

The Asian Age, Mumbai, 25 Feb 2008

'I spent winter on the street'

By OUR CORRESPONDENT

DEMOLISHED

Mumbai, Feb. 24: A 58-year-old lady at Marol naka has been fighting for justice as GVK and Mumbai International Airport Private Limited (MIAL), who are modernising the city's airport have demolished her "Nixon Villa" a month ago. The last month has not been so easy for her.

"I was forced to spend this winter on the footpath outside my demolished home," said the Ms Carmel Fernandes, who has nine children. Her home was demolished in January. On February 8, when Mumbai had recorded 8.5 °C, the coldest night in 46 years.

The home which stood for the last 40 years was brought down in a couple of minutes. "When the authorities came to demolish the house, I showed them a stay order. In spite of this, they cane-charged me and demolished my home," said Ms Fernandes. She claims that she did not receive any order or notice from any concerned authority about the proposed demolition. Moreover, she even claims that till date, she has not been given any alternative accommodation or rehabilitated.

All her belongings were also taken as part and parcel of the debris. She is

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unaware about where her three cupboards containing her clothes and other valuables are. Other than that, her gas cylinder and other kitchen materials are yet to be traced. At the site of her property, there are security guards behind the barbed wires which demarcate the boundary.

Speaking on one of the problems being faced due to displacement, she said, "We had problems in receiving the hall ticket for my son who will be appearing for his final year exam."

Her view on development is that when a private player comes for any developmental work, only the company's bank balance increases when they snatch away everything from the lower-class people.

the MIAL authorities could not be contacted for their comments on the issue.