

# MAURITIUS **TIMES**

• *“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.” -- Joshua J. Marine*

## A Protracted Battle

Beyond the anguish and trauma of someone close being infected by Covid-19, there is now the risk of suffering from the debilitating side effects of post-Covid syndrome

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Unfinished Business

# The IPPs-CEB Contracts

**T**he resurgence of Covid cases around the island, as well as the controversies relating to ICTA's initial proposals to counter abuse on social media and the bogey raised around an alleged Indian military base in Agalega and other issues flagged by the media, should not detract us from addressing other matters of national interest which remain unresolved to this day. For example, the Independent Power Producers-CEB cast-iron contracts, a few of which came up for renewal in 2017-18. Little is known about the terms and conditions applied in their renewal, and whether they are still inimical to the CEB's and by extension the consumer's interests. Or whether it will be left to the Utility Regulatory Authority, which has come into operation since last December following amendments brought to the Electricity Act 2005, to examine and review these contracts.

The Labour-led government had sought before 2014 to do so without much success. It bears repeating that the subsequent Alliance Lepep government did not show the same earnestness vis-à-vis the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) as it did in the case of the STC-Betamax contract negotiated by the Labour-MSM-PMSD government for the transport of petroleum products from Mangalore, India. It is consumers who are still having to foot the bill for the Lepep government's lack of similar zeal to dig into the black box that is the IPP-CEB deal. It is to be hoped that the Utility Regulatory Authority, which is chaired by Philip Ah-Chuen, known to be a no-nonsense man, will obtain the support of the current government to ensure that fair and equitable conditions are inserted in the IPPs-CEB contracts

It was in 1997, based on a model employed to encourage energy production in less developed energy-deficient economies, that the World Bank advocated that Mauritius should also embark on a model that shifts energy production from public sector producers to the private sector producers of electricity – the IPPs. Under this concept, the government signed up long-term contracts, Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), typically for 15 or 20 years, with the IPPs to supply electricity to the public grid. Thus, the CEB was displaced to the benefit of IPPs, the first of which was signed in 1997. Six others were subsequently signed with other sugar-milling companies, thus extending the scope of the private sector from being a negligible supplier of electricity to the country to occupy today some 55% of the total electricity generated.

The PPAs are cast-iron contracts which force the CEB to take or pay (even if it doesn't take) whatever the IPPs produce, leaving the CEB with the residual role to supply the balance to meet demand. Under the IPP arrangement, the IPPs pass on to the CEB all risks (such as exchange rate, internal and external inflation, guaranteed return on equity to investors, etc.) and are fully insulated. The CEB passes on such risks to consumers including, amongst others, the cost of insulation from all risks sugar millers grouped in IPPs have been accorded by different governments under the contracts.

Readers will also recall the lobby against other new players which sought to enter the electricity supply chain, a victim of which lobbying had been CT Power, a potential 110 MW alternative supplier to the CEB, on the grounds that it would have polluted the environment, notwithstanding the fact that the IPPs themselves use over 50% coal in their electricity generation. From 200,000 tons in 2000, 800,000 tons are today imported for the benefit of the IPPs when the trend worldwide is towards shifting, though incrementally, towards alternative sources of energy to mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

Under the 1990s and early 2000s long-term contracts binding the CEB irrevocably to IPPs, consumers have been at the receiving end of all added costs/risks encountered by the IPPs, which have shown resistance to any review of these same contracts. Arbitration has not helped, and if things do not work out to the satisfaction of the public it might ultimately be necessary to envisage some form of taxation to correct the asymmetries in the IPPs-CEB cast-iron contracts.

The Conversation

# How to Use Statistics to Prepare for the Next Pandemic

*Many governments, including the US, already collect and make public population statistics that could help them prepare for the next pandemic*



**Masked white man on a gurney is brought into Elmhurst Hospital in the Queens neighbourhood, which has one of the highest infection rates of coronavirus in the US, on April 03, 2020 in New York City. Pic - Spencer Platt/Getty Images**

Covid-19 prevalence in US counties: population size, population density, public transport, voting patterns and percent African American population. We validated our model by showing that counties which reported fewer Covid-19 cases in April than expected in our model tended to have more cases in July. The results thus provide a new way of discerning when a US county is under-reporting the actual number of infections present in the community.

In the second paper we sought to explain why certain countries, like the US, have death tolls in the hundreds of thousands, while other nations had very few deaths. Using international data from a large survey, measuring cultural values in 88 countries, we found demographic factors like population size and obesity levels were important. But more surprising, we found culture was also important, in that open and tolerant societies, as well as those with low trust in institutions, tended to fare the worst.

This analysis made some surprising predictions about the spread of Covid-19 around the world. For example, while many believed in early 2020 that African countries would be heavily affected by Covid-19, our model predicted that they would not. So far this has been true.

In the US, which scored high on many of the socio-cultural risk factors – including low trust in institutions, high tolerance toward minorities and high levels of obesity – Covid-19 has hit very hard. Nearly 583,000 people in the US had died from Covid-19 as of May 12, 2021. That is the highest absolute number of deaths in any nation so far, and roughly 17.5% of global deaths from the virus, in a country where only 4% of the world population lives.

**Why it matters**

Governments struggle to predict and plan for the location and extent of disease outbreaks. With so many moving parts, from local mandates like economic shutdowns and face mask recommendations, to international travel bans or restrictions, it seems almost impossible to project the number of cases in different counties or regions. In the average week, how many cases might you expect to have?

**R. Alexander Bentley**  
*Professor of Anthropology*  
*University of Tennessee*

**P**ublicly available statistics about population demographics and culture can help governments prepare for the next pandemic. We have found that by using existing socio-demographic data from early Covid-19 hot spots, where there was a lot of information, officials could have predicted how Covid-19 would spread through society. The next time there is a global health crisis governments can use our techniques to figure out how a disease will likely move beyond hot spots to regions that are not yet affected.

With a computational social scientist and a librarian for science, technology and mathematics research, we study the socio-cultural drivers of public health crises, such as obesity. In two peer-reviewed papers that we published in early 2021, which build on our previous research, we analyzed these drivers at the scale of US counties and at scale of nations. Both studies connected socio-cultural variables to the impact of Covid-19.

For our US study, we collected data from 3,088 US counties on 31 factors that could affect the spread of Covid-19. These factors included population density and ethnicity, commuting habits for work, voting patterns, social connectivity, underlying health conditions and economic information. We collected this information from the US Census Bureau and a variety of other sources.

Using these factors, we built a predictive model of Covid-19 prevalence. We found that just five risk factors can predict between 47% and 60% of variation in

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**Mauritius Times**

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

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

*This epaper has been produced with the assistance of*

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

There is a well-known saying: 'Take it with a pinch of salt.' The meaning is that whatever you obtain by way of information may be exaggerated or false, and you should not believe it entirely or blindly. The greatest source of popular information for the public is the media, traditionally the written press, which has been followed if not superseded in recent times by social media and online inputs that number in trillions of bits of information, the classic 'explosion or overload of information.'

It follows therefore that there is a great responsibility on the part of the media to be as accurate as possible in its reporting and presentation of news by verifying facts and figures. That this is not always the case has been highlighted by the recent appearance on the social media scene of 'fake news,' which complicates matters because among other things people can hide behind fictitious identities to peddle such false or wrong information. This is done with a given purpose or agenda in mind. I recall a remark made by a local senior journalist well before the days of internet let alone social media to the effect that 'objective does not necessarily mean neutral.' Fair enough if this leads to a debate of competing ideas on whatever is newsworthy at a given time, but that is not always the case when the aim is to hound or denigrate a person or a country.

And thus we hear of talk of the ethics of journalism or of professional conscience. But what happens when one doesn't have a conscience, or has one that can be bought? Such subhumans, alas, do exist.

When something sounds exaggeratedly good or exaggeratedly bad, one must apply the pinch of salt rule. Nowadays this may have to be a big spoon or in certain cases even a *kalchul* (ladle) of salt! And thus, we come to another adage, that the truth lies somewhere in between.

Two days ago was Buddha Purnima, and Buddha advocated the 'middle path.'

# This World of Misinformation

*If we seek, we shall find. Credible sources, credible information*



Pic - Shutterstock

**“Of late though I have come to realise that the BBC is no longer as trustworthy in its news reporting as I had always believed it was, especially when it comes to coverage of India. Its rabid anti-Modi and anti-India bias is incredible. You can be anti a person - no problem if you have ideological blinkers. But why extend this hate to a whole country? Vulture journalism at its worst. Unfortunately by Indians themselves who are on its payroll or in thrall to it...”**

This is all the more needed in this day and age, when maintaining a balance between extremes is what is most likely to allow mankind to survive and progress. It is the same idea that is to be found in the Tirukkural, the book of aphorisms penned by the great Tamil poet Tiruvalluvar, namely, 'Weigh a man's good points and his bad points, and then make a judgement.'

This problem of the credibility of the media is a major and important one nowadays. The issue has suddenly erupted into more prominence with a controversy surrounding the BBC about an interview of Princess Diana that was conducted in 1995 by its journalist Martin Bashir, and the release of Lord Dyson's report on the same. In an article in the Australian publication *The Conversation* titled 'BBC Diana "cover up" - why Lord Dyson's report is a body blow for broadcaster,' on May 21, 2021 former BBC journalist Tim Luckhurst writes that 'the report found that the BBC's reporter, Martin Bashir, "used deceitful behaviour" to obtain the interview, and that the BBC knowingly "covered up" what it subsequently learned about this behaviour.' Further, 'it is a scandal now that Lord Dyson, a senior retired judge, has found that the corporation "fell short of the high standards of integrity and transparency which are its hallmark".'

The BBC has been looked up to for 'its role as a benchmark that has enhanced the reputation of British broadcasting. Long a trusted source of news for the discerning, it has a global reputation for accuracy and honesty.'

That, it seems, may no longer be the case, as is echoed in the conclusion of the article, 'The BBC cannot afford to alienate its friends with any further evidence that **its journalism, the jewel in its crown, is less than entirely reliable.**' Although it now has 'significantly better processes and procedures than existed in 1995.'

Does it? I doubt very much.

The reason why this is of interest to me is that, as a student in the pre-Independence period at the Royal College Curepipe which with the Queen Elizabeth College can be considered as the berth of Britishness in education then, I and my fellow students in the senior forms were constantly exhorted by the Rector, Herbert Bullen (who I believe had an Oxonian background), to daily listen to the BBC news at 8 in the morning so as to learn to speak proper English and also get reliable news. As far as I am concerned, I tried to follow his instruction as often as I could, and this habit of relying on the BBC for news and entertainment continued when I went to the UK for my postgraduate studies in the 1970s.

Of late though I have come to realise that the BBC is no longer as trustworthy in its news reporting as I had always believed it was, especially when it comes to coverage of India. Its rabid anti-Modi and anti-India bias is incredible. You can be anti a person - no problem if you have ideological blinkers. But why extend this hate to a whole country? Vulture journalism at its worst. Unfortunately by Indians themselves who are on its payroll or in thrall to it. Several other news channels are no better.

No one can have information about everything, and that is why when we wish to understand a situation or an issue that is shaking up the world, one has to get a balanced perspective especially when one is not familiar with the problem. For example, to get a grip on the recent Palestinian-Israeli conflagration, finding BBC and other channels lacking, I listened to the best expose on the historical aspects that I could find. It was that of the renowned journalist of Pakistani origin settled in Canada, Tarek Fatah. His views are always consistent and well-argued, and the best part is that he is clearly a man who seeks to promote peace and harmony amongst people.

If we seek, we shall find. Credible sources, credible information.





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Mrinal Roy

# A Protracted Battle

*Beyond the anguish and trauma of someone close being infected by Covid-19, there is now the risk of suffering from the debilitating side effects of post-Covid syndrome*

The world has now endured more than 16 months of the Covid-19 pandemic. There is however no end to the pandemic in sight. It is obvious to everyone alive to the state of Covid-19 infection in countries across the world and the systemic constraints limiting access to vaccines in developing and poor countries that the battle against Covid-19 will be a very long drawn one. It is not likely to end any time soon.

## Post-covid syndrome

New Covid-19 related health complications threaten to further extend the adverse fallouts of coronavirus in the world. Medical data in the United States, Britain and Israel have shown that after a bout of Covid-19, some people suffer from long Covid or post-Covid syndrome. This is evidenced by a set of symptoms such as breathlessness, fatigue and 'brain fog' which last for at least three months in the aftermath of an infection. 'Brain fog' is a medical condition which involves memory problems, a lack of mental clarity and an inability to focus. A similar wave of debilitating ailments was recorded in the wake of the 1918 'Spanish flu' pandemic.

According to 'The Economist', more than 500,000 persons have had long covid for more than six months in Britain. The vast majority of these are in their prime working age. Indications are that their chances of full recovery are probably slim. Britain's Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that '14% of people who have been tested Covid-19 positive have lingering symptoms which last for more than three months'. From their data, ONS also points out that 'at least 1.1% of Britain's population, including 1.5% of working-age adults, reported symptoms dragging on for three months or longer.' If this rate is crudely applied to the 168 million cases of coronavirus infection in the world, it is clear that the dire fallout and costs of the pandemic on public health services would be much longer and more onerous than expected.

## No cure

There is no cure for post-Covid syndrome. Researchers believe that 'long covid is due to a combination of a persistent viral infection, a chronic autoimmune disorder and lingering damage to some tissues caused by the Covid-19 infection'. Substantial funds are being poured in related



**“Covid-19 has caused disastrous socio-economic consequences in the country. It has significantly increased public debt which has exceeded 90% of GDP. The IMF has therefore recommended that ‘the government should prepare plans for fiscal consolidation to stabilize public debt in the medium term once Mauritius has firmly emerged from the pandemic, to preserve fiscal sustainability and build buffers’...”**

research. However, in the absence of a cure, people suffering from post-Covid syndrome have to endure months of rehabilitation to help them cope with the ailment. 'The Economist' points out that in some countries such as 'the Netherlands, employers and employees who are too unwell to work normally are required to come up jointly with a plan to enable the sick employee to return to work under new conditions.'

Beyond the anguish and trauma of someone close being infected by Covid-19, there is now the risk of suffering from the debilitating side effects of post-Covid syndrome. The crying lesson to be drawn from the above is that everyone must avoid crowded places, take every precaution required and strictly abide by sanitary and social distancing rules and properly wear masks so as to avoid being infected. The world must also wake up to the urgent imperative of boosting vaccine production to ensure that people across the world not only have access to vaccines but are vaccinated as early as possible to attain herd immunity.

## Costly setback

Every new coronavirus case is a costly setback. It delays the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. It triggers contact tracing operations and requires that all those in contact with infected persons are corralled in quarantine. Launching the necessary protocol to protect the population against the risk of infection every time a case of coronavirus infection is detected

in the country is a time consuming and costly exercise.

The new wave of Covid-19 infection in the country remains unabated. More than two months after new cases of coronavirus were detected in the country, 33 new cases were tracked down through contact tracing in two days this week. They are mostly employees of the Waste Water Management Authority. They reside in localities scattered across the country. This raises serious questions about the state of the hygienic and social distancing protocol in place in that institution. 168 persons in contact with those infected had to be put in quarantine. All this adds to the continuously escalating costs of managing the Covid-19 pandemic in the country. It also inordinately delays the prospects of Mauritius becoming Covid safe again in the near future.

\* \* \*

## Cutting our coat according to our cloth

*Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country. -- John F. Kennedy*

There cannot be progress without hard work, discipline, efficient management, innovative strategies and a professional work ethic. Covid-19 has caused disastrous socio-economic consequences in the country. It has significantly increased public debt which has exceeded 90% of GDP. The IMF has therefore recommended that 'the government should prepare plans for fiscal consolidation to stabilize public debt in the medium term once Mauritius has firmly emerged from the pandemic, to preserve fiscal sustainability and build buffers.' It has also advised that 'the central bank law is being reformed, including to preempt further exceptional transfers to the government, in line with international best practices.'

## Limited leeway

The upshot is that the Minister of Finance has very limited leeway and is therefore forced to prepare the forthcoming budget within the straight-jacket of severely strapped government finances. Too many stakeholders of the Mauritian economy do not seem to be alive to this reality. Despite such a grim outlook, some Ministers do not seem to grasp the economic predicament of the country and the constraints under which the Minister of Finance has to operate in. Last week, various Ministers have blithely submitted their tall demands of more social housing and infrastructural projects and more drains, etc., despite strapped government finances. Trade unions are clamouring for work rosters for their members.

This is not the time for tall demands or ill-conceived policies which force firms to close down or relocate abroad. A job offers the only safeguard and insurance policy to grapple with and tide over the dire consequences of the Covid-19 crisis.

Work from home cannot be applicable indiscriminately to all sectors. In many services-driven sectors and professional management consulting services in developed countries, it has recorded a rise in productivity. They demand hard work, long working hours and professional competence. They are not home based vacations.

## Untenable

No country can progress if it does not value and promote a culture of hard work, managerial competence, a professional work ethic, a high sense of probity and path-breaking strategies to realize a far better future for all. This is therefore not the time to act like a profligate and improvident grasshopper but be an industrious ant. It is untenable to continue to squander scarce funds in costly white elephants and wasteful expenditures or populist measures the country can ill afford.

If we value our country and wish to protect and improve the future of the young, we all need to unite and team up around these essential values, principles and ethos to put the country back on track. More than ever, we imperatively need to cut our coat according to our cloth.





Social media influencers in France say a mysterious advertising agency offered to pay them if they agreed to discredit Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine. Pic - AP

## French social media influencers offered money to discredit Pfizer vaccine

Several European influencers have claimed that they have been offered money by a communications agency to discredit the Covid-19 vaccine developed by Pfizer-BioNTech. They were asked to create videos for YouTube, Instagram and other social media platforms questioning the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. One influencer told French TV that he was offered about \$2,500 for a video.

French YouTuber Léo Grasset, whose popular science channel has nearly 1.2 million subscribers, recently shared the information about the "strange" proposal he received and posted screenshots of the request from his Twitter handle. Grasset said that the agency, posing as based in London, informed him about their "colossal budget" and asked to hide the sponsorship details if he accepts the offer, reports HindustanTimes.

"Present the material natively. Act like you have the passion and interest in this topic. Present the material as your own independent thought," the screenshot read.

The agency, as per the screenshot, requested Grasset to falsely claim that the death rate among those vaccinated with Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is almost three times higher than those with AstraZeneca vaccine. "Put a question like 'Why some governments actively purchasing Pfizer vaccine, which is dangerous to health of the people?'" it said.

According to a Wall Street Journal report, French counterintelligence authorities are investigating whether the Russian government is in any way involved in the attempt to create doubt about the vaccine widely used in the United States and Europe. French health minister Olivier Véran slammed the effort to discredit the vaccine, calling it "dangerous" and "irresponsible".

## Russia seeks to outmuscle US in Arctic with northern military base

"The enemy shall not pass," exclaims commander Ivan Glushchenko, standing in the glistening white snow that surrounds an ultra-modern Russian military base in the heart of the Arctic, the site of Moscow's stand-off with NATO. The growing accessibility of natural resources and navigation routes in this rapidly thawing region has attracted global competition, and Moscow's interests clash with those of several other countries, including the United States, reports AFP.

On the island of Alexandra Land, inhabited only by military personnel and covered by permafrost, Russian forces are stationed in a clover-shaped complex painted in the colours of the Russian flag: white, blue and red.

Built on the ruins of an old Soviet site, the complex now covers more than 14,000 square metres (150,000 square feet) and is capable of sustaining itself independently for over a year. The base is equipped with necessities such as an electric power station, and water purification and heating systems. It also has a clinic, gym, cinema, sauna and even a church.

All the facilities are linked by heated tunnels, allowing the 150 or so servicemen to avoid the harsh weather outside, where temperatures can drop to a chilling -42 degrees Celsius.

Despite the strong winds and brutal weather conditions, the base also has a giant airfield. It also boasts a Bastion coastal defence system with a range of 360 kilometres (220 miles). It has demonstrated its reliability in the extreme weather conditions of the Arctic, says commander Balabek Eminov.

As Moscow seeks to assert its influence in the Arctic, military disputes have intensified in recent years, with both



Russian forces are stationed in a clover-shaped complex painted in the colours of the Russian flag: white, blue and red. Pic - AP

Russian and NATO forces carrying out manoeuvres to display their ambitions.

US and NATO forces are conducting manoeuvres in the Arctic with increasing regularity, according to Alexander Moiseyev, the commander of the Northern Fleet.

Russia has also bolstered its military presence in recent years, in particular by deploying its state-of-the-art S-400 air defence systems to the region. As ice cover in the Arctic decreases, Russia is also hoping to gain economic influence and make use of the Northern Sea Route shipping channel to export oil and gas to overseas markets.

Russia has invested heavily to develop the route, which cuts the journey to Asian ports by 15 days compared with using the traditional Suez Canal route.

## China will donate 1 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines to Nepal: President Xi Jinping



China's President Xi Jinping with Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli in 2019. Pic: Reuters

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday announced a donation of one million doses of Covid-19 vaccines for Nepal, which is facing a severe shortage of jabs for providing the second shots to more than one million people.

Xi announced the provision of the vaccines as grant assistance during a phone conversation with his Nepalese counterpart Bidya Devi Bhandari, according to a statement from Nepal's foreign ministry. China had provided 800,000 doses of Sinopharm's BBIBP-CorV vaccine to Nepal in March.

The Chinese assistance comes at a time when Nepal is grappling with a second wave of Coronavirus infections, with 6,677 new cases reported since Tuesday to take the

national tally to 535,525. The country's death toll is nearly 6,900.

Xi acknowledged the difficulties Nepal has been facing due to the second wave of the pandemic and expressed his government's full support for the fight against Covid-19, the statement said.

Bhandari's conversation with Xi came days after she wrote a letter to her Indian counterpart Ram Nath Kovind to take initiatives to ensure vaccines for Nepal, The Kathmandu Post reported.

Nepal had been looking for commercial supplies from Serum Institute of India (SII) and vaccines from the WHO-backed COVAX facility to meet most of its needs for plans to inoculate more than 70% of the population of some 30 million. However, Nepal has struggled to procure vaccines since India restricted exports in late March to cope with its own devastating second wave of infections.

A priority for Nepal has been the supply of two million doses of the Covishield vaccine under a commercial contract finalised with SII earlier this year. SII has so far supplied one million doses and the remainder has been held up despite Nepal making 80% of the payment in advance, Nepalese officials have said.

India also provided 1.1 million doses of Covishield as grant assistance in January and March and Nepal received another 348,000 doses of Covishield from COVAX in March.



## Prince William, Kate cook meals for vulnerable; Sikh women's group guide couple

Britain's Prince William and his wife, Kate Middleton, joined a Sikh women's group on Monday to prepare meals for vulnerable families in Edinburgh, UK. The official Twitter handle for The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge posted pictures of the royal couple trying their hands at making chapatis in the café kitchen at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, Queen's official residence in Scotland.

In a video shared on YouTube by The Royal Family Channel, Prince William, second-in-line to the throne, and Kate are seen taking instructions from members of Sikh Sanjog, a charity group based in Scotland, on how to make chapatis. The royal couple also spent time with children who are seen using colouring books, reports Hindustan Times.

"Cooking up a storm in the cafe kitchen at the Palace of Holyroodhouse with Sikh Sanjog, where the Duke and Duchess prepared meals to be distributed to vulnerable



Prince William, second-in-line to the throne, and Kate are seen taking instructions from members of Sikh Sanjog. Pic - Twitter

families across the Edinburgh community," the tweet read.

Sikh Sanjog had set up a service to

provide hot curry meals to disadvantaged people in the community during the lockdown. The group is still providing the

service as the United Kingdom is in the final phase of the four-step roadmap out of lockdown. Sikh Sanjog thanked the duo on Twitter for joining them in the kitchen, adding that the children and staff enjoyed their company.

The British royal family has been facing criticism for alleged racism following an explosive interview of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex with the iconic talk show host Oprah Winfrey. Meghan Markle claimed that the royal family, which she referred to as "The Firm", refused to make her son a prince partly due to conversations about how dark his skin might be.

While Meghan Markle refused to name the person because it would be "damaging" to them, Harry later clarified that Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, who died in April, were never part of those conversations. Prince William refuted the claims saying they are "very much not a racist family."

## 'Covid-19 spreads majorly through the airborne route': Indian Health ministry

The Indian Union Health Ministry has stated in its new clinical management protocol that a majority of transmission of Covid-19 is supposed to be happening "through the airborne route and droplet released when the infected person coughs, sneezes or talks."

Moreover, one of the guidelines issued recently by the office of the principal scientific advisor has disclosed that infected aerosols can be carried in the air up till 10 meters.

"Current evidence suggests that the virus spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with each other, typically within 1 metre (short-range). A person can be infected when aerosols or droplets containing the virus are inhaled or come directly into contact with the eyes, nose, or mouth," the revised protocol mentioned as per Hindustan Times.

It added, "The virus can also spread in poorly ventilated and/or crowded indoor settings, where people tend to spend longer periods of time in physical proximity. This is because aerosols remain suspended in the air or may travel farther than 1 metre (long-range)."

However, the findings of this time mark a significant shift from the previous year's clinical management protocol that had stated that the infection spreads primarily through close contact. It had remarked that the transmission happens mainly via respiratory droplets that are released when an infected individual talks, sneezes and coughs.

## Bharat Biotech expects WHO approval for Covaxin by July-September

Bharat Biotech has said on Tuesday that it is expecting regulatory approvals from the World Health Organisation (WHO) for its Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin by July-September 2021.

The Hyderabad-based company stated that application for Emergency Use Listing (EUL) has been submitted to WHO, Geneva and regulatory approvals are expected by July-September 2021.

It also said regulatory approvals for Covaxin are in process in more than 60 countries including the United States, Brazil and Hungary.

"Emergency use authorisations have been obtained in 13 countries with more to follow," it said.

Most countries recommend vaccinations against Covid-19. Unvaccinated travellers can travel with negative RT-PCR tests prior to travel, in the absence of any other country specific travel restrictions, it added.

Bharat Biotech's statement came out amid reports that people who have taken



Covaxin and plan to travel abroad were nervous as it is not in the list of WHO approved vaccines.

With countries gearing up to resume travel and tourism, intending travellers from India who have taken Covaxin jabs will be anxiously waiting for Covaxin's approval by WHO.

Pfizer, Moderna and Covishield are on WHO's approved list and people who have taken these vaccines may not face any restrictions while travelling. Those

who have taken vaccines which are not on the approved list of WHO may have to undergo quarantine on landing in the destination countries.

WHO's EUL is expected to open the doors for Covaxin to be accepted by countries around the world.

Bharat Biotech and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) claimed last month that Covaxin had shown overall interim effectiveness of 78 per cent.

## Climate crisis: Dutch court tells Shell to cut emissions

A Dutch court on Wednesday ordered Royal Dutch Shell to significantly deepen planned greenhouse gas emission cuts, in a landmark ruling that could pave the way for legal action against energy companies around the world.

Shell immediately said it would appeal the court ruling, which comes amid rising pressure from investors, activists and governments on energy

companies to shift away from fossil fuels and rapidly ramp up investments in renewable energy.

At a court room in The Hague, judge Larisa Alwin read out a ruling which ordered Shell to reduce its planet warming carbon emissions by 45% by 2030 from 2019 levels.

"The court orders Royal Dutch Shell, by means of its corporate policy, to reduce its CO2 emissions by 45% by

2030 with respect to the level of 2019 for the Shell group and the suppliers and customers of the group," Alwin said.

Earlier this year, Shell set out one of the sector's most ambitious climate strategies. It has a target to cut the carbon intensity of its products by at least 6% by 2023, by 20% by 2030, by 45% by 2035 and by 100% by 2050 from 2016 levels.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah



Prof Sheila Bunwaree

# “The continued secrecy around the MIC's disbursements does not augur well at all for the economy”

**P**rof Sheila Bunwaree dissects the current pandemic-induced problems, but also notes that the cracks in the economic landscape had already started appearing before the pandemic as underlined by the IMF. The increasing poverty and rising inequality have been compounded, according to her, by the accelerated mismanagement of the economy and the opacity in regard to the MIC, along with dilapidation and wastage of public funds. Unless we gear up our education and training system and develop innovative approaches to exploit, for example, the opportunities presented by the Africa Fund instead of siphoning it off into white elephant projects such as the proposed 50-storey Trade Centre, we will be on a sliding slope.

**Mauritius Times:** It should not be easy for any Minister of Finance in these difficult pandemic times to meet the competing demands of the different sectors of the Mauritian economy whilst taking care at the same time of the economic fundamentals of the country, some of which are already in the red. What do you think should be expected from the forthcoming budget?

**Prof Sheila Bunwaree:** While pandemic times certainly make it difficult for Finance Ministers across the globe to juggle around and try to find effective ways of reconciling economic fundamentals with competing demands of the different sectors of the economy, it is not an impossible task. But doing so requires gusto, competence, creativity, innovative approaches, a culture of transparency as well as the right people working within a meritocratic framework.

The current state of our economic fundamentals is to a large extent the reflection of chronic mismanagement. With a debt level having gone beyond 90% of GDP and which was facilitated by changes surreptitiously brought to the Public Debt Management Act by the current regime, we are now confronted with a debt spiral with the big risk of the economy crashing in a similar manner to what happened in places such as Greece and Zambia some years back.

Looking at how prices are shooting through the roof with people's purchasing power rapidly eroding and a simultaneous rise in unemployment, we are in what some economists describe as stagflation. The latter coupled with a balance of payments deficit only worsens the situation on the macroeconomic front. When we look at the competing demands of the different traditional sectors starting with tourism which has been most severely hit by

**“We have no choice, we do have to reopen and the idea of travel bubbles engaged in by countries such as Maldives and Sri Lanka, if I am not mistaken, is a good one. But again, it would have been much easier if government had shown some skills at anticipatory governance by ensuring that vaccines were obtained early enough and the rollout campaigns planned more effectively...”**

the pandemic, the manufacturing sector, the financial services sector with the country still being on the FATF grey list and the EU's black list, there is reason to worry.

Needless to say, that new sectors such as the Blue Economy, Agribusiness, Artificial intelligence, Fintech and block chain technology have hardly developed. And yet we have to do everything possible to get our economy back on the rails and work towards reviving it whilst ensuring stronger social protection for those at the bottom layers of society.

**“That social media/technology platforms need to be regulated to counter abuse and protect society is beyond dispute. Engaging a debate with the nation on critical issues such as this is laudatory but when consultation is based on a document whose very content shows proclivity towards undemocratic norms and methods, there is cause for concern...”**

**\* But the challenge is greater now, isn't it?**

With growing poverty and rising inequality in the wake of the pandemic, the challenge is even greater, but all crises present interesting opportunities. There is a need to know how to seize these and be ready to move forward with them. It is not right to put everything on the back of Covid since we are well aware that the cracks were already there pre-Covid and a number of people have been drawing attention to them. The World Bank Group study report of April 2021 entitled 'Mauritius through the eye of a perfect storm' in fact confirms this point. The report notes:

'...The shocks of 2020 came at a time when serious structural cracks were beginning to appear in the foundation of Mauritius's long term growth model. Even prior to Covid and other events of 2020, Mauritius was on an increasingly fragile development trajectory...'

If we want to stop this fragility from worsening, decisions have to be bold and audacious even if some measures are seen as unpopular. A responsible government which truly has the interests of future generations close to its heart and wants to genuinely build back better without leaving anyone behind should focus on a budget which can help to put the economy back on the rails and aim for a realistic growth level while ensuring that the latter is of a



productive nature with job creation on top of the agenda.

Can we expect this from the forthcoming budget? Judging by the trends set and the way that things have been managed as well as the corruption and waste

tolerated by the system as demonstrated by the recent Audit Report, it is difficult to foresee a radical approach towards the budget, and yet that is badly required. The forthcoming budget should in fact pave the way for a new development paradigm. Resilience and recovery would simply not be possible if Nature and the environment are not embedded in the development model.

**\* Mistakes have indeed been made, as highlighted by numerous economists and the IMF in its statement released in the wake of the 2021 article IV consultations. The latter has recommended that the 'authorities should accelerate the long-term structural transformation to turn Mauritius into a sustainable and resilient economy built on education and technology.' But why is it that successive governments have been unable to make much headway on that front?**

Let me first say that I am certainly not a blind follower of IMF recommendations. IMF is known to have caused a lot of damage to certain economies. Their insistence on rolling back the State in the context of the structural adjustment programmes in a number of countries in Africa as discussed in the works of well-known economists such as Tandika Mkandawire and Soludo, for instance, have clearly shown the negative impact that IMF has had on these countries.

● Cont. on page 8





# 'The forthcoming budget should pave the way for a new development paradigm'

nologies that I mentioned earlier, but none of these talks have been shaped and delivered into reality on the ground.

The Article IV Papers are right in stating that the economy should be built around technology and education. The latter are indeed central to all efforts towards turning Mauritius into a resilient and sustainable economy. It is a known fact that apart from our exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which remains largely unexploited, the only other resource we have is our human capital. But are our education system and training system producing the kinds of people and the skills that the emerging economy needs? The simple answer is NO.

Judging by the persistent mismatch between the labour market needs and the outcomes of our education and training system, it is no exaggeration to say that our education system has remained largely inadapted, elitist and continues to exclude a large segment of the student population, thus contributing to a wastage of our human capital. There is little effort if at all at reskilling and retooling with a curriculum which has remained almost static over the years. Technology-wise, we are lagging behind many African countries. R&D and innovations remain low, not permitting us to exploit new technology driven sectors.

Successive governments together with bureaucratic elites have been more inclined towards maintaining the *status quo* and satisfying the demands of the educational elite rather than addressing the fundamental challenges of the system. But there is no room for such an approach anymore. We urgently need an 'Assises de l'Education' and to develop a technology and education roadmap which will enable the economy to become more resilient as well as ensure that we obtain adequate returns on investments made in the education sector.

**\* The IMF has also not taken too kindly to the ownership of the Mauritius Investment Corporation Ltd by the Bank of Mauritius. There is continuing opacity around the MIC, its disbursements and the terms and conditions thereof. Aren't we also missing an opportunity of leveraging substantial bailout funds to recast the ownership of prime assets in the country?**

How can any institution or anyone bent on codes of good practices on transparency in monetary and financial policies take kindly to what has been happening at the MIC and Bank of Mauritius? The narratives around these two institutions constitute a very sad story indeed. The continued secrecy around these disbursements, terms and conditions does not augur well at all for the economy. It is totally unacceptable that MIC which has turned out to be some kind of subsidiary of the Bank of Mauritius is using international reserves to come to the rescue of certain distressed companies, and that too in the most opaque manner.

I am certainly in favour of assisting all those who have been badly hit by the pandemic and who are large and important contributors to the economy. But wealth concentration and ownership of prime assets, as you put it,

should be addressed and be on the agenda. More so now that it is proven that the pandemic has worsened inequalities across and within borders.

Indeed, if bailout funds continue to be distributed to cronies and clientelistic networks at the expense of the small, unconnected entrepreneurs, we run the risk of seeing social cohesion and peace threatened in the mid- and long-terms.

**\* Besides the usual calls for further improvements of the country's competitiveness, enhancement of diversification, etc, we do not appear to be making much progress as regards tapping opportunities in the region, especially on the African continent. Are we missing the boat there?**

With a market of some 1.2 billion people, projected to reach some 1.7 billion by 2030, the African continent definitely represents an important market. Apart from being a huge market, the continent offers a host of other opportunities: rapid industrialisation and adding to its value chains, its emphasis on closing its infrastructure gap, the innovations coming to the fore to unleash agricultural and resource wealth, new broadband connections and the potential of increasing digital and mobile access. Such opportunities are for investors and entrepreneurs with the audacity and imagination to seize and embark on new ventures.

The Mauritius' Africa strategy, which was presented as a new pillar of development in a much earlier budget some years back, was certainly well-inspired, but whether there has been any effective follow-up and evaluation of projects is a legitimate question. The establishment of Special Economic Zones such as the Diamniadio Industrial Park in Senegal and technology parks in Bassam, Ivory coast can certainly be advantageous to all stakeholders, but can we know about the strengths and weaknesses of such projects so as to redirect efforts in the best interest of all?

**“The narratives around the MIC and the BOM constitute a very sad story indeed. The continued secrecy around these disbursements, terms and conditions do not augur well at all for the economy. It is totally unacceptable that MIC which has turned out to be some kind of subsidiary of the Bank of Mauritius is using international reserves to come to the rescue of certain distressed companies, and that too in the most opaque manner...”**

Another interesting element of the Africa Strategy was the setting up of the Africa Fund. This was done precisely as a response to the growing opportunities in Africa and the Africa Rising narrative. This scheme was designed to support and facilitate entry of Mauritian investors into the continent.

**“The latest aberration of the government -- digging into the Africa Fund, to build a 50-storey building – ‘a Mauritian world trade centre’ in the Prime Minister’s constituency, more precisely at Côte d’Or (soon to be known as white elephant village perhaps!), only testifies to the incoherence and chaotic management of resources by the current regime. Funds destined for investments on the continent are now being re-channeled into useless projects such as this...”**

● Cont. from page 7

The very conditionalities and reforms imposed by the IMF at the time trapped many of the African economies in vicious debt cycles, retarding and/or leading to lopsided development. It is important to remember that it is the visionary leadership of the time that resisted the IMF conditionalities of abolishing free education and free health care that permitted us to obtain an adequate pool of labour to respond to the needs of our first phase of industrialization.

But coming to the Article IV Consultations papers and their recommendations it makes, I must say that they make a lot of sense and I am fully supportive of these recommendations. We must not forget that the latter comes right on the heels of Moody's downgrading the Mauritian economy to Baa2 level. The economy is in dire straits largely due to its inability to bring about the structural reforms so badly needed. The diversification of the economy that is often alluded to as part of the success story of Mauritius in the post-Independence period, has in recent years come to a standstill. We have not witnessed any new sectors coming up in a significant manner - there has been a lot of talk of the Blue Economy and new tech-

● Cont. on page 9



# 'What's the point of stringent measures when there is already an arsenal of laws that can assist towards an effective regulation of the social media?'

● Cont. from page 8

But the latest aberration of the government – digging into the Africa Fund, to build a 50-storey building – 'a Mauritian world trade centre' in the Prime Minister's constituency, more precisely at Côte d'Or (soon to be known as white elephant village perhaps!), only testifies to the incoherence and chaotic management of resources by the current regime. Funds destined for investments on the continent are now being re-channeled into useless projects such as this, at the whim and fancy of certain people in government, resonating with the famous: 'we are government, we decide'.

I was flabbergasted by the Minister of Finance's response to a member of the opposition when the latter questioned the validity of the proposed 'World Trade Centre' project, highlighting that it was not in tune with the objectives of the Mauritius Africa Fund. The Finance Minister's response was: '*...Nous n'avons même plus d'avions qui desservent le continent africain actuellement, comment faire pour que le MAF continue à se développer...*' I leave it to the judgement of the average Mauritian to decide how on earth are Mauritian investors going to benefit from the freshly signed and ratified African Continental Free Trade Area about which there has been much ado if the Minister's 'logic' is what we see in his response to the question.

**\* The success of our economic recovery will depend to a large extent on how well we ride out of the current pandemic locally as well as on overall economic developments in our export markets. What's your take on how we are doing locally in the fight against the pandemic?**

There are no two ways: if we want to survive and rebuild our capacities, retain a competitive edge, and become truly resilient, we have to make the fight against the pandemic our priority. Controlling the first wave was relatively successful, but the second wave has been problematical, with the number of cases rising and the deaths of dialysis patients. It is good that a fact-finding committee has been set up to this effect.

The main problem, as I see it now, is the lack of vaccines as well as persistent vaccine hesitancy which means that it will be very difficult to reach the herd immunity level required and yet so important to keep the nation safe. Moreover, campaigns about Covid appropriate behaviour: wearing of masks, social distancing, etc., remain insufficient.

**\* The government is working on a roadmap on the reopening of our frontiers, and it would be toying with the idea of introducing travel bubbles with some countries. Would it be safe to go ahead with the reopening of frontiers what with the resurgence of Covid cases in numerous places locally?**

It is very difficult to say for sure that we would be safe. We are living through very challenging and uncertain times and having to face all sorts of vulnerabilities and risks. But we have no choice, we do have to reopen and the idea of travel bubbles engaged in by countries such as Maldives and Sri Lanka, if I am not mistaken, is a good one. But again, it would have been much easier if government had shown some skills at anticipatory governance by ensuring that vaccines were obtained early



**“Successive governments together with bureaucratic elites have been more inclined towards maintaining the *status quo* and satisfying the demands of the educational elite rather than addressing the fundamental challenges of the system. But there is no room for such an approach anymore. We urgently need an 'Assises de l'Education' and to develop a technology and education roadmap which will enable the economy to become more resilient....”**

enough and the rollout campaigns planned more effectively.

**\* As an educationist, how do you react to the news that almost half of our education personnel, mostly the teaching staff, have shown resistance to getting the Covid vaccines? Should that be made mandatory?**

Resistance to vaccines or vaccine hesitancy is not a Mauritian phenomenon only and certainly not restricted to the educational personnel. Vaccine hesitancy is complex and influenced by a number of factors. The level of mistrust and disinformation to do with vaccines and their efficacy, has impacted on people's decision-making processes. Context is also important to this discussion. We must not forget the amount of confusion that was created around the vaccination programme at the start impacting on the level of confidence.

That said, vaccines constitute a core component of the fight against the pandemic and one of the most essential ways together with other sanitary precautions. One would have thought that the educational personnel, particularly teaching staff, would be imbued with a large dose of moral responsibility and predisposition to protect the young people they encounter almost on a daily basis. If it is true that

half of the educational personnel are reluctant to get inoculated, then one cannot but ask the question whether teachers who are supposed to be the transmitters of knowledge and promoters of the advancement of the greater good, are equipped with such values?

It is therefore important that we intensify the campaign in favour of the vaccine and ensure that teachers understand the crucial role and responsibility that they have towards the children. They must not forget that the children and they themselves can be important 'silent spreaders' and how catastrophic the situation can be if we allow them to continue being complacent about the vaccination.

At the end of the day, we have no other means than being somewhat benignly dictatorial and make the vaccine mandatory. There can of course be exceptions on medical grounds.

**\* On the political front there is continuing controversy about the ICTA proposals to counter abuse of social media and the Agalega issue despite the reassurances of the government contrary to what the opposition would want us to believe. How do you react to these issues?**

That social media/technology platforms need to be regulated to counter abuse and protect society is beyond dispute. Engaging a debate with the nation on critical issues such as this is laudatory but when consultation is based on a document whose very content shows proclivity towards undemocratic norms and methods, there is cause for concern. A lot of ink has been spilt on the various dimensions of the Consultation Paper with people expressing their discontent about intrusion in their privacy and the squandering of their fundamental rights. The negative impacts that such controls can have on business and on an economy, which is already in the doldrums, has also been raised.

What's the point of such control and stringent measures when there is already an arsenal of laws which, if properly applied, that can assist towards an effective regulation of the social media? I am glad that Google and Mozilla have stood up against ICTA's proposals to control the social networks. This will certainly add support to the various points raised by the many enlightened citizens of Mauritius, who value their liberty and the democratic norms they are used to. I certainly align myself with them.

Coming to Agalega, the opacity around the agreement between India and Mauritius is deeply worrying, more so when numerous newspaper articles from different sources, emerging in the recent past, indicate some kind of militarization of the place. What is also disturbing is that many Agaleans, citizens of the Republic continue to be deprived of certain fundamental rights and treated as second-class citizens, while all sorts of infrastructural projects are being developed in the name of development.

Moreover, it is reported that what is taking place there is tantamount to an ecological disaster. We are well aware that rival powers within the global order see the Indian ocean as strategic to their interests and at this stage we are not sure which powers will dominate and what does a new equation reserve for the Agaleans and the Mauritians is unknown. It is our responsibility as citizens to unmask what is hidden underneath and this, in the best interests of all.



## Rewriting our History - First Chinese in Mauritius

Up to now, it was widely believed that the first Chinese to Mauritius landed from the 'Haes' on 1 May 1654. However, new research, by Joël Edouard from the University of Mauritius, seems to indicate that a certain Chinese, recorded in the Dutch language as "Bunckij",



First Chinese in Mauritius

might have reached the shores of Mauritius earlier in 1650. For some reason, Bunckij (pronounced Bunckai) was banished from Batavia (Jakarta) and sent into exile to Mauritius.

Now, how did a Chinese, of all places from Indonesia, end up in Mauritius? First of all, Chinese presence in Indonesia dates as far back as the 13th century. Moreover, Jakarta, Mauritius and Cape Town were key ports along a strategic maritime route linking Asia with Europe.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the Dutch were among the first to use and systematize convict labour, which is often overlooked compared to slave and indentured labour. We can bet that for Bunckij, "Maurice, c'est un plaisir" was a far removed and foreign notion at that time.

This key finding has the potential to rewrite the history of Mauritius. Therefore, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to researcher and historian Joël Edouard for sharing his findings as he combs through the archives of the VOC.

*Kwang Poon*

### Related Links

1. S.J. Edouard MA (Joël) - Radboud University (ru.nl) <https://www.ru.nl/english/people/edouard-s/>
2. Présence hollandaise à Maurice (1598-1710) - Bodha: «Une porte qui s'ouvre sur une partie méconnue, mais capitale» (lemauricien.com) <https://www.lemauricien.com/actualites/politique/presence-hollandaise-a-maurice-1598-1710-bodha-une-porte-qui-souvre-sur-une-partie-meconnue-mais-capitale/378962/>

## About Madeleine of La Hausse de la Louviere, Quatre Bornes

My father, Edwin John Stowers (John) was in the navy based in Mauritius during part of World War II. Whilst there he was friends with a girl named Madeleine who lived at La Hausse de la Louviere, Avenue Belle Rose, Quatre Bornes.



My father had a miniature portrait of her painted on bone with her address on the back. I now have this miniature portrait and would like to pass it on to one of her family if any could be found.

I wondered if you could put something in your paper which might bring one of her descendants forward so that I could return the portrait to them, should they wish. Unfortunately I don't know her family name and my father died long ago.

*Karen Miller -- UK*  
Email - [karengstowers@aol.com](mailto:karengstowers@aol.com)



# COMMUNIQUE

## GOVERNMENT WAGE ASSISTANCE SCHEME (GWAS) and SELF-EMPLOYED ASSISTANCE SCHEME (SEAS)

*Extension For the Month of May 2021*

Following the decision of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius to extend the **Government Wage Assistance Scheme (GWAS)** and the **Self-Employed Assistance Scheme (SEAS)** for the month of **May 2021**, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) informs employers and self-employed individuals of the following measures for the payment of the financial assistance.

### A. Tourism Sector

Financial assistance under **GWAS** and **SEAS** will continue to be provided to employers and self-employed individuals operating in the tourism sector in the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues for the **full month**.

### B. Sectors other than the Tourism Sector

**Financial assistance for a full month will be provided under GWAS and SEAS to those carrying out the following activities and who were not allowed to operate during the month of May 2021.**

1. Fitness centres and Professional Sports;
2. Horse racing bookmakers (outlets), casinos and gaming houses;
3. Leisure parks, amusement centres, including aquariums;
4. Multi-purpose halls, including wedding halls, theatres and cinema halls;
5. Nightclubs licensed by the Tourism Authority, and bars;
6. Self-employed individuals who are –
  - (i) Stallholders in markets that remained closed;
  - (ii) Haberdashers operating in a market;
  - (iii) Hawkers not allowed to operate;
  - (iv) Artists.

### C. Operators in the red zones and who are not allowed to operate

1. Employers having their principal place of business in a red zone;
2. Self-employed individuals residing in red zones or having their business activity within a red zone.

#### Note:

- A. **Red Zones:** Rivière des Anguilles, Batimaraais, St Aubin, Tyack, Benares, Camp Diable and Bonne Terre.
- B. **Markets/ shopping malls/ hypermarkets/ supermarkets/ superettes/ meat/ poultry/ fish shops/ food retail shops/ retail shops (magasins)/ hardware shops (quincailleries) were allowed to operate in red zones.**

### D. Operators in the Gaming Sector

**Employers operating in the following sectors are eligible for GWAS for half a month –**

1. Horse Racing Organisers;
2. Bookmakers conducting fixed odds bets on horse racing through remote communication;
3. Totalizator operators of horse racing by remote communication.

### Applications for GWAS and SEAS for the month of May 2021

**GWAS: Employers who are eligible for GWAS are required to submit a fresh application.**

**SEAS: Self-employed individuals who are eligible for SEAS as operators in the red zones are required to submit a fresh application through the MRA website [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu). Other eligible self-employed individuals are not required to submit fresh applications.**

For further details, kindly visit the MRA website: [www.mra.mu](http://www.mra.mu) or phone the MRA Helpdesk on 207 6000 during working hours or send an email at [headoffice@mra.mu](mailto:headoffice@mra.mu)

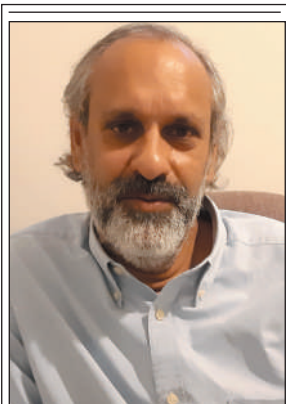
MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

26 May 2021

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Samad Ramoly

# Our identity trap

**T**hat fake missiles adorned with provocative slogans in an anti-oppression protest can trigger an outrage is quite understandable. This is not about minimising the impact of reckless behaviour, but a bid to explain with detachment why such situations occur.

Stigmatising this or that "community" without factoring in the historical, anthropological and socio-economic dimensions merely feeds and emphasises the gap between the "us" tribe and the "them" tribe. Our living-in-harmony-together is as sacred as it is vulnerable to the doublespeak of our ruling class and our own lazy thinking. Our human capital, and indeed our productivity at work and our competitiveness in the global market, are ultra-sensitive to the state of our well-being.

Do we deliberately choose to live in "bwar, amizé" mode as if there is no tomorrow? In truth, unless we can claim some ascetic credentials, we cannot escape from identifying with several overlapping communities. We assert ourselves and withdraw ourselves according to our moods and our

nature. For example, our identity swings with shifting affinity bias between Indianness, Muslimness, Africanness, Chineseness, Europeaness or cosmopolitanism; femininity namely or transgenderism; Catholicism namely or agnosticism; Mauritian patriotism or citizenship without borders. In short, countless healthy as well as unhealthy permutations are possible.

On the other hand, it is not the pluralism of our multicultural identity that can undermine, say, mutual respect and civic responsibility, but its weaponisation. A lasting identity crisis can indeed be indicative of unbearable suffering.

If we are not invariably cheerful to the Mauritius-building promise, it is because it is, among other things, deeply undermined by the absence of enlightened leadership. In this context, we tend to cling to other often fanciful "forces", no matter if they are exclusive and harmful to the Other. To vent feelings of hopelessness and helplessness, toxic channels often turn into refuge.

Ultimately, creating a common narrative rests on public policies that strive to integrate all the components of the nation. The brand of Mauritius manufactured by self-serving proponents of the status quo can be redesigned when "I love Lazistis" goes viral. That is to suggest, with a critical mass that cuts across our tribal affiliations against unfairness, contempt and bullshit.

# How to Use Statistics to Prepare for the Next Pandemic

Cont. from page 2

Should the US expect more cases than Ghana? Why might one city or region be hit harder than another?

We show that additional planning based upon cultural and demographic factors can help predict how outbreaks could progress. It can also reveal which people may be most vulnerable. Properly applied, this data-driven approach might save hundreds of thousands of lives when the next pandemic hits.

## What still isn't known

Our goal is to use the predictive power of cultural and demographic data to anticipate the spread of future pandemics. But neither of our studies specify a relationship between cause and effect.

For example, when looking at the US, one of the five predictive factors is the proportion of the population that is African American: Higher proportions predicted higher infection and death rates. Our analysis, however, did not determine whether this one factor might subsume many other truly causal factors. The social science and public health literature posits reasons why African American populations have suffered more from Covid-19, including bigger households, underlying health conditions and a tendency to work in sectors with greater risk of exposure.

**R. Alexander Bentley, Professor of Anthropology, University of Tennessee**

The Research Brief, a short take about interesting academic work, is available on: <https://theconversation.com/us/topics/research-brief-83231>

## Programme des Courses

### 3e Journée samedi 29 mai 2021

<b>1</b>	<b>THE STUD MASTER CUP</b> 1400 m -- Valeur [0-15] -- 12h15					
1	Blunderbuss	CR	3-1-4-1-9	61(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	10 1200
2	Kings Empire	SH	6-R-3-12	61	S.Rama	5 290
3	Rochester	JMH	6-6-7-6-9	61	B.Bhaugeerothee	3 750
4	King's Story	JMH	9-10-7-8-9	60.5	K.Ghunowa	4 4000
5	Mark Tapley	VA	10-8-8-9-5	60.5	S.Bussunt	9 2000
6	Hit The Green	RM	7-2-3-3-2	60	R.Joorawon	6 400
7	Captain Falcon	G	7-5-6-8-2	59.5	Y.Emamdee	8 700
8	Greatfiveeight	CD	7-8-6-7-4	58(-4)	M.Sonaram	2 500
9	New Golden Age	P	R-5-3-9-4	58	O.Sola	7 1500
10	Special Force	SPN	2-11-10-11-3	56	B.Sooful	1 550
11	Misty Roller [EA]	CD	2-2-3-2-1	60.5	-----	11 ----
<b>2</b>	<b>THE DAY TO REMEMBER CUP</b> 990 m -- Valeur [0-26] -- 12h50					
1	Manolette	CD	4-5-N-1-6	61(-4)	M.Sonaram	5 310
2	Marula	JMH	8-5-6-3-3	61(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	2 400
3	Very Vary	SN	1-2-1-N-6	61	D.Bheekary	3 330
4	Zenzero	SH	3-2-2-7-4	61	S.Rama	7 500
5	Bleu Royale	P	0-0-0-0-N	58.5	S.Bussunt	4 1000
6	What A Kid	RG	6-7-N-5-5	58	J.Allyhosain	6 1200
7	Birthday Boy	VA	7-8-7-5-8	56.5	B.Sooful	1 430
<b>3</b>	<b>THE LEOPOLD SEDAR SENGHOR CUP</b> 1500 m -- Valeur Benchmark 31 -- 13h25					
1	Ballantine Hall	G	1-6-3-2-9	60	S.Donohoe	1 400
2	Imperial Rage	SJ	0-0-6-7-1	60	R.Boutanive	7 1100
3	Man From Seattle	RG	5-6-3-9-3	60	J.Allyhosain	3 380
4	Camp David	GR	4-9-7-8-3	59.5	S.Rama	5 550
5	Sand Path	CD	6-3-6-2-1	59.5(-4)	M.Sonaram	6 350
6	Wordbuster	VA	R-6-2-8-2	59.5	B.Fayd'herbe	8 520
7	Subtropical	SPN	8-4-6-9-9	58.5	B.Sooful	2 2300
8	High Key	SN	4-2-4-5-4	58	D.Bheekary	4 520

<b>4</b>	<b>THE DR. JOCELYN MAINGARD CUP</b> 1365 m -- Valeur Benchmark 36 -- 14h00					
1	Edge Of The Sun	AS	5-2-7-2-6	61.5	R.Joorawon	4 600
2	Donnan	SN	6-10-1-1-4	61	D.Bheekary	7 380
3	Giggin	PM	nouveau	61	P.K.Horil	2 750
4	Royal Resolution	JMH	2-7-91-6	60.5	T.Juglall	3 650
5	Alameery	SJ	nouveau	59.5	R.Boutanive	5 2500
6	Kaydens Pride	RM	1-5-2-2-3	59.5	P.C.Orffer	6 240
7	Keiko	SJ	C-5-2-4-5	59.5	S.Bussunt	8 1100
8	Jals Tiger	GR	4-7-1-3-3	58.5	B.Sooful	1 620
9	Oxford Blue	CD	nouveau	56(-4)	M.Sonaram	9 1400
<b>5</b>	<b>THE FRANCE ALTELME CUP</b> 990 m -- Valeur Benchmark 41 -- 14h35					
1	Dark Force	RM	3-2-6-1-1	61	P.C.Orffer	4 290
2	Harmonica	JMH	2-7-3-7-5	60(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	8 1400
3	Ninotto	RG	1-3-5-2-5	60	J.Allyhosain	2 400
4	Candy Apple	GR	2-3-4-2-5	59.5	S.Rama	1 340
5	Great Stohvanen	AS	1-4-2-5-6	59.5	R.Joorawon	3 350
6	Savvy	SJ	0-0-0-6-7	59.5	R.Boutanive	7 2200
7	Superstitious	AS	5-1-2-1-3	59.5	O.Sola	5 4000
8	Ernie	JMH	5-7-7-7-6	59	T.Juglall	10 2000
9	Varside	SH	2-5-4-2-3	59	B.Bhaugeerothee	6 1200
10	Zeno	VA	0-0-0-N-8	53.5	B.Sooful	9 2200
<b>6</b>	<b>THE OWNERS CUP</b> 1365 m -- Valeur Benchmark 51 -- 15h10					
1	Shadowing	AS	1-1-2-3/1	61	R.Joorawon	10 470
2	Big Mistake	PM	26-8-3-7	60.5	P.K.Horil	3 1200
3	Blackburn Roc	GR	0-0-8-1-1	60.5	S.Rama	7 290
4	Over The Odds	SJ	nouveau	60.5	R.Boutanive	1 1400
5	Henry Tudor	CD	2-2-6-6-9	60(-4)	M.Sonaram	8 800
6	Emerald Band	VA	1-2-2-1-6	59.5	B.Fayd'herbe	2 420
7	Toro Bravo	SN	4-1-1-R-1	58	D.Bheekary	9 300
8	Syds Liason	RG	nouveau	57	J.Allyhosain	4 1600
9	Clouded Hill	JMH	0-0-0-9-9	56.5	T.Juglall	5 4000
10	Lighthearted [EA]	P	0-0-2-7-8	56.5	-----	6 ----

<b>7</b>	<b>THE DUCHESS OF YORK CUP</b> 1400 m -- Open - G.2 -- 15h45					
1	Twist Of Fate	VA	nouveau	58	B.Fayd'herbe	10 230
2	Count Jack	GR	nouveau	58	S.Donohoe	2 330
3	Alramz	RM	nouveau	58	P.C.Orffer	8 600
4	Marshall Foch	GR	nouveau	58	S.Rama	3 1600
5	Arizona Silk	PM	nouveau	58	P.K.Horil	7 1400
6	Stopalltheclocks	CD	nouveau	58	R.Joorawon	4 1200
7	Master Of Illusion	CD	nouveau	58	M.Sonaram	1 2000
8	Battle Of Alesia	RG	nouveau	58	J.Allyhosain	6 1000
9	Padre Pio	SJ	nouveau	58	D.Bheekary	9 500
10	Bag Of Tricks	RG	nouveau	58	B.Bhaugeerothee	5 4000
<b>8</b>	<b>THE WILFRID JACKSON CUP</b> 1500 m -- Valeur Benchmark 31 -- 16h20					
1	Power Tower	RG	5-7-1-2-3	61.5	J.Allyhosain	1 420
2	Senor's Guest	GR	3-2-3-1-6	61	B.Sooful	3 700
3	Why Wouldn't Yew	RM	6-4-3-7-7	61	P.C.Orffer	2 400
4	Heart Of Darkness	SN	5-7-3-4-1	60.5	D.Bheekary	5 550
5	Italian Way	VA	1-3-1-1-2	60.5	B.Fayd'herbe	6 320
6	Ladder Man	P	0-3-7-4-7	60.5	O.Sola	9 3500
7	Tyrian	PM	6-3-1-5-7	60.5	R.Joorawon	7 1200
8	Kalgoorlie	G	4-1-4-3-4	60	S.Donohoe	4 470
9	Ticket Holder	SJ	26-7-7-10	59.5	R.Boutanive	8 2200
<b>9</b>	<b>THE KING SWEEP PLATE</b> 1450 m -- Valeur [0-25] -- 16h55					
1	Canary Island	VA	nouveau	61.5	B.Fayd'herbe	2 250
2	James Peter	SN	nouveau	61.5	D.Bheekary	3 370
3	Starsky	CD	2-1-6-6-8	61.5	S.Rama	7 1400
4	Tyrandeus	SN	87-2-1-7	61	T.Juglall	8 2500
5	Artax	AS	9-4-9-3-6	60	R.Joorawon	5 600
6	Street Byte	CD	1-6-5-3-1	60(-4)	M.Sonaram	4 400
7	Midnight Oracle	SPN	5-4-6-10-7	59	B.Sooful	1 1200
8	Sir Capers	P	1-4-6-4-6	59	O.Sola	9 2000
9	Seventh Silver	RG	7-8-7-9-5	57	J.Allyhosain	6 1000

## SELECTIONS

1. Kings Empire, Hit The Green, Blunderbuss
2. Manolette, Very Vary, Marula
3. Man From Seattle, Sand Path, High Key
4. Kaydens Pride, Donnan, Jals Tiger
5. Dark Force, Candy Apple, Ninotto
6. Blackburn Roc, Shadowing, Emerald Band
7. Count Jack, Twist Of Fate, Padre Pio
8. Power Tower, Italian Way, Kalgoorlie
9. Canary Island, James Peter, Street Byte



# Having trouble sleeping? Here's the science on 3 traditional bedtime remedies

*What is it about chamomile tea, milk and cocoa that could help us sleep better, and what does the evidence say?*

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**S**leep is essential for good health. Poor sleep quality, or not enough sleep, can negatively affect our mood, cognitive function, and immune system.

Stress can impact our sleep, and stress and anxiety associated with the COVID pandemic have meant many of us are not sleeping as well as we used to. A survey of 2,555 people across 63 countries found 47% of people were experiencing poorer sleep than usual during the pandemic, compared with 25% before COVID hit.

We also know stress is associated with poor dietary habits. People who are feeling stressed and tired may be more likely to reach for energy drinks and caffeinated beverages. But a high intake of caffeine as well as sugar-sweetened and energy drinks can keep us awake. So it's something of a vicious cycle.

Similarly, people who are feeling stressed may be more likely to drink alcohol. Alcohol before bed, especially in excess, can also disrupt our sleep.

So what can you drink to improve your sleep?

## Chamomile

Chamomile tea has been used in traditional medicine for centuries to treat a range of sleep ailments, such as insomnia.

The plant extract contains apigenin, a chemical compound that binds to the same receptors in the brain as benzodiazepines (drugs used to treat anxiety and insomnia), producing a sedative effect.

Studies have shown chamomile (consumed in the form of an extract or a tea) leads to significant improvement in sleep quality.

However, although the evidence is po-

sitive, these studies were relatively small and we need larger, well-designed clinical trials to reinforce these observations.

## Milk

A warm cup of cow's milk is a popular bedtime beverage in Western cultures, particularly for children.

Milk is a source of the essential amino acid tryptophan, which our bodies need to produce compounds including serotonin and melatonin in the brain. These compounds are involved in the sleep-wake cycle, which could explain why milk helps us sleep better - if indeed it does.

Scientists have studied the effects of milk and milk products (such as yogurt and cheese) on sleep quality for decades, but the evidence is still inconclusive.

It may simply be the ritual of drinking warm milk before bedtime that relaxes the brain and body, rather than the effects of

compounds present in the milk itself. We'll need more research evidence before we can be confident one way or the other.

## Cocoa

Hot cocoa (commonly dissolved in milk) is also regarded as a sleep-promoting drink. The cocoa bean is a rich source of many beneficial chemicals, including compounds called flavonoids.

Flavonoids have a range of potential health benefits, and may be used to treat some neurodegenerative disorders.

There's limited research on the effects of cocoa on sleep quality. But a study in mice suggested natural cocoa may improve stress-induced insomnia.

In humans, consuming cocoa is associated with a reduction in blood pressure (in healthy people and those with high blood pressure). This lowering of blood pressure, which relaxes the smooth muscles that line our arteries, could produce a calming effect, making it easier to go to sleep.

While these sleep remedies are unlikely to be harmful, the overall evidence on improvement in quality of sleep is weak. You may like to try them, but you shouldn't see any of them as a quick fix.

At the end of the day, several lifestyle factors can influence our sleep quality, including screen time, physical activity, stress and diet.

If you are consistently struggling to sleep, it's best to consult with your general practitioner.

## Life's Stories

### Optimism is Infectious

*Memoirs of Admiral Chester Nimitz*

**W**hat happened at Pearl Harbour that day is very interesting and I never knew this little bit of history.

Tour boats ferry people out to the USS Arizona Memorial in Hawaii, every thirty minutes.

We just missed a ferry and had to wait thirty minutes. I went into a small gift shop to kill time.

In the gift shop, I purchased a small book entitled, 'Reflections on Pearl Harbour' by Admiral Chester Nimitz.

Sunday, December 7th, 1941, Admiral Chester Nimitz was attending a concert in Washington, DC.

He was paged and told there was a phone call for him. When he answered the phone, it was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the phone.

He told Admiral Nimitz that he (Nimitz) would now be the Commander of the Pacific Fleet.

Admiral Nimitz flew to Hawaii to assume command of the Pacific Fleet. He landed at Pearl Harbour on Christmas Eve, 1941.

There was such a spirit of despair, dejection and defeat. You would have thought the Japanese had already won the war.

On Christmas Day, 1941, Adm. Nimitz was given a boat tour of the destruction wrought on Pearl Harbour by the Japanese. Big sunken battleships and navy vessels cluttered the waters everywhere you looked.

As the tour boat returned to dock, the young helmsman of the boat asked, "Well Admiral, what do you think after seeing all this destruction?"

Admiral Nimitz's reply shocked everyone within the sound of his voice. He said, "The Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could ever make, or God was taking care of America. Which do you think it was?"

Shocked and surprised, the young helmsman asked, "What do mean by saying the Japanese made the three biggest mistakes an attack force ever made?"

Nimitz explained...

#### Mistake No. 1:

The Japanese attacked on Sunday morning. Nine out of every ten crewmen of those ships were ashore on leave. If those same ships had been lured to sea and been sunk, we would have lost 38,000 men instead of 3,800.

#### Mistake No. 2:

When the Japanese saw all those battleships lined in a row, they got so carried away sinking those battleships, they never once bombed our dry docks opposite those ships.

If they had destroyed our dry docks, we would have

had to tow every one of those ships to America to be repaired. As it is now, the ships are in shallow water and can be raised.

One tug can pull them over to the dry docks, and we can have them repaired and at sea by the time we could have towed them to America. And I already have crews ashore anxious to man those ships.

#### Mistake No. 3:

Every drop of fuel in the Pacific theatre of war is in the tops of the ground storage tanks five miles away over that hill. One attack plane could have strafed those tanks and destroyed our fuel supply.

That's why I say the Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could make or, God was taking care of America.

In jest, I might suggest that because Admiral Nimitz was a Texan, born and raised in Fredericksburg, Texas, he was a born optimist.

But any way you look at it, Admiral Nimitz was able to see a silver lining in a situation and circumstance where everyone else saw only despair and defeatism.

President Roosevelt had chosen the right man for the right job.

The USA desperately needed a leader that could see a silver lining in the midst of the clouds of dejection, despair and defeat.





## Pandemic Laughter

- If you see me leaving this group, please add me again. It's just that I'm so desperate to go out!
- Never in my wildest dreams have I imagined myself entering a bank, wearing a mask, and asking for money.
- Never thought my hands would one day consume more alcohol than my liver... ever!
- Lockdown seems like a Netflix series: just when you think it's over, they release the next season.
- I'm starting to like this mask thing. I went to the supermarket yesterday and two people that I owe money to didn't recognize me.
- Those complaining that we didn't have enough holidays, what now?
- I need to social distance myself from my fridge; I tested positive for excess weight!
- I'm not planning on adding 2020 to my age. I didn't even use it! I don't know about 2021. Does it exist?
- We want to publicly apologize to the year 2019 for all the bad things we

said about it.

- To all the ladies who were praying for their husbands to spend more time with them - how are you doing?
- My washing machine only accepts pyjamas these days. I put in a pair of jeans and a message popped up: "Stay Home".

2019: Avoid negative people.

2020: Avoid positive people.

2021: Avoid people because you don't know if they are positive or +negative

\*\*\*

A guy goes to see his doctor, and the doctor says, "Well, I'm afraid you have six weeks to live."

The guy says, "Oh damn, well what should I do doctor?"

The doctor tells him, "You should take a mud bath once a day for the next six weeks."

The guy asks, "Why? Is that supposed to help?"

The doctor says, "No, but it'll get you used to being in the ground."

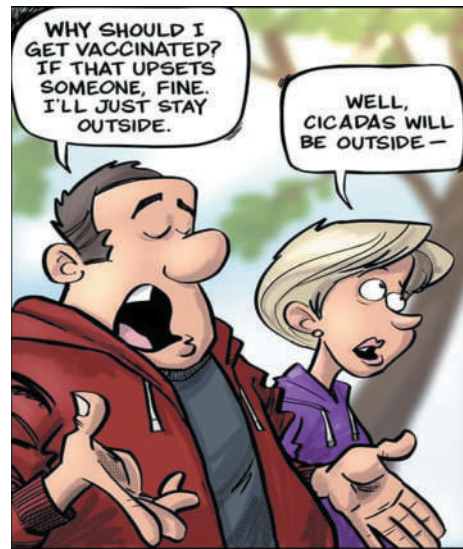
\*\*\*

A policeman stops a lady and asks for her license.

He says, "Lady, it says here that you should be wearing glasses."

The woman answered, "Well, I have contacts."

The policeman replied, "I don't care



who you know! You're getting a ticket!"

\*\*\*

In the men's bathroom, an accountant,

a lawyer, and a cowboy were standing side by side using the urinal.

The accountant finished, zipped up, and started washing and literally scrubbing his hands, clear up to his elbows. He used 20 paper towels before he finished. He turned to the other two men and commented, "I graduated from the University of Michigan, and they taught us to be clean."

The lawyer finished, zipped up, and quickly wet the tips of his fingers, grabbed one paper towel and commented, "I graduated from the University of California, and they taught us to be environmentally conscious."

The cowboy zipped up, and as he was walking out the door, he said, "I graduated from Texas Tech University, and they taught us not to piss on our hands."

\*\*\*

A: "Why are you late?"

B: "There was a man who lost a hundred-dollar bill."

A: "That's nice. Were you helping him look for it?"

B: "No, I was standing on it."

\*\*\*

Q: What is green and fuzzy and if it fell out of a tree it would kill you?

A: A pool table.

\*\*\*

Q: Why do anime fans listen to the radio in the morning?

A: Because they enjoy car toons!

## Life's Stories

### Life's Timing and Will is Perfect

In 1979, I was managing a Wendy's in Port Richey Florida.

Unlike today, staffing was never a real problem, but I was searching for a someone to work three hours a day only at lunch. I went through all my applications and most were all looking for full time or at least 20 hours per week.

I found one however, buried at the bottom of a four-inch stack that was only looking for lunch part-time. His name was Nicky. Hadn't met him but thought I would give him a call and see if he could stop by for an interview.

When I called, he wasn't in but his mom said she would make sure he would be there.

At the accorded time, Nicky walked in.

One of those moments when my heart went in my throat. Nicky suffered from Down's Syndrome. His physical appearance was a giveaway and his speech only reinforced the obvious.

I was young and sheltered. Had never interacted on a professional level with a developmentally disabled person. I had no clue what to do, so I went ahead and interviewed him.

He was a wonderful young man. Great outlook. Task focused. Excited to be alive.

For only reasons no one knew at that time, I hired him. 3 hours a day, 3 days a week to run a grill.

I let the staff know what to expect. Predictably the crew made sure I got the message, "No one wants to work with a retard."

To this day I find that word offensive.

We had a crew meeting, cleared the air, and prepared for his arrival.

Nicky showed up for work right on time. He was so excited to be working. He stood at the time clock literally shaking with anticipation. He clocked in and started his training. Couldn't multi-task, but was a machine on the grill.

Now for the fascinating part...

Back in that day, there were no computer screens to work from. Every order was called by the cashier. It required a great deal of concentration on the part of all production staff to get the order right.

While Nicky was training during his first shift, the sandwich maker next to him asked the grillman/trainer what was on the next sandwich.

Nicky replied, "Single, no pickle no onion." A few minutes later it happened again.

It was then that we discovered Nicky had a hidden and valuable skill. He memorized everything he heard! Photographic hearing!

#### What a skill set!

It took three days and every sandwich maker requested to work with Nicky. He immediately was accepted by

the entire crew.

After his shift he would join the rest of his crew family, drinking Coke like it was water! It was then that they discovered another Rainman-esque trait.

Nicky was a walking/talking perpetual calendar!

With a perpetual calendar as a reference, they would sit for hours asking him what day of the week was December 22,1847. He never missed. This uncanny trait mesmerized the crew.

His mom would come in at 2 to pick him up.

More times than not, the crew would be back there with him hamming it up.

As I went to get him from the back, his mom said something I will never forget.

"Let him stay there as long as he wants. He has never been accepted anywhere like he has been here."

I excused myself and dried my eyes, humbled and broken hearted at the lesson I just learned.

Nicky had a profound impact on that store. His presence changed a lot of people.

Today I believe with every fibre of my body that Nicky's hiring was no accident.

Life's timing and will is perfect.

We are all like Nicky.

We each have our shortcomings.

We each have our strong points.

But we are all of value one way or another.



As wonderful as the idea of giving birth seems, it is as exhaustive and prone to risks. While some women have it easy, others can fall into high-risk categories, which can make it a matter of great concern. In such scenarios, it is important to take necessary measures to ensure a safe pregnancy and to have a healthy baby.

#### What is high-risk pregnancy?

When there is potential complication associated with the birth of a baby, not just to the baby alone, but to the mother as well, it is considered to be a high risk pregnancy. While a pregnancy can pose additional stress on a woman's body, it can also trigger bouts of anxiety and mental health issues. A high-risk pregnancy diagnosis may demand certain lifestyle changes and also a healthy support system.

That said, here are some precautions you must take if you are prone to a high risk pregnancy.

#### Be well-informed

First of all, when it comes to pregnancy, it is of utmost importance that you stay on top of your game. Stay well informed but also do not believe everything you read online or hear from your near and dear ones. Visit your doctor for verified, factual information and ask questions that you think are important for you and your unborn baby.

#### Surround yourself with supportive people

During pregnancy, your mind and body may feel rest-

### Mother Care

## Pregnancy care: Precautions to take during high-risk pregnancy



less. Especially when you're diagnosed with high risk pregnancy, it may put you in a state of stress and anxiety. Therefore, in such situations, you must surround yourself with positive people and energy. A healthy support system can keep you sane during troubled times and may help you overcome all the challenges.

#### Trust the process

Pregnancy is a long, 9-month process, which can seem exhaustive and tiring. However, it is important that

you trust the process so as to ensure a safe pregnancy. Believe in your physician and your gynecologist and avoid resorting to online advice. While it's a long wait, each and every milestone is a memory you'll cherish.

#### Switch to a healthy diet

Considering you're diagnosed with a high risk pregnancy, it is crucial that you keep a check on your diet. A healthy diet is key to a healthy lifestyle and that is why you must not give into your cravings and temptations. Avoid eating a high-fat diet and foods that are rich in sugar. In case of hypertension during pregnancy, limit your salt intake.

#### Regulated physical activity is a must

Exercises, yoga and any form of physical activity can keep your mind and body healthy. Even during pregnancy, a short routine walk or simple prenatal exercises can help ease your pregnancy process. However, you must avoid any intense workouts and physical activity, especially if you're diagnosed with high risk pregnancy. Remember to consult your doctor and seek their advice for the same.

#### Reduce stress and manage your anxiety

Pregnancy can be toilsome. It can induce a lot of stress and anxiety. But in high-risk pregnancy, you must learn to reduce your anxiety levels and manage them efficiently. As mentioned above, choose a healthy lifestyle and surround yourself with a wonderful support system. Do not allow negative ideas to cloud your mind and learn to communicate with your partner or your loved ones.



## 6 Things Women in their 40s Really Want in a Man

*There is no right or wrong age to find love. After all, to love or to be loved is one of the most beautiful emotions one could experience*

There are different things people want from love in different phases of their lives. When we are young, we want love to be exciting and thrilling but we expect it to be steady and mature once we grow up. If you are a man in your forties looking for a life partner, here are a few things, as reported by TOI, women in the same age bracket really want in their partners.

#### Honesty

The fact is that every age group of women look for honesty in

men. However, mature women value it even more because they have no time to waste. They want men to be emotionally honest with them. It's not worth playing games with someone who twists the truth. A woman who has been down this road before will not bargain with childish behavior such as dishonesty.

#### No comparison with younger women

Women value a man who sees life the way they do, who sees them for who they are and what they have to offer. However, some men in their 40s and even beyond want a young "trophy" to show off to the world. On the other hand, some men do prefer the love of a mature woman who knows how to handle her man. They recognize that women of a similar age are the women they can relate to the most.

#### Taking "I love you" seriously

A mature woman knows the value of saying "I love you." When she says that she loves you, she means it and it's special. There will be no doubt in the man's mind that this woman loves him with a pure heart.

#### They do not want romance 24/7

Quality romance to a woman in her 40s is attentiveness and time. They want to feel the connection and want to be wooed through acts of consideration, respect, and support. For them, it's much more romantic and meaningful when a man takes the time to learn how they like their tea rather than to receive flowers.

#### No games

When we are younger, we play mind games that often lead to heartbreak. But if you are a man who is attracted to drama, a mature woman is not for you. Older women don't have time to waste on men who don't want a commitment. She knows what she wants, is self-assured, and will not be involved in a relationship with someone who is not ready to put in the work or someone who plays emotional games.

#### Self-awareness

Mature women yearn for a quality soul - a man who understands who he is, he is on the same page as her, has learned from past relationships, and is not interested in repeating old behavior patterns.



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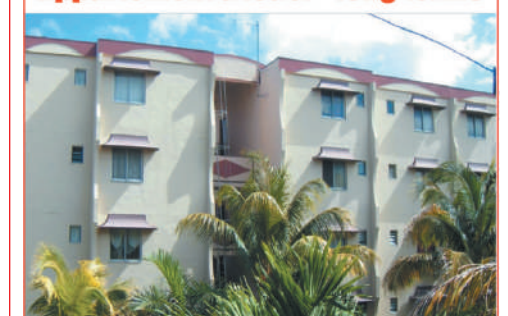


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# Madhuri Dixit is celebrating her 54th birthday

*The Bollywood superstar who changed the rules of the game*

**M**adhuri Dixit was a force to reckon with in the 1990s, a female superstar Bollywood is yet to find a replacement for. On Madhuri Dixit's birthday this month, here's looking back at her journey, evolution and what made her, one and only, as reported by Mimansa Shekhar of Indian Express.

When Anupam Kher revealed in 2015 that Madhuri Dixit was given a higher remuneration than Salman Khan in *Hum Aapke Hain Koun*, barely anyone was surprised. By 1994, Madhuri was already a superstar, a self-made icon who was arguably among one of the biggest success stories of Bollywood. She was 27 and had already delivered blockbusters like *Tezaab*, *Ram Lakhan*, *Tridev*, *Parinda*, *Dil*, *Saajan*, *Beta*, and *Khalnayak*. Madhuri was the reigning queen of box office and everything she touched turned to gold.

It was Rajshri Productions that introduced Madhuri in Bollywood with *Abodh* (1984) at the age of 17. Though the film was panned, she got noticed. After some forgettable movies, *Tezaab* happened. And there she was, like a female Pied Piper, leading an entire generation to the tunes of "Ek Do Teen". She breathed life into Nisha, the heart and soul of HAHK too, just the way she did for innocent Pooja in *Saajan* and the spirited Suru/Saraswati in *Beta*.

In 2000, Madhuri won the title of Actress of the Millennium. Guinness Book of Records Millennium version even named her as the highest paid Indian actress.

What exactly was it about Madhuri that made her the numero uno star?

Madhuri came when another diva, Sridevi was ruling Bollywood in the 1980s. Even after four decades, fans are divided into Team Sridevi and Team Madhuri. The fact remains that she did replace Bollywood's Chandni in the 1990s. Even the Khans, whose star was on the rise in the days, understood her power. Aamir and Madhuri were equals in *Dil*, not just onscreen, but off it too. Shah Rukh Khan romanced her with the same intensity as she reciprocated in *Dil Toh Pagal Hai*. And HAHK was the last film Salman did opposite an actress who suited his age!

Seen closely, that was a time when female actors were meant to adorn the screen, shed tears, dance around with the hero and shout "bachhao" at the villain's den. Madhuri made her choices clear. Most of her films had her playing strong characters, who weren't ready to budge. They were aggressive, tough, stubborn, bold and took their charge of their life, women who we hadn't seen on our screens.

When she wrecked vengeance on Vijay (SRK) in *Anjaam*, it was no love story. She became a warrior against her male-dominated village and the oppression in *Mrityudand*. She took unconventional decisions in *Gulaab Gang* and *Aaja Nachle*.

Madhuri Dixit is a complete package of talent, onscreen presence, a radiant smile, chemistry with her co-actors, and delivers a near-perfect act in almost every genre. Many also point that Madhuri could never match Sridevi's comic timing, but she compensated that with her dancing prowess, something no actress has come even close to, till now (not even Aishwarya Rai in "Dola Re").

And can we not call her songs, the spine of her



films? A major share in the success of Madhuri can be given to her iconic numbers, and her mentor, late choreographer Saroj Khan. Upon the latter's demise last year, Madhuri said, "Saroj ji was part of my journey since the beginning. She taught me a lot, not just about dance but so much more."

Saroj Khan designed hook steps especially for Madhuri. Each song they did together was a piece of art. Nobody could present Madhuri better than her 'master ji', be it "*Humko Aaj Kal Hai*", "*Chane Ke Khet Mein*" or "*Mera Piya Ghar Aaya*".

Madhuri's nimble feet gave us dozens of tracks we've grown up on. But, we can't just call her songs, dance numbers. They took the story forward. Sometimes, they were trendsetters. Her "*Choli Ke Peeche Kya Hai*" from *Khalnayak* turned heads for its bold composition and lyrics. And she pulled it off with utmost grace. She did so even in "*Dhak Dhak Karne Laga*" from *Beta*, one of the most sensuous songs till date, which also made her 'Dhak Dhak girl' for life.

During one of the episodes of the Indian version of *So You Think You Can Dance* in 2016, Madhuri spoke about her initial days. She shared, "Those were my early struggling days and I used to feel I don't actually fit into the 'perfect' size of heroines back then in Bollywood. And I used to think that way majorly because of the continuous criticisms I used to face from outsiders. But that didn't deter my path to success and I worked hard and I think I have accomplished what I had set out for."

One can easily look at the bright side of her statement. If she did not fit into the frame of heroines back then, she created a new frame that others were forced to fit into. There has not been a replacement for Madhuri yet.

Madhuri Dixit is a recipient of Padma Shri. She has so far won six Filmfare Awards and has featured seven times on Forbes India's Celebrity 100 list.

*Happy birthday, Madhuri Dixit!*

## YOUR STARS

### Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

You can be attracted by someone who's very different from you and whom you know not suitable to you; and you'll have all of the world's difficulties fighting against this inclination. There'll be a small tyrannical side to your character which might very well provoke disputes with your entourage.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 12, 17, 20, 31**

### Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

You'll have the impression that happiness is only something that can't be grasped. Open your eyes: human happiness does exist, and it's easy to be reached! Your natural charm and magnetism will give you opportunities to make very pleasant encounters.

**Lucky Numbers: 6, 9, 14, 17, 20, 23**

### Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

For single people, love affairs will be what they'll want them to be, for instance to consolidate an existing relation, which would be a source of balance for them. Chance will this time come by the way where you didn't expect it.

**Lucky Numbers: 5, 23, 23, 31, 34, 36**

### Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

The stars will come to help you in your professional activities. This astral climate will compel you to get rid of many harmful preconceived ideas which might stifle your personality.

**Lucky Numbers: 12, 16, 20, 21, 24, 30**

### Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

Your psychic state will probably leave much to be desired. You'll feel that your head is empty, or on the contrary full of ideas so much that they'll blur your judgment. If you entrust other people with certain works, don't be totally confident in them.

**Lucky Numbers: 7, 12, 15, 17, 20, 30**

### Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

If you refrain from imposing your will too much, you can use your energy to unjam certain situations that are at a standstill. Don't embark on a daring financial operation. Beware of your possessive tendencies, which may be strengthened this time.

**Lucky Numbers: 11, 17, 20, 26, 29, 31**

### Gemini: May 21 - June 20

Things will go extremely well on the sentimental front; if you're single, you could fall in love irremediably; and if you're married, then you'll spend delicious moments with your mate. Beware of swindles.

**Lucky Numbers: 1, 8, 14, 18, 20, 30**

### Cancer: June 21 - July 22

You'll have an opportunity to shine in your career; but it's hazard rather your talent which will do your glory; therefore, beware of too much self-pride! Your good humour will facilitate your contacts with people within the framework of your career or leisure.

**Lucky Numbers: 5, 7, 19, 20, 30, 34**

### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Those who've been since a long time trying to conquer a person who pleases them will see their efforts crowned with success and their patience rewarded. Real estate won't be a factor of chance and could give rise to numerous problems.

**Lucky Numbers: 7, 9, 30, 34, 39, 40**

### Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

If you have children, you'll feel nearer to them than ever; you'll succeed in establishing good complicity ties with them; they'll confide in you as they would do in their best friend.

**Lucky Numbers: 4, 12, 19, 20, 22, 33**

### Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

The stars will give you the opportunity to encounter a person with whom you'll reach marvellous understanding. You'll grapple with the problems which hinder your progress. Also, you'll courageously accept certain confrontations which you viscerally dread.

**Lucky Numbers: 3, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22**

### Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

The atmosphere will be laden with love, in the largest sense of the word. You'll even find reasons for appreciating those who annoyed you before. Avoid all risk of irritation, all conflictual situation. No obstacle can impede your progress; however, don't let yourself be intoxicated.

**Lucky Numbers: 15, 17, 30, 31, 37, 39**



## Maniesh Paul to Barun Sobti; TV celebs who married their childhood sweethearts



Falling in love is surely a blissful feeling. Nevertheless, falling in love with someone whom you connect with since childhood and setting forth on a happily ever after journey with them is even more ecstatic. Many popular celebrities from the film industry are known to have married their childhood friends and sweethearts. But did you know, a few television celebrities also fall in the list? Take a look at who they are, as reported by Times of India:

### Maniesh Paul and Sanyukta Paul

Maniesh Paul recently grabbed the headlines when he poured his heart out and talked about marrying his childhood sweetheart, Sanyukta Paul. The popular host shared their love story to *House of Bombay*. He revealed that both of them knew each other from kindergarten, however, Maniesh had the first memory of Sanyukta from when they were in third grade.

Further talking about how things progressed from friendship, love and then marriage for them in the latter part of the piece. Maniesh and Sanyukta tied the knot in 2007 after dating for years, ever since their school days. The couple is parents to a daughter, Saisha and son Yuvann.

### Pooja Banerjee and Sandeep Sejwal

*Kumkum Bhagya* actress Pooja Banerjee married Olympian swimmer Sandeep Sejwal in 2017. The couple knew each other since fourth standard and stayed friends for years until they realised their feelings for each other.

### Barun Sobti and Pashmeen Manchanda

*Iss Pyaar Ko Kya Naam Doon?* fame Barun Sobti married his sweetheart from school, Pashmeen Manchanda. The couple met each other when they were in

ninth grade. However, they realised their love only when they had to part ways during their college days. Their romance continued even though they were miles apart. Later, they convinced their parents and finally tied the knot in 2010.

### Kinshuk Mahajan and Divya Gupta

*Pandya Store* actor *Kinshuk Mahajan* met the love of his life during ninth grade. They attended the same tuition classes for Economics. The couple went from being tuition buddies to friends and then love blossomed between the two. They dated each other for a while and then took the plunge in 2012.

### Chandan Prabhakar and Nandini Khanna

The *Kapil Sharma Show* fame Chandan Prabhakar is married to his childhood best friend Nandini. The comedian and scriptwriter have always believed that his wife is his lucky charm. The couple, who got married in 2015, became parents to daughter Advika in 2017.

### Palak Jain and Tapasvi Mehta

*Itna Karo Na Mujhe Pyaar* fame Palak Jain tied the knot with her teenage crush Tapasvi Mehta in 2019. The actress also shared in her interviews that she was smitten by Tapasvi when she first saw him. She also revealed that she used to watch the show *Parrvarish* wherein he played the son of lead actress Shweta Tiwari.

### Rucha Hasnabis and Rahul Jagdale

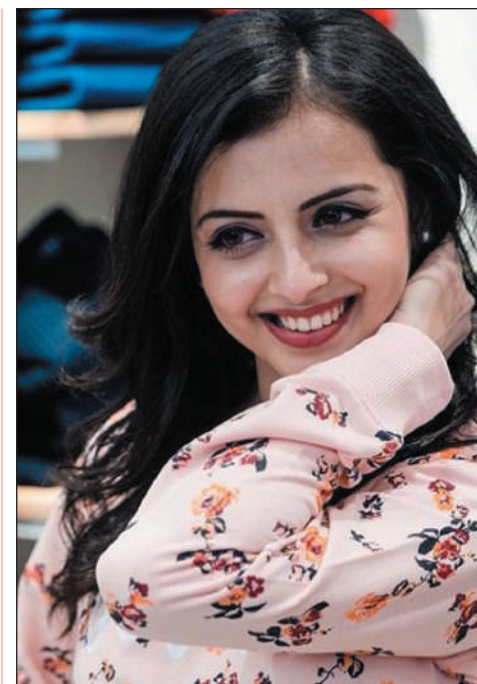
*Saath Nibhana Saathiya's* *Rashi* aka Rucha Hasnabis is married to her childhood BFF Rahul Jagdale. The couple went to the same school and that's from where their love story started. They tied the knot in 2015 and Rucha left her acting career for family and happily settled with Rahul in America.

## Shrenu Parikh: 'This is not the time to flaunt our vacation photos on social media'

Shrenu Parikh, who had tested positive for Covid-19 in July last year and recovered after spending a few days at the hospital, says that we must take care of our mental health and also try to help each other during these challenging times. Professionally, the actress was about to start shooting for a new project but with shoots getting cancelled in Mumbai, it has been postponed indefinitely.

Talking to Soumitra Das of TNN, Shrenu says, "The project is on hold right now and this has been a challenging phase for actors, who have suffered monetary losses. Having said that, I don't want to complain because our losses are nothing compared to what people like daily wagers are going through at the moment. Many people are struggling to arrange for two meals daily and I feel really pained to see so much suffering all around."

The *Ishqbaaaz* actress, who is usually pretty active on social media, has been using the medium primarily to amplify messages seeking help. She tells us, "Apart from amplifying messages to help others, I don't feel like posting anything on social media. This is not the time to flaunt our vacation photos or anything like that. The second wave of the pandemic has been really devastating in our country and most of us have lost loved ones to Covid-19. I am trying to associate myself with teams of volunteers in different cities, who have been doing a commendable job by helping the needy during these stressful



times."

Talking about the importance of mental health, the actress says, "I have interacted with a lot of strangers also in the last few weeks. It's time for us to be there for each other. It feels really sad when someone doesn't survive even after all the efforts to save them. At times, all this negativity and bad news gets really overwhelming and I face anxiety issues, as I keep thinking about the well-being of my loved ones. Sometimes, I switch off completely from social media to deal with it."

## Sunayana Fozdar: "Whatever I am today, I owe it to my mom"

Sunayana Fozdar who is known for her phenomenal acting chops and great taste in fashion is very close to her mother in real life. The *Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah* actress who grew up in an all-women's team has been raised by her mother single-handedly.

In an exclusive conversation with Jishika Madaan of Koimoi, Sunayana opened up on her relationship with her mother and how do they share a colloquial bond all these years.

Sunayana Fozdar shares, "My relationship with my Mom is very strong yet we don't express! I am an identical copy of hers. But we are extremely emotional people. She has been my pillar of strength. Whatever I am today, I owe it to her completely. And it's been an all-woman army in my home always. So, she has always taught me how to be independent".

The *Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah* actress further shared how



internally strong her mother is, and how that one quality of hers resonated with her. Sunayana Fozdar added, "Not once in my life, have I seen her upset or breaking down in front of me. So that's the strength that I get from her. She is the strongest woman that I have ever seen. And whatever good that I am is because of her. We are more like friends than just mother-daughter"

On the professional front, Sunayana Fozdar plays the role of Anjali in *Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah*. The actress joined the show last year amid the pandemic after Neha Mehta quit.





Vendredi 28 Mai - 21.15

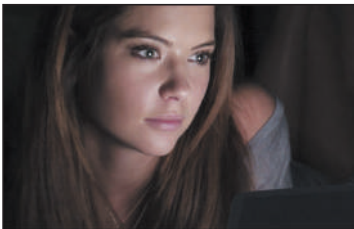
The Post



Samedi 29 Mai - 21.20

Ratter

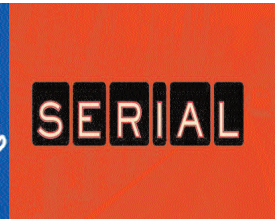
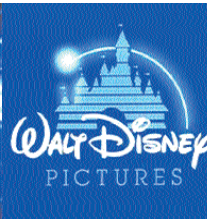
Starring: Ashley Benson, Matt McGorry, Kaili Vernoff



Dimanche 30 Mai - 21.15



Samedi 29 Mai - 21.00



vendredi 28 mai

samedi 29 mai

dimanche 30 mai

MBC 1

- 07.00 Dessin Anime
- 10.35 Serial: Open Heart
- 11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
- 12.55 MBC Talent Show
- 14.16 D.Anime: The Hive
- 14.23 D.Anime: Dragons: Par-Delà
- 14.47 D.Anime: La Famille Blaireau
- 15.19 D.Anime: Cosmic Quantum...
- 15.45 Film: Le Petit Dinosaur
- 17.00 Serial: Backstage
- 17.30 Mag: Origami
- 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
- 21.25 Serial: Seal Team
- 23.00 Le Journal
- 23.35 Mag: Eye On SADC

MBC 2

- 10.00 Serial: Ki Jaana Mein Kaun
- 11.05 Serial: Zun Mureed
- 12.04 Film: Bagavat
- Starring : Dilip Darbar, Jeet Upendra, Anita Raj, Sana Khan & Other
- 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 Programe

MBC 3

- 06.00 Mag: Eco India
- 06.26 Mag: Shift
- 06.38 Mag: Sur Mesure
- 07.52 Mag: Science Ou Fiction
- 08.47 Doc: 360 GEO
- 09.39 Doc: The Miracle Of Hearing
- 11.07 Mag: Eco India
- 11.46 Mag: Sur Mesure
- 12.33 Mag: Tomorrow Today
- 12.59 Mag: Science Ou Fiction
- 13.54 Doc: 360 GEO
- 15.29 Doc: Starting Strong
- 16.53 Mag: Sur Mesure
- 17.06 Mag: Border Crossing
- 17.32 Mag: Tomorrow Today
- 18.00 Doc: Asteroids
- 18.44 Mag: Arts And Culture
- 19.00 Mag: Global 3000
- 20.05 Doc: Olivia's Garden
- 20.30 Local: News (English)
- 21.32 La Vie Revee De Gaspard

Cine 12

- 00.54 Serial: The Magicians
- 01.34 Film: Armed Response
- 03.04 Serial: L.A.'s Finest
- 03.54 Film: Amazing Grace
- 05.51 Tele: Muneca Brava
- 07.15 Film: The Watch
- 09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire
- 09.45 Tele: Daniella
- 10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
- 11.00 Serial: L.A.'S Finest
- 11.44 Film: Amazing Grace
- 13.42 Tele: Muneca Brava
- 14.50 Film: The Watch
- 16.41 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: The Post
- 23.13 Tele: Muneca Brava

Bollywood TV

- 08.00 Film: Dharm Adhikari
- 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 - Shradha Aur Saburi
- 15.34 Film: Singh Saab The Great
- Starring Sunny Deol, Urvashi Rautela, Prakash Raj
- 18.00 Live: Samacher
- 18.30 Kundali Bhagya
- 18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka

- 06.00 D.Anime: Mega Man
- 06.24 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis...
- 06.46 D.Anime: Sissi, Jeune Impe...
- 07.13 D.Anime: Kid Lucky
- 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: Ribbit, Prince Malgre...
- 16.50 Serial: Project MC
- 17.15 Mag: Origami
- 17.30 Serial: Magic Mania
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Entertainment: Dance
- 19.30 Journal & La Meteo
- 20.25 Local: Le Rendez Vous
- 21.20 Film: Ratter
- 23.00 Le Journal

- 07.00 Film: Sindoor
- 09.32 Serial: Vir: The Robot Boy
- 10.11 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
- 11.36 Serial: Bloody Romance
- 12.00 Serial: Nanda Saukhya Bhare
- 12.24 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
- 12.47 Serial: High School
- 13.03 Annakodiyum Ainthu Pengalum
- 15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
- 15.30 Film: Dil Dhadakne Do
- 18.16 DDI Magazine
- 19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol
- 19.30 DDI Magazine
- 20.06 Serial: Vikram Betaal Ki Rahasya Gatha
- 20.28 Serial: Bitti Business Wai
- 21.01 Film: Cookie
- Starring Nabeel Ahmed, Amit Ashar, Bhavin Bhanushali
- 22.43 DDI Live

- 06.00 Doc: Asteroids
- 06.55 Mag: Global 3000
- 07.27 Mag: Euromaxx
- 07.56 Doc: Wildlife Heroes
- 08.48 La Vie Revee De Gaspard
- 09.40 Doc: Guinea-Bissau
- 11.07 Doc: Asteroids
- 12.03 Mag: Global 3000
- 12.29 Mag: Le Saviez-Vous?
- 12.38 Doc: Wildlife Heroes
- 13.30 La Vie Revee De Gaspard
- 14.22 Doc: Guinea-Bissau
- 16.04 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: Our Friend The Atom
- 23.19 Doc: High-Speed Internet...
- 00.02 Doc: Amazing Gardens

- 01.16 Film: The Post
- 03.13 Serial: Dynasty 2
- 03.52 Film: Contract Killers
- 05.31 Tele: Esmeraldas
- 06.10 Serial: Reckoning
- 06.52 Film: Clarity
- 08.30 Serial: Mike Hammer
- 09.26 Serial: The Enemy Within
- 10.07 Serial: 12 Monkeys
- 10.49 Film: I Think My Babysitter's
- 12.13 Serial: Dynasty 2
- 13.00 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: Du Mauvais Cote De...
- 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones
- 20.30 Series: Reckoning
- 21.15 Film: Julie Et Julia
- 23.18 Tele: Dulce Amor

- 04.05 Sanjivani
- 04.26 Radha Krishna
- 04.48 Agniphera
- 05.09 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
- 05.34 Zindagi Ki Mehek
- 05.55 Ikyawann
- 06.26 Mere Sai - Shradha 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
- 10.12 Siddhi Vinayak
- 12.00 Serial: Bhakharwadi
- 14.00 Sanjivani
- 16.00 Pavitra Rishta
- 18.30 Film: Alag - He Is Different
- Star: Akshay Kapoor, Dia Mirza
- 20.25 Serial: Siya Ke Ram
- 21.08 Serial: Naagin

- 06.00 D.Anime: Mega Man: Fully...
- 06.25 D.Anime: Rev & Roll, Amis A...
- 07.56 D.Anime: Cosmic Quantum...
- 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: The Hive
- 15.22 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz And...
- 15.45 Film: Mother's Day
- 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: Predestination
- Stars: Ethan Hawke, Sarah Snook, Noah Taylor

- 07.00 Film: Ganga Ki Saugandh
- 09.32 Serial: Babu
- 10.11 Local: Love & Unity Concert
- 12.00 Film: Super Nani
- Stars: Rekha, Sharman Joshi, Randhir Kapoor
- 14.12 DDI Magazine
- 15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
- 15.19 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
- 15.42 Eka Lagnachi Teesri Gosht
- 16.05 Apoorva Raagangal
- 17.00 Mahakali
- 17.43 Kiswa
- 18.00 Mag: DDI Magazine
- 19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol
- 20.06 Serial: Mann Mein Vishwas Hai
- 20.47 Serial: CID
- 21.32 Serial: Naagin Season 2
- 22.17 Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki
- 22.59 DDI Live

- 06.00 Mag: Amazing Gardens
- 06.26 Extremism And Violence
- 06.52 Doc: The World From Above
- 07.47 Doc: 360 GEO
- 08.37 Doc: Destination
- 10.29 Doc: High-Speed Internet...
- 11.10 Doc: Amazing Gardens
- 11.38 Extremism And Violence
- 12.30 Mag: Check In
- 12.56 Doc: 360 GEO
- 17.42 Mag: Shift
- 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: Lords Of Water
- 22.27 Doc: Concorde - The Fall Of...
- 23.09 Mag: Tendance XXI
- 23.36 Doc: Ville En Fête

- 00.20 Serial: The Magicians
- 01.27 Film: Julie Et Julia
- 03.26 Serial: Hawaii Five-0
- 04.08 Film: Ratter
- 05.25 Tele: Esmeraldas
- 06.05 Serial: Reckoning
- 06.47 Film: I Think My Babysitter's
- 08.12 Serial: Mike Hammer
- 09.00 Film: Julie Et Julia
- 11.03 Film: Du Mauvais Cote De...
- 12.42 Serial: L.A.'s Finest
- 15.05 Telenovela: Amanda
- 15.48 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: A Day Late And A Dollar Short
- 22.45 Tele: Dulce Amor

- 00.40 Serial: Bhakharwadi
- 02.23 Sanjivani
- 04.06 Pavitra Rishta
- 05.36 Film: Alag - He Is Different
- Starring: Akshay Kapoor, Dia Mirza
- 08.00 Motu Patlu
- 08.11 Karn Sangini
- 09.59 Jaana Na Dil Se Door
- 12.00 Piya Albela
- 13.50 Agniphera
- 15.47 Bin Kuch Kahe
- 17.35 Punar Vivaah
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Film: Panga
- Starring: Kangana Ranaut, Jassi Gill, Richa Chadda, Neena Gupta
- 20.37 Entertainment: Dance
- 21.26 Bade Acche Lagte Hai

MBC 2

Samedi 29 Mai - 21.00

Stars: Nabeel Ahmed, Amit Ashar, Bhavin Bhanushali



Dimanche 30 Mai - 18.30

Stars: Kangana Ranaut, Jassi Gill, Richa Chadda, Neena Gupta





# The Five Biggest Threats to Human Existence



Anders Sandberg,  
James Martin Research  
Fellow, University of Oxford

In the daily hubbub of current "crises" facing humanity, we forget about the many generations we hope are yet to come. Not those who will live 200 years from now, but 1,000 or 10,000 years from now. I use the word "hope" because we face risks, called existential risks, that threaten to wipe out humanity. These risks are not just for big disasters, but for the disasters that could end history.

## 1. Nuclear war

While only two nuclear weapons have been used in war so far - at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II - and nuclear stockpiles are down from the peak they reached in the Cold War, it is a mistake to think that nuclear war is impossible. In fact, it might not be improbable.

A full-scale nuclear war between major powers would kill hundreds of millions of people directly or through the near aftermath - an unimaginable disaster. But that is not enough to make it an existential risk.

Similarly the hazards of fallout are often exaggerated - potentially deadly locally, but globally a relatively limited problem. Cobalt bombs were proposed as a hypothetical doomsday weapon that would kill everybody with fallout, but are in practice hard and expensive to build. And they are physically just barely possible.

The real threat is nuclear winter - that is, soot lofted into the stratosphere causing a multi-year cooling and drying of the world. Modern climate simulations show that it could preclude agriculture across much of the world for years. If this scenario occurs billions would starve, leaving only scattered survivors that might be picked off by other threats such as disease.

The main uncertainty is how the soot would behave: depending on the kind of soot the outcomes may be very different, and we currently have no good ways of estimating this.

## 2. Bioengineered pandemic

Natural pandemics have killed more people than wars. However, natural pandemics are unlikely to be existential threats: there are usually some people resistant to the pathogen, and the offspring



of survivors would be more resistant. Evolution also does not favor parasites that wipe out their hosts, which is why syphilis went from a virulent killer to a chronic disease as it spread in Europe.

Unfortunately we can now make diseases nastier. One of the more famous examples is how the introduction of an extra gene in mousepox - the mouse version of smallpox - made it far more lethal and able to infect vaccinated individuals. Recent work on bird flu has demonstrated that the contagiousness of a disease can be deliberately boosted.

Right now the risk of somebody deliberately releasing something devastating is low. But as biotechnology gets better and cheaper, more groups will be able to make diseases worse.

Most work on bioweapons have been done by governments looking for something controllable, because wiping out humanity is not militarily useful. But there are always some people who might want to do things because they can.

The number of fatalities from bioweapon and epidemic outbreaks attacks looks like it has a power-law distribution - most attacks have few victims, but a few kill many. Given current numbers the risk of a global pandemic from bioterrorism seems very small. But this is just bioterrorism: governments have killed far more people than terrorists with bioweapons (up to 400,000 may have died from the WWII Japanese biowar program). And as technology gets more powerful in the future nastier pathogens become easier to design.

## 3. Superintelligence

Intelligence is very powerful. A tiny increment in problem-solving ability and group coordination is why we left the other apes in the dust. Now their continued existence depends on human decisions,

not what they do. Being smart is a real advantage for people and organisations, so there is much effort in figuring out ways of improving our individual and collective intelligence: from cognition-enhancing drugs to artificial-intelligence software.

The problem is that intelligent entities are good at achieving their goals, but if the goals are badly set they can use their power to cleverly achieve disastrous ends. There is no reason to think that intelligence itself will make something behave nice and morally. In fact, it is possible to prove that certain types of superintelligent systems would not obey moral rules even if they were true.

Software-based intelligence may very quickly go from below human to frighteningly powerful. The reason is that it may scale in different ways from biological intelligence: it can run faster on faster computers, parts can be distributed on more computers, different versions tested and updated on the fly, new algorithms incorporated that give a jump in performance.

It has been proposed that an "intelligence explosion" is possible when software becomes good enough at making better software. Should such a jump occur there would be a large difference in potential power between the smart system (or the people telling it what to do) and the rest of the world. This has clear potential for disaster if the goals are badly set.

The unusual thing about superintelligence is that we do not know if rapid and powerful intelligence explosions are possible: maybe our current civilisation as a whole is improving itself at the fastest possible rate. But there are good reasons to think that some technologies may speed things up far faster than current societies can handle. Similarly we do not have a good grip on just how dangerous different forms of superintelligence would be, or

what mitigation strategies would actually work. It is very hard to reason about future technology we do not yet have, or intelligences greater than ourselves. Of the risks on this list, this is the one most likely to either be massive or just a mirage.

## 4. Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology is the control over matter with atomic or molecular precision. That is in itself not dangerous - instead, it would be very good news for most applications. The problem is that, like biotechnology, increasing power also increases the potential for abuses that are hard to defend against.

The big problem is not the infamous "grey goo" of self-replicating nanomachines eating everything. That would require clever design for this very purpose. It is tough to make a machine replicate: biology is much better at it, by default. Maybe some maniac would eventually succeed, but there are plenty of more low-hanging fruits on the destructive technology tree.

The most obvious risk is that atomically precise manufacturing looks ideal for rapid, cheap manufacturing of things like weapons. In a world where any government could "print" large amounts of autonomous or semi-autonomous weapons (including facilities to make even more) arms races could become very fast - and hence unstable, since doing a first strike before the enemy gets a too large advantage might be tempting.

Weapons can also be small, precision things: a "smart poison" that acts like a nerve gas but seeks out victims, or ubiquitous "gnatbot" surveillance systems for keeping populations obedient seems entirely possible. Also, there might be ways of getting nuclear proliferation and climate engineering into the hands of anybody who wants it.

We cannot judge the likelihood of existential risk from future nanotechnology, but it looks like it could be potentially disruptive just because it can give us whatever we wish for.

## 5. Unknown unknowns

The most unsettling possibility is that there is something out there that is very deadly, and we have no clue about it.

The silence in the sky might be evidence for this. Is the absence of aliens due to that life or intelligence is extremely rare, or that intelligent life tends to get wiped out? If there is a future Great Filter, it must have been noticed by other civilisations too, and even that didn't help.

Whatever the threat is, it would have to be something that is nearly unavoidable even when you know it is there, no matter who and what you are. We do not know about any such threats (none of the others on this list work like this), but they might exist.