

# In solidarity with the just struggle of Haft-tapeh Sugar workers in Iran!



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## FREE ALL JAILED WORKERS, NOW!

The strike action of the 5,600 strong Haft Tapeh sugar workers in Shoosh, in the southern province of Khuzestan in Iran that began in early November, has entered its third week. The protesting workers launched their protest action in early November demanding their wages and benefits, that have remained unpaid for the last 4 months. These protests were met with brute force by the regime and the special forces dispatched to the area. As a result of the police attacks, 19 workers were arrested.

Currently, four of the workers' representatives remain in police custody. Since the arrest of the workers' representatives, the protests have spread across the city, attracting support and solidarity from the general population. Across the country, other workers, teachers, university students and widest sections of society have expressed their solidarity with the Haft Tapeh workers' just struggles. In solidarity, workers from different sectors have joined and expressed their support for the strikers. The month of November has seen strike actions by other workers including Ahvaz steelworkers, teachers and lorry drivers have launched similar protest actions demanding unpaid wages, extending solidarity with the Haft Tapeh sugar workers just struggles. The protestors have called for the immediate release of those arrested, an end to the persecution of strikers and demand the settlement of their long overdue unpaid wages and benefits.

The Haft Tapeh sugar workers have always had to struggle for their wages and rights. In 2008, the Haft Tapeh workers formed an independent union following a 42-day strike to demand long-standing wage arrears. Throughout, the past 10 years they have continued to struggle for their rights and for improvements to their conditions. Since 2015, however, things have taken a turn for the worse since the state-run factory was privatised and sold, under a shady deal, to one of the regimes cronies. During the last 3 years, every few months the workers are forced to go on strike and take protest action in order to get paid. On every occasion, the workers are attacked and their representatives arrested. The last of these was held less than 3 months ago in August 2018.

These conditions are not unique to the Haft Tapeh workers. Across the country, thousands of workers and employees are forced to go on strike to get their wages. According to the official statistics last year there were 6,000 strikes across the country. According to the same statistics during the last 12 months, there have been over 100,000 workers laid off in about 1000 enterprises and institutions.

With soaring inflation and rising prices of basic necessities, the number of unemployed and destitute is rising.

As the already dire economic conditions in the country take a decided turn for the worse the shortages of basic necessities have mobilised large sections of the population to launch protests. In early 2018, the largest mass protest of the urban poor spread to over 110 cities across the country. Hundreds of thousands of people mostly the young and the unemployed marched the streets confronting the notorious repressive forces, the Islamic guards, the Basiji militias and other thugs of the regime.

Clearly, the effects of the economic crisis that has struck the whole of the capitalist system are aggravated with the extreme levels of corruption and squandering of resources by the regime's cronies and the Islamic republic's costly and reactionary foreign policy and military adventurism in the Middle East, that have exasperated the conditions for the people.

Since coming to power in February 1979 and throughout the reactionary rule of the Islamic republic, resistance and struggle of the workers and other toiling masses, students and the youth, women and national minorities have continued unabated manifesting in tens of uprisings and mass mobilisations demanding the complete overthrow of the whole regime of Islamic republic. The regime's response has always been ruthless repression and as consequence prisons have continued to be filled with activists. Arbitrary arrests, summary trials, rape, torture, execution and the ill-treatment of political prisoners are carried out as a matter of routine.

We demand the immediate and unconditional release of all those arrested in recent protest actions and call for the freedom of all political prisoners.

Clearly, the path to freedom, democracy and liberation for the workers and other oppressed people of Iran lies through the revolutionary overthrow of the whole regime of Islamic republic with all its cliques and factions.

## Down with Islamic regime of Iran! Free all political prisoners in Iran!

Activists of Peoples Fadaai Guerrillas of Iran – London  
Democratic anti-imperialist organisation of Iranians in Britain

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