

## Use of industrial plots for commercial purposes irks judicial commission

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RETIRED Justice Amir Hani Muslim visits the water filtration plant at Paretabad on Sunday.—Dawn

**HYDERABAD:** Supreme Court-appointed judicial commission on clean water and sanitation on Sunday took serious notice of wide use of industrial sector plots for purposes other than establishment of industries.

The commission headed by retired Justice Amir Hani Muslim issued directives to director general of Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) and secretary and managing director of Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE), asking them to appear before the commission in this regard in Karachi on Monday.

Hyderabad mayor Syed Tayyab Hussain, commission's registrar Ghulam Mustafa Channa, Hyderabad commissioner Ahsan Ali Mangi, deputy commissioner Aslam Soomro and other officers concerned accompanied the justice during his visit of water supply installations.

The issue of conversion of industrial plots for commercial purposes was brought to the notice of Justice Muslim during an informal meeting at the judges' lodge before he set out for the visit.

Hyderabad Municipal Corporation municipal commissioner Nasrullah explained that HMC staff was not able to cleanse sewerage drains because parking lots had been built over the drains by management of different commercial plazas in SITE area.

The mayor said that construction of commercial plazas was creating hindrances to de-silting drains. The commission wondered as to how such edifices and parking lots had been built in SITE area over the drains for which the plazas were charging as well. The judge was displeased at the heaps of garbage lying near the road.

Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) managing director Masood Jumanji informed Justice Muslim that Wasa did not provide individual connections to such projects in SITE area as it allowed bulk water supplies connections to SITE, Pakistan Railways and Cantonment Board Hyderabad (CBH).

The commission wanted to know how no-objection certificates were issued for industrial plots which could not be used for purposes other than the specific purposes.

Wasa MD disclosed that CBH owed it Rs311m and industries department Rs340m.

The commission asked the commissioner to ensure payment of dues and said if any reconciliation of bills between Wasa and CBH was required then it should be done also.

Later, Justice Muslim visited Autobahn road which passes through SITE area and witnessed the commercial plazas. He was informed by the municipal commissioner that industrial plot could not be used for commercial purposes.

MD of SITE explained that the conversion was allowed by a board of SITE department after due process.

Justice Muslim remained unconvinced and directed secretary of industries, SBCA director general and MD of SITE to appear before him on Monday in Karachi to explain the facts as to how plots were being converted in this fashion.

Justice Muslim visited filtration plant in Paretabad and Hala Naka and asked as to why the road leading to Paretabad plant had not yet been completed.

Meanwhile, residents of nearby Ghafoor Colony complained to the judge that their colony was approved but they were told that their houses were to be demolished to make room for building the boundary wall. The commission asked the officers concerned to look into the matter.

Wasa MD informed the commission in answer to a query that the sludge produced after filtration of wastewater was wasted. The commission said that in various cases people paid to buy sludge therefore Wasa should find out ways to use it.

The judge later left for Kotri.

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