

CASE STUDY

The Story of Perumalsamy and Karuthapandian

On 10th November 2017, IJM Staff were at the Egmore Railway Station to monitor transiting migrant labourers.

OBSERVATION

It was about 11:30pm when staff noticed a man on platform 4. He looked out of place as he was dressed in shabby clothes and holding onto a dirty bag. The IJM staff decided to initiate a conversation with him. It was during this time that a much younger boy appeared and began questioning the staff. It appeared that the young boy and older man knew each other, so the staff included the boy in their conversation.

INTERVIEWING

The staff **asked them their names and ages**. It was revealed that they were Perumalsamy, approx. 55 years old and Karuthapandian, aged 17 years old. They were **asked where they were traveling to**. Both were trying to get home to their native villages. Perumalsamy said he was a native of Madurai while Karuthapandian was a native of Thiruthangal, Sivakasi in the district of Virudhunagar.

The staff **asked where they were traveling from**. The men revealed that they both had escaped from a confectionery unit in Basavan Kalyan village in the Bidar District of Karnataka, where they had been forced to work for over three years. They travelled from Basavakalyan by train for 2 days without food to reach Egmore station.

When **asked how and where they became trafficked**, the men said they were trafficked from Madurai and Sivakasi, respectively, having been promised monthly wages, three meals a day and free accommodation. They said they were trafficked by a middle man named Solamuthu. The owners Anil Kumar and Jaya made them work from 04:30 hours to 23:30 hours and subjected them to physical and verbal abuses. They were offered only two meals per day and were made sleep on the portico of the Unit where they worked.

As the team interviewed the two men, they identified several injuries all over their bodies. One of the staff members **asked the men how they got their injuries**. Were they from some sort of accident? According to Karuthapandian, owner Anil Kumar hit him on the head with an iron rod three days back. This is when he began planning his escape.

“How did you escape?” our staff asked. On midnight November 7th 2017, they left the facility without informing the owner. They walked to the local train station in Basava Kalyan, Karnataka. They were met by Policemen who took pity and gave them 50/- to help them with their travel.

REPORTING

We brought this case to the notice of GRPF, Egmore. The IJM team in collaboration with RPF ASI Mr. Anoop approached the Government Railway Police (State) and filed an FIR against the middle man and the owners. On 11th Nov 2017, after filing the FIR, Perumalsamy was handed over to his family members from Madurai. On 14th November 2017, Karuthapandian was produced in front of the Child Welfare

Committee (CWC) by Childline. After completing the procedures, The CWC handed over Karuthapandiyan to his family.