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## WHEN APATHY KILLS

# Worker Dies After Falling Into Dirty Pit Line At Basin Bridge Train Care Centre; His Colleagues Go On Warpath Demanding Better Facilities

### TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Enraged staff at the Basin Bridge train care centre struck work for five hours on Monday morning after a colleague died in the early hours of injuries sustained in a fall on Saturday. They were protesting the lack of basic medical facilities and an ambulance to move Anbu, who apparently slipped on a heap of uncleared waste and fell from a ramp into a pit line, to hospital in time.

The 44-year-old from Tiruvallur, who sustained severe head injuries in the fall early on Saturday, lay bleeding as an ambulance took more than 45 minutes to reach the spot. He was shunted from one hospital to another before being admitted to the government general hospital where he died early on Monday.

As the news spread, hundreds of employees stopped work criticizing the authorities' failure to provide basic facilities. Senior officials' incharge of the centre and Chennai division did not take steps to clear garbage, drain water from pit lines and appoint additional staff even after a huge workers' protest last month, they said.

"The divisional railway manager promised that all issues would be sorted out in the first week of July. But, everything remains the same. Food waste, empty water bottles and other rubbish from coaches are swept onto ramps and not cleared in time," said a senior technician.

The workers, who blocked the rake of the Chennai-CST Express which was being taken to Chennai Central, ended the strike around 2pm after additional divisional railway manager Anil Kumar promised to take steps to remove garbage and clean pit lines soon.

The ADRM's suggestion, "it is the duty of everyone to keep the yard clean," enraged workers. They said: "It is not our duty. We are technicians. Authorities clean up pit lines and clear garbage within an hour if a minister or railway board member visits the centre".

"There are no basic facilities. Pit lines are dirty and waterlogged, workers develop skin ailments as they don't have gum boots or gloves, and garbage is not removed. The medical unit neither has a doctor nor a first aid kit. The issues were notified to senior officials but no action was taken," said a staffer.

A senior railway official said: "Several employees of the train care centre are under treatment at the railway hospital for ailments."

Technicians check the undercarriage of trains at pit lines (a track where trains are inspected) while others use a ramp parallel to the pit line to wash the exteriors, clean toilets, sweep the coaches and do other maintenance work. Garbage from inside the coaches are piled up on the ramp.

### WHEN TOI BROUGHT THE MISERY TO LIGHT

The Times Of India on July 9 reported about the poor working condition of railway workers at the Basin Bridge yard and indifference on the part of the authorities

