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'First phase of BSUP scheme will be completed by Dec. 31'

Special Correspondent

Each house cost

Rs. 1.44 lakh

Phase I is initially planned for 12,000 beneficiary families

COIMBATORE: The Phase I of the Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP), under which houses are being constructed for slum dwellers, will be completed by December 31, the deadline for this phase, Coimbatore Corporation Commissioner Anshul Mishra said recently.

The first phase involved the construction of houses on the very site on which the slum dwellers lived now. Each house, measuring about 260 sq.ft. cost Rs.1.44 lakh. The beneficiaries had to contribute 20 per cent. To enable them pay this, the Corporation had tied up with banks to provide them with loans for four per cent interest in order. In another phase, multi-storey tenements were being constructed for families living in slums that encroached upon water bodies, roads and other spaces owned by the Government. Phase I was initially planned for 12,000 beneficiary families as per the first detailed project report. But, many families identified as beneficiaries in this were found to be ineligible. A number of them were living on sites categorised as objectionable 'poramboke.' Of the 5,700 eligible beneficiaries, some were not willing to construct new houses. A few of them said they did not want to demolish recently-constructed walls in order to build a totally new house. A few others said the sites they occupied were too small for even a 260 sq.ft. house. At least 95 per cent of them had been

provided with work orders for the construction of the houses. The rest would also get the orders soon. But, a major problem was that beneficiaries did not start the work despite getting the orders.

“We are convincing the people to build the houses and are confident of meeting the December 31 deadline,” the Commissioner said. As for the multi-storey tenements with 9,600 flats, the Corporation had asked the State Government for an additional Rs.140 crore as the original outlay of Rs.185 crore would not be sufficient to provide structures that could withstand an earthquake.