

Sri Lankan SEP to launch election campaign with live streamed online public meeting

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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP), the Sri Lankan section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, will hold an online public meeting, live streamed on Facebook at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 22 local time, to launch its campaign for the forthcoming general elections. The SEP cancelled its previously announced March 21 public meeting at the Colombo Public Library Auditorium due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The SEP is fielding 43 candidates for three districts—Colombo, Jaffna and Nuwaraeliya—in the April 25 general elections. The SEP's candidate lists are headed by Vilani Peiris, P. Sambandan and M. Thevarajah, senior party leaders who have dedicated their lives to the struggle for the perspective of international socialism.

President Gotabhaya Rajapakse has called the elections in an attempt to win more seats for his ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP). His aim is the establishment of a presidential dictatorship that would attempt to suppress the rising mass opposition of workers and the rural poor to its IMF-dictated austerity measures.

The opposition parties—the United National Party, its breakaway faction, the Samagi Jana Balavegaya, and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna—have no differences with Rajapakse's dictatorial plans and have expressed their readiness to work with him. The Tamil National Alliance and other Tamil bourgeois parties want to boost their parliamentary seats and preserve their privileges through a deal with Colombo that backs the geopolitical interests of the US and its regional ally India.

Pseudo-left organisations, such as the Nava Sama Samaja Party, the United Socialist Party and the Frontline Socialist Party, are tirelessly working to prevent any independent mobilisation of the working

class against the increasing authoritarian measures of the Sri Lankan ruling elite.

Opposing all these parties, the SEP is fighting for the independent mobilisation of the working class for international socialism and against deepening social inequality, imperialist war and the threat of dictatorship. The inability of the capitalist system to meet the most basic social needs of the working class and the oppressed masses is starkly demonstrated by the unprecedented economic and social crisis provoked by the spread of the coronavirus pandemic around the world.

This Sunday's afternoon online meeting will be addressed by party speakers, including General Secretary Wije Dias and leading candidates, and will be live streamed through the Sri Lankan SEP's Facebook page. SEP speakers will elaborate on the international socialist program and perspective on which the party's election campaign is based.

We invite workers, youths, intellectuals and WSWS readers to participate in this vital event.



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