

Regarding settlement of EPF claims of employees of Thiruvepathy Mills-laid

SHRI K. SUDHAKARAN (KANNUR): The immediate attention of the Minister of Labour is requested regarding the pressing concerns raised by the Thiruvepathy Mills Employees Joint Action Committee in Kannur. This pertains to the demand of Rs. 44,34,291 by the Employee's Provident Fund Organisation for EPF contributions. Thiruvepathy Mills, classified as a sick industry in 1989 under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision 1985), has initiated closure proceedings. The auction of movable and immovable properties yielded Rs. 7.92 Crores, settling workmen's liabilities at Rs. 16.63,49,339 by 2008. Surprisingly, only one-fourth of the legally entitled amount reached the workmen as the first dividend. The Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner claims Rs. 1,49,25,709, but the liquidator approved only Rs. 44,34,291 for EPF contributions. The remaining balance, covering interest, penalty charges, and damages, remains unsettled. This situation jeopardizes workmen's interests as fulfilling EPFO claims leaves insufficient funds for their rightful dues. The plea urges withdrawal of EPFO's claim, citing the company's sick industry status and the potential undermining of workmen's demands for damages and interest. The Employees Provident Fund's core objective to protect workmen's interests faces a complex predicament in this unfolding scenario.