

# MAURITIUS TIMES

• Strong health and disease surveillance systems halt epidemics that take lives, disrupt economies, and pose global health security threats. -- Tedros Adhanom

## Opposition vs Speaker Tussle



### "To resign would be stupid. The best option is to go to Court"

By Lex See Page 8-9

## Worse Than Epidemics



“As regards the endemic social evils, some of them have assumed the proportion of epidemics. Thus, in the US, the President and his administration are soon to take action to combat what has been called 'the gun violence public health epidemic.' Nearly 30,000 people every year fall victim to guns... In the US too, in addition to what President Obama, no less, had referred to as 'institutionalised racism, against the Blacks in particular, there are now attacks on Asians. Of late, Chinese-origin people have been particularly targeted, but Indians too have been attacked...”

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## Is the Government losing the plot?



Why restart economic activities so soon after the new outbreak of infection when new cases of infection continue to be detected every day?

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### How to stop psychopaths and narcissists from winning positions of power

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### Worldwide vaccination is a long way off

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# Parliamentary Supremacy?

Parliament is too important an institution in a representative democracy like ours for its functionings to be allowed to be sapped by any dysfunction whatsoever. Besides representing the electorate and making laws, its other function is to hold the government accountable for its decisions and scrutinise its functioning through debates on Bills or issues on the floor of Parliament, parliamentary questions set by the Opposition as well as MPs from the ruling party to ministers, and in parliamentary committees.

That is why rules have been made to ensure its proper and orderly functioning. It falls upon the Speaker 'to ensure that the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly are complied with', as is stated on the webpage of the National Assembly. Further, 'the Speaker interprets and enforces the Standing Orders and for the purpose of interpretation, recourse is often had to Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice, responds to Members' points of order and give rulings when necessary... One of the most important qualities of a Speaker is impartiality. He must be above party politics. Once elected to the Chair, he owes his loyalty to the dignity of Parliament.'

Much has been said and written these last few days about what is considered to be an abuse of his powers by the current Speaker with regard to the PQ of Hon Assirvaden about the status of the ambassadorship of Showkutally Soodhun in Saudi Arabia, his decision to remove the PQ from the Hansard, and the resulting protest by Opposition MPs, which led to the suspension of Hon Assirvaden himself from the sitting of Parliament, and his naming of Hon Arvin Boolell, Hon Paul Berenger and Hon Rajesh Bhagwan and their suspension from the current session of Parliament. This is viewed as clearly disproportionate to any fault that the Speaker would have considered them to have committed. The Opposition MPs are perfectly right to have decided not to tender "unreserved apologies" for them to regain their seats in the House – if only to preserve their own dignity and that of Parliament – which the Speaker as well is enjoined by the rules of the Assembly to ensure.

The latest showdown in Parliament involving the Speaker and the Opposition MPs is one too many in a long list of attempts by various institutions to shield the government from an inquisitive Opposition, which is fulfilling its duties as is expected by the electorate. Various options are being examined by the Opposition to challenge the Speaker's decision, the latest and most probable of which appears to be in the form of a judicial challenge.

This opportunity should not be lost if only to bring about some serenity in the governance of the country and the functioning of an important arm of the State. Questions have been raised as to whether the Supreme Court would be prepared to go beyond the usual deference to the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy and intervene in the internal workings of the Assembly. What is at stake is the protection of the Constitution, and our Supreme Court will surely take that into account.

From a national standpoint, the critical issue is that so many of our institutions do not seem to be functioning properly, that is there are lapses in their proceeding by established rules. It is the duty of parliamentarians to seek answers from the government on behalf of the public. If obstacles are put in their way in Parliament, how then is the public interest going to be served? Under the circumstances, if the only recourse of the representatives of the people is to the judiciary, we must pray that the latter – which we have always maintained is the bulwark of our democracy – finds some way to 'unlock' the situation in Parliament in spite of the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy.

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## The Conversation

# How to stop psychopaths and narcissists from winning positions of power

*Why companies (and political parties) should screen leadership candidates for psychopathy and narcissism*



Could personality profiling help companies find suitable leaders? Photo - pexels/fauxels

One of the human race's biggest problems has been that people who occupy positions of power are often incapable of using power in a responsible way. In the past, this was mostly due to hereditary systems which assigned power to kings and lords and others, who often didn't have the intellectual or moral capacity to use their power well. But in more recent times, it seems as though power attracts ruthless and narcissistic people with a severe lack of empathy and conscience.

In psychology, there is a concept of a "dark triad" of malevolent personality traits: psychopathy, narcissism and Machiavellianism. These traits are studied together because they almost always overlap and combine. If a person has psychopathic traits, then they tend to have narcissistic and Machiavellian traits too.

People with these personalities can't sense other people's feelings or see the world from any perspective apart from their own. They don't have a sense of conscience or guilt to stop them behaving immorally. They feel superior and enjoy manipulating and controlling other people. At the same time, they need to feel respected and admired and like to be the centre of attention.

There's a great deal of evidence that people with dark triad personalities are

attracted to the corporate and political worlds. Research, for example, shows that people with narcissistic and psychopathic traits have a strong desire for dominance and are disproportionately common in leadership positions.

As the psychologists Niklas Steffens and Alexander Haslam put it, "like moths to a flame, narcissists may be drawn naturally to positions of power and influence". Or as the psychologist Robert Hare writes of psychopaths, they "are social predators and like all predators they are looking for feeding grounds. Wherever you get power, prestige and money, you will find them".

The most evil leaders of the 20th-century, such as Stalin, Hitler, Mao Zedong, Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein and Colonel Gaddafi, clearly had severe dark triad traits. They didn't become leaders because of their ability or intelligence, but simply because they had a tremendous desire for power and were incredibly ruthless and cruel in their pursuit of it.

### Steve Taylor

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

# Worse Than Epidemics

*There are also other ills that cause worse damage to societies, because they are endemic. One has come much to the fore to complicate matters in this ongoing Covid pandemic is the infodemic*

**T**he Covid-19 pandemic is polarizing the world's attention so overwhelmingly that we may be forgiven to overlook the other maladies that are even worse in many respects. It is true that this is a pandemic as has never been seen before, in terms of its extreme and acute health, social and economic impacts. The latter two result from the sanitary measures that have had to be imposed and that have changed the nature of work, what with the restriction of people-to-people contact being a major requirement to prevent spread. Epidemics and pandemics create a more marked impression because they are rapid killers that throw the health and medical services out of gear.

But it is also a fact that epidemics and pandemics are relatively short-lived, and that because they are infectious diseases, they are amenable to control by vaccines which modern science and technology can develop much more rapidly than before – as happened with the AH1N1 pandemic, and is also true for the current one. Besides, vaccine rollout can also be speeded up, though there are hiccups.

But there are also other ills that cause worse damage to societies, because they are endemic rather than episodic like epidemics and pandemics. Endemic means natural to, native to, confined to, or widespread within a place or population of people. This term can apply to both medical and social conditions, and since they are present all the time, they have the potential to cause immense damage across wide swathes of the population of a country.

This is what the silent killer diseases grouped under the umbrella term 'Non-communicable diseases' (NCDs) are doing. Cancer, heart and respiratory diseases, diabetes are responsible for the deaths of millions across the world every year. To this we must add the communicable ones like malaria, TB, HIV-AIDS and others that are equally devastating.

When we turn to the social problems that are present, we find that their impacts are no less calamitous.

One has come much to the fore to complicate matters in this ongoing Covid pandemic. It is the infodemic, defined as 'an overabundance of information — some accurate and some not — that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it.' It is both a tsunami of incorrect information and of false rumors, stigma, and conspiracy theories — what could be described as 'infauxdemic'. When present during public health emergencies, such as the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2019, it can be 'linked to violence, mistrust, social disturbances, and targeted attacks on healthcare providers.' Similarly, 'during the SARS outbreak in China in 2002-2003, fear and anxiety about contracting the disease caused social stigma against Asian people. Stigmatized persons may delay seeking medical care, potentially remaining undetected, but contributing to the expansion of the epidemic via community transmission.'



**“There are also other ills that cause worse damage to societies, because they are endemic rather than episodic like epidemics and pandemics. Endemic means natural to, native to, confined to, or widespread within a place or population of people. One has come much to the fore to complicate matters in this ongoing Covid pandemic. It is the infodemic, defined as ‘an overabundance of information — some accurate and some not — that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it.’ It is both a tsunami of incorrect information and of false rumors, stigma, and conspiracy theories ...”**

As it is, 'public health emergencies are stressful times for people and communities'. Over and above managing them, there is now the added burden of having to dispel the 'infauxdemic'. So much so that it has now to be considered as an emerging threat 'to pandemic preparedness and control, and, therefore...' needing 'systematic monitoring and control measures.'

As regards the endemic social evils, some of them have assumed the proportion of epidemics. Thus, in the

US, the President and his administration are soon to take action to combat what has been called 'the gun violence public health epidemic.' Nearly 30,000 people every year fall victim to guns, either by the police or in incidents of mass shooting that are almost commonplace out there.

In the US too, in addition to what President Obama, no less, had referred to as 'institutionalised racism, against the Blacks in particular, there are now attacks on Asians. Of late, Chinese-origin people have been particularly targeted, but Indians too have been attacked. With the rise and spread of 'white supremacy', it is to be expected that such racism may spread, unless control measures and social attitudes help in curbing it.

Each country has its brand of endemic malfunction, other types cut across the world. In the UK, 'grooming gangs' that have trapped young white and Sikh girls by the hundreds into sexual slavery and violence have been active for decades. It is only a few years ago that the culprits — and that too *some* only — were made to face justice, and convicted. Only a few days ago the British media reported on one of the leaders who had been released from prison and found to be shopping with his family in the very region where he had carried out his predatory activities, whereas he was supposed to have been deported to his country of origin.

Sexual harassment and violence against women and even underage girls are to be found in all countries, and have been highlighted during the #MeToo movement, involving high profile personalities whom one would never have thought capable of such infamy, exploiting their victims from their positions of power, whereas they were expected to be the protectors.

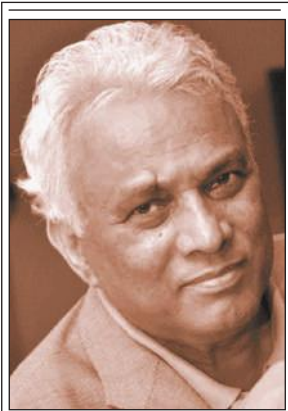
The drug endemic-epidemic is only too well known for the ravages that it is responsible for, destroying young lives and the respective families. Synthetic

drug abuse has assumed alarming proportions in our own country, and we are still awaiting the concrete follow-up of the recommendations of the Lam Shang Leen Report.

These other 'endemic-epidemics' are ongoing and both demoralizing and devastating. When Covid-19 is over, they will need the amount of attention that it is receiving. But nothing prevents us from intensifying our efforts to simultaneously combat them.

# Is the Government losing the plot?

*Why restart economic activities so soon after the new outbreak of infection when new cases of infection continue to be detected every day?*



Mrinal Roy

The country is currently in the throes of a new surge of Covid-19 infection since 5 March amid patent evidence that the virus has spread through the movement of infected persons from the initial clusters of infection to far-flung localities across the country such as Dagotiere, Canot, Dubrueil, Souillac, Chamouny, Chamarel and Highlands etc.

Despite the small size of the country of 1,864 km<sup>2</sup>, the government, presumably emulating policies introduced in large countries like France, Germany or Australia where whole states, districts and provinces have been declared red zones, has ring fenced the hotspots of infection in the country from the rest of the country and fastidiously classified them as red zones. This demands a cumbersome micro-management of zones and villages scattered over the country.

Against such a backdrop and despite the fact that contact tracing exercises continue to track down new cases of Covid-19 infection and evidence that the chain of infection is yet to be contained and broken, government has disconcertingly decided, that barring areas declared red zones, to allow a wide range of economic sectors to restart their activities in the rest of the country.

## Risky gamble

This controversial decision begs so many legitimate questions. Why restart economic activities so soon after the new outbreak of infection when new cases of infection continue to be detected every day amid galling evidence that some people are still not wearing masks nor abiding by sanitary and social distancing rules in place? What is the rationale of such a hasty decision? What is the reason for such a risky gamble? Has government caved in to pressures from the private sector? Are the authorities losing the plot?

Would it not instead have been more prudent and judicious in the context of the prevailing Covid-19 situation in the country to maintain a full lockdown with strict confinement, sanitary and social distancing rules till the end of April to enable the country to first contain and break the chain of Covid-19 infection in the country before restarting the economy? In a small country like Mauritius, shouldn't the priority be to first make the country Covid safe again? What if the infection rate rises instead of petering out?

More than 471,000 Work Access Permits (WAP) including presumably self-employed persons compared to some 469,000 employees in the country, have thus been issued by government in the first week of the opening up of the economy. Additional WAP applications continue to be processed. The WAP permits enable the permit holder to travel from his

home to his place of work. It is therefore vital that all WAP holders strictly abide by sanitary and social distancing rules and wear their masks as the virus is still very much present in the country.

The history of the world's battle against the Covid-19 pandemic over the past year is littered with evidence from a plethora of countries across the world such as France, the US, the UK, Italy, Spain, Germany or Brazil that hasty decisions to restart economic activities too soon have backfired. Rushing into rebooting economic activities when the spread of the virus is not robustly contained has invariably triggered a second and third wave of infection, a rising death toll, overwhelmed health services and forced countries to impose new lockdowns and strict confinement rules.

## Grim statistics

After more than a year of battling against the pandemic, the statistics are still grim as fuelled by new strains of the virus, the new waves of Coronavirus infection seem more potent.

Coronavirus infection figures released by health authorities across South America this week show a number of countries grappling with a spike in infections and deaths. Uruguay and Paraguay registered record numbers of daily deaths. Brazil with more than 13 million Covid-19 cases is the second most affected country in the world after the United States. Its daily Covid-19 death toll has soared past 3000 for the first time this week.

In January, the US recorded more than 4000 deaths in one day for the first time. In France, the number of Covid-19 patients in the country's intensive care units might soon attain the peak reached last year. Britain with almost 127,000 coronavirus deaths has the highest death toll in Europe. Poland is struggling to cope with a record number of new infections. Hungary now has one of the highest Covid mortality rates in the world. The second wave of coronavirus infection in Ukraine is deadlier than the first with some 400 deaths registered every day.

These statistics show that despite all the world's efforts to fight the pandemic, the situation remains daunting. This is therefore not the time to drop our guard or be complacent. Covid-19 vaccines represent a game changer in this indecisive battle. The onus is thus squarely on the world countries to act collectively and take every action necessary to boost Covid-19 vaccine production and assure that all countries have access to vaccines in a timely manner so that

they can all speedily vaccinate their population to attain herd immunity as quickly as possible. The world needs to act as one. It needs to act now.

## Important lessons

Many important lessons have been learnt from the grueling battle of countries across the world against the Covid-19 pandemic over more than a year. This is an unprecedented crisis which has brought the world on its knees. We therefore need to remain mobilized and take every precaution necessary to protect ourselves against the risk of infection while the Covid-19 vaccine rollout reaches the level required for herd immunity as it will take time to overcome the pandemic. Covid-19 threatens the gregariousness, conviviality, existential values and the very essence of our lives. The world therefore needs to unite and adopt a concerted strategy to fight and win the biggest and most difficult battle faced by humanity.

Saving the lives of people must take priority over saving the economy. The world must therefore take all actions and measures necessary to protect ourselves against the risk of infection and robustly contain and halt the spread of the virus. In parallel every country must obtain its vaccine requirements and accelerate its Covid-19 vaccination drive.

It is a shame that despite the fact that 35 dialysis patients have been infected by Covid-19, only 60% of the 13,000 medical staff manning the various health services in the country have so far opted to be vaccinated. It is expected that an international Covid-19 vaccination certificate will be a mandatory document for international travel once borders and travel are opened when the vaccination drive attains the objective of herd immunity. Vaccination will also be an essential requirement for the hotel, airport and port staff as well as operators of the tourism sector and hospitality industry. By the same token, it is essential that all hospital staff be urgently vaccinated against Covid-19 in order to safely assume their professional duties and protect themselves, their patients and their families.

## Unity of purpose

The battle against Covid-19 will be a long drawn one. Solidarity and unity of purpose should be the driving leitmotiv of all mankind at this momentous juncture. This is not therefore the time for rash initiatives but concerted strategy by the caucus of nations to efficiently and swiftly vaccinate one and all while taking every precaution necessary to protect ourselves against every risk of coronavirus infection.



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# Worldwide vaccination is a long way off



Anil Madan

It was inevitable that a chorus of pleas for more equitable distribution of vaccines would lead to a crescendo of exhortations that the US must take the lead in ensuring that this happens. Strangely, even though Russia (Sputnik) and China (Sinovac) have developed their own vaccines, there are no great numbers of outstretched arms looking to those nations to be the world's saviour. The most notable recent plea is from Darren Walker, president of

the Ford Foundation who, in a *Washington Post* op-ed piece declared that the solution is for the US to "dip into its vast reserves and vaccinate the world — mobilizing the resources of the US military and other agencies to manufacture, ship and distribute doses around the world." It is not clear if the "vast reserves" refers to vaccines already ordered and purchased by the US, but in context, he seems to be referring to the ability of the US to manufacture enough vaccines to inoculate the world in short order.

Respectfully, this is a pipe dream. Manufacturing vaccines is not simply a matter of deploying soldiers to perform a task. It is a highly technology and control intensive proposition with the need for specialized equipment and sophisticated process controls. In addition, a vaccine production facility requires vast quantities of raw materials and supplies, not readily available around the world. Even with necessary equipment, raw materials and trained personnel in place, things can go wrong. In fact, recently Johnson & Johnson had to discard millions of doses of its vaccine due to a manufacturing error by a contractor.

It is a well-known fact that rich Western countries such as the UK, Canada, and the US have pre-ordered millions of doses of the Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. Whereas this situation has in one respect led to the laments about lack of equity, there is little that is surprising here. The simple fact is that the vaccines mentioned were produced with American, British, Canadian and European support, financing, and risk-taking when it came time to place orders. Those countries, in order to protect their citizens, hedged their bets by spending billions of dollars well before any of the vaccines were proven or approved. It would be extremely risky for any politician to be seen as failing to put his or her countrymen's health concerns as a priority over exporting vaccines to other countries. We have seen how vaccine nationalization is playing out in the EU countries which fell short in placing early orders for vaccines and have now reacted by trying to impose export controls on vaccines.

Regardless of how many vaccines have been ordered by any country or group of countries, the practical reality is that the world's vaccine producers cannot produce more than 2 or 3 billion doses per year. Even if Johnson and Johnson could produce one billion doses a year, that means 2 billion people could be fully vaccinated in one year, i.e. 1 billion doses of J&J and 2 billion doses of a two-shot Moderna or Pfizer vaccine. Given that the world's population is approximately 7.7 billion, there is no chance of getting everyone vaccinated much before 2023 or 2024. Indeed, 2025 or 2026 may be a more realistic projection.

For a while, it appeared that the US would have a significant surplus of vaccines that it could share with the



Coronavirus expected to last long-term despite global vaccine rollout. Photo - images.news18.com/ibnlive

**“Regardless of how many vaccines have been ordered by any country or group of countries, the practical reality is that the world's vaccine producers cannot produce more than 2 or 3 billion doses per year. Even if Johnson and Johnson could produce one billion doses a year, that means 2 billion people could be fully vaccinated in one year, i.e. 1 billion doses of J&J and 2 billion doses of a two-shot Moderna or Pfizer vaccine. Given that the world's population is approximately 7.7 billion, there is no chance of getting everyone vaccinated much before 2023 or 2024...”**

world. And President Biden did promise that he would indeed share with the world after domestic needs were fulfilled. Unfortunately, recent developments suggest that things are not that simple.

Preliminary reports suggested that the US, had pre-ordered 300 million doses of each of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, 100 million of the Johnson & Johnson single shot vaccine which was then augmented to 200 million doses, 300 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine, 100 million doses from Novovax, and 100 million from Sanofi.

The latter three are not yet approved in the US. The AstraZeneca vaccine is unlikely to get emergency use authorization given the reports of blood clotting incidents and restrictions in Germany and other EU countries on administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine. It is unlikely, therefore, that until these problems are resolved, the US, could safely and credibly export such vaccines to other countries while not having approved their use within the US. And, of course, since the Serum Institute of India was on tap to manufacture billions of doses of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, until the issue of blood clotting is cleared up, its production cannot be counted upon to meet the world's needs.

Recent studies have suggested that the Pfizer vaccine is effective in children under the age of 16. At the same time, cases among those aged 12-17 have been surging in the US. This means, the focus will shift to inoculating those in that age group.

There is also the concern that variants of the virus may require that vaccines be tweaked and that booster shots be given even to those who have received both shots of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines. Both of those companies stand to profit immensely if booster doses are required in

the US and, indeed, from making the Covid vaccine an annual ritual. Even if existing surpluses of vaccines could be made available for distribution to other countries, domestic needs in the US, Britain, Canada, Australia, Japan, and the EU will constrain availability elsewhere in the world. The available surplus from the US may be only 170 million doses (300 million Pfizer shots, 300 million Moderna shots and 200 million J&J shots = 500 million fully vaccinated). Even if these are all J&J doses so that 170 million people could be vaccinated effectively, this is a drop in the ocean when it comes to worldwide demand.

And, of course, one has to deal with the problem of how equity is determined. It has been suggested, quite rightly, that frontline healthcare workers around the world be first in line. One can expect, however, that as happened in the US, the politicians and those in power will put themselves first in line.

As of now, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are manufactured in the US, and in Europe. Given the ultra-cold storage temperatures required for these vaccines, export to warmer climes in Africa and Asia presents logistical and technical challenges that make distribution of vaccines immensely difficult.

Sadly, even if the US military could become a major manufacturer as the president of the Ford Foundation suggests, this is not necessarily going to solve the world's problems. Finding a way to make the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine safe is much more likely to put India's vast production resources into the pipeline.

In the meantime, most of the world will simply have to wait until supply catches up to demand.

Cheerz...  
Bwana

# Hyundai says its new electric car can power devices, cook dinner

Hyundai in the next few months is set to start sales of the Ioniq 5, its first EV built on a dedicated platform called the Electric-Global Modular Platform, or E-GMP. The flattened chassis allows the automaker to create more spacious interiors, another drawcard to entice drivers to switch from convention gasoline-powered vehicles.

"This year will be the start of a new era for Hyundai and Kia as its full EVs go on sale," said Lee Jae-il, an analyst at Eugene Investment & Securities Co. in Seoul. "Hyundai has come a long way from being one of the latecomers to the EV market to offering a very competitive product with the Ioniq 5."

In a series of promotional videos on YouTube, a camper is shown running on a treadmill hooked up to the car's battery, listening to their favorite tunes on a bank of speakers, and even rustling up a roast-chicken dinner in a portable oven. The car can supply up to 3.6 kilowatts of power, enough to run appliances like refrigerators and stoves.

It's part of a push by Hyundai to appeal to a younger audience as it plays catch-up in the EV market. The South Korean automaker is behind EV pioneers such as Tesla Inc. and established brands like Volkswagen AG and BMW AG, only intro-



Hyundai's Ioniq 5 EV at the media preview in Seoul last month. Photo - img.republicworld.com

ducing its electric car in 2016, reports Bloomberg.

"We looked at the wider meaning of space that would include outdoor and daily activities that consumers can do with their cars," Heung Soo Kim, a senior vice president and head of product and EV businesses, said in an interview last month. "We are constantly looking into new features that will appeal to users."

Hyundai says it's the first major electric-car maker to offer bi-directional

charging, which means owners can power electronic devices from the car battery. While conventional car batteries can be used to charge laptops and phones, they drain quickly if hooked up to anything more powerful, like a portable fridge or sound system, meaning serious campers need to install a dual-battery system or lug around heavy, noisy generators to power their home comforts.

The Ioniq 5 also comes with the option to install a solar-panel roof that will charge the battery pack, giving the vehicle

additional driving range of about 1,300 kilometers annually.

U.S.-based EV start-up Rivian Automotive Inc. is also looking to attract buyers who love the great outdoors, but with some creature comforts. It has developed a slide-out camp kitchen for its Sedona SUV complete with an induction cooktop powered by the car battery.

The Ioniq 5 will start at 52 million won (\$46,000) before subsidies, according to Hyundai's website. The smaller Kona EV starts at 49 million won before subsidies, and its Palisade SUV starts at 36.4 million won.

Hyundai shares rose 0.4% in early Seoul trading Wednesday. They have risen 20% this year, making them one of the best-performing auto stocks behind the likes of VW, General Motors Co. and Ford Motor Co.

Another features Hyundai says sets it apart from rivals is its charging speed. The platform enables EVs to charge up to 80% capacity from 10% in 18 minutes and add as much as 100 kilometers of driving range in just 5 minutes. They'll have a top range of 500 kilometers on a single charge. It will also charge at 800 volts and 400 volts, allowing owners to access more charging infrastructure, Kim said.

## Hackers "scraped" data of half-billion users in 2019 leak: Facebook



The stolen data did not include passwords or financial data, according to Facebook. Photo - azvision.az

Facebook said Tuesday that hackers "scraped" personal data of some half-billion users back in 2019 by taking advantage of a feature designed to help people easily find friends using contact lists.

A trove of information about more than 530 million Facebook users was shared over the weekend at a hacker forum, prompting the leading social network to explain what happened and call on people to be vigilant about privacy settings.

"It is important to understand that malicious actors obtained this data not through hacking our systems but by scraping it from our platform prior to September 2019," Facebook product management director Mike Clark said in a post.

"This is another example of the ongoing, adversarial relationship technology companies have with fraudsters who intentionally break

platform policies to scrape internet services."

The data included phone numbers, birth dates, and email addresses, and some of the data appeared to be current, reports Agence France-Presse.

The stolen data did not include passwords or financial data, according to Facebook.

Scraping is a tactic that involves using automated software to gather up information shared publicly online.

"All 533,000,000 Facebook records were just leaked for free," Alon Gal, chief technology officer at the Hudson Rock cybercrime intelligence firm, said Saturday on Twitter.

He denounced what he called the "absolute negligence" of Facebook.

"Bad actors will certainly use the information for social engineering, scamming, hacking and marketing," Gal said on Twitter.

This is not the first time leaks or use of data from the world's largest social network -- with nearly two billion users -- has embroiled Facebook in controversy.

In 2016, a scandal around Cambridge Analytica, a British consulting firm that used the personal data of millions of Facebook users to target political ads, cast a shadow over the social network and its handling of private information.

## India's Serum Institute asks government for \$403 million to boost AstraZeneca vaccine output



A health official draws a dose of the AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India, at Infectious Diseases Hospital in Colombo. Photo - media.nature.com

The Serum Institute of India, the world's biggest vaccine manufacturer, has asked the government for a grant of 30 billion rupees to increase its capacity to make AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine.

It is seeking the money to ramp up monthly production to more than 100 million doses by the end of May, the government said in a statement on Wednesday, noting output was currently around 65-70 million

doses a month.

The company is making vaccine doses for dozens of mainly poorer countries, though it has supplied Britain, Canada and Saudi Arabia due to AstraZeneca production issues elsewhere, reports Reuters.

About 90% of the 86 million doses India has administered since mid-January have come from the institute, with the rest

accounted for by a domestic vaccine developed by Bharat Biotech, which is also struggling to boost output.

Some Indian states have complained of a vaccine shortage even though immunisations are currently limited to front-line workers and people aged over 45, or 400 million of India's 1.35 billion people.

\* Contd on page 7

## Mukesh Ambani India's richest in Forbes list, Gautam Adani 2nd



Mukesh Ambani reclaimed the top spot in the Forbes list of India's 10 richest billionaires. Photo - static.theceomagazine.net

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani reclaimed the top spot in the Forbes list of India's 10 richest billionaires with a net worth of 84.5 billion dollars.

Mr Ambani was followed by Adani Group chief Gautam Adani and HCL founder Shiv Nadar.

Put together, the three richest Indians add over 100 billion dollars, as per Forbes. Forbes also said that the total number of Indian billionaires rose to 140 this year from 102 last year and their combined wealth nearly doubled to 596 billion dollars, reports ANI.

Mukesh Ambani, who is also Asia's richest person, diversified his oil and gas empire and dived into sectors such as telecom and retail, which resulted in him retaining the top position.

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, Mr Ambani accomplished a fund-raising feat, garnering 35 billion dollars through a string of deals to achieve his target of reducing his flagship Reliance Industries' net debt to zero by 2021.

Gautam Adani, an infrastructure tycoon, got 42 billion dollars richer as shares of his companies Adani Enterprises and Adani Green Energy soared. Mr Adani unseated Radhakishan Dhamani who was previously the second-richest Indian. Forbes said that Mr Adani's wealth increased five-fold since 2020.

Mr Adani acquired a 74 per cent stake in Mumbai International Airport, the country's second-busiest, last September. He also sold 20 per cent in his listed renewables firm, Mr Adani Green Energy, to French energy giant Total for 2.5 billion dollars.

In the top ten richest Indians' list, two Indians featured who earned their spot owing to investments in the health-care sector which has witnessed a boost owing to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.

These two are: Cyrus Poonawalla of the Serum Institute of India (SII) and Sun Pharmaceutical Industries' Dilip Shanghavi.

## Russia is testing a nuclear torpedo in the Arctic that has the power to trigger radioactive tsunamis

Russia is reportedly planning to deploy a nuclear-powered missile to the Arctic next summer which is designed to detonate off the coastlines of enemy countries, as the country amasses a growing presence in the region, CNN reports.

Satellite images this week provided to CNN by Maxar, a satellite company, indicate that is Russia testing new weapons in the region and building significant military infrastructure there, which is increasingly free of ice due to climate change.

CNN reported that Russia will deploy the Poseidon 2M39 missile to its Arctic region next summer, which has been referred to in reports as a "doomsday" device due to its devastating power, reports Business Insider.

The device, images of which first surfaced on Russian state television in 2015, is an underwater nuclear torpedo that is designed to hit the ocean floor, kicking up a radioactive tsunami that could spread deadly radiation over thousands of miles of land, rendering it uninhabitable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin requested an update on a "key stage" of the tests in February from his defense minister and further tests are expected later this year, the Times of London newspaper reported.



Doomsday nuke sent for testing in Arctic. Photo - cdn.newsapi.com.au

Russia and NATO countries with a presence in the Arctic region have both been increasing their activity there in recent years as rising sea temperatures make it more accessible, Insider's Christopher Woody reported.

Russia has the world's longest Arctic coastline and derives around a quarter of its GDP from the region, and the Northern Sea Route is a valuable shipping corridor for Moscow.

The Pentagon on Monday said it was watching reports of Russian military activities and infrastructure build-ups in the Arctic "very closely."

## Are some Covid-19 vaccines more effective than others?



A health worker gets a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccine at a Covid-19 vaccination center. Photo - images.news18.com

It's hard to tell since they weren't directly compared in studies. But experts say the vaccines are alike on what matters most: preventing hospitalisations and deaths.

"Luckily, all these vaccines look like they're protecting us from severe disease," said Dr. Monica Gandhi of the University of California, San Francisco, citing study results for five vaccines used around the world and a sixth that's still in review, reports PTI.

And real-world evidence as millions of people receive the vaccines show they're all working very well.

Still, people might wonder if one is better than another since studies conducted before the vaccines were rolled out found varying levels of effectiveness. The problem is they don't offer apples-to-apples comparisons.

Consider the two-dose vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna, found to be about 95 per cent effective at preventing illness. Studies for those shots counted a Covid-19 case whether it was mild, moderate or severe - and were conducted before worrisome mutated versions of the virus began circulating.

Then Johnson & Johnson tested a single-dose vaccine and didn't count

mild illnesses. J&J's shot was 66 per cent protective against moderate to severe illness in a large international study. In just the US, where there's less spread of variants, it was 72 per cent effective. More importantly, once the vaccine's effect kicked in it prevented hospitalisation and death.

AstraZeneca's two-dose vaccine used in many countries has faced questions about the exact degree of its effectiveness indicated by studies. But experts agree those shots, too, protect against the worst outcomes.

Around the world, hospitalizations are dropping in countries where vaccines have been rolling out including Israel, England and Scotland - regardless of which shots are given. And the US government's first look at real-world data among essential workers provided further evidence that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are highly protective -- 90 per cent -- against infections whether there were symptoms or not.

## AstraZeneca vaccine clot risk 'very rare', says EU regulator

The EU's medicines regulator said Wednesday that blood clots should be listed as a rare side effect of the AstraZeneca jab but the benefits continue to outweigh risks, as several countries battle fresh virus surges amid vaccine shortfalls.

A number of nations have suspended the use of AstraZeneca's vaccine for younger populations after it was earlier banned outright in several places over blood clot scares.

The United Kingdom on Wednesday said it will adopt new medical advice to offer most people under 30 an alternative to AstraZeneca if possible, after reporting 19 deaths from clots among people who received the shot, reports AFP.

The debate comes as countries from Germany to Ukraine and India face new waves of the virus that has now killed more than 2.8 million people.

Governments are scrambling to secure much-needed vaccine doses, with

Australia the latest nation to complain of shortages that it blamed on EU export controls.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) said Wednesday that blood clots should be listed as a "very rare" side effect, encouraging countries to continue its use.

The announcement came after the EMA examined 86 blood clotting cases, 18 of which were fatal, out of around 25 million people in Europe who received the

AstraZeneca vaccine. Most of the cases were in women aged under 60.

But EMA chief Emer Cooke said no particular risk factor had been identified and the clots may be linked to an immune response to the vaccine.

"The benefits of the AstraZeneca vaccine in preventing Covid-19 overall outweigh the risk of side effects," she told a news conference. "It is saving lives."

## Opposition vs Speaker Tussle

# “To resign would be stupid. The best option is to go to Court”

**W**hat are the options available to the Opposition MPs, namely the Labour Party's Arvin Boolell, Paul Berenger and Rajesh Bhagwan of the MMM, named by the Speaker and subsequently suspended for the present session of Parliament on a motion tabled by the Prime Minister, to regain their seats in the House and exercise their constitutional right of representation in Parliament? Tender "unreserved apologies" to the House, or provoke by-elections with a view to seeking a popular vote to censure the Speaker, or take up the matter to the Supreme Court? It would seem that the third and last option is being seriously considered by the three MPs in the hope that the Supreme Court would intervene in this matter with a view to protecting the Constitution rather than shy away on the premise of "parliamentary supremacy". LEX addresses the implications of these options in the Qs & As that follow. Read on:

### LEX

\* Under the heading 'The Speaker' posted on the National Assembly webpage, we are informed as follows: "One of the most important qualities of a Speaker is impartiality. He must be above party politics. Once elected to the Chair, he owes his loyalty to the dignity of Parliament." Should that be a tall order for a political nominee?

Whether a Speaker belongs to a political party or not, whether he has any political views or affinity, he must discard all political considerations and strive to discharge his duties impartially once he takes the chair as Speaker. He personifies the dignity of Parliament and he must act accordingly.

\* **Should the post of Speaker be better left to a lawyer by training, or does the responsibility that this post carries require more than a training in law?**

It has been said that it is parliamentary rather than legal experience which is the first requirement of a Speaker.

“Whether a Speaker belongs to a political party or not, whether he has any political views or affinity, he must discard all political considerations and strive to discharge his duties impartially once he takes the chair as Speaker. He personifies the dignity of Parliament and must act accordingly...”



That does not mean that somebody with no parliamentary experience cannot occupy the post of Speaker. What is important is that he should act impartially and treat members of the government as well as the opposition in the same manner and without any bias.

\* **The ongoing 'malaise' inside the National Assembly is attributed to the manner in which the Speaker conducts the proceedings of the Assembly. Isn't that unfair given that the Speaker might be going by the book?**

The Speaker exercises his power according to the Standing Orders that confer on him wide powers to give rulings which can virtually never be challenged at a sitting of the Assembly. Whenever a Member wants to raise a point of order, he is told to shut up literally or is threatened by the sanction of being expelled or named.

One may wonder whether this doesn't amount to a stifling of the opposition so that the government can have its way. It is as if we are living in a one-party state although we boast of having a parliamentary democracy at work here.

One may go by the book, but parliamentary practices that have evolved over the centuries and are embodied in the 'bible' of parliamentarians - Erskine May -, are also pertinent in deciding on procedures and rulings in the Westminster model of parliament.

For all we know, the Speaker may name all members of the Opposition followed by a suspension for the remainder of the session of Parliament. Parliament would thus function without an opposition, but will that be constitutional?

\* **Standing Order (21) 4. states as follows: "When a question has been refused or amended, and the Member concerned wishes to make representations to the Speaker on the matter, these must be made pri-**

“To resign would be stupid; it would be playing in the hands of the government and the Speaker. The best option is to go to Court and argue that the decision to name the three parliamentarians had been made on the flimsiest of reasons and that an indefinite suspension is simply undemocratic...”

vately to the Speaker and not raised by way of a point of order in the Assembly." That's the rule. How could the Speaker have been wrong when his decision to remove Hon Assirvaden's question was contested by the latter in the Assembly?

The power to disallow a question is contained in Standing Order 27 which reads:

*The Speaker shall decide whether a question is or is not admissible under these Orders and may disallow any question when, in his or her opinion, it is an abuse of the right of questioning or calculated to obstruct or affect prejudicially the proceedings of the Assembly and shall disallow any question if it infringes any of these Orders.*

It must be shown that the question amounts to an abuse of the right of questioning or calculated to obstruct or affect prejudicially the proceedings of the Assembly. No Speaker cannot just disallow a question just to please the powers that be. The exercise of such a power must be done judiciously -- not arbitrarily.

If Hon Assirvaden was told in private that his question would not be allowed, then he was not justified to raise the issue on a point of order. However, a Member may feel that the disallowance is simply not justified. What was Hon Assirvaden asking? Whether an ambassador of Mauritius was declared persona non grata in an Arab State?

☛ Cont. on page 9



# 'Standing Orders cannot be used to trample on democratic principles like frustrating a Member of the Opposition from fulfilling his duties'

Cont. from page 8

Is not that a matter of utmost public interest? On what ground was the question disallowed? The Speaker could have given a more convincing explanation rather than saying that what had motivated his decision was to avoid offending the Saudi authorities.

**\* What about the naming of Arvin Boolell, Paul Berenger and Rajesh Bhagwan? Was the sanction by the Speaker disproportionate with any offence that might have been committed by any of the former?**

Naming is the ultimate sanction that can be used against a Member of Parliament. The suspension, as wished by the Prime Minister in his political wisdom, is that the sanction should be for the whole session of Parliament. Was it disproportionate? Views may differ, but the decision to suspend for such an indefinite period is purely subjective. No Parliament based on the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy would suspend a member arbitrarily for such a long time.

**\* Are the Standing Orders a law unto themselves?**

The Standing Orders are adopted by Parliament, but they do not have the force of law as they do not constitute an Act of Parliament or regulations.

Section 48 of the Constitution states:

*"Subject to this Constitution, the Assembly may regulate its own procedure and may, in particular, make rules for the orderly conduct of its own proceedings."*

This means that the Standing Orders cannot be incompatible with the Constitution. It also stands to reason that the Standing Orders cannot be used to trample on democratic principles like frustrating a Member of the Opposition from fulfilling his duties.

The question that arises is whether, by the Speaker's rulings and decision to name Members of the Opposition, the business of the House is being so conducted as to prevent Members from sitting in Parliament and fulfil their duties?

**\* Is the exercise of his powers by the Speaker subject to the Constitution?**

Yes. The Supreme Court has ruled on this topic in the case of Attorney General against Navin Ramgoolam in 1993. This is what late Justice Lallah said:

*"Where Parliament exercises sovereign powers under the Constitution and the Courts are empowered to exer-*

**"Naming is the ultimate sanction that can be used against a Member of Parliament. The suspension, as wished by the Prime Minister in his political wisdom, is that the sanction should be for the whole session of Parliament. Was it disproportionate? Views may differ, but the decision to suspend for such an indefinite period is purely subjective. No Parliament based on the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy would suspend a member arbitrarily for such a long time..."**



*cise a particular jurisdiction which itself requires an enquiry into the exercise of those powers by Parliament, then the jurisdiction of the Courts must be exercised to the appropriate extent in order to enable it to determine the particular question that is before it. It would be misleading, in those circumstances, to invoke the sovereignty of the National Assembly which would have the effect of paralysing the effective exercise of the constitutional jurisdiction of the Court."*

**\* The Opposition is apparently considering two options in the wake of the suspension of the three MPs: rather than tendering unreserved apologies to the House, provoke by-elections with a view to seeking a popular vote to censure the Speaker, or take up the matter to the Supreme Court. Which could be the best option?**

To resign would be stupid; it would be playing in the hands of the government and the Speaker. The best option is to go to Court and argue that the decision to name the three parliamentarians had been made on the flimsiest of reasons and that an indefinite suspension is simply undemocratic.

**\* Would our Supreme Court overstep the bounds set on it by the Constitution or will it most likely stick to the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy?**

In the case of Utchanah against Berenger in 1998, the Supreme Court stated:

*"We are of the view that Parliament may hide neither behind the cloak of privilege or immunity nor behind an ouster of jurisdiction in order to flout the Constitution which is the very essence of its existence. This Court does possess jurisdiction to determine whether Parliament is acting within the boundaries set by the Constitution."*

On occasions arising, the Supreme Court will intervene if the actions of the Speaker go against the Constitution.

**\* Wouldn't it be in the public interest for the Court**

**"It is parliamentary rather than legal experience which is the first requirement of a Speaker. That does not mean that somebody with no parliamentary experience cannot occupy the post of Speaker. What is important is that he should act impartially and treat members of the government as well as the opposition in the same manner and without any bias..."**

**to intervene in certain circumstances to overrule Parliament and protect the Constitution, and in the process develop a more positive jurisprudence?**

The Court has intervened, albeit rarely, in the internal workings of Parliament. What is at stake is not whether it is in the public interest for the Court to intervene. What is at stake is whether a Member of the Assembly who feels that he is wrongly and unjustly deprived of his constitutional right from attending Parliament can be left without any remedy.

Judge Lam Shan Leen gave the answer in the case of Honourable P. R. Bérenger v Sir R. Jeewoolall in April 1999. According to the judge when a Member of the Assembly is being deprived of his right to attend the sitting of the Assembly and to perform duties which are personal to him as set out in the Standing Order and

*"...as the Standing Order is silent as to the procedure obtainable in the Assembly for that member to seek redress of a sanction manifestly wrongly taken against him and in the present case from attending the sitting of the Assembly, I do not believe that the right of that member to seek redress from the Supreme Court could be curtailed by the respondent invoking the privilege of the House to deal sovereignly with its internal business."*

*"What we are looking at is the decision making process of the Assembly under the supervision of its chairman, more especially when that decision infringes on the constitutional right of a member."*

# India prepares for Kumbh Mela, world's largest religious gathering, amid COVID-19 fears

*Kumbh Mela, a Hindu pilgrimage that started earlier this month in India, has survived wars and famine since its origin. But the biggest threat has been the spread of illness – back then as now.*



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**M**assive crowds are expected to gather at India's northern city of Haridwar throughout April 2021 for the religious festival of Kumbh Mela, despite the country's grappling with a COVID-19 surge.

The Kumbh Mela is a Hindu pilgrimage held every 12 years at sacred tirthas, or river-ford sites, along the Ganges River in India.

This year the government expects over a million pilgrims a day to bathe in the sacred river. Over 5 million people are expected per day on the most auspicious days – April 12, 14 and 21 – for a total of a 100 million celebrants.

As a scholar of Hinduism, I celebrate this peaceful mammoth congregation of humanity. Shaped by mythology, astrology and society over the long course of history, this festival is the largest religious gathering of its kind in the world.

Rooted in Hinduism's ancient theological texts, the bathing ritual has survived wars, revolution and famine – but its biggest threat has been epidemic diseases. Authorities from the colonial British government of the 19th century to the Indian government today have had to contend with the challenge of managing the spread of contagion during this huge gathering of people.

## Festival of immortality

The festival celebrates the Hindu myth of Samudra manthan – the churning of the cosmological ocean by the gods and demons to get the nectar of immortality, known as amrita.

In the fight that ensued for the amrita, several drops of the elixir fell to Earth, sanctifying the waters where they landed. The word Kumbh refers not only to the pot of nectar spilled on its way to the heavens, but also to the astrological sign of Aquarius, the water carrier, the time when the Kumbh Mela takes place. Hindus believe that bathing in the sacred Ganges on the auspicious days of the festival leads to salvation from the endless cycle of reincarnation.

The traditional start date of the Kumbh, Makara Sankranti, or the winter solstice, is in January. However, this year the festival was delayed by the Indian government because of fears of the spread of COVID-19.

## Colonial Kumbh

The festival is mentioned in British colonial records. In 1812 the archives of the British East India Co., a joint stock company that had been formed in 1600 to engage in trade with India, mention a "great" congregation of people at the "melah" that had not occurred in 28 years. Historians of religion have noted that the British conflated another ancient fair, which went by the name Magha Mela, with the Kumbh Mela.



Ascetics take a holy dip in the waters of the Ganges River. Photo - AFP

At the time, the East India Co. imposed a "pilgrim tax" on participants, even though it did not provide infrastructure or amenities.

The East India Co. ruled India for the British Crown from 1757, and the company-crown alliance lasted a century until the Indian rebellion of 1857. During that time the British administration, in collaboration with the local police and heads of pilgrim organizations, made attempts to improve the infrastructure of the Kumbh Mela, including laying new railway lines, widening the access roads and building bigger bathing platforms, or ghats. They hoped to increase access, prevent pilgrim stampedes near the waters edge and garner better revenue.

Inadvertently, the British helped legitimize and popularize the Kumbh Mela as the supreme sacred festival. At the same time, they believed the Kumbh was a political gathering where revolutionary and nationalistic ideas took birth.

## Politics of Kumbh

Until 1801, before the colonial rule in the state, the Kumbh Mela was controlled and managed by sects, or "akharas," of militant ascetics who fought for the privilege of bathing first, as going first conferred power and status. These were often violent battles of alarming scale in which thousands died.

But the akharas skillfully managed the logistical challenge of the massive pilgrimage and festival. They organized hostels and food, provided policing, and oversaw the arbitrating of disputes over congregant living facilities. They also instituted and collected pilgrim taxes. The ascetics of the akharas engaged in religious discourses and philosophical lectures. Their presence was an attraction for ordinary pilgrims who sought their audience and blessings.

But by 1858 the British Crown controlled all of India and attempted to take over the logistics and rules for the Kumbh Mela, particularly for pilgrims' movement at the site, to avoid stampedes and upgrade the sanitary conditions. At the time legal agreements over the bathing order ensured an end to the violence between the akharas.

The British allowed and instituted an order for the ascetics of 14 akharas to bathe on the three auspicious bathing days of the mela. Following Indian independence, subsequent Indian governments have also tried to control the crowds and organize the akharas' bathing schedule.

## Fear of contagion

The first British reference that specifically mentioned the Kumbh Mela was made in an 1868 report that stated the need for increased and tighter sanitation controls at the "Coomb fair" to be held in January 1870. Recognizing the threat of rapid spread of contagion among the crowds, the British government attempted to sanitize and control the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims at the Kumbh.

In 1870 the Pioneer newspaper, the voice of the British in the northern city of Allahabad, said that the control of crowding was seen as a "well-directed activity towards averting, or at any rate mitigating, the ravages of disease" among pilgrims. The spread of disease was viewed as a threat to the possible collection of taxes and governance.

Between 1892 and 1908, when major famines, cholera and plague epidemics struck in British India, the colonial government controlled entry to the Kumbh, citing hygiene concerns. Pilgrims dropped to a low of around 300,000 as reported by the Imperial Gazetteer.

# How to stop psychopaths and narcissists from winning positions of power

☛ Cont. from page 2

Many present day politicians appear to have psychopathic and narcissistic traits too. It's easy to spot such leaders, because they are always authoritarian, following hardline policies. They try to subvert democracy, to reduce the freedom of the press and clamp down on dissent. They are obsessed with national prestige, and often persecute minority groups. And they are always corrupt and lacking in moral principles.

## Narcissists and sociopaths

In democratic countries such as the UK and the US, one could argue that there is less likelihood of psychopathic people becoming leaders. But there's still a serious problem with highly narcissistic, ruthless and non-empathic people attaining power. This is clear from Donald Trump's presidency.

Like many mental health professionals, the president's niece, Mary Trump – a clinical psychologist – voiced her opinion that Trump suffers from a range of personality disorders. She suggested that his main issue was his severe narcissism, but also that he “meets the criteria for antisocial personality disorder, which in its severe form is generally considered sociopathy”.

Over time, as sensible and responsible people left his administration, Trump attracted others with similar personality traits to himself. In this way, his regime became what the Polish psychologist Andrew Lobaczewski called a “pathocracy” – a government consisting of people with personality disorders. In the UK there has also been a trend for leading politicians to display signs of narcissism,



'Who me?' Evan El-Amin/Shutterstock

ruthlessness and a lack of empathy. This also suggests a movement towards pathocracy.

The essence of the problem is that callous, low-empathy people are drawn to power, whereas empathic and responsible people (who would make ideal leaders) don't have a desire for dominance. They usually prefer to remain on the ground, interacting with other people. This leaves positions of powers free for the wrong people.

## What can be done?

Like others who have studied the problem of “corporate psychopathy”, the Australian psychologist Clive Boddy has suggested that companies should screen leadership candidates for psychopathy. In my view, we should do something similar in politics. Every government (indeed every organisation) should employ psychologists to assess potential leaders and determine their suitability for power.

Personality tests might not be much use, because dark triad personalities are manipulative and dishonest. But other assessments could be used. It's widely accepted there are childhood signs of dark triad traits, such as callousness and cruelty and a lack of empathy, guilt and emotion. So psychologists could examine the candidate's life history, interviewing previous supervisors and coworkers. They could also speak to past acquaintances, former schoolteachers or university tutors.

Some might argue this would give too much power to psychologists, who would effectively become kingmakers – and perhaps become vulnerable to corruption themselves. While this is true, it's surely preferable to the present situation, where there's nothing to stop people with narcissistic and psychopathic traits gaining power and then using their power malevolently.

**Steve Taylor,**

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# India prepares for Kumbh Mela, world's largest religious gathering, amid COVID-19 fears

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In 1941, the British government banned sale of tickets amid rumors that Japan, in advance to entering World War II, was to bomb Allahabad where the Kumbh was slated to take place.

## Rising religiosity

In the past century the Kumbh has become so popular that “half” versions – Ardh Kumbh – are held every six years.

The dramatic arrival of the akharas – that includes 14 sects of Hindu and Sikh ascetics as well as warrior monks often illustrated with exoticized photographs – has become the signature visual of the Kumbh.

These tens of thousands of ascetics, some dressed in saffron robes, some nude and covered in ash, with wild dreadlocks, come riding on horseback, or in golden seats on elephants. The processions are accompanied by loud drumming, conch

blowing and the sound of gongs as they enter the sacred water, in wave upon wave of humanity.

## COVID controls

This year's event takes place amid fears that a massive gathering like this could turn out to be a COVID-19 super-spreader event. According to Johns Hopkins University, by April 1, 2021, the start of the Kumbh Mela, India had reported 12 million cases and 162,900 deaths.

The Indian government has issued several directives to control the spread of the disease: Thermal screening checkpoints have been set up, and efforts are being made to sanitize all restrooms and sleeping quarters. Strict protocols for participation in the Kumbh have been issued, including a limited time period of half an hour for each akhara to bathe. Furthermore, the government has stated that after April 1 all visitors to the Kumbh have to produce evidence of a recent negative



The scene of Kumbh Mela in Haridwar, India, in 1850. J. M. W. Turner via Wikimedia Commons

COVID-19 test.

However, even before the Kumbh began, the city and neighboring areas had already emerged as COVID-19 hot spots. As the festival began, seven living Hindu saints in the city of Haridwar tested positive, and 300 pilgrims were found positive during the first few days of the festival.

Images emerging from Haridwar of millions of the faithful, praying, eating and

bathing, often maskless and in close proximity with one another, are raising fears about how the desire for the divine nectar of immortality might turn out in a pandemic year.

**Tulasi Srinivas**

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# Mediterranean diet increases gut bacteria linked to healthy ageing in older adults

*Our research found that following a Mediterranean diet was linked with less frailty, inflammation, and maintaining better cognitive function*

As our global population is projected to live longer than ever before, it's important that we find ways of helping people live healthier for longer. Exercise and diet are often cited as the best ways of maintaining good health well into our twilight years. But recently, research has also started to look at the role our gut - specifically our microbiome - plays in how we age.

Our latest study has found that eating a Mediterranean diet causes microbiome changes linked to improvements in cognitive function and memory, immunity and bone strength.

The gut microbiome is a complex community of trillions of microbes that live semi-permanently in the intestines. These microbes have co-evolved with humans and other animals to break down dietary ingredients such as inulin, arabinoxylan and resistant starch, that the person can't digest. They also help prevent disease-causing bacteria from growing.

However, the gut microbiome is extremely sensitive, and many things including diet, the medications you take, your genetics, and even conditions like inflammatory bowel disease and irritable bowel syndrome, can all change the gut microbiota community. The gut microbiota plays a such a huge role in our body, it's even linked to behavioural changes, including anxiety and depression. But as for other microbiome-related diseases such as type 2 diabetes and obesity, changes in the microbiome are only part of the issue - the person's genetics and bad lifestyle are major contributing factors.

Since our everyday diets have such a big affect on the gut microbiome, our team was curious to see if it can be used to promote healthy ageing. We looked at a total of 612 people aged 65-79, from the UK, France, the Netherlands, Italy and Poland. We asked half of them to change their normal diet to a Mediterranean diet for a full year. This involved eating more vegetables, legumes, fruits, nuts, olive oil and fish, and eating less red meat, dairy products and saturated fats. The other half of participants stuck to their usual diet.

## Mediterranean microbiome

We initially found that those who followed the Mediterranean diet had better cognitive function and memory, less inflammation, and better bone strength. However, what we really wanted to know was whether or not the microbiome was involved in these changes.

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, a person's baseline microbiome (the species and number of microbes they had living in



their gut before the study started) varied by country. This baseline microbiome is likely a reflection of the diet they usually ate, alongside where they lived. We found that participants who followed the Mediterranean diet had a small but insignificant change in their microbiome diversity - meaning there was only a slight increase in the overall number and variety of species present.

However, when we compared how strictly a person followed the diet with their baseline microbiome data and their microbiome after following the diet, we were able to identify two different gut microbe groups: diet-positive microbes that increased on the Mediterranean diet, and diet-negative microbes whose abundance was reduced while following the diet.

Diet-positive microbes are microbes that flourished in the Mediterranean diet. Diet-negative microbes either couldn't metabolise the diet, or they were unable to compete with diet-positive microbes. These diet-positive microbes were linked with less frailty and inflammation in the body, and higher levels of cognitive function. Losing the diet-negative microbes was also associated with the same health improvements.

between these measures and dietary changes. This suggests that the diet alone wasn't enough to improve these three markers. Rather, the microbiome had to change too - and the diet caused these changes to the microbiome.

These types of studies are challenging and expensive, and the microbiome dataset is often difficult to analyse because there are many more data-points to study than there are people in the study. Our findings here were possible because of the large group sizes, and the length of the intervention.

However, we recognise that following a Mediterranean diet isn't necessarily doable for everybody who starts thinking about ageing, usually around the age of 50. Future studies will need to focus on what key ingredients in a Mediterranean diet were responsible for these positive microbiome changes. But in the meantime, it's clear that the more you can stick to a Mediterranean diet, the higher your levels of good bacteria linked to healthy ageing will be.

When we compared the changes in the number of these microbes in the treatment group (those on the Mediterranean diet) and the control group (those following their regular diet), we saw that the people who strictly followed the Mediterranean diet increased these diet-positive microbes. Although the changes were small, these findings were consistent across all five countries - and small changes in one year can make for big effects in the longer term.

Many of the participants were also pre-frail (meaning their bone strength and density would start decreasing) at the beginning of the study. We found the group who followed their regular diet became frailer over the course of the one-year study. However, those that followed the Mediterranean diet were less frail.

The link between frailty, inflammation, and cognitive function, to changes in the microbiome was stronger than the link

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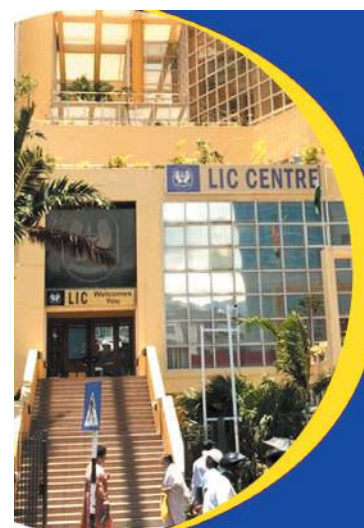
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1956-2020



## Golden Words

1. If you want to change the world, do it when you are a bachelor. After marriage, you can't even change a TV channel.
2. Listening to wife is like reading the terms and conditions of a website. You understand nothing, still you agree.
3. Chess is the only game in the world, which reflects the status of the husband. The poor King can take only one step at a time, while the mighty Queen can do whatever she likes.
4. All men are brave. Horror movies don't scare them... But 5 missed calls from wife surely does.

\*\*\*

Pour tuer le génie d'un lac, on fit venir trois experts: un Français, un Américain et un Mauricien...

Le génie leur dit: 'Vous allez jeter à tour de rôle un objet dans le lac. Si je le retrouve, celui qui l'a jeté mourra. Dans le cas contraire, c'est moi qui mourrai.'

Le Français jeta dans le lac une aiguille. Le génie la retrouva et le Français mourut.

L'Américain y jeta une corde très courte et plus fine qu'un poil. Le génie la retrouva et il mourut aussi.

Le Mauricien à son tour jeta un objet dans le lac. Le génie plongea sous l'eau et chercha durant plus d'une heure sans rien trouver.

Avant de disparaître, il vint demander au Mauricien: 'Qu'est-ce que tu as jeté

dans l'eau?'

Le Mauricien répondit: 'Un comprimé d'Effergal.''

\*\*\*

### Wedding in America

Invited: 100.

Attendance: 70.

Gifts: 70.

### Maryaz Dan Moris

Invited: 500.

Frotaire: 200.

Lenvolop vide: 300.

Critik: 400.

(*Pomme de terre ti cri, selmn in mange 3 plats*)

Bataire bis takeway: 100

Photographe local: 50

Banne grand galant: 250

\*\*\*

### True lies

Maximum Lies have been told in court with the Holy book in hand...

Maximum Truth have been told in bars with a glass of whiskey in hand...

World's biggest lie men say: 'No need to ask my wife. My decision is final.'

World's biggest lie women say: 'I will ask my husband and tell you.'

\*\*\*

When a woman says that she loves her children more than her husband, she clearly is lying.

Because she can leave her children with her neighbours, but she will never leave her husband with a neighbour...

\*\*\*

My wife sent me a text, "Your great"

So, naturally, I wrote back, "No, you're great."

She's been walking around all happy and smiling.

Should I tell her I was just correcting her grammar or leave it?

## Life's LESSONS

### You are Master's piece!

Just because a group of people do not accept you as you are, there is no necessity for you to strip yourself of your originality. You need to think good of yourself, for the world takes you at your own estimate. Never stoop down in order to gain recognition. Never let go of your true self to win a relationship. In the long run, you will regret that you traded your greatest Glory - your... uniqueness, for momentary validation. Even Gandhi was not accepted by many people.

The group that does not accept you as YOU is not Your world. There is a world for each one of you, where you shall reign as king /queen by just being yourself. Find that world... In fact, that world will find You.

What water can do, gasoline cannot and what copper can, gold cannot. The

fragility of the ant enables it to move and the rigidity of the tree enables it to stay rooted. Everything and everybody has been designed with a proportion of uniqueness to serve a purpose that we can fulfil only by being our unique self. You as you alone can serve your purpose and I as I alone can serve my purpose. You are here to be you... Just YOU.

There was a time in this world when a Krishna was required and he was sent; a time when a Christ was required and he was sent; a time when a Mahatma was required and he was sent. There came a time when you were required on this planet and hence you were sent. Let us be the best we can be.

In the history of the universe, there has been nobody like you and to the infinity of time to come, there will be no one like you. Existence loved you so much that it broke the mould after making you, so that another of your kind will never get repeated.

You are original. You are rare. You are unique. You are a wonder.

You are a masterpiece... You are Master's piece!

*Jai Gurudev... Stay safe and blessed.*

### Of Faith & Attitude

Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That is faith.

When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them. That is trust.

Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but we still set the alarm to wake up. That is hope.

We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. That is confidence.

We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. That is love.

On an old man's shirt was written a sentence 'I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years experience.' That is attitude.

## LA POLITIQUE

Le Président

Ministres

Députés

Le peuple

## Corona's CV

If Corona had to make a CV, here's how it would read:

- Responsible for global digital transformation and fast-tracking.
- Reduction of global CO2 emission.
- Five million job "restructuring".
- Global hygiene initiatives. Ensured 100% compliance on washing hands, leading to reduction of other communicable diseases.
- Made global industry shift to WFH - saved exposure and costs.
- Reduction in global noise pollution by making everyone keep their mouth shut (masked).
- Taught cooking, vegetable shopping, housekeeping to many.
- Highlighted the importance of governance, adaptability and long-



term planning, by all sectors

- Spiritual contribution. Provided ample time to all egoistic and self-centred people to contemplate on their mortal nature.
- Provided a big boost to the Pharma

sector and brought back small utility stores back into the limelight.

Corona's CV would look better than that of many CEOs!

\*\*\*

### Covid-19 Vaccine and Seat Belts

Regarding vaccine, the best simile I could think of is of a seat belt or an airbag in our cars.

Does it afford good protection? Yes, just like vaccine.

Does it protect you hundred percent? No, just like vaccine.

Does it prevent you from getting an accident? No, just like vaccine.

If at all we get into an accident does it reduce severity? Yes, just like vaccine.

Does it mean you can be reckless and

fast? No, just like vaccine, it does not mean that masks can be avoided.

Does a seat belt mean you won't injure others on road? No, just like vaccine. You can still infect others.

When I wear a seatbelt do, I think of the company making money? No, just like vaccine.

Am I happy that someone invented seatbelt? Oh yes, just like vaccine.

Does seatbelt itself cause problems? Yes, seatbelt injuries are possible. Just like vaccines can have side effects.

Should we still wear a seatbelt? Yes, yes, yes. Just like a vaccine.

I would surely get a vaccine. Just like a seatbelt, vaccine doesn't mean you can be careless and stupid; it just gives you some amount of protection.

And I am willing to take the risk of minor side effects for the 70% chance of that protection?

# How Late is Too Late to Have a Baby

From higher education to economic stability, there are various reasons women delay the process of childbearing.#

While 15 years to 30 years is the time when a woman is most fertile, not everyone is ready to bear the responsibility of a child at this age. From a career perspective, 35 to 45 seems the most perfect age for childbearing but this is the time when there is a terminal decline in a woman's fertility. So, if you are waiting for a bit more to become a mom, here is how late it is too late to become a mom, as reported by Times of India.

## Advanced maternal age and fertility

The conception after the age of 35 comes under 'advanced maternal age', also called AMA.

But one should not be terrified of the term because getting pregnant even after the age of 35 is possible with or without assisted reproduction. But it is usually not advisable to wait so long as it can lead to complications.

Though some women might have a hard time in late motherhood, some sail through it very easily. There are many factors including how close you are to your menopause that plays an important role.

Here are a few things you should know about conceiving at an older age, what risks it has for you and

## Being Mum



the baby and what you should ask your doctor before you embark on the journey.

## What is assisted conception?

There is an increase in the number of women of advanced maternal age (AMA) options for assisted reproduction. Women opting for late pregnancy should know that there is age-related complexity to fertility, including a decline in the oocyte quality and reserve in addition to an increase in the number of oocyte chromosomal aberrations.

Success rates of assisted reproductive technology (ART) cycles decrease with advanced maternal age. There are different fertility options for women of AMA including fertility preservation, IVF treatment, genetic screening and oocyte or embryo donation.

Detailed counselling needs to be done as per the risks. Women of AMA should be screened for any underlying medical condition that can have an impact on maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality.

The natural deterioration in female reproductive ability

has two main reasons:

- Progressive depletion of the number of oocytes in the ovary
- Age-related decrease in oocyte quality

Reproductive choices for women at an advanced maternal stage:

- Social egg freezing
- Embryo freezing
- IVF

## Maternal health risks of pregnancy at an advanced age

Elderly women who become pregnant are at a higher risk of caesarean delivery, gestational diabetes, preeclampsia and preterm delivery of the baby with low birth weight. These risks vary widely, depending on the woman's health status and increase with maternal age at delivery.

Other ways to conceive if you are older

**IVF with donor eggs:** in this process, instead of doing a traditional egg retrieval to later fertilize and transfer, you can do an embryo transfer using embryos created with donor eggs that are fertilized with either your partner's sperm or donor sperm.

**Egg freezing:** If you know beforehand that you want to wait to have a baby and you are under the age of 35, you might consider freezing your eggs right away. If you are freezing your eggs in your early 30s and plan to use them in your 40s, your odds of having a healthy baby will relate to your age when you freeze your eggs and not your current biological age.

**Embryo adoption:** Either you choose to do IVF yourself or to use a surrogate embryo adoption is another favourable option. Embryos are generally frozen and donated by couples who aren't using them in their own ART procedures.

# Ways to Keep your Relationship Exciting and Fresh

Being in love is beautiful on one hand and difficult on the other. It takes a lot of effort, time, sacrifices, and adjustments to nurture a relationship that makes you feel satisfied and happy. However, sometimes, over a period of time, partners tend to get bored with each other and struggle to keep the spark alive. This often leads to uncomfortable silences that span for a long time which makes the relationship toxic eventually. In order to avoid this, here are 7 ways, as suggested by Times of India, to keep your relationship exciting and fresh.

## Keep the element of surprise alive

Don't forget to surprise your partner from time to time in a variety of ways. Arrive home with a small gift, cook your partner's favorite meal or book a surprise weekend getaway. This will keep the excitement alive and prevent you from getting stuck in a relationship rut.

## Schedule frequent dates

Most couples go on dates regularly during the initial phase of their relationship. However, after some time, going out to dinner often gets interchanged with sitting on the couch. As a result, the relationship can become a little dull. Thus, schedule regular dates so you can spend quality time together.



He & She

## Send romantic messages

When you are a part due to any reason, send romantic messages to one another. This can build anticipation for when you will see each other again. Send short messages of love, admiration, and encouragement. It is a simple and easy way to keep the romance alive in your relationship.

## Try something new together

Be it visiting a new restaurant to try out a new cuisine or going for adventure sports or taking baking lessons together - anything new will bring in thrill and excite-

ment in your relationship. Also, a willingness to learn something new can help you grow together as a couple.

## Put your feelings in words

Never forget to keep any sort of feeling to yourself. Always express your feelings to your partner. Sometimes people forget all the cheesy things they used to say to one another once the relationship matures. Say, "I love you," often, and don't shy away from words that truly express how you feel.

## Establish goals together

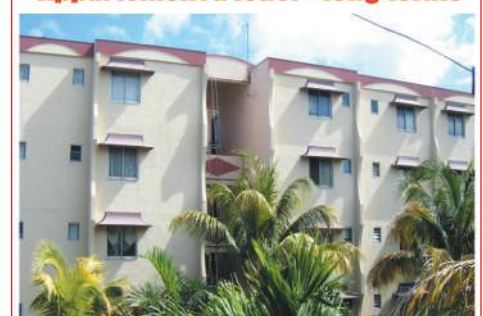
Create some goals that you can work

on together as a couple. It may include saving a certain amount of money to go on a vacation or running a half marathon together. Working toward your goals can help you feel like a team and gives you new things to talk about and do together.

## Greet one another with excitement and enthusiasm

The way you greet one another after being apart for even small intervals of time can set the mood for the rest of the day. Changing small habits, such as the way you greet your partner when they get home, can be key to a lasting relationship.

## Appartement à louer - long terme



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## Adah Sharma: 'I am getting really good roles only now'

Adah Sharma says she has always been open to all kinds of opportunities, be it Hindi films, regional films, short films or web films and series.

Adah Sharma has been in Bollywood for over a decade now but the actor says as compared to before, the roles that are coming her way have improved.

"I think my acting abilities were never questioned right from my first film," says the actor, who made her Hindi film debut with *1920* (2008).

She further adds, "But I am getting really good roles only now, especially in the past three films. I am getting a lot of opportunities now because people are getting to see a lot of me. In that way it is good, I was never somebody who has been criticized too much anyway."

And the actor says that she has achieved this by being open to all kinds of opportunities, be it Hindi films, regional films, short films like *Chuha Billi* or web series such as *The Holiday* and *Pati Patni Aur Panga*.

"I have tried to do something different each time and the audience gets very excited about. They expect me to do something different, not the usual stuff. Every time I have done something commercially ordinary people have been really pissed with me. They are like, 'anyone can do this, so *Adah ko liya hi kyu?*'" she muses.

The 28-year-old who has starred in films like *Hasee Toh Phasee* (2014), *Commando 2* (2017), says she wants to never disappoint her fans by making a wrong choice in films.

"I have done some big films where the role was not great and the audiences didn't like me in it. I like that they have certain expectations from me. I like the pressure," she concludes.

## Bollywood actors who have some unusual demands before signing a film

Thousands of fans from all across India visit Mumbai just to have a look of their favourite Bollywood star. So naturally, with all that stardom and fame comes a lot of demands as well. Here are all the demands, some weird, that Bollywood stars have before signing a movie, as reported by Sumedha Tripathi of scoopwhoop.com :

### 1. Kangana Ranaut

The *Queen* actor despite being so vocal on her social media platforms doesn't entertain people in person. According to reports, she has instructed her personal assistant to always answer all the questions and queries without involving her. Also, she makes sure that her personal assistant always travels with her.

### 2. Akshay Kumar

Kumar is well-known in the industry for his disciplinary regime. So, this hard-working actor apparently makes sure to give himself a break once a week while shooting for any movie. Thus, he doesn't work on Sundays. He believes that Sundays are for relaxation and a time to spend time with his family.

### 3. Hrithik Roshan

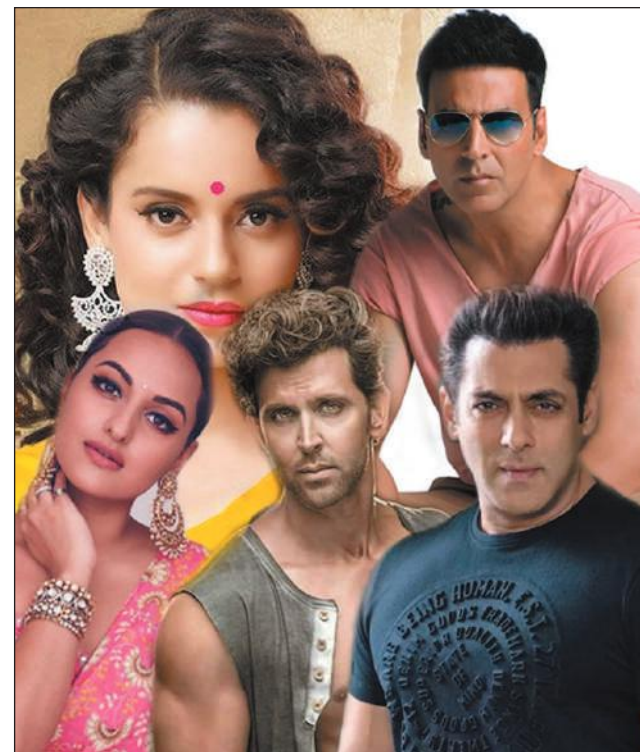
Hrithik works a lot for that chiselled body and why not? But according to sources, to maintain his chiselled body he always travels with a personal chef whenever he is shooting in foreign locales. He even demands the best gym in the town so he could maintain his fitness.

### 4. Sonakshi Sinha

Sonakshi has been a queen of hearts for quite a while now. But this actor apparently has a clause that she always follows while signing any Bollywood projects. The clause is 'no kissing on-screen'. She is not comfortable doing the same and continues to apply it.

### 5. Aamir Khan

The actor makes sure he gives his 100% to a film. But according to reports, while signing a contract he makes sure that the camera is not on any low angles shots



because he starts feeling shy when a low-angle shot is being taken.

### 6. Akshaye Khanna

Apparently, before signing the movie *Dhishoom* where Akshaye played a negative role, he made sure his character won't be beaten blue by the lead. Moreover, he asked production to add his inputs and changes anytime he wants in the script.

### 7. Salman Khan

Before signing a movie, Salman has just one clause that he always demands. According to reports, his films should be free of any intimate scenes and he would not at all kiss on-screen.

## Katrina Kaif's sister Isabelle reveals parents were against her acting career

### 'Katrina helped convince my mom'

Katrina Kaif's sister Isabelle Kaif made her acting debut with *Time To Dance*. She starred opposite Sooraj Pancholi in the Stanley D'Costa directorial. While Katrina has always been showering Isabelle with support, the latter revealed that her parents did not want her to follow in Katrina's footsteps to Bollywood, reports Hindustan Times.

In a recent interview, Isabelle revealed that her parents were not on board with her acting career. Instead, they dreamt of her securing good grades and landing a regular job.

"They weren't the happiest about it, not very happy at all. They wanted me to go and get a proper degree that was going to be useful and was going to lead me to job security," she told SpotboyE. "Go get a degree in



business or maths or English or something that could translate into a secure job. They weren't thrilled

about it," she said. Isabelle added that Katrina played a vital role in convincing their parents. "She definitely helped convince my mom to let me try."

Isabelle has previously clarified that she did not bag her projects due to Salman Khan but auditioned for the roles. "I have auditioned for the film and got selected after the producers liked me," she told PTI. She noted that Salman has always been supportive of anyone trying to join the industry. "I have been auditioning for films for sometime (now) and this time everything fell in place. The more you do it, the better you get," she added.

Isabelle has already signed and is busy with her second project, *Suswagatam Khushaamadeed*. Last month, she revealed she was filming the movie, which also stars Pulkit Samrat, in Agra.

## 'It has been emotionally alarming to describe the stories in Crime Alert' says Sudha Chandran



Sudha Chandran's present show 'Crime Alert' has been receiving a lot of praise from the audience for portraying a realistic approach towards Recently, she shared how as an anchor

she realised that crime has no parameter and for her, it has been mentally and emotionally alarming to describe stories of crime, reports India Forums.

Sharing more about her experience, Sudha says, "You have a parameter of crime but when you start anchoring such stories, you realise that crime has no parameter. It has gone way beyond our imagination. It is not like crime is only committed by the uneducated, we have also got very educated people doing these crimes. It is an eye-opener and is emotionally alarming to describe these stories. You cannot even imagine that a human being can go down to this level."

She also adds, "Crime doesn't always mean murder. We recently did a beautiful story where a young boy comes into Bollywood nurturing dreams and hope. However, he's been led the wrong way and is duped of his money. This is also a crime. Along with the actions even at thoughts can be criminal. I am glad we are using our platform to enlighten people, to get a little more sensitive towards crime."

Sudha Chandran also said that she appreciates that television platform is not only just focusing on entertainment but also to give out social message and awareness.

## Prachi Desai on marriage plans: 'I never saw it as safety net'

Prachi Desai has talked about her thoughts on getting married and why it is not something she would do simply to make her life more secure. Prachi has said that she is open to the idea of it but only if she finds someone perfect.

Speaking to a leading daily, Prachi said a marriage of convenience has never been on her agenda. "My parents have brought me up in such a way that I never saw marriage as a safety net or as something I would do if my career slowed down for a bit or something didn't work out," she said.

"You know, I have been married so many times on screen that I think I am done with it for now. Whoever the guy is for me, he better be prepared. I live on my terms and I love my independence too much to give it up for marriage right now. I won't mind being married a few years later but again, only if and when someone perfect comes along," she added.

Prachi's breakout role was in the hit television soap *Kasamh Se*. After that, she was seen in



films such as *Rock On* and *Azhar*. Recently, she spoke to Hindustan Times about the pressures of being an actor. "Had I let that pressure get to me, I would have agreed to all the offers that came to me. I got many roles with great directors and stories but I felt the role wouldn't benefit me in any way. The roles didn't add anything to my career so I'd to let go of those films. It comes

from the space of being strong minded and knowing what I want. Being the limelight wasn't my goal as anyway I shy away from it. I don't socialise a lot and kept my communication limited," she said.

She is currently seen on the web series *Silence*, with Manoj Bajpayee. She plays a police officer on the show.

## YOUR STARS

### Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

Problems and frustrations on the sentimental plane; increase your efforts to make good understanding reign. Think of reducing your weight if you suffer from a notable overweight; eat lighter and do exercises. Workwise, you'll be able to profit from favourable circumstances.

**Lucky Numbers: 2, 7, 16, 21, 25, 30**

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

At work, be wary of the traps that your adversaries will set up for you. Very fine relationships with your family entourage. Heartwise, if somebody makes your head turn, wait some time nevertheless before accepting the event as true.

**Lucky Numbers: 12, 15, 30, 34, 39, 40**

### Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You'll dream of a quite different destiny - a brighter, more illustrious or more adventurous one; be satisfied with your fate. You'll meet a person who will quickly take on a great importance in your life. Prepare the ground thoroughly before launching your great projects.

**Lucky Numbers: 9, 12, 19, 20, 33, 40**

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

Risks of professional rivalry; try to defuse the situation by keeping a low profile. A renewal of vitality; it will be an ideal week to undertake a diet or to follow a fitness program. Ask yourself if you haven't somewhat neglected your children; they do need your presence.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 19, 21, 33**

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

Take more time to relax and rest. At work, beware of distraction; concentrate yourself on what you're doing, otherwise you're likely to make a serious mistake. Your love affairs won't give you all the satisfactions you wish.

**Lucky Numbers: 17, 11, 12, 19, 30, 31**

### Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

Let your partner express himself/herself, he/she will have as good ideas as yours. Beware of small health problems; cope with them without delay. Be wary of hasty decisions on the financial plane: you could be disappointed with the results.

**Lucky Numbers: 14, 17, 20, 23, 24, 30**

### Gemini: May 21 - June 20

At work, very interesting opportunities will present themselves to you. Don't underestimate yourself: you have unsuspected resources. In your couple life, neither of you will want to make concessions: beware of heated arguments!

**Lucky Numbers: 18, 20, 22, 26, 30, 31**

### Cancer: June 21 - July 22

Singles will make promising encounters. At work, your merits will be well recognized, and you'll obtain a fine pay increase. You'll also have the opportunity to become acquainted with interesting and pleasant people coming from afar.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 15, 17, 20, 21, 36**

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

You'll be able to consolidate your professional position, or to find an employment that's much more satisfactory to you. Know how to say "no". Above all, don't let yourself be fooled by the misleading speeches of various religious sects.

**Lucky Numbers: 11, 15, 17, 30, 31, 40**

### Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

Sufficiently good health; but those who suffer from a chronic disease will have to be watchful more closely. However, you'll find yourself once at grips with pecuniary problems; by imposing yourself severe saving measures, you'll be limiting the damages.

**Lucky Numbers: 1, 3, 18, 20, 36, 37**

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

You'll be in an excellent mood and will take life as it comes without making a big deal of it. Concerning work, it'll be the moment to build the projects that are close to your heart. Put your self-pride aside and request assistance from your close relatives if you need it.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 18, 20, 23, 29, 34**

### Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

Expect some money problems or the active hostility of some people around you. At work, you'll not be afraid to take great risks; in your emotional life, you'll prefer stability, and that too will be a success.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 7, 12, 20, 21, 30**

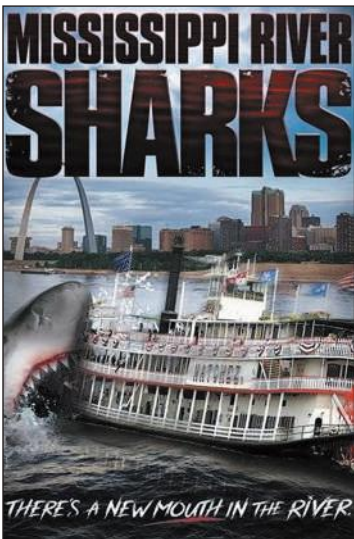




Vendredi 9 Avril - 21.15

**Mississippi River Sharks**

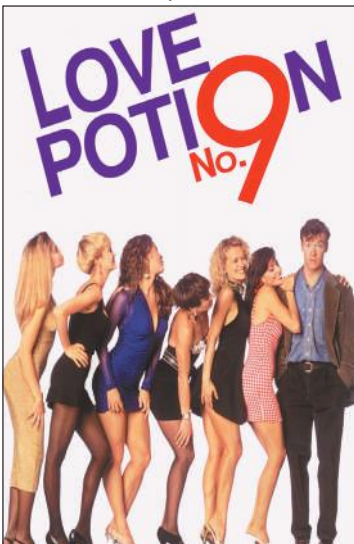
Avec: Cassie Steele, Jason London, Miles Doleac



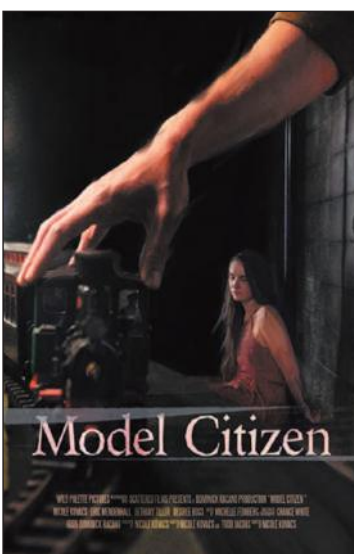
Samedi 10 Avril - 21.15

**Love Potion No.9**

Stars: Tate Donovan, Sandra Bullock, Mary Mara



Dimanche 11 Avril - 21.15

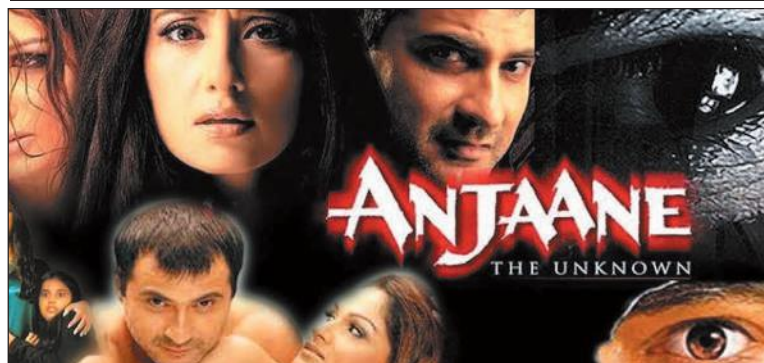


	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
<b>vendredi 9 avril</b>	07.00 Dessin Anime 10.35 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A... 11.05 Tele: Soleil Levant 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.50 Mag: Urban Gardens 13.55 Local: MBC Production 14.25 D.Anime: Spirit: Au Galop... 14.44 D.Anime: Sindbad And The 7 15.06 D.Anime: Kid Lucky 15.19 D.Anime: Kung Fu Panda 15.45 Film: Groundhog Dave 2 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: Concert Organise... 21.43 Serial: When Calls The Heart 23.00 Le Journal 23.45 Mag: Eye On SADC	10.00 Serial: Ki Jaana Mein Kaun 11.05 Serial: Zun Mureed 12.04 Film: Kaaka Muttai 13.43 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 Mesure 19.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Serial: Band Khirkiyan 20.44 Local: Anjuman 21.10 Local: Urdu Programme - Noor-E-Iman	06.00 Mag: Eco India 06.26 Mag: Shift 06.38 Mag: Carnet De Sante 07.51 Doc: Quand Le Thon Nous... 08.44 Doc: 360 GEO 09.39 Doc: Duck Academy 10.19 Doc: The Secret Of Mona... 12.00 Mag: Border Crossing 12.27 Mag: Le Saviez vous? 12.32 Mag: Tomorrow Today 14.01 Doc: 360 GEO 14.41 Doc: Duck Academy 15.24 Doc: The Secret Of Mona... 16.14 Mag: Eco India 16.40 Mag: Shift 17.07 Mag: Border Crossing 17.33 Mag: Tomorrow Today 18.00 Doc: Tanzania Transit 20.05 Doc: Olivia's Garden 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.40 Doc: Wildlife Heroes	01.28 Film: Get Out 03.12 Serial: The Good Doctor 03.53 Film: Chair De Poule 2 05.19 Tele: Muneca Brava 06.01 Serial: 19-2 06.43 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv... 09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire 09.45 Tele: Daniella 10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.00 Serial: The Good Doctor 12.00 Film: Chair De Poule 2 13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.45 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv... 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: Mississippi River Sharks	08.00 Film: Inteqam 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: Achanak Starring: Govinda, Manisha Koirala, Farha Naaz Rahul Roy 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
<b>samedi 10 avril</b>	06.00 D.Anime: Dragons: Par-Delà 06.35 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis... 06.46 D.Anime: Dinofroz 07.12 D.Anime: Dee Dee The Little... 07.25 D.Anime: Wishfart 07.47 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin... 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 Twisted... 15.17 Film: Woody Woodpecker 16.47 Serial: Nowhere Boys 17.15 Local: Info En Langue 17.30 Live - Covid-19 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Entertainment: Dance 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.10 Local: RDV Muzikal 21.10 Film: Mindhunters 23.00 Le Journal	07.00 Film: Meri Biwi Ki Shaadi Starring: Amol Palekar, Ranjeeta Kaur, Ashok Saraf 09.05 Film: VIR: The Robot Boy 10.00 Bade Acchelagte Hai 12.00 Serial: Nanda Saukhya Bhare 12.29 Serial: Mooga Manasulu 12.52 Serial: High School 13.14 Annakodiyum Ainthus Pengalum 13.37 Serial: Anu Pallavi 14.51 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha 15.12 Film: Fukrey Returns Starring: Pulkit Samrat, Manjot Singh, Ali Fazal 17.27 Mag: DDI Magazine 18.59 Mag: Sur Mesure 19.59 Serial: Vikram Betaal Ki Rahasya Gatha 20.29 Serial: Bitti Business 21.00 Film: Anjaane Starring M. Koirala, S. Kapoor	06.00 Doc: Tanzania Transit 06.55 Mag: Global 3000 07.21 Mag: Le Saviez Vous? 07.24 Mag: Euromaxx 07.53 Doc: Wildlife Heroes 08.45 Doc: Portraits Of Marie... 09.37 Doc: Opera - A Tough Busi... 10.20 Doc: Riding The Rails... 11.02 Doc: Tanzania Transit 11.48 Mag: Arts And Culture 12.29 Mag: Euromaxx 12.59 Doc: Wildlife Heroes 13.51 Doc: Portraits Of Marie Ant... 14.43 Doc: Opera - A Tough Busi... 20.05 Mag: Vue D'en Haut 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.40 Doc: 360 GEO 21.32 Doc: Destinations 21.44 Doc: SOS Animaux En... 22.35 Doc: The Truth About Lying 00.00 Doc: Amazing Gardens 00.26 Doc: Too Good For The...	01.26 Film: Mississippi River Sharks 02.51 Serial: Dynasty 2 03.32 Film: Exit Speed 04.59 Tele: Esmeraldas 06.03 Serial: Killjoys 06.50 Film: Nessie & Me 08.35 Serial: Mike Hammer 09.20 French Series 10.02 Serial: 12 Monkeys 10.40 Film: Mississippi River Shark 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: I Think My Babysitter's 20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 20.30 Series: Killjoys 21.15 Film: Love Potion No.9 22.46 Tele: Dulce Amor	04.05 Sanjivani 04.28 Radha Krishna 04.48 Agniphera 05.09 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 05.31 Zindagi Ki Mehek 05.51 Ikyawann 06.13 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein 06.36 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: Judwaa 2 Star: Varun Dhawan, Jacqueline Fernandez, Taapsee Pannu 20.49 Serial: Siya Ke Ram 21.34 Serial: Naagin
<b>dimanche 11 avril</b>	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: Zanfan Nou Zil 10.35 Serial: Backstage 12.00 Le Journal 12.40 Tele: Daniella 15.05 D.Anime: The Hive 15.20 D.Anime: Kid Lucky 15.35 D.Anime: The Twisted Whisk... 15.45 Film: Sing/Tous En Scene 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: Model Citizen Stars: Kevin Fonteyne, Shawn Pyfrom, Brytnee Ratledge 23.00 Le Journal	07.00 Film: Chashme Buddoor Starring: Farooq Shaikh, Deepti Naval, Saeed Jaffrey 09.13 Serial: Vir: The Moie 10.00 Local: Excerpts Of Akhanda 11.00 Serial: Oru Kai Osai 11.22 Serial: Santoshi Maa 12.00 Film: Yeh Jawaani Hai Dee... Starring - Ranbir Kapoor, D. Padukone, Aditya Roy Kapur 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 17.42 Serial: Kisna 18.30 Local: Tupa Tupa Nu Avance 19.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Serial: Mann Mein Vishwas.. 20.43 Serial: CID	06.00 Doc: Amazing Gardens 06.26 Doc: Too Good For The... 06.50 Doc: The World From Above 07.47 Doc: 360 GEO 08.37 Doc: Destination 10.23 Doc: Nollywood 11.11 Doc: Amazing Gardens 11.37 Doc: Too Good For The... 12.30 Mag: Check In 14.55 Doc: The Truth About Lying 17.15 Doc: The World From Above 18.00 Mag: Tendance XXI 18.30 Doc: Ville En Fête 20.05 Doc: Olivia's Garden 20.30 Local Prod: News (English) 21.32 Doc: Destinations 22.36 Doc: Collected Memories 23.18 Doc: Onibo 00.01 Mag: Tendance XXI 00.27 Doc: Ville En Fête 00.52 Doc: Garden Party	01.06 Film: Love Potion No.9 02.39 Serial: Hawaai Five-0 03.21 Film: Mindhunters 05.02 Tele: Esmeraldas 05.43 Serial: Killjoys 06.51 Film: Dominion 08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer 09.19 Film: Love Potion No.9 10.50 Film: I Think My Babysitter's 12.15 Serial: Hawaii Five-0 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: Thirteen Days 23.40 Tele: Dulce Amor	00.40 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein 02.19 Sanjivani 04.06 Pavitra Rishta 05.33 Film: Judwaa 2 Starring: Varun Dhawan, Jacqueline Fernandez, Taapsee Pannu 08.01 Motu Patlu 08.11 Karn Sangini 09.58 Jaana Na Dil Se Door 11.39 Piya Albela 13.28 Agniphera 15.18 Bin Kuch Kahe 17.08 Punar Vivaah 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Film: Phillauri Stars: Anushka Sharma, Dosanjh, Suraj Sharma 20.39 Entertainment: Dance 21.01 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 22.51 Piya Albela

**MBC 2** Samedi 10 Avril Stars: Manisha Koirala, Sanjay Kapoor - 21.00



Dimanche 11 Avril - Stars: Anushka Sharma, Dosanjh, Suraj Sharma 18.30



## Letter from the grave

# Lee Kuan Yew's open letter to political leaders

**D**ear leaders, I want to appreciate your condolence messages to Singaporeans since my death on 23 March 2015. Having died at the age of 91, I would not say I died young.

In fact, life expectancy in Singapore, which I led as prime minister for 31 years, is 80 years for men and 85 for women. You may even say I spent an overtime of 11 years. I would say I lived a good life which I devoted to the progress of my country.

I can confidently say that everything I did — including that for which I was heavily criticised for being “highhanded” — was for the benefit of my people, not for personal gain. I died a fulfilled man with no regrets whatsoever.

May I briefly tell you the story of Singapore so that you can understand why it is often referred to with admiration all over the world. We were a small, hopeless island.

We thought we were so poor it was impossible to survive on our own. We decided to go into a union with other countries to form Malaysia in 1963.

But because of ethnic riots, we were expelled from the union in 1965, and I broke down in tears because I did not see how we were going to survive as a country. It was so bad we had no potable water. We relied on other countries for water to drink!

We had no natural resources. No oil, no gold, no solid minerals, nothing. All we had were human beings — and ports.

We did not give up. We decided to pick the pieces of our lives. We resolved to turn our fortune around.

Today, our story has changed completely. So, you know, we are no longer a Third World country.

We are one of the four Asian Tigers — so-called because of our incredible development story.

Singapore is the only Asian country with the top AAA rating by all credit rating agencies. We are the fourth largest financial centre in the world. We have one of the five busiest ports in the world.

Manufacturing accounts for around 30% of our GDP. And Singapore has the third highest per capita income in the world.

Permit me some more immodesty. Unlike Malaysia, we don't have a single drop of crude oil on our land. But also, unlike Malaysia, we are one of the biggest exporters, not importers, of petroleum products.

Our country is in the top three of oil-refining centres in the world, yet we don't have oil! We have some of the biggest refineries in the world.

Meanwhile, Malaysia, with all the oil it produces, has been importing petrol, diesel, kerosene, engine oil and other petroleum products for decades!

Let me shock you: we are the largest oil-rig producers in the world! The World Bank ranks us as the easiest place to do business in the world. I'm blushing, even in death!

Let me explain how we attained these feats. We are no magicians. We are no angels.

We are human beings like you.

The first thing we recognised is that quality leadership



Singapore Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew waving to supporters in 2011 as he arrived at an elections nomination center. Lee, the founder of modern Singapore who helped transform the sleepy port into one of the world's richest nations, died on 23 March 2015. He was 91. Photo- AP

is non-negotiable!

I understand that ordinary people get all the blame for the country's problems under the pretext that if the followers are bad, then leaders will be bad. I disagree.

If the leaders are good, the followers will be good.

The leaders take the critical decisions and show direction. That is why they are called leaders.

It is the dog that should be wagging the tail, not the tail wagging the dog.

Don't blame passengers for bad driving. Countries are transformed by good leadership.

Why does a country need competent and exemplary leaders?

Development starts from visioning. No country develops by accident or co-incidence. Development is planned.

The leader, who must understand the critical issues, puts together a team, shares his vision with them, assigns them responsibilities and leads them from the front.

That is where it starts. It is when you have a vision of society that you will know that education is key, electricity is key, health is key, infrastructure is non-negotiable. It is when you have this vision that you know where to direct your energy and resources. You know the kind of people to put in charge of key ministries and agencies.

Furthermore, leaders must not be obsessed with instant gratification and personal comfort. Some leaders are too obsessed with the perks of office that they have forgotten why they were elected in the first instance.

**“Quality leadership is non-negotiable! I understand that ordinary people get all the blame for the country's problems under the pretext that if the followers are bad, then leaders will be bad. I disagree. If the leaders are good, the followers will be good. The leaders take the critical decisions and show direction. That is why they are called leaders. Don't blame passengers for bad driving”**

I understand that aside the presidential jets in town, they are more comfortable with chartered jets. What a waste.

I will share a story with you, which you can read in my book, 'From Third World to First'. It's on pages 363-364, and it had to do my trip to Ottawa, Canada, for the Commonwealth meeting in 1973.

The Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, arrived in style in his own aircraft.

When I landed, I saw a parked Boeing 707 with “Bangladesh” emblazoned on it. When I left, it was still standing on the same spot, idle for eight days, getting obsolescent without earning anything.

As I left the hotel for the airport, two huge vans were being loaded with packages for the Bangladeshi aircraft. At the conference, Mujibur Rahman had made a pitch for aid to his country.

Any public relations firm would have advised him not to leave his special aircraft standing for eight whole days on the parking apron. You want aid but you are showing opulence to the world.

The Presidents of Kenya and Nigeria also arrived in jets. I wondered why they did not set out to impress the world that they were poor and in dire need of assistance.

Our permanent representative at the UN explained that the poorer the country, the bigger the Cadillacs they hired for their leaders.

So I made a virtue of arriving by ordinary commercial aircraft and thus helped preserve Singapore's Third World status for many years.

However, by the mid-1990s, the World Bank refused to heed our pleas not to reclassify us as a “High Income Developing Country” — giving no brownie points for my frugal travel habits. We lost all the concessions that were given to developing countries.

I understand that some of you are very, very religious. Yet, I am told you loot your state treasury without compassion or compunction, inflate contracts recklessly, operate killer squads, and watch — without conscience — as your citizens struggle without clean water and good hospitals.

Unfortunately, I died an agnostic. I neither denied nor accepted that there was a God.

Though two of my younger brothers, Freddy Lee and Lee Suan Yew, are members of the Anglican and Methodist churches respectively, I was not a churchgoer. Don't misunderstand me: I am not saying you should not believe in God.

But I only wonder: how can you say you believe in God and fail so woefully in what your holy books teach about loving your neighbour, caring for the needy and showing responsibility as a leader? I cannot understand it.

You guys never cease to amaze with how you can conveniently combine religion with greed.

On a final note, I appreciate that you are mourning my death and describing me as great. Thank you very much.

But I want you to know that you too can become great by putting the welfare of your citizens above your personal comfort.

I go to my grave a happy man.

Ask yourself: will you go to yours fulfilled? Adieu!