



Union Messenger

Monthly Bulletin of Iran's Trade unions

Published by: Felezkâr-Mechanic

Internet:

www.felezkar.com

International email:

irunionmessenger@gmail.com

Facebook :

www.facebook.com/skfelezkar

June 2014

Vol. 1 Issue 1

Introduction

An opportunity has arisen for us to be the clear voice of Iran's trade unions for our working sisters and brother across the globe. This would be a vehicle for us to inform you of the issues and difficulties of the struggle to improve the situation of working class of our country. This is the first time ever in the history of Iran's labour movement since 1905 that an international bulletin is published to connect the union and labour movement of Iran with the global labour movement. The significance of the issue is that by using this vehicle we can bring forward the complexity and difficulty of struggle in Iran and our notion of labour struggle to the attention of working class activists across the globe. The union struggles of Iranian workers take place under inhuman and grueling conditions, along with unemployment and lay-offs and imprisonments and "white torture"¹.

Currently, Behnam Ebrahim-zadeh, a factory worker, Mohammad Jarrahi and Shahrokh Zamani, construction painters, Reza Shahabi, bus driver and board member of the Union of Tehran Transit Workers (VAHED), and Rasoul Bodaghi, teacher and member of Iran's Teachers' Association, have been in prison for years due to their union activities.

¹ While Torture signifies such punitive actions against the prisoners as disallowing phone calls, banning family visits, prolonged solitary confinement, keeping them uninformed from outside world, refusing to provide medical care, delaying doctor visits and ill-treating them when they are suffering from severe pain, putting the prisoner's family under pressure to mentally break the resistance of the prisoner and mortify him/her, insulting prisoners and their family during visits, and poor quality of food and water which led to all kind of skin and gastrointestinal diseases.

We hope that this Messenger of Iran's trade unions, together with the "Payam-e Sandica" (Union Messenger) which is published in Iran in Farsi, would lead to common ground and practical unity among us.

Wishing a broadening of union cooperation and success of the world labour movement,

Editor,

Monthly "Union Messenger", the internal bulletin of Iran's trade unions

News Releases from:

Public Relations, the Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran (Felezkâr-Mechanic)

FIRING OF THE SECRETARY OF THE LABOUR ORGANIZATION OF CHADORMALU MINE WORKERS WAS RATIFIED!

June 16, 2014

Firing of the secretary of the trade association of the workers of Tous Asphalt (located in Chadormalu mine, in the city of Yazd) was approved by the arbitration board of Yazd Labour Department. This board ignored articles 14 and 18 of the Labour Law and rejected the grievance of this labour activist. This labour activist, who organized a strike last year along with 28 board members of the above-mentioned trade association for better working conditions of workers, was jailed for one month. Mr. Bahram Hassani stressed that he would resume his grievance to pursue the demands of workers. We hope that the efforts of Mr. Bahram Hassani would succeed, and the trade association of workers of Chadormalu would be able to benefit from the work of such active workers. The trick of employers to deal with union activities is to fire labour activists and making them wrestle with judiciary offices.

What is important is the struggle of other board members and workers to return this labour activists back to work. Labour education should bear its fruits on days like this. The Union of Metalworkers and Mechanics of Iran will make every possible effort to help this labour activist and the trade association of Chadormalu workers. We extend our arm toward all the genuine labour activists for solidarity and workers' unity.

WORKERS AND ENGINEERS AT BAFGH IRON ORE MINE ON STRIKE!

June 15, 2014

It is now 27 days since 5,300 of workers and engineers at Markazi Iron Ore Company in the city of Bafgh have been on strike. The iron ore reserves of this company, which have been mining iron ore and supplying the steel mills across the country for 50 years, will exhaust next year. Consequently, due to lack of necessary infrastructure and new mining industry and other industries in this region and proximity to desert, 5,300 employees of this company and their families will face poverty and misery.

Although it is repeatedly claimed that the government cares for industry, but the news like the one above reveal the true nature of such claims. It is clear that a government whose high ranking ministerial managers are recruited from Chamber of Commerce or are heads of Employers' Association, undoubtedly will not pursue job creation policies.

A METALWORKER'S REPORT FROM "IRAN KHODRO"

June 7, 2014

This automotive OEM started its production since January, after an extensive downturn. This occurred when many contract and daily-paid workers' contracts were not renewed. Following the start of production and putting enormous pressure on assembly line workers to worker harder to compensate for their laid off co-workers, a wave of protests built up which led to workers' boycott of the canteen for 3 days and refused to eat lunch. As a result, the CEO came to meet with the workers and admitted that the workload was too much, and promised to improve the working conditions. Unfortunately he has not fulfilled his promise. On February 14th, one of the press operators by the name

of Keramat Azizi lost his life in a press accident due to the negligence of the safety committee of the plant. The reason for the accident and his death was that the management had asked for one of the three safety light curtains of the press to be disabled in order to speed up the press stroke and increase production. After this fatal incident the management was forced to shut down the press room for three days, and the disabled light curtain has never been re-connected and activated after the production started again. The working condition and wages of workers are horrible. Last year, in a devious action to curb the labour protests, the management paid \$200 to workers on the occasion of the revolution anniversary. However, despite the current inflation of 35%, government increased the minimum wage by only 25%. Still, the wages of senior workers was raised only 12% which led to their dissatisfaction and discontent. Being strict and stingy in increasing the minimum wage happens at a time when managers are paid colossal bonuses to exploit the workers more and more.

After the formal announcement of the so-called increase in minimum wage, discontent among Iran Khodro workers escalated. The pay of many employees was increased only by 12%. On top of that, the implementation of the second phase of subsidy elimination [of essential goods] has adversely impacted the livelihood of workers with two children. The CEO of the company who became of aware of workers' discontent through his moles, promised to increase the wages of some employees 5% more than what the government had announced.

Could a family of four make the ends meet with such wages, particularly when the prices are so high and after the increase of gas (petrol) price, they will soar even further? Workers are talking among themselves about the amount of bonus (in thousand dollars) that manager got this year. And of course the huge gap between the workers' and managers' pay is another issue not to overlook.

Greetings to the auto workers of the world!

For broader solidarity among the workers of the world!



Other contact emails: s_felezkar@yahoo.com
skfelezkar@gmail.com