

More realtors go for solar rooftops

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Kolkata: A decade after the first integrated rooftop solar housing was attempted in New Town, Kolkata, an affordable housing project in suburban Serampore is aiming to become the second-largest in housing rooftop solar globally (after Québec in Canada) with a generation capacity of over 1.5 MW. With the solar economics now become extremely lucrative, several developers are eyeing solar rooftop to offset electricity requirements in common areas and reduce maintenance charges.

According to Piyush Sharma, director of India operations of Enact Systems Inc of US that does both solar rooftop project planning and manage-

ment, the 30 lakh sq ft housing project on a 23-acre plot in Serampore will utilize 2 lakh sq ft roof area on 24 G+12 towers to produce 1.5 MW electricity (18 lakh units). "This will power around 90% of the common area, including the club, elevators, sewage treatment plant, pumps, staircase and landing lights, street lights, leading to a saving of Rs 1.25 crore per year. This will substantially reduce maintenance charges to under Rs 1 per sq ft," said Eden Realty chairman Sachchidanand Rai.

Two other housing projects that are under construction in Kolkata will also have rooftop solar facility—220 KW at Solaris Bonhooghly and 400 KW in Solaris Joka.

SP Gonchowdhury, who



A 30L sq ft project at Serampore will utilize 2L sq ft roof on 24 G+12 towers to generate 1.5 MW power (18 lakh units)

designed the first solar housing project Rabi Rashmi Abasan in New Town in 2008 with 20 houses that generated 60 KW power to meet its demand, said many more housing projects will go solar with the cost of solar installation coming down

from Rs 13 per KWh to Rs 4.

"We have had solar rooftop in institutions and commercial spaces. Nearly 70 schools and colleges have solar rooftop as do many infrastructure facilities and commercial establishments, including Kolkata airport," he said, adding that the AC load of apartments on the top floor will also reduce due to the shade that solar panels will provide.

The Ambuja Neotia group is already chalking out plans to do so after setting up a 50 kw rooftop at Eco Centre and finalizing two more — 250 KW at City Centre, Haldia, and 100 KW at City Centre, New Town. "We will also utilize land assets to set up megawatt size solar plants," said Ambuja Neotia director Parthiv Neotia.