

Tudeh News

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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>



Season's Greetings



To all Communist and Workers Parties;

To all peoples around the world struggling for peace, progress and socialism:

Onwards our march for world peace, and fight back against globalization

**International Department of the
Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran
December 2006**

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The Great Political Victory of People in Municipal Elections

(Abridged From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 754, 21st December 2006)

Finally, after weeks of tension and commotion, municipal elections and mid-term parliamentary elections were held in Iran. Disqualifying hundreds of independent and dissident candidates, along with intensifying the suppressive pressure on labour and student movements in Iran over the weeks prior to election, and also widespread propaganda of media which are controlled mainly by the dark-minded rulers and pro-Supreme Leader groups, had developed a highly tensioned political atmosphere in the country.

Speeches by Ahmadi-Nejad (the President) supporters on the days before the elections claiming that "30 millions" votes will be cast for them had made the elections like a referendum around the policies of Ahmadi-Nejad's and his reactionary supporters [among the ruling officials].

A hard test and political battle was before the popular movement. The reactionary forces did everything they could to dissuade the masses away from this political battle ground so that they can pull out their own puppets from the polls through extensive vote scams, just like what they did in the last presidential elections.

However, the people showed up meticulously and with admirable vigilance at those polling centers where there was a chance to knock out the reaction candidates, and gave a fascinating lesson to the ruling despots and also to the nation's political forces.

The disgraceful defeat of the coalition of Ahmadi-Nejad's supporters in the municipal elections all over the country, despite all the swindling efforts by the Interior Ministry, Revolutionary Guard and the government backed forces, indicated the fact that in spite of all these efforts and all the retreats of last year, the popular movement continues its struggle against the tyrannical ruling regime, by all means, however limited.

Another important aspect of the elections was the broad and vigilant presence of masses and social forces, and also re-evaluation of the political position that some of the social forces had taken during presidential elections.

For instance, pointing out the continuation of tyrannical rule and ignoring the rights of citizens, part of the student movement called upon the people not to vote for the candidates of dark-minded and despotic forces if they participate in the elections.

Previously, Tudeh Party of Iran had also stated that: "...Thus, when in numerous cities and towns only puppets of reactionary forces are left as candidates, a nation-wide participation in the municipal elections is out of question. However, the other factor to consider is to take advantage of the elections to organize the political struggle against the ruling despots..." (From "Nameh Mardom" No. 572).

People's victory in defeating the reactionary candidates in the municipal elections is only a small step in the complicated and hard political struggle against the ruling despots. Moving towards organizing social forces,

and in particular developing close ties between the labour movement, the student movement and the heroic struggle of women in the country is a fundamental task in front of all the progressive forces of the country. Efforts towards building this broad anti-despot union in order to get rid of the Supreme Leader regime and to establish freedom, democracy and social justice have to be fortified.

Women's Independent Movement in Iran

(Abridged From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 756, 12th December 2006)

Iran's women's independent movement, with a century of struggle history, steadily and confidently open its way in the society...Decades after Constitution Revolution (1906)...hundreds of periodicals and books and tens of web sites and web logs and women's columns in printed media, challenge the anti-women regime of Supreme Leader and patriarchal society in various forms.

We are talking about a society in which thousands of years of residues of patriarchal culture in the shape of laws from medieval age, under the cover of tradition and religious decrees imposed by the regime, violates women's rights in the most brutal way. However, the women's movement is campaigning to change the statute quo and to achieve equality, freedom and social justice.

The struggle of Iran's brave women for equality, social, economical, civil and political rights, and to exterminate gender and class oppression, is supported by two strong factors:

1. **The achievements of the global women's movement and world organizations of human rights**

Contemporary developments in the world is a clear indication of global impact of the challenging struggle of women to achieve political, economical and social equality; a struggle that has changed many countries and has given the women the rights to elect and be elected, to work, to participate in political and social activities, and to defend family and family rights, and has opened the road to achieve full equality of women's and men's rights, and liberation from gender and class oppression....

Occasions such as International Women's Day, International Labour Day, Human Rights Day, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, International Day to Eliminate Violence against Women, Universal Children's Day, International Day of Peace, World AIDS Day,... are valuable achievement of the global movements of women and other progressive forces and are opportunities to fortify the struggle against class and gender oppression and to augment the awareness of the society.

2. Century old struggle of Iranian women

From the first time celebration of March 8th, International Women's day, and first secret women's associations in Iran ... until today, when women are on the peaks of science and knowledge (65% of Iranian students are female) and are imposing their active presence on the society, about one century has passed. Today, women are armed with science and awareness in their fight against dark-mindedness and suppression, and this is a great achievement that promises future victories.

Women's struggle to achieve their human demands in the past one hundred years under despot and reactionary regimes, both of Royal and Supreme Leader types, that repress women's demands and prevent the formation of political and other forms of organizations, led to this disastrous outcome that women still have the same demands in their agenda as they have had since the Constitution Revolution (1906). Even the popular revolution of 1978, in which women had a significant role, could not respond to equality and human rights demands of women. The regime that took over the revolution, resorting to canon laws of Islam and suppressing some of the legal and civil achievements, and resorting to anti-women articles of the constitution, demoted women to 2nd degree citizens. As a result, today the women of Iran are one of the most oppressed layers of our society.

However, women's movement in Iran did not stop progressing, despite all its ups and downs, and struggle continued under the suppressing conditions. In May of 1997 [presidential elections, electing reformist Khatami, and a big NO to Supreme Leader's candidate] women demonstrated their powerful presence and played a significant role in creating an open [political and social] atmosphere... Women's movement led to the formation of numerous trade and non-governmental organizations, development of hundreds of social activists and emergence of female writers, poets, researchers, lawyers, journalists, translators...

Women's movement, however, rightfully realized that the presence of the elites of the movement, no matter how vast and powerful, without any

connections with its social body, i.e. with the oppressed masses of women, and without awakening them, will be no more than elites isolated from the people. They learned this valuable lesson that no change in the anti-women laws could be achieved without the presence of masses and through negotiations “from above” and behind closed doors. And that is why anti-women reactionaries are trying to prevent any connections between the movement activists and the movement body, by not issuing permits for gatherings, filtering women’s web sites, etc...The regime makes every desperate effort to suppress or intimidate women’s movement along with labour, student and other movements of progressive forces. Supreme Leader’s regime has intensified this effort by bringing Ahmadi-Nejad to power.

Today, under the harsh environment in our country, women take advantage of various forms of organizing and awakening of masses. Celebrating international days is one way to publicize the gender and class oppression issues. Another form of struggle is organizing campaigns with various agenda, among which are:

- “campaign for presence of women in public sport stadiums”, is the symbol to break the atmosphere of gender separation;
- “campaign to gather signatures against stoning and execution by hanging”, in which more than 40 lawyer are active; and
- “One million signature campaign” against discriminatory laws, which started about 3 months ago. The petition states: “undoubtedly, the women of lower class of the society, or who belong to religious or ethnic minorities, suffer more from discriminatory laws. Iran’s

government has joined the international declarations of human rights and is committed to implement their regulations. The most important factor in human rights is to not discriminate based on gender, ethnicity, creed ...We, the undersigned, demand elimination of discrimination against women in the laws of country, and call upon the legislators to review and reform the laws according to the international commitments.”

We, like the independent movement of women, deeply believe that with relentless effort and struggle of women along with other progressive forces, “liberation of women” is possible, and a world can be built based upon freedom, equality, peace and social justice for all, men and women. Supporting the heroic struggle of Iranian women and reflecting their righteous voice in the society and the world public opinion is an urgent and significant task of all the progressive forces.

The Arrest of Union Activists: Part of the Reaction’s Conspiracy against Working People

(Abridged From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 752, 23rd November 2006)

On the morning of November 19, security agents of the Supreme Leader regime, arrested Mansour Ossanlou – the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Tehran and Suburbs Public Transit Union – once again and sent him to jail. This renowned union activist was under arrest for more than 8 months and was released a while ago under bail and was awaiting his trial at the Islamic Revolution courts.

The re-arresting of Mansour Ossanlou, by more or less kidnapping him, and firing of warning shots to scare the public, was a premeditated and carefully planned action in the current atmosphere of our country. In order to attack the rights of the working and toiling masses, the ruling reactionaries are trying to break the resistance of the workers - which reforming the labour law in favour of corporations is part of it - and quell their resistance and protests.

In achieving this aim, the arrests of many well known trade-unionists, increased pressure on the activists and generally creating conditions similar to that of a police state and terror is among their tactics. Furthermore, the arrest of the Chairman of the Transit Workers Union occurred a short while after issuing the general call to various independent workers' group to unite in analyzing the ministry of labour's motion to reform labour laws, and this in itself shows how the regime fears the growth of such organizations. In reality the second time arrest of Mr. Ossanlou is a warning by the regime to workers and their syndicated organizations!

It is worth noting that Mansour Ossanlou and a number of other members of the union board of directors attended the Asian meeting of the International Labour Organization, in Tabriz, Iran, by invitation despite resistances from the government authorities, and later on they attended the next meeting in Kerman, Iran, and at that conference Mr. Ossanlou gave the opening speech as per the request of the representative of the International Labour Organization. Thus, none of the activities of the transit union and its chairman was outside the current laws and regulations, and his subsequent arrest is an illegal act by the security services!

Tudeh Party of Iran strongly condemns the increased pressure on union activists, including and especially the illegal arrest of

Mansour Ossanlou, and demands swift action to bring his case to light. Iranian union movement can resist the trickery of the despots and defend the rights of the working class only, and only by uniting their action!

December 10, Human Rights Day, and a Crime called "Punishment by Stoning"

(Abridged From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 753, 7th December 2006)

December 10 has been named as The International Day of Human Rights. On this day of 1948, Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted and this day became a day to honor the Human Rights. Today, this charter is part of the International Law and from its point of view, all humankind from any gender, race, wherever they are, would benefit from equal rights.

On this day, once again, the progressive and humanitarian forces all over the world state their solidarity with the universality of Human Rights, and move towards implementing its articles, especially in those countries where the citizens' rights are violated. The leaders of Iran's regime call the Human Rights a western stratagem where their interest is involved; however, strictly as propaganda, they cry wolf for other countries and condemn the violation of the rights of their citizens. This is happening at a time when the tormented and tyrannized people of our country don't benefit from any citizenship rights whatsoever, and their human rights are being violated in every way.

On the occasion of the Human Rights Day, December 10, we'll briefly touch on an inhumane punishment called "stoning" and its execution in the "freest and most Islamic" country of the world. Stoning

sentence is indeed a segment of the retribution's bill of the Supreme Leader's regime, and it has been executed for many years in Iran. It is such an inhumane punishment that has been listed as the worst punishment in the world. Stoning has been ordered many times during the past years, and currently 12 people (10 women and 2 men) are sentenced to stoning, who are imprisoned in various jails across the country and the danger of stoning is threatening their lives daily.

Fortunately, grave efforts and campaigns pleading to eliminate the stoning punishment from the laws of country are ever expanding, among which, women's effort is very noticeable, because women comprise a major part of the activists of these campaigns. These campaigns consist of protesting, gathering signatures and writing public pleas to leaders and high-ranking officials of Iran.

One of the primary achievements of these campaigns is to publicize the inhumane order of stoning and to draw the attention of the public opinion towards the violation of the human rights in Iran. For instance, there is an active campaign called "The Campaign for Stoning-free Law", whose target is to gather signatures to eliminate "stoning" from the country's punitive laws. One section of the petition reads: "Stoning punishment is so inhumane and unacceptable in today's world that even the ruling authorities are embarrassed to talk about it and deny its implementation in Iran. Nevertheless, it is still part of the punitive laws of Iran and its execution ... is always possible..."

"Stoning has not yet brought to a halt, even though the judicial authorities have ordered to stop this punishment in February 2003. One woman and a man have been stoned in Mashad in April 2006. Before stoning, they were treated like dead bodies; they were cleansed according to Islamic sacraments in

the mortuary. Mahboubeh, the woman was buried up to her shoulder, and Abbas, the man, up to his waist. Following the ceremonies, stones were thrown at them by a crowd who volunteered to kill them slowly, whereas in the media their stoning was reported as Hanging."

Regarding the vast protests and reactions to ban stoning, even some of the judicial authorities have recently denied stoning in Iran and claimed that stoning is not being ordered in Iran. In response to this claim, and indeed the clear lies of the spokesperson for the Judicial power, the activists of The Campaign for Stoning-free Law write: "Despite the denial of judicial and parliamentary authorities of Iran about stoning in Iran, there are undeniable documents and evidences which show that in the early morning of May 6, 2006, 2 persons (named Mahboubeh and Abbas) have been stoned in Mashad.

In addition, a woman named Masoumeh, who was sentenced to stoning, has been hanged in a closed-door room after she was moved from Rajaei-Shahr prison to the notorious Evin prison, in August 2006.

Furthermore, another woman has been hanged in public in Ghazvin in March 2005 for adultery charges." The Campaign's letter continues to ask: "...If we trust that stoning sentences have not yet executed in Iran, then why they insist to keep this punitive measure in country laws? If such a punishment has not been executed in Iran in the past 28 years [since 1978 revolution], then why 42 articles of Iran's punitive law have to be allocated to such an outdated and obsolete law that many of Iranian authorities, from top to bottom, try to hide or deny?"

These are samples of questions that made some of the judicial authorities of Supreme Leader's regime to lie about, and deny the current laws of country.