



## Protest

**26**

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### **India Tactical: Ordnance factory staff launch indefinite nationwide strike on July 26; maintain vigilance, potential for protests**

#### **Please be advised:**

- Employees at 41 ordnance factories across the country, including the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) headquarters at Shahid Khudiram Bose Road, Kolkata, launched an indefinite strike on July 26.
- The strike is in protest against the central government's decision to dissolve the nearly 250-year old OFB and turn them into corporations. Additionally, the central government is also expected to introduce the Essential Defence Services Bill, 2021 this week to prohibit industrial action at defense-related establishments.

#### **Assessments:**

The strike is likely to see participation in the tens of thousands given the widespread opposition to the move, especially since media reports indicate that over 80,000 employees and 400,000 civilian defense employees associated with the ordnance factories are opposed to the government move. Even though no related demonstrations have been announced as of writing, the support of political parties such as the West Bengal-based All-India Trinamool Congress Party (TMC) may result in protests, particularly at the OFB headquarters in Kolkata. Although the protests are unlikely to turn violent, increased security measures like the deployment of reserve police forces at the factory sites and other sensitive government establishments are likely across the country, including Chandigarh, and the states of Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and West Bengal, where many of these factories are located.

#### **Recommendations:**

Those operating or residing in India on July 26 and over the coming days are advised to maintain vigilance due to the potential for ad-hoc protests related to the ordnance factory staff's strike.