

# Sri Lanka: ISSE-SEP meeting in Colombo on Karl Marx and Charles Darwin

1 August 2009

The International Students for Social Equality (ISSE) and the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Sri Lanka are holding a public meeting on the contributions of two great revolutionary thinkers of the 19th century—Karl Marx and Charles Darwin. This year marks 200 years since the birth of Darwin and 150 years since the publication of his *On the Origin of Species*.

Frederick Engels wrote to Marx in 1859: “Darwin, by the way, whom I’m reading just now, is absolutely splendid.... Never before has so grandiose an attempt been made to demonstrate historical evolution in Nature, and certainly never to such good effect.” Recognising the significance of Darwin’s theory, Marx wrote in 1861: “Darwin’s work is most important and suits my purpose in that it provides a basis in natural science for the historical class struggle.”

The two great thinkers of science—Darwin and Marx—defined the modern era. The full implications of their work is only just becoming apparent today. Evolution came into its own with the discovery of DNA and, despite opposition from religious fundamentalists, has become an essential part of our everyday lives and experience. Marx has long been dismissed by opponents of socialism as outmoded, but his work has taken on a new relevance as the world financial system implodes and the global economy descends into an unparalleled depression.

The ISSE-SEP meeting will examine the ideas of these seminal thinkers, drawing out the common themes that animated their work and exploring their significance for the present day. We invite all students, youths, workers, intellectuals and readers of the *World Socialist Web Site* to attend the meeting and participate in the discussion.

**Speaker:** Panini Wijesiriwardane

**Time:** Tuesday, August 4, 3.30 p.m.

**Venue:** The Lobby, Public Library Auditorium, Colombo



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