

# Major Fire in Chala Market

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: About 10 shops were gutted in a major fire which blazed across two lanes in the Chala market here on Friday evening. Fire and Rescue Services, along with the police and other agencies, battled late into the night to douse the fire which broke out in the Nizar Hotel lane and quickly spread, creating panic in the commercial area.

A shop owner, who was rushed to a private hospital near Chala after he swooned on seeing fire engulfing his shop, died late in the night. He was identified as Shahul Hammed, 64, of Ammikkavilakom Lane, Kallattumukku near Manacaud.

“He was the owner of Ali Bangles which was damaged in the fire incident. He was fire and was evacuated immediately. He, however, continued to watch the blaze standing in the Nizar Hotel lane and was rushed to the hospital when fainted,” said Dileep, the secretary of Vyapari Vyavasayi Erkopana Samithi, Chala unit. According to the police, the fire had broken out at the godown of Lovely Fancy Stores around 5.30 p.m. “It quickly spread to the nearby shops and godowns of New Bilal Store and Pack n’ Pack, and from there to Abdulla Traders, Noble Footwear and Shabu Agency. As soon as the alarm was sounded, all the nearby shops downed shutters and switched of power supply. But the fire spread to nearby shops also,” said the police.