

**A  
Tribute to Gopal T  
Padayichie**

**Manager  
CELTIC UNITED  
FOOTBALL CLUB**

**15 November 2019**

**Ismail Vadi**

## CELTIC UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB REUNION

Members of the Lenasia-based Celtic United Football Club held their first reunion at a glittering function last week after 50 years of the establishment the club. The club once proudly carried the colours of the Brazilian national soccer team. The famous soccer club formed in 1969 by Gopal Padayichie and Abubakr Danka was disestablished in the mid-1980s. For over 15 years, Celtic players thrilled local soccer fans with their dazzling skills at the Tech Grounds and the Lenasia Soccer Stadium. The team of youngsters from Greyville was affiliated to the erstwhile Lenasia Football Association and went onto to play semi-professional soccer in the non-racial Transvaal Soccer Board led by Mohamed Sibda. Speaking at the reunion, an overjoyed Gopal Padayichie, who was the team manager, said that it was his dream to groom youngsters from Lenasia into a disciplined and formidable soccer team that would one-day play professional soccer along non-racial lines. Sadly, that dream only materialised after My Padayichie sold the club in 1986, and Celtic Utd FC was promoted to the First Division of the Federation Professional League led by a new management. Former Gauteng MEC for Roads and Transport, Ismail Vadi, played for Celtic FC as a goalkeeper. At the party, he traced the history of the junior team from humble beginnings in Greyville that systematically climbed the ladder to reach professional status. Vadi also outlined the historical roots of the Lenasia Football Association and the broader non-racial soccer movement that played a seminal role in getting the all-White Football Association of South Africa expelled from FIFA. Former captain Jaya Kuni said it is sad that a highly successful team was no longer in existence and that several players had passed on over the years.

**REUNITED**  
AND IT FEELS  
*So good*

**Celtics Soccer**  
**Reunion**  
**Lenasia Civic Centre**

Date: 17 August 2019

Time: 16h30 for 17h00

Cost: R200 per couple includes Dinner & Refreshments

RSVP Aron Collepen 081 473 1502 or Jaya Kuni on 082 451 0072  
or Claude Naidoo on 082 453 8562

# *Programme*

**Master of Ceremonies**

Gregory Lazarus

**Starters**

**Welcome Address**

Aron Collophen

**Manager Address**

Gopal Padayichie

**Main Course**

**Guest Address**

Ismail Vadi

**Dessert**

**Vote of Thanks**

Claude Naidoo

**DJ**

Until Event Ends

Meeting after 50 years of the formation of Celtic Utd FC.

Thanks to Aron, Claude and Jaya for taking the initiative.

There's an element of sadness to this reunion – a number members are no longer with us and we honour their memories.

Also sad that that club no longer exists.



Celtic United FC was established in 1969 by Gopal Padayichie and supported by Abubakr Danka and Moosa Bismilla.

It took pride in that it adopted the colours of the Brazilian national team.

The club was disestablished by 1988.

## CELTIC UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB (ESTABLISHED 1969)



BACK ROW. LEFT TO RIGHT: S. GOVENDER, L. WADEE, G. PADAYICHIE, R. JAMES, K. SIGABAN.  
CENTRE ROW. N. MOHAMED, S. PADAYICHIE, L. MOODLEY, J. KUNI, A. COLLAPEN, G. KANDIN.  
FRONT ROW: (SITTING) S. NAIDOO, G. ABDUHLAN, I. WADEE, J. JACK, C. NAIDOO.



Celtics – a dream that died?



Founding members: Pushpa and Gopal Padayichie and  
Abubakr and Sabera Danka

Moosa Bismillah  
managed the  
Celtics junior team



Club meetings were held on Friday nights at the modest Greyville home of Uncle Gopes and Aunty Pushpa at 105 Honeysuckle Avenue and later in township at the home of Mr Padayichie Snr at 47 Canary Avenue.

On Sunday players would gather at the Kuni residence on 16 Shrike Avenue to be taken in the yellow and white Combi to the Tech Grounds for weekly matches.



Club was registered to the  
Lenasia Football Association  
(LFA)

Affiliated to the Transvaal  
Soccer Board (TSB)

Provincial  
affiliate to the South African  
Soccer Federation (SASF)

Explicitly supported non-racial  
soccer and opposed the all-  
White Football Association of  
South Africa that was  
suspended and later expelled  
from FIFA

Soccer and sport were essential  
components of the struggle  
against apartheid



## **The Birth & Development of the Lenasia Football Association**

**O**n the 24th July, 1957, a meeting was convened at the residence of Mr. Dalta Magoo (Hut No. 40, Old Camp Lenz) with the purpose of establishing a Football Association in the area. The meeting was attended by three clubs, namely, Lenz United, Century, and Orientals. Mr. Jimmy Padayachee was elected as protem chairman and Mr. Pali Naidoo as secretary. The meeting agreed that an association be formed, a constitution be drafted and that the association should seek affiliation to the Transvaal Indian Football Association. The inaugural meeting was held on the 25th August, 1957, at the residence of Mr. D. Magoo. The clubs present were Socials, Century A, and Orientals. Mr. Jimmy Padayachee presided and in the absence of Mr. P. Naidoo, Mr. W.A. Moonsamy acted as secretary.

**The constitution and the name Western Districts Indian Football Association was adopted. The office bearers elected at this meeting were as follows:**

Patrons: The Mayor of Johannesburg - Mr. J.T. Ramsamy, and Mr. K.D. Pillay.

President: Mr. W.J. Wamasuriya.

Secretary: Mr. W.A. Moonsamy.

Treasurer: Mr. G. Padayachee.

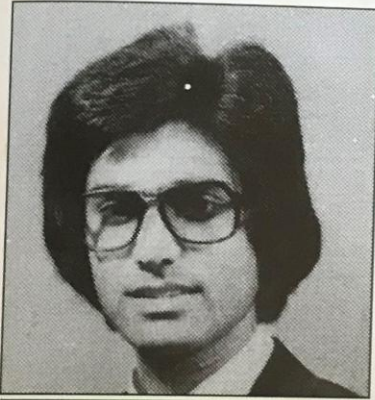
Record Clerk: Mr. M. Moonsamy.

Vice President: Messrs; J. Padayachee, F. Rungan, A. Poonen, R. Poonen, and K.R. Padayachee.

Thus the first community based institution in Lenasia came into being. Armed with spades and shovels officials, players and residents set out to make the first playing field (where the present Civic Centre is situated today) in the area for their only form of entertainment. In 1958 a new set of officials was elected into office. This was a difficult and frustrating season and resulted in the Association hibernating.

Matter of pride that Uncle Gopes served on the Executive Committee of the TSB

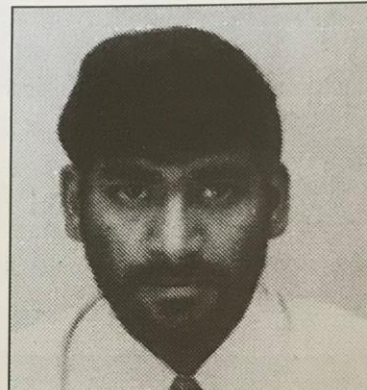
# The Executives 1980.....



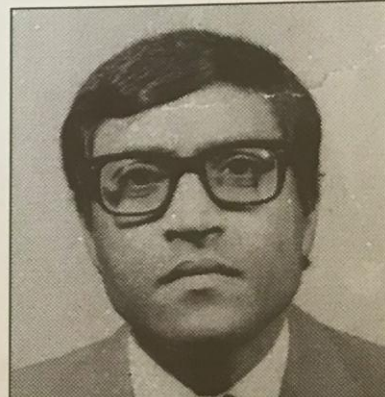
G. H. Sibda  
Vice-President



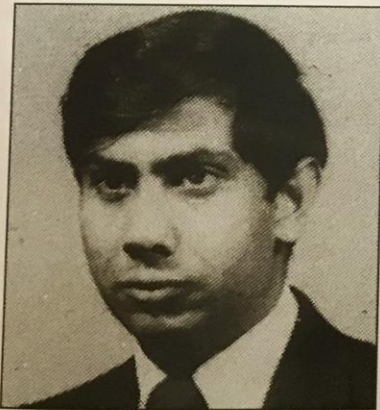
B. L. Gaffney  
President



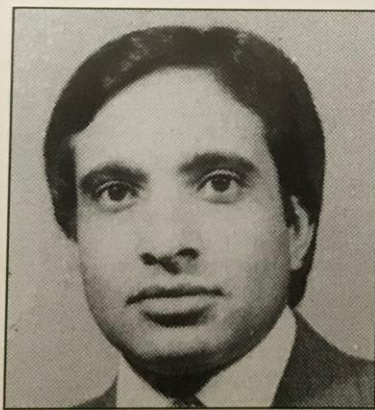
G. T. Padiachee  
Vice-President



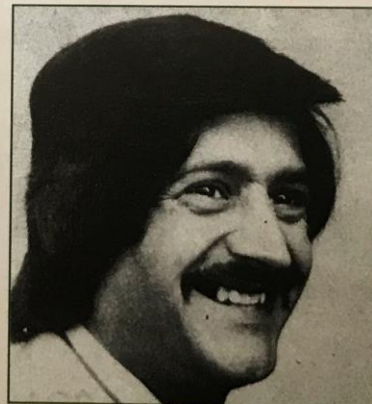
Vadivel Moodley  
Secretary & Registration & Minutes



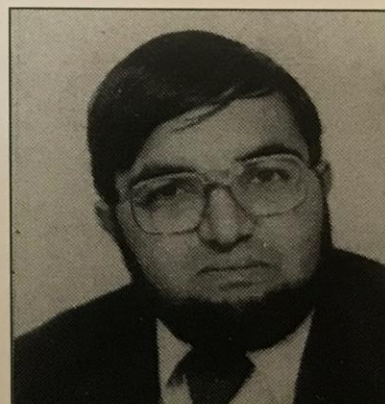
A. Shaik  
Secretary Records



Rashid Mia  
Secretary & Chairman:  
Protest, Misconduct & Enquiry Board



Mohamed Sibda  
General Secretary:  
Public Relations Officer & Finance



A. Hassen  
Secretary & Chairman:  
Selection Committee

# The Executives 1980

# Transvaal Soccer Board Officials



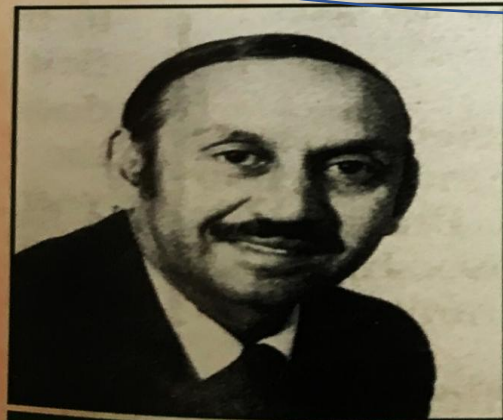
## TRANSVAAL SOCCER BOARD 1980

**Standing Row from left:** E. Hafejee, H. Kara, S. Phillips, V. Moodley (Secretary), C. Lewis, J. Jansen, A. Shaik  
**Middle Row from left:** I. Asmal, I. Khotwal, H. Laloo, F. Beukes, B. Jansen, I. Naik, I. Waja  
**Front Row from left:** R. Mia (Secretary), M. Sibda (Gen. Secretary), B. Gaffney (President), G. H. Sibda (V. President), A. Hassen (Secretary)  
**Insert:** G. T. Padiachi (V. President)

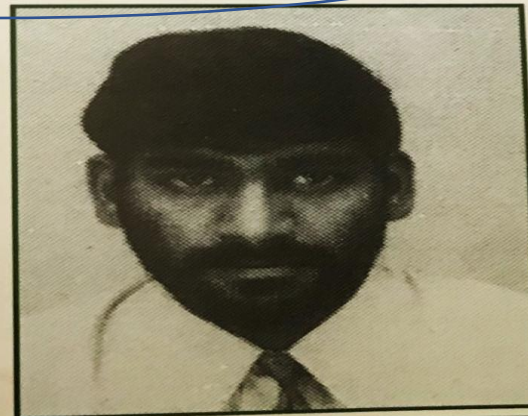
*'We must accept finite disappointment but we must never lose infinite hope.'*

I do believe that all these quotations are relevant to the councillors here today. Many of our senior officials have elected to take a back seat in accepting Transvaal Soccer Board positions. Yet they are well aware that they are capable of making a lasting impact and contribution to the Board. We are all here to serve the game under the auspices of SACOS and the SASF. We are all believers of the NON RACIAL PRINCIPLE. Yet many of us are not prepared to actively partake in organizing the game of SOCCER for the ordinary player in the street whom we claim to represent. Is this going to continue??? If so, we may as well resign ourselves to the fact that it is no longer necessary to continue with the Board." Pretoria and ETFA formed the North-Eastern Transvaal Soccer Board and affiliated directly to the SASF. The SASF at its meeting had resolved to revert back to centralized tournaments. Mahomed Sibda is elected Treasurer and also one of the trustees of SASF.

1988/ 89 – The country's sports fraternity is engaged in debating the impending unification and its implications for and against became topics of concern. THE REST BECAME HISTORY. Despite all the trials and tribulations, the Transvaal Soccer Board honoured all its commitments and paid out all prize monies timeously from 1970 – 1988.



Sam Khan



Gopal Padiachee



## THE SQUAD

**Manager:** Gopal Padayichie (deceased)

**Secretary:** Suki Sigaben

**Treasurer:** Sagie Govender

**Coaches:** Archie Naidoo / Virgil Padayachee / Terrence Lazarus

**Record Clerk:** Krish Sigaben

Gregory Lazarus

Ismail Vadi

Lionel Moodley (deceased)

Doughie Padayachee (deceased)

Krish Sigaben

Jeffrey Jack (deceased)

Goolam Abdullah

Anand Padayachee

Nader Padayachee

Rajan James

Tyrone Kollapen

Nazir Mahomed

Bashier Mahmood (Hoorzook)

Madhavan Naidoo

Jaya Kuni

Claude Naidoo

Seelan Naidoo

Gregory Peters (deceased)

Veera Sagie Govender

Mohamed Luckman Wadee (deceased)

Neil Singh

Walter Govindasamy

Gopal Kundon (deceased)

Gregory Sigaben



## **SUCSESSES**

LFA Junior League Champions

LFA Senior League Champions

LFA First Division Champions

Promoted to FPL 2<sup>nd</sup> Division (semi-professional league)

First Division FPL







## WHAT EXPLAINS THE SUCCESS?

- Strong management and leadership
- Willingness to make personal and financial sacrifices
- Adherence to administrative fairness
- Strong on club discipline
- Emphasis on training and fitness
- Fair player selection policy
- Team camaraderie and spirit
- Exposure of competitions and games outside of Lenasia (Nufcor, Bosmont, Fietas, Rustenburg Tournament)
- Team pride – success bred success





CELTICS FUND  
RAISER

APSARA CINEMA







# BIG ACTION PICS





THANK YOU UNCLE GOPES AND AUNTY PUSHPA  
Go well Uncle Gopes. We'll miss you!



Pic: Yunus Chamda