

Workers in Iran

News & views from the labour movement in Iran



No. 7 - Friday 2 September 2005

Request for a delegation to investigate the crimes of the Islamic Republic in Iranian Kurdistan

21 August 2005

To: Amnesty International
United Nations Human Rights Commission
European Union - Human Rights
Human rights organisations and personalities

Dear Sir/Madam:

Following the demonstrations throughout the cities in Iranian Kurdistan since July 9th in protest at the brutal murder of Mr. Shwaneh Ghaderi by the security forces in Mahabad, the Iranian regime has embarked on a brutal round of repression and violence. So far, at least 20 people have been killed, around 300 wounded and over 1300 arrested. The detainees - many of them children and young people under 18 - have been subjected to severe tortures. The death in custody of at least one person, namely, Mr. Shaho Amjadi, who was being held in Sanandaj Prison, has been confirmed. His body was buried on Monday August 14th amid tight security and heavy police presence.

Faced with daily protests by the people, the Iranian regime has had to release a number of those detained. However, hundreds arrested in the cities of Mahabad, Oshnaviyeh, Piranshahr, Sardasht, Rabat, Saghez, Boukan, Baneh, Divandareh, Sanandaj, Marivan, Kamyaran, Gherveh, Paveh, Ravansar and Javanrood are still in prison. Those who have been released have either been released on bail (set at anything between \$23,000 and \$57,000) or handed heavy fines (\$3,400 to \$5,700).

What's most disturbing is the horrific physical and psychological abuse and torture of the prisoners, the raping of girls and boys with batons, the fracture of arms and legs, the burning of parts of the body and the general abuse and maltreatment of prisoners. A 16-year old boy released in Sanandaj recently had been left with a badly inflamed and bruised back with blue marks. Recently released prisoners have spoken of the critical state of some

of those inside. A number of prisoners are now on hunger strike in protest. Police raids into the homes of people are still continuing in several cities. A number of known activists and figures, such as Mr Borhan Divargar, a labour activist from Saghez, and Ms Roya Tolouiee, a women's rights activist from Sanandaj, are still in prison. A number of political activists are also in jail.

These atrocities, along with the installation of Ahmadi Nejad as president, who is known to have been in charge at one time of firing the final shot into the heads of executed political prisoners, along with the members of his cabinet, most with long track records of murder and terror, have caused much apprehension throughout Iran, especially among the families of political prisoners and the recent detainees. People are demanding:

- 1- the immediate release, without any bail or fine, of all political prisoners and all those arrested in the recent protests;
- 2- an end to the militarisation of the cities; an end to the arrests;
- 3- the guaranteeing of political and civil liberties; freedom of expression, protest and strike;
- 4- the prosecution of all those behind the recent killings, torture and abuse.

People of Iran expect the support of international human rights organisations. We call on you, in response to all those in Iran anxious about the fate of their loved ones, to urgently send a delegation to the cities of Iranian Kurdistan to investigate the human rights abuses by the regime; to inspect the prisons and meet with the prisoners, their families and the people of the cities, and in this way gain closer insight into the savageries of the Islamic Republic.

Regards,

1- International Committee Against Exe-

cutions (www.adpi.net)

2- Azar Majedi, Head of the Organisation for Women's Liberation - Iran (www.azadizan.com, azarmajedi@yahoo.com)

3- Mina Ahadi, Co-ordinator of the International Committee Against Stoning (www.stopstoningnow.com minaahadi@aol.com)

4- Maryam Namazie, well-known personality in the fight against political Islam (m.namazie@ukonline.co.uk)

5- International Federation of Iranian Refugees (www.hambastegi.org)

6- Homa Arjomand, Co-coordinator of the International Campaign Against Sharia Court in Canada (www.nosharia.com)

7- Parvin Kaboli, Spokesperson of the Campaign in Defense of Women's Rights in Iran (www.irandwr.org parvinkaboli@yahoo.se)

8- Farshad Hosseini, refugee rights campaigner (farshadhoseini@yahoo.com)

9- Mohammad Asangaran, Secretary of the Kurdistan Committee of the Worker-Communist Party of Iran (asangaran@aol.com)

10- International Labour Solidarity (committee of the Worker-Communist party of Iran) (b.soroush@ukonline.co.uk)

For further information, please contact: Farshad Hoseini: 0031-613940534 farshadhoseini@yahoo.com

Mina Ahadi: 0049-1775692413 minaahadi@aol.com

Published biweekly by the
International Labour Solidarity
Committee of the Worker-Communist
Party of Iran

Editor:

Nasser Asgary

nasser_asgary@yahoo.com

Co-ordinator:

Shahla Daneshfar

shahla_daneshfar@yahoo.com

International Labour Relations:

Bahram Soroush

b.soroush@ukonline.co.uk

Iranian labour fights back!

* Another 600 workers of Mahshahr Industrial Complex have signed the \$550.00 minimum wage petition. This petition is still being signed and circulated among workers of different work sites.

* Recently, Iran Khodro workers passed a resolution which, among others, demanded a minimum wage of not less than \$550.00 per month, return of dismissed co-workers, a decent and adequate retirement pension plan, a safe workplace, job security and an end to contract work.

* On August 3rd and 4th a letter signed by workers of 10 different work-

places condemned the suppression of the protests of the people of Kurdistan by the Islamic regime of Iran, and supported their struggle. These workplaces are as follows: Tabriz Refinery, Esfahan Refinery, Tractor Makers of Tabriz, Tabriz Petrochemical, Petrochemical Complex of Arak, Razi Petrochemical of Mahshahr, Mahshahr Petrochemical of Bandar-e Imam, Uremia City Drivers, City Workers of Mahshahr, and City Workers of Abadan.

* Following the tragic death of 2 workers on the job in the city of Kermanshah on August 20th, 150 members of Ker-

manshah Electricians and Metalworkers Union signed a petition demanding a safe workplace and that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs pay these 2 deceased workers' families an adequate compensation, as well as a monthly pension of not less than \$550.00.

* Following a 50-day strike by 2,000 Textile workers of Kashan, workers succeeded in getting back a portion of their unpaid wages. During this strike, hundreds of workers marched from Kashan to Tehran to highlight their situation and demand immediate action.

These are just some of the hundreds of struggles that have taken place in the last few weeks in the various workplaces in Iran.

Unions protest violent attack on Asia textile workers in Kerman-Iran

Following brutal attack on Asia textile workers in Kerman-Iran, Deborah Bourque, and Jorid Tveita, Presidents of Canadian union of postal workers, and Norwegian Hotel and restaurant workers union respectively, condemned violent attacks of the Iranian security forces directed at these workers.

In a letter to Iranian President, Ahmedinejad, Deborah Bourque writes: "On behalf of the 55, 000 members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, I wish to condemn the recent violent attacks and arrests directed at textile workers in the province of Kerman. It has become widely known that the workers of the Asia Wool Spinning Company were protesting the non-payment of wages and benefits. Subsequently, the mostly female protestors were violently attacked by security forces. In one case, a pregnant woman was dragged on the road and kicked in the back. This protest only occurred after several attempts to bring this to the attention of the authorities met failure. These workers have not been

paid for fourteen months! What else are they to do? The withholding of wages can have disastrous consequences for families and communities, especially if families are living below the poverty line on a meagre salary. Withholding of pay should be considered a grave criminal offence. It is little more than theft and stealing from working people. Unfortunately, this practice has become common. The factory owners simply refuse to pay their workers on time."

Jorid Tveita too in a letter to Ahmedinejad writes: " I have gotten hold of information that on Wednesday the 27 of July a protest of about 100 textile workers in the south eastern province of Kerman - most of them women - was violently attacked by the Iranian regime's security forces, according to the state news agency ILNA. The workers of Asia Wool-Spinning Company were protesting at the non-payment of their wages and benefits. Each worker in this company is owed up to 3 million Tomans (about \$3,500) in unpaid wages. The workers blocked the main road outside the

factory to highlight their protest. However, the security forces started attacking the workers. A pregnant woman was dragged on the road and kicked in the back. Another worker had her leg injured when it was caught under the wheel of a vehicle, which had been ordered to move by the security forces. The workers said their attempts over the years to bring their plight to the attention of the authorities had led them nowhere. Hundreds of thousands of workers in Iran continue to suffer from long delays in the payment of their wages sometimes for up to two years; a fact also highlighted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in this year's International Labour Conference. The disastrous consequences of unpaid wages for workers in Iran, who can barely survive on the basic pay in any case, are all too obvious. Withholding workers' pay must be treated as a grave criminal offence, and the government in Iran held to account for this catastrophic situation for Iranian workers...."

Visit these websites:

www.wpiran.org
www.kargaran.org
www.m-hekmat.com
www.wipbriefing.com
www.socialismnow.org