

## Bulk LPG tanker drivers on strike

- Special Correspondent



Indian Oil Petronas Pvt. Ltd. is in talks with drivers and truck owners .— File Photo

*After a driver's death, they reiterate demand for insurance cover*

Bulk LPG truck drivers attached to the IndianOil Petronas Pvt. Ltd. (IPPL) terminal have gone on strike since Sunday night, disrupting supplies to 11 bottling units in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The drivers are demanding insurance cover and protection for them en route to the bottling units.

CITU's Athipet unit secretary S. Selvaraj said the immediate provocation for the strike was the death of a driver from Tiruchy near Hyderabad recently.

“He had accidentally hit a car and the people in the car thrashed him. Though he was hospitalised, he died last week. The man has two young children. We want compensation for his family,” he said, adding that unless there was a permanent solution the drivers would not withdraw their agitation.

“We carry products for the government. Drivers are beaten up at times for the money they carry or their mobile phones. There are no safe places to park or sleep en route to the bottling plants. If there is a problem and we report to the police, they ask us why we sleep on the road,” he added.

The IPPL is a joint venture of Indian Oil Corporation and the Malaysian government-owned Petronas where LPG is imported in bulk from tankers. LPG is then supplied through bulk tankers with a capacity of 17.5 tonnes to 14 bottling plants, 10 in the State, one in Puducherry, two in Hyderabad and two in Cuddapah.

Sources in IPPL said all bottling plants have two days of LPG stock and hoped that the strike will be called off by Tuesday. “In the instant case the owner had taken insurance for the driver too, not just the product or the vehicle,” the source added.

Indian Oil sources said that they were in talks with the drivers and truck owners and if the strike is not withdrawn by tomorrow it could have an impact on the LPG supplies in the State.

“We have been pressing for LPG pipelines to do away with bulk vehicle supplies. Though we have the necessary permissions, we are unable to lay pipelines in Tamil Nadu,” said an official.

Meanwhile, Indane distributors in the city, who are already worried over the 10-day backlog of cylinders, say this could lead to a bigger problem if not resolved soon.

“We are getting supplies from Chengalpet and Salem bottling plants. If supply is cut off to these plants due to the bulk drivers strike then supplies to the entire State could be affected,” said a retailer.

***Sources in IPPL said bottling***

***plants have***

***two days***

***of LPG stock***

---

Printable version | Dec 30, 2015 12:35:16 PM | <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/bulk-lpg-tanker-drivers-on-strike/article8038691.ece>

© The Hindu