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Kovai complex develops crack

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[Kovai complex](#)

April 18: A week after a Slum Clearance Board block caved in at Ammankulam in Coimbatore, officials were hit by another shocker when blocks in the neighbourhood developed massive cracks on Sunday.

The Rs 29 crore housing complex when completed will have 936 flats. The project, executed by a private contractor, is funded by the Centre under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission.

According to Coimbatore district collector Umanath, the housing complex was designed by experts of Anna University, Chennai, after studying soil conditions in the area. The expert committee suggested that the basement be laid after removing loose soil and the pillars mounted on a site with rocky base.

“The design plan was followed, but engineers recently discovered that there is loose soil a few centimetres below the rocky area,” the collector said. “However, all existing blocks will be demolished and a team of experts will provide suggestions after visiting the spot on Monday.”

The project had been rejected in 2003, during the previous AIADMK regime, as the site at Ammankulam, with its loose soil, was unfit for construction, S.M. Ve-lusamy, former AIADMK minister and the local MLA from Palladam told Deccan Chronicle. “Civil engineers warned the government that any

construction on the site would be dangerous and the proposal of a multi-storeyed apartment block by the Ta-mil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) was cancelled,” he alleged.

In 2003, when N. Balaganga was TNSCB chairman, about 500 tenements were allotted for Coimbatore and the Ammankulam site had been chosen but was later annulled, Mr Velusamy sa-id, charging the DMK government with taking up the project for vested interests.