

## **Unending Woes of the Workers**

# **THE FUTURE OF THE G.M. HALOL PLANT WORKERS IS DOOMED**

The car manufacturing plant of General Motors is operating in India from 1996, at Halol of Gujarat. This American automaker has a capacity of 110,000 units a year.

In this plant of Halol of Gujarat which is touted to be Detroit of the East, utility vehicles Tavera, Sedan Cruze and multi-utility vehicle ENJOY are manufactured. Around 1100 workers are working in the plant and 40% of the workers are contractual workers who get paid a minimum wage of Rs.278/- a day, depending on their skills. There are more workers who worked more than 10 years, but not regularized or made the workers of the company. The 60% or more of the permanent workers get paid anything between Rs 14,000/- to Rs 30,000/- a month depending on their skills and years of service.

Recently the CEO of General Motors of Mary Barra came to India, and met the Prime minister Modi and briefed him with the company's plans in India.

After that she coolly announced that it would shut down its manufacturing unit in Halol in Gujarat in June 2016, and relocate its manufacturing at Talegaon plant in Maharashtra and strengthen it.

Thus the CEO of General Motors (America) has doomed the future of Halol plant workers in Gujarat.

Though the Halol plant was operating in Gujarat for decades, it has not done much for local development nor had it created any vibrant eco system around Chandrapur village where it is situated.

Even the record of labour relations of General Motors management is not appreciable.

G.M. India Halol plant has been mired in controversies related to labour-unrests. There have been repeated strikes and sits-outs in the plant since 2010.

Though the C.E.O. of General Motors has grandly announced that the company is committed to India for the long term and wants to have a sustainable, profitable business here and India is a very important market and announced plans to invest \$ 1 billion in the country, a majority of which will go into its plant in Maharashtra. The real objective of shutting the plant at Halol seems to be the management's decision to reduce wage bill as well opt for fresh contracts with temporary workers and new terms of service at the Talegaon factory, Maharashtra.

In other-words the G.M. management decided to disband the permanent workers at Halol once for all and do away with the unrest of those workers, by relocating its manufacturing at Talegaon, where the conditions for the management conducive to exploit the cheap labour.

Now the workers of Halol plant have no scope of employment opportunities else-where or any chance to get substantive compensation from the General Motors management. Being majority of workers are from Gujarat and who are middle-aged, they cannot opt to work at Talegaon plant in Maharashtra even at a disadvantageous wage rate and worse service conditions with this announcement of closure of G.M.'s Halol plant in June 2016, it is not only the future of G.M. plant workers, but the future of the workers of the units supplying spare parts to G.M plant are also doomed; because vendors and, sparepart suppliers cannot relocate to Talegaon of Maharashtra.

Such is the nature of foreign direct investment entering India which never heeds the workers as human beings and ruins the lives of workers without any compunction.

Covering up this heinous, brutal nature of its management policies, now the G.M. management hoodwinks the public that it would create 12,000 new jobs in India with its new investments.

We are having such bitter experiences of deceit with NOKIA, FOXCON companies who have abandoned their workers inhumanly and doomed their future for ever.

### **PLIGHT OF SIRPUR PAPER MILL WORKERS**

Sirpur paper mills in Telengana state is closed for 10 months. 3,700 workers (inclusive of permanent and contract workers) are not being paid with wages or salaries for all these 10 months. Now these workers are living a penury of life.

While 12 workers died unable to sustain the shock when they were told that they would not be getting salaries till things got better at the mill, and unable to repay the loans that were taken or unable to provide two square meals a day to the family 3 workers committed suicides. Thus 15 lives have been claimed by the penury imposed on them.

While the services of the contract workers are terminated, the permanent ones were mandated to attend despite the lack of any work since the 'shut down'.

The workers have conducted sit-in protests, and went to Hyderabad and conducted protest demonstrations to bring their plight to the notice of the state government to no avail.

With the shutdown of the mills, E.S.I, assistance is withdrawn. Due to lack of treatment help from E.S.I., a worker's father died.

The trauma and anguish of the workers and the wails of their family members are heart-rending.

The Telangana state rulers who have been reveling in their success of achievement of their new state have no time to notice the plight of the Siripur paper mill workers, though one of them Naini Narsimha Reddy, the current Home Minister of Telangana state was earlier the leader of the union of Siripur paper mills.

### **SURAT DIAMOND POLISH-WORKERS IN DISTRESS**

Nearly half a dozen large diamond companies in the city of Surat, which a year ago was considered to be India's diamond capital with affluence have closed down resulting in more than 5,000 polishers have lost their jobs since June and thousands more may be left without work due to glut in the diamonds business. All these workers are highly skilled workers having 10-25 years of experience. These workers who lost their jobs are ready to work even for a half the salary they are getting till now. But nobody to provide them with jobs. Such is the distressed condition on workers of Modi's Gujarat. This the real face of our 'economic growth' being touted by the rulers.

### **SUDDEN CLOSURE OF JINDAL'S PLANT IN A.P.:**

The management of Jindal plant at Appannapalem of Vizianagaram district in A.P, had suddenly without any prior notice had illegally closed down the plant, by sticking a closure notice on the main gate of the factory. Thus it has throughout 700 families of workers on to the roads without compunction. According to the management of Jindal this closure of the plant is ostensibly due to the rise in the rates of electricity charges and pending demands of workers.

That is how the big-capital is playing havoc with the lives of workers according to its whims with impunity.

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