

AWNI



# Alternative Workers News-Iran

a fortnightly Newspaper from:  
«solidarity committees with Iranian workers movement - abroad»

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## Special issue of sugarcane workers' struggles in „Haft Tappeh“

### Statement by Solidarity committee with Iranian workers movement – abroad

In defence of

### Sugarcane workers of Haft Tappeh!

Sugarcane workers of Haft Tappeh are fighting for their righteous rights, but the management with the support of ruling capitalist Islamic regime of Iran and its oppressive security apparatus, are suppressing any workers' demand for their unpaid wages, insurance premiums, job security, etc.

The authorities have promised many times to fulfil workers' demands, in order to disperse them, but this time the workers with their families are continuing their struggle until their demands are met. So far this time authorities' response, was arresting labour activists, and othe protesting workers at 9 p.m at night in their homes. Therefore, following this move by the authorities, the release of the detained co-workers ,was another demand of the Sugarcane workers of Haft Tappeh.

We, the solidarity committee with Iranian workers movement – abroad, while supporting the struggle of Sugarcane workers of Haft Tappeh, express our solidarity with them for achieving their righteous rights. We condemn the imprisonment of the labour activists and other workers, and demand the immediate and unconditional release of the all detained workers.

Sugar cane workers of „Haft Tappeh“, struggles blown win!

Long live solidarity with sugar cane workers, „Haft Tappeh“  
28 July, 2017.

**Solidarity committee with Iranian**

**workers movement – abroad**

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Note: we have received other three statements by "Coordinating Committee to create independent organizations, „free Union workers in Iran," and "the defenders of workers' rights " in support of the struggles of sugarcane workers of „Haft Tappeh. We try to publish them in next issue!

**About us:** (\*) - The Committee in Solidarity with the Iranian Labor Movement - Abroad" consists of solidarity groups and individuals outside of Iran that support Iranian Workers' struggle for: (1) Democratic rights and economic justice; (2) Exposing anti-labor policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran; (3) Building bridges between the Iranian and international workers' movements.

**The statement by Syndicate of „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane Workers about their two days of protest in company plant and the arrest of 15 workers in early morning of July 25, 2017**



Due to protests by workers in „Haft Tappeh“ sugarcane company, protesting nonpayment of their delayed wages in recent days and the closing of Andimeshk international road in the city of Ahvaz, police and security



forces attacked workers in their houses and arrested fifteen of them, among them: Ahmad Kasir, Behzad Nazari, Said Hadi Tafah, Abdolreza Sarkhe, Hamid Abdollahzade and two others by names of Sabah Savari. The protesting workers have announced that until their overdue wages are not paid, protests and strikes will continue in the following days. „Haft Tappeh“ workers have numerous times protested, demonstrated and gone on strike and this time around, it should prove to the officials that the policy of ignoring their demands is not acceptable.

The demands are: payment of delayed wages and pensions of the last 3 months, extension of social insurance coverage that has stopped during this period, payment of 4 percent employer share for the retirees. Additionally, workers intensely protest the process of more than 15 months privatization of the company and its destructive results in some sections that are already privatized. Obviously, privatization will definitely be disastrous for workers. So far it has resulted in delayed wage payments and cuts in many social benefits.



Additionally, presence of security forces in working areas have increased and recently, police assault on workers in the Ahvaz-Andimeshk road shows that officials are ready to spend millions for suppressing worker's legitimate demands, but not providing workers' wages and benefits. The fact of the matter is that in recent years the number of worker and employees in „Haft Tappeh“ has decreased from over 7000 to less than 4500. Most workers in the agricultural section work on temporary agreements. Certainly, the government is responsible for worsening status of workers' rights and should quickly act to rectify their conditions.

The „Haft Tappeh“ Syndicate demands that the arrested workers be released unconditionally. The Syndicate will try to routinely publicize struggles by workers and retirees and draw attentions of people in Iran and worldwide. We appreciate all internal and worldwide supports so far. We also appreciate supports by International Federation of Food ... (IUF) and their show of solidarity for workers of „Haft Tappeh“ and would like to see more solidarity in the coming days and weeks.

**.Syndicate of „Haft Tappeh“ Sugar cane Workers - 2nd July, 2017**

See the worker`s demonstration in this clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2Yz4AXK2fY>



Iran: „Haft Tappeh“ sugar workers are fighting for their wages, pensions and rights!

17 July 2017 **Urgent Action**

Workers at the giant Haft Tappeh sugar cane plantation and mill complex in the southern city of Shush have always had to fight for their wages and their rights. In 2008, workers formed an independent union - affiliated to the IUF - following a 42-day strike to demand long-standing wage arrears. Union leaders have endured arrest, prison and blacklisting. The workers and their union face repression as they once again demonstrate to claim massive wage and benefit arrears.



Conditions have worsened since the company was privatized in a murky deal in 2015 whose details have never been fully brought to light. Since October last year, workers have had to repeatedly hold strikes

and demonstration to demand payment of wages and benefits, most recently in June this year. Thousands of workers have not been paid their wages for two months and as many as four. Pension benefits have been suspended in recent months because of the company's failure to pay into the state social security scheme. Over half the plantation and mill workers have no permanent employment contracts and live in permanent insecurity. Current and retired workers and their family members have been harassed and threatened with closure of the company if they continue to demand their rights; workers are routinely harassed, dismissed and kept under constant surveillance of the security forces.

The Haft Tappeh workers and their union are demanding full payment of wage and benefit arrears; recognition of the union as the workers' legal representative; and the company's return to government ownership.

[CLICK HERE](#) to send a message to the Iranian authorities in support of the workers' demands.

### Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Wahed):

#### **We condemn the non-payment of HaftTappeh sugarcane workers, and the arrest of protesting workers!**



According to the statement by the „Haft Tappeh“ sugarcane workers' syndicate, following the recent workers 'protest of the „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane Crop and Industry Company, and the closure of the international road of Andimeshk – Ahwaz by the workers, in protest for non-payment of their wages, Police and security forces attacked the workers' homes at 9 p.m on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> of July, 2017, arresting 15 of them. Some of the detainees are: Ahmad Kaseer, Behzad Nazari, Seyed Hadi Taghah, AbdolReza Sorkkeh, Hamid Abdollahzadeh, and two more with the name of Sabah Savari.

The workers have announced that if their demands are not met, and all of the detainees are not released, they will resume their protests from tomorrow.



The toiling workers of „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane Crop and Industry continued their guild protests on July 25, 2017, by closing down the international Andimeshk – Ahwaz road. The workers are:

In defiance, for the arrears of 3 months wages.

failure to pay a 4% premium insurance rights of the workers in hard and harmful occupations, which has become a barrier to the workers 'retirement in the past 15 months.

- Mass lay-offs.
- Failure to implement the parliamentary resolution on retirement of sugarcane cutters, ending the security condition for workers at the factory.
- The failure to pay rewards and productivity for the years of 2015 and 2016.
- The workers believe that the privatization of the Sugarcane Company is one of the main factors of creating these situations.

Syndicate of workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (Wahed), while supporting the statement of Workers' Syndicate of the „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane Crop and Industry Company, condemns the imposition of inhuman conditions on workers, and calls on provincial and state officials, to fulfill workers' demands as soon as possible.

It should be noted that the police, security and judicial encounters with the Syndicate of workers of „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane crop and Industry company, which was reopened in 2008, and the imprisonment and dismissal of Syndicate's representatives, has led to more abuse of conditions and violation of the most basic and obvious workers' rights by their employer. In such a situation, we, the workers, have no other choice, but to strengthen our organization, Unity and solidarity forever.



25 July, 2017

<http://vahedsyndica.com/archive/2729>

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## Workers of „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane Company! We appreciate your struggle and we support you

After several strikes during last months and in the face of disregard and contempt of the employer and government authorities who ignore the basic and undeniable rights of workers, this time the workers' families, exhausted and worn-out by the shameful conditions imposed on them, joined the workers' movement. They blocked Shush-Andimeshk High Way, and by gathering in the streets and lanes expressed their contestations to the public out of the Company. The workers of „Haft Tappeh“ Sugarcane Company who have extensive experience of employer's and officials' non- respected promises, the useless employee correspondence to administrations, absurd negotiations and waste of time in these procedures, this time tried to ask the help and solidarity of the city's toiling population.



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city's toiling and solidarity of population. But during the night of July 25, 2017 the security forces gave an assault the domicile of workers and arrested 15 workers of the Company. According to the last news the number of detained workers has reached to 20.

But during the night of July 25, 2017 the security forces gave an assault the domicile of workers and arrested 15 workers of the Company. According to the last news the number of detained workers has reached to 20. The forces of security and order, the judiciary, the government officials and the employer showed once again that they are united and unanimous in defending the capitalist's interests against the workers demands. This cruel and inhuman system expects silence and obedience from the part of the workers who haven't received their wages for months and have been pressed under the weight of heavy living cost and monthly payments that they have to reimburse to banks and other financial institutions, whose insurance document haven't been validated for months, the Company's retired workers who haven't received their pension related benefits, the workers who contest the privatization of the Company and demand the release of their detained colleagues! It is for this reason that they try to have the members of Company Union Board withdraw from their combat by beating, putting them in prison, expulsion, denying to pay their wages, accusing them with security charges, fabricating judiciary cases against theme, condemning them to imprisonment, incarcerating their family members, etc.. They try to stifle the militancy of Sugarcane Company and other companies' workers. One cannot call this imposing condition Life, it is a gradual death which cannot be tolerated if one wants to an honest living, neither can be adopted silence vis- à -vis those who spoil human life. The claims of Haft Tapeh Sugarcane Company workers are the most basic rights that the workers have won through long struggles and to preserve them they have no other way to continue their combat. The experiences of struggle have taught them: when the employer and managers of the Sugarcane Company and Sugarcane Development Company refuse their claims the workers use their own collective force and power. They expect and search the help and solidarity of their own Union which they have created by courage and sacrifice, the help and solidarity of the workers of other companies, and other independent Unions. They expect the help of their families. The repression of workers' contestations, the assault to their domicile and incarceration of the workers who struggle for their claims are signs of incapability and weakness of a system that relies only on violence, prison and

bayonet. These repressions won't stop the struggle of the working class against capitalism.

**Workers of Pars Jonoubi projects  
Petrochemical workers in the Mahshahr region and Bandar Emam  
Labor activists of the South  
A group of workers from the Tehran-Karaj axis  
Workers' militants of Shush and Andimeshk**

July 25, 2017

[kargaran.parsjonobi@gmail.com](mailto:kargaran.parsjonobi@gmail.com)

**Autorities of “Neyshekar”!  
strikes again,**

**open your ears, it is  
we are human too, we are Iranians too**

This morning, July 19/2017 the retired and working workers gathered in protest. The workers who have retired in February of 2017, are protesting for the 4 % out of 341, who were not paid and also because they are tired of the empty promises made by the company's management, and no matter which regional or provincial authority they have complained to, they have all told them to keep calm, but calmness has a limit!- and for how long?

By delegating this troubled and debtor company which is a result of the wrong policies by the previous and current governments and the lack of determination and power of the MP and provincial authorities, has resulted in hard times for the hard working workers.

Mr Rohani how long are we supposed to shout that we are hungry? Why should the workers pay for the Flaw in the implementation of the devastating rule 44 (The principle of privatization) by the government.



Mr Rohani, today the employed workers are protesting as usual, we are like the little child that no one will notice our needs unless we make a noise.

Mr. Jahangiri (Government spokesman), is this how you are doing “Resistive Economy”?

District security officials: None of the company's management team does not bother to give us (the workers) any kind of answers, even if it is not true.

Provincial Council officials and The National Security Council members, specially Mr Smamkhani, you are from Khuzestan yourself and know what it means to work in the heat of 54'C, we are begging you to do something for us.

Dear Members of the Assembly of Experts, please convince the government to review the status of this Company and help us out of this misery, we are humans too, we have the right to live as well, we are losing our dignity here.

We are tired of protesting, we want to produce, but we lack the energy to do that. We are concern for the country's security, we understand the region's situation, but some people are trying to make us protest by being irresponsible.

At the end, we are begging all the authorities in this country, specially Khuzestan's MPs and the honoured Members of Assembly of Experts to review the delegation of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company.

Wednesday, 19 July, 2017.

A group of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Workers

**Condolences to the workers, congratulations to the financiers**

With the victory of the Rouhani government, which is strongly protagonist of capitalist relation of production, introducing plans to punish workers and make them to give away what they had gained thru their long struggles. That is why we say the workers were the real losers in this election.



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But why we disagree with the design of the internship which Rouhani has put forward for workers and pushing it thru by all mighty force:

First of all, this is a plan in order to weaken the power of the workers which is still valid in Iranian Labor Law.

Secondly, in this new plan there is no more social security benefits for workers, the Government has washed his hand off in supporting workers in Social Security.

Thirdly, if this new plan becomes law not only takes away some benefits which are still in old Labor Law, but opens the way for greater exploitations of working people and serving only capitalist class. It is so obvious that Rouhani Government by this policy of anti-workers is only serving the International imperialist powers and Capitalist class.

Reza Rakhshan and Ferydun Nikoofard, Members of the Board of Directors of sugar cane workers syndicate „Haft Tappeh“

## Workers at „Haft Tappeh“ in a session of the one hundred and sixth ILO



The report of the Secretary General of the Federation of Ritschi, James Assistant laborers food, agricultural, hotel, restaurant, and tobacco and services worldwide (IUF) in the general meeting of the 106 session of the Work International Conference -Geneva

June 2017 14

The General Manager and the representatives present in the meeting of the International Conference on 106th. I stand here to give my report to the Director General of the Conference.

Mr. Ryder (Secretary General of the International Labor Organization) announced the opening of his speech, which refers to his career deserve to face Conference (Decent Work Agenda) that the Declaration of the year 2008 in conjunction with social justice in a world we want fair, which is the motto of this fundamental labor rights principles for many years. We also agree with his comments that "there is no other principle, which directly take a heart sign the commitment of the international labor organization that represents her identity we will appear at the arena or else there."

General Manager, all the Member States for the dynamics of political commitments and practical action again to end abuses that have no place in the world it is not what is called in.

I would like to have been the continuing systematic violation, workers who frequently repeated by the employer, namely the violation of basic rights of the workers syndicate „Haft Tappeh“ in Iran.

In the past ten years, the workers receive their wages finished „Haft Tappeh“. This situation during the past two years after the





transfer of the company to the private sector is deteriorating. Not only the items related to the workers' problems are not fixed, but wages could not be paid in a timely manner as well, sometimes months delayed wage workers are the creditor. And workers at the peak of despair on the streets and protest in front of the Governor's Office. We urge the Iranian Government to immediately 95 Convention (on the protection of wage) is an international organization of work.



More than 1000 workers who are currently employed and retired sugar cane factories are „Haft Tappeh“ this month with the support of their spouses and children, to get their unpaid wages and benefits a few months strike. „Haft Tappeh“ company in response to the protests of workers threatened to dismiss them that or its workers have to return to work or the management of „Haft Tappeh“ to shut down and the company can understand. Workers at „Haft Tappeh“ to get their overdue wages and other issues related to their Advantages with numerous demonstrations and strikes over the past years are involved. These workers previously in front of the Governor's Office in the city of Susa gathered and have threatened that they will rally again, management must pay them what is owed to the workers.

In October 2016, more than 500 people of the company's workers went on strike demanding payment of their salaries, and that three months was postponed. 1800 reports that workers at least two months overdue. The other 800 of the company's workers are not paid at least chharmah are seeking rights. According to the terms of these workers, the factory of a security to a space industrial complex has become a constant presence and intimidating the police, that the management team at all times helps escort the space this indicates the condition. Digital cameras are everywhere in the workplace is installed and security guards of these cameras for controlling workers' every move. The daily ordinary workers and dismissed the protest part of workers with arrest and illegal detention. We insist we get and you want to ask the Iranian Government to prevent the action of the employer and the workers' State of persecution.



The



processes of health and safety in the workplace has not yet run. Air temperature at the time of the workers toil over 50 degrees Celsius. Permanent contracts for workers who do not have a job classification system. They like to work and

temporary workers the minimum wage they are a quarter of what the real wages should be paid. We, as of Iran's representatives want to workers with a permanent contract and job security. 131 fixed the minimum wage Convention, Iran to deliver justice to workers' wages has passed.

The members of the Executive Board of the sugar cane workers syndicate of temporary work contracts, „Haft Tappeh“. This is a calculated strategy to suppress the freedom of Association and freedom of expression. The members of the Executive Committee of the Union will have to send your registration and signing of the agreement and that no action against the employer and company do not.

We urge the Iranian Government to sugar cane workers syndicate „Haft Tappeh“ as the exclusive agent of the workers of the „Haft Tappeh“ to recognize and allow them to proceed to all activities in accordance with the Convention of the international organization working in your workplace. The members of the syndicate have no absolutely no job security and human rights in Iran.





picture of the young workers of the "Haft Tappeh" , the 50 years ago



A straw cutting worker

**A clip and the labor anthem**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpNQ4xZZYwE>

Poetry translation from this anthem:

**Do Not Forget Me: A Song**

*Do not forget me*

*Forget me not.*

*Do not forget me*

*Forget me not.*

*I am amidst a mountain of metal and fire*

*I am amidst a valley of deadly dust.*

*Tired of inhaling a smelly air full of sour and bitter gases*

*I am amidst petro clouds*

*Waiting for rain.*

*Do not forget me*

*Forget me not*

*without your voice every night*

*I am ruined and diminished*

*I am ruined and diminished.*

*Do not forget me*

*If late rent payment hits you*



*If the rent payment dues you  
If cheese on credit shames you  
If the child within your tired soul  
is crying because of my dying hope  
my dying hope.*

*Listen to a thousand untold words of my heart  
A heart which burns like an oven  
A heart which has the scent of fresh crisp bread  
A heart which has remained with you full of desire.*

*Do not forget me  
Forget me not  
Forget me not  
though I have forgotten me  
though I have forgotten myself.*

Translated from the Persian, by: Majid Nafisi

**Union anthem:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGHSPZPtW3s>

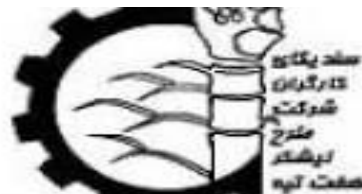


**A movie:**

Sugar cane workers of „Haft Tappeh“ closed Andimeshk road to Ahvaz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FSPlalCZho>

**The „Haft Tappeh“ anthem:**



[http://www.ofros.com/audio/tarane\\_hafttape.mp3](http://www.ofros.com/audio/tarane_hafttape.mp3)