

155 Lottery system to allot flats to eligible encroachers

Snehal Rebello, Hindustan Times Mumbai, August 06, 2011

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In a first, the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) at Borivli will introduce a lottery system next week for allotting flats to encroachers in the national park eligible for resettlement.

The move is aimed at ensuring transparency. At present, the park authorities have undertaken the exercise of rehabilitating 995 encroachers in resettlement flats at Chandivli.

"We decided to conduct a lottery like MHADA to avoid any allegations of bias in the allotment of flats. The drawing of lots will be held outside the park premises and in the presence of non-government organisations," said Sunil Limaye, director and conservator, SGNP.

"We don't want allegations such as we were influenced to allot a flat to someone on a particular floor."

Also, for the first time, encroachers eligible for resettlement have been made to give their thumbprints and attach a family photograph in the form that would entitle them to resettlement. This is to make sure that encroachers recognised by the state for resettlement don't claim another flat. "We have got complaints that people who were resettled at various places have sold their flats and have come back. There is a likelihood that these people will claim another flat," said Limaye. "The thumbprints and family photograph will help in verification."

In May 1997, the Bombay high court had ruled that 80,000 encroachments inside SGNP would have to be resettled outside the park within a period of 18 months. Till date, of the 25,000-odd eligible encroachers, 8,711 have been rehabilitated in the first phase. The second phase involves resettling 13,000 odd families including those in adivasi padas but the Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) is yet to decide on the resettlement location. Once the location is finalised, the SRA has given a time frame of two years to build the houses.

Case studies

None June 01, 2011

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'I am proud to own a Mhada house'

The Marathi actor and poet won a flat in Malvani under the artist quota after four previous unsuccessful attempts. Joshi said he had complete faith in the transparency of the Mhada lottery system. "I did not want to go to any politician for a house. I am proud to own a Mhada house, like a common man," said Joshi, who currently stays in a rented house in Goregaon.

"This is the first house I will own. My daughter's birth has been very lucky for me," said the actor, who believes the Mumbai police should also be given Mhada flats. "Policemen work harder for us while we enjoy festivals. I strongly feel that they should have a provision for policemen to own Mhada flats."

'I will live in a house of my own now'

Naik had to take permission from her doctor to visit the Mhada venue and check the results as she was admitted to a hospital in Kalwa four days ago for heart-related problems. Her son Ramesh, who lost both his legs in a train accident 15 years ago, won the lottery under the handicapped quota in Gaikwad Nagar, Malvani. "I have been dreaming of owning a house for more than 50 years. This is the first time we applied for a Mhada flat and God has been kind," she said.

The senior citizen has been living in a rented house in Dombivli with her son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter for years. "I told my daughter-in-law that we won a flat but she could not believe it as no one from my home knew I would leave the hospital to check the result" she laughed.

"This is the first time I will live in a house of my own. My son is a tailor and works hard. We will take loan to buy the flat in Malad," Naik said.

'I won't have to travel six hours a day now'

A Mhada staffer since the past three years, Patil leaves his house in Pen, Raigad, at 6 am everyday to get his office in Bandra. "I want to live with my family but we could not afford a house in Mumbai. Now, I can bring them here and live peacefully with them," said Patil, who will now own a flat in Malvani.

He is thrilled at the prospect of being able to spend more time with his family. "I have been travelling for six hours a day for three years. I could hardly devote any time to my family, but now the situation will change," he said. This was the first time Patil applied for a Mhada flat, and he won it under the category reserved for Mhada employees.

15 mins to know if you've won home

HT Correspondent, Hindustan Times Mumbai, May 18, 2010

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The Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) wants to ensure applicants hoping to get their dream homes in this year's lottery, do not have to wait too long to know if they have.

This year, within 15 minutes of the MHADA lottery to be held on Monday, applicants will be able to check the results online.

The agency will upload results of the lottery on several websites.

MHADA attempted to put the results online last year, but its website crashed due to heavy traffic. This time, it is armed with better bandwidth and more websites.

"We want to make the whole system smooth and ensure that people do not have to come to the lottery centre," said Amarjeet Singh Manhas, chairman, MHADA (Mumbai Board). A total of 3.17 lakh applicants have applied for 3,449 low cost MHADA homes built at places such as Dahisar, Sion, Versova and Mankhurd.

MHADA will use the computerised lottery system, introduced last year and certified by the Tata Consultancy System (TCS), to draw the lots.

The system attracted several Public Interest Litigations after last year's draw by applicants claiming it was flawed. The high court, however, dismissed all the petitions.

A committee of retired judge K.K. Bam, secretary of the state's information technology cell, Ajay Pande, and Professor G. Sivakumar of Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay, will preside over the lottery.

The committee has already checked the system. "We want to ensure total transparency," Manhas said.

After the lottery, the deposit money of unsuccessful applicants will be refunded and deposited in their bank accounts in 48 hours through the Electronic Clearing System. Those who win homes will be intimated in three days and asked to submit relevant documents and make an initial payment to claim their apartments.

If an applicant gets allotted multiple flats, the housing board will make sure he or she chooses one flat.

MHADA lottery: Govt auditor gives system clean chit

HT Correspondent Mumbai, February 11, 2010

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The principal accountant general (audit) of Maharashtra, on Wednesday, cleared the lottery system used by the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to allot 3,863 flats in May 2009.

Ex-serviceman, Gayasingh Yadav (80) had filed a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking that the allotment be scrapped. Yadav, who had applied for a flat under the system but did not get one, had alleged that the lottery system was faulty.

Following the HC's directives in October, Deputy Accountant General R.K. Solanki filed an affidavit saying the lottery system was discussed with MHADA officers during a meeting on September 9, 2008. MHADA had, then, said it would take care of the system in their computerisation project.

This meeting was held following the Comptroller and Auditor General's report (CAG) for 2008-'09, which said: "The deficiencies brought out in the report point to an ad hoc approach towards the utilisation of computerised systems which delivered an unreliable system, with deficient data."

The CAG report further stated that the system "could not invoke all the business rules of the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Board, one of the executive arms of MHADA, and its schemes".

MHADA had replied saying, "The audit observations included in the CAG Audit report were generally taken care of while conducting the lottery draw in May 2009."

Yadav's advocate, Ahmed Abdi, opposed the practical clean chit given to the system and will file a reply in two weeks.

The HC had allowed the housing body to go ahead with the allotments of flats. Yadav went to the Supreme Court requesting that allotments be stayed but his petition was dismissed. The PIL had sought a crime branch inquiry and asked for MHADA's equipment to be seized.

The HC is hearing the petition now and final allotments will depend on its order.

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