

Mr Ponnampalam Jeyaraj– A potted history

Ponnampalam Jeyarajasingam was born on 11 June 1944 in Kedah, Malaysia to Arumugam Ponnampalam and Annammah. When he was born, he was the second son and youngest child, which earned him the lifelong nickname of Baby. To this day, he is still referred to as Baby, Baby Anna and Baby Mama, even after his younger sister and brother were born.



Jeyarajasingam spent his first five years in a village in Sungai Petani, before the family moved back to Sri Lanka and settled in his mother's home town of Sandilipay. He had two brothers, the late Thavapalasingam and the late Rajasingam, and two sisters, Thavamalar and Pathmamalar. He grew up in Sandilippay and attended Skandavarodya College.

After school, he undertook an engineering course at Katubedde Technical College (now known as Moratuwa University), before doing an apprenticeship at Browns. It was during his apprenticeship that he found out about studying

opportunities in the UK at the British Council library in Colombo.

In 1967, Jeyarajasingam migrated to the UK to study Textile Engineering at Bolton Institute of Technology (now known as the University of Greater Manchester) in Bolton. He arrived in the UK eight days after one of his closest friend, A.E. Joseph. He lived with a group of students in the house of Milada Spencer (known to all as Mum) at 19 Hilden Street, Bolton.

After completing his course, he worked for various textile companies such as Courtaulds and Carrington Vyella.

