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Traders stall opening of modern fish market

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COIMBATORE: A modern, Rs 1.37 crore, fish market built by the Coimbatore Corporation remains shut months after its completion, because of additional demands placed by dissatisfied fish traders. The new market at Ukkadam, was built to replace the existing market near Ukkadam bus stand. Traders are not ready to shift to the new complex complaining of inadequate facilities.

According to Subair secretary of the Coimbatore District Fish Traders Welfare Association, "Each trader needs a stall measuring 200 square feet, while the new complex has 100 square foot stalls. Moreover, the open ceiling needs to be covered with asbestos sheets. We also need an open drainage system but the Corporation has covered the drainage, which will get blocked often causing inconvenience to traders and customers."

Surprisingly, the traders also reject refrigeration facilities fearing loss of sales, "We do not want an air-conditioned storage facility as Kovaiites won't like to buy stored fish."

Moreover, the stalls do not need to be air-conditioned as the bad smell remains within the room. Ultimately, our business will get affected.”

According to sources, a team from Tamil Nadu Fisheries Corporation visited the new market two days ago and gave suggestions to tile stall floors and provide a freezer facility instead of air-conditioning.

It was also suggested to that traders be provided seperate spaces invisible to customers for cutting fish and be directed to use the stalls only to display fish.

A senior official of Coimbatore Corporation said, “The Corporation will start these recommended works in two days. However, at present it is committed to allotting only one stall to each trader (against their demands for two stalls each). As the existing fish market is in a very bad condition and acts as a ground for spreading diseases, it is imperative to shift all the stalls in larger public interest.”