

DAWN

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Melamine, detergents in packed milk, court told

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE, Dec 9: Justice Mian Saqib Nisar of the Lahore High Court expressed grave concern on Wednesday when the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) chairman confirmed the mixing of melamine, besides detergents, in packed milk.

The judge observed that the court would not allow anyone to play havoc with the lives of people, especially children.

The chairman informed the court that a meeting of the Food and Milk Products Technical Committee would be held on Dec 15 to discuss the adulteration of different substances in packed milk.

Barrister Zafarullah Khan,

who had filed a petition against supply of adulterated packed milk, pointed out that the Pakistan Standard Specifications for Milk, 2009, allowed indirect mixing of 5mg of melamine in 1kg of milk for adults and 1mg for children.

The PSQCA chairman said the technical committee would take note of the matter.

Justice Nisar directed the chairman to present a detailed report on Dec 22 about the outcome of the meeting.

The judge asked amicus curiae Barrister Sidra to collect milk samples for tests in a laboratory in London.

Barrister Zafar would contribute Rs10,000 to meet expenses of sample collection,

the judge said.

Since melamine has high nitrogen content, it is mainly used in plastic and foam products. It can make foods appear to have higher protein content in some tests. Dishonest food producers in some countries have used melamine to supplement feedstock, pet food and even baby formula.

Scientists have determined that melamine causes kidney stones and renal failure and can be fatal to animals and humans.

Recently, several thousand babies in China became ill, having suffered acute kidney failure, with several fatalities, after consuming milk contaminated with melamine.