

Workers and students in Sri Lanka denounce US-Israeli war against Iran

Our reporters
12 March 2026

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka have spoken to workers and university students about the implications of the criminal US-Israeli war against Iran and the urgent need to build an anti-war movement based on international socialism.

The brutal US-Israeli war of extermination, now in its second week, is aimed at subjugating Iran and placing its resources under Washington's domination. The indiscriminate attacks have devastated the country, killing over 1,000 people and destroying basic infrastructure.

Sri Lanka's Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna/National People's Power (JVP/NPP) government has not condemned the war, effectively signalling its support for Washington's actions. As the war spreads across the Middle East, oil and gas prices are rapidly rising around the world.

A political science teacher from a school in Puttalam, a coastal town in the North-Western Province, said: "To justify this illegal war, Donald Trump is spreading lies, claiming that Iran is developing nuclear weapons and that this poses a threat to the American people. These claims are false. What they really want is to seize Iran's oil resources and cut off oil supplies to China."

Responding to Trump's claims to be defending human rights in Iran, she added: "If the American government cares so much about people, why are immigrants being deported from the US? The biggest threat to the American people is the Trump administration, isn't it?" She said that the US ruling elite was increasingly concerned about the weakening global dominance of the US dollar.

Referring to the US assault on Venezuela at the beginning of the year, she added: "I heard that

President Nicolás Maduro made oil deals using Chinese currency. Iran is similar. China's investments in these countries have increased, which is why tensions have escalated into war. If China and Russia become directly involved, nuclear weapons could even be used." She also condemned the decades-long US sanctions against Iran, which have restricted access to essential medicines, and denounced the massacres carried out in Palestine over the past two years.

The teacher criticised the failure of the JVP/NPP government to condemn the war, noting that it was also imposing International Monetary Fund austerity measures on the Sri Lankan masses. She referred to Russian Revolution leader Vladimir Lenin, who said there could be no genuine freedom until the working class overthrows imperialism and the capitalist ruling classes.

Kanishka Karunaratne, a Ceylon Electricity Board consumer coordinator, said: "From the American side, this appears to be a one-sided war and is driven by the economic crisis in America. There are serious problems in the US economy. Trump seems to want an economic system like Hitler's, where powerful states annex other countries. America intervened in Venezuela and now it is manipulating its trade relations."

Karunaratne said the US and Israel had no right to intervene in and exploit human rights issues in Iran: "There are problems in Iran, but they are internal problems. Every country has such issues. It is up to the Iranian people themselves to intervene and change their government.

"Stopping the war is a serious issue because there is a problem with the mentality of the person waging the war—Donald Trump. It's impossible to imagine how he makes his decisions, but a real anti-war movement can

be built through the protest movements that have now emerged in America.”

Senuri, a Visual and Performing Arts University student, said: “This war is completely unnecessary. America is acting unjustly. It wants to plunder Iran’s resources, such as oil and gas, and so Iran has the right to retaliate. Donald Trump is a dictator who makes unilateral decisions, just like Hitler did.” Senuri referred to the irrationality of the capitalist system, saying, “This system should not continue any longer.”

A Colombo University student said: “We are against the war. This is a major crime. The US-Israeli attack has killed many ordinary people. It shows the destructive role that America is playing today. Earlier this year we saw the attack on Venezuela. The US kidnapped the former president of that country, Nicolás Maduro, and even his wife. After targeting that country, they are now trying to conquer Iran, and it’s difficult to believe they will stop there. It seems the US wants to dominate Greenland and even Canada as well.”

S. Bhanusa, a University of Jaffna student, told the IYSSE that she “strongly opposed” the US-Israeli attacks on Iran and referred to Colombo’s 26-year communalist war against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in the north and east of Sri Lanka and the social devastation faced by Tamil people.

“As a community, we faced immense hardships and cruelty for decades. We can understand the feelings of the Iranian people in the face of US-Israeli bombings and missile attacks. They have even killed hundreds of children,” she said.

Bhanusa said she was following news about the brutal attack on Iran through the media, particularly social media platforms such as YouTube. “If this war escalates, the danger of a third world war will increase. A major power is waging war against another smaller country. It must be stopped,” she said.

During their discussions, SEP/IYSSE campaigners explained that the military attack on Iran could not be stopped by appealing to the imperialist powers. The first task of the working class, they explained, is to understand the character of the war itself. Modern wars are not accidents or the result of the policies of this or that government but arise from the crisis of the capitalist system and the struggle of rival imperialist powers for markets, resources and strategic dominance.

The historical experience of the twentieth century demonstrates that war can be stopped only through the revolutionary intervention of the working class. As the producers of society’s wealth, workers possess the collective power to disrupt war economies through strikes and mass action. United internationally and politically independent from capitalist parties and unions, they can overthrow the pro-war capitalist system and reorganize society on socialist foundations.

Today, as the danger of a third world war rapidly intensifies, the working class confronts the same historic alternative: socialism or barbarism. Against the pro-war ruling elites, their fascistic allies, and the pseudo-left and pacifist forces that promote illusions in the capitalist system, the working class must take up the fight to abolish the source of war itself—capitalism. As the International Committee of the Fourth International insists, there can be no genuine struggle against war without the fight for socialism, and no socialist movement that does not oppose imperialist war.

SEP/IYSSE campaigners urged all those they spoke with to attend the SEP–IYSSE public meeting on March 17 at 4 p.m. at the Colombo Public Library to discuss the geo-strategic factors driving the US-Israeli war and how to develop an international socialist anti-war movement of workers, youth, and intellectuals to fight it.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact