

Labour strife may dent Modi's jobs push

REUTERS, Chennai/New Delhi

Labour unrest is on the rise at two centres in India where motorcycles and components are manufactured, underlining the problems Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government faces in creating new manufacturing jobs that are sustainable and pay attractive wages.

Motorbike makers, such as Japan's Yamaha, and India's Eicher Motors - maker of the iconic Royal Enfield motorcycles - have been hit hard by

out of the growth story because of lagging wages.

Around the southern Indian city of Chennai, often dubbed the "Detroit of South Asia", there have been a series of work stoppages at the motorcycle makers, mainly over union recognition, contract labour and wage issues.

Workers at several other companies in the area, including makers of auto parts and tyre manufacturers, have protested in recent months against lower wages, and for more secure jobs and the right to unionize.

credit markets and their purchasing power will therefore be restricted, Sundar said.

Underlying the militancy is a mixture of pressures facing the workers and their employers, including rising living costs and sluggish sales.

India's domestic passenger vehicle sales fell 5.6 percent in September from a year ago, data from the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) showed on Friday. The sales were hurt by rising fuel prices and higher interest rates.

A wave of labour stoppages could put additional pressure on the profitability of companies affected at a time when they are already grappling with increasing input costs and uncertain demand.

On a recent visit by a Reuters reporter to the industrial belt of Oragadam, more than 50 km (32 miles) southwest of Chennai, hundreds of workers wearing Yamaha uniforms sat metres (yards) away from the factory gates. Besides them were placards with slogans like "Do you know kindness?" and "Let us put an end to oppression" written in English, Japanese and Tamil.

Apart from higher pay and permanent jobs, the workers also want the right to form unions to collectively bargain. They went on strike after some employees were fired for forming a union. "Nobody can tell us we can't fight for our rights," said one of the union leaders, E Muthukumar, to a crowd of cheering protesters.

The Yamaha workers, who have now been on strike for about three weeks, earn up to 17,000 rupees a month (\$229) and say they want substantially more to meet rising living expenses.

Full-time workers at the nearby Royal Enfield motorcycle plant earn about 25,000 rupees every month on average and are demanding at least double that amount. They, too, have been on strike for most of the past three weeks after resuming work for a few days but then walking out again.



REUTERS/FILE

Workers listen to a speaker during a protest demanding higher pay and job security near a Yamaha facility in Oragadam in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, India.

walkouts, although major carmakers have been largely unscathed.

The workers are mainly demanding higher pay and job security, particularly by getting employers to reduce the use of contract labour, who are paid less than permanent employees and can often be fired at will.

Modi, who has to call elections by May next year, has promised to create new jobs by boosting manufacturing in Asia's third-largest economy, but has failed to match aspirations despite rapid overall economic growth. Those who have jobs feel left

In Gurugram, on the outskirts of the capital New Delhi, hundreds of workers from companies, including car maker Maruti Suzuki, staged a day-long protest on Oct 7 over demands for job security and higher wages.

The labour unrest "exposes the vulnerability of the workers," said K.R. Shyam Sundar, professor of human resource management at XLRI, one of India's top management schools.

Contract workers don't have the same path to the middle class as employees - they are, for example, much less likely to get access to formal



SEVEN RINGS CEMENT

Seven Rings Cement CEO S Raihan Ahmed and directors Tahmina Ahmed, Brig General (retd) Ahmed Mukhtadir Arif and Saif Rahman pose with the top performers at a conference for the company's dealers (sales-south), at Savar in Dhaka on Saturday.

Japan unveils sales tax hike

AFP, Tokyo

Japan on Monday announced a much anticipated sales tax hike in 2019 to address the nation's huge public debt, despite warnings it could hobble growth in the world's third-biggest economy.

The point-of-sale tax will rise from eight percent to 10 percent from October next year as ageing and heavily indebted Japan battles to finance snowballing social security bills - especially medical fees.

The tax rise was originally planned for October 2015 but was pushed back twice due to fears it could derail the fragile economy.

The last such move - in April 2014 - was blamed for tipping Japan into a

brief recession.

This time, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe believes he can avoid a sharp decline in consumer spending by introducing measures to cushion the blow.

The government "will do its best to avoid a negative impact on the economy by taking every possible measure," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters.

However, Suga added that the planned hike could still be scrapped if there were a potentially historic recession like a global slump triggered by the 2008 collapse of Lehman Brothers.

The measures will include plans to leave the sales tax on food unchanged at eight percent, Suga said.

The government also plans subsidies to offset the impact of the sales

tax hike on some durable goods such as houses and environmentally friendly cars.

And the proceeds from the tax hike will go in part to fund free nursery places to ease the impact on families and encourage Japanese to have more babies, as the population continues to shrink at a fast pace.

"I don't think the sales tax this time will create a setback in the economy," Hideo Kumano, chief economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute, told AFP, adding that a hoped-for rise in wages would be critical.

The measures to mitigate the impact on consumption and an expected rise in salaries next year should be enough to absorb a shock from falling disposable income, he said.



GADGET & GEAR

Duke, CEO of Chinese mobile phone manufacturer Vivo in Bangladesh, and Nure Alam Shimu, managing director of local mobile phone retailer Gadget & Gear, exchange documents after signing a deal at the former's office in Dhaka yesterday. Vivo handsets can be availed at the retailer through six equal monthly instalments at zero interest.



EGENERATION

Sook Hoon Cheah, president of South East Asia New Markets of Microsoft, hands over a crest to AKM Shirin, managing director of Dutch-Bangla Bank, at The Westin Dhaka recently celebrating incorporation of its solutions at the bank. Bangladesh Army, Bank Asia, Anwar Group and bKash also availed the solutions between July and September through Microsoft's licensing solutions partner, eGeneration. Shameem Ahsan, chairman of eGeneration, was present.

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড

(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানী)

Sylhet Gas Fields Limited

(A Company of Petrobangla)

বিদ্যুৎ ও জ্বালানী নিরাপত্তা সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার

গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ। এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE

Tender no. SGFL/DP(SYL-9)/DDS/FP18-19 Date: 10-10-2018

1.	Ministry/Division	: Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division.						
2.	Agency	: Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (A company of Petrobangla).						
3.	Procuring Entity Name	: Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (SGFL)						
4.	Procuring Entity District	: Sylhet						
5.	Invitation for	Tender for procurement of Directional Drilling Services with equipment for Drilling of well no. Sylhet-9 (appraisal/development well) at Sylhet (Haripur) Field, Jaintapur, Sylhet, Bangladesh						
6.	Invitation Ref No	: SGFL/DP(SYL-9)/DDS/FP18-19						
7.	Date	: 10-10-2018						
KEY INFORMATION								
8.	Procurement method	: Open Tendering Method (International Competitive Tendering). Single Stage Two Envelope System.						
FUNDING INFORMATION								
9.	Budget and Source of Funds	: Gas Development Fund (GDF).						
PARTICULAR INFORMATION								
10.	Project Name	: Drilling of well no. Sylhet-9 (appraisal/development well) at Sylhet (Haripur) Field, Jaintapur, Sylhet, Bangladesh.						
11.	Tender Publication Date	: N/A.						
12.	Tender Last Selling Date	: 02-12-2018						
13.	Tender Closing/Receiving Date & Time	: 03-12-2018 and 12:00 hrs (BST)						
14.	Tender Opening Date & Time	: 03-12-2018 and 12:15 hrs (BST)						
15.	Name and Address of the Office(s)							
	Selling Tender Document (Principal)	: Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, Dhaka Liaison Office, Petrocentre (13th Floor), 3 Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh						
	Selling Tender Document (Others)	: Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX), BAPEX Bhaban, 4 Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh						
16.	Receiving of Tender Document	: Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, Head Office, P.O.: Chiknagool, Sylhet, Bangladesh.						
	Opening of Tender Document	: Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, Head Office, P.O.: Chiknagool, Sylhet, Bangladesh.						
17.	Date & Time of Selling of Tender Document.	: The Tender document will be available for sale from 17-10-2018 to 02-12-2018 during office hours on all working days.						
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER								
18.	Eligibility of Tenderer	: A Contractor or a Subcontractor that is a national of, or registered in, the following countries are not eligible: Countries, which have no business relations with the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Materials, Equipments Plants and supplies shall not have their origin in the following countries: Countries, which have no business relations with the People's Republic of Bangladesh.						
19.	Brief Description of Works	: To provide Directional Drilling Services with equipment for Drilling of Well No. Sylhet-9 (Appraisal/Development well).						
20.	Brief Description of Physical Services	: Directional Drilling Services providing all necessary equipment/tools and professional experts/operators.						
21.	Price of Tender document	: Taka 5,000.00 or USD 60.00 (non refundable).						
22.	Name of the Official Inviting Tender	: Engr. Md. Lutfar Rahman.						
23.	Designation of the Official Inviting Tender	: Managing Director Sylhet Gas Fields Limited						
24.	Address of the Official Inviting Tender	: Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, Dhaka Liaison Office, Petrocentre (13 th Floor), 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh Attn: Deputy General Manager (Procurement)						
25.	Contact Details of the Official Inviting Tender	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;">Tel. No.</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;">Fax No.</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;">E-mail</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">+880255013709</td> <td style="border: none;">+880255013708</td> <td style="border: none;">md@sgfl.org.bd</td> </tr> </table>	Tel. No.	Fax No.	E-mail	+880255013709	+880255013708	md@sgfl.org.bd
Tel. No.	Fax No.	E-mail						
+880255013709	+880255013708	md@sgfl.org.bd						
26.	Special Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tender must remain valid for 120 days from the date of closing of the Tender. b) Amount of tender security for BDT 10,50,000.00 (ten lakh fifty thousand) or USD 12,700.00 (twelve thousand seven hundred) in the form of bank draft or pay order from any scheduled Bank of Bangladesh or in the form of an irrevocable bank Guarantee (as per format provided in the Tender Document) issued by a scheduled Bank of Bangladesh or from any reputable foreign Bank duly endorsed by a scheduled Bank of Bangladesh with full obligation & liabilities. c) The Tender Security must remain valid for one hundred and forty eight (148) days from the date of closing of the tender. d) Tender(s) submitted after the deadline for receiving of tenders will be rejected and returned unopened to the Tenderer. e) The Tender must not be submitted by Fax or email. f) Exceptions (Technical or Commercial or of other nature) proposed by Tenderer (if any) shall be clearly expressed in a separate section of their technical offer. No exception will be accepted in the price offer. g) This tender notice will also be available at Petrobangla Website: www.petrobangla.org.bd and SGFL Website: www.sgfl.org.bd and CPTU Website: www.cptu.gov.bd. 						
27.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.							

Deputy General Manager (Procurement)