

# Sushi maker loses tips of fingers in accident then 'sent to hospital in taxi'



**A sushi maker sliced off the tips of two fingers in an accident and was then sent to A&E in a taxi, GMB Union says.**

The accident happened in January at the Taiko Foods factory in Acton – a major supplier to supermarkets including Waitrose and Sainsbury's.



Viraj Kakadia was operating an unsafe and dangerous vegetable cutting machine that had stopped working during use.

Mr Kakadia, who was wearing insufficient protective equipment due to lack of availability, attempted to restart the machine and in doing so lost the tips of two fingers.

The machine was reportedly missing a safety guard and sensor.

Mr Kakadia, a GMB Union member, was taken to hospital by taxi but without his finger parts surgeons could not re-attach his fingertips.

**Viraj Kakadia, GMB Member, said:**

“The employer is playing games with my life.

“If they sent the fingertips with ice with me to the hospital, I’d still have them intact today. They didn’t call an ambulance, and they haven’t offered me any support.

“The employer isn’t providing a safe working environment. The standards aren’t there. The training is not there, and it is not a trade union organised workplace.

“Myself and my colleagues are standing up and protesting for our rights. They don’t treat us equally. They don’t value our work and the jobs we do are very hard. I work six days a week in a work environment where the temperature is just four degrees.

“There is no amount of money for my injury that would solve it so it’s not a question of money.

“GMB union will represent us and ensure this negligence doesn’t happen to anybody else in future.”

**Hiten Vaidya, GMB London Region Organiser said:**

“Viraj was not given sick pay during the two weeks he had to take off work but was told to take it as holiday.

“GMB gave Viraj emergency funds to get by whilst we approached the company about this and after being challenged the employer agreed to pay full sick pay and reimburse Viraj’s annual leave.

“There are more than 600 employees at the factory, with most earning the National Living Wage of £9.50 an hour.

“Around half of the workforce at the factory is estimated to be from ethnic minority backgrounds with English as a second language.



"GMB will tackle the concerns that we have been alerted to by our members at Taiko who must be assured that their safety at work is a priority at all times.

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## Member requiring help?

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