

---

## Mexican police storm Sicartsa steel plant and 3 strikers killed

*Friday, 21 Apr, 2006*

Hundreds of Mexican police stormed Sicartsa steel plant on Thursday to force out striking workers in a violent clash that spilled onto the streets and left three workers dead. Two of the dead were shot and the other was crushed in tussles between steel workers and police with riot gear and shields at the Sicartsa complex, which has been closed for three weeks by workers defending a union boss whom the government accuses of graft. Dozens more were injured when some 600 police moved in firing tear gas canisters early in the morning at the plant in the western state of Michoacan, officials said. The Villacero steel company briefly regained control of its Sicartsa complex as strikers were pushed out but it later said workers were again blocking the plant and it was unlikely to reopen on Friday.

Both workers and police were hurt, some of them by people in the crowd throwing stones and homemade petrol bombs. "A very violent conflict situation arose," Enrique Bautista, a senior official in the Michoacan state government, said in a radio interview. "There was a very large number of injured and there are three people dead," he said, adding that the police were on orders to go in armed with only riot shields and batons.

It was the worst clash since thousands of mining and metals workers across the country went on strike last month in defense of union boss Napoleon Gomez, whom the government no longer recognizes because of the corruption accusations. The dispute followed a horrific mining accident in northern Mexico where 65 workers died in an underground gas explosion, sparking angry protests over mine safety and the failure of rescue teams to reach the bodies. Hundreds of Villacero workers at the Sicartsa steel complex joined the strike in early April.

The union said President Vicente Fox had "blood on his hands" and demanded an investigation into the violence. "There was a violent evacuation where more than 600 officers from different police forces in Michoacan entered the complex to unblock the strike," union spokeswoman Consuelo Aguilar said. "We don't know where it will end."

For more news visit at [www.steelguru.com](http://www.steelguru.com)