



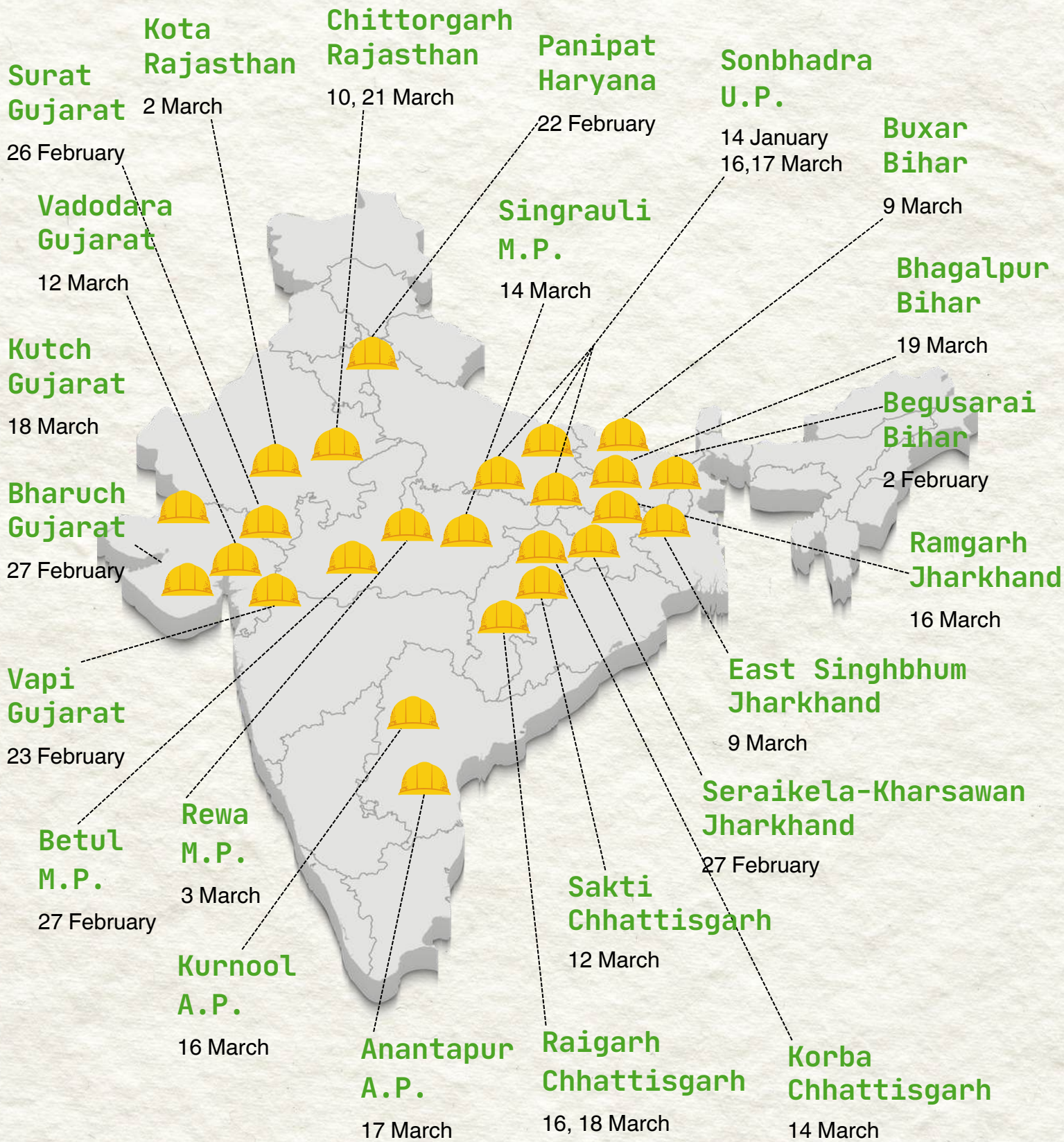
YELLOW HELMETS

In charge of making history

A compilation of the ongoing wave of large-scale protests and strikes by temporary workers in the underbelly of premier industrial complexes in India, amidst the deafening silence of mainstream media



March of the Yellow Helmets



At least 28 major strikes and protests were recorded between January and March 2026, mainly in the power and construction sectors.

As we write this, migrant workers in India are forced to return to their home once again. Like with the COVID-19 lockdown earlier, the LPG crisis has made living in the cities unsustainable. Once again, they are the first to be thrown out of the cities built and run by their toil. The politics of the ruling class is to maintain silence on the ‘migrants’, unless they are to be pitted against the ‘locals’ and made easy prey, to rally together the ‘locals’ whose crisis of livelihood is also fuelled by the same ruling class.

This compilation brings to you another story. It is the story of why thousands of workers walked out of work, creating a sea of the eponymous ‘yellow helmets’ which flooded India’s premier industrial units. The ruling minority is afraid that this story can end fear that rules the minds of the toiling majority. It is fear and brute force that is their last resort when all cultural and ideological facades fail.

That is why the media either does not cover this story at all or covers it with headlines such as ‘workers turned violent’, without mentioning their demands and contexts. This narrative about workers becomes all the more important when the Union government claims that the four Labour Codes, brought into force in November 2025 by clearing away 29 labour laws, will ensure ‘ease of doing business’ amid strong condemnation from workers organizations.

As May Day approaches, a day to commemorate the struggles to enact the 8 hour workday, the demand of 8 hours of workday is reverberating across the country once again. Strikes and protest gatherings are taking place, with over 30,000 workers seen marching at a single factory. Double overtime pay, payment of wages within a stipulated period and basic workplace safety constitute the major demands.

These protests are mostly erupting spontaneously where no unions exist, in industrial zones without any history of organised struggles, sometimes triggered by an industrial accident or death.

During the Covid-19 crisis, **Migrant Workers Solidarity Network (MWSN)** brought out a report 'Citizens and the Sovereign: Stories from the largest human exodus in contemporary Indian history' ([click here](#)). This report compiled stories of migrant workers' resistance across India. Migrant workers are not just passive subjects and victims but must be recognized as active citizens of India. Any empathy with the marginalized must start with recognizing ordinary people as the makers of history.

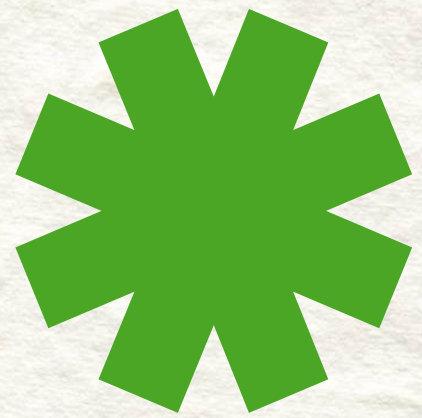
Note: This compilation is the product of direct interaction with workers in various states and information compiled from social media. While we have tried to verify these from multiple reports where possible, some social media reports could not be cross-referenced. In the interest of expediency and lack of media coverage, we have retained these references.



14 January 2026



Sonbhadra
Uttar Pradesh



OBRA THERMAL POWER PLANT



3 MONTHS NO PAY

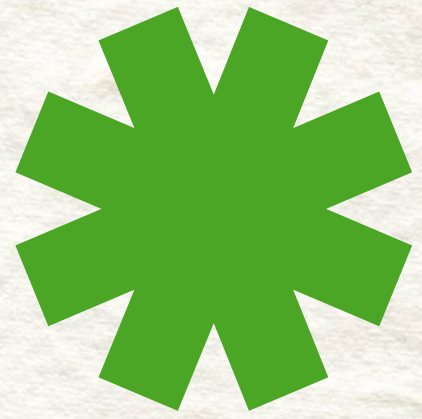
The Obra C Extension is an under-construction ₹13,000 crore coal-fired thermal project awarded to South Korean power equipments maker **Doosan Heavy Industries & Construction** by the state-owned Uttar Pradesh power utility UPRVUNL. **Migrant contract workers faced massive wage delays, leading to the strike.** It was not covered by any media house.



2 February 2026



Begusarai
Bihar



IOCL REFINERY, BARAUNI

WORKERS FIGHT CONTRACT RAJ

Indian Oil Corporation Limited contract workers working for went on a **one day strike** demanding **recognition as workers** with social security (ESI/PF), minimum wages, workplace safety and basic necessities like drinking water, toilets and sheds in the factory premises. A worker leader was arrested any many were threatened by bouncers to resume work but the struggle lit a spark across India.

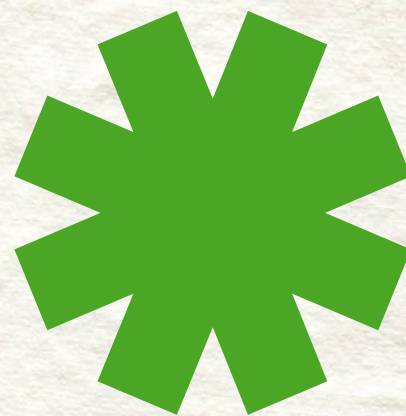




22 February 2026



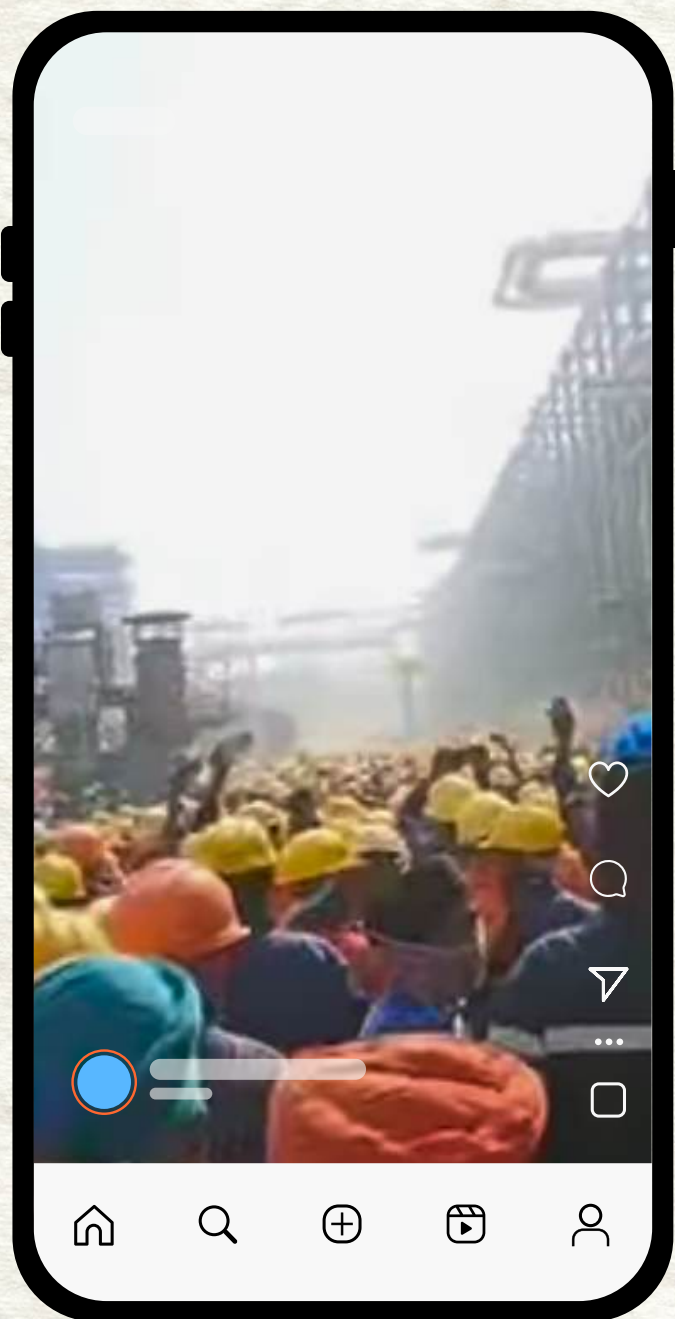
Panipat
Haryana



IOCL REFINERY, PANIPAT

30,000+ WORKERS 6 DAY STRIKE

Two migrant workers died in India's largest integrated oil refinery, resulting in around **30,000 – 40,000 contractual workers of Larsen & Toubro** and others stopping work. Instead of opening discussions, workers met lathi charge, CISF fired bullets, internet jammers were deployed and FIRs were registered against 2,500 unidentified workers. Workers demanded **8 hours work, Sunday holiday, double overtime and timely wage payment.**

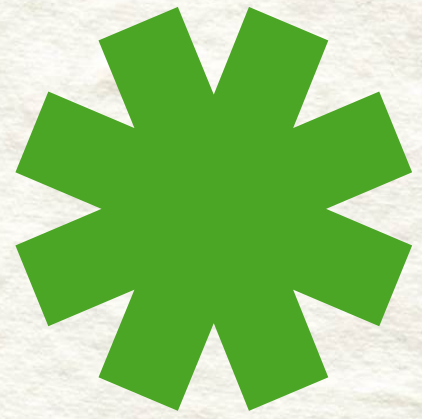




23 February 2026



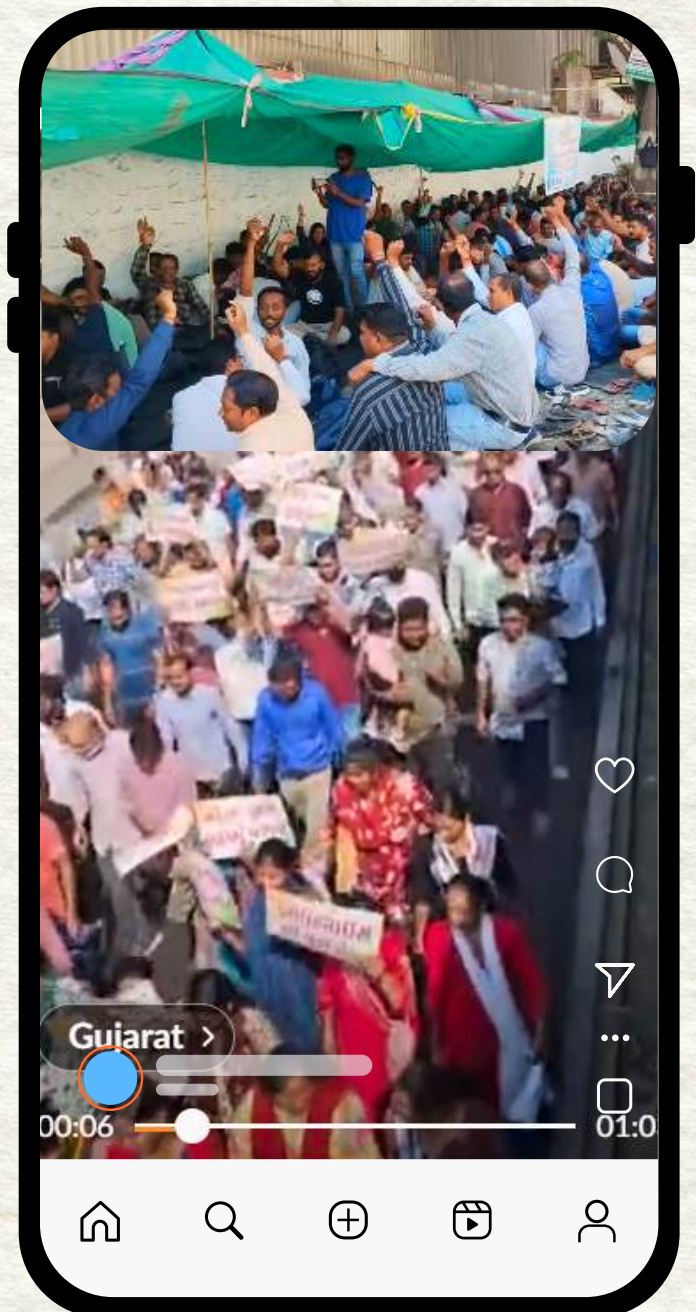
Vapi
Gujarat



ALOK INDUSTRIES

26+ DAYS TEXTILE STRIKE

Workers at Alok Textiles, owned by **Reliance Industries**, are on strike since 23 February (as of printing) over wage hikes, against unequal wages, lack of basic facilities like clean drinking water, toilets, accident compensation, changing working hours for women and arbitrary demotions. Workers of Alok Industries situated in Silvassa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli also joined the protest.

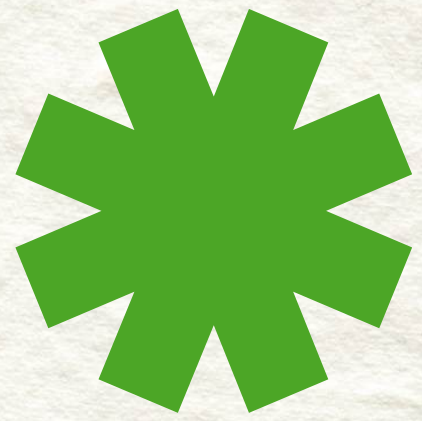




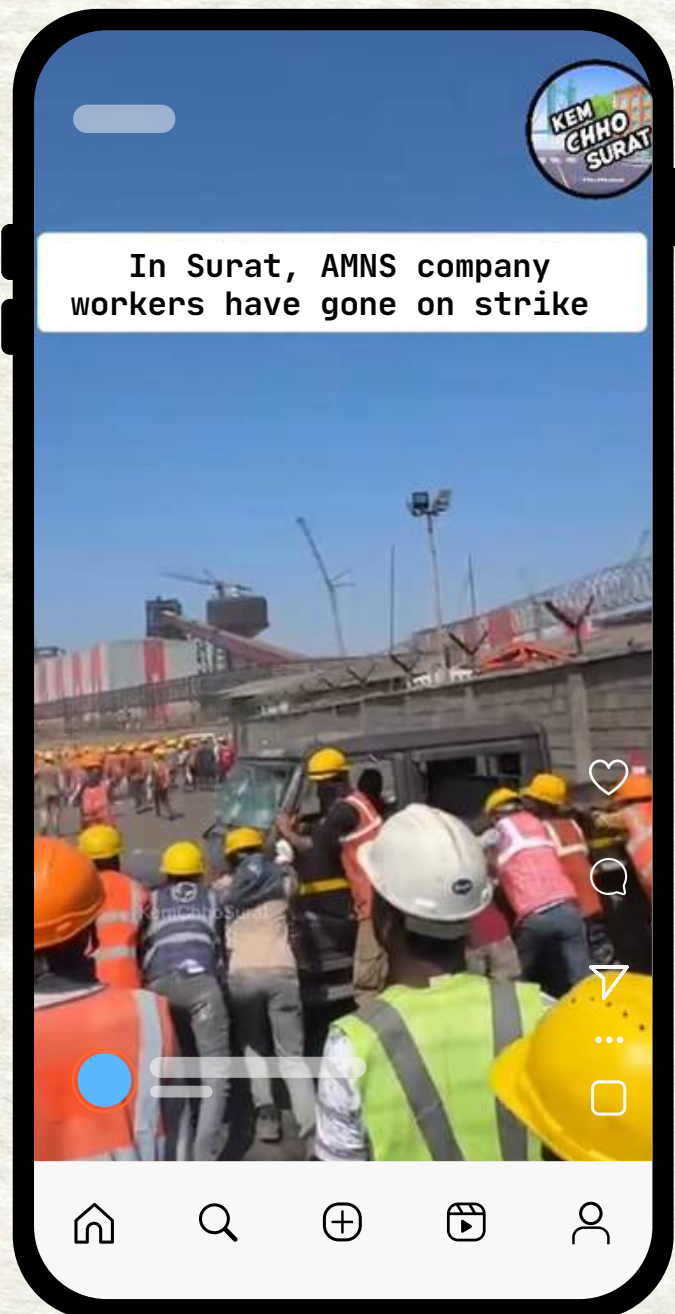
26 February 2026



Surat
Gujarat



AM/NS STEEL PLANT



8 HOURS WORK, DOUBLE OVERTIME DEMAND SPREADS

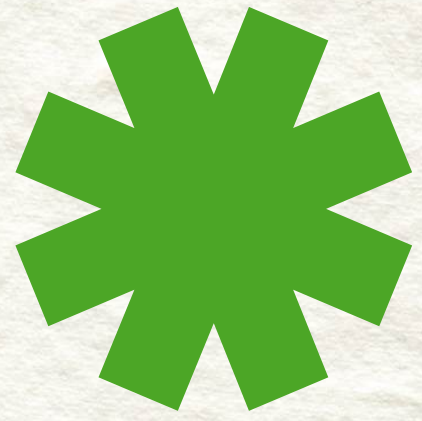
In Hazara, Surat, **ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India** saw 2,000+ workers go on strike, inspired by the IOCL Panipat movement, demanding 8 hour work day, double overtime and wage payment by 7th of the month. 40 workers were arrested on fake 'attempt to murder' charges before management was forced to negotiate.



27 February 2026



Betul
Madhya Pradesh



WESTERN COAL FIELD

WAGE THEFT IN A PSU

In the Patherkhera area, contract workers at the government-owned Western Coal Limited went on a **15 day hunger strike**. Contractors had not paid **four months wage dues** and were paying ₹400 to ₹500 per day, as opposed to the government-mandated ₹1,365. As primary employer, WCL cannot hide from accountability by hiding behind contractors, which the WCL workers have exposed.

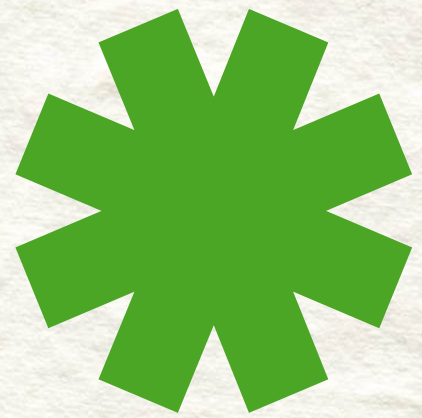




27 February 2026



Seraikela-Kharsawan
Jharkhand



BEBBCO FABRICATION

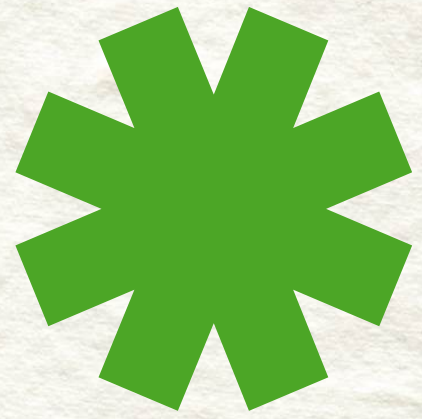


COMPANY'S BOUNCERS ATTACK WORKERS

In the Gamharia industrial township, workers started sit-in at the gate of the automobile fabricator **Bharat Engineering & Body Building Company (BEBBCO)**. Their demands: 8 hour work day, double overtime, ESI and PF coverage. On 2 March, company-hired bouncers attacked the peaceful protest, seriously injuring five. Protest is ongoing.



27 February 2026

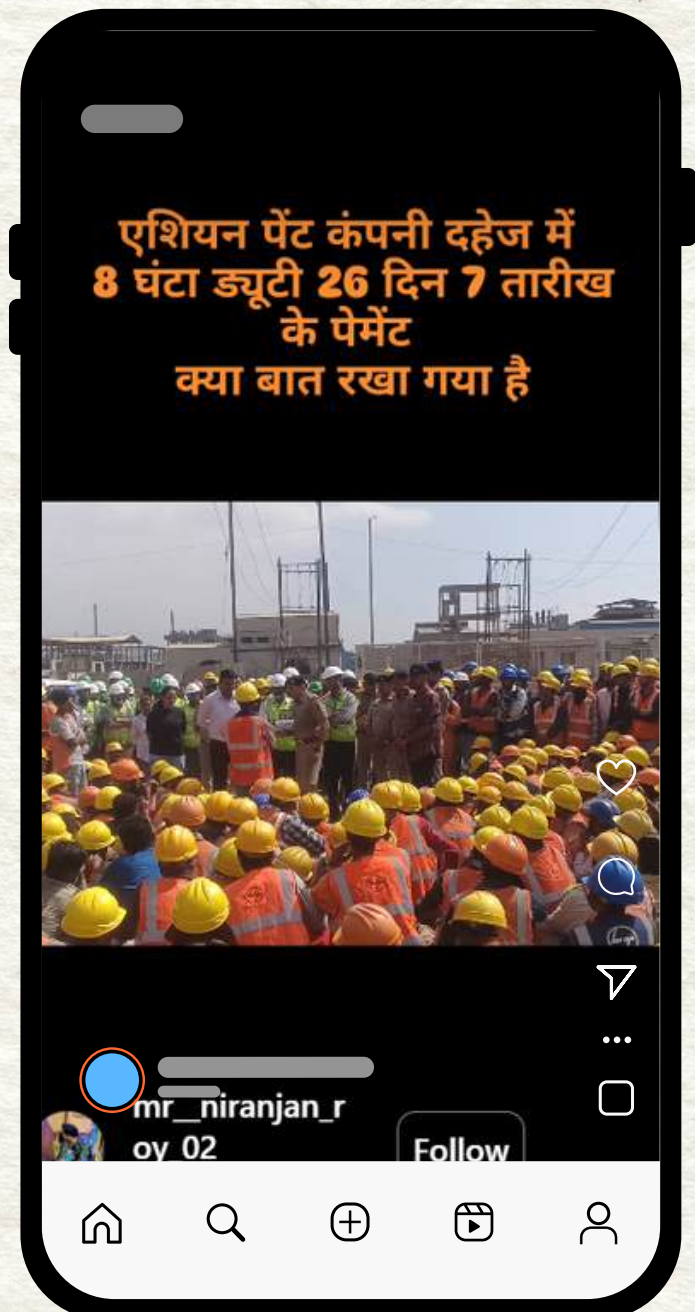


Bharuch
Gujarat

ASIAN PAINTS, DAHEJ

8 HOUR WORKDAY DEMAND SPREADS

Inspired by the IOCL Panipat strike, migrant workers went on strike with the same demands: **8 hours work with double overtime**, 26 days of work per month and timely payment of wages by the 7th of each month. Gujarat government had passed the **Factories (Gujarat Amendment) Ordinance, 2025**, allowing factory work hours to increase from 9 to up to 12 hours a day, before the Labour Codes came into effect.

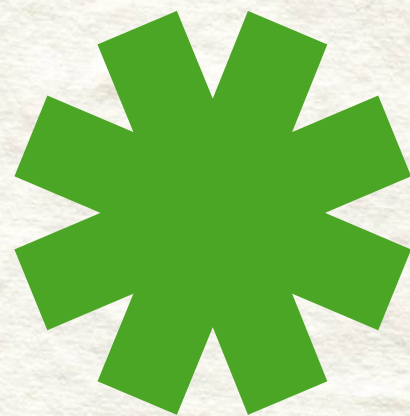




2 March 2026



Kota
Rajasthan



CHAMBAL FERTILISER & CHEMICAL

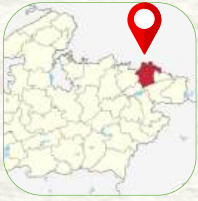
8 HOURS WORK DEMAND ECHOES IN RAJASTHAN

Strike erupted at the **KK Birla Group company** with the demand for 8 hours work with double overtime, 26 days work and time wages. Last December, **Rajasthan Shops and Commercial Establishments (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025** permanently increased the daily work limit to 10 hours and the quarterly overtime cap to 144 hours.

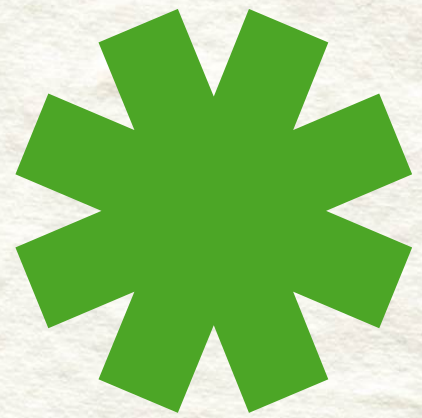




3 March 2026



Rewa
Madhya Pradesh



ULTRATECH CEMENT, REWA

300 WORKERS FIRED

On the day of Holi, **Aditya Birla Group** company fired 300 workers from nearby villages who worked 14 hour shifts at its Bela Cement Works plant. A labour court is hearing the matter and the management had illegally fired the workers. **Migrant workers were brought to replace the locals.** This was met with gates being shut by workers on strike and a solidarity march by other unions.

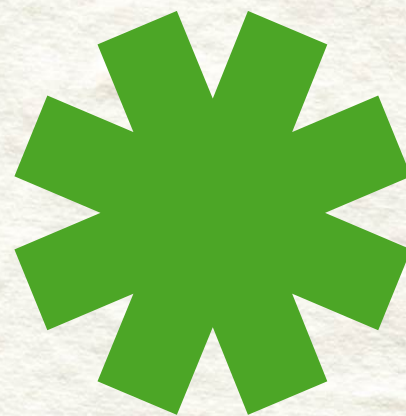




9 March 2026



Buxar
Bihar



BUXAR THERMAL POWER, CHAUSA



OLD DEMANDS, SECOND STRIKE

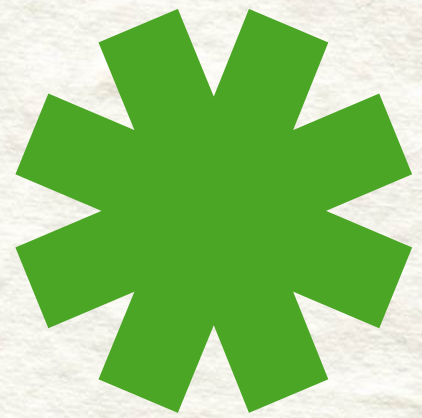
The power plant being developed by state-owned **Sutej Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN)** saw a major strike by construction workers demanding 8 hours work with double overtime and timely wages. Workers had already gone on a strike against the contractors with the same demands in 2023.



9 March 2026



East Singhbhum
Jharkhand



TATA STEEL, JAMSHEDPUR

‘NON-CORE’ NOT PROTECTED

40 contract workers in the plant’s hospitality service department were dismissed leading to a **sit-in protest** for four days. The new Labour Codes divide workers further into **core and non-core categories**. As hospitality is a non-core activity in the steel plant, contract labour is now freely allowed, reducing the bargaining power for both set of workers.

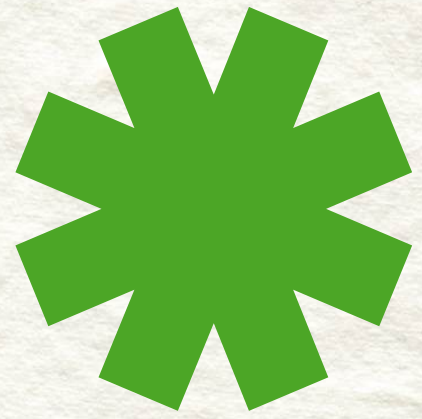




10 March 2026



Chittorgarh
Rajasthan



HINDUSTAN ZINC

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS STRIKE

At the **Vedanta Group** subsidiary in Chanderiya, construction workers employed on contract by **Larsen & Toubro** went on strike for 8 hour work days, double overtime, 26 days work per month and wages by the 7th day. Chittorgarh residents have already been resisting displacement, agricultural land pollution and water poisoning.

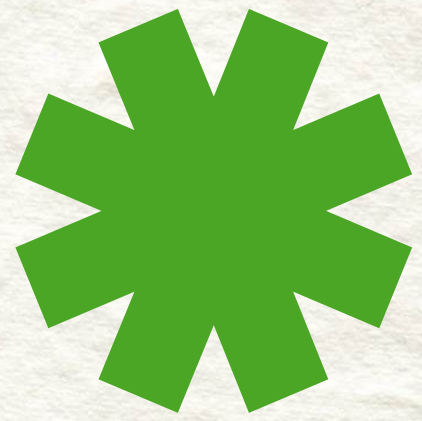




11 March 2026



Sonbhadra
Uttar Pradesh



NTPC, RIHAND

1 OF 4 NTPC STRIKES

Workers from outsourcing companies Engineers Project, Shivam Energy, Shri Vim Infra Project, Gunal Global Febtech, Kumber Enterprises, Rohan Builders, Priya Infra, MHPH etc., struck work demanding **8 hours workday (currently they work 12 hour shifts)**, wage hike, social security and permanent employment. At present they are paid no overtime beyond 8 hours' pay.

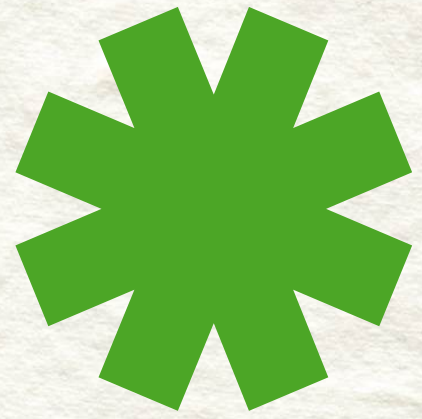




12 March 2026



Sakti
Chhattisgarh



VEDANTA POWER, SINGHITARAI

वेदांता पावर प्लांट सिंघीतराई में
ड्यूटी समय 8 घंटा करने के लिए
मजदूरों द्वारा धरना प्रदर्शन.....



1,000+ WORKERS AT THE FACTORY GATES

A wave of protests in **Chhattisgarh** between 9 and 15 March reached the multinational **Vedanta Limited**.

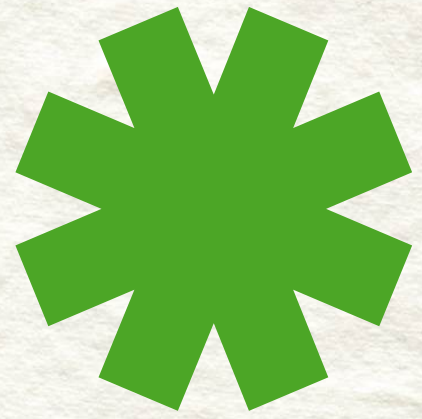
Thermal energy workers held gate meetings over long workdays, low wages, irregular payments and poor working conditions. They demand **8 hours workday** and permanent employment.



12 March 2026



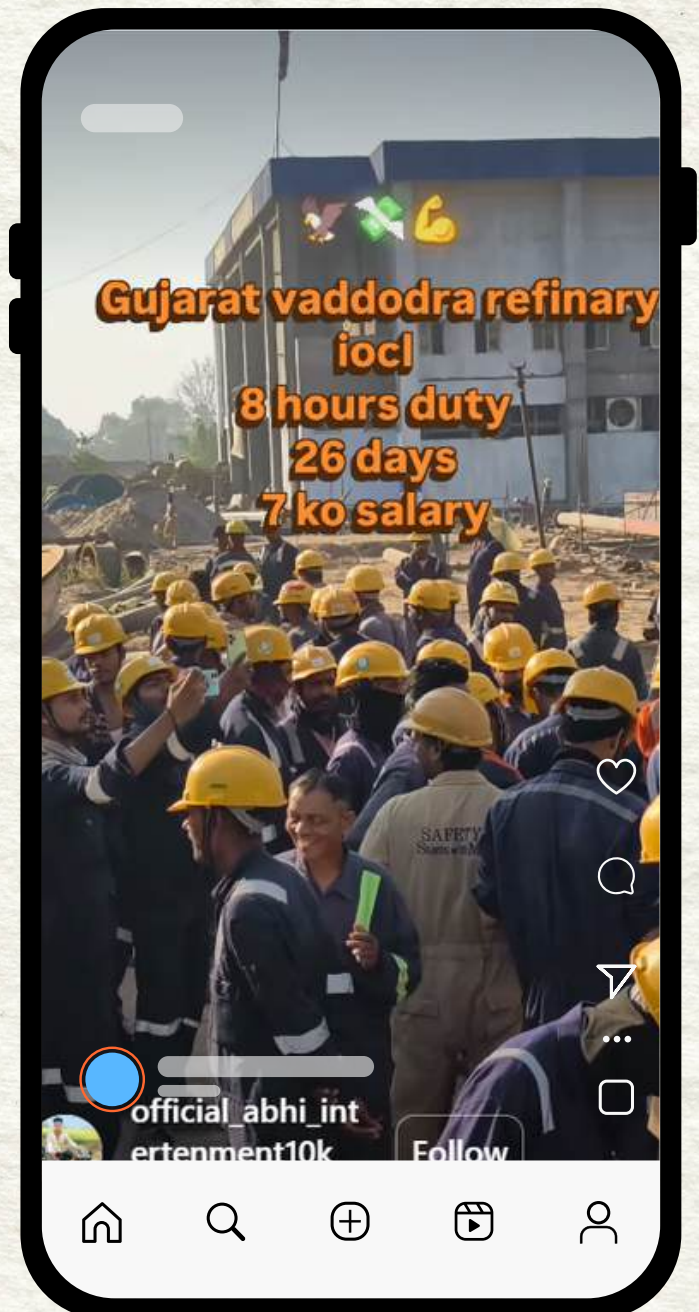
Vadodara
Gujarat



IOCL REFINERY, VADODARA

FIRE SPREADS FROM PANIPAT

In another strike against the infrastructure giant **Larsen & Toubro**, workers went on strike for an **8 hour workday**, 26 days work per month, salary payment by the 7th day of the month, and social security coverage such as PF.

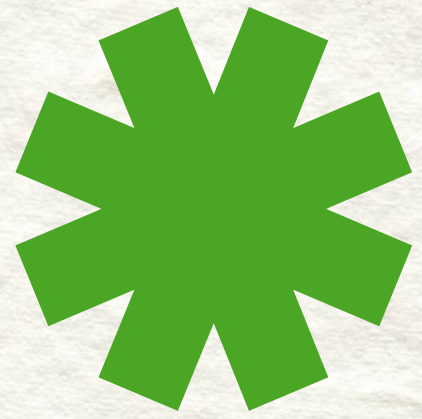




14 March 2026



Singrauli
Madhya Pradesh



ADANI POWER, SINGRAULI

WHAT MADE WORKERS MILITATE?

A contract worker named Lallan Singh from Jharkhand died on 13 March while working in a night shift due to severe workload after a 12 hour shift. **Adani Power**, owned India's second richest man, denied any compensation. Workers went on strike demanding an **8 hour workday**. FIRs were registered against unidentified workers but the management was forced to assure compensation to the deceased worker's family.

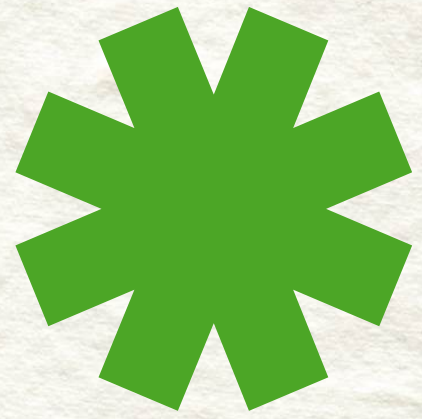




14 March 2026



Korba
Chhattisgarh



ADANI POWER, KORBA

AGAINST ADANI FROM MP TO CHHATTISGARH

Around 6,000 workers struck work in solidarity with the workers of **Adani Power** in the Singrauli plant. They shared the demand for an **8 hour workday**, as opposed to the current 12 hour shifts without overtime. They demanded wage hikes and payment within the 7th day of the month.

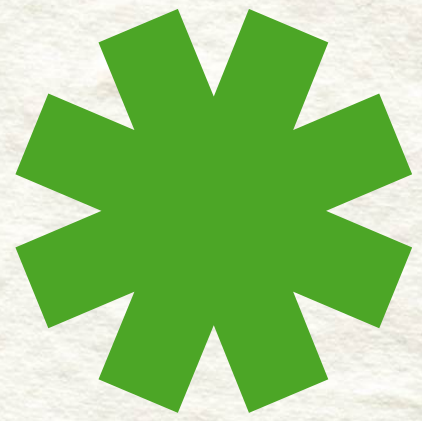




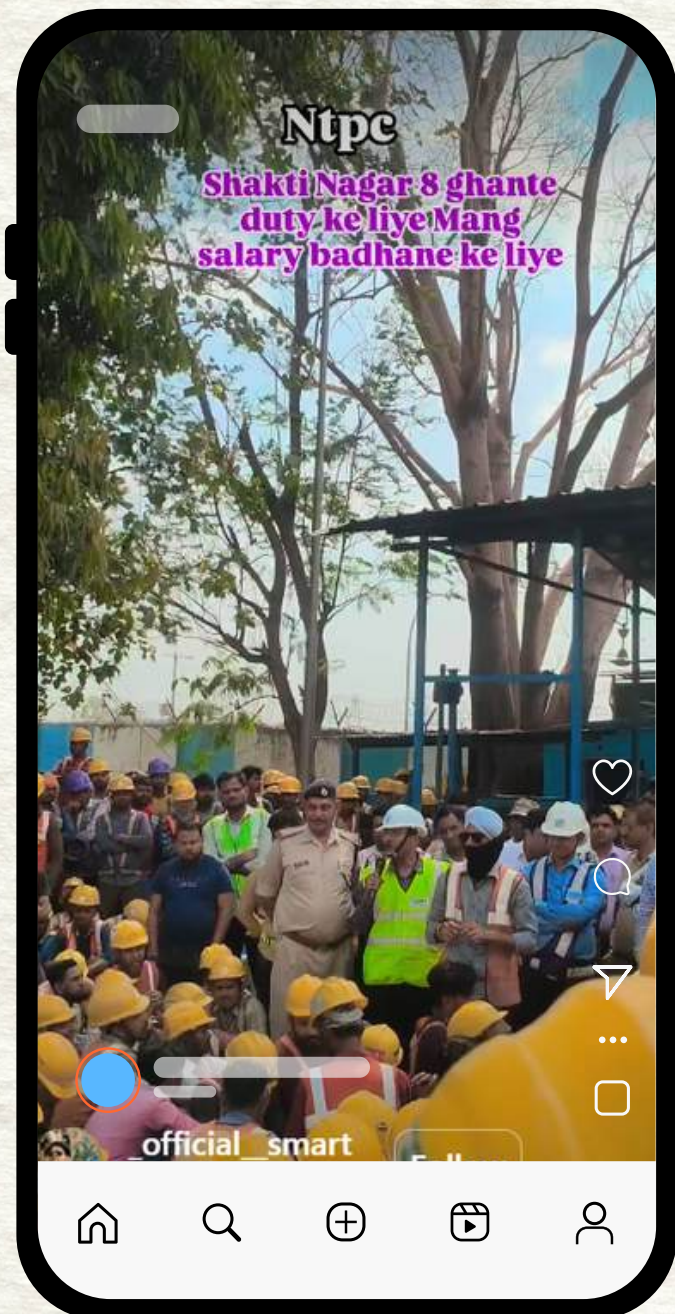
16 March, 2026



Sonbhadra
Uttar Pradesh



NTPC, SHAKTINAGAR



ANOTHER NTPC STRIKE

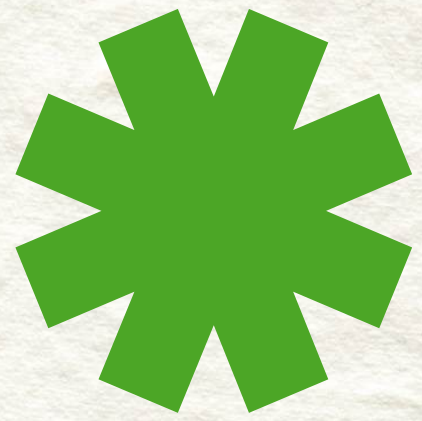
Singraulli Super Thermal Power Station, the oldest power plant by NTPC, witnessed contract workers engaged in the Stage III expansion, executed by **Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)**, go on strike demanding an **8 hour workday**, as opposed to the forced 12 hour shifts without any overtime, and an increase in wages.



16 March, 2026



Ramgarh
Jharkhand



ULTRATECH CEMENT, PATRATU

SECOND STRIKE AT ULTRATECH

After Rewa in MP, Ultratech Cement workers protest for 8 hours workday, double overtime payment, increase in wage, regularisation of jobs and priority for hiring local workers. While companies promise jobs to locals when displacing families, they prefer to hire **migrant workers with lower bargaining** outside their home state.

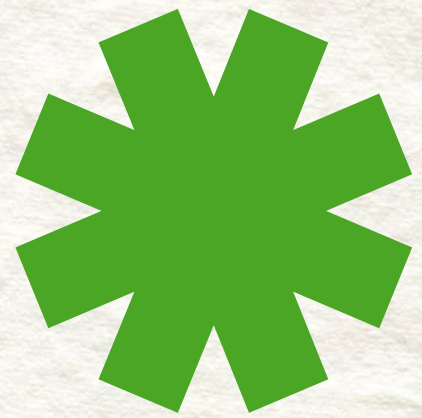




16 March 2026



Raigarh
Chattisgarh



ADANI POWER, RAIGARH



WORKERS AGAINST ASIA'S RICHEST BILLIONAIRE

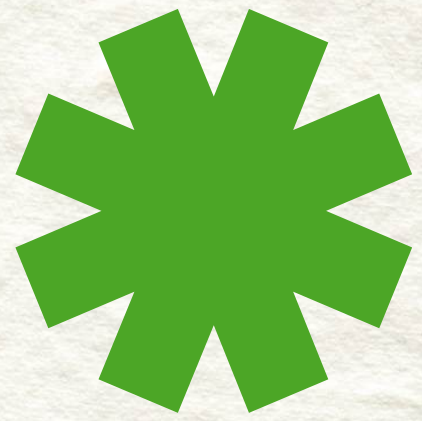
After Singrauli and Korba, Adani Power workers went on strike in Raigarh for an **8 hour workday** and a wage hikes for contract workers. These workers are excluded from social security and work without basic facilities like toilets and clean water.



16 March 2026



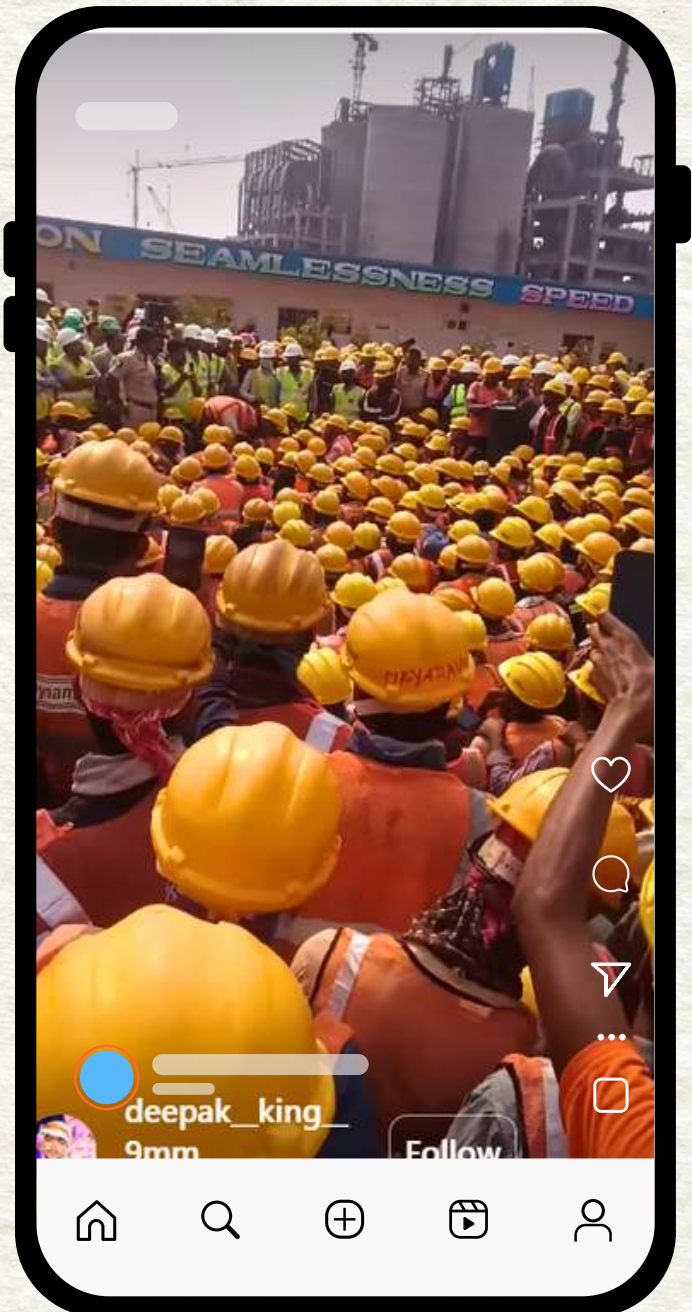
Kurnool
Andhra Pradesh



ULTRATECH CEMENT, PETNIKOTA

THIRD STRIKE AT ULTRATECH

After Rewa (MP) and Patratu (Jharkhand), Ultratech workers struck work in AP for an **8 hour workday**, double overtime and minimum wages as per state laws. They also demand **accident compensation and security** after any workplace related injury or death. The protest is ongoing as of printing.

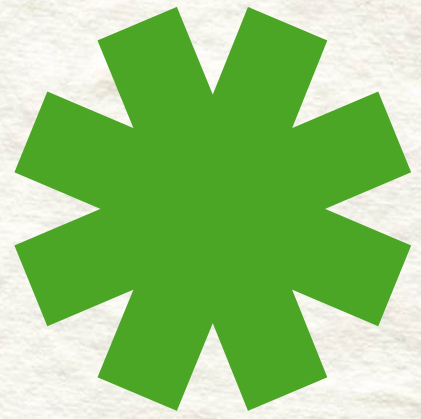




17 March 2026



Anantapur
Andhra Pradesh



ULTRATECH CEMENT, TADIPATRI

FOURTH STRIKE

After the UltraTech strike in its neighbouring district, workers at Tadipatri also halted work the next day to demand an **8 hours workday**, double overtime and improvement in working conditions. In September 2025, the AP state assembly passed the **Factories (Andhra Pradesh Amendment) Bill** extending the workday to 12 hours and allowing night shifts for women.

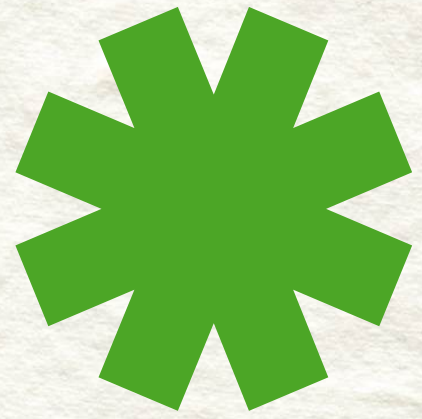




17 March 2026



Sonbhadra
Uttar Pradesh



ACC CEMENT, SALAIBANWA

WAGE THEFT MUST STOP

सलाईबनवा स्थित ACC सीमेंट प्लांट से एक परेशान करने वाली खबर सामने आ रही है। यहाँ काम करने वाले मज़दूर भाई अपने जायज़ वेतन के लिए सड़कों पर उतरने को मजबूर हैं।



र भगतान नहीं तो काम नहीं
आर आंदोलन और भी उग्र होस
ठेकेदार कंपनी LNBT द्वारा लंबे समय से
मजदूरों का भुगतान रोका गया है। क्या
ठेकेदार और कंपनी प्रबंधन यह नहीं समझते
कि मजदूरों का पुराना भुगतान की

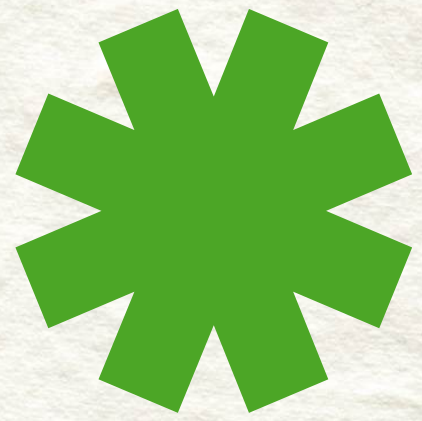
ACC Cement, also owned by the **Adani Group**, saw workers protesting demanding a **8 hour workday and timely payment**. Earlier this year, on 2 January, 100+ workers had protested against the management after **wages were withheld for two months** and PF was cut from their salaries but not credited. They demanded regularity in wages and social security.



18 March 2026



Kutch
Gujarat



TATA POWER, MUNDRA

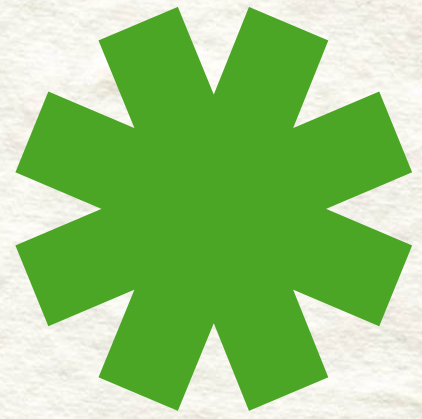
STRIKE AT INDIA'S LARGEST COAL PLANT

Tata Power's Ultra Mega Power Plant is one of India's largest coal power projects. Workers went on strike and demanded an **8 hour workday**, overtime payment, regular salaries and good working conditions. Recently, the **Gujarat government has approved a supplemental power purchase agreement** with Tata Power.



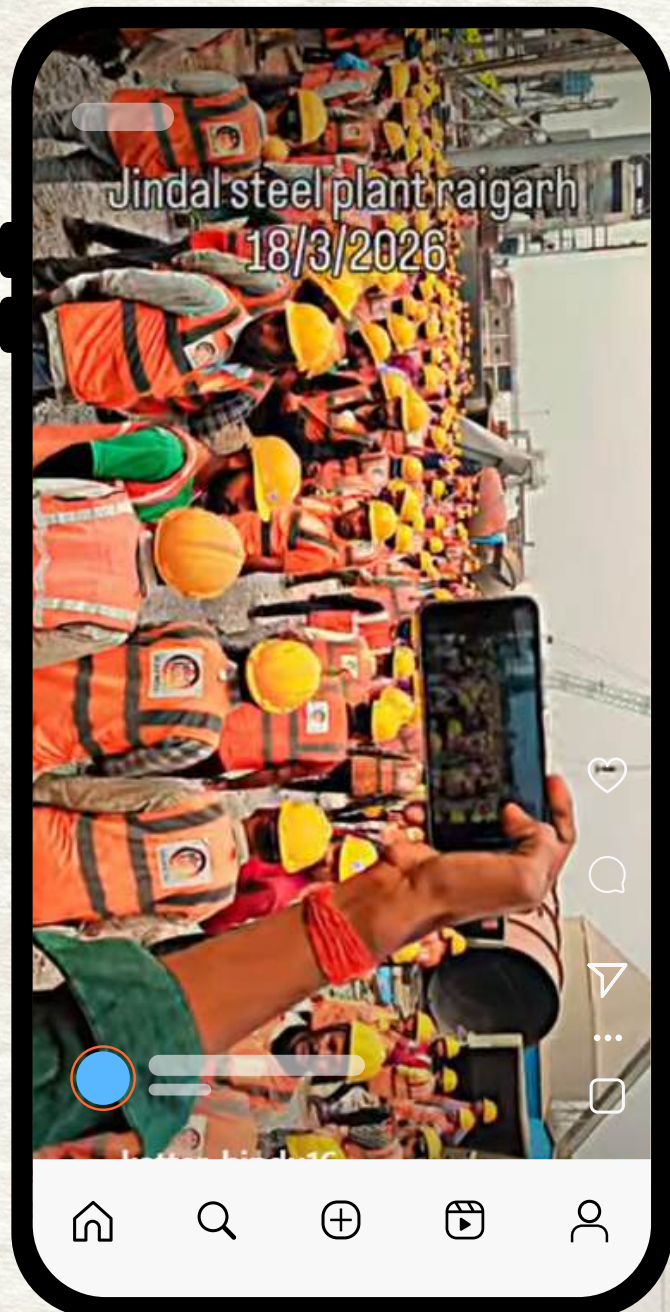


18 March 2026



Raigarh
Chhattisgarh

JINDAL STEEL, RAIGARH



FIRST ADIVASIS, NOW WORKERS

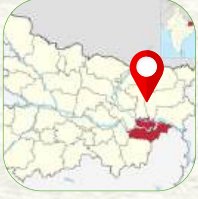
At **JSW's** integrated steel and power plant, construction workers employed by **Bharat Heavy Electricals (BHEL)** are demanding ₹30,000 monthly wage, 8 hour workday, overtime payment beyond 5 pm and payment within 7th day of the month.

Coal mine protest turns violent in Chhattisgarh's Raigarh; several cops injured, vehicles torched (The Hindu, 28 December 2025)

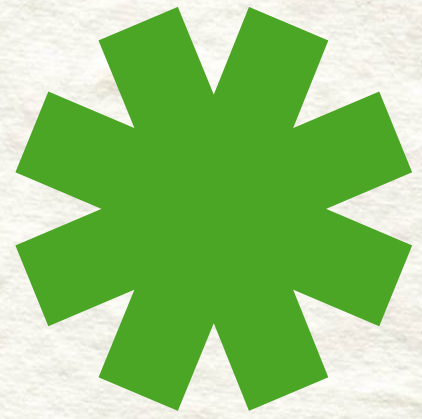
In December 2025, villagers from Tamnar holding a peaceful sit-in for 15 days against forced displacement by the coal mines had been met with brutal police repression.



19 March 2026



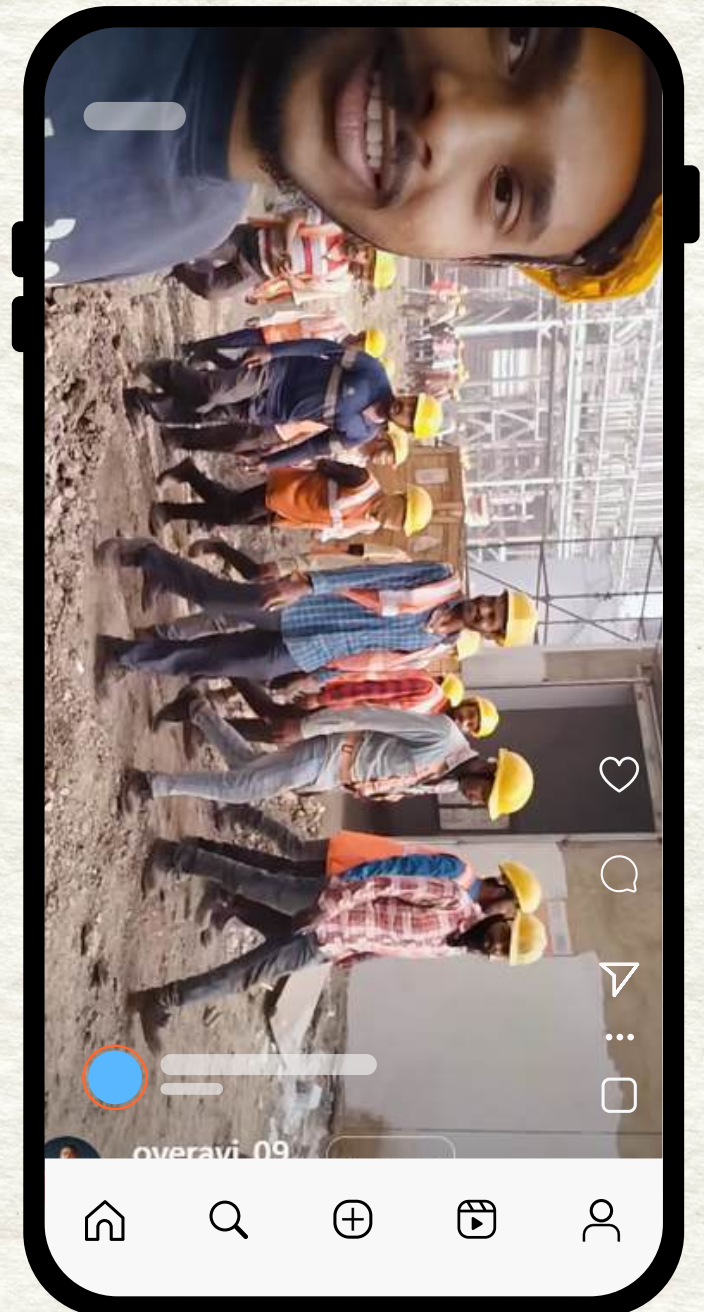
Bhagalpur
Bihar



NTPC, KHALEGAON

NTPC, YET AGAIN

Maintenance workers held an eight hour strike demanding their workday should be 8 hours. A recent notice from NTPC declared that the **workday has been extended to 12 hours**. This was the third NTPC plant to see a strike over working hours in this period.

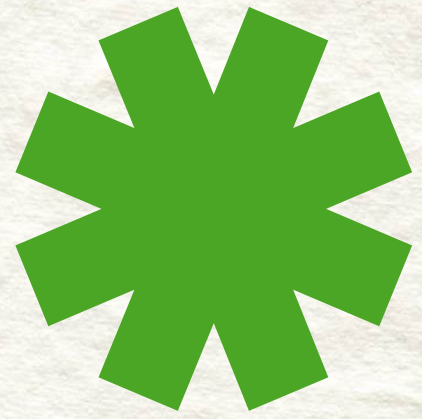




21 March 2026



Chittorgarh
Rajasthan



WONDER CEMENT, NIMBAHERA

ANOTHER FACTORY DEATH

Workers started a peaceful sit-in against the management when Vishnu Meghwal, a **worker from a nearby village died** during his shift. Wonder Cement management had refused to take any responsibility for this workplace accident and unsafe working conditions.





Have feedback for
**Migrant Workers
Solidarity Network**
or want to get involved?
Contact us.

contact.mwsn@gmail.com | mwsn.in

[f mwsn.in](https://www.facebook.com/mwsn.in) [@migrant_in](https://www.instagram.com/migrant_in) [X migrant_in](https://twitter.com/migrant_in)



Issued by Udita and Sourya on behalf of MWSN
85271 49979 / 88792 15570