

### 1. Tell us about your family background.

My Dad, Mr. Gopala Manarroo has been a bookmaker for 23 years. He was mostly known at the Champ De Mars as Govinda Manarroo. Born in Moka he was a very modest man who married my mum Miss Panjalay Runghen a quite wealthy lady from Port Louis as well. Even though he was simple but he was very rich in cultural knowledge and cares a lot about his religion. From this union was born my elder sister Mrs Malini Mootoosamy who was previously a good Bharatnatyam dancer, student of Mrs. Revatee Sunassee, myself and my younger sister Mrs. Rubina Rengasamy who is very religious person as well. Since our early childhood we were taught the importance of our culture and identity of our ancestors. My Dad has been a member of the Tamil League for 20 years consecutively. My childhood has always been revolving around Kovil, prayer, bajanam, etc. In fact my uncle late Mr. Mareemootoo Manarroo was the first Mauritian builder of Tamil Kovil in Mauritius. Today his son is still doing this job.



### 2. What has attracted you to serve the community?

Coming already from a very religious background I always had a big vision for the Tamil community. I was member of the Shree Kannadur Mariamen Kovil, Port Louis since I was 9 years old. Something which has inspired me and I still remember it very well is the big gathering organized by the Tamil Council in the year 1990's. I admired the members with the 5101 posters, the huge number of people celebrating the Tamil Puttandhu at Mont Choisy. I am seizing this opportunity to extend my special thank and admiration for Mr. Devarajen Kanaksabee for his contribution to our community.

### 3. What have been your greatest achievements and satisfaction?

My very first Tamil Night 5105 at Metropole was out of the world. At that time Mr. Gessen Singaron was very famous with his Tamil segas. My greatest achievement and satisfaction is the successful rallies we have been organizing since 5111. My best accomplishment is during 5113 at Palladium where with the help of the great Mr. Ganesh Permal, without whom I personally wouldn't have done it, so big thanks to him. We did an exposition at the entrance of the Palladium where you could find all the accessories which our ancestors was using before like cooking utensils, portraits of our ancestors and pictures of some affluent Tamil politicians.

### 4. Do you have any regrets?



It's regretful and I am very worried because being already a minority in this country, we do not stop fighting among ourselves. In most Kovils there are arguments between members. We are always competing among each other. There is singing competition in Kovil, Tamil Night competitions, rally competitions and even today I heard that others are organizing Tamil Contest like I am doing. Nowadays while in Kovil people don't concentrate on Poosai but on gossip and who wears what. OnexFm has been touring lots of kovil during Cavadee and Govinden and it is very regretful knowing that even Kovil is being rated as five stars. Peoples choose to attend big and beautiful kovil leaving the old and small Kovil near their home. I have

also noticed with deep concern one more outrageous thing and this has really shocked me. In a particular Kovil I have been, for people to be able to sit in an “Egiyoum” they have to pay an exaggerating fee of Rs. 10,000. That’s ridiculous. So a poor and even middle class family will never be able to take part in the Poosai since they can’t afford that huge amount. My question goes directly to the MTTF. Is there anyway of setting a range on how much each Kovil should charge for specific thing like Poosai, Milk during Cavadee and entry fee, etc.? My opinion this is complete pure business. One more thing we are employing and spending huge money on foreign priest, our children who are learning Tamil in school or privately, what is their future? Do they have to be only Tamil teachers? Can’t they be priest? Will our children get first priority?

5. What are the lessons you have learnt while providing community services.

First lesson is never give up. Since I started OnexFm I have directly and indirectly witnessed lots of ups and downs but I am still surviving. I have to endure many tests, lots of critics, so many people asking me to give up since all these community services won’t fill my belly but I am still fighting. OnexFM has done so much for our community and the list is long. I can’t express the happiness I received when we achieved something good for the community even though most of the time the credits go to others. So, whatever we have endured is nothing compared to the satisfaction we get out at the end of each work. And we will fight against all difficulties as long as Kadavoulei is on our side.

6. What is your opinion on Pathirikai, and how do you believe it can better help the community?

I have no words to describe the admiration for Pathirikai. A big thank you from my heart for all the fantastic works you have been doing for the community. You are already helping our people a lot so I can’t think any other better thing you could do. May be we could try to use Pathirikai as a platform to provide information like job, or where people can send their query or any other issue and we could try to help them. Anyway I wish Pathirikai a very long life!

7. Do you have any advice for our youth?

Well, my advice would be since the world is moving and developing very rapidly, one shouldn’t tend to forget his culture and religious background. Our ancestors have thrived hard to give us the place we are standing today so we should always be grateful to them. Please use your spare time to help the community, get involve in benevolent activities and don’t discriminate while helping. Whenever there is festival like Cavadee or Govinden, you will see lots of young people involving in the kovil but unfortunately when you visit the same Kovil every Friday, it is almost empty.

One thing I have noted as well is the way the youngsters dressed to attend Kovil. I won’t go into the details but I would like to point out that Kovil is a place where we should give a lot of importance to respect, belief and tradition.



I would also like to remind our young mame and akka that OnexFM still need their help and ideas so that we can do lots more for our community. So please feel free to join us!