

State Govt staffers threaten Vidhana Soudha bandh

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PROTESTING against the new Karnataka State Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 2021 and cancellation of the provision to encash their earned leaves, employees of the State Secretariat on Friday threatened to stop the movement of files across departments and to call for a Vidhana Soudha bandh over the next few weeks. On January 12, they will wear black badges as a mark of protest.

The State Government, through a notification on Thursday, barred state government employees from publish-



We are not against government punishing employees for violating rules and shirking work, but the latest order harks back to an era where employees would stand before their employers with folded hands

Guruswamy, president, Karnataka State Secretariat Employees' Association

ing books, participating in radio shows, acting in films, television serials and contributing articles or writing letters to newspapers without a prior approval from the government.

Guruswamy, president, Karnataka State Secretariat Employees' Association, told *TNIE* that the new rules are against freedom of expression. Guruswamy said that the employees accepted the suggestion of

the government when it decided to cut a day's salary. "We did not get cash for earned leave in 2020, but we understood the financial situation of the state, as it was fighting the Covid pandemic and floods. But now that the government is earning better revenues and had reached 65 to 70 per cent of the target by December-end why should there be a cut of our encashed EL money," he asked.

He said that they appealed to the authorities to rescind the rules, but there was no positive response. "On January 12, we will also submit a memorandum to Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa and Chief Secretary P Ravikumar. If the government

does not agree to our demands, we will call for the Vidhana Soudha bandh and stop the movement of files in the coming weeks," he warned.

Another government staffer, requesting anonymity, said that over 3,000 employees work at Vidhana Soudha, Vikasa Soudha and MS Building. "If we stop moving files, it will impact the entire state and all the departments," he said.

Karnataka State Government Employee' Association president Shadakshari said, "We are going to appeal to the chief minister. We will also collect suggestions from the employees and seek rectification of the rules."