

# MAURITIUS TIMES

• Say and do something positive that will help the situation; it doesn't take any brains to complain. - Unknown

Interview: Jack Bizlall

**“On ne déterre les crimes que pour les besoins du journalisme événementiel. Après on oublie...”**

...Qui se rappelle du passé?  
Dans trois ans, on oubliera Kistnen”

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## The Murky Secrets behind the Covid-19 Pandemic



By Mrinal Roy 👉 See Page 4

## Are we heading towards failure?



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

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**What does the Seychelles experience tell us about variants, vaccine efficacy and herd immunity?**

By C Raina MacIntyre





## PNQ on Agalega

**Q**uestions have been raised since a number of years in Parliament and in the local media about a supposed secret Mauritius-India agreement to allow the setting up of an Indian military base on Agalega. The issue had been brought up since the time when Mauritius was undertaking a spirited international campaign and legal battle with respect to our country's sovereignty over Diego Garcia before the United Nations, culminating in the hearings before the International Court of Justice.

The response of the Mauritius government to date has been to deny the existence of any such agreement with the Indian authorities. As early as in May 2017 - one month before Xavier Duval was to query the Prime Minister through a PNQ on this issue -, an official communique released on May 29, 2017, following Pravind Jugnauth's state visit in India had stated that the vision of the Government of Mauritius was to further develop the economic potential of Agalega. For this purpose, basic infrastructural facilities including a runway and a jetty along with associated amenities would be constructed in Agalega by the Government of India at its own cost. An agreement with the Indian government for the development of these infrastructural projects at Agalega was signed during the PM's state visit to India. These were besides the ongoing cooperation in hydrography, support provided to the National Coast Guard of Mauritius, etc.

Another PNQ has been addressed to the PM this week, by Hon Xavier Duval, on the same issue. Pravind Jugnauth has reiterated the position of the Mauritian government with regard to its agreement with the Indian government as regards the development of the infrastructural works at Agalega and their use by both Mauritian and Indian authorities. Besides again denying unequivocally the development of a military base, we learn that there will be no stockpile of weapons at Agalega, meaning that the Indian assistance towards the development of infrastructural projects at Agalega, according to the PM, would not qualify as the development of a military base - unlike what obtains in the case of US/Chinese/French engagement when they set up their military bases in the region and elsewhere.

However, it would certainly help to clear doubts and speculations if the Mauritian and Indian authorities were more proactive in communicating to the public at large more details about the agreement signed between the two governments with regard to Agalega. The more so in the wake of the satellite images published recently the Lowy Institute on the scope of the works in progress on the island

On the other hand, we have to pragmatically acknowledge the new circumstances that have developed in the region. There are new players, an endemic hostile environment north of the Gulf states, and a geomilitary thrust by large powers, along with the constant threat of piracy from the African coast. Definitely we cannot ignore this changed and evolving context, and our focus must perforce be on our security as a small island state, which depends on the geopolitical balance in the region. Our goal should be to ensure that we are strategically aligned with the equation which is in the country's interest both politically and economically on a long-term basis.

## Mauritius Times

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## The Conversation

# The end of 'global health' as we know it

*If there ever was a global health system, then it has gone sadly missing when we needed it most*

**T**he pandemic has made us painfully aware of our common vulnerability to disease outbreaks. New communicable diseases originating in one part of the world can spread quickly and widely, underlining that health is a global concern. But this is old news.

The advent of the concept of "global health" is well established in both the academic literature and policy discussions, reflecting the consensus that we have seen a fundamental change in the nature of the causes and outcomes of ill-health in recent decades.

This change is rooted in the effects of globalisation and seen not only in the spread of communicable diseases, but in other developments - the globalised pharmaceutical market, the emergence of global civil society, new international health actors with a global perspective (such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation), and the migration of health professionals. These developments combined to create a powerful sense of change, such that as long ago as 2008, the UK government declared that "health is global".

Covid-19 appears to reinforce this narrative. Most striking, of course, is the spread of the disease. It has touched almost everyone. Within 18 months of its appearance, the WHO has identified only 14 countries reporting zero cases, 12 of which were Pacific Islands which had implemented strict travel restrictions, reinforcing sea borders.

The pandemic has also demonstrated the global nature of the marketplace for health products. From the often-desperate search for PPE in the early months of the pandemic to the development, production and supply of vaccines in 2021, it is clear that states cannot rely on national suppliers alone.

### The liberal vision

But the global health narrative was always more than simply an analysis of a new reality. It was also a call for new ways of working to address both new diseases, like COVID-19, and existing health inequalities. Underpinning this was the argument that if health was global, then responses needed to be global too, and that a consequence of globalisation was that



Countries have diverged on everything from mask mandates to vaccination campaigns. Pic - Kim Ludbrook/EPA

the health of one state or population group was linked to the health of all.

This liberal vision of global health - one which held that the rich had responsibilities to the rest of the world, and progress was possible through cooperation - was already in trouble prior to COVID.

For all of the stated concerns about inequalities from the G7 and others, the global health agenda originated in high-income countries and reflected their concerns (especially over the spread of disease from other countries).

As a result, proposed responses prioritised their interests, including an emphasis upon dealing with the effects of disease - through pharmacological solutions - rather than addressing the causes, which might have been disruptive to their economic interests. That is why there were so many calls to decolonise global health before Covid emerged.

### Unashamed nationalism

Covid -19 has thrown into sharp relief the current weaknesses of the global health project. During the most serious pandemic in living memory, the response has been dominated by national concerns and policies.

In the years leading up to the pandemic, the emergence of unashamedly nationalist governments in G7 and G20 states challenged visions of globally shared interests.

Colin McInnes,  
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Aberystwyth University



# Are we heading towards failure?



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

**T**he long shadow that Covid-19 is still casting on us, the massive drug hauls that are taking place with no end in sight to the problem, the many brutal events that are erupting on the national scene on an almost daily basis, the fact that we figure on black lists and are being downgraded on global indices – so many negativities that can no doubt explain the justifiable

*It cannot be denied that there is palpable tension in the air, and pessimism, why, even loss of hope for the future of the country*



Pic - ca-times.brightspotcdn.com

sense of despondency that is being felt around. It cannot be denied that there is palpable tension in the air, and pessimism, why, even loss of hope for the future of the country has taken hold across a large sec-

tion of the people.

We have to ask ourselves why is that so, and what should be done to lift up our spirit to restore some hope for a better future, however much the current scenarios may be giving us reason to despair rather. 'History teaches us failure can happen if one cannot think of failing' – this line from 'Has China Won?', a book by Kishore Mahbubani – the Singaporean thinker, diplomat and founder dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy – set me thinking, and sent me back to some earlier

material in my collection that from time to time I revisit to learn lessons from.

We fail because we keep repeating the same mistakes that we have made. It is

said that experience is not repeating the same mistake twice. In medicine we say, you can have 20 years of one year's experience (that is the year of your internship) or 20 years (or more of course) of experience in practice. The implication is that you have kept learning as you went along, and not repeated earlier mistakes you may have made. We all do. That is not the problem. To not learn from them is the problem. And when one is in a position of great responsibility, the impact is widespread.

In one of the cuttings of about 10 years ago I read: 'Some analysts have been drawing attention to the prevailing perception of a lack of moral leadership in the country, that the country is being run like a clan with an undisputed chief to whom all must vow obedience for fear of being sidelined and, amongst other things, that there are abusive practices being resorted to in the administration of the country.'

➤ **Cont. on page 10**

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# The Murky Secrets behind the Covid-19 Pandemic

*Science is based on facts, not hot air. We therefore need to urgently carry out a deeper investigation to uncover the truth behind the origin of Covid-19*



Mrinal Roy

**T**he Covid-19 pandemic has brought to light some murky secrets of risky scientific research and begged many ethical questions. There are also growing interrogations as to why the origin of Covid-19 still remains unknown some 16 months after the outbreak of the pandemic. Its origin has been the object of the wildest conjectures, raised legitimate questions in the wake of the contested findings of a WHO investigation in March 2021 on the origin of the pandemic and spawned conspiracy theories. It is therefore extremely important to unequivocally uncover the truth behind the origin of Covid-19 in order to better fight the present pandemic and prevent the risks of such deadly and disastrous pandemics in the world in future.

There are basically two theories about the virus which caused the Covid-19 pandemic. The first theory widely broadcast at the start of the Covid-19 outbreak is that it jumped naturally from wildlife to people or natural emergence. There were speculations that it originated in bats and then spread to pangolins and humans. The second theory was that the virus escaped from a laboratory where it was the object of risky research.

Chinese authorities reported at the time that many coronavirus cases had occurred in the wet market in Wuhan where wild animals are sold for meat. It must be recalled that the SARS1 epidemic of 2002 was caused by the spread of a bat virus to civets sold in wet markets and from civets



Pic - static.india.com

**“The first theory widely broadcast at the start of the Covid-19 outbreak is that the coronavirus jumped naturally from wildlife to people or natural emergence. There were speculations that it originated in bats and then spread to pangolins and humans. The second theory was that the virus escaped from a laboratory where it was the object of risky research.**

to people. Similarly, the 2012 MERS epidemic was caused by a bat virus which spread to camels and from camels to people.

The decoding of the virus's genome showed it belonged to a viral family known as beta-coronaviruses, to which the SARS1 and MERS viruses also belong. This finding gave credence to the theory that, like them, it was a natural virus that had managed to jump from bats, via another animal host, to people. It was the media's preferred theory.

## Deeper investigation

Various developments have questioned this convenient narrative on the origin of a virus which has wreaked such socio-economic and health havoc on the world and caused a death toll of more 3.4 million people across the world.

In a letter published in the leading academic journal *Science* last week, an international group of 18 renowned biologists, immunologists and other scientists questioned the conclusions of the investigation of the WHO team in Wuhan to determine

the origins of Covid-19 (SARS-CoV-2) arguing that 'although there were no findings in clear support of either a natural spillover or a lab accident, the team assessed a spillover from an intermediate host as "likely to very likely," and a laboratory incident as "extremely unlikely"'. They added that the 'two theories were not given balanced consideration as only 4 of the 313 pages of the WHO March 2021 report and its annexes addressed the possibility of a laboratory accident'. They therefore called 'for a deeper investigation into the origin of Covid-19, including the possibility that a laboratory accident released the new coronavirus that caused the pandemic.'

Spelling out the conditions for such an investigation, they stated that 'a proper investigation should be transparent, objective, data-driven, inclusive of broad expertise, subject to independent oversight and responsibly managed to minimize the impact of conflicts of interest'. (When will such straightforward benchmarks apply in Mauritius to unequivocally ensure transparency and accountability of governance at all levels?) There must also be 'a more

extensive evaluation of the two leading hypotheses: that the pandemic virus infected people and spread in the population after escaping from a lab, or after jumping to humans from infected animals'.

The signatories include highly regarded scientists who are actively involved in studying SARS-CoV-2 (Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2) the virus causing the pandemic.

## Manufactured virus

One of prominent signatories of the letter is Ralph Baric, an eminent coronavirus researcher who has collaborated with scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China, the institution at the centre of debate over the lab hypothesis. Shi Zheng-li, China's leading expert on bat viruses at the Wuhan Institute of Virology learned from and worked with Ralph Baric. In November 2015 they created a novel virus by taking the backbone of the SARS1 virus and replacing its spike protein with one from a bat virus (known as SHC014-CoV). The specific targets of this manufactured virus were human cells grown in cultures and humanized mice. They were able to infect the cells of the human airway when tested against a lab culture of such cells.

The potential danger of a manufactured virus escaping the lab raised alarm bells 'as no one could predict its trajectory'. There is a long history of viruses escaping from even the best run laboratories. In their research paper Baric and Shi 'referred to the obvious risks of creating more dangerous pathogens but argued they should be weighed against the benefit of foreshadowing future spillovers'.

## Funding trail

In a disconcerting twist to the Covid-19 narrative, Shi Zheng-li continued the work she had started on genetically engineering coronaviruses funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), an agency of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH). The grants according to public records were assigned to the prime contractor, Peter Daszak, president of the EcoHealth Alliance who subcontracted them to Shi.

The reference to conflict of interest in the letter published in *Science* is quite telling. The WHO team assigned to investigate the origins of Covid-19 in Wuhan vetted by the Chinese authorities included Daszak who kept asserting before, during, and after their visit that lab escape was extremely unlikely. This has obviously provoked serious interrogations in the scientific world. Drawing from extracts of the detailed proposal and purpose of the grants funded by NIAID for fiscal years 2018 and 2019, Nicholas Wade, a science journalist and author in an article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* earlier this month indicate that 'Shi set out to create novel coronaviruses with the highest possible infectivity for human cells.

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## New York state probes Trump Organization in 'criminal capacity'



New York probe of Trump Organization now criminal as US lawmakers back study of Capitol riot. Pic - i0.wp.com

**T**he New York state attorney general's office has announced it is now investigating the Trump Organization also in a "criminal capacity", broadening its civil probe in a significant escalation of legal risk for former president Donald Trump, a one-time New Yorker who now lives in Florida.

Attorney general Letitia James's office will join an ongoing criminal probe into the Trump administration being conducted separately by Manhattan district attorney Cyrus Vance.

Trump is also facing a criminal investigation in Georgia state for allegedly trying to overturn the outcome of the election in 2020.

Trump and his wife Melania Trump now live in their Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, but the Trump Organization, which was led by sons Donald Trump Jr and Eric Trump during the Trump presidency, remains headquartered in New York City. And both probes started even when Trump was in White House.

"We have informed the Trump Organization that our investigation into the organisation is no longer purely civil in nature," Fabien Levy, a spokesman for the New York attorney general, said. "We are now actively investigating the Trump Organization in a criminal capacity, along with the Manhattan DA. We have no additional comment at this time."

Trump slammed the announcement as "an investigation that is in desperate search of a crime". And said in a statement on Wednesday, "After prosecutorial efforts the likes of which nobody has ever seen before, they failed to stop me in Washington, so they turned it over to New York to do their dirty work. This is what I have been going through for years."

The two parallel investigations are focused on charges - emerging from former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen's congressional testimony - that the Trump Organization downplayed the value of its properties and assets for tax purposes and inflated them to secure bank loans.

**U**S House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Tuesday called for a US diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, criticizing China for human rights abuses and saying global leaders who attend would lose their moral authority.

US lawmakers have been increasingly vocal about an Olympic boycott or venue change, and have lashed out at American corporations, arguing their silence about what the State Department has deemed a genocide of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in China was abetting the Chinese government, reports Reuters.

Pelosi, a Democrat, told a bipartisan congressional hearing on the issue that heads of state around the world should shun the games, scheduled for February.

"What I propose - and join those who are proposing - is a diplomatic boycott," Pelosi said, in which "lead countries of the world withhold their attendance at the Olympics."

"Let's not honor the Chinese government by having heads of state go to China," she added.

"For heads of state to go to China in light of a genocide that is ongoing - while you're sitting there in your seat -

## Pelosi calls for US, world leaders to boycott China's 2022 Olympics



US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi speaks at a news conference in the United States Capitol about the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act, in Washington, US. Pic - AP

really begs the question, what moral authority do you have to speak again about human rights any place in the world?" she said.

An independent United Nations panel said in 2018 it had received credible reports that at least 1 million Uyghurs and other Muslims had been held in camps in China's Xinjiang region. Beijing describes them as vocational training centers to stamp out extremism, and strongly rejects accusations of abuse and genocide.

Chinese Embassy spokesman Liu Pengyu told Reuters that US attempts to interfere in China's domestic affairs over the Olympics were doomed to fail.

"I wonder what makes some US politicians think they actually have the so-called 'moral authority'? On human rights issues, they are in no position, either historically or currently, to make wanton groundless criticism against China," Liu said.

## EU relaxes travel measures, to allow tourists fully vaccinated against Covid-19



EU nations have been struggling throughout the pandemic to prop up their vital tourism industry. Pic - s.france24.com

**T**he European Union on Wednesday took a step toward relaxing tourism travel for visitors from outside the bloc, with EU ambassadors agreeing on measures to allow fully vaccinated visitors in.

Covid-19 outbreaks but the bloc's 27 ambassadors now say many of those restrictions on non-essential travel should be eased. Specifically, tourists from outside the bloc who have been fully vaccinated should be allowed in.

They also agreed on easing the criteria for nations to be considered a safe country, from which all tourists can travel. Up to now, that list included only seven nations.

The EU imposed strict measures last year to contain

The EU "Council will now recommend that member states ease some of the current restrictions" for those who have been vaccinated, said EU Commission spokesman Christian Wigand.

"The council should also soon expand the list of non-EU countries with a good epidemiological situation from where travel is permitted," said Wigand. The EU's European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control is to give advice on the list.

EU nations have been struggling throughout the pandemic to prop up their vital tourism industry and hope to recover some income over the peak summer season.

## Joe Biden tells Netanyahu he expects 'significant de-escalation' in Israel

**P**resident Joe Biden stepped up the pressure on Israel to end 10 days of violent skirmishes with Palestinians, making clear in a call Wednesday with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he expected "significant de-escalation" by day's end.

Biden asked Netanyahu to move "toward the path to a cease-fire," according to a White House description of their conversation.



Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Joe Biden. Pic - www.24newsd.tv

There is pressure, too, on Biden to do more, with more than 200 people killed in the fighting. Until Wednesday, Biden had avoided pushing the American ally more directly and publicly for a cease-fire or conveyed such a level of urgency for ending Israeli airstrikes targeting Hamas in the thickly populated Gaza Strip.

The Biden administration had relied on what officials described as "quiet, intensive" diplomacy, including quashing a UN Security Council statement that would have addressed a cease-fire. The administration's handling opened a divide between Biden and Democratic lawmakers, dozens of whom have called for a cease-fire.

➔ More on page 6



# Long before divorce, Bill Gates' conduct upset Melinda: Report

**M**icrosoft co-founder and billionaire Bill Gates and his philanthropist wife Melinda Gates announced earlier this month that they are getting a divorce. The breakup of one of the world's most wealthy and powerful couples has given rise to scrutiny over what may have caused them to take the step. One of the main reasons for the divorce is believed to be the world-famous software pioneer's questionable behaviour in work-related settings, highlighted by several leading newspapers in their reports.

Bill Gates pursued women who worked for him at Microsoft and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on several occasions, the New York Times reported, quoting people familiar with the developments.

In 2018, a sexual harassment claim against the billionaire's longtime money manager Michael Larson came to light. While Bill Gates insisted that the matter be settled internally, Melinda Gates wanted an outside investigation. At the end of the investigation, Melinda Gates was reportedly not satisfied with her husband's handling of the matter, according to NYT. Michael Larson still works for Gates.

The following year, Microsoft's board of directors, of which Bill Gates was a part, initiated investigation into a case after being told that their co-founder had "sought to



Bill and Melinda Gates. Pic - i0.wp.com

initiate an intimate relationship with a company employee in the year 2000," according to Frank X Shaw, a Microsoft spokesperson. The incident was reported by Wall Street Journal. In 2020, Bill Gates stepped down from Microsoft's board. However, Bridgett Arnold, spokesperson for Bill Gates, said the affair took place 20 years ago and

ended 'amicably'. "Gates's decision to transition off the board was in no way related to this matter," she added.

The nail in the coffin is said to be the billionaire's relationship with Jeffrey Epstein, who faced accusations of sex trafficking and pleaded guilty to soliciting prostitution from a minor. When Bill Gates started spending time with him in 2011, three years after Epstein's confession, Melinda Gates expressed her discomfort. When Bill Gates did not put an end to his association with Epstein and their relationship became public in October, 2019, Melinda Gates hired divorce lawyers, according to people who attended or were briefed on gatherings with the two men, NYT reported.

Arnold, however, said that characterisation of his conduct was not right. "It is extremely disappointing that there have been so many untruths published about the cause, the circumstances and the timeline of Bill Gates's divorce," she said.

"Any claim that Gates spoke of his marriage or Melinda in a disparaging manner is false. The claim of mistreatment of employees is also false. The rumours and speculation surrounding Gates's divorce are becoming increasingly absurd, and it's unfortunate that people who have little to no knowledge of the situation are being characterised as 'sources'," she added.

## YouTube experiences global outage, fixes issue after multiple users complain on social media

**Y**ouTube experienced a global outage reportedly earlier on Wednesday morning (IST) causing many users to complain on microblogging site Twitter. Confused users, initially unaware of the outage, complained of not being able to play videos and also of issues with logging in and user accounts, reports Hindustan Times.

Data from Downtidetector, a website that provides real-time status and outage information, showed that at least 10,000 users have complained of outages in YouTube services between 8am and 9am (IST), after which, the number of people reporting the outage fell drastically.

Following the many complaints by users of the platform, #YouTubedown was found trending on Twitter earlier in the day. Noticing the reports, YouTube responded saying that the issue was fixed and thanked its users for reporting the outage. "We're seeing reports around difficulties accessing YouTube services within the last hour. We can confirm that this is now fixed and you should be able to access our service without any issues. Thanks for your reports and do let us know if you're still facing any problems!" the company tweeted via its official Twitter handle @TeamYouTube.

Later on Wednesday evening, YouTube updated that few other users have complained that the issue has been repeating and again confirmed that it has been fixed. "Update - We received new reports about this issue. Our teams looked into it and now we can confirm it's resolved (again). We'll keep a close watch and let us know if you find any problems!" However, downtidetector showed that not many users have reported an outage and as of 4pm, only 29 users had reported.

In a separate incident earlier on Wednesday, YouTube also tweeted to creators saying, "If you were having issues uploading or watching videos on YouTube (including live streams) in the last ~45 mins - this issue has been fixed. Note: if your video is processing, it should complete now - otherwise you may need to reupload. Thanks for all of your reports!"

## Putin to would-be aggressors: 'Will knock their teeth out'

**R**ussian President Vladimir Putin alleged Thursday that some of the country's foreign foes dream about biting off pieces of the country's vast territory, warning that Moscow would "knock their teeth out" if they ever try.

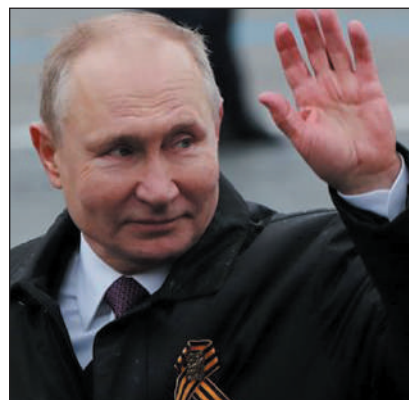
In strong remarks during a conference call with officials, the Russian president noted that foreign efforts to contain Russia date from centuries ago, reports AP.

"In all times, the same thing happened: once Russia grew stronger, they found pretexts to hamper its development," Putin said, alleging that some critics of Russia who he didn't name have argued that it's unfair for it to keep its vast natural riches all to itself.

"Everyone wants to bite us or bite something off us, but those who would like to do so should know that we would knock their teeth out so that they couldn't bite," the Russian leader said. "The development of our military is the guarantee of that."

The Kremlin has made the modernization of the country's armed forces a top priority amid tensions in relations with the US and its allies. Russia-West ties have sunk to post-Cold War lows over Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, accusations of Russian meddling in elections, hacking attacks, and other issues.

Putin said that Western sanctions against Russia are continuing a long-time historic trend of containing a



Vladimir Putin Pic - Reuters.com

powerful rival, citing Russian Czar Alexander III who charged that "everyone is afraid of our vastness."

"Even after we lost one-third of our potential" when former Soviet republics became independent after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, "Russia is still too big for some," Putin said.

"No matter what we do, no matter how we try to satisfy the appetites of those who are trying to contain us, the containment will continue because many of our opponents just don't want such a country as Russia," Putin said. "But we, citizens of the Russian Federation need it, and we will do everything to not just preserve but strengthen it."

He claimed that Russia now has the most modern strategic nuclear forces compared to other nuclear powers, including such state-of-the-art weapons as the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle.

The military has said that the Avangard is capable of flying 27 times faster than the speed of sound and making sharp maneuvers on its way to target to dodge the enemy's missile shield.

It has been fitted to the existing Soviet-built intercontinental ballistic missiles instead of older type warheads, and the first unit armed with the Avangard entered duty in December 2019. The military said that in the future Avangard could be fitted to the prospective heavy missile called Sarmat that is under development.

Putin has also touted other prospective weapons, including the Poseidon atomic-powered underwater drone armed with a nuclear weapon that is capable of generating devastating tsunami waves near an enemy coast. Its tests are continuing.

Putin has charged that the country has succeeded in revamping its arsenals without inflicting too heavy a burden on the national economy by carefully choosing the military priorities.

He noted that Russia this year is set to spend an equivalent of \$42 billion on defense, compared to the Pentagon's budget topping \$700 billion.

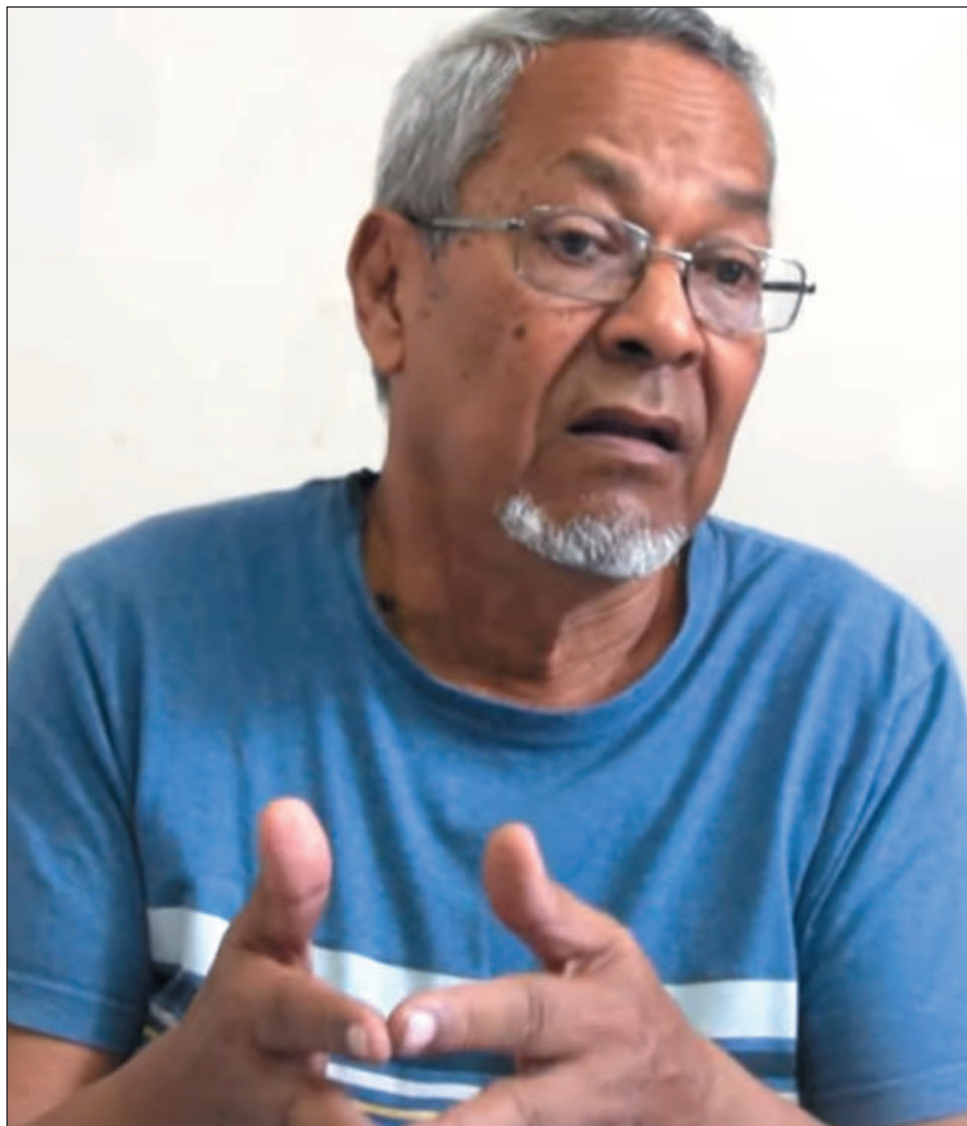
"We have managed to support our armed forces without militarizing the state budget, and we will continue doing so," Putin said.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah



# “On ne déterre les crimes que pour les besoins du journalisme événementiel. Après on oublie...”

...Qui se rappelle du passé? Dans trois ans, on oubliera Kistnen”



**Mauritius Times:** On s'est réveillé lundi dernier avec la nouvelle de "l'interpellation" de Rama Valayden à deux heures du matin par le CCID, ce qui a provoqué l'indignation de nombreux internautes le même jour. Puis, la police a donné une version totalement différente du fil des événements, et cela a été confirmé par Me Navin Ramchurn, l'avocat de M. Valayden lui-même. Que recherche M. Valayden, selon vous?

**Jack Bizlall:** J'ai été étonné de sa démarche de demander à la police de le rencontrer à une heure si matinale. Je suis heureux du soutien qu'il a eu quand on a interprété cette rencontre "recherchée" par lui comme une décision de la police de l'arrêter manu militari.

Je n'ai pas compris l'attitude de soumission de ses avocats et de son silence. C'était à lui de s'expliquer dans le ton qu'il a l'habitude de prendre dans de telles circonstances. Les gens n'attendent que ça de lui. Le suiveur oscille entre l'admiration et le mépris. Il faut qu'il devienne vigilant.

Est-ce que je ne le comprends pas?

**“Rama Valayden a déjà agi dans le passé comme il le fait aujourd'hui. C'est sa manière de faire, et ce, depuis son adolescence: un commencement et pas de suite. Chez lui, l'événement a préséance sur l'objectif visé, si tant est qu'il y en ait un. Comme nous sommes dans le journalisme événementiel, il y a une causalité explosive qui s'installe insidieusement dans notre pays...”**

Rama Valayden a déjà agi dans le passé comme il le fait aujourd'hui. C'est sa manière de faire, et ce, depuis son adolescence: un commencement et pas de suite.

*"L'interpellation" de Rama Valayden à deux heures du matin par le CCID, lundi dernier, suivant la manifestation présumée illégale en faveur des Palestiniens, a provoqué l'indignation de nombreux Mauriciens en début de semaine. Les choses ont pris une tournure différente après le démenti de la police, qui a donné une version totalement différente du fil des événements. M. Valayden devra apporter sa version des faits mardi prochain au Bar Council. Jack Bizlall nous donne son opinion sur cette arrestation, sur le trafic de drogue...*

Chez lui, l'événement a préséance sur l'objectif visé, si tant est qu'il y en ait un.

Comme nous sommes dans le journalisme événementiel, il y a une causalité explosive qui s'installe insidieusement dans notre pays.

Par ailleurs, Rama Valayden est un homme de cœur, sensible aux problèmes des autres. Il a le courage de descendre dans la rue avec témérité. C'est un démocrate.

Quand il est retourné au pays et qu'il a annoncé sa politique républicaine, j'avais dit à Dev Ramano que c'était un élément sérieux. Nous nous connaissons très peu et, personnellement, je crois qu'il ne maîtrise pas "l'après".

Je me souviens de son rassemblement, il y a 22 ans de cela pour éradiquer la drogue à Maurice en présence d'une majorité de participants soutenant la décriminalisation du cannabis. Il y avait une affiche ambiguë à l'extrême.

"L'après" : ce furent la mort de Kaya, les émeutes du 21 et du 22 février 1999 et la mort de Berger Agathe brandissant sa chemise blanche en signe de paix et pourtant touché par plus de 50 balles de chevrotine.

Il a été pris de court. Il était à Rodrigues à l'époque (c'est ce que l'on m'a dit quand j'ai voulu lui parler) et il n'a pu intervenir. Fort heureusement d'autres personnes sont intervenues, en particulier CassamUteem.

Je lui ai adressé une lettre en date du 25 janvier 2009 à ce sujet quand il était *Attorney General*. Je l'ai rencontré à son bureau à propos de l'argument qu'un fumeur de cannabis ne peut être privé de sa liberté sous la Section 5 du Deuxième Chapitre de la Constitution sauf s'il est un *addict to drugs... For the purpose of his care or treatment or for the protection of the community*. Il n'y a pas de sanctions pénales.

Il m'a regardé et puis il m'a dit très

candidement: "Je suis malheureusement le conseiller du gouvernement et non pas ton conseiller". Je me suis souvenu de certains conseils et cela a mis fin à une certaine admiration de ma part pour son savoir-vivre.

Où veut-il aller? Je ne crois pas qu'il le sache. Mais il n'est pas méchant. Mais il doit s'intéresser à "l'après" qui pourrait être une source de danger pour notre société.

**\* Tout comme Bruneau Laurette, il a probablement vu un vide politique à remplir avec les partis traditionnels comme le MMM, le PMSD et le PTr ne parvenant pas, selon lui, à contrer efficacement le pouvoir en place, d'où ses méthodes pas tout à fait conventionnelles. Qu'en pensez-vous?**

Il y a dans les faits plus qu'un vide. C'est un anéantissement idéologique pour faire place à l'opportunisme caractériel de la classe intermédiaire qui contrôle absolument tout. On ne regarde plus les contradictions sociales et économiques avec un regard qui fait primer des propositions socialistes et démocratiques autrement définies.

Qui se bat pour l'adoption d'une Nouvelle Constitution? Très peu de gens ! Et on veut changer la société sans changer la nature de l'Etat, comme défini dans notre Constitution, et soutenu par l'idéologie de la classe dominante et exploiteuse!

Je ne fais pas de Valayden, de Laurette et autres citoyens supposément avisés, les boucs émissaires d'une situation pourrie par des gouvernements contrôlés par des dynasties familiales depuis 1987. L'analyse que nous donne la lutte des classes est importante. Il faut en premier lieu pousser de l'avant les revendications des classes opprimées, ensuite les revendications catégorielles, des collectifs humains, des individus. Au fond c'est une manipulation de la politique par des opportunistes de tous bords.

**\* Suite en page 8**



# Nous devons absolument faire attention à l'opportunisme politique qui trouve un vide et s'y plonge sans propositions alternatives crédibles'

\* Suite de la page 7

Ce que vous appelez méthodes non conventionnelles, ce sont en vérité celles des populismes de tous bords. Nous devons absolument faire attention à l'opportunisme politique qui trouve un vide et s'y plonge sans propositions alternatives crédibles, sauf pour les cris des foules lors des manifestations. Regardez les pancartes de ces manifestations et tirez-en les conclusions qui s'imposent.

Ce qui me préoccupe, c'est ce qui va se passer dans quelques mois si le secteur touristique plonge. Nous avons une bande d'irresponsables à la tête de notre pays. Employeurs du privé comme le Gouvernement. Cette bande n'écoute pas.

- Certains responsables de nos institutions et de nos corporations d'Etat doivent être remplacés. Il nous faut des mini-cabinets ministériels (Social - Planification économique surtout) soutenus par un encadrement intellectuellement avisé et surtout un système pour recueillir et traiter les faits...
- On dépense beaucoup d'argent sans octroyer des ressources dans l'affirmation de nos deux secteurs de production; il faut une refonte des deux piliers de nos secteurs de services (consommation et soutien logistique).
- Il faut exercer plus de contrôle sur les secteurs financier et bancaire.

Ce Gouvernement doit partir aux prochaines élections générales, de préférence, anticipées.

**\* Faut-il toutefois reconnaître que Rama Valayden et son groupe d'Avengers ont permis de voir plus clair dans l'affaire Kistnen et les pratiques illégales dans l'allocation des contrats publics - le fruit d'un travail assidu d'investigation sur le terrain, et cela dans l'intérêt public?**

Il n'y a pas de doute. Comme il l'a fait dans plusieurs cas surtout dans l'affaire des frères Sumodhee. J'ai conservé ses textes d'enquête et des positions juridiques. Il a le temps, les moyens et la perspicacité pour le faire.

Mais nous vivons dans une société qui favorise la pratique de l'accaparement par la pratique de la fraude, du vol, de la corruption, du blanchiment d'argent... Voilà comment les couches dévoyées de la bureaucratie d'Etat et les parasites de toutes sortes seraient en train de s'enrichir et de monopoliser le pouvoir à l'intérieur d'une structure politique dynastique.

Une dynastie politique croit que le pouvoir lui appartient et il peut en abuser avec l'objectif de le transférer à ses descendants. C'est le cas surtout avec la dynastie capitaliste qui entretient des liens incestueux avec ces dynasties politiques et bureaucratiques. Je dis bien "incestueux", parce qu'ils sont deux enfants siamois.

Nous avons à revoir ce qui se présente devant nous sur le plan structurel sous les désastres économiques post-Covid 19. On ne déterre les crimes que pour les besoins du journalisme événementiel. Après on oublie. Qui se rappelle du passé? Dans trois ans, on oubliera Kistnen. Une des causes est, de mon point de vue, le type de journalisme que nous pratiquons.

**\* Donc, que pensez-vous du groupe d'Avengers?**

Je dirai trois choses à propos de ce groupe d'avocats qui portent un nom éminemment populiste.

1) Nos avocats mauriciens ne suivent pas leur déontologie et certains devraient être "cassés" comme avocats. Ce groupe gagnerait à mettre de l'ordre au sein du Bar Council. Je vais bientôt adresser une lettre à cette

***"Une dynastie politique croit que le pouvoir lui appartient et il peut en abuser avec l'objectif de le transférer à ses descendants. C'est le cas surtout avec la dynastie capitaliste qui entretient des liens incestueux avec ces dynasties politiques et bureaucratiques. Je dis bien "incestueux", parce qu'ils sont deux enfants siamois..."***

organisation dénonçant les agissements de certains. Ce n'est plus possible.

2) Il faut qu'ils fassent la différence entre l'application de la loi dans une société qui bouge et une société régie uniquement par la loi. C'est Jean Etienne-Marie Portalis, un des rédacteurs du Code Civil qui a dit ceci:

*" Quoi que l'on fasse, les lois positives ne sauraient jamais entièrement remplacer l'usage de la raison naturelle dans les affaires de la vie. Les besoins de la société sont si variés, la communication des hommes est si active, leurs intérêts sont si multiples, et leurs rapports si étendus, qu'il est impossible au législateur de pourvoir à tout ".*

On doit couvrir à la fois la nature humaine et la condition humaine. C'est dans ce sens qu'il faut se concentrer sur une Nouvelle Constitution. Je ne peux respecter des avocats qui jonglent avec des cas médiatisés et ainsi, ils obstruent un travail à long terme que l'on mène pour changer notre Constitution.

3) Il faut aider tout le monde et donc engager leurs collègues à travailler gratuitement pour ceux qui n'ont pas de moyens pour se défendre. La pratique du *pro bono* doit être affirmée à Maurice. Il est trop facile de faire de la défense juridique des faibles une stratégie pouvoiriste.

**\* Au-delà de l'affaire Kistnen/Sawmynaden, serait-il devenu gênant pour les autorités, surtout après ses révélations concernant notre système de sécurité du territoire, ce qui aurait favorisé le trafic de drogue par voie maritime? Ou prenez-vous ses révélations avec une pincée de sel?**

Ce que je peux vous dire, c'est que les autorités, du moins certains, ne prennent pas conscience, ou seraient impliquées, dans le trafic de drogue international.

Maurice est une plaque tournante de la drogue, surtout des pays qui fabriquent de l'héroïne, de la morphine et d'autres drogues dérivées utilisant du pavot d'opium provenant surtout de l'Afghanistan.

Une partie reste ici, mais la plus grosse part reprend le chemin de l'étranger. Ce qui est importé pour notre consommation, c'est le cannabis provenant de la Réunion, de Madagascar... Sur le marché local les gousses de cannabis viennent d'ailleurs. Elles ne proviennent pas des plantations locales. Mais nous produisons en petites quantités des hybrides au moyen du système hydroponique ou autres.

Dans le pays, nous avons l'épineux problème des drogues synthétiques. C'est une drogue dévastatrice. Il faut arrêter sa fabrication et sa vente. J'ai interrogé des personnes doublement avisées sur leur fabrication et



aussi sur les produits chimiques utilisés. Elles m'ont donné des noms de produits qui sont, en fait, des poisons.

Quand j'ai déposé devant la Commission sur la drogue, j'ai donné mon opinion et j'ai même soumis un opuscule publié par l'Observatoire Pour La Démocratie le 20 mars 2016. Ce texte est toujours d'actualité. On a créé, des camarades et moi, l'organisation CLAIM. Cette organisation est autonome et fait un bon travail de conscientisation.

Il y a un comité gouvernemental qui écoute les gens sur la question du cannabis. J'ai proposé que Maurice adopte la stratégie allemande qui a été mise en place sur l'argument le plus fondamental en République: La Liberté de la Personne humaine.

**\* Un rapport rédigé, dans le cadre du 'Maritime Security', à l'initiative de l'Union européenne en juin 2019, faisait déjà état d'une hausse du trafic d'héroïne par voie maritime dans l'océan Indien. Durant ces dernières années, des saisies d'une valeur d'environ Rs 12 milliards ont été effectuées, et la dernière à Pointe aux Canonnières se situerait autour de Rs 3,7 milliards... Disposons-nous à Maurice de moyens pour financer de telles transactions?**

Vous soulevez trois questions que je pose depuis des années.

\* Suite en page 9



# 'Chez Valayden, l'événement a préséance sur l'objectif visé, si tant est qu'il y en ait un'

\* Suite de la page 8

1. Que le trafic de la drogue est international et passe par la voie maritime. C'est impossible de le faire par d'autres voies. Donc la surveillance doit avoir lieu dans le port mais surtout sur les côtes.

Ce n'est pas un hasard d'avoir trouvé de la drogue à Pointe aux Canonnières. Elle était tout simplement en transit. Donc, il faut un contrôle sur les liaisons maritimes avec l'Orient pour son arrivée, et vers l'Afrique et l'Europe pour son exportation.

2. Que comme tout commerce international, il faut un secteur financier et un secteur bancaire. Les financiers internationaux n'ont rien à voir avec la fabrication, le transport et la distribution des drogues fabriquées du pavot à opium, pour utiliser le langage approprié.

Notre FIU local, créé en 2002, a-t-il les moyens et l'objectif de contrôler le commerce de la drogue et des armes ou n'agit-elle que sur les ordres de sa contrepartie américaine?

L'Etat américain, pour le besoin de contrôler le terrorisme islamique, contrôlerait-il toutes ces institutions d'investigation dans le monde?

3. Le commerce de la drogue et la prostitution sont les deux activités, dans le secteur informel, qui doit brasser quelques 10 milliards de roupies. Il existe plusieurs centres de massage spécialisés en matière de prostitution et il existe plusieurs réseaux de distribution de drogues dans le pays.

Nonobstant le fait que les drogues s'exportent, il n'est point difficile de retracer les gros distributeurs et remonter les filières. Donc au lieu de s'acharner sur les petits consommateurs, il faut remonter vers le haut. Visons donc les drogues mortifères !

Si nous nous appuyons sur la liberté de la personne humaine, nous devons contourner la consommation de drogues dites douces (non mortifères) pour nous attaquer aux drogues mortifères. On ne peut finir avec les pratiques de prendre des calmants et des produits qui reproduisent les mêmes sensations que les plaisirs psychédéliques.

Malgré tout le respect que j'ai pour l'art ou la musique psychédélique, il faut surtout ne pas laisser ces produits entre les mains des personnes âgées de moins de 25 ans ou de ceux qui souffrent de maladies psychiatriques.

**\* Dans le sillage du différend qui oppose la Gambling Regulatory Authority au Mauritius Turf Club, on serait revenu sur les ramifications entre certains proches du pouvoir, le trafic de drogue, les paris illégaux, l'évasion fiscale et le blanchiment d'argent. Il paraît qu'on serait là devant une industrie mafieuse et tentaculaire qui dépasserait nos frontières, et donc difficile à combattre, non?**

Je ne suis allé aux courses qu'une seule fois dans ma vie. C'était il y a des années de cela pour y emmener un enfant de 5 ans qui voulait voir les chevaux. Aujourd'hui, il est mon fils adoptif de 48 ans. C'est la seule chose de bon que je peux tirer des courses...

Je constate que la mafia qui contrôle les courses veut empêcher J.G.Giraud d'assumer ses fonctions. Il s'y passe des choses graves. Contactez n'importe qui... et on vous nommera les noms de ceux qui pèsent financièrement et frauduleusement sur les courses, en termes de sport hippique, tout comme il y a des mafias qui contrôlent d'autres fédérations sportives.



**“Je constate que la mafia qui contrôle les courses veut empêcher J. G. Giraud d'assumer ses fonctions. Il s'y passe des choses graves. Contactez n'importe qui... et on vous nommera les noms de ceux qui pèsent financièrement et frauduleusement sur les courses, en termes de sport hippique, tout comme il y a des mafias qui contrôlent d'autres fédérations sportives...”**

S'il faut agir, il faudrait agir sur l'ensemble des jeux de hasard et aussi des jeux sportifs. Pour moi, les jeux de hasard est un vol organisé qui tire des profits énormes entre les mises et les gains.

Il faut mettre de l'ordre et aider à changer les choses. Si je peux me permettre de vous le dire, il y aura beaucoup de changements positifs à la MTC. D'ailleurs il y aura un changement de noms. La FPU représente les travailleurs de la MTC.

**\* Autre sujet dans l'actualité locale ces derniers jours, suivant sur le débat concernant le droit de vote à notre diaspora, c'est la première élection virtuelle tenue entre le 8 et le 15 mai de la 'Mauritius Global Diaspora'. Le PTR est arrivé en tête avec un peu plus de 30%, suivi du Vote Blanc (28,47%) et le Reform Party (12,29%) - et les autres obtenant un score de 0.08% à 7,97%. Cela reflète-t-il la réalité politique dans**

**le pays actuellement, selon vous ?**

La diaspora se permet de voter dans le cadre de ses perceptions des choses à Maurice. Ces camarades ne vivent pas notre réalité et ne sont pas conscients de la somme de travail abattu par les forces de gauche.

Je suis désolé. Mais le MPM, quoi qu'il arrive, a dans ses propositions constitutionnelles, la proposition suivante pour notre diaspora qui est le droit de vote, de retour, etc.

*Chapitre 1 - Section 3.2 Any population survey shall include the citizens of the Republic residing overseas and having registered themselves at the Embassies of the Republic or are registered with the Passport Office.*

Vous savez je suis un observateur engagé politiquement au plus profond de ma personne. J'ai une position de classe et une position politique qui me poussent à délaisser la voie parlementaire pour une stratégie de construction de pouvoir extraparlamentaire.

- Je note que ceux qui sont partis, pour une raison ou pour une autre, ont conservé leur affiliation travailliste.
- Le vote blanc est le vote le plus positif dans le sens que ces personnes ont participé au vote en tant que personnes intéressés mais ils ont voté blanc, ce qui exprime beaucoup de choses. 28,47%, c'est très positif.

**\* Pas de base militaire indienne à Agaléga, a rassuré le Premier ministre cette semaine, en réponse à la PNQ de Xavier Duval, portant sur l'accord entre les autorités indiennes et mauriciennes. Chacun a droit à son opinion sur l'Inde de Modi, mais pourquoi est-ce que le sous-continent indien a-t-il une si mauvaise presse à Maurice alors qu'on passe sous silence les bases françaises, américaines ou chinoises dans la région?**

Notre Gouvernement est irresponsable sur la question d'Agaléga. Tout d'abord, il faut, dans la Nouvelle Constitution, démilitariser l'océan Indien en commençant par interdire des bateaux de guerre dans nos eaux territoriales.

L'Inde va placer Agaléga dans sa stratégie d'attaque ou de défense. J'ai des photos des constructions en cours et je suis choqué qu'aucune information ne circule dans le pays sur ces travaux en cours.

Il y a des centaines de travailleurs indiens à Agaléga et plusieurs constructions sont en cours : Port, aéroport, station électrique, etc. Je vous transmets quelques photos...

La déclaration faite par le PM à l'Assemblée nationale nous donne l'assurance qu'il n'y a pas de logistique pour stocker des armes sur ces deux îles mais il n'est pas dit que des armes ne transiteront pas par Agaléga.

J'ai déjà parlé des exportations d'armes vers l'Afrique du Sud passant par Plaisance, du temps de l'apartheid. J'avais contacté l'ANC à ce sujet et la réponse était que rien ne pouvait être fait. C'était en 2001. Cette affaire avait été rapportée dans les journaux de l'époque.

Il faut bien prendre conscience que Modi à deux pays sur son chemin: le Pakistan et la Chine, le premier pour des raisons politiques depuis 1930, et le second pour des raisons économiques depuis 20 ans.

L'Inde sera le pays le plus peuplé du monde en 2025 et aussi le principal concurrent économique de la Chine. Sur un autre plan, cela va affaiblir nos actions pour récupérer les Chagos...



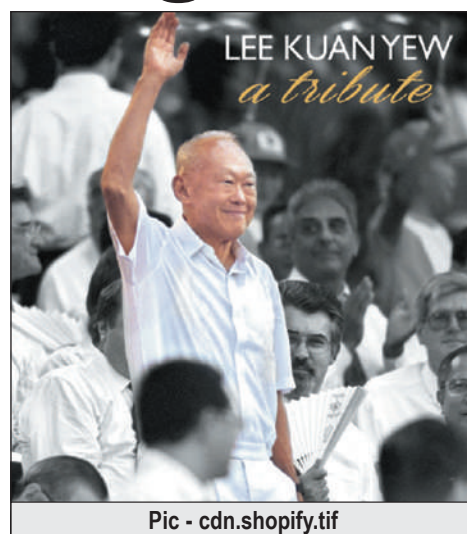
# Are we heading towards failure?

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Around the same time, a senior minister (who is currently minister again) in an interview in a newspaper had commented that *'nos institutions sont faibles et vulnérables. Elles ne sont pas dirigées par des personnes choisies sur la base des compétences et sont perméables aux influences politiques.'*

Has anything changed? And will things change? This is where we must learn from others who have been at the helm of their successfully-run countries, and to me late Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew is that model to inspire. There is plenty to gain in *'From Third World to First - The Singapore Story: 1965 - 2000'*, written by no less than the very person who was the central character of that story, Lee Kuan Yew. Being given that we have been saying that we want Mauritius to become the Singapore of the Indian Ocean, I thought that this first-hand account by the internationally respected leader of such a tiny country but great nation could contain some gems of lessons of relevance to our own future.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate what I am saying is to quote some extracts, so that we get the flavour of the book and insights into the vision and character of the persona in his own words. It may be noted that the italics in these quotations are added. He begins by saying that he wrote the book 'for a younger generation of Singaporeans who took stability, growth and prosperity for granted' but that he 'wanted them to know how difficult it was for a small country of 640 sq. km with no natural resources to survive.' He reminded them that 'public order, personal security, economic and social progress, and prosperity are not the natural



Pic - cdn.shopify.tif

“Lee Kuan Yew praises his core team which was ‘outstanding,’ willingly acknowledging that ‘they were all older than I was, and were never inhibited from telling me what they thought, especially when I was wrong.’ And why did he welcome such a state of affairs? Because ‘they helped me to stay objective and balanced, and saved me from any risk of megalomania which could so easily come with long years in office’...”

order of things, that they depend on ceaseless effort and attention from an *honest and effective government that the people must elect.*

But he is careful to point out that his book is not a prescription, a 'how-to' book. Rather, it is 'an account of the problems my colleagues and I faced, and how we set about solving them.' It is for us to draw any lessons, and adapt them for application in our context as appropriate. This was the line adopted by Lee Kuan Yew himself: 'So I

made a practice of finding out who else had met the problem we faced, how they had tackled it, and how successful they had been.'

But it wasn't about a blind transposition of models that had been used elsewhere, as he underlines, *'what guided me were reason and reality.'* The acid test I applied to every theory or scheme was, *would it work?* adding that 'if it did not work, or the results were poor, I did not waste more time or resources on it.' He is humble enough to accept that he could make mistakes, but *'...never made the same mistake twice, and I tried to learn from mistakes others had made.'*

The theme of learning runs constantly, *'as apprentices in the exercise of power... we never stopped learning* because the situation kept on changing and we had to adjust our own policies.' He acknowledges that 'I had the advantage of several ministers who read widely,' and he encouraged a mutual exchange, for 'we passed interesting books and articles we had read to each other.' Humility and reality surface again, when he notes that 'when we started, we were *innocent and ignorant* but we were saved by *being careful to probe and test ideas before we implemented them.*

For me this is one of the most valuable lessons that the book contains, because too often, in our hurry to get things done, we plunge in blindfolded as it were, causing harm in so doing. And the higher we are placed in the polity, the more damage that is done because in the natural order of things decisions made at that level of national functioning have a larger impact, affecting many more lives, and also the country at large, than decisions taken at lower levels.

That's why it is important to remember that we do not know everything, and must consult wisely: meaning the right people, 'capable men of integrity.' And again, 'I sought out able men and placed them in positions of authority to 'administer an honest and efficient system' in order to fulfil the *'burning desire to change an unfair and unjust society for the better.'* He praises his core team which was 'outstanding,' willingly acknowledging that 'they were all older than I was, and were never inhibited from telling me what they thought, especially when I was wrong.' And why did he welcome such a state of affairs? Because 'they helped me to stay objective and balanced, and saved me from any risk of megalomania which could so easily come with long years in office.'

Perhaps that is why he 'always tried to be correct, not politically correct.' If he has 'one formula for success,' he says, 'it was that we were constantly studying how to make things work, or how to make them work better.' He ends his epilogue by reminding that 'we stand a better chance of not failing if we abide by the basic principles that have helped us progress: social cohesion through sharing the benefits of progress, equal opportunities for all, and meritocracy, with the best man or woman for the job, especially as leaders in government.'

True, every country has its own socio-historical context. But the above captures the essential, robust principles of governance that apply to all countries, and there is more than enough wisdom in them to help us avert becoming a failed state – we cannot boast to be still *numero uno* in sub-Saharan Africa. One day, perhaps, there may be a Mauritian story, correct but not necessarily politically correct, to tell. We will then have arrived, who knows...

RN Gopee

## The end of 'global health' as we know it

☛ Cont. from page 2

Most obviously, Trump's "America first" stood in stark contrast to the Obama administration's global health security initiative and the Bush administration's massive programme for AIDS relief, which helped transform the course of HIV infections in Africa.

During this time, optimists pointed to the continued engagement of other countries in global health initiatives, and argued that this new nationalism might only be a transitory phase, with business-as-usual returning post-Trump. Pessimists suggested that what we have seen is a more fundamental shift in the zeitgeist, with the global "haves" turning away from the humanitarianism and cosmopolitanism of the 2000s. The jury may be out as to who is correct, but at the very least the consensus of that era over the benefits of globalisation appears much less convincing now.

### Global health gone missing

In contrast to the 2002-3 SARS outbreak and the 2009-10 swine flu pandemic when the WHO was central to a global response, or the 2014-15 West African Ebola outbreak when the organisation was widely criticised for not playing a leading role, this time around there has been no

question that leadership on Covid-19 would come from anywhere except national governments.

Stark policy differences between states have appeared over basic issues such as face masks, lockdowns and social distancing. The WHO has criticised high-income countries for a "catastrophic moral failure" over allocation of vaccines, and questions of safety have been largely addressed at the national level despite clear advice from



The catastrophic COVID surge in India is evidence of the failure of global health. Jagadeesh NV/EPA

the WHO.

Although COVAX, the global vaccine sharing facility, had delivered more than 38 million doses to 100 economies in the first quarter of 2021, by mid-April it was warning that supplies were tight and additional stocks were unlikely to be available to it beyond those already reserved. This was despite accelerating production of vaccines, and appeared to be because of prior agreements by manufacturers with (usually high-income) states on supplies for their national needs. Joe Biden's recent announcement of an additional 20 million doses for the rest of the world, although welcome, is but a drop in the ocean given the billions likely to be needed in India alone.

The catastrophic increase in Covid cases in India was exacerbated by the lack of critical health products, from PPE and oxygen to vaccines. If there ever was a global health system, then it had gone sadly missing when we needed it most.

Covid-19 has demonstrated that, in a time of crisis, the rich and powerful fell back to national approaches with only secondary concerns for the global health good. But since national health outcomes appear still to be inextricably linked to global developments, the need to rebuild global health after Covid is more pressing than ever.

Colin McInnes, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Aberystwyth University



# The Murky Secrets behind the Covid-19 Pandemic

☛ Cont. from page 4

Her plan was to take genes that coded for spike proteins possessing a variety of measured affinities for human cells, ranging from high to low. She would insert these spike genes one by one into the backbone of a number of viral genomes ("reverse genetics" and "infectious clone technology"), creating a series of chimeric viruses. These chimeric viruses would then be tested for their ability to attack human cell cultures ("in vitro") and humanized mice ("in vivo"). And this information would help predict the likelihood of "spillover," the jump of a coronavirus from bats to people.

The methodical approach was designed to find the best combination of coronavirus backbone and spike protein for infecting human cells. The approach could have generated SARS2-like viruses.'

## Pandora's box

It cannot yet be stated that Shi did or did not generate SARS2 in her lab because her records have been sealed. Richard H. Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University and leading expert on biosafety adds: 'It is clear that the Wuhan Institute of

Virology was systematically constructing novel chimeric coronaviruses and was assessing their ability to infect human cells grown in cultures and humanized mice. Depending on the constant genomic contexts chosen for analysis, this work could have produced SARS-CoV-2 or a proximal progenitor of SARS-CoV-2. "Genomic context" refers to the particular viral backbone used as the testbed for the spike protein.'

Remarks made by David Baltimore, 1975 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine and co-discoverer of reverse transcriptase and a class of viruses that includes HIV that 'the existence of the furin cleavage site in the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 suggests a non-natural origin' has opened a Pandora's box of conjectures on Covid-19.

It is imperative to lift the curtain on some of the controversial and risky research being carried out under the radar in laboratories. It must be flagged that ever since virologists gained the tools for manipulating a virus's genes, they have argued they could get ahead of a potential pandemic by exploring how close a given animal virus might be to making the jump to humans. And that justified lab experiments in enhancing the ability

of dangerous animal viruses to infect people, virologists asserted. These lab experimental tweaks on viral capabilities are known as gain-of-function experiments. With coronaviruses, there was particular interest in the spike proteins, which jut out all

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around the spherical surface of the virus and determine which species of animal it will target.

## Uncovering the truth

The upshot of such risky research which tampers with the laws of nature and plays God may have been the cause of Covid-19 and its multiple variants causing successive waves of infection and a rising death toll across the world. It has overhauled and severely disrupted our lives and livelihoods with no end in sight.

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Mrinal Roy

## PROGRAMME DES COURSES

### 1 THE PORT AU PRINCE CUP 1400 m -- Valeur [0-25] -- 12h15

1 The Right Stuff	CD	4-7-3-7-3	61(-4)	M.Sonaram	1	280
2 Artax	AS	5-9-4-9-3	60.5	P.K.Horil	4	380
3 Double Winner	P	0-8-7-9-R	60.5	K.Kalychurun	6	1600
4 After The Order	CR	5-2-4-4-8	59.5(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	7	550
5 Amandla	JMH	3-6-9-2-3	59.5	T.Juglall	8	400
6 Eurotec	RM	nouveau	59	P.C.Orffer	3	2000
7 Red Force One	RG	nouveau	59	J.Allyhosain	5	450
8 Northern Rebel	JMH	8-4-8-6-6	53	S.Rama	2	2500

### 2 THE DR. J. EDOUARD BRUNEL CUP 1500 m - Valeur [0-26] - 12h50

1 Capkuta	JMH	0-0-0-5-5	60	T.Juglall	3	600
2 Dreamforest	CD	6-6-3-5-5	60(-4)	M.Sonaram	2	1300
3 Heart Of Darkness	SN	3-5-7-3-4	60	D.Bheekary	1	600
4 Lead Singer	P	0-0-0-3-7	60	P.K.Horil	7	900
5 Mr Green Street	RM	5-2-2-4-9	60	P.C.Orffer	10	350
6 Ruby Spirit	AS	7-5-6-5-4	60	R.Joorawon	5	1600
7 Siberian Husky	CR	8-3-9-7-4	60(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	4	750
8 Flowerscape	RG	2-2-3-4-1	59.5	J.Allyhosain	6	260
9 Jet Path	VA	10-4-8-9-8	59	B.Sooiful	9	2500
10 Eagles Vision	SPN	6-5-8-6-2	58	K.Kalychurun	8	1400

### 3 THE RETIRED RACEHORSES COMMITTEE CUP 1450 m - Valeur Benchmark 36 - 13h25

1 Apollo Star	AS	4-1-2-22	60	R.Joorawon	5	500
2 Bound By Duty	RM	0-2-5-1-1	59.5	P.C.Orffer	8	600
3 Itdawnedonme	SH	7-10-2-8-5	59.5	S.Rama	4	1000
4 Black Indy	PM	2-5-6-9-2	59	P.K.Horil	9	2000
5 Bollinger	P	0-8-2-1-8	59	K.Kalychurun	6	600
6 Good Buddy	JMH	1-9-5-6-3	59	T.Juglall	11	2500
7 Affranchi	VA	7-6-6-7-6	58.5	B.Sooiful	2	2500
8 Lagacio	G	1-4-4-2-5	58.5	S.Donohoe	3	1600
9 Nao Faz Mal	RG	7-6-2-3-1	58	J.Allyhosain	7	250
10 Paddingtons Luck	GR	4-4-2-7-2	58	N.Tehea	1	500
11 Keiko [EA]	SJ	C-5-2-4-5	58.5	-----	10	----

## 2è Journée samedi 22 mai 2021

### 4 THE RENE MAINGARD CUP 1365 m -- Valeur Benchmark 46 -- 14h00

1 Lickerio	AS	3-2-6-7-6	61	R.Joorawon	6	500
2 Tripod	CR	6-3-6-8-3	60(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	3	650
3 Promissory	VA	3-2-3-1-3	59.5	B.Sooiful	4	700
4 Roman Dancer	G	6-R-1-7-1	59.5	S.Donohoe	1	500
5 Snowy Mountain	P	nouveau	59.5	K.Kalychurun	5	2500
6 Trip To The Sky	SJ	8-3-3-3-1	59.5	R.Boutanive	2	300
7 Watch Me Dad	GR	2-1-1-2-2	59.5	N.Tehea	7	300
8 Potawatomi	SN	3-5-2-6-8	54(-3)	A.Roy	8	2500

### 5 THE CAMILLE L. NAIRAC CUP 1450 m -- Valeur Benchmark 56 -- 14h35

1 Stream Ahead	CD	6-5-3-1-N	61.5(-4)	M.Sonaram	5	1200
2 Prince Of Persia	G	1-4-3-5-1	61	S.Donohoe	3	450
3 Tsitsikamma Dance	RM	6-2-5-5-4	61	P.C.Orffer	7	600
4 Arabian Air	CR	1-5-9-6-4	59(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	8	900
5 Hubble	SJ	5-1-1-1-7	59	P.K.Horil	9	450
6 Dynamite Jack	RG	7-1-5-1-1	58.5	J.Allyhosain	6	220
7 Charleston Hero	VA	1-3-1-1-8	58(-3)	A.Roy	2	1000
8 Lemon Drop Shot	P	3-7-2-4-8	56	K.Kalychurun	4	1400
9 The Byzantine	JMH	4-5-8-5-6	52.5	T.Juglall	1	3000

### 6 THE COMMONWEALTH CUP 990 m -- Valeur Benchmark 31 -- 15h10

1 Till Dawn	AS	2-7-3-2-1	60.5	R.Joorawon	6	450
2 Captain Garrett	GR	0-0-6-R-2	60	N.Tehea	8	300
3 Trojan Quest	JMH	4-5-8-4-1	60	T.Juglall	3	800
4 Nikhils Inn	PM	nouveau	59.5	P.K.Horil	7	650
5 Master Jay	G	3-7-7-N-2	59	S.Donohoe	2	300
6 Desert Illusion	SN	nouveau	58.5	D.Bheekary	5	700
7 Masterofallisurvey	P	nouveau	57.5	K.Kalychurun	4	1600
8 Le Quartier	CD	nouveau	56(-4)	M.Sonaram	9	1600
9 Zeno [EA]	VA	0-0-0-N-8	58.5	-----	1	----

### 7 50TH ANNI. OF INDEPENDENCE OF MAURITIUS CUP 1400 m -- Valeur [50+] -- 15h45

1 Alyaasaat	GR	1-2-1-1-2	61	N.Tehea	8	320
2 Horse Guards	CD	9-1-65-1	59.5(-4)	M.Sonaram	9	450
3 Table Bay	G	2-21-3-3	58.5	S.Donohoe	4	1000
4 Opera Royal	SH	3-4-5-2-5	57	S.Rama	2	2500
5 Vascostreettractor	SJ	3-1-3-2-7	56.5	B.Sooiful	7	380
6 Wall Tag	VA	2-3-5-3-3	56.5(-3)	A.Roy	5	900
7 Iditarod Trail	GR	2-1-1-2-7	56	R.Joorawon	1	320
8 Haylor	SJ	2-2-N-5-1	54	T.Juglall	6	1400
9 Ideal Secret	RM	3-2-2-4-1	54	P.K.Horil	3	1600

### 8 THE PROFESSOR HASSAN RAFFA CUP 1365 m -- Valeur Benchmark 46 -- 16h20

1 Choir Of Angels	JMH	2-1-1-2-7	60	T.Juglall	7	400
2 Hakeem	P	2-5-5-2-4	60	K.Kalychurun	8	1000
3 Protea Paradise	RG	6-6-4-5-10	59	J.Allyhosain	4	2000
4 Break The Silence	GR	nouveau	58.5	N.Tehea	3	270
5 Inauguration	CR	5-9-6-4-7	58.5(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	5	700
6 Culture Trip	SN	nouveau	58	D.Bheekary	2	600
7 Juniper Lane	PM	nouveau	58	P.K.Horil	1	380
8 Moschino	VA	2-3-1-4-1	57(-3)	A.Roy	6	1400

### 9 THE GREAT GUSTO PLATE 990 m -- Valeur [0-20] -- 16h55

1 Arctic Flyer	SPN	7-6-5-5-7	60	K.Kalychurun	3	700
2 Time Is Gold	SH	0-0-0-10-7	60	S.Rama	2	1400
3 Dunzie	CD	4-8-2-2-2	59.5(-4)	M.Sonaram	9	280
4 Minaloushe Venture	AS	5-4-4-35	59.5	P.K.Horil	5	900
5 Go Jewel	VA	nouveau	59	B.Sooiful	7	280
6 Newsman	RG	2-6-4-4-2	58.5	J.Allyhosain	8	380
7 Chap Trap	CR	97-6-710	57.5(-3)	A.Roy	4	2000
8 Real Vision	JMH	5-5-4-4-4	57.5	T.Juglall	6	1400
9 Birthday Boy [EA]	VA	7-8-7-5-8	58.5	-----	1	----

## SELECTIONS

1. The Right Stuff, Artax, Red Force One
2. Flowerscape, Mr Green Street, Heart Of Darkness
3. Nao Faz Mal, Bound By Duty, Bollinger
4. Trip To The Sky, Promissory, Roman Dancer
5. Dynamite Jack, Prince Of Persia, Hubble

6. Captain Garrett, Master Jay, Till Dawn
7. Alyaasaat, Iditarod Trail, Horse Guards
8. Break The Silence, Culture Trip, Choir Of Angels
9. Dunzie, Newsman, Arctic Flyer



# Men are from Mars, women are from... Mars?

*How people choose partners is surprisingly similar (but depends on age)*

Stephen Whyte, Benno Torgler &  
Ho Fai Chan, Queensland  
University of Technology;  
Rob Brooks,  
UNSW

As behavioural scientists, we have a keen interest in how people make decisions, and particularly how these decisions incorporate a range of emotional, cognitive and psychological factors.

Choosing a life partner is arguably one of the most important decisions a person can make. And research has shown the most common way to do this these days is to go online.

As increasing numbers of people wade cautiously through the digital dating market, many still subscribe to stereotypical ideas about what men and women find attractive in a partner.

Our latest research, published today in PLOS One shows the truth, as ever, is more nuanced.

Using survey data from 7,325 heterosexual users of dating websites, aged 18 to 65, we show there is no absolute difference between the preferences of men and women when it comes to choosing a mate. Both essentially desire the same qualities, but prioritise them slightly differently.

## The democratisation of dating?

Dating in the 21st century is a truly unique experience. For millennia, the human search for companionship had been constrained by access, distance and resources. Most people had to find a partner through close or extended family, or religious, cultural or social organisations.

Today, online dating allows seemingly unrestrained and "nonsequential" decision-making.

Imagine if you met someone at a bar and told them to wait around for two hours, just in case you managed to find someone better. It sounds bizarre, but that's what online dating allows. You can search through thousands of people and never have to make a decision.

This is good news for researchers of human behaviour. With such a vast and growing pool of data, we can study mating choices in a way we never could before.

## Pressure to play the evolutionary game

Obviously, a huge part of sexual attraction comes down to personal preference regarding what makes someone "sexy". That said, there are many stereotypes relating to what heterosexual men and women find sexy.

It's often assumed women favour more emotional, personality, intelligence and

commitment-based traits in men, while men are often said to prefer physical attractiveness.

From an evolutionary psychology angle, these stereotypes aren't unfounded. In the game of life, the main aim is to pass on your genes - and once you do, to ensure your offspring achieve the same success.

Naturally, men and women play different roles in the reproduction process. From an evolutionary standpoint, it makes sense for women to seek a man with traits that will benefit her offspring in both the short and long term, as women bear a bigger reproductive cost than men.

They have internal gestation for nine months and then must successfully give birth, all while facing discomfort and risk. They will then continue to nurse and care for the child.

Men, at its simplest, need only to invest time into copulation to have offspring. Theoretically, then, the specific selection pressures on men and women to pass on their genes should be observable in the characteristics of the mates they choose.

Many of these assumptions fall under a school of thought called "parental investment theory", developed in the early 1970s by evolutionary biologist Robert Trivers.

More recent theories in gender studies and social and evolutionary psychology have countered the notion of absolute differences. They demonstrate men and women are far more similar in their preferences than previously thought.

Our research reinforces one such theory, referred to as "mutual mate choice". We found both men and women essentially desire the same qualities in a partner, differing only in the relative emphasis placed on each trait at different life stages.

## If men are from Mars, women are too

We asked survey participants to rate from 0 to 100 the importance they placed on nine traits when looking for a mate. They fell into three categories:

- aesthetics, such as age, attractiveness and physical features
- resources, such as intelligence, education and income
- and personality, such as trust, openness and emotional connection.

Both genders rated aesthetics as highly important, along with all three personality traits, while income was much less important.

Women, however, rated factors including age, education, intelligence, income, trust and emotional connection about 9 to 14 points higher than men. Men placed relatively more emphasis on attractiveness



and physical build.

Importantly, the way both genders prioritised traits changed with age. Both cared less about physical attractiveness as they got older, whereas emphasis on personality increased. This makes sense, considering we require different things from a partner at different life stages.

Our findings reinforce that both men and women tend to give similar emphasis to certain traits, depending on their individual needs at a particular stage in life.

## Men and women can both be very picky

One interesting revelation came when we grouped participants' preference data together.

Of those individuals who said one specific trait was very important to them, it turned out the majority of traits were very important to them. On the other hand were respondents who said they didn't have a strong preference for any particular trait at all.

So while some people were happy to go with the flow, many of the participants actually cared a lot about a lot of different

factors. For men, the likelihood of having such stringent preferences was most common between ages 20 and 40. Among women it was more likely between the ages of 35 and 50.

## Personal circumstance and preference is key

The bottom line is there is no single unified theory of mate choice. Attractiveness matters to everyone to some extent. Resources and intelligence matter to everyone to some extent.

Beyond human biology and evolution, it's likely our individual personal constraints - such as employment, education, family and social circle - still have a huge impact on how we choose a mate, even if we are dating online.

While dating apps and websites may come with an element of "cognitive overload", they are ultimately just conduits for human communication. They let people search far and wide for a mate who will help them achieve their own relationship goals.

And our relationship goals, just as is the case with the importance we place on our preferences, change over time.





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## Le petit Théo et sa maîtresse

Le petit Théo demande à sa maîtresse s'il peut lui parler après le cours. Elle accepte.

La maîtresse : Alors, que veux-tu me dire, Théo?

Théo: Je pense être trop intelligent pour rester dans cette classe, je m'embête! Je voudrais passer directement au lycée.

Sur ce, le directeur informé, demande à Théo s'il veut bien passer des tests. Il accepte sans hésiter et le directeur commence le test.

Le directeur : Voyons voir Théo, 3 X 4?

Théo : Douze !

Le directeur : Et 6 X 6 ?

Théo : Trente six, Monsieur le directeur.

Le directeur : Capitale du Japon?

Théo: Tokyo!

Le test continue pendant une demi-heure, Théo ne fait aucune erreur!

À la fin du test, le directeur est satisfait mais la maîtresse demande si elle peut à son tour lui poser des questions. Tous deux acceptent et là elle commence.

La maîtresse : Bon Théo, la vache, elle en a 4 et moi j'en ai 2, qu'est ce que c'est?

Théo : Les jambes, Madame.

La maîtresse : Correct. Qu'est-ce qu'on trouve dans tes pantalons et pas dans les miens?

Le directeur s'étonne de la question...

Théo: Des poches, Madame.

La maîtresse : Bien, Théo. Qu'est-ce que les hommes et les femmes ont en plein milieu et qui est en double ?

Le directeur se prépare à intervenir lorsque Théo répond :

Théo: Les deux "M", Madame.

La maîtresse : Où est-ce que les femmes ont les poils les plus frisés?

Théo: En Afrique Madame...

La maîtresse : Qu'est-ce qui est mou mais qui, aux mains d'une femme, devient dur?

Le directeur ouvre grands les yeux mais Théo répond: Le vernis à ongles, Madame.

La maîtresse : Qu'est-ce que les hommes et nous les femmes, nous avons au milieu des jambes ?

Théo : Les genoux!

La maîtresse : Bien. Et qu'est-ce qu'une femme mariée a de plus large qu'une femme célibataire?

Le directeur n'en croit pas ses oreilles !

Théo : Le lit, Madame.

La maîtresse : Quelle est la partie de mon corps qui est souvent la plus humide?

Théo : Votre langue, Madame.

La maîtresse : Quel mot commençant par la lettre "c" désigne quelque chose qui peut être humide ou sec et que les hommes aiment regarder ?

Théo : Le ciel !

Le directeur soufflant, transpirant comme un sauvage, décide d'arrêter le test et s'exclame: Ce n'est pas au lycée que je vais t'envoyer mais directement à l'université ! Même moi, je l'aurais complètement raté ce test...

**Morale de l'histoire : c'est avec l'âge que l'on devient pervers!!!**

\*\*\*

### Marriage anniversary

A wife wakes in the middle of the night to find her husband missing. Hearing sobbing from the living room, she goes down to find her husband crying.

"What's the matter?" the woman asks.

"You remember 25 years ago. When I got you pregnant and your father told me I had to choose to marry you or go to jail," the man sobs.

"Sure, darling," the kindly wife replies, "so what?"

"Well, I would have been released tonight," the man gasps through desperate sobs.

### Life's Stories

## La sagesse de Mandela

Quand Mandela étudiait le Droit à l'université, un professeur blanc, dont le nom de famille était Peters le détestait intensément.

Un jour, Peters déjeunait à la salle cantine quand Mandela est venu avec son plateau et s'est assis à côté du professeur.

Le professeur lui dit: "Monsieur Mandela, vous ne comprenez pas?, un cochon et un oiseau ne s'assoient pas ensemble pour manger"

Mandela le regarda et répondit calmement: "Ne vous inquiétez pas professeur, je vais m'envoler?", et il est allé s'asseoir à une autre table.

Le lendemain, en classe, le prof enragé posa la question suivante: "M. Mandela, si vous étiez en train de marcher dans la rue et avez trouvé un paquet, et à l'intérieur étaient un sac de sagesse et un autre sac avec de l'argent, lequel choisiriez-vous?"

"Sans hésiter, celui avec l'argent, bien sûr," répondit Nelson.

Peters, souriant lui dit: "Moi, à ta place, j'aurais pris la sagesse."

Mandela haussa les épaules et répondit: "Chacun prend ce qu'il ne possède pas déjà!"

## The Great Philosophy of Life!

It is said in the sacred texts that 80% of the fighting male population of civilization was wiped out in the eighteen days of the Mahabharata war.

Sanjay, at the end of the war went to the spot where the greatest war took place: Kurukshetra.

He looked around and wondered if the war really happened, if the ground beneath him had soaked all that blood, if the great Pandavas and Krishna stood where he stood.

"You will never know the truth about that!" said an aging soft voice.

Sanjay turned around to find an old man in saffron robe appearing out of a column of dust.

"I know you are here to find out about the Kurukshetra war, but you cannot know about that war till you know what the real war is about," the old man said enigmatically.

"What do you mean?"

The Mahabharata is an epic, a ballad, perhaps a reality, but definitely a philosophy.

The old man smiled prodding Sanjay into more questions.

"Can you tell me what the philosophy is then?" Sanjay



requested.

"Sure," said the old man. "The Pandavas are nothing but your five senses: **Sight. Smell. Taste. Touch.** Sound. And do you know what the Kauravas are?" he asked narrowing his eyes. The Kauravas are the hundred vices that attack your senses everyday but you can fight them... and do you know how?"

Sanjay shook his head again.

"When Krishna rides your chariot!"

The old man smiled brighter, and Sanjay gasped at that gem of insight.

"Krishna is your inner voice, your soul, your guiding light, and if you let your life in his hands you have nothing

to worry."

Sanjay was stupefied but came around quickly with another question. "Then why are Dronacharya and Bhishma fighting for the Kauravas, if they are vices?"

The old man nodded, sadder for the question.

"It just means that as you grow up, your perception of your elders changes. The elders who you thought were perfect in your growing-up years are not all that perfect. They have faults. And one day you will have to decide if they are for your good or your bad. Then you may also realize that you may have to fight them for the good. It is the hardest part of growing up and that is why the Gita is important," said the old man.

Sanjay slumped down on the ground, not because he was tired but because he could understand and was struck by the enormity of it all.

"What about Karna?" he whispered.

"Ah!" said the old man. "You have saved the best for last. Karna is the brother to your senses, he is desire, he is a part of you but stands with the vices. He feels wronged and makes excuses for being with the vices as your desire does all the time. Does your desire not give you excuses to embrace vices?"

Sanjay nodded silently. He looked at the ground, consumed with a million thoughts, trying to put everything together and then when he looked up the old man was gone... disappeared in the column of dust leaving behind the great philosophy of life!



# Tips and tricks to ace work from home like a pro

Since last year, a vast majority of organizations around the world began working from home the same day the WHO officially declared Coronavirus as a pandemic. Working remotely can be hugely satisfying and productive, but it can also be challenging at the same time. There's an added advantage of spending more time with your near and dear ones, saving on the time you would spend on your daily commute, and working in a space where you're already quite comfortable. However, on the other hand, some of us have drowned ourselves in work, missing meals, and the basic necessity of taking care of our health.

Here are a few tricks and tips to make working from home as productive as possible as reported by Shikha Desai of TOI with inputs by Bhavin Turakhia, CEO & Founder, Flock.

## 1. Eat your meals on time

The secret is to not only plan your meals but also eat on time. Visualize breakfast, lunch, and dinner for at least a week or at least your working days of the week-think about what you need as well as what can be prepared quickly. Working from home may not mean more time to cook -especially if you have kids to look after while doing all the work your manager expects. Make sure to eat your meals on time, and push ahead meals for calls or meetings. Self-care is a must in such times.

## 2. Improve your work desk at home, regularly

Most of us now have a workspace at home, it could be a couch or space in your room by the window. What is important is to constantly upgrade or improvise it. Add some sticky notes, pictures of your favorite people (they could be your colleagues as well). Bring a bit of life into your work from home setup. In this space, you can plant a few houseplants to increase aesthetics and all together, a fresh vibe to the place.

The idea is to not make your workstation mundane and



boring. Working under suitable conditions is very essential for not only productivity but also your mental health and employee morale. Our work life is something that eats up a major chunk of our life. It is therefore important to enjoy it rather than just endure it. Since we are all caught up in it, we might as well start enjoying it with an uplifting environment. So, roll up your sleeves and start improvising up your home office today!

## 3. Don't lose on the habit of creating to-dos

A lot of us probably did this in the office, but planning your day is all the more important when you work from home. Even the most focused of us can find home working environment a little challenging. You might have started strong, but as distractions crop up, it's very easy to lose focus.

Planning your day doesn't have to be a big fancy task, bringing out your best stationery. It could be a simple sticky note on your system or jotting down pointers in your diary. Simply think of hours you want to set aside for work. Then you want a list of things to do in those chunks of time. Do it at the end of the day for the next one. And don't forget to check things off that to-do list every time you finish a task, because that is what has kept you going!

## 4. Take leaves. Unwind and relax

The work-from-home burnout is real, so don't hesitate to ask for leave. While working remotely for the past few months, most of us have neglected to take breaks. Taking a day off might not seem like a priority during a global pandemic, particularly when widespread lockdown measures have limited downtime to the confines of our own home once again, but not taking any time out could be detrimental to productivity. Even mental health experts stress the need for a routine and set of clear boundaries between working and personal time.

## 5. Limit those video calls, they do cause a fatigue

While working from home has been a sought-after perk for some employees, we have entered a new reality of frequent online meetings and an inability to disconnect from the job, which has created a new stressor, known as communication fatigue. In this context, the concept of 'workplace burnout' has taken an all-new meaning, with employees having to deal with virtual communication fatigue. Today, with the array of communication and conferencing platforms available, employees are continuously connected virtually with their colleagues, seniors, clients, and more. This communication overload is resulting in employees feeling drained at the end of the day with virtual communication fatigue being one of the most talked-about topics today. So, take virtual time off and set a deadline, create an itinerary for every video call.

## Invest in yourself, practise self-care

Investing in yourself helps take Covid-19 off your mind so you can move forward with a healthy mind and body, and a positive outlook towards the world. It doesn't have to be a hardcore exercise or activity. Just stay focused on eating healthy, staying physically active, and practicing regular meditation. Talk to friends and distant family. This period will pass hopefully soon, and we will all be on our way to unlocking a better version of ourselves when things return to normal. Because now, more than ever, self-care is our ticket to happiness.

## Relationships

# Signs you have an unhealthy obsession with someone

Having a crush on someone is all roses and beautiful dreams until you start obsessing over them! There is a very fine line between attraction and obsession. And when your obsession forces you to divert all your energies on them, that's when it starts to become unhealthy. You'll think about them all the time and this will restrict you from doing regular activities because they become your world! Here are some identifiable signs, as reported by Times of India, to find out if you have an unhealthy obsession with someone.

## Hiding personal insecurities

If you have low-self esteem issues and are trying to hide your insecurities by crushing hard on someone, then it's definitely unhealthy. You will lose your sense of individuality and will also try to validate your existence based on that person. You will tend to use that person to feel good about yourself, when in reality, you loathe your insecurities.



## Only caring about outer qualities

You will find yourself immersed within that person's outer qualities because that is what made you so infatuated with them. When the honeymoon period gets over and little flaws and fights arise, you will be unable to deal with that person's real persona because you are completely obsessed with their outer personality. Hence, it becomes extremely troublesome, causing you to lose control and focus over your life.

## Bailing out on your friends

Forget having a balance over your life, you won't even hesitate to bail out on your best friends! You will start prioritising that person more than anyone else, causing you to lose out on your dearest and closest friends and family. You will start spending all day with your partner even though they might not do the same. You might also cancel evenings with your friends in the hope that person might just call you.

## Accepting all last-minute plans

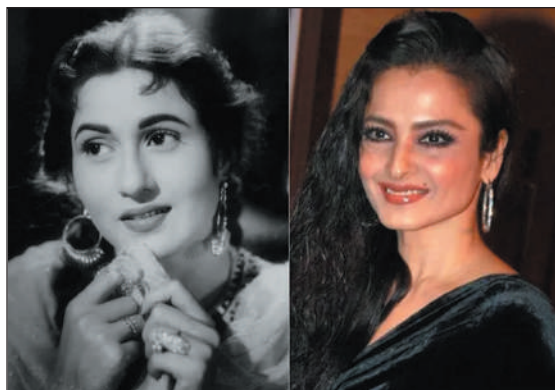
Impulsive and spontaneous plans are the best, but not at the expense of cancelling your previous plans just for that person. If you find yourself always accepting last-minute invites by ditching your friends or cancelling your hobbies, interests, etc., it is a clear sign that the person is invading your time, space and mind.

## Not getting upset with them, ever

You will avoid getting mad at that person because you're afraid that they might get very upset, and leave you. You will prefer to hide your emotions even though those concerns need to be addressed. This is never advisable because bottling up your feelings will only lead to severe resentment later.



# From Madhubala to Rekha: The tragic love lives of Bollywood actresses



*Times Now take a look at actresses who had tragic love lives. Unrequited love, physical abuse, mental instability...*

Film industry, over the years, has given birth to umpteen love stories. While some of them turned out to be fairy tales, there were others that were dark and depressing. Unrequited love, physical abuse, mental instability - the dark love stories of Bollywood are filled with ingredients that can send chills down your spine. History is the witness that the actresses have suffered more than actors because of ill-fated love. Here, we take a look at actresses who had tragic love lives...

## Madhubala

One of the most loved Bollywood actresses of all time, Madhubala dated a number of men in her life. However, she could never find true love and died a tragic death at the age of 36. She was all of 17 when she started dating Dilip Kumar. Theirs was a pairing that was loved by one and all. But their relationship ended as her father didn't approve of it. Madhubala then married Kishore Kumar. Speculations were rife that the singer-actor married her as he was in need of money. Soon, her health started deteriorating, and she breathed her last in 1969.



## Meena Kumari

Meena Kumari is undoubtedly one of the most graceful actresses to have graced the silver screen. Meena got into a relationship with filmmaker Kamal Amrohi and soon married him. Amrohi was almost 17 years elder to her. Due to his strict nature, the love story - which looked like a fairy tale in the beginning - turned into a nightmare.

## Parveen Babi

Parveen Babi, too, had a tragic love life. She was in a relationship with filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt, who even left his wife and family to be with Parveen. But due to her unstable mental condition, the two could not stay together.

While Mahesh tried everything to make things work between the two, Parveen's condition kept deteriorating before she died a lonely death.



## Kangana Ranaut

Kangana Ranaut has achieved a lot of success in her professional life. However, on the personal front, she hasn't been too lucky, especially as far as her love life is concerned. The actress was once dating Shekhar Suman's son Adhyayan Suman. But the relationship ended on a bitter note. The actress was also reportedly in a relationship with Hrithik Roshan. The supposed love story made headlines for all the wrong reasons when Kangana washed her dirty linen in public.



## Zeenat Aman

Zeenat Aman fell in love with Sanjay Khan, who was married with three kids. Their affair became the talk of the town and it was not long before they got hitched. It was said that Sanjay was a dominating husband and even thrashed Zeenat in a five-star hotel. Zeenat later married Mazhar Khan.

\*\*\*

## Rekha

Rekha was reportedly in a relationship with Amitabh Bachchan. While the actress was quite open about his equation with Bachchan, the latter always remained silent about it.

When the megastar married Jaya Bhaduri, it was the end of Amitabh and Rekha's alleged love story.

## YOUR STARS

### Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

You won't be afraid to solicit the support of influential persons in order to promote your projects. On the amorous plane, you'll have enough courage to make this declaration which has been waited for since a long time.

**Lucky Numbers: 8, 12, 15, 17, 22, 37**

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

Your charming power will increase tenfold and you'll be very eager to love and to be loved. You won't be spared pecuniary or family problems; show common sense. Don't overstep your limits for you won't be immune to overwork.

**Lucky Numbers: 2, 6, 9, 11, 33, 35**

### Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

This will be a week of personal achievement and of progress. The sentimental field will give you many satisfactions and will reassure you. You won't spare your efforts to consolidate your present love relation. Possibility of beautiful reunions with friends.

**Lucky Numbers: 1, 5, 9, 17, 21, 27**

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

Endowed with fantastic dynamism, you'll find pleasure in demolishing the obstacles which impede your progress. In couple, discussions may degenerate if each party is not prepared to water down his/her wine. Your present vitality will allow you to indulge in a host of activities.

**Lucky Numbers: 8, 14, 15, 24, 25, 30**

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

Don't take any really important decision this week. You'll have the possibility to succeed, but on condition of making very great efforts. Be very careful as far as implications of money in your love relationships are concerned.

**Lucky Numbers: 5, 13, 19, 21, 35, 37**

### Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

Beware of certain of your co-workers who'll try to put a spoke in your wheel. Certain financial transactions require much patience and a long preparation; if you act too hastily, you may have very bad surprises.

**Lucky Numbers: 6, 11, 16, 17, 30, 32**

### Gemini: May 21 - June 20

Your love life will be threatened by monotony and routine; appeal to your imagination. You'll have stormy relationships with your entourage, at your work place; however, you'll be well disposed to recognize your errors.

**Lucky Numbers: 7, 9, 11, 15, 21, 30**

### Cancer: June 21 - July 22

You'll have to cope with a new problem or a change in your work. You'll make an effort to strengthen your family circle; don't hesitate to provoke open-hearted discussions so as to solve certain fundamental problems.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 18, 20, 31, 36**

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

A small trip in couple will allow you at the same time to consolidate your relationships. Manage your budget as severely as possible, otherwise you'll know anguishing moments. It would be the time to question yourself if you want to evolve well in your career.

**Lucky Numbers: 1, 9, 17, 18, 20, 30**

### Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

Thanks to your very positive new state of mind, you'll succeed in consolidating your professional position. But tighten the strings of your purse, otherwise you'll spend your money according to your whims, and really it will not be the moment to do it!

**Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 14, 15, 26, 33**

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

You'll have many decisions to make, and this may render you somewhat nervous. Your relationships with your beloved one will be placed under the sign of harmony. Accept to take the first step toward reconciliation with one of your friends.

**Lucky Numbers: 10, 15, 20, 21, 23, 36**

### Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

In your work, don't hesitate to take some audacious initiatives. The stars will help you solve your small difficulties on the affective plane; the misunderstandings between you and your partner will be rapidly dispelled.

**Lucky Numbers: 2, 9, 12, 20, 30, 33**



## Karan Patel says TV industry should stop dragging on with a show

**K**aran Patel has said that the television industry should start making finite series instead of dragging on with a show. He opened up on working in the *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein* (YHM) serial for six years adding that there were moments when he wanted for the show to end if the makers were unable to continue the storyline, reports Hindustan Times.

Karan's was last seen in *Kasautii Zindagii Kay 2*, which ended in October 2020. He has appeared in many television serials and also participated in the reality shows like *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 6* in 2013 and *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 10* in 2020. He had emerged as the runner-up in the latter.



Speaking to a leading daily, he said, "I have been part of a show (YHM) for six years. I am not complaining, because it has helped me reach where I am today. But, in those six years, there were many times when I thought, 'Bas karo yaar, khatam karo agar story nahi mil rahi hai aagey toh' (Let it be, end it if the story is not moving forward)". Don't drag a show. Instead, end it on a high, so that when you return with a second season, you have the audience waiting for it impatiently."

Earlier, this month, Karan and his wife Ankita Bhargava celebrated six years of their marriage. The two had tied the knot on May 3, 2015, in a Gujarati-style ceremony. The couple welcomed their first child a daughter named Mehr in December 2019. The family went to the Maldives, earlier this year, on a vacation.

In February, Ankita had revealed a change in the couple's lives after their daughter's birth. She had said that as children pick up what they see their parents do, they have become 'more aware' of their behaviour.

## I never let go of my objective in life: Ashi Singh

**L**ast seen playing central characters in shows like TV shows *'Yeh Un Dinon Ki Baat Hai'*, *'Aladdin...'* and a cameo in film *'Qaidi Band'*, Agra-born actor Ashi Singh says she always wanted to be an actor.

"I never let go of my objective in life. This helped me in the long run and soon my parents too realised I should be given at least one chance to pursue my dream of becoming an actor," she said.



## Kundali Bhagya's Preeta is a magnet that attracts all bad situations in her life!

*From two broken engagements to several attempts to kill herself, Preeta has gone through too much in Kundali Bhagya!*

**K**undali Bhagya's Preeta Arora, or shall we say, Preeta Karan Luthra (Shraddha Arya), might be one of the most loved *bahus* and *betis* among all the Zee ladies, and she is known especially for her chemistry with Karan Luthra (Dheeraj Dhoopar), her husband on the show. In the show, as she navigated through the crowded city of Mumbai, she locked horns with Karan, the famous cricketer, and well, the rest is history. While Karan and Preeta are now finally able to be honest about their feelings and live like husband and wife, there's still Akshay's murder that looms over their heads. And Preeta getting arrested for this murder makes us notice that she has gone through an awful lot of things on the show since its inception in 2017 and getting arrested is just one of them!

### Two broken engagements

When we are first introduced to Preeta, we know that she was previously engaged to a man who left her after the engagement. Then we see how Preeta gets engaged to Prithvi and is about to get married, but they realise how bad Prithvi is and break the engagement. Later, Prithvi bounces back and convinces them that he is a good person and they're about to be married when Karan takes Prithvi's place and marries Preeta himself!

### Two not-so-happy marriages

We all know that Preeta and Karan married each other not once, but twice. But we must look at how unfortunate both circumstances were too. The first time around Karan married Preeta out of pure hatred and resentment and only did it to mess with her life and leave her. Preeta was left with no choice but to return to her own house just mere hours after



her wedding! Even during the second marriage, she was made to watch Karan marry another woman and only stepped in when she realised how evil Mahira was and wanted to save the Luthra family!

### A cold welcome into the family

Since Preeta married Karan without his consent right before the very eyes of the Luthra family, they were all angry with Preeta and refused to accept her as well. It was then that Preeta had to call the police and the police pressured them into keeping Preeta in their house and forced them to welcome Preeta with a Grah Pravesh ritual. It wasn't the most ideal marriage and her first set of days in her *sasural* did not start off on the right foot at all!

### Getting thrown in jail

Akshay's murder is not the first time Preeta has been in jail. She was arrested earlier when Mahira accused Preeta of attempting to kill her, which was obviously fake, but Preeta was arrested anyway! She later got bailed out but was again put in prison after some evidence against her cropped up! Finally, the court let her go once they saw that she was not guilty! Not just Preeta but even

her loved ones have been put in jail a couple of times and this has left Preeta helpless and distressed. Some of these people are Sarla, Shrishti, and Karan.

### Being blamed for everything

Right at the beginning of the show, Preeta was blamed when Kareena's expensive necklace was lost. It was not Preeta's fault at all, but she was blamed nonetheless. Karan blamed her when they could not stop Sherlyn's marriage and he also blamed her for Mahesh's accident, even though this was all orchestrated by Sherlyn and Preeta did her best to stop these things from happening. Preeta has been blamed for many other things on the show that are either done by Mahira or Sherlyn.

And no one was ready to believe Preeta when she tried to uncover Akshay's cheating ways as well. Instead, she was blamed for breaking Kritika's marriage!

### Staying with her Sautan

Mahira is Karan's childhood friend, almost like family and she has been staying with the Luthras for some time now. We all know the kind of woman Mahira is. She is a wolf in sheep's clothing. She is obsessive and manipulative and wants Karan to be hers, no matter what. And the fact that Preeta has to literally watch Mahira strut around her house, trying to steal her husband and cause fights between them is really frustrating and sad!

### Multiple attempts to kill her

She was once pushed in front of a moving truck. She was kidnapped and injured in the past. She was hit by another truck sent by Akshay, and she has also been poisoned by Mahira at least twice! She has witnessed a robbery in a mall and has been part of police investigations as well! On Rishabh's wedding day, she met with an accident and suffered from a serious head injury for days!

Telling more about her initial days, Ashi said, "I came to Mumbai when I was a teenager (15-16) and my father's friend suggested joining an acting course. Nothing much worked! Once done with my diploma, at one point my parents suggested to go back. I was like no, I just cannot go back especially after my completing my course in the same field. I auditioned rigorously for over two years and finally got a break with the show *'Secret Dairies'*. Though it was a small part, but I knew I had to move step by step. More work came my way and got to do shows like *'Savdhaan India'*, *'Gumrah'* and *'Crime Petrol'*."

The young actor is happy that her last two shows took her back to her old days

in Agra. "Yes, especially *'Yeh Un Dino...'* as it was set in 90s and life in my hometown was very much the same. It was like I was reliving my Agra life for the show. Also, I was offered *'Aladdin'* at same time, but I couldn't take it then. But again, I was reapproached for the same part (princess Yasmine) as the other actor had left the show. I knew, I was destined to play the part and so it came back to me."

Sharing about the struggle one has to face if a person has no *filmi* background, Ashi said, "It gets tough if you are there on your own but thankfully, I had my family's support and got a break in the industry at the right time, else it wouldn't have been possible to sustain and make a mark."



**CINE 12**

Vendredi 21 Mai - 21.15

## Haunted


**CINE 12**

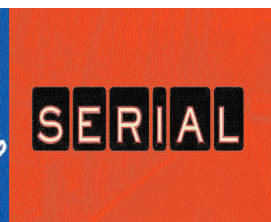
Samedi 22 Mai - 21.20

## Atlantic RIM

Starring: Steve Richard Harris, Xavi Israel, Jenna Enns


**mbc 1**

Dimanche 23 Mai - 21.15



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
<b>vendredi 21 mai</b>	07.00 Dessin Anime 10.35 Serial: Radio Free Roscoe 11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.55 MBC Talent Show 14.00 D.Anime: The Hive 14.34 D.Anime: The Garfield Show 14.47 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz And.. 15.09 D.Anime: Cosmic Quantum... 15.35 Film: Capitaine Superslip 17.00 Serial: Backstage 17.30 Live - Covid-19 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Siya Ke Ram 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.20 Prod: Lottery Vert Draw 20.30 Local: MBC Prod 21.20 Serial: Seal Team 23.00 Le Journal 23.35 Mag: Eye On SADC	10.00 Serial: Ki Jaana Mein Kaun 11.05 Serial: Zun Mureed 12.04 Film: Happy Journey Starring : Atul Kulkarni, Priya Bapat 14.04 DDI Magazine 15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha 15.25 Serial: Aamhi Doghi 15.44 Serial: Bava Maradallu 16.07 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal 16.36 Serial: Suno Chanda 16.48 Serial: Imtihaan 17.01 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.35 Serial: Chhanchhan 18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone 18.30 DDI Magazine 19.05 Zournal Kreol 19.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Serial: Band Khirkiyan 20.43 Local: Anjuman 21.08 Local: Urdu Programme 22.01 DDI Live	06.00 Mag: Eco India 06.26 Mag: Shift 06.38 Mag: Sur Measure 07.46 Mag: Science Ou Fiction 08.12 Doc: 360 GEO 09.46 Doc: Northern Lights 10.57 Mag: Eco India 11.35 Mag: Sur Measure 12.14 Mag: Tomorrow Today 12.56 Mag: Science Ou Fiction 13.09 Doc: 360 GEO 15.55 Mag: Eco India 16.21 Mag: Sur Measure 16.34 Mag: Border Crossing 17.07 Mag: Tomorrow Today 17.29 Mag: Science Ou Fiction 18.02 Doc: Good Virus, Bad Virus 18.44 Mag: Arts And Culture 20.05 Doc: Guilt-Free Brew 20.30 Local: News (English) 21.32 Doc: Oak Tree: Nature's...	01.49 Film: Breakdown 03.18 Serial: L.A.'s Finest 03.59 Film: For The Love Of George 05.22 Tele: Muneca Brava 06.46 Film: Mackenna's Gold 09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire 09.45 Tele: Daniella 10.28 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.00 Serial: L.A.'S Finest 12.00 Film: For The Love Of George 13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.45 Film: Mackenna's Gold 16.45 Serial: Chicago Fire 17.20 Serial: 19-2 18.05 Tele: Daneilla 19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Serial: Reckoning 21.15 Film: Haunted 22.45 Tele: Muneca Brava	08.00 Film: Parineeta 12.05 / 19.54 - Sanjivani 12.30 / 20.11 - Radha Krishna 12.51 / 20.32 - Agniphera 13.20 / 21.09 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 13.40 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 14.02 / 21.46 - Naagin S3 14.44 / 21.59 - Ikyawann 15.05 / 22.25 - Mere Sai - Shraddha Aur Saburi 15.26 Film: Mr Bechara Starring Anil Kapoor, Nagarjuna Akkineni, Sri Devi, Anupam Kher 18.00 Live: Samacher 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka
<b>samedi 22 mai</b>	06.00 D.Anime: Mega Man 06.24 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis... 06.46 D.Anime: Sissi, Jeune Impe... 07.13 D.Anime: Dee Dee The Little.. 07.35 D.Anime: The Twisted Whis... 07.57 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin... 08.20 D.Anime: Teenie Weenies 08.24 D.Anime: Martin Morning 12.00 Le Journal 12.30 Tele: Daniella 14.40 D.Anime: The Hive 15.00 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz and.. 15.35 Film: Fishables 2 16.50 Serial: Project MC 17.15 Local: Info En Langue 17.30 Live - Covid-19 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Entertainment: Dance 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.25 Local: Le Rendez Vous 21.20 Film: Leave No Trace 23.00 Le Journal	07.00 Film: Ishq Ka Jazbaa 09.32 Serial: Vir: The Robot Boy 10.11 Bade Acchelagte Hai 12.00 Serial: Nanda Saukhyia Bhare 12.26 Serial: Mooga Manasulu 12.49 Serial: High School 13.11 Annakodiyum Ainthus Pengalum 13.37 Serial: Anu Pallavi 15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha 15.21 Film: Phir Hera Pheri Starring: Akshay Kumar, Sunil Shetty, Paresh Rawal, Bipasha Basu 17.57 Mag: DDI Magazine 19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol 20.06 Serial: Vikram Betaal Ki Rahasya Gatha 20.29 Serial: Bitti Business 21.00 Film: Chakravyuh Starring: Abha Deol, Abhishek Bachan, Esha Deol, Om Puri	06.00 Doc: Good Virus, Bad Virus 06.55 Mag: Global 3000 07.21 Mag: Euromaxx 07.50 Doc: Wildlife Heroes 08.42 Doc: Oak Tree: Nature's... 09.29 Doc: The Miracle Of Hearing 11.07 Doc: Good Virus, Bad Virus 11.51 Mag: Global 3000 12.17 Mag: Euromaxx 12.46 Doc: Wildlife Heroes 13.38 Doc: Oak Tree: Nature's... 14.26 Doc: The Miracle Hearing 15.53 Student Support Prog... 19.31 Mag: Check In 20.05 Doc: Garden Party 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.40 Doc: 360 GEO 21.32 Doc: Destinations 21.45 Doc: SOS Animaux En... 22.37 Doc: The New Silk Road 23.19 Doc: Amazing Gardens 23.45 Doc: Norwegian Riesling	01.26 Film: Haunted 02.52 Serial: Dynasty 2 03.32 Film: Death Fighter 05.00 Tele: Esmeraldas 05.41 Serial: Reckoning 06.23 Serial: Sherlock 08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer 09.20 Serial: The Enemy Within 09.58 Serial: 12 Monkeys 10.40 Film: A Doggone Adventure 12.15 Serial: Dynasty 2 13.25 Serial: L.A.'s Finest 15.05 Tele: Amanda 15.45 Tele: Muneca Brava 16.30 Mag: Hollywood On Set 17.00 Serial: Reckoning 17.45 Film: Bobby Et Les Chasseur 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Series: Reckoning 21.15 Film: Atlantic RIM 22.45 Tele: Dulce Amor	04.05 Sanjivani 04.26 Radha Krishna 04.48 Agniphera 05.09 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 05.31 Zindagi Ki Mehek 05.55 Ikyawann 06.26 Mere Sai - Shraddha Aur... 06.36 Bin Kuch Kahe 07.12 Kundali Bhagya 07.34 Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka 08.00 Zindagi Ki Mehek 09.47 Motu Patlu 10.01 Siddhi Vinayak 11.39 Serial: Bhakharwadi 14.00 Sanjivani 16.00 Pavitra Rishta 18.30 Film: Andhadhun Star: Tabu, Ayushmann Khurrana, Radhika Apte 20.42 Serial: Siya Ke Ram 21.25 Serial: Naagin
<b>dimanche 23 mai</b>	06.00 D.Anime: Mega Man: Fully... 06.24 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis A.. 07.56 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin... 09.30 Mag: Future Mag 10.00 Local: Zanafan Nou Zil 10.30 Serial: Mustangs FC 12.00 Le Journal 12.40 Tele: Daniella 14.10 Local: Elle 15.05 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz And.. 15.16 D.Anime: Pet Alien 15.30 Film: Hotel Transylvania 3 17.03 Serial: Project MC 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Local: Yeh Shaam Mastani 19.30 Le Journal 20.10 Local: Groov'in 21.15 Film: Anna Karenina Stars: Keira Knightley, Jude Law, Aaron Taylor-Johnson	07.00 Film: Dillagi Starring: Sanjay Khan , Mala Sinha 09.19 Serial: Bapu 10.00 Local Prod: Excerpts Of Shiv Abhishek 11.09 Serial: Oru Kai Osai 11.22 Serial: Santoshi Maa 12.00 Film: Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam Starring - Salman Khan, Ajay Devgan, Aishwarya Rai 15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha 15.20 Serial: Mooga Manasulu 15.45 Eka Lagnachi Teesri Gosht 16.06 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal 17.00 Serial: Mahakali 17.42 Serial: Kisna 18.30 Local: Tipa Tipu Nu Avance 19.30 DDI Magazine 20.00 Serial: Mann Mein Vishwas..	06.00 Mag: Amazing Gardens 06.26 Doc: Norwegian Riesling 06.52 Doc: The World From Above 07.47 Doc: 360 GEO 08.37 Doc: Destination 10.29 Doc: Amazing Gardens 11.10 Doc: Norwegian Riesling 11.21 Doc: The World From Above 11.47 Mag: Check In 12.16 Doc: 360 GEO 17.37 Doc: Destinations 18.00 Mag: Tendance XXI 18.35 Doc: Ville En Fête 20.05 Mag: Happiness Is On The... 20.30 Local Prod: News (English) 20.40 Doc: Comme Une Envie... 21.32 Doc: Destination 21.45 Doc: 360 GEO 22.37 Doc: Southern Japan By Rail 00.02 Mag: Tendance XXI 00.52 Doc: Garden Party	00.20 Serial: The Magicians 01.27 Film: Atlantic RIM 06.52 Doc: Astronaut 05.04 Tele: Esmeraldas 05.45 Serial: Reckoning 06.27 Film: Leave No Trace 08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer 09.19 Film: Atlantic RIM 10.44 Film: Bobby Et Les Chasseur 12.15 Serial: Hawaii Five-0 13.00 Serial: L.A.'s Finest 15.11 Telenovela: Amanda 15.53 Tele: Muneca Brava 17.00 Serial: Reckoning 17.43 Serial: Hawaii Five-0 18.30 Serial: Supercopier 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Serial: The Good Doctor 21.15 Film: Searching 23.00 Tele: Dulce Amor	00.40 Serial: Bhakharwadi 02.23 Sanjivani 03.43 Pavitra Rishta 05.12 Film: Andhadhun Starring: Tabu, Ayushmann Khurrana, Radhika Apte 07.48 Motu Patlu 08.00 Karn Sangini 09.46 Jaana Na Dil Se Door 12.00 Piya Albela 13.50 Agniphera 16.32 Bin Kuch Kahe 17.35 Punar Vivaah 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Film: Sniff Starring: Parshva Dhariwal, Khushmeet Gill, Putul Guha 19.55 Motu Patlu 20.48 Entertainment: Dance 20.55 Bade Acche Lagte Hai

**MBC 2**

Samedi 22 Mai

- 21.00

Stars: Abha Deol, Abhishek Bachan,  
Esha Deol, Om Puri
**B TV**

Dimanche 23 Mai

- 18.30

Stars: Parshva Dhariwal, Khushmeet  
Gill, Putul Guha



# What does the Seychelles experience tell us about variants, vaccine efficacy and herd immunity?

*Covid is surging in the world's most vaccinated country. Why?*



**C Raina MacIntyre**

Professor of Global Biosecurity,  
NHMRC Principal Research Fellow,  
Head, Biosecurity Program, Kirby  
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The small archipelago nation of Seychelles, northeast of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean, has emerged as the world's most vaccinated country for COVID-19.

Around 71% of people have had at least one dose of a COVID vaccine, and 62% have been fully vaccinated. Of these, 57% have received the Sinopharm vaccine, and 43% AstraZeneca.

Despite this, there has been a recent surge in cases, with 37% of new active cases and 20% of hospital cases being fully vaccinated. The country has had to reimpose some restrictions.

How can this be happening? There are several possible explanations:

1. the herd immunity threshold has not been reached - 62% vaccination is likely not adequate with the vaccines being used
2. herd immunity is unreachable due to inadequate efficacy of the two vaccines being used
3. variants that escape vaccine protection are dominant in Seychelles
4. the B1617 Indian variant is spreading, which appears to be more infectious than other variants
5. mass failures of the cold-chain logistics needed for transport and storage, which rendered the vaccines ineffective.

What does the country's experience teach us about variants, vaccine efficacy and herd immunity?

Let's break this down.

## Variants can escape vaccine protection

There are reports of the South African B.1.351 variant circulating in Seychelles. This variant shows the greatest ability to escape vaccine protection of all COVID



variants so far.

In South Africa, one study showed AstraZeneca has 0-10% efficacy against this variant, prompting the South African government to stop using that vaccine in February.

The efficacy of the Sinopharm vaccine against this variant is unknown, but lab studies show some reduction in protection, based on blood tests, but probably some protection.

However, no comprehensive surveillance exists in the country to know what proportion of cases are due to the South African variant.

The UK variant B117, which is more contagious than the original strain, became the dominant variant in the United States. But the US still achieved a dramatic reduction in COVID-19 cases through vaccination, with most people receiving the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Israel, where the UK variant was dominant, also has a very high vaccination rate, having vaccinated nearly 60% of its population with Pfizer. It found 92% effectiveness against any infection including asymptomatic infection, and Israel has seen a large drop in new cases.

The United Kingdom has used a combination of Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines. More than 50% of the population have had a single dose and almost 30% are fully vaccinated. The country has also seen a significant decline in case numbers.

But there's a current surge of cases in northwest England, with most new cases in the city of Bolton being the Indian

variant. This variant is also causing outbreaks in Singapore, which had previously controlled the virus well.

Seychelles needs to conduct urgent genome sequencing and surveillance to see what contribution variants of concern are making, and whether the Indian variant is present.

If the South African variant is dominant, the country needs to use a vaccine that works well against it. Many companies are making boosters targeted to this variant, but for now, Pfizer would be an option. In Qatar, local researchers found Pfizer had 75% effectiveness against the South African variant.

## We need to use high-efficacy vaccines to achieve herd immunity

The reported efficacy of Sinopharm is 79% and AstraZeneca is 62-70% from phase 3 clinical trials.

Our research at the Kirby Institute showed that, in New South Wales, Australia, using a vaccine with 90% efficacy against all infection means herd immunity could be achieved if 66% of the population was vaccinated.

However, using lower efficacy vaccines means more people need to be vaccinated. If the vaccine is 60% effective, the proportion needing to be vaccinated rises to 100%.

When you get an efficacy of less than 60%, herd immunity is not achievable.

However, these calculations were done for the regular COVID-19 caused by the D614G variant which dominated in 2020.

This has a reproductive number ( $R_0$ ) of 2.5, meaning people infected with the virus on average infect 2.5 others.

But the B117 variant is 43-90% more contagious than D614G, so the  $R_0$  may be up to 4.75. This will require higher vaccination rates to control spread.

What's more, the Indian variant B1617 has been estimated to be at least 50% more contagious than B117, which could take the  $R_0$  to over 7, and takes us into uncharted territory.

This could explain the catastrophic situation in India, but also raises the stakes for vaccination, as lower efficacy vaccines will not be able to contain such highly transmissible variants effectively.

Herd immunity is still possible, but depends on the efficacy of the vaccine used and the proportion of people vaccinated.

A UK modelling study found using very low efficacy vaccines would result in the economy barely breaking even over ten years because it would fail to control transmission. On the other hand, using very high efficacy vaccines would result in much better economic outcomes.

## Vaccinating the world is the only way to end the pandemic

As the pandemic continues to worsen in some parts of the world, the risk increases of more dangerous mutations that are vaccine-resistant or too contagious to control with current vaccines.

Keeping up with mutations is like whack-a-mole while the pandemic is raging.

The take-home message for our pandemic exit strategy is that the sooner we get the whole world vaccinated, the sooner we will control emergence of new variants.

## Notice for Permission for Land Use

Take notice that I **RAMDAWOR JANISHTA** will apply to the District Council of Rivière du Rempart for a Building and Land Use permit for a proposed **Child Day Care Centre / Kindergarten at Beeharry Road, Petit Raffray**.

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

20 May 2021