

'Bangladeshis queuing up for Malaysian citizenship'

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladeshis are now queuing up for citizenship of Malaysia, which promises all the amenities of modern life on a par with the Western developed countries, said officials of a Malaysian business group yesterday.

PK Resources Barhad, which deals with the issue of permanent residence under a Malaysian government-sponsored programme, claimed that 150 Bangladeshis have so far applied for getting an address in Malaysia.

The Malaysian government has launched "Malaysia: My Second Home Programme", inviting foreign citizens to live in the country.

Under the programme, a huge number of foreigners have shown interest in settling in the newly industrialised country because of

the high living standards at a lower cost, said PK Resources officials at a seminar at Sheraton Hotel in the city yesterday.

The PK Resources, which has businesses in construction, real estate, tourism and other sectors, is now implementing a mega real estate project near Kuala Lumpur on a 6000-acre land.

Under the project titled 'Putra Nilai', thousands of apartment buildings will be constructed to provide the foreign citizens with all facilities to lead a modern life. A modern educational institute, a shopping mall and a golf club have already been constructed.

Any citizen from any country will be eligible to buy apartment and live with his family in Malaysia under the programme if he has a monthly income of 10,000 Ringgit, equivalent to Tk 170,000, said the PK officials.



Big potholes dot the road from Badamtali Ghat to Sawari Ghat in the old part of the city, causing immense suffering to the pedestrians as well as passengers for long, but the authorities remain indifferent.

PHOTO: STAR

Garment workers vow to hold May Day rally at Mukhtangan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Garment Workers Unity Council (BGWUC) yesterday warned that Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) would be responsible for anything untoward if police bar the organisation from holding the May Day rally at city's Mukhtangan tomorrow.

Leaders of the council at a press conference yesterday said that on March 16 they appealed to the DCC for permission to hold a rally at Mukhtangan on May 1. Though they were the first to seek the permission, the city corporation for reasons unknown has allocated the venue to another organisation, they alleged.

"More than 15 thousand garment workers will assemble at Mukhtangan on May 1 and hold the rally at any cost," the council Co-ordinator Tauhidur Rahman said while addressing the press conference.

The DCC had not granted GWUC the permission also in last year saying that it was allocated to Gono Sangskritik Front as they were the first among the applicants, he added.

Rahman sought the prime ministerial and the LGRD minister's intervention to allow the garment workers hold the rally at Mukhtangan tomorrow to mark the May Day.

Meanwhile, ward No 6 commissioner Ahsanullah Hasan, currently the acting mayor of DCC, told The Daily Star that he was not yet aware of the issue as he took the charge only a couple of days ago.

The council leaders at yesterday's press conference also demanded that the government engage the Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) to arrest the owner of the collapsed garment factory at Savar.

They also asked for seizure of all assets of the garment owner after issuing an ultimatum ordering him to surrender within a week.

Joy leaves for US today

UNB, Dhaka

Sajib Wajed Joy, son of Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina, leaves Dhaka for the United States today.

He is expected to come return home in August.

Joy arrived here on April 14 and during his 16-day stay, he visited some northern districts with her mother for political campaign.

Joy also visited his father's village home at Pirganj in Rangpur.

Water line snapped for refusal to pay bribe

Stranded Pakistanis at two city camps allege

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 25,000 stranded Pakistanis and their family members living in two camps at Mirpur in the city have been facing acute water crisis for the last two and a half months since the Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) snapped water supply to the camps.

They alleged that refusal to pay bribes to a Wasa line inspector has led to this situation.

As repeated appeals to the authorities did not yield any result, they laid a siege to Wasa water tank installation on Monday last.

However, the Wasa has been supplying two tankers of water everyday for the last two weeks but it is too inadequate for the people living in Muslim and Madrasa camps at Mirpur-10.

"This is too little to meet the demand of 25,000 people. The people in the camps are suffering

from diarrhoea and skin diseases as shortage of water forced them to use water from different local sources," said Md Hablu, a member of Stranded Pakistani General Repatriation Committee.

Local people said the government has been supplying water, gas and electricity to the stranded Pakistanis' camps, known as Bihari camp, free of cost since 1991. But in 1998, the Wasa had suddenly stopped water supply to the two camps.

However, the authority again started supplying water, but the camp members have to pay Tk 500 to an employee a month, they said.

The water pipeline developed a crack in mid-February this year, which was also repaired, they said.

"But a line inspector of Wasa Mirpur Zone demanded Tk 2000 from us. As we could not afford it, the water supply remained snapped since then," said a camp member, requesting anonymity.

When contacted, the Wasa line inspector denied the allegation.

The camp members also approached to Wasa Zone-4 Executive Engineer Abdul Aziz to restore the water supply, but to no effect.

Failing to get water from the Wasa, desperate camp people dug at three points in the area to connect the snapped pipelines, but the effort did not yield any result because of low water pressure, said Md Hablu.

"I took a bath last Friday and am wearing dirty clothes for days together," said Azgori Begum of Madrasa Camp. "We hardly get a pitcher of water from the water tanker of Wasa as camp people start scrambling for water as soon as the tanker arrives in the area."

When contacted, Executive Engineer Abdul Aziz said, "We are trying to solve the problem."

Brushing aside the allegation against the inspector, he said, "We are now busy finding out ways to supply water to the camps."