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Rajasthan launches new housing policy for the poor

Special Correspondent

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1.25 lakh houses to be constructed in the next five years

Slum areas to be regularised by August 15, 2010

JAIPUR: The Rajasthan Government on Monday launched an affordable housing policy for the poor, low-income and economically weaker sections of society with the target of constructing 1.25 lakh dwelling units for them during the next five years.

Unveiling the new policy, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said it was aimed at meeting the housing shortage for low-income groups in the State with encouragement for private sector participation. The Rajasthan Housing Board, Urban Improvement Trusts, Jaipur Development Authority and urban local bodies will actively work for ensuring success of the new policy.

Mr. Gehlot pointed out that the Congress-led government had announced the policy in this year's State Budget and had been working since July this year for giving it a final shape. The applicants under the economically weaker and low-income categories will be allotted houses at a cost of Rs.2.40 lakh to Rs.3 lakh under the scheme.

Along with the new policy's execution, the slum areas in the desert State will be regularised by August 15 next year. Mr. Gehlot said his government had decided to regularise all slum colonies with this year's Independence Day as the cut-off date for occupancy under the Centre's ambitious Rajiv Gandhi Housing Scheme.

The Chief Minister affirmed that Rajasthan would be the "frontline State" for execution of the scheme aimed at making the entire country slum-free. A survey will be started shortly for identifying the slum areas where brick houses are to be constructed to replace huts, sheds and ramshackle structures.

Mr. Gehlot said his government would also launch a new drive, "*Prashasan Shahron Ke Sang*" (Administration with towns), across the State from January 26 to resolve the grievances of the residents of urban areas.

Urban Development Minister Shanti Dhariwal said the State Government had initiated several projects for making Jaipur a world-class city. "These works will achieve new horizons and set high standards for urban local bodies," he said, adding that the work for constructing 4,000 houses will start in Kota next month.

Principal Urban Development Secretary G. S. Sandhu, describing the salient features of the affordable housing policy, said it would be executed in five models.

The Government had approved 21 of 55 proposals submitted by developers for constructing houses on private land where about 10,000 dwelling units would be built, he added.

State Water Resources Minister Mahipal Maderna, Tourism Minister Bina Kak, Minister of State for Rural Development Ameen Khan, Jaipur Mayor Jyoti Khandelwal, Rajasthan Housing Board

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Written by Administrator

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chairman Lalit Kothari, JDA Commissioner Sudhansh Pant and Housing Commissioner P. K. Goyal were present on the occasion.