

Labor Rights in Iran



QUARTERLY REPORT NO. 22

July - September 2022



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Introduction

This publication is Zamaneh Media's 22nd Labor Rights Report. These reports focus on unemployment, deferment or wage arrears 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 quarterly report covers major labor rights issues, protests, and trends from July through September 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

Between July and September 2022, the nuclear negotiations between Iran and western countries (JCPOA) did not reach the expected result. The sanctions imposed against Iran's depleted economy remained in place, and the Iranian people, exhausted by the livelihood crisis, are left with little hope of improving the situation.

In the first year of Ebrahim Raisi's cabinet (a member of the "Death Commission" guilty of killing political prisoners in the 1980s), financial irregularities in the Ministry of Housing surfaced. President Raisi had promised that the ministry would build one million low-cost units each year to solve the housing crisis. A financial scandal occurred when the share of housing in the household budget reached 70%.¹ The government now seems to have quietly backtracked on its initial promise. The announced policy of controlling the rental market has also been ineffective. President Raisi's cabinet announced a ceiling of 25% for housing rent increases in big cities, but tenants had to pay a much higher deposit and monthly rent (more than twice the deposit and rent compared to the previous year). As a result, there has been a significant increase in migration from relatively prosperous urban areas to the outskirts of cities and areas without amenities.

The inflationary effect of removing the preferred currency on two groups of food and health goods became more visible. The inflation rate on food in July and August 2022 was over 80%.² The rate for the dairy group's per capita consumption reduction we reported in previous reports, reached 111%. The government, which was obliged in the budget law to stabilize food prices based on the August 2021 rate, backed out of this promise in the budget law amendment bill.

Health goods inflation increased by at least 39.6% compared to August 2021. The price of medicine has increased after the implementation of the Daroo-yar Plan. (In Daroo-yar plan, the insured are given a direct drug subsidy, which should moderate the increase in the price of the drugs to some extent. Also, the number of drugs covered by the insurance increased in this plan.)

All the while, political repression, especially government violence against women, has intensified. In July 2022, women defying the mandatory, "proper" hijab were arrested daily. Sepideh Rashno, a young woman wearing an 'improper' hijab, was arrested and tortured in Tehran. Zhina Mahsa Amini died in the hospital while in the custody of the Morality Police. The persecution and arrest of Baha'is and Sunni Muslims also intensified. The government arrested many Baha'i citizens for practicing their faith. More prisoners on death row were sent to the gallows. Arresting or summoning civil, political, student, and labor activists to prison continued as part of the government's repressive policy. Several student activists, including Yashar Dar al-Shafa, Abolfazl Nejadfateh, and Hasti Amiri, were summoned to prison. Leila Hosseinzadeh was arrested again. In Kurdistan, labor and ethnic rights activists were called and arrested.

Arash Ganji and Behnam Musivand, political prisoners, were transported from Evin prison to Rajaeshahr prison. Behnam Musivand went on a hunger strike to protest his situation. Mohammad Habibi, Jafar Ebrahimi, and Rasoul Bodaghi, members of Iran's Teachers' Trade Association (ITTA), Reza Shahabi and Hassan Saeedi, two members of the Syndicate of Workers

1 [Eghtesad 24](#), July 7, 2022

2 [Iran Statistics Center](#), July and August 2022 consumer price index report

of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company. (SWTSBC), and Keyvan Mohtadi, a translator and researcher who defends workers' rights, are still in prison under the pressure of the security institutions. Sepideh Gholian, arrested and sentenced to jail during the labor protests at Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Agro-Industry Co., went on hunger strike in prison.

The continuation of the water crisis caused public protests in several cities, including Hamedan, Shahrekord, Urmia, Isfahan, and Behbahan. Farmers in the provinces of Isfahan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, and Khuzestan protested the government's unfair policies in allocating farmers' water to factories such as steel industries. In Hamedan and Shahrekord, the government, as always, violently suppressed and arrested those protesting water shortage, water cuts, or contaminated drinking water.

This summer, the scope of union and labor protests became wider. Workers rallied or went on strike in dozens of large manufacturing and industrial units, including the oil and gas, steel, and mining industries. With continuous and widespread protests, the social security retirees finally forced the government to back down and accept their demand to review the rights of social security pensioners.

Protests

Contractual and Official Oil Workers

Official and contract workers in the energy sector protested the non-fulfillment of their wage and welfare demands. The official employees of the Ministry of Oil want to increase their salaries by more than 10%. They held rallies several times in different regions and gave the officials of the Ministry of Oil a deadline to amend the salary approval.³ Official employees in oil and gas projects have said that they will rally in Tehran if their demand for the cancellation of the government decree to increase only 10% of salaries is not fulfilled.



Oil workers

Project/contract workers in oil and gas projects and refineries also went on strike this summer. The poor condition of air pollution and long working hours in the summer of 2022 caused dozens of workers to be sick and transferred to medical centers.⁴ Sources close to the workers reported the death of at least two workers due to heatstroke.

Contract workers at oil and gas and petrochemical projects went on strike in July and August 2022 to protest poor housing and food services, inadequate wages, and harsh working conditions. They want to reduce working days to 20 days per month and increase rest days to 10 days. The Islamic parliament, which had promised to approve the plan to hire contract workers for the public sector, has only issued a “status change” permit for a group of workers belonging to the families of military personnel who participated in the Iran-Iraq war.

3 [Council for Organizing Protests of Oil Contract Workers](#), August 11, 2022

4 [Rouydad 24](#), August 12, 2022

Table 1 - Protests of oil, gas, and petrochemical workers between July and September 2022

Protest Group	Demands	The Form of the Protest
Contract workers of oil and gas projects in the employment of contracting companies ⁵	Wage increase Reduction of working days Increasing welfare services Improving the quality of food and accommodation	Strike in more than 40 refineries and oil and gas projects
Oil well guards ⁶	Changing the employment status from contract to permanent Work benefits	Rally in front of the office of management of southern oil-rich areas
Overhaul workers of Tehran Refinery ⁷	Cancellation of the mandatory increase in working hours	Strike
Aram Pars Petrochemical in Hengam ⁸	Payment of arrears	Rally
Abadrahan Asaluyeh ⁹	Payment of arrears	Rally
Oil and gas official employees ¹⁰	Salary increase	Rally

Industrial and Mining Workers

The workers in Iran's industrial and mining sectors are in danger of being fired due to the economic recession. Between spring 2021 and spring 2022, more than 13% of workers in the industry moved to the service sector, according to the latest report of the Statistical Center of Iran.

Employment in the industrial sector is under threat now more than ever due to the continuation of sanctions and exchange rate deregulation. The increase in production costs, financial corruption, and the general waste of financial resources in large industrial units have put industrial workers at risk of being fired.

One example of widespread financial corruption in industrial units is the embezzlement of 92 trillion tomans by Sepahan Mobarakeh Steel Company in Isfahan province. In the summer of 2021, Mobarakeh steel workers went on strike for several days, protesting wage arrears, low wages, and discrimination between official and contract employees. It led to the arrest and dismissal of several workers' representatives. A year after this strike, the investigation committee revealed that the managers of the company had paid 92 trillion tomans of the income intended for worker compensation to religious and military institutions.¹¹

The Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization ([IMIDRO](#)), a government institution, and the Welfare Development Investment Private Joint Stock Company affiliated with the Workers' Welfare Bank, are the principal shareholders of Mobarakeh Steel Company in Isfahan.

Financial corruption in the steel industry does not end with Mobarakeh Steel. Before disclosing what has happened in this semi-state company, the workers of the Iran National Steel Industrial

5 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 27, 2022

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

7 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 27, 2022

8 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 9, 2022

9 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 26, 2022

10 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 13, 2022

11 [The full text of the investigative report into Sepahan Mobarakeh Steel Company](#)

Group (INSIG) in Ahvaz had warned about the influence of the state mafia in the production and pricing of steel products and had held a rally to voice their disapproval. In the summer of 2022, the workers at INSIG once again protested for several days against the factory owners' decision to stop the production line, ban some protesting workers from entering the factory, not pay the poor weather allowance, and not implement the job classification plan. The protesters gathered in front of the steel factory building and government institutions in Ahvaz.¹²

The workers of the Sungun copper mine, located in Varzaqan county in East Azerbaijan province, went on strike for several days to protest low wages, exploitation by various contracting companies, and the non-implementation of the job classification plan. The police attacked the gathering and arrested at least 22 workers. The contractors also prevented the protesting workers from entering the workplace. News sources close to the Sungun copper workers announced the dismissal of at least 30 workers with more than ten years of experience.¹³

The workers of industrial and mining units in other cities also protested the wage arrears, non-implementation of the job classification plan, forced increases in working hours, and low wages. The delay in paying salaries and the non-implementation of the job classification plan were the two main reasons for the industrial and mining workers' protests.

Table 2 - Protests of industry and mining sector workers between July and September 2022

Unit	Reasons for protest	Form of the protest
Karoon Agriculture and Industry Complex ¹⁴	Salary inequality with formal workers Lack of job security and temporary contracts	Strike
Darugar Holding ¹⁵	Wage arrears Stopping the production line	Rally
Kish Wood Industry Factory ¹⁶	Wage arrears	Rally
Iran Ofogh Industrial Development Company (IOID) - oil and gas ¹⁷	Wage arrears	Rally
Asminon Chromite Mine ¹⁸	Layoffs Wage arrears	Rally
National Steel Group ¹⁹	Low salary Decrease in production Threatening workers with dismissal	Rally
Tolypers Chemical and Consumer Goods ²⁰	Wage arrears Lack of job security	Rally
Maadiran Group (Office Machines)	Low salary Long working hours	Rally

12 [Telegram channel of National Steel Group workers](#), July 31, 2022

13 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 7, 2022

14 [Radio Zamaneh](#), September 2, 2022

15 [Radio Zamaneh](#), June 26, 2022

16 [ILNA](#), August 18, 2022

17 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), June 27, 2022

18 [ILNA](#), July 16, 2022

19 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 28, 2022

20 [ILNA](#), July 22, 2022

Golgozar Mining and Industrial Company (GEG), Sirjan City ²¹	Unknown	Strike
Jahan Vegetable Oil Co., Zanjan City ²²	Dismissal of 60 workers	Rally
Narges Shiraz Vegetable Oil Co. ²³	Low salary Sale of factory accessories	Rally
Rafsanjan Oxin Steel Co. ²⁴	Delay in payment of wages	Strike
Jil Karoon Brick Factory, Khuzestan Province ²⁵	Factory sale and unemployment of workers	Rally
Pars Pamchal Chemical Co. ²⁶	Delay in payment of wages	Rally

Municipal and Contract Workers

Municipal workers, mainly employed on temporary contracts and through contractors, have the highest unpaid wages compared to other sectors.

Between July and September 2022, more than a dozen city workers rallied or went on strike to protest unpaid wages. Sisakht municipal workers in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province still have the longest wage arrears. The contractors of Khorramshahr municipality have not paid the employer's share of the insurance premiums for nearly one year and six months.

Due to the dispersion and temporary nature of their contracts, the municipal workers do not have a union organization, so they have not been able to organize coordinated nationwide protests.

Table 3 - Protests by municipal workers, July through September 2022

Municipality / Group	Demands	Form of Protest
Khorramshahr ²⁷	3 months' salary 17 months insurance premium	Rally
Ilam ²⁸	1 month salary 3 months insurance 3 months of benefits	Media coverage
Sar Pol Zehab ²⁹	3 months' salary	Media coverage
Yasuj ³⁰	4 months' salary	Media coverage Garbage dump in front of social security building
Sisakht ³¹	13 months' salary New Year's bonus	Rally
Neyshabour ³²	Arrears	Rally
Andimeshk ³³	12 months' salary	Rally

21 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 17, 2022

22 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 29, 2022

23 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 25, 2022

24 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 31, 2022

25 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 30, 2022

26 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), July 25, 2022

27 [ILNA](#), June 21, 2022

28 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 3, 2022

29 [IRB](#), June 22, 2022

30 [Tasnim News](#), August 2, 2022

31 [Sobh-e-Zagros](#), July 15, 2022

32 [Kargar News](#), July 26, 2022

33 [Jamaran](#), August 9, 2022

Hoviza ³⁴	3 months' salary	Media coverage
Asalem ³⁵	Unknown	Rally
Shush (Susa) ³⁶	3 months' salary	Strike
Zarneh ³⁷	7 months' salary 53 months of insurance	Media coverage
Visian ³⁸	8 months' salary	Strike
Iranshahr ³⁹	6 months' salary 14 years of New Year's bonus	Media coverage
Roodbar ⁴⁰	6 months' salary	Media coverage
Waste recycling of Tehran municipality ⁴¹	Formal contract Cancellation of mandatory overtime	Media coverage
Ahvaz city train ⁴²	6 months' salary	Media coverage
Koohdasht ⁴³	Unknown	Rally
Line 3 of the Tehran Metro ⁴⁴	Wage arrears Insurance coverage Payment of benefits	Strike

Health Care Workers

The seventh wave of the Covid-19 epidemic increased the pressure on medical staff and nurses. The Ministry of Health and Medical Education, which has not received permission from the Plan and Budget Organization (PBO) to hire contract nurses officially, once again hired them with 89-day temporary contracts.

Nurses and medical staff protested in several cities. Medical interns also held rallies protesting wage discrimination.

Table 4 - Protests of healthcare workers between July and September 2022

Protest Group	Reasons / Demands	Form of Protest
North Khorasan medical staff ⁴⁵	Unknown	Rally coinciding with the President's visit
Intern medical students Yazd University of Medical Sciences Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Tehran ⁴⁶ Mashhad University of Medical Sciences Ahvaz Jondishapur University of Medical Sciences	Demand for additional wages due to Covid-19 Request to increase scholarship	Rally

34 [IWNA](#), August 16, 2022

35 [Radio Zamaneh](#), September 1, 2022

36 [ILNA](#), July 31, 2022

37 [ILNA](#), September 5, 2022

38 [Mehr News](#), July 5, 2022

39 [Aftab News](#), August 11, 2022

40 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 29, 2022

41 [ILNA](#), July 28, 2022

42 [ILNA](#), August 9, 2022

43 [Rah-e-Dana](#), August 28, 2022

44 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 31, 2022

45 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), June 23, 2022

46 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 8, 2022

Kermanshah nurses ⁴⁷	Protesting dismissals, after the epidemic rate has dropped Objection to temporary contracts	Rally
Tehran Farhangian Hospital ⁴⁸	Objection to six months of salary arrears	Rally
Nurses of Pastor-No Hospital in Mashhad ⁴⁹	Objection to three months of salary arrears	Rally

Public Transit Workers

In the road and rail transportation sector, line maintenance and technical infrastructure workers employed through contracting companies continue to suffer from delayed wages, removal of employment benefits, non-provision of work tools by the employer, and temporary contracts. During the summer, they rallied sporadically in several areas.

Table 5 – Protests by public transit workers between July and September 2022

Protest group	Reasons for protest	Form of the protest
Zarand maintenance workers of Railway Lines and Technical Buildings, (Zarand County, Kerman Province) ⁵⁰	Delay in payment of wages Non-payment of benefits	Media coverage
East Zahedan maintenance workers of Railway Lines and Technical Buildings ⁵¹	Delay in payment of wages Non-payment of benefits Failure to provide work clothes by the employer	Rally
Hormozgan maintenance workers of Railway Lines and Technical Buildings	Non-payment of overtime	Rally
Maintenance workers of Railway Lines and Technical Buildings in Qom and Hamedan ⁵²	3 months' salary arrears Temporary contracts	Media coverage
Bandar Abbas minibus drivers ⁵³	Reduction of fuel quota Increase in the price of auto parts and tires	Rally
Urmia bus drivers ⁵⁴	Unknown	rally
Kermanshah truck drivers	Inadequate freight price Expensive spare parts	rally
Sirik truckers (Sirik County, Hormozgan Province) ⁵⁵	Reduction of fuel quota	rally
Qorveh truckers (Qorveh County, Kurdistan Province) ⁵⁶	Inadequate freight price	Strike

Public and Semi-Public Sector Workers

The government's large budget deficit caused only a 10% increase in the meager salaries of government employees since the beginning of the year 1401 in the Iranian calendar (March

47 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), July 14, 2022

48 [Radio Zamaneh](#), September 1, 2022

49 [ILNA](#), July 5, 2022

50 [ILNA](#), June 25, 2022

51 [ILNA](#), August 11, 2022

52 [ILNA](#), August 15, 2022, and the [official Telegram channel of Railway Lines and Technical Buildings maintenance workers](#)

53 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), July 9, 2022

54 [Young Journalists Club](#), August 28, 2022

55 [Rokna News](#), August 15, 2022

56 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 25, 2022

21, 2022).

The Telecommunication Company of Iran, where the IRGC is the main shareholder, reduced its employee welfare benefits.

Table 6 - Public and semi-public sector employee protests between July and September 2022

Protest group	Reason(s) for protest	Form of the protest
Telecommunication Company of Iran employees in these cities: Yazd Esfahan ⁵⁷ Urmia ⁵⁸ Hamedan ⁵⁹ Bojnurd ⁶⁰ Ilam ⁶¹ Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari ⁶² Ahvaz ⁶³ East Azerbaijan ⁶⁴	Removal of welfare benefits Wage arrears	Rally in different cities
Telecom contract employees (Telecommunication Company of Iran)	Temporary contracts	Rally
High voltage contract workers in these cities: Zanjan ⁶⁵ Khuzestan Kohgiluyeh and Boyerahmad ⁶⁶ Hormozgan East Azarbaijan ⁶⁷	Temporary contracts Non-implementation of the salary-increase resolution of the Supreme Labor Council	Rally
Agricultural Jihad employees ⁶⁸	Low salary Wage discrimination Failure to implement the salary equalization plan	Rally
Employees of public and private banks ⁶⁹	Low salary	Rally

57 [ILNA](#), July 24, 2022

58 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 14, 2022

59 [Tasnim News](#), August 18, 2022

60 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 17, 2022

61 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), July 5, 2022

62 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), July 12, 2022

63 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), July 17, 2022

64 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 30, 2022

65 [IWNA](#), August 4, 2022

66 [ILNA](#), July 25, 2022

67 [ILNA](#), August 6, 2022

68 [ILNA](#), July 5, 2022

69 [Didban-e-Iran](#) (Iran Watch), June 27, 2022

Customs employees of Arvand Free Zone ⁷⁰	Dismissal of 130 workers	Media coverage
Karaj firefighters ⁷¹	Wage arrears	Rally
	Non-payment of employment benefits	
School janitors ⁷²	Failure to implement the salary equalization plan	Rally

The Retirees

The government was finally obliged to increase the salaries of Social Security pensioners after a warning from the Speaker of the Parliament. The Iranian Parliament considered the cabinet's decision to increase pensioners' salaries by only 10% illegal.⁷³ After that, the government promised to increase the wages of Social Security retirees. As of mid-September, the government has yet to fulfill its promise.

Social Security retirees have continuously protested the government's decision in the summer of 2022. The security forces arrested protesting retirees in several cities. At least 12 retirees were arrested in Ahvaz.⁷⁴ Another group was arrested in Kermanshah. Esmail Gerami, a retired union activist, has been imprisoned since March 2021.

The cabinet has delayed revising the pensioners' salaries while it has prepared a new bill to increase the salaries of government and military retirees.

The retirees of the Telecommunication Company of Iran (TCI) also held a rally in several cities, protesting the removal of welfare benefits and ignoring the regulations approved in 2010. The TCI, handed over to the IRGC Cooperative Foundation and Farman Imam Executive Headquarters in a dubious contract, must fully pay the benefits of official employees and retirees. In Tehran, the security forces surrounded the protesting retirees and arrested several of them for a short time.⁷⁵

The National Airlines of Iran's pensioners also rallied, protesting the government's plan to merge the Aviation Pension Fund with the Civil Servants Pension Fund.

Ebrahim Raisi's cabinet and the parliament are planning to change the pension laws to the detriment of retirees. In July, the head of the Civil Servants Pension Fund called to reform social security laws. Previously, the government and parliament have twice tried to amend the social security laws, but these plans still needed to be revised. The government's goal in reforming social security laws is to increase the minimum retirement age, reduce retirement pay, and eliminate benefits related to complex and harmful jobs.⁷⁶

Informal Workers

The economic recession has increased the number of fired workers. Unemployed workers turn to "informal" jobs such as delivery for online service companies (i.e., Snap, Snapfood, Digikala, etc.), carrying goods in the market, peddling, night guards in half-finished buildings, and in border areas to carry illegal cargo (kulbars), all without any contracts and insurance coverage.

⁷⁰ [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 3, 2022

⁷¹ [Alborz News](#), August 24, 2022

⁷² [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), September 6, and [August 28](#), 2022

⁷³ [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 20, 2022

⁷⁴ [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 31, 2022

⁷⁵ [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 1, 2022

⁷⁶ [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 11, 2022

Porters earn less due to the economic recession, and kulbars in the eastern and western border areas are routinely the targets of deadly shootings by border guards.

The administrators of Tehran municipality have said that by organizing the peddlers and forcing them to register in a designated online system, they have reduced the number of peddlers from between 20,000 and 30,000 to 5,800 in Tehran.⁷⁷

The officers in charge of clearing sidewalks deal violently with peddlers in different regions of Iran. In Ahvaz, the police raided and destroyed the peddlers' market.⁷⁸ Shiraz municipality denied any violence against a hawker whose beating, captured on video, spread on social networks.⁷⁹ In Bandar-e Mahshahr and Mollasani (Khuzestan Province), Hesarak of Karaj (Tehran Province)⁸⁰, Qazvin⁸¹, and Sanandaj⁸², the peddlers were not spared from the violence of government agents. The government has moved to forcefully implement the plan to 'register' peddlers by forcing them to designated remote areas outside the city limits and high-traffic centers.⁸³

The guards in the country's western and eastern border areas routinely shoot at kulbars and sukhtbars. Kulbars are porters who carry heavy cargo of commercial goods on their backs and cross dangerous border areas so that guards do not intercept them. Sukhtbars are fuel carriers. In the summer of 2022, the news media and institutions monitoring the human rights situation in Kurdistan reported the murder of at least 14 kulbars. All of these kulbars were killed by border guards. 77 kulbars were also injured: 72 kulbars were shot by government agents or fell from a height due to the pursuit of agents, and five kulbars were injured due to the explosion of mines left over from the Iran-Iraq war or newly planted mines on the border of Iran and the Iraqi Kurdistan region.

If we review these statistics separately by month, July and August were two especially deadly months for kulbars. In July, six kulbars were killed by border guards⁸⁴, and at least 24 were injured by gunfire from security and military officers. In August, government agents killed eight kulbars and wounded 24. In June, at least 17 kulbars were injured, 14 of them by the officers' bullets. Three others died from falling from a height while running away from government agents who were in pursuit.⁸⁵

In Sistan and Baluchestan, government agents killed 18 sukhtbars with direct fire. Twenty-seven also died due to road accidents or vehicle overturns when fleeing from the pursuit of government agents. At least three of the dead were children. During this period, sukhtbars were also injured.

77 [Shargh Daily](#), August 10, 2022

78 [Khakzadegan](#), September 4, 2022

79 [IRNA](#), July 8, 2022

80 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 26, 2022

81 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 17, 2022

82 [Free Union of Iranian Workers](#), August 3, 2022

83 [Mehr News](#), August 1, 2022

84 [Colbarnews](#), August 24, 2022

85 [Kurdistan Human Rights Network](#), July 23, 2022

Suppression of Unionists and Labor Activists

In the summer of 2022, Iran’s security and judicial institutions continued to arrest and issue prison terms to labor activists and members of teachers’ and workers’ unions. Some members of the teachers’ unions, arrested in April and May, were temporarily released on bail.

Sara Siahpour, a teacher union activist in Alborz province, was arrested in August 2022 and was released on bail after a few days. Three members of the teacher’s union in Tehran, two members of the board of directors of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company , and Keyvan Mohtadi, a researcher who defends workers’ rights, are still locked up in prison despite the end of their “interrogation” by the security agents.

Several student activists, journalists, and civil activists allied with the workers were arrested in different cities or called to prison to serve their sentences. In Kurdistan, more than ten labor activists were summoned to the security institutions. Protesting workers were arrested from Sungun Copper Company, in Varzaqan county in the province of East Azerbaijan, and social security pensioners, Iran Air (Homa Airlines), and Telecommunication Company of Iran (TCI) in Ahvaz and Tehran. Dozens of teachers and labor activists in different cities were summoned to court. In production units, private and public sector employers fired the protesting workers. AzarAb Industries’ labor activists were sentenced to whipping and fines.

Table 7 - Suppression of union and labor activists between July and September 2022

Suppression Type	Name(s)	Type of Activism
Continued detention	Jafar Ebrahimi Mohammad Habibi Rasul Bodaghi Sara Siahpour	Teacher union activist
Continued detention	Keyvan Mohtadi	Researcher who defends workers’ rights
Continued detention	Reza Shahabi Hassan Saidi	Members of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company
Arrested	Valiullah Mahmoudi Arshad Kazempour Jafar Abbaspour Mehrdad Monfared Khodaei Farzad Zalizadeh Ismail Izadkhah Kazem Shahi Saleh Mohammadi Mohammad Mahmoudi Ismail Ebadi Ziad Mahmoudi	Workers of Sungun Copper Complex ⁸⁶

Arrested	12 Ahvaz Social Security pensioners ⁸⁷ Several protesting employees of the Agricultural Jihad Organization Several workers of Karun cement factory	Retiree in Ahvaz
Arrested	Leila Hosseinzadeh	Student activist who defends workers' rights
Summoned to court	Fatima Zandkarimi Salah Haji Mirzaei Majid Karimi Reza Moradi Ghiyath Nemati Reza Tahmasebi Sadegh Kanani Nasrin Karimi Faisal Nouri Kourosh Ezzati Rozgar Heydari Mukhtar Asadi Aram Ebrahimi Behzad Qavami Anoush Adeli Mahmoud Sedighipour Aziz Ghasemzadeh Mohammad Javad Hojjati Saidi Jahanbakhsh Ladjevardi Ali Nahali Golnaz Ghadimkhani	Members of teachers' unions ⁸⁸
Summoned to court	Sheth Amani Armin Sharifah Zahid Moradian Haujin Latifi	Workers' rights activists in Kurdistan

87 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 31, 2022

88 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 17, 2022

Summomed to the security police	Ghalib Hosseini Khalid Hosseini Muzafar Salehnia Namaq Babakhani Khabat Dehdar	Labor activists in Kurdistan
Summomed to prison/execution of sentence	Asal Mohammadi Raham Yeganeh Nasrin Javadi Parveen Mohammadi Yashar Darulshafa	Defender of workers' rights
Sentence issued	Kamiyar Fakoor	Defender of workers' rights

Migrant Workers

The return of the Taliban to power has increased the number of Afghan refugees who have sought refuge in Iran. Iran continues to implement severe restrictions against Afghan immigrants. From the beginning of the Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2022), the Islamic Republic of Iran has implemented a project entitled “Census of Afghan Immigrants.” After the registration deadline, Iran’s Ministry of Interior announced that it would forcefully deport immigrants not registered under this plan. Iran has expelled many Afghan refugees in the past months.

In September, Hasht Sobh newspaper in Afghanistan listed the most critical challenges faced by Afghan refugees and immigrants in Iran as “passing the mandatory obstacles, not having access to school, strictness in visa renewal, buying SIM cards, using the Internet and opening a bank account.”⁸⁹

When the school season reopened, Afghan children faced difficulties enrolling in school, and it is estimated that around 200,000 school-age Afghan children in Iran are deprived of education.⁹⁰

According to government officials, in the academic year 2021-22, nearly one million students in Iran were deprived of education. Economic poverty, and the lack of access to the Internet and virtual education, main reasons for the rising number of children missing out on education.

89 [8 AM](#), August 31, 2022

90 [Shargh Daily](#), September 9, 2022

Work-Related Deaths

The deterioration of economic conditions has increased the suicide rate in Iran. Government sources do not officially confirm the increase in the number of suicides of workers, but the domestic media publish more news about the suicide of workers or their families every month.⁹¹ In the summer of 2022, three fired Ilam Petrochemical workers⁹², a fired Lahijan water and sewage worker⁹³, and a Haft-Tappeh sugarcane worker who was threatened with firing all committed suicide⁹⁴. Delays in the payment of wages, dismissals, insufficient wages, and despair at their changing situation are among the main factors that lead workers to commit suicide.

Employers and the government, who have imposed wage suppression and harsh living conditions on workers by not fulfilling their legal duties in providing occupational and psychological safety and security to workers, play the primary role in the death of workers due to work accidents or attempted suicide.

According to government officials, the rate of work accidents in Iran has decreased, but in reality the number of deaths caused by work accidents in the three months of summer increased significantly compared to the previous season. In just 48 hours in July 2022, 4 workers lost their lives.⁹⁵

The deadly heat in the south of Iran made the oil and gas project workers sick en masse. A car accident carrying seasonal workers in Shushtar County, Khuzestan Province, killed 16 workers.⁹⁶

Construction workers and well diggers, deprived of social security and accident insurance, are still victims of unsafe working conditions.

The following table shows the work accidents reported in the Iranian domestic media. The number of work accidents in Iran are likely more than what the domestic media report.

Table 8 - Work incidents from July through September 2022

Sector	Injured	Deaths
Construction	13	23
Large industrial workshops	69	23
Small workshops	22	7
Mining	0	6
Public sector	16	19
Agriculture	10	21
Total	130	99

91 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 2, 2022

92 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 9, 2022, and [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 14, 2022

93 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 31, 2022

94 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 17, 2022

95 [Radio Zamaneh](#), July 13, 2022

96 [Radio Zamaneh](#), August 30, 2022

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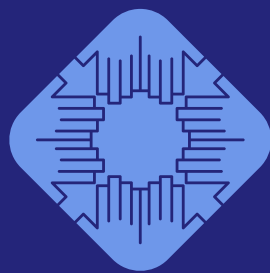
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