

# SEP/IYSSE public meeting in Colombo: Oppose the Sri Lankan government's privatisation of state enterprises! Build workers' action committees to fight for jobs and wages!

Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka)

7 June 2023

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka will hold a meeting at the Public Library Auditorium in Colombo on Thursday, July 6 at 4 p.m. on the theme “Oppose the Sri Lankan government's privatisation of state enterprises! Build workers' action committees to fight for jobs and wages!”

The Sri Lankan government of President Ranil Wickremesinghe has initiated a massive process of “reforming” 430 state-owned enterprises (SOE) in line with the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that are the precondition for a \$US3 billion bailout loan. Under this process, some SOEs will be closed, some will be sold to Sri Lankan and international private investors, some merged, and the rest “restructured.”

Wickremesinghe's “reforms” are aimed at attracting foreign investors while placing the full burden of the country's economic disaster, part of a global crisis of capitalism, on the working class and the rural poor. This program will impact more than half a million workers employed in these enterprises, destroying tens of thousands of jobs. Those who remain will face reduced wages, pensions, worsening conditions and increased workloads. The IMF measures, moreover, will drive up the price of all goods and services, pushing working people, already battered by hyperinflation and severe shortages, into further misery.

The trade unions, which have betrayed a series of

struggles by workers against the government's austerity assaults, have maintained a deathly silence since the SOE “reform” measures were announced last month. The unions defend capitalism, covertly or overtly support IMF austerity, and act as industrial police for the government and big business to contain and suppress the class struggle.

The SEP is calling on workers to establish their own action committees, independent of the unions, at every workplace, factory, plantation and neighbourhood in order to take the struggle against privatisation and all the government's social attacks into their own hands. That struggle must be developed into an independent political movement of the working class fighting for a government of workers and peasants, based on the principles of international socialism.

The SEP/IYSSE public meeting will elaborate on the program and perspective of socialist internationalism that the working class needs to fight the government's austerity measures. We urge workers, youth, the rural poor and all our readers to attend the meeting and participate in this important discussion.

Date and time: Thursday, July 6, 4 p.m.

Venue: Public Library Auditorium, Colombo

*The SEP, which takes the COVID-19 pandemic seriously and will take all the necessary health and safety measures at the meeting, urges all participants to wear N95 masks for the protection of themselves and others.*



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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