

Urgent request from workers' federations and unions

Sugar Cane Workers and the detained representatives need international support

Surely you're aware of the struggles of over 6000 sugar cane workers of Haft Tapeh in Khuzestan province in south Iran that started on 5th November 2018 and has been going on since. The striking workers have been holding assemblies in front of governor's office of the city of Shush and protesting in the city.

On November 18th, armed forces of intelligence services arrested 18 workers – members of workers' council of Haft Tapeh – and Sepideh Gholiyan, a 23 years old university student and citizen journalist who was there to report.

After pressure from the workers their families and member of the public, the authorities were forced to free most of the workers but they kept Esmail Bakhshi and Sepideh Gholiyan in custody.



Esmail Bakhshi has been a key figure in uniting, organising and leading the workers and the strike. He and Sepideh Ghliyan are denied any visit.

On 29th November 2018, Esmail Bakhshi was admitted to hospital for life threatening injuries as a result of brutal torture – stomach bleeding and bruises all over his body. He is tortured to accept delusive accusations by the authorities who try to sentence him for the bogus “national security” case, which he refuses. Under torture he has been insisting on the legitimate demands of the workers. This worthy workers' leader deserves undivided international support.

Esmail Bakhshi has undergone torture for his role in the glorious strike and protest by the sugar cane workers of Haft Tapeh that has inspired workers' movement in Iran and mobilised the society to support the struggling workers. The Islamic Republic of Iran hopes to terrorise and to push back the workers and the activists who go on strike and demand their rights in Iran.

On 29th November 2018, the armed forces of intelligence services also raided home of Ali Nejati, a member of Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Syndicate and brutally beat him up in front of his family and took him and his son, Peyman Nejati, away. The arrests happened while the striking workers of Haft Tapeh and members of the public were in streets and demand freedom of imprisoned workers. “Imprisoned workers must be freed!” the workers and the people chanted on the 29th day of the strike.

The workers of Haft Tapeh have not been paid for four months and struggle to make ends meet with



non payment of the wages which are way below poverty line. The workers demand end to involvement of contractors and private sector in management, and running of the corporation under supervision of workers' council. One of their demand is recognition of the workers' council.

Campaign to Free Imprisoned Workers calls for urgent action! We ask all workers' federations and unions, and international humanitarian organisations to urgently put all the pressure they can on Islamic Republic of Iran to free Ismail Bakhshi, Sepideh Gholiyan, Ali Nejati, and Peyman Nejati, and to stop the torture and abuse.

Workers of Haft Tapeh continue to stand strongly and united with their strike and protests. International workers' organisations are expected to come to their aid and support them in their justified struggle to free the detained and to meet their legitimate demands.

We call on all to urgently join the ongoing campaign to free the arrested workers.

Campaign to Free jailed workers in Iran(Free Them Now)

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