

We are pleased to welcome this month, Mr Ganesh Ramalingum, C.E.O. of Data Communications Ltd and the newly elected President of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Govindaswami Ramalingum, also known as Ganesh, born on the 20th July 1954 is married to Ludy Marimootoo. They have two children : Kashee Devi (26 years old) and Selvan (23 years old).

Ganesh Ramalingum did his primary schooling at the Camp-Diable Government School before moving to Eden College for his Secondary Schooling. He studied for a BSc in Mathematics and an MSc in Statistics at the University of Manchester, U.K. between 1977 and 1981. In 1993 he did an MBA at the University of Mauritius in collaboration with the University of Bradford, England. He equally accumulated several professional qualifications such as CISCO and ACCA. He is presently the Executive Chairman of the Data Communications Limited (DCL) as well as the newly elected President of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).

**Mr Ramalingum, you have been closely associated with the computer industry in Mauritius in its early days and now you are leading a well-known organisation engaged in many projects at national level. How do you see the modernisation of Mauritius compared to other countries?**

I started around 32 years ago when computer was barely known to the general public. I was heavily involved with training in the early days as the public needed the knowledge as a push for this industry. Training was basically for programming and use of packages like word, excel, power point etc. For some people in the industry, it was UNIX training, Databases etc.

Mauritius has evolved to a country which is envied by many countries in the region and even certain part of Europe.

We are well ahead in many areas of the economy with its pillars in Industry, Financial, ICT/BPO, Fisheries, Tourism, Sugar. The only fact that we do not have natural resources has forced us to use one of our asset which is Human Resources.

The success of Mauritius is based on our willingness to succeed and our innovative ideas to become the centre and hub on the region for many different activities.

However, we need to continue innovating in order not to lag behind as many african and asian countries are working hard towards growth and improvement in their economy. While all these are happening in the African and Asian countries, we need to consolidate our effort and innovate to stay ahead of development.

**Do you see Mauritius as a cyber-island in the coming years?**

We must say that Mauritius has achieved a lot and has made a lot of progress in the ICT Industry. We used to depend only on Satellite for our communications in the past. Through strategy and proper investment, Mauritius has been connected to the SAFE (Under sea fibre optics cable) and additionally to EASSY/SEACOM via LION1 and LION 2.

We can proudly say that we have proper connections to the outer world.

Many operators on the island are investing in installation of fibre cables throughout the island. Some companies have also invested in Wireless communications. With all these developments, we can say that people from anywhere on the island may have a connection to the internet. Due to development and competition from operators, I can see a price stabilisation within the next couple of years.

There are also other initiatives to have other international and regional fibre optics cables to come to Mauritius. These can only help to reduce the cost of International bandwidth.

### **Why did you choose to go for computer education in early 90s?**

In fact, my first degree was in Mathematics and the second degree was in statistics. During the course, I was exposed to computer science which was fascinating for me. I invested more time to learn more about the subject. I had to use computer extensively in both my degrees but more extensively in my statistics one.

On my return after in 1981, I started to work in a software development company and grew from there. I also did an MBA at the university of Mauritius.

I entered the computer and telecommunication world through interest and perseverance in the subject.

### **As a member of the Tamil community, how do you see the evolution of Tamils in Mauritius compared to what it was 20 years back?**

The community spends a lot of time more towards religion.

There has been a lot of progress from a cultural point of view as well as many young generations are interested in their culture and religion. Sometimes religion is too omnipresent. Young should be encouraged to speak the language which is probably lacking amongst many today.

I would have spent more time and money on teaching the community more on spoken Tamil and followed by written Tamil for those who are interested. I do not approve many kovils as I see too much money spent in structures which could have been used otherwise.

**Do you think that our Tamil associations are devoting too much of their effort in preserving our cultures and traditions and are not doing enough for the education of our people?**

Yes as explained above.

We should concentrate more on education. Young ones should be encourage to learn the language and the culture.

**What advice would you give to our youth at a time where education appears to be the key to their success?**

To persevere in education as this is the only way of progress. Education is vital to any individual. Learn more skills and always be ready to challenge yourself. Whatever you want to do can be achieved by focusing on your target.

**You are a regular reader of Pathirikai, the online newspaper of the Tamil Community. What is your evaluation of the journal, and how best do you think it can serve the community?**

There has been a lot of evolution. Keep it up. I think you are doing a good job.

May be more can be achieve by propagation.

**Is there anything you would like to add, for the benefit of our readers?**

Spend more time on the family and look after the children. Their education is important as this is the route to their progress and achievement in life.

Prayer is important and should be moderate. No one can concentrate in a prayer which last for hours. This is not a criticism but for you to reflect and decide what is right.

Spend less money on structure but more on the education and skills that you can give to your children and the community at large.