

Lottery for government flats held

■ OUR CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Bringing in more transparency in the administration, the West Bengal Housing Board held a lottery on Friday at Nazrul Mancha to distribute government flats. A total of 3,857 applicants had applied for the 31 schemes of the board, which included 264 houses to be built.

Out of the total applications, 380 were rejected and withdrawn and the board was left with 3,477 valid applications. There 31 schemes, including three in Durgapur, five in Konnagar, one in Howrah, three on the EM Bypass, eight in New Town, one in Serampore, two in Krantik, one in Jubilee, one in Millennium Tower, one in Asansol and five in Matkal-Nimta.

There were a total of 33 LIG houses with a budget up to ₹4.1 lakh, 76 MIG houses with a budget of ₹ 6 lakh to ₹13 lakh and 155 HIG houses with a budget of ₹13 lakh to ₹1 crore. "People wanted paribartan to bring in transparency and wanted to fight corruption. Chief minister Mamata Banerjee has instructed us to bring in transparency and equality and remove the quota system introduced and practised by the erstwhile Left Front government," said housing minister Aroop Biswas.

He said that this move has been introduced for the first time in the state and the open lottery would decide who gets the houses. Apart from this, rejections and invitations for the lottery were mailed to applicants, which was also a first of its kind endeavour.

"Some applicants alleged that they did not receive the invitations. I will form a one-man committee to probe the matter. After Durga Puja, we will distribute 450 more houses through the lottery system. Also, a total of 20,000 dwelling houses would be made under the Gitanjali scheme in the zillas. We are also looking into all scams and illegal activities of the previous government," said Biswas.

Two barrels, one with the names of the applicants and their schemes and the other with the flat numbers, were used and also applicants for a separate waiting list for each scheme were also drawn. In Eastern High HIG, there were three flats and 184 applicants. The winners for the three were Sanchita and Suken Das, Gautam and Indrani Sanyal

and Prashum Kumar Das. The Sanyals said: "We are very happy because this has never happened before. The whole lottery was conducted right in front of us. It was all conducted in an admirable manner with so many people involved."

Bishnu Agarwal got himself one of the 19 flats available at Eastern Grove New Town. When his name was called out, he put up his hand and ran towards the podium and immediately called his family and friends. He said that it was thanks to the new initiatives of the present state government that people can finally trust the administration. Chief guests were actors Rituparna Sengupta and Jishu Sengupta. Housing board vice-chairman Subrata Maitra was also present.

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