

بررسی سالانه ی نقض حقوق سندیکایی در جهان

گروه همبستگی...

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کتاب ۲۰۰۷ :

بررسی سالانه ی نقض حقوق سندیکایی در جهان

کتاب بررسی سالانه ی نقض حقوق سندیکایی در جهان از سوی اتحاد جهانی سندیکاها IGB منتشر گردید. این سندیکای جهانی در نوامبر ۲۰۰۶ تاسیس و نماینده گی ۱۶۸ میلیون کارگر وشاغل متشکل در ۳۹۵ تشکل عضو خود را در ۱۵۳ کشور و مناطق جهان بر عهده دارد .

طی سال ۲۰۰۶ در سطح جهان مجموعاً ۱۴۴ نفر از فعالین سندیکایی به قتل رسیدند . جرم آنان فعالیت برای تحقق حق فعالیت سندیکایی بود. همچنین بیش از ۸۰۰ نفر قربانی ضرب و شتم و یا شکنجه گردیدند . این بررسی را کتابی انجام داده که قدرتمندترین سندیکای کارگری جهان IGB با ۱۶۸ میلیون عضو ناشرش می باشد. این کتاب ۴۰۰ صفحه ای با توضیح و تشریح جزئیات ۵۰۰۰ مورد دستگیری فعالین سندیکایی و بیش از ۸۰۰۰ مورد اخراج از کار بدلیل فعالیت سندیکایی را گزارش می دهد . علاوه بر اینها ۴۸۴ مورد تازه از دستگیری فعالین کارگری نیز بررسی شده است .

فعالین کارگری که تلاش می کنند از راه فعالیت های سندیکایی شرایط زندگی شان را بهبود بخشند، درکشور های گوناگون هر چه بیشتر تحت فشار و سرکوب و وحشت قرار گرفته اند. به گفته ی GUY Ryder رئیس IGB در مواردی که بررسی شده است سرکوب و خشنونت علیه فعالین کارگری همچنان در سال ۲۰۰۷ نیز ادامه داشته است .

کلمبیا با ۷۸ مورد قتل فعالین کارگری خطرناکترین کشور جهان محسوب می گردد. این قتل ها قطعاً توسط جوخه های مرگ شبه نظامی وابسته به دولت و کارفرمایان و یا به دستور آنان انجام گرفته است . بین ۱۹۹۴ تا ۲۰۰۶ شاهد ۱۱۶۵ مورد قتل فعالین کارگری بوده ایم که تنها ۵۶ نفر متهم به ارتکاب این قتل ها به دادگاه کشانده شدند و ۱۴ مورد از آنان محکوم گردیدند.

در فلپین موجی از خشنونت بر علیه فعالین کارگری به راه افتاده است که طی آن شاهد قتل ۳۳ تن از فعالین سندیکایی و مدافع حقوق کارگری و دستگیریهای موقت و بازجویی پس دادن به پلیس و نظامیان بوده ایم .

در این بررسی همچنین موارد متعدد اخراجهای دسته جمعی ، ضرب و شتم ، دستگیری وتهدید فعالین کارگری و خانواده های آنان در کشورها و مناطق دیگر جهان گزارش شده است . کشور های دیکتا توری و دولت های

اتوریتز نظیر روسیه سفید ، برمه، چین ، کوبا، اکوادور، ایران ، کره شمالی و کشورهای عربی حوزه خلیج همچنان با تلاشگران سازمانیابی مستقل سندیکایی مقابله می کنند . در چین بیش از ۱۰۰ تن را در شرایط غیر انسانی در زندانها یا اردوگاههای کار اجباری محبوس نموده اند .

دولت زیمبابوه سیاست خشن ضد کارگری بر علیه جنبش کارگری را ادامه می دهد و بعنوان نمونه در یک حرکت اعتراضی ۱۵ نفر از مجموعه ۲۵۶ نفر شرکت کننده در اعتراض کارگری دستگیر شده اند که یکی از آنان نماینده ی کنگره سراسری اتحادیه ی کارگری زیمبابوه بود که در زندان بشدت مورد شکنجه قرار گرفت .

همچنین در برخی کشورهای صنعتی پیشرفته از نقض آشکار حقوق گزارش هایی وجود دارد. بعنوان مثال استرالیا که با قانون گمراه کننده ی " آزادی انتخاب محل کار " موارد متعددی از حقوق شاغلین را ربود و فعالیت سندیکایی آنان را با محدودیت مواجه ساخت و تنبیه ی سنگینی را به طرفداران جنبش سندیکایی تحمیل نمود.

دولت ۱۰۷ کارگرساختمانی که برای جلوگیری از اخراج همکاران دست به حرکت اعتراضی زدند به محاکمه کشاند و جریمه های نقدی اخذ نمود .

در ایالت متحده آمریکا، در نتیجه ی یکی از تصمیمات مدیران امور کار، حق تشکل از میلیونها شاغل گرفته شد وقتی تعریف بخشی از شاغلین بسط داده شد .

در سوئیس نیز دولت سعی کرد آزادی تشکل را در قانون کار کشور زیر سوال برد . امری که سندیکای SGB سرانجام موفق شد با آن مقابله کند.

در بررسی سالانه تشکل ستیزی کنسرن های چند ملیتی منجمله ، Coca Cola , Wal- Mart , Goodyear , Nestle , Boygues زیر نورافکن برده شده و نشان داده شده است که بر علیه سندیکاها چگونه فعالیت های خرابکارانه تکرار می گردد و نشان داده می شود کنسرن های تولیدی شناخته شده در سطح جهان چگونه در بخشهای زیرمجموعه بعنوان مثال در بخش کشاورزی و صنعت نساجی حق تشکل یابی را لگد کوب می کنند .

در لهستان حتی چند فقره از این کنسرن های چند ملیتی کوشیدند، از فضای سندیکا ستیزی در این کشور سوء استفاده کنند و ابتدایی ترین حقوق را نیز محدود تر و شرایط کار را سخت تر نمایند.

زنان کارگر همچنان تحت ستم و استثمار مضاعف قرار دارند، بویژه در مناطق آزاد تجاری در آسیا ، آفریقا ، و آمریکای لاتین که اصولاً زنان در آنجا مشغول به کارند و استثمار می گردند. بسیاری اخراج شده اند و کارفرمایان از رعایت حقوق آنان خودداری کرده اند .

در مراکش کارگران نساجی باید در دادگاه پاسخ گو می شدند چونکه دست به اعتصاب زدند و زنانی کارگری که متحصن بودند بشدت توسط پلیس مورد ضرب و شتم قرار گرفتند .

در کشورهای حوزه خلیج بد رفتاری با خدمتکاران خانگی بشدت رایج است . آنانیکه جزء استثمار شده ترین لایه ی نیروی ۹۰ میلیونی کارگران مهاجر در سطح جهان محسوب می گردند.

در منطقه ی پاسیفیک – آسیا ، ستم بر مردم کارکن بیش از هر کجا در کشور های بنگلادش ، کامبوج ، هند، اندونزی ، مالزی ، و سریلانکا زمانی آشکارتر می شود که بدانیم ۵۰۰۰ کارگروزن و مرد تنها به جرم فعالیت سندیکایی از حق کار محروم شده اند و یا وقتی فعالین کارگری توسط نظامیان در نپال به قتل می رسند .

در کامبوج که برای نقض حقوق کار و سیاست های ضد کارگری شهره است و در مالزی تعداد بیشماری از شاغلین توسط پلیس مجروح گشته اند ، و در کامبوج سیاست ضد کارگری با قتل یک رهبر سندیکایی بنام " Hy vuthy " در فوریه ۲۰۰۷ به اوج رسیده است .

در تایلند کودتای نظامی برای کارگران ثمری جزرعب و حشت واذیت و آزار ببار نیاورد و فعالین سندیکایی و کادرهای سندیکایی از کاراخراج شدند . در این منطقه که نیروی کاردرمهاجرت دائمی است کارگران مهاجر درمقابل سوء استفاده و استثمار شدید هیچ حامی قانونی ندارند .

در کنار قتل فعالین سندیکایی کلمبیا، در دیگر کشورهای آمریکای لاتین نیزخشونت زنجیره ای بر علیه فعالین سندیکایی مشهود است . بعنوان مثال قتل ۲ معدنچی در مکزیک توسط پلیس و زخمی شدن ۴۱ نفر دیگر . ۱۵ کارگر اکوادوری نیزدر تظاهراتی که سندیکا فرا خوانده بودند تا به قرارداد آزاد تجاری با آمریکا اعتراض کنند توسط نیروهای پلیس وارتش بشدت زخمی شدند.

در گوآتمالا ؛ جایی که در ژانویه ۲۰۰۷ " Pedro Zamora " به قتل رسید ، یکی از رهبران اتحادیه معلمان نیز از ترورجان سالم بدربرد.

در منطقه آزاد تجاری که کارفرمایان بشدت ضد تشکل های کارگری هستند و اخراج های دسته جمعی را سازمان می دهند و ترس و وحشت را بر محیط کار حاکم می گردانند می توان از کشور هایی نظیر ، کوستاریکا، جمهوری دومینیکان ، السالوادور، هندوراس و نیکاراگوئه نام برد .

در آرژانتین، پرو وکشورهای دیگرزمانی که برای سازمانیابی سندیکایی فعالیت های سازمان داده شده یا شاغلینی در اعتصابی شرکت نموده اند عاقبت اخراج دسته جمعی آنان اجرا شده است و فعالین سندیکایی دستگیر شده اند . در آفریقا حق تشکل یابی به شکل زمختی لگدمال می شود و به طبع آن فعالین سندیکایی نیز تحت فشارقرارمی گیرند.

در غناپلیس با حمله علیه یک تظاهرات کارگری ۲۰ تن را به قتل رساند و تعدادی را نیززخمی نمود . در مراکش طی یک تظاهرات کارگری یکی از فعالین سیاسی اجتماعی به قتل رسید و تعدادی زخمی شدند ، همزمان در آفریقای جنوبی ، پلیس به کارگران اعتصابی یک موسسه ی روزنامه تیراندازی نمود و در موارد متعددی ۱۸ فعال کارگری توسط پلیس زخمی شده اند .

در کنیا ۱۰۰۰ نفر از کارگران اعتصابی مزارع گل اخراج شدند و تعدادی نیزتوسط پلیس زخمی گردیدند. در الجزیره و اتوپی که اتحادیه معلمان برتابیده نمی شود ، بسیاری از کارکنان آموزش و پرورش دراین شرایط تبعیض تشکل یابی دررنجند.

در جیبوتی سندیکای UDT بطور سیستماتیک مورد فشار و آزار واذیت قراردارد و یکی از رهبران سندیکا برای حفظ جانش مجبوربه تبعید ناخواسته شده است .

رژیم های لبنان و سودان هم حق تشکل یابی را بشدت محدود نموده اند . در مصرنیز صحبت از حق سازمانیابی کارگری بسیار محدود است .

اولین قدمها برای برسمیت شناختن فعالیت سندیکایی در عمان و بحرین در سایه ی سنگین ممنوعیت فعالیت

سندیکیایی در بخش بزرگی از کشورهای خاور نزدیک بویژه عربستان سعودی قرار گرفته است . در اردن ، کویت و یمن نیز فعالیت سندیکیایی و حق تشکل همچنان با محدودیت روبروست . در سوریه نیز تنها سندیکای موجود وابسته و شدیداً تحت کنترل و نفوذ دولت قرار دارد . در کل خاورمیانه کارگران مهاجر با شرایط کار خطرناک و استثمار وحشیانه روبرو هستند بدون اینکه امکان دفاع از حق و حقوق خود داشته باشند . در عراق فعالین کارگری همچنان سیل اعمال خشونت و ضربات مرگبار هستند . بعنوان مثال می توان یکی از مسئولین بخش بهداشت و درمان را نام برد که ربوده شد و با مته ی برقی شکنجه گردید و سرانجام با گلوله به قتل رسید .

در ایران حقوق پایه ای کارگران همچنان رعایت نمی گردد و فعالیت مستقل سندیکیایی با دستگیری های گسترده سرکوب شد و دختر ۱۲ ساله ی یکی از کارگران مورد آزار و اذیت قرار گرفت .

منصور اسانلو رئیس سندیکای کارگران اتوبوس رانی واحد ۴ ماه تمام در زندان بسربرد . مورد ضرب و شتم واقع شد و در سپتامبر برای بار دوم مجدداً دستگیر شد . در حالیکه در مقابل وثیقه آزاد شده بود، در جولای ۲۰۰۷ مجدداً دستگیر شد و به همراه تعدادی از فعالین سندیکیایی هنوز در زندان بسر می برد .

در فلسطین خشونت روزمره تاثیر خود را بر فعالیت سندیکیایی بر جای گذاشته است، در یک مورد مردانی که ماسک بر چهره زده بودند نارنجکی به دفتر رادیویی یک سندیکا پرتاب و سرانجام آنرا به آتش کشیدند . این خشونت ۴ زخمی بر جای گذاشت . محدودیت تردد که رژیم اسرائیل مابین غرب اردن و نوار غزه ایجاد نموده است فعالیت سندیکیایی را نیز با مشکلات سنگینی مواجه کرده است .

در ترکیه و آذربایجان فعالین سندیکیایی با رعب و وحشت مواجه اند و در بوسنی و هرسی گوین ، لیتوانی ؛ مولداوین ، رژیم ها مشروعیت تشکل های کارگری را مورد حمله فرار می دهند و در روسیه و گئورگی آزادی تشکل و تعرفه ی دستمزدها به گور سپرده شده است .

رئیس اتحاد جهانی سندیکا ، Ryder در مقدمه کتاب بررسی یک پیام امیدوارکننده برای خواننده دارد .
وی می نویسد:

با همه این تنگناها میلیونها زن و مرد کارگر همچون گذشته به فایده ی تشکل سندیکیایی باور دارند یا به آن باور می یابند !

وی جرات همه کسانی را تحسین می کند که در شرایط سرکوب و فضای تشکل ستیزی خطر را نیز به جان می خرند و در سطح جهان از حق تشکل یابی کارگران دفاع می کنند و از این طریق همبستگی بین المللی را ممکن می گردانند .

تا همین حد که گزارش سرکوب در کتاب بررسی سالانه منتشر می شود ، می تواند فشار جهانی اتحادیه ها و سندیکاهای کارگری بر دولت ها و کارفرمایان ثمره ی خود را داشته باشد . با این وجود وی هشدار می دهد از سال ۲۰۰۶ بندرت نشانه ای از بهبود وضعیت دیده می شود و دولت ها همچنان موظفند در چهارچوب مقاله نامه ی بین المللی حقوق کار را رعایت نمایند .

در کتاب بررسی سالانه نقض حقوق سندیکیایی در جهان مورد ایران به تفصیل گزارش شده و سیاست ضد کارگری

جمهوری اسلامی ایران چه بلحاظ موارد و بند های قانون کار و چه در زمینه ی رفتار دولت و کارفرمایان و اعمال شدیدترین فشار ها به فعالین کارگری افشاگری شده است که متن انگلیسی این بخش از کتاب درج می گردد .

برگردان : گروه همبستگی با جنبش کارگری برلین

منبع : ۲۰۰۷

Annual Survey

of violations of trade union rights

[/http://survey07.ituc-csi.org](http://survey07.ituc-csi.org)

گزارش ویژه ایران :

Iran

Population: 68 500 000

Capital: Tehran

ILO Core Conventions Ratified: 29 - 100 - 105 - 111 - 182

Legislative proposals tabled in 2006 will, if passed, deprive some 90 per cent of the workforce of the protection of labour legislation, including the right to organise. Unions faced ruthless repression, particularly the union at the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company.

Photo



Mansour Osanloo imprisoned on several occasions

Zoom...

Trade union rights in law

No independent trade unions: The government does not allow the existence of independent trade unions. Only one "workers" organisation is authorised by the government, the Workers' House. It is essentially a channel for government control over workers.

In 2003, an agreement was reached between representatives of the government, employers and the Workers' House to work on an amendment to the Labour Code to allow workers to form so-called "trade unions".

Islamic societies: The section on workers' and employers' organisations in the 1990 Labour Code stipulates that "the workers...may establish Islamic societies and associations" to disseminate Islamic culture, to defend the achievements of the Islamic Revolution. No other workers' organisation can be set up in a workplace if an Islamic society, known as Islamic Shora or "Shoraya Eslami", already exists.

The law also provides for the creation of Islamic Labour Councils which consist of representatives of the workers and one representative of management in industrial, agricultural and service organisations of more than 35 employees. The Labour Councils are overseen by the Workers' House.

The rules for the functioning of the Islamic Labour Councils, their constitutions and elections, are drawn up by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the Islamic Information Organisation. The Council of Ministers then has to approve the rules. The councils now represent workers in tripartite meetings.

Government control: All collective agreements have to be submitted to the Ministry of Labour for examination and approval. The government maintains that this is to prevent these agreements from undermining the minimum rights established by law. The government sets wage levels in most industries and is the largest employer, accounting for 40 per cent of the workforce.

For the last 25 years the workers' representatives sent to the ILO's annual International Labour Conference in Geneva have been selected not by the workers but by the minister of Labour and Social Affairs.

No strikes allowed: The law does not give workers the right to strike, but they can down tools so long as they remain at the workplace, or operate a go-slow. A 1993 law prohibits public sector strikes.

Export processing zones: Labour legislation does not apply in the export processing zones.

Most workers unprotected by the labour law: Workshops with less than five workers have been exempt from all labour laws; workshops with less than ten workers are exempt from some laws, with the result that 700 thousand workers are not covered by the labour legislation. Workers at most carpet weaving workshops, for example, are deprived of the protection of existing labour legislation, including the right to organise.

Draft legislation exempting temporary workers from the scope of the labour legislation was tabled in parliament in November 2004, but had not passed into law by the end of 2006. According to some reports, however, the government issued interim legislation, valid for a period of three years, which deprived temporary workers protection under labour legislation in enterprises with less than ten employees. When it is eventually adopted, such legislation would deprive about 90 per cent of the workforce in Iran of the protection of labour legislation, including the right to organise, annual leave, pay rises, the right to public holidays, and medical and social benefits. Workers on temporary work contracts have already been exempted from receiving unemployment benefits under legislation adopted earlier.

Trade union rights in practice

Protest activity: Despite the ban on strikes, workers' protests and other work stoppages are a daily occurrence throughout Iranian enterprises. They are often repressed. Most of these protests concern either low wages, the non-payment of wages, lay-offs or factory closures. The minimum wage set by the government is \$US 140 per month, while the official poverty line stands at \$US 300. Nearly two million workers have not been paid - some for nearly two years.

Barriers to organising: Obstacles to organising include the presence of security and intelligence forces in workplaces, and the increasing trend towards temporary contracts. It is common practice in Iran to fire workers the day before a three month probation period expires. They are then rehired on a new contract with a new period of

three months probation. The practice is then repeated endlessly. A worker hired under such a contract is not entitled to benefits and severance pay. According to statistics reportedly provided by the government, more than 1.5 million workers are hired under such circumstances.

Suppression of Workers' Rights Advocates: During the past year, those who tried to advocate workers rights were detained, harassed, interrogated and subjected to official and unofficial intimidation. One notable example was Dr. Nasser Zarafshan, a renowned human and workers' rights advocate who faced several attempts on his life while in prison for defending the families of assassinated writers and intellectuals.

Other groups and individuals were also subjected to this policy of legal and illegal intimidation. Their unions were not recognised, their newspapers and websites were closed or subjected to pressure, and they were called for questioning and warned to be silent or face the wrath of the "Islamic Judiciary". Organisations like the Coordination Committee to form Independent Workers Organisations, the "Steering Committee for the Pursuit of the Right to Form Independent Workers Bodies and Organisations", the Founding Board of the Union of Dismissed and Unemployed Workers and even "Factory Committees" were refused recognition and subjected to different forms of harassment and intimidation.

Violations in 2006

Background: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government continued to pursue the right-wing economic policies and neo-liberal agenda of his predecessor. The scope of privatisation approved in July was so far-reaching that Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, had to 're-interpret' article 4 of the Islamic Republic's constitution. The impact of UN sanctions on the economy was keenly felt, notably through factory closures and unpaid wages, and the government used this as an excuse to increase its oppression of the workers.

Repression against the union at the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company:

Reminder of events in 2005: On 3 June 2005, an independent trade union was created at the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company ("Sherkat-e Vahed"), despite the repeated and often brutal attempts of the authorities, the management and also the official trade union to thwart that plan. During this bitter dispute, the union activists received support from many of the company's 17,000 employees, unhappy about bad working conditions and the failure of their official representatives and the management to take their complaints seriously.

In the months that followed the repression was stepped up. By December, 29 trade unionists had been arrested and taken to Evin Prison in Tehran, a prison that has for decades been notorious as a detention and torture centre for political prisoners. However, on 25 December, following a bus drivers' strike in Tehran, all the detainees were released, apart from Mansour Osanloo, the chair of the executive committee of the union at Sherkat-e Vahed.

Violence and mass arrests in January: In early 2006, faced with the refusal of the authorities to release Mansour Osanloo, the union called a strike for 28 January. On 26 January, the court ordered eight members of the executive committee to appear before it and they were arrested and taken to Evin Prison. In the meantime the authorities and the bus company had arranged for other buses and drivers to be brought to the city to break the strike. Then, in a vast wave of repression huge numbers of arrests were made: on 27 January around 100 members of the union were arrested, followed on 28 January by some 700 to 1000 more people, including ordinary workers, wives and even children, such as the 12-year daughter of one union member who was beaten and then thrown roughly into a police bus. The security forces and people from the bus company threatened the drivers, hitting them and forcing them back to work. The police raided the union leaders' homes to pick them up. Around 30 of the arrested people were seriously injured and required urgent treatment from medical teams.

International mobilisation: In the next few days, support for the union and the families of the arrested people and protests against the government grew both in the country and abroad: the opposition parties were involved of course, but also several "traditional" workers' organisations, which demanded the unconditional release of those arrested, together with a very large number of NGOs and trade unions around the world.

Releases and anti-union manoeuvres: In early February many protests were held in Tehran demanding the release of those still in custody. Indignation grew when the union learnt that the authorities were putting pressure on the prisoners by making their release subject to their signing a pledge to stop participating in union activities. Once most of the prisoners had been released, the workers' demands turned to removal of the sanctions preventing people from returning to work. With that aim, around 120 workers demonstrated in front of several ministries and the bus company offices, which reacted by issuing a list of 46 employees who had been dismissed, including five members of the executive committee who were still in prison, explaining that the decision had been made by the authorities. In mid-February all those arrested had been released apart from seven members of the executive committee (Osanloo, Madadi, Gheibi, Moradi, Salimi, Hosseini and Gohari). On 19 March they were all released except for Mansour Osanloo.

More arrests on May Day and in mid-July: Around 250 workers from Sherkat-e Vahed, who were meeting for the May Day march, were surrounded by 1000 members of the police and security forces. They arrested 13 workers and detained them for several days, including Ebrahim Madadi, the Vice-President of the Union. On 15 July, another gathering in front of the Labour Ministry was broken up, leading to eight more arrests. All the detainees were released on bail after four days.

Also on 1 May, 20 workers from the "Fra Nakh Mah Nakh" factory who had attended Labour Day celebrations were arrested by the security forces. The workers of this factory have not received their salaries for eight months, and had been on strike for five days.

Mansour Osanloo: The key figure in the dispute between the union of Sherkat-e Vahed and the authorities, Mansour Osanloo, was held in Evin Prison from 22 December 2005 to 9 August 2006. During his seven months in detention, his rights were constantly flouted. According to a report by the Iranian Human Rights Committee, he was kept in solitary confinement for over four months, with his eyes blindfolded and his hands bound. He was harassed and threatened continually. He very rarely was allowed to see his lawyer or his close family, all of whom were very worried about his health problems (he had a serious eye injury resulting from a previous attack linked to his union activities and was due to have an eye operation just before his arrest). The authorities kept the charges against him vague, even suggesting that his trade union activities might not be the real problem. On 9 August, Mansour Osanloo was released after the payment of bail of 150,000 tomans (165,000 USD) and a few days after the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) sent an official complaint to the ILO.

Arrest of ILO workshop participants: On 8 November, Mansour Osanloo and nine other leaders of the union of Sherkat-e Vahed were arrested by security forces on their arrival in Tabriz to attend an ILO workshop on globalisation and privatisation. After being held up for several hours they were allowed to go to the meeting.

Mansour Osanloo arrested again by five plainclothes officers: On 19 November, Mansour Osanloo was arrested again, on his way to the Labour Ministry accompanied by two other leaders of the union, Ebrahim Madadi and Mansour Hayat Gheibi, to demand the reinstatement of the workers sacked after the events in January. When asked by the trade unionists why they were being arrested, the five officers in plain clothes hit Ebrahim Madadi and Mansour Osanloo, despite the fact that the latter was wearing a large head bandage after his eye operation. They fired shots in

the air and shoved Mansour Osanloo into a vehicle. Later on the authorities informed his close family that he had been charged with failing to appear in court, as required, on 20 November (even though that was the day after his arrest).

Three other arrests on 3 December: On 3 December, three union activists, Seyed Davoud Ravazi, Abdolreza Tarazi and Golamreza Gholam Hosseini, were arrested when handing out trade union leaflets at the coach station in Kharavan. The first two were released that evening and the third a few days later. All three belong to the group of 46 workers who were sacked by the bus company Sherkat-e Vahed.

Mansour Osanloo freed at the end of 2006: On 19 December, Mansour Osanloo was released after payment of additional bail. In 2007, he will be expected to reply to charges of "issuing propaganda against the system and attacking national security".

Attempt to hold 2004 Labour Day celebration in Saqez: judicial harassment continued: In May 2006, the Appeals Court in Saqez (in the province of Kurdistan) overturned the verdicts of the Revolutionary Court in November 2005 sentencing brothers Salehi, Hosseini, Divangar and Abdipour of the Bakery Workers' Union and Brother Hakimi, a member of the Iranian Writers' Association to prison terms of two to five years (and five years in prison plus three in exile for Mahmoud Salehi). In November 2005, the trade unionists had been charged with, and found guilty of crimes against national security for taking part in a riot and an illegal gathering on Labour Day 2004.

What had actually happened during that attempt to celebrate Labour Day was that police forces and plainclothes officers had attacked the activists before the meeting had even started. Some 50 trade unionists had been arrested and the authorities had pressed charges against seven of them (two had been acquitted in the verdict of November 2005). Since the reports of the police confirmed this version of events, the Court of Appeal had to absolve the accused of those charges. However it sent them back to the Revolutionary Court to answer charges under Article 610 of the Islamic Punishment Act which ascribes sentences of two to five years' imprisonment for congregating to conspire to commit crimes against national security.

The verdicts of the Revolutionary Court were issued between 17 October and 27 November. Mahmoud Salehi, the former President of the Bakery Workers' Union was sentenced to four years in prison. Jalal Hosseini, Mohsen Hakimi and Borhan Divangar were sentenced to two years in prison. Mohammad Abdipour was acquitted. After appealing a second time, the four trade unionists were provisionally released at the end of the year.

Impunity for the assassins of four workers in 2004 in the province of Kerman: Two years after the bloody repression by security forces of a strike in the towns of Khatoonabad and Shahr-e-Babak (Kerman province) which took the lives of four workers, there has still been no proper enquiry, no-one has been found guilty and it seems that the victims' families have still not received any compensation.

Anti-union repression at Iran Khodro: Several dozen workers from the car company Iran Khodro were sacked shortly after a strike on 8 March for better wages. At the end of September and beginning of October, security forces also made two raids on the buildings that mainly house Iran Khodro employees and their families. The police confiscated all the satellite dishes, which the workers saw as a provocative act aimed at preventing them from obtaining objective information. In recent years, social unrest has intensified at Iran Khodro, the largest carmaker in the Middle East with an annual production of around a million vehicles. The group produces Peugeot and Mercedes cars, for example. The request to form an independent trade union was rejected and working conditions declined even though production hit record levels.

Several strikes and gatherings brutally repressed: In April, security forces brutally attacked workers at Rasht City Textiles who had blocked production in protest at their wage arrears. According to the Iranian Labour News Agency, the press agency of the traditional workers' organisation, many workers were seriously hurt.

On 26 August, members of the police and security forces were sent in to end a protest started on 19 August by workers at the Parrish factory in the town of Sanandaj. The strikers, who were gathering outside the factory entrance, were violently attacked by the security forces who used batons and tear gas to disperse them. Many workers were injured. A journalist and a worker from another company, who were attending the protest out of solidarity, were arrested.

On 28 August, after an eight-day sit-in at the "ParRiss" weaving factory in Sanandaj, security forces attacked the 57 workers and their families with tear gas and beat them. A number of workers were injured. Akoo Kord Nasab, a journalist of the (now closed) weekly magazine "Payam-e-mardom" and Ebrahim Vakili, a brother of one of the workers, were detained on charges of taking part in an illegal sit-in, and disturbing public order. They were released on bail the next day. Five of the protesting workers, Behzad Sohrabi, Mahvash Vakili, Saman Nezakati, Habibolah Khoda Rahmi, and Tayeb Chatani, were dismissed.

On 16 September, in Babolsar, security forces attacked workers from the carpet factory Alborz, who were gathering outside the company entrance and preparing to march on the governor's building. Some 40 workers were injured and a similar number were arrested. In November 2005, a strike by the employees of this struggling company had been brutally repressed. In the meantime, the workers' demands, which mainly focused on wage arrears, had still not been met.

Arrest of a union leader in Kermanshah: On 15 September, Javanmir Moradi, the leader of the Electrical and Metal Workers' Trade Association in the town of Kermanshah, was arrested for helping organise a meeting on May Day. He was released on 16 September.

Trade unionist sacked at plastic factory: It was reported in October that, the workers' representative at the Zamzam Shargh plastic factory (in East Tehran) was sacked after approaching management with a request to negotiate better working conditions. Later, following pressure and threats, some of the staff agreed to sign new contracts with reduced wages.