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# Cement around tree removed

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**New Delhi:** It is barely a 250m stretch in Sarvodaya Enclave but it boasts of at least three violations. Under a pavement tiling project being carried out by the PWD, a tree was completely enclosed by concrete till a resident protested and on Tuesday, workers chipped away the *bajri* to leave space around the tree. Residents and PWD also locked horns over the storm water drain in this stretch, with the former alleging that PWD has narrowed down the drain by cementing along it, while PWD is accusing some residents of having completely blocked the drain by building over it.

The tree, standing on the side of the footpath that is being tiled, was enclosed with cement on Monday. A resident — who saw the work taking place — spoke to both the workers on the site and to PWD officials and the cement was finally removed on Tuesday. PWD officials, however, said that strict instructions have been issued to all contractors to leave a suitable amount of space around trees. “We are taking care to ensure that no tree is concretized but it may happen accidentally in some cases and we will have the concrete removed as soon as it comes to our notice,” said an official.

The pavement tiling work also entailed cementing the storm water drain along the stretch. PWD has cemented it on both sides and along the floor of the drain. Residents have alleged that this has reduced the width of the drain sub-



**BEFORE & AFTER:** The tree, standing on the footpath, was enclosed with cement. A resident spoke to the workers at the site and the PWD officials, and the cement was finally removed

stantially. “The width of the drain has been reduced by almost a foot because of the cementing on both sides. The bottom has also been cemented, which will prevent the percolation of water into the ground,” said a resident. PWD officials said this would be checked and measures would be taken to increase the size of the drain if it is found to

be inadequate.

While residents raised these issues, PWD officials said a large part of the drain had been completely blocked due to encroachments by residents. “People have constructed driveways over the drain and blocked it completely. We are trying to remove it but are facing stiff resistance,” said a senior official.