

# Video: Workers speak on Cyclone Ditwah disaster and government neglect in Sri Lanka

Our reporters

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The WSWs spoke with survivors of Cyclone Ditwah, which has unleashed the worst humanitarian disaster in Sri Lanka in decades. Striking on November 27 before moving into India, the cyclone has left more than 635 confirmed dead, with nearly 200 still missing.

Survivors interviewed by the WSWs described walls of water tearing through homes, sweeping away entire families, and collapsing houses in seconds. One resident recounted how his son's house was submerged and two nearby homes collapsed, burying his relatives whose bodies remain missing. Over 1.7 million people have been affected across the island, with tens of thousands now crowded into overcrowded shelters.

While scientists have linked the scale of the storm to global warming—supercharged by rapidly warming ocean waters and extreme rainfall—the disaster was compounded by decades of political negligence. Survivors describe a total lack of warning or evacuation. Government mismanagement—including the unannounced opening of reservoir sluices—turned a climate disaster into a human catastrophe.

As these interviews make clear, the devastation cannot be explained solely by nature. It is rooted in capitalism's subordination of life to profit. The cyclone's impact reflects years of austerity, deforestation, unsafe housing and the erosion of public infrastructure. Ditwah is not just a Sri Lankan disaster, but a global warning.



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