

Call for solidarity with Gadani Ship Breaking Workers in Pakistan

Thursday 1 July 2010, by [MANSOOR Nasir](#), [NTUF](#) (Date first published: 1 July 2010).

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Call for solidarity

Again 15,000 Gadani Ship Breaking Workers on indefinite Strike from 5th July, Full day “Mazdoor Dharna” on 3rd July at Karachi Press Club

An emergency meeting of office bearers of Ship Breaking Democratic Workers Union, representing 15,000 ship breaking workers, held at the union office today. The meeting was presided over by Rafiq Baloch, president National Trade Union Federation(NTUF) and attended by representatives of all 40 sites of ship breaking industry.

All representatives of the union discussed the prevailing situation at ship breaking yards and workers anger and fierceness due to breach of agreement by the ship breaking owners which bounded the owners to accept the demands of workers till 30th June and workers called off their strike in accordance with this agreement on 16th June till 30th June.

Now workers demands have not been honored and ship owners are playing dirty tricks against workers with the help of their henchmen called “Jamadars” (contractors).

Taking stock of the situation and also keeping in mind the militant mood of workers it is decided unanimously call for indefinite strike from 5th July till the acceptance of workers demands. 10,000 pamphlets with appeal to workers for successful strike is being distributed among workers of all technical categories now. A “Workers Strike Committee” having seven members is formed to take all emergency decisions.

National Trade Union Federation with whom Gadani Ship Breaking Democratic Workers Union(GDSBDWU) is affiliated has endorsed the strike call and announced full support and solidarity with ship breaking striking workers.

NTUF will lead a full day “Mazdoor Dharna” on 3rd July, Saturday from 7am to 5pm at Karachi Press Club in solidarity with ship breaking workers where thousands of workers show their power with red flags.

Following are the main demands of ship breaking workers

*100% increase in wages

*Registration with Social Security and Old age Benefits Institutes

*Medical Dispensary and Ambulance at each ship breaking yard

*Clean drinking water and canteen at each yard

*Appointment letter for every worker

* End of contract (JAMADARY)system

*Workers residential colony

*Recognition of representative character of GSBDW Union

*Occupational safety measures at work place

*End of police harassment against workers

We appeal to all pro workers individuals and organizations please show your solidarity with struggling workers of Balochistan against the ruthless capitalist exploitation.

Long live workers struggle
Long live workers revolution

Nasir Mansoor

Deputy General Secretary

National Trade Union Federation Pakistan

Ship Breaking Worker chalk out action plan in press conference on Thursday

23 June 2010

Dear friend,

The Gadani Ship Breaking Democratic Workers Union has called off strike on 16 June till 30 June on written assurance of Administration on behalf of Ship breaking Owners that they will meet and collectively announce the acceptance of workers demands before the dead line of 30 June but as per Owners' anti worker tradition they have retracted from agreement.

So representatives of 15,000 ship breaking workers have decided to chalk out their future action plan through press conference. If you are in Karachi please rush to Karachi Press Club tomorrow (24 June Thursday) at 4pm where Ship Breaking industry workers are going to address an important press conference.

Nasir Mansoor

Deputy General Secretary

National Trade Union Federation, Pakistan

Gadani Update

JUNE 25, 2010

The 15,000-strong Gadani ship-breakers' strike was suspended last week, after the owners promised to heed the workers' demands by the 30th of June. The draft agreement to this effect was approved at a meeting of the union on the 16th, which was attended by some 3,000 workers from the dozens of sites across the shoreline.

The workers remain wary of the intentions of their employers, of course. The owners' association has offered the union a 20% increase in compensation—but, as the press release appended below makes clear, not only is the concession trivial in relation to the rising cost of living (and in relation to the super-profits made by owners and contractors alike), it addresses only one of the several demands made by the union. Only two days ago, for example, a 25 year-old worker fell to his death while working on a ship's ladder in near-darkness. A harness would have saved him.

At a press conference in Karachi yesterday, representatives of the Ship Breaking Democratic Workers' Union emphasized their readiness to take further strike action. Suspicions are that the owners' association will stand its ground, and full preparations have been made for a further round of struggle.

* *From /progpak.wordpress*

Workers strike Ship breaking industry of Gadani Hub Blochistan

Karachi

Police baton-charged thousands of workers of the Gaddani ship breaking industry on Wednesday, leaving hundreds of them wounded.

Police also arrested some leaders of the protesting workers but released them after some time.

Around 15,000 workers of the ship breaking industry of Gadani had been on a strike from Tuesday. They have been demanding of the owners to ensure safety measures at the workplace as some workers had died due to the absence of such measures.

Before going on strike, they had served a notice to the owners of the industry demanding of them to increase their wages and provide necessary facilities.

After waiting for three days for a response to their demands from the owners, they went on strike.

The Ship Breaking Democratic Workers Union of Gadani had called a meeting at 9:00am on

Wednesday at its office, but before the meeting could start, a contingent of the police force arrested the leaders of the union.

Bashir Ahmed Mahmood Dani, the president of the union, who was among those arrested and later released, told this correspondent that as the news of the arrest of the leaders reached the workers, around 2,000 of them marched towards the police station to protest against this action.

Dani said the police baton charged the workers and fired teargas shells at them, injuring hundreds of his colleagues.

He alleged that the security forces had taken a similar action against another peaceful rally which was protesting against "this inhuman act".

Dani also alleged that the security forces compelled the workers to call off their strike and resume work.

He said the ones who resisted calling off their strike received injuries as well.

Later on, he said, a large number of workers assembled at the union office where they were given guarantees by the owners that all their demands would be met by the end of this month.

While highlighting the severity of the situation he said that 15,000 people worked in a highly dangerous environment which had claimed the lives of 17 workers last year. Dani said three workers died because an iron sheet had fallen on them. He said many others had died of electrocution while some slipped to their deaths from a floor of a ship.

Dani said a large number of people working under the contractors hardly earned Rs200 a day. He said safety equipment like helmets and gloves were not given to the workers.

Dani said these workers inhaled toxic fumes while breaking the ships. There was not a single hospital in the area, he said.

"There is just one ambulance in the area, which spans over 15 square kilometers, and this, too, was at the disposal of a contractor. In case of serious injuries, the victims are taken to hospitals in Karachi," he said.

Dani said around 40 ships were currently anchored to be taken apart, and it took around four months to dismantle a single ship. The general-secretary of National Trade Union Federation, Nasir Mansoor, told this correspondent that people in this industry were not even considered as workers by the government functionaries. He said these people were only regarded as "seasonal workers" and the owners were free to do whatever they liked with them and nobody was bothered of ensuring compliance of labour laws over here.

He said these workers didn't even have the facility of drinking water or food at the site.

The general-secretary said they were forced to work 14 hours a day without any overtime. Mansoor said there was no logic behind using an anti-terrorist force to disperse peaceful demonstrators.

Forward by **S B Khan**

Labour Party Pakistan (LPP)

National Student Federation (NSF)

5,000 Ship Breaking Workers strike in Gadani Balochistan

15,000 workers of ship breaking site at Gadani(Balochistan) are going on all out strike from Tuesday 15th June for indefinite period.

The Gadani Ship Breaking Democratic Workers Union representing one of strongest militant workers contingent has given a legal strike notice on Saturday, 12 June to more than 40 owners of ship breaking sites with demands to raise the daily wages, medical cover, adequate occupational safety measure and betterment in severe working conditions. The time period (three days in legal term) of strike notice from the union is ended tonight and now workers have no choice but to go on strike to press for their just demands.

It was one and half year ago when owners negotiated with workers representatives and accepted some demands of the workers but now they haven't been in mood to come in term with workers demands. It is interesting to note that there is boom in ship breaking sector with huge profit since last agreement but workers have not being paid fairly out of this bumper profit. Workers of ship breaking are paid very low(6000 to 7500 pak rupees monthly) with long working hours stretched from 10 to 15 hours and they have to work in very hazardous and dangerous conditions without any precautionary and safety measures. No proper canteen and residence for the ship breaking workers.

There is no properly equipped hospital to cater the immediate needs of workers in case of emergency and accident at work place, workers are not cover under any health and security nets. Due to these working environment 17 workers have been died during the work with in one year with out any compensation from government or ship breaking companies.

Due to all these condition their was great panic among workers and they have been forcing the union to start negotiation with employers on their basic demands but employers and managements are least bother about the demand and have not given any wait and serious thought to meet the demand or even start negotiation with workers' representatives till filling of this report. They just requested to postpone the strike for day which was rejected by the union leaders with whole heartily consent of the workers.

Now workers are in very defiant and militant mood and their leader told me half an hour ago that complete strike will be observed from 7am tomorrow till acceptance of their demands such as

- * raise in wages
- _ *proper medical facilities
- _ * adequate safety measures at workplace
- _ *batter working conditions

All friends of workers are requested to come forward and stand up with them.

Nasir Mansoor

Deputy General Secretary

National Trade Union Federation, Pakistan

P.S.

* Gaddani or Gadani is a small coastal city of Lasbela District located in the southern part of Balochistan along the Arabian Sea, Pakistan.