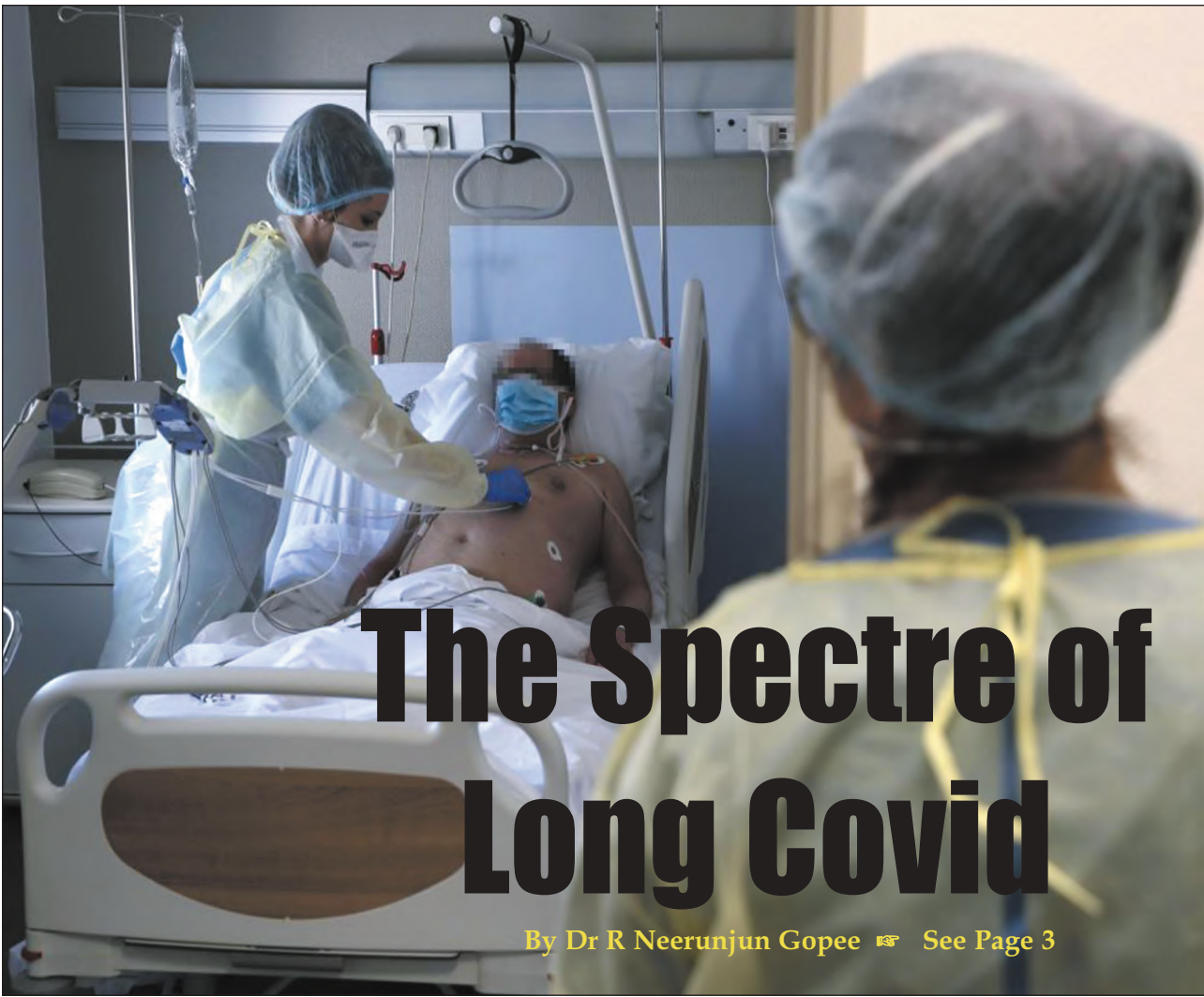


MAURITIUS

TIMES

• “The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything.” — Albert Einstein



The Spectre of Long Covid

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Preserving the Dignity of the House

The constitutional case lodged by Hon Arvin Boolell, who has challenged his suspension for eight sessions of the National Assembly and which is, in his view, a violation of his constitutional rights, was called before Judges Karuna Devi Gunesh Balaghee and Denis Mootoo on Monday; it has been adjourned to November 23 before the Master and Registrar. His complaint is directed against the Speaker, Sooroojdev Phokeer, the Prime Minister, Pravind Jugnauth and the Clerk of the National Assembly. Dr Arvin Boolell has accused the Speaker of "bias and in favour of the majority in the House", and cites 20 occasions between February 28, 2020 and July 20, 2021, where the Speaker's decisions would have been biased against Opposition MPs.

In spite of the current anxiety that has gripped large swathes of the population with respect to the resurgence of Covid-19 cases and the increasing number of deaths, it is important that the long-drawn tussle between the Opposition and the Speaker be thrashed out for the good name of the country and its reputation. That is why Hon Boolell and Hon Shakeel Mohamed, who has also challenged the Speaker's decision to expel and suspend him from Parliament, have been well advised to pursue their constitutional challenge for the sake of the country's image -- if only to obtain a pronouncement of the Supreme Court on the speakership of Mr Phokeer as well as in a bid to preserve the dignity of duly elected MPs and that of Parliament.

We understand the reasons why Supreme Courts in Westminster-style democracies are somewhat reluctant to intervene in the conduct of honourable members in their august parliamentary Houses and even those of a Speaker who is felt to be overstepping his bounds. In most such places, we are dealing with matured democracies which respect not only the letter of the law but also its spirit. Given the numerical majority on one side, such Speakers use a deft touch or a touch of humour to defuse tense situations or prevent them from arising in the first place. In many cases, those imbued with such a democratic spirit tend to bend over backward to ensure Opposition members have their rightful and often meaningful say while clearly, government will have its way. We need not belabour the point but we can all watch extracts

of authoritative but sensitive handling of House matters in the often charged atmospheres of Indian Parliament.

Whether our democracy is still young and therefore liable to various vagaries or departures is beside the point. Parliament is too important an institution in a representative democracy like ours for its functionings to be allowed to be sapped by any dysfunction whatsoever. Besides representing the electorate and making laws, its other function is to hold the government accountable for its decisions and scrutinise its functioning through debates and parliamentary questions set by the Opposition. Its critical views and remarks can in effect be helpful to government in addressing issues or sorting out problems which it may not have foreseen in drafting legislation.

If parliamentary debates are reduced to a succession of government MPs and Ministers reading pre-written speeches without even taking note or account of useful contributions from Opposition benches, then the term parliamentary debate becomes senseless. That is why rules have been made to ensure its proper and orderly functioning but, ultimately, it falls upon the Speaker to ensure that the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly are complied with, despite the numerical majority that any government enjoys.

No self-respecting National Assembly moulded in the British parliamentary tradition, can serve democratic interests or expectations of good governance through the people's elected representatives, when an inquisitive opposition, which is fulfilling its duties as is expected by the electorate, is unable to do so effectively. Elected MPs and, in particular Opposition MPs have usually an uphill battle against those who already control much of the House agenda and sittings, and one could portend that their contribution has to be facilitated rather than thwarted unjustifiably. So, while we understand some of the reluctance of judges to interfere in matters that a functioning Parliament should be able to manage without external help, there may be merit in the Supreme Court accommodating some departure to hear and pronounce on these two cases as ultimate guardians of our constitutional democracy and protector of the rights of the electorate to be adequately represented and defended in Parliament.

The Conversation

Is Covid-19 here to stay?

Some viruses go extinct, while others stick around. The virus that causes Covid-19 seems likely to remain with us for the long term



In August 2020, about 500,000 motorcyclists rode the streets of Sturgis, South Dakota, at the city's annual motorcycle rally. Masks were encouraged but not required. Covid-19 cases throughout the state increased. Bryan R. Smith/AFP via Getty Images

Early on in the pandemic, it wasn't unreasonable to expect that SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes Covid -19) might just go away, since historically some pandemic viruses have simply disappeared.

For instance, SARS-CoV, the coronavirus responsible for the first SARS pandemic in 2003, spread to 29 countries and regions, infecting more than 8,000 people from November 2002 to July 2003. But thanks to quick and effective public health interventions, SARS-CoV hasn't been observed in humans in almost 20 years and is now considered extinct.

On the other hand, pandemic viruses may also gradually settle into a relatively stable rate of occurrence, maintaining a constant pool of infected hosts capable of spreading the virus to others. These viruses are said to be "endemic."

Examples of endemic viruses in the United States include those that cause the common cold and the seasonal flu that appear year after year. Much like these, the virus that causes Covid-19 likely won't die out, and most experts now expect it to become endemic.

We are a team of virologists and immunologists from the University of Colorado Boulder studying animal viruses that infect humans. An essential focus of our research is to identify and describe the key adaptations that animal viruses require to persist in the human population.

What determines which viruses become endemic?

So why did the first SARS virus from 2003 (SARS-CoV) go extinct while this one (SARS-CoV-2) may become endemic?

The ultimate fate of a virus depends on how well it maintains its transmission. Generally speaking, viruses that are highly contagious, meaning that they spread really well from one person to the next, may never die out on their own because they are so good at finding new people to infect.

Sara Sawyer, Professor of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology, Arturo Barbachano-Guerrero & Cody Warren, University of Colorado Boulder

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

It was almost a given that sooner or later the Delta variant of Covid-19 would reach our shores too, as it indeed has. It will require a deeper analysis to establish with a degree of certainty how far this is related to the opening of our borders just over a month ago, and whether the sharp increase in the number of cases is linked thereto as well.

In the meantime, we have been facing a real wave or surge of cases. The tales of woe that are reported by patients and relatives, along with the tragic deaths that are taking place daily – all the more disturbing because of the young age of the victims – point to a health system that has been overwhelmed, a phenomenon which affected many countries as the pandemic unfurled as a tsunami at its very beginning.

Definitely we could have been better prepared. Is it that somewhere along the way we developed complacency or faced ennui and exhaustion? After all, it is humans who are manning this crisis, and long hours of overwork with the physical and mental stresses caused may be part of the explanation. But in no way does this justify a less than optimum preparedness in terms of the expected workload and the necessary resources ranging from hospital accommodation to treatment requirements that needed to have been planned for well ahead.

While we are now struggling to cope with the large number of cases that are being detected on a daily basis, there is at the same time an insidious invasion of the body systems other than the respiratory system, notably the lungs, that is taking place in Covid-infected patients. In fact, within months of the pandemic spreading, it was already seen to be affecting practically all organs, and also began to involve all ages – contrary to what a more 'conventional' virus does, that is target a specific organ or tissue in a more defined age group.

Another feature was the presence of some lingering symptoms, or reappearance of symptoms, in patients who had recovered from the initial acute infection. During one of his interventions on TV around that time, Prof Randeep Guleria of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, had advised patients to go for check-ups of the

The Spectre of Long Covid

Recovering from the acute infection does not mean that the patient is completely rid of Covid impact. As Long Covid, it leaves its signature in subtle ways



“The tales of woe that are reported by patients and relatives, along with the tragic deaths that are taking place daily – all the more disturbing because of the young age of the victims – point to a health system that has been overwhelmed... Definitely we could have been better prepared. Is it that somewhere along the way we developed complacency or faced ennui and exhaustion? After all, it is humans who are manning this crisis, and long hours of overwork with the physical and mental stresses caused may be part of the explanation...”

lungs 3-4 months post-recovery even if they didn't have symptoms, including doing an MRI scan that would show the residual damage in the organ and help clinicians to give advice accordingly.

The realization that Covid-19 is more than just about the lungs was confirmed in a paper published in the 'Journal of Proteome Research' in August 2020, which referred to abnormal findings in several chemicals in the body that were 'consistent with recent reports that Covid-19 is a systemic disease affecting multiple organs and systems.'

Gradually scientists and clinicians have come up with the concept of Long Covid, which refers to the poor health condition that can persist in patients who have recovered from the early acute episodes of Covid-19. The symptoms are many and varied and all age groups including children are vulnerable.

In October 2021, WHO has come up with a definition of Long Covid as a 'Post-Covid-19 condition occurs in individuals with a history of probable or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection, usually 3 months from the onset of Covid-19 with symptoms that last for at least 2 months and cannot be explained by an alternative diagnosis.'

'Common symptoms include fatigue, shortness of breath, cognitive dysfunction but also others, which generally have an impact on everyday functioning. Symptoms may be new onset, following initial recovery from an acute Covid-19 episode, or persist from the initial illness.

Symptoms may also fluctuate or relapse over time.'

Anxiety, depression, pain, and changes in hearing, smell, and taste were among the other symptoms that the definition included.

According to the WHO, 'With a standardized definition, we hope to advance recognition of the condition. It will also help clinicians to identify patients more easily and provide them [with] the appropriate care. With this standardized definition, we will also be able to measure the burden of this illness better, giving us a better understanding of its prevalence globally. Finally, we hope it will aid and promote research on the topic. [Having] a single definition will allow us to synergize global research and advance a globally relevant understanding of the condition.'

Importantly, the WHO also noted that it expects this definition to evolve as more researchers accumulate more data on the condition. Moreover, the panel highlighted that a separate definition might be necessary to describe the condition in children.

This points to a need to better understand the long-term impacts of Covid-19 on the health of those who have been affected, and seek ways to predict the progression of the disease in both individuals and communities, as well as devise appropriate preventive measures and treatments.

Therefore, as much as we are rightly focusing on handling the acute cases that are currently our major concern, as soon as possible we must also start to give attention to the long-term impacts on individual patients and the national disease burden that this will entail too. Before it is too late and in order not to be caught unawares again, we must begin to get ready for diagnosing Long Covid locally. We must therefore look out for opportunities to collaborate with teams that are already addressing the issue by means of novel ways, using sophisticated platforms that may not be available here, such as those described in the paper alluded to, and that can carry out measurements of specific chemicals known as biomarkers in body fluids such as blood and urine. Besides detecting the active disease process, these tests may 'provide early predictors of individual severity that could be of value in the management of hospitalized patients and the assessment of long-term recovery.'

From a broader Public Health perspective, this methodology could also provide inputs that will help predict risk factors for disease in the community, which in turn will help in the development of programmes for prevention. The overall benefit will be improvement in survival rates, especially in high-risk groups, reduction in mortality and improvement in the quality of life of people who have suffered from Covid infection.

In conclusion, it could be said that it is not over when it is over: that is, recovering from the acute infection does not mean that the patient is completely rid of Covid impact. As Long Covid, it leaves its signature in subtle ways in several organs, and can be tracked by innovative tests that can predict the further evolution of the disease in both the individual and at community level, at the same acting as tools to work out prevention and treatment programmes. All of these can help to mitigate the national disease and health burden.

In the Spirit of Unilateralism

Jan Arden

If confirmation was needed that the government's preferred way of running the country is by unilateral imposition, it came in its recent handling of a number of issues. Some may feel that government should have its unfettered way on the basis of its numerical supremacy in Parliament. Therefore its unilateral use of Standing Orders and legislative processes to ram through major legislation, even on issues of national interest, is immaterial. In that spirit of unilateralism, many regulations and some pieces of legislation that have been enacted with minimal or lip-service consultations in Education, Public Health, Social Security or Family Welfare have generated such controversies, redrafting and backpedaling that the general impression has been one of amateurism if not suspect motivations.

The siphoning of the country's accumulated Central Bank reserves was no doubt necessary to steer many players in the business sector out of pandemic-related troubles - but the terms of such bail-out from public funds to otherwise profitable concerns would have deserved greater transparency, unless unavoidable for imperative commercial reasons. The handling of the exit strategy from the financial mess at Air Mauritius since 2019, leading to voluntary administration, compounded by ravages of international travel during the ongoing pandemic, has cost to-date unknown billions. Vital questions about the necessity of the super-structure Airport Holdings Ltd to oversee and manage all air flight and airport activities remain shrouded in fuzziness and bask in the same spirit of unilateralism, although massive public funds and employee welfare or futures are concerned.

The Computer Security or the Offshore Petroleum Bills are two latest examples where complex questions that deserved fuller and less expeditious examination, are being pushed through with a haste that is hard to justify. Several reasons could be put forward to explain government's constant preference for unilateral imposition.

The first may have to do with its history and the conditions associated with the founding of the MSM as a dissident but powerful split from the MMM in the short-lived MMM-PSM regime of 1982. Tempers and characters forged in those days would certainly have left a lasting impression in SAJ's legacy at the helm of party and country, even if later alliances of both the MSM and the MMM, obeying to vicissitudes and vagaries of time, made



“Building more roads, roundabouts, fly-overs, bridges, hospitals or even social housing are expected activities of governments. That is, after all, what they are voted in for, while they make sure the burden is shared equitably and does not become and place an unsustainable one on succeeding generations if they have to repay our debt-financed activities. That is neither sufficient nor commensurate with the leadership required in the tough times we are facing collectively...”

for a succession of political alliances and misalliances since 1991. Staying in power and holding on to the power seat of PM became cardinal quests.

The scale of the economy, of public sector contracts and the irruption of “money politics” in political and media campaigns has added fuel to that already volatile mix and raised stakes to unprecedented levels. But while many, even grudgingly, would admit or admire SAJ's respect for laws and Constitution and the protocolar necessities of a democratic state, these normative considerations may have been succeeded by a state of mind with little patience for negotiating or building consensus, even more so when

“Government certainly wields power but that doesn't seem to be translating into showing the leadership that is sufficient or needed to effectively meet the country's challenges. And the correlate is an increasingly worrying trend of unilateralism, as the renewed attempt to strictly confine social media exemplifies. Why is it that despite a Westminster inspired constitution, an independent judiciary or a largely active press, democratic structures and processes appear to be failing us? The danger is that while the government rules it does not govern, if its primary focus remains on its core sympathizers...”

national issues are at stake. Why bother consult for constitutional or important appointments if government or the PM will decide anyway, seems to exemplify the new motto, as in the case of recent appointments of political aides and associates by the President to institutions like the Electoral Supervisory Commission.

It is an almost inevitable consequence of unilateralism that government and MSM analysts believe it acceptable or profitable politically to maintain a permanent state of tension and a “them and us” attitude vis-a-vis the opposition forces both in the National Assembly and outside. Building trust, confidence, respect and consensus cannot be said to have been high on the parliamentary agenda and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court may decide to define some boundaries, even if the Court traditionally refrains from interference in those august settings where every Opposition MPs right to voice their say and ask questions should be respected.

Not only has this done little to inspire public confidence in the government, it has also nurtured a divided opinion in the country and raised many questions about policies, competencies or the direction it is taking. Nowhere has the mix of shallow competencies, lack of transparency, deficient institutions, tainted procurement procedures, tweaking of data to suit political narratives been more apparent than in the handling of public health services throughout the pandemic, giving way to wildfire rumours and a generalized if not deadly trust deficit. Have we been cutting corners, been blinded by the Delta variant's virulence, accumulated stocks of

unusable or ineffective vaccine lots – these are a few of the many questions that are troubling citizens.

Government certainly wields power but that doesn't seem to be translating into showing the leadership that is sufficient or needed to effectively meet the country's challenges. And the correlate is an increasingly worrying trend of unilateralism, as the renewed attempt to strictly confine social media exemplifies. Why is it that despite a Westminster inspired constitution, an independent judiciary or a largely active press, democratic structures and processes appear to be failing us? The danger is that while the government rules it does not govern, if its primary focus remains on its core sympathizers. If governing without consensus, through unilateral imposition, has become a familiar trait of the ruling party, other habits it has formed contribute to its distinct way of running the government. The ingrained tendency to shift blame on something or someone else whereby all present challenges are blamed on past governments, on the pandemic or on other factors extraneous to itself no longer sells at this stage of the mandate.

Building more roads, roundabouts, fly-overs, bridges, hospitals or even social housing are expected activities of governments. That is, after all, what they are voted in for, while they make sure the burden is shared equitably and does not become and place an unsustainable one on succeeding generations if they have to repay our debt-financed activities. That is neither sufficient nor commensurate with the leadership required in the tough times we are facing collectively.



People walk at a crossing in Shibuya shopping area, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, in Tokyo. Pic- Reuters

Japan mulls making Covid-19 testing free for more people

Japan is considering making coronavirus testing free for more people, including those with no apparent symptoms of the disease, in a fresh effort by the government to better prepare for a new possible Covid-19 wave, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihiko Isozaki said on Monday.

So far, tests have been free only for those with virus-linked symptoms and contacts with an infected person.

"When the infection doubles, even if that happens, we are going to establish a more solid medical system and this will become more concrete in our plan. Vaccines, testing, and enhancement of handling people recuperating at home and hotels from the discovery of infection to treatment, we are going to strengthen our steps and the holistic plan will be revealed [in] the first half of this month," Yoshihiko told a press conference when asked whether the government will introduce free PCR tests and antigen tests for all willing.

The package of measures, which will also include more hospital beds for coronavirus patients, and an opportunity for people with mild symptoms to undergo quarantine in specially designated facilities, including hotels, is aimed to identify positive Covid-19 cases at the early stage, reports ANI.

The new plan is expected to help the government prevent a repeat of the scenario of the fifth wave this summer, when the surging numbers of infections led to overloading of medical facilities and shortage of hospital beds.

About 73% of the country's population have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

UK to roll out Covid-19 antiviral drug trial this month

Britain will start to roll out Merck's molnupiravir Covid-19 antiviral pill through a drug trial later this month, Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Adviser at the UK Health Security Agency said on Sunday.

The British government said in October it had secured 480,000 courses of the Merck drug, as well as 250,000 courses of an antiviral pill developed by Pfizer Inc.

Asked about the molnupiravir approval, Hopkins told BBC television: "That is great news and it will start to be rolled out through a drug trial in the end of this month/the beginning of December."

Hopkins said all the trials so far had been done with the unvaccinated, so this would help understand how it will work in the wider vaccinated population, reports Reuters.

"The new Pfizer drug is probably not going to be licensed until the new year some time," she added. "It is still likely to be a couple of months away."

Singapore records 3,035 Covid cases; reports rare virus-MIS-C among children

Singapore has reported emerging cases of a rare virus-linked paediatric multi-system inflammatory syndrome amidst rising number of Covid-19 cases as it tries to arrest the spread of the contagion.

The country reported 3,035 new Covid-19 cases on Saturday and 12 deaths due to complications linked to the coronavirus.

Four infections are among over 8,000 paediatric Covid-19 cases that are "considered rare" and are emerging since the start of the pandemic, said the Health Ministry. All four, age ranging from two months to eight years, were admitted to hospital between October and November this year, reports Reuters.

Of these four cases, one four-year-old is in the children's intensive care unit (CICU) breathing with the support mechanical ventilation, one is in a general ward and two have been discharged.

An international review in May, 2020, reported a Multi-System Inflammatory Syndrome (MIS-C) incidence rate of 0.14 per cent, meaning 14 in 10,000 cases, among all children with Covid-19 infection, said the ministry.

As of Saturday, Singapore has reported 215,780 Covid-19 cases since the start of the pandemic and 480 deaths.

China: Communist party meet to cement Xi Jinping's rule

A key three-day Communist Party of China (CPC) meeting to be held in Beijing from Monday is set to cement President Xi Jinping's authority and pave the way for him to retain power for an unprecedented third time in 2022.

The sixth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee will review - and almost certainly pass - a key resolution on the "major achievements and historical experience of the Party's 100 years of struggles".

The historical document is only the third of its kind since the CPC was founded in 1921 with the first two issued under China's iconic leaders Mao Zedong in 1945 and the second by Deng Xiaoping in 1981, reports SutirthoPatranobis of Hindustan Times.

This year's plenum will be conducted by the current 19th Central Committee, which was elected in 2017 and will remain until late 2022 when the next party Congress will be held.

Monday's meeting has been preceded by China's Xinhua news agency, publishing an essay, paying glowing tributes to Xi Jinping, describing him as a tireless, selfless and scholarly servant of the people.

Xi is "a man of determination and action, a man of profound thoughts and feelings, a man who inherited a legacy and dares to innovate, and a man who has forward-looking vision and is committed to working tirelessly", Xinhua said.

It spoke about how on the "...eve of Lunar New Year 2020, with the Covid-19 epidemic clouding festivities, Xi had a sleepless night".

Headlined, "Xi Jinping, the man who leads CPC (Communist Party of China) on a new journey", the essay portrayed him as a man with "little time for himself", for whom "happiness is achieved through hard work".

A political science expert told state media that the meeting will "...re-enhance the Four Consciousnesses

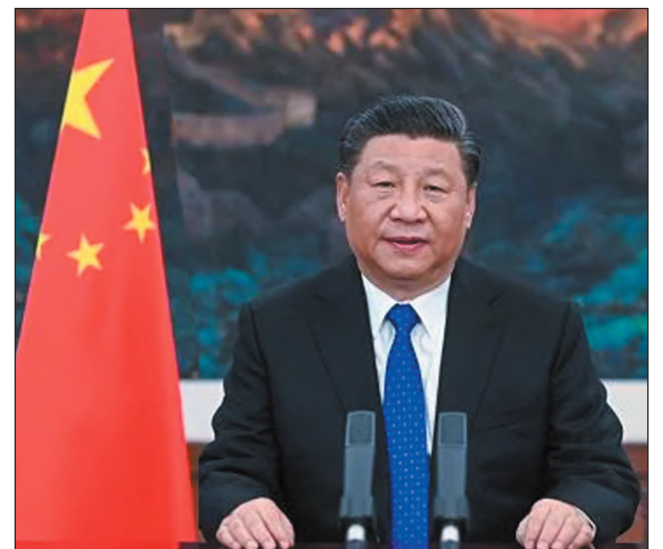


Cyclists pass the city skyline during the coronavirus disease outbreak, in Singapore. Pic- Reuters

In its efforts to boost hospital capacities, Singapore has converted the F1 Pit Building used for Grand Prix races into a 721-bed Covid-19 treatment facility, the Channel reported.

Starting Tuesday, the facility will only take in elderly patients, those who are unvaccinated and above 70 years old or vaccinated and above 80 years old.

Patients will be admitted after being assessed by hospitals and they will be monitored by medical staff round the clock.



China's President Xi Jinping is expected to retain power for an unprecedented third time in 2022. A key three-day Communist party meeting to be held in Beijing is set to cement Xi Jinping's authority. Pic - AFP

and re-affirm the Four Matters of Confidence to ensure the party will move forward in unison".

Quoting Yang Xuedong, a political science professor at Tsinghua University, told Global Times said the "Four Consciousnesses" refers to "consciousnesses of the ideology, the whole, the core and the line".

"When he took power in 2012, Xi spelt out two 'centenary goals': to make China a "moderately prosperous" society by 2021, 100 years since the party was founded, and a "great modern socialist country" by 2049, 100 years since Mao declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China", the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Xi announced that the first goal had been achieved at the party's centennial this year, and the resolution is likely to chart a path to achieve the second goal, the report said.

*Contd on page 6

Red lines over climate finance could jeopardise Glasgow outcome

After big bang announcements at the beginning of the COP26 climate summit, representatives of 196 countries and stakeholders are now racing to bridge significant divides over climate financing, net-zero commitments and how they can achieve the 1.5°C target as these remain major sticking points that could make or break global efforts to mitigate the climate crisis.

Multiple people involved in the negotiations, which will last for six more days, said there exists hard red lines between developed and developing countries and these must be resolved for countries to come to a consensus on the Glasgow pact text.

They said at least three issues are particularly divisive: the delivery of the \$100 billion climate finance that was agreed on in 2009; whether that amount is increased after 2025 period; the 1.5°C target and how it will be achieved globally now that several countries, including India and China, have announced they will not be able to go carbon neutral by 2050, reports Hindustan Times.

India, the third largest carbon emitter, has committed to a net-zero goal by 2070 and China, the largest emitter, has pegged



People take out a protest rally against the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow on Saturday. Pic -Reuters

2060 for the shift.

In the first domain pertaining to climate finance, developed countries have not agreed to any independent review of the

delivery of \$100 billion. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is keeping accounts of that fund. "The developing countries

have said OECD has been very generous in its accounting of the money so they want a review. The donors (developed countries) of course are deeply uncomfortable about such a review and number crunching. This I think will remain a red line," said a senior official from the EU delegation.

Then comes the issue of how much rich countries should in fact be contributing, with many nations, including India, demanding the aid to be increased, and whether some major economies like China should also be donating. "Will there be an incremental increase or not? And who will be included as the donors? South Africa for example has said \$750 billion will be needed. African countries have asking for \$1.3 trillion. It's impossible when it's difficult to deliver even \$100 billion. There are conversations on including China and Saudi Arabia among donors. I doubt if India will also be included but cannot rule out. So there is a second red line," another senior official from a developed country delegation added.

There are also discussions on whether big flows of private capital can be included in this finance goal.

Get ready to witness longest partial lunar eclipse of 21st century



Weather permitting, people in North and South America, Eastern Asia, Australia and the Pacific Region will be able to see at least part of the eclipse. Pic- AP

The longest partial lunar eclipse of the century is set to occur overnight on November 18-19 when the Moon will slip into Earth's shadow for a couple of hours, according to Nasa. The eclipse will occur earlier or later in the evening depending on the time zone of people witnessing the phenomenon. The duration of the partial lunar eclipse will be about 3 hours and 28 minutes.

During a partial lunar eclipse, Moon traverses Earth's penumbral and umbral shadows. Lunar eclipses can only occur during the Full Moon phase, with a minimum of two and a maximum of five lunar eclipses every year, reports Hindustan Times.

November's will be the second and the last lunar eclipse of the year. In May, a

total lunar eclipse occurred for a duration of 3 hours and 7 minutes.

This time, the eclipse will be visible from any location where the Moon will be above the horizon, according to Nasa, which means people in North and South America, Eastern Asia, Australia and the Pacific Region will be able to see at least part of the eclipse.

For those observing the eclipse from US East Coast, it will begin around 2.18am, reaching its peak at 4.02am in the morning. On the US West Coast, it will begin just after 11 pm, peaking at 1 am.

The longest total lunar eclipse of the century occurred on July 27, 2018, which went on for about an hour 42 minutes.

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Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Bill

“By what yardstick will the undesirability of the contents of an online publication be judged? Who will be the judge of that?”

The Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Bill is going through Parliament these days. It is backed by the Budapest Convention for EU countries to which Mauritius has subscribed voluntarily. While the aims are laudable in confronting novel forms of misuse of social media towards a variety of criminal ends, there is mistrust that has been generated by government actions to justify legislators having a closer look at provisions that may restrict normal freedom of speech and opinion or place an unreasonable onus on online administrators. Lex weighs in.

LEX

* Parliamentary debates will begin today on the Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Bill, the object of which is to repeal the Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act. What's the reasoning behind this initiative of the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation?

The reasoning is to be found in the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill which reads: “The object of this Bill is to repeal the Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act and replace it by a new Act to provide for – (a) increased compliance with the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime through the provision of additional criminal offences related to cybercrime and cybersecurity, improved investigation techniques and increased international cooperation.”

* Critics have focused on what they consider to be a disguised attempt by the government to go round the resistance that came up earlier this year following the circulation of the ‘Consultation Paper on proposed amendments to the ICT Act’. Are there already provisions in The Information and Communication Technologies Act 2001 for punishing people who make an abuse of information and communication technologies?

The present law contains a number of offences namely, unauthorised access to computer data and access to and interception of computer service as well as unauthorised modification of computer material. There is also the offence of damaging or denying access to computer system and unauthorised disclosure of password. Other offences are electronic fraud and unlawful possession of devices and data and unauthorised modification of computer data. Additional offences appear in the new law like computer-related forgery, cyberbullying, cyber extortion, revenge pornography, cyberterrorism, infringement of copyright and related right; failure to moderate undesirable content.

* It's a fact however that cybercrime keeps evolving, and is becoming more complex with advances in technology. This new Bill will provide the means and the legal framework to deal with “additional criminal offences related to cybercrime and cyber-

security, improved investigation techniques and increased international cooperation”. Isn't that reasonable enough?

Indeed. What are we witnessing today? Criminals use technological means to commit a number of high-profile offences. In addition, we have individuals who make an improper use of technology to abuse or threaten people. Any responsible government should react to this kind of issue. Since crimes are committed transnationally, international assistance becomes imperative in the fight against organized crime and other offences.

* Such offences like misuse of fake profile, cyberbullying, cyber extortion, revenge pornography, which can potentially cause tremendous harm to unsuspecting individuals have to be tackled. Doesn't this Bill provide the remedy/ies to such social ills?

The Bill makes provision to punish these offences. To that extent nothing sinister or controversial should be read in the Bill. Only those with a hidden agenda and whose wings will be clipped by the new law will shout the loudest and create a mayhem.

* There is also the issue of cyberterrorism as well as offences involving ‘critical information infrastructure’ which could result in “the interruption of a life sustaining service such as the supply of water, health services and energy; an important effect on the economy” and in “massive casualties or fatalities”; or the “failure or substantial disruption of the money market”. Cyberspace must not be allowed to become the playground for terrorists, isn't it?

Of course not. But criminals will not hesitate to use any method to carry out their illegal transaction.

* However, Section 23 of the new Bill may be



“As the Bill stands, it will be difficult to challenge most of its provisions. It should be remembered that the Bill copies almost faithfully the provisions of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. That Convention is the first international treaty on cybercrime and has been drafted by the Council of Europe. The Council takes into account the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights...”

construed as a threat to freedom of expression, since it becomes the responsibility of the administrator of an online account to moderate undesirable (online) content that “threatens, abuses or misleads the public; threatens public health or public safety” as well as “national security or promotes racism”. In the first instance, it's newspapers that run the risk of falling foul of the law. What's your take on that?

This is a controversial provision. It places a heavy responsibility on the administrator of an online account. By what yardstick will the undesirability of the contents of an online publication be judged? Who will be the judge of that? On the face of it, this provision appears to be in the nature of pre-censorship which is abhorrent to the principle of freedom of expression.

* Newspaper editors ‘moderate’ what goes in print, and they can be sued for libel or other offences. Shouldn't the same logic apply in the case of online administrators should they commit the same offence?

Whether a publication is in print or online the publisher is amenable to the same law of the land. There is not a law for online publication and another law for publication in print.

● Cont. on page 8

'The Bill makes provision to punish these offences. To that extent nothing sinister or controversial should be read in the Bill'

● Cont. from page 7

* However, who decides and on the basis of what criteria will online content be judged as containing threats to public safety, national security or likely to promote racism? Could that open the door to abuse by whichever authority will have the responsibility of oversight?

Under the Bill undesirable content includes any

leision, public exhibitions or public entertainments; or (c) for the imposition of restrictions upon public officers.

But the derogations must be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.

* In the eventuality that the Bill is voted, is there scope to challenge it on the ground of constitutionality?

the confidentiality, integrity and availability of computer systems, networks and computer data as well as the misuse of such systems, networks and data by providing for the criminalisation of such conduct, as described in this Convention, and the adoption of powers sufficient for effectively combating such criminal offences, by facilitating their detection, investigation and prosecution at both the domestic and international levels and by providing arrangements for fast and reliable international co-operation, as it appears in the Preamble to the Convention.

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“Section 23 of the new Bill is a controversial provision. It places a heavy responsibility on the administrator of an online account. By what yardstick will the undesirability of the contents of an online publication be judged? Who will be the judge of that? On the face of it, this provision appears to be in the nature of pre-censorship which is abhorrent to the principle of freedom of expression...”



online content that is deceptive or inaccurate, posted with intent to defame, threaten, abuse or mislead the public; threatens public health or public safety; threatens national security; or promotes racism.

Since this is a criminal offence, the investigation will be in the hands of the police, and it will be for the DPP to decide whether to prosecute or not.

* To come back to the issue of freedom of speech, what's the principle behind this concept?

The right of freedom of speech and expression means that every citizen of a country has the right to express his views, opinions, belief, and convictions freely by word of mouth, in writing or in, print or through any other methods provided he does so in full respect of existing defamation laws or those dealing with threats. This right is protected by section 12 of our Constitution.

* Are there or can there be limits to freedom of expression?

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right. It is not an absolute right like the right to life. It can be derogated from.

The Constitution states that the right can be derogated from in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health; (b) for the purpose of protecting the reputations, rights and freedoms of other persons or the private lives of persons concerned in legal proceedings, preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of the courts, or regulating the technical administration or the technical operation of telephony, telegraphy, posts, wireless broadcasting, te-

As the Bill stands, it will be difficult to challenge most of its provisions. It should be remembered that the Bill copies almost faithfully the provisions of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. That Convention is the first international treaty on cybercrime and has been drafted by the Council of Europe. The Council takes into account the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights. Though it is a European Treaty, a non-European country can ratify it, and this is what Mauritius has done.

* It might surprise the critics of the Bill that most social media users and the public generally might agree on the principle in favour for some form of oversight over social media content, as several jurisdictions have put in place. Is the absence of any form of oversight an option?

Though internet has been a boon in modern society, at the same time many make an improper use of internet platforms. Oversight becomes a must as a reaction to illegal and immoral conduct. In today's world, an absence of oversight would be catastrophic.

* Most of the jurisdictions which have implemented or envisaging to address the issue of abuse and misuse of social media have promulgated laws to make social media companies to take more responsibility for the safety of their users and tackle harm by content. It could be that it's the current atmosphere of trust deficit in the Government that's coming in the way of an otherwise necessary piece of legislation?

No. The government is only implementing its obligation under the Budapest Convention which, amongst others, is the necessity to deter action directed against

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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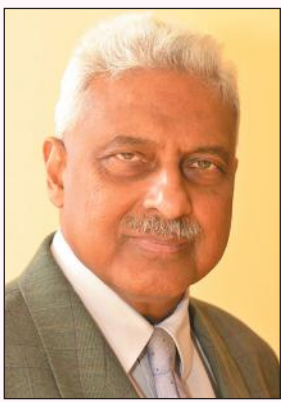
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Rajiv Roy

La conférence de Glasgow sur le climat - COP26 - est un moment de toute première importance pour la planète.

C'est la raison pour laquelle les yeux du monde sont rivés sur cet événement pour suivre avec appréhension si les décisions seront à la hauteur des enjeux, si depuis la COP23, il y a eu une évolution des consciences, si la moelle substantifique, la quintessence de ce qui nous lie en tant qu'humanité peut enfin s'imposer et s'essaimer.

Pourtant il est plus que jamais évident qu'il faudra se serrer les coudes pour s'en sortir collectivement car nous n'avons pas de planète de rechange!

Il faut dire que le constat actuel par rapport au changement climatique est accablant. Les preuves défilent quotidiennement devant nous à travers les variations de température, les pluies diluviennes conduisant à des inondations majeures, la montée du niveau de la mer, la fonte des glaces aux pôles, ou la disparition des neiges du Kilimandjaro plus près de chez nous.

Voilà pourquoi le Premier ministre italien Mario Draghi qui préside le G20, regroupant les grandes puissances économiques du monde, a clairement fait ressortir dans son discours que le combat contre le changement climatique est le défi majeur de notre époque.

Il a ajouté ceci: soit nous agissons maintenant en changeant de braquet pour favoriser une approche plus écologique, soit nous tergiversons en renvoyant à plus tard les décisions cruciales sans toutefois aucune garantie de réussite. Parmi les pays du G20, le Brésil, la Chine, l'Inde, l'Allemagne et les États-Unis représentent à eux seuls 80% d'émission de gaz à effet de serre de la planète.

Si nous sommes arrivés là, nous ne devons nous en prendre qu'à nous-mêmes, car c'est dû à nos excès, à notre course effrénée pour obtenir toujours plus de croissance, de profits, pour nous hisser en tête d'affiche, sans aucune autre considération et en faisant fi des conséquences désastreuses d'un tel comportement...

Ce changement climatique - qui bouscule désormais

“Si nous sommes arrivés là, nous ne devons nous en prendre qu'à nous-mêmes, car c'est dû à nos excès, à notre course effrénée pour obtenir toujours plus de croissance, de profits, pour nous hisser en tête d'affiche, sans aucune autre considération et en faisant fi des conséquences désastreuses d'un tel comportement... Ce changement climatique - qui bouscule désormais nos certitudes -exige de nous tous des prises de décision intelligentes et intelligibles. Le temps n'est plus aux discours vaseux mais à l'action...”

nos certitudes -exige de nous tous des prises de décision intelligentes et intelligibles. Le temps n'est plus aux discours vaseux mais à l'action car l'heure est grave. Selon les climatologues, pour faire plafonner le réchauffement climatique à 1.5 degrés, il faut atteindre le "net zero emission" (émission nette zéro) d'ici 2050.

Il y a donc une urgence pour amener tous les pays à faire les bons choix, à être proactifs pour que cette conférence ne soit pas un coup d'épée dans l'eau mais une opportunité réelle pour avancer dans la bonne direction et poser les bases pour un revirement de la situation.

Il faut aussi prendre acte du fait que certaines puissances, à l'instar de la Chine et l'Inde, veulent faire valoir le fait que l'on ne peut pas leur demander de freiner leur croissance et leur développement alors que d'autres pays - avant eux - ont construit leur richesse sans restrictions et sont responsables pour une large part de la situation actuelle.

Si ces éléments ne sont pas actés d'une manière ou d'une autre, alors l'on pourrait s'attendre à de la résistance de leur part. Il faut donc faire preuve de beaucoup de diplomatie et de doigté car, en définitive, le but est de faire avancer tous les pays dans la même direction et éviter ainsi de commettre l'irréparable.

Il faut aussi se rendre compte que les puissances de l'Ouest ont parfois le mauvais réflexe de distribuer des certificats de bonne conduite selon leur propre agenda ou de faire des déclarations péremptoires qui souvent agacent et irritent plus d'un. L'excellent film du grand metteur en scène Costa Gavras 'Adults in the room' sur l'attitude de l'Union européenne, et ce, par rapport à la



Pic - La Dépêche

Grâce alors qu'elle traversait une période délicate, est très révélateur et dépeint avec brio cette mentalité paternaliste.

Cette posture expliquerait, dans une certaine mesure, l'absence physique des dirigeants de la Chine et de la Russie à la COP26, même si, au fond, c'est une occasion ratée pour elles d'évoquer, en tête à tête, des dossiers litigieux ou en suspens pour atténuer les tensions qui ne servent les intérêts de personne.

Alors que ces gesticulations politiques se déroulent, il y a le sort d'un certain nombre de pays qui est dans la balance. L'on se souvient du cabinet des ministres exceptionnel tenu par le Premier ministre d'alors des Maldives sous la mer. Le but était d'amener le monde à réagir par rapport au fait que son île serait totalement submergée par l'océan dans un avenir pas très lointain. Même si cela avait marqué les esprits, encore une fois, il n'y a pas eu de suite, aucune mobilisation généralisée pour endiguer ce problème.

D'autres îles sont malheureusement dans une situation identique, à l'instar de Samoa, Solomon, Barbades, Tuvalu, Kiribati, parmi moult d'autres. D'ailleurs, le discours rempli d'émotion de la Première ministre des Barbades, Mia Amor Mottley, récemment, en Ecosse, tout autant que sa plaidoirie pour des actions concrètes a bouleversé plus d'un. Les populations de toutes ces îles représenteront une nouvelle catégorie de réfugiés, connue comme des réfugiés climatiques sans mère patrie et n'ayant plus de territoire propre.

Dans le même ordre d'idées, les peuples autochtones d'Amazonie, à l'instar du chef Raoni, sont à l'avant-plan du combat pour sauver la forêt primaire, leur habitat naturel depuis toujours, alors que parallèlement la déforestation continue de plus belle sous le gouvernement de Bolsonaro qui distribue des permis d'exploitation à tour de bras.

Parfois, entre le constat pourtant implacable et les mesures d'accompagnement, il y a un grand fossé, un trou béant. Autant lorsque les grandes corporations se retrouvent en difficulté ou au bord du gouffre comme pendant la crise des 'sub-primes', l'Etat se retrouve les manches pour voler à leur secours, autant lorsque de simples individus sont victimes du changement climatique, l'on tergiverse avant de décider s'il faut les soutenir ou non.

Et, c'est la raison pour laquelle de plus en plus de gens remettent en cause ce modèle de développement où ils se sentent exclus. Ceci expliquerait le pourcentage très élevé de l'abstention lors des élections ou l'attrait pour des partis qui prônent un nationalisme nous rappelant les pages sombres de l'Histoire de l'humanité.

Sur le plan local, il ne faudrait pas que la présence à la COP26 soit un moment de complaisance juste pour se donner bonne conscience et, qu'en retour, on ne prend pas les décisions courageuses qui conviennent, par exemple, par rapport au charbon.

Le charbon n'aurait pas dû être autorisé dans un premier temps si nos gouvernants avaient conscience de ses conséquences néfastes sur l'environnement mais il semblerait que des réseaux puissants ont toujours et encore le dernier mot.

From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

4th Year No 177

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 27 December 1957

• *He who fears nothing is not less powerful than he whom all fear.* -- Friedrich Schiller

By THUMB MARK III

Dr S. Ramgoolam

On the afternoon of Monday last about half past five we went to the Municipality of Port Louis. In the Committee Room were gathered the councillors; the public gallery was packed to capacity so much so that people coming late had to stand on tip toes by the door side and stretch their necks to have a glimpse of what was going on inside. The councillors, all with solemn looks, sat silently listening to the quavering voice of the chairman, Dr E. Millien, who was speaking in French. In the meantime, the audience was holding its breath; it was so silent that you could almost hear it.

By the side of the chairman, sat a short, dapper little man in a light blue suit wearing a red neck tie. He too was listening to the chairman, but he had his eyes fixed to the ceiling and betrayed a sense of absent-mindedness. We could not possibly make out what the chairman was saying, but we heard him concluding by proposing Dr Ramgoolam to be the Mayor for 1958. The proposal was seconded by a young councillor, Eddy Chankye; after putting the proposal to the vote, the chairman proclaimed Dr Ramgoolam Mayor of Port Louis for 1958 — and the audience broke into roaring applause; they applauded a landmark in the history of the Indo-Mauritian community.

Dr Ramgoolam is the first Indo-Mauritian to become Mayor of Port Louis. His election to such a high office is an event in which one can read the progress made by the Indo-Mauritian community so far; it is more striking when it is considered against a historical background. The other side to this event is that it brings out the personality and career of the greatest parliamentarian ever produced by the Indo-Mauritian community, a community which some people had come to think were composed of mere hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Ramgoolam is now 56; he has already spent over 20 years in public life. He was born of very humble parents on a sugar estate in Flacq district and, during his early years, the period of his primary education, he had to attend to many a menial job; he even tilled the land. Gradually, he made his way up to Royal College and in his early twenties he left for London for medical studies.

His student days in London were not very rosy and at a certain time he had to interrupt his studies owing to lack of funds. But being a courageous and a go-ahead young chap, he was not to be daunted by adverse circumstances and fought his way up. He had to work and study at the same time and he did it.

Altogether, he spent over 10 years in London to complete his studies. Quite often there is an ill wind that blows nobody good but, in his case, his rather long stay in London was not purposeless. It was an opportunity for him to study the British mind at the same time keeping an eye on the political developments around him. He took to writing and established quite a number of contacts in political and journalistic circles. He returned to Mauritius in 1936.

Soon after his arrival he was drawn into politics. He founded the daily *Advance*, which has the largest circulation today and tried to make of it the mouthpiece of socialism. He joined the *Union Mauricienne* in the early forties and was elected to the Municipality of Port Louis but later had to leave owing to an ideological conflict. Later he was nominated to the Legislative Council where he is still serving but not as a nominee. When it came to



Pic - vintagemauritius.org

revise the Constitution in 1947, he was appointed on the Constitutional Consultative Committee. It was a crucial period when the vested interests were really threatened, when the hoi polloi began mustering its strength and when faint cries of Indian domination were heard. At that time the Mauritius Labour Party, founded a few years earlier under the inspiring leadership of Dr Cure, was in a helpless state; it was moribund and after the elections of 1948 under the then new Constitution when he was elected from Pamplemousses-Rivière du Rempart, Ramgoolam joined the party. Ramgoolam had realised that it was idle for the workers to fight their way individually.

Since then, a new chapter was opened in his life and he had held a prominent place on the political stage of this country. He was nominated on the Executive Council and together with his colleagues of the Labour Party began clamouring for a more liberal constitution: in fact, he thought that nothing short of Responsible Government with ministerial powers coupled with adult suffrage would satisfy the party and the idea was launched.

It is difficult to speak of Ramgoolam without mentioning NMU (Noel Marrier d'Unienville) and at this juncture we are compelled to do it. Long before the Labour Party published its manifesto which sought Responsible Government for Mauritius. NMU, who had returned from Paris and taken charge of *Le*

Cernéen, had started hitting Ramgoolam. For over 8 years, hardly an issue of *Le Cernéen* was printed without an article — very often there were more than one — abusing or vili-fying Ramgoolam.

At first, we had thought that it was just a political struggle but the ruthless hatred which was being poured on the doctor from the columns of *Le Cernéen* was just shocking. It was a well-designed plan to identify Ramgoolam with the resurgent Indo-Mauritian community, to confuse the Indo-Mauritians themselves and finally to drive a wedge between the two main ethnic groups composing the Labour Party. Apart from a few casual articles, Ramgoolam neither in his own name nor on behalf of the Labour Party raised a little finger to counter the anti-Labour propaganda and there lies what this correspondent considers to be the only blunder of his career and it is a blunder which has changed the direction of the destiny of Mauritius.

The Hindu hegemony myth hammered upon by NMU and others gained much ground not only in Mauritius but in London too, and when Ramgoolam and his colleagues went to the Colonial Office for negotiations about our Constitution they had to face a British government who had swallowed the Hindu domination bogey, lock, stock and even barrel. And instead of having a really responsible government with a fully-fledged ministerial system we had to accept a hotch-potch kind of ministry and what followed needs no retelling. When the ministry was constituted this year, he was *appointed* (by the Governor) Ministerial Secretary to the Treasury and now he has been elected Mayor of Port Louis.

It is by no means possible to give a complete picture of such an impressive and controversial personality as Ramgoolam within the compass of a short chronicle. What we have said is confessedly of a schematic nature. Lest we forget, let it be said that besides being an adroit diplomat, a great parliamentarian and a suitable politician he is a writer whose pen many will covet. The few articles he had written on the class conflicts of this island constitute the best pages of socialist writings of Mauritius and betray an analytical mind so far unmatched. Ramgoolam is to his people what Rivet has been to his community and on this great occasion we cannot but wish him all the best.

1956-2021

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Changement climatique & COP26

De notre destin commun

• Suite de la page 9

Le changement climatique doit impérativement renforcer le concept de solidarité mondiale. Ainsi, la crise des migrants concerne tous ceux quittant des zones de guerre ou des pays touchés par la famine, et ceux qui sont victimes de brimades pour chercher refuge sous des cieux plus sûrs, en dépit des passeurs véreux.

Cette situation a dévoilé un aspect pas très flatteur des sociétés les plus avancées. Il faudrait une politique d'aide ciblée pour encourager un développe-

ment local responsable, ce qui contribuerait à préserver l'environnement. Il est vrai que la grande majorité des peuples du monde ont un attachement profond à leur terre d'origine et ne demandent qu'à vivre en paix avec leur famille sur ce sol.

La COP26 a du pain sur la planche. Plus de 100,000 jeunes ont défilé car il s'agit de leur avenir et ils n'ont pas l'intention d'abdiquer, de baisser les bras: ils réclament des comptes. Mais au vu de l'attitude calculée de certains dirigeants, le chemin risque d'être long tout en espérant

qu'ici-là il ne soit pas trop tard.

En effet, nous sommes à la veille d'une situation irréversible. Greta Thunberg, l'activiste très pugnace, a déjà qualifié cette conférence négativement: c'est un échec parce qu'il n'y a pas suffisamment d'ambition, nous dit-elle.

Espérons, néanmoins, qu'à la clôture des travaux, on ne se limite pas aux seules "nettes zéro" d'émissions de gaz en 2050, à l'arrêt de la déforestation en 2030, ou à stopper l'émission de méthane en 2030. Ce ne serait pas suffisant et confirmerait les craintes de certains scien-

tifiques qui pensent que même si les initiatives pour réduire les émissions sont mises en place, nous serons quand même impactés par une augmentation de 2.7 degrés.

Il faudrait aussi que les pays riches tiennent parole en mettant à disposition les \$100milliards promis depuis 2020, sinon les pays moins nantis questionneront à juste titre leur crédibilité. C'est pour cette raison que le secrétaire général des Nations unies, Antonio Guterres, a souligné avec force que les manquements par rapport aux engagements financiers contribuaient à la méfiance entre le nord et le sud. Notre avenir se joue maintenant.

Let's keep our fingers crossed...

Rajiv Roy

Is Covid-19 here to stay?

• Cont. from page 2

When a virus first enters a population with no immunity, its contagiousness is defined by scientists using a simple mathematical term, called R_0 , which is pronounced "R-naught." This is also referred to as the reproduction number. The reproduction number of a virus represents how many people, on average, are infected by each infected person. For example, the first SARS-CoV had an R_0 of about 2, meaning that each infected person passes the virus to two people on average. For the delta variant strain of SARS-CoV-2, the R_0 is between 6 and 7.

The goal for public health authorities is to slow the rate by which viruses spread. Universal masking, social distancing, contact tracing and quarantines are all effective tools to reduce the spread of respiratory viruses. Since SARS-CoV was poorly transmissible, it just took a little bit of public health intervention to drive the virus to extinction. Given the highly transmissible nature of the delta variant, the challenge for eliminating the virus will be much greater, meaning that the virus is more likely to become endemic.

Is Covid-19 ever going away?

It's clear that SARS-CoV-2 is very successful at finding new people to infect, and that people can get infected after vaccination. For these reasons, the transmission of this virus is not expected to end. It's important that we consider why SARS-CoV-2 moves so easily from one person to the next, and how human behavior plays into that virus transmission.

SARS-CoV-2 is a respiratory virus that is spread through the air and is efficiently transmitted when people congregate. Critical public health interventions, like mask use and social distancing, have been key in slowing the spread of disease. However, any lapse in these public health measures can have dire consequences. For instance, a 2020 motorcycle rally brought together nearly 500,000 people in Sturgis, South Dakota, during the early phases of the pandemic. Most of the attendees were unmasked and not practicing social distancing. That event was directly responsible for an increase in Covid-19 cases in the state of South Dakota and nationwide. This shows



An elderly woman receives a Pfizer COVID-19 booster shot at a clinic in San Rafael, California. Justin Sullivan/Getty Images News via Getty Images

how easily the virus can spread when people let their guard down.

The virus that causes Covid-19 is often associated with superspreading events, in which many people are infected all at once, typically by a single infected individual. In fact, our own work has shown that just 2% of the people infected with Covid-19 carry 90% of the virus that is circulating in a community. These important "supercarriers" have a disproportionately large impact on infecting others, and if they aren't tracked down before they spread the virus to the next person, they will continue to sustain the epidemic. We currently don't have a nationwide screening program geared toward identifying these individuals.

Finally, asymptomatically infected people account for roughly half of all infections of Covid-19. This, when coupled with a broad range of time in which people can be infectious – two days before and 10 days after symptoms appear – affords many opportunities for virus transmission, since people who don't know they are sick generally take few measures to isolate from others.

The contagious nature of SARS-CoV-2 and our highly interconnected society constitute a perfect storm that will likely contribute to sustained virus spread.

What will our future with Covid-19 look like?

Given the considerations discussed above and what

we know about Covid-19 so far, many scientists believe that the virus that causes Covid-19 will likely settle into endemic patterns of transmission. But our inability to eradicate the virus does not mean that all hope is lost.

Our post-pandemic future will heavily depend on how the virus evolves over the coming years. SARS-CoV-2 is a completely new human virus that is still adapting to its new host. Over time, we may see the virus become less pathogenic, similar to the four coronaviruses that cause the common cold, which represent little more than a seasonal nuisance.

Global vaccination programs will have the greatest impact on curbing new cases of the disease. However, the SARS-CoV-2 vaccine campaign so far has touched only a small percentage of people on the planet. In addition, breakthrough infections in vaccinated people still occur because no vaccine is 100% effective. This means that booster shots will likely be needed to maximize vaccine-induced protection against infection.

With global virus surveillance and the speed at which safe and effective vaccines have been developed, we are well poised to tackle the ever-evolving target that is SARS-CoV-2. Influenza is endemic and evolves quickly, but seasonal vaccination enables life to go on as normal. We can expect the same for SARS-CoV-2 – eventually.

How will we know if and when SARS-CoV-2 becomes endemic?

Four seasonal coronaviruses circulate in humans endemically already. They tend to recur annually, usually during the winter months, and affect children more than adults. The virus that causes Covid-19 has not yet settled down into these predictable patterns and instead is flaring up unpredictably around the globe in ways that are sometimes difficult to predict.

Once rates of SARS-CoV-2 stabilize, we can call it endemic. But this transition may look different based on where you are in the world. For instance, countries with high vaccine coverage and plentiful boosters may soon settle into predictable spikes of Covid-19 during the winter months when the environmental conditions are more favourable to virus transmission. In contrast, unpredictable epidemics may persist in regions with lower vaccination rates.

Sara Sawyer, Professor of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology, Arturo Barbachano-Guerrero & Cody Warren, University of Colorado Boulder

Social media: teenage girls with perfectionist tendencies need to take extra care – here's how

When perfectionists compare themselves to others on social media, they report feelings of depression and insecurity



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We all do it. Robot-like, we endlessly scroll through social media feeds. To an extent, we even go about our daily lives staring at screens while ignoring the world around us. In fact, evidence suggests a fifth of adolescents spend five or more hours on social media per day. Some even log on after midnight.

Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and TikTok are a ubiquitous part of young people's lives – especially female adolescents. But as recent research suggests, the psychological wellbeing of these young women may be at stake as a result. And our new study, published in the *Personality and Individual Differences* journal, has identified a group who may be particularly vulnerable.

Social media feeds are filled with beautiful models, people living perfect lives and unattainable body ideals. Photographs are altered using filters – and only a person's highlights are shown. We find ourselves under the spell of social media, and while there are benefits to using it, it often takes an emotional toll.

Female adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the stringent standards of beauty displayed on social media. Social media often intensifies their insecurities and anxieties. And, in the face of the edited, perfect lives of others, many feel inadequate.

This is partly because social media provides female adolescents with a platform to compare their appearance with others. Sadly, research suggests that women often perceive themselves negatively in such comparisons. It has been shown to heighten female body-image concerns, reduce happiness and increase

feelings of social alienation.

Rising levels of perfectionism

Whether social media is harmful or not ultimately depends on who is using it, though. Our new study suggests that "self-critical perfectionism" is one characteristic which may make young women vulnerable to the harmful effects of social media.

Perfectionism is a personality trait characterised by irrational standards and harsh self-criticism. People who are high in self-critical perfectionism are likely to set uncompromising standards for their appearance and compare themselves negatively with others. They can also have a tendency to feel that other people or society more generally demand perfection. This can lead to chronic concerns about others' criticism and expectations.

Recent research has found perfectionism to be rising in young people. This is particularly alarming, as perfectionism has been linked to a host of negative outcomes, such as depression, symptoms of eating disorders, and even thoughts and ideas about suicide.

To test whether perfectionists really are more vulnerable on social media, we measured 135 female adolescents' level of perfectionism, body appreciation, depressive symptoms and comparisons based on appearance on social media. We did this once a week for four weeks.

In line with previous research, we found that the girls who were self-critical perfectionists were more likely to have greater depressive symptoms and lower body appreciation. However, we also discovered that the girls reported even more depressive symptoms and negative body image when comparing their appearance negatively to others on social media.

People higher in self-critical perfectionism are therefore thought to be especially vulnerable to negative social comparisons. This is because they derive their self-worth from being seen by others as flawless.

While social media can seemingly provide people higher in self-critical perfectionism with a fleeting fix of self-worth and validation, the endless likes, comments and follows can also evoke feelings of inadequacy. Negative comparisons will likely exacerbate perfectionists' underlying sense of inferiority.

Moving forward

Although social media is an inevitable part of modern society, we suggest that adolescents who are more vulnerable to the negative effects should spend more time offline. They should also control what is shown on their social media feeds – by unfollowing or muting accounts that are

triggering their anxieties. Finally, they should avoid or reappraise comparisons made with others.

In particular, adolescents would benefit from questioning the unrealistic standards of beauty on social media, and being more wary of the perfect images portrayed online.

Parents can help by talking with their adolescent children about the fact that their value as a person does not hinge on attaining a perfect appearance. They should help encourage children to avoid using social media to gain validation and self-worth. Indeed, challenging this belief and adopting greater self-compassion and self-acceptance is vital to help counteract these harmful effects.

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The Annual General Meeting of RDA Technical and Other Staff Union will be held on Saturday 27 November 2021 at 10.00 am at Dhiraj Fine Dining Restaurant, Quartier Militaire.

Agenda

1. Reading & approval of last AGM.
2. Matters arising.
3. President's report.
4. Finance.
5. Amendments to rules (if any) and Motions.
6. Reshufflements (if any).
7. AOB.
8. Speeches by Honorary Guests.
9. Lunch.

Dr Prithish Gupta QUEDOU
Secretary

Poudre d'Or Village Shivalay Women Association

Reg No. 6735

The Annual General Meeting of Poudre d'Or Village Shivalay Women Association will be held on Sunday 28 November 2021 at 09.00 am at the seat of the Poudre d'Or Village Shivalay.

Agenda

1. Reading & approval of last AGM.
2. Matters arising.
3. President's report.
4. Finance.
5. Amendments to rules (if any) and Motions.
6. AOB.

Mila Seebaluck
Secretary

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10 things I learned about rich people while helping millionaires manage their money

Jon Dulin, Free Money Finance – Business Insider

I had the privilege of a view into how the wealthy manage their money when I worked for a high net worth financial planning firm. As a guy in my early 30s, I didn't know what to think, working for the wealthy. However as I met these people and became intimate with their financial lives and their goals, I felt more at ease. I also learned a lot. In fact, I have started to use many of the things I learned from working with them in my personal life to help me get ahead.

Appearances are deceiving

When clients would come in for a quarterly meeting or just to say hello, you would never guess they were worth millions by just looking at them. They were smart with their spending and didn't show it off.

Takeaway Lesson: Being rich isn't about appearances. It is about being smart with your money. Sure when you make it, you could buy a huge house and drive brand new cars, but chances are you are going to end up broke.

A high-paying job doesn't mean an easy financial life

Many people might think that being a doctor means you have an easy financial life. While this is true in the long run, in the short term it is not the case. Most of the doctors we dealt with had a lot of debt. But they also had a ton saved for retirement.

When it comes to high paying jobs outside of the medical field, your financial life is not a breeze either. Often you are in social circles with other wealthy people which leads to expensive cars, second houses and country club memberships.

A handful of our clients had country club memberships that cost them \$10,000 a year and they never went. They just had a membership because it was a status symbol.

Takeaway Lesson: Don't think that a high paying job means zero financial stress in your life. At the end of the day, your money decisions determine how much wealth you have. If you choose to spend all of your money, you will never get ahead financially. But if you save, regardless of your income, you can grow your wealth.

Don't focus on the cost. Look at the benefits.

Too many of us look only at the cost of things and not the benefit it provides. For example, you might scoff at paying someone to manage your investments when you could do it yourself. For some people, doing your own taxes or managing your own investments is possible. But for others, it might not be the best idea.

For example, we had a long time client come to us one day and tell us that over the time he worked with us he saw a couple of recessions. Through it all, we held his hand and kept him invested for the long term. He admitted if he was managing his own money, he wouldn't have nearly the same amount as he does now.

Takeaway Lesson: Don't just look at the cost of something, look at what you get out of it. This applies to everything in life. Even clothing. A high quality suit that costs more money lasts much longer than a bargain suit. In the moment, that bargain suit looks like the smarter financial move, but in the long run, you save money by buying quality.

They look long term

Those not financially well off tend to be short sighted and the wealthy look long term. In other words, those not financially well off are fixated on short term happiness. The wealthy look at the long term and see how spending and saving will affect their finances over time. When



buying a car, the wealthy focus on the total price of the car. People who struggle with money look at just the monthly payment and end up spending a lot more overall.

Takeaway Lesson: Don't get caught up in the moment and buy something, even if it looks like a good deal. Take your time and think through things to make sure it is the best use of your money.

Even the rich don't budget

I can't tell you how many times we sat down for a meeting to update goals and projections and the client was clueless on what they spend annually.

I quickly learned when creating a plan to add 10% to whatever number they said they spend a year because everyone tends to underestimate how much they really spend.

While it isn't great that they don't budget, it isn't as big of a deal with the wealthy. After all, when you spend \$10,000 a month and have \$20 million, you can live comfortably for a long time. That is only about 1% of your net worth a year. But when you are spending \$3,000 a month and only make \$40,000 a year, you have a problem.

Takeaway Lesson: Make sure you know where your money is going. At the very least, save a portion of every pay check, ideally 10-20% of it, and don't spend more than you have in your checking account. If you can do this, you will make progress financially.

Running a business is a path to wealth

Many of our clients started their own businesses. A good number were McDonald's franchisee holders. Others ran insurance companies. While we also had a bunch of clients that worked for someone else, the wealthiest of the group all ran their own business.

Takeaway Lesson: Running a business is the best way to become a millionaire. While you can save and invest your way there as well, running a business will get you there faster. But running a successful business isn't a piece of cake. It's a lot of upfront cost and lots of hard work.

Being invested is more important than timing the market

Part of our investing strategy was to keep our clients invested in the market. We didn't try to time the market when investing. After the market collapsed in 2008, we kept the majority of clients invested. And it all paid off. By 2011, most everyone had seen their portfolio values higher than they were before the crash.

Takeaway Lesson: Don't obsess with trying to pick the perfect time to invest in the stock market. Just get your money invested. Be sure you have a plan and follow it for the ultimate chance of success.

Those who are well off have a genuine spirit

Many of the rich are honest, humble people. They spend a lot of their time volunteering, donate a lot of their money to causes they believe in, and are more than willing to help out others. They are not what the media portrays the rich to be at all. In fact, they are a lot like you and me.

Takeaway Lesson: While you might get ahead in the short term by making money illegally or in a shady manner, at the end of the day, honest hard work and being a good person will get you much farther in life. And you'll be a lot happier too.

Involve your spouse in your finances

The importance of involving your family in your finances is critical. There were 3 times when one of our clients passed away. Each time it was the male and each time, the wife came in to our office, with no idea as to how much money they had and which financial institutions they had accounts with.

Takeaway Lesson: Make sure you include others in your financial life. Even if they have zero interest in it, make sure you have a document with accounts, account numbers, passwords, values, etc., and make sure your spouse or close family member knows where it is. The more information they have regarding the finances, the more they can focus on other things during their time of mourning.

This post was originally published on Free Money Finance.

Work Smarter

Don't let your loyalty to your company compromise your ethics

Being dedicated to your organization is admirable. After all, loyalty has many benefits at work — it helps build trust, commitment, and a sense of team. But be careful that you aren't so committed to your company that you compromise your ethics. You can guard against being blindly loyal by staying true to who you are. First, if you see something unethical, say something. You may be concerned about "rocking the boat" at a place you care deeply about but remember that silence often enables wrongdoing to continue, which is ultimately bad for the organization. Don't compete with your colleagues. When workplaces get competitive, people start to lose sight of what is right and wrong. Instead, seek out ways to collaborate and build loyalty across teams. Finally, shift your perspective. When you find yourself in a fraught situation where you are torn between what's best for the organization and what's best for you (say your manager is asking you to do something you feel is unethical, for example), try taking a step back and consider how someone who didn't feel so loyal to the company would act in your shoes.

This tip is adapted from "Are You Too Loyal to Your Organization?," by Zachariah Berry - Harvard Business Review



Italian sailors knew of America 150 years before Christopher Columbus

New analysis of ancient writings suggests that sailors from the Italian hometown of Christopher Columbus knew of America 150 years before its renowned 'discovery'.

Transcribing and detailing a, circa, 1345 document by a Milanese friar, Galvaneus Flamma, Medieval Latin literature expert Professor Paolo Chiesa has made an "astonishing" discovery of an "exceptional" passage referring to an area we know today as North America.

According to Chiesa, the ancient essay -- first discovered in 2013 -- suggests that sailors from Genoa were already aware of this land, recognizable as 'Markland'/'Marckalada' -- mentioned by some Icelandic sources and identified by scholars as part of the Atlantic coast of North America (usually assumed to be Labrador or New-found-land).

Published in the peer-reviewed journal *Terrae Incognitae*, the findings add more fuel to the fire for the continuing question of 'what, exactly, did Columbus expect to find when he set out across the ocean?'

Galvaneus was a Dominican friar who lived in Milan and was connected to a family which held at the lordship of the city. He wrote several literary works in Latin, mainly on historical subjects. His testimony is valuable for information on Milanese contemporary facts, about which he has first-hand knowledge.

Cronica universalis, which is analyzed here by Chiesa,

is thought to be one of his later works -- perhaps the last one -- and was left unfinished and unperfected. It aims to detail the history of the whole world, from 'Creation' to when it was published.

In translating and analysing the document, Prof Chiesa demonstrates how Genoa would have been a "gateway" for news, and how Galvaneus appears to hear, informally, of seafarers' rumours about lands to the extreme north-west for eventual commercial benefit -- as well as information about Greenland, which he details accurately (for knowledge of the time).

"These rumours were too vague to find consistency in

cartographic or scholarly representations," the professor states, as he explains why Marckalada wasn't classified as a new land at the time.

Regardless though, Chiesa states, *Cronica universalis* "brings unprecedented evidence to the speculation that news about the American continent, derived from Nordic sources, circulated in Italy one and half centuries before Columbus."

He adds: "What makes the passage (about Marckalada) exceptional is its geographical provenance: not the Nordic area, as in the case of the other mentions, but northern Italy.

Physics meets democracy in this modeling study

A study in the journal *Physica A* leverages concepts from physics to model how campaign strategies influence the opinions of an electorate in a two-party system. Researchers created a numerical model that describes how external influences, modelled as a random field, shift the views of potential voters as they interact with each other in different political environments.

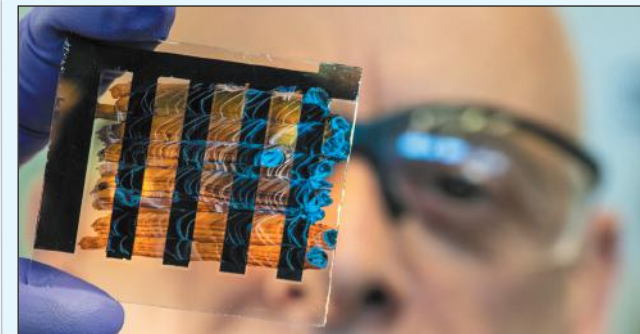
The model accounts for the behaviour of conformists (people whose views align with the views of the majority in a social network); contrarians (people whose views oppose the views of the majority); and inflexibles (people who will not change their opinions).

"The interplay between these behaviours allows us to create electorates with diverse behaviours interacting in environments with different levels of dominance by political parties," says first author Mukesh Tiwari, PhD, associate professor at the Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology.

"We are able to model the behaviour and conflicts of democracies, and capture different types of behaviour that we see in elections," says senior author Surajit Sen, PhD, professor of physics in the University at Buffalo College of Arts and Sciences.

Sen and Tiwari conducted the study with Xiguang Yang, a former UB physics student. Jacob Neihsel, PhD, associate professor of political science at UB, provided feedback to the team, but was not an author of the research.

The team used this model to explore a variety of scenarios involving different types of political environments and electorates.



Among key findings, as the authors write in the abstract: "In an electorate with only conformist agents, short-duration high-impact campaigns are highly effective. ... In electorates with both conformist and contrarian agents and varying level(s) of dominance due to local factors, short-term campaigns are effective only in the case of fragile dominance of a single party. Strong local dominance is relatively difficult to influence and long-term campaigns with strategies aimed to impact local level politics are seen to be more effective."

"I think it's exciting that physicists are thinking about social dynamics. I love the big tent," Neihsel says, noting that one advantage of modelling is that it could enable researchers to explore how opinions might change over many election cycles -- the type of longitudinal data that's very difficult to collect.

Mathematical modeling has some limitations: "The real world is messy, and I think we should embrace that to the extent that we can, and models don't capture all of this messiness," Neihsel says.



Why do our toes and fingers get wrinkly in the bath?

The truth is scientists aren't exactly sure why our fingers and toes get wrinkly in the bath.

Here's what we do know:

- * it happens when we stay in the bath for more than about five minutes, but can happen faster if the water is hotter. In warm water (about 40 degrees Celsius), the skin on your hands and feet can wrinkle in only 3.5 minutes
- * it also happens to macaque monkeys
- * it only happens on our hands and feet. The rest of our skin doesn't tend to wrinkle in this way.

We do know the water doesn't just leak into our fingers all by itself. The body actually works to let the water past the first few layers of skin. It has something to do with



our nervous system, the network of "wires" that help pass messages from your brain to various parts of your body.

In fact, if you cut or damage certain nerves, the skin on hands or feet won't wrinkle when wet.

And we also know the wrinkling has something to do with blood vessels shrinking. Blood vessels are the tiny pipes that carry blood around your body. Veins, arteries and capillaries are all types of blood vessels.

So we have some clues about how the skin wrinkles, but no clear answer on why.

Even though we don't really understand why this wrinkling happens, there are some theories. Theories means scientists have come up with their best guesses.

Good grip in a slippery situation?

Have you found things that are wet are easier to pick up when your hands are wrinkly?

Some scientists think wrinkling may give us better grip in water. This makes it easier for us to touch and hold wet objects with our hands. Our toes also wrinkle in water, and so maybe this helps us safely walk on wet surfaces.

A very long time ago, this would have helped our ancestors collect food from underwater, especially in fast-flowing

water like you might see in a creek or river.

However, some scientists tested this idea, and found having wrinkled fingers often did not help. So maybe this isn't the answer after all.

Why aren't our fingers always wrinkly?

If there are some good things to do with wrinkly fingers and toes, why aren't they always this way?

Well, wrinkles might make it easier for our skin to get injured or make it harder to feel sensations. And if your feet are wet and wrinkly all the time you might get a painful and dangerous condition called trench foot.

So maybe wrinkly hands and feet aren't something you want all the time.

Your question is a very interesting one that scientists still wonder about. Maybe one day you will find the answer.

Christian Moro

Associate Prof of Medicine and
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Healthy Living

Small bursts of exercise that add up to a lot

If you don't have time to change into gym clothes and do a full workout, these quick tips can help you sneak exercise into even the busiest day.



Stretch: It helps your blood flow through your body, increases your range of motion, and may help prevent an injury. And you can do it anywhere, even at your desk during the workday. But keep it gentle. Don't push to the point of serious pain, and never "bounce" into a stretch.

1-Mile Rule: If you live close to town, think of all the places you drive within a mile of your home. In the time it takes to load up the car, drive, find -- and possibly pay for -- parking, you could probably have walked there.

Tense your muscles: No time for the gym? No problem. You can do this almost anywhere and in very little time. A typical example: Tighten your stomach

muscles for 3 to 10 seconds. Repeat 4 times. Your co-workers won't even know you're working out. These exercises may lower your blood pressure as well.

Get a jogging stroller: Don't feel trapped in the house with the kid. Take them with you! A stroller can make your jog an adventure for everyone.

Walking meetings: Need 30 minutes to catch up with a co-worker? Do it on foot and kill two birds with one stone. Not only will you get some exercise, but you may also do your job better.

Take the stairs: In 1 minute, a 150-pound person burns 10 calories walking up stairs, compared with 1.5 calories taking the elevator. Take the stairs one at a time. It actually burns more calories than taking them two at a time.

Sprint! Just three 20-second sprints, with a 2-minute break in between, may be as good for you as 50 minutes of moderate jogging. Just make sure to warm up first. And ask your doctor if you're not sure if you're healthy enough for vigorous exercise.

Power chores: As the person you live with will tell you, you have any number of chances to be active around the house and yard. Scrub the tub a little harder than usual. It can get your heart rate up. Does the car need a detail? Do it yourself. You'll save some money and get a workout at the same time.

Stay off the couch: Don't settle in with a bowl of ice cream to watch TV. Put the remote across the room so you have to get up to change the channel. Ride an exercise bike or run in place while you watch, do pushups during commercial breaks, or just tidy up around the living room. You'll burn calories and be more likely to stay out of the fridge.

WebMD

The question you need to ask your partner to diffuse an argument

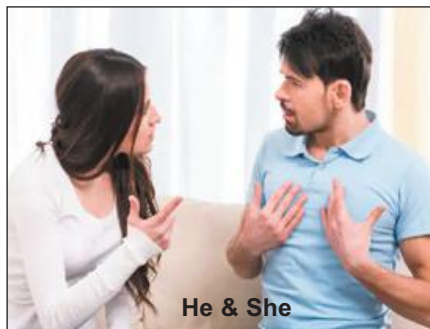
Arguments are exhausting. Complaining about office drama or fighting about the piled-up dishes in the sink are only some of the reasons why couples fight. Even if it is considered a healthy practice in marriages and relationships, it can lower the morale of the couple when things get rowdy. While fighting, couples end up yelling, swearing or even crying because both seem to come to the conclusion that, they don't understand each other's problems. And that means, more fights.

The number one thing couples can agree on while fighting is that they both just don't understand what approach they need to take to solve the argument. Whether it's agreeing with each other or boasting about individual opinions and views. You both don't understand what exactly you two need to hear at the moment. And so, you both get stuck, unable to decipher the differences between you two. However, if analysed carefully, couples can come out of this uncharted territory by applying a magical, yet basic marital solution i.e, ask each other these questions while fighting:

Do you want me to comfort you? Or, do you want me to give you solutions?

Recorded to end fights most of the time, these simple two questions can come out to be very handy for couples who are unable to grasp why their fights always turn ugly.

Sometimes, in the event of an emotional or physical disaster, all we want is someone to comfort us. While you spit indifferences about the cruel aunt from your partner's side of the family, you would want nothing more than to have your partner to be on your side for once, so that they can also support our frustration over seemingly difficult family matters. Regardless of any situation, sometimes, you just want some comfort.



He & She

While on the other hand, asking for solutions to problems seems like a better and mature idea at times. Relying on comfort from your partner during a fight may not be what you are looking for, instead, you might want some practical views or solution to the fight you are having with your partner right now. You might want to know where you went wrong and what is the quickest solution to dissolve the fight.

This helps you figure out what exactly you need

This leads us to wonder if fights happen because couples don't understand whether they require comfort or solution at the moment? Probably yes, because these two simple questions above, can solve the problem in a jiffy. It leaves no room for miscommunication or misunderstanding as you have to just answer whether you want comfort or solution in the fight. Going around in circles, treading over the same points will garner nothing, except for more disagreements, anger and spite.

This will not only help you get clarity to what you want but also helps your partner to direct the fight towards your current needs and vice versa. You both are further allowing yourselves to vulnerable during fights and arguments. By asking each other these two golden questions, you both will move a step closer to understanding what you both want, and most importantly, diffuse the fight at once.

Important words to say to your partner to strengthen your marriage



He & She

Couples constantly look for ways to keep the romance alive in their relationship. Dates, flowers, gifts are only some ways to tell your partner how much you mean to them. But, verbally communicating your feelings to your partner is the most precious and impactful way to strengthen your bond further. Here are some important words you can tell your partner, to bring back the sparks in the relationship.

"Please" - This simple word signifies courtesy and vulnerability. This word lets you ask your partner for something without seeming too rude or demanding. This further entices feelings of affection.

"Thank you" - These two magical words are enough to let your partner know how grateful you are for their presence in your life. By encouraging words of gratitude, your partner will definitely feel special and valued.

"I'm sorry" - When you've done something wrong, the first thing you need to do is apologise. Don't be too proud to say sorry; rather acknowledge the mistake and apologize. Your humble nature will pacify your partner.

"You look amazing" - Compliments always go a long way, when trying to keep your partner happy. A compliment about how they look will always cheer them up. It'll make them feel better about themselves and you too!

"I want your opinion on this" - Asking your partner for their opinion shows how much you value and consider their opinion. Your partner will feel connected to you and further, it gives the impression of great teamwork. So, always ask your partner their opinions.

"You can do it!" - Motivation. It's one of those things people yearn to hear from their partners. Boosting their confidence and supporting them is one of the most considerate things you can do. Congratulate and motivate them on their successes and failures.

"I love you and I miss you" - Your partner may be longing for your presence beside them. Telling your partner how much you miss them initiates feelings of love and affection. If the distance is hurting you both, utter these magical words and let it do its magic.

"I forgive you" - Forgiveness is the key to a happy and successful relationship and marriage. Find it in your heart to forgive your partner for the mistake they did, unless their offence hurts you in a drastic way. If you love them enough, forgive them.

LAUGHTER is the best medicine

There was an old man who lived by a forest. As he grew older and older, he started losing his hair, until one day, on his deathbed, he was completely bald. That day, he called his children to a meeting...

He said, "Look at my hair. It used to be so magnificent, but it's completely gone now. My hair can't be saved. But look outside at the forest. It's such a lovely forest with so many trees, but sooner or later they'll all be cut down and this forest will look as bald as my hair."

"What I want you to do..." the man continued. "Is, every time a tree is cut down or dies, plant a new one in my memory. Tell your descendants to do the same. It shall be our family's duty to keep this forest strong."

And so, they did.

Each time the forest lost a tree, the children replanted one, and so did their children, and their children after them.

And for centuries, the forest remained as lush and pretty as it once was, all because of one man and his re-seeding hairline.

What is the most expensive video-streaming service at this time?

College

A man's wife tells him if he comes home drunk one more time, she'll divorce him.

Later that night he's at the pub and gets so drunk that he pukes all over his shirt.

"Oh no! I'm in big trouble now. My wife said she'll divorce me if I come home drunk again!"

His friend tells him not to worry. "Just put a twenty-dollar bill in your shirt pocket, and when she sees you just tell her that someone else threw up on you. And show her the twenty and say he gave it to you to pay for the cleaning bill."

Agreeing that this solves the problem, he relaxes and orders another drink.

Later that night when he gets home, his wife sees him and becomes enraged. "Look at you! You're so drunk you threw up all over yourself! We're through!"

"No no no, I can explain! Another man threw up on me. See look, he gave me these twenty dollars to pay for the cleaning bill."

"Ok but what's that other twenty-dollar bill in your pocket?"

"Ah yes... That is from the man who shat in my pants."

Cheating for "Good" Reasons

An elderly couple was having dinner one evening when the husband reached across the table, took his wife's hand in his and said, "Martha, soon we will be married 50 years, and there's something I have to know. In all of these 50 years, have you ever been unfaithful to me?"

Martha replied, "Well Henry, I have to be honest with you. Yes, I've been unfaithful to you three times during these 50 years, but always for a good reason."

Henry was obviously hurt by his wife's confession, but said, "I never suspected. Can you tell me what you mean

by 'good reasons'?"

Martha said, "The first time was shortly after we were married, and we were about to lose our little house because we couldn't pay the mortgage. Do you remember that one evening I went to see the banker and the next day he notified you that the loan would be extended?"

Henry recalled the visit to the banker and said, "I can forgive you for that. You saved our home, but what about the second time?"

Martha asked, "And do you remember when you were so sick, but we didn't have the money to pay for the heart surgery you needed? Well, I went to see your doctor one night and, if you recall, he did the surgery at no charge."

"I recall that," said Henry. "And you did it to save my life, so of course I can forgive you for that. Now tell me about the third time."

"Alright," Martha said. "So do you remember when you ran for president of your golf club, and you needed 73 more votes?"

Just In Time

A cop was on night patrol driving up near lover's lookout when he noticed a parked car with a young man reading on the front seat and a young woman knitting on the back seat. He pulled over and walked up to their car.

"What are you doing, Son?" the cop asked.

"Reading," the young man answered.

The cop shone his flashlight on the back seat. "And what is she doing?"

"She's knitting," the young man answered.

"How old are you?" the cop asked suspiciously.

"I'm twenty-one," the man answered.

"And how old is she?" the cop asked.

The young man looked at his watch, "In forty-five minutes she'll be eighteen."

In the future, Donald Trump passes away from a heart attack.

He immediately goes to Hell, where the devil is waiting for him.

"I don't know what to do here," says the devil. "You're on my list, but I have no room for you. You definitely have to stay here, so I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I've got three folks here who weren't quite as bad as you. I'll let one of them go, but you have to take their place. I'll even let YOU decide who leaves."

Donald thought that sounded pretty good, so the devil opened the door to the first room.

In it was Barack Obama and a large pool of water. Barack kept diving in, and surfacing, empty handed. Over, and over he dived in and surfaced with nothing.

Son : Mom, yesterday when i was on bus with dad, dad told me to give up my seat to a lady.

Mom : Good, you have done right thing.

Son : But mom I was sitting on dad's lap.



Such was his fate in hell.

"No," Donald said. "I don't think so. I'm not a good swimmer and it would ruin my hair. I don't think I could do that all day long."

The devil led him to the door of the next room. In it was Al Gore with a sledge-hammer and a room full of rocks. All he did was swing that hammer, time after time after time.



"No, this is no good; I've got his problem with my shoulder. I would be in constant agony if all I could do was break rocks all day," commented Donald.

The devil opened a third door. Through it, Donald saw Bill Clinton, lying on the bed, his arms tied over his head and his legs restrained in a spread-eagle pose. Bent over him was Monica Lewinsky, doing what she does best.

Donald looked at this in shocked disbelief, and finally said, "Yeah man, I can handle this."

The devil smiled and said...

"OK, Monica, you're free to go."

An engineer dies and goes to hell

An engineer dies and goes to Hell. He's hot and miserable, so he decides to take action. The A/C has been busted for a long time, so he fixes it. Things cool down quickly. The moving walkway motor is jammed, so he unjams it. People can get from place to place more easily. The TV was grainy and unclear, so he fixes the connection to the satellite dish, and now they get hundreds of high-def channels.

One day, God decides to look down on Hell to see how his grand design is working out and notices that everyone is happy and enjoying umbrella drinks. He asks the Devil what's up?

The Devil says, "Things are great down here since you sent us an engineer."

"What?" says God. "An engineer? I didn't send you one of those. That must have been a mistake. Send him upstairs immediately."

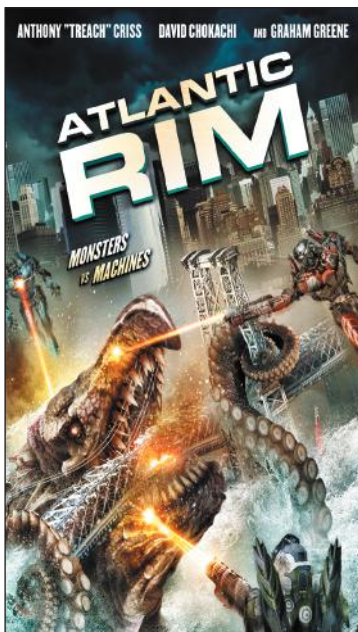
The Devil responds, "No way. We want to keep our engineer. We like him."

God demands, "If you don't send him to me immediately, I'll sue!"

The Devil laughs. "Where are you going to get a lawyer?"

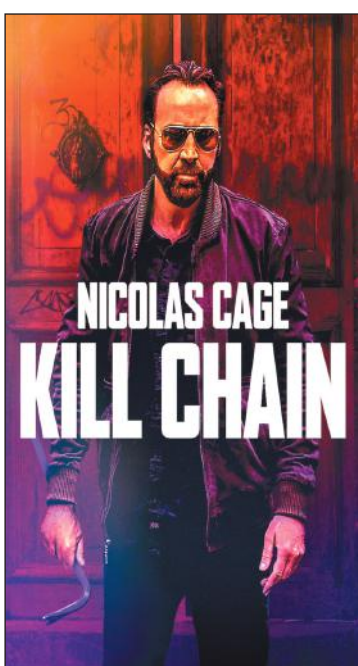
CINE 12

Mardi 9 novembre - 21.10



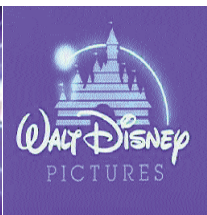
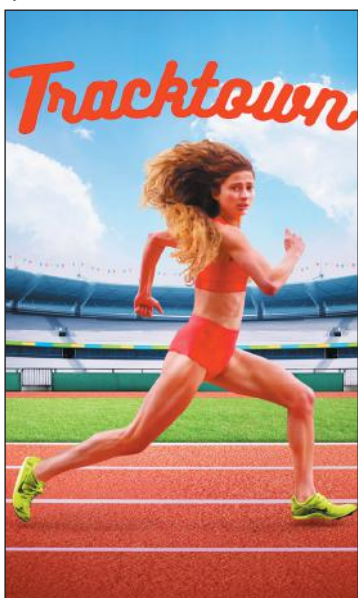
MBC 1

Mardi 9 novembre - 21.10



MBC 2

Mardi 9 novembre - 21.10



MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
06.00 Local: Rodrig - Akoustic 09.45 Local: Encounter 11.10 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Local: Les Grands Noms... 12.30 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.55 Local: Come On Let's Dance 13.50 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A... 14.40 D.Anime: Invention Story 14.52 D.Anime: The Hive 15.20 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin... 15.32 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz... 15.43 D.Anime: Les Triples 16.19 D.Anime: Kid Lucky 17.20 Mag: Human Nature 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 18.55 Local: Kala 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.20 Local: Priorite Sante 21.25 Film: Ratter	07.00 DDI Live 10.00 Serial: CID 10.45 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha 12.00 Film: Khajoor Pe Atke Star: Vinay Pathak, Suneeta Sengupta, Alka Amin 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.20 Serial: Aamhi Doghi 15.43 Serial: Bava Maradallu 16.04 Serial: Sondha Bandham 16.27 Serial: Mera Maan Rakhna 16.48 Serial: Imtihaan 17.05 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.30 Telugu - Premabhishekam 18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone 18.30 Local Prod: Abhay Charan 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.04 Local: Programme In Tamil 20.30 Film: Avishkaar Star: Rajesh Khanna, Sharmila Tagore	06.00 Rev: The Global Auto 06.54 Mag: Check In 07.49 Mag: Magnifique 09.00 Educa Prog: G5 11.30 Educa Prog: G8 14.57 Mag: Close Up 15.23 Local: Klip Seleksion 16.04 Doc: Goods To Paradise 16.50 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 18.30 Mag: Vous Et Nous 19.00 Student Support Prog - G7 19.30 Doc: Garden Party 20.02 Doc: Tresors Oublies 20.30 Local Prod: News (English)) 20.45 Doc: Zenith 21.10 Doc: Comme Un Poisson... 21.59 Mag: Business Africa 22.24 Mag: Focus On Europe 22.50 Doc: Guinea-Bissau 23.32 Mag: Motorweek 23.58 Mag: Vous Et Nous	01.54 Serial: Island Doctor 03.21 Serial: Killjoys 04.02 Film: Norman 05.55 Tele: Muneca Brava 06.37 Serial: Absenta 09.00 Serial: The Good Doctor 09.45 Tele: Teresa 10.35 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You 11.01 Serial: Killjoys 11.46 Film: Norman 13.37Tele: Muneca Brava 14.12 Mag: Cinemag 14.45 Serial: Island Doctor 16.41 Serial: The Good Doctor 17.22 Serial: Absentia 18.05 Tele: Teresa 19.00 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You 20.05 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana 20.30 Serial: Mad Dogs 21.15 Film: Atlantic RIM 22.45 Tele: Muneca Brava	07.38 Film: Hindustani 11.30 / 19.27 - Radha Krishna 11.59 / 20.57 - Chupke Chupke 12.30 / 21.27 - Mere Sai 13.09 / 22.07 - Agniphera 13.30 / 22.37 - Yeh Teri Galiyan 14.00 / 23.07 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.30 / 21.59 - Chhanchhan 15.00 Serial: Dil Hai Tumhara 14.53 / 22.25 - Sethji 15.25 Film: Raiszaada Star: Govinda, Sonam, Shashi Kapoor, Asha Parekh 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron.. 19.30 Bhakharwadi
06.00 Local: Rodrig Sa 09.30 Local: Moments Forts De... 11.10 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Local: Autour Des Valeurs... 12.30 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir 12.55 Local Prod: Groov'in 13.50 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A... 14.40 D.Anime: Invention Story 14.48 D.Anime: The Hive 15.20 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin... 15.32 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz 15.50 D.Anime: Les Triples 16.19 D.Anime: Kid Lucky 16.53 D.Anime: Splash And Bubble 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 18.55 Local: Nayi Drishti 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.30 MBC Production 21.25 Film: Kill Chain Stars : Nicolas Cage, Anabelle Acosta	07.00 DDI Live 10.00 Pyar Ka Dard Meetha... 12.00 Film: Samraat Star: Dhamendra, Jeetendra, Hema Malini 15.26 Aamhi Doghi 15.46 Bava Maradallu 16.07 Sondha Bandham 16.49 Serial: Imtihaan 17.10 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.31 Serial: Kulvadh 18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone 18.30 Local: Abhay Charan 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.06 Programme In Marathi 20.30 Film: Aga Bai Arehya 2 Starring: JSonali KulkarniBharat JadhavSiddharth Jadhav 22.37 DDI Live	06.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 06.26 Mag: Healthy Living 07.23 Mag: Made In Germany 07.49 Mag: Magnifique 09.00 Educa Prog: Grade 5 11.30 Educa Prog: Grade 8 14.03 Doc: Comme Un Poisson... 14.57 Mag: Close Up 15.23 Local Prod: Klip Seleksion 17.16 Mag: Red Carpet 17.31 Mag: Check In 18.00 Mag: Motorweek 19.00 Student Support Prog... 19.30 Doc: Garden Party 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.45 Doc: Zenith 21.10 Doc: Comme Un Poisson 21.59 Mag: Business Africa 22.24 Mag: Focus On Europe 22.50 Doc: Guinea- Bissau 23.32 Mag: Motorweek 23.58 Mag: Vous Et Nous	01.30 Film: Orky 03.04 Serial: Killjoys 03.42 Film: Atlantic RIM 05.06 Tele: Muneca Brava 05.48 Serial: French Series 06.32 Film: Orky 09.10 Serial: The Good Doctor 09.45 Tele: Teresa 10.35 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You 11.01 Serial: French Series 12.00 Film: Atlantic RIM 13.32 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.46 Film: Orky 16.48 Serial: The Good Doctor 17.20 Serial: French Series 18.08 Tele: Teresa 19.00 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You 20.05 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 20.30 Serial: Reef Doctors 21.15 Film: Les Heures Sombres 23.15 Tele: Muneca Brava	07.00 Film: Raiszaada Star: Govinda, Sonam, Shashi Kapoor, Asha Parekh 11.30 / 20.06 - Radha Krishna 12.00 / 20.26 - Anupamaa 12.31 / 20.02 - Mere Sai - Shrad.. 13.10 / 20.46 - Agniphera 13.30 / 21.09 - Yeh Teri Galiyan 14.00 / 21.50 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.30 / 22.15 - Chhanchhan 15.00 / 21.46 - Sethji 15.06 Film: Bewafa Se Wafa Starring: Vivek Mushran, Juhi Chawla, Nagma, Pran 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Ishaaron Ishaaron... 19.30 Bhakharwadi 20.00 Serial: Siddhi Vinayak 20.30 Serial: Redha Krishna
06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion 06.45 Local: Fee Main 07.45 D.Anime: Rodrig Mo Pei 10.34 Mag: Tomorrow Today 11.10 Tele: Sinu, Rio Des Pasiones 12.00 Le Journal 12.55 Local: Le Rendez-Vous 14.08 Serial: Heidi, Bienvenida A... 14.35 D.Anime: Invention Story 15.20 D.Anime: Oum Le Dauphin... 15.32 D.Anime: Spongo, Fuzz and... 15.43 D.Anime: Les Triples 15.57 D.Anime: Voltron... 17.20 Mag: Human Nature 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 19.30 Le Journal 20.00 Local: Autour Des Valeurs 20.30 Film: Kalank Stars: Varun Dhawan, Alia Bhatt, Madhuri Dixit	07.00 DDI Live 10.00 Karm Phal Data Shani 12.00 Film: Rani Aur Lalpari Starring: Jeetendra, Asha Parekh, Rajendra Kumar 15.25 Aamhi Doghi 15.47 Bava Maradallu 16.09 Sondha Bandham 16.26 Serial: Mera Maan Rakhna 16.51 Serial: Imtihaan 17.07 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala 17.38 Local: Amrit Vaani 17.48 Local: Bhajan Sandhya 18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone 18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da... 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.06 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.32 Local: Evasion 21.28 Film: Tracktown	06.00 Mag: Motorweek 06.26 Mag: Vous Et Nous 07.19 Doc: Garden Part 07.49 Doc: Tresors Oublies... 09.00 Educa Prog: Grade 5 11.30 Educa Prog: Grade 8 14.03 Doc: Comme Un Poisson... 14.54 Mag: Business Africa 16.28 Mag: Motorweek 16.55 Mag: Vous Et Nous 17.21 Mag: Arts.21 18.00 Mag: Eco India 19.00 Mag: Border Crossing 19.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.45 Doc: Stunt Warriors 21.37 Doc: Comme Un Poisson 22.26 Doc: Sculptrices 23.19 Doc: Guardians Of The... 00.01 Mag: Eco India 00.27 Mag: Shift	03.25 Film: Les Heures Sombres 05.35 Tele: Muneca Brava 06.17 Serial: Reef Doctors 09.00 Serial: The Good Doctor 09.45 Tele: Teresa 10.35 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You 11.00 Serial: French Series 11.42 Film: Les Heures Sombres 13.42 Tele: Muneca Brava 14.45 Film: A Doggone Adventure 16.37 Serial: The Good Doctor 17.18 Serial: Reef Doctors 18.05 Tele: Teresa 19.00 Tele: I Forgot I Loved You 20.05 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana 20.30 Serial: Reef Doctors 21.15 Serial: The Blod Type Avec: Katie Stevens, Aisha Dee, Meghann Fahy 21.55 Serial: The Bold Type 22.33 Tele: Muneca Brava	07.00 Film: Bewafa Se Wafa Starring: Vivek Mushran, Juhi Chawla, Nagma, Pran 12.00 / 19.54 - Radha Krishna 12.09 / 20.11 - Anupamaa 12.27 / 20.32 - Mere Sai 12.59 / 21.09 - Agniphera 13.27 / 21.24 - Yeh Teri Galiyan 14.00 / 21.50 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 14.30 / 22.15 - Chhanchhan 15.01 / 21.46 - Sethji 15.30 Film: Imaandaar Starring: Vikas Anand, Sanjay Dutt, Satyen Kappu 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 18.59 Ishaaron Ishaaron Mein 19.29 Bhakharwadi 20.00 Siddhi Vinayak

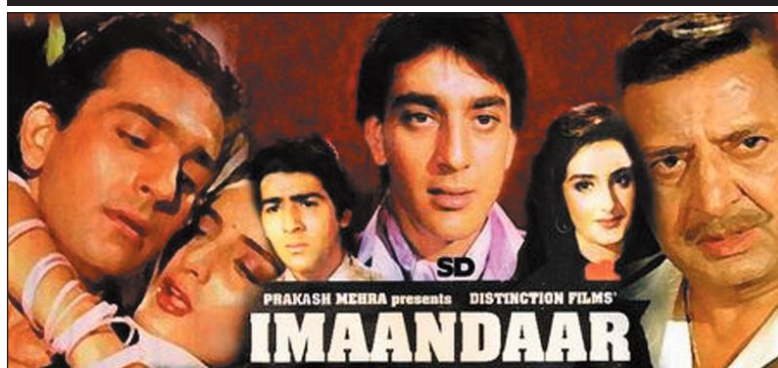


Jeudi 11 novembre - 15.30

Star: Vikas Anand, Sanjay Dutt, Satyen Kappu



Jeudi 11 novembre - Stars: Varun Dhawan, Alia Bhatt, Madhuri Dixit



Varanasi - Where it's forbidden to serve meat

Long known as one of the world's holiest cities, India's spiritual capital is now luring culinary pilgrims as it transforms into a vegetarian paradise

Amrita Sarkar - BBC

Inhabited since at least 1800 BC, Varanasi is well known for being among the oldest living cities on Earth, and one of the holiest for the world's estimated 1.2 billion Hindus. Every day, as the sound of ringing temple bells echo overhead, tens of thousands of devotees descend the city's 88 stone ghat steps and dip themselves into the Ganges river to wash away their sins.

Varanasi may be India's spiritual capital, but it isn't exactly known for luring culinary pilgrims. Most food travellers will likely flock to the country's famous epicurean hubs of Delhi, Kolkata or Chennai before making their way to Varanasi. Yet, chefs from around the world are starting to draw inspiration from its culinary heritage, recreating its flavours in their restaurants.

Chef Vikas Khanna, who received a Michelin star each year from 2011 to 2016 when he ran Junoon in Manhattan, said he was bowled over by the *vrat ke kuttu* buckwheat-flour pancakes served in a single Varanasi temple. "I've tried my best to recreate it in my kitchen at Manhattan. It tastes heavenly," Khanna told Lonely Planet in 2020.

Two-time Michelin-starred chef Atul Kochhar named his modern Indian restaurant in London Benares (the name of Varanasi during British rule). In his eponymous cookbook, the chef showcases vegetarian fusion recipes, such as chickpea pancakes and heritage tomato salad, that highlight the sweet-and-tart flavour combinations commonly found in the city. Even Indian celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor has written about his fondness for Varanasi food, highlighting its excellent vegetarian offerings.

Of course, in a country that is 80% Hindu and 20% vegetarian, meatless

options are ubiquitous in India. But what makes Varanasi's vegetarian cuisine so interesting is how its *sattvic* and vegetarian specialties are directly influenced by its strong sense of spirituality. A *sattvic* menu is based on Ayurvedic principles and adheres to the strictest standards of vegetarianism prescribed by the Sanatana dharma, an absolute form of Hinduism. As such, it forbids the use of onion and garlic in cooking, which are believed to increase anger, aggression and anxiety, among other things.

Traditionally, many Varanasi restaurants have served meat to cater to Western tourists and non-vegetarian Hindu pilgrims, and local *sattvic* cuisine was primarily eaten at home. But in 2019, the BJP government banned the sale and consumption of meat within a 250m radius of all Varanasi temples and heritage sites. This encouraged restaurants to start featuring local vegetarian and *sattvic* recipes that have been passed down for generations within Varanasi homes but were previously unavailable to visitors.

Inside the luxury hotel BrijRama Palace, an imposing sandstone structure on the Ganges at Munshi Ghat, executive chef Manoj Verma applies his encyclopaedic knowledge of traditional textbook vegetarian Varanasi cooking. "When I first took over the kitchen, I immediately included dishes like khatta meetha kaddu (sweet and sour pumpkin) and nimona (spiced mashed peas) on our menu," Verma said. "These are humble dishes that our guests would have never had the opportunity to taste otherwise," he added.

Across town, Shree Shivay is one of a growing number of restaurants serving local *sattvic* recipes. Today, locals estimate are anywhere from 40 to 200 *sattvic* restaurants in Varanasi, a huge jump since the 2019 meat ban. The restaurant's menu, which changes twice a day based on what is available at the local market that



Varanasi is one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities – and the holiest for Hindus. Pic - : Hitesh Makwana/EyeEm/Getty Images

morning, features *thalis*, or set offerings, with at least 12 different dishes. After months of careful experimentation, the restaurant's three chefs came up with a formula where they could mimic the taste of any sauce or gravy using five key ingredients: cashews, poppy seeds, melon seeds, tomatoes and *chironji* (a nutty seed endemic to northern India).

Beyond its restaurants, Varanasi's street food scene is as vibrant and electric as that of Bangkok or Istanbul but enjoys none of the media hype. Although many of the *sattvic* foods sold are unique or inventive variations of snacks found elsewhere in India, they do not benefit from the hype of Delhi's *chaat* (savoury snack combining several textures and flavours) or Mumbai's *vada pav* (potato burger).

One such example is the tomato *chaat*, sold at the Kashi Chaat Bhandar stall. "When the daughter of billionaire industrialist Lakshmi Mittal got married in France, they chose us as one of the caterers," said third-generation owner Yash Khetri. Made with a tangy and spicy base of mashed tomatoes bathed in a cumin-spiked sugar syrup and topped with crunchy sev (deep-fried chickpea flour noodles), the original recipe was developed in 1968 by Khetri's grandfather. Today, you won't find it anywhere else outside of Varanasi.

Another example is the frothy sweetened milk tea served at the Lakshmi Chai Wale stall in terracotta cups with a side of *malai* toast. This delectable accompaniment consists of two slices of bread grilled over hot coals, then slathered with fresh cream and sprinkled with granulated sugar.

Across town, the chief attraction at

Varanasi's Baati Chokha restaurant is *baati*, a hard, unleavened wheat bread and a typical food in the surrounding state of Uttar Pradesh that's baked on dried cow dung cakes. In fact, as diners enter, they are greeted by the sight of dried cow dung cakes stacked up to the ceiling in an outdoor shed. The restaurant does everything in-house, from pounding their spices in stone mills to grinding the flour for the *baati*. The vegetables for the accompanying *chokha* made with eggplant, potatoes and tomatoes, are also roasted on top of the same dung cakes, before simmering in a spice mix in clay pots.

Local guide, Manjeet Sahani, who frequently takes visitors to the restaurant, said, "Initially, I thought that the sight of cow dung cakes might put people off. Honestly, most people I bring here tell me that this is the best food they have ever eaten in India."

Most Indians know that Varanasi is the capital of *paan* (betel leaf), and I was not going to leave Varanasi without having tried one. *Paan* is usually enjoyed at the end of a meal as it aids in digestion and functions as a breath freshener. At the Netaji Paan Bhandar stall, the original founder's grandson and the current owner, Pavan Chaurasiya, layered rose petal jam, areca nuts and slaked lime on the fresh betel leaf before folding it with origami-like precision and presenting it to me on a silver tray. On the countertop lay a laminated newspaper clipping showing when India's former prime minister, Indira Gandhi, visited their shop in 1976. I could not have asked for a more fitting end to my vegetarian Varanasi pilgrimage than the lingering sweetness of this long-beloved *paan*.



Shree Shivay is one of a growing number of Varanasi restaurants serving local *sattvic* dishes.