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India's first solar powered housing project sold out

Priced at Rs45 lakh, the houses will ensure 60% energy savings

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These may not look like conventional homes but are fitted with all the modern amenities. And a lot more.

The lily pool in front of each house looks pretty but serves a more serious purpose. The breeze flowing over it cools the house on entering it through a natural draft circulation process called the chimney effect.

Installed on its roof are solar panels and solar water heaters, which will offer inmates electricity as well as provide them with warm water for a relaxing bath at the end of a tiring day.

Sounds surreal? This is what India's first solar housing project—Rabi Rashmi Abasan—at Rajarhat on the outskirts of Kolkata has to offer. This housing project has a group of 25 houses.

Priced at Rs 45 lakh per house, this housing project has already found its share of takers among the upper end of the social spectrum.



■ A solar-light operated cottage at Solar Housing Complex in Rajarhat near Kolkata after being inaugurated last Tuesday —PTI

But, S Bhattacharya, director in-charge of West Bengal Renewable Energy Development Agency (Webreda), told *DNA*: "Although the buyers were mainly from Kolkata, there have been considerable enquiries from outside West Bengal," underlining the general interest that solar energy is generating across the country.

These 25 houses will ensure at least 60% of energy savings with-

out compromising on comfort, said Bhattacharya.

The houses have been funded mainly by private players, with minor participation from the central and state governments and have come up on land provided by the West Bengal Housing Infrastructure Development Corp. Webreda has been involved with the technical aspects.

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