

PM's housing gift turns 8,314 more homeless into jubilant in Rajshahi

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Online Desk: All the 20 landless and homeless families have become happy after getting homes for the first time in Char Asariadaha village (riverbed) under Godagari Upazila in the district. They were given the houses with special design of earthquake resilient and portable in the fourth phase of Ashrayan-2 project to mark the Mujibbarsha very recently thanks to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the benevolent works, reports BSS.

There are vacant places for cultivating vegetables and other crops in the project area. The rehabilitated families will get scope of improving their living and livelihood condition through homestead gardening and rearing cattle, goat and poultry birds.

Togora Begum, one of the beneficiaries, said they had to live in a roadside thatched house before getting the new one. She had to suffer a lot due to the lack of a house. But, the worst situation has changed now. She along with her family members are having happy days in the house. "I never thought that I would be an owner of a brick-built house," she said with a smiling face, adding that the house gave them a new life expressing deep gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her benevolent initiative.

Another beneficiary Aklema Begum said she has attained permanent address with the noble gesture of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. "The PM's housing gift has enhanced our social dignity side by side with boosting the level of confidence as a whole," she added. "There was no thought even in the dream of getting a brick-built house in the char area," said Farida Begum, another beneficiary, adding they had to live in a thatched house on other land for a long time in the past. The four-member family is now happy after getting the house as they availed a permanent house for living.

Assistant Commissioner (Land) Sabuj Hassan told BSS that there was a big challenge in the field of building houses in the char area but the task has been successful through facing the challenges. Priority was given to widow, divorcee, bagger, persons with disability, ethnic minority and third gender side by side with other distressed people in terms of scrutinizing beneficiaries for their proper rehabilitation. Deputy Commissioner Abdul Jalil said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has declared the Rajshahi district as freed from landless and homeless people through handing over homes to 4,321 families.

In the fourth phase, houses were allocated to 8,314 families in all eight districts under Rajshahi division. Commissioner of Rajshahi division GSM Zafaruallah said there were 31,930 homeless and landless families in 'KA' class in the division. Already, 21,762 of those were rehabilitated in the first, second and third phases. A total of three districts— Rajshahi, Chapainwabganj and Joypurhat— and 32 upazilas were declared as freed of landless and homeless people in the division taking the number to 42, out of 67, he added.

Main thrust of the initiative is to improve the standard of living, ensure basic education, health care and skill development on income generating activities of the beneficiary people. The floors and walls of the houses are brick-built as the roofs were made of corrugated sheet. The houses were made colorfully and eye-catching. The disaster resistant houses reveal the images of laudable and lasting development activities of the government.

At the initiative of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the government has provided them with the houses to alleviate their poverty through giving shelters and human resource development activities. On behalf of Ashrayan Project-2 of the Prime Minister's Office, the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) has built the houses. Each of the semi-pucca houses with two bedrooms, one kitchen, one toilet, common space and

veranda are built at a cost of Taka 2.59 lakh.

Commissioner Zafarullah said the construction of the houses is a laudable step of the government. All the government's line departments, including agriculture, fisheries, livestock, youth development, cooperatives, women affairs and social development, have started expanding their activities to the Ashrayan villages to improve the living and livelihood conditions of the settlers.