

Gurgaon-Manesar automobile sector screeches to a halt

- [Ashok Kumar](#)

More than 10 lakh workers downed tools on Wednesday as part of the nationwide strike against the alleged 'anti-labour' policies of the Union government, bringing the Gurgaon-Manesar-Bawal automobile sector to a grinding halt.

The production in more than 1,500 small, medium and large automobile factories in Gurgaon, Udyog Vihar; Industrial Model Township (IMT), Manesar; IMT, Binola; IMT, Dharuhera; and IMT, Bawal was severely affected. The major industries among those hit were Maruti Suzuki, Honda, Hero MotoCorp, Munjal Kiriu, ASTI Electronics, Baxter, Bajaj Motos, Autofit, Premium Moulding and Bellsonica.

The production in all the four plants of Maruti Suzuki - Maruti Suzuki Manesar, Maruti Suzuki Gurgaon, Suzuki Motorcycles, Suzuki Powertrain – was affected. “The workers did not turn up for work and there was no production at Maruti plants. Almost 80 per cent automobile factories in the Gurgaon-Manesar-Bawal sector were forced to shut down,” said Maruti Udyog Kamgaar Union general-secretary Kuldeep Jhanghu.

One of the major demands of the striking workers was to raise the cap on minimum wages and end the wage disparity between regular and contract workers.

The strike, however, remained peaceful with the workers staging demonstrations on the roads. Police personnel were deployed in large numbers at different places such as IMT Manesar, Udyog Vihar and the bus stand to prevent any untoward incident, said Assistant Commissioner of Police (Crime) Rajesh Chechi. The workers, however, accused the police of preventing them from joining the strike at a few places. “The activists of the Workers Solidarity Centre (WSC) ran a campaign from 4.30 a.m. in front of factory gates. The workers of Indo Auto, where there is no union, got down from the buses and decided to join the strike. The labour contractor, HR manager and local police came to the spot, threatened the workers, and the activists of the WSC. But the workers stood firm and refused to join work. Also the workers of AG industry refused to join work,” said WSC activist Amit Chakravarty.

The garments factories operating in Udyog Vihar sector 1-IV mostly stayed away from the strike as these do not have unions. However, a few major companies declared a holiday apprehending violence. NCR Chamber of Commerce and Industry president H.P. Yadav said the existing minimum wages were really low in view of the present rate of inflation and needed to be increased by 20-30 per cent. The Haryana Roadways buses remained off the roads.

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