

## Sugar availability eases, prices to come down within fortnight

By Tanveer Sher

**KARACHI:** The sugar shortage is apparently over following the start of the sugarcane crushing in Sindh, the commodity is now available in abundance in the wholesale and retail markets of Karachi.

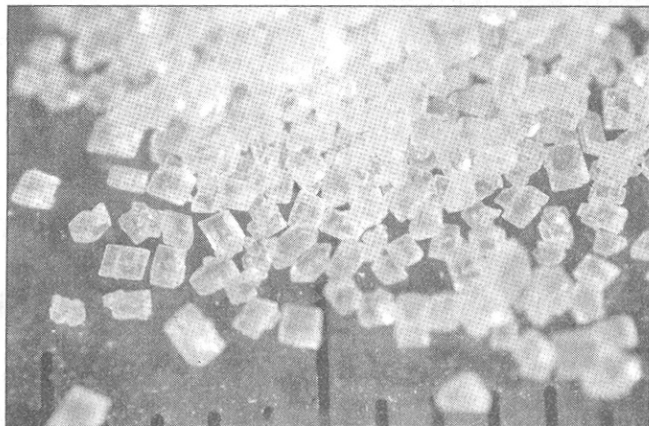
Traders said the sugar crisis hit hard general consumers during the last 2 to 3 months however, the buyers are compelled to pay higher rates for the desired quantity of sugar they intend to buy at retail outlets of their respective areas.

Fareed Qureshi, general secretary Karachi Retailer and Grocers Group expressed optimism sugar rates might plunge in next few weeks once all sugar mills in the province start sugarcane crushing.

“The retail price is expected to fall to the level of Rs 45 to Rs 47 per kg either by the end of the current month or with the advent of New Year providing some financial relief to majority of population” he added.

Currently wholesale rates of sugar stand at Rs 48 to Rs 49 per kg while at retail level it is sold at Rs 52 to Rs 54 per kg, depending upon the area.

The wholesalers of Jodia Bazaar claimed they have



been receiving regular supply of the commodity from Sindh interior sugar mills while crushing season started from November 15 in full pace.

However, some of the wholesalers asserted hardly half of the sugar mills out of total 20 to 25 in the province, are currently continuing their operational activities while rest are expected to be fully operational by the end of the December.

With the restoration of regular supply of sugar to wholesalers from sugar mills, it largely helped ending the drought of the commodity besides end unprecedented rush at outlets and godowns of Jodia Bazaar.

Majority of retailers in different areas of Karachi expressed their glee over relatively easy and smooth availability of the commodity, which was now available in bulk in the Jodia Bazaar with wholesalers.

Fareed Qureshi said regular supply of new sugar from wholesalers largely helped overcoming acute shortage of the commodity.

In view of new high rates of sugar, majority of consumers now prefer to purchase its small quantity as the Rs 54 per kg price is exorbitant and it is beyond reach of overwhelming numbers of buyers to make bulk purchases on such high price.