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Housing scheme runs into rough weather

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Beneficiaries unsatisfied with the quality of work

— Photo: M. Sathyamoorthy

The Kasturibai Colony at Kandhal near Udhagamandalam.

Udhagamandalam: The implementation of a housing scheme at Kasturibai Colony in Kandhal near here has run into rough weather following differences between the beneficiaries and those involved in its implementation.

Enquiries made by The Hindu revealed that under the Central Government-sponsored Integrated Housing for Slum Development Programme this hill station had been sanctioned 1080 units.

While the Centre took care of 80 per cent of the expenses, the balance had to be shared by the State Government and the beneficiaries.

Among the areas identified for implementation of the scheme was Kasturibai Colony where 200 houses were to be built.

With ten houses having been completed residents have started airing their grievances.

Lamenting that even ten months after razing to the ground all the existing structures, the scheme was far from being completed, they alleged that the quality of work was not satisfactory.

Claiming that the size of the houses was smaller than what had been stipulated, they said that the walls of the houses should not be common.

They added that they had sought the intervention of human rights activists to draw the attention of the authorities concerned to their grievances.

Meanwhile the Chairman, Udhagamandalam Municipal Council, R. Rajendran said that 16 slums had been selected for implementation of the scheme.

While over 600 houses had been completed and 200 were in the process of being completed, the 200 units sanctioned for Kasturibai Colony had been delayed due to various factors.

Stating that each house had to be built over 25 square metres and comprise two rooms, a kitchen and a toilet, he said that funds were being released in a phased manner. It was up to the beneficiaries to put up individual houses or houses with common walls.

Though the civic administration is not directly involved with the project it was coordinating the arrangements including bank loans. The Abubabaji Charitable Trust, a non-governmental organisation had also been requested to extend financial assistance to the beneficiaries at Kasturibai Colony.

Pointing out that due to the delay the construction cost was going up, Mr.Rajendran said that if the beneficiaries extend their cooperation all the houses can be completed within six months.