

Over 3K seats for RTE, fewer takers in Mumbai

Aishwarya Iyer
aishwarya.iyer@dnaindia.net

A total of 3,701 vacant seats are up for grab for the fourth round of admissions under the Right to Education (RTE) Act in the city private schools. As per the officials at the education department of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), fewer students are showing interest in admissions this year, even after seats being allotted to them.

In the previous rounds (till third round), 11,000 plus students had registered while only 3,408 students had confirmed seats, revealed the officials at the department. When this newspaper met several parents who had come to the help desk of RTE admissions outside the department it was known that parent's "lack of interest" as described by the officials is because of the complicated RTE online admission process, lack of knowledge and uneven treatment of students from schools.

"The admission process is supposed to be done online or through a mobile application which is a task because neither I nor my wife is well versed with modern technology. I think we made some mistake in the procedure because of which my daughters were not allotted anywhere," said a parent residing in Mazgoan area. Meanwhile, another parent claimed to not get any allocation in both the first and third-round even after completing all the formalities. "In the schools we mentioned, our son's name didn't show up. In the first and third round this happened meanwhile in the second round, our application didn't even reach the final section due to some technical error. Now, I have been standing here (at help desk) since morning just to find a solution and get a way in the fourth round," said another parent from Byculla locality.

As per the officials, for the fourth round, the focus will be on the 'pending applications'



Picture for representation



There are several applications in our portal which are held back for some or other reasons. We will take them out and try our best to process it further

Official, Education dept,
Brihanmumbai Municipal
Corporation

The authorities can take the data of the students, create a mapping of their data and school locations and allot seats to them. This way, the idea of RTE shall be executed properly

Sudhir Paranjape,
RTE activist

EDUCATION FOR ALL

■ Under the RTE Act, selected schools are mandated to reserve 25% of their seats at the entry-level for children belonging to economically weak families

■ This year, a total of 302 schools were finalised in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) for admissions under RTE which had 7,491 seats in total for the students in the private aided schools

as the probability of new applications is 'very less'. "There are several applications in our portal which are held back for some or other reasons. We will take them out and try our best to process it further. Till now, there are no new applications and it looks like there will be quite fewer applications any further," an official quoted on the condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, experts feel neither BMC nor the government is interested in filling the seats. Sudhir Paranjape, a city-based RTE activist feel, "If authorities intend to fill the vacant seats, it will happen. If not, seats will continue to remain vacant. The entire administration has failed to conduct RTE admissions for the last two years."