

# MAURITIUS TIMES

• "I'm coronavirus brave. I stand tall and proud. With my mask on my face, Staying away from the crowd." -- Ari Gunzburg, Coronavirus Brave



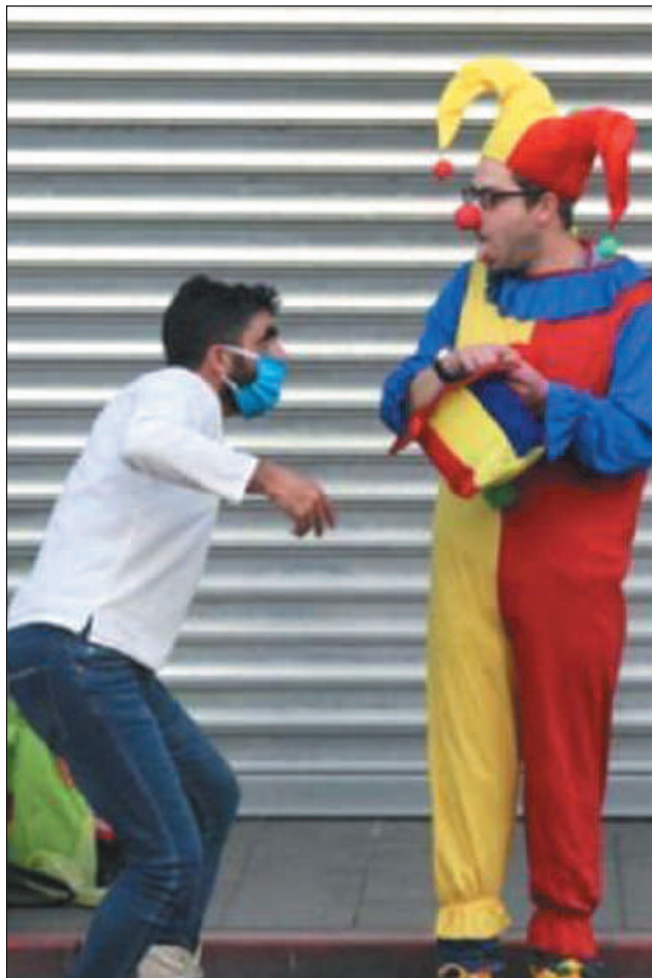
Interview : Xavier-Luc Duval, Leader de l'Opposition

**“ Le Gouvernement doit se ressaisir car on va droit dans le mur ”**

'Il est impossible d'envisager une ouverture des frontières alors que la grande majorité des Mauriciens n'est pas vaccinée'

See Page 8-9

**Corona doesn't play April fool**



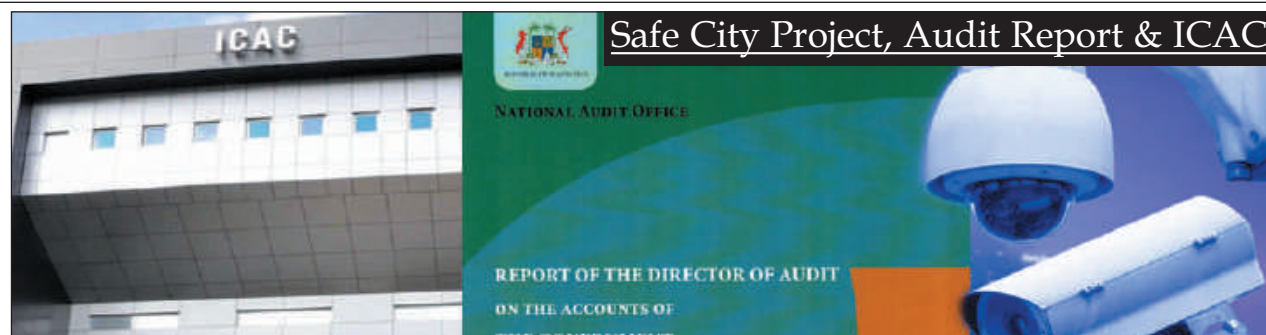
Dr R Neerunjun Gopee See Page 3



**This is the world's most difficult battle.**

We can only win it by fighting it together

By Mrinal Roy See Page 4



**‘Can an ICAC investigation override the constitutional powers of the Director of Audit?’**

*Surely the better opinion would be that the supremacy of the Constitution should prevail'*

By Lex See Page 5



## Constitutionalism to Support Constitutional Functions

**O**ur Constitution makes provision for a number of what are called Constitutional Posts, which guarantee to the occupiers of these posts constitutional protection in the sense that they benefit from some form of constitutional protection. This applies to, for example, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioner of Police, the Judiciary, the Director of Audit – such that the institutions they run (for the larger good of the country and the people) can be classified as independent. This means they can function without fear of favour, and take decisions that are in the national interest. They cannot be removed from office except by way of a special procedure as in the case of a judge or the Director of Public Prosecutions by virtue of section 89 of the Constitution.

However, obstacles may be put in the exercise of their function so that they are effectively prevented from fulfilling their duties as should be. This has been illustrated in the recent exchange in Parliament that took place following the PNQ of the Leader of the Opposition to the Prime Minister after the public release of the National Audit Office's Annual Report. As we have come to get used to, it contained a litany of mis-governance examples cutting across all sectors of the public service which result in colossal waste of public funds. In the year 2020 which the Report covers, this was particularly critical because extra funding was required on an emergency basis for medical and health procurements because of the Covid pandemic.

In his reply to the PNQ the Prime Minister stated, regarding the inability for the National Audit Office (NAO) to consult certain documents in relation to the Safe City project, that the NAO should have sought advice from the Attorney General on the constitutionality or otherwise of 'that' decision by the police. It was in relation to an Agreement signed between the Mauritius Police Force and Mauritius Telecom which makes provision for a Mutual Nondisclosure Agreement.

This was about the 'Safe City Project', about which the director of the NAO states in his report that '... the contract for the "Safe City Project" for some Rs 16 billion was awarded directly to a private company on an operating lease model for a 20-year period. No evidence was produced to NAO to the effect that an

assessment was made to ascertain the fairness of the lease payments made by the Police Service under the contract, and thus that the procurement was undertaken in the most economical manner.' Furthermore, the NAO staff faced considerable difficulties to have access to procurement files from the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW), which had been secured by ICAC for its enquiry.

We are thus in presence of what could be viewed as diversionary tactics being resorted to, all apparently *en bonne et due forme*, to prevent the director of NAO from obtaining all the information that he is required by law to provide to the country, so that the people can judge for themselves where taxpayer money is going.

This is not sensitive information having a security aspect, and we would grant that the holder of a constitutional post may need to consult with the Executive – effectively in our country this means the Prime Minister – where national security is concerned, especially in circumstances that may require crucial decisions that may have widespread social impacts such as law and order in the country.

But in no way can this apply where public funds are concerned, where complete transparency must not only prevail but be seen to prevail: that is, there must not be any attempt to prevent the NAO from gaining free access to any information that it deems is necessary.

In this respect, it would be useful to apply, as Milan Mehtarbhan has observed in one of his interviews to this paper with reference to the Constitution, 'over and above the text of the Constitution ... the values of constitutionalism': Constitutionalism goes beyond a mere textual approach and includes values, norms and conventions. It is not just the letter of the Constitution that matters. A democratic State is not only one which complies with the strict requirements of its Constitution but also one which will at all times act in accordance with the core values of democracy and good governance.'

The NAO Report is, par excellence, the document whose focus is good governance and is eagerly awaited each year. Does it not deserve a good dose of constitutionalism for the sake of the country as a whole?

## The Conversation

### Covid-19 vaccines are a victory for public research, not 'greed'...

*The development of the Covid-19 vaccines is part of a vast system of public subsidies and universities, not corporate ambition*



Universities are the unsung heroes of vaccine development.  
Cultura Creative RF / Alamy Stock Photo

**B**oris Johnson, the UK prime minister, reportedly attributed the success of the Covid-19 vaccines to "capitalism" and "greed". But he is wrong – the idea that private ingenuity and naked competition produced the vaccines is a complete fantasy.

Before Covid-19, the vaccine market was notoriously sluggish, taking between five and 15 years to develop a viable candidate. It is for this reason the current effort looks so remarkable.

For pharmaceutical companies, the incentives are poor. In April 2018, long before coronavirus emerged, a report by Goldman Sachs analysts proposed that providing a "one shot" cure for diseases could never be a "sustainable business model".

That's because, as Johnson rightly implies, pharmaceutical companies follow the money. In 2019, the global vaccines market size was US\$47bn. Meanwhile sales of just four treatment drugs matched this volume of sales (Humira, used to treat rheumatoid arthritis; Keytruda, the cancer treatment; Revlimid, used to treat multiple myeloma; and Imbruvica, also a cancer drug).

Earlier coronavirus diseases, Sars and Mers, had no vaccine. Both had candidates initially tested on animals that did not make it to human trials. The Ebola vaccine was finally approved in 2019, 16 years

after it was first patented and a full six years after the start of the epidemic in West Africa.

There can be little doubt that racial capitalism and global economics has shaped our response to this virus. Previous viruses did not threaten the economy of the developed countries to the same extent. The costs of Ebola to west African countries is estimated at more than US\$50b. The cost of Sars was significant for the Asian economy, amounting to between 0.5 and 2.0% of GDP. The economic fallout of Mers was largely limited to the South Korean economy.

Most advanced economies stand to lose at least 4.5% of GDP as a result of this pandemic. So we needed Covid-19 vaccines to save these economies. Does that count as a success for greed and capitalism?

#### A victory for public funds

The reason the COVID-19 vaccines arrived at such warp speed is that the risk model changed overnight and the normal risks associated with vaccine development were almost completely removed from investors.

David Whyte

Professor of Socio-legal Studies,  
University of Liverpool

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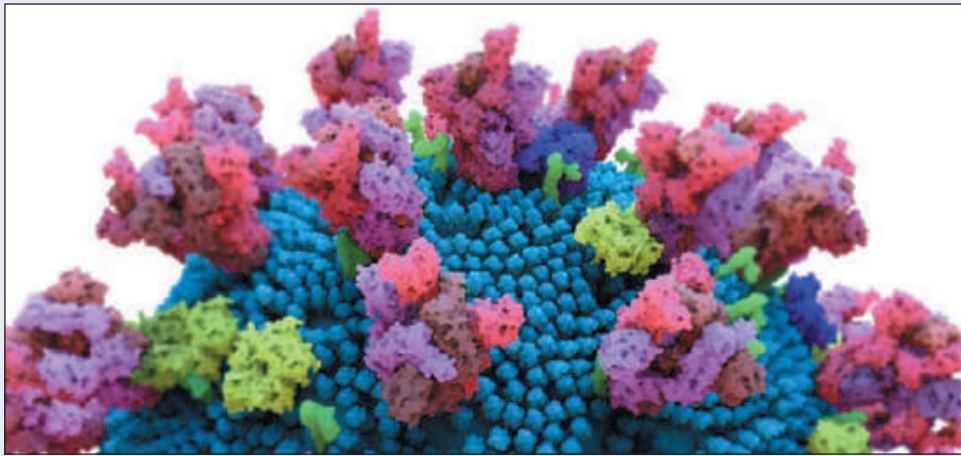
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# Corona doesn't play April fool



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee



**H**ave a good look at the picture. It's not a bouquet of flowers to adorn one's sitting room.

Yesterday was April Fool's Day, and a lot of posts on social media showed that their inventors or authors thought the occasion was a nice one to joke about Covid.

But the coronavirus which is playing havoc with mankind is no joker and doesn't play April fool. So don't be misled by its beautiful appearance in the picture – for that's what is shown: how corona looks under the microscope. It was reproduced in an article on the subject in the online publication *The Conversation* last year.

It is to be admired from afar... social distancing applies!

For corona is a serious foe which can be deadly. In country after country it is causing deaths every single day.

**“If we are truly serious about getting back to our liberties as soon as possible, is to get ourselves vaccinated. Don't go by the confusing plethora of material to be found in the university of social media or WhatsApp: serious scientific studies continuously being done by teams from all over the world have demonstrated again and again the safety and efficacy of all vaccines currently being used, which are comparable for all of them...”**

It has got only one mission: to go from one person to another. No barrier is too great for it. It faces no challenges. That's meant for us: how to stop it in its track.

Because it is very fond of us, of our throats and lungs. When we talk, cough or sneeze, therefore, that's travel bonanza for corona: swarms of it fly out of our noses and mouths and enter the nostrils and mouths of those who find themselves near us. Spread all over them, their clothes in fact. And as we try to use our hands to contain the cough or the sneeze, they too get plastered by the same swarms.

We can't be more clever than corona. But if all of us try hard enough, we simply have to do what is not too hard at all, based on the way it goes from one person to another as described in the above paragraph. So: move about only when that's essential, keep a safe distance from the next fellow; MASK UP; wash our hands frequently and use sanitiser. That shouldn't be so difficult isn't it?

The next best thing, if we are truly serious about

**“It is hard enough to be suffering from the disease oneself. To lose a parent to it and not being able to have a last look is a worse suffering. We cannot believe that our country has descended to such a level of emotional depravity that we no longer care for feelings and relationships. Corona must not be an excuse to inflict more suffering than the disease is causing. If we cannot cure, let us at least show that we can care...”**

getting back to our liberties as soon as possible, is to get ourselves vaccinated. Don't go by the confusing plethora of material to be found in the university of social media or WhatsApp: serious scientific studies continuously being done by teams from all over the world have demonstrated again and again the safety and efficacy of all vaccines currently being used, which are comparable for all of them.

The latest trials in children show their efficacy in that category as well – an important finding because as corona has spread it has been found to affect all age groups, not only the elderly as was happening at the onset of the pandemic.

Put together what all this means is that, even if corona settles for good amongst us as it seems wont to do, we have the wherewithal to prevent it from ruining our lives. Why are we therefore not making the best use of what is already at our disposal?

Sure, that's going to take some time, many years. All the more reason for us to get going as rapidly as we can.



We really should. For Yes, We Can...

\* \* \*

## What we are missing

Relationships.

Consistently, repeatedly, by far the most common complaint about the restrictions imposed because of Covid continues to be the absence of socializing, of meeting near and dear ones, of touches and hugs. Of being physically face to face. We have had enough of touching screens. We are craving for the real thing.

And who are the ones who are being missed the most? We shouldn't be surprised: grandparents longing to hug the cynosures of their eyes: grandchildren who want to be endlessly spoilt. They need it as much as their doting grands do too!

There have been so many live reports of this. A particularly tear-jerking reporting on TV was the one showing two little kids running to climb into the open arms of grandma and grandpa when the first lockdown was lifted in Italy, remaining locked for endless moments as eyes wetted and the children sought the warmth of love and joy. And there were many more such witness accounts from grandparents across the globe.

After all, the little ones are the future of humanity aren't they. For their sake, for the sake of humanity, we MUST put all our efforts together to master the corona monster. For Yes, We Can. Together.

And we must show more respect for relationships locally. It was harrowing to see the tearful appeal of the daughter of the lady who passed away after being transferred to the ENT Hospital from a private clinic where she worked.

It's not as if we are overwhelmed with the number of deaths. And the authorities must not show double standards. They did allow the relatives of Dr Bruno Cheong to have a final look and to be present at the cemetery.

The daughter and other relatives may be in quarantine, but surely our Public Health experts could have advised on how to arrange for at least the daughter to attend at some stage of the transit to the cemetery?

We cannot accept let alone condone this degree of inhumanity, of callousness. This family deserves unmitigated apologies on the part of the authorities.

More people may die. And it won't be all at once. Such a display of indifference to the feelings of their immediate family should never happen again. It is nothing short of cruel.

It is hard enough to be suffering from the disease oneself. To lose a parent to it and not being able to have a last look is a worse suffering. We cannot believe that our country has descended to such a level of emotional depravity that we no longer care for feelings and relationships.

Corona must not be an excuse to inflict more suffering than the disease is causing.

If we cannot cure, let us at least show that we can care.



# The Battle against the Covid-19 Pandemic: United we stand, divided we fall



Mrinal Roy



Photo - iexamonline.in

**T**he signs are worrying. The daily information regarding the unabated number of new cases of Covid-19 infection stemming from existing and new hotbeds of coronavirus infection is an indictment of an infuriatingly lax and culpable behaviour by some during the lockdown imposed to contain the new outbreak of Covid-19 infection in the country. It is patently evident that many of those infected are guilty of wantonly flouting the strict lockdown directives in force as well as rules governing sanitary and social distancing norms and the proper wearing of masks. Far from assuming their civic duty of strictly abiding by the prescribed sanitary rules to help the country break the chain of infection and contain the spread of the virus, they have fuelled it through their reckless and irresponsible actions.

The upshot has been a disquieting surge of Covid-19 infection with clusters of infection spawning in diverse locations in the country. Massive contact tracing exercises organized in various regions on the basis of information obtained from infected persons have helped track down infected persons and corral them for treatment in dedicated Covid-19 hospitals.

## Culpable indiscipline

This process has also mobilised the country's medical laboratories to carry out more than 60,000 PCR tests and a host of quarantine centres to isolate those in contact with the infected persons. The mobilization of all these services through the culpable indiscipline of some, to track down and contain the spread of the virus in the country has added unnecessary pressure on these key services which are on the forefront of our battle against the pandemic and further hiked the whopping costs of managing the Covid-19 crisis.

This harrowing situation begs so many germane questions. How could so many persons blithely flout the strict rules of the national lockdown and expose themselves and others to the risk of infection? How could there be so many lapses in the rigorous oversight of the sanitary protocols in place to contain the virus and break its chain of transmission in the community? The country learnt with dismay this week that only 5000 of the 13000 medical staff manning the various health services in the country have so far opted to be vaccinated. It is also distressing to learn that patients and medical staff working in a dialysis centre were infected by coronavirus adding to their medical woes.

**“There is an urgent need for international solidarity to win the battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. This is the world's most difficult battle. We are in this battle together. We can only win it by fighting it together. There is therefore an imperative need to set up an international group comprising key world leaders, the main producers of Covid-19 vaccines and representatives of the major continents to take stock of country demand and supplies, take measures to boost production, formalize the approval of vaccines already in use and fairly arbitrate the allocation of vaccine quantities to countries across the world...”**

## Vaccine protection

If the world is to win the battle against the pandemic we need to use every tool available to stop it. First and foremost, every country must urgently vaccinate its population to protect them against the risk of Covid-19 infection. Urgent steps must therefore be taken to boost the production and availability of Covid vaccines to all countries across the world. The aim of the global vaccination drive should be to reach the required herd immunity against coronavirus as early as possible.

We know that Covid-19 is very infectious and can cause serious life-threatening complications. If we are infected we could spread, as evidenced locally, the disease to friends, family, and others around us. Every precaution must therefore be taken to ensure that we not only protect ourselves but also others from getting infected by the virus. The golden rule must be that every precaution must be taken not to be infected by the virus.

There is growing evidence that vaccines protect people against severe forms of coronavirus infection and death. Vaccines also protect our family members, people around us and in particular those that are vulnerable to high risks of severe illness from Covid-19.

As more and more people are vaccinated in countries across the world, the quicker we can hope of reaching the herd immunity required to protect the world population against the risk of infection.

In parallel, every country must rigorously impose strict sanitary measures, the wearing of masks and social distancing to help reduce the risk of people being infected by the virus and spreading it to others. In Mauritius, government has formalized these rules and regulations into law to deter and sanction any wanton behaviour. It is however imperative that people strictly abide by these rules for the protection of one and all.

It is the combination of a robust vaccination drive to attain herd immunity and the application of strict sanitary measures which will offer the best protection against the risk of a coronavirus infection and help the world win the battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. These are necessary conditions to progress towards a modicum of normality to reboot the economy and kick-start the urgent process

of economic recovery, bilateral trade flows and the movement of people under established rules.

## The way forward

The current imbalance between competing demands for Covid-19 vaccines from countries across the world and limited and controlled supplies of vaccines from manufacturing countries has denied a multitude of countries access to vaccines or adequate and timely supplies of vaccines to meet their requirements. Vaccine diplomacy is not enough. This is a most unsatisfactory situation because a return to a modicum of normality also depends on whether herd immunity through vaccination against coronavirus has also been attained not only in countries which are our main trading partners and principal sources of tourists or not but also in countries across the world.

There is also no clear visibility on the vaccine supplies from the COVAXIN facility in 2021 and 2022. The drug-maker Johnson & Johnson which has just concluded a deal to supply the African Union with up to 400 million doses of its single jab Covid-19 vaccine will only start to supply them as from the third quarter of 2021.

More than ever before, there is an urgent need for international solidarity to win the battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. This is the world's most difficult battle. We are in this battle together. We can only win it by fighting it together. There is therefore an imperative need to set up an international group comprising key world leaders, the main producers of Covid-19 vaccines and representatives of the major continents to take stock of country demand and supplies, take measures to boost production, formalize the approval of vaccines already in use and fairly arbitrate the allocation of vaccine quantities to countries across the world. This platform should also be looking at financing options for the most vulnerable countries. This is a tall order but this is the only rational and sustainable way forward.

In this context, kudos must be given to the owners of the Serum institute of India who unlike other vaccine producers took a calculated risk on the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine and started its production at their own cost ahead of final approval in order to provide advance supplies of this vaccine to the world.

➡ Cont. on page 11



## Safe City Project, Audit Report &amp; ICAC

# 'Can an ICAC investigation override the constitutional powers of the Director of Audit?

*Surely the better opinion would be that the supremacy of the Constitution should prevail'*

**T**he Director of Audit made some scathing comments in his Report for the year 2019/20 wherein it is stated that for the Safe City Project "access to important documents were denied or delayed thereby severely affecting and heavily impairing his audit and preventing him from carrying out his duties under the Constitution". He also mentioned that his office could not have access to other procurement files from the Ministry of Health and Wellness as well as from the Ministry of Commerce, which had been secured by ICAC for enquiry in relation to the procurement of medical supplies following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. This matter was taken up by the Leader of the Opposition in his PNQ addressed to the Prime Minister last Tuesday. What follows, in the form of Qs & As, addresses some of the other issues that had not been addressed in the PNQ.

## LEX

**\* Does the Director of the National Audit Office (NAO) benefit from some form of constitutional protection in the same manner as the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Commissioner of Police, the Judiciary – such that it can be classified as an independent institution? Or are there nuances in each case?**

Yes, he does as he cannot be removed from office except by way of a special procedure just like a judge or the Director of Public Prosecutions by virtue of section 89 of the Constitution.

**\* The Prime Minister stated, in reply to last Tuesday's PNQ, regarding the inability for the NAO to consult certain documents in relation to the Safe City project that the NAO should have sought advice from the Attorney General on the constitutionality or otherwise of that decision by the police. Is the PM right?**

Annex 3 of the Lease 2 Agreement, signed between the Mauritius Police Force and Mauritius Telecom, makes provision for a Mutual Nondisclosure Agreement at Clause 3, which reads as follows:

*"Non-Disclosure of Proprietary Information"*

*Recipient undertakes to retain the Proprietary Information in strict confidence, not to make any use of such Proprietary Information other than as stipulated herein, and not to disclose such Proprietary Information to any third party without the expressed prior written authorisation from an officer of the Discloser."*

In his answer the PM quoted part of section 17(1) of the Finance and Audit Act to criticize the Director of Audit who allegedly did not consult the Attorney

General. What specifically should the Director of Audit have consulted the AG about? Is it to interpret the confidentiality clause? The question may be asked whether the confidentiality clause in a lease agreement is an enactment within the meaning of section 17 (1)(d) which reads:

*In the exercise of his duties under this Act, the Director of Audit may —*

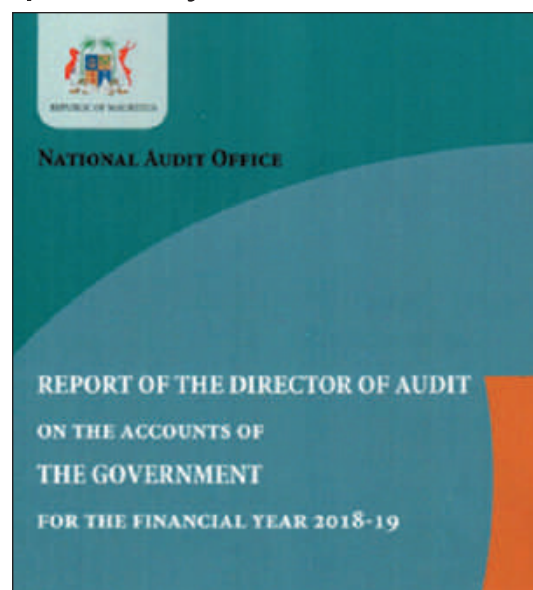
*(d) lay before the Attorney-General a case in writing as to any question regarding the interpretation of any enactment concerning the powers of the Director of Audit or the discharge of his duties and the Attorney-General shall give a written opinion on such case."*

The law speaks of enactment. Should we interpret enactment henceforth to include a clause or a condition in a contract?

What the PM omits to mention is section 17(1)(d) which confers the following powers on the Director of Audit:

*In the exercise of his duties under this Act the Director of Audit may — (a) call upon any public officer for any explanations and information which he may require in order to enable him to discharge his*

**“When it comes to public funds, opacity has no place. It is public money, and those who juggle with that money should do so in a transparent manner and be accountable to the people and not to their own private interests...”**



duties.

Can a clause in a contract or can an ICAC investigation override the constitutional powers of the Director of Audit? Surely the better opinion would be that the supremacy of the Constitution should prevail.

**\* What could or should have been the advice of the Attorney General if it had been sought by the NAO?**

First of all, the answer given by the PM cannot have been prepared without consultation with the Attorney General (AG), who under the Constitution is the principal adviser to the government.

The present one is a member of a political party. One would expect the AG to give a totally independent advice irrespective of party politics or party allegiance.

**\* Without casting doubt on the integrity and good faith of the Solicitor General's office, and the Attorney General, the latter is a political appointee. Should that be taken in consideration?**

Of course. Can you imagine an AG in the present political climate prevailing in Mauritius go against the wishes of the government? That could be a tough call.

**\* The director of the NAO states in his report: "... the contract for the "Safe City Project" for some Rs 16 billion was awarded directly to a private company on an operating lease model for a 20-year period. No evidence was produced to NAO to the effect that an assessment was made to ascertain the fairness of the lease payments made by the Police Service under the contract, and thus that the procurement was undertaken in the most economical manner." Would**

these explain why more information was not made available to the NAO?

It is difficult to give a clear answer in the absence of all the facts. One may surmise that this may have been the reason if we go by the yardstick of how contracts involving millions of rupees were awarded for the purchase of masks and other medical supplies during the first wave of Covid-19.

**\* The agreement signed between the Mauritius Police Force and Mauritius Telecom makes provision for a Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement. Similar contracts had been signed in the past for the supply of fuel. Is this practice in the public interest?**

When it comes to public funds, opacity has no place. It is public money, and those who juggle with that money should do so in a transparent manner and be accountable to the people and not to their own private interests.

**\* These non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) are usually meant to "keep people/institutions from sharing trade secrets, proprietary knowledge, client information, product information, and strategic plans. NDAs keep people from making a profit on any secret company information..." The NAO surely does not fall into that category?**

The NAO is a responsible body and should be credited with the integrity and honesty that have always characterised it in the discharge of its functions.

**\* The NAO also informs us that its "staff faced considerable difficulties to obtain records". It could not have access to 60 procurement files from the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW), which had been secured by ICAC for its enquiry. It's only on 25 January 2021, "after the completion of audit, the Ministry informed NAO that there is no objection on its part for NAO Officers to access these files at ICAC." Is that in order or should the NAO have "préséance" when it comes to access to files over other institutions?**

There is a perception the start of an investigation by ICAC could have been a strategy to block any answers being given in Parliament on the transactions in question and which would also, so doing, deny access to the documents by the Director of Audit. That's hopefully not the case.



## Joe Biden to unveil \$2 trillion "once-in-a-century" infrastructure plan



Joe Biden will on Wednesday propose a \$2 trillion infrastructure plan. Photo - c.ndtvmg.com

**P**resident Joe Biden on Wednesday proposed a \$2 trillion infrastructure plan aimed at modernizing the United States' crumbling transport network, creating millions of jobs and enabling the country to "out-compete" China.

The first phase of Biden's "Build Back Better" program will detail massive investment spread over eight

years, reports AFP.

It plans to inject \$620 billion into transport, including upgrading 20,000 miles (32,000 kilometers) of roads and highways, repairing thousands of bridges and doubling federal funding for public transit.

The president, whom Donald Trump tried to caricature as "Sleepy Joe" and a man without strong ideas or motivation, intends to make the bold infrastructure plan one of his flagship policies.

"He views his role as laying out... a broad vision, a bold vision for how we can invest in America, American workers, our communities," White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

The investment would be partly paid for by raising corporate tax from 21 percent to 28 percent.

"The president is proposing to fundamentally reform the corporate tax code so that it incentivizes job creation and investment... and ensures that large corporations are paying their fair share," a senior

administration official said ahead of the speech.

The new legislative offensive comes soon after Congress passed a nearly \$2 trillion Covid-19 economic stimulus plan.

And Biden's speech is set to open a bitter battle in Congress, where the Democrats hold only a narrow majority and will face strong opposition from the Republicans.

The first criticisms of the plan came before Biden even gave his speech, some of it from the progressive wing of his party. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said the package "needs to be way bigger." At the other end of the spectrum Republican Senator John Barrasso dismissed the plan as "a Trojan horse for more liberal spending & higher taxes."

The coming months will test the negotiating skills of the Democratic president, a veteran of Washington politics and deal-making, and the chances of his infrastructure plan passing into law remain uncertain.

## UK's Prince Harry, Meghan planning home birth for 2nd child: Report



Meghan Markle confessed she had no clue what her royal marriage would bring into her life. Photo - c.ndtvmg.com

**M**eghan Markle and Prince Harry's second child will be born at home, according to reports.

As reported by Fox News, the Sussexes are expecting in early summer, and the baby girl will be the first-ever royal to be born in America.

The 39-year-old Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle, and Prince Harry bought their USD 14.5 million Montecito estate last year after moving to California.

During the couple's bombshell interview with Oprah Winfrey, the gender of the baby was revealed and during the interview, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle detailed their reasons for leaving royal life behind.

Prince Harry said: "A girl, you know, what more can you ask for? But now, you know, now we've got our family. We've got, you know, the four of us and our two dogs, and it's great."

Per Fox News, during the tell-all, the two made several serious allegations against the royal family and the Institution at large, including accusations of racism and turning a blind eye to Meghan Markle's mental health needs.

They also discussed the media's presence in their life, reporting on their every move and the criticism of Meghan Markle's actions, which led to, in part, her suicidal thoughts.

Meghan Markle confessed she had no clue what her royal marriage would bring into her life, saying: "There was no way to understand what the day-to-day was going to be like."

"That's what was really tricky over those past few years, is when the perception and the reality are two very different things. And you're being judged on the perception, but you're living the reality of it," she added.

\* Contd on page 7

## Russia registers world's first Covid-19 vaccine for animals

**R**ussia has registered the world's first vaccine for animals against Covid-19, its agricultural regulator said on Wednesday, after tests showed it generated antibodies against the virus in dogs, cats, foxes and mink.

Mass production of the vaccine, called Carnivac-Cov, can start in April, regulator Rosselkhoznadzor said.

The World Health Organization has expressed concern over the transmission of the virus between humans and animals. The regulator said the vaccine would be able to protect vulnerable species and thwart viral mutations.

Russia has so far only registered two cases of Covid-19 among animals, both in cats.

Denmark culled all 17 million mink on its farms last year after concluding that a strain of the virus had passed from humans to mink and that mutated strains of the virus had then turned up among people.

Rosselkhoznadzor said Russian fur farms planned to buy the vaccine, along with businesses in Greece, Poland and Austria. Russia's fur farm industry accounts for around 3% of the global market, down from 30% in the Soviet era, according to the main trade body.

Alexander Gintsburg, head of the institute that developed Russia's Sputnik V human vaccine, was quoted in Izvestia newspaper on Monday as saying Covid-19 was likely to hit animals next.

"The next stage of the epidemic is the infection with the coronavirus of farm and domestic animals," Gintsburg said.

Some scientists say that cats and dogs do not play a major role in transmitting the coronavirus to humans and that their own symptoms are often mild if they contract Covid-19.



Russia has so far only registered two cases of COVID-19 among animals, both in cats. Photo - edition.cnn.com

Clinical trials of the Russian animal vaccine began in October last year and involved dogs, cats, Arctic foxes, mink, foxes and other animals.

"The results of the trials allow us to conclude that the vaccine is safe and highly immunogenic as all the vaccinated animals developed antibodies to the coronavirus," Konstantin Savenkov, Rosselkhoznadzor's deputy head, said in the statement.

The watchdog said the animals had continued to show an immune response for at least six months since the trials began in October. It said it would continue to study the vaccine's effect on the animals.

Russia already has three coronavirus vaccines for humans, the best known of which is Sputnik V. Moscow has also given emergency approval to two others, EpiVacCorona and CoviVac.

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Jennifer Arcuri claims she and Boris Johnson had an affair. Photo - aw-journal.com

## American businesswoman Jennifer Arcuri talks of her four-year affair with "Alex the Great"

American businesswoman Jennifer Arcuri has told of her four-year affair with Boris Johnson between 2012 and 2016. Ms Arcuri said the pair shared a "physical and intellectual attraction" after meeting while she was a student in 2011 and he the mayor of London and married to lawyer Marina Wheeler, with whom he has four children, reports The Independent. "We were in an intimate relationship for four years," she said in an exclusive interview with the Sunday Mirror. "I loved him, and with good cause. But the man I thought I knew doesn't exist any more."

She describes first meeting him at a tech event and remembers: "He'd turn the whole room into a bunch of howling schoolgirls. I made a beeline for the front

of the line." Their paths crossed again in spring 2012 when she volunteered to work for his re-election campaign and they began texting, his number saved in her phone as "Alex the Great", a nod to his given Christian name and much-trumpeted passion for antiquity.

## Britain: An institutionally racist country?

The government's highly anticipated race report commissioned in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests has rejected suggestions that Britain is still an institutionally racist country. The 264-page report concludes that the UK has become a "more open society" where children from many ethnic communities perform as well or substantially better than white pupils in compulsory education.

The independent review - which is published on Wednesday - argues that issues around race and racism are "becoming less important" and, in some cases, are

not a significant factor behind explaining disparities. However, race advisers have warned that Britain is not "a post-racial society" and that "overt and outright racism persists in the UK", particularly online.

## Sexual abuse in UK schools: "Deeply troubling"

Opportunities to root out the problem of sexual abuse in UK schools have been missed since a report called for "urgent" action on the issue five years ago, MPs have warned. Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer on Monday added his voice to calls for an inquiry, after a website gathered testimony from more than 9,000 young people, at both independent and state schools, about treatment that amounted to sexual harassment or abuse, and in some cases rape.

But former members of the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee said that in 2016 they produced a report warning that the British government had no "coherent plan" for dealing with "deeply troubling" levels of sexual harassment and violence taking place between children and teenagers at schools in England. The government responded the following year with new guidance for schools on how to deal with incidents of alleged sexual abuse by one student on another. But former committee member Jess Phillips - now safeguarding spokesperson on Sir Keir's front bench - said that ministers had failed to engage with schools to ensure that the guidance was followed.

## Labour suffering from a "lack of authenticity"

Labour under Keir Starmer is suffering from a "lack of authenticity" and direction, Len McCluskey has claimed as he chal-

lenged the leader to "honour" left-wing pledges he committed to 12 months ago to offer a credible alternative to the Conservatives. In a scathing assessment of the Labour leader's first year, the general secretary of Unite - one of Labour's biggest financial backers - said Sir Keir's personal ratings were "plummeting" and suggested voters were unsure who the party speaks for.

Writing in The Independent, the union chief said: "Focus groups show that at best his Labour Party is seen as dull, absent of convictions or presence, at worst opportunistic, only following the political wind after it has blown, rarely making the weather." Citing a complaint by the Conservative Willie Whitelaw that Labour under Harold Wilson at the 1970 election campaign was going around the country "stirring up apathy", Mr McCluskey went on: "Today it is true".

## France : Third national lockdown

Emmanuel Macron has ordered France into its third national lockdown in response to a surge of Covid-19 cases in the country. In a televised address on Wednesday evening, the French president said confinement measures that were already in place in Paris and 19 other departments would be extended nationwide for four weeks from Saturday. "We must make an additional effort," he said. "No region is safe from this virus. Everyone should limit their contacts with other people."

These measures include a 7pm curfew, a 6.2-mile travel restriction and the closure of all non-essential shops. In addition, schools and nurseries will be closed for three weeks from 12 April. France has one of the highest infection rates in Europe - more than seven times that of the UK - and is in the middle of a third major wave that threatens to be the worst yet.

# Meditate, be at peace, Trump Buddha statue designer tells ex-US President

Chinese furniture maker Hong Jinshi first created a couple of pint-sized statues of former U.S. President Donald Trump meditating in a Buddhist pose as a fun project for himself last year.

Six months on, Hong's amusing hobby has turned into a small side-hustle, with a workshop in the town of Dehua in Fujian province on track to produce an inaugural batch of 250 statues of Trump dressed in Buddhist robes with his legs crossed.

Hong was inspired by the potential contrast provided by the two extremes of Buddhism and a former leader known for his sharp outbursts.

"Our tradition is that a person who is so old and successful ... should start to enjoy his old age and be more relaxed, but he was still tormented and fretting over various desires and uncertainties," Hong



Hong Jinshi has no idea if Donald Trump has seen the statues. Photo - www.livemint.com

said.

Hong has received orders from China and abroad for 200 of the statues, which take 10 days to make and

feature a design he refined over several months with the help of a sculptor friend. A 16-cm (6.3-inch) version costs 999 yuan (\$152.22) while a 46 cm statue costs 20000 yuan.

Sales would be higher, Hong said, if not for the scores of "fake, copycat and lower quality" imitations that have popped up on popular Chinese online marketplace Taobao at lower prices.

Hong has no idea if Trump has seen the statues, but said he was prepared to offer one to the former leader to help him "to cheer up a bit."

Hong said the project has brought him a lot of happiness, and recommended Trump attempt a similar search for fulfilment.

"Meditation is a look within, where you let go, and stop fighting for fame and fortune," Hong said. "In Trump's current state, to be honest, he is really well-suited to do some meditation in this way."

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah





Interview : Xavier-Luc Duval, Leader de l'Opposition

# «Le Gouvernement doit se ressaisir car on va droit dans le mur»

**‘Il est impossible d’envisager une ouverture des frontières alors que la grande majorité des Mauriciens n’est pas vaccinée’**

**D**epuis l'apparition de la Covid-19 et l'impossibilité des scientifiques de maîtriser ce phénomène, chaque gouvernement avance en tâtonnant. L'opposition n'a pas plus d'informations précises que le gouvernement, que ce soit sur le coronavirus ou les vaccins. Mais devant l'exaspération grandissante des citoyens, l'opposition fait nécessairement entendre sa voix au Parlement ou dans les médias. Tel est le cas à Maurice aussi où l'opposition estime que le gouvernement en place fait fausse route. Nous avons invité Xavier Duval pour nous expliquer les tensions auxquelles l'Opposition fait face en ce moment, et les risques éventuelles de déstabilisation économique et sociale pour le pays.

**Mauritius Times : Qu'est-ce qui vous a fait croire que le Gouvernement aurait été disposé à agréer votre motion pour que les élus puissent s'exprimer sur la gestion de la Covid-19 alors que votre requête pour un tel débat avant la rentrée parlementaire avait été rejetée par le Premier ministre ?**

**Xavier-Luc Duval:** Ma demande, pour qu'il y ait un débat à l'Assemblée nationale sur la crise liée au Covid-19, avait effectivement été rejetée par le Premier ministre la semaine d'avant. Il m'avait informé qu'il estimait que les questions parlementaires sur le sujet suffisaient.

Mais, du côté de l'opposition, nous avons constaté que l'attitude de confrontation des membres du Gouvernement au Parlement ne favorisait pas le débat et qu'on nous empêchait aussi de formuler nos propositions pendant le *Question Time*. Donc, celle-ci devenait inutile dans un tel contexte.

Par ailleurs, j'ai bien compris le désir de la population pour qu'il y ait un débat élargi sur toute la crise liée au Covid-19.

J'aimerais insister sur le fait que l'Opposition avait vu juste lorsque nous avons réclamé la fermeture des frontières dès le début de la crise. Nous avons également réclamé que, pour l'achat de vaccins, on puisse présélectionner ceux susceptibles d'être approuvés par l'OMS comme beaucoup de pays l'ont fait, et effectuer des précommandes.

Aujourd'hui, nous nous insurgeons aussi contre le fait que le Gouvernement se trompe de priorité car il est triste de constater que ceux qui sont atteints de Covid et qui sont admis dans les ICU des hôpitaux sont, soit des gens âgés ou des personnes ayant une comorbidité. Donc, nous réclamons que l'on vaccine immédiatement cette catégorie de personnes, en priorité.

Pour toutes ces raisons, il est important que l'Opposition puisse participer au débat et que nous mettions en place un National Action Plan.

**\* Que pensez-vous de la décision du Gouvernement d'assouplir les restrictions à partir du 31 mars, cela alors que la situation au niveau des cas positifs ne semble pas s'améliorer et que la propagation du virus risque d'être encore plus importante avec le nombre de personnes qui circuleront à partir de cette**

**fin de semaine ?**

Pendant environ un an, il n'y a pas eu de cas local de Covid-19 à Maurice mais malgré cela on a voulu garder un niveau d'alerte élevé, alors que l'on aurait pu assouplir les mesures de restrictions. Aujourd'hui, la population est fatiguée, ce qui a pour résultat un relâchement au niveau de la discipline.

La campagne de vaccination a mal démarré avec, notamment, l'utilisation d'un 'Consent Form' qui décourage les gens. Le Gouvernement offre des vaccins non homologués par l'OMS et tout cela a retardé le processus.

Par ailleurs, le WAP est compliqué et injuste. Certains en ont un et d'autres n'en ont pas. Les employés d'entreprises et ceux des services publics obtiennent leur WAP alors que les demandes de permis de ceux qui travaillent à leur compte, les self-employed, sont rejetées et cette catégorie de travailleurs est traitée comme des mendiants.

L'augmentation de l'allocation aux *self-employed* est passée à Rs 10 000 : c'est bien, mais largement insuffisant. Comment un maçon ou un coiffeur qui gagnent d'habitude trois ou quatre fois plus, vont-ils faire pour s'en sortir ? On aurait pu proposer aux *self-employed* en règle avec la MRA la moitié de leurs revenus, jusqu'à un maximum de Rs 25 000, par exemple.

S'il y a eu des choses qui ont été faites correctement, il y a eu surtout beaucoup de manquements. Je constate que le Gouvernement avait dit, il y a deux mois environ,



**La réalité, aujourd'hui, c'est que le chômage explose, que des entreprises sont au bord de la faillite, que la grande majorité des Mauriciens ne sont pas encore vaccinés. En même temps, il y a une urgence économique qui exige un assouplissement des règles. Mais avec un Gouvernement prévoyant, on aurait pu avoir fait comme au Royaume Uni, en Israël ou en Serbie, et être en train d'ouvrir le pays... »**

qu'il n'y avait aucune urgence pour la vaccination. Maintenant il utilise le slogan « Seule solution, vaccination ». Il y a là un manque total de prévoyance, de planification.

Mais je suis très inquiet pour les personnes âgées et celles qui ont des risques de comorbidité et qui sont atteintes de la Covid-19 car elles ont 50 fois plus de probabilité de décéder ou d'avoir des complications. Si la Covid reste là pendant un moment encore, nous serons assis sur une bombe à retardement, concernant toutes ces personnes, dont 8% seulement sont vaccinées...

Un grand nombre de ménages sont dans une situation précaire, certains d'entre eux sont même réduits à la mendicité pour se nourrir. Nous devons faire face aux problèmes d'alcoolisme et de consommation de drogues, de violence domestique et de la délinquance qui augmentent. Tout cela est provoqué par l'oisiveté due au confinement.

La réalité, aujourd'hui, c'est que le chômage explose, que des entreprises sont au bord de la faillite, que la grande majorité des Mauriciens ne sont pas encore vaccinés. En même temps, il y a une urgence économique qui exige un assouplissement des règles.

Mais avec un Gouvernement prévoyant, on aurait pu avoir fait comme au Royaume Uni, en Israël ou en Serbie, et être en train d'ouvrir le pays. Or, il est impossible d'envisager une ouverture des frontières alors que la grande majorité des Mauriciens n'est pas vaccinée. On est condamné à cause du manque de prévoyance des dirigeants.

**\* Au-delà de la crise sanitaire, il y a effectivement la crise socioéconomique, qui va s'accroître aussi longtemps que l'économie reste fermée. Fort de votre expérience en tant qu'ancien ministre des Finances, voyez-vous des facteurs au niveau local qui pourraient retarder la reprise de l'économie mauricienne ?**

La situation économique était déjà très précaire avant la Covid-19, mais le Gouvernement ne faisait rien et prétendait le contraire.

☛ Suite en page 9



# 'Il y a très peu de choses qui séparent les différents partis de l'opposition, et je constate surtout la volonté de travailler ensemble'



☛ Suite de la page 8

Les industries d'exportation étaient déjà en pleine dégringolade. Le tourisme, qui était le fleuron de notre économie jusqu'en 2016, a commencé à flancher depuis, affichant un taux de croissance qui avait chuté en 2019 suite à la réduction des arrivées.

Avec une économie déjà en difficulté, le Gouvernement est pourtant venu de l'avant avec des projets extravagants comme le stade de Côte d'Or ou Safe City, ce qui a provoqué une forte augmentation de la dette publique.

Depuis la crise liée à la pandémie de Covid-19, le Gouvernement a accordé beaucoup de subventions mais, pour retrouver la prospérité, il ne suffit pas de régler les problèmes liés à la Covid. Il faut trouver des solutions pour notre économie, améliorer la productivité des entreprises et l'efficacité des services publics, renforcer l'attractivité de la destination et redresser Air Mauritius... Sans compter qu'il faudra repayer la dette. Finalement, il faut bien comprendre que nous faisons face à un problème structurel. La crise Covid, elle, est un problème conjoncturel.

**\* L'assistance financière de l'Etat aux employés du privé et aux entreprises apporte un certain sou-**

lagement durant cette période de déprime économique, mais notre économie peut-elle tenir le coup si la reprise économique mondiale, principalement dans nos marchés d'exportation, se fait attendre?

Il y a beaucoup d'argent disponible à la Banque de Maurice et au MIC dont on a dépensé seulement Rs17 milliards des Rs80 milliards alloués. La dépréciation de la roupie est une manne pour la Banque de Maurice qui va augmenter la *Special Reserve* et les réserves du pays ont été augmentées au fil des dernières années. Les recettes perçues à travers la TVA prélevée par la douane augmentent aussi proportionnellement. Le Gouvernement sera tenté de faire main basse encore une fois sur les fonds de la Banque de Maurice, ce qui est dangereux.

Dans le secteur touristique, il y a eu, encore une fois, un manque total de planification et de prévoyance. Le Gouvernement n'a pas su préparer ce secteur à la reprise. Il aurait fallu avoir offert aux travailleurs des programmes de formation pendant tous ces longs mois d'inactivité. Former les cuisiniers, les serveurs, donner des cours de langues, travailler sur l'amélioration du service en général. Bref, mettre en place un vaste programme de formation en ressources humaines, mais on a perdu un an...

Ils auraient dû aussi embellir et rénover les produits touristiques avec l'aide de la main-d'œuvre des hôtels et des entreprises du tourisme ; le pays aurait pu en bénéficier. Mais les gens ont été payés pour rester à la maison.

Donc c'est une occasion ratée car on aurait pu rouvrir les frontières avec un personnel touristique mieux formé, des hôtels complètement rénovés. Nous aurions ainsi pu présenter au monde un projet renouvelé, une île paradisiaque, propre avec des infrastructures

touristiques dignes de ce nom et un service inégalable.

Mais le Gouvernement ne veut pas écouter, ils ne veulent même pas de débat à l'Assemblée nationale.

**\* Comment se porte l'Opposition aujourd'hui, après la mésentente survenue dans le sillage de la pression exercée pour que le leader du PTr renonce à toute ambition premier ministérielle lors des prochaines législatives?**

Je ne veux rentrer dans aucun débat qui puisse diviser l'Opposition. En fait, il y a très peu de choses qui séparent les différents partis de l'opposition, et il est impensable, qu'avant les élections, nous ne pourrions pas régler ces quelques petits problèmes.

Je constate surtout la volonté de travailler ensemble et d'analyser ensemble les dossiers. La situation entre nous est même meilleure qu'en 2019 au moment des élections, malgré tout ce que l'on pourrait croire.

**\* On s'attendait à une réaction plus solidaire de la part de l'Opposition suite à l'incident survenu au Parlement après que le Speaker avait pris la décision d'enlever la question du député Assirvaden liée au statut du poste d'ambassadeur de Showkutally Soodhun en Arabie saoudite... Vos commentaires ?**

« Je ne veux rentrer dans aucun débat qui puisse diviser l'Opposition. En fait, il y a très peu de choses qui séparent les différents partis de l'opposition, et il est impensable, qu'avant les élections, nous ne pourrions pas régler ces quelques petits problèmes. Je constate surtout la volonté de travailler ensemble... »

Nous avons constaté que l'opinion publique ne comprenait pas les *walk-out* de l'Opposition en général et que les gens s'attendent plutôt à ce que nous fassions face à l'adversité, que nous poursuivions la lutte dans l'hémicycle.

C'est ce qui explique l'attitude de l'Opposition et la raison pour laquelle les trois partis de l'opposition sont restés malgré l'expulsion de trois de nos membres.

**\* Certaines institutions sont cadennassées, d'autres traînent les pieds avec les enquêtes, l'Opposition n'est pas protégée au Parlement, dit-elle, lorsque des questions lui sont refusées ou quand elle n'arrive pas à obtenir certaines informations cruciales et certains de ses membres sont carrément exclus de la Chambre. Comment contrer le Gouvernement dans ces circonstances?**

Une telle attitude du Gouvernement semble encourager ceux qui préconisent des actions dans la rue et ça, c'est dangereux. Plus on limite les questions au Parlement, moins la population croira dans la démocratie parlementaire, et plus les gens descendront dans la rue, avec tous les dangers que cela comporte. Le Gouvernement doit se ressaisir car on va droit dans le mur...

**\* Il y a toute une foule – et plus de concurrence – dans l'opposition avec la venue de nouvelles formations, déjà ou très bientôt, dont les Laurette, Valayden, Bodha, Bhadain. Est-ce une situation qui vous inquiète quant à son impact sur le plan électoral?**

Roshi Bhadain et son parti sont importants dans la coalition de l'opposition, ainsi que Nando Bodha. L'Opposition est très active au Parlement et, après le confinement, nous serons sur le terrain. Je crois que cela suffira car il y a parmi nous suffisamment d'hommes et de femmes de valeur et d'expérience. Je n'ai aucune crainte.

Je crois qu'il y a peu de choses qui nous séparent. Notre sens du patriotisme nous permettra de relever ensemble les défis économiques et sociaux. C'est ce qui va primer et je suis convaincu que ce sera le cas.



# Covid-19 vaccines are a victory for public research, not 'greed'...

☛ Cont. from page 2

Before this pandemic, capitalism was not very good at delivering vaccines for infectious diseases.

Research and development, combined with direct subsidies were mobilised on an enormous scale for this pandemic. Governments used public funds to place huge advance orders for vaccines that removed all market risk from future sales.

It is those two things that prompted an unprecedented single-purpose investment in the sector. This investment will, of course, be followed by unprecedented profits.

The development of the Covid-19 vaccines is, therefore, part of a



Rich countries put in immense advanced orders for COVID-19 vaccines. Javier Cebollada/EPA

vast system of public subsidy that can deceive people into thinking that it is private capital that is saving us from the virus, thanks to its capacity for "innovation".

Yet there is another subsidy to those companies that remains hidden – universities.

Universities provide trained scientists and a foundation of knowledge that emerges over hundreds of years. It is in universities that the rules for clinical research are developed, and it is university researchers who

publish results in academic journals which provide that knowledge foundation.

Universities make the largest social contribution to verifying and disseminating scientific breakthroughs. It is knowledge that we hold in common. In economic terms, this knowledge production counts as an "externality" in the business model: an invisible subsidy that never shows up on a corporate balance sheet, because corporations never have to pay for them.

The infrastructure that produced the Covid-19 vaccines was nurtured in publicly funded universities, in public institutes and in heavily subsidised private labs. A process that looks like it is driven by private ingenuity and naked competition in reality is driven by the scientific knowledge that is part of the "commons" and for this reason should be owned by everyone on the planet.

**David Whyte**

Professor of Socio-legal Studies,  
University of Liverpool

## Quotable Quotes

\* A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.

-- Martin Luther King Jr

\* Mountaintops inspire leaders but valleys mature them.

-- Winston Churchill

\* Lead from the back and let others believe they are in front.

-- Nelson Mandela

\* I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the water to create many ripples.

-- Mother Teresa

\* A boss has the title, a leader has the people.

-- Simon Sinek

\* We cannot lead anyone farther than we have been ourselves.

-- John C. Maxwell

\* One voice can change a room.

-- Barack Obama

\* You manage things; you lead people.

-- Grace Hopper

\* Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.

-- Steve Jobs



## COMMUNIQUE | COVID-19

### SUBMISSION OF RETURNS AND PAYMENT OF TAXES

Following the announcement made by the Government of the Republic of Mauritius for the resumption of economic activities in a phased manner as from 01 April 2021, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) informs the public of the following arrangements:

- **ONLINE** facilities for the electronic submission of Returns (Income Tax, VAT, Contribution and other returns) and payment of taxes, if any, are available on the MRA website: [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu)
- Where submission of returns and payment of taxes are due in the month of March 2021 and have not been submitted or paid as a result of the sanitary lockdown prevailing, no penalty, surcharge or interest will be applied by the MRA provided the return is submitted and the tax, if any, is paid on or before 30 April 2021.
- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), with turnover not exceeding Rs. 50 million, will have up to 15 July 2021 for the submission of VAT return and payment of tax falling due on 31 March 2021.
- Refunds and repayments claimed in returns submitted will be processed accordingly. Where additional information or documents are required, taxpayers will be contacted either by phone or email.

For further information, kindly visit MRA website: [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu) or phone the MRA Helpdesk on 207 6000 during working hours.

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

31 March 2021

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T: +230 207 6000 | F: +230 207 6048 | M: [headoffice@mra.mu](mailto:headoffice@mra.mu) | W: [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu)





# The Battle against the Covid-19 Pandemic: United we stand, divided we fall

Cont. from page 4

## Skewed supply of vaccines

The current supply of vaccines is skewed towards the needs of the vaccine manufacturing countries and the richest nations. There is therefore a real risk that the rate of coronavirus infection peak in countries denied or receiving only a small proportion of their vaccine requirements. This would result in a higher death toll and trigger a flow of refugees towards richer countries to flee the pandemic. The virus has already killed some 121,000 people across Africa and infected 4.18 million.

Experience has shown that member driven UN bodies do not have the authority and mandate to fairly arbitrate available supplies of vaccines and assure an equitable distribution of vaccines to countries across the world. For example, the WHO is



photo - scout.org

currently mired in the controversies relating to the thrust and contested findings of the belated investigation into the plausible origins of Covid-19.

## United not divided

A world divided between countries ha-

**"It is the combination of a robust vaccination drive to attain herd immunity and the application of strict sanitary measures which will offer the best protection against the risk of a coronavirus infection and help the world win the battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. These are necessary conditions to progress towards a modicum of normality to reboot the economy and kick-start the urgent process of economic recovery, bilateral trade flows and the movement of people under established rules..."**

ving obtained the required volume of vaccines to attain herd immunity and a plethora of highly infected countries struggling to have access to Covid-19 vaccines amid a rising death toll, let alone having the required financial resources to buy their vaccine requirements, is not a tenable or sustainable option for the future. The leaders of US, EU, the BRICS countries and Covid-19 vaccine manufacturing countries must come together to produce and supply the vaccine requirements of all countries in a fair, timely and equitable manner.

The world needs to be united in this important endeavour if we are to win this difficult battle. There is no other way. Not to urgently do so is tantamount to shooting ourselves in the foot and inordinately delay any prospect of a return to some form of normality.

Mrinal Roy

## Food for Thought

## What is the measure of humanity?

There is an experience that TN Seshan told in a management seminar.

He was travelling in Uttar Pradesh with his wife for a picnic while he was the Chief Election Commissioner. On the way, they saw a large mango plantation filled with sparrow nests.

Seeing this, they went down there and his wife wanted to take two nests home.

The police escort called a young boy who was grazing cows in the fields and demanded to bring the nests down and offered to pay him Rs10. He refused, so Seshan raised the offer to Rs 50.

The policeman asked the boy to do it as Seshan was a big officer. The boy told Seshan and his wife: 'Saabji, I will not do it for whatsoever you will give.' He continued, 'Inside those nests, there are baby sparrows; if I give those nests to you, in the evening when mother sparrow returns with food for the babies and do not find them there, she will cry. I do not have the heart to see that.' Hearing this Seshan and his wife were shocked.

Seshan says my position and the IAS melted away in front of that little boy. I was in front of him like a mustard seed. They gave up their wish and after returning, this incident continued to haunt him with guilt for days. Education, position or social status is never the yardstick for the measure of humanity.

Knowledge is to know nature. We don't achieve anything by gathering a lot of information. Life becomes blissful when you have knowledge, sense & wisdom.



## COMMUNIQUE | COVID-19

### RESUMPTION OF OPERATIONS

Following the announcement made by the Government of the Republic of Mauritius for the resumption of economic activities in a phased manner as from 01 April 2021 and in view of minimising the risk of infection by the Corona Virus the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) informs the public of the following work arrangements:

- The Customer Service Centre and the Cash Office at the MRA Headquarters, Eham Court, Port Louis will be closed. Any person who requires any information or assistance for the submission of returns or for the payment of tax is required to phone MRA helpdesk on **207 6000**.
- The helpdesk service will operate on weekdays from 09:00 hrs to 16:30 hrs. As a result of an increased number of incoming telephone calls, any person who is unable to access our Officers on the phone is advised to send an email on **headoffice@mra.mu** and give his National Identity Number or Business Registration Number, name, telephone number and indicate the type of information or assistance required. Our Officers will phone them back as soon as possible.
- The public may also consult MRA website: **www.mra.mu** for information relating to taxes administered by the MRA.
- Any person requiring any information or clarification on taxes administered by the MRA may send an email at **headoffice@mra.mu**

Applicants having queries regarding the **Self-Employed Assistance Scheme (SEAS)** or the **Government Wage Assistance Scheme (GWAS)**, may phone the MRA Helpdesk on 207 6000 or send an email at **headoffice@mra.mu**

MRA relies on the usual cooperation and understanding of one and all to reduce physical contact with a view to combat Covid-19.

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31 March 2021

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# Diet resolutions: 6 things to know about eating less meat and more plant-based foods



By Mariana Lamas, Research assistant, Centre for Culinary Innovation, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

**M**any people are making changes to their diets to eat healthier or in a more environmentally friendly manner. They might choose to eat less meat, less sugar or even adopt an entirely vegan diet. A growing number, however, are choosing a plant-based diet that focuses on foods that come from plants, but may still include animal products, such as meat or cheese.

American biochemist Thomas Colin Campbell coined the term "plant-based" in the 1980s to better explain his research on diet and nutrition. The term surged in popularity in 2016 when Campbell's book 'The China Study' was reprinted and alternative meat products such as Beyond Burger and Impossible Burger were launched.

Since then, plant-based foods have taken the world by storm. They are everywhere: fast-food chains, restaurant menus, grocery stores, social media, food blogs and on your plate. The global plant-based food market is predicted to reach a market valuation of US\$38.4 billion by 2025. In the United States alone, the number of plant-based products available increased 29 per cent between 2017 and 2019.

As a research assistant at the Centre for Culinary Innovation, I work with industry to develop new food products. Although the work of the centre is not limited to plant-based foods, our team focuses on researching, understanding, experimenting and creating new ones.

The rapid growth of plant-based food is due to several factors. The most common reasons people in Europe, the U.S. and Canada give for eating plant-based food are the health benefits, curiosity to try new food, environmental concerns and animal welfare.

If you are thinking about switching to a plant-based diet, here are six things you should know about plant-based food.

## 1. Understand what plant-based means

According to the Plant Based Foods



Plant based diet. Photo - thrivingonplants.com

Association, a plant-based product consists of ingredients derived from plants, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds or legumes.

The final product directly replaces an animal product. By this definition, a cheese made from plant sources can be called plant-based, but flour or bread cannot. If the final product only partially replaces an animal product, then it should be labelled as a blend.

## 2. A plant-based diet may not be vegan or vegetarian

The terms vegan and plant-based have long been used interchangeably. But following a plant-based diet does not necessarily mean that you are vegan or vegetarian. It means that you are consciously choosing to eat more from plants, but you may still be eating meat, fish, eggs or other animal products.

In fact, plant-based food manufacturers are not targeting vegans and vegetarians since they are only a small percentage of the population. Their main targets are meat eaters and flexitarians - people who eat mostly plant-based diets, but still eat meat.

## 3. Plant-based food is not a synonym for healthy

Usually, a diet containing a higher proportion of plant-based food is automatically associated with being healthy. However, it might not always be the case.

A plant-based diet is healthy when it is mainly composed of whole foods such as

vegetables, fruits, legumes and nuts. In fact, such a diet has been shown to decrease the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

Nutritionists remain concerned about heavily processed meat substitutes that contain high levels of saturated fats and sodium. These ingredients - preservatives, flavouring and fillers - enhance the taste, shelf life and texture.

Although they are considered natural, they are not necessary for a healthy diet. They may be environmentally friendly, but they may not be healthy, especially in large amounts.

## 4. Plant-based food is changing the way we eat

Plant-based food is not going away anytime soon. In fact, what we are seeing now is a global increase of plant-based products.

What started with soy milk in the 1990s, and continued with almond milk in the 2000s and burgers in 2010s, has expanded to different types of plant-based products: pork, chicken, yogurt, ice cream, seafood, fish, eggs, cheese, sausage, jerky and more.

While Gen X and baby boomers may be more resistant to change their diets, millennials and Gen Z - who are more likely to consider the food source, animal welfare issues and environmental impacts when making their purchasing decisions - are embracing plant-based food and will continue to do so.

Millennials did not invent this type of eating, but they are re-inventing it and spurring a broader change in attitudes and consumption of plant-based food. Gen Z is growing up with plant-based eating as a norm.

## 5. Plant-based food is as 'good' as its ingredients

What goes unnoticed by many consumers is how these products are made. Replacing animal food products is not an easy task, quite the opposite, it is a very complex one.

It takes years to research and develop plant-based food products. And it has only been possible because of the ingredients available, such as plant proteins, oils, flavourings and binders. The better they are, the better the final product will be. Not only in the sense of texture, appearance, flavour and mouthfeel, but also health.

The next wave of plant-based products will likely be healthier as better ingredients and processes (like 3D printing) will be available. If we look at Beyond Burger, for example, the new formulation is healthier than the previous one.

## 6. Plant-based is good for the planet, but be careful

One of the main reasons consumers switch to a plant-based diet is because of sustainability and environmental concerns. Indeed, eating plant-based reduces the impacts of climate change, saves water and minimizes agricultural land use.

But be aware that many plant-based brands are a part of a larger operation. A specific brand may be sustainable and environment friendly, but the company that owns it may not be.

It is important that food companies be transparent. Consumers have the right to know where the products they buy come from and how they are made so they can make informed decisions and hold companies and brands accountable.

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## Happy Husband

Today is World Happy Husband Day. Let us maintain two minutes silence and appreciate some real-life experiences quotes of some great personalities.

After marriage, husband and wife become two sides of a coin, they just can't face each other, but still they stay together.

-- Al Gore

By all means marry. If you get a good wife, you'll be happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.

-- Socrates

Wife inspires us to great things and prevent us from achieving them.

-- Mike Tyson

I had some words with my wife, and she had some paragraphs with me.

-- Bill Clinton

There's a way of transferring funds that is even faster than electronic banking. It's called marriage.

-- Michael Jordan

A good wife always forgives her husband when she's wrong.

-- Barack Obama

When you are in love, wonders happen. But once you get married, you wonder what happened.

-- Steve Jobs

And the best one is...

## They are driving us mad with Corona...

We have become crazy.

I went to the bathroom at a restaurant. I opened the door with my elbow, I raised the toilet seat with my foot, I switched on the water faucet with a tissue, washed my hands with the liquid soap for 20 seconds, then opened the bathroom door with my elbow to leave and when I returned to my table I realized...

I forgot to pee!!!

## Meaningful Questions

Why is the place in a stadium where you sit, called a stand?

Why is that everyone wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die!!

We have freedom of speech, then why do we have telephone bills?

If money doesn't grow on trees, then why do banks have branches?

Why doesn't glue stick to its bottle?

Why do you still call it building, when it's already built?

If it's true that we all are here to help others, what are others here for?

If you aren't supposed to drink and drive, why do bars have parking lots?

If all the nations in the world are in debt, where did all the money go?

When dog food is 'new with improved taste', who tests it?

If the "black box" flight recorder

Marriage is a beautiful forest where Brave Lions are killed by Beautiful Deers.

-- Brad Pitt

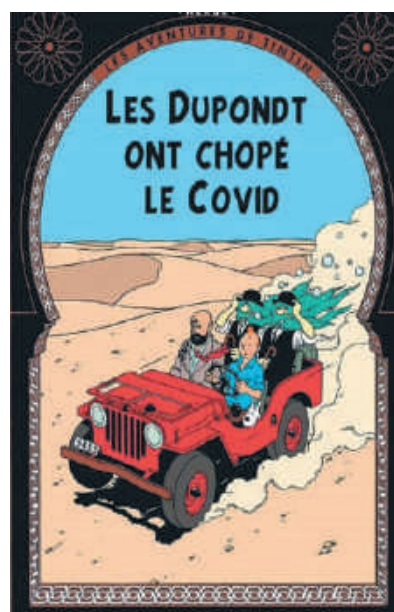
is never damaged during a plane crash, why isn't the whole airplane not made out of that stuff?

Who copyrighted the copyright symbol?

Can you cry under water?

Why do people say: "you've been working like a dog", when dogs just sit around all day?

We all are living in a seriously funny world!!!



Marriage is the only battle in the world where the combatants share a bed.

-- Andrew Kutto

## Proverbs and their meaning

1. Swedish proverb: The pillow is the best advisor.

*Meaning: Sleep over a problem and see how you feel in the morning.*

2. Kenyan proverb: When elephants fight, it is the grass that gets hurt.

*Meaning: Fights of the powerful hurt only the little guys.*

3. Ancient Roman proverb: Hunger is the best sauce.

*Meaning: Everything tastes better when you are hungry.*

4. Japanese proverb: A frog in a well does not know the great sea.

*Meaning: There is more going on than you know, try and see the big picture.*

5. Turkish proverb: If the world flooded, it would not matter to the duck.

*Meaning: Things that are bad for you, aren't always bad for everyone.*

6. Filipino proverb: Leave it to the batman.

*Meaning: Some problems require superheroes to solve.*

7. Russian proverb: To live with the wolves, you have to howl like a wolf.

*Meaning: In dangerous situations, try and blend in.*

8. French proverb: A hungry stomach has no ears.

*Meaning: You can't concentrate without food in your tummy.*

9. Kenyan proverb: Slippery ground does not recognise a king.

*Meaning: Even the most powerful people are just human deep down.*

10. Gaelic proverb: A cat in mittens won't catch mice.

*Meaning: Being careful and polite doesn't always get things done.*

### Inspiration

## Let us be bees

NASA has a poster hanging with bees that reads: "Aerodynamically a bee's body is not made to fly; the good thing is that the bee doesn't know."

"The law of physics says that a bee cannot fly; the aerodynamic principle says that the breadth of its wings is too small to keep its huge body in flight, but a bee doesn't know. It doesn't know anything about physics or its logic and flies anyway."

"This is what we can all do: fly and prevail in every moment in the face of any difficulty and in any circumstance despite what they say."

"Let us be bees, no matter the size of our wings; we take flight and enjoy the pollen of life."

## Thoughts to Live by Mimetic Desire

Have you ever seen children at a party playing with balloons?

One child suddenly grabs a red balloon and yells: "This balloon is mine!" Inadvertently, all the children drop their balloons and fight over this red balloon. A very dumbed down example of what René Girard calls "mimetic desire".

A lot of our desires don't emerge from within, but from 'outside'. We import our most powerful desires from imitating the desires of other people.

In fact, the entire advertising industry is founded on the exploitation of borrowed desire. Human desire is not a linear process, where a person autonomously desires an inherently

desirable object. Rather, we desire according to the desire of others. If we are not aware, others influence us on what to desire. And this is amplified on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram which are excellent conduits of mimetic desire.

French thinker Montesquieu, explained it beautifully: "If we only wanted to be happy, it would be easy; but we want to be happier than other people, which is almost always difficult, since we think them happier than they are."

Getting clear about what really matters to you is incredibly important, and not as simple as it appears.

Don't follow the desires of another. Understand that what makes them feel rich and fulfilled is not the same for you. Look for your own happiness and stay blessed forever.





**N**ot all women think that they need a man to make them happy and satisfied in life. These are the women for whom being single is a blessing. They embrace their solitude and they love their freedom. They don't think being single is anything to worry about. In fact, for some women, relationships are all about drama and it all seems too complicated to handle. These are the kind of women who think being single works best for them. Here are some of the reasons, as published in The Times of India, why riding solo is the best option for some women than being in a relationship.

#### **They're free spirits who hardly like a routine**

Slowly and gradually, relationships turn into some kind of routine. Some people are built for it, and they find comfort in it. But some free-spirited women can't even stand the idea of a routine in a relationship. They're always on the lookout for adventures. It's just our society that needs to accept the fact that some women are not the same who want to settle down with a partner and have a family.

#### **They don't wish to deal with the stress and anxiety of a relationship**

Dating can be painful and stressful for some. And some women simply decide to not put themselves through all that pain and stress. It's absolutely normal that these women don't want to be hurt. Some of them are not ready to risk entering a bad relationship because they appreciate their well-being above all. Fights, codependency, emotional baggage - they all come with the price some women don't want to pay.

#### **They don't like commitment**

Some single women like to date but they don't plan to

### Relationships

## Reasons why some women prefer being single than in a relationship

get involved in a serious or committed relationship that leads to marriage. Everyone has their own choice in life and not all of us can imagine being tied to one person for the rest of our lives. Sometimes, some women need more space, and commitment is not what they strive for.

#### **They enjoy other things in life**

Single women who love being single don't need a man to have a fulfilled life. They have other things in life to keep them happy. Travelling, going out with friends, flirting with random people, chasing a successful career is what excites them more than being in a relationship. Everyone

has different priorities and conventional married life just doesn't seem to be a priority for some women.

#### **They're in a contented relationship with themselves**

It's true that the most important relationship you can ever have is the relationship with yourself. And some women are really happy with their own selves. It's perfectly fine to be self-sufficient, have less drama and less stress in life. Some people do feel that they can't be complete unless they have a significant other, but some women are very positive about leading a life all by themselves.

## Unrealistic expectations parents have for their children

### **Being Mum & Dad**



#### **To always be happy and cheerful**

Children can have bad days too. Maybe they're at odds with their friends or they've just got into an argument with their teachers, many things can lead to their mood swings. That said, to expect them to be in a good mood all the time is asking too much of them.

#### **Be grateful for everything**

Surely, you've tried to provide your child with all the necessities of life. However, if you're always expecting them to be grateful for it, then it's a wrong kind of parenting you're indulging in. Instead, teach them to be humble and set examples where they

understand the value of hard work. Over time, they will recognize your effort towards them.

#### **To never lie**

Remember the time when you lied to your parents? Well, yes. There's no escaping that. Similarly, we cannot expect our children to be honest all the time. Not to say, you shouldn't check them when you uncover their lies. But don't have expectations that may leave you disappointed.

#### **To never make mistakes**

If adults are so prone to making mistakes, considering they're much more advanced in the field of reason and rationality, how can we expect the young ones to remain flawless. Instead of chiding them for making mistakes, ask them to learn from it. Let them embrace their flawed nature and love them for who they are.

**A**s parents, we often go overboard in trying to give our children the best of everything. However, knowingly or unknowingly, we also tend to demand a lot from them. Even after having lived a rebellious childhood and having opposed most of what our parents demanded of us, we tend to commit the same mistakes when we ourselves become parents and set such unrealistic, unachievable expectations for our children. That said, here are some very unrealistic things we could expect from our kids.

#### **To be perfect at home and in school**

Whether a kid or an adult, being perfect is just an illusion. There's no way anyone can go without making a mistake. Especially when it comes to children, if you want them to flourish and be confident in their lives, expecting them to stay on top of their class and being perfect in their day to day activities is just unrealistic.

### **Life's LESSONS**

## Don't mess with women

**A** woman was golfing and accidentally she hits the ball into the woods. She then goes into the woods to look for it and there she sees a frog in a trap.

The frog says to her: If you release me from this trap, I will grant you three wishes.

The woman frees the frog, and the frog says: Thank you, but I have failed to mention that there is a condition attached to your wishes, and that is: whatever you wish, your husband will get ten times of that wish.

The woman says: That is okay with me.

For her first wish, she wants to be the most beautiful woman in the world.

The frog warns her: you do realize that this wish will also make your husband the most handsome man in the world, an Adonis, to whom women will just flock to!

The woman replies, That is fine, because I will be the most beautiful woman and he will have eyes only for me.

So in a movement, she becomes the most beautiful woman in the world.

For her second wish, she wants to be the richest woman in the world.

The frog says: That will make your husband the richest man in the world, and he will be ten times richer than you.

The woman replies: That is okay, because what is mine is his and what is his is mine.

So, in a split second she becomes the richest woman in the world.

The frog then asks her, what is her third wish?

She says: I would like to have a mild heart attack.

**Moral of the story: Women are clever. Don't mess with them.**

Attention female readers: This is the end of the joke for you. Stop here and continue feeling good!

Male readers: The man had a heart attack ten times "milder" than his wife!!!

**Moral of the story: Women are great but sometimes falsely believe that they are very smart.**



Sushmita Sen on healing from relationships that cause 'pain and wounding'

## 'We each carry the power to heal ourselves'



'I speak from experience', says Sushmita Sen

**S**ushmita Sen is making headlines for her recent social media post about 'happy healing' and 'breaking patterns'. The actor took to her Instagram to share a note where she is talking about unhealthy relationship patterns and how to break out of them.

Sushmita Sen has been dating model Rohman Shawl since 2018 and is a mother of two adopted daughters - Renee Sen and Alisah Sen.

The former Miss Universe shared a quote that read, "When there is something we haven't healed in our lives, we can often find ourselves either being drawn into relationships that recreate the pain and wounding, or relationships that never touch the pain and wounding. We take a path of repetition (opportunity for re-enactment) or a path of opposition (opportunity to never be hurt that way again). Our work is to wake up, become aware, and do healing work that allows us to take a path of integration with ourselves and with others. This path will activate us, but it will also be what allows us to walk ourselves towards authentic healing." The quote is by Vienna Pharaon, who is a Marriage & Family Therapist.

The actor shared the note with the caption, "Patterns repeat themselves unconsciously...until we consciously break them!!! We each carry the power to heal ourselves...I speak from experience!! When we become aware of the patterns, the repetitions, the unconscious habits...we must break those patterns...before they break us!!!" Sushmita ended the note by saying, "Happy Healing!!!! I love you guys!!!!"

On the work front, Sushmita Set is busy shooting for season 2 of her Disney+ Hotstar series, *Aarya*.

## Covid spike leads to film postponement again, will biggies follow suit?

Some of the Bollywood films that have released theatrically in March include *Roohi*, *Mumbai Saga*, *Saina* and *Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar*.

**E**ven as things seemed to have been right back on track in the film industry with movies bee lining to release, the recent spike in the number of Covid-19 cases have put a bump on the road ahead. The release date of as many as three films have already been postponed indefinitely, including Rani Mukerji and Saif Ali Khan's *Bunty Aur Babli 2*, the Hindi version of Rana Daggubati's *Haathi Mere Saathi* and recent being Amitabh Bachchan and Emraan Hashmi starrer *Chehre*, reports Hindustan

## Hera Pheri - counted among the best Bollywood comedie, is 21

**P**riyadarshan's comedy caper *Hera Pheri* completed 21 years of its release on March 2021. The film is counted among the best Bollywood comedies. It is centred around three men - Baburao Ganpatrao Apte (Paresh Rawal), conman Raju (Akshay Kumar) and an unemployed do-gooder Shyam (Suniel Shetty). One wrong phone call changes their lives forever, and they get involved in the kidnapping of a young girl.

Recalling the good old days on the 21st anniversary of *Hera Pheri*'s release, Suniel Shetty wrote on Twitter, "No wonder we underestimate how quickly time flies. It seems I blinked, and 21 years went by. What a film we made... Missing #OmPuri ji very dearly today..."

Responding to Shetty's tweet, Akshay Kumar shared how he had no idea "what a film we were making". He also revealed his favourite scene from the movie is the one where he, Rawal and Shetty's characters were fighting, and suddenly Tabu's Anuradha came in the room. Akshay tweeted, "Agreed! Even we didn't know back then what a film we were making, each scene better than the other. Specially love this one: dhoti. Genius of Priyan sir and epic dialogues by late Neeraj Vora."

Actor Gulshan Grover, who essayed the role of Kabira in the movie, also celebrated the 21 years of the movie by sharing a small clip from it. Along with it, he wrote, "21 years of #Herapheri, what a film by director Priyadarshan @priyadarshandir

Producer #firozNadiadwala and brilliant actors @akshaykumar @SunielVShetty @SirPareshRawal #Tabu #Asrani ji , late #OmPuri ji and #KabiraSpeaking."

*Hera Pheri* is a remake of the Malayalam movie 'Ramji Rao Speaking' by Siddique and Lal. In an earlier interview with PTI, Priyadarshan has called it a 'humour of poverty' which "is inspired by Laurel and Hardy, Charlie Chaplin." He had also revealed how Rawal had a lot of trouble in getting into the role of Baburao Ganpathrao Apte. "He changed his body language and wore soda bottle glasses, which was challenging as you go completely out of focus. He would count his steps as he couldn't see anything," Priyadarshan said.

It wasn't easy to work on *Hera Pheri* for Shetty and Kumar either. They had to sleep on newspapers to get that feeling of being uncomfortable. In an interview with IMDb, Shetty had shared, "The director would ask us to



sleep in the afternoon on paper, so we used to sleep on newspapers. He (Priyadarshan) said I don't want you to be comfortable. When you get up, you should have rested, but stay uncomfortable. So, we wore no makeup, nothing. Akshay Kumar, me and Paresh ji were constantly together, constantly rehearsing our lines, constantly improvising and Priyan sir is one man who knows when to say cut."

*Hera Pheri*, which was a massive hit at the time of its release, now enjoys a cult status. It also starred actors Om Puri, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Asrani, Mukesh Khanna, and Gulshan Grover.



Times

Talking about the decision to postpone *Chehre*, producer Anand Pandit says, "I have always lived by the maxim of 'safety first'. Given the rising number of Covid cases, it is only right that we delay the release of '*Chehre*'. Audiences have already showered the trailer with a lot of love and every member associated with '*Chehre*' wants cinema lovers to watch it on 70 mm. We are ready to wait for the right time and to ensure our audiences remain safe."

Some of the Bollywood films that have released in March include *Roohi*, *Mumbai Saga*, *Saina* and *Sandeep*

*Aur Pinky Faraar*.

Even Ram Gopal Varma's *D Company* has also been postponed and the filmmaker had shared that this decision was taken due to the "sudden severe Covid rise in many parts of the country and also amid continuous news of new lockdowns". The release date of the Indo-Polish film *No Means No* has been postponed due to the surge in cases in India.

All this has again put a question mark on the many films lined up for release including the biggies *Sooryavanshi*, *Radhe*, *Satyameva Jayate 2* which are set to make way to theatres in the next two months.

Trade analyst Atul Mohan anticipates that there would be more such announcements of postponements in the next few days.

While Bollywood films have taken a tumble, South films are on track for release in that region. Tamil film *Sulthan*, starring Karthi and Rashmika Mandanna will arrive in cinemas on April 2 and so will Pawan Kalyan's Telugu film *Vakeel Saab* on April 9. Even the Telugu and Tamil versions of *Haathi Mere Saathi*, titled *Aranya* and *Kaadan*, respectively, made its way to theatres as scheduled.



## Karan V Grover on his 10-year relationship with Poppy Jabbal 'No marriage plans right now, we both are happy the way we are'

**I**t has been more than ten years now that Karan V Grover has been dating actress Poppy Jabbal. But they have never openly spoken about it. The two had first met in a car parking area and later they met again through some common friends and soon started dating. Their families are aware of their relationship and the one question both are asked these days is when they plan to get married.

In an exclusive chat with Farzana Patowari of Times of India, Karan said, "We both are happy the way we are right now. Since she is also an actress so she is also busy working and we both are focusing on our careers right now. I am in between meetings regarding work and should be back soon. It has been a year since I shot something after my show *Kahaan Hum Kahaan Tum* went off air abruptly."

He further adds, "I think there is no standard rule when we talk about relationships between two people. Additionally, I think that it's different for different people. There are different stages in a relationship and the stage in which we are right now is one where we are happy and satisfied." Luckily for them, their parents are supportive and don't put any pressure on them, he says.

Right from travelling together to sharing the same sun sign that is cancer, the couple has a lot of things in common. They are also seen attending each other's family function and meeting common friends from the industry too.



## Mouni Roy says she would 'fight all the time' with Arjun Bijlani during 'Naagin'

**M**ouni Roy, who starred alongside Arjun Bijlani in the supernatural fantasy series *Naagin*, said that she fought with him 'all the time' during the first season. She chalked it up to the 'gruelling'

shooting experience.

*Naagin*, produced by Ekta Kapoor under her banner Balaji Telefilms, revolved around the lives of shape-shifting serpents and became one of the most-watched shows on Indian television. The fifth season of the series recently came to an end, with the sixth season in the works, reports Hindustan Times.

In an interview with Bollywood Hungama, Mouni was asked if she has ever fought with any of her co-stars. "Of course, I have had! Arjun Bilani. We have known each other forever and during the entire season of *Naagin 1*, we used to fight all the time. It was such a high-intensity show. 16-18 hours, *nange pao* (barefoot) in Film City, climbing trees, getting down, dancing in those *pathareela* (stoned) floor and all... It was very gruelling, that experience, but then it gave us what it did," she said.

While Mouni played Shivanya/Shivangi in *Naagin*, Arjun played Ritik. Later seasons of the show starred *Nia Sharma*, Vijayendra Kumeria, Jasmin Bhasin, Sharad Malhotra and Rashami Desai.

Mouni, who started her journey as an actor on television with shows such as *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and *Devon Ke Dev... Mahadev*, also said that she will no longer be a part of daily soaps. "I think it is very time-consuming and my health deteriorates," she said.

In 2018, Mouni made her Bollywood debut opposite Akshay Kumar in Reema Kagti's sports drama *Gold*. She has also starred in films such as *Romeo Akbar Walter* and *Made in China*. Currently, she is awaiting the release of Ayan Mukerji's supernatural drama *Brahmastra*, which also stars Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt and Amitabh Bachchan. She will play the antagonist in the film.

## YOUR STARS

### Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

Everything that's related to finances will have to be studied carefully; avoid money disputes and too important expenses. You might meet a person who'll deeply move you. Spend more time with your close ones, especially if you have children.

**Lucky Numbers:** 3, 4, 6, 12, 20, 30

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

A good week to finish a delicate job or to put an end to some bad habits. Avoid mingling questions of money with your current good relationships with your friends; never try to borrow money from them; also refuse to lend money.

**Lucky Numbers:** 1, 9, 12, 15, 23, 33

### Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You'll be very much inclined to getting excited and arguing with everybody; try to calm down. In your love life, you'll be less unyielding than usual; you'll even be ready to make concessions in order to preserve a harmonious climate.

**Lucky Numbers:** 5, 11, 20, 33, 36, 38

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

Beware of your current tendency to take your dreams for reality, which could lead to irresponsibility and dilettantism, hence to failures. The emotional climate will be sunny, and this will concern love as well as friendship.

**Lucky Numbers:** 15, 20, 23, 30, 35, 36

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

Your relationships with the other sex will be tinted with romanticism; very pleasant sentimental encounters in view. Think about getting rid of those relations that don't bring anything to you and that only make you waste your time and even your money.

**Lucky Numbers:** 14, 15, 20, 23, 36, 37

### Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

Marvellous understanding with the one whom you love or whom you're going to meet this time. You'll be inclined to indulge in food excesses, and your stomach is well likely to have to pay for it. It'll be the moment to manage your budget strictly.

**Lucky Numbers:** 5, 11, 14, 27, 33, 34

### Gemini: May 21 - June 20

This astral climate is very likely to be frustrating in the field of work; only take a minimum of engagements or appointments. Risk of past emotional pains awakening up; refuse tormenting yourself with the past, look at the future with confidence and optimism.

**Lucky Numbers:** 1, 3, 22, 33, 36, 38

### Cancer: June 21 - July 22

Put into practice the plans that you've laid down and try to act with as much coherence as possible. The steps you take to find a new lodging will meet with no difficulties; furthermore, the financial conditions will be advantageous.

**Lucky Numbers:** 11, 12, 17, 23, 26, 30

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Your love life will be in the limelight, and your relationships with your children will be warmer than usual. Take time to rest if you want to avoid fatigue, which could reduce the sharpness of your senses and lessen your morale.

**Lucky Numbers:** 4, 5, 18, 20, 21, 23

### Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

Some small fits of nervousness; try to control yourself, to be more diplomatic with others so as to avoid useless frictions. Good bargains are presently possible. Don't hesitate to fancy up your home, but without emptying out your bank account.

**Lucky Numbers:** 3, 9, 14, 15, 20, 30

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

You'll strongly assert yourself in your love life; if you're still single, you'll bravely take off to conquer hearts. It'll be the moment to work in double quick time: you'll have the opportunity of making considerable progress.

**Lucky Numbers:** 17, 20, 21, 24, 33, 36

### Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

Strokes of lucky will occur in many domains. You'll be entitled to real and whole satisfactions if you follow the path that you've traced for yourself. Be careful of your exaggerated reactions, which sometimes go counter to your interests.

**Lucky Numbers:** 10, 17, 20, 21, 30, 32

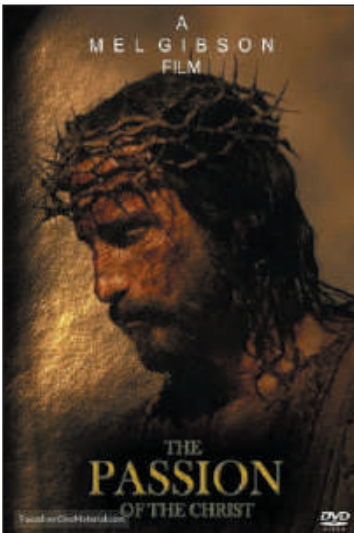




Vendredi 2 Avril - 21.15

## The Passion Of The Christ

Avec: Jim Caviezel, Maia Morgenstern, Monica Bellucci



Samedi 3 Avril - 21.15

## Sense And Sensibility

Stars: Emma Thompson, Kate Winslet, James Fleet



Dimanche 4 Avril - 21.15



vendredi 2 avril

### MBC 1

07.00 Dessin Anime  
10.35 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A...  
11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant  
12.00 Le Journal  
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir  
12.50 Mag: Urban Gardens  
13.55 Local: Generations J  
14.25 D.Anime: The Hive  
14.32 D.Anime: Au Galop En Toute...  
15.06 D.Anime: Kid Lucky  
15.19 D.Anime: The Twisted Whis...  
15.55 D.Anime: HTDT - Humpty...  
16.02 D.Anime: Groundhog Dave  
17.00 Serial: Mustangs FC  
17.30 Live - Covid-19  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Serial: Siya Ke Ram  
19.30 Journal & La Meteo  
20.20 Prod: Mauritius Dancing...  
21.10 Serial: When Calls The Heart  
23.00 Le Journal

### MBC 2

10.00 Serial: Ki Jaana Mein Kaun  
11.05 Serial: Zun Mureed  
12.04 Film: Shourya  
14.04 DDI Magazine  
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha  
15.21 Serial: Aamhi Doghi  
15.42 Serial: Mooga Manasulu  
16.07 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal  
16.30 Serial: Suno Chanda  
16.56 Serial: Achra Ke Moti  
17.09 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala  
17.30 Serial: Chhanchhan  
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone  
18.30 DDI Magazine  
19.00 Mag: Sur Measure  
19.30 DDI Magazine  
20.00 Serial: Band Khirkiyan  
20.44 Local: Anjuman  
21.10 Local: Urdu Programme - Noor-E-Iman

### MBC 3

06.00 Mag: Eco India  
06.26 Mag: Shift  
06.38 Mag: Carnet De Sante  
07.51 Doc: My Life With A Robot  
08.46 Doc: 360 GEO  
09.39 Doc: The Science Of Avalan...  
10.21 Doc: The Sound Of Freedom  
12.06 Mag: Border Crossing  
12.29 Mag: Le Saviez vous?  
12.32 Mag: Tomorrow Today  
14.01 Doc: 360 GEO  
14.46 Doc: The Science Of Avalan...  
15.28 Doc: The Sound Of Freedom  
16.14 Mag: Eco India  
16.40 Mag: Shift  
17.07 Mag: Border Crossing  
17.33 Mag: Tomorrow Today  
18.00 Doc: Mega Yachts  
20.05 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
20.30 Local: News (English)  
20.40 Doc: Wildlife Heroes

### Cine 12

01.21 Film: Barabbas  
03.31 Serial: The Good Doctor  
04.12 Film: Cup Of Love  
05.39 Tele: Muneca Brava  
06.21 Serial: 19-2  
07.03 Serial: Island Doctor  
09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire  
09.45 Tele: Daniella  
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor  
11.00 Serial: The Good Doctor  
12.00 Film: Cup Of Love  
13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava  
14.45 Serial: Island Doctor  
16.40 Serial: Chicago Fire  
17.20 Serial: 19-2  
18.05 Tele: Daneilla  
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor  
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir  
20.30 Serial: Killjoys  
21.15 Film: The Passion Of The Christ

### Bollywood TV

08.00 Film: Gayab  
12.05 / 19.54 - Sanjivani  
12.30 / 20.11 - Radha Krishna  
12.48 / 20.32 - Agniphera  
13.07 / 21.09 -  
Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
13.29 / 21.24 -  
Zindagi Ki Mehek  
13.49 / 21.46 - Naagin S3  
14.35 / 21.59 - Ikyawann  
14.51 / 22.25 -  
Yeh Hai Mohabbatein  
15.14 Film: Laila Majnu  
Starring: Avinash Tiwary, Tripti Dimri  
18.00 Live: Samacher  
18.30 Kundali Bhagya  
18.52 Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka  
19.11 Serial: Mere Angne Mein  
19.33 Serial: Siddhi Vinayak

samedi 3 avril

06.00 D.Anime: Dragons: Par-Delà  
07.12 D.Anime: Dee Dee The Little...  
08.19 D.Anime: The Minimighty...  
08.27 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies  
12.00 Le Journal  
12.30 Tele: Daniella  
14.35 D.Anime: The Hive  
15.00 D.Anime: The Garfield Show  
15.04 D.Anime: Sindbad And The...  
15.12 D.Anime: The Minimighty...  
15.15 D.Anime: Kid Lucky  
15.27 D.Anime: The Twisted Whis...  
15.40 Film: Valentina  
16.50 Serial: Nowhere Boys  
17.16 Local: Info En Langue Des...  
17.30 Live-Covid 19  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Entertainment: Dance  
19.30 Journal & La Meteo  
20.20 Local: RDV Muzikal  
21.10 Film: Beyond White Space  
23.00 Le Journal

07.00 Film: Aap Ke Saath  
Starring: Anil Kapoor, Vinod Mehra, Smita Patil  
09.05 Film: Elaan-E-Jung  
10.00 Bade Acchelagte Hai  
12.00 Serial: Nanda Saukhya Bhare  
12.22 Serial: Mooga Manasulu  
12.45 Serial: High School  
13.07 Annakodiyum Ainthus Pengalum  
13.30 Serial: Anu Pallavi  
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha  
15.20 Film: Aiyaary  
Starring: Sidharth Malhotra, Manoj Bajpayee, Rakul Preet Singh  
17.51 Mag: DDI Magazine  
18.59 Mag: Sur Measure  
19.59 Serial: Vikram Betaal Ki Rahasya Gatha  
20.29 Serial: Bitti Business  
21.00 Film: Mission Kashmir

06.00 Doc: Mega Yachts  
06.55 Mag: Global 3000  
07.21 Mag: Le Saviez Vous?  
07.28 Mag: Euromaxx  
07.54 Doc: Wildlife Heroes  
08.46 Doc: Portraits Of Marie...  
09.37 Doc: The Volcano That...  
10.20 Doc: Better Brain Health  
11.02 Doc: China's Gateway To...  
11.48 Mag: Arts And Culture  
12.33 Mag: Euromaxx  
12.59 Doc: Wildlife Heroes  
13.51 Doc: Portraits Of Marie Ant...  
14.43 Doc: The Volcano That...  
20.05 Mag: Check In  
20.30 Local: News (English)  
20.40 Doc: 360 GEO  
21.32 Doc: Destinations  
21.44 Doc: 80's Blockbusters  
22.35 Doc: Morocco??S Warrior...  
00.00 Doc: Amazing Gardens  
00.26 Doc: Sudan - A TV Show...

01.06 Film: The Passion Of The Christ  
03.06 Serial: Dynasty 2  
03.47 Film: Dead On Arrival  
05.24 Tele: Esmeraldas  
06.03 Serial: Killjoys  
06.50 Film: A Date With Miss Fort...  
08.35 Serial: Mike Hammer  
09.20 Serial: Shades Of Blue  
10.02 Serial: 12 Monkeys  
10.40 Film: I Think My Babysitter's  
12.15 Serial: Dynasty 2  
13.00 Serial: The Good Doctor  
15.05 Tele: Amanda  
15.48 Tele: Muneca Brava  
16.30 Mag: Hollywood On Set  
17.00 Serial: Killjoys  
17.45 Film: Coup De Foudre A La...  
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir  
20.30 Series: Killjoys  
21.15 Film: Sense And Sensibility  
23.16 Tele: Dulce Amor

04.05 Sanjivani  
04.26 Radha Krishna  
04.48 Agniphera  
05.09 Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
05.31 Zindagi Ki Mehek  
05.51 Ikyawann  
06.13 Bin Kuch Kahe  
06.41 Kundali Bhagya  
06.58 Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka  
07.18 Mere Angne Mein  
08.00 Zindagi Ki Mehek  
09.47 Motu Patlu  
10.20 Siddhi Vinayak  
12.00 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein  
14.00 Sanjivani  
16.00 Pavitra Rishta  
18.30 Film: Maine Dil Tujhko Diya  
Star: Sohail Khan, Sameera Reddy, Sanjay Dutt  
21.11 Serial: Siya Ke Ram  
21.56 Serial: Naagin

dimanche 4 avril

06.00 D.Anime: Dragons: Par-Delà...  
06.26 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis A...  
08.11 D.Anime: The Minimighty Kid  
09.30 Mag: Future Mag  
10.00 Local: Zafan Nou Zil  
10.35 Serial: Backstage  
12.00 Le Journal  
12.40 Tele: Daniella  
15.05 D.Anime: Au Galop En Toute...  
15.25 D.Anime: Kid Lucky  
15.35 D.Anime: The Twisted Whisk...  
17.00 Serial: Nowhere Boys  
17.30 Live-Covid 19  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Local: Yeh Shaam Mastani  
19.30 Le Journal  
20.10 Local: Groove'In - Kafé Kiltir  
21.15 Film: Stan & Ollie  
Stars: Steve Coogan, John C. Reilly, Shirley Henderson  
23.00 Le Journal

07.00 Film: Ek Raaz  
Starring: Kishore Kumar, Agha, Mumtaz Begum  
09.13 Serial: Vir: The Robot Boy  
10.00 Local: Shiv Mahapuran Ki...  
11.00 Serial: Oru Kai Osai  
11.22 Serial: Santoshi Maa  
12.00 Film: Mr Joe B. Carvalho  
Starring - Arshad Warsi, Soha Ali Khan, Javed Jaffrey, Vijay Raaz  
14.00 Mag: DDI Magazine  
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha  
15.20 Serial: Mooga Manasulu  
15.43 Eka Lagnachi Teesri Gosht  
16.06 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal  
17.00 Serial: Mahakali  
17.51 Serial: Kisna  
18.30 Local: Tipa Tipa Nu Avance  
19.30 DDI Magazine  
20.00 Serial: Mann Mein Vishwas..  
20.50 Serial: CID

06.00 Doc: Amazing Gardens  
06.26 Doc: Sudan - A TV Show...  
06.50 Doc: The World From Above  
07.42 Doc: 360 GEO  
08.37 Doc: Destination  
10.23 Doc: SOS Amazon  
11.08 Doc: Amazing Gardens  
11.34 Doc: Sudan - A TV Show...  
12.25 Mag: Check In  
14.49 Doc: Morocco??S Warrior...  
17.08 Doc: The World From Above  
18.00 Mag: Tendance XXI  
18.30 Doc: Ville En Fête  
20.05 Doc: Olivia's Garden  
20.40 Doc: Comme Une Envie De...  
21.43 Doc: Revolte Dans La Mode  
22.36 Doc: Deadly Greed  
23.18 Doc: Fly Rocket Fly  
00.01 Mag: Tendance XXI  
00.27 Doc: Ville En Fête  
00.52 Doc: Garden Party

01.06 Film: Sense And Sensibility  
03.07 Serial: Hawaai Five-0  
03.48 Film: Beyond White Space  
05.17 Tele: Esmeraldas  
05.59 Serial: Killjoys  
06.41 Film: Clarity  
08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer  
09.11 Film: Sense And Sensibility  
11.20 Film: Coup De Foudre A La...  
13.03 Serial: The Good Doctor  
15.05 Telenovela: Amanda  
15.45 Tele: Muneca Brava  
16.29 Mag: Close Up  
17.00 Serial: Killjoys  
17.45 Serial: Hawaii Five-0  
18.30 Serial: Macgyver  
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir  
20.30 Serial: The Good Doctor  
21.15 Film: Easter Under Wraps  
22.45 Tele: Dulce Amor

00.40 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein  
02.19 Sanjivani  
04.06 Pavitra Rishta  
05.33 Film: Maine Dil Tujhko Diya  
Starring: Sohail Khan, Sameera Reddy, Sanjay Dutt  
08.01 Motu Patlu  
08.11 Karn Sangini  
10.04 Jaana Na Dil Se Door  
12.00 Piya Albela  
14.17 Agniphera  
15.45 Bin Kuch Kahe  
17.37 Punar Vivaah  
18.00 Live: Samachar  
18.30 Film: Partner  
20.45 Entertainment: Dance  
21.33 Bade Acche Lagte Hai  
23.33 Piya Albela

## MBC 2

Samedi 3 Avril  
- 21.00Stars: Sanjay Dutt, Hrithik Roshan,  
Preity Zinta, Sonali KulkarniDimanche 4 Avril -  
18.30Stars: Salman Khan, Govinda, Lara  
Dutta



# The end of the pandemic is coming - just don't set a date for the party

*History tells us that the end of pandemics are rarely - if ever - neat, uncomplicated, or even easy to date*



Alfonso Fabio Iozzino/Alamy Stock Photo

“After the pandemic is over” must be one of the most frequently uttered phrases of 2021. I am certainly guilty of this kind of optimism, longing for the day when I can get on a plane, have dinner with my friends, and cuddle all the new babies I know who have been born under the restrictive eye of COVID-19.

In February, the UK government unveiled a four-step plan to ease England's lockdown restrictions by June 21. While the prime minister has cautioned that the country's path out of the pandemic will be driven by “data not dates”, his restraint has had little impact, it seems, on the population's excitement levels. Memes and social media posts immediately proliferated, with people booking flights, planning parties, and taking time off work in anticipation of future freedom.

Looking ahead to the end of the pandemic is not confined to the UK, and as the vaccine rollout proceeds (albeit unevenly), people across the world are turning their attention to celebration and relief. However, history tells us that the end of pandemics are rarely - if ever - neat, uncomplicated, or even easy to date.

## Past pandemics

The misleadingly named Spanish flu pandemic of 1918 was the deadliest in history. It infected around 500 million people worldwide and killed anywhere from 20 million to 50 million. Much like today, citizens were subjected to social restrictions and ordered to wear masks. The pandemic abated, but identifying its precise end is almost impossible.

In 1920, several newspapers reported the reappearance of influenza. Around 5,000 cases were reported in Chicago in the space of six days, and theatres were ordered to close. Later that year, “drastic measures” were implemented to check the spread of flu in New York City after an emergency meeting of the transportation

authorities, theatre and cinema owners, and the representatives of department stores. At around the same time, 60 people died from influenza in Paris.

Subsequent waves of the virus ripped through European and North American cities for years after the pandemic's supposed end. As late as 1925, and in the space of nine days, 201 people in Chicago died from what the newspapers called a “highly contagious influenza epidemic”. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that there is little evidence in the historical record of parties to commemorate the end of the terrible virus.

Today's coronavirus pandemic is, of course, different to the march of influenza around the globe in 1918 - not least because we have several highly effective vaccines. The jab is a powerful tool and so many people's hopes for COVID's end hang on this marvellous technology. However, while vaccines have played a crucial role in past efforts to control infectious disease, their ability to bring pandemics to a rapid and definitive close is much more limited.

Take polio, for example. A vaccine was developed for the disease in the 1950s. Its inventor Jonas Salk became an almost immediate American hero, but it took almost three decades for polio to be brought under control in Britain and there were no celebratory holidays marking the last naturally acquired infection in 1984.

## The end of fear

Historians of medicine know that pandemics and epidemics are social phenomena. As a result, their endings happen in two ways. There is the medical conclusion of a pandemic, when disease incidence goes down and death rates plummet. But there is also the social end, when fear of the infection decreases and social restrictions ease.

Crucially, you can have one without the other. The rates of coronavirus might go down, fewer people will be hospitalised and die, people's anxieties could ease, and life could return to normal - in that order. Or rates could stay the same, but people just get sick and tired of restrictions and launch themselves into the parties they had planned, regardless. Or rates could go down, but people remain fearful - anxious about returning to “normal life” and unable to let go of some of the precautions we have become accustomed to.

We also have to remember that coronavirus is a global disease and that different places will have varying social and medical conclusions to their respective versions of the pandemic.

## Uneven geography

HIV/AIDS swept through Europe and North America in the 1980s and 90s. Infection rates have since dropped dramatically, and many HIV-positive people live long and healthy lives in developing countries. And yet, as of 2019, almost 40 million people are infected with HIV worldwide and we are still experiencing what the World Health Organization

calls a “global epidemic”, it is just that the geographical scope of the disease has shifted.

As wealthier nations continue to vaccinate themselves out of restrictions, the ending of their pandemics might come relatively quickly. But what about the rest of the world? When will developing countries see a similar conclusion?

Wherever you look, there is unlikely to be a precise end date for the pandemic. We have only managed to successfully eradicate one disease (smallpox), and for every other epidemic or pandemic in history, their endings have been messy, protracted and uneven. While we all might need a dose of optimism, rather than planning parties or holidays, perhaps our time now would be better spent thinking about what kind of future we want to look forward to and how we put the lessons we have learned this past year into practice.

**Agnes Arnold-Forster**

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## COMMUNIQUÉ

Total Mauritius Ltd souhaite informer l'ensemble des opérateurs de la zone portuaire ainsi que le grand public qu'elle procédera à la réalisation de travaux sur l'un de ses réservoirs au sein de son dépôt de Tromelin. Cet exercice débutera aux alentours du 5 avril 2021 par une opération de vidange au cours de laquelle une flamme de faible taille pourra être visible. Ces travaux ont reçu l'approbation des autorités concernées et devraient durer au maximum un mois. Ils seront réalisés en présence de nos équipes techniques et selon les règles internationales en vigueur. Nous restons à votre disposition pour toute question que vous pourriez avoir au 2075600.





**Protecting lives, ensuring happiness**

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