

Tehran Bus Workers Condemn Racism and Deportation of Afghan Migrants



Securitization, racism, and the expulsion of Afghan migrants are clear violations of human rights

The Workers' Union of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, as part of the Iranian and global working class, considers migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees to be as integral parts of every country's human and labor community. It is essential for all labor and civil organizations to adhere to this clear and common international position and under no circumstances fall under the influence of the toxic atmosphere of anti-immigrant and racist sentiments. Attacks on migrants weaken social and class solidarity and serve the interests of ruling powers and the capitalist system. Racism and scapegoating of migrants must be condemned, as they cause serious harm to international solidarity, something that workers in Iran, the region, and the world urgently need. Afghan migrants in Iran, despite decades of presence and economic and social contribution to the country, continue to be among the most disenfranchised and vulnerable groups. Humanitarian, social, and legal support, and efforts to regularize their status, are essential steps toward social justice and

a solidarity that must be built on shared interests and human dignity, not differences in nationality, race, or residency status.

In recent years, and especially in the days following the ceasefire, the ruling establishment, along with certain opportunistic media and political groups, has repeatedly exaggerated the number of Afghans living in Iran without relying on verifiable data, including official UN statistics. This inflation of figures has often been used, amid the country's dire economic and political situation, to justify Afghanophobia, mass deportations, harsh restrictions, and the securitization of Afghan presence in Iran.

In addition, accusations such as "spying for Israel" have been leveled against Afghan migrants without the presentation of credible evidence or a transparent judicial process. These charges appear more as propaganda tools for repression than as claims based on genuine security concerns. It is clear to everyone that spies have infiltrated the structures of the ruling establishment itself, a reality fundamentally impossible for Afghan migrants, as well as for ordinary citizens and social activists in the country, who neither have access to such structures nor the slightest inclination to collaborate with the criminal Israeli regime. Overall, the securitization and politicization of Afghan presence in Iran is part of a broader project by the ruling authorities to manage escalating political, economic, and regional crises, especially in the aftermath of the ceasefire.

Since the beginning of this year, even before the military attacks by Israel and the United States, we have witnessed an unprecedented wave of deportations of Afghan migrants, the majority of whom have been forcibly and unjustly expelled from the country without any proper legal recourse. Violent behavior toward Afghan migrants, state-imposed restrictions on their fundamental rights, and structural and cultural racism against them have been clearly documented, revealing the severity of the situation and the blatant violation of their basic human rights.

It is clear that anti-immigrant sentiment and the forced deportation of migrants are not limited to Iran. For example, in the United States, Donald Trump's administration faced widespread backlash from labor unions, anti-racist activists, and civil society groups over its anti-immigration policies, including mass deportations. These experiences demonstrate that resisting the repression of migrants is part of the global struggle for social justice, and labor organizations in various countries have adopted relatively similar positions on this issue.

The Syndicate of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company firmly condemns these racist policies, which are built on propaganda, exaggeration, fabricated scenarios, unfounded accusations, and hate-mongering. We have repeatedly said: we, the workers, must not become victims of the repressive policies of the ruling establishment, dominant capitalism, and the military interventions and projects of imperialist states. Government-affiliated organizations, such as the Workers' House, which over the years have not only obstructed the creation and expansion of independent labor unions across the country but have also been among the instigators and promoters of anti-Afghan sentiment in Iran, must be increasingly exposed. A large portion of Afghan migrants were born or raised in this very country and must be granted full citizenship rights. Others, like the millions of Iranian migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and displaced people around the world, must attain their basic rights in accordance with international conventions and the universal principles of human rights.

The structural causes of refuge and migration, including war, repression, the violation of the most basic human rights (including the rights of women and children), the climate crisis, and neoliberal policies are rooted in anti-people states, capitalist systems, and imperialist powers. We emphasize: the position of the working class, both in any given country and globally, is clear and must remain unshakable. The rights of migrants and asylum seekers are not separate from the class struggle for a just world; they are an inseparable part of it. Defending Afghan migrants against deportation, intensified exploitation, denial of rights, violence, and scapegoating is a defense of all of us and of the working class as a whole, because an injury to one is an injury to all.

No to racism, no to war

The solution for workers and the oppressed is unity and organization.

Syndicate of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company

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