

December 19, 2012

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## Communiqué # 43 Reza Shahabi Defence Committee

**Reza Shahabi has decided to go on an indefinite wet Hunger Strike, as a response to security agents' insults and intimidation tactics.**

On Monday December 17, 2012 during Reza Shahabi's family visitation and meeting with his wife and daughter he announced that in addition to refusing to take his medication, he will also go on an indefinite wet Hunger Strike in response to security agents' insults and threats, and also to highlight lack of medical treatment he has been receiving. He announced that his Hunger Strike shall go on until he is free to leave prison, on bond, for medical treatment that he requires.

While in hospital for his medical examinations, Mr. Shahabi was insulted and threatened by a security agent that was transferring him. Upon his exit from hospital, the security agent threatened him twice, telling him: "You're a dissenter and anti-revolution pretending to be sick, making us pay all this monies for your treatment," and also "I'll be teaching you a hard lesson you'll never forget."

Besides chronic back and neck pains which require immediate treatment, Mr. Shahabi also suffers from high blood pressure, causing many, reoccurring nose bleeds. His decision to refuse medication and food will seriously jeopardize his life.

Reza Shahabi Defence Committee condemns all harassment and threats and insults against him. We are seriously concerned about his health. All responsibility for his health lies with the Judiciary and security forces. We demand immediate medical care for Mr. Shahabi, to be carried outside of prison, in proper facilities.

**Reza Shahabi Defence Committee**  
**December 17, 2012**  
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**Committee Spokesperson: Mahmoud Salehi**

Translated by IASWI

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**Reza Shahabi on hunger strike again**

**Free Reza Shahabi Now**  
(See Sample Protest Letter below)



Reza Shahabi, an Iranian labour leader imprisoned since June 2010, went on hunger strike on Dec 17, 2012 to protest against mistreatment by jail guards

as well as prevention of his medical treatment by the judicial authorities.

Reza Shahabi's physical conditions have deteriorated. He has announced that he will refuse taking his medication and eating food until he is allowed to be transferred to a hospital outside prison for complete treatment.

Mr. Reza Shahabi who had gone under major surgery of his neck, and according to doctors' recommendations was in need of at least "two months rest at home", and "incapable of withstanding any further punishment," was sent back to Ward 350 of Evin prison on August 14, 2012. Since then, his health deteriorated significantly. In addition, his jail guards have been very insulting and he has been threatened recently by one of his guards. Reza was taken to hospital on December 15, 2012 but the jail guard accompanying him refused to allow him for proper examination and forced Reza, with threats of beating and assaulting him, to go back to prison.

Reza Shahabi is the Treasurer and Executive Board member of the Syndicate of workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, which belongs to the Municipality of Tehran and has more than seventeen thousand employees. All Executive board members of this union have been persecuted, dismissed and many were jailed since the formation of the Syndicate in 2005. He has recently been sentenced to 6 year imprisonment and five year ban on all union activities as well as 7 million Toman fine; the appeal court seems to have confirmed his sentence for four years imprisonment, five year ban on all union activities and 7 million toman penalty. Reza Shahabi's health deteriorated significantly after severe beatings and mistreatment following his arrest. The authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are directly responsible for any consequence resulting from continued imprisonment and mistreatment of Reza Shahabi.

**Sample Protest letter:** Reza Shahabi must be immediately released and promptly treated.

I (we) are writing to protest the continued persecution of labour activist and the gross violation of workers' rights in Iran. We continue to witness many labour activists brutally persecuted and unjustly imprisoned in Iran. In particular, I am seriously concerned about the health and well being of Reza Shahabi. Reza Shahabi, the executive board member and treasurer of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran Bus Workers' Company, has been incarcerated for more than two and half years. Shahabi was severely beaten during his interrogation in detention. He underwent cervical spine operation on July 24, 2012. Medical doctors have been recommending treatment of his back as well. Contrary to doctors' recommendations, Shahabi was sent back to Ward 350 of Evin prison on August 14, 2012. Since then, his health has been drastically deteriorated. On December 17th, 2012, Reza Shahabi went on hunger strike to protest intimidating behaviour of his jail guard as well as the continued lack of proper medical treatment. He has also refused to take any medication.

I (we) strongly condemn the unjust arrest and sentence against Reza Shahabi and other labour activists. I (we) also denounce ongoing persecution and arrests of labour activists in Iran. I (we) demand the immediate and unconditional freedom of Reza Shahabi and all detained labour activists in Iran.

Name:

Organization/Position:

Please send your protests letters to:

info@leader.ir, info@judiciary.ir, dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir; iran@un.int; ijpr@iranjudiciary.org, info@dadiran.ir, office@justice.ir, support@irimlsa.ir; info@humanrights-iran.ir; avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir; bia.judi@yahoo.com; info@mlsa.ir;

CC: info@workers-iran.org