

Sri Lankan SEP/IYSSE to hold picket and public meeting to fight for socialist perspective in the mass anti-government protests

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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka are holding a picket and an online public meeting to advocate a working-class socialist program for the ongoing mass demonstrations against the government of President Gotabhaya Rajapakse.

The picket will be held at 3 p.m. on Thursday April 21 outside the Fort Railway Station in Colombo. The main slogans at the picket will be “Abolish the executive presidency,” “Defeat the IMF austerity measures” and “Build workers’ action committees.”

The online public meeting will be held three days later on Sunday April 24 at 4 p.m. It will be on Zoom and livestreamed via the SEP Facebook page.

The Rajapakse government has been shaken by unprecedented and ongoing mass protests that erupted over intolerable social conditions. Lengthy daily power cuts, shortages of fuel and cooking gas, and the skyrocketing cost of essential items have devastated the lives of workers, youth, farmers, fishermen, self-employed and small-scale business holders.

The mass movement has coalesced around “Go Home Gota,” the demand that President Gotabhaya Rajapakse and his Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna government resign. The SEP supports this demand and on April 7 issued a statement which goes further in outlining a socialist political program and perspective for the working class.

The statement calls for the immediate abolition of the executive presidency which has been used since 1978 to brutally crush all social opposition by working people, youths and rural toilers to capitalist rule.

Pointing out the treacherous role of unions in

suppressing the wave of strikes and protests by workers during the past period, the SEP urges workers to form Action Committees—Independent of the trade unions—to address all the pressing social needs of the masses.

It explains the incapacity all parties of the bourgeois political establishment to solve any of burning social issues confronting the working people and rural toilers and advances a series of policies aimed at meeting those needs.

The SEP advocates a program for the working class to overthrow capitalist rule and establish a government of workers and peasants to implement socialist policies. This fight of the Sri Lankan working class is a part of broader struggle for socialism in South Asia and internationally.

The SEP/IYSSE urge all the workers, youths, peasants, and other oppressed layers to participate in this picket and online public meeting. Register for the Zoom meeting [here](#).



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