

Govt assists economically challenged women in Chakdah to become self-reliant



The women formed self help groups and seven pits each measuring 15 cottahs were leased out to them for catfish cultivation under MGNREGA at a cost of about Rs 1,47,899

KOLKATA: The assistance provided by the state Panchayat and Rural Development department to help 210 women coming from economically challenged

background to become self-reliant is more thrilling than any reel life story. The women, mostly coming from minority community now earn Rs 47,000 per year and give support to their families.

They no longer take loans from the Self Help Groups for survival. The unique

development that has taken place in rural Bengal contributed to the landslide victory of Trinamool Congress led by Mamata Banerjee in 2016 Assembly election. "In the past five years there is a change in the vision of the state government and this has helped the people to change their vision as well.

Rural women most of whom are homemakers now think of forming Self Help Groups to become

economically independent. This has changed the economic scenario in rural Bengal," said a senior official of the department.

Sarifa Mondol and Marjina Bibi Mondol along with many others had never dreamt in their wildest reveries that they would be able to come out of their financial constraints. Sarifa's daughter fell ill and she did not have money to treat her. Similarly, Marjina could not settle her daughter's marriage because of acute financial crisis.

But now, they – along with other women of Tangra village in Dubra gram panchayat in Chakdah in Nadia district – are economically self-reliant.

They help their daughters to carry on with their education and

the financial condition of the household has improved.

The women formed SHGs and seven pits each measuring 15 cottahs were

leased out to them for catfish cultivation under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) at an estimated cost of Rs 1,47,899. The fingerlings of catfishes are available locally. The feed and medicines are also available in the market.

The pits soon became nurseries for catfish cultivation. The women got training from the Fisheries department of Chakdah development block. The women conducted a survey in the area and found that their produce had a market. In the first year 1,200 catfishes were produced. As of today, cat fish cultivation is going on in 210 ponds and MGNREGA has spent Rs 45 lakh for the purpose.

The person days generated is 26,000. Each member of the Self Help Group is now earning Rs 47,000 per year.