

Sri Lankan SEP to hold public meetings to launch presidential election campaign

Socialist Equality Party
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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka will hold a series of public meetings as a part of the party's campaign for the presidential election on January 8, 2015.

The SEP presidential candidate, political committee member Pani Wijesiriwardena, has a long history of fighting for socialist policies among workers, youth and the oppressed. He is the only candidate who defends the interests of the working class on the basis of a socialist program against the growing danger of world war and the attacks on living conditions and democratic rights.

The global capitalist breakdown and rising geopolitical tensions are expressed in the political crisis surrounding the Sri Lankan election. President Mahinda Rajapakse called the election early, fearing that any delay would only lead to deepening hostility by working people to his government's austerity agenda. The following day, his health minister Maithripala Sirisena resigned and announced that he would stand as the common opposition candidate, backed by the United National Party and other opposition parties.

Like other countries throughout the region, Sri Lanka is being swept up in the US war preparations against China. Over the past five years, Washington has exploited the Rajapakse government's war crimes in a bid to force Colombo to distance itself from Beijing. Now the US has given the green light to the intrigues of the opposition to split the ruling party and engineer Rajapakse's defeat at the election.

The SEP insists that the working class must oppose all factions of the ruling class, which in one way or another are dragging Sri Lanka into the machinations of imperialism and its drive to war. Faced with a worsening economic crisis at home, both the government and opposition parties agree that working

people must be forced to bear the burden. Whichever of their candidates wins the January 8 elections, they will intensify the onslaught on the living conditions of the working class.

The SEP election meetings will discuss these vital political issues and the international socialist program needed to prevent war and defend the social and democratic rights of workers and youth. We urge workers, youth and intellectuals to attend and participate in this vital discussion.

Meeting venues and dates:

Maharagama

Sanathana Mandiraya (Near Nawinna Railway Gate)

Friday December 12 at 4 p.m.

Gampaha

Sanasa Small Hall (Courts Road)

Sunday December 14 at 3 p.m.

Chilaw

Sudasuna Hall

Wednesday December 17 at 3 p.m.

Hatton

Kamkaru Sevana Hall

Sunday December 21 at 10 a.m.

Kurunegala

YMBA Hall

Monday December 29 at 4 p.m.

Matara

Sanasa Hall, Nupe Junction

Saturday January 3 at 3 p.m.

Colombo

Public Library Auditorium

Sunday January 4 at 3 p.m.

More meetings, including in Kandy and Jaffna, will be announced in the coming days.



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