

Madhya Pradesh electricity workers continue indefinite strike

Thousands of Madhya Pradesh outsourced electricity workers remain on strike after walking out on June 25 over a 15-point log of claims. Their demands include permanent jobs for all temporary workers employed for more than three weeks, equal pay rates and benefits to all employees, and implementation of the seventh pay commission ruling.

Strike was called by the Madhya Pradesh Electricity Outsourced Workers Association. The workers are employed by about 30 private contracting companies for six government-owned electricity companies. Strikers have maintained a three-week protest at a site in Tower Chowk.

Manoj Bhargava, state convenor of the union, told the media said that the 45,000 outsourced employees performed dangerous work but were only paid 6,000 and 8,000 rupees per month. Workers with up to 12 years' service were deprived of decent salaries, he said, and pointed out that the Indian government and a few state governments paid 18,000 rupees per month to employees doing in the same work.

In April 2017, more than 20,000 workers from all of Madhya Pradesh state's power distribution companies struck work over the same demands. Workers also held state-wide demonstrations in October against the state government's moves to fully privatise electricity.
