

## Salt Corporation workers call off strike at Valinokkam

• Special Correspondent

*They protested against non-implementation of wage pact*



Stir for a cause:Tamil Nadu Salt Corporation workers staging a protest at Valinokkam in Ramanathapuram district on Wednesday.

More than 1,000 workers of the Tamil Nadu Salt Corporation (TNSC), including a large number of women, struck work for the second day on Wednesday at Valinokkam, protesting against non-implementation of wage pact entered with the management in 2014. However, the strike was called off after reconciliation talks held here.

About 900 tonnes of salt is produced in a day in the Valinokkam facility of the TNSC, a fully owned enterprise of the Tamil Nadu government, and the production was totally hit on Tuesday and Wednesday as the workers launched an indefinite strike, demanding the implementation of wage hike pact.

The workers, after opening a 'gruel centre' on Wednesday, threatened to continue the strike but called off the stir after reaching an agreement with the management in the talks held before the Labour Officer here, M. Sivaji, CITU district secretary, representing the workers, said.

The management, represented by Delhi Kumar, General Manager, agreed to implement the wage agreement and it was decided to work out the modalities of payment after talks with the Managing Director in Chennai on April 12, he said.

As per the agreement signed in September 2014, the management had agreed to pay Rs 28.10 above the then minimum wages fixed by the government with retrospective effect from 2013. Meanwhile, after the government revised the minimum wages in 2015, the management started paying the revised minimum wages but continued to evade the hike of Rs 28.10, he said.

The workers, as advised by the Labour Officer, had filed a case before him last year, but the management had sought as many as 11 adjournments in a bid to delay the proceedings, Mr Sivaji charged.

### “Remain NMRs”

“More than 1,300 men and women toiled for two to three decades, braving the vagaries of the weather, and they continue to be treated as NMRs (Non Muster Roll) workers”, Mr Sivaji said.

The men were paid paltry Rs 260.90 and the women Rs 258.90 a day, he added.

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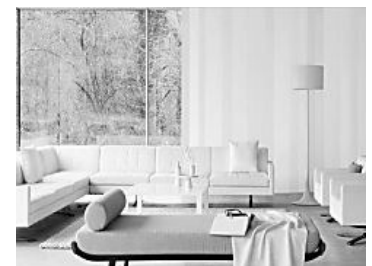
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