

# PETROLEUM EMPLOYEES UNION

Founder : RAJA KULKARNI  
President : K. H. DASTOOR

Phone : 2418 17 42  
E-mail : peumumbai@yahoo.co.in

(Regd. No. 1657)  
AFFILIATED TO NFPW & INTUC.

Website : [www.petroleumemployeesunion.com](http://www.petroleumemployeesunion.com)



SINCE : 1954

To,  
E.D.-Chief Offshore Logistic,  
11 high, ONGC, Sion,  
Mumbai.

Date: 19/02/2026.

To  
E.D.- Chief Corporate Drilling Services,  
11 high, ONGC, Sion,  
Mumbai.

Subject: Serious concern and Escalation Regarding Compromised Aviation Safety and Lack of Standby Redundancy for Surat-Based Offshore Operations.

Sir,

We are in receipt of grievance on behalf of the crew members of Rig Sagar Ratna and associated offshore assets. The Union has been apprised of a series of alarming aviation failures that have not only paralyzed routine crew changes but have created an environment of significant psychological distress and physical risk for people.

The Union stands firmly with the crew in highlighting that the current aviation support out of Surat Airport is fundamentally unsafe and operationally negligent with single Helicopter provision call sign VT-RRI and no standby provision is available. Recent incidents have transitioned from minor inconveniences to a pattern of systemic mechanical failure. Specifically, we draw your attention to the following critical lapses:

#### 1. Pattern of Mid-Air Failures:

In recent days, multiple sorties destined for rigs such as Divine Driller and GD Chaaru were forced to abort and return to base within minutes of take-off due to recurring technical glitches. These are not isolated events; they follow a history of technical malfunctions and bird strikes that suggest the deployed aircraft is no longer fit for purpose.

2. Zero Redundancy/Standby Capacity: Management is currently operating a "single-point-of-failure" model. With no standby helicopter available at Surat, our members are stranded with no means of medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) or emergency extraction. Relying on Mumbai-based assets for Surat emergencies is an unacceptable risk to life due to the extended flight times involved.

3. The "Shaky" State of Equipment: Reports from our members describe the current machine as "rickety" and unstable. Forcing offshore professionals to board an aircraft that has repeatedly failed mid-flight—without any formal certification of airworthiness or transparent communication regarding repairs—is a violation of basic occupational safety standards.

**The Union's Mandate for Resolution:**

**We demand the following immediate actions to restore operational safety:**

**1.Immediate Mobilization of a Standby Aircraft:** A secondary, airworthy helicopter must be stationed at Surat to ensure redundancy for both crew changes and emergency evacuations.

**2.Full Technical Disclosure:** According the SOP decided after previous helicopter accident in 2022, chopper should fly only after clearance from "Aviation safety expert". This SOP should be followed at Surat airport. Management must provide the offshore crew with a formal report detailing the root causes of recent aborted flights and documented proof of rectification by certified engineers.

**3.Contractual Accountability:** We request an immediate review of the service provider's contract to ensure that "Availability and Reliability" clauses are being enforced, including penalties for the lack of a backup machine.

Until the all above points are satisfied, for the safety of employees working at Rig Sagar Ratna, Tapti etc, crew-change activity should be carried out from Juhu Helibase, Mumbai.

Our members remain committed to ONGC's production / drilling goals, but their lives are not negotiable. We expect a formal response and a meeting on serious issue raised by crew members.

Respectfully,



(Sandeep B Revandkar)  
General Secretary

Copy To,

- 1) President, Western Offshore Unit.
- 2) ED- Chief HR Services.
- 3) ED- CDS, SW.
- 4) I/C Air Logistic, helibase.
- 5) Head Drilling Safety, 11 High
- 6) Head Offshore Safety, Vasudhar Bhavan.
- 7) LM-DS, SW.
- 8) Operation Manager, Sagar Ratna.
- 9) Rig Manager, Sagar Ratna.

Encl: Grievance letter received from Rig Sagar Ratna Dtd. 18.02.2026.