

## FLSP 'Roadmap' to Protect the People from the Pandemic!

In Sri Lanka, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on January 27 2020. The number of infected people has exceeded 233,000 while reporting more than 2400 deaths by this time. The COVID-19 pandemic soon transformed from a health issue to a social and economic crisis, causing many adverse economic and social effects. The impact of

the pandemic on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and the informal sector, including daily wage earners, was severe. The government has failed to control both virus and the burning issues of the people.

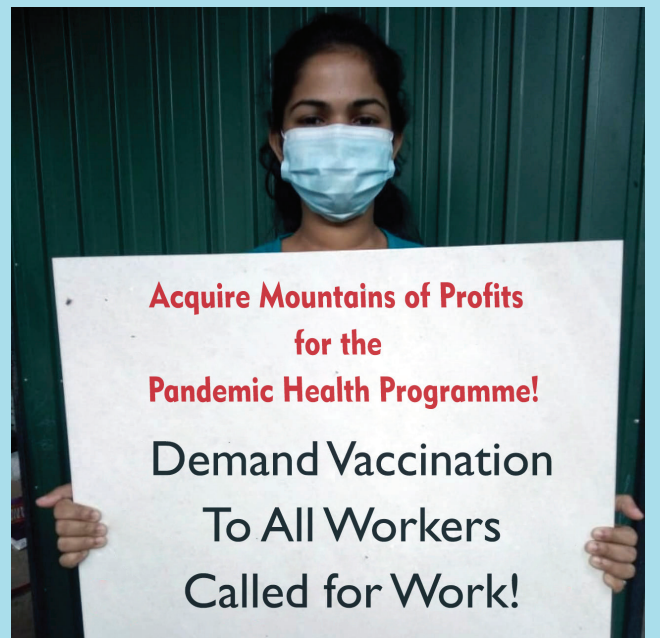
While demanding government reliefs to vulnerable people in the backdrop of human tragedy, the FLSP has expressed in its proposals a natural, sustainable solution to the prevailing pandemic crisis.

### Sri Lanka Increases Fuel Prices Amidst the Pandemic

Sri Lanka has decided to increase fuel prices with effect from midnight on Friday 11th June. Secretary of Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna moved for the resignation of Energy Minister Udaya Gammanpila a day after he raised fuel prices. This price hike is nothing but going back on an election promise to fix oil prices to bolster the cash-strapped state energy corporation.

Minister Gammanpila said the price hike was a decision of a cabinet subcommittee. The state-run Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) had 330 billion rupees of accumulated loss and over 3 billion US dollars in foreign exchange, which was in short supply.

Free Women! the women's wing of the FLSP organized an online protest campaign via social media platforms, demanding quick responses necessary to protect working class from the pandemic, as many of the garment workers were victimised for the greed of companies for profits!



### Worst Ever Pollution Taking Place In the Lankan West Coast

A cargo ship carrying tonnes of chemicals is sinking off Sri Lanka's west coast, causing Sri Lanka's worst-ever marine disaster. The Singapore-registered MV X-Press Pearl was carrying 1,486 containers, including 25 tonnes of nitric acid, along with 278 tonnes of bunker fuel oil and 50 tonnes of gas oil.

The fire was caused by nitric acid, a highly corrosive acid widely used in manufacturing fertilisers and explosives. The ship's owners confirmed the crew had been aware of the leak but said they were denied permission by Qatar and India to dock the ship. However, the vessel was allowed to enter our waters by Sri Lankan Authorities after being rejected by two other nations.