

# KALYANI Sarasa

## ODISHA



**Kalyani**, a 56-year-old widow, is an inspiration to many. Her husband was a cobbler heading a family of ten members. After his untimely demise, Kalyani was left helpless with a large family to feed. Her family consists of three sons, three daughters-in-law and three granddaughters. Her sons are cobblers too, who have a small shop near the bus stand. The entire family's income was not enough for their sustenance.

They lived together in a thatched house with no toilet, kitchen, electricity and water supply. The family used to cook in the open which was a concern during the rains. With no toilet facility, they had to walk several kilometers for bathing and defecating. The women and girl children were the worst sufferers. They had no privacy and security rendering them vulnerable all the time. They lived in constant fear worrying about their safety. "There was no electricity at home and it was very difficult for me to study at night. There was no proper lighting or ventilation. There were times when I felt so helpless that I cursed my fate for being born". They say home is the safest place but our house was far from that", expressed Kalyani's 14 years old grand- daughter with grief in her eyes.

Agonised and heartbroken by the sufferings and difficulties faced by her family, Kalyani would always pray for a pucca house. After her husband's death, she decided to work as a daily labour to support her family. "Once while I was at home, I saw a mobile van announcing that there is a scheme providing financial assistance to poor people like us for building pucca houses. Intrigued, I enquired about Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) [PMAY(U)]. I felt like God was answering my prayers. I applied for the scheme immediately and to my luck was eligible for it," remembers Kalyani. There has been no looking back after she got a pucca house under PMAY(U).