

Surat diamond industry wage settlement in sight

The wage hike dispute between diamond cutting and polishing unit owners and workers in Surat would be resolved within the next two to three days, Surat Diamond Industry Association president C.P. Vanani said Wednesday.

Workers took to the streets Wednesday after certain units declined to increase wages by 20 percent, as previously agreed.

There are 4,000 diamond units in the city, employing about half a million workers. Agitated workers threw stones at diamond factories located in Varachha and Kapodara areas, the diamond hubs of the city.

The Diamond Workers Association representing cutters and polishers had recently warned of a strike if wages were not revised immediately.

Vanani told IANS that the industry had decided upon a 20 percent wage hike against workers' demand for a 30 percent upward revision.

The industry could not meet the workers' demand as it was facing recessionary trends, he said. Nevertheless, a 20 percent increase was decided upon as the last wage revision occurred 14 years ago.

Vanani said most owners of diamond units have agreed to go along with the hike, and that the association was discussing the issue with those who opposed it.

'We hope to resolve all issues within the next two to three days and normalcy will be restored,' Vanani added.

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