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Encroachments removed on trekking path in Palani

Staff Reporter

Amid tight security, Sri Dhandayuthapaniswamy Temple authorities demolished shops operating on the trekking path leading to the hill temple from the Sri Padhavinayagar shrine here on Wednesday.

Over 13 shops have conducted business on the trekking path for several decades. With the original owners long since dead, their permits have been used by others to run the shops.

The demolition drive comes in the wake of a recent order from the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court calling for the removal of encroachments in the temple town.

In August 2013, 10 shop owners obtained a stay order from the High Court restraining the authorities from evicting them.

Save for those, the remaining three shops were removed from the trekking path on the orders of Municipal Commissioner K. Saravana Kumar, who assumed office recently. Subsequently, officials also removed encroachments on Sannadhi Street, Malai Adivaram, Railway Feeder Road, Gandhi Veedhi and other key locations.

Several areas under the control of the temple administration remain under encroachment.