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## **Housing facilities for hut-dwellers to improve**

Special Correspondent

CHENNAI: Chennai Corporation on Monday launched the process of improving housing facilities for those living in huts, under a scheme jointly funded by the Centre and the State government.

At a function in Labour Colony, Guindy, nearly 25 persons in Division 140 of the Corporation received work orders to build houses with funds sanctioned under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission.

A total of Rs.17.81 crore had been allotted under the scheme and 1,370 huts had been identified in the city so far.

Giving away the work orders, Mayor M. Subramanian said applicants must hold clear title for the land. Those who own land allotted by Slum Clearance Board may also apply. "The scheme will benefit all those who live in thatched huts in the city," he said. The work order will be deemed cancelled if work is not commenced within 15 days' of issue of the order.

According to a civic body official those living in lands not owned by them must provide a no objection certificate permitting them to take up construction. The scheme stipulates that a person must have resided in the place for five years and must produce a copy of the ration card.

Each beneficiary is given Rs.1.30 lakh to construct a house. To be eligible for the benefit, a

beneficiary must pay ten per cent of the sanctioned amount. Payment will be made in four phases – after building basement, lintel, ceiling, and while providing the “finishing touches”. The amount need not be returned to the government but the beneficiary must ensure that the ‘pucca’ house has toilet and bathroom facilities, Mr. Subramanian said.

The amount was a subsidy to ensure that persons living in thatched roofs received better amenities. Persons with land may approach the zonal office. Officials would inspect the site and present their report in the ward committee, Mr. Subramanian explained.

### Health cards distributed

The Mayor also distributed smart cards to those who have joined the Kalaignar health insurance scheme.

So far, a total of 4,98,795 families in the city had enrolled and about 770 persons had benefited under the scheme. It had cost the government Rs.3.8 crore, he said.