

# MAURITIUS TIMES

Advice is like snow - the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into the mind. -- Samuel Taylor Coleridge



## Food Security and Universal Basic Income: Priorities of the Moment?

“Over so many decades we have been able to maintain a Welfare State against all odds; we can go further and implement Universal Basic Income before we lose the battle due to unemployment. It is for economists and the experts to provide the country with a blueprint and to tell us whether the simple idea of Universal Basic Income is practical and implementable in our context”

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# Mauritius: On the blacklist

**W**e were given advance notice, courtesy Reuters in a dispatch dated May 05, of the European Union's imminent decision to include Mauritius and ten other countries to its list of states that pose a "financial risk to the bloc because of anti-money laundering and terrorism financing shortfall". The axe has fallen, and in a press release made public yesterday, the EU has added The Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Cambodia, Ghana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe, considered as "high-risk third countries with strategic deficiencies in their regime regarding anti-money laundering and countering terrorist financing" to its money-laundering blacklist.

The EU's amended list will now be submitted to the European Parliament and Council for approval within one month (with a possible one-month extension). Given the Coronavirus crisis, the date of application of today's Regulation listing third countries – and therefore applying new protective measures – only applies as of 1 October 2020. This is to ensure that all stakeholders have time to prepare appropriately, states the press release. In any case this couldn't have come at a worse time, what with the many economic challenges that the country will have to face in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The bill for saving our economy and for allowing it to get back on its feet in the months ahead will run into billions, and the signal that the EU's decision conveys to potential global investors and foreign bankers that might decide to keep away from Mauritius to avoid the risk of being at odds with the EU comes as a massive blow to the country.

We do not know at the time of writing what type of action will be contemplated in this matter by our policy makers, but there is no doubt that Mauritius will have to show, as it has done several times in the past that it is continuing to operate by the highest standards of international good governance. Strengthening of the rules or the adoption of new rules – without destroying the sector -- to amply prove to the countries and organisations feeling aggrieved due to the operation of offshore operators that we are having clean hands

will carry conviction. This will not be difficult to do provided we are sufficiently proactive to make it extremely unrewarding for operators to indulge in loose behaviour in defiance of codes of market conduct that comply with globally accepted norms.

Singapore, for instance, has decided to penalize its financial operators who help citizens of other countries in tax evasion as if they have indulged in a money laundering offence. Actions like this carry conviction that the jurisdiction "means business". For us to be able to maintain pace like this, our authorities need to be always alert as to where exactly the shoe is pinching at the level of international susceptibilities. That should necessarily be followed up by taking timely pre-emptive action.

In the same line of thought, without any doubt the EU must also be concerned about the soundness of the country's governance and the management of our public finances and economy. Can we honestly say that this is done with rigour and the national interest taking priority over all other, narrower or unethical considerations? If doubts are raised about election results and are followed with court cases, with allegations of rigging or bribing on a massive scale, what kind of signal does this send to international bodies such as the EU on which we depend for assistance? Besides, what about the chronic and repetitive, recurrent wastages that the country's Audit Report exposes every year and that are never addressed, and other excessive expenditures (due to for example cost overruns on big projects), which all add further to budgetary deficits and contribute to piling up the country's debt which is now nearing almost 70% of GDP?

If we want to gain international credibility, besides the responses that must be provided to address the specific issues raised by the EU, we could begin by putting our house in order to show our seriousness and commitment to straightening our financial situation. This will not be sufficient, but at least it will send a right signal. The forthcoming budget exercise gives an opportunity to do that.

## Economic recovery will come with high levels of unemployment:

### How should governments respond?

**T**wo key factors distinguish the economic consequences of coronavirus from those of previous crises. One is the catastrophic decline in employment in such a short space of time. The other is the incredibly swift digital transformation which has changed the way society works and consumes.

In this new digital landscape, as well as a widespread shift to home working, the resurgence of e-commerce and even the remote provision of healthcare have become facts of everyday life. In effect, the credit for the rapid digitising of most companies does not belong with business leaders – but to the arrival of Covid-19.

Any exit from the current lockdown is likely to reverse some of this digital transformation, but not all of it. And the unprecedented scale of what has happened will have a significant impact on employment levels for a long time – even as economies rebuild.

Indeed, weak employment growth has been a key feature of previous economic recoveries – a phenomenon economists call "jobless recovery". In the US, following the global financial crisis of 2008, it took over six years for employment to get back to its pre-recession peak. The recessions of 1991 (after the Gulf War) and 2001 (the dot-com bubble crash), also saw long-lasting high levels of unemployment, with immense economic and social consequences.

In Europe, the effect on employment after 2008 was even more dramatic. It took the EU 11 years to return to its pre-crisis unemployment rate of 6.7%.

### Recovery without jobs

Put simply, these jobless recoveries were caused by a mixture of globalisation and digitisation. Essentially, manufacturing jobs end up moving from advanced economies to destinations offering cheap labour, while advances in technology replace labour.

The vast scale of the digital transformation caused by coronavirus is likely to make any recovery even more jobless than in the past.

This leaves politicians with the difficult task of formulating policies that will counteract these unfavourable effects. They will need to come up with a plan that reverses the contraction in economic activity, reduces income inequality (or at least doesn't worsen it) and minimises impact on government debt.

On that final point, it is worth mentioning that in the UK, national debt as a percentage of income is forecast to edge towards 100% – although some believe it be even higher. This figure was 75% in 2010 – and widely seen as unsustainable.

Our recent research has shown that there are trade-offs among these three objectives. For example, policies which stimulate the economy and reduce government



Photo - Bryan R Smith/Reuters

debt often benefit business owners at the (relative) expense of workers. But policies which help the poorer in society have less of an impact on government debt as these households contribute less tax.

We also found that higher spending and lower taxes are particularly effective in economic downturns. This is because households tend to spend any additional earnings, helping the economy to bounce back faster.

Also, when interest rates are at record low levels, there is a potential for what we call "fiscal free lunches". That is, tax cuts could raise income to such an extent that the additional tax revenue generated more than pays for any initial rise in government expenditure.

So policy looking to minimise the potential for a jobless recovery should look to increase production in the economy and increase the marginal returns from hiring labour. For example, cuts to corporate tax rates can help by improving business profits, although cuts to employers' national insurance contributions would be a more effective approach to directly addressing employment levels.

Also, while corporate tax cuts might end up increasing income inequality (by increasing dividends for shareholders) reducing national insurance contributions would increase demand for labour, raising both employment and wages. The government could also look to accelerate infrastructure spending, improving the productive capacity of the economy and providing a spending stimulus which targets long-term results.

Overall, the most significant impact on the economy and employment would come from a complete structural reform to tax and spending policy. In 2011 a comprehensive review of UK tax structure highlighted many inconsistencies and inefficiencies, concluding that the system was "inefficient, overly complex and frequently unfair".

Since then, some small changes have been made, but these inefficiencies and complexities persist. If there was ever a good time to initiate truly bold reforms, it is now.

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

# Time for a Great Healing

*For quite a while the world has been in a great need of an equally great healing, and the time is ripe at this juncture of our collective suffering*

**A**round the world people are getting restless with the restrictions and the social isolation that the Covid-19 pandemic has imposed on us. The question that is gnawing us internally is – when will all this be over and we get back to completely normal? Although we are aware that all the indications are that the 'normal' we have known before the lockdown is not likely to be restored any time soon, we cannot prevent ourselves from hoping that this *might* yet just be so!

We live in a kind of denial about the scenario that is to come. But what to do, we human beings are gregarious animals and like to socialize. The prospect of doing that 'at a distance' in future is our greatest apprehension, as we like to be close to each other, to touch and feel and to hug, and explode in joy at the warmth and the burst of emotions and feelings that such intimacy brings.

“The other day as the lockdown was lifted in parts of Spain, there was the scene of a little girl excitedly running towards her grandparents. The grandpa was bent forwards and had his arms wide open in anticipation, and soon enough the child was picked up and her arms and legs were wrapped around grandpa's neck and chest respectively, at the same time as she snuggled her head into his neck with her hair flying about on his face. I am sure grandpa's eyes must have filled up. How many parents and grandparents, friends and relatives are impatiently waiting to reunite with their loved ones, and enjoy the conviviality of meals, laughter and time together!”

The other day as the lockdown was lifted in parts of Spain, there was the scene of a little girl excitedly running towards her grandparents. The grandpa was bent forwards and had his arms wide open in anticipation, and soon enough the child was picked up and her arms and legs were wrapped around grandpa's neck and chest respectively, at the same time as she snuggled her head into his neck with her hair flying about on his face. I am sure grandpa's eyes must have filled up – mine did as a matter of fact! -, and next of course was grandma's turn. How many parents and grandparents, friends and relatives are impatiently waiting to reunite with their loved ones, and enjoy the conviviality of meals, laughter and time together!

But alas, there are sad stories too, like that of the



Grandad in lockdown celebrates granddaughter's engagement. Photo - cdn.extra.ie

South African man who had come here before the lockdown, and whose wife (and son too if I am not mistaken) passed away back home from Covid-19, and he could not be with his young daughter either, who had to bear this great loss without her father being around. Of course there must have been relatives to take care of her until her father came back, but it's not the same to have one's own parent in moments like these. Finally he was able to go back a few days after the sad event, and all that one can say is God bless them, and pray that they find strength and solace in each other's presence as they build their shattered lives anew.

All of us are praying that this be a one in a lifetime's experience, but as things go there appears to be no guarantee given the odd behaviour of this virus from a medical point of view, causing as it is not just one but a multitude of disease patterns that are keeping doctors and scientists baffled. On top of that comes the controversy about whether it is a naturally occurring virus or one that emanated from a laboratory. Be that as it may, the social and economic impacts of this public health disaster are already only too evident, and we are faced with a long period of painful adjustments that we will have to struggle with and adapt to.

As if the pandemic was not problem enough, perverse behaviour on the part of antisocial elements helped its further spread, complicating the task of national authorities already struggling to control the transmission. How can people spit on vegetables that they are selling (India), or deliberately apply saliva on goods in a supermarket (Australia, Canada), or knowingly congregate (South Korea, France, India) despite the clear-cut advice being dispensed that they cannot deny being aware of? Yet all this happened!

On the other hand, there are so many nationals who are stranded outside their own countries as they were caught unawares when they were in transit on their way back home, as is the case with many of our own compatriots in places as far as Miami as well as in Italy and Turkey, who are still awaiting repatriation because of slow or inadequate response from the authorities. Some coun-

tries were more proactive early on, Germany for example, which commissioned its airline to bring back the nearly 100,000 Germans who were abroad. The Indian government, on the other hand, has announced measures to repatriate its nationals by air and its navy ships, an operation that will be under way soon.

The pandemic has not impacted all countries uniformly – size of country, unpreparedness (rather than preparedness!), in/adequacy of the State response, capacity of the health systems are some of the main factors that are responsible for the differences seen across different jurisdictions. The pandemic has uncovered many social inequalities within countries, even in the most developed ones such as the US as has been highlighted by several authors.

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For quite a while the world has been in a great need of an equally great healing, and the time is ripe at this juncture of our collective suffering. The following Sanskrit mantra of universal appeal is particularly apt at this difficult moment for mankind:



Grandpa and granddaughter outdoors. Photo - depositphotos.com

Om Sarve bhavantu sukhinah

Sarve santu niramayah

Sarve bhadrani pasyantu

Ma kashchit duhkha bhagbhavet

Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih

May all be prosperous and happy

May all be free from illness

May all see what is auspicious

May no one suffer

Om peace, peace, peace



# Food Security and Universal Basic Income: Priorities of the Moment?



Sada Reddi

**If it takes 50 years for an idea to gain acceptance, there comes a time for implementation, and that time is now**

**A**s we inch towards easing of the lockdown, the country faces numerous challenges in all walks of life, and as it is to be expected in such situations, an array of solutions and measures are being thought out and debated by the general public. This is a salutary exercise in a democratic country. For in a mature democracy, many of these ideas would have been publicly debated and some taken on board and implemented.

Nonetheless, we can but applaud the decisive role played by the population, its frontliners and public opinion in implementing the lockdown, even though much

At the moment there is no shortage of ideas to confront the problems facing the country in every aspect sector of our lives ranging from indebtedness to economic stagnation and unemployment. For example, in education it may not be possible for some time to resume classes without putting the health of students, teachers and their families at risk. We can only push for more online learning at different levels of our education system and see if we can reduce classroom contact hours to the necessary minimum. Other measures may include reducing the weightage of examinations in favour of more continuous assessment, which may be made to replace first semester examinations, moving School and Higher School Certificate examinations permanently to May and June which will allow students to move to higher classes or

university in August and September.

We have had to wait for Covid-19 to appreciate the contribution of everyone in the health sector - from doctors, nurses to cleaners, and for that matter, every worker in the country. Yet for years the health system has been allowed to

deteriorate in the interests of the private sector and the grievances of the personnel had fallen on deaf ears. Even patients had to suffer for the failure to allocate adequate resources to the Health sector with the result that very often the frontliners are blamed both for quality of care and that of some of the medicines imported. Only one month back, in a dispensary, a relative of mine was asked to discard the aspirin he had been given previously to be replaced with a new brand, which confirms the poor quality of some of the drugs. But whatever be the new measures and reforms that are implemented, they should result following consultations with all stakeholders, for any decision implemented from above will only backfire.

As for food security, the time has come for a strong political will to put it in on the agenda not for cosmetic reasons but because it has become clear to the population during the present crisis how food shortage has been a major problem for the population. Shortage of vegetables, exorbitant prices, problems of distribution, speculation and hoarding are all the results of food scarcity. Such a situation has disastrous consequences for the health of the population especially among the poor, and even if we can import food, what we need at present is a sustainable solution. There is no dearth of ideas and suggestions regarding this crucial issue emanating from so many people - from small planters' organizations, trade unions, politicians, civic organizations and other experts in the field. If it is true that it takes 50 years for an idea to gain acceptance, there comes a time for implementation, and that time is now.

Another important idea that requires urgent consideration is Universal Basic Income. Paul

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Photo - basicincometoday.com

**“In this time of crisis, how many of our citizens have not faced the grim prospects of unemployment and insecurity? While others can relax, live well and not worry about unemployment, many of our citizens live in fear of an uncertain tomorrow. Why can't these benefits enjoyed by the few be extended to the whole country? At a time when we are thinking about what kind of society we want to live in and bequeath to our grandchildren, we can build a fairer society built on trust and mutual aid instead of fear and insecurity...”**

Berenger has referred to it in his press conference. This is not a new idea; it has been debated down the years and won the support of a number of world economists, among whom a number of Nobel Prize winners. There are several reasons why trade unionists, politicians and economists should debate the issue and strive for its implementation. In Mauritius, a large segment of the population, i.e. the senior citizens, is already covered by old aged pension scheme; workers in the formal sector are obtaining a minimum wage, but there are also those in the labour force who do not receive any form of assistance: those operating in the informal sector. In a first phase, the Universal Basic Income should be extended to them and to the unemployed and at later stage extended to the whole population. We already have a number of social security measures that can be streamlined towards Universal Basic Income.

This is imperative as we are going to face high unemployment as more people lose jobs due to and in the wake of the present crisis; ultimately more jobs will be lost with the advent of Artificial Intelligence as well as for other reasons. A Universal Basic Income will attenuate the predicament of the unemployed and the poor, reduce inequality, and serve to redistribute wealth so that economic development does not take

place for the benefit of just the few.

It will also bring about a new perspective on education and work. We have far too long made education and employment a question of fear. Those who do not get some education are condemned to scarcity, unemployment, underpaid jobs, precarious living and insecurity throughout life. Now this radical measure is a direct and effective way to combat poverty and give employment and education new meanings.

In this time of crisis, how many of our citizens have not faced the grim prospects of unemployment and insecurity? While others can relax, live well and not worry about unemployment, many of our citizens live in fear of an uncertain tomorrow. Why can't these benefits enjoyed by the few be extended to the whole country? At a time when we are thinking about what kind of society we want to live in and bequeath to our grandchildren, we can build a fairer society built on trust and mutual aid instead of fear and insecurity.

Over so many decades we have been able to maintain a Welfare State against all odds; we can go further and implement Universal Basic Income before we lose the battle due to unemployment. It is for economists and the experts to provide the country with a blueprint and to tell us whether the simple idea of Universal Basic Income is practical and implementable in our context.



Photo: falco from Pixabay

more still needs to be done for our collective security. While waiting for a detailed and final plan for the gradual lifting of the lockdown to be made public, even if it has to be modified as we go along, the present crisis affords us with a unique opportunity to rethink our society and implement a number of measures which in the past have either received scant attention or treated with callous indifference. There are so many interesting ideas being ventilated in all sectors by people from all walks of life -- from the ordinary citizen to the expert, and some of them will, at least out of necessity, require consideration for their implementation. Out of this constellation of ideas, two seem to me to demand the utmost attention: food security and universal basic income.





Mrinal Roy

# Ray of Hope

*Worldwide tests with anti-viral drug remdesivir show that patients who were treated with it recovered faster and had a shorter time of recovery*

**A**fter four months of battling against the deadly Covid-19, there is finally a ray of hope. Research has shown that the anti-viral drug remdesivir is highly effective in inhibiting a key enzyme of coronavirus responsible for the replication mechanism of Covid-19.

A government-run study carried by the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases as well as White House immunologist Dr Anthony Fauci revealed that worldwide tests with anti-viral drug remdesivir showed that patients who were treated with it recovered faster and had a shorter time of recovery. Dr Fauci added that 'it has proved that the world has a drug that can block this virus.' On 1 May the American biopharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, Inc which developed remdesivir announced that the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted emergency use authorization (EUA) for the investigational antiviral remdesivir to treat Covid-19.

“The easing of prevailing lockdown restrictions across the world can only be envisaged in a sustainable, very well-thought-out step by step process when statistics relating to new cases of Covid-19 infection, number of deaths, elimination of hotspots of infection and level of testing for Covid-19 show that the spread of the virus is robustly contained in the country concerned. Any rash or premature lifting of restrictions carries the potent risk of a costly second surge of infection...”

Remdesivir will become available to US hospitals in the coming week to treat some 150,000 to 200,000 Covid-19 patients with 1.5 million vials of the drug donated to the US government by Gilead Sciences. It will take some time before the antiviral drug remdesivir is produced to be more widely available hopefully at reasonable cost to treat Covid-19 patients.

Remdesivir provides treatment not a cure. Scientists around the world are working on potential treatments and effective vaccines against Covid-19 to stem the pandemic, minimize its dire impact on the world and save lives. Researchers are exploring diverse pathways to combat the

virus. Several companies are thus working on existing antiviral drugs, some of which are already in use against other illnesses to adapt them to treat patients infected with Covid-19.

Treatments such as remdesivir thus help the world buy time until the discovery of a safe and effective vaccine. It is evident that the post Covid-19 normality will be significantly different from the pre-Covid-19 situation. The world would have to reinvent and adapt itself to operate in a sustainable manner in the context of a materially different new world order. We first need to stop the virus. This necessarily means finding an effective vaccine.

## Protracted validation process

There are over 120 Covid-19 vaccines candidates in the research pipeline in different stages of development in the world. Their progress is being tracked and monitored by the World Health Organization.

It could take between 9 months to 2 years to develop a vaccine. World leaders have this week pledged \$ 8 billion to fund laboratories that have promising leads in developing and producing a vaccine. The US is also investing billions of dollars into its own research efforts. The world desperately needs a vaccine which provides robust immunity against Covid-19. To meet this key goal, the world needs an unflinching solidarity and cooperation among nations. Ideally, we would want a vaccine which is 100 percent effective. However, this is not always the case. A vaccine that is at least 70 percent effective will be enough to stop the outbreak. This year's flu vaccine is only around 45 percent effective.

The safety and efficacy of a new vaccine will have to be tested and validated though a protracted process where human trials of the vaccine with different doses are effected in stages to increasingly larger groups of volunteers including people from different age groups and health conditions in accordance with a well established protocol. The whole process must be reviewed independently and validated before being submitted to the WHO and various government agencies for approval. The production of some 7 billion doses to be distributed and administered to the world population also needs to be urgently organized. This is intrinsically a long drawn process.

The established protocol and steps for trials, testing and validation are sequential to ensure at every step that all pathological questions and safety norms have been sa-



Remdesivir provides treatment not a cure. Several companies are thus working on existing antiviral drugs, some of which are already in use against other illnesses to adapt them to treat patients infected with Covid-19.

Photo aljazeera.com

tisfactorily addressed. Investors want to make sure that each step is comprehensively validated before investing into the next step. This is an emergency situation. The world is ready to support whatever it takes to find a vaccine which can stop Covid-19. Bold actions are required. There is therefore a growing urgency to reduce the timeline of finding a safe and effective vaccine by financially supporting scientists and researchers to save time by carrying out under the highest safety precautions required several of the development steps at once.

We know that the vaccine developed by the University of Oxford in the UK has already started human trials. In a bid to save time in the race to swiftly provide an approved vaccine to the world to defeat Covid-19, The Serum Institute of India, the world's largest vaccine maker has thus taken the initiative and risk to start mass production of the Oxford vaccine and produce 40 million units which will be made available at a nominal cost, even before the vaccine has reached advanced clinical trials, without knowing if it works.

Every day that can be saved in the process of validation and dissemination of a safe and effective vaccine will make a huge difference to the world in terms of saving lives and reducing trillions of dollars in economic damage.

So long as a safe and effective vaccine is not discovered and validated for worldwide use, strict compliance with social distancing and hygiene rules in place as well as the wearing of masks will be part of the new normal. The easing of prevailing lockdown restrictions across the world can only be envisaged in a sustainable, very well-thought-out step by step process when statistics relating to new cases of Covid-19 infection, number of deaths, elimination of hotspots of infection and level of testing for Covid-19 show that the spread of the virus is robustly contained in the country concerned. Any rash or premature lifting of restrictions carries the potent risk of a costly second surge of infection of the virus and of significantly delaying a return to a modicum of normality in the world.

## Getting our priorities right

The US situation is a case in point. According to forecasts based on modelling by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Federal Emergency Management Agency made public this week, the death toll could rise to 3000 Americans a day by 1 June, up from a current daily toll of about 2000, in the wake of the relaxation of restrictions in a host of States across the US in an attempt to revive the economy and employment in a country with very little social protection. They also forecast about 200,000 new cases of infection each day by the end of the month, up from about 25,000 cases now. Will these chilling forecasts come true? Are the stakes of the US presidential elections in November 2020 clouding a sensible and safe management of the pandemic?

“World leaders have this week pledged \$ 8 billion to fund laboratories that have promising leads in developing and producing a vaccine. The US is also investing billions of dollars into its own research efforts. The world desperately needs a vaccine which provides robust immunity against Covid-19. To meet this key goal, the world needs an unflinching solidarity and cooperation among nations. Ideally, we would want a vaccine which is 100 percent effective. However, this is not always the case...”

The future will therefore depend on the strategies adopted by each country to robustly contain and stem the spread of the virus. It will also depend on the manner each country prioritizes its objectives and judiciously arbitrates the cardinal issue of saving lives as opposed to saving the economy bearing in mind that it is those who depend on work to assure their livelihoods who are the principal casualties of a pandemic.



# Germany reopens shops as lockdown is relaxed

Chancellor Angela Merkel has said Germany's goal of slowing the spread of coronavirus has been achieved, so all shops can be reopened as lockdown restrictions are eased.

Bundesliga football has been given the green light to resume and schools will gradually reopen in the summer term.

Germany's 16 federal states, under an agreement with the government, will take control of timing the reopening. They will operate an "emergency brake" if there is a new surge in infections, reports BBC.

General contact rules involving will continue for another month. A limited resumption has already begun, but this easing of restrictions is far broader.

Two households will be able to meet and eat together, and elderly people in nursing homes and facilities for the disabled will be able to have visits from one specific person.

"I think we can safely state that the very first phase of the pandemic is behind us,"



Bayern Munich are among a number of Bundesliga clubs to have returned to training. EPA

Chancellor Merkel said. "But we need to be very much aware we are still in the early phases and we'll be in it for the long haul."

Germany has seen fewer than 7000

deaths in the coronavirus pandemic - a much lower figure than in other Western European countries including the UK, Italy, France and Spain.

The popular daily newspaper *Bild* announced on Wednesday that Germany was opening up again. And broadly that is what has been agreed.

Shops of up to 800 square metres (8,600ft) in size have already been allowed to open. All restrictions on shops will now be lifted, although masks must be worn and social distancing maintained.

Schools have already begun opening for older children; all pupils will be allowed to return to class gradually during the summer term.

The German football league, the Bundesliga, has been given the green light to kick off for the first time since March.

Matches will resume on 15 May, and will be played behind closed doors amid strict hygiene measures. A two-week quarantine is expected to be put in place for the players, in the form of a type of training camp.

## India begins massive evacuation operation



Air India will operate 64 flights this week to bring back stranded Indians in the wake of Covid-19 as part of the Vande Bharat mission. (ANI Photo)

India will commence one of the world's largest air rescue operations *Vande Bharat Mission* from May 7, when the two airlines will start the first phase of the mission. The two airlines will operate 64 flights in 7 days to bring back 14,800 stranded Indians from 12 countries.

Operating at different time slots, the 'special ferry' flights will leave New Delhi, Cochin and Kozhikode for Singapore, Abu Dhabi and Dubai respectively. Similarly, Air India Express will operate Cochin-Abu Dhabi-Cochin and Kozhikode-Dubai-Kozhikode services, reports Indian Link.

As per plans, 10 flights will be operated to the UAE from May 7-13, while seven will be sent to the US, seven to Malaysia and five to Saudi Arabia, amongst others. Overall, more than 190,000 Indian nationals, who will pay a one-way ferry service charge, are expected to be brought back in an airlift operation that might last couple of weeks or even more.

Indian nationals stranded in Australia will have to wait a little longer. As of now, the Indian High Commission in Canberra has asked those waiting to get back home to register their interest by 10 May.

Meanwhile, with the first flight due to arrive in Delhi at 7.00 am on Friday 8 May, the national capital has ramped up efforts to mass quarantine the evacuees. Several thousand hotel rooms have been booked across Delhi to keep them stationed for 14 days. All major hotels in the aero city area including lodges and guest houses are also being kept for quarantine purposes, a source revealed. Hotels in adjoining districts are on stand-by. However, all these facilities will be provided against payment by the concerned evacuees. All evacuees will have to spend a mandatory 14 days in quarantine facilities and will undergo medical tests.

Passengers availing these evacuation flights will be charged for the one-way ferry service, as the national carrier is already in a financial turmoil. Lately, despite its precarious financial position, the flag carrier has emerged as one of the few airlines in the world that have evacuated more than 9000 passengers during the Covid-19 crisis.

In comparison, three decades ago, Air India led a group of airlines which included Indian Airlines and Aeroflot as well as IAF to rescue an estimated 111,711 Indians from the Gulf, after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. The 59-day operation involved 488 flights and was conducted before the first Gulf war.

This time, the exercise will encompass flights to the US in the west to the Philippines in the east.

## How African firms are being impacted by the lockdown



Workers making hand sanitisers at Premier Distilleries in Uganda

But a precious few firms have been able to repurpose their production lines or cater to key workers, and are able to stay open. One thing that has risen is demand for hand sanitiser.

In Botswana, a perfumier is now making hand sanitiser, and in Uganda, manufacturers are operating at full

capacity to make them, including the producers of alcoholic beverages.

Premier Distilleries, which was originally set up to produce wines and spirits, is now producing hand sanitisers, as requested by the Ugandan government.

The problem is that many African nations have long gotten used to importing many goods from countries like China or India, or other African nations - particularly landlocked countries like Uganda.

"If there's one thing this experience has taught us, it's the need to develop local capacities, because one of the key challenges that have arisen as a result of the coronavirus is that global supply chains have been disrupted," Daniel Birungi, executive director of the Uganda Manufacturing Association explains to the BBC.

**By Mary-Ann Russon**  
Business reporter,  
BBC News, 07 May 2020

Compiled by  
Doojesh Ramlallah

Although the transmission rate for coronavirus in Africa has so far been much slower than in Europe, the economic effects are still being felt.

Measures put in place to limit the spread of the virus have disrupted economic activity in many nations. Small businesses that import items from countries like China are already feeling the pinch. And governments and investors fear there will be longer-term negative effects on economic growth.

It is not yet clear how hard the coronavirus will hit Africa's economies. Before the onset of the pandemic, the African Development Bank had projected African economic growth to reach 3.9% in 2020, up from 3.4% in 2019.

But now experts say the pandemic could cut the continent's growth by between 3-8 percentage points this year, reports BBC.

Many businesses have been forced to close as a result of the coronavirus lockdown, with curfews in place in some African nations and bans on both public and private transport in place.



# Exit from coronavirus lockdowns - lessons from 6 countries

*It's possible to evaluate countries' readiness to lift their lockdowns, based on how well they managed the first wave of the pandemic*

**I**t has been less than two months since the world scrambled to go into the "Great Lockdown" to slow the spread of COVID-19. Now, many countries are considering their exit strategies. Some have already eased up.

The push is largely economic. There is a lot scientists don't yet understand about the novel coronavirus, and there is no known cure or vaccine. Many countries are still experiencing a rise in infections. But the lockdowns have played havoc with people's livelihoods. Entire economies are in meltdown: The International Monetary Fund predicts the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression.

Just as each nation chose a different route into lockdown, each is likely to choose its own exit path. I have launched a research initiative, "Imagining a Digital Economy for All 2030," with a focus on the post-pandemic global economy. We have been studying the characteristics of 40 countries that help explain how governments and citizens have acted to contain the COVID-19 outbreak and their preparedness to take an economy online. Our analysis offers ways to gauge which countries are best prepared for a safe exit.

It seems clear that the safest idea is to reopen slowly, in phases, while remaining ready to reenter lockdown in case of new outbreaks. By looking at how well a nation managed the first wave of the pandemic, and how ready it is to work remotely by falling back onto the online economy, we now understand how prepared nations are to restart economic activity without triggering fresh rounds of public health disasters.

## Public health and technology

Not every country is well equipped to ease itself out of a lockdown safely.

A nation's ability to manage the outbreak relies on many factors: the willingness of governments to take decisive action; citizen compliance in staying home and social distancing; and capacity for adequate testing for the disease, including "contact tracing" - tracking down the people who have been in contact with those infected. Those characteristics are also key to managing future outbreaks.

In parallel, not every country is ready to shift much of its economic activity online. Around the world, not everyone has affordable, reliable internet service; or the jobs, devices and digital apps that would let them work productively from home; or ways to make payments and get public services online. In some countries - though not all - workers who can't do their jobs remotely can reduce their in-person contact by using digital transactions, whether it is for carry-out food, e-commerce or receiving bailout checks and unemployment benefits.



Countries such as Germany, New Zealand and South Korea are strong in both disease-fighting and digital-economy preparedness. Their economic activity isn't as dependent on in-person interactions, and authorities can respond quickly if loosened rules result in a spike in cases. In contrast, the U.S., Italy and Japan face different challenges before they can safely lift lockdowns.

## Difficulties ahead for the US

Compared to countries worldwide, the U.S. is more prepared to operate parts of its economy online, but its response to the outbreak indicates there may be difficulties after reopening. States were inconsistent in issuing stay-at-home orders, and citizens' compliance with the rules has varied widely.

Officials have been unable to test in large numbers, and only four states meet, or are on track to meet, the contact-tracing required to control future outbreaks.

The results are evident in the mortality rates in the U.S. and other, better-prepared countries: On May 5, the key statistic shows the U.S. death rate was more than three times that of Germany, nearly 200 times those in New Zealand and South Korea.

## What made the difference?

The countries that more efficiently managed this first outbreak and its consequences capitalized on their public health preparation to get a grip on the infection quickly. Germany has a high volume of infections but low mortality. The country only knows this because it had tested extensively - at a rate of 21 people per 1,000, as compared with 9.8 per 1,000 in the U.S.

New Zealand's government proved

willing to rapidly impose severe restrictions on movement and found the public largely supportive and ready to comply.

South Korea, while among the earliest countries affected, kept its mortality among the lowest in the world through widespread testing and deploying technology for widespread contact tracing. Infected individuals' interactions were retraced using cellphone location data, surveillance camera footage and credit card records. Websites and apps offer details on infected people's travel and exposure risks.

These approaches may prove hard for the U.S. to replicate. The country is far from having testing rates like Germany's. New Zealand has a much less polarized citizenry and far more trust in its national leadership than the U.S. The South Korean technology-intensive approach to contact tracing would be considered too intrusive on individual privacy for the U.S.

## Troubles for other nations, too

Italy initially underestimated the severity of its outbreak, but then imposed a strict lockdown with high citizen compliance and widespread testing and tracing. However, we found in our study that Italy is among the least prepared European Union members for a shift to a digital economy. Germany, New Zealand and South Korea all have higher levels of internet access and service, digital payments and public services, and employers ready to handle remote work.

Japan's situation is particularly challenging because it eased up its restrictions too early and then had to impose an emergency to stem additional outbreaks. It is also relatively unprepared in digital terms because of a host of factors,

ranging from peer pressure to come into the office, to security concerns, transactions that require a paper trail, often requiring official corporate seals, missing digital infrastructure and a continued aversion to digital payments.

Each of these countries is a wealthy, developed nation, so the differences are not due to affordability. Our research has found that preparedness requires not just funding but also farsighted, credible and transparent leadership and citizens' trust in that leadership. The first leads to timely and firm decisions, and the second contributes to citizens' willingness to cooperate with those decisions.

For instance, German Chancellor Angela Merkel's background as a trained scientist gave her powerful credibility when facing a scientific crisis. New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern clearly explained her "go early, go hard" approach to lockdown restrictions, and her citizens agreed. In South Korea, authorities controlled the virus through "decisive and transparent leadership based on data, not emotion."

As governments seek their own exit pathways, and aim to strengthen areas where they are weak, there's no way to be completely certain or fully prepared for what might happen next.

In our research, we've found one principle that governments might find useful to guide them through the uncertainty. It's from a former New Zealand prime minister, Helen Clark: "Economies can recover; the dead can't."

**Bhaskar Chakravorti,**  
Dean of Global Business,  
The Fletcher School,  
Tufts University



Interview: Kevin Teeroovengadam

# “We are anything but resilient! That's the plain truth”



**K**evin Teeroovengadam worked for KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young in corporate finance and strategic consultancy before moving to Loita Capital Partners Group based in South Africa. He joined Actis in 2007, the leading emerging market private equity firm. He was the co-founder and CEO of AttAfrica in 2013 which became the premier investor of shopping malls in Africa. Like other observers, he also sees a major recession coming with an unfavourable global environment that is likely to keep investors away. He feels that government must bring about targeted reforms in the education sector and rope in the talents of Mauritians wherever they are to get the country going again. He makes a number of suggestions about a way forward, among others improving efficiency, reducing wastage, putting a hold on big projects among others.

**Mauritius Times: How bad is the economic situation globally in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak and lockdown in most countries of the world, and what is your assessment of its impact on the Mauritian economy?**

**Kevin Teeroovengadam:** Since the outbreak that started in China, a bit more than four months ago already, the situation has evolved from what initially started potentially as a slowing down of the global economic growth to a global deceleration much worse than the financial crisis of 2008. It has now reached a stage where it is the worst crisis since the great depression of 1929/30s.

I do not believe we have reached the bottom yet; it will be a much prolonged recession. This is a combination of a health crisis, an economic shock with a sudden stop of many economic sectors, leading to

from the old to a new paradigm which was bound to happen during this decade, but I never expected it would be in such a disruptive and fast-track manner.

As for Mauritius, we are in our first recession since the early 1980s and unfortunately it will be a very severe contraction that will leave our nation very scarred and will take a longer time to heal and recover.

**\* The first estimates as regards the performance of our economy in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic point to a GDP contraction of around 6% in 2020. What's your take on that estimate? An understatement?**

The estimate of 6% contraction put up by the Minister of Finance and IMF was a couple of weeks ago. I have been saying since beginning of April that it would be a double digit contraction with a best case scenario of low teens, a base case of mid-

severe than what was expected a couple of weeks ago.

**\* Does that mean that all economic sectors here - whether it's tourism, financial services and manufacturing, sugar, etc., with their focus on foreign markets for business and customers**

“We lost the last 10 years (the lost decade) by failing to carry out the much-needed economic transformation that would have shielded us better during the current crisis. Instead we kept saying our economy was resilient and well diversified. But the reality is very different today. Why? Because our economy has been surfing on the global wave; that wave was receding and it's not there anymore. We could see that situation unfolding even before Covid-19 with our GDP growth slowing down by end 2019 to 3.1%...”

**will go through difficult times beyond 2020 and well into 2021?**

Unfortunately yes! We should not underestimate the difficulties being faced in our export markets and also the ripple effect that Covid-19 is having just like a tsunami or an earthquake that have multiple waves or shocks.

The “V” curve recovery is wishful thinking since a long time ago and even the “U” curve recovery would be a very optimistic scenario. I believe it will be an “L” curve along the lines of a “Nike” logo. It is going to be very slow, and it will take us a good 3 to 4 years to be back to where we were in 2019. This is assuming there's no second wave of Covid-19 as countries start to open up softly.

**\* To make matters worse, there is likely to be bad news for our financial services sector this week. Reuters has reported that the “European Commission is set to include Panama, the**

Bahamas, Mauritius and nine other countries to its list of states that pose a financial risks to the bloc because of anti-money laundering and terrorism financing shortfalls”. That's going to be a hard blow to the sector, and it's coming at the wrong time, isn't it?

If what's reported becomes real, which I really hope not, this will be a massive blow for Mauritius. There's no good or wrong time for this. But at this juncture where we have so many economic fires to deal with, we really do not need another big one. This would mean that Mauritius has failed to do the necessary “cleansing” asked of us over such a long period of time. The implications will be multi-fold:

- (a) Potential global investors will shy away from Mauritius at a time where we badly need new investors;
- (b) Existing global investors who currently use Mauritius will look to relocate elsewhere to mitigate the risk of being at odds with the European Commission
- (c) A withdrawal of deposits from global investors and hence risk for our local banking sector
- (d) Foreign owned banks might question the rationale of being based in Mauritius.

It's important to understand that from the global perspective Mauritius is a small jurisdiction and we are competing with other jurisdictions. The complexity has increased since the beginning of the year, post Brexit in January and also now with recession in Europe. The bottom line is very simple. Great Britain will try to protect its own offshore jurisdictions to the detri-

ment of other countries such as Mauritius, while Europe will need every euro possible to rebuild its economy and hence can hit at jurisdictions like Mauritius.

We have seen already a number of European countries saying that companies which have structures in offshore or tax efficient jurisdictions will not benefit from bailout money from their respective governments. The pressure was already mounting in Europe even pre-Covid-19 and now with Covid-19 we are in a situation where it is a bit like “Chacun pour soi, Dieu pour tous”.

Let's hope that our government has done the necessary lobbying with our European friends and that we obtain a favourable response from the European Commission.

“The “V” curve recovery is wishful thinking since a long time ago and even the “U” curve recovery would be a very optimistic scenario. I believe it will be an “L” curve along the lines of a “Nike” logo. It is going to be very slow, and it will take us a good 3 to 4 years to be back to where we were in 2019. This is assuming there's no second wave of Covid-19 as countries start to open up softly...”

massive unemployment, bankruptcies both at corporate and household levels, de-globalisation in the short- to medium-term, repositioning of geo-politics, advent of technology that's already forcing billions of people to embrace Industry 4.0 and disrupting companies and economies that relied heavily on Industry 3.0 and all these culminating in the short- to medium-term with a lot of fear amongst the population. In short, what we are witnessing is a shift

teen and worst case scenario that could go well beyond 20%. I would like to highlight that the IMF generally tends to be late in providing real updates of the situation on the ground and that is why I would discard the IMF's forecast made 3 weeks ago. The situation has since evolved negatively, with the lockdown in Mauritius extended till the end of May with a soft opening around mid-May; moreover the economic damage in our main export markets in Europe is more



# 'Government will not be able to bail out everybody, in fact it should not bail out everybody...

Why bail out companies in sunset industries or companies that have had structural problems or weak management?

● Cont. from page 8

**\* Mauritius does have otherwise its strong points: a rather well-diversified economy, low unemployment and low inflation, its Welfare State with strong social security safety nets. These should help to see us through the economic storm, isn't it?**

We lost the last 10 years (the lost decade) by failing to carry out the much-needed economic transformation that would have shielded us better during the current crisis. Instead we kept saying our economy was resilient and well diversified. But the reality is very different today. Why? Because our economy has been surfing on the global wave; that wave was receding and it's not there anymore. We could see that situation unfolding even before Covid-19 with our GDP growth slowing down by end 2019 to 3.1% - that is much lower than the initial 4% forecast.

We never managed to bring our debt to GDP ratio to the 60% level and in fact in 2019 it went up beyond 65%. I won't be surprised if it goes well beyond 80% in the wake of the current crisis. And for years we have not been able to tackle our budget and trade deficits year after year, yet Mauritius has spent more than Rs75 billion in various projects of dubious relevance. Worse successive annual government audit reports have drawn attention to the staggering level of waste year in year out. Add them up and you get to more than Rs75 billion which have gone down the drain!

Imagine if we didn't waste that much money, we would have less debt (as these projects were all funded by debt), and we would have had the necessary reserves to help weather the tough current economic storm on our hands. Let's be honest with ourselves: instead of rhetorically talking about Mauritius being resilient, we are anything but! That's the plain truth.

“If the situation doesn't improve by early June, Government will have to deal with an unprecedented situation. They have very limited options; one of them will be to borrow to “limiter la casse” as much as possible. In any case, Government will not be able to bail out everybody, in fact it should not bail out everybody. Why bail out companies in sunset industries or companies that have had structural problems or weak management?”

**\* A number of measures have been taken to assist both employees and employers during the lockdown, and more is likely to come in the weeks ahead. In case the situation doesn't improve soon, what are the government's choices?**

As we stand today, the situation is already extremely complex as the whole economic value chain - from our export-oriented sectors to our domestic market - is

currently being impacted. When there is a recession and, on top of that, an economic sudden stop and fear from people, this leads to a domino effect.

After the lockdown, it will be hard for people to just go out and consume the way they did before and for a number of reasons - such as some would have lost their jobs, others would be asked to reduce their salaries and, generally speaking, this trauma of being locked-down would lead to people shying away from consumerism at least in the short- to medium-term. Hence this leads to multiple waves of contraction which is the opposite of the multiplier effect when you have economic growth.

If the situation doesn't improve by early June, Government will have to deal with an unprecedented situation. They have very limited options; one of them will be to borrow to “limiter la casse” as much as possible. In any case, Government will not be able to bail out everybody, in fact it should not bail out everybody. Why bail out companies in sunset industries or companies that have had structural problems or weak management?

Government will need to start offloading assets as it is sitting over a lot of these scattered around the island. For example, Landscape, SIC, shares in banks and insurance companies, our famous new stadium in Cote d'Or; it should even consider privatising the rail infrastructure of the new metro, as well as reducing its stake in Mauritius Telecom by divesting at least 10% shareholding, etc. Whatever option the government will look at, the reality is it won't be smooth riding for a number of years to come.

**\* Once economic recovery begins, what should Mauritius go big on first in the short and medium terms?**

First of all I really hope the government will upgrade its team across the board. We need new faces, fresh ideas and Mauritians who have the expertise and skills to take

Mauritius to the next level. In this lockdown, I have come across Mauritians in Mauritius and also the diaspora who are real talents. If only they were part of the decision making and execution processes, it would have been a totally different ball game. Mauritius needs to be able to do this human capital upgrade and transition as soon as possible.

Second, the government should change the way it used to operate. We cannot carry on with inefficiencies, where we have waste

of money every year.

Third, Government will have to re-prioritise its infrastructural projects. For example, the new airport terminal should be put on hold for a long time to come.

Fourth, government should focus on reducing our import bills especially on food-stuff and make self-sufficiency a 2- to 3-year objective.

Fifth, bolster our healthcare sector not only for us Mauritians, but also to position it for our neighbours in Africa who could shy away from Europe and come to Mauritius instead. That's a big and growing market. But for that we need more and better healthcare facilities and there are possibilities for public-private partnerships.

Sixth, reposition our tourism sector. The



“I really hope the government will upgrade its team across the board. We need new faces, fresh ideas and Mauritians who have the expertise and skills to take Mauritius to the next level. In this lockdown, I have come across Mauritians in Mauritius and also the diaspora who are real talents. If only they were part of the decision making and execution processes, it would have been a totally different ball game. Mauritius needs to be able to do this human capital upgrade and transition as soon as possible ...”

first step would be for existing hotel groups to consolidate, restructure their debts, and with the possibility of separating the walls and operations.

Seventh, invest massively in education and overhaul our education system once and for all. Our human capital is what will take us to what the Minister of Finance referred to a high-income country, else this will remain but a dream. So we need a radically different human capital and, to be able to achieve that, we need a radically different education system. We cannot continue to get youngsters out of school and recurrent mismatch with job requirements and growing youth unemployment. We need a human capital that can fit within this new paradigm of Industry 4.0/5.0.

**\* What are your thoughts for the future as regards the economic model that we should strive to put in place or new paradigm to embrace?**

I firmly believe that in a crisis you either die or you come out much stronger, wiser and smarter. For Mauritius, we should take Covid-19 as a blessing in disguise as it will force us to bring about the changes we didn't bother with in the last lost decade and also force us to rethink how we want to position ourselves in this new paradigm.

The future is Industry 4.0/5.0; we can't shy away from this future and we should promote innovation, science, research, and technology. We are seeing how technology has positively disrupted a number of traditional companies around the world. Classical

examples are Amazon, Alibaba, Airbnb, Uber-eats. We need to embrace technology and promote agri-tech, edu-tech, fin-tech, health-tech, prop-tech, etc. For example, agri-tech can help us to become self-sufficient very quickly. Gone are the days of mechanisation of agriculture. If we can grow vegetables without land these days in other parts of the world, this tells you we have entered a new era. Other examples, we have seen during this lockdown period, is technology being used for education and also for tele-medicine. So the sky is the limit if we bring in technology in everything we do. But to be able to use technology, we need to have an open mind and get our youngsters to spearhead these changes.

We could also use this as a way to make Mauritius become the tech hub for Africa. There are plenty of African talents who are spearheading a number of tech products/companies and who would be keen to relocate to Mauritius if such opportunities were offered to them. We could very easily make Mauritius the “Silicon Valley” for Africa.

The other play for Mauritius is to become a science and research hub for Africa. We have seen over the last 20 years, we have had various viruses (H1N1, Sars, Mers, Ebola, etc) impacting the world and we might see other pandemics in the future. So why not developing Mauritius as a lab for Africa? Let's get our Mauritian diaspora scientists who are working abroad in prestigious labs to set base in Mauritius or else lobby to get international labs established in Mauritius.



## Open Letter to the Government

## From: Mauritian Ghosts Stranded in Rome

**W**e are 43 Mauritians stranded in Rome, Italy, since 22 March 2020, and we would like to address this open letter to the Government through the Foreign Affairs Minister to draw attention to our current plight. We are extremely disappointed with the manner in which our situation has been handled, or rather mishandled, by the authorities; it almost amounts to our being denied our inalienable right of entry in our own country.

The reply of the Foreign Affairs minister to the PQ addressed by Hon Shakeel Mohamed on 5 May 2020 bears testimony to the indifference of the authorities to our plight. In most countries, foreign nationals have been repatriated to their native homelands thanks to the efficient, pre-emptive and diligent agency of their respective foreign affairs missions posted there. We are the only foreign nationals left 'imprisoned', so to say, in IH Roma Hotel, Rome.

We understand that the minister would have stated in his response to the PQ that:

(i) at the time there was a flight in Paris outbound for Mauritius, we had not yet received our Covid-19 test results, and that would be the reason why we could not

board the said flight; that is incorrect because our tests were then ready, our embassy in Paris was fully aware of this fact and the flight list, at the outset, never featured our names;

(ii) as regards our return to Mauritius being dependent on the availability of flights, we understand that Costa Crociere would have informed, in writing, and on numerous occasions our embassy in Paris, that it would bear all expenses related to our return to Mauritius, including the provision of a charter flight;

(iv) it would not be superfluous to state that most of us constitute a long-retired workforce which has given sweat and soul to our country. What is most depressing and unacceptable is that one of us, when requesting for an update, got copiously insulted by a cadre of our embassy in Paris who, it would seem, did not want to be unnecessarily bothered by our ordeal;

(v) the information concerning when our last tests were done is also not correct; they do not date back to 7 April 2020, as stated, since we underwent confirmation tests on 25 April 2020, and the results thereof were duly transmitted to our

embassy in Paris. Costa Crociere immediately initiated action on 30 April 2020 to repatriate all Mauritians on a special charter flight at its own cost; we understand that the Mauritian authorities would have never responded to that initiative and the entire operation was halted.

Moreover it would seem that the authorities harbour an over-exaggerated fear that we will trigger a second wave of the infection once we are back in the country. To that we will say that we have been tested negative twice, and we are willing to go for quarantine, again, once we are back. And still, we are being told that we do not qualify for repatriation since there is a dearth of quarantine space and management back home; so all of sudden we are turned into the sacrificial lamb because a country that prides itself as the star and key of the Indian Ocean does not have adequate quarantine capacity to accommodate its citizens. Are we to expect any denouement in the coming days, or would that be, once again, wishful thinking, or asking too much?

*With love and socially-distanced hugs*  
**Mauritian Ghosts Stranded in Rome**

## Prepare for the future now

**I** am an expat, one of a very large number of the diaspora.

I keep in touch with events on the island but not the parliamentary stuff. My interest is in other productive sectors, for example tourism. It is now obvious that concentrating for years on rich external tourists has not paid off. All the big hotels that occupy large swathes of the best beaches only attracted the rich and the famous. It is only recently with the advent of the boutique hotels, private rentals, AirBnB, B&Bs, etc., that the island has opened up a bit more. A lot has to do with expats telling their friends in the UK and elsewhere what a good time they had in Mauritius. The photos would have worked too.

So now, with the lockdown and no flights, what to do?

Well as soon as restrictions are loosened, hotels can offer special weekend deals as well as mid-week breaks to the local population. Prices would need to be competitive enough to attract locals. Free drinks, water sports, children's clubs, babysitting, etc., will attract many people. Cheap 3-course lunches with minimal choices at low prices will also bring in a varied clientele. There would need to be extensive advertising. Some boutique hotels could offer 3-course takeaway lunches or dinner with matching drinks.

With regard to the national airline, it needs to be slimmed down drastically and to only offer flights to profitable routes. Offer a very high standard of service at reasonable prices. Appoint a CEO with proven experience; salary and bonuses to be taken only if targets are reached. No more nepotism. All ground and cabin staff to be among the best. Salaries should be commensurate with experience and delivery of targets.

Plan now for package holidays with hotels in Mauritius and abroad. Make prices competitive. Throw in free car hire for part or the whole of the holiday, a couple of hours of fishing offshore, etc.

Employ a good PR company to start assembling booklets and other publicity literature to be ready when flights resume. Distribute at the appropriate time. Flood the market ahead of time.

Tidy up places like La Louise. Get old and dangerous evil smelling, fuming diesel vehicles off the roads.

Look westwards; that's where the tourists will come from.

All passengers to be tested (with immediate result) when booking a flight. Test again before check in. No need to quarantine on arrival in Mauritius. Test again every few days to reassure everybody. Test before boarding and at destination. Testing to be free of charge.

**Ben Genevieve**  
Perth WA

## Crying Wolf

**T**o be honest we all have to admit that the government is taking the necessary initiatives to contain the pandemic. Some may say that action could have been taken well before, thus preventing an outbreak here, but let's leave that to the past.

What bothers me is that we are giving peanuts to the needy people and throwing away millions to the rich industrialists. Whatever happened to the hundreds of millions of rupees made as profit by the tourism and cane industries? Not a word has been said of the millions paid up as dividends to the shareholders, but why do we hear cries of wolf! when the situation gets bad?

How can we give away taxpayer's money to those who are against socialism in favour of the needy but find socialism in favour of the rich acceptable? Even if the taxpayer's money is given away, the government should trade its assistance for shares in these companies, or the bailout funds should be given as loans.

**Atish Boolaky**  
Russia

## Covid-19 and Frugal Living



Even as economies begin to open up, businesses and consumers continue to look for ways to avoid risk.  
(Martin Meissner/Associated Press)

**S**uch a tiny thing and such a big impact. It was unimaginable until it happened. A virus that cannot survive on its own but considered as a living entity, has taken over the world with breathtaking speed. Thereupon, the world has got aggressively involved in the implementation of suppression strategies to contain the transmission of this new virus, the Covid-19, from one person to another: enforcing significant lockdowns, disciplined physical distancing, personal hygiene, contact tracing, testing, quarantine and isolation. All the foregoing activities have a common goal: to stop the contagion from infecting people, killing them and causing immense collateral damages to the economy, personal and family lives and livelihood.

The confinement has changed people's way of living all over the world. Either they are doing it voluntarily or are forced to do so by the prevailing circumstances. The consumption of goods and services has significantly changed.

There is frugal living. It is not deprivation but a choice between the necessary and the superfluous. People are satisfying themselves with the minimum quantity and objective needs of food, clothing and shelter. It is not a sign of despair or a call to tighten belts. It is an instinctive shift to prioritize and do things that are most important. Frugality brings about a balance between needs and resources. You may already be running your life along these lines: setting a food budget, creating meal plans and listing your groceries accordingly, preparing your food, - using leftovers, making your bread, cakes and cookies, growing your own herbs and eating at home amongst other things. It implies modest consumption and simplicity in personal lifestyle to face the *Mahamari*... the pandemic.

There is, however, the fear that the transmission of the virus can quickly rebound if we are not cautious enough and relax or remove the measures and interventions. The lockdown has slowed down the progression of the disease but it has in no way eradicated it. We have to maintain a significant portion of the suppression measures for a longer period of time to keep the virus away. These, among other things have been rightly referred to as the "new normal".

We had better resign ourselves and adapt to the new normal and adopt a frugal way of living as the journey promises to be quite long and resources limited for getting to a vaccine and/or therapeutic drugs that will combat this tiny virus.

**Mohun Aujayeb**  
Quatre Bornes



## In A Light Vein

# Management Course Training

As we are all locked down at home, let me run a Management Course Training for you guys.

### Lesson 1 of 5

A man is getting into the shower as his wife is getting out, when the doorbell rings. She quickly wraps herself in a towel and runs downstairs. She opens the door to Fred, the next-door neighbour.

Before she says a word, Fred says, 'I'll give you \$800 to drop that towel.'

After thinking for a moment, she drops it and stands naked in front of Fred.

After a few seconds, Fred hands her \$800 and leaves.

Wrapping herself in the towel, as she gets to the bathroom, her husband asks: 'Who was that?'

'It was Fred the next-door neighbour' she replies.

'Great!' the husband says, 'did he say anything about the \$800 he owes me?'

**Moral of the story:** If you share critical information pertaining to credit and risk with your shareholders (and management team) in time, you may be in a position to prevent avoidable exposure.

\*\*\*

### Lesson 2 of 5

A priest offered a nun a lift. As she sat in the car, she could not help but reveal a leg. The priest nearly had an accident. After controlling the car, he stealthily slid his hand up her leg.

The nun said, 'Father, remember Psalm 129?'

He removed his hand. But, changing gears, he let his hand slide up her leg again.

The nun once again said, 'Father, remember Psalm 129?'

The priest apologized: 'Sorry, sister, but the flesh is weak.'

Arriving at the convent, the nun went on her way.

On his arrival at the church, the priest rushed to look up Psalm 129. It said, 'Go forth and seek, further up, you will find glory.'

**Moral of the story:** If you are not well informed in your job, you might miss a great opportunity.

\*\*\*

### Lesson 3 of 5

A sales rep, an administration clerk and their manager are walking to lunch when they find an antique oil lamp.

They rub it and a Genie pops out. The Genie says, 'I'll give each of you just one wish.'

'Me first! Me first!' says the admin clerk.

'I want to be in the Bahamas, driving a speedboat, without a care in the world.'

Puff! She's gone.

'Me next! Me next!' says the sales rep. 'I

want to be in Hawaii, relaxing on the beach with my personal masseuse, an endless supply of Pina Coladas and the love of my life'.

Puff! He's gone.

'OK, you're up', the Genie says to the manager.

The manager says, 'I want those two back in the office after lunch.'

**Moral of the story:** Always let your boss have the first say.

\*\*\*

### Lesson 4 of 5

An eagle was sitting on a tree resting, doing nothing. A small rabbit saw the eagle and asked him, 'Can I also sit like you and do nothing?'

The eagle answered: 'Sure, why not.' So, the rabbit sat on the ground below the eagle and rested.

All of a sudden, a fox appeared, jumped on the rabbit and ate it.

**Moral of the story:** To be sitting and doing nothing, you must be sitting very, very high up.

\*\*\*

### Lesson 5 of 5

A turkey was chatting with a bull. 'I would love to be able to get to the top of that tree,' sighed the turkey, 'but I haven't got the energy.'

Well, why don't you nibble on some of my droppings?' replied the bull. 'They're packed with nutrients.'

The turkey pecked at a lump of dung, and found it actually gave him enough strength to reach the lowest branch of the tree. The next day, after eating some more dung, he reached the second branch. Finally, after a fourth night, the turkey was proudly perched at the top of the tree.

He was promptly spotted by a farmer, who shot him out of the tree.

**Moral of the story:** Bullshit might get you to the top, but it won't keep you there.

End of training.



## Food for Thought

# We are not in the same boat

We are not all in the same boat.



We are all in the same storm.

Some want to go back to work because they are running out of money. Others want to kill those who break the quarantine.

Some need to break the quarantine to stand in line at the banks. Others criticize the government for the lines.

Some have experienced the near death of the virus; some have already lost someone from it, some are not sure their loved ones are going to make it, and some don't even believe this is a big deal.

Some of us who are well now may end up experiencing it, and some believe they are infallible and will be blown away if or when this hits someone they know.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during this 2020. Others say the worse is yet to come.

So, friends, we are not in the same boat.

We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different. And each one will emerge, in his own way, from that storm.

Some with a tan from their pool. Others with scars on the soul (for invisible reasons).

It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance. Not just looking, more than looking, seeing.

See beyond the political party, beyond religion, beyond the nose on your face.

Do not underestimate the pain of others if you do not feel it.

Do not judge the good life of the other, do not condemn the bad life of the other. Don't be a judge. Let us not judge the one who lacks, as well as the one who exceeds him.

We are on different ships looking to survive. Let everyone navigate their route with respect, empathy and responsibility.

Unknown author

## Never have I seen such a mess

On every Monday, the heart longs for the office but the weekend does not seem to end.

Those who have money have no way to spend it.

Those who don't have money have no way to earn it.

There is enough time on hand but you cannot fulfil your dreams.

The culprit is all around but cannot be seen.

If someone leaves this world, he cannot be bid adieu.

\*\*\*

Never have I seen such a mess in life.

The air is pure but wearing a mask is mandatory.

Roads are empty but it is impossible to go on long drives.

People have clean hands but there is a ban on shaking hands.

Friends have time to sit together but they cannot get together.

The cook inside you is crazy, but you cannot call anyone to lunch or dinner.



# Struggle with self-discipline? Try forming these habits



Darius Foroux of Medium

**W**ithout discipline, we give up easily

Self-discipline is the ability to make yourself do things even if you *don't* want to do them. That's one of the most important qualities in life.

Especially in 2020, since we're all forced to work and spend more time at home. There's not much we can do outside of the house. That requires self-discipline. A lot of discipline.

We can't travel, eat out, shop comfortably, watch movies at the cinema, go to concerts, and so forth. And yet, we're expected to behave like good people. We're expected to work remotely, stay in shape, participate in video calls, take online courses, keep in touch with family, you name it.

Without self-discipline, we will revert back to giving up. Because whether you're aware of it or not, we're all headed towards chaos. That's the natural direction of life.

We need self-discipline to fight back. But how do you develop it? It remains a complex issue, and no one has the answers. Jocko Willink simply says that you must do things and not complain. I like that, but for us mortals, it's not that simple.

One thing I know is that it doesn't happen overnight. I prefer to focus on habits that lead to discipline, instead of focusing on self-discipline itself. So here's a list of habits I've adopted that made me more disciplined.

## Hold yourself accountable

If you say you're going to do something, *do it*. And if you can't, have a good reason. That's the foundation of self-discipline. But you don't do things so you can prove something to *others*.

No, you do it for yourself. You hold yourself accountable by writing down your goals, intentions, and actions. No one is watching. Just be yourself.

This doesn't have to be complicated. I

write down what I want to do every single day in my journal. Then, at the end of the day, I look at what I actually did. When your actions match your words, you're on the right track.

## Be honest in your communication

To yourself and to others. Honesty is difficult for most of us because it requires humility. We're often afraid of telling the truth because we think we look weak.

But the opposite is true. When you're not honest, people can tell. As a result, no one will take you seriously. We all have weaknesses and issues. There's no need to hide it. There's also no need to play the victim. Simply stick to the truth.

When you keep on being honest with yourself and others, it's easier to be disciplined. Because it's not the end of the world when we screw up. I have bad days too. I eat junk food. I skip my workouts. But I'm honest about it when I do. That brings me back on the right path.

## Set the right example

Never expect people to do something you're not doing. And if you're doing something others are not doing, don't expect them to do it.

"What's that?" I know. It sounds like a paradox. It comes down to this: Do the right thing and have zero expectations of others. If some people don't want to do that themselves, it's not your problem. Keep on setting the right example. This is one of the biggest cliches in the world, but let your actions speak for you.

## Improve every day

Most people don't have the patience and drive to improve. Recently, a person who bought my writing course said it was too much work to improve their writing. No kidding?!

Of course it's hard to improve yourself. That's why most people don't do it. I gave that person a refund. It's not for you. There are enough people who *do* want to improve themselves. If you have the will to improve, you don't have to worry about self-

discipline.

But you need to have a reason to improve. Why do you want to get better at a skill? What do you want to use it for? Why do you want to get in shape? What will you do when you're fitter?

## Think on paper

Putting your thoughts into words helps you to understand yourself and what you're doing. I often come up with an idea that sounds great in my head.

But then I put my idea into words. I start thinking on paper. I simply write down my thought process. I start like this: "I have a new idea. It's..." By the end of the page, I know whether it's useless or not. Often, my behaviour is not a matter of self-discipline - or a lack of it.

Sometimes you don't do something because it's not the right thing to do. So always think on paper. After you've scribbled down your thoughts, let it rest, and get back to it a few days later.

Then, you think "this is great" or "this is stupid". Either way, you win. Why? You used your brain as a tool.

## Do what you can

Look, life is far from perfect. We will never have the perfect circumstances to work. You know, I wish I lived in a mansion on the beach. I wish it never rained when I want to go outside. I wish, I wish, I wish. It's all fun and games. But in life, we must do what we can with what we have.

- Tired? Do what you can.
- Fired? Do what you can.
- Got to pay your bills? Do what you can.
- Shitty house? Do what you can.
- No friends? Do what you can.

## Look ahead, very far ahead

It will not always remain summer. Life moves in cycles. Sometimes it's great for a long time. And sometimes it's bad for a long time. Things happen. Economies collapse. Jobs disappear. Natural disasters happen. Pandemics shut down life. You name it.

The best way to deal with all of it is to be prepared. Train your body and your mind. Build a cash buffer. Get rid of excess. Life is very long.

## Live NOW

But none of the above means you should *always* think about the future. Life happens NOW.

Working from home, reading a book, going for a walk, spending time with loved ones; all those things happen right now. You're not helping yourself by being lost in your thoughts.

You only help yourself by being disciplined about living in the present. I remind myself of this several times a day.

Did you know that living in the present is a *skill*? You've acquired it once you're aware of your thoughts. That's all. So next time you're preoccupied, clenching your jaw, and not paying attention to what's in front of you, snap out of it. "Just like that?"

Yes, just like *that*. Get back to what matters most: The one thing that's right in front of you.

## In A Light Vein

# A bar opened opposite a church!!!

**T**he church prayed daily against the bar business.

Days later the bar was struck by lightning and caught fire which destroyed it.

Bar owner sued the church authorities for the cause of its destruction, as it was an action because of their prayer.

The church denied all responsibility!

So the judge commented, "It's difficult to decide the case because here we have a bar owner who believes in the power of prayer and an entire church that doesn't believe in it."

\* \* \*

## Avoid touching M.E.N. to stop the spread of Covid-19

**M** - Mouth

**E** - Eye

**N** - Nose

## Follow W.O.M.E.N. to prevent Covid-19

**W** - Wash your hands with soap

**O** - Obey directives

**M** - Move away from crowded places

**E** - Exercise regularly

**N** - Never ignore warning signals.

\* \* \*

L'homme traverse la plus difficile phase de sa vie.

Le gouvernement ne veut pas qu'il travaille.

Son épouse ne le veut pas à la maison.

La police ne le veut pas dans la rue.





# 16 Gorgeous Stars Turning 50 In 2020 Who Haven't Aged A Day: Kelly Ripa, Mariah Carey, & More



Mariah Carey



Kelly Ripa

*Some of Hollywood's biggest stars are turning 50 this year! Kelly Ripa and Mariah Carey are among the famous faces who have barely aged in the past decades*

she told Town & Country. "Trying to play the scene at hand while also trying to hold your face up. Fast-forward to being 68, and it's a glorious act of bravery."

She also added, "There were people on the [Golden] Globes in their twenties who were so Botoxed. In their twenties! We've been so conditioned now to never see a real human face, one that moves, with its original teeth. Sometimes we forget that there is a choice. I choose not to do this. It's like wearing multiple pairs of Spanx: Good for you, not for me. Not mandatory."

Another Hollywood A-lister, Taraji P. Henson celebrates the half-century milestone on September 11, and said she was determined to shatter the ageist glass ceiling in Hollywood. "I still feel like I'm just getting started. I still feel like I have so much more to do," she told Refinery29 in an interview. "Men don't have an age limit put on them at all. They don't. I have not seen a man stop

working because of his age. I haven't even seen a man stop working because of his receding hairline or his beer gut. So why should women have a limit?"

Some of Hollywood's top A-listers are celebrating a massive milestone in 2020: their 50th birthday! These actors, singers and TV personalities are the total embodiment of 'aging gracefully', many of whom look exactly the same as they did decades ago! Over the next 12 months, dozens of famous faces will be hitting the huge milestone birthday, including Kelly Ripa, Mariah Carey, and Naomi Campbell. The "All I Want For Christmas" singer turned 50 on March 27, but she isn't a big fan of celebrations. "I don't have a birthday," the five-time Grammy winner joked in a 2016 interview with Complex. "I was just dropped here. It was a fairyland experience. Honestly, when you put a number on it yourself, it's just like, 'Why?' Why do that?"

Fellow A-lister Naomi Campbell, who is among the most prolific models in the world said she was excited for the milestone she will celebrate on May 22. "I'm so embracing it, I can't wait," she said in an interview with Lorraine. The super-

model isn't phased by being among the oldest women on the runway, sometimes even sharing the stage with her friends' daughters.

"I embrace that too! I think it's great, and I just think they're giving me a helping hand when I've got to run around and come back down for the finale and it's all down the steps and they're like 'we'll help you' and I look up and it's daughters of my friends, and I kind of feel that's special in a way," she added.

Meanwhile, Mean Girls writer Tina Fey will turn 50 just a few days earlier on May 18. The 30 Rock star has spoken candidly about how tough the film industry can be on women who grow older in the spotlight. "The greatest challenge for me as an actress is just getting older,"



## YOUR STARS

### Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

You'll be well determined to improve your career situation; however, you'll notice certain tension between you and your colleagues on one hand, and between you and your hierarchical superiors on the other hand. Your sexual form will agreeably surprise your partner.

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

It won't yet be torrid passion between you and your partner, but things will tend to improve noticeably. Despite your good will, dialogue with your children will be difficult; you'll have the impression to be permanently confronted with their provocations.

### Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You could win an excellent financial deal. In any case, you'll have the capacity to manage your finances with rigour and seriousness. It may be opportune to remind you that, if there's always a little folly in love, there's also always a little reason in folly.

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

You must think to reduce not only foods very rich in cholesterol but also all foods that are too much sweetened and alcoholic beverages. Don't neglect small details and be attentive to all that you'll be led to sign.

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

This astral climate will incline to a somewhat blunted sense of good and evil; therefore beware of a tendency to moral laxity. Above all don't give in to the temptation to try to solve your problems by ways which border with illegality or scandal.

### Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

Interesting opportunities should present themselves on the material plane; don't miss them for you won't find others soon. Heart wise, on the contrary, don't expect great changes. If you're a lonely soul, you'll still have to endure your situation.

### Gemini: May 21 - June 20

With you, even a mild beginning attraction may quickly become a great fire of love. Your instincts may overpower you; don't let them dominate you completely. Your nerves will be put to hard test; maximum irritation because of your children; on top of all that, a dispute with your spouse!

### Cancer: June 21 - July 22

There will reign in your entourage very strong tension and, as you'll be like a bear with a sore head, conflicts may be numerous. Financial considerations make you seriously doubt the sentiments which others harbour toward you.

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Despite evident inconvenience, you'll readily mingle love and work. Fight against your tendency to mull over the past instead of dealing with the present time and preparing the future. One can change nothing to the past, whether for good or ill; therefore, it would be better to leave it in oblivion.

### Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

If you're single, a sentimental rupture or annoying misunderstanding will perturb your peace of mind. Reconciliations will be really effective only if you take the first steps. On the career front, risks will exist but they can be easily identified.

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

Love, money, health, work: on all these planes the stars will be favourable to you. However one of your friends has tried and will still try to abuse your kindness; you must immediately stop him doing it.

### Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

A person who had disappointed you will rise in your esteem thanks to the courage and serenity which he/she showed under harrowing circumstances. Chance will smile to you. Try to adapt to circumstances if you want to remain in control of the situation.



# 'Bin Kuch Kahe': Zee TV's new serial



**You have turned producer with *Bin Kuch Kahe*. Please tell us about the show**

I am co-producing it with Rajshree Ojha, under the banner of Artecom Entertainment. It is being shot in Jaipur. It's Rajshree's concept and she has been very instrumental. You can say it's a Rajshree Ojha product. We have worked together on the casting and everything else. It's a joint effort. It's a finite series with 157 episodes and is a first of its kind on Indian television. We are treating it like cinema, reports Ahana Bhattacharya of Koimoi.

## What is the story about?

It's a story of three sisters and their relationship with their mother. Apparently, it looks like a dysfunctional family because everybody is fighting with each other. But once you start following the characters, you know that they all have genuine reasons.

## Who all feature in the lead cast?

Shamata Anchan and Sameer Arora are playing the female and male leads respectively. Both Rajshree and I believe that all the three sisters are the lead in this serial since it is their story. The elder sister is being played by Rashmi Somvanshi, Nirvana is essaying the

middle sister and Shamata is the youngest sister. We also have Shivam Sood, Nikhil Sabarwal and Bharat Sharma on board. Archana Mittal is playing the mother's role.

## Why is it a finite series?

I and Rajshree were very sure about the fact that we would not do something which is a regular TV show. We wanted to have a start and an end, we didn't want a stretch all story. The moment you tend to stretch it, it loses the grip. It's also a first of its kind in the sense that Rajshree calls it a dramady (drama and comedy), a term popularly used in US sitcom. I think it's the first dramady in Indian television. Zee has always come up with new ideas and tries to experiment with concepts. We are grateful that Zee gave us this creative freedom.

## How was the experience of shooting in Jaipur?

We've been shooting there for the last three months. It was brilliant! It has been a smooth journey. Initially, it was a bit of a task to convince the entire crew to leave their comfort zone in Mumbai and shift to Jaipur temporarily but we managed to do that. It is being shot by Shanu Singh Rajput. Ashish Patil has directed 80-85 episodes while the rest will be directed by Mitesh Chitalia. Our set has been designed in Jaipur by Archana Shourie and Vinod Bagh. We have infused modern architecture with the traditional Jaipur flavour in the set.

## Bin Kuch Kahe's on-set ambience is very positive: Shamata Anchan



The strikingly beautiful and super-talented Shamata Anchan, who mesmerized audience with her acting talent in Star Plus' *Everest*, is currently enchanting viewers as a journalist Myra Kohli in Zee TV's *Bin Kuch Kahe*

Shamata is glad to be part of this light hearted show, which doesn't dabble in too much drama, reports iwmbuzz.com.

"It's an amazing experience working for the show and shooting in Jaipur for it. We have a great bonhomie on the sets. There was also a tradition that whenever the director used to say pack-up, we used to play a song and dance for 5 mins and then go to our respective rooms. We are not only on set but off-screen family too. The on-set atmosphere is also very

positive," shared the actress.

The beautiful damsel is open to work in all genres. She said: "I don't mind doing a web-series or a movie in any genre or language. If the role is good I am okay to do a Telugu movie too."

Shamata is a journalist in the show, so we ask her if she was told to ask questions to the following people what she would ask...

*Your co-star Sameer Arora - How does it feel working with Shamta Anchan?*

*Kapil Sharma - So, all good with your co-actors?*

*Ashutosh Gowariker - When are you planning to make your acting comeback?*

*Ranbir Kapoor - Are you single?*

## TV SERIAL

### Kulfi Kumar Bajewala

**Friday 8 May:** Mahinder supports Gunjan's accusations about Loveleen while Chandan receives an unexpected news. Later, Kulfi is overwhelmed on meeting Bhola.

**Monday 11 May:** Loveleen is shocked by Nandini's reply while Kulfi learns the truth about Chandan. Later, a confused Loveleen finds a clue about Sikander.

**Tuesday 12 May:** Kulfi and her friends trick Chandan's men, and they disguise themselves to meet Bhola at his house. However, Pakhi recognises Kulfi and provokes Bhola against her.

**Wednesday 13 May:** While Kulfi struggles to remind Bhola of his past, Nandini's mother tries to mislead her. Later, a suspicious Chandan spots Kulfi near Nargis park.

**Thursday 14 May:** Kulfi and her friends plan to verify some vital information about Bhola. Meanwhile, Chandan is tensed as Loveleen finds the location of his house.

### Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

**Friday 8 May:** Naina and Sameer are upheld on their plan of going to Mumbai and fulfilling Sameer's dream of becoming an actor. Naina asks her father to accompany them to Mumbai if he wants to sure of their safety.

**Monday 11 May:** Naina decorates the whole house and lights it up with candles to have a good time with Sameer. Sameer tries to avoid her and throws his tantrums when Kanji interrupts. Naina takes advantage of Sameer's tantrums and invites him inside.

**Tuesday 12 May:** Sameer sells his house to fulfill his dream of getting a new bungalow for Naina. He even tries not to let her know about the sale of his house. And they both pack their luggage to leave for Bombay.

**Wednesday 13 May:** Everyone gets together in the family and all are happily giving farewell to Sameer and Naina. All are busy in games and dance and happy as well.

**Thursday 14 May:** Sameer and Naina leave for Bombay finally by packing up their luggage. All family members bid them farewell in the railway station. Even Sameer promised Naina that he will make a better house for her than she was having.

### Ek Deewaana Tha

**Friday 8 May:** Vyom tells Madhavi and Ranjan about Shivani's death and why he had done what he did. Radhika reveals to Krish that Shivani was not up for her wedding with Akash. Things take a nasty turn when Vyom reveals the whole truth.

**Monday 11 May:** Krish and Radhika wants to look for Shivani. Akash threatens Mr and Mrs Bedi, they are at his gun-point. Akash convinces Radhika to re-enact the past life character for his movie.

**Tuesday 12 May:** Vyom reveals to Radhika that he has been waiting twenty five years for Shivani to be his. Radhika asks Krish to have faith on him and to be by her side. There is someone in the house and he gets a hold of Radhika, calls her out by Sharanya.

**Wednesday 13 May:** Radhika is convinced someone grabbed her, but Akash tries to manipulate her into thinking she got unconscious. Krish believes in Radhika and goes to look out for whoever grabbed her.

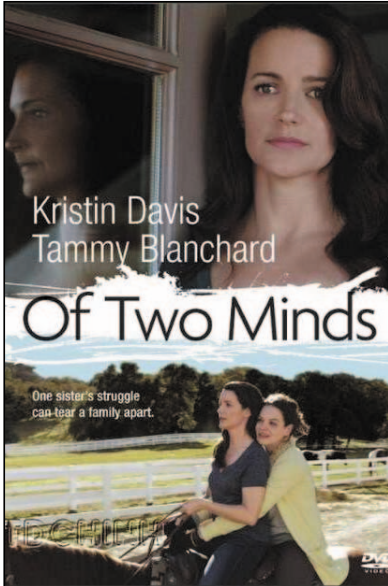
**Thursday 14 May:** Akash aka Vyom sets a trap to kill Krish but things turn nasty when his plans fail and he gets stabbed instead. Shivani and Krish take him to the hospital. Shivani gets a vision from the past. Krish proposes his love for Shivani just to get a cold rejection.



## CINE 12

Vendredi 8 mai - 21.15  
**Une Soeur Aux Deux Visages**

Avec Kristin Davis, Tammy Blanchard, Joel Gretsch

Vendredi 8 mai  
- 15.03**Koi Mil Gaya**

Avec: Rekha, Hrithik Roshan, Preity Zinta

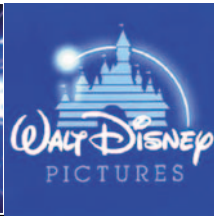


## CINE 12

dimanche 10 mai - 21.15

**Underworld Awakening**

Avec: Kate Beckinsale, Michael Ealy, India Eisley

**MBC 1**

06.33 Local: Encounter  
07.00 Dessin Anime  
10.24 Mag: Origami  
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo  
12.00 Le Journal  
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs  
12.35 Doc: Wildlife Heroes  
13.30 Local: Saver Kiltirel  
14.00 Local: Pause Cuisine  
14.30 D.Anime: Raju The Rickshaw  
14.44 D.Anime: Astrology  
15.07 D.Anime: Kuu Kuu Harajuku  
16.28 D.Anime: Polly Pocket  
17.00 Live Press Conference  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Serial: Siya Ke Ram  
19.30 Journal & La Meteo  
20.00 Local: Press Conference  
22.15 Serial: Madam Secretary  
23.00 Le Journal  
23.35 Local: Hit Parade Kreol

**MBC 2**

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

**MBC 3**

06.00 Mag: Eco India  
06.44 Mag: Shift  
07.00 Mag: Initiative Africa  
07.27 Doc: A Question Of Science  
07.32 Mag: Tomorrow Today  
07.57 World Stamps  
09.00 Live Educational Program...  
16.03 Doc: 360 Geo  
16.55 Mag: Strictly Street  
17.21 Doc: The Dresden Legend  
18.04 Charlie And The Humans  
18.35 Local: Talk On Ramadan  
19.00 Mag: Global 3000  
19.26 Doc: A Question Of Science  
19.33 Mag: Euromaxx  
20.01 Serial: Mah-E-Tamaam  
20.41 Serial: Karb  
21.03 Local: Ramadhan 2020  
22.03 Local: Anjuman  
22.29 Doc: The Ruins Of Raqqa  
23.11 Doc: King Of Mountain

**Cine 12**

01.41 Film: Think Like A Man Too  
03.25 Serial: NCIS  
04.05 Film: Central Intelligence  
05.51 Tele: Amanda  
07.15 Film: K2 - The Ultimate High  
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight  
09.52 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour  
10.16 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett  
10.35 Serial: NCIS  
11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor  
12.00 Film: Central Intelligence  
13.37 Tele: Amanda  
14.45 Film: K2 - The Ultimate High  
16.40 Serial: Scorpion  
17.21 Serial: When Calls The Heart  
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: Midnight, Texas  
21.15 Une Soeur Aux Deux Visages

**Bollywood TV**

09.30 Film: Bhai Ho To Aisa  
11.55 / 19.54 - Ek Deewana Tha  
12.11 / 20.11 -  
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala  
12.32 / 20.32 Radha Krishna  
12.54 / 21.09 - Kaleerein  
13.15 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek  
13.37 / 21.46 -  
Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
14.03 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan  
14.25 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz  
15.03 Film: Koi Mil Gaya  
Stars: Rekha, Hrithik Roshan, Preity Zinta  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya  
18.51 Piya Albela  
19.13 Mere Angne Mein  
19.24 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai  
20.05 Ek Deewana Tha  
20.22 Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala

vendredi 8 mai

samedi 9 mai

dimanche 10 mai

06.00 Dessin Anime  
09.36 Mag: Origami  
09.50 Serial: Grandpa In My Pocket  
10.20 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida...  
11.15 Local: Itinerer Moris  
12.00 Le Journal  
12.25 Local: Pause Cuisine  
13.05 Local: The Dodo WHO  
Wanted To Fly  
14.10 Local: Fee Main  
14.30 D.Anime: Raju The Rickshaw  
14.44 D.Anime: Astrology  
17.00 Live Press Conference  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Entertainment: Dance  
19.30 Journal & La Meteo  
20.00 Local: Press Conference  
20.35 Local Prod: MBC  
21.35 Serial: Chicago Med  
23.00 Local: Le Journal  
23.35 Local: Rodrigues

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

06.00 Doc: King Of Mountain  
07.00 Mag: Global 3000  
07.29 Doc: A Question Of Science  
08.03 Doc: Secret Worlds  
08.50 Doc: World Stamps  
08.53 Doc: Sur La Route Des Vins  
09.48 Doc: Photo Number 6  
10.30 Doc: The Ruins Of Raqqa  
11.13 Doc: King Of Mountain  
12.03 Entertainment: Adele...  
13.10 Doc: Secret Worlds  
13.58 Doc: World Stamps  
14.58 Doc: Photo Number 6  
15.41 Doc: The Ruins Of Raqqa  
16.26 Doc: King Of Mountain  
17.09 Mag: Urban Gardens  
17.27 Mag: Global 3000  
18.04 Doc: Bohemian Switzerland  
19.00 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
19.30 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts et...  
20.02 Mag: Mon Histoire  
20.57 Doc: World Stamps

00.20 Tele: Peau Sauvage  
01.29 Film: Une Soeur Aux Deux  
Visages  
03.40 Film: Le Club Des Tigres  
05.25 Tele: Destiny  
06.43 Film: Les Mensonges D'une  
Mere  
08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer  
09.19 Film: Bienvenue Dans La  
Jungle  
10.59 Film: Murder, She Baked  
12.23 Serial: The Bletchley Circle  
13.08 Tele: L'esclave Blanche  
14.06 Tele: La Premiere Dame  
14.45 Film: Le Club Des Tigres  
17.00 Serial: Midnight, Texas  
17.52 Film: E.T. L'Extraterrestre  
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva  
20.30 Series: Midnight, Texas  
21.15 Film: Missing Daughter  
22.45 Tele: Eva Luna

04.05 Ek Deewana Tha  
04.26 Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala  
05.05 Zindagi Ki Mehek  
05.27 Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
05.47 Chhanchhan  
06.07 Ishqbaaz  
06.29 Kumkum Bhagya  
06.50 Piya Albela  
07.12 Mere Angne Mein  
08.00 Zindagi Ki Mehek  
10.11 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai  
12.30 Film: Main Hoon Na  
Starring: Shahrukh Khan,  
Sushmita Sen, Sunil  
Shetty  
16.00 Pavitra Rishta  
18.30 Film: Main Prem Ki Diwani  
Hoon  
21.15 Serial: Siya Ke Ram  
22.05 Serial: Naagin Season 2  
22.55 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek

06.00 Dessin Anime  
09.33 Mag: Origami  
09.45 Serial: Grandpa In My Pocket  
10.35 Local: Un Rasinn  
11.30 Local: Saveurs Plus  
12.00 Le Journal  
14.30 D.Anime: Raju The Rickshaw  
14.46 D. Anime: Croque Nuage  
14.55 La Famille Blaireau-Renard  
15.30 D.Anime: Petit Creux  
15.32 D.Anime: La Famille Passiflore  
16.30 D.Anime: Polly Pocket  
17.00 Live Press Conference  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Local: Safar  
19.00 Local: Anjoria  
19.30 Le Journal  
20.05 Local: Press Conference  
21.30 Film: The Bounty Hunter  
23.00 Le Journal  
23.35 Local: Sega Tambour

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

06.00 Doc: Horizon  
06.51 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
07.44 Doc: Wildlife Heroes  
08.38 Doc: World Stamps  
10.28 Doc: Soyalsim  
11.14 Doc: Horizon S  
12.00 Entertainment: Justin Bieber  
13.00 Doc: Wildlife Heroes  
14.04 Doc: World Stamps  
14.59 Doc: Iran Short Of Water  
15.54 Doc: Soyalsim  
17.31 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
18.00 Doc: Zenith  
18.26 Mag: Japan Video Topics  
18.34 Local: Talk On Ramadan  
19.05 Doc: Builders Of The Future  
19.29 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts Et...  
20.06 Doc: Master Of Engineering  
20.58 Doc: World Stamps  
21.01 Les Dessins De Christian  
21.48 Doc: Futuropolis

00.20 Tele: Peau Sauvage  
01.30 Film: Missing Daughter  
02.56 Serial: Hawaii 5-0  
03.32 Film: Labyrinthus  
05.11 Tele: Destiny  
06.46 Film: Witchslayer Gretl  
08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer  
09.18 Film: Le Zoo Enchante  
10.44 Film: Labyrinthus  
12.15 Serial: Hawaii 5-0  
13.10 Tele: L'esclave Blanche  
13.47 Tele: Premiere Dame  
14.50 Film: Jem Et Les  
Hologrammes  
18.30 Series: Mission: Impossible  
19.15 Mag: Close Up  
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva  
20.30 Serial: Counterpart  
21.15 Film: Underworld Awakening  
Avec: Kate Beckinsale, Michael  
Ealy, India Eisley

02.43 Kaleerein  
03.33 Pavitra Rishta  
05.09 Film: Main Prem Ki Diwani  
Hoon  
08.00 Motu Patlu  
08.11 Chhanchhan  
10.02 Itna Karo Na Mujhe Pyaar  
12.30 Film: Om Shanti Om  
Starring: Shahrukh Khan,  
Deepika Padukone, Kirron  
Kher  
15.13 Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala  
17.00 Punar Vivaah  
17.30 Samachar  
18.30 Film: Hum Saath Saath  
Hain  
Starring: Salman Khan,  
Sonali Bendre, Mohnish  
Behl, Tabu, Saif Ali Khan,  
Karisma  
22.04 Bade Acche Lagte Hai

Samedi 9 mai -  
18.30Stars: Hrithik Roshan, Kareena  
Kapoor, Abhishek BachchanDimanche 10 mai  
- 18.30Stars: Salman Khan, Sonali Bendre, Mohnish Behl,  
Tabu, Saif Ali Khan, Karisma Kapoor**MAIN PREM KI DIWANI HOON****Hum Saath-Saath Hain**





Nita Chicooree-Mercier

# Funding the Press

The treasuries of few countries are full enough to enable governments to allocate sums to prop up ailing sectors in their economies during the present crisis, to avoid massive lay-offs and to keep small businesses afloat. However, employees are losing jobs everywhere and unemployment is on the rise. France even hands out some aid to students to lighten the financial burden off parents' shoulders. The challenge to established authority which the written press normally represents is also flailing about, and only a handful of political leaders have included the press as beneficiaries of state aid.

Undeniably, the press is an indispensable element that informs the public about daily current events at national level and the general health of society, including sociological, economic and political affairs. A few of them have an international readership and are considered as noteworthy reference in international matters in a highly connected world and a global economy. An appeal to readers on their online edition for financial contribution to keep them cope with less revenue generally draws a positive response from many of them.

Other readers may think twice before parting with a few bank notes from their accounts on a monthly basis because of the partisan stance and biased views or silence of the paper concerned on the political handling of key issues peddled by some other papers. Political correctness on societal ills and sensitive issues, compromises with toxic



ideologies misleading the public, withholding information for lack of courage to tell the truth and come out with a balanced reporting let alone analysis do not meet with approval. Increasingly, readers turn to other sources than mainstream newspapers for a deeper insight into matters that concern their country and the world. For the past fifteen years or so, the younger generation has taken stock of the incomplete, partial and sometimes outright biased reporting on major issues. Consequently, they look for the bigger picture of everything happening under the sun from more specialized and informed sources in every field. Internet is their world. Much more so than their elders who loyally stick to the same press outlets to get informed.

Generally, journalists have a passion for their job, connecting people to whatever is happening miles away in their country and across the oceans. Reporters still do their job,

putting their lives in jeopardy in hot spots of the world. Reporting and criticism often lead to conflictual relations with the authorities, and the consequences vary from court action for libellous reports to arbitrary arrests, depending on political regimes. In the example of a far left-wing absolute rule, a journalist is sent up for 15 years for having criticized the Communist Party in China only this week. At the other end of the ideological spectrum, there is absolute monarchical rule which sends a commando to cut a journalist down into pieces with a crude saw without anaesthesia. In between, drug mafiosi underworld has no qualms about blowing up a journalist in her car in Malta, and other mafiosi groups shoot at journalists in the country of the former gulag. Seasoned journalists keep the passion for their job alive despite all odds.

The press is the echo chamber of multiple voices in society. The presence of a number of press papers in a small island may be viewed as a sign of intellectual vitality, but also, by some, of an expression of unwanted cacophony. Whatever be the reality, due attention to the importance of reading papers should be promoted especially among young adults. The sector is groping its way along to stand on its own. Amid lockdown restrictions and business standstill, a business magazine may look like an unessential service, but if its survival for brighter days depend on assistance right now, the plea is worth considering. And the same goes for the predicament of other papers, too, for that matter.

What funds can be taken from public coffers to rescue the sector? With the string of burdens of a viral crown on its head and a garland of thorns around its neck, caused by Air Mauritius and SBM, the government is unlikely to dig in its coffers to extend a generous hand to the press. The other option is to turn to private donations from corporate business, and Mauritians locally and abroad. It is our hope that there will be an understanding, support and a general positive response.



## Tree of Knowledge

# Staying afloat in Post-Pandemic World



Niranjana KarthigaiRajan

“For people in business, 2020 is just a year for staying alive. Don't even talk about your dreams or plans. Just make sure you stay alive. If you can stay alive, then you would have made a profit already,” said Jack Ma, Alibaba group.

Business leaders need to carve out new ways to operate post-Covid 19, and the actions they take now and in the weeks ahead will define them and their companies. Leaders have to envision what the future will look like, how employees and cus-

tomers will have changed by this crisis, and what their companies will need to do to meet their emerging needs.

In a time of crisis, business leaders have to be a courageous champion like Winston Churchill, and not like Neville Chamberlain. That is how Churchill's courageous leadership, profound speeches, and ability to confront reality defeated his enemies.

### Responding to the crisis

Thriving in this downturn requires immediate action planning. And decision making amid uncertainty is not easy. Every good-to-great company faces adversity on its path to great, and during those adverse situations *good-to-great* leaders need to approach those challenges as Admiral James Stockdale did. James Collins, a business strategist, in his book *Good to Great*, relates a conversation he had with James Stockdale, US navy admiral who was imprisoned and tortured for seven years during the Vietnam War. This conversation lead Jim Collins to coin the term the Stockdale Paradox (named after Admiral James).

The Stockdale Paradox is the ability to retain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, and at the same time have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be. The psychological duality of 'balancing realism with optimism' will increase the odds of making a series of good decisions during a bleak situation.

### Adopting to new normal

Businesses can't go back to the way they operated before. Instead, businesses have to become more adaptable, implement new tools to aid collaboration, and rediscover business building.

For instance, the Covid-19 outbreak is going to spike business automation and greater use of technology; increase preference for local over global products and services; supply chains built on just-in-time inventory may have to be reevaluated; teams have to be empowered without top-down governance; reexamining of policies and practices on employee benefits, and much more.

In restructuring the business operations, companies must have employee safety and customer safety as the top priority. Companies have to innovate on contactless option and forecast on emerging new needs of customers post-lockdown.

For instance, retailers may have to innovate ways to minimize crowd gathering in stores. For example, by introducing 'Buy online, pick up in store' option, modifying store hours, training and equipping staff to engage with customers online, and much more.

### Retooling is the key

Companies need to prioritize the most pressing issues first to ensure business continuity and stability. That also means having the discipline to ignore non-essential activity.

Leaders have to define the best ways to resolve:

- Global supply and demand shock through end-to-end single integration platform across the supply chain.

- Companies' financial health by identifying opportunities to shorten the cash-conversion cycle.
- The need for new working and shopping experience by digitization and automation in order to improve resilience, scale, and speed.

### Leading in a crisis

In today's crisis atmosphere, the shortened timeline for companies to react has put leadership style to test as they have to make unprecedented decisions.

The companies that utilize adaptive leadership will emerge stronger from the Covid-19 pandemic. Business leaders can follow the following techniques to make rapid and effective decisions during times of uncertainty and circumstances with imperfect information:

- Fishbowl technique
- Balcony perspective

In fishbowl technique, the decision makers and key experts sit around a table (or virtual table) allowing a few empty seats. The stakeholders observe the meeting and they can also contribute ideas by temporarily taking one of the empty seats. This technique allows various views and debate from various stakeholders unlike the hierarchical approach. Also, this method saves time and enhances the potency of the message.

Balcony perspective proposed by Ronald Heifetz and Marty Linsky suggest that leaders mentally step back from the action to get a complete perspective. In this technique, you learn to be both an observer and a participant at the same time. Unlike as on a dance floor, where the perspective is only limited to things just around you, when you move out of the floor to the balcony, you get a more strategic view of your business.

"In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity," said Albert Einstein. Decision making amid uncertainty isn't easy. Rediscover, rethink and continue to learn as you go.

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