



OIL & NATURAL GAS CORPORATION (W.O.U.) KARMACHARI SANGHATANA

AFFILIATED TO - PETROLIUM & GAS WORKERS' FEDERATION OF INDIA

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Website : www.ksmumbai.com

REF. : ONGC/KS/ 58/2026

DATE : 27/07/2026

To,
The ED - Chief Corporate Drilling Services
ONGC-WOU,
11 High,
Sion-Bandra Link Road,
Sion,
Mumbai - 400 017.

a/c

Subject: Urgent Intervention Sought Regarding Serious Aviation Safety Concerns, Repeated Helicopter Failures, Prolonged Offshore Retention of Employees & Management Accountability for Rig Sagar Jyoti.

Respected Sir,

We are in receipt of a complaint letter submitted by the employees of Rig Sagar Jyoti regarding the alarming deterioration of helicopter operations from Surat Helibase. The complaint signed by a large number of ONGC employees raises issues that go far beyond operational inconvenience. It exposes serious concerns relating to aviation safety, employee welfare, operational continuity & management accountability.

It is deeply disturbing that despite repeated written representations dated **24.06.2026, 14.07.2026, 15.07.2026, 18.07.2026 & 24.07.2026**, no effective corrective measures appear to have been taken. The continued silence of the concerned authorities despite repeated warnings on safety-related matters is unacceptable for an organization like ONGC, where safety is professed to be the highest priority.

We considers the following issues extremely grave:

1. Repeated Helicopter Technical Failures Cannot Be Treated as Routine Operational Issues

The complaint clearly indicates repeated technical failures of helicopters deployed from Surat for crew change operations.

Of particular concern is the incident dated **26.03.2026**, wherein helicopter **VT-RRI** reportedly developed a technical malfunction immediately after take-off & was compelled to make an emergency landing at Surat Airport. While no casualty occurred, such an incident should have triggered a comprehensive technical review of helicopter operations from Surat. Instead, similar technical failures continued to occur.

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Further, during July 2026, repeated cancellations of crew change sorties due to technical defects compelled offshore employees to express their unwillingness to board helicopter VT-RRI because of genuine safety concerns. Even after deployment of replacement helicopter **VT-RRF** from 21.07.2026, technical problems reportedly surfaced again within three days.

When two different helicopters develop similar technical problems within a short period, the issue can no longer be attributed merely to individual aircraft. It raises legitimate concerns regarding maintenance systems, engineering support, troubleshooting standards & operational management at Surat Helibase. We strongly believe that employee confidence in aviation safety has been seriously eroded.

2. Employees Cannot Be Compelled to Continue Offshore Indefinitely

Because of repeated helicopter failures & inadequate contingency planning, crew changes have virtually come to a standstill.

As reported in the complaint:

- Around **25 incoming personnel** remain stranded.
- Around **25 outgoing personnel** continue to remain offshore.
- Several ONGC employees have completed **26 consecutive offshore working days**.
- Contract personnel have remained onboard for nearly **42 consecutive days**, while continuously performing demanding operational duties.

Such prolonged deployment inevitably causes:

- Physical exhaustion
- Mental fatigue
- Reduced alertness
- Declining morale
- Increased probability of human error; &
- Serious operational & safety risks.

No responsible employer can ignore these realities.

3. Safety Cannot Be Compromised in the Name of Operational Continuity

We particularly concerned that repeated technical failures continue despite repeated written warnings issued by employees.

The complaint rightly asks a question that deserves immediate attention:

If an unfortunate accident occurs after repeated written warnings have already been issued to the management, who will accept responsibility?

This is not merely a rhetorical question.

Every written representation ignored today becomes documentary evidence tomorrow.

If management fails to act despite repeated warnings regarding aviation safety, accountability cannot be avoided in the event of any unfortunate incident.

4. Unexplained Payload Restriction Has Aggravated the Crisis

The sudden reduction in Bell-412 passenger capacity from approximately **8–9 personnel to only 5–6 personnel** for Rig Sagar Jyoti has further aggravated the backlog.

The complaint correctly points out that:

- Similar restrictions were reportedly not applicable for nearby offshore installations;
- No prior consultation was held with Rig Management;
- No satisfactory technical explanation was provided before implementation.

Any operational restriction having a direct impact on manpower movement should have been transparently communicated & technically justified.

5. Surat Crew Change Arrangement Requires Immediate Review

We notes that the complaint highlights several inherent deficiencies in the Surat-based arrangement:

- Absence of standby helicopters;
- Dependence on a single Bell-412 helicopter;
- Limited passenger capacity;
- Repeated cancellation of sorties;
- Increasing crew change backlog;
- Inadequate accommodation facilities;
- Financial hardship to employees stranded at Surat; &
- Non-reimbursement of expenses because of existing system limitations.

In contrast, Mumbai offers multiple standby helicopters, larger AW-139 aircraft, superior accommodation facilities & significantly better operational resilience. These facts merit serious consideration.

6. Repeated Representations Have Been Met With Silence

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect is not merely the technical failures but the apparent absence of any meaningful response from the concerned authorities despite repeated communications from offshore personnel.

The complaint specifically records that:

- No substantive reply has been received;
- No accountability has been fixed;
- No long-term corrective strategy has been communicated; &
- No assurance has been provided to employees.

Such silence only weakens employee confidence in the organization's commitment to safety.

Relief Sought :

We demand immediate intervention by the competent authority & requests that the following actions be initiated without delay:

1. Immediate review of the continued operation of crew change flights from Surat & restoration of Mumbai-based crew change operations until reliability & safety at Surat are fully established.
2. Constitution of an independent technical committee to investigate the recurring helicopter failures & maintenance practices at Surat Helibase.
3. Comprehensive review of the payload restrictions imposed on Rig Sagar Jyoti & restoration of normal operational capacity wherever technically feasible.
4. Immediate clearance of the crew change backlog to ensure that no employee is compelled to remain offshore beyond permissible limits.
5. Formulation of a robust long-term crew change strategy for the Tapti Field with adequate standby helicopter arrangements.
6. Immediate reimbursement of expenses incurred by employees stranded at Surat & improvement of accommodation & welfare facilities.
7. Communication of a detailed action taken report to all stakeholders regarding corrective measures being implemented.

We wish to make it abundantly clear that this issue concerns **Human Lives**, not merely logistics. ONGC has always maintained that "**Safety is the first priority.**" Those words must now be reflected through decisive action.

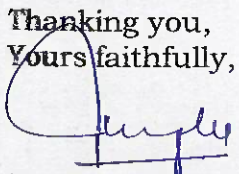
Ignoring repeated written warnings relating to aviation safety, prolonged offshore retention & crew fatigue would be inconsistent with the Corporation's commitment to protecting its employees.

Therefore, we urge to the Management to intervene personally & resolve this matter on the highest priority before an avoidable incident forces corrective action after the fact.

In the event that no meaningful action is forthcoming within a reasonable period, the Union shall be constrained to take up the matter before the appropriate statutory authorities & other competent forums available under law for protection of employees' safety & welfare.

We trust that such a situation will not arise & that the Management will treat this representation with the seriousness it deserves.

Thanking you,
Yours faithfully,


(Pradeep Mayekar)
General Secretary

a/c

Copy to:

1. ED Chief - HR Services, ONGC-WOU, NBP Green Hts., BKC, Bandra (E), Mum. 51
2. ED - COL, ONGC-WOU, 11 High, Bandra Sion Link Road, Sion, Mumbai - 17
3. GGM (P) - Head Offshore Safety, ONGC-WOU, 11 High, Mumbai - 400 017
4. GGM (E) - Head Air Logistic, ONGC-WOU, Juhu Helibase, Santacruz (W), Mum. 56
5. GM, I/c - IR, ONGC-WOU, NBP Green Heights, BKC, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 51
6. Rig Manager - S/Jyoti, ONGC-WOU, 11 High, Bandra Sion Lk Rd., Sion, Mum. - 17

Subject: Urgent Escalation: Immediate Intervention Required for Crew Change Helicopter Operations – Rig Sagar Jyoti

Dear Sir,

This is an urgent escalation regarding the deteriorating helicopter operations being carried out from Surat Airport for crew change of Rig Sagar Jyoti. Despite repeated written communications over the last several weeks highlighting serious operational disruptions, recurring helicopter technical failures, increasing crew fatigue, and growing safety concerns, the issues continue to persist without any effective corrective action or response from the concerned authorities.

Multiple emails dated 24.06.2026, 14.07.2026, 15.07.2026, 18.07.2026, and 24.07.2026 have consistently brought these matters to the notice of higher management. Unfortunately, the situation has only worsened.

1. Repeated Helicopter Technical Failures

The helicopter operating from Surat has repeatedly developed technical snags, resulting in frequent cancellation of scheduled crew change sorties.

A serious warning sign occurred on 26.03.2026 when helicopter VT-RR1 reportedly developed a technical malfunction shortly after take-off from Surat Airport and had to make an emergency landing. Emergency response teams at Surat Airport were reportedly mobilized. Fortunately, the incident did not result in any casualty, but it highlighted the seriousness of the recurring technical issues.

Subsequently, during July 2026 alone, multiple scheduled sorties were cancelled due to technical defects. Following repeated failures, offshore personnel collectively expressed their unwillingness to board helicopter VT-RR1 owing to legitimate safety concerns. This was formally communicated through email on 18.07.2026.

Consequently, helicopter VT-RRF was deployed at Surat with effect from 21.07.2026. However, within merely three days of deployment, this helicopter also developed a technical snag, leading to further cancellation of scheduled crew change sorties.

This clearly indicates that replacing one helicopter with another has not solved the underlying problem.

2. Serious Concern Regarding Maintenance at Surat

An important observation needs immediate attention.

After the technical incident involving VT-RR1, the helicopter was shifted to Juhu Helibase. It is presently operating daily from Mumbai on production duties without any reported operational difficulties.

Similarly, VT-RRF, after being deployed to Surat, also began experiencing technical failures within two days.

While we are not in a position to question the competence of Global Vectra's maintenance organization, these facts create a strong perception that the issue may not lie solely with the helicopters themselves but may instead relate to maintenance practices, engineering support, troubleshooting, or operational management at Surat Helibase.

This aspect deserves immediate independent review.

3. Continuous Crew Change Disruptions

Because of repeated helicopter unserviceability combined with unavoidable monsoon weather, crew changes have virtually come to a standstill.

As on 25.07.2026:

- Incoming backlog: 25 personnel
- Outgoing backlog: 25 personnel

Several ONGC employees have already completed up to 26 consecutive offshore working days.

Several contractual personnel have remained onboard for nearly 42 consecutive days.

Personnel continue to perform demanding 12-hour operational shifts every day.

Such prolonged offshore exposure inevitably results in:

- Physical fatigue
- Mental exhaustion
- Reduced alertness
- Lower morale
- Increased operational risk
- Higher probability of human error

This directly impacts operational safety.

4. Unexplained Payload Restriction

Another issue creating serious operational disruption is the sudden reduction in helicopter payload.

Until recently, the Bell-412 helicopter routinely carried approximately 8–9 personnel per sortie.

However, since the beginning of July, the payload has been restricted to only 5–6 personnel.

Initially it was believed that this restriction was due to adverse monsoon weather.

However, it was subsequently observed that the same helicopter, under similar weather conditions, was carrying its normal payload while operating to nearby Rig GD Chaaru.

Upon seeking clarification, the Global Coordinator shared an internal document issued on Global's letterhead stating that reduced payload would be applicable for Rig Sagar Jyoti during the monsoon season.

The document cited obstruction affecting One Engine Inoperative (OEI) escape requirements as the reason.

This raises several important questions:

- Why was this restriction imposed only on Rig Sagar Jyoti?
- Why was no such restriction applicable earlier when the same helicopter had been operating to the same location?
- Why was no prior communication made to the Rig Management or ONGC Base Office before implementing this operational limitation?
- Why was such an important operational restriction communicated only after repeated enquiries?

It is pertinent to note that the helideck at Rig Sagar Jyoti is equipped with two access routes, including access to C Deck and Forward Jack-house Top.

The sudden implementation of this restriction without prior consultation has significantly reduced crew movement capacity and increased backlog.

5. Operational Limitations of Surat-Based Crew Change

The present Surat-based arrangement suffers from several inherent disadvantages.

A. No Backup Helicopter

The entire Tapti Field presently depends upon a single helicopter.

Whenever that helicopter becomes unserviceable, the entire crew change operation comes to a halt.

No standby helicopter is available.

B. Limited Helicopter Capacity

Only Bell-412 helicopters are operating from Surat.

The maximum seating capacity itself is around nine passengers.

With the present payload restriction, only five to six personnel are being carried.

Normal crew changes generally require movement of 10–12 personnel.

Consequently:

- Personnel are frequently dropped from manifests.
- Crew change backlogs continue to increase.

- Shift planning becomes extremely difficult.

C. Inadequate Accommodation at Surat

Personnel stranded at Surat are accommodated in the Surat Guest House, where adequate facilities are reportedly lacking.

Crew members are compelled to spend from their own pockets for food and other basic necessities.

Furthermore, these expenses are generally not reimbursable because the WebICE system is configured primarily for Mumbai-based helicopter operations.

This causes unnecessary financial hardship to employees.

6. Advantages of Mumbai-Based Operations

Crew change operations from Mumbai offer significant operational advantages.

- Multiple backup helicopters are readily available.
- In case one helicopter becomes unserviceable, another aircraft can be deployed immediately.
- Larger AW-139 helicopters with seating capacity of approximately 15 passengers are available.
- Crew movement is substantially more efficient.
- Chances of backlog are considerably reduced.
- Accommodation facilities at Poonam Nagar Guest House and transit hotels are adequate.
- Personnel can claim helicopter drop expenses through the existing WebICE system without difficulty.

These operational advantages make Mumbai a far more reliable and resilient base for crew change operations.

7. Declining Crew Confidence

Repeated technical failures have severely affected the confidence of offshore personnel.

Many crew members are now apprehensive about boarding helicopters operating from Surat.

This is not merely an operational issue but a matter of workforce confidence in aviation safety.

Safety culture depends not only on technical compliance but also on the confidence that personnel have in the systems intended to protect them.

8. Lack of Response Despite Repeated Escalations

Despite numerous emails, letters, and repeated requests from the Rig, Base Office, and Offshore Management, no substantive response has been received from the concerned authorities.

No accountability has been communicated.

No long-term corrective action has been shared.

No assurance has been provided to offshore personnel.

This continued silence despite repeated safety-related representations is deeply concerning.

9. A Question That Requires Immediate Consideration

Every previous communication has highlighted the increasing safety risks associated with repeated helicopter technical failures and prolonged crew retention offshore.

The question that naturally arises is:

If an unfortunate incident or accident occurs after repeated written warnings have already been issued, who will accept responsibility? Who will be identified as the First Person Responsible (FPR)?

This question deserves an immediate and transparent response before any irreversible event compels one.

Request for Immediate Intervention

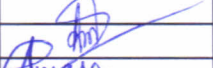
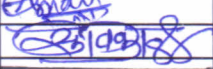
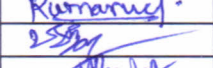
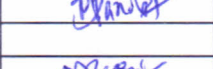
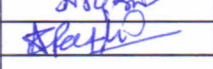
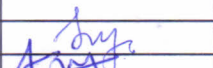
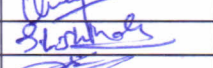
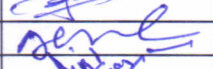
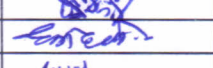
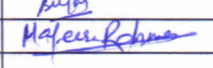
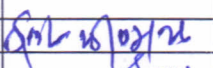
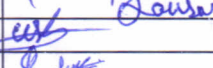
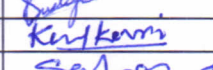
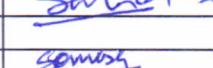
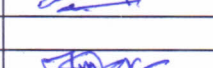
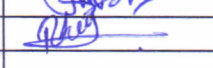
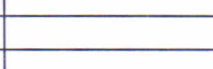
In view of the above facts, we respectfully request the immediate intervention of higher management and seek approval for the following actions:

1. Operation of crew change sorties from Mumbai Helibase only.
2. Independent review of maintenance practices, engineering support, and operational reliability of helicopters operating from Surat.
3. Review of the unexplained payload restriction imposed on Rig Sagar Jyoti and restoration of normal operational capacity, wherever technically feasible.
4. Immediate formulation of a long-term and sustainable crew change strategy for the Tapti Field to ensure uninterrupted operations.
5. Clear communication to all stakeholders regarding the corrective actions being undertaken.

This matter is no longer merely an operational inconvenience. It has become an issue of personnel safety, operational continuity, workforce welfare, and organizational accountability.

We earnestly request immediate intervention before the situation escalates further.

Rig Sagar Jyoti Crew

SR. NO.	FAMILY NAME / GIVEN NAME	RANK/ RATING	DETAILS	COMPANY	SIGNATURE
1	ANUPAM MONDAL	Asstt.Ex.Engr.(Cmtg)	139631	ONGC	
2	AMAN KUSHWAHA	ASSTT.EX.ENGR.(MEC	141150	ONGC	
3	SUNIL KALE	SR.ENGG.ASSTT.(ELEC	126398	ONGC	
4	DEEPAK LODHI	EX.ENGR.(DRILLING)	137383	ONGC	
5	TATHAGAT PANKAJ	ASSTT.EX.ENGR.(DRIL	141476	ONGC	
6	KUMARAVEL M	TECHN.(DRILLING)	126504	ONGC	
7	P. PANDIA RENGARAJA	ASSTT.ROUSTABOUT	136657	ONGC	
8	PALTU MANDAL	Sr. Exe Chemistry	136070	ONGC	
9	DILIP SAINI	GEOLOGIST	141353	ONGC	
10	NAVAJYOTI GOGOI	Asstt.Engr.(Drilling)	125606	ONGC	
11	AMOL KALBHILE	Jr.Engg.Asstt.(Drilling	140451	ONGC	
12	ARVIND MARANDI	SUPTDG.ENGR.(DRILLI	125770	ONGC	
13	SUMAIS JALALUDHEEN	ASSTT.EX.ENGR.(MEC)	139521	ONGC	
14	SATISH PURENA	ASSTT.EX.ENGR.(MEC	141140	ONGC	
15	SIRAJ QURESHI	SR.ENGG.ASSTT.(ELEC	124878	ONGC	
16	VINAY NYARE	SR.ENGG.ASSTT.(DRIL	127981	ONGC	
17	SOMNATH SHINDE	TECHN.(MACHINING)	126625	ONGC	
18	GOUROV DAS	ASSTT.ENGR.(MECH)	122921	ONGC	
19	RAHUL AADLINGE	JR.ENGG.ASSTT.(MEC	140212	ONGC	
20	LOVINDER SINGH	EX.ENGR.(ELECT)	138140	ONGC	
21	DHANANJAY SHIVAJI HAKE	ASSTT.OPTR.(HE)	126393	ONGC	
22	SAJAL SRIVASTAVA	EX.ENGR.(CMTG)	133629	ONGC	
23	NAFEESUR RAHMAN	EX.ENGR.(DRILLING)	136279	ONGC	
24	DIPAK DEORI	Asstt.Ex.Engr.(Drillin	92436	ONGC	
25	BHAUSAHEB NARODE	JR.TECHN.(WELDING)	140269	ONGC	
26	SAURAV MEENA	Medical Officer	142083	ONGC	
27	UMESH SHAMBHASHIV	Techn.(Welding)	122840	ONGC	
28	SANTOSH BHADANGE	Sr.Engg.Asstt.(Drillin	128008	ONGC	
29	AKSHAY KULKARNI	Sr.Engg.Asstt.(Drillin	130582	ONGC	
30	ABHRA SAHA	SUPTDG.CHEMIST	131286	ONGC	
31	WASIM KADRUD ZAMAN	CH.ENGR.(DRILLING)	122649	ONGC	
32	SOMESH SHARMA	EX.ENGR.(ELECT)	134788	ONGC	
33	MAYANK VEDWAL	GEOLOGIST	141593	ONGC	
34	JITENDRA KUMAR MISHRA	EX.ENGR.(CMTG)	135603	ONGC	
35	PRATIK YADAV	JR.ENGG.ASSTT.(INST	140203	ONGC	
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