

RTI reveals

# Tainted RPO gets ₹60-lakh plot in 'unblemished' quota

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REMEMBER Sumathi Ravichandran, former regional passport officer in Chennai, who was arrested by police on graft charges in April? Well, she was allotted a plot worth ₹60 lakh by the Tamil Nadu Housing Board under the 'Unblemished Government Servant' (UGS) quota in 2008.

Sumathi not only owns another plot — which disqualifies her from applying for the allotment — she did not submit the mandatory UGS certificate from her department.



Sumathi  
Ravichandran

When NGO Federation of Anti-Corruption Teams, India (FACT) challenged the allotment, TNHB sent her a notice asking her to produce the UGS certificate. RTI inquiries reveal, however, that Sumathi is not the only

one to have obtained a plot without submitting a UGS certificate. According to replies to RTI queries filed by FACT with 34 government departments, only one out of several state government officers who were awarded plots in 2008 had furnished the certificate for the years 2000 to 2008.

Among those sanctioned plots despite not having furnished UGS certificates are IAS officers G Prakash and J Radhakrishnan, retired IAS officers C K Gariyali and S Kosala Raman, IPS officer Sampath Kumar and Chief Minister's personal security officers C Ganesan and C Vinothan.

Moreover, the RTI replies said M Vadivali, a *duffadar* (clerk) with Housing and Urban Department (parent organisation of TNHB), secured a flat, while Kannabiran, junior attendant at Supreme Court got a plot within 24 hours of applying. Assistant public relations officers at CM's office, Bala Sakthidhasan and K Maran, gave UGS certificates issued by CM's office — and not the Information Department to which they belong.

A 1996 GO says any government servant having 25 years' service without any punishment or adverse remark is eligible for a UGS certificate.