

Tudeh News



International Bulletin of the Tudeh Party of Iran– Nov. 2009 - No. 260

International Dept. Address: BM Box 1686 London WC1N 3XX

Fax: (Berlin: 324-1627) (London: 208 -392 2653)

e-mail: mardom@tudehpartyiran.org - **URL:** <http://www.tudehpartyiran.org>

Who is accountable for the Rights of the Working People?

(From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran, No. 830, 23rd November, 09)

The bankruptcies of industrial and manufacturing plants one after another, and vanishing of the workers' job security have become some of the most challenging issues facing our nation. Not a single day passes without workers across the country raising their voice against the absolute lawlessness and chaos reigning in the work places. Unpaid wages, temporary contracts, low-scale wages and shutting down of the service-industrial companies have become major unsolvable dilemmas. Iran Labor News Agency (ILNA) reported on October 29 that "the workers at Ziyaran Meat Products Packaging & Production Co. (once the largest slaughter house and red meat products and export complex in the Middle East) are owed six months of unpaid wages. Ziyaran was ceded from the state Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture to the private sector in 1989 and ever since its problems started. These workers walked for seven kilometers to meet with the state governor of Qazvin." Furthermore, the news media reported that after 50 years of successful operation, Babolsar Fiber Production (Plywood) plant ceased its operations. ILNA reported on October 28th: "Babolsar Fiber plant is one of the plywood production plants in the country that has stopped its production line after 50 years allegedly due to drops in sales and lack of liquidity. In the last few days, tens of workers of this company have been laid off and close to 100 are waiting to be laid off. The intention

of the gradual shutting down of this company is to appropriate its land which is located in a prime real estate area in the city of Babolsar."

Bonyade Mostazafen va Janbazan (Foundation of Oppressed and Disabled), Astane Qods Razavi Foundation, and Mehr Reza Institute affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards are among the buyers of the property of this plant and are the cause of plight of hundreds of workers. Ahwaz Pipe Mills Company, which was considered a major profitable industrial plant in the country, is on the verge of total closure. Recently, the workers of this plant staged a protest march which was raided by the police forces. Ahwaz Pipe Mills, like most of other industrial complexes, has been facing problems since privatization. This strategic plant was privatized 7 years ago. During this period, the company shares have been transferred several times by proxy to various individuals who not only enjoyed the ample revenues of the company but also have received bank loans. ILNA noted on the Pipe Mills that "The outcome of the privatization has been the stoppage of production, piling up of workers' demands, and eventually development of the current situation, i.e. 13 months of unpaid wages. The individual who originally acquired the company shares and transferred them shortly after did not spend even \$1 million while the net worth of the plant at the time of transfer was \$70 millions. Now, hundreds of the workers have been let go on gods watch without any supports from anywhere..."

"The bakery trade workers complain of their wage freeze", was the title of ILNA report on the plight of thousands of bakery workers across the country. Despite the laws and regulations ratified by the Supreme Labor

Council on wages, the bakery workers in Sanandaj and Saqez still make the same wages as the previous year. ILNA reported on October 24th that “since March of 2001 (that is more than 8 years ago) the refusal of bakery owners to sign collective bargaining agreements has hampered the issue of wage increases. The bakery workers of Saqez in Kurdistan province demand attention to their work situation but the labor department officers are putting forth obstructions and impede workers achieve their demands.”

In Sanandaj, after numerous protests, and seven months after the Supreme Labor Council decree, the bakery workers were eventually able to get a slight increase in their wages. Really, who is responsible for this dire situation? Millions of workers all across the country are bound by lawlessness and chaos and their rights are being trampled upon●

Suppression will not stop the workers' trade union movement!

Workers continue the fight for the revival of their trade union rights!

From the web site of the Tudeh Party of Iran

www.tudehpartyiran.org

Four members of the board of directors of the Syndicate of Workers of Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane Company were summoned by the intelligence forces and were sent to Dezful prison to serve their terms.

Ali Nejati, the president of the board of directors, wrote a letter and called upon all the workers and working people of the country to lend their helping hands and protest these unjust sentences. The letter stresses: “We have strived to secure our rights and to defend the legitimate demands of Haft Tappeh workers and to gain the bare minimum means of subsistence and human dignity, but we are sentenced and imprisoned... We know that forming

independent workers organizations is the inalienable right of workers. While the employers organize freely, those workers who form their sovereign organizations are sentenced and imprisoned. We believe that we workers will be able to win our demands and wishes only through own efforts and unity and solidarity. I and my fellow workers at the Syndicate of Workers of Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane Company will be in jail for six months... Workers! Today is the day to support those workers in Haft Tappeh who have struggled for the workers' rights and were elected by Haft Tappeh workers to represent them in an independent organization, and today are being sentenced to jail only because of defending their labour rights... I hope we would strive to form our independent labor organizations through stronger unity and solidarity so that we can achieve our legitimate rights and demands! Wishing for ever increasing unity of the workers!”

The trial and incarceration of the union activists reveals the true nature of the theocratic regime of Velayat-e Faqih (Supreme Leadership) and the anti-national coup-born government. Such actions cannot weaken the Iranian working class' resolve for their trade-political rights, including their right to revive and organize independent unions. Furthermore, in the current situation, summoning and jailing labour activists means threatening the working people. The putschists' goal is to avoid the spread of workers struggles and their joining with the general movement against the election coup in the country.

Tudeh Party of Iran strongly condemns the arrest and incarceration of the members of the board of directors of the Syndicate of Workers of Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane Company and calls for their immediate release and the recognition of the workers inalienable right to organize trade unions. Revival of the workers' trade union rights and confronting the anti-labor policies of the ruling reaction is tied to the firm alignment with the general anti-despotic movement in the country.

**Freedom for all the Political Prisoners!
Freedom for the Incarcerated Workers
and Union Activists!**
