

Pub Date:	14 Oct 2016	Publication:	The Telegraph	Edition:	Kolkata
Journalist:	Anasuya Basu	Language:	English	Page No.:	16
CCM:	115.12	MAV:	769024.31	Circulation	328548

Calcuttans ready to cross river and set up house on west bank

Away from the bustle of city

ANASUYA BASU

As Calcutta bursts at its seams with a huge population density, the city seems to be expanding in all directions, be it north, south, east and now even across the river, on the west. If it's Joka and beyond in the south, Rajarhat and New Town in the east are fast filling up. Barasat and Madhyamgram are no longer far off in the north. But now for many, it's destination Kona Expressway and NH6 in the west. People are ready to shed their inhibitions about poor cousin Howrah, and cross the river to set up house, particularly on the Kona Expressway-NH6 stretch with its vastly improved linkages, and affordable housing.

While the Unitech's The Gateway right after the Santragachhi Inter-State Bus Terminus is sold out in its first phase, Joyville, by Shapoorji Pallonji in Salap has been launched in January this year and AmbujaNeotia's Utsav Park in Dhulagarh is also, reportedly, sold off in its first phase. "Some 20 years back, land on either side of the Kona Expressway was used to set up factories. Land was cheap and available. Now 20 years after, commercial land has given way to residential projects attracting ready buyers," said a real estate professional.

Affordable housing

With the launch of Joyville at Salap, an affordable housing project from Shapoorji Pallonji with flats starting from Rs 21 lakh, many a middle-income professional are opting to leave the bustle of the city life and move to the quieter, tranquil neighbourhoods on the west bank. "Since the launch



The project site for Joyville of Shapoorji Pallonji (picture by Anup Bhattacharya) and (below) Unitech's Gateway at Santragachhi



WESTWARD HO!

THE GATEWAY

- Spread over 35 acres
- Phase I: 7 G+14 towers
- 2 BHK flats of 977sq ft and 1468sq ft
- 3 BHK flats of 1245sq ft and 1782sq ft

JOYVILLE

- Spread over 30 acres
- 3 phases of 29 G+18, G+19, G+20 towers
- Phase 1: 1 BHK flat of 605sq ft
- 1.5 BHK flats of 745sq ft
- 2 BHK flats of 1116sq ft
- 2.5 BHK flats of 1291sq ft

of the project we have closed about 200 bookings," said Cyrus Engineer of Shapoorji Pallonji. Spread over 30 acres, the project will have 29 towers of 19, 20 and 21 floors that will be launched over three phases. In the first phase, the company will offer four types of apartments, 1 BHK of 605sq ft, 1.5 BHK of 745sq ft, 2 BHK of 1116sq ft and 2.5 BHK of 1291sq ft. The starting price is Rs 21

lakh that could go up to Rs 55 lakh.

Sourabh Mukhopadhyay, a professor at IIT Kharagpur, has booked a 2.5 BHK flat at Joyville. "We are a family of three—my wife, daughter and myself. I would have bought a 3 BHK flat had they had one. I went for the largest flat that was on offer," said Mukhopadhyay, who frequently travels to Calcutta for work.

"I love that it is away from the bustle of the city and yet so close to the city. I am looking forward to moving in, when they hand over the flats, hopefully four to five years down the line. There will be a lot less pollution than Calcutta, it is closer to the airport than compared to New Town. In proper Calcutta, there is no space left to buy a flat," said the IIT professor.

Calcutta buyers

About 45 per cent of the bookings at Joyville is by people who live in central Calcutta and south Calcutta, 25 per cent are from Howrah and the rest from Jamshedpur, Siliguri, Gangtok and Jharkhand. Bengalis in Mumbai and Delhi are also buying flats because of its ease of connectivity. "It is 20 minutes from Belghoria Expressway and 25 minutes from the airport. The Vidyasagar Setu is 15 minutes away," said a company spokesman.

However, the project has a major drawback in terms of its approach. To enter Joyville one has to cross the Salap Bridge, which is highly congested on any weekday morning with the Salap Bazaar right across. After crossing the bridge one has to take an underpass on the NH6 and pass through a narrow road to the project gate. "We will have a proper road soon from the underpass," promised the company spokesman.

Closest to the city

Unitech's The Gateway at Santragachhi, located right beside the Inter-state Bus Terminus, is also sold out in the first phase. "We will launch the second phase soon," said a company spokesman. Spread over 35 acres, the project has seven towers of 15 floors each with a total unit of 392.

"We have 2BHK flats of 977sq ft and 1468 sq ft and 3 BHK flats of 1245sq ft and 1782sq ft," he added. The locational advantage of Gateway is undeniable, it being right on the Kona Expressway, the closest to the city than the other two projects.