

MAURITIUS TIMES

• "Climate change is sometimes misunderstood as being about changes in the weather. In reality, it is about changes in our very way of life." -- Paul Polman



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The Covid-19 Conundrum

It is now over one and half years since the Covid-19 burst on the world scene from its origins in Wuhan, China. It began to spread so rapidly that within a few weeks the WHO declared first a Global Public Health Emergency, and shortly afterwards a pandemic.

The world has never been the same since. To this day there are no clear right answers nor good solutions to all the problems that the pandemic has directly given rise to – medical and health, economic, social – that have affected all countries indiscriminately. In the early stages it was the frontliners, mainly the health professionals (doctors and nurses) and the support staff of hospitals and health facilities (laboratory personnel, ambulance drivers, mortuary attendants and so on) who bore the brunt of the pandemic's impact. With rapidly rising numbers of patients and a significant percentage becoming seriously ill and requiring admission along with intensive care, the hospitals were overwhelmed.

There was no known specific treatment and as the health staff battled to save lives, many were lost. In due course, health personnel too started to succumb to the stress of taking care of patients for long hours, and their proximity to the ill, infected patients led to their being infected as well. Death from stress, Covid infection and unfortunately suicide too saw the loss of both young and experienced medical and nursing staff.

Side by side, scientists and health researchers began to think about not only treatment but also control of the spread of the virus. 'Fortunately,' it had been fairly rapidly been genetically characterized, and so scientists could begin to work on producing vaccines, using modern techniques in genetic engineering and production technologies that could go to scale in shorter times than had been traditionally the case.

Compiling global data on all evolving aspects of the disease, WHO was soon able to propose some guidelines for prevention and control, namely the public health or sanitary measures which stand good to this day, which can be captured by the acronym SMS: Sanitizing, Masking, Social distancing. God AND the devil being in the details, there have been variations in the minutiae of these measures so as to limit the spread of the virus, but fundamentally SMS is the core of the prevention programme. But to achieve it, given the nature of human social interactions

at large (workplace, socializing for leisure and in other institutions for educational or other purposes, etc) and the requirements of the globalised world which remained critical in terms of manufacture of all goods and the supply chains that depend on extensive transport networks, this could not be left to the people's will. And so harder legal measures had to be introduced in all countries successively, amongst which what has been called the rolling lockdowns, in the face of second and third waves that have now become another reality of the pandemic.

We have not been spared either, and if it can be put this way, compared to our neighbouring island Reunion with all its more advanced facilities, we are less worse off, with 20+ deaths and 5000+ total cases, whereas Reunion has crossed 43,000 cases with nearly 280 deaths. This in no way mitigates the hardships that the families of the deceased have been made to suffer in addition to their personal losses, nor the decried conditions of quarantine and the lack of an empathetic human approach in a number of cases.

Just one is too many. We therefore make an appeal here to the authorities to give more attention to these aspects, if only not to tar the relatively positive record in the matter of prevention and control to date.

The major strategy in control is achieving levels of vaccine above 60% or 70% depending on country specifics as regards their own assessment of their respective ongoing situations. As is well known, a number of issues have plagued vaccine rollout, including efficacy, availability and access to, resistance or reluctance on the part of the public, such that certain countries – and surely more to come – have had to introduce vaccine 'mandates' (France, USA, Russia, China). And now there are also 'mask mandates.'

Many uncertainties persist, for example in the matter of treatment, no specific one being available yet. But coping with the other impacts, especially the economic one, is no less complicated.

Bottomline is that every country has to take its own call. The world over populations are tired if not fed up, but unfortunately as we have now known for some time, this virus is going to stay. This is the new normal that confronts us, and we must all cooperate as well as take individual responsibility in this struggle for control that will be protracted.

The Conversation

Climate repair: three things we

must do now to stabilise the planet



“Nowhere is safe.” As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned in a recent report that climate change and its consequences are here to stay, is there still an opportunity to mitigate some of the dangers and to get back to a place of relative safety for humanity?

The challenge of surviving the next 50 years is now seen as a planet-wide existential crisis; we need to work together urgently, just to secure a short-term future for human civilisation. Global weather patterns are violently disrupted: Greece burns; the south of England floods; Texas has had its coldest weather ever, while California and Australia suffer apocalyptic wild fires. All of these violent, record-breaking events are a direct result of rapid heating in the Arctic - occurring faster than in the rest of the world. A warm Arctic triggers new ocean and air currents that change the weather for everyone.

The only way to reverse some of these catastrophic patterns, and to regain a kind of stability in climate and weather systems, is “climate repair” – a strategy we call “reduce, remove, repair” – which demands that we make very rapid progress to net zero global emissions; that there is massive, active removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere; and, in the first instance, that we refreeze the Earth's poles and glaciers to correct the wild weather patterns, slow down ice-melt, stabilise sea level, and break the feedback loops that relentlessly accelerate global warming. There are no either/or options.

Reducing emissions

About 70% of world economies have net zero emissions commitments over varying timescales, but this has come too late to restore climate stability.

The IPCC has asked for accelerated progress on this trajectory, but whatever happens, current emission rates of atmospheric greenhouse gases imply global warming of 1.5? by 2030 and well over 2? above pre-industrial level by the end of the century – a devastating outcome. In particular, melting ice and thawing permafrost are considered inevitable even if rapid and deep CO2

emissions reductions are achieved, with sea-level rise to continue for centuries as a result. In every area of the world, climate events will become more severe and more frequent, whether flooding, heating, coastal erosion or fires.

There are definitely important steps that can still reduce the scale of this devastation, including faster and deeper emissions reductions. However, this is not enough on its own to avert the worst. Together there is real evidence that the massive removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and solutions such as repairing the Earth's poles and glaciers could help humanity find a survivable way out of this crisis.

Removing greenhouse gases

Taking CO2 and equivalent greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere, with the aim of getting back to 350ppm (parts per million) by 2100, involves creating new CO2 “sinks” – long-term stores from which CO2 cannot escape. Sinks operate at many scales, with forest planting, mangrove restoration, wetland and peat preservation all crucially important.

Very large projects, such as the restoration of the Loess Plateau in China demonstrate scalable CO2 removal, with multiple add-on benefits of food production, bio-diversity enhancement and weather stabilisation.

Habitat restoration can also make economic sense. In the Philippines, mangrove is the focus of a cost-benefit analysis. Mangrove captures four times more carbon than the same area of rainforest, provides numerous ecosystem services and protects against flooding, conferring socio-economic benefits and significantly reducing the cost of dealing with extreme weather events.

Big new carbon sinks must be created wherever safely possible, including in the oceans. Interventions that mimic natural processes, known to operate safely “in the wild”, are a workable starting point.

David King, University of Cambridge; Jane Lichtenstein, University of Cambridge

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Doojesh Ramlallah, Sultana Kurmally and Kersley Ramsamy

Pearl House 4th Floor Room 406 - Sir Virgil Naz Street, Port Louis -- Tel: 5-29 29301 Tel/Fax: 212 1313



mtimes@intnet.mu



www.mauritiustimes.com



facebook.com/mauritius.times

Exiting the Grey List

Jan Arden

Following several meetings regarding the country's progress, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) conveyed on 25 June 2021 that Mauritius has substantially completed its action plan at a **technical level** and that the FATF will conduct an on-site inspection in Mauritius to verify implementation of the reforms outlined in its last progress report submitted in April 2021. The same day the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance issued a communique to congratulate all stakeholders for their efforts and reassert the commitment of the Government to continue to take all necessary steps to sustain reforms in order to strengthen the Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime.

It is a most welcome piece of news that the numerous shortcomings and strategic deficiencies identified in 2020 have at last been fully addressed, opening the way for the on-site inspection and evaluation which would presumably take place this month, in time for the October plenary.



“Corruption and money laundering are intrinsically linked, say both the FATF and the G20, and they might be taking a close look at high-profile affairs and scandals which have regularly hit the headlines over the past few years. The *Senor Alvaro's* princely treatment and the *St Louis Gate* may, for instance, be on the menu of savvy auditors although they certainly would not be the only ones...”

However, without wishing to dampen enthusiasm of seasoned operators or the celebratory mood in government quarters (EDB, BoM, Ministry of Financial Services), and while hoping our institutions are up to scratch for the evaluation, let us remain guardedly optimistic for a couple of reasons.

The first has to do with the onsite evaluation itself. Quoting from official FATF documents,

“The scope of the evaluations will involve two inter-related components for **technical compliance** and **effectiveness**.

The **technical compliance** component will assess whether the necessary laws, regulations or other required measures are in force and effect, and whether the supporting AML/CFT institutional framework is in place.

The **effectiveness component** will assess whether the AML/CFT systems are working, and the extent to which the country is achieving the defined set of outcomes.”

If the technical side has been reasonably defended and the FATF has accepted that our set of laws and regulations meet the compliant or largely compliant (C/LC) status, much of the on-site evaluation would be focused on demonstrating the effectiveness with which those laws and regulations are applied, across the board, consistently and

predictably, with demonstrable results and sanctions whenever applicable. Which is where our regulatory and investigative authorities will have to demonstrate with sufficient evidence that they are indeed up to the task and are getting results, not just in a few odd cases, but as credible independent deterrent of fraudulent, illicit and criminal financial activities within a sustainable policy framework. No two ways to understand that the ball rests squarely in the hands of the government team.

We may also note that Government has announced some measures in its Budget Speech 2021/2022 to continue enhancing the AML/CFT legislative framework of the country, key among which are a Financial Crime Commission to better manage the fight against financial crime and a new Bank of Mauritius Bill and Banking Bill to reflect best international practices. Both are as yet in the realm of wishes and desires rather than concrete demonstrable evidence of progress.

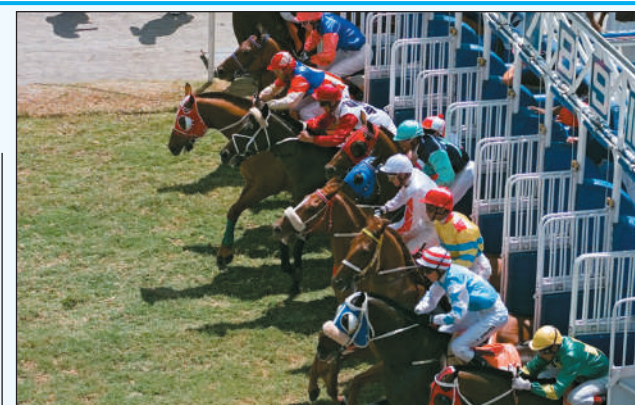
Another reason to remain guarded has to do with our risk profile which has far less to do with terror financing, than with money laundering that is associated with drug dealing, gambling and outright corruption.

Chief among this dark trio is corruption, bribery and general pilferage or siphoning of public funds to the benefit of cronies and associates of high officials and politicians in office. Money laundering is the process of concealing illicit gains that were generated from criminal activity and the FATF consequently attaches importance to the fight against corruption. The more so now that the G20 has called upon the FATF to integrate the problem of corruption in the framework of its work on combating money laundering. Corruption and money laundering are intrinsically linked, say both the FATF and the G20, and they might be taking a close look at high-profile affairs and

scandals which have regularly hit the headlines over the past few years. The *Senor Alvaro's* princely treatment and the *St Louis Gate* may, for instance, be on the menu of savvy auditors although they certainly would not be the only ones.

It is also common knowledge to the FATF that money laundering and corruption of processes during the Covid pandemic, often through abuse of convenience emergency procurement contracts, have emerged as major issues. The resilience of our regime, our processes, the due diligence of our Boards and Ministries at STC, Commerce and Health are on the front line. Our institutions may be tested on that front and have to satisfy auditors with concrete evidence that high-level and other abstruse committees were actually doing their statutory duties to the best of their abilities within the parameters and constrictions of the pandemic.

As for the massive funds generated from drugs and narco-trafficking, they are intrinsically tied to money-laundering, often on a trans-national basis, through a variety of means and mechanisms known to auditors. Are the ADSU and the FIU equipped and encouraged to keep up a permanent vigilance and perform effective money-trails and audits on illicit gains that are sufficiently huge to attract attention? Will the Lam Shang Leen commission of inquiry on drug trafficking and its principal recommendations concerning the ADSU or the vulnerable points of entry be taken



“The interview granted by Benn Gunn, in *Week-End* issue of 15th August makes rather damning reading... He sums up his views that the alternative track being pursued by the Government of Mauritius “lacks the essential and fundamental element of independence”. We trust, if the matter comes up for review, that the authorities will convince auditors that theirs is a genuine attempt to put “*ordo ab chao*” rather than hidden agendas to benefit private gains...”

up by the auditors?

The last of that sordid trio of white-collar crime and money-laundering is the betting, gambling, casinos and horse-racing activities which have undoubtedly become an industrial concern of late. The fate of the Parry Report on horse-racing, an interim version of which was submitted to the former President of the Republic late 2014, has been dubious but in December 2015 the late PM, SAJ, did invite two renowned UK horse-racing integrity specialists, Messrs D.P. Gunn and J.P. Scotney, to advise and make recommendations. The interview granted by Benn Gunn, in *Week-End* issue of 15th August makes rather damning reading: none of their 13 recommendations have been implemented, blocked it seems by influential persons at the GRA and PMO. He sums up his views that the alternative track being pursued by the Government of Mauritius “lacks the essential and fundamental element of independence”.

We trust, if the matter comes up for review, that the authorities will convince auditors that theirs is a genuine attempt to put “*ordo ab chao*” rather than hidden agendas to benefit private gains.

All in all, then, the on-site effectiveness evaluation will depend to a considerable degree on the agencies and institutions being manned by government's appointees and nominees defending the country's cause since we were plunged into the damaging twin lists of FATF and the EU in 2020. That the bone marrow has not been damaged and rotten to the point that salvage cannot be expected from the dysfunctional Parliament or from the institutions with the notable exception of the judiciary.

As for the trivialization of costly, time and resource-consuming commissions of inquiry, their reports either tossed away, sat upon or simply used to stoke political ends, the auditors may smile. But certainly, the latest, as a posthumous twist to the Britam saga, smacks more of contempt for our judiciary and Law Lords, through an attempted rehashing of the government narrative of 2015 that was dismissed convincingly in International Arbitration and confirmed, two months ago, in our highest judiciary instance, the Privy Council.

While we wish the contrary were true, the ride to exiting the nefarious FATF grey list may not be as smooth as our officials would have us believe. Patriotism is not the parroting of official narratives but an unending quest for greater and nobler values, ethics, morals and justice, often against the formidable weight of self-protecting establishments, formerly colonial, nowadays financial empires and their interests.

Qs & As - Electoral Expenses

'The genuineness and authenticity of the 'Kistnen Papers' will have to be established...

It will be up to the DPP to assess their veracity and relevance and decide whether they would be admissible in a court of law'

The Police have started investigations in the so-called Kistnen Papers that have come to light in the Judicial Inquiry into the circumstances of the MSM agent's tragic demise. If credible, these would point to breach of electoral expenditure ceilings in a constituency where there is already a judicial challenge on allegations hinging on electoral promises for votes. Lex provides insight on these and related questions.

LEX

* It appears that the police has now started an investigation into the allegations of breach of electoral laws in light of what have come out of the judicial inquiry into the murder of MSM activist Soopramanien Kistnen and the details of electoral expenses contained in what are called the 'Kistnen Papers'. Can these papers be produced in a court of law and do they constitute damning evidence of electoral breaches?

Any documentary evidence is subject to the rules of evidence of the country. Mauritius has adopted the common law principles of evidence which is exclusionary in nature. That means only relevant evidence can be admitted. At times, evidence will be excluded even though it may be relevant if the admissibility of such evidence would be unfair to one party against whom the evidence is sought to be adduced.

With regard to the 'Kistnen Papers', their genuineness and authenticity will have to be established. If these papers form part of the police file, it will be up to the Director of Public Prosecutions to assess their veracity and relevance and decide whether they would be admissible in a court of law and what weight can be attached to them.

* Assuming that the police succeeds in making a robust case of breaches of the electoral law, what happens next? Does the Representation of the People Act contain the appropriate sanctions for such breaches?

Under the Representation of the People Act, the maximum amount that a candidate who does not belong to a party, or where there is no other candidate belonging to the same party at the election in a constituency, is Rs 250,000. As for a candidate who is not the only candidate belonging to a party, election expenses in the constituency are limited to Rs 150,000.

It is an offence amounting to illegal practice when the ceiling authorized by law has been breached.

* We understand that the Electoral Commission and the Electoral Supervisory Commission are not empowered to carry out investigations in suspected offences of illegal practices under the Representation of the People Act. Could it be that the drafters of our Constitution in their wisdom thought it inappropriate to have parallel centres of power at work in the country? Were they right?

The Electoral Commissioner or the Electoral Supervisory Commission is not empowered by law to investigate any offences in relation to election expenses. One cannot expect the Electoral Commissioner or the Electoral Supervisory

Commission to don the garb of investigators. That would place them in an invidious position. Their mandate is to see to it that elections are held in accordance with existing rules and regulations. In so doing they must be scrupulously independent. Whether the police will initiate an investigation into the various allegations levelled by Opposition candidates and within what delay remains to be seen.

* Everything therefore hinges on a serious police investigation for the successful prosecution of offenders - whether in relation to a murder case, fraud/corruption or illegal electoral practices?

That's not very reassuring in light of the trend of investigations by the authorities, including ICAC, since the 2019 elections involving members of the government or their followers. Not very flattering in terms of public perception, the more so in view of the uncertainty around certain investigations or the absence of explanations regarding where matters stand.

Let us also recall how the DPP had to ask the police to probe further in different cases, the latest being the one relating to former Minister Sawmynaden. Can the police be trusted with carrying out an impartial and thorough investigation into the allegations of unlawful spending by candidates of the ruling party? Let's wait and see.

* Justice Albie Sachs observed in his report on the Commission on Constitutional Reform 20001-2002 that 'it is common knowledge that... ceilings on expenditure are observed only in their breach. Gross violations take place and false returns of expenses... are filed with impunity'. Yet, it does not appear that any election has ever been annulled or any candidate condemned for any offence of unauthorised expenditure above the ceilings prescribed by the Representation of the People Act. Why is that so?

The Sachs Commission also commented that "the presently prescribed ceilings on expenditure are totally unrealistic". It recommended that "The ceilings would therefore need upward revision to a reasonable and realistic level so as to match the cost of election. The ceilings for party as well as independent candidates should be the same, but the ceiling



“Can one imagine Rs 250,000 to constitute a realistic amount of money in terms of election expenses? That's simply ridiculous from ground realities. So long as the ceiling is low, the returns would not reflect the reality of true expenses. No election has ever been invalidated on the ground of illegal expenses in modern Mauritius because it is difficult to prove such allegations. Since all parties resort to the same stratagem, they have no interest to challenge an election on this ground...”

should cover all expenditure incurred by the candidate in his or her constituency including the amount incurred by the party and friends and associates of the candidates.”

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* There is moreover the practice of expenditure incurred by third parties on behalf of election candidates, which defeats the principle of imposition of ceilings on electoral expenses. What does the law provide in that case?

Section 55(1) of the Representation of the People Act provides that “A candidate shall not be guilty of an illegal practice by reason of any other person having incurred any expenditure in connection with the candidature of the candidate unless it is proved that such expenditure was incurred with his consent.”

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Anil Madan

An Ominous Turn - Idiocy Trumps American Exceptionalism

One has the sense that America is in deep trouble. How we will stem this tide of foolishness that engulfs this country should concern every American and the rest of the world

The Ninth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States declares: "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." This is an unmistakable declaration that rights other than those enumerated in the Constitution are indeed retained by the people. The so-called strict constructionists, including some Supreme Court justices argue that if a right or privilege is not expressly enumerated in the Constitution, it does not have Constitutional-level protection. A dialectic on the intricacies of the arguments for and against such "textualism" as it is sometimes called is for another day.

For now, I want to focus on the not entirely unexpected observation that some Americans seem to have discovered the *right* to be stupid and the *freedom* to embrace idiocy over science or truth.

I recently lamented the idiocy of the anti-vaxxers, the vaccine resisters, the vaccine skeptics. My fear is that a wider national pandemic of idiocy has gripped America. It comes not only from the right-wing yahoos and their special kind of idiocy, but also from the lefty loonies who themselves are worthy imbeciles. There is no vaccine for stupidity. And if there were, the variants of idiocy would rapidly outfox any vaccine.

Whether you are a proponent of American

Exceptionalism or a full-throated skeptic who thinks that the very idea that America is exceptional is a hoax, this widespread embrace of idiocy in America manifesting itself most commonly in partisan sniping should trouble you. It looms ominous and foreboding over this nation, very ominous, very foreboding.

As we explore some examples, I will come back to the unremitting idiocy of Republican governors who embrace Trumpism while ignoring science in their response to the exploding Covid-19 crisis in general and, in particular, the Delta variant.

First, the situation on the USA-Mexico border is a mess. After President Biden all but invited a surge of émigrés in quest of the promised land, he tasked Vice President Kamala Harris with leading an effort to stem migration across the border. A senior administration official explained that Harris's role would focus on two tracks: both curbing the current flow of migrants and implementing a long-term strategy that addresses the root causes of migration.

Understanding the root causes of migration is simple.

Those who migrate want to uproot themselves from where they are and establish roots in America. No other explanation is necessary. If you want to stop illegal immigration, you have to enforce immigration laws. Harris' initial efforts at curbing the flow of immigrants consisted of making this statement: "As one of our priorities, we will discourage illegal migration. And I believe if you come to our border you will be turned back. Do not come. Do not come. The United States will continue to enforce our laws and secure our border."

For those of you bringing your hands together to applaud this declaration by our VP, and wondering what is wrong with it, consider that she made the statement in *English* to migrants who speak only *Spanish* and weren't listening to her speech on their trek to the US. If anything stands out from the Biden administration's approach to immigration, it is a lack of enforcement. Not only that, but those who came in caravans, were coming precisely because they thought they would get away with it. Harris' promise to enforce the immigration



Re-Open America Protests. Pic - LiveatPC.com

laws must have sounded idiotic even to herself.

Some months later, she allowed that some of the reasons for the surge to the border can be broken down between acute factors and root causes. "Acute causes," include food insecurity, hurricanes, and Covid-19. As for the root causes, she said: "I'm thinking of corruption, violence and poverty, the lack of economic opportunity, the lack of climate adaptation and climate resilience, the lack of good governance." It is not clear what programs or policies she will implement to address these acute factors and root causes. If we are to depend on stopping hurricanes and Covid-19 in order to control immigration, this is not a war we can win.

At the same time, one might wonder why the ongoing lament about lack of opportunity, reinforced by the lack of climate adaptation and climate resilience coupled with a lack of good governance hasn't prompted an exodus from the United States.

As you now desist from applause and begin to shake your head, keep in mind that she is but a heartbeat away from becoming President. Kamalubdub, Kamalubdub.

Second, let us consider my alma mater Cornell University—yes, I am somewhat embarrassed to admit the connection. Last year, the university announced that: "Cornell's Behavioural Compact for the 2020-2021 academic year outlines several important steps that students must take as they return to Ithaca. In addition to requiring the wearing of masks and engagement in physical distancing, the Compact requires students to participate in ongoing surveillance testing for Covid-19 and to be vaccinated against seasonal influenza." Cornell also decreed that students who were not vaccinated against the flu, would not be allowed into campus libraries.

At first blush, this seems reasonable. After all, no Covid-19 vaccines were then available. Requiring flu vaccines seems prudent. However, Cornell outdid itself:

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Vice President Kamala Harris calls situation at the US-Mexico border 'tough'. Pic - AP

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An Ominous Turn - Idiocy Trumps American Exceptionalism

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"We recognize that, due to longstanding systemic racism and health inequities in this country, individuals from some marginalized communities may have concerns about needing to agree to such requirements. For example, historically, the bodies of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour (BIPOC) have been mistreated, and used by people in power, sometimes for profit or medical gain. We know this history and validate the potential concerns it may raise. At the same time, we know that longstanding social inequalities and health disparities have resulted in Covid-19 disproportionately affecting BIPOC individuals."

Okay, let me parse this out. The flu vaccine is a great idea because of the Covid-19 situation although the flu vaccine has nothing to do with Covid-19. However, even though BIPOC individuals are disproportionately affected by Covid-19, we will allow them to refuse the flu vaccination because at some time in the past, other people of colour were exploited.

“Masks and lockdowns are a definite Democratic plot and vaccines are not to be openly promoted. So, Governor DeSantis of Florida, in the face of soaring infections among those not vaccinated, has declared that there will be no mandates or lockdowns in Florida. He has even threatened to withhold the salaries of educators who defy his injunction against masking in schools. Governor Abbot has likewise tried to preclude local officials from imposing mask mandates. Governor Kristi Noem of South Dakota has pooh-poohed concerns that a rally of some 700,000 bikers will become a potential super spreader event for Covid-19 cases even as Delta variant cases spike in her state...”

I cannot think of a more racist policy than to encourage anyone (including BIPOCs) to refuse a scientifically proven vaccine on the grounds that there may have been past instances of unrelated misconduct by unrelated third parties. Either Cornell believes that misconduct continues or it doesn't. Either Cornell believes that fears expressed today, by BIPOC persons are unfounded, or it does not. Decades from now, if BIPOC individuals die from the flu or Covid-19 because Cornell allowed them to abjure vaccines, history will judge the university harshly. What explanation will Cornell offer when people who are not vaccinated spread Covid-19 on campus?

Now that Covid-19 vaccines are available, Cornell has a new policy requiring all students to be vaccinated for Covid-19 but seemingly has abandoned the BIPOC exemption but this is not clear. However, Cornell still allows medical and religious exemptions. Why Cornell supposes that any legitimate religion worships a God who is an anti-vaxxer is beyond me.

Third, Governor Kate Brown of Oregon privately signed a bill last month ending the requirement for high school students to prove proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic before being allowed to graduate. Although the Governor herself did not want to bring attention to the bill and refused to discuss it, her spokesman said the new

standards for graduation would aid Oregon's "Black, Latino, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Tribal, and students of colour." So far, there has been no explanation as to how allowing students to graduate from high school without being able to read, write, or do arithmetic helps them and particularly why this is so for students of colour.

Finally, let us consider the group of Republican clowns who serve as Governors of several southern states. It is difficult to pick the top two prize pigs in this beauty contest, but Governor DeSantis of Florida and Governor Tate Reeves of Mississippi stand out. Governors Greg Abbot of Texas and Kristi Noem of South Dakota are also no slouches in the idiocy marathon.

Reeves made somewhat of a name for himself in Trumpkin circles for his support of lawsuits to throw out election results in several states where Trump supporters made baseless false claims of voting fraud. But when it came to Covid-19, he outdid himself. He overrode local leaders' orders for people to stay at home instead telling Mississippians to rely on the power of prayer. After he was severely criticized for his response to the pandemic, he imposed some state-wide restrictions on non-essential businesses but two days after doing so, he declared April Confederate Heritage Month. On the other hand, somewhat to his credit, although he ended virtually all Covid-19 restrictions earlier this year, he left school mask mandates in place. But just recently, he again spread his Republican wings and flew back to the cuckoo's nest contradicting himself by proclaiming: "There will be no lockdowns and there will be no state-wide mandates" in Mississippi.

Taking a page from Trump's playbook, the Republican governors have decided that their cred with the far-right fringe of their party depends on establishing their opposition to any and all policies and recommendations coming from the Biden administration. Indeed, to the extent that they can couple this opposition with a conspiracy theory tying the Democratic administration to some supposed agenda being promoted by Bill Gates or George Soros, the more strident they become.

Masks and lockdowns are a definite Democratic plot and vaccines are not to be openly promoted. So, Governor DeSantis of Florida, in the face of soaring infections among those not vaccinated, has declared that there will be no mandates or lockdowns in Florida. He has even threatened to withhold the salaries of educators who defy his injunction against masking in schools. Governor Abbot has likewise tried to preclude local officials from imposing mask mandates. Governor Kristi Noem of South Dakota has pooh-poohed concerns that a rally of some 700,000 bikers will become a potential super spreader event for Covid-19 cases even as Delta variant cases spike in her state. She has called the rally a "fantastic event" and even showed up on horseback, as standard-bearer for the imbeciles.

When asked about the rally, she said: "I think it's interesting that this side, this political party, the Democrats, who embrace getting abortion on demand, are accusing us of embracing death when we're just allowing people to make personal choices and have personal responsibility over when they want to assemble, when they want to gather and spend time outdoors enjoying their way of life."

There you have it: the right to be stupid, the freedom



'Governor Kristi Noem of South Dakota has pooh-poohed concerns that a rally of some 700,000 bikers will become a potential super spreader event for Covid-19 cases even as Delta variant cases spike in her state. She has even showed up on horseback, as standard-bearer for the imbeciles'

to embrace idiocy are the building blocks of the Republican Party platform for the next round of elections in 2022 and then for the White House in 2024.

One has the sense that America is in deep trouble. How we will stem this tide of foolishness that engulfs this country and come together to address the profound challenges that require thoughtful, united and coherent action should concern every American and the rest of the world.

Cheerz...
Bwana

CBRD Technical Officers' Union Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Union scheduled for 23rd March 2021 has been postponed to 08 September 2021.

The members are kindly requested to attend the Annual General Meeting at noon at the seat of the Union.
(Training room)

AGENDA:

1. Reading and approval of minutes of last AGM.
2. President's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Auditor's Report
5. Matters arising
6. Election of Executive Members 2021-2023
7. Nomination of Auditors

Motion, if any, from members and candidature for the Executive Members should reach the Secretary at latest 03 September 2021. Please note that the Executive Members will comprise 2 Chief Compliance Officers, 2 Principal Compliance Officers, 3 Compliance Officers.

Mary Jane Chellemen
Secretary

US air force halts evacuations from Kabul to clear airfield of crowd: Report

The US military put on hold its evacuation process from Kabul temporarily on Monday to clear the airfield at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Afghanistan's capital, news agency Reuters reported, citing senior defence officials.

Horrific video shared on social media showed some people who tried to flee the country as stowaways, either by clinging on the belly or the wheels of a US air force plane, fell as the mammoth flying machine took off. Local reports claimed at least three people fell to their death.

Thousands of Afghans were seen gathering at the international airport in Kabul, the only exit points out of the country not in control of the Taliban yet, in a last-ditch effort to leave the war-torn nation, even as the administration shut the civilian airspace over Afghanistan.



Evacuation flights halted amid chaos at Kabul airport as Afghans try to flee. Pic - CBS News

In the ensuing chaos, at least five people died at the airport earlier in the day, news agency Reuters reported citing eyewitnesses who said US troops stationed there fired gunshots into the air to prevent frantic locals from boarding a civilian aircraft.

On the other hand, the US state department announced on Monday that the administration of Kabul airport is in the hands of American forces.

Visuals shared on various social media platforms showed hundreds of people running across the airport tarmac. American soldiers fired warning shots into the air. A crowd was seen trying to board an aircraft while many latched on to the railings of a staircase leading to an aerobridge.

Another video, shared by Tolo News on Twitter, showed a swarm of people running on the tarmac while some clung to the body of a US military aircraft as it taxied on the runway.

Panic gripped Kabul after the Taliban took control of Afghanistan's presidential palace on Sunday following President Ashraf Ghani's escape to a central Asian country. The Islamist insurgents were waiting to take over the Afghan capital.

The rapidity with which the Taliban took over various provinces of the country, 20 years after they were routed, has stunned the US officials. Just days before the Taliban fighters entered Kabul with barely any resistance, an American military analysis had predicted it could take months for the Afghan capital to fall.

US President Biden faces flak at home for Afghan pull-out

CNN news anchor Jake Tapper's first question to US secretary of state Antony Blinken on his Sunday morning show captured the sense of how the rest of the United States was viewing President Joe Biden's recent decisions on Afghanistan: "How did President Biden get this so wrong?"

As morning hour wore on and Al Jazeera news channel began running clips of Taliban fighters walking around inside the President Palace abandoned by former president Ashraf Ghani, Biden was facing similar questions from both supporters and critics, with varying degrees of outrage and frustration, reports Hindustan Times.

"This is going to be a stain on this president and this presidency," said Michael McCaul, the top Republican on the House Foreign Relations Committee, on the same programme with Tapper. "I think he is going to have blood on his hands for what they did."

Ryan Crocker, who was president Barack Obama's ambassador to Afghanistan, could sense the impending disaster. "I'm left with some grave questions in my mind about his ability to lead our nation as



Joe Biden announcing his proposal to withdraw the remaining 2,500 US troops from Afghanistan before September 11, saying "it's time to end America's longest war." Pic - CNN

commander-in-chief," Crocker told The Spokesman-Review, a Washington state publication, on Sunday morning, shortly before news came of the Taliban entering Kabul.

"To have read this so wrong - or, even worse, to have understood what was likely to happen and not care," the former ambassador of the Obama-Biden administration added.

Barely a month ago, Biden has strenuously discounted any chance of the Taliban gaining early control of Kabul and the country. "Afghan troops have 300,000 well-equipped -

as well-equipped as any army in the world - and an air force against something like 75,000 Taliban. It is not inevitable," he had said on July 8 when asked if Taliban takeover was inevitable.

More recently, Biden has said he does not regret the decision to pull US forces out of Afghanistan ending a "forever war", but as the Taliban advanced swiftly in recent days to take control of the country, he has sought to deflect some of the criticism of his own actions by pointing to the flawed deal he inherited from Trump.

Anthony Fauci says US can move quickly to offer 3rd vaccine shots

Anthony Fauci, President Joe Biden's chief medical adviser, said the U.S. will be "absolutely prepared" to distribute a third shot of the coronavirus vaccine quickly to a wider population if needed.

He gave no timeline but said health officials are evaluating various groups "on a daily and weekly basis."

"So if it turns out, as the data come in, we see we do need to give an additional dose to people in nursing homes, actually, or people who are elderly we will be absolutely prepared to do that very quickly," he said on CBS's "Face the Nation."

The issue of extra, or booster, shots has become more pressing, amid questions about "breakthrough" infections among the fully vaccinated, particularly with the more contagious delta variant now prevalent in the U.S., and whether the shots' efficacy declines over time. Last week, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approved a third shot for people with compromised immune systems.

The New York Times reported on Saturday that, with 100 million doses stockpiled, the Biden administration has begun drawing up plans to offer booster shots to some Americans as



Anthony Fauci has in the past advocated voluntary vaccine mandates at the local level and in businesses. Pic - hwnnews.in

early as this autumn.

Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, said no decision had been made "because right now the data we have from the U.S. says people who are vaccinated are fully protected, even against delta."

But, Collins said on Fox News "Sunday," "there is a concern that the

vaccine may start to wane in its effectiveness over months. And delta is a nasty one for us to try to deal with. The combination of those two means we may need boosters, maybe beginning first with health care providers, as well as people in nursing homes, and then gradually moving forward."

India rushes to secure citizens in Afghanistan



Passengers from Kabul arrive at New Delhi airport on Sunday. Pic - HT photo

As Taliban fighters began entering Kabul on Sunday following the collapse of President Ashraf Ghani's government, Indian authorities scrambled to pull out hundreds of diplomats and citizens still in Afghanistan, reports Hindustan Times.

The speed of the Taliban's advance into the capital again took most countries by surprise, though people familiar with developments said the Indian side was well pre-

pared for all contingencies. The Indian Air Force's heavy lift aircraft, especially the C-17 Globemasters, have been on round-the-clock standby for several days and could be pressed into service at short notice for an evacuation.

The Indian side had been anticipating the Taliban advance into Kabul would take a few more days, and reports about the entry of fighters into the city on Sunday as Ghani and his close aides reportedly fled to

Tajikistan triggered hectic consultations, the people cited above said on condition of anonymity.

The government is closely monitoring the rapidly evolving situation in Afghanistan to decide on the evacuation of diplomatic personnel from Kabul, the people said.

Specific plans for all contingencies are already in place and all steps will be taken to ensure that the staff of the Indian embassy in Kabul and Indian nationals are not at any risk, the people added.

Plans are also in place for the destruction and retrieval of documents and computers at the Indian embassy, which is the only functional mission in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of staff from the consulates in Herat, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar over the past year. There was no official word from the external affairs ministry to the latest developments in Afghanistan. New Delhi has consistently said it is opposed to any attempt to forcibly capture power in Kabul.

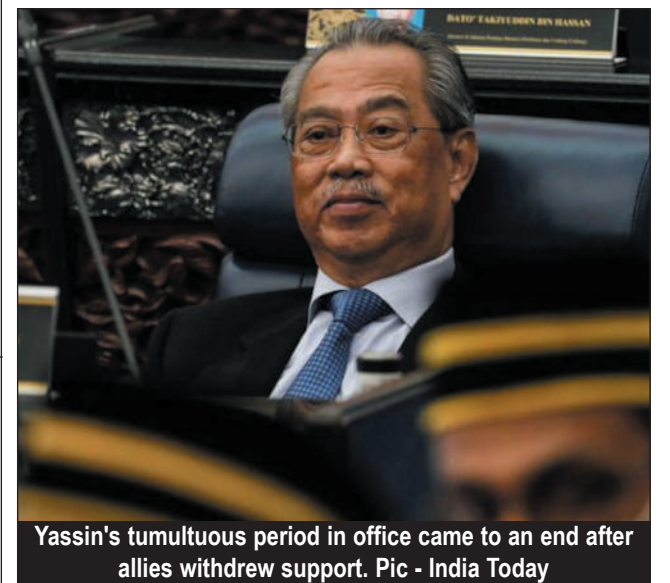
Malaysia's cabinet-led by PM Yassin has resigned, says science minister

Malaysia's prime minister and his government resigned Monday after just 17 months in office, throwing the country into fresh political turmoil as it battles a serious coronavirus outbreak.

Muhyiddin Yassin's tumultuous period in office came to an end after allies withdrew support and a last-ditch bid to cling to power failed, and he becomes the shortest serving premier in Malaysian history.

After a final cabinet meeting, the 74-year-old headed to the national palace to submit his resignation to the king.

Science Minister Khairy Jamaluddin confirmed on Instagram that the entire cabinet had quit. "Thank you for the opportunity to, once again, serve the nation," he wrote.



Yassin's tumultuous period in office came to an end after allies withdrew support. Pic - India Today

There is no clear successor to Muhyiddin but an election looks unlikely as the country faces its worst Covid-19 wave yet and an economic downturn.

Rather, a period of political horse-trading is expected before a new coalition emerges that can command a majority in parliament.

"His replacement is anybody's guess," said Oh Ei Sun, an analyst at the Singapore Institute of International Affairs.

Malaysia's constitutional monarch formally appoints the premier, and it will be up to him to assess who has sufficient backing from MPs.

Muhyiddin came to power in March last year without an election at the head of a scandal-plagued coalition following the collapse of a two-year-old, reformist government led by nonagenarian political heavyweight Mahathir Mohamad.

But his government faced turmoil from day one -- his majority in parliament was in doubt, its legitimacy was constantly questioned, and he faced a constant challenge from opposition chief Anwar Ibrahim.

Canada's parliament dissolved, snap polls on Sept 20



Justin Trudeau calls snap election, two years ahead of schedule. Pic - Evening Standard

Canada will have snap polls on September 20 over two years before the tenure of the ruling Liberal Party government was to end. Canada's governor-general Mary Simon agreed to dissolve parliament following a request from the country's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Trudeau announced about the decision outside the governor-general's residence at Rideau Hall in Ottawa following a nearly hour-long

meeting with her.

As Trudeau announced the forthcoming election, he focused on the Covid-19 pandemic and his government's efforts in meeting that challenge and that of vaccinations, a sign of how significant that issue may be in helping him secure a majority when the next House of Commons is constituted.

The process of starting the campaign, called dropping the writ in

Canadian electoral parlance, commenced with the governor-general's decision. The campaign period will be for the shortest permitted length - 36 days.

The snap polls will proceed despite the country being at the beginning of a fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic with all other major Federal parties opposing national polls under such circumstances. However, with Trudeau's holding a lead in opinion surveys, he will seek to convert the present minority for his ruling Liberal Party into a majority.

The Trudeau-led Liberal Party government is in a minority in the House of Commons, with 155 MPs, as against 119 for the principal opposition party, the Conservatives. When the last Federal elections were held in October 2019, the Liberals captured 157 seats, short of the 170 majority mark and also trailed the Conservatives in vote share, with 31.1% against 34.3%.

The Taliban takeover

The Taliban is in control of Afghanistan 20 years after being overthrown by American and British forces, with its fighters patrolling the streets of Kabul and the country's president, Ashraf Ghani, fleeing abroad.

The Islamists seized Kabul after capturing the last remaining major cities from the government and tightening the noose around the capital by systematically cutting

off every route out to the rest of the country, reports The Independent.

There is now deep apprehension of what the future holds for this shattered country in the gathering darkness among many of those who oppose the harsh theocratic rule of the jihadists. The Taliban has assured that no retribution will be taken, but there have been executions in areas under its control such as Spin Boldak and Ghazni.

In a Facebook post on Sunday, Mr Ghani confirmed he had flown out of Afghanistan and said he had sought to "avoid bloodshed" with the fate of millions of people at stake as the Taliban entered Kabul.

Meanwhile videos have depicted a chaotic scene at Kabul airport, the only way out for thousands of people following rapid advance of the Taliban into the capital, and toppling of the country's government.

'Candidates should tread carefully and choose their words with the utmost care...'

● Cont. from page 4

This section affords blanket protection to a candidate as no candidate who is returned would confess that he consented to such expenses. The classic explanation would be: "So and so decided to do me a favour, but I was not aware about it."

* It would seem however that vote buying through electoral promises or through recruitment exercises, award of licences on the eve of elections can be more easily proved and punished if we go by the Commission of Inquiry on the Recruitment of Community Workers chaired by Justice Ralsoomer Lallah in 1982 as well as the Ashock Jugnauth vs Raj Ringadoo case of 2007. Is that correct?

Certainly. We saw that in the Ashock Jugnauth case. Justice Lallah highlighted this fact in his report. As no candidate of the outgoing government was elected, no election had to be invalidated. The merit of the Lallah Report is that it delineates in clear terms what would amount to illegal electoral promises. It is to be hoped that those who

are challenging the 2019 elections on the ground of illegal promises will read the report. The Courts should also peruse the report

* What in fact do the Commission of Inquiry and the Jugnauth vs Ringadoo case inform us what is and is not permissible under the Representation of the People Act?

Candidates should tread carefully and choose their words with the utmost care at public meetings when it comes to making promises or recruiting people in the public service during an electoral campaign.

The Privy Council summarized the com-

plaints against Ashock Jugnauth as follows: "The complaint raised four matters. The first arose out of what the appellant was alleged to have said, at a public meeting on 29 June at St Pierre in constituency no 8, about the availability of government money for the acquisition of land to provide additional space for the Moslem section of the local cemetery. The other three matters were broadly similar to one another and were treated together by the Supreme Court. They concerned exercises carried out by the Ministry of Health – of which the appellant was the Minister – to recruit three groups of staff in the period before the general election

in July 2005. The three groups were General Workers, Hospital Servants and Health Care Assistants."

The Privy Council endorsed the finding of the Supreme Court that "one of the purposes, even if not the sole purpose, of the recruitment exercises was to attract voters to vote in return for the jobs in the civil service".

The lessons to be learnt from the Ashock Jugnauth case and from the Lallah Report are that candidates should be extremely careful in regard to the nature of the promises they make, and they should exclude from their campaign any reference that the promises are in exchange for votes.

* In light of the judgement in the Jugnauth vs Ringadoo case, can it be anticipated which way the judges will go as regards the electoral petitions in relation to the 2019 elections?

The principles on electoral promises are there. It is a question of evidence that is presented and what credibility the courts would place on such evidence. As the Privy Council stated in the Ashock Jugnauth case: "The Supreme Court based its judgment to a significant extent on findings of fact which the judges made after due consideration of the oral evidence which they had heard and which they accepted."

LEX

“Mauritius has adopted the common law principles of evidence which is exclusionary in nature. That means only relevant evidence can be admitted. At times, evidence will be excluded even though it may be relevant if the admissibility of such evidence would be unfair to one party against whom the evidence is sought to be adduced. With regard to the 'Kistnen Papers', their genuineness and authenticity will have to be established. If these papers form part of the police file, it will be up to the DPP to assess their veracity and relevance...”



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From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

4th Year No 170

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 8 November 1957

• *Let us have the crisis: we shall either have death or the cure. -- Carlyle*

Somduth Bhuckory

The members of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Mauritius Police Force have arrived here this week. They are Sir John Nicoll, K.C.M.G., chairman of the Commission, Sir William Johnson, C.M.G. and Mr I.H.E.J Stourton, C.M.G., O.B.E.

It will be remembered that towards the end of August of this year the Secretariat issued a communique to the press informing the public of the appointment of the Commission. The communique also stated the terms of reference of the Commission as follows: "To advise on the manner in which the Mauritius Police Force has adopted itself to meet the problems of the day having regard to local conditions and resources; to consider and report on any improvements that may be required in conditions of service, systems of promotion and training of the Force to enable it more effectively to discharge its responsibilities and for these purposes to invite and examine evidence from the public."

A subsequent communique, issued by the Secretariat in the second week of October, stated among other things how the Commission desired to collect evidence but it did not mention whether the sittings would be *in camera* or in public. It contained the appointment of Mr W.H. Garrioch of the Parquet as Secretary of the Commission.

That communique also contains a paragraph which seems to have been added as an afterthought -- perhaps because the terms of reference appeared to be a bit narrow. We mean paragraph 6 which runs as follows: "In view of their terms of reference the Commissioners are prepared to receive memoranda, or to hear evidence, on any matters touching upon the discipline or efficiency of the Police Force which would enable them to consider whether any action is necessary in order to maintain or restore public confidence in the Force and to make the necessary recommendations. Such evi-



Pic - Siegfried Sammer - Getty Images

Spotlight on the Police

dence would include if it were put forward evidence against individual officers."

How to maintain or restore public confidence in the Force, that's the big problem. The public will be more interested in this aspect of the enquiry, we are certain, than in any other.

* * *

The appointment of this Commission brings naturally to our mind the motion of Hon Bissoondoyal, which was debated upon for four weeks in October 1955. The core of the motion was this: "Owing to the unsatisfactory state of affairs in the Police Department, the appointment of a Royal Commission has now become necessary." Fifteen elected members were of the opinion that the appointment of such a Commission was necessary but fifteen others -- 2 elected, 3 official and 10 nominated thought otherwise and the motions was lost.

The loss of the motion was nothing less than a public calamity. It was with a view to restoring public confidence that we then wrote the following: "Government will surely consider whether the defeat of the motion is enough to whitewash the Police Department or, in their own interest, some kind of enquiry should not be instituted."

In November of the following year, Hon Bissoondoyal presented the motion again but once more it was not carried. The Council was equally divided -- sixteen for and sixteen against it. And so, the Royal Commission did not come and the gravity of the Beau Songes

upon it as a machinery of protection they start assimilating it with powers of oppression and persecution.

* * *

It is the duty of the police to maintain law and order. If it fails in this high endeavour, people are apt to take the law into their own hands.

The police plays a big part in the administration of justice also. If it fails to find the culprit and punish him, confidence will be non-existent. And if for one reason or another it leaves the culprit aside and catches hold of the innocent, the result can but be disastrous.

Let us give a striking example of how the public can lose confidence in the police. Four weeks ago, burglars broke open a restaurant and a tailor's shop during the night at Montagne Longue. The burglars got in by the front doors which were heavily locked. And the police station of the place is just across the road! The restaurant, we are told, was burgled six months before also. The Commission may try to ascertain first how such a burglary is possible and secondly why the culprits are not found. Does the police want to hush everything up in order not to give publicity to its inability to maintain law and order?

The example given above shows how the police itself can be responsible for sapping public confidence. We shall not go to the length of making wild accusations of bribery and corruption; we shall refrain from asserting that there is a law for the rich and another for the poor; we are loathe to say that class or community has any weight in deciding prosecution; we shall not say why the police prosecute so frequently members of the public for outrage against or assault upon members of the police force -- just because we know that substantiating a charge is no easy matter. We should like the Commission, however, to consider these general impressions and clear them up.





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1956-2020

Climate repair: three things we must do now to stabilise the planet

● Cont. from page 2

Promotion of ocean pastures to restore ocean diversity and fish and whale stocks to the levels last seen 300 years ago is one such possibility – offering new sustainable food sources for humans, as well as contributing to climate ecosystem services and carbon sinks.

In nature, sprinklings of iron-rich dust blow from deserts or volcanic eruptions, onto the surface of deep oceans, generating – in a matter of months – rich ocean pastures, teeming fish stocks and an array of marine wildlife. Studies of ocean kelp regeneration show the full range of real-life impacts, from increased protein sources for human consumption, to restoration of pre-industrial levels of ocean biodiversity and productivity, and extensive carbon sequestration.

Extending the scale and number of ocean pastures could be achieved by systematically scattering iron-rich dust onto target areas in oceans around the world. The approach is intuitively scalable, and could sequester perhaps 30 billion tons per year of CO₂ if 3% or so of the world's deep oceans were to be treated annually.

Largescale carbon-sink creation of this kind is pivotal if the atmosphere is to return to pre-industrial CO₂ levels. A billion tons per year of sequestration is the minimum threshold coordinated by the Centre for Climate Repair at Cambridge given the intensity of the climate crisis. While the scale of intervention is sometimes called “geoengineering”, the approach is closer to forest planting or mangrove restoration. The aim is to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere using natural means, to return us to pre-industrial levels within a single generation.

Repairing the planet

The immediate challenge is to stabilise the planet, achieving a manageable equilibrium that gives a last chance to shift to renewable energy and towards a circular global economy, with new norms in urban, rural and ocean management. “Repairing” systematically seeks to draw the Earth back from climate tipping points (which, by definition, cannot happen without direct effort), providing a supporting framework in which “reduce” and “restore” can happen. Political and societal will is needed.

The most urgent effort is to refreeze the Arctic, interrupting a bleak spiral of accelerating ice loss, sea-level rise – and the acceleration of climate change and violent global weather changes that they cause. Arctic temperatures have risen much faster (and increasingly so) than global average temperatures, when compared with pre-industrial levels.

Melting Arctic ice embodies a powerful feedback force in climate change. White ice reflects the Sun's energy away from the Earth before it can heat the surface. This is known as the albedo effect. As ice melts, dark-blue seawater absorbs increasing

amounts of the Sun's energy, warming increases, and ever-larger areas of ice disappear each summer, expanding the acceleration. Arctic temperatures govern winds, ocean currents and weather systems across the globe.

A tipping point is passing: sea-ice loss is becoming permanent and accelerating; Greenland ice will follow and will eventually raise global sea-levels by over seven metres. Total loss may take centuries but, decade by decade, there will be relentless incremental impacts. By mid-century the melting will be irreversible, and sea-level rise alone will leave low-lying countries like Vietnam in desperate circumstances, with reductions to global rice production a certainty, many millions of climate refugees and no obvious pathway forward for such

nations.

The rapid Arctic temperature increase is matched by the rapid and accelerating loss in minimum (summer) sea-ice volume, which further accelerates the temperature rise in a spiral of reinforcing feedback loops.

It is vital to pivot the world back from this ice-melt tipping point, and to repair the Arctic as rapidly as possible. Marine cloud brightening in which floating solar-powered pumps spray salt upwards to brighten clouds and create a reflective barrier between the Sun and the ocean, is known to cool ocean surfaces and is a promising way to promote Arctic summer cooling. It mimics nature, and can be scaled up or down in a flexible way. Studies of marine cloud brightening, its climate impacts and interactions with human systems, are

underway.

As with promotion of ocean pastures, such solutions must be critically analysed, but there is no longer any doubt of their crucial importance.

What we do in the next five years determines the viability of humanity's future. Even if we narrow our aspirations to “survival”, fixing on a timescale of 50 years or so, the challenges are daunting. Humanity deserves better. We know what to do to be able to imagine thousands of years of human civilisation ahead, as well as behind us.

*David King, University of Cambridge;
Jane Lichtenstein, University of
Cambridge*



COMMUNIQUE

ELECTRONIC EMPLOYEE DECLARATION FORM (e-EDF) 2021/22

The **Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA)** informs all employees that the facility to submit their **Employee Declaration Form (EDF)** to their employers **electronically** is available on MRA website: www.mra.mu

Employees

In order to access the e-EDF, an employee has to go to the MRA website, click on the banner **e-EDF 2021/22**, and insert the following information:

- **National Identity Card Number (NID)**
- **Mobile Phone Number**

The employee will instantly receive a ‘One-Time Password (OTP)’ on his mobile phone via SMS. After inserting the OTP, the employee will have the option to select the Name and Employer Registration Number (ERN) of his employer and thereafter access the e-EDF.

On accessing the e-EDF, the employee will have the option to select/insert his respective Income Exemption Threshold and other reliefs and allowances to which he is eligible. Before submitting the e-EDF, the employee will have to confirm the correctness of the information provided therein.

Employers

An employer will have to login to the MRA e-services platform using his **EMPLOYER REGISTRATION NUMBER (ERN)** and **PASSWORD** to download an excel file showing the deductions claimed by his employees in their e-EDF for the year ending 30 June 2022.

The MRA kindly requests all employers to inform their employees that they should submit their **EDF ONLINE** through the **MRA Website: www.mra.mu**

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

MAURITIUS REVENUE AUTHORITY

12 August 2021

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Do I need a Covid-19 booster shot? 6 questions answered on how to stay protected

The increasing prevalence of new coronavirus variants is raising questions about how well protected those who've already had their Covid-19 shots are against evolving forms of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Here, microbiology and infectious disease specialist William Petri of the University of Virginia answers some common questions about Covid-19 booster shots.

1. What is a booster shot?

Boosters are an extra dose of a vaccine given to maintain vaccine-induced protection against a disease. They are commonly used to bolster many vaccines because immunity can wear off over time. For example, the flu vaccine needs a booster every year, and the diphtheria and tetanus vaccine every 10 years.

Boosters are often identical to the original vaccine. In some cases, however, the booster shot has been modified to enhance protection against new viral variants. The seasonal flu vaccine, most notably, requires an annual booster because the flu virus changes so rapidly.

2. Do I need to get a Covid-19 booster?

Only if you're immunocompromised. As of August 2021, the U.S Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend adding a third shot to the normal vaccination course for people who are severely immunocompromised.

3. Why aren't booster shots recommended for everyone yet?

While vaccine-induced immunity may not last forever, it is not clear when a booster will be needed.

Encouragingly, all of the currently authorized Covid-19 vaccines induce a robust immune memory against the coronavirus. The vaccine teaches your immune system's memory B cells to produce antibodies when you're exposed to the virus. Researchers have detected high levels of memory B cells in the lymph nodes of people who received the Pfizer vaccine for at least 12 weeks after they got the shot.

Studies also suggest that authorized Covid-19 vaccines are continuing to offer protection even against emerging strains of the coronavirus. Among one study's participants, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine had 73% and 82% efficacy 14 days and 28 days post shot, respectively, at warding off severe disease from the beta variant. Another study found the Pfizer vaccine to be 88% effective against the delta variant.

The other source of long-lasting antibody responses against the coronavirus is cells called plasmablasts that reside in bone marrow. These cells continuously produce antibodies and do not require boosting to maintain their activity. Fortunately, plasmablasts have been detected in the bone marrow of people who received the Covid-19 vaccine for up to 11 months, indicating some degree of long-lasting immune memory.



4. How will I know if I need a booster?

You may need to wait for an outbreak in people who have been vaccinated. Researchers are still figuring out the best way to measure the strength of someone's vaccine-induced immunity. The Covid-19 vaccines have been so effective that there are not many failures to test.

The best candidate to measure are certain antibodies the vaccine induces the immune system to make. They recognize the spike protein that allows the coronavirus to enter and infect cells. Evidence supporting the importance of anti-spike antibodies includes a study showing that the somewhat more effective mRNA vaccines like Pfizer and Moderna generate higher antibody levels in the blood than the adenovirus vector vaccines like Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca. In a preliminary study that has not yet been peer-reviewed, anti-spike antibody levels were lower in people who caught Covid-19 after they were vaccinated with the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine.

Medical workers would love to be able to give patients a blood test that would tell them how well protected they are or aren't against Covid-19. That would be a clear indication as to whether a booster shot is needed.

But until researchers know for sure how to measure vaccine-induced immunity, the next indication that boosters may be needed are breakthrough infections in older adults who have already been vaccinated. People over the age of 80 make lower levels of antibodies after vaccination, so their immunity may wane sooner than

that of the general population. The elderly would also most likely be the most susceptible to new viral variants that evade the protection current vaccines provide.

5. Who does the FDA and CDC recommend get a third shot?

An extra shot may be necessary for certain immunocompromised people. In one study, 39 of 40 kidney transplant recipients and a third of dialysis patients failed to make antibodies after vaccination. Another study identified 20 patients with rheumatic or musculoskeletal diseases on medications that suppress the immune system who also did not have detectable antibodies. Both of these studies were done after patients received the full vaccine dose.

Currently, the CDC recommends that the following people consider getting a third dose:

- People in active cancer treatment
- People who have received organ transplants and are taking immunosuppressive therapy
- People who have received a stem cell transplant within the past two years or are taking immunosuppressive therapy
- People with moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency
- People with advanced or untreated HIV infection
- People taking high-dose corticosteroids and other immunosuppressive drugs

A third dose has been shown to help in

these cases. In one study, one-third of solid organ transplant patients who had a suboptimal response to two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines were able to develop an antibody response with a third dose.

Those who are immunocompromised may wonder if the vaccine they received is successfully generating immunity in their body. A preliminary study that has not yet been peer-reviewed did find that a test that specifically targets the anti-spike antibodies the vaccines trigger may be helpful in determining whether the vaccine worked. But for now, the FDA does not recommend antibody tests to assess immunity.

6. Does my third dose need to match my first two?

Likely not. Recent research has shown that mRNA vaccines, like Pfizer and Moderna, can be mixed with adenovirus-based vaccines like AstraZeneca with comparable results.

Article corrected to indicate that the Johnson & Johnson study measured efficacy rather than effectiveness against severe disease from the beta variant of the virus that causes Covid-19.

Article updated to reflect FDA authorization and CDC recommendation of an additional dose for immunocompromised individuals on Aug. 12, 2021, and Aug. 13, 2021, respectively.

By William Petri,
University of Virginia

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Getting to The Top and Staying There

What makes a successful leader?



“To remain at the summit, it is absolutely critical to possess both learning agility and emotional intelligence in managing one's self and others.”

On a recent visit to KwaZulu-Natal, a coastal South African province, I was fortunate enough to touch base with some friends and colleagues for an afternoon catch up. Of this group of individuals, I am the only one that works within the traditional human resources discipline. Many of the individuals within the group are CEOs, CFOs and Senior Executives in some very well-known, large organisations that have delivered massive shareholder value and business growth. Over lime milkshakes, the conversation turned to what makes for a successful Executive Leader in today's world. There was a lot of debate, but the consensus around the table is that there are two "phases" one must go through in order to reach the top. Getting to the top, and staying at the top.

Getting to the top

Ruthless execution and delivery, delivery, delivery - when you start your career "climb", nothing matters more than delivery. It's the single most important differentiator and without it, you go nowhere. During this phase, it is "acceptable" to forego the human element. So even if you have great leadership skills, these matter significantly less than what you deliver to the organization's bottom line. Also, a sense of ruthlessness with people is often not only acceptable, but encouraged. This part of the process is concerned with the application of skills and competencies that increase operational efficiency and delivery.

Staying at the top

"To remain at the summit, it is absolutely critical to possess both learning agility and emotional intelligence in managing one's self and others."

It is another question altogether when one gets to the top, because the rules of the game change completely.

Delivery and execution is assumed, and so value has to be delivered through some other means. Without exception, the view around the table was that emotional intelligence is the number one thing that top leaders must possess in order to remain top leaders. Emotional intelligence can be defined as an interrelated group of interpersonal competencies and skills that, when combined, result in greater self-awareness, adaptability, cooperation with others and more.

CEOs that possess emotional intelligence are self-aware. They recognise and manage their emotions, particularly under stress or pressure. In addition when you are emotionally intelligent you are cognizant of the emotions and feelings of others. This is an important skill for Executives because leading teams of other Managers takes a certain finesse. This finesse comes from the ability to understand where other people are coming from, and ultimately allows you to tailor your approach to each member of the team in order to unlock value.

Higher self-awareness also gives rise to learning agility, the ability to effectively develop new behaviours in response to new situations. A learning agile leader is one who does not shy away from change, but who actively manages change, who embraces new experiences and who continues to grow as a leader, even when he or she has reached the 'top'.

That's all very nice, but what does one do with this insight?

The good news, is that either as an individual or as a business, you don't have to leave this to chance, or hope that that you got enough of Mom and Dad's good genes to hack your way to the top. It is possible to assess both learning agility, interpersonal competencies and overall self-awareness (through an objective and robust psychometric approach) in order to determine where your current leaders are, what future leaders will need, and how big the

leadership gap is between your present state and your future state.

Once you have this picture it is then important to either develop your current executive leadership in preparation for the future as well as begin developing up-and-coming learning agile leaders in both "getting there" skills as well as "staying there" skills. This, by extension, demands that current talent and career models will have to be interrogated to ensure that they accommodate this. It also means that sometimes difficult decisions may need to be taken if current leaders show lower levels of learning agility or self-awareness, as this may be result in an unwillingness to change and adapt (a critical future skill) to the mapped demands of the future. If you follow these steps (or answer these questions), you should be able to start the process of identifying and developing leadership for the future.

- Where are we going to play? What does the world and our market look like and what type of business are we going to be in?
- How are we going to win?
- What competencies will we need in our people to get there?
- What competencies will we need in our leaders to lead us there and maximise value once we get there?
- Based on current and objective assessment, how close or far away are we from manifesting this reality? What do we need to do to make the boat go faster?
- Who will we partner with to create/measure/assess-/monitor our progress along the way? Not many organisations have in-house assessment centres or resources to do this, so the choice of a partner is critical to success.

Of course, even with the most rigorous models and approaches, timing and a certain amount of luck also play their part in creating the opportunities for growth and promotion. The bottom line is that unless you start preparing for the future, the future may swallow you up.

Despite a tacit recognition from my hard-nosed business colleagues around the table in KZN that emotional intelligence is a key BUSINESS imperative, this does not allow me off the hook when it comes to being the whipping boy when we meet again. I'm happy with that, and even as I write this, most of them have made contact with me requesting some assistance in either their personal development or leadership team development.

So even old dogs can learn new tricks, and I'm optimistic that the thing that keeps these successful people at the top is that same quality that allowed them to recognize the importance of change, and the courage to take action in response to it - learning agility.

Brandon Gillham

Work Smarter

Help your boss understand your family commitments

When trying to balance work and family, it helps to have a supportive and understanding boss. But what happens if yours isn't either of those things? First, brush up on your employee benefits: What are you entitled to in terms of paid leave, child care accommodations, and alternative work arrangements? You may have some rights that you aren't aware of. Next, if you trust your boss, have a one-on-one conversation in which you're

honest and transparent about the demands on your time. It's possible that they just don't understand all of the commitments you're juggling. Also, exhibit empathy for your boss - the same way you want them to exhibit empathy for you. It's not easy being a manager right now, and you may not be aware of some of the challenges they're facing. Finally, have a plan (or a few plans) ready to pitch. They're more likely to say yes to a concrete proposal.

Getting your boss to understand and support your needs comes down to clear, honest, and frequent communication. If you're willing to initiate that dialogue, you'll be more likely to get the support you're looking for.

This tip is adapted from "When Your Boss Doesn't Respect Your Family Commitments," by Rebecca Knight - Harvard Business Review.

Postmenopausal women can dance their way to better health

After menopause, women are more likely to experience weight gain, overall/central body adiposity increases, and metabolic disturbances, such as increases in triglycerides and bad cholesterol. Together, these changes ultimately increase cardiovascular risk. Around this same time, women often are less physically active, which translates into reductions in lean mass and an increased risk of falls and fractures. As a result of all these changes, postmenopausal women often suffer from decreased self-image and self-esteem, which are directly related to overall mental health.

Physical activity has been shown to minimize some of the many health problems associated with menopause. The effect of dancing, specifically, has already been investigated with regard to how it improves body composition and functional fitness. Few studies, however, have investigated the effects of dance on body image, self-esteem, and physical fitness together in postmenopausal women.

A new study published in 'Menopause', the journal of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) analyzed the effects of dance practice on body composi-



tion, metabolic profile, functional fitness, and self-image/self-esteem in postmenopausal women. Although the sample size was small, the study suggested some credible benefits of a three-times-weekly dance regimen in improving not only the lipid profile and functional fitness of postmenopausal women but also self-image and self-esteem.

Dance therapy is seen as an attractive option because it is a pleasant activity with low associated costs and low risk of injury for its practitioners. Additional confirmed benefits of regular dancing include improvement in balance, postural control, gait, strength, and overall physical performance. All of these benefits may contribute to a woman's ability to maintain an independent, high-quality lifestyle throughout her lifespan.

Differences in financial risk preferences can make or break a marriage

While it is well known that fighting over money can lead couples to divorce court, new research from the University of California San Diego's Rady School of Management finds that differences in risk preferences, especially when it comes to financial matters, are likely a root cause of marital separation.

The longitudinal study measured the risk preferences of 5,300 couples in Germany from 2004 to 2017. Participants in the survey -- conducted annually by the German Socio-Economic Panel -- were

asked how willing they were to take risks when it comes to careers, sports, driving and financial matters.

After controlling for an array of household characteristics, such as the wife's and husband's education level, religion, region of origin, cultural background and more, the author found differences in risk preferences are the biggest predictor of marital separation in the long run.

Couples who had the most dissimilar risk attitudes are twice as likely to divorce,

compared to couples with the most similar preferences. Additionally, of all the risk categories listed in the survey, differences in financial risks were the strongest predictor of divorce.

"Arguing about money is typically cited as a reason for divorce, but a main potential driver of these fights is differences in risk attitudes," said the study's author, Marta Serra-Garcia, associate professor of economics and strategy at the Rady School. "Risk attitudes determine investment decisions, such as housing for the family. If spouses have different risk preferences, they will often disagree on common and very important investments in the marriage."



Why do I sometimes forget what I was just going to say?

That's an interesting question. Forgetting to do or to say things happens to all of us sometimes.

Have you ever walked into a room and realised you can't remember what you were looking for? We tend to do this more when we are thinking of a few things at once or doing two things at the same time. Some people call this "dual-tasking".

Have you ever crossed the road while chatting to a friend at the same time, or walked across a room while tapping away on a tablet or phone? That's dual-tasking.

Everyone does it and we tend to get better at it as we get older and learn new skills.

But while our brain is a truly amazing computer - more powerful than any real computer - it can only use so much mental energy at one time.

Your brain is a power station

Think of your brain as a power station, providing electricity to a number of cities.

If some cities cry out for a lot of energy (by having all their light switches on), other cities would have less power to work with.

There's only so much electricity to go around.

In the same way, your brain only has so much energy to share around at any one time. Younger kids have small brains and have less mental energy available than older kids. In the same way, a teenager's brain is less mature than an adult brain.

Now, this brings us back to the question of forgetting things.

An older (and more experienced) brain means more mental energy to share between tasks.

For young kids, dual-tasking is possible. However, some studies suggest that it can be a little more difficult for younger kids compared with older kids.

Why? The power station in their brain is a little smaller and is not producing quite the same amount of energy as older kids.

Practise makes perfect

The more we practise our skills (like riding a bike, playing a sport, or baking a cake), the better we are at doing another task at the same time.

For a very skilled sportsperson (like a footballer), juggling a football while having a chat with a friend would be easy.

Their football skills are so automatic

that they don't need much mental energy to do it, leaving more for other things.

However, for someone who is just learning, juggling a ball may require a lot of mental energy just by itself. There is not much left-over for holding a conversation.

So, why do I sometimes forget to say something before I say it?

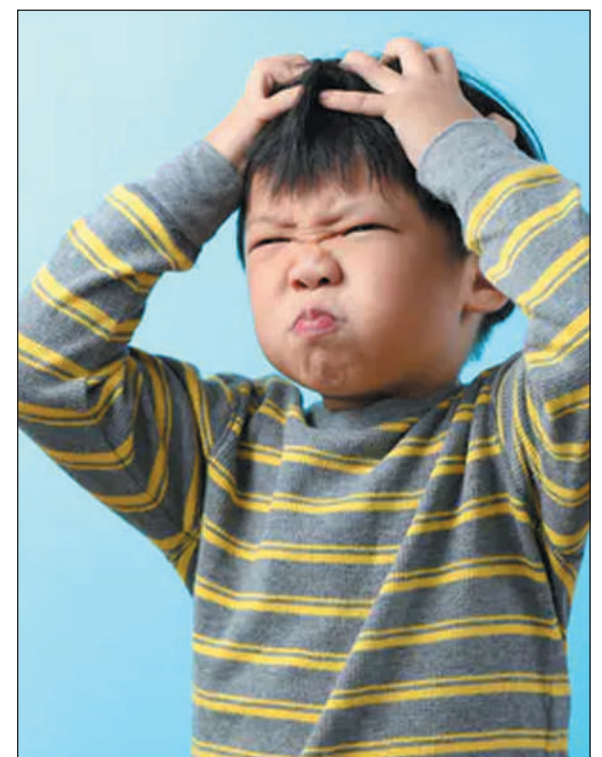
The answer is you are likely to have been "dual-tasking" just before speaking.

It might have been because you were thinking about the words you wanted to say and something else at the same time. Or maybe you were concentrating on listening while trying to think of what to say.

Sometimes, your brain just can't do two complicated things at once. You might not have enough mental energy in that moment.

Forgetting things is normal for everyone and can happen when you are doing too many things at once.

When it happens to you, take a deep breath and relax!



Perhaps those words will come back to you later when you clear your head and re-energise?

Peter Wilson, Prof of Developmental Psychology, Australian Catholic University

Healthy Beauty

The Beauty Benefits of Natural Oils

Try argan oil to plump up your skin, sesame oil to cut plaque and bad breath, and rosemary oil to thicken your hair

Why try natural oils? They are touted as alternatives to condition hair, moisturize skin, fight acne, and strengthen nails. Take a stroll down the beauty aisle of your drugstore and you'll find them in many products. Do they work? You might need to experiment, says Stephanie S. Gardner, MD of WebMD. Everyone's skin is different, and it comes down to trial and error. Read on.

Marula

Made from the fruit of the marula tree, which is native to South Africa, this oil is rich and hydrating. It's full of fatty acids, which dermatologists say soothe dry skin. It absorbs quickly and won't leave you shiny or greasy.

Tea Tree

Red, inflamed breakouts happen when bacteria gets trapped inside your pores. Research shows that tea tree oil helps zap that bacteria. In one trial, it beat a placebo gel (which has no active ingredients) at treating acne and calming inflammation. Another study found that it was as effective as benzoyl peroxide, a common ingredient in over-the-counter zit remedies.

Argan

Sometimes called "liquid gold," argan oil is rich in antioxidants called polyphenols, which can fight the effects of aging. Dermatologists also say its omega-3 fatty acids boost collagen growth and plump up your skin. It doesn't matter if you have a dry, oily, or normal skin type.

It also conditions hair, but doesn't weight it down or



make it feel greasy. You can still use your other hair care products, too.

Chamomile and Peppermint

You probably think of chamomile as a relaxing tea, but the oil from this daisy-like plant can also calm your skin. Skin specialists call it an anti-inflammatory and an antiseptic, which cuts down on redness, irritation, and the chance of infection. Peppermint oil has the same soothing properties.

Coconut

Dry, cracked skin is more likely to get infected, irritated, and have allergic reactions. Coconut oil protects and moisturizes it, and soothes the scaly, rough patches that go along with common conditions like eczema, too.

Rosehip and Carrot

You'll find vitamin A in lots of skin care products. It's a

"retinoid," a chemical that helps replace old skin cells with new ones and make collagen, which can ease colour changes from scarring and stretch marks. Two oils that are particularly rich in vitamin A: rosehip seed and carrot. Some dermatologists say they're also good as acne and anti-aging treatments. You would use only a tiny dab at night-time.

Rosemary and Castor

Want to plump up your ponytail? Does your scalp show more than it used to? Rosemary oil may help you get a thicker, shinier mane. In one study, 6 months of treatment worked as well as 2% minoxidil against androgenetic alopecia, a common form of hair loss in men and women. And it was less likely to cause an itchy scalp.

Castor oil is another home remedy said to thicken brows and lashes. Before you try it, ask your doctor if it's safe, since it would go near your eyes. The jury's still out as to whether it really works.

Olive and Avocado

Got thin or brittle nails? For a simple, all-natural solution, dab a little olive or avocado oil on them before bed. The oils will soak in overnight and nourish with good-for-your fatty acids. You can use other types of oil for this, too.

Sesame

Could you replace your mouthwash with oil? It's trendy, but oil pulling, or rinsing out your mouth with oil, is a generations-old remedy for healthy teeth and gums. Research shows it might help. Recent international studies found that swishing with sesame oil (coconut and sunflower work, too) can cut plaque and gingivitis. It may also wash away the microorganisms that cause bad breath.

Living a long, healthy life is at the top of most people's wish list. But just how do you get there?

Author Dan Buettner decided to go straight to the source. Working with National Geographic and the National Institute on Aging, he identified areas of the world where people live the longest and healthiest, such as Sardinia, Italy, Okinawa, Japan, and Loma Linda, CA.

They dubbed these areas "blue zones," then set out to discover what those populations had in common. For instance, people in the blue zones are naturally active throughout the day, have meaningful connections in their community, and feel a sense of purpose.

But their diets have things in common too, according to his cookbook 'The Blue Zones Kitchen'. Here are some of the ways you can make their longevity diet work for your health too as highlighted by Sally Kuzemchak, MS, RD Registered dietitian.

Eat beans. People in the blue zones eat beans regularly -- at least a half cup



every day. Beans (such as black, garbanzo, and white) are an inexpensive source of plant-based protein and they're loaded with fiber, a nutrient that's linked to lower risk of disease and good for gut health.

Include cruciferous veggies. Broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage all con-

tain natural compounds that are good for your heart and help ward off some kinds of cancer.

Snack on nuts. The blue zone centenarians eat about 2 ounces of nuts a day - that's roughly two small handfuls. You can vary the kind you eat (such as pista-

chios, walnuts, and almonds) to get the array of benefits. Peanuts are an especially economical choice.

Drink mostly water. Though people in the blue zones also drink beverages like tea and coffee, most of your hydration should come from water. Beverages like soda are the No. 1 source of added sugar for most adults -- and most sugary drinks are void of other nutrients anyway. Although red wine is popular in some blue zones, the authors note you shouldn't start drinking it if you don't already.

Get less sugar. People in the blue zones eat just a fifth of the added sugar we eat. Instead of having sugary foods and drinks throughout the day, they tend to eat sugar "intentionally" for special occasions.

Make more meatless meals. In blue zones, meat isn't the centerpiece of the meal. It's more of a side dish or a way to boost flavour in recipes. Their meals are mostly plant-based, and beans are often the main protein source (or tofu in Okinawa, Japan).

Show gratitude and eat with loved ones. Take a moment to show gratitude before a meal -- and ideally, enjoy your meals in the company of family and friends.



Biting a politician

A Male mosquito to its wife:

Male Mosq: Darling I will hunt a lion for you.

Female Mosq: Ok fine, now go to sleep.

Male Mosq: I will bite an elephant and bring his blood for you.

Female Mosq: Sure love, go to sleep.

Male Mosq: I will drive you around Paris in a Mercedes.

Female Mosq: Hmm ok, go to sleep...

Male Mosq: You don't trust me? I will get you a 100 gms gold chain.

Female Mosq: You idiot go to sleep! How many times have I told you not to come home after biting a politician.

A Golfing Story

Alan who lived in the north of England, decided to go golfing in Scotland with his buddy, Chris.

So they loaded up Alan's minivan and headed north.

After driving for a few hours, they got caught in a terrible blizzard.

So they pulled into a nearby farm and asked the attractive lady who answered the door if they could spend the night.

'I realize it's terrible weather out there and I have this huge house all to myself, but I'm recently widowed,' she explained, 'and I'm afraid the neighbours will talk if I let you stay in my house.'

'Don't worry,' Alan said. 'We'll be happy to sleep in the barn. And if the weather breaks, we'll be gone at first light.'

The lady agreed, and the two men found their way to the barn and settled in for the night.

Come morning, the weather had cleared, and they got on their way. They enjoyed a great weekend of golf.

But about nine months later, Alan got an unexpected letter from an attorney.

It took him a few minutes to figure it out, but he finally determined that it was from the attorney of that attractive widow he had met on the golf weekend.

He dropped in on his friend Chris and asked, "Chris, do you remember that good-looking widow from the farm

we stayed at on our golf holiday in Scotland about nine months ago?"

'Yes, I do,' said Chris.

'Did you, er, happen to get up in the middle of the night, go up to the house and pay her a visit?'

'Well, um, yes!,' Chris said, a little embarrassed about being found out, 'I have to admit that I did.'

'And did you happen to give her my name instead of telling her your name?'

Chris's face turned beet red and he said, 'Yeah, look, I'm sorry, buddy. I'm afraid I did.' 'Why do you ask?'

'She just died and left me everything!'

A guy barges into a psychiatrist's office, and screams...

"Doctor! I have suicidal tendencies! What do I do?!"

The doctor calmly answers "Pay me in advance"

"Dad, what's capitalism?"

"Here, take this £5 note and go and get me a BLT with a large coca cola."

The boy left his house and took the only possible route, up a huge hill. He got to the counter and made the order.

"That'll be £7.34," said the assistant.

"I only have £5, mister," said the boy. The assistant shrugged his shoulders and the boy left.

The boy barged in through the front door and shouted, "Dad, I just went all that way for you and you didn't give me enough money."

The dad looked him in the eye and said, "Son, that's capitalism."

A waiter barges into his manager's office

"Help!" he says, "There are two guys outside high as a kite trashing the place!"

The manager steps out of his office, and sure enough there are two high guys shoving tables and throwing plates. He calmly walks out of the restaurant and returns shortly with a very beautiful woman. As soon as the dudes saw the woman, they immediately stopped trashing the place and began admiring her. She left soon after and they followed her out, entranced by her beauty.

Meanwhile the waiter is standing there, watching this all take place. He stared at the manager, confused as to how he knew that would work.

"That, my friend," says the manager, "Is how you kill two stoners with one bird."

Paternity Test

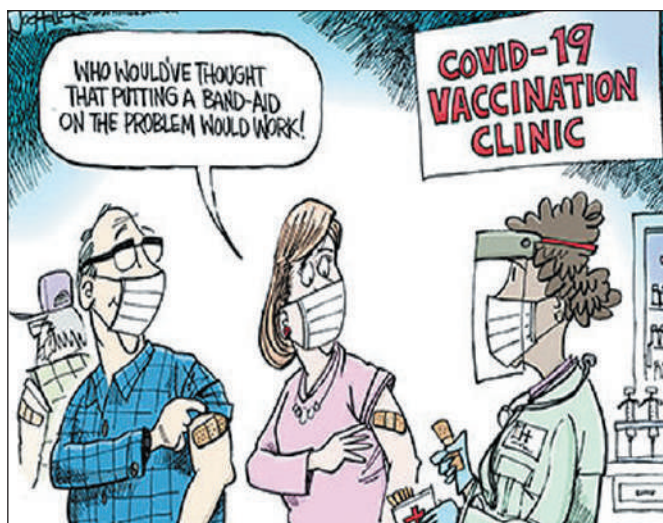
A politician wanted to confirm that his son was really his son or had his wife been unfaithful.

He creates a setup. He places a \$1000 bill, a glass of whiskey and a gun on a table. He then calls his son in. His son barges in "Hey Dad"

He shows his son the setup and tells him to choose.

The son without a second thought picks up the bill, puts it in his pocket. Without further ado, he drinks the entire glass of whiskey in one go. He then picks up a gun, starts to threaten everyone else in the room to empty their pockets.

The politician stands up, hugs his son and with a heart filled with emotion exclaims: "HE IS MY SON!"



Vieillir en beauté

-- Félix Leclerc

Vieillir en beauté, c'est vieillir avec son cœur,
Sans remords, sans regret, sans regarder l'heure.
Aller de l'avant, arrêter d'avoir peur,
Car à chaque âge se rattache un bonheur.

Vieillir en beauté, c'est vieillir avec son corps,
Le garder sain en dedans, beau en dehors.
Ne jamais abdiquer devant un effort.
L'âge n'a rien à voir avec la mort.

Vieillir en beauté, c'est donner un coup de pouce!
À ceux qui se sentent perdus dans la brousse,
Qui ne croient plus que la vie peut être douce
Et qu'il y a toujours quelqu'un à la rescousse.

Vieillir en beauté, c'est vieillir positivement.
Ne pas pleurer sur ses souvenirs d'antan.
Être fier d'avoir les cheveux blancs,
Car pour être heureux, on a encore le temps.

Vieillir en beauté, c'est vieillir avec amour,
Savoir donner sans rien attendre en retour,
Car où que l'on soit, à l'aube du jour,
Il y a quelqu'un à qui dire bonjour.

Vieillir en beauté, c'est vieillir avec espoir,
Être content de soi en se couchant le soir.
Et lorsque viendra le point de non-recevoir,
Se dire qu'au fond, ce n'est qu'un au revoir!

Ne regrette pas de vieillir.
C'est un privilège refusé à beaucoup!

Thought to Live by

What makes one feel rich and happy

I got on the bus. I got upset seeing the crowd inside. There was no place to sit. Just then, a person vacated his seat. The man standing next to the vacant seat could have sat there, but instead he offered me a seat.

The same thing happened again at the next stop. He gave his seat to another. This happened four times during the whole journey. The man seemed like a normal worker, returning home after a long day's work. At the last stop when we all got off, I talked to him.

"Why were you giving your seat to someone else every time you got a vacant seat?"

His answer surprised me: "I haven't studied much in my life and I don't know many things. I don't have much money, So I don't have much to give to anyone. That's why I do this every day. This is something that I can do. I can do it easily. I can stand for a while even after working all day. I gave my seat to you and you said 'thank you'. It gives me satisfaction that I have done something for someone."

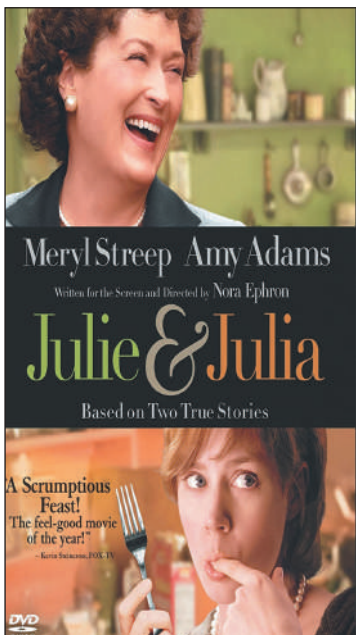
I was speechless!

The desire to do something for someone is the ultimate gift. This stranger taught me a lot: how easy it is to become rich from within!

Beautiful clothes, lots of money in a bank account, expensive gadgets, accessories and luxuries or an educational degree... can't make you rich and happy, but a small act of giving is enough to make you feel rich and happy every day.

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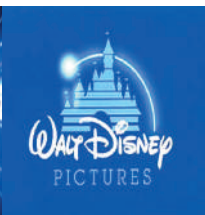
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Jeudi 19 août - 21.15



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
mardi 17 août	06.00 Local: Rodrig Mo Pei 09.45 Local: Passerelles 11.00 Mag: Le Saviez Vous? 11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant 12.00 Le Journal 12.30 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.55 Doc: Green Touch 14.41 D.Anime: The Garfield Show 15.06 D.Anime: Petit Creux 15.10 D.Anime: The Deep 15.33 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie 15.35 D.Anime: Wishfart 15.56 D.Anime: Mega Man: Fully... 16.10 D.Anime: Johnny Test 16.31 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.35 Local: An Eta Dalert 21.05 Film: Thirteen Days 23.35 Le Journal	07.00 DDI Live 08.00 Educational Prog: Grade 3 10.15 Educational Prog: Grade 4 12.30 Film: Swayamvar Star: Shashi Kapoor, Sanjeev... 15.00 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek 15.34 Serial: Aamhi Doghi 15.47 Serial: Bava Maradullu 16.15 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal 16.38 Serial: Aatish 16.49 Serial: Imtihaan 17.16 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.34 Telugu - Premabhishekam 18.00 Serial: Dr. Qin 18.30 DDI Magazine 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.04 Local: Programme In Tamil 20.30 Film: Kaajal Star: Meena Kumari, Dharmendra, Raaj Kumar	06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa 06.52 Mag: Voa Connect 07.21 Mag: In Good Shape 07.47 Doc: Amazing Gardens 09.00 Educational Prog: Grade 5 11.30 Educational Prog: Grade 8 14.55 Mag: 360 GEO 15.47 Mag: Global 3000 16.13 Mag: Washington Forum 17.42 Mag: Eco@Africa 18.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 18.30 Doc: Zambia 19.00 Student Support Prog... 19.31 Mag: Made In Germany 20.30 Local: News (English) 21.04 Doc: Snapshots 21.30 Doc: Une Nuit, Orsay Avec... 22.21 Mag: Close Up 22.47 Local: Klip Seleksion 23.29 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto And Mobility show	01.24 Film: The Quiet Hour 02.50 Serial: Chicago Med 03.31 An Emma Fielding Mystery 05.41 Serial: Gone 06.21 Film: Woochi, Le Magicien... 09.00 Serial: When Calls The Heart 09.48 Tele: Teresa 10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.01 Serial: Chicago Med 12.00 An Emma Fielding Mystery 13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.12 Mag: Hollywood On Set 14.45 Film: Woochi, Le Magicien... 16.55 Serial: When Calls The Heart 17.37 Serial: Gone 18.17 Tele: Teresa 19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Serial: Gone 21.15 Film: Julie Et Julia 23.13 Tele: Muneca Brava	08.00 Film: Hello Starring Salman Khan, Sharman Joshi, Sohail Khan 12.04 / 19.54 - Radha Krishna 12.24 / 20.11 - Chupke Chupke 12.48 / 20.32 Mere Sai 13.09 / 21.09 - Agniphera 13.14 / 21.24 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 13.53 / 21.59 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 14.59 / 22.25 - Sethji 15.29 Film: Achanak Star: Govinda, Manisha Koirala, Farha Naaz, Rahul Roy 18.00 Live: Samacher 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.55 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron... 19.17 Bhakharwadi
mercredi 18 août	06.00 Local: Rodrig: Ecozone 07.35 Local: Priorite Sante 10.30 Mag: Check In 11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 13.00 Local Prod: Emission Speciale A L'occasion De L'assomption 14.30 D.Anime: Twirlywoos 14.54 D.Anime: The Garfield Show 15.07 D.Anime: Petit Creux 15.31 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie 15.36 D.Anime: Wishfart 17.05 Serial: Dark Oracle 17.35 Serial: Lucas Etc. 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 18.55 MBC Production: Ayush 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.15 MBC Production 21.10 Film: Heaven's Fall	07.00 DDI Live 08.00 Educational Prog: Grade 3 10.15 Educational Prog: Grade 4 12.30 Film: Amar Shakti Star: Shashi Kapoor, S. Sinha, Sulakshana Pandit 15.00 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek 15.25 Aamhi Doghi 15.47 Bava Maradallu 16.01 Apoorva Raagangal 16.29 Serial: Aatish 16.55 Serial: Imtihaan 17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.28 Serial: Kulvadhu 18.00 Serial: Dr. Qin 18.30 Mag: DDI Magazine 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.06 Programme In Marathi 20.34 Film: Aga Bai Arechya 2 Stars: Sonali Kulkarni, Bharat Jadhav, Siddharth Jadhav	06.00 Rev: The Global Auto... 06.26 Doc: Zambia - Invasion Of... 06.52 Mag: Check In 07.18 Mag: Made In Germany 08.13 Doc: Builders Of The Future 09.00 Educational Prog: Grade 5 11.30 Educational Prog: Grade 8 14.00 Doc: Snapshots 14.29 Mag: Close Up 14.55 Local: Klip Seleksion 15.37 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 17.50 Mag: Motorweek 18.16 Mag: Vous Et Nous 18.43 Student Support Prog... 19.13 Doc: Garden Party 19.47 Doc: Les Montagnes Du Monde 20.30 Local: News (English) 21.04 Doc: La Ville Passe Au Vert 21.55 Mag: Business Africa 22.22 Mag: Focus On Europe 22.49 Doc: The Maras	01.43 Film: Death Fighter 03.12 Serial: Chicago Med 03.53 Film: Julie Et Julia 05.51 Tele: Muneca Brava 06.33 Serial: Gone 07.15 Film: Signed, Sealed, Delive... 09.00 Serial: When Calls The Heart 09.45 Tele: Teresa 10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.01 Serial: Chicago Med 11.41 Film: Julie Et Julia 13.39 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.46 Film: Signed, Sealed, Delive... 16.40 Serial: When Calls The Heart 17.23 Serial: Gone 18.08 Tele: Teresa 19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Serial: Madam Secretary 21.15 Film: Heaven's Fall 23.00 Tele: Muneca Brava 23.42 Serial: When Calls The Heart	08.00 Film: Achanak Star: Govinda, Manisha Koirala, Farha Naaz, Rahul Roy 12.04 / 20.06 - Radha Krishna 12.24 / 20.26 - Chupke Chupke 12.44 / 20.02 - Mere Sai - Shrad... 13.10 / 20.46 - Agniphera 13.31 / 21.09 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 13.57 / 21.50 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 14.16 / 22.15 - Maharakshak 15.01 / 21.46 - Sethji 15.30 Film: Shaadi Ka Laddoo Starring: Sanjay Suri, Mandira Bedi, Aashish Chaudhary 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.51 Ishaaroon Ishaaron... 19.15 Bhakharwadi 19.38 Serial: Siddhi Vinayak
jeudi 19 août	06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion 06.45 Local: Fee Main 07.10 Local: Aktiv 10.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today 11.00 Mag: Le Saviez-Vous? 12.00 Le Journal 12.50 Mag: Green Touch 13.03 Local: Le Rendez Vous 14.00 Local: Zafan Nou Zil 14.41 D.Anime: The Garfield Show 15.07 D.Anime: Petit Creux 15.32 D.Anime: Teenie Weenie 15.32 D.Anime: Petit Creux 17.05 Serial: Dark Oracle 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 18.55 Local: Tirth Yatra 19.30 Le Journal 20.15 Film: Thappad Stars: Taapsee Pannu	07.00 DDI Live 08.00 Educational Prog: Grade 3 10.15 Educational Prog: Grade 4 12.30 Film: Rakhi 15.00 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek 15.22 Aamhi Doghi 15.43 Bava Maradallu 16.01 Apoorva Raagangal 16.32 Serial: Aatish 16.53 Serial: Imtihaan 17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.29 Local: Amrit Vaani 18.00 Serial: Dr. Qin 18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da... 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.06 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.32 Local: Retrovizer 21.14 Film: The Hurt Locker Stars: Jeremy Renner, A. Mackie, Brian Geraghty	06.00 Mag: Motorweek 06.26 Mag: Vous Et Nous 07.19 Doc: Garden Party 07.51 Les Montagnes Du Monde 09.00 Educational Prog: Grade 5 11.30 Educational Prog: Grade 8 14.54 Mag: Business Africa 15.45 Doc: The Maras 16.33 Mag: Motorweek 16.59 Mag: Vous Et Nous 17.26 Mag: Arts.21 18.00 Mag: Eco India 18.30 Mag: Shift - Living In The... 19.00 Student Prog Grade 7 19.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today 20.01 Mag: Science Ou Fiction 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.40 Mag: Vue D'en Haut 21.58 Doc: China's Cities 23.21 Mag: Eco India 23.47 Mag: Shift	01.26 Film: Night Wolf 02.50 Serial: Chicago Med 03.33 Film: Land Raiders 05.46 Tele: Muneca Brava 07.19 An Emma Fielding Mystery 09.00 Serial: When Calls The Heart 09.45 Tele: Teresa 10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor 11.00 Serial: Chicago Med 12.00 Film: Land Raiders 13.38 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.45 An Emma Fielding Mystery 16.40 Serial: When Calls The Heart 17.19 Serial: Madam Secretary 18.05 Tele: Teresa 19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Serial: Madam Secretary 21.14 Serial: Rich Man, Poor Man 22.01 Film: Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within	08.00 Film: Shaadi Ka Laddoo Starring: Sanjay Suri, Mandira Bedi, Aashish Chaudhary 12.05 / 19.54 - Radha Krishna 12.22 / 20.11 - Chupke Chupke 12.48 / 20.32 - Mere Sai 13.07 / 21.09 - Agniphera 13.33 / 21.24 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 13.48 / 21.50 - Zindagi Ki Mehek 14.14 / 22.15 Maharakshak 14.55 / 21.46 - Sethji 15.20 Film: Manie Dil Tujhko Diya Starring: Sohail Khan, Sameera Reddy, Sanjay Dutt 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.51 Ishaaron Ishaaron Mein 19.14 Serial: Bhakharwadi



Jeudi 19 août - 15.20

Star: Sohail Khan, Sameera Reddy, Sanjay Dutt



Jeudi 19 août - 20.15

Stars: Taapsee Pannu



Afghanistan's Unfolding Tragedy - Afghan government collapses, Taliban seize control

The Taliban 'expect a complete handover of power.' Experts explain who the Taliban are, what life is like under their rule and how the U.S. may bear responsibility for Afghanistan's collapse

Panic and turmoil grip Afghanistan after Taliban insurgents captured the capital city of Kabul and the president fled on Aug. 15, 2021.

There would be "no transitional government in Afghanistan," Taliban officials told Reuters news service. The insurgent group "expects a complete handover of power" - though many nations may not recognize a Taliban government that took power through armed struggle rather than by continuing the now-failed internationally mediated peace negotiations.

Fearful citizens aiming to escape the rule of radical Islamic fighters were "lining up at cash machines to withdraw their life savings," according to the Associated Press, and overrunning the Kabul airport's tarmac as U.S. military evacuation flights tried to take off.

The fall of Afghanistan came just three months after the U.S. began to withdraw its troops from the country following a 20-year war that killed 2,448 U.S. service members, 3,846 U.S. military contractors and some 66,000 Afghan national military and police.

For Afghans and international observers of a certain age, history is repeating itself in Afghanistan.

The Taliban - which means "the students" in Pashto - seized control of Afghanistan in 1996 after capturing Kabul in the Afghan civil war. They established a government based on their extreme interpretation of Islamic Sharia law and ruled for five years. The Taliban regime was then toppled in 2001 by the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Here, Afghanistan experts offer insight into the Taliban - then and now - and explain the United States' role in Afghanistan's collapse.

1. The Taliban regime

Have the Taliban changed since 2001?

That's the question Sher Jan Ahmadzai, director of the Center for Afghanistan Studies at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, set out to answer in his July 2021 story on the Taliban.

Ahmadzai, who is from Afghanistan, explained that, "During the Taliban's five-year rule, women were prohibited from working, attending school or leaving home without a male relative. Men had to grow beards and wear a cap or turban."

Anyone not abiding by this code could be lashed, beaten or humiliated.

The rhetoric of the Taliban has mode-



rated since 2001, Ahmadzai wrote, but their extremist beliefs have not changed.

"All evidence suggests the Taliban still believe in restoring their old system of emirate, in which an unelected religious leader, or emir, was the ultimate decision-maker," given authority from God.

Already, in Taliban-controlled parts of Afghanistan, Ahmadzai wrote, Taliban have rulers "have asked families to marry off one girl per family to their fighters; said

"Reform of the Taliban is not really possible. Their core ideology is fundamentalist, particularly towards women," one 40-year-old women's rights activist from Kabul told Hoodfar and Tajali.

In international meetings and on social media, Taliban leaders suggest only that women have rights "according to Islam."

A schoolteacher in northern Afghanistan told the researchers, "In the beginning, when we saw the Taliban interviews on TV, we hoped for peace, as if the Taliban had changed. But when I saw the Taliban up close, they have not changed at all."

3. A 'moral tragedy'

The United States cannot shirk moral responsibility for the human rights abuses and violence that Afghans will likely face under Taliban rule, according to University of Washington philosopher Michael Blake.

"This ought to trouble the politicians who defend the withdrawal, and those voters who gave power to those politicians," he says.

Calling the collapse of Afghanistan "morally tragic," Blake says the U.S. may have an obligation to provide refuge to Afghans who bear particular risks because they were part of the United States war effort. That includes Afghan translators, who have been targeted by the Taliban for their work with the U.S. military.

The Biden administration in July 2021 authorized a US\$100 million "urgent" expansion of the special visa program that could get up to 20,000 Afghans affiliated

with the U.S. war effort out of Afghanistan and resettled abroad.

But it is difficult if not impossible now for those people to flee a country under Taliban rule. And translators are far from the only Afghans at risk of retaliation by the Taliban.

4. Global terror threat

The Taliban's victory in Afghanistan is also a victory for the terrorist organization al-Qaida, according to Greg Barton, chair in global Islamic politics at Deakin University in Australia.

"Afghanistan was the birthplace of al-Qaida in 1988. The group gave rise to terrorist networks around the world, including...al-Qaida in Iraq, which morphed into the Islamic State," writes Barton.

The U.S. originally invaded Afghanistan to hunt down and destroy al-Qaida after the group attacked the World Trade Center and Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. Afghanistan had become a haven for terrorists under Taliban rule.

With the Taliban's return to power, international terrorist organizations could - sooner than anticipated - begin openly operating out of the country again, said Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley on Aug. 15, 2021.

5. Could US forces return to Afghanistan?

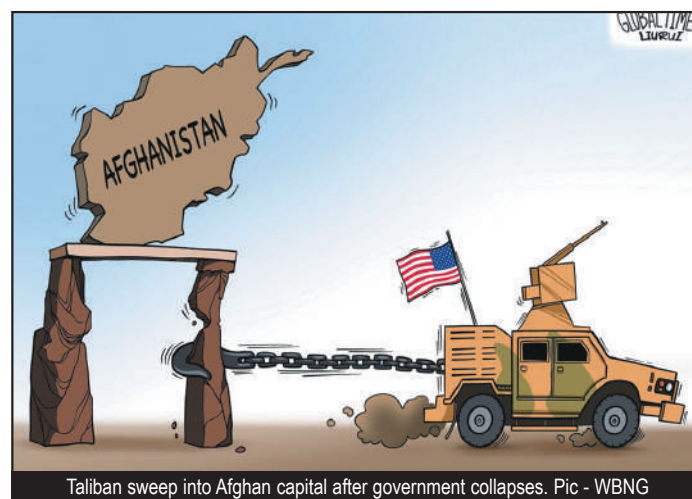
When former President Donald Trump made a deal with the Taliban to end the U.S. war in Afghanistan, acceding to a longstanding Taliban demand, public opinion polls indicated widespread support for the decision.

That gave President Joe Biden license to follow through on Trump's decision, says Thomas Alan Schwartz, a history professor at Vanderbilt University.

But a "rapid takeover of the country by the Taliban, with the subsequent persecution of women and domestic opponents of the regime, may well produce a backlash among millions of Americans," Schwartz wrote on Aug. 13, 2021.

Schwartz notes that "the brutality of Islamic State executions led U.S. forces back into Iraq" after President George W. Bush had declared victory there. Similarly, the "repression and carnage involved in a Taliban triumph" could make Biden rethink a full U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan that would "cast a profound and damaging shadow over the entire Biden presidency."

Catesby Holmes
International Editor, The
Conversation US



women should not leave home without a male relative; and ordered men to pray in mosques and grow beards."

2. Women under 'fundamentalist' rule

Afghan women may have the most to fear from the Taliban's victory.

Scholars Homa Hoodfar and Mona Tajali interviewed 15 Afghan women activists, community leaders and politicians over the past year. Few of them felt the Taliban believed in gender equality.