

# MAURITIUS TIMES

*"Life is ten percent what happens to you and ninety percent how you respond to it." - Charles Swindoll*

Air Mauritius

## Pourquoi un traitement fiscal préférentiel pour certains?



Par Aditya Narayan Voir page 4

*Une cure d'austérité serait acceptable pour tous si elle était proportionnellement juste pour chacun. Se débarrasser de ceux au bas de l'échelle pour protéger les privilèges d'une minorité serait injustifiable*

## Has Covid-19 brought any benefits?



'We can see the Himalayas for the first time in 30 years' - from India to Venice, the beautiful side effects of the coronavirus pandemic

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**"Recovery in economic activity post Covid-19 will be slow, painful and weak"**

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## Steeling ourselves

*//Operational disruptions, supply chain uncertainty and cash flow worries have already sent most large companies reeling. Pressure for deliberate, large-scale depreciation of our currency (in order to generate more rupees to pay our workers) will increase, pushing up inflation and the cost of living."*

By Lindsay Rivière See Pages 7-10



# Preparing To Overcome

There is general consensus that the economic fallout from Covid-19 will be dramatic for all countries across the world. Even in the best case scenario, it is estimated that the cost to national economies will be higher than that following the 2008 economic crisis, and losses are likely to exceed over 10% of global GDP. That will add to the lockdown-associated psychological stress and fatigue people everywhere are struggling with. What this means is that the severity of the impacts of the pandemic on national economies and mental health will be dependent on how long it lasts, the response marshalled by governments and how soon a vaccine is developed against the virus.

We may not be out of the woods any time soon according to the latest indications of the pandemic situation in different regions. In fact reports from news agencies indicate that 'coronavirus cases are spiking from India to South Africa and Mexico in a clear indication the pandemic is far from over'.

The surges come as much of Asia, Europe and scores of US states have been easing lockdowns to restart their economies, basing themselves on the flattening of the curve in their respective countries, though this cannot be and is not uniformly to the same degree in different countries. But the need to get the economies running anew, which basically means that people must work 'to put food on the table', the lassitude of the lockdown and the overwhelming urge to socialize have perforce been factored into the national decisions to open up. US autoworkers, French teachers and Thai mall workers are among hundreds of thousands of employees back at work with new safety precautions, reports Associated Press.

Russia reported a steady rise in new infections on Tuesday, and new hot spots have emerged across the nation of about 147 million. It has registered nearly 9300 new cases in the last 24 hours, bringing the total to almost 300,000 infections, about half of them in Moscow. Russia's caseload is second only to that of the US, which has seen 1.5 million infections and

over 90,000 deaths.

The number of cases is now rising across Africa, where all 54 nations have seen confirmed infections for a total of over 88,000 cases and 2800 deaths, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and it is expected that this trend will continue. South Africa has the highest number of cases at over 16,400 and nearly 290 deaths. Infections have increased dramatically in Cape Town and the surrounding Western Cape province, which now accounts for 61% of South Africa's total.

Yesterday WHO reported the highest number of cases worldwide till then - 106000, 45000 of which were in the US alone. Epidemiologists have warned that there may be successive waves that will follow intermittent periods of lockdown.

What does all this mean for Mauritius, which will see the lifting of the almost 70-day lockdown on 1st June? Although the indications are that we are unlikely to have a 'second wave' phenomenon, we must remember that all such projections are made on the basis of available data and are probabilistic. The global scientific consensus is that in the absence of proven specific treatment and a vaccine, the best strategy to control any spread or surge is to apply rigorously the social distancing and other sanitary measures that have been recommended - and one must say generally been followed in Mauritius.

As we open up, this is the message that must be repeated 24/7 using all the means of communication available - radio, television, loudspeakers, billboards, flyers: all over, at workplaces and so on. The leaders must give the example, and the police must be trained to be more persuasive and less coercive not to say aggressive. And of course the frontliners in the health facilities must be given all that is required in terms of equipment, medications, protective gear.

If an enlightened leadership can mobilize and inspire all citizens through personal examples of sacrifice and patriotism that are worthy of emulation, we can look forward to opening up with a confidence to overcome.

# How do you stay safe?

An expert explains how to assess risk when reconnecting with friends and family

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has finally released new guidelines for businesses, bars and schools that are considering reopening. Although following these guidelines should help, it's frustrating there hasn't been more clear, concise communication about the risk of infection. And without strict guidelines, it will be up to us to minimize our own risk and the risk of everyone around us.



As a survivor of leukemia and a bone marrow transplant, I am part of a high-risk population, so my risk calculation is likely different from yours. As my state starts to relax restrictions, I will continue to limit my interactions with others as much as I can.

## How do we minimize risk?

If the riskiest thing is to be in a crowd while indoors with sick people, then it follows the least risky behaviour is to be in small groups, outdoors and to avoid sick people.

I think it will help to describe a simple model of infectious disease. The rate of new infections over a given time period is called the "force of infection," which depends on a few things: the rate at which people contact each other; the probability of infection given contact; and the number of infectious individuals in a population.

This means our ability to prevent new infections depends on two things: reducing the rate at which people contact each other - or reducing the probability of infection given contact.

Reducing the contact rate was the goal of stay-at-home measures. By all accounts, this is still the most effective tool to prevent new infections.

Other nonpharmaceutical interventions, like face masks and hand hygiene, reduce the effective contact, or the chance the virus is transmitted if there is contact. Universal masking may be particularly effective if we can't rely on symptomatic screening for identifying infectious cases.

Or maybe you've heard of the layers of Swiss cheese. Sometimes you have a few interventions (slices of Swiss cheese), but none is perfect (the holes). But stack the slices up, and the holes start to cover up. Layering imperfect interventions can, in a similar way, slow

down transmission.

## So what does it all mean?

I once read a quote about the common cold from Ian Mackay, an Australian virologist: "The only fail-safe means of avoiding a cold is to live in complete isolation from the rest of humanity." The same is probably true for COVID-19.

But that's not realistic. Authorities should borrow ideas from HIV prevention and focus on clear messages for harm reduction. In the absence of stay-at-home orders, all of us will have to decide for ourselves how much risk we are willing to tolerate.

I'm a leukemia survivor, so I will factor that in. You, too, will need to consider your medical history. When I'm not in isolation, I will stack as many layers of Swiss cheese as I can to minimize any risk: staying 6-10 feet away from others, wearing masks, staying outdoors.

I think these are generally common-sense guidelines for anyone.

- If your local authorities allow small gatherings, then getting together with friends who aren't sick or who haven't been in contact with other sick people is safest outdoors.
- Try to stay as far apart from each other as you can.
- Keep a mask and hand sanitizer nearby.
- Don't share food or drinks.
- If anyone feels sick or has had recent contact with someone who feels sick, they should skip the playdate (this goes for adults and kids).
- If you are seeing someone at high risk of severe disease, an older relative or someone with a compromised immune system, take even more precautions and consider whether you can connect with them virtually.

Ryan Malosh  
University of Michigan

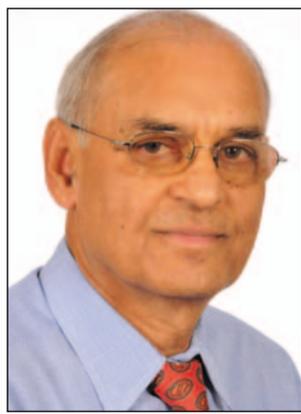
## Mauritius Times

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

# Has Covid-19 brought any benefits?

*We should thank Covid-9 for the opportunity to take a fresh turn in our lives and cast a new look at the world around us*



'We can see the Himalayas for the first time in 30 years' - from India to Venice, the beautiful side effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Photo - www.thetimes.co.uk

At a time when on a daily basis it is the bad and sad news about the Covid-19 pandemic that predominates, it might seem cynical to seek anything positive associated with this overwhelming health crisis. Sure enough, there is the daily tally of rising numbers of cases and deaths globally although in some countries the rate of such a rise may be slowing, the controversies about drug treatment, the lack of protective gear and medical equipment faced by practically all countries, the problems relating to the disposal of so many dead people in such a short time, and the consequential social and economic crises that have been precipitated.

But there are always two sides to any situation, and there are people who, taking a longer term view from the perspective of history, give us reason to hope and perhaps try to boost our morale. Writing in *The Conversation* of May 18, 2020 - 'Four ways economic crises can change things for the

better' - Alexander Tziamalidis and Konstantinos Lagos of Sheffield Hallam University, UK, sound an optimistic note: 'Despite the setbacks from the great depression of the 1930s, the recession that followed the second world war, the oil shocks of the 1970s and the 2007-09 financial crisis, real GDP per capita rose exponentially in the 20th century and 21st century. If there is one lesson from history, it is that the economy will pick up again. Unemployment will be reduced, salaries will increase, the stock market will rise to new unprecedented highs and our factories will be producing more goods than ever before.'

They conclude in an equally confident tone: '...let's think of the opportunities for positive change this pandemic has highlighted. Stronger public health, reduced unnecessary commuting, less pollution and international pharmaceutical cooperation can improve our world. So can increasing the pay, as well as recognition, for key workers. The UK could also lead globally to crack down on tax havens and start taxing big corporations properly. Everyone can do their bit to turn this pandemic into an opportunity for good - let's all fight and vote for it.'

Certainly, our Public Health Division has once again shown that it can rise to the challenge and I will not be surprised if in course of time we are counted among the countries that most successfully managed the Covid-19 crisis. We must not, however, rest on our laurels, and immediately post the crisis situation we must embark on consolidating our Public Health System to face any future pandemics (that are sure to come) through policy and structural changes that are required, as I have suggested in my article in this paper of April 17, 2020 'Wake-up call post Covid-19: Need for a Robust Public Health System', based on my experience in the health system.

Although there is ongoing talk about the world changing forever towards a 'new normal', the question mark in my mind is whether the undoubted short-term

benefits that we have all witnessed - and about which, for example regarding nature, many have waxed lyrical - will be mainstreamed into the future or will soon cease after the lockdown is lifted.

Let's consider 'reduced unnecessary commuting, less pollution' which I think go together. Several countries reported the return of blue skies and blue waters in their rivers; probably in due course there will be publications showing a reduced incidence of asthmatic attacks and acute chest problems during the crisis in places such as Delhi where pollution is endemic. We do not have an issue of air pollution here - but we definitely have traffic pollution if I may use this expression: road congestion and delays, and the related noise pollution from cars emitting unnecessarily high decibels.

On Tuesday last I was driving back from Pailles to Curepipe at about 15.45 pm. I estimated that there was about 25-30% more traffic than during the total lockdown, and I crossed the Rduit roundabout without having to wait, and so too the St Jean one on to Quatre Bornes for a shopping stop. It was such a pleasant drive, and given the circumstances, I couldn't help asking myself what would happen as from June 1st on the lockdown being completely lifted? Definitely the traffic volume will increase, and at a wild guess perhaps up to 50-60% of the pre-lockdown level would still be great in terms of commute time and comfort. So will this benefit last beyond past the lockdown, or will it revert not to the expected 'new normal' but to the bottlenecks, noise and stress of the pre-pandemic period?

Perhaps we all ought to start seriously thinking about how to perpetuate this undoubted positive fallout of the pandemic.

It will involve resets in the workplace in different sectors both public and private, new work patterns and schedules, shorter weeks if possible (New Zealand has settled for a 4-day week). It may also mean less outings and more home deliveries, perhaps creating another entrepreneurial niche.

At the global level, despite some political bickerings both within and in between countries, nevertheless there has been a realization that more and not less cooperation is required to tackle this enemy which knows no boundaries. At the same time, countries have discovered that they could ramp up their capacities to produce protective medical gear such as surgical masks and gowns/aprons, to design and build low cost ventilators by newly set up teams, create indigenous test kits that were in short supply everywhere.

In other words, there has been a move towards self-reliance and a reduction of dependency on single-source supply, a trend which is likely to endure and help countries to be better prepared to deal with future health and associated crises. By the same token, sewing machines acquired a new life and regained their value as housewives got on to making home-made masks for personal use.

In a similar vein, there has been an enhanced awareness about the precariousness and cost of food supplies. In the UK, with online help from the Royal Horticultural Society, many households took to growing and enjoying their own vegetables, and even with the limited experience gained, they are keen on continuing post the crisis. This is something within the reach of many households too locally, and is a clear gain that could be emulated if there is the will.



Photo - imagesvc.meredithcorp.io

In the UK, with online help from the Royal Horticultural Society, many households took to growing their own vegetables. This is something within the reach of many households too locally, and is a clear gain that could be emulated if there is the will. On a personal level, there has been introspection, more sharing of family time together, innovative culinary experiments, going back to books as the online overload of fake and despairing news became unbearable, greater appreciation of the bounties of nature. These, we would concur, are not inconsiderable gains...



After the waters in River Yamuna recently reaching a remarkable level of purity, the Ganga river has now become so clean that the water is fit for drinking. Photo - travelandleisureindia.in

On a personal level, there has been introspection, more sharing of family time together, innovative culinary experiments, going back to books as the online overload of fake and despairing news became unbearable, greater appreciation of the bounties of nature. These, we would concur, are not inconsiderable gains.

Perhaps we should look forward to consolidate them, and thank Covid-9 for the opportunity to take a fresh turn in our lives and cast a new look at the world around us.

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Aditya Narayan

La mise sous administration volontaire d'Air Mauritius est suivie de la divulgation d'informations diverses sur les opérations et les pratiques de gestion qui avaient cours au sein de cette compagnie avant la date fatidique de la déclaration d'insolvabilité.

Chaque semaine apporte son lot de secrets révélés, les uns plus croustillants que les autres, grâce à des fuites organisées dans la presse, soit pour valider les critiques formulées contre une gestion malsaine dans le passé, soit pour embarrasser ceux qui étaient dans les petits papiers de la direction, ou encore pour justifier à priori certaines coupures inévitables dans le gras afin de remettre la compagnie sur les rails.

Ainsi, un journal a publié la fiche de paie datant de 2008 d'un commandant mauricien qui touchait presque Rs 1 million par mois. Abstraction faite d'une violation de la confidentialité des renseignements personnels, cette information n'a pas vraiment choqué le public vu que beaucoup de mandarins dans l'Etat et le secteur para-public ont droit à un pactole mensuel aussi élevé avec le cumul d'une vaste gamme de fonctions ou de responsabilités qui leur sont confiées en vertu de leurs prétendues compétences.

Ce qui a choqué davantage, c'est que les allocations diverses sont le double du salaire de base. Le plus grave, c'est que la compagnie, selon une ligne sur la fiche de paie, a remboursé l'impôt sur le revenu payé par l'employé en question pour un montant de Rs 134 399 par mois.

“On se demande ce qui est logique dans un pays où la discrimination fiscale est institutionnalisée... Par exemple, la taxe immobilière s'applique seulement dans les villes. Les régions dites rurales y échappent bien... Deuxième exemple: des employés du secteur public ont droit à l'exemption de taxe douanière sur l'achat d'un véhicule tous les cinq ans alors que ceux du secteur privé doivent payer la taxe. Troisième exemple: les entreprises d'exportation paient l'impôt sur la société au taux de 3% alors que les entreprises produisant pour le marché intérieur paient 15%...”

### Du jamais vu!

C'est du jamais vu : un employeur rembourse à un employé l'impôt déduit de son salaire mensuel sous le système de déduction "Pay As Your Earn". Là, il faut bien préciser les règles.

- Si l'employé est un pilote non-résident qui déclare son revenu aux autorités fiscales de son pays de résidence (et non pas le pays où il travaille) en vertu d'un traité de non-double imposition entre les deux pays, il n'y a rien à redire. L'employé se fait rembourser l'impôt déduit automatiquement de son salaire dans la juridiction d'affectation (ex: Maurice), et il paie son impôt dans son pays de résidence (ex: France).

Cela est conforme au concept de résidence fiscale qui veut qu'un diplomate ou un consultant affecté dans un autre pays que le sien s'acquitte de ses obligations fiscales dans son pays de résidence.

- En revanche, si l'employé est un résident mauricien, il n'y a pas d'autre raison justifiant le remboursement de l'impôt déduit qu'une volonté d'accorder un traitement

## Air Mauritius

# Pourquoi un traitement fiscal préférentiel pour certains?



préférentiel au bénéficiaire.

On savait que le Président de la République et le vice-président sont exemptés de l'impôt sur le revenu en vertu de l'article 5 de la *Constitution of Mauritius (Amendment No. 3) Act, 1991*, qui les place au-dessus des règles qui s'appliquent à tous. On ne savait pas, par contre, qu'un employé pouvait se faire rembourser ses charges fiscales en vertu de son contrat de travail. Ce privilège est-il accordé à d'autres? Il semblerait que le pays soit un paradis fiscal non seulement pour les sociétés étrangères domiciliées dans le secteur offshore avec un impôt sur le revenu de 3%, mais aussi pour une catégorie d'employés privilégiés.

Dans cette affaire, il y a quelque chose qui cloche. Outre le fait que l'employé - dispensé de charges fiscales - reçoit un avantage pécuniaire énorme, la compagnie traite le remboursement d'impôt personnel dans ses comptes comme un des éléments de la dépense salariale déductible de l'impôt sur la société. La compagnie recouvre donc le montant d'impôt personnel versé au fisc par déduction automatique. Finalement le gagant, c'est la compagnie et le perdant est le fisc.

### Equité fiscale

Plus fondamentalement, c'est le principe de l'équité fiscale qui est en jeu. Tous les citoyens sont censés payer des impôts à l'Etat en contrepartie des services gratuits qui sont mis à leur disposition (éducation, soins de santé, pension universelle, etc.). C'est un devoir de citoyenneté dans une république démocratique.

Lorsque des individus sont exemptés de l'impôt sur le revenu ou se font rembourser leurs charges fiscales, on crée une classe à part. On fait d'eux des nantis auxquels la loi générale ne s'applique pas. C'est une discrimination fiscale qu'aucune logique économique ne saurait justifier.

Finalement, on se demande ce qui est logique dans un pays où la discrimination fiscale est institutionnalisée dans d'autres domaines. Par exemple, la taxe immobilière s'applique seulement dans les villes. Les régions dites rurales y échappent bien qu'il n'y ait aucune différence physique ou infrastructurelle entre les deux types de territoire.

Deuxième exemple: des employés du secteur public ont droit à l'exemption de taxe douanière sur l'achat d'un véhicule tous les cinq ans alors que ceux du secteur privé doivent payer la taxe.

Troisième exemple: les entreprises d'exportation paient l'impôt sur la société au taux de 3% alors que les entreprises produisant pour le marché intérieur paient 15%.

Si l'on veut bâtir une société juste et équitable, il est nécessaire d'éliminer toutes les formes de discrimination fiscale. La fiscalité préférentielle pour une minorité est une

source d'inégalités économiques, une source de frustration sociale et une entorse aux valeurs communes d'une république démocratique.

Revenons à Air Mauritius. Le *Covid-19 Bill* ayant force de loi, il est fort probable que le Gouvernement demande à la Banque centrale d'injecter des fonds dans la compagnie afin de la recapitaliser et lui donner des ressources financières pour honorer ses obligations envers les créanciers. Cette injection de capital pourrait se faire par le biais d'une entité spéciale (*Special Purpose Vehicle*) qui serait mise sur pied ou par un transfert de fonds à l'Etat-actionnaire majoritaire qui augmenterait ainsi sa part dans le capital de la compagnie.

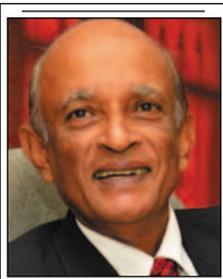
Puisqu'il s'agit de fonds publics en provenance de la Banque centrale, il est primordial que cet investissement aille renflouer une entreprise réformée, redimensionnée et libérée de toutes les charges inutiles (par exemple, les nombreuses allocations personnelles pour certains) qui plombent ses ailes.

Certains croient avoir beau jeu pour blâmer tous les employés en soulignant que la masse salariale annuelle (Rs 3,9 milliards pour 2900 employés) est un coût fixe à comprimer à tout prix pour faire repartir la compagnie avec une ardoise réduite. Or, la moyenne annuelle des salaires de Rs 1,3 millions par employé est une statistique sommaire qui cache mal le fait que c'est un groupe restreint qui touche Rs 1 million par mois.

Le gras à couper existe aux échelons supérieurs de la gestion. Les plus fortunés devraient être les premiers à faire les sacrifices. Une cure d'austérité serait acceptable pour tous si elle était proportionnellement juste pour chacun. Se débarrasser de ceux au bas de l'échelle pour protéger les privilèges d'une minorité serait injustifiable.



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S. Callikan

# Covid-19: Lessons from elsewhere

*If, after the pandemic, we need to send a medical emergency-preparedness team anywhere to gather first-hand information, we know Taiwan should be among the few prime destinations, irrespective of potential ruffled feathers from friends*

**C**ovid-19 has undeniably had an unprecedented impact, both sanitary and economic, across the world, and most countries had struggled with no agreed roadmap to find the correct health response strategy. Mauritius, as an island, could only be exposed to such an epidemic outbreak through imported sources, either through its important tourist and travel industry, or from Mauritians returning from exposed areas, including cruise ships, or even uncontrolled migrant movements.

In other words, our airport and, to a lesser extent, the port are the two nerve centres of any potential infectious spread for a disease that, as we know, bows down neither to VVIPs, nor to the political or economic status of its victims. The latter, particularly with the long incubation period of two weeks and with a proportion of asymptomatic infections, can create havoc as involuntary spreaders in society, unless fast and efficient detection, isolation and containment measures are taken.



Photo: Chiang Ying-ying

leeway to the Health Minister to treat differently any part of our Republic, nor the nature of the communicable disease and its likely morbidity or spreadability. For instance, conditions specific to Rodrigues or Agalega or to a specific eruption zone (say, a Port-Louis suburb) would have warranted a far more refined quarantine control and management tool.

The Act develops no clear graded and coordinated response plan akin to cyclonic conditions that would clearly spell out not just the responsibilities of the general public, but equally important, those of the authorities, who, using the exceptional circumstances of an international pandemic, are granting themselves exceptional powers for any local epidemic; powers that, *en passant*, may even fail the test of constitutionality according to many independent minds.

While still on the topic of pandemic control and handling, as an island our lessons are worth comparing with other island nations and states. Two in particular stand out for the quite different outcomes as reported in the international press: the UK, one of the worst European cases, and Taiwan - one of the most successful pandemic handlers around the world.

Many of us will have been aware that the UK has become Europe's prime exemplar of boisterous unpreparedness and desultory Trumpian-style mismanagement and missteps that have outstretched resources and hospital personnel, taking the tragic tally of infections and deaths well beyond Italy and Spain. The *Financial Times*, not a left-wing alarmist outlet, has even estimated that total deaths

“On 10 May 2020, it had already recorded the outstanding feat of 28 consecutive days free from new reported coronavirus cases, that is, twice the normal incubation period. With a recorded 440 infected cases, today nearly all recovered, and only 7 deaths from Covid-19 for a population of 24 million and despite only 70,000 tests having been conducted, is a remarkable feat by all known world standards and achievements, one that has been praised in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*...”

But we have had a remarkable frontline medical and para-medical team that walked the extra mile that sees us, despite ten unfortunate deaths, in the enviable position of three successive weeks without any new reported case. While we recognise this, there is no doubt that lessons have to be drawn on all fronts: lack of clear sanitary authority on port or airport management, failures at most of our overseas embassies, initial falterings in properly managed quarantine facilities, non-availability of daily life essentials including pharmaceutical supplies and bottled gas, unacceptable price hikes in unscrupulous supermarkets and other outlets, reported hoarding and racketeering on some consumables, to the fate of vegetable growers and fishermen, have all been frayed and disruptive.

These are not failings of laymen and ordinary citizens but of an administration assailed on all fronts, clearly without a preparedness plan prior to the sanitary curfew and pretty much on trial and error mode once it was announced.

It is a worrying state of mind in governing circles when the Quarantine Act makes no headway on the coordination and preparedness fronts as raised previously here and elsewhere. In its sledgehammer approach, the Act gives no

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are double the official figure. The new Leader of the Labour Party, Keir Starmer, was clinically sober, taking pains to factually probe and grill government, in an almost virtual Westminster, on how “*We were slow into lockdown, slow on testing, slow on protective equipment.*”

Mainland China's intense pressures have consistently denied Taiwan an independent presence as WHO member or even an observer status, a fact that adds little to the WHO defense from overbearing influence by the global superpower. Its unfortunate and unjustified political exclusion from the WHO health-sharing forums has made Taiwan's remarkable results in controlling and preventing the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic less available to other nations and less publicized. Yet, as an island nation, these should be of interest to us.

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Key to its success has been preparedness and planned response levels, maybe resulting from various previous epidemics in the South East Asian region and a likelihood of future outbreaks. It is perhaps fortunate that Luo Yi-jun, deputy director for Taiwan's Centers for Disease Control, had been scanning the press in the early hours of New Year's Eve when a thread about an unknown disease causing pneumonia in Wuhan caught his attention. But he immediately emailed colleagues and put the country on alert.



Photo: yuvamauritius.com

On 31 December 2019, the Taiwanese CDC had the authority to implement inspection measures for all inbound flights from Wuhan, China. On 20 January, in its graded response mechanism, the Taiwan government deemed the risk posed by the outbreak sufficient to activate its Central Epidemic Command Centre (CECC) to level 3 and later to level 1 on 28 February. On 26 January, Taiwan had suspended all air travel to and from China, and put in place quarantine measures for passengers. The JAMA lists more than 120 sanitary confinement measures that were locked in successively by the CECC as alert levels moved upscale.

If, after the pandemic, we need to send a medical emergency-preparedness team anywhere to gather first-hand information, we know Taiwan should be among the few prime destinations, irrespective of potential ruffled feathers from friends. Being far earlier on the curve than most countries and having similar insular conditions with its ports, airports, tourism and airline industries, it could even provide our leaders invaluable lessons in progressive deconfinement and on steps to a planned economic recovery.

The teenagers made headlines in 2017 when they won a special 'al' competition in the US. Now they are racing against time to deliver ventilators by the end of May, at a fraction of the market price.

Afghanistan, reeling from years of war, has a maximum of just 400 ventilators for a population of 38.9 million. So far, more than 7,650 coronavirus cases and 178 deaths have been confirmed, but the authorities

hotspot for the pandemic because of its close proximity to Iran, the region's epicentre of the outbreak, reports Sodaba Haidare of BBC.

The girls, aged between 14 and 17, have built a prototype using a motor from a used Toyota Corolla and a chain drive from a Honda motorcycle. They say their ventilators will give temporary relief to patients with respiratory difficulty in an emergency when standard ventilators are not available.

## Afghan girls make ventilators out of car parts



The girls are trying to produce ventilators for a fraction of the market price

fear the situation could get worse and overwhelm an already fragile healthcare system.

Known as the "Afghan Dreamers", the girls come from the western province of Herat, where Afghanistan's first case of Covid-19 was reported. It's the nation's

"I feel so proud to be part of a team that is trying to do something meaningful to support our doctors and nurses - they are our heroes at this time," says team captain, Somaya Faruqi.

The global shortage of ventilators is a problem and their hefty price of \$30,000 (£24,000) to \$50,000 (£40,700) on the global market means many poorer countries can't afford them.

But the teenagers say they are building the much-needed device for less than \$600 each.

With shops closed and the city of Herat under lockdown, the challenge that the girls are facing is travelling outside the province to source parts.

But the founder of the group, Roya Mahboob, an entrepreneur who has been among Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World, says her team is still hoping to deliver the ventilators by the end of May.

## 'It doesn't harm you': Trump defends his hydroxychloroquine use as Covid-19 measure

President Donald Trump emphatically defended himself Tuesday against criticism from medical experts that his announced use of a malaria drug against the coronavirus could spark wide misuse by Americans of the unproven treatment with potentially fatal side effects.

Trump's revelation a day earlier that he was taking hydroxychloroquine caught many in his administration by surprise and set off an urgent effort by officials to justify his action. But their attempt to address the concerns of health professionals was undercut by the president himself, reports Associated Press.

He asserted without evidence that a study of veterans raising alarm about the drug was "false" and an "enemy statement," even as his own government warned that the drug should be administered for Covid-19 only in a hospital or research setting.

"If you look at the one survey, the only bad survey, they were giving it to people that were in very bad shape," Trump said. That was an apparent reference to a study of hundreds of patients treated by the Department of Veterans Affairs in which more of those in a group who were administered hydroxychloroquine died



than among those who weren't.

"They were very old. Almost dead," Trump said. "It was a Trump enemy statement." During a Cabinet meeting, he elicited a defense of his practice from other officials, including VA Secretary Robert Wilkie who noted that the study in question was not conducted by his agency.

But the drug has not been shown to combat the virus in a multitude of other studies as well. Two large observational studies, each involving around 1,400 patients in New York, recently found no Covid benefit from hydroxychloroquine. Two new ones published last week in the medical journal BMJ reached the same conclusion.

## India extends coronavirus lockdown by two weeks

India has extended its lockdown for another two weeks as it attempts to curb the spread of coronavirus. The government's disaster response authority said that new guidelines would be issued, "keeping in view the need to open up economic activities".

The country went into lockdown on 24 March and schools, public transport and most businesses have been shut since. India has recorded 2,896 deaths.

It has more than 90,000 confirmed coronavirus cases and 53,946 active infections.

It is the fourth time the federal government has extended the world's largest lockdown, covering 1.3 billion people. India media dubbed the extension "lockdown 4.0", reports BBC.

### What has changed?

Most of the restrictions remain in place - flights, trains, educational institutions, metro services, restaurants, bars, cinemas and shopping complexes will remain closed.

Restaurants will now be allowed to operate takeaway services, while sports complexes and stadiums can host events without spectators, the home affairs min-

istry said.

And for the first time since the lockdown was announced, private cars and buses can now operate across cities and towns - as well as crossing state borders if they have permission.

Journeys in personal vehicles had been permitted before, but drivers had been discouraged from travelling long distances, often being stopped at police checkpoints and asked where they were headed to.

Essential services - hospitals, pharmacies and groceries - have been allowed operate throughout.

### Have there been other relaxations?

Before this, the government had already relaxed the rules to allow agriculture and related businesses to reopen and operate. And self-employed workers including plumbers, electricians

and carpenters were allowed to start working again.

But the relaxations were allowed only in orange or green zones, which do not have a high number of Covid-19 cases. Tight restrictions continue in red zones, which are seen as hotspots.

The entire country has been divided into these three colour-

coded zones. Officials say the zones are being continuously monitored for a rise or fall in cases.

India's lockdown was put in place quickly and has come at a massive economic cost, with job losses already crossing 120 million.

Compiled by  
Doojesh Ramlallah



This is the fourth time the federal government has extended the lockdown



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# Steeling ourselves

*This is a time not for the shy and the fearful but for the brave and the strong-willed.  
This is a battle Mauritius simply cannot afford to lose*



Lindsay Rivière

*"History has a habit of testing us, as individuals and as a nation; a habit of demanding that we choose between our fears and our hopes."*

-- Former US President Bill Clinton

As Mauritius gradually moves towards 'deconfinement' and the end of the curfew on June 2, we will soon be able to better assess the massive socio-economic devastation of the Covid-19 crisis and plan our response to new realities.

We are, indeed, faced today with one pivotal moment in our History. Our immediate challenge is to **manage fear** and **rebuild hope**. How do we go about achieving this?

**Fear**, today, is everywhere. At the public health level, we may have successfully contained the first onslaught of the pandemic through prompt and decisive action, strict guidelines, inspired leadership and the co-operation of everyone. However, this is only temporary relief: we are not precluded from a resurgence of the virus through some returning Mauritian or visitor. And it only takes one moment of distraction for the fire to flare up again. Constant surveillance will thus become obsessive and may well reach paranoid levels. Furthermore, the Covid-19 crisis has left deep psychological scars in all Mauritians, confronted with weeks of uncertainty and living with the terrifying prospect of serious ill-health or the death of our loved ones. The nation is nervously exhausted. Its emotional balance and safety net have been severely dented.

And yet, there is still worse to come!

## Mental stress and solidarity fatigue

Besides endangering lives, coronavirus is also a job-killer. Massive unemployment will soon affect tens of thousands of households, threatening their financial stability, diminishing their purchasing power and creditworthiness, disrupting family plans, shattering dreams. The mental stress will



*“Operational disruptions, supply chain uncertainty and cash flow worries have already sent most large companies reeling. Pressure for deliberate, large-scale depreciation of our currency (in order to generate more rupees to pay our workers) will increase, pushing up inflation and the cost of living. These various elements all add up to a very dangerous situation: a multi-sector, multi-faceted, all-encompassing, all-at-once crisis! This could quickly evolve from a crisis to a nightmare!”*

inevitably increase. Deep personal and collective anger will quickly follow, making the nation growingly unresponsive to further calls for long-term sacrifice and civic responsibility. It's well to remember that people spend 90% of their time thinking about themselves and their personal issues and far less time than we think reflecting on 'the collectivity' or other people's problems. We may well start facing 'solidarity fatigue' soon. As difficulties increase, people grow more selfish and retire into a 'couldn't-be-bothered', inward-looking attitude.

We can already see this in the trade unions' current display of "mentality of entitlement" to everything. Unions shockingly only defend their paying members' rights and interests and speak up only for those who already have a job, not making a single constructive proposal on larger employment issues and not paying any attention to the future needs of those who do not have a job or who may well lose theirs. The trade union movement typically wants no change to any acquired right, no disruption to the traditional way of doing things, no PRB delay, no reduction in any benefit, while the current crisis situation requires flexibility, adaptability, compromise and the courage to temporarily relinquish some benefits in order to enhance the chances of the unemployed to find jobs. Do not over-estimate solidarity. It goes away like a flower in the wind!

## Intense social pain

At a larger level, considerable social pain lies ahead. As the crisis deepens, the worsening social divide in Mauritius, vividly

exposed during the past few weeks, will extend with long-lasting effects. Many of our citizens will soon have to go into survival mode, skipping mortgage repayments, losing their homes or cars, missing out on school fees. Others will see family businesses they spent years building up simply vanish. Many will face the prospect of financial ruin or bankruptcy and feel like they have gone back many years. Thousands of poor will start lacking food and essential goods. When we reach that breaking point in Mauritius, we are never far from disquieting law-and-order breakdown, from challenges to public authority, sometimes from street riots and serious threats to social cohesion.

How all this alters the national mood, weakens our determination to face future threats is anybody's guess. But we must all, from now on, face one hard truth: **Things will not get better in the coming months. They will get worse.** So, what do we do?

First and foremost, we all have to psychologically steel ourselves against long-term adversity, explain to our children the full extent of the difficulties lying ahead and brace our families for further shocks and serious disruptions to our daily lives.

## A gigantic cost

The deteriorating economy will further destabilize us. The economic cost of the current crisis is going to be gigantic. A significant 10-11% drop in our Gross Domestic Product for 2020, equivalent to some Rs 50 billion, is predicted by the Minister of Finance, after 30 years of slow but steady growth. All deficit and debt fig-

ures will go through the roof since Government will require Rs 100 billion for its various assistance schemes to keep the country afloat. Investment will be down 18% in 2020. Up to 60,000 of our citizens may be retrenched by December, joining the 40,000 pre-crisis unemployed and pushing overall jobless figures to above 100,000 (or 17% of the workforce). This is a frightening, unprecedented level of unemployment, higher than in the darkest days of the '70s and likely to generate considerable frustration and impatience - except that, this time, these will happen in a more sophisticated, better-educated and more demanding society that will not accept this regime for a very long time before starting screaming.

One of our greatest economic successes since Independence, our world-class tourism industry, is on its knees, with little hope of quick recovery and Rs 38 billion in debt. Serious macro-economic threats abound. All sectors are at risk. The country faces a huge setback in its export-earning capacity and its actual foreign-exchange earnings, as larger countries increasingly turn inwards, start stock-piling and as world demand for our products falls dramatically. Operational disruptions, supply chain uncertainty and cash flow worries have already sent most large companies reeling. Pressure for deliberate, large-scale depreciation of our currency (in order to generate more rupees to pay our workers) will increase, pushing up inflation and the cost of living.

\* Contd on page 10

**Sameer Sharma:**

# “Recovery in economic activity post Covid-19 will be slow, painful and weak”

**S**ameer Sharma makes an insightful analysis of the current local and global economic and financial situations and how Mauritius is dependent on the global network. Taking us through the intricacies of the pre-COVID situation of the economy and with an eye on how to face the post crisis, he makes some realistic proposals and suggestions for a viable way forward to salvage the country – but warns that it is not going to be easy and that those who are better off must be prepared to share more in support of the country's future.

Sameer Sharma is a Data Science Consultant currently based in the US. He has more than 12 years of quantitative analytics, predictive modelling and global multi-asset investing experience, and is passionate about all things data and how it can be leveraged to solve real world problems within the financial sector.

**Mauritius Times:** Mauritius appears at this stage to have the coronavirus under control. Rebooting the economy may prove to be the hardest part of the battle, isn't it?

**Sameer Sharma:** Indeed. There is increasing consensus that the recovery in economic activity post Covid-19 will be slow, painful and weak globally and more likely than not in Mauritius too. A lot of damage has been done and will continue to be done to corporate balance sheets and Government finances globally.

Covid-19 may lead to a transition of the world order from peak globalization to accelerated de-globalization which is a permanent negative for potential growth. During the last Great Financial crisis, states barely won the battle but the ensuing gap between markets and the common man meant that policy makers lost the war over time.

Growing wealth inequality in turn led to a rise in populism and nationalism. Europe as a monetary union barely made the past decade out in one piece. Covid-19 will make it all much worse.

**\* As regards the economic consequences of the pandemic, it surely is going to be painful for all of us – whether it's the big or the smaller countries? How hard will it be for a small island-state like Mauritius with an open economy highly dependent on the hardest-hit countries of Europe and the USA for its trade and exports?**

“It is not as if the Government can borrow to infinity and help everyone under the sun. It is not just about recapitalization but about the planes Air Mauritius has which would correspond to a more profitable strategy. A lot of money will be required and who will negotiate with pensioners to reduce the pension bill?”

Given the sheer size of the Global Business Sector when compared to what it was in 2008, given our dependence on tourism receipts and reliance on villa sales to foreigners which we like to call Foreign Direct Investment as if it were some productivity-enhancing investment, Mauritius came into this crisis very exposed to the going-ons in the world, especially in that of Europe. The rise of these sectors over the past two decades brought large foreign exchange flows which, when coupled with an unsustainable wage set-



“Mauritius should open itself up to young Indian, African and European entrepreneurs who are willing to come to Mauritius and set up their start-ups or midsized companies. We should shift away from attracting just the silver generation. Mauritius has sun, sea, good 'Ease of Doing Business' metrics and is a safe place to live in. Mauritius needs more people to scale up...”

ting policy, in turn led to an appreciation of the real effective exchange rate of the Rupee.

Too many people focus on the MUR/USD rate, but it is indeed the real effective exchange rate (REER) which matters more as it captures both trade weighted currency movements and wage growth differentials to those of our main trading partners. These factors when added to our lack of productivity growth had already brought about weak export growth figures for quite some time now.

In the post Covid-19 world, we should not expect a strong recovery in our already weak pre-crisis export and trade figures. The problem this time is that with a weak global growth outlook in the next five to ten years, those foreign exchange flows too (assuming we even get out of the European Union blacklisting on time) will not be coming as easily as before.

**\* If the going will get tough in the months ahead, how soon will that be?**

The recession is already here. What is important to grasp from a policy making angle is that this is not a one-round “game”. Game theorists will understand that the medium term outlook corresponds to a multi-round game. It is in this context that monetary policy must be taken to uncharted territory now, before longer term stagflationary risks, which de-globalization can bring about, come to the fore.

**\* Besides the cost to the Mauritian economy of the two-month lockdown, further public spending to prevent a deep depression will probably far exceed the current government spending on the Wage Assistance Scheme. How will Mauritius finance all of that? Through financial assistance from the IMF, loans from 'friendly countries, the reserves of the Bank of Mauritius, a Covid tax?**

If this were to be a temporary shock or one-round game, as we say in Game Theory, the right approach would be to increase long-term Government borrowing via traditional means, offer wage support and offer tax breaks to select sectors. Monetary policy would simply respond by keeping rates low for longer. But this will not be a one-round game.

“If the CEO of SBM had the bulk of his salary paid in vested SBM shares redeemable gradually over five years with claw back provisions, do you think all this would have happened? You need to align the interest of senior management to those of the shareholders...”

We have to remember that Mauritius was engaging in money printing which is what a special reserve fund transfer is prior to the crisis. The Mauritian Government faces large unfunded liabilities in the form of the Basic Retirement Pension and contingent liabilities with the National Pension Fund assets heading to zero in the coming two decades on top of existing public debt.

On the foreign side, credit rating agencies have already been telling us that our country's debt metrics are higher than those of similarly rated Baa1 peers although our growth rate and the local bias in debt was higher which kept the rating stable. While we may indeed borrow from the IMF and use up our quota and yes, while we may need to borrow more locally given low interest rates, we just cannot sustain a multi-round regime when our tax revenues will be under pressure as well.

Remember that the two largest local banks are always rated one to two notches below the sovereign rating. A downward revision in the Mauritian credit rating would create quite the volatility in foreign currency deposits held at these banks.

We cannot wait for later when it comes to unconventional monetary policy because there is uncertainty as to what a potential second wave, and over the longer-term what de-globalization could do to the global inflation outlook which is for now quite deflationary. Central banks across the globe are front-loading unconventional monetary policy because of this uncertainty. Mauritius will be doing the same.

**\* A budget is coming up soon. It is expected that the Government will spell out its strategy and announce measures to help weather the storm and speed up economic recovery. Which measures do you think would sit well with the Mauritian context and facilitate a speedier economic recovery?**

There will be no speedy recovery but a gradual recovery. The focus of the budget should be to ensure that the credit situation of the free cash flow poor private sector is contained so that as many jobs as possible are preserved and, secondly, it needs to offer targeted support to the most vulnerable.

# 'Government cannot borrow to infinity and help everyone under the sun'

☞ Cont. from page 8

For larger corporates, the SPV private equity type approach would be financed mostly by the BoM directly and indirectly. For small and medium sized businesses, the Government should offer loan guaranties on their debts. The Government could, for example, guarantee all securitized loans of small businesses bought by the Bank of Mauritius from banks or guarantee loans via banks directly. We need to strengthen corporate balance sheets as much as possible in this multi- round game.

This may not be possible in this budget, but Mauritius must invest much more in renewable energy and agri so that it can start to reduce its import content. For this to happen, it needs to review its tax policy - which favours the rentier economy - towards one which favours production. This needs to be done gradually of course as sadly we still need to sell villas to plug the current account deficit, assuming we can still find buyers.

The Government must also cut wasteful spending, cut salaries of highest paid bureaucrats and more importantly review all budget programs in terms of cost and benefit. Are we achieving our objectives and can we spend less money and achieve similar objectives? It may not be the right time to raise taxes significantly, but the budget must signal a move towards more taxes on the rich in the form of property taxes and then expand the negative income tax.

The Government must also begin to reform the parastatals which are low hanging fruits when it comes to productivity enhancement of the economy.

“Mauritius must invest much more in renewable energy and agri so that it can start to reduce its import content. For this to happen, it needs to review its tax policy - which favours the rentier economy - towards one which favours production. This needs to be done gradually of course as sadly we still need to sell villas to plug the current account deficit, assuming we can still find buyers...”

**\* I presume you would also call for more circumspection in the event that Government steps in with a Stimulus Package to bolster ailing companies in the wake of Covid-19 so that taxpayers (present and future) do not have to bail out businesses, which could be restructured in bankruptcy proceedings that should not lead to their shutdown?**

Large Mauritian non-financial conglomerates are asset rich but free cash flow poor. Their subsidiaries are undercapitalized and over leveraged and also have weak liquidity metrics. This is the norm. Now with the crisis and post crisis recovery, they will need patient capital. The way you do this is with the SPV which will provide deemed viable firms (after all other resorts have been exhausted) with patient capital in the form of convertible preferential shares.

The SPV would appoint an external fund manager with a clear mandate who would then negotiate haircuts with banks and work on re-engineered capital structures that better match the economic regime. The SPV needs to be independently managed and accountable to Parliament and would have an attractive long-term return target to achieve. It would have influence on the Boards and could even push for employee representatives on these Boards. It certainly cannot be free give-aways anymore but the structure needs to be independent and guaranteed in law.

**\* Besides the 'sunset industries', there have also been bad news about Air Mauritius and SBM. The former has been placed in voluntary administration and the latter has seen its profits dip to its lowest level for years. What's your take on how our Republic's jewels have been managed?**

This has more to do with the political system which has outlived its usefulness. One remedy would be to break down the salaries of politicians and their nominees to a lower base salary and a higher performance-based bonus with clear preset KPIs which would be made public.

If the CEO of SBM had the bulk of his salary paid in vested SBM shares redeemable gradually over five years with claw back provisions, do you think all this would have happened? You need to align the interest of senior management to those of the shareholders.

**\* However one would have expected the Government to extend more support to Air Mauritius (with the necessary strict and binding conditionalities) given its long-term importance to the country instead of allowing it to go into voluntary administration. What's your take on that?**

Air Mauritius has had an Altman Z score in the bankruptcy zone for close to two decades, and it has had poor return on capital and investment metrics for most of the past two decades bar a couple of years between 2016 and 2018. The State may be largely at fault for where Air Mauritius has come down to but it simply cannot afford to bail it out anymore unless politicians are willing to stay out of the airline.

This bailout will by the way need to come via unconventional means and transfers, a process which entails its own set of risks. It is not as if the Government can borrow to infinity and help everyone under the sun. It is not just about recapitalization but about the planes Air Mauritius has which would correspond to a more profitable strategy. A lot of money will be required and who will negotiate with pensioners to reduce the pension bill?

**\* BBC reported last week that China is going to face an 'unprecedented global backlash that could destabilize its reign as the world's factory of choice' and India is keen 'to make inroads into a space it hopes China will vacate sooner rather than later'. Scale no doubt matters, but are there opportunities for Mauritius in the post-Covid world?**

If Mauritius is able to get out of this dangerous European Union blacklist and recognize the fact that it has weak demographics and needs to be more open to immigration, then a lot of opportunities will present themselves.

Mauritius should open itself up to young Indian, African and European entrepreneurs who are willing to come to Mauritius and set up their start-ups or midsized companies. We should shift away from attracting just the silver generation. Mauritius has sun, sea, good 'Ease of Doing Business' metrics and is a safe place to live in. Mauritius needs more people to scale up.

Our demographics are worsening. Mauritius frankly is too small and needs to be more in sync with the happenings of an increasingly competitive world. Some local entrepreneurs still live in their own coconut shells. They are lucky that the country is so small that most large foreign companies are not that interested to come here and compete.

Banks globally are realizing that they need to diversify the geographies of their operations post Covid-19. Mauritius is blessed with some of the best bilingual accounting talent in the world and we can certainly compete with



The Government must also cut wasteful spending, cut salaries of highest paid bureaucrats and more importantly review all budget programs in terms of cost and benefit. Are we achieving our objectives and can we spend less money and achieve similar objectives? It may not be the right time to raise taxes significantly, but the budget must signal a move towards more taxes on the rich in the form of property taxes...

the Indians and Asians in general when it comes to accounting and being a bank back office. The issue sometimes is that our nominees who are sent out to meet bankers globally do not do us proud. We should introspect on this.

Local pension funds must also evolve and help develop via seed capital an ecosystem which brings providers and seekers of capital together in order to develop the local private equity and private credit markets. Unless we can deepen our capital markets, we will not attract the right kind of entrepreneurs.

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“ *As unemployment looms, Government should urgently fill all vacancies in the public sector, lower retirement age, call upon the well-to-do to make fiscal sacrifices and effectively demonstrate solidarity with substantial pay cuts for executives; no 2020 end-of-the-year bonus above a certain wage level; no dividend declaration for 2020 and 2021; securing temporary land leases for the unemployed to go in modern agriculture...* ”

\* Contd from page 7

These various elements all add up to a very dangerous situation: a multi-sector, multi-faceted, all-encompassing, all-at-once crisis! This could quickly evolve from a crisis to a nightmare!

### Restoring hope

How does Mauritius react to all this? How do we rebound, rebuild, put our citizens back to work, remain efficient in this changing world? How, in this terrible mess, do we **restore hope** and redefine a shared vision of the future?

Our national recovery essentially requires three attitudes: **Basic No-Nonsense Realism**, promoting an atmosphere of **Mutual Trust** and instilling a sense of **Renewed Optimism**.

1. First, we all have to fully understand that we are in a transition to a new social order, a new way of doing business, a new way of working and new standards of competence. Staying alive has always been a matter of common sense, the more so now! Unless every individual, every business, every institution and our society as a whole understands this and agrees to the need for some degree of change and re-skilling, Mauritius and each one of us individually may progressively become **irrelevant** in the unforgiving world that is waiting for us on June 2. From now on, we will all be either among the 'smart' people who choose to adapt or else among the modern-age 'sans comprend'. There is no



“ *Investment will be down 18% in 2020. Up to 60,000 of our citizens may be retrenched by December, joining the 40,000 pre-crisis unemployed and pushing overall jobless figures to above 100,000 (or 17% of the workforce). This is a frightening, unprecedented level of unemployment, higher than in the darkest days of the '70s and likely to generate considerable frustration and impatience...* ”

in-between. It is up to us to place ourselves in one category or the other.

2. We need a strong Government with a clear mind. Since the crisis erupted, Pravind Jugnauth has, in my view, provided

the nation with clear thinking, decisive and timely action and quiet determination. During this dramatic episode, it is fair to say that he has convincingly passed the leadership test of demonstrating 'grace under pressure'. His main weakness, however, is not getting others involved enough in building **Mutual Trust** and not consulting a wider range of wise men and women who genuinely want to help. This is a big mistake. Trust is an essential ingredient in mobilizing the country.

3. Now that the sanitary threat looks like receding, the Prime minister would be well-inspired to convene a **National Emergency Summit**, appoint a **Post-Covid 19 Think tank** bringing together the island's best brains in order to map the road ahead and define clear economic strategies and widely-approved objectives. This is not a time for political chest-beating or point-scoring. It is a time for reaching out to other stakeholders, promoting openness, togetherness, fairness, empathy, a time to build a consensus, offer renewed hope, dissipate doubt and cultivate a new sense of cautious optimism. We desperately need some degree of optimism but don't know where to start looking.

4. In the process, Government is right to combine the 2020-21 Budget with its economic packages proposals in June, to offer a larger view of the national effort required to kick-start the economy. The Finance minister has to be creative, imaginative. He is doing the right thing by introducing added flexibility in labour laws to help save jobs. He should now promote

back on the table the question of limited "Unemployment Benefits". A Rs 5,000 p.m. pay-out, as suggested by Paul Bérenger last November, would cost Rs 6 billion p.a. but would go some way towards keeping our fellow citizens on temporary welfare programs instead of feeling completely lost and abandoned at such a terrible time.

6. Finance Minister Renganaden Padayachy should also vigorously pursue debt-abolition for Mauritius by the IMF, World Bank, European and other financial institutions. Mauritius should draw on traditional friendships to get India, France, the UK and others to abolish or reduce our public debt. Countries and institutions are mobilizing trillions of dollars to help; our foreign debt is only peanuts to them. Besides, 70% of our public debt is due locally. Surely, there must be ways to get local lenders to accept greater repayment flexibility. This would free up important financial resources (19% of the Budget goes towards servicing debt), to help Government mobilize additional funds for assistance schemes and give a boost to entrepreneurs.

7. Government should not be afraid, in the face of current difficulties, to go beyond traditional debt ceilings and budget deficit targets, provided transparency prevails.

8. Nor should it shy away from turning a negative into a positive, drumming up our international image as a small but safe, reliable, no-nonsense investment destination which successfully confronted the coronavirus.

9. Parts of the Mauritian private sector should also seize on new business opportunities. How about Mauritius becoming a world leader in mask production, using our efficient textile base? A new international market of billions of masks is emerging and demand will continue for years to come on all continents. Let's go for a slice of that market.

10. Isn't it high time for our larger business groups to reassess their attitude towards smaller, private operators, bringing them on board for specific sub-contracting jobs or for helping the country become more self-sufficient in many areas?

11. As unemployment looms, Government should urgently fill all vacancies in the public sector, lower retirement age, call upon the well-to-do to make fiscal sacrifices and effectively demonstrate solidarity with substantial pay cuts for executives; no 2020 end-of-the-year bonus above a certain wage level; no dividend declaration for 2020 and 2021; securing temporary land leases for the unemployed to go in modern agriculture. Let's generate ideas, think creatively.

This is a time for Mauritians to steel themselves and stop complaining for just about anything. This is a time not for the shy and the fearful but for the brave and the strong-willed. This is a battle Mauritius simply cannot afford to lose. If it does, it will most likely fall apart as a democracy and slide downhill towards certain disaster and chaos.

Lindsay Rivière

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Krishan Deeljore

# The Future Value of Talent

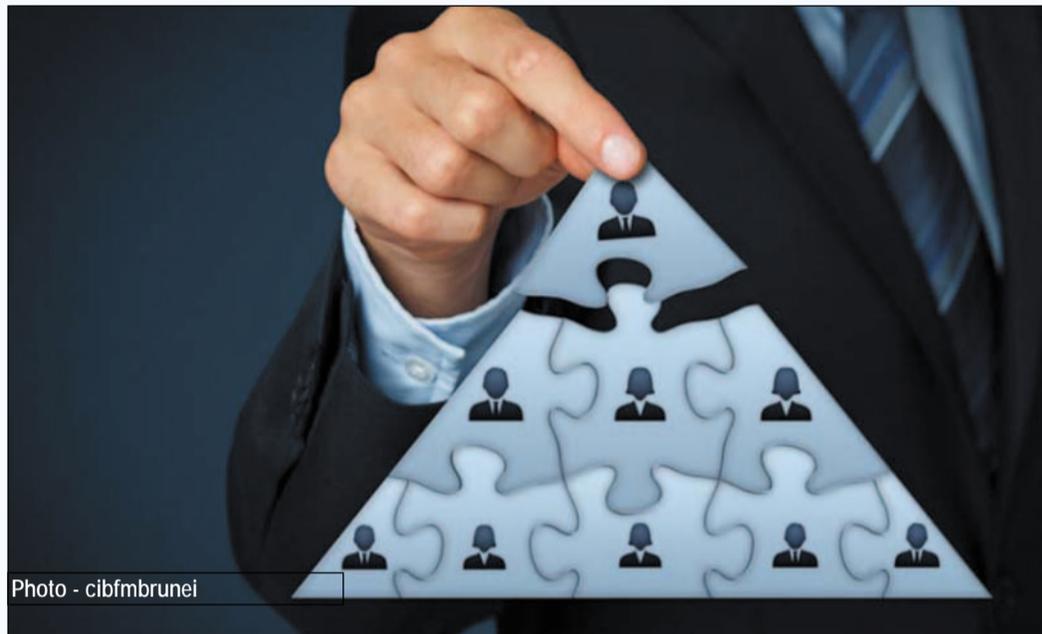


Photo - cibfbrunei

**F**uture value is generally defined as the value of an asset at a specific date in the future. In monetary terms, it measures the nominal future sum of money that a given sum of money is "worth" at a specified time in the future assuming a certain interest rate, or a rate of return. A lot has already been said and written about the future value of investments, money and assets in the post Covid-19 world, but not much yet about the future value of the most valuable asset - Employees.

A company which manages its financial assets recklessly is automatically sanctioned by shareholders, auditors, and regulators for inefficient use of funds. However, we rarely hear about companies being sanctioned for careless or irresponsible management of their human assets. Although it is common belief amongst CEOs and senior executives that employees are crucial to an organization's success, many companies find it very difficult to quantify and measure their employees' contributions to the bottom-line.

In my view, this crisis is an opportunity for us to radically improve the way we measure and manage the value of Talent in organisations. And in order to do so, we must challenge two past beliefs. As the title suggests, this article is split in two parts - CEOs on one side, and employees on the other (a coin analogy seemed fit). This first part describes the first shift for CEOs and business owners.

## Shift #1: CEOs must adopt a strategic approach to measuring, recognising and managing the value of employee contributions

At the very onset of the lockdown in Mauritius, many companies swiftly opted to guarantee a minimum service to their clients by asking some teams to work from home. In order to do so, they had to select those people who were 'business critical'. For those who were part of this decision-making process, you will recall that these decisions were primarily based on the role that these employees have and how critical their activity is for clients or cash flow. Whether they were top performers in the company became somewhat insignificant. Similarly, when defining your business continuity plan, you would typically rank your core activities in terms of criticality and then select the core teams based on how essential their roles are in guaranteeing your business continuity.

In 'normal' times, however, managers would be reluctant to categorise their teams in such a way for fear of sounding biased. In fact, organisations have been designed in such a way that employees are classified according to departments and functions, not according to how essential their roles are to the success of the compa-

ny. In addition, rewards and recognition programs are most commonly linked to individual performance, without any distinction of business criticality. This is the first belief that businesses must start challenging and invariably it has to start from the top.

Back in 2006, Jeffrey Joerres and Dominique Turcq proposed a model to classify jobs according to the role they play in creating value for customers and shareholders rather than department. They argued that this model could improve the effectiveness of recruiting, training, and deployment. Such a system seemed revolutionary at the time but could have much wider and deeper significance in the current context.

Here are 4 steps to put it into practice:

1. Define every job in your company in terms of the main purpose, required knowledge, experience, technical skills and behavioural competencies. Important to dissociate the jobs from the individuals who perform them.
2. Evaluate the value of each job by the value impact or cost impact on the organizational performance.
  - **Value impact:** what is the risk to the financial performance or reputation of the company if this job is not performed well?
  - **Cost impact:** skill complexity and training required to perform the job. Both are directly proportional to cost of employing this skill.
3. Determine the relative Value of each job by comparing to other jobs horizontally across departments
4. Classify the jobs into four categories – Creators, Ambassadors, Drivers and Craft Masters – based on their value and map them in a 4-quadrant diagram (illustrated below).
  - Creators are the mind and brain behind the organization's business model and strategy.
  - Ambassadors represent the organization's public face and are directly responsible for

customer experience.

- Drivers represent the largest percentage of human resources in most companies and they keep the business running.
- Craft Masters are the equivalent of a Control tower. They ensure the quality, timeliness, and cost-effectiveness of the execution of the business strategy.

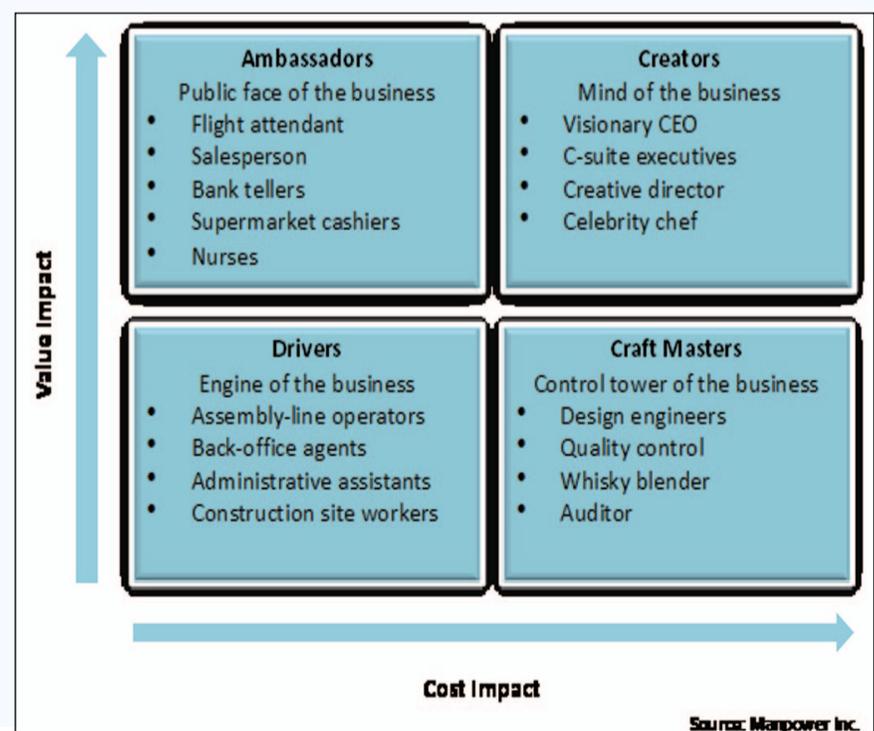
In the process of reshaping the world of work, this system can guide CEOs and business owners to make several key strategic decisions in an objective way, thus minimising legal and reputational risks:

1. When devising more flexible policies in terms of place and hours of work, organizations can more easily determine distinct strategies for each segment and thus better manage any impact on business output.
2. It provides solid rationale for companies to adopt a more agile mix of part-time, full-time, freelance or outsourced resources. For example, Creators and Ambassadors would generally be hired and trained as permanent headcount whereas Drivers may be brought in as temporary or contract workers and Craft Masters engaged as independent consultants.
3. This categorisation can also help companies figure out adequate downsizing and restructuring strategies while preserving and enhancing the value of talent.

In the second part, we will talk about Shift #2: How employees should rethink their potential and ensure they are future-ready.

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## In A Light Vein

## 5 Surgeons

Five surgeons are discussing who makes the best patients to operate on.

The first surgeon, says, "I like to see accountants on my operating table because when you open them up, everything inside is numbered."

The second responds, "Yeah, but you should try electricians! Everything inside them is colour coded."

The third surgeon says, "No, I really think librarians are the best! Everything inside them is in alphabetical order."

The fourth surgeon chimes in: "You know, I like construction workers... Those guys always understand when you have a few parts left over."

But the fifth surgeon shut them all up when he said: "You're all wrong. Politicians are the easiest to operate on. There are no guts, no heart, no balls, no brains, and no spine... Plus, the head and the arse are interchangeable!"

\* \* \*

## Pour sourire

En 2014 après Jésus-Christ, Dieu visite Noé et lui dit : "Une fois encore, la terre est devenue invivable et surpeuplée. Construis une arche et rassemble un couple de chaque être vivant ainsi que quelques bons humains. Dans six mois, j'envoie la pluie durant quarante jours et quarante nuits, et je détruis tout !"

Six mois plus tard, Dieu retourne visiter Noé et ne voit qu'une ébauche de construction navale.

"Mais, Noé, tu n'as pratiquement rien fait ! Demain il commence à pleuvoir !"

"Pardonne-moi, Tout Puissant, j'ai fait tout mon possible mais les temps ont changé. J'ai essayé de bâtir l'arche mais il faut un permis de construire et l'inspecteur me fait des ennuis au sujet du système d'alarme anti-incendie."

"Mes voisins ont créé une association parce que la construction de l'échafaudage dans ma cour viole le règlement de copropriété et obstrue-leur vue. J'ai dû recourir à un conciliateur pour arriver à un accord."

"L'urbanisme m'a obligé à réaliser une étude de faisabilité et à déposer un mémoire sur les coûts des travaux nécessaires pour transporter l'arche jusqu'à la mer. Pas moyen de leur faire comprendre que la mer allait venir jusqu'à nous. Ils ont refusé de me croire."

## Thoughts to live by

## Thank God today for all your blessings

A rich man looked through his window and saw a poor man picking something from his dustbin... He said, 'Thank God, I'm not poor.'

The poor man looked around and saw a naked man misbehaving on the street... He said, 'Thank God, I'm not mad.'

The mad man looked ahead and saw an ambulance carrying a patient... He said, 'Thank God, am not sick.'

Then a sick person in hospital saw a trolley taking a dead body to the mortuary ... He said, 'Thank God, I'm not dead.'

Only a dead person cannot thank God.

Why don't you thank God today for all your blessings and for the gift of life ... for another beautiful day.

What is life?

'La coupe du bois de construction navale s'est heurtée aux multiples Associations pour La Protection de l'Environnement sous le triple motif que je contribuais à la déforestation, que mon autorisation donnée par les Eaux et Forêts n'avait pas de valeur aux yeux du ministère de l'Environnement, et que cela détruisait l'habitat de plusieurs espèces animales. J'ai pourtant expliqué qu'il s'agissait, au contraire de préserver ces espèces, rien n'y a fait.

'J'avais à peine commencé à rassembler les couples d'animaux que la SPA et WWF me sont tombés sur le dos pour acte de cruauté envers les animaux parce que je les soustrayais contre leur gré à leur milieu naturel et que je les enfermais dans des pièces trop exigües.

'Ensuite, l'agence gouvernementale pour le Développement durable a exigé une étude de l'impact sur l'environnement de ce fameux déluge.

'Dans le même temps, je me débattais avec le ministère du Travail qui me reprochait de violer la législation en utilisant des travailleurs bénévoles. Je les avais embauchés car les syndicats m'avaient interdit d'employer mes propres fils, disant que je ne devais employer que des travailleurs hautement qualifiés et, dans tous les cas, syndiqués.

'Enfin le Fisc a saisi tous mes avoirs, prétextant que je me préparais à fuir illégalement le pays tandis que les Douanes menaçaient de m'assigner devant les tribunaux pour "tentative de franchissement de frontière en possession d'espèces protégées ou reconnues comme dangereuses."

'Aussi, pardonne-moi, Tout Puissant, mais j'ai manqué de persévérance et j'ai abandonné ce projet.'

Aussitôt les nuages se sont dissipés, un arc-en-ciel est apparu et le Soleil a lui.

'Mais tu renonces à détruire le monde ?' demanda Noé.

'Inutile,' répondit Dieu, 'l'administration s'en charge.'

\* \* \*

## Lockdown story

Today, my neighbour's 12 year old son said, "I've lost half my property due to the corona lockdown."

I asked: "How?"

He said, "My mom's pregnant...!!!"

## Life's Lessons

## How to deal with people who make mistakes

His phone rang in the church during the prayers...

The pastor scolded him. The worshippers admonished him after the prayers for interrupting the silence. His wife kept on lecturing him on his carelessness till they reached home. You could see the shame, embarrassment and humiliation on his face.

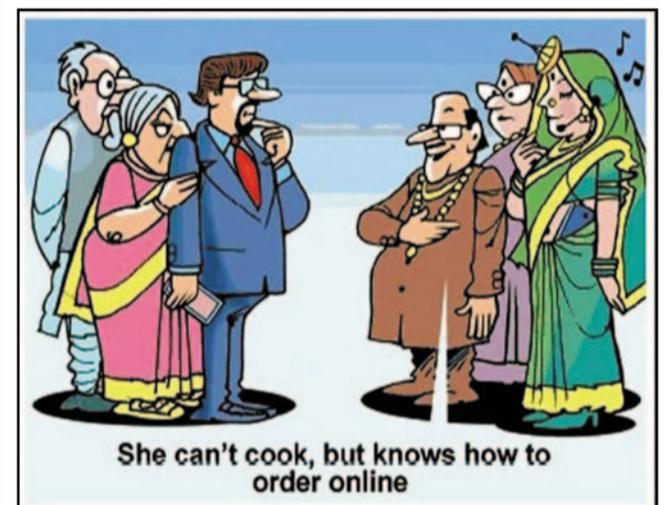
He never stepped the foot in that church since then.

The same evening, he went to a bar. He was still nervous and trembling.

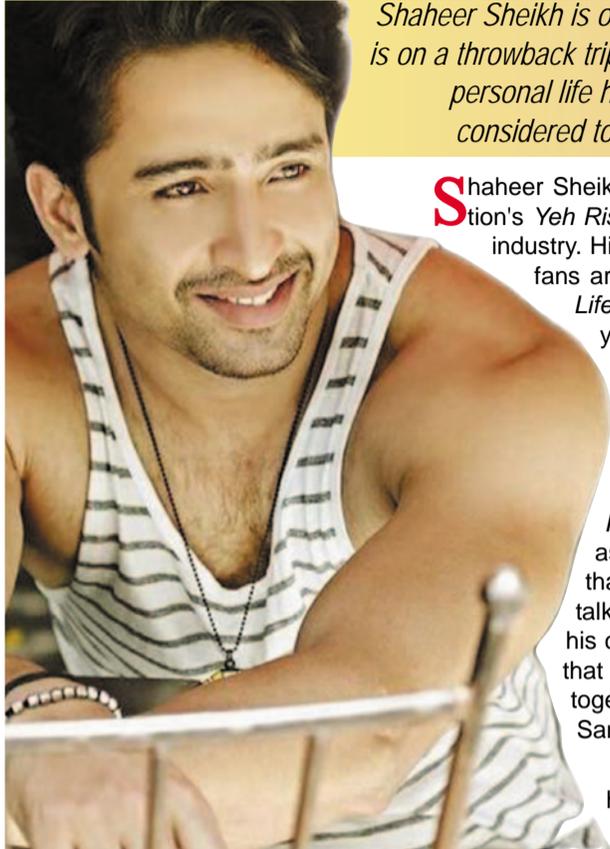
He spilled his drink on the table by accident. The waiter apologized, gave him a napkin to clean himself up. The janitor also mopped the floor. The female manager offered him a complimentary drink. She also gave him a huge hug while saying: "Don't worry man. Who doesn't make a mistake?"

He has never stopped going to that bar since then.

Management Lesson: You can make a difference by how you treat people when they make mistakes.



## Shaheer Sheikh made his acting debut with THIS show and no, it's not Kya Mast Hai Life



*Shaheer Sheikh is one of the most desirable men right in Telly land. The actor who is on a throwback trip that with sharing a lot of old memories from his TV shows and personal life had also shared pictures from Kya Mast Hai Life which is considered to be his debut TV show. But guess what? That's not so.*

**S**haheer Sheikh who is currently seen as Abir Rajvansh in Director's Kut production's *Yeh Rishtey Hai Pyaar Ke* is one of the most loved actors in the television industry. His character, Abir is one of the most loved on-screen characters and fans are just crazy about him. Shaheer was first noticed in *Kya Mast Hai Life*, a popular teen show in which he played the role of Veer Mehra, a young college student. Many of you would even think that *Kya Mast Hai Life* was his acting debut but guess what? That's not the case. Yes, you read that right.

As per a report in Pinkvilla, Shaheer Sheikh made his acting debut with a show called *Sanya*. It was a teen sitcom and featured Shaheer as Arjun Shekhawat. *Sanya* aired from 2005 to 2006 while *Kya Mast Hai Life* aired in 2009-2010. *Sanya* featured Rozzlin Pereira as *Sanya*, a girl-next-door with a difference. Well, that's that. Now that's like a perfect trivia for all the Shaheer Sheikh fans, right? Anyway, talking about *Kya Mast Hai Life*, the actor played one of the leads and his charming demeanor had won hearts back then. It was a teen sitcom that narrated the story of 5 friends who embark on their college life together. It featured Nazneen Ghan, Shweta Tripathi, Ashish Juneja and Sana Amin Sheikh in key roles.

Recently, Shaheer, who is on a throwback/nostalgia trip had shared his memories from *Kya Mast Hai Life* on his Instagram handle. "I had never faced the camera before, so it was a big challenge for the production house and the director to teach me everything. For me

the experience was like going back to school, where I'd spend the entire day with my friends. It was a treat to work with Sol productions as they made sure that we were well taken care of. Being my first show, this not only served as my learning curve, but I also had a total blast while shooting for KMHL," he had captioned the post with several throwback pictures.

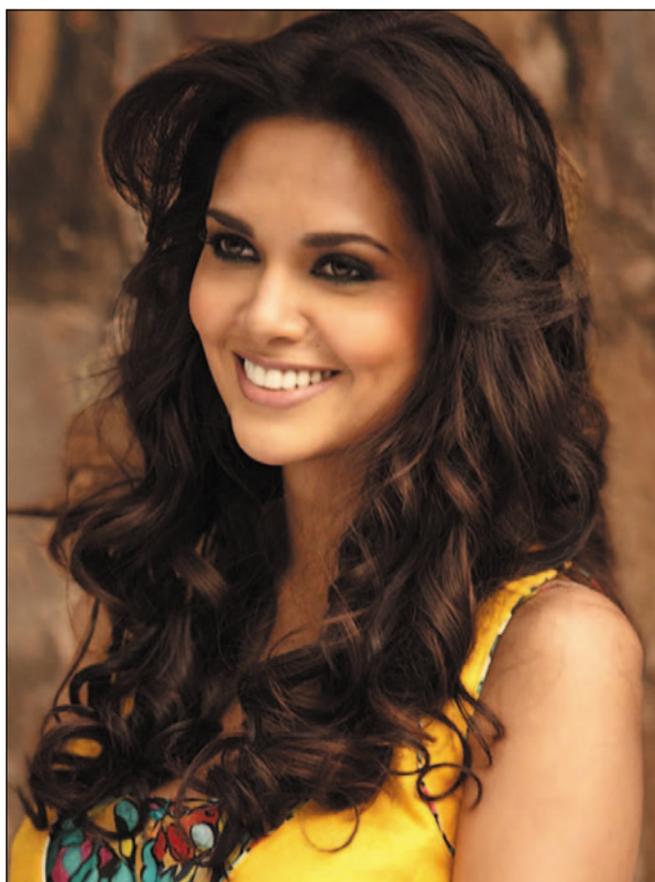
## Esha Gupta opens up on her low phase post *Jannat 2* and *Raaz 3*: 'I did not have a Godfather, I did not have anyone in this industry'

*After beginning with a bang, courtesy films like Jannat 2 and Raaz 3D, Esha Gupta's career had hit a prolonged slump, before Rustom happened 4 years later, and then, Total Dhamaal, 3 more years after Rustom. In an exclusive Insta live chat with BollywoodLife, the actress elaborates on how she dealt with this phase and why it did not deter her*

**B**ollywoodLife recently had an interesting and fun Insta live chat with the gorgeous and talented Esha Gupta, who graciously indulged us on a range of topics. *The Jannat 2* actress spoke in depth about why she clinched her hit web series, *RejctX*, how she responds to people still comparing her features to that of Angeline Jolie and making it in the industry without a Godfather to not having any regrets about having done *Humshakalas*, dealing with the low phase in her career and not doing *Hera Pheri 3* — Esha Gupta didn't shy away from tackling every question in this exclusive interview like a boss.

Esha had begun with a bang courtesy films like *Jannat 2* and *Raaz 3D* (the first was a superhit, and the second, a blockbuster), which had released back-to-back in the first year of her career. But she hit a prolonged slump after that, before *Rustom* happened four years later, and then, *Total Dhamaal*, three more years after *Rustom*. In-between, she was a part of commercial duds like *Chakravyuh*, *Humshakals*, *Commando 2* and *Baadshaho*, with some of them also being critically panned.

Opening up on her low phase and why it didn't deter her, Esha Gupta said, "By God's grace, every time I have a low, like a lot of actors have in their career, I just look back at where I started from. I did not have a Godfather, I did not have anyone, I don't think there's anyone remotely related to us (her family) from this industry, we don't even know anyone, like not even say a singer who's in the industry. And I'm a believer and when I look back and see the number of girls and guys who come everyday to Mumbai to try and make it in the industry, I'm like, 'God, wow...I'm fortunate!'"



### YOUR STARS

#### Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

You'll manage your business affairs with panache. There won't be loss of time simply because you'll be obsessed by the idea of efficacy. Your reflexes at your driving wheel will be slightly lessened; know that the road is more dangerous at night than during daylight despite reduced traffic.

#### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

You'll have knee-jerk reactions toward your near ones, and your lack of objectivity may render you unjust; be very vigilant on this point. You'll appreciate the kindness of certain of your neighbours; if you want your neighbours to respect your tranquillity, then respect theirs.

#### Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You'll feel guided by seething energy and also by devouring passion. You'll be madly in love and you'll be loved as much. Other people might even envy you this happy climate in which you'll be bathing.

#### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

You'll organize you small life well and everything will go well. You'll efficiently control your energy, and you'll succeed in launching large-scale plans. Don't above all embark on insufficiently ripened undertakings, especially if your sentiments are at stake.

#### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

You'll be in full possession of your physical and intellectual means. You'll notice intrigues in your entourage and will have a painful feeling of frustration about it; it will be a harsh lesson which, however, will have the merit of making you know human nature better.

#### Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

It will be the time of sentimental instability because you'll tend to live an unrealizable dream, to look from arm to arm for this impossible love which you clamour from life. Caution will be recommended to you.

#### Gemini: May 21 - June 20

Love affairs will be promising for single people. Fortuitous circumstances will cause you to meet people having many points in common with you, and this will help you get over certain fastidious stages. This will also be an opportunity to discover different milieus.

#### Cancer: June 21 - July 22

Some clashes of character may affect those who live in couple. Single people will tend to assert their sentiments. Try to dismiss definitely certain misunderstandings which have infested your relations with your near ones. Great satisfactions in family life!

#### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Beware of your tendency to malice. It can this time provoke serious dissensions with your spouse or mate; instead of constantly bearing grudges against the other one, you'd better burst into anger outright, and the issue would be settled once for all.

#### Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

Everything will become easier for you; think to settle certain delicate problems definitely. You can make good business deals. You must canalize your energy well and beware of exhilaration, otherwise there'll be risks of small incidents and accidents.

#### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

You'll have the feeling that everything is against you. You'll lack self-confidence. Above all don't get panicky, and fight against anguish. Don't let yourself be influenced by your family entourage; the counsels of your near ones will only get you into a muddle instead of clarifying your ideas.

#### Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

Impatient and keen on succeeding, you may commit psychological and tactical errors in your work; try to be a little more diplomatic and beware not to go ahead of schedule. If you persist in dashing headlong, then expect to have sudden changes of mood as well as crises of discouragement.

# Dipika Kakar: "I was destined to do *Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum*"

**A**fter taking home the winning trophy of 'Bigg Boss 12', popular television actress Dipika Kakar returns to fiction with her new show, 'Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum'. Here's what the talented actress has to say about her new beginning on Indian television.

Dipika Kakar became a household name after essaying the character of Simar Bhardwaj in Rashmi Sharma Telefilms' long-running show, Sasural Simar Ka. After headlining the show for six long years and gaining unparalleled popularity, she quit Sasural Simar Ka and waited for something more interesting to come her way.

In October 2018, Dipika Kakar participated in Salman Khan's Bigg Boss 12 and, after staying locked up inside the glass-walled house for a couple of months, emerged as the winner of the season. Now, the actress is back in news with Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum.

In a conversation with STARBIZ correspondent Mohnish Singh, Dipika Kakar talked about her character Sonakshi Rastogi, life after winning the coveted Bigg Boss trophy and much more...

**\* Dipika, you are returning to fiction after a break. How are you feeling?**

There is a lot of excitement. Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum is really a very different show. It is a North-South show for me if I compare it to what I have done all these years - from getting into the supernatural zone and doing fantasy stuff to now doing a show like this.

**\* How did the show come to you?**

Actually, what happened was that when I was about to go to *Bigg Boss* but was yet to sign my papers, just then I got a call from Sandeep Sikand, the producer of the show. We had a meeting. But then *Bigg Boss* happened. It was kind of impossible for Sandeep to wait for me for four months as I was inside the *Bigg Boss* house. I forgot about the show after I went to *Bigg Boss*, so did Sandeep about having me onboard. I have no idea whether or not he approached any other actress when I was in *Bigg Boss*. When I came out of the show, he called me up after 15 days or so. He said, "Dipika, I have not yet finalized anyone for the show." I said, "Okay." So we did a couple of meetings and things worked out. It seems the show was meant for me.

**\* You seem to have shed a lot of weight.**

Yes, I have and I have deliberately done it for the character of Sonakshi. I felt that if I am coming on the screen after some period, then I should look fresh. I wanted people to realize that I was not the same Dipika which they have been watching over all these years. Thankfully, I have been successful in achieving that.

**\* How many kilograms have you lost?**

I have lost around 7kgs.

**How did you do it?**

Diet. I am not able to exercise a lot because of my shooting hours. But, yeah, keto diet did wonders.

**How did winning *Bigg Boss 12* help you professionally?**

Honestly speaking, I feel I was destined to do *Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum*. As I told you, I had already done a meeting for the show before entering the *Bigg Boss* house, so I don't feel that winning *Bigg Boss 12* has opened the door for a lot of avenues in my career. But if you talk about love from fans and if you talk about the fame that you get, it definitely helps you get a major boost if you do a show like *Bigg Boss* and win it.

I still remember that I cried after listening to the good things that my fans had to say about me after winning the show. I still get goosebumps. After the show, my fans know who and what Dipika is in real life. They don't see you in any



character when you are locked inside the *Bigg Boss* house. That connect that you build up with your fans through a show like *Bigg Boss* is amazing. I have some fans that have made an Instagram group and they have added me in it. At times, I chat with them there. It is so heart-warming. It feels so good.

**But there have been incidents where fans lock horns with the fans of some other celebrities?**

Yeah, it happens. I am very thankful to Shaba (sister-in-law) and Shoaib for this reason because when I was inside the *Bigg Boss* house, a lot of obnoxious things were happening outside the house. I just don't want to get there. I am very proud of the fact that when relatives and loved ones of other celebs were busy supporting their fans in such nasty things, Shoaib and Shaba requested my fans to keep calm. I always tell my fans that don't pay heed to what others say. Their bad words don't make us a bad person.

**Not every television actress is lucky enough to bag the second show as the female lead. How do you feel after making the impossible possible?**

I really feel lucky. I am very blessed and fortunate that I got such a big show after *Bigg Boss*. Honestly, I value this show very much. Every artist wants to do something different and this show is really very different. I would have done any other good show also, but this is something outstanding for me. So I think He is really happy with me.

**What are the plus and minus of *Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum*?**

Honestly speaking, I do not see any minus here; everything is plus for me. As I said, my look in the show is very fresh and the story is very fresh. The story of the show will definitely hook everyone. Somebody just asked me that there is no saas-bahu drama in the show, then how will we manage to hook the audience. I said to him that to keep the audience hooked, a story should have interesting twists and turns and that twists and turns can be there in any relationship.

## TV SERIAL

### Kulfi Kumar Bajewala

**Friday 22 May:** Abhay and his friends scheme against Bhola while Kulfi's suspicion grows. Later, Loveleen's efforts to outsmart Chandan fall short.

**Monday 25 May:** Kulfi struggles to save Bhola when Shanti attacks him. Later, Loveleen resolves to expose Chandan while Sikander regains his memory.

**Tuesday 26 May:** Chandan overhears Loveleen's conversation and threatens her of dire consequences. Later, she calls the police when Kulfi brings Sikander home.

**Wednesday 27 May:** Sikander and Kulfi's reunion is cut short as Amyra's life is in danger. Later, Loveleen apologises to Kulfi while Chandan is threatened.

**Thursday 28 May:** Chandan is arrested after Sikander tricks him into confessing his crime. The latter then rushes to save Amyra when Chandan implements his evil plan for revenge.

### Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

**Friday 22 May:** Sameer, Naina and Naina's father all reach the office of the producer, who after a long wait, agrees to meet them. After seeing Sameer's portfolio, he doesn't give away any expression and walks away.

**Monday 25 May:** After their lie uncovers in front of the society panel, they decide to not let them live in the society and ask them to leave. But Naina, with the help of Preeti, solves that problem. But the problems don't end there.

**Tuesday 26 May:** Sameer and Naina convince Naina's father upon their opinion. Naina imagines her father as Dharmendra and dreams of a movie project for Sameer and romance together at night.

**Wednesday 27 May:** After Naina goes missing from a local train station, Sameer and Naina's father panic as to where she went. Their neighbour offers to help and they are more than grateful for it.

**Thursday 28 May:** Naina's father gets himself into some other's house mistakenly and gets blamed as characterless. Naina and Sameer reach in the venue and handle the situation as the colony member were about to call the police.

### Kahan Hum Kahan Tum

**Friday 22 May:** Rohit preps for a complicated surgery while Sonakshi is all set for her shoot. Later, a tired Sonakshi faints while shooting a dance sequence.

**Monday 25 May:** Sonakshi refuses to listen to Rohit's medical advice. Later, Sonakshi's mother confronts her while Rohit is filled with rage.

**Tuesday 26 May:** A frustrated Rohit meets Sonakshi on the sets of KPK while Sumit and Netra indulge in a dispute. Later, Rohit and Sonakshi argue on TV serial content.

**Wednesday 27 May:** Nishi makes a deal with Suman while Rohit is overwhelmed to meet his family members. Elsewhere, Sumit hatches a diabolical plan against Sonakshi.

**Thursday 28 May:** A furious Sonakshi slaps Sumit after he misbehaves with her. Rohit recalls the progress he has made as a doctor. Later, Sonakshi spots Rohit in grave danger.



Vendredi 22 mai  
- 21.15

# Rencontre Avec Joe Black

Avec: Brad Pitt, Anthony Hopkins,  
Claire Forlani



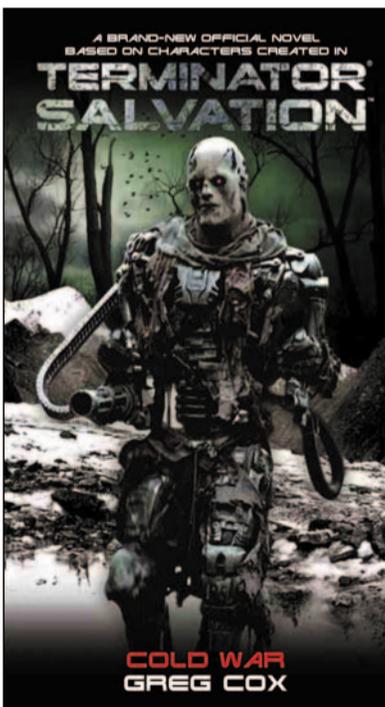
La mort, qui prend la forme d'un jeune homme, demande à un magnat des médias d'agir comme guide pour lui apprendre la vie sur Terre et, ce faisant, il tombe amoureux de la fille de son guide.



Samedi 23 mai - 21.15

# Terminator Salvation

Stars: Christian Bale, Sam Worthington,  
Anton Yelchin



In 2018, a mysterious new weapon in the war against the machines, half-human and half-machine, comes to John Connor on the eve of a resistance attack on Skynet. But whose side is he on, and can he be trusted?



vendredi 22 mai

samedi 23 mai

dimanche 24 mai

### MBC 1

06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion  
07.00 Dessin Anime  
10.27 Mag: Origami  
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafooo  
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: Johnny Test  
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: Chicago Police...  
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: Border Crossing  
07.29 Doc: A Question Of Science  
07.36 Mag: Tomorrow Today  
08.57 World Stamps  
09.00 Live Educational Program...  
16.56 Mag: Strictly Street  
17.19 Doc: Marvel  
18.04 Donor Organ Recipients  
18.35 Local: Talk On Ramadan  
19.00 Mag: Arts.21  
19.29 Mag: Global 3000  
19.58 Serial: Tawaan  
20.40 Serial: Karb  
21.03 Local: Ramadhan 2020  
22.03 Local: Anjuman  
22.29 Doc: Photo Number 6  
23.12 Doc: Like Me: The Selfie...  
23.25 The Sound Of Freedom  
00.37 Mag: Urban Gardens

### Cine 12

01.41 Film: Tower Block  
02.59 Serial: 12 Monkeys  
03.40 Film: Royal Matchmaker  
05.03 Tele: Amanda  
06.42 Film: Love's Complicated  
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight  
09.49 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour  
10.13 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett  
10.35 Serial: 12 Monkeys  
11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor  
12.00 Film: Royal Matchmaker  
13.30 Tele: Amanda  
14.45 Film: Love's Complicated  
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 Rencontre Avec Joe Black

### Bollywood TV

09.21 Film: Chhaila Babu  
11.55 / 19.54 -  
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam  
12.32 / 20.11 -  
Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala  
12.53 / 20.32 Radha Krishna  
13.15 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe  
13.37 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek  
13.59 / 21.46 -  
Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
14.21 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan  
14.41 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz  
15.03 Film: Tum Bin 2  
Stars: Neha Sharma, Aditya Seal, Aashim Gulati  
18.00 Live: Samacher  
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya  
18.51 Piya Albela  
19.13 Mere Angne Mein  
19.24 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai  
20.05 Kahan Hum Kahan Tum

06.00 Dessin Anime  
09.36 Mag: Origami  
09.45 Serial: Grandpa In My Pocket  
10.19 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida...  
11.10 Local: Itinerer Moris  
12.00 Le Journal  
12.25 Local: People - No 24  
13.10 Local: Groov'in  
14.00 Local: Pause Cuisine  
14.10 Local: Fee Main  
14.30 D.Anime: Raju The Rickshaw  
14.44 D.Anime: Astrology  
16.09 D.Anime: The Deep  
16.30 D.Anime: Johnny Test  
17.00 Live Press Conference  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Entertainment: Nach Baliye  
19.30 Journal & La Meteo  
20.00 Local: Press Conference  
20.35 Local Prod: Konser Kadanse  
21.35 Serial: Chicago Med  
23.00 Local: Le Journal

04.30 Aastha TV  
07.00 Film:  
11.40 Good Morning Shanghai  
12.00 Nanda Saukhya 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 The Sound Of Freedom  
07.00 Mag: Arts And Culture  
07.29 Doc: A Question Of Science  
08.03 Doc: The Pacific, An Ocean...  
09.22 Doc: World Stamps  
09.28 Doc: Sur La Route Des Vins  
10.21 Doc: Photo Number 6  
11.04 Doc: Like Me: The Selfie...  
11.49 Entertainment: Adele Home  
12.52 Mag: Urban Gardens  
13.24 Mag: Global 3000  
14.22 Doc: The Pacific, An Ocean...  
15.33 Doc: World Stamps  
15.39 Doc: Sur La Route Des Vin  
16.32 Doc: Photo Number 6  
17.14 Doc: Like Me: The Selfie...  
18.04 Doc: Evgenia Won't Give Up  
19.00 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
19.30 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts et...  
20.02 Doc: Wildlife Heroes  
20.59 Doc: World Stamps  
20.58 Doc: Fresh Fruit Frankers

01.39 Telenovela: Peau Sauvage  
02.26 Film: Dad's Army  
04.02 Film: Bernie The Dolphin  
05.30 Tele: Destiny  
06.18 Mag: Hollywood On Set  
06.45 Film: The Pirate  
08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer  
09.19 Film: Dad's Army  
10.55 Film: L'ile Aux Sorciers  
12.35 Serial: The Bletchley Circle  
13.21 Tele: L'esclave Blanche  
14.03 Tele: La Premiere Dame  
14.52 Mag: Hollywood New Feed  
15.05 Film: Bernie The Dolphin  
17.00 Serial: Midnight, Texas  
17.52 Film: Une Illusion D'amour  
18.04 Doc: Evgenia Won't Give Up  
19.11 Mag: Hollywood Best Film  
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva  
20.30 Series: Midnight, Texas  
21.15 Film: Terminator Salvation  
23.05 Tele: Eva Luna

04.05 Kahan Hum Kahan Tum  
04.26 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala  
04.43 Radha Krishna  
05.05 Zindagi Ki Mehek  
05.27 Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
05.47 Chhanchhan  
06.07 Ishqbazz  
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: De Taali  
Starring: Riteish Deshmukh, Ayesha Takia, Aftab Shivdasani  
14.49 Bin Kuch Kahe  
16.00 Pavitra Rishta  
18.30 Film: Jolly LLB 2  
20.53 Serial: Siya Ke Ram  
21.24 Serial: Naagin Season 2  
22.08 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek

06.00 Dessin Anime  
09.33 Mag: Origami  
09.45 Serial: Grandpa In My Pocket  
10.40 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 D.Anime: Zou  
15.30 D.Anime: Astrology  
15.55 D.Anime: Mademoiselle...  
16.30 D.Anime: Johnny Test  
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  
20.35 Local Prod: Faya Vibes  
21.30 Filler: Cassidy Red  
23.00 Le Journal

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: Tiba Tiba 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: The Father Of Modern...  
11.10 Doc: Horizon S  
12.00 Entertainment: Michael Jackson  
13.56 Doc: World Stamps  
14.51 Antoine De Saint-Exupery  
16.28 Doc: Horizon S  
17.19 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
17.45 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts...  
18.11 Doc: Anna's Wildlife  
19.05 Doc: Garden Party  
19.05 Doc: Builders Of The Future  
19.35 Mag: Mixeur, Les Gouts Et...  
20.06 Doc: Delacroix From Paris...  
20.58 Doc: Egalusuaq, Sur La Piste  
21.49 Doc: The Crude Poker Game  
22.31 Doc: Africa Rising  
23.14 Doc: Anna's Wildlife

00.20 Tele: Midnight, Texas  
01.28 Film: Terminator Salvation  
03.18 Serial: Hawaii 5-0  
03.58 Film: Une Illusion D'amour  
05.21 Tele: Destiny  
06.09 Serial: Midnight, Texas  
06.51 Film: The Musketeer  
08.34 Serial: Mike Hammer  
09.18 Film: Royal Matchmaker  
10.46 Film: Une Illusion D'amour  
12.15 Serial: Hawaii 5-0  
13.00 Tele: L'esclave Blanche  
13.40 Tele: Premiere Dame  
15.06 Film: Le Retour De La Momie  
17.09 Serial: Midnight, Texas  
18.30 Series: Mission: Impossible  
19.20 Serial: Hawaii 5-0  
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva  
20.30 Serial: Counterpart  
21.15 Film: Le Fiance Aux Deux  
Visage

01.06 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein  
02.31 Bin Kuch Kahe  
04.21 Pavitra Rishta  
05.57 Film: Jolly LLB 2  
08.00 Chhanchhan  
09.43 Itna Karo Na Mujhe Pyaar  
12.30 Film: Mughal-E-Azam  
Starring: Prithviraj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, Madhubala  
14.42 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala  
17.00 Punar Vivaah  
18.00 Samachar  
18.30 Film: Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi  
Starring: Shahrukh Khan, Anushka Sharma, Vinay Pathak  
21.16 Entertainment: Dance  
23.36 Bade Acche Lagte Hai

Samedi 23 mai - Stars: Akshay Kumar, Huma Qureshi, Saurabh Shukla



Dimanche 24 mai - Stars: Shahrukh Khan, Anushka Sharma, Vinay Pathak



# Avancer masqués pour l'heure...



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

**U**n ouf de soulagement chez le bon peuple de retrouver bientôt un brin de liberté et sortir de cette assignation à résidence forcée. La possibilité de passer à autre chose maintenant que masque, gants et lavage des mains sont bien intégrés dans les habitudes. Les activités reprennent pour certains alors que le désarroi mine la santé des autres, inquiets de s'enfoncer dans les dettes, et pour d'autres, de conserver leur emploi et assurer tant bien que mal les besoins alimentaires au quotidien.

Dans ce début de retour à la normale, mais plus comme avant, espérons-le, on se remet à parler de tout et de rien. On n'y échappe pas, ce phénomène fou de la pandémie revient dans les conversations, celle-là et celles d'avant, l'impuissance face à ces calamités naturelles et fabriquées parfois ; et de conclure que la nature ne se venge pas, elle subit la loi de cause et effet. La vengeance est le propre du Sapiens, détruire les autres et autodestruction. Ce qui s'abat sur le monde, " un truc de ouf " !

Satisfaction générale à noter sur la gestion de la crise sanitaire par le Gouvernement. Le compte-rendu quotidien au début afin d'informer, de conseiller et d'interdire. Un travail d'équipe et de concertation entre les autorités et les représentants du corps médical.

Mesures et intérêts communs au service du pays et du peuple sans lesquels il n'y a pas de pays. Une symbiose presque parfaite qui a bien fonctionné. Dès les premiers jours, une décision soudaine de confinement total pour dix jours annoncée sur un ton de fermeté non négociable par le Premier ministre. Sinon, le milieu hospitalier aurait été submergé par un afflux de gens contaminés par négligence. Une catastrophe évitée de justesse.

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## Danger imminent

**Port-Louis 19 mars 2020.** La date restera dans les mémoires. A peine la nouvelle d'un début de contamination annoncée la veille, une étrange effervescence saisit la capitale. Le temps de s'y rendre pour régler quelques formalités, on assiste à une scène inédite, ou plutôt, à une prise de conscience d'un danger imminent en début de matinée, et au fil des heures, une lente agitation à se parer à ce



qui sera présenté comme une guerre.

Un vendeur de masques surgit à la rue Bourbon et interpelle les passants :

- Masques, masques, achetez vos masques maintenant. Allez, venez !

Il sillonne les rues, et le prix varie entre 50 et 75 roupies d'un trottoir à l'autre. Distribution de masques aux employés dans une quincaillerie à la rue Royale où s'affairent les clients de passage. Les uns interrompent le service pour ajuster au visage le masque dont ils se passeraient bien mais s'y résignent par discipline. Un des habitués de la clientèle se faufile entre les rayons, et glisse à qui veut bien l'entendre pour faire le malin d'une voix basse qui se veut discrète:

- Ils ont trouvé un remède en Inde... en Inde.

Consultation des rubriques sur son téléphone, sans doute. Pressé, les yeux pétillants, il ne regarde personne en particulier et n'attend pas forcément de réponse.

Le patron, un Chinois d'un certain âge, un homme petit et courbé, se déplaçant à petits pas dans le magasin lève la tête, se tourne vers lui et esquisse par politesse une réponse d'une voix faible: - Ah ! L'Inde... Ah !

Dehors, le soleil d'été tape fort. Le port du masque s'annonce timidement. Il est à peine treize heures, et voilà qu'un magasin baisse ses rideaux métalliques. Consigne informelle et tacite suivie petit à petit le long de la rue dans un bruit de métal signalant une fermeture... qui aura duré deux mois. Devant la grande sortie du marché, un homme montre du menton un marchand ambulancier posté plus loin.

- Celui-là, il a un bâtiment de quatre étages à Port-Louis, dit-il à son compagnon.

Sous-entendu d'une activité parallèle souterraine et lucrative. Le port du masque est, en réalité, un phénomène bien ancré dans les mœurs locales.

Plus loin, les magasins 'demi gros' affichent une fréquentation inhabituelle. Les uns et les autres se procurent d'avance

les denrées de base à un prix avantageux. D'autres se dirigent vers les pharmacies et, en l'espace de quelques minutes, une file d'attente déborde sur le trottoir. Le ton est donné.

## Crise sanitaire, crise économique et sociale

Et la suite? On la connaît tous. Laissons de côté le volet ouvert sur un paysage contemplé avec des lunettes roses pour aujourd'hui, la nature qui respire, le chant des oiseaux, la libre circulation des animaux et un ciel magnifique, le tout qui continuera à survivre dans une indifférence totale au sort des bipèdes cloîtrés dans leur demeure...

Tout le monde l'a répété maintes fois : crise sanitaire, crise économique et sociale. Un chamboulement total des repères dans les eaux troubles fait remonter à la surface les épaves flottantes de la société. L'instinct prédateur traque ses proies sur leur chemin. Ici où les dispositifs de surveillance de *Smart City* ne s'appliquent pas, ce sont des vols de légumes en plein champ dans le but de se faire de l'argent facile grâce au travail des autres. Là, d'autres marchands de sommeil s'activent pour palier au manque de leur clientèle. Ailleurs, on défonce les magasins. Au sein des familles, le désœuvrement fait des ravages. On cogne sur femmes et enfants. Autant des plaies qui rongent la société. Une belle femme qui rouvre son magasin sans se douter qu'elle va respirer son dernier souffle lorsque surgissent deux jeunes gens dans la fleur de l'âge qui lui infligeront une plaie fatale...

On se réjouissait trop tôt de la relative sécurité des gens chez eux, de l'absence de cambriolage et de vols. Aux cogneurs de femmes et voleurs de légumes, une recrudescence de cybercriminalité s'est ajoutée à la liste. On entend par là une opération masquée derrière leur ordinateur et smartphone, l'infraction dans l'espace numérique des autres, une activité illégale qui consiste à voler des données par tous les moyens de piratage, infiltration de réseau, piège tendu pour introduire un virus, hameçonnage, 'download' les appareils des autres, doublon d'ordinateur

et contrôle à distance, et se faisant ainsi propriétaires des données qui appartiennent à autrui. Le but ? Escroquerie financière dans certains cas, pure méchanceté dans d'autres, voyeurisme et une nette volonté d'afficher, masqués et une capacité de nuisance.

Entre le voleur, le cambrioleur, le mâle violent, le marchand de sommeil et le cybercriminel se tisse un lien qui remonte jusqu'au début des déboires de l'Homo Sapiens : un machisme animé par un désir de dominer par tous les moyens et la jouissance d'une puissance par le contrôle sur autrui qu'ils pensent avoir réussi à acquérir. L'illusion d'une supériorité caractéristique des tenants d'un régime autoritaire et tyrannique qui les reconforte à court terme.

Dans une société moderne et un état de droit, toutes ces manigances se terminent en " eau de boudin " à long terme. Et c'est peut-être là que réside la profonde crainte qui les anime, celle d'être démasqués tôt ou tard. Et les plus à perdre, ce sont ceux qui fanfaronnent en costume et cravate et pensent jouir d'une certaine respectabilité mais qui paniquent à l'idée que leur imposture soit exposée au grand public. Tout est une question du temps et de bon timing.

Hormis les malfrats qui profitent du grand chamboulement qui leur donne tout le loisir de commettre des délits, cette période de crise et de bouleversement invite à une profonde réflexion sur le tenant des systèmes qui gouvernent la vie des êtres au cours des siècles : organisations humaines, système étatique, social et économique, les grandes corporations, les récits que constituent certaines religions et autres idéologies qui sont les produits de l'imagination fertile de Sapiens. Et en les feuilletant dans leur existence d'entités fictives et légales, on enlèverait bien des masques. Et ce sera bien là le sens et le but final de ce 21e siècle qui n'est qu'à son début. C'est dans ce sens qu'on est amené à avancer, celui d'enlever les voiles qui dissimulent le système de pensée fossilisée, d'exposer les faits et remonter aux sources, et rétablir les vérités dans tous les domaines. Ce siècle sera passionnant de bonds et de rebonds.