

Plantation workers demand freedom for Julian Assange and Chelsea Manning and for jailed Maruti Suzuki workers

Our correspondent
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The plantation workers' conference convened by the Abbotsleigh Estate Workers Action Committee and the Socialist Equality Party at Hatton Town Hall in Sri Lanka on March 17 unanimously passed the following resolutions.

Free Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange immediately!

This conference condemns the joint conspiracy of the US, British and Australian imperialist powers against principled journalist and WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange and American whistleblower Chelsea Manning, and demands their immediate and unconditional release.

While adding our voice to the worldwide campaign of the Socialist Equality Parties and the *World Socialist Web Site* to mobilise workers, youth and concerned intellectuals to free Assange and Manning, we wholeheartedly appeal to the multi-millioned masses of the South Asian region to join this struggle.

By putting their lives on the line to reveal the military crimes of US imperialism in Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries worldwide, Assange and Manning have rendered an invaluable service to the people of the world.

We understand that imperialism is trying to persecute Assange and Manning and set an example of the punishment that will be used against all those who oppose its crimes and conspiracies.

As working people we have suffered a 30-year

bloody civil war against the country's Tamil minority, and have also passed through a period of intensified attacks on democratic rights in the decade since the war ended in 2009.

Now the pro-imperialist ruling class of this country is determined to make this island a centre of US war preparations against China and is working systematically to curb the democratic rights of the masses for that purpose.

This conference firmly endorses the assessment of the SEP and WSWS that freedom for Assange and Manning can only be ensured through a unified movement of the international working class. We pledge to give all possible support to build this campaign.

Release jailed Maruti-Suzuki workers!

Two years ago, on 18 March 2017, a court in Gurgaon, India, following a protracted legal frame-up, sentenced 13 workers from car manufacturer Maruti-Suzuki to lifetime imprisonment. Four workers were sentenced to five-year terms and another 14 given three-year terms.

This plantation workers' conference called by the Abbotsleigh Estate Action Committee and the Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka) extends its fullest support to the campaign being conducted by the International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site* to demand the immediate release of the 13 Maruti Suzuki workers joined for life and the 18

others imprisoned on lesser sentences.

These workers were framed up in a bogus case concocted by management of the car manufacturer, the police and judicial officers, accusing them of being responsible for the death of a human resources manager during a workers' struggle that flared up in 2012 at a Maruti-Suzuki assembly plant in Manesar, Haryana State, near the Indian capital New Delhi. The then Indian Congress government and the current Bharatiya Janata Party government supported this dreadful act.

These workers are entirely innocent. Their only "crime" was to challenge the brutal workplace conditions imposed by the Japanese-based multinational corporation with the full backing of the trade union scabs loyal to the company.

The repression of the Maruti-Suzuki workers is a part of the onslaught of crisis-ridden world capitalism against the social and democratic rights of the international working class. This is the context in which militant estate workers in Sri Lanka have been sacked in an attempt to break the justified struggle of plantation workers for a pay rise, and police brutality is being unleashed against the struggles of teachers and students.

This conference appeals to workers worldwide, and all who defend the democratic rights, to come forward and support the determined Maruti-Suzuki workers and demand their immediate release.



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