

MAURITIUS TIMES

• The mark of a great man is one who knows when to set aside the important things in order to accomplish the vital ones. -- Brandon Sanderson

Interview : Rabin Bhujun, Journaliste



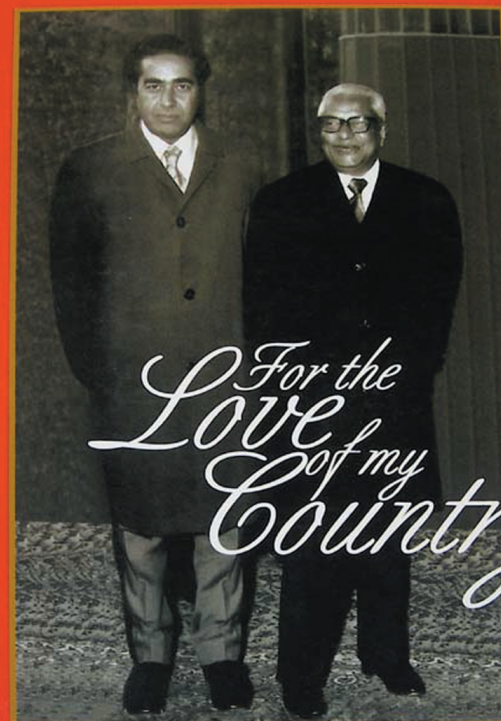
Mouvement 'Pou Nouvo Moris' : 'What's next ?'... "on ne comprend pas trop où tout cela nous mène et comment..."

'Si Jugnauth raisonne, il cherchera à gouverner avec une seule opposition politique permanente et non deux'

☞ Voir Pages 7-8-12

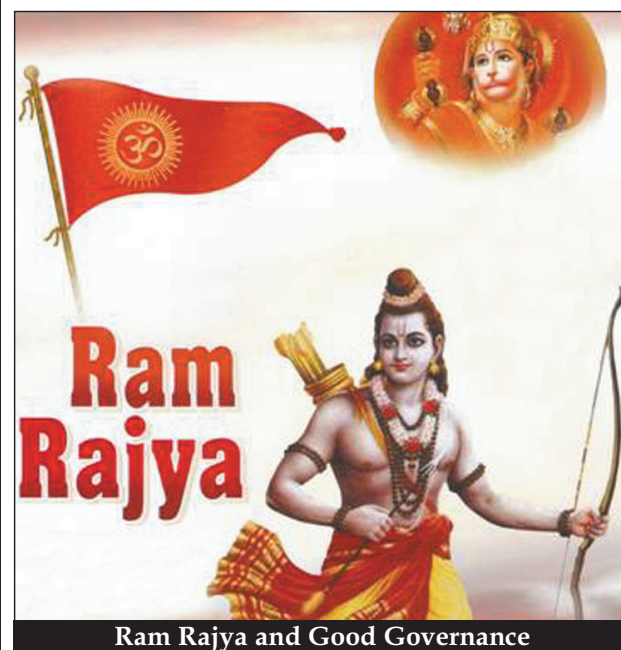
SSB and The 1969 Coalition Government

Sir Satcam BOOLELL Q.C.



By Satyajit Boolell SC ☞ See Page 9-10

The Dharma of Governance



Ram Rajya and Good Governance

A ruler must know when to step aside. S/he must know when to step down. S/he must rule according to Dharma so as to be just and keep the people happy. Most importantly, a ruler must lead by example...

By Dr R Neerunjun Gopee ☞ See Page 3

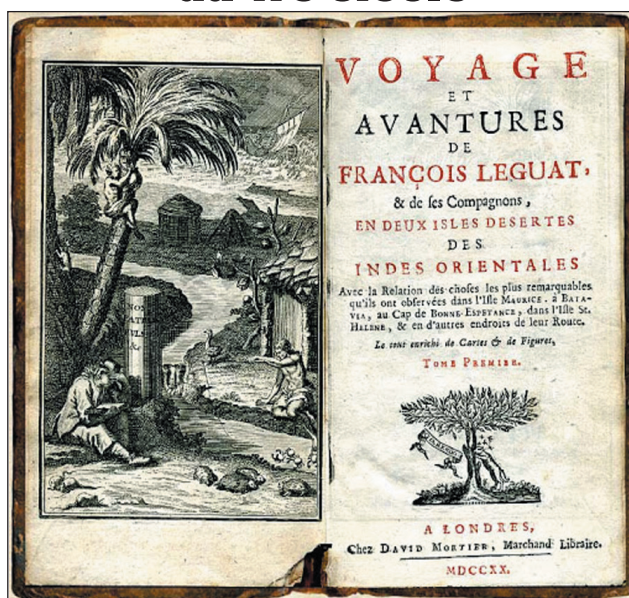


Indian Americans can be an influential voting bloc - despite their small numbers

By Sumit Ganguly ☞ See Page 18

Histoire & Gouvernance

Ile de la Passe, Ilot Vacoas, Ile aux Fouquets : Abus de pouvoir et corruption au 17e siècle



Par Vina Ballgobin ☞ Voir Page 4-10

Assuming and Sharing Responsibility

A second citizens march took place at Mahebourg on Saturday last. While the crowd was sizeable, it was nevertheless about half or perhaps even less than half of the size the organizers had reckoned the first march at Port Louis on 29 August had gathered, namely 100,000 to 123,000. It would be recalled that it was the Wakashio incident that had triggered the first protest, to which were tagged the ongoing or rather chronic issues of alleged corruption, drug trafficking, nepotism, etc. It may also be pointed out that this event was inspired by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement that had started in the USA, which itself was followed by similar movements in a few capital cities around the world to finally be restricted to the USA itself.

The reason for its persistence there has got to do with the very founding of the USA, when Africans were brought in as slaves to work in the cotton fields in the south of the country. Even after their liberation, and despite the success of many of their descendants in the field of sports, music and entertainment, they have faced what is acknowledged as being 'institutionalised racism', with discrimination against them that still exists – such as segregation in buses or schools, targeting by police – the elimination of which is an ongoing struggle. A similar situation of discrimination on racial and colour basis still prevails in some countries in South America, especially where the political systems were non-democratic, and that was part of the reason for the emergence of liberation theology. It faced twin enemies: colour discrimination and political repression, both of which along with corruption, drugs have tended to marginalize sections of their population.

One cannot draw parallels with the local situation post-independence because of the guarantee of equal human rights to all citizens enshrined in the Constitution. That there are some sections of the population which find themselves in situations of difficulty is an undeniable fact, and poverty is not limited to one community, despite facilities

that are extended to all by the government, as was pointed out by Cardinal Piat on the occasion of the Pere Laval pilgrimage. He also drew attention to how their former owners - the plantocracy - had abandoned the slaves to themselves after their liberation, and how Pere Laval came to their rescue by preaching among them and encouraging them to build their own chapels, for example, because the oligarchy – which also controlled the government – would not allow them in the Cathedral.

The government was named by the Cardinal as having the responsibility to provide for the poor and vulnerable. It goes without saying that any government can only do that in an equitable manner, through a legal framework that is common to all and through facilities and benefits that extend to all equally – otherwise other groups could justifiably accuse it of discrimination. However, here is where the responsibility of civil society and of religious bodies come in. As we have seen elsewhere, in formerly apartheid South Africa and in the USA where the Black-White racial polarization is so entrenched, laws will never be sufficient to lift people. These have to be supplemented by the inculcation of virtues and values of sacrifice at the personal and family level, of perseverance, thrift and hard work, because as the saying goes 'Rome was not built in a day'. Social evolution and personal advancement is not only a matter of structural and infrastructural facilities – which is the role of government – but also of cultural and religious teachings.

In other words, uplifting the community is a shared responsibility among several players, amongst which government is only one, the prime player being the individual, inspired by such luminaries as Pere Laval – or his modern representatives. There's many a lesson to retain from the life and struggle of Pere Laval in favour of the poor, and all – politicians and preachers -- would do well to learn therefrom and act according to the roles expected of them respectively.

The Conversation

Americans are renouncing US citizenship in record numbers – but maybe not for the reasons you think

Some 10,000 people are likely to give up their US passport this year, way above average. Are they fleeing COVID-19? Nasty politics? Taxes? None of the above, says an expert on American citizenship.

President Trump hosted a televised naturalization ceremony at the White House, aired during the Republican National Convention.

"You've earned the most prized, treasured, cherished, and priceless possession anywhere in the world," he told the five new United States citizens. "It's called American citizenship."

Prized? Perhaps. But maybe not priceless.

A record number of Americans are renouncing their citizenship. In just the first half of this year, 5,315 Americans gave up their citizenship. That puts the country on track to see a record-breaking 10,000 people renounce US citizenship in 2020. Until a decade ago, fewer than 1,000 Americans per year, on average, chose to renounce their citizenship.

Why are so many people abandoning the United States?

The financial factor

While many liberal Americans threatened to move abroad after Trump's election in 2016, rising renunciations are not directly attributable to any particular election result. The trend began in 2013, midway through the Obama administration. That year about 3,000 Americans suddenly gave up their passports – three times more than usual.

Nor are people fleeing the US because of the coronavirus. The paperwork for the 5,315 renunciations completed so far this year began long before COVID-19 ravaged the country and made Americans global pariahs.

In fact, most Americans giving up their US passport already live abroad and hold another citizenship. In surveys and testimonials, these people say they're dropping their U.S. citizenship because American anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism regulations make it too onerous and expensive to keep.

In 2010, Congress passed the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, which requires foreign financial institutions to report assets held abroad by US citizens



American citizenship is not as coveted as it once was.
iStock /Getty Images Plus

and green card holders. The law, intended to identify the non-US assets of all taxpayers, also ended up strengthening a 1970 anti-money laundering law, the Foreign Bank Account Report, which requires citizens to declare all foreign assets to the U.S. Treasury Department.

Together, these two regulations represent a major burden for low-income and middle-income expatriates. Until 2010, they could basically ignore or remain ignorant of the Foreign Bank Account Report because there was little chance the US government would discover their non-compliance.

They weren't avoiding taxes. Of the roughly 9 million US citizens living abroad, most don't earn enough to owe Uncle Sam a dollar. Only expatriates who make over \$107,600 in foreign income are required to pay US taxes.

According to a 2018 survey by InterNations, an expatriates' networking organization, the education sector is the largest employer of Americans living abroad, at 29%. Few educators make six figures. In the US, the average teacher earns \$60,000. In most other countries, it's even less.

Still, all American expats – even those who've lived abroad for decades, earn no income in the US, and hold no US assets – must submit an annual tax return to the Internal Revenue Service. Now, ever since Congress strengthened anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financial reporting requirements, many have had to hire costly international accounting firms to do their taxes. The consequences of non-compliance are severe: forfeiting up to 50% of all undeclared assets held overseas.

Brett Goodin
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➡ Cont. on page 12

Mauritius Times

Founder/Editor: Beekrumsing Ramlallah - Aug 1954-Sept 2000

Editor-in-chief: M. Ramlallah / Senior Editor: Dr RN Gopee
This epaper has been produced with the assistance of

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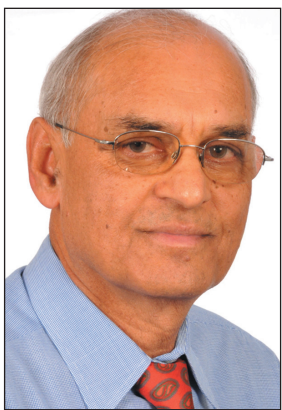
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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

The Dharma of Governance

A ruler must know when to step aside. S/he must know when to step down. S/he must rule according to Dharma so as to be just and keep the people happy. Most importantly, a ruler must lead by example...



Ram Rajya and Good Governance. Photo - myindiamyglory.com

It is a story of long, long ago, going back thousands of years, told and retold countless numbers of times since, and that will continue to be narrated to avid audiences as long as the mountains and the hills exist. In known human history, it is unique, one of its kind with no parallel.

Who can imagine being offered a rich kingdom on a platter and refusing to accept and be crowned as its king, as the rightful successor to the aging incumbent, his father, which was the tradition in that land? And it was to fulfill a duty towards his father, who had pledged to grant two boons to his stepmother at a future time. She felt the moment had come, and put forward her request: that instead of his elder (step)brother her own son should be made king and the former go away for fourteen years to the forest.

“In the Westminsterian parliamentary system, for example, there is no limit to the number of terms a leader can serve. And they are therefore tempted to hold on to power till they are forced out. Here we have from time to time heard about limiting the mandate to two terms, as is the case in America, but no action has followed. It's not as if it's the best of all worlds in America at the moment – which is true practically in all countries for that matter! – but at least there is the possibility of institutional change by law...”

The elder brother duly made his way to the forest with his wife. But when the designated younger brother (who had been away when the decision was made), along with two other stepbrothers went to the forest to try and persuade their elder brother to come back and take his place as king, the latter refused categorically. Instead, he offered the crown to the younger brother who in his turn declined as a mark of respect to his elder brother as well as to abide by the hoary tradition of the land.

Then an adviser who wanted to ingra-

tiate himself vis-à-vis the future king stepped in, and told him that 'we should be guided in all our actions not by any notions of what is right and just, but by what is pleasant and comfortable to us. Man's life is short and it is foolish to forego its pleasures for the sake of such illusions as truth and righteousness.'

The future king listened patiently. Then he replied: 'I am sorry that my father entertained at his court such a false adviser as you. From time immemorial, our sages and scriptures and traditions have declared that Truth is the foundation of the universe, that Truth is God, and that Truth should be followed at all cost. And I hold to that Truth. **Kings and rulers, more than other men, should set the example of following Truth whatever the consequences. For sovereignty is conferred on some men, not for the enjoyment of wealth and power, but for the maintenance and extension of Dharma**, which is eternal and inviolable. I am more concerned with leading men along this way than with ruling the kingdom. I have given my word that I will step aside – and I must and will keep it.'

That elder son was Rama, the Prince of the Kingdom of Kosala, whose capital was Ayodhya. His younger brother Bharat made him accept that he, Bharat, would act as his regent for the kingdom and would place Rama's sandals on the throne until such time as he came back and was crowned as king.

And this is exactly what happened when Rama came back. Under his rule the kingdom prospered and everybody was happy, what is referred to as Ram Rajya - the rule of Rama.

Many leaders often allude to Ram Rajya either when they are campaigning or when they are invited to talk in certain forums. From their track records afterwards, it is evident that they soon forget about it, in other words preach but not prac-

tise the essential lessons that should have been learnt from Ram Rajya. They are:

1. A ruler must know when to step aside.
2. S/he must know when to step down.
3. S/he must choose advisers wisely.
4. S/he must rule according to Dharma so as to be just and keep the people happy.
5. Most importantly, a ruler must lead by example.

It is not necessary, and it will be tedious as well, to cite examples which show that these lessons are followed more in the breach than in the observance. There is also a systemic issue, because in the Westminsterian parliamentary system, for example, there is no limit to the number of terms a leader can serve. And they are therefore tempted to hold on to power till they are forced out. Here we have from time to time heard about limiting the mandate to two terms, as is the case in America, but no action has followed. It's not as if it's the best of all worlds in America at the moment – which is true practically in all countries for that matter! – but at least there is the possibility of institutional change by law.

In certain other countries, aspirants greedy for the permanent enjoyment of wealth and power have tweaked the constitution of their countries in order to stay on, and resistance has been accompanied by violence – such as in West Africa, in Burundi. Currently this is the scenario in Belarus, where the ruler has voted himself in so to speak for the sixth time in 25 years! And in these countries, it is the adversaries and the people who suffer, often brutally.

History is replete with examples of kings and autocrats or dictators who have assassinated or eliminated not only rivals but even their own kith and kin – fathers, brothers, wives, sons.

That is why, as Dr David Frawley aka Vamdev Sastri advocates: 'It is important that a regard for the universal Dharma is brought into both our personal lives and into our societies. Otherwise our civilization may continue to flounder and is unlikely to find peace or harmony with life. This is a matter first of all of upholding *Dharmic* principles and practices in how we live and think. The work begins with each one of us.'

And what is this Dharma? It comes from the Sanskrit root 'dhrī' meaning 'to uphold', and refers to the spiritual, ethical and natural principles that uphold the entire universe which extends from the infinitely small to the infinitely large – microcosm to macrocosm; it is implied that dharma is to be found at all levels. It is the software which maintains the harmony of both the totality and the individual, which are complementary and interdependent.

“Many leaders often allude to Ram Rajya either when they are campaigning or when they are invited to talk in certain forums. From their track records afterwards, it is evident that they soon forget about it, in other words preach but not practise the essential lessons that should have been learnt from Ram Rajya. They are: 1. A ruler must know when to step aside. 2. S/he must know when to step down. 3. S/he must choose advisers wisely. 4. S/he must rule according to Dharma so as to be just and keep the people happy. 5. Most importantly, a ruler must lead by example...”

It is that which upholds, nourishes, sustains, integrates, strengthens, and unites, and thus ensures the overall well-being of the individual and society. It follows, therefore that all that tends towards peace and harmony constitutes Dharma, is *dharmic*. Contrarily, everything that takes one away from peace and harmony – and gives rise to conflict – constitutes *adharma*, is *adharmaic*.

If leaders and rulers were to analyse themselves sincerely and intelligently in this prism, it would not be difficult for them to chart the way ahead for their own good, for the people's and the country's good. And it is never too late to apply the principles of Dharma - indeed it is even more necessary when things are going wrong because of earlier misguided or adharmic decisions.

We desperately are in need of Ram Rajya, rule according to Dharma. But merely saying it is not enough.

Ile de la Passe, Ilot Vacoas, Ile aux Fouquets: Abus de pouvoir et corruption au 17e siècle

Après 52 ans d'indépendance, à l'heure où les jeunes réclament le respect de leur identité nationale, il est temps de mieux connaître l'Histoire



Vina Ballgobin

Au 17e siècle, les Hollandais exploitent le bois d'ébène et les sources alimentaires. On en a retenu le fort de Vieux Grand-Port et l'accident de Pieter Both ; on croit à tort que les Hollandais ont exterminé les dodos. Mais après 52 ans d'indépendance, à l'heure où les jeunes réclament le respect de leur identité nationale, il est temps de mieux connaître l'Histoire.

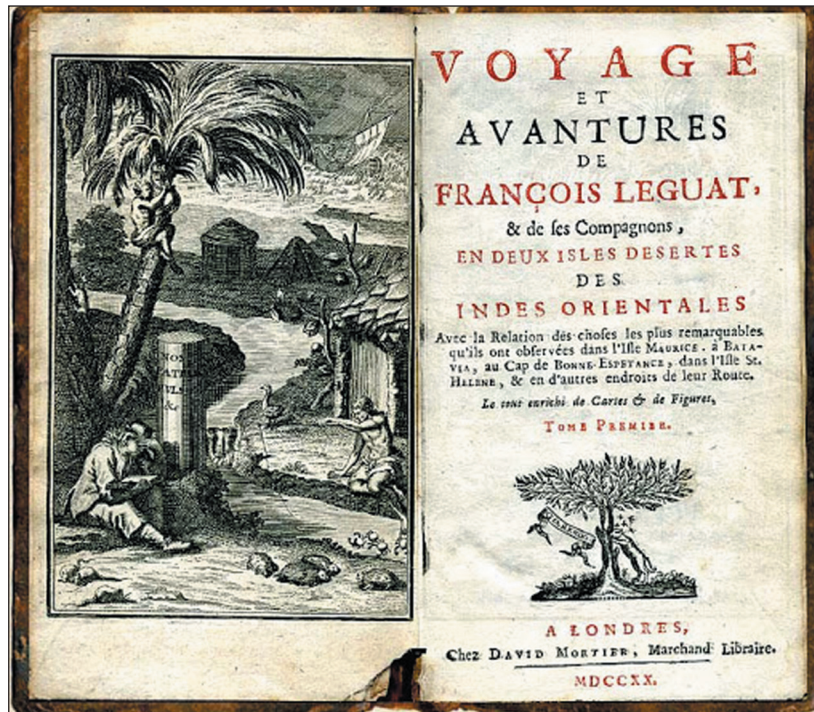
Lorsque l'on visite Grand-Port, de la baie du Chaland à la Pointe du Diable, en passant par Ferney et les Treize Cantons, sans oublier la Rue des Hollandais, et ces trois îles un peu plus loin, il faudrait aussi que résonne dans la mémoire collective l'histoire tragique vécue par François Leguat - issu de la province de Bourgogne en France - et ses dix compagnons à cause de l'*opperhoofd* (commandant) cruel et tyrannique, Rudolf Diodati.

A la fin du 17e siècle, les cachalots et les baleines vivent en grand nombre dans l'océan Indien. Ils rejettent de l'ambre gris (issu des intestins) qui est porté par les courants et déposé sur les plages autour de l'île Maurice. On peut en ramasser assez facilement. Parfois, les morceaux pèsent 25 kilos. La Compagnie néerlandaise des Indes orientales achète l'ambre gris à un prix fixé d'avance. Mais Diodati collabore avec quelques corrompus pour tirer un maximum de bénéfices du business d'ambre gris.

De Amsterdam aux Mascareignes

Le 18 octobre 1685, Louis XIV annonce la révocation de l'édit de Nantes (qui accordait des droits religieux aux Protestants). Les huguenots décident de partir vers d'autres cieux. Ainsi, le 6 août 1689, Leguat arrive en Hollande où M. le Marquis du Quesne préparait deux vaisseaux en vue de se rendre à l'île Bourbon (l'île de la Réunion). Les protestants français, réfugiés en Hollande, sont invités à rejoindre l'équipage gratuitement. Mais le bruit court que le Roi de France envoie lui aussi une équipe dans les Mascareignes. Ainsi du Quesne opte pour l'envoi d'une petite frégate dans l'océan Indien et donne l'ordre de baptiser l'île Bourbon de son nom au cas où son équipage arriverait avant les Français. Au cas contraire, l'équipage devrait se rendre à l'île Rodrigues.

Voilà comment le capitaine Valleau quitte le port le 10



juillet 1690 à bord de la frégate *L'Hirondelle* avec dix voyageurs : Leguat a 52 ans, sept d'entre eux ont entre 20 et 30 ans, deux ont 12 et 18 ans respectivement. Le voyage dure quatre mois et demi jusqu'au Cap de Bonne-Espérance. La monotonie est brisée de temps en temps par quelques pélicans ou des poissons volants. *L'Hirondelle* arrive au Cap le 26 janvier 1691 et embarque de nouveau pour l'île Maurice le 5 février 1691. Commencent alors les mésaventures de François Leguat et de ses compagnons.

De l'île Rodrigues à l'île Maurice

L'île Maurice, à l'époque, est considérée comme un paradis par certains voyageurs. Pour d'autres, c'est l'enfer de l'esclavage et de la pauvreté, et aussi des catastrophes naturelles sans compter la prolifération des insectes et des rats dévastateurs. Ayant reçu des ordres secrets, le capitaine Valleau s'éloigne de cette île et se dirige vers l'île Rodrigues. Le 30 avril 1691, il y dépose des biscuits, des fusils, des outils agricoles, des scies, des haches, des clous, des marteaux et des ciseaux, et aussi des ustensiles de cuisine, des tissus et des filets de pêche. Il invite Leguat et ses compagnons à s'y établir.

Huit compagnons sur les dix débarquent à l'île Rodrigues et construisent une habitation précaire avec le tronc et les feuilles d'un latanier. Les huit compères vivent de la chasse et de la pêche. L'agriculture ne démarre pas car les crabes arrachent les plantes pendant la nuit. Ils bravent aussi deux cyclones dévastateurs. Toutefois, la vie est paisible. Pendant deux ans, aucun d'entre eux ne tombe malade. Leguat observe l'oiseau nommé le Solitaire

qui ne peut ni voler ni courir très rapidement, mais dont la chair est exquise. La femelle est magnifique. Elle porte une sorte de bandeau de veuves au haut du bec. Ses plumes sont impeccablement lissées. Des plumes posées sur les cuisses sont arrondies par le bout en coquilles et y sont fort épaisses.

Au bout d'un an, les compères construisent une barque rudimentaire de 22 pieds de quille, 6 de largeur et 4 de hauteur pour se diriger vers l'île Maurice. Une gomme végétale sert à calfater et une grosse roche d'environ 150 livres remplace l'ancre. Un aviron sert à diriger l'embarcation. Ils quittent l'île Rodrigues le 19 avril 1693. Malheureusement, ils voguent jusqu'aux brisants et la barque coule. Sept d'entre eux bravent les vagues et réussissent à regagner la terre ferme.

Malgré les tentatives de dissuasion de Leguat, les jeunes gens sont motivés par leur envie de rencontrer d'autres êtres humains. Ils construisent une nouvelle embarcation plus solide et se munissent de rames, ils franchissent l'une des passes et arrivent en pleine mer. Ils consomment du lamentein boucané et des melons d'eau. Ils souffrent atrocement du mal de mer. Pendant une tempête, ils sont exténués mais bravent les fortes houles. Les passagers courageux se sentent ballotés entre la vie et la mort. Certains font des prières et trouvent l'énergie nécessaire pour se battre contre le découragement. L'embarcation tangue dangereusement au milieu des orages. Ils ne voient plus rien dans la nuit et redoublent d'efforts pour suivre la girouette. Leguat croit apercevoir le feu de Saint Elme (une boule de feu à l'extrémité du mât).

Finalement, le calme revient avec la lumière du jour. C'est le 29 mai 1693. Oh miracle! Ils voient l'île Maurice devant eux. Ils remontent la Grande Rivière Nord-Ouest et se reposent. Ensuite, ils se dirigent vers Rivière Noire. Enfin, ils voient des Hollandais mais ils sont encore plus émus de voir des vaches. Ils sont bien reçus par leurs hôtes. Après un mois, Diodati est informé de leur présence sur l'île.

De l'île Maurice à l'île de la Passe

Il se trouve qu'un des compagnons de Leguat, Jean de la Haye, a besoin d'argent. Il décide de vendre quelques effets personnels à M. Josse. Ce joaillier achète, entre autres, un morceau d'ambre gris recueilli à l'île Rodrigues. Lorsque Jean apprend par un habitant de l'île que l'ambre gris vaut très cher, il demande réparation à M. Josse qui refuse de l'écouter. Alors Jean cherche justice auprès de Diodati. Mais en vain.

Diodati, lui, sait que Leguat et ses compagnons souhaitent se rendre à Batavia par le prochain vaisseau. Il craint qu'ils ne portent plainte contre lui pour refus de rendre justice, voire pour escroquerie. Le *business* d'ambre gris avec son complice joaillier risque d'éclater au grand jour.

Dès lors, Diodati use de son pouvoir pour diviser le groupe des sept compagnons. Deux d'entre eux rejoignent son camp : Piette Thomas et Robert Anselin. Diodati confisque et brûle leur embarcation, il offre les voiles en cadeau à ses chasseurs. Puis, il retient les cinq prisonniers dans une hutte, il limite leurs déplacements, ils sont mal nourris. Jean Testard et Jacques de la Caze, impatients, décident de s'enfuir pour l'île Bourbon.

* Suite en page 10

« Ile de la Passe, Ilot Vacoas et Ile aux Fouquets racontent l'histoire de huit Français injustement emprisonnés par une figure d'autorité qui adopte une politique partisane pour justifier ses propres pratiques illégales. La corruption n'est pas le propre d'un groupe ethnique en particulier. Puis, ces trois îles clament haut et fort la résilience des prisonniers.

Tout être humain, même un Blanc d'origine européenne, peut être victime d'atrocités. Se battre pour sauvegarder sa dignité et retrouver la liberté, ce n'est pas le propre d'un groupe ethnique en particulier... »



40% revenue rise last quarter and the biggest profit in the retailer's 26-year-history. Photo - wp.technologyreview.com

Amazon to hire 100,000 workers in US this year

Amazon.com Inc on Monday said it is recruiting 100,000 more workers - the fourth hiring spree it has announced for the United States this year - to keep pace with e-commerce demand that jumped during the pandemic.

The world's biggest online retailer said the positions are for full and part-time work in its home country and Canada, and these will include roles at 100 new warehouse and operations sites it is opening this month. The Seattle-based company employed 876,800 people as of June 30, excluding contractors and temporary personnel, reports Reuters.

The news reflects Amazon's constant need for labour to pick, pack and ship products to shoppers' doorsteps, with a 40% revenue rise last quarter and the biggest profit in the retailer's 26-year-history. It is rolling out automation at its newest buildings at the same time, said Alicia Boler Davis, Amazon's vice president of global customer fulfillment.

Earlier this month Amazon announced 33,000 openings for corporate and technology workers. It announced 100,000 and 75,000 new operations jobs in March and April, respectively, in an appeal to people who were laid off by other businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

WHO Head urges rich nations to join vaccine scheme by Friday deadline

Countries should join the World Health Organization's (WHO) COVAX vaccine facility by a Friday deadline to help ensure that immunizations are fairly and efficiently distributed, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Monday.

So far, 92 lower-income nations are seeking assistance via the COVAX facility, part of the WHO's ACT Accelerator to boost development of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics to combat the pandemic. Some 80 higher-income nations have expressed interest, but many must still confirm their intention to join by the end of this week, reports Reuters.

"If people in low- and middle-income countries miss out on vaccines, the virus will continue to kill and the economic recovery globally will be delayed," Tedros told a WHO regional event for Europe that was broadcast virtually.

How India and China bought peace - for now

After months of worsening tensions on their contested Himalayan border, India and China surprised many by announcing that troops are to quickly disengage.

The joint announcement followed a marathon meeting between Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Moscow.

It came despite spiralling rhetoric between the nuclear-armed neighbours, which had suggested increasing hostility.

Earlier in the week, China's state-run Global Times had said Chinese troops would "quickly deal a heavy blow to Indian troops, and they will be all annihilated" if Delhi provoked a war.

India, too, had upped the ante, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh saying "there should be no doubt" about the country's resolve to protect its territorial integrity, reports BBC News.

The statements reflected the reality on the ground: a hostile face-off between troops.

In June they fought a deadly clash in Ladakh's Galwan Valley with clubs and stones.

Both countries still have a huge deployment in the region where they have overlapping territorial claims - and overcoming their differences will not be easy.

'Ice breaker' envoy

So, what made the countries agree to de-escalate, when few expected it to happen?

Many observers, including Michael Kugelman, deputy director at the Wilson Center think-tank, believe that both countries were ready for a confrontation, but they also realised that a war, even a limited one, was not an option.

"It would have been catastrophic for both countries and the wider region. The economic stakes were too high to risk a war," he said.

The fact that Mr Jaishankar served as ambassador in Beijing for many years and is known to share good relations with Chinese diplomats appears to have helped.

It did break the ice, Mr Kugelman says, adding that personal relations often play a role in crucial diplomatic negotiations.

Weather, an unlikely factor, may have also played a role. The higher ridges of the Galwan Valley become inhospitable in winters.

Lieutenant General (retired) Vinod Bhatia, who served in the Indian army, says troops are used to operating in harsh conditions, but "given a chance, both armies would want to avoid that".

Reports also suggest that Indian troops recently occupied some ridges overlooking Chinese posts. Neither country has officially confirmed the reports.

"India may have used this advantage as a bargaining chip," Lt-Gen Bhatia adds.

Both countries also have many other crises to deal with. India's Covid-19 caseload continues to rise at an alarming rate and its economy is suffering. Any armed confrontation would affect the country's ability to overcome these issues.

China, meanwhile, has tensions with the US and a host of other countries to deal with, as well as global condemnation of its controversial security law in Hong Kong.



India has expedited the construction of roads along its border with China. Photo - bbc.com

Officials in Delhi and Beijing were largely restrained in their comments in June and July, even after the Galwan clash that left the Indian soldiers dead.

Mr Kugelman says this was because they didn't want to undo PM Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping's efforts in improving relations. The two have met 18 times since Mr Modi came to power in 2014.

"But it all came undone in recent days, and now it will be interesting to see how China and India sell the announcement to their people," he says.

Yun Sun, director of the China Programme at the Stimson Center think-tank in Washington, says China will find it tricky to reverse the rhetoric because "it can't come across as weak or bullied by India".

Resolving these core issues, including unsettled disputes going back decades, along the LAC that stretches for 3,440km (2,100 miles), will not be resolved in a few days.

"So, it's a good start," Mr Kugelman says. "Talks are better than no talks, but we just have to be cautiously optimistic."

* More on Page 6

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Greece-Turkey tensions: Greece announces military boost

Greece has announced a significant weapons purchase as tensions with neighbouring Turkey rise.

The new arms include 18 French Rafale fighter jets, four frigates and four navy helicopters, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said.

The country also plans to increase the size of its armed forces by 15,000 soldiers over the next five years.

Tensions have flared between Greece and Turkey over gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean, reports BBC News.

Turkey recently sent vessels to conduct seismic research sharpening a dispute with Greece over



Greece's PM Mitsotakis said Greece would acquire 18 French-made Rafale warplanes, four multi-purpose frigates, while also recruiting 15,000 new troops.
Photo - Reuters

territory.

The two Nato allies have competing claims over maritime rights, prompting fears that tensions could escalate further.

The European Union, of which Greece is a member, has previously called for dialogue.

"The time has come to reinforce the armed forces... these initiatives constitute a robust programme that will become a national shield," Mr Mitsotakis said on Saturday.

The spending will also include new anti-tank weapons, navy torpedoes and air force missiles.

France has backed Greece in the dispute with Turkey, and earlier this week President Emma-

nuel Macron stressed the importance of being "clear and firm" with Turkey, which he accused of "unacceptable behaviours".

What's the background?

In July, Turkey announced it was sending a research ship to carry out a drilling survey in waters close to the Greek island of Kastellorizo, a short distance from the coast of south-west Turkey.

In response, Greece carried out naval exercises with a number of EU countries and the United Arab Emirates.

Tensions between the two countries have been strained by several other issues, including the divided island of Cyprus and the crossing of migrants into Greece from Turkey.

Greece also opposed Turkey's recent decision to turn the Hagia Sophia museum in Istanbul back into a mosque. It had been an Orthodox Christian cathedral for centuries.

US, Maldives sign defence cooperation deal



Photo - secureservercdn.net

The US has signed a framework for defence cooperation with the Maldives to deepen engagement in support of maintaining peace and security in the strategic Indian Ocean, the Pentagon has announced, as the Trump administration looks to strengthen alliances in the Indo-Pacific to counter China's growing presence in the region.

The framework for defence and security relationship was signed in Philadelphia on September 10 between Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia Reed Werner and Maldivian Minister of Defence Mariya Didi.

"The framework sets forth both countries' intent to deepen engagement and cooperation in support of maintaining peace and security in the Indian Ocean,

and marks an important step forward in the defence partnership," the Pentagon said, reports Press Trust of India.

The Indo-Pacific is a biogeographic region of Earth's seas, comprising the tropical waters of the Indian Ocean, the western and central Pacific Ocean.

During discussions after signing the agreement, Mariya Didi said the framework will strengthen defence and security cooperation between the two countries, Maldivian portal Sun Online reported.

Mariya Didi said that peace and security in the Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean region is tied to the best interests of both countries.

The Central Indo-Pacific includes the numerous seas and straits connecting the Indian and Pacific oceans.

The resource-rich Indo-Pacific region is where China has been trying to spread its influence. The US has also been pushing for a broader role by India in the strategically important region. China is eyeing to expand its influence in the Indian Ocean region. China has already taken control of Pakistan's strategic Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea.

Michael Bloomberg to spend at least \$100 million to help Joe Biden in Florida



Photo - www.inquisitr.com

Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg is committing at least \$100 million to help Joe Biden's presidential campaign in the crucial battleground state of Florida.

Bloomberg's late-stage infusion of cash reflects Democrats' concerns about the tight race in a state that is a priority for President Donald Trump. A victory for Biden in Florida, the largest of the perennial battleground states, would significantly complicate Trump's path to reaching the 270 Electoral College votes needed to secure a second term.

The billionaire Bloomberg launched

his own campaign for the Democratic nomination late last year amid worries about Biden's strengths. Despite spending \$1 billion on his campaign, Bloomberg struggled and dropped out in March, quickly endorsing Biden, reports India Today.

Bloomberg's new spending is intended to boost Biden before the start of early voting in Florida, which begins on Sept. 24. A Bloomberg adviser said much of the money will go to television and digital advertising.

Compiled by D. Ramlallah

Rabin Bhujun, Journaliste

Mouvement 'Pou Nouvo Moris' : 'What's next?'... on ne comprend pas trop où tout cela nous mène et comment..."



Mauritius Times : S'il y a effectivement un sentiment de ras-le-bol et un désir de changement chez un nombre - pas nécessairement insignifiant - de Mauriciens, comme exprimé sur les réseaux sociaux et dans certains titres de presse et repris par le mouvement 'Pou Nouvo Moris', vous posez-vous toutefois des questions sur les réelles motivations de ce mouvement?

Rabin Bhujun : Ce mouvement est mû par la colère, la frustration et l'inquiétude de dizaines de milliers de Mauriciens face aux événements traumatisants que la nation endure depuis 6 mois et la manière dont le Gouvernement les gère. Dans une certaine mesure aussi, par un climat politique qui est demeuré tendu à la suite des législatives de décembre dernier.

Je m'interroge plutôt sur le devenir du mouvement ; sur sa finalité. Chaque quinzaine, des milliers de personnes

“Aucun changement majeur dans ces partis, surtout le MMM et le PTr, n'interviendra sans la bénédiction, voire le soutien actif du leader. Pour cela, il faudrait que davantage de cadres et de sympathisants de ces partis tiennent un langage sans complaisance face à leur leader respectif, en leur faisant comprendre qu'il est temps de quitter la scène...”

Aucun gouvernement n'apprécie les mouvements populaires qui perturbent l'ordre intérieur. Parfois certains individus opportunistes sèment la zizanie pour apporter encore plus d'instabilité, menaçant une certaine discipline sociale nécessaire pour le bon fonctionnement d'un pays. Pour autant, un gouvernement doit-il ignorer les revendications politiques, sociales et/ou économiques des mouvements pacifiques ? Doivent-ils céder aux demandes pressantes des jeunes, inquiets non seulement pour leur avenir immédiat mais aussi du devenir de la planète elle-même ? Ne relève-t-il pas de la responsabilité des dirigeants au pouvoir de comprendre les besoins et les attentes des manifestants pour repenser leurs propres stratégies politiques ? Rabin Bhujun, journaliste et observateur de la société, nous donne son avis.

peuvent descendre dans les rues sans que leur objectif commun à court et moyen termes ne s'exprime au-delà de quelques slogans simples – aussi percutants soient-ils. Il y a ainsi un flou sur le 'what's next ?'.

Si une réflexion existe à ce sujet, elle n'a pas été clairement partagée et communiquée. Du coup, on ne comprend pas trop où tout cela nous mène et comment. Toutefois, avec une approche et des objectifs plus clairs, le mouvement de colère peut devenir celui de l'espoir et du changement.

* Ce mouvement a rencontré un deuxième succès avec le rassemblement à Mahébourg samedi dernier. Les organisateurs réfléchissent probablement sur l'opportunité d'organiser d'autres manifestations dans un proche avenir. Qu'est-ce que tout cela va donner en fin de compte ?

Le succès du rassemblement de Mahébourg – même s'il était bien moins retentissant que celui du 29 août – indique que le mouvement ne faiblit pas. Dorénavant, le défi est d'éviter que ces manifestations ne deviennent une sorte de bruit de fond auquel on va finir par s'habituer. Cela démobilisera les manifestants eux-mêmes et desservira à terme leur cause.

Si les animateurs du mouvement sont réalistes, ils doivent composer avec le fait que malgré leurs appels à 'B... Li Deor', le Gouvernement entend rester en place, à moins, bien-sûr, qu'un cataclysme politique ne s'abatte sur Pravind Jugnauth lui-même et ne le contraigne ainsi à renoncer à son poste.

Une autre ligne directrice est donc nécessaire ; elle implique un dialogue entre les pouvoirs publics et le mouvement, après la formulation, par celui-ci, de demandes et de propositions claires. Le mouvement produira davantage de résultats tangibles si la pression qu'elle exerce sur le pouvoir devient plus constructive et réfléchie.

* Le principal organisateur du mouvement semble conscient des limites des manifestations de rue car il a déclaré que «tant que les Mauriciens n'obtiennent pas leurs droits, nous irons en Cour». La rue a donc ses limites ?

Le mouvement des *Gilets jaunes* en France et précédemment celui d'*Occupy Wall Street* aux Etats-Unis nous rappellent qu'avoir la mobilisation populaire pour seule stratégie ne produit pas de résultats tangibles tant que ces mouvements ne se structurent pas aussi bien dans leur organisation que dans leurs revendications.

Occupy Wall Street a fini par être la plateforme où on critique tout et n'importe quoi faute d'une stratégie cohérente. Les *Gilets jaunes*, malgré les épisodes trop fréquents de violence dans le sillage de leurs mobilisations, ont néanmoins influé sur la politique d'Emmanuel Macron en retardant certaines réformes après avoir forcé son gouvernement au dialogue.

“Si Jugnauth raisonne, il cherchera à gouverner avec une seule opposition politique permanente et non deux. Si toutefois la classe moyenne sur laquelle le Premier ministre compte pour asseoir son autorité politique commence à être directement affectée par la crise économique, il deviendra alors beaucoup plus difficile de gouverner...”

Mais comparés aux Mauriciens, les Français descendent plus souvent et plus facilement dans la rue. A Maurice, c'est dans une large mesure la classe moyenne qui fait et défait les gouvernements. Et le pouvoir actuel a la nette impression que la classe moyenne n'est pas massivement engagée dans ce mouvement, ce qui explique son attitude actuellement.

* On a noté l'absence des principaux dirigeants politiques du pays à Mahébourg, samedi dernier. C'est sûr qu'ils sont conscients du sentiment qui prévaut chez une partie de la population, surtout celle qui vient l'exprimer publiquement, et en particulier les jeunes. Pensez-vous qu'ils se sentent réellement menacés par le mouvement 'Pou Nouvo Moris' ?

Je ne pense pas qu'ils se sentent menacés car ils ne voient sans doute pas le mouvement comme pouvant se structurer en une force politique et ainsi représenter à court terme une alternative crédible et fonctionnelle au quatuor MSM, Parti travailliste, MMM et PMSD.

Les dirigeants de ces partis *mainstream* ont plutôt jaugé à quel point le sentiment de défiance des manifestants à l'égard du pouvoir s'étend aussi à toutes les formations politiques, y compris à celles de l'opposition ; que de nombreux manifestants jugent comme faisant aussi partie du problème.

☞ Suite en page 8

'Si Jugnauth raisonne, il cherchera à gouverner avec une seule opposition politique permanente et non deux'

☞ Suite de la page 7

Conscients qu'ils ne pourront pas facilement *convertir* les manifestants à leur cause et n'ayant donc rien à gagner vraiment en s'associant au mouvement, les partis traditionnels ont pris leurs distances.

*** Tout comme nos principaux partis de l'opposition, le Gouvernement, sachant bien qu'il n'y a - dans les circonstances actuelles - aucun moyen constitutionnel de le déloger, pourrait aussi choisir de « bide its time » en espérant que ce mouvement s'affaiblira avec le temps. Qu'en pensez-vous ?**

En l'absence d'un mécanisme de type référendum révocatoire (*recall elections*), même si 200,000 Mauriciens descendent dans les rues chaque quinzaine et qu'une pétition réclamant la démission de Jugnauth recueille 250,000 signatures, le chef du Gouvernement n'aura aucune obligation légale de se retirer. J'entends déjà les génies cyniques du Prime Minister's Office nous expliquer que ce ne serait jamais que 15-20% de la population qui vocifèrent.

“ Depuis des années, le MMM est le théâtre d'une bataille entre rats des villes et rats des champs. Cette querelle demande à être tranchée même si cela implique que le MMM se positionnera dorénavant toujours comme un parti national qui a vocation à d'abord réussir de bons résultats dans quelques circonscriptions seulement et ainsi être un partenaire d'appoint de choix d'une grande alliance... ”

Même si Jugnauth a «pris note» du rassemblement du 29 août, l'arrogance de son entourage est remarquable. Au lendemain de la manifestation de Port-Louis, un ministre a jugé l'évènement «insignifiant»; quelques jours plus tard, un *senior advisor* se félicitait de l'action des «great men» au pouvoir après la campagne «I love my government» ridiculisée sur les réseaux sociaux. Ce dimanche, la page Facebook officielle du MSM a jugé utile d'interpeller Bruneau Laurette et les Mauriciens pour n'avoir rien fait lors des inondations meurtrières de 2013.

*** Cette posture est-elle tenable ?**

Ces attitudes peuvent prêter à de graves conséquences. Le cynisme revient à opposer une minorité de mécontents à une majorité de la population, qui soutiendrait tacitement le Gouvernement du fait de son

silence. Si le pouvoir fait cela, il fracturera le pays en deux et risquera d'exacerber les tensions qui existent déjà entre ceux qui estiment être des oubliés [du développement et de la démocratie] et ceux qui pensent qu'ils ont consenti aux sacrifices nécessaires pour bénéficier de leur confort et privilèges actuels. Les deux perspectives se tiennent, le Gouvernement ne peut tenter de privilégier qu'une d'entre elles.

L'arrogance peut conduire à autre chose. Si le mouvement se structure, clarifie ses demandes et souhaite le dialogue mais qu'en face, le Gouvernement continue à se montrer condescendant, il ne faudrait alors pas s'étonner que la colère des manifestants ne finisse par s'exprimer autrement qu'à travers des pancartes et des cris.

*** Toutefois 'fou li dehors', c'est plus facile à dire qu'à faire, non ?**

Si on tient pour acquis que la grande majorité de ceux qui marchent souhaitent un renouvellement politique de fond, se pose alors la question de l'alternance. Malgré le vide politique et le contexte social fécond de l'époque, il a fallu au MMM 13 ans pour prendre le pouvoir en 1982.

En admettant que les législatives n'auront pas lieu avant 2023, *Pou Nouvo Moris* peut-il se structurer en une vraie formation politique, dotée d'instances nationales de décision, de bureaux régionaux dans chaque circonscription, de moyens financiers adéquats et d'un leadership charismatique et pragmatique ?

D'ailleurs, en parlant de leadership, certains acteurs du mouvement ont une idéologie très marquée à gauche. Or, les Mauriciens sont habitués à être dirigés par des gouvernements calés au centre et qui, d'ordinaire, voient dans la communauté des affaires un partenaire et non un adversaire à diaboliser quotidiennement. Prenons la question pratique du financement du mouvement. Acceptera-t-on les contributions des entreprises locales ou d'ONG étrangères ? Sera-t-on à l'abri de soutiens financiers intéressés et *agenda-driven* ?

Il faudra donc qu'un consensus se dessine pour ancrer cet éventuel mouvement politique dans un cadre idéologique. Cela fait, il n'est pas dit que tous ceux qui soutiennent aujourd'hui le programme *fou li deor* soient aussi enthousiastes à mettre une idéologie radicalement nouvelle *andan*. Il est plus facile de s'entendre sur des idées progressistes par rapport à la démocratie et la société que de trouver un consensus sur un *landscaping* radical du paysage économique et social, comme le préconisent certains acteurs du mouvement.

Mais même si le mouvement relève les défis logistiques et idéologiques, il lui restera

encore à braver un obstacle majeur. Notre mode de scrutin First Past the Post et un découpage, tout sauf innocent, des circonscriptions récompensent et induisent certains voting patterns (tendances de vote) qui tendent à produire les résultats comme ceux que nous avons connus en décembre 2019.

*** Entrons-nous toutefois dans une phase d'instabilité politique ?**

Je ne le pense pas. Le Gouvernement sait que légalement, rien ne l'empêche de rester en place. Si la sagesse prime, le Premier ministre essaiera d'instaurer un dialogue avec le mouvement.

Nous ne sommes qu'au début d'un cycle économique extrêmement difficile qui produira beaucoup de *casualties* sociaux et économiques. Si Jugnauth raisonne, il cherchera à gouverner avec une seule opposition politique permanente et non deux.

Si toutefois la classe moyenne sur laquelle le Premier ministre compte pour asseoir son autorité politique commence à être directement affectée par la crise économique, il deviendra alors beaucoup plus difficile de gouverner. Mais nous n'en sommes pas là. Du moins, pas encore !

*** Si le mécontentement de la population mais surtout le mouvement 'Pou Nouvo Moris' représentent un challenge pour le PTr et le MMM, ils sont également une opportunité pour se réinventer. Qu'en pensez-vous ?**

Je pense en effet que *Pou Nouvo Moris* est un bon *wake up call*, surtout pour les partis qui pensaient que ceux mécontents de l'action gouvernemental allaient *de facto* les soutenir.

Commençons par le MMM. Depuis des années, ce parti est le théâtre d'une bataille entre rats des villes et rats des champs. Cette querelle demande à être tranchée même si cela implique que le MMM se positionnera dorénavant toujours comme un parti national qui a vocation à d'abord réussir de bons résultats dans quelques circonscriptions seulement et ainsi être un partenaire d'appoint de choix d'une grande alliance.

Cela pourrait impliquer que Joanna Bérenger succède à son père. Il y aura beaucoup de critiques, justifiées pour certaines, face à cela. Elle est encore verte politiquement, et le MMM sera le dernier grand parti de l'échiquier où le leadership deviendra aussi un legs familial.

Mais Joanna Bérenger est bien vue par de nombreux militants, voire au-delà. Alors *why not* ?

*** Et les Travailleurs ?**

A mon sens toutefois, c'est le PTr qui a le



“ C'est le PTr qui a le plus à gagner d'une profonde remise en question. Il faut toutefois qu'une question fondamentale soit tranchée : Est-ce que le Parti travailliste est plus important que son actuel leader ou l'inverse ? Toute stratégie rouge de «renouvellement» qui impliquerait que Navin Ramgoolam reste comme le candidat au *prime ministership* est voué à un échec électoral... ”

plus à gagner d'une profonde remise en question. Il faut toutefois qu'une question fondamentale soit tranchée : Est-ce que le Parti travailliste est plus important que son actuel leader ou l'inverse ? Toute stratégie rouge de «renouvellement» qui impliquerait que Navin Ramgoolam reste comme le candidat au *prime ministership* est voué à un échec électoral, selon moi.

A moins que ce choix n'intervienne à la suite d'un cataclysme politique frappant personnellement Jugnauth, comme évoqué plus tôt.

Ramgoolam me fait penser à Rama Sithanen : il est devenu une cible facile à descendre. Cela, à l'aide d'un argumentaire connu et sans cesse ressassé ; même si celui-ci repose, en partie, sur une totale hypocrisie. Comme les attaques par rapport aux Rs 220 millions saisies à son domicile en février 2015... alors qu'il n'est certainement pas le seul leader politique local à jongler avec ce genre de fortune.

Le couple Jugnauth, par pur marketing politique, aime se projeter comme étant très spirituel. Je ne sais pas trop ce qu'ils souhaitent dans leurs prières. A chaque fois implorent-ils les divinités pour que Ramgoolam reste à la tête du PTr aux prochaines législatives ? Ce qui serait un gage de succès pour eux.

☞ Suite en page 12



Satyajit Boolell SC

SSB and The 1969 Coalition Government

Politics, Sir Satcam used to say, much to the bemusement of journalists, is the art of the possible.

Yet, who could have thought that, barely a year after the bitter fight over the issue of independence in August 1967 General

Elections, 1969 would see the birth of the Labour Party-PMSD coalition. Whilst it is a great illustration of what Sir Satcam meant, this new coalition was not without its dose of controversy.

Prior to the general election the three political leaders, Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (knighted in June 1965), Sookdeo Bissoondoyal and Razack Mohamed, united on the question of independence during the Lancaster House talks, struck an alliance under the banner of the Independence Party to confront the PMSD. The elections were fought along communal lines, with Hindu votes massively in favour of political independence.

The results confirmed those deep-seated divisions within our Mauritian society. The Independence Party won with 56% of the popular vote. Far from attenuating the political and communal cleavage, these first post-Independence elections had the effect of heightening the divide. Independence was still unpalatable to half of the population fearful of losing their British passport and the privileges that accompanied it.

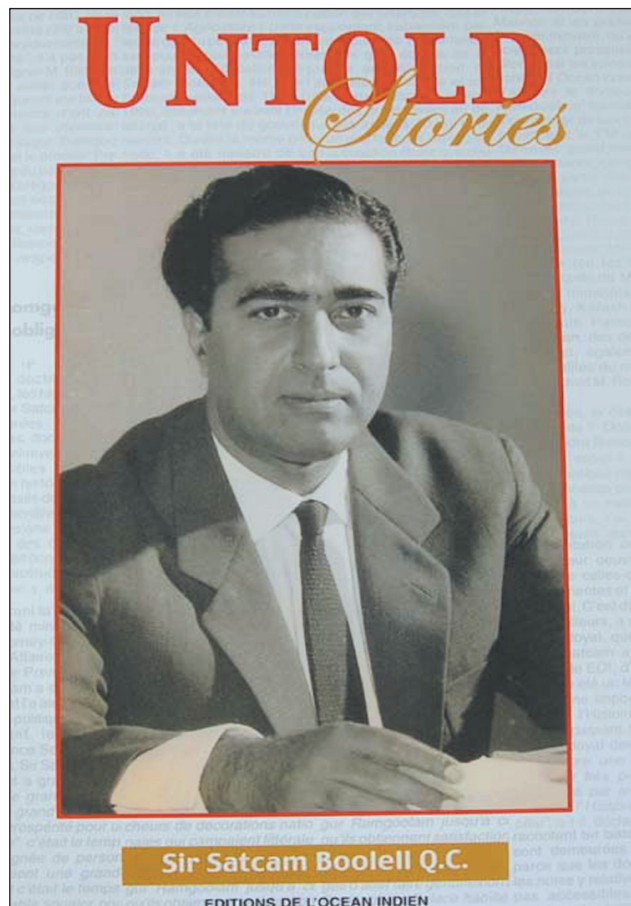
Over and above the social unrest, the newly formed Government also inherited economic distress with Mauritius on a verge of bankruptcy. In his speech in the Legislative Assembly, Gaetan Duval, Leader of the Opposition, quoted the figure 50,000 persons without a job. The sacking of relief workers in October 1967 worsened the situation leading to violent riots on the streets of Port-Louis. Thousands chose to emigrate fearing the escalation of communal tension.

On the 22nd of August 1967, Legislative Assembly met for its first sitting. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, on behalf of the majority, tabled a motion for an independent Mauritius (...)

The motion was opposed by the PMSD, it was a reflection of their disagreement with the verdict of the electorate, invoking amongst others, the fact that Mauritian citizens were about to lose their British Passports and that petitions had been filed regarding electoral frauds.

The preparations for the independence ceremony at Champ de Mars were well on their way, when in January 1968, communal riots between Muslims and creoles flared up in the outskirts of Port-Louis. A state of emergency was declared in the eastern part of Port Louis. A general feeling of gloominess swept over the country. The state of emergency was extended to cover the whole island as the death toll spiralled overnight reaching seventeen. Government took urgent steps to have recourse to a unit of the King Shropshire Infantry which was despatched to Mauritius from Aden.

The emergence of a national consciousness as the Father of the Nation had hoped was clearly not on the cards. The country went wild with rumours that there would be bloodshed if the Union Jack were to be lowered on the 12th of March at Champ de Mars. The flag-raising ceremony however, went ahead without an incident, the riots having been quelled and law and order restored. It was a crowning moment for the Independence movement, as the Union Jack was lowered under the gaze of a stoic Sir John Shaw Rennie, the Governor General.



“ Sir Satcam Boolell's life and political career were celebrated last Friday on the occasion of his 100th birth anniversary. To mark the occasion, a ceremony was held at Octave Wiehe Auditorium, University of Mauritius, with tributes paid by Yvan Martial, Justice Vinod Boolell and Hon Arvin Boolell. This article by Satyajit Boolell is drawn from a publication containing personal tributes by those who had known SSB from close, which was also launched on that occasion.

In his book, 'Untold Stories', Sir Satcam described the mood of those who voted against independence as "one of despondency but not revolt". Socially, he said the country was drifting apart: "In the offices, work sites, schools and even in the police force the mood was one of mutual distrust...". It was at this critical juncture he received the visit of late Sir Andre Nairac QC, a brilliant lawyer with a rich record of service to his country. He wrote:

"Sir Andre had been a member of the Legislative Council for many years and a Minister in the initial stage of the ministerial system, preceding independence. As was his wont, he came straight to the point. He was against Independence, he said and did everything in his power to prevent it. Now that the people had given their verdict he bowed to it. He was however much concerned about the rift in our society. Something should be done to close it. He was prepared to talk to Gaetan Duval and meet Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam. I was in full agreement with him and promised my cooperation. I had no doubt that as one of the advisers of the PMSD, he had the green light from Duval before seeing me. He also lobbied other leading members of the government. His visit was well timed because the revocation of the 'IFB' had left a few vacancies still unfilled. Sir Andre was soon followed by Gaetan Duval himself who used the same language to me".

Sir Seewoosagur was receptive to the idea and felt that national reconciliation had become imperative and from that moment onwards things moved swiftly. At the municipal elections a political deal was struck between the two parties agreeing not to oppose each other. Quatre Bornes and Vacoas Phoenix went to Labour and the remaining municipalities which included Port Louis went to the PMSD amidst a low turn out at the polls. At the time, Sookdeo Bissoondoyal was no longer in government; he had been revoked by Sir Seewoosagur for lack of ministerial responsibility. The cracks within government were already apparent.

It was finally left to Michel Debré, Reunion's representative in the French National Assembly, an envoy of Quai d'Orsay, to seal the coalition. Debré, Sir Satcam wrote "performed the act with the art of a caring elder brother when he took the hand of Duval and placed it into that of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam as if telling the latter not to allow the young boy to stray outside the family circle". The coalition was announced on the 2nd of December but prior to formalising the alliance, Sir Seewoosagur presented a motion for the amendment of the Constitution to extend the life of Parliament by four years to last up to July 30 1976. Although Sir Satcam was not privy to the decision to postpone the general election, he made a strong case for the coalition stating that it was a necessity for economic development and national unity. In his address to Parliament he stated:

" [...] we are at a point where some bold decisions have to be taken. No government worthy of its name would like to surrender power or to share its power with any opposition party but when we consider the economic situation of this country and the social climate we feel as good patriots that at some time or other some concession, some give and take must take place especially when we have an opposition in this country which was divided on one single issue which was that of independence and which was in complete agreement on all other issues, we thought that it would be in the interest of the country to associate them with the Government. So it is in that spirit that I think it is the duty of one and all in this House to give a chance to a Government which can bring some social stability, some political stability and at the same time create a climate which will inspire confidence to eventual investors both local and foreign. So, Sir if that is the expected result which is to follow from a coalition of the two largest parties in this country, I do not think any price is too much for us to pay".

Not a word was said on whether the amendments were contrary to the democratic principles as declared under Section 1 of the Constitution save that: *"[...] we have talked of democracy and we hope now after the formation of a National Government, we will move towards meritocracy and this is more important for the future of this country. We must talk now in terms of national interests. ... for six or seven years in front of us we will forget about politics and devote ourselves towards the reconstruction of the economy and the country, if this can be achieved within two or three years I believe that we would have done a great service to this country and it is then that we will be judged by future generations".*

In December 1983 however during the debates on the Constitution of Mauritius (amendment no 2) Bill to provide for the accession of Mauritius to the status of the Republic, Sir Satcam responded to criticisms of the Leader of the Opposition who had described the extended mandate and postponement of elections as a dark moment of our history. In a stern reply to the Leader of the Opposition and with the 'franc-parler' which he was known for, Sir Satcam stated:

* Contd on page 10

SSB and The 1969 Coalition Government

* Contd from page 9

"[...] my Friend the leader of Opposition, did not know in what circumstances the amendment to the Constitution took place and why we had to postpone the elections. No country can be governed if half of the population is against it. On a fundamental issue, it was a division not along ideological or political lines: it was a division along communal or racial lines. And it was felt necessary then to reconcile that large section of the population to the idea of independence to have a coalition and to forget elections for some time, because elections always generate certain feelings and one of the feelings which is easily generated is the communal feeling. It is normal. I, as a Hindu, will appeal to the Hindu electorate because I have a better chance of getting their votes than going to an electorate to which I do not belong. Just as the Leader of the Opposition will always stand at Quatre Bornes; my Friend, the last speaker, will stand at Stanley; and my Friends Hons Bashir Khodabux and Cassam Uteem will stand at Plaine Verte".

The political vacuum created by the coalition of the two main political parties saw the emergence of a left wing party, the MMM, which adopted a nationalistic approach alive to the urban and rural divide. It campaigned fiercely against the postponement of elections which it qualified as a violation of the Constitution and undemocratic. The amendment to section 57 which fixes the duration of a parliament to five years was intended to create a fiction "as if Parliament were constituted on the 31st July 1971 instead of 12 March 1968".

In 1973, Paul Berenger leader of the MMM challenged the constitutionality of the amendments, in an application to the Supreme Court. It was turned down, after the Supreme Court held: "When the Constitution itself permits the alteration of S. 57, which deals with the prorogation and dissolution of Parliament, and lays down the procedure for such alteration, we do not understand how it can be said that the alteration, when made, is contrary to the declaration contained in S. 1 of the Constitution". Today an amendment which impinges on the notion of democracy as obtained in Mauritius cannot be effected unless approved by a referendum of three -quarters of the electorate followed by a final voting of all members of the National Assembly. It followed from an amendment effected in 1982 elevating section 1 of the Constitution which provides that "Mauritius shall be a sovereign democratic State" to a "super-entrenched" status.

My above description of the 1969 coalition government is based on the account given by Sir Satcam in 'Untold Stories' and from his speeches, as reported in Hansard. Obviously, it is his interpretation of the events then, as experienced by him. The coalition did not last long nor did it bring the stability that was hoped for. There were as Sir Satcam described "frequent skirmishes between Labour and PMSD ministers in the cabinet until the inevitable breaking point was reached on 17th December 1973". Though the economic zone was a great boost, Sir Satcam considered that "the petrol crisis of the seventies had set the clock back for a decade. It was the sugar protocol signed in 1975 that came to the rescue of Government".

He agreed nevertheless "that coalition bridged the

great national divide "independence was an acceptable fact; sovereignty of the nation became an object of great pride and the dormant patriotism of the Mauritians was aroused". Whether we agree or not with his account of events, history will be the best judge. There are nevertheless positive lessons to be drawn from the coalition government of 1969, and mistakes to be avoided.

Sir Satcam leaves behind an important legacy especially in the context of Mauritian politics. His prophetic message rings true today. Politics, he said, is the art of reconciling competing interests, for it is in adversity that mutual obligations are bonded and once this occurs, strive for a win-win and move ahead. Throughout his life, he preached national unity. It was his love for people generally. He enjoyed the company of the older generations. He would embark on long conversations with them, sitting in the shade of the poplar tree at Petit Paquet. Perhaps he was a romantic of old times, possibly a remnant nostalgia of having lost his father at a tender age.

As we mark his hundredth birth anniversary, I can see a smile on his face. Who could have thought today, that there would be an *entente* between two arch-rivals, the PMSD and the MMM just like in 1969 when the Labour Party and PMSD were bitter opponents?

Satyajit Boolell SC
20 August 2020

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

Ile de la Passe, Ilot Vacoas, Ile aux Fouquets: Abus de pouvoir et corruption au 17e siècle

* Suite de la page 4

Jean Namur, un soldat et espion de Diodati, informe son supérieur de ce qui se trame. Le 15 janvier 1694, Diodati les interroge. Les cinq compères sont jetés au cachot et leurs pieds sont mis aux stombs (deux pièces de bois assez grosses, l'une s'abaissant sur l'autre, avec un trou au milieu pour y insérer les pieds des prisonniers). Ils sont couchés sur le dos, la tête plus basse que les pieds. Les deux instigateurs, eux, doivent porter 30 livres de fer de plus aux pieds.

Quelques jours plus tard, Diodati confisque leurs effets personnels et ils sont transportés sur l'île aux Vaquois, aride et étroit, rempli de trous et de roches pointues, à deux pas des brisants. Ils vivent dans une cabane délabrée, entourée de la mer à marée haute. Ainsi, ils vivent dans la plus grande détresse pendant trois ans. Les repas sont envoyés chaque semaine, puis chaque quinzaine et ensuite, plus rarement. L'eau est insalubre. Les prisonniers demandent des filets pour la pêche et des récipients pour recueillir l'eau de la pluie. Diodati les leur refuse. Leguat et deux autres tombent gravement malades. Ils ne reçoivent aucun soin.

Le 15 mars 1694, les prisonniers voient un navire hollandais *La Persévérance*. Ils décident de construire un radeau avec des herbes de mer et ils y attachent deux barriques aux extrémités. Jean de la Haye et Jacques Benelle effectuent la traversée jusqu'à l'île Maurice en 12 heures. Ils rencontrent les officiers à la loge (le demeure) de Diodati et font une plainte : mauvais



traitement reçu, déportation injuste et sans fondement. Les officiers se rendent sur l'île aux Vaquois. Alors, ils décident d'informer les autorités hollandaises à propos de cette barbarie et de l'état abominable des prisonniers: Diodati aurait dû les expédier à Batavia ou au Cap pour un procès en bonne et due forme. La Caze nage jusqu'à *La Persévérance* dans une ultime tentative de fuite mais les officiers le renvoient à sa prison.

Le 9 février 1695, lors d'un cyclone, la hutte des prisonniers est emportée par des vents violents. Ils se cachent dans des trous naturels remplis d'eau et légèrement protégés des vents. Ils sont transis de froid, malades, et affamés. Tantôt, ils sont empoisonnés par certains poissons, tantôt ils souffrent de dysenterie et d'autres maladies... Diodati reste sans pitié.

La vie suit son cours. Les prisonniers fabriquent des chapeaux en feuilles de lataniers pour se protéger du soleil. Lors du

ravitaillement, les soldats les troquent contre de la viande ou de l'eau. Les prisonniers apprennent à pêcher pendant la marée basse et repèrent les cachettes des poissons. De temps en temps, ils passent sur les deux autres îles : l'île aux Fouquets et l'île de la Passe. Ils capturent des oiseaux et se nourrissent de leurs œufs. Une fois seulement, ils capturent une tortue de mer avec 150 œufs. De leur prison, ils observent le fort incendié. Ils tremblent attention que Diodati ne les accuse à tort de nouveau. Mais les coupables, deux esclaves femmes sont perdues et deux esclaves hommes sont battus sur les ordres du monstrueux Diodati.

De l'île de la Passe à Amsterdam

Le 10 janvier 1696, Testard construit seul un radeau et s'enfuit contre la volonté de ses amis. Plus personne ne le reverra. La Caze construit aussi un radeau, il se cache dans les bois à l'île Maurice. Après une semaine, il frappe à la porte d'un habitant qui le livre aux

soldats. Le 6 septembre 1696, grâce à l'information circulée par les officiers de *La Persévérance*, les prisonniers sont embarqués sur le vaisseau *Le Suraag*. Ils débarquent à Batavia mais le temps passe sans aucun procès pour les libérer du joug de Diodati. Ils se rendent alors en Hollande huit ans après leur départ initial. Ils ne sont plus que trois : Leguat, La Caze et Benelle. Leguat s'installe en Grande Bretagne jusqu'à sa mort en 1735.

Pour conclure

D'abord, ces trois îles racontent l'histoire de huit Français injustement emprisonnés par une figure d'autorité qui adopte une politique partisane pour justifier ses propres pratiques illégales. La corruption n'est pas le propre d'un groupe ethnique en particulier...

Puis, ces trois îles clament haut et fort la résilience des prisonniers. Tout être humain, même un Blanc d'origine européenne, peut être victime d'atrocités. Se battre pour sauvegarder sa dignité et retrouver la liberté, ce n'est pas le propre d'un groupe ethnique en particulier...

Enfin, les officiers de *La Persévérance* aident les prisonniers après leur départ de l'île Maurice. Cela s'appelle «humanité» ou la capacité de lutter contre toute forme d'injustice même si l'on n'est pas directement concerné. Voilà une valeur fondamentale que plusieurs membres de l'élite politique et académique de la République de Maurice contemporaine, de tous les groupes ethniques, font semblant d'avoir oublié...

Vina Ballgobin

Second Generation Mauritians in Britain



Kishore Teelanah

This is a continuation of success stories of children born of Mauritian parents in the UK. These children really make their parents proud by being successful both academically and in their personal development and culture. The first generation Mauritians have passed on their positive influence which they inherited from their parents and families in Mauritius. This is a story of two young men which will make any family proud and happy to be associated with them.

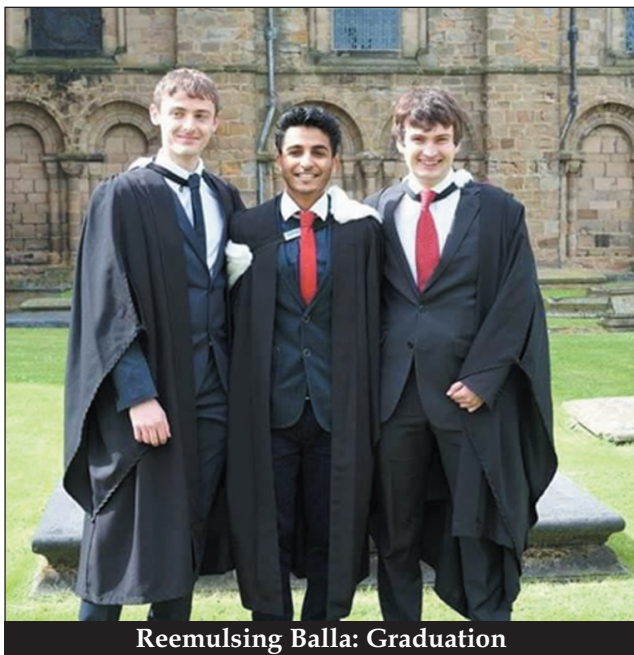
Reemulsing (Reemul) Balla

Reemul is a 26-year old Londoner who is an aspiring freelance journalist. He is a friendly and humble Anglo-Mauritian. After gaining a clutch

of 4 A-Levels from a Grammar School, he completed a BA degree in History and French at Durham University. Reemul's ambition pushed him to do an MA in Film Studies which led him to pursue his ambition further. Currently Reemul is completing a fast-track journalism course. He is one of the few Mauritians who can speak fluent Creole and French as well as being proud of following his parents' footsteps in their Hindu culture.

Reemul worked as a Research Associate at Guidepoint Global London where he was responsible for recruitment of jobs for CEOs, CFOs, CTOs, MDs and doctors given his bilingual expertise. Reemul has made a debut in his first article for a broadsheet paper, The Guardian (Australia)

His experience took him to India as part of UNESCO New Delhi as an Intern in Documentation and Public Information. He had responsibility for preparing press releases, articles and social media campaigns for UNESCO Events and workshops. Reemul was involved in workshops such as World Book Fair 2018, Global Education Monitoring Report and International Tolerance Day.



Reemulsing Balla: Graduation

Reemul was also a Volunteer Writer for GivethemSport.com and Threeandin.com in 2016-17 and wrote about football and match reports for both websites. Soon afterwards, he took up the responsibility of Advertising and Digital Solutions intern. He participated and reported in B2B strategy meetings concerning revamping well-known FMGC websites.

Reemul's bilingual skill landed him the job of a Language Assistant at Lycee Sud des Landes, Aquitaine in France where he taught English and French at a secondary school. He was also involved in debates, media analysis and vocabulary for BAC examinations. He

had position of responsibility and creative work as Radio Host (Rare FM & Purple Radio Durham) when he was an undergraduate in Durham. He was the founder and President of the Durham University French Speaker's Society. He also extended his experience to founding and running the Durham Indian Society. He became a writer for Durham Palatinate and Collingwood Woodward in culture, film and sport. He has continued to-date to be Blog writer on Medium App.

Reemulsing is full of life and has other interests too. He still writes on travel and culture blogs, script writing and comedy sketches. His recent success started with the Guardian Australia with a story about Millie Chandarana's success in her football ambition. Reemul also wrote a report in Brent Gazette about the Iraqi Welfare Association delivering food to vulnerable people in Brent, London during the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Yash Sohodeb

Yash (Bansi) Sohodeb

Yash Sohodeb is a 30-year old talented musician, super producer, song writer, DJ and artist. After he completed his GCE A- Level in Media and Arts, he pursued his degree in Music and Arts from Middlesex University in 2011. Since then, Yash has produced a sonically advanced pallet spanning multiple genres such as Hip Hop, R&B, Pop and Electronic music. His limitless ability to produce within specific genres of those musical categories combination with provision of unique Stikmatic sound makes his talents stand out and be in demand.

In 2018, Yash signed for a publishing deal with Stellar Songs/Sony under the expert eyes of Tim & Danny who are well-known for breaking Sam Smith, Emile Sande, Charlie XCX and Naughty Boy. Yash is also part of a trio act called 'Mad Teeth' alongside Jessica Agombar and David Stewart and had recently signed a worldwide deal with RSA/Sony Music. His deal was endorsed by David Dollymore who said 'this will be the next biggest thing to happen in dance music globally'.

Currently, Yash is working on his debut solo album which is best

described as electric infusion of Grime, Garage and dance of Indo-Mauritian culture of the 1990s upbringing in London. He is also expecting to have future releases next year with Mad Teeth, Gashi, Banx, Ranx, TKayMaidza, Rocky NTI, Avelino, Lauv, Bas and Travis Scott.

Furthermore, Yash has toured the UAE, USA and Europe. He has also played at many large festivals

including: Tomorrowland, Gibraltar Monkeys Rocks, Paris Fashion Week and Abu Dabi F1. Yash has also founded his own independent record label: SAME PEOPLES. He has been working as an advocate for MIND Mental Health Charity, bringing awareness of mental health in the music and the entertainment business. He is also a keen fundraiser for United Friends and Families and campaigns for the plight of and injustice to Blacks and Asians including police brutality.

Stig Abel, the editor and publisher of the Times Literary Supplement, former LBC presenter and BBC reporter and an avid writer, said: "Immigrant families tend to have a comprehensive narrative arc from poverty to success, a story of hard work and striving against all odds. Education is seen as a life-changing and story-changing". I am a witness to this ever since I have been in the UK (1974) and this will continue for a long time to come. Among the immigrants, Mauritian families have made sure that their offspring do even better in education and science, with higher than average literacy.

Kishore Teelanah has been in the UK for over 45 years and currently works in the Education Sector as Industry Placement Coordinator. He also promotes STEM subjects across schools, colleges and in higher education settings and is a mentor to final year Bioscience degree students at Kingston University





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1956-2020

'Je ne pense pas que nos principaux dirigeants politiques se sentent menacés car ils ne voient sans doute pas le mouvement comme pouvant se structurer en une force politique'

☞ Suite de la page 8

* On ne connaît pas à ce stade l'impact de l'action commune du PTR, du MMM et du PMSD sur le plan politique. Avec l'arrivée du mouvement de Bruneau Laurette, y aura-t-il un effet sur ce rassemblement des partis de l'opposition ?

Cette entente de l'opposition est une équation à trois variables, difficile à solutionner. Nous n'en sommes qu'aux fiançailles de raison et non de passion. Le mariage – électoral celui-là – s'annonce autrement plus compliqué. Même si les intérêts des trois partis s'alignent pour les municipales, prévues d'ici juin 2021, une alliance à trois pour les législatives s'annonce difficile à conclure et à gérer.

Prenons trois exemples de *deal breakers*:

- Bérenger et Duval accepteront-ils que Ramgoolam occupe le poste de chef du gouvernement durant tout un mandat ?
- La base du MMM et du PMSD respectivement qui se vouent une haine quasi atavique, arriveront-ils à travailler



« Chaque quinzaine, des milliers de personnes peuvent descendre dans les rues sans que leur objectif commun à court et moyen termes ne s'exprime au-delà de quelques slogans simples – aussi percutants soient-ils. Il y a ainsi un flou sur le 'what's next?'... on ne comprend pas trop où tout cela nous mène et comment. ... »

ensemble dans des circonscriptions où ils s'affrontent depuis 50 ans?

- Enfin, quid des *token positions*? Bérenger sera numéro 2, Duval numéro 3, mais quid de Reza Uteem? Shakeel Mohamed, lui, obtiendra ce 4e rang synonyme de *vice primeministership*?

* En parlant du PTR et du MMM, vous avez dû constater que rien n'a changé au niveau de ces partis, ce qui pourrait ouvrir la voie libre à l'émergence des mouvements opportunistes, n'est-ce pas?

Notre système de scrutin continuera malheureusement à privilégier les quatre principaux partis et les alliances qu'ils formeront. Mais de nombreux Mauriciens qui

marchent *Pou Nouvo Maurice*, même s'ils ont voté pour ces partis dans le passé, sont profondément désillusionnés par leur immobilisme et pourraient, en effet, céder à la tentation du désespoir en soutenant les regroupements auxquels vous faites allusion.

C'est pourquoi il est crucial, qu'en même temps que le mouvement se structure, les principaux dirigeants de l'opposition fassent également leur introspection et se rendent compte de leurs faiblesses. Aucun changement majeur dans ces partis, surtout le MMM et le PTR, n'interviendra sans la bénédiction, voire le soutien actif du leader. Pour cela, il faudrait que davantage de cadres et de sympathisants de ces partis tiennent un langage sans complaisance

face à leur leader respectif, en leur faisant comprendre qu'il est temps de quitter la scène.

Après deux échecs électoraux cuisants – il n'a même pas été personnellement élu – je ne comprends pas pourquoi Ramgoolam n'annonce pas qu'il se retire ; et que, par exemple, il passera l'année qui vient à aider à faire émerger une poignée de candidats à sa succession ; que lors d'une grande assemblée des Travailleurs, à la même époque, l'an prochain, les membres choisiront alors le prochain leader.

Ce nouveau chef des rouges, aidé d'un mentor bienveillant en la personne de Ramgoolam, pourra alors passer les deux à trois années suivantes à consolider son équipe et sa base tout en peaufinant et testant les idées et propositions qui seront présentées devant l'électorat lors des prochaines législatives.

Pour que cela se produise, il faudra que les leaders aient la sagesse d'analyser la situation et l'avenir de leur parti par-delà de leur petite personne. En sont-ils capables? Je ne le crois pas.

* Cont. from page 2

Unbecoming American

"Becoming American" is a favorite topic in US literature, popular history, and the media. There are entire sections of university libraries devoted to books and studies on the topic. My first book, about how ordinary American citizens shaped early American national identity, will soon be among them.

However, there is very little written about the reverse: unbecoming American.

Renouncing U.S. citizenship is pretty complicated and costly. It involves one or two interviews with a consular officer, a \$2,350 administrative fee – very expensive compared to other wealthy countries – and potential audit of the citizen's last five years of U.S. tax returns.

The whole process takes about a year. Once you have successfully unbecome American, you need to submit a tax return to the IRS the year after renouncing. After that, your ties to the U.S. government are severed.

The formal, bureaucratic process of unbecoming American resembles the process of becoming American. By the time those five new citizens were naturalized at August's virtual Republican Convention, they had been U.S. residents for at least five years and spent the past 12 to 18 months filing paperwork, scanning their fingerprints, and studying for a civics test.

Early in American history, though, citizenship was clumsy, informal, and changeable.

Colonists during the Revolutionary War often switched their allegiance, declaring themselves Patriots or Loyalists, depending on personal circumstances or which army controlled their town at the time, according to historian Donald

Americans are renouncing US citizenship in record numbers – but maybe not for the reasons you think

F. Johnson in his forthcoming book *Occupied America*.

National identity was still in flux after the war. It was often unclear who was actually a citizen. Sailors, in particular, were frequently challenged on their status because many looked and sounded indistinguishable from the British when at sea or in foreign ports, wrote Nathan Perl-Rosenthal in his 2015 book *Citizen Sailors*.

One of the sailors I researched for my book, James L. Cathcart, regularly changed national allegiances to improve his fortunes. By my count, he switched identities or allegiances eight times by the time he turned 29, in 1796.

Born in Ireland, Cathcart fought for both sides in the American Revolution. Then when captured by Algerian corsairs in 1785, he spent a decade in captivity wavering between calling himself British or American, depending upon which offered the best hope of ransom. During captivity in Algiers he was also made a senior bureaucrat, advising and representing the interests of the ruler of 18th-century Algiers.

Goodbye, America

The confusion over identifying American sailors eventually inspired the documentation and bureaucracy that would ultimately be used to determine U.S. citizenship for all.

[Deep knowledge, daily. Sign up for The Conversation's newsletter.]

As this history shows, the notion of American citizenship as the "most prized, treasured, cherished, and priceless possession" is a relatively recent invention. And it may not be permanent.

With 10,000 U.S. passports expected to be dumped this year and another 23% of American expats – about 2 million people – saying they are "seriously considering" renouncing citizenship, unbecoming American is starting to sound as American as apple pie.

Brett Goodin, New York University

Ushna Vaari Gurukulam

Eau Bouillie, Nouvelle Découverte

Members of the Ushana Vaari Gurukulam are kindly invited to attend the Annual General Assembly of the Association which will be held on Sunday 27 September 2020 at the seat of Ushna Vaari Gurukulam, Royal Road, Eau Bouillie Nouvelle Découverte at 03hrs30.

AGENDA:

1. Reading and approval of minutes of the last General Meeting
2. President's report
3. Treasurer's report
4. AOB.

Secretary

11 September 2020

In a light vein

Dylan was practicing his golf swing in his front yard when he swung a little too hard and sent the ball through his neighbour's window.

Dylan ran over and rang the doorbell three times. After no one answered for a few minutes, he opened the door to see broken glass everywhere, a lamp lying on the ground, and a huge fat Arabian man wearing a turban sitting on the couch.

Dylan asked, "Who are you?" The fat man replied, "I am a genie you have freed from that lamp."

Dylan questioned, "Oh man, do I get three wishes?"

The genie replied, "Since you freed me by accident you only get two and I get one."

Dylan thought about it and realized what he wanted, "I want to be the best golfer ever."

The surprised genie said, "You sure? Most people wish for money, but okay. Now your wife gets one wish."

Dylan brought over his wife who wished right away, "I want a million dollars every week of my life."

The genie said, "Granted. And now for my wish, I have been cramped up in that lamp for many years so it's been a while since I've been with a woman. I want one day of wild, crazy sex with your wife, Dylan."

Dylan said, "No way!"

The genie replied, "Not even for a million dollars a week?"

Dylan turned to his wife, who said, "I guess for all that, I should. Well, not until Dylan leaves."

Dylan said, "Okay, have fun, I guess," and left.

Dylan's wife then proceeded to have wild sex for the rest of the day with the genie.

When they were finished, the genie asked how old her husband was. She said, "Forty-five."

The genie laughed and said, "Isn't he a little old to be believing in genies?"

A couple are rushing into the hospital because the wife is going into labour. As they walk, a doctor says to them

that he has invented a machine that splits the pain between the mother and father.

They agree to it and are led into a room where they get hooked up to the machine. The doctor starts it off at 20% split towards the father. The wife says, "Oh, that's actually better." The husband says he can't feel anything.

Then the doctor turns it to 50% and the wife says that it doesn't hurt nearly as much. The husband says he still can't feel anything.

The doctor, now encouraged, turns it up to 100%. The husband still can't feel anything, and the wife is really happy, because there is now no pain for her. The baby is born.

The couple go home and find the postman groaning in pain on the doorstep.

A man asks his wife, "What would you do if I won the lottery?"

His wife says, "Take half and leave your ass!"

The man replies, "Great! I won 12 bucks, here is six, now get out!"

Women might be able to fake orgasms, but men can fake a whole relationship.

A married couple are out one night at a dance club.

There's a guy on the dance floor giving it large: break dancing, moon walking, back flips, the works.

The wife turns to her husband and says, "See that guy? Twenty years ago he proposed to me and I turned him down."

The husband says, "Looks like he's still celebrating!"

A man approached a very beautiful woman in a large supermarket and said, "I've lost my wife here in the supermarket. Can you talk to me for a couple of minutes?"

"Why do you want to talk to me?" she asked puzzled.

"Because every time I talk to a beautiful woman, my wife appears out of nowhere."

Search for Bliss

A rich man, nearing his expiry date, realized that throughout his life he had enjoyed many transitory moments of pleasure, but he had never experienced eternal bliss. He had travelled to exotic places, rubbed shoulders with superman, received all round admiration, enjoyed great culinary delights but between one upswing to another a yawning emptiness invariably intruded igniting new craving.

The full body scan reports were not scary, but the horoscope predicted not many days were left. Realizing that the exit from the world is inching closer the rich man reflected, "With only a few days left, I must make a last-ditch effort to experience eternal bliss." He thought, "I have been toiling all my life, but this experience has always eluded me? Now I have the means and I will enjoy it at any cost."

He sought guidance from many of his knowledgeable friends, but everyone smiled with indulgence.

The dilemma became more intense and impassioned, "Where should I look for it, who can guide me, has any one really experienced it?"

Days became months and inquisitiveness became anxiety and anxiety became trepidation.

Exasperated he took out his car, put cash, diamonds and jewels worth millions of rupees in a brief case and started search for a guide or source of bliss. The media flashed news, "Rich man in search of eternal bliss, very handsome reward for competent guide."

After interacting with many self-styled masters, he reached a quaint city with a long spiritual lineage. The knowledgeable of the city said, "You have come to the right place. There is a man who solves this kind of unusual problems."

The rich man said, "Unusual problems!" The people of the city said, "We have also learnt many unusual things in his company. Like nobody can buy even a glimpse of eternal bliss with money, leave alone eternal bliss. But still, there is such a man in this city."

Courteously they guided the rich man to him. The man looked like an Avadhoot, who had sacrificed everything for God. Totally unconcerned about his external image or internal impression.

The sun was setting. The crowd said, "This is that man." The rich man put forward his bag and said, "I am ready to give wealth worth millions for experiencing

eternal bliss." The man looked at the seeker from top to bottom. He said, "Glimpse may set a chain reaction?" Rich man said, "No matter, a true glimpse will be worth it."

Before the sentence was complete, the man grabbed the bag and ran away. For a moment the rich man stood transfixed before crying, "I am ruined, I am dead." But then the man had gone far away into the darkness. The crowd knew that man and that he would do something absurd. They said, "We told you in the beginning that this is the man who can answer absurd questions." The rich man said, "Is this an answer! Catch him!" The rich man ran after him to teach him a lesson. The man started eluding by running through myriad of turning and twisting alleys.

He went through an alley dotted with palaces of high and mighty exhibiting overflowing affluence. The impact of glitter appeared fleeting and not worthy of propensity to pine for and possess.

He ran down red-light area famous for flesh trade where beautiful women were selling their assets. The effect was painful as it reflected the wanton tendencies of human nature.

He raced through a food street known for mouth-watering cuisine well known around the globe. The garish display evoked painful reminders of millions who exist on morsels picked from dustbins.

He moved through an enclave inhabited by musicians of every genre. Absence of creative expression of devotion and predominance of physical stimulus was nerve wrecking.

Next was a street of massage parlours with glittering sign boards and displaying mannequins for sale. The shocking display struck him as a catalyst of lust for new breed of rapists.

Ending the 'tour de force', the man threw the bag down from where he had picked it up. The perspiring rich man also reached there and looked at the bulging bag with disdain realizing that bliss is not in obeying the dictates of gross body but emulating the subtle which whispers within and permeates the cosmos.

Quietly, the man merged into nothingness.

Tranquilly, the rich man sensed initiation into experience of bliss.



14 Things No One Tells You About Aging

Turns out you might not become a grumpy old man, after all. And your taste buds could change



They're called the golden years for a reason. Getting older has its perks. For one, you're good at using what you've learned. This is called crystalized intelligence, and it keeps getting better, even when you're 65 or 70.

Mr Nice Guy

Turns out you might not be a grumpy old man (or woman), after all. You'll probably get more agreeable as you age, at least through your 60s. You're also likely to be happier and less inclined to get angry. Scientists haven't figured out exactly why this happens, but they do have some theories. Older people might control their emotions better, and focus more on how to make the most of life.

Play well with others

You're more in tune with other people's emotions in your 40s than at any other time in your life. That insight into how others think and feel can make living with your

loved ones easier and help you get along better with your coworkers, too.

A taste for life

As you age, medications, illness (colds, flu, gum diseases, etc.) and allergies all can change your sense of smell and taste. And that can affect your diet and health. If you find things need to be spiced up, try some olive oil, herbs like rosemary and thyme, garlic, onion, peppers, or mustard. Just stay away from the salt.

What's that doing there?

Around the time the hair on your head starts to disappear, it can show up in the strangest places. This can mean large hairs in older guys' noses and ears. Older women may notice small hairs on their chins. This is all caused by changes in our hormones.

Rise and shine

There's a good chance you'll become the morning person you've always wanted to be -- in your 60s. Our sleeping patterns can shift as we age, so we get sleepier earlier and wake up earlier. That seems to work out well. One study showed that even though folks over 65 tend to wake up during the night, most said they regularly get a good night's sleep.

Bye-bye migraines

Once you hit your 70s, those migraines you may have had much of your life may go away. Only 10% of women and 5% of men over 70 still report migraines. Even better news: If you do have a migraine, it may not actually come with the headache. As people age, some may experience migraines as visual or sensory disturbances without pain.

Don't quit your day job

Early retirement might not be the best thing for your health -- unless you have a fun second career. A study called the Longevity Project found that people who work hard at a job they enjoy live the longest. That, along with good friends and a good marriage, could be the key to sticking around a while.

Fear is not your friend

You may worry more about breaking bones as you age. But you're more likely to take a tumble if you're scared of falling. One study found that about a third of adults over 65 have that fear. And it's understandable, because falls are the leading cause of injuries for older people.

Self-confidence

Self-esteem soars as you age, studies show, and increases with wealth, education, good health, and employment. But it takes a dip after 60. That may be because people begin to have health issues and start searching for a new sense of purpose following retirement. With increasing life spans, healthier lifestyles, and working to an older age, we may see that change.

Less stress

Baby boomers and older adults report less stress than their younger counterparts, according to the American Psychological Association's annual Stress in America report. That doesn't mean, it goes away. Health and money problems still crop up. But, the APA says, 9 of 10 older adults say they're doing enough to manage it.

Weight of the world

The longer you're alive, the more gravity brings you down. The spaces between the bones in your spine -- called vertebrae -- get closer together. That can make you about an inch shorter as you get older.

Good Things That Eventually Go Bad

Sex, exercise, and hand-washing can be great for you -- but only up to a certain point

1. Exercise

You can do a number on your body if you hit the gym too hard. Overuse can damage joints, tendons, ligaments, and even your heart. Women who exercise too much may start missing periods or speed up the bone loss that leads to osteoporosis. How much is too much? If your workouts leave you exhausted or irritable, or if you have a hard time sleeping, eating, or concentrating, it might be time to scale back.

2. Sleep

If you snooze beyond your typical 40 winks, you could do your body more harm than good. Studies show that more than 8 hours of sleep every night increases your risk of death from heart problems by 34%. You also can have trouble with concentration, weight, and blood sugar levels.

3. Antibiotics

Antibiotics kill many of the bacteria that cause infection and sickness. So what could be the harm in taking some if you have the sniffles? Turns out, bacteria can change if they're in contact with antibiotics too often. This makes them resistant to the drugs. Take antibiotics only when you're sure you need them.

4. People-Pleasing

It feels good to make people happy -- but there's a fine line between being helpful and being a pushover. If you agree with others just to keep the peace or take on too many tasks because you can't say no, it can make you unhappy.

Just Say No

Practice these turn-down skills to help save your sanity: Ask questions to be sure you know what you're getting into. Ask yourself this: What's in it for you? Then answer firmly, and know you don't have to give a reason for your refusal. "No" can be a complete sentence.

5. Sex

The jury's still out on whether you can be "addicted" to sex. However, you can have an overactive sex drive. This makes you think about and act on sexual feelings more than the average person. When you focus most of your attention on sex, it can affect your everyday life and relationships in a negative way.

Find Out Why

In some cases, your focus on sex can be caused by other medical problems. Check with your doctor to see if it might stem from medications you take, situations

of abuse, or possibly even a brain tumor. Support groups and counseling can also help you get your life back to normal.

6. Handwashing

This is the best way to keep germs at bay. Suds up too often, though, and your hygiene could actually suffer. Studies show that too much can damage your skin and give germs a place to grow and thrive.

7. Healthy Food

You only eat food that's good for you? Great! But how much do you eat? Overeating causes high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, bone and joint problems, sleep problems, and even depression -- no matter what kind of food you put on your plate. And if you take in more calories than you burn, you'll gain weight, which can lead to heart disease and stroke.

8. Water

It's rare, but you can drink too much water. When you do, your kidneys can't get rid of the extra fluid fast enough. This drops the sodium in your blood to unhealthy levels -- a condition called hyponatremia. It can cause nausea, weakness and fatigue, headache, or, in severe cases, seizures, coma, and death.

You're at higher risk if you're an athlete who exercises for long stretches of time, like a marathon runner.

9. Work

Do you stay at the office long past quitting time? Maybe you really love what you do -- or maybe you're a workaholic. If you feel like you should be working all the time and tend to choose work over relationships, that might be you. Remember what they say about all work and no play.

10. Smartphone Time

They make a lot of things easier, but if you can't stop looking at yours, your smartphone can make your real life harder. It can affect how you relate to people, your mood, your sleep quality, and even your brain chemistry.

Tips to Unplug

Change things up. Schedule different things to do at the times you're most likely to be on your phone. Set limits on the amount of time you want to spend on it and turn it off when you're not using it. And seek support -- friends and family can help keep you in check.

Tara Sutaria is honing her singing skills; hoping to do a live gig soon!



Tara Sutaria's love for singing is well known. It isn't a surprise then that the actress used the time that she spent at home, over the past few months, to hone her singing skills. Tara, who is a trained singer, says, "This break allowed me to research different singers from around the world. I have been watching them perform

and observing their technique to figure out how to use them in the studio and at concerts. I have also been watching many documentaries, series and videos of my favourite artistes from India and abroad. The past few months have given me a lot of time to focus on music."

During an interaction with Bombay Times in 2019, Tara had said that her New Year resolution would be to look for opportunities related to music. She had said, "While this year (2019), I focused on acting, next year, I will also look for musical opportunities. I want singing to be a huge part of my next year." It looks like the actress has been able to keep her resolution. Tara adds, "I've performed at music concerts all my life, in India as well as abroad, and it's something I can't wait to get back to. I've been training classically and in musical theatre since I was five. In fact, my last concert was at the Royal Opera House in Mumbai, just before I made my debut with *Student of the Year 2*."

Interestingly, in her forthcoming film *Ek Villain 2*, Tara reportedly plays a singer. At an event before the lockdown, she had even hinted at singing for the film. While the actress doesn't want to reveal much about the Mohit Suri directorial, she opens up about the Hindi remake of the Telugu film, *RX 100*, in which she will be seen opposite Suniel Shetty's son, Ahan. "Before the lockdown, we were shooting for the film. We have finished most of it, just the last bit of the film is left, which we will complete once it is safe to do so," she says.

Meanwhile, at home, she is also spending a lot of time with her twin sister, Pia. "This phase gave us a lot of time to hang out with each other at home. Before that, we were busy with our crazy schedules. Now at home, we have been watching movies and listening to music that we have grown up hearing and reconnecting in so many ways. We also got time to have conversations about the work that we are doing, the work that we admire, the performances that we like from across the globe. We got nostalgic looking at family photo albums and watching old videos," she



Cameron Diaz opens up on why she quit acting

Former actress Cameron Diaz feels peaceful after retiring from films.

On *Gwyneth Paltrow's* series, Diaz opened up on her decision to quit films.

"I just decided that I wanted different things out of my life. I had gone so hard for so long, working, making films and it's such a grind. I didn't really make any space for my personal life," Diaz said.

"A peace. I got a peace in my soul. I finally was taking care of myself," she answered when she was asked about the changes she witnessed in her life post quitting films.

Diaz married musician Benji Madden in 2015. The couple have a daughter, Raddix, born in January 2020.

Bollywood is India's favourite scapegoat: Amyra Dastur

The actor believes that "if anything bad happens, then automatically Bollywood gets the blame". She also adds, that since their lives are public, people think they can comment about it

"I've taken it as a time for reflection and to spend time with my mom and dad. It was definitely hard in the beginning. Every extension came with anxiety and stress, but slowly I managed to be active on social media and do all my classes for my projects online. But now, I'm ready and craving to go back to work," says actor Amyra Dastur.

The 27-year-old, made her debut in 2013 with Manish Tiwary's *Isaaq*, says that "Bollywood is India's favourite scapegoat". "If anything bad happens, then automatically Bollywood gets the blame. Yes, there are issues in our Industry but there are issues everywhere. The only problem we face is that our lives are public which makes people think they have the right to comment about it. In other words, we're damned if we do and damned if we don't," she says.

About the ongoing insider-outsider debate and nepotism, Dastur says, "As an outsider it definitely hurts to see star kids getting roles you feel they haven't earned. But you can't hold it against them. If you're given an advantage in life then you should capitalise on it. Ultimately, the audience decides and if they like someone then they themselves will follow them and increase the persons popularity. Unfortunately, we're so stuck on hating star kids that we don't realise if the audience channels that hate into kindness for promoting outsiders, it would change the game."

Ask her if favouritism and groupism exists in the industry, and she says, "Yes, it does. But it exists in every industry. We don't live in a black and white world. There are favourites and there is groupism which you need to deal with.



The boycotting is something that I don't agree with and I believe it needs to be tackled. You can have your favourites but you shouldn't put someone down because they don't adhere to your opinions. That's what the problem is, not favouritism but the boycotting and catty environment. Putting people down has become so easy lately with social media or blind items or even in film criticism. These kinds of personal attacks cause major mental trauma and it needs to be filtered and stopped."

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Mother-daughter pair Neena and Masaba Gupta

Neena Gupta: Looking after a baby alone and working was tough

'Kaam ke bina kisi ki koi izzat nahi hai duniya mein' - there's no respect without work

Neena Gupta says looking after a baby all alone and balancing a busy work schedule as an actress was tough for her at one point of life. So, when she got married, she decided to go easy with her schedule, reports Tellychakkar.

The actress said she slowly "realised that it was not going to work because people, including my husband and my daughter, started taking me for granted".

"Something was lacking, some respect was lacking. One day something happened, which I don't want to talk about, and I said 'this is what I have become' and I said now I am going to work," she said.

So, she started making calls and looking out for work.

"But it never worked out, and I was very frustrated and I wrote a post (where she asked for work). Initially when I decided not to work, it was very nice to begin with but then I realised 'kaam ke bina kisi ki koi izzat nahi hai duniya mein' (there's no respect without work)," she said.

Neena had Masaba after her brief relationship with former West Indies cricketing icon Vivian Richards in the eighties. Later, Neena went on to marry Vivek Mehra.

She said that raising Masaba as a single parent till a point was hard.

"It was very hard. It was harder than I imagined. I feel it was wrong because a child needs both the parents to be around, and they need quality time. They need a lot of time and I feel that if I didn't have to earn money, Masaba would have been even better," she said.

The actress added: "People used to think I have shifted to Delhi after my marriage with Vivek because he is from Delhi -- that I don't work anymore, and I was wondering 'why am I not getting good offers'. So, one day I went to a director's house, and as I was entering her assistant came and she said, 'Hi, when did you come to Mumbai?' I realised that this was the problem. People thought I had shifted to Delhi. I was very frustrated and angry," she said during a conversation with actress Neha Dhupia in a podcast of "JioSaavn #NoFilterNeha".

'I can't avoid romantic scenes, my job demands it', says Surbhi Chandna

In a chat with a daily, Surbhi Chandna revealed what pushed her to accept 'Naagin 5'. She also spoke about doing romantic scenes during the pandemic.

After playing the bubbly Anika in *Ishqbaaz* and Dr Ishaani in *Sanjeevani*, Surbhi Chandna has entered the fantasy-fiction genre with *Naagin 5*. In a chat with a daily, the actress revealed how the decision to join the show was not an easy one, the pressure of comparison with previous 'naagins' and how the pandemic has changed many things for actors and TV shows.

When asked if she were under pressure because many actresses have played this part previously, Surbhi told Times of India, "Of course, it's a huge responsibility to play *naagin*. Also, it is human nature to draw comparisons, especially for a show that has completed four seasons. So, when they approached me, I was apprehensive if people would accept me."



She added, "I even confessed my nervousness to producer Ekta Kapoor, but she said, 'You will rock it'. Her confidence in me pushed me to accept the role and work ten times hard."

Given the safety guidelines and social distancing norm, is she apprehensive about doing romantic scenes? "TV shows haven't stopped shooting romantic scenes. In fact, every scene is shot after taking the necessary precautions. We use hand sanitisers after every shot; even the chairs are sanitised repeatedly and our temperatures are checked. We are also drinking *kadas* to boost our immunity. I can't shy away from doing a romantic scene due to the pandemic, because my job demands it," said the actress.

Credits: Times of India

Jamai Raja's Achint Kaur turns 50; rings in her birthday with her co-stars Nia Sharma and Reyhna Pandit

Jamai Raja actress Achint Kaur turned a year older on September 5. The actress celebrated her 50th birthday with her *Jamai Raja* co-stars Nia Sharma and Reyhna Pandit. The actress looked gorgeous in a white top and shorts. She had a crazy birthday party with just a couple of friends and shared a few videos from the party on her Instagram page. Her social media pages are flooded with birthday wishes from all her friends, reports Times of India.

Known for mostly portraying negative characters on

screen, Achint Kaur played one of the coolest moms of television in *Jamai Raja*. She is best remembered for her roles in the show TV shows like *Virrudh*, *Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii*, *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and many others. There are very few actors in the TV industry, who are ageing gracefully and actress Achint Kaur is definitely one of them. She has also worked in many Hindi films like *2 States* and *1920* amongst others.

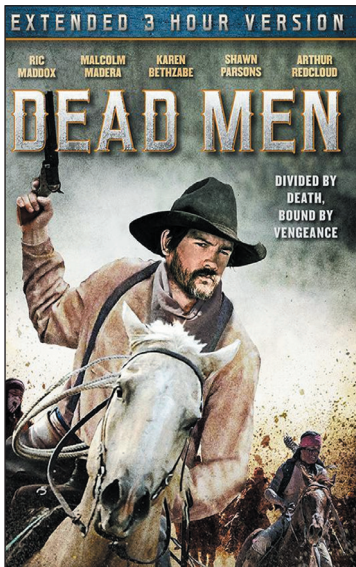
Currently, the actress is away from the small screen and is enjoying her time with her son.





Mardi 15 sept - 21.10

Dead Men

Avec: Ric Maddox, Aaron Marciniak,
Richard O. Ryan

Mercredi 16 sept - 21.15

Silverado



Jeudi 17 sept - 21.00



MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
mardi 15 septembre 07.05 Local: People 09.40 Local: Couleur Marine 10.15 Mag: Euromaxx 10.45 Local Prod: Rodrig Mo Pei 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Doc: Agatha Christie Contre 13.25 Local: Nos Aines 14.30 D.Animes: Kid-E-Cats 14.35 D.Anime: Bob Le Bricoleur 15.08 D.Anime: Petit Creux 15.49 D.Anime: Fils De Wouf 16.15 D.Anime: Uma And Devan... 16.25 Sindbad And The 7 Galaxies 16.51 D.Aimes: Trollhunters 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.00 Local: Priorite Sante 20.40 Local: An Eta Dalert 21.10 Film: Dead Men 00.10 Le Journal	mardi 15 septembre 10.00 Serial: CID 10.44 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha 12.04 Film: Bairaag Starring: Dilip Kumar, Saira Banu 14.31 DDI Magazine 15.00 Mag: Comedy Classes 15.28 Serial: Honaar Soon Mee... 15.48 Serial: Mooga Manasulu 16.13 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal 16.33 Serial: Bisaat-E-Dil 16.54 Mehendi Tohra Naam Ke 17.17 Serial: Gangaa 18.00 Serial: Die Now 18.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Local: Tamil Programme 20.30 Film: Shakti Starring: Dilip Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan, Raakhee, Smita Patil 23.19 DDI Live	mardi 15 septembre 06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa 06.44 Mag: World Stories 07.00 Mag: Voa Connect 07.25 Mag: In Good Shape 07.55 Doc: Amazing Gardens 09.00 Doc: 360 GEO 10.43 Doc: Of Black Holes And... 11.28 Mag: Eco@Africa 11.54 Mag: Urban Gardens 12.12 Mag: World Stories 12.27 Mag: Voa Connect 12.57 Mag: In Good Shape 14.26 Doc: 360 GEO 15.19 Mag: Global 3000 16.11 Doc: Of Black Holes And... 16.56 Mag: Eco@Africa 17.27 Mag: Sur Mesure 18.21 Mag: Urban Gardens 18.30 Doc: Obsession Magnifique 19.00 Student Support Prog... 19.29 Mag: Garden Makeover	mardi 15 septembre 01.28 Film: Kill Kane 03.22 Film: Inferno 05.19 Tele: Totalement Diva 06.11 Serial: Shades Of Blue 06.53 The Bletchley Circle 08.31 Mag: Close Up 09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire 09.45 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.35 Serial: Dynasty 2 11.15 Tele: Dulce Amor 11.43 Film: Inferno 13.40 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.45 Film: The Bletchley Circle 16.40 Serial: Chicago Fire 17.21 Serial: Shades Of Blue 18.05 Tele: Soleil Levant 19.10 Tele: Dulce Amor 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Serial: S.W.A.T 21.15 Serial: Unforgotten	mardi 15 septembre 08.00 Film: Chauraha 12.04 / 19.54 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.26 / 20.11 - Kulfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.38 / 20.32 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Bin Kuch Kahe 13.31 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.56 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.20 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki 14.39 / 22.25 - Bitti Business Wali 15.30 Film: Film Star Starring: Mahima Chaudhry, Priyanshu Chatterjee, Vasundhara Das and Aryan Vaid 18.00 Live: Samacher 18.30 Kumkum Bhagya 18.51 Piya Albela
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Jeudi 17
sept - 15.20Stars: Akshay Kumar, Ashwini Bhawe,
Sudesh BerryJeudi 17 sept -
20.10Stars: Varun Dhawan, Jacqueline
Fernandez, Taapsee Pannu

Indian Americans can be an influential voting bloc - despite their small numbers



Indian Americans with Donald Trump. Photo - newsbred.com

Senator Kamala Harris being picked by Joe Biden as his running mate has put a spotlight on the Indian American community in the United States.

The interest, in part, stems from her origins: Her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, was a biologist from the Indian city of Chennai. Her father, Donald Harris, an economist, was from Jamaica. After her parents divorced, her mother raised Kamala Harris and her sister as members of the Black Church. But her mother also took Harris to Hindu temples.

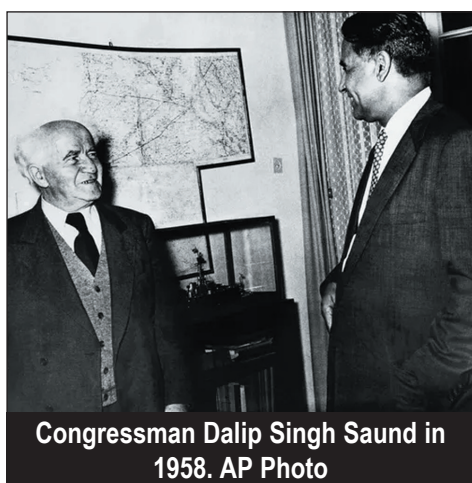
In her memoir Harris writes about her Indian origins.

I am a political scientist of Indian origin who has followed the rising trajectory of Indian Americans in American politics.

Though Indian Americans constitute a mere 1.5% of the population their impact on American politics can be disproportionate. Indian Americans are among the wealthiest and most educated of all immigrant groups in the U.S.

The question is: How exactly do they vote?

Presence in American politics



Congressman Dalip Singh Saund in 1958. AP Photo

At 4 million, Indian Americans are one of the fastest growing immigrant groups in the United States and the second-largest immigrant group after Mexicans.

The community, however, started with modest numbers, owing to severe restrictions on immigration prior to the passage of the landmark Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.

This legislation, that ended immigration on the basis of national origins and prioritized highly skilled workers, led to a dramatic increase of immigration from Asia. A disproportionate segment of those who formed the first wave of migrants were middle class professionals - doctors, educators and managers.

In 1957, Dalip Singh Saund became the first Asian American to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, coming from a district in southern California. A naturalized U.S. citizen of Indian heritage, he was subsequently elected for two more terms before he suffered a stroke in 1962 and was too ill to run again.

Indian Americans were a minority in Saund's constituency - California's 29th District - which includes part of Los Angeles County. Saund pursued a campaign that could overcome widespread suspicion, distrust and even outright hostility toward immigrants from South Asia.

In 2005, another Indian American, Piyush "Bobby" Jindal, became the second Indian American to be elected to the House of Representatives. In 2011, Pramila Jayapal, became the first Indian American woman in the U.S. House of Representatives. Today there are five Indian Americans in Congress including Kamala Harris in the Senate.

Being a high-earning and educated immigrant group makes Indian Americans a very attractive pool of potential donors

for political campaigns. In the current election season they have emerged as significant donors. Not surprisingly, both Republicans and Democrats make ardent efforts to court them especially in highly contested regions.

Affluent Indian American vote

Since the days of President Ronald Reagan, the Republican Party had tried a "big tent" strategy, an effort to accommodate people of various political leanings. That, however, is no longer the case, especially under President Trump.

The approach was ostensibly designed to broaden the appeal of the party especially to hitherto marginalized communities and immigrant groups of color including those from various developing nations as well as Hispanics.

The party did attract particular individuals of Indian American origin who rose to positions of considerable prominence, such as Bobby Jindal, the former governor

of the community. Some affluent Indian Americans do tend to vote for the Republican Party.

When Trump visited India in February 2020, he received a huge reception especially at an extravaganza organized in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat.

Leaning Democratic

However, a majority of Indian Americans either identify with the Democratic Party or lean Democratic politically.

In the past, a 2012 Pew survey showed 65% of Indian Americans are Democrats or lean Democrat. According to a more recent 2020 survey that political scientist Karthick Ramakrishnan has conducted, 54% of Indian Americans are leaning toward the Democratic nominee, Joseph Biden, while 29% are in favor of the Republican incumbent, Donald Trump.

The same survey also shows that there



Indian Americans with Barack Obama. Photo - The Hindu

of Louisiana, and Nikki Haley, the erstwhile American ambassador to the United Nations whose parents emigrated to the U.S. from Punjab.

However, the party could not genuinely broaden its Indian American base across the country. Both these individuals also distanced themselves from their religious roots by converting to Christianity.

Particular episodes also alienated Indian Americans from the party. In one such episode in 2006, George Allen, a former Republican senator from Virginia, while running for office during a campaign rally referred to a young Indian American as Macaca, a certain species of monkey. "This fellow here, over here with the yellow shirt. Macaca or whatever his name is. He's with my opponent, he's following us around everywhere," he said.

The incident, which attracted media attention, has long since rankled members

are 1.8 million Indian Americans, whose vote in crucial swing states ranging from Arizona to Wisconsin could help tip the election one way or another.

There may be several likely explanations for the overwhelming level of support among Indian Americans for the Democratic Party. For the past several decades, Democrats have been more welcoming of immigrants and minorities. And most Indian Americans tend to have more liberal political leanings. It may be worth noting that as many as 84% of the Indian American community had voted for President Obama.

Whether the same trend is repeated is yet to be seen.

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