

SEQUOIA, STEADVIEW CAPITAL JOIN APTUS VALUE'S \$122 MN FUNDING ROUND

• Beena Parmar

Aptus Value Housing Finance India Ltd said on Tuesday it has raised Rs 880 crore (\$122 million) in an equity funding round led by existing investor WestBridge Capital.

Steadview Capital and Sequoia Capital came in as new investors in the round, Chennai-based Aptus said in a statement. Existing investors WestBridge Capital and Malabar Investments also took part.

Aptus, founded by former Murugappa group executive M Anandan in 2010, raised the funding at a post-money valuation of Rs 5,080 crore.

Anandan said Aptus is now well-capitalised and aims to grow its loan book to Rs 9,000 crore by 2021-22 from the current Rs 2,650 crore. The loan book has grown at an annualised pace of 60% for the past five years and the company aims to maintain this rate, he said. The fundraising comes at a time when several housing finance and non-banking finance companies are facing a liquidity crunch that was triggered by the collapse of Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd last year and worsened after Dewan Housing Finance Corporation defaulted on its debts.

Aptus joins PNB Housing Finance Ltd, Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd and Aavas Financiers Ltd in raising capital this year. Carlyle-backed PNB Housing raised \$100 million (Rs 690 crore) from International Finance Corporation in July. IFC, the World Bank's private-sector investment arm, also offered \$50 million to Aavas and \$150 million to Piramal Capital.

Aptus offers loans in the range of Rs 5-25 lakh to self-employed people for buying affordable housing units. It also provides business loans through unit Aptus India Finance Pvt. Ltd.

The mortgage lender has about 40,000 customers in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Pondicherry. It has disbursed more than Rs 3,500 crore worth of loans since inception.

Spark Capital acted as the exclusive financial adviser to Aptus for the latest fundraising transaction.

Aptus had raised Rs 30 crore from Impact investor Caspian's India Financial Inclusion Fund in 2012. Two years later, homegrown private equity firm WestBridge put in around Rs 100 crore in Aptus in 2014.

In a follow-up round in 2016, WestBridge and Caspian invested a total of Rs 270 crore more in Aptus. In December 2017, Aptus raised Rs 200 crore through debentures from a mutual fund.

In May last year, International Finance Corporation made a commitment to invest Rs 100 crore in Aptus through senior secured non-convertible debentures with a tenor of seven years.