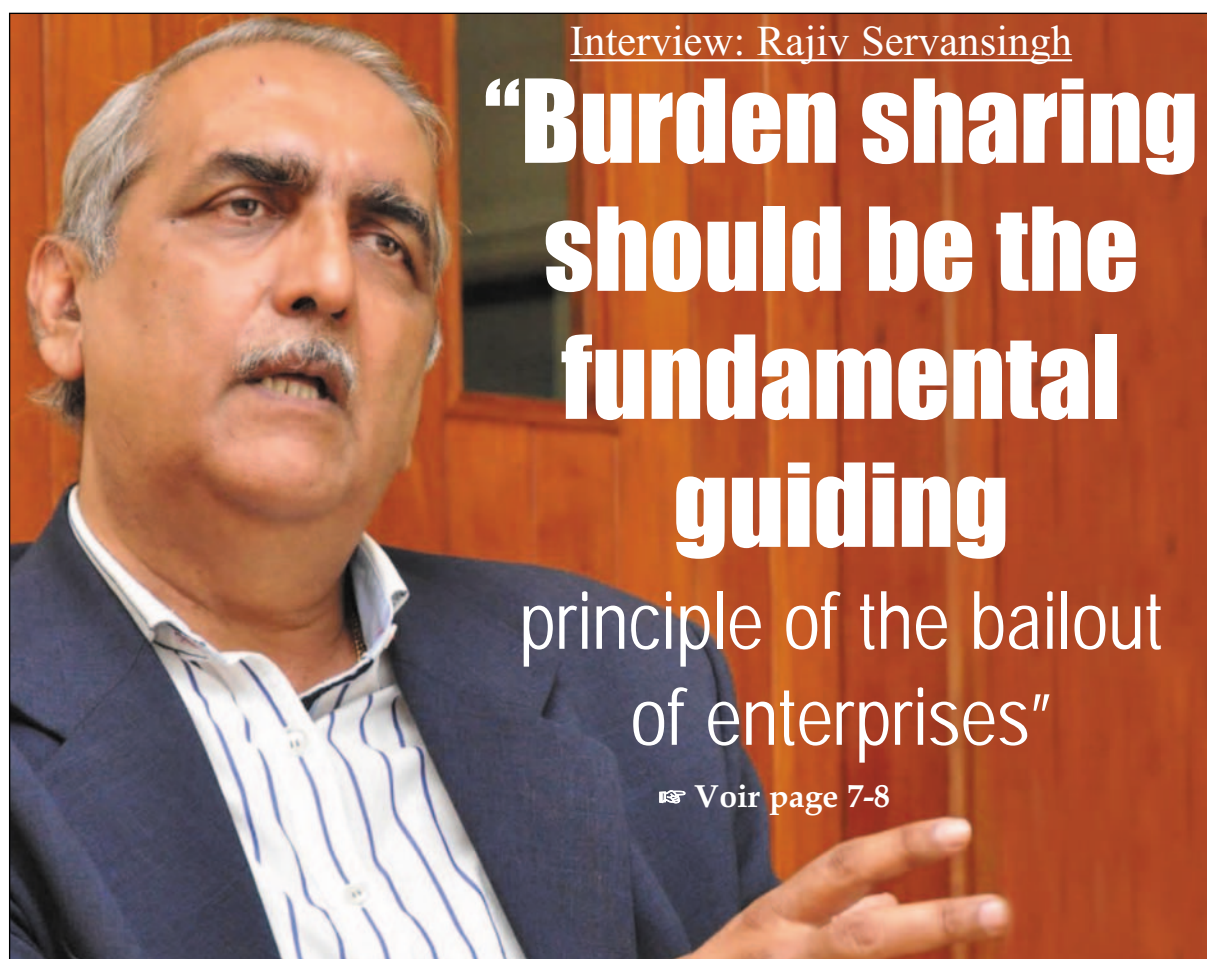


MAURITIUS TIMES

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



Interview: Rajiv Servansingh

"Burden sharing should be the fundamental guiding

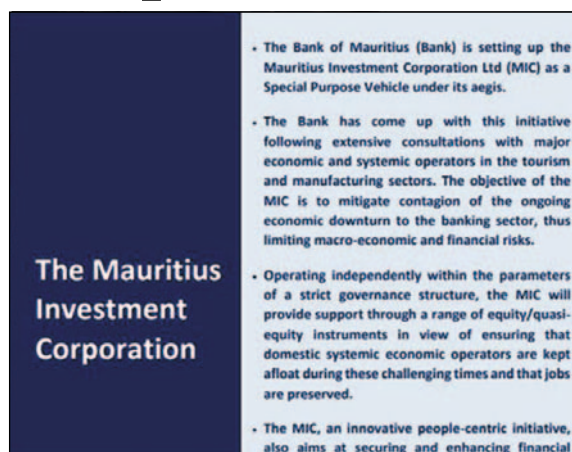
principle of the bailout of enterprises"

🔊 Voir page 7-8

Analyse

Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd

Un changement de vocation pour la Banque centrale



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Agora

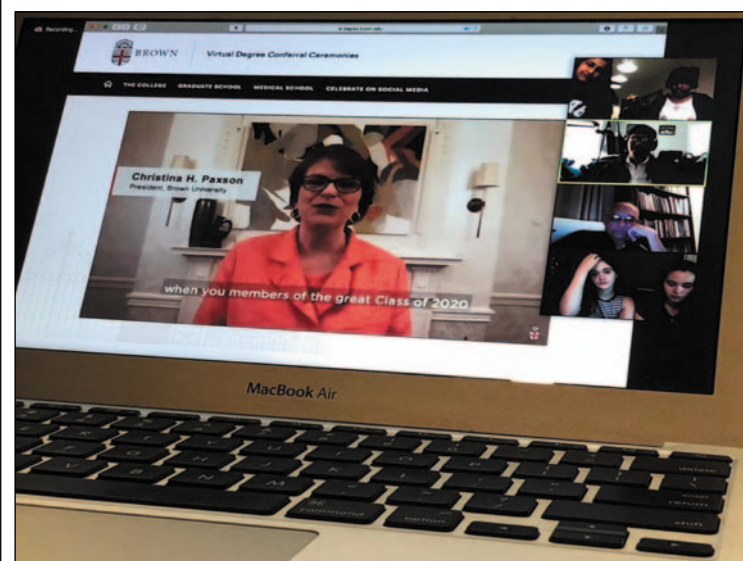
Exceptional Elbow Room for Engineering Economic Reconstruction



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Graduation in the time of Coronavirus



Thank goodness for technology that allows us to meet across time zones and geographies

By Dr R Neerunjun Gopee 🔊 See Page 4

Save Lives, Fix the Economy & Win Re-Election

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, which has created an economic crisis "like no other" as averred by Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the IMF, governments across the world have made available extensive financial packages to support employees, save jobs and prevent economic collapse with assistance to businesses and large corporations. Central banks have also intervened and decreased their lending rates to almost zero. The sizes of the support packages of rich and less rich countries are record-breaking – trillions of dollars of public money that will go to most sectors of their economies.

If only governments have the financial muscle to come up with such gigantesque assistance programmes, public opinion here and abroad has been voicing out the need to put in place proper safeguards and strict conditionalities to ensure that public money is used judiciously and channelled towards the public interest. Government assistance, it has been argued in these columns, should serve three goals: (1) make sure people's basic needs are met, (2) make it possible to prevent economic collapse and speed up economic recovery post lockdown, and (3) use these funds to create positive change, and rebuild areas we previously neglected. From an economic perspective, it is clearly more efficient to provide support only to the people and business sectors that really need it, or have lost income and would not be able to support themselves and, moreover, depending on the longer-term importance of these sectors to the people and the national economy.

The Mauritian government has come up with the Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd, which will be set up by the Bank of Mauritius as a Special Purpose Vehicle under its aegis with an initial "ONE-OFF exceptional contribution of Rs 60 Billion" by the Central Bank. The objective of the MIC is "to mitigate contagion of the ongoing economic downturn to the banking sector, thus limiting macro-economic and financial risks". The MIC, which is being established by the BOM under Section 6(1)(y) of the Bank of Mauritius Act, will operate "independently within the parameters of a strict governance structure", and will have the responsibility of providing "through a range of equity/quasi equity instruments in view of ensuring that domestic systemic economic operators are kept afloat...". As yet, it is not known what are the conditionalities that will be applied for the disbursement, the composition of the decision makers within the MIC and their credentials.

Former Finance minister Rama Sithanen men-

tioned in an interview to this paper, before the announcement of the setting up of the MIC, that besides the elements of fairness and prudence that should inform the decision-making process as regards government support, the Government should ensure that proper safeguards are put in place: "The Minister of Finance simply has no choice than to depend on the two reserves of the Central Bank.... All countries are doing it - from the US and the UK to the EU and Japan. However he must be responsible and these must be included in a standalone and robust Act of Parliament with key safeguards, oversight, supervision and control... A Special Economic and Finance Committee of the National Assembly with the Minister of Finance as Chairperson and experienced MPs such as Paul Berenger and Xavier Luc Duval (both former Ministers of Finance) and the leader of the Opposition as key members of that Committee during the next four years to oversee the use of these funds, its supervision and monitoring."

As it is, the MIC is a creation of the Bank of Mauritius – not of our legislative process, and as such it will fall outside the purview of parliamentary supervision. This is not to cast doubt on the credentials or competence or integrity of the decision makers within the MIC. But we are talking here is about an astronomical amount of money, the utilisation of which will be spread over the next years before the next elections.

To the focus of governments across the world during the present testing times, namely to 'save lives and fix the economy', there might be a third objective, which politicians would be averse to admitting: winning re-election. To be fair, this is in fact what probably any government would strive to do in the present testing circumstances when they are working out different kinds of assistance programmes to save their economies and provide relief to their populations.

As regards Mauritius' handling of the pandemic and its consequences, the medical challenge appears to have been met. One cannot exclude that the reasoning within the political establishment is that winning the second battle will take care of the third challenge, that of winning a second round at the next polls. Sure enough, there is still a long way to go. But injecting the initial capital inflows in the form of bailout packages and giving support to other sectors – all of which to be drawn from a war chest of such magnitude, followed up by spreading the disbursements over the years till the approach to the elections, might well be perceived as a strategy equivalent to the adoption of popular measures that brought the regime to power. Time will tell.

The Conversation

A doctor shares 7 steps he'll review to decide when and where it's safe to go out and about

All states have relaxed social distancing to some degree, but there are few consistent guidelines for people to know how to stay safe. A doctor who specializes in immunology tells what he will do.

As we return to some degree of normalcy after weeks of social distancing, we all need a plan. As an immunologist, I've given this a lot of thought personally and professionally.

When I venture out, I am first going to check the number of new COVID-19 infections in my community. In Virginia, for example, as of May 16, some health districts had 200 new daily cases and others fewer than 10. I am going to be less risk-averse when new cases fall to near zero.

Second, I will assess my risk for severe infection and the risk for severe infection for those I will be visiting. The CDC defines these risk factors as being over age 65 or having serious underlying medical conditions, which include chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immunocompromise, severe obesity (body mass index over 40), diabetes, kidney disease requiring dialysis, liver disease or living in a nursing home or long-term care facility. If I have one of these risk factors, or am visiting someone with one of these risk factors, I am going to be extra-cautious.

Third, I will draw from knowledge about how COVID-19 is transmitted. Airborne transmission and fomites, or contaminated surfaces such as doorknobs, are both means of infection. The SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 is stable in airborne droplets, or aerosols, for hours and on the surface of cardboard for a day and plastics for two days. A study in the New England Journal of Medicine, for example, showed that half of nursing home patients who had COVID-19 were without symptoms



The Inn at Little Washington in Washington, Virginia, shown May 20, 2020, plans to use mannequins in its dining room to enforce social distancing when it reopens at the end of the month. Olivier Douliery/AFP via Getty Images

at the time of diagnosis, by nasal swab PCR test for the virus, and yet infectious to others. Normal speech generates oral fluid droplets which are potentially infectious but are captured by a cloth face mask, preventing transmission to others.

I am going to wear a mask to help prevent my giving the infection to others, avoid touching surfaces such as handrails, try not to touch my eyes or nose or mouth with my hands and wash my hands frequently.

I am going to try to stay outdoors, where the risk of infection from aerosols is less, and if indoors stay six feet distant from others and limit my time there.

I am going to assess my risk for infecting others. If I have a fever, cough or other flu-like symptoms, such as muscle aches or tiredness, I am not going to venture out and risk exposing others to COVID-19. Even if healthy, I am going to wear a mask when out so that I can protect others if I am unknowingly infected but pre-symptomatic.

While it is tempting to resume normal activities, I have to remember – and I hope you will, too – that my individual behavior affects not only my health, but also yours.

William Petri
University of Virginia

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Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd

Un changement de vocation pour la Banque centrale

Aditya Narayan

Après la modification de la *Bank of Mauritius Act* par le projet de loi *Covid-19 (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020* pour permettre à la Banque centrale de faire des dons au gouvernement ou d'investir dans des entreprises, des fonds de Rs 60 milliards ont été versés dans les caisses de l'Etat en vue de financer le programme de stabilisation économique.

Les commentaires et les passions se déchaînent au sujet de cette initiative de la Banque centrale. L'opposition et des observateurs économiques crient au viol de l'indépendance de la Banque centrale, qui serait désormais sous la tutelle de l'Etat. Le Gouvernement prétend qu'il n'y avait pas d'alternative au recours à la Banque centrale pour sortir le pays de la crise économique. Qu'en est-il vraiment?

Tout le monde est d'accord que des circonstances exceptionnelles appellent des mesures exceptionnelles. Pour mobiliser les ressources financières nécessaires à la relance économique, le Gouvernement avait trois options:

- emprunter davantage du Fonds Monétaire International (FMI) en se prêtant aux exigences de la conditionnalité en termes de rigueur économique et de discipline financière,
- emprunter de certains pays amis (l'Inde et la Chine) en leur faisant des concessions géo-politiques qui influent sur la souveraineté nationale, et
- solliciter l'aide de la Banque centrale en vue de financer le déficit public tout en ouvrant les vannes du crédit aux entreprises en butte à des difficultés de trésorerie.

Trois options

Il est évident que le Gouvernement a privilégié la troisième option. La première option aurait contraint le pays à accepter un ratio dette/PIB strict de 60% ou moins, ce que le Gouvernement ne voulait pas. D'ailleurs, il a aboli le plafond de dette publique sous le *Public Debt Management Act 2008* afin d'accroître sa marge de manoeuvre en matière d'endettement. Vu le montant colossal de l'aide requise (Rs 60 milliards), la deuxième option aurait livré le pays pieds et poings liés à l'une ou l'autre des deux puissances qui ont des intérêts



“La Réserve fédérale américaine a le loisir d'imprimer des billets (le dollar étant une devise de réserve) et elle est redevable de ses actions au Congrès, auquel elle explique ses mesures et ses prévisions économiques. En revanche, la Banque centrale de Maurice ne rend compte qu'à son conseil d'administration, qui est nommé par le Gouvernement. Elle ne rend pas compte au Parlement. La nouvelle entité juridique (MIC) est en dehors du contrôle parlementaire...”

stratégiques certains dans l'océan Indien.

Le Gouvernement croit sans doute que la troisième option est politiquement acceptable et économiquement faisable. Politiquement acceptable parce que le gouvernement, jouissant d'une majorité confortable pour faire passer les lois, pense qu'il serait mieux d'intervenir fermement et massivement en début de mandat pour relancer l'économie au lieu de laisser la crise perdurer avec le risque d'une crise sociale à terme.

Economiquement faisable parce qu'il considère que les ressources de la Banque centrale sont suffisantes pour subvenir aux besoins de financement du programme de stabilisation économique. Le Gouvernement table sur l'espoir ou la prévision que, une fois les différents secteurs de l'économie remis sur les rails, les recettes d'exportation et du tourisme ainsi que l'investissement direct extérieur repartiront de plus belle pour remplir les caisses vides.

Il va de soi que le Gouvernement fait peu de cas des critiques au sujet de l'érosion de l'indépendance de la Banque centrale, lesquelles relèvent d'un débat ésotérique pour le commun des mortels... Son calcul est cynique mais simple : les gens qui ont besoin d'aide immédiate ne

se soucient pas de la provenance de l'argent. Les employés d'Air Mauritius menacés de licenciement ne s'inquiètent pas que les fonds nécessaires au renflouement de la compagnie proviennent des réserves de la Banque centrale ou d'une autre source. Quand la subsistance même est menacée, on s'agrippe à n'importe quelle bouée de sauvetage.

Nouvelle vocation

Au niveau institutionnel, la Banque centrale s'est départie de son rôle traditionnel de régulateur de la politique monétaire, de dépositaire des réserves en devises étrangères et de prêteur en dernier recours pour les banques commerciales. Elle s'est découverte une nouvelle vocation à deux volets :

- celle d'agir en bailleur de fonds de l'Etat pour financer le déficit public à coups de dons (aux Rs 18 milliards déjà prises du *Special Reserve Fund* s'ajouteront d'autres ponctions) en mettant à contribution la planche à billets ou de gains de change du fonds de réserve spécial, et
- celle d'agir en banque d'investissement pour prendre part au capital des entreprises voulant se recapitaliser ou en banque de développement pour prêter de l'argent directement aux entreprises en mal de fonds de roulement. Ainsi, la *Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd* (MIC) - nouvellement créée par la Banque centrale - investira dans Air Mauritius en y achetant des actions qu'elle paiera en devises étrangères afin de

permettre à la compagnie d'honorer ses créances sous les contrats de location d'avions.

La nouvelle vocation de la banque suscite, à juste titre, des craintes quant à l'indépendance de la Banque centrale. En soutenant la politique fiscale du Gouvernement par l'injection de fonds dans le *Consolidated Revenue Fund* de l'Etat qui couvre les dépenses publiques, elle risque de compromettre son rôle de gardien de la stabilité des prix, lequel dépend de la politique monétaire dont elle est seule responsable.

La Banque centrale pense pouvoir s'inspirer de la Banque centrale américaine qui a fait de l'assouplissement quantitatif (le rachat des titres de dettes aux acteurs financiers, notamment des bons du Trésor et des obligations d'entreprise) son dada afin d'inonder l'économie des Etats-Unis de liquidités en temps de crise. Or, la Réserve fédérale américaine a le loisir d'imprimer des billets (le dollar étant une devise de réserve) et elle est redevable de ses actions au Congrès, auquel elle explique ses mesures et ses prévisions économiques.

En revanche, la Banque centrale de Maurice ne rend compte qu'à son conseil d'administration, qui est nommé par le Gouvernement. Elle ne rend pas compte au Parlement. La nouvelle entité juridique (MIC) est en dehors du contrôle parlementaire, à l'instar des entreprises publiques contrôlées par l'Etat (Air Mauritius, SBM). La MIC rendra compte à un conseil d'administration nommé par la Banque centrale, sur lequel l'Etat exercera un contrôle de facto.

- Qui décidera à propos de quel secteur ou quelle entreprise aurait besoin de financement?
- Qui fera l'analyse des risques liés à l'investissement?
- Quels critères guideront les prêts?
- Comment s'assurer que les prêts seront remboursés?
- Quelle prise de participation au capital d'entreprise sera faite?
- Quelle sera la politique en matière de dividendes et de bonis de performance dans les entreprises aidées?

Autant de questions pertinentes qui relèvent de la gouvernance de la MIC. Il est essentiel que cette dernière soit transparente en donnant les informations utiles sur les montants d'investissements/prêts par entreprise/secteur tout en expliquant la rationalité des décisions prises. Un rapport régulier sur la performance des investissements/prêts serait une bonne mesure de transparence.

Planification économique

La question la plus fondamentale est de savoir si l'action de la MIC sera une intervention ponctuelle visant à éteindre les feux (*fire-fighting*) avant qu'ils n'embrasent tout le pays ou le prélude d'une certaine planification économique (celle que le ministère du Plan faisait autrefois).

☞ Suite en page 4

“Qui décidera à propos de quel secteur ou quelle entreprise aurait besoin de financement? Qui fera l'analyse des risques liés à l'investissement? Quels critères guideront les prêts? Comment s'assurer que les prêts seront remboursés? Quelle prise de participation au capital d'entreprise sera faite? Quelle sera la politique en matière de dividendes et de bonis de performance dans les entreprises aidées? Autant de questions pertinentes qui relèvent de la gouvernance de la MIC...”



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

Graduation in the time of Coronavirus

Thank goodness for technology that allows us to meet across time zones and geographies

The tickets had been booked well in advance, and there was much impatience to catch the flight that would take the parents and the graduant's younger sister to the US. They were to attend the graduation ceremony of their son, and obviously he was as excited as them for the reunion and conferring of degree that would go on to be a cherished memory in their family album.

and deadlines to meet could not be emptied as regularly as was required. Inevitably, utensils would keep piling up, and it was usually not till late Sunday night that a slot of time would be found to attend to the chore. Mama or Papa, or both, were the saviours when they made the trip to spend time with the loved one – increasingly possible in the past few decades as this could be afforded. And of course

friends in later years. And so too will be the virtual graduation ceremony of my niece's son that we gathered to 'attend' last Sunday night.

She had set up the Zoom app on my laptop, and sent me the link. No need to say that I had to undergo a coaching session so as to be able to connect as I would be on my own at home during the session. I joined in a bit late because my laptop had a fit and wouldn't boot, so I had to make a few more attempts before it got going.

Thank goodness for technology that allows us to meet across time zones and geographies. Family, friends and classmates from different locations in Mauritius and the US were thus able to watch the unfolding of the ceremony after our preliminary chitchats and the playing out of a video showing Alok's lifecourse to date along with some of the messages that had been recorded. We went down memory lane and 'nostalgised' (no excuse for this 'verbing' of a noun in these days of language transformation!) about shared moments fondly remembered.

“Thank goodness for technology that allows us to meet across time zones and geographies. Family, friends and classmates from different locations in Mauritius and the US were thus able to watch the unfolding of the ceremony after our preliminary chitchats and the playing out of a video showing Alok's lifecourse to date along with some of the messages that had been recorded. We went down memory lane and 'nostalgised' (no excuse for this 'verbing' of a noun in these days of language transformation!) about shared moments fondly remembered...”

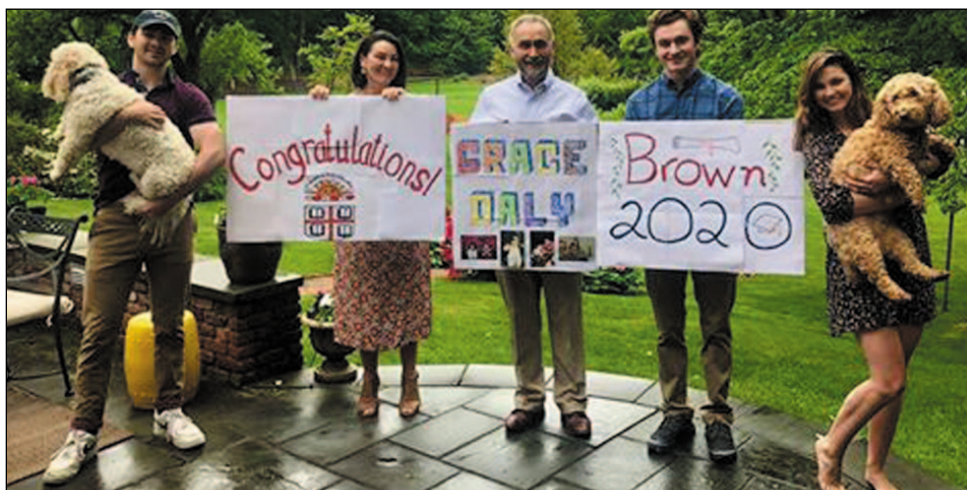
The university heads made their addresses turn by turn. The formal announcement of conferment was preceded by its version in Latin: I had last heard Latin spoken during the Form I class at Royal College Curepipe, so this was a novelty. But it sounded appropriate and gave an augustness and solemnity to the occasion, despite the absence of gowns and caps that normally add colour and formality to the whole process.

All the hundreds of graduants became 'degreed', as it were, simultaneously in this virtual graduation ceremony that was, nevertheless, as rich with excitement and emotion as if it were the real one.

The ceremony may have been virtual, but the scroll will be real!

And now we await the return of our hero for the well-deserved celebration. That, definitely, will not be a virtual one!

RN Gopee
ngopee@intnet.mu



“Family and friends of Class of 2020 graduate Grace Daly, who earned a bachelor of arts on Sunday, celebrated even though the pandemic kept everyone far from College Hill”

Unfortunately, things turned out differently – Coronavirus spoiled their carefully worked out plan. The family could not fly out as airlines stood grounded. This reminds me of a definition of life that I had once heard: Life is what happens to you when you are busy planning other things.

Besides, as the university emptied an alternative arrangement had to be found for the son's boarding until graduation day. To their relief, a good friend was able to accommodate him, and he was well taken care of, leaving their place to return to his apartment a few days before the big day so as to prepare for it.

As sometimes happens in such circumstances, the co-occupant of the apartment was not as finicky about tidiness and cleanliness, so there was a lot to clear – beginning with the kitchen sink, or rather stink. But the young lad is very deft with his hands, and he got going immediately, speeding up when his flatmate vacated – mercifully! – shortly afterwards.

Most of us whose kids have studied overseas would have stories about loaded kitchen sinks that the pressure of studies

there's more flights available than during my time as an undergraduate in Kolkata: the only once a week Air India flight was inaugurated in 1966, one year after I had left, and that too only up to Mumbai, and that went on well into the 1970s.

I remember calling my son late one Sunday night when he was at university, and as all of us parents know our big concern is about their food. And quite naturally I asked him what he had had for dinner. Kichlao, he replied flatly. What?, I asked, what's that? Khichlao, he repeated. And went on to tell me that he had started off making a pulao, and then, he continued, 'I threw in a bit of this and a bit of that, and it was beginning to resemble a khichri. Finally it was neither quite a pulao nor a proper khichri. So I decided to call it khichlao!' He assured me it was wholesome and tasty enough, and that he had managed to clear the full kitchen sink before getting down to his assignments anew.

Such is student life at the university, spiced with all kinds of similar incidents that are looked back upon with smiles and humour as they are narrated to family and

Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd

Un changement de vocation pour la Banque centrale

Suite de la page 3

Dans le premier cas, on misera sur le court terme pour faire redémarrer les secteurs ou les entreprises avec leurs mêmes modèles d'affaires afin de permettre un retour à la normale. La normalité retrouvée serait le statu quo ante avec ses lignes de faille et ses vulnérabilités aux chocs exogènes. On ne changera rien au fond.

Dans le deuxième cas, on misera sur le moyen terme et le long terme pour atteindre des objectifs de réforme économique. Certains pays s'y sont déjà engagés en subordonnant l'intervention financière du gouvernement dans l'économie à des objectifs clairs et mesurables. Selon différentes permutations, ces pays, y compris le Canada, ont exigé que les entreprises bénéficiant de l'aide ou du crédit acceptent :

- un plafond sur les émoluments des cadres dirigeants avec des coupures là où c'est nécessaire ;
- le gel du paiement des dividendes pour deux ans ;
- l'interdiction de racheter des actions d'entreprise sur le marché boursier en vue d'augmenter la valeur des titres de la société ;
- une prise de participation de l'Etat au capital de la société en contrepartie de l'aide consentie, couplée d'un droit de vote au conseil d'administration ;
- des mesures tangibles visant à réduire l'empreinte carbonique de l'entreprise dans l'effort de combattre le changement climatique et d'assurer le développement durable ;
- la conformité totale aux règles fiscales pour la société et ses filiales d'outre-mer en vue de diminuer l'optimisation fiscale et combattre l'évasion fiscale ;
- la minimisation des licenciements dans le cadre de la restructuration de l'entreprise ; et
- le paiement du salaire minimum à ceux qui n'y ont pas droit.

Faire des réformes dans une conjoncture difficile est l'approche utilisée dans ces pays afin de ne pas gaspiller une opportunité où le public est prêt à se serrer la ceinture pour réussir des changements positifs et durables.

Aditya Narayan



S. Callikan

Exceptional Elbow Room for Engineering Economic Reconstruction

Despite lack of garde-fous, ceilings or sunset clauses, Government have granted the Finance minister carte blanche for engineering an economic reconstruction that should be guided by the national interest.

With the Covid-19 pandemic under reasonable control and deconfinement looming, all attention will necessarily be focused on the handling by authorities of the social and economic crisis and the upcoming budget of the new Minister of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED). If it is true that the “exceptional circumstances require exceptional measures” and that nothing should be taboo or off-limits, Hon Padayachy, without under-rating the challenges ahead, will have a grandstand opportunity to rise and make his place if not in history, then in popular imagery.

On the plus side, he is himself a recognized economist, has been in the corridors of power and has an experienced team of cadres at MOFED which should ensure that early missteps, perhaps through over-reliance on outside advisers, will have been curbed. Government has also acted swiftly through the Covid-19 omnibus Act rushed through Parliament, giving the Minister unprecedented leeway with public debt management and the Central Bank (BOM) foreign exchange reserves.

Despite the strong reservations that



“Prudence dictates that the Minister does not use this massive boon, born of our collective savings and paid for by future generations, in one fell swoop. True it is that some sectors, most particularly in travel, tourism, hostelry, entertainment and allied services may need swift prop-up intervention. That should of course be commensurate with countervailing owner equity injections where establishments have recorded ample previous profits, reserves and paid-out dividends...”

have been voiced out and the lack of *garde-fous*, ceilings or sunset clauses, Cabinet and government MPs have granted him *carte blanche* and an exceptional elbow room for engineering an economic reconstruction that should be guided by the national interest.

We hear of the Rs 18 billion of BOM notional special reserves (somewhat equivalent to printing the money), the “one-tranche” Rs 60 billion being transferred from BOM forex reserves to government current expenditure coffers, the Rs 50 billion reportedly asked from WB/IMF, the Rs 8 billion from African Development Bank, the Rs 14 billion of one-year import credit facility from the Saudis. Until the budget details, we as yet have no information whether more unknown billions, again from BOM, will be injected into the economy through equity participation. Much of that could perhaps be earmarked for reviving the national carrier currently in receivership. Total fund availabilities might represent quite a high percentage of our faltering GDP at the disposal of a Finance minister, who despite the exceptional circumstances, will not be struggling to make ends meet but on how and where best

to guide and prioritize government's intervention.

Prudence dictates that the minister does not use this massive boon, born of our collective savings and paid for by future generations, in one fell swoop. True it is that some sectors, most particularly in travel, tourism, hostelry, entertainment and allied services may need swift prop-up intervention. That should of course be commensurate with countervailing owner equity injections where establishments have recorded ample previous profits, reserves and paid-out dividends.

The Minister would also be inspired to heed calls for intelligently bargaining injection of public funds against some form of non-executive participation in those fundamentally sound private concerns queuing up for assistance, while making the tough calls for enterprises that were non-viable even before Covid-19. But as uncertainty hovers about the length, depth and duration of disruptive economic and social conditions, or about potential unknown shocks down the road, the Minister should be wise enough to keep some of the ammunition at his disposal dry and safe, to be spent over 2-3 years.

The Minister of Finance and ultimately the government will be judged by the effectiveness and efficacy of his budgetary measures, their social and economic fairness, and the understanding he shows for the vulnerable, the self-employed and the thousands of micro, small and medium enterprises that constitute half of the productive fabric of society. It is not only about the corner shops, the local barbers and hairdressers or the street food merchants that all need to re-open rapidly. Nor is it just about all the workers and small contractors who need to ply about their mechanical, building or maintenance trades without waiting for Work Access Permits or queuing for government handouts.

For instance, collateral-free loans of up to a million rupees, with minimum red-tape, and reductions in various rates, levies and duties, even for a specific period, could provide effective relief in the mix of alternatives to be explored for the sector. The Modi government has reportedly reserved an astounding 15% of the Indian economic bail-out package to pre-

Leading by example: Pay cuts for MPs & higher establishment

cisely those ends.

With some safeguards, even 10,000 such loans at an average of Rs 200,000 with a decent moratorium, would barely cost the exchequer Rs 2 Bn, while they may revive post-pandemic reconstruction and boost many traditional sector small-scale entrepreneurs. A similar hassle-free amount could be earmarked for start-ups in new or emerging sectors, unlocking their potential, generating employment or future revenues to start pay-back.

Food security during the lockdown has rightly brought home to many urbanites how much of our fine herbs, spices, root crops and green veggies we can all grow in our backyards or even in a battery of drums. Some might also have realized the hardships exacerbated by closed markets and ruthless intermediaries, even as farmer produce was sometimes rotting in the fields. A hardy few have even erected a simple gravity-fed space-saving pipe system for home hydroponics.

The Minister could dwell on how much we owe those fisher-

men, vegetable growers and small animal breeders who toil seven days a week to attend to our food security needs in ways that few of our conglomerates could. Coming out of the pandemic crisis should be an opportunity for a bold series of budgetary measures to energize, expand land availabilities, provide seedlings, compost, fertilizers, or meaningful technical upgrade opportunities into sheltered farming and, perhaps more importantly, provide them with greater security.

The exceptional circumstances and hardships endured by ordinary citizens during the sanitary lockdown has starkly placed in perspective the lifestyle, salaries, perks and privileges of the governing elites against the realities of those dozens of thousands of self-employed to whom a meagre monthly allowance of Rs 5,100 was handed or those hard-working families who make ends meet on joint salaries not exceeding Rs 25,000.

It is demeaning to read about



New Zealand PM Jacinda Arden -Photo: AFP

“New Zealand PM Jacinda Arden summed it aptly that cuts in lavish top-echelon salaries, while not material to government budget, were all about empathy, solidarity, symbolic burden-sharing and leadership by example in such difficult times. Locally, the nominal 10% cut in ministerial basic salaries, which can be recouped in tax returns, can certainly be improved upon as many leaders round the world have demonstrated...”

sanction-less billions squandered in dubious loans, wasted in massive failures or regularly denounced by Audit Reports that gather dust on shelves. Empathy

for the struggles most Mauritians are enduring and the jobs that look likely to be axed, calls for exemplary public finance management and an exceptional sense of solidarity from the highest echelons.

New Zealand PM Jacinda Arden summed it aptly that cuts in lavish top-echelon salaries, while not material to government budget, were all about empathy, solidarity, symbolic burden-sharing and leadership by example in such difficult times. Locally, the nominal 10% cut in ministerial basic salaries, which can be recouped in tax returns, can certainly be improved upon as many leaders round the world have demonstrated.

No Opposition party would be necessarily averse to a cross-party fundamental review of salaries, allowances, perks, privileges and pensions of higher establishment. Social and political consensus could earn the required qualified majority in Parliament. In this unique opportunity, will the Minister of Finance have the appetite and social fibre to make the overtures on that front and drive an overdue slimming regime?

S. Callikan

Russia-US nuclear arms treaty set to expire



Time is running out on an arms control treaty that, if it's allowed to expire, will leave the world with no legal restrictions on US and Russian nuclear weapons for the first time in nearly half a century.

"It's really hard to see how, in the midst of a pandemic that would make actual in-person negotiations quite difficult, you're going to get something done and ratified and in force before the New START treaty expires on Feb. 5, 2021," said Alexandra Bell at the Center for Arms Control and Non-proliferation.

They note how Trump's reelection campaign, the coronavirus pandemic and the economic problems it has created are consuming a lot of time. Negotiating complex nuclear accords can take years, and even the president, who has blamed Beijing for not stopping the spread of the virus, has said he doesn't want to talk to President Xi Jinping right now.

A spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Geng Shuang, said in January that China has "no intention to participate" in trilateral arms control negotiations.

If US President Donald Trump doesn't extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty — only remaining US-Russia arms control pact — or succeed in negotiating a replacement treaty, it will expire on Feb. 5. That's just 16 days after Trump begins a second term or his successor is sworn into office, reports associated Press.

Russia has offered to extend New START for up to five years, but Trump is holding out. He thinks China, which is expected to double its stockpile of nuclear weapons in the next decade, should have to sign on to a nuclear arms control accord, too.

The future of New START was further called into question with Trump's announcement last Thursday that the US intends to withdraw from another treaty that permits observation flights over the U.S., Russia and more than 30 other nations.

Trump voiced his desire for a three-way arms control agreement months ago, but that effort is still in the starting blocks.

Russian officials and many arms control experts agree that China, as a rising power, should be part of a nuclear arms accord, but they are eyeing the calendar.

China open to apolitical probe into source of coronavirus: Foreign Minister Wang Yi

China is "open" to international cooperation to identify the source of the novel coronavirus but any investigation must be "free of political interference", China's foreign minister said Sunday.

Wang Yi blasted what he called efforts by US politicians to "fabricate rumours" about the pathogen's origins and "stigmatise China".

The United States and Australia have called in recent weeks for an investigation into the origins of the pandemic.

Both US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have accused China of a lack of transparency over the issue, and repeatedly pushed the theory that the virus leaked from a Chinese maximum security laboratory.

Most scientists believe the virus jumped from animals to humans, possibly from a market selling exotic animals for meat in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

"China is open to working with the international scientific community to look into the source of the virus," Wang said at a press conference on the side-



A healthcare worker collects a swab for testing in China's Jilin province on May 18 (Photo Credits: AP)

lines of China's annual parliament session.

"At the same time, we believe that this should be professional, fair and constructive," he added.

"Fairness means the process be free of political interference, respect the sovereignty of all countries, and oppose any presumption of guilt."

The World Health Organization has also called on Beijing to invite them in to investigate the source, with China proposing that the "global response" to Covid-19 should only be assessed when the pandemic is over.

Amid tensions with China along LOC, India speaks to Lanka and Mauritius on scaling up ties

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had two significant phone conversations on Saturday - one with the Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and another with his Mauritius counterpart Pravind Jugnauth. 'The two are islands in the Indian Ocean, but more importantly China has been engaging with both and increasing its footprints there aggressively,' reports CNN.

India has been trying to open a new chapter with Sri Lanka after Rajapaksa took the reins of the island nation last year. Within hours of his victory, external affairs minister S Jaishankar dashed off on a sudden, unannounced visit to Colombo and extended him an invite to visit India. He reciprocated by making his New Delhi visit the first foreign visit after taking charge.

India's caution stemmed from the fact that the 10-year regime of his brother Mahinda Rajapaksa, from 2005-2015, made New Delhi uncomfortable with its open closeness to China. Mahinda Rajapaksa was accused of driving Sri Lanka into a Chinese debt trap and pushing the Hambantota port in his constituency, one that was considered economically unfeasible but strategically significant.

China managed to get the port on a 99-year lease from Sri Lanka despite India's opposition. The only solace India could draw was from the fact that the port cannot be used for military purposes without Lanka's consent.

During Gotabaya's visit to New Delhi, India announced a \$400 million line of credit for development projects in Sri Lanka and a \$50 million fund to fight terrorism in the aftermath of the Easter Sunday terror attack.

Significantly, India chose to once again reiterate its commitment to Colombo during the Covid-19 pandemic, similar to the supplies India is sending to Mauritius during this tough phase. In the call with PM Pravind Jugnauth, he "thanked PM (Modi) for sending the Indian Naval Ship 'Kesar' to Mauritius as part of 'Operation Sagar', with a consignment of medicines and a 14-member medical team to help the Mauritian health authorities fight the Covid-19 pandemic."

In addition, India also offered enhanced "cooperation in various areas, including measures aimed at supporting the financial sector of Mauritius."

The call assumes significance as the skirmishes on the Line of Actual Control with China have gone up significantly over the last few weeks. After initially dismissing them as events arising due to a "difference in perception of the LAC," the MEA on Thursday not just rubbished allegations of activities on the Western and Sikkim sector but also counter-alleged that "all Indian activities are entirely on the Indian side of the LAC".

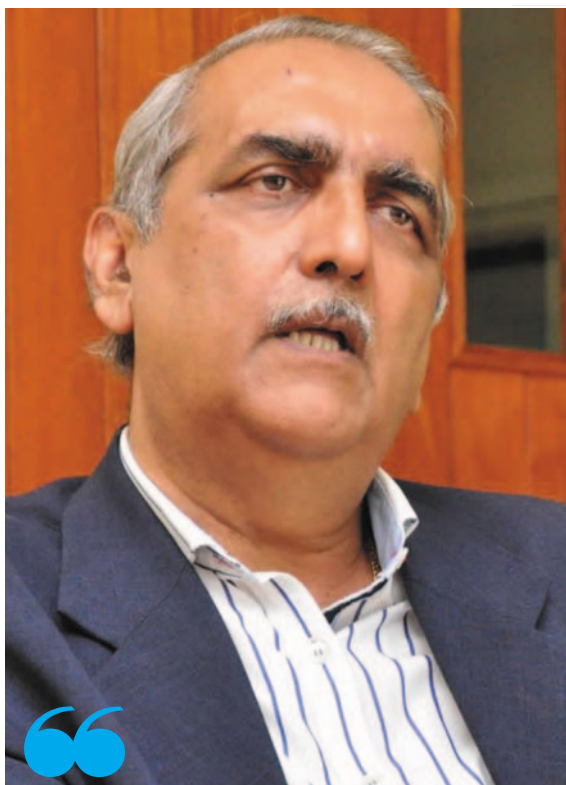
"In fact, it is the Chinese side that has recently undertaken activity hindering India's normal patrolling patterns," the MEA spokesperson said.

Compiled by
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“Burden sharing should be the fundamental guiding principle of the bailout of enterprises”

Rajiv Servansingh shares his views on the difficult period awaiting the country post Covid-19. He emphasises that there must perforce be burden sharing to face the economic impacts, and that it is the State that must be the driver as it is providing the bailouts to keep businesses afloat. It has to have a solid team to negotiate with the stakeholders and perhaps the most important part of the package will be insisting on the conditionalities that must be attached. He agrees with the suggestion of rigorous oversight by a Parliamentary Committee to ensure greater transparency and accountability, so as to avoid repeating the mistakes made with disbursement of the stimulus package in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis.

happen next although there is no need to panic.

In this unprecedented situation, novel and previously untested solutions would have to be deployed. As Franklin D Roosevelt once said about the effects of the great depression: the only thing we need to fear is fear itself.

*** Are you worried that the real pandemic danger might come from its social impacts with some 100,000 unemployed by the end of the year, as suggested by the current Minister of Finance? That s may even be worse than the 1970s, isn't it?**

My understanding of what the Minister meant was that such a dramatic situation could develop if nothing was done to at least mitigate the most immediate and serious consequences of the economic crisis following the pandemic.

The figure of 100,000 unemployed would indeed represent the kind of situation that we had in the 1970s when we had around 26% of our active population out of work. The notable difference, however, is that in those days the calamitous economic situation was a result of sheer mismanagement of the national economy and not the result of some external factor beyond anyone's control as is the case with the present Covid-19 pandemic.

*** It is not known whether the Finance minister has factored in the likely consequences of the Covid-19 Act, in particular those in relation to the amendments to the Workers Rights Act that might facilitate redundancy in the private sector, in his unemployment calculations. Do you see any rationale in those amendments at this point in time?**

As I said earlier, the minister's statement regarding the 100,000 unemployed was just a warning about what could happen if no decisive action was taken. As regards the amendments to the Worker's Rights Act, it is clear that this is a very sensitive issue especially coming from a government which had actually reintroduced so many of the measures for protection

of worker's rights in the recent past, after the previous neo-liberal regime had got rid of them.

The government has been insisting that these are temporary measures which are being taken in the context of the post-Covid crisis. My personal instinct is that any government should only have recourse to such exceptional measures only in dire and inevitable circumstances.

As for the rationale for amendments to the Worker's Rights Act, I would think that one can only understand it if placed in the context of a major economic crisis. We are not in an autocratic state and are operating in a mixed economy where the greater part of economic activity is in the hands of the private sector.

“Providing bailouts for the corporate sector is probably the one that will retain the most attention and rightly so. How these funds are transferred and the conditionalities attached to them will likely be a defining moment for the present government and a test of the will of the State not to fall into the trap of ‘socializing losses while profits remain solidly privatized’...”

In all cases where the government will be providing financial support to companies, the primary *quid pro quo* should be to prevent any forced redundancy. It would nevertheless be unavoidable that many firms would still have to restructure their businesses.

Look at Air Mauritius. I understand that such cases would be referred to the redundancy board where employers would have to justify their claims for such actions. If anyone is claiming that in a context where the economy of Mauritius is on the path of double-digit contraction of its GDP growth and that this will not entail any unemployment, then he should certainly come forward with his magic wand.

*** There might not be a causal relationship here, but one cannot however fail to take note that despite an injection of Rs 60 billion, besides the earlier Rs 18 Bn, by the Bank of Mauritius with a view to “ensuring that domestic systemic operators are kept afloat... and that jobs are preserved”, we'll end up with 100,000 unemployed by the end of the year. Do you find that reasonable and therefore acceptable?**

It would seem that some people are suggesting that there might exist a causality between the amendments to the Worker's Rights Act and ending up with 100,000 unemployed in spite of the Rs60 Bn that the government is proposing to inject in the economy. If we follow through this logic, it would mean that the government would only have to

retract these amendments and there would be less unemployment.

I am afraid there is a huge flaw in this line of reasoning - the counterfactual argument is: Even admitting that after investing Rs 60Bn there would still be 100,000 unemployed by the end of the year, then it immediately begs the question of what would it be if government did not actually invest this amount to save lives, jobs and enterprises.

*** While we are busy amending labour laws, it's also being argued that it's not the time now in the present exceptional circumstances to review the tax system or raise taxes to finance economic recovery programmes. Shouldn't there be some form of burden sharing in these challenging times. What would you have proposed?**

I have been a long time supporter of a revision of the Flat Tax and for a more progressive taxation in the country, and this certainly remains one of the leitmotifs underlying my thinking about the new economic development model for our country.

However hailing a new progressive tax regime as a solution at a time when the corporate sector is facing a calamitous financial future would simply constitute a misleading, ineffective, not to say demagogical statement.

Especially when it comes from quarters which have actually helped to introduce the Flat Tax and supported it at a time when companies were earning huge profits.

As to the second part of your question, there is no doubt however in my mind that burden sharing should be the fundamental guiding principle of the bail out of enterprises following this crisis.

*** As regards the Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd, this Special Purpose Vehicle which will operate, according to the Bank of Mauritius, “independently within the parameters of a strict governance structure” will provide “support through a range of equity/quasi equity instruments in view of ensuring that domestic systemic economic operators are kept afloat”. There is no mention of conditionalities attached to that support. What do you think should have been the correct way to go about supporting our economic operators so that we do not repeat the mistakes of 2008?**

Let us reiterate the point that the world over there is overwhelming consensus that governments need to intervene massively with financial assistance to enterprises for saving those companies which would be viable under normal circumstances, to help households who suddenly find themselves deprived of any earnings and to support the more vulnerable groups in society.



This is indeed the litmus test of how public funds will be used for saving private, often family-controlled companies from otherwise inevitable bankruptcy. Every case will have to be examined for its merits and would have its own characteristics that will define not only the amount of financial support that it will receive but probably most importantly the conditions which will be attached to such transfer of funds...



Mauritius Times: Politicians and economists have for weeks now been expressing serious concerns about the economic impact of the pandemic that has come to worsen an already bad situation pre-Covid-19. Do you also think it's going to be as bad as they suggest it would?

Rajiv Servansingh: You do not need to be a rocket scientist to understand that when virtually the whole global economic activity is deliberately put on hold for a period of more than two months, the consequences for all nations will be close to catastrophic if special measures are not taken to deal with such an unprecedented situation. In Mauritius, which is a small island developing state with an extremely open economy, dependent on foreign trade and investments, the effects can be devastating. In a no-action scenario one can expect a severe recession if not an economic depression and subsequent social upheavals.

Governments all over the world have reacted by providing liquidity to businesses as well as to households to deal with the first effects of the calamity - to prevent businesses going into bankruptcy and families going without basic necessity. Every thinking person would therefore be worried about what would

“To the extent that the processes and instruments suggested by Rama Sithanen go in the direction of greater transparency and accountability, they should be most welcome. Indeed the suggestions include a recommendation for a special committee of the National Assembly to have a supervisory role on the workings of the MIC. I believe that this is the sort of mechanism to which we should more frequently have recourse...”

Amendments to Worker's Rights Act: 'Any government should only have recourse to such exceptional measures only in dire and inevitable circumstances'

☞ Cont. from page 7

In Mauritius the government has set up the Mauritius Investment Corporation as the principal instrument through which bailout to enterprises will be provided to economic operators. These, we surmise, include the large companies from the organized (corporate) sector as well as SMEs and other independent producers.

Providing bailouts for the corporate sector is probably the one that will retain the most attention and rightly so. How these funds are transferred and the conditionalities attached to them will likely be a defining moment for the present government and a test of the will of the State not to fall into the trap of "socializing losses while profits remain solidly privatized".

In an article which was published some two weeks back in the local press, in which I developed the concept of "conditionality bargaining" which should govern the whole process of bailout, I cited the following quote from a commentator: "Lest we forget and do what was done in the 2008 financial crisis, the State is and must be seen as the real hero that it is in the present situation rather than a naïve patsy."

This is indeed the litmus test of how public funds will be used for saving private, often family-controlled companies from otherwise inevitable bankruptcy. Every case will have to be examined for its merits and would have its own characteristics that will define not only the amount of financial support that it will receive but probably most importantly the conditions which will be attached to such transfer of funds.

*** And how do you propose that the above could be actually implemented?**

First, let us underline that the successful implementation of such an approach will not be possible without a strong State negotiating team of professionals and people who have demonstrated skills for carrying out the expectedly harsh negotiations.

“As for the rationale for amendments to the Worker's Rights Act, I would think that one can only understand it if placed in the context of a major economic crisis. We are not in an autocratic state and are operating in a mixed economy where the greater part of economic activity is in the hands of the private sector. In all cases where the government will be providing financial support to companies, the primary *quid pro quo* should be to prevent any forced redundancy...”

Again referring to my proposal on "conditionality bargaining", I have suggested five conditions which need to be fulfilled by companies which wish to benefit from the State's financial support:

(1) beneficiary companies that generously distributed non-taxable dividends to shareholders over the past 5-6 years should call on those large investors to contribute to a recapitalization of their companies;

(2) companies which are provided with soft loans and other forms of financial packages should not distribute dividends for as long as those loans and other facilities have not been fully repaid;

(3) part of the funds being allocated to those companies would be fully convertible into equity at some future time at the discretion

of the State;

(4) beneficiary companies would not be allowed to proceed with any share buybacks for as long as they have not refunded loans and other facilities extended under the package; and

5) the State should have board representation for as long as facilities have not been repaid.

To these should be added an additional condition that these companies would not proceed with any involuntary redundancy of workers during the next twelve months.

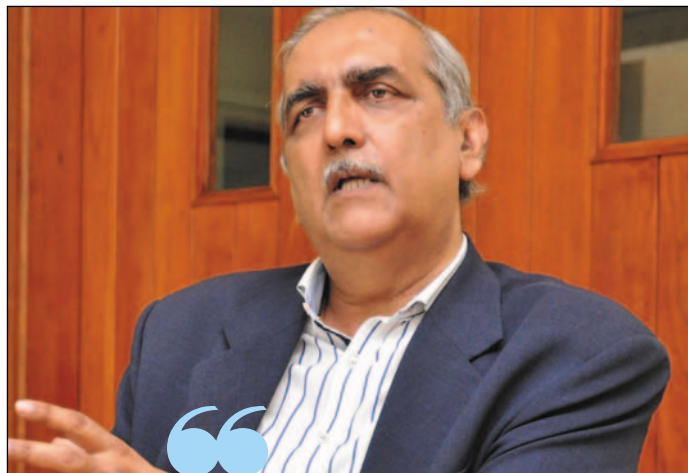
*** We do not know as yet how Covid-19 will transform the country and our economy in the months and years ahead. Are you worried that things, whether these have to do with business practices or economic priorities, might get back to business as usual once the menace of Covid-19 is gone?**

The jury is still out about how far and deeply the experience of these months of virtually worldwide confinement of people and subsequent seizure of economic activity would impact human/social behaviour in the near future and beyond. There is no precedent, in modern history at least, which can provide some clues about an event of such magnitude.

In my sense though there are three entrenched and dominant trends which will be severely contested in the coming months. What will come out of these contests, however, are not clear, for they will depend on the outcome of what promise to be aptly fought political struggles.

History has taught us that there is no such thing as a smooth uncontested way forward, and only the outcome of political struggles between those who want to maintain the *status quo* ante (conservatives) and the agents of change (progressives) determines what eventually comes out of such volatile and unstable events as the one we are living through presently.

Accordingly I see a first consequence of the confinement and economic crisis in the return of politics as the prime mover of the struggle either for fundamental changes to come or a return to the *status quo* depending on the outcome and the forces in play. The failure of the erstwhile system which has witnessed two major crises within a period of a little more than a decade and the severity of the



As regards the amendments to the Worker's Rights Act, it is clear that this is a very sensitive issue... The government has been insisting that these are temporary measures which are being taken in the context of the post-Covid crisis. My personal instinct is that any government should only have recourse to such exceptional measures only in dire and inevitable circumstances...

present breakdown do plead for transformative changes.

This return of politics will be at the expense of the primacy of an economic model which has shown its weaknesses in the present crisis.

A second major consequence of the present crisis would no doubt be a questioning of the "conventional wisdom" associated with globalization and its merits as the ideal global economic architecture. Already many of the same nations which were unreserved proponents of globalization are waking up to the harsh realities of a global supply chain which left them totally helpless in the face of a health pandemic.

Globalization was recently described by Robert Lightiser, admittedly a close ally of Donald Trump, as "the blind pursuit of efficiency in the global market at the expense of national self-interest, American jobs and security." As for Josh Harley, a Rep. from Missouri, he recently described the WTO as "a messianic frame of mind that took hold in the West after the collapse of the Soviet Union." The "Far Left Review" could not do better.

Not to be left out, Europe has also taken some recent measures, for example, regarding control of foreign investments in certain sectors of its economy which would have been inconceivable in the heydays of the globalization narrative. The gathering storm of a new cold war between China and the West will do nothing to stop this emerging scenario from materializing.

Finally, it is becoming obvious that the changing role of the State in national economies will probably be the defining characteristic of the post-Covid economic structure. The era which started in 1981 with the Ronald Reagan quip during his inaugural speech, that "Government is not the solution to our problem. Government IS the problem" seems to have taken a severe blow as people have witnessed the desperation of their governments and their institutions in responding

to the pandemic.

The short-sightedness of private companies in their drive for short-term search for shareholder value have left them resourceless as a result of two months of crisis. Their recourse to public funds to rescue them from bankruptcy will no doubt have serious consequences on the claim of the proponents of "unfettered capitalism" as the only drivers of wealth creation and greater "efficiency".

*** Are there particular mistakes of the past we should avoid and make sure that the funds entrusted to the MIC are used to create positive change, and rebuild areas we previously neglected?**

I would like to think that the setting up of the MIC is itself an attempt to avoid some of the past mistakes. The "stimulus packages" that were dished out in the wake of the post 2008 financial crisis suffered from a lack of transparency and strict conditionalities which could be monitored along with regular disbursements.

It would indeed be a serious mistake if we failed to create the requisite capacity for the MIC to carry out its mission. To my mind, this institution could be an important tool in redefining our famous public-private partnership to bring it up to page with the new realities of a post-Covid world where, as we have said earlier, the role of the State would most likely once again be prominent as indeed was the case in Mauritius for a long time during the heydays of a successful public-private sector partnership.

*** Former Finance minister Rama Sithanen stated in an interview to this paper that a larger recovery fund like the MIC should come about from a "a stand-alone and robust Act of Parliament with key safeguards, oversight, supervision and control" and a "Special Economic and Finance Committee of the National Assembly" should be set up to oversee the use of these funds, its supervision and monitoring". That would have been more reassuring, don't you think?**

I have already stated what are some of the preconditions for a successful operation of the MIC. To the extent that the processes and instruments suggested by Rama Sithanen go in the direction of greater transparency and accountability, they should be most welcome. Indeed the suggestions include a recommendation for a special committee of the National Assembly to have a supervisory role on the workings of the MIC. I believe that this is the sort of mechanism to which we should more frequently have recourse, in the name of democracy and accountability.

*** What are the odds for a quick economic recovery post the lifting of the more than two months lockdown?**

The uninitiated would be at a loss to find their way among the number of alphabets which are being used to describe and predict the pace of future recovery and its consequences.

Between the L, W and V curves being proposed, each one represents a different model. I think in the present circumstances it would be best to take a pragmatic approach and deal with the cards which we have been given.

Prof Wolfgang Mastnak

“Mauritius could significantly contribute to cross-cultural music therapy”



In view of its 75th anniversary on 21st September 2020, the United Nations (UN) has invited several stakeholders including educational institutions to encourage youth participation and work out innovative solutions to address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For some years now, the University of Mauritius (UoM) has been encouraging teaching using new methods to support the UN objective by sharing knowledge and skills with the youth on specific programmes. In this context, the UoM implemented its first Western Music programme in August 2016 in close collaboration with Prof Wolfgang Mastnak of the University of Music and Performing Arts of Munich (Germany), Director of the Beijing Normal University Research Centre (China) for Arts Therapies, Professor of Shanghai Conservatory (China), and whose specialty is music therapy in several categories of patients and disease conditions.

Prof Wolfgang tells us in this email interview about music therapy and research work being undertaken to help both nurses and patients, and also the environment to help mental health patients.

*** According to a 2016 WHO report, 28.4 out of every 1,000 Mauritians suffer from severe mental or substance abuse disorders; moreover schizophrenia affects 2.6 out of every 1,000 people and 7.9 out of every 1,000 have severe depressive disorders. How do we compare with other countries, and how serious is the problem in Mauritius?**

There is no doubt the problem is serious in Mauritius. WHO reports (Jan 2020) that globally more than 264 million people suffer from depression. That is higher than the ratio in Mauritius.

Nevertheless, we have to take into account that the registration of mental diseases also depends on public health and cultural conditions.

As for schizophrenia, WHO (Oct 2019) speaks of globally 20 million patients which is less than the percentage you refer to.

Finally, 1 person in 30 suffering from a severe mental or drug-related disorder is really alarming.

*** Is there work to be done for better identification of mental health problems as well as on the different treatments available so as to bring down the increasing number of people suffering from these problems?**

A key factor is health education. Not only according to WHO but also from an inter-disciplinary perspective, health has both medical and social dimensions. For example, the development of health-awareness and self-competence for healthy lifestyles is above all an educational matter that involves, of course, preventive medicine. Early diagnosis and better identification of risk-profiles require interdisciplinary collaboration, both in research and practice.

Given the different causes of mental disorders, appro-

appropriate treatment is very important, for example, in depression caused by social isolation and experienced loneliness.

It is most obvious that pharmacological treatment with SSRIs - a standard medication for depression - cannot treat the root cause. But even in the medical fields, new approaches matter. For instance, research from Harvard University suggests that the best means to enhance neuroplasticity is music. This result has important implications for the treatment of stroke-patients, and for speech and motor rehabilitation.

*** In what way does music therapy help in the treatment of mental health patients?**

Many years ago, often medical doctors who were fond of music encouraged their patients to enjoy their favourite songs to relax and alleviate their symptoms.

Today we use an interdisciplinary approach (medical sciences, neurosciences, psychology, educational sciences, biological anthropology etc), to study the 'underlying mechanisms' of music therapy.

- From a psychological perspective, music can be an efficient means to cope with early childhood traumas that result in depression or anxiety disorders.
- We use behavioural music therapy to support the acquisition of language in children with cerebral palsy.
- Based on neuroscientific findings, we apply a combination of music and dance therapy to reduce symptoms of Parkinson's disease.
- Complex psychiatric theories elucidate how therapeutic singing modulates certain forms of post-traumatic syndromes, etc.

Today, music therapy can be of help in several medical specialities e.g. oncology, cardiology, neurology, psychia-

try, sexual medicine, etc.

I have to emphasise that music therapists are specially trained musicians.

*** Should music therapy take place only in institutional settings or can it be carried out in the community?**

Not only in institutional or clinical settings, because in fact, 'community music therapy' has become an important aspect of music therapy. For example, the activities of the NGO 'Vent d'un Rêve' in Cité Mangalkhan involve a lot of health-relevant factors that can be called "community music therapy".

There are already very convincing Mauritian activities that satisfy the criteria of "community music therapy".

- Jean-Clair Seevraz has initiated various projects using music to support children with special needs and in specific mental risks in special educational and paediatric domains.
- Mégane Duvergé has performed choral activities to improve social inclusion and mental well-being in parts of the Mauritian older generation.

It is very important to identify key domains of music therapy, a field which is very complex and depends on given socio-cultural conditions. It comprises such different topics as community-based drug prevention, anaesthesiology in surgery, home care for individuals with Alzheimer's disorder, specific developmental support of children with autism spectrum disorder, etc.

Settings can be very different and to design the most efficient interventions is challenging.

*** You have initiated the first music programme at the University of Mauritius, which allows for further specialisation in music therapy after completion of undergraduate studies. Does this reflect the needs of the country?**

I had the great pleasure and honour that the Chancellor of the University of Mauritius, Dr Jean-Claude Autrey, invited me to design and promote the first academic music programme in Mauritius.

Your first question: Why a music therapy module in the Bachelor Studies of music?

- For one, I feel that music therapy could be helpful for the public health system in Mauritius.
- Secondly, I am convinced that music therapy can greatly promote professional health tourism in Mauritius, for example, in the field of stress therapy and burnout prevention or in the multifaceted domain of couples therapy.

Further, Mauritius could also significantly contribute to cross-cultural music therapy. In this context, particularly the sega contains a high therapeutic potential and I hope we will have the possibility to conduct research on its health-related factors.

I am also convinced that future trainings in music therapy in Mauritius must be based on the complex culture of Mauritius and be benchmarked to international research standards.

The full text is available online. Please consult:
www.mauritiustimes.com



Kishore Teelanah

Spectrum of Mauritian Achievers in the UK

Bhakt Bhakti aur Bhagwan Ashram (BBABA)

Almost all Mauritians who came to Britain at various stages since the 1960s have made tremendous progress in various ways. The majority came to study nursing during the days when unemployment was high in Mauritius. Others came later in the 1980s and 90s to undertake other professional studies and thereafter acquired British citizenship. Just like many immigrants who have settled in Britain, many of our fellow Mauritians have studied hard whilst working to earn valuable qualifications.

This article gives an account of BBABA Charity run by a group of Mauritians, who have also made a huge contribution to society in Mauritius, Italy, Britain and other countries. Their story will hopefully inspire other fellow Mauritians and their children. One quality that makes these compatriots stand out is their ability to adapt and embrace British society and integrate where others have failed.



BBABA UK raising funds at the 'Mauritian Open Air Festival' in London, July 2019

This is the story of a special person who has made a huge contribution through her voluntary services to the community in Mauritius, Italy and UK. Since her childhood, she started offering prayers to Lord Krishna and follow all the religious principles.

In October 1995, as a teenager, Bhaktini Lilavrathee Devi Dasi (also known as Mataji) became severely ill. Her suffering was such that she turned to regular prayers for relief. She made a full recovery by the Grace of Shrimati Dharam Devi Guru-maata Durga ji through whom she was blessed with divine powers, and thanks to which she has been able to help cure many people suffering from serious illnesses from across the world.

Mataji Bhaktini Devi then started to actively promote social and spiritual activities with her devotees and community in Mauritius. A follower of the path of bramacharini (celibate), she has surrendered her life to propagate Sanatana Dharma and help the needy.

In 2001, some fifteen of her devotees came together to set up an ashram and a temple in Midlands, where a

statue of Mother Durgaji has been placed. This would later become the founding association of what will be known internationally as Bhakt Bhakti Aur Bhagwan Ashram (BBABA).

One of the main principles of BBABA is to provide relief and shelter to all people regardless of their caste, creed, colour and religion. The main objectives of the BBABA are to:

- work for social, cultural, economic, spiritual and educational benefit,
- set up homes for orphans, old persons and the needy, construct, run and maintain temples, meditation centres and social halls, rehabilitation centres,
- encourage farming and other related activities, and
- propagate Sanatana Dharma and maintain a cordial relationship and to collaborate with other religious bodies

With growing momentum, the need was felt for a similar association in the UK. With the support of Mataji Bhaktini Lilavrathee Devi and Behenji Prema, volunteers set out to implement the project. By November 2007, BBABA was successfully set up in London, and became a Registered Charity in England. Mataji Bhaktini Devi started preaching and doing prayers and satsangs in various devotees' houses in London, Kent, Liverpool, Manchester, etc. They also maintained contact with Mauritian residents in Milan, and are looking forward to launching a BBABA branch and to carry on with its charity work in Italy.

An increasing number of people started joining BBABA as regulars to most pujas and other events. BBABA UK's main focus is on children and youth – the future torchbearers of our culture and values.

In response to the wish of many devotees to have a place of worship for all Mauritian brothers and sisters where they will be able to pray and do rituals the way they had been doing it in Mauritius, BBABA UK has been able to set up a temple with a spiritual park outside in Ilford, London, with the help of volunteers and their families.



BBABA members at a charity prayer event in London, 2018



Behenji Prema Gunesssing and Mataji Bhaktini Lilavrathee Devi Dasi at a religious event

Many charity events have been organised to raise funds for a Mauritian Hindu Temple where all irrespective of community can come and pray. All the donations received from these events will go towards the purchase of 33 murtis from India, which will be installed in the newly-built temple in Ilford.

BBABA UK is not only a religious organisation; it also promotes social and cultural activities. It also organises Christmas parties for children, music classes for both kids and adults, and 'Mauritian Open Air Festivals' – a vegetarian food event -- and the latest being a Valentine Party for couples and families. All these events have met with success, and all the money raised will go to the temple project.

Mauritians, wherever they reside, are known to be very passionate about maintaining their beliefs and peaceful cul-



Ladies at a Charity Valentine Party February 2020, Enfield, London

ture; the sacrifice they are willing to endure despite so many challenges is admirable. British Mauritians are hard-working citizens who take pride in helping their children to reach their full potential. They owe that passion to their parents and ancestors from their motherland, Mauritius.

Charles H Townes (American Nobel Prize-winning scientist) once said: "Indian students should value their religious culture and of course, the classical Indian culture bears importantly on the meaning of life and values. I would not separate the two. To separate science and Indian culture would be harmful. ...I don't think it is practical to keep scientific and spiritual culture separate."

For enquiries about BBABA, please contact:
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Krishan Deeljore

The Future Value of Talent



Photo - menofvalue

In Part 1 of this article, published last Friday, I described a system which can help CEOs and business owners adopt a strategic approach to managing the value of employee contributions by differentiating between jobs according to their value and cost impact. But for this system to work and bring results, a second element is essential; very much like it takes two hands clapping to make a noise. In this second part, we will talk about a second shift in past belief: How employees should rethink their potential and ensure they are future-ready.

It is common belief that employees are an organization's most valuable asset. Well, not exactly. In more precise terms, the most valuable asset of a business is its engaged and motivated employees. It is a fact that the last several weeks have been mostly people-led and technology-supported. Amidst the prevailing uncertainty, it is safe to assume that the future will be even more digital and technologically driven than before the pandemic. What this means for employees is a radical shift in the way we choose and manage our careers.

Shift #2: Employees must rethink their potential and switch off the autopilot to ensure they are future-ready

Career growth and development are some of the top things people look for in jobs. Yet, lack of career opportunities is among the top two reasons why people leave their job. It is common belief that career management is the joint responsibility of both individuals and the organizations employing them. Yet, for most individuals a productive career conversation with the manager is either a box-filling exercise or just a fallacy.

Truth is most employees go through their entire professional life on 'autopilot' mode and rarely pause to rethink their potential. Whether we have a fulfilling career or not is considered to be a matter of luck or chance rather than choice. Why? In neuropsychological terms, our brain is prewired for routine, familiarity and simplicity. Although we do enjoy the odd dose of new experiences now and again, most of us will choose to stay in a comfort zone which is in fact a survival mode.

Probably the biggest gift of the pandemic has been that it has provided us with the opportunity to:

- Reflect on what is really important in our life
- Realise where we have short comings and misalignment
- Reset our priorities and goals

It is probably too soon for most people to realize this, but in a few years' time, a significant number of people will likely end up in better careers and look back at 2020 as a defining moment in their professional life. You will not get a better opportunity to switch off the autopilot mode and switch on your career self-management mode. If you want to be effective and successful, then you have to start with an objective in mind.

10 powerful questions to ask yourself when defining your career goals

1. What is my purpose?

2. How do I define career success? What does career success look and feel like for me?
3. What would my dream job/career be like if I had the power to make it any way I wanted?
4. Am I achieving some level of success in my current job? If not, what must I change?
5. What are my personal values? What drives me?
6. Is my career the best fit for my interests and abilities?
7. Do I have a gift or calling? How can I share this gift or best answer the call in a way that will fulfil me?
8. What is the one activity I love most? Is it part of my career? If not, how can I make it part of my career?
9. Where do I want to be in my career in 5 years? In 10 years? In 15 years?
10. Why is this goal important?

Whether you are nervous about losing your job or you are thinking of an opportunistic career move over the next few weeks, you should be in control and in the driving seat when it comes to career decision. Question is: what are you doing to future-proof yourself?

We expect digital transformation to be an even bigger imperative for organizations to survive in the short-term future. Contrary to popular belief, digital transformation is less about technology and



Photo - theceresgroup

more about people. We talk about future skills such as software engineering and data science, yet the key is to find the people who can manage these engineers and scientists and get

start owning and consciously driving their careers to future-proof themselves for the digital transformation which is underway. In doing so, we depend on two of our most natural abilities -

"It is probably too soon for most people to realize this, but in a few years' time, a significant number of people will likely end up in better careers and look back at 2020 as a defining moment in their professional life. You will not get a better opportunity to switch off the autopilot mode and switch on your career self-management mode. If you want to be effective and successful, then you have to start with an objective in mind..."

them to work as a team to outperform our competitors. The digital future of work represents almost limitless opportunities for unlearning, reskilling and upskilling ourselves.

"Everything in business can be copied except for Talent"

Organisations must change the way they measure and manage talent, and employees must

Adaptability and Curiosity. We have shown during this crisis that we can adapt and bounce back from adversity. We must now stay curious, so we always have options, even outside of a crisis.

Sources: 'Digital transformation is about talent, not technology' by Becky Frankiewicz and Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, HBR May 2020

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Krishan Deeljore is the Founder and Managing Director of BI Instruments Ltd, a boutique consulting and advisory firm providing bespoke services to clients in the Indian Ocean and East Africa region.



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In A Light Vein

When the experts talk on Covid-19...

After a morning walk, a group of doctors were standing at a roadside restaurant enjoying a cup of tea.

They saw a man limping towards them.

One doctor said, "He has arthritis in his left knee."

The second said, "He has plantar faciitis."

The third said, "Just an ankle sprain."

The fourth said, "See that man cannot lift his knee, he looks to have impaired lower motor neurons."

"But to me he seems a Hemiplegic Scissors Gait," said the fifth.

Before the sixth could proclaim his diagnosis, the man reached the group and asked, "Is there a cobbler nearby who can repair my slipper?"

This is exactly how the experts talk on social media and television on the Covid-19 issue these days.

A neighbour could not be seen for many days. I thought he may not be alive. Fearing this, I went to his house today.

I was shocked to see a plaster on his left leg. I asked: 'How did this happen? Where did you fall?'

To this, he replied 'softly' with a mysterious smile: 'Don't take tension, I have nothing. There was no need to go somewhere during the lockdown for 21 days, so while returning from office, I got my leg plastered for 21 days. Otherwise, the wife would break the back by getting all her domestic work done by me. And now, with the Grace of Almighty God, these days I am resting happily.'

I said: 'You are a very stupid and selfish neighbour. Couldn't you have shared this idea before?'

Different kinds of lies told by different people

1. Lie told by a very close friend: 'Hey she is staring at you.'
2. Lie told by a bus conductor: 'The next bus coming behind is empty.'
3. Lies told by parents: 'You have to study hard only upto 10th std, then it's all fun.'

4. Lies told by everybody to new purchaser: 'House, vehicle we buy only once, hence don't bother about spending more.'
5. Lies told to a newly recruited guy: 'Salary is less, but you get to learn more.'
6. Lies told by a boss to an employee who did not get promotion: 'I recommended and fought for your promotion a lot.'
7. Lies told by girl's parents during girl seeing ceremony: 'The snacks and coffee are prepared by our daughter only.'
8. Lies told by a boy to his fiancée before marriage: 'I only drink occasionally.'
9. Lies told by prize distributor: 'According to me all entries deserved a prize.'
10. Lies told by a sari salesman: 'Madam, this sari and its colour look grand on you.'
11. Lies told by your table partner in a bar: 'Beer is not an alcoholic drink.'

And lastly, lies told by all husbands: 'When you went to your Mom's place, I could not get proper sleep and peace.'

US Defence Secretary in a briefing to Trump: "Sir, there has been a major terrorist attack in Chennai, India. 36 Tamillians have been killed."

Trump is silent. His lips quiver. His hands shiver. His eyes well up. He is unable to speak.

Defence Secretary is stunned. He never imagined that this event could affect him so badly.

After a few minutes, in a trembling voice, Trump asks: "So, how many millions are there in one tamillion?"

During World War II, a man was arrested in London for calling Winston Churchill, the then Prime Minister of UK, a fool.

The following day in the House of Commons, the opposition members were ready to roast the government for this.

"Are we living in a police state," they shouted, "What's wrong in calling the PM a fool?"

Churchill's reply was truly disarming, "The man was not arrested for calling the Prime Minister a fool," he said, "but for letting out a State Secret at a time of war."

The world changed in March of 2020

We'll be able to tell coming generations of this season we're living through. We will speak of the pain and of the harm. And we will talk of the wisdom and honour that this time has delivered to us.

I've been reflecting on the good that we may find as we stay inside, shelter-in-place and experience more stillness. And so I'd like to offer you some of the benefits of lockdown (while society focuses on so much negativity)...

1. All real healing, transformation and evolution happens-not out in the world-but deep in the wilderness-of silence, solitude and stillness.

2. Being forced to stay in one place for a long time also provides the rare opportunity to be incredibly creative.

3. Times of discomfort are periods of elite growth. We don't expand so much when everything's fabulous.

4. Because of the virus, many families have become much closer. People who needed to forgive have forgiven. Broken fences have been mended. Meals together are a thing again.

5. We take less for granted now. Fresh vegetables. Walking in a park. Going to a restaurant. Flying on an airplane. These things seem special again.

6. The pandemic has forced us all to slow down. This gives us the great chance to get to know ourselves better. Our gifts and talents. Our fears and wounds. And as we use this period to build higher selves, we remake tragedy into triumph.

7. Many have realized that all of the things that were purchased to look good on the street have zero worth-when no one's on the street.

8. People are reading books again. Classics and modern treasures. Poetry and biographies.



Robin Sharma

And so we become enriched. Versus being busy. And being cyber zombies.

9. Suffering has opened many a human heart in this new world. Neighbours are helping each other. Strangers are smiling at one another. The hardness that many of us used to protect our good hearts is eroding. Slowly. But certainly.

10. We are seeing Mother Nature breathing again. Without the planes flying and the factories operating and the ships sailing, the skies and lands and oceans are returning to more of their native glory. This is a sacred gain.

11. Many are using lockdown as a lab: to learn new skills and build new acumen so that when everything opens up again, they are massively more valuable to the marketplace. And therefore they attract greater rewards for themselves, while they scale their impact.

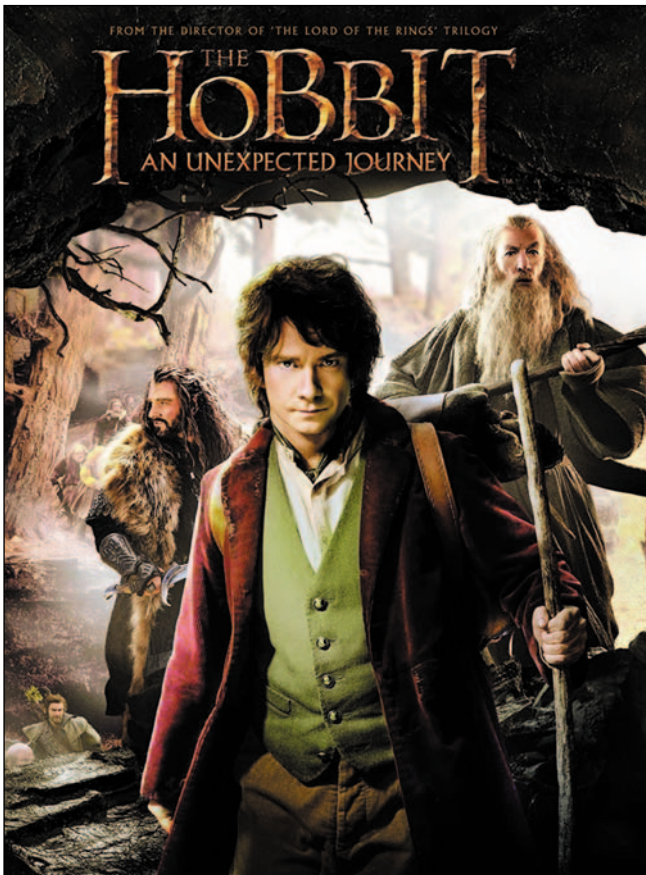
12. Most of us are becoming more resourceful. Wasting less. Caring more. Making do with what we have. And feeling ever so grateful.

13. It's a time of spiritual opening. When things fall apart, human beings are granted the opportunity to become born anew. Part of us dies so a more creative, brave, generous and useful us can show up. We let go of what we were to become all that we must be. And this is a blessing. Not a curse.



Top 10 adventure movies ever made

Here are ten brilliant adventure movies or film franchises that will, for a while, let you escape into worlds that are happier than the one we are living in right now



With the world reeling under the coronavirus outbreak, going on an adventurous trip appears like a distant dream. But there are always stories through which we can vicariously go on perilous yet fun adventures.

Here are ten brilliant adventure movies or film franchises that will, for a while, let you escape into worlds that are happier than the one we are living in right now.

1. *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*

The first film from Peter Jackson's *Hobbit* trilogy divided critics, but it was one of the better movies with an adventure at its centre. Our hero, Martin Freeman's Bilbo Baggins, is forcibly thrown into a quest of dwarves to reclaim their homeland by Sir Ian McKellen's crafty wizard Gandalf, and yet, we later discover that the ostensibly stay-at-home hobbit had an adventurous streak, after all. "The world is not your books and maps. It's out there," Gandalf tells Bilbo.



2. *The Lord of the Rings*

Peter Jackson's epic of all epics, *The Lord of the Rings* was based on JRR Tolkien's hefty tome of the same name. It combined great writing, stunning visual effects and pitch-perfect casting to tell an emotion-heavy tale of the eternal struggle against evil.

3. *Indiana Jones*

The quintessential adventure movies, it is hard to choose one among the Indiana Jones movies. A poll from a couple of years ago deemed Harrison Ford's fictional archaeology professor the most popular movie character, beating out Batman and his own Han Solo. It is easy to see why. Indiana Jones lives the life many dream of. There is nothing remotely dull in his life, it appears, as he fights the Nazis, cult leaders and all manner of scum of society... and comes out of the fray alive and still pining for more adventure.

4. *Thor: Ragnarok*

Thor: Ragnarok is also a bloody good adventure movie. It took two mediocre movies for the God of Thunder (and Chris Hemsworth) to show what he was capable of, and you would never imagine that a film about the literal end of the world could be uproariously funny. It was not perfect, but you'll be laughing too much to notice any flaws. Recruiting Taika Waititi may be the best decision Kevin Feige ever made.



5. *The Goonies*

The classic adventure movie involving a bunch of kids who discover an old map that purports to unearth the treasure of a legendary pirate. The kids, calling themselves the Goonies, are determined to save their homes from foreclosure and think this treasure may be a way out of the problem. Oh, but there is a whole family of criminals on their trail.

6. *Up*

There is no other Pixar film that has had the same impact on me as *Up*. Well, perhaps apart from *Coco*. The film is such a stunning and unlikely concoction of grief and joy. The characters and story are remarkably well-written. In the classic Pixar tradition, the film keeps things simple

enough for a kid to understand, but everything in the movie will appeal to the most hard-bitten adult. Adventure is, indeed, out there.



7. *The Mummy*

Another movie that received mixed critical reviews, *The Mummy* (1999) is simply one of the best adventure movies ever made. Brendan Fraser's Rick O'Connell is an American adventurer who accidentally awakens a cursed high priest Imhotep from the era of Seti I, a pharaoh that ruled Egypt around 3300 years ago. The special effects handled by Industrial Light & Magic still hold up superbly.

8. *The Adventures of Tintin*

Exquisitely animated and featuring some of the best voice-acting you will ever see in an animated film, Steven Spielberg's *The Adventures of Tintin* was for many their childhood come alive in high definition.

9. *Pirates of the Caribbean*

Led by Johnny Depp's perpetually inebriated Jack Sparrow, a winning character which made Depp one of the most well-known actors in the world, *Pirates of the Caribbean* was based on a Disneyland ride of the same name. Equal parts swashbuckling pirate adventure and fantasy, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, or at least the first two films, was wholesome entertainment for the whole family.

10. *The Man Who Would Be King*

Starring two giants of British cinema, Sean Connery and Michael Caine, *The Man Who Would Be King* was adapted from the eponymous Rudyard Kipling novella by John Huston and Gladys Hill. The two legends play the role of British Army's non-commissioned officers who embark on a little adventure and end up in Kafirstan after facing dacoits, elemental forces and so on. The film is one of those little-known gems that more people need to discover and watch.

Tanaz Irani is super excited for her new show 'Kaha Hum Kaha Tum'!



Tv industry's brightest and beautiful actress Tanaz Irani shows the new Star Plus, *Kaha Hum Kaha Tum*. She plays the role of a rich, top-notch doctor on the show and is very excited about it. Yes, she recently revealed that "my character is the aunt of the main lead, Karan V. Grover. One of the main reasons to say yes was that Sandeep directs Sikand production and he knows that every character has to be completely on-screen."

Speaking further, he said, "Sandeep just asked me to come for a look test, saying that I would be able to do full justice to Dr Nishi's character, as he had conceived it based on my previous work. He was very right because I just love the satire and style and the character brings to the table; He's like me. The biggest feature of our show is that everything is very natural. Yes, given the dynamics of the daily grind, we will have drama."

"However, be careful about a powerful combination of mass and class, which should separate us from the rest of the crowd." she added. "They work hard. Like us, they also have to remember the hours of family chores, missing hours. We're just lucky that we didn't have to cram to get the actor's tag, as doctors have to do."

Tanaz is working with both the main leads (Karan and Deepika) and said about both "None of them is arrogant. You can learn and enjoy the acting process with them."

Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum's Karan V Grover opens up about his marriage plans with Poppy Jabbal

Actor Karan V Grover, recently spilled the beans about his wedding plans with long time girlfriend Poppy Jabbal.

Television actor Karan V Grover, who is winning a lot of hearts as Dr Rohit Sippy in *Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum*, recently spilled the beans about his wedding plans with long time girlfriend Poppy Jabbal. Karan and Poppy have been in a relationship for more than six years now. But the actor says that wedding is not on the cards anytime soon.

In an interview with the Hindustan Times, Karan said, "She is an easy person to be around. We are both happy together. She ensures that my busy life is easy and smooth. Our relationship is effortless and that's why simply wonderful. Marriage is not even up for discussion."

"We are at that stage in life, where talking about marriage or thinking about it isn't a family discussion. There is no pressure from either of our families as they are happy the way we are and so are we (smiles). That is most important as usually, people marry to be happy and we are already happy (laughs). At the end of the day, you have to really like your life with your partner and the way things are. Then you are sorted and whether you are married or not it is a personal call. Some people may not approve of it and others may not. We both love the way our lives are and that's all we need," he added.

Karan made his debut in telly industry in 2004 with *Saarrthi* and later worked in shows like *Woh Rehne Waali Mehlon Ki*, *Hum Aapke Hain In Laws*, *Punar Vivah- Ek Nayi Umeed*, *Bahu Hamari Rajni Kant*. He also worked in a web series titled *The Better Half with Chhavi Mittal*.

While, his ladylove Poppy was last seen in Ekta Kapoor's web series *Broken But Beautiful*.



Salman Khan unveils the poster of Mithun Chakraborty's son Namashi Chakraborty's debut film *Bad Boy*



Namashi Chakraborty and Amrin's film is directed by Rajkumar Santoshi, who is known for blockbusters like Ghayal, Ghatak, Ajab Prem Ki Ghazab Kahani, Andaz Apna Apna and many others.



The megastar of Bollywood, Salman Khan, who is known for launching many new faces in the entertainment industry, has unveiled the poster of Mithun Chakraborty and Yogeeta Bali's son Namashi Chakraborty's debut film *Bad Boy*.

The film is directed by Rajkumar Santoshi, who is known for blockbusters like *Ghayal*, *Ghatak*, *Ajab Prem Ki Ghazab Kahani*, *Andaz Apna Apna* and many others. It also marks the debut of lead actress Amrin Qureshi. Talking about the poster, director Rajkumar Santoshi said, "Just like the poster, the story of *Bad Boy* is engaging and appealing. Drama, music, action, romance, these elements are the core of the film. Commercial cinema is one of the genres which the audience enjoys and loves the most."

Producer Sajid Qureshi said in a statement, "This is our first official announcement of *Bad Boy*. We bring you the first poster of the film featuring the lead cast- Namashi Chakraborty & Amrin Qureshi. I don't want to give much about the film as of now, I just want to say it will be one of the most massy entertainers of 2020 with the right amount of romance, comedy, action, music and drama. After all, it's a Rajkumar Santoshi film, I am confident about his work, it's top-notch."

On the other hand, Namashi said, "*Bad Boy* is a dream come true for me. To be launched in an out and out commercial film, with the guidance of Sajid bhai and Raj ji, was an honour. I enjoyed every second of filming this lovely film." Leading lady Amrin also talked about her dream debut and said, "It's a dream movie filled with entertainment and everything nice. Each and every moment was magic on set and I cannot wait for everyone to see it."

CINE 12

Mardi 26 mai - 12.00

Le Monstre De L'Ocean

Avec: Gralen Bryant Banks, Brandon Beemer, George Brooks



CINE 12

Mercredi 27 mai - 21.15

Once Upon A Time In Mexico

Avec: Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Johnny Depp



Mardi 26 mai - 14.50

Stars: Amitabh Bachchan, Sanjay Dutt, Aishwarya Rai



MBC 1

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.26 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.15 Local: Rodrig Prog
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
12.35 Doc: Comme Un Poisson...
13.30 Local: Passerelles
14.00 Local: Le Chef
14.30 D. Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur
14.44 D. Anime: Astrology
15.04 D. Anime: Kuu Kuu Harajuku
16.28 D. Anime: Johnny Test
17.00 Live: Live Press Conference
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Jamai Raja
18.55 Local: Yaadein
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
21.35 Serial: Unforgotten
22.20 Serial: Chicago Police...

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@Africa
06.58 Mag: World Stories
07.14 Mag: Voa Connect
07.39 Doc: A Question Of Science
07.45 Mag: In Good Shape
08.56 World Stamps
09.00 Live Educational Program...
16.58 Mag: Global 3000
17.54 Doc: Set One: Heavy Load
18.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto
18.30 Mag: Urban Gardens
18.35 Doc: Builders Of The Future
19.00 Mag: Check In
19.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
19.32 Mag: Made In Germany
20.00 Local: Tamil Programme
20.32 Film: Magalir Mattum
22.39 Doc: African Logbook
23.21 Mag: Rev: The Global...
23.47 Mag: Urban Gardens
23.53 Doc: Builders Of The Future

Cine 12

01.33 Tele: Esmeraldas
02.57 Serial: 12 Monkeys
03.43 Film: Le Monstre De L'Ocean
05.03 Tele: Amanda
06.47 Film: Life's A Breeze
09.00 Serial: The Good Fight
09.51 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.16 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.42 Serial: 12 Monkeys
11.25 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.00 Film: Le Monstre De L'Ocean
13.30 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: Life's A Breeze
16.40 Serial: France Series
17.22 Serial: Dynasty
18.07 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.31 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.10 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 Serial: Dynasty
21.15 Film: Don't Think Twice

Bollywood TV

09.16 Film: Shree 420
12.05 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tum
12.31 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.49 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.10 / 21.04 Bin Kuch Kahe
13.33 / 21.09 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.47 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.55 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.15 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
14.50 Film: Hum Kisi Se Kum Nahin
Stars: Amitabh Bachchan, Sanjay Dutt, Aishwarya Rai
17.30 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein

mardi 26 mai

mercredi 27 mai

jeudi 28 mai

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.30 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.15 Local: Rodrigues
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
13.30 Local: Saver Kil Tirel
14.30 D. Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur
14.44 D. Anime: Astrology
14.55 D. Anime: Zou
15.31 D. Anime: Astrology
15.55 D. Anime: Mademoiselle...
17.00 Live Press Conference
17.35 Local: Kahani Patharon Ki
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
20.35 Doc: Big Story
21.30 Serial: The Enemy Within
22.20 Serial: Chicago Police Department

04.30 Aastha TV
07.00 Film:
11.40 Good Morning Shanghai
12.00 Nanda Saukhyia Bhare
12.30 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
12.48 Serial: Brundavanam
13.10 Serial: Annakodiyum Ainthu
13.35 Serial: Anu Pallavi
14.05 Entertainment: Dil Hai Hindu
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.20 Film: Imtihaan
18.00 Mag: Check In
18.30 Mag: Eco@Africa
19.00 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 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto
07.00 Mag: Check In
07.29 Mag: Made In Germany
07.57 Doc: Horizon S
08.48 Doc: World Stamps
09.01 Live Educational Program...
16.48 Mag: Close Up
17.16 Doc: The Bugs
17.59 Mag: Motorweek
18.35 Doc: Olivia's Garden
19.00 Doc: Arts.21
19.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
19.30 Doc: Garden Party
20.25 Film: Pune Via Bihar
22.37 Mag: Motorweek
23.07 Mag: Urban Gardens
23.09 Doc: Olivia's Garden
23.34 Mag: Arts.21
00.00 Doc: A Question Of Science
00.05 Doc: Garden Party
00.37 Doc: Alpine Twilight
01.19 Doc: World Stamps

01.27 Film: Don't Think Twice
02.59 Serial: 12 Monkeys
03.41 Film: Hailey Dean Mysteries
05.54 Serial: Dynasty
09.00 Serial: French Series
09.45 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.10 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.40 Serial: 12 Monkeys
11.25 Tele: Dulce
12.05 Film: Hailey Dean Mysteries
13.30 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: Becoming Jane
16.40 Serial: Mission
17.27 Serial: Dynasty
18.07 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.31 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
20.05 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.30 When Calls The Heart
21.15 Film: Once Upon A Time In Mexico
Acteurs: Antonio Banderas, Salma Hayek, Johnny Depp

09.20 Film: Souten
12.05 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tum
12.28 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.49 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.12 / 21.04 Bin Kuch Kahe
13.34 / 21.09 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.56 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.18 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.38 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
15.16 Film: Judwaa
Stars: Salman Khan, Karisma Kapoor, Rambha
17.30 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.36 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.29 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.30 Local: Mangeons Veg
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
13.30 Doc: Big Story
14.30 D. Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur
14.45 D. Anime: Astrology
14.55 D. Anime: Zou
15.31 D. Anime: Astrology
15.32 Un Chien Des Flandres
16.30 D. Anime: Johnny Test
17.30 Local: Kal Aaj Aur Kal
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Le Journal
20.05 Local: Press Conference
20.35 Film: Jazbaa
22.30 Serial: Chicago Police Depar
23.15 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: Tipa Tipa Nu Avance
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Serial: Maharakshak
20.42 Serial: Naagin
21.28 Serial: CID
22.15 Serial: Piya Rangrezz

06.00 Mag: Motorweek
06.30 Doc: Olivia's Garden
07.25 Doc: A Question Of Science
07.29 Doc: Garden Party
07.57 Doc: Alpine Twilight
08.44 Doc: World Stamps
08.50 Mag: Set One
09.00 Live Educational Program...
16.35 Doc: Visite Guidee
17.17 Mag: Focus On Europe
17.43 Mag: Set One
18.00 Mag: Eco India
18.27 Mag: Urban Gardens
18.35 Mag: Sur Mesure
19.00 Mag: Border Crossing
19.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
19.37 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.00 Doc: Comme Un Poisson...
21.00 Doc: 360 Geo
21.54 Mag: Strictly Street
22.16 Doc: The War On My Phone

04.04 My Best Friend's Wedding
05.45 Tele: Amanda
06.27 Serial: When Calls The Heart
07.09 Film: Bullet For A Badman
09.00 Serial: Line Of Duty
09.58 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.22 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.44 Serial: S.W.A.T
11.27 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.04 My Best Friend's Wedding
13.35 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: Bullet For A Badman
16.30 Serial: Line Of Duty
17.27 Serial: When Calls The Heart
18.12 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.34 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.06 Tele: Totalment Diva
20.31 Serial: When Calls The Heart
21.15 Film: Sniper Reloaded
22.45 Tele: Amanda

09.10 Film: Jewel Thief
12.05 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tum
12.30 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.51 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.13 / 21.04 Bin Kuch Kahe
13.35 / 21.09 -
Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.57 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.19 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.39 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
14.50 Film: Hum Se Badhkar Kaun
Stars: Sunil Shetty, Saif Ali Khan, Sonali Bendre, Dipti Bhatnagar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein



Jeudi 28 mai - 14.50

Stars: Sunil Shetty, Saif Ali Khan, Sonali Bendre, Dipti Bhatnagar



Jeudi 28 mai - 20.35

Stars: Aishwarya Rai, Irrfan Khan, Shabana Azmi



King burgers and environmental issues



“Ethical judgement is not the topic. It is a matter of setting the limits of much space utilisation, extent of carbon footprint, shrinking natural habitat, land and air pollution, and health issues caused by overeating fatty meat. The point is to what extent not only beef eaters but other regular meat consumers can cut down on their monthly consumption of meat. 50% to 75%? The onus is on them...”



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

Central American forests, king burgers and environmental issues: any link between them at first sight? On second thoughts, one takes stock of the chain of cause and effect that runs through what look like three disparate elements.

The second element arouses gustative memories of the palate when burger lovers hop into a fast-food chain eatery with family or friends to please themselves with pieces of mashed beef coated with mouth-watering tomato sauce, a meagre leaf of green lettuce, a slice of tomato, all stuffed in a round piece of bread. Accompany it with 'the taste the feeling' drink, and you are definitely in tune with millions of young folks. Often, a new generation of parents do not mind that their teens are following the trend, and when they happen to eat out treat themselves to a big piece of beefsteak. While the steak is cut off from real meat, the mashed beef in burgers is a mix of whatever is left after all meat is cut off from the cadaver of an ox, bowels, stomach and internal organs mashed and dressed with a chemical colouring to make it

appetizing.

To make it travel round the world and make it a hit, the trick lies in the marketing of the product, eye-catching billboards in the right places: along busy streets, on highways, on television where it occupies the right time-slot when the whole family watches the news, and on the internet, of course. The goal is to lure in millions of youngsters to join the trend, which translates into the kids pestering the parents to satisfy their wishes and the latter ending up in parting with a few coins from their bank accounts. No breaking news in reminding one and all that child psychologists are hired to make up the adverts to enslave the kids to delicious fast food. Psychologists for adults also contribute to the success of various brands. The underlying principle is to cash in on the sheep mindset that characterizes crowd behaviour and bring millions jingling into the coffers of the international huge corporate food business.

Add billions of consumers worldwide who enjoy beefsteak, roast beef, beef tongue, even its testicles ('rognons' in France), and various dishes to the picture, and you have an idea of the

extent of cattle breeding to supply the industry. This brings us to the first element which points to massive deforestation undertaken in poorer countries in Central America so as to make room for pasture lands and crops for cattle feed. The animals are then shipped off to US slaughterhouses. The same process of industrial farming with chemical products is used to grow massive soja crops meant to feed cattle in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Zimbabwe and other countries.

The third element raises the question of the environmental consequences of deforestation and the amount of water needed to grow cattle feed and millions of cattle worldwide. In other words, it is one of the major aspects of an issue which hits headlines and comes up in all conversations these days: the relation of human beings to other species, explosive demography, the space-consuming factor of industrial farming and the shrinking natural habitat of big and small animals.

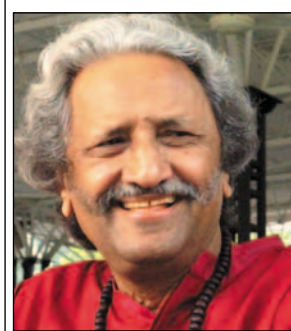
There is widespread awareness of the carbon footprint of international transportation of live animals shipped off in boats, loaded in trucks to slaughterhouses, then to the butchers' and supermarkets, to finally end up in the kitchens of households worldwide, which also have access to air-transported frozen meat.

Lately a shortage of meat in the supply chain prompted some folks in the US to go hunting. It speaks volumes of the well-entrenched habit of meat-based meals in some cultures and the nervousness it may cause in periods of deprivation.

This is not about conditions in industrial farming, the few centimetres allotted to every head or rather mouth to feed itself and fatten, calves separated from cows, and finally, dragged to slaughterhouses. Not even about meadows where cows and calves cavort and frolic around freely.

Ethical judgement is not the topic. It is a matter of setting the limits of much space utilisation, extent of carbon footprint, shrinking natural habitat, land and air pollution, and health issues caused by overeating fatty meat. The point is to what extent not only beef eaters but other regular meat consumers can cut down on their monthly consumption of meat. 50% to 75%? The onus is on them.

Letter from New Delhi



Kul Bhushan

What are you cooking during lockdown?

In prolonged lockdown, cooking takes centre stage but what's cooking your mind and heart?

What are you cooking? I texted a young lady in my WhatsApp group after I received a good number of photos of mouth-watering dishes shown off by numerous friends.

Cooking has taken centre stage with these extended lockdowns in most countries hit by the coronavirus. Confined to one's home, many men have entered the kitchen to help with the cooking. Women have explored the net to discover new dishes and started baking too!

When asked to send some baking soda, our grocer replied it was out of stock due to heavy demand, so much so that a substitute has been found in Eno's Salt! The internet is busting with literally hundreds of 'Lockdown Recipes' for all types of dishes, a new global trend indeed.

Back to the simple question: What are you cooking? She replied promptly, 'Kidney beans and rice.'

Nah. Another question was texted: 'What are you cooking in your mind and in your heart?' Aaah! The reply came a couple of hours later: 'Guessing, not sure.'

A life coach-cum-housewife replied, 'Baking cakes, doughnuts and sometimes bread. Trying out new dishes almost every day. Teaching cooking to my twelve-year-old daughter.'

When asked about cooking in her mind and heart, she wrote, 'Calligraphy. Learnt it sometime ago but now practising it every day and uploading it on different calligraphy groups. Very interesting and satisfying.'

Sent the same question to a documentary film-maker and a pot, pat came the reply, 'Basic food.' Nah. No reply to the follow-up question but sent two poems.

A nursery school teacher replied, 'We are preparing a

recipe for sharing meditation with children.'

A dancer replied, 'Vegan pizza, whole wheat with cashew sauce.' And also sent its photo. But what's cooking in your mind and heart? Can you go deeper? The one-word answer was cryptic: 'Sure.'

A 20-year old university student answered, 'Nothing, I was resting today.' When asked what's cooking in her mind and heart, she replied, 'Hehe! Cooking plans in my heart to visit the mountains.'

A key member of the management team of Osho activities wrote, 'Sometimes cooking, sometimes office work. Tread mill, yoga, White Robe meditation. In my heart, Osho and my papa.'

Now sent this question to a surgeon who replied, 'Boiled vegetables with sprouts with some homemade butter.' Plus, a video arrived of this yummy dish.

But what's cooking in your heart? 'Love for Venus, birds, trees, sky, and working on my chakras and nadis (arteries but in yoga they carry life force energy). Being out of the body and one with the all.'

When prodded for the second time, a paramedical replied, 'Cooking daal sabzi (pulses and vegetables) for both of us. Occasionally, fish or chicken. Kids do groceries for us. Not sure if I answered your question.'

A dance instructor wrote, 'Today stuffed mushrooms and pizza.' In your mind and heart? 'When the pizza goes in the mind and the heart is in bliss.' More seriously, 'I am doing yoga and meditation every day and listening to Osho before going to bed. Life is good. XX.'

Sure. It all depends on what you cook in your mind and heart.

Kul Bhushan

worked as a newspaper Editor in Nairobi for over three decades and now lives in New Delhi