

Sri Lankan SEP/IYSSE to picket and hold public meeting for release of Maruti Suzuki workers

30 March 2017

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youths and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) will hold a picket protest and a public meeting as part of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) campaign to free framed-up Maruti Suzuki workers. The picket protest will be at 4 p.m. tomorrow in Colombo, outside the Fort Railway Station, and the public meeting at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4, at the Colombo Public Library Auditorium.

Thirteen workers from the Maruti Suzuki car assembly plant at Manesar in the northern Indian state of Haryana have been sentenced to life imprisonment on fraudulent murder charges. Another 18 workers from the same factory were sentenced to between three and five years prison terms on lesser charges.

These sentences are the outcome of a monstrous frame-up mounted by the Japanese-owned car maker and the police and judicial authorities, with the full collaboration of India's main political parties—the ruling Hindu supremacist Bharatiya Janatha Party (BJP) and the Congress Party. The workers were targeted for their role in a series of militant struggles, including strikes, occupations and protests, against the slave labour conditions at the plant.

The company and the police seized on a management-provoked altercation on July 18, 2012, and a fire that resulted in the death of Awanish Kumar Dev, a company human resources manager. While 13 workers were charged and convicted of murder there was no evidence linking any of the accused to the fire and the death. In handing down the convictions, the Indian court willfully ignored its own finding that the police had colluded with the company management and that evidence had been fabricated.

In jailing the Maruti Suzuki workers, the Indian

ruling elite hopes to intimidate workers throughout the country, stop them taking any action against harsh working conditions, and reassure local and foreign investors that it will do anything to maintain the country's sweatshop labour regime.

The ICFI is fighting to mobilise the independent political strength of the working class in India, throughout South Asia and internationally, to defeat the frame-up of Maruti Suzuki workers. It calls on the international working class to fight for the immediate release of all of the framed-up workers and the quashing of the bogus guilty verdicts.

The SEP/IYSSE public meeting will discuss the significance of the ICFI campaign and the political program and perspective on which it is based. We urge workers, youths, intellectuals and WSWs readers to support this critical struggle and attend our public meeting in Colombo on April 4.

Picketing

Date and time: Friday, March 31, 4 p.m.

Venue: In front of Fort Railway Station, Colombo

Public meeting

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

Venue: Public Library Auditorium, Colombo

To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>