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Civic body clears encroachments amidst protest

Hyderabad: There was chaos near the Ek Minar Masjid and Darussalam Road on Thursday afternoon as the GHMC, traffic and other police personnel cleared encroachments on the road.

Owners of local shops, automobile workshops and metalware stores got into a heated argument with the officials who carted away the scrap material, metal bars and other junk that was stored on the road.

The road was widened a couple of years ago to ease traffic but the encroachments meant it was back to square one, residents say.

Yaseen Shakir, 61, a resident of the area said, "The whole point of widening the road is to avoid traffic congestion. People have started putting up unfinished grills, automobiles, windows and other stuff on the road. I have myself escaped accidents several times. It is important to remove such things from roads."

Shaik Zaheer, 42, a carpenter who has a shop on the road, said that corporation workers did not give him time to move his stuff off the road.

“The moment they arrived, they started picking up things and loading them on to trucks. They should have at least warned us,” he said.

Mukesh Singh, section officer with GHMC’s town planning wing, said they had received numerous complaints regarding encroachments on the road.

“We launch these drives whenever there is a complaint. This is a routine procedure. But, sometimes, people just don’t co-operate and we are forced to seize their stuff. Sometimes, we warn them once and come back the next day, only to find everything still lying on the road.”

Some residents said the encroachments were cleared speedily to facilitate traffic movement during the Milad-Un-Nabi procession, which will be held soon.