

# MAZDOOR ADHIKAR SANGHARSH ABHIYAN (MASA)

C-141, SAINIK NAGAR, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110059

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Ref. No. ....

Date 25.02.2026

## **Statement of Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan (MASA) in Strong Support of the Ongoing Heroic Struggle of Thousands of Workers at Panipat Oil Refinery**

Thousands of workers employed at the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) refinery in Panipat, Haryana, are on strike. On February 23, starting at 11:00 AM, 30,000 to 40,000 workers began a demonstration at Refinery Gates 1 and 4. Only a few hours later, the police initiated a lathi-charge to forcibly end the protest, in which several workers were injured. Following this, reports have emerged of CISF firing shots into the air to control the situation. The CISF is responsible for creating a tense atmosphere by repressing the peaceful and legitimate protest of the workers at the behest of the management and contractors.

The workers state that despite being employees of one of the country's largest public sector undertakings, their working conditions are extremely pathetic. Even after working 12-hour shifts, they are paid for only 8 hours; in other words, no payment is given for overtime. Only 2 days of leave are fixed per month, and they are required to work on the remaining 2 Sundays. Wage payments are frequently delayed. Management and contractors engage in fraud regarding PF (Provident Fund) deductions, and even basic facilities like toilets are not provided at the workplace. The administration, management, and contractors—having immediately retreated due to the organized resistance and anger of the workers—have presented a written but vague assurance with the intention of scattering their struggle. However, the workers have decided to continue the strike and demonstration until their demands are met, without falling into this trap.

On February 24, a team from the Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan (MASA) visited the refinery premises for fact-finding and to interact with the struggling workers. It was revealed that the main trigger for the aforementioned workers' uprising on February 23 was a work-related accident in the refinery two days prior, in which 2 workers died and 1 was severely injured (one leg amputated up to the knee), and the subsequent indifferent attitude of the management. The suppressed anger of the workers, who have endured years of exploitation and indecent behaviour by the management and contractors, erupted following this heartbreaking incident. Notably, jammers have been installed to shut down mobile networks and internet services throughout the complex, especially at the workers' protest site, so that news of both the struggle and the repression do not reach the outside world. It is also noteworthy that the police administration has registered an FIR against 2,500 unidentified workers, while no FIR or minimum legal action has been taken against the management and contractors for openly violating labor laws or against the administration for the lathi-charge on the peaceful protest.

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It is worth noting that this Panipat refinery has been operational since 1998, with more than 50,000 workers employed in various units. It is one of the largest integrated refineries in South Asia. Despite this, most of these thousands of workers work under various contractors and are deprived of permanent jobs and basic workers' rights. Today, the contract system has become the primary employment arrangement not just in the private sector, but also in public undertakings and government companies, which intensifies exploitation by nullifying the basic rights of workers.

The 4 new Labor Codes implemented by the Modi government last year, by dismantling all central labour laws, make this contract system and its even more dangerous form, 'Fixed-Term Employment,' universal across all sectors. As a result, basic rights such as permanent employment, 8-hour workdays, overtime, and PF—which the working class achieved through sacrificial struggles—have been abolished in one stroke. Not only this but forming unions and going on strike has been made nearly impossible and equivalent to a crime. The workers' strike at the Panipat refinery is a result of this new, highly anti-worker system of intense exploitation and slavery, against which the working class must build class unity without falling into the divisive conspiracies of caste, religion, and language.

The point-wise demands of the struggling workers of IOCL Refinery, Panipat are as follows:

1. The 8-hour duty shift must be strictly implemented.
2. Payment of wages must be ensured between the 1st and 7th of every month, and the full amount due must be paid upon completion of 240 days.
3. Wages should be paid according to the company's Board Rate, and Provident Fund (PF) amounts should be deposited equally and regularly.
4. In the event of any accident or mishap during work, the company must take full responsibility and provide proper compensation.
5. Fellow workers picked up from K.K.S. (local site/area) must be released immediately.
6. Overtime (OT) must be paid at double the rate.
7. All national holidays must be granted to the workers.
8. Monthly duty should be fixed at 26 working days.
9. Proper arrangements for toilets and clean drinking water must be made at the workplace.

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Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan (MASA) stands fully with the struggle of the Panipat refinery workers and demands the immediate implementation of the legitimate demands. Furthermore, while strongly condemning the police repression of peacefully protesting workers, MASA demands legal action against the responsible officials and the IOCL management and contractors who have been openly violating labour laws for years. The FIRs registered against the workers should be scrapped immediately, and no further legal action should be taken against them. Additionally, MASA demands the repeal of the new Labor Codes that dismantle the rights of workers across the country.

With Revolutionary greetings,

**Central Coordination Committee  
Mazdoor Adhikar Sangharsh Abhiyan (MASA)**