

Unrest in Smart Phone Units in Noida

With 35 production units of handset manufacturing, Noida is an important region of handset production in the country. While the annual demand for handsets in the country is 450 million units, the production units at Noida have a capacity to produce 200 million handsets a year.

The handset companies are making huge profits by selling their products in the market of our country. But the conditions of the workers in the production units of these mobile-handsets are pathetic and grave. In the past two years workers in these units are resorting to agitations to realise their just demands of wage hike and better working hours and working conditions. But the managements of these production units are not heeding the just demands of workers, forcing them to choose the path of agitation.

Recently the workers at the Hipad Technology went on rampage (on 30-11-2018), protesting against the managements decision to discontinue with the services of 200 workers by sacking them on the pretext that demand for mobile phone fell after Diwali.

The facility of Hipad Technology manufactures handsets for smart phone brand Oppo and power banks for market leader Xiaomi. Oppo has taken a significant part of its 3 million unit sales from their factory for the period July-September period. Oppo's new brand launched on May 1, has sold a million hand-sets till September. After earning huge profits from these sales, now on the pretext of lack of demand it causes the sacking of 200 workers in the Hipad Technology units at Noida.

This is not the first time that workers went in to protest agitation; forcing them to go on rampage due to the ruthless and adamant anti-worker stances and policies of the management of this unit. Oppo mobile India knowing fully well of the fury of workers, that goaded them in to rampage due to managements anti-worker policies would not come to the rescue of workers interests but makes decision in its the best interests of earning super-profits. Neither the labour-laws nor the governmental administration come to protect the workers interests, but they intervene in the name of maintaining law and order-thus protect the interests of the errant industrial management.

In July, last year protests turned 'violent' at a plant operated by smart phone maker VIVO India; due to the abrupt discontinuation of 50 workers on the pretext of improving the productivity.

In July 2016 a protest broke-out in the manufacturing unit of durables major LG India in Greater Noida, demanding better wages and lower working hours went on for months.

In March 2016 the Noida unit of mobile phone maker Oppo was besieged by workers after reports of a Chinese executive of the company tearing the Indian national flag. The police interfered and subdued the agitating workers.

In April 2018, workers and locals had ransacked the unit of Hipad technology, smashing glass windows and destroying the CCTV cameras demanding higher wages and better working hours; but their demands were not met.

The strategy of hiring of many hand-set makers in Noida is often hiring trainees not protected by strict labour laws and sacking them easily at any time with impunity. With such a strategy those hand-set makers have scaled up their operations quickly.

These companies justify their anti-worker policies on the ruse of running the manufacturing units as a sustainable model to meet the requirements of large investments made by them.

On the other hand our rulers and governments reveal that they are able to create a good atmosphere in the country for doing-business to the liking of foreign direct investment.

These pro big-capital policies have become a scourge to the workers and working-class of our country, worsening their living and working conditions day by day pushing them in to despair with no hope of any rescue.

The capitalists (manufacturers) that created these circumstances are again crying foul that workers are not disciplined and resorting to violence erasing the chances of flow of F.D.I investments in to India and again making the victim workers of their ruthless inhuman exploitation of their labour power the scape goats of governmental ire and draconian oppression.

The workers-movement of India must fight sincerely against this aspect of abominable practices of the big-capital against the workers coming out of its ritual approach with regards of the protection of interests of the workers of unorganised and informal sector.
