



An assessment of the Iranian labour Movement in 2017 and its Characteristics

In 2017, we witnessed an increase in labour protests and strikes, qualitatively and quantitatively. In brief, we observed a rise in the working class movement.

To the same extent, summons, arrests, trials, imprisonment and the expulsion of leaders of workers and strike organizers were increased. Hundreds of workers were prosecuted by judicial and security organisations for organizing strikes and protests and participating in campaigns.

The suppression started with the arrests of six workers of Kermanshah Oil Refinery in March. Haft Tapeh Sugar Cane Agro-industry workers and unionists were frequently arrested, and interrogated throughout the year. The arrest of 10 workers in Ahvaz steel factory, summoning 20 Hepco workers, and four workers of a cement factory in Masjed Soleiman; sacking seven

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Under the theme "Work-Bread Freedom" we will conquer the streets on May 1st!

Summary of the declaration of the organization Fadaian (aghaliyat) on the occasion of the 1st of May

This year in Iran, we celebrate May 1, the day of united struggle, under conditions that can lead to a revolution. The contradictions of the capitalist order have reached their peak. The whole obsolete system has been plunged into a crisis. The deep-rooted economic crisis has clearly shown that a solution within the framework of the capitalist order can not be found. This crisis has had dire consequences for the working class and working masses.

While the capitalists have fabulously amassed their wealth for decades through the exploitation of workers, the workers have been increasingly trapped in poverty. The vast majority of the Iranian population suffers through the pressure of the crisis and the economic policies of the ruling

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workers from Yasuj sugar factory, factory in Masjed Soleiman; sacking seven workers from Yasuj sugar factory, 11 workers of the telecommunications company in Lorestan, two workers in electric metre manufacturing company, 15 workers in Khuzestan's steel factory, 14 workers of Modiran Khodro auto industry and tens of other leaders of the labour movement in petrochemical industries, mines, telecommunications company and many other factories are just a few instances of the ruling class' measures against the working class.

The Islamic regime's thugs beat workers and responded their protests by naked force. They attacked workers with teargas and tried to assassinate unionists and leaders by employing organised armed gangs.

The regime continued its neoliberal policies in this year. Privatisation, expelling workers, enforcing temporary work contracts, denying insurance and social security to workers, legislating new laws against the labour force, declining health and

safety in workplaces were intensified. Unsafe workplace and an explosion in Zemestan Yurt mine left 43 workers dead. The government enforced an apprenticeship plan, which means nothing but the slavery of university graduates and providing free labour force for capitalists.

Despite the suppression, labour protests in the form of strikes, rallies, demonstrations and marches continued, and not all can be even listed here. The protests were seen in all sectors; oil, gas, petrochemicals, steel, metal, mines, tile making, cement, pulp and paper, vegetable oil and textile industries, ship building, agro-industries, utilities, telecommunications transportations, railway, water treatment and civic services. Families of the workers extensively engaged in the protests. Pensioners of factories and retired government employees also staged rallies. Workers in two industries – agricultural insurance funds workers and Persian Gulf Transportation Company – organised protests across the country. ▶



The Organisation of Fadaian (aghaliyat) is a communist organisation that fights for overthrowing of capitalist order and establishing of a communist society.

The Organisations of Fadaian (aghaliyat) fights for establishing a society without classes where every sort of exploitation, oppression, discrimination, social inequality and suppression are abolished. All the society's free and equal members live in happiness, welfare and their abilities are thrived.

The immediate goal of the Organisation of Fadaian (aghaliyat) is overthrowing the Islamic Republic of Iran and establishing the Soviet State of Workers and Toilers. Soviet State, which is the manifestation of the most consequent and complete form of democracy, will establish the broadest and most complete form of political freedoms, and with fulfillment the democratic, social and welfare demands the socialistic changes will begin.

Long live Socialism!

Only in the second half of 2017, hundreds of workers of agricultural insurance funds, on behalf of 5,800 workers all over Iran, staged a rally outside of the parliament and the Agriculture Bank and other state organisations. Hundreds of Persian Gulf Transportation Company workers gathered outside of the company's head-office, the Ministry of Economy and the Labour Ministry.



The sense of unity and solidarity among workers crossed the boundaries between factories and sectors. Workers in Haft Tapeh and Tehran bus drivers supported Hepco workers in Arak. Other workers in the country unanimously condemned attack on Hepco and Azarab workers. Furthermore, Haft Tapeh, Tehran bus driver and a large number of miners rushed to help the miners who were trapped beneath the earth in Zemes-tan Yurt mine, and expressed sympathy with them.

Haft Tapeh trade union and the bus drivers' trade union published a joint statement on the minimum wage in 2018 and played a remarkable role in raising the workers' demands at a national level. These two unions started a close collaboration on cyberspace.

The other characteristic of the movement in 2017 was the higher weight of political slogans and demands in it. In some factories and institutions, like Hepco, workers engaged in a direct confrontation with the government. These workers revealed the links between state agencies like the police and the Judiciary, on the one hand, and capitalists, on the other hand. They organised a campaign against privatisation. The

workers' struggle for the freedom of imprisoned workers, like Reza Shahabi, was another evidence of workers' political demands. In some factories, workers put forward the idea of controlling and managing the workplace.

The participation of women workers in struggles was another characteristic of the labour movement in 2017. In Haft Tapeh, apart from the striking workers' wives, female workers played an active role in the strike.

More signs of the merge of the working class' movements with protests of masses were seen. Unions of Haft Tapeh and bus drivers issued a joint statement in support of the January mass protests and condemned the government's use of force against street protesters. A group of Haft Tapeh workers even went further and called for a street demonstration with under the slogan of "bread, work, freedom". The other sign of this development was the use of universal slogans both in the labour movement in workplaces and mass protests in the streets.

The working class movement, in spite of its shortcomings and weaknesses, took long strides forward in 2017 and entered a new phase of its struggle. With such experience, the working class movement will surely take stronger steps in 2018.



class. Financial corruption has permeated all components of the government apparatus. Statesmen and their followers plundered the land. The gap between poverty and wealth has never been as deep and clear as in today's Iran. It is obvious that the minimum wage is one-fifth of the poverty line. However, hundreds of thousands of workers did not receive their wages at all for several months. By now, more than 10 million workers, especially women and young people, are unemployed and living in miserable conditions.

The politics of the ruling class have failed in all areas, and the regime has fallen into an impenetrable impasse. The consequence of this impasse and the total bankruptcy of the ruling class and the political regime is a political crisis that has shaken the foundations of the reactionary regime.

The gangs of the ruling class, who for decades cheated on the people with the play "reformist" and "conservative", while oppressing and capturing innocents, now try to blame others.

The Islamic Republic is now facing one of the deepest political crises in its history. The revolutionary nature of this crisis manifests itself in the fact that dissatisfaction with the status quo has reached its peak. The working masses in Iran no longer want to endure the existing order, and the ruling class is no longer in a position to dominate the people as in the past. Nationwide protests across Iran under the slogan "Work, Bread, Freedom" and "Down with the Khamenei" have revealed the revolutionary nature of the existing crisis. The regime resorted to brutal repression. But these repressions are not working anymore. This is evidenced by the continuation of protests and strikes in several regions in Iran, for example in Khuzestan, Isfahan, Kurdistan, Kazeroon. These struggles are a sign of the will of the masses to overthrow the regime. That's the fate of the Islamic government.

We should not forget that the capitalist class in the country and its allies at the international level are now trying to take the initiative into their own hands. Using the masses through empty promis-

es and supporting another reactionary government as an alternative after the overthrow of the Islamic regime. The same happened in Iran in 1979. The working class should not allow this. Since in this case the workers will not achieve their goals and demands, and the defeat of the revolution will lead to the failure of the struggle for freedom, democratic rights and the prosperity of the masses.

Comrade worker!

The masses have risen all over the country. They call slogans such as "Down with the Islamic government" and "We warn you before the day we receive arms!". It is the right time for a general strike. That would be the necessary condition for the armed struggle of the population against the regime and destruction of the entire existing system.

The 1st of May this year can be the trigger for this fight. The working class should use the slogans "Work, Bread, Freedom" to represent all working people, to stand up for the realization of their rights and to take over the leadership of the anti-regime movement. The organization Fadaian (aghaliyat) congratulates to May 1, the day of international workers' solidarity, and calls on the Iranian working class in Iran to shut down production, shut down factories, and street demonstrations on May 1 to allow the overthrow of the regime.

Long live the 1st of May, the worldwide day of workers' solidarity!

Down with the Islamic government - High the Council's government!

Down with capitalism

Long live freedom! - Long live socialism!

Organization Fadaian (aghaliyat)

May 1, 2018



privatisation of education and health that is introduced as "involving people" and reducing to zero welfare services have created the current situation.

Rouhani administration always complained that it spends enormously in paying cash subsidies, and we frequently exposed this lie. However, this year and during the budget debate it was known that making the subsidies so-called targeted has not been a burden on the national



budget but the government has made a big money by implementing this scheme. In 2017, the government has earned about 100,000bn tumans versus paying only 37,000bn tumans cash subsidies to the people!

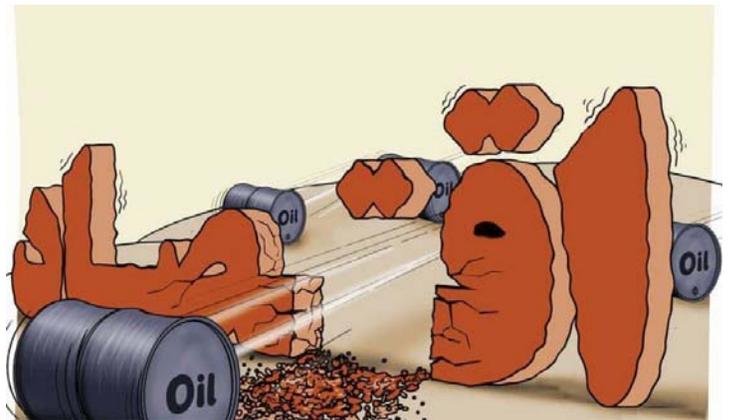
Liberalising utility fees, and prices of petrol, bread etc has troubled groups of people even in affording staples such as bread. According to figures, the bread's consumption has sharply decreased in recent years, while with the growing poverty bread was the only food the people had to consume to survive.

Not to mention the situation of education and health. For instance, the 2017 budget bill predicts the privatisation of 20 per cent of schools, all under the pretext of reducing the government's role in the economy! What an in-

teresting pretext!

The Islamic Republic pretends to be a fool. Education, health, social security is not a business but a basic social right. All individuals in the society are entitled to use these services, and the government should provide and guarantee these services.

Even MP Shahab Naderi acknowledges that 80 per cent of the people live under the poverty line. Then, how can these people benefit from these rights? The interior minister speaks about the unemployment of 60 per cent in some cities, and Yahya Al Eshaq, former minister of commerce and a member of the chamber of commerce says 70 per cent of small and medium industries have been closed down and the rest work with a capacity of 30 per cent.



This is a real picture of the Iranian economy. If the regime's leaders like Khamenei and Rouhani deny the reality it can be deduced that the regime does not intend to hear the people's demands, and the only way remained for workers and toilers is to overthrow the regime and seize the political power through soviets.

Iranian Economy in the Past Year

As we had predicted a stagflationary economic crisis, poverty, unemployment and class gap grew in 2017, and our analyses were proved as the time passed. The Iranian capitalist class, which controls political power, is not able to adopt the policies that can relieve the crisis. On the one hand, the ruling class' "neoliberal" economic plans have aggravated the crisis, and on the other hand, the political structure itself has escalated the crisis. Another factor that will put its impact on the economy the next year, more gravely than before, is a crisis in the regime's foreign policy that will increase the capitalists' fear of the regime's overthrow. This fear will accelerate the ruling system's collapse and will lead to capital flight. The parliament's

economic committee chairman Pourebrahimi says more than 30bn dollars left the country in late months of 2017. In brief, the prospect of the Iranian economy in 2018 will be even worse than 2016, even if the Islamic regime and the capitalist system can survive.

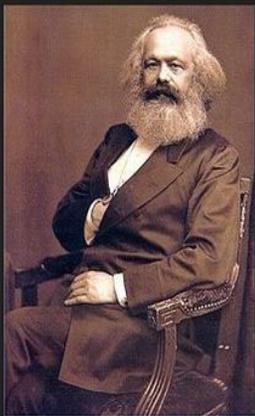
However, despite these economic facts, which is clear to workers and toilers, the Iranian regime and the Rouhani administration always boast about an economic growth. Even Khamenei, the regime's so-called leader, shamelessly and outrageously spoke about decreasing poverty and increasing social justice and progress.

The falsehood of regime's claims are so obvious to workers and toilers that we do not need to respond.

Mesbahi-Moqadam, a member of the watchdog Expediency Council of the regime, said on the TV that two per cent of households possessed 80 per cent of bank deposits. This means that the two per cent's wealth amounts to about 240bn dollars!

This is a horrible class gap, and perhaps this situation under the bloody jackboots of the Islamic regime cannot be compared to any other country in the world. The fall of the workers' real wages can be easily seen in the decrease of the wages' contribution to the production expenses. Temporary work contracts, outsourcing, giving a free hand to contractors to exploit workers brutally, eliminating subsidies under the ridiculous pretext of making them targeted,

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Workers of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains.

(Karl Marx)

Contact Us

*The organization Fadaian
(aghaliyat)*

info@fadaian-minority.org

*The Abroad committee of
Fadaian (aghaliyat)*

ac.fadaian@gmail.com