

## In their struggle, labour law is a dead letter

- [M.P. Praveen](#)



Umme Chalima and son Hafisul Islam with her mother.—Photo:Special Arrangement

When Umme Chalima and her seven-year-old son Hafisul Islam left for their home in Assam on Sunday in an overcrowded train, they had few good memories of their three-week long stay here, except may be, for the compassion of a handful.

They came from Nagaon district in Assam on November 30 in the hope of getting some compensation for the death of Chalima's husband Jamir Ali who was employed with a plywood company in Perumbavoor. The 45-year-old died in an accident at the worksite on August 24 this year.

He was electrocuted reportedly while operating an electric saw with a co-worker. Ali had been working in the company on and off for the last one-and-a-half year. He is survived by wife and four children.

"We came to know that they had complained of suffering shock twice before. It proved fatal the third time," said Fr. Sabu Malayil S.J of Jeevika, a Perumbavoor-based voluntary organisation, which works among migrant workers.

### Natural death?

The hospital to which he was rushed declared him brought dead at 10.45 p.m. and attributed the reason to electric shock.

Curiously, the post-mortem report didn't mention electric shock but said the victim died due to occlusive coronary artery disease, a heart disease, and certified it as a death due to natural cause.

The company had reportedly promised to pay compensation for which Chalima and her son, accompanied by her mother and uncle, came to Perumbavoor.

"But the company offered to give a post-date cheque for Rs.1.50 lakh and that too with some riders. They were asked to give a signed undertaking that it was in full compensation and to submit at the local police station that they have no complaints about the incident.

If they were to give such signed undertakings and then the post-dated cheque bounced then these poor people, hundreds of kilometres away, would be left with no choice," said Fr. Malayil.

When contacted, a company official claimed that the compensation had been paid and on receiving which the family chose to leave. He, however, was 'ignorant' of the amount paid.

But it emerged that they had to return after receiving information that Chalima's grandmother and daughter had met with an accident.

"They left with some money mobilised by sympathetic locals and with the sole relief that ESI benefits are likely to be cleared shortly," Fr. Malayil said.

And for Chalima and her son, the crowded journey back home, which ended on Wednesday, proved as nightmarish as the experience here.



**The 30 Places You Must Go To Before You Turn 30**  
*Pride.com*



**6 Investing Lessons from the Richest Man in the World- Warren Buffett**  
*scripbox*



**Double celebrations for Akshay Kumar - wifey's bday and new year!**  
*LiveInStyle.com*



**8 Ways to Become a Space Tourist**  
*Parachute by MapQuest*



**7 Cancer-Fighting Culinary Spices and Herbs - For Dummies**  
*Dummies.com*



**Ekta Kapoor: The Queen of Lavish Parties**  
*LiveInStyle.com*



**Why Advanced Racing Games in Brazil Are 16-Bit**  
*iQ by Intel*



**Rare earth metals: Objects of power and risk**  
*Financial Times*

**MORE FROM THE HINDU**



**Juvenile fishing a colossal loss**  
*25/12/2015*



**Panel moots body to protect Vembanad**  
*25/12/2015*



**When a citizen 'mitra' came to Pramila's rescue**  
*20/12/2015*



**The Year of the Cow**  
*26/12/2015*

Recommended by

Printable version | Dec 30, 2015 1:05:50 PM | <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Kochi/in-their-struggle-labour-law-is-a-dead-letter/article8027870.ece>

© The Hindu