New houses for landslide-hit victims

Persons who took part in the construction work did not accept wages and industrialists did not collect transport charges

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UDHAGAMANDALAM: Even though the pall of gloom which engulfed Nudhatty, a Badaga village near Kotagiri after an unprecedented massive landslide that occurred last month brought down a few houses and claimed the life of a woman, is yet to lift, the residents got something to cheer about on Sunday thanks to a laudable gesture of the Kotagiri-based ‘Porangadu Seemai Nala Sangam’ and many individuals who helped put the village on the road to recovery.

Residents who spoke to The Hindu pointed out that even before the tempest abated on the fateful night rescue, restoration and rehabilitation works had been set in motion by the villagers. They were accelerated by volunteers from different organisations like Isha Yoga Centre and educational institutions apart from the district administration.

With help in different forms pouring in from other members of the community in various parts of the district, the Sangam had taken upon itself the task of constructing three new houses for those who had been rendered shelterless by the landslide.

Accordingly a nominal ‘tax’ was levied on each Badaga family in the area and a sum of about Rs. 10 lakh raised. A month ago the ‘bhoomi puja’ was performed. Persons who took part in the construction work did not accept wages and industrialists did not collect transport charges for building materials brought from the plains.

With the annual ‘Hetthe Habba’, the main festival of the Badaga community scheduled to begin on Monday, a house warming ceremony was organised at Nudhatty on Sunday. Among those present were the heads of various villages in Kotagiri and surroundings.