

MAURITIUS TIMES

• "People shouldn't be afraid of their government. Governments should be afraid of their people." -- Alan Moore, V for Vendetta

Cloudy weather will persist



The vitiating of the social climate in the country is the result of a series of political-cum-business dealings whose ramifications are still being unravelled, with probably more yet to come

Dr R Neerunjun Gopee * See Page 3

Global disruption: An uphill task for unprepared Mauritius



We must stop fooling ourselves. Without the advent of a few visionary insiders, a critical mass of outsiders and synergy between all stakeholders, we will not get out of the vicious circle

By Samad Ramoly * See Page 4

Interview: Sangeet Hazareesingh



“ Successive governments have become more and more adept at tolerating corruption in their midst.

But it is rare for the public to learn of the true scale of what happened because most of these secrets remain secret...

* See Pages 7-8-9

Nando Bodha's Resignation

Nando Bodha's resignation as Minister in the Pravind Jugnauth-led government and from the MSM must have hit the government Prime Minister and leader of the MSM like a bolt of lightning. This would be the more so since the announcement of his resignation came on the same day that the governing alliance had chosen to rally support from the party loyalists to rebut the sustained attacks from the 'Avengers' lawyers, and the opposition parties generally, over the series of disturbing happenings that have shocked the public in these last weeks.

The Prime Minister, being the best informed person of the country thanks to the daily briefings of the National Intelligence Unit, would probably have been made aware of Nando Bodha's intentions and/or frustrations since a few weeks back. That was when word was already going around in restricted political circles about the imminence of his resignation. What was clearly not anticipated was his determination to cross the Rubicon eventually.

Nando Bodha does not belong to the shouting brigade of latter-day young turks of the MSM since Pravind Jugnauth took over from Sir Anerood Jugnauth. He had been one of the longest serving members of the MSM ever since the party was founded, being alongside Sir Anerood down the years. He has participated in and contributed to the major political battles waged by the then party leader and Prime Minister. He might also, like Madun Dooloo earlier, have been frustrated for having been sidelined from the top post in the party, but his personal loyalty and the respect for SAJ kept him in the party. Press comments following his resignation would suggest that his equation with the present leader of the MSM is way different today than it had been with Sir Anerood Jugnauth.

Could it be that Nando Bodha is genuinely concerned about the state of governance in the country under the present government? We have to give him the benefit of the doubt and accept what he says for now, but his few pronouncements by way of explanation for his resignation have confirmed what his earlier government colleagues, including the Reform Party's leader Roshi Bhadain, had been hammering all along since he had left the MSM: the alleged capture of the government's decision-making by a small group of loyalists/advisers close to the Prime Minister.

Will Nando Bodha's resignation open the floodgate for more resignations to come? Unlikely, although word is already going around about a few others that are not comfortable about the company they are presently keeping in the Cabinet, and the leadership's handling of the numerous dysfunctions in relation to law and order issues that have been laid at its feet by the 'Avengers' and the opposition.

Nando Bodha is a seasoned politician, having helped strategize the MSM's political actions and its communications for several years under Sir Anerood Jugnauth. His personal attributes and political skills are acknowledged within and outside the MSM. It's not surprising therefore that the MMM leader has already made known his interest in roping in Nando Bodha within the MMM that had been on the look-out for a prime ministerial candidate with the "right profile" to help reverse its electoral and political misfortunes.

It remains to be seen if Nando Bodha would look towards the MMM for his political future. If he does, the "rapport de forces" within the Labour Party-MMM-PMSD "Entente" is likely to change... that is if Nando Bodha, who is well versed in the "political culture" of the MSM, manages to counter any vile and nasty attacks that might be unleashed against him in the weeks ahead.

Either way, the political and legal cauldrons will keep boiling...

The Conversation

Myanmar's military has used surveillance, draconian laws and fear to stifle dissent before. Will it work again?

Myanmar has once again returned to military rule, with a year-long state of emergency declared by the army.

When military dictators ruled Myanmar from 1962 to 2010, they were able to maintain tight control over the people through the country's extensive intelligence apparatus and harsh tactics such as imprisonment, torture and mass killings. As a result, Myanmar's people lived in virtual silence for decades.

After a decade-long political transition that brought Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) to power, Myanmar is now a changed place. What used to be a pariah state is increasingly connected to the world. Civil society has begun to be established and public awareness about freedom, democracy, human rights and development has increased drastically.

Given this, many are closely watching how people will react to the military taking back control of the country and tossing aside a government that won a massive popular mandate only a few months ago.

Already, we are seeing signs of non-violent protests and civil disobedience against the coup, particularly on social media. At least one public protest has also been reported in Myanmar's second-biggest city. For the military, maintaining "social control" may not be as easy as it was before.

More internet access, but surveillance continues

The internet and social media undoubtedly shape social interactions and everyday life today in Myanmar — a massive change from even just a decade ago when SIM cards for mobile phones cost over US\$1,000.

Today, around 90% of Myanmar's 54 million people have access to a phone with internet connectivity, and according to one estimate, nearly 22 million people use Facebook as their primary source of online news and information.

However, the ubiquity of social media has not guaranteed freedom of expression. In fact, in recent years, it has gotten worse.

Under the country's former dictatorship,



Photo - digitalwomen.news

a vast intelligence apparatus underpinned the military's rule. Indeed, the country could best be described as an "intelligence state".

This did not substantively change when Suu Kyi came to power as the country's de facto leader in 2016.

The dramatic increase in the use of mobile phones and the internet, for instance, allowed the authorities to use widespread digital surveillance to maintain social control. And in 2018, the president's office formed a team of social media monitors, whose work some opponents have questioned.

The NLD also did not liberalise the media. In fact, media freedom surprisingly was not a priority for the party. Journalists have been jailed, arrested and harassed in recent years, and hundreds of news sites have been blocked, ostensibly for spreading "fake news".

Moreover, the state maintains control over the leading broadcasters and publications and a monopoly on telecommunications.

Given this, the military leaders were quick to order local telecom firms to temporarily block Facebook following the coup, while the Myanmar state broadcaster, Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV), has beamed out military propaganda for the first time in years.

Laws cracking down on free speech since 2010

In addition, the military already has in place numerous laws to enforce social control.

**DB Subedi & Johanna Garnett,
University of New England**

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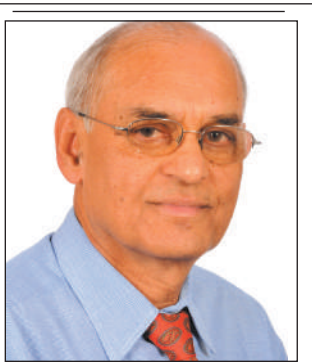


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Cloudy weather will persist



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

What is the situation in the country? Are things falling apart? In one of his press conferences some time back the Commissioner of Police has reassured the population that everything is under control and they need not worry. On his part, the Prime Minister as head of government has also reiterated the message that the centre is still holding and that the country is marching forward steadily towards the future.

However, despite these messages, the general perception in the public space is that things are not as rosy as is being depicted. Although people are going about their normal routine as usual, there is a palpable crispiness if not actual tension in the air, with a climate of fear and suspicion hanging over our heads. Definitely a very uncomfortable feeling that pervades the polity. In trying to characterize this atmosphere more appropriately, I found an apt metaphor in the daily weather forecast, the latest of which can perhaps be paraphrased and captures the essence of the prevailing spirit - or shall we say climate - of the times:

'General Situation:

A heavily laden and highly unstable stream is flowing over our country.

Forecast for the Days to Come:

Cloudy most of the time, the sun will rise later than usual, and there will be frequent and unpredictable showers throughout. Both over the high grounds (usual) and the low grounds, contrary to the usual pattern.

Fair weather only during the night; during the day perhaps from time to time. However, clouds development are expected in the evenings and weekends at specific locations where a high concentration of activities and people is expected. These localised showers could be accompanied by isolated thunderstorms that may, however, spread rapidly.

The maximum temperature will vary between 27 and 29 degrees Celsius over the central plateau and between 31 and 34 degrees Celsius over the coastal regions. It may reach boiling point in certain areas.

Winds may blow wildly from the West-North-West at breakneck speeds.

Seas moderate beyond the reefs with likely swells within the lagoons.

The vitiating of the social climate in the country is the result of a series of political-cum-business dealings whose ramifications are still being unravelled, with probably more yet to come



“The torrent of information, misinformation, disinformation that emanates from all quarters both public and private that include myriad discussions among analysts, stakeholders, observers and sundry witnesses of the events and incidents taking place - all these simply leave the common man baffled and confused. There is only one hope, and that is that the legal battles being fought come to their conclusions soon, and the final verdicts pronounced by the learned adjudicators. Then only will there be some much needed clarity...”

The public is advised to take all precautions, reference Mahatma Gandhi's three monkeys.

A warning of undetermined class is permanently in force, repeat, a warning...

The torrent of information, misinformation, disinformation that emanates from all quarters both public and private that include myriad discussions among analysts, stakeholders, observers and sundry witnesses of the events and incidents taking place - all these simply leave the common man baffled and confused. There is only one hope, and that is that the legal battles being fought come to their conclusions soon, and the final verdicts pronounced by the learned adjudicators. Then only will there be some much needed clarity, and even if they are contested or appealed, people can take solace in the fact that a due process according to the laws of the land is being followed, and a definitive outcome will emerge.

In line with the winds of change that are blowing hot and cold in many countries around the world, here too there have been people movements whose objective is to make strong messages reach official ears, which cannot be accessed through

the normal bureaucratic channels. There is no guarantee, though, that even if heard, they will be acted upon, but at least the people cannot be blamed for not playing the democratic game. Especially when the protests have not resulted in any major acts of violence on the part of demonstrators as has happened elsewhere, from the US to Byelorussia via Hong Kong, although there has been rough handling of certain supporters who came to show solidarity to those they felt were hapless victims. Such incidents will hopefully not happen in the future, especially where women are concerned.

The vitiating of the social climate in the country is the result of a series of political-cum-business dealings that have been uncovered, and whose ramifications are still being unravelled, with probably more yet to come, and no clear end in view. Such an end is highly desired by all the people, as a lassitude is settling in. It is demoralising for the people, and damaging for the country.

In such matters one must go to the root cause of the problem, because what is being seen are only the effects of a deeper malady that many countries have become afflicted with. So widespread is it that books have been written on the phenomenon.

For example, 'Kleptopia: How Dirty Money is Conquering the World' by Tom Burgs is one such. It is one of several in the 'Books of the Year' section of *The Economist* magazine, whose short write-up on it should open eyes. Here are some of the terms used: 'international corruption', 'moral condemnation', 'murkiness and turpitude involved', 'intersection of politics and personal enrichment'. Another book about Putin's rise that is presented refers to 'massive concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few'.

Bottomline for this state of affairs is moral turpitude, a better term for it being the French *anomie*, defined in *Le Petit Larousse* as (translated): 'the state of a society characterized by a disintegration of the norms which maintain the social order'. But given what is being witnessed, one could extend this definition to include not only disintegration, but a total indifference to this state - almost a wish for it to persist - and to any attempt at bringing about any remedy.

There is only one, and that is to pay heed to the wisdom of the ages, articulated by the true sages who recast them in contemporary terms so that we cannot claim any excuse for not understanding, and therefore not acting accordingly.

As Pujya Swami Dayanananda Saraswati of the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam writes in his commentary on Chapter 2 of the Bhagavad Gita:

'A rich man should be magnanimous and a knowledgeable man humble. Knowledge and humility, money and magnanimity, power and justice, strength and gentleness - these go together. A person having only one of these two attributes, such as power or strength, without the justice or gentleness that goes with it, is capable of destroying others'.

What a sublime message, and what great lessons those who are willing to listen can draw.

A bon entendeur, salut!

Looking forward to a more pleasant climate forecast soon...





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Samad Ramoly

Global disruption: An uphill task for unprepared Mauritius

We must stop fooling ourselves. Without the advent of a few visionary insiders, a critical mass of outsiders and synergy between all stakeholders, we will not get out of the vicious circle

There will always be among us optimists who look at life through rose-tinted glasses, pessimists locked in the darker side of life, utopians who fantasize about a dream world, relativists obsessed with putting everything into perspective, even if it means coming to terms with mediocrity and *tillespri* (bigots). All of these perspectives matter. Realists, on the other hand, approach the world in all its complexity, intuitively welcoming its nuances, and act accordingly. For them, the idea of a one-size-fits-all method does not make sense. Their actions can, however, be either lastingly fair or invariably harmful.

When the latter perspective among ruling elites is imbued with benevolence, it steers a nation's policies towards common good, drawing on the experiences of citizens while striving to cope with globalisation. Otherwise, these elites readily hide their actions in namely, buzzwords, ideologies and narratives from another time or elsewhere. In short, a sham that is obviously not designed to respond creatively to the multiple aspirations of citizens. This perspective can even transform the ruling elites into surreal creatures with the potential to shape the framework of the "system". Meanwhile, wealth grab for networks of patronage of this "system" is being plotted - we will call these profiteers the insiders (and the rest, the outsiders) here. The end justifying the means.

We keep repeating to ourselves that our parliamentary system is Westminsterian in spirit - that is supposed to convey a reliable interconnection with citizens. However countless mainstream politicians have been teaming up with members of the business community while government policies drift away from common good. Mainly due to the lack of sufficiently watchful mainstream media sensitive to market-dominant advertisers and their enabler-politicians, of adequate monitoring mechanisms conducive to transparency and accountability, of ruthless anti-corruption and pro-competition watchdogs. A similar situation certainly prevails in most other countries, even if with varying extent of dysfunction. Such circumstances breed anti-establishment resentments whose supreme creature is embodied by the whimsical Donald Trump, and his avatars.

Glocal Reset

For several centuries, most of the world has been infatuated with the "Western" perspective shaped by the global ruling elites and represented initially by the Franco-British



Photo - immo-ile-maurice.com

"Inequalities are polarising the country as gated communities, shelters for the well-heeled, and subsidized Smart Cities targeting without qualms foreigners are on the rise. Ironically, wealth and land concentration in the hands of a few members of a very small community remains a taboo. Which in itself is suicidal* and a litmus test for any aspiring change agency. In addition to a lame excuse to empower new parasites..."

"partnership" before the United States became the engine. Unlike the imprint of other civilisations, this perspective promotes a binary and probably a cheerleader mindset too. Individual freedom takes precedence over the spirit of the community, reason cannot factor in the emotional dimension (God forbid religious interference), technicality supercedes feelings, etc.

17th century wise thinker Spinoza sensed the toxicity of the non-holistic approach that overlooks complementarity and solidarity. Today anthropologist Joseph Henrich and others are sounding the alarm. In the 1980s, this "Western" perspective undermined interdisciplinary thinking in favour of one-track minded expertise. Orthodox economics and its experts mainstream economists (fortunately Millennial economists are seeking to emancipate themselves from the inability of many of their elders to think outside the box) have been elevated to the status of high priests to guide the "system". Regrettably, Mauritius is not one of those few countries spared. For several years now, "Western" hegemony has been crumbling with the new international geopolitical context, and in its wake, the tension has gone global.

Worse, Covid-19 has further disrupted our "normal" and somehow shaken the perspective of political and business captains almost everywhere, here ironically navel-gazing stays put. Even the *Financial Times*, the spin machine of global capitalism, has changed its perspective. For us, it is not a question of subscribing to a "stakeholder capitalism" style of reset or to that of revisited "socialism". What matters is the emergence of an enlightened leadership that has been so elusive and capable of comprehensive assessment of our everyday reality. Also, badly missing are a planning entity, a global vision and the desired local know-how to implement a vision that scrutinizes costs and meets standards. Alternately, the solution is not to outsource everything to international technocratic bureaucrats. We can

draw inspiration from smart practices abroad, seek support from our diaspora, but the solutions must be home-grown and hybrid.

Since 1968, our successive governments have granted us with hallmarks of progress. Without really worrying about their effectiveness over time. Take the welfare state, which keeps regressing in terms of efficiency and quality. It is not the targeting of beneficiaries that will make the government's social contract with the people efficient, but a firm commitment to root out waste and corruption. Singapore, South Korea and the Nordic nations, in particular, have long internalised the imperative of a proactive and inclusive state. Like the education and health systems, an integrated public transport system does not have to endorse the imperative of profitability. In fact, in some cities public transport is free. More are looking forward to follow suit, having well anticipated the multidimensional impact of a well-connected, affordable and green energy-driven public transport system on labour and leisure markets, the environment and society as a whole.

Regarding our development model, it has never been founded on incentives for innovation and efficiency but on privileges (rent-seeking, cronyism, preferential deals with other countries and dented rupee). All our governments have been flaunting public infrastructure projects (which tend to go hand-hand with kickbacks) as trophies to celebrate this development and almost monopolise the 7:30 pm news on national television to hype the dedication. If previous governments pretended to be fiscally responsible (when mismanagement was growing endemic) even if the use of the 7:30 pm news was already grotesque, the current government is allowing itself all excesses. A freefall with regard to the quality of governance that speaks volume about the validity of the Mo Ibrahim Index and makes a mockery of our high "democratic" credentials as surveyed by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

The Covid-safe episode provides a short-lived comfort that could boost the phony image of faultless management, but it cannot hide what is brewing underneath: a drifting national system that is neither robust nor virtuous. Our integration into global finance without the monetary protocol required to stabilise our currency (which other small and open economies are observing) has perverted our development model which was already producing a lot of distortions and instability. An outcome that has insidiously been constituting a worrying reflection of our behaviour.

A healthy nation cannot exist without a responsive government that inspires trust and creates the conditions conducive to the well-being of citizens. However, to sustain their often-flashy lifestyle (which zealously ambitious outsiders promptly ape) insiders have unwittingly favoured a development model that deindustrialises and turns a large segment of outsiders precarious. The high cost of living, whether in absolute terms or relative to the level of income, and the ongoing housing crisis act as the main channels of discontent. It is worth emphasizing that 60% of the inhabitants of Vienna in Austria, a country that really generates high income, enjoy housing that is heavily subsidized by the State.

* Cont. on page 11



The installation, set against the historic and scenic backdrop of the reflecting pool and Washington Monument, includes a plaque featuring a QR code which viewers can scan to take them to an Instagram Spark AR. Photo - akm-img-a-in.tosshub.com

Unique glass portrait honouring America's first woman Vice President Kamala Harris unveiled in Washington

A unique glass portrait honouring America's first woman vice president Kamala Harris has been unveiled in front of the historic Lincoln Memorial in Washington.

The exhibit, commemorating the seminal achievement for women in America, celebrates the many "firsts" attached to Kamala Harris's name, including the first woman vice president, first Black vice president, first Indian-American vice president and first vice president to graduate from a Historically Black College and University, according to a statement.

"Representation matters, especially at the ballot box, and the inauguration of Kamala Harris as the first woman, and first woman of colour, to serve as vice president of the United States is a landmark moment in American history," news agency PTI quoted Holly Hotchner, president and CEO of the National Women's

History Museum, as saying.

Harris took over the office of the US vice president on January 20.

The installation to honour Harris' shattering of this monumental "glass ceiling" is presented by the National Women's History Museum - the nation's leading women's history museum and the most recognised institution dedicated to uncovering, interpreting and celebrating women's diverse contributions to society, in partnership with Chief, a private network focused on connecting and supporting women leaders.

Artist Simon Berger used the one-of-a-kind broken glass medium to create a unique portrait that embodies Harris's glass-shattering achievement. The installation was created by creative agency BBH New York, with production partnership from M ss ng P eces, news agency PTI reports.

A project to build a giant island providing enough energy for three million households has been given the green light by Denmark's politicians.

The world's first energy island will be as big as 18 football pitches (120,000sq m), but there are hopes to make it three times that size. It will serve as a hub for 200 giant offshore wind turbines.

It is the biggest construction project in Danish history, costing an estimated 210bn kroner (£24bn; □28bn: \$34bn).

Situated 80km (50 miles) out to sea, the artificial island would be at least half-owned by the state but partly by the private sector.

It will not just supply electricity for Danes but for other, neighbouring countries' electricity grids too. Although those countries have not yet been detailed, Prof Jacob Ostergaard of the Technical University of Denmark told the BBC that the UK could benefit, as well as Germany or



An impression of the island, surrounded by offshore wind turbines, 260m (850ft) in height. Photo - ichef.bbc.co.uk

Denmark to build 'first energy island' in North Sea

the Netherlands. Green hydrogen would also be provided for use in shipping, aviation, industry and heavy transport.

Under Denmark's Climate Act, the country has committed to an ambitious 70% reduction in 1990 greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, and to becoming CO2 neutral by 2050. Last December it announced it was ending all new oil and gas exploration in the North Sea.

Cuba opens up its economy to private businesses

Cuba has announced it will allow private businesses to operate in most sectors, in what is a major reform to its state-controlled economy.

Labour Minister Marta Elena Feito said the list of authorised activities had expanded from 127 to more than 2,000. Only a minority of sectors would be reserved for the state, she said.

The communist country's economy has been hit hard by the pandemic and US sanctions introduced by the Trump administration. Last year its economy shrank by 11% - its worst decline in almost three decades - and Cubans have been facing shortages of basic goods.

Ms Feito said just 124 economic activities would be exempt from private involvement although she did not mention which ones.

Experts on Cuba's tangled and complicated economy say the step essentially opens up almost all economic activity on the island to some form of private enterprise, the BBC's Will Grant in Havana says.

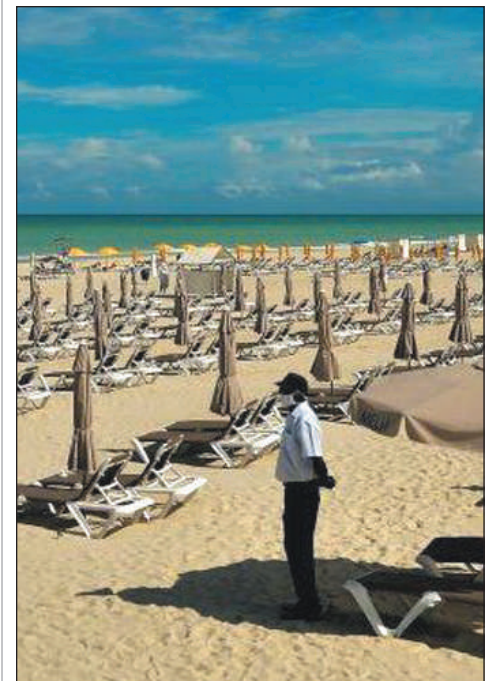
This will be a significant shot in the arm for those families and individuals who harbour hopes of moving beyond just the very small businesses into medium-sized ventures, he notes.

Apart from hundreds of thousands of small farms, Cuba's non-state sector is composed mainly of small private businesses run by artisans, taxi drivers and tradesmen. Around 600,000 people, around 13% of the workforce, joined the private sector when the opportunity arose.

However a large number of private businesses are involved in the island's tourist industry, which has been hard hit by the pandemic and sanctions.

Some 60 years of hostility between the

US and Cuba were eased in 2015 when then US President Obama and Cuban leader Raul Castro agreed to normalise relations, allowing US citizens to visit the island and empowering local businesses.



Many private businesses work in Cuba's tourist industry which has been hit hard by the pandemic. Photo - ichef.bbc.co.uk

But Obama's efforts were rolled back by his successor, President Donald Trump, with the support of hawkish Cuban-Americans who saw Mr Obama's historic opening as an appeasement of Castro's communist regime.

New US President Joe Biden - who was Barack Obama's vice-president - has previously signalled that he wants to improve US-Cuban relations but observers say it is not clear how high it might be on his priority list.

Energy Minister Dan Jorgensen said the country was simply "changing the map".

"This is gigantic," Prof Ostergaard told the BBC. "It's the next big step for the Danish wind turbine industry. We were leading on land, then we took the step offshore and now we are taking the step with energy islands, so it'll keep the Danish industry in a pioneering position."

Green group Dansk Energi said that while the "dream was on the way to becoming a reality" it doubted the North Sea island would be up and running by the planned 2033 start date.

But Danish politicians across the spectrum have given their backing to the plan. Former energy minister Rasmus Helveg Petersen of the Social Liberal party said energy islands had begun "as a radical vision" but there was now a broad agreement to turn it into a reality.



Pope Francis appoints first woman to the Synod of Bishops. Photo - www.fijivillage.com

Pope Francis appoints first woman to the Synod of Bishops

The Pope has appointed a woman as an undersecretary to the Synod of Bishops for the first time. Sister Nathalie Becquart, who is from France, will have voting rights in the body, which advises the pontiff and debates some of the most controversial issues in the Roman Catholic Church.

Ms Becquart has worked with the synod as a consultant since 2019.

The body's secretary-general, Cardinal Mario Grech, said the appointment showed that "a door has opened".

He noted that the decision reflects the Pope's desire "for a greater participation of women in the process of discernment and decision-making in the church".

BBC's John McManus says the move is not a precursor to ordaining women as priests, although some opponents may regard it as a further step in that direction.

In recent years, the Synod of Bishops has debated topics of doctrine including the treatment of divorced and married Catholics.

The news comes less than a month after Pope Francis formally changed the law in the Church to allow women to administer communion and serve at the altar, although the decree stressed that ordained priesthood would remain open to men only.

Last year, meanwhile, the pontiff appointed six women to the council which oversees the Vatican's finances.

Iran's Foreign Minister urges Biden to return to nuclear deal

Iran's foreign minister urged Washington to act fast to return to the 2015 nuclear accord, pointing out that legislation passed by parliament forces the government to harden its nuclear stance if U.S. sanctions are not eased by Feb. 21.

Mohammad Javad Zarif also referred to elections in Iran in June. If a hardline president is elected, this could further jeopardize the deal.

"Time is running out for the Americans, both because of the parliament bill and the election atmosphere that will follow the Iranian New Year," Zarif said in an interview with Hamshahri newspaper published on Saturday. Iran's new year begins on March 21.

The parliament, dominated by hardliners, passed the legislation in December that set a two-month deadline for an easing of sanctions.

President Joe Biden's administration is exploring ways to restore the nuclear deal that Iran signed with world powers but was abandoned in 2018 by former President Donald Trump, who restored sanctions.

Iran retaliated by breaching the terms of the accord in a step-by-step response. Last month, it resumed enriching uranium to 20% - a level it achieved before the accord.

Biden has said that if Tehran returned to strict compliance with the pact, Washington would follow suit and use that as a springboard to a broader agreement that might restrict Iran's missile development and regional activities.

Tehran has said Washington must ease sanctions before it resumes nuclear compliance, and ruled out negotiations on wider security issues such as Iran's missile programme.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussed Iran on Friday in a virtual meeting with his British, French and German



Iran's foreign minister urged Washington to act fast to return to the 2015 nuclear accord. Photo - ABC

counterparts as the group weighed how to revive the deal.

"The more America procrastinates, the more it will lose ... it will appear that Mr Biden's administration doesn't want to rid itself of Trump's failed legacy," Zarif said in the interview.

"We don't need to return to the negotiating table. It's America that has to find the ticket to come to the table," he added.

On Monday, Zarif hinted at a way to resolve the impasse over which side moves first, by saying the steps could be synchronized.

In the latest steps by Iran to develop its missile programme, the Iranian military on Saturday opened a plant to produce hybrid solid fuel for missiles and a factory to build shoulder-fired rockets, state television reported.

NHS hospitals defy official rules

NHS hospitals are defying official rules to give nurses and doctors masks with greater protection amid fears over the spread of coronavirus within hospital wards. An analysis of the latest NHS data by The Independent shows more than 35,000 patients were likely to have been infected with coronavirus while already in hospital between 1 August and 31 January.

NHS England has estimated as many as 20 per cent of infections could be due to spread within hospitals. Outbreaks at some hospitals have seen whole teams of doctors or nurses affected, in some

cases leading to wards having to be closed. The Independent has learnt several hospitals are now supplying higher grade masks to staff working in general wards, despite Public Health England saying only surgical masks are needed. Research this week suggested staff exposed to coughing were at greatest risk of infection from the virus.

Heavy snow and blizzard conditions forced the closure of vaccination centres as the so-called "Beast from the East II" hit the south east of England. The severe

weather - which also caused widespread disruption to road and rail networks across the area - is expected to continue into Monday afternoon. Police forces in Essex, Kent and Norfolk urged motorists to avoid travelling on Sunday while Southeastern trains announced several routes in Kent would remain closed until Tuesday. Hundreds of homes in Suffolk experienced power cuts as temperatures plunged below freezing. The cold weather is a result of bitter easterly winds from Russia and Scandinavia combining with a weather front named Storm Darcy by the Dutch meteorological office.

Myanmar coup: Tens of thousands join largest protests since 2007

Myanmar has seen its largest protests in more than a decade, as tens of thousands of people rallied against the military coup and demanded the release of elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

"We don't want military dictatorship. We want democracy," the crowds chanted in the main city, Yangon. Rallies were held in more than a dozen other cities, reports BBC.

Internet access has now been restored after a day-long blackout.

The army has not yet commented on the growing opposition to last Monday's

coup.

The military seized power after claiming, without evidence, that the November election was fraudulent. The rulers declared a year-long state of emergency and have been hunkered down in the capital, Nay Pyi Daw.

Ms Suu Kyi and senior leaders of her National League for Democracy Party (NLD), including President Win Myint, have been put under house arrest.

In Yangon, people wore red shirts and held red balloons, the colour of Ms Suu Kyi's party, while cars and buses slowed

to sound their horns in support. Many flashed the three-finger salute, a symbol of defiance against authoritarianism in the region.

The internet shutdown imposed by the military failed to curb the protesters. "Respect our vote," read one banner, in reference to the NLD's landslide win in November.

Last Sunday's protests in Yangon were the biggest since the so-called Saffron Revolution in 2007, when thousands of the country's monks rose up against the military regime.

Crowds marched towards the Sule Pagoda in the city centre while police vehicles and officers in riot gear were stationed near Yangon University. There were no immediate reports of violence.

"First, we don't want to go back to military rule. We don't want to live in fear. Secondly, we want Mother Su to be freed from being under detention unjustly," a protester told the BBC. "And third, we want to root out the system where soldiers take civilian administrative positions."

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah

Sangeet Hazareesingh

“Successive governments have become more and more adept at tolerating corruption in their midst.



Mauritius Times: Seen from a distance, what does the situation Mauritius finds itself in today look like to the diaspora? Much more than delicate: messy and ugly?

Sangeet Hazareesingh: First of all, it's important for me to mention that, while I am not affiliated to any political party, I do have a soft corner for one. However, my views are not coloured by sentimentality towards any party.

The best way to describe my impression of Mauritius presently is incomprehension.

Here is a country that has had a decent history of governance, compared to many others. Increasingly, however, successive governments seem to think that, if they placate their electorate with more goodies, they can govern as they please.

And it has worked. In the last 25-30 years, governments have come and gone, but the way the country has been governed has not changed. There is no accountability until elections come round. Not one of the institutions that can bring restraint to how politicians operate has worked.

So yes, it looks ugly and messy.

“Courage is not in resigning. Mr Bodha has been paid handsomely by taxpayers for a number of years. He will be paid handsomely in retirement. Courage lies in telling taxpayers why his conscience does not allow him to continue working with the current leaders. If his resignation leads to us being none the wiser, then what does it matter to the average citizen whether he is in government or out?”

But it is rare for the public to learn of the true scale of what happened because most of these secrets remain secret...”

Like most of the Mauritian diaspora, who are very active on social media, commenting almost on a daily basis on developments in every field, be it economic or political, back home, Sangeet Hazareesingh also takes a keen interest in how the country is doing. He has a Ph.D. in Mathematics and has taught at the Universities of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Minnesota, Duluth, University of Wisconsin, Superior, and for the last 26 years been on the faculty of Mesabi Range College, which is part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

In this issue's interview, he comments on several issues of current interest and others that are basic to the good functioning of our democracy and good governance, such as political financing, democratization within political parties, revisiting the Constitution, etc. As regards the latest political development, the resignation of Nando Bodha from the government, he feels that it will serve no purpose if he (Bodha) does not come forward with the real reasons why he quit, in other words say exactly what are the dysfunctions and why. Read on...

* You might have heard about Nando Bodha's resignation last Saturday. It seems he had reached a point where he could not take it anymore. In fact, he expressed his disappointment that 'la culture du pouvoir et le fonctionnement du MSM ne correspondent plus aux valeurs et principes qui ont toujours marqué mon parcours politique...' He might have listened to his conscience, but it takes courage to listen to your own conscience these days given the present circumstances here, isn't it?

Conscience is a good thing but the question, especially in politics, is: To what end? It is possible to use it to work from within to effect change, or conscience can dictate that change is no longer possible from within. I don't know if we will ever get an answer as to why Mr Bodha decided that this is the time to call it quits, but the country deserves to know.

Courage is not in resigning. Mr Bodha has been paid handsomely by taxpayers for a number of years. He will be paid handsomely in retirement. Courage lies in telling taxpayers why his conscience does not allow him to continue working with the current leaders.

Not everything that he knows comes within the purview of the Official Secrets Act. If his resignation leads to us being none the wiser, then what does it matter to the average citizen whether he is in government or out? And where's the courage if it comes at no risk?

In fact, his resignation may do more harm if the people who take over are less scrupulous.

* In any case, Bodha's resignation is surely an embarrassment for the MSM, the more so since Yogida Sawmynaden is still around – though admittedly, like everyone, he is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Should politics (good political sense) trump legalistic considerations pertaining to presumption of innocence in this case?

The Prime Minister enjoys almost absolute power in Mauritius. Ministers serve at his pleasure. Being part of the Cabinet is not a right that Mr Sawmynaden has. It is a privilege bestowed on him by the PM. The PM does not need ICAC, or the Police Commissioner or anyone else to find out whether Mr Sawmynaden pocketed the money allocated to the Constituency Clerk or not.

All it requires is for the PM to tell Mr Sawmynaden that records show that Mrs Kistnen was employed as his Constituency Clerk. Records also show that payment was made to him for seven months' salary. If Mr Sawmynaden cannot substantiate that this money was actually paid to Mrs Kistnen, then he will have to resign and the matter referred to MRA for failure to report part of his income.

This particular issue is not a legal matter. It is an administrative matter.

“The Prime Minister enjoys almost absolute power in Mauritius. Ministers serve at his pleasure. Being part of the Cabinet is not a right that Mr Sawmynaden has. It is a privilege bestowed on him by the PM. The PM does not need ICAC, or the Police Commissioner or anyone else to find out whether Mr Sawmynaden pocketed the money allocated to the Constituency Clerk or not...”

* It's also a political matter...

What I meant is that Mr Maneesh Gobin was using a lot of legalistic arguments to justify why there is no response as yet on whether Mr Sawmynaden did something wrong. The procedure is administrative but yes, the answer is eminently political.

* The Pravind Jugnauth government does not appear perturbed in any way, and the Prime Minister proceeded with a reshuffling of his Cabinet the same day. Life goes on, the government seems to be saying, thanks to its parliamentary majority. What do you think about that?

What's happening in Mauritius is happening in too many countries that call themselves democracies. Governments have become immune to shame. They are no longer responsive to the need to be transparent. Just because they can get away with it now does not mean that transgressions can continue forever. That's what Trump thought. Now he is living in fear of what's to come.

* Cont. on page 8

'Courage is not in resigning. Courage lies in Mr Bodha telling taxpayers why his conscience does not allow him to continue working with the current leaders'

* Cont. from page 7

* If we go by the assessments of different international agencies on the governance and democratic credentials of this country, Mauritius would be doing much better than most countries on the African continent and even elsewhere. But ground realities tell a different story...

Mauritius is most likely doing better than many countries but that doesn't mean it is good. A student who scores 35 on an exam is certainly better than a student who scores 20 but that's not saying much.

Mauritius is a sophisticated country in the sense that it has well-designed institutions, and it has a civil service that works reasonably well. What it has always lacked is the separation of public and private gain. It is routine for somebody who gets a ticket from the police to call up someone they know to have the ticket cancelled. And it is routine for those who do it to brag about it.

I remember an incident a number of years ago when we were involved in an accident. Even though the relative who drove me admitted being at fault and had the insurance coverage needed, the police kept us at the station for over four hours. I told the policeman who was "investigating" the matter that I had just come back on vacation and

"I remember my grandfather running into the house one day, removing his shoes, and coming out barefoot to talk to this young punk, who worked in the sugar estate. While my grandfather addressed him as Mr., he called my grandfather by his name. It was not appropriate in those days for a man of his standing, three times as old, to wear a hat or wear shoes because this nineteen-year-old was superior to him because of the colour of his skin..."



them. It is a symbiotic relationship made in heaven.

The question is not whether corruption can be rooted out. It is: Are we willing to live with the consequences of it being rooted out?

*** What do you consider could constitute a threat to our democracy, and how should that be addressed?**

The dangers to democracy are visible everywhere. Just one example: Practically every appointment at the higher echelons is made not because people bring any special skills but because they have the right connections. When the country was in its early stages of development, having a few rotten apples here and there was no big deal. Now

the house one day, removing his shoes, and coming out barefoot to talk to this young punk, who worked in the sugar estate. While my grandfather addressed him as Mr., he called my grandfather by his name. It was not appropriate in those days for a man of his standing, three times as old, to wear a hat or wear shoes because this nineteen-year-old was superior to him because of the colour of his skin.

People, like my grandfather, voted for Independence in large part because they felt disrespected in their own country. They had no idea whether better days were ahead or not. All they knew was that the existing state of affairs could not continue.

People today are much more tolerant because they have too much to lose. Few people want to upset the applecart. That's the ace of many governments. Until it isn't.

*** American press reports by some of the major media companies portrayed a picture of Americans having to put up with Donald Trump during most of the former President's mandate. And it took four years to make change happen. The feeling here is that though we may not have a Trump-like situation in Mauritius, things are getting nastier by the day and there isn't much that we can do over here as well until the next elections. Your opinion?**

Trump was and is an aberration in American politics. To this day, I do not know whether he actually knew or was it by sheer luck that he picked immigration as his battle cry. It turned out to be the right issue at the right time for a man with no scruples. Enough of the country sided with him on this signature issue that it basically paralyzed the system for four years.

Mauritius is different. There is no hard-core issue that is animating any of the parties. There is no left-right ideological battle.

Until the country is faced with the harsh reality that it converted temporary wealth of the 1980s into unsustainable permanent compensation, there will be little change. All

politicians are dreaming of re-creating the economic boom of those days, but that goal remains elusive. In the meantime, compensation in Mauritius for the top levels of government easily exceeds those of richer nations. There aren't too many government servants in the United States and State Governments who drive to work in luxury cars; those that do rotate in and out of the private sector.

If California was a country, its GDP would be the 8th in the world. The Governor of the State of California earns \$201,000 dollars, which is roughly Rs 672,000 month. Almost 70% of that income is taxed at over 20% by the federal government and over 7% by the State. The Governor of California is paying at least 27% in income taxes, almost 3% in social security taxes in addition to deductions for health care, medicare, etc. His take-home pay is approximately Rs 400,000 month. How many executives in Mauritius, in parastatal bodies, are earning more than that? And that's not even including all the other perks of the job.

Salaries in the public sector are more generous than in many private sector jobs, especially at the higher echelons, and certainly more generous than in most countries I know. Salaries were appropriately raised when the country was really doing well. Successive PRBs have kept on tacking increases to those salaries as if we were producing gold when in reality, all we were doing was borrowing more and more.

So far, we have been lucky that Mauritians have found it relatively easy to obtain work in foreign companies and are not averse to being away from home.

Whether this is going to be possible post-Covid remains to be seen. If the government is not prepared, the prediction of VS Naipaul that Mauritius will be an overcrowded barracoon may well turn out to be true.

And the lack of responsiveness will have consequences.

*** To come back to local politics, Nando Bodha hit the nail on its head when he referred to the 'culture du pouvoir du MSM' in his resignation note released to the press. It all has to do with the political culture of our political parties – no matter whether we have the best drafted Constitution or not, isn't it?**

I don't buy the MSM's "culture du pouvoir" bit. Politics is populated by, supported by, entrenched by some of the most nefarious parts of society. Few people of good reputation survive long by being "clean". That said, there is a question of degree.

* Cont. on page 9



"What's happening in Mauritius is happening in too many countries that call themselves democracies. Governments have become immune to shame. They are no longer responsive to the need to be transparent. Just because they can get away with it now does not mean that transgressions can continue forever. That's what Trump thought. Now he is living in fear of what's to come..."

I had people waiting for me back home. His response was: "You live abroad. Then obviously you won't understand the procedure." Quite obviously, he wanted his bakshish to let us go.

So, the notion that corruption only occurs at the highest level is quite wrong. It occurs daily in big ways and small. Except that we won't admit that we participate in this system.

We need a set of rules that apply universally.

And this is where the system breaks down. The people who are supposed to set the rules break them for their personal gains and for the benefit of those who support

we are aspiring to play in the big league. We can so easily become prey to chicanery from both internal and external malevolent forces.

*** It would seem that the disconnect between an increasing number of the people and the current government is growing by the day. Some are of the view that that disconnect has also to do with the political leadership of the other parties as well – the mainstream parties. How do you react to that?**

In the years before Independence, how you were addressed depended on which community you belonged to, with few exceptions.

I remember my grandfather running into

'SSR didn't become PM in 1968 out of thin air. He built it on a career of service.

Likewise, Paul Berenger didn't materialize out of thin air'

* Cont. from page 8

There is little doubt that successive governments have become more and more adept at tolerating corruption in their midst. But the surprising, or perhaps not so surprising, thing is that no matter how big the scandal is, it is rare for the public to learn of the true scale of what happened because most of these secrets remain secret.

We also place too much blame on governments and not enough on people. If you know the right people, you can get anything done. If you don't, then you are on your own. We are a country of men, not of laws. Changing the Constitution is not going to change much if we keep this spoils system in place. But no one is going to disarm unilaterally because there is no advantage to doing it.

* **It's the spoils system at work?**

Politics is a spoils system. To the winner goes the spoils, but this does not mean that anything goes.

Let's take the the appointment procedures and criteria for some of the key posts in the country and which may not be serving our democracy well. The government should rightfully appoint people it chooses in key positions but there ought to be some minimum qualifications, not to mention experience for the job. I have a doctorate in Mathematics. It doesn't qualify me to run Air Mauritius.

I think that, of all the sins of governments in Mauritius, the appointment of unqualified people to be part of key institutions, is the worst. It diminishes the institutions. It saps the morale of the knowledgeable people

ensure that government didn't become a *de facto* colonial power over some communities. In that sense, it has served us well.

Because of these sensibilities, I don't think the time is right to rewrite the Constitution. I believe there are a number of changes that are manifestly needed:

1. It is crazy to have people getting elected with less than 50% of the votes. We should have a runoff system like what happened in the state of Georgia recently. The general election weeds out all but six of the candidates and the runoff picks the winning 3, except in cases where a candidate wins 50% outright. And the runoff should be held within a few days of the general election to avoid protracted campaigning and electoral bribes.

2. ICAC's charter should be revisited with the help of foreign experts. It is clear that some magistrates in Mauritius have demonstrated great integrity. They could be used to provide oversight to ICAC.

3. I remember the time when the biggest scandal was whether the word bullshit was used in Parliament. Parliamentarians should be made to go to school to learn how to conduct themselves. And the Speaker too.

Most changes I would make are not constitutional. They are more in the realm of norms to be followed in public discourse.

* **There are also the issues of democratisation of political parties, limitation of prime ministerial term, Right to Information, political financing, etc. 'Vaste chantier', but there does not seem to be a beginning of reform. Is politics the problem?**

“Politicians have always managed to stay one step ahead of the reforms, including those on election expenditures and statement of assets. In other words, every government that has come to power has done so by committing election fraud. Why would we trust them to put any teeth in any legislation that limits their ability to corrupt the system?...”

who work there and, most of all, it conveys the distinct message that if you were to study and learn the skills for a particular job, you would be no better than the man on the street in terms of getting it. This, more than anything, discourages highly qualified Mauritians from coming back.

* **The view has been expressed time and again in Mauritius that though our Constitution has served us well these last 50 years, we should revisit that Constitution for the decades ahead and in light of dysfunctions witnessed along the way. What are your thoughts on what is required for the country?**

The Constitution of Mauritius was written at a time of much internal turmoil. There was a great need to protect all communities and

There is simply no mechanism for making the system more responsive, no matter what reform is carried out because people who come to power have demonstrated that they don't really respect the institutions under their stewardship. Do we have an Ombudsman? Who knows and who cares? The institutions were never allowed to do their job. Same deal with ICAC and its predecessors.

Politicians have always managed to stay one step ahead of the reforms, including those on election expenditures and statement of assets. In other words, every government that has come to power has done so by committing election fraud. Why would we trust them to put any teeth in any legislation that limits their ability to corrupt the sys-

tem?

The University of Mauritius could play a pivotal role, if it was allowed to do so, by bringing together members of the bar, historians, political scientists and other concerned parties, including international constitutional scholars, to develop a framework for change.

We should remember that making profound changes takes time, resources, and above all, reflection. Democratisation of parties is a mythical solution. Isn't the MMM

“We also place too much blame on governments and not enough on people. If you know the right people, you can get anything done. If you don't, then you are on your own. We are a country of men, not of laws. Changing the Constitution is not going to change much if we keep this spoils system in place. But no one is going to disarm unilaterally because there is no advantage to doing it...”

democratic? Russia had term limits. That didn't stop Putin from ruling the country in one way or another for multiple terms. Pakistan had imposed a Bachelor's degree requirement on its MPs. Suddenly, those who didn't graduate had a degree from the US certificate mills.

The sad reality is that ingenuity is not lacking among those who want to cheat. What we need most of all is not laws. We need a few good men. And women.

* **As regards the issue of political financing, State financing may not necessarily put an end to political donations from individuals and private companies, and politicians may wish to have access to both. There seems to be no one best model available to ensure a level playing field, isn't it?**

I think in Mauritius, we overstate the role of money. I don't know one way or the other whether 'tempo' with or without lids have actually had an impact on the election. I remember being in Mauritius just before the elections of 2014. I talked to a lot of people; some I knew, some not. The feeling that the government had to be removed was so pervasive that no amount of money could have saved it. I suspect that the election of 2019 was just as immune to electoral money and would have produced a different outcome had it not been for some easily identifiable causes.

The question of level playing is also a non-issue. What we don't have is a cause. Post-Independence elections in Mauritius have been won and lost primarily on issues and political *surenchère* because there is no cause to fight for. People the world over understand causes. Trump won because he had a cause: *Stop polluting the country with non-White immigrants*. Biden won because he had a cause: *We are not just a bunch of racists*. Trump would have won his election



in 2016 even if he had not spent a penny. Biden would have won this past election for the same reason.

Candidates can't just appear overnight and expect to become MPs and ministers. They have to have some vision and they have to convince people that their visions align. SSR didn't become PM in 1968 out of thin air. He built it on a career of service, which gave him the credibility to become PM. He associated himself with people who shared his vision and worked tirelessly to convey that vision to the grassroots. Likewise, Paul Berenger didn't materialize out of thin air. He worked tirelessly to get workers and students to his side and in the process materially changed political discourse in the country.

Whosoever wants to become Prime Minister outside of the current crop of parties needs to lay the foundation by actually being of service. You have to pay your dues.

* **On the other hand, the separation of powers seems to be functioning properly with each of the branches of government – the legislative, executive and judicial – exercising its core functions. Is that indeed the case or is there an issue with the checks and balances?**

We are always one step away from real dictatorship because our electoral system makes it easy to get a two-thirds majority. With a two-thirds majority comes the power to change the Constitution. The judiciary therefore can very easily become vulnerable to political pressures. If reforms are to be made, this is the area to start.

Personally, I would love to see a system where judges of the Supreme Court of Mauritius, India, Sri Lanka, Singapore establish some rotation so that there would always be a judge from another country in our court and a judge from our court in another country.

From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

4th Year No 157

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 9 August 1957

● *Public opinion is the mixed result of the intellect of the community acting upon general feeling. – Hazlitt*

Our Political Future



Somduth Bhuckory

We have reached a point in our evolution when it would not be unwise to take stock of our political situation dispassionately. We seem to be going forward but where is our onward march leading us? Are we heading for a good headache or are we on our way to some political garden of Eden?

The trend of events in our little island home is such that those who have the welfare of this place at heart cannot sit still and look on indifferently. Things have come to such a pass that serious-minded people must think and think aloud.

The members of the Boundary Commission are among us with the exception of its Chairman. They are getting ready to report to Mr Lennox-Boyd.

On the other hand, it is reported that the Muslim community has reached quite an unexpected decision. It wants to press for communal representation.

Recently *The Times* of London described our political situation as '*The Mauritian Tangle*'. It would appear now that the tangle is getting more and more confused and complicated.

As long as there was the London Agreement only to consider, some sort of solution, however unsatisfactory, was in sight. That Agreement which has gone out of its way to please the minorities is now being repudiated by the biggest minority it set out to pacify.

We know that nothing will stop the Boundary Commission from going on with its work. Time, money and energy will be spent. There will be a tug-of-war between single-member constituencies and the list-system. What will happen next? In any event, discontent, which is just simmering today, will boil over.



At the end of July 1954 Lennox-Boyd succeeded to the post of Colonial Secretary. Photo - britishempire.co.uk

The Muslim community has voiced its unequivocal opinion. Mr Mohamed who subscribed to the London Agreement is very far from supporting the Agreement. It remains to be seen how the Labour Party is going to make out its case for single-member constituencies and save its face. And in case it does not succeed, will there not be pandemonium even in its own rank?

Now there is silence all around us. Is it the calm preceding the storm? And our destiny seems to be drifting calmly towards some unknown distant shore.

* * *

Mr Mohamed was to take a decision by July 31st. He appears to have thrown in his lot with that of his community. Mr Mohamed must have realized that if he resigned from the *Parti Mauricien* to join the Labour Party, the latter would not receive him with open arms. If Mr Mohamed supports communal representation, will he continue to be a member of the *Parti Mauricien*?

There is no doubt that the Muslim community weights heavily in establishing the balance of power. If it stays with the *Parti Mauricien*, it stays there as an asset. If it leaves the *Parti Mauricien* and joins the Labour Party, it will add considerable strength to the Labour Party. Even if it does not join the Labour Party but leaves the *Parti Mauricien* and joins the Labour Party, it will add considerable strength to the Labour Party. Even if it does not join the Labour Party but leaves the *Parti Mauricien* and becomes totally neutral, the Muslim community will weaken the *Parti Mauricien* in no small measure and consequently

strengthen the Labour Party in the same proportion.

So one can see easily that the stand taken by the Muslim community is going to weaken the *Parti Mauricien* and strengthen the Labour Party. In spite of this, we are not prepared to support the decision of the Muslim community. Political expediency may give us momentary power and glory but it's only political principles that will stabilize our future.

Sometimes we are driven to reflect on the solicitude shown to minorities today. Any Constitution, it is contended, should ensure the representation of the minority communities. The new credo is the more baffling because until recently nobody bothered about the representation of the majority. The rule by the smallest minority has been endured without that minority finding that it was not fair for it to govern. Now that the majority is threatening to assume power and govern, the very thought of its getting on top is creating havoc.

If we stand for parliamentary democracy, we cannot be lulled into believing that our salvation lies in any other way than in party politics. Communities should be encouraged to make common cause with political parties and not to pitch their tent apart. Separatism is political suicide. Let those who care for the future of our island remember this.

* * *

Party politics had started to take a fine shape when came the London Agreement

sowing confusion in its train. And today we are faced with the implementation of the unhappy Agreement.

Before the general elections take place, the London Agreement laid down that the ministerial system should be instituted and the Boundary Commission should report. As everybody knows, the ministerial system has been introduced in a lukewarm atmosphere. And we can see that the Boundary Commission is sitting while the political climate is full of doubts and uncertainties.

The Boundary Commission will surely sense that there is no enthusiasm for it. It will also sense, we fancy, that there is a lack of enthusiasm because the people do not want either the kind of single-member constituencies outlined in the London Agreement or the List System.

When Mr Lennox-Boyd learns of the apathy of the people, will he persist in implementing the findings of the Boundary Commission? If he does, it will amount to thrusting an unpopular Constitution upon us. How will Mr Lennox-Boyd do this, he who has promised not to ram anything down our throats? It's time Mr Lennox-Boyd was told again what we want.

We want a Constitution that will give a fillip to party politics. By introducing a tinge of communalism in the London Agreement only disservice has been done to the constitutional progress of our island.

We do want single-member constituencies but not forty of them. And we want them without the conditions imposed by the London Agreement. We think that a maximum of twenty-five would do.

We do also want universal adult suffrage but an unfettered adult suffrage. The List System is simply abhorrent.

Our readers as well as Mr Lennox-Boyd will see that we are not crying for the moon.

Notice for Permission for Land Use

Take notice that I Mr Ehsan Moideen will apply to the District Council of Flacq for a Building and Land Use permit for the construction of building to be used as General Retailer's Shop Showroom and outlet for ready made goods at Royal Road Brisée Verdière.

Any person feeling aggrieved by the proposal may lodge an objection in writing to the above-named Council within 15 days as from the date of this publication.

Date : 09.02.2021

Global disruption: An uphill task for unprepared Mauritius

* Cont. from page 4

To be effective, we must urgently seek to significantly reduce the costs of running households and businesses. Through the blinkered perspective, the ageing of the population, among other key areas to be addressed, and its negative impact on the country's vibrancy have been ignored.

Systemic Cure

Investing in whitewashing and its offshoot greenwashing which serve to channel attention away from insiders, is also a confession of incompetence to build a flourishing and globally competitive nation. Resorting to prohibitions, fear-mongering and repression becomes a management style when a government knows it is incapable of measuring and taking risks to navigate an increasingly unpredictable and ruthless global environment. Where they expect an empathetic state, the most vulnerable outsiders face stigma. It's not easy not to be tempted into "rod so bout" (reckless pursuit of personal gain) when visible and invisible obstacles are everywhere. An existential crisis is not the stage to give the best of oneself while being simultaneously law-abiding. When, the more so, leading by example is nowhere to be seen.

Even before Covid-19, the most advanced societies were beginning to embrace responsible consumption. Since Covid-19, frugality and everything experiential have been added to this new way of life. It is far-fetched to expect a sophisticated lifestyle when debt trap eats up what is sup-



"Take the welfare state, which keeps regressing in terms of efficiency and quality. It is not the targeting of beneficiaries that will make the government's social contract with the people efficient, but a firm commitment to root out waste and corruption. Singapore, South Korea and the Nordic nations, in particular, have long internalised the imperative of a proactive and inclusive state. Like the education and health systems, an integrated public transport system does not have to endorse the imperative of profitability..."

posed to be disposable income and available leisure activities are not all healthy and varied, let alone affordable. Inequalities are polarising the country as gated communities, shelters for the well-heeled, and subsidized Smart Cities targeting without qualms foreigners are on the rise.

Ironically, wealth and land concentration in the hands of a few members of a very small community remains a taboo. Which in itself is suicidal* and a litmus test for any aspiring change agency. In addition to a lame excuse to empower new parasites.

Technology has freed us from many physical tasks. Artificial intelligence will free us from many intellectual tasks. Without a shift towards experiential, interdisciplinary and lifelong learning, it would be pointless to look forward to a human capital, featuring Digital Natives, blessed with nimble cognitive abilities and a strong sense of discernment. Especially with the overwhelming use of algorithms to bolster the sense of entitlement of insiders. We must stop fooling ourselves. Without the advent of a few visionary insiders, a critical mass of outsiders and synergy between all stakeholders, we will not get out of the vicious circle. We will have to settle for more flashes in the pan in return of more scars including the normalisation of shoddy work and service, structural mismatches, a mode of operation specific to cheaters and incivility. There is plenty more than meets the first impression of a dazzled visitor, sloppy national statistics or the number of fancy cars on our roads.

Samad Ramoly

* L'oligarchie dépigmentée

[<https://tchombo.blogspot.com/2009/03/oligarchie-depigmentee.html>]

* For further reading penned in 2008

[<https://tchombo.blogspot.com/2011/05/is-mauritian-sense-of-hospitality.html>]

Myanmar's military has used surveillance, draconian laws and fear to stifle dissent before. Will it work again?

Cont. from page 2

For example, the controversial Telecommunications Law, passed in 2013, empowers the government to temporarily suspend and restrict telecommunication services and collect data from people.

It also makes defamation a criminal offence, which has been used numerous times in recent years for criticising or insulting the government and military. One youth activist described the chill this has caused:

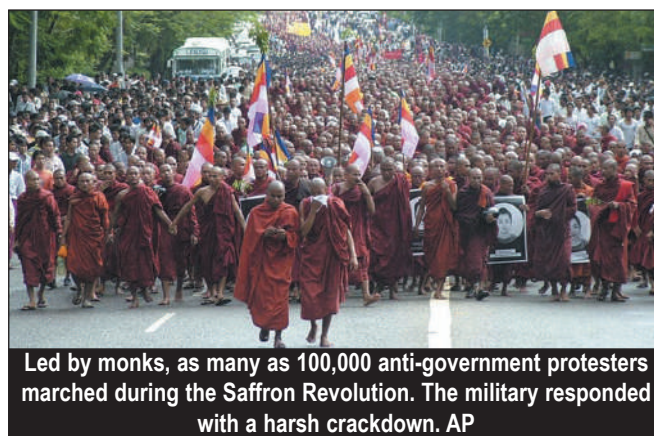
It makes us censor ourselves. It creates fear in the youth community. We are still living in fear.

Those wishing to hold an assembly or protest must also adhere to the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law, passed in 2011. Demonstrators have been arrested for failing to comply with the law or violating the vaguely phrased limits placed on speech by the statute.

Section 505(b) of the penal code is another overly broad law that prohibits speech that may cause "fear or alarm in the public" and lead others to "upset public tranquillity". The law has long been used to curtail speech critical of the government. Even monks holding sit-in protests have been targeted.

Public reactions so far: symbolic and spontaneous

Despite these draconian laws and state



Led by monks, as many as 100,000 anti-government protesters marched during the Saffron Revolution. The military responded with a harsh crackdown. AP

repression, young people have embraced nonviolent movements and campaigns to challenge the military's rule in the past.

And public defiance is already being seen following this week's coup. For instance, people have honked car horns and banged pots and pans to "drive out" the military in the same way they scare evil spirits from their homes.

Several organisations are releasing statements on social media condemning the coup, while many NLD supporters are turning their Facebook profiles black or replacing them with a red portrait of Suu Kyi.

Civil disobedience and boycotts are also gathering steam. Health workers at 70 hospitals and medical departments boycotted work this week, while others are tweeting images of red ribbons, the campaign's sym-

bol of resistance.

And in the capital, about 70 recently elected lawmakers convened a symbolic opening of the new parliament at a government guesthouse.

The huge Myanmar diaspora can also become a powerful resistance group worldwide. This week, migrant workers protested against the coup in Thailand, chanting "Shame on you, dictator".

Similar protests have taken place in Japan, Australia and Canada.

The diaspora was effective in the past in bringing visibility to the harsh rule of the dictatorship in Myanmar and helping rally global support behind Suu Kyi.

Although the military rulers violently cracked down on nonviolent protests on many occasions in the past, including the famous Saffron Revolution of 2007, they failed to crush the people's aspirations for democracy and justice.

As the public defiance this week illustrates, the people of Myanmar are refusing to be silenced again. Because their actions appear to be spontaneous, however, it remains to be seen how effective a longer-term resistance campaign will be in the face

of the state's sophisticated surveillance apparatus.

This will require organisation and leadership on the ground. And with the detention of Suu Kyi, as well as scores of other activists, lawmakers and other NLD officials, the opposition may struggle to replace the central command needed to lead protesters in this way.

The international community will also need to continue to support the pro-democracy activists and put pressure on the military leaders, particularly as the initial outrage over the coup subsides.

The public has demonstrated its resilience before. They'll need to show bravery and determination again to make the military feel vulnerable in its claims of legitimate rule.

**DB Subedi & Johanna Garnett,
University of New England**

NOTICE FOR PERMISSION FOR LAND USE WITHIN RESIDENTIAL ZONE

Take notice that I **Mr Stephan Li Sing Pak, representing Li Sing Pak Co Ltd** will apply to the Municipal Council of **Beau Bassin - Rose Hill** for a Building and Land Use permit for a proposed conversion of an existing store of 1st Floor level of a three storey building into a guest house at 25 Royal Road, Beau Bassin.

Any person feeling aggrieved by the proposal may lodge an objection in writing to the Council within 15 days as from the date of this publication.

Date: 08.02.2021

7 research-based resolutions that will help strengthen your relationship

Psychology studies suggest a variety of ways you can strengthen your bond and increase your satisfaction with your partner

Couples with better marriages report higher well-being, and a recent study found that having a better romantic relationship not only promoted well-being and better health now but that those benefits extend into the future.

The lesson is clear: Your relationship is important. Resolve to get it right.

That doesn't mean you have to be perfect. But here are seven resolutions based on recent psychological research that you can make this new year to help keep your relationship going strong.

1. Set yourself up for success

Adjust your mindset so you see your relationship as a key source of positive experiences. Psychologists like me call this boosting your social approach motivation. Instead of merely trying to avoid relationship problems, those with an approach motivation seek out the positives and use them to help the relationship.

Here's how: Imagine a conversation with your partner. Having more of an approach motivation allows you to focus on positive feelings as you talk and to see your partner as more responsive to you. Your partner gets a burst of positivity, too, and in return sees you as more responsive. One partner's good vibes spill over to the other partner, ultimately benefiting both. After a year when your relationship may have felt unprecedented external strains, laying the foundation to take advantage of any positives is good place to start.

2. Be optimistic

While things in the past may not have always gone how you wanted, it's important to be optimistic about the future. But the right kind of optimism matters. A 2020 research study from Krystan Farnish and Lisa Neff found that generally looking on the bright side of life allowed participants to deal with relationship conflict more effectively - as they put it, better able to "shake it off" - than did those who were optimistic specifically about their relationship.

It seems that if people focus all their rosy expectations just on their relationship, it encourages them to anticipate few negative experiences with their partner. Since that's unrealistic even in the best relationships, it sets them up for disappointment.

3. Increase your psychological flexibility

Try to go with the flow. In other words, work on accepting your feelings without being defensive. It's OK to adjust your behaviors - you don't always have to do things the way you always have or go the places you've always gone. Stop being stubborn and experiment with being flexible.

A recent study by Karen Twiselton and colleagues found that when you're more flexible psychologically, relationship quality is higher, in part because you experience more positive and fewer negative emotions. For example, navigating the yearly challenge of holidays and family traditions is a relationship minefield. However, if both partners back away from a "must do" mentality in favor of a more adaptable approach, relationship harmony will be greater.

4. It's OK to put 'me' before 'we'

It's easy for some people to play the self-sacrificing martyr in their romantic relationship. If this sounds like you, try to focus more on yourself. It doesn't make you a bad person or a bad partner. When you're psychologically



healthy, your partner and your relationship also benefit.

Recent research identified four main traits that are part of good mental health: openness to feelings, warmth, positive emotions and straightforwardness. These traits help with being more clear about who you are, feeling better about who you are, expressing greater optimism and less aggression, exploiting others less and exhibiting less antisocial behavior. You can see how what's good for you in this case would be good for your partner too.

5. Do something for your partner

But it's not all about you. Putting your partner first some of the time and catering to your partner's desires is part of being a couple. A 2020 study by Johanna Peetz and colleagues found that prioritizing your partner makes you feel closer to them, increases positive feelings, reduces negative ones and boosts perceived relationship quality.

In the new year, look for ways to give your partner some wins. Let them get their way from time to time and support them in what they want to do, without exclusively prioritizing your own wants and needs.

6. Don't be so hard on yourself

So many new year's resolutions focus on body image. Aspirations to eat better and work out often stem from the same goal: a hotter body. Yet, research from Xue Lei shows that you may not really know what your partner wants you to look like.

Women tend to overestimate how thin male partners want them to be. Similarly, men believe that female partners want them to be more muscular than women say they do. It may seem harmless, but in both cases individuals are more critical and demanding toward themselves, in part based on misreading what a partner truly desires.

7. Stay in touch

I saved the easiest item on the list for last: Touch your

partner more. When Cheryl Carmichael and colleagues followed 115 participants over a 10-day period, they found that initiating and receiving touch - things like holding hands, cuddling, kissing - were associated with both a boost in closeness and relationship quality. Importantly, being touched by your partner has the added benefit of making you feel more understood and validated. Who couldn't use more of that in the coming year?

Gary W. Lewandowski Jr.

Professor of Psychology, Monmouth University

Appartement à louer - long terme



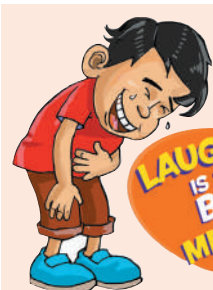
Appartement meublé de 3 c.a.c, climatisé, cuisine équipée, piscine et parking, sécurité (24/24) à Trou aux Biches - Complexe Fleury sur Mer
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Reunion

Have you ever been guilty of looking at others your own age and thinking, 'Surely I can't look that old.' Well, you'll love this one. The story is from a lady called Vandhana:

My name is Vandhana. I was sitting in the waiting room for my first appointment with a new dentist.

I noticed his BDS degree on the wall, which bore his full name.

Suddenly, I remembered a tall, handsome, dark-haired boy with the same name had been in my high school class some 25 odd years ago.

Could he be the same guy that I had a secret crush on, way back then?

Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, gray-haired man with the deeply lined face was way too old to have been my classmate.

After he examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended St Xavier's High School.

"Yes, yes, I did," he gleamed with pride.

"When did you graduate?" I asked.

He answered, "In 1987. Why do you ask?"

"You were in my class!" I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely.

Then, that ugly, old, bald, wrinkled faced, gray-haired, decrepit, idiot asked: "What subject did you teach?"

Définitions

Le Petit Robert 2020 est enfin arrivé...

Taser : Instrument utilisé afin de mieux faire passer le courant entre la police et la jeunesse.

Sudoku : Qui a le nord en face.

Cravate : Accessoire servant à indiquer la direction du cerveau de l'homme.

Voiture : Invention ingénieuse, permettant de contenir 110 chevaux dans le moteur et un âne au volant.

Egalité des sexes : Nouveau concept créé par les hommes pour ne plus payer le restaurant.

Monter un meuble Ikea : Expression moderne signifiant "passer un week-end de merde".

Suppositoire : Invention qui restera dans les annales.

Les ex : C'est comme la prison, si tu y retournes c'est que tu n'as pas compris la leçon.

La beauté intérieure : Concept inventé par les moches pour pouvoir se reproduire.

Pruneau : Synonyme de personne âgée. Qui est ridé et qui fait chier.

Aides internationales : Aides payées par les pauvres des pays riches pour aider les riches des pays pauvres.

Pharmacie : Confiserie pour vieux.

Blonde : Concept pour faire croire que les autres femmes sont intelligentes.

Un meurtre de sang froid: Un ice crime

Sentiments partagés : Quand votre belle-mère est en train de reculer dans le ravin avec votre voiture toute neuve.

Cellulite : Couche graisseuse qui enveloppe souvent les femmes mais emballe rarement les hommes.

Femme : C'est comme le café, au début ça excite mais rapidement ça énerve.

Carte bleue : Viagra féminin.

Masochisme : Concept proche de la politesse : frapper avant d'entrer.

L'amour : C'est comme un jeu de cartes, si tu n'as pas un bon partenaire, il vaut mieux avoir une bonne main.

Femme facile : Femme ayant les mêmes besoins sexuels qu'un homme.

Homme riche : Celui qui gagne plus d'argent que ce que sa femme n'en dépense.

Grand amour : Expression datant du 15ème siècle, lorsque l'espérance de vie était de 35 ans.

Where White man went wrong



Indian Chief 'Two Eagles' was asked by a white U.S. government official, "You have observed the white man for 90 years. You've seen his wars and his technological advances. You've seen his progress, and the damage he's done."

The Chief nodded in agreement.

The official continued, "Considering all

these events, in your opinion, where did the white man go wrong?"

The Chief stared at the government official then replied, "When white man find land, Indians running it, no taxes, no debt, plenty buffalo, plenty beaver, clean water. Women did all the work. Medicine man free. Indian man spend all day hunting and fishing; all night having sex."

Then the chief leaned back and smiled, "Only white man dumb enough to think he could improve system like that."

Nowadays kids are given almonds & supplements for their memory. During our times we get a big slap and we remember everything 🤡



Life stories

I wish you enough

Recently I overheard a father and daughter in their last moments together at the airport. They had announced the departure.

Standing near the security gate, they hugged and the father said, 'I love you, and I wish you enough.'

The daughter replied, 'Dad, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Dad.'

They kissed and the daughter left. The father walked over to the window where I was seated. Standing there I could see he wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on his privacy, but he welcomed

me in by asking, 'Did you ever say good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?'

'Yes, I have,' I replied. 'Forgive me for asking, but why is this a forever good-bye?'

'I am old, and she lives so far away. I have challenges ahead and the reality is - the next trip back will be for my funeral,' he said.

'When you were saying good-bye, I heard you say, 'I wish you enough.' May I ask what that means?'

He began to smile. 'That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to

everyone...' He paused a moment and looked up as if trying to remember it in detail, and he smiled even more. 'When we said, 'I wish you enough,' we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them.' Then turning toward me, he shared the following as if he were reciting it from memory.

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how grey the day may appear.

I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun even more.

I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive and everlasting.

I wish you enough pain so that even the smallest of joys in life may appear bigger.

I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.

I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.

I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final good-bye.

He then began to cry and walked away.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them; but then an entire life to forget them.

To all my friends and loved ones,

I wish you enough.

Wellness

The 4 steps that will increase happiness, according to a new study

Researchers believe these daily habits will train your brain to achieve better overall well-being, writes Catherine Pearson of HuffPost

This past year has been an excruciating one for millions, and our collective well-being has taken a serious hit. Against that bleak backdrop, it seems silly, almost, to think about cultivating emotional well-being. Now? Really? And most importantly, how?!

A research paper recently published in the 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences' offers a mental training plan that its authors call the "how" of well-being. Their findings suggest there are four key behaviours that tend to contribute most to overall satisfaction. And they see their plan as a way in which people who already feel relatively healthy can cultivate mental wellness on a daily basis. (Of course anyone grappling with severe stress, anxiety or other mental health concerns should absolutely reach out to a qualified mental health professional.)

Here are the four basic pillars of the plan, and some simple steps you can start taking right away.

Step 1: Cultivate awareness - and 'meta-awareness'

Awareness is a "heightened, flexible attentiveness to your environmental and internal cues," according to the Center for Healthy Minds ? which basically means your surroundings as well as your thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations.

And studies do show that people with heightened awareness tend to have better overall well-being. Also, being distracted can lead to feelings of stress and unhappiness.

One simple tactic that will help you achieve this? Close your eyes and focus on the act of taking 10 breaths.

Another option? "One thing I like to do is when I'm doing dishes, I'll notice the sounds, I'll feel the sensations," Dahl said.

The new Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences research - which pulls from a range of studies from the worlds of neuroscience, meditation traditions and more - suggests that "meta-awareness" is important, too. So it's not only important to be aware; it's also important to be aware that you're being



aware. Ultimately, cultivating meta-awareness helps you to deliberately direct and sustain your attention, the authors argue, rather than being pulled in by "distractors."

Step 2: Cultivate Connection

Forging and strengthening a sense of togetherness is certainly a difficult goal amid Covid-19. But making a small effort to connect with friends, loved ones and colleagues via Zoom, email or text can be enough to help you tap into deeper feelings of kinship as the pandemic continues.

The researchers also say that simply cultivating feelings of kindness toward others can be enough to help boost your sense of connection - regardless of whether the person on the receiving end even knows you're thinking about them.

They cite several studies and pilot

programs that suggest kindness meditation programs can lower feelings of distress and boost positive feelings. There is even some preliminary evidence that these types of practices may help lessen implicit bias.

"You can start with a simple appreciation practice," Dahl said. That might entail bringing a friend or loved one into your mind, then consciously focusing on the things you really cherish about them.

Step 3: Practice Insight

The researchers define insight as having self-knowledge about how your own emotions, thoughts and beliefs shape your sense of who you think you are.

And working to develop this kind of insight can empower you to challenge the beliefs you've held about yourself that you may have thought were immutable, Dahl

explained. He cited a personal example, describing how he used to be deeply unsettled by public speaking and believed this was just an unchangeable fact of who he was.

"Instead of having this kind of constant judgment, we can get curious about our own inner worlds," Dahl said.

One practical, real-world way to to that is to simply notice when a negative thought crops up, and be inquisitive, the researchers wrote. Stop and ask yourself: Where is this thought coming from? Is it based in any assumptions?

Step 4: Connect With Your Purpose

You don't have to try and orient every day toward some far-reaching sense of purpose with a "capital P," Dahl said. But it can be worthwhile to spend time thinking about your deep core values. Then make an effort to notice how even some of the most mundane activities you do every day are connected to them.

For example, doing the dishes or cooking a meal at the end of a long day might be an act of generosity toward those you love. Signing on for your "fifth Zoom meeting of the day" may help connect you to a career that you find meaningful.

Research has shown that having a larger sense of purpose in life is linked to positive health outcomes ? from resilience in the face of trauma to overall lower risk of death.

And ultimately, these four habits should help provide a clearer framework for people looking to improve their mental well-being and wondering how to start. If connecting with your sense of purpose every day doesn't necessarily click with you right off the bat, for example, try something else.

"We think of this as the 'eat your fruits and vegetables of mental health,'" said Christy Wilson-Mendenhall, a scientist at the Center for Healthy Minds who was also a researcher on the new paper.

The goal is to find what really works for you and that - crucially - "becomes easy to integrate into everyday life," she said.

Life stories

The Parable of the Coffee Bottle

A young couple had neighbours who were senior citizens, the husband around 80 years old, and the wife about 5 years younger.

The young couple were very fond of the elderly couple and made it a point to visit them and have coffee with them every Sunday.

They observed that the old lady would bring the coffee bottle to her husband to be opened, every time.

The thoughtful young man gifted the lady a gadget,

without her husband's knowledge, to easily open the bottle, and showed her how to use it.

On their next visit, the old lady once again brought the bottle for her husband to open! The young couple was amazed! Had she forgotten about the gadget?

When the opportunity arose to be alone with the old lady, they quizzed her about this. Her reply made them speechless...

She said: "Oh, I can open the bottle myself, even

without your gadget! But I get him to open it so he feels he is still stronger than I am and thus the man of our home... that he remains useful to me as always; that I still depend on him; that togetherness is the main ingredient of any marriage... We don't have many more years of life in us, and togetherness is of utmost importance..."

Moral: Never underestimate the wisdom of the elderly. Our parents/grandparents may not be bringing in money any longer, but their guidance alone is priceless. You may have a fruitless tree in your garden, but at least it gives you shade. You will not cut it off now, will you? Looking after the elderly and infirm should be looked upon as a "blessing".

Anil Kapoor to Sanjay Dutt: Bollywood actors who are acting the fitness game in their 60s



It is survival of the fittest in Bollywood too. While young heartthrobs are taking the industry by storm, veterans are girding their loins for the game. We have senior actors in Bollywood who are in their 60s and can still give young actors a run for their money. Anil Kapoor, Sanjay Dutt, Suniel Shetty, and others have been aching the fitness game like no other. Their social media handles are full of pictures that prove that they are fit and focused now more than ever, reports Times of India. Take a look!

Anil Kapoor

Anil Kapoor is one actor in Bollywood who does not preach but leads by example. The Kapoor actor is 64 years old but does not look a day more than 40. He has the looks and the personality that could put to shame any

young actor standing beside him.

The actor has of late been quite focused on his fitness. His social media handles are full of his workout videos and pictures that are sure to leave you motivated.

Suniel Shetty

Suniel Shetty will turn 60 next year but if his Instagram pictures are anything to go by then he has been lying about his age all along. The actor has undoubtedly had one of the fittest bodies in B-town.

Talking exclusively to ETimes, Suniel had said, "I am somebody who came into fitness first. I want to show people that I am the leanest and fittest actor at 60. My calendar age may be different from my biological age and that is what I want to prove. Age is just a number. If I want to live in people's memories forever, it is surely going to be like - 'What a physique this man has got!'"

Sanjay Dutt

Sanjay Dutt is very particular about his fitness. He has never missed out on his workouts no matter how busy or occupied he is. In fact, even when the actor was serving his jail time, he used buckets and spades to exercise.

In an interview with Times of India, he had said, "Diets and workout plans work best if you can integrate them in your life as a lifestyle change. On shoots and travel, I tweak them as per time and availability, but on the whole, I don't think of them as separate from my daily routine. They are my routine. So, nothing has changed, except that I have the luxury of time right now."



Sunny Deol

Sunny Deol, who recently celebrated his 64th birthday, has one of the fittest bodies in B-town. The actor keeps himself healthy and fit with his regular workouts and other fitness regimes.

In an interview with *Filmfare*, he had said, "Fitness is an addiction for me. If I don't work out, I don't feel energetic throughout the day. I work out with weights in the morning and play sports in the afternoon."

Jackie Shroff

Jackie Shroff has never failed to amuse his fans. Time and again he treats them on social media with his dashing pictures and his followers just cannot have enough of the dapper actor. His son Tiger Shroff is also a fitness enthusiast.

Talking about his workout routine, Jackie told a news portal that he practices yoga for at least 15 days a month.

9 Bollywood actors who tragically lost everything & went from riches to rags

There are actors who have seen dizzying highs and the peaks of stardom and wealth, only to have it all come crashing down. There are countless horror stories about Bollywood actors who went from riches to rags - here's a few, as reported by Rohit Bhattacharya of scoop-whoop.com.

1. AK Hangal

Known for his iconic role in *Sholay*, apart from a slew of other films spanning decades, Hangal was a cinema legend. He had also participated in the Indian Freedom movement, and had even been jailed for it. Despite all these accolades, he was pretty much penniless by the time he hit old age, as none of his family members were making any money either. Tragically, he died in 2012, destitute and unable to pay his medical bills.

2. Meena Kumari

Active between 1939 and 1972, Meena Kumari was popularly known as The Tragedy Queen due to the characters she played, and was regarded as one of the finest actors of her times. As with her on screen roles, real life imitated tragedy, and she suffered from depression, insomnia, alcoholism, and rising debt. When she passed away, she left behind scores of bills.

3. Nalini Jayawant

Jaywant acted in several Hindi films and was a common face during the 40s and the 50s. She might best be remem-



bered for the film *Bahen* from 1941. She also played the leading roles in many films through the 1950s, even bagging a Filmfare award. However, she retired in the late 60s, and passed away in 2010, alone and in financial trouble.

4. Achala Sachdev

Achala acted in over 120 movies going from the 40s all the way to the 90s. She featured in several Yash Raj films including *Mera Naam Joker* and *DDLJ*. When she passed away in 2012, she was blind, paralysed and penniless from years living alone.

5. Cuckoo Moray

An actor and dancer who was active during the 40s and the 50s, Cuckoo was also known as the Dancing Queen of her time. She would apparently charge Rs 6000 for a single dance number, which

was a massive sum in those days. She also owned a bevy of vehicles. However, she disappeared from the film industry in the 60s, and passed away from cancer at the age of 52, completely broke.

6. Sulochana

Sulochana's real name was Ruby Myers, and she was arguably the highest paid silent movie star of Indian cinema. She was of Jewish ancestry, hailing from the community of Baghdadi Jews in India. At one point, she was apparently earning more than the Governor of Bombay. However, with the advent of talkies, work dried up and she went bankrupt. She died in 1983, impoverished and unable to even pay rent.

7. Bharat Bhushan

Bharat Bhushan was a legend of his time, debuting in the film *Chitralekha* and

going on to act in cult classics like *Baiju Bawra*. He even starred opposites the likes of Madhubala and Nutan. While he was one of the highest paid actors at one point, he suffered massive losses after going into production with his brother and was never able to recover from the blow. He went bankrupt, and passed away in 1992, penniless.

8. Bhagwan Dada

Born Bhagwan Abhaji Palav, he popularly came to be known as Bhagwan Dada and he is perhaps most famous for his film *Albela* and the song 'Shola Jo Bhadke'. His signature dance steps and comedic style were even copied by the likes of Amitabh and Mithun. At one point, Bhagwan Dada owned a 25-room house in Juhu and 7 cars, but after a string of flops, he went bankrupt and ended up living in a chawl in Mumbai. He passed away impoverished.

9. Vimmi

Vimmi gained national fame and fortune with the BR Chopra film *Humraaz*. She starred opposite Sunil Dutt, and went on to act in several other films as well. However, most of these films ended up being flops, and the industry stopped offering her roles. At the same time, her textile business also failed and she fell into depression and alcoholism. She died of liver disease at the age of 34 in abject poverty, and her body was taken to the crematorium on a chaiwallah's thela.

KHKT's Karan V Grover undergoes a transformation after 5 years

Coronavirus lockdown has left us all bored, there's no second doubt about it. While some are merely passing time, others are using it fruitfully. Many Bollywood and TV stars are revisiting their old hobbies of cooking, painting, singing, and others to make the most of this quarantine period. Amidst all this, Karan V Grover has transformed. Yes, the *Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum* actor has experimented with his looks after 5 long years, and is now busy flaunting his 'New Me.'

Karan recently took to his Instagram handle to give his fans a glimpse of him using his shaving kit and scissors to the best use. The handsome hunk has not only chopped off his hair but also shaved his beard. Karan showed off his witty side, as he found a solution to the probable shortage of



shampoos amidst the 21-day lockdown. He then took his razor and turned a hairstylist himself. He captioned the same as, 'Hair me out! Also seeing my clean-shaven face after almost 5 years.'

As soon as Karan posted the video, his fans and industry friends started bombarding him with comments. While some liked his new look, others did not really approve of it. Ridhi Dogra wrote, 'Wow kid Grover quarantine mein aage jaana hai piche nahi.' (We have to move ahead during this quarantine, not backward).

Karan's KHKT co-star Kishwer Merchantt was quite stunned with his brand new look and said, 'Wtf!!!! Dude, u look like a 16-year-old... so cute.' While *Naagin* fame Adaa Khan did not like the cut, Shama Sikander called it 'brave'.

Kundali Bhagya

Sanjay Gagnani aka Prithvi Malhotra set to return in a completely revamped avatar



Zee TV's popular *Kundali Bhagya* has always made a buzz with its twists and turns. Especially the impactful characters that the show consists of surely made the viewers demand more. And one such actor is Sanjay Gagnani who made a special place in the audience's heart for his character Prithvi Malhotra. He left the show six months back after he was tested Covid-19 positive. The news had left his fans upset but now there

is a piece of good news for them, reports Pinkvilla.

Sanjay Gagnani is all set to make a comeback in the same show with a totally revamped avatar. Sharing his thoughts about the daily soap, he said, "Yes. All I can say is, Prithvi Malhotra, is returning with a totally revamped avatar, more sleek, stylish and even more deadlier when it comes to his evil motives and the three things that he would continue to cater the audiences of *Kundali Bhagya* is, entertainment, entertainment and entertainment!"

After taking a break, Sanjay spent time with his family.

It is expected that Sanjay's revamped avatar will bring a lot of upcoming twists in the show.

Gagnani further said, "All I can say and reveal at the moment is, expect fireworks when PM returns because all the fans and viewers know that whenever PM enters a scenario, they can expect a lot of entertainment, twists, turns, masala, fun, negativity and unpredictability!"

Meanwhile, in the upcoming episode, Preeta, Srishti, and Samar will be seen exposing Akshay. The family is seen prepping for Akshay and Kritika's wedding and on another side, Akshay has a big plan against Preeta.

Surbhi Chandna opens up on her bonding with Sharad Malhotra

Surbhi Chandna and Sharad Malhotra starrer *Naagin 5* is ending and it will be replaced by its spin-off *Kuch Toh Hai*. The supernatural drama has ruled the hearts of the audience and it going off-air will create a void on the screen. All season, *Naagin* has been equally popular and made a huge fan base. Surbhi Chandna, who is playing the lead role of Bani in the show, recently got candid about her shooting experience, comparison, and bonding with co actor Sharad Malhotra.

Talking to *The Times of India* about Sharad Malhotra, Surbhi Chandna said, "He is a good looking actor which became a boon for the show. People loved our onscreen chemistry and showered so much love. During the shooting, we use to have so much fun even while shooting many romantic scenes. Sharad is a great buddy and it is always fun working with him." She even praised her co actor Mohit Sehgal.

While talking about her transformation for the role, Surbhi said that she had to restart for this show. "In the show, my character Bani was not a normal girl. She has power but does not have to reveal it. *Naagin's* previous seasons had set a bar and to match it, I have to prepare myself mentally and physically too. I had not done any supernatural shows earlier but I learned so much professionally and personally through this show."

Surbhi had to face comparison also when she came on board. On this, she replied that it does not affect her much. The spin-off *Kuch Toh Hai* teaser has been released. Krishna Mukherjee and Harsh Rajput will be seen in the lead role. The teaser is trending and makers expect that the show creates the same magic as *Naagin*.



'The only thing that defines someone is their confidence': Arjun Bijlani

Arjun Bijlani says he looks up to Bollywood star Saif Ali Khan when it comes to fashion choices and maintaining an attractive look.

"Saif Ali Khan is my style inspiration. There is an understated elegance about the way he styles himself. He makes any cool look coolest and a sharp look sharpest. Be it a funky t-shirt, a pair of white kurta and pajama or a tuxedo, he aces every look," Arjun told IANS.

The actor, who recently went for a clean shave, has been posting profile shots on his social media page with his new look, and when it comes to his choices, he chooses comfort over everything else.

"I like clothes that are both comfortable and stylish. Whatever I wear should make me feel more confident and good about myself. For me being fashionable is feeling your confident best. If you are feeling good about yourself, you will look great in anything that you wear," he says.

The actor, who rose to fame with the show 'Miley Jab Hum Tum' and later worked in shows such as 'Naagin 3' and 'Udaan Sapnon Ki' among others, feels the only thing that defines someone is their confidence.

"I feel someone can look supremely fashionable in a basic tee and denims if they feel confident about who they are," he says.

CINE 12

Mardi 9 fevrier - 21.10

Dam Sharks

avec: Janelle Beaudry, Paige Lauren
Billiot, Ashton Bingham

mhc-1

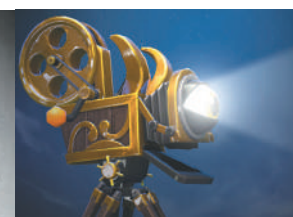
Mercredi 10 Fevrier - 21.10

Ironclad



CINE 12

Jeudi 11 Fevrier - 21.15

avec: James D'Arcy, Maria Valverde,
Jack Davenport

mardi 9 fevrier

MBC 1

07.35 Local: Sekirite La Route
10.20 Local: Fam Model
10.35 Mag: Euromaxx
11.10 Tele: Au Nom De L'amour
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
12.50 Local: People
14.30 D.Animes: Polly Pocket
14.51 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie
14.53 D.Anime: The Garfield Show
15.37 D.Anime: Uma And Devan...
16.00 D.Anime: La Famille Blaireau
16.31 D.Anime: Little Spirou
16.38 D.Aimes: Teenie Weenie
17.20 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida a...
17.50 Mag: Origami
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
21.10 Film: A Bronx Tale
23.10 Le Journal

MBC 2

10.00 Serial: CID
10.44 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha
12.04 Film: Virodhi
Starring: Dharmendra, Sunil
Dutt, Armaan Kohli
14.15 DDI Magazine
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.21 Serial: Honaar Soon Mee...
15.41 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
16.03 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal
16.29 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 Local: Tamil Programme
20.30 Film: Victoria No 203
Starring: Ashok Kumar,
Saira Banu, Pran
23.06 DDI Live

MBC 3

06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa
06.39 Mag: World Stories
07.00 Mag: Voa Connect
07.25 Mag: In Good Shape
07.51 Doc: Amazing Gardens
09.42 Mag: Global 3000
10.34 Doc: The Big Reset 2.0
11.19 Mag: Eco@Africa
11.45 Mag: Arts And Culture
12.11 Mag: Voa Connected
12.45 Mag: In Good Shape
13.11 Doc: Amazing Gardens
14.09 Doc: 360 GEO
15.27 Mag: Washington Forum
15.53 Doc: The Big Reset 2.0
16.40 Mag: Eco@Africa
17.03 Mag: Arts And Culture
18.19 Doc: Italy??S Little Criminals
18.51 Student Support Prog...
19.19 Mag: Urban Gardens
19.23 Mag: Made In Germany

Cine 12

01.24 Film: Astronaut: The Last...
02.58 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.40 Film: Beyond The Mask
05.23 Tele: Muneca Brava
09.00 Serial: The Magicians
09.48 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: S.W.A.T
12.00 Film: Beyond The Mask
13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.18 Mag: Hollywood Best Film
14.45 Film: Signed, Sealed, Belive...
16.44 Serial: The Magicians
17.24 Serial: Midnight, Texas
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: The Bold Type
21.15 Film: Dam Sharks
22.38 Tele: Muneca Brava
23.20 Serial: The Magicians

Bollywood TV

08.00 Film: Kayda Kanoon
12.04 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam
12.26 / 20.11 -
Radha Krishna
12.50 / 20.32 Sanjivani
13.09 / 21.09 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.31 / 21.24 - Bade Acche
Lagte Hai
13.31 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.53 / 21.59 - Naagin Season 3
14.34 / 22.25 - Ikyawann
15.41 Film: Rahasya
Starring: Kay Kay Menon, Ashish
Vidyarthi, Tisca Chopra
18.00 Live: Samacher
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
18.52 Serial: Ek Rishta
Saajhedari Ka

mercredi 10 fevrier

08.00 Local: Palette
08.30 Local: Rodrig Prog
09.00 Doc: Blowguns VS Bulldozer
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
13.05 Local: Groov'in
14.00 Local: Priorite Sante
14.33 D.Anime: Polly Pocket
14.54 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie
14.56 D.Anime: The Garfield Show
15.29 D.Anime: La Ligue Des...
15.53 D.Anime: Uma And Devan...
16.15 D.Anime: Yo Yo
16.35 D.Anime: Little Spirou
17.20 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida...
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Jamai Raja
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.00 Prod: Lottotech
20.20 Local Production
21.15 Film: Ironclad
23.10 Local: Le Journal

10.00 Pyar Ka Dard Meetha...
11.17 Suhani Ek Ladhi
12.00 Film: Mahaantq
Stars: Jeetendra, Sanjay
Dutt, Madhuri Dixit
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.22 Honaar Soon Mee Hya...
15.44 Mooga Manasulu
16.10 Apoorva Raagangal
16.30 Serial: Tu Ishq Hai
16.53 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
17.33 Serial: Kulvadh
18.00 Serial: Bloody Romance
18.30 Serial: DDI Magazine
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Programme In Marathi
20.30 Film: Zombie Finals
22.30 DDI Live

06.00 Rev: The Global Auto...
06.26 Doc: Italy??S Little Criminal
06.52 Mag: Check In
07.25 Mag: Made In Germany
07.53 Doc: Builders Of The Future
08.46 Doc: Sky Heroes
10.19 Doc: Chocolate's Heart Of...
11.56 Mag: Check In
12.25 Mag: Urban Gardens
12.29 Mag: Made In Germany
12.55 Doc: Builders Of The Future
13.20 Doc: Olivia's Garden
14.15 Mag: Colse up
15.23 Doc: Chocolate's Heart Of...
16.09 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto...
17.31 Mag: Made In Germany
18.00 Mag: Motorweek
18.30 Mag: Shift
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.26 Doc: Urban Gardens
20.05 Mag: Tendence XXI
20.31 Mag: Vue D'en Haut

00.25 Serial: The Bold Type
01.31 Film: Contract Killers
03.10 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.50 Film: Dam Sharks
05.14 Tele: Muneca Brava
06.37 Film: Hope Dances
09.00 Serial: The Magicians
09.48 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: S.W.A.T
12.00 Film: Dam Sharks
13.33 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.45 Film: Hope Dances
16.40 Serial: The Magicians
17.21 Serial: Midnight, Texas
18.12 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: 19-2
21.15 Film: Les Miserables
22.53 Tele: Muneca Brava
00.35 Serial: The Magicians

08.00 Film: Rahasya
12.04 / 20.06 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam
12.26 / 20.26 -
Radha Krishna
13.10 / 20.46 Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.30 / 21.09 -
Bade Acche Lagte
13.49 / 21.31 - Naagin Season 3
14.31 / 21.46 - Ikyawann
14.36 / 21.59 -
Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.16 / 22.25 - Bin Kuck Kahe
15.39 Film: Kranti
Starring: Bobby Deol, Vinod
Khanna, Ameesha Patel
18.00 Live: Samacher
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhed Ka
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.35 Yeh Pyaar Nahi Toh Kya...

jeudi 11 fevrier

06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion
06.45 Local: Sur Prise
09.00 Mag: Made In Germany
09.45 Local: Encounter
10.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
13.00 Local: RDV Muzikal
14.30 D.Anime: Polly Pocket
14.51 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie
14.53 D.Anime: The Garfield Show
15.26 D.Anime: La Ligue Des Super
15.52 D.Anime: Uma And Devan...
16.03 D.Anime: HTDT
16.14 D.Anime: Yo Yo
16.22 D.Anime: Yakari
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Jamai Raja
18.55 Local: Chaar Dham Tirth...
19.30 Le Journal
20.25 Film: Nanu Ki Jaanu

10.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
12.05 Film: Amar Akhbar Anthony
Starring: Vinod Khanna, Amitabh
Bachchan, Rishi Kapoor
14.50 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.21 Aamhi Doghi
15.42 Mooga Manasulu
16.06 Apoorva Raagangal
16.29 Serial: Tu Ishq Hai
16.51 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.13 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
18.00 Serial: Bloody Romance
18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da
Devi Maiya
19.00 Zournal Kreol
20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
21.00 Film: Night Wolf
Starring: Isabella Calthorpe, Tom
Felton, Gemma Atkinson
22.36 DDI Live

06.00 Mag: Motorweek
06.25 Mag: Vous Et Nous
07.19 Doc: Urban Gardens
08.09 Mag: Vue D'en Haut
10.04 Doc: The Wonderful World...
10.46 Mag: Shift
11.28 Mag: Vous Et Nous
12.24 Mag: Urban Gardens
14.44 Mag: Focus On Europe
16.08 Mag: Motorweek
18.00 Mag: Eco India
18.44 Mag: Carnet De Sante
19.34 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.05 Doc: Dates That Made...
21.00 Local: News (English)
21.10 Doc: Une Nuit, Orsay Avec...
22.02 Doc: 360 GEO
22.52 Doc: Botticelli's Inferno
23.34 Mag: Eco India
00.13 Mag: Carnet De Sante
00.28 Mag: Border Crossing

01.14 Film: Les Miserables
03.15 Serial: S.W.A.T
04.32 Film: Signed, Sealed, Delive...
05.55 Tele: Muneca Brava
06.37 Serial: 19-2
07.19 Film: A Doggone Adventure
09.00 Serial: The Magicians
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: S.W.A.T
12.00 Film: Signed, Sealed, Delive...
13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.45 Film: A Doggone Adventure
16.39 Serial: The Magicians
17.21 Serial: 19-2
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.08 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: 19-2
21.15 Film: Guernica
23.05 Tele: Muneca Brava
23.47 Serial: The Magicians

08.00 Film: Kranti
12.05 / 19.54 -
Kahan Hum Kahan Tuam
12.26 / 20.11 -
Radha Krishna
12.47 / 20.32 Sanjivani
13.09 / 21.09 -
Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.31 / 21.24 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.45 / 21.46 - Naagin
14.29 / 21.59 - Ikyawann
14.49 / 22.25 -
Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.10 Film: Sone Pe Suhaaga
Starring: Dharmendra, Jeetendra,
Anil Kapoor, Nutan, Sridevi,
Poonam Dhillon, Kimi Katkar
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhed Ka

Jeudi 11
Fevrier - 15.20Star: Dharmendra, Jeetendra, Anil
Kapoor, Nutan, Sridevi, Poonam
Dhillon, Kimi KatkarJeudi 11
Fevrier - 20.25

Stars: Abhay Deol, Patralekha, Manu Rishi



Formation, environnement et la bonne carte



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

L'oisiveté étant la mère de tous les vices, et les risques de filer un mauvais coton augmentant à chaque croisée de rue, le Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) veille à ce que le cerveau et les mains des désœuvrés de la période Covid soient occupés par une formation utile dans le domaine de la construction. Un secteur où tout le monde s'improvise ouvrier spécialisé - maçon, carreleur et maître d'œuvre à la fois -, une polyvalence inquiétante qui réserve parfois de mauvaises surprises à ceux qui font appel à leur service.

Le crépissage des murs est souvent source de futurs ennuis car des craquelures apparaissent au bout de quelques mois. Outre le lundi cordonnier des ouvriers spécialisés ou non, après avoir empoché la paie le samedi, les horaires de travail varient selon le bon vouloir des uns et des autres. Peu nombreux sont ceux qui manient plus ou moins efficacement tôle et bois, mais grande est leur capacité de plumer ceux qui ont affaire à eux, comme une concertation entre compagnons pour prendre une revanche sociale...

Il en est de même en ce qui concerne la catégorie d'ouvriers qui fabriquent des murs en pierres taillées. Au MITD d'attirer davantage de jeunes gens vers cette voie afin de permettre un éventail de choix plus large au public. Faute d'une véritable politique d'encadrement visant à professionnaliser le métier de la construction, de nombreux ouvriers ont appris à travailler en travaillant sur le chantier.

Remédier à l'amateurisme est plus qu'indispensable. Les grandes compagnies de construction qui ont dispensé une formation aux apprentis afin de les embaucher ont vu ces derniers voler de leurs propres ailes, une fois la formation terminée. Les futurs propriétaires de maison dans la classe aux revenus moyens apprécieront si la technique de tracer une ligne droite est acquise après tant d'années de boom dans le domaine de la construction.

C'est un écart plutôt comique entre une compétence de base non maîtrisée et l'ambition de rentrer à pleins tuyaux dans la robotique ! Un cours sur l'éthique du travail sous les ailes de MITD, entre autres, " comment respecter le contrat



“ Un baume au cœur du pays, la bonne nouvelle de la reconnaissance de la Cour internationale de Justice de la souveraineté mauricienne sur l'archipel de Chagos. Presque inaperçue, disons-le, dans le défilé des interventions tonitruantes dans la sphère médiatique, occupée à s'égosiller derrière le micro des radios et spéculer sur la série des faits 'troublants' locaux... Le dossier Chagos prenait la poussière au fond du tiroir pendant des années, comme d'autres dossiers importants qui méritaient d'avancer... ”

passé avec un client " par exemple, ne serait pas superflu. Les braves gens qui économisent pendant des années pour s'offrir un toit se passeront bien des complications dans leur vie que le secteur de la construction, indispensable à tous, a tendance à leur apporter.

Tandis que le Metro Express, c'est-à-dire le tramway, continue à creuser son trajet en déterrants les roches et les arbres de leur demeure souterrain dans la poussière et le grincement de dents ici et là, les ingénieurs, fichés incompetents de par leur origine, comme le vaccin en cours,

s'attirent les boulets rouges des mécontents par leur porte-parole dans les colonnes attitrées.... qui en profitent pour polir l'image des élus de leur cœur, une tâche à laquelle elles se livrent avec ferveur pour plaire à leur parrain idéologique dans les coulisses et mériter le salaire mensuel que leur verse le groupe patronal.

Loin d'être une œuvre d'art, l'architecture des ponts convient aux mégapoles des grands pays. Faute de moyens financiers, Maurice est rentré tardivement dans la course à la modernisation du transport public. Un véritable métro souterrain aurait mieux convenu. Continuer avec la pollution sonore et la lenteur des bus - ce qui ne concerne pas directement ceux qui se déplacent en voiture climatisée et n'empruntent jamais le transport public -- n'est pas viable à long terme.

Le projet de Smart City par les groupes issus de grosses propriétés sucrières qui ont déjà fabriqué des ghettos pour riches et fait monter en flèche le prix des terrains suscite peu de réaction dans les milieux où on décoche des flèches, par habitude, sur les projets initiés par l'Etat. Une prétention à décider de la configuration de ces 'smart cities' et l'architecture homogène des demeures que la classe aisée paiera à prix d'or, et empruntera à un taux élevé aux banques qui prêtent aux grands groupes à un taux bas.

Villes agrémentées d'une végétation parsemée pour consoler les nostalgiques des camphriers au doux parfum... Depuis quand les batmen des quartiers ghettoïsés des villes apprécient-ils la beauté de la Nature ? Quand on observe depuis des lustres la laideur de Beau Bassin-Rose-

Hill, celle du centre-ville de Curepipe et la saleté du chaos commercial de Port-Louis nord et sud, il est évident que l'aménagement esthétique et verdoyant n'a pas été une priorité... Au programme des futurs 'smart cities', béton à gogo sur les terres fertiles et un pactole dans les mains des plus fortunés depuis des siècles.

Un baume au cœur du pays, la bonne nouvelle de la reconnaissance de la Cour internationale de Justice de la souveraineté mauricienne sur l'archipel de Chagos. Presque inaperçue, disons-le, dans le défilé des interventions tonitruantes dans la sphère médiatique, occupée à s'égosiller derrière le micro des radios et spéculer sur la série des faits 'troublants' locaux... Le dossier Chagos prenait la poussière au fond du tiroir pendant des années, comme d'autres dossiers importants qui méritaient d'avancer.

Remis à jour par un Sir Anerood vieillissant à la Haye, il y a quelques années, le dossier a pris du poil de la bête face à la puissante Angleterre et une Amérique en posture de wait and see. L'Oncle Sam sortira la bonne carte en temps et lieu, et ce n'est pas de sitôt qu'il lâchera prise d'une base militaire où des bombes peuvent être foncées et larguées sur tous les malfrats que compte la région... Maurice saura négocier sa carte, comptez sur les têtes pensantes du pays...

Pour l'heure, le dossier avance aux yeux des habitants de l'archipel, déportés à Maurice, et exilés dans les faubourgs peu attrayants de la capitale. Voilà un baume au cœur qui leur fait miroiter une lueur d'espoir d'un retour au pays natal, aussi certain que le nom du prochain gagnant de la loterie...

Autre cas de figure, une manne financière en billets verts 'In God We Trust' dans les coffres de l'Etat, ce qui devrait énerver ceux qui ne sont pas au poste de commande du navire à Port-Louis et qui, ces jours-ci, rêvent que ce dernier subisse le sort du Wakashio sur les récifs à Blue Bay.

Ayant une compassion certaine pour les Ilois, les Mauriciens, dans les milieux où l'on pense, c'est-à-dire à peu près partout, sont aussi conscients des enjeux, d'une part, économique de ce vaste territoire, dont ils espèrent tirer profit un jour, et d'autre part, géopolitique où ils sauront choisir leur camp dans une nouvelle guerre froide entre un modèle capitaliste d'Etat totalitaire et ses alliés du vivier néofasciste mêlant Dieu à tous les combats, et un modèle capitaliste protégeant les valeurs communes.

Et, au diable, les Maldives ! Pour l'instant, ils ne peuvent que se réjouir de la bande bleu turquoise dans l'océan Indien affichée comme partie intégrante de la carte en extension sur l'écran de leur journal télévisé.