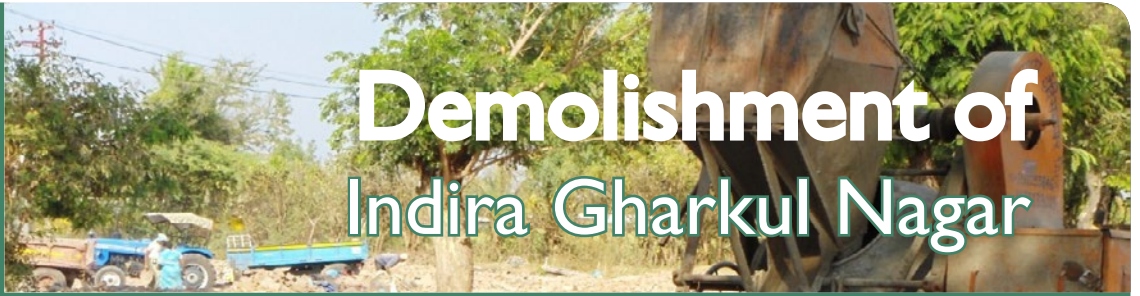




Demolishment of Indira Gharkul Nagar



Indira Nagar Gharkul In Miraj was demolished on 17th of January under the Integrated Housing & Slum Development Program.

IHSDP in Miraj

IHSDP project in Sangli-Miraj involves rehabilitation of 3798 families across 29 slums, onto 7 existing slum sites. In October 2011, around 300 families of Sangay Nagar Miraj slum were moved to transition camp to allow construction to commence. Cooperation between them, NGO and the authorities allowed to provide the families with all the necessary amenities in a temporary location very close to the existing settlement. Indira Nagar Gharkul is a slum in Miraj, which has about 300 families and similar to Sanjaynagar in principal, but the situation here was difficult as some families rushed to the courts as soon as the project was announced in the newspapers.



Beginning of demolition

Project for Indira Gharkul

The new project for Indira Nagar Gharkul together with some adjacent open land was designed in 2009 and included mid-rise, multifamily buildings, to house over 800 residential units, with public spaces and facilities for all the inhabitants. Additional apartments were dedicated as an alternate location for families from neighboring slums which were to be demolished in order to widen the new Sangli-Miraj road.

Vision of sharing the land with another communities and of living in multi-storey buildings raised protests, even though the land belongs to the municipality, not to the slum dwellers.

Dwellers were shifted to a temporary location



Indira Gharkul site is essential for IHSDP Sangli-Miraj, as it will accommodate over 800 families, resettled from other slums in Miraj.



On 17th of January Indira Nagar Gharkul slum was demolished by decision of Municipal Corporation. Slum dwellers were shifted to temporary location.



Conflict of interests

In spite of I I members having filed a case in the courts, Shelter Associates held a series of meetings and presentations, explaining why the plan was essential to the IHSDP project for Sangli-Miraj and many families within the community were able to understand and appreciate the layout better. However they did not have the courage to oppose the I I influential inhabitants who had moved the courts and decided to remain passive spectators.

“Even though majority of the Indira Nagar slum dwellers understood all the advantages of the project and wanted it to be realized, they feared to oppose to the I I powerful persons and remained passive.”

Demolishment went smoothly



Key Points/Info box

- Integrated project of residential area for 800 families was made back in 2009
- After 3 years of hold, the project with be continued
- The site will accommodate not only the Indira Gharkul dwellers, but also other slums' inhabitants, who need to be resettled for Sangli-Miraj road construction
- New residential site will consist of multi-storey apartment buildings, common spaces, community centre and school

Demolishment

On 17th January at 4 p.m. the city authorities: the municipal commissioner, city engineer, Health officer, officer of Fire Department, slum department officer, along with 300 policemen, entered the Indira Nagar Gharkul to start the relocation process. Inhabitants were informed by loudspeakers to empty their houses. Since no one reacted at first, 150 laborers began to dismantle stalls, cowsheds and other external structures. Dwellers tried to contact the local councilors, without success. Also protests did not stop the demolition works. When the local people realized that the action was inevitable, they started collecting their goods, including reusable construction materials, and moving to prearranged location of the tenements built under the Valmiki Awas Yojana program which was earmarked as transit camp for this project.

Summary

Example of Indira Nagar Gharkul demolition shows the importance of cooperation between all the stakeholders in the process of integrated planning.

The process of participation was very complex and hard for Shelter Associates. They persisted in their efforts for over three years with workshops with children, livelihood efforts and informal meetings on different levels. Even though majority of the Indira Nagar slum dwellers understood all the advantages of the project and wanted it to be realized, they feared to oppose to the powerful persons and remained passive.

In this case a top-down action became necessary but it did not become violent or get out of control as the community had all the information about the project and hence it was not a surprise demolition.

Overall the shifting went off pretty smoothly with the SMKMC and SA aiding the families to move to the transit camp.

Construction of social housing has already started in a part of the site



Image caption...