



A damaged pipe, carrying the effluents from the Multan Industrial Estate, is discharging waste into Sikanderia canal. — Dawn

# Industrial waste causes havoc with farm life

By Nadeem Saeed

MULTAN, June 4: Industrial waste and sullage being discharged into canals and rivers continue to play havoc with rural life.

In early days of industrialization in Multan, the waste water was discharged into a nearby wasteland. However, due to persistent pressure of the urban locals residing in the vicinity of the wasteland, the industrialists started pumping out untreated effluents into nearby canals and the river. They installed disposal pipes from the factory to the canal and let the toxic poison the canal water which irrigated farm land and was drunk by human beings and animals.

In various industrial areas of

Multan, there are industries of chemicals, textile, paper and pulp, leather tanning, engineering and holstery that discharge thousands of gallons effluents daily. In some cities, industrialists do bother to construct open drains for disposing of the wastes, but here in Multan they follow the easy way of getting rid of the effluents by throwing them straightaway into the canals.

A number of villagers said they could not sleep due to stink of the industrial waste besides suffering considerable losses in shape of deaths of their cattleheads who drank the contaminated water. They said skin and lung diseases were common in their folks.

This correspondent stayed for a

couple of hours in villages situated on the banks of the nullah that carried the industrial waste to the River Chenab, and started feeling irritation on the exposed parts of the body.

Villagers said their lands were losing their fertility with the passage of time. "Trees are going dry, while mango yield is going down every year," they said.

According to them, their requests and reminders to the government to check the flow of toxic water had, so far, gone unheeded.

But how can one hope any improvement initiated by the government or its departments when Wasa in Multan also discharges sewage into the Sikanderia distributary near Suraj Miani.



INDUSTRIAL estate's highly-toxic effluents are being discharged into drain which flows through Basti Baitwala, Basti Volvot, Basti Panjwan, Basti Ameer Shah, and falls into the River Chenab near Basti Jhok Shah. The five-kilometre long drain has also contaminated subsoil water along its either bank.— Dawn