

WATER CRISIS

No respite in sight

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

Residents of Azimpur and Lalbagh have been suffering from a terrible water crisis over the last

few months.

Even the limited supply of water in those areas has often found to be dirty and smelly.

"Water scarcity is more fre-

quent in the densely populated areas like Sheikh Shaheb Bazar, Lalbagh, Amligola, Islambagh and adjoining localities," said Mahub Hossain, a resident of Azimpur.

Water supply is highly irregular in those parts and the low water pressure means that people living on third floor onwards never get running water.

Residents are left to store water in buckets, drums and anything that can hold water whenever they receive the supply which is not more than two to three hours every day.

Poor people usually stand in long queues at water pumps as they do not have any other source of water.

"People in our area go without taking baths for days as there is never enough water," said a resident of Lalbagh.

However, officials of Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) Zone 2 claimed that they have not received any complaints as yet.

"We have a complaint centre at our office in Postogola where we receive complaints from residents and take actions," said AKM Hamid, executive engineer of Zone 2.

Residents also complained of dirty and pungent water, which they believe could have been the cause of an outbreak of diseases.

Some people said that leaked underground pipes might be the reason for the dirty water.

"We have never heard such allegations. However, we would appreciate it if residents inform us about these things as soon as they occur," said Hamid.

WASA officials said that with apartment buildings going up everywhere and the tendency of taking illegal lines, water crisis was always a possibility in those areas.

"But that does not mean that we are not providing adequate supply there," said Hamid.

Some other officials predicted a deepening water crisis during summer as consumption will increase by at least 30 percent although WASA's daily production will remain the same. Power outages, which will be frequent all over the city during the summer, will further hamper steady supply.



Residents of Azimpur push one another to ensure a fair share of water.

Canadian immigration process relaxed

FAIZUL KHAN TANIM

With the Canadian authorities relaxing their immigration process by reducing the minimum points requirement for applying by eight points from the previous 75, the number of interested applicants in Bangladesh and the eventual success rate have shot up.

At a press conference organised by Galaxy Consultants in the city recently, immigration experts discussed the positive impact of this liberalisation of the immigration process. Officials of Galaxy Consultants, a Canadian immigration firm, informed that in the past the success rate of Bangladeshi applications was around 35 to 40 percent. But nowadays, they were receiving 60 to 70 interested clients each day and 70-75 percent of the applicants were being successful in their immigration bid.

"More and more people from all walks of life are coming to us for immigration following the policy liberalisation," said Jameel Akhter, the country manager for Galaxy Consultants.

The popular immigration categories include Independent class, which is also known as skilled workers category, business class meaning entrepreneurs, self-employed persons and investors and the family class.

The selection is based upon the evaluation through the points system. Points are awarded on factors like education, language proficiency, work experience, age, adaptability and some other aspects. Adaptability includes presence of relatives in Canada (close relatives of applicants living in Canada gives bonus points to those candidates) and spouse's education (an applicant of family class migration will earn

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extra points if his/her spouse is educated).

Under the family class, individuals living in Canada can sponsor members of their immediate family (parents, grandparents and children under the age of 22 and dependent children).

The business class has sub-categories for entrepreneurs, investors and self-employed people. Entrepreneurs need business experience with a net

worth of 300,000 Canadian dollars.

Self-employed persons have to have relevant work experience and the intention to be self-employed in Canada. Sportsmen, farmers, social workers, journalists, IT professionals, cultural professionals like dancers, actors, artists are encouraged to apply in this category.

Investors need relative busi-

ness experience and legally obtained net worth of 800,000 Canadian dollars and the intention of making an investment of 400,000 Canadian dollars in Canada.

Sufian Ahmed, a Canadian immigration expert said that professionals can enhance their chances of getting good jobs after migrating by appearing in licensing exams in Canada. These exams are very helpful for medical graduates, lawyers, accountants and other professional people.

Ahmed said Canada was liberalising its immigration policy when neighbouring United States was imposing a stricter border policy and immigration process.

"The country has a population of three million with a growth rate of 0.1 percent. 60 percent of the baby boomers will retire within the next five years and then there will be scarcity of population contributing to the country's economy."

