

Sri Lankan SEP meeting to launch two books on the Sinhala chauvinist JVP

Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka)
18 March 2024

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka will hold a public meeting at Colombo Public Library auditorium on April 4 at 4 p.m. to launch two books on the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP).

One is the fourth edition of the *Politics and Class Nature of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (in Sinhala) written by the late Keerthi Balasuriya, the founding general secretary of the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL), the predecessor of the SEP.

The other is the *Rightward shift of Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*, a collection of the recent articles written by K. Ratnayake for the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) English and Sinhala language editions. Both the Sinhala and Tamil versions of this book will be launched at this event.

The JVP began in the late 1960s as a petty bourgeois radical movement that recruited disaffected rural Sinhala youth based on a toxic mixture of Sinhala populism and Maoist and Castroite peasant guerrillaism.

In the 1980s, it lurched to the right, becoming a strident supporter of the communal war against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) provoked by the right-wing United National Party (UNP) government of President J.R. Jayawardene.

During the last 30 years, the JVP has continued to rapidly shift to the right, dropping its empty socialist phrase mongering and transforming itself into a parliamentary party of the Colombo political establishment. In 2004, it joined the bourgeois government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga in which JVP leaders held four ministerial posts.

Widely discredited among workers and youth, it formed the National Peoples Power (NPP) in 2015, as a

broad electoral front now bidding for political power to “save the country,” that is, to prop up the capitalist system.

In recent years, the JVP/NPP leaders have cultivated close relations with the diplomats of imperialist countries including the US, the UK, the EU and other major powers, while promising to serve big business interests. They have promised the International Monetary Fund (IMF), if it comes to power, it will continue the IMF’s devastating austerity program, currently being implemented by the government of President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

The JVP’s rightward evolution is not an isolated, national phenomenon. Rather it is an expression of the shift by similar organisations internationally—such as the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua and a host of Maoist groups including the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist Centre), just to name a few—into pro-imperialist outfits. Behind this universal shift is the globalisation of production that has sounded the death knell for all nationalist programs, including those on which these organisations were based.

The SEP/IYSSE meeting will discuss the JVP’s rightward trajectory, and the underlying crisis of global capitalism which has found a particularly sharp expression in Sri Lanka. The meeting will discuss the international socialist perspective that the working class and the oppressed need to adopt to fight for their democratic and social rights.

We invite all workers, young people, school and university students to attend this important meeting and participate in the discussion.

Venue: Colombo Public Library Auditorium

Date and time: April 4, 4p.m.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact