

Mayor says only 12pc of Karachi is in his administrative control

KARACHI: Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar said on Tuesday that the federal or provincial governments could not solve the basic municipal problems of the metropolis on their own as these could be solved only when civic utilities and resources were under the command of the city's municipal administration.

"Under the controversial Sindh Local Government Act (SLGA) 2013, the mayor has administrative control over less than 12 per cent of Karachi," he said.

The mayor said that under the SLGA rules the mayor had nothing to do with most of the basic and civic problems of the city as he possessed control over only 12pc of the city.

In the present LG law, the mayor cannot launch an uplift project worth above Rs20m

The mayor expressed these views while addressing members of the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (Kati) during his visit to their head office.

"It is not possible that the federal or provincial government can solve these problems on [their] own," he said.

The mayor said that no attention was paid on resolving the problems being faced by traders in the Korangi industrial zone despite the fact that Kati contributed a lot to the country's economy.

He said that he was fully aware of the issues raised by the industry owners in this very important area of the city, but he had no power to launch a project worth over Rs20 million for the city under the "controversial" LG law.

Mr Akhtar said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation had limited resources and faced shortage of funds mainly due to the reason that the Sindh government withheld several revenue generating departments, which were not under the control of the municipal administration.

He said that the traders' community in the city would have to raise its voice for the resolution of the city's problems and set its way like the industrialists of Sialkot adopted for solving their problems.

The mayor also said that the population of the city was shown much lesser in the recent census and claimed that the city's actual population was about 30 million.

He said that the city's municipal administration was carrying out different development and uplift works with whatever resources were available to it.

"However, [the] city's problems are increasing day by day making the situation worse," the mayor added.

He said that Karachi could run the entire country if it got its due share and proper attention. "The federal and provincial governments must pay attention to the problems being faced by the people in Karachi," he said.

Kati president Mohammad Danish Khan, senior vice president Faraz-ur-Rehman, chairman of Kati's local government committee Zubair Chaya, Gulzar Feroz, KMC's technical services director general S.M. Taha and other industrialists and traders were present on the occasion.

The Kati president said that with 4,500 units, Korangi and Landhi was the biggest industrial zone of the country which contributed about Rs500m to the national exchequer in the form of taxes on a daily basis.

He demanded that the authorities solve the city's problems on a priority basis.

Mr Chaya said that no one knew who had what responsibility and role in Karachi.

He said that the traders had to approach the president of Pakistan and Sindh governor for resolving their problems.

Tahir Siddiqui