

## On the Demise of Comrade Nagalingam Sanmugathasan

# Comrade Shan: An Unrepentant Communist

By the Central Organizing Committee, Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist)

The death of comrade Nagalingam Sanmugathasan, affectionately known as comrade "Shan" and leader of the Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist) on 7th February, 1993, in England, is a most grievous loss to the International Communist Movement and to the Marxist-Leninist movement in Sri Lanka. His memory will live forever in the hearts and minds of the people.

Comrade Shan participated in the Marxist-Leninist proletarian revolutionary movement when he was still a student at the Colombo University. As he has stated in his autobiography, *Memoirs of an Unrepentant Communist*, "It was my second year at the University (1939-40) that changed the direction of my entire life. In that year I became a communist. I have not looked back since."

... As the leader of the CTUF (Ceylon Trade Union Federation), comrade Shan led the workers in many militant strikes, including the general strike of 1947, the Hartal (general strike) of 1953, the transport strike in 1955.

...Comrade Shan became a fulltime member of the Ceylon Communist Party when it was formed in 1943.

The Ceylon Communist Party (CCP) at that time played a decisive vanguard role in rising to the defence of comrade Stalin. Yet, from the very beginning, the CCP was saddled with an opportunist, class collaborationist, parliamentarist and economist political leadership. This opportunism degenerated into open revisionism when this leadership sided with Khrushchev in the great international ideological struggle between modern revisionism, represented by the new class of state monopolist capitalists headquartered in Moscow which had usurped state power in the Soviet Union following the death of comrade Stalin, and Marxism-Leninism as represented by Mao Tsetung and the Chinese Communist Party.

...Under his leadership, the 9th Congress of the CCP held in 1969 upheld Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It established the New Democratic Revolution and the line, strategy and program of Protracted Peoples War as the historic path through which the Sri Lanka revolution must proceed uninterruptedly towards the Socialist Revolution. It also laid out basic policies and guidelines for reorganizing the party, taking work among the peasantry in the countryside as principal and secret, underground work as the basis for party activities. The 9th Congress held under the personal leadership of comrade Shan represents a milestone and a historic achievement in the development of the Marxist-Leninist, proletarian revolutionary movement in Sri Lanka.

Comrade Shan was blessed with the supreme honour of meeting and having discussions with Chairman Mao on one of his two visits to China during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. He had

the great honour of addressing thousands of Red Guards during the GPCR. Such was the prestige and honour he enjoyed within the international communist movement.

Following the death of Chairman Mao, when the revisionists led by Deng Xiaoping captured state power in China, restored capitalism and began to distort and betray the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, comrade Shan played an important role in exposing Chinese revisionism, along with that of Enver Hoxha and the Albanian Party of Labour. He played a vital role in rallying and uniting the genuine Maoist parties and organizations of the world in order to accomplish the decisive task of rebuilding the International Communist Movement based on the defence and application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. As a result of his efforts, the CCP (Maoist) had the honour of becoming a founding member of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, which was formed in 1984.

...It is fitting that comrade Shan, who was 74 years of age, should die while being involved in the defence of the life of comrade Gonzalo since, in some ways, his death represents the end of a generation of Marxist-Leninists who had taken up the torch of proletarian revolution since the time of Stalin, while comrade Gonzalo represents the new generation of Maoists who would take the proletarian revolution into a new 21st century bearing unprecedented challenges and undreamt of truly historic opportunities for advancing the world proletarian socialist revolution towards the final goal of communism.

Under comrade Shan's leadership, during the late '60s, the CCP became the strongest, most militant working class party in Sri Lanka. Its influence spread far and wide. The scarlet banner of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was unfurled through the armed clashes of the oppressed caste members in Jaffna who fought against their domination by the upper caste landlords. It blazed from the lush hill tops and verdant valleys of the plantations where the Red Flag Union mobilized tens of thousands of workers to fight against their exploiters in pitched militant economic battles....

...Before he left for England to get treatment and care for his debilitating illnesses, he convened a special congress of the CCP where he established new principles and a new generation of leadership for accomplishing the task of rebuilding the party. Until his end, comrade Shan devoted all his conscious efforts to the cause of advancing the world proletarian revolution. He was truly, "An Unrepentant Communist".

The Central Organizing Committee of the Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist) shares its deep sorrow at the loss of our beloved leader and teacher with the international proletariat and the oppressed people of the world, and vows to uphold his name and his contributions and achievements, and to carry out his wishes to fight for the final victory of Communism upon the ashes and ruins of imperialism. We have the steel confidence that standing firmly on the principles established and the victories achieved under the leadership of comrade Shan, we shall overcome all difficulties and rise up to fulfill our duties and obligations to the world revolution.

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[http://www.aworldtowin.org/back\\_issues/1993-19/comrade\\_Shan\\_An\\_Unrepentant\\_Communist\\_19\\_eng.htm](http://www.aworldtowin.org/back_issues/1993-19/comrade_Shan_An_Unrepentant_Communist_19_eng.htm)