

# MAURITIUS TIMES

• "Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right." -- Oprah Winfrey

Interview:  
Chetan  
Ramchurn



**"After a dreadful first year, the worst, I fear, is yet to come"**

\* See Pages 7-8-9

## Que sera - sera?



*The most perilous job has been futurology, making predictions about the future. No model could anticipate what was happening, and it is going to be the same for 2021*

Dr R Neerunjun Gopee + See Page 3



**Coronavirus: how the pandemic could play out in 2021**

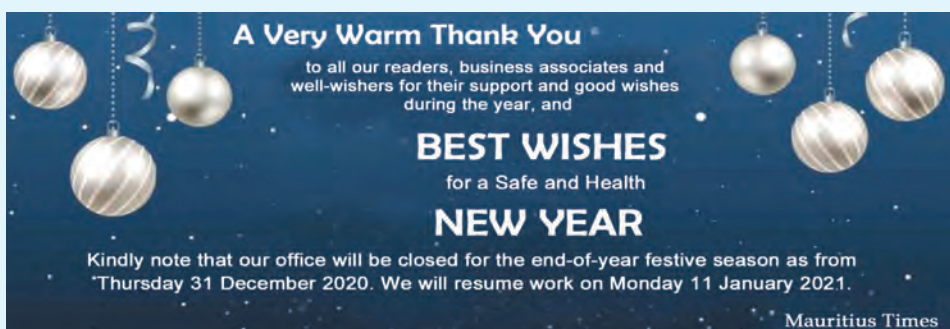
By Adam Kleczkowski, University of Strathclyde + See Page 2-12

## Crystal-Gazing 2021



*It is easy to look forward to 2021 and list the ills likely to befall the world. Realism dictates that we must do so for ignoring the problems will not make them go away. Photo - himalayanheroes.com*

By Anil Madan + See Page 4-18





## Rough Road Ahead In 2021

**T**he year that is about to end has been lived under the deadly shadow of an invisible, infiltrative enemy that has all but decimated the world. It is a year that has had one constant: uncertainties on every front that we can think of. Every indication is that these will persist, but there is one thing that is certain as we enter 2021: the road ahead is going to be very rough, and not only for Mauritius, though we may be hit the harder because of a number of vulnerabilities for which we are to a large extent responsible, such as the generous electoral goodies that have been distributed or the white elephant type projects the country has engaged in.

We have to reckon with the difficulties and obstacles associated with the rolling out of the vaccines that are in the pipeline allied to the emergence of a new, more infectious strain of the coronavirus, to which the recent surges and further restrictions that have followed can be added – all these together have affected more severely and widely our traditional export markets. These very same factors also point to a second fact that we have to face: it will take longer rather than shorter for these markets to be open once again for usual let alone more business, thus implying even more difficulty for our eventual economic recovery.

As it is, the debt level of the country has already exceeded the upper limit of what is considered sustainable according to criteria set by recognized international institutions. Government has had to draw from the Special Reserves of the Central Bank to finance the stimulus package to big “distressed” business and the wage assistance scheme. *En passant*, it must be pointed out that small businesses have not benefited from any such largesse and have had to fight for their survival on their own.

The question that arises based on the preceding is how long will the government be able to continue with the wage assistance scheme, a second package having already been advanced? Commonsense dictates that there will be a limit, and then what will be the solution? Further borrowing from traditional and non-traditional partners? That means more debts, but equally and more importantly it also means that there is no free lunch: every loan or grant comes at a price, one that is not disclosed to the public and

that is, ominously, imposing further financial burden on coming generations.

On the political front, there's the list of questions that have not found answers in Parliament, but government may well be under an illusion if it thinks that they are going to go away. Far from the parliamentary vacation till March next year being one of respite, it looks more set to become the lull before the storm. The opposition will no doubt sharpen itself, turn on the heat and dig in when Parliament reopens.

To complicate matters, a Pandora's box has been opened with the mysterious deaths that have taken place and that appear to be linked, with suspicions of political involvement being investigated by the legal team that has taken the defense of the main case, that of Soopramanien Kistnen a political agent of the MSM. The important issue of motive for a possible foul play is being hinted at by the findings related to his account keeping for electoral expenses in Constituency No. 8. As this angle is probed further we may be in for more surprises that will add more heat to the situation.

The landscape of the country that is emerging at the end of 2020 is one where political, economic and social incidents and forces have played out under the threat of a pandemic to create a climate of apprehension that has gripped the population, despite their seeming calm as they go about preparing to have some measure of relaxation during the new year festivities. Soon enough they will discover that these are short-lived as the fears and anxieties return when the celebrations are over.

At the cost of repeating ourselves, it is worth reiterating that it is only our Constitution and our institutions which rigorously and fearlessly uphold it that can salvage the country from losing its way and becoming unlivable. The integrity and patriotism of the persons who are at the helm of our institutions is the *sine qua non* criterion which will reassure the citizens that they can lay their heads on their pillows in serenity. We have no choice but to look forward with this much of hope for the sake of our country – that if the political class is failing us, we have the guarantee that our institutions will be there to rein in the forces that are inimical to the safety and security of citizens.

## The Conversation

## Coronavirus: how the pandemic could play out in 2021

*As vaccination begins to take effect, what we'll be able to do will change – but the transformation will be slow*

**V**accines for Covid-19 are now being rolled out, but in some parts of the world, this good news has been tempered by the emergence of new, potentially more infectious strains of the virus. Exactly how the pandemic will evolve has become more uncertain.



Photo - statnews.com

Certainly, the next three or so months will be challenging, and a virus-free life is probably some way off. Some things may not return to how they were before.

Predicting exactly how things will play out is difficult, but there are some things we can forecast with a relative degree of confidence. With that in mind, here's what we can expect from the coming year.

### What impact will the new strain have?

There's currently only limited information about the new viral strain. Although yet to be confirmed, it appears to be more infectious, but not to lead to more severe disease or be able to evade vaccine-derived immunity.

However, the variant suggests the virus is able to produce significant mutations, and further mutations could change the course of the outbreak. Suppressing the pandemic quickly therefore has become an even more urgent task.

Stricter restrictions on behaviour are likely to last well into the new year, and we may need further restrictions to control the virus if it is indeed more infectious.

### How long until we see the vaccine's effects?

Producing enough vaccine doses is a big task – production might hit a bottleneck. Even assuming we can make all we need, immunising people

will take many months.

In the UK, GPs are rolling out vaccines, and an average English GP looks after nearly 9,000 people. Assuming GPs work eight hours each day, need 10 minutes to vaccinate someone, and each patient needs two shots, it would take them more than a year to see all their patients. Others, of course, will help with the roll-out, but this shows the size of the task. Delays will be unavoidable.

Additionally, the two doses of the Pfizer vaccine need to be given 21 days apart, with full immunity arriving seven days after the second jab. Other vaccines – such as Astra-Zeneca's – require an even longer period between doses. It will take at least a month (if not more) to see the full effect in each vaccinated person.

In countries that relaxed social distancing rules for Christmas, we might see a post-Christmas spike in cases. In this case, vaccines are unlikely to change much initially – the disease will have too much momentum in early 2021. This will also probably be the case in the UK thanks to the new strain of the virus, even though restrictions weren't lifted for many. Public awareness of the disease's momentum is needed, to avoid loss of confidence in vaccination.

**Adam Kleczkowski,**  
Prof of Mathematics and Statistics,  
University of Strathclyde

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**Doojesh Ramlallah, Sultana Kurmally and Kersley Ramsamy**

Pearl House 4th Floor Room 406 - Sir Virgil Naz Street, Port Louis

Tel: 5-29 29301 Tel/Fax: 212 1313





Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

# Que sera – sera?

*The most perilous job has been futurology, making predictions about the future. No model could anticipate what was happening, and it is going to be the same for 2021*

Every culture has a creation hymn. That of the Hindus is found in its sourcebook, the Vedas, specifically in the Rigveda which is one of the four

Vedas. Its last stanza is as follows:

*Whence this creation has arisen  
– perhaps it formed itself, or perhaps it did not –  
the One who looks down on it,  
in the highest heaven, only He knows  
or perhaps even He does not know.*

Substitute 'creature' for 'creation' and think Covid-19. A WHO team is visiting or will visit Wuhan to try and unravel the enigma of the origin of the coronavirus that has swept the world since the beginning of the year. Maybe the mystery will persist, and nobody will ever know.

Fact is, this has been a year of uncertainties on all fronts, and of surprises, most of them very nasty as the tsunami unfurled to inflict disease and cause death on a scale that was last seen during the Spanish flu of 1918. To date it has affected nearly 80 million people and caused about 1.8 million deaths.

The most perilous job has been futurology, making predictions about the future. No model could anticipate what was happening, and it is going to be the same for 2021. We are perforce resigned to say – or to cheer ourselves up by singing the melodious 'Que sera sera': 'What will be will be'. Because, really, no, we don't know with any degree of precision *que sera*. And we are hung upon *sera, sera pas?*

Will vaccines that have started to be rolled out stop Covid-19 in its track? That's the hope. But when? How long will it take? Only in a few countries or the whole world? Will the same vaccines be effective against the new variant? Will new variants arise?

Some countries which thought they had passed the peak saw new spurts that soon became wholesale surges. Will this trend stop or continue because of the mutant virus?

It will be recalled that Covid was initially thought to be like just another flu virus. Until it started to show its fangs. It began to claw at other tissues and organs of the body, and to affect all age groups though with a predilection for the elderly and those with co-morbidities.

But that was not the end – and will probably not be as more secrets are most likely to be unveiled. The flu doesn't leave sequelae. Covid-19 does. It scars the lungs, causing respiratory distress that has affected patients who thought they had recovered, and led physicians to advise patients to be prepared to undergo follow-up scans after a few months of recovery. The heart, brain – both cognitive and mental functions –, the kidneys are impacted too. And it causes a tendency for blood to clot, so that patients in whom this is detected may have to be on prolonged anti-clotting therapy.

The disruptions that occurred were qualitatively the same in all countries, the most salient ones being: closure of businesses and loss of jobs, but also new opportunities of repurposing for the manufacture of masks, ventilators, Personal Protective Equipment, hand sanitisers, gloves;



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drastic readjustments in schools and colleges with kids at home posing new challenges for parents, learning from home and rescheduling of exams; impacts on tourism, the leisure and entertainment industries; forced staying at home especially in apartments giving rise to stress and to mental health conditions; in some countries an alarming increase in teenage suicides; international travel shutdown with the winding up of several airlines which were already struggling for survival.

Complicating these changes that Covid has wrought, there was the dilly-dallying about the appropriate and timely responses to the crisis that divided politicians. Don't forget the enactment of emergency legislation that was viewed with concern by citizens in democratic jurisdictions as being tantamount to Big Brother overlordship and infringement of fundamental rights. Restrictions were sure necessary – but how far and how long for are questions that may remain unanswered for an indeterminate period.

We too have lived through that reality, but there is also an alternative one isn't it. For example, the tourism industry – meaning essentially hotel occupancy – was severely affected. But throughout, there have been two sources of compensation, though not in foreign currency. They were travellers who had to be quarantined, and local tourists who have thronged the hotels both here and in Rodrigues.

I personally know of many families that have spent their weekends in this way. But I also learnt of instances of high net worth individuals who had flown in, having booked a whole hotel.

On the other hand, we can consider ourselves fortunate in comparison to so many other countries because we have not had to face any severe lockdown after the one and only that was imposed shortly after the pandemic began. People have been going about practically normally, and the end of year shopping has only confirmed this trend.

Looking to 2021, it is likely to continue. There are two

items on my wish-list for the country as we enter the new year. The first is that the 'metro' works be planned to be completed at the earliest, and preferably not extend beyond 2021. And if the line could reach up to Mahebourg as envisaged, that would be a great plus. Along with this, government should roll out an incentive plan to encourage travellers to leave their cars and use the tram. I dream of a 2021 where the nightmare of traffic congestion will longer haunt us.

This would be helped further if work from home that many must have become used to now could become institutionalized, in both the public and private sectors. Allied to this could also be worked out a viable flexitime schedule that would allow working mothers to be at home by the time their kids come back from school.

The immense social benefit of this measure cannot be underestimated. However, this will need strong political direction and will, as well as disruption in the bureaucracy that prefers the *status quo*.

A better 2021 for us will thus require some bold decision making, kind of 'a small step for the establishment, but a major advance for the country'.

Happy New Year to all.





Anil Madan

**2**<sup>021</sup> starts with hope. In unison, the world hopes that the coronavirus pestilence will go away. As for Trump the pest, one-half of a divided America fears that he will not exit gracefully. The other half, seeing his presidency as more fest than pest hopes that he will find a way to stay. The application of science and knowledge has delivered vaccines putting the world on the verge of consigning Covid-19 to history. The application of Democracy has brought us to the verge of relegating Trump to a historical footnote. The record voter turnout at the US presidential election this year evoked the wisdom attributed to Lincoln that you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.

Hope aside, it is easy to look forward to 2021 and list the ills likely to befall the world. Realism dictates that we must do so for ignoring the problems will not make them go away.

The single biggest concern and hope for 2021 the world over is, of course, bringing the coronavirus pandemic to an end. Vaccines from multiple sources - Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson and Johnson, AstraZeneca, Russia, India, China - hold the promise of that conquest. But it will take time and likely well beyond 2021.

Canada has pre-ordered nine doses per capita, the US, UK, and Australia three to four doses per capita. Japan, Switzerland, and Indonesia, all relatively rich countries, also have ordered more than enough. India, a major producer of pharmaceuticals and vaccines has ordered two billion doses.

Meanwhile, inoculation of a sizable number of people in poorer nations is not likely to be achieved until 2023 or 2024. In the interim, and particularly in 2021, every country must brace itself for more cases of Covid-19, more deaths, and more economic misery in the months ahead. The logistics of inoculating almost eight billion people are daunting. There is light at the end of the tunnel but the light will shine on the richer nations long before rays of hope come to poorer nations.

In the meantime, anxiety over whether the Trump pest will depart is alarmist paranoia and fake news hype. As a practical matter, it will be a non-issue. On January 20, 2021, Chief Justice Roberts will administer the oath of office to Joe Biden and Trump's term will end. The US Secret Service charged with the duty to protect the

## Breakfast With Bwana

# Crystal-Gazing 2021

*There is light at the end of the tunnel but the light will shine on the richer nations long before rays of hope come to poorer nations*



China and the US both need to recognize that the win-win solution is for both nations to prosper, that conquest by one of the other is not possible. Photo - Financial Times

President will transfer its loyalty to Biden. As a former President, Trump will be entitled to protection but not the pretense of power. Whether he sees the light or remains in a dark tunnel of his own making matters not. The unknown is, of course, the extent to which Trump will remain a force in the Republican Party.

### Expansionary moves & military adventurism

If the seemingly unending and unyielding battle against Covid-19 will continue to be the single most important story of 2021, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will continue its own unending and unyielding quest for domination and exploitation. A Chinese attack on Taiwan is the only event that could trump the end of Covid-19 and Trump's own exit.

**“As the widespread administration of vaccines gets underway, we should see a gradual return to life as we knew it. When workers fill offices, restaurants, service businesses and retailers will return. When travellers return to trains, buses, and planes, hard-hit hotels and resorts will recover. People in tourist areas who have lost their incomes and means of livelihood as tourists disappeared will have a chance to rebuild. And perhaps in 2021, we will see a return of fans to sports stadiums, patrons to museums, and music lovers to performances...”**

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will therefore continue to loom over the world, for all intents and purposes, the equivalent of another virus. From the day that Britain ceded control to China, the world knew that the CCP presented an existential threat to Hong Kong and sadly, we have seen that danger become a reality. The CCP acts with impunity, its agreement with Britain to honor Democracy in Hong Kong, empty words. The sad truth is that the CCP has good reason to believe that in the long run, it can ignore the rest of the world and do as it pleases. There was little hope that Britain could enforce any part of the agreement it made with China. Trust in and reliance on China's goodwill were misplaced.

As a practical matter, the only country that can stop China's expansionary moves is the US, but US policy on China is fickle, indecisive, and too much influenced by the interests of America's corporations. We have had our wake-up call. Will we pay attention?

There is a very good reason for concern. The existential threat that the CCP presents to Taiwan has long been known. As recently as this past September, Associated Press reported that China warned the United States on Monday of potential “serious damage” to their relations if it does not withdraw from an upcoming economic meeting with Taiwan that is expected to be attended by a senior American official. Imagine the temerity of China “warning” the US that it should not send an official to a meeting with Taiwanese counterparts. Temerity devolves to audacity. Chinese foreign ministry spokes-man Wang Wenbin urged the US at a daily briefing to “stop all forms of official exchanges with Taiwan, so as to avoid serious damage to China-US. relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.”

The issue of Taiwan puts the US on a collision course with China which treats Taiwan as a matter of its domestic affairs and an inalienable part of China, no matter that Secretary of State Pompeo declared that Taiwan has not been a part of China.

With the Trump administration out, it is unclear how the Biden administration's foreign policy imperatives will germinate when it comes to China. But if Biden does not stand firm and demand an end to Chinese sanctions on American companies that sell weapons to Taiwan, indeed impose counter-sanctions on China's business dealings with the US, things will only get worse. This is nothing more than the old domino theory playing out — you lose Hong Kong and Taiwan is gone. Then Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and who knows where it ends? The difference this time is that the principals, China and the US, are playing the game directly and not through proxies.

2021 also holds the promise that America will no longer be involved in a war or military action outside its borders. If there is one lesson that the US has learned from its interventions around the globe, it is that American military adventurism is generally a lose-lose proposition. This may well be because the US has never had the acquisition of foreign lands as its goal.



# India to play vital role in Covid vaccine distribution: Pharma Industry

**W**ith vaccine rollout beginning in some countries, the world ravaged by the Covid-19 pandemic is looking to India for the large-scale production and supply of coronavirus vaccines as it enters 2021.

"India contributes 60 per cent of the vaccine production to the world. India is going to play a vital role in the inequitable distribution of vaccines around the world," Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) Secretary-General Sudarshan Jain told Press Trust of India.

While Indian companies such as Zydus, Bharat Biotech and Gennova are developing indigenous vaccines, other domestic companies are collaborating with global companies such as Serum Institute with AstraZeneca, Dr Reddys with Sputnik, and Biological E with J&J, he added.

Currently, three COVID-19 vaccine candidates of Bharat Biotech, Serum Institute of India, and Pfizer are under



Indian firms have used different platforms to produce vaccines. Photo - sciencemag.org

active consideration of India's drug regulator and there is hope that early licensure is possible for all or any of them, according to the Union health ministry.

Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) Executive Director Ashok Kumar Madan said, "We are sure with all the attention given by the government, vaccines will too be available for use from

January 2021 onwards. These vaccines are being approved by our Drugs Controller as per the stringent international norms. We take pride that almost 70 per cent of the WHO vaccine procurements are from India".

Indian firms have used different platforms to produce vaccines.

Scientists in these firms have the capability to produce the vaccine to counter the mutated forms in a short time, he added.

On the availability of the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine, Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla told PTI that based on the trial results in India and the UK, and if approvals from regulatory bodies are in place in time, "then we can expect the vaccine to be available in India

by January 2021 (only if it is proven immunogenic and efficacious)".

As part of various partnerships and collaborations for vaccine candidates, SII will keep aside 50 per cent of whatever quantity of the vaccine candidates are produced for India and the remaining quantity will go to low and middle-income countries, he noted.

"So far, under at-risk manufacturing, we have already stockpiled 50 million doses. Currently, our capacity is 60-70 million doses per month, which will increase further up to 100 million doses of the vaccine per month by February 2021. However, we will progress to mass production only after it is proven efficacious and immunogenic for mass use," Adar Poonawalla said.

About the price of the vaccine, he said, "We want the vaccine to be affordable and accessible to all. The Government of India will receive it at a far more affordable price of USD 3-4, since they will be buying in a larger volume. The priority is going to be India and the GAVI countries, after which only, the private market will open up where the pricing would be USD 6-8 per dose".

## Chinese economy to overtake US 'by 2028' due to Covid



China is the only major global economy that will have expanded in 2020. Photo - headtopics.com

**C**hina will overtake the US to become the world's largest economy by 2028, five years earlier than previously forecast, a report says.

The UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) said China's "skilful" management of Covid-19 would boost its relative growth compared to the US and Europe in coming years.

Meanwhile India is tipped to become the third largest economy by 2030.

Although China was the first country hit by Covid-19, it controlled the disease through swift and extremely strict action, meaning it did not need to repeat economically paralysing lockdowns as European countries have

done.

As a result, unlike other major economies, it has avoided an economic recession in 2020 and is in fact estimated to see growth of 2% this year.

The US economy, by contrast, has been hit hard by the world's worst coronavirus epidemic in terms of sheer numbers. More than 330,000 people have died in the US and there have been some 18.5 million confirmed cases. The economic damage has been cushioned by monetary policy and a huge fiscal stimulus.

"For some time, an overarching theme of global economics has been the economic and soft power struggle between the United States and China," says the CEBR report.

"The Covid-19 pandemic and corresponding economic fallout have certainly tipped this rivalry in China's favour."

The report says that after "a strong post-pandemic rebound in 2021", the US economy will grow by about 1.9% annually from 2022-24 and then slow to 1.6% in the years after that.

By contrast the Chinese economy is tipped to grow by 5.7% annually until 2025, and 4.5% annually from 2026-2030.

China's share of the world economy has risen from just 3.6% in 2000 to 17.8% now and the country will become a "high-income economy" by 2023, the report says.

The Chinese economy is not only benefitting from having controlled Covid-19 early, but also aggressive policymaking targeting industries like advanced manufacturing, said CEBR deputy chairman Douglas McWilliams.

"They seem to be trying to have centralised control at one level, but quite a free market economy in other areas," he told the BBC. "And it's the free market bit that's helping them move forward particularly in areas like tech."

## Putin rumours run wild as he shrouds himself in secrecy

**V**ladimir Putin has surrounded himself with such a thick fog of secrecy that it's now unclear where he is living, how many children he has, if his health is failing, or whether he's planning to stay in power.

Tabloids this year dabbled in stories that the Russian president was sick and poised to quit the Kremlin. After Putin, who is 68, coughed at a meeting with the government on Nov. 19, the gossip went into overdrive, reports Anna Nemtsova of Daily Beast.

Some claimed the president was suffering from cancer, others diagnosed him with Parkinson's disease. A video of Putin absentmindedly playing with a folder in October fuelled the rumours that he was suffering from some kind of degenerative condition.

As pro-Putin ideologists often emphasize "Russia is Putin," so media reports analyzed Putin's health as a vital matter of Russia's future.

All of it without a shred of evidence. The closest thing you get to an official Kremlin health report is the occasional shirtless photoshoot.

Professor Valery Solovey, who has become one of Moscow's most notorious sensationalists, this year fanned the speculation on YouTube by claiming that Putin was planning to quit any time now as a result of some "force majeure."

The speculation over Putin's long-term health would seem to be at

odds with his decision to push through legislation that allows him to stay in power until 2036. The work for that formally began last January, and he decided to rubber-stamp it with a nationwide referendum over the summer that was not legally necessary but offered Putin the chance to show that he was still the boss when-as expected-he won the referendum comfortably.

The power move failed to quell the speculation among Moscow's elite, where names of potential successors buzz around incessantly.

On radio Echo of Moscow, known as Moscow's ear, the editor-in-chief Aleksey Venediktov reports that the top two contenders are ex-president Dmitry Medvedev, who is now deputy chair of the Security Council, and Sergei Naryshkin, the director of Foreign Intelligence.

Others claim there will be another Putin after Putin. The president's nephew Roman Putin seems to have big political ambitions-the businessman with the familiar name founded a new political party this month called "Russia Without Corruption."

Speculation over Putin's intentions was further inflamed in November when the duma-Russia's Kremlin-friendly parliament-passed the first reading of a bill that would grant Russian presidents and their families immunity from prosecution after they leave office.

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# Brexit: 'Bumpy' period expected as UK adjusts to new EU rules

There will be "bumpy moments" for UK businesses and travellers as they get to grips with new EU rules, says British government minister Michael Gove. He said there would be "practical and procedural changes" when the Brexit transition period ends on 31 December. Mr Gove also urged people going to the EU to make extra checks, including mobile phone roaming charges.

EU ambassadors have approved the post-Brexit trade deal, paving the way for it to take effect on 1 January. Under EU rules it can take effect provisionally, though the European Parliament will vote on it in January. In the UK, MPs will vote on the deal on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, UK International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said she expects to sign a continuity trade agreement with Turkey this week - a move that was not possible until the deal with the EU was struck.

Mr Gove told BBC Breakfast: "I'm sure there will be bumpy moments but we are there in order to try to do everything we can to smooth the path."

He warned businesses that time was "very short" to make the final preparations before the transition period ends.

"The nature of our new relationship with the EU - outside the Single Market and Customs Union - means that there are practical and procedural changes that businesses and citizens need to get ready for," he said.

Businesses have been urged to make sure they understand the new rules on importing and exporting goods, including the different rules that apply to trade with Northern Ireland, and to consider how they will make customs declarations on EU trade.

Mr Gove also encouraged travellers to EU destinations



"Bumpy moments" for UK businesses and travellers as they get to grips with new EU rules. Photo -EPA

from 1 January to take out comprehensive travel insurance, check their mobile phone provider's roaming charges and make sure they have at least six months left on their passports.

Measures are being put in place around the UK as it prepares to enter its new trading relationship with the EU.

The Scottish government has signed a lease to use a former military airfield in Dumfries and Galloway as an emergency lorry park for up to 240 vehicles if there is disruption at Cairnryan port near Stranraer.

In Wales, traffic measures have been introduced on a

major road leading to Holyhead port.

Meanwhile, travellers from Great Britain will need to declare cash of Pounds 10,000 (£9,049) or more when entering Northern Ireland from 1 January.

What took so long? The UK voted to leave the EU in 2016 and actually left on 31 January 2020, but leaders had until the end of 2020 to work out a trade deal.

There are big changes ahead. Although it's a trade deal that has been agreed, there will also be changes to how people travel between the EU and UK, and to the way they live and work

## Covid: South Africa passes one million infections as cases surge



Hospitals and clinics in South Africa are under strain as the numbers of new cases rise. Photo - Reuters

South Africa has become the first country on the continent to register more than one million Covid-19 cases. It comes just days after authorities confirmed that a new, faster-spreading, coronavirus variant had been detected. Some hospitals and medical centres have reported a huge rise in admissions, putting a heavy strain on resources, reports BBC.

President Cyril Ramaphosa is widely expected to announce tougher restrictions to prevent the virus from spreading

further. The latest milestone was announced on Sunday by South Africa's Health Minister, Zweli Mkhize. The country has now confirmed 1,004,413 Covid-19 infections and 26,735 deaths since the outbreak began in March.

Last week, South Africa recorded a daily average of 11,700 new infections - a rise of 39% on the previous week - and from Wednesday to Friday, the daily number of new cases was above 14,000.

A new coronavirus variant - known as

501.V2 - is believed to be driving the surge in infections. It was identified by a network of South African scientists in the Eastern Cape province and then rapidly spread to other parts of the country.

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### UK has two cases of variant linked to South Africa

Earlier this week, the UK banned travel from South Africa because of the new variant. Another new Covid variant has already been detected in the UK, although they have evolved separately.

Both have a mutation - called N501Y - which is in a crucial part of the virus that it uses to infect the body's cells, but appear unrelated to each other.

### Other Covid developments around the world

After South Africa, the worst hit country on the African continent is Morocco, which has seen 432,079 cases and 7,240 deaths. They are followed by Egypt with 131,315 cases and 7,352 deaths and Tunisia with 130,230 infections and 4,426 deaths.

Japan imposed a ban on most non-resident foreign nationals entering the country following confirmation of its first cases of the new variant that emerged in

the UK. The ban will remain in place until at least the end of January. On Saturday, Japan registered a record 3,881 infections including a new record for the capital, Tokyo, of 949

The European Union has begun a co-ordinated vaccine rollout, in what the bloc's most senior official said was a "touching moment of unity". European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine had been delivered to all 27 member states. Some countries began administering the jabs on Saturday, saying they were not prepared to wait another day.

South Korea reported its first cases of the UK variant in three people who arrived from London on 22 December, the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency said on Monday

In the US, top government scientist Anthony Fauci reiterated warnings that there could be a surge in cases as a result of families getting together over the holiday season - despite being urged not to do so. "I share the concern of President-elect (Joe) Biden that as we get into the next few weeks, it [the outbreak] might actually get worse," he told CNN.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah



# 'Should the chasm between the people and their representatives grow, we will be sitting on a ticking time bomb'



**Mauritius Times:** It has been an eventful year what with, amongst others, the Covid-19 outbreak and lockdown, the Wakashio shipwreck and oil spill, the forced resignation of Ivan Collendavelloo following the St Louis Redevelopment project scandal, and lately the disturbing things we are getting to learn from the judicial inquiry into the death in suspicious circumstances of Soopramanien Kistnen. Truly an "annus horribilis" for the Government - and the country as well, isn't it?

**Chetan Ramchurn:** Yes indeed, it has been a complicated year at global, regional and domestic levels. We knew since the beginning of 2020 that the Covid-19 outbreak would reach our shores. On February 3, the Leader of the Opposition questioned Minister Jagutpal on the dearth of personal protective equipment (PPE), on contact tracing as well as on security measures and whether a surveillance system had been implemented. The Minister's reply was: "Government is leaving no stone unturned to protect our citizens from such unwarranted

*The observations of Chetan Ramchurn in this issue's interview on the several aberrations that have marked the country this year are as usual sharp and to the point, quite in line with his usual franc-parler. He is a private entrepreneur who has appeared several times in our columns, and he echoes the sentiments of the younger generation of patriots whose responsibility is to prepare the country for the future and as such his views have to be taken with all the seriousness that they deserve. Read on...*

risks that may be unleashed by such a Public Health Emergency of international concern".

Still, there are doubts on the timing of the lockdown with many averring that had it been enacted before, there would have been fewer deaths resulting from the virus. But, this being one of the rare good decisions of this Government, we should recognise that the lockdown has been maintained for a long enough period and has ensured the safety of Mauritians. The opposition's criticisms against the lack of preparedness of the authorities however have been proved right with many examples of hefty panic buying from mysterious suppliers at the height of the crisis.

The Covid-19 pandemic should not mask our economic woes prior to it nor the ambient corruption that has been perceived for years: the Government has been pretty clueless on the measures that would bail our economy out and promises of a 4% GDP growth have remained a mirage since 2014. Besides the St Louis project, the Kistnen death and the inability of the authorities to detect some form of foul play in it, other 'achievements' of this 14-month old government comprise our inclusion on the blacklist of the European Union, the massive protests against the apparent inaction of the Executive following the Wakashio oil spill and the proliferation of drugs in our society.

I should add however that there is one notable difference between the "annus horribilis" of those in office and that of the population. The self-employed as well as owners of small businesses are left pretty much on their own while the government knows that it has four more years in power. It is countering its evident unpopularity with its usual shtick: visits to religious ceremonies so that the Premier can state repeatedly that he is still in control, staged PR coups celebrating a tramway project that has

*"The post-Wakashio protest stemmed out of ecological concerns and the perception that there was no prompt action taken in the face of a disaster. I am happy to note that people are more aware of the mess we are in now. Whether that superior consciousness will outlast a future pension hike, populist measures or ethnic affiliations, I do not know. Should the economic situation further deteriorate and the State does not act as a caring presence next to those in need, there is certainly the possibility of civil unrest..."*

*"Seniority does not always mean wisdom. There are so many good leaders that are young and performing across the world. Let me add that youth does not automatically mean dynamism or talent as well. Have you seen some of our new government and opposition MPs? The people we are looking for are decision makers that can adapt to an ever-changing environment and that will not sell them out for the interests of their financiers..."*

yet to break even and the strong presence of lackeys on social media professing their utmost devotion to this 37.68% Government. After a dreadful first year, we are to endure four more years of that team. The worst, I fear, is yet to come.

\* Events and incidents that have been taking place and unfolding over the past several weeks with a series of deaths, also in suspicious circumstances, have had the effect of creating an atmosphere of apprehension not only among the population but even the lawyers who have taken up the case of Mr Kistnen and who have expressed concern for their own security. Do you think that apprehension in the minds of the people about the law and order situation is justified?

Not everyone seems to be concerned though. In recent times, many have intervened on pro-government stations or platforms to admonish those that are concerned about the state of law and order in the land. This is usually expressed in succinct terms: 'Aret faire palabres'. That this is expressed verbatim by several individuals shows some form of orchestration; there is a shouting brigade that works towards quelling dissenting voices. The lackeys close to power are working hard towards getting the population to focus about something else.

One crucial book to understand the Mauritian situation is Matthew Simonton 'Classical Greek Oligarchy: A Political History'. In this seminal work, the author highlights how the 'elite' use institutions to maintain the status quo and prevent revolt. The apprehension is justified in light of the recent mysterious deaths. The judicial enquiry instituted following the former MSM agent's death has revealed many loopholes in our system and even more glaringly the degree to which our institutions are poorly run.

That the hefty surveillance state cameras failed to capture crucial footage and that someone who wanted to reveal how fraud and corruption were related to the Kistnen case would not even have his statement recorded in the diary book are revealing. Our institutions are failing

\* Contd on page 8



# 'Institutions are the men and women that make them. I would hope that they stand up for what is moral'



*"The self-employed as well as owners of small businesses are left pretty much on their own while the government knows that it has four more years in power. It is countering its evident unpopularity with its usual shtick: visits to religious ceremonies so that the Premier can state repeatedly that he is still in control, staged PR coups celebrating a tramway project that has yet to break even and the strong presence of lackeys on social media professing their utmost devotion to this 37.68% Government..."*

*"The composition of the MIC should have been done in a more intelligent manner. Political nominees with wobbly track records are ubiquitous in our institutions. Patented historical private sector guys having a say in the spending of our funds seems ludicrous. Socialising losses is hardly new in Mauritius. We had the stimulus package during the Labour years. Of course, no one wants to see a high unemployment rate in the country but there is simply too much opacity in the way funds are being disbursed..."*

**\* Contd from page 7**

But what are institutions? Institutions are the men and women that make them. I would hope that they stand up for what is moral.

**\* But there is clearly more than meets the eye that is going on. Mrs Kistnen's lawyers have openly queried the existence of a 'mafia', in light of the suspicious death of the former MSM activist and the subsequent deaths that all seem to have some connection with the supply chain of requirements during the pandemic. How do you react to that speculation regarding the existence of a mafia?**

Although it would not surprise me at all that there could be one, it is crucial to present some evidence that would link the deaths to each other. There seems to be a lot of coincidences indeed with their alleged involvement in the procurement of equipment or PPE during the lockdown. The Commissioner of Police seemed adamant that there is no such thing. I would have preferred the same promptness when the possibility of a murder was enunciated in court. Will the previous investigators be questioned on how they concluded that Kistnen's death was a suicide?

We have known death squads in the not too distant past. Everyone remembers the Gorah Issac murders. Azor Adelaide lost his life at the hands of a political hit squad as well. It is totally within the realm of possibility that aides of politicians with a gargantuan appetite for money or power

will resort to anything to remain anonymous. Over the last few days, another matter has come out of this Pandora's Box. Evidence showing electoral expenses going beyond the statutory limit was apparently in Kistnen's possession.

**\* The institutions created by the Constitution or set up by Parliament, except for the judiciary and the DPP, appear shy to take the bull by the horns and do what they have been set up for to put the house in order, and there is apprehension in some quarters that it would take just a spark to unleash unrest in the country. What's your take on that?**

There are several levels of unrest or disturbances. The most prominent one in Mauritius takes the form of peaceful marches. The post-Wakashio protest stemmed out of ecological concerns and the perception that there was no prompt action taken in the face of a disaster. I am happy to note that people are more aware of the mess we are in now. Whether that superior consciousness will outlast a future pension hike, populist measures or ethnic affiliations, I do not know. Should the economic situation further deteriorate and the State does not act as a caring presence next to those in need, there is certainly the possibility of civil unrest.

Authorities have to ensure that basic necessities are available to families where the main breadwinner has lost his/her job. There is the need for reskilling and upskilling, and the Government seems to have understood it in the recent months. Let's hope for greater solidarity in the face

of tougher times. Our crippled institutions, unless reformed now with competent people placed at their heads, could create further distrust in the Government and should this chasm grow between the people and their representatives, we will be sitting on a ticking time bomb.

**\* On the other hand, politics, like nature, abhors a vacuum, and so do electors who are still on the lookout for an alternative. The 'Entente', which has brought together the Labour Party, the MMM and the PMSD under one tent, seems to have many more miles to go before it obtains popular support. Is it difficult at this stage to anticipate how far it will go?**

I have strong doubts on the pertinence of this 'entente'. Of course, in the name of the greater good, there are always collaborations that are possible. I wonder how intelligent it is to have three leaders taking turns to speak in a cosy conference room. They seem to be disconnected from the masses.

I note that there seems to be no ideological difference expressed in their views, which is not healthy for our democracy. On the Contribution Sociale Généralisée (CSG), I regret that no socialist views have been expressed. There is the need for progressive taxation. How come the Labour Party is not saying that?

This blurring of identities is not a welcome addition to the political landscape. However lame someone might be, that he requires the pooling of three

factions automatically elevates him to a higher position than warranted. The opposition had better get its strategy and tactics right.

**\* 2021 promises to be a very challenging and perhaps more difficult year that what 2020 has been for the economy. It's likely to be tough times for the government but also for the jobless and even income-earners, and economists have been saying lately there's a limit to which the government can go in dishing out subsidies/wage assistance and even with disbursements from the Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd (MIC) with a view to ensuring social peace in the country. Should we be worried about what's going to happen next?**

The usual response of our leaders is to solicit foreign aid to sustain our expenses. This further reduces our independence and sovereignty. Our clout, some might call it our allure, has in large part been built on our exceptional geographical location in the strategic Indian Ocean. I believe we will resort to it to benefit from lines of credit. How long will we keep doing that? What do we have to give up in exchange for this bail-out? There is no such thing as a free lunch in this world. We should be worried because our leaders have spent unwisely on projects of little or no importance: Safe City, Tramway and the Côte d'Or stadium. There is no clear roadmap to regain a position of economic strength and that is the real concern.

**\* Contd on page 9**



# "After a dreadful first year, the worst, I fear, is yet to come"

\* Contd from page 8

\* As regards the MIC, nothing has changed to date as regards the opacity surrounding its functioning, the conditions attached to its disbursements to "distressed" companies, and now we hear that companies which have benefited from the MIC's support have paid out dividends to their shareholders. It would seem that deep pockets have more political influence, isn't it?

Under the MSM, that would hardly be surprising. The composition of the MIC should have been done in a more intelligent manner. Political nominees with wobbly track records are ubiquitous in our institutions. Patented historical private sector guys having a say in the spending of our funds seems ludicrous. Socialising losses is hardly new in Mauritius. We had the stimulus package during the Labour years. Of course, no one wants to see a high unemployment rate in the country but there is simply too much opacity in the way funds are being disbursed.

As Aditya Narayan in the 2nd June 2020 edition of this paper put it:

"Just throwing money at existing enterprises to keep them afloat and preserve jobs would be a short-sighted vision. It is necessary to look at their business model and determine whether it is sustainable in the long-term. That's where the MIC should be a kind of strategic planner who pushes economic operators towards a more inclusive and sustainable path of growth, taking into account the need for a greener economy that is geared towards import substitution, food self-sufficiency and energy security."

\* In view of the apprehensions regarding the situation that would prevail next year, would you say the country would still require experienced,



old hands both in the government and in the opposition to steer the boat to safer waters?

It has little to do with age. Seniority does not always mean wisdom. There are so many good leaders that are young and performing across the world. Let me add that youth does not automatically mean dynamism or talent as well. Have you seen some of our new government and opposition MPs? The people we are looking for are decision makers that can adapt to an ever-changing environment and that will not sell them out for the interests of their financiers.

But coming back to your question, I fail to see why people from the opposition would join forces with a government they have rightly criticised for months and who

would get the final say? A serious opposition is crucial for the good running of a democracy. To do without a credible opposition would be a step backwards.

\* The government's rebuttal to all the allegations levelled in the wake of these suspicious deaths is that the opposition and the media are doing politics. If that is indeed the case, that would amount to dangerous politics. How do you react to that?

Some of the figures in the actual government had no such qualms when they peeped into the private lives of their opponents or used suspicious deaths for political gains in the past. If there was no basis for further investigation, this would be dangerous politics indeed, but there seems to be ample ground for suspicion in

*"That the hefty surveillance state cameras failed to capture crucial footage and that someone who wanted to reveal how fraud and corruption were related to the Kistnen case would not even have his statement recorded in the diary book are revealing. Our institutions are failing us. But what are institutions? Institutions are the men and women that make them. I would hope that they stand up for what is moral..."*

the Kistnen case. There is clearly a lack of seriousness in the way the authorities have acted till now. The level of cooperation is not the best we have seen between the judiciary and relevant authorities. The fears of tampering are very much justified.

Unlike many, I do not idolise the lawyers purporting to seek justice. I concur that there are renowned attention seekers that are trying to exist through this case. But there is only one goal to be pursued: to discover the truth and only one victim, Kistnen Soopramanien and his family. So we should be careful about what exactly is being sought. I also find the constant reminder that this is being done 'pro bono' vulgar.

Having said that, I understand the necessity to draw attention to the many suspicious deaths as the media is doing and so are the lawyers who seem to be better informed than anyone else. Will we know the truth about the strange deaths during the present regime? It seems highly unlikely.



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From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

4th Year No 155

## MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 26 July 1957

| *If there be no enemy there's no fight. If no fight, no victory and if no victory there is no crown. -- Thomas Carlyle*

# So, you're coming to Britain...

Peter Pan

**N**ever before, I fancy, the influx of colonial people in London has been as steady as it has been during the past five or six years.

As a matter of fact, one daily comes across thousands of Jamaicans, Nigerians, West Indians, Indians, Mauritians, etc., in the most popular areas of London, to wit, Piccadilly Circus, Oxford Circus, Hyde Park, Madame Tussaud, London Museum, University of London, Colonial Office, Mauritius Bureau, not to speak of places of worldwide repute like Trafalgar Square, Whitehall, with Big Ben towering high in the air, and the Thames flowing by under a grey, dull sky...

This influx of people coming from all corners of the Commonwealth is gradually causing grave concern to the population and Government of Britain; and so, before you come here we would rather brush up the complete picture for you so that you might not be too disappointed like so many – during your short stay here.

## Is Britain a really hospitable place?

In a large degree, yes. But... But, let us add that this hospitality has been of late exploited to the full. Apparently too many people think that Britain is simply a modern Eldorado where you get everything free of charge: namely the dole, health services, free dentures, glasses, family allowance, etc.

Although one enjoys many benefits here, yet on the whole one steadily learns that nothing really is obtained free of charge. From personal experience, I know that you cannot get glasses or hearing aids unless you pay at least £1 and very often as much as £3 to £4!

At one time, dentures were issued free of charge. Today you have to pay for same. Health services too are not really free: you actually pay a nominal charge for each drug prescribed by the doctor on his prescription; and very few doctors would prescribe here costly things like rimifon, cortisone or tonics like Sanatogen or Neo-Vita.

In the long run, we are afraid that casual visitors here will not get free dental treatment, still less specialised treatment at Barts or Guy's hospital for nothing. Why? Simply because most visitors here have exploited fully the elastic scheme, so much so that of late it has been fairly diffi-



cult for some colonial visitors to be readily admitted in State hospitals.

## How goes the cost of living?

It is indeed very hard to give a neat and straightforward answer to that question, for most people do not fall in the same economic or social bracket.

Broadly speaking, the bachelor who likes his cigarettes, his drinks, plus some fun every weekend, -- cinema, dancing, theatre – should be able to live easily on about £8-10 to £9 per week. Incidentally, most students have to cope with no more than £5 to \$6 per week. One friend of mine confessed that he could not afford more than £4 every week, and by that time he was preparing his BSc (Econ)!...

The married man, with a wife and one or two kids to support, must reckon with a minimum of about £9-10 to £10 per week. And if his wife does not work, it can be a real hardship for him to make both ends meet, as jobs of £10 per week are hard, pretty hard to get.

## The major issue: Jobs!

This is the moot point! Apparently, most people at home think that it is very easy to get a good, well-paid job in Britain. At one time, especially after the War, no doubt there were jobs here for one and all – qualified or not. Today with automation, with guided missiles – which have displaced thousands in the armed forces and in the Royal Air Force particularly – with women competing with men in most jobs it is certainly not easy overnight to find a good job, a job quite congenial to one's taste and ability.

With the new Industrial Age, Britain is more in need of physicists, chemists, draughtsmen, research workers, metallur-

gists, technicians, builders, electricians, etc, than of clerks, bookkeepers – however good the diplomas of the latter might be!

You'll be amazed to learn that in Britain a miner, a bricklayer, a draughtsman, in brief, people engaged in jobs frowned upon at home, earn more there than young doctors who work in London hospitals!

So, if you are interested in electricity, in engineering, in the building trade, in printing, in electronics, in Physics, Chemistry, in research work, Britain is the place for you; but if you are nothing but a "clerk" you'll find it very hard to get the job you want.

All things being equal, preference will be given to the English candidate rather than to the foreign or colonial competitor, although the latter very often comes along with very impressive diplomas. Incidentally, most English bosses are not very interested in diplomas. They all try, at the very first interview, to size you up, by assessing your I.Q. (Intelligence Quotient),

your true self, your personality; and to the British boss, a man with a magnetic personality, with a resonant, charming voice, is worth more than the dull, shy graduate who has no opinion of his own!...

If you are lucky to get a clerk's job – and there are very few in London for colonial people – then you can be sure that you are in for a very dreary and ill-paid job. Most clerks in London, working from 8 or 9 a.m. to 5 or 6 p.m. with one hour's break, do not earn more than £8-10 to £9 and if you subtract the tax, the insurance, you are not left with a lot of money!... Honestly, if you ever think of coming here to seek a job, you should try to learn first electricity, the orthodox way or engineering, or brick-laying. With such jobs in hand, you can be pretty quickly fixed up anywhere in Britain. And your weekly wages will be good.

## By way of conclusion

In a large degree, one finds innumerable advantages in a city like London. One can study a host of subjects in evening classes by paying every term a very moderate fee; one daily has the chance to see good films. If you like classical music, well, every week you'll have at least a very good concert at the Royal Festival Hall or at the Convent Garden Opera. If you are quite keen about learning languages, every evening you can join a linguist class to learn Italian or Spanish.

But London, or Britain at large, can be a very awkward place for visitors, or colonial people who are very temperamental. On the whole, the Anglo-Saxon is very shy, very reserved. His xenophobia is today proverbial. His way of reasoning is essentially insular. According to the French writer, Raymond Las Vergnas, the typical Britisher vis-à-vis the foreigner cannot help thinking: "*Il est différent, donc il a tort*"...

Somehow, London is really unique in the world. Once you get to know the Londoner, the thoroughbred like my friend Peter, you'll find in him a very reliable and cooperative friend. A friend who will stick to you through thick and thin...





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# Spectrum of Mauritian Achievers – Karuna Ramanah & Samila Savomy



**Kishore Teelenah**

**I**t is a well-known fact that all Mauritians who came to the United Kingdom have made tremendous progress in one way or another. According to the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), white working-class men are 50% less likely to go to university than white working-class women. In contrast, immigrant families tend to take advantage of the golden opportunities to move up in society - something which could not have been possible at the time they left Mauritius. They came armed with an unshakable work ethic and a willingness to achieve at any cost. This article gives an account of two Mauritians who have made their relatives both in the UK and Mauritius proud. One quality that makes these compatriots stand out is their ability to adapt and embrace British society and integrate where some others have failed. Education has been seen as both life-changing and story-changing for them.

## Karuna Ramanah

Karuna is a Mauritian-born lady who came to Britain in the late 1990s and like other newcomers, she started from humble beginnings. After getting married, she started a job at McDonald's fast food restaurant and gradually worked her way up to become the manager. She set herself a higher standard by completing a course in English at Level 3. Karuna continued in her employment at McDonald's at the head office to support her supervisor with administrative duties.



Karuna Ramanah receiving an Achievement Award for contribution to Mauritius Hindu Association Society

After the birth of her daughter, she continued to work part time to support her husband's photography business at their studio. She was already an experienced kindergarten teacher in Mauritius and wanted to pursue her career in Primary Education. Karuna followed a Teaching Assistant course to start her new career in the school classroom. As she got further experience in this field, she was inspired to upskill to become a full-time Learning Support Assistant (LSA). While working as an LSA, she joined the Mauritius Hindu Association and helped with the administrative duties for many years. She was promoted to the role of Executive Assistant to jointly run the society with the committee members. In the meantime she continued to be a strong support for the Mauritius Hindu Association in promoting societal values and community work. Karuna is also a member of the Mauritius Telegu Association and proud to continue with her philanthropic activities.

\* \* \*



Samila Savomy and some of the members of the Mauritius Telugu Association

## Samila Savomy

Samila left Mauritius for Britain in late 1980s after getting married. She had already successfully completed her School Leaving Certificate from Mauritius and after arriving in London, she pushed herself to do further studies. She started with a secretarial course at Pitman College in Holborn. Samila went on to take two short courses in First Aid and Childcare. While appreciating the value of hard work and endurance, she pursued a study in Critical Thinking and Analysis at the University of East London.

In 1989, she worked as Housing Administrator dealing with housing applications, recording the statistics of income and expenditures. By 2008, Samila used her mathematics skill to work as an Account Assistant in a Nursing Care Home, collating all payments for the Finance Director. After five years, her skills and ex-



**Award given by Mauritius Hindu Association to MTA for their dedication and hard work in their contribution to society. From L to R: Mrs Daya Appiah, Mrs Rubina Naiker (Chair) and Ms Samila Savomy**

perience had prepared her to work at a Doctor's Surgery in Barking, London. In the current Covid-19 pandemic, she is at the forefront as a key worker where her knowledge and practice of health care is of utmost importance.

She had provided voluntary services to the Mauritius Telegu Association (MTA) for the past 28 years by attending their meetings as well as serving as vice-president. She was intensely involved with the administrative work. This also included making contacts with hundreds of members and non-members in promoting MTA. Part of the duties included monthly prayers in which Samila was quite proactive and well organised. A society cannot run without funds and her experience and sheer hard work for charity events helped MTA progress further. She is a talented cook and amongst other members provided meals for prayers and fundraising events.

The vibrant celebrations of Mauritius Independence Day, Diwali, Sankranti and other religious ceremonies have been special among British-Mauritians. These would not be possible without proper administration and planning. As Mauritians love their traditional foods, Samila took a lead in preparing and cooking meals and snacks. Her much appreciated philanthropic work has been very useful to several societies in support of the Mauritian communities. She has been a member of the Mauritius Telegu Association for 28 years and dedicated her time wisely while being a caring mother. Her relentless charity work was also shared with a Tamil Association where she supported the chair with administrative work and organising prayers and food.

**Mauritian-born Kishore Teelenah, Section Manager for Science Further and Higher Education (London), has over 34 years of experience in teaching, learning and education management in Science having worked in many educational establishments at different levels. He has a special interest in Biomedical Sciences in such subjects as cancer and diabetes. He is also a mentor to final year Bioscience degree students at Kingston University.**



# Coronavirus: how the pandemic could play out in 2021

\* Cont. from page 2

## How will the pandemic unfold?

After people have had Covid-19 (or received a vaccine), they become immune (at least in the short term). Those infected later then increasingly have contact with immune people rather than susceptible ones. Transmission therefore falls and eventually the disease stops spreading – this is known as herd immunity.

The level of immunity across the population needed to stop the virus spreading isn't precisely known. It's thought to be between 60% and 80%. We're currently nowhere near that – meaning billions around the world will need to be vaccinated to stop the virus spreading.

This also relies on vaccines preventing transmission of the virus, which hasn't yet been proved. If it is, we'll see a decline in Covid-19 cases, perhaps as early as spring 2021. However, lockdowns and other measures will still be needed to limit transmission while vaccination builds up population immunity – particularly wherever the more infectious strain of the virus has taken hold.

In contrast, if the vaccine only prevents infected individuals from becoming seriously ill, we will be left relying on infections to build up herd immunity. In this scenario, vaccinating the vulnerable would



Photo - politico.com

reduce the death rate, but serious illness and long Covid affecting younger people would likely persist.

## What's likely to change?

Vaccines aren't a silver bullet – some level of precaution will need to be maintained for months. In areas where the highly infectious strain is rampant, high-level restrictions may last until vaccine roll-out has finished. Any changes will come slowly, primarily in the area of care home visits and reopening hospitals for regular treat-

ment.

In time, travel will hopefully become more straightforward, though airlines might start requiring vaccination certificates. Although some countries require vaccination against yellow fever for entry, requiring immunity passports for Covid-19 is likely to prove contentious.

Mask wearing might become a social habit globally as it is now in Asia – for example when somebody is not feeling well or is concerned for their health.

## Looking further ahead

Can vaccination lead to eradication of the virus? We don't yet know how long vaccine-based immunity lasts – and long-term immunity will be key. Fully eradicating the virus will be very difficult and will require a global effort.

While we've got close to eradicating polio, smallpox remains the only human disease we've fully stamped out, and this took almost 200 years. Measles, for example, although nearly eradicated in many countries, keeps coming back.

Some vaccines, like measles, give nearly lifelong protection, whereas others need to be repeated, like tetanus. If Covid-19 mutates regularly and significantly – and its potential to do so has just been demonstrated – we may need to take new vaccines periodically, like we do for flu. In the long term, we would also need to vaccinate children to maintain herd immunity.

The social and economic effects of the pandemic will probably be long-lasting too. Perhaps life will never return to what it was before. But it is up to us to make it safer by being better prepared for future pandemics.

**Adam Kleczkowski** -  
University of Strathclyde

## 2021: Sources to watch

Samad Ramoly

**Global Politics:** Kishore Mahbubani, Fareed Zakaria...

**Global Capitalism:** Rana Foroohar, Mohamed el-Erian, iconoclast central banker Andy Haldane (Sign of the times: an outlying white European male)...

**Global Identities:** Pankaj Mishra, Achille Mbembe...

**Global Whatever:** The one & only Nassim Taleb...

**Global Policies:** Usual suspect Singapore, fast learner South Korea, women-led Finland...

Additions welcome.



## COMMUNIQUE

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- (1) Holders of licences (including licence holders in Rodrigues) for wholesale/retail sale of **Beer, Rum, Liquor** and **alcoholic products** issued under Part III of the Excise Act 1994, are hereby informed that renewal of the above licences for Year 2021 may now be effected electronically through MRA website: [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu).
- (2) Holders of wholesale licence of **Beer, Rum, Liquor** and **alcoholic products** must ensure that they have furnished to the MRA a security by means of a bond, prior to availing themselves of the online renewal facility.
- (3) The MRA requests licence holders to avail themselves of the Direct Debit facility for payment of appropriate licence fee. Appropriate instructions and procedures for online renewal of the above licences are also available on MRA website.
- (4) **Any licence renewed after 14 January 2021 will attract a surcharge of 50%.**

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

22 December 2020

Ehram Court, Cnr Mgr. Gonin & Sir Virgil Naz Streets, Port Louis, Mauritius  
T: +230 207 6000 | F: +230 211 8099 | E: [headoffice@mra.mu](mailto:headoffice@mra.mu) | W: [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu)





# Funny Jokes for New Year

What happened to the Irish man who thought about the evils of drinking in the New Year? He gave up thinking.

Women get a little more excited about New Year's Eve than men do. It's like an excuse: you drink too much, you make a lot of promises you're not going to keep; the next morning as soon as you wake up you start breaking them. For men, we just call that a date.

On New Year's Eve, Marilyn stood up in the local pub and said that it was time to get ready. At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living. Well, it was kind of embarrassing. As the clock struck, the bartender was almost crushed to death.

A friend asks his friend 4 a cigrtte. His friend says  
I think u made a Nw Yr resolution 2 quit smoking.  
Da man says. I am in da process of quitting. Right now  
I am in da middle of phase 1. What's phase 1?  
I've quit buying

On New Year's Eve, Daniel was in no shape to drive, so he sensibly left his van in the car park and walked home. As he was wobbling along, he was stopped by a policeman. 'What are you doing out here at four o'clock in the morning?' asked the police officer.

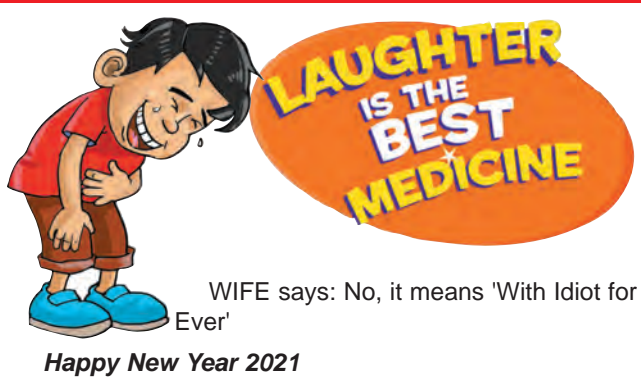
'I'm on my way to a lecture,' answered Roger.  
'And who on earth, in their right mind, is going to give a lecture at this time on New Year's Eve?' enquired the constable sarcastically.

'My wife,' slurred Daniel grimly.  
Jemima was taking an afternoon nap on New Year's Eve before the festivities. After she woke up, she confided to Max, her husband, 'I just dreamed that you gave me a diamond ring for a New Year's present. What do you think it all means?'

'Aha, you'll know tonight,' answered Max smiling broadly.

At midnight, as the New Year was chiming, Max approached Jemima and handed her small package. Delighted and excited she opened it quickly. There in her hand rested a book entitled: 'The meaning of dreams'.

Husband asks: Do you know the meaning of WIFE.  
It means, 'Without Information Fighting Every time'



## New Year's Eve One-liners

A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.

My new year's resolution is to be more optimistic by keeping my cup half-full with either rum, vodka, or whiskey.

My New Year's resolution is to stop hanging out with people who ask me about my New Year's resolutions.

If your born in September, it's pretty safe to assume your parents started out the New Year with a Bang!

I have only one resolution. To rediscover the difference between wants and needs. May I have all I need and want all I have. Happy New Year!

If 2020 was a person, I'd sue him for pain and suffering and lost wages.

Dear Luck, .....can we be friends in 2021 please?  
I raised my left leg before the ball dropped so I could start the New Year off on the right foot.

In 2020, may your neighbours respect you, troubles neglect you, angels protect you, and may all your troubles last as long as your New Year resolutions.

Dear God, my prayer for 2021 is a FAT bank account and a THIN body.

Many things can be preserved in alcohol this New Years Eve. DIGNITY is not one of them.

Every year I make a resolution to change myself..... this year making a resolution to be myself! I'm planning on finding new and interesting things to hate about my job in 2021.

Just heard that in 2020 there will be a new device that



can turn thoughts into speech. I have had that for years, it's called alcohol.

Keep the smile, Leave the tear, Hold the laugh, Leave the pain, Think of joy, Forget the fear. Be joyous, cause it's a New Year. New Year's is just a holiday created by calendar companies who don't want you reusing last year's calendar.

I'm actually feeling pretty okay about not accomplishing anything this year. My 2021 resolution is for everyone else to gain the 50 pounds I refuse to lose.

I was going to quit drinking for the new year, but then I remembered no one likes a quitter. It's officially New Year Eve, you only have a couple of hours to do all the things you will resolve not to do in the new year.

There have been many times in 2020, when I have annoyed you, distubed you, irritated you, and bugged the hell out of you.....today I just wanna tell you I plan to continue in 2021!



## Quotable Quotes

It is not very difficult to sacrifice every-thing for people you love.

But it's very difficult to find people, who respect your sacrifice.

No matter how many times the teeth bite the tongue, but still they stay & work together...

That's the spirit of forgiveness and relationship.

Pages of yesterday cannot be revised, but the pages of today and tomorrow are blank.

You hold the pen, make it an inspiring story.

Always believe best is yet to come.

Confidence doesn't come when you have all the answers. But it comes when you are ready to face all the questions.

Locks are never manufactured without a key. There are no problems without solutions. Only we need to have patience to unlock them!

People will question all the good things they hear about you... but they believe all the bad things without a second thought. That's life.

Disappointments are like road humps. They slow you down a bit but you enjoy the smooth road afterwards.

Don't stay on the humps too long, move on...

People are so unpredictable... Even if you live your life as an open book, people will still wonder which pages have secret messages.



## Happiness Hacks

# 20 things you can do in 2021 to make it the best year of your life

*2020 has been particularly hard, and it has taught us some important lessons. How about stepping into 2021 with this checklist of how to stay content and feel happy? We think it's a great plan!*



There's no doubt that we've all gone through a lot this past year. A global crisis literally took over our lives at the beginning of 2020, confining us to our homes almost the entire year. This is something we couldn't have imagined, even in our wildest dreams. In hindsight, it has also taught us a lot of important lessons - of being mindful, living in the moment, and never taking anything for granted.

As we march ahead into the next year, let's learn a few things that will provide us with contentment and long-lasting joy. Here are 21 things to do in 2021 to make it the best year yet:

## 1. Wake up naturally

You might think of it as a strange suggestion. I mean, is it even possible to wake up without an alarm clock? Well, it is. Practise a routine of sleeping on time and waking up at the same hour every day. That's how your biorhythm should work, with no alarms to jolt you out of your slumber. Wake up naturally and start your day with a positive mood.

## 2. Begin every morning with a smile

We know life can take over, and it might feel like an ordeal to smile the first thing every morning, but push yourself to do it. Tell yourself it's going to be a day full of happiness and contentment, and have a wide smile on your face. It might sound silly, but trust us, it will really set the tone for the day ahead!

## 3. Exercise daily

Do whatever that makes you move - it could be dancing, jumping on the spot, or going for a run with your favourite music playing through your earphones. Make sure you're incorporating 20 minutes of exercise every single day for your dose of happy hormones.

## 4. Sing in the shower

Haven't we all felt a sense of happiness when we come out of a nice shower after belting out our favourite song? Oh, and while you are at it, don't forget to put on your best-scented body wash. Well, it is believed that our favourite aromas have pleasant olfactory memories associated with them that make us feel blissful. Now, that's a good enough reason to enjoy a warm shower and de-stress!

## 5. Practise meditation

We are always hustling, and unfortunately, our culture glorifies that. We are never really told to slow down, but guess what? That's equally important. Practising meditation for about 15 to 20 minutes every day is a healthy practice. In fact, research shows that our brain releases an anti-anxiety chemical called GABA when we practice meditation or yoga. A study in the Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine found there is a 27 per cent increase in GABA levels after an hour of meditation.

## 6. Eat breakfast

Most of us are in such a hurry every morning that we forget to eat breakfast, and end up feeling 'hangry'. Well, how about enjoying a nourishing meal packed with your favourite foods every morning? It will help you look forward to something, and at the same time, give you a boost of energy.

## 7. Get into the habit of reading

With dwindling attention spans these days, most people find reading 'very boring'. It really isn't, though! Get a book from your favourite genre, slip into the quilt, and sip on some hot chocolate as you immerse yourself in a different world.

## 8. Focus on one task

We function on auto-pilot mode and perform tasks mechanically, often juggling several things at a time. Well, the key is to focus on one task at a time. Multitasking actually affects your focus and causes stress.

## 9. Take an afternoon nap

Taking an afternoon nap can be extremely helpful in boosting your mood. At the same time, it ensures "improved alertness and performance without interfering with your night-time sleep." Research also shows that when you do not take a nap in the day, you become sensitive to negative emotions.

## 10. Call your friends

How about catching up with a few friends over a nice, warm conversation? There's nothing like venting out or feeling nostalgic when you share memories. It's a great feeling and makes you feel so comfy. According to a study published by the British Medical Journal in December 2008 by Harvard University, happy friends increase our happiness by 15.3 per cent!

## 11. Meet some friends in person

We know 2020 has been hard because we haven't been able to meet so many of our friends in person! But, in the coming year, how about taking precautions and stepping out to see a friend or two in the neighbourhood? There's also a study by Fowler and Christakis that suggests that a happy friend who lives within half a kilometre of your house, makes you 42 per cent more likely to be happy too.

## 12. Spend money on experiences

There's no denying that it is fun to spend money on buying that latest gadget or that outfit you've been eyeing for a long time. But, the amount of satisfaction you get when spending on experiences is completely different.

## 13. Give hugs

This is the best thing to happen to humans! When you hug a person, your body releases the cuddle chemical, oxytocin. That's why you end up feeling happy! It is a hormone that is linked to social bonding, fostering trust and loyalty. Moreover, a hug also lowers your blood pressure and helps you release anxiety. So, hug away to glory.

## 14. Eat a prolonged dinner

We understand life is tough, and there's a lot that needs to be juggled during the day. But, how about giving yourself some time at night, maybe during dinner? Spend an hour by yourself, or enjoy the meal with your family as you share the stories of the day. It won't just make you feel great, but the effect will also pass on to your family.

## 15. Keep a gratitude journal

Write about the best things that have happened to you during the course of the day in a journal. It will train your mind to find positivity on tough days.

## 16. Get enough sleep

A good 7 to 8 hours of sleep is essential for your contentment. When you don't sleep enough, your hippocampus (the seat of pleasant and neutral memories in your brain) doesn't function properly. As a result, your sleep-deprived brain tends to recall fewer positive memories and a higher number of negative memories.

## 17. Drink water

Drink a glass of water first thing in the morning when you wake up. In fact, keep drinking water at regular intervals throughout the day. Research says that those who drink "more than enough" water consider themselves very happy, as compared to those who don't. That's because even a mere 1.5 per cent loss of body fluid can cause fatigue, anxiety, headaches and an unwillingness to take up challenging tasks.

## 18. Take a free online course

2020 has opened up several avenues to brush up on your skills and gain knowledge, that too without spending a penny. Take free online courses on various websites and you'll feel so empowered. In turn, you are more likely to feel content.

## 19. Volunteer

Volunteering your time is a great way to help others and feel content at the same time. Whether it's an old age home or an animal shelter, there are many places that could benefit from a helping hand.

## 20. Try your hand at gardening

One of the new activities to try out in 2021 could be gardening. Scientists have discovered that the mycobacterium found in soil can improve brain function while boosting moods. The mycobacterium vaccae found in the soil increases serotonin produced in the brain. So, by getting your hands dirty, you'll actually feel happy!

Try out these 20 things and make 2021 a year full of positivity!

Geetika Sachdev



# From '83 to Laal Singh Chaddha, top 10 Bollywood movies to watch in 2021

As the entertainment industry reels from the Covid-19 pandemic, the year 2021 may offer hope for filmmakers and theatre owners, reports Business Standard

While 2020 has turned out to be a dark, forgettable year for the Hindi film industry because of Covid-19, there is some hope that 2021 will turn out to be different with a large number of films - both small and big-budget ones - will find their way to theatre screens across India and abroad.

One notable thing about 2020 was how Bollywood quickly moved on as projects were stalled and many jobs were lost during the lockdown. From shootings being halted to postponing release dates, the entertainment industry saw it all and is ready to return to the silver screen with much-awaited projects.

Here are the top 10 Bollywood movies to watch out for in 2021:

## 1. '83

Directed by Kabir Khan, '83 is a movie on India's historic Cricket World Cup win in 1983. The sports drama stars Ranveer Singh in the role of team captain, Kapil Dev, and is slated to release in 2021. It was earlier scheduled to be out in April 2020.

## 2. Sooryavanshi

The movie is a part of Rohit Shetty's *Singham* franchise and was a much awaited movie slated to release in 2020. Now the makers have decided to schedule it for the first quarter of 2021. The movie has Akshay Kumar and Katrina Kaif in lead roles.

## 3. Thalaivi

Starring Kangana Ranaut in the lead role, the shooting of *Thalaivi* was wrapped up on December 12. Following the pack-up, Ranaut wrote on Twitter, "And it's a wrap, today we successfully completed the filming of our most ambitious project *Thalaivi* - the revolutionary leader, rarely an actor finds a character that comes alive in flesh and blood and I fall in love so hard but now suddenly it's time to say bye, mixed feelings." The movie is directed by AL Vijay and also features Arvind Swami and Prakash Raj.

## 4. Radhe: Your Most Wanted Bhai

Directed by Prabhu Deva, the action-drama got Salman Khan and Disha Patani in leading roles. The shooting was wrapped up in October and most probably will release on Eid 2021.



## 5. Brahmastra

The much-anticipated movie was scheduled to release in December 2020 but the pandemic forced a postponement. After *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani*, this is Ayan Mukherji's first project after 7 years. The movie has stellar actors starring Amitabh Bachchan, Ranbir Kapoor, and Alia Bhatt. The dates are not confirmed yet but hopefully, it will release hopefully release in 2021, having been delayed for long already.

## 6. Pathan

Starring Shah Rukh Khan, Deepika Padukone, and John Abraham, *Pathan* is slated to release on Diwali 2021. The movie is directed by Siddhartha Anand and the shooting has begun for the action-revenge flick.

## 7. Atrangi Re

Slated to release in 2021, the movie is directed by Anand L Rai and stars Akshay Kumar, Sara Ali Khan, and Dhanush. The movie will see Khan romancing Kumar and Dhanush in two timelines set in Bihar and Tamil Nadu, according to media reports.

## 8. Jersey

Finally, all the Shahid Kapoor fans can finally sigh in relief. Directed by Gowtam Tinnamuri, *Jersey* is a Telugu-remake that will release in 2021. The shooting was wrapped in 47 days during the pandemic. Kapoor will be seen playing the character of a cricketer and will also star

Pankaj Kapur.

## 9. Laal Singh Chaddha

Aamir Khan will return to the silver screen as Laal Singh Chaddha in the Hindi adaptation of the Tom Hanks starrer *Forrest Gump*. *Forrest Gump* was released in 1994 and is recognised as a classic. The movie was adapted for a Hindi remake by actor-writer Atul Kulkarni. Previously scheduled for release on Christmas 2020, the film's release has now been pushed to Christmas 2021 as the shooting couldn't be completed on time because of the pandemic.

## 10. Gangubai Kathiawadi

Another movie that was supposed to release this year, the Sanjay Leela Bhansali-directed biopic is now slated for 2021 if all goes well. The shooting for the movie resumed in October and stars Alia Bhatt as Gangubai Kathiawadi, apparently one the most dreaded character in Mumbai's underworld.



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## To Rent

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Parking and 24 hour security, swimming pool  
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# Top 9 highest-paid Indian television actresses of 2020



Indian television shows are considered to be one of the biggest sources of entertainment for the audience. Nowadays, there are several Indian TV shows or serials that are giving tough competition to the Hindi film industry. Many TV actresses have gained global recognition thanks to the immense popularity of their shows. According to reports, many such actresses are being paid far greater than several Bollywood actresses.

You must be wondering, how much popular TV actresses earn for a single episode or a show. Without any further ado, let's talk about the top 9 highest paid Hindi television actresses of 2020.

## Hina Khan

Hina Khan is one of the most popular faces of the Indian TV industry. The popular actress is known for her characters Akshara in *Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai* and Komolika in *Kasautii Zindagii Kay*. Apart from acting, she participated in Salman Khan's reality TV show, *Bigg Boss 11* and emerged as the first runner up in 2017.

*Kasautii Zingadii Zay* was one of the highest generating TRP shows of all time. According to reports, Hina Khan gets paid a whopping sum of Rs 150,000 to Rs 200,000 per episode.

## Divyanka Tripathi

Divyanka Tripathi is a popular TV actress, who made her acting debut in the TV industry for Doordarshan. She earned nation-wide fame and recognition with Zee TV's drama fiction *Banoo Main Teri Dulhann* by playing the dual roles of Vidya, an orphan and illiterate girl, and Divya, a modern and literate girl.

Due to her outstanding acting, she won many awards including the Indian Television Academy Award for Best Actress in Drama Category and the Indian Telly Award for Fresh New Face. Divyanka Tripathi is currently known for playing the character of Dr Ishita Bhalla in *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein*. Besides acting, Divyanka Tripathi hosted several award shows and she has been a part of dance reality show *'Nach Baliye 8'*. She apparently charges a whopping amount of Rs 80,000-85,000 per episode.

## Jennifer Winget

Jennifer Winget is one of the most beautiful and talented Hindi TV actresses. She is popularly known for her roles Kumud Desai in *Saraswatichandra*, Maya Mehrotra in *Beyhadh* and Zoya Siddiqui in *Bepannah*.

Jennifer Winget made her acting debut as a child actor when she was merely 12-year old in *Raja Ko Rani Se Pyar Ho Gaya*. Later, as an adult, she went on to work in scores of Indian TV shows. According to reports, earlier the actress was being paid Rs 80,000 to Rs 85,000 per

episode but now her pay-check has been increased to Rs 100,000 per episode.

## Surbhi Jyoti

One of the most sought after actresses of Hindi TV industry, Surbhi is well known for her roles of Zoya in *Qubool Hai* and Naagrani Bela in *Naagin 3*. She started her acting career with regional theatre and films.

Apart from working in Hindi TV shows, Surbhi Jyoti has worked in Punjabi movies *Ik Kudi Punjab Di*, *Raula Pai Gaya* and *Munde Patiala De*. According to reports, following *Naagin 3*,

roles in *Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii* and *Bade Achhe Lagte Hain*. Sakshi Tanwar debuted in Indian TV industry with *Albela Sur Mela* in 1998 but she rose to fame with her portrayal of Parvati Agarwal in the soap opera, *Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii*. In December 2012, she made a second appearance on Amitabh Bachchan's TV reality show *Kaun Banega Crorepati*.

Besides TV shows, Sakshi appeared in Aamir Khan's film *Dangal* wherein she played Daya Kaur, wife of former wrestler Mahavir Singh Phogat (played by Aamir Khan), who trains his daughters to be world-class wrestlers against social odds.

She is the only TV actress who has always been in the list of top 10 actresses of the TV industry. Sakshi, who has hosted many reality shows such as 'Crime Patrol', 'Code Red' and 'Tyohaar Ki Thaali' reportedly takes home almost Rs 125,000 to Rs 150,000 per episode.

## Krystle D'souza

Surbhi has become quite a famous actress and apparently earns Rs 70,000 to Rs 75,000 per episode. Notably, Jyoti is also the brand ambassador of Reliance Jewels.

## Asha Negi

Asha Negi is one of the most popular and talented Hindi TV actresses. She earned fame and recognition for her characters of her roles in the shows *Pavitra Rishta* as Purvi, *Ek Mutthi Aasmaan* as Kalpana, *Kuch Toh Hai Tere Mere Darmiyaan* as Koyal. Asha took part in the Indian dance reality show *Nach Baliye 6* along with her partner Rithvik Dhanjani in 2014.

Negi began her career as a model in 2009 after she won the title of Miss Uttarkhand 2009 during her college days. Later she auditioned for her first TV show in 2010 with the popular show *Sapnon Se Bhare Naina* playing the role as Madhura. Post her first TV show, she appeared on the Balaji Telefilms series *Bade Achhe Lagte Hain*, where she played the negative role, Apeksha Malhotra.

According to reports, she gets paid a sum of Rs 75,000 to Rs 80,000 per episode.

## Nia Sharma

Nia Sharma is undoubtedly one of the most popular Hindi TV actresses of recent time. She has worked in many Indian TV shows but popularly known for portraying the lead roles of Anu in *Kaali - Ek Agnipariksha*, Manvi in *Ek Hazaaron Mein Meri Behna Hai*, *Roshni* in *Jamai Raja* and Aarohi Kashyap in *Ishq Mein Marjawan*.

Besides TV shows, Nia Sharma has also been a part of *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi* in 2017 and web series *Twisted*. She was ranked second in the Top 50 Sexiest Asian Women 2017 list published by British-based Eastern Eye newspaper. According to reports, she takes home a sum of Rs 75,000 to Rs 80,000 for shooting a single episode.

## Sakshi Tanwar

Sakshi Tanwar is one of the most experienced and highest-paid Hindi TV actresses. She is known for her



Krystle D'Souza is one of the most sought after actresses of Indian TV shows. She is known for her roles Jeevika Vadhera in *Ek Hazaaron Mein Meri Behna Hai* and Sakshi in *Ek Nayi Pehchaan*. D'Souza debuted her acting career when she was in college.

The actress had started her acting career with *Kahe Na Kahe* in the year 2007, and later she appeared in several other shows. Krystle gained fame and recognition with *Ek Hazaaron Mein Meri Behna Hai*, which also featured Nia Sharma.

Talking about her remuneration, Krystle D'Souza apparently charges around Rs 55,000 to Rs 60,000 for one episode.

## Drashti Dhami

Drashti Dhami is a well known Indian model and TV actress. She is popularly known for her portrayal of Geet in *Geet - Hui Sabse Parayi*, *Madhubala* in *Madhubala - Ek Ishq Ek Junoon*, and Nandini in *Silsila Badalte Rishton Ka*.

In 2013, Dhami won Colors TV's *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 6* along with choreographer Salman Yusuff Khan. Before appearing in TV shows, Dhami started her career in modelling with print and television advertisements.

Now, Drashti has become one of the top actresses, who has a huge fan following across the globe. As per the buzz, Drashti charges around Rs 65, 000 to Rs 70,000 per episode.



## CINE 12

Mardi 22 Dec - 21.05

## La Grande Muraille

Avec: Matt Damon, Jing Tian,  
Pedro Pascal

## CINE 12

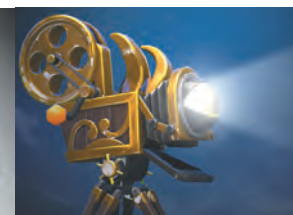
Mercredi 30 Dec - 21.15

## Ex Machina



## CINE 12

Jeudi 31 Dec - 21.15

Avec: Dwayne Johnson, Jack Black,  
Kevin Hart

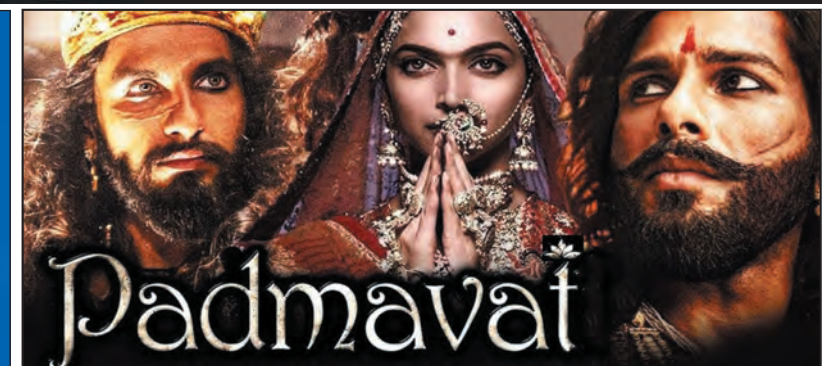
MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
<b>mardi 29 decembre</b> 07.00 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie 07.39 D.Anime: Little Spirou 09.01 D.Anime: The Hive 09.50 Magazine: Origami 10.00 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.55 Doc: Foodland - Christmas... 14.16 Local: Artizan 14.30 D.Anime: Astrology 14.54 D.Anime: Les Triples 15.06 D.Anime: Sissi, Jeune... 15.40 Film: Toys & Pets 17.20 Serial: Backstage 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.10 Local: Priorite Sante 20.40 Local: MBC Prod 21.05 Film: Cup Of Love 23.00 Le Journal	<b>mardi 29 decembre</b> 07.00 DDI Live 10.00 Serial: CID 10.43 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha 12.04 Film: Naqab Starring: A.K. Agnihotri, Rakesh Bedi, Rita Bhaduri 15.00 Mag: Comedy Classes 15.21 Serial: Honaar Soon Mee... 15.43 Serial: Mooga Manasulu 16.06 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal 16.32 Serial: Tu Ishq Hai 16.50 Serial: Achra Ke Moti 17.11 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 18.00 Serial: Bloody Romance 18.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Tamil Programme 20.30 Film: Mughal-E-Azam Starring: Prithviraj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, Madhubala 23.23 DDI Live	<b>mardi 29 decembre</b> 06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa 06.26 Mag: Arts And Culture 07.00 Mag: Voa Connected 08.00 Doc: Amazing Gardens 08.53 Doc: 360 GEO 10.02 Global 3000 11.29 Mag: Eco@Africa 11.59 Mag: Arts And Culture 12.25 Mag: Voa Connected 12.52 Mag: Urban Gardens 12.59 Mag: In Good Shape 13.28 Doc: Amazing Gardens 14.36 Doc: 360 GEO 15.28 Mag: Global 3000 16.20 Doc: The Wonderful World... 17.06 Mag: Eco@Africa 18.26 Doc: The Daughter Of... 18.55 Mag: Check In 19.36 Mag: Made In Germany 20.07 Doc: Builders Of The Future 20.32 Mag: Sur Measure	<b>mardi 29 decembre</b> 01.15 Film: Hollows Grove 02.35 Serial: Counterpart 03.25 Film: Love Over Distance 04.55 Tele: Totalement Diva 05.48 Serial: L.A'S Finest 06.37 Film: Bleeding Steel 09.00 Serial: Mission: Impossible 09.48 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.36 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.00 Serial: Counterpart 12.00 Film: Love Over Distance 13.30 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.48 Film: Marrying Mr. Darcy 16.28 Serial: Mission: Impossible 17.16 Serial: L.A.'s Finest 18.05 Tele: Soleil Levant 19.10 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Serial: L.A.'s Finest 21.15 Film: La Grande Muraille 23.01 Tele: Totalement Diva	<b>mardi 29 decembre</b> 08.00 Film: Raanjhanaa 11.55 / 19.54 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.23 / 20.11 - Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.44 / 20.32 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Sanjivani 13.29 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.52 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.12 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki 14.32 / 22.25 - Ikyawann 15.20 Film: Mera Haque Starring: Sanjay Dutt, Anita Raj, Bindu 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka
<b>mercredi 30 decembre</b> 06.30 Local: Sur Prise 07.00 D. Anime: Teenie Weenie 09.50 D. Anime: Astrology 12.00 Le Journal 12.55 Doc: Foodland 13.00 Local: Groov'in 14.05 Mag: Word On The Street 14.30 D.Anime: Astrology 14.42 D.Anime: The Garfield Show 14.54 D.Anime: The Hive 15.35 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis... 15.49 Film: Rock Dog 16.05 Film: Penguin Land 17.17 D.Anime: Astrology 17.15 Serial: Backstage 17.45 Doc: Foodland - Christmas... 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.20 Prod: Variason 2021 21.23 Film: Crooked Arrows 23.08 Le Journal	<b>mercredi 30 decembre</b> 10.00 Serial: Pyar Ka Dard Meetha 11.16 Serial: Suhani Si Ek Ladki 12.00 Film: Payal Ki Jhankaar Stars: Alankar Joshi, Roobini, Surinder Kaur 13.54 Mag: DDI Magazine 15.00 Serial: Comedy Classes 15.21 Honaar Soon Mee Hya... 15.44 Mooga Manasulu 16.10 Apoorva Raagangal 16.30 Serial: Tu Ishq Hai 16.48 Achra Ke Moti 17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.33 Serial: Kulvadhu 18.00 Serial: Bloody Romance 18.30 Serial: DDI Magazine 19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol 19.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Programme In Marathi 21.00 Film: Kickboxer Against... Starring: Sherman 'Big Train' Bergman, Jay W. Jensen	<b>mercredi 30 decembre</b> 06.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 06.26 Mag: Foodland 06.39 Doc: The Daughter Of... 07.41 Mag: Made In Germany 08.32 Mag: Sur Measure 10.02 Local: Klip Seleksion 11.29 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 12.09 Doc: The Daughter Of... 12.34 Mag: Check In 13.05 Mag: Urban Gardens 13.29 Mag: Made In Germany 13.38 Doc: Builders Of The Future 14.16 Doc: Revolt Dans La Mode 15.11 Mag: Close Up 16.34 Doc: The Digital Age 17.17 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 17.46 Mag: Shift 18.00 Mag: Motorweek 18.57 Mag: Arts.21 19.23 Doc: Garden Party 20.45 Doc: Foodland	<b>mercredi 30 decembre</b> 01.10 Film: La Grande Muraille 03.11 Serial: Counterpart 0404 Film: Trollie 05.30 Tele: Totalement Diva 06.22 Serial: L.A'S Finest 07.16 Film: Cup Of Love 09.00 Serial: Mission: Impossible 09.49 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.00 Serial: Counterpart 12.00 Film: Trollie 13.30 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.48 Film: Cup Of Love 16.29 Serial: Mission: Impossible 17.17 Serial: L.A.'S Finest 18.05 Tele: Soleil Levant 19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Serial: Beauty And The Beast 21.15 Film: Ex Machina 23.03 Tele: Totalement Diva	<b>mercredi 30 decembre</b> 08.00 Film: Mera Haque 12.04 / 20.06 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.23 / 20.26 - Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.47 / 20.46 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Sanjivani 13.31 / 21.31 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.54 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.20 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal.. 14.36 / 22.25 - Ikyawann 15.30 Film: Phata Poster Nikhla Hero Starring: Shahid Kapoor, Ileana D'Cruz
<b>jeudi 31 decembre</b> 06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion 06.45 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin 09.40 D. Anime: Astrology 10.00 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A... 11.10 Tele: Au Nom De L'amour 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.46 Doc: Foodland - Christmas... 13.51 Local: Zafan Nou Zil 14.33 D.Anime: Astrology 15.10 D.Anime: The Hive 15.09 D.Anime: Les Triples 15.16 D.Anime: Sissi, Jeune... 16.05 Film: Moi, Moche Et Méchant 17.22 Serial: Backstage 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Jamai Raja 18.55 Local: Chaar Dham Tirth... 19.30 Le Journal 20.30 Local: Au Revoir 2020	<b>jeudi 31 decembre</b> 10.00 Karm Phal Data Shani 12.05 Film: Khuda Gawah Starring: Amitabh Bachchan, Akkineni Nagarjuna, Sridevi 15.00 Serial: Comedy Classes 15.21 Honaar Soon Mee Hya Gharchi 15.43 Mooga Manasulu 16.12 Apoorva Raagangal 16.40 Serial: Tu Ishq Hai 17.03 Serial: Achra Ke Moti 17.22 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.44 Local: Amrit Vaani 18.14 Serial: Bloody Romance 18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da Devi Maiya 20.00 Local: Retrovizer <b>REVEILLON 2020</b>	<b>jeudi 31 decembre</b> 06.00 Mag: Motorweek 06.25 Mag: Vous Et Nous 06.56 Mag: Arts.21 07.22 Mag: Urban Gardens 08.27 Mag: Vue D'en Haut 10.52 Doc: Dark Eden 12.00 Mag: Vous Et Nous 13.38 Mag: Tendence XXI 14.04 Mag: Vue D'en Haut 14.29 Doc: Foodland 14.45 Doc: Tarzan, Aux Sources... 18.00 Mag: Eco India 20.00 Doc: Oak Tree 20.45 Doc: Foodland 21.00 Local: New (English) 21.10 Doc: Michael Jackson 22.03 Doc: Fresh Fruit Fakers 22.54 Doc: Neuschwanstein 23.37 Doc: Master Of Engineering 00.28 Mag: Eco India 00.54 Mag: Shift	<b>jeudi 31 decembre</b> 01.24 Film: Ex Machina 03.12 Serial: Counterpart 04.02 Film: Terminator 3 05.51 Tele: Totalement Diva 06.44 Serial: Beauty And The Beast 07.25 Film: Crooked Arrows 09.00 Serial: Mission: Impossible 09.48 Tele: Soleil Levant 10.35 Tele: Tant Amor 11.00 Serial: Counterpart 12.00 Film: Alpha 13.37 Tele: Totalement Diva 14.43 Film: Crooked Arrows 16.40 Serial: Mission: Impossible 17.23 Serial: Beauty And The Beast 18.05 Tele: Soleil Levant 19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.08 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Serial: Beauty And The Beast 21.15 Film: Jumanji 23.14 Tel: Totalement Diva	<b>jeudi 31 decembre</b> 08.00 Film: Phata Poster Nikhla Hero 12.03 / 19.54 - Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam 12.26 / 20.11 - Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 12.47 / 20.32 Radha Krishna 13.09 / 21.09 - Sanjivani 13.31 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 13.56 / 21.46 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.20 / 21.59 - Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki 14.36 / 22.25 - Ikyawann 15.14 Kundali Bhagya 15.35 Ek Rishta Saajhed 16.00 Mere Angne Mein 16.23 Yeh Pyaar Nahi Toh Kya... 18.30 Film: Padmavat 21.06 Kahan Hum Kahan Tum

Mercredi 30 Dec - 15.30

Stars: Shahid Kapoor, Ileana D'Cruz



Jeudi 31 Dec - 18.30

Stars: Deepika Padukone, Shahid  
Kapoor, Ranveer Singh





Gov. Ned Lamont and healthcare workers applaud as Dr Ajay Kumar becomes the first person vaccinated against Covid-19 in Connecticut. Photo - Connecticut Mirror

☞ Cont. from page 4

More to the point, we have often not known who the enemy was, why we were fighting, or indeed how victory would be defined. Better not to fight a war in which the enemy is oneself.

But 2021 will not bring an end to turmoil on the big stage when it comes to China which has better-defined goals: control of Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, dominion over the Tibeto-Gangetic Plain, control of shipping lanes in the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean, and continued domination as the world's manufactory. 2021 promises to be a year of Chinese expansionism. India remains at risk.

One other lesson the US has learned is worth remembering. Even though the US "won" the Cold War and effectively defeated the Soviet Union, its successor Russia remains a formidable foe with enormous military clout. Russia's gas reserves and Europe's energy needs will give Moscow far-reaching economic leverage for decades. There is some hope that Russia's commercial interests and stronger business relations with Western Europe will open a new era of cooperation and perhaps turn Russia into a consumer nation. A bigger market for all is a possible positive outcome.

Similarly, China and the US both need to recognize that the win-win solution is for both nations to prosper, that conquest by one of the other is not possible, and even if one were to "win" in the quest for

domination, the other will remain a formidable force, both in economic as well as military terms, to be reckoned with at every turn. The challenge for President Biden will be to convince President Xi that China's long-range interests lie in cooperation not conflict. I am not optimistic that this is possible. It is too easy to look at America's pleas as coming from the loser in this ongoing war.

Given this reality, it is remarkable and disheartening when we realize that the CCP acts as if it can win an economic and military contest with the US. At the most basic level, both countries realized from the time of Nixon's overture to China, that there was more to be gained from cooperation than conflict. Sadly, since that time, China has embarked on a strategy of exploiting the greed of America's corporate barons and the naïveté of its leaders. The time to put a stop to this is nigh.

America shares much of the blame for the circumstances that prevail. Let's face it: the US has been weak and wishy-washy when it comes to dealing with China and even with North Korea, and the Taliban. Where the US has shown some resolve, with Iran, Biden threatens to undo Trump's approach. What happens in these areas next is mostly speculation?

Afghanistan is likely to devolve into an even bigger mess. The Taliban seem to have taken a page from China's playbook. While ostensibly engaged in negotiations and talking the talk of peace, their modus operandi is violence and killing. The one constant is that the US desperately wants

## Breakfast With Bwana

# Crystal-Gazing 2021

out of Afghanistan. With US troops gone, a blood bath in Afghanistan is highly likely. Whether Afghanistan again puts out the welcome mat for terrorists is the inevitable risk that the exit strategy entails.

### The rest of the world

The Middle East is also likely to present turmoil and challenges in the new year. Whereas the Sunni Arab states seem comfortable sharing a bed with Israel, Saudi Arabia has not committed to establishing diplomatic relations with Tel Aviv, or is it Jerusalem? Some people speculate that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) is waiting to leverage Saudi-Israeli rapprochement as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from

ty and hunger and will face a backlash as its infrastructure "loans" become unsustainable burdens.

The nations of Latin America present their own challenges. Covid-19 in Brazil has dwarfed to some extent the disruption of the Amazon both in terms of deforestation and wildfires but these all loom as threats to the entire world. The Central American countries and Mexico will continue to exert pressure on the US on the immigration front.

All of these concerns give us barely a moment to mention that Britain and the EU have a tough road ahead as they finalize their divorce but reaffirm their love affair.

“Even though the US "won" the Cold War and effectively defeated the Soviet Union, its successor Russia remains a formidable foe with enormous military clout. Russia's gas reserves and Europe's energy needs will give Moscow far-reaching economic leverage for decades. There is some hope that Russia's commercial interests and stronger business relations with Western Europe will open a new era of cooperation and perhaps turn Russia into a consumer nation. A bigger market for all is a possible positive outcome. Similarly, China and the US both need to recognize that the win-win solution is for both nations to prosper, that conquest by one of the other is not possible...”

President Biden in exchange for letting him take the credit for having successfully negotiated a deal between the two. Of course, the credit rightfully belongs to Trump but as Shakespeare observed, the evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones.

Iran continues to threaten Israel, Saudi Arabia and its dreams of a Shiite Caliphate or Shiite Crescent remain very much in play. As Biden tries to reengage with Iran, even if only to stick a finger in Trump's eye, there is a delicate dance here. The ever-present danger is that Iran will develop a nuclear weapon and actually use it.

Africa presents an economic challenge for the world. It is fair to say that Britain, India, and the US have lost whatever opportunities they have had to retain the nations of Africa as both economic partners and allies. China is the usurper here. The Indian diaspora spread across Africa offered a ready chance to build a partnership with African nations. But short-term thinking and the urge to exploit rather than to forge partnerships and foster development, have left the Indians as an unwelcome presence. Both the British and French abandoned their beachheads in Africa, and the US never quite got it going except for establishing a base here and there. Into the breach has stepped China. But I predict that China will not help African nations solve their crises of pover-

2021 promises no respite from wild-fires, floods, hurricanes, cyclones, or hunger. The world can respond to climate events by mitigation and adaptation. Hunger is a totally different issue. There is plenty of food in the world to feed all. But for some years now, the world has been consuming more food than it produces. The threat of billions of locusts returning to sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Asia remains a reality.

And, of course, we must not forget that another pandemic, how-ever unwelcome, is possible in a world ill-equipped to handle it.

On a positive note, as the widespread administration of vaccines gets underway, we should see a gradual return to life as we knew it. When workers fill offices, restaurants, service businesses and retailers will return. When travellers return to trains, buses, and planes, hard-hit hotels and resorts will recover. People in tourist areas who have lost their incomes and means of livelihood as tourists disappeared will have a chance to rebuild.

And perhaps in 2021, we will see a return of fans to sports stadiums, patrons to museums, and music lovers to performances.

2021 promises to be a better year but one still fraught.

Cheerz...

Bwana

“The single biggest concern and hope for 2021 the world over is, of course, bringing the coronavirus pandemic to an end... Inoculation of a sizable number of people in poorer nations is not likely to be achieved until 2023 or 2024. In the interim, and particularly in 2021, every country must brace itself for more cases of Covid-19, more deaths, and more economic misery in the months ahead. The logistics of inoculating almost eight billion people are daunting. There is light at the end of the tunnel but the light will shine on the richer nations long before rays of hope come to poorer nations...”