

MAURITIUS TIMES

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Being Wise After The Event

From its very onset the Covid-19 infection, and later pandemic, has played out on a matrix of uncertainties which one could say was hardwired into it. After all, even after the WHO visit to Wuhan a whole year into the epidemic, its exact origin has still not been determined with any degree approximating certainty. Was the mission doomed to fail from the start? After all, it was clearly impossible for the WHO team to travel back in time and inspect let alone gather original evidence. So, the jury is still out – in other words, uncertainty still prevails as to where the Covid-19 came from.

The story repeats with all the other aspects of the pandemic as it relentlessly made its way to affect all countries in the world. It was evolving as rapidly as it was changing dynamically, so that tracking its path to devising strategies of prevention and control to finding the appropriate treatment(s) were proving to be major challenges for the scientists and health professionals who were working in overdrive to limit spread, reduce severity of the disease and save lives where possible. They are still at it, fighting the same battle but with new and additional challenges.

On top of that the national authorities were faced with overwhelming of their health systems even in the most developed nations with enormous resources, and equally forging their way to cope with the logistics of providing medicines and equipments for treatment as well as for protection of those working in close contact with patients, and disposing of the mounting numbers of the dead. Mass graves in civilian times in democracies? Who could have imagined that? Yet all this was happening, and still is. Not later than two days ago France was struggling to find place in its ICUs choked with 4000 patients (with 26000 new cases that single day), heliporting others to locations elsewhere including Belgium.

And now to complicate matters, several European countries have declared a stop to the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine because a **few patients** suffered from blood clotting. And this is in spite of the EU regulatory body and WHO, as well as other experts, firmly recommending that it is safe to use the vaccine as there is **no causal relationship established** on the basis of evidence available. One can

recall also that stockpiles of AstraZeneca have been lying unused in Germany, and that the US administration has already paid up for an additional 100 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

In this charged atmosphere of handling what is an unprecedented ongoing emergency situation caused by the equally unprecedented complex behaviour of a novel virus of unknown origin, every country has tried to swim against the rolling tides of uncertainties and find some sense of direction based on the best expert advice available, which kept changing save for just one thing: the package of public health measures, which has remained the only constant throughout.

It is quite normal for all citizens to be concerned for themselves and their families, and to want rapid and sure solutions from their governments. But it is not normal for lay people who have no knowledge of the complexities to question the recommendations of recognized bodies such as the WHO and other established regulatory bodies. Worse still is it to spread false information or to compare oranges to apples by contrasting what countries with hugely different resources and demographics were doing. So being wise after the event is not an option in this unbelievably complex scenario.

One aspect in which the government could have done better here is vaccine procurement – and the money was there: the Rs 500 M that were dilapidated on Pack and Blister for defective equipment – they were not ventilators. Much less was required to secure an additional one million vaccine doses from the Serum Institute of India which sold it to the Indian government at Rs 200 Indian per dose. With the help of the Indian government, the one million doses could definitely have been secured, for Rs 100 M, instead of us going with a begging bowl while squandering from the taxpayers' kitty. And it is still not too late to do that.

And there's another thing that can be done: vaccinate as many people as possible as soon as possible by working out a new strategy. Concentrate on the quick doables and deliverables to instill trust in the population and get back to normal with their cooperation. That's the only viable way forward.

The Conversation

5 strategies to prepare now for the next pandemic

Shoring up surveillance and response systems and learning lessons from how the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded will help the world be ready the next time around



The public health response in Guinea was swift when new cases of Ebola virus disease were identified in February 2021. Carol Valade/AFP via Getty Images

from infectious disease to natural disaster to terrorist attack.

One practical way to be prepared for a future pandemic is to ensure that all these systems and structures remain stable. That means maintaining funding, training and personnel for a rapid global response even when no pandemic threats are visible on the horizon.

2. Prepare the public to do its part

Effective pandemic response requires a clear, consistent voice and an actionable message that reflects best practices based on sound science. Messaging and data that clearly explain how each individual has an important role in curbing the pandemic – and that it might evolve as the pandemic unfolds over time – are critical.

The message to stay home and “flatten the curve” to avoid overwhelming health care resources with Covid-19 cases was an essential early public health message that resonated with many Americans who were not designated as essential workers. However, once initial shutdown orders were lifted and new treatments emerged, there was general confusion about the safety of public gatherings, particularly since guidance varied by state or locality.

Guidance is also most effective if it's tailored to different audiences. In the South, distrust of testing and vaccination efforts by government and health care providers is directly linked to language barriers and immigration concerns. One strategy to reach diverse and often underserved populations is to rely on leaders in the local faith community to help deliver public health messages.

Preparedness requires an “all of community approach” that engages everyone in the planning stages, especially those from underserved or vulnerable populations. Building relationships now can improve access to information and resources when the next disaster strikes, helping ensure equity and agility in response.

Science and risk communication scholars have started talking about the best ways people can manage the flood of information during a pandemic.

While the world is still reeling from the Covid-19 pandemic, public health and emergency management experts are already preparing for the next one. After all, biologists are certain another dangerous new pathogen will emerge sooner or later.

We are public health researchers engaged in both leading public health disaster response and evaluating emergency management.

Here are five strategies that will give the world a head start – and maybe even help prevent the next outbreak or epidemic from blowing up into a pandemic.

1. Shore up the systems already in place

The identification in February 2021 of a new outbreak of Ebola in Guinea showed how critical surveillance and reporting are for rapidly responding to and containing infectious disease.

The process generally works like this: Once an astute clinician diagnoses a disease that is on the watch list of the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, she reports the case to local health authorities to investigate. The information gets passed up the chain to the state, federal and international levels.

Clinicians, public health practitioners and labs all around the world send disease reports to groups like the WHO's Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network. It aggregates all that data and helps identify outbreaks of new infectious diseases and their pandemic potential.

If a pathogen does make it past local monitors and starts to spread, governments have emergency management systems in place to respond. These incident command structures provide a framework to respond to crises that range

Mauritius Times

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

Editor-in-chief: M. Ramlallah / Senior Editor: Dr RN Gopee

This epaper has been produced with the assistance of

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Lockdowns: Need for some realism



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

There should not be any extension of the lockdown if we Stay Home, Stay Safe

As we enter the second week of the second lockdown – after the three-month long one of last year – the question that is uppermost in people's minds is whether there will be an extension after the 25th March. To say that there is genuine apprehension about it is to put things mildly. In fact, shortly after the lockdown was announced on last Tuesday night by the Prime

Minister in his short address, rumours started circulating about extension.

Whether this happens or not depends on two factors: (1) The effectiveness of the measures being implemented by government, among others contact tracing/testing/isolation, restriction of movement of the population with a call to stay safe at home and not to go out except if absolutely necessary, control of access to the red zones and to outlets providing essential services such as supermarkets and health facilities, expansion of the vaccination campaign, and (2) How far the public is complying with these measures and the sanitary precautions that have been advised from the very beginning of the pandemic last year.

On Saturday last, that is on the fourth day of the lockdown, I had to review a patient at the clinic. She came from the south of the island, either Souillac or Chemin Grenier, and I asked her how things were out there. 'Aïo', she replied, 'dimoune pe faire coma dire tout normal. Pe vane legumes lor la rue, pe aller vini et banne la police pas pe dire narien' – 'people are going about as if everything is normal, selling vegetables in the streets, moving about and police are not doing anything.' She also mentioned that she saw people without masks.

“While the lockdown is undoubtedly a traumatic experience that we perforce have to endure, we have to find ways to enjoy the forced break that is being imposed – different from the holidays that we seek and plan for in normal times. Technology allows for the education of children to continue online, occupying a significant portion of children's time. Except that they cannot participate in outdoor activities with family and friends, and so innovative ways must be found to keep them busy when they are done with their zoom classes...”

And that is the worrying thing. It has been the same story all over the world, in all countries: whatever governments do is never enough, for complex reasons having to do with both politics and politicking. Given this stark fact, the greatest responsibility lies therefore in the hands of the individual person. To this day, a large number of people refuse to realise and understand that **'If I protect myself, others too and the country will be protected'** – and this applies to all including VIPs who must set the example, as has been repeated *ad nauseam*.

Unfortunately, people tend to think that disease or misfortune only affects others – until they are themselves hit, and then it is too late. On the other hand, shouldn't we be responsible enough to take care of our own health and safety – or do we want or need to have the police on our



“Unfortunately, people tend to think that disease or misfortune only affects others – until they are themselves hit, and then it is too late. On the other hand, shouldn't we be responsible enough to take care of our own health and safety – or do we want or need to have the police on our backs 24/7? After all, there are only so many police officers to go around, and they are also human. Besides, all the personnel who are involved in running the essential services are on overdrive at the moment, many perhaps doing overtime duty. Shouldn't we have some consideration and sympathy for them also? They too have families whom they leave for long hours...”

backs 24/7? After all, there are only so many police officers to go around, and they are also human. Besides, all the personnel who are involved in running the essential services are on overdrive at the moment, many perhaps doing overtime duty. Shouldn't we have some consideration and sympathy for them also? They too have families whom they leave for long hours, whom they miss and who miss them as well.

So while the lockdown is undoubtedly a traumatic experience that we perforce have to endure, we have to find ways to enjoy the forced break that is being imposed – different from the holidays that we seek and plan for in normal times.

Technology allows for the education of children to continue online, occupying a significant portion of children's time. Except that they cannot participate in outdoor activities with family and friends, and so innovative ways must be found to keep them busy when they are done with their zoom classes. This is especially the case for those living in flats, and for them there are a variety of indoor games that parents can offer them – and even participate in why not (carom, snakes and ladders for example – and also educate them about the origin of the latter why not?), as a way of fostering that togetherness and quality time that we all complain has been fast eroding.

But of course they must also be given their own space as well for part of the time, and be encouraged to pursue any hobby or interest which they show inclination for. The older ones might take to preparing favourite meals, and that would give working-at-home mums a break and later

savour the experimental pizza, cookie or banana and cinnamon cake.

I know some who have resumed their zumba or yoga classes online, with guides from as far as Canada leading them – another opportunity to connect, but also to keep healthy. My only caveat is that this must not end with the end of the lockdown! So there must be a way forward plan on a long term basis to continue availing of the benefit triggered during lockdown.

Others I know have got down to do the decluttering that kept being postponed and in the process discovering little gems when a second look was taken before final disposal of paraphernalia. One such treasure was a thin pocket-size booklet containing advice to young children from the Mother of Pondicherry. And a positive outcome was that a whole carton of books was prepared for donating to a shelter for children.

As far as I can see, there are endless ways of occupying one's time fruitfully. I deliberately use the term 'fruitfully' rather than the more common 'productively' which sounds slave-driven and utilitarian, with an industrial aftertaste that is a far cry from what one is looking for: to enjoy the self-chosen activity.

And oh, did I mention books? Those bought and flipped through, and then put away for later – **when there is time?** Well, that time could just be now isn't it?

No, there should not be any extension of the lockdown if we **Stay Home, Stay Safe** by keeping the family fruitfully engaged and becoming enriched with both new knowledge and skills in fun ways.


Cheers.

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Sameer Sharma

When Populists Collide

The economic situation is dire, yet all traditional parties keep on having the same “let us pay them more with money we do not have” reflexes. This path will lead the country to a deeper hole

All large political parties in Mauritius have socialist sounding names, but it is very hard for this author at least to argue that any of these traditional parties and the capitalist loving BMW driving politicians have anything socialist about them. In fact I have never been able to get a straight answer about what is distinct about the political ideologies of any of the large parties. Given the culture of rotating political alliances, ideologies if any appear to have been quite fluid. When it comes to economic ideology, all of these large political parties appear to have little which separates them apart.

In fact many Mauritians who have worked with representatives of the International Monetary Fund in the past would know that the stability of the economic regime and the consistency of economic policy making over the past few decades have often been cited as a positive for Mauritius. These days, the unofficial comments from those working at the Fund would be a bit more nuanced to say the least!

Somehow Mauritius has always managed to maintain a low and attractive tax regime in the past while maintaining a basic but relatively effective social state. What is interesting about the current economic policy making however is not that the core ideology in itself is very different, but that since 2015 at least, it took on an even larger populist tilt.

Vote bank politics

In order to consolidate popular support in the 2014 elections and in order to later on offset any potential disappointment during the 2019 elections, the current government sold the story that it would tackle perceived widening of wealth inequality by increasing the minimum wage, by increasing the level of the Basic Retirement Pension (BRP), by introducing negative income taxation and by engaging in a massive public sector recruitment drive employing thousands especially from areas where it has its vote bank. I have recently been told by many of my former colleagues at the Bank of Mauritius that the tower has become overpopulated with attendants. Experienced economists with quantitative skills are

increasingly an endangered species over there.

There is nothing wrong in re-distribution of tax revenues *per se*, but in order for Mauritius to be able to sustain such populist spending, it needed to also be able to generate levels of growth closer to 5% per year. As we all know, Mauritius has never even got close to 4% levels of growth. When the government took over the reins of power in December 2014, the economy was already growing below its then 4% potential.

Total factor productivity growth was near zero, labour input growth was stuck given the quality of the existing human capital, the degree of labour participation, espe-

“How do we tackle the unchecked growth of populism in Mauritius? We do so by focusing more on measures which promote social mobility by embedding the concept of the equality of opportunity in a new social contract. From a policy making angle, we start by reforming the education system by offering quality education to all, by better aligning the pay of politicians and technocrats to performance, by eliminating kingly perks to politicians and their nominees that a small island nation cannot afford...”



cially of women and unfavourable demographics. Capital input growth was also stalling given the high debt to free cash flow levels of the private sector (do not look at debt to equity in Mauritius because assets tend to be overvalued and free cash flow tends to be poor for non-financial firms), the saturated market and the simple fact that foreign direct investment and real estate investments and construction in general have low multiplier effects on economic growth.

The slow “deleveraging” process in the private sector and its low free cash flow generation ability overall meant that corporate savings was flattish to declining, and domestic private investment was poor especially if you exclude the low growth multiplier construction sector. The public sector enterprises were as they are now: bastions of debt, of low levels of productivity and over-staffed in many areas given vote bank politics.

In order to stimulate growth, the government thought that it could boost consumption with a theory that higher consumption levels were linearly related to higher levels of growth (a crazy concept in an import dependent economy which produces less than it imports and quite the over-simplification of econometrics), keep interest rates low and by pushing even more public construction and offering more sops to stimulate more foreign real estate villa sales (construction again).

* Cont. on page 5

When Populists Collide



that elected populists earlier on, like Turkey and Hungary, have rapidly descended into authoritarianism – a trajectory that is suggestive of the risk populism poses broadly, if not confronted successfully.

In many ways the Mauritian government which has used populism to gain power is facing a civil war of sorts with other populists who perceive that the system is corrupt, rotten and unfair despite having made use of the money printing press and having borrowed heavily to finance its populist policies. The reaction of the government to protests is one of shock and of labelling the protesters as being an ungrateful lot.

The rise of populism has typically been explained by two main theories. Firstly, immigration and social media pushing ahead with fake news have fermented discontent and, secondly, that economic pain and growing income inequality leads to populism. The solution to the latter is greater re-distribution while the solution to the former can go as far as to seek to control social media. What is however increasingly clear about academic studies on the topic is that unfair economic outcomes are more plausibly associated with populism than a number of prominent alternative hypotheses.

So how do we tackle the unchecked growth of populism in Mauritius? We do so by focusing more on measures which promote social mobility by embedding the concept of the equality of opportunity in a new social contract. From a policy making angle, we start

- by reforming the education system by offering quality education to all,
- by better aligning the pay of politicians and technocrats to performance,
- by eliminating kingly perks to politicians and their nominees that a small island nation cannot afford, and by breaking down the nexus between politicians and many in the private sector,
- by implementing electoral finance reforms,
- by promoting the decentralization of power away from the Prime Minister,
- by having an independent police force and a much more efficient justice system, by having stronger independent anti-corruption watchdogs with teeth to bite,
- by enshrining the concept of meritocracy in both the public and private sectors, and
- by reviewing the tax regime towards one that is less forgiving on the rentier economy and more open to firms which seek to add value.

Mauritius has now entered its lost decade at a time when it is not even ready to face the consequences of an increasingly digitalized world. Covid-19 has worsened corporate and public sector balance sheets further and “deleveraging” will take time to solve. Significant structural reforms are needed. The more the people see corruption, nepotism and favoritism galore, the more they will seek more freebies and the reality is that Mauritius cannot afford to give out freebies anymore.

The economic situation is dire, yet all traditional parties keep on having the same “let us pay them more with money we do not have” reflexes. This path will lead the country to a deeper hole from which it may not be able to come out of for much longer than the tough decade to come. Understanding the roots of contemporary populism is therefore vital to the survival of liberal democracy.

Sameer Sharma is a chartered alternative investment analyst and a certified financial risk manager.

“Way back in 2014, the IMF had already warned Mauritius that the BRP would need to be reviewed (more targeting or/and indexing) given unfavourable demographics, and what did the Government do? It increased it in a massive way twice. The only way left to finance the higher Basic Retirement Pension was to increase taxes, borrow more or engage in this terrible idea to destroy the NPF, via the *Contribution Sociale Généralisée*, rather than modernizing the way in which we manage public money...”

* Cont. from page 4

What Mauritius really needed in 2015 were massive structural reforms which would aim to boost the key factors of production and bring wage growth closer to productivity growth. But there was never any appetite for this and by 2019 growth had decelerated to the low 3% area.

By 2019, the IMF itself believed that the Mauritian Rupee was at least 15% overvalued given the level of the real effective exchange rate and fundamentals. Mauritius was simply not competitive enough. Foreign flows through Mauritius along with real estate villa sales were meant to buy us time to engage in structural reforms and get our act together, but we chose to do nothing about it.

Way back in 2014, the IMF had already warned Mauritius that the BRP would need to be reviewed (more targeting or/and indexing) given unfavourable demographics, and what did the Government do? It increased it in a massive way twice. The only way left to finance the higher BRP was to increase taxes, borrow more or engage in this terrible idea to destroy the National Pension Fund (NPF), via the *Contribution Sociale Généralisée* (CSG), rather than modernizing the way in which we manage public money and keep our three-tier system.

Back in 2014, the IMF warned that the NPF could go the way of the dodo by the early 2050s. What many do not realize is that since 2014, interest rates in Mauritius and globally fell and the present value of NPF liabilities increased further. The strategic asset allocation framework and the way we manage NPF money not having evolved for decades (it is still backwards and lacks a modern professional setup and an asset allocation framework that takes these liabilities into account properly), in a low interest rate environment (do not think

rates will go higher soon), the NPF would have likely met its end by the late 2030s to very early 2040s. While growth including potential output trended downwards (savings trending down,

Incremental Capital-Output Ratio trending up), the government doubled down on populist policies, promising even more BRP increases and public jobs and public sector wage increases. Many seemingly educated voters thought that Mauritius could afford free health care, free universal education, free non toll paying roads and other perks while maintaining a 15% tax rate is another story (albeit the levy on the highest income earners was imposed), but what was also clear about the 2019 elections was that most other parties (the Reform Party attempted to balance the books from looking at its manifesto but was a small party) also attempted to outmatch the other when it came to promises of populist spending. There should be no surprise as to why Mauritius had already reached out to the printing press of its central bank by December 2019 and would have dismantled the NPF in order to create a CSG kitty in 2020.

Mauritius has now entered its lost decade

In many ways the guru strategists made a fundamental mistake by not only riding on the wave of populism but also in thinking that they could tame and control it by offering unsustainable freebies, and that in doing so, the people would not care about corruption and unfair outcomes. The reality is that populists care deeply about whether each individual's economic outcomes occur for fair reasons. Thus citizens turn to populism when they do not get the economic opportunities and outcomes they think they fairly deserve.

As I have previously written, Mauritius may still be a democracy of sorts but it is increasingly an illiberal one. Other developing and even some developed countries

Novel coronavirus jumped from bats to humans with "very little change": Scientists

The progenitor of the novel coronavirus underwent "very little change" to adapt to humans from bats, according to a new study which suggests that the ability of the virus to spread from one person to another likely evolved in the flying mammal prior to it jumping to its new human host.

The study, published in the journal 'PLOS Biology', assessed hundreds of thousands of sequenced genomes of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and found that for the first 11 months of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been very little "important genetic change" observed in the coronavirus.

However, it noted that some changes such as the D614G mutation, and similar tweaks in the virus spike protein has affected its biology, reports Press Trust of India.

"This does not mean no changes have occurred, mutations of no evolutionary significance accumulate and "surf" along the millions of transmission events like they do in all viruses," explained study first author Oscar MacLean from the University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research in Scotland.

But the scientists said it was "surprising" how transmissible SARS-CoV-2 has



Scientists said it was "surprising" how transmissible SARS-CoV-2 has been from the outset. Photo- ichef.bbci.co.uk

"Usually viruses that jump to a new host species take some time to acquire adaptations to be as capable as SARS-CoV-2 at spreading, and most never make it past that stage, resulting in dead-end spillovers or localised outbreaks," said Sergei Pond, another co-author of the study from Temple University in the US.

Analysing the mutations undergone by

the novel coronavirus and related sarbecoviruses -- the group of viruses the Covid virus belongs to from bats and pangolins -- the scientists found evidence of fairly significant change, but all before the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 in humans.

Based on this observation, the researchers said SARS-CoV-2 came with a ready-made ability to infect humans and other mammals, with these properties likely evolving in bats prior to it jumping to

humans.

"While an undiscovered "facilitating" intermediate species cannot be discounted, collectively, our results support the progenitor of SARS-CoV-2 being capable of efficient human-human transmission as a consequence of its adaptive evolutionary history in bats, not humans, which created a relatively generalist virus," the scientists wrote in the study.

Although the novel coronavirus is still cleared by the human immune response in the vast majority of infections, the scientists cautioned that it is now moving away faster from the January 2020 variant used in all of the current vaccines to raise protective immunity.

The current vaccines will continue to work against most of the circulating variants, but as more time passes, and the bigger the differential between vaccinated and not-vaccinated numbers of people, they said there will be more opportunity for the virus to escape vaccines.

"The first race was to develop a vaccine. The race now is to get the global population vaccinated as quickly as possible," said David L Robertson, lead author of the study from the University of Glasgow.

Bitcoin passes \$60,000 for first time



Bitcoin briefly rose above \$60,000 for the first time on Saturday. Photo- Reuters

Bitcoin briefly rose above \$60,000 for the first time on Saturday, as increasing backing from corporate heavyweights helps the world's most popular virtual currency continue its record-breaking run, reports AFP.

The cryptocurrency hit an all-time high of \$60,012 at 1149 GMT, according to the website CoinMarketCap.

Bitcoin has been on a meteoric rise since March last year, when it stood at \$5,000, spurred by online payments giant PayPal saying it would allow account holders to use cryptocurrency.

Last month Elon Musk's electric carmaker Tesla invested \$1.5 billion in the virtual unit, while Twitter chief Jack Dorsey and rap mogul Jay-Z said they are creating a fund aimed at making Bitcoin "the inter-

net's currency".

Others jumping on the bandwagon include Wall Street player BNY Mellon, investment fund giant BlackRock and credit card titan Mastercard.

Bitcoin, which was launched back in 2009, hit the headlines in 2017 after soaring from less than \$1,000 in January to almost \$20,000 in December of the same year.

The virtual bubble then burst in subsequent days, with bitcoin's value then fluctuating wildly before sinking below \$5,000 by October 2018.

However the last year's rise has been more steady, with investors and Wall Street finance giants wooed by dizzying growth, the opportunity for profit and asset diversification, and a safe store of value to guard against inflation.

Bitcoins are traded via a decentralised registry system known as a blockchain.

The system requires massive computer processing power in order to manage and implement transactions.

That power is provided by "miners", who do so in the hope they will receive new bitcoins for validating transaction data.

Queen Elizabeth's first appearance since Harry-Meghan interview



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II attends a virtual science showcase. Photo - cdn.dnaindia.com

Britain's Queen Elizabeth has made her first appearance since a tell-all interview by grandson Prince Harry and his wife Meghan rocked the monarchy, but made no reference to the crisis it had caused her family, reports Reuters.

During the Oprah Winfrey interview, Meghan said a member of the royal family had made a racist comment and Harry criticised his relatives for how they dealt with press treatment of his wife, with the fallout dominating the British media since it aired last Sunday.

On Thursday, Harry's elder brother Prince William told reporters "we're very much not a racist family", the day after the 94-year-old monarch herself issued a statement on behalf of the royals in which she said they were saddened by how challenging the couple had found the last few years.

The Sun newspaper, citing an unnamed source, said Harry's father, heir-

to-the-throne Prince Charles, had wanted to issue a point by point rebuttal, but the royal family had decided not to get involved in a 'tit for tat' battle.

In a video call with scientists and schoolchildren to mark British Science Week, the queen did not refer to the interview at all, the royals' usual approach to what they

have said was a private, family matter.

Instead she discussed the latest updates from NASA's Mars Perseverance mission, as well as the discovery of a rare meteorite which landed in Gloucestershire, western England last month, the first to be recovered in the United Kingdom for 30 years.

When told by space scientist and broadcaster Maggie Aderin-Pocock that she had been inspired to follow her career by the exploits of Russian Yuri Gagarin, the first human in space in 1961, Elizabeth, who has reigned for 69 years, recounted that she had met him shortly afterwards at Buckingham Palace.

Asked what he was like, she replied: "Russian, he didn't speak English. He was fascinating and I suppose being the first one, it was particularly fascinating."

Odisha farmer builds solar-powered car that can run 300 km on single charge



The car's battery can be fully charged within eight and a half hours, Sushil Agarwal said. Photo- telanganatoday.com

A farmer in Odisha's Mayurbhanj has built an electric four-wheeler that runs on a solar-powered battery. The car built by Sushil Agarwal is powered by 850 Watts motor, 100 Ah/ 54 Volts of battery and can run 300 km on a single charge.

"I have a workshop at home. During Covid-19 lockdown, I began working there to create this. It can run for 300 km after full charge," Sushil Agarwal told news agency ANI.

The car's battery can be fully charged within eight and a half hours, he said.

"It is a slow charging battery. Such batteries have a long life. It can last up to 10 years," he said.

"All the work on this vehicle, including motor winding, electrical fitting and chassis work, were done in my workshop with the help of two other mechanics and a friend who advised me on electric works," he added.

It has been 3 months since he completed the work on the vehicle which is still in its initial frame.

Mr Agarwal has built the vehicle just by reading some books and watching videos on YouTube.

"I am glad to know that he has tried to design and manufacture a solar battery powered vehicle during the lockdown period. Such environmentally-friendly vehicles that do not cause much pollution are the future of the automotive industry," Gopal Krishna Das, an official of the Regional Transport Office (RTO) in Mayurbhanj said.

"Society should encourage this type of invention. It is advisable to improve the design in consultation with Government of India's agencies like ARAI, CIRT to improve the safety, comfort and efficiency of the vehicle so that it can be used on roads," Mr Das said.

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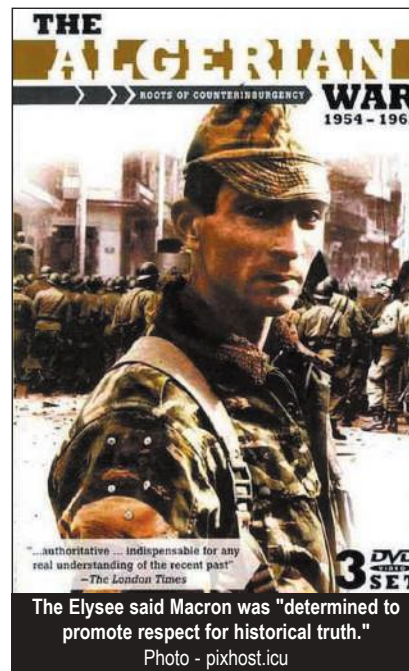
France will accelerate declassification of Algeria war files, Elysee Palace says

France will speed up the declassification of secret defense archives, including those related to its war with Algeria, as it continues to grapple with its colonial history. France colonized Algeria from 1830 until its independence in 1962 following a seven-year war.

The Elysee Palace said French President Emmanuel Macron took the decision to introduce a new procedure which will accelerate the declassification process for defense documents up to the year 1970.

The Elysee said Macron was "determined to promote respect for historical truth." The new rule comes in from March 11, reports Zamira Rahim and Antonella Francini of CNN.

"This decision will significantly shorten the waiting times, for the declassification procedure including [for] documents related to the



The Elysee said Macron was "determined to promote respect for historical truth." Photo - pixhost.icu

Algerian war," the Elysee statement said.

France under Macron has sought to reckon with its past. The President previously called colonialism a "grave mistake and a fault of the republic" in a speech in the Ivory Coast in late 2019.

In July, the country returned the skulls of 24 Algerian resistance fighters who died while opposing French occupation in the 19th century.

Debate around the issue in France reignited recently following historian Benjamin Stora's government commissioned report on the "reconciliation of memories" between the two countries.

"On the basis of this effort, President Macron will establish several concrete initiatives aimed at moving forward on the path to acknowledging all memories and easing tensions," an Elysee spokesperson said in January, after the report was released.

Bharat Biotech's nasal vaccine for Covid-19 likely to be a game-changer

In the summer of the year 2020, the chairman and managing director of India's premier vaccine developing company, Bharat Biotech International Limited told Sneha Mordani of India Today that while efforts were on to develop an intramuscular vaccine against Covid-19, what he really would want to do is develop a vaccine that will be easy to administer like 'polio drops'.

The analogy of polio drops drawn to a vaccine against Covid-19 at that point seemed like a tall order. However, a year later, that vision is coming close to reality and it has got the medical fraternity excited.

Dr Krishan Ella's Bharat Biotech has started the process of screening potential clinical trial participants at four centres in India - Nagpur, Hyderabad, Patna and Chennai for their new nasal vaccine against Covid19.

The product on trial is BBV154, a novel adenovirus vectored, intranasal vaccine.

As per Bharat Biotech's website, "An intranasal vaccine stimulates a broad immune response neutralising IgG, mucosal IgA, and T cell responses and creates an immune response at the site of infection (in the nasal mucosa) essential for blocking both infection and transmission of Covid-19."

Why is a nasal vaccine better? "It will be cheaper and cost-effective and there would be ease of administration



Bharat Biotech is set to start phase 1 of clinical trials for its nasal vaccine soon. Photo - india.com

with no injections," says Dr Sanjeev Bagai, an avid vaccine watcher and chairman at the Nephron Clinic in Delhi. Bharat Biotech has said that the scalability to manufacture this would help meet the global demand.

That it is non-invasive and needle-free is an added advantage. The nasal vaccine will not require trained healthcare workers as it would go inside the nasal cavity like drops. This would also eliminate the injuries and infections associated with needles.

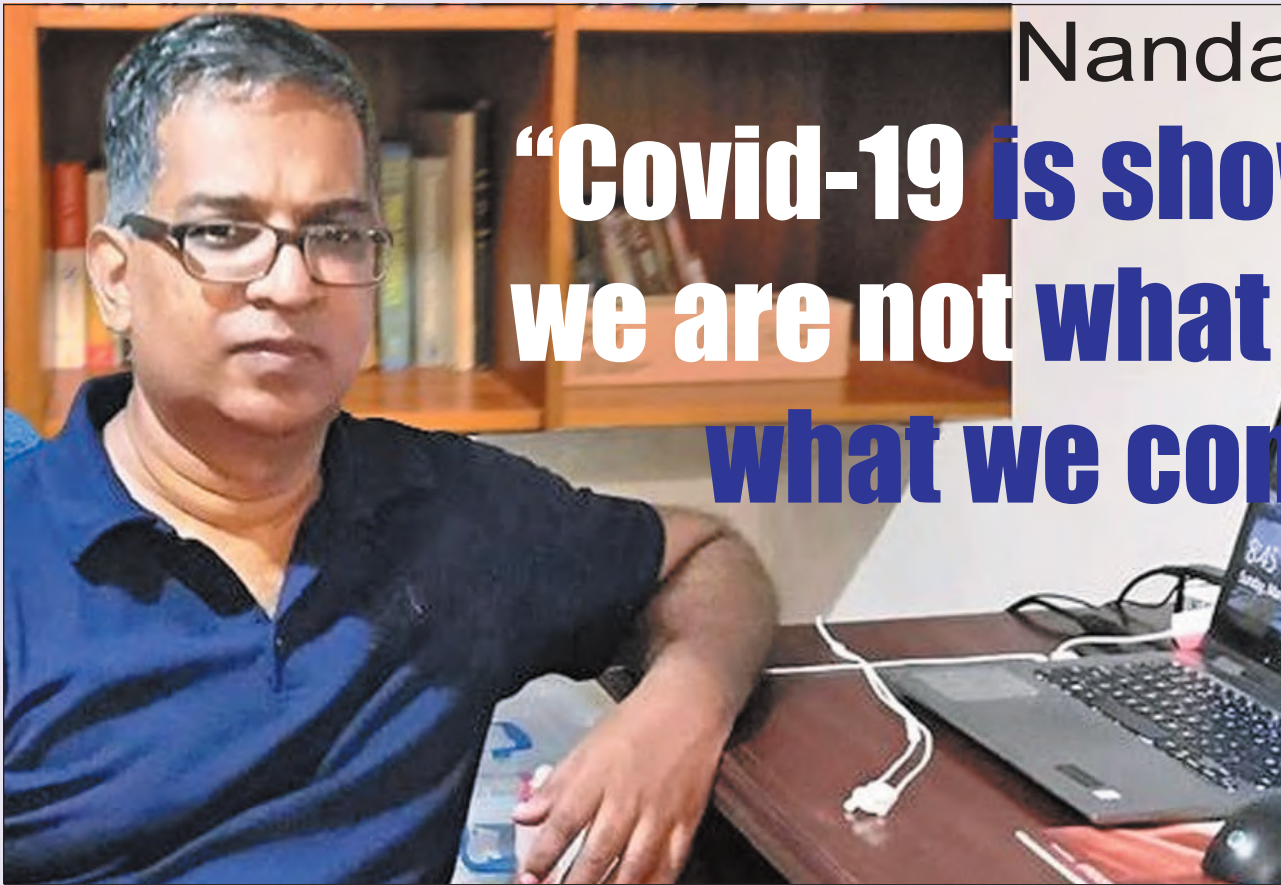
"The nasal route has excellent potential for vaccination due to the organised immune systems of the nasal mucosa," says Dr Bagai.

Professor Giridhara Babu, a renowned epidemiologist, agrees

with Dr Bagai.

"A vaccine administered intranasally, if approved after clinical trials, will be a game-changer. Some of the adverse effects related to vaccination can be attributed to how injections are administered. An intranasal vaccine, if proved to be free of adverse effects, will help in improving the vaccine coverage. Since the virus harbours in the nasopharynx, it will be interesting to examine its efficacy in inducing local immunity. If yes, then this might turn out to be better than other vaccines in terms of preventing the infection," says Professor Giridhara Babu.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah



Nanda Pavaday: “Covid-19 is showing us that we are not what we have but what we contribute”

An economics graduate, Nanda Pavaday is a popular storyteller with wide following on social platforms, especially on Facebook. He has plied his trade weaving narratives for companies and brands and has won numerous awards during his career. In 2019, he launched ‘Ti Zistwar nou Pays’ - a collection of stories from his childhood and in 2020 his second book ‘Confizri’ was published. Excerpts from the encounter:

*** Your Facebook posts and your writings indicate that you are a strong believer in positivity. How can people stay upbeat in these trying times?**

To be honest, I am not always positive. Like others, I have my moments of doubts and worries too, but I avoid sharing those episodes unless I am convinced that the readers can learn something from them and move forward. People tend to like my jokes and funny posts because it is in human nature to enjoy a good joke.

When things get overwhelming, I remember a saying that conveys the message that not a single leaf falls from a tree without God’s will. I usually find some serenity in this thought. It helps me to accept that whatever happens fits within God’s design and the Almighty always works towards our best interest.

*** Do you really think that positivity and optimism can go a long way in meeting the substantial challenges which face us all, whether it’s about the effects and consequences of the pandemic or the grim news we have been fed with since last year?**

It is important not to react to every piece of information that is being shared. During times of stress, a lot of what is said and forecasted is not necessarily true or does not materialise. Being in a reactive mood is never a good thing. It is always better to take time to think and try to make a positive contribution in whatever way we can.

Last year during the pandemic, I used to check on my friends by sending them a message via email and WhatsApp every two three days just to ask them how they were doing. I wanted them to feel that they are not alone in these trying times and if they needed me, I was there for them.

*** Why is it that we seem to be losing our bearings,**

our soul to greed, quick bucks...? It’s so easy to pin the blame on our parents, on the education system, but is that really the case?

The problem of eroding values is definitely one of the most serious ones that our country and the world at large is facing. Over the years, there have been many new colleges and universities that have set up and many professional schools built to teach people skills; efforts have been made to raise the educational facilities to nurture a more intelligent population but, in parallel, most of the channels through which these values were transmitted have collapsed.

Families are less closely knit, and parents hardly spend time with their children; the movies kids watch are a far cry from the ones we watched in our childhood since they were infused with values and propounded the importance of family values and togetherness.

Our leaders are simply not good role models, the media promote a skewed vision of success, one that tilts heavily towards material abundance, and religion has become more of something we do as a matter of routine

“The lockdown teaches us that we are not our car, our house or the money we have in the bank. We are not our office because most of us don’t even have one now. We are not the time we spend on our job; it is not even considered essential to society. We are not the company we spent our life building, most are closed or hardly operating. We are not the lengthy titles we have on our business card; nobody is asking us for it anymore...”

than something that teaches and elevates us. Activities like gardening, poultry breeding and fishing that used to teach us about the virtues of patience have now been replaced by video games that teach kids to click buttons and go. Drugs and gambling have replaced sports activities in every street corner.

As a result, year after year, we are producing people with professional skills and book knowledge but very few with sound values like honesty, integrity, loyalty, compassion, respect and accountability.

*** You were saying earlier that our leaders do not serve as good role models. One would like to believe that the people are fed up with the way politics is being conducted locally; they might be looking forward to see change happening at that level. Do you think that’s really the case?**

The present system has passed its expiry date. Today there are not many young people who would accept that it is their dad, as head of the family, who gets to choose the person they should marry and spend the rest of their life with. Likewise, in most companies, decisions are no longer taken by the bosses to be imposed on employees but rather in concert with them. The tendency is for all individuals to be consulted and involved in matters that concern them.

“In most companies, decisions are no longer taken by the bosses to be imposed on employees but rather in concert with them. The tendency is for all individuals to be consulted and involved in matters that concern them. It is only in politics that we see a small group of people deciding on matters that will affect and influence our lives without consulting us. This explains why the current system does not respond at all to the aspirations of the public...”

It is only in politics that we see a small group of people deciding on matters that will affect and influence our lives without consulting us. This explains why the current system does not respond at all to the aspirations of the public. In the past, it was important to have representatives militating in favour of the people because the means of transport and communications were limited and did not make it possible to mobilize thousands of people to come forward to discuss their cases. Such is no longer the case. Through the means offered by advances in telecommunication, it is now possible to involve a person or a group of people on any subject that affects them, and obtain the support and contribution of real professionals in debates that require a certain expertise, without them needing to be physically present.

➡ Cont. on page 9

'Happiness is found in what we manage to build within ourselves. Having time for yourself allows you to form your own thoughts without being influenced by others'

☛ Cont. from page 8

The current situation where we sit there and watch people who are supposed to represent us put on a show demonstrating a total lack of knowledge, competency and concern breeds frustration and anger. The current political system would have long collapsed had it not been for the huge amount of money invested in it and that holds it in place.

*** In your list of institutions and other stakeholders that inspire hope for the future, where would you place the youth of our country?**

When we talk of the future, we can only talk of the youth. But then it's also about the legacy we leave to them. Right now, in these uncertain times, the only certainty we have is that there will be more scandals and more mudslinging. We are not inspiring our youths to be better people.

“Some of us are feeling useless, naked, vulnerable. We are finding out we are not the things we do, how we make ourselves look, what we have accumulated. And there are some who are baking bread and distributing to others, some are creating music and prose, some are imparting knowledge and life experiences, some are opening their heart and sharing love. Covid-19 is showing us that we are not what we have but what we contribute...”

Some time back, I was approached by a colleague to write an article for their magazine because I am considered to be a successful author. I felt uncomfortable with the term 'successful author' because, as I told them, it gives the youths the impression that the success of a person is to be seen on TV or giving interviews in the papers. I would rather they see me as someone who has faced failures and misfortunes, and made mistakes, but kept going. That's a vision of success that has more depth.

*** How else can we have hope for the future?**

In one word, it will be 'faith'. I think we live very unspiritual lives. We focus mostly on what is visible, even more so with the advent of social media that has made it essential to be seen doing things rather than actually involving ourselves and really connecting.

To me, success is not just about going higher up but deeper inside. When you look at a tree, you find that the branches and leaves are always being swayed but if the tree has deep roots, the trunk will stay firm come the winds and the storm.

*** What about belief in a Supreme Being?**

I have decided to believe in God. Arguing that God does not exist because you can't find proof of His existence is like being Mauritian and saying Mauritius does not exist because you can't see it on the world map. You are probably looking for it in the wrong place.

One must not confuse between disproving a concept of God and disproving God. Concepts are signposts of something, they are not the thing itself. It is absolutely



impossible to prove the existence of God through logic because scientific knowledge requires that you are separate from the subject of your study. To experience the divine, you have to turn your attention inward, towards yourself.

If you can't see the ocean, either you are too far from it and your view is being obstructed by mountains and human constructions, in which case you have to come closer. Or you are already in the ocean and you need to stop searching. We have been searching for so long whether God existed anywhere outside of us. He would have been found by now. Not believing is easier than believing.

*** What is the most important lesson that you take from the pandemic?**

The lockdown teaches us that we are not our car, our

“Families are less closely knit, and parents hardly spend time with their children; the movies kids watch are a far cry from the ones we watched in our childhood since they were infused with values and propounded the importance of family values and togetherness. Our leaders are simply not good role models, the media promote a skewed vision of success, one that tilts heavily towards material abundance, and religion has become more of something we do as a matter of routine...”

house or the money we have in the bank. We are not our office because most of us don't even have one now. We are not the time we spend on our job; it is not even considered essential to society. We are not the company we spent our life building, most are closed or hardly operating. We are not the lengthy titles we have on our business card; nobody is asking us for it anymore. We are not the gang we hang out with to make us look good. We are not the selfies we take in classy restaurants and places all over the world.

“I felt uncomfortable with the term 'successful author' because, as I told them, it gives the youths the impression that the success of a person is to be seen on TV or giving interviews in the papers. I would rather they see me as someone who has faced failures and misfortunes, and made mistakes, but kept going. That's a vision of success that has more depth...”

We are not our friends, now we see the toxic influence some of them have over us. We are not our fans and followers but the trust that exists between us. We are not the football team we thought we will not be able to live without. We are not the weapons we built to protect our borders, they are all useless as the enemy is small and invisible.

We are not our flock of servants and workers tending to all our needs. This epidemic is having both a humbling and a regulating effect on all of us. By isolating us, Coronavirus is getting us to be real.

By cutting us off, it is forcing us to be with who we are. We are our minds and the thoughts that we allow to sit there. We are our bodies, our health and how we keep ourselves fit. We are the food we eat and the hygiene we maintain. We are not our religious beliefs and the great show we make about all that but the silent faith we have in our hearts.

We have no home if there is no love. Our children are not ours if we have not built ties with them. Some of us are feeling useless, naked, vulnerable. We are finding out we are not the things we do, how we make ourselves look, what we have accumulated.

And there are some who are baking bread and distributing to others, some are creating music and prose, some are imparting knowledge and life experiences, some are opening their heart and sharing love. Covid-19 is showing us that we are not what we have but what we contribute.

*** Anything else?**

I think that happiness is found in what we manage to build within ourselves. Having time for yourself allows you to form your own thoughts without being influenced by others.

In our modern life, it is not our deficiencies that make us sick but our excesses; we must therefore learn to slow down and recharge our batteries as often as possible. You can only know other people as deeply as you know yourself.

From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

4th Year No 159

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 23 August 1957

• *Life is a comedy to him who think, and a tragedy to him who feels. -- H. Walpole*

Somduth Bhuckory

It is fifty years since Manilal came to Mauritius and on the 13th of October of this year will be celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his arrival here.

For all that Manilal has done to bring about a better way of life in the island, he deserves the gratitude of all progressive and freedom-loving people. Indians, in particular, owe him a special debt for what he has done to liberate their forefathers from the shackles of oppression.

Fifty years ago, the pattern of life in Mauritius was different. The white community was as assertive as ever and would not listen to sharing the power that was in its grasp. The coloured population, however, was very alive and active and it was up and against the bastion of oligarchy. At that time Indians were labourers mostly. Some of them were small planters and merchants. The rank and file had not yet produced any leader of their own.

Our little island was going through a stormy period when Manilal came in 1907. It was in that year that a political movement under the name of *Action Libérale* was started. The leaders of the movement were G. Guibert, E. Nairac, R. Merandom and Dr Eugene Laurent. The Indians sided with it in the hope of bettering their lot.

And that was a time when our colony had to face an economic crisis. The economic condition was so desperate that the Chamber of Agriculture had recourse to the Imperial Government for a loan. The Imperial Government was not prepared to grant any loan unless and until a Royal Commission reported on the economic position. The Chamber of Agriculture was averse to having a Royal Commission but the *Action Libérale* was wholeheartedly in support of it. Eventually the Royal Commission came in June 1909.

The coming of the Royal Commission afforded a splendid opportunity to the oppressed Indians to ask for the redress of their grievances. As they had no leader from their own ranks to champion their cause, it was Manilal who carried their tales of woe and suffering to the Commissioners.

The Indians had been in Mauritius for seventy-two years when the Royal Commission came. It is noteworthy that it was not for the first time that somebody from outside Mauritius was fighting on their behalf. De Plevitz had identified himself with their cause thirty-seven years before when another Royal Commission had come in 1872.

* * *

Royal Commissions do not go to paradise islands. They go to danger spots and they indicate troubled times. So, it can be averred that when Manilal came some twenty months before the arrival of the Royal Commission he came at a time when the island was sitting on the brink of a volcano. Only a man of undaunted courage and strong determination could have raised his voice against the exploitation and oppression that were then prevalent.

Manilal came to Mauritius from Bombay on the 11th of October 1907. It is said that he came here at the request of Mahatma Gandhi who paid us a visit of ten days in

1901. Just like Mahatma Gandhi, Manilal was a barrister and both of them came from Gujrat. Manilal's full name was Ma-ganlall Manilal Doctor. He had the degrees of M.A., L.L.B. Soon after his arrival he registered himself as a barrister at the Supreme Court and was called to the local bar.

Four months before the arrival of the Royal Commission, Manilal started a weekly paper called *The Hindustani*. The motto of the paper was: "Liberty of Individuals; Fraternity of Man; Equality of Races." The paper was bilingual: English and Gujarati. Later Gujarati was replaced by Hindi. Incidentally that was the beginning of Hindi journalism.

Manilal fought from the press as well as from the platform. He always spoke in Hindustani. But his fights did not end at the press or on the platform. He used to carry them on even in the courts of justice.

Manilal served the oppressed and the down-trodden for five years in Mauritius. He went away but he left his name and his glorious deeds behind. His impact on the social, economic and political life of the labouring class has been immense.

* * *

We cannot forget such a man. It is to perpetuate his memory that a group of people are today endeavouring to erect a suitable statue in a suitable place in Port Louis.

Manilal came to visit us in 1950 when we celebrated the proclamation of the Indian Republic at Champ de Mars. He was then an old man. His old and weary heart must have stirred at seeing the present generation living in the world of his old dream.

Manilal passed away in January of last year. The

Memorial for Manilal



Photo - flickr.com

news of his death cast a gloom around those who understand what his service and sacrifice mean to Mauritius. While the anniversary of Gandhi Memorial School was being celebrated last year at Tranquebar, a committee was then and there set up with Vanprasthi Dhoorundur as President and Mr M. Sangeelee as Secretary with the idea of paying a fitting tribute to Manilal by erecting a statue in his honour.

The committee has done excellent work so far. A large sum of money has been collected and an English sculptor has been engaged to make a life-size statue in bronze. And it has applied to the Municipality of Port Louis for a suitable site. Now a Working Committee has been formed to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the coming of Manilal here in a fitting manner on Sunday the 13th of October in Port Louis. Many personalities have accepted the invitation of the Working Committee to participate. On that day the highlights will be a public meeting and a fancy fair.

The statue will be unveiled later on because it is not possible to have it by then. On that day, however, the Committee is planning to lay its foundation stone. The celebration will be marked also by the publication of a symposium on Manilal.

We appeal to one and all to make of this celebration a success. Rich and poor must contribute generously. Let the memorial of Manilal stand as a landmark in our history. The oppressed will derive hope from it and fighters of all times inspiration. It would be cruel to let the memory of such a man slip into oblivion.



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Il faut le dire et le redire...

Le Travaillisme

Le Travaillisme comme le Militantisme sont en hibernation. Dans ce contexte, la question suivante est posée : Serait-il possible de les réveiller en les unifiant à tous les niveaux ?



Jack Bizlall

Dans un texte intitulé "Un peu de 68 et de 75" publié dans la page Forum du *Mauricien*, j'ai demandé à la génération post 89 (celle qui est née après la chute du mur de Berlin), de faire un bilan respectueux du Militantisme de la période 69-75.

C'est à moi aussi de le faire à l'égard de mes aînés se réclamant du Travaillisme.

On utilise le terme "en dernière analyse", dans la compréhension de l'histoire, pour toute appréciation des événements historiques après avoir, autant que ce soit possible, tout examiné sur le plan contextuel, infra-structurel et supra-structurel (incluant l'élément idéologique) et, surtout après un certain temps qui nous permet d'exprimer une opinion objective et non influencée par ce qui se poursuit encore.

Le Travaillisme est une idéologie appliquant et justifiant un rapport particulier entre le collectif et l'individu, entre le pouvoir politique et le pouvoir économique, entre le social et l'économie et surtout entre l'idéologie libérale étrangère à la classe ouvrière et une conciliation qui se construit sur l'universalité de plusieurs aspirations et de protection sociale (santé, allocations sociales, éducation...), à partir de la perspective d'un mouvement ouvrier, dirigée néanmoins par une couche de la petite bourgeoisie proposant une forme "acceptable d'alliance de classe conflictuelle".

Depuis sa création en 1900, en Grande Bretagne, le Travaillisme s'est exprimé par sa force profondément syndicale, ses aspirations socialistes (à partir de 1918), sa tendance à être dirigé par une classe ouvrière avancée (que Lénine avait qualifié d'aristocratie ouvrière) et la petite bourgeoisie soutenant le libéralisme.

Bien que n'étant pas un mouvement révolutionnaire, Lénine propose en 1908 son adhésion à la Deuxième Internationale (créée en 1889 "en raison de la pluralité des courants socialistes" et, de ce fait, "sans structures centralisatrices").

Le Labour Party anglais fut un mouvement ouvrier large avec des organisations (groupes socialistes et syndicats) cohabitant avec des individus appartenant à d'autres classes sociales, pour la plupart de la petite bourgeoisie et de la bureau-

cratie d'Etat.

C'est au fond un courant qui veut concilier le travail et le libéralisme. C'est un courant social démocrate, donc réformiste, gradualiste, accordant la préséance à l'économie et ainsi mettant le social au centre et au service de l'économie libérale. Le Travaillisme a aussi pratiqué l'action syndicale dure mais en se soumettant au libéralisme en tant que philosophie et aux traditions libérales de la démocratie parlementaire. Entendons-nous bien, le libéralisme n'est pas que le capitalisme.

La grande particularité du Travaillisme réside dans l'imposition d'une idéologie étrangère sur le mouvement ouvrier tout en l'unifiant par des mesures sociales universelles qui bénéficient à l'ensemble de la société. Le résultat est l'Etat-providence, c'est-à-dire un Etat qui puise des taxes et d'autres sources économiques, des moyens pour soutenir la population et pour construire une société différente de ce qui se construisait tant aux Etats-Unis qu'en URSS. Cette idéologie s'est répandue à travers ses colonies par l'Etat britannique comme par les intellectuels de ces colonies qui ont vécu en Angleterre. Maurice en est un exemple.

Politique - A Maurice nous devons au Travaillisme d'abord et avant tout une conscience anti-esclavage, anti-esclavagisme et anti-engagisme. Cette conscience politique s'est construit progressivement dans un combat contre l'oligarchie sucrière fondamentalement et le colonialisme, conjoncturellement. Viennent ensuite le suffrage universel, la démocratisation de l'emploi dans la fonction publique et le secteur privé, l'aliénation au colonialisme et, par la suite, une orientation positive en faveur de l'indépendance.

Economie - Il en existe plusieurs pôles.

- L'émergence de la société post-agricole, semi-industrielle par l'émergence des industries de substitution à l'importation et à l'exportation.
- Plusieurs nationalisations et le développement de l'économie mixte.
- Avènement du travail pour tous.
- Développement des liens économiques privilégiés avec l'Europe.
- Création de plusieurs syndicats et la



lutte syndicale, avec comme corollaire, plusieurs institutions protégeant l'emploi des travailleurs.

Le Social - Dans ce domaine, plusieurs progrès sont énumérés ci-dessous.

- L'éradication des maladies contagieuses et les épidémies par l'hygiène, les soins médicaux, les mesures sanitaires et les vaccinations.
- L'universalité dans la démocratisation du logement : un logement décent pour chaque citoyen.
- La démocratisation de la santé et de l'éducation par leur gratuité et leur expansion.
- La protection de l'ensemble de la population par des allocations et la pension universelle.
- La protection contre les calamités naturelles, surtout les cyclones et la sécheresse.
- La promulgation des lois les plus avancées pour protéger et garantir les droits des uns et des autres.
- Des mesures appropriées pour l'eau, l'électricité, le transport public, les activités portuaires, les activités aéro-

portuaires, la communication, les services bancaires et financiers, le réseau routier, les services municipaux, l'entraide... Enorme. Vraiment énorme.

Ces développements sont étroitement associés à une fusion de l'économie et du social à travers l'Etat. Et pourtant tout n'a pas été dit.

Le Travaillisme a atteint son apogée avec l'indépendance. Ensuite la chute est arrivée, voire même, la décadence. Quelques exemples expliquant ce changement de cap sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Le gel des salaires
- Le chômage
- L'exode/la migration vers d'autres lieux
- La difficile "cohabitation ethnique", les bagarres de janvier 1968, ...
- L'alliance politique de 1969 éliminant l'opposition parlementaire
- L'incertitude de l'avenir, la fraude, la corruption...
- Et surtout et avant tout, la crise économique provoquant la cassure sociale.

Au fond, le Travaillisme et le Militantisme ont été des moteurs de notre Histoire. Il faut savoir qu'à partir de 1976, le MMM rejette la voie révolutionnaire pour adhérer au Travaillisme jusqu'à conclure une alliance politique avec le PTr en 1995.

Mais, aujourd'hui, le Travaillisme comme le Militantisme sont en hibernation. Dans ce contexte, la question suivante est posée : Serait-il possible de les réveiller en les unifiant à tous les niveaux ?

Mais, c'est aussi une vérité de la Palice qu'on ne construit pas le futur uniquement avec le passé. Depuis 1989, tant de choses se sont passées. Dans cinq milliards d'années, notre galaxie, la Voie Lactée et la galaxie Andromède se fusionneront en une nouvelle galaxie dont le nom a déjà été trouvé : la galaxie *Mikomeda*. Le moteur de cette galaxie fonctionnera différemment avec deux centres, déformant l'espace-temps.

Je ne peux que remercier mes aînés d'avoir construit un pays tout à fait particulier, avec une économie tout à fait particulière, une société où il fait bon vivre. Ma génération lui a donné une culture que j'aime - Que dis-je ? Aimer - que j'adore.

Ce que la jeune génération doit faire maintenant, dans le sillage de la célébration de l'indépendance, dans un contexte de confinement général, c'est se poser "les questions pour le changement".

Les réponses qu'ils recherchent se trouvent dans les questions si elles sont intelligemment construites, matériellement et intellectuellement parlant. Dans un prochain texte, je parlerai d'une proposition pour faire suite au Travaillisme et au Militantisme.

5 strategies to prepare now for the next pandemic

☛ Cont. from page 2

Lessons from what's been called the infodemic of Covid-19 news – some trustworthy but some certainly not – can inform new strategies for sharing reliable info and fostering trust in science.

3. Get coordinated and practice

Emergency managers and health care leaders have long recognized that a coordinated response by diverse teams is critical for public health emergencies.

Tabletop exercises that simulate real emergencies help officials prepare for crises of all types. Like a fire drill, they bring together community stakeholders to walk through a hypothetical disaster scenario and hash out roles and responsibilities. These practice sessions include people who work in public health, emergency management and health care, as well as federal, tribal, state and local front-line responders.

Practice scenarios must also include the reality of "stacked disasters," like a hurricane or winter storm that puts even more stress on the disaster response system.

These exercises enable a community to test parts of the overall emergency management plan and determine gaps or areas to strengthen. Ongoing testing and training to the plan ensures everyone is as ready as they can be.

Beyond this training, health care professionals could be cross-trained to back up specialized clinical staff, who may need support over the course of a long pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic delivered lessons about infrastructure and supply chains. Strategic investments can shore up existing strategic national stockpiles of supplies and vaccinations for the future. If necessary, the president can use the Defense Production Act to order private companies to prioritize federal orders.

4. Polish the playbook

After every major disaster response, all of the different groups involved – law enforcement, EMS, fire, emergency management, public health, search and rescue and so on – conduct what are called "after action reviews." They can improve plans for the next time around.

A thorough review of the response to the current Covid-19 pandemic at all levels will identify gaps, challenges and successes. Those "After Action" findings need to be integrated into future planning to improve preparedness and response for the next pandemic.

5. Build on the new normal

It's been easier to adapt to the necessary lifestyle changes due to this pandemic thanks to the ways technology has changed the workplace, the classroom and the delivery of health care. Business analysts predict the quick move to video teleconferencing and remote work for offices in 2020 will be lasting legacies of Covid-19. A multidisciplinary team here at Texas A&M is tracking how robotics and automated systems are being used in pandemic response in clinical care, public health and public safety settings.

Some of the sudden, dramatic changes to norms and behaviors, like the use of face masks in public, may be among the easiest strategies to keep in place to fend off a future pandemic from a respiratory virus. Just as telephone systems continued to improve over the last 100 years, ongoing innovation that builds on rapid adoption of technologies around Covid-19 will help people adjust to sudden lifestyle changes when the next pandemic strikes.

Tiffany A. Radcliff - Associate Dean for Research and Professor of Health Policy and Management & Angela Clendenin - Instructional Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Texas A&M University



COMMUNIQUÉ

GOVERNMENT WAGE ASSISTANCE SCHEME (GWAS) AND SELF-EMPLOYED ASSISTANCE SCHEME (SEAS)

For the Month of March 2021

Following the decision of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius to extend the **Government Wage Assistance Scheme (GWAS)** and the **Self-Employed Assistance Scheme (SEAS)** for the month of **March 2021**, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) wishes to inform employers and self-employed Individuals of the conditions applicable and the measures taken by the MRA for payment of the allowances.

A. Tourism Sector

The financial assistance under GWAS and SEAS will continue to be provided to operators in the tourism industry in Mauritius and Rodrigues for the month of March 2021, **in full**.

The monthly allowance payable under GWAS is equivalent to one month's basic wage of all employees drawing a monthly basic wage of up to Rs 50,375, capped at Rs 25,375 of assistance per employee.

The monthly allowance under SEAS is Rs 5,287.

B. Sectors other than the Tourism Sector

With the lockdown in the island of Mauritius for the period 10 March 2021 to 25 March 2021, the financial assistance under GWAS and SEAS is extended to all other sectors, and the allowance is payable on the basis of **half of a month**.

GWAS

Under GWAS, employers in the private sector, approved or registered charitable institutions as well as charitable trusts and charitable foundations are eligible, for the month of March 2021, to a financial assistance equivalent to **a half month basic wage** of all employees drawing a monthly basic wage of up to Rs 50,375, capped at Rs 12,688 in respect of Mauritian and expatriate employees, in full-time or part-time employment in Mauritius.

SEAS

Under SEAS, eligible self-employed individuals in the Island of Mauritius are entitled, for the month of March 2021, to a financial assistance of Rs 2,550, topped up by an amount of Rs 94, representing compensation 2021, to bring the total amount payable to Rs 2,644.

C. Application for GWAS and SEAS to the MRA

Employers are required to apply for GWAS electronically using the facilities that will shortly be made available on the MRA website, www.mra.mu.

Self-employed individuals who have already made an application for SEAS for any of the months of March 2020 to February 2021 are **NOT** required to make an application for SEAS for the month of March 2021. Only eligible self-employed individuals, who had not previously applied for SEAS, are required to make an application for March 2021. The necessary facility will shortly be made available on the MRA website, www.mra.mu.

Self-employed individuals who have previously made an application for SEAS and are not eligible to the allowance for the month of March 2021, are requested to withdraw their application, by 19 March 2021, using the facility available on the MRA website: www.mra.mu.

Payments under GWAS and SEAS will be credited by the MRA directly to the bank account of eligible employers and self-employed individuals.

For further information, kindly visit the MRA website: www.mra.mu or phone the MRA helpdesk on **207 6000** during working hours.

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

13 March 2021

Ehram Court, Cnr Mgr. Gonin & Sir Virgil Naz Streets, Port Louis, Mauritius
T: +230 207 6000 | F: +230 207 6048 | M: headoffice@mra.mu | W: www.mra.mu



Bad neighbours!

There is a huge house in our street.

The extended family is run by a grumpy old woman with a pack of irritable dogs allowed to run without leash.

Her car isn't taxed or insured and doesn't even have a number plate, but the police still do nothing.

To the best of my knowledge, she has never worked a day in her life.

Her bad-tempered husband is notorious for his racist comments.

A shopkeeper blamed him for arranging the murder of his son's ex-wife and her boyfriend, but nothing has ever been proved.

All their kids have broken marriages except the youngest, who everyone thinks is gay.

Two grandsons are meant to be in the army but are always out partying in nightclubs. One of them just got married and pray to God he settles down. The second is out of control. It is not known if they have the same father.

Gosh, I hate living near Buckingham Palace!



That's Life

What is A.A.A.D.D.?

It is Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder. This is how it manifests:

I decide to water my garden. As I turn on the hose in the driveway, I look over at my car and decide it needs washing.

As I start toward the garage, I notice mail on the porch table that I brought up from the mail box earlier. I decide to go through the mail before I wash the car.

I lay my car keys on the table, put the junk mail in the garbage can under the table, and notice that the can is full. So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the garbage first.

But then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the garbage anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my check book off the table, and see that there is only one check left.

My extra checks are in my desk in the study, so I go inside the house to my desk where I find the can of Coke I'd been drinking.

I'm going to look for my checks, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over. The Coke is getting warm, and I decide to put it in the refrigerator to keep it cold.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke, a vase of flowers on the counter catches my eye -- they need water.

I put the Coke on the counter and discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning. I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers.

I set the glasses back down on the counter, fill a container with water and suddenly spot the TV remote. Someone left it on the kitchen table.

I realize that tonight when we go to watch TV, I'll be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the den where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.

I pour some water in the flowers, but quite a bit of it spills on the floor.

So, I set the remote back on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill.

Then, I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day:

the car isn't washed,
the bills aren't paid,
there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter,
the flowers don't have enough water,
there is still only one check in my check book,
I can't find the remote,
I can't find my glasses,
and I don't remember what I did with the car keys.

Then, when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day, and I'm really tired.

I realize this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some help for it, but first I'll check my e-mail...

Don't laugh -- if this isn't you yet, your days are coming!

Author unknown

Ghaffar Bhai in Thailand

Ghaffar Bhai is on his first trip to a massage parlour in Thailand and the Madam over there asks him to take a seat and relax.

She sends a pretty young girl over to entertain him. They chat and giggle - she sits on his lap and they cuddle. He leans over and whispers into her ear.

"Certainly not!" she replies. She stands up and walks away.

Seeing this, the Madam sends a more experienced girl over.

Again they chat and giggle - she sits on his lap and they cuddle. He leans over and whispers in her ear.

"Oh no... you must be joking!" she screams and walks away.

The Madam is surprised that such an ordinary looking guy could ask for something so shocking that two of her girls have refused.

She decides to send Lulu over to the guy. Lulu has never been known to refuse any request no matter how weird.

Well, they two chat and giggle - she sits on his lap, and they cuddle. He leans over and whispers in her ear.

"No way buddy," she shouts, and slaps him across the face and walks away.

The Madam is intrigued She has never seen anything like this in all her years working in massage parlours and though she has not done "bedroom work" for many years, she is more than curious about the guy's request - so she decides to teach her employees a lesson.

She goes over to Ghaffar Bhai herself and tells him that she is the best in the house anyway.

Then she sits on his lap and they cuddle. He leans over and whispers in her ear:

"Will Congress win the elections in India?"



When William Shakespeare went for vaccination

Nurse: Which arm?

Shakespeare: As you like it.

Nurse: Was that painful?

Shakespeare: Much ado about nothing.

Nurse: You will have to have a second jab.

Shakespeare: Measure for measure?

Nurse: So what do you think of the government handling of Covid?

Shakespeare: Comedy of Errors.

English is full of contradictions

Here are some funny ones...

1. Found missing
2. Open secret
3. Small crowd
4. Act naturally
5. Clearly misunderstood
6. Fully empty
7. Pretty ugly
8. Seriously funny
9. Only choice
10. Original copies
11. Exact estimate
12. Tragic comedy
13. Foolish wisdom
14. Liquid gas
15. Working holiday

And the newest Mother of all is

16. Social distancing.

Intelligent Answers

Wife, "Tell me who is stupid? You or me?"

Husband (calmly): "Everyone knows that you are so intelligent, you will never marry a stupid person."

What a decent way to reply!

Wife to her accountant husband: "What is inflation?"

Husband: "Earlier you were 36-24-36. But now you are 48-40-48. Though you have everything bigger than before, your value has become less than before. This is inflation."

Economics is not that difficult if we have the right examples.

Interviewer: "What is recession?"

Candidate: "When wine & women get replaced by water & wife, that critical phase of life is called recession!"

An economist beautifully explained two reasons for having two wives.

A - Monopoly should be broken.

B - Competition improves the quality of service.

If you have 1 wife, she fights with you!

If you have 2 wives, they will fight for you!

Secrets to a long and successful marriage



He & She

Marriage takes work! Whoever tells you otherwise is simply lying! So when you see couples who have lasted a lifetime together, you can't help but wonder what could be the secret behind such successful marriages. Well, it isn't some

complicated riddle, but in fact, quite simple in terms of love, understanding, trust and of course, strategy! Hence, we bring to you some ways to have a lifelong marriage.

Fight fair

Don't bring "you didn't do that last year

too" into a fight. Bringing up past mistakes will only deteriorate the situation. So, if you and your partner are arguing, focus on handling the current issue you both are facing, rather than misleading the conversation into unnecessary directions. Fight fair, solve fair.

Compliment each other frequently

Simple words of encouragement or compliments have far greater power than you think. Telling your partner they look good in that suit or dress can really lighten them up. Also, if your partner is let down at any moment, praising them about their qualities and work will surely motivate them further.

Keep realistic expectations

Don't expect your partner to do things according to your way. Keep it real when it comes to expecting them to indulge in some household chores or basic amenities. Accept that your partner has their own way of doing things. Marriage includes a lot of compromise and understanding, especially about meeting up to expectations.

Mould into each other's wants

If your partner is craving ice-cream for dessert, but you want brownies, then order some ice-cream for now. There's always a next time. Don't throw a fit if things don't go your way, instead, learn to balance it equally, so that your partner also takes your wants and needs into consideration.

Your spouse comes first

If there's any good or bad news, your spouse should be the first one to know. This assures them of their position in your life. Despite you having best friends, spend time with your spouse, go out on spontaneous trips and consider each other as a main priority - this will keep you two married happily.

Take things lightly, whenever possible

It isn't necessary to take things seriously every time you and your spouse have a fight. If they have offended you in a way, take some time to think and give them a chance to apologise genuinely. If they do, don't make a big deal out of it. You can laugh it out instead!

Health Tips

Here are 10 health benefits of mint leaves

Pudina (mint) is one of the oldest culinary herbs known to humans. It has remarkable medicinal properties and is a rich source of polyphenols. It has carminative and antispasmodic properties. Here are 10 health benefits of mint leaves that one must know:

Helps in digestion

Mint is rich in antioxidants, menthol and phytonutrients that help the enzymes to digest food. The essential oils in mint possess strong antibacterial and antiseptic effects that calm stomach cramps and help ease acidity and flatulence.

Treats asthma

Regularly taking pudina can ease chest congestion. The methanol in mint acts as a decongestant, it helps loosen mucus collected in the lung and also shrinks swollen membranes in the nose to allow you to breathe easier. While using pudina, make sure that you don't overdose it, otherwise, your air passage will become irritated.

Cures headaches

Pudina contains menthol that can help relax muscles and ease the pain. Applying pudina juice on your forehead and temples can give you relief from headache. Also, balms of pudina base or mint oil are effective in curing headaches.

Eases stress and depression

One of the main advantages of mint is that it is the most widely used herb in aromatherapy. Pudina or mint has a strong, refreshing smell that can ease stress and refresh the body and mind. The apoptogenic activity of



mint helps regulate the cortisol levels in the blood that triggers the body's natural response to ease the stress. Inhaling pudina essential oil can instantly release serotonin in the blood which is a neurotransmitter that is well known for easing symptoms of stress and depression.

Makes your skin healthy

Pudina has anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial properties that help treat acne and pimple on the skin. Pudina leaves contain a high amount of salicylic acid which acts as anti-acne. It also acts as an effective skin cleanser. Pudina has antioxidant properties that help you get clean and youthful skin by removing free-radicals from the body. Other ways pudina makes your skin healthy is that it retains the moisture in the skin, clear off dead skin cells, and dirt from the skin pores, and makes the skin look radiant and toned.

Oral care

Chewing pudina leaves is a great way to improve oral hygiene and dental health. The essential oils in pudina can help you get fresh breath. Also, using the mouthwash containing peppermint oil can help you kill bacteria in the mouth and provide you with healthy gums and teeth.

Improves memory

According to a research, mint can improve memory

and retrieve the cognitive function of the brain. Consuming pudina regularly can increase brain power by improving alertness, and memory retention, and other cognitive functions.

Promotes weight loss

The aromatic herb pudina could help you in weight loss. The essential oils of pudina stimulate digestive enzymes to increase the bile flow and promote digestion. It also helps in improved nutrient absorption from the food. When the body is able to assimilate and absorb nutrients properly, your metabolism increases. The increase in metabolism promotes weight loss.

Treats common cold

If you are struggling with cold and finding it difficult to breathe, pudina is the best remedy for it. Most of the vapor rubs and inhalers contain mint. Mint naturally clears nose throat, bronchi, and lung congestion. Apart from respiratory channels, mint also eases irritation caused by chronic coughing.

Eases symptoms of nausea

Pudina is an effective treatment for nausea that often occurs in morning sickness. Eating a few pudina leaves or smelling it every morning can help pregnant women prevent the nauseous feeling or cope with it better.

11 newcomers expected to make their Bollywood debut in 2021

Every year, a number of fresh faces are introduced to the audience on the silver screen. Every normal year that is. With the pandemic looming large, all film shootings were halted, and even when they did get permission to start, cinema theatres were not allowed to open. However, with things slowly crawling back to normalcy, it looks like all those who were waiting in the wings to make their big-screen debuts last year will finally get a chance to display their acting chops. From Manushi Chhillar to Ahan Shetty, check out all the Bollywood newcomers set to hit the screen in 2021, as reported by Deepali Singh of Vogue.in.

Shalini Pandey



The Telugu blockbuster *Arjun Reddy* (2017) did not just prove to be a game changer for its lead hero Vijay Devarakonda—it also opened doors for its female lead Shalini Pandey as she bagged herself a role in Bollywood opposite Ranveer Singh in the upcoming YRF production *Jayeshbhai Jordaar*.

While she played the docile Preethi in *Arjun Reddy*, we hope to see her in a more perky avatar in her Hindi film debut that is supposed to be a humorous entertainer based in Gujarat. The release date of the film has been set for August 27.

Manushi Chhillar

In November 2019 it was announced that the former Miss World would be making her debut in the world of acting. 23-year-old Chhillar, who won the Miss World pageant 17 years after Priyanka Chopra, will star opposite Akshay Kumar in Chandraprakash Dwivedi's magnum opus *Prithviraj*, essaying the role of Princess Sanyogita, Prithviraj's love interest.

Talking about her first role, the young actor says, "Her life is an extremely important chapter in Indian history and I will try my best to play her as accurately as possible." The movie is expected to release around Diwali 2021.

Rashmika Mandanna

After delivered back-to-back hits in Telugu and Kannada cinema, the actor is

now set to make her Bollywood debut with Siddharth Malhotra in the upcoming *Mission Majnu*. The cast is currently shooting in Lucknow for the espionage thriller which is set in the 1970s and is inspired by real events.

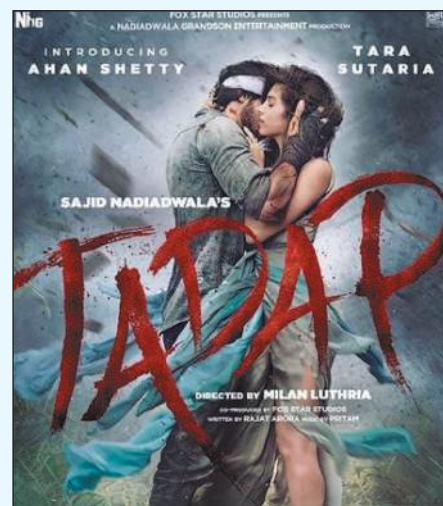
Lakshya

The 2008 romcom *Dostana* featured the trio of John Abraham, Abhishek Bachchan, and Priyanka Chopra. Its 2021 sequel, *Dostana 2*, will again see two guys and a girl in the lead roles.

While Kartik Aaryan and Janhvi Kapoor are familiar names for Indian audiences, it was the addition of newcomer Lakshya that intrigued everyone. If you're a television soap watcher, you'll recognise this actor from shows such as *Adhuri Kahani Hamari*, *Pyar Tune Kya Kiya* and *Pardes Mein Hai Mera Dil* among others.

Ahan Shetty

Quite a lot has been written about Suniel Shetty's son shooting for his debut film, a remake of the Telugu film *RX100* (2018). A few days ago, the makers of the film finally revealed the first poster of the movie titled *Tadap*. Described as an incredible love story, the Milan Luthria-directorial also stars Tara Sutaria in the lead role.



Ahan recently took to Instagram to celebrate the wrap of his first film, sharing a picture of him fist-bumping the director along with a sweet note for his team, "Going to hold on to these memories forever. Thank you to the whole team of *Tadap* and everyone who pushed me in ways I didn't know I could." The movie is set to hit cinemas on September 24, 2021.

Palak Tiwari

Shweta Tiwari's daughter had pulled out of the Bollywood film *Quickie* opposite Darsheel Safary as she did not want showbiz to distract her from her education. Now, the young actor will be seen in *Rosie: The Saffron Chapter*, a film inspired by real

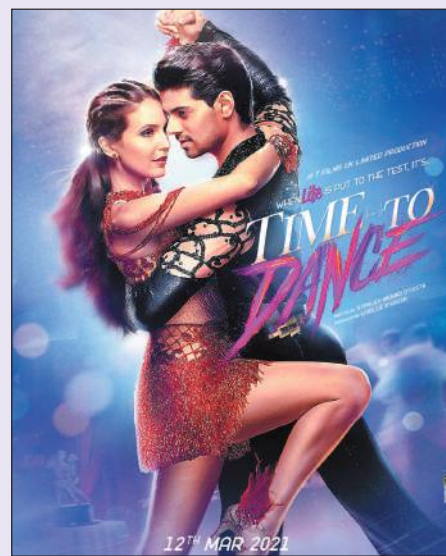
Shirley Setia

The singer became a household face soon after she started posting covers of popular songs on YouTube. A social media sensation, Shirley gave us a glimpse of her acting skills with the Netflix film *Maska* (2020), co-starring Manisha Koirala. She will now be seen in her first lead role in her big-screen debut *Nikamma* opposite Abhimanyu Dassani. Directed by Sabbir Khan, the film also marks Shilpa Shetty Kundra's return to films after more than a decade.



Isabelle Kaif

Katrina Kaif's younger sister is yet to make her big-screen debut but she has already bagged two plum projects. The trailer of her first film, *Time to Dance*, opposite Sooraj Pancholi came out recently and the new star looks comfortable matching steps with the latter in the dance movie directed by Stanley D'Costa. She has two other projects in the pipeline: *Kwatha* with Salman Khan's brother-in-law Aayush Sharma and *Suswagatham Khushamdeed* with Pulkit Samrat.



Pranitha Subhash

South Indian actor Pranitha Subhash is already an established name in the Kannada, Tamil and Telugu film industries. After having seen her performance in some of her films, the makers of *Bhuj: The Pride of India* signed her on for the historical war drama starring Ajay Devgn. She also recently wrapped up the shoot of her second Hindi film, *Hungama 2* directed by Priyadarshan.

Speaking of her Bollywood debut, the actor says "I think today Bollywood has space for everyone, with different genres and stories—either on OTT or theatres. Apart from that, it's not a space where you get stereotyped anymore. You can choose what you want, there are multiple types of movies. Things have diversified so much, so I am just looking for diversity and variety in my work."

events co-starring Vivek Oberoi.

The plot revolves around the sudden and mysterious disappearance of Rosie, a BPO employee at Gurugram. In an earlier interview, Palak had mentioned that she has drawn inspiration from Sadhna's work in the 1964 *Woh Kaun Thi*.

Sharvari Wagh

It has been a long wait in the industry for Wagh who started giving acting auditions in 2014. Her efforts finally paid off when she was announced as one of the leads in the YRF production *Bunty Aur Babli 2*, a sequel to the 2005 film starring Saif Ali Khan and Rani Mukerji. The newcomer has been paired opposite Siddhant Chaturvedi in the film which revolves around two con couples. Her first project—*The Forgotten Army: Azaadi Ke Liye* (2020) was an epic war series that released last year on Amazon Prime Video.

Namashi Chakraborty

Mithun Chakraborty's younger son Namashi would have made his Bollywood debut last year itself, had it not been for the pandemic. Now, he's set to star in Rajkumar Santoshi's *Bad Boy*. Expected to be an out-and-out commercial film, it also marks the filmmaker's return to direction after seven years. Reportedly, the actor has also already bagged his second film which is expected to be a quirky family comedy.

Karan Patel: 'If the people forget you, then it's a problem'

After 18 years on television, popular actor Karan Patel has been trying his luck in films. He has been on auditions but "things don't happen that easily as maybe producer directors have a mind-set or a mental block about TV actors, their calibre and being over-exposed. Maybe someday they will change their mind."

Though he has been a part of movies such as *City of Gold* (2010), *Shootout at Wadala* (2013), and *Phamous* (2018), the *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein* actor hasn't got the role he wants, reports Kavita Awaasthi of Hindustan Times. He says, "For me, as an actor, today the challenge is to find work on the big screen; to break the stigma that TV actors can't become film stars. I am not disheartened as one should keep trying and not everyone is lucky to get a break in one go, some take years, some take months while some get it instantly. Each one has to keep trying in their capacity till they strike."

For television celebs, streaming platforms seem to be the next phase in their careers, a transition that works for them and their audiences. Patel feels there's a reason. "The kind



of stories being told online aren't available on the tube, unfortunately. In fact, I think TV should adapt to finite shows with strong storylines. Of course, I don't mean include nudity and explicit scenes or cuss words but there are so many interesting subjects which are being made for web, can be made for TV as well. But then maybe TV producers cater to a different audience and know best about the business. I think, the ball game is the same, but the players are different," says the 37-year-old.

Talking about his career progression and his image of an angry young man, he shares, "I have done fairly well, I think, done justice to the roles given to me. My milestones are not just mine but they couldn't have been possible without Ekta Kapoor, the audiences and a little bit of good luck (laughs). As far as my image is concerned, it is good to have one because then that means the public remembers you. If they forget you, then it's a problem."

'I miss facing the camera': Ruhaanika Dhawan aka Ruhi from YHMH

Ruhaanika Dhawan got her share of fame from the television show *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein*, where she was seen playing the role of little Ruhi. She has been a popular child artist and that is also evident from her social media following. Post *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein*, Ruhi has been missing from television. So what has she been upto since the last many months?

"I am currently focusing on my academics and extra co-curricular activities. I am in Grade 8 so academics are more important to me now more than ever," says the 13-year-old. But she clarifies that she hasn't taken a break from acting and is doing theatre, reports Hasti Doshi of TNN.

Speaking about attending online school, she says, "I wasn't sure about this earlier as I felt that it wouldn't work out. But now I feel it's working out pretty well as I am spending more time with my family and I also get extra time to do other things that I'm interested in."

She loves swimming and that's one thing she misses. "I miss going for my swimming classes and tournaments as I am a state level swimmer now. But I haven't been able to do that since a year. However, I am glad that I took up learning basketball, then gymnastics and boxing. All these things help me to build my stamina. When I go back to school I don't want to lose on my stamina and want things to be as they were earlier," says the youngster.

So, does she miss playing the role of Ruhi? "I really do miss playing both the roles, Ruhi and Pihu, because the show was on air for almost seven years and it kind of becomes a part of you. I wish to get back soon on television. It's almost two years I haven't faced camera and I miss facing the camera. I won't be taking up any long-term projects until I finish my 10th standard. But I would like to stay in touch with the audiences by doing short term work like ads, web shows, a role in a film, etc."



COMMUNIQUÉ

MRA ENSURES ONLINE FACILITIES

With the announcement of the new national sanitary lockdown effective in Mauritius as from 10 March, 2021, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) wishes to inform the public that the following **ONLINE** facilities are available on MRA's website, www.mra.mu:

- electronic submission of Returns (Income Tax, VAT, Contribution and other returns),
- electronic payment of taxes, if any, and
- the issuance of Tax Residence Certificate (TRC).

Facilities to apply for financial assistance under the Government Wage Assistance Scheme (GWAS) and the Self-employed Assistance Scheme (SEAS) for the month of March, 2021, wherever applicable, will soon be available on the website of the MRA.

Moreover, the processing of VAT and income tax refund/repayment, wherever applicable, will continue during the lockdown period.

The head office of the MRA at Eham Court, Port Louis, and the office at Belfort Tower are closed, as a result of the lockdown. However, a team of officers will be working from home to ensure the delivery of essential services provided by the MRA.

Members of the public may phone the hotline service of the MRA on: **2076000** during office hours, for any query, or send a mail on: headoffice@mra.mu.

The MRA relies on the usual collaboration and understanding of its stakeholders during these challenging times.

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

13 March 2021

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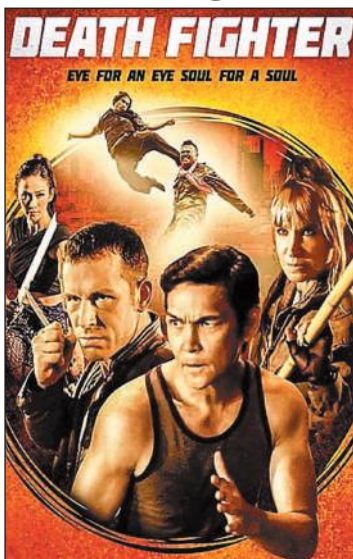




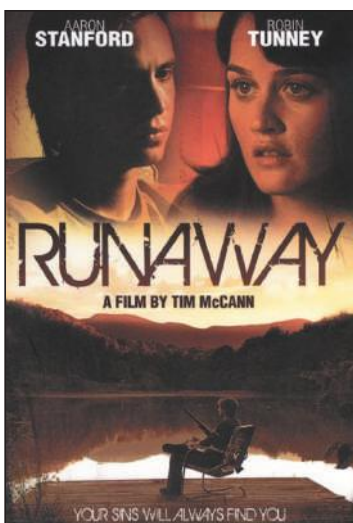
Mardi 16 Mars - 21.10

Blood CircusAvec: Jamie Nocher, Tom Sizemore,
Robert LaSardo

Mercredi 17 Mars - 21.25

Death Fighter

Jeudi 18 Mars - 21.15

Avec: Aaron Stanford, Robin Tunney,
Peter Gerety

mardi 16 mars

MBC 1

07.00 Local: People
10.10 Local: Artizan
10.25 Mag: Euromaxx
11.00 Tele: Au Nom De L'amour
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
13.00 Anou Fet Lindependans
14.30 D.Animes: Sissi
14.54 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie
14.57 D.Anime: The Garfield Show
15.24 D.Anime: Kulipari An Army...
15.48 D.Anime: HTDT
16.37 D.Anime: Baby Boss
17.05 Mag: Mimetismes
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: Blood Circus
23.00 Le Journal

MBC 2

10.00 Serial: CID
10.44 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha
12.04 Film: Rajnigandha
Starring: Amol Palekar, Vidya
Sinha, Dinesh Thakur
13.43 DDI Magazine
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.21 Serial: Aamhi Doghi
15.43 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
16.03 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal
16.29 Serial: Suno Chanda
16.50 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.11 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
17.28 Telugu - Premabhishekam
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone
18.30 DDI Magazine
19.00 Zournal Kreol
20.00 Local: Revil Programme
20.30 Film: Samraat
Starring: Dharmandra,
Jeetendra, Hema Malini

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
09.44 Mag: Global 3000
10.34 Doc: Battle Of Social Net...
11.23 Mag: Eco@Africa
11.49 Mag: Arts And Culture
12.15 Mag: Voa Connected
12.49 Mag: In Good Shape
13.11 Doc: Amazing Gardens
14.14 Doc: 360 GEO
15.32 Mag: Washington Forum
16.02 Doc: Battle Of Social Net...
16.47 Mag: Eco@Africa
17.13 Mag: Arts And Culture
18.07 Mag: REV: The Global Auto...
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.26 Mag: Le Saviez Vous?
19.34 Mag: Made In Germany

Cine 12

01.26 Film: The Pirate
03.08 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.49 Film: Cassidy Red
05.20 Tele: Muneca Brava
06.43 Film: Signed, Sealed, Delive...
09.00 Serial: The Magicians
09.45 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: S.W.A.T
12.00 Film: Cassidy Red
13.32 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.17 Mag: Hollywood On Set
14.45 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliver...
16.40 Serial: The Magicians
17.23 Serial: Shades Of Blue
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: Shades Of Blue
21.15 Film: Grizzly Park
22.45 Tele: Muneca Brava

Bollywood TV

08.00 Film: 3 Bachelors
12.04 / 19.54 - Sanjivani
12.26 / 20.11 -
Radha Krishna
12.44 / 20.32 Agniphara
13.09 / 21.09 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.28 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.51 / 21.59 - Naagin Season 3
14.33 / 22.25 - Ikyawann
14.52 / 22.56 -
Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.37 Film: Officer
Starring: Sunil Shetty, Raveena
Tandon, Danny Denzongpa,
Sadashiv Amrapurkar
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
18.52 Serial: Ek Rishta
Saajhedari Ka
19.15 Mere Angne Mein

mercredi 17 mars

08.00 Local: Palette
09.00 Doc: Escaping Hell On Earth
09.45 Local: Entractes
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
12.50 Prod Indepen: Met Seryer
14.30 D.Anime: Sissi
14.56 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie
14.59 D.Anime: The Garfield Show
15.23 D.Anime: Kulipari An Army...
15.47 D.Anime: HTDT
16.15 D.Anime: Trolls
16.38 D.Anime: Baby Boss
17.05 Mag: Mimetismes
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
21.25 Film: Death Fighter
23.10 Local: Le Journal

10.00 Pyar Ka Dard Meetha...
11.17 Suhani Ek Ladhi
12.00 Film: Badle Ki Aag
Stars: Sunil Dutt,
Dharmendra, Jeetendra
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.22 Aamhi Doghi
15.44 Mooga Manasulu
16.10 Apoorva Raagangal
16.30 Serial: Suno Chanda
16.53 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
17.33 Serial: Kulvadh
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone
18.30 Serial: DDI Magazine
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Programme In Marathi
20.30 Film: Mi Pan Sachin
Marathi Film
22.40 Live: DDI Live

06.00 Rev: The Global Auto...
06.26 Doc: Dream Job Or Rip-Off?
06.52 Mag: Check In
07.24 Mag: Made In Germany
07.50 Doc: Ville En Fête
08.43 Doc: Charles Pathé...
10.04 Local: Klip Seleksion
11.58 Doc: Dream Job Or Rip-Off
12.24 Mag: Check In
13.06 Mag: Made In Germany
13.23 Doc: Ville En Fête
13.49 Doc: Olivia's Garden
14.07 Local: Close Up
15.36 Local: Klip Seleksion
17.01 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto...
17.53 Mag: Japan Video Topics
18.00 Motorweek
18.30 Mag: Vous Et Nous
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.26 Mag: Le Saviez Vous?
20.05 Mag: Tendance XXI
20.31 Mag: Vue D'en Haut

00.20 Serial: Shades Of Blue
01.26 Film: Grizzly Park
02.59 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.40 Film: Godzilla
05.59 Tele: Muneca Brava
07.22 Film: The Ballad Of Lucy...
09.00 Serial: The Magicians
09.44 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: S.W.A.T
11.37 Film: Godzilla
13.57 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.45 Film: The Ballad Of Lucy...
16.23 Serial: The Magicians
17.20 Serial: Shades Of Blue
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: 19-2
21.15 Film: Les Deux Cavaliers
23.04 Tele: Muneca Brava
23.46 Serial: The Magicians

08.00 Film: Officer
12.04 / 20.06 - Sanjivani
12.24 / 20.26 - Radha Krishna
12.46 / 20.02 - Agniphara
13.10 / 20.46
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.30 / 21.09 -
Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.53 / 21.31 - Naagin Season 3
14.35 / 21.46 - Ikyawann
14.36 / 21.59 -
Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.20 Film: Yateem
Starring: Sunny Deol, Farha
Naaz, Danny Denzongpa
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhed Ka
19.13 Mere Angne Mein
19.35 Siddhi Vinayak

jeudi 18 mars

06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion
06.45 Local: Sur Prise
09.00 Mag: Made In Germany
09.45 Local: Encounter
10.15 Local: Coin Jardin
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
13.00 Anou Fet Lindependans
14.30 D.Anime: Sissi
14.55 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies
14.57 D.Anime: The Garfield Show
15.44 D.Anime: HTDT
15.56 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies
15.58 D.Anime: Robot Trains
17.50 Mag: Origami
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Jamai Raja
18.55 Local: Tirth Yatra
19.30 Le Journal
20.15 Film: Raazi
23.00 Le Journal

10.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
12.05 Film: Devdas
Starring: Dilip Kumar, Vijayan...
14.36 Mag: DDI Magazine
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.21 Aamhi Doghi
15.41 Mooga Manasulu
16.05 Apoorva Raagangal
16.32 Serial: Suno Chanda
16.51 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.13 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone
18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da
Devi Maiya
19.00 Zournal Kreol
20.05 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
20.31 Local: Rencontre
21.12 Film: Seized
Starring: Scott Adkins, Mario
Van Peebles, Karlee Perez
22.35 DDI Live

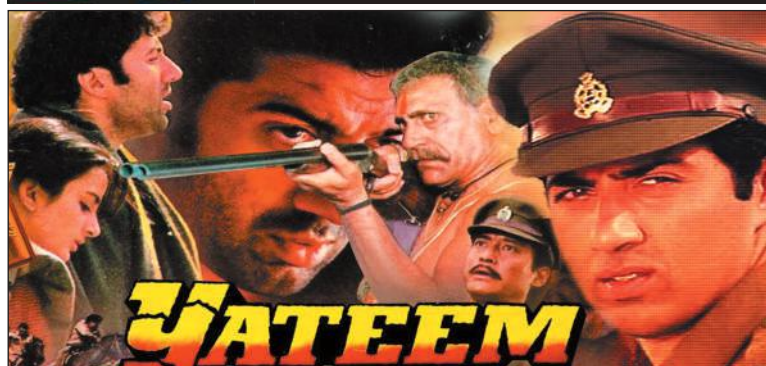
06.00 Mag: Motorweek
06.25 Mag: Vous Et Nous
07.00 Doc: Garden Party
07.56 Mag: Vue D'en Haut
09.15 Mag: Business Africa
09.43 Mag: Focus On Europe
10.09 Doc: The Red Children
11.59 Doc: Garden Party
14.39 Mag: Focus On Europe
16.24 Mag: Vous Et Nous
16.54 Mag: Le Saviez Vous?
16.58 Doc: Garden Party
17.29 Mag: Tendance XXI
17.55 Mag: Japan Video Topics
18.30 Mag: Shift
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.34 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.05 Doc: The Real Sherlock...
21.00 Local: News (English)
21.10 Doc: 360 GEO
22.02 Doc: Have Fun In Pyongyang

01.28 Film: Shadow People
02.46 Serial: S.W.A.T
03.27 Film: Signed, Sealed, Delive...
04.52 Tele: Muneca Brava
05.34 Serial: 19-2
06.16 Film: Les Deux Cavaliers
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: Les Deux Cavaliers
16.38 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: Runaway
23.35 Tele: Muneca Brava
23.30 Serial: The Magicians

08.00 Film: Yateem
12.05 / 19.54 - Sanjivani
12.14 / 20.11 -
Radha Krishna
12.44 / 20.32 Agniphara
13.59 / 21.09 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.21 / 21.24 -
Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.51 / 21.46 - Naagin
14.26 / 21.59 - Ikyawann
14.47 / 22.52
Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.20 Film: Izzatdaar
Starring: Dilip Kumar, Govinda,
Madhuri Dixit, Raghuvaran
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhed Ka
19.11 Mere Angne Mein
19.32 Siddhi Vinayak

Mercredi 17 Mars -
15.30Star: Sunny Deol, Farha
Naaz, Danny
Denzongpa

Jeudi 18 Mars - 20.30

Stars: Alia Bhatt, Vicky
Kaushal

A l'autre bout de l'individu-roi



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

Tandis qu'en Europe, les gouvernements peinent à confiner leur population, d'autres pays, notamment à Maurice, n'ont aucun mal à faire passer le message auprès du public. Un individualisme poussé à l'extrême qui a du mal à intégrer la loi de la collectivité ? Un phénomène inquiétant qui mérite attention.

Qui voudrait assister dans son pays à des scènes de destruction des biens publics et privés par une foule surexcitée ? Des hommes révoltés défoncent les portes des bureaux de l'administration publique, saccagent les vitrines des magasins, brûlent les voitures et démolissent tout sur le passage - poteaux, abris d'autobus et poubelles. Des scènes de chaos et d'anarchie qui défient le sens de l'ordre et de la mesure dans une société.

Déclenchée à Amsterdam, lieu emblématique de toutes les libertés, elle s'est répandue comme une traînée de poudre dans d'autres grandes villes européennes. Que veulent les rebelles en temps de pandémie ? Aller au pub comme avant, s'accouder au bar et engloutir des verres de bière à leur guise, vivre l'instinct grégaire de rencontrer les gens et converser, s'asseoir à une terrasse de café à regarder vivre la ville, à voir le défilé des piétons pressés et des voitures klaxonnant sous la lumière jaune des néons par ce temps d'hiver ; aller au restaurant ou en boîte de nuit avec les copains et copines ; participer à la vie trépidante des grandes villes. On leur dit que ce n'est plus possible, et tout explose.

Depuis, les gouvernements enfilent des gants de velours pour ménager les rebelles aux poings serrés. Ceux-là prennent à contre-pied la position officielle sur l'urgence des mesures exceptionnelles dans une situation exceptionnelle créée par une pandémie ravageuse. Faut-il se rappeler que la voix officielle s'était elle-même embrouillée dans des conclusions hâtives et ambiguës depuis l'an dernier ! Masque, pas de masque ? Distanciation utile ou pas ? Qui contamine qui ? Les tergiversations des voix scientifiques ont aussi semé la confusion dans les esprits qui en profitent pour faire feu de tout bois. Et quand les rapports entre gouvernants et gouvernés sont fondés sur des inimitiés ancrées dans l'Histoire, la méfiance rend



Pays-Bas : des manifestations anti-confinement basculent en émeutes.

“Qui voudrait assister dans son pays à des scènes de destruction des biens publics et privés par une foule surexcitée ? Des hommes révoltés défoncent les portes des bureaux de l'administration publique, saccagent les vitrines des magasins, brûlent les voitures et démolissent tout sur le passage. Des scènes de chaos et d'anarchie qui défient le sens de l'ordre et de la mesure dans une société. Déclenchée à Amsterdam, lieu emblématique de toutes les libertés, elle s'est répandue comme une traînée de poudre dans d'autres grandes villes européennes...”

la contestation plus facile.

L'image des soldats de la Special Mobile Force (SMF) expédiés sur le terrain pour barricader Curepipe et Vacoas peut paraître surréaliste aux yeux d'un public des grands pays, accoutumé à se braquer contre les gouvernants à tout bout de champ. Les slogans tels que : Atteinte à la liberté ! Etat policé ! Dictature ! auraient fusé de toutes parts.

Aux grands maux, les grands remèdes. Gouverner, c'est être capable de prendre des décisions sans faiblir. Agir avec fermeté et autorité n'est pas une preuve d'autoritarisme. Le public mauricien est en phase avec la politique sanitaire décidée par les autorités ; on ne peut gouverner ou être gouverné dans un climat de méfiance. Que ce soit au niveau microscopique des relations humaines, familiales, sociétales ou au niveau macroscopique de l'Etat, la méfiance n'est pas tenable à long terme. A un moment, il faut savoir rétablir la confiance.

Hors de Maurice, la mesure stricte du Gouvernement mauricien est saluée

comme étant courageuse et raisonnable. Ici, dans le langage courant, les gens de la rue déplorent l'élan moutonnier des leurs à vouloir gambader librement comme des cabris dans la prairie. Les Mauriciens ont bien raison, diront d'autres, conscients de l'obstacle obstiné dressé sur la route de la politique sanitaire de l'Etat par le 'Gaulois récalcitrant', navrés du principe de précaution à visée électorale en vue des prochaines élections. La politique, le pouvoir, avant la santé publique. Un sacré pétrin !

Toutes les économies sont dans le rouge. Personne n'est dupe des manigances des politiciens qui attendent comme des vautours le moment où ils peuvent descendre l'adversaire à terre et le mettre en pièces avec une avidité obscène. Pour le public mauricien, ce n'est pas une question de courage, c'est une question de bon sens et de discipline. La discipline est un mot presque tabou, voire même, une insulte dans les sociétés où le sens de 'liberté' est galvaudé.

La Chine n'a pas fait un micro-trottoir pour demander l'avis du 'peuple' sur le confinement. Bien que très difficile à supporter, les gens ont pris leur mal en patience. Tout ne peut pas être mis sur le compte de la soumission ou de l'obéissance. Il y a aussi l'adhésion des gens aux mesures proposées par les autorités, et ce n'est pas une tare de s'aligner sur une directive dans la mesure où elle est éclairée par la Raison.

Ici et là, toute tendance à profiter du malheur pandémique sur la bonne santé économique pour ériger les gouvernants comme ennemis du public risque de jouer un mauvais tour à ceux qui se livrent à ce jeu.

Le 'peuple' est-il un bloc monolithique éclairé sur tous les sujets qui le concernent ? On a vu ce que le romantisme idéologique qui consiste à mettre le

'prolétariat' sur un piédestal, à le dissocier du corps social pour mieux l'idolâtrer a donné dans l'histoire moderne. Le peuple est une entité à plusieurs têtes ; il y a aussi le peuple canaille, et là, l'ensauvagement rôde autour.

Le cosmos, tout comme la société, est fondé sur l'ordre, et cet ordre est pyramidal depuis la nuit des temps. Ce réalisme fait aussi de la place, dans les discours, au rêve d'un ordre horizontal et un pouvoir égalitaire, mais seulement en tant que fiction et utopie. De plus, il en faut aussi pour contenter les uns et les autres, et donner des vains espoirs. Les gouvernants, ont-ils peur du peuple en Europe ? Sont-ils paralysés par la réaction d'une foule déchaînée ?

Le client-roi est né avec la production de masse dans des industries fabriquant à la chaîne, mettant toute une gamme de produits à sa disposition, aidé dans son choix par la publicité savamment calculée pour flatter son égo et attirer son portemonnaie.

Mais comment est né l'individu-roi ? Par l'émancipation du joug contraignant de la politique répressive et de la société liberticide, par la libération de la parole et la réclamation des droits de tout un chacun. Ce sont des droits acquis avec un sens de responsabilité et de devoir des uns et des autres. Laissons de côté l'autre source de l'individualisme, le cheminement personnel sur le plan religieux de la Réforme contestataire qui a ouvert la voie à une lecture personnelle grâce à l'accès direct aux Ecritures d'un mouvement initié il y a deux mille ans. Passons.

L'individu-roi libéré de toute contrainte ressemble à un Frankenstein lâché dans la nature. Un monstre livré à ses pulsions destructrices, qui ne reconnaît que sa propre loi, le moi-je qui pense, et qui, par conséquent, existe. Les sociétés, dites 'libérées' envoient des signes d'un épuisement de ce concept, d'où les ébullitions signalant une transition, une possible réinsertion dans la collectivité. Voilà des signes qu'on ferait bien de prendre au sérieux afin de ne pas répéter les mêmes erreurs.