

Public meeting: Oppose the Sri Lankan government's witch hunt against electricity workers

The Collective of Workers Action Committees
24 January 2024

The Collective of Workers Action Committees (CWAC) in Sri Lanka will hold a public meeting opposing the Sri Lankan government's witch hunt against Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) employees. We call on workers and youth to attend the event which will be at the JMC Jayasekara Management Centre, Colombo 2 on February 1 at 4 p.m.

Over the past week, CEB management has suspended 66 employees who participated in three days of protest—on January 3–5—against the Wickremesinghe government and its International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed privatisation and austerity measures.

CEB management is planning to suspend more employees in the coming week based on its decision to cancel workers' leave on the eve of the protest. Victimised workers face severe penalties under the draconian provisions of the Essential Public Services Act activated by the government.

This is a full frontal attack on the fundamental democratic right of workers to engage in industrial action, including strikes, to defend their jobs, wages and working conditions.

It is a sharp warning, not only to the CEB workers, but to the entire working class who are determined to fight the IMF measures. Hundreds of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have been targeted for privatisation or commercialisation, with this brutal "restructuring" impacting about half a million workers.

The government's vicious repression against CEB employees is an attempt to intimidate and terrorise all SOE employees. Workers must come forward and defend all CEB employees, and their own rights. Take these slogans "Stop the witch hunt!" and "Reinstate all

suspended employees unconditionally!" as your rallying cry.

CEB trade union leaders and their counterparts in other SOEs are blocking the development of a unified working-class struggle against the Wickremesinghe government's witch-hunting measures and the broad-ranging austerity measures.

Workers cannot protect their jobs, working conditions and democratic rights by depending on the trade union bureaucracy or any of the capitalist parties, including the Samagi Jana Balawegaya and Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna as well as their pseudo-left apologists. These parties and the trade unions are committed to IMF austerity.

Our Collective of Action Committees, which includes port workers, health employees and teachers, students and parents, as well as migrant, railway, plantation and garment workers, urges our class brothers and sisters across Sri Lanka to establish their own action committees and take forward the fight to defend your rights.

Our February 1, the public meeting will discuss the issues now confronting workers and a program to fight the government and CEB management repression as part of the struggle to defend all the social and democratic rights of the working class. We call on you to attend this critical meeting, participate in the discussion and develop this crucial struggle.

**Venue: JMC Jayasekara Management Centre
Colombo 02, opposite CEB head office**

Date: February 1

Time: 4 p.m.



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact