

# Labor Rights in Iran



QUARTERLY REPORT NO. 21

**April - June 2022**



## **Contents**

Introduction	4
Overview	5
Protests	7
Hungry People's Revolt	8
Teachers: Widespread Repression	9
"Wanted" Teachers	14
Bus Drivers' Two-day Strike	16
Retirees	18
Oil Contract Workers	19
City Services	20
Other Protests	21
Informal workers	23
Migrant Workers	24
Repression: Arresting Union Activists and Attacking Independent Labor Organizations	25
Work-related Accidents	27

Labor Rights in Iran  
No. 21  
April - June 2022

## Introduction

This publication is Zamaneh Media's 21st Quarterly Labor Rights Report. These reports focus on unemployment, deferment or non-payment of wages and benefits, protests and strikes, freedom of association and assembly, independent unions, workplace discrimination, contract violations, women's labor, child labor, workplace accidents, and labor law. Zamaneh Media monitors these topics daily, and this report provides an overview of the most critical Iranian labor rights issues over the past three months.

The following report covers major labor rights issues, protests, and trends from April through June 2022. The information herein does not address all labor-related events and topics.

In addition to the quarterly reports, Zamaneh Media also publishes special reports on specific labor topics as well as an annual report. For all previously published reports, please visit [Zamaneh Media's website](#).

## Overview

This spring in Iran was deadly. Domestic vehicles and unsafe roads caused the death of at least 1,100 people. According to official statistics, the collapse of the Metropal Building in Abadan resulted in 43 fatalities mourned by all of Iran. The death penalty machine in prisons continued to work at a faster pace.

This spring, nuclear negotiations reached a deadlock and the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors reissued a resolution against Tehran. As a result, the value of the national currency fell quickly and one U.S. dollar exceeded 33,000 tomans. This currency depreciation and the ongoing war in Ukraine, which had already increased food prices, neutralized the slight increase in wages from March 2022 (end of the Iranian calendar year 1400).

An increase in the price of food products at a time when at least 36% of Iran is living below the poverty line makes earning a livelihood difficult or even impossible for a large portion of the population. According to the Statistics Center of Iran, the official inflation rate reached 39.3% in May. Inflation reached 65.7% for bread and cereals, 41.7% for dairy products, chicken, and eggs, and 74.2% for fruits and vegetables.<sup>1</sup>

The government raised the cost of public sector medical services by at least 19.5%, and there was also a 24% increase in private sector health expenses. The higher cost of health services makes access to doctors and treatment more difficult or even impossible for at least 9 million Iranians without health insurance.<sup>2</sup>

The price of medicine also increased due to the removal of preferential currency in the market. (Market exchange rate at the time of publishing was 1 USD  $\approx$  30,000 tomans. Preferential currency was 1 USD  $\approx$  4,200 tomans.) In April, the Minister of Health revealed that due to the non-allocation of preferential currency, patients with particular conditions were forced to pay for medicine through the state-supported "Nimaae" currency, priced at six times the preferential currency.<sup>3</sup> (Nimaae currency exchange is conducted digitally through a portal named Nima, hence "Nimaae").

According to the statistics center, as of May the cost of housing had also experienced a 30.4% compared to a year ago. Housing and rent prices in the market have increased more than the officially announced figure, and according to media reports, households have departed from large and expensive cities to cheaper areas at a higher rate. In Iran researchers have found that over 25% of the urban population lives in marginal areas.

The rate of inner-city transportation increased by an average of 25%, according to the Islamic city councils.

The government's imposition of poverty and hunger on wage earners and poor people has made their lives so unbearable that some workers committed suicide.

Domestic media and sources close to workers in Iran reported the suicide or attempted suicide of at least eight workers between April and June. In the Golestan tobacco factory, a worker self-immolated after being "punished" and "fined" for an accident.<sup>4</sup> In a village in Mamasani, Fars province, two bakery workers published a farewell video and committed suicide due to economic problems.<sup>5</sup> The delay in the payment of wages, which is one of the main factors driving labor protests, caused a Yasuj water and sewerage company worker to self-immolate.<sup>6</sup> A worker at Padena Polymer Company in the industrial city of

1 [Iran Statistics Center](#), Consumer Price Index, April 2022

2 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 8, 2022

3 [Fararu](#), April 4, 2022

4 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), May 22, 2022

5 [Young Journalists Club](#), May 12, 2022

6 [Kabna News](#), May 23, 2022

Alborz, Qazvin, ended his life due to what he referred to as personal problems.<sup>7</sup> Two terminated workers of Farabi Petrochemical in the port city of Bandar Mahshahr committed suicide after their employer did rehire them.<sup>8</sup> In Lendeh, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, a worker killed himself due to his inability to pay rent.<sup>9</sup>

---

7 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 4, 2022

8 [Akhbar Rooz](#), June 9, 2022

9 [Free Trade Union of Iranian Workers](#), June 18, 2022

## Protests

A large-scale wave of protest movements has swept across Iran. The government's austerity measures have destabilized wage earners' livelihoods. Growing discrimination and inequality causing a deep class gap, wage payment delays by public and private employers, wage suppression, and the arrest of labor and union activists have all caused the protests to intensify this spring.

The protesters over the past three months have included teachers and retirees demanding the full implementation of job ranking and wage optimization, oil and energy workers, temporary and contract municipality workers, miners, and informal workers exploited by internet service companies. The implementation the policy of deregulating the price of food items and removal of the preferred currency have also caused mass protests in some regions of the country.

---

## Hungry People's Revolt

The removal of food product subsidies caused protests in several cities. On May 5, people took to the streets in the cities of Khuzestan Province, including Dezful, Izeh, Khorramshahr, Ahvaz, Mahshahr, and Hamidiyeh. The scope of the protests expanded a week later and reached the provinces of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Lorestan, Kohgiluyeh, and Boyer-Ahmad, and Isfahan. As in November 2019, the government violently repressed the protesters and disconnected the internet to prevent the spread of information about the crackdown on the protesters.

Dozens of protesters were arrested in Andimeshek, Dezful, Junghan, Hefeshjan, and other cities. The prosecutors of Yasuj and Dezful confirmed the arrests of many protesters. The media also published the news with photos showing that at least six people were killed during the protests, which continued sporadically until May 17.<sup>10</sup>

In response to these widespread protests, the government arrested and imprisoned labor and union activists in different cities. Dozens of teachers' union activists, members of the drivers' union of the Tehran Bus Company, and labor activists in Kurdistan and other cities were arrested at night by security agents or summoned by judicial and security authorities. A large number of those arrested are still in prison and under interrogation.

The collapse of the Metropol building in Abadan on May 23 caused another wave of protests in Abadan, Khorramshahr, Ahvaz, Mahshahr, and a few other cities. Several social and civil activists were arrested and imprisoned in Abadan during these protests.



---

## Teachers: Widespread Repression

Teachers gathered in over 200 cities and districts on April 21 to protest. Since last August, these teachers have rallied several times to protest the government's manipulation of the job ranking bill, the privatization of education, the prohibition of teaching in the ethnic mother tongues, the suppression of protesters, and the filing of legal charges against trade union members. Security agents raided and made arrests at these protests in Tehran, Shiraz, Marivan, and several other towns; they arrested 22 teachers in Tehran alone.<sup>11</sup>

On May 1, International Labor Day, the Coordinating Council of Teachers' Trade Unions called on the teachers, workers, and students' families to protest in all cities. One day before the rallies, the security officers arrested several trade union activists in Tehran and Kurdistan and threatened many others with phone calls to prevent the nationwide movement.<sup>12</sup> Despite security measures, these gatherings took place across the country.<sup>13</sup> On May 12, the teachers rallied for the third time in one month.<sup>14</sup> On May 8, the teachers of Kurdistan Province staged a sit-in protesting the arrests of their colleagues.<sup>15</sup>

Beginning in 2021, security officers summoned over 200 teachers to the security and judicial headquarters, arrested them, and threatened them with dismissal from work. These measures were an attempt at preventing the spread of teachers' protests, which comprise the most organized labor activism in Iran today. In March, several teachers were taken to court in Ahvaz, Shiraz, Qazvin, Marivan, Sanandaj, Kermanshah, Rasht, Lahijan, Karaj, Tehran, and Delfan. In April, dozens union activists were arrested and taken to prison in different cities.

The government accused a number of detained teachers of cooperating with "foreign forces to overthrow the regime" under the pretext of a meeting between two Iranian labor activists and two members of the French "*Force Ouvriere*" union. Government print media and state television reported on this topic. The Ministries of Information, Education, and the Judiciary jointly accused the teacher and union activists of abusing the educators' demands and trying to "create chaos," threatening the detainees with "judicial action."<sup>16</sup>

In Kurdistan, Shaban Mohammadi, Masoud Nikkhah, and Eskandar Lotfi were tortured and abused in order for the government to obtain forced confessions. Eskander Lotfi's defense lawyer announced on June 10 that his client was transferred to an unknown location<sup>17</sup> and warned that he was in danger.<sup>18</sup>

Even though there was an agreed upon release on bail, the security institutions still have Jafar Ebrahimi and Mohammad Habibi in jail.<sup>19</sup>

After the second nationwide gathering of teachers on May 12, security forces arrested many union members in the cities of Ahvaz, Najaf Abad, Shiraz, Tehran, Marivan, Yazd, Yasuj, Mashhad, Arak, and several other cities. The detention of teachers continued until late June, as of the time of publication.

In March, the government summoned and tried many members of trade unions, including Rasool Bodaghi, Jaleh Roohzad, Gholamreza Gholami Kendazi, Ruhollah (Rada) Mardani, Nader Sharifi, Kourosh Qanbari, Zadali Mahmoudi, Mohammad Saeedi Abu Ishaghi, Kou-

---

11 [Radio Zamaneh](#), April 21, 2022

12 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 2, 2022

13 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 1, 2022

14 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 12, 2022

15 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 8, 2022

16 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 8, 2022

17 [Saleh Nikbakht's tweet](#), June 10, 2022

18 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 30, 2022

19 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 30, 2022

rosh Sharifi, Hamid Ishaghi, Mohammad Amiri, Gholamhossein Mousavi, and Ali Babamir. The below table shows the list of teachers who were arrested, summoned, and have legal cases in different regions of Iran. The information in this table is collected from the Telegram channel of the Coordinating Council of Teachers' Trade Unions and may not include the names of all the teachers under prosecution.

*Table 1- Teachers arrested in spring 2022 (last update: June 21, 2022)*

Row	Name	Province	Status
1	Rasul Bodaghi	Tehran	Arrested
2	Mohsen Omrani	Bushehr	Temporarily released
3	Jafar Ebrahimi	Tehran	Arrested
4	Mahmoud Malaki	Bushehr	Temporarily released
5	Mohammed Habibi	Tehran	Arrested
6	Hamid Khojasteh	Bushehr	Temporarily released
7	Ali Akbar Baghani	Tehran	Temporarily released
8	Youssef Sayadi	Bushehr	Temporarily released
9	Massoud Nikkhah	Kurdistan	Arrested
10	Ardeshir Sayadi	Bushehr	Temporarily released
11	Eskander Lotfi	Kurdistan	Arrested
12	Fereydoun Shafiei	Bushehr	Temporarily released
13	Jabbar Dousti	Kurdistan	Temporary freedom
14	Asghar Hajeb	Bushehr	Temporarily released
15	Mahdi Tafsiri	Kurdistan	Temporarily released
16	Mohammadreza Akbari	Bushehr	Temporarily released
17	Shaban Mohammadi	Kurdistan	Arrested
18	Reza Amanifar	Bushehr	Temporarily released
19	Salah Sorkhi	Kurdistan	Temporarily released
20	Ali Haji	East Azerbaijan	Temporarily released
21	Safar Ramezani	Gilan	Temporarily released
22	Reza Muslimi	Hamadan	Temporarily released
23	Ehsan Asadi	Gilan	Temporarily released
24	Ebrahim Mahmoudi	Lorestan	Temporarily released
25	Mansoura Irfanian	Khorasan Razavi	Temporarily released
26	Latif Rouzikhah	East Azerbaijan	Temporarily released
27	Hadi Sadeghzadeh	Khorasan Razavi	Arrested
28	Hossein Salami	Mazandaran	Temporarily released
29	Fatemeh Bahmani	Central	Temporarily released
30	Mozhgan Bagheri	Fars	Arrested
31	Mohammad Ali Zahmatkesh	Fars	Arrested
32	Mohammed Reza Alishvandi	Fars	Arrested
33	Mahdi Fathi	Fars	Arrested
34	Gholamreza Gholami Kendazi	Fars	Arrested
35	Asghar Amirzadegan	Fars	Arrested
36	Abd al-Razzaq Amiri	Fars	Arrested
37	Hamid Abbasi	Fars	Arrested
38	Afshin Razmjoo	Fars	Temporarily released
39	Massoud Nikkhah	Tehran	Temporarily released
40	Fariba Moinini	Isfahan	Temporarily released
41	Siamak Chehrizi	Khuzestan	Temporarily released
42	Pirooz Nami	Khuzestan	Temporarily released

43	Ali Kroshat	Khuzestan	Temporarily released
44	Hossam Karai	Khuzestan	Temporarily released
45	Mehdi Kalantari	Yazd	Temporarily released
46	Hamideh Zare	Yazd	Temporarily released
47	Ahmed Changizi	Yazd	Temporarily released
48	Fariba Nezamzadeh	Fars	Temporarily released
49	Rahman Raisi	Isfahan	Temporarily released
50	Latfullah Jamshidi	Tehran	Temporarily released
51	Mohammad Hasan Poreh	Fars	Arrested
52	Mahdi Fathi	Fars	Arrested
53	Yunus Sheikhabadi	Tehran	Freed
54	Ghaffar Dindar	Tehran	Freed
55	Ghasem Falah	Tehran	Freed
56	Abbas Mirzaei	Tehran	Freed
57	Abdullah Heydarzadeh	Tehran	Freed
58	Abbas Soleimani	Tehran	Freed
59	Mehrdad Darkhani	Tehran	Freed
60	Ghodrat Forghani	Tehran	Freed
61	Hojatullah Madadi	Tehran	Freed
62	Mohammad Sadiq Shariati	Tehran	Freed
63	Ali Madadi	Tehran	Freed
64	Mohammad Reza Hasanpour	Tehran	Freed
65	Ali Hekmatirad	Tehran	Freed
66	Hossein Habibi	Tehran	Freed
67	Ebrahim Eslami	Tehran	Freed
68	Akbar Jafari Dodran	Tehran	Freed
69	Mozafar Zare	Tehran	Freed
70	Youssef Abolhasanpour	Tehran	Freed
71	Ramin Karimi	Tehran	Freed
72	Hossein Gudarzi	Tehran	Freed
73	Ahmed Tagavi	Zanjan	Freed
74	Ali Hossein Behamin	K. Boyer Ahmad	Temporarily released
75	Majid Karimi	Kurdistan	Temporarily released
76	Akbar Zendehebudi	Bushehr	Temporarily released
77	Abdul Rasul Emadi	Isfahan	Freed
78	Khadija Mubarakhi	Boyer Ahmad	Freed
79	Mehrdad Yaghmai	Fars	Freed
80	Hossein Mahdipour	S. Baluchistan	Arrested
81	Jaleh Rouhzad	Alborz	Freed
82	Ahmed Heydari	Tehran	Freed
83	Fateh Majidi	Kurdistan	Arrested
84	Mohammad Reza Behzadpour	Kerman	Freed
85	Majid Naderi	Kerman	Freed
86	Hossein Rashidi	Kerman	Freed
87	Mohsen Bahrami	Fars	Freed
88	Morteza Mohammadi	Fars	Freed
89	Mohammadreza Shariatinia	Khorasan Razavi	Freed
90	Iraj Rahmana	Fars	Detained
91	Nowruzali Rashidi	Boyer Ahmad	Freed
92	Nasser Mousavi	Fars	Arrested

93	Behnam Mohammadi	Fars	Arrested
94	Mohammad Reza Behnamnejad	Qazvin	Arrested
95	Mahmoud Sabooni	Qazvin	Arrested
96	Ali Sadeghinejad	Qazvin	Arrested
97	Mahmoud Zamani	Qazvin	Arrested
98	Hamid Farrok Amini	Qazvin	Arrested
99	... Sayadi	Qazvin	Arrested
100	.... Eftekhari	Qazvin	Arrested
101	... Ebrahimi	Qazvin	Arrested
102	Ebrahim Kordi	Qazvin	Arrested
103	.... Rezni	Qazvin	Arrested
104	. . . Kazemi	Qazvin	Arrested
105	Kokab Bodaghi	Khuzestan	Arrested
106	Mohammad Reza Moradi	Kurdistan	Arrested
107	Salah Haji Mirzaei	Kurdistan	Arrested
108	Behzad Qavami	Kurdistan	Arrested
109	Haiva Qureshi	Kurdistan	Arrested
110	Kaveh Mohammadzadeh	Kurdistan	Arrested
111	Amid Shah Mohammadi	Kurdistan	Arrested
112	Osman Rezaei	Kurdistan	Arrested
113	Parviz Ahsani	Kurdistan	Arrested
114	Tahsin Soleimani	Kurdistan	Arrested
115	Sivan Soleimani	Kurdistan	Arrested
116	Aram Mohammadi	Kurdistan	Arrested
117	Aram Qadri	Kurdistan	Arrested
118	Marzieh Talai	Kurdistan	Arrested
119	Mohammad Fatehi	Kurdistan	Freed
120	Khalid Abdullahi	Kurdistan	Arrested
121	Taher Ghaderzadeh	Kurdistan	Freed
122	Suleiman Abdi	Kurdistan	Arrested
123	Aziz Marzi	Kurdistan	Freed
124	Ahmed Qadri	Kurdistan	Arrested
125	Keyvan Mohammadi	Kurdistan	Freed
126	Hossein Mohammadi	Kurdistan	Freed
127	Khalid Sheikhi	Kurdistan	Arrested
128	Luqmanullah Moradi	Kurdistan	Arrested
129	Salahuddin Hosseini	Kurdistan	Freed
130	Qadir Yathrebi	Kurdistan	Freed
131	Zahed Moradi	Kurdistan	Arrested
132	. . . Amini	Kurdistan	Arrested
133	Anwar Farajzadeh	Kurdistan	Freed
134	Ismail Reyhani	Kurdistan	Arrested
135	Hossam Khakpour	Kurdistan	Arrested
136	Hasan Rahimian	Kurdistan	Arrested
137	Mahmoud Siddiqui	Gilan	Temporarily released
138	Aziz Ghasemzadeh	Gilan	Temporarily released
139	Javad Saeedi	Gilan	Temporarily released
140	Anoush Adeli	Gilan	Temporarily released

141	Jahanbakhsh Lajvardi	Gilan	Temporarily released
142	Ali Nehali	Gilan	Temporarily released
143	Parviz Eini	Lorestan	Arrested
144	Taher Hamidi	Kurdistan	Arrested
145	Zahra Esfandiari	Fars	Arrested
146	Hossamuddin Mazloumi	Fars	Arrested
147	Morad Noshadi	Fars	Arrested
148	Morteza Rashidi	Fars	Arrested
149	Ramezan Bonsari	Fars	Arrested
150	Ghiyath Nemati	Kurdistan	Arrested
151	Mohsen Shokouhi	Kurdistan	Arrested
152	Reza Tahmasbi	Kurdistan	Arrested

## “Wanted” Teachers

Between March 21 and June 21, at least 45 teachers in different parts of Iran were summoned to security and judicial authorities or tried in court. The Coordinating Council of Teachers’ Trade Unions reported that security forces attacked teachers’ gatherings in different cities on April 21, May 1, and May 12.

In Tehran, security officers prevented the teachers from rallying. In Bukan, union activists received threatening phone calls to deter them. Security officers attacked the teachers’ gathering in Rasht, beat protesters in Marivan, and violently arrested teachers in Shiraz. In Yasuj, the security agents forcibly arrested Ali Hossein Behamin. They insulted the teachers and their lawyers in the court that heard the charges against Rada Mardani and Aziz Ghasemzadeh. The Minister of Education threatened to fire protesting teachers in response to the continuous uprisings.

The following table shows the teachers who were summoned or for whom a judicial case was filed.

*Table 2 - Teachers summoned to the security institutions or the prosecutor’s office*

Methods	Names
---------	-------

<p>Summons to court/security police/ Intelligence Corps/Ministry of Information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Shahriar Shirvani</li> <li>2- Iqbal Tamradi</li> <li>3- Kokb Badaghi</li> <li>4- Bahnia Behmeinejad</li> <li>5- Mojtaba Ghorbanzadeh</li> <li>6- Aziz Ghasemzadeh</li> <li>7- Mahmoud Beheshti Langroudi</li> <li>8- Bakhtiar Rezvani</li> <li>9- Jaleh Roohzad</li> <li>10- Avat Razavi</li> <li>11- Leila Enayatzaadeh</li> <li>12- Taher Hamidi</li> <li>13- Tahir GHadirzadeh</li> <li>14- Amini's goal</li> <li>15- Aziz Marzi</li> <li>16- Ahmad Qadri</li> <li>17- Khalid Abdullahi</li> <li>18- Sulaiman Abdi</li> <li>19- Nader Sharifi</li> <li>20- Koresh Ghanbari</li> <li>21- Zad Ali Mahmoudi</li> <li>22- Mohammad Amiri</li> <li>23- Gholamhossein Yousefi</li> <li>24- Ali Babamir</li> <li>25- Pirouz Nami (summons to the court and trial)</li> <li>26- Ali Kroshat</li> <li>27- Ferangis Nasimpour</li> <li>28- Ruhollah (Rada) Mardani</li> <li>29- Majid Karimi (summoned to the Intelligence Department)</li> <li>30- Fatemeh Zand Karimi (summoned to the Intelligence Department)</li> <li>31- Mukhtar Asadi (summoned to the Intelligence Department)</li> <li>32- Reza Moradian (summoned to the Intelligence Department)</li> <li>33- Vahid Gudarzi</li> <li>34- Iraj Ansari</li> <li>35- Khan Aziz Ismaili</li> <li>36- Ali Sadeghi</li> <li>37- Bahman Taherkhani</li> <li>38- Iraj Kardan</li> <li>39- Tahsin Mustafa</li> <li>40 Sivan Soleimani</li> <li>41- Ahmad Taqvi</li> <li>42- Timur Bagheri Koodakani</li> <li>43- Tahmasab Sohrabi</li> <li>44- Anoush Adeli</li> <li>45- Gholamreza Akbarzadeh Baghban</li> <li>46- Yadullah Baharestani</li> </ol>
<p>Issuance/confirmation of prison sentence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- Rasool Badaghi/ 5 years in prison, 2 years banned from international travel</li> <li>2- Rasul Kargar/ Confirmation of 1 year imprisonment</li> <li>3- Hamid Akhlamadi/ 2 years and 6 months in prison</li> <li>4- Hossein Ruintan/ 20 years in prison</li> <li>5- Ismail Farhangmanesh</li> </ol>

## Bus Drivers' Two-day Strike

The Tehran Bus Company drivers went on strike on May 16 and 17, protesting the company's non-implementation of the 2022 Supreme Labor Council (SLC) resolution on the minimum wage.<sup>20</sup> Instead of implementing the SLC's directive, the Tehran Bus Company calculated the drivers' wages based on what the parliament passed, which allowed only a 10% salary increase for public sector employees.

The drivers refused to transport passengers for two days. The security forces tried to put an end to the strike by arresting at least 12 protesters on May 16. According to the bus drivers' union, the security forces also used military personnel to move passengers in an attempt to neutralize the impact of the strike.

A few days before this strike, the security forces arrested Reza Shahabi, a terminated employee and member of the workers' union board of directors. On June 12, after his detention was extended for another month, Shahabi announced that he would go on a hunger strike in prison.

During the two-day strike, over 20 employees were arrested. A few were quickly released and ten were taken to prison and released on bail in the following days.<sup>21</sup>

After the arrest of members of independent labor organizations, specifically the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (SWTSBC), security officers raided its board member Davood Razavi's house and confiscated his personal belongings. They also arrested Hassan Saeedi, the other board member, during a night raid and took him to prison.

The following table shows the list of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company's arrested workers.

*Table 3 - Arrested Tehran bus drivers*

Row	Name	State
1	Reza Shahabi	Arrested (hunger strike)
2	Hasan Saeedi	Arrested
3	Vahid Fereydoni	Freed on bail
4	Mohsen Karai	Freed on bail
5	Hamed Asghari	Freed on bail
6	Ali Samakhani	Freed on bail
7	Javad Sadeghi	Freed on bail
8	Mohammad Ali Ebaddari	Freed on bail
9	Ali Asghar Abshenas	Freed on bail
10	Mohsen Kabiri Dur	Freed on bail
11	Ahad Salehpour	Freed on bail
12	Fariborz Sajjadpour	Freed on bail
13	Ebrahim Gurani	Freed on bail

Like the arrested teachers, Reza Shahabi has also been accused of "communicating with

<sup>20</sup> [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 17, 2022

<sup>21</sup> [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 24, 2022



a foreign force” because he met with two members of the French union “Force Ouvriere.” Security officials have also arrested two researchers, translators, and workers’ rights defenders, Keyvan Mohtadi and Anisha Asadollahi, on the same charge; they are still in solitary confinement and are under interrogation with the aim of obtaining a forced confession.<sup>22</sup>

## Retirees

The retirees waited until the beginning of June for Ebrahim Raisi's cabinet to approve a salary payment increase. On June 5, after a delay of 75 days, the government approved an increase of only 10% for retirees and non-minimum wage pensioners.<sup>23</sup> Angry with the cabinet decision, the pensioners took to the streets in different cities and chanted against the government officials.

The retirees who had previously protested every Sunday to demand the approval of wage optimization, salary increases based on the absolute poverty line, and free comprehensive health insurance, continued to do so.<sup>24</sup> In Tehran, Shiraz, and Isfahan, security officers attacked the pensioners to prevent them from holding a rally.

Following the pensioners' protest, a government spokesperson announced the president's special order to "examine and revise" the cabinet's resolution.

Social security retirees, 80% of whom receive salaries below the poverty line according to the pension centers, viewed the cabinet's decision as a "coup" that would impose poverty and hunger on a population of 4 million pensioners and retired workers.

The government, which withdrew the wage optimization bill from parliament in the winter of 2021, owes more than 400 trillion tomans to the Social Security Organization but refuses to pay it in cash and at once.

In addition to the social security retirees, oil and telecommunication industry pensioners also protested several times in different cities to demand salary increases, wage optimization, and wage arrear payments.<sup>25</sup>

23 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 7, 2022

24 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 12, 2022

25 [Council for Organizing Protests of Oil Contract Workers](#), April 12, 2022

## Oil Contract Workers

Following widespread strikes by contract and temporary oil and gas workers in the summer of 2021, parliament announced an urgent review of an official employment plan to address this issue. However, that review process has since stalled. The parliament's Social Committee modified some provisions in the plan. According to media reports, MPs have indicated that this plan, if approved, will only apply to government institutions and therefore will not affect the fate of temporary workers exploited by human resources companies. At the beginning of this year, private sector contractor companies refused to implement the minimum wage resolution ratified by the SLC.

On April 25, 2022, contract workers in oil, gas, and petrochemical projects in different regions initiated a new round of strikes, demanding a 58% wage increase, 20 days of work and ten days of rest per month, and better work conditions.<sup>26</sup>

In their statement, the contract workers emphasized salary increases commensurate with real price inflation and a minimum monthly salary of 16 million tomans (approximately \$530).

Those directly under contract with the public sector rallied in several regions to protest the non-implementation of the minimum wage approved by the SLC.<sup>27</sup>

In Assaluyeh, the petrochemical contract workers could push back the contractors and achieve part of their demands.<sup>28</sup>

*Table 4 - Protests by oil workers in the private and public sectors*

Private companies with temporary contracts	Public (government) sector
Alikhani Contractors	Oil and gas drilling projects
Farjo Contractors	Gachsaran Oil and Gas Company
Phase 19 Assaluyeh	Maroon Oil and Gas Company
Phase 13 Assaluyeh	Ilam Petrochemical
Kushan steel	Aghajari Oil and Gas
Kangan Petrochemical	Ministry of Oil
Petro Kian	
Hengam 1	
Bushehr Assaluyeh Green Tanks	
Jahan Pars	
Bidboland Refinery	
AGC of Dasht Abbas	
Shirvani Damavand Contractors	
Qitasi Islamabad West	
Panah Contracting, Gachsaran Refinery Industry	
Adish Contracting	
Setareh Phase 11	
Tabriz Petrochemical	
Cheshme Khosh oil field	

<sup>26</sup> [Council for Organizing Protests of Oil Contract Workers](#), April 26, 2022

<sup>27</sup> [Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting \(IRIB\)](#), May 12, 2022

<sup>28</sup> [Council for Organizing Protests of Oil Contract Workers](#), April 27, 2022

---

## City Services

Many employees in the municipality, the electricity company, the water and sewerage company, and the Ministry of Energy work under temporary contracts through third-party companies. These workers often receive their wages several months late.<sup>29</sup>

In some municipalities workers' arrears extend to over a year. Municipal managers and members of the city and village councils claim that the decrease in the municipalities' income and delay of contractors completing the administrative work causes the arrears. In the first three months of this year, the media reported on the delay in the payment of municipal workers' salaries in Shush<sup>30</sup>, Ahvaz, Rabat Karim, Yasuj<sup>31</sup>, Sisakht<sup>32</sup>, Lushan, Manjil, Behbahan, Rudbar<sup>33</sup>, Bojnord, Neishabour, Sarablah, Iranshahr<sup>34</sup>, Samsami, Fasa, and Ahar.<sup>35</sup>

In the water and sewerage sector, contract workers in the cities of Behbahan<sup>36</sup>, Yasouj, Baghmalek<sup>37</sup>, Banglan, Tehran, and provinces Hormozgan<sup>38</sup> and South Khorasan protested the delay receiving their wages. As mentioned earlier, in Yasuj, a worker named Saeed Farhadi set himself on fire to protest the non-payment of salaries and his demands being ignored.<sup>39</sup>

---

29 [Etamad](#), May 1, 2022  
30 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), May 6, 2022  
31 [Kebna News](#), May 22, 2022  
32 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), April 26, 2022  
33 [8 Day News](#), 15 May 2022  
34 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 4, 2022  
35 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), May 22, 2022  
36 [IRNA](#), May 11, 2022  
37 [Young Journalists Club](#), May 21, 2022  
38 [Aftab Jonoob](#), April 30, 2022  
39 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 25, 2022

## Other Protests

Employees of industrial firms, road and rail transportation, health and medicine, and mining also protested low wages, layoffs, harsh working conditions, temporary contracts, and delayed payment of wages during the spring.

Contract workers in the private and public sectors had the highest frequency of protests due to the government’s refusal to raise the wages of contract workers following the resolution of the Supreme Labor Council (SLC). Contract workers do not enjoy the benefits of official public sector employees, nor are they subject to the approval of the SLC. The Ministry of Cooperation, Labor, and Social Welfare fired a group of protesting workers in April.<sup>40</sup>

Health department employees continue demanding the implementation of the nursing services tariff law, the suspension of temporary contracts, and the end of the exploitation of nurses by human resources companies. They want hospitals to hire more nurses to reduce workload pressure on them. The head of Iran’s Nursing System Organization revealed in June that 5,000 nurses were laid off after the initial COVID-19 peak subsided.<sup>41</sup>

Table 5 - Other protests by the department

Sector	Location	Demands
Industry	Saipa Auto	Stop selling company shares
	Lorestan Agro-industrial Co. <sup>42</sup>	Stop outsourcing
	Kian Tire <sup>43</sup>	Return to work of suspended workers
	National Steel Group <sup>44</sup>	Increase wages - increase production
	Isfahan Tile <sup>45</sup>	Change working conditions and return to work
	Abadeh Cement	Pay deferred wages
	Kerman Steel <sup>46</sup>	Pay deferred wages
	Tehran Pharma	Pay deferred wages
	Qazvin Tulipress Factories <sup>47</sup>	Pay deferred wages
	Azar Glass Industries <sup>48</sup>	Pay deferred wages
	AzarAb Industries <sup>49</sup>	Pay deferred wages
	Haft-Tappeh Sugarcane <sup>50</sup>	Increase salary – convert temporary contracts to permanent
	Karun Agro-Industrial Co. <sup>51</sup>	Convert contracts to permanent – eliminate discrimination between formal and contract workers
	Delfan Granite	Reopen factory

40 [Radio Zamaneh](#), April 28, 2022

41 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 3, 2022

42 [Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting \(IRIB\)](#), April 6, 2022

43 [Radio Zamaneh](#), April 10, 2022

44 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), April 17, 2022

45 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 11, 2022

46 [Young Journalists Club](#), April 28, 2022

47 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 12, 2022

48 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), June 2, 2022

49 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), May 31, 2022

50 [Haft-Tappeh Sugarcane Workers Union](#), April 25, 2022

51 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), May 1, 2022

Health	Social Security Org. nurses <sup>52</sup> Tabriz Ali-Nasab Hospital <sup>53</sup> Lorestan Health Department Shiraz Health Department <sup>54</sup> Eastern Azerbaijan Health Corps <sup>55</sup>	Implement hard work pension law Pay deferred wages Official hiring Official hiring Pay deferred wages
Mining	Glendrood Coal Mines <sup>56</sup> Yurt Coal <sup>57</sup> Sungun Copper Complex <sup>58</sup>	Cancel outsourcing Cancel temporary contracts - cancel outsourcing Implement job classification plan – increase salary i
Transportation	Sanandaj taxi drivers <sup>59</sup> Tehran city train <sup>60</sup> Truck drivers <sup>61</sup> Bandar Abbas minibus drivers Railway line and technical building maintenance staff <sup>62</sup>	Increase salary
Government and public sector	Contractual employees of the Ministry of Labor <sup>63</sup> Contractual employees of the Ministry of Petroleum Contractual employees of other government institutions Electric company contract workers <sup>64</sup> Azad University staff <sup>65</sup>	Eliminate wage discrimination between official and contract employees Implement Supreme Labor Council resolution on wages

- 52 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 30, 2022  
53 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), May 10, 2022  
54 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), April 10, 2022  
55 [ISNA](#), April 13, 2022  
56 [IWNA](#), April 19, 2022  
57 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), May 24, 2022  
58 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), June 12, 2022  
59 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), May 27, 2022  
60 [Ensaf News](#), May 29, 2022  
61 [Echo Iran](#), April 9, 2022  
62 [Iran Labor Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 1, 2022  
63 [Asr Iran](#), April 19, 2022  
64 [Bargh News](#), May 7, 2022  
65 [Student News Agency](#), June 7, 2022

---

## Informal workers

The number of workers without employment contracts and health insurance has increased due to the recession and subsequent closure of production and service workshops. As in past years, many employers at the beginning of this year threatened to fire their workers because of the increase in the minimum wage.

In March, the media reported that Iran Office Machines Holding (Maadiran Industries) dismissed one-third out of the 1,700 employees due to an inability to pay wages.<sup>66</sup> Nantanz Steel dismissed 30 workers<sup>67</sup> and Lorestan Agriculture and Industry Complex fired 23 as well.<sup>68</sup> In the municipalities of Ilam and Neishabour, a total of 186 workers became unemployed at the beginning of the year. It's important to note that the actual number of unemployed workers in the country is several times higher than the statistics announced in the media.

According to government statistics, at least 3.5 million workers in Iran work without contracts and health insurance. Construction workers comprise the majority of informal workers, and some estimates indicate that at least 500,000 currently lack insurance.<sup>69</sup> They also experience the highest rate of work accidents and related deaths. The parliament plans to amend Article 5 of the Construction Workers Insurance Law which has already been delayed several times. The Minister of Labor said that this amendment will result in at least 400,000 workers receiving insurance.<sup>70</sup>

Peddlers constitute another large group of informal workers. In the new year, the government has required peddlers to pay a tax equal to 21% of their income.<sup>71</sup>

Digital ("gig") economy workers, who mainly deal with passenger services and goods delivery, comprise another group of informal workers lacking contracts and health insurance. The drivers of Snapp and Snappfood, the largest internet taxi and courier company in Iran, went on strike again in May<sup>72</sup> to demand higher wages, insurance, employment contracts, and job security. According to Snapp, over one million recruits began working at the company in 2021.

Another category of informal workers, kulbars and sukhtbars in Kurdistan and Baluchistan, face constant danger at the hands of military forces at border crossings. Kulbars are porters who carry a heavy cargo of commercial goods on their backs and cross dangerous border areas to avoid interception by guards. Sukhtbars are fuel carriers along Iran's eastern borders. The leading cause of death for this group results from government agents chasing and shooting at them. Between April and June 2022, 12 kulbars were killed and 85 were injured. According to information provided by Baluch activists, 28 sukhtbars were killed and 14 injured during the same period.

---

66 [Fars News Agency](#), March 25, 2022

67 [Tasnim News Agency](#), April 12, 2022

68 [Asr Iran](#), April 12, 2022

69 [ILNA](#), June 2, 2022

70 [Mehr News](#), May 20, 2022

71 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 10, 2022

72 [Zomit](#), May 22, 2022

## Migrant Workers

Since the Taliban's return to power, the number of Afghan immigrants in Iran has increased. The government uses unrealistic statistics and propaganda to portray immigrants as the reason for the increase in the unemployment rate.

The April price deregulations have forced immigrants to face more severe poverty because they cannot enjoy government subsidies and do not have Iranian identity cards which is necessary to access the government aid quota.

The government plans to implement an immigrant census in order to "organize" Afghan immigrants in Iran.<sup>73</sup> However, it is rumored that the actual purpose of this plan is to identify and deport immigrants without residence cards. Iran detains newly arrived Afghan immigrants in camps without facilities<sup>74</sup> and returns them to Afghanistan after a short time.

Migrant workers in Iran complain that they are exploited at work, that employers do not pay their wages, and that police officers violently arrest them.<sup>75</sup>

The Iranian government has leveraged its anti-immigrant policies to ban Afghans from staying in certain cities. For example, Bushehr Governorate has recently prohibited the residence and employment of migrant workers in Assaluyeh, Gonaweh, and Dailam.<sup>76</sup> Anti-Afghan immigrant propaganda has also caused people in some cities to demonstrate racist and violent behavior towards Afghans.<sup>77</sup>

---

73 [IMNA](#), April 28, 2022

74 [8 am](#), May 18, 2022

75 [8 am](#), May 18, 2022

76 [Asr Iran](#), April 2, 2022

77 [Radio Zamaneh](#), April 5, 2022



## Repression: Arresting Union Activists and Attacking Independent Labor Organizations

In response to the labor movement's progress in Iran, the government has carried out repressive attacks against labor organizations and union activists. The Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (SWTSBC), teachers' unions, the Coordinating Committee for the Establishment of Labor Organizations, and the Free Union of Iranian Workers were among the labor organizations attacked by the media branches of the security agencies. The security forces also arrested some of their members.

This spring, security forces arrested at least 93 teachers in different cities. While some of these teachers were released on bail, at least 19 of them are still in custody and under interrogation. Additionally, at least 51 current or retired teachers were summoned to either security or judicial institutions and interrogated or tried. The judiciary also sentenced some teachers to prison, imposed travel bans, administered fines, and suspended prison terms. (See table 1 and 2)

During the two-day bus driver strike, security agents attacked SWTSBC members and arrested at least 12 of them. Ten of these detainees were freed on bail, but Reza Shahabi and Hassan Saeedi are still imprisoned. (See table 3)<sup>78</sup>

Reyhaneh Ansarinejad, a board of directors' member for the Free Union of Iranian Workers, was arrested in May. Despite the paid bail, security agencies are still holding her in prison.

On the eve of International Labor Day in Kurdistan, security agencies summoned or arrested labor activists. The Ministry of Intelligence accused six detainees of "collaborating with the [Kurdish] Kumaleh Party," which is a charge used to issue long-term judicial sentences.

Two researchers, translators, and workers' rights defenders, Keyvan Mohtadi and Anisha Asadollahi, have been detained and kept in solitary confinement since May 8.

Security and judicial authorities have also summoned some members of the Coordinating Committee for the Creation of Labor Organizations and independent labor activists in Kurdistan.

*Table 6 - Labor activists and workers' rights defenders arrested or summoned between April and June 2022*

Summomed	
	Arman Sharifeh
	Muzafar Salehnia
	Sheth Amani
	Delir Nasrollahi
	Hajar Saeedi
	Abdullah Khairabadi
	Zahed Moradian
	Saeed Rezaei
	Ehsan Rezaei

78 [Radio Zamaneh](#), May 12, 2022

<b>Arrested</b>	Osman Esmaili - Freed on bail Morteza Saeedi - Freed on bail Amir Abbasi - Freed on bail Peyman Farhangian Kamiyar Fakoor - Freed on bail Sajjad Shukri Anisha Asadollahi Keyvan Mohtadi Nishman Rahmati - Freed on bail Parveen Abdollapour - Freed on bail Hassan Ezzati - Freed on bail Saeed Mohammadi - Freed on bail Omar Soleimani - Freed on bail Fateh Majidi - Freed on bail Afshin Rahimi - Freed on bail Valeh Zamani
-----------------	--

## Work-related Accidents

During the Iranian calendar year 1400 (March 21, 2021 - March 21, 2022), the Iranian Forensic Medicine Organization recorded more than 28,000 work related accidents, which is more than double the statistics announced by the Ministry of Cooperation, Labor, and Social Welfare (13,000).<sup>79</sup>

According to labor activists, about half of work related accidents occur in construction.<sup>80</sup> As previously stated, the plan to amend the Construction Workers Insurance Law is still pending in the Islamic Consultative Assembly (majlis/parliament). In May, retired Minister of Labor Hojatullah Abdul Maliki said that an amendment of Article 5 of this law would provide 400,000 construction workers with health insurance.<sup>81</sup> However, the parliament is delaying approval.

The May 23 collapse of the [Metropol building](#) in Abadan claimed at least 43 lives. Of these 43, 17 were workers, only 5 of whom had insurance.<sup>82</sup> According to the head of Abadan Construction Workers Trade Union, 70% of the 500 workers on this construction project were not insured.<sup>83</sup> The number of workers injured in this incident has not yet been announced.

Between March 21 and June 21, Iranian news media and sources close to workers reported the death of at least 109 workers and minor or severe injuries of 229 due to work accidents. This statistic does not include all work accidents, however.

At least 40 kulbars and sukhtbars lost their lives by falling from a significant height or experiencing another accident as a result of being chased by border guards.

The below table shows the work accident statistics during this spring. These statistics are collected from reports published in Iran's domestic news agencies, Kulbar News (exclusively covers Kurdistan's kulbars), and the Baluch Activists' Campaign, (publishes information related to Baluchs in Iran).

Table 7 - Work accidents

Section	Injured	Killed
Building	24	48
Industry	154	14
Mine	19	1
Public Service	12	9
Small workshops	15	31
Agriculture	0	5
Kulbars	85	12
Sukhtbars	14	28
Other	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>149</b>

79 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 15, 2022

80 [Iran Labor News Agency \(ILNA\)](#), June 2, 2022

81 [Mehr News](#), May 21, 2022

82 [Khabar News](#), June 14, 2022

83 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 3, 2022



## Previous Reports

[Report 20](#)

[Report 19](#)

[Report 18](#)

[Report 17](#)

[Report 16](#)

[Report 15](#)

[Annual Report no. 4](#)

[Annual Report no. 3](#)

[Annual Report no. 2](#)

[Annual Report no. 1](#)

[Special Report on Iranian Pensioners](#)

[Special Report on Wage Suppression of the Iranian Workers](#)

[Special Report on Oil Industry's Contractual Workers' Strike](#)

[Special Report on Teachers and Reopening of Schools in Iran](#)

[Special Report on Suppression of Trade Unions in Iran](#)

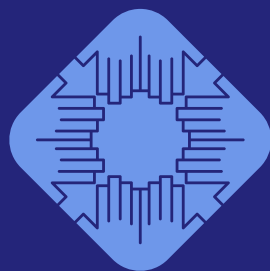
## Visit Zamaneh Media Labor Rights Page:

English

<https://en.radiozamaneh.com/labor/>

Persian

<https://www.tribunezamaneh.com/labor>



**Labor Rights in Iran**  
A Zamaneh Project