

MAURITIUS TIMES

"People should be conscious that they can change a corrupt system" - Peter Eigen, founder of Transparency International



Interview : Lindsay Rivière

'Les jours politiques de Collendavelloo sont probablement comptés,

aujourd'hui ou demain, même si rien ne le compromet personnellement'

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Fighting Corruption

In a comment on the 10th edition of the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) - Africa in July 2019, Transparency International addressed the issue of corruption in Mauritius -- 'Is Mauritius at a tipping point in the fight against corruption?' - wherein it highlights the general perception of Mauritians that it is 'institutions and groups like parliamentarians, the police' etc., who are seen as corrupt, 'given recent scandals and issues with corruption, impunity and nepotism'. Further, it adds that according to the same barometer report 60% of Mauritians think that corruption is on the rise and the government is doing a bad job of tackling it.

Although the report notes that in the previous 12 months only about 5% Mauritians had to pay a bribe to access public services such as health and education, as a result of ICAC's driving 'systemic change that drastically reduced bribery rates in government institutions', it says that 'the national anti-corruption strategy (...) did not rid Mauritius of nepotism and cronyism. It is common for public sector positions to be filled through political connections rather than ability - many top public officials are relatives of ministers'. It also refers to the resignation of Justice Minister Ravi Yerrigadoo 'in connection with money laundering', of 'then President Ameenah Gurib Fakim 'after a US\$27,000 spending spree' with the credit card of an 'NGO funded by a notorious Angolan businessman who had acquired a Mauritian investment banking licence shortly after laws had been conveniently changed to make this easier to do'. The report highlights that 'these scandals - which were followed by resignations rather than prison sentences - may be reasons why Mauritians feel that unchecked corruption is on the rise'.

No wonder therefore that the report notes further that if 'Mauritians benefit from some integrity in public institutions and some very effective anti-corruption strategies, but they are right to worry that corruption is rising and that those in power aren't serious about tackling it'. On this score, the record of ICAC leaves much to be desired. Its inexplicable turnaround in the MedPoint case has thrown doubt on its will to deal with corruption, as much as the list of affairs where it is yet to be known where its inquiries stand, such as the Dufry scandal (2015); the

Alvaro Sobrinho scandal (2018); the Sugar Insurance Fund Board's highly excessive overpayment of land v/s valuation scandal (2018); the Choomka affair (2017); the Yerrigadoo/Bet 365 scandal (2018); the Glen Agliotti affair (2019), and finally the Serenity Gate/Film Rebate Scheme scandal (2019).

The actual list is too long to compile. But all these pending inquiries highlight the absence of a credible and respected investigative agency capable of handling white collar crime (financial scams and frauds, massive and complex corruption cases, money-laundering of the proceeds of drug, gambling or other illicit money sources...) independently of political proximity. We need not document here the perversion of Public Procurement procedures through various means well known it seems by marauding top echelons in major purchasing Ministries as the most recent CEB corruption scandal points to.

We need not recall either the absence of concrete results in many high-profile drug importation enquiries, nor the major cases where no inquiry has even been felt necessary (high-risk loans at the State Bank of Mauritius, or high-voltage financial losses of the national carrier) and the general absence of any prosecutions, still less sanctions, in all the aired high profile cases of white-collar crimes.

The alternative to sending a case to ICAC is the setting up of a commission of enquiry. Unfortunately terms and time-frame can be very loose and its mandate to make findings and recommendations are immediately challenged and contested by protagonists in long drawn out court battles. More often than not embarrassing Commissions are simply left to wither away or their recommendations simply set aside and no remedial actions initiated, let alone judiciary proceedings initiated or convictions made.

Will the St Louis scandal prove to be yet another pointless and an utter waste of time and resources at a time when we are desperately trying to get out of the announced EU blacklist of seriously deficient financial jurisdictions and when all funding agencies will be scrutinising our response to what appears to be a clear-cut case of massive corruption involving a "complot" at our administrative levels to thwart the public procurement process?

The Conversation

Are we all OCD now?

One of the hallmarks of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is contamination fears and excessive hand-washing. Years ago, a patient with severe OCD came to my office wearing gloves and a mask and refused to sit on any of the "contaminated" chairs. Now, these same behaviors are accepted and even encouraged to keep everyone healthy.

This new normal in the face of a deadly pandemic has permeated our culture and will continue to influence it. Many stores now prominently post rules mandating face masks and hand sanitizer use and limit the number of customers allowed inside at one time. Walkers and joggers politely cross the street to avoid proximity to each other.

Only a few months ago, this type of behavior would have been considered excessive, irrational, even pathological, and certainly not healthy. So, where do doctors draw the line between vigilance to avoid being infected with the coronavirus and obsessive-compulsive disorder that can be harmful? This is an important question that I, a psychiatrist, and my co-author, a wellness and parenting coach, often hear.

Adaptation or internet addiction?

Since the start of the pandemic, it has become more challenging to assess behaviors that were once considered excessive. Many behaviors previously considered pathological are now considered essential to protect human health and are applauded as adaptive and resourceful.

Before COVID-19, concerns about compulsive use of the internet or internet addiction, characterized by overuse and overdependence on digital devices, were growing.

During the pandemic, however, society has quickly adapted online opportunities. Whenever possible, people are working from home, attending school online and socializing through online book clubs. Even certain health care needs are increasingly being met remotely through telehealth and telemedicine.

Overnight, digital connections have become commonplace, with many of us feeling fortunate to have this access. Similar to contamination fears, some digital behaviors that were once questioned have become adaptive behaviors that keep us healthy - but not all of them.

Is it obsessive-compulsive or protective?

While COVID-19-era behaviors may look like clinical OCD, there are key distinctions between protective behaviors in the face of a clear and present danger like a pandemic and a clinical diagnosis of OCD.

The repetitive, ritualistic thoughts, ideas and behaviors seen in clinical OCD are very time-consuming for people dealing with them, and they significantly interfere with several important areas of the person's life, including work, school and social interactions.

Some people have obsessive-compulsive traits that are less severe. These traits are often observed in high-achieving people and are not clinically debilitating. Such "keep the eye on the prize" behaviors are recognized in nearly 20% of the population. A talented chef who is very attentive to detail may be referred to as "obsessive-compulsive." So may a detail-oriented engineer

building a bridge or an accountant doing taxes by examining files from many different angles.

The critical difference is that the persistent, repetitive, ritualistic thoughts, ideas and behaviors seen in those suffering from clinical OCD often take over the person's life.

When most of us check the door once or twice to make sure it is locked or wash our hands or use sanitizer after going to the grocery store or using the restroom, our brains send us the "all clear" signal and tell us it is safe to move on to other things.

A person with OCD never gets the "all clear" signal. It is not uncommon for a person with OCD to spend several hours per day washing their hands to the point their skin becomes cracked and bleeds. Some people with OCD have checking rituals that prevent them from ever leaving their home.

OCD triggers have become harder to avoid

The same principles that apply to compulsive hand-washing behaviors also apply to compulsive use of the internet and electronic devices. Excessive use can interfere with work and school and harm psychological and social functioning. Besides social and familial problems, those behaviors can lead to medical problems, including back and neck pain, obesity and eye strain.

The American Pediatric Association recommends that teenagers spend no more than two hours per day using the internet or electronic devices. Some teenagers with internet addiction are spending as many as 80-100 hours per week on the internet, refusing to do anything else, including their schoolwork, outside activities and interacting with their families. The digital world becomes a black hole that is increasingly difficult for them to escape.

For those who struggle with compulsive use of the internet and social media, the new, increased demands to use digital platforms for work, school, grocery shopping and extracurricular activities can open the black hole even further.

People with pre-pandemic contamination fears, or who previously were unable to regulate their use of technology, find trigger situations that were once avoidable have now become even more ubiquitous.

Keeping the threat response in check

As new behavioral norms evolve due to the changing social conditions, the way that certain behaviors are identified and described may also evolve. Expressions such as being "so OCD" or "addicted to the internet" may take on different meanings as frequent hand-washing and online communication become common.

For those of us adapting to our new normal, it is important to recognize that it is healthy to follow new guidelines for social distancing, washing hands and wearing masks, and that it is OK to spend extra time on the internet or other social media with the new limits on personal interactions. However, if internet use or hand-washing becomes uncontrollable or "compulsive," or if intrusive "obsessive" thoughts about cleanliness and infection become problematic, it's time to seek help from a mental health professional.

David Rosenberg, Wayne State University

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Aditya Narayan

Patrimoine national

Les terres de l'Etat sont-elles réservées à une minorité?

La question de la distribution des terres de l'Etat est revenue au premier plan de l'actualité ces jours-ci avec l'expulsion manu militari des squatters qui occupaient illégalement des terrains de l'Etat dans plusieurs endroits (Riambel, Pointe-aux-Sables). La semaine dernière deux révélations faites au Parlement sont venues alimenter la controverse. L'une faite par le leader de l'Opposition à l'effet qu'un homme d'affaires détenant un bail sur 30 arpents de Pas géométriques n'aurait pas payé les frais de location à l'Etat ces dernières années. L'autre faite par un député de l'opposition à l'effet qu'un député de la majorité est l'un des trois actionnaires dans une compagnie qui a obtenu un bail sur deux arpents de Pas géométriques (pieds dans l'eau).

appliquée dans deux cas.

Dans le premier cas, les autorités ont envoyé les forces de l'ordre sur certains sites à travers le pays pour démolir les habitations de fortune qui y furent installées par des squatters. Raison invoquée: occupation illégale de terres de l'Etat.

Dans le deuxième cas, un homme d'affaires locataire d'un bail ne se serait pas acquitté des frais de location dûs à l'Etat, ce

proximité du pouvoir identifie un terrain de l'Etat quelque part et dépose une demande de bail fondée sur certains besoins, il a plus de chances de l'obtenir que le citoyen ordinaire qui n'a pas d'information ou de contact politique.

Historiquement, certains groupes sociaux n'ont pas eu un accès facile à la propriété en raison des séquelles de l'esclavage ou de l'engagisme qui ont fait d'eux des démunis, condamnés à être des locataires ou à squatter les flancs des montagnes sous des bicoques. La Commission Justice et Vérité a abordé le problème de la dépossession des descendants d'esclaves, mais aucune mesure de remédiation n'a été prise. Ces groupes vulnérables ont un urgent besoin de logement social. Le gouvernement vient de promettre la construction de 12 000 maisons en cinq ans dans le budget 2020-21, mais en attendant la réalisation du projet il y a un besoin de logement pour les squatters.

Logement social

L'histoire du pays ne manque pas de modèles de logement social entrepris à des époques différentes avec des institutions comme la *Central Housing Authority*, la *Mauritius Housing Corporation* (MHC) et la NHDC. Dans tous ces cas, le gouvernement a construit des maisons pour les familles pauvres ou accordé des prêts-logement à celles qui pouvaient prendre une hypothèque. Le modèle de logement social le plus équitable est celui qui fut réalisé par la *Mauritius Sugar Authority* (MSA) entre 1987 et 1997.

Après des négociations entre la MSA et les établissements sucriers, ces derniers avaient accepté de vendre un lopin de terre (minimum de 7 perches) pour une somme nominale (Rs 15 000 à Rs 25 000) aux habitants des "camps sucriers" afin qu'ils puissent construire leur propre maison. Une cinquantaine de camps sucriers furent ainsi démolis et des terrains furent distribués à travers le pays à leurs habitants, qui avaient eu un prêt de la MHC pour financer la construction d'une maison.

Le gouvernement avait pris en charge toutes les dépenses de développement des infrastructures (eau, électricité et chemins dans les morcellements) et avait exempté les morcellements de toute taxe d'enregistrement ou de conversion.

Le gouvernement peut s'inspirer de ce modèle de logement pour venir en aide aux sans-logis authentiques et à tous ceux qui n'ont pas les moyens d'acheter un lopin de terre en ces temps où la spéculation foncière a mis hors de leur portée tout accès à la propriété. Il est irréaliste de s'attendre à ce qu'une famille vivant sur le salaire minimum économise assez d'argent pour devenir propriétaire d'une maison. D'ailleurs, même ceux qui ont ouvert un compte d'épargne-logement en vue d'avoir droit à une maison de la NHDC attendent pendant des années avant d'avoir

leur propre toit.

Il y a suffisamment de terres de l'Etat pour lancer un vaste projet de logement social. Les établissements sucriers qui développent des villas de luxe pour étrangers riches peuvent mettre à la disposition d'un tel projet les terres marginales qu'ils veulent convertir en morcellements immobiliers. En contrepartie de toute aide que l'Etat leur accordera à travers la Mauritius Investment Corporation ou autrement, ils doivent faire un effort de solidarité sociale.

Open-data Government

Le manque de transparence dans la gestion du patrimoine foncier de l'Etat demeure un problème grave. Il est temps de changer de fond en comble le modèle actuel avec des réformes visant à optimiser l'utilisation des terres de l'Etat pour les besoins agricoles, industriels, commerciaux, du logement social, de l'immobilier et de l'hôtellerie. Plus que jamais, il est nécessaire d'établir une *Land Bank* qui identifiera tous les bénéficiaires des baux sur les terres de l'Etat, l'emplacement et la superficie des terrains loués à bail, les frais de location par arpent, et les types d'usage ou de développement permis.

Cette *Land Bank* devrait suivre le modèle de "*open data government*" qui existe dans les démocraties libérales, où tous les biens publics sont repertoriés et affichés dans une base de données en ligne avec les types de développement ou d'usage qui leur sont attribués. Ce modèle assure la transparence dans la gestion des biens fonciers.

Le modèle de "*open data government*" fait partie de toute une philosophie de management moderne du secteur public fondée sur le droit à l'information du public. La démocratie existe lorsque les citoyens sont informés et savent ce que leurs dirigeants font.

Dans les pays démocratiques dignes de ce nom, tout citoyen doit pouvoir faire une demande d'information sous la *Freedom of Information Act* (FOIA) et le gouvernement est tenu d'y répondre dans des délais prescrits. A Maurice, aucun gouvernement n'a voulu introduire une FOIA parce que l'opacité lui permet d'appliquer la loi selon ses convenances.

La transparence permettrait d'en finir avec certaines pratiques malsaines qui favorisent une minorité de privilégiés. Le locataire d'un bail qui ne réalise pas son projet dans deux ans devrait rendre le terrain à l'Etat. Celui qui ne paie pas ses frais de location devrait être poursuivi avec des peines sévères ou être destitué du titre du bail. Celui qui revend le bail à une tierce partie devrait rendre les revenus engrangés à l'Etat. Il est inacceptable que des individus ou des sociétés qui reçoivent un bail puisse le revendre à d'autres pour réaliser une manne inespérée sur le dos de l'Etat. C'est un recel de bien public, une braderie du patrimoine commun.



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Le fait qu'un homme d'affaires ou un député ait obtenu un bail sur des terres de l'Etat n'est pas nouveau ni surprenant. Bien des individus se sont vus octroyer des baux sur des terres de l'Etat pour des raisons diverses. Ce qui est discutable, voire controversable, c'est la façon dont le Gouvernement gère les terres de l'Etat à travers le bail à long terme.

Limites morales de la loi

Sous des gouvernements successifs, l'Etat a loué des terres par bail pour une période fixe (allant jusqu'à 99 ans) dans l'opacité absolue. Le gouvernement distribue des terres à sa discrétion à qui il veut, fixe les frais de location et détermine la durée de location. Cette politique est-elle justifiable en ces temps de crise où les citoyens veulent savoir comment leurs mandataires politiques dépensent l'argent des contribuables et ce qu'ils font des biens publics confiés à leur charge?

Les bien-pensants diront que tout ce que l'Etat fait est dans les limites de la loi et donc entièrement légal. Or, la loi a des limites morales dans la mesure où son application devient inique lorsqu'elle est de nature discriminatoire. Nous en avons eu une preuve probante avec la façon dont la loi a été

qui est vraisemblablement un acte illégal. Dans les deux cas, le Gouvernement n'a pas fait preuve de la même fermeté dans sa tentative de rétablir la loi. Y-a-t-il une loi pour les riches et une autre pour les pauvres dans la république mauricienne qui est censée fondée sur l'Etat de droit?

La distribution des terres de l'Etat est une problématique multi-dimensionnelle qui touche aux droits de propriété, au logement social, à la réforme agraire, à l'utilisation des terres publiques à usage agricole, commercial ou industriel, et à la transparence dans la gestion du patrimoine national.

Droits de propriété

L'occupation des terres de l'Etat par des squatters est une question lancinante dans ce pays où l'accès à la propriété est devenu un enjeu important du développement inclusif. Le gouvernement a sans doute le droit de louer des terres à des particuliers, des sociétés ou des organisations civiles pour des besoins aussi variés que le développement immobilier, les cultures vivrières ou l'installation de facilités sociales (lieux de culte, centres communautaires, etc).

Ce qui cloche, c'est que cette distribution ne se fait pas selon des critères objectifs qui placent les demandeurs/locataires sur un pied d'égalité. Si quelqu'un qui est dans la



Sada Re

Demystifying the 'New Normal'

The new normal is a time to determine the causes of our economic problems and find creative ways to adapt and to develop further resilience as we did in 2008

We encountered the term 'new normal' in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, for it was then projected that the new rules governing the world economy would be different from what obtained in the post-War world. The term was used even much earlier and is now employed to define the post-pandemic Covid-19 world. It is also being used to explain the rationale behind the 2020-21 budget and has also become a weapon in the armoury of the government.

Everybody has had the experience of the lockout and its partial lifting, but each of us has had different experiences. Many of us



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have had to put up with stress or mental exhaustion as well as fear. After staying at home for so long, with all the pressures and tension that this entailed, coming out of the lockout has been a relief for some, but equally stressful for others. Resuming work with children being left uncared for at home or unreliable and ad-hoc arrangements to look after younger children, growing irritation to access public transport, long hours of waiting in the morning, and in the afternoon to come back home, new sources of tension as a result of social distancing and prevailing chaotic conditions in certain places and loss of jobs - all these have made it quite difficult to adapt to the new normal.

On the other hand one can find some changes taking place that can indeed be

positive on several counts. However I have come across people who are indifferent to the lifting of the lockdown for they and their employers have found the work from home arrangement beneficial for both. Working from home cuts down travelling time and costs and the need to pay for office space so long that communication facilities are taken care of. They find their work more productive and the home food much more balanced. In other words, companies and employees can develop new working conditions though this does not prevent meetings at the workplace when necessary. Obviously not all jobs can be done from home, but many can and the onus is on the employers both in the private and public sectors to creatively devise new schemes of work. In many countries working from home was already an established practice. In Mauritius, too, a lot of employees used to work from home for several days of the week. Working from home will thus become the new normal.

However, not everything will change. There will be both change and continuity. Some time ago we advocated a change in the timetable for SC and HSC examinations to be aligned with university calendar. Instead of students getting their HSC results in January and February and waiting for seven months to obtain university admission, especially in Europe, they can get their results in July and join university in September-October. As a result of this change which can become permanent, adjustments must inevitably follow in the school calendar year throughout the primary and the secondary levels. This is one permanent change which can become the new normal.

Other changes in the workplace can take place in the new normal. As regards working from home, one would have expected measures in the budget to facilitate this new approach such as increasing Internet capacity and speed as well as lowering its cost. This is just one of the many measures that were expected to be taken on board in the Budget and which would have helped employees and companies adapt to the new normal but unfortunately the missed opportunities are too many.

If the experts on the Mauritian economy cannot themselves see some clarity in the budget or find those sectors which usually generate employment being given little importance or even ignored, are we then surprised that the population is anxious about the future? This explains why a budget presented under the cover of the new normal has been unacceptable to large swathes of

the population. This is understandable because the budget has been presented against a background of mismanagement of public funds that has nothing to do with the Covid-19 and in fact preceded the pandemic.

One can understand the legitimate grievances of the population when they are confronted with financial problems that are not of their own making. What is the population to do when some people decide for obscure and not so obscure reasons to buy unnecessarily airplanes for Air Mauritius that has necessitated a bailout from government and resulted in the layoff of so many employees? The employees of State Bank of Mauritius

collaboration of all those in the sector. Planters know too well they will not rush to plant a particular crop only to find a glut in the market where they lose their investment. The Marketing Board, food-processing factories, food importers, planters, big and small as well as livestock farmers and food processing factories must all collaborate to devise a scheme for food security which is acceptable and implementable.

As regards the pandemic, a return to normality will come after a reliable vaccine has been found. If it is not, we shall have to live with it just like we live with so many diseases where no vaccine has yet been found. When



Photo: dhakatribune.com

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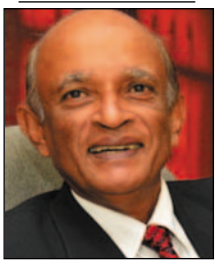
and its shareholders have good reasons to be frustrated when loans are being offered to international sharks causing enormous loss to the bank. This is a major scandal for a bank that has been painstakingly built over the years. What has the population to do with the white elephant at Cote d'Or?

All these decisions have had a direct bearing on the budget and it is the population which has had to bear the brunt of all this misgovernance. It is obvious to the population that the rupee is being depreciated and the value of the rupee in our pockets is being reduced to about 80 cents, eroding our purchasing power and lowering our standard of living. Even the promised increases in the pension till 2023 would not buy more goods that we actually do at present because of further depreciations of the rupee.

The term new normal has been blanded in the budget more for mystification than to address the concerns of the public about jobs, livelihoods and resilience. A new normal may be permanent or not. But it is also a time of rethinking, planning and taking all the stakeholders on board and coming up with creative solutions. Even as regards food security, it is barely sufficient to encourage food production without any planning and the

it comes to climate change, extreme anomalies of the weather are the new normal but we can avoid them if measures are taken to tackle the problem. The new normal is a time to determine the causes of our economic problems and find creative ways to adapt and to develop further resilience as we did in 2008. Our young people are at present disappointed, being reduced to despair, and many are reaching the conclusion that there is no future for them here.

The process of mystification has been going on for some time in various sectors of society. Trade unionists have protested in vain against laws undermining workers' rights. The principles of consultation and accountability have been abandoned. But there is hope when we see so many young people coming forward to carry out not only a necessary demystification of the budget but also to increase our understanding of the economic situation and provide alternative measures and solutions to tackle our problems. This healthy exercise is helping the population gain knowledge, consciousness and confidence that they too can contribute towards finding solutions at their level that will go towards building more resilience, and that alternative solutions do exist.



S. Callikan

Budget Controversies

The PM advisors should turn their full attention to the socio-economic and political consequences of the package of discriminatory measures that unnecessarily clog the budget

Days prior to the Budget Speech, we observed that the new hand at Finance, Hon Padayachy, would have exceptional elbow room of Rs158 bn plucked from Central Bank reserves. We also noted that some Rs80 bn of this undoubted free manna was destined exclusively for off-budget large conglomerate support, for which parliamentary oversight and exceptional transparency was more than desirable.

That imperative aside, it still left a comfortable amount of free money (some Rs78 bn) for budgetary injection into reviving other sectors like the SMEs, meeting acute social distress caused by the pandemic, maintaining employment, reverse the decline in the country's productive capacities and expanding the space for new opportunities, while tackling the relatively reckless electoral campaign pledges.

Despite this exceptional leeway, have those objectives been met in the 2020-2021 Budget? The jury is obviously still out but controversies have erupted around three major structural policy changes: pension reform, a discriminatory foreigner fiscal treatment and the shift away from a low-tax ecosystem. Few trade unions, economic operatives and their associations, even Business Mauritius, have been impressed. Construction is heavily foreign labour and foreign imports dependent. Despite a string of welcome individual

measures elsewhere, no distressed traditional sector seems to have benefited from a structured plan.

On the pension front, not all of us were aware of the intricacies of the National Pension Fund (NPF/NSF, jointly Rs160 bn) and the returns on its management. I for one learned incidentally that only private sector employees and employers contribute to universally distributed basic pension and what the Minister was proposing was to increase these selective taxes further, with benefits frozen for 3-4 years and little visibility about future pension payments. I would have thought the whole question deserved better defence

and pedagogy by the Minister and his advisors.

Meantime, new anxieties have cropped up post-budget: continued human stresses at our national airline, poor job prospects elsewhere, weak Central Bank reserves, currency depreciation, higher retail prices and scarcity of foreign exchange. It was government's call to believe the pandemic's enormous psychological stresses and fractures were opportune moments for those seismic policy shifts when ample reserves, siphoned out of Central Bank, were available to the Finance minister. He is undeniably tying the PM to the success or not of his own



experiments in social and economic engineering.

* * *

Expatriates galore

Even if there were valid reasons to relax some of the regulatory annoyances governing expatriates, the unlimited possibility proposed for their spouses and parents to settle and invest in any small business or property has disturbing connotations. Will many corner shops, beauty parlours, delis, snacks and other outfits up North, in the expatriate enclaves of Black River or country-wide be owned and operated by expatriate spouses or elderly parents?

How many of the incomers will be birds of prey, soaking up middle management jobs in various sectors and adding little real value to our development prospects? Will they add fuel and take property prices out of reach of struggling, tax-burdened, qualified Mauritians? Will the latter's legitimate housing or property expectations be served by the future middle-income NHDC flats? Are we planning to test the limits of our traditional hospitality?

We recall that SAJ had stamped down EDB's previous plans belittling our passport or the sense of citizenship of honest, hard-working and qualified Mauritians. The current PM and his team may have had their attention focused on handling the pandemic through a praiseworthy dedicated public health service. It can generally be considered a success, although distressed, stranded Mauritians and their families forced to pay back loans, repatriation and quarantine costs, may certainly not concur. But the PM advisors should turn their full attention to the socio-economic and political consequences of the package of discriminatory measures that unnecessarily clog the budget.

The Minister of Financial Services has to be commended for coming up with a more sober and factual presentation of the events posterior to the mutual evaluation report of 2017, published in 2018, which eventually lead to the IMF/FATF grey-listing in January 2020. Wordy reassurances, "high-level commitments" (which every suspect country brandishes) and any actions taken since, either on technical compliance or on implementation fronts, had obviously not been enough to stave off the heavy slap to our jurisdiction.

The European Union followed suit and sadly, through delegated powers that remain to be confirmed in October by the EU Council of Ministers, announced its intention to place Mauritius on the list of countries with strategic anti-money laun-

dering deficiencies (the notorious "blacklist"). Desperate efforts of our international diplomacy ensued, as detailed by the Minister, within the one-month appeal or protest period, but to no avail.

We still have no legally structured and competent investigative authority capable of the often complex financial transactions in the underworld of black monies, their whitewashing mechanisms through known means or diversion into drugs and terrorist financing. International agencies do happen to read our press and the long string of scandals buried under our eyes. CCID, ICAC or the FSC would elicit wry smiles as credible independent money-laundering investigating agencies.

Black holes

Even the promised Financial Crimes Commission mentioned in the 2015 Government Manifesto, re-promised in Pravind Jugnauth's 2019 bud-get, has been shelved aside in this budget. We can hardly claim to have either diligent risk management strategy or a credible sanction policy with demonstrable results. The string of dubious or

corrupt overlords from elsewhere have at times benefited from highest-level assistance in settling their ill-gotten mountainous gains on our shores.

It was the worst possible time for the CEB corruption scandal of momentous proportions, where the African Development Bank and other international watchdogs will be scrutinizing the exemplarity and credibility of our response, in a situation where the Danish bid-winner has

already investigated and fired its own personnel, accepting a 21-month ban from internationally funded bids. More than the outraged population, more than the furious Opposition, they will not buy cover stories.

While we certainly hope all knowledgeable hands will try their utmost to assist avoiding the October sanctions deadline, the PM must be fully aware of the necessity to tackle whatever bull is careening in the china shop. A heavy cloud of suspicion now extends over all major contracts awarded by the three big agencies (CEB, CWA & WWMA) falling under the direct purview of Public Utilities. Neither BAD nor other international funding banks, neither the IMF/FATF nor the EU will be amused by political expediency and business as usual. These are indeed exceptional moments.

"We still have no legally structured and competent investigative authority capable of the often complex financial transactions in the underworld of black monies, their whitewashing mechanisms through known means or diversion into drugs and terrorist financing. International agencies do happen to read our press and the long string of scandals buried under our eyes. CCID, ICAC or the FSC would elicit wry smiles as credible independent money-laundering investigating agencies..."

S. Callikan



Yoga Guru Baba Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna. Photo - images.indianexpress.com

Patanjali has found Ayurveda cure for COVID-19: Acharya Balkrishna

Patients took five to 15 days to be completed cured, he said

Even as researchers and pharmaceutical firms across the world are burning the midnight oil to find a vaccine and medicine for the coronavirus pandemic, Patanjali CEO Acharya Balkrishna has come out with a claim that Patanjali Ayurved has found a cure for Covid-19, reports The Week.

According to media reports, Balkrishna said when the virus began to spread across the world, a team of scientists at Patanjali Ayurved was tasked with find a cure for the disease. They worked day and night and identified herbs that had medicinal properties to cure

the disease.

He further claimed that they have treated many people who had contracted Covid-19 and all of them have recovered and tested negative. Patients took five to 15 days to be completed cured, he said.

Claiming that a lot of people have recovered after taking their medicines, he said this has proved that Covid-19 can be cured by Ayurveda. "We are conducting controlled clinical trials," he said, and promised to offer evidences for the cure in the next four to five days.

Prince of Wales and Emmanuel Macron to meet on quarantine exempt visit

The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall will be the first Royal Family members to hold a major event during the coronavirus lockdown when they welcome the French president to the UK.

Charles and Camilla will meet Emmanuel Macron at their London home on 18 June.

They will mark the 80th anniversary of a famous speech by Charles de Gaulle.

Mr Macron will be exempt from a 14-day quarantine imposed on most people who travel to the UK, as a "representative of a foreign country on business".

A Clarence House spokeswoman said government guidelines on social distancing would be followed, reports BBC.

The royal couple will travel from Birkhall in Aberdeenshire, where they have been staying for almost three months, to Clarence House in London to attend the meeting.

Both had to self-isolate in March after Charles, 71, contracted coronavirus.

They have been carrying out royal engagements remotely - via video calls or recorded messages - and are said to be "pleased" to be welcoming Mr Macron to the country.

During the height of lockdown, to curb the spread of coronavirus in France, residents there had to provide a travel permit to justify any outdoor trips.

Restrictions began to ease on 11 May, and phase two of the easing began on 2 June. Nearly all of France is now in a so-called "green zone" where, for example, bars and restaurants can reopen.



Asked if the French president would be subject to quarantine rules for UK arrivals, a spokesman for Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: "No, he won't."

"As we set out in the guidelines when they were published, the French delegation will fall within the exempted category of representatives of a foreign country or territory travelling to undertake business in the UK."

France's coronavirus death toll rose to 29,374 on Friday, while the UK's rose to 41,481.

Clarence House said the royal couple would formally receive Mr Macron, with a guard of honour, to celebrate the 80th anniversary of World War Two resistance leader General Charles de Gaulle's "Appel" to the French population.

On 18 June 1940, de Gaulle used a BBC broadcast to urge people to resist the German occupation of France during the Second World War.

"I call upon all Frenchmen who want to remain free to listen to my voice and follow me," he said.

British ministers could overrule scientists on social distancing

The British government could overrule its scientific and medical advisers to relax the two-metre coronavirus social distancing rule, the chancellor has said - as Boris Johnson urged Britons to head back to the shops.

Rishi Sunak pronounced on Sunday that "advisers advise ministers, who are elected to make decisions" after he was asked whether it would be politicians or senior experts like Sir Patrick Vallance and Professor Chris Whitty who would have the final say on what was safe.



Chancellor Rishi Sunak with Prime Minister Boris Johnson at a media briefing in Downing Street. Photo - Matt Dunham/PA Wire

Senior figures within the Conservative Party and business lobby groups have been urging the British government to relax the rule for fear it could make reopening their premises unprofitable, but Labour warned that the government should follow the science and ensure that workplaces are safe before people return.

* * *

Boris Johnson has announced he will establish a cross-government commission to examine "all aspects" of racial inequality in the UK in the wake of recent Black Lives Matter protests. The Prime Minister acknowledged that Britain had much more to do to tackle racism and said the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities would look at "all aspects of inequality - in employment, in health outcomes, in academic and all other walks of life".

* * *

Police leaders have meanwhile urged Priti Patel to impose an emergency ban on all further public demonstrations during the coronavirus pandemic, warning officers are being put at risk. John Apter, chairman of the Police Federation, called on the Home Secretary to implement tougher restrictions after dozens of officers were injured in violent clashes with far-right agitators over the weekend.

"In normal times, the principle of having the right to peaceful protests is an important one," he said. "However, we are not in normal times, we are tackling a deadly virus which is indiscriminate in who it can affect."

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah

Paying for coronavirus will have to be like war debt - spread over generations

The macroeconomic shock to the world economy from the COVID-19 pandemic is arguably unprecedented in modern times. The financial response by governments of the major economies has been substantial.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies estimates that the G20 had deployed US\$7 trillion (£6.2 trillion) in direct spending, tax relief and lending by the end of May. That is more than 10% of their combined GDP for 2019, averaging over 12% among the advanced economies. This exceeds the fiscal support measures taken by governments during the great financial crisis of 2007-09, as can be seen in the map below.

Yet economists agree that 2020's interventions were both necessary and timely. More may also be needed. In many of the industrialised economies, governments have focused on employment support and subsidised loans to businesses of all sizes. Some countries like Germany are now announcing major investments in green infrastructure and consumer incentives like cutting VAT and subsidies for electric and hybrid vehicles.

Debt and more debt

In the UK, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) currently estimates that the total impact on government borrowing will be £132.5 billion in 2020-21. This will widen the deficit to over 15% of GDP, compared to less than 2% in 2018-19.

Even this depends on whether the lockdowns end and economic activity can resume. If not, deficits could exceed those seen in wartime, when they peaked in the regions of 25%-30% of GDP.

Many wonder how the additional debt will be paid for. For the UK, even on the OBR's most optimistic scenario that economic activity will rapidly recover in the three months following a three-month lockdown, the debt-to-GDP ratio peaks at 110% and returns to 95% in 2021. If the recovery is much slower, most governments will face very high debt-to-GDP ratios indeed.

Like in the great financial crisis, central banks are playing an important role in the market for government debt with major quantitative easing (QE) programmes. QE involves central banks creating new money to buy assets - mostly government debt in the form of sovereign bonds, and sometimes also commercial debt.

On March 19, the Bank of England said it would increase its holdings of UK government bonds (gilts) and certain corporate bonds by £200 billion to £645 billion. The ECB announced a 750 billion (£668 billion) programme around the same time, then expanded it on June 4 to 1.35 trillion. The Fed's new QE commitment is open-ended, with over US\$1.5 trillion of assets purchased since the crisis began.

It's important to note that QE programmes are not directly financing government spending. The money created by the central banks is used to buy government debt from the likes of investment funds which have bought it from the government. The central banks are propping up demand for this debt to ensure that the cost of government borrowing stays low. This potentially avoids disorderly situations where investors become more wary of buying the debt because they think that the country in question has become a bigger credit risk.

QE also supports economic recovery through other



channels. First, when central banks put new money into government and corporate debt, it encourages investors to redirect their money into relatively similar assets like shares or different corporate debt.

This is known as the portfolio rebalancing effect, and it brings benefits. For instance, if extra demand causes the price of certain shares or corporate debt to increase, the cost of borrowing for the companies in question will fall. This lowers the cost of borrowing across the economy.

Second, the purchase of government debt from banks gives them more money to potentially lend. This is reversed when the QE programme ends. Third, the asset purchases create stability. During the great financial crisis, one of the greatest impacts of QE was to signal to financial markets that the central banks were serious about sustaining economic recovery with a loose monetary policy that kept interest rates low.

Risks and consequences

The key question about QE is whether giving governments breathing space to borrow, while loosening monetary policy, will have unforeseen consequences. After the 2007-09 crisis, there were concerns that QE would drive up asset prices and cause people to take excessive risks. There is evidence that this did happen.

This time around, we have already seen stock markets surging. The S&P 500 is up 43% since mid-March. Linked to this are concerns that unwinding a very large QE programme at the end of the crisis could destabilise markets - note that the QE injections following the previous crisis have never been completely reversed.

Another worry is that QE may be insufficient to stimulate demand in the economy after a crisis as deep as that caused by COVID-19. Some economists, such as Jordi Gali and Refet Gürkaynak and Deborah Lucas, are arguing for a so-called "helicopter drop" of money to support fiscal policy.

What they mean is central banks giving new money direct to their governments that would never need to be repaid - known as direct monetary financing. This would remove the need for those governments to issue extra debt to the markets.

It's probably too early to resort to such financing, without seeing how long the crisis lasts and how effective QE is in supporting governments in debt financing. Meantime, more could be done to spread the debt burden across several generations.

For example, governments could issue debt with very long maturity dates like 50 or 100 years, or even debt that never matures - so-called perpetual debt or consols - as is common in war-time finance. The UK chancellor, Rishi Sunak, is currently being urged by many in his party to think along these lines.

It is also important to realise that direct monetary financing is not a free lunch.

Regrettably, there is no magic money tree in economics. Ultimately current government spending is a claim on real resources that has to be financed either directly through future taxes and growth or lower future spending, or through future inflation (which is a tax on money and creditors).

The crisis will, however, mark a change in the relationship between governments and central banks. Blurring the boundaries between the two, even through QE, requires them to co-ordinate their actions much more closely. In the post-COVID era, the notion that central banks are independent of governments is bound to be somewhat diminished.

Anton Muscatelli,
Principal and Vice Chancellor,
University of Glasgow



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'Les jours politiques de Collendavelloo sont probablement comptés,

aujourd'hui ou demain, même si rien ne le compromet personnellement'



Mauritius Times: Rien ne semble indiquer, à ce stade, quelque intention de Pravind Jugnauth de 'larguer' Ivan Collendavelloo suite à l'éclatement de l'affaire St Louis. Le directeur par intérim du CEB a été suspendu et le conseil d'administration, révoqué. Le Premier ministre a clairement pris les choses en main, mais on se demande s'il poussera son adjoint, présumé innocent jusqu'à preuve du contraire, à la démission avec le démarrage de l'enquête par l'ICAC, ou se sert-il de cette enquête pour surseoir à une décision quelconque?

Lindsay Rivière: Les premières décisions du Premier ministre depuis l'éclatement de l'affaire concernant l'acquisition de turbines pour la centrale thermique de Saint-Louis (révocation et remplacement du conseil d'administration du CEB et établissement d'une double enquête, (interne et par l'ICAC) vont certes dans la bonne direction mais ne constituent que le strict minimum que la situation exigeait.

“Qu'on l'apprécie ou non, Pravind Jugnauth est là pour rester ! L'Opposition ne doit donc jamais oublier ceci, face au PM : Il ne faut jamais, au grand jamais sous-estimer celui qui est en face de vous. Vous le faites souvent à vos risques et périls. Beaucoup de guerres ont été perdues par excès d'arrogance...”

Le scandale est, en effet, énorme et susceptible de causer des dégâts considérables à l'image internationale du pays et sur celle du Gouvernement.

Le nouveau conseil d'administration, dirigé par le Deputy Financial Secretary Ada Chellapermal, et constitué de fonctionnaires et de conseillers de haut niveau, relève désormais presque entièrement du PMO et du ministère des Finances, et non du ministère de tutelle d'Ivan Collendavelloo.

Ceci implique que le PMO ne pourra plus désormais plaider l'ignorance à propos de quoi que ce soit relativement au CEB ou à la suite donnée ou révélée par l'enquête.

Cela fait longtemps que la corruption endémique paralyse les institutions de l'Etat. Et voilà tout un pan du service public qui en prend un coup à cause de quelques brebis galeuses. Ce serait donc le règne de la perversion de la culture des pots-de-vin et l'effritement des valeurs d'équité et de justice? Et l'on se demande alors si les objectifs de développement durable sont réalisables localement. La République de Maurice pourra-t-elle un jour se rapprocher des valeurs prônées par Singapour avec la mise en place à tous les niveaux d'institutions efficaces, ouvertes et transparentes, et des ressources humaines responsables qui banniront à jamais les effets dévastateurs pour la stabilité économique et l'image de la République auprès de ses partenaires dans le monde? Lindsay Rivière nous en parle.

Les risques politiques de cette affaire augmentent donc pour Pravind Jugnauth. Toute allégation de 'cover up' à l'avenir sera désormais déposée directement à la porte du PMO.

Quant à l'enquête initiée par l'ICAC, compte tenu de l'image très endommagée de cette institution depuis sa mise sur pied il y a quelques années, il faudra s'attendre à beaucoup de scepticisme dans l'opinion publique quant à la manière, l'efficacité et la durée (généralement une éternité) de son enquête. Etant donné la gravité et les implications de cette scandaleuse affaire, je pense que ce n'est pas une enquête de l'ICAC qui s'impose mais bel et bien une commission d'enquête au plus haut niveau, sans doute présidée par un Juge en fonction, qui irait au fond des choses sur les circonstances de l'octroi de ce contrat de plusieurs milliards depuis 2016.

C'est là, sans doute, une des plus grosses et des plus sordides affaires de corruption alléguée de ce début de siècle, impliquant des centaines de millions, et elle intervient après des assurances publiques et répétées de 'tolérance zéro'.

Il faut donc que la réaction officielle soit à la mesure du scandale. Avec les institutions internationales suivant de près ce dossier, le PM ne doit pas dévaluer lui-même ses assurances. Il y va de sa crédibilité locale et internationale.

Une simple enquête au niveau de l'ICAC ne suffira pas. Elle sera, en effet, perçue dans l'opinion comme une tentative de gagner du temps et, comme vous dites, "de surseoir à une décision". Pravind Jugnauth doit confirmer sa volonté politique de 'zéro tolérance' en nommant une Commission d'enquête aux pouvoirs étendus et en demandant à son adjoint, Ivan Collendavelloo, de 'step down' du Gouvernement le temps que durera l'enquête.

*** Le Premier ministre dispose d'une majorité confortable, et toute décision en ce qui concerne Ivan Collendavelloo dépendra aussi de la 'power equation' au sein de l'alliance gouvernementale. Mais voyez-vous les choses évoluer rapidement de sorte que le Premier ministre se verra dans l'obligation d'aller jusqu'au bout et ainsi 'larguer' son vice-Premier ministre?**

Compte-tenu de l'ampleur de la majorité gouvernementale, pour Pravind Jugnauth la question d'agir ou non par rapport à Ivan Collendavelloo ne se posera pas en termes de 'rapports de force' au sein de la majorité.

Collendavelloo est, en effet, politiquement 'expendable'. Il n'est essentiel au Gouvernement ni en nombre d'élus ML ni en termes de contribution personnelle essentielle à l'efficacité du Gouvernement. L'attitude qu'adoptera Pravind Jugnauth vis-à-vis de son Adjoint relèvera donc de considérations d'utilité et d'intérêt politiques précis, pas de loyauté mutuelle entre deux compagnons de route. Ivan Collendavelloo a toujours été plus proche de Sir Anerood Jugnauth (et on l'a vu en 2014 quand il quitta le MMM pour rejoindre SAJ), que de Pravind Jugnauth.

Les relations entre les deux hommes sont souvent difficiles et tendues. Le PM va surtout se demander, dans cette affaire, si Collendavelloo peut et va lui faire du tort politiquement, et si ce scandale va fragiliser le Gouvernement après sa gestion réussie du Covid-19 et du Budget.

En politique, seul l'intérêt compte. N'oublions pas également, qu'avec l'entrée au Gouvernement d'Alan Ganoo, de Steve Obeegadoo, de Kavi Ramano, soit un apport d'ex-MMM politiquement solides, le Premier ministre a aujourd'hui moins besoin d'Ivan Collendavelloo que hier.

“Il est plus qu'évident que le PM a la situation politique bien en main. Le MSM lui est totalement acquis. Son aile ex-MMM semble susceptible de le conforter à Gauche, face au MMM, et ce, même si Collendavelloo n'est plus jugé essentiel. Peut-être même Pravind Jugnauth deviendra-t-il, au fil du temps, moins dépendant de la cuisine ...”

La manière dont Pravind Jugnauth a 'step in' pour révoquer, sans plus de manières, le Chairman du CEB (colistier battu de Collendavelloo à Rose-Hill aux dernières élections) et le conseil d'administration du CEB nommé par le même Collendavelloo est, en elle-même, un 'language' du DPM et une claque sonore au ML, qui n'a d'ailleurs jamais impressionné.

Pour vous répondre directement, j'ai l'impression que Pravind Jugnauth n'aime pas particulièrement traîner des poids lourds derrière lui ou porter la croix des autres. Ce scandale dominera la première page des journaux, des semaines encore. Les jours politiques de Collendavelloo sont donc probablement comptés, aujourd'hui ou demain, même si rien ne le compromet personnellement.

*** En ce qui concerne l'ICAC, son 'track record' dans la lutte contre la corruption n'est pas très convaincant jusqu'ici : son bilan en matière d'enquêtes, d'actes d'accusation et de condamnations surtout en ce qui concerne les affaires impliquant des membres ou des proches du gouvernement ont fait l'objet de beaucoup de critiques. Qu'est-ce que cette enquête va donner, selon vous?**

L'ICAC a mal démarré il y a quelques années et, depuis, n'a jamais pu rétablir son image en tant qu'institution indépendante. Le mal est fait. En termes de crédibilité publique, "you never have a second chance to make a first impression" et l'ICAC subit cette loi.

Le public mauricien prend tout ce qui touche aux enquêtes de l'ICAC avec des pincettes et une très grosse pincée de sel, et ce, quels que soient ses dirigeants ou les comités parlementaires qui supervisent cette institution.

'Pravind Jugnauth n'aime pas particulièrement traîner des poids lourds derrière lui ou porter la croix des autres'

☞ Suite de la page 8

Il y a un déficit énorme de crédibilité puisque, des années après ses débuts, l'ICAC malgré toutes ses enquêtes n'a pas grand-chose à montrer à son tableau de chasse, encore moins quand il s'agit de personnalités du Gouvernement.

L'institution en est seule responsable.

*** Selon le dernier Baromètre mondial de la corruption - Afrique, beaucoup de Mauriciens considèrent toujours les institutions et certains groupes dont les parlementaires, etc., comme corrompus. Suivant la décision de l'Union européenne de placer Maurice sur la liste provisoire des pays à risques élevés, voilà que la Banque africaine de développement (BAfD) vient pointer l'administration mauricienne du doigt dans l'affaire Saint Louis. Cela va sans doute causer un préjudice grave aux intérêts et à la réputation de Maurice, non?**

Il y a, autant à Maurice qu'à l'étranger, une érosion considérable de la crédibilité du pays et de ses institutions. L'effet cumulé des divers scandales, les personnalités en jeu et le retentissement qu'elles ont provoqué, les sommes de plus en plus astronomiques évoquées (Rs 700 millions à un milliard dans l'affaire du CEB), l'inefficacité totale des mécanismes de contrôle, l'absence de volonté politique démontrée constituent un cocktail explosif et toxique qui ronge le cœur même de l'Etat et de ses institutions.

☞ **Voyez la valse des nominations politiques de candidats battus et d'agents. Aujourd'hui, il vaut presque mieux être un candidat battu nommé quelque part avec salaires de Rs 200,000 par mois, voitures de fonction et privilèges qu'un candidat élu !**

Qu'avons-nous vu depuis le début de ce siècle? La politique est presque totalement dévaluée. L'affairisme est partout. Les contrats se négocient désormais non plus en millions mais en milliards de roupies, alimentant la vénalité de certains. Plusieurs institutions de supervision ou d'arbitrage ne jouent plus correctement leur rôle.

Il y a une démission croissante des responsables à Maurice. La qualité des hommes publics baisse de génération en génération. Les élections nécessitent de plus en plus d'argent, d'où bailleurs de fonds de plus en plus exigeants. Il y a de plus en plus de corrompus parce qu'il y a de plus en plus de corrupteurs sans vergogne, à la recherche de contrats mirobolants, de permis et de coups de pouce.

Toute la décadence constatée à Maurice et le matérialisme ambiant qui salit toute la vie mauricienne sont le reflet d'une société qui se laisse de plus en plus aller, qui recherche partout des raccourcis, qui ridiculise et affaiblit de plus en plus les grands principes sur lesquels ce pays a été construit. Au fond, la décadence morale qui progresse est le bouillon de culture de la corruption.

*** A la lumière de différents cas où des manquements à la bonne gouvernance ont été notés au niveau du fonctionnement de nos institutions de contrôle (les 'regulators') telles que le Central Procurement Board, la FSC et la Banque centrale, on se demande si la fraude et la corruption constitueront le talon d'Achille de l'actuel Gouvernement. Qu'en pensez-vous?**

Le drame mauricien est la politisation de tout et, en particulier, de toutes les institutions par les gouvernements successifs depuis l'Indépendance. Les premiers gouverne-

ments de Maurice étaient plus ou moins respectueux de l'indépendance des institutions publiques que nous avaient léguées les Anglais.

Au fur et à mesure, on a vu la branche Exécutive de l'Etat (le gouvernement) grossir, s'ingérer, vouloir contrôler de plus en plus de secteurs de la vie du pays. Le Parlement, les Municipalités et les Conseils régionaux n'ont aujourd'hui pratiquement plus de pouvoir. Le Gouvernement ne cesse de s'étendre, comme une énorme pieuvre.

On a ensuite vu, au fil des années, la multiplication effrénée des *parastatal bodies*, puis des *State-Owned Companies* qui ont poussé comme des champignons après la pluie, souvent pour concurrencer le secteur privé. Comme un gros problème apparaît, on lance un nouvel organisme public de régulation. Ensuite, au lieu d'opérer en autonomie, ces nouvelles institutions agiraient comme des extensions, presque des Subsidiaries, du gouvernement, aux ordres de l'Hotel du Gouvernement.

Autrefois, dans les années 70-90, le gouvernement se satisfaisait de nommer les Chairpersons des institutions ; aujourd'hui, il nomme même les CEOs, les managers, les attachés de presse, et les conseillers et consultants.

Autrefois, des personnalités indépendantes dirigeaient les institutions et on s'en vantait. Aujourd'hui, on voit se mettre en place partout à Maurice un système de nominations équivalent au "système de dépouilles" en cours aux Etats-Unis, où un nouveau gouvernement, après une élection présidentielle, se réserve le droit de nommer des milliers de dirigeants et de managers des centaines d'institutions du pays, presque toujours des nominations politiques. Ceci est extrêmement dangereux.

Tout nouveau gouvernement à Maurice démarre ainsi le pouvoir qu'il s'arroge d'effectuer quelque 500 nominations de haut niveau dans des dizaines d'institutions, des postes bien rémunérés à plus de Rs 100,000 par mois.

On n'hésite plus à nommer, sans hésiter, des politiciens du parti au pouvoir, candidats battus ou membres, absolument partout à des postes requérant souvent des compétences techniques pointues.

Voyez la valse des nominations politiques de candidats battus et d'agents. Aujourd'hui, il vaut presque mieux être un candidat battu nommé quelque part avec salaires de Rs 200,000 par mois, voitures de fonction et privilèges qu'un candidat élu!

J'ai toujours pensé que le meilleur moyen de progresser est de s'entourer de gens valables et hautement compétents. Nos politiciens font souvent exactement le contraire, avec les résultats que l'on voit pour les institutions. Et l'Opposition ne fait rien! Et on s'étonne de voir périlcliter le pays?

*** Toujours en matière de bonne gouvernance et à la lumière des affaires qui ont dominé l'actualité à Maurice, (dont celles impliquant Alvaro Sobrino et la famille Dos Santos, les prêts sans garantie accordés à des milliardaires étrangers par nos banques commerciales, etc), que pensez-vous de la décision du Gouvernement de remettre à la Mauritius Investment Company Ltd la responsabilité d'investir de l'argent public (Rs 80 milliards) dans des entreprises sans être comptable de ses décisions au Parlement?**

Le MIC est un autre exemple de ce que je vous disais il y a quelques minutes. Rs 80 milliards à investir ! Il faudra voir ce qu'on en fera, quels sont ceux et celles qui seront nommés et qui en bénéficiera, sans que le Parlement ne puisse s'en mêler. Tout cela est un signe des temps!

*** Le budget 2020-21 a suscité des réactions diverses et opposées, allant d'une approbation tacite dans certains milieux à une désapprobation ouverte dans d'autres. Répond-il, selon vous, aux défis qui**



☞ **L'ICAC a mal démarré il y a quelques années et, depuis, n'a jamais pu rétablir son image en tant qu'institution indépendante. Le mal est fait. En termes de crédibilité publique, "you never have a second chance to make a first impression" et l'ICAC subit cette loi. Le public mauricien prend tout ce qui touche aux enquêtes de l'ICAC avec des pincettes ...!**

guettent le pays dans le sillage de la Covid-19 ?

Je suis de ceux qui pensent que, face à l'ampleur actuelle mais surtout l'ampleur à venir de la crise, il est essentiel d'injecter des fonds massifs (en dizaines de milliards) dans l'économie pour la soutenir et la faire repartir et qu'il faut donc

- (i) laisser filer le déficit budgétaire,
- (ii) accroître la dette publique à plus de 65% du PIB,
- (iii) accorder des 'stimulus packages' au secteur privé,
- (iv) assouplir les lois du travail et bouger vers le 'contract employment' pour préserver l'emploi, quitte à revoir ceux-ci si tout repart d'ici un an ou deux,
- (v) repenser la fiscalité pour accroître la solidarité nationale, et
- (vi) revoir en profondeur l'architecture économique du pays et ne pas faire comme si rien ne s'était passé avec la Covid-19.

Nous n'avons pas beaucoup de choix et ce n'est pas le moment de faire la fine bouche : Il y a 100,000 chômeurs qui arrivent et une terrible misère sociale va s'abattre sur Maurice, avec des conséquences dramatiques pour beaucoup de familles.

Mais avec tout ceci, il faudra bien sûr beaucoup de contrôles, de supervision parlementaire et que l'on soit en conformité avec les principes d'efficacité, de bonne gouvernance et d'accountability'.

Ceci étant mon postulat, vous comprendrez que j'ai bien accueilli plusieurs initiatives du Budget mais moins bien certaines autres. On a peut-être été trop vite en affaire sur certaines questions mais, pour l'essentiel, il n'y a pas 36 solutions!

☞ Suite en page 16

Is this the secret of smart leadership?



David Robson

It's more than two millennia since the philosopher Socrates argued that humility is the greatest of all virtues. His timeless observation was that the wisest people are the first to admit how little they really know.

Science has been slow to catch up to this argument, but the last decade has offered a spate of new studies examining this trait and its effects on our thinking and reasoning. According to this research, people with greater humility are better learners, decision-makers and problem solvers. One study even found that someone's humility could trump actual IQ in predicting their performance.

The latest findings suggest that the trait is especially important for leaders, with evidence that displays of humility can improve strategic thinking and boost the performance of colleagues across an organisation.

'You need confidence to be humble'

The recent focus on humility is a refreshing shift in perspective after decades of interest into self-esteem and self-confidence, which were often considered to be cure-alls for many of the ills in our society.

High self-esteem and humility need not necessarily be at odds, of course. As Khalid Aziz, a leadership coach in the UK, points out, "you need confidence to be humble."

Unfortunately, a lot of the writing about self-esteem and self-belief often neglected to consider need for humility alongside confidence. As Will Storr describes in his book 'Selfie, the self-esteem movement' - promoted in the popular media and absorbed into educational policy - encouraged parents and teachers to provide unconditional positivity and optimism at the expense of any criticism or doubt. This hardly set the stage for healthy humility. And that oversight may have been to our great detriment.

Consider a 2013 paper published by Bradley Owens, an organisational psychologist at Brigham Young University, which examined the performance of 144 undergraduate students studying for a management course.

Figuring that each individual may not be very good at assessing their own humility, Owens asked the participants to rate each



Angela Merkel's scientific background is sometimes credited with giving her greater intellectual humility. And this is thought to have helped her to navigate the country through a series of crises during her 15 years as Germany's Chancellor. Photo - static.euronews.com

other on statements such as "This person actively seeks feedback, even if it is critical", "This person admits it when they don't know how to do something" and "This person acknowledges when others have more knowledge and skills than him - or herself". He then tracked various measures of their performance over the course of the year.

The results were striking, with the students rated humblest achieving better grades than those who were considered to have more inflated opinions of themselves. Indeed, the humility ratings proved to be a better predictor of performance than measures of actual intelligence. Humility was particularly important for some of the less gifted students, almost completely compensating for their lack of natural intelligence and allowing them to perform as well as people with much higher IQ scores.

The reason for this advantage was apparent when Owens and his colleagues looked more carefully at the students' trajectories across the term. The people with the greatest humility may not have started out the strongest, but by acknowledging the gaps in their knowledge or skillsets and then correcting them, they made the greatest improvements over the course. The less humble students were more likely to plateau. Overall, the humbler students were just more "teachable" than the less humble students, irrespective of their actual IQ.

Owens' study helped establish the importance of humility as a distinct psychology trait, with later research confirming that intellectual humility can boost learning

and many other measures of successful thinking. Elizabeth Krumrei Mancuso at Pepperdine University in California has found that humbler participants tend to show greater curiosity, and appear to be more willing to learn for the sake of learning. "These qualities may provide a greater openness to gaining new knowledge," she says.

Of the world leaders today, Angela Merkel's scientific background is sometimes credited with giving her greater intellectual humility - including the tendency to check her assumptions and to listen to others' opinions before forming her own. And this is thought to have helped her to navigate the country through a series of crises during her 15 years as Germany's Chancellor. In the past, Abraham Lincoln was famed for his humble attitude, and his capacity to acknowledge his own flaws and errors was thought to have improved his tactical decision making.

Avoiding groupthink

Besides these individual benefits, the recent research shows that a leader's humility can also have important knock-on effects for their team members.

In a survey of more than 700 employees at a US health services provider, Owens found that humbler leaders cultivated greater work engagement and job satisfaction among their employees. Although Owens didn't probe the reasons for the link in this study, his later research suggests that the leader's humility improves the communication among team members. Not only does that give the employees the con-

fidence to disagree with decisions, the fact that the leader is willing to admit their own limits should encourage the team members to admit their own flaws - all of which should create a more honest and constructive workplace.

Humbler CEOs encouraged greater collaboration and information sharing among the firm's top management team

Amy Yi Ou at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University has found similar benefits in a study of 105 technology companies. Using surveys similar to Owens', she found that humbler CEOs encouraged greater collaboration and information sharing among the firm's top management team. The improved decision making resulted in greater overall profits.

Questioning questions

Despite these benefits, some leaders may still fear that expressing humility could undermine their authority. But the latest research on humility, published earlier this year, suggests that this need not be an issue, provided you go about it in the right way.

Irina Cojuharenco at the University of Surrey created different vignettes describing leaders' behaviour, and asked participants to rate them on their perceived competence. Although blunt admissions of ignorance on an important issue - explicitly saying "I don't know" - did harm the leaders' ratings a bit, the effect was much less pronounced if they expressed their ignorance as a question requesting more information on the matter.

What's more, the display of ignorance - by asking questions - only really made a difference if the leader's competence was already in doubt. (For people who had already proven their knowledge - through a prestigious degree, for instance - it had little effect.) And even then, the participants' overall trust of the leader remained unchanged. They seemed to appreciate the leaders' genuine desire for more information and respected their humility, even if their belief in the leaders' technical competence had been shaken.

Given these findings, Cojuharenco argues that leaders should be much readier to ask questions that may reveal their ignorance - rather than attempting to maintain the illusion of knowledge. "In the four studies we've conducted, we've never seen negative overall effects," she says.

If you still doubt humility's power, she suggests that you think of inspirational figures within your own life. The chances are, you'll realise that they were the individuals who demonstrated the most humility, she says. And by following their lead, you can improve your own thinking and decision making.

David Robson is a science writer and author of 'The Intelligence Trap: Why Smart People Make Dumb Mistakes', which examines the psychology of our most common thinking errors and the ways to make wiser decisions.

Should I wear a mask on public transport?

As restrictions ease, many Australians will be wondering if it's worth wearing a mask on the bus, train or tram to reduce their risk of being infected with coronavirus.

When Australian Deputy Chief Medical Officer Nick Coatsworth was asked about this earlier this week, he said:

If you are a vulnerable person and you have no other means of getting to work or around, it would be a very reasonable thing to do. We don't think that general, healthy members of the community need to be considering wearing masks in that context.

Earlier, Chief Medical Officer Brendan Murphy said wearing masks on public transport "is not an unreasonable thing to do".

But the Australian National Cabinet has stopped short of making wearing masks on public transport compulsory. No wonder it can all seem a bit confusing.

So what does fresh evidence say about the benefits of healthy people wearing masks in public? And how do you use this to decide what to do?

Yes, wearing a mask does reduce your risk

Until now, the evidence about whether wearing a mask out and about if you're healthy reduces your risk of coronavirus infection has been uncertain.

But a recent review in *The Lancet* changes that. As expected, the researchers found wearing masks protected health-care workers against coronavirus infection. But they also found wearing masks protects healthy people in the community, although possibly to a lesser degree.

The researchers said the difference in the protective effect was largely because health workers are more likely to use N95 masks,

which were found to offer greater protection than the disposable surgical masks we generally see people wearing out in the community.

So, the take-home message is that masks, while not offering perfect protection, reduce your risk of coronavirus infection while you're out and about.

In light of this study, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has updated its advice to recommend healthy people wear masks in public where there is widespread transmission and where physical distancing is difficult, such as on public transport.

But how is this different to what I've heard before?

What this *Lancet* study adds is the best evidence we have so far that *healthy people* who wear a mask out and about can reduce their chance of infection.

It's important to stress, the evidence is quite clear that *if you're sick*, wearing a mask reduces your risk of transmitting the coronavirus to others.

If you're sick or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 the clear advice is still to stay home and self-isolate. You shouldn't be on public transport anyway!

Masks also protect others

But how about the other possible benefit of wearing masks on public transport - minimising the risk of you unwittingly transmitting the virus to others if you don't have symptoms?

Despite some confusing messages from WHO earlier this week, we know "asymptomatic transmission" does occur, although we are yet to pin down its exact role.

For instance, a recent review suggests as many as 40-45% of

coronavirus infections are asymptomatic and they may transmit the virus to others for an extended period.

So, preventing asymptomatic transmission is another reason you may choose to wear a mask. That is, rather than wearing a mask to protect yourself, you could wear a mask to protect others.

So, what should I do?

Given masks reduce your risk of infection **and** reduce the risk of you unwittingly passing on the virus to others, you could certainly make a case for routinely wearing a mask on public transport while we have coronavirus in the community.

This case is even stronger if you are at risk of severe illness, for example if you are over 65 years old or have an underlying medical condition such as high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes.

Alternatively, if you are travelling on a short trip on a train and you have plenty of room to social distance, then you may decide wearing a mask may not be essential given the level of risk on that journey.

However, if you are on a longer commute and the train is crowded and social distancing is difficult, then wearing a mask could well be sensible.

If you do decide to wear a mask, then it's important to make sure you know how to put it on and take it off correctly. And as no mask offers complete protection, you still need to physically distance where possible and wash your hands.

Hassan Vally

Associate Professor, La Trobe University



COMMUNIQUE

FILING OF RETURNS / STATEMENTS and PAYMENT OF INCOME TAX and VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)

- The public is hereby informed that the due date for electronic submission of returns/statements and electronic payment of tax is **26 June 2020** for the following:
 - Income Tax Return by companies with accounting year ending in December 2019.
 - VAT Return for May 2020.
 - PAYE & NPF/NSF return for May 2020
 - Current Payment System (CPS) statement for quarter ending 31st of March 2020.
 - Advance Payment System (APS) for quarter ending 31st of March 2020.
 - Tax Deduction at Source (TDS) for May 2020.
- As a consequence of the recent lockdown that prevailed in Mauritius, companies that have their accounting year ended in December 2019 and have an obligation to file audited accounts, may, exceptionally, file their income tax return and pay tax based on unaudited accounts. In case they need to file an amended return after the audit is completed, no penalties for late submission of return will be charged, provided the amended return is filed on or before **31 August, 2020**.

TAX DUE DATE: 26 JUNE 2020

For any additional information, taxpayers may visit MRA website: www.mra.mu or phone MRA helpdesk on: **207 6000**

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In A Light Vein

Never underestimate the power of senior citizens

After the death of his wife an elderly man married a young woman.

Now he was spending less time with his friends. His concerned friends enquired if there was a problem.

"I want to pass time with you but my poor wife gets lonely when I'm away."

His friends advised him to keep a young tenant at home, your wife will be happy in the company of a younger person.

The elderly man promptly acted on their advice and leased a room in his house to a young tenant.

The friends were meeting more often. One day the friends jokingly asked, "How is your wife now?"

"She is not lonely at all; in fact she is happy and she is pregnant"

The friends laughed, as they expected this. "How is the tenant?" they asked.

The man replied very soberly: "She is also pregnant..."

* * *

Kim Jong-un announced in a news conference that North Korea would be sending a man to the sun within ten years!

A reporter said: "But the sun is very hot. How can your man land on the sun?"

There was a stunned silence. Nobody knew how to react.

Then Kim Jong-un quietly answered: "We will land at night."

The entire audience broke out in thunderous applause!

Back in the White House, Donald Trump and his entourage were watching the news conference on TV.

When Trump heard what Kim had said, he sneered: "What an idiot. There is no sun at night time!"

Now, his cabinet broke up in thunderous applause!

* * *

At a liquor manufacturing unit, the regular taster died and the CEO started looking for a new one to hire. A drunkard with a ragged, dirty look came in to apply for the position. The CEO wondered how to send him out. He gave him a glass to drink.

The drunkard tried it and said: "It is Muscat, three years old, grown on a north slope, matured in steel containers. Low grade, but acceptable."

"This is correct," said the Boss. He gave him another glass.

"It is a Pinot Blanc champagne, high grade and exclusive," calmly said the drunkard.

After a third glass, he said: "It is a Cabernet, eight years old, a south-western slope, oak barrels, matured at 8 degrees. Require 3 more years

for finest result."

The CEO was astonished. He winked at his secretary, and whispered something to her. She left the room, and came back with a glass of urine.

The alcoholic tried it and said: "It's a blonde, 26 years old, three months pregnant. And if I don't get the job, I will name the father."

The CEO immediately said: "You are appointed."

* * *

An old man is selling watermelons.

His pricelist reads: 1 for \$3, 3 for \$10.

A young man stops by and asks to buy one watermelon.

"That'd be 3 dollars," says the old man.

The young man then buys another one, and another one, paying \$3 for each.

As the young man is walking away, he turns around, grins, and says, "Hey old man, do you realize I just bought three watermelons for only \$9? Maybe business is not your thing."

The old man smiles and mumbles to himself, "People are funny. Every time they buy three watermelons instead of one, yet they keep trying to teach me how to do business..."

Words to live by

Live in peace, not in pieces

Martina Navratilova was once asked, "How do you maintain your focus, physique and sharp game even at the age of 43?"

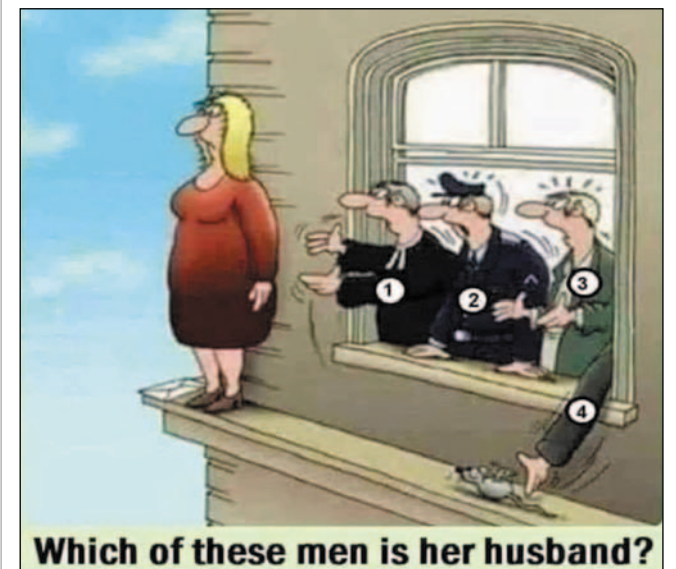
She gave a humble reply. Read on:

The ball doesn't know how old I am. You need to stop yourself from stopping yourself. Every game in life is actually played on a 6 inch ground - the space between your two ears. We don't live in bungalows, duplexes or flats. We live in our mind which is an unlimited area.

Life is great when things are sorted and uncluttered there. Keeping the mind messy with hatred growing on the table, regrets piling up in corner, expectations boiling in kitchen, secrets stuffed under the carpet and worries littered everywhere ruins this real home.

The key factor to performing well in life and in every arena is the ability to control the quality and quantity of your 'internal dialogue'. Performance is potential minus internal interference."

Live in peace, not in pieces.



That's Life

That's the leader

Leader: Yes, now the right time has come.

Public: Will you loot the nation?

Leader: Oh, no.

Public: Will you work for us?

Leader: Yes, very much.

Public: Will you increase the prices and cost of living?

Leader: Don't think about that.

Public: Will you provide us with jobs and livelihood?

Leader: Surely will do that.

Public: Will you do scams and misappropriations?

Leader: Are you mad, absolutely not.

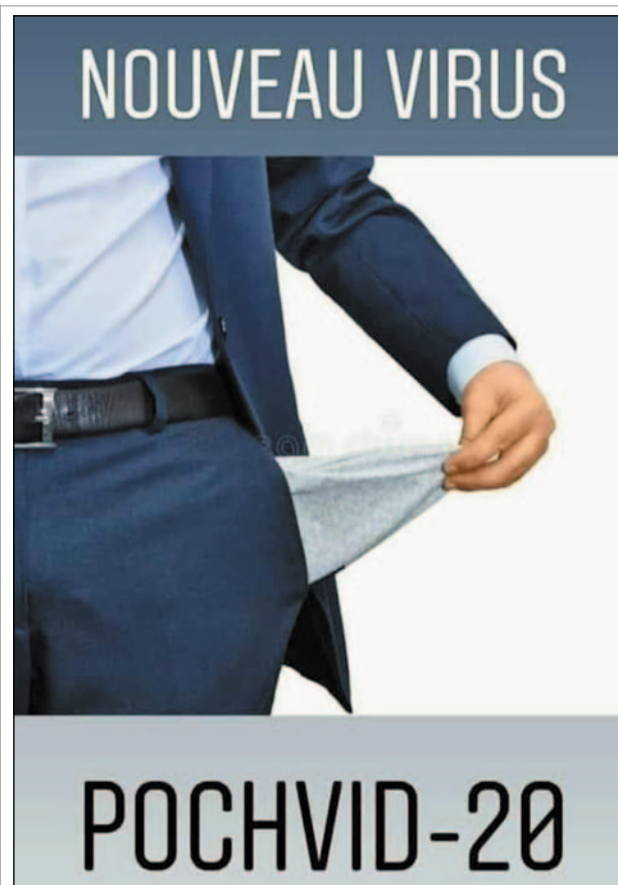
Public: Can we believe in and trust you?

Leader: Yes.

Public: Oh our leader.

The leader won the election and returned elected.

Now read from bottom to top.





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Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* to release on July 31. *Wonder Woman 1984* shifts from August to October 2

Tenet was earlier scheduled to release on July 17. It will now hit the screens on July 31. Gal Gadot's *Wonder Woman 1984* has been shifted from an August release to October 2.

The closely watched arrival of Christopher Nolan's big-budget sci-fi espionage film *Tenet* will finally happen on July 31, Warner Bros. announced Friday.

The studio said it would delay the release by two weeks and instead re-issue Nolan's 2010 sci-fi blockbuster *Inception* in mid-July.

The release date for *Tenet* has been closely watched in all corners of the film industry, which has faced shuttered theaters due to the coronavirus since mid-March. Movie theaters plan to reopen in July for a vastly different summer season than the one the industry had planned.

The Marvel film *Black Widow* and the ninth installment in the *Fast & Furious* franchise, both expected to arrive in the early summer, have delayed their releases.

Warner Bros. also announced Friday that *Wonder Woman 1984*, a sequel to its 2017 hit, would shift from an August release to October 2.

Tenet will arrive in the-



aters a week after Disney's live-action version of *Mulan* is released on July 24.

When the studio released the film's trailer in May, it didn't include a release date, simply stating, "Coming to theaters." The film stars John David Washington, Robert Pattinson, Elizabeth Debicki and Michael Caine.

AMC Theaters, the world's largest theater operator, said this week it expects to have at least 97% of its locations open by mid-July. The National Association of Theater Owners, the trade group that represents exhibitors, expects some 90-95% of cinemas around the world will open then as well.

Rather than packing multiplexes, AMC says it will keep its cinemas 25-50% full to ensure social distancing. Those won't be the only changes. Concessions will ordered via an app and theaters will undergo regular cleanings, AMC has said.

Janhvi Kapoor's *Gunjan Saxena The Kargil Girl* to have direct OTT release

Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl, starring Janhvi Kapoor, follows the footsteps of *Gulabo Sitabo* and *Shakuntala Devi* as it is set for a digital release. The film will be streaming on Netflix soon.



After Shoojit Sircar's *Gulabo Sitabo* and Vidya Balan's *Shakuntala Devi*, Janhvi Kapoor's much-awaited film, *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl*, will also be released on a digital platform. Karan Johar, who has produced the film, took to social media to reveal that the film will be released on Netflix.

Karan Johar shared a new poster of the film announcing that it will be released on Netflix. The filmmaker, however, didn't reveal the date of its release.

Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl is the biopic of the former Indian Air Force pilot Gunjan Saxena, who played a pivotal role in the Kargil War of 1999.

Directed by Sharan Sharma, the film was set to hit the screens on March 13, 2020. But due to the nationwide lockdown imposed to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, its release was postponed.

The shooting of *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl* started in Lucknow in 2018. Apart from Lucknow, the film is shot in Georgia. It also stars Pankaj Tripathi as Gunjan Saxena's father and Angad Bedi as her brother.

Daniel Craig returns as James Bond; fights a pandemic like COVID-19 in the new film

Daniel Craig is all set to return as James Bond with a new film and will be seen fighting a pandemic like COVID-19 in it. Check out the whole story to find out more

From Bond Girls, we move onto Bonds Girl. When Daniel Craig returns as James Bond in *"No Time To Die"*, and the British superspy will be a father, too. Also, sources say in the new film, Bond will be saving the world from a global pandemic, giving the film an interesting topical spin. Bond will be father to a daughter with love interest Dr Madeleine Swann, played by French actress Lea Seydoux, confirms a report in *daily-mail.co.uk*. The little girl is named Mathilde. The news started doing the rounds when last week the call sheets of the film, 25th of the official series, went up for sale on the online auction site eBay. The sheets describe a sequence in southern Italy that was filmed last September. It featured Seydoux with Lashana Lynch's Nomi, who will be the first black female agent, and the girl Mathilde, essayed by five-year-old child actor Lisa-Dorah Sonne.

"Yes, it's true. Bond is a dad. Daniel wanted to make this Bond film the most surprising and entertaining yet," said a source. "Daniel is older and his Bond is maturing and looking at life through the prism of



fatherhood. But there's a lot more to it than that," the source added, according to the website. "Fleabag" creator Phoebe Waller-Bridge has collaborated on the script. She

rewrote the script after filmmaker Danny Boyle walked out and Cary Joji Fukunaga took over the directorial duties. The insider said making Bond a dad had "opened up a whole avenue of powerful moments – and jokes", adding: "It's the one thing fans would never expect". "Bond has always managed to charm his way into the hearts and beds of hundreds of beautiful women, seemingly without any consequences. Making him a father opens up a whole new world in terms of drama and story development," said the source, according to *daily-mail.co.uk*.

Sources also revealed that new movie will see Bond saving humanity from a biological pandemic. "It's not quite Covid-19, but it's similar and it is very timely," said the source. *"No Time To Die"* was scheduled to release in April 2020 but like many other films has had to be postponed owing to the global COVID-19 pandemic. It is currently expected to release in November. The story of the new film is set five years after the last Bond release, *"Spectre"*, which opened in 2015. In *"Spectre"*, the love story of Bond and Swann had taken off.

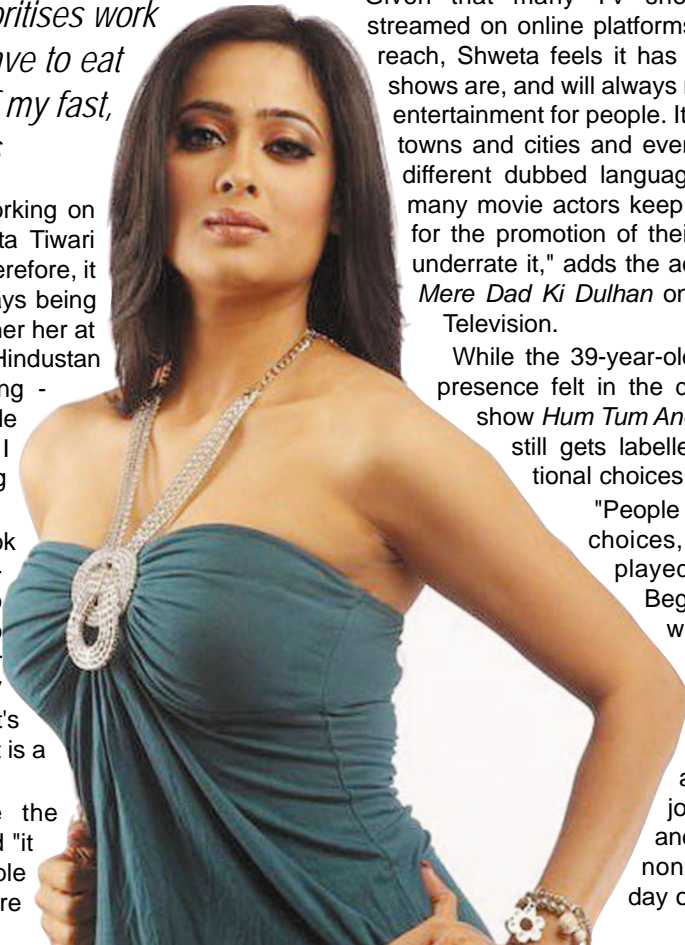
Shweta Tiwari says work is worship: 'Even if I have to eat non-veg while I'm on fast, I'll do it'

Shweta Tiwari says she prioritises work above all else. "Even if I have to eat on-vegetarian on the day of my fast, I will do it," she says

After almost two decades of working on the small screen, actor Shweta Tiwari still calls television her first love. Therefore, it comes as no surprise when she says being tagged as a "TV?actor" doesn't bother her at all, reports Sangeeta Yadav of Hindustan Times. "It has given me everything - name, fame and identity, and people still call me Perna of *Kasautii...* I couldn't have asked for anything better," she smiles.

At a time when many actors look down on the medium for its regressive content and have moved on to try their luck in films and web shows, Shweta says she can never quit TV. "Some actors consider TV to be a smaller medium but that's wrong as times have changed and it is a much bigger medium now."

She admits that somewhere the content on TV is still regressive and "it needs to tell stories that are relatable and portray characters in a more progressive way".



Given that many TV shows are also being streamed on online platforms and getting a wider reach, Shweta feels it has gone worldwide. "TV shows are, and will always remain a daily dose of entertainment for people. It has its reach in small towns and cities and even across the world in different dubbed languages. Because of this, many movie actors keep coming to TV shows for the promotion of their work. We shouldn't underrate it," adds the actor, currently seen in *Mere Dad Ki Dulhan* on Sony Entertainment Television.

While the 39-year-old has also made her presence felt in the digital space with her show *Hum Tum And Them*, she says she still gets labelled for her unconventional choices.

"People also questioned my choices, especially when I played a prostitute in *Begusarai*. And even my web show, which required me to do bold scenes, raised many eyebrows," she continues, "But as an actor, it is my job. Work is worship, and even if I have to eat non-vegetarian on the day of my fast, I will do it."

'Bin Kuch Kahe' director Rajshree Ojha talks about film-making

It's not the medium, but the story that matters

This director with a difference has now ventured into the Hindi television space as a producer with '*Bin Kuch Kahe*' on Zee TV, reports Arushi Goswami of India Forums

Rajshree Ojha can easily be termed to be a director with a difference. Being a part of the industry for a while, her films have always exploited the untapped elements prevalent in the society.

To her credit, she has a film like the Sonam Kapoor starrer, *Aisha* which gave the industry of Bollywood a new approach towards viewing the fashion industry and also gave a real insight into the lives of the high society of metropolitan cities. Even before *Aisha*, she made her directorial debut with the film *Chaurahen* and has won the prestigious American Film Institute's Spirit of Excellence Award for Outstanding Direction. She also went on to direct the segment titled *Biryani* in the multi-starrer film *X: Past Is Present*.

Rajshree Ojha has now ventured into the Hindi television space as a producer with the show, *Bin Kuch Kahe* which telecasts on Zee TV. The show is about three sisters and their journey in a dysfunctional family, headed by a troublesome mother. Ojha believes that her 157 episode-long daily soap will bring a welcome change that'll make the critics view the space in a more respectable manner.

How has your journey been in the industry as a whole? Usually, people follow the transition from TV to films, but you have done the opposite. Can you provide a brief insight on the same?

The journey has just begun and I am keeping my fingers crossed! Nevertheless, it has been fun with a lot of



learning and I have made some great friends and good associates. It's been a mix of good and bad, meeting interesting people where some you will take along and some you never hope to see again as you walk towards your destination; that's how it has been for me. So to answer the question as a whole, it has been a good journey so far.

Talking about the medium, I don't care for that to be a factor as it's the story that matters. Some stories need to be told on the larger canvas and some are suited for the small screen. For me, television is a huge medium that reaches to millions with varied tastes. To reach out to them and make them watch your content is an art in itself. And this is how I thought to give the medium a try and I chose to tell this story on TV.

Having said that, I feel Indian TV is a bit stuck in the formula zone. I think things will change and people will demand better stories rather than the quintessential soap operas only.

Goodbye Sushant Singh Rajput: In his last film *Chhichhore*, he taught us all to live life fully

*Sushant Singh Rajput was last seen on the big screen in 2019 film *Chhichhore*. The actor breathed his last today*



Sushant Singh Rajput committed suicide at his Bandra home in Mumbai today (June 14). He was 34 years old. The actor was suffering from depression for the past six months.

Sushant was a well-known television star before he made his debut in the Hindi film industry with Kai Po Che. With films like *MS Dhoni: The Untold Story*, *Detective Byomkesh Bakshy*, *Sonchiriya* and more, the actor made a mark in the industry.

He was last seen on the big screen in Nitesh Tiwari's 2019 college drama *Chhichhore*, a film about friendship and hope.

Sushant played the role, Aniruddh or Anni, a father of a teenage son, Raghav, who is awaiting the result of IIT-JEE entrance test. Wanting to follow the footsteps of his father and mother (Shraddha Kapoor), Raghav is desperate to get through the entrance exam and secure a seat in the top engineering college of the country.

When Raghav can't clear the exam, he jumps off his balcony and ends up in a coma. Anni summons his college gang, who go by the name of Losers. They all tell stories from their fun college days to help revive Raghav. From water wars to daring friends to get clothes from girls' hostels, Losers take us on a nostalgia ride.

While remembering their college days, these men, who are now in their 40s, tell the audience how these underdogs became the college champions by staying united. *Chhichhore* makes the audience relive their life-shaping college days, while having them roll-on-the-floor-laughing.

Sushant's character, Anni, is the heart and soul of the film. He keeps his gang and film together. With a bunch of his flawed friends, Anni taught us that it is important to live every moment of life fully, even the difficult ones as they make us appreciate the good times even more.

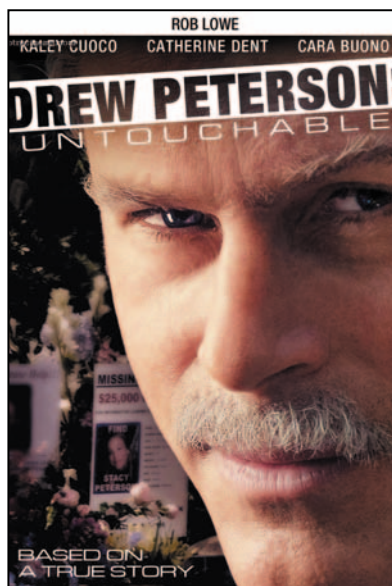
Our Anni breathed his last today. Though Sushant couldn't win his battle against depression, with his last film, he taught us to take a back-seat and enjoy life as it comes.

CINE 12

Mardi 16 juin - 21.15

L'Intouchable
Drew Peterson

Star: Rob Lowe, Kaley Cuoco

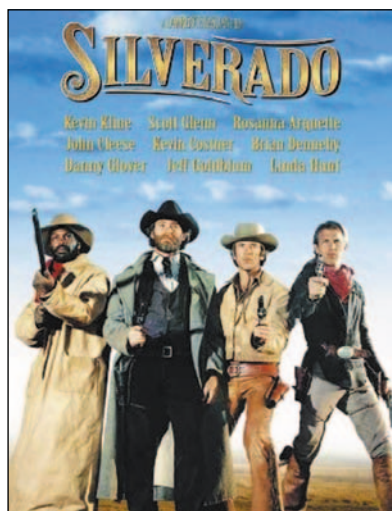


CINE 12

Mercredi 17 juin - 21.15

Sil Verado

Avec: Kevin Kline, Scott Glenn, Kevin Costner



CINE 12

Jeudi 18 juin - 21.15

S.W.A.T



MBC 1

06.00 Local: Rodrig Prog
07.00 Dessin Anime
10.21 Mag: Origami
10.45 Mag: Zoboomafoo
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Doc: Autour Des Valeurs
12.35 Doc: Pavarotti, Pop Tenor
13.30 Local: Arogya
14.30 D.Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur
14.41 D.Anime: Le Quiz De Zack
14.44 D.Anime: Astrology
15.07 D.Anime: Kuu Kuu Harajuku
16.32 D.Anime: Linkers
17.00 Live Press Conference
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
20.35 Local: Priorite Sante
21.30 Serial: Unforgotten
23.10 Serial: Chicago Police...

mardi 16 juin

MBC 2

08.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
09.00 Live Educational Prog...
17.00 Zoom TV Live
20.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
20.45 Film: Ijaazat



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
06.26 Mag: Urban Gardens
06.43 Mag: World Stories
06.58 Mag: Voa Connect
07.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
08.00 Doc: Alpine Twilight
09.00 Live Educational Program...
16.02 Doc: 360 GEO
17.19 Mag: Made In Germany
18.10 Mag: National Geographic...
18.24 Mag: Urban Gardens
19.00 Journal Kreol
19.29 Doc: A Question Of Science
20.03 Local: Tamil Programme
20.32 Film: Bhaskar Oru Raskal
22.53 Mag: REV: The Global Auto..
23.19 Mag: Urban Gardens
23.25 Doc: Builders Of The Future
23.50 Mag: Check In
00.16 Doc: A Question Of Science
00.22 Mag: Made In Germany

Cine 12

01.37 Tele: Esmeraldas
02.22 Serial: The L.A. Complex
03.44 Film: La Passion Heritage
05.11 Tele: Amanda
07.08 Film: Lucky Dog
09.00 Serial: Line Of Duty
09.59 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.23 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
10.48 Serial: S.W.A.T
11.29 Tele: Dulce Amor
11.58 Film: La Passion En Heritage
13.31 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: Lucky Dog
16.30 Serial: Line Of Duty
17.25 Serial: Dynasty
18.21 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.35 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: French Series
21.15 Film: L'Intouchable Drew...

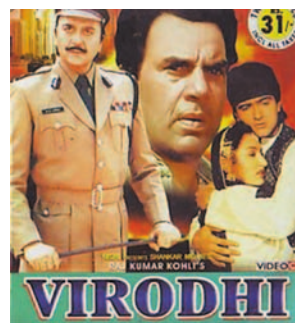
Bollywood TV

09.14 Film: Yeh Raat Phir Ayegi
12.04 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam
12.26 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.46 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.08 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe
13.30 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.52 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.14 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.35 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
15.10 Film: Hum Pyar Tumhi Se
Kar Baitha
Stars: Jugal Hansraj, Tina
Rana, Sachin Khedekar
18.00 Live: Samacher
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.24 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

mercredi 17 juin

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.20 Mag: Origami
10.30 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.15 Local: Itinerer Moris
11.15 Local: Rodrigues
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
13.30 Local: Saver Kil Tirel
14.00 Local: Priorite Sante
14.30 D.Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur
14.41 D.Anime: Le Quiz De Zack
16.03 D.Anime: Chicken Town
16.10 D.Anime: Delilah Et Julius
16.34 D.Anime: Linkers
17.00 Live Press Conference
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Local: Press Conference
21.30 Serial: The Enemy Within
23.15 Serial: Chicago Police Depart
23.56 Local: Le Journal

08.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
09.00 Live Educational Prog...
17.00 Zoom TV Live



20.45 Film: Virodhi
Starring: Dharmendra, Sunil
Dutt, Armaan Kohli
22.45 DDI Live

06.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto
06.26 Mag: Urban Gardens
07.26 Doc: A Question Of Science
08.03 Doc: Horizons S
08.46 Doc: World Stamps
08.49 Mag: Japan Video Topics
09.00 Live Educational Prog...
16.03 Doc: The Secret Of Home...
16.45 Mag: Close Up
17.14 Doc: Goodbye Yellow Sea
18.04 Mag: Motorweek
18.30 Live: News
18.40 Mag: Shift
18.52 Mag: Urban Gardens
19.00 Live: Journal Kreol
19.24 Doc: A Question Of Science
20.02 Programme In Marathi
20.29 Film: Youth Badal
Ghadvaychi
23.06 Mag: Motorweek
23.31 Mag: Urban Gardens
23.37 Doc: Olivia's Garden

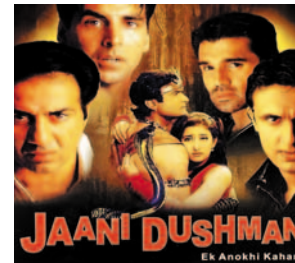
01.37 Film: L'Intouchable Drew
03.00 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.41 Film: The Gabby Douglas...
05.03 Tele: Amanda
05.45 Serial: French Series
06.53 Film: Before You Say I Do
08.22 Mag: Hollywood No Set
09.00 Serial: Line Of Duty
09.59 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.46 Serial: S.W.A.T
11.26 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.00 Film: The Gabby Douglas...
13.30 Tele: Amanda
14.16 Mag: Hollywood On Set
14.45 Film: Before You Say I Do
16.40 Serial: Mission Impossible
18.03 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Series: When Calls The Heart
21.15 Film: Sil Verado
23.22 Tele: Amanda

09.19 Film: Raaz
12.04 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam
12.26 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.46 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
13.08 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe
13.30 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.52 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.14 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.35 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
15.10 Film: Wedding Pullav
Stars: Diganth, Anushka
Ranjan, Sonali Sehgal
18.00 Live: Samacher
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.24 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai
20.05 Kahan Hum Kahan Tum

jeudi 18 juin

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.17 Mag: Origami
10.30 Mag: Zoboomafoo
11.00 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
13.30 Local: Metissages
14.30 D.Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur
14.41 D.Anime: Le Quiz De Zack
15.07 D.Anime: Kuu Kuu Harajuku
15.30 D.Anime: Astrology
15.32 D.Anime: Cam And Leon
16.32 D.Anime: Linkers
17.00 Live Press Conference
17.30 Local: Kal Aaj Aur Kal
18.00 Live: Samachar
20.00 Le Journal Televisé
20.35 Film: Tutak Tutak Tutiya
Star: RJ Balaji, Tamannaah
Bhatia, Prabhu Deva
22.34 Serial: Chicago Police...

08.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
09.00 Live Educational Prog...
17.00 Zoom TV Live
20.00 Karm Phal Data Shani



20.45 Film: Jaani Dushman:
Ek Anokhi Kahani
Starring: Sunny Deol, Akshay
Kumar, Suniel Shetty, Raj Babbar
22.45 DDI Live

06.00 Mag: Motorweek
06.26 Mag: Urban Gardens
07.24 Doc: A Question Of Science
07.30 Doc: Garden Party
08.54 Doc: World Stamps
09.00 Live Educational Prog...
16.03 Doc: Visite Guidee
16.45 Mag: Business Africa
17.24 Mag: Focus On Europe
17.58 Mag: Eco India
18.44 Mag: Shift
19.00 Live: Journal Kreol
19.24 Doc: A Question Of Science
20.02 Film: Eagle Vs. Silver Fox
22.30 Mag: Strictly Street
22.50 Doc: The Emperor Of The
Red Gold
23.33 Mag: Eco India
23.59 Mag: Urban Gardens
00.26 Mag: Sur Mesure
00.19 Mag: Shift

01.03 Film: Sil Verado
03.10 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.51 Film: A Bunch Of Amateurs
05.27 Telenovela: Amanda
06.09 Serial: When Calls The Heart
06.51 Film: L'île Aux Sorciers
09.00 Serial: Line Of Duty
09.59 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
10.36 Serial: S.W.A.T
11.29 Tele: Dulce Amor
12.00 Film: A Bunch Of Amateurs
13.37 Tele: Amanda
14.45 Film: L'île Aux Sorciers
16.43 Serial: Line Of Duty
17.27 Serial: When Calls The Heart
18.08 Tele: Au Nom De L'Amour
18.30 Tele: Mariana Et Scarlett
19.00 Tele: Dulce Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: When Calls The Heart
21.15 Film: S.W.A.T

09.31 Film: Alibaba Marjinaa
12.04 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam
12.26 / 20.11 -
Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala
12.37 / 20.32 Radha Krishna
12.59 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe
13.21 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.43 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.03 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan
14.25 / 22.25 - Ishqbaaz
15.10 Film: Main Krishna A
Hoon
Stars: Juhi Chawla, Paresh
Ganatra, Namit Shah, Hrithik
Roshan, Katrina Kaif
17.00 Live: Samacher
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Piya Albela
19.08 Mere Angne Mein
19.29 Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai

Jeudi 16 juin
- 20.35Stars: RJ Balaji, Tamannaah
Bhatia, Prabhu DevaJeudi 16 juin
- 15.10Stars: Juhi Chawla, Paresh Ganatra, Namit
Shah, Hrithik Roshan, Katrina Kaif

India's goddesses of contagion provide protection in the pandemic

Hindus in India have had a helping hand – several in fact – when it comes to fighting deadly contagions like Covid-19: goddesses co-opted to help contain and kill pestilence.

Collectively known as “Amman,” or the Divine Mother, the goddesses of contagion, They have been deployed in many of the deadly pandemics India has experienced from ancient times until the modern age.



Hindu priests wearing protective gear perform rituals in front of the Hindu goddess Kali.
Debajyoti Chakraborty/NurPhoto via Getty Images

In conducting my fieldwork as a cultural anthropologist who studies religion, I have seen small shrines all over India dedicated to these goddesses of contagion, often in rural, forested areas outside village and town limits.

The goddesses act as “celestial epidemiologists” curing illness.

Blowing hot and cold

One of the first images of a contagion goddess recorded is of the demon-turned-goddess Hariti, carved and worshipped during the deadly Justinian plague of Rome that came to India via trade routes, killing between 25 to 100 million people globally. In the late 19th century, my hometown of Bangalore suffered an epidemic of bubonic plague, which required the services of a contagion goddess. British colonial documents record the repeated waves of illness that stalked the city, and the desperate pleas to a goddess named “Plague Amma.”

In south India, the premier contagion goddess is Mariamman – from the word “Mari” meaning both pox and transformation. In the north of India, she is known as the goddess Sheetala, meaning “the cold one” – a nod to her ability to cool fevers.

The goddesses’ iconography emphasizes their therapeutic healing powers. Sheetala carries a pot of healing water, a broom to sweep away dirt, a branch of the indigenous Neem tree – said to cure skin and breathing disorders – and a jar of ambrosia for eternal life. Mariamman, on the other hand, carries a scimitar with which to smite and decapitate the demons of virulence and illness.

Contagion goddesses are not angelic and gentle, as one might expect caregivers to be. They are hot-tempered, demanding and fiery.

Ritual readiness

Placating the goddesses through blood sacrifice, decorative offerings and self mortification, was – and in some places, still is – a way of preparing for a pandemic in parts of India.

Sometimes, painful piercings, hook swinging and self-flagellation were offered when patients recovered from illnesses, both mental and physical. Or in a sanitized version of blood sacrifice, small silver images of the patient were offered as a prophylactic against illness.

Rituals have often involved variolation. A devotee would be inoculated with infected pus and the goddess invoked through possession to save them. The aim was to trigger a milder form of the illness and gain immunity.

But these local contagion goddesses merged over time with the Divine Mother Shakti, the feminine personification of the energy behind creation. This domesticated the goddesses, making them more acceptable to bourgeois Hindus.

The goddesses’ post-pox lives

With the widespread use of modern antibiotics, retrovirals and vaccines in the mid 20th century, traditional Hindu healing rituals became less relevant. Contagion goddesses were beginning to be forgotten and ignored. But a handful of them developed rich post-pox lives, reinventing themselves for modern afflictions. Some goddesses moved on from focusing on disease alone.

In Bangalore, a city plagued by traffic fatalities, the goddess Mariamman transformed from a cholera goddess into the protector of drivers. Now known as “Traffic Circle Amman,” the goddess’s temple sees cars and trucks line up every day for blessings, before drivers face the deadly maelstrom of city traffic.

Other goddesses came into being to fight new illnesses. On Dec. 1, 1997, World AIDS day, a new goddess named AIDS Amma was created by a science schoolteacher, H.N. Girish, not to cure AIDS but to teach worshippers the prophylactic measures necessary to prevent the disease.

Covid-19 conscripts

During the Covid-19 crisis all the contagion goddesses have been re-conscripted.

The Indian government’s quick action in instituting a stay-at-home lockdown that lasted two months prevented widespread contagion, but it also meant that people weren’t allowed to go to temples to worship the goddesses and ask for intervention. So priests offered special decorations, including garlands of acidic lemons believed to placate the goddesses.

The goddesses have also been recalled in posters by Indian artists that circulate through Facebook. Artist Sandhya Kumari’s rendering of “Coronavirus Mardini” – a hygienically masked Mother India attacking the coronavirus with a trident – recalled Shakti’s killing of evil, a familiar image to all Hindus.

A nationalistic caption was added during reposting – “Mother India will end the Coronavirus, but it is every Indians duty to stay at home and take care of loved ones. Jai India!”

In Kumari’s rendering, the goddess’s iconography is updated for the pandemic. The goddesses’ many gloved hands grasp sanitizer, masks, vaccination needles and other medical equipment. The coronavirus is held in chains, immovable and shorn of its virulence.

While controversies over temples reopening dominates the news, a new deity, crafted from polystyrene and called “Corona Devi” has been installed in a temple dedicated to the pox goddess. Mr Anilan, the priest and single devotee, says he will offer worship for “Corona Warriors” – health care workers, firefighters, and other front line personnel. Here science and faith are not seen as inimical to one another, but as working together, hand-in-glove.

Tulasi Srinivas

Institute for Liberal Arts and Interdisciplinary Studies
Emerson College

L'ICAC a mal démarré il y a quelques années et, depuis, n'a jamais pu rétablir son image d'indépendance. Le mal est fait'

Suite de la page 9

Il faut lever de l'argent et, pour l'Opposition, veiller à ce qu'il soit bien dépensé. Le temps presse.

*** Selon la plupart des experts, le pire de la crise économique mondiale est encore à venir. Il y a donc des jours difficiles devant nous, cela tant que les signes de reprise ne seront pas présents. Avec moins d'argent disponible dans les caisses de l'Etat à des fins d'assistance directe aux chômeurs et autres dans les mois à venir, les choses risquent de se compliquer sur le plan social. Qu'en pensez-vous?**

Oui, je pense sincèrement que le pire est à venir, avec la décroissance mon-diale, la baisse de la demande, les guerres commerciales inévitables et la mise à l'arrêt de l'économie mondiale.

La première vague de la pandémie a été surtout sanitaire, la deuxième économique, la troisième sera sociale, avec beaucoup, beaucoup de problèmes sociaux qui pourraient bien déborder en insatisfaction avec des risques de désordres et un climat social très tendu vers la fin de l'année ou en 2021. Il faut faire très attention, à ne pas se tromper d'enjeux, à jouer à fond la solidarité nationale, à ne laisser personne en bordure de la route.

***Le recours aux fonds de la Banque de Maurice pour financer la relance laisse supposer que le Gouvernement est conscient du prix fort à payer pour l'aide et la générosité des pays amis, semble-t-il?**

Le prix à payer sera, en effet, très fort. Je crains que, fort de tout l'argent disponible (Rs 100 milliards sur la table), le Gouvernement ne soit tenté de mal dépenser, de relâcher la discipline fiscale ou de revenir, année après année, vers la Banque de Maurice pour puiser dans les Rs 300 milliards de réserves nationales qui nous restent. Il faut insister sur une absolue transparence des dépenses publiques.

Quant aux pays amis, nous devrions solliciter leur concours pour réduire au maximum la dette publique de Maurice outre-mer, ce qui libérerait une part non-négligeable des dépenses actuelles au Budget pour la ‘servicing’ de la dette publique (19% du Budget).

*** Je vous disais au début de cet entretien que le Premier ministre a pris les choses en main en ce qui concerne l'affaire St Louis. On ne sait pas s'il existe ou non une équipe dans l'ombre qui veille au grain, mais il est de toute évidence bien entouré. Quelle impression vous fait-il depuis qu'il a assumé les fonctions de Premier ministre en novembre dernier ?**

Il est plus qu'évident que le PM a la situation politique bien en main. Le MSM



lui est totalement acquis. Son aile ex-MMM semble susceptible de le conforter à Gauche, face au MMM, et ce, même si Collendavelloo n'est plus jugé essentiel.

Peut-être même Pravind Jugnauth deviendra-t-il, au fil du temps, moins dépendant de la cuisine et de son cercle passé de conseillers, qui sait ?

On dit bien que la fonction fait l'homme. En tout cas, le PM a définitivement plus d'assurance et de ‘self-confidence’ depuis les élections de novembre 2019.

Pravind Jugnauth, peu à peu, est en train de se transformer et de faire oublier l'efficacité passée de la génération SAJ. Il y a clairement un nouveau ‘think tank’ à l'Hôtel du Gouvernement et on l'a bien vu que ce soit pendant la crise de la Covid-19 ou dans la réalisation du Budget.

*** Si ses adversaires ont eu tort de le sous-estimer, qu'est-ce que votre expérience journalistique vous indique quant à la résilience politique de son gouvernement ?**

Sans être proche du MSM, j'ai toujours dit et écrit que l'Opposition MMM et Travilliste, par leur arrogance coutumière, sous-estimait beaucoup Pravind Jugnauth, et ce, à ses dépens.

Le PM a sans doute des défauts et des faiblesses mais il surprend souvent ses adversaires, développe ses propres stratégies et arrive souvent avec des solutions assez originales. Il est en train de développer une empathie, un rapport avec le peuple que Navin Ramgoolam et Paul Béranger semblent avoir de moins en moins.

En tout cas, qu'on l'apprécie ou non, Pravind Jugnauth est là pour rester !

L'Opposition ne doit donc jamais oublier ceci, face au PM: Il ne faut jamais, au grand jamais sous-estimer celui qui est en face de vous. Vous le faites souvent à vos risques et périls. Beaucoup de guerres ont été perdues par excès d'arrogance.