

**PRESS RELEASE**

Karachi, March 14: Karachi Metropolitan Corporation Commissioner Syed Afzal Zaidi on Monday said that they want to increase the municipal resources so that the institution can be made financially stable.

Attention can be paid to other issues only after overcoming the basic problems. There should be a better local body system for the next elected representatives, he expressed these views while addressing a delegation of participants of the 33rd Mid-Career Management Course of the National Institute of Management, who were on a study tour of KMC at Frere Hall.

Also present on the occasion were KMC Finance Advisor Imtiaz Abro, Director Charged Parking Sumaira Hussain, Senior Director Media Management Ali Hassan Sajid, Head of the delegation Chief Instructor NIM Samina Intezar and other officers.

Metropolitan Commissioner Syed Afzal Zaidi said that the people have high expectations from the local government.

"The only solution to the basic problems of water and sewerage, gardens and recreation, street lights, repair of roads and streets is a complete and strong local government system. We have local government laws coming and going, unfortunately no system has been allowed to flourish, the main reason being lack of decision making," he said.

Zaidi said that in the past local councils across the country including Karachi were financially stable due to octroi tax but now they rely on provincial grants.

He said that KMC's personal resources are limited to collection from municipal taxes and barely achieves the target while the company has to pay Rs 7 billion in pension.

He said that in order to improve the revenue collection, there was a plan to introduce a municipal utility bill in the electricity bill for which every effort was made and now the matter is finally before the Electric Board.

He said that it was unfortunate that at first no one felt the need to increase the resources of KMC but relied on the provincial government.

"KMC's 10,000 shops earn only Rs 15.16 crore per annum. The fares of KMC pumps are also nominal. Lack of coordination between KMC and DMC on the issue of charged parking and road cutting permits should come to an end," he added.

He said that in Karachi, 14 institutions have a controlling authority, adding that if a central local revenue authority is established, funds can be distributed to all local councils.

He said that there are a lot of things that should have been done 40 years ago have not been done which is causing complications and difficulties.

"We are working hard to improve the municipal tax system so that we do not face financial problems in the future," he said.

Zaidi said that in order to improve the quality of basic civic amenities, it is necessary to constantly review and inspect all things in the style of other major cities of the world.

He said that cities like Bombay and Madras receive billions of rupees in property taxes which keeps the financial system stable.

"The constitution should clearly state the financial, administrative and political powers of the local bodies so that all parties can understand them and move towards betterment," he added.

The Metropolitan Commissioner also answered the questions of the participants regarding the local government system and the steps to be taken in this regard. The delegation also visited Sadiqen Art Gallery and Library.

The head of the delegation, Samina Intezar, Chief Instructor, National Institute of Management, presented a shield on behalf of NIM to Metropolitan Commissioner Syed Afzal Zaidi and thanked him for his excellent hospitality.

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