tribune, March 1, 2018

KARACHI: University of Karachi (KU) Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Ajmal Khan inaugurated on Wednesday a plantation campaign at the varsity.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, the VC said global warming and increased frequency of heatwaves threatened the natural balance of the environment. Natural calamities, including tropical cyclones, tornadoes, floods and droughts, along with global warming had become a serious threat for the South Asian countries, he added.

Dr Khan maintained that trees played an important role in reducing the occurrence of natural calamities. Tree plantation is the only way to save the world from the danger of global warming, he said, adding that tree plantation needed to be promoted as trees controlled heatwaves.

More than 2,500 saplings will be planted at KU during the campaign, the VC said. KU Registrar Dr Munawar Rasheed, Student Adviser Dr Syed Asim Ali, the controller of examinations, dean and a large number of faculty and students also attended the inauguration ceremony.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1647417/1-plantation-campaign-inaugurated-ku/>

## STIFF PENALTIES AWAIT COAL POWER PROJECTS IN CASE OF DELAYS

Dawn, March 2nd, 2018

Khalid Hasnain

**KARACHI:** Two coal-fired power plants are coming up at Port Qasim with a combined output of 1330MW. Seven different projects of this type are moving ahead across Sindh, making power transmission a critical element to carry the electricity to load centres upcountry.

**LAHORE:** The government has warned power projects under construction in Sindh that if their dates of commercial operations are delayed, they will be responsible for paying the capacity charges of the Matiari-Lahore transmission line, which is being laid by a Chinese company.

The line is the first private investment in the transmission sector, and will be the first high voltage DC line power line in the country.

It is designed to carry power from up to eight coal based projects being built in Sind, with a combined gross generation capacity beyond 5500MW. The line will have a design transmission capacity of 4000MW and traverse 878 kilometres, at a total project cost of \$2.12 billion, according to the tariff petition filed with Nepra.

Govt juggles burden of capacity charges from possible delays in coal power plants

The government is concerned that the line might become operational while the coal fired projects whose power it is meant to evacuate could be struck with delays, even though the line is scheduled to enter commercial operations in March, 2021, while the coal projects are scheduled for COD on dates ranging from June 2018 till March 2020.

But in the event of any any delays, capacity charges of the line will have to be paid by the sponsors of the coal fired projects to the Chinese company that will build and operate the transmission line, as per a recent cabinet directive.

The Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB), which filed the tariff petition for the transmission line, has now been told by the Cabinet Committee on Energy through a letter dated Feb 1, 2018, that “completion of ongoing power projects in the south should be ensured within their timelines for availability of requisite power to be evacuated through HVDC transmission line”. In case any of the coal fired power projects in the south face delays in their commercial operations, PPIB must “ensure



that the projects are...required to share the cost of capacity payments in case the same are accrued due to delayed COD of the projects, by incorporating the same in all future IAs/PPAs.”

The approximately monthly power evacuation and its transportation from south to north is Rs2.5bn per month, to be paid to the Pak Matiari-Lahore Transmission Company Ltd (PMLTCPL), according to a source in the power division..“In case the commissioning of the transmission line is delayed, the Chinese firm will have to pay a fine to the government to the tune of about Rs30 million per day” the source told Dawn. “The same fine is also liable to be paid by the government to the firm if it commissions the project on time, but remains idle in case of delayed CODs of the power plants.”

The government is hoping to enter into a formal agreement with PMLTCPL soon in this regard.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1392680/stiff-penalties-await-coal-power-projects-in-case-of-delays>

‘INDUS DELTA HAS SHRUNK BY 92% SINCE 1833’

In 1833, the delta of the Indus River was estimated to be stretching out over an area of around 12,900 square kilometres (sq km). However, the human impact on the environment and natural flow of the river has evidently resulted in the contraction of the delta by as much as 92% in the past 200 years.

This was established in the results of a 15-month study conducted by a team of five academics of the United States-Pakistan Centre for Advanced Studies in Water (USPCASW) at Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET), Jamshoro.

For decades, affected communities, environmental activists and academics have been highlighting the issue of sea intrusion and its consequences for the coast, delta and locals. However, the need for an authentic estimation of the sea intrusion was being felt by researchers. The USPCASW team’s study was an attempt to fulfil that need with the help of satellite imagery and other research tools.

For decades, affected communities, environmental activists and academics have been highlighting the issue of sea intrusion and its consequences for the coast, delta and locals. However, the need for an authentic estimation of the sea intrusion was being felt by researchers. The USPCASW team’s study was an attempt to fulfil that need with the help of satellite imagery and other research tools.

The research findings, which also included the coastal communities’ perception about the sea intrusion’s impact as well as recommendations to address the problem, were shared at a seminar at USPCASW on Friday.

“The delta has shrunk by 92% [from 12,900 sq km]. It currently stretches over a meagre 1,000 sq km,” lead researcher Prof Dr Altaf Ali Siyal said. There are only two active creeks, Khobar and Khar creeks, in the delta which once had as many as 17 active creeks, he added.

The Indus delta is the fifth largest in the world, besides being a designated wetland according to the Ramsar Convention, the international treaty which provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The delta supports the seventh biggest mangrove forest and is the largest arid zone mangrove forest. Currently, it is being threatened by erosion, sea intrusion, soil salinity, declining river flow, shrinking active delta and climate change.

The researchers studied satellite images of the Indus delta's creeks of the last 45 years starting from 1972. The creeks were divided in four zones, with two each on the right and left banks of the river. On the left side, the area from Sir Creek to Wari Creek was designated as zone I while the area between Wari and Khobar creeks was termed zone II. On the right side, the area between Khobar and Daboo creeks was designated as zone III while the area between Daboo and Phitti creeks was termed zone IV.

The study measured the shoreline erosion rate to be 45.69 metres per year in zone I and 52.1m per year in zone II. In zone III and zone IV, 27.21m per year and 31.43m per year erosion was calculated respectively.

The highest intrusion was observed in zone II where the sea has encroached upon 1.24km, followed by zone I where 1.1km was conquered by the sea.

The Indus delta lies in Thatta and Sujawal districts. According to the study, the latter district, which is located on the left bank, has suffered more from the erosion.

During the last four-and-a-half decades, the sea also added 42,609 hectares of delta in its tidal flood plain (TFP), which is submerged during high tide. In 1972, the pace of TFP was measured at 7.1%, whereas by 2017, it almost tripled to over 18%.

Some 81,324 hectares of the TFP are covered by mangroves, including thick mangroves, which occupy 36,245 hectares and thin mangroves, which occupy 45,079 hectares. However, the total percentage of the TFP covered by mangroves is just 12%.

Water bodies containing seawater in the delta have doubled from 1,600 sq km to 3,000 sq km, Prof Siyal said. "We find a lake after every two to three kilometres in the delta," he added.

The research also studied effects of sea intrusion on the local population. According to it, 76% locals use underground water to drink, which has become brackish and saline in over 88% area of the delta.

Turbidity, electrical conductivity, acidity level and percentages of chloride and arsenic in the underground water have been found far beyond the World Health Organisation's permissible limits.

Besides the sea intrusion, the study also researched changes in temperature and perspiration. It found that from 1960 to 1990, an average of 100 millimetres of rain was recorded during the monsoon in July. However, during the period from 1990 to 2015, a drop of 40% in rainfall was recorded. Similarly, average temperature from March to July also showed an increase in the period from 1990 to 2015.

According to the study, the delta produced 5,000 tons of fish in 1951. But the catch has now drastically slumped to only 295 tons.

The researchers have proposed construction of a sea levee covering at least 200km of the coastline. Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, during his visit to Thatta district in 2016, had announced a similar project but it has yet to materialise.

The other recommendations include increasing the flow of water in the Pinyari and KB Feeder canals, restoring 15 defunct creeks, plantation of mangroves, cultivation of halophytes, increasing farming of shrimps and crabs, releasing 10 million acre feet of water downstream Kotri barrage and promoting tourism.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1649523/1-indus-delta-shrunk-92-since-1833>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 19TH TO FEBRUARY 25TH 2018  
DISTRIBUTION OF FOREST ROYALTY: TIMBER MAFIA OPPOSING INITIATIVE OF  
DISTRICT ADMIN

Business Recorder, 20 February 2018

ISLAMABAD: Some vested interests backed the powerful timber mafia of Chitral have openly started manipulating an initiative of the district administration aimed at distribution of forest royalty to the royalty holders directly instead of involving the Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) to ensure transparency.

At Arandu, Shishi Koh, Damil Nisar, Arsoon and Kalash valleys of Bumburate, Birir and Rumbur, the government pays 60 percent of the income generated from the sale of forest timber to the local residents when the forest is harvested on commercial scale which normally happens after every five years.

The mass scale irregularities in distribution of the said amount among the royalty holders had been a lingering issue for quite long. The locals of the area are of the view that instead of the actual royalty holders, most of the amount ended up in the pockets of the so-called Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) constituted in each lot of the forest in these areas.

The JFMCs are non-representative and mostly headed by non-locals and members of the timber mafia who have connections with local political leaders as well as contractors of the timber trade. So far, it is alleged, millions of rupees have been embezzled by members of the JFMCs in connivance with the powerful elements involved in timber business as well as the forest department officials.

Deputy Commissioner Irshad Ali Sodhar said that he has announced a team of officials headed by a revenue official and had started a survey in the southern sub-valleys of Chitral to give women shares in the royalty of forest.

He said that as per practice in vogue for the disbursement of forest royalty, the amount was placed at the disposal of JFMC office-bearers where the funds were often misappropriated. —PR

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/02/20/3-page/700785-news.html>

AIR POLLUTION: CLIMATE MINISTRY SETS UP AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STATIONS IN  
CAPITAL

The Express Tribune, 22 February 2018

To better monitor air quality, the climate change ministry has set up air quality stations in the capital and in some other parts of the country, officials said.

Officials said that the Ministry of Climate Change has established seven fixed and three mobile Ambient Air Quality Stations (AAQS).

Set up under the Environmental Monitoring System (EMS) project launched in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), one fixed station has been set up in Islamabad while Peshawar and Quetta have also got a station each. Moreover, two stations each have been set up in Lahore and Karachi.

Moreover, of the three mobile stations, one has been set up in Islamabad, one in Lahore and the last one in Karachi.

These stations are equipped with the latest technology to monitor ambient air around-the-clock.

Officials said that all provinces have devised their project concept-I (PC-I) and have started work on the project at the provincial level with the required staff.

After closing of this project at the federal level, PC-IV was submitted to Planning and Development Division and Establishment Division to convert the project posts from development to non-development.

With the air in the capital rapidly deteriorating, the Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) — the apex environmental watchdog, has initiated an air quality survey in and around the industrial sectors of the capital in Sectors I-9, I-10 and the Kahuta Industrial Triangle since February 1.

Officials further said that the Pak-EPA has been conducting surveys and taking samples on a need-basis to assess the quality of ambient air, particularly during winter.

Moreover, the sources said that the Environmental Monitoring System project has set up a foundation for building the capacity of monitoring laboratories of Pak-EPA and provincial EPAs to enhance regulatory compliance, environmental management and protection.

Pakistan's urban air pollution is among the worst in the world. The horrific impact of air pollution is causing more than 20,000 premature deaths among adults and almost 5 million cases of illness among children each year, according to the World Bank's report titled, 'Cleaning Pakistan's Air: Policy Options to Address the Cost of Outdoor Air Pollution'.

It mentions that the concentrations of particle pollution — or particle matter (PM) — in Pakistan's urban areas are much higher than those experienced in other regional countries such as Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka. In addition, while these countries have adopted a number of measures that have resulted in reduced urban air pollution, Pakistan has yet to follow suit and is paying the costs of increasingly high outdoor air pollution.

World Bank estimates show that residents of Peshawar, for example, breathe an annual average of 110 cubic micro-metres of fine particulate matter — tiny pollutants that reduce visibility and reach deep into the respiratory tract. That is more than 11 times over the recommended upper limit.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1640286/1-air-pollution-climate-ministry-sets-ambient-air-quality-stations-capital/>

#### 'LARGEST SOLAR PLANT' IN THAR

Dawn, February 22nd, 2018

MITHI: Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC) and Reon Energy Ltd signed an agreement on Wednesday to install solar power plant at Thar Coal Block-II to limit carbon emissions and help protect the environment.

“This will be the largest solar energy project for captive utilisation to date, in Pakistan. The plant will provide considerable savings in energy costs, along with an expected reduction of 3,150 metric tonnes in the annual carbon emissions,” said a press statement issued by SECMC spokesperson.

The agreement was signed by Reon CEO Mujtaba Haider Khan and Chief Operating Officer of SECMC Syed Abul Fazl Rizvi.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1390961/largest-solar-plant-in-thar>

#### GREENING SINDH

The Express Tribune, February 22nd, 2018.

The Sindh government has decided to develop a forest area of over 20,000 acres of land between Karachi and Hyderabad in order to improve the overall environmental conditions. The move to transform a vast tract of barren land belonging to the forest department was badly needed as both these urban centres have expanded exponentially with drastic reduction in green cover. Urban forestry is an emerging discipline that requires a lot of understanding to develop a sustainable urban forest.

In June 2015, temperatures rose to 44.8oC in Karachi, putting millions of dwellers at the risk of heatstroke. The extreme heat resulted in the death of over 1,200 people. This extreme weather phenomenon, which scientists termed an ‘urban heat island’ and which is expected to become more frequent and more intense due to climate change, has raised questions around factors that contributed to the high death toll among the vulnerable population. It is not clear whether any lessons were learned on how to reduce the health impact from future heatwaves.

The rapid expansion of cities takes place without any land-use planning strategy and the resulting human pressure has highly damaging effects on forests, landscapes, as well as green spaces in and around cities. The environmental impacts of urbanisation are often intensified by climate change and include increased pollution, decreased vegetation cover, as well as increased poverty and frequency of extreme climatic events. Urban trees can help mitigate some of the negative impacts and social consequences of urbanisation, and thus make cities more resilient to these changes.

Between 2000 and 2010, Pakistan lost forest cover equivalent to the size of Lahore. The country’s deforestation rate continues to be the highest in Asia and is well below the recommended cover of 25%.

Forests in Sindh have been degraded to a significant degree and their ecosystem function has ceased to exist. A report recently submitted by the forest and wildlife secretary to the Supreme Court and the chief minister provides an insight into how Sindh was deprived of its forests over the decades.

The report reveals that there has been an 80% decline in the actual forest cover since 1971 and the present forest size is of 100,000 acres, which is less than 0.3% of the entire surface area. Titled 'Fading forest of Sindh', the report describes "illegal encroachment of forests" as the biggest problem being faced by the department as it estimates that an alarming 145,245 acres of forestland is under illegal possession.

The report further revealed that "there are also instances where the forestland has been permanently transferred to private parties, in violation of state policy and neglecting clear-cut instructions of the superior courts issued from time to time."

Moreover, a number of housing schemes are being developed between the Latifabad and Jamshoro Indus river embankment and the additional protection embankment near Hyderabad. In principle these could not be developed between the embankments as the area might be inundated during the monsoon or floods.

In the present circumstances, there is a strong need to formulate a dynamic policy for the preservation and management of all types of forests in Sindh. It is high time to act and adopt appropriate policies, so that the forest ecosystem could be revived and made functional. Participatory forest management approaches, revision and updating of Sindh forest Act of 1927 and a regular monitoring of ecosystem should be the immediate future priorities.

Without studying or understanding the ecology of the land area, trees and other vegetation cannot be planted. Trees must be planted as per the region and the present forest cover, so that they may be regenerated as per their natural history. The introduction of new, non-native species of plants and animals can have dire effects on the environment. All stakeholders should be involved in adaptive strategies.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1641110/6-greening-sindh/>

**DUMPING OF INDUSTRIAL WASTE: FACTORY OWNERS FACE LEGAL ACTION**  
Business Recorder, 25 February 2018

**KARACHI:** Owners of over 70 factories, releasing toxic industrial waste in Karachi's drains, were presented in front of the Sindh Water Commission on Saturday.

The commission expressed its displeasure at the refusal of factory owners to allow Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) officials from inspecting their premises.

Head of Sindh Water Commission Amir Hani Muslim issued an order to inspect all of the reported factories with a police party and directed relevant authorities to file cases against six factory owners.

Owners of the reported factories submitted an unconditional apology, during the hearing, and assured the court of complete cooperation with the authorities in the future.—INP

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/02/25/3-page/701780-news.html>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 5TH TO FEBRUARY 11TH 2018  
ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION PUTTING LIVES AT RISK, NA BODY SAYS  
Jamal Shahid

Dawn, February 07, 2018

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee has claimed that the rate of environmental degradation across the country is putting people's lives at risk.

A subcommittee of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Human Rights said on Tuesday that the neglect

of nature and natural resources had caused an environmental crisis in the country.

Committee members argued that development had come at the expense of the environment and public health, and observed that air and water quality in many cities and villages were below international health standards.

The subcommittee met to discuss measures taken to control pollution generated by industries in Hattar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan.

The committee's concerns were augmented by unsatisfactory responses from provincial government officials, who, at best, said their offices were doing their utmost with limited resources.

Sindh Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) Additional Director General Waqar Hussain told the committee the environment was not a priority for the government. Starting from marine pollution, Mr Hussain listed environmental problems that included solid waste collection and disposal issues and 14,000 industrial units in Karachi that were adding to the 450 million gallons of waste water discharged into the Malir and Lyari rivers every day.

"Lack of staff, funds and support from the district management – besides several other factors – all make the jobs of environmentalists harder by the day," he said.

The situation in Punjab is no less dire, according to Punjab Director Environment Nasimur Rehman, who said at least Rs100 billion are required to treat waste water in Lahore alone.

"It will take another five years before all the big and small leather factors pollution water sources in Sialkot shift to the under-construction industrial tannery zone," Mr Rehman said.

He hinted that it was unlikely that the people of Sialkot would see any relief until all the factors were moved from the city to the industrial zone.

Mr Rehman also identified the plastics industry as a significant problem.

“Plastic-making is the second largest industry, after textiles, in the country. It is impossible to shut it down completely. Hundreds of thousands of livelihoods are connected to this industry. There are 600 plastic-making units in Lahore alone, and thousands in Punjab,” he said.

“Plastic bags that can last up to 400 years are major reasons for the blockage of sewerage systems,” he said.

He also informed the committee that increasing the cost of producing plastic bags and introducing biodegradable bags that dissolve in three to five months could discourage the use of plastic bags.

Solid waste collection and disposal is also a challenge, due to a lack of funds and resources, he said.

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf MNA Munaza Hussain was critical of emissions from steel factories in and around Lahore that affected breathing and caused the smog last year. Mr Rehman told her the mills had been directed to install devices that controlled the amount of poisonous emissions from their chimneys.

Officials from KP’s environmental departments suggested planting more trees to cleanse the air of pollutants, particularly around industrial zones.

Balochistan, where there are fewer industrial units compared to other parts of the country, also had its share of environmental concerns.

Quarrying, emissions, an absence of sewage treatment plants and the coal industry were some of the main causes of air and water pollution in Balochistan.

A report presented by officials from the Balochistan environment department also said that entire crops of vegetables that were irrigated by sewage were flattened by the local government.

Clean drinking water remains a major problem for the entire province, environmental experts from Balochistan said.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1387870/environmental-degradation-putting-lives-at-risk-na-body-says>

## JUDICIAL COMMISSION SEEKS REPORTS ON GARBAGE LIFTING IN KARACHI

Naeem Sahoutara

February 7, 2018

KARACHI: The judicial commission directed on Tuesday the heads of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), cantonment boards, Defense Housing Authority (DHA) and others to submit detailed reports regarding lifting of solid waste in their areas.

Justice (retd) Amir Hani Muslim gave these directives while heading a commission, appointed by the Supreme Court, to probe into failure of the provincial authorities in providing clean drinking water and improve sanitation conditions in Sindh.



At the outset, the commission expressed its dissatisfaction with the report about the work on the rehabilitation of water filtration and sewerage treatment plants submitted by the managing directors (MDs) of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) and Hyderabad's Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa).

Justice Muslim directed them to take steps for the rehabilitation of the non-functional treatment and filtration plants immediately. However, the commission stopped them from hiring services of consultants for installation of the new plants.

He noted that the existing non-functional plants could be put back into order by spending the money already allocated in the budget, thus there was no need to allocate an additional amount of Rs300 million, as demanded by the MDs.

The commission expressed its displeasure over the absence of the provincial chief secretary and planning and development commission secretary, who were immediately called.

Planning and Development Commission Secretary Waseem Ahmed assured that the schemes devised by the KWSB will be approved within five days of their submission.

The commission sought a complete list of the schemes from KWSB MD Syed Hashim Raza Zaidi, who sought two weeks time to do the same. He was allowed one week to do the needful.

The commission observed that the process of appointment of consultants for the schemes would take time, but Chief Secretary Muhammad Rizwan Memon said that the government itself had consultants available.

He also filed a report, which stated that the government had appointed new project directors for treatment plant-I and III and the K-IV water supply project.

The commission directed the authorities concerned to immediately provide the entire record relating to TP-I, TP-III and K-IV projects to the new project directors so that work on them could be initiated at the earliest.

It also directed the planning and development commission to supervise work to ensure quality and monitoring of the schemes.

Justice Muslim observed that no visible improvement had been seen towards lifting garbage in the metropolis.

A lawyer, representing the cantonment board, said that garbage was being properly lifted within its limits and dumped in Surjani Town.

However, Justice Muslim said that during his recent visits to different parts of the city, he himself had seen garbage dumped unattended.

He came down hard on the cantonment boards' chief executive officer (CEO) for being absent during the proceedings despite issuance of notice.

He inquired why the cantonment boards were not supplying clean drinking water to the residents.

The lawyer said that it was mandatory for new residential and commercial projects to have a water filtration plant.

The commission noted that the cantonment boards had no right over the sub-soil water and asked how they had approved installation of the plants.

It asked why solid waste was being dumped into the storm water drain, Nehar-e-Khayam. The lawyer said it was the responsibility of the private contractors to ensure proper disposal of garbage.

The commission issued notices to the CEOs of all the cantonment boards, the mayor, municipal commissioner, KMC, Karachi Port Trust chairperson, DHA administrator and all the district municipal corporations to submit a detailed report regarding availability of the sewerage system and lifting and dumping of solid waste in their limits.

The commission expressed its annoyance over transfers of the project to the town municipal administration (TMA) and remarked that the same get delayed following transfer to the TMAs despite spending huge funds.

It directed the chief secretary, Memon, to look into the matter relating to transfer of the development schemes to the TMAs and submit a report in this regard.

The Sindh Environmental Protection Agency's (Sepa) director-general (DG) filed a report suggesting that notices had been issued to 450 industrial units over violation of environmental laws. Action has also been taken against 27 industries, he added.

The DG disclosed that none of the 1,000 industrial units operating across the province had any plant installed for the treatment of toxic and poisonous industrial discharge.

Looking at the situation, the commission directed the chief secretary to take steps to strengthen the environment department.

The DG said that Sepa had 430 employees in Karachi.

The commission observed that the employees, who had been appointed without meeting merits, should be dismissed at the earliest to ensure proper and efficient working of the department.

It directed the chief secretary to examine all the appointments made in the environment department and submit a report in this regard within one week.

Justice Muslim told the provincial health secretary that a very sorry state of cleanliness was observed during the recent inspections of the public hospitals in Karachi.

He said the rules were not being followed for the disposal of medical waste by the management of health facilities.

Referring to his visit, Justice Muslim said medical waste was seen dumped in the adjoining streets of the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital, Karachi.

Health Secretary Fazlullah Pechuho admitted to these facts and undertook that the conditions will be improved.

He said that the incinerators and other machines were being imported from Italy.

The commission noted that a water filter plant installed by a non-governmental organisation in Civil hospital was lying non-functional for the last two years. It added that potable water was not available to the prisoners admitted to the jail ward.

The commission ordered the health secretary to ensure incinerators were installed and made fully functional as soon as possible. It further ordered him to improve conditions at Civil hospital and Lyari General Hospital.

It directed the health secretary to submit a complete list of the medical superintendents (MS), who had also been given charge of project directors of different projects at the government hospitals.

The commission directed the chief secretary to withdraw the charge of project directors from all the MSs. It also issued notices to the MSs of Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, Civil hospitals and Lyari General Hospital following a report which showed 78% potable water being provided at these public health facilities was unfit for human consumption.

They were told to ensure supply of potable water at their respective hospitals and submit compliance reports to the commission.

The commission directed the health secretary to submit a work plan regarding supply of clean drinking water at hospitals. It ordered Pechuho to ensure the public were allowed to use the toilets free of charge at hospitals.

Further hearing was adjourned till February 16.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1627889/1-judicial-commission-seeks-reports-garbage-lifting-karachi/>

## STONE CRUSHING, MINING ILLEGAL IN FORESTS

The Express Tribune, February 8th, 2018.

Even as people continue to die due to dust inhalation at stone crushing plants in the province, the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government remains clueless about the legal status of such units, and mining in forests.

This was disclosed as the provincial chief secretary sought the legal opinion of the law department and the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) advocate general during a January 25 meeting regarding stone crushing and mining operations in the province.

Especially in all the three types of forests which the government recognises including protected forests, reserved forests and 'Guzara forests' (sizeable patches of wooded lands close to habitations set aside to meet the bona fide domestic needs (timber for house construction, fuel, fodder) of the local communities but cannot be cut without government permission).

In their opinions, the K-P Advocate General and the K-P law department, stated stone crushing and mining in areas which are officially recognized as forests as illegal.

The K-P advocate general stated that both mining and stone crushing were illegal in all types of the forests under Section-26 and Section-33 of the Forest Ordinance 2002.

The written opinion — a copy which is available with The Express Tribune— stated the relevant clauses and sections on which the opinion was based.

Citing the forest ordinance 2002, which defines forests and bans activities such as mining and stone crushing, the advocate general stated, “Removal of any stone, rock or mineral and surface oil and all products of mines and quarries are prohibited in the reserved forest by section-26 of the Ordinance.”

It added that mining and stone crushing process is relatively the most lethal processes in the list of proscribed activities.

The opinion also declares as illegal stone crushing and mining in protected and guzara forests under Section-33 of the ordinance.

The K-P law department, in a letter sent to the K-P secretary mines and minerals, secretary industries and secretary forest, environment and wildlife department, stated that they endorse the opinion of the advocate general on the subject.

The issue came to light after the Supreme Court took a suo moto notice of stone crushing and mining in the Margalla Hills of Islamabad and sought a reply from the K-P government about illegal stone crushing and mining in the province since such activities were being conducted on the K-P side of the Margalla Hills.

The notice finally woke the government up on the issue which launched a drive against stone crushing across the province along with stopping mining in the forests— an activity which was under way for about three decades.

The K-P cabinet had also discussed the issue in its meetings and new rules were framed for stone crushers.

Ironically, the stone crushers against whom the government had launched an operation, had No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) from K-P’s environment department along with licences issued to them by the K-P industries department. The plots on which the activity was being carried out had been leased to them by the K-P mines and minerals department.

Impact on stone crushing industry, mining and construction project: After the apex courts intervention, stone crushing and mining mostly ground to a halt in K-P.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1628968/1-stone-crushing-mining-illegal-forests/>

**KWSB TO SUBMIT MEASURES TAKEN TO CURB INFLOW OF WASTE INTO  
FRESHWATER BODIES**

The Express Tribune, 10 February 2018

The Sindh High Court (SHC) sought on Friday comments from the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board's (KWSB) chairperson regarding steps to stop the inflow of toxic industrial waste into Keenjhar Lake – one of the largest freshwater sources in the province – without proper treatment.

A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, sought such comments on a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Haleem Adil Shaikh, who had pleaded the court ask the respondents to set up water quality testing laboratories at Keenjhar Lake.

The petitioner had informed the judges that the lake, which is situated at distance of about 122 kilometres east of Karachi, was a main source of water for the entire population. Untreated industrial waste was being discharged into the lake from different areas including the Kotri-Baghar (KB) Feeder at Kotri, Choal, Nooriabad and Keenjhar, the petitioner had stated.

In an earlier hearing on January 22, 2015 an additional advocate-general, Abdul Jalil Zubedi, had submitted a report prepared by Kotri SITE.

The report had revealed that there are 99 industrial units currently operating in the Kotri industrial area that generate 1.5 million gallons of effluent per day that is disposed into the KB Feeder Canal without any treatment.

The law binds all units to set up a treatment plant for primary treatment before final treatment and disposal but the industries are not complying with this, the SITE report had claimed, adding that this was causing contamination of the KB Feeder Canal.

During Friday's proceedings, the petitioner complained that the matter had been pending in the court since 2013, but the authorities concerned had failed to make any progress regarding resolution of the problem.

The bench directed the law officer representing the KWSB to submit a report on what measures had been taken so far to control the inflow of untreated toxic industrial waste into the lake.

The judges observed that a judicial commission to look into such issues had also been constituted on the orders of the Supreme Court and asked the petitioner to also express such grievances before the commission. Sheikh undertook to move the commission as well. The hearing was adjourned till a date to be later notified by the office.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1630874/1-kwsb-submit-measures-taken-curb-inflow-waste-freshwater-bodies/>

## **March 2018**

***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM MARCH 26TH TO MARCH 31ST 2018***

***MUNICIPAL BODY'S SERVICES TO BE EXTENDED ACROSS GB***

Dawn, March 28th, 2018

GILGIT: Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Hafeezur Rehman has approved a project worth Rs180 million to extend services of Solid Waste Management Company (SWMC) across the region.

The project was initially started in some areas of Gilgit and Skardu districts.

Now, the SWMC services are being extended to Hunza, Nagar, the remaining areas of Gilgit, Diamer, Ghizer, in the first phase, and Astore, Shigar, Ghanche and Kharmang, in the second phase, in order to keep the urban areas clean by ensuring proper disposal of municipal waste.

The approval in this connection was given during a meeting in Gilgit chaired by the chief minister, according to a press release issued here on Tuesday.

On the occasion, GB chief minister directed the officials concerned to ensure life insurance of the SWMC employees. "All resources would be utilized to keep clean all the districts of the region," he added.

Meanwhile, the chief minister constituted a five-member committee headed by local bodies minister Farman Ali to prepare recommendations for conducting local government elections in the region.

Such polls have not been held in GB since 2009.

GB law minister Aurangzeb Khan Advocate, secretary local bodies Sanaullah Khan, secretary law Raheem Gul, and a home department representative will be its members.

GB election commissioner has been made focal person of the committee.

According to a press release, the chief minister has directed the secretary finance to provide necessary funds to GB election commission for holding the polls.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1398036/municipal-bodys-services-to-be-extended-across-gb>

## GOVT FORMS BODY TO SELECT DUMPING SITE FOR SOLID WASTE

Dawn, March 29th, 2018

Mohammad Ashfaq

**PESHAWAR:** As the issue of urban waste disposal has turned into a crisis in the provincial capital, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Wednesday formed a high-powered committee, including lawmakers and officials, to select a site for dumping garbage on scientific lines.

The committee was formed in a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pervez Khattak. The officials of Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) have been running from pillar to post to locate a proper area for the establishment of a dumping site as recently they were stopped by the local people from disposing of the garbage in all the temporarily arranged sites.

The officials finally requested the chief minister to intervene as it had virtually failed to lift most of the city's garbage in the previous one month, sources said. They said that the local MPAs were the main hurdles to the purchase of land for the dumping sites on the outskirts of provincial capital.

CM says site should be 1.5km away from populated areas; directs finalisation of plan for producing electricity from garbage

Keeping in view the concerns of WSSP officials, the chief minister called a meeting of all MPAs of Peshawar, including ministers, at the Chief Minister's House on Wednesday. It was also attended by district nazim Mohammad Asim Khan, secretaries of the finance and local government departments, deputy commissioner Peshawar and high-ups of WSSP.

During the meeting, a committee was formed under the chairmanship of information minister Shah Farman while its members included adviser to the chief minister on environment department Ishtiaq Urmar, DC Peshawar, Provincial Housing Authority's director general and the district nazim.

The committee was tasked to finalise selection of one of the six sites identified for waste management and establishing a treatment plant. It was asked that the site must be for a longer period of time.

It was also decided that the dumping site should be 1.5 kilometre away from the populated areas, an MPA who attended the meeting told Dawn. "The WSSP needs 600 kanals for establishment of the dumping site," he said.

The WSSP admitted during the meeting that all the temporarily arranged dumping sites were nearer to the population.

Addressing the participants, the chief minister directed for finalisation of a site for waste management and establishing a treatment plant for producing electricity from solid waste, according to a statement issued here.

He cautioned for enhanced level of preparedness for effectively controlling the spread of dengue virus in different districts of the province. He called for a clean environment in Peshawar, directing the deputy commissioner to immediately construct the drainage system in Gulbahar and broken manholes in the city.

The meeting was briefed about the drainage and sanitation system in the city and the work so far done in this regard.

The chief minister said that the uplift of Peshawar would not be compromised in any case, adding that the local MPAs must cooperate with the executing agencies for completion of the projects in their respective constituencies. He also directed for deputing an official to monitor the construction work on the main drain in Gulbahar.

The PTI-led provincial government has so far failed to buy land for the establishment of a proper dumping site in Peshawar. Also, there is still no dumping site in any district of the province for ensuring disposal of garbage on scientific lines.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1398137/govt-forms-body-to-select-dumping-site-for-solid-waste>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM MARCH 19TH TO MARCH 25TH 2018

JUDICIAL COMMISSION BANS GARBAGE THROWING INTO NULLAHS IN KARACHI

The Express Tribune, March 21, 2018

Naeem Sahoutara

The judicial commission ordered on Tuesday the Karachi mayor to enforce the ban on throwing of garbage into more than 500 drains in Karachi and remove encroachments from the same.

Justice (ret'd) Amir Hani Muslim passed this order while heading a Supreme Court-appointed judicial commission to investigate into the alleged failure of the provincial authorities in providing clean drinking water and sanitation conditions in Sindh.

During the proceedings, the commission told Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar that construction of roads was his responsibility and cleaning of the drains was the responsibility of the district municipal corporations (DMCs).

Justice (ret'd) Muslim told the mayor that authority and politics were two separate issues.

He further told the mayor that cleaning of some drains was the responsibility of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and others were to be cleaned by the DMCs.

To a query, the mayor said that the KMC was responsible for cleanliness of more than 30 drains, while the DMCs were responsible for cleaning of 500 drains.

Justice (ret'd) Muslim asked the mayor to explain how these drains will be cleaned and what help he needed from the commission.

The mayor said 500 nullahs had been choked with garbage, adding that the KMC had cleared the Gujjar Nullah of garbage and encroachment.

Akhtar deplored that encroachments had started re-emerging along the drain because the road along its banks was not built.

The commission told the mayor to enforce the ban on throwing of garbage in the nullahs as the same was already prohibited under the relevant laws. It further directed him to remove encroachments from the drains.

The commission also ordered the Karachi mayor to ensure the staff of Chinese companies, which were awarded contracts to lift and dispose off garbage in city, were not harassed by the KMC officials.

It directed the Sindh government to ensure implementation of the laws banning the manufacturing and sale of polythene bags that do not dissolve after disposal.

Earlier, the commission said a ban on manufacturing, sale and purchase of substandard plastic bags should be banned by declaring Section 144 of the CrPC. However, an additional advocate-general said that there was no need to put a ban under Section 144, as the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency laws were already in the field. He pleaded to the commission to pass an order directing all those concerned to ensure implementation on the laws.



The commission, with the consent of the parties, ordered that a board meeting should be convened within this month in order to look into the issues related to waterlogging in the water sources from the thermal power plant in Jamshoro.

The commission ordered that the contractor will be paid the remaining outstanding bill by the company within 10 days and complete the project by June 30.

The commission directed the deputy commissioner and Jamshoro SSP to ensure that the project was not delayed on account of unlawful interruption by the locals affected by the waterlogging, as their monetary interest will be taken care by the relevant forum.

The additional director of the ministry of energy and power division, Dr Aamer Ahmed Ali, informed the commission that a report on compliance of these directives of the commission will be presented in the first week of April.

With the consent of the parties, the commission ordered that the central procurement committee will be re-notified during the course of the day to look into the purchase of medicines of the government hospitals in the province. It also ordered that Prof Dr Saeed Qureshi, the vice-chancellor of the Dow University of Medical Sciences, will be the committee's chairperson.

The committee members will include Jinnah Sindh Medical University, Karachi VC Dr Tariq Rafi, Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS), Jamshoro Pro-VC Professor Dr Muneer Junejo, Professor Aneela Ataur Rehman of LUMHS community medicines, Chandka Medical University, Larkana VC Shafi M Qureshi, additional director of the directorate of pharmacy, additional secretary, PM&I of the health department and additional secretary to be nominated by the finance secretary not below the rank of BS-19.

According to the terms of reference, the committee will prepare bidding documents, carry out technical as well as financial evaluation of the bids and prepare evaluation reports as provided in the Rule 45.

The committee will also make recommendations for the award of contract to the competent authority, perform any other function ancillary and incidental to the above and monitoring of the procured medicines with regard to their quality and genuineness.

The commission ordered that the committee will be authorised to have vigilance over distribution of the supply to different hospitals, including all health facilities and to generate compliance report on the website for the public at large.

The commission ordered that the National Accountability Bureau's chairperson may appoint any of his additional director's as a member of the procurement committee in order to ensure transparency in the procurement process of medicines.

The health secretary informed that the issue of the technical committee may be taken up on March 22.

Planning and Development Board Chairperson Waseem Ahmed said that there was no provision under the Rules of Business authorising any of the government departments to appoint a consultant for repair and maintenance works in government hospitals.

The commission wrote, in its order, that the consultant appointed by the health department or any other department in the Sindh government do not have the sanction of law. It noted that the minutes of the meeting held in 2007 or around relied upon cannot overrule the specific provisions of the Rules, therefore, the consultant appointed by the health department needed to be de-notified on Tuesday and the work assigned to them shall be taken over by the works and services department on the same day after proper inventory.

The commission directed the Works and Services Secretary Aijaz Memon to take over all the ongoing contracts given by the consultants besides the functions or works assigned to the consultants of the health department and it would be proceeded with as if assigned to the works department.

The commission ordered that the liabilities, if any, of the consultant or contractor will be examined and settled by the works and services secretary through the chief engineer, which includes the quality of work.

The commission adjourned the hearing till March 22.

Later, Justice (retd) Amir Hani Muslim, along with the Karachi mayor and other officers, went on a visit to inspect the drains which had been choked with garbage and because of lack of cleanliness.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1665371/1-judicial-commission-bans-garbage-throwing-nullahs-karachi/>

**‘GO GREEN TREE PLANTATION’ DRIVE IN FULL SWING**  
Business Recorder, 22 March 2018

LAHORE: ‘Go Green Tree Plantation’ drive by Deokjae to plant thousands of trees along the Hyderabad Mirpurkhas Dual Carriageway is in full swing with the help of local school children and thousands of trees have already been planted so far.

The drive was kick started recently by Minister for Works and Services Sindh, Imdad Pitafi who appreciated the efforts of Deokjae for local community services and environment preservation while doing proper maintenance of the Dual Carriageway.

The Chief Executive of Deokjae, Muhammad Intesaruddin sharing the details of the project said that plantation drive is being carried along Hyderabad-Mirpurkhas Dual Carriageway (HMDC), which is the company’s major achievement. “The road is of economic and strategic importance as it connects to the major arteries of the province and has also provided an impetus to the Farm to Market access thus facilitating the farmers in the region,” said Intesar. He said that with the help of most advanced technologies, the company ensured on-time completion of the project with stringent quality control procedures. Furthermore, Deokjae enhanced the efficiency of the Hyderabad-Mirpurkhas Toll Gate by installing state of the art Electronic Toll & Traffic Management System that is the latest and matches global standards.—PR

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/03/22/7-page/706235-news.html>

## PESHAWAR SUFFERS FROM GARBAGE DISPOSAL CRISIS

Dawn, March 24th, 2018

**PESHAWAR:** The Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar hasn't lifted most of the garbage produced in the provincial capital for the last one week over the people's resistance to the use of temporary dumping site in Bahadur Kaly area.

The issue has added to the misery of the city's over five million residents, who are already suffering from the large-scale road diggings and closures due to the ongoing Bus Rapid Transit project.

A senior WSSP official wondered why the civic agency would lift garbage if it had no place to dispose it of.

WSSP chief says we'll try to resolve the issue next week

"Only part of the garbage generated by the city could be lifted during the last four days as the local residents have stopped our garbage trucks from unloading in the temporary dumping site in Bahadur Kaly area," he told Dawn.

The official said the WSSP's sanitation staff members threw the little garbage, which they collected, in pits on the city's outskirts.

He said the civic agency's top bosses had directed the heads of the city's four zones to locate such pits for garbage disposal until the dumpsite issue was resolved.

The official said garbage was lifted only in the city's busiest markets and bazaars to prevent possible law and order situation, while garbage trucks hadn't gone to the rest of the urban and semi-urban areas for the last four days.

He said the WSSP and district administration had been struggling to find proper ways to dispose of garbage since last Monday when the people of Bahadur Kaly stopped garbage trucks from unloading in the temporarily dumping site over the stinking environment and fears of outbreak of diseases.

The people insisted that their move came only after their repeated requests and warnings to the WSSP to find an alternative dumpsite fell on deaf ears.

When contacted, WSSP chief executive Khanzeb said Chief Minister Pervez Khattak had called a meeting next Monday for discussing on the issue.

"We will try to resolve this issue in the forthcoming week," he said.

The WSSP chief said all MPAs of Peshawar, district nazim, additional chief secretary, commissioner and deputy commissioner, civic agency's high-ups, and secretaries of the finance and local government departments would attend the meeting.

Sources said MPAs of Peshawar were the main hurdle to the purchase of land in the city for a permanent dumping site.

They said the civic agency had enough funds but failed to purchase land for the purpose due to the resistance of the local politicians.

The sources said the purchase of 574 kanals of land in Maryamzai area on the outskirts of the provincial capital had reached the 'maturity stage' before a PTI minister came in its way.

They said another land was later chosen in Surizai Mera area but couldn't be used for garbage dumping due to the opposition of another PTI minister.

The sources said Peshawar generated 1,000 tons of garbage daily with 80 per cent of it being lifted daily by the WSSP.

They said the WSSP had changed three garbage dumping sites during the last one year due to the resistance of the local residents.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1397141>

#### PAKISTAN JOINS 184 NATIONS TO MARK EARTH HOUR

The Express Tribune, March 25, 2018

On Saturday at 8:30pm, the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) – Pakistan joined 184 nations around the world in marking the ninth edition of 'Earth Hour'. This was the movement's biggest edition yet in a global moment of solidarity for climate change.

Landmarks across the country switched off their lights and joined WWF-Pakistan's call to stand with millions of people to combat climate change and protect biodiversity and nature.

Along with support from other provincial assemblies, the Sindh Assembly also pledged its support for Earth Hour and to take initiatives to address the issues of climate change and biodiversity loss.

A notification on the ban of plastic bags was issued only a few days earlier by the home department and is in keeping with the three pledges for Earth Hour that WWF-Pakistan is asking individuals to take. The numerous places where lights were switched off included Frere Hall and the Sindh Assembly building.

As part of Earth Hour, people, cities and businesses around the world switched off their lights for one hour to draw attention to the urgent need to step up in the fight against climate change and protection of biodiversity.

With the historic Paris Agreement on climate change now in full force, there has never been a more crucial time to hold leaders accountable and show strong public support for efforts to stem climate change. From the Eiffel Tower to Taipei 101 and the Empire State Building to the Acropolis, thousands of landmarks switched off their lights in solidarity as individuals, communities and organisations worldwide delivered on their potential to help change climate change, the planet's biggest environmental challenge yet.

In Pakistan, landmarks which switched off lights included the Balochistan Assembly, Balochistan High Court, DCO office in Lahore, Avari Hotel, Pearl Continental Hotel, Water and Power Development Authority house, Water and Sanitation Agency, Lahore Electric Supply Company, Fatima Group, Wazir Khan Mosque, Hazori Bagh, Trail Dehli Gate, Pakistan Housing Authority foundation, MCB House, Lahore Development Authority complex, Parliament House, Supreme Court of Pakistan, Pakistan National Monument, Pak-China Friendship Centre, Shah Faisal Mosque, Convention Centre, D-Chowk and other locations.

WWF-Pakistan Regional Director for Sindh and Balochistan Dr Babar Khan, in his message, said that the country has embraced the true essence of the Earth Hour movement this year.

“We have come a long way since 2010, when WWF-Pakistan first celebrated Earth Hour. The seed we sowed has taken root and people today are comparatively more well-aware of the climatic changes around us,” Dr Khan said, adding that if we take a look at our past, we will understand that the Earth Hour movement will shape our future.

It is a constant reminder that we should lead towards the transformation of a more prosperous and renewable future, he said.

“Pakistan is among the top 10 countries affected by climate change and this environmental challenge is already impacting our economy severely. On this Earth Hour, by joining WWF, millions of people around the world have shown their commitment to the planet,” shared WWF-Pakistan Head of Communications and Marketing Asma Ezdi, adding that switching off all unnecessary lights for one hour on Saturday was a symbolic gesture.

“All of us should pledge to take action in our capacity as an individual, business and policy and decision-maker to reduce our footprint, save nature and protect the environment,” she said.

The year 2018 marks the 11th anniversary of Earth Hour, which started as a symbolic event in Sydney in 2007. Today, it is the world’s largest grassroots movement for the environment, ensuring that people who are on the frontlines of climate change are also empowered to be the planet’s first line of defence.

The one-hour event continues to remain the key driver of the movement encouraging individuals, communities, households and businesses to turn off non-essential lights as a symbol of their commitment to the planet.

In other parts of the country, events were organised in Lahore, Islamabad, Quetta, Bahawalpur, Khanewal, Faisalabad, Peshawar, Nathiagali, Gilgit, and Sukkur.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1668786/1-pakistan-joins-184-nations-mark-earth-hour/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM MARCH 12TH TO MARCH 18TH 2018

ILLEGAL TRADE IN WILDLIFE RIFE ACROSS PAKISTAN, SAYS STUDY  
Dawn, March 12th, 2018

**KARACHI:** A recent study, compiled through undercover surveys of 55 markets in 23 cities across Pakistan, has revealed that a majority of species/animal derivatives on sale at these markets are listed within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List of threatened species.

The study found that Karachi hosted the highest number of markets and shops dealing in illegal wildlife followed by Peshawar. Consumption of dried meat of the Indian cobra and sand lizard is recorded to be widespread in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

Titled 'An assessment of the scale of illegal wildlife trade in Pakistan', the study was conducted by the World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-P) and authored by Dr Uzma Khan and Hamera Aisha.

'Karachi has highest number of markets and shops dealing in illegal wildlife followed by Peshawar'

Part of a project supported by USAID, the study aimed at assessing the scale of illegal wildlife trade in Pakistan and looked into the effectiveness of the existing wildlife regulations.

The study covered a total of 288 shops and street vendors in 55 markets dealing in wildlife and their derivatives. These markets were located in Karachi, Thatta, Kashmore, Ghotki, Sukkur, Nagarparkar, Lahore, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Gujranwala, Mianwali, Murree, Multan, Abbottabad, Chitral, Mardan, Mansehra, Peshawar, Gilgit, Muzaffarabad, Gawadar and Jiwani.

All surveyed markets and shops were found to be involved in illegal wildlife trade. The study didn't cover legal pet trade.

High return crime

Illegal trade of wildlife species was predominantly recorded in bigger metropolises such as Lahore and Karachi, where the demand for exotic pets was found higher than other cities.

In Karachi, 12 markets and 42 shops were identified dealing in illegal wildlife, whereas, in Peshawar seven markets and 33 shops were recorded to be involved in this illegal trade.

The survey teams did not find any wildlife markets in Islamabad, Gwadar, Jiwani, Murree or Nagarparkar districts.

The teams recorded 55 wildlife species on sale in markets surveyed across the country, of which 40 per cent comprised mammals, 39pc birds, 19pc reptiles, while the remaining 2pc belonged to the invertebrates (Arachnida) category.

Mammal species recorded during the course of the survey included the leopard cat, Indian palm civet, Pallas cat, chinkara, hog deer, grey langur, Asiatic jackal, Indian pangolin, rhesus monkey etc. Whereas, the common leopard and Himalayan black bear cubs were also available for sale within a time period of 14 days upon an advance payment of 50pc.

A number of bird species caught in the wild were observed in markets. But, (for the purpose of this study) only protected species and those high in trade demand were recorded.

“In Lahore, Karachi, Abbottabad and Mansehra shops were observed to have catalogues with pictures of animals and their price tags. Whereas, in the province of Sindh and Punjab it was also observed that shopkeepers kept short video clips of captured animals in their mobile phones for customers.

“In Lahore’s Tolington Market, researchers were escorted by shop owners to a small, dingy shop where animals were kept in small cages and in a deplorable state of neglect,” it says.

The survey team recorded the use of derivatives of 12 mammals, five reptiles and one bird and invertebrate species as the key ingredient in traditional medicines available with street vendors and local herbalists.

These medicines are commonly sold as ointments and are believed to have aphrodisiac properties and to provide relief in joint and muscular pain.

Traditional medicines containing pelican fat were recorded in Sukkur, Ghotki, Kashmore and parts of Balochistan where local herbalists converted it into oil to treat several diseases, including fever and muscular pain.

The forms in which animal derivatives were sold include oils, which contained fat or bile extracts, meat (both fresh and dried) and bones. Fat extracts of the Indian spiny tailed lizard, Asiatic black bear, Asiatic lion and tiger were commonly found in traditional medicines.

Survey teams found the meat of Indian pangolins, Indian crested porcupines and freshwater turtles on sale in several cities. This meat was meant to be used in traditional medicine or smuggled to East Asian countries.

Markets in Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were found selling wildlife pelts and fur.

“Specifically, the cities of Karachi, Sukkur, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Lahore had widespread pelt and fur trade.

Pelts of the common leopard, African lion (exotic species), Indian palm civet, jungle cat, and leopard cat were available at high prices in markets where local herbalists were mostly found,” the study says.

According to 50pc of respondents, the study says, wildlife derivatives were sourced in the wild through traders in Karachi and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. A total of 30pc claimed to have bought animals through salesmen.

“Around 10 per cent of herbalists confirmed getting animal fat and other derivatives from the staff of provincial wildlife departments. Whereas, remnants of circus animals and smuggled animal products together add up to five per cent of animal derivatives found in markets,” it says.

The study also points out that neither the wildlife nor the police department was found to have any monitoring facility in these markets.

The study found that illegal wildlife trade conducted through websites extended to a large range of cities and provinces.

Punjab had the largest share of trade with 13 cities involved, mainly in Lahore and Rawalpindi. Sindh had the second largest proportion of online trade, predominantly in Karachi.

“All corners of Pakistan are involved in illegal wildlife trade as traders selling items exist in all provinces. Traders in Balochistan advertised their wares in five different cities. The Azad Jammu and Kashmir had traders located in three cities and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had vendors in three cities. Gilgit-Baltistan also had a trader in Hunza,” the study says.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1394654>

#### KMC OFFICERS BRIEF WB TEAM ABOUT CITY'S DRAINS

Dawn, March 15th, 2018

KARACHI: A delegation of the World Bank comprising urban specialists and analysts visited the headquarters of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) on Wednesday to obtain the details and data about major city drains, officials in the KMC said.

They said a briefing was given during their meeting with the senior KMC officials in a bid to provide the World Bank team all necessary details and information about the 30 major drains of the city including their locations, routes and flooding situation in nearby areas during rains.

The World Bank team represented by senior urban specialist Yoo Hee Kim, specialist Sohaib Akhtar and analyst Kabir Dawani which has already surveyed Gujjar Nullah and Orangi Nullah now plans to survey Korangi Nullah and Soldier Bazaar Nullah.

Officials said a World Bank package included developing the city's drainage infrastructure and rehabilitating and remodelling of drain routes to solve the issues associated with the present structure of the storm-water drains and sewerage system.

KMC director general works Shahab Anwer and other officials with district and zonal chief engineers helped the team analyse the situation and work out the package.

They said Mayor Wasim Akhtar had directed them to extend full cooperation to the World Bank in their study of city's drainage system and preparation of a development package.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1395269/kmc-officers-brief-wb-team-about-citys-drains>

#### GWADAR TO HAVE 300MW COAL-FIRED PLANT: OFFICIAL

Business Recorder, 15 March 2018

Zaheer Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar Port has been made operational with weekly arrival of ships, as the first ship visited the port on March 7 and another one on March 14, said Director General Gwadar Port Authority Dostain Jamali Wednesday.

While briefing the National Assembly Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reform meeting chaired by Abdul Majeed Khan Khanankhail, Dostain Jamali said that two liners (COSO and



Sino-Trans) start arriving at the port with the first one on March 7 and another one on March 14, 2018. He further stated that a Chinese company has completed the feasibility study for the construction of 1,000 meters long new terminal with five additional berths. Gwadar Port is going to become a hub of economic activities and a state-of-the-art One Window Operation is envisaged for development of Gwadar Free Zone to facilitate the investors, added Jamali.

He said that a 300MW coal-fired power plant will be established by the Chinese company at Gwadar while at present 7.8MW captive power plant was made operational to provide electricity to the free zone, he added.

He said that China's financing for China Overseas Port Holding Company has been approved and some more berths will also be added to the Gwadar Port. Jamali said that development of Gwadar free zones is almost compete with an estimated cost of \$160 million and additional investment of \$250 million is also in the pipeline from the main investor. Gwadar Expo was held on January 29, 30 2018, he added.

The meeting was also told that unlike other projects Gwadar Port is not a stand alone project and delay of one project will ultimately affect work on Gwadar Port. He said that work on different departments is connected with Gwadar projects.

The Chinese company installed a water treatment plant with the capacity of 200,000 gallons of water per day in Gwadar. The committee was informed that the paper work of Pakistan Railway project Main Line (ML-1) is completed and up-gradation of the ML-1 would be started within 3 months.

DG Railways Mazhar Ali Shah told the meeting that projects will be presented before the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council for approval. Main Line from Peshawar to Karachi is an early harvest project in the CPEC, added Shah.

He said that once the project is cleared by the CDWP and ECNEC, financial contracting will be followed with the objective to complete the project with around \$8 billion.

An official after the meeting told Business Recorder that cost is estimated at \$3 to \$4 million per kilometer.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/03/15/1-page/704903-news.html>

## HUBCO, FAUJI FERTILIZER TO SET UP COAL-FIRED POWER PLANT

The Express Tribune, March 16th, 2018.

Two Pakistan-based leading companies in the power and fertiliser sectors have joined hands with a Chinese state-owned firm for setting up a 330-megawatt coal-fired power project in Thar, according to notices sent to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Thursday.

“Hub Power Company (Hubco) has signed a shareholders’ agreement on March 15, 2018 with Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) and China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) for equity injection into Thar Energy Limited by Hubco of 60%, FFC 30% and CMEC 10%,” Hubco Company Secretary Shaharyar Nashat said in a notice.

They signed the agreement in Islamabad. The proposed equity investment would be subject to obtaining all necessary corporate and regulatory approvals by the companies involved in the project, he added.

Hubco's share price inched up 0.05%, or Rs0.05, to close at Rs97.42 with 101,000 shares changing hands at the PSX.

FFC's share price dropped 0.47%, or Rs0.40, and closed at Rs85.59 with a volume of 482,000 shares.

"The power plant, being a CPEC project, will be built under a special purpose company, Thar Energy Limited, and will be based on indigenous coal to be mined from the coalfields of Thar block-II in which Hubco has an 8% equity stake," a press statement added.

"Financial close of the project is expected in June 2018," it said.

Thar Energy CEO Saleemullah Memon said groundwork on the site had already commenced and the project was expected to begin commercial production by December 2020.

Hubco CEO Khalid Mansoor said Thar coal mines would be a game changer as they would indigenise energy resources for the country.

The project being set up by Thar Energy would be amongst the first in a series of power plants based on Thar coal and would lead to substantial foreign-exchange savings.

FFC Chief Executive Shafqaat Ahmed said the project would help overcome power shortfall in the country by utilising domestic coal, which was also a major goal of the government, besides adding value to the company's long-term investments in the best interest of its shareholders.

They said the strategic partnership would open up new avenues of business growth whereas the excellent financial position, credibility and best business practices of the two corporate entities would provide synergy and confidence for all the stakeholders.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1661205/2-joint-venture-hubco-fauji-fertilizer-set-coal-fired-power-plant/>

## TREE PLANTATION DRIVE LAUNCHED IN DISTRICT SOUTH

Business Recorder, 17 March 2018

KARACHI: Deputy Commissioner District South Karachi Muhammad Asif Jameel has said that around 50,000 saplings will be planted across the city in coming two months especially targeting the under-privileged and low-income residential areas.

He made this announcement at the launch of plantation campaign in District South. Office of District South's Deputy Commissioner and National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH) are jointly organizing the campaign.

Asif Jameel further urged all relevant institutions and agencies should fully participate in this campaign.

He said plantation campaign was launched to make Karachi completely green and peaceful city.

DC South called for more such plantation campaigns in the city on emergency basis in order to secure lives of several living organisms facing serious threat to their survival because of serious issue of air pollution.

NFEH president Muhammad Naeem Qureshi said a large number of saplings had been planted in various parts of Karachi under the ongoing drive of his forum to increase tree cover in Karachi and make its environment clean. The plantation campaign of the forum has been carried out since the year 2014.

Qureshi said under the campaign of his forum, training and plant saplings would be given to the concerned citizens and institutions for increasing greenery in the city. He said present plantation campaign would be concluded by April, 2018.

He appealed to the concerned people and agencies to fully take part in the current plantation campaign in Karachi.

Assistant Commissioner of Saddar area in the city Sara Javed said plantation would be done in entire District South of the city. She said, specially, low-income and under-privileged areas of the district would be targeted under the campaign including Lyari, old city areas, and Sultanabad.

He said conditions of public parks in the District South were being improved by the district administration.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/03/17/5-page/705318-news.html>

#### CJP ORDERS CLEANING OF KARACHI IN A WEEK

The Express Tribune, March 18, 2018

Naeem Sahoutara

The Supreme Court (SC) issued notices on Saturday to the heads of all private companies that had received advance payment from the provincial government to execute water and sewerage-related projects in the province.

A three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Mian Saqib Nisar, further directed them to appear in court to explain what progress they had made by the next hearing.

These notices were issued by the judge bench that also comprised Justice Faisal Arab and Justice Sajjad Ali Shah on an interim report submitted by the judicial commission at the SC's Karachi Registry.

The CJP told the chief secretary that the commission's interim report was an eye-opener. He remarked that the federal government was providing funds and asked what was happening in Sindh, as a very grim picture had surfaced.

The secretary said that there were some short-term and long-term projects and work on the short-term projects was being carried out 24 hours in three shifts. He admitted that some companies had received advance payments, but they ate up the money and did nothing.

However, he maintained that the conditions were improving and disclosed that those companies that had received advance payments but did no work had started returning the money to the government.

The CJP asked him to name the companies and said all of them would be summoned to the court next week.

The top judge asked the chief secretary whether he had any objections on the commission's interim report, to which the officer said he had not gone through it yet and requested more time.

The CJP observed that collection of garbage and its disposal was the duty of the Karachi mayor, asking Wasim Akhtar to explain what he had done.

The mayor complained that the provincial government had assumed all the powers, adding that the SC had already passed an order that municipal functions were not the duty of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB), but the government was not implementing it.

The chief secretary admitted that four to five tons of garbage was not being lifted in Karachi.

The CJP remarked that this means that the mayor was right, as it was the function of the district municipal corporations, which work under the provincial government.

The chief secretary said lifting garbage in the city had started and the entire system was being computerised due to which the situation was not improving immediately and would take some time.

Justice Nisar observed there was a need to sensitise the people. He asked that if the system had been improved, why was it not fully-functional.

The chief secretary said four contractors were lifting garbage in city. The CJP told him that there was garbage everywhere in Bath Island.

Dr Farogh Naseem, who represented the mayor, said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) only had the staff, but the Sindh government was running the whole system. He alleged that the government was not implementing the court's order to dissolve the SSWMB and transfer the authority to the district municipal corporations.

Akhtar said that the drains were choked and the city had piles of garbage, adding that city's condition was at its worst.

Justice Arab remarked that this was the duty of the KMC. The mayor said that the KMC had staff, but the contracts were being awarded to Chinese companies.

The CJP said he spent a whole night killing mosquitos at his residence in Bath Island locality.

The chief secretary admitted that there were some roads in the city which were not cleaned for as long as six months, but the situation was gradually improving.

However, Justice Shah told the chief secretary that his government was not providing funds to the KMC.

The chief secretary said four of the city's six districts had been outsourced for garbage collection and disposal. Justice Shah asked him to visit the drains which had been choked by garbage.

"Do you mean we should visit a couple of nullahs?" the CJP asked the chief secretary, who remained silent.

The CJP remarked, "I want Karachi cleaned in one week."

The mayor said that the Sindh government had retained the powers of tax and revenue collection and requested that the revenue collection authority should be transferred to the local bodies and civic agencies.

Addressing the mayor, the CJP said, "You have received votes from the public, keep aside the government and serve the masses."

Justice Nisar observed that the judicial commission was doing the right job and the SC would not interfere in its matters. The bench referred the matter of solid waste to the commission to decide as to whether the function of collection and disposal of solid waste should rest with the local government or the DMCs.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1662986/1-cjp-orders-cleaning-karachi-week/>

## **April 2018**

***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM APRIL 23 RD TO APRIL 29TH 2018***

***'WE NEED TO TAKE CARE OF MOTHER NATURE'***

The Express Tribune, April 23, 2018

It is Mother Earth's birthday and it needs looking after, as we need to leave a better world for our children, said horticulturist Tofiq Pasha.

Commenting on the theme of this year's World Earth Day – end plastic pollution – he said that eradicating plastic pollution is easily doable but for that every individual needs to take a step forward as every individual owes mother nature.

He was speaking at Pakistan's first urban forest park in Clifton to commemorate World Earth Day on Sunday. "It's not only trees that make up the Earth but water, soil, fire and air and every aspect is bleeding as we have ruined them badly," he lamented.

Shoaib Shamsi, an alumni of a boarding school in Abbotabad, who had joined the forest plantation project, said that this day requires our urgency and that the planet is crying out and telling us that we are not doing things to protect it. According to him, we need to take steps so that the Earth cools down and stops showing its anger towards us.

At the event there was a stall for Garbage Can – a sustainable waste management company. According to its founder and CEO, Ahmad Shabbar, users can give them a call to pick up recyclable garbage.

“A majority of people and organisations donate their garbage that can be recycled but if anyone wants to sell it, then we purchase it,” he explained, adding that aluminium cans, paper, cardboard and all types of plastics have a lot of monetary value as they can be recycled.

Shabbar, while quoting Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Director Dr AD Sajnani, said that the current solid waste amount produced by the city is 12,000 tons a day and barely 60% is being picked up. “The projected solid waste amount by 2020 is 16,000 tons a day.”

Charter president of the Rotary Club of Karachi, Dr Heeralal Lohano, said that it is high time to convert deforestation into forestation. He added that a clean environment would reduce a number of diseases.

A student of Karachi Grammar School, Alinah Qureshi, said that it is a great and innovative idea to take people on board for this important project with environmental implications like learning about composting, recycling, or planting trees. Her brother Daniyal added that it may be small but it is a vital step to create awareness among the masses. “We should save our energy resources for the upcoming generations,” the young student remarked.

An entrepreneur, Usman Siddiqui, who had come to plant trees, which was the most popular activity of the event, with his wife and three young children said that it feels satisfying to plant a tree as they need to let people know the importance of tree cover. “It’s Rs950 to plant a sapling and it would be really great if these saplings planted by my children survive in the coming years.”

Trashit – a company producing organic compost – also had a stall and its co-founders Rahul Rai and Anusha Fatima were answering people’s queries about the company. “Our nutritious 10 kilogramme bag of compost is worth Rs1,500 and is made up of 15kg of recycled organic waste,” explained Rai, who said they balanced the composition of nitrogen, potassium and phosphorous in the compost.

The organiser of the event, Shahzad Qureshi, said that we need to resolve on this day to address environmental issues and to address the issue of plastic that takes hundreds of years to decompose and poses serious threats to living beings on this planet.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1692544/1-need-take-care-mother-nature/>

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE: STUDENTS JOIN HANDS FOR A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

The Express Tribune, 24 April 2018

The students of classes eight and nine of the Nasra School celebrated on Sunday International Earth Day by participating in a community service project.

More than 250 students from all five campuses of Saddar, Korangi, Malir, North Karachi and the Super Highway participated in the event. They were joined by teachers and other volunteers who gathered to clean a major portion of the Sea View Beach in Clifton.

Earth Day has become one of the most widely celebrated environmental events across the globe. On this day, events are held worldwide to increase awareness and appreciation of the Earth's natural environment. Currently, it is celebrated in more than 192 countries each year.

The event was attended by Deputy Mayor Dr Arshad Vohra, who encouraged the students to keep Karachi clean.

The students of Nasra School and other volunteers gathered at the designated point at Sea View Beach and later split into smaller groups. Each group divided the coastline into smaller, workable sections. The school provided the students with gloves, trash bags and other necessary material required to clean the beach.

The goal was for students to participate in a community service activity to inculcate a feeling of responsibility, community as well as to create an impact on a national level.

The first Earth Day in 1970 brought together 20 million people from all walks of life and is widely credited with the launch of the modern environmental movement. Earth Day has become a day of action that changes human behaviour and provokes policy changes. Today, the fight for a clean environment continues with increasing urgency as the effects of climate change become clearer every day.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1693472/1-community-service-students-join-hands-cleaner-environment/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM APRIL 16TH TO APRIL 22ND 2018

RIVERS WORLDWIDE THREATENED BY PHARMA WASTE: STUDIES

Business Recorder, 16 April 2018

VIENNA: River systems around world are coursing with over-the-counter and prescription drug waste harmful to the environment, researchers said on Tuesday.

On current trends, the amount of pharmaceutical effluence leaching into waterways could increase by two-thirds before mid-century, they told a major science conference in Vienna.

“A large part of the freshwater ecosystems is potentially endangered by the high concentration of pharmaceuticals,” said Francesco Bregoli, a researcher at the Delft Institute for Water Education in the Netherlands, and leader of an international team that developed a method for tracking drug pollution “hotspots”.

A large number of drugs found in the environment — analgesics, antibiotics, anti-platelet agents, hormones, psychiatric drugs, anti-histamines — have been detected in nature at levels dangerous for wildlife.

Endocrine disruptors, for examples, have notoriously induced sex changes in fish and amphibians. Bregoli and his team used a common anti-inflammation drug, diclofenac, as a proxy, or stand-in, to estimate the presence and likely spread of other medications throughout freshwater ecosystems.

Both the European Union and the US Environmental Protection Agency have identified the drug as an environmental threat. Veterinary use of diclofenac, for example, has driven a sub-species of vultures on the Indian subcontinent to the brink of extinction.

More than 10,000 kilometres of rivers around the globe have concentrations of the drug in excess of the EU “watch list” limit of 100 nanogrammes per litre, the new research found.

“Diclofenac emissions are similar to any of thousands of pharmaceuticals and personal care products,” said Bregoli, who presented his findings at the annual meeting of the European Geosciences Union.

Global consumption of diclofenac tops 2,400 tonnes per year. Several hundred tonnes remain in human waste, and only a small fraction — some seven percent — of that is filtered out by treatment facilities. Another 20 percent is absorbed by natural ecosystems, and the rest find its way to the oceans.

Bregoli and his team developed a computer model to predict current and future levels of pharma pollution based on criteria such as population densities, sewage systems, and drugs sales. To test the model’s predictive power, they compared the results to data gathered from some 1,400 spot measurements of diclofenac toxicity taken from different locations around the world.

It was a good match, though most of the data points, Bregoli noted, were in Europe and North America. Pollution levels are likely to be substantially higher in much of Latin America, Africa and Asia where — on average — less than a quarter of waste water is treated, and even then with technology unable to filter out most pharmaceuticals.

Technology alone cannot solve the problem, said Bregoli, who is preparing his findings for publication.

“We need a substantial reduction in consumption,” he told AFP.

In other research presented at the conference, scientists found that the rapid expansion of sewage systems in large urban areas has sharply increased river pollution, because much of the effluence is not adequately treated. “In 2000, sewage was a source of pollution in about 50 percent of the rivers in the world,” said Maryna Stokal, a scientist at Wageningen University & Research, in the Netherlands.

“By 2010, sewage was a source of pollution in almost all rivers worldwide.”

Antibiotics and chemicals waste is also driving the evolution of drug-resistant bacteria, UN Environment warned in a study in December. Between 70 and 80 percent of all antibiotics consumed by humans and farm animals — totalling thousands of tonnes — find their way into natural environments, the UN agency said in a report.—AFP

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/04/16/9-page/710958-news.html>

WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT TO SOON BE PASSED INTO LAW, PA TOLD  
Dawn, April 19th, 2018



KARACHI: The Sindh legislature was informed on Wednesday that certain appropriate steps for the protection of wildlife were being taken in the province and soon the assembly would pass a “comprehensive” wildlife act into law.

“Appropriate steps for protection of wildlife are being taken in the province and nothing is being ignored,” said Senior Minister Nisar Khuhro while responding to queries of the lawmakers on behalf of Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah during the Question Hour of the day’s session.

“Preparations of Sindh Wildlife Protection Act, 2014 for effective protection is already in the assembly secretariat,” he added.

Replying to a question asked by Khairunnisa Mughal, Mr Khuhro said the government was encouraging breeding and game farms in private sector, however, proper regulations and supervision was being ensured.

“Breeding farms, game farms are being encouraged in private sector to reduce pressure on natural resources.

“The wildlife protection act would take care of all such issues,” said Mr Khuhro.

The house was informed that reorganisation and restructuring of the wildlife ministry was being made through which its formation at district level, which was absent earlier, was being established.

He said periodical surveys were planned for the first time in history and new heads had been created which was essential to effective protection of wildlife.

He said the government was taking concrete steps and more progressive steps were in the pipeline.

Speaking on behalf of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement lawmaker, Kamran Akhtar, who had originally asked a question, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf’s Khurram Sher Zaman surprised the house when he asked the minister in a supplementary question, regarding recruitments in the wildlife department, as for which post the word “do” stood for.

He was holding a list of 30 employees who had been recruited during 2014-15 and word “do” followed the post of ‘forest guard’.

Amid amusement in the house, Mr Khuhro informed him that the word stood for “ditto” meaning the same thing repeated in a list.

Responding to another query, the minister said one of the 30 employees was a woman because most of those posts pertained to forest guards and tractor cleaners etc for which women did not apply.

However, Mr Khuhro clarified that all those 30 recruitments made in Karachi and 10 other districts of Sindh were illegal in which a former conservator was involved, who was later caught by the authorities.

“However, these employees moved court and got relief from it. Thus, they had been reinstated on their posts,” said the minister.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1402460/wildlife-protection-act-to-soon-be-passed-into-law-pa-told>

## PLASTIC DEVASTATING ENVIRONMENT, EXPERTS WARN

Dawn, April 21st, 2018

KARACHI: Plastic pollution is playing havoc with environment and fast degrading marine and freshwater life in the country, warned experts at an Earth Day event held at Karachi University's Institute of Environmental Science on Friday.

The World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-P) had collaborated with KU for the event organised under the Sustainable Fisheries Entrepreneurship Project.

“The large-scale use of single-use plastics in our daily life is devastating our environment. Plastic, in fact, is becoming an environmental catastrophe in both the rural and urban areas,” said KU dean faculty of sciences Tasneem Adam Ali, emphasising the need to promote the concepts of rejecting, reducing, reusing and recycling plastic products.

Professor Omm-e-Haney, the director of the Institute of Environmental Science, KU, said that plastic pollution posed a serious threat to marine life and its ecosystem. The issue of plastic pollution along Pakistan's coast, it was observed, was a major concern and was worsening due to an inadequate solid waste disposal system in the city.

Muhammad Moazzam Khan, technical adviser (marine fisheries) at WWF-P, said that plastic products, mainly in the form of household utensils and low-quality toys, had been used in this region even prior to 1947.

“From 1965 to 1975, there was a noticeable increase in the use of plastics when it became an integral part of our lives. Today, plastic material constitutes the fourth largest item of import and this sector alone contributes significantly to the national exchequer in different heads,” he told the audience. The plastic industry, he said, was growing at an annual average of 15 per cent and had surpassed all other industrial sectors.

“Today, the domestic consumption of plastics stands at more than 2.7kg, far less than the international average. Yet, Pakistan is the second largest domestic market for plastics in the [region] after India,” he observed.

Citing an assessment survey undertaken by WWF-Pakistan this year, he revealed that even remote beaches of Balochistan, including Jiwani (which is located near Iran's border), were not spared of plastic, which made up a large part of the debris accumulated on some of the most fragile beaches of the area.

At the conclusion of the event, a group of students and volunteers carried out a solid waste collection activity to demonstrate the need for changing behaviour towards plastics and educating the general public on this growing issue.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1402877/plastic-devastating-environment-experts-warn>

## PAKISTAN SETS WORLD RECORD BY PLANTING OVER ONE MILLION MANGROVES

The Express Tribune, 19 December 2018

The Sindh forest department successfully broke its earlier Guinness World Record of planting the most trees in 24 hours by planting 1,129,294 mangroves on an island near Keti Bunder in Thatta district of Sindh..

Pakistan Peoples Party Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah separately planted saplings on the island to launch the plantation drive.

Bilawal, Murad, Parliamentary Minister Nisar Khuhro, Transport Minister Nasir Hussain Shah and MPA Ghulam Qadir Malkani were taken to the island where the drive was launched.

The department held the previous record of planting the most trees in 24 hours and was attempting to break its own record. The earlier record was set in 2013 by planting 847,275 trees in Kharo Chaan, Thatta.

As per the standard fixed guidelines mandated from the Guinness World Record authorities, the record has to be set in a 24-hour period by 300 planters during daylight hours.

Briefing Bilawal, Forest Secretary Sohail Akbar Shah said since they were attempting the record in estuarine intertidal mudflats, the availability of maximum time was critical.

After using the navy's tidal data, they selected April 19 as the most suitable day on which the maximum amount of daylight, 12.5 hours, could be availed. He informed Bilawal that the attempt was made from 6:30am till 7pm.

Murad said the purpose of their attempt is to highlight and showcase the importance of Indus delta mangroves, its affiliated biodiversity and most importantly the communities dependent on this precious but threatened ecosystem.

“Our experience of setting the Guinness World Record in 2009 and 2013 has brought the coastal areas into the limelight and socio-developmental activities are on the rise in these areas,” he explained.

The CM said that the current attempt is being financed by the Sindh government with logistical and material support provided by the Pakistan Navy.

“We expect support and active participation from the media, civil society, local representatives and a large number of members of the community in this important national event,” he said.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1690008/1-pakistan-sets-world-record-planting-one-million-mangroves/>

## CLEANING OF DRAINS AND SEWERS UNLIKELY TO BEGIN BEFORE MID-JULY

Dawn, April 22nd, 2018

KARACHI: Cleaning of storm-water drains and sewers in the metropolis before the upcoming monsoon in June seems improbable as the proposed work is unlikely to begin before mid-July owing to technical and legal snags.

While confiding this to Dawn on Saturday, informed sources said the work on cleaning of drains might not be kicked off before the middle of July if the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation went by the legal formalities for the execution of the task.

They said the KMC did not have the requisite gear and machinery for de-silting the drains and the work would be outsourced by inviting bids from private contractors.

We are ready to start work, but can't move ahead without funds, says mayor

KMC's senior director for co-ordination Masood Alam said the process of inviting tenders was likely to be initiated on April 24. "But the process will be initiated only after we get funds." The sources, however, said that the provincial government was still dragging its feet on releasing Rs500 million to the KMC despite the fact that the chief secretary had assured on April 17 the Supreme Court-mandated judicial commission on water and sanitation that the funds would be released within two days.

Mayor Wasim Akhtar told Dawn that he had learnt that the chief minister had approved the summary, but funds had not been released till today.

"We are ready to start work on the cleaning of drains, but can't move ahead without funds", he said.

The KMC has identified 26 storm-water drains as in very poor condition, needing de-silting before the wet weather. These drains included Frere Nullah (Clifton Nullah), Manzoor Colony Nullah, Mehmoodabad Nullah, Korangi Nullah, Nehr-i-Khayyam, Hub River Road Nullah and Shershah Nullah.

Sources said the KMC had worked out a procurement mechanism for cleaning and de-silting storm drains and requested the provincial government in February to allocate funds for the purpose.

They said the provincial authorities had been informed that no work on the cleaning of drains had been carried out since December 2013 and most of the storm-water drains were in a poor condition.

The sources said the KMC had asked for Rs500m each for cleaning of drains and repair of machinery. However, the provincial government approved only Rs500m for cleaning of drains, they said.

KMC insiders said that there were about 200 articles of heavy gear and machinery such as trucks, dumpers, loaders in the corporation which it had used in 2009 and 2010. They said only 40 vehicles were in running condition, while the rest of them were ruined and rusted.

The KMC's senior director said that there were over 500 small and big drains in the city and 30 of them discharged water directly into the sea.

"But, unfortunately, over time these drains have been heavily encroached upon, leaving no space for de-silting machinery to operate," he said.

He added the KMC had already started its work and engineers of the respective storm-water drains had been asked to assess the quantum of work and make bill of quantities within three days. "The

tenders will be invited through the press as and when we get funds from the provincial authorities,” he said.

However, the sources said that there was a lengthy and cumbersome procedure of formalities for procurement under the Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and if the KMC went by the rules, it would be able to issue work orders to contractors not before mid-July.

They said the deadline for cleaning the storm-water drains could be met only if the process was initiated on an emergent basis without going through the procedure.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1403038>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM APRIL 9TH TO APRIL 15TH 2018

WORKSHOP ON ‘REVAMPING OF FOREST DEPT’ HELD

Business Recorder, 11 April 2018

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Forestry and Wildlife & Fisheries Yawar Zaman has stressed the need for running a robust programme to address the environmental problems and ensure progress of forestry, wildlife and fisheries sector.

He was speaking at a one-day workshop organised by the Punjab Forest Department on ‘Revamping of Forest Department’ which is aimed at revolutionizing the forest department and mainstreaming its development for the growth and prosperity of Punjab province.

Mian Waheed-ud-Din, Secretary Forestry Wildlife & Fisheries department; Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, Country Representative, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Pakistan; deputy secretaries, chief conservators, district forest officers, and especially the retired officers of the forest department also participated in it.

Since there is a room for improvement in every department, the current government strives to improve the lives of local populace and making necessary changes in the rules and regulations of various departments to meet peoples’ requirements.

The responsibilities of Punjab Forest Department include sustainable management of natural forests, increasing and subsequently improving the forest cover, protecting the land and allocated water resources, improvement in rangelands and provision of sustainable source of wood to meet national wood requirements, conservation of wildlife and improvement in fisheries production.

The Minister hoped this workshop will play an important role in devising such a robust programme, especially with regards to revamping department’s administrative structure, the upcoming provincial forest policy, ways to achieving maximum results and mobilizing media for raising forestry awareness among masses.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/04/11/10-page/709976-news.html>

JUDICIAL COMMISSION DIRECTS FOCAL PERSON TO COORDINATE BETWEEN  
AGENCIES

The Express Tribune, 11 April 2018

The judicial commission on water and sanitation directed on Tuesday its focal person, Syed Ali Hyder Shah, to facilitate the Karachi mayor and civic agencies in devising a plan to clean the storm water drains in the metropolis.

Justice (retd) Amir Hani Muslim, the head of the Supreme Court-appointed judicial commission gave this directive on Tuesday after summoning the heads of civic bodies over the issue of removal of electricity and phone cables, and gas and sewerage pipes from storm water drains as they were obstructing the cleaning work.

During Tuesday's proceedings, Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board Managing Director Muhammad Khalid Shaikh, National Telecommunication Corporation Director Shahid Hussain, Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) Acting Managing-Director Amin Rajput, SSGC Senior General Manager Distribution Saeed Larik and K-Electric Chief Distribution Officer Amir Zia appeared before the commission.

The senior officials of utility organisations undertook before the commission that they would coordinate with the mayor who had identified the places from where the electricity wiring, gas lines, phone cables or sewerage pipes were to be removed.

The commission directed that Shah, who is also the secretary of provincial services and general administration department's training management and research wing, would be the coordinator, between the mayor and other officers in facilitating the cleaning of storm water drains in Karachi.

A day earlier, the commission had appointed Shah as its focal person to resolve the water and sewerage related issues in the city.

The chief secretary informed the commission that some time was required to revisit the issue of executing schemes on two storm water drains – Gujjar Nullah and Mehmoodabad Nullah - and to see if those schemes needed to be handed over back to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) for execution.

The commission adjourned hearing on the matter till April 16.

The Ghotki Municipal Committee chairperson and chief municipal officer appeared before the commission and informed it that in future they would attend the meetings of the Ghotki deputy commissioner.

Justice (retd) Muslim directed the task force chairperson to examine the issue of salaries and other directives issued by the commission its visit to Ghotki.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1682328/1-judicial-commission-directs-focal-person-coordinate-agencies/>

**POOR QUALITY FUEL, COAL-BASED PLANTS SEEN AS KEY CAUSES OF AIR POLLUTION IN CITY**

Dawn, April 12th, 2018

Faiza Ilyas

KARACHI: The long absence of a mass transit system in Karachi and use of poor quality fuel are major factors behind the city's highly degraded air. What has added to the environmental disaster is the government decision to allow operation of a number of coal-based projects with little checks.

These points were raised by experts at a seminar on pollution-free transport organised by the National Forum for Environment and Health, a non-governmental organisation, at a hotel here on Wednesday.

Giving a presentation on the subject, Dr Mohammed Raza Mehdi, a professor and co-chair at the department of urban and infrastructure engineering, NED University of Engineering and Technology, referred to the World Health Organisation's data according to which polluted air caused around 865,000 premature deaths every year and emissions from transport were a major factor degrading air quality.

"It is high time that public awareness is created on transport emissions. The situation has reached a point that suggests that doing nothing is no longer an option," he said.

According to him, traffic problems in developing countries such as Pakistan are different from what is experienced in the developed world.

"Apart from the fact that we lack traffic discipline and compliance [with] the law, not all of our oil refineries have the capacity to develop a fuel according to the European specifications," he said, adding that Pakistan's transportation largely consisted of buses and trucks being run on diesel, causing air pollution.

Pointing out some other transport problems causing air pollution, Dr Mehdi said that unlike Western and some African countries where goods were transported by railway, an eco-friendly system, around 90 per cent cargo in Pakistan was transported through roads that not only destroyed the network and led to traffic congestion, but also degraded air.

Data suggested that carbon emissions had steadily increased in Pakistan and there was a dire need that a system was developed to monitor these hazardous emissions.

He recommended improvement in fuel quality and ensuring fitness of vehicles as important measures to check air pollution.

"The government needs to properly implement relevant laws relating to registration, licensing as well as fitness of vehicles. In addition, awareness should be created about the hazards of air pollution and how people could play their role in this regard," he said, warning that Pakistan would have to face huge economic challenges if nothing was done about increasing air pollution.

Transport operators, he suggested, should be given representation on the National Highway Authority's executive board as they were not satisfied with its services.

In the end of his presentation, he shared results of a study conducted on diesel-based passenger transport in Karachi that showed that nitrogen oxide acquired the highest concentration among all greenhouse gases discharged from these vehicles.

‘Forty people for one seat’

Saquib Ejaz Hussain, an air quality expert, highlighted the challenges posed by poor air quality across the country and how provincial governments had turned a blind eye to the problem.

“Only the Balochistan Environmental Protection Agency has submitted a reply to the notice the Supreme Court had sent to all provincial governments over air quality,” he said, adding that tests had shown that indoor pollution was much more serious than outdoor pollution at some places in the country that had no standards on indoor pollution.

According to him, only two detailed studies had been conducted on Pakistan’s air quality so far. The last one was in 2005-06, which showed that the concentration of extremely hazardous pollutants was much higher than the WHO permissible limits in Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Peshawar and Quetta.

On Karachi, he said that an absolute failure on part of the government to bring about a mass transit system and develop the fast-growing city according to a master plan had led to what he described as a “collapsed state of the city”.

“From 2005 to 2015, 50pc of city’s area has been used for infrastructural development constituting largely high-rises. And, regrettably, this process continues as we see new big residential and commercial projects within and around the city’s limits,” he said.

The 14-kilometre-long coastal belt of Karachi, Mr Hussain said, had been declared a high-density zone that means development of more high-rise buildings.

Speaking about Karachi’s transport woes, he said there had been an exponential increase in vehicle ownership in recent years as public transport had almost vanished from the roads and it was estimated a few years ago that 40 people compete for one seat in the public transport of Karachi.

One solution to the transport problem, he said, was revival of the Karachi Circular Railway for which the Japan International Cooperation Agency had extended full financial support but asked for land to settle and rehabilitate displaced persons.

“But the government refused,” he said, referring to government decisions which degraded environmental conditions, including commercialisation of 26 city roads, declaring Block 1 and Block 2 of Clifton as high-density zones and allowing the establishment of coal yards near residential areas.

“We can’t meet air standards even at night and that’s because we have allowed this practice of burning municipal waste,” he informed the audience, citing recent data from the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency that showed high concentration of hazardous air pollutants in city’s air.

Assistant commissioner Sara Javed, representing the DC South office, underlined the need for inculcating a sense of responsibility in individuals and communities.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1401021/poor-quality-fuel-coal-based-plants-seen-as-key-causes-of-air-pollution-in-city>



## CURBING AIR POLLUTION

The Express Tribune, 13 April 2018

More than 12 years have passed since Pakistan last measured the quality of air in its largest cities. And while the results were found to be downright disturbing, there is no reason to suspect that transport emissions may have improved since then. Convinced that such emissions have grown exponentially worse with each passing year, environmental experts are at a loss to explain why no new study has been undertaken. Karachi, the country's largest city, has been at the thick end of the environmental stick. The quality of air in Karachi is highly degraded due to several major factors, including the substandard quality of fuel.

The fact that it has no mass transit scheme in place only exacerbates the problem. Diesel-run buses and trucks are the backbone of our country's transportation and are a major cause of air pollution. Far greater environmental risks lie ahead though. The government is resolute in its decision to allow operation of a number of coal-based projects.

Unlike many other countries that rely on the more environmentally-friendly rail sector, the bulk of Pakistan's cargo is transported by road — posing a threat to the network's sustainability and contributing to overall traffic congestion. If ways are not found to tackle air pollution soon, Pakistan will have to contend with stiff economic challenges.

There are a few measures that are of critical importance such as cutting back on the use of fossil fuels because this would help to reduce emission of particulate matter and lessen carbon and nitrogen emissions from vehicle exhaust.

Collaborative efforts, as well as long-term commitment, are needed to reduce emissions that contribute to poor air quality. Communities, industries, businessmen all need to do their part in pushing for a healthier and a more sustainable environment. Such efforts have the potential of bringing about a stark improvement in the overall health of the planet.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1684066/6-curbng-air-pollution/>

## SC WANTS CITY DRAINS, SEWERS CLEANED BEFORE MONSOON

Dawn, April 15th, 2018

Tahir Siddiqui

**KARACHI:** The Supreme Court on Saturday directed the authorities to clean sewers and storm-water drains across the city before the first spell of monsoon and submit a compliance report.

Headed by Justice Faisal Arab, a two-judge bench was hearing a petition on supply of potable water and provision of proper sanitation facilities across the province at the Karachi Registry of the apex court.

At the outset of the hearing, an additional advocate general of Sindh informed the judges that steps, including cleaning of sewers and storm-water drains, had been initiated on the directive of the apex court-mandated water commission.

“It’s shameful that work has just started”, Justice Arab said, adding that the authorities should have started work on their own.

The judges also remarked that the monsoon season was upon us and asked when the authorities would complete the work.

Justice Arab said that clean water was a basic necessity of life and the people should be provided with it.

Petitioner Advocate Shahab Usto informed the judges that there were 30 big and 500 small drains in the city and four big drains at Korangi, Chakra Goth, Mehmoodabad and Manzoor Colony were being cleaned.

Four of the 30 big and 500 small drains are being cleaned, court told

He submitted that the provincial government was allocating Rs500 million for cleaning drains across the city.

The bench directed the authorities to complete the task of cleaning of drains, and put off the hearing to May 5.

Meanwhile, the two-judge bench of the apex court extended its restraining order on the merger of Sindh Bank and Summit Bank till further orders and put off the hearing to May 5.

Justice Arab remarked that the Chief Justice of Pakistan, who had taken suo motu action against the merger, would decide the case himself.

Governor of State Bank of Pakistan Jamil Ahmed appeared before the bench on a court notice and informed the judges that the SBP had no objection to the merger of the two banks. He submitted that the SBP was monitoring the proposed merger of the banks in accordance with the rules.

Justice Arab remarked that Summit Bank had incurred losses and asked if its merger would not have any adverse effects on Sindh Bank.

On court’s query, the director of Sindh Bank informed the judges that the employees of Summit Bank would be paid salaries by Sindh Bank for one year and after that they could seek a new contract or job.

He said that the merger would not have any negative effects on Sindh Bank as the bank branches and foreign exchange would increase in the wake of merger.

The representative of Summit Bank informed the judges that the proceedings of merger of the two banks were still at an initial stage.

The court directed the respondents to file a report regarding the proceeding of merger of the banks, and put off the matter to May 5.

The proposed merger of Sindh Bank with Summit Bank faced a setback after Supreme Court's suo motu intervention over alleged irregularities.

A note from the Supreme Court registrar office — which forms the basis for suo motu notice — stated that Summit Bank was formed via the amalgamation of Atlas Bank, Arif Habib Bank and MyBank and according to regulations of the central bank, it was compulsory for all banks to have a paid-up capital of Rs10 billion.

The note also said: “Summit Bank has failed to comply with such requirement for years and, on the contrary, the capital has been raised fraudulently by misusing depositors' money against shell companies and fake grower loans through sugar mills and power project in Nooriabad, Sindh.”

The registrar note also highlighted that Sindh Bank was a government-owned entity and its merger or takeover of a loss-incurring entity would cause a loss to the national exchequer.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1401601>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM APRIL 1ST TO APRIL 8TH 2018  
'PESHAWAR BUS PROJECT CAUSING HIGH AIR POLLUTION LEVELS'  
Dawn, April 1st, 2018

Zulfiqar Ali

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) has neglected an environmental management plan designed for the ongoing Bus Rapid Transit project and thus, causing high concentration of particulate matter (pm10) and heavy dust in the air, claim officials of the provincial Environmental Protection Agency.

With the execution of multibillion rupees Peshawar Sustainable Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Project, not only air quality deteriorated in areas along the route but a layer of thick dust has also engulfed other localities.

The pm10, a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets floating in the air, has breached the benchmark of the National Environmental Quality Standard (NEQS) due to the overlooking of guidelines envisaged in the project's environmental management plan.

EPA officials blame situation on PDA's failure to follow environmental plan

An independent environmental monitoring firm that investigated the impact on ambient air quality along the bus route in Peshawar has revealed in its report that the maximum concentration of PM10 in the air reached up to 193ug/m<sup>3</sup> at Reach-I (from Chamkani from Firdos) against 150 ug/m<sup>3</sup> permissible limit of the NEQS.

The presence of pm10 at two different locations on Reach-II (from Firdos to Hayat Avenue) was 177.1 and 184.1ug/m<sup>3</sup>. The report didn't contain the pm10 data of Reach-III (from Hayat Avenue to Hayatabad), which is considered the worst affected part of the BRT project.

It, however, said other indicators of environment along the BRT route including noise pollution, presence of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), nitric oxide (NO), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and carbon monoxide (CO) were almost within the permissible limits that surprised officials of the EPA.

“This is unbelievable that other indicators, particularly the level of noise, are within the range of NEQS,” said one official of the EPA, who is monitoring environment-related matters of the BRT project.

He said the firm conducted the study in the absence of EPA staff members, which was a violation of the terms of reference.

The EPA officials held the PDA, the project’s executing agency, responsible for the deteriorating quality of air, especially heavy dust that blanketed the entire city.

They said the PDA was warned several times to adopt proper mitigation measures to protect ambient air quality and ambient noise.

EPA director general Israrul Haq was not available for comments.

“Despite warnings, the PDA does not comply with the environmental management plan and the EPA will approach the environmental tribunal for the implementation of the EMP,” said the official.

The BRT’s 433-page environmental impact assessment report presented to the Asian Development Bank by the PDA carries all guidelines and mitigation plan for the protection of ambient air quality, ambient noise, quality of water, traffic management plan, heritage etc.

Main guidelines of the EMP are that water will be sprinkled daily at all construction sites to suppress dust emissions and all heavy equipment and machinery shall be fitted in full compliance with the national and local regulations.

Stockpiled soil and sand shall be slightly wetted before loading, particularly in windy conditions. Fuel-efficient and well maintained haulage trucks shall be employed to minimise exhaust emissions. The vehicles transporting soil, sand and other construction materials shall be covered with tarpaulin.

For controlling noise, the plan said the excessive noise emitting equipment will not be allowed to operate and will be replaced. The blowing of horns will be prohibited on access roads to sites. Construction equipment, which generates excessive noise, shall be enclosed or fitted with effective silencing apparatus to minimise noise. The well-maintained haulage trucks will be used with speed controls.

The contractor shall take adequate measures to minimise noise nuisance in the vicinity of construction site by way of adopting available acoustic methods to remain within NEQS limits.

Officials in the EPA said the guidelines were not followed and therefore, heavy dust, increase in pm<sub>10</sub> and noise.

They added that there were major hospitals, educational institutions and residential areas in the Reach-II and Reach-III along the route, which have been badly affected by the dust and noise pollution.

“Mechanism of sprinkling water along the project route is not an effective measure. The EPA has repeatedly asked the executing agency to carry out proper showering of the site to minimise the adverse impacts of construction activities on the people,” said an official.

He said the faulty water showering system created slush on the roads that also spread to the feeder roads too.

The official pointed out that another reason of excessive dust in the air was that debris and earth were collected only through loaders while EPA had directed PDA and contractors to use manual methods to properly dispose of debris from the site.

He said there was no fabrication or other related measures to contain or minimise dust and noise pollution. Instead of fabrication the authority had fixed only traffic ribbon and construction sites had not been covered.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1398807>

#### EXPERTS POINT OUT FLAWS IN GOVT STRATEGY TO CURB PLASTIC POLLUTION

Dawn, April 3rd, 2018

**KARACHI:** Simply slapping a ban on polythene bags will have little impact on their mass use unless the government creates awareness of their hazards and provides the people with inexpensive, reusable environment-friendly alternatives.

Moreover, the management of plastic refuse is only a part of a bigger problem — the absence of an efficient waste collection and management system across the province. The first step towards the solution to the problem lies in segregating waste at source, a strategy successfully adopted by many countries.

These points were raised by experts Dawn spoke to on the recent government ban on polythene bags that includes all kinds of (non-biodegradable) lightweight plastic material used for packaging, wrapping etc.

They also questioned the need for a notification on the ban given the fact that rules on prohibition of non-degradable plastic had existed since 2014 as part of the Sindh Environmental Protection Act.

The March 21 notification of the government said: “In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 144 (I) CrPC, the government, do hereby impose a complete ban on manufacture/sale/purchase of non-biodegradable polythene bags/plastic products in Sindh with immediate effect till further orders.”

Stress segregating waste at source, refuse management, recycling and enforcement of laws

According to the notification, the ban has been imposed to avoid environmental pollution, choking of drains and to minimise health risks to citizens associated with use of these non-biodegradable

polythene bags and plastic products or any other material “in contravention of Sindh Prohibition of Non-degradable Plastic Products (Manufacturing, Sale and Usage) Rules, 2014 and the Sindh Environmental Protection Act, 2014.”

Apart from the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa), it authorises the SHO/police station concerned to register complaints under Section 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code against violators.

Studies have found that plastic harms the environment and all forms of life in numerous ways. The long list of plastic’s harmful impact on the environment includes release of toxic chemical/s both into the air and the soil, if it is burnt or it remains buried in the soil.

It can also seep into the ground and mix with groundwater, making water unhealthy both for humans and agriculture. It may also cause death of marine life.

Internationally, there is a difference of opinion over how environmentally safe biodegradable plastic carrier bags are. Many believe that though they do not last as long as non-biodegradable plastic bags do, they still do not present a clear improvement.

Sharing his opinion on the ban, Dr Moazzam Ali Khan of Karachi University’s Institute of Environmental Studies, pointed out that the government needed to look at the bigger picture to effectively address the problem of plastic refuse, which constituted around 13 per cent of the 60pc recyclable waste.

“Unfortunately, we neither have a uniform system for waste collection nor waste disposal. A large quantity of refuse generated in the city daily is not picked up at all by civic agencies and remains in the city, causing environmental pollution,” he said.

According to him, an absolute rejection of plastic carrier bags is neither possible nor a solution as they are used for waste segregation and collection. “While we must cut down on their massive use and find environment-friendly alternatives, there is a need to focus on refuse management and recycling industry.”

The first step, he said, should be containment of the waste through its segregation at source. Municipalities in many countries used colour-coded plastic container system for segregating waste and its collection.

“The segregated waste is handled and treated separately. In our case, however, the entire waste, including the highly infectious medical waste constituting around 25pc of the total waste, is thrown out in the street.”

This hazardous practice, Dr Khan pointed out, turned the entire waste infectious. “This practice not only poses a serious threat to public health at large but directly puts health and safety of hundreds of waste pickers at grave risk.”

Trash, he said, often remained at garbage dumps for at least a day before it was picked up by civic agencies, increasing public health risks.

Dr Khan also raised concern over the open burning of garbage, a routine practice in many areas. “People are generally unaware of how polluted air is damaging our health. They should intervene if they see someone doing this in their neighbourhoods and the government should also play its role by taking up such cases.”

Seconding his opinion, Dr Atif Mustafa, associated with NED University of Engineering and Technology as an environmental engineer, said public awareness of plastic hazards was the key to the solution.

“Apparently, there is a government ban on using polythene bags but you can see every one of us is using them. What we desperately need is awareness of the issue and providing people with economical, reusable environment-friendly alternatives,” he said.

According to him, biodegradable plastic carrier bags are being manufactured and used at a very limited scale in the city. “It raises their cost. I think one strategy to discourage the use of polythene bags is to start charging consumers for them. Right now, they are almost free.”

Dr Mustafa also referred to his study conducted in the Jacob Lines area which showed that segregation of waste and its proper collection was possible with community’s cooperation.

“Segregation of waste at source makes collection and recycling easier and reduces transportation cost as well as carbon footprint,” he said.

Zubair Ahmed Abro, a senior environmental lawyer, said the government did not need to issue a notification on the ban since detailed rules on this subject already existed.

“The government only needs to strengthen Sepa to enforce the existing rules and regulations instead of giving powers to the police where there is always a chance of misuse.”

He explained that Section 188 of the PPC dealt with disobedience to an order promulgated by a public servant, and the punishment was one month and a fine up to Rs600.

Asked about their role and actions, Sepa officials in a written reply to Dawn’s queries stated that they “have been relentlessly pursuing stakeholders to adopt the technology for manufacturing biodegradable plastic products for the last three years and have issued numerous notices to solicit support of the industry.”

Three companies, Sepa officials said, had been issued licences to sell their oxo-biodegradable additive in Sindh whereas three companies had already adopted this technology.

“Efforts are under way to bring other major sectors like sugar, cement, textile, hospitals etc into following the law and enforce it on small shopkeepers as well.”

According to Sepa data, 20 million kilograms of “flexible plastic has been converted into biodegradable plastic from 2014 to 2016 whereas last year 97,940kg of flexible plastic was converted into biodegradable plastic.”

The department also plans to launch a mass awareness campaign on the hazards of plastic.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1399181>

## FPCCI UNDERSCORES NEED FOR DUTY-FREE COAL IMPORT

Business Recorder, 3 April 2018

KARACHI: Senior vice president of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Syed Mazhar Ali Nasir has urged Miftah Ismail, adviser to the Prime Minister on Revenue and Economic Affairs and Federal Commerce Muhammad Pervaiz Malik, to withdraw the 5% import duty on coal and allow its duty-free imports to make coal-fired electricity production viable.

He said it would help save the huge investment made in the coal-based power projects. He said that 14% rise in C&F price of imported coal during the last nine months has created problems for coal-based electricity projects.

He said recent devaluation of Pak rupee against US dollar by more than 10% has further eroded the competitive edge of production of electricity through imported coal. He said all this has rendered the industry on the verge of collapse.

“Resultantly, the industry will have no option but either to return to national grid that will exert unbearable load on WAPDA or may cause shutdown of the industry for economic reasons,” he said.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/04/03/5-page/708473-news.html>

## COURT DIRECTS EPA TO MONITOR POLLUTION ON BRT ROUTE

Dawn, April 4th, 2018

PESHAWAR: A Peshawar High Court bench on Tuesday directed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct monitoring visits twice a day of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project for ensuring that mitigating steps are taken so that the particulate level in the air should remain in the permissible limits.

The bench comprising Chief Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Syed Afsar Shah also directed the Peshawar Development Authority’s director general, Israrul Haq, to increase water sprinkling along the route of the BRT project so as to mitigate dust pollution.

The PDA DG informed the bench that major work on the project had already been completed and the citizens had to face hardships more only for over a week.

He stated that they had been keeping a close eye on the environmental aspect of the project and had been regularly sprinkling water so as to reduce the concentration of dust in the air.

PDA ordered to increase sprinkling of water at project sites

He stated that asphaltting had been carried out on different main roads along the route of the project due to which water could not be sprinkled there.



He added that people would face problems for a few more days as before asphalt dust had to be removed through pressure machines due to which the level of dust particles increased for some time as they had no other option.

He also submitted a report to the court wherein it was mentioned that as per environmental monitoring that had been conducted during the environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the project, the PM (particulate matter) levels were already high way before initiation of the construction activities of the BRT project.

The report states that the second monitoring in the project area in second week of March were found well within the NEQS (National Environment Quality Standard).

The high court had on Dec 7 declared in accordance with law the BRT Project of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

The court had disposed of two writ petitions challenging the BRT project on multiple grounds, with certain observations and directives given to the relevant officials including the KP inspector general of police and EPA's DG.

One of the two writ petitions were filed jointly by a former provincial minister Amanullah Haqqani and a citizen, Wali Khan, whereas the other one was filed by an environmentalist, Abid Zareef.

The court had ordered that progress reports should be submitted by the PDA, EPA and other departments concerned to the Human Rights Cell of the high court.

From time to time the court has been conducting hearing regarding the environmental aspects of the Peshawar Sustainable Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Project commonly known as BRT.

The senior superintendent of police (traffic), Yasir Afridi, informed the bench that the traffic police had been vigilant on all the routes in the project area and had been making efforts so as to mitigate traffic problems originating due to the ongoing construction work.

An assistant director of EPA submitted its report wherein it was mentioned that the timings of water sprinkling had been publicised and displayed at different points including the names and phone numbers of the drivers of water tankers.

The bench directed the official that they should conduct monitoring visits twice a day of different sites in the project. The bench observed that EPA was the monitoring agency for looking into the environmental aspect of the project.

The in charge of military police, Peshawar Cantonment, Major Usman Ghani informed that in past they were facing problems of increase in dust but now due to regular sprinkling of water that problem had been overcome to a great extent.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1399435/court-directs-epa-to-monitor-pollution-on-brt-route>

STEPS AGAINST PLASTIC POLLUTION

Dawn, April 4th, 2018

Rafia Zakaria

ABOUT two years ago, a groundbreaking initiative was launched in Morocco. Called Zero Mika, the initiative announced a ban on plastic bags. The ban did not apply to all plastic bags. Those used to gather household trash and agricultural and industrial products, as well as isothermal bags for maintaining medicine and other medical supplies at certain temperatures, were exempted from the ban.

The ban did, however, apply to the largest contributor of plastic bag pollution — bags used for carrying groceries and other purchased items. In short, bags that are easily and unthinkingly discarded on the streets.

The Zero Mika (zero plastic) law implemented by Morocco aims to reduce the polluting effects of the many tonnes of plastic bags that are produced every year. According to reports, Morocco has seized 420 tonnes of plastic bags since the implementation of the ban.

In choosing to take active steps against plastic pollution, Morocco and other countries that have implemented plastic bag bans have chosen to be part of the solution rather than the problem. Few people, including many reading this article today, realise that an average single-use plastic bag takes 1,000 years to decompose.

We are temporary beings but the filth we produce will last almost forever.

Given that human beings have produced 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic so far, and continue to do so at distressingly fast rates, the time may soon come when the plastic we create begins to crowd out life itself.

There is evidence of this in the oceans. Seabirds like gulls and others along with sea mammals like seals, turtles and dolphins routinely get tangled in plastic bags and choke. Marine turtles, once the pride and delight of beachgoers in Karachi, cannot distinguish between jellyfish which they eat, and plastic bags which kill them. The result: the ever-dwindling numbers of marine life on the plastic-polluted shores of the Arabian Sea.

Fish ingest plastic too and the cancerous effects of humans eating marine creatures that have consumed plastic will likely become apparent in the next few years as the incidence of cancer and other pollutant-related ailments increases even more.

The amount of plastic dumped in the ocean is reaching such staggering levels that there are actually three 'islands' made of plastic waste in the Pacific Ocean. They aren't going away for hundreds and hundreds of years, long after the humans who used them for the sake of convenience, without a thought to the larger impact of non-biodegradable plastics, are dead. We are temporary beings but the filth we produce will last almost forever.

Pakistanis, most of whom do not live by the sea, find it hard to care for the health of the oceans that they may never have seen, let alone the fate of generations to come.

At the same time, one can only hope that they may be convinced to care for what they see. A cursory glance at any part of Pakistan is guaranteed to reveal the ugly spectre of a plastic bag or several plastic

bags either hanging from phone and electric wires, waving merrily from rubbish heaps and clogging gutters, or simply blowing around in the wind in a street or alley.

The bags are everywhere, and the rich and poor and concerned and completely thoughtless can all see for themselves just how horribly they transform the environment. If civic concern cannot galvanise them into action, perhaps a concern for the fact that nearly every view in every part of the country has been tainted by the plastic bag can bring about some action.

This is the reason why the example of Morocco is particularly pertinent. Unlike in Balochistan, which supposedly already announced such a ban, but whose enforcement seems lax if not non-existent, and the Sindh government, which had also announced such a ban but has since forgotten about it, Morocco has actually devoted resources to ensuring that it remains one.

It is not that the country has not faced a struggle in the form of a black market in which plastic bags are sold illegally, following the legislation that was passed with fines imposed on violators. The main point is that the bags are banned and their numbers are being drastically reduced since the time before the ban. That in itself is a victory.

Others are following suit. The Indian state of Maharashtra, whose coastline also borders the Arabian Sea, fed up with watching debris pile up on the beaches and in drains and city streets, has imposed a ban on all plastic goods. The ban imposed by the state government lays out exemptions for items such as garbage bags, packing for processed goods, milk pouches, medical supplies and other essential items. The use of plastic for any other purpose, given the thoughtless convenience of not having to use an alternative, will not be allowed.

Early reports showed an eagerness to comply; vegetable and fruit sellers on the streets of Mumbai had put up small handmade signs asking people to please bring bags from home, as they were no longer permitted to provide them.

There was, of course, a time in South Asia before the plastic bag became ubiquitous, a time when jute and cane baskets and rope bags or reusable plastic baskets were used to transport things. Unlike the Western world, admittedly the largest producer of plastic waste, Pakistanis only have to remember old habits, not necessarily learn new skills.

If the plight of the seagulls and the fish and the birds doesn't move you, then just look outside, up and down and around. Wouldn't it be simply wonderful, completely amazing, to never ever have to see the black and blue and striped shreds of plastic as the backdrop to every moment, every scene and every site?

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1399496/steps-against-plastic-pollution>

USE OF NON-DEGRADABLE PLASTIC PRODUCT BANNED IN SINDH  
The Express Tribune, 7 April, 2018

KARACHI: Sindh government has banned use of non-degradable plastic product for being dangerous to environment and human life.

Citing the section 14 of sub-section 3 of Sindh Environmental Protection Act 2014, it said “no person shall import, manufacture, stockpile, trade, supply, distribute or sale any scheduled plastic, which is non-degradable.”

It said that after the devolution of powers to provinces following the 18th Constitutional Amendment, Sindh Assembly carried out a legislation “The Sindh Environmental Protection (SEP) Act 2014,” to impose a ban on use of said dangerous product and its all forms’ availability. It said use of non-degradable plastic product is dangerous for human health and life. The makers, sellers, distributors, retailers, and shopkeepers should know use of non-degradable plastic products were banned in accordance with SEPA 2014 and Sindh prohibition of non-degradable plastic product (Manufacturing, Sales & Usage) Rules 2014.

Sindh government said “scheduled plastic products must be Oxo-biodegradable and pro-degradant use must be approved by the agency or any other department or agency and in such manner as prescribed.” It advised the public to never use non-degradable plastic bags since they are dangerous to the environment and human life. In case of a failure to comply with the SEP Act 2014 and its rules, the manufactures, sellers, distributors, retailers and shopkeepers would face a punishment with a fine and imprisonment for a term that may extend up to three years, the government warned.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/04/07/3-page/709216-news.html>

## May 2018

### *NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM MAY 14TH TO MAY 20TH 2018*

#### *DESPITE HEAPS OF GARBAGE ACROSS CITY, SOLID WASTE BUDGET SLASHED*

The Express Tribune, May 14, 2018

Oonib Azam

A total of Rs1.7 billion has been allocated to the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) for development expenditures in the 2018-19 fiscal year. In 2017-18 it was allotted Rs2.9 billion.

However, despite this allocation, the residents of Karachi have yet to see the SSWMB functioning at its full capacity. The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Bill, 2014 was passed by the Sindh Assembly in February 2014.

However, the board has yet to start its functions in the entire port city. The fate of the board, however, still hangs in the balance as the Sindh High Court has yet to rule on a petition challenging its establishment.

Ever since its establishment, the board has been subjected to ‘power politics’. The Pakistan Peoples Party-led Sindh government wants to keep the board under its control, while the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-led city government is of opinion that the local government should be responsible for all functions assigned to SSWMB.

Currently, the board is operational in districts South, East and Malir.

Two new waste management projects in Karachi and Shaheed Benazirabad that were included in the budget for fiscal year 2016-17 have yet to see the light of the day.

The new additions to the schemes were development and scientific improvement of two existing landfill sites in Karachi. This scheme was allocated Rs275 million back in 2016.

In 2017-18, Rs605 million was allocated for this scheme and this year Rs580 million has been allocated. The other scheme, the integration of the SSWMB project in Shaheed Benazirabad, was allocated Rs100 million in 2016-17. For 2017-18 Rs183 million was allocated and the same amount has been allocated in the upcoming fiscal year.

Apart from these schemes, the establishment of six Garbage Transfer Stations (GTSs) with Material Recovery (MR) and Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) facilities in Karachi is a scheme being reflected for years in the budget with no work to show on ground. An official of the SSWMB told The Express Tribune that the six modern GTS and two sanitary landfill sites in Karachi would be functional by the next financial year.

He explained that in December 2017, fresh international tenders were issued for these projects as their cost was above Rs1 billion. Then Transparency International objected to their tender and said that since these will be first-of-their-kind projects in Pakistan, the board must hire a consultant who must prepare a design for these projects, he said.

The official said that, later, due to frequent transfer and postings in the board, they were unable to issue tenders for the consultancy. "Now the tender documents have been prepared and the consultant will be hired by the first week of June," he said, adding that by July 15, they will issue international tenders for the projects again.

Last year, a new scheme was introduced. The establishment of new land fill site for Karachi at Dhabeji was allocated Rs500 million and it has an estimated cost of Rs2 billion. The project was expected to be completed by June 2019 but no work has been initiated as of now.

However, this year the project was wiped off the budget books and in its place a feasibility study for the establishment of a new landfill site for Karachi at Dhabeji has been added. For this project, Rs35.7 million has been allocated with an estimated cost of Rs43.7million.

The board's executive director of finance, Asjad Mehmood, said that they have obtained 500 acres of land in Dhabeji for this project. "It will be the country's largest landfill site," he said, adding that once the planning commission approves this project, they would issue its tenders.

During his budget speech, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said that Sindh is densely populated and the most urbanised province of the country with 24% of the country's population. The trend of urbanisation and growing population put constant pressure on water supply, sewage effluent disposal and solid waste management services.

According to the provisional census report of 2017, the population of Sindh is 47.89 million. The estimated demand of drinking water is 1,538 mega gallons per day and the waste water generation is estimated at 1,076.6 mega gallons per day at 70% of water supplied.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1709311/1-despite-heaps-garbage-across-city-solid-waste-budget-slashed/>

## COMMISSION DISPLEASED WITH DHA, CANTONMENT BOARDS' PERFORMANCE IN KARACHI

The Express Tribune, May 16, 2018

### KARACHI:

Taking notice of the perpetual pollution of the recreational beach, Sea View, the water commission has put the defence secretary on notice.

Justice (ret'd) Amir Hani Muslim, who heads the Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation, in his order after Tuesday's hearing in Karachi, held the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC) responsible for the pollution.

During the hearing, Dr Ghulam Murtaza, a senior research officer of the Pakistan Council of Research on Water Resources, and the DHA submitted their separate reports. The commission's head described the former report, based on examination of water samples collected from different locations along the Sea View, as 'alarming' and the latter as 'evasive'.

"The DHA and cantonment boards in Karachi have made the lives of the visitors going to Sea View miserable." The commission noted that the restaurants at Sea View and Do Darya drain sewage in the sea and that there is no mechanism for collection of solid waste either.

Justice (ret'd) Muslim observed that the DHA has filed an evasive report, while no official from the authority appeared before the commission, except its counsel, Advocate Shahid Hussain. But even the counsel failed to respond to the commission's queries, it added.

"... the officials of DHA have failed to come forward to provide any assistance and cantonment board is shifting responsibility on DHA," Justice (ret'd) Muslim observed. "... the commission is constrained to issue notice to the defence secretary to appear in person and justify as to how these agencies [DHA and CBC], which are under administrative control of the Ministry of Defence, can play with the lives of the citizens under their laws in defiance of the Constitution."

Additional Attorney-General Salman Talibuddin briefed that the DHA is a development agency and, hence, it is its responsibility to construct the infrastructure for sewage treatment. The cantonment board operates the developed infrastructure and manages the municipal responsibilities, he added. He said that the DHA and CBC have been giving contradictory stances.

The commission directed Dr Murtaza to re-collect the samples for an updated examination from different locations along Sea View and to submit the report at the next hearing. He will be accompanied by a senior officer of the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency.

The commission asked the defence secretary to explain to the commission which law permitted the civic agencies to release untreated sewage into the sea, which is injurious to human health and hazardous to marine life.

"If the secretary fails to appear, the commission will file a reference to the Supreme Court to take appropriate action against those who have defeated the directives of the commission."

The defence secretary will have to give a reply to the commission's queries in light of Dr Murtaza's initial report at the next hearing on May 21.

Major (ret'd) Shaukat Alvi, advisor to the projects in DHA, and Colonel (ret'd) Tariq Mehmood, the additional director of DHA engineering project, had informed the commission on May 8 that a functional treatment plant existed earlier. "But it was [either] abandoned or allowed to become non-functional after the scheme was handed over to the cantonment board," they claimed.

The sewage, according to the commission, is being discharged from four separate locations from Dua and China Town restaurants to Do Darya.

During the previous hearing, Justice (ret'd) Muslim had ordered that the original development plan of the DHA should be submitted to the commission. The details of the planned treatment plants, operating treatment plants and the quantity of sewage should be elaborated in the plan, it was said. The officials of DHA and CBC had sought a week's time to furnish the details.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1710979/1-commission-displeased-dha-cantonment-boards-performance-karachi/>

#### JUDICIAL COMMISSION ASKS DEFENCE SECRETARY TO JUSTIFY RELEASE OF RAW SEWAGE INTO SEA

Dawn, May 16th, 2018

**KARACHI:** The Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation took exception to the absence of Defence Housing Authority officials on Tuesday and summoned the defence secretary on May 21 over disposal of untreated sewage into the sea.

The head of the commission, retired SC Justice Amir Hani Muslim, deplored that despite clear directives at a previous hearing, the DHA officials did not turn up and the Cantonment Board Clifton (CBC) was shifting responsibility onto the DHA.

On May 8, Justice Muslim had directed the DHA officials to file the original plan of DHA and details of the operational and planned sewage treatment plants after he noticed four points around Seaview beach where untreated sewage was allowed to fall into the sea, polluting the beach. He had also asked an official of the Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) to collect samples from all the four points for an analysis after the DHA officials insisted that it was not sewage but storm-drain water.

At the outset of the hearing on Tuesday, nobody turned up from the DHA except its lawyer, who remained unable to respond to any question asked by the commission, and submitted an evasive report, the commission said.

Dr Ghulam Murtaza of the PCRWR submitted his report, which was alarming and had direct bearing on lives of people visiting the beach as the DHA and the CBC were draining contaminated (sewerage) water directly into the sea.

Additional attorney general Salman Talibuddin informed the commission that the DHA and the CBC had been taking contradictory stands, adding that the DHA was the developing agency and it was the responsibility of the DHA to develop land catering to all civic needs. It is also bound to plan sectors in a manner which helped residents get clean water and proper sewerage facilities, inclusive of treatment plants.

On the other hand, the CBC contended that once a sector was developed they took over the sector, operated it and managed their municipal responsibilities by collecting the conservancy charge and other related issues.

The commission said it appeared that the DHA had avoided submitting the details though the issue was related to human lives and under Article 9 of the Constitution it was the fundamental right of every citizen to enjoy life.

All the federal and provincial authorities and civic agencies of the country were constitutionally bound to help the citizens enjoy their lives by providing clean potable water with proper hygienic atmosphere.

However, Justice Muslim observed that the DHA and the CBC on the contrary had made the lives of picnickers visiting Seaview miserable by draining untreated liquid into the sea through different drains.

He further said that the restaurants leased out and constructed at Seaview and Do Darya had no mechanism for lifting solid or liquid waste, which was also drained directly into the sea from recreational spots as the report of samples collected by Dr Murtaza showed contamination.

In these circumstances, where the DHA officials have not come forward and the CBC was shifting responsibility onto the DHA, the commission said it was constrained to issue notice to the defence secretary to appear in person and justify that how the DHA and the CBC, which were under the administrative control of the ministry of defence, could play with the lives of citizens under their laws in defiance of the Constitution.

While asking the defence secretary to turn up on May 21, the commission also directed him to explain which law permitted these civic agencies to drain untreated sewage directly into the sea which was injurious to health and hazardous to marine life.

Justice Muslim again directed Dr Murtaza to revisit the different areas of Seaview with a senior officer of the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency and collect samples from all points where sewage was being drained into the sea.

He said the commission was constituted under the order of the Supreme Court with the objective to ensure that clean water was provided to the public, while proper drainage system and lifting of municipal solid waste and medical waste were provided for.

The commission warned: "If the secretary defence fails to appear, the commission will file reference to the honourable Supreme Court for taking appropriate action against those who have defeated the directives of the commission".



<https://www.dawn.com/news/1407888/judicial-commission-asks-defence-secretary-to-justify-release-of-raw-sewage-into-sea>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM MAY 7TH TO MAY 13TH 2018  
SAAF DEHAT PROGRAMME HITS A SNAG BECAUSE OF 'DELAYED FUNDING'  
Dawn, May 7th, 2018

Mansoor Malik

LAHORE; May 6: The Punjab government's much-trumpeted Saaf Dehat (clean villages) Programme has hit a snag owing to "over-budgeting" by the local government department and eventual ban slapped by the Election Commission of Pakistan on funding the ongoing development schemes and projects.

As per official sources, the political wrangling for more and more funds for national and provincial assemblies constituencies and the local government and community development (LG&CD) department's inability to put forward a "realistic" demand for budget has resulted in uncalled for delay in release of funding for the last quarter of ongoing financial year 2018-19.

It is reliably learnt that the LG&CD department had been seeking a sum of Rs2.3 billion for the last two months of the current fiscal, besides re-appropriating funds from one scheme to another, while the finance department continued telling it that there were only Rs1.57 billion allocated for the purpose. Until the discrepancy was rectified, it was too late.

Since there is no hope for release of funds for the Saaf Dehat programme for now, all the efforts made so far and the one-time cleaning in 3,281 rural union councils at a total cost of over Rs492 million, may go down the drain.

The delay in the programme may result in returning of heaps of garbage in rural areas, causing embarrassment to the Shahbaz-led government in the upcoming general elections.

Each rural union council was given Rs150,000 for one-time removal of garbage and the process continued for several months, including two-month extension, till February 28, this year.

LG&CD department senior officials claim the one-time cleaning project had turned around the sanitation situation in the villages, where besides the staff hired for the purpose, the residents too volunteered for the removal of solid waste and cleaning of drains.

Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif had launched the "Khadim-e-Punjab Saaf Dehat Programme" to improve the sanitation situation in rural areas across the province. Since the creation of Pakistan, the officials said, the system of solid waste management was almost non-existent in rural areas of the province. The programme aimed at cleaning of drains, sweeping streets and collection of solid waste was a boon for some 69.9 million people residing in rural areas of Punjab, they added.

As per LG&CD department estimates approximately 20,000 tons of municipal waste was being generated per day in rural areas, resulting in accumulation of heaps of solid waste in the villages that was not only destroying beauty of the rural landscape but also causing unhealthy environment for local population.

The officials said the situation had turned more grievous because of gradual shift in the composition of rural waste from nature-friendly organic materials to plastics and other dangerous stuff.

Given the conditions, they said, the cleaning of rural areas could no longer be neglected because besides threatening environment the chemical pollutants in waste material could also cause various diseases among livestock and humans by sneaking into the food chain.

A senior officer said the department had completed the process of awarding contracts to private parties for carrying out cleaning work in 3,281 rural union councils in the province. But, they said, the non-issuance of funds in the last quarter of current fiscal brought the project to a grinding halt.

The union councils did not have enough money to continue the project on their own, an official said.

“Now, the (LG&CD) department is presenting its budget proposals to the planning and development (P&D) department for allocation of funds (for the project) in the next financial year,” he said.

The official said the LG&CD department had issued tenders and shortlisted firms offering the lowest bids, besides finalising the agreement specimens and got them whetted from the law department. “The department was now at a stage where respective union councils’ heads were to sign agreements with the private vendors and execute the programme. But the whole process suffered a serious setback due to non-availability of funds well in time and eventual ban on investing in ongoing development projects and programmes by the ECP,” he lamented.

Since there was no hope of funds’ release within the present provincial government’s tenure that was going to end on June 4, and the caretaker government might not be interested in taking bid financial decisions, he said the department would be looking for regular funding after the new government got installed. “The department is also worried whether the shortlisted private vendors will readily be available at that time or it will have to go through the whole process of tendering again till issuance of work orders,” the official said.

To a question, the official claimed the department had got assessed the one-time cleaning and found that the villages were cleaned up to 90 per cent. He said there were some 500,000 pictures available on chief minister’s Saaf Dehat programme dashboard to prove the claim.

While the government’s intentions seem good, certain pressing questions are still being asked from different quarters regarding the sustainability of the programme

and “dumping” of the waste. “Whether the municipal waste will just be dumped on landfill sites or there are plans of running waste-to-energy (WtE) projects, as frequently asked by the chief minister himself in different policy-level meetings,” a source reminded.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1406071>

NO WORLD BANK HEARING LIKELY BEFORE KISHANGANGA INAUGURATION  
Dawn, May 7th, 2018

WASHINGTON: Pakistan has apparently missed the opportunity to involve the World Bank in the Kishanganga dam dispute before it becomes operational.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the disputed project in the next few days and the World Bank has not yet responded to Islamabad's request for a meeting.

Pakistan wants to send a high-level delegation, headed by Attorney General Ashtar Ausaf Ali, to Washington to share its concerns with World Bank President Jim Yong Kim about the dam.

World Bank has not yet responded to Pakistan's request for a meeting with its president

The bank has accepted the Pakistani proposal but bank officials say that they are still trying to find an appropriate slot for the meeting because of their chief's busy schedule. Pakistan had hoped for a meeting in late April, when Mr Ali was in New York for a UN meeting, but it did not happen.

The 1960 Indus Water Treaty (IWT) recognises the World Bank as an arbitrator in water disputes between India and Pakistan as the bank played a key role in concluding this agreement.

The power division of Pakistan's energy ministry sent a fresh communiqué to the World Bank in early April, urging it to ensure that India abided by the treaty that gave Pakistan control over the water of the Chenab and the Jhelum rivers.

The control over the water flowing in three eastern rivers — Beas, Ravi and Sutlej — was given to India. India may also use the waters of the western rivers in “non-consumptive” ways. India interprets this as a permission to build “run of the river” hydel projects that do not change the course of the river and do not deplete the water level downstream.

Pakistan argues that the Kishanganga and Ratle projects in the India-held Kashmir would do both — change the course of the river and deplete the water level.

In 2010, Pakistan took the matter to the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, which stayed the project for three years.

But in 2013, the court ruled that the Kishanganga was “a run-of-river plant within the meaning of the Indus Waters Treaty and that India may accordingly divert water from the Kishanganga (Neelum River) for power generation.

The court, however, also ruled that India was under an obligation to “construct and operate” the Kishanganga dam in such a way that it “maintains a minimum flow of water in the Kishanganga/Neelum River.”

The minimum flow was fixed at 9cumecs, a unit of flow equal to one cubic meter of water per second.

India declared that it was lowering the height of the dam from the planned 98m to 37m and resumed construction at full swing.

Pakistan, however, collected evidence to prove that India was violating the treaty as well as the court's verdict in August 2016, Pakistan asked the World Bank to appoint a court of arbitration to

review the designs of the Kishanganga and Ratle projects. India rejected the suggestion, saying that Pakistan's objections were technical in nature, the matter should be decided by a neutral expert.

Pakistan disagreed, arguing that a decision by a technical expert was non-binding and India would be under no obligation to implement the expert's recommendation.

The World Bank set in motion both processes but paused them when India and Pakistan refused to withdraw their proposals. After the pause, the bank held several rounds of talks, the last of which took place in September 2017, but failed to resolve the dispute.

After India announced last month that it was commissioning all three units at Kishanganga, Pakistan wrote to the World Bank, demanding that it ensure that India abided by the Treaty.

"The World Bank continues to work with both countries to resolve the most recent disagreement in an amicable manner and to safeguard the Treaty," a bank spokesperson told Dawn when asked how the bank planned to resolve this dispute now.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/140613>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM APRIL 30TH TO MAY 6TH 2018

GOVT MOVES TO CURB URBAN AIR POLLUTION AFTER HIGH COURT RULING

Business Recorder, 1 May 2018

RAWALPINDI: Environmental protection agency is installing air quality monitors and warning factories to add pollution filters after a panel of the country's top judges ordered the government to detail its efforts to control worsening air pollution.

The court ruling earlier this month followed a lawsuit by a man challenging the government's failure to control air pollution in that port city.

Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar, head of a three-member high court panel, ruled that the government must provide details of what it is doing to curb air pollution across the country.

He said he was shocked at how dirty the air had become, particularly in Pakistan's cities.

The ruling has spurred government authorities to action to try to reduce pollution levels, fearing they could face court orders or sanctions. Venu G. Advani, the Karachi lawyer who filed the court petition, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation he was seeking to have air quality regulations in the country enforced.

He said he hoped the court would ensure "provision of the constitutional right to a clean environment, for which clean air is key".

"There is no hope without the Supreme Court's intervention to awaken government officials from their deep slumber" on air quality, he said in a telephone interview from Karachi.

According to a 2015 report published by the medical journal Lancet, nearly 22 percent of annual deaths in Pakistan – or more than 310,000 each year – are caused by pollution, the majority of them due to air pollution. A 2014 World Bank study on Pakistan’s air quality recommended the country set aside funding to “install and operate a reliable air quality monitoring network”, and set other standards and frameworks to cut pollution.

Since the court ruling, officials at the Pakistan Environmental Protection agency have said they are moving rapidly to comply.

“We are now installing air quality monitoring instruments with the help of federal government funding and punishing the polluters,” said Ziauddin Khattak, director of the agency.

“We have now told dozens of industrial units and brick kilns through warning notices to install air cleaning filters on smoke-emitting chimneys and have started monitoring vehicles on various thoroughfares and issuing fines to the polluting vehicle owners,” he said.

Nearly 50 brick kilns have been issued notices, Khattak said, and more than 130 buses and other vehicles fined over the last two months.

He said seven fixed and three mobile ambient air quality monitoring stations have been set up in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar and Quetta, all cities that have suffered particular problems with air pollution.

Saif Anjum, Punjab provincial environment secretary, said his agency also had installed six air quality monitoring units in Lahore, with 30 more being put in place. The units, along with an air quality action plan, “will help cut 50 percent of air pollution in the next couple of years,” he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Other keys to improving air quality include planting more urban trees, replacing aging city buses and increasing parking fees to encourage the use of public transport, Anjum said.

A 2016 study by the World Health Organisation ranked Rawalpindi, located near the capital Islamabad, as the second most polluted city of the country after the northwest city of Peshawar.

So far no air quality monitors are being installed in Rawalpindi, however, because of a lack of funds, officials said.

With few trees and an abundance of traffic, as well as brick kilns spewing black smoke and open incineration of waste, Rawalpindi has air pollution levels more than 10 times above levels considered safe by the World Health Organization, said Asif Shuja Khan, a former director general of the Pakistan Environmental Protection agency.

Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad stand as 3rd, 4th and 5th most polluted cities in the country in terms of air quality, Khan said. Over 90 percent of Rawalpindi’s population of over 2 million inhales contaminated air regularly, exposing them to a higher risk of health problems such as cardiovascular disease and lung cancer, he said, with children particularly vulnerable.

Pakistan's Constitution says a clean environment is a fundamental right of all citizens, under provisions that guarantee a "right to life" and "right to dignity", said Ahmad Rafay Alam, vice president of the Pakistan Environmental Law Association.—Reuters

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/05/01/5-page/714335-news.html>

SHC ASKS IRRIGATION DEPT TO COMPLY WITH ITS ORDER IN LETTER AND SPIRIT  
Dawn, May 1st, 2018

HYDERABAD: A division bench of Sindh High Court Hyderabad circuit comprising Justice Azizur Rehman and Justice Fahim Ahmed Siddiqui on Monday directed Sindh irrigation authorities to submit a list of direct outlets (DOs) in accordance with the schedule as provided under section 5 of the Sindh Irrigation Act, 1879 along with authority letters of their sanction.

The order was passed on three identical petitions filed by tail-end growers seeking cancellation of DOs on main Rohri Canal. The bench noted that pursuant upon its March 6, 2018 order, only details of direct outlets of Naseer branch system of Naseer division Hyderabad (Rohri Canal system) were provided to court. The list was also not provided. It said that the order be complied with in letter and spirit within six weeks.

Advocate Jhematmal Jethanand represents 33 growers of the area in the three separate constitutional petitions. The petitioners have cited the chief engineer of Sukkur barrage, superintending engineer of Rohri Canal, executive engineer of Naseer division and assistant executive engineer of Khairpur Gamboh subdivision as respondents.

The petitioners submitted that their lands were located in the command area of channels/minors that emanated from the Naseer branch (Rohri Canal system). The regulatory mechanism of Rohri Canal is defined for an equal distribution of water to every acre under its command. Also, Rohri Canal water is the only source of drinking water for hundreds of villages/towns of many districts.

They submitted that under the Sindh Irrigation Act, Rules and Manual, there was no provision of grant of direct outlet on main Rohri Canal or Naseer branch. They said that a total ban was imposed on sanction of new outlets vide June 20, 1988 notification.

They informed the court that in 1999, the Sindh government realised that DOs affected equitable distribution of water and, therefore, an ordinance was promulgated cancelling 107 DOs. However, all DOs were not cancelled. Later, they said, the ordinance was declared illegal.

The petitioners submitted that despite that, the respondent functionaries continued to sanction DOs on Rohri Canal. They said there was no provision of rotation of channels/minors because the system was perennial hence supply of water could not be stopped. They said channels of Naseer division were closed for 15 days in a month and rotation was being executed by closing distributaries and minors alternatively every week. Some of them are closed for two weeks to stop supply to their land, according to them.

They said that no rotation was effected in Rohri Canal upstream, Nusrat, Dad and most irrigation divisions of Hala. Rotation was given effect only in tail's channels of Hala division, they said, adding

that all channels of Naseer division fell prey to the “pick and choose policy” which was unconstitutional, discriminatory and mala fide.

They prayed to the court to declare the respondent functionaries’ acts of granting DOs and shifting of watercourses as unlawful. They also urged that all sanctioned DOs be declared illegal.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1404962>

## WATER POLICY

Dawn, May 2nd, 2018

THE approval of a new national water policy in the closing days of the current government is a tribute to the capacities of democracy. Water is the lifeblood of Pakistan, and since the building of the world’s largest irrigation system, along with a huge storage infrastructure, in the 1960s and 1970s, the sharing and utilisation of water across sectors and among provinces has been one of the thorniest issues in our politics. The policy itself has been under discussion, on and off, for over a decade, and the final signatures of the four chief ministers and the prime minister last week can be seen as a milestone, much like the water-sharing accord of 1991.

But now comes the hard part. The policy calls for increasing the share of resources from federal and provincial development programmes to be dedicated to the water infrastructure. At the federal level, this means accelerating work on the Diamer Bhasha dam, and at the provincial level it means public works to plug leaks through lining the water courses. The latter ought to be the biggest priority. Losses of water are estimated at 46 MAF annually, whereas the Diamer Bhasha dam will add 6.4 MAF of storage capacity. If the policy succeeds in reducing losses by a third, as is the stated goal, the amount of water it would free up would be double the capacity of the Diamer Bhasha dam, at presumably less than half the cost.

Far too often, Pakistan’s water woes during climate change are presented as shortage in the supply of water, whereas the real challenge is in the improved utilisation of the existing supply. This involves some investment in physical infrastructure, but also large-scale changes in farm-water management techniques and the sound measurement of water flows through the system, to give a few examples.

This requires a crucial reform: water pricing — the only way to sensitise farmers to the prevailing scarcity of water, and to urge greater efficiency in the use of this resource. And yet, this is one area where the policy minces its words. It wants to link water pricing with the “users’ ability to pay”, which is going to be next to impossible for the state to assess. Until a realistic water-pricing regime is brought into play, mobilising investment and changing utilisation patterns in agriculture will prove to be a losing battle.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405139>

## IN THAR LONG DELAYED AQUA FIRM AREARS BEING CLEARED

Eleven-year-old Kewal Bheel of Bijhuto is panting. The four-kilometre journey from his village to Phingariyo in Tharparkar has left the boy exhausted. “I come to fetch potable water twice a day, every day,” Bheel says as he goads six donkeys laden with containers bearing water. Siblings in school, a mother busy with household chores and father at work, the boy walks 16 kilometres every day to collect clean drinking water for his family. It becomes harder as the mercury rises.

I struggle in summer, he says. But, Bheel is happy. The installation of water filtration plants in Mithi, Tharparkar's largest city, has made life better. Earlier, people walked tens of kilometres to collect potable water daily. Now, distances are shorter. Pratap Mengwaro has been teaching at a Sojhani Goth school, two kilometres from Bheel's village, for over a decade. A filtration plant has been installed in front of the school. Mengwaro is a relieved man. He no longer frets about children having access to potable water. The teacher says health standards in the area have drastically improved following the installation of the plant.

Bheel and Mengwaro are but exceptions. Scores of Tharparkar residents have no option but to consume water unfit for human consumption. Niaz Ahmed of village Majeed Jai Wind says clean drinking water is only available at Vijoto Stop or Rabo Vikya Goth, both kilometres away. Stored rainwater is another source. As many lack the means to travel this far, they consume water with total dissolved solids (TDS) content running in the thousands, Ahmed says. The man says this leaves scores with myriad illnesses. Many expectant women give birth on their way to collect potable water, Ahmed adds.

In the aftermath of Tharparkar crisis grabbing headlines in 2014, the Sindh government started installing filtration plants to remedy high TDS content in water. The largest of its kind was installed in Mithi by the Sindh Coal Authority in 2015. The hybrid plant operated by Pak Oasis Industries can treat two million gallons of water daily using solar energy or electricity. Pak Oasis Installations Manager Muhammad Irshad says Mithi consumes one million gallons daily. He says water is also provided to Islamkot, another Tharparkar city 45 kilometres from Mithi. Irshad says Pak Oasis, operating 650 plants across the latter city, has also installed water tanks every five kilometres between the two cities for citizens' benefit. Irshad says the plant has been set up at a cost of Rs5 billion.

He says 16 bores have been drilled to extract high TDS water. Untreated water is stored in a massive tank before being processed. It is passed through cartridges before being filtered by 0.001 micron-sized membranes. Forget dissolved solids, the process does not even spare germs, Irshad adds. The official says the plant employs state-of-the-art technology to deliver clean drinking water at less than half a rupee per gallon. 'Moreover, nearly 1,500 are employed across plants operated by the company. Cartridges need to be replaced every week. Machinery has to be maintained. All this has a price,' Irshad shares before revealing that many Tharparkar plants earlier looked set to shut down with the Sindh government not having cleared arrears in years. The Sindh government owes Pak Oasis Rs400 million, he claims.

Irshad says a shut down notice had been served to the Sindh government later. Pak Oasis virtually operated for free. Operations were set to cease had arrears not been cleared, Irshad says. He says the government ordered district authorities to take control of the filtration plants following the presentation of the shut down notice. However, officials refused saying they lacked capacity to run the plants. In a December, 2016 letter to the Tharparkar DC, the Mithi AC said he had personally conducted a survey of all reverse osmosis plants and held a meeting with all stakeholders.

"Keeping in view the intricacies of maintenance and repair, it was observed that a surplus of various mechanical instruments had to be maintained. Hence, procurement would present another challenge for local government entities," the official wrote. "A striking observation worth sharing is that interactions with local government representatives revealed they were totally confused... It is probably because they are well aware of their limits when it comes to human resource management and technical expertise," the letter goes on to read. Presenting recommendations the AC wrote, "Being



typically associated with this business Pak Oasis Limited can manage the facilities with much ease compared to nascent local government entities. It has an established set up encompassing human resources, technical expertise, procurement and maintenance. Their only requirement is a lateral check and third party audit system to ensure accountability.”

A January, 2018 letter by the now-defunct Special Initiative Department (SID) to the chief secretary on funds allocation to maintain and streamline operations across Sindh filtration plants installed by various departments also brought government attention to the issue. “The contractor M/s Pak Oasis Industries responsible for the operations and maintenance of reverse osmosis plants of Special Initiative Department (SID), health department and the SCA has already served a notice of shutdown of these plants in case of non-payment of operations and maintenance due cost,” the document reads.

Mithi MPA Ramesh Kumar told The Express Tribune earlier in March that control of filtration plants was being transferred to the health department. He said this was being done in line with recent Supreme Court orders on the SID. “It will take a few months. Company arrears will be cleared then. I will personally look into the matter.” What seemed to be a situation mired in uncertainty till recently appears salvaged with in-part payment of dues commencing. Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has approved the payments. The health department is devising a schedule. The company will receive Rs200 million in April. Regular payments will enable Pak Oasis to effectively deliver, Chief Operating Officer Irshad Hussain says. He also thanked the Sindh Water Commission and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for intervening in the matter. The PPP chairman ordered the issue to be quickly resolved. Bilawal recently toured the area to inspect coal power plants.

The PPP chairman had also visited selected filtration plants over his Tharparkar tour, Information Minister Nasir Hussain Shah says. The minister adds payments remained stalled due to two issues. There were reports of some filtration plants not functioning. The firm has been directed to remedy this. Also, the issue was sub judice. Control of filtration plants had to be transferred to the health department in line with court directives, he adds.

<http://newslab.tribune.com.pk/water-woes-in-thar-long-delayed-aqua-firm-arrears-being-cleared/>

## PML-N LAWMAKER CALLS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF KALABAGH DAM

Dawn, May 3rd, 2018

Iftikhar A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: A ruling Pakistan Muslim League-N lawmaker sparked a new controversy on Wednesday when he touched on two delicate subjects in his speech in the Senate.

While taking part in the budget discussion, retired Lt Gen Abdul Qayyum not only called for the construction of dozens of dams, including the Kalabagh dam, on the Indus river, but also proposed to bring back the subject of education devolved to the provinces through the 18th Amendment.

Gen Qayyum pointed out that there were 3,200 dams in India and 22,000 in China.

He claimed that the education sector had deteriorated after it was devolved to the provinces and stressed that the 18th Amendment was not the final word. He pointed out that 103 articles of the Constitution — one-third of the total — had been amended through the 18th Amendment. “If the

1973 Constitution can be so significantly amended, why the 18th Amendment cannot be improved upon,” he remarked.

PPP member opposes proposal, saying three provincial assemblies have already rejected the idea

He said prosperous nations achieved their glory due to education with focus on science and technology. “Education, including technical education, therefore, deserves to be prioritised in Pakistan,” he remarked.

He said disparity in the education sector among the provinces might create a feeling of deprivation, harming national unity and national security. “So it is essential that we put education on the concurrent list for better coordination at least for next 10 years.”

Sassui Palijo of the Pakistan Peoples Party rejected Gen Qayyum’s proposal and said three provincial assemblies had rejected the idea of constructing the Kalabagh dam. “It is an insult of the three legislatures to talk about the project after unanimous resolutions,” she remarked.

While talking to Dawn, former Senate chairman Raza Rabbani noted that education had always been a provincial subject but it had been usurped by the federal government.

“The 18th Amendment has only given effect to a historical position,” he remarked.

Mr Rabbani said since the speech had been made on the floor of the Senate, he would respond to it on the floor of the house in detail in the next two days.

Earlier, Gen Qayyum said the budget was an important financial fact-sheet which highlighted estimated receipts and expected expenditure for the next financial year. There were very few countries in the world which had surplus budgets.

The strongest world economies, including the US, China and Japan, had deficit budgets, he added.

He said loans were not something bad, but these must be prudently utilised for development.

Gen Qayyum said the PPP government had increased external debts by more than 100 per cent, but it did not add even one megawatt of electricity and constructed no major motorway, airport or seaport.

On the contrary, he said, during five years of the PML-N government debts soared by less than 100pc, but 12,230 megawatts of electricity were added to the national grid.

He said an increase in gross domestic products, remittances, foreign direct investment, foreign exchange reserves, stock exchange index and tax collection showed that it was a budget for the poor and not for the rich.

He said agriculture research deserved more allocation of funds than mere Rs5bn.

“The government must review this aspect because in an agrarian society agriculture and industrial sectors are mutually supportive”.

He said pensioners who were war veterans and families of the martyrs deserved attention and stressed that mere 10pc increase in pension was not adequate.

The opposition staged a walkout in protest against absence of Finance Minister Miftah Ismail from the house.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405322>

## PAKISTAN NAVY LAUNCHES MANGROVES PLANTATION CAMPAIGN

Dawn, May 4th, 2018

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy (PN) has launched Pakistan Navy Mangroves Plantation Campaign 2018 in line with the government vision of “Green Pakistan”.

It is the third campaign aimed at planting about two million mangroves in the coastal areas of Sindh and Balochistan during the next one year.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi was the chief guest and inaugurated the campaign at Shah Bandar, a message received here on Thursday said.

Addressing the ceremony, he stressed that deforestation of mangroves had not only affected biodiversity of coastal areas, but also livelihoods of coastal communities.

In this context, the drive was an initiative to plant additional mangroves as well as to create awareness among the masses about the significance of mangroves to support nature, he said.

He urged all stakeholders including federal and provincial departments and civil society to play their due role and join hands with Pakistan Navy in the noble cause of protecting marine ecology.

Speaking on the occasion, country head of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, said the role of the PN in plantation of mangroves forests was “unprecedented”.

Later, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi visited forward bases of Pakistan Navy in the creek areas and interacted with the officers and men.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by a large number of senior military and civil officials including federal and provincial parliamentarians, representatives from business community, World Wildlife Fund, IUCN, Fisher Folk Society and officials from the Sindh forest department.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405404>

## BARBS FLY AS WATER EMERGENCY INTENSIFIES

Dawn, May 4th, 2018

ISLAMABAD: The Indus River System Authority (Irsa) on Thursday expressed its inability to oblige a demand from Sindh’s parliamentarians to immediately close down two link canals and stop filling Mangla dam to facilitate sowing of Kharif crops in the province.

The water regulator told the Senate Special Committee on Water Scarcity that the matter needed to be taken up with Punjab where the water shortage was higher than Sindh.

The committee, led by Senator Moula Bux Chandio of PPP, was constituted on an adjournment motion of Senator Sassui Palijo to look into the 'emergency-like situation' in Sindh due to water shortage. Ms Palijo, who was in the capital, could not make it to the meeting.

Lawmakers from Sindh raise alarm; situation as bad in Punjab, says Irsa, widespread crop damage, cotton sowing disrupted

Senior senators from Sindh, particularly Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah and Mr Chandio, said there was acute water shortage in the province and a delay in an urgent resolution of the problem would cause irreparable loss of sugarcane, cotton and chili crops. They protested over the transfer of water from Indus zone to Jhelum-Chenab zone through Chashma-Jhelum and Taunsa-Punjnad link canals and at the same time filling of Mangla dam.

Chandio and Shah repeatedly called for immediate closure of the two canals as well as the filling of Mangla dam for at least 2-3 weeks to enable farmers in Sindh, particularly at the tail-end, to complete sowing. They said the two canals were flood canals and could only be operated in case of surplus water but not when scarce Indus waters were being shifted into Jhelum-Chenab.

They said the non-implementation of agreements, water accord and understandings on water issues had led to confrontational politics on Kalabagh Dam, otherwise there was no reason for opposition by Sindh and other provinces over the dam. Chandio stressed that no province had any problem with any water project or energy sector agreement as long as contracts and understandings are not breached.

Shah said the Kalabagh Dam became controversial because two canals were made part of its design while consensus was achieved on Diamer-Bhasha dam because it did not contain any canal. Federal Flood Commission Chairman Ahmed Kamal, who assumed this charge a day earlier on rotation being the federal member, said total water discharges in Indus system currently stood at 64,000 cusec, including 40,000 cusec from Tarbela dam and 24,000 cusec from Chashma barrage. Of these 64,000 cusec, 45,000 cusec were going to Sindh compared to 15,000 cusec to Punjab while the remaining flows were going to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Kamal said the senators should take up the matter with Punjab government for some adjustment to facilitate sowing in Sindh. Irsa was bound to give water to all provinces including Punjab as per their requirements and could not cut down on the largest province's share, he added.

He said Irsa was required to achieve up to 70-75 per cent filling of Mangla dam by the end of June to meet watering requirements in late Kharif. So far, 38pc shortage had been applied to Punjab versus 37pc to Sindh.

Shah claimed the so called three-tier formula on distribution of water among the provinces was illegal as per explanations of the law ministry and severely compromised the interests of the lower riparians.

He said the water shortage in Sindh was very serious and the provincial government was under tremendous pressure, hence it was necessary for the water regulator to provide some interim relief through additional releases for farmers in the province.

Senator Sabir Shah of PML-N from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa agreed that the water shortage was a serious problem in Sindh at present and relief should be given to avoid crop losses to farmers. He said the committee should also look beyond the current crisis and examine if it would emerge again and what could be the consequences, adding that the focus should be on creation of additional resources and proposing a way forward to counter blockade of river flows by India.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405483>

#### VIOLATION CAUSES OPPOSITION TO KALABAGH DAM: SINDH SENATORS

ISLAMABAD: The representatives of Sindh in Upper House of Parliament said on Thursday that the principal reason for the opposition to Kalabagh dam by the smaller provinces is disrespect of Water Accord 1991, though Punjab was not named.

These views were expressed at a meeting of Senate Special Committee on Water Scarcity headed by Senator Moula Bux Chandio. The committee was constituted to determine a solution for water shortage for Kharif crops in Sindh as the sowing season will end after two weeks.

“Punjab should give its share to Sindh for the time being and adjust it later so that crops are cultivated in Sindh as the province is facing drought like situation due to severe shortage of water,” said Sindh representatives.

Senator Syed Muzafar Hussain Shah, who signed the Water Accord 1991 as Chief Minister Sindh, was very vocal against alleged violation of the Accord due to (i) Mangla reservoir and (ii) opening of two canals i.e. Chashma Jhelum (CJ) link canal and Trimmu Panjnad (TP) link canal which, according to him, were meant to release water in case of floods. He said Sindh already faces substantial loss in Kharif season due to shortage of water.

Senator Peer Sabir Shah supported the recommendation of Senators from Sindh for Punjab to provide “temporary relief” by giving its share of water to Sindh but also emphasized the need to construct other water reservoirs to deal with the crisis.

Chief Engineering Advisor Federal Flood Commission, Ahmad Kamal who took charge as Chairman IRSA on May 2, 2018 as representatives federal government informed the committee that according to initial estimates by Indian metrological department based in Pune (India) and China which forecast weather for six months, monsoon rains in Punjab and KP are expected to be more or less normal whereas in Sindh and Balochistan rains would be below normal, adding that actual forecast will be available in June.

He said, in winter 2017-18 snowfall remained 23 per cent less than in the previous year which implies that water flows will be lower. He said there is continuous decline in water availability and there are ups and downs in temperature due to disturbances in the west. Reservoirs are not being filled due to variance in temperatures, he added.

On May 3, 2018 inflows at Indus were recorded at 373,000 cusecs against last year’s figure of 518,000 cusecs and historic average of 530,000 cusecs. Inflows at Kabul were 249,000 cusecs on May 3, 2018 against 272000 cusecs last year and historic average of 472000 cusecs. On Jhelum inflows were 328,000 cusecs against 532,000 cusecs and on Chenab 231,000 cusecs as compared to 269,000 cusecs. This shows 25.7 per cent reduction in inflows from last year and 37 per cent on historic basis.

Senator Syed Muzaffar Shah said that the committee had sought IRSA views on two of three issues and had not sought any justification, adding that Sindh is a lower riparian and is facing acute shortage of water during Kharif crop cultivation season, while IRSA is filling Mangla reservoir and releasing water in CJ and TP links canals. He said 62500 cusecs of water is being released in two flood canals.

“There is shortage in the system and lower sowing in Sindh is earlier compared to Punjab. Sindh is drying and its sowing period is about to end in 20-25 days and IRSA is filling Mangla reservoir,” he said, proposing closure of CJ link and TP canal as well as stopping to fill Mangla reservoir. He said cotton, sugarcane and chilies were not sown due to shortage of water in Sindh.

Senator Moula Bux Chandio said that he was aware of the reasons for the water crisis including betrayal of a neighbour (Punjab) as well as poor weather but added that he wanted to focus on mismanagement on the part of IRSA. Which must propose a solution to the current crisis – be it in South Punjab or Sindh, as politicians are facing severe pressure from the general public.

Chairman IRSA said total available water outflows were 64000 cusecs on Thursday of which 47000 cusecs is being provided to Sindh, followed by 15000 cusecs to Punjab and 4000 cusecs to KP which is line with the agreed shares of provinces.

He said Mangla reservoir must be 70-80 per cent full by June 30 each year as in the remaining months it is uncertain whether it can be filled and whatever benefits are projected from Mangla project would then not be reaped.

He argued that if Punjab consents to defer its water requirements for some time then it is possible to release more water to Sindh which can be adjusted later on.

However, Syed Muzafar Shah challenged Chairman IRSA by stating that he cannot release water in flood canals, adding that in accordance with the Water Accord flood canals cannot be opened if lower riparian is facing water shortage.

“We want Chairman Irsa to intervene and deal with this situation because if the required water is not supplied cotton crop, sugarcane etc will not be sowed and then Sindh will be declared drought hit province,” he added.

Chairman Irsa said he understood the views of committee members and would submit its recommendations to deal with the crisis so that harmony in provinces is not affected on this issue as the Accord is the only document on which there is an agreement between the provinces. He said, shortage in Punjab and Sindh was 38 per cent and 37 per cent respectively. Both Balochistan and KP are exempted from shortages.

Muzafar Shah said that the reason for opposition to Kalabagh dam was due to non implementation of the agreement, arguing that the agreement was CJ canal will not be opened until surplus water is available.

“The PC-1 of Kalabagh dam shows canals on both sides of the dam and the objection of political forces and civil society is that when flood canals are opened in violation of the agreement then whatever water is being given to Sindh will be stopped. That is our primary objection to Kalabagh dam,” he added.

Muzafar Shah maintained that provinces are supporting Diamer Basha Dam because no canal construction is envisaged.

Senator Moula Bux Chandio said that he is not against any project but added “What we want is that whatever commitment is made, should be honoured but no one is ready to make a commitment”.

“We are not against any specific project of water or energy but commitments were dishonoured in the past which is why we agreed on Diamer Bhasha dam. Everyone has the right to live according to his/her own will,” Chandio argued.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/05/04/3-page/714828-news.html>

## PLANTING TREES CAN REDUCE KARACHI'S TEMPERATURE'

Dawn, May 5th, 2018

KARACHI: Serious tree plantation efforts on the lines of international urban forestry can help reduce Karachi's temperature, said Inspector General Forest Syed Nasir Mahmood while delivering a lecture at Karachi University (KU) on Friday.

Titled 'Recent advances in ecosystem development', the programme was organised by Dr Panjwani Centre for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research and the Virtual Education Project-Pakistan at KU's International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences.

“There is a dire need to promote vertical or roof gardening in the megalopolis where 80 per cent of land is covered with concrete,” Mr Mahmood said.

He described deforestation and degradation of forests as real threats to the country's ecosystem.

“Internationally, deforestation and forest degradation impact the lives of millions of people whose livelihoods depend on forests,” he said.

He was of the view that if plantation efforts were taken in Karachi on scientific lines as is happening in other countries, Karachi's temperature could be brought down by at least six to 10 degrees centigrade.

People in Karachi like the rest of the country, were being supplied with vegetables grown with sewage, he said, suggesting that people should try growing vegetables and fruit in whatever space is available to them.

Talking about Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation Plus (REDD+), he said that it's a new paradigm and new hope to alleviate global emissions.

Forests, he pointed out, had a critical role in mitigating climate change as they acted as a carbon sink. “Deforestation weakens this foremost carbon sink function. It is estimated that 15 to 20 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions are the result of deforestation,” Mr Mahmood explained.

According to him, the forestry sector is facing great destruction worldwide despite the fact that this sector contributes greatly to national development goals and provides more than eight per cent of

gross domestic product (GDP) in some developing countries. Demographic factors, including population growth, density, distribution, migration, and urbanisation were important drivers of deforestation. Forest fires were also a key factor contributing to deforestation, he said.

Pakistan had lost significant forest cover over the years and urgently needed steps to counter adverse effects of climate change. That's only possible through promoting forest culture in the country, he concluded.

Prof Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary of ICCBS also spoke.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405692>

## WATER SHORTAGES

Dawn, May 5th, 2018

REPORTS of severe water shortages afflicting large areas of Sindh and southern Punjab are on the increase, and large-scale damage to key crops, particularly cotton, paint a troubling picture. From Badin to Mirpurkhas to Nawabshah and all the way to Rahim Yar Khan, farmers are reporting that the sowing season for cotton has been badly disrupted because the water that is so essential at the time of sowing did not arrive at the scheduled time. Large sugarcane fields stand burnt, and vegetable output has suffered hugely. Demands from farmers and residents of agrarian towns have shifted away from water for irrigation. Now they are reduced to demanding drinking water since the shortages have parched more than just arable land.

Some lawmakers from Sindh have asked that the Indus River System Authority cut flows into two key link canals, arguing that these are to be used only in times of flood and not to make up for water shortages upstream. Irsa has responded that the situation in Punjab is just as bad, even though the sowing season for cotton has not begun there, while the wheat crop is ready for harvest. Thus far, the dispute at the national level has not gone beyond the confines of some testy exchanges between a few senators and key people in the water bureaucracy.

Those exchanges demonstrate that the matter is unlikely to find resolution at that level. It is difficult to see what the government can actually do about the problem, given that it has been created by low inflows into the dams. But if it is true that there are significant withdrawals being made through the link canals for lands in Punjab, then the question of fairness in allocations must take centre stage. In Sindh too, the shortages have driven a politicised allocation, particularly from the Kotri Barrage, as well as illegal pumping of water by those closer to the canal head, leading to bitter complaints from the tail enders.

The episode cries out for high-level attention. The Sindh government needs to wake up to its responsibility to ensure equitable sharing of the scarce quantities of water in its own areas, while the federal government must wake up to its obligations to ensure that interprovincial allocations are being done as per the spirit of the 1991 water-sharing accord. The shortages are a fact, but the acrimony they are giving rise to can be better handled.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405764/water-shortages>

‘PLANTING TREES CAN REDUCE KARACHI’S TEMPERATURE’



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<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405692>

'GOVT HAS ALLOCATED RS100B FOR DIAMER-BASHA, DASU DAMS'  
The Express Tribune, May 5th, 2018.

State Minister for Finance Rana Muhammad Afzal Khan on Friday informed the Senate that an amount of Rs100 billion has been allocated in the budget 2018-19 for Diamer-Basha and Dasu dams.

Responding to a query raised by Opposition Leader Sherry Rehman, he said the country is wasting huge amounts of water due to non-construction of reservoirs.

“We have allocated Rs100 billion for the Diamer-Basha and Dasu dams and it is up to the next government to decide about their construction,” he added.

He suggested inviting experts from universities and other departments to advise on how to handle the shortage of water.

He said that members of the water caucus should come up with an open mind to give their recommendations.

Earlier, Rehman demanded setting up parliamentarians’ water caucus to discuss recommendations to address the issue.

She said all four provinces have come to an understanding and signed the country’s first water policy.

The new policy is essential for better management of Pakistan’s water resources and to ensure that future generations are not deprived due to global warming and climate change, she added.

According to the policy, administrative bodies will be established at the provincial as well as federal levels to effectively manage water supplies better, she said, adding this includes the national water council and provincial water authorities for the purpose.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1702646/2-govt-allocated-rs100b-diamer-basha-dasu-dams/>

## RESERVOIRS: CCI DECIDES TO CONSERVE SURPLUS ANNUAL FLOWS MUSHTAQ GHUMMAN

ISLAMABAD: The Council of Common Interests (CCI) has decided to conserve only the surplus annual flows in the reservoirs to augment the storage capacity, well-informed sources told Business Recorder.

The presentation on National Water Policy had already been made by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission in the 36th meeting of the CCI. Therefore, the discussion took place only on the reservations conveyed by the Government of Sindh. Some of these had already been incorporated in the Policy.

The following amendments were incorporated in the National Water Policy during the meeting:-

Recommendation (1) – clause 10.7: The Water Apportionment Accord of 1991 is currently an accepted document and IRSA is mandated to implement the Accord. It is reiterated that IRSA has to implement the Accord in letter and spirit as per provincial share stipulated in para 2 of the Accord. (For clarity the words “para 2 of” are added in the last sentence.

Clarified unanimous consensus – clause 10.7: The Water Appointment Accord of 1991 is currently an accepted document and IRSA is mandated to implement the Accord. It is reiterated that IRSA has to implement the Accord in letter and spirit as per provincial share stipulated in the Accord.

However, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission clarified that it is understood that para 2 is part of the Accord; therefore, there is no need to insert these words in the policy. Chief Minister, Sindh was satisfied with his clarification.

Recommendation (2) – clause 17.5: Provinces are responsible for routine repair and maintenance of flood protection dykes, flood fighting and drainage. However, in case of major catastrophe like the 2010 floods, the federal government will provide supplementary funds, in addition to the 50% which the federal government has already agreed to provide under normal flooding.” (the last sentence in bold italic is added for clarity).

Clarified unanimous consensus – clause 17.5 : Provinces are responsible for routine repair and maintenance of flood protection dykes, flood fighting and drainage. However, in case of major catastrophe like the 2010 floods, the federal government will provide supplementary funds, in addition to the 50% which the federal government has already agreed to provide under NFPP-IV.

The Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission clarified that clause 17.5 of the policy is acceptable to all and there was no need to insert the sentence proposed by the Government of Sindh.

Recommendation (3) – clause 20.5.2 “Based on new realities of seawater and to conserve aquatic ecosystem, required environmental flows will be reassessed and assured so as to address the issues on long term basis”. The words in bold italic are added for clarity).

Clarified unanimous consensus – clause 20.5.2 “Based on new realities of seawater intrusion and to conserve aquatic ecosystem, required environmental flows will be reassessed and assured so as to address the issues on long term basis”.

The Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission further stated that the words “... and to conserve aquatic ecosystem” have already been added to the said clause.

Recommendation (4) clause 28.4(ii) “in order to augment the dwindling irrigation deliveries into the existing canal systems on account of ever decreasing existing storage capacity of Mangla and Tarbela due to sedimentation and to develop new cultivated area on canal irrigated water, the existing water storage capacity of 14 MAF shall be increased by immediately starting construction of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam project having 6.4 MAF live storage on which consensus of all the federating units has already been achieved in 2009 at CCI level. The existing water storage capacity will be increased by not more than 10 MAF including Diamer-Basha Dam”. (The words bold italic are added for clarity).

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will be increased by up to 10 MAF including Diامر-Basha Dam”. (The words bold italic are added for clarity).

The sources said, Chief Minister, Sindh, Murad Ali Shah also proposed that the words “not more than” may be added in the above clause i.e. 28.4(ii) of the Policy, whereupon Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission clarified that the words “at least” have been inserted instead of the words “not more than” in the said clause. However, it was decided that the words “up to” be inserted instead of “not more than” in the said clause.

As regards inclusion of irrigation Ministers in the National Water Council, it was agreed that since the concerned ministers for provincial irrigation departments could always accompany the Chief Ministers in the meetings, if so required, their inclusion in the composition of the National Water Policy may not be appropriate so as to keep the council small.

The water charter was approved by expanding its scope with respect to water treatment from urban to rural areas as well. The view of the Government of Sindh that Pakistan needs to conserve water flows to augment the storage capacity while keeping in view conservation of aquatic ecosystem was also included. Being a single basin country, it was agreed that only the surplus annual flows would be conserved in the reservoirs.

As regards the title “Urban Water Management” of the clause 13 of the National Water Policy, it was agreed to include the word “Rural” in the said clause which will become “Urban/ Rural Water Management”.

In addition, the composition of National Water Council will include Chief Ministers plus one additional member each to be nominated by the Chief Ministers of the respective provinces (clause 29.5.1 of the National Water Policy).

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/05/06/1-page/715217-news.h>

#### PHC MOVED AGAINST GOVT’S NOD FOR PALAI CEMENT FACTORY

Dawn, May 6th, 2018

PESHAWAR: The residents of Palai area in Malakand region, known for its orchards, have moved the Peshawar High Court against the no objection certificate (NOC) issued by the provincial government for the construction of a cement factory in their area and acquisition of around 400 acres of land for the purpose.

The petitioners, including Ali Mohammad and 15 others, prayed the court to strike down the government’s NOC for the Fecto Cement Private Limited to establish a factory in Palai.

They also sought the court’s order to declare illegal the invoking of Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act by the government for acquiring land for the factory saying the move is a threat to the local environment and the people’s health.

The petitioners requested the court to declare the cement factory’s establishment a violation of the provincial, federal and international environmental protection laws and standards.

They sought the immediate suspension of the impugned notification under Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act, and restriction on the Fecto Cement from carrying on activities in the area until the final disposal of the petition.

Respondents in the petition are the provincial government through its chief secretary, Federation of Pakistan through the climate change secretary, provincial secretaries of agriculture, environment, mines and minerals, industries, forest and wildlife, the provincial Environmental Protection Agency's director general, Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency director general, Malakand district nazim and deputy commissioner, director (agriculture), and Fecto Cement Limited through its chief executive.

The petitioners had earlier submitted a complaint with the PHC's Human Rights Cell on the same issue. A bench of the high court had on Apr 5 directed Advocate Ali Gohar Durrani, appearing for the complainants to file a proper writ petition.

The petitioners said the Palai area was known globally for serene lush green fields in general and citrus orchards in particular.

They said the area was short of water yet they and many like them did all their best to make the area environment friendly mostly without the help of the government.

The petitioners claimed that the official estimates suggested that there were around 171,000 fruit plants in the area.

They said in the garb of development and investment, the government had issued 14 NOCs to different cement manufacturers across the province to set up their units.

The petitioners said the Fecto Cement Limited requested the mines and minerals development secretary for setting up a factory in Palai through a letter sent on Aug 4, 2017.

They said the mines secretary processed the request the same day and directed the deputy commissioner of Malakand to ensure land acquisition for the purpose.

The petitioners claimed the tehsildar of Batkhela tehsil later issued a notice of affixation, which was circulated as an official document despite being undated and signed by the Fecto Cement Limited general manager and not by any government official.

They said surprisingly, it later emerged that the Environment Impact Assessment study was in progress showing that 400 acres of land was being acquired without even looking into the details of the impact of the manufacturing plant of cement on ecology, environment, bio-diversity and wildlife of the area besides human lives.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1405944>

**June 2018**

***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JUN 18th TO JUN 24th 2018***

### ***Protest against dumping site in Peshawar area***

Bureau Report June 20, 2018

PESHAWAR: Protesting against the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar for setting up a dumping yard at Garhi Faizullah, the people belonging to various rural localities of the provincial capital on Tuesday blocked Bagh Banan Road and blocked entry of the dumpers into the area. They warned that they would not let the provincial government turn their agriculture land into a garbage yard.

The protesters shouted slogans against the government and vowed to block movement of WSSP vehicles in the entire area if the garbage was dumped anywhere in limits of Umar area. They said their lands produced a variety of crops and vegetables.

“We have levelled the agriculture farms and set up solar-powered tubewells to earn livelihood for our families, but the government is bent upon snatching bread from our children,” said a protester.

They feared that if the garbage was dumped in Garhi Faizullah then movement of locals would become impossible due to the foul smell and unhygienic conditions. They blamed the officials of the revenue department for the plan to establish garbage dumping yard in the suburban localities.

The protesters dispersed on intervention of the local police, officials of WSSP and district administration. The government officials assured the protesters that the issue would be discussed in a meeting with the Peshawar deputy commissioner on Wednesday (today).

Published in Dawn, June 20th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1414882/protest-against-dumping-site-in-peshawar-area>

50 trees at Sindh Agriculture University chopped down, sold

By Z Ali

Published: June 23, 2018

HYDERABAD: The Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) has allowed chopping down and sale of trees in its premises. The move, according to its critics, smacks of an irregularity besides entailing environmental implications.

“Environmentally, cutting a tree is like killing a human,” said a professor who is one of the opponents of the allegedly recurrent practice of cutting the trees at SAU. He requested anonymity.

According to a notification dated June 5, the varsity’s Tree Auction Committee, in its meeting headed by Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Mujeebuddin Sahrai, approved the highest bid of Rs250,000 for 50 trees, including neem, jambolan, rosewood, eucalyptus and four other species sold at Rs5,000 per tree.

The trees were chopped down on Thursday. A sports ground is in close proximity of the area from where the trees were uprooted. The critics allege that there was no justifiable reason to cut the trees and that they have been sold on cheap rates.

## Date trees planted on University Road dry up

Another professor, who also requested anonymity, said the trees had been sold on cheap rates. According to him, a mature rosewood tree is priced at least between Rs25,000 to Rs30,000, whereas a neem tree should not be sold below Rs20,000.

“All of these trees were planted 10 to 15 years ago and were mature trees. Their average worth shouldn’t have been less than Rs20,000 per tree,” he maintained.

Another SAU teacher, who claimed to have been constantly opposing the tree cutting, alleged that the practice paced up after Prof Sahrai was appointed as the VC. “Around a thousand trees have been cut since VC Sahrai took over the charge,” he said, adding that there was an area in the varsity with a large number of unwanted trees but the VC did not order to chop down those trees as they would either not be sold or would fetch a very low price.

An official bewailed that due to the tree cutting, one of the greenest universities of the province, located in Tando Jam, a rural town in Hyderabad, is being shorn of its beauty, besides the environmental damage.

## Green Drive: A tree in every house

### Varsity’s version

SAU Spokesperson Asghar Bhatti, however, told The Express Tribune that the trees had been chopped down to construct a service road. The road would connect the animal husbandry and veterinary sciences department to the crop production faculty and the admin bloc, he said.

Explaining the need of the service road, the spokesperson said at present, teachers, students and staff moving between the three locations had to detour through Hyderabad-Mirpurkhas Highway, which posed risk of accident.

He claimed that the auction for trees was done in a transparent manner through bidding and that the contractor who made the highest bid was given the trees.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1740494/1-50-trees-sindh-agriculture-university-chopped-sold/>

## NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JUN 11th TO JUN 17th 2018

### Plastic pollution in Pakistan

By Murtaza Talpur

Published: June 11, 2018

Environmental pollution has become a vile threat to humans and wildlife globally. Today, both the air we inhale and the water we drink is highly unhygienic. The same goes for the food we consume. In addition, massive plumes of smoke are emitted by vehicles and motor cars that can envelop all the big cities of the world.

One of the leading causes of increasing environmental pollution is the world's growing population. As the population rises, so does the amount of garbage that people produce. For a better lifestyle people need effortlessly disposable products, such as soda cans or bottles of water. We have become a disposable state and nation; however, it is a bitter reality that the hoarding of these products has led to increasing amounts of plastic pollution in Pakistan.

Plastic is not an inherently good object, as it is composed of major toxic pollutants that have potential to cause great harm to the environment in the form of air, water and land pollution. In addition, it has started to impact the natural ecosystem negatively while creating problems for wildlife and human population such as killing of plant life and posing hazards to animals.

According to a study, about 8 million tonnes of plastics are deliberately dumped into the oceans globally. They also find their way due to wind and the flow of rivers and release of urban overflow into water channels. It is shocking to know that the simplest plastic normally used in grocery store bags take over 100 years to collapse, though the complex ones take between 100 and 600 years or even beyond that to decompose.

It is estimated that food wrappers and containers produce 31.15% of pollution in the environment. Bottles and containers cap produce 15.5% of pollution in the environment. Plastic bags cause 11.18% environmental pollution, straw and stirrers produce 8.13%, beverage bottles cause 7.27% pollution in the environment.

Since 1967, global plastic production has increased from two million tonnes to 380 million tonnes, almost three times faster than the world's GDP. Since 1950, the world has produced 9 billion tonnes of plastic waste. Of that only 9% has been recycled and another 12% incinerated. The rest of the waste was either dumped into landfills or emptied into the natural environment. There are several countries that have duly banned the use of plastic bags such as Bangladesh, France and Rwanda. Pakistan lags behind in these initiatives and is probably years away from a partial or blanket ban on plastic bags.

World Earth Day: Give up use of plastic and save the environment

There are countless environmental threats in Pakistan; from villages to small towns and big cities everywhere — on the street corners, in the air, on the seashore, in the freshwater bodies, in the water channels, we find heaps of plastic waste. Such waste has stained what used to be our once beautiful seashore of Karachi.

Elsewhere in the country, we are producing and using plastic-related objects with wild abandon. We haul our groceries from the market in plastic bags, at home we eat in plastic utensils and instead of using mud pitchers for drinking water we rely on plastic-made coolers. We also store our spices and other consumer goods in plastic containers and bowls. We drink bottled water every day, we use plastic mobile pouches, students take plastic made geometry boxes to school and the processed crisps we buy is packed in plastic wrappers. In today's world plastic has become our soulmate.

To conclude plastic pollution is an environmental menace and poses a major problem for marine life and freshwater lakes in Pakistan; it destroys habitats and adversely impacts wildlife species. Apart from the above-mentioned effects of plastic pollution, some of the more disturbing impacts are: it upsets the food chain, pollutes groundwater, land and air. It kills animals and is highly poisonous and



expensive. Therefore, on a serious note the government, relevant institutions and policymakers need to rethink their strategy and devise adequate measures against this ecological threat.

Published in The Express Tribune, June 11th, 2018

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1732444/6-plastic-pollution-pakistan-opinion/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JUN 4th TO JUN 10th 2018

Water commission threatens to stop constructions in DHA, Clifton

By Our Correspondent

Published: June 4, 2018

During the hearing of the water commission held in the Sindh High Court, head of the commission, Justice (retd) Amir Hani Muslim warned that all construction activity may be put to a halt if CBC and DHA fail to define their territorial limits.

Meanwhile, the federal defence ministry assured the Supreme Court-mandated water commission of immediate measures to stop pollution of Sea View beach.

During the hearing, Defence Ministry Joint Secretary Farooq Hassan said they will make sewage treatment plants functional at the earliest to stop discharge of untreated sewage in the sea.

He informed the commission that the defence secretary convened a meeting in Islamabad on May 31 in light of the commission's directives. The meeting instructed the CBC and DHA to stop discharging sewage at Sea View beach.

Justice (retd) Amir Hani Muslim-led commission to start proceedings today

It decided to construct a sewage treatment plant in the Kublai Khan area and complete this project by August, 2019, he added. The existing practice of releasing untreated sewage in the storm drains leading towards the sea will be stopped after four months and the sewage will be channeled to a treatment plant.

In May, a senior research officer of the Pakistan Council of Research on Water Resources, Dr Ghulam Murtaza, collected water samples from the beach for a lab test. He described the beach's contamination in his report to the commission as alarming, injurious to human health and hazardous to marine life.

It was pointed out that the sewage was being discharged from four separate locations from Dua and China Town restaurants to Do Darya.

The meeting agreed that the restaurants and kiosks along the beach will be barred from disposing off sewage in the sea. The joint secretary assured that the sewage of DHA Phase VIII will be treated at the existing treatment plant in the same phase.

However, sewage of Phases I to VII will be treated in the proposed plant. Hassan maintained that the sewage of some of the phases is supposed to be treated at the Mehmoodabad treatment plant, which is operated by the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB).

CJP forms judicial commission to probe APS attack

“... the stance of the DHA is debatable as according to them, some of the phases were planned in such a manner that their sewerage was to be treated through Mehmoodabad,” the commission observed.

However, KWSB Managing-Director Khalid Mehmood Shaikh denied that any such agreement existed over the plant in Mehmoodabad, the capacity of which is 180 million gallons per day. Justice (ret'd) Muslim directed the commission's focal person, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, to coordinate with the CBC, DHA and KWSB over construction of the new plant and its capacity.

The commission was informed that the KWSB has provided 114 water connections to the cantonment boards and related installations. These include 41 metered connections and 73 which are not metered. The KWSB was ordered to install metres in all the connections, along with cameras to monitor the flow of water.

With regard to the billing disputes between KWSB and K-Electric, the commission ordered the water board's managing-director to pay the amount to the power distribution company within seven days. The focal person was asked to coordinate between the two agencies for resolution of the matter of load-shedding of the water board's water pumping stations.

Justice (ret'd) Muslim objected to the water board's procedure of collective punishment by stopping supply from the bulk supply to a certain locality instead of cutting off the individual supply line of illegal connections.

The water board was asked to cut the illegal connections and resume the stopped bulk supply and submit periodical reports in this regard to the focal person. “No compromise [can be made] on unjust distribution of water.”

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1727468/1-water-commission-bars-construction-dha-clifton/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM MAY 28th TO JUN 3rd 2018

WB to give \$400m for green projects in Punjab

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Updated May 30, 2018

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday signed two financial agreements worth \$400 million with the World Bank for accelerating climate resilience development in Punjab.

The two projects are aiming to improve the environment and quality of life in cities of Punjab. These include Punjab Cities Programme (\$200m) and Punjab Green Development Programme (\$200m).

Secretary Economic Affairs Division Syed Ghazanfar Abbas Jilani signed the financing agreements on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, while representatives of Punjab government signed their respective programme/operation agreements.

Country Director Patchamuthu Illangovan signed the financing and programme/operation agreements on behalf of the World Bank.

## ADVERTISEMENT

An official statement issued said that Punjab Cities Programme aims to strengthen the performance of participating urban local governments in urban management and service delivery.

The Punjab Cities Programme will strengthen urban local governments' ability to deliver green municipal infrastructure and services in 16 cities benefiting 4.1 million people. The programme will also build systems to improve transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of the city governments.

The programme will support the operation implementing entity's implementation of its Performance Based Grants (PBG) programme to selected 16 MCs for strengthening their institutional performance and the carrying out eligible infrastructure investments.

The Punjab Green Development Programme will strengthen the province's environmental management through empowering its departments to provide better environmental services to citizens and the private sector, with a focus on strengthening the capacity of the Environment Protection Department.

It will help modernise laws and regulations and promote investments in cleaner technologies to reduce air and water pollution. The objectives of the programme are to strengthen environmental governance and promote green investments in the province.

Published in Dawn, May 30th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1410866/wb-to-give-400m-for-green-projects-in-punjab>

## July 2018

### *NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JULY 16TH TO JULY 22ND 2018*

#### *Gorano protest ends after 635 days*

A Correspondent July 21, 2018

MITHI: A group of villagers and rights activists who had been protesting against construction of a waste-water reservoir at Gorano village ended their agitation late on Thursday evening after 635 days over assurances by local leaders of Pakistan Peoples Party that they would redress their grievances after winning election.

PPP leaders Senator Gianchand, Fakeer Sher Mohammad Bilalani, Nandlal Malhi and others reached the protesters' camp pitched outside the press club in Islamkot and held talks with their leaders advocate Leela Ram, Bheem Raj, Abdullah Chowhan and others.

The PPP leaders admitted before journalists and general public that they "failed to understand" the issue and take villagers' concerns seriously when they were in government. Besides, work on the

project had already been undertaken but now they would stand by them and have their genuine concerns redressed, they said.

The protesters' leaders warned that if their demands were not met yet again they would resume their protest after election.

Published in Dawn, July 21st, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1421464/gorano-protest-ends-after-635-days>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JULY 9TH TO JULY 15TH 2018

Air pollution may account for 3.2m new cases of diabetes every year globally

NEW YORK: Air pollution could be responsible for 3.2 million new cases of type 2 diabetes every year globally, suggests a new analysis.

“We estimate that about 14 percent of diabetes in the world occurs because of higher levels of air pollution, that’s one in seven cases,” said senior study author Dr. Ziyad Al-Aly of Washington University and the VA Saint Louis Health Care System in Missouri.

“Risks exist at levels that are below what’s now currently considered safe by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States and also by the World Health Organization,” he told Reuters Health in a phone interview.

The tiniest form of particulate matter pollution, known as PM 2.5, is already associated with increased risk of heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease, and other noncommunicable diseases “and contributed to about 4.2 million premature deaths in 2015,” the study team writes in The Lancet Planetary Health.

PM 2.5 is the mix of solid fragments and liquid droplets suspended in air that’s sometimes visible to human eyes as haze.

“There is emerging evidence over the past several years that particulates, when they are small enough, they make their way through the lungs to the blood vessels,” Al-Aly said. “They go to the liver, they go to the pancreas, they go to the kidneys. These particles are noxious. They irritate tissue and they damage tissue, they create oxidative stress, they create inflammation.”

Type 2 diabetes is associated with obesity and aging and occurs when the pancreas can’t make or process enough of the hormone insulin.

To look for a link between air pollution and type 2 diabetes, researchers analyzed data on 1.7 million U.S. veterans without diabetes, comparing PM 2.5 levels where they lived to their risk of being newly diagnosed with the disease during the next eight and a half years, on average. The researchers separated out the independent effect of air pollution by taking other diabetes risk factors, like obesity, into account.

Veterans’ annual average daily PM 2.5 exposure ranged from 5 to 22.1 micrograms per cubic meter (mcg/m<sup>3</sup>) of air. A 10-point increase in PM 2.5 concentration was associated with a 15 percent higher

risk of developing diabetes, and an 8 percent higher risk of death. Risk of diabetes started to rise when pollution levels exceeded 2.4 mcg/m<sup>3</sup>, well below the EPA's current standard of 12 mcg/m<sup>3</sup> and the World Health Organization guideline of 10 mcg/m<sup>3</sup>.

Al-Aly and his colleagues then looked at worldwide PM 2.5 levels to estimate the total burden of diabetes due to air pollution. About 3.2 million new cases of diabetes, 8.2 million years of life lost to disability and more than 200,000 deaths annually were attributable to breathing dirty air, the authors calculated. Low-income and low-to-middle income countries bore the largest burden of air pollution-related diabetes.

While air in the U.S. is relatively clean compared to smog-choked parts of China, India and elsewhere, Al-Aly said, "we need to do better."

He called for moving to "energy sources that contribute much less to pollution, more electric cars, more hybrid cars, more solar power and wind sources of energy rather than coal. It's already happening, but probably not fast enough."

In an editorial, Dr. Gary O'Donovan of the Universidad de los Andes in Bogota, Colombia, and Dr. Carlos Cadena-Gaitan of the Universidad EAFIT in Medellin, call the findings "another call for action." They note that the current study did not adjust for physical activity, and that it's possible to cut air pollution while promoting exercise with programs like Bogota's Cyclovia, in which city roads are closed to motor vehicles on Sundays and holidays to make room for walkers and cyclists.

"More research is required to determine the independent associations of physical activity and air pollution with diabetes and other non-communicable diseases; nonetheless, there is more than enough evidence to justify the implementation of policies and interventions that might actually increase physical activity and decrease air pollution, such as Cyclovias, free sport and exercise facilities, bicycle sharing schemes, electric vehicles, low sulfur fuels, exhaust filters, and driving prohibition schemes," they write.—Reuters

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/07/09/6-page/726746-news.html>

#### NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JULY 2ND TO JULY 8TH 2018

Rs250m Punjab Environment Fund approved

#### RECORDER REPORT

LAHORE: Chief Secretary Punjab Akbar Durrani on Saturday approved creation of an Rs250 million Punjab Environment Fund.

The decision to establish the fund was taken at the meeting chaired by Chief Secretary to review smog control policy and tree plantation campaign in the province, here at Civil Secretariat.

The Environment Protection Department (EPD) had put forth the proposal to set up the fund with seed money of Rs250 million. The Chief Secretary told the meeting that as per direction of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, smog control policy has been posted at the website of EPD.

He directed all departments to submit their suggestions regarding the policy within two days. He opined that controlling environment pollution is a service to humanity. "Every citizen should take part in this initiative. There is need to work on emergent basis to overcome smog issue," he added.

The meeting decided to set target of planting 30 million saplings in the province in three months during the tree plantation campaign. The Chief Secretary ordered that tree plantation campaign in the province be launched like a competition. He said that top achievers in tree plantation would be awarded prizes at district, division and provincial level. He issued instruction to form committees at union council level to stop cutting of trees. He also asked the relevant authorities to launch a community mobilization and awareness campaign regarding controlling air pollution and benefits of afforestation.

The Secretary Environment Protection Department briefed the meeting about causes, and harms of smog, and recommendations of the Commission on controlling environment pollution. The meeting was attended by Chairman Planning and Development, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Additional Chief Secretary Home Department, secretaries of different departments including forest, education, health, finance, local government and community development, labour, industries and commerce, director general of Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), chief metrologist and officers concerned.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/07/08/5-page/726535-news.html>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JUNE 25TH TO JULY 1ST 2018

PQA industrialists given three months to install treatment plants

Ishaq Tanoli June 26, 2018

KARACHI: The Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation in Sindh on Monday directed the owners of industrial units situated in the Port Qasim Authority (PQA) industrial zone to install treatment plants within three months.

It also asked the PQA to lay sewerage pipelines outside the industries within two months which would be linked by the industries after contaminated water was treated.

The commission warned around 10 industrialists that their industrial units would be sealed if they failed to comply with its directive within the stipulated period.

The head of the commission, retired apex court judge Justice Amir Hani Muslim also expressed resentment over the absence of around 15 industrialists who neither turned up in person nor sent their representatives in compliance with the summons issued by the commission. The commission directed the senior superintendent of police to ensure the appearance of those owners of industrial units through the station house officers of the police stations concerned on Tuesday (today).

Judicial commission tells police to ensure presence of summoned owners of industrial units

PQA's pledge

At the outset, the owner of a pharmaceutical company undertook to install a treatment plant on the firm's premises, but complained that there was no sewerage line of the PQA to connect with the industries' sewerage lines after contaminated water was treated.

However, PQA officials assured the commission that the authority would provide sewerage lines within two months as the scheme was operative in the north-west zone.

A number of officials of the industries contended that their owners were abroad and would appear before court on June 26 and 28. The commission directed them to file undertakings of the owners that treatment plants would be set up within three months.

It also ruled that the periodical progress for proposed installation of a treatment plant would be gathered by the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) director general through his director and the PQA.

The commission directed some other industrialists to install septic tanks within two months while notices earlier issued to a few were discharged after they submitted that they had septic tanks on their premises and Sepa did not dispute the same.

#### Unconditional apologies

Two companies tendered unconditional apologies for not providing access to officials of Sepa for inspection and said the factories could be visited at any time.

The commission also directed two other firms to deposit the penalty amount of Rs1 million imposed by the PQA within two days.

Some of the industries' officials contended that they were not required to install treatment plants as they did not discharge any industrial waste.

The commission directed Dr Ghulam Murtaza of the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources to inspect the industries in question and submit a report. He was also told to inspect whether the septic tanks at different industrial units were functional.

A few firms said that they had primary treatment plants, but Sepa officials stated that such plants did not cater to the standards for the discharge of waste. The commission directed them to install standard treatment plants within three months.

The commission had visited the PQA on June 13 after receiving complaints from different quarters about draining untreated industrial waste into the sea and the chairman informed it that most of the industries did not have treatment plants on their premises and they were directly discharging liquid waste/industrial effluent into the sea, and also provided a list of such industries to the commission.

The commission was further informed that not only the PQA but Sepa had also issued notices, but apart from a few, all the industries within the industrial zones of the PQA were still draining industrial waste directly into the sea.

The commission had issued notices to the owners of all the industries mentioned in the list provided by the PQA to appear in person before it and justify the discharge of untreated industrial waste into the sea.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1416111/pqa-industrialists-given-three-months-to-install-treatment-plants>

SC seeks report on Manchhar Lake within two weeks

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Updated June 27, 2018

KARACHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the provincial authorities to come up with a report about measures taken to control pollution in the largest freshwater reservoir of Pakistan, Manchhar Lake, within two weeks.

A two-judge bench of the SC headed by Justice Gulzar Ahmed told the irrigation department secretary and other officials concerned to furnish details of the allocation of funds for the lake and how much money had been spent on it.

While hearing a case about a suo motu taken in 2010 regarding contamination of Manchhar Lake at the Supreme Court Karachi registry, the bench also directed the officials to inform it within two weeks that when water of the lake would be fit for human consumption.

Justice Ahmed deplored that the proceedings had been pending for the last eight years, but there had been no progress. He warned the officials that they could be sent to prison if they failed to produce desired results.

The apex court had taken notice of the increasing contamination of the lake in 2010 because of disposal of effluent from the Main Nara Valley Drain, now converted into the Right Bank Outfall Drain.

Published in Dawn, June 27th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1416256/sc-seeks-report-on-manchhar-lake-within-two-weeks>

Judicial commission summons top officials over marine pollution on 30th

Ishaq Tanoli June 27, 2018

KARACHI: The Supreme Court-mandated commission on water and sanitation on Tuesday summoned the commander of Karachi, chairman of the Karachi Port Trust, Sindh chief secretary, secretary for the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and other senior officials on June 30 over marine pollution.

Head of the commission retired apex court judge Justice Amir Hani Muslim said that inaction on the part of the authorities concerned had resulted in a great loss to the national economy through decline in exports and the sanctions imposed by the European Union and United States on fish imports.

“What is more disturbing is that constant flow of untreated waste is permanently damaging marine life,” he added. At the outset, Captain Rizwan Ahmed of Pakistan Navy, a representative of the headquarters commander of Karachi, briefed the commission on harbour pollution while the secretary for fisheries and livestock, and officials of the Karachi and Korangi Fish Harbour authorities, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board and the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) were also in attendance.



More PQA industrialists warned to install waste treatment plants or face shutdown

Justice Muslim said the overall picture given by Mr Ahmed was horrible as inaction on the part of different stakeholders had aggravated the pollution problem and it appeared that none of the departments concerned was discharging its duties.

He further said that the national strategic platforms had also been exposed to destruction and added that filth in the harbours had increased because of the direct discharge of industrial/municipal waste from different points of Karachi.

The commission said that the issues needed to be addressed on a war footing and for those compelling reasons, it was left with no option other than calling the commander of Karachi, KPT chairman, chief secretary, secretary for the TDAP, secretary for maritime affairs, secretary for local government, secretary for industries, secretary for fisheries and livestock, managing director of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board, officials of Sepa and the provincial law officers on June 30 so that appropriate and immediate steps could be taken to resolve the issues.

Warning to more PQA industrialists

Meanwhile, the commission directed the owners of some other industries located in the Port Qasim Authority (PQA) industrial zone to install waste treatment plants within three months and warned that their industrial units would be sealed if they failed to comply with its directive within the stipulated period.

A number of industrialists were also found absent during Tuesday's proceedings and Justice Muslim expressed displeasure over their repeated absence. He yet again issued notices to them and directed the police to ensure their presence on June 28.

On Monday, the commission had issued an identical directive to over 10 industries and also told the PQA to lay sewerage pipelines outside the industries within two months.

Initially, notices were issued to most of the industries located in the industrial zone of the PQA on June 13 for directly discharging liquid waste/industrial effluent into the sea.

Published in Dawn, June 27th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1416252/judicial-commission-summons-top-officials-over-marine-pollution-on-30th>

Project launched to promote commercial forestry

By Our Correspondent

Published: June 29, 2018

LAHORE: In order to increase forest coverage in the province, the South Punjab Forest Company (SPFC) has launched a novel commercial forestry project.

The project, besides benefiting the environment, is estimated to generate Rs20 billion during the next 20 years.

SPFC CEO Tahir Rasheed briefed the media on Thursday about the company's initiative and highlighted developments in the forestry sector around the world. He said that the company has adopted a commercial forestry model that is being rolled out in Pakistan for the first time under the public-private-partnership.

Under the project, the government has provided abandoned forest land to the private and corporate sector for commercial forestry, which will benefit the environment and economy alike. The project had already received approvals from its board of directors and the Public Private Partnership (PPP) steering committee before it solicited proposals from investors for over 99,077 acres of land in Southern Punjab.

He said, "Due to the comprehensive bidding process, 348 bids were received which were opened by an independent Bids Opening and Evaluation Committee (BOEC) in the presence of bidders and the media. Out of 189 projects, the SPFC received bids on 124 projects, which was 61,749 acres out of the total 99,077 acres. Furthermore, the average produce sharing ratio received was 36 per cent which was double than what was set, for instance, 15 per cent."

Tackling climate change: Forest cover increased by 6.3% in four years

He said that he had received final approval from the cabinet committee of the government of Punjab, after which the concession agreements have been signed with investors. "A total of 43 concession agreements have been signed with investors so far and now the company is waiting for administrative department's (Punjab Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Department) green signal to direct its field formations to initiate the process of handing over of forest land to concessionaires, who have met all requirements.

Rasheed said that the model of commercial forestry can be replicated in urban centres as well in order to achieve the goal of resilient cities, which can help address the issues of smog, heat wave, and urban flooding.

He told media about socio-economic and environmental benefits of SPFC's initiative and highlighted that around 40 million trees will be planted under this programme in underprivileged districts of southern Punjab. It will help in sequestration of 35 million tons of carbon from the environment and will generate nearly 15,000 green jobs.

Out of total 40 million trees, Rasheed indicated the SPFC will conserve 25 per cent indigenous tree species during the project duration that will help increasing forest area of the province. As all these trees are planted by private sector investors mostly for commercial purposes so it will generate an economic activity of around Rs240 billion, while the government will get a revenue of Rs20 billion from the project. In addition, mitigation of climate change through massive carbon sequestration will improve the micro-climate of Punjab and also assist the government in achieving its commitments laid out under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and Agenda 2030 among others, he added.

The SPFC is a Punjab government's entity, established as a public-sector company, under section 42 of the Companies Act, 2017, in the province of Punjab. It aims to stimulate private sector investments alongside public money to reduce deforestation in Punjab and to combine forest conservation with sustainable economic development. The investment objective of the company is to encourage the

investment in assets that can be established and managed on an environmentally and socially sustainable basis.

Published in The Express Tribune, June 29th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1745233/1-project-launched-promote-commercial-forestry/>

## **August 2018**

### ***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 27TH TO SEPTEMBER 2TH 2018***

#### ***AGRICULTURAL POLLUTANTS WORSEN WATER CRISIS IN SINDH***

F.H. Mughal Updated August 27, 2018

AGRICULTURAL pollutants pose a major threat to the surface water, farms and the health of the people living in Sindh.

Almost all surface water bodies in Sindh — the Phuleli Canal, Kalri Baghar Feeder, Pinyari Canal, Nara Canal, Rohri Canal, Rice Canal, Ghotki Feeder, Dadu Canal and Pat Feeder — get contaminated by these pollutants.

The Phuleli Canal and Kalri-Baghar Feeder are further affected by the discharge of industrial and municipal wastewater. The canal network system in Sindh is surrounded by land used for agriculture. The discharge or overflow from these lands flows directly into surface water bodies.

This has worsened the water crisis by leading to deterioration in water quality, thus reducing the volume of water that can be used. Agricultural pollutants typically comprise sediments, nutrients, pesticides, nitrates, phosphorus and heavy metals.

Heavy metals such as cadmium, cobalt, copper, nickel, lead, zinc, iron and manganese are found in a number of commercial mineral fertilisers, industrial sludge, animal feed additives, and in some pesticides, herbicides and fungicides.

Pollutants contain dangerous heavy metals such as cadmium, copper, nickel, lead, zinc, and iron, which require costly advanced water treatment systems not available in Sindh

The problem with heavy metals is that they require costly advanced water treatment systems (ultrafiltration, precipitation, biological oxidation, activated carbon, ozonation and ion exchange), which are not available in the water treatment plants in Sindh.

As a result, these pollutants are able to pass through the water treatment systems, ending up in household water storage systems. Drinking water contaminated by heavy metals leads to serious health problems. In infants it can cause methaemoglobinaemia, or blue-baby syndrome, which can be fatal.

In Pakistan, agriculture-related regulations do mention include agricultural pollutants. The Sindh Environmental Quality Standards of the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mention a

pesticides standard of 0.15 milligrams per litre (mg/L) for discharge in inland waters. The Sindh EPA has the power to enforce the pesticides standard, but is not doing so.

While the Sindh EPA is responsible for the discharge of agricultural effluent into the surface water, the surface water bodies are the responsibility of the Sindh irrigation department. While agriculture practices are the responsibility of the Sindh agriculture department.

The three institutions need to work together to control the agricultural pollutants, and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal Target 6.3, which states: “By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimising release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater”.

The three institutions can use their respective regulations to control the pollutants. For example, in British Columbia, the westernmost province of Canada, the Health Act and Sanitary Regulations are applied to farm waste on matters of nuisance, conditions affecting human health, and stream pollution.

Another act, the Municipal Act, gives municipal councils certain powers to pass bylaws regarding nuisance conditions, locations of livestock operations, and property line setback distances for buildings. The Water Act aims to stop dumping of waste into streams.

The Federal Fisheries Act has broad powers to prosecute persons whose work results in harmful alteration or destruction of fish habitat. The Pesticide Control Act Regulations exempt farm operators from certification, licensing and permit requirements when operating on their privately owned or leased land, and when using common agricultural pesticides.

The Sindh agricultural department’s extension wing can implement simple measures in coordination with agriculturists to control the flow of agricultural pollutants into the surface waters.

Some of these measures include: establishing stream bank buffer strips, preventing livestock from going into streams by placing fences around streams and constructing facilities to store manure. Furthermore, they can introduce waste minimisation practices to prevent pollution at the source, train field staff and conduct public awareness programmes for agriculturists.

Soil erosion can be curtailed by adopting minimum tillage operations, covering light-textured cultivated soils to prevent flow of sediment into streams, and setting up wetland treatment systems if run-offs are extensive. If field drains are constructed they can help pollutants bypass streams and collect in evaporative ponds.

The writer has a master’s in environmental engineering from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok

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<https://www.dawn.com/news/1429142/agricultural-pollutants-worsen-water-crisis-in-sindh>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 20TH TO AUGUST 26TH 2018  
‘OXO DEGRADABLE PLASTIC BAGS DISASTROUS TO ENVIRONMENT’  
Jamal Shahid August 20, 2018

ISLAMABAD: Environmentalists are now suggesting the discontinuation of Oxo biodegradable plastic bags, which have been declared disastrous to the environment, and marine life in particular.

“The United Nations Environment Programme called for an end to Oxo biodegradable plastic bags four years ago,” said an official in the Ministry of Climate Change.

Among the various types of Oxo degradable plastic bags such as the ones that disintegrate after exposure to the sun and the soil, the type that breaks down after reacting with oxygen were introduced by the Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) some eight years ago.

UN called for end to use of these bags four years ago, climate change ministry official says

It took hard work and some years to get retail chains such as Metro Cash and Carry, Shaheen Chemists and D. Watson, to mention some, to switch to biodegradable plastic bags, said the senior official from the ministry.

“But Pak-EPA did not realize that it was going from one problem into another,” he added.

He explained that Oxo degradable bags take as long as six months to a year and a half or more to break down into micro plastics.

“Because they do not completely disintegrate, pieces of plastic settle in soil impacting its fertility and crop production. Worst, these tiny pieces of plastics find their way into water channels that eventually end up in rivers and seas and become fish food, choking and killing them. It could also end up inside humans after consuming sea food,” the official said.

If not stopped, he said, Oxo degradable plastics could sometime in the future affect Pakistan’s fish exports especially to the EU, which is strict in observing environmental laws.

Ministry of Climate Change Director General Irfan Tariq conceded that the Oxo degradable bags brought into use not too long ago are an environmental hazard. There were perhaps not many options available to replace non-degradable plastic bags, he said.

“We supported UN when this issue was raised to protect our aquatic and marine environment. We will have to switch to alternate of Oxo degradable bags. The new minister for Climate Change is already aware of such issues and will take necessary measures,” Mr Tariq said.

The senior official also explained how Pakistan discouraged the use of Oxo degradable plastic bags among other countries in the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme not too long ago.

Offering other alternatives such as recyclable plastic bags or those made from paper and cloth, another senior official in the Ministry encouraged the use of starch based plastic bags engineered to fragment and totally disintegrated within 100 days after reactions with elements in nature such as water and heat.

“Starch based degradable bags are already in use. Pakistan needs to switch to newer eco-friendly technologies, especially when risks and impacts of climate change are amongst the highest in a country like ours,” the official said.

Published in Dawn, August 20th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1428026/oxo-degradable-plastic-bags-disastrous-to-environment>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 6TH TO AUGUST 12TH 2018  
WORLD BANK TO FUND PUNJAB'S 'GREEN GROWTH' PROJECT  
Amin Ahmed August 06, 2018

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has given approval to the 'Punjab Green Development Programme' to strengthen environmental governance and promote investment.

According to a bank document, the project will be launched next month with the installation of the new government in the province.

The programme's cost over five years amounts to \$273 million, of which \$200 million will be financed by the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank group. The World Bank approved the project on May 25, while the legal agreements were signed just before the completion of previous government's tenure.

Under the programme, the Punjab government will promote green financing as a way to mobilise resources for green investments beyond the programme's implementation period, and will directly support priority green investments in both the public and the private sectors. To mobilise domestic capital markets as a sustainable source of finance for green investments, the finance department will develop a set of principles for the issuance of green bonds.

An amount of \$273m will be spent on the project over five years

In line with the Punjab Environmental Protection Act of 1997 and amended in 2012, which authorises the creation of a provincial fund to finance environmental projects, the provincial government will establish a fund with a capital of \$55 million from the programme.

The programme operation has been designed in the context of mounting environmental challenges like air, water and soil pollution in Punjab along with its continued economic growth in recent years.

Lahore, the country's second largest city with over 11 million inhabitants, is one of the world's most populated cities and has been increasingly affected by toxic smog in recent years, caused notably by increasing emissions from industries, vehicles, power generation, and open trash and crop burning. Smog from Lahore and other cities in Punjab can extend throughout the province depending on the season and weather patterns.

Moreover, surface water and groundwater are seriously polluted due to untreated municipal, agricultural, and industrial wastewater. In the absence of adequate facilities, solid waste is disposed of with minimum sanitary measures.

A report of the World Bank says current trends, including industrialisation and urbanisation suggest that issues related to air, water and soil pollution in Punjab will worsen unless the institutional and technical capacity of organisations responsible for pollution management are strengthened, and unless targeted interventions are adopted to control such pollution releases and promote a greener growth trajectory.

The 18th Constitutional Amendment devolved among others, the responsibility for environmental planning, pollution control, and pollution prevention to the provinces, which still have very limited capacity to carry out such responsibilities. The Punjab government has been under increasing pressure to act to curb the growing smog crisis.

To improve the environmental governance and ensure sustainable development of its economy, the Punjab government requested the World Bank's support to address environmental challenges faced by the province.

Given the large contribution of vehicles to air pollution, the new programme will support Punjab government to strengthen its control over vehicle emissions. Specifically, the transport department will expand the scope of its existing procedure for the vehicle inspection and certification system to cover the entire fleet including private vehicles. It will also study the institutional and regulatory framework needed to ensure compliance of new vehicles with safety and emission standards, with a focus on rickshaw production.

The World Bank says in its report that ambitious efforts are needed in Punjab to reduce the rising social and economic costs of environmental degradation. Pollution is responsible for major health costs for residence of the province. It is also slowing productivity in sectors such as leather, transport and agriculture. Likewise, growing energy demand and erratic energy supply contribute to pollution due to the common use of small diesel electric generators and have increased pressure for improved energy efficiency in the different sectors of the economy.

Published in Dawn, August 6th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1425238/world-bank-to-fund-punjabs-green-growth-project>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM JULY 30TH TO AUGUST 5TH 2018

KORANGI CREEK BIODIVERSITY BEING DESTROYED BY UNTREATED WASTE: STUDY

Faiza Ilyas Updated July 30, 2018

KARACHI: A recent study highlights how continued flow of untreated domestic and industrial effluents from the city has destroyed the biodiversity of a major creek supporting livelihood of a large number of fishermen.

Titled Impact of indiscriminate disposal of untreated effluents in Korangi creek, the study is conducted at Karachi University's Institute of Environmental Studies (IES) by Prof Moazzam Ali Khan and Dr Aamir Alamgir.

Once carrying freshwater from the Indus river, Korangi creek is a tidal channel receiving highly polluted water from multiple sources, including Korangi and Landhi industrial areas and the Malir

river. Constant discharge of solid and liquid waste from Cattle Colony into the creek, the study points out, has increased the load of organic pollutants.

The creek connected with Kadiro, Jhari and Ganglaro creeks is navigable through small vessels and runs parallel to a hilly range starting from Ibrahim Hyderi.

‘Concentration of oil and grease found exceptionally high in water and sediment samples’

Like rest of the city, towns and settlements along the creek lack a proper system for waste collection and disposal, which is dumped along and into the creek. Fishing villages along the creek include Rehri village, Ayub village, Chashma village and Jamote village.

All these factors, the study says, have seriously affected the creek’s ecology, causing loss of fishes’ spawning grounds. These effects are noticeable in terms of fisheries’ quality that has commercial importance, it says.

“The creek provides livelihood to more than 100,000 people who are directly or indirectly engaged in fisheries. Twenty-seven bird species, many threatened or vulnerable, were recorded from this area in 1999,” the study says.

### Findings

Under the study, 38 samples of water and sediments were collected from various spots of and along Korangi creek. It found that its water was primarily polluted by organic load originating from nearby human settlements. The concentration of oil and grease was found to be “exceptionally high in water and sediment samples, which is detrimental for marine life”. The mean biological oxygen demand (a measurement of the amount of dissolved oxygen used by microorganisms for decomposing organic matter in water) of seawater tested and sediments was 288mg/l and 1645mg/l while chemical oxygen demand was 1231.9mg/l and 1645mg/kg, respectively.

The national environmental quality standard for BOD in seawater is 80mg/l and COD in seawater is 400mg/l.

The concentration of phenol and cyanide was much higher in the sediment samples as compared to the seawater whereas the load of phosphate, organic nitrogen and ammonia was higher in the samples collected from mangrove areas.

Out of six heavy metals tested, the concentration of lead was very high (5.49 mg/l), which might be an indication of fuel leaking from defective motor boats.

The national environmental quality standard for lead in wastewater is 0.5 mg/l. “The creek ecology once supporting livelihood of a large number of fishermen and contributing to economy has been destroyed by the continued discharge of untreated domestic and industrial waste. “This high level of pollution is also contaminating the quality of groundwater as well in the area,” said Dr Aamir Alamgir, a researcher and teacher at the IES, while sharing his observations during the study.



Dr Alamgir has also done a study on the quality of area's groundwater and found it to be contaminated especially with high fluoride content. People living along the polluted creek, he said, were found to suffer from numerous ailments, especially those related to body growth and skin.

"People are also exposed to toxic fumes emanating from the industrial waste. We also saw very vulnerable water lines passing along gutter lines," he said, adding that pollution had also badly damaged mangroves. Fishermen now had to travel long distances to catch fish and the team hardly observed any important bird species in the area, he said.

Published in Dawn, July 30th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1423750/korangi-creek-biodiversity-being-destroyed-by-untreated-waste-study>

#### MAKING AFFORESTATION A PRIORITY

Rashid Manzur | Dr M Abbas Aziz July 30, 2018

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) defines forest as land with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10 per cent and an area of more than 0.5 hectare. As a rule, 25pc of a country's area should consist of forest cover. But in Pakistan, it is about 5pc or 4.34 million hectares of the country's land area.

However, according to the World Bank sources, the total forest area of Pakistan was 3.3pc back in 1990, which has fallen to an alarming 1.9pc by 2015. In total, between 1990 and 2015, Pakistan lost 24.7pc of its forest cover, or around 625,000 hectares. The country is 110th globally in terms of the percentage of land covered by forests. The deforestation rate in the country, estimated at 0.2-0.5pc annually, is the highest in the world, which accounts for a 4-6pc decline in wood biomass per annum.

According to an International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) report, Pakistan's forests may die out within the next 10 to 15 years if the present rate of deforestation continues.

The main causes of deforestation are: demographic pressure, illegal cutting of trees, poor management of forests, household dependency on fuel wood for cooking etc. An increase in salinity due to sea water intrusion along the coastline of Sindh and Balochistan has adversely affected mangroves. Between 1965 and 2001, the area under mangroves has decreased from 400,000 hectares to 158,000 hectares. Juniper forests of Ziarat, known as living fossils, are declining at the rate 1.27pc per annum.

From the air we breathe to the wood we use, we depend on forests for our survival. Besides providing habitats for animals and livelihoods for humans, forests offer many benefits, such as watershed protection, prevention of soil erosion, mitigation of climate change by carbon sequestration, and provision of wood as a substitute for fossil fuel. Afforestation can also support side businesses, like apiculture, sericulture and livestock. It can even be a good source of herbal drugs.

Urban forests can play a key role in making cities more resilient to the effects of climate change. They offset industrial and agricultural pollution. Trees can cool cities by between two degrees Celsius and 8°C. When planted near buildings, trees can cut air conditioning use by 30pc and reduce the heating energy use by a further 20-50pc. One large tree can absorb 150 kilograms of carbon dioxide in a year and can produce as much oxygen as 10 people inhale in a year.

Research studies have shown that an individual tree can provide net benefits of up to \$50 per year. All these benefits can be availed if the planted tree reaches the age of 10 years. As part of the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries – a new mechanism of paying cash credit to developing countries that protect forests and the carbon stored within them – Pakistan can earn between \$400m and \$4 billion per year by conserving forests.

Wastewater from cities is largely used for growing vegetables and fodder, which poses serious environmental and health issues. This wastewater can be safely used for afforestation and will provide water re-use and nutrient recycling opportunity.

The World Conservation Union has estimated that with the current population growth, wood consumption in Pakistan would increase by 3pc every year. Increasing 1pc area under forests will require afforestation on 1.05m hectares. To achieve the benchmark of 25pc forest cover, we have to plant trees over an area of 15.56m hectares in addition to the existing forests. About 1,000 to 2,500 trees of species with upright growth habit or 500 to 1,000 spreading crown trees can be grown in one hectare. Assuming an average tree density of 500 per hectare, it would mean growing 7.78 billion trees.

Currently, plants of different tree species are available in nurseries of the Punjab's Forest Department for Rs8 per tree (Acacia) and Rs60 per tree (Jamun). Assuming an average price of Rs50 per sapling for the next five years, it would require an investment of Rs389bn for saplings only.

The achievement of this herculean task is only possible through a collective effort by the nation and participatory approach by the public and private sectors. The private sector should come forward to establish forest tree nurseries and provide saplings to the public at subsidised rates. Farmers can allocate 5-10pc of their farm area exclusively for growing trees like other field crops are grown. Tree species palatable to goats and sheep can provide additional benefit as fodder. Moreover, fodder crops can be intercropped in forest fields to feed the livestock. Farmers can sell these trees to meet their economic needs. Along the highways/motorways and around the cities, public land can be dedicated for raising trees and people should be mobilised to plant and take care of planted trees. Commercial organisations can include this afforestation activity in their corporate social responsibility projects.

Bringing more area under trees will not only help mitigate the environmental challenges, water scarcity issue and weather extremes, but will also contribute to the economic development of the country. We should not only gear our efforts to bring more area under forests, but also take care of the existing forests so that we can leave a green, healthy and prosperous Pakistan for our coming generations.

Dr Muhammad Abbas Aziz has a PhD in soil science.

Rashid Manzur has a master's in agriculture and has been working with government and private organisations for 33 years.

Published in Dawn, The Business and Finance Weekly, July 30th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1423473/making-afforestation-a-priority>

## FLOODING AFTER DYKE BREACH DESTROYS HOUSES, CROPS

The Newspaper's Correspondent July 31, 2018

SUKKUR: Flooding caused by a breach in the dyke of Toj Shakh (irrigation channel) destroyed 15 houses and standing crop besides inundating a graveyard in the Dargah Pir Haibat Shaheed area near Tangwani town of Kandhkot-Kashmore district on Monday.

Residents of several affected villages told local reporters that the breach occurred in the morning and the irrigation and local administration were promptly informed about it but no official turned up to get it plugged. They said they themselves carried out the repair work on a self-help basis to avoid more losses.

Published in Dawn, July 31st, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1423862/flooding-after-dyke-breach-destroys-houses-crops>

## September 2018

**NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER 24TH TO SEPTEMBER 30TH  
2018**

### **AIR POLLUTION LINKED TO HIGHER RISK OF DEMENTIA**

RECORDER REPORT SEP 24TH, 2018 PARIS

Urban air pollution, mostly from vehicles, is associated with an increased risk of dementia, according to research published on Wednesday. The link remained even after heavy drinking, smoking and other well established risk factors for dementia were ruled out, the researchers reported in medical journal BMJ Open.

Worldwide, about seven percent of people over 65 suffer from Alzheimer's or some form of dementia, a percentage that rises to 40 percent above the age of 85. The number afflicted worldwide is expected to nearly triple by 2050, posing a huge challenge to healthcare systems.

"Primary prevention of all dementia is a major global public health concern for the coming decades," the researchers wrote. Chemicals cast off by tailpipe pollution such as nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and soot are known to boost the risk for heart disease, stroke and respiratory problems, especially asthma. But whether they also make Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia more likely has remained unclear.

To find out more, a team of researchers led by Iain Carey of the University of London's Population Health Research Institute combed through health records for 131,000 people living in Greater London who, in 2004, were aged 50 to 79.

None showed signs of dementia when the study began. Based on residential addresses, the scientists estimated yearly exposure to both NO<sub>2</sub> and fine particulates known as PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and then tracked the health of the participants over a seven-year period.

During that time, nearly 2,200 patients – 1.7 percent of the total – were diagnosed with dementia. The fifth of these patients living in the most heavily polluted areas were 40 percent more likely to be afflicted than the fifth residing in areas with the least NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

Public health gains Because the study was based on after-the-fact analysis rather than a clinical trial in an experimental setting, no firm conclusions can be drawn as to cause-and-effect, the authors cautioned. But the findings strongly suggest that the chemical byproducts of burning diesel and petrol can damage brain function.

“Traffic-related air pollution has been linked to poorer cognitive development in young children,” the study noted. And even if the impact of air pollution remains relatively modest, they added, “the public health gains would be significant if it emerged that curbing exposure might delay progression of dementia.”

The study was welcomed by experts who reviewed it before publication. “There is a growing body of evidence of the link between air pollution and brain health, including dementia and Alzheimer’s,” said Martie Van Tongeren, a professor of occupational and environmental health at the University of Manchester.

“This adds to it.” Kevin McConway of the Open University praised the study but noted that it only estimated exposure to pollutants at home, and did not account for NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels at or near places of work, or the amount of time spent away from home.

In September 2015, the US Environmental Protection Agency revealed that German car manufacturer VW has installed so-called “defeat devices” in its cars to cheat in emissions tests. The European Environment Agency estimates that more than 400,000 people in Europe’s urban areas die prematurely every year due to outdoor air pollution.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/09/20180924410004/>

## DAM-CENTRIC APPROACH HAS EMPTIED INDUS, DEPRIVED DELTA OF WATER, SAYS EXPERT

The Newspaper’s Staff Correspondent Updated September 29, 2018

HYDERABAD: Eminent water expert Dr Hassan Abbas has said Pakistan needs to adopt ‘flowing river model’ as a dammed river was either ill or bad river and regretted that dam-centric approach has emptied the Indus River and deprived its delta of water.

He told journalists at the local press club on Friday that the dam-centric approach was adopted in the name of so-called development that started in 1850 onwards and after partition, Pakistan and India continued with this development model by signing Indus Waters Treaty.

So, he said, Indus was emptied and “now water flows don’t reach delta”. Hardly 1-2 MAF water flowed downstream Kotri Barrage in a year, making the delta lose its value. The river used to bring silt deposits which kept sea intrusion in check and nature created this balance after millions of years, he said.

But in last 150 years, such silt deposits did not reach delta after water projects were built on Indus, allowing sea to devour land by degrees every day. Policymakers did not understand it and let the delta be ruined, he said.

He said that Pakistan faced this situation for lack of hydrological knowledge thus projects built so far proved detrimental to the economy. “Now when we have knowledge we must know how a water project can affect delta,” he said.

He proposed knowledge-based mechanism to see whether certain water project was to benefit or harm the delta. If the proposed project was detrimental to environment, it should be shelved considering huge losses, he said.

Mr Abbas said that in a recent dialogue in Almaty, Kazakhstan, he proposed to Afghan experts to use Kabul River for navigation instead of building dams on it which could undermine Pakistan’s interests. He said that navigation in the river could lessen transportation cost as two inland ports could be established in two cities of Afghanistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan should develop Indus and Kabul rivers for navigation to benefit Central Asian states but perhaps his proposal did not go down well with experts of some countries, he said.

He said regarding efforts to build a dam over the Indus, if it was all about enhancing storage capacity, then one must explain what would happen on the 41st day even if storage was increased to 40 days from 30 days. So far there was nothing on record to show what happened on the 31st day of existing storage, he said. He said that no one was talking about the real problem. The water resources of Pakistan were polluted with sewage, pesticides, runoff and fertiliser, which had serious impact on groundwater resources in rural areas where 40 per cent population depended on shallow groundwater.

He said that it was Karachi which faced the most serious water problem although it was the highest income generating city. If water issue was to be resolved, then Karachi’s problem must get preference as it would also resolve the city’s economic issues.

He said that people tend to avoid modern hydrology and water management under which dams’ narrative had been rejected. In USA, 1,500 dams had been dismantled over the past 12 years and they were studying how to get about dismantling the remaining ones.

He said that Pakistan instead was being asked to follow those who did not have any knowledge of water management. Pakistan opposed India over building of dams but failed to sell its narrative on water issue to international community for two reasons. Pakistan based its claim on being the lower riparian to argue that India could not be allowed to build dams upstream but domestically it was promoting construction of dams at the cost of rights of lower riparian, he said.

He said that Pakistan needed to adopt flowing river model of development as a ‘dammed river’ was either ill or bad river. If Pakistan was able to promote this model of development, then it would be able to easily counter Indian narrative over dam because this model was acceptable worldwide, he said.

Mr Abbas said that flood irrigation was an old method and now there was talk of high-efficiency irrigation system with water pricing through metering. Pakistan should introduce a knowledge-based mechanism to evaluate any water project in a transparent manner, he said.

He disagreed with a view that water resources were depleting and believed global warming would lead to variation in weather patterns but there would be more rainfall as per scientific data available.

Published in Dawn, September 29th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1435585/dam-centric-approach-has-emptied-indus-deprived-delta-of-water-says-expert>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER 17TH TO SEPTEMBER 23TH 2018

MUZAFFARABAD CITIZENS PROTEST NEELUM-JHELUM POWER PROJECT

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter September 17, 2018

ISLAMABAD: A large number of people from Muzaffarabad and nearby areas on Sunday gathered outside the National Press Club and protested against the unavailability of water and the severe damage caused to the ecosystem due to the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project.

The protest was organised by the Jammu Kashmir Awami Workers Party (JKAWP).

The protesters said the main crisis is a catastrophic reduction of water in the Neelum River flowing through Muzaffarabad city. They said the Neelum River has almost dried up from Nosari to Muzaffarabad after the inauguration of the project, due to the diversion of 90pc of the river's water to the tunnel from Nosari.

"The project was started in 2008 and a 30-km long tunnel was constructed from Nosari to Chattar.

According to international laws, 80pc of a river's water is to be allowed to flow downstream but in this case, 90pc of the water is directed into the tunnel due to which 400 natural fountains of the area have dried up and the ecosystem of the area has been destroyed. Locals of the area are facing water scarcity as well," JKAWP Chairperson Nisar Shah told Dawn.

"The river has dried up and the lives of humans, animals and underwater species, as well as the biodiversity of the river, has been badly affected and is actually endangered.

"The ecological pattern in the area is changing very quickly. People living in the mountains are facing a serious water crisis," he said.

He said JKAWP and all other political parties of Azad Kashmir are demanding that the people and government of Azad Kashmir should have the power to decide on projects for the development of their natural resources.

He added that all mega projects are being initiated without proper consultation or environmental, social and strategic assessments.

In addition to drawing 90pc of water from the river instead of 20pc, the promise of creating small lakes in the lower basin of the river from Nosari to Muzaffarabad has also not been fulfilled, Mr Shah said.

He added that at present, Azad Kashmir is producing around 2,500 megawatts of electricity when its total consumption is 400MW but the four million people of Azad Kashmir are facing prolonged electricity loadshedding.

He said the people of Azad Kashmir are demanding that the area should be free of loadshedding.

Published in Dawn, September 17th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1433321/muzaffarabad-citizens-protest-neelum-jhelum-power-project>

#### THOUSANDS OF DEAD FISH SET ASHORE AT CLIFTON BEACH RECORDER REPORT SEP 17TH, 2018 KARACHI

A large quantity of dead fish was discovered on the Clifton beach, here Sunday. Thousands of dead fish have washed ashore along the city's coastline between Seaview and Do Darya. A number of citizens, who reached the beach for a day out, had to return home owing to dead fish and disgusting smell.

Some local fishermen were seen collecting dead fish which they are likely to sell out in the city. There was no official from the concerned department to stop them or undertake efforts to clean the beach. Besides, a large number of birds also swarmed the beach seeing dead fish as feed. Experts who deal with marine life say increasing sea pollution could be the reason behind the killing of fish in such a large quantity.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/09/20180917408415/>

#### CRUSHING PLANTS AT MARGALLA HILLS PERMANENTLY CLOSED: EPA RECORDER REPORT SEP 17TH, 2018 ISLAMABAD

The crushing plants here at Margalla Hills have been permanently closed and Sanjrani area plant was sealed in July 2018 by Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (EPA), ministry of Climate Change. Senior officials of EPA told APP that there are no crushing plants in any residential areas of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) at present. However, they said that one asphalt plant had been installed by CDA near Islamic International University Islamabad (IIUI), therefore, Capital Development Authority (CDA) might be asked about its operation.

The officials said that the approval for the design and construction of flats or any building in Islamabad was given by CAD, while Pakistan Environmental Agency only dealt with the Environmental impact assessment projects. They said that EPA gives environmental approval after environmental impact assessment. The officials further said that one project of residential apartments in F-10 Islamabad had been stopped after issuance of environmental protection order (EPO) by Pak-EPA due to violation of Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA) 1977.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/09/20180917408435/>

'DELTA DEPLETING FAST FOR WANT OF FRESHWATER'  
The Newspaper's Correspondent September 18, 2018

THATTA: Speakers addressing seminar held here on Monday warned that the situation in Indus delta was fast deteriorating because of lack of freshwater flows which had also turned subsoil water brackish, rendering it unfit for the consumption of humans as well as livestock.

The worst affected talukas were; Ghorabari, Keti Bunder and Kharo Chan, where sea intrusion had wrecked havoc with fish catch and fertile land, forcing large populations to migrate to other areas, they said.

They were speaking at the seminar on 'Sea intrusion: a threat to the survival of Indus delta' jointly organised by the Centre for Environment Development and the Sindh Radiant Organisation at Makli here.

Environmentalist Nasir Ali Panhwar said that most of the residents of deltaic region were fishers who had lost their livelihoods, causing a steep rise in the levels of poverty, malnutrition and deterioration of general health. Scarcity of potable and uncontaminated water was contributing to an increase in the incidence of diseases of skin, eyes and digestive tract, he said.

Mr Panhwar said the delta was dependent on silt-laden freshwater discharges from Indus which had been curtailed due to diversion of water for agriculture, power generation and other uses in upper reaches of the river. The freshwater flows into the delta had been inconsistent and mostly below minimum required levels during recent years, he said.

Abdul Qadir Palari said the reduction in the inflow of freshwater had exposed this complex ecosystem to several environmental and social stresses in the form of loss of habitat and biodiversity and a decline in the productive values of the ecosystem.

Dr Mohammad Ali Manjhi urged that both federal and Sindh governments to work together to revive the delta through comprehensive rehabilitation programme and an independent body to implement it. The plan should envisage revival of lost species, protection of environment, resettlement of uprooted people and long term coastal zone management, he said.

He demanded the government should ensure at least 10 MAF water was released downstream Kotri barrage and order a comprehensive multidisciplinary study to determine the volume of water required for the protection, preservation and revival of the delta.

Published in Dawn, September 18th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1433523/delta-depleting-fast-for-want-of-freshwater>

## RS64M ALLOCATED FOR REVIVAL OF ZIARAT FORESTS

By APP

Published: September 19, 2018

ISLAMABAD: An allocation of Rs64 million has been made for revival of Juniper and Chalgoza forests in Ziarat, Balochistan under the Green Pakistan programme.



“The programme will be implemented by the Balochistan Forest Department over the next five years,” senior officials of the Ministry of Climate Change informed Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change on Tuesday.

Initially, local community would be taken onboard by creating awareness and mobilising them to become a part of the programme.

A provision for livelihood activity has been made by compensating them for voluntary withdrawal from resource use rights over treated areas for required period.

On an average, enclosures will be established over an area of 15 acres at potential locations.

Besides that rehabilitation of degraded land would also be done through rain water harvesting techniques.

Juniper forests in Ziarat are unique because of their high ecological significance, extremely slow growth rate and scenic value. It is estimated that the age of a mature Juniper tree in Ziarat can exceed 1,500 years. Ziarat Juniper Forest has been declared Biosphere Reserve under the UNESCO’s Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

The biosphere reserve is home to the largest area of Juniper forest in Pakistan, covering an area of 111,852 hectares. The Balochistan Forest and Wildlife Department has developed a management plan for preservation and conservation of this reserve.

If the key areas in the core forest zone were fenced for a prolonged period it would ensure respite to natural regeneration.

The mature trees within the fenced areas would be used for seed dispersal in adjoining areas.

Over a period of years, the area would be covered with good regeneration of key species and its associate species.

One of the major reasons for degradation of these forests is fuel wood and grazing rights of local community. Due to excessive grazing, the natural regeneration is affected.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1806817/1-rs64m-allocated-revival-ziarat-forests/>

## GOVT TO SET UP PUNJAB CLEAN AIR COMMISSION TO CONTROL SMOG

From the Newspaper September 23, 2018

LAHORE: The Punjab government has decided, in principle, to set up the Punjab Clean Air Commission to control pollution and smog.

Committees have been established at tehsil and district levels for monitoring measures to control environmental pollution. Recommendations and proposals given by various departments to prevent smog and pollution were discussed in a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar on Saturday.

According to a handout, the meeting was told that brick kilns would remain closed as per court orders from Oct 20 to Dec 31. A ban on the burning of crops residue would be imposed across the province from Oct 1. It was also decided that an effective and people-friendly strategy would be evolved for stopping operation of two-stroke engines, motorcycle rickshaws and smoke-emitting vehicles.

A social media campaign would be launched to create awareness about the damage caused to environment by the burning of solid waste. A comprehensive mass media campaign would also be designed to create awareness about smog.

Chief Minister Buzdar directed to repair air monitoring equipment and said the air quality system in Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi, Rahim Yar Khan and Faisalabad must be made functional immediately.

He said smog disrupted daily life, therefore, a sustainable policy to prevent it should be devised.

The Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission needed to devise a system for real-time information about smog and other environmental issues. The South Asia Coordination body be contacted to prevent pollution entering Pakistan from the neighbouring country, the CM ordered.

Those who attended the meeting included federal Environment Minister Amin Aslam, senior provincial minister Abdul Aleem Khan, provincial ministers Mian Aslam Iqbal, Sibtain Khan Niazi, Malik Nouman as well as the inspector general of police and secretaries of departments concerned.

The environment secretary gave a detailed briefing to the meeting participants.

Published in Dawn, September 23rd, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1434428/govt-to-set-up-punjab-clean-air-commission-to-control-smog>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER 10TH TO SEPTEMBER 16TH 2018  
HUNZA PEOPLE PROTEST AWARD OF MINING LEASE TO OUTSIDER  
A Correspondent Updated September 10, 2018

GILGIT: Hundreds of residents of Nasirabad area of Hunza district on Sunday demonstrated outside the Gilgit Press Club against issuance of a mineral lease to a private company in their area.

Earlier, about 500 people took out a protest rally from Nasirabad to the press club here, chanting slogans against the GB government and owners of a private mining company.

They said that economic murder of the poor people was not acceptable and that the local people had the foremost right over their natural resource.

The protesters said marble abundantly existed in Nasirabad, and the local people had obtained mining lease from mineral department in 1989. They said that the locals had regularly been paying the lease fee to the government.

However, they said in recent years a private company had claimed ownership of the mine lease because the owner of the firm was an influential person who had support of the police and the local administration.

Published in Dawn, September 10th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1431974/hunza-people-protest-award-of-mining-lease-to-outsider>

## COURT SUMMONS OFFICIALS ON PLEA AGAINST CLEAN WATER WASTAGE

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter September 15, 2018

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court on Friday summoned the officials concerned from departments of Punjab Planning and Development and the Housing and Urban Development on a petition questioning wastage of clean water by washing roads and cars.

During the hearing, Justice Ali Akbar Qureshi observed that the matter was of grave importance and required to be decided without delay.

Abdullah Malik of the Civil Society Network had filed the petition pleading that precious water was being wasted by the government and the individuals as well.

Petitioner's counsel Azhar Siddique pointed out that the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) washed all main roads of the city and watered plants with clean water while vehicles were being washed at private service stations with clean water.

He said huge quantity of clean water being wasted by the government and private persons could be recycled if steps were taken to save it.

Justice Qureshi noted that canal water could be used for watering plants and greenbelts in the city instead of clean water. He vowed that the court would not let the clean water wasted and take the matter to its logical end.

The judge directed the responsible officials from the Planning and Development Department and the Housing and Urban Development Department to appear in person on Sept 17.

The judge also appointed Barrister Sohail Babar as amicus curiae (friend of court) to assist the court on the matter, which would be heard on a day-to-day basis from next hearing.

In a separate hearing, Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry sought a reply from the Faisalabad deputy commissioner on a petition questioning lack of rescue facilities at private swimming pools.

Imran Ali of Faisalabad filed the petition pleading that private swimming pools were rampant in the city but they lacked necessary equipment or rescuers to deal with any emergency situation.

The petitioner pointed out that his young son had died while swimming in the pool of a private housing society due to unavailability of rescue facilities.

He sought a direction for the government to take strict action against the administration of private swimming pools lacking rescue services.

The judge will resume hearing on Monday.

CJP: Chief Justice of Pakistan Mian Saqib Nisar will hear multiple cases of public interest, including suo motu on free of cost extraction of groundwater by bottled water manufacturing companies, at the Lahore registry of the Supreme Court on Saturday (today).

Notices have already been issued to the attorney general of Pakistan, advocate generals of all provinces and the representatives of the companies to appear before a two-judge bench.

Justice Ijazul Ahsan will join the chief justice at the bench.

Other cases include legitimacy of public sector companies working in Punjab and colossal losses incurred by railways.

After the regular cases, the chief justice would personally hear applications moved by citizens to human rights cell of the Supreme Court.

Published in Dawn, September 15th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1433001/court-summons-officials-on-plea-against-clean-water-wastage>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER 3TH TO SEPTEMBER 9TH 2018

CUTTING OF TREES CONTINUES IN SWAT DESPITE PROTESTS

The Newspaper's Correspondent September 03, 2018

Mature and healthy trees are being cut along Saidu Road, Swat. — Dawn

MINGORA: The local officials of forest department are busy in cutting mature trees along the roadsides in Swat as the government launched the billion tree plantation drive across the country on Sunday.

“The forest department and district administration, despite our protests, are busy in cutting the trees which were grown along both sides of the roads in the former state era,” said Attaullah Jan, a lawyer and civil society member in Saidu Sharif.

He said that the trees not only generated oxygen but also provided shade to people and controlled pollution.

CM orders inquiry, suspends district forest officer

The local people gathered on Saidu Sharif Road to protest cutting of the trees. They demanded of the provincial government to stop immediately cutting of mature trees in the area.

They said that on one hand Prime Minister Imran Khan was insisting on planting trees but on the other hand the forest department was cutting mature trees in Swat.

“Today the government has launched tree plantation drive across the country including Swat but I am really shocked to see the department cutting trees in Saidu Sharif and Mingora,” said Hazrat Maaz Khan, a resident of the area.

He said that the deputy commissioner ordered the district forest officer to stop the cutting drive but the forest department did not obey the orders and continued to cut the trees.

The local people said that keeping in view the growing population, it was difficult to grow any new tree. “The administration in collusion with the district forest officer and contractors has made an historic blunder to kill those mature trees in Saidu Sharif and Mingora,” said Mahmmod Aslam, an environment activist.

He said that the decades-old trees were healthy and in the present day circumstances they could not be grown again.

The PTI youth activists also participated in the protest against the district forest office and said that they would raise voice against cutting of trees.

MPA Fazal Hakim, when contacted, said that he would initiate an inquiry in the issue and would take legal action against the people involved in it.

On the other hand, saplings were planted in Fizagat as part of the countrywide plantation drive. MPA Fazal Hakim, tehsil nazim Ikram Khan and others planted saplings.

The district administration claimed that 100,000 trees would be planted in the campaign.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Saqib Raza Aslam said that Chief Minister Mahmood Khan has taken notice of the issue and directed forest department to immediately stop cutting of trees. He also ordered legal action against the district forest officer.

The chief minister directed the chief secretary to suspend the Swat DFO and immediately stop cutting of trees. He also ordered an enquiry into cutting of trees and directed the deputy commissioner to submit the inquiry report within 24 hours.

The chief minister regretted that provincial government repeatedly issued instructions against illegal and unscientific cutting of forests as it threatened the environment. He said cutting of trees was unaffordable act. He added that there was ban on cutting of trees and he would never allow deforestation and illegal cutting of trees.

Published in Dawn, September 3rd, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1430576/cutting-of-trees-continues-in-swat-despite-protests>

***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 22TH TO OCTOBER 28TH 2018***

***PLASTICS HAVE ENTERED HUMAN FOOD CHAIN, SAYS STUDY***

AFP October 24, 2018

PARIS: Bits of plastic have been detected in the faeces of people in Europe, Russia and Japan, according to research claiming to show for the first time the widespread presence of plastics in the human food chain.

All eight volunteers in a small pilot study were found to have passed several types of plastic, with an average of 20 micro-particles per 10 grams of stool, researchers reported on Tuesday at a gastroenterology congress in Vienna.

The scientists speculated that the tiny specks — ranging in size from 50 to 500 micrometres — may have been ingested via seafood, food wrapping, dust or plastic bottles. A human hair is roughly 50 to 100 micrometres in width.

“In our laboratory, we were able to detect nine different types of plastics,” said Bettina Liebmann, a researcher at the Federal Environment Agency, which analysed the samples.

The two most common were polypropylene (PP) — found in bottle caps, rope and strapping — and polyethylene terephthalate (PET), present in drinking bottles and textile fibres.

Together with polystyrene (utensils, cups, coolers) and polyethylene (plastic bags), they accounted for more than 95 per cent of the particles detected.

“We were unable to establish a reliable connection between nutritional behaviour and exposure to microplastics,” said lead author Philipp Schwabl, a researcher at the Medical University of Vienna.

In earlier studies on animals, the highest concentrations of microplastics were found in the stomach and intestines, but smaller amounts have also been detected in blood, lymph and the liver.

“There are initial indications that microplastics can damage the gastrointestinal tract by promoting inflammatory reactions or absorbing harmful substances,” Schwabl said.

“Further studies are needed to assess the potential dangers of microplastics for humans.” Schwabl recruited five women and three men, aged 33 to 65, in Finland, the Netherlands, Britain, Italy, Poland, Russia, Japan and Austria.

Each kept a week-long log of what they ate, and then provided a stool sample.

All consumed foods wrapped in plastic and beverages in plastic bottles, and six ate seafood. None were vegetarians.

“I’m not at all surprised, or particularly worried by these findings,” commented Alistair Boxall, a professor in environmental science at the University of York in Britain.

“Microplastics have been found in tap water, bottled water, fish and mussel tissue, and even in beer,” he added.

“It is therefore inevitable that at least some of these things will get into our lungs and digestive system.” Much more research is needed, he said, before we can determine the origin of plastics found in the gut, and especially whether they are harmful.

Published in Dawn, October 24th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1440996/plastics-have-entered-human-food-chain-says-study>

## BURNING OF CROP RESIDUE, GARBAGE BANNED UNTIL DEC

Aamir Yasin October 25, 2018

RAWALPINDI: The district administration has banned the burning of garbage, tyres and crop waste until December to prevent smog as winter approaches.

After directives from the Punjab government, Deputy Commissioner Omer Jehangir imposed section 144 on the burning of crop residue, solid municipal waste, and other plastic and leather items in the winter.

The Punjab home department imposed the ban on the request of the provincial agriculture department after Punjab suffered from heavy smog last winter.

The administration also directed the concerned department to register cases against violators.

After imposing section 144, Mr Jehangir also constituted anti-smog implementation committees at district and tehsil levels.

The committees are to provide administrative support for the implementation of smog policy.

Published in Dawn, October 25th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1441112/burning-of-crop-residue-garbage-banned-until-dec>

## PLASTIC POLLUTION

Editorial October 26, 2018

EIGHT individuals from Europe, Russia and Japan were asked to keep a diary of everything they ate for a small study. After a week, they provided stool samples to scientists. All eight subjects were found to have traces of plastic in their system. Each had had plastic-wrapped food or had drunk from plastic bottles, while six had consumed seafood. It bears repeating — our planet has a plastic problem, and it isn't going away anytime soon. The worldwide production of plastic is said to have swollen to nearly 300m tonnes a year. More than 8m of that ends up in the oceans, where it can take anywhere from 100 to 1,000 years to disintegrate, contaminating beaches, endangering marine life and eventually making its way into the food chain. The survey results may shock some, but it was inevitable that the material found all around us would one day be inside us. Recently, the EU Parliament voted for an outright ban on single-use plastics. With a growing population and rapid urbanisation, Pakistan's demand for cheap plastic will keep increasing. Are policymakers paying attention? Those in the corridors of power should be — particularly since many have stakes in large-scale industries.

A UN report states that the Indus River has the second highest amount of plastic waste dumped into it at 164,332 tonnes. Most of the untreated industrial waste of Lahore, Faisalabad and Sialkot also ends

up in the rivers, lakes and sea. Another WWF study mentions that plastic contributes nearly 50pc of the beached pollution at Karachi's Clifton beach, while other beaches along the coastal belt are also getting polluted. The implications for public health are worrying. In the past, there have been several attempts at banning non-biodegradable polythene bags, but these were always resisted by manufacturing industries, which employ thousands of workers. It is said that some 10,000 manufacturing units produce over 50bn plastic bags a year in Pakistan. The Sindh government announced a ban this year (although the law has existed since 2014), but little evidence of its compliance exists on ground, as is evident from the absence of large-scale, inexpensive, environmentally friendly alternatives and the lack of awareness amongst the general population. However, informed consumers can change some of their lifestyle choices by prioritising the environment and health of their fellow citizens over convenience. After all, even in the absence of strict laws, the market still only responds to demand.

Published in Dawn, October 26th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1441412/plastic-pollution>

## SERIOUS CONCERNS RAISED OVER INCREASED POLLUTION IN PORT QASIM

Faiza Ilyas Updated October 26, 2018

KARACHI: Concerns related to serious environmental degradation affecting the federally administered Port Qasim area dominated the proceedings of a public hearing held at a hotel on Thursday.

Among other reservations, questions were raised as to why the area had been heavily industrialised without assessing the cumulative impact of projects.

The public hearing called by the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) pertained to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of a proposed project titled 'Expansion of PVC (polyvinyl chloride) and VCM (vinyl chloride monomer) manufacturing plant' by Engro Polymer and Chemicals Limited (EPCL).

The EIA report was prepared by Hagler Bailly Pakistan (HB-P).

The project site is located in the eastern industrial zone of Port Qasim and southern part of Malir district.

The programme started off with a brief presentation on the project by Athar Abrar Khawaja, manager of the Engro project, who explained the design, major processes and operational controls of the existing plant.

The project, according to the details shared in the programme, aims to increase production of PVC — a chemical used in the manufacturing of numerous plastic products — and VCM (raw material for PVC) from 195ktpy to 295ktpy and from 195ktpy to 245ktpy respectively.

This would be done by establishing another PVC plant within the boundaries of the existing facility. The project will also include other modifications, for instance, the addition of a 7km-long import line for ethylene dichloride and installation of another VCM storage tank.



On corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, he said that the company planned to install five filtration plants in the area and a health clinic.

Giving a presentation on the EIA report, Vaqar Zakaria representing HB-P said that the sampling data was collected to assess air and water quality, and noise levels, apart from secondary data on topography, geology, seismicity and climate.

“While all other data on air quality complied with Sindh Environmental Quality Standards (SEQS), the sulphur dioxide concentrations exceeded the annual SEQS,” he said, adding that traffic on Port Qasim access roads and combustion points where coal, petrol and diesel were being used as fuel are major sources of sulphur dioxide emissions.

Pointing to high environmental pollution in Port Qasim, he said: “Its ecology is headed towards a disaster. The area faces serious environmental issues which have emerged due to massive dredging, discharge of all kinds of waste into the creek system, destruction of mangroves and even fishing with the help of small mesh-sized nets. The larger picture of this area needs a lot of attention.”

Sharing some EIA report data, he said that an estimated 59,000 people lived in the surveyed settlements of the study area and that water availability was a major problem being faced by locals as most underground water was saline and brackish.

Replying to a question on pollution in the Port Qasim area during the question-answer session, Waqar Hussain Phulpoto representing Sepa said that it was only after the water commission took up the case of marine and environmental pollution that Sepa staff was allowed to visit Port Qasim for inspection.

“Such a state of affairs is indeed a source of embarrassment for us. However, things have changed after the Supreme Court intervened,” he admitted, adding that the Port Qasim Authority (PQA) had committed to the court to build two combined effluent plants in its jurisdiction.

Saqib Ejaz Hussain, a senior environmentalist, criticised the PQA and questioned whether they had a master plan. “The PQA allowed the destruction of mangroves grown over 200 hectares by Engro under permission from PQA, as well as of naturally grown mangroves for different projects, ignoring their protected status.”

He called upon Sepa to review its SEQS including that of air quality which had been raised unjustifiably and were contributing to pollution.

“Another violation (in Port Qasim) is the discharge of untreated waste by industries into Badal Nala, which is a storm-water drain,” he said, expressing concern over Sepa’s role and authority.

Dr Syed Raza Ali Gardezi representing Citizens for Environment urged Sepa to have a uniform standard for the number of trees planted to compensate for the vegetation lost due to a project.

To concerns related to human and environmental safety, Mr Khawaja said that the proposed plant wouldn’t generate any hazardous solid waste whereas liquid waste would be treated in the already operational treatment plant.

“Apart from local standards, we also follow international standards. Health screening of staff is a regular feature of our operation that also includes weekly emergency drills. The data on the operation is regularly submitted to Sepa,” he said.

Published in Dawn, October 26th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1441362/serious-concerns-raised-over-increased-pollution-in-port-qasim>

## CHINESE SANITATION COMPANY TOLD TO FIX ITS ACT IN KARACHI

By Nasir Butt

Published: October 26, 2018

KARACHI: The language barrier was one major impediment in the hearing of the Supreme Court-mandated Judicial Commission on Water and Sanitation on Thursday, when the head of the Chinese company, Changyi Kangjie Sanitation Engineering Company, contracted to collect solid waste from Karachi appeared before the commission.

The commission’s members, headed by Justice (Retd) Amir Hani Muslim, communicated with the Chinese firm’s chief through an interpreter. At the outset, Justice Muslim asked the chairman if he understood English or Urdu. The latter, who was accompanied by a female interpreter, replied in the negative, prompting Justice Muslim to remark that being the head of such a big company, he should learn a language to communicate in.

Following up on his earlier question, Justice Muslim asked the chairman if he knew why he had been summoned, before asking the interpreter to tell the chairman that his company had failed in its responsibilities and that there were tonnes of complaints against its operations.

To this, the company’s counsel interrupted that the chairman had assured to resolve all the issues. The commission head asked the counsel to be seated and refrain from interrupting the proceedings.

In response, the chairman asked the court to order settlement of its outstanding dues. To this, the commission remarked that instead of addressing the issues, the company was asking questions. Justice Muslim asked the interpreter to tell the chairman why payments to the company had been suspended.

The company chairman told the commission that its bills from 2017 had not been cleared. To this, the managing director of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board told the commission that the payments had been suspended after multiple objections were raised regarding the bills. The Chinese company is obligated to carry out 30% of the work through a local contractor, he said.

Justice Muslim remarked that the commission had given several relaxations to the Chinese company, which had in turn continued to operate due to the weaknesses of the Sindh government.

The company’s performance was not fitting for it to be allowed to continue with the contract, said Justice Muslim. To this, the company chairman said that the local administration was not cooperating with his firm. In response, the commission questioned whether anyone was asking for extortion money or preventing the company from fulfilling its responsibilities.

We are not here to resolve your payment disputes, the commission head remarked.

Subsequently, the commission ordered to constitute a committee, comprising representatives from the Chinese company and the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board to resolve the payment disputes through dialogue and negotiations. The commission ordered the committee to present its report by October 30.

#### Encroachments

Separately, the commission gave one month's time to the authorities to clear up the encroachments on Khalid bin Waleed Road, Sir Syed Road and Allama Iqbal Road.

The deputy commission for Karachi District East Ahmed Siddiqui told the commission that the administration had cleared up the mess and the roads were being carpeted. He added that encroachments between Disco Bakery and Gulshan Chowrangi had also been cleared and that the district administration was carrying out a full-fledged campaign after the by-elections. Siddiqui said that the entire district would be cleared of encroachments within a month. Meanwhile, the Sindh Building Control Authority DG Iftikhar Qaimkhani told the commission that residential plots on Sir Syed Road were being used for commercial activities and that the administration had initiated a crackdown against them.

The counsel for Karachi Development Authority maintained that they were carrying out a crackdown against illegal structures. To this, Justice Muslim remarked that the KDA was in the habit of leaving rubble from their anti-encroachment drives in their wake. "I am also a resident of Karachi and I can see that on the roads," he said. "You are not telling the Supreme Court that the mess is still lying over there," he told the counsel.

#### Water woes

Residents living on both the sides of the Lyari river appeared before the commission to apprise its members of their woes regarding the use of heavy duty generators and boring by the industries. The residents requested the commission to order the removal of the line that passed through Sher Shah river. To this, the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board's MD asked the residents to speak of the problems they were facing and abstain from pinpointing the Lyari river. The commission head, however, advised the water board's MD to listen to the petitioners.

Later, Justice Muslim remarked that the administration was making great profits while the city was facing acute shortage of water. Meters are not being installed to monitor water supply, he said, adding that were meters to be installed, everyone's business would come to a halt. The administration is not serious in improving the water supply system.

The commission hence directed all petitioners decrying the suspension of water supply to appear before it on November 6.

Published in The Express Tribune, October 26th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1834120/1-chinese-sanitation-company-told-fix-act-karachi/>

## LHC SEEKS NOTIFICATION OF COMMISSION ON AIR POLLUTION

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Updated October 27, 2018

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court directed on Friday a provincial law officer to submit a notification regarding constitution of an air pollution standing commission, as ordered by the Supreme Court.

Justice Ayesha A. Malik was hearing petitions filed by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf leader Waleed Iqbal and others questioning the failure of the government to implement recommendations of a smog commission established by the high court in 2017.

Smog commission chairman Dr Pervez Hassan told the court that the apex court had constituted the air pollution standing commission to implement guidelines prepared by the smog commission.

He stated that Punjab had been divided into three zones — green, yellow and red. Green zones are those where smoke emission is less, yellow with moderate and red with large smoke emission. He said no brick kilns would be closed in green zones while yellow areas would be monitored and analyzed for abrupt weather changes and all kilns using older forms of technology would be banned in red zones.

The judge adjourned hearing till Dec 16 and directed the law officer to produce the notification of the air pollution standing commission, if established by the government.

Earlier, advocate Sheraz Zaka representing Mr Iqbal said recommendations of smog commission had not been implemented. He said the chief secretary and the secretary of environment failed to perform their statutory obligations.

The lawyer that the entire province was adversely affected by spillover effects of smog. He said chief secretary and secretary environment should be directed to clamp down on commercial activities of factory owners established in residential areas in Lahore.

Published in Dawn, October 27th , 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1441618/lhc-seeks-notification-of-commission-on-air-pollution>

## HYPER DANGER OF SMOG IN PUNJAB LIKELY FROM NOVEMBER 4: EPD SECRETARY REECORDER REPORT OCT 27TH, 2018 LAHORE

Secretary Environment Protection Department Dr Zafar Nasrullah has said that brick kilns in 'red zone' areas comprising Lahore, Gujranwala and some parts of Sahiwal will be completely closed down from November 4 due to expected hyper danger of smog in Punjab.

Presided over by Provincial Minister for Labor and Human Resource Ansar Majeed Khan on Friday, the secretary revealed this in a meeting which was held to deliberate over the issue of closure of brick kilns in Punjab due to expected phenomenon of smog next month.

Addressing the meeting, the Minister said no zigzag brick kiln will be closed down by the Punjab government in the province due to expected phenomenon of smog. He said the demand of bricks will greatly increase in forth coming days with the start of Prime Minister's "Apna Ghar" project and job

opportunities for the brick kilns workers will be enhanced as well. The brick kiln owners should convert their kilns to zigzag technology for non-stop and comparatively more profitable functioning of their business, he suggested.

“All the brick kiln owners should get their kilns and workers registered with the Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI) so as to facilitate their workers from health care and related social security cover. Strict action will be taken against the brick kiln owners who will not register their business with the PESSI,” he warned.

The secretary environment while briefing the participants of the meeting said no brick kilns will be closed down in ‘green zone’ areas comprising Southern Punjab which will not be affected from the smog whereas some areas of ‘yellow zone’ will kept under strict observation and only be closed if affected from the smog.

Dr. Zafar Nasrullah said as the brick kilns functioning on zigzag technology do not cause the reasons for smog; therefore, they will remain open. On this, the Minister said the Punjab government will promote brick kilns with zigzag technology as these cause less smog and can supply bricks throughout the year with best quality bricks.

The Minister announced that the brick kilns owners will be facilitated with soft loans by the Bank of Punjab (BoP) for transfer of brick kilns to zigzag technology. He hoped that 80 percent brick kilns will be transferred to pollution-free zigzag technology till next season.

He also ordered the DG Headquarter PESSI to ensure registration of the brick kilns and its workers so that they could be provided the facilities of R-V cards and related social security facilities. For the purpose, the labour department will convert all its services for labour community on “one window operation” with online facilities linked with central office, he added. DG Labor Welfare Punjab Farooq Hameed Sheikh informed that nearly 10,000 brick kilns are functional in the province and they have so far registered over 6500 brick kilns and 290,000 workers with the department.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/10/20181027419133/>

## CHURNA ISLAND DIRECTLY HIT BY OIL SPILL: EXPERTS

The Newspaper’s Staff Reporter Updated October 28, 2018

KARACHI: As an operation began on Saturday to contain damage from the oil spill at Mubarak village and near Cape Monze, experts called for immediate measures to protect Churna Island’s sensitive habitat, which was directly hit by the oil spill.

Located some six kilometres from Mubarak village, the island falls under the jurisdiction of the Balochistan government. The island, a lifeline for fishermen, is a major biodiversity hotspot popular for scuba diving and snorkelling.

“The seawater surrounding the island was heavily polluted with oil traces that have left the whole rocky boundary of the island darkened,” said Dr Javed Aftab of the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), who along with his team carried out an offshore inspection of the oil spill on Friday.

The Maritime Security Agency says the source of oil spill is still unclear

The island and its surrounding area, he pointed out, was home to highly diverse marine life, including corals.

“We plan to inspect the site in more detail on Monday and collect more samples from the site. The conditions there are worrisome and require a detailed assessment,” he said.

Explaining how corals are impacted by an oil spill, he said that it could kill them or impede their growth.

“The entire reef ecosystem can suffer from an oil spill, affecting the many species of fish, crabs, and other marine invertebrates that live in and around coral reefs,” he said, adding that oil fingerprinting could help trace the source of oil spill.

He also shared his observations of Mubarak village and said that fishermen had genuine concerns over the loss of their livelihood and future implications of this disaster.

“The whole marine ecology along this coastal belt has been badly affected. Oil traces now cover rocky habitats supporting a diverse range of species. All must have perished [in] this disaster which would have short- and long-term effects,” he said.

Environmentalists have long been demanding that Churna Island be declared a protected area due to its ecological significance, which in recent years faces serious threats from industrial development.

Who did it?

The deputy director general of the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency, Commodore Abdul Majid, told a press conference that the source of the oil spill was still unclear and an investigation into the incident would be carried out once agencies finished their damage-control operations.

“We came to know about this incident on 25th and immediately measures were taken to assess the damage. Air surveillance showed that there were two trails of oil spillage,” he said, adding that the quantity of spilled oil could be six to seven tonnes.

Speaking to Dawn, PMSA spokesperson Lt Cdr Wajid Nawaz Chaudhary said that the Pakistan Navy and PMSA had initiated efforts to contain the oil affecting the sea.

“We are being helped by the Karachi Port Trust and Byco. Both oil spill trails of around 500m each exist near Cape Monze. However, we will check whether Churna Island is affected or not,” he said in reply to a question.

The clean-up operation at Mubarak village, he said, was also being carried out while samples had been collected by experts, which would help trace the source of oil spill.

Sindh Minister for Environment and Coastal Development Taimur Talpur also visited Mubarak village and inspected the affected areas.

Published in Dawn, October 28th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1441764/churna-island-directly-hit-by-oil-spill-experts>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 15TH TO OCTOBER 21TH 2018

11 AIR MONITORING UNITS TO BE OPERATIVE THIS MONTH

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter October 16, 2018

LAHORE: Eleven air quality monitoring stations will be made operational throughout Punjab this month and three of them have already been turned operative – one each at Gujranwala, Multan and Faisalabad – and the remaining eight will be put up in Lahore.

This was stated by Adviser to Prime Minister on Climate Change Ameen Aslam at a press conference here on Monday.

Flanked by Punjab Chief Minister's spokesman Shahbaz Gill, he said one of the units would be set up on Burki Road (close to Indian border in east of Lahore) to monitor smog coming to Pakistan from across the border.

He claimed that Chief Minister Usman Buzdar also approved a fund of Rs250 million for the introduction of "zigzag technology" in brick kilns in the province, which can help reduce emission up to 60 per cent.

Minister says Rs250m approved for zigzag technology at kilns

A decision to the effect, he said, was taken at a meeting of the chief minister with the brick kilns owners, in which they assured cooperation, which includes closure of their units from Oct 20 to Dec 31 for tackling the smog problem. The minister said: "The government has recently sealed 53 smoke-emitting brick kilns and stopped construction of another 153 being built on older technology. It is also monitoring industries to mitigate the problem and pushing them for taking measures to preempt the issue. A meeting [today] in the provincial metropolis, chaired by the chief minister, approved a fund for zigzag technology (a Nepalese version) in brick kilns and money for purchase of air quality monitoring systems. On top of it, smog committees have also been constituted at tehsil level which would monitor the situation and control smoke-emitting units in their areas."

He said the Punjab government would also set up smog desks in hospitals where doctors and specific medicines would be readily available round the clock to deal with the patients suffering from smog-related problems.

He listed four factors – brick kilns, vehicular and industrial emissions and crop burning – causing smog problem. However, he feigned ignorance about individual contribution of these factors, saying that experts have identified these causes jointly responsible for the problem.

Regarding cross-border factors contributing to smog, as commonly believed, he said that was being monitored through satellite. "The federal government has inducted Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) for satellite monitoring of smog travel. Negotiations were also under way with India at the foreign office level to learn from their experience and share our version of the problem."

The commission would also see how much crop burning was happening on this side of border.

Published in Dawn, October 16th, 2018.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1439357/11-air-monitoring-units-to-be-operative-this-month>

#### EPD EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR SUGAR MILLS TO TAKE ANTI-SMOG STEPS

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Updated October 20, 2018

LAHORE: The Environment Protection Department (EPD) on Friday extended the deadline for the sugar mills to adopt measures to control pollution.

The decision was taken at a meeting between officials of the EPD and the Punjab Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) to discuss the issues of smog and wastewater.

The meeting chaired by EPD Secretary Dr Zafar Nasrullah and the chairperson of the sugar mills association also talked about possible solutions to the smog.

Dr Nasrullah said the sugar industry was one of the major foreign exchange earners. "It is also a green industry which uses non fossil fuels to run," he said.

He said the government was not against any businesses but the fact was that it's time to sensitize those associated with this industry and to highlight the issues of pollution. He said the EPD wanted the sugar mills' owners to re-examine their methods of disposing of their waste products.

He also said the owners should communicate with the EPD for technical assistance and come up with a detailed plan where they must highlight the size of their mill, the requirements, and any other issues they may be facing in installing scrubbers or any other machinery for waste gases.

"I am setting Nov 10 as a deadline for this plan to reach us so that things can be decided and we can forward the details to our district officers," said Dr Nasrullah.

"Every mill will have a different time frame to establish this equipment keeping in consideration their size, logistics and financial dispositions," he said. "However once the plan is decided and owners give us a reasonable deadline themselves, we will take that into consideration. After that date we will take strict measures because a commitment should be respected."

He said the deadlines should be reasonable because the EPD could not give indefinite time for implementation. He also said that an assurance letter would be needed from the owners along with each plan.

Earlier on Sept 17 last, the secretary had given a deadline to the sugar mills' owners to install scrubbers and other equipment by Oct 20.

Members of the association suggested that there should be a standardised plan so that everyone could know what was required.



The EPD secretary said they would soon bring out a manual for basic criteria, equipment needed and that available in the market, and an analysis of which system would be most efficient.

He said wet and dry scrubber was 95 to 99 per cent efficient and it cost much less than other methods' expenditure.

As for water pollution, he said, it was essential that the owners know that they must now begin to conserve water, preferably recycle it because water was now a precious commodity.

Dr Nasrullah said he would ensure that no team member of the EPD was involved in any kind of blackmailing. "No one will have an attitude of policing," he said.

Nauman Ahmed Khan, chairperson of the PSMA, thanked the EPD and said environmental impact must be reduced for upcoming generations.

Published in Dawn, October 20th, 2018.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1440082/epd-extends-deadline-for-sugar-mills-to-take-anti-smog-steps>

#### INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ZOFEEEN IHSAN OCT 21ST, 2018 ARTICLE

The role of infrastructure impacting economic growth and welfare has been studied across literature intensely during the past three decades. The post-World War II, reconstruction gave us a model where governments used to invest in economies so that an enabling environment can be created for the private sector. Later, however, many experts realized that infrastructure needs to be divided into public works (mainly focusing on construction of infrastructure) and public service delivery (provision of utilities such as electricity and water), see World Bank (1994). While the former in the developing countries still remains a public sector domain, the latter has seen the involvement of private sector (through unbundling of supply chain).

Environment is one of the most considered global issues for a long time. Many conventions, regulations and laws regarding the health of the planet earth and its environment have been developed over the past few decades and are further evolving with the passage of time. Many elements have been identified that impact the environment globally and the situation in Pakistan is no better. For the purpose of this write-up I would like to limit the focus of environment only on construction which is believed to be the one of the major elements that impacts environment. In recent years, and especially in Karachi over the past years, environmental issues have risen exponentially due to a substantial increase in development projects taking place in the city. At their completion, these projects are largely beneficial to the people of this metropolitan city but it is the construction phase of these projects that I'd like to focus on.

During the construction phase of various projects, a number of environmental hazards arise such as dust pollution due to digging and a reduction in trees which might result in reduced bird life and an increase in noise and vibration pollution caused by heavy machinery and traffic jams on alternative routes.

In a news report brought to light earlier this year, it was discovered that prior to the construction of the Punjab Chowrangi underpass no feasibility report was carried out, which not only delayed the project but also caused severe problems for both the commuters and the construction workers. Meanwhile, work on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has also been in progress with the Red Line project estimated to begin in the near future.

Nevertheless, it is commendable that the comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report has been carried out well before time and the report is readily available on ADB's website for public comments.

The BRT is a modernized, low-cost approach to mass transit that is said to be especially suitable to conditions in Karachi and one that has been the need for decades now. According to an EIA report, at national and global levels, the project is expected to reduce consumption of fossil fuels and provide a reduction in the Nation's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory in comparison to the absence of such a project.

An interesting fact that has come to light through this report, which many citizens might not be aware of, is the key legislation related to environmental protection in Pakistan that has been devolved to the state level, including the Sindh Environmental Protection Act 2014. These laws authorize the Director General (DG) of the Sindh Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) to undertake activities to conserve and enhance the quality of the environment.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) further covers a multitude of potential issues that could arise during the construction of the project. Some of these include: physical resources which further consists of geology, soils and groundwater, surface hydrology and water quality, meteorology and air quality, dust, noise and vibration; And biological resources which include protected areas, land cover, trees and valued flora, mammal and bird life.

As mentioned earlier, noise and air quality and dust impacts occur both during construction and operations, whereas impacts due to vibration are limited to its construction phase. Drainage and water quality impacts can occur both during construction and operations; for the latter, potential impacts occur due to heavy rainfall and the need to keep the alignment, stations and depot areas free and clear of flooding, have been covered within this report.

To ensure recommendations in the study are actually followed and implemented during the execution phase, extensive measures are being put in place during the planning phase of the project and a robust document is being made part of the bidding document. It is indeed heartening to see that this issue is being taken seriously and hopefully in all future infrastructure development projects, lessons may be learned from this exercise and ensure similar studies are carried out prior to digging up roads and making commuters lives difficult.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/10/20181021417630/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 8TH TO OCTOBER 14TH 2018  
PM ANNOUNCES CLEAN & GREEN PAKISTAN CAMPAIGN  
The Newspaper's Staff Reporter October 09, 2018

ISLAMABAD: In line with his promise in the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's election manifesto, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday announced a countrywide cleanliness drive titled "Clean and Green Pakistan" aimed at provision of clean drinking water, clean environment, proper sanitation, a waste disposal system and construction of toilets at all public places in five years.

The prime minister will formally inaugurate the campaign on Oct 13 that will also envisage a massive "waste-to-energy" programme. "People from all walks of life should make the drive a successful endeavour," the prime minister urged people while announcing the cleanliness drive at a ceremony. He was accompanied by Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar, Federal Environment Minister Malik Amin Aslam and other cabinet members.

He said over 500,000 children died in the country every year due to poor sanitation and unhygienic living conditions.

Prime Minister Khan said neighbouring India also faced the same problems but it had overcome cleanliness issues over the past four years.

He revealed that the cleanliness programme, to be stretched over five years, would have three main components.

According to him, awareness will be created among people, especially children, about importance of sanitation and a lesson about it will be incorporated in school syllabus from Class I to V. Awareness will be created about dumping sites and the monster of loadshedding will be overcome by generating electricity from trash. Contests regarding sanitation will be conducted at the tehsil level after every two months and officials concerned would be rewarded or penalised on the basis of the state of cleanliness in their areas.

The prime minister stressed the need for availability of public toilets at all public places and tourism sites.

"One of the causes behind less tourism in Pakistan is that there are no public toilets," he said, adding that this worried people when travelling to far and remote areas.

Through the initiative, public toilets will be built across the country.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Office will establish a complaint cell to receive public complaints and ensure their early redressal.

According to a senior official of the PMO, the prime minister will soon inaugurate the cell.

Published in Dawn, October 9th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1437781/pm-announces-clean-green-pakistan-campaign>

K-P MINERAL, TOURISM DEPTS EYE PROTECTED FOREST LAND

By Our Correspondent

Published: October 9, 2018

PESHAWAR: The provincial government is hoping to remove protections provided for barren, ‘subsistence’ (guzara) forests in the province under the forest law to utilize this land for economic activity such as digging mines and using them for tourism purposes, government sources have said.

The move is apparently being pushed by the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Mineral Development and Tourism departments who have been trying to persuade the K-P Forest Department to amend the K-P Forest Act.

The K-P Mineral Development Minister Dr Amjad Ali, while confirming the move said that the forest act has proven to be a major obstacle in the promotion of mining in the province since it prohibits any activity in areas declared as forests.

“The forest act is very strict. We cannot conduct any activity in areas protected under the forest act due to which precious minerals are lying unexplored and unutilised,” he told The Express Tribune.

“We have brought this issue to the notice of Khan sahib (Prime Minister Imran Khan),” he said, adding that the provincial tourism department too was running into problems due to the strict restrictions of the forest act.

“We want the forest department to make changes in the guzara forests category, which are just barren mountains with no trees, but the land cannot be touched owing to protection [provided under the law],” he explained.

When forests were reserved for government ownership and management — especially in the Hazara region — at the time of first settlement of land ownership in 1872, sizeable patches of wooded lands close to habitations were set aside to meet the bona fide domestic needs (timber for building houses, firewood, fodder) of the local communities. Such forests were designated as guzara or subsistence forests.

Dr Ali said that they want the restriction on these forests to be removed and the legal sections dealing it should be amended.

To a question whether the amendment would, in fact, contradict the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) much-trumpeted plantation drive, the Billion Tree Tsunami, the mines minister said that they wanted access to the barren lands of guzara forests.

He claimed that there were no trees in the guzara forests nor could trees be planted there owing to the land structure. He, however, did not specify which sections of land or where in the province were these barren guzara forests located.

In a recent handout issued by the K-P Information Department, Dr Ali was quoted telling a delegation of leaseholders at his office that the government was working on amending the forest act which would allow them to explore minerals in large areas of the province.

Moreover, the statement read that Dr Ali pointed to the keen interest Prime Minister Imran Khan was taking in the development of mining in K-P.

This was primarily hinged on the Rs30 billion per annum revenue potential for minerals mined in K-P. In this regard, the Chinese had expressed an interest in offering the latest machinery to the province which would help curtail as much as 70 per cent of wastage owing to prevalent blasting methods.

Published in The Express Tribune, October 9th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1821228/1-k-p-mineral-tourism-depts-eye-protected-forest-land/>

PLASTIC POLLUTION

Obed Suhail October 12, 2018

MOST Pakistanis would be forgiven for not knowing that a ban on plastic bags exists across most of the country, given that our federal and provincial governments have failed to implement such bans properly. In fact, implementation is so poor that, in any market, one will see plenty of plastic bags changing hands with impunity.

The verdict is still out on why bans on plastic bags have so far failed in Pakistan. While there may be multiple reasons, a lack of will seems the most likely cause behind the continuing widespread availability and use of plastic bags. After all, if authorities in the capital can effectively ban smoking shisha in public places, end the decades-old tradition of kite flying, and impose food and time restrictions on wedding ceremonies, how difficult is to curtail the use of plastic bags?

In Sindh, for example, a ban has existed since 2014 under the Sindh Prohibition of Non-degradable Plastic Products (Manufacturing, Sale and Usage) Rules and the Sindh Environmental Protection Act. It was only earlier this year that the provincial government finally issued a notification to impose the ban. The issue isn't particular to Sindh alone, as poor implementation of plastic bag bans has also been reported in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Our country is facing an escalating plastic bag pollution crisis. A recent survey by the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency found that about 55 billion bags are currently being used, and is expected to increase yearly by 15 per cent. The sooner we realise and address the shortcomings in our strategy to ban plastic bags, the less likely we are to share the fate of countries where plastic bags have caused floods by clogging waterways, seriously harmed ecosystems, and contributed to the spread of vector-borne diseases.

Why have bans on plastic bags so far failed in Pakistan?

Imposing an outright ban on a widely used item without creating disincentives to discourage its use and providing some affordable alternatives is futile. Our government needs to consider strategies such as imposing a bag tax, which has proved to be very effective in other countries. For example, after a five-cents bag tax was imposed in Washington, DC, usage fell by an estimated 86pc. There's no reason why it wouldn't have similar results in Pakistan.

Initially, only single-use plastic bags, which take decades to decompose, can be tackled. Thick recycled plastic bags are a good alternative if they are reused, as are oxo-degradable bags. But these alternatives should be taken with a pinch of salt. If people only use thick bags once, they'll be as harmful to the environment as standard bags, if not more so. Oxo-degradable bags still take three years to decompose completely; even longer if they end up in a landfill with limited exposure to oxygen.

One might think that the only remaining option is to use bags that are not made of plastic, but this isn't an entirely straightforward solution. Paper bags are considered by many to be the most obvious substitute, but recent research has shown that they contribute significantly to global warming. This leaves us with cloth bags, which also have a big carbon footprint.

With no alternative that is 100pc eco-friendly, the most impactful approach is to maximise our reuse of shopping bags, be they made of thick plastic or cloth. That is what people used to do before the advent of single-use shopping bags, so going back to this eco-friendly habit shouldn't be too herculean a task. On our part, we need to get used to taking our reusable bags with us when we go shopping.

But, of course, the bigger responsibility lies with the government, whose job it is to facilitate people in transitioning from single-use plastic bags to reusable bags. Steps need to be taken to make the transition easier for shopkeepers, who have been and will be facing backlash from consumers when they don't provide free shopping bags. Affordable alternatives to traditional single-use bags should be made readily available, and if the government is willing to go the extra mile, subsidising them could expedite the implementation of plastic bag bans across the country.

Besides these measures, there is also an urgent need to launch awareness campaigns to educate people about the necessity of banning single-use plastic bags, and how changing our habits and using more eco-friendly bags can make a difference. So far, awareness campaigns to influence the behaviour of shoppers are ostensibly non-existent in Pakistan. Without awareness campaigns, there is bound to be widespread non-compliance.

The growing demand and use of traditional plastic bags in Pakistan despite bans is a testament to the lack of efforts by the government. Plastic bag pollution could have been curtailed years ago if more concrete and meaningful steps had been taken, but it's not too late for the government to mend its approach and put a lid on this growing menace once and for all.

Published in Dawn, October 12th, 2018.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1438465/plastic-pollution>

## PRESIDENT ALVI KICKS OFF PLANTATION CAMPAIGN

By Hafeez Tunio

Published: October 14, 2018

KARACHI : President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi, who also hails from Sindh's provincial capital, on Saturday launched 'Clean and Green Pakistan' campaign from Karachi by planting a tree and taking part in cleaning a street at the city's Korangi area.

"Please plant as much trees as you can and stop throwing garbage in front of our houses," said Alvi while addressing people in the area. "We should follow the teaching of our Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) about hygiene," he added.

During the ceremony, the president also invited Karachi Mayor Waseem Akhtar, who belongs to the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), as well as workers and leaders of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to take part in the campaign.

Speaking to media-persons on the occasion, he pledged to resolve the water and sanitation issues of Karachi.

“Potable water and cleanliness are among the burning issues, which are also among the priorities of the PTI government. We are currently facing various environmental challenges. We should know the importance of trees to cope with soaring temperature,” he added.

Separately, Sindh Governor Imran Ismail also kicked off the campaign by planting a sapling.

“The city belongs to the people and they must take care of it collectively. People coming here must ensure cleanliness not only to make it more beautiful but also protect marine life,” he said. “The oceans are a blessing of the Almighty and Karachiites are fortunate to have this blessing.”

He said Prime Minister Imran Khan was very keen to see Sindh catch up with other parts of the country as it had been left far behind in all respects. The premier, he added, had announced various projects for the economic hub of Pakistan with an aim to restore its past glory.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1825363/1-president-alvi-kicks-off-plantation-campaign/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 1TH TO OCTOBER 7TH 2018

HSP TREE PLANTATION CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter October 01, 2018

KARACHI: The commencement of a tree plantation campaign of the Horticulture Society of Pakistan 'Plants4Pakistan' in collaboration with Pakistan Defence Housing Authority took place at the A.K. Khan Park on Abdul Sattar Edhi Avenue on Saturday.

The park received over 150 saplings of Sukh Chain, Paras Peepal, lignum and Casurina plants, expected to do well with the non-conducive growing conditions on the park premises. The rare factor of this activity was active participation from the youth group The Tree Club.

Expressing satisfaction on the growing activism and love for nature, especially by the members of The Tree Club, HSP chairman Kaleem Farooqi thanked the participants for attending the event. He said his activity was a continued commitment of the HSP tribe for transforming the country into a green garden. He recalled the contribution of HSP's founder, the late A.K. Khan, who contributed enormously to promote this love for nature.

Retired commodore Ashfaq Baig Mirza, general secretary of the HSP, reaffirmed on behalf of the HSP to support any effort for the wellbeing of nature.

Director for horticultural, DHA, Col Tauqeer Mahmood also spoke.

Published in Dawn, October 1st, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1435995/hsp-tree-plantation-campaign-launched>

## GOVT URGED TO CONTROL RISING CARBON DIOXIDE LEVELS

By APP

Published: October 1, 2018

LAHORE: Experts and environmentalists have urged the federal government to draw up a comprehensive strategy to address the rapidly increasing levels of carbon dioxide and methane in the air.

Experts expressed the hope that the tree planting initiative of the incumbent government will help to combat the impact of climate change during the next five years.

Sources from the Pakistan Council of Scientific Industrial Research (PCSIR) said that carbon dioxide makes up 72% of all greenhouse gases while methane and nitrous oxide make up 18% and 9% respectively.

Environmentalist Dr Mehmood Khalid Qamar stated that the nation was facing rising temperatures, droughts and floods which are affecting people's health, agriculture and water supplies. Greenhouse gases are a major contributor towards environmental pollution throughout the world; they play a critical role in global warming, he added.

According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2018, Pakistan is among the top ten countries most affected by climate change.

Sources at the Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC) revealed that the centre was developing policy recommendations to help the government with their tree plantation campaign and to address climate change.

The centre is taking steps to promote coordination among researchers and institutions working on different aspects of climate change in Pakistan, sources said.

The government is facilitating the collaboration of various local tree plantation formations with international scientists and experts who are engaged in several research activities, the sources added.  
Published in The Express Tribune, October 1st, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1815427/1-govt-urged-control-rising-carbon-dioxide-levels/>

## PTCL, WWF JOIN HANDS TO PLANT 0.2M MANGROVE SEEDS IN LASBELA

By APP

Published: October 2, 2018

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) in collaboration with the WWF-Pakistan will start a countrywide tree plantation campaign 'Rung Do' on Tuesday (today). PTCL and WWF-Pakistan have recently signed an agreement for planting 200,000 mangrove seeds in Balochistan. The seeds will be planted by local community members at Miani Hor, Lasbela district. On the occasion, PTCL Chief Human Resources Officer Syed Mazhar Hussain said, "PTCL being the largest telecommunication company in Pakistan, takes responsibility to address the serious issue of deforestation in the country."



“We are happy to partner with WWF on this significant initiative and are confident on their ability to identify the most suitable landscape and plant variety of saplings that will make a substantial difference in the environment.

“We are also proud to involve the local community in our plantation drive as this will add more value and ownership from the local communities.”

WWF-Pakistan Senior Director Programmes Rab Nawaz stated, “Among the top 10 countries affected by climate change, one is Pakistan where citizens can help by planting one tree at a time.

“Through this campaign, WWF-Pakistan aims to contribute to the Bonn Challenge, a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030.

“PTCL’s support for the plantation of 200,000 mangroves is the largest commitment from the corporate sector so far.”

Between 2000 and 2010, Pakistan lost an average of approximately 43,000 hectares of forests (equivalent to half the size of Islamabad).

With only 2% forest cover remaining, the country’s deforestation rate is the highest in Asia and is well below the recommended cover of 25%.

Therefore, in order to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change, regulate water cycles and increase green cover across the country, WWF-Pakistan has pledged to plant a total of 1.4 million trees by August 2019 through active participation of different stakeholders, local communities and passionate individuals along with corporate organisations such as PTCL.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1816169/1-ptcl-wwf-join-hands-plant-0-2m-mangrove-seeds-lasbela/>

## SC ORDERS PAK-EPA TO SHUT DOWN STEEL MILLS VIOLATING ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS

Jamal Shahid Updated October 04, 2018

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) to shut down all steel mills violating environmental laws.

“Operations of these steel units will remain closed until their owners follow all the environmental laws of the Pak-EPA,” a senior Ministry of Climate Change official told Dawn.

According to the official, the SC has also given owners of steel mills another week to deposit Rs5 million each until they install equipment to filter their emissions.

Report draws court’s attention to water wasted by steel mills; MCI told to investigate

The official explained that following the court order the mills’ points of entry and exit will be sealed by the Pak-EPA.

In one of the hearings of cases regarding pollution by steel mills, the SC had added a financial penalty to the Rs5m security deposit for those mills that had not deposited the Rs5m on time. The court directed such mills to pay an 8pc mark-up that would go to the SC’s Diamer Bhasha and Mohmand Dam Fund.

The SC had also asked Human Rights Cell Director General Khalid Teepu Rana to submit a report, in collaboration with the Pak-EPA, on industrial units in the city.

The climate change official said the report was presented to the SC on Wednesday. The two monitoring departments also drew attention to the wasting of hundreds of thousands of gallons of water by steel mills every day that the government was not compensated for.

“The SC paid particular attention to this major concern that has surfaced, especially when it is taking the matter of the possible water crisis seriously,” the official said, adding that the SC has directed the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad to investigate how much water the mills are wasting.

Among the other recommendations in the report, the Pak-EPA has also asked steel mill owners to make information on emissions easier to access online.

The Pak-EPA has been drawing the SC’s attention towards increasing air pollution, and steel mills’ emissions in particular, for nearly 30 years. The court has finally taken a decision in favour of I-8, I-9 and I-10 residents, as well as those from nearby Rawalpindi, who had been breathing poisonous air for years.

According to environmentalists in the climate change ministry, Islamabad owes its high air pollution to industrial units in I-9 and I-10, such as marble factories and steel mills, mega-development projects and other factors.

Inhaling particulate pollution – mixtures of solid and liquid particles that circulate in the air – emitted by these units can increase risks of lung cancer, cardiac arrest and stroke, as well as emergency room visits for people with asthma and heart problems.

Published in Dawn, October 4th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1436684/sc-orders-pak-epa-to-shut-down-steel-mills-violating-environmental-laws>

## **November 2018**

### ***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 19TH TO NOVEMBER 25TH 2018 STUDY FINDS PORT QASIM COASTAL AREA HIGHLY POLLUTED***

Faiza Ilyas November 21, 2018

**KARACHI:** A recent study conducted by Karachi University (KU) has showed that the Port Qasim coastal area is highly polluted, posing serious threat to the area’s biodiversity.

Titled Monitoring of anthropogenic impact on the Port Qasim coastal area, Karachi, Pakistan, the study was carried out by Prof Moazzam Ali Khan and Dr Aamir Alamgir of KU’s Institute of Environmental Studies.

Under the study, samples of seawater were collected from 23 locations, including Bundal Island, and were analysed for physico-chemical characteristics to determine the extent of pollution.

Samples were also analysed for heavy metals, such as arsenic, chromium, copper, cadmium, lead and nickel.

The investigation has revealed that the Port Qasim coastal area is grossly polluted with inorganic and organic contaminants mainly due to waste water effluent being discharged into the sea from various industrial set-ups.

Extensively high organic load has been found at the site receiving waste water from Landhi's Cattle Colony.

According to the study, seawater samples showed high oil and chemical contents. Out of all heavy metals, the concentration of chromium and lead has been found exceptionally higher. The distribution of heavy metals demonstrated a typical diffusion pattern from the land to the direction of the sea.

#### Pollution source

On the area's geography and the kind of activities being carried out in its jurisdiction, the study says that the deep-water seaport is spread over 12,000 acres. Gharo, Kadiro and Phiiti creeks constitute the approach channel to Port Qasim.

"These creeks are linked with mangrove patches and mudflat ecosystems. The system of these creeks is approximately 28km long and its width ranges from 250m to 2.5km. Within Port Qasim's jurisdiction, many industrial zones are operating, including automotive industry. Two other major industrial set-ups are Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) and an electricity generation plant."

The mangroves in the area, it says, are constantly under threat owing to indiscriminate discharge of both domestic and industrial effluent.

The study also found seawater temperature very high (60-65 centigrade) at one point receiving discharge from a thermal power plant which, according to the study, had destroyed marine biodiversity at that particular location.

Two sample sites receiving untreated industrial effluent from Landhi industrial estate exhibited extremely high pollution load both in terms of organic and inorganic forms.

The sampling stations closed to Bundal Island are relatively less polluted. This could be mainly due to the dilution factor.

In general, the concentration of chemical oxygen demand (the amount of oxygen required to degenerate all pollution in a chemical way) and total concentration of organic nitrogen and ammonia, oil and grease, all pollutants considered very detrimental to marine biodiversity, was found exceptionally higher in most samples.

"Although, dissolved oxygen concentration was low, it may prevent anoxic condition. From the ecological viewpoint the concentration of phenol and cyanide was much higher although no significant point source of these pollutants was identified.

“Nutrient parameters were relatively higher in concentration in samples collected from the mangrove area. Concentration of nickel and chromium was also high, indicating industrial discharges from tanneries. Presence of high lead concentration indicates use of lead-based fuel likely being used by fishing motor boats,” it says.

Published in Dawn, November 21st, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1446808/study-finds-port-qasim-coastal-area-highly-polluted>

#### IMC LAUNCHES ‘MILLION TREE CAMPAIGN’ RECORDER REPORT | NOV 21ST, 2018 | KARACHI

Indus Motor Company Limited (IMC), in a ceremony held on November 20, officially launched its ‘Million Tree Campaign’ as its commitment towards supporting the government’s Clean and Green Pakistan movement. With the ambition to reduce its carbon footprint and support Toyota’s pledge to zero CO2 emissions from factories by 2050, the company aims to plant one million trees across the city over the next few years.

The countrywide campaign will engage IMC employees and senior management in a collective effort to stimulate a positive impact on their surroundings. IMC CEO, Ali Asghar Jamali said, “We are pleased to advance our concern beyond cars with this campaign that is rooted in a commitment towards environment preservation. Our inspiration comes from the government’s vision for a greener Pakistan and we are hopeful that our efforts would serve as an example for other individuals and businesses to emulate.”

The initiative was highlighted at a special event held at IMC that convened senior officials and representatives from Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), Landhi Association of Trade & Industry (LATI), Bin Qasim Association of Trade & Industry (BQATI) and other esteemed delegates from local councils in addition to IMC senior management and employees. The Chief Guest was Waseem Akhtar, Mayor Karachi.

During the event, IMC shared an insightful overview of the campaign as well as its vision for the future followed by a plantation drive that senior officials partook. Under this campaign, the first plantation drive was spearheaded by CEO IMC along with some IMC employees earlier in October.

President of Toyota Daihatsu Engineering & Manufacturing, Tatsuro Takami also participated in the campaign during his visit to IMC last week. The drives include preparing adequate land at the plantation site by loosening the soil, removing weeds, surrounding bushes and hedges and then seeding and planting new trees. In the near future, to plant one million trees, some of the land area will be restored.

An active signatory of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the company underscored its contribution in achieving the sustainable development goals, particularly goal number 13 regarding climate action. The ‘Million Tree Plantation’ project has a long-term aim to protect the land against erosion, turn the country’s barren landscape into forests, enhance rainfall prospects and help mitigate the effects of climate change on ecosystems and biodiversity of the country.-PR

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/11/20181121425489/>

## ENDANGERED MANGROVES

Editorial November 23, 2018

A NEW study by Karachi University's Institute of Environmental Studies shows high levels of pollution in the waters surrounding Pakistan's second busiest harbour: Port Qasim. Testing water samples for organic and inorganic waste, the researchers concluded that the high levels of pollution endangered the area's biodiversity. This is not news. It's a confirmation of established and oft-repeated fears by local fishermen and environmentalists. In the early 1970s, when the port was being constructed, eight species of mangroves flourished. Today, only four remain. While there have been efforts to make up for some of the lost mangrove cover by the Forest Department and IUCN, it might still not be enough, especially not for a city like Karachi, which has hardly any forest cover.

Not only do mangroves lower temperatures, they are the first line of defence against soil erosion and intrusions from the sea, including cyclones and tsunamis. But in recent years, toxic waste in the form of untreated sewage, industrial effluent, and bloodied water drained from the nearby cattle colony, have proved to be the biggest challenge to the survival of mangroves. On a daily basis, around 472m gallons of waste are released into the sea; which poisons the surrounding vegetation and marine life. A hatching ground for fish, and critical to sustaining the delicate ecological balance of the area, mangroves that fall under the authority of the Port Qasim Authority and the Karachi Port Trust are the most endangered. The major coal-handling operations approved by the PQA this year will only add to the already considerable problems. Alarming, the board did not even wait for clearance from the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency before going ahead with its operations. Surely, our policymakers have to be more farsighted than this and to focus on the threat to the environment. After all, the well-being of our natural surroundings depends on more than just hopes and prayers.

Published in Dawn, November 23rd, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1447157/endangered-mangroves>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 12TH TO NOVEMBER 18TH 2018  
RS2B FOR FORESTRY ACTIVITIES IN GB  
November 12, 2018 / Islamabad

The federal government has allocated two billion rupees to for promoting forestry activities in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and involving local communities under Green Pakistan Programme. Sources at Climate Change Division said on Sunday that 5.2 million rupees have been earmarked for capacity building and awareness campaigns. The other projects include Habitat Development and Pasture Management for Wildlife Conservation.—INP

<https://pakobserver.net/rs2b-for-forestry-activities-in-gb/>

THICK SMOG, FOG HIT MOST AREAS IN SINDH  
Dawn Report November 13, 2018

SUKKUR: Most parts of Sindh have started experiencing thick fog/smog during night and morning hours causing poor visibility and hardship to drivers, besides breathing problem to asthma patients.

A remarkable decline in the movement of vehicular traffic on intercity and link roads after 11pm till around 9am is being noted as weather conditions have started changing across the province.

Usually busy roads in Rohri, Ali Wahan, Kandhra, Baberloi and many other towns in Sukkur, Ghotki, Khairpur, Shikarpur, Larkana, Jacobabad and Kandhkot districts in upper Sindh have been witnessing a marked decrease in movement of vehicles in the morning and late evening hours since the night intervening Saturday and Sunday due to poor visibility caused by smog.

Similar conditions prevail in Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas, Badin, Sanghar and other districts in lower Sindh due to thick fog.

The few vehicles coming on roads during these timings are seen moving at a snail's pace and keeping their lights on to avoid an accident while people walking on pavements or riding two-wheelers mostly have to use cloth sheets wrapped around their upper body.

Many private educational institutions in upper Sindh have "readjusted" their timings, effective Monday (Nov 12).

Published in Dawn, November 13th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1445179/thick-smog-fog-hit-most-areas-in-sindh>

## PUNJAB WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT ALLOWS HUNTING OF PARTRIDGES

By Asif Mehmood

Published: November 13, 2018

LAHORE : The Punjab Wildlife Protection Department has allowed individuals to hunt partridges throughout Punjab. Hunting will be allowed for three months from November 15, 2018 to February 15, 2019.

According to a notification issued on Tuesday, individuals can hunt partridges in 41 tehsils across the province. However, hunting of any sort is still prohibited in the remaining 82 tehsils. Hunting is prohibited in Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar and Rahim Yar Khan.

On the other hand, hunting is only allowed in the game reserve area in Chistian tehsil. Officials from the Punjab Wildlife Protection Department reiterated that only those citizens who have permits can hunt on Sundays. Hunting is strictly prohibited in wildlife sanctuaries and national parks.

Hunting in the game reserve area is only permitted for those with special licenses from the Punjab Wildlife Protection Department director general. In private game reserves, permission depends on the owner's approval. Hunters are also prohibited from using automatic weapons and weapons used by the armed forces.

Previously, the Punjab Wildlife Protection Department issued a notification allowing licensed individuals to hunt waterfowls on Saturdays and Sundays between October 1, 2018, and March 31, 2019.

According to the Wildlife Act, those engaging in violations can face fines between Rs20,000 and 30,000 or imprisonment between one and five years. Authorities may also confiscate the vehicles and weapons used by the violators.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1846533/1-punjab-wildlife-department-allows-hunting-partridges/>

## BILLION TREE TSUNAMI BENEFITS: K-P'S FOREST AREA SWELLS BY 0.35M HECTARES By APP

Published: November 17, 2018

ISLAMABAD: Forests in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa have grown by 0.348 million hectares following the successful implementation of the provincial government's Billion Tree Tsunami project.

This was stated by the State Minister for Climate Change Zartaj Gul in the Senate on Friday.

In a written reply to a question posed by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Chaudhry Tanvir Khan, Gul stated that the government plans to replicate the successful model of the "Billion Tree Tsunami Project" all over the country. However, the target will be enhanced to planting 10 billion saplings.

"The prime minister has already inaugurated the project by planting a sapling on September 2, 2018," the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) minister wrote in her reply, adding that this will help increase forest area in the country.

The Dera Ghazi Khan native added that details of the plan are being worked out in close consultation and coordination with the provinces.

She said the federal government has devised a mechanism for coordination with the provinces to curb deforestation and increase forestation in the country.

Moreover, the Federal Forestry Board has been revived after the National Forest Policy was approved by the Council of Common Interests (CCI).

In reply to another question posed by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, Gul said that so far 27 million plants have been planted in the four provinces and different territories under the Green Pakistan Programme — Revival of Forest Resources in Pakistan'.

The programme had been launched by deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif in February 2017, at a cost of Rs3.7 billion over five years.

The state minister for climate change stated in her written reply that 100 million saplings are slated to be planted under the programme by 2021 at a cost of Rs3.652 billion.

She further said that her ministry has received around \$37.46 million in funding from the Green Climate Fund for a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) project in the northern areas of the country.

Additionally, Gul said that the government had launched the "Clean and Green Pakistan Movement" on October 8, 2018. In this regards, she said that the Ministry of Climate Change is coordinating its



implementation with all the provinces including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B).

Regarding the National Forest Policy, she reiterated that it has been approved by the CCI and it is expected to be issued soon after it is approved from the competent forum.

On mitigating effects of climate change, Gul said that her ministry had undertaken various steps to counter climate change including the introduction of the National Climate Change Policy, the National Forest Policy and the Pakistan Climate Change Act 2017.

Published in The Express Tribune, November 17th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1848887/1-billion-tree-tsunami-benefits-k-ps-forest-area-swells-0-35m-hectares/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 29TH TO NOVEMBER 4TH 2018

POLLUTED WATERS

Editorial October 29, 2018

A MYSTERIOUS black ‘oil spill’ stretching from the coast of Mubarak Village in Sindh to Churna Island in Balochistan has spread panic among the local fishing community and residents, who quickly alerted the authorities. The black slick on the surface of the water that is clinging to rocks and fishing nets is thought to be some days old. Although workers of various NGOs, the navy, Karachi Port Trust, the Pakistan Disaster Management Authority and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency have begun cleaning up some of the mess, the extent of the damage to marine life can only be ascertained in the coming days. The source of the spill has still not been found, but Balochistan’s Environmental Protection Agency has ordered the nearby Byco Petroleum plant to halt its operations for now. They fear the spill will spread towards other beaches. Fishermen, who will be the worst affected, have demanded that the government take strict action against the owners of whichever company is found to be responsible for the discharge.

The incident brought back memories of the 2003 oil spill off the coast of Sea View beach in Karachi. Back then, a Greece-registered oil tanker carrying 67,535 tons of light crude oil spilled around 31,000 tons into the surrounding waters. Traces of oil could be seen even one year after the incident. It was catastrophic on all accounts — environmental, social and economic. Mangroves, fish, mammals, turtles, bird and crustacean life were affected by the spill on a large scale. A report stated that out of the 31,000 tons of oil spilled, less than 1pc was recovered in consequent cleanup drives. The implications for the health of those living on the coastal belt were even worse. In 2017, similar fears of another oil spill surfaced after residents noticed that the waters of Sea View and Hawkesbay beaches were growing increasingly dark. Later, it was found that the dark colour was caused by sewage that was being directly flushed into the sea from a drain, which had unclogged due to the rains. There are two sewage and industrial waste dumps at Sea View that discharge untreated water directly into the sea. It is said that around 500m gallons of waste are discharged daily, which adversely impacts vegetation and marine life, and disturbs the ecological balance. Due to the pollution of these waters, KPT officials bemoan spending millions extra on the maintenance of ships. Pakistan’s polluted waters are costing us in every way.

Published in Dawn, October 29th, 2018



<https://www.dawn.com/news/1442119/polluted-waters>

## WITHOUT URGENT ACTION WE MAY LOSE OUR HABITATS FOREVER: WWF

By Zulfiqar Baig

Published: October 31, 2018

ISLAMABAD: World Wildlife Fund-Pakistan Senior Director Programmes Rab Nawaz said Pakistan is faced with many challenges and opportunities when it comes to the environment and wildlife. The Living Planet Report shows that if we do not change the way we value our natural surroundings, we are going to lose these species and ecosystems forever.

He added that Pakistan is no different; we are losing our unique habitats and our wildlife at an alarming rate. However, we still have some of the world's most beautiful landscapes. We, as a nation have to come up with solutions that ensure these landscapes stay for future generations whilst supporting the communities and the wildlife that share them.

Humanity and the way we feed, fuel and finance our societies and economies is pushing nature and the services that power and sustain us to the brink, according to WWF's Living Planet Report 2018. Researchers, present a sobering picture of the impact of human activity on the world's wildlife, forests, oceans, rivers and climate, underlining the rapidly closing window for action and the urgent need for the global community to collectively rethink and redefine how we value, protect and restore nature.

The Living Planet Report 2018 presents a comprehensive overview of the state of our natural world, twenty years after the flagship report was first published.

Through indicators such as the Living Planet Index (LPI), provided by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the Species Habitat Index (SHI), the IUCN Red List Index (RLI) and the Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII), as well as Planetary Boundaries and the Ecological Footprint, the report paints a singular disturbing picture: human activity is pushing the planet's natural systems that support life on earth to the edge.

The report highlights that over recent decades, human activity has also severely impacted the habitats and natural resources which wildlife and humanity depend on such as oceans, forests, coral reefs, wetlands and mangroves. While shedding light on the extent and impact of human activity on nature, the Living Planet Report 2018 also focuses on the importance and value of nature to people's health and well-being and that of our societies and economies.

Globally, nature provides services worth around US\$125 trillion a year, while also helping ensure a supply of fresh air, clean water, food, energy, medicines and other products and materials.

The report specifically looks at the importance of pollinators which are responsible for US\$ 235-577 billion in crop production per year, and how a changing climate, intensive agricultural practices, invasive species and emerging diseases have impacted their abundance, diversity and health.

Evidence shows that the two agendas – for the environment and human development – must converge if we are to build a sustainable future for all.

The Living Planet Report 2018 brings to attention the opportunity the global community has to protect and restore nature leading up to 2020, a critical year when leaders are expected to review the progress made on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). WWF is calling on people, businesses and governments to mobilise and deliver on a comprehensive framework agreement for nature and people under the CBD, one that spurs public and private action to protect and restore global biodiversity and nature and bend the curve on the devastating trends highlighted in the Living Planet Report 2018. Living Planet Report 2018 is the twelfth edition of WWF's biennial flagship publication.

Published in The Express Tribune, October 31st, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1837569/1-without-urgent-action-may-lose-habitats-forever-wwf/>

## LAHORE RANKED AMONG MOST POLLUTED CITIES

By Our Correspondent

Published: October 31, 2018

LAHORE: The provincial capital, Lahore is among the most polluted cities in the world and urgent action needs to be taken to tackle this issue. Air pollution caused by traffic, industries, crop burning and burning of solid waste are the major contributors of smog and the layer of smog will thicken in the coming days.

These facts were revealed by WWF's Living Planet Report 2018 on Tuesday. The report, which was presented in the presence of environmental journalists and researchers, presented a sobering picture of the impact of human activities on the world's wildlife, forests, oceans, rivers and climate. It also underlined the urgent need for the global community to collectively rethink and redefine how we value, protect and restore nature.

Sharing his thoughts at the launch of the report, WWF-Pakistan Director General Hammad Naqi Khan said the Living Planet Index (LPI), which tracks trends in global wildlife abundance, indicates that global populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles declined, on average, by 60% between 1970 and 2014. These declining populations are especially pronounced in South America (89%), Africa (56%) and the Indo-Pacific (64%) region which includes Pakistan. In addition to these declining trends, Pakistan is adversely affected by illegal wildlife trade which has deeply impacted our biodiversity.

He said the smuggling of freshwater turtles and pangolins were a growing concern as well as rising rates of deforestation. "Increasing deforestation has contributed to increased threats for species such as the snow and common leopard which are fast losing their habitat. Pakistan is experiencing a steady rise in carbon emissions, which contributes to global issues such as climate change and global warming," he said.

Khan said Lahore and Karachi were among the 10 most polluted cities in the world in terms of air quality, according to air quality monitor AirVisual.

“Humanity and the way we feed, fuel and finance our societies and economies are pushing the nature and the services that power and sustain us to the brink, he said while quoting the contents of the report.

The Living Planet Report 2018 presented a comprehensive overview of the state of the natural world, 20 years after the flagship report was first published. Through indicators such as the Living Planet Index (LPI), provided by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the Species Habitat Index (SHI), the IUCN Red List Index (RLI) and the Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII), as well as Planetary Boundaries and the Ecological Footprint, the report paints a singular disturbing picture: human activity is pushing the planet’s natural systems that support life on Earth to the edge.

“The ranking today puts Lahore at the top of the list and urgent action needs to be taken to tackle this issue,” he said. “The urban air pollution in Pakistan is among the world’s most severe, significantly damaging human health, quality of life, economy and the environment.”

He urged people to move around with face masks to protect themselves from breathing problems, eye, nose, and throat infections.

The report highlights that over recent decades, human activity has also severely impacted the habitats and natural resources wildlife and humanity depend on such as oceans, forests, coral reefs, wetlands and mangroves.

Globally, nature provides services worth around \$125 trillion a year, while also helping ensure the supply of fresh air, clean water, food, energy, medicines and other products and materials. The report specifically looked at the importance of pollinators which are responsible for \$235-577 billion in crop production per year, and how a changing climate, intensive agricultural practices, invasive species and emerging diseases have impacted their abundance, diversity and health.

Evidence shows that the two agendas – for the environment and human development – must converge if we are to build a sustainable future for all. The Living Planet Report 2018 highlighted the opportunity the global community has to protect and restore the nature leading up to 2020, a critical year when world leaders were expected to review the progress made on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

WWF is calling on people, businesses and governments to mobilise and deliver on a comprehensive framework agreement for nature and people under the CBD, one that galvanizes public and private action to protect and restore global biodiversity and nature and bend the curve on the devastating trends highlighted in the Living Planet Report 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1837718/1-lahore-ranked-among-polluted-cities/>

‘BYCO NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR OIL SPILL NEAR MUBARAK VILLAGE’

KARACHI: After a thorough investigation, the Balochistan Environmental Protection Agency (BEPA) has confirmed that Byco Petroleum Pakistan Ltd (BPPL) had absolutely no leakage or loss of containment from any of its facilities. This has been further confirmed also by the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA).

BEPA and PMSA had conducted their investigation starting October 25, including conducting aerial survey to determine the source of the leakage that washed up on the shores of Mubarak Village. Their findings showed no evidence of leakage at Byco's facilities. —PR

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/10/31/7-page/746915-news.html>

## WWF LIVING PLANET REPORT 2018 LAUNCHED

Lahore, Karachi among 10 most polluted cities in the world

ZAHID BAIG

LAHORE: Lahore and Karachi are among the ten most polluted cities in the world in terms of air quality with Lahore topping the list released by the air quality monitor AirVisual.

The situation needs an urgent action to tackle this issue, said Hammad Naqi Khan, Director General WWF-Pakistan while speaking at the launch of the WWF Living Planet Report 2018 here on Tuesday.

Naqi further said that air pollution caused by traffic, industries, crop burning and burning of solid waste are major contributors of smog and the layer of smog will thicken in the coming days. The urban air pollution in Pakistan is among the world's most severe, significantly damaging human health, quality of life, economy and the environment.

He urged people to move around with face masks to protect themselves from breathing problems, eye, nose, and throat infections.

Sharing his thoughts about the report, he said, the Living Planet Index (LPI), which tracks trends in global wildlife abundance, indicates that global populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles declined, on average, by 60 percent between 1970 and 2014. These declining populations are especially pronounced in the South America (89 percent), Africa (56 percent) and the Indo-Pacific (64 percent) region which includes Pakistan. In addition to these declining trends Pakistan is adversely affected by illegal wildlife trade which has deeply impacted our biodiversity. Smuggling of freshwater turtles and pangolins are a growing concern as well as rising rates of deforestation. Increasing deforestation has contributed to increased threats for species such as the snow and common leopard which is fast losing its habitat. Pakistan is experiencing a steady rise in carbon emissions, which contributes to global issues such as climate change and global warming.

The Report released on Tuesday in the presence of environmental journalists and researchers, presents a sobering picture of the impact of human activity on the world's wildlife, forests, oceans, rivers and climate, underlining the rapidly closing window for action and the urgent need for the global community to collectively rethink and redefine how we value, protect and restore nature.

“Humanity and the way we feed, fuel and finance our societies and economies is pushing nature and the services that power and sustain us to the brink”, said the report.

The Living Planet Report 2018 presents a comprehensive overview of the state of our natural world, twenty years after the flagship report was first published. Through indicators such as the Living Planet Index (LPI), provided by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the Species Habitat Index (SHI), the IUCN Red List Index (RLI) and the Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII), as well as Planetary

Boundaries and the Ecological Footprint, the report paints a singular disturbing picture: human activity is pushing the planet's natural systems that support life on Earth to the edge.

The report highlights that over recent decades, human activity has also severely impacted the habitats and natural resources wildlife and humanity depend on such as oceans, forests, coral reefs, wetlands and mangroves.

While shedding light on the extent and impact of human activity on nature, the Living Planet Report 2018 also focuses on the importance and value of nature to people's health and well-being and that of our societies and economies. Globally, nature provides services worth around US\$125 trillion a year, while also helping ensure the supply of fresh air, clean water, food, energy, medicines and other products and materials.

The report specifically looks at the importance of pollinators which are responsible for US\$ 235-577 billion in crop production per year, and how a changing climate, intensive agricultural practices, invasive species and emerging diseases have impacted their abundance, diversity and health.

Evidence shows that the two agendas – for the environment and human development – must converge if we are to build a sustainable future for all. The Living Planet Report 2018 highlights the opportunity the global community has to protect and restore nature leading up to 2020, a critical year when leaders are expected to review the progress made on the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

WWF is calling on people, businesses and governments to mobilize and deliver on a comprehensive framework agreement for nature and people under the CBD, one that galvanizes public and private action to protect and restore global biodiversity and nature and bend the curve on the devastating trends highlighted in the Living Planet Report 2018.

Living Planet Report 2018 is the twelfth edition of WWF's biennial flagship publication. The report includes the latest findings measured by the Living Planet Index tracking 16,704 populations of 4,005 vertebrate species from 1970 to 2014.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/10/31/27-page/747093-news.html>

#### SMOG SITUATION TO IMPROVE M RAFIQUE GORAYA NOV 1ST, 2018 LAHORE

The Meteorological department has said that a westerly wave has entered upper parts of the country that would improve the smog scenario and improve quality of air in big cities.

It said under the influence of this weather system; rain-thunderstorm with gusty winds is expected at scattered places in Malakand, Hazara, Mardan, Peshawar, and Rawalpindi division, Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir, while at isolated places in Kohat, Bannu, Sargodha, Gujranwala and Lahore divisions from Wednesday to Friday. Snowfall over the hills is also expected in Malakand division (Swat, Chitral, Kalam Malamjabba, Upper Dir), Hazara division, Murree and Galliyat, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during the period.

Weather forecast for today:

Rain-thunderstorm (snowfall over the hills) with gusty wind is expected at scattered places in Malakand, Hazara, Mardan, Peshawar, Kohat, Rawalpindi divisions, Islamabad, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, while at isolated places in Bannu, DI Khan, Sargodha and Gujranwala divisions. Dry weather is expected elsewhere in the country.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/11/20181101420357/>

## PUNJAB 'LIVING ON THE EDGE', SAYS AGRI DEPT

By News Desk

Published: November 3, 2018

A spokesman for the Agriculture Department has said that Punjab is living on the edge due to environmental pollution.

“Smog tends to affect human health and people have to suffer. Dense smog has an adverse effect not only on human beings, but also on crops,” he said.

The spokesman added that due to, the photosynthesis process in the leaves of crops was also affected and plants cannot make their necessary food.

“Plants, under the effect of smoggy clouds, cannot prepare necessary hormones for their growth and the per acre yield of crops may be affected due to this situation.

The spokesman disclosed that the Government was paying special heed towards the anti-smog campaign and more than 150 FIRs had been registered against people involved in rice burning.

He advised that instead of burning of rice stubble, farmers should mix the crop residue into the soil through a deep plough through a rotavator or disc harrow.

The spokesman said that this year, the Agriculture Department will monitor and report the burning of rice stubbles on a day to day basis. Under section-144, the Government of Punjab has banned the burning of crop residue. Field assistants of the Agriculture Department are monitoring and reporting incidents of rice stubble to their divisional director and M & E Director on a daily basis.

Published in The Express Tribune, November 3rd, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1839467/1-punjab-living-edge-says-agri-dept/>

## SEA INTRUSION CAN ENDANGER AREAS AS FAR UP AS KOTRI, HYDERABAD, SAB WARNS

The Newspaper's Staff Correspondent November 04, 2018

HYDERABAD: Sindh Abadgar Board (SAB) has expressed fear that if required quantity of water is not released downstream Kotri Barrage then sea intrusion will even endanger areas as far up as Kotri and Hyderabad and stressed the need for putting in place a structure that can check further onslaught of the sea.

The board, which met here on Saturday with its president Abdul Majeed Nizamani in the chair, said that Sindh, being lower riparian, had first right on water but this principle had never been respected.

Mr Nizamani regretted that even available water flows were not judiciously distributed within Sindh and tail-end growers were deprived of their share in water. Sea intrusion was also caused by lack of freshwater flows, he said.

He said that Indus delta used to be very green and beautiful until 1950-1960 but the rich ecology started degrading when river flows were stopped and agriculture land on millions of acres got destroyed.

He feared that if the situation persisted the sea would endanger even the areas as far up as Kotri and Hyderabad. There was an urgent need for raising a structure that could keep the sea in check, he said.

He said that groundwater reserves in Sindh had dropped to just 2.5MAF as compared to Punjab's 45MAF. Besides, the province experienced less precipitation — five to nine inches — as compared to Punjab where rainfall volume was recorded at 15 to 18 inches.

He said that summer conditions, especially during Kharif season, affected crops because of high velocity coastal winds that blew as far up as Sakrand in Sindh. Freshwater lakes like Manchhar, Keenjhar, Hamal, Nareri, Hadero had been destroyed but government was not paying any attention to their rehabilitation.

The meeting expressed concern over delay in completion of Right Bank Outfall Drain project, which had contributed solely to the destruction of Manchhar Lake by unending effluent discharge into the lake.

It called for completing RBOD at the earliest and said that Manchhar should be rehabilitated to its original shape and steps should be taken for the rehabilitation of other freshwater lakes as well. The meeting was attended by Syed Nadeem Shah, Imran Bozdar, Aslam Marri, Yar Mohammad Leghari and others.

Published in Dawn, November 4th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1443348/sea-intrusion-can-endanger-areas-as-far-up-as-kotri-hyderabad-sab-warns>

## WHO SAYS AIR POLLUTION KILLS 600,000 CHILDREN EVERY YEAR

By Reuters

Published: November 3, 2018

GENEVA: Air pollution kills an estimated 600,000 children every year and causing symptoms ranging from loss of intelligence to obesity and ear infections but there is a limited amount parents can do, a World Health Organization report said on Monday.

Parents should try to avoid household air pollution by using less polluting fuels for cooking and heating and not smoking but to reduce child exposure to ambient pollution they should need to lobby politicians to clean up the environment, WHO experts said.



“Polluted air is poisoning millions of children and ruining their lives,” WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement. Large parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America are among the worst affected.

“This is inexcusable. Every child should be able to breathe clean air so they can grow and fulfil their full potential.”

The WHO report, “Prescribing clean air”, summarised the latest scientific knowledge on the effect on children of air pollution, which affects about 93 percent of children globally.

Maria Neira, WHO’s head of environmental determinants of health, said the worrying findings highlighted in the study, including evidence of pollution causing stillbirth and preterm birth, as well as diseases into adulthood, should lead to policy changes globally.

“Something that is critical as well is this issue of the neuro-development,” she said.

“Imagine that our children will have less cognitive IQ. We are talking about putting at risk a new generation of having a reduced IQ. This is not only new but terribly shocking.”

There was clear, consistent evidence of an association between ambient air pollution and otitis media, or ear infections, the study said, as well as some evidence of it causing obesity and insulin resistance in children.

Air pollution can also cause childhood cancers, asthma, poor lung function, pneumonia and other types of acute lower respiratory infection, the report said.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1839729/3-says-air-pollution-kills-600000-children-every-year/>

## **December 2018**

### ***NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 24TH TO DECEMBER 30TH 2018***

#### ***INQUIRY ORDERED INTO DISPOSAL OF SEWAGE INTO NATURAL WATERWAY***

The Newspaper’s Staff Correspondent Updated December 24, 2018

**HYDERABAD:** Retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim, who heads the one-man judicial commission appointed by Supreme Court on water quality and drainage system in Sindh, on Saturday visited a water scheme in Kandhkot and ordered an inquiry into release of sewage into a natural waterway.

Justice Muslim expressed his reservations over working of the executive engineer, who claimed that the entire amount required for the procurement of pipes had been released. The judge asked the DC to assess value of the purchased pipes. He was also directed to assess the amount utilised by the PHE department against this scheme. The reports were required to be submitted in the commission by the DC on Dec 29 and the DC, chairman/CMO and executive engineer were told to attend the commission’s deliberations.

Residents of the area recorded their reservations over the scheme before the commission. One of them, Aftab Bachkani from Haibat Khan village, stated that the local municipality was using four acres of land for the area’s sewerage system. According to him, the same land has been converted to



New Sabzi Mandi with the result that sewage was flowing into Sindh Dhoro, a natural waterway, and farmlands.

The commission directed the deputy commissioner to hold an inquiry into the matter independently and interact with the complainant, chairman/chief municipal officer (CMO) and executive engineer of the public health engineering (PHE) department. He asked the DC to submit a detailed report in the commission.

#### RO plant at school

Justice Muslim also visited the reverse osmosis (RO) plant installed at the Govt Higher Secondary School, Kandhkot, and noted that the plant was not in use despite being functional as it had only one tap and installed inside the school hence inaccessible to the general public.

The judge asked the contractor and project director concerned to appear before him with details of plant's installation and the payments made by the federal or provincial government.

He directed a magistrate to visit RO plants within his jurisdiction and submit a report regarding their functioning and whether they were catering to people's water requirement.

#### Garhi Yasin water scheme

Justice Muslim also visited Garhi Yasin, where he found a pumping station completely encroached upon and another one ill-maintained though functional.

The deputy commissioner was asked to ensure that the municipal committee would file an application for removal of the encroachments from the amenity plot in line with the apex court's orders.

The judge asked the town committee chairman and Garhi Yasin town officer to appear before him on Dec 28. He also ordered restoration of the pumping station, rehabilitation of the oxidation ponds in the town and widening of the pond by the PHE after identifying the area.

#### Bhan Syedabad visit

During his visit to Bhan Syedabad in Jamshoro district, Justice Amir Hani Muslim had found the town's filtration plant non-functional since 2010.

He asked for the list of the officers who were present on the date of its completion.

Notices were issued to the officers asking them to appear before the judge on Dec 28. PHE chief engineer Shamsuddin Sheikh has also been asked to ensure the officers' appearance whether they were serving or had retired.

The Jamshoro DC had stated that the water supply scheme remained slow and needed improvement. The executive engineer, sub-engineer, sub-divisional officer and contractor, besides the chairman and town municipal officer, were directed to appear before the judge on Dec 28.

The commission noted that the executive engineer and other officers failed to ensure requisite improvement in the Bhan Syedabad water supply scheme. The Jamshoro DC, after his visit, had

suggested that three motors be got repaired but the executive engineer did not do this although such expenses were covered in the maintenance cost.

Published in Dawn, December 24th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1453181/inquiry-ordered-into-disposal-of-sewage-into-natural-waterway>

## 64 Illegal Housing Schemes Polluting Rawal Dam Water By APP

Published: December 24, 2018

ISLAMABAD: As many as 64 housing schemes are polluting the waters of Rawal Dam, one of the major reservoirs supplying water to the garrison city, besides degrading the Soan River water.

According to an official, the illegal housing societies had not obtained any No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and an environment impact assessment report from Environment Protection Agency (EPA).

The housing societies were illegal and hence had no proper sewage and sanitation system which ultimately resulted into improper disposal of waste through different tributaries and drains dumping them into Rawal Lake, said a CDA official requesting anonymity.

He said the mushroom growth of housing schemes near the jurisdiction boundaries of Murree and the federal capital and other trans-boundary areas encircling the key water reservoirs. "During extreme rainfall, household, plastic wastes and carcass of animals could be visibly seen flowing down to the tributaries, linked channels and drains," he mentioned.

He informed that at present there was no water treatment plant working at Rawal Dam whereas it required four water purification plants. To a question, he said the regularisation process of illegal settlements was on the cards as the government was working on the proposal to revise the capital's master plan. He said not only illegal housing, rather poultry farms and industrial units established near Soan River out of which some were set up at deserted and far off locations and were not easily accessible.

The CDA spokesperson said the federal government had formed a committee to decide the fate of illegal settlements and would give its recommendation over the issue soon.

The long-awaited five Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), planned to be installed in catchment areas of federal capital, may not materialise in near future due to bureaucratic hiccups and illegal settlements in and around the project designated sites, according to Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI).

The plants were to be installed at catchment areas of Bari Imam, Lower and Upper Shahdra and Simly dam might took half a year due to some technical issues to get its PC-I approved from the planning commission, official sources in the MCI told APP.

The STPs idea, floated by Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration and Cabinet Division in 2012, is aimed at stopping the flow of sewage in the streams of Murree and the Korang River which

discharges into Rawal Lake. Sharing details of the project, the MCI said Rs3.69 billion PC-I had been completed and submitted to the Planning Commission (PC) for getting final nod from Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) after clearance of some technical observations.

The PC raised some observations earlier regarding categories, capacity and capability of the plants which were responded to by the hired consultant instantly. Recently, the sources said the planning commission again sought integrated water management solution, details of PC-II of the project and current status of the illegal settlements in and around the selected sites.

The regularisation case of encroached land in these areas was in process and once the CDA Authority declares them legal, the MCI would purchase the sites by claiming the easement right especially over water collection sites. The finances to acquire the identified sites had already been allocated in the PC-I. They also sought PC-II amounting to Rs70 million including cost of hiring consultants and conducting feasibility studies

Surprisingly, the installation of plants would be facilitating majority of Punjab citizens but the provincial government did not release 36 per cent of their share.

The sources said the CDA had made a commitment recently to kick-start the project soon after approval of the PC-I. After approval of the PC-I, they said, "We will start other procedures like pre-qualification, inviting tenders and hiring a contractor." Elaborating the plants capacity, they said the five units would purify nine million gallons contaminated water per day, giving a sigh of relief to the citizens of twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi who had been expressing concerns due to supply of polluted water.

Published in The Express Tribune, December 24th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1873415/1-64-illegal-housing-schemes-polluting-rawal-dam-water/>

## PHA DEMANDS IMPOSITION OF BAN ON USE OF PLASTIC BAGS RECORDER REPORT | DEC 25TH, 2018 | PESHAWAR

Public Health Association (PHA) has asked the provincial government for imposition of complete ban on all kind of plastic bags and creating of awareness regarding losses inflicted on the environment due to its usage.

In this connection, a delegation of the association called on the provincial minister for Local Government and Rural Development (LG&RD), Shahram Khan Tarakai here on Monday. The delegation of PHA was comprised of Dr. Shiraz Ahmad Khan, Dr. Tauseef Ismail and Dr. Afshan Tabbasum and others while Secretary LG&RD, Zahir Shah and Secretary Local Council, Khizer Hayat Khan and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Water & Sanitation Services Programme (WSSP), Peshawar, Engineer Khanzeb Khan were also present on the occasion.

The PHA ambassador for Plastic Pollution Control, Dr. Tauseef in his briefing stated that plastic bags and rappers are big threat to the lives of birds and wildlife. He said that being a non-bio-gradable it takes at least thousand years to dissolve and is visible in shape of the blocked nullahs and heaps of garbage. They told the minister that planning for initiating a campaign in this regard is being under process under which they will promote the minimum use of plastic bags and the replacement of bio-gradable bags with gradable ones.

Talking to the delegation, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government and Rural Development (LG&RD), Shahram Khan Tarakai said that plastic bags are big causes of environmental pollution and its massive use is bearing negative impact on the ecosystem. He said that problems and hurdles in banning of polythene bags will be removed to get the environment rid of this menace.

During the meeting, the association gave detailed briefing to the minister over the damages inflicted on environment due to the usage of plastic bags and its negative impacts on human life and society.

In response to the demands of the association, the provincial minister said that the provincial government will take all stakeholders on board for the elimination of this big menace damaging environment. He assured the delegation of all possible cooperation in minimizing the use of plastic bags and launching of campaign for the promotion of the alternative gradable bags.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/12/20181225434143/>

## INDONESIAN RESCUERS USE DRONES, SNIFFER DOGS AS TSUNAMI DEATH TOLL RISES

By Reuters

Published: December 25, 2018

LABUAN: Indonesian rescuers on Tuesday used drones and sniffer dogs to search for survivors along the devastated west coast of Java hit by a series of tsunamis that killed at least 373 people, warning more victims are expected to be uncovered as the search expands.

Thick ash clouds continued to spew from Anak Krakatau, a volcanic island where a crater collapse at high tide on Saturday sending tsunamis smashing into coastal areas on both sides of the Sunda Strait between the islands of Sumatra and Java.

At least 128 people remain missing. More than 1,400 people were injured, and thousands of residents had to move to higher ground, with a high-tide warning extended to Wednesday.

Rescuers used heavy machinery, sniffer dogs, and special cameras to detect and dig bodies out of mud and wreckage along a 100 km stretch of Java's west coast and officials said the search area would be expanded further south.

"There are several locations that we previously thought were not affected," said Yusuf Latif, spokesperson for the national search and rescue agency.

"But now we are reaching more remote areas...and in fact there are many victims there," he added.

The vast archipelago, which sits on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", has suffered its worst annual death toll from disasters in more than a decade.

Earthquakes flattened parts of the island of Lombok in July and August, and a double quake-and-tsunami killed more than 2,000 people on a remote part of Sulawesi island in September.

“At least 373 people have died, while 128 people are currently missing,” Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, a spokesperson for the disaster mitigation agency, said on Monday evening.

It took just 24 minutes after the landslide for waves to hit land, and there was no early warning for those living on the coast.

“EVERYTHING IS DESTROYED”

Authorities and experts have warned of further high waves and advised residents to stay away from the shoreline.

“Since Anak Krakatau has been actively erupting for the past several months additional tsunamis cannot be excluded,” said Dr. Prof Hermann Fritz, from the Georgia Institute of Technology in the United States.

Rescue efforts were hampered by heavy rainfall and low visibility. Military and volunteer rescue teams used drones to assess the extent of the damage. One team used sniffer dogs to search for survivors at the beach club where a tsunami washed away an outdoor stage where the Indonesian rock band Seventeen were performing at a party for about 200 guests.

Destruction was visible along much of the coastline where waves of up to two meters crushed vehicles, lifted chunks of metal, felled trees, wooden beams and household items and deposited them on roads and rice fields.

Nurjana, 20, ran uphill after the tsunami hit. Her beachside snack stall was washed away.

“I opened the door straight away and saved myself. I jumped over the wall,” she said. “Everything is destroyed.”

Out in the strait, Anak Krakatau (Child of Krakatau) was still erupting, belching white smoke and ash into the sky.

The meteorology agency said that an area of about 64 hectares, or 90 soccer pitches, of the volcanic island had collapsed into the sea.

In 1883, the volcano then known as Krakatoa erupted in one of the biggest blasts in recorded history, killing more than 36,000 people in a series of tsunamis, and lowering the global surface temperature by one degree Celsius with its ash. Anak Krakatau is the island that emerged from the area in 1927, and has been growing ever since.

Saturday’s high waves isolated hundreds of people on Sebesi island, about 12 km volcano.

“We are completely paralyzed,” Syamsiar, a village secretary on the island, told Metro TV, calling for food and medicine.

President Joko Widodo, who is running for re-election in April, told disaster agencies to install early warning systems, but experts said that, unlike tsunamis caused by earthquakes, little could have been done in time to alert people that waves were coming.

## MEMORIES OF 2004

“Tsunamis from volcanic flank collapse are generated right at the coast and often close to populations,” said Eddie Dempsey, lecturer in structural geology at Britain’s University of Hull.

“The interval between the volcanic collapse and the arrival of the waves is minimal.”

The timing of the disaster over the Christmas season evoked memories of the Indian Ocean tsunami triggered by an earthquake on Dec. 26, 2004, which killed 226,000 people in 14 countries, including more than 120,000 in Indonesia.

Food, water, blankets, and medical aid has started arriving in the area.

District chief Atmadja Suhara said he was helping to care for 4,000 refugees, many of them homeless.

“Everybody is still in a state of panic,” he said. “We often have disasters, but not as bad as this.”

“God willing,” he said, “we will rebuild.”

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1874258/3-indonesian-rescuers-use-drones-sniffer-dogs-tsunami-death-toll-rises/>

## PUNJAB WILDLIFE DEPT RECOMMENDS STEPS TO CURB ILLEGAL HUNTING

By Asif Mehmood

Published: December 30, 2018

LAHORE: In order to curb the illegal hunting of birds and animals in the province, the Punjab Wildlife Department has sent a summary to the government for approval.

According to the recommendation, individuals found hunting in protected areas will be fined Rs50,000 to Rs0.2 million. They may also face up to five years in jail. Sources from the Punjab Wildlife Department say that the hunters continue to flout the rules because of the negligible penalty fee and punishment.

“Under existing rules and regulations, poachers found hunting in protected areas can be fined up to Rs50,000,” sources explain. “By increasing the fine and punishment, we hope to see a decrease in incidences of illegal hunting,” they added.

Further, the department also recommended giving modern vehicles and weapons to field staff in the summary sent to the Punjab government. According to the department, hunters use newer, faster vehicles as compared to the ones used by wildlife officials, which is how they are able to escape. Sources maintained that sometimes hunters also use modern weaponry and open fire on raiding teams. Earlier, two employees from the Punjab Wildlife Department, Gujranwala Division were killed during a raid. “Raiding teams often risk their lives to arrest hunters who are released for a mere few thousand rupees,” expressed Lahore Division District Wildlife Officer Tanveer Janjua.

Previously, the department put forth the recommendation that hunting of rare animals and birds be proclaimed a non-bailable crime. However, this proposal was rejected during the initial stages.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1877394/1-punjab-wildlife-dept-recommends-steps-curb-illegal-hunting/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 17TH TO DECEMBER 23RD 2018  
COMBATING SMOG THROUGH SOCIAL FORESTRY

Amjad Mahmood Updated December 17, 2018

INCREASING pollution and climate change, partially caused by gradual deforestation across the world, have made survival a greater struggle than ever before. The phenomenon is more pronounced in the subcontinent, particularly Pakistan, where the menace of smog during winter is getting worse each year.

The toxic haze blanket has affected climate patterns as farmers witness erratic and extreme weather — triggering heavy rains or long dry spells — to the disadvantage of the agriculture sector.

One of the solutions suggested to control and reverse the situation is increasing forest cover as trees absorb the carbon dioxide released into the air by factories, burning of stubble and vehicular traffic.

Smog has affected climate patterns as farmers witness erratic and extreme weather — triggering heavy rains or long dry spells — to the disadvantage of the agriculture sector

A study by the Punjab Economic Research Institution (PERI) revealed that the province has 17 trees per acre on its farmlands against the ratio of two to three per acre trees at the time of independence.

Experts believe that the province holds tremendous potential to increase the number of trees per acre to 30 without adversely interfering with crop yield and with minimum input of the required resources.

To help achieve the potential, the provincial forest department has undertaken various initiatives, including Green Pakistan Programme, Social Forestry, and Enhancing Range Lands Production and Planting of Fodder Trees.

Punjab Forestry Research Institute, Faisalabad, Director Rai Rafiq says that provincial authorities are coming up with an extension wing to oversee various forestation initiatives, including the 10 billion tree national campaign. The extension services will start in the next financial year.

Explaining the Social Forestry Project initiated around a year ago, senior forest official Rana Farooq says woodlots are being raised on farmland on a cost-sharing basis to bring 11,850 acres of land under forest by 2020.

The first year was consumed in preparing nurseries of various indigenous and imported varieties of plants to be provided to the farmers who intend to join the project. These nurseries have started supplying plants.

Mr Farooq says under the scheme the government is sharing 70 per cent of the cost of the forestation while the the farmer bears the rest. The farmer's cost includes water charges and labour.

Excluding the Rawalpindi division, landholders in all other Punjab regions — with landholding of up to 10 acres in the rain-fed areas of Khushab, Bhakkar and Mianwali districts etc. and up to five acres in the canal-fed area — are eligible to qualify for the scheme.

The department sets only one condition: the farmer cannot chop trees for five years, he says.

Per acre forestation costs around Rs15,000 and the department pays the grower 70pc of the amount in three instalments at as many stages of plantation. Farmers' response to the scheme has been encouraging as so far more than 4,000 acres of land have been covered forested.

Experts uphold social forestry as a better model than farm forestry and strip forestry due to strong motivation of individuals growing trees on private lands, but emphasise on adopting a participatory approach for the purpose

Dr Mamoona Wali Muhammad, director Forest Education at Peshawar Forest Institute, says as social forestry means planting trees for the well-being of local communities, the community concerned must be involved in the nitty-gritty of the project for it to be successful.

She also stresses on planting indigenous trees as these are not only best suitable for the local environment but farmers also know how to take care of them.

Mr Farooq says that farmers willing to join the social forestry project are duly consulted and advised on what to grow and are offered follow-up services with a free hand on the selection of the tree species.

The provincial government has also stepped up its effort for conserving forests in the province by promoting commercial forestry on over 90,000 acres of land in southern districts, including Muzaffargarh, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur.

A senior conservative officer for the southern zone says land has been distributed among investors for afforestation under a public-private partnership model to provide sustainable farm wood to the wood-based industry, reducing logging pressure on natural forests.

Published in Dawn, The Business and Finance Weekly, December 17th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1451877/combating-smog-through-social-forestry>

#### WORK ON TREATMENT PLANTS ON RAWAL DAM'S TRIBUTARIES YET TO BEGINS

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Updated December 19, 2018

ISLAMABAD: The Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) is facing Supreme Court's questioning for its delay in installing sewage treatment plants on the tributaries of the Rawal Dam.

After last year's suo motu notice taken by the apex court regarding contamination of the Rawal Dam, the MCI was supposed to install four sewage treatment plants on the tributaries of the dam.

Sources said recently the SC asked the local government about its failure to launch the project and sought reports from the directorates concerned by Dec 20.

The project was supposed to be funded by the CDA, the capital administration and the Punjab government. The sewage treatment plants would be set up at Bari Imam, Lower Shahdara, Upper Shahdara and Simly Dam Road.

MCI was supposed to start work on project after SC took suo motu notice last year



The sources said in the absence of any and check, Rawal Dam received untreated sewage from unplanned localities in the catchment areas that included the thickly-populated Bhara Kahu. The untreated water entering the dam contaminates it, posing a risk to aquatic life and the residents of Rawalpindi who are supplied water from the reservoir.

During a meeting headed by the chief commissioner Islamabad in March this year, it was decided that the MCI would execute the project. According to minutes of the meeting, the MCI would execute the project with financial support from the Punjab government.

The director of the agriculture external services briefed the meeting about the preparation of the PC-I, including directions from the apex court and the feasibility study carried out by a company.

“The chief officer MCI agreed to the proposal and expressed his commitment to take over the project under the umbrella of the MCI and asked the representatives of the government of Punjab for commitment about 36pc share of the PC-1 cost.”

The representatives of the Punjab government assured the meeting that they were ready to participate in the project and earmark funds in the annual development plan 2018-19.

It was decided that the provincial government would earmark Rs864 million as per its tentative share of 36pc in the PC-I.

The sources said following the meeting, the MCI took over the project and got it included in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2018-19 as an unapproved project.

The previous government of the PML-N had approved Rs 400 million for the ongoing fiscal year for the project but later the PTI government decided not to fund all unapproved projects of the MCI.

When contacted, Chief Metropolitan Officer Syed Najaf Iqbal told Dawn that there was no delay on part of the MCI.

“Recently, the SC also asked the MCI about this project and we informed the court that the project had been included in PSDP but funds are not being released.”

He said all concerned authorities had been directed to submit their replies at the next hearing.

Meanwhile, the Islamabad bus service project, which was added to the PSDP, is also facing uncertainty as the federal government has refused to release funds for it.

In the PSDP, the government had earmarked Rs500 million for this public welfare project.

According to the PC-I, the MCI would run the bus service with a fleet of 106 buses on six routes.

The capital city has been witnessing a significant increase in its population. It had a population of around 800,000 in 1998 which jumped to over two million in 2017. But, so far the capital does not have a public transport facility other than the Rawalpindi-Islamabad metro bus service.

The chief officer said whenever funds were released the MCI would start work on the project.

Published in Dawn, December 19th, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1452221/work-on-treatment-plants-on-rawal-dams-tributaries-yet-to-begins>

#### GOVT INKS MOU WITH WWF ON ENVIRONMENT

The Newspaper's Staff Reporter December 20, 2018

KARACHI: The Sindh government on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the World Wide Fund for Nature, Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) to provide technical support to run an awareness campaign to improve environment in the province.

Sindh Minister for Environment and Coastal Development Taimur Talpur signed the MoU on behalf of the government.

According to the MoU, the WWF would provide technical support to the Sindh government through capacity building, high-tech equipment provision for measuring ambient air quality and helping it to run a mass awareness campaign at the provincial level.

Speaking on the occasion, Environment Secretary Laeeq Ahmed said difficulties being faced by the department due to lack of high-tech equipment/gadgets and technical human resources.

He emphasised the need for building partnership with well-cognizant national/international partners to meet modern-day challenges in the perspective of climate change and its impacts globally and locally.

He highlighted the role of WWF-Pakistan for its invaluable support to the Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa) to meet international standards to guard the environment and combat pollution.

WWF-Pakistan official Babar Khan appreciated the proactive approach of the officials for giving importance to the burning issue of environmental deterioration and climate change and inviting all stakeholders on board to resolve the issue.

He assured the minister of continuing support from WWF-Pakistan to tackle environmental hazards.

Terming the MoU as a step heralding a new beginning in conservation of environment, Minister Talpur expressed the hope that WWF-Pakistan will also extend its support to the department in the area of coastal management.

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<https://www.dawn.com/news/1452394/govt-inks-mou-with-wwf-on-environment>

#### SUGAR MILLS ORDERED TO INSTALL IN-HOUSE TREATMENT SYSTEMS

By Z.Ali

Published: December 20, 2018

KARACHI: The Supreme Court-mandated Commission on Water and Sanitation has given one week to sugar mills to comply with its order for installation of in-house treatment systems to stop polluting the waterways and environment in rural areas. The Commission Chairperson Justice (retired) Amir Hani Muslim, conducted the hearing on Tuesday. He expressed annoyance with the Sindh Environment Protection Agency's (SEPA) dalliance over the matter.

The commission had earlier ordered the mills to build treatment plants in the month of July this year. The following month it ordered inspection of all the mills and distilleries by Dr Ghulam Murtaza of Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) and SEPA. The inspection also aimed to assess the treatment plant requirement of those mills.

During the hearing, the commission was informed that 21 sugar mills out of the 34 which are functioning in the province have submitted an environmental management plan (EMP) and the initial environmental examination (IEE) to SEPA. However, SEPA did not forward the same EMP and IEE to the commission which was dismayed to notice the unnecessary delay.

“SEPA has failed to provide copies of the reports submitted by the sugar mills for which no justifiable reason has been offered,” noted Justice (retired) Muslim while directing the agency to immediately forward such reports to the commission in the future.

In 2013, Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority (SIDA) prepared a report about the environmental pollution caused by the mills. According to the report, the samples collected from the soil and waterways around the mills showed that the discharged effluent is highly polluted. The dissolved oxygen level, total suspended solids, biological oxygen demand and chemical oxygen demand were found far beyond the permissible limits set by the World Health Organisation.

The effluent released in the drainage network was found hazardous for human health and livestock. It contained wastewater from boilers and slush from the processing plants and it is mainly organic. It seeps through the soil of the ponds and drains and contaminates the subsoil water which the people and livestock drink in rural areas.

Advocate Abdul Sattar Pirzada filed a statement on behalf of Pakistan Ethanol Manufacturers Association (PEMA). Justice (retired) Muslim observed that the statement did not elaborate the short-term measures which the commission earlier ordered. He said in February 2019, the water centre at Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET) will submit a set of recommendations for the distilleries. Following the recommendations, the distilleries will have to submit IEE for review and approval by SEPA which will have to complete the review with approval or disapproval in two weeks.

The commission adjourned hearing over the matter to December 29.

CEPT Kotri

The commission gave less than a week to Sindh Industrial and Trading Estate (SITE) for submission of revised PC-I for the rehabilitation of the newly built Combined Effluent Treatment Plant (CEPT) in Kotri SITE area of Jamshoro district.

Earlier this month a team of engineers from NED University evaluated the plant, constructed at the cost of around Rs1 billion on Sindh High Court's order. Subsequently, a PC-I costing Rs92.99 million was prepared for its rehabilitation. The plant was built to treat industrial wastewater which is being released in the KB Feeder Canal, which supplies water through Keenjhar Lake to Karachi, untreated.

Published in The Express Tribune, December 20th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1870641/1-sugar-mills-ordered-install-house-treatment-systems/>

#### EPD TO COLLECT SAMPLES OF WATER BEING DISCHARGED BY INDUSTRIES ZAHID BAIG | DEC 21ST, 2018 | LAHORE

The Environment Protection Department (EPD) Punjab has launched a campaign to collect samples of processed water being discharged by the industrial units to assess how much and what sort of pollutants are being discharged by the industries situated along Hudiara drain. EPD sources told Business Recorder on Thursday that though the department keeps checking the discharges from industries throughout the year but it has launched an intense campaign recently against industries polluting water. All laboratories have been directed to monitor and test waste water samples of 15 to 20 factories per month.

The sources said the campaign was practically started in September but later all resources were diverted towards taking steps for avoiding smog in the provincial metropolis in particular and the province in general. Hudiara drain originates from Batala (District Gurdaspur – East Punjab, India) and after being joined by many tributaries in Amritsar and covering 40Km enters Pakistan near Laloo village carrying untreated sewage mingled with untreated industrial effluents.

From Laloo village to Mohlanwal village where the drain discharges into River Ravi, a stretch of 55 Km, the drain receives untreated effluents from hundreds of industrial units and domestic sewage from some parts of Lahore City and cantonment areas.

This drain was originally a storm water drain. However, dumping of industrial and domestic wastewater has turned it into a perennial drain. Its annual average discharge at its confluence with the River Ravi is about 500 cusecs.

There are hundreds of industrial units of different natures situated along Hudiara drain on both sides of the border. The drain water is polluted and as such not suitable for agricultural irrigation and also does not support any aquatic life. Moreover, it is also likely to cause contamination of subsoil water.

The sources said that such an exercise was also done in 2017 as samples of hundreds of industries were taken but reports could not be made public due to reasons best known to the authorities.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/12/20181221433058/>

#### NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 10TH TO DECEMBER 16TH 2018 FINAL WARNING: COMMISSION GIVES GOVT 7 DAYS TO SUBMIT CONVERSION POLICY

By Our Correspondent

Published: December 14, 2018

**HYDERABAD:** As the law regulating conversion of industrial plots for commercial purpose remains unidentified, Sindh government again failed to apprise the Supreme Court-mandated Water Commission about the policy under which the conversion is taking place. “The issue is pending for several months, and neither the Sindh government nor the concerned department have come up with any concrete policy,” Justice (r) Amir Hani Muslim, the commission’s chairman, noted in his order on Thursday.

“As a last chance, seven days’ time is granted to the government to submit the policy.” The commission took notice of the issue after visiting SITE Hyderabad where it overviewed the construction of on-going commercial projects. According to SITE authorities, around 37 plots have been converted to commercial, of which 22 commercial structures were completed while work on seven others is under way. Eight other converted plots were still unused.

The commission visited Sukkur district on Wednesday. Justice (R) Muslim expressed dismay over drainage and solid waste management problems. “The issue requires inquiry into the matter,” he observed.

Sukkur Municipal Corporation Mayor Arsalan Shaikh explained the state of affairs to the commission but Justice (R) Muslim said he was not persuaded by his explanation. “The explanation given by the mayor should be sent to Sindh Local Government Secretary who should file his comments within three days [to the commission], whereafter, appropriate order will be passed.”

Published in The Express Tribune, December 14th, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1866405/1-final-warning-commission-gives-govt-7-days-submit-conversion-policy/>

**AROUND 55 BILLION POLYTHENE BAGS BEING USED ANNUALLY ACROSS COUNTRY:  
NA INFORMED  
AAMIR SAEED & NAVEED BUTT | DEC 15TH, 2018 | ISLAMABAD**

Pakistan has been using around 55 billion plastic shopping bags each year while the use is on the rise at the rate of 15 percent per annum, the National Assembly was informed on Friday. Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul informed the House during the Question Hour that there are about 8,021 production units in the country with average production capacity of 250-500 kilograms per day and majority of them are cottage industry.

Approximately, 1, 60,000 people are directly and 600,000 people are indirectly dependent on this industry, the minister informed the House. She said that plastic bags take much longer time to degrade (non-biodegradable) as under the best circumstances, high density polyethylene will take more than 20 years to degrade.

The manufacturers of the plastic bags oppose the ban on plastic bags, arguing that employment of thousands of persons depends upon such cottage industries, which manufacture polyethylene bags. The ban will render many people jobless, she said. To another question, the House was informed that there have been Rs 247.378 billion outstanding loans of Pakistan International Airlines till November 30 this year.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain informed the House that a comprehensive plan is being implemented to make Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation and Pakistan Television Corporation profitable entities.

A single board of directors has been constituted for both as part of the reforms, he said, adding that both PBC and PTV will be brought under a single administrative umbrella in the next phases in order to bring efficiency and improvement in these organisations.

The minister expressed hope that PTV will be turned into a profitable entity by next year while the situation of PBC will also be turned around by next two years. Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said Radio Pakistan is part of cultural heritage and all-out efforts are being made to make it a profitable state institution. He said there is no plan at present to lease the building of Radio Pakistan in Islamabad.

Responding to a calling attention notice, Minister for Planning and Development Khusro Bakhtiar informed the House that all development schemes are intact in district Chitral and there is no plan of excluding any of these from Public Sector Development Programme 2018-19. He said that work on development schemes costing Rs 63 billion is in full swing and projects worth Rs 32 billion have already been completed.

The minister said a development scheme costing Rs 16 billion for Shandur has been revised upward to Rs 25 billion and it has been decided to release this amount. The Golen-Gol Hydropower Project of 106 megawatts capacity has been completed that will improve the power supply situation in the district, he said, adding that increase in cost will also be released.

The minister said that grid evacuation projects are also being completed on fast track basis, adding that two packages of NHA in Chitral of 117 kilometres have been completed, while a section of 28 kilometres is under completion. Earlier, members of the opposition parties and government allied party Balochistan National Party (BNP) walked out from the proceedings over non-issuance of production order of PML-N-MNA Khawaja Saad Rafique. BNP-Mengal chief Akhtar Mengal said it is very upsetting that the production order for Rafique has not been issued. Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif said that there has been delay in issuing production orders for Saad Rafique despite requests made to the NA Speaker in last sitting. PPP lawmaker Raja Pervez Ashraf also expressed concerns over non-issuance of production order and joined the PML-N walkout along with his party colleagues.

<https://fp.brecorder.com/2018/12/20181215431294/>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 3RD TO DECEMBER 9TH 2018

QATARI PRINCE ALLOWED TO HUNT HOUBARA BUSTARD

The Newspaper's Staff Correspondent Updated December 03, 2018

QUETTA: Though the Balochistan government has approved guidelines to ensure implementation of the law for the wildlife's protection, authorities have issued a special permit to a Qatari prince, allowing him to hunt internationally protected houbara bustard in the province.

Inhabitants of the Central Asian region, houbara bustards migrate to Pakistan every year in winter to avoid harsh weather conditions at home. The return to the region after winter.

Sources said that the Qatari prince had paid \$100,000 before he was issued the permit for hunting the migrating birds.

Hunting parties are set a limit of 100 birds in a maximum period of 10 days, but they often exceed their quota.

According to the policy, they cannot use shotguns and other inflammatory weapons, but can hunt houbara bustard with the help of falcons.

A wildlife department official confirmed that the Qatari prince had given \$100,000 to the provincial government for hunting migratory birds in Balochistan.

Published in Dawn, December 3rd, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1449121/qatari-prince-allowed-to-hunt-houbara-bustard>

NEWS COVERAGE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 26TH TO DECEMBER 2ND 2018  
USE OF SEWAGE FOR CULTIVATION APPALLS CM  
MOHAMMAD ZAFAR

QUETTA

Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan has taken notice of vegetables grown by using Sewage water on Sabzal Road and other areas in the provincial capital.

In a statement on Tuesday, the chief minister ordered Quetta commissioner to take immediate action against all those involved in business of growing vegetables by using Sewage. The commissioner has been directed to present a report before the government.

CM Kamal said: "The use of sewerage water in cultivation of vegetables around the city is causing a number of diseases, including hepatitis and cancer, among the people".

Moreover, according to the directives of the chief minister, Mines and Mineral Development (MMD) Secretary Zahid Salim on Tuesday visited mines area in Swaranj and Sanjidi.

During the visit, he inspected the 25-bed hospital for colliers, rescue centre, and mines labor welfare primary and high schools. He took notice of absence of teachers in the school.

It was decided that PC-I would be prepared for upgrading schools and hospitals and better provision of water and health facilities. Moreover, the finance department would be approached for release of required funds.

The MMD DG, Mines chief inspector and welfare commissioner were also present on the occasion.

Earlier on Monday, CM Kamal at a high-level meeting approved the reform action plan framed by the finance department to increase revenue from taxation.

It was decided that a Resource Mobilization Conference would be convened soon.

Under the plan, goals would be set for all tax generating departments in the next financial year.

Moreover, reward will be given to those departments that would achieve their pre-set goals.

For the implementation of the plan, the finance department issued guidelines to all the departments. These departments can make policies and give suggestions according to the already provided guidelines.

Besides, it was also pointed out that large chunks of fund were being utilized on semi-government departments. They can be made independent and profit-oriented through necessary reforms.

It was decided that tax reform units would be established soon.

The finance department briefed the CM about the performance of several departments and regarding the expenditures and recovery of taxes by departments including excise and taxation, industries, agriculture and energy. CM Kamal said through reforms, performance of such departments can be further improved,

Meanwhile emphasis was placed on the establishment of Khuzdar and Bostan Industrial Zones.

“Every department should play its role,” the chief minister said, adding that they must learn from other provinces in this regard.

He said: “We are fortunate enough that our resources are much greater than our population”. Baluchistan, because of the importance of its strategic and geographical location, would provide Pakistan a solid foundation, he added.

CM Kamal said there was no shortage of competent officers in Baluchistan. However, he stressed the need for self-confidence among government officers.

During the meeting, it was highlighted that there was a strong need of strengthening tax-generating institutions because if attention is not given to Such institutions, then there is a possibility that in near future there would no salary for government Servants.

[https://epaper.tribune.com.pk/DisplayDetails.aspx?ENI\\_ID=11201811290094&EN\\_ID=11201811290040&EMID=11201811290013](https://epaper.tribune.com.pk/DisplayDetails.aspx?ENI_ID=11201811290094&EN_ID=11201811290040&EMID=11201811290013)

## WILDLIFE DEPT ISSUES NEW HUNTING LICENCE

By Asif Mehmood

Published: December 1, 2018

LAHORE: The wildlife department of Punjab has started issuing new shooting licence that comes along with a booklet of instructions, rules and regulations pertaining to hunting.

The new licenses will promote a sense of conservation amongst the hunters and make them aware about legal hunting practices based on the provisions of Wildlife Act.



The manual of the shooting license was prepared and provided to the department by Field Sports and Conservation Society Chairman Badar Munir. Wildlife Department Director General Sanaullah thanked the society chairman for his efforts during a ceremony.

He voiced hope that the new shooting licences would help promote a sense of conservation amongst the hunters and make them aware of the rules and regulations of hunting. He said the manual of instructions contains all the basic information for the assistance of the hunters. He also lauded the efforts of Field Sports and Conservation Society, an organisation working for the conservation of wildlife in the province, and its chairman Badar Munir in promoting awareness regarding the wildlife rules.

While addressing the event, Munir said he would continue to take steps for the conservation of wildlife in the province. "I will continue to play my part in promoting legal hunting," he said.

Published in The Express Tribune, December 1st, 2018.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1857726/1-wildlife-dept-issues-new-hunting-licence/>

#### 16 MILLERS FINED OVER ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

A Correspondent December 02, 2018

BADIN: The civil judge of Shaheed Fazil Rahu (formerly Golarchi) town, Ali Sher Chandio, on Saturday fined owners of 16 rice husking mills for their failure to install a dust control system at their respective industrial units as was directed by the Supreme Court-mandated judicial commission on water quality and drainage system.

Retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim, who heads the one-man commission, had issued the directive during a representation by residents of the town during his visit to the area. The residents had complained of environmental pollution and health hazards being caused by dust emanating during the husking mills' operation.

Each miller was ordered to pay a fine of Rs10,000 and make arrangements for the installation of the system.

The judge had issued the directive to the owners of over 50 such mills in the town. They were told to either install the system or shift their mills away from residential areas of the town.

While imposing the fine, the civil judge warned the millers that their establishments could be sealed if they failed to comply with the commission's directive within the next six months.

Published in Dawn, December 2nd, 2018

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1448821/16-millers-fined-over-environmental-pollution>

#### FUNDS RELEASE ISSUE: SC SEEKS PROGRESS DETAILS OF COMMITTEE ON WATER TREATMENT PLANTS RECORDER REPORT

LAHORE: The Supreme Court on Saturday sought progress of a committee formed to decide release of funds for four water treatment plants in the city.

Chief Justice Mian Saqib Nisar expressed concern over delay in completion of the projects and said the court wanted to see results.

The CJP directed the provincial minister for Housing and Urban Development Mian Mahmoodur Rasheed to also accompany the chief minister Punjab to Islamabad as the court could summon him on next hearing to be held on December 05.

Eerier, Advocate General Punjab told the court that the government had constituted a committee to oversee funds issues for the construction of four water treatment plants at Shahdara, Shadbagh, Babu Sabu and Mehmood Booti.

The minister stated that the government had to see the feasibility of the projects as billion of rupees were required for their completion. Chief Justice observed that the matter of adulterated water pertained to public importance and the court would not allow the government to scrap it. "The government might have experience of few months but we have been sitting here for the last 21 years. And we know how funds are released for projects," CJP Mian Saqib Nisar told the minister.

<https://epaper.brecorder.com/2018/12/02/9-page/752059-news.html>