

MAURITIUS TIMES

"There's a fine line between solidarity and stupidity. Which side you want to be on is entirely up to your commonsense." -- Mohith Agadi

Nature is reviving - What about us?



Covid-19 hijacked and hacked human lung cells. By adopting simple measures we can protect ourselves, that is, prevent it from hijacking our lives.

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La rupture est-elle enfin possible ?

Par Aditya Narayan 📧 Voir Page 4

The Covid-19 Bill

The Explanatory Memorandum to the The Covid-19 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill states that the object of this Bill is 'to amend a number of enactments to cater for the impact of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), the infectious disease commonly known as COVID-19, and for matters connected, consequential or related thereto'. The scope of these latter matters is indeed broad and wide-ranging, and there can be no doubt that a lot of work and consultations with different stakeholders have gone into the drafting of the 84-page document.

What is of particular interest to us relates to the proposed amendments to the Bank of Mauritius Act and the Workers' Rights Act 2019, which, if voted by a simple majority, will have long-lasting impacts on the way public funds and debts are managed and utilised, and on the acquired rights of workers and their protection under the laws of the country. These concerns have also been flagged by Rishi Bhadain, who has called for concerted action by the Labour Party, MMM, PMSD and his Reform Party to oppose the proposed legislation.

We concur with the view that exceptional times demand exceptional measures. But Covid-19 should not serve as a pretext to drive questionable changes in our polity. For instance, the provision to presumably increase labour flexibility - through amendments to the Workers' Rights Act 2019 which, through the insertion of a new section (72A. Reduction of workforce in certain enterprises in the services) - will allow the Redundancy Board (in case it finds that the reasons for reduction of the workforce or the closing down are justified) shall order that the worker shall be paid only 30 days' wages as indemnity in lieu of notice. Workers can no doubt seek redress from the law courts for abuses by employers, but the cost and time it takes to secure reparation can not only deter any challenge by aggrieved parties.

What is also likely to give rise to heated debate relates to the amendments being envisaged to the Bank of Mauritius Act, in particular Section 6, which will see the addition of a new paragraph (oa) which will allow the BOM to 'grant such amount to Government as the Board may approve to assist it in its fiscal measures to stabilise the economy of Mauritius on account of the Covid-19 virus having a negative impact on the economy of Mauritius'. Furthermore, there is also the projected amendment of Section 46 for the addition of a new subsection (5) which will authorise the BOM to 'invest, with the approval of the Board, such amount of the official foreign reserves as the Board may determine in any corporation or company set up for the purpose of facilitating economic development'. There is moreover the new subsection (6) in section 47, which may allow the Board to 'approve such grant from the Special Reserve Fund to assist

Government in its fiscal measures to stabilise the economy of Mauritius'.

Readers will remember that in light of the Finance Bill 2019, which proposed an amendment to the Bank of Mauritius Act with a view to utilising the central bank's Special Reserve Fund for repaying Government's external debt, the view had already been expressed in different quarters and in the columns of this paper that the proposed amendment was not compatible with the notion of independence inherent in the legal provisions of the BOM Act and that it would undermine the Bank's credibility for the proper conduct of monetary policy.

One would also expect the proposed utilization of the official foreign reserves of the BOM in any corporation or company 'set up for the purpose of facilitating economic development' would cause much more disapproval. Dissenting views are already being heard about what are perceived to be some dangerous provisions of the Bill, which would give the government a blank cheque to print money with little by way of safeguards to manage this exceptional public funding to prevent abuse and protect the public interest. It has also been argued that the BOM had been 'one of the rare central banks whose founders were far-sighted enough to enable it to fund "development-related" projects with full accountability unaffected as it was the Minister of Finance (himself accountable to the Assembly) who was required to approve any such project'. There was thus, it is felt, no need to amend the BOM Act to take on the Covid rescue plan.

Former Finance minister Rama Sithanen seems to hold a different view. He says in today's interview that 'we should throw away some taboos and consider some unconventional financing methods which other countries have embraced', and goes on to suggest that in the exceptional testing times in the wake of Covid-19 the 'Minister of Finance simply has no choice than to depend on the two reserves of the Central Bank and on its electronic money transfer machine to save the country from both an economic and a social crisis. All countries are doing it - from the US and the UK to the EU and Japan'.

There are obviously different perspectives to this issue. We would like to think that the recourse to the BOM to save the economy has not been taken lightly and would not serve any objective contrary to the public interest. The critical issue in this transaction is rigorous oversight, preferably through a parliamentary mechanism as suggested by Rama Sithanen. Were such a mechanism to be adopted, as well as any other ideas offered in a spirit of genuine collaboration, this will no doubt go a long way towards facilitating wider acceptance of the amendments being proposed - with the important caveat that this should be a one-off measure.

The Conversation

Coronavirus: the first big test of the information age and what it could mean for privacy

The late Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell long ago predicted the coming of the "information society", which he said would soon replace industrial society. Bell foresaw scientific experts driving government policy, services taking over from manufacturing and computers becoming the main mode of interaction between people. "What counts", he wrote in his classic 'The Coming of Post-Industrial Society' (1973), "is not raw muscle power, or energy, but information". The new society, about which he was mildly optimistic, would be a reality by about 2020.

The coronavirus crisis has thrown into sharp relief the trends Bell and other information society thinkers identified. In fact, I believe we are undergoing the first real test of the "information society thesis". Whole populations have now been driven online. Amazon, Tesco and our favourite takeaways are open while most factories and industrial plants are mothballed. Essential services have been protected. Teaching and marking have migrated to cyberspace. Meetings are now "virtual". Scientists are indeed calling the shots - onscreen via their laptops.

Information technology is enabling people to read, play and communicate - and, now, help the government trace the path of the infection via an app. The elderly and other vulnerable groups are under electronic as well as human care. My mother, living alone 400 miles away and recovering from the virus, is buoyed up all day long with face-time calls. My wife's mother has Alexa at her side in her care home.

Meanwhile, 3D printers in private dwellings are churning out protective equipment. Health messages are getting through. The mass media have been joined by social media in a never-ending supply of information and opinion.

Data and privacy

However, we must add a cautionary note: Bell warned that the centralisation of data in the information society could prove a serious threat to privacy. Theodore Roszak, the Californian commentator who coined the term "counterculture", was much blunter. In 'The Cult of Information' (1994), he wrote:

Something very big, new, and threatening is permeating our political life. For the snoops, the sneaks, the meddlers, data glut is a feast. It gives them exactly what they require.

Many contemporary scholars are saying much the same. Information society studies (as I christened the field back in 2000) has given rise to a whole subfield devoted to the issue - namely



surveillance studies. The specialism's founder, Professor David Lyon, once told me that the surveillance society is just the flip-side of the information society.

But the issue is existential as well as academic. Cameras are everywhere; drones, facial recognition, roadblocks and the snoop-line numbers that some over-zealous police forces advertise have all become normalised. There can be no doubt that the infrastructure for complete totalitarianism is now in place, should power fall into the wrong hands.

I believe that surveillance has already gone much too far. As someone posted to an online newspaper recently: "George Orwell's 1984 is a warning, not a bloody instruction manual!" We must of course look after our senior citizens, the main victims of Covid-19, but we must also protect the rights for which their generation fought so bravely.

The most important reference point in all this is no longer 1984, but 9/11. Many of the emergency measures may have been rescinded, but there remains an extremely toxic legacy. Torture was brought back by the George W Bush administration and supported by Tony Blair's government as a "necessary" response to the "unprecedented" danger. Now torture is something the "good guys" sometimes do. On this issue, the entire world order is in a worse place than it was.

What, then, will be the permanent deposit of lockdown once this new tide goes back in? Greater state surveillance, in all probability.

Coronavirus has revealed that much of life continues to function thanks to technology. Society has not fallen apart. Bell and the information society theorists would feel vindicated in their general projections. But we will all need to think harder about the implications for privacy. And to borrow the linguist and political thinker Noam Chomsky's phrase, it is surely the "responsibility of intellectuals" to lead the way.

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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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Nature is reviving - What about us?



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

We can definitely do with much less than we have been succumbing ourselves to, and adopt a lifestyle that makes us less dependent on external things

A few days ago a TV anchor in New Delhi used the expression 'Nature is reviving' – she was referring to dolphins sighted off the coasts of Mumbai and Chennai that were clearly enjoying themselves (NB: dolphins are considered to have a degree of 'mind awareness' like humans), and to the rare sight of the Ganga dolphin cavorting in the clear waters of the Ganga river.

Earlier, within a couple of weeks of the lockdown in Delhi, someone sent me posts of the blue sky there as well as in the adjoining towns of Noida and Gurgaon, and also of the clear blue waters of the Yamuna river. I also received similar pictures of the Ganga at Hardwar, an ancient place of pilgrimage in North India. All these places are familiar to me, and the pictures revived many warm memories as well as nostalgia, making me wonder when I will be able to visit next given the flight travel 'lockdown' that Corona-ji has forced upon the industry.

Nevertheless, these were heartwarming sights. In Mauritius, we never have to worry about not seeing blue skies. Unfortunately, now that restric-



At a time when research and trials are on to find a drug to beat Covid-19, this may not be quite an apt quotation, but to my mind it nevertheless should serve to remind us of the excesses to which we have become addicted.

Photo - encrypted- tbn0.gstatic.com

tions are being phased out, vehicles are plying and car sales are resuming, grey will soon replace blue again in the Delhi sky, a pity...

Nature has been reviving too in Mauritius, as several citizens have waxed lyrical about seeing birds that had virtually disappeared from the landscape that had begun to be seen again. In my own yard there were definitely more birds flying around, perching on the trees and overhead electric lines, happily chirping. After quite some time I was hearing bird song in the evening. The weather in Curepipe has

been warm and sunny the past few days, inducing a joyful feeling – among the birds too: my favourites, the *condes*, make the mellifluous *tliou-tliou* sound which I return by whistling, something that I had learnt in childhood and that I was happy to find delight in afresh, courtesy Corona-ji!

I wondered whether it was the noise of the increasing traffic that disturbed these denizens of the skies and made them seek calmer and less noisy, more natural niches. With the metro works causing diversion from Jan Palach terminus, the diverted

trials are on to find a drug to beat Covid-19, this may not be quite an apt quotation, but to my mind it nevertheless should serve to remind us of the excesses to

“For those who have not introspected there's still time to do so. One could start by resisting the bombardment of the infodemic about Covid-19, sticking to the essentials of the authoritative advice being given and leaving the controversies to the experts. By the same token, one could look around the house and do a decluttering exercise. We can definitely do with much less than we have been succumbing ourselves to, and adopt a lifestyle that makes us less dependent on external things, that is bring us closer to nature. This is perhaps one of the valuable lessons of confinement...”

which we have become addicted, and which the interlude provided by the confinement would have triggered us to reflect upon and change accordingly.

As we all know by now, Covid-19 is the resultant of a way of unnatural living that has brought animals and humans in a kind of proximity that is not present in the natural state, and hence the jump from animal to humans followed by human-to-human transmission that is the cause of this worldwide destruction of lives and disruption of society.

It is the same story with the other health pandemic that the non-communicable diseases constitute: it's our way of living, or our lifestyle of hurry-worry-fast food. The consequence of which is that hundreds of millions of people across the world are now

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birds!

This reminds me of what a famous experimental pharmacologist (pharmacology is the study of therapeutic drugs), Sir John Gaddum is quoted as remarking: 'If all the drugs in the British Pharmacopeia (the catalogue of drugs in use) were to be thrown into the ocean, that would be so much better for mankind, but so much worse for the fishes!'

At a time when research and

hooked upon drugs that had better not figured in the Pharmacopeias to begin with, if only we led healthier lives.

And that's not complicated, come to think of it: there are only two components involved – food and exercise. On that count, I was very pleased to see that some young mothers whom I know had rebooted, as it were, and discovered their hidden culinary talents whether it is new dishes or new deserts. I have

thus had the fortune of enjoying some yummy freshly made cakes quite regularly during these past few weeks.

From Australia came posts about *semolina-dalchini* pastry made for afternoon tea, about successful attempts at making *chana-puri* and *gateaux patates*,

and also encouraging children to try out their own recipes - for which there was scant time earlier on in Mauritius. And, equally game-changing, the resolution to aim for a fresh work-life balance that would now incorporate these practices.

And also a resolution to burn calories through more regular practices that would include family treks and yoga.

For those who have not introspected there's still time to do so. One could start by resisting the bombardment of the infodemic about Covid-19, sticking to the essentials of the authoritative advice being given and leaving the controversies to the experts. By the same token, one could look around the house and do a decluttering exercise. Someone who was emigrating told me she got rid of almost two thirds of the clothes they had, and so far in their new location they had used only a quarter of all they had brought along. Not to mention about disposing of unused kitchenware and crockery, and so on with other household items.

We can definitely do with much less than we have been succumbing ourselves to, and adopt a lifestyle that makes us less dependent on external things, that is bring us closer to nature. This is perhaps one of the valuable lessons of confinement.

Covid-19 hijacked and hacked human lung cells. By adopting simple measures we can protect ourselves, that is, prevent it from hijacking our lives. And use the opportunity of confinement to give them a new orientation, as many are already doing. Why not continue on this path?



Coronavirus lifestyle improves climate-change behaviors. Photo - www.latimes.com

Aditya Narayan

Post-pandémie

La rupture est-elle enfin possible?

Rien ne garantit que les choses vont changer irrémédiablement. Déjà la reprise des marchés boursiers à la faveur du sauvetage d'entreprises indique un certain retour à la normale qui n'est pas de bon augure pour l'avenir.

Avant l'avènement de la pandémie, des personnes bien intentionnées appelaient à une rupture avec l'ordre établi tant sur le plan du modèle économique que sur celui de la gouvernance générale. On se disait que les choses ne pouvaient plus continuer ainsi. Et puis est venue cette épidémie qui a tout remis en question avec des conséquences très graves pour la croissance, l'emploi et la dette publique. En même temps, elle a créé de nouvelles opportunités de changement qui paraissaient inimaginables il y a quelque temps. Est-ce que le pays saura saisir l'occasion pour permettre cette rupture si indispensable à un renouveau national ou se rabattra-t-il sur son modèle dépassé et ses méthodes inefficaces une fois la sortie de crise assurée?

Fragilité des équilibres

S'il y a une chose que cette crise a révélée au grand jour, c'est la fragilité des équilibres économiques que l'on croyait immuables. La pérennité des pôles de croissance traditionnels, notamment le tourisme, les industries d'exportation, le bâtiment et les services financiers, était considérée comme acquise. Après tout, malgré le déficit commercial colossal, on arrivait tant bien que mal à équilibrer les comptes de la nation avec une balance des paiements légèrement positive, alimentée essentiellement par l'apport de l'investissement direct extérieur dans l'immobilier de luxe et des capitaux extérieurs placés dans le secteur offshore.

Soudainement, confinement oblige, les hôtels se sont désemplis de leurs touristes avec une baisse de revenus considérable pour le pays en devises étrangères. L'industrie manufacturière d'exportation a perdu 40% de ses commandes. Le bâtiment est en perdition. La production locale périclète à cause du manque d'encadrement logistique.

Résultat des courses : on prévoit une contraction de 10% du Produit Intérieur Brut (PIB) et une armée de 100,000 chômeurs. Il faudrait, selon le ministre des Finances, Rs 50 milliards pour relancer l'économie avec pour résultats inévitables un déficit public plus fort (10% du PIB) et un endettement national plus élevé (frôlant 75% du PIB).

Sortie de crise

Maurice n'est pas seule dans ce marasme sans précédent. Des pays plus résilients économiquement voient leur niveau d'endettement public atteindre ou dépasser

100% du PIB, mais ils ont la capacité de rebondir avec une devise forte et une infrastructure économique robuste.

Désenchantée par les chocs économiques depuis 1997, l'opinion publique dans ces pays veut que la sortie de crise elle-même se fasse selon un nouveau paradigme, lequel puisse consolider le rôle de l'Etat comme régulateur des marchés, instaurer de nouvelles pratiques de gestion dans le secteur public, encourager le secteur privé à mieux concilier le développement et l'écologie, et jeter les bases d'une société plus égalitaire et plus démocratique. Dans cette perspective, les chantiers de réformes potentielles sont vastes ici comme ailleurs.

"La crise de 2020 sauvera-t-elle le capitalisme encore une fois pour le rendre plus fort ? La réponse à cette question dépendra des politiques mises en oeuvre à court terme pour sortir de la crise (une urgence pour sauver les emplois) et de celles qui interviendront à moyen terme pour réorienter l'économie vers moins de productivisme, mais vers plus d'égalité, de partage et de sécurité économique..."

C'est l'ampleur de l'effort financier requis pour sortir de la crise qui impose justement une nouvelle approche économique. Comment va-t-on s'y prendre pour relever les nouveaux défis ? C'est une question primordiale.

Il ne s'agit pas uniquement de trouver les fonds nécessaires à la relance (emprunts sur le marché local, emprunts du FMI ou de l'Arabie saoudite) afin de faire redémarrer les secteurs en hibernation. On en trouvera sans doute.

La question la plus importante, c'est de savoir comment on utilisera l'argent emprunté, avec un lourd fardeau de dette, laissé aux prochaines générations, pour arriver à des niveaux d'efficacité et de productivité économiques plus forts tout en assurant l'emploi, la survie de petits entrepreneurs et la solidarité avec les groupes vulnérables.

Sauver le capitalisme?

En 2008, l'aide massive de l'Etat en faveur des entreprises avait finalement sauvé un capitalisme financier débridé, avide de profits et réfractaire à la régulation. Les dix années suivantes ont vu une montée des marchés boursiers cassant tous les records avec

l'enrichissement effréné de gros investisseurs, qui bénéficient parallèlement de baisses d'impôts conséquentes.

Il a fallu un mauvais virus pour percer les bulles boursières spéculatives qui ne reflétaient pas les fondamentaux économiques et donner un coup d'arrêt à la croissance vertigineuse et nuisible à l'environnement. Les adeptes de la décroissance fondée sur le développement durable et le refus de la surconsommation n'ont pas de quoi pavoiser car rien ne garantit que les choses vont changer irrémédiablement. Déjà la reprise des marchés boursiers à la faveur du sauvetage d'entreprises indique un certain retour à la normale qui n'est pas de bon augure pour l'avenir.

La crise de 2020 sauvera-t-elle le capitalisme encore une fois pour le rendre plus fort ? La réponse à cette question dépendra des politiques mises en oeuvre à court terme pour sortir de la crise (une urgence pour sauver les emplois) et de celles qui interviendront à moyen terme pour réorienter l'économie vers moins de productivisme, mais vers plus d'égalité, de partage et de sécurité économique.

Va-t-on enfin penser un modèle de développement alternatif pour pallier aux faiblesses structurelles telle que la dépendance stratégique au marché extérieur? Les premières démarches ne sont pas prometteuses à Maurice comme ailleurs.

Chez nous, l'Etat est venu au secours des entreprises sans rien demander en contrepartie (la sécurité d'emploi garantie, la prise de participation au capital d'entreprise ou le remboursement à terme de l'aide consentie). Les entreprises rentables qui déclaraient des dividendes ne méritaient pas d'aide mais l'ont eue quand même. Ailleurs, les grandes entreprises de production ou de distribution (Amazon, Walmart, Costco) ont déjà accéléré la robotisation des



Photo - image.cagle.com

opérations et le commerce en ligne pour se prémunir contre les effets devastateurs d'une épidémie.

Des milliers d'emploi sont menacés. Les sociétés informatiques ont introduit des applications de surveillance qui enregistrent les contacts humains des individus soumis au test de dépistage, ce qui est une invasion de la vie privée à l'avantage des Etats autoritaires soucieux de surveiller les suspects en tous genres. Les restrictions sur les libertés civiles en temps d'urgence ont donné le goût des dérives anti-démocratiques aux pouvoirs. Le capitalisme de surveillance est en vogue.

La mal gouvernance

Dans les entreprises d'Etat, la mal gouvernance continue de plus belle comme en témoignent la baisse de rentabilité effarante chez SBM (pour cause de créances douteuses de Rs 7,6 milliards en trois ans) et la chute d'Air Mauritius, dont les ailes sont plombées par des années de pertes successives.

Le secteur public avec son personnel pléthorique ne veut pas s'imposer la discipline financière nécessaire. Les syndicats tiennent à leurs acquis (augmentations salariales promises dans le rapport du PRB) alors que la donne a changé radicalement.

Les corporatismes étroits ont la vie dure dans le secteur public (pas de coupures significatives dans les dépenses au-delà d'une réduction générale de 10%) et le secteur privé (les entreprises rentables maintiennent les dividendes et les rachats d'actions).

La SBM s'est fardée d'un com-

munié élogieux sur ses "prouesses" mais ignore le fond du problème des dettes rayées. Le pays s'est vu placer sur la "liste des pays à haut risque" de l'Union européenne parce que son dispositif de lutte contre le blanchiment d'argent et le financement du terrorisme est jugé inadéquat. Au lieu de remédier aux carences, les autorités cherchent des faux-fuyants.

Du côté politique, l'Assemblée législative a repris ses travaux mais, contrairement aux espérances, la dernière session s'est terminée en eau de boudin avec l'expulsion d'un leader de parti comme si les habitudes étaient tenaces. Il n'y a pas eu de consultations véritables entre l'opposition et la majorité sur les mesures projetées dans le Covid Bill.

Alors l'espoir d'une rupture est-il compromis? Le directeur du journal *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Serge Halimi, résume le pessimisme ambiant dans l'édition d'avril 2020 comme suit :

"Une fois cette tragédie surmontée, tout recommencera-t-il comme avant ? Depuis trente ans, chaque crise a nourri l'espérance déraisonnable d'un retour à la raison, d'une prise de conscience, d'un coup d'arrêt. On a cru au confinement puis à l'inversion d'une dynamique sociopolitique dont chacun aurait enfin mesuré les impasses et les menaces. La débâcle boursière de 1987 allait contenir la flambée des privatisations; les crises financières de 1997 et de 2007-2008, faire tituber la mondialisation heureuse. Ce ne fut pas le cas."



Chetan Ramchurn

Just another show?

The spectacle since lockdown has been eerie. Next to genuine examples of solidarity and compassion, there have been some discomfiting scenes laying bare the pettiness of many. Nothing very surprising for it is in the zeitgeist, but it does resonate more profoundly in a time of crisis.

The lure of self promotion on the woes of others has been inoculated in our culture for years with some having made careers, including in the political field, out of sharing photos and videos of their purported magnanimity on a regular basis. This has been going on full throttle for the last 50 days. We know of these shticks designed to publicise those aching for some form of visibility but had hoped that these times would have kept such tricks away. This yearning for the limelight is also present among many with a history of disastrous decision making for our economy. This event should not breathe new life into the careers of former failures.

This crisis will leave in its wake an even more divided society. Houellebecq talks of the "obsolescence of human relations" in his latest article going as far as concluding that "it will be the same world, only slightly worse than before". What we are staring at is a world with interactions between one another becoming rarer and mistrust among each other rising.

“Greed had always been present in our various exchanges but new heights were reached post-lockdown. Masks so crucial in these strange terms were captured by those cruel market forces of demand and supply and became the hottest commodity around.

Not a single sphere of our lives is shielded from the very worse of capitalism. Not even basic necessities...”

Greed had always been present in our various exchanges but new heights were reached post-lockdown. Masks so crucial in these strange terms were captured by those cruel market forces of demand and supply and became the hottest commodity around. Not a single sphere of our lives is shielded from the very worse of capitalism. Not even basic necessities.

In such cases, you would expect the State to correct the market madness and position itself as the last protection for citizens. When they finally started acting, the harm had been done. Sci-fi writer Alain Damasio outlines how vacuous our lives have become : *«Sortir du consumérisme comme unique horizon du désir, retisser des liens humains, proches, plutôt que d'exacerber l'individualisme. Il y a tellement d'autres choses à faire!»*

Most opposition parties and figures had initially chosen to sing kumbaya with the government, keeping their criticisms to a bare minimum. This stance despite the clearly exaggerated preparedness of those in office whenever questioned in Parliament, despite the obvious dearth of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), despite the Minister of Tourism claiming that Mauritius could become a refuge destination, showed way too much clemency.

Still, the Government chose to enforce two lockdowns and these are decisions that go in the right direction. Solid planning would help protect us against a second wave. Mass testing along with closed borders for the foreseeable future would bolster our fight against the pandemic.

Often maligned by the mainstream media, public servants have been elevated to hero status overnight. May we hope that this is not forgotten all too easily afterwards for they were our first line of defence and many lives were saved because of them. Will this quell the demands of vociferous privatisation and TINA proponents? No. Political scientist Nicolas Matyjasik warns us against such temptations: *« Quand tout sera privé, nous serons privés de tout »*.

Leadership is about putting those with the right mettle in the right positions. Already saddled with Covid-19, we also witnessed the results of poorly calculated decisions and incompetence in State enterprises. No one owned up to the hefty mistakes. Who knows? Maybe in some months, those that have failed will be the ones posing as experts as is often the case in Mauritius.

How the power to delay death has allowed inequality to flourish

Coronavirus provides a chance to re-assess our values



Homeless in locked down London. - Photo Victoria Jones/PA Wire/PA

Two years ago my second child was born with a condition which meant he could not breathe unaided. I thought he was going to die. My perspective on the world changed in those early days of his life, as he used a breathing device and then a ventilator, and then received a tracheostomy at two weeks old.

Facing your own mortality, or that of someone close to you, is life changing. But recognising our mortal vulnerabilities is also a fundamentally important part of human nature.

Not facing up to them – until we are forced to by a crisis like coronavirus – is not good for society. Yet for many years in many Western societies there has been a collective reluctance to face our mortality and the reality of our fallible physiological condition.

Psychologists and sociologists have examined this sense of denial of death since the 1960s, a period without world wars or pandemics which has witnessed incredible advances in medical technology. Over that time, people have lived longer and longer lives.

The average age of death in the UK is now 79 for men and 83 for women. Those who die prematurely or before their parents are considered as out of sync with the natural order of things.

But now a global pandemic is happening. So what can we hope to learn from it?

As an academic who has worked on death and society for almost two decades, I barely know where to start. But I do feel that the pandemic provides us with a perfect opportunity to reassess how we value life, death and what happens in between – particularly with regard to social and economic equality.

A couple of weeks ago the BBC news presenter Emily Maitlis was widely praised for drawing attention to the deep societal inequalities that coronavirus has exposed. My favourite anti-hero Jonathan Pie also predicted how COVID-19 would lay bare the enormous economic inequalities inherent in the UK, where “the rich are protected and the poor and vulnerable aren’t”.

Controlling life and death has meant that the workplace – where we sell our labour – has changed radically in the past 60 years. Since the birth control revolution of the 1960s, millions of women have entered the labour market (while typically remaining responsible for the lion’s share of child rearing). And a gradual economic

shift towards a service economy and away from production and manufacturing has led to much less hazardous workplaces – and fewer work-related deaths – for most in the UK.

This means that the average person can now expect to spend 50 years of their life working. That’s five decades spent trying to generate sufficient income to cover living costs, and if possible, some savings for a retirement spanning another 20 or so years.

Older and wiser?

These changes to working lives, and the financial imperative to earn enough to live, have perpetuated economic inequalities. Those born into affluent families race up the occupational hierarchy and housing ladder compared to those born into poverty.

Highly educated and relatively wealthy people feel more equipped to self-advocate for their healthcare and can better afford high-quality, nutritious food. They inevitably live longer than their poorer counterparts, as during their working lives they live in larger accommodation with outside space, eat better, and have more stable and secure employment.

Medical and public health advancements have therefore contributed to the growth of the gap between the richest and the poorest in society. And coronavirus has shown in stark terms how, despite extraordinary measures to cover some people’s wages during lockdown, those at the bottom of society simply cannot afford to be unwell.

So in terms of what we can learn from COVID-19, as we reflect on the social and economic cost of this pandemic, we will need to assess how we view and accept our own mortality and that of others.

This requires a sensible debate about life expectancy and poverty. About whether we need, or want, to continue to constantly strive for longer and longer lives – and at what cost. The more people who live into their 90s and beyond, the greater the financial pressure on the workforce, and the more socio-economic inequality thrives.

Moments where we fully realise that we are not invincible, individually and collectively, are profound. As I did when my son was born, facing the very real possibility of death can forever alter how you see the world.

While delaying death can be regarded as a medical and public health success, and something of a modern luxury, it has allowed social and economic inequality to grow unfettered. Such inequity has to stop. Let this be a life-changing moment for all of us.

Kate Woodthorpe
University of Bath

How lockdown is being lifted across Europe

Across Europe, people are already seeing an easing of lockdown measures, as businesses reopen and children start going back to school. Here is how Europeans are emerging from life under lockdown.



A deserted beachfront in Nice under lockdown. Reuters

France: End to travel permits

France's strict lockdown was imposed on 17 March and residents were required to provide a travel permit justifying any trips outside. From 11 May, those restrictions

will be eased and after three weeks the situation will be reviewed.

- Residents will no longer have to provide **travel certificates**, and car journeys within a radius of up to 100km (62 miles) from home will be permitted. Longer trips will require a certificate and during the rush-hour in Paris you will still need your employer's authorisation or a compelling reason to travel
- France will be split in two, with four "**red zones**" including Paris keeping parks, gardens and schools for 11 to 18-year-olds shut
- **Schools for 11 to 15 year-olds** (*collèges*) in "green zones" open on 18 May. A limit of 15 pupils will be put on classrooms and masks will be compulsory for older children. Schools for 15 to 18-year-olds (*lycées*) are not opening before June
- **All shops** (bar Paris shopping centres) will be able to reopen; **leisure centres** and **cemeteries** can reopen but **bars** and **restaurants** will remain closed
- **Gatherings** of fewer than 10 people will also be permitted; **the elderly** and **vulnerable** will be allowed out but must use common sense
- **Lockdown bites poor** as France eases grip

Ireland: Five steps and small summer weddings

Ireland has had a stricter lockdown than the UK, with residents only allowed to exercise within 2km (1.2 miles) of their homes. But a **five-stage roadmap to re-open the country starts on 18 May**, with restrictions eased every three weeks.

- **Schools** will remain shut until September, while outdoor workers such as construction workers and gardeners will be allowed to resume activities from May 18
- **Creches and nurseries** will open for the children of essential workers from 29 June, and this will be extended to the children of other workers from 20 July. Childcare workers will be sent to the homes of 5,000 essential workers from 18 May
- **Social visits** will be permitted to other households from 8 June, and from 29 June, people will be allowed to travel within a 20km radius of their homes
- Weddings, baptisms and **small social gatherings** will be allowed from 20 July, but only for family and close friends
- **Shops** selling non-essential items can open from 8



Ireland is introducing a five-stage plan to re-open the country

June if the number of staff and customers remain small, and larger premises can open from 29 June

Italy: Funeral gatherings now permitted



A general view of an almost empty street, as the spread of the coronavirus disease continues, in Rome, Italy. (REUTERS/Remo Casilli)

Italy imposed a strict and lengthy lockdown, with a ban on walking or exercising more than 200m away from home. In early May, some restrictions were relaxed and

people are now able to travel for longer distances, as well as visit their relatives in small numbers. Visits to other regions of the country are still banned.

- **Bars and restaurants**, which can offer takeaway services, are expected to fully reopen for dine-in service from 1 June
- **Hairdressers and beauty salons** are due to reopen from 1 June
- More shops will reopen on 18 May along with **museums and libraries**
- Sports teams will also be able to hold **group training** from 18 May
- **Funerals** are now allowed with a maximum of 15 people attending, ideally outdoors
- **Schools** will not reopen until September
- The **Catholic Church** will be allowed to hold masses from 18 May

China reports first coronavirus case in Wuhan since April 3 among 14 new infections



China's National Health Commission reported 14 new confirmed coronavirus cases on May 9, the highest number since April 28, including the first for more than a month in the city of Wuhan where the outbreak was first detected late last year.

While China had officially designated all areas of the country as low-risk last Thursday, the new cases according to data published on Sunday represent a jump from the single case reported for the day before. The number was lifted by a cluster of 11 in Shulan city in northeastern Jilin province, reports Reuters.

Jilin officials on Sunday raised the Shulan city risk level to high from medium, having hoisted it to medium the day before after one woman tested positive on May 7. The 11 new cases made public on Sunday are members of her family or people who came into contact with her or family members.

The new Wuhan case, the first reported in the epicentre of China's outbreak since April 3, was previously asymptomatic, according to the health commission.

Aside from the Shulan cluster and the Wuhan case, the remaining two new confirmed cases were imported infections. It also said newly discovered asymptomatic cases were at 20, the highest since May 1 and up from 15 a day earlier.

No new deaths were reported, it said.

The total number of confirmed coronavirus cases in mainland China reached 82,901 as of May 9, while the total death toll from the virus stood at 4,633, according to the commission.

Russia: Not ready to lift lockdown

Unlike other European countries, Russia's outbreak is yet to peak and at least 10,000 new infections were reported daily last week. There will be no end to the lockdown just yet.

- President Vladimir Putin has left it to local governors to decide on the best policy
- Moscow, as the worst-hit city, has imposed the most stringent set of restrictions which will continue until at least 31 May
- From 12 May it will be compulsory to wear gloves and masks in shops and on public transport in Moscow
- Only food shops and pharmacies are open. Moscow mayor Sergey Sobyanin says it is too early to open non-essential shops and shopping centres
- Schools are shut and many people are working from home. There is currently no plan in place as to how to re-open them. Travel within Moscow and also between cities is discouraged. Many cities have police cordons and only those with residential registration are allowed in.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah

Interview: Rama Sithanen

“We Should Throw Away Some Taboos

and consider some unconventional financing methods which other countries have embraced”

If there seems to be broad consensus that we might be in for the long haul given that the Covid-19 pandemic has led to 'an economic crisis which is itself morphing into a financial crisis, a foreign exchange shortage and may be a social crisis with rising unemployment and poverty', and recovery likely to be a long journey depending on the form it takes -- a normal U-, a flatter U- and a L-shaped, but certainly not be a V-shaped recovery --, there is going to be agitated debate in the days to come not only on burden sharing, but also on who does the financing of the recovery and the source of that money. Rama Sithanen states in today's interview that 'we should throw away some taboos and consider some unconventional financing methods which other countries have embraced'...

Read on:



Mauritius Times: How bad do you think post-Covid is going to be for the country, in particular for public finances, the workers and business?

Rama Sithanen: It will be extremely bad for all three. Fiscal revenue has already shrunk considerably as receipts from VAT, corporate and personal tax, excise duties and other streams such as passengers fees will fall drastically while expenditure will rise as a result of untargeted assistance to around 425,000 employees and self-employed. Government revenue could decline by around 25% for this financial year. It would be worse in 2020/21. Expenditure could rise by at least 3% of GDP if we account for some savings from recurrent budget and the deferment and cancellation of some capital projects. The budget deficit would be much more than 10% this year especially as the denominator which is GDP will also fall significantly from the Rs 500 billion of last year.

The Minister of Finance has spoken of 100,000 people becoming unemployed. Added to the existing 40,000 jobless people this would represent an unemployment rate of about 24% on a labour force of 585,000 persons. Many firms, especially those in very affected areas such as travel, tourism and related activities, EPZ, SMEs and micro-entreprises and construction will face huge financial and cash flow difficulties and many could close down.

Government faces a daunting choice between a rock and a hard place. If it insists on firms keeping their employees when revenues are down, it will have to pay their salaries, which is clearly unsustainable over the months. And if it relaxes the labour law as demanded by the private sector, tens of thou-

“Government must also consider the option of cash for land for those who have huge immovable assets. This land will be indispensable for food security in four to five clusters. Left on its own, this land will be used mainly for unproductive real estate development that does not contribute much to the real economy. However Government must use the acquired land strategically for food security...”

sands of our compatriots will be either laid off or furloughed. Those who remain will have to share jobs, and have cuts in their salaries and fringe benefits.

*** Researchers in the UK argue that ‘major pandemics in Europe, from the Black Death in 1347 to the 1918 flu, have a long-lasting and severe effect on the economy’, with interest rates – and therefore investment – remaining depressed for between 30 and 50 years following an outbreak. ...a “V-shaped” recovery – where economic growth returns to its previous level by the autumn – is highly unlikely.’ This clearly suggests that Mauritius, which is highly dependent on external trade and export markets, is also in for the long haul unless an effective vaccine is developed, isn’t it?**

Absolutely. Unless we find a safe and effective therapy and/or a vaccine, life will be very different post-Covid. The behaviour and expectations of consumers, producers and investors will change. We already have many crises folded into the public health emergency. It is similar to the great depression of the 1930s. The pandemic has led to an economic crisis which is itself morphing into a financial crisis, a foreign exchange shortage and may be a social crisis with rising unemployment and poverty. It will certainly not be a V-shaped recovery, which is an immediate

bounceback after a sharp and deep economic downturn. I think it will be a combination of a normal U-, a flatter U- and a L-shaped recovery.

It will vary from industry to industry. Tourism, travel and hospitality will take years to recover to pre-Covid level. IATA and British Airways speak of 5 years before being back to where we were in December 2019. It will thus be L-shaped. All our export-driven sectors from textiles, clothing, seafood, sugar, jewellery and medical devices will be

“The Finance minister should defer some expenditures and reprioritise others, reallocate the outstanding amount of Rs 11 b from the Special Reserves of the BOM to finance the deficit... I have doubts if he can dispose of assets in this context to generate some additional revenues. He should not sell crown jewels at a fire sale price...”

affected by both a fall in demand and lower prices resulting from fierce competition to gain market share in a depressed environment. They could follow a flat U-shaped recovery. Or a W if there is a resurgence of the pandemic.

Other sectors such as the domestic-oriented industry and construction could have a normal U-shaped recovery. We are very dependent on what happens in our

major trade, tourism and investment markets. While tourism and EPZ account directly for around 22% of GDP, when we add their indirect, induced and catalytic effects, this figure rises to about 44% of GDP. If we include the export of services such as global business, it goes above 50% of GDP. This external dependence is considerable.

We are definitely in this for the long haul and we better get prepared for it.

*** The current Minister of Finance stated, some 40 days into confinement, that the cost to the economy would be around 10% loss of GDP. There is also the cost to the government of preventing a deep depression, which probably will far exceed the current spending on the Wage Assistance Scheme. Where will that kind of money come from?**

The economic, social and financial impact of the pandemic is a moving and dynamic figure as we continue to grapple and update its direct, indirect and supply chain effects in our economy. The IMF is always behind the curve and will continue to downgrade its economic outlook as the year unfolds. It will also depend on the pace of the easing of the lockdown and the reaction of households, investors and firms.

Even if we open our borders, it does not mean that tourists will flock back immediately. The Schengen airspace will be closed to non EU countries for some time and surveys show that Europeans would hesitate to travel long haul in the initial period. FDI, portfolio and private equity investment will also be adversely affected. The more so now with the country on the black list of the EU for identified strategic deficiencies in its money laundering effectiveness framework.

The loss to the economy will certainly be more than 10% of GDP. I have worked on three scenarios. A baseline which is around 15% of GDP, an optimistic one of 12% and a pessimistic one of above 20% of GDP if the recovery is slow.

The Government has four conventional fiscal tools to finance deficits.

First, it can raise existing taxes or broaden their scope. Or introduce new ones. This would be counterproductive in the current recession. Many countries are lowering taxes to stimulate activities while some are deferring the payment of taxes to ease the cash flow of firms.

☞ Cont. on page 8

'We simply cannot use public funds to bail out very rich enterprises without insisting on strict conditions and burden sharing'

• Cont. from page 7

Second, it can lower expenditure. To have a material effect, it should be a massive decrease in spendings. Can Government rise to this challenge from a political economy standpoint? It is not a freezing of vacancies, a 10% decrease in MPs' salaries and a postponement of international conferences that will do this job. We have an inferno, and using the garden hose to douse the horrendous flames will not take us far.

Third, it can borrow internationally from the IMF, World Bank, African Development Bank and other development financial institutions. It can also have recourse to sovereign debt by tapping the international capital market.

And, lastly, it can borrow domestically. However these conventional measures will be inadequate to fund such a massive deficit. We need innovative and creative measures even if they are unconventional.

*** The Minister of Finance has also stated that public expenditure will be cut by 17%. Can he do that to contain the budget deficit if he can't raise taxes?**

The simple answer is a big no. He may be well intentioned but he is very new and without experience in preparing and presenting a budget. It will be his first one. I wish him well under these testing circumstances.

I have presented 10 budgets including two during the financial crisis of 2008 and I have a little bit of experience. Unless he reverses some of the fundamental policies of the Prime Minister, questions the foundation of our Welfare State, reviews the rights of employees in the public sector, and disregards the legal obligations of Government. Otherwise he simply cannot slash expenditure by 17%. This represents Rs 24 b of cuts for a total expenditure of Rs 139 m in 2019/20, a whopping 5% of GDP. Simply impossible.

Will the PM allow him to do so? Let me explain in very simple terms.

In the 2020/21 indicative budget, there are seven items that account for 82% of the total expenditure of Government. Out of a total projected expenditure of Rs 152 b adjusted from Rs 143 b for the higher pensions as from Dec 2019, these seven items add up to a total spending of Rs 125 b.

Social protection, which includes adjusted old-aged pension, is at Rs 49 b, Education at Rs 19 b, Health at Rs 15 b, Public debt servicing at Rs 14 b, public service pensions at Rs 10 b, Police at Rs 10 b and transfers to local authorities and Rodrigues at Rs 8 b.

Pensions for retired civil servants and other public officers and debt servicing are State obligations. Education and health are the two pillars of our Welfare System. It would be very difficult to deprive local authorities and Rodrigues of transfers without affecting the quality of services to citizens unless there is a massive rise in municipal rates or other levies to raise revenue. Police is tricky for security reasons.



“State support must be targeted, timely, temporary and proportionate. A differentiated approach according to how deeply and widely sectors have been affected. Air Mauritius, tourism and travel will need one set of policies while the EPZ, construction and SMEs require a different approach. We should also adopt a specific strategy for food security in four to five key clusters...”

“The Minister of Finance simply has no choice than to depend on the two reserves of the Central Bank and on its electronic money transfer machine to save the country from both an economic and a social crisis. All countries are doing it. But they call it differently. The smell of the rose does not change simply because you describe it as a different flower! Or to split hairs on the elusive difference between a whore and a call girl...”

Will the PM allow his Minister of Finance to review the social protection policies that won him the elections in 2014 and 2019? We shall see when the Minister of Finance presents his budget.

To crown it all, the 82% does not include the salaries and related benefits of the other 20 or so ministries. Nor the capital expenditures that would be difficult to curtail as the projects are ongoing and spread over many budgets, such as the two road/bridge infrastructure works at Phoenix and the M1/A1 link.

*** If you were Finance minister in these uncertain times, what would you have done differently from what the current government is doing in order to speed up post-Covid economic recovery?**

I was Minister of Finance during the financial crisis of 2008. It was tough even if this

one is more challenging.

We carried out reforms in 2007 and this helped us to build resilience. Economic growth was 5.9% in 2007 and 5.5% in 2008. We had fiscal space resulting from the reforms and public debt was not high. With the Stimulus Package, we prevented a recession. In fact growth was positive at 3.1% in 2009 and 4.2% in 2010. Employment rose in 2008, 2009 and 2010 while the unemployment rate declined. Investment and FDI did not fall.

I exercised prudence in managing the fiscal and financial affairs of the country. I acted quickly and in a targeted and proportionate manner. We weathered the storm well and Mauritius successfully avoided a recession. We have been commended for the management of the 2008 crisis. Today is a different context. The economy was in decline well before the pandemic. We had growth of only 3% in 2019 while the fiscal deficit is high and debt very high.

I would have focussed on seven areas:

1. We have no choice than to allow the fiscal deficit and public debt to rise. The question is by how much? So as not to unduly penalise our children and grandchildren who will have to pay more taxes to finance these exorbitant debts. We will have to resort to lending from institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, AfDB, etc., to fund the rising fiscal deficit. And also do some domestic borrowings;
2. It is clear that conventional monetary and fiscal policies will not be enough to fight this severe economic depression. We should throw away some taboos and consider some unconventional financing methods which other countries have embraced. I have proposed a once-in-a-lifetime use of a money-financed fiscal deficit by the Central Bank as opposed to the traditional debt-financed fiscal deficit;
3. I have also proposed the setting up of a massive reconstruction fund with seed capital from Government, BOM, commercial banks and the corporate sector. And an international development finance institution (DFI) partner/s which will bring its brand to the Fund. Each will contribute US\$ 50 m making a total of US\$ 250 m. This can be leveraged by four times to reach US\$ 1.25 b. A recovery fund of Rs 50 b to support the economic revival;
4. I have suggested the creation of 5 funds to support the economic recovery. Horses for courses. One for tourism, travel and Air Mauritius as they are the most affected sectors. A second one for the export sector such

as textiles and clothing, seafood, jewellery, medical devices, etc. A third for construction and domestic-oriented industries. A fourth fund for SMEs and micro entrepreneurs. And a fifth one for food security;

5. I do not think it is right to give a 100% wage subsidy indiscriminately. Money is very scarce and should be managed very prudently and wisely. The support should be targeted and proportionate. It must be fair to taxpayers. Many companies that have not been adversely affected are drawing the 100% subsidy. Also, we do not make the difference between a company that has been impacted 20%, 40%, 60% and 80% like it is done in Australia and New Zealand.

Group companies should be treated differently as the holding has cash reserves built from extraction of surpluses from subsidiary firms. And companies that have paid 80% or more of profit as dividends until recently cannot be treated as others who have been prudent. We cannot reward the grasshoppers and penalise the ants of our country;

6. There must be a fair and equitable burden sharing of the costs of adjustments. In terms of conditions imposed for access to funds, contribution from beneficiary firms and financial quid pro quos;

7. We should lay the foundation for the architecture of the future economy. Some sunset firms will disappear, some will have to be completely restructured to survive post Covid, while new ones should be nurtured to capture the emerging opportunities. Invest in quality infrastructure, in sharpening our skills and human capital, in science and technology, in innovation and creativity, in strong and independent institutions. In new clusters that are both sustainable and inclusive. From the green economy to a circular economy and a responsible blue economy, from capturing the opportunities of the digital economy and the fourth industrial revolution to Mauritius as an effective platform for Africa in many areas.

*** You have also spoken of the monetisation of fiscal deficit which some people call 'helicopter money'. Can you explain exactly what you mean?**

I start with a simple observation. The traditional fiscal measures will not be enough to fight this economic war. Bows and arrows will not take us very far.

It would be difficult to raise taxes. It is impossible for the Minister of Finance to slash expenditures by 17%. Of course he has no choice than to raise the fiscal deficit and public debt as the amount needed is staggering. He can borrow both domestically and externally with the IMF, World Bank, AfDB.

But a country cannot continuously borrow its way out of unsustainable debt. Public debt is already close to 75% if all debts are properly accounted for. It will increase by June 2020. Do we want to become Greece or Lebanon?

☞ Cont. on page 9

'It would be sheer blackmail if some were to brandish massive layoff of workers as a negotiating argument to bring an inexperienced Finance minister to panic...'



• Cont. from page 8

While we have no choice than to increase the level of debt, we must also utilise some unconventional non-debt measures. We need the nuclear options.

*** What do you mean by nuclear options and the economic taboos you referred to earlier?**

I am a pure product of conventional fiscal and monetary economics having studied them at both undergraduate and post graduate at the LSE in the 70s. For sure, I do not agree with unconventional measures in normal times. But these are exceptional times and they call for exceptional measures. I see no other way than to complement conventional debt-financed fiscal deficit with some monetisation of the fiscal deficit and a more active role by the Central Bank in the fiscal policy domain.

“I do not think it is right to give a 100% wage subsidy indiscriminately. The support should be targeted and proportionate. It must be fair to taxpayers. And companies that have paid 80% or more of profit as dividends until recently cannot be treated as others who have been prudent. We cannot reward the grasshoppers and penalise the ants of our country...”

I have said it in interviews and press articles. No institution has the foreign exchange and special reserves and more importantly the unique power to create money to give to Government and to invest in our economy now other than the Central Bank. But these must be exceptional and resorted to once in a generation. The BOM has to monetise some of the fiscal deficit and invest to revive a moribund economy and prevent an economic and social crisis.

We all know how this is done in other countries. Call it conventional quantitative easing, people's quantitative easing, an unlimited line of credit to Government, a per-

petual bond, a grant, a donation, drone or helicopter money, the printing press or whatever politically correct terms, it boils down to the same thing. The BOM has to open its reserves and its electronic money transfer machine to the Government to finance the huge deficit and to invest directly.

Some people believe Mumbai and Bombay are two different cities in India. Similar to Pekin and Beijing. People are making an unnecessary fuss about a name.

*** How would the Bank of Mauritius do that?**

I have already suggested two to three ways of going about it.

First, the Bank of Mauritius could buy directly Government papers and then deal with it on its balance sheet as former US Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke or Adair Turner (former chairman of the Financial Services Authority, UK) has suggested. A perpetual bond which basically means no refund or just have an annotation on the balance sheet and again no reimbursement. Some call it a grant or a donation.

Second, I have proposed the setting up of a large recovery fund with the BOM as one of the five providers of capital. I have recommended US\$ 50 m by each participant. Put simply, the Bank of Mauritius will draw from its foreign exchange reserves to make such investment.

Third, Government will continue to draw from the Special Reserves of the BOM as it has done with a first tranche of Rs 18b to prepay its debt. Except it will not be used to repay debt, but to finance the massive budget deficit.

Let me be very clear both as a former Minister of Finance for 10 years and a professional economist with 41 years of practical, pragmatic and solution-driven hands on experience. The Minister of Finance simply has no choice than to depend on the two reserves of the Central Bank and on its electronic money transfer machine to save the country from both an economic and a social crisis. All countries are doing it - from the US and the UK to the EU and Japan. But they call it differently. The smell of the rose does not change simply because you describe it as a different flower! Or to split hairs on the elusive difference between a whore and a call girl.

However he must be responsible and these must be included in a standalone and robust Act of Parliament with key safeguards, oversight, supervision and control. It should be done only ONCE. Otherwise it will lead to a loss of confidence and trust in our money and economy. We should avoid the moral hazard where irresponsible governments will use this to finance any economic largesse.

A Special Economic and Finance Committee of the National Assembly with the Minister of Finance as Chairperson and experienced MPs such as Paul Berenger

“Education and health are the two pillars of our Welfare System. It would be very difficult to deprive local authorities and Rodrigues of transfers without affecting the quality of services to citizens. Police is tricky for security reasons. Will the PM allow his Minister of Finance to review the social protection policies that won him the elections in 2014 and 2019?”

and Xavier Luc Duval (both former Ministers of Finance) and the leader of the Opposition as key members of that Committee during the next four years to oversee the use of these funds, its supervision and monitoring.

*** This is quite unconventional and never heard of in Mauritius...**

Just like we have never heard of the pandemic and its economic viruses before...

What I have suggested above is for the medium- and long-term. The Government immediately needs funds to meet the large decline in revenues and the significant rise in expenditures. The Finance minister should defer some expenditures and reprioritise others, reallocate the outstanding amount of Rs 11 b from the Special Reserves of the BOM to finance the deficit instead of prepaying the external debt and mop up the huge windfall gains from both the CEB and the STC due to the collapse in the prices of petroleum products.

I have doubts if he can dispose of assets in this context to generate some additional revenues. He should not sell crown jewels at a fire sale price. He cannot also shoot all his ammunitions now as we are in this crisis for a long time.

*** Who should foot the bill for stimulus packages? Is there any reason why taxpayers (present and future) should bail out rich enterprises?**

The country desperately needs money for three purposes.

First, for survival during the lockdown. This is the wage subsidy and the support to informal workers and entrepreneurs.

Second, for induced coma to ensure that companies do not go bankrupt and their productive capacity destroyed. Access to credit and liquidity are key to avoid closures and massive layoff. There is need for credit guarantees and special line of credit so that com-

mercial banks can assist firms that are in difficulties.

Third, is the massive stimulus package required once we ease the lockdown restrictions. This will last for two to three years.

The support must be targeted, timely, temporary and proportionate. A differentiated approach according to how deeply and widely sectors have been affected. Air Mauritius, tourism and travel will need one set of policies while the EPZ, construction and SMEs require a different approach. We should also adopt a specific strategy for food security in four to five key clusters.

There must be burden sharing and conditions attached. We simply cannot use public funds made up principally of indirect taxes to bail out very rich enterprises without insisting on strict conditions and burden sharing. Enterprises must present a robust turnaround strategy with burden sharing proposals.

The US has introduced conditions like no

dividend payment until loans are paid back, no shares buyback and a significant reduction of executive pay and benefits. There could be equity, quasi equity and redeemable bonds in exchange for public money. Companies that have declared 80% or more of profit as dividends should make an equity infusion.

Group companies should first seek assistance from their ultimate owners who sit on reserves. Some of these companies are owned by the richest people of the land with considerable fortune. It is not fair for the middle income and the poor that pay indirect taxes to bail them out unconditionally. They should make some contribution. Similar to what Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the UK, has told Richard Branson. He should contribute as he is very rich and has many assets including a private island in the Caribbean.

It would be sheer blackmail if some were to brandish massive layoff of workers as a negotiating argument to bring an inexperienced Minister of Finance to panic and force him to accept anything to save jobs! There must be solidarity and proportionate sacrifice.

A combination of loans, equity or quasi equity could be used in some cases.

Government must also consider the option of cash for land for those who have huge immovable assets. This land will be indispensable for food security in four to five clusters. Left on its own, this land will be used mainly for unproductive real estate development that does not contribute much to the real economy. However Government must use the acquired land strategically for food security.

We could bring from overseas very robust companies with expertise in food security and agribusiness in addition to the good work of the likes of Medine locally in that space.

How to help with school at home: don't talk like a teacher

One-to-one talk is a great tool for learning



Teachers ask questions to gauge the understanding of the whole class. weedezn/Shutterstock

In many countries schools remain closed and the dinner table now serves as the school desk. This crisis has given us all new respect for the work that teachers do, but it has also given us an extraordinary moment to break the strictures of classroom learning.

While there's been much interest in digital tools and resources to help parents support learning, we shouldn't overlook the most flexible and practical precision tool we have at our disposal - talk.

In the classroom, talk is typically used by teachers to marshal a diverse group of students through a sequence of activities in an allotted time. Some students may struggle to keep up with the pace of teaching, while others may find it grindingly slow.

But now we find ourselves in a unique moment. One-to-one conversations can unfold at a pace that reflects your child's needs and interests. This is the magic formula that private tutoring bottles and sells for a hefty price.

Talk the talk

Here are some tips on how to help your child learn through talk.

Take your time: There is now no urgency to meet an arbitrary deadline or timetable. Teachers are often having to hurry students up and shift them on to the next scheduled activity. While we adults often complain that children have limited concentration spans, in fact it's often us who get restless and want to move on to the next thing. Let your child stay on task till they are finished.

Ask questions: Teachers often ask "pseudo" questions they already know the answer to as a way to check student understanding and attention. Once the teacher achieves the desired answer, the whole class can move on with the assumption that everyone else is on the same page. Again, teachers have had to develop this to manage the student-teacher ratio.

But at home these questions can be used to check and explore the understanding of the individual child. Even better, prompts such as "tell me about..." and "think out loud" can invite longer, more thoughtful responses.

Allow them time to think: In class, time pressures can rob students of time to think over their answers. At home, we can give thinking the time it needs. It's very tempting as a restless adult to interrupt thinking time with new more complex versions of the same question, but try to resist this urge. If you need to ask again, don't change the question, just repeat it - then let the thinking happen.

Discuss together: In the pressure of the classroom, students rarely ask questions about curriculum content. You can turn this pattern on its head. If the school materials suggest a topic, then start with a shared discussion about the questions you'd both like to answer about that topic. Make a note of these questions, and then talk about how you might tackle each question.

Do some speculative thinking together - hypothesise or make some guesses together that you can later test. Stop and explore their understanding and application of ideas. Ask genuine questions that you don't know the answer to, and share the process of wondering and enquiring. Diversions and detours are all part of the fun in exploring ideas.

Keep children involved

Read out loud: We tend to associate school reading with students reading texts out loud. Instead, use this lockdown to read out loud to your child. Take on a book that is a bit beyond their capacity, and stop after each chapter to reflect on what's happened - and what might happen next.

Maybe alternate reading paragraphs out loud to each other, mimicking character voices for fun. Sneak in an occasional non-sensical error to check your co-reader is

following closely. When big sister, brother or another carer come in, ask your co-reader to update them on the story while you get a cup of tea. You can support them with "and what about when...?"

Use your own language: Teachers tend to speak the official language of instruction, but this may be your child's second language, or a dialect that is not used at home. Bilingualism is a valuable asset, not an impediment. This moment is a great opportunity for you and your child to use your shared home language to explore and enrich their school learning.

Encourage children to speak up: Some of us were educated in times when children were expected to be seen and not heard. Nowadays interactive talk is understood to be an indicator of active learning and an important part of building knowledge. Talk is an extraordinary tool for making meaning and building relationships.

Enriched talk doesn't cost anything, and



Ask genuine questions and learn together. fizkes/Shutterstock

you can start immediately. If schools resume under socially distanced arrangements we can expect that talk in classrooms will become more constrained. Our differently textured interactions at home can continue to provide a contrast to teachers' talk.

Catherine Doherty

Professor of Pedagogy and Social Justice,
University of Glasgow

Food for Thought

Ils meurent.

La meilleure des générations est en train de mourir.

Celle et ceux qui sans études, ont éduqué leurs enfants.

Celle et ceux qui sans ressources les ont aidés pendant la crise financière.

Ils sont en train de mourir.

Celles et ceux qui ont le plus souffert.

Celles et ceux qui ont travaillé comme des bêtes.

Celles et ceux qui sont les plus vulnérables que quiconque.

Celles et ceux qui ont traversé tant de difficultés meurent.

Celles et ceux qui ont soulevé le pays.

Celles et ceux qui souhaitent main-

tenant seulement profitez de leurs petits-enfants.

Ils meurent seuls et effrayés.

Ils s'en vont sans déranger, celles et ceux qui dérangent le moins, ils partent sans adieu.

Alors pour celles et ceux qui se plaignent tout le temps d'être confiné(e)s à la maison, parce que leurs salons de coiffure, d'ongleries ou bien même leurs salles de sports restent fermées... par RESPECT à cette génération, tais-toi et fait ce que les autorités préconisent... reste à la maison et si tu sors, c'est simplement pour aller faire tes courses aux supermarchés ou à la pharmacie..





Krishan Deeljore

8 ingredients for success when working remotely



Working independently, managing time efficiently, and staying focused on tasks are critical skills to remain productive in a remote work environment.
Photo - cached.imagescaler.hbpl.co.uk

As much as it hurts to say and hear it, we have to admit it: "Work has invaded our homes". Over the past few weeks, people have just been adjusting to working remotely. Albeit without much training and with limited resources. We have called it the 'biggest social experiment of the century'. According to recent surveys, up to 74% of businesses expect most of their employees to continue to work from home after the Covid-19 pandemic subsides. Not as a business continuity plan, but as 'the new normal'.

If you are an employer, you would have realized that your people work differently when they work remotely. This means that the support you need to provide to them is different, too. Most of us have realized that remote work success is not a given and

the effort to be put in cannot be underestimated. It is one thing to work from home as a convenience or a forced alternative, but doing it for extended periods and being consistently successful at it is a totally different ball game.

With the increasing financial pressure, employers will be aiming and expecting to reach equivalent if not higher productivity levels through remote working as quickly as possible. As an employee, how do you ensure you are ready to excel at it?

“Most of us have realized that remote work success is not a given and the effort to be put in cannot be underestimated. It is one thing to work from home as a convenience or a forced alternative, but doing it for extended periods and being consistently successful at it is a totally different ball game...”

Behavioural research by leading firm SHL? shows that for successful performance in a remote work environment, these **three** factors are essential and equally important:

● **Work relationships:** A sense of isolation is common for remote workers, which can reduce work motivation. Establishing social connections, maintaining open communication, and building strong cooperative working relationships can overcome feelings of social isolation in a remote work environment to enable high performance.

● **Work habits:** Many remote workers are more productive than those working in offices. Working independently, managing time efficiently, and staying focused on tasks are critical skills to remain productive in a remote work environment.

● **Self-development & well-being:** Engagement is increased when workers have opportunities to learn new skills and use those skills to meet challenging goals. Being flexible, willing to take initiatives, and looking for opportunities to improve performance are important capabilities to thrive in a remote work environment.

In other words, your readiness to perform productively while working remotely and to be successful at it can be broken down into these eight behaviours:

1. Do you put effort into developing and maintaining good relationships with

- others at work?
2. Are you willing to share information and offer help and guidance to others?
3. Are you confident and effective when working in an autonomous way, i.e. without direct supervision or help from others?
4. Do you manage your own time effectively and deliver work on schedule?
5. Can you stay focused on tasks over a long period of time without getting distracted?
6. Can you easily accept and adapt to changes in your work environment?
7. Do you actively and readily look for development opportunities in order to improve your own performance?
8. Do you seek additional work and enjoy taking on new responsibilities?

Hopefully, each one of those questions will resonate with you and make you become aware of what is required in terms of behavioural shift. The next step will be to identify your strengths and start working on your areas of improvement.

As an employer, it becomes paramount to identify your organization's strengths as well as potential areas for training and support in this new world of work. This will enable you to plan, prepare and develop your workforce for remote work success.

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Krishan Deeljore is the Founder and Managing Director of BI Instruments Ltd, a boutique consulting and advisory firm providing bespoke services to Clients in the Indian Ocean and East Africa region. BI Instruments Ltd aspires to be a catalyst for innovation by helping businesses discover new ways to increase their productivity and agility especially in the current climate.

Work Smarter

Leave work at the door — even if you can't leave the house

When you're working from home, it can be really hard to transition from work mode to personal mode, but it's more important than ever to keep the distinction clear. Here's how to make the switch. First, establish a routine that eases you into work mode. Maybe it's putting your dishes in the dishwasher, getting a cup of coffee, and then sitting down at your computer. Or maybe it's doing a quick workout, showering, and then turning to your phone to check email.

Do these activities in the same way each day to build the habit. Then, make a plan for your day, blocking out time on your calendar for meetings, answering emails, or focusing on special projects. Finally, set a wrap-up routine to end your workday. This could include doing a final scan to make sure you've responded to all critical emails, looking over your task list to decide what you will tackle tomorrow, and

maybe even saying out loud to yourself, "The workday is done, I'm signing off."

This tip is adapted from "How to Transition Between Work Time and Personal Time," by Elizabeth Grace Saunders

Conduct layoffs with compassion

Layoffs during the pandemic are different; due to social distancing, they can't happen in person. If you must oversee layoffs remotely, take extra care to break the news with compassion. Your aim is to treat people with dignity, fairness, and respect. Offer a short explanation about the economic conditions that led to the decision. Stress that the dismissal is not the employee's fault, but a result of an unprecedented global crisis. Provide information on how your employee can apply for government benefits. Offer to serve as a reference for future applications, and share leads about any opportunities that you're aware of. Even if you're experiencing guilt and sadness,



The way employers layoff their workers during a crisis is a tell-tale sign of how they treat the ... Photo - GETTY

don't make the conversation about you. Resist the temptation to say, "This is hard for me." Instead, find a peer or mentor to help you talk through your feelings at another time. As a manager, it's your responsibility to be fully there for your people, especially when you're conveying devastating news.

This tip is adapted from "How to Manage Coronavirus Layoffs with Compassion," by Rebecca Knight.

Harvard Business Review's Management Tip

In A Light Vein

Economics is not that difficult if we have the right examples...

Interviewer: What is recession?

Candidate: When "Wine & Women" get replaced by "Water & Wife", that critical phase of life is called Recession!

Accountancy fact: What is the difference between Liability & Asset?

A drunk friend is a liability. But a drunk girlfriend is an asset.

An economist beautifully explained two reasons for having two wives.

A - Monopoly should be broken.

B - Competition improves the quality of service.

If you have 1 wife, she fights with you!

If you have 2 wives, they will fight for you!

When you are in love, wonders happen.

But once you get married, you wonder what happened.

Philosophy of marriage: At the beginning, every wife treats her husband as GOD. Later, somehow, don't know why... alphabets get reversed!

Secret formula for married couples...

"Love one another"

And if it doesn't work, bring the last word in the middle!

* * *

Priority

It's the FA Cup Final at Wembley stadium and a young guy is very disappointed when he finds his seat is at the very rear of the stand, with a poor view of the pitch. A few minutes after the game started, he notices that there is an empty seat near the front, so he wanders up and casually sits down. After some time he asks the old man sitting next to him: "What kind of an idiot would book seats and not bother to turn up?"

"Actually, the seat is mine, I had reserved it for my wife, but she passed away, we've been coming to the Cup finals ever since we were married," the old guy replied.

"Oh, my god, I'm really very sorry, but tell me isn't anyone else you could have given the seat -- a relative perhaps?"

"Oh, I couldn't do that, they are all at the funeral," he replied.

* * *

A man is sitting on his sofa watching a late movie when there is a knock at the door. The guy angrily opens the door to find a five-foot beetle standing in front of him. After he asks the beetle what the hell he thinks he is playing at calling at such late hour, the creature falls on him with a series

of vicious kicks and punches. It then walks away, while the man crawls back in his house and calls an ambulance.

At the hospital the man is reluctant to tell the doctor how he had his injuries, but eventually relates the incredible tale of the huge beetle, expecting to be laughed at.

He is really surprised to find the doctor sympathetic, explaining the guy that there is a nasty bug roaming about.

* * *

Je ne bois jamais à outrance,
je ne sais même pas où c'est.

L'ouverture d'esprit n'est pas une
fracture du crâne.

Je n'ai jamais abusé de l'alcool,
il a toujours été consentant.

Si vous parlez à Dieu, vous êtes
croyant...
S'il vous répond, vous êtes schizo-
phrène.

5 fruits et légumes par jour, ils me font
marrer...
Moi, à la troisième pastèque, je cale.

L'alcool tue, mais combien sont nés
grâce à lui ?

Un jour j'irai vivre en Théorie,
Car en Théorie tout se passe bien.

La médecine du travail est la preuve
que le travail est bien une maladie !

Le lundi, je suis comme Robinson
Crusoé,
J'attends Vendredi.

IKEA est le meilleur prénom pour une
femme :
Suédoise, bon marché, à emmener
aussitôt chez soi et facile à monter.

Dieu a donné un cerveau et un sexe à
l'homme
mais pas assez de sang pour irriguer les
deux à la fois.

La lampe torche.
Le PQ aussi.

La pression, il vaut mieux la boire que la
subir.

Jésus changeait l'eau en vin...
et tu t'étonnes que 12 mecs le suivaient
partout !

Si la violence ne résout pas ton
problème,
c'est que tu ne frappes pas assez fort.

Travailler n'a jamais tué personne mais
pourquoi prendre le risque ?

Food for Thought

Misery or bliss?

Actor Rishi Kapoor was joking and laughing with care takers till he breathed his last.

A mystic too had remained happy his whole life - no one had ever seen him unhappy. He was always laughing, his whole being was a perfume of celebration... even on his death bed he was enjoying and laughing hilariously.

Puzzled, his disciples asked, "You are dying but still laughing? What is so funny? We are feeling so sad about the oncoming tragedy. Confronting death at least, one should be sad and sober and here you are behaving crazy, still laughing - how are you managing it?"

The mystic said, "It is simple. Long time back I had gone to my Master as a young man; I was only seventeen and very miserable and my Master was old - over seventy. He was sitting under a tree, laughing for no reason at all. There was nobody else there, nothing had happened, nobody had cracked a joke or anything, and he was simply laughing, holding his belly.

I asked him, 'What is the matter with you? Are you mad or something?'

"He said, 'One day I was also as sad as you are. I prayed to God for guidance. My inner consciousness echoed within and sounded, it is your choice, it is your life.'

When an emotionally taxing relationship is terminated - is it misery or bliss?

When you migrate from sleep to awakening state - is it misery or bliss?

When you decide that the investment is beyond redemption - is it misery or bliss?

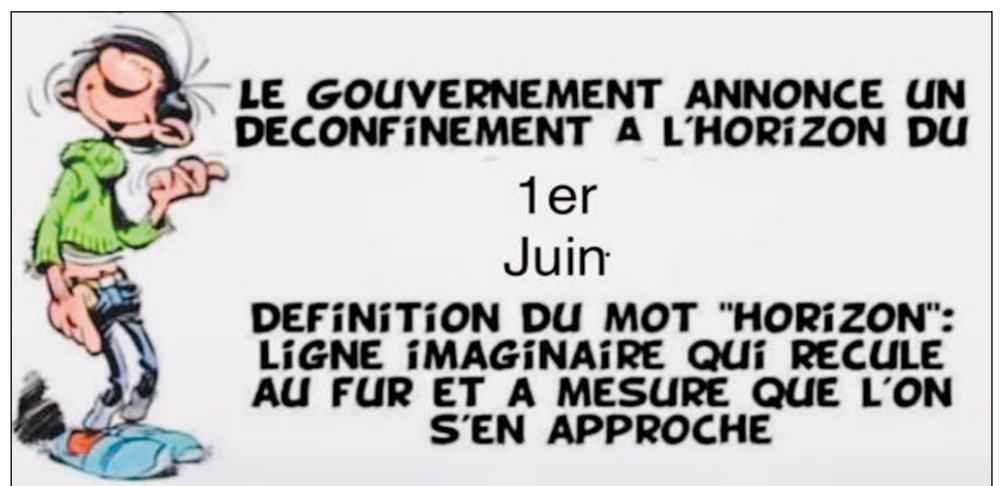
When you realize that desire is beyond what you deserve - is it misery or bliss?

When God invites you to join him - is it misery or bliss?

"Since that day, every morning before I open my eyes, the first thing that I ask myself is, 'Mr ABC - being a non-entity - as I am nameless, what do you want? Misery? Blissfulness? What you are going to choose today?' And it happens that I always choose bliss."

It is a choice. Try it. When you become aware the first moment in the morning that sleep has left, ask yourself, 'Another day! What is your idea? Do you choose misery or blissfulness?' And who would choose misery? And why? It is so unnatural - unless one feels blissful in misery, but then too you are choosing bliss, not misery.

The disciples also started laughing and the music of laughter became immortal part of ambience.



Tom Cruise joins hands with Elon Musk; could become the first actor to shoot a movie in space

Tom Cruise has joined hands with reputed space researcher and explorer and the chief engineer/designer/founder of Space X, Elon Musk, and word is that the two are discussing plans with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to shoot the superstar's next film aboard an actual Space X vessel stationed beyond Earth's stratosphere



He has scaled skyscrapers, jumped off buildings, dangled from helicopters, crawled over bullet trains and pulled off some of the most adrenaline-pumping, jaw-dropping stunt imaginable on camera. But now, Tom Cruise may just be "boldly going where no actor has gone before (pun intended). As per latest reports, one of the biggest moviestars of all time, may be venturing into space to shoot his next action-adventure movie, and while

several movies, TV shows and web series have been based beyond the realms of our planet, especially in Hollywood, never has an actually filmed a project in space.

According to *Deadline*, Tom Cruise has joined hands with reputed space researcher and explorer and the chief engineer/designer/founder of *Space X*, *Elon Musk*, and word is that the two are discussing plans with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to shoot the superstar's next film aboard an actual *Space X* vessel stationed beyond Earth's stratosphere. The project is being touted as an action-adventure film. However, no Hollywood studio has yet come on board to back it.

Cruise has an unparalleled reputation off pulling off one daredevil stunt after another for his, particularly for his *Mission Impossible* movie. In *MI 4: Ghost Protocol*, the actor scaled the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, in *MI 5: Rogue Nation*, he had hung off the side of a military airplane mid-flight, while in *MI 6: Fallout*, he had injured his ankle while jumping off one rooftop to another, not to mention the indelible scene where he had hung off a helicopter, again mid-flight. While there are others who prefer doing their own stunts, no actor other than Jackie Chan has amassed a reputation for putting his body on the line more than Cruise has in the name of entertainment.

This is what Vidya Balan has to say about not featuring with A-list superstars in her movies

Vidya Balan is one actress in Bollywood who has never failed to impress her audience with her bold choices of films and acting prowess. Overcoming all criticism pertaining to her dressing sense and acting, she is today one of the most bankable actresses we have in the industry. In a recent interview, she reportedly said that she felt she was being sidelined when it came to starring in films with the male superstars. She revealed that there was a time when she was not even being considered for the mainstream A-lister superstar films.

Elaborating more, she added that she was not bothered by all that though as she was enjoying the content and being the whole and soul of the films. Pointing at her last release, *'Mission Mangal'*, she added that she did not play a romantic lead but a prominent role in the film and that is how she likes it.

Earlier, Vidya has done films with lead actors like, Amitabh Bachchan, Salman Khan, Shahid Kapoor. However, of late she has been part of films that are low budget but rich in content and role.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Vidya will next

be seen in the biopic of mathematician *Shakuntala Devi*. The movie also features Sanya Malhotra, Jisshu Sengupta and others. The film is being directed by Anu Menon and is one of the most awaited films of the year.

Apart from this, she also has Amit Masurkar's *'Sherni'* in her kitty.



How Priyanka Chopra is staying creative (and grateful) under lockdown (As told to Keaton Bell of Vogue)

I got early information (about COVID-19) at the World Economic Forum in January. I attended with Global Citizen, and as the outbreak began in China, I remember there was a conversation about it. I work with the World Health Organization a lot and I'm the daughter of a physician, so I spoke to my mom and understood the severity of what it was-and what it could be if it wasn't handled soon. Now, I think people have begun to realize that the coronavirus affects every single one of us-it makes no differentiations-and the world has to come together to beat it.

Nick and I made quick decisions about the most responsible things to do, and made sure our family was taken care of-we checked in on people, and explained what the coronavirus was. We were supposed to be in India for Holi, but we cut our trip short and came back to America because we were worried about borders being locked down. Nick is a Type 1 diabetic, so we felt it was important to go into quarantine almost immediately.

I'm so grateful we're together at this time, and that we weren't stuck in different parts of the world because we both travel so much. And I feel incredibly blessed to be dealing with boredom, and not a lack of food or water, or the loss of a loved one. I've been coping by making donations to where people need help, and using my platform to



promote the people who are actually on the ground, doing the work. The one thing keeping me calm is constantly reminding myself how lucky we are.

Nick and I have used the quarantine not only to spend time with each other, but also to sharpen our creative skills and to write and develop projects we want to produce. We find a movie or a filmmaker we want to watch every night just for inspiration: we've watched *Seven Psychopaths*, we watched *Sing Street*, and I've been watching *Little Fires Everywhere*, which is amazing. I've also started the piano-I make my husband teach me. I've never played, but I've always wanted to learn an instrument, so I make him give me a half-hour or 45-minute lesson every day. He's an in-house piano teacher, an in-house physical trainer, and an in-house writing partner-it's good. I've taken a hip-hop dance class too, because I miss dancing! But I've also been working on my book a lot, and this time is going to help me finish it. This time is, fortunately and unfortunately, given me time to think about finishing that book.

Being in this quarantine has made me realize that some of the stresses we put on ourselves in our normal lives may or may not be important. It's good to take a breather, take stock of your life, and tell your loved ones you love them.

Sameer Arora ran away from home at 17 for acting

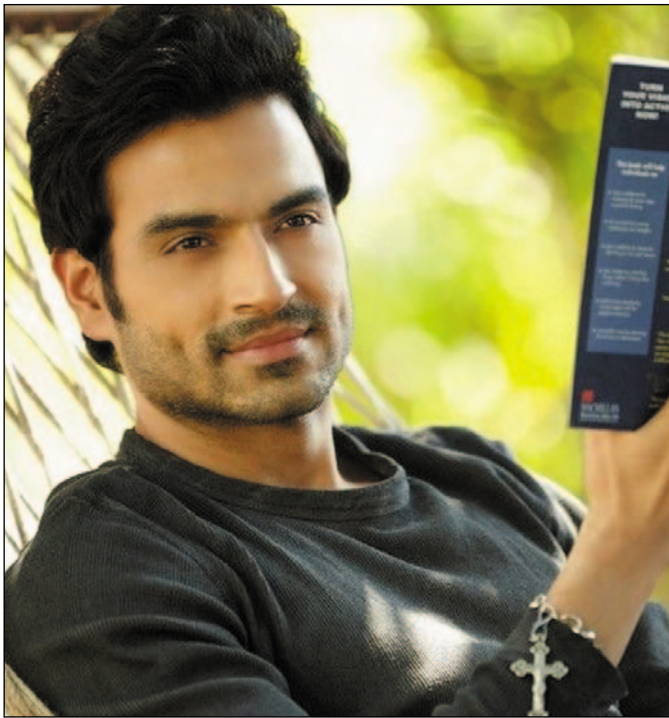
Sameer Arora, who is currently seen as Kabir Miranda in TV show *Bin Kuch Kahe*, says he left his home in Nainital at the age of 17 as he wanted to become an actor, but his parents were against the profession.

"I thought about acting when I was 10 or 12 years old. One day my teacher asked me to take part in a school play and essay the role of a king. Initially, I declined that opportunity and later she made me do it. After that play, I thought of being an actor," Sameer told IANS.

"I used to tell my parents while watching TV shows and films that I want to be an actor. But my parents were against this profession. So I ran away from my home at 17 and lived in Delhi and worked there for three years. Then I shifted to Mumbai and while tackling financial crisis I gave acting auditions," he added.

Sameer shared that at first he lied about his work to his parents, but they later got to know about it and accepted him as an actor.

"At first, I didn't tell my parents why I am going to Mumbai from Delhi. I said that my company is giving me an internal transfer for three months. Then those three months became six months and my parents asked me when I will come back," Sameer said.



"But then my dad saw my first print ad. He is a clothes merchant. I did my photoshoot for Siyaram's. When my father saw my photo on the brand's product, he said, 'Okay, do it. One day when you will face reality then you will come back home'. But I never thought of moving back. Later they accepted me happily," he added.

Sameer, who made his debut with *Bin Kuch Kahe*, earlier worked as an assistant director to filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali in the 2013 film *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela*.

"I have acted in a few ads and short films earlier. Then I decided to assist a director and approached Sanjay sir for a year. He then took me as his assistant director in *Ram-Leela*.

"He liked my work and kept me and said he liked my face. For Ranveer Singh's rehearsals, I used to stand in front of the camera when the lighting works was being done. Somewhere he liked my face and advised me to be an actor," Sameer said.

Talking about his character in *Bin Kuch Kahe*, Sameer said: "It's a challenging character for me as he is half Brazilian and half Indian. He is a journalist so, I had to do a lot of research for this character."

Bhairavi Raichura is missing acting especially after watching re-runs of *Balika Vadhu* and *Hum Paanch*



Bhairavi Raichura is glad that two of her shows - *Hum Paanch* and *Balika Vadhu* - are back on the small screen and she gets extremely nostalgic talking about those.

In the 1990s, she was loved as the tomboyish Kajal bhai of *Hum Paanch*, and cut to 2008, Bhairavi Raichura made her mark in her role as a doting mother Bhagwati in *Balika Vadhu*. In a career dotted by several television shows, these were two distinctly different, but iconic roles that the actor got to play - something she says she's eternally grateful for.

And now that amid the lockdown spurred by the Covid-19 pandemic, both these shows have made a comeback on TV, it has sparked a desire in Raichura to be back to face the cameras herself again.

"I've not been acting for six to seven years now," says the actor, who launched her own production house a few years ago. "Now, I'm actually missing acting, especially after watching both the shows. I was like 'Oh no, I am missing acting'. *Aisa hota hai na... So let's see.*"

She'd love to act in a web show. "These days, the web has come in a huge way in our country, and it's so nice that limited series are happening. There are great roles coming in for all age groups, so yes, it's a great time for actors and even writers... Let's see, you never know (when I act). As of now, I haven't said yes or even thought of acting, but you never know," the actor teases.

For now, she's gladly sinking into nostalgia watching her shows, especially *Hum Paanch*, which she took up as a teenager. Now when she looks back at it, it seems to her as if "it's from another lifetime".

Asked about the funkiest thing about the role, she says, "It was the role itself! There was no role like that in Indian cinema or television back then. So I feel extremely privileged, thankful and humbled that I got to play it. I was very raw and new, I didn't know much about the craft of acting then, and neither was there any reference for the character... But everyone on the sets helped me a lot... It was like a workshop for me."



Kulfi Kumar Bajewala fame Myra Singh to make a comeback with *Yehh Jadu Hai Jinn Ka*

Yehh Jadu Hai Jinn Ka the supernatural fantasy show will now see the entry of Kulfi Kumar Bajewala fame child artist Myra Singh, reports iwmbuzz.com.

She will play a fairy in the show and will have an interesting character. As per a reliable source, "She will play the role of Lily fairy." When contacted, Myra's mother confirmed the news.

Recently, *Yehh Jadu Hai Jinn Ka* was in the headlines for the entry of Surbhi Jyoti as the red moon princess. And now Myra's entry will only bring further joy for the loyal fans of the show.

Arjun Bijlani is back on television with 'Naagin 1' and 'Dance Deewane 1'

The shoots may have come to a halt, but as they say, the show must go on. So, in a bid to rake in the ratings and keep the audience entertained during the nationwide lockdown, broadcasters have been airing reruns of their popular shows. After '*Ramayan*', '*Shaktiman*' and '*Mahabharat*' among several others, the latest ones to be re-telecast are the first seasons of the fantasy thriller, '*Naagin*', and the reality show, '*Dance Deewane*'. Interestingly, there's a common factor binding the two shows - actor Arjun Bijlani. While he played the male lead, Ritik, in '*Naagin*', he hosted '*Dance Deewane*'.

Talking about the double bonanza, Arjun shares, "I am reliving my memories with these two shows. '*Naagin 1*' will always be close to my heart. Many people might have missed watching it earlier, so I hope that they can watch it now. This show and its inaugural season were extremely popular and that is why the broadcaster has brought it back. The same is with '*Dance Deewane*'; it's entertaining and engaging. The lockdown has been extended and now, people have even more reasons to watch these shows. I hope that they are thoroughly entertained."

That's for his fans, but what about him? How does he

plan to spend the lockdown period till May 3? Arjun replies, "I will spend it exactly the way I have been spending the last few weeks - being with my family. I am also doing my bit as a responsible citizen and artiste by motivating people through social media."

He adds, "I am meditating a lot, as I want to emerge from this, mentally stronger. Corona is an invisible enemy, and if we run out of positivity, we will be defeated. We have to stay positive and determined. So what if the lockdown has been extended? It's only for our safety. I hope this gets over soon."

CINE 12

Mardi 12 mai - 21.15

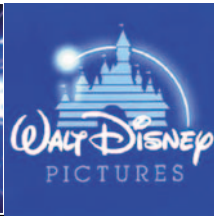
Bad Boys II

Avec: Smith, Martin Lawrence,
Gabrielle UnionMardi 12 mai -
15.06Stars: Hrithik Roshan,
Ameesha Patel

CINE 12

Mercredi 13 mai - 21.15

Total Recall

Avec: Colin Farrell, Bokeem
Woodbine, Bryan Cranston

MBC 1

06.30 Local: Encounter
07.00 Dessin Anime
10.26 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
12.35 Doc: Comme Un Poisson...
13.30 Local: Close Up
14.00 Local: Palette
14.30 D. Anime: Raju The Rickshaw
14.44 D. Anime: Astrology
15.04 D. Anime: Kuu Kuu Harajuku
16.28 D. Anime: Polly Pocket
17.00 Live: Live Press Conference
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Jamai Raja
18.55 Local: Yaadein
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
20.30 Local: Ayurveda & Yoga Awareness

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 Journal 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@Africa
06.44 Mag: World Stories
07.00 Mag: Voa Connect
07.29 Doc: A Question Of Science
07.32 Mag: In Good Shape
08.41 World Stamps
09.00 Live Educational Program...
17.00 Mag: Global 3000
17.21 Aloha-The Spirit Of Hawai
17.34 Mag: In Good Shape
18.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto
18.30 Mag: Urban Gardens
18.35 Talk On Ramadan 2020
19.00 Mag: Check In
19.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
19.32 Mag: Made In Germany
20.00 Local: Tamil Programme
20.32 Film: Kadaikutti Singham
22.52 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto
23.22 Doc: Builders Of The Future
23.47 Mag: Check In

Cine 12

01.33 Tele: Esmeraldas
02.57 Serial: NCIS
03.14 Serial: Sherlock
05.09 Tele: Amanda
06.47 Film: The Pirate
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight
09.47 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.11 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.35 Serial: NCIS
11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.00 Serial: Sherlock
13.30 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: The Pirate
16.40 Serial: Scorpion
17.20 Serial: Dynasty
18.07 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.31 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.10 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 Serial: Dynasty
21.15 Film: Bad Boys II

Bollywood TV

09.30 Film: Gunehgaar
11.55 / 19.54 - Ek Deewana Tha
12.24 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.33 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
12.55 / 21.04 Bin Kuch Kahe
13.17 / 21.09 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.39 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.57 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.18 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
14.50 Film: Kaho Naa... Pyar Hai
Stars: Hrithik Roshan,
Ameesha Patel
17.36 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.36 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

mardi 12 mai

mercredi 13 mai

jeudi 14 mai

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.24 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.15 Local: Itinerer Moris
11.30 Local: Nu Lakwizin
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
13.35 Local: Rodrig Prog
14.30 D. Anime: Raju The Rickshaw
14.44 D. Anime: Astrology
15.31 D. Anime: Petit Creux
15.55 D. Anime: Johnny Test
17.00 Live Press Conference
17.35 Local: Kahani Patharon Ki
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
20.35 Local: Lamizik Vinn Kot Ou...
21.35 Serial: The Enemy Within
22.20 Serial: Chicago Police Department

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 Journal 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 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto
07.00 Mag: Check In
07.29 Mag: Made In Germany
07.57 Doc: Horizon S
08.45 Doc: World Stamps
09.01 Live Educational Program...
17.00 Mag: Close Up
17.26 Doc: The Truth About Lying
18.04 Mag: Motorweek
18.35 Local: Talk On Ramadan
19.00 Doc: Arts.21
19.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
19.30 Doc: Garden Party
20.25 Film: Gopya - Marathi Film
22.24 Doc: Ghana - Business On...
23.07 Mag: Motorweek
23.33 Mag: Urban Gardens
23.37 Doc: Olivia's Garden
00.03 Mag: Arts.21
00.29 Doc: A Question Of Science
00.36 Doc: Garden Party

01.06 Tele: Peau Sauvage
01.51 Film: Bad Boys II
04.12 Serial: NCIS
06.13 Tele: Amanda
06.55 Film: The Musketeer
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight
09.48 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.12 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.40 Serial: 12 Monkeys
12.05 Film: Hailey Dean Mysteries
13.30 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: The Musketeer
16.40 Serial: Mission: Impossible
17.23 Serial: Dynasty
18.07 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.31 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 When Calls The Heart
21.15 Film: Total Recall
Stars: Colin Farrell, Bokeem
Woodbine, Bryan Cranston
23.19 Tele: Amanda

09.30 Film: Milan
12.05 / 19.54 - Ek Deewana Tha
12.22 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.43 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.05 / 21.04 Bin Kuch Kahe
13.27 / 21.09 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.39 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.09 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.29 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
14.50 Film: Ankhe
Stars: Govinda, Chunky
Pandey
17.36 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.36 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

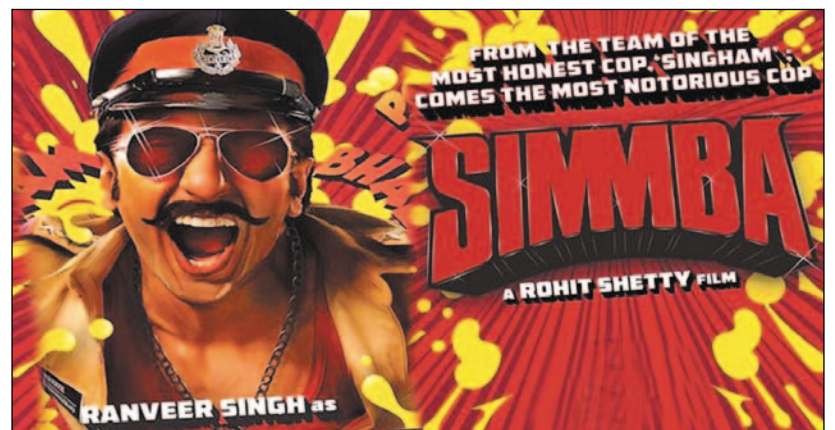
07.00 Dessin Anime
10.24 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.30 Local: Mangeons Veg
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
13.30 Local: Lamizik Vinn Kot Ou...
14.30 D. Anime: Raju The Rickshaw
14.43 D. Anime: Astrology
14.55 La Famille Blaireau-Renard
15.31 D. Anime: Petit Creux
15.32 D. Anime: La Famille Passiflore
16.30 D. Anime: Polly Pocket
17.30 Local: Prakriti Ki God Mein
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Le Journal
20.05 Local: Press Conference
20.35 Film: Simmba
23.00 Le Journal
23.45 Serial: Chicago Police Depar

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 Journal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Serial: Maharakshak
20.42 Serial: Naagin
21.28 Serial: CID
22.15 Serial: Piya Rangrezz

06.00 Mag: Motorweek
06.30 Doc: Olivia's Garden
07.25 Doc: A Question Of Science
07.29 Doc: Garden Party
07.57 Doc: Mega Yachts
08.39 Doc: World Stamps
08.45 Mag: Healthy Living
09.00 Live Educational Program...
16.35 Doc: Visite Guidee
17.14 Mag: Business Africa
17.43 Mag: Healthy Living
18.00 Mag: Eco India
18.27 Mag: Urban Gardens
18.35 Talk On Ramadan 2020
19.00 Mag: Border Crossing
19.30 Doc: A Question Of Science
19.37 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.00 Film: Thank You Jiga
22.00 Mag: Strictly Street
22.25 Doc: Lead In The Blood
23.07 Mag: Eco India

04.22 Film: The 5th Wave
06.10 Tele: Amanda
06.52 Film: When Calls The Heart
07.34 Film: La Parole Est Au Colt
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight
09.48 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.12 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.37 Serial: 12 Monkeys
11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.04 Film: The 5th Wave
13.39 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Chevauchee Avec Le Diable
16.45 Serial: Scorpion
17.25 Serial: When Calls The Heart
18.12 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.31 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.06 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.31 Serial: When Calls The Heart
21.15 Film: About Alex
22.49 Tele: Amanda

09.10 Film: Amar Akhbar
Anthony
11.55 / 19.54 - Ek Deewana Tha
12.24 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.33 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
12.55 / 21.04 Bin Kuch Kahe
13.17 / 21.09 -
Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.50 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.12 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.33 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
14.50 Film: Welcome Back
Stars: Anil Kapoor, Nana
Patekar, Dimple Kapadia,
John Abraham
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.36 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

Jeudi 7 mai - Stars: Anil Kapoor, Nana
Patekar, Dimple
Kapadia, John AbrahamJeudi 7 mai -
20.35Stars: Ranveer Singh, Sonu
Sood, Sara Ali Khan



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

Les yeux sont rivés sur les décisions que prendront les autorités pour sauver les meubles en cette période de banqueroute qui guette de nombreux pays. Ici, c'est celle de la compagnie de l'aviation, perçue comme un véritable patrimoine national, qui mobilise particulièrement l'attention de tous ceux qui s'inquiètent de son avenir.

De nombreuses voix s'élèvent pour proposer des solutions afin de maintenir Air Mauritius dans le giron de l'économie locale. L'autonomisation de la compagnie est possible, selon l'ancien ministre des Finances, Rama Sithanen. Il est envisageable de remettre la compagnie à flot en la rendant plus indépendante tant au niveau des investissements répondant à ses besoins qu'au niveau d'une gestion professionnelle et efficace.

Quelques voies sont proposées pour permettre à la compagnie d'assumer un plus grand rôle dans les diverses filières qui, au final, la rendrait moins vulnérable auprès de ses créanciers. C'est un vaste chantier qui requiert de l'ambition, du courage et surtout des compétences comme la gestion de son propre service informatique, entre autres.

Quand on pense aux petits détails qui coûtent cher, celui du choix de l'uniforme confié aux étrangers en pensant que tout ce qui vient d'ailleurs est forcément mieux. Résultat : une couleur sable qui sied davantage à la peau claire qu'à un teint basané local. Ici, les stylistes locaux auraient proposé mieux. Le petit kit offert à chaque voyageur sur le long courrier : chaussettes, masque, brosse à dent, dentifrice, etc., est importé de Thaïlande. Ce n'est quand même pas de la haute technologie !

La poudre utilisée dans la fabrication des jus de fruits à Plaine Lauzan et servis à bord vient également de Thaïlande. Ce sont des milliers de kits, de jus de fruits et bien d'autres produits par jour.

Tout remettre à plat et tout refaire avec du sérieux, c'est le cri de tous ceux qui ont à cœur l'avenir de la compagnie nationale. Le leader du Reform Party et ancien ministre de la Bonne gouvernance Rosh Bhadain propose de suspendre la construction de la ligne Rose-Hill-Curepipe du tramway et d'investir les 10 milliards dans Air Mauritius. Et il en faudrait encore... dans

Le Destin du Pays

Dans un contexte de pandémie où le pays fait face à de nombreux défis, l'heure n'est plus à un orgueil mal placé, à l'ego et au calcul électoral. Dividendes faramineux de SBM Holdings, et maintenant, une 'administration volontaire' à Air Mauritius qui va jouer la prolongation à coups des millions sur la tête des contribuables, c'est effarant !



Quant au bruit qui circule sur une mise en tutelle par Ethiopian Airlines, présentée comme super efficace, on se permet de se poser quelques questions, notamment sur la sécurité si jamais la logique des profits à tout prix prime..."

les 7 milliards, d'où viendront-ils ?

L'ancien ministre des Finances a quelques sources de financement à suggérer, manifestement. De par son expérience, il aurait certainement des pistes de sauvetage à conseiller à l'actuel responsable du portefeuille national.

Quant au bruit qui circule sur une mise en tutelle par Ethiopian Airlines, présentée comme super efficace, on se permet de se poser quelques questions, notamment sur la sécurité si jamais la logique des profits à tout prix prime. Cette compagnie a continué à opérer les Boeings 737 dont les pièces fabriquées dans divers pays et leur assemblage ont été jugées défectueuses et dangereuses.

Le 29 octobre 2018, un 737 de Lion Air, compagnie indonésienne, décolle de Jakarta avec 189 passagers à bord, et dans les airs, pique et repique du nez pendant treize minutes avant de s'écraser dans la mer de Java. Problèmes de moteurs placés différemment ... et de défaillance anti décrochage. Ce qui n'a pas empêché un 737 d'Ethiopian Airlines de décoller avec 157 passagers le 10 mars 2019 d'Addis-Abeba et de s'écraser six minutes plus tard à la vitesse vertigineuse de 925 kms heure. On se dit que la première qualité d'une compagnie aérienne, c'est de s'assurer de la sécurité de ses appareils avant toute autre considération.

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'administration volontaire' à Air Mauritius qui va jouer la prolongation à coups des millions sur la tête des contribuables, c'est effarant !

La pandémie pousse à une remise en question de tout par rapport aux questions qui concernent les choix des pays. Tout le monde est au pied du mur. Ce n'est plus le moment de s'esquiver et de miser sur un retour à la normale parce que plus rien ne sera comme avant. Un malheur n'arrivant jamais seul, c'est la loi des séries qui s'abat sur le pays ces jours-ci, et qui révèle au grand jour les failles d'un système dont les uns et les autres se sont accommodés pendant des décennies.

C'est de la pure folie de produire moins de 30% de nos besoins et d'importer tout le reste ! Le pays a vécu au-dessus de ses moyens, la classe dirigeante politique s'octroie des sommes mirobolantes comparées à d'autres pays, et les gros bonnets du privé se partagent des dividendes mirobolants non-imposables et des parachutes en or en décalage complet avec la réalité économique du pays.

Il y a une prise de conscience générale de tous les enjeux et défis. Les décisions prises aujourd'hui détermineront la direction à suivre à l'avenir pour les futures générations. Tout cela requiert une synergie des meilleures compétences à mettre à la disposition du pays. S'obstiner à faire cavalier seul risque d'entraîner le pays sur une voie cahotante. On s'attend à des mesures efficaces et concrètes suite à cette prise de conscience bénéfique car c'est le destin du pays qui est en jeu.



Tree of Knowledge

Madisyn Taylor



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Strangers in Our Sanctuary

Having strangers in our homes can be difficult, but we can choose to treat their energy as an exchange of gifts as well as an exercise in acceptance.

When we have created a sanctuary in our home, it can be jarring to have the outside world come in. It is easy to share our space with those we know well, but often strangers are asked in as household help, contractors, or technicians that help us make our homes more comfortable. Acquaintances of our spouses or children also bring something new and different into our space. If we resist their presence, treating it as an intrusion, we restrict the free flow of energy and may miss the gift they bring. Instead, we can choose to treat their energy as an exchange of gifts as well as an exercise in acceptance.

Before their arrival, we can prepare by envisioning light surrounding our bodies and radiating outward from the core of our homes. We may want to create a calm and welcoming environment by playing meditation music or lighting incense. We can remove tension for all involved by putting away our valuables. Then when they arrive, we claim our boundaries by guiding them through their visit--asking them to remove their shoes, offering coasters or a place to set down tool boxes, and indicating by example to speak softly or not use harsh language. If something still causes stress, we can remember that what begins as an irritation to an oyster becomes a pearl. After they depart, we can burn sage and clear our space if we like but not without first finding the pearl.

Finally, remember that we learn about life by relating with others. People may have been sent to our homes because we ignored some of the universe's messengers outside. Our homes need not be a way to keep people out but can be the place where we are ourselves while accepting and allowing other's choices. When we share the joy of our homes, we radiate our light rather than hide it behind closed doors. The more we do this, the more the outside world can become like the sanctuary we've created inside.