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Sanitation workers urge capital managers to disinfect slums

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The slum is home to more than 200 under-privileged people. — Dawn/File



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ISLAMABAD: Urging city managers to disinfect the capital's slums at the earliest, a sanitation worker, residing in the G-7 katchi abadi, said people of his community lift garbage and work at hospitals which makes them most vulnerable to Covid-19.

The slum is home to more than 200 under-privileged people.

Katchi abadis require extra-precautionary measures due to their peculiar conditions, as most people living in them are sanitation workers who are continually exposed to unhygienic places because of the nature of their work.

Ilyas, a sanitation worker from Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad (MCI), said a large number of residents of his slum had been performing duties without wearing full safety gear.

“Our community is at risk due to less awareness and unavailability of protective equipment,” he said.

Another sanitation worker said he had to purchase masks and gloves on his own to ensure personal safety.

Interfaith League Against Poverty (ILAP), a non-governmental organisation, has also raised concern and called for taking urgent steps to protect people living in slum areas.

ILAP President Sajid Ishaq said currently around 60,000 people were residing in 11 permanent and temporary slums in multiple sectors. He underlined the need for sensitisation of people living in slums towards Covid-19 and provision of safety kits to workers, performing sanitation duties across the country.

Mr Ishaq pointed out that a Covid-19 positive case which surfaced in Rimsha Colony should be taken seriously by the authorities. Less care of these people may undermine the efforts of government departments, who have been fighting this virus, he added.

Joint Christian Action Committee President Basharat Khokhar said after medical and paramedical staff, sanitation workers were performing their duties on the front lines against Covid-19.

“The city’s cleanliness would be ensured if they stay healthy,” he added.

He said at present there were about 1,200 permanent sanitation workers of the MCI while 800 were working under contractors. Temporary sanitation workers should be given a health risk allowance, he added.

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