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Places of worship razed to free traffic

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Dec. 22: At least 30 places of worship that were obstructing the free flow of traffic were removed by the Tiruchy municipal corporation with the help of the police and highway officials. These temples and mosques were among several encroachments on the key thoroughfares in the city.

“Officials have been conducting the eviction drive in phases after holding sensitisation meetings with various religious groups,” said Mr T.T. Balasamy, the corporation commissioner. He added that the religious groups cooperated with the civic body and in some instances they removed idols themselves, helping authorities to execute the eviction order.

Among the places of worship removed in the last few days were the Ilankan Mariamman temple on East Boulevard Road, Madurai Veeran temple, Melamuthu Mariamman temple, and a mosque near Ramakrishna theatre. As per the Supreme Court directive, civic bodies are empowered to evict

unauthorised encroachments on road spaces as they hinder the free flow of traffic.