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Chief Minister Directs CCTV Surveillance for Cleanliness Monitoring

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Punjab's Chief Minister (CM) Maryam Nawaz Sharif has ordered the use of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras to monitor cleanliness across the province, aiming to enforce accountability in the Suthra Punjab Program (Clean Punjab Program). Announced on July 27, 2025, this directive addresses persistent sanitation issues amid public outcry over mismanagement. This article examines how the CM's initiative seeks to overhaul waste management, the challenges it faces, and why robust enforcement is critical for Pakistan's urban centers.

The Suthra Punjab Program, launched to ensure visible cleanliness, has faced scrutiny for inconsistent results, with districts like Lahore drowning in garbage during recent monsoons. During a review meeting, the CM demanded "visible and improved

cleanliness” and instructed the use of Safe City cameras to monitor sanitation, as reported by the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP). She emphasized that contractors failing to meet standards should be sacked, signaling a no-nonsense approach. The program introduces innovations like e-invoicing and the Vehicle Trip Counting System (VTCS) to track waste collection, alongside plans for 136 new waste disposal points. These steps aim to modernize a system plagued by inefficiency and corruption.

However, the reliance on CCTV raises questions about execution. Urban planner Ayesha Malik told Dawn News, “Technology is only as good as its implementation. Without trained staff and maintenance, cameras won’t solve the root issues, clogged drains and underfunded agencies.” Lahore’s Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) struggles with outdated infrastructure, and unchecked urban sprawl has worsened waste management. The CM’s push for accountability is laudable, but decades of bureaucratic lethargy and political favoritism in contract awards demand deeper reforms. The World Bank’s interest in funding Suthra Punjab offers hope, yet international aid alone won’t fix local governance failures.

Public frustration is palpable, with residents demanding results over rhetoric. The CM’s directive could be a game-changer if paired with strict oversight and investment in sustainable systems like recycling plants. Without addressing these systemic flaws, CCTV monitoring risks becoming another superficial fix. Punjab’s cities deserve better, clean streets, efficient services, and leaders who prioritize long-term solutions over short-term optics.