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ایران آزاد

A Report on the extensive violation of workers' rights in Iran

Presented to the side panel of the
United Nations Human Rights Council
June 2011

Collected by:
Iran-Freedom

Society to Support Human Rights, Freedom and Democracy – Germany

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A Report on the extensive violation of workers' rights in Iran

The report contains three sections:

- **Section 1:** The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years
- **Section 2:** Ever-increasing lack of Safety and Health in the workplace
- **Section 3:** The violation of basic rights of workers as human beings including freedom of expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association

The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years I

The active labor force distribution, according to the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI):

Year	Total working people	Employer	independent Worker	Wage-earner in private section	wage-earner in public section	unpaid family worker	Total Wage-earner	Law-makers, High-ranking People, Managers,...	Experts	Workers, Teachers, Nurses, Technicians, ...
1385	20476000	1146656	6593272	6654700	3788060	2170456	10442760	593804	1597128	10422284
1386	21107000	1139778	6838668	6944203	3904795	2195128	10848998	590996	1667453	10785677
1387	22914000	1122786	7584534	7996986	4193262	2039346	12190248	549936	1787292	11892366

Table 1 – SCI – Labor Force Results 2006-2007-2008

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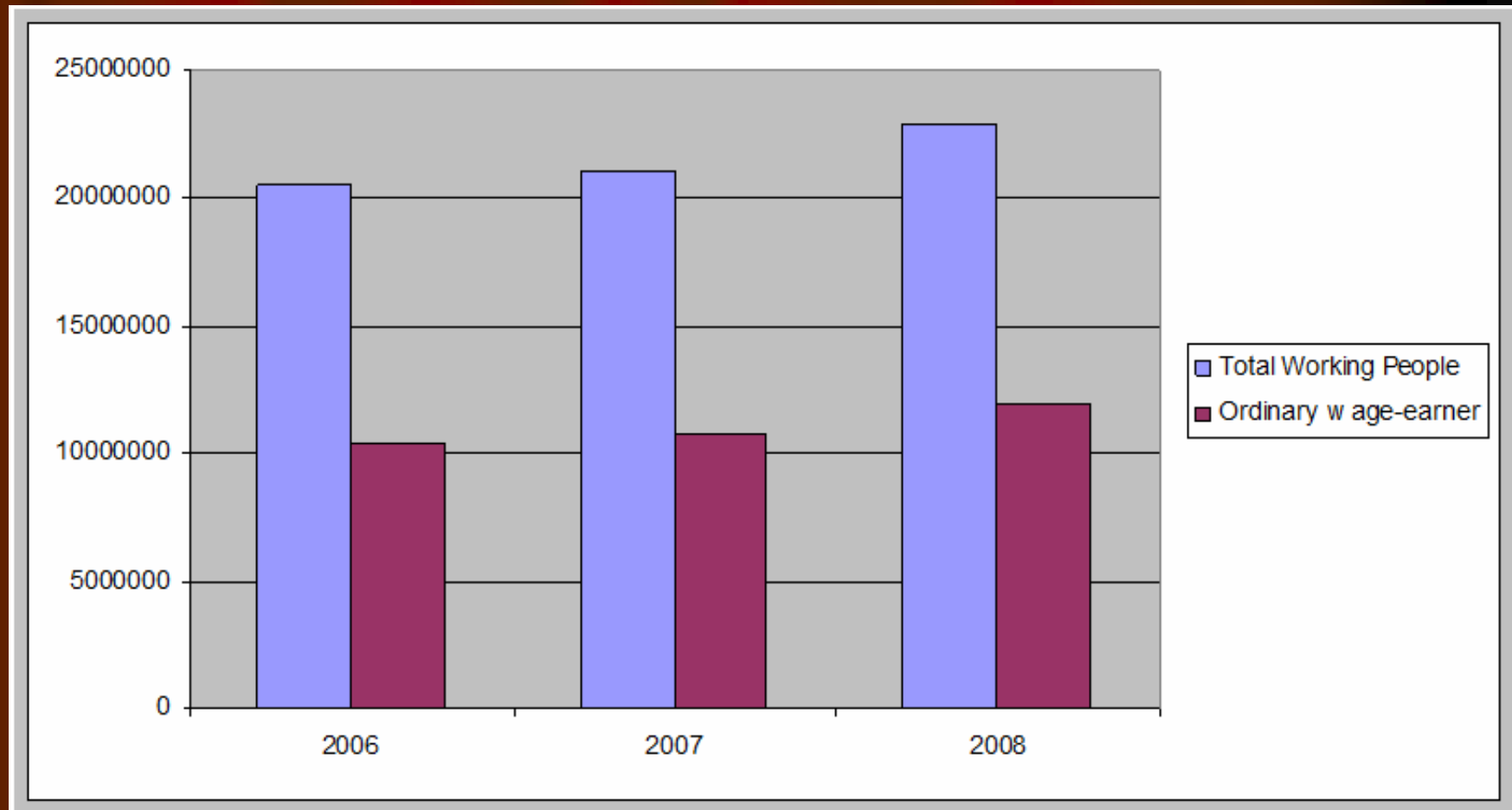
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The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years II

The share of ordinary wage earners (workers, teachers, nurses, technicians ...) in the total labor force, according to the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI)



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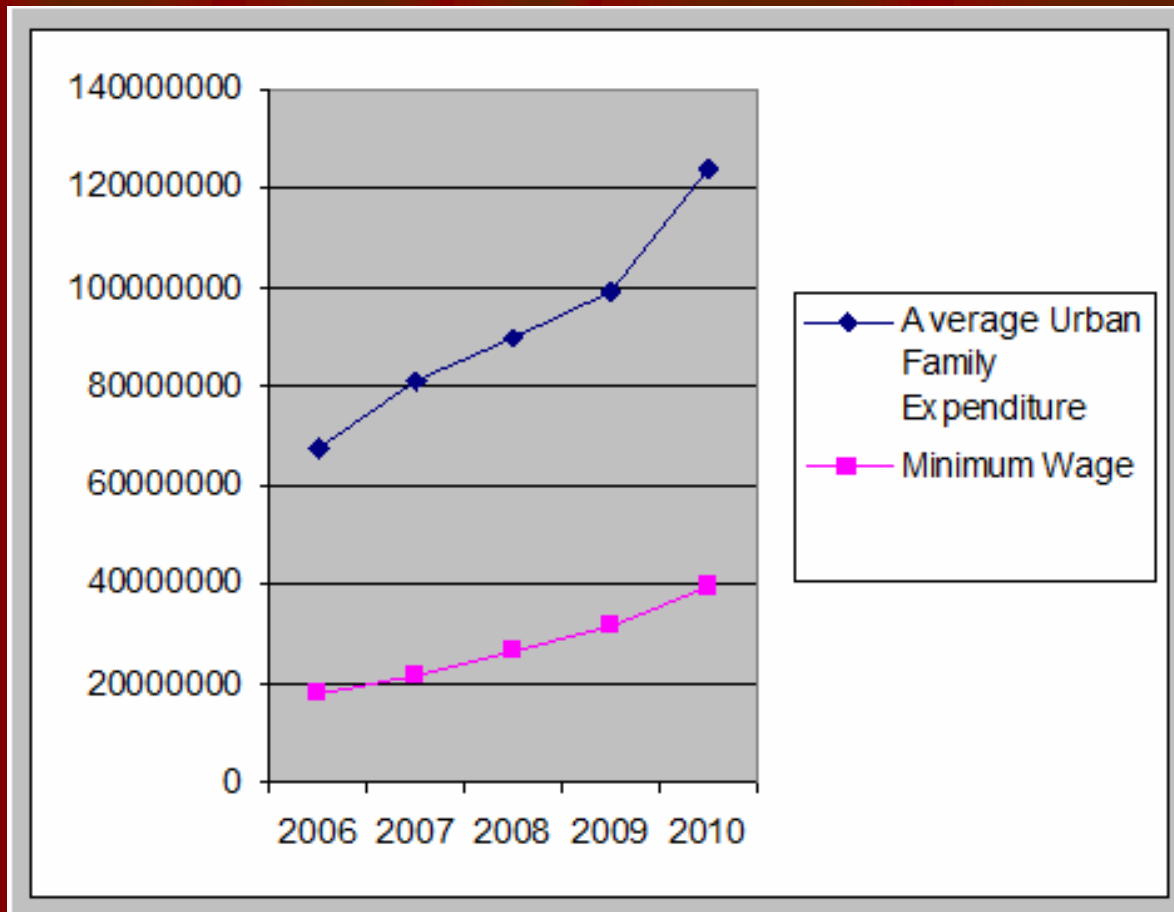
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The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years III

A comparison between the expenses of an average family with the minimum salary, which is adjusted and regulated every year by the government, shows a large gap between the income and expenses of an average family.



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The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years IV

The rate of unemployment in 2005-2009 period is shown in the following table:

unemployment rate	Year
11,5	2005
11,3	2006
10,5	2007
10,4	2008
11,9	2009

The non-official estimation goes far beyond the above figures, sometimes doubled. Given these rates, in 2008, the best year in unemployment rate, the number of the jobless amounts 2,400,000, multiplied by 4 (the average family) make 9,600,000. According to SCI, only 3.1 % were, on the same year, under the cover of unemployment insurance and 96.9% lacked any form of insurance or any form of official income.

The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years V

According to the current figures, the rate of temporary contracted workers has reached 80%. ... Many of the workers are forced to sign blank forms and settlement of account at the very beginning of employment^[1], enabling the employer to stop the process at any point without any cost on his side.

The characteristics of such contracts are:

- They cover a very short period of employment and can be sorted as following:
 - Less-than-one-year contracts
 - Less-than-six-months contracts
 - Less-than-three-months contracts
 - Less-than-one-months contracts
 - Less-than-ten-days contracts
- Blank contracts with the wage-earner's signature at the bottom, enabling the employer to put down whatever conditions he wishes.
- Verbal contracts, leaving the employer with no commitments at all.

[1] - <http://sabainfo.ir/newsdetail-26504-fa.html>

The worsening of the economic conditions of workers in the last five years VI

In 2010, like the previous years, tens of thousands of workers experienced from one month to 30 months of delay in payment.

The table shows some of such cases:

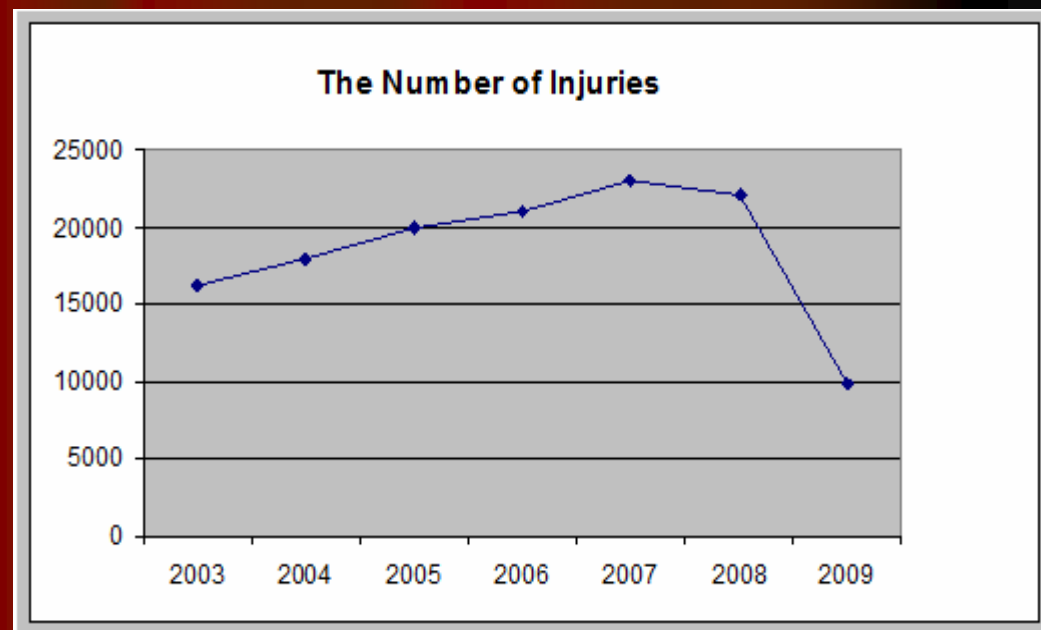
Company Name	Delay(months)
Kashan Spinning, weaving and Textile Company	30
Iran Blanket	26
Pars Wagon	24
Alvand Rehabilitation Center-Ghazvin	21
Ziaran Meat	20
Khuzestan Pipe Making Company	18
Alborz Crockery	14
Far Communication Industries of Iran-Fars Province	13
Tabriz Construction Company	11
Minu Dasht Mines	10
Shokufe Plant Oil Company	8
Pardis Spinning Company	8
Pars Metal Company	7
Rasht Khavar Spinning Company	6
Abadan Municipality	6
Sasan Beverages Company	5
Zarrin Ban (Parsian) Factory	5
Alborz tire Company	5
Tabad Weaving Factory – Ghazvin	4
Communication company of Chahbahar Free Zone	4
Talia Company	3
Zahesh Manufacturing Industries	3
Espidar Crockery – Saveh	3
Pasargad Stone	2

Ever-increasing lack of safety and health in the workplace I

the number of injuries increases from about 16000 in 2003 to about 23000 in 2007 and 2008. Then there is a sharp decrease to less than 10,000 in 2009. Needless to say, the reduction has nothing to do with the improvement in work conditions. **Ahmadi Nejad's government has silently omitted the figures about 80% of the workers; those who have been thrown out of the social security coverage!**

According to the same source, in the first 9 months of 2010, more than 16000 workers have had work-related injuries, with 77 deaths, 167 total disability, 262 partial disability, and 744 imputation.

Again according to the same source, in 80% of the cases the employer was guilty.



Ever-increasing lack of safety and health in the workplace II

Female sexual harassment in workplace:

Female sexual harassment is another major problem in the workplaces.

According to ILO's Convention 111, and ILO Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (COP-SH), sexual harassments are among hazardous conditions in the workplace.

Female workers **are not only** subjects to work-related accidents, as male workers, they are also subjects to sexual harassment. A report on working woman showed that 68% of the employers wanted to have sexual affairs with their female employee. [\[1\]](#)

[\[1\]](#) Ibid

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The violation of basic rights of workers as human beings I

The violation of basic rights of workers as human beings, including freedom of expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association

The imprisonment of leading labor activists reach at its peak in 2010. In this year, at least 51 activists were arrested and 14 others were interrogated. Here are the names of some of them:

Haleh Safarzadeh, Homayoon Jaber, Mehdi Farahi Shandiz, Alireza Akhavan, Saeid Torabian, Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, Mohammad Ashrafi, Pedram Nasrollahi, Kaveh, Koorosh and Kianush Golmohammadi, Omar Esmailpour, Sedigh Khosravi, Ebrahim Esmaili, Reza Rakhshan, Omid Shojai, Afshin Nadimi, Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, Reza Shahabi, Ali Nejati and Khaled Hosseini. Some others were sentenced to prisons, which totally amounted to 411 months. They are:

Salam Ghaderi, Khaled Assadi, Azad Hosseini, As'ad Moloudzadeh, Mohammad Esmail Vandi, Azad Monirnia, Khosrow Bukani, Pejman Rahimi, Sedigh Karimi, Foad Keikhosravi and Behzad Arab Gol.

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The violation of basic rights of workers as human beings II

Majority of arrested workers are members of independent workers organizations, mostly trade unions. The most important such organizations are:

- The Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company
- The Syndicate of Workers of Neishekar Haft Tappeh Company
- The Society to Defend Workers Rights
- Free Union of Iran Workers
- Coordinating Committee to Help Form Workers Organizations

These are some of the organizations working legally in the field of labor rights. Though the right of assembly and association is recognized in the declaration of Human Rights, ILO Conventions, and Islamic Republic of Iran's laws, the government is sure to severely and brutally suppress any movements in this area. This behaviour of the government is an obvious violation of **Article 23-4 of the Declaration:**

Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

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The violation of basic rights of workers as human beings III

Chapter 6 of Iranian Labor Laws deals with labor organizations. Article 131 recognizes the **right of workers to form their trade unions**, and also the countrywide associations of the unions.

But then adds that workers can only form one of the three defined organizational bodies, Islamic council of labor, trade union or workers representative.

As the government itself, on behalf of workers, has formed the Islamic councils, the members of which are selected under the strict supervision of the appropriate governmental body, according to the abovementioned law, the workers are deprived of their independent organization, and those who do not obey are severely punished. Like what happened to the aforementioned trade unions. Security forces along with Iran House of Worker and Islamic councils conducted a series of attacks to these independent trade unions and their leading figures, beating them severely and looting their offices.

Iran House of Worker is specially active in this area. This organization and Islamic councils of labor are primarily governmental bodies to prevent the development of laborers' real organizations. Many a time they have been used to attack meetings of workers and subdue them brutally.

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The violation of basic rights of workers as human beings IV

Unfortunately, ILO, instead of inviting representatives directly selected by Iranian workers, has invited members of these two governmental bodies to its 93rd session in Geneva. The invitation has been severely criticized by labor organizations, both inside and outside of Iran. The cooperation of ILO with the representatives of Islamic Republic, especially after the brutal suppression of people, including workers, during the last two years in Iran, has highly discredited ILO among Iranian workers.

A major demand of Iranian workers now is to fire these disguised representatives from the 93rd ILO Session and all other international labor organizations and replace them with those selected by Iranian workers in a free election. Only in this way can they reflect the real conditions and demands of Iranian workers in international scene.

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