

MAURITIUS TIMES

If we need to really solve the problem, we need to collaborate, create collectives, and take solutions at scale. -- Ravi Venkatesan

Interview: Jean-Claude de l'Estrac



“ Air Mauritius a été asphyxiée par étouffement politique...

.... par l'Hôtel du gouvernement ou par ses délégués-paillassons au conseil d'administration... mais pas uniquement sous ce gouvernement ”

* 'La vraie question est celle de savoir s'il existe aujourd'hui une volonté politique mobilisant la contribution de tous. Le gouvernement risque de payer très cher l'arrogance de son cavalier-seul'

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An Opportunity to Reset Buttons

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How about taxing dividends?

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Burden Sharing

Grumbles have been recurrent for many years about the equity of our fiscal policies, portrayed as cuddly to private sector conglomerates and flourishing institutions as opposed to the middle classes and the ordinary taxpayers. These have taken a new dimension of resentment and anger lately in the wake of questions raised by different stakeholders about the legitimacy of the wage assistance being made rapidly available to the big corporations.

Presented as part of government's Covid-19 assistance and bailout package to the corporate private sector, it has indiscriminately covered all companies including those which have been making billions of rupees of profit year after year and distributing a large part of which to their shareholders. Former Finance minister Rama Sithanen has also touched on this issue in an open letter to the Prime Minister, wherein he advised the latter to look into the unacceptable situation involving private companies which have, 'for many years, declared massive dividends without any consideration for reserves for a rainy day' seeking assistance from the Public exchequer. 'Is it fair to the country that those who have distributed 80% of profit as dividends (in some cases more than 100%), be given support without asking them to plough back some of these excessive dividends?' he stated.

The question of the taxpayer being called to bail out the Richard Bransons has been raised in the UK, Australia and by several others here. We must also bear in mind that many conglomerates have been particularly adept at using fiscal leeway and provisions (eg multi-year tax deductions for hotel refurbishments) to minimise taxes they paid to the Exchequer over decades.

What is ironical is that such voices are being heard here simultaneously when the number of top employers in the citadel of capitalism, the US, that have cut executive pay has more than quadrupled in the last month. Large corporations are asking their executives to cut their salaries or bonuses as a way to show shared sacrifice as the number of laid-off and furloughed employees grows in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The number of top 100 employers in the United States that have instituted executive pay cuts jumped more than four-fold from 6% on March 24 to 25% last week, according to JUST Capital, which advocates for companies to be a force for good in the economy.

This Corona crisis has added fuel to a

simmering feeling of discontent with our fiscal policies and the equity of burden-sharing. We can expect the government at some stage to give due consideration to calls for revisiting our fiscal policy with a view to introducing greater equity in the country in the treatment of profitable conglomerates and companies, struggling SMEs, micro-entrepreneurs and the self-employed and the wider public. Meantime there are emergencies galore, but equity should be over-riding in sharing the burden of reconstruction that lies ahead.

One avenue would be a new tax regime more progressive in nature -- in fact a precondition which will allow the country to weather the financial storm on its hands, or for introducing some form of agrarian reform -- a prerequisite to achieving food security. More reforms in different sectors will be necessary if we are to ride out of the present and forthcoming predicament, and it will require strong political leadership to drive such reforms whilst maintaining a just equilibrium amongst the needs to carry forward our Welfare State, save from disaster our productive sectors in the wake of Covid-19 and eventually increase their competitiveness as well as reduce inequality in our society.

Opposition and resistance from the traditional quarters and other vested interest can delay or limit the scope of reforms to be introduced in the best interest of the country. A strong and committed government will have to resist such opposition. The role of the State is frequently played down in the market driven economy. When private profit is thriving and there is scope to do even better in time to come, strident calls are made by ultra-liberalists to curtail the "interference" of government. The claim is then made that "small government is the best government". In other words, the government should do the minimum leaving it to the private sector to drive the bigger parameters. However, when times are not so good, as happened in 2007 with the onset of the financial crisis in the West, governments are given compulsive roles to step in, preferably with a lot of bailout money in their hands at taxpayers' expense.

Facts show that governments have intervened and will intervene now and in the future to save the economic machinery from collapse. But in order to play their role effectively, the government should wield the necessary authority, be respected and seen to be running the affairs of State in the public interest -- not for the few.

Coronavirus

It feels like we are sliding into a period of unrest, but political philosophy offers hope

Thomas Hobbes described a dark place called the 'state of nature'. But he also showed us how to avoid falling into it.

Nothing will be the same again, and maybe that's a good thing. The potentially devastating impact of COVID-19 on the world economy is beyond the scope of measure. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has expressed concern that the pandemic could trigger conflicts around the world. The heart-warming pictures of Italians singing from their balconies at the start of the crisis is gradually being replaced by mounting incidents of social unrest, with increasingly longer queues at food banks. The risk is that if the economy collapses it will also bring down civil society with it. Political philosophers have a term for it: we are being propelled towards the "state of nature".

Thomas Hobbes introduced the concept of the state of nature in his 1651 book *The Leviathan*. He was very clear that the state of nature was not an archaic state of affairs that occurred in the remoteness of time but something that can occur at any moment. Whenever political stability breaks down, it can be replaced by anarchy. And of course, for Hobbes, the state of nature was not a pretty place:

In such condition, there is no place for Industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain; and consequently no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by Sea; no commodious Building; no Instruments of moving.

We are not in a Hobbesian state of nature -- not yet. We don't anticipate having, in the words of Hobbes, "no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society", although at present there is no theatre, no concerts, no travel and no sporting events. We are also starting to see initial manifestations of what Hobbes called the "war of all against all": such as countries aggressively outbidding each other on the global market for coronavirus protective equipment and anti-lockdown protests in the US including heavily-armed rallies enjoying the blessing of President Donald Trump

Hobbes goes on to capture the essence of the state of nature in chilling and memorable terms: "And which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short". COVID-19 has instilled fear in all of us -- continual fear.

All is not lost

Fortunately, Hobbes also teaches us that we are not doomed, that it is possible to escape the state of nature. But the only way to survive is via social cooperation. For all its misery and wretchedness, the state of nature is also a state of equality. We are all mortal and equally vulnerable. That is certainly true of life under COVID-19. This virus is a great leveller, it does not distinguish between nationalities or ethnicities, genders or social classes, religions or languages. Today we are all equally at risk, and from this fundamental equality another reality ascends: only unity, teamwork



Armed protestors gather in Michigan to oppose lockdown measures. EPA/Jeffery Sauger

and solidarity will defeat this invisible enemy.

To escape the Hobbesian state of nature we need to forge a new social contract, a mutually-beneficial agreement where everyone agrees to make a sacrifice in the short run on the understanding that everyone will be better off because of it in the long run.

Similarly, to overcome COVID-19 we will need to commit to an unprecedented level of sacrifice, trust and social cooperation. Living under temporary lockdown and maintaining physical distancing is a big sacrifice for many people, especially as unemployment escalates and many businesses are on their knees, but we must have trust in the World Health Organization and in our public health experts, since these emergency measures will work only if everyone complies without exceptions.

But mutual social cooperation is fragile and tentative, especially in a capitalist world where selfishness is a virtue and greed rewarded. This crisis is forcing us to rethink many firmly held assumptions: the pursuit of individual self-interest will not work this time, there will be no trickle-down effect, and senseless, wasteful materialism is no longer sustainable.

Don't be a fool

The biggest threat to social cooperation is the selfish actions of free-riders who want to benefit from people's spirit of cooperation without doing their bit for the common good. Hobbes had a term for this type of person: the fool. As Hobbes explains, the fool believes that there is no such thing as justice, and that it is legitimate to break an agreement in the pursuit of self-interest. The world is full of fools, except that in times of crisis their true nature is fully exposed. These days they include people who continue to stockpile even now they see how unnecessary it is or who flout lockdown rules selfishly. They also include businesses who exploit people's fear by overcharging for food, facemasks or hand sanitisers. All it takes to avoid being a fool is to prioritise cooperation over self-interest, or the common good over private interests.

Like in the Hobbesian state of nature, living with COVID-19 is a reminder of the emancipatory politics of social cooperation. We are entering the territory of a new social contract, which will form the cornerstone of a new civil society post COVID-19.

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Mauritius Times

Founder/Editor: Beekrumsing Ramlallah - Aug 1954-Sept 2000

Editor-in-chief: M. Ramlallah / Senior Editor: Dr RN Gopee

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

An Opportunity to Reset Buttons

The lockdown has, both by default and by design, unlocked possibilities for the future. The future is already here – and we had better not miss the boat

As we learn in Public Health, every disease has a health, an economic and a social impact, which is usually restricted to the patient and his family. However, when the disease is of epidemic or pandemic nature, which calls for large-scale interventions by the national authorities, the impact is correspondingly more serious and has wider implications for the country – as the current Covid-19 pandemic is showing. Even as governments in all countries are struggling to get transmission of the virus under control, in the short period of a few weeks it has practically brought the world down to its knees. What is certain is that there will have to be a rethink of how things will have to be rolled out in the aftermath which, by all accounts, is going to be a protracted one.

But one can turn this adversity into an opportunity to reset some buttons in a bid to put the country back on a better footing, based on the new realities and concerns that the pandemic has forced upon us.

An obvious one directly related to health is the tourism sector, which is beset by a number of problems that will affect influx: affordability, airline access, trust in the country as a healthy destination – perhaps *the* factor that will be uppermost in the mind of prospective visitors with respect in particular to Covid-19. We have less control on the first two elements than on the third one, for which the way forward is to ensure the robustness of our Public Health System, which would include a framework for prevention, detection, sanitary arrangements and treatment that meet international standards, something which is doable, as outlined in my article of April 4 in this paper, 'Wake-up call post Covid-19: Need for a Robust Public Health System'.

A second reset which could be transformational is the transport sector, with fallouts on the economy through reduction in fuel needs/consumption which in turn would

have an environmental benefit. Fortunately or fortuitously, the metro has been up and running and, save for the couple of untoward incidents that took place, in general to the satisfaction of the users in terms of comfort, cleanliness, and duration of journey among other things. In fact there is anecdotal evidence that people are looking forward to the prompt completion of the planned extensions up to Mahebourg so that they can begin to travel by the metro.

This presents a tremendous opportunity to reduce traffic congestion through diminished car usage – for, if Covid-19 has shown that we are all equal and this mindset carries over, then hopefully there should be no reluctance on the part of white collar workers to use the metro, which may hopefully become a preferred mode of transport for a majority of commuters.

The challenge is how to make habitual car owner-users get out of their vehicles and take (to) the metro instead? The starting point would be to facilitate their trip to the metro stations and stops. Currently feeder buses are being used. Perhaps a scheme could be worked out for these to be initially supplemented then eventually replaced altogether by the smaller 15 or 30-seater vans plying more frequently and picking up people nearer to their residences, much like the former 'Tip-top' buses used to do.

With school attendances being re-scheduled, at least a proportion of the vehicles being used for school transport could be allowed to be redeployed – each being assigned to specific localities – to service the metro, thus ensuring livelihood and sustainability that span more than one sector of activity. The point is that the further rolling out of the metro looks like presenting openings for cross-cutting gains that will compensate for loss elsewhere, and reduce the risks of families becoming unable to make ends meet. This is about the medium and long terms, and thus about the country's future.

Furthermore, more people using the metro would mean less cars on the road – and less cars needed in the country overall. From both a traffic and an environmental point of view, could this be also an occasion to seriously think about putting a cap on the



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numbers of cars we are importing? The mushrooming of outlets for second hand and reconditioned cars, as well as the expansion of the luxury car sector has been increasing the vehicular fleet, and thus traffic congestion as well.

Besides, experts may figure out whether this as well impacts the foreign exchange reserves of the country, which is already heavily indebted – and more loans adding to the burden with the population kept in the dark about the trade-offs that are being negotiated. We can ill afford more debts in the post Covid-19 scenario, with a recession foreseen that is going to be worse than the Great Depression of 1929, and several times greater than the financial crisis of 2007. So there is no time to lose in charting out new ways in sectors that are a potential drain on the country's finances, in reducing non-essential expenditures and redirecting finance towards supporting the more basic needs of the people.

In the same line of thought is the idea of pedestrian zones in the larger shopping conurbations, both urban and rural, with a shuttle service from parking areas at the periphery (e.g. La Vigie in Curpipe) to be organized by the local authorities.

Going forward, one can see some resets initiated during the lockdown poised to assume an accrued role in future, for example in the secondary and tertiary educational sectors, where e-learning is definitely set to become mainstream: the Open University model. There is equally potential to expand platforms in the work-from-home initiatives that are already in motion, and these should be implemented more widely in the public sector.

The lockdown has, both by default and by design, unlocked possibilities for the future. The future, that is, is already here – and we had better not miss the boat.



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Mrinal Roy

United We Stand

Costly bailout packages dished out by government from the Public Exchequer to help the corporate sector reboot the economy must ensure that the crying lessons of the 2008 financial crisis bailouts have been learnt

Two cardinal lessons have transpired from the world's uphill battle against Covid-19 over the last four months. Firstly, a rigid national lockdown and the confinement of people in their homes together with strict social distancing and hygiene norms are the only efficient way to stem the spread of the virus and save lives against an extremely contagious and deadly virus. Over the last months, there have been so many instances of spikes in the spread of the virus whenever the stringent restrictions of a total lockdown have not been rigorously adhered to in various countries by irresponsible behaviour of people who have been too lax in abiding by the rules of confinement and social distancing. There is patent evidence that the strict enforcement of a total lockdown in countries across the world has helped flatten the curve of infection and bought time to enable the health services of countries to cope with the pandemic and not be overwhelmed.

The second equally important lesson learnt is that any lifting of the lockdown restrictions and the confinement rules should be well thought out, very gradual and extremely calibrated to avoid the risk of a second wave of infection by Covid-19 as has been the case in Singapore and South Korea. Any rash lifting of the lockdown restrictions such as opening up the economy and schools too soon in the teeth of the ground reality of Covid-19 in the country concerned can backfire into a resurgence of the virus.

These lessons have been so well learnt by Angela Merkel, the Chancellor of Germany which is one of the countries which has efficiently managed the coronavirus pandemic and an economic powerhouse incurring enormous daily losses owing to the lockdown. She warned the states in Germany which is a federal republic 'against rushing to loosen the lockdown restrictions' as the country is still a long way from being out of the woods.' She urged 'caution and discipline for the country to be able to return to economic, social and public life more quickly and sustainably'.

The UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has this week also echoed the need for caution and announced that 'he will not give the go-ahead to lift the coronavirus lockdown imposed six weeks ago as he refused to throw away all the effort and the sacrifice of the British people and risk a second major outbreak resulting in a huge loss of life and the National Health Service being overwhelmed.'



Photo: REUTERS/Aly

“Science and technology are also helping combat Covid-19. Apart from the development of contract tracing apps on smart phones to track contacts with infected persons and the spread of Covid-19, artificial intelligence is crunching large amounts of data and complex algorithms to find potential treatments and powering robots that can replace humans in hospital wards. Scientific research is also being carried out by some 80 research centres around the world using different pathways and concepts such as gene sequencing to urgently find an efficient vaccine to counter Covid-19. The current race to find a validated vaccine is a balance between safety and speed...”

A growing number of governments and people have therefore come to realize the wisdom and merits of the above two paramount lessons learnt from the world's experience of battling against Covid-19. Mauritius must therefore exercise extreme caution and must first ascertain through a broader level of testing (using WHO approved kits) of all frontline personnel and staff working in all essential services and related contact tracing that all carriers of the virus have been detected and corralled for treatment. The overriding object of a total lockdown is to starve any residual undetected virus in the country of new persons to infect and eliminate it from the island. It is only then that a

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sensible and step by step easing of the lockdown within the country can be envisaged while staying alert to any undetected presence of the virus in the country.

Science to the rescue

The Covid-19 pandemic has also heightened the world's interest and trust in science and scientific findings by researchers from renowned research centres and universities to help sift the wheat from the chaff in the maze of conflicting information circulating on Covid-19. Science is prevailing over ignorance, obscurantism, superstition

and fake news.

Science and technology are also helping combat Covid-19. Apart from the development of contract tracing apps on smart phones (subject to individual privacy rights) to track contacts with infected persons and the spread of Covid-19, artificial intelligence is crunching large amounts of data and complex algorithms to find potential treatments and powering robots that can replace humans in hospital wards.

Scientific research is also being carried out by some 80 research centres around the world using different pathways and concepts such as gene sequencing to urgently find an efficient vaccine to counter Covid-19. The normal timeline to find a vaccine is between 12-18 months. The current race to find a validated vaccine is a balance between safety and speed. Clinical human trials have already started in research centres in various countries. Historically, just 6% of vaccine candidates end up making it to the market. Yet, governments, charities and big pharmaceutical firms are investing billions of dollars into vaccine research sometimes using novel pathways with extraordinarily low odds of success, to outwit an invisible enemy whose biological ingenuity has brought everyday life to a standstill. This is what scientific research is all about. It is a constant quest to continuously explore and fathom the arcane frontiers of scientific knowledge.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also enabled people to judge their governments and the political leadership of their country and the competence with which they are managing the coronavirus crisis. However, the strategies of too many countries seem to be pursuing conflicting objectives and distracted by the pressure of vested corporate lobbies to restart economic activities, despite the potent risks that a premature easing of the lockdown could increase the spread of the virus and the number of Covid-19 related deaths.

Covid-19 has also focused attention on the absolute need for an efficient universal healthcare system in every country. The US government which does not have a universal healthcare system as the National Health System in the UK has therefore had to agree to pay hospitals to treat uninsured Covid-19 patients. Covid-19 is also a grueling stress test of the efficiency of universal health care systems in the world in the face of a life threatening and deadly new virus.

Secure guarantees

Costly bailout packages dished out by government from the Public Exchequer to help the corporate sector reboot the economy must ensure that the crying lessons of the 2008 financial crisis bailouts have been learnt and more importantly that all public funds advanced are fully secured and guaranteed by the beneficiaries. It is equally important that Covid-19 does not become a pretext to rush the enactment of questionable laws which encroach on our

fundamental rights. It will equally be important to opt for a more environmentally sustainable economic model which is also significantly fairer to all stakeholders and to initiate the land reforms necessary to *inter alia* ensure that the country is as self sufficient in agricultural produce and other essential food supplies as possible.

At this critical hour, it is above all important to get our priorities and clarity of thought right, the more so as the battle against Covid-19 is bound to be a protracted and long-drawn one.

State support for the private sector

How about taxing dividends?

The time has come for the self-denying ants (taxpayers) not to be paying for the self-indulgent grasshoppers (big corporations)

Aditya Narayan

In an open letter addressed to the Prime Minister, which was published in two daily newspapers on 27 April, former Finance minister Rama Sithanen took the government to task over how it is administering the wage subsidy program for businesses that have ceased operations due to the epidemic. He drew government's attention to the fact that private sector companies are asking for financial assistance after having paid out "massive dividends". The issue raised is highly relevant and must be analysed in its proper perspective.

The ex-minister made the following comment:

"There are many companies that have, for many years, declared massive dividends without any consideration for reserves for a rainy day. They have behaved like the reckless grasshopper. In some cases, dividend distribution is higher (yes, higher) than profit because of asset re-evaluation. You should request the Ministry of Finance to look into this problem and I am sure you will be appalled with the findings. Is it fair to the country that those who have distributed 80% of profit as dividends (in some cases more than 100%), be given support without asking them to plough back some of these excessive dividends? Or inject some money, while we give only Rs 2 550 per fortnight to a small planter, a fisherman, a hawker or a hairdresser and nothing to an unemployed single parent with kids. Surely this cannot be solidarity and sacrifice. There must be burden sharing."

Profit distribution

Mr Sithanen is right in asking one question that we have all pondered for years: is it fair for private sector companies to be given support (via stimulus packages or wage subsidy) in bad times when, in good times, they distribute their after-tax profits to shareholders without building up any reserves for the future. He seems to suggest that government should not help out those companies as they

have enough money. However, he stopped short of proposing how, going forward, the government should treat dividends from an economic policy perspective. He might have thought that it was not opportune, in these dire times, to raise fundamental issues about profit distribution, corporate retained earnings and dividends. Or maybe he thinks that excessive dividend distribution is fine as long as the companies do not get government financial support. Be that as it may, profit distribution is an issue that needs to be addressed within the broader purpose and contextual framework of economic policy.

There is no doubt that government bailouts are reasonable for people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own, but not for those who did not save for a rainy day. The time has come for the self-denying ants (taxpayers) not to be paying for the self-indulgent grasshoppers (big corporations).

However, the critical question is how does one plough back some of the excessive dividends paid out by corporations? Obviously, there is only one way: it is the taxation of dividends, which is sorely missing in our fiscal toolbox. It is high time to start taxing dividends as a source of income in the hands of shareholders in the same way that income from employment or office is taxed. The need for a level playing field between employees and shareholders in terms of tax treatment has never been more pressing if we are talking about solidarity and burden sharing among people.

In their drive to attract investors and stimulate growth,



Photo - specials-images.forbesimg.com

successive governments since 2005 have pursued a low-tax policy that has deprived the Treasury of substantial revenue. Mauritius has one of the lowest tax/GDP ratios in the world, i.e., 18% compared to an average of 40% for the Scandinavian countries (which, by the way, have a better standard of living) and an average of 34% for the OECD countries. With personal income tax and corporate tax being levied at a flat rate of 15% (with 3% corporate rate for export companies) and without a tax on capital gains or dividends, government's fiscal space has narrowed down considerably. That is one of the major weaknesses of our economic policy.

Deficits and taxes

The government runs annual budget deficits that add to the public debt, which is almost at 70% of GDP. Public debt servicing reached an astounding amount of Rs 28 billion in 2018-19, that is 20% of government's current expenditure. The budget deficit is bound to increase substantially this year (up to 10% of GDP) with all the wage subsidy programs and other assistance being provided to employers in order to help them keep employees on the payroll during the crisis.

The government cannot borrow anymore without jeopardizing

severely the solvency of the country and the exchange rate of the rupee. Do we want to go back to the 1980s when the country had to devalue its currency and surrender to IMF conditionalities under its structural adjustment program? Or does the country want to emulate Greece, a basket

“Most capitalist countries that have a free-market economy levy taxes on personal income, corporate income, capital gains and dividends. Why is Mauritius the odd man out? Are those countries less smart or worse off than Mauritius? Unsurprisingly, it will be argued that now is not the time to tax dividends as we need private sector capital in order to come out of the doldrums. When times are good, we don't think about tax reform. When times are bad, we are told we should not think about it. So when is the right time to talk about fiscal reform?”

case of financial mismanagement that did not clean up its own fiscal house?

It is essential that government expands its tax base to increase fiscal revenue instead of depending on the traditional sources such as VAT and flat income taxes. The country badly needs a new economic paradigm to turn around the disastrous economic situation. A critical part of that new paradigm is tax reform with a view to taxing all sources of income, including dividends and capital gains on moveable and immoveable capital property

The argument that dividends are an after-tax distribution of profits (since profits are taxed before dividends are paid out) and should not be taxed again in the hands of shareholders is a fallacy. Dividends are a source of income for shareholders that should be treated like any other source of income (for example, wages and salaries for employees, and business income for corporations and unincorporated entities) if we want to achieve fiscal fairness in society. Whatever amount of

income tax paid by corporations is their liability to the country as corporate citizens in return for the freebies they get from the State (public infrastructure, skilled labour force trained by publicly funded institutions, police service, etc.).

Claw back excess profits

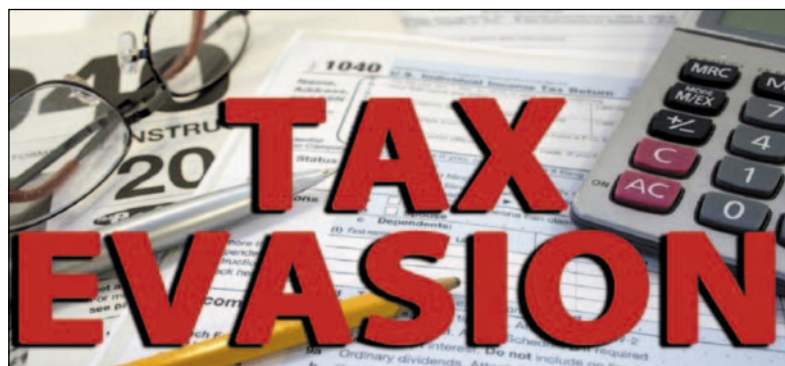
Shareholders are owners of corporations. They are rewarded for their investment in capital by way of dividends just like employees are rewarded through wages and salaries. Both groups should be treated equally and fairly from a fiscal perspective. Taxing dividends at the present income tax rate of 15% is therefore a matter of economic equity (although there is more equity to be achieved with progressive taxation). The low-tax regime in Mauritius has caused an outflow of capital to the extent that local residents have invested Rs 144 billion in other jurisdictions, as revealed by the MRA. Whether they paid any tax on that income before export is another matter.

It is a paradox that the country has so much wealth abroad when

it is running short of money locally to fund business support schemes. If companies are paying out 80% or even 100% of profits as dividends, as claimed by Sithanen, then it's time for the government to start clawing back part of the profits distributed with a tax on dividends.

Most capitalist countries that have a free-market economy levy taxes on personal income, corporate income, capital gains and dividends. Why is Mauritius the odd man out? Are those countries less smart or worse off than Mauritius? Unsurprisingly, it will be argued that now is not the time to tax dividends as we need private sector capital in order to come out of the doldrums. When times are good, we don't think about tax reform. When times are bad, we are told we should not think about it. So when is the right time to talk about fiscal reform?

To paraphrase Abhijit V. Banerjee, Nobel Prize in Economics 2019, should we allow the three Is (Ideology, Ignorance and Inertia) to keep kicking the can down the road?



Indian-American-led clinical trial of remdesivir shows positive results

The phase three clinical trial of the antiviral drug remdesivir, led by a team of investigators including an Indian-American physician, for the treatment of the coronavirus patients has shown positive results, a US pharma company announced on Wednesday.

The California-based pharma company Gilead Sciences said that the preliminary results showed that 50 per cent of the Covid-19 patients treated with a 5-day dosage of remdesivir improved and more than half were discharged from the hospital within two weeks. A phase three clinical trial is said to be the final step in the process of the drug approval, reports PTI.



The pharma company also said that it is also aware of positive data emerging from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases' (NIAID) study of the investigational antiviral remdesivir for the treatment of the COVID-19.

Remdesivir is not yet licensed or approved anywhere globally and has not been demonstrated to be safe or effective for the treatment of the Covid-19.

The study sought to determine whether a shorter, five-day course of remdesivir would achieve similar efficacy results as the 10-day treatment regimen used in multiple ongoing studies of remdesivir, the company said.

Indian government will allow migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists resume their journeys



The Indian government will allow migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and others stranded throughout the country to resume their journeys by road.

The decision announced by the Home Ministry will provide relief to hundreds of thousands of migrant workers who want to return to their villages from Indian cities and towns after they lost jobs following the imposition of the lockdown on March 25 to control the spread of coronavirus pandemic. Many can go back to farming in their villages during the current harvesting season in India.

They would be kept under watch with periodic health check-ups, a ministry statement said.

The government recently allowed reopening of neighborhood shops in cities and towns and resumption of manufacturing and farming in rural India to help millions of poor people who lost work.

The lockdown in India imposed March 25 is expected to end May 3. Prime Minister Modi will decide whether to extend or end restrictions or allow a gradual loosening in some areas.

Latest update from 'The Vindicator' on the coronavirus pandemic worldwide

Germany: Measures imposed will need to remain in place

Four leading scientific research organizations in Germany say some measures imposed to curb the rate of coronavirus infections will need to remain in place until a vaccine is found or herd immunity is achieved.

They say in a joint statement that their mathematical models independently show the reproduction rate of the outbreak has been below 1 in Germany since the end of March. This means every person confirmed with Covid-19 infected fewer than one other person over the past month.

The Fraunhofer Society, the Helmholtz Association, the Leibniz Association and the Max Planck Society say the drop in new cases in Germany was thanks to restrictions and behavior changes. But they warned "the situation is not stable, even a small increase in the reproduction rate would lead us back into a phase of exponential growth."



Pictures of students are seen in a class during an economics lesson of the teacher Christophe Blanc at the private school 'Ecole Ardevaz' today in Sion, Switzerland. Because of the coronavirus outbreak the school are closed. (Jean-Christophe Bott/Keystone via AP)

They say striving for herd immunity, where so many people acquire immunity that the virus is effectively stopped from spreading through the population, would

require "several years" and some restrictions would need to be maintained. Experts say a vaccine likely won't be available until next year.



Paternity leave can wait

Boris Johnson looks set to take up to two weeks of paternity leave by the end of June following the birth of his first child with partner Carrie Symonds on Wednesday. Downing Street said the prime minister intends to take time off "later in the year, rather than now" to care for his infant son, reports The Independent. Official rules state that paternity leave of one or two weeks "cannot start before the birth and must end within 56 days of the birth", which would mean the British PM needing to take his break before 23 June.

WHO is looking into the safety of hugs for grandparents

A top World Health Organization official says the U.N. health agency is looking into whether grandparents can safely hug their grandchildren without risk of contracting the coronavirus.

The comments from Maria Van Kerkhove, technical lead of WHO's emergencies program, come after a top Swiss health official this week suggested that grandparents could hold young grandchildren - under age 10 - close without risk of contracting Covid-19 disease.

Most statistics show the elderly and people with pre-existing health conditions have been the overwhelming majority of victims who have died from the pandemic.

At a WHO news conference, Van



Kerkhove acknowledged that many grandparents "are dying to hug their children, grandchildren" and said the issue was one of the "living reviews" conducted by WHO.

Compiled by
Doojesh Ramlallah



Samad Ramoly

'No Logo': 20 years on, more valid than ever

No Logo' warns us against how we have subtly been transformed into "walking billboards" of lifestyle brands - while at the same time fuelling overconsumption of conspicuous products and services translated into dramatic wealth concentration, environmental degradation...

In 1999 when thinker activist Naomi Klein broke through, her book *'No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies'* gathered a wide following of rebels against unfettered capitalism. The now cult band Radiohead captured the energy to spawn its haunting spleen among many Millennials, today's generation 24-39. As expected, the book attracted the wrath of free market fundamentalists. It also became the book of reference of anti-globalists.

In essence, *'No Logo'* warns us against how we have subtly been transformed into "walking billboards" of lifestyle brands - while at the same time fuelling overconsumption of conspicuous products and services translated into dramatic wealth concentration, environmental degradation, health issues and existential blow. Covid-19 has prompted a re-assessment of the lifestyle most of us have embraced without any resistance in practically all quarters. *'No Logo'* should be re-read or discovered if you missed it.

Slowbalisation

The growth versus degrowth feud is a natural outcome in a globalisation setting where there are dangerously more losers than winners. However, what is at stake is the over-reliance of nations on multinationals and con-

how adequately mainstream media scrutinises the moves of governments and Big Business alike; how the competition watchdog ensures that healthy competition prevails and how the anti-corruption brigade optimises its mission.

Covid-19 is a crash course on the extent of how interconnected we are, not only emotionally but also in sustaining our very livelihood. It is not globalisation *per se* that is disrupting our well-being, it is rather the recklessness of the enablers of its expansion and the negative values it promotes. Flashy cars, fast food brands, luxury goods namely are expected to embody our progress. In a bid to cash in on the retail therapy's diminishing appeal, a wellness industry has picked up. It is very unlikely that mindfulness and coaching sessions alone can relieve stress and anxiety sustainably. Only a thoughtful systemic overhaul can reverse the toxic process.

It is fanciful to expect GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth that rests on a permanent rupee assault; that fetishizes job creation in a tax haven as proof of "economic democratisation"; that incentivises foreign direct investment through property development for foreigners (and simultaneously disincentivises food so-



face of insane global competition.

Actually, as a country in "catch-up" mode and with a tiny domestic market that needs to connect to the global bandwagon to stay relevant, we cannot afford GDP degrowth. What is desired is the degrowth of policies that stimulate GDP extraction and inequality, and the growth of policies that aim at integrating all citizens and rewarding them fairly. The value of GDP growth is in its quality, not the number.

Responding to the new "new normal"

Currently, a few countries such as Germany, Iceland, South Korea and Singapore (GIKS) are being commended for not only how they have built an ecosystem that deals so efficiently with Covid-19 and how they are set to bounce back so effectively. Our reality is founded on an ecosystem that is not even robust enough to adapt to recurring cyclones and droughts. Now thriving upon other shocks is not our luck.

We are not really dysfunctional yet. We still manage to come out somehow, only increasingly scarred, as we do not demonstrate any urge to learn and improve. Here are some dominant traits of the GIKS: approach is anchored in the real world and is always holistic; ideologies and pedantic debates

remain the preserve of the small-minded; only ideas pertinent to the context are validated and solutions are homegrown; technocracy is not tyranny; no Coronabibi or its equivalent to mask incompetence.

"Covid-19 is a crash course on the extent of how interconnected we are, not only emotionally but also in sustaining our very livelihood. It is not globalisation *per se* that is disrupting our well-being, it is rather the recklessness of the enablers of its expansion and the negative values it promotes. Flashy cars, fast food brands, luxury goods namely are expected to embody our progress. In a bid to cash in on the retail therapy's diminishing appeal, a wellness industry has picked up..."

The GIKS subscribe to the liberal order. Not the brand brainstormed at the Davos ski resort or Hotel de Bilderberg should you be wondering. But as per the wisdom of the great thinker Adam Smith as expressed in *'The Theory of Moral Sentiments'* and *'The Wealth of Nations'* (that should be read together to derive a coherent message): self-interest, of the enlightened variety (a bit that is almost never nuanced), ultimately leads to common good.

Of course, as Germany and Iceland on the one hand, South Korea and Singapore, on the other, do not share the same cultural background, the balance between the individual and the community (as a whole) is sought via two distinct paths. Nonethe-

less, they all choose to nudge a behaviour of collaboration, harnessed by a quest for reciprocity and trust in institutions. That does not mean to suggest that the GIKS are flawless.

Millennials are often portrayed as a bunch of lazy slackers. That is most unfair. It takes a lot of mental fortitude to stay upbeat in a world that typically spreads endless images of family breakdown, wars spearheaded through mass deception and their equally bloody backfire, lavishness on one side and extreme poverty on the other, environmental disaster, and so on.

Generation Z, associated to age group 9-24, seems to have endured less disillusion, and seems more willing to take part in creating a less decadent world. With Covid-19, two more crash courses have been imposed on us: brand loyalty break up and frugality. Older generations have joined both Generation Z and Millennials among whom frugality has become a mainstream lifestyle, even if not in same proportion everywhere as in socially and economically more advanced nations (SEMAN), but will we survive the moment? Very likely in the SEMAN.

Some historians are already claiming the SEMAN have reached Peak Travel. Now second home investment does not look as gratifying. Younger generations are contributing to turn Uniqlo, the Japanese no-logo

"What is at stake is the over-reliance of nations on multinationals and conglomerates (Big Business), who through intense lobbying, dictate the terms on which local and global policies are implemented, while simultaneously shaping our lifestyle. What must sink in is that the market economy must be built upon pro-market leadership, not pro-big business followership that feeds on corruption..."

glomerates (Big Business), who through intense lobbying, dictate the terms on which local and global policies are implemented, while simultaneously shaping our lifestyle. What must sink in is that the market economy must be built upon pro-market leadership, not pro-big business followership that feeds on corruption. The creation of a virtuous cycle depends on

verignty and brutally kills plans for home ownership as land prices explode); that slimily lures distressed citizens into the betting arena; that romanticizes degrees and diplomas awarded on rote learning aptitude instead of placing a premium on competence powered by sharpened cognitive skills; to invariably boost the morale of the human capital in the

value for money clothing retailer, into the global leader. Reused and recycled clothing outlets are flourishing. The SEMAN are undoubtedly kick-starting a more ethical era. If their recent reactions are any indication, our political and business captains do not seem to have paid attention. More critically, they seem to have remained immune to the crash course in humility. Singapore has become a global benchmark namely because the outstanding leader Lee Kuan Yew has groomed his heirs to "implement policies correctly, without trying to be politically correct". Where is the leadership that can reverse the current twisted balance between localism and globalism that has been clipping our wings?



Interview: Jean-Claude de l'Estrac

“Air Mauritius a été asphyxiée par étouffement politique...”

... par l'Hôtel du gouvernement ou par ses délégués-paillassons au conseil d'administration... mais pas uniquement sous ce gouvernement”

La crise du coronavirus n'est pas uniquement sanitaire, elle est aussi financière. Et les répercussions sur l'économie réelle et le social peuvent être très nombreuses. Chaque Etat touché par le Covid-19 doit désormais se pencher sur des solutions immédiates et à moyen terme pour parer à toute forme de vulnérabilité. Jean-Claude de l'Estrac nous livre ses réflexions...

Mauritius Times : La décision de placer Air Mauritius sous administration volontaire est probablement un signe précurseur de l'impact du Covid-19 sur Maurice avec des conséquences économiques jamais vues depuis plus de cent ans. Pensez-vous que le pays, ses dirigeants tant dans le secteur public que dans le secteur privé, et la population ont bien pris la mesure de ce qui nous attend en termes de souffrances, de misères, de sacrifices dans les mois à venir et de leur impact sur le plan social ?

Jean-Claude de l'Estrac: Ne mélangeons pas torchons et serviettes. Covid 19 ou pas, Air Mauritius était en phase terminale financière depuis plusieurs années. Pour une foule de raisons que de nombreux observateurs ont évoqué ces jours derniers.

Même si leurs explications diffèrent parfois, il y a une explication qui fait l'unanimité : Air Mauritius a été asphyxiée par étouffement politique. Et pas uniquement sous ce Gouvernement. Pratiquement toutes les décisions stratégiques qui ont plombé la compagnie ont été dictées, depuis plusieurs années, par l'Hôtel du gouvernement ou par ses « délégués-paillassons » au conseil d'administration.

“Il est peut-être aussi encore trop tôt pour mesurer le plein impact de la pandémie et du confinement. Tout dépendra de la durée la paralysie économique ici et chez nos divers partenaires. Mais on sait déjà que cela fera mal, très mal en termes de chômage accru et de baisse de pouvoir d'achat...”

Il y a une dimension, toutefois, qui n'a pas été débattu jusqu'ici : ce sont les problèmes liés au morcellement du marché aérien régional desservi par quatre petites compagnies, toutes concurrentes, et toutes en grandes difficultés financières depuis des années.

La question avait été largement débattue au cours d'un symposium, convoqué, en mai 2013, à l'initiative de la Commission de l'océan Indien. Le rapport, publié, suite à la conférence, avait démontré combien cette situation, à l'opposé de ce qui se passe ailleurs, devait conduire à un échec régional.

Les auteurs du rapport 'Les ailes de l'Indianocéanie' écrivaient : « Dans l'aérien, on meurt seul ou on survit ensemble ». Ils expliquent : « Le transport aérien dans l'Indianocéanie est confronté à cette réalité. Hélas, dénué de vision globale et de perspective partagée, le vieux modèle, essoufflé, meurt lentement, privant la région des bénéfices que pourrait lui procurer une compétitivité aérienne compétitive ».

C'est fort de cette analyse que j'ai engagé, à la direction de la COI, des discussions avec l'ensemble des compagnies aériennes de la région, en vue d'une fusion des quatre compagnies ou à défaut d'une bien plus grande coopération, avec possiblement un partenaire stratégique commun.

Nous avons même commencé la discussion sur la création d'un marché aérien unique, un *Indian Ocean Single Aviation Market* (IOSAM) sur le modèle utilisé en Asie du Sud-Est -- c'était une proposition intéressante des Seychelles. Elle est plus que jamais pertinente. L'Indianocéanie émerge du Covid-19 comme une région saine, ce qui sera un atout indiscutable pour le tourisme nouveau.

*** Mais pourquoi cela ne s'est jamais concrétisé ?**

C'est Air Mauritius qui a tué le projet. Ses représentants, convoqués à une réunion de présentation, au bureau de Navin Ramgoolam, alors Premier ministre, avaient rejeté toute idée de coopération avec les autres pays de la région, et même le soutien acquis de l'Union européenne pour des études complémentaires, déclarant qu'Air Mauritius a les moyens de créer seule une compagnie régionale et qu'elle le ferait.

Et le secrétaire général de la COI de faire remarquer alors que si la compagnie régionale projetée ne devait être qu'une subsidiaire d'Air Mauritius, elle ne serait pas une compagnie régionale, pas dans le sens de la création d'un transporteur pour la desserte aérienne des îles de l'Indianocéanie et du reste du monde.

Ainsi est morte l'idée d'une compagnie régionale qui aurait permis la mutualisation des faibles moyens de chacune des compagnies nationales.

*** Pour en revenir au Covid 19, pensez-vous que nos dirigeants ont vraiment bien pris la mesure de ce qui nous attend ?**

Je crois que nos ministres sont toujours à la recherche urgente de solutions aux problèmes immédiats, et cela se comprend.

Il est peut-être aussi encore trop tôt pour mesurer le plein impact de la pandémie et du confinement. Tout dépendra de la durée la paralysie économique ici et chez nos divers partenaires.

Mais on sait déjà que cela fera mal, très mal en termes de chômage accru et de baisse de pouvoir d'achat. Effectivement, une crise sociale n'est pas exclue.

“Au point où nous en sommes, certaines des réformes à faire seront nécessairement douloureuses. Elles risquent de ne pas se faire si elles devaient être le seul fait d'un gouvernement. En tout cas, pas d'un gouvernement qui a sans cesse les yeux rivés sur les prochaines élections...”

*** Outre la pandémie du Covid-19 elle-même, il y a aussi une pandémie d'inquiétude quant aux conséquences économiques de la propagation de cette maladie sur le plan mondial. 'La source d'anxiété sur le plan économique réside dans notre incertitude quant à ce qu'il convient de faire', affirme Robert J. Shiller dans un article publié par Project Syndicate. Pensez-vous qu'au stade où nous en sommes, nous disposons des ressources et des stratégies pour faire face et surmonter les nouveaux challenges qui se présentent devant le pays ?**

La question n'est pas celle de savoir si le pays dispose de ressources intellectuelles et gestionnaires pour aider le pays à surmonter les épreuves qui se profilent.

La réponse courte est : oui, ce pays en a la capacité. Mais la vraie question est celle de savoir s'il existe aujourd'hui un cadre, une plateforme, et surtout une volonté politique mobilisant la contribution de tous. Le Gouvernement risque de payer très cher l'arrogance de son cavalier-seul.

Cette crise sans précédent, cette catastrophe économique et sociale, nous invite à beaucoup d'humilité. Un grand nombre de nos certitudes ont été ébranlées, nous avons bien vu combien nos pratiques, dans le secteur public comme dans le secteur privé, nous ont mal préparés à ce qui était, après tout, pas si imprévisibles.

'Ce serait souhaitable pour le pays qu'un gouvernement d'unité nationale soit envisagé. Mais cela ne se fera pas'

☞ Suite de la page 8

Mais la facilité de nos modes de vie, notre besoin de paraître, tant chez les individus que chez les grandes organisations publiques et privées, ont obscurci notre capacité de discernement. Tous coupables !

*** Mais si, dans l'ensemble, le Gouvernement a pu jusqu'ici limiter les dégâts liés à la pandémie, le plus grand challenge qui se présente devant lui, c'est l'élaboration et la mise en opération d'un plan de sauvetage de notre économie déjà fragile et moins résiliente avec une dette publique galopante, le financement des mesures populaires des dernières élections et dans l'infrastructurel, etc. – ce qui présage une marge de manœuvre très limitée. Qu'en pensez-vous ?**

“Un grand nombre de nos certitudes ont été ébranlées, nous avons bien vu combien nos pratiques, dans le secteur public comme dans le secteur privé, nous ont mal préparés à ce qui était, après tout, pas si imprévisibles.

Mais la facilité de nos modes de vie, notre besoin de paraître...ont obscurci notre capacité de discernement. Tous coupables !”

Il ne fait pas de doute que le Gouvernement, du Premier ministre aux différentes institutions de l'Etat, le service hospitalier, la police, tous ont donné le sentiment d'une maîtrise de la situation, d'une bonne capacité de réaction, et pour tout dire, d'une efficacité certaine.

Mais vous avez raison, le plus difficile est à venir. Et pour les raisons que vous évoquez – l'endettement, l'endettement caché souvent, les prestations sociales bien au-dessus de nos moyens économiques, électoralement motivées – nous n'avons plus de grandes marges de manœuvre. Appelons-le comme nous le voulons, la parade de pratiquement tous les Etats, est partout la même : la mobilisation des gros moyens financiers à injecter dans l'économie pour la faire démarrer.

Quand il y a débat, c'est autour de la question des bénéficiaires surtout dans le privé, et des éventuelles contreparties que l'Etat serait en droit d'exiger.

Mais d'abord, il faut trouver l'argent. Quitte à rappeler de très mauvais souvenirs, nous avons déjà frappé à la porte du FMI. Il faudra, pour faire repartir l'économie, des sommes colossales, et nous n'avons pas d'autres recours que d'emprunter massivement. Nous parlons de dizaines de milliards de roupies qu'il faudra rembourser pendant plusieurs années. Le Gouvernement dit que nous sommes en guerre ; chacun sait que le nerf de la guerre, c'est l'argent.

*** Il fallait donc passer par une privatisation, même déguisée, d'Air Mauritius pour renflouer les caisses de l'Etat ? Vous ne voyez sans doute pas les administrateurs nommés par le conseil d'administration réussir là où une dizaine de CEOs dont certains des spécialistes de l'aviation n'ont pu le faire ?**

Les administrateurs n'ont pas pour vocation de gérer durablement la compagnie. Ils ont là pour lui donner un répit, le temps de trouver les moyens de son renflouement financier, de renouveler le conseil d'administration, de trouver un nouveau CEO.

L'exercice, en raison du Covid-19, n'est pas propre à Air Mauritius. Toutes les compagnies aériennes éprouvent

naturellement de grandes difficultés, leurs avions n'ayant pas volé pendant des semaines.

Pour quelques grandes compagnies internationales comme Air France-KLM et Lufthansa, les gouvernements ont déjà proposé des réinvestissements massifs en milliards d'euros mais d'après débats se déroulent autour du rôle de l'Etat au sein des nouveaux conseils d'administration.

*** Toutefois, pour être juste, aucun gouvernement depuis l'indépendance – même pas celui de 1982, comme SAJ se plaît à nous le rappeler de temps en temps -- ne s'est retrouvé devant une telle situation, non ?**

Cette crise est effectivement sans précédent par sa dimension globale. Mais si on ne se réfère qu'au local, différents gouvernements, à différents moments, ont eu à gérer des situations que l'on a également qualifiées de catastrophiques.

Pendant la période coloniale, à plusieurs reprises, des épidémies ont décimé la population, 8 000 morts du choléra en 1854, et la malaria qui emporte plus de 40 000 personnes sur une population d'un peu plus de 332 000 âmes en 1867, parce qu'il n'y avait pas suffisamment de quinine dans le pays.

Sous le *premiership* de Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, en 1960, le très violent cyclone Carol cause la mort de 42 personnes, 1 700 blessés, d'immense dégâts à la seule industrie sucrière du pays, 80 000 personnes se retrouvent

“Une politique d'auto-suffisance alimentaire offre de grandes perspectives de création de richesses tant pour de petits agriculteurs que de grosses sociétés. Cela passe par une réforme agraire bien entendu. Tout ne pourra être fait en même temps. Il faut parer au plus pressé...”

sans logement et se réfugient dans des salles de classe et des salles des conseils de village. C'étaient des catastrophes aussi !

*** Vous disiez dans un article de presse récemment que « le pays a aujourd'hui besoin... d'un Conseil économique et social dédié, regroupant les compétences les plus pointues du pays, sans considération partisane, sans clivage public-privé, capable d'une méthodologie consensuelle de sortie de crise ». Ce dont le pays a sans doute le plus besoin aujourd'hui, c'est tout un programme politique et la volonté politique en vue d'enclencher les grandes réformes, non ?**

Sans doute ! Mais je vois les propositions de réforme émerger d'un Conseil ainsi constitué, il pourrait avoir le très grand avantage de promouvoir et de susciter le plus large consensus possible.

Au point où nous en sommes, certaines des réformes à faire seront nécessairement douloureuses. Elles risquent de ne pas se faire si elles devaient être le seul fait d'un gouvernement. En tout cas, pas d'un gouvernement qui a sans cesse les yeux rivés sur les prochaines élections.

*** Une refonte ou rééquilibrage de notre politique**



fiscale en vue d'une taxation plus juste au lieu de la taxe progressive en vigueur, une réforme agraire pour assurer notre sécurité alimentaire, etc., ne peuvent se faire sans une réelle volonté politique. Il faudra donc passer par là pour « repenser le futur », comme vous l'aviez préconisé, n'est-ce pas ?

Absolument ! Sauf que de nouvelles taxes dans une économie anémiée risquent d'être contre-productives. En tout cas, la dernière chose à faire, c'est de tout recommencer comme avant alors que le monde d'avant a montré ses grandes insuffisances. Cela vaut pour les gouvernements comme pour les entrepreneurs. Mais tout n'est pas perdu !

Une politique d'auto-suffisance alimentaire, par exemple, offre de grandes perspectives de création de richesses tant pour de petits agriculteurs que de grosses sociétés. Cela passe par une réforme agraire bien entendu. Tout ne pourra être fait en même temps. Il faut parer au plus pressé, c'est ce que le Gouvernement a fait jusqu'ici pour faire face la crise sanitaire.

*** Pensez-vous qu'au regard du très vaste chantier qui s'ouvre devant nous, il serait souhaitable pour le pays qu'un gouvernement d'unité nationale soit envisagé ?**

C'est évident, mais ce n'est pas la peine d'en parler, cela ne se fera pas.

*** Pourquoi ?**

Parce que, en politique, c'est comme en amour : chacun dit – 'Accepte moi comme je suis, et non comme tu veux'.

Full Spectrum, la réponse organisationnelle à la crise

Arvin Mootoocurpen

Les dés sont jetés. Il y aura une forte contraction de l'économie mauricienne dans les mois à venir. Mais existe-t-il des solutions ? Parlons-en.

Dans une communication récente, sur les réseaux sociaux, Jacques Attali, économiste français de renom, demande : "Que font les entreprises européennes et françaises pour mobiliser leurs actionnaires, leurs chercheurs, leurs cadres et salariés à la recherche des solutions scientifiques, économiques et sociales aux problèmes d'aujourd'hui ?".

C'est une question intéressante. Une des solutions à un début de rebond serait la mobilisation de toutes les ressources humaines à la recherche de solutions scientifiques, technologiques, économiques et sociales.

Et, à la question, quelle pourrait être la contribution de la communication au pays?

Plus de foires et de salons et de marketing en ligne, et utilisation des moyens - visuel, audio, écrit - afin de persuader par rapport à la supériorité des produits mauriciens? Le problème est que c'est aussi ce que feront les autres pays et probablement mieux que nous.

Alors comment gagner en compétitivité?

Personnellement, je propose de combler d'abord les failles organisationnelles en réadaptant le modèle de communication militaire aux besoins de l'économie mauricienne. Le modèle de communication militaire contemporain qui consiste à mobiliser les talents à la recherche de solutions.

Une réforme organisationnelle entreprise par la Grande-Bretagne surnommée '*Rainbow in the Dark Doctrine*' attire les regards des professionnels de la guerre de l'information depuis plusieurs années. '*Rainbow in the Dark*' est une approche centralisatrice qui rassemble opérations psychologiques et de relations publiques sous le même toit, dans un contexte d'accroissement des contraintes budgétaires.

L'auteur s'appelle Stephen Jolly, spécialiste de la guerre de l'information. Son constat : faible coordination, structure trop complexe, vision à court terme des objectifs de communication, le tout mis en œuvre par des méthodes obsolètes. Sa solution : le '*Full Spectrum Communications*'. Approche qui tient en trois mots : "efficacité", "centralisation", "numérique" et réunit les stratèges de l'ensemble de la Défense et les spécialistes des relations publiques, du contenu et d'engagement numérique sous le même toit, le *Directorate Defence Communication*.

Les faiblesses observées par Stephen Jolly sont aussi les nôtres. Le '*silo mentality*' mauricien pose un réel danger.

Il faut imaginer un '*Full Spectrum*' réadapté avec les communicants de l'*Economic Development Board*, du ministère des Finances, du ministère de l'Industrie, et de *SME Mauritius* réunis sous le même toit. En parallèle, les associations des entreprises privées seraient dotées d'une structure similaire. Les deux, public et privé, seraient connectés par une troisième structure, pour la coordination. Appuyé par une équipe d'opérateurs et un secrétariat, la direction définirait les directives et gèrerait les stratégies d'engagement.

Cette nouvelle organisation devra promouvoir surtout l'expertise mauricienne, désirée sur un continent africain qui manque cruellement d'experts, dans beaucoup de secteurs, du secteur manufacturier à la finance. Mobilisons nos talents pour la promotion de nos ressources humaines, de notre savoir-faire, de nos capacités!

Arvin Mootoocurpen est le directeur général de Purpose Communications Ltd



COMMUNIQUE

COVID-19

SELF-EMPLOYED ASSISTANCE SCHEME

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

During the implementation of the **Self-Employed Assistance Scheme (SEAS)**, a series of issues have been noted. The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) wishes to apprise applicants of the following, so that eligible applicants may avail themselves of the assistance in the most effective manner:

1. All applications must be made online on MRA website: **www.mra.mu**. The MRA will not entertain any application made by email or via phone. Individuals who are having difficulties to apply may call MRA Helpdesk on 207 6000.
2. Self-employed individuals who have already applied for the assistance for the period 16th of March to 15th of April 2020 **need not submit a new application** for the period 16th of April to 30th of April 2020.
3. Self-employed individuals in Rodrigues and in Agalega, who are eligible for the Self-Employed Assistance Scheme, are entitled to an assistance of Rs 5,100 for the period 16th of March to 15th of April 2020 only as the confinement period in those islands ended on 15th of April, 2020.
4. As at date, the MRA has received more than 251,000 applications for SEAS and payment has already been credited to the bank accounts of some 172,000 applicants. All applications received have already been processed and the unpaid cases relate to applicants who have not passed the eligibility criteria, or are entitled to the financial assistance but have an issue with their Bank Account.
5. An applicant who does not have a Bank Account may still make an application. However, he will have to open a Bank Account at the earliest and, thereafter, revert to his application form and insert his bank details.
6. Banks would henceforth make verifications to ensure that the applicant is the holder of the Bank Account before crediting the payment into that account. An applicant should, therefore, ensure that the Bank Account Number inserted in his online application form is in his own name.
7. An applicant who has inserted the Bank Account Number of another person, and gets the message that the account has been used more than once, may now amend his application, online, to insert a Bank Account which is in his own name.
8. An applicant, including a student, who has inserted incorrect information in his application form and who now wishes to withdraw his application, has been provided with an online facility to do so. In case he has already been paid, he will also be able to refund the amount using the same facility.
9. **All emails regarding SEAS must be addressed to headoffice@mra.mu**. No consideration may be given to emails sent directly to the mail box of MRA officers.
10. The MRA informs the public that a post audit exercise has been initiated to detect cases where misrepresentations have been made in application forms so as to benefit from the Self-Employed Assistance Scheme. Cases deemed fraudulent will be referred to the Police for appropriate action as provided in Law.

For further information regarding the Self-Employed Assistance Scheme, members of the public are requested to call MRA Helpdesk on **207 6000**.

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

29 April 2020

Ehram Court, Cnr Mgr. Gonin & Sir Virgil Naz Streets, Port Louis, Mauritius

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Isolating together is challenging - and relationship stresses can affect biological functioning

A study found the emotional dynamic between young heterosexual partners can have a measurable physiological effect on men, but not on women



In the wake of COVID-19 social distancing and stay-at-home orders, young couples may find themselves spending more time with each other than ever before.

As a developmental psychologist who conducts research on adolescent and young adult relationships, I'm interested in understanding how young people's everyday social interactions contribute to their health. Past research shows that people who have higher-quality friendships and romantic relationships during their teens and 20s typically have lower risk for illness and disease during adulthood, whereas individuals with early relationships characterized by conflict or violence experience heightened risk for negative health outcomes. Why might this be the case?

Can matters of the heart affect your heart?

My colleagues and I wondered whether young people's everyday, seemingly mundane, interactions with their dating partners might have acute effects on their physiological functioning. These direct connections between social functioning and physiology could accumulate over time in ways that ultimately affect long-term health.

We conducted a study to examine whether young dating couples' everyday romantic experiences were related to their physiology. We specifically investigated if couples' feelings towards one another during the day predicted changes in their heart rate while they slept.

We focused on overnight heart rate because other research shows that having chronically elevated heart rate can hamper the essential restorative effects of sleep and increase risk for later cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States.

To test our question, we used participants from a larger, ongoing study in our lab at the University of Southern California to capture a "day in the life" of young dating couples. The couples, most of whom were in their early 20s and had been dating for 1-2 years, were recruited from the Los Angeles area.

24 hours together

They were asked to choose a day they were planning to spend most of their time together and, on that chosen day, couples came into our lab first thing in the morning. They were equipped with a wireless chest-strap heart monitor and lent a mobile phone that sent surveys every hour until they went to bed. When participants left the lab, they were told to go about their day as they normally would.

Our study focused on 63 heterosexual couples who had valid 24-hour heart rate data (some participants took the monitors off when they slept or reattached them incorrectly after showering).

Every hour during the day, participants rated two things:

how annoyed and irritated they felt with their dating partner, and how close and connected they felt to their dating partner. Participants also reported on their hourly behaviors to make sure we knew about anything else that could affect their overnight heart rate - like whether they drank alcohol, exercised or took medication. For 24 hours, the heart rate monitor tracked couples' heartbeats per minute, an indicator of physiological activity.

From feelings to physiology

Even after taking into account both partners' daytime heart rate, stress levels, drug or alcohol use and physical activity, we found that men's overnight heart rate changed depending on how women felt toward their partner throughout the day.

When women felt closer and more connected to their partners during the day, men had lower overnight heart rates. When women felt more annoyed and irritated with their partners during the day, men had higher overnight heart rates. On average, men's overnight heart rates were about 2 to 4 beats per minute slower in couples where women expressed more closeness. On the other hand, men's heart rates were about 1.5 to 3 beats per minute faster if women expressed greater annoyance.

Interestingly, we found that women's annoyance did not predict increases in men's heart rate, if women also felt close to their partners throughout the day. In other words, the negative effects of annoyance got diluted if some closeness was also in the mix.

There were actually no effects of men's annoyance or closeness on women's overnight heart rates - men's cardiovascular responses appeared to be uniquely sensitive to women's daytime relationship feelings. Other research has found similar gender differences. One possibility is that women are more likely to express their feelings of closeness or annoyance, whereas men may feel less comfortable engaging in such communication.

Of course, every relationship has its natural ups and downs, and our study only captures a snapshot of young dating couples' lives together. However, the findings suggest the way romantic partners feel about one another, even within a single day, can have acute effects on their biological functioning during sleep.

These seemingly trivial, everyday experiences could build up over time and help explain why relationships wind up affecting people's health - for better or for worse.

Hannah L. Schacter,
Assistant Professor of Psychology,
Wayne State University

Spirituality may help people live longer

Discover why some believe that older people who regularly attend religious services appear to have better health

Why do older people who regularly attend religious services appear to live longer and have better health? Is it something about the type of people they are? Or is it something related to their visits to churches or synagogues - perhaps increased contact with other people?

A growing body of research is beginning to define the complex connections between religious and spiritual beliefs and practices and an individual's physical and psychological health. No one says it's as simple as going to services or "finding religion" later in life. It may be that people who are more involved in religious activities or are personally more spiritual are doing something that makes them feel better emotionally and helps them live longer and more healthily. The question, researchers say, is what exactly are they doing?

"There is an increasing interest in the subject among researchers and the public," says Susan H. McFadden, Ph.D., of the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh, who is co-chair of the Religion and Aging interest group of the Gerontological Society on Aging (GSA), a national group of researchers in aging.

Aging experts will discuss religion, spirituality and aging at the GSA annual conference, which starts Nov. 19 in San Francisco. Sessions will include a discussion of a new report -- from the National Institute on Aging and the Fetzer Institute, a Michigan foundation interested in mind/body issues -- that details research on the religious and spiritual dimensions of health.

Among the most recent findings in this area: People who attend religious services at least once a week are less likely to die in a given period of time than people who attend services less often. These results -- published in the August 1999 issue of the *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences* -- came out of a study examining almost 4,000 North Carolina residents aged 64 to 101.

People who attended religious services at least once a week were 46 percent less likely to die during the six-year study, says lead author Harold G. Koenig, M.D., of Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina. "When we controlled for such things as age, race, how sick they were and other health and social factors, there was still a 28 percent reduction in mortality," he says.

Koenig, a psychiatrist, says that the regular churchgoers showed a reduction in their mortality rate comparable to that of people who don't smoke over those who do.

Spiritual, Healthy Habits

Other large studies have had similar results. Some smaller studies have also shown that spirituality may be beneficial: People who attend religious services, or who feel they are spiritual, experience lower levels of depression and anxiety; display signs of better health, such as lower blood pressure and fewer strokes; and say they generally feel healthier.

Researchers, including Koenig, say there are limitations to the conclusions anyone should draw from these studies. It could be that people who attend religious services benefit from the social network they form. "It might be that people in churches and synagogues watch out for others, especially the elderly," encouraging them, for example, to get help if they look sick, Koenig says.

Also, it's known that among today's older men and women, religious belief often leads to less risky behavior, such as less alcohol consumption and smoking. And religious beliefs -- or a strong feeling of spirituality outside of traditional religions -- may improve an individual's ability to cope with the stresses of everyday life and the tribulations of aging, experts say.

Or it could be, McFadden says, that certain personality types cope better with life -- and those are the types of people who also attend services more regularly.

WebMD

Food for Thought

Bundle of misery

A man used to call God every night and repeat the same prayer with great fervour.

He would cry, "Dear God, do me at least one favour I have been asking for my whole life. As far as I can see, I am the most miserable man on the earth. Please recheck the hard drive of your supercomputer where my sins and good deeds are recorded. Why did you award me such a punishment? I am ready to exchange my miseries with somebody else, anybody will do. I do not ask for bliss. Please give me just one opportunity to exchange my miseries. Is it a thing too great I am asking for?"

One night his appeals were responded. In a glorious dream he heard God making an announcement. A great voice came from the heavens saying, "Gather all of your miseries into bundles and bring them to the temple hall for exchange."

The whole population of town started packing miseries into big bundles for exchange in the temple. This man was very happy: "So the moment has come! It seems the long awaited is going to happen!"

He rushed with his bundle. On the way he found that others were also rushing. By the time he reached the temple he became afraid, very afraid, he saw people carrying bigger bundles than his. People that he had always seen smiling -- Rotarians, Lions, Jaycees, business tycoons, lifestyle management teachers -- in beautiful clothes, who were always guiding others about how to convert miseries into happiness. The scenario made him hesitant, to go in or not was the million-dollar question, but he had been praying his whole life, so he thought, 'Let us see what happens'.

Everybody entered the temple. The voice said,



"Put your bundles around the hall." They put their bundles along walls. The voice said again, "Now you can choose any bundle that you like."

And the miracle of miracles happened: everybody rushed to his own bundle. This man also rushed fast towards his own bundle, afraid that if somebody else chooses it then he will be at a loss.

Everybody picked up his own bundle, with great relief and they were all happy, carrying their bundles back to their homes.

Even this man was very happy, for the simple reason that 'Who knows what is in the bundle of other sufferer?' At least he was aware of his own bundle and its contents. He had become accustomed to perks and punishment of his fate. Remodelling self to face unknown miseries will a tougher ordeal.

What's right isn't always popular...

A perfect example for the dilemma we often face in any decision making - specially during the Covid times nowadays...

A group of children were playing near two railway tracks, one still in use while the other not. Only one child played on the unused track which was dirty, the rest on the clean operational track.

A train is coming, and you are just beside the track interchange. You can make the train change its course to the unused track and save most of the kids.

However, that would also mean the lone child playing by the unused track would be sacrificed. Or would you rather let the train go its way?

Let's take a pause to think what kind of decision we could make.

Most people might choose to divert the course of the train, and sacrifice only one child.

Save most of the children at the expense of only one child was a rational decision most people would make, morally and emotionally. But have you ever thought that the child who chose to play on the unused track had in fact made the right decision to play at a safe place? Nevertheless, he had to be sacrificed because of his ignorant friends who chose to play where it was dangerous to do so.

This kind of dilemma happens around us every day.

In the office, community, in politics and especially in a democratic society, the RIGHT is often sacrificed for the interest of the majority, no matter how foolish or ignorant the majority are, and how farsighted and knowledgeable the minority are.

The great critic Leo Velski Julian who told the story said he would not try to change the course of the train because he believed that the kids playing on the operational track were aware that the track was still in use, and that they would run away when they hear the train's sirens.

Now, if the train was diverted, that lone child would definitely die because he would never expect that a train could come over on the unused track! Further, that track was not in use probably because it was not safe. If the train was diverted to such a track, we may put the lives of all passengers on board at stake! And in our attempt to save a few kids thinking that the train may run over them, we might end up sacrificing hundreds of people.

While we are all aware that life is full of tough decisions that need to be made, we may not realize that a hasty decision may not always be the right one.

What's right isn't always popular. And what's popular isn't always right.

In A Light Vein

Man rules

We always hear 'the rules' from the female side. At last a bloke has taken the time to write this all down. Now here are the rules from the male side.

These are our rules!

Please note. These are all numbered #1 on purpose!

1. Men are not mind readers.

1. Learn to work the toilet seat. You're a big girl. If it's up, put it down. We need it up, you need it down. You don't hear us complaining about you leaving it down.

1. Crying is blackmail.

1. Ask for what you want. Let us be clear on this one:

Subtle hints do not work!

Strong hints do not work!

Obvious hints do not work!

Just say it!

1. Yes and no are perfectly acceptable answers to almost every question.

1. Come to us with a problem only if you want help solving it. That's what we do. Sympathy is what your girlfriends are for.

1. Anything we said 6 months ago is inadmissible in an argument. In fact, all comments become null and void after 7

days.

1. If you think you're fat, you probably are. Don't ask us.

1. If something we said can be interpreted two ways and one of the ways makes you sad or angry, we meant the other one.

1. You can either ask us to do something or tell us how you want it done. Not both.

If you already know best how to do it, just do it yourself.

1. Whenever possible, please say whatever you have to say during commercials.

1. Christopher Columbus did not need directions and neither do we...

1. All men see in only 16 colours, like Windows default settings.

Peach, for example, is a fruit, not a colour. Pumpkin is also a fruit. We have no idea what mauve is.

1. If we ask what is wrong and you say 'nothing', we will act like nothing's wrong. We know you are lying, but it is just not

worth the hassle.

1. If you ask a question you don't want an answer to, expect an answer you don't want to hear...

1. When we have to go somewhere, absolutely anything you wear is fine... really.

1. Don't ask us what we're thinking about unless you are prepared to discuss

such topics as football or motor sports.

1. You have enough clothes.

1. You have too many shoes.

1. I am in shape. Round is a shape!

1. Thank you for reading this. Yes, I know, I have to sleep on the couch tonight. But did you know men really don't mind that? It's like camping...

Rules

1. Choose a number between 1 and 9
2. Multiply it by 3
3. Add 3
4. Multiply by 3 again
5. Add the resulting two numbers together
6. The number you obtain is that corresponding to the destination of your next vacation

Destination

1. Italy
2. Spain
3. India
4. Caribbean
5. Portugal
6. New Zealand
7. Bahamas
8. Singapore
9. Stay at home
10. Thailand
11. Brazil
12. Scotland
13. Australia
14. South Africa
15. Canada
16. Greece
17. Mexico
18. Mauritius

HOW TO CHOOSE
YOUR NEXT
vacation destination

When 'Inferno' actor Tom Hanks said that he wants to be cool like his co-star Irrfan Khan



Irrfan Khan was one of the few Indian stars to seamlessly transition from Bollywood to Hollywood, while breaking the stereotypical barriers reserved for brown people in the West with his unconventional acting skills.

From pivotal roles in big budget tent-poles like *'Jurassic World'*, *'Inferno'* and *'The Amazing Spider-Man'* to critically acclaimed and successful crossover dramas such as *'The Namesake'*, *'Slumdog Millionaire'* and *'Life of Pi'*, Irrfan was India's first and biggest export to Hollywood. And he did all this without making any clamor about invading the West, and instead let his work do the talking.

He was the actor who matched the Oscar-winning Tom Hanks' on-screen thunder. He portrayed the role of the head of an enigmatic international organisation known as 'The Consortium' in *'Inferno'*. While promoting the film Tom Hanks said he wants to be cool like Irrfan.

"Here's what I hate about Irrfan Khan... I always think I'm the coolest guy in the room, and everybody's hanging on to every word I say and everybody's a little intimidated to be in my presence. And then Irrfan Khan walks into the room. And he's the coolest guy in the room," Tom Hanks said about working with Irrfan.

After carving a name for himself in Hindi cinema, he has gradually established himself in the West too. But there was a time in the 1990s when Irrfan was contemplating leaving the glitzy world of showbiz.

British filmmaker Asif Kapadia's *"The Warrior"* in 2001 gave a much-needed fillip to his career and an exposure to the West that opened new vistas. From there on, there was no looking back.

In an interview with IANS in the past, Irrfan had shared how his move to tread the Hollywood path was initially met with criticism.



"When I entered Hollywood, most of my colleagues and industry people used to say that 'Hollywood mein kya hai', 'Taxi driver aur waiter ke role hi hote hain'. But fortunately things have changed. Now, nationality is not important," he said, going on to use his character in *"Inferno"* to further elaborate his point. For me in *'Inferno'*, nationality doesn't matter, or like in *'Jurassic World'*, where I played the role of Simon Masrani -- he could have been an Indian Sindhi or an Italian. So that is how things are changing. Your nationality doesn't really become a limitation," the National Award-winning star had said.

He also starred in the 2017 film *"The Song Of Scorpions"*, and 2007 movie *"A Mighty Heart"*, which also featured Angelina Jolie, besides the Indo-German short film *"The Cloud Door"* (1994).

After working on the small screen, Irrfan made his film debut with a cameo in 1988 through Mira Nair's Oscar-nominated *"Salaam Bombay"*. The actor passed away in Mumbai on Wednesday. He was 53.

The actor, diagnosed with a neuroendocrine tumour in 2018, was still recovering from the disease after extensive treatment in London.

The actor was taking baby steps back into the acting world. He recovered well enough to complete the shoot of *"Angrezi Medium"*, which was incidentally the last film to hit the screens in India before the COVID-19 outbreak in the country.

Rishi Kapoor passes away at 67



Bollywood actor Rishi Kapoor breathed his last yesterday after fighting a long battle with cancer. He was admitted to Sir H. N. Reliance Foundation Hospital in Mumbai. His brother Randhir Kapoor has confirmed the news a while ago.

The Kapoor family has issued a statement which read, "Our dear Rishi Kapoor passed away peacefully in hospital yesterday after a two-year battle with leukaemia. The doctors and medical staff at the hospital said he kept them entertained to the last. He remained jovial and determined to live to the fullest right through two years of treatment across two continents. Family, friends, food and films remained his focus and everyone who met him during this time was amazed at how he did not let his illness get the better of him.

He was grateful for the love of his fans that poured in from the world over.

In his passing, they would all understand that he would like to be remembered with a smile and not with tears. In this hour of personal loss, we also recognise the world is going through a very difficult and troubled time. There are numerous restrictions around movement and gathering in public. We would like to request all his fans and well-wishers and friends of the family to please respect the laws that are in force. He would not have it any other way."

YOUR STARS

Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

If you're married, your spouse must do his/her best to please you and to keep you with him/her. Avoid discussions as far as possible this time. Don't let yourself be irritated by small domestic problems; above all refrain from taking it out on your children, even if they may commit the worst silly deeds.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

Beware of possibilities of sentimental disappointment. You'll have excellent chances to obtain a post of responsibility where you'll be able to exercise your sense of command, innovate and discover in all freedom.

Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You'll be in for all adventures and discoveries, and you'll bite into life hungrily. You'll probably meet a person who'll strongly attract you on the sexual plane but who won't suit you in the least as far as intellectual affinities are concerned.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

The pay raise which you've been hoping for so much won't be granted you soon; meanwhile continue to work with dedication and method. An accumulation of contrariness will set your nerves on edge; you'll succeed in avoiding stress only by trying to take things less at heart.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

For many of you, work will be intense, and you may suffer from overwork if you don't have enough willpower to force yourself to take moments of rest. You'll try to impose yourself; this will be useful, but it won't be necessary to shout very vehemently so as to obtain the desired results.

Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

If you don't take necessary precautions, your affective life could very well be perturbed, especially if you live in couple. Beware, you'll have a strong tendency to live above your means! Don't think that you can always get away with it.

Gemini: May 21 - June 20

Natives without special ties will see their amorous wishes and desires fulfilled; this is to say that they'll no longer be confined in their loneliness. Your trenchant way to conceive life may this time lead you to sudden reversals, especially as concerns your job.

Cancer: June 21 - July 22

It won't absolutely be the moment to indulge in business; in addition to your lack of judgment and of clear-sightedness, you'll tend to be intolerant, and this is susceptible to cause you some setbacks in your relationships.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Your relationships with your professional entourage will be much more serene; there'll of course be some divergences of view or method, but these won't end in serious conflicts. Certain persons will have a grudge against you because of your frankness.

Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

You can bring your most daring undertakings to a successful conclusion. Do the impossible to give priority to your affective life and to make your near ones happy. The lunar influences will incline you to observe the greatest prudence in the conduct of your affective life.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

Your children may take your good will for something like tyranny; therefore, you'll have to show moderation and tact, and also resignation. A peaceful and serene atmosphere will reign in the amorous field; profit by it to set things right with your mate.

Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

Delays will perturb your professional plans; try to keep your cool: you'll win nothing in getting worked up and in submitting your near ones to the effects of your bad humour. Your psychic state will perhaps be darkened by unfounded fears or by certain melancholia.

Jennifer Winget on Beyhadh 2 going off air: 'It feels sad to have to pull the plug on the show without a proper end'

Beyhadh 2 stars Jennifer Winget, Shivin Narang and Ashish Chowdhry in lead roles



Jennifer Winget's Beyhadh 2 joins the list of Patiala Babes And Ishaaron Ishaaron Mein as it is also ending in an abrupt way due to the lockdown situation across the country. This harsh decision was taken by the makers when the lockdown was extended by the government and they had no bank of new episodes, though they cited the reason behind the end that the show is time-bound and it's a finite fiction show. After Shivin Narang, Jennifer Winget has opened up on the show's abrupt closure as she feels it's very said and disappointing.

In a chat with TOI, Jennifer Winget said, "While we were hoping to wrap the show by May anyway, the current lockdown placed a lot of constraints, which made it impossible to physically and realistically see the show through till the end. This goes for every other show as well as production house and channel. In this case, it

was the logical thing to do because we need to consider the safety of the entire team, without which it was impossible to carry things forward."

She added, "It is so close to my heart and always will be, it definitely feels sad to have to pull the plug on the show without giving a proper end. But, I am sure something better will come out of this, there will be better days for us. I am also sure that our fans will understand the circumstances and stay with us, whatever the outcome." In an exclusive conversation with BollywoodLife, Shivin had praised Jennifer and said, "She is so hardworking and so honest with her work. Even after spending 15 to 16 years in the industry, she is so focused and honest with her work. What makes Beyhadh 2 is each and every character from it."

Kulfi and Amayra aka Aakriti Sharma and Myra Singh's special good-bye song for Kulfi Kumar Bajewala fans



Star Plus' Kulfi Kumar Bajewala was one of the very popular shows at one point in time. The show gave the television industry two power-packed performers as child artists in Aakriti Sharma and Myra Singh who played the characters of Kulfi and Amayra respectively.

The show not only gave a great debut to the kids but also provided a wonderful opportunity to Mohit Malik and Anjali Anand who played the character of Sikander Singh Gill and Lovely in the show. Mohit impressed the audience with his acting chops and his incredible performances especially in emotional scenes while Anjali as Lovely aced the grey shade character and was loved as much as she was hated for being the cruel Lovely.

Kulfi Kumar Bajewala will soon bid adieu to the viewers and right before the curtains fall, the cuties Myra Singh and Aakriti Sharma are seen bidding last good-bye to the audience in typical Kulfi Kumar Bajewala style.

The duo sang a song on the tunes of "Peth bichara, bhok ka maara" which was the introductory song for Kulfi and waved good bye to the viewers.

TV SERIAL

Kulfi Kumar Bajewala

Friday 1 May: Kulfi hesitantly obeys Sikander while Pakhi and Bhola spend some happy time. Later, Loveleen bumps into Nandini.

Monday 4 May: Nandini is worried about Bhola while Kulfi notices Chandan hiding cash. Later, he gets furious after Kulfi tries to expose him.

Tuesday 5 May: Loveleen doubts Chandan while Pakhi and Bhola struggle to get money. Later, Kulfi finds drugs at home.

Wednesday 6 May: At the rally, Kulfi hears Sikander's voice but fails to see him. Later, Nandini's mother is furious at Bhola.

Thursday 7 May: A furious Chandan scolds Kulfi and misbehaves with Mahinder. Later, he makes a shocking declaration to Loveleen.

Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

Friday 1 May: Sameer's world goes in a whirlpool when Munna tells Naina that Sameer is taking the measurement for female clothes. Naina is angry looking at Sameer take the measurements of girls to sew their clothes. When a customer comes again and asks Sameer to take the measurements, he gets into deep trouble.

Monday 4 May: Naina and Sameer after reading a lot of letters from Preeti have known a lot about Mumbai. Naina reads out a letter from Preeti stating about how her life has been in Mumbai. The letter also states about her mother-in-law in comparison to her mother.

Tuesday 5 May: After the shoot starts in Sameer and Naina's mansion, Sameer on seeing the actors attitude and fame, he dreams on to be an actor and this desire is even more flamed when he gets a small role in the ad shoot.

Wednesday 6 May: As the dream of going to Mumbai lives on, Anand is strictly against it and is not ready to listen to Naina or Sameer. And Sameer and Naina both know that if they crack through Anand, even Naina's father will crack.

Thursday 7 May: After Sameer and Naina decide to go to Mumbai, they are visited by their uncle and he taunts them a lot commenting on the difference between hero and zero.

Ek Deewana Tha

Friday 1 May: Radhika and Krish analyze the events that have been happening to them since they came to Bedi House and come to the conclusion that they were somehow related to each other in their past lives. Shivani and Akash decide to get married by the night itself which confuses Krish so he tells Radhika not to trust Akash anymore.

Monday 4 May: Krish and Radhika starts doubting Akash's intentions, they are convinced that something is wrong with him. Akash takes off his mask in front of Shivani to reveal his true identity. Krish and Radhika find a file, which links industrialist Dhananjay to Mrs. Bedi.

Tuesday 5 May: Akash tell Shivani the truth about their past lives, Shivani is at shock. Krish confides in Radhika that he feels that there is some sort of a past connection. The truth is unfolded and no one knows how to handle it.

Wednesday 6 May: Akash tells Shivani how Mister and Misses Bedi used the power of black magic to bring her back to life again, and how Akash has hidden his true identity just to make Shivani fall in love with him.

Thursday 7 May: Krish and Radhika console each other about the circumstances they are going through. Akash injects himself with something. A new guy shows up and slits Shivani's throat. Akash tries to fake a Shivani's last words in a letter.

CINE 12

Vendredi 1 mai - 21.15

Inferno

Avec: Tom Hanks, Felicity Jones, Irrfan Khan



CINE 12

Samedi 2 mai - 15.06

L'île Aux Sorciers

Avec: Sara Langebæk Gaarman, Lucas Munk Billing, Lasse Borg

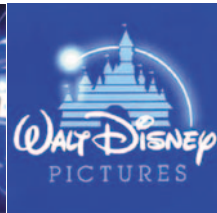


CINE 12

dimanche 3 mai - 14.50

King Kong

Avec: Naomi Watts, Jack Black, Adrien Brody



vendredi 1 mai

MBC 1

06.33 Local: Encounter
07.00 Dessin Anime
10.29 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
12.35 Doc: Wildlife Heroes
13.30 Local: Saver Kiltirel
14.00 Local: Wellness By Trilo
14.30 Serial: Magic Mania
14.42 D.Anime: Bugsted
15.04 D.Anime: Kuu Kuu Harajuku
16.28 D.Anime: Polly Pocket
17.00 Local: Mati Ke Mol
17.30 Live: Samachar
18.00 Live: Covid-19 Conference
18.30 Serial: Siya Ke Ram
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
20.30 Local: Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin

MBC 2

04.30 Aastha TV
07.00 DDI Live
10.00 Serial: Tumhaari Natasha
11.19 Serial: MOL
12.04 Film:
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.20 Honaar Soon Mee Hya...
15.43 Mooga Manasulu
16.03 Apoorva Raagangal
16.30 Serial: Ki Jaana Mein Kaun
16.53 Serial: Gangaa
18.00 Serial: Dr. Quin
18.30 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
19.50 Local: Yaadein
20.20 Serial: Mah-E-Tamaam
21.25 Local: Anjuman
21.26 Local: Urdu Programme
22.37 DDI Live

MBC 3

06.00 Mag: Eco India
06.44 Mag: Shift
07.00 Mag: Border Crossing
07.27 Doc: A Question Of Science
07.32 Mag: Tomorrow Today
07.57 World Stamps
08.55 Mag: Strictly Street
09.18 Monuments Men Of Timbuktu
10.01 Doc: It's In Our Genes
10.43 Mag: Healthy Living
11.00 Mag: Eco India
11.26 Mag: Urban Gardens
11.44 Mag: Shift
11.59 Mag: Border Crossing
12.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
12.32 Mag: Tomorrow Today
12.58 Doc: World Stamps
13.04 Doc: 360 GEO
13.56 Mag: Strictly Street
14.19 Monuments Men Of Timbuktu
15.01 Doc: It's In Our Genes

Cine 12

01.29 Film: Chappie
03.25 Serial: NCIS
04.05 Film: An Hour Behind
06.12 Serial: When Calls The Heart
06.54 Film: Drunken Master
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight
09.52 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.16 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.42 Serial: NCIS
11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.00 Film: An Hour Behind
13.30 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: Drunken Master
16.58 Serial: Scorpion
17.36 Serial: When Calls The Heart
18.22 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.46 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.10 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 Serial: Midnight, Texas
21.15 Film: Inferno

Bollywood TV

09.30 Film: Zindagi Aur Khwab
12.06 / 19.54 - Ek Deewana Tha
12.24 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.45 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.06 / 21.09 - Kaleerein
13.35 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.56 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.24 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.45 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
15.03 Film: Welcome Back
Stars: Anil Kapoor, Nana Patekar, Dimple Kapadia, John Abraham
17.30 Live: Samacher
18.00 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.24 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

samedi 2 mai

06.00 Dessin Anime
09.36 Mag: Origami
09.50 Serial: Grandpa In My Pocket
10.20 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida...
11.15 Local: Itinerer Moris
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Pause Cuisine
13.05 Local: Extraits
14.00 Local: People
14.10 Local: Fee Main
14.30 Serial: Magic Mania
14.40 D.Anime: Bugsted
17.00 Local: Gulmohar Ki Chaoun..
17.30 Live: Samachar
18.00 Live Press Conference
18.30 Entertainment: Dance
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
20.35 Local: Groov'in
21.45 Serial: Chicago Med
23.00 Local: Le Journal
23.35 Local: Rodrigues

04.30 Aastha TV
07.00 Film:
11.40 Good Morning Shanghai
12.00 Nanda Saukhyia Bhare
12.30 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
12.48 Serial: Brundavanam
13.10 Serial: Annakodiyum Ainthu
13.35 Serial: Anu Pallavi
14.05 Entertainment: Dil Hai Hindu
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.20 Film: Imtihaan
18.00 Mag: Check In
18.30 Mag: Eco@Africa
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.05 Serial: Vikram Betaal Ki Rahasya Gatha
20.21 Serial: Bitti Business Wali
21.00 Film:
23.15 DDI Live

06.00 Paradise Or Robocalypse
07.00 Mag: Global 3000
07.29 Doc: A Question Of Science
08.03 Doc: Secret Worlds
08.50 Doc: World Stamps
09.01 Ayni, L'odysee Du Condor
09.48 Doc: Photo Number 6
10.30 The Emperor Of The Red...
11.13 Mag: 50 Cent: Rap Star
12.58 Mag: Euromaxx
13.24 Doc: Secret Worlds
14.12 Doc: World Stamps
15.10 Doc: Photo Number 6
15.52 The Emperor Of The Red...
16.32 Paradise Or Robocalypse
17.17 Mag: Urban Gardens
17.38 Mag: Global 3000
18.04 Doc: Horizon S
19.00 Doc: Olivia's Garden
19.30 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts et...
20.02 Doc: Wildlife Heroes
20.57 Doc: World Stamps

00.46 Tele: Peau Sauvage
01.29 Film: Inferno
03.26 Film: Jurassic World
05.25 Tele: Destiny
06.43 Film: Miracles From Heaven
08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer
09.19 Film: Twister
09.45 Tele: Au Nom De L'amour
11.07 Film: Chasseur De Tresor
12.34 Serial: The Bletchley
13.20 Tele: L'esclave Blanche
14.06 Tele: La Premiere Dame
15.06 Film: L'île Aux Sorciers
17.11 Serial: Midnight, Texas
17.52 Film: Jurassic World
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 Series
21.15 Film: Two Fists, One Heart
Stars: Daniel Amalm, Ennio Fantastichini, Jessica Marais
23.00 Tele: Eva Luna

04.05 Ek Deewana Tha
04.26 Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
05.28 Zindagi Ki Mehek
05.47 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
06.07 Chhanchhan
06.29 Ishqbaaz
06.55 Kumkum Bhagya
06.15 Piya Albela
07.36 Mere Angne Mein
08.00 Zindagi Ki Mehek
10.02 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai
12.30 Film: Dil Maange More
Starring: Shahid Kapoor, Soha Ali Khan, Ayesha Takia, Tulip Joshi
14.32 Kaleerein
17.30 Samachar
16.00 Pavitra Rishta
18.30 Film: Prem Ratan Dhan...
21.15 Serial: Siya Ke Ram
22.05 Serial: Naagin Season 2
22.55 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek

dimanche 3 mai

07.00 Dessin Anime
09.33 Mag: Origami
09.45 Serial: Grandpa In My Pocket
10.35 Local: Un Rasinn
11.30 Local: Saveurs Plus
12.00 Le Journal
14.42 D. Anime: Bugsted
14.43 D. Anime: Croque Nuage
14.52 La Famille Blaireau-Renard
15.27 D.Anime: Petit Creux
15.28 D.Anime: La Famille Passiflore
16.30 D.Anime: Polly Pocket
17.00 Local: Chatkar Pakwan
17.30 Live: Samachar
18.00 Live Press Conference
18.30 Local: Safar
19.30 Le Journal
20.05 Local: Press Conference
21.30 Film: Hollows Grove
23.00 Le Journal
23.35 Local: Grup Tambour...

04.30 Aastha TV
07.00 Film: Paapi
10.00 Local: Shree Durga...
11.00 Serial: Oru Kai Osai
12.00 Film:
15.00 Samachar
15.20 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
15.40 Serial: Eka Lagnachi Teesri
16.06 Apoorva Raagangal
16.28 Local: Yaadein
16.54 Serial: Mahakali
18.00 Lettre Pastorale Careme
18.30 Local: Tipa Tipa Nu Avance
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Serial: Maharakshak
20.42 Serial: Naagin
21.28 Serial: CID
22.15 Serial: Piya Rangrezz

06.00 Doc: Horizon
06.51 Doc: Olivia's Garden
07.42 Doc: Wildlife Heroes
08.38 Other: Nikulin Circus
10.14 Nauvanik, Terre De Glace
11.06 Doc: Horizon S
12.00 Entertainment: Adele Home..
13.00 Doc: Wildlife Heroes
13.52 Other: Nikulin Circus
15.32 Nauvanik, Terre De Glace
16.24 Doc: Horizon s
17.15 Doc: Olivia's Garden
17.41 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts Et...
18.07 Doc: Zenith
18.34 Doc: Garden Party
19.05 Doc: Builders Of The Future
19.34 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts Et...
20.06 Doc: Master Of Engineering
20.58 Doc: World Stamps
21.01 Doc: Children In Art
21.53 Doc: When Paul Came Over..

00.20 Tele: Peau Sauvage
01.05 Film: Two Fists, One Heart
02.50 Serial: Hawaii 5-0
03.32 Film: Hope Dances
05.22 Tele: Destiny
06.46 Film: She's The Man
08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer
09.18 Film: Will
10.56 Film: Hope Dances
12.29 Serial: Hawaii 5-0
13.10 Tele: L'esclave Blanche
13.57 Tele: Premiere Dame
14.50 Film: King Kong
17.50 Series
18.31 Serial: Mission
19.19 Serial: Hawaii 5-0
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 Serial: Counterpart
21.15 Film: Murder, She Baked
Avec: Alison Sweeney, Cameron Mathison, Barbara Niven

02.43 Kaleerein
04.13 Pavitra Rishta
05.20 Prem Ratan Dhan Payo
Starring: Salman Khan, Sonam Kapoor, Neil Nitin Mukesh
08.00 Motu Patlu
09.18 Chhanchhan
10.02 Itna Karo Na Mujhe Pyaar
12.30 Film: Golmaal Again
Starring: Ajay Devgn, Parineeti Chopra, Tabu, Arshad Warsi
15.01 Ek Deewana Tha
17.00 Punar Vivaah
17.30 Samachar
18.30 Film: Bajirao Mastani
Starring Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone, Priyanka Chopra
21.06 Motu Patlu

Dimanche 3 mai - 12.30

Stars: Ajay Devgn, Parineeti Chopra, Tabu, Arshad Warsi



Dimanche 3 mai - 18.30

Stars: Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone, Priyanka Chopra



The Dilemmas of Deconfinement

Stay at home and bring down the economy, or go back to work/schools and take risks: an unprecedented dilemma which leaves little choice



Deconfinement - End of penalty for Spanish children. Photo - i0.wp.com



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

Mauritians of all age groups are aware that they are experiencing an unprecedented disruption in fields: educational, economic, industrial, political and social, caused by a new virus. It is the first time in the history of humanity that a pandemic spreads from Asia to Central, Eastern and Western Europe, to North and South America, the West Indies, Africa, from Indian Ocean islands to Australia. The 1347 devastating pandemic along the

Silk Road travelled from Asia and entered Europe through Italy. Ironically, the virus from South Asia passed first through Italy again. Spanish expeditions in Mexico in the 16th century brought a virus which decimated the Aztec and Maya populations. The proliferation of more recent viruses was quite limited geographically.

What makes the situation unique is that the world is interconnected as never before. We are no longer the sapiens living in the Stone Age, hunter-gatherer tribes, or the Agricultural Revolution of 12,000 years ago, and later periods when human groups were still self-sufficient to feed themselves from their labour and did not have to turn to the ruler of the country to tell them what work to do and how to find food to feed themselves. It is a unique situation with a global virus halting the global economy, breaking all chains of work, manufacturing, supplies and orders at international level, and disrupting everything at national level.

Given all the uncertainties over the possible development of the virus, the age group that it may seriously or lightly affect, phased deconfinement with schools re-opening for specified classes, and employees going back to work in some sectors, it is a very heavy responsibility for the government and stakeholders in the private sector. It is obvious that no government in Mauritius has faced such a situation. Hence, the Executive cannot take decisions lightly without learning from the experience of countries

about the way to proceed with due consideration to what is applicable in the local context. This is precisely what the Executive is doing, like for instance with the Minister of Education inviting all partners in the educational sector to suggest the best solutions. Re-opening schools, offices, factories, big and small businesses is no easy decision for any government. All countries are adopting the same approach - that of applying the most effective strategies employed by other governments. Up to now, Mauritius has been quite efficient in containing the pandemic which could have taken more lives if appropriate measures had not been implemented.

Civil society, governments, business and industrial sectors are aware of the risk of sparking a second wave of Covid-19 despite all the precautionary measures put in place during lockdowns. Stay at home and bring down the economy, or go back to work/schools and take risks: an unprecedented dilemma which leaves little choice.

It is worth considering what preventive steps can be adopted to increase resistance and reduce damage apart

from technical measures involving masks, gloves and social distancing. Do not look west for any preventive medicine. It is not the job of formal modern medicine in which what you eat and drink is not considered as a means to limit infectious diseases. Trust local traditions to purify the blood from toxins which circulate to the liver and lungs, and make them less vulnerable to infections. Plants and herbs are known to many. Ayurvedic medicine is widely used by loads of people in both prevention and treatment of diseases. What is not officially acknowledged by the international body of medicine is considered informal, and the national committee monitoring the disease cannot, presumably, take an official stance on the topic.

But folks can go along with their knowledge of spices, herbs and decoctions. Despite the age of Artificial Intelligence, we are still connected to the first Agricultural Revolution 12,000 years ago and the legacy it left to people across the world. It might be interesting to get information about the medicinal quality of the plant that is being used to make drinks in Madagascar.

Hasty announcements of a vaccine shortly in British and German labs, with the US joining in the race is to be taken with circumspection. They are all driven by the logic of huge profits and market share of their respective pharmaceutical lobbies. Remember how the French lobby refused to allow India to manufacture at a lower cost the pills to combat AIDS and prolong the lives of millions of HIV people in Africa in the 1990s. US contribution to WHO is the highest in the world, but it is not all for a philanthropic cause. In return, it aims to promote US hegemony in medical innovation and market share. WHO has been underfunded for decades, and the bickering with the US is not the first time this is happening. An effective vaccine normally takes at least one year to come up with. Since its existence in 1948 WHO has contributed to lots of progress in improving the health of people worldwide. But in an age of high commercial globalisation and interconnected world, there is no global plan right now to tackle the disease, according to historian Yuval Noah Harari in an interview to BBC. Though it is the biggest event that affects the modern world today, he adds, in 100 years people will look back on it as a faraway insignificant event.

In the meantime every country will have to consider the biological reality of contamination, and yet, cross fingers and bring in a dose of optimism and hope in the future development of the situation as economic activities resume.

Obituary

Dr Bruno Cheong

Dr Bruno Cheong, a specialist in Internal Medicine who was Consultant-in-Charge at Flacq Hospital, succumbed to Covid-19 disease on Monday night, April 27, at the ENT Hospital Vacoas where he had been admitted as he developed the more severe form of the disease. He had caught it from Patient zero whom he had seen, unbeknown to him that he was facing the invisible enemy that would later cost him his life.

It was a life fruitfully lived as a highly appreciated physician respected by both colleagues and allied medical staff. He was affable, soft-spoken, and ever sporting a smile. He had a solid reputation as a competent professional, which along with his gentle manners earned him the respect and affection of his grateful patients.

The medical profession loses one of its stalwarts,

and the country a hero who fell on the field of the worse health battle to date in the 21st century. Gone too soon, for he still had a lot more to contribute, he will long be remembered as a brave soldier who sacrificed his life in the service of his patients.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family. May God bless them and give them courage to face this great loss, in the knowledge that the whole country shares their grief.

RNG

