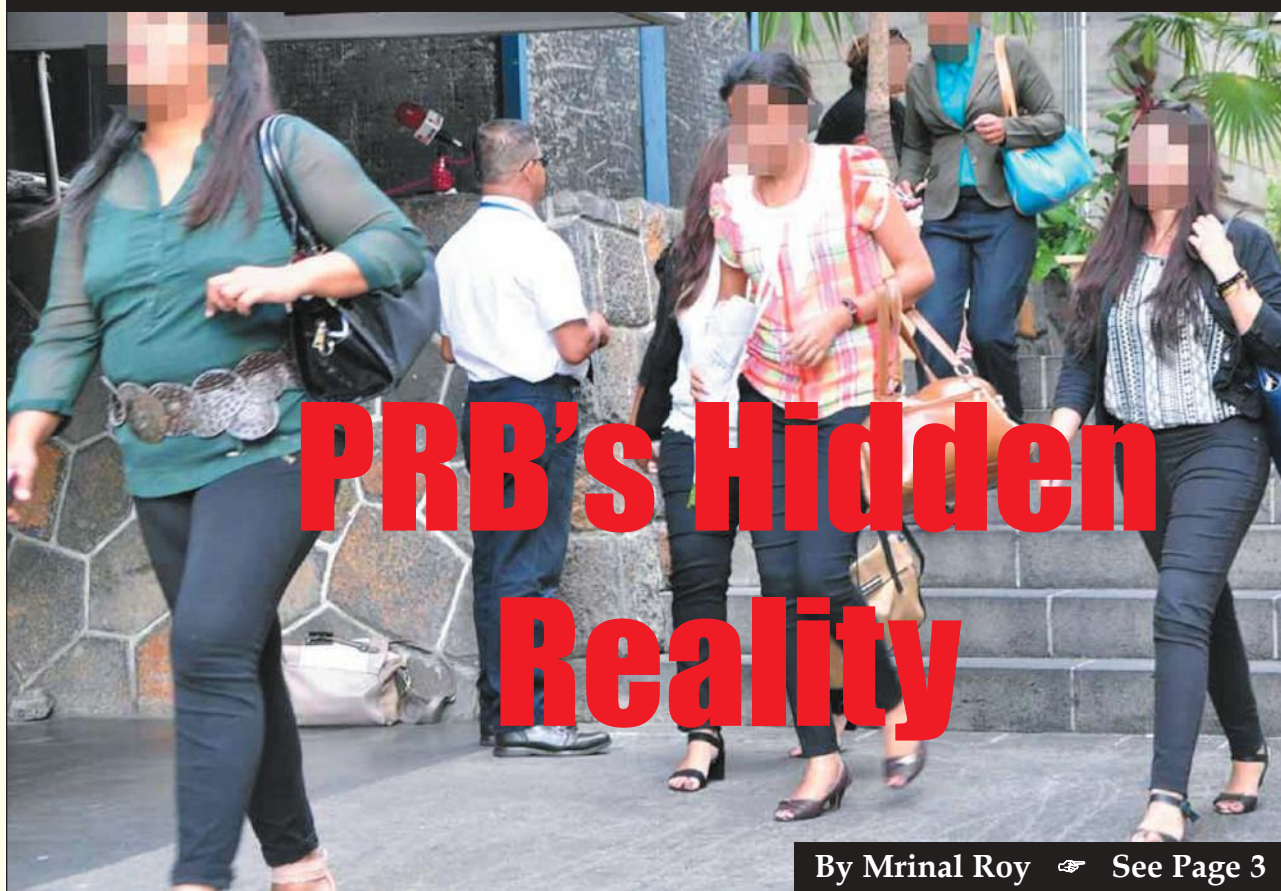


MAURITIUS TIMES

• "Working hard for something we don't care about is called stressed; working hard for something we love is called passion." -- Simon Sinek

Matters of the Moment



By Mrinal Roy See Page 3

Private Prosecution against PK Jugnauth



By LEX Page 5-6

Opinion

Politics and Meaningful Statesmanship



By Murli Dhar See Page 4

Covid: new antibody treatment could offer up to 18 months' protection



By Rebecca Aicheler, Cardiff Metropolitan University

See Page 9

When will the country get out of the rut?

It is high time indeed that there should be a change in the way that politics is being played out in this country, going down as it has done in the same rut, that is, following the same pattern of behaviour by government after government. It is difficult to change the view that nothing has changed in the way of doing politics, that the poor practices of the past have been perpetuated under the new government. Yet, like others earlier, it too was voted for in the hope that it would bring to an end past malpractices and embrace an improved way of running the affairs of the country.

The initial promising start to cope with the unfolding Covid-19 pandemic, taking such a pre-emptive bold measure as the early lockdown, was soon marred by the confusion of poor as well as questionable decisions taken in relation to the procurement of medical supplies. Some persons close to the regime were found to be taking undue pecuniary advantage of their proximity to the new incumbents of power – a repeat of previous practices. Further investigations led to the uncovering of what was allegedly the murder of a political agent. One prominent minister had to step down, and it was hoped that given the closeness of the dead victim to power, the case would soon be solved by finding and convicting the culprit.

Instead, the unravelling of the case has shown the gaps and weaknesses in our institutions and led to drug trails as well as labyrinthine and shady business dealings involving the high and the mighty. Now there are private prosecutions, suits and countersuits being lodged in court by umpteen political and legal stakeholders who have jumped into the fray, and all the stakeholders, those in power, those positioning themselves for a future grab, the opposition, and activists of various sorts are now trying to gain political mileage. All this makes good footage and titillates the appetites of those who thrive on such a mess, but what good is that doing to the country?

It is true that the truth must be found out and justice meted out, but the way that things are happening is just a repeat of what has been seen before, with undue delays and labyrinthine twists and turns that give a very poor image of the law enforcement, investigative, and governance processes in our country. Isn't that what we had seen before too? This makes people rightly ask whether politics will continue to be more concerned

with defending the indefensible, keep trying to salvage the lost reputations of those who have savaged it from within the ranks? Can the country afford such a non-stop diversion of its energies and resources away from attending to the issues of more immediate importance and relevance to the livelihood of the masses?

And God knows that despite the upbeat air presented by government with the inauguration of flyovers, the prospects being entertained following the opening of frontiers with the resumption of touristic activities, the affluence at malls and other places after lifting of restrictions, it is undeniable that the overall prevailing atmosphere and feeling in the country is not the brightest. One would not be wrong to state that it is one of pessimism for the future of the country, for the upcoming generations for whom opportunities are closing elsewhere as well due to the contraction resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic which has taken a new upturn despite our vaccination coverage.

We cannot deny the jobs lost, swelling unemployment figures, industries shutting down, our receding international image, the swelling national debt amongst other things. They don't seem to be getting the serious attention and thinking that they deserve so as to find the viable, short- and long-term solutions that they are crying for.

Apart from economic security there is also the visible disintegration of the social fabric, and responsible to a large extent is the explosion of the drug culture that has been hastened by the advent of synthetic drugs for one. But another major factor is the running after easy money by all means, and that the irregular practices at the high levels have no doubt spurned. There is urgency in shifting focus to these problems instead of wasting energies elsewhere, to prevent the country from sliding further down both nationally and internationally.

At such times, leaders put aside their political differences and their personal animus towards each other to get the country out of the rut. We would hope that this might yet be possible here, that an element of patriotism and some magnanimity would be brought in to lift the country out of the sinking mood and heads put together to revamp the economy. Does the moral leadership exist for such an eventuality? That is a tall order, and it is for those who are vying for leadership to give the concrete answer.

The Conversation

What happens if COP26 doesn't meet its goals?

What is COP26? Here's how global climate negotiations work and what's expected from the Glasgow summit



UN climate summits bring together representatives of almost every country. UNFCCC

Over two weeks in November, world leaders and national negotiators will meet in Scotland to discuss what to do about climate change. It's a complex process that can be hard to make sense of from the outside, but it's how international law and institutions help solve problems that no single country can fix on its own.

I worked for the United Nations for several years as a law and policy adviser and have been involved in international negotiations. Here's what's happening behind closed doors and why people are concerned that COP26 might not meet its goals.

What is COP26?

In 1992, countries agreed to an international treaty called the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which set ground rules and expectations for global cooperation on combating climate change. It was the first time the majority of nations formally recognized the need to control greenhouse gas emissions, which cause global warming that drives climate change.

That treaty has since been updated, including in 2015 when nations signed the Paris climate agreement. That agreement set the goal of limiting global warming to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 F), and preferably to 1.5 C (2.7 F), to avoid catastrophic climate change.

COP26 stands for the 26th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC. The "parties" are the 196 countries that ratified the treaty plus the European Union. The United Kingdom, partnering with Italy, is hosting COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, from Oct. 31 through Nov. 12, 2021, after a one-year postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why are world leaders so focused on climate change?

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's latest report, released in August 2021, warns in its strongest terms yet that human activities have unequivocally warmed the planet, and that climate change is now widespread, rapid and intensifying.

The IPCC's scientists explain how climate change has been fueling extreme weather events and flooding, severe heat waves and droughts, loss and extinction of species, and the melting of ice sheets and rising of sea levels. UN Secretary-General António Guterres called the report a "code red for humanity."

Enough greenhouse gas emissions are already in the atmosphere, and they stay there long enough, that even under the most ambitious scenario of countries quickly reducing their emissions, the world will experience rising temperatures through at least mid-century.

Shelley Inglis, University of Dayton

● Cont. on page 10

Mauritius Times

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

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

This epaper has been produced with the assistance of

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Mrinal Roy

PRB's Hidden Reality

The PRB salary table is a tell tale story of the ugly reality of Mauritius 53 years after independence

The country has buckled under the dire socio-economic consequences and costs of the Covid-19 pandemic. Tens of billions of Rupees of public funds have been used by Government to mitigate its adverse consequences and bail out distressed companies including some of the biggest conglomerates of the country. Various support measures to employees will cost Rs 12.9 billion to the public Exchequer by December whereas Rs15.9 billion have been advanced to the hotel industry from Mauritius Investment Corporation (MIC) funds. The economy shrank by 14.9% in 2020. Government is therefore desperate to see the economy pick up to shore up strapped public finances. The stakes are high. This is therefore not the time for financial *largesse* but for judicious and rigorous financial management of limited public funds.

Yet, the government has blithely announced last week that it had agreed to pay the new salary recommendations of the Pay Research Bureau (PRB) in full as from 1 January 2021 instead of the PRB recommendation of paying the new salaries in a phased manner over two calendar years as from 1 January 2021 and January 2022. The yearly cost to public funds would be Rs 4.3 billion whereas for the period 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2022 the total cost to the public Exchequer will amount to Rs 6.5 billion.

The PRB salary awards cannot be an opportunity for government to play Father Christmas nor obtain political mileage.

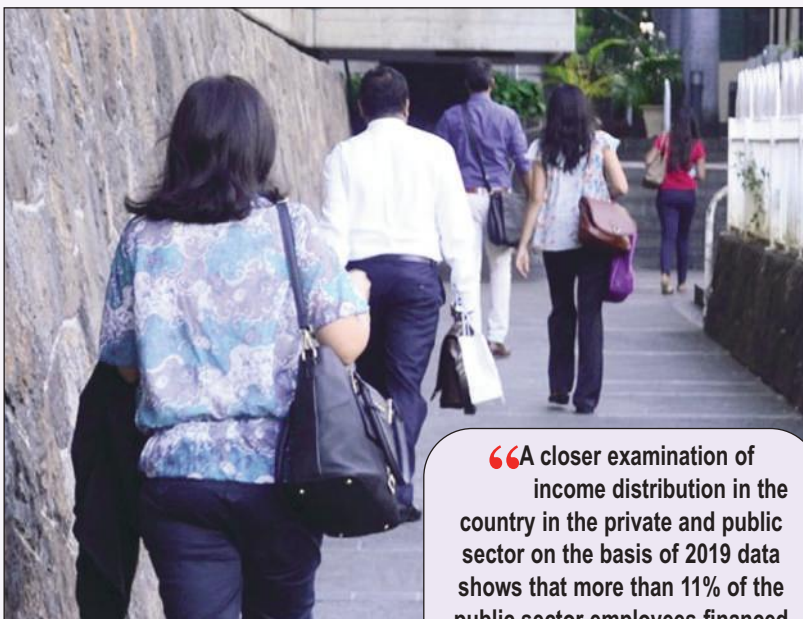
This raises legitimate questions regarding performance analysis, competence, accountability and transparency, cost benefit, efficiency and quality of services provided by government institutions, some of which are mired in controversy and key ministries which are the pillars of our welfare state.

Major trade unions representing government employees have been vocal critics of the tenor of the PRB report and questioned its independence. There is also a legitimate outcry at the smug boast and questionable claim in the report that the salary ratio of the General Worker to the Permanent Secretary (PS), 'which was 1:7 pre-tax in the 2016 PRB Report has been brought down to 1:6.2.' Is this a credible yardstick to measure PRB actions to bridge the wide disparity between the salary of the lower rungs of the civil service and those of the higher echelon of the government Establishment?

Apples and oranges

Looking simply at the salary figures in the PRB report, the ratio of the Rs 132,000 earned by a PS to the salary of Rs10,250 of the General Worker is more than 12:1 whereas compared to that of a Senior Chief Executive earning Rs 163,250, the ratio is nearly 16:1.

How on earth can a higher increase of 10% on the salary of a General Worker earning Rs10,250 or Rs 123,000 in a year be compared with a 7% salary hike of a Permanent Secretary earning Rs 132,000 plus a wide range of benefits per month? It's akin to comparing apples and oranges. The crying truth is that in absolute terms the salary gap is increased instead of being decreased. Such



empty claims cut no ice among the people.

Is such a scale of inequality acceptable in Mauritius?

Is it acceptable that those earning up to Rs 10,250 (representing around 23% of the employees of the country according to income distribution data in 2020) eke out a living in a context of escalating prices of basic existential needs fuelled by the unchecked depreciation of the Rupee while the total income of the 5.7% of employees at the top of the income distribution accounts for a whopping 21% of total income for all employees which allows them to indulge in conspicuous spending and accumulate assets?

Is it acceptable that around 75% of employees earn up to Rs 25,000 and only account for some 48% of total income while the remaining 25% of employees (earning more than Rs 25,000) receive 52% of total income? Is this fair in a context when some 55% of the bulk of government revenue is collected from VAT paid by the multitude?

Holy grail

From a survey of the range of salary obtained at various echelons of the civil service hierarchy, it is obvious that the holy grail of a civil servant is to attain a salary of Rs 80,000 and above with the top job being that of the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service earning post PRB a handsome salary of Rs 213,250 plus a wide range of benefits. This stratospheric level of salary is a pipe dream for the majority of civil servants. Only a small percentage and presumably less than 3000 top brass of the civil service benefit from salaries of Rs 80,000 or above.

A closer examination of income distribution in the country in the private and public sector on the basis of 2019 data shows that more than 11% of the public sector employees financed from public funds earn more than Rs 50,000 compared to only 5.5% employees in the private sector which generates revenue from its entrepreneurial activities. Unsurprisingly, the distribution of salary and benefits in the PRB report shows that it is patently skewed in favour of the higher echelon and top brass of the

government Establishment.

Step back

We should also be reminded that while the post independence generation could certainly afford to buy land and invest in a house and a car (without obtaining duty free facilities), go on holidays from their savings and bequeath assets including land to their children, this is quasi-impossible for the young university educated cadre to do from his meagre savings in a context of continuously escalating land prices. Purchasing power and disposable income have been significantly eroded over time despite the official rhetoric and tom-tomming about being a high-income economy. This constitutes a major step back. It is an indictment of questionable policies promoted by successive governments during past decades.

How can such a situation be sustainable in a context of growing inequality and escalating real estate values across the country fuelled by generous fiscal *largesse* by government in support of promoters of Smart City and other property development schemes which allow the sale of a major share of their high-priced residential properties to foreigners? Such a policy is basically denying large swathes of mainstream Mauritians the unalienable

right to buy a house or flat or buy land and build a house of their choice.

While presenting the PRB report last week, government said that the PRB will now be looking at a review of the salary and benefits of the President, Ministers and MPs, etc. In the light of relatively high salaries of the political Establishment in the country when compared to BRICS countries such as Russia, Brazil, India or China and the state of the economy in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, would it not be apt to freeze this salary review exercise in line with the highest norms of selfless service and patriotism to the country and the people?

Institutionalised inequality

The PRB salary table is also a tell tale story of the ugly reality of Mauritius 53 years after independence. It provides a snapshot of the difficulties and hardships faced by different categories of employees in the civil service to meet their existential needs and realize their legitimate aspirations. It lifts the veil on institutionalised inequality and the wide disparity between those in the lower rungs of the civil service and the higher echelons of the government Establishment.

The government has all the data available to analyse and have a comprehensive insight into this iniquitous and retrograde situation. The role of government is to use its *droit de regard* to keep tabs on such realities and take urgent corrective policy decisions accompanied by the reforms required such as land reform to significantly improve the quality of life and standard of living of the multitude and provide them with the economic freedom necessary to make their free choices in pursuit of their loftiest aspirations.

“A closer examination of income distribution in the country in the private and public sector on the basis of 2019 data shows that more than 11% of the public sector employees financed from public funds earn more than Rs 50,000 compared to only 5.5% employees in the private sector which generates revenue from its entrepreneurial activities. Unsurprisingly, the distribution of salary and benefits in the PRB report shows that it is patently skewed in favour of the higher echelon and top brass of the government Establishment...”

Politics and Meaningful Statesmanship

The fundamental question being asked on all sides is whether orderliness will emerge out of the growing widespread dis-order. And, if so, by which means?

Murli Dhar

It is not only in Mauritius. It's a phenomenon that is hitting even the socially best performing countries of the world, notably even the very well governed Scandinavian countries. About half the population in very many countries are unhappy with the way politics is being done. This phenomenon is affecting nearly all countries, rich and poor.

This is what explains why some 40% of Mauritian voters haven't made up their minds on the relevance of the political class. We won't be surprised if such numbers increased over time, given the prevailing parlous state of politics on both sides.

It's the reason why many citizens in different countries across the world are up in arms against their governments. The unhappiness springs, in some of the cases, with the emergence of challenging day-to-day adjustment issues touching upon job security, inability to meet basic bills pertaining to rent, water, electricity or the servicing of debts incurred - all of which made worse with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. In other cases, there's growing mistrust in the ability of the state to balance the social equation, given that the elite goes on squeezing living standards out of those lower down by all (market) means available.

The fundamental question being asked on all sides is whether orderliness will emerge out of the growing widespread dis-order. And, if so, by which means? Or, will the disequilibrium stretch on to breaking point, with incongruous leaders emerging, unable to find a satisfactory answer to the problems which have cropped up all round? If so, that could eventually end up in a large scale war.

The dysfunction in Mauritius

Politics is about earnest decision-making. Good decisions improve the orientation of society and the economy. Bad politics keeps tinkering at the edges to a point of no return in the social and economic fabric.

Consider the impact of the way of doing politics in Mauritius, which is a multicultural society. It is therefore important to operate a harmonious framework to take advantage of a unified structure. However, right from the beginning, a model of communal confrontation was adopted as the way forward for local politics. Strident appeals to separateness of cultural identities was brought forth as the foremost factor on which the campaign for indepen-



“The pursuit of identity politics in Mauritius, focussing on distinct communities, castes and related affiliations, made the country weaker than necessary. Not only the best candidates to elections were not picked up according to their sharper embrace of public and international issues. The power and influence of all manner of lobbies and incompetents on politics ended up affecting the delivery of certain public institutions, forcing politicians to increase the space of non-meritocracy...”

dence was fought way back in 1967.

Fifty-three years later, it may have become dormant but it appears ready to pounce, only waiting to be awakened. The principal vehicle through which it is being carried forward is through politics. It may have helped politicians to get people to rally around them over decades.

The communal segmentation which was centred on opposing minority versus majority communities at the time of independence "progressed" to other perverse forms since then. Election after election thereafter, sub-groups from within the population became the focus of the power game, resulting in sub-sub-divisions.

“It goes to our credit that, despite this dysfunctional divisive model, our successive governments did not fail us totally. Pressured by an educated citizenship, successive governments were led into taking some initiatives from time to time for the good of the country as a whole. Mauritius did not therefore sink the way certain other countries did into abject dictatorships, swayed by ethnic lobbies. Our institutional structure was able to withstand unwarranted political interferences...”

Given this, the focus of politics was no longer on getting the best outcomes for the country. What mattered more was drawing the "correct" representation from this sub-divided pool, with power of selection of candidates concentrated on party leaders.

Identity politics took centre stage. Other national issues, such as strengthening public institutions and increasing our economic scope were also looked into but as subsidiary concerns. Meritocracy was quite often baffled in the name of identity politics. It became primordial to meet the demands of distinct lobbies which wanted to grab key positions.

The pursuit of identity politics in Mauritius, focussing on distinct communities, castes and related affiliations, made the country weaker than necessary. Not only the best candidates to elections were not picked up according to their sharper embrace of public and international issues.

The power and influence of all manner of lobbies and incompetents on politics ended up affecting the delivery of certain public institutions, forcing politicians to increase the space of non-meritocracy. Some already in command in the public domain fought tooth and nail to maintain themselves despite their shortcomings. Things like this would go against otherwise sound and painful decisions for the

long term good of the country. Pandering to specific "vote-banks" in a bid to secure power acted to distort efficient decision-making at the cost of the country.

It goes to our credit that, despite this dysfunctional divisive model, our successive governments did not fail us totally. Pressured by an educated citizenship, successive governments were led into taking some initiatives from time to time for the good of the country as a whole. Mauritius did not therefore sink the way certain other countries did into abject dictatorships, swayed by ethnic lobbies. Our institutional structure was able to withstand unwarranted political interferences.

After bankrupting the goodwill they had earned in the previous election, however, our governments were forced at times to concoct diverse coalitions to stick to power. This diluted whatever force of conviction the original politicians had in a personal sense of values or standing up for a sense of values for the country as a whole. A widespread culture of perpetual defection undermined whatever little ideological grounding or true statesmanship remained.

Breaking away from a model to nowhere

It is obvious that Mauritius will not make much headway if this chaotic system of divisive decision-making continued, pitching one set of people against the other or putting private interests "first". Problems will not be solved at the root. New governments will keep overturning "bad" decisions taken by their predecessors. We might make some progress, but it won't be the lasting solution or direction for the country.

Citizens in their majority have shown that they will endorse rational decisions taken for the good of all. This will happen the more the better we reconstitute statesmanship on a wider sociological base which makes sense of how people live and will be governed, how they earn their living, what are the prospects in the making for them and how the fruits of progress will be shared among all, indiscriminately.

That will cause politicians to shift from the classic divisive model to a larger role in keeping with the changing world: one in which they will adopt performing policies to the benefit of all, and be accountable for their actions to the people at large.

Private Prosecution against PK Jugnauth

"The DPP may intervene to put a stop to a private prosecution.

This happened in the case where Bruno Laurette prosecuted two ministers"

LEX

Cases of private prosecutions are illustrative of a state of frustration with progress of official investigations but they are limited by the necessity of "locus standi" from aggrieved parties, and avoiding malicious, vexatious or cases whose merits are weak. This is where the office of the DPP plays its role although its recourse can only be guided by case files being forwarded to it by investigating agencies and recommending further enquiries, where required. No provision compels the latter to abide by such recommendations or to do so within a given time-frame. Lex shares his legal viewpoint.

*** Magistrate Bibi Azna Bholah of the District Court of Port Louis has acceded to the application of Mr Suren Dayal to lodge a private prosecution against Hon Pravind Jugnauth for allegedly swearing a false affidavit in connection with his election expenses in Constituency No. 8 at the 2019 general elections. Would this be considered as a serious offence, if proved, and what could be the consequences for the charged party?**

Under the Representation of the People Act, where any expenditure is incurred in contravention of the law by a candidate in connection with whose candidature it was incurred shall be deemed to be guilty of an illegal practice. Illegal practice is an offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding Rs 1000. The convicted person shall, in addition, be incapable during a period of 5 years from the date of his conviction of being registered as an elector or of voting at any election or of being a candidate at an election, or, if elected before his conviction, of retaining his seat.

Swearing a false affidavit is a criminal offence under section 195 subsection 1 of the Courts Act and it reads:

"(1) Any person who swears a false affidavit where an affidavit is required or may be used, shall be liable to penal servitude for a term not exceeding 3 years and to a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees."

The offence is committed irrespective of the amount spent as it concerns false information in regard to electoral expenses. There is a duty on a candidate to submit his return of expenses as provided by section 56 subsection 5 of the Representation of the People Act, and it reads:

"(5) (a) Every return under this section shall be supported by a declaration sworn to before a Magistrate by the candidate stating — (i) that the return fully and accurately sets out all payments made by the candidate himself; and (ii) that to the best of his knowledge, information and belief



"Apparently the Kistnen papers were handed to the police. Are they investigating? If they had investigated the matter and submitted their findings to the DPP, there might be no need for a private prosecution... However, without playing politics, it remains doubtful as to whether the police would be able to investigate cases involving a member of the majority party and less still the Prime Minister..."

the return is a full and accurate return of all expenditure incurred, and of all money, securities or the equivalent of money received by the election agent, in connection with the election."

*** How does Suren Dayal's private prosecution of Pravind Jugnauth compare with that lodged by Simla Kistnen against former Minister Yogida Sawmynaden?**

There is no difference though the offences are not the same. However, in the case lodged by Simla Kistnen, the latter on advice filed a provisional case, which was a bad strategy as a provisional information can only be charged by the police and is a means of justifying an arrest and taking the offender before a magistrate.

*** We understand that the prosecution of a case depends on the evidence available that will stand the test of credibility in a court of law, and that even after an investigation, the police or the DPP may decide not to prosecute. Is that correct?**

The DPP may intervene to put a stop to a private prosecution. This happened in the case where Bruno Laurette prosecuted two ministers in the Wakashio matter and in

"The DPP may intervene to put a stop to a private prosecution. This happened in the case where Bruno Laurette prosecuted two ministers in the Wakashio matter and in the Sawmynaden case. In the former's private prosecution, in the absence of a thorough investigation, the required elements of the offence or offences alleged against the two ministers might not have been clear. Hence the decision of the DPP to stop the prosecution pending the completion of the police inquiry..."

the Sawmynaden case. In the former's private prosecution, in the absence of a thorough investigation, the required elements of the offence or offences alleged against the two ministers might not have been clear. Hence the decision of the DPP to stop the prosecution pending the completion of the police inquiry.

*** Mr Dayal's case is built on the basis of information contained in the documents of the so-called 'Kistnen Papers'. The veracity of these documents will have to be determined, and that's where Mr Dayal's case may hit a wall, isn't it?**

The authenticity of the 'Kistnen Papers' will certainly have to be established before a court of law can act on them. If the DPP puts a stop to the case and asks the police to undertake further investigations, then of course this should be done.

But if the case, as it stands today, is allowed to proceed and the so-called 'Kistnen Papers' are produced in court, the defence may object on the ground that they are not authentic.

*** What if the charged party were to put up the defence that the alleged election expenses in excess of the amount authorised by the Representation of the People Act would have been incurred by third parties without his consent? Wouldn't that defeat the legal restrictions imposed on candidates as regards their electoral expenses?**

Under section 55(2) of the Representation of the People Act, 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.

● Cont. on page 6

'If Mr Jugnauth feels that the private prosecution is malicious or vexatious, his legal advisers will surely advise him on the remedy available to him'

• Cont. from page 5

* But before we reach that stage, what response is this private prosecution likely to elicit from the Director of Public Prosecutions?

We'll have to wait and see. Apparently the Kistnen papers were handed to the police. Are they investigating? If they had investigated the matter and submitted their findings to the DPP, there might be no need for a private prosecution.

As mentioned earlier, the DPP may well put a stop to the case and ask the police to investigate, which means that we'll be back to square one. However, without playing politics, it remains doubtful as to whether the police would be able to investigate cases involving a member of the majority party and less still the Prime Minister.

* It appears that the police had indeed started an investigation into the allegations of breach of electoral laws. Would it be correct to state that in these circumstances the police will be compelled to submit the conclusions of its investigations to the DPP?

They should be compelled, but do they feel compelled? Let us not forget that the DPP asked the police to investigate the Sawmynaden case after he put a stop to the case. We have not heard anything so far and we don't know where matters stand.

* If a private prosecution were to be initiated in the Angus Road case by an aggrieved party, will the ICAC also have to submit the findings of its investigation into this case to the DPP?

An aggrieved party is someone who has suffered a prejudice following an offence. How will a person prove he is an aggrieved party in the context of the Angus Road saga? Here as well, it remains to be seen if the ICAC will submit the case file to the DPP.

* Could it be said therefore that the recourse to private prosecutions by aggrieved parties like, for example, in cases relating to alleged illegal electoral campaign financing, that is in excess of that permissible by law, could help overcome any resistance by the investigative authorities to



“Under the Representation of the People Act, where any expenditure is incurred in contravention of the law by a candidate in connection with whose candidature it was incurred shall be deemed to be guilty of an illegal . Illegal practice is an offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding Rs 1000. The convicted person shall, in addition, be incapable during a period of 5 years from the date of his conviction of being registered as an elector or of voting at any election or of being a candidate at an election...”

conduct thorough investigations into such cases?

Not every private individual would be authorized by law to enter a private prosecution for an electoral offence. The individual must be an aggrieved party. Mr Suren Dayal, who stood as a candidate in the same constituency as the Prime Minister, does qualify as an aggrieved party.

* Though private prosecutions are considered by aggrieved parties as the only avenue for redress of injustice, they are sometimes regarded with suspicion given their potential for vexatious or malicious prosecutions. If such consideration were to be pre-

sent in the private prosecution against Pravind Jugnauth for alleged illegal campaign financing, what would happen next?

If Mr Jugnauth feels that the private prosecution is malicious or vexatious, his legal advisers will surely advise him on the remedy available to him, which amongst others could be the filing of a civil case for damages.

MAURITIUS TIMES To Our Readers

65 years ago, *Mauritius Times* was founded with a resolve to fight for justice and fairness and the advancement of the public good. It has never deviated from this principle no matter how daunting the challenges and how costly the price it has had to pay at different times of our history.

We are determined not to abandon this line of action, which is the cardinal principle of our raison-d'être. This is what has given *Mauritius Times* a unique standing in the local publishing world.

Our production circumstances have changed since last year with the onset of the Covid-19 lockdown, and we have had to move to the digital platform. We have since March 2020 freely circulated the paper via WhatsApp and by email, besides making it available on our website.

However, with print journalism in Mauritius and across the world struggling to keep afloat due to falling advertising revenues and the wide availability of free sources of information, it is crucially important for the *Mauritius Times* to still meet its cost of production for it to survive and prosper.

Readers will no doubt appreciate that it takes a lot of time, hard work, money and the continued support of our contributors to produce the *Mauritius Times* - as we have done without interruption in these last 65 years. We can only continue doing it with the support of our readers.

We hope you'll continue to support the paper by taking a subscription or by making a recurring donation through a Standing Order to our not-for-profit Foundation. Our future will be secure with the support of our readers and well-wishers.

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Tel. 465-2424

Russia will shut workplaces for a week, Latvia went back into lockdown for at least a month and Romanian funeral homes are running out of coffins, as vaccine-sceptic countries across eastern Europe face a fresh surge of Covid-19 infections and deaths.

Russia, which boasted of developing one of the earliest Covid-19 vaccines, has been unable to persuade large swathes of the population to take it, and is now facing its highest daily death rates of the pandemic, reports agencies. President Vladimir Putin announced on Wednesday that the period from October 30-November 7 would be "non-working days", although salaries would still be paid.

Public hostility to vaccination has hit other eastern European countries that were within Moscow's orbit during the Cold War. The EU states with the lowest vaccination rates are all part of the former eastern bloc, including Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Poland, Latvia and Estonia.

Romania, where one person is dying of Covid-19 every five minutes, had the world's highest death rate per capita this week, with Bulgaria close behind.

Virus rebounds, curbs return



Bulgaria, where only a quarter of the population has taken a first dose of vaccine, banned access to indoor public spaces this week for anyone who cannot show proof of vaccination... Pic - AP

Latvia has imposed a month-long lockdown, becoming the first EU country to shut down again since the bloc began reopening this year as vaccines became widely available.

Bulgaria, where only a quarter of the population has taken a first dose of vac-

cine, banned access to indoor public spaces this week for anyone who cannot show proof of vaccination, a negative test or recovery from a recent infection.

Poland's health minister said on Wednesday "drastic measures" could be needed to respond to a sudden surge of

infections there, although he said no new lockdown was being considered.

In the UK, health chiefs have urged the government to legally enforce some of the Covid-19 prevention measures, such as mandatory face coverings in enclosed spaces, as infections in Britain continue to spike over the 40,000 mark daily.

The NHS Confederation, a membership body of the country's National Health Service (NHS), said a back-up strategy, or "Plan B plus", is required as pre-emptive action over winter. The warning comes as the UK hit a daily high of 43,738 cases and 223 deaths on Tuesday.

In Brazil, after senators said Jair Bolsonaro should be charged for nine crimes, including charlatanism, malfeasance and crimes against humanity in their conclusion of a probe into the government's handling of the pandemic, the president insisted he's "guilty of nothing".

Bolsonaro is largely blamed for Brazil's erratic handling of the pandemic, dismissing it as just a flu, shunning masks and vaccines, and asking supporters to ignore restrictions.



A health worker prepares a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine. Pic - Bloomberg

Covishield, Pfizer may be 90% effective against death by Delta variant

Two doses of Covishield and Pfizer Covid-19 vaccines may be 90% effective at preventing deaths from the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the dominant form of the virus in many other countries), according to a study published in the 'New England Journal of Medicine' on Thursday, reports PTI.

The research team from Universities of Edinburgh and Strathclyde and Public Health Scotland analysed data from 5.4 million people in Scotland between April 1 and September 27, 2021.

During this period, 115,000 people tested positive for Covid-19 through a PCR test conducted in the community, rather than in hospital, and there were 201 deaths recorded due to the virus.

The study found that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is 90% effective and the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, known as Covishield in India, is 91% effective in preventing deaths in people who have been double vaccinated, but who have tested positive for coronavirus in the community.

"With the Delta variant now the dominant strain in

many places worldwide and posing a higher risk of hospitalisation than previous variants seen in the UK, it is reassuring to see that vaccination offers such high protection from death very shortly after the second dose," said Professor Aziz Sheikh, Director of the University of Edinburgh's Usher Institute, and EAVE II study lead.

The researchers said to increase confidence in these early findings, the study needs to be repeated in other countries and settings, and with longer follow-up time after full vaccination.

Pfizer, BioNTech say their Covid vaccine booster dose 95.6% effective

The third dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19 has shown 95.6% efficacy compared to those who did not receive a booster, according to the vaccine makers. Pfizer-BioNTech announced the results on Thursday from a Phase 3 trial evaluating the efficacy and safety of a 30-µg booster dose, the same dosage strength as those in the primary series, of the mRNA-based Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 Vaccine.

"These results provide further evidence of the benefits of boosters as we aim to keep people well-protected against this disease," said Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said in a statement.

More than 10,000 individuals who had completed the primary two-dose series of the Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine participated in the booster dose trial. Half of the trial participants received a 30-µg booster dose while the other half received a placebo. The researchers identified five Covid-19 cases in the booster dose group while 109 cases in the placebo group, reports 'Hindustan Times'.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has already authorised the third dose of Pfizer Covid vaccine for emergency use among individuals 65 years of age and older, all adults at high risk of severe Covid-19, and those with frequent institutional or occupational exposure to the virus.

1 billion Covid vaccine doses in 9 months: Indian Govt hails historic milestone

India crossed a major milestone on Thursday when the number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossed the 1 billion mark. The milestone was achieved just before 10am.

The number is twice the number of vaccines administered in the United States, five times that of Japan, nine times that of Germany and 10 times the number of vaccine doses administered in France, the government said in a presentation.

It took just nine months for the country to cross the historic figure. The government has planned a number of events to mark the occasion, including launching of a song and display of the country's largest tricolour at the Red Fort in Delhi.

After the billionth dose was administered, the Centre recounted the journey to 1 billion vaccine doses in the presentation, which listed the milestones crossed by the nationwide vaccination programme since its launch on January 16, 2021. It said that CoWIN - the digital platform being used for keeping records of vaccination - has so far registered 760 million beneficiaries. It also said that India used drones for the first time to deliver vaccines to remote corners of the country.

The government said that the first 100 million doses were administered in just 85 days of the launch of the vaccination drive.

The inoculation programme has been speeding up since its launch, recording 25 million vaccinations in a day on September 17, which translated to 156.2 thousand doses per hour, or 26,000 doses per minute or 434 doses every second.



A woman receives a dose of Covishield vaccine in Mumbai. Pic - Reuters

*Contd on page 8



Members of Iskcon participate in a peaceful protest against the recent violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. Pic - AP

Bangladesh police identify man behind incidents which triggered violence

The Bangladesh police have identified the man responsible for inciting the violence, which led to attacks on Durga puja pandals in Comilla and other places. Comilla's Superintendent of Police Farooq Ahmed told 'Dhaka Tribune' that the man's name is Iqbal Hossain from Sujanagar area of the city.

Dhaka Tribune said in its report that the police identified Hossain after analysing video footages of the CCTV cameras installed at the Durga Puja venues. He has not yet been arrested, reports Amit Chaturvedi of Hindustan Times.

In the footage, the 35-year-old Hossain is seen taking the Quran from a local mosque and walking into a Durga Puja venue. He was later seen walking away with the club of Lord Hanuman.

Attacks on Hindu temples have intensified in Bangladesh since last Wednesday after a post surfaced on social media showing the Quran kept at a Durga Puja pandal. Late on Sunday, a mob damaged 66 houses and set on fire at least 20 homes of Hindus.

The police said over 450 suspected temple attackers have been arrested so far in different parts of the country. 41 of them have been arrested for the Comilla incident and four of them are Hossain's associates.

On Tuesday, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina instructed her home minister to initiate immediate action against those who incited violence using religion as she asked the people not to trust anything on social media without fact-checking.

Hindus make up some 10% of the Muslim-majority Bangladesh's 169 million population.

Pig kidney works in human patient; 'Potential miracle,' hails US surgeon

In a breakthrough transplant, a US medical team has succeeded in temporarily attaching a pig's kidney to a person, AFP reports. The surgery, carried out on September 25, is being considered as a "potential miracle" by the surgeon who led the procedure.

The surgery involved a genetically modified donor animal and a brain dead patient on a ventilator whose family had given permission for the two-day experiment, for the sake of advancing science.

The team of doctors joined the kidney to blood vessels on the top of one of the patient's legs, so that they could observe it and take biopsy samples.

After the surgery, it was found that the organ was able to reduce the level of the molecule creatinine, a key indicator of kidney health.

According to earlier research, kidneys from pigs are viable in nonhuman primates for up to a year. However, this was the first time that the same had been attempted with a



Pig kidney works in human patient; 'Potential miracle,' hails US surgeon. Pic - eastnews.in

human patient. The donor pig belonged to a herd that had undergone a genetic editing procedure to knock out a gene that produces a particular sugar.

Robert Montgomery plans to submit the findings to a scientific journal in the next month, and is expecting a clinical trial in around a year or two. The outside experts welcomed the

news but said they would like to see the peer-reviewed data before drawing firm conclusions.

The news comes amid a dire shortage of transplant organs. According to official US data, there are nearly 107,000 Americans awaiting an organ - 90,000 of whom need a kidney. 17 Americans die each day while waiting for an organ.

Ex-US Prez Donald Trump announces plans to launch new social network

Former US president Donald Trump announced plans Wednesday to launch his own social networking platform called "TRUTH Social," which is expected to begin its beta launch for "invited guests" next month.

The platform will be owned by Trump Media & Technology Group (TMTG), which also intends to launch a subscription video on demand service that will feature "non-woke" entertainment programming, reports AFP.

"I created TRUTH Social and TMTG to stand up to the tyranny of Big Tech. We live in a world where the Taliban has a huge presence on Twitter, yet your favorite American President has been silenced. This is unacceptable," Trump was quoted as saying in the statement.



Imran Khan accused of selling gifts received from other countries' heads

Pakistan's Opposition parties on Wednesday accused Prime Minister Imran Khan of selling gifts he received from other countries' heads, including an expensive watch worth USD 1 million.

Gifts are routinely exchanged between heads of states or officers holding constitutional positions during a state visit. According to the gift depository (Toshakhana) rules, these gifts remain the property of the state unless sold at an open auction. Rules allow officials to retain gifts with a market value of less than ?10,000 without paying anything, reports PTI.

"Imran Khan has sold the gifts he

received from other countries," PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz tweeted in Urdu.

Opposition alliance -- Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) -- president Maulana Fazlur Rehman said there are reports that prime minister Khan has sold a precious watch he received from a prince. "This is shameful," he said.

Social media is rife with reports that Khan was gifted a watch worth USD 1 million by a prince of a Gulf country. The watch was allegedly sold in Dubai by Khan's close aide and USD 1 million was given to the prime minister. The prince reportedly knows the selling of the watch

he gifted to Khan.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Punjab president Rana Sanaullah told a press conference on Wednesday that Pakistan was defamed because of the alleged selling of the gifts received by the premier from the heads of the states of other countries.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Communication, Dr Shahbaz Gill, had earlier said the government was "maintaining secrecy" over details of gifts received by Prime Minister Khan from other heads of states as releasing their lists and "comparing them with those of other countries is considered inappropriate.

private.

Last month, the Pakistan government refused to make public details of gifts given to the prime minister by foreign heads of states, asserting that the disclosure can damage the country's national interest and its relations with other states, after the Pakistan Information Commission sought details from the Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government in response to an application from a citizen on the issue.

Covid: new antibody treatment could offer up to 18 months' protection against severe disease

AstraZeneca's durable monoclonal antibody treatment has shown promise in phase 3 clinical trials



Rebecca Aicheler
Cardiff Metropolitan University

A new treatment could soon help protect people from developing severe Covid. AstraZeneca has just released results from a phase 3 clinical trial – the final stage of testing before a drug is authorised – that suggest its new Covid treatment, AZD7442, is effective at reducing severe disease or death in non-hospitalised Covid patients.

The treatment contains antibodies, which are usually produced naturally in response to a Covid infection or vaccination. They work by recognising specific parts of SARS-CoV-2 – the virus that causes Covid – and either attack these directly or bind to them to stop the virus from working and flag it for destruction by other parts of the immune system.

After they've done their job of clearing the virus, the antibodies remain in the body for a period of time, making up part of our immunological memory. If what they target is encountered again, they can leap into action.

The new treatment, AZD7442, uses special antibodies called monoclonal antibodies. These are antibodies produced in a lab that imitate the body's natural defences – in this case mimicking the immune system's response to Covid.

Artificially developing antibodies to fight disease isn't a new technique. This technology is already used to treat many diseases, including leukaemia, breast cancer and lupus. In fact, this isn't even the first time the technique has been used for Covid. The first Covid monoclonal antibody treatment was approved in the UK in August 2021.

How does AstraZeneca's treatment work?

AZD7442 is a cocktail of two monoclonal antibodies – tixagevimab and cilgavimab – that are designed to reduce



The treatment can be given people at high risk from Covid, such as care home residents, without requiring a trip into hospital. Pic - EPA

the severity of a SARS-CoV-2 infection and so prevent people from getting severely ill.

Both of these antibodies bind to different parts of virus's spike proteins, which cover its outer surface and are what the virus uses to infect cells. It's thought that attaching to these proteins is what gives the medicine its effect, as this stops the virus from being able to get inside cells and reproduce.

The two monoclonal antibodies in the cocktail are based on antibodies taken from patients who survived Covid. Scientists at AstraZeneca took blood samples from patients and isolated immune cells called B cells, which are the antibody factories of the human body. They then grew more of these B cells in the lab, and used them to make large quantities of the two antibodies, which they had identified as specifically targeting the coronavirus's spike protein.

But the key difference between this and other antibody-based treatments is that in AZD7442, the antibodies have been modified so they stay in the body for longer.

Studies using similarly modified antibodies against another respiratory virus – respiratory syncytial virus – have shown that this approach gives long-term protection, with the modified antibodies having triple the durability of conventional antibodies. It's hoped that a single dose of AZD7442 could offer 12 to 18 months protection from severe Covid, though we'll have to wait to see exactly how long protection lasts.

How well does it work?

AstraZeneca's phase 3 trial investigated the effectiveness of the treatment

when given to patients who were infected with SARS-CoV-2.

The study looked at 822 participants who were over the age of 18. Only around 13% were 65 years and over, but 90% had health conditions that put them at high risk of severe Covid, such as cancer, diabetes, obesity, chronic lung disease or asthma, cardiovascular disease or a weakened immune system.

The trial results show that of the 407 people who received AZD7442, 18 developed severe Covid or died, compared with 37 of the 415 people who received a placebo. This suggests that those in the AZD7442 group were 50% less likely to develop severe Covid than those taking a placebo.

The trial also looked specifically at patients who received treatment quickly – that is, within five days of their symptoms starting. In this group, AZD7442 reduced the risk of severe disease or death by 67%, suggesting that early treatment with AZD7442 provides greater protection.

It's important to note, however, that these results have been released by AstraZeneca but don't yet appear to have been formally reviewed by other scientists. So any findings need to be treated with caution.

How useful will it be?

These results suggest that AZD7442

could be a valuable tool for patients in need of instant immunity against Covid, such as those who have not responded to vaccines because of a weakened immune system or those in other high-risk groups.

However, more detail of the characteristics of the patients who did and did not benefit from the medicine is required to fully understand who will benefit most from receiving this drug.

And when considering how useful AZD7442 could be, it's important to consider when in the course of the disease the treatment will be given. For many, severe disease with Covid isn't caused by the virus replicating, but by the immune system going awry.

This means that to prevent severe disease, drugs such as AZD7442 need to be given early in infection, before the overzealous immune response kicks in. Give them too late, and treatments like this that target the virus directly are unlikely to offer much benefit (unlike those that can control inflammation and immune over-reaction, such as dexamethasone or tocilizumab).

But one thing that could help the treatment be deployed early during infection is the fact that it only needs to be injected into a muscle, rather than be given intravenously. This means it can be given at a clinic, without patients needing to come into hospital.

However, monoclonal antibody treatments are notoriously expensive, and the cost of AZD7442 has not yet been released. This could be the biggest barrier to the drug having a big impact worldwide – assuming, of course, that its phase 3 results pass the scrutiny of regulators and the drug is approved.



1956-2021



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What happens if COP26 doesn't meet its goals?

● Cont. from page 2

However, there remains a narrow window of opportunity. If countries can cut global emissions to "net zero" by 2050, that could bring warming back to under 1.5 C in the second half of the 21st century. How to get closer to that course is what leaders and negotiators are discussing.

What happens at COP26?

During the first days of the conference, around 120 heads of state, like US President Joe Biden, and their representatives will gather to demonstrate their political commitment to slowing climate change.

Once the heads of state depart, country delegations, often led by ministers of environment, engage in days of negotiations, events and exchanges to adopt their positions, make new pledges and join new initiatives. These interactions are based on months of prior discussions, policy papers and proposals prepared by groups of states, UN staff and other experts.

Nongovernmental organizations and business leaders also attend the conference, and COP26 has a public side with sessions focused on topics such as the impact of climate change on small island states, forests or agriculture, as well as exhibitions and other events.

The meeting ends with an outcome text that all countries agree to. Guterres publicly expressed disappointment with the COP25 outcome, and there are signs of trouble heading into COP26.

Countries are required under the Paris Agreement to update their national climate action plans every five years, including at COP26. This year, they're expected to have ambitious targets through 2030. These are known as nationally determined contributions, or NDCs.

The Paris Agreement requires countries to report their NDCs, but it allows them leeway in determining how they reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The initial set of emission reduction targets in 2015 was far too weak to limit global

warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

One key goal of COP26 is to ratchet up these targets to reach net zero carbon emissions by the middle of the century.

Another aim of COP26 is to increase climate finance to help poorer countries transition to clean energy and adapt to climate change. This is an important issue of justice for many developing countries whose people bear the largest burden from climate change but have contributed least to it. Wealthy countries promised in 2009 to contribute \$100 billion a year by 2020 to help developing nations, a goal that has not been reached. The US, UK and EU, among the largest historic greenhouse emitters, are increasing their financial commitments, and banks, businesses, insurers and private investors are being asked to do more. Other objectives include phasing out coal use and generating solutions that preserve, restore or regenerate natural carbon sinks, such as forests.

Another challenge that has derailed

past COPs is agreeing on implementing a carbon trading system outlined in the Paris Agreement.

Are countries on track to meet the international climate goals?

The U.N. warned in September 2021 that countries' revised targets were too weak and would leave the world on pace to warm 2.7 C (4.9 F) by the end of the century. However, governments are also facing another challenge this fall that could affect how they respond: Energy supply shortages have left Europe and China with price spikes for natural gas, coal and oil.

China – the world's largest emitter – has not yet submitted its NDC. Major fossil fuel producers such as Saudi Arabia, Russia and Australia seem unwilling to strengthen their commitments. India – a critical player as the second-largest consumer, producer and importer of coal globally – has also not yet committed.

Shelley Inglis, University of Dayton



The Willis Partnership
Executive Search Consultants

Chief Executive Officer Fund For Export Development In Africa (FEDA)

The Company

The Fund for Export-Development in Africa – FEDA – was established as a subsidiary of the African Export-Import Bank ("the Bank") in February 2019. With headquarters in Kigali, Rwanda, FEDA is tasked with implementing the Bank's equity investment programme by providing seed capital to export-focused companies within a wide range of sectors. FEDA was established by the Bank to facilitate foreign direct investment flows into Africa's trade and export sectors and to fill the equity funding gap that amounts to \$110 billion per annum in exports related sectors.

FEDA has engaged the Willis Partnership to assist them with the recruitment of a new CEO for the Fund.

The Role

Based in Kigali and reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for leading and developing a team of professionals to manage a large and diverse portfolio across the African continent. They will be expected to develop investment strategies across growth equity, project finance, and structured debt to pursue mostly direct investment opportunities across multiple sectors and industries.

The CEO will spearhead the development of deep

industry knowledge in target sectors and lead the sourcing of new transaction opportunities through a broad professional network. The position is accountable for managing the entire value chain including due diligence, structuring/negotiating, and closing new deals. Post-closing, the CEO will hold Board seats and work with the Private Equity team to monitor, manage, and add value to portfolio companies through well planned exits.

The CEO serves as the leader of the FEDA Senior leadership Team and as the liaison between FEDA, the Board of Directors, investors and other stakeholders. They are expected to contribute to thought leadership across FEDA's investment program, asset classes and development impact themes. The CEO is expected to foster a healthy workplace culture which supports professional development, staff well-being and the transformation of the African continent.

The Candidate

Eligible candidates for this role must be able to demonstrate the following:

- Relevant undergraduate degree and a post graduate degree or professional qualification in lieu;
- Minimum of 15 years' relevant experience in international finance, with a demonstrable track record in the private equity industry at C-Suite

level;

- Knowledge of and experience of leading and managing trade and/or export development related investments coupled with strong knowledge of the African trade and investment environment;
- Strong business acumen, maturity and tact, with substantial experience of building successful relationships at ministerial and board levels in government and the private sector;
- Relevant stakeholder management experience along with strong decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent communication, business presentation and analytical skills with good general knowledge of key investment sectors;
- National of an African country.

If you believe you meet the eligibility criteria for this role, and wish to apply, please send a full curriculum vitae to our retained Consultant, Robert Baldwin, at:

robertbaldwin@willis-partnership.co.uk
quoting reference FEDA/21. Applications sent direct to the Bank will not be considered. The closing date for applications to be received will be the **3rd of December 2021**.

Habits that can Hurt your Brain

Smoking, overeating, even spending too much time inside: See what can hasten mental decline and memory problems

You do a few things you know you shouldn't -- we all do. But some of those bad habits can take a toll on your brain. For example, lack of sleep may be a cause of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. It's best to have regular sleeping hours. If you have trouble with sleep, avoid alcohol, caffeine, and electronics in the evening, and start a soothing bedtime ritual.

You have too much alone time

Humans are wired for social contact. It's not about how many Facebook friends

you have -- what matters is a real sense of connection. People who have that with even just a few close friends are happier and more productive. They're also less likely to suffer from brain decline and Alzheimer's. If you feel alone, call some friends or start something new -- salsa dancing, tennis, bridge -- that involves other people.

You eat too much junk food

Parts of the brain linked to learning, memory, and mental health are smaller in people who have lots of hamburgers, fries, potato chips, and soft drinks in their diet. Berries, whole grains, nuts, and green leafy vegetables, on the other hand, preserve brain function and slow mental decline. So next time you start to reach for a bag of chips, grab a handful of nuts instead.

You blast your headphones

With your earbuds at full volume, you can permanently damage your hearing in only 30 minutes. But it's not just your ears: Hearing loss in older adults is linked to brain problems, such as Alzheimer's and loss of brain tissue. This may be because your brain has to work so hard to understand what's being said around you



that it can't store what you've heard into memory. So, turn it down -- no louder than 60% of your device's maximum volume -- and try not to listen for more than a couple of hours at a time.

You don't move enough

The longer you go without regular exercise, the more likely you are to have dementia. You're also more likely to get diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure -- all of which may be linked to Alzheimer's. You don't have to start running marathons -- a half-hour in the garden or a brisk walk around the neighbour-

hood will work. The important thing is to do it at least 3 days a week.

You still smoke

It can shrink your brain -- and that's not a good thing. It makes your memory worse and makes you twice as likely to get dementia, including Alzheimer's. It also causes heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and high blood pressure.

You overeat

If you eat too much food -- even the right kind of food -- your brain may not be able to build the strong network of connections that help you think and remember. Overeat for too long and you may get dangerously overweight, which can cause heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure -- all linked to brain problems and Alzheimer's.

You stay in the dark too much

If you don't get enough natural light, you may get depressed, and that can slow your brain. Research also shows that sunlight helps keep your brain working well.

Medically Reviewed by Jennifer Robinson, MD, WebMD

Programme des Courses

28^e Journée samedi 23 octobre 2021

1 THE AT THE DOUBLE PLATE 1400 m - Valeur [0-20] - 12h30					
1 Heart Of Darkness	SN	6-6-8-4-6	60	G.D.Aucharuz	7 800
2 Secret Idea	CD	5-1/5-8-4	60(-3)	M.Sonaram	10 600
3 Zodiac Jack	JMH	6-7/8-5-8	60	R.Joorawon	4 900
4 Celestial Magma	SM	0-0-7-10-4	59.5(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	8 600
5 Fairbanks	VA	4-4-4-5-6	59.5(-3)	A.Roy	6 800
6 Subtropical	SPN	9/9-4-7-9	59.5	J.Allyhosain	5 3500
7 Loosen Your Tie	JMH	N-6/4-6-2	59	K.Ramsamy	3 450
8 Captain Falcon	G	1-2-3-1-3	58.5	B.Sooful	1 290
9 Le Quartier	CD	0-7-8-9-8	58.5	K.Kalychurun	2 2500
10 Secret Circle	SJ	9-6-7-6-9	58.5	T.Juglall	9 1600

2 THE GYPSEY ROVER PLATE 1400 m - Valeur Benchmark 36 - 13h05					
1 Camp David	GR	2-1-5-1-4	61.5	N.Teeha	7 650
2 Numbertynetyne	G	0-8-10-5-6	61.5	B.Bussunt	3 1600
3 Bollinger	P	10-8-2-3-1	61	B.Sooful	6 235
4 Choir Of Angels	JMH	6-R-R-4-8	61	R.Joorawon	1 700
5 El Patron	SN	N-1/4-2-1	61(-3)	A.Roy	8 370
6 Bonnie Prince	SH	2-4/4-7-7	60	P.K.Horil	4 2500
7 Nao Faz Mal	RG	5-5-1-5-3	60(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	2 650
8 Kingsman	P	4-7/8-3-7	59	J.Allyhosain	5 4000
9 Massimo	VA	0-0-0-0-5	56	K.Kalychurun	9 4000

3 THE CITADELLE PLATE 990 m - Valeur Benchmark 41 - 13h40					
1 Captain Garrett	GR	1-2-2-1-2	61	N.Teeha	6 550
2 Go Jewel	VA	1-1-1-2-1	61	B.Sooful	5 180
3 Liquid	RM	nouveau	61	P.C.Orffer	3 1000
4 Man Of Property	SJ	nouveau	61	D.Bheekary	8 2200
5 Alaskan Night	AS	0-0-0-7-3	60.5	S.Rama	4 570
6 Soul Connection	SPN	6-7-5-8-6	59.5	R.Vaibhav	7 4000
7 Bye Bye Rocket	SH	3-1-3/7-8/	59	G.D.Aucharuz	2 2000
8 Ninotto	RG	5/3-5-5-2	59(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	1 550
9 Marula [EA]	JMH	3-1-1-3-2	56.5	-----	9 -----

4 THE CHICA PLATE 1450 m - Valeur Benchmark 46 - 14h15					
1 Roman Dancer	G	1/1-3-3-5	60	K.Ramsamy	1 550
2 Secrets Of Maya	VA	0-0-0-0-7	60	J.Allyhosain	3 4000
3 Ai Aasy	RM	0-0-0-6-4	59	P.C.Orffer	8 650
4 Bless My Path	CD	0-0-6-2-1	59	D.Bheekary	7 265
5 Gimmetherain	SJ	5/4-5-2-4	59	T.Juglall	10 4000
6 Victor Lazo	G	0-0-0-0-9	59	S.Bussunt	9 5000
7 Gang Leader	AS	0-0-8-6-R	58	S.Rama	5 2300
8 Ron's Joy	GR	5-1/1-1-1	58	B.Sooful	4 400
9 Trip To The Sky	SJ	1/2-2-4-2	58	N.Teeha	2 400
10 Freedom of Speech	SM	0-0-0-7-10	57	P.K.Horil	6 4000

5 THE VICTOR DUVIVIER CUP 1365 m - Valeur Benchmark 51 - 14h50					
1 Emerald Band	VA	3-4-1-2-3	60.5	B.Sooful	9 700
2 Arabian Air	CR	4/5-6-8-5	59.5	P.K.Horil	4 3000
3 Prince Of Venice	SM	5-5-R-7-1	59.5(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	2 240
4 Silken Prince	SH	1/8-5/9-8	59.5	J.Allyhosain	6 4000
5 Toro Bravo	SN	1-R-1/1-R	59.5	G.D.Aucharuz	5 300
6 Pop Icon	SPN	R-10-6-9-7	59	R.Vaibhav	3 1800
7 All About The Bass	AS	2-8/3-4-4	58.5	S.Rama	7 700
8 Captainofthesea	RG	5-5-5/4-3	57	K.Ramsamy	1 700
9 Quatro Five Six [EA]	SM	0-4-4-9-6	58.5	-----	8 -----

6 THE VILLIERS CUP 1400 m - Valeur Benchmark 66 - 15h25					
1 Iditarod Trail	GR	6-10-5-4-5	60.5	N.Teeha	3 750
2 Arizona Silk	SM	8-5-4-6-5	59.5(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	4 1600
3 Trippi's Express	RG	2-2-5-3-2	59.5	P.K.Horil	1 300
4 Ehsaan	G	6/1-3-7-4	59	K.Ramsamy	8 2500
5 Dynamite Jack	RG	5-1-1/1-3	56.5	J.Allyhosain	2 350
6 Puget Sound	SPN	6-3-7/8-9	55.5	T.Juglall	7 5000
7 King Of Tara	VA	5-1-1-1-3	54	B.Sooful	5 1200
8 Colour My Fate	AS	2-2-1-2-3	53.5	S.Rama	6 300

7 THE DRY MARTINI PLATE 2050 m - Valeur Benchmark 31 - 16h00					
1 Bellagio King	SPN	0-0-2-7-4	61(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	2 500
2 Black Indy	PM	9-2/4-6-5	61	J.Allyhosain	7 4000
3 Lit	G	3-1-7/7-6	60	B.Sooful	4 430
4 Moonrise Sensation	AS	6-6-5-7-3	60	S.Rama	9 550
5 High Key	SN	5-6-2-8-1	59.5(-3)	A.Roy	3 400
6 Imperial Rage	SJ	6-3-5-5-4	59.5	N.Teeha	8 400
7 Mr Green Street	RM	7-3-1-6-7	59	P.C.Orffer	1 800
8 Desert Thief	RG	4-5-3-3-1	52.5	T.Juglall	5 3300
9 Dreamforest [EA]	CD	2-5-4-6-4	55.5	-----	6 -----

8 THE POLAR BOUND PLATE 1450 m - Valeur [0-25] - 16h35					
1 Casanova King	SJ	0-0-0-9-10	60	T.Juglall	1 4000
2 Nikhils Inn	SM	0-3-2-11-6	60(-4)	N.S.Batchameah	10 500
3 Smuts	AS	0-0-7-3-3	60	S.Rama	5 400
4 Master Mariner	SPN	0-0-7-8-7	59.5	J.Allyhosain	9 3500
5 Xenon	RM	4-R-2-3-3	59.5	P.C.Orffer	7 370
6 Lasair	JMH	10-5-7-8-8	58.5	K.Ramsamy	4 1200
7 Moroccan Retreat	SPN	0-7-5-9-8	58.5	R.Vaibhav	6 4000
8 The Right Stuff	CD	7-3/7-3-4	58.5(-3)	M.Sonaram	11 1200
9 Yankee Force	RG	1-2-4-2-6	58.5	R.Joorawon	3 320
10 Volatile Energy	SN	5-1/9-7-4	58	D.Bheekary	8 1300
11 Middle Path [EA]	RG	7-7-2-4-8	59.5	-----	2 -----

Selections

1. Captain Falcon, Loosen Your Tie, Secret Idea
2. Bollinger, El Patron, Nao Faz Mal
3. Go Jewel, Captain Garrett, Ninotto
4. Ron's Joy, Roman Dancer, Trip To The Sky
5. Prince Of Venice, Toro Bravo, Emerald Band
6. Colour My Fate, Trippi's Express, Dynamite Jack
7. High Key, Moonrise Sensation, Imperial Rage
8. Yankee Force, Smuts, Xenon

Can Facebook's smart glasses be smart about security and privacy?

Smart glasses like Facebook's Ray-Ban Stories could be used to record you surreptitiously. If the company adds facial recognition, you could be even more exposed.

Facebook's smart glasses ambitions are in the news again. The company has launched a worldwide project dubbed Ego4D to research new uses for smart glasses.

In September, Facebook unveiled its Ray-Ban Stories glasses, which have two cameras and three microphones built in. The glasses capture audio and video so wearers can record their experiences and interactions.

The research project aims to add augmented reality features to smart glasses using artificial intelligence technologies that could provide wearers with a wealth of information, including the ability to get answers to questions like "Where did I leave my keys?" Facebook's vision also includes a future where the glasses can "know who's saying what when and who's paying attention to whom."

Several other technology companies like Google, Microsoft, Snap, Vuzix and Lenovo have also been experimenting with versions of augmented or mixed reality glasses. Augmented reality glasses can display useful information within the lenses, providing an electronically enhanced view of the world. For example, smart glasses could draw a line over the road to show you the next turn or let you see a restaurant's Yelp rating as you look at its sign.

However, some of the information that augmented reality glasses give their users could include identifying people in the glasses' field of view and displaying personal information about them. It was not too long ago that Google introduced Google Glass, only to face a public backlash for simply recording people. Compared to being recorded by smartphones in public, being recorded by smart glasses feels to people like a greater invasion of privacy.

As a researcher who studies computer security and privacy, I believe it's important for technology companies to proceed with caution and consider the security and privacy risks of augmented reality.

Smartphones vs. smart glasses

Even though people are now used to



Facebook's Ray-Ban Stories glasses capture photos and video and play audio, but the company has much bigger plans for smart glasses, including AI that can interpret what the wearer is seeing. Pic - canadianinquirer.net

being photographed in public, they also expect the photographer typically to raise their smartphone to compose a photo. Augmented reality glasses fundamentally disrupt or violate this sense of normalcy. The public setting may be the same, but the sheer scale and approach of recording has changed.

Such deviations from the norm have long been recognized by researchers as a violation of privacy. My group's research has found that people in the neighborhood of nontraditional cameras want a more tangible sense of when their privacy is being compromised because they find it difficult to know whether they are being recorded.

Absent the typical physical gestures of taking a photo, people need better ways to convey whether a camera or microphone is recording people. Facebook has already been warned by the European Union that the LED indicating a pair of Ray-Ban Stories is recording is too small.

In the longer term, however, people might become accustomed to smart glasses as the new normal. Our research found that although young adults worry about others recording their embarrassing moments on smartphones, they have adjusted to the pervasive presence of cameras.

Smart glasses as a memory aid

An important application of smart glasses is as a memory aid. If you could record or "lifelog" your entire day from a first-person point of view, you could simply rewind or scroll through the video at will.

You could examine the video to see where you left your keys, or you could replay a conversation to recall a friend's movie recommendation.

Our research studied volunteers who wore lifelogging cameras for several days. We uncovered several privacy concerns - this time, for the camera wearer. Considering who, or what algorithms, might have access to the camera footage, people may worry about the detailed portrait it paints of them.

Who you meet, what you eat, what you watch and what your living room really looks like without guests are all recorded. We found that people were especially concerned about the places being recorded, as well as their computer and phone screens, which formed a large fraction of their lifelogging history.

Popular media already has its take on what can go horribly wrong with such memory aids. "The Entire History of You" episode of the TV series "Black Mirror" shows how even the most casual arguments can lead to people digging through lifelogs for evidence of who said exactly what and when. In such a world, it is difficult to just move on. It's a lesson in the importance of forgetting.

Psychologists have pointed to the importance of forgetting as a natural human coping mechanism to move past traumatic experiences. Maybe AI algorithms can be put to good use identifying digital memories to delete. For example, our research has devised AI-based

algorithms to detect sensitive places like bathrooms and computer and phone screens, which were high on the worry list in our lifelogging study. Once detected, footage can be selectively deleted from a person's digital memories.

X-ray specs of the digital self?

However, smart glasses have the potential to do more than simply record video. It's important to prepare for the possibility of a world in which smart glasses use facial recognition, analyze people's expressions, look up and display personal information, and even record and analyze conversations. These applications raise important questions about privacy and security.

We studied the use of smart glasses by people with visual impairments. We found that these potential users were worried about the inaccuracy of artificial intelligence algorithms and their potential to misrepresent other people.

Even if accurate, they felt it was improper to infer someone's weight or age. They also questioned whether it was ethical for such algorithms to guess someone's gender or race. Researchers have also debated whether AI should be used to detect emotions, which can be expressed differently by people from different cultures.

Augmenting Facebook's view of the future

I have only scratched the surface of the privacy and security considerations for augmented reality glasses. As Facebook charges ahead with augmented reality, I believe it's critical that the company address these concerns.

I am heartened by the stellar list of privacy and security researchers Facebook is collaborating with to make sure its technology is worthy of the public's trust, especially given the company's recent track record.

But I can only hope that Facebook will tread carefully and ensure that their view of the future includes the concerns of these and other privacy and security researchers.

This article has been updated to clarify that future Facebook augmented reality glasses will not necessarily be in the Ray-Ban Stories product line and that, while the company's goals include identifying people, the Ego4D research data was not collected using facial recognition technology.

By Apu Kapadia, Indiana University

Laughter is the **BEST** Medicine

Serial killer

Having heard from the jury, the magistrate asked the accused serial killer to stand up.

"You have been found guilty of murdering your postman with an axe," he said sternly.

"You lying bastard..." screamed a man in the gallery, leaping to his feet.

The magistrate stared in astonishment, before turning back to the killer to continue with his verdict: "You are also guilty of killing a housewife with a hammer!"

The man in the gallery again started protesting.

"Sir, I am on the point of charging you with bringing the court into dispute. Kindly explain your outrageous interruptions," the magistrate stated.

"I lived next door to that bastard for 25 years and did he ever have a garden tool when I needed one?" the man snarled.

Lemon Pickers

"Lemon Pickers Needed", read the ad in the newspaper.

Ms Sally Mulligan of Coral Springs, Florida, read it, and decided to apply for one of the jobs that most Americans are not willing to do. She submitted her application for a job in a Florida lemon grove, but seemed far too qualified for the job. She has a liberal arts degree from Auburn University, and a master's degree from the University of Georgia. For a number of years, she had worked as a social worker, and also as a school teacher.

The foreman studied her application, frowned, and said, "I see that you are well educated, and have an impressive resume. However, I have to ask you, have you had any actual experience in picking lemons?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, I have," she said. "I've been divorced three times, owned two Chryslers, a Ford Pinto, voted twice for Donald Trump, refused to get vaccinated and caught Covid which I barely managed to survive."

She started work yesterday.

Comprendre les énarques

Un super énarque se retrouve assis à côté d'une petite fille lors d'un vol intercontinental.

L'énarque dit à la petite fille :

- Si on parlait un peu ensemble, il paraît que les voyages passent beaucoup plus vite si on parle avec quelqu'un.
- La petite fille le regarde et dit :

At first she was my girlfriend. I would talk and she would listen.

Then our marriage was fixed and she would talk while I would listen.



Now we are married. We talk and the neighborhood listens.

"D'accord, de quoi voulez-vous qu'on parle ?"

- L'homme dit : "Et si on parlait de physique nucléaire."
- La petite fille lui répond : "D'accord, mais avant, écoutez-moi bien... Un chevreuil, une vache, un cheval mangent tous la même chose - de l'herbe, et pourtant le chevreuil fait des petites crottes, la vache fait des bouses plates et le cheval de gros

boulets verts. Comment expliquez-vous cela ?"

L'énarque pantois, réfléchit un instant puis doit avouer :

- "Ma foi, je ne saurais l'expliquer !"

Alors, sarcastique, la petite fille lui dit :

- "Comment voulez-vous que je vous explique ce qu'est la physique nucléaire alors que vous ne maîtrisez même pas un petit problème de merde."

Un catholique, un protestant, un musulman et un juif étaient en discussion pendant un dîner.

Le catholique dit : "J'ai une grande fortune. Et j'achèterais bien la Citibank !" !

Le protestant dit "Je suis très riche et j'achèterais bien la General Motors" !

Le musulman dit : "Je suis un prince fabuleusement riche...Je veux acheter Microsoft" !

Ensuite ils attendent tous que le juif parle...

Le juif remue son café, place la cuillère proprement sur la table, prend une petite gorgée de son café, les regarde et dit avec désinvolture : "Je ne vends pas..."

Prescription du docteur à son patient :

"Le soir, avant de vous coucher, laissez vos soucis au pied de votre lit."

"Mais je ne peux pas Docteur", répond le patient, ma femme n'acceptera jamais de dormir par terre!"

One armed Champion

An energetic young boy despite the fact that he was born without a left arm joined to learn judo with an old Japanese Judo master.

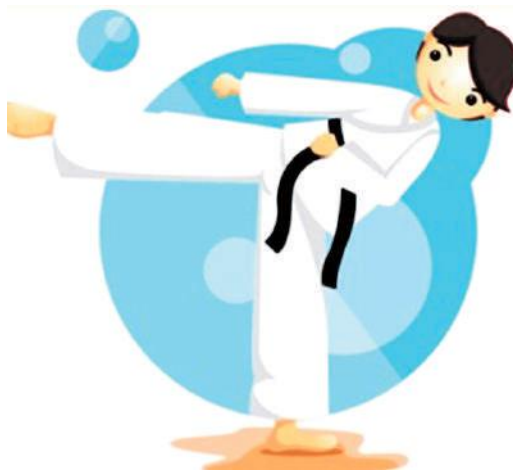
The old Japanese Judo master taught him a very exciting judo throw on the first week of the training. On the second week, he was asked to practice the same judo move. Every other week the young boy was taught to practice the same one technique over and over again. He could see other students learning different Judo techniques, but he couldn't understand why, even after three months of training the master had taught him only one move.

"Sensei," the boy finally said, "Shouldn't I be learning more moves?"

The Sensei replied - "Just focus on this one throw. This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know"

The little boy did not quite understand what his teacher was up to, but continued his training like his Sensei instructed.

Several months later, the Sensei



took the boy to his first tournament. The young boy was terrified to enter the tournament filled with other well trained and experienced Judo Players. Surprising himself and the audience, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third one was a little harder, but the young boy pulled off the technique - the only technique he knew, and won. The fourth round amazingly went the same way and the young boy found himself in the tournament final facing a much bigger, stronger and tougher opponent. For some time in the finals, the young boy without an arm appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt during the match, the referee called for a time out. The

referee was about to stop the match, but the old Sensei intervened and insisted on letting the boy continue.

After the match resumed, his opponent made a mistake and dropped his guard. Promptly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. The boy deftly used his one and only move throughout the tournament and came out as a winner.

On the way home, the Sensei and the boy reviewed every move in each and every match of the boy. Surprised by his own victory, the boy summoned courage to ask the Sensei how he was able to win the tournament with only one move.

"You won for two reasons," the Sensei answered. "First, with several months of dedicated practice you've almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for the move you learnt is for your opponent to grab your left arm."

With the boy's hard work and the Sensei's sagacity, the boy's biggest weakness was transformed into his biggest strength.

Pressing husband's forehead, wife gently asked "before marriage who pressed your head?"



Husband gave a simple heart touching answer "before marriage there was no headache".

A little boy says, 'Dad I've heard that in some parts of Africa a man doesn't know his wife until he marries her.'



'Son,' says the dad. 'That happens everywhere.'

After marriage

How to balance between your mother and wife

It is extremely common and rather harrowing when you are in a situation like this. Count your blessings if your mother and wife are on the same page. If they are poles apart and you get stuck between the two then here are some tips to help you balance between the ladies of your life.

Both are justified: You must first understand that both have their own justified reasoning. They have their own perspectives and after marriage you need to understand that priorities do shift. It is not their mistake because one has taken care of you since birth and the other has left her home to adjust in your world and take care of your future.



Begin with the kitchen: It sounds funny to many but the truth is that it all begins with the kitchen. Women are very possessive about the kitchen. If you live in a joint family, then this might be a major issue. So sit the women down and make a chart as to how this can be handled. Also, you too should chip in. If there is something both the women do not like, then how about you taking charge for it? If you cannot, keep a cook, but come up with a solution. If the two have different favourite dishes, then request them to divide the days. No blame game please.

Promote communication: The biggest barrier in all relationships is miscommunication. Instead of them festering hatred for each other every day, ask or make them voice their opinion to each other. Maybe one wants something but the other has been presuming that it is something else. Do not encourage their complaining habits.

Controlling your own anger: Have you seen Sarabhai Vs Sarabhai? Note how the character of Sahil Sarabhai has been portrayed. He never lashes out on either his mother or his wife in front of the other. Speak to them individually but maintain the respect. How you react makes a huge amount of difference.

Well-being & Health

Simple ways to become a happy person

These days when there is so much competition, pressure from all arenas of life, being happy has become a luxury. This emotion can bring many changes to your personality and attract more positivity as well. To become happy, there are few simple things you can do. So, scroll down and manifest all the happiness and spread the joy around with your smile.

Exercise or dance: This is not just for the weight watchers or fitness freaks. When you do some sort of exercise, your body releases endorphins which makes you feel happy. If you do not want to do a proper regime exercise then dance is one good option. Dance like nobody's watching. Join some classes or simply check out the umpteen tutorials on the internet.

Focus: Focus on the right things. Look at everything with a half glass full attitude. Be happy and grateful with what you have.



Do what you like: Don't do what others expect you to do. Do what you like, helps you grow, and brings you happiness.

Envision: If you want something, you tend to wish you had it. But instead, act as if you already have it! Do this when you wake up and before sleeping. It is said that when you say the positive words out loud, you attract good vibes and manifest energy as well. It encourages you to work harder on what you truly need.

Music: Listen to good, happy music which attracts positivity. If you want to watch shows then watch

something which is positive.

Interacting with good people: It is very important that you cut off or distance yourself from negative people. It is always said that you must surround yourself with positive people.

Stop complaining: This is where your words and thoughts filtering come in. You must check what you say and what you think about. The moment you start thinking negatively about someone or something then consciously push it away. You will yourself feel lighter and happier after a few days.

Do you breathe through your mouth while sleeping?

Breathing provides our body with oxygen and helps us release carbon dioxide. We all breathe through our noses. But in the case of nasal congestion, we end up breathing through our mouth, especially during our sleep. While we might think of this habit as harmless, it's not so.

Breathing through the nose can lead to a lot of health concerns. Here are some of them as listed by nutritionist Pooja Makhija in one of her social media posts.

Nasal breathing is important for your overall health. It helps in aiding weight loss. Yes, you read that right. Read ahead to know more why nasal breathing is important.

The nutritionist said, "Our autonomic nervous system has two main branches - sympathetic and parasympathetic. The sympathetic branch is responsible for our 'fight or flight' response, whereas the parasympathetic branch is responsible for the 'rest and digest, tend and befriend' response. Basically, the sympathetic branch gets you fired up and primed for movement, and the parasympa-



thetic branch puts the brakes on and chills your body out".

How breathing can affect workouts

She also said, "Mouth breathing biases your body towards a sympathetic state, whereas nasal breathing activates the parasympathetic response. If the body is stuck in this state due to chronic stress and breathing dysfunction, it won't effectively rebuild tissue from all of the HIIT workouts you are doing."

Nasal breathing for weight loss

The nutritionist said, "Since a large portion of this recovery process happens while you sleep, it is espe-

cially important to breathe in a way that shifts your nervous system state into 'rest and digest' mode. This is why nasal breathing is so important for weight loss."

How to improve oral breathing

She added, "Obviously, we switch to oral breathing only when our nasal passage is blocked. Good quality Vitamin C supplements (and foods), curcumin (opens up sinus blockages), zinc-rich foods and supplements can really help improve nasal breathing (provided of course, that's the prime reason and not a deviated septum). Speak with your nutritionist for exact doses and duration".

BollyBytes

Bipasha Basu: Was told not to get tanned as I was already dusky



From being called bohemian and sexy to receiving unwarranted advice on her complexion, Bipasha Basu came face-to-face with the unspoken rulebook of Bollywood when she forayed into films. Two decades later, she's glad that she didn't follow the norms, and took the road less travelled.

Ask her to tell us more about the rules she was told to abide by, the actor narrates to Hindustan Times some rather strange instances.

"I remember I was having iced tea in a glass while shooting *Ajnabee* in Switzerland. My hairstylist came and told me, 'Everyone is thinking that you are drinking whiskey'. She asked me to drink it in a cup to avoid this perception. Then this other time, I was wearing a backless blouse, and she told me, 'Actresses don't dress up like this' and that I'm only supposed to wear it on-screen," she recounts.

That was the point which irked the actor, as she didn't want to create any fake persona, and found it all very hypocritical.

"I used to ask, if you can't wear something in your normal life, how can you wear it on screen. In fact, I've had experiences where big actresses would comment on other girls wearing tiny shorts off-screen, and when they were the ones who'd wear it on screen," notes the *Raaz* (2002) actor, adding that she could never "understand this double standard".

Sometimes, it was not just about her clothes or lifestyle, but also about her skin colour.

"I used to love sunbathing all the time, even though I'm dusky. But I was told, 'You've to walk with an umbrella all the time'. I understand now why umbrellas are required. Back then, in my me-time, I was told that you shouldn't tan because you're already dusky. But none of these things really stopped me," she asserts, proudly stating, "These are some rules that I was told to follow right from my first film, which I never followed."

After completing 20 years in Bollywood, Basu credits the directors of her first film, Abbas-Mustan, for giving her a great start. "On the set of my first film, *Ajnabee*, I wasn't treated like a newcomer, but an equal," she wraps up.

Isha Koppikar believes in natural treatments, swears by acupuncture

More and more people are now opting for non-invasive, drug-less therapies for relief, prevention, and cure of various physical and mental ailments. Bollywood actress Isha Koppikar also believes in natural treatments when it comes to face and body as they are safe. While inaugurating a new holistic Rejua healthcare centre in South Mumbai recently, she revealed that she prefers acupuncture, reports The Health Site.

"Don't play around with your body, just be natural. Real beauty comes from within your heart. To be beautiful, your thoughts need to be beautiful, you need to get a good night's sleep, eat a well-balanced diet, and exercise daily," she said.

"Keep it simple and avoid complicating your life. I believe in simple living and high thinking. The pandemic taught us that life is simple, we got time to spend with our families. We got a chance to take care of ourselves, do things that we didn't have time to do earlier. I learn how to cook during pandemic. Our lives will be fast-paced, but you need to know what kind of life you want to live," she added.



Ajay a 'fabulous cook', but avoids touching anything with fingers: Kajol

Like every star Ajay Devgn has a private side to him that we know little about.

Who can be a better person than his wife and popular actress Kajol to reveal these secrets to the world?

Speaking on a popular show, Kajol said: "Let me start by saying that there are a few secrets that not everybody may know about Ajay. One of them being that he is a fabulous cook. And number two is that he is borderline OCD about touching anything with his fingers."

Explaining this fetish of his, Kajol said: "According to him, it's because he just cannot get the smell out of his fingers. Whatever that means!"

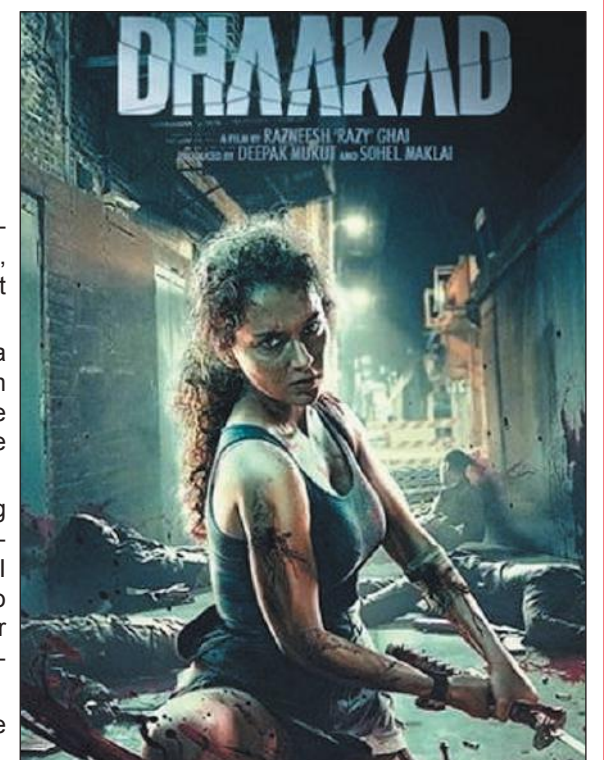
Kangana: I have always done 'Dhaakad' things in life

Kangana Ranaut, who took to social media to share a four-looks-in-one poster of her upcoming film, 'Dhaakad', launched it in person here at an event on Tuesday, saying that all her life she has done 'Dhaakad' things.

Asked about the 'Dhaakad' moments in her life, Kangana said, "I think everything I have done is 'Dhaakad'. From running away from my home till now, I continue to do all the 'Dhaakad' stuff. Now I am doing this 'Dhaakad' film and I hope the audience will love it."

Kangana said she's grateful that she gets to play exciting characters in her films. "I believe it is Bollywood's first woman-centred spy thriller," she said. "I am really happy about this. I find myself fortunate to be able to portray a character who performs wholesome action scenes. I thank my director Razneesh Ghai who believed in me and gave me this opportunity."

In the film, Kangana plays Agent Agni, who takes on the twin menace of child trafficking and exploitation of women.



Yeh Hai Mohabbatein fame Abhishek Malik's wedding festivities kick-start with engagement ceremony

Yeh Hai Mohabbatein' fame Abhishek Malik and girlfriend Suhani Chaudhary, who had their roka ceremony early this year on January 26, are all set to tie the knot. Their wedding festivities have kick-started and an engagement ceremony was held on Monday 18th Oct. Abhishek shared a few pictures from the ring and mehendi ceremonies, reports Times of India.

In one of the pictures, the soon-to-be married couple looks lost in love. The bride-to-be is seen wearing a gorgeous pink gown with sequin and feather embellishment. She kept her look minimal but accessorised her hair. Abhishek was seen wearing a black tuxedo.

Sharing the photos, Abhishek captioned the post as, "True Love Stories Never Have Endings. #Engaged". Abhishek and Suhani danced their hearts out on their engagement bash."

Abhishek also shared a picture from their mehendi, where the couple can be seen wearing yellow and green. While Suhani chose to wear yellow, Abhishek opted to wear green. The



mehendi ceremony happened on Sunday (October 17).

He captioned the image as, "The best thing to hold onto in life is each other."

Suhani is a stylist and has her own boutique. In an earlier interview with ETimes TV, Abhishek talked about his fiancée and was all praise for her, "Everybody is happy. Suhani ki vibes *bahut achhi hai*. She is fashionable and is grounded at the same time. She is a very family-oriented girl," he said.

Abhishek had also revealed

in the same interview about his proposal to Suhani, he said, "There was no formal proposal. My family did some shopping. I picked up a ring for her at the airport. It was a special day for her and I thought of making her feel special with this gesture. My friends captured the moment when I put the ring on her finger and that's how we got a proposal video. On the day of roka, I went up to uncle (Suhani's father) and introduced myself, 'I am Abhishek, *jiske sath apki beti ka roka ho raha hai*' and everyone started laughing."

Gautam Rode: Starting shoot initially was definitely scary amid Covid

Actor Gautam Rode talks about his family going through a tough time due to Covid affecting majority of them.

Gautam Rode has always adhered to all Covid-19 precautions. But, the situation at home during one point of time compelled him to be extra careful, especially while resuming work.

He recalls, "I got Covid in November last year, then my wife (actor Pankhuri Awasthy) and mum, too. The three of us stayed together in one house and dad in the other. It was a scary period."

Rode, who was recently seen in the web show *Naqaab*, continues, "Our driver died because of Covid, and that made us more scared, for my mother more than anything else, because of her age and everything. She was, however, the healthiest one out of us. Everyone recovered, I developed antibodies and started shooting after 14 days."

And, *State of Siege* was the first project he shot for after recovering. "I started shooting around December 17-18. It was definitely scary. That time, we took a lot of precautions. We finished that, then I moved on to *Naqaab*, and finished in the beginning of March, with one schedule in March. In



between, I kept shooting for something or the other. It's not been as bad for me as many other people said. Work kept happening, I kept shooting," says the 44-year-old, who has been a part of television shows such as *Baa Bahoo Aur Baby* as well as *Saraswatichandra*.

Going forward, the actor hopes that the pandemic does not lead to another lockdown. "One can only hope that a third wave doesn't come," Rode signs off.

YOUR STARS

Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

Unexpected delays will complicate all in your work; try to keep your cool. Be tolerant and understanding, otherwise you won't escape domestic squabbles. Concerning your speculations, caution will be necessary.

Lucky Numbers: 9, 17, 23, 31, 36, 37

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

Your contrariness will be amplified and may cause numerous stirs in your relationships. You'll be quite impatient to solve your pecuniary problems; the wisest thing would be to cut down your projected expenses and to try to earn a little more money.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 15, 22, 29, 30

Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

If you feel stressed or too often tired, make a good cure of magnesium. At work, you'll lack neither courage nor aggressiveness nor sense of responsibility. One of your best friends may disappoint you; take the thing with philosophy.

Lucky Numbers: 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 24

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

The family ambience will be heavy by moments and your love life may begin to go through a morose phase. On the contrary, you'll know beautiful successes in your work. Risk of food intoxication; see to the freshness of your food.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 5, 14, 16, 20, 30

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

Even though you're desperately disillusioned, love will swoop on you and you can't resist it! It won't be the moment to make important expenses. At work, don't be too kind, don't let certain colleagues unload their tasks onto you.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 19, 20, 26, 30, 33

Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

This time, you'll perhaps receive a promotion or distinction, and new proposals may also be made to you. The stars will incite you to get rid of certain useless scruples which impede your progress. Control your budget.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 8, 14, 23, 27, 39

Gemini: May 21 - June 20

You'll need gentleness, tenderness in your life as a couple, and you'll do your best to avoid risks of tension. Slight improvement on the financial plane. Don't believe yourself to be a special victim of destiny; recognize readily that you've had your part of the cake.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 9, 12, 14, 18, 30

Cancer: June 21 - July 22

This time don't rely too much on your intuition as usual. You'll feel a powerful renewal of passion for the beloved one; a candlelit dinner is possible. A favourable week for consolidating your material situation.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 14, 19, 20, 26, 30

Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Your friendship ties with a newly met person will become deeper and bring you many joys. In your work, be vigilant so as to avoid traps. If you've an important family problem to solve, tackle it right away; any delay will be quite harmful.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 19, 20, 33, 39, 40

Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

By dint of overdoing things, you may get into financial trouble. With your increased charm and sense of diplomacy, you can enhance your image as an innovator in the professional field; it's possible you'll be entrusted with a better job.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 5, 8, 9, 22, 30

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

Your relationships with your entourage will be difficult because of your touchiness. Single people, affective loneliness will seem to you more unbearable than ever; nevertheless, don't lose hope: you'll have great chances to meet your sister soul this time.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 18, 20, 21, 29, 32

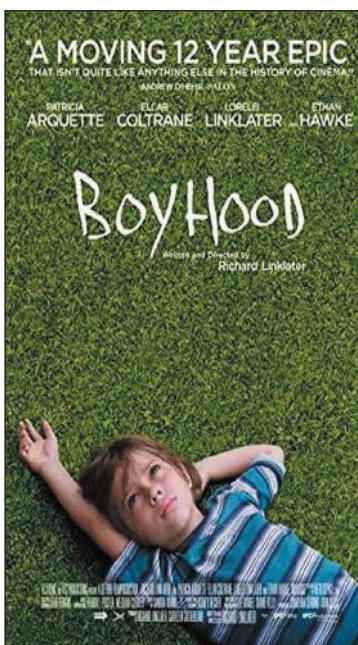
Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

You may have to bear delays and hitches on many fronts; don't get all worked up, things will turn out all right. Your health will need to be spared, don't impose excessive efforts on your body. Beware of one of your friends.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 17, 20, 23, 27, 30

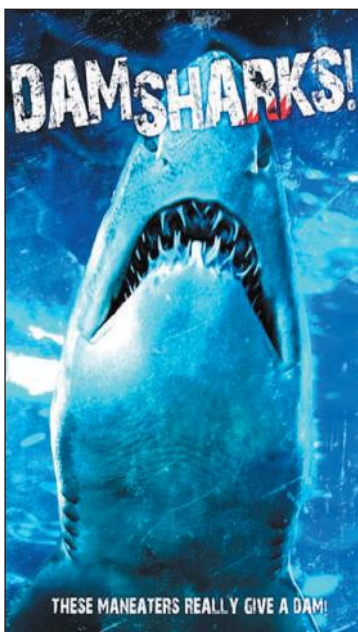
CINE 12

Vendredi 22 octobre - 21.15



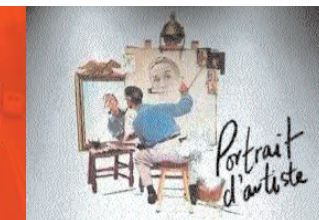
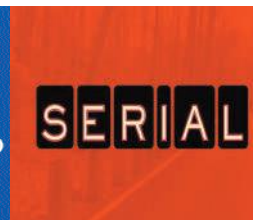
MBC 1

Samedi 23 octobre - 21.20



MBC 1

Dimanche 24 octobre - 21.15



vendredi 22 octobre

MBC 1

07.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
09.00 Doc: Hanau - A Massacre...
11.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
12.55 Local: Prod: Elle - No 37
13.50 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A...
14.54 D.Anime: Invention Story
15.06 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin...
15.20 D.Anime: Kulipari An Army...
15.40 D.Anime: Les Triples
16.02 D.Anime: Spirit: Au Galop
17.05 D.Anime: Splash And Bubble
17.45 Mag: Le Saviez-Vous?
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Siya Ke Ram
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.30 Local Prod: Come On Let's...
21.25 Serial: 19-2
23.00 Le Journal
23.35 Mag: Eye On SADC

MBC 2

07.00 DDI Live
10.00 Serial: Bisaat-E-Dil
11.02 Serial: Tawaan
12.00 Film: Antariksham 9000...
15.05 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek
15.23 Serial: Aamhi Doghi
15.44 Serial: Bava Maradallu
16.07 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal
16.28 Serial: Mera Maan Rakhna
16.48 Serial: Imtihaan
17.05 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
17.25 Serial: Chhanchhan
18.00 Serial: My Little Princes
18.30 Local: Abhay Charan
19.05 Journal Kreol
19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
20.02 Serial: Aas
20.46 Local: Anjuman
21.09 Local: Urdu Programme
22.07 DDI Live

MBC 3

06.00 Mag: Eco India
06.26 Mag: Shift
06.38 Mag: Sur Mesure
06.52 Mag: Border Crossing
07.20 Mag: Tomorrow Today
08.13 Doc: 360 GEO
09.05 Doc: Iran Short Of Water
12.58 Mag: Science Ou Fiction
14.19 Doc: Iran Short Of Water
17.05 Mag: Border Crossing
17.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today
18.00 Doc: Losing Sleep
18.45 Mag: Art And Culture
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.33 Mag: Euromaxx
20.05 Doc: Volcano Stories
20.30 Local: News (English)
20.40 Doc: Calypso Rose
21.34 Doc: Hugo Pratt, Trait Pour...
22.30 Doc: What Did The Big Bang
23.12 Doc: Losing Sleep

Cine 12

03.38 Film: Model Citizen
05.04 Tele: Muneca Brava
05.40 Serial: Reef Doctors
06.48 Film: Stan & Ollie
08.22 Mag: Cinemag
09.00 Serial: When Calls The Heart
09.45 Tele: Teresa
10.37 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You
11.00 Serial: Heroes Reborn
12.00 Film: Model Citizen
13.33 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.45 Film: Stan & Ollie
16.45 Serial: When Calls The Heart
17.28 Serial: Reef Doctors
18.10 Tele: Teresa
19.00 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You
19.34 Mag: Cinemag
20.05 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana
20.30 Serial: Powers
21.15 Film: Boyhood

Bollywood TV

08.00 Film: Santa Banta PVT Ltd
Vir Das, Boman Irani, Neha Dhupia
12.08 / 20.30 - Radha Krishna
12.31 / 21.00 - Chupke Chupke
12.50 / 21.30 - Mere Sai
13.12 / 22.00 - Agnipheera
13.27 / 22.30 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
14.00 / 23.00 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.30 / 21.46 - Chhanchhan
15.00 / 22.20 - Sethji
15.25 Film: Rockstar
Ranbir Kapoor, Nargis Fakhri, Shammi Kapoor
18.00 Live: Samacher
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
19.00 Ishaaron Ishaaron Mein
19.31 Serial: Bhakharwadi
20.00 Serial: Siddhi Vinayak

samedi 23 octobre

06.00 D.Anime: Robot Trains
06.27 D.Anime: The Hive
07.00 D.Anime: Sissi
07.31 D.Anime: Kung Fu Panda
07.53 D.Anime: Astrology
07.56 D.Anime: Jil Jil Genie 2
09.01 D.Anime: Astrology
09.10 D.Anime: Where's Waldo
09.35 Serial: Oh Yuck
12.00 Le Journal
12.35 Tele: Teresa
15.30 D.Anime: Kulipari An Army
15.53 D.Anime: Les Triples
16.07 D.Anime: Spirit
17.10 Serial: Hi Opie!
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Entertainment: Dance
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.15 Local: Autour Des Valeurs
21.20 Film: Dam Sharks
Avec: Janelle Beaudry, Paige Lauren Billiot, Ashton Bingham

07.00 Film: Rampur Ka Lakshman
09.08 Mag: DDI Magazine
10.00 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
11.35 Serial: Bloody Romance
12.00 Serial: Nanda Saukhyia Bhare
12.27 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
12.44 Serial: High School
13.11 Annakodiyum Aintu Pengalum
15.00 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek
15.25 Film: Sniff
Starring: Parshva Dhariwal, Khushmeet Gill, Putul Guha
16.50 DDI Magazine
19.00 Live: Journal Kreol
19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
20.06 Serial: Vikram Betaal Ki Rahasya Gatha
20.28 Serial: Bitti Business Wali
21.01 Film: Marjaavaan
Stars: Riteish Deshmukh, Sidharth Malhotra, Tara Sutaria

06.00 Doc: Losing Sleep
06.42 Mag: Arts And Culture
06.55 Mag: Our Voices
07.50 Doc: Volcano Stories
09.08 Doc: Hugo Pratt, Trait Pour
10.00 Doc: What Did The Big Bang
10.52 Doc: Bohemian Switzerland
11.17 Doc: Losing Sleep
12.12 Mag: Our Voices
15.00 Student Support Prog...
17.30 Doc: Volcano Stories
18.30 Mag: Science Ou Fiction
19.00 Doc: Zenith
19.30 Mag: Check In
20.30 Local: News (English)
21.00 Local: Thirumaal Thiruvavul
22.30 Doc: La Turbulence Robin
23.22 Doc: The Wirecard Case
00.04 Doc: Invisibles: Clickworker
02.03 Mag: Check In
02.29 Doc: Sky Heroes
02.55 Doc: La Turbulence Rodin

01.59 Film: Boyhood
04.45 Tele: Tanto Amor
05.58 Serial: Imposters
06.36 Serial: S.W.A.T
07.56 Serial: The Enemy Within
08.38 Serial: The Magicians
09.20 Serial: Falling Water
10.01 Film: Boyhood
12.47 Serial: French Series
13.30 Serial: Heroes Reborn
15.05 Tele: Muneca Brava
16.29 Mag: Cinemag
17.00 Serial: Imposters
17.45 Film: Zoo
20.05 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana
20.30 Series: Powers
21.15 Film: Searching
Starring: John Cho, Debra Messing, Joseph Lee
22.51 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir

04.05 Radha Krishna
04.26 Chupke Chupke
04.48 Mere Sai -- Shraddha Aur...
05.30 Agnipheera
06.00 Zindagi Ki Mehek
06.30 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
06.38 Chhanchhan
06.57 Ishaaron Ishaaron Mein
07.18 Siddhi Vinayak
08.02 Zindagi Ki Mehek
10.12 Motu Patlu
10.43 Siddhi Vinayak
12.01 Serial: Bhakharwadi
14.19 Chupke Chupke
16.00 Pavitra Rishta
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Film: Raanjhanaa
Star: Dhanush, Sonam Kapoor, Abhay Deol
20.43 Serial: Namah

dimanche 24 octobre

06.00 D.Anime: Robot Trains
06.27 D.Anime: The Hive
06.37 D.Anime: P'tit Cosmonaute
06.44 D.Anime: Sissi
09.30 Serial: Oh Yuck
10.30 Local: Zafan Nou Zil
11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
12.00 Le Journal
12.40 Tele: Teresa
14.10 Local: Elle
15.05 D.Anime: Invention Story
15.18 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin...
15.55 D.Anime: Les Triples
17.17 Serial: Hi Opie!
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Yeh Shaam Mastani
19.30 Le Journal
20.25 Local: Groov'in
21.20 Film: Maudie
Starring: Sally Hawkins, Ethan Hawke, Zachary Bennett

07.00 Film: Sai Teri Maya
10.00 Local Prod: MBC Prod
11.00 Serial: Oru Kai Osai
11.22 Serial: Santoshi Maa
12.00 Film: Singham Returns
Stars: Ajay Devgan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Amole Gupte...
14.13 DDI Magazine
15.00 Serial: Zindagi Ki Mehek
15.22 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
15.45 Serial: He Mann Baware
16.12 Apoorva Raagangal
17.05 Serial: Siya Ke Ram
18.00 DDI Magazine
18.30 Local: Tita Tita Nu Avance
19.00 Live: Journal Kreol
20.05 Serial: Mann Mein Vishwas..
20.48 Serial: CID
21.30 Serial: Naagin Season 2
22.17 Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki
22.55 DDI Live

06.00 Mag: Amazing Gardens
06.51 Doc: Zenith
07.16 Mag: Check In
07.46 Doc: Sky Heroes
08.11 Doc: La Turbulence Robin
10.31 Doc: Muay Thai
11.39 Mag: Science Ou Fiction
12.05 Doc: Zenith
12.30 Mag: Check In
14.17 Doc: The Wirecard Case
14.59 Doc: Invisibles: Clickworker
18.02 Mag: Magnifique
18.30 Doc: Amazing Gardens
18.59 Doc: Garden Party
19.33 Doc: Comme Une Envie...
20.30 Local Prod: News (English)
20.45 Mag: Nouveau Look Pour...
22.01 Doc: Mr. Brown
22.46 Doc: Congo
23.29 Mag: Magnifique
23.58 Doc: Amazing Gardens

01.40 Film: Searching
03.19 Serial: Midnight, Texas
04.00 Film: Dam Sharks
05.20 Tele: Tanto Amor
06.04 Serial: Imposters
06.44 Serial: Island Doctor
08.30 Serial: The Enemy Within
09.12 Film: Searching
10.48 Film: Zoo
12.23 Serial: Midnight, Texas
13.30 Serial: Heroes Reborn
15.35 Tele: Muneca Brava
17.01 Serial: Imposters
17.45 Serial: Midnight, Texas
18.30 Film: Dam Sharks
20.05 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana
20.30 Serial: Pure Genius
21.15 Film: Poker Night
22.59 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir

00.35 Serial: Siddhi Vinayak
02.21 Bhakharwadi
04.28 Chupke Chupke
06.02 Pavitra Rishta
08.00 Ikyawan
10.00 Jaana Na Dil Se Door
12.00 Piya Albela
14.00 Agnipheera
16.29 Punar Vivaah
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Film: Mr Bechara
Starring: Anil Kapoor, Nagarjuna Akkineni, Sri Devi, Anupam Kher
20.50 Entertainment: Dance
21.43 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
23.28 Serial: Piya Albela

MBC 2

Samedi 23 octobre

- 21.00

Stars: Riteish Deshmukh, Sidharth Malhotra, Tara Sutaria



Dimanche 24 octobre

- 18.30

Stars: Anil Kapoor, Nagarjuna Akkineni, Sri Devi, Anupam Kher



'It takes a mental toll':

Indian students tell their stories of waiting out the pandemic in Australia

Indian students in Australia haven't had the experience they hoped and paid for. Campuses closed, they lost work and they watched helplessly from afar as Covid-19 ravaged their home country

The stories of international students' struggles amid the challenges and uncertainties of the Covid-19 pandemic seem to have reached the stage of psychic numbing. Despite their numbers, their voices have been largely neglected. They are still waiting to be heard, and that includes the nearly 100,000 Indian international students who make up the second-largest population of the international cohort in Australia.

The students I interviewed in 2020 were a part of my PhD study that examined Indian students' experiences in student-staff partnership projects. They were all enrolled as international students in Australian universities.

The students offered personal accounts of their experiences of financial strain, mental stress and alienation amid the pandemic. This article is both a call for compassion and a reminder of the perils of treating international students as customers. And if we insist on treating them as customers, some of these customers are unhappy.

Are students getting value for money?

Students expressed disappointment about the quality of education they received in return for high international student fees.

Vani (all names are pseudonyms) is a postgraduate student. She had extensively researched the options of studying in Canada and the UK before narrowing down her choice to one of the Australian universities. She was dismayed when her university education quickly moved online within months of her arrival in the country.

"I completely understand everything was happening in a hurry in 2020, and moving online was the only option. The library, the labs and other facilities were not accessible. Still, we were paying the same fees for amenities. For what?"

Another student, Beena, said her university missed the opportunity to demonstrate human-centric education.

"Apart from a few academics, there was no checking-in, no poster of 'R U OK?' when I needed it the most."

Many students talked about how mental stress affected their academic performance. One detailed how at the peak of the pandemic he struggled to book an appointment with the university-appointed counsellor. The wait times were very long.

Financial struggles add to burden

It was difficult for Indian students to find part-time work, which they depended on. Their struggles intensified as a result of the lack of immediate government support.

Raised in an Indian culture, the students



For Indian students in Australia, the pandemic added another layer of hurt to the experience of many years of racism. Pic - AAP

felt it was their responsibility to take care of their parents. The students explained how, as adults, they felt overwhelmed by having to ask their parents for help to sustain them. Kinjal, a postgraduate student, shared her experience of dealing with plummeting job opportunities.

"At one stage of this pandemic, I was literally scavenging for work. I handed my resume to random offices and outlets as if it was a promotional brochure. Those were the moments when the gravity of the situation sank in."

"I remember attending the video call to my parents in pretend formal wear. The least I could do was not let them worry about me. I am already guilty of putting them into financial burden with a student loan for my overseas education."

The politics of exclusion

When Prime Minister Scott Morrison told international students to head back to their country in April 2020 it had a powerful emotional impact. A 18-year student enrolled in a computer science degree said:

"I know we really do not belong in this country. I have made peace with random racial slurs. I do not feel threatened with the occasional loud screams on the quiet street - 'Aye, you curry muncher, go back where you come from.'"

"But the news headline was a tight slap. Words matter. I have engaged with various groups in a conversation about this statement, about righteousness and ethical dilemmas of politics. All I can say is that - you are asking a loyal customer to leave the store."

Students also drew comparisons with other countries' treatment of international students and skilled workers, specifically Canada. They felt developed countries such as Australia need to follow the humane approach of other countries.

Feeling helpless as COVID swept India

The students were also terribly concerned for the well-being of their family members, relatives and friends as India's healthcare system collapsed under the second wave of the pandemic. Many students expressed difficulty in managing the stress of living a double life.

"It was business as usual in my university, while Indians were fighting for their breath. When I saw my dad in the hospital through a WhatsApp call, it was devastating. It was a hard call to make. Leaving the country would mean never coming back and still paying fees for a course run online. Not going back may mean a lifetime of regret. These decisions are complicated, and it takes a mental toll."

The experiences of these students affirm that it is time to rethink higher education and look beyond just the economic imperatives. We need to have the moral courage to stop commodifying education.

In future, one of the metrics for universities' rankings should be how humanely they treat their students. There needs to be a place for respect and compassion for international students in educational policies.

By Preeti Vayada,
The University of Queensland



Tree of Knowledge

Madisyn Taylor

Empowered Storytelling



We all have a story to tell, but sometimes we get stuck in that story and become our story.

We all have our own life story. It is filled with relationships and events that help shape who we are and what we believe to be true about the world. Depending on our perspective and willingness to grow, our experiences can become fodder for negativity and patterns of playing the victim, or they can fuel a life of empowerment and continued self-development. It is the story we tell ourselves about what happens that makes all the difference.

Take a moment to look at the life story you create for yourself on an ongoing basis. If you generally feel peaceful about the past and trust in your ability to handle whatever comes your way, then you are framing circumstances in a manner that serves you well. On the other hand, if you retain a lot of guilt or resentment and often feel weighed down by life, you may want to start telling yourself a new version of past and present events. No matter who the characters are in your story or what they have done, you are the only one who can give their actions the meaning they will have for you. You are the only one who can define what role you will play in your own life. By taking responsibility for your story, you are able to learn and grow, forgive and find compassion, and most importantly, move on into a brighter future.

From now on, you can choose a life story that supports you. Let it be proof of your own resilience and creativity. Be kind with the roles you give yourself and generous with how many chances you get to learn what you need to know. When you remember that you are the author of your own story, you are free to create a masterpiece.