

Sri Lankan SEP/IYSSE to hold memorial meeting for lifelong Trotskyist Jerani Ratnayake

Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka)
20 June 2023

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka will hold a memorial meeting to pay tribute to Jerani Ratnayake, a lifelong member of the Trotskyist movement. She passed away on July 8 last year after a heart attack at a Colombo hospital, where she had been admitted several days earlier as a result of a COVID-19 infection.

The meeting, to mark the first anniversary of her death, will be held at the Funeral Home of the Boralesgamuwa Cemetery, an outer suburb of Colombo, on Saturday, July 8 at 4.00 p.m.

Jerani was the wife and lifelong partner of Kamilasiri Ratnayake, the national editor in Sri Lanka of the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS).

Jerani was Tamil. Together with her parents and family members she went through the bitter experience of anti-Tamil communalism instigated by successive Sri Lankan governments over decades.

She worked at the Central Bank after her graduation, where she met members of the SEP's forerunner, the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) and joined the party. From that time, she was deeply committed to the perspective of Trotskyism and an intransigent fighter for the principles of international socialism as a part of the RCL's faction within the Central Bank Employees Union (CBEU).

Jerani rejected the perspective of the various petty-bourgeois Tamil nationalist movements, such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). These emerged in the 1970s as a consequence of the betrayal by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), which abandoned the fight for socialist internationalism and entered the bourgeois coalition government of Sirima

Bandaranaike in 1964.

When the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) unleashed its fascistic rampage in 1988–89, murdering three RCL comrades and threatening RCL members at the Central Bank, she fought back bravely with other comrades on the basis of Trotskyist principles.

Comrade Jerani's determined fight for Trotskyism, embodied today in the comrades of the ICFI, will inspire workers, toiling masses and youths amid the global capitalist crisis expressed in the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine as well as the explosive growth of class struggles around the world.

The SEP memorial meeting will discuss the political lessons of her decades-long struggle for Trotskyist principles that are vital for the current generation of workers and youths in their fight against capitalism. We urge workers, youths and WSWS readers to attend the event.

Date and time: Saturday, July 8, 4 p.m.

Venue: Funeral Home at Boralesgamuwa Cemetery



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