

MAURITIUS TIMES

• "I am beneath or above no one. When I am independent of the good or bad opinion of others, I stand strong in my own divine power." -- Deepak Chopra



Interview: Chetan Ramchurn

«Pravind Jugnauth does not feel threatened despite the mismanagement and scandals...»

Would you be if your main adversary has been considerably weakened?»

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The Battle against Drug Trafficking and Mafia Infiltration



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Early Elections

Politicians and political commentators have seen in the recent announcements made by the Prime Minister of what would otherwise be called 'electoral freebies', namely the decision to implement free pre-primary schooling as from Jan 2024, the distribution of permits to some 1000 fishermen, which would render them eligible to bad weather and other allowances, as the signs of early elections in the offing. They also point out to the earlier than normal pre-budget consultations that have started at the Ministry of Finance. Another reason that would militate in favour of that eventuality concerns the hearing of the Privy Council in the matter of the electoral petition of Labour Party unreturned candidate Suren Dayal challenging the election of Pravind Jugnauth, Leela Devi Dookun Luchoomun and Yogida Sawmynaden in Constituency No. 8, set for 10 July 2023, and the strong compulsion this case imposes on the Prime Minister to avoid any discomfiture should the Law Lords accede to Suren Dayal's petition on one ground or another.

All this is still in the realm of speculation.

Some observers have opined here and elsewhere that the PM and his party may plough on at the helm of the country, regardless of the outcome of the appeal lodged at the Privy Council by Suren Dayal. Opinions in the legal circles differ on this question. Milan Meetarbhan, who is well versed in constitutional matters, stated to this paper earlier this year: 'I am not sure that this would be legally possible if the Privy Council were to decide that the election of the three candidates in Constituency No 8 was not valid. Even if the ultimate outcome does not lead to loss of membership, should the proceedings before the court or comments in the judgment show that there was serious irregularity there would be a moral responsibility for the ministers to step down. But not in this country!'

While the Minister of Finance has been careful to state that populist freebies can no longer be entertained, implying that what tenets and strategies pertained to the previous campaign, these could no longer form the basis for next election's strategies, in view one assumes of the serious macro-economic predicament the country finds itself in. He would obviously know far better than anyone else the real state of public finances, public sector debts and whatever hidden liabilities any incoming government will have to face. However, the possibility that the Minister is engaging, as others before him, in some clever management of public opinion cannot be ruled out and real intentions will come clear in the budget. That the freebies alluded to above are being announced these days may also be a counter to possible accusations of electoral and populist shenanigans given the government's ploy during the 2019 campaign and which are being tested at the Privy Council in July this year.

On the other hand, if Pravind Jugnauth were to win his case, it's more than likely he'll go upto the end of his mandate. But he may decide to go for early elections if only to take on an unprepared and vulnerable opposition which to

date has not settled the terms and conditionalities of an alliance between the Labour Party, the MMM and the PMSD, beyond the fact re-affirmed yesterday that it would be led by the LP. The standing of Navin Ramgoolam is another issue for many Labourites themselves, who privately would be expressing the same sentiments of the Faugoos, Varmas, Ramnarains and Sayed-Hossens about the functioning of the Labour Party and its leadership. The outbursts of a few prominent and long-time LP members, three of whom have earlier held ministerial posts, do not help in building the image of a credible alternative to the Pravind Jugnauth's MSM. Other Labourites are of the view that time is of the essence and the necessity to clean the Augean stables makes the leadership of Navin Ramgoolam at this juncture unavoidable, while the leadership issue, however important in its own right, has to play second fiddle to that electoral imperative.

Pravind Jugnauth's government has adopted a business-as-usual attitude even in the face of the misgovernance issues which have hogged the headlines these last three years. One could expect that it will remain unperturbed no matter what critics, whether on the streets, on social media, in the Opposition or even rating agencies, say about its record on this count. Neither will the alleged mafia infiltration in our institutions nor the misfirings of the Special Striking Team and the revelations that have been coming out recently about the ramifications of drug trafficking in the West or around Grand Bassin, the intellectual debates about Constitutional reform, gender representation and like issues weigh heavily in the final choice of the electorate. What matters to the people are bread and butter issues.

On the other hand, the government will have access to the Special Funds to finance a number of freebies, irrespective of what the Finance minister may say publicly. The MSM leader has the means to fund his campaign and the MBC-TV - possibly the most effective propaganda tool in spite of private radios and social media - at its disposal for its election campaign. He will in all likelihood hold elections when he would deem the political conditions suitable for the re-election of the MSM-led alliance. It is therefore up to the Opposition to create the political dynamics to overturn what in the present political circumstances seems a real option: a third stint in office for the MSM.

One should however note the fact that mafia infiltration has been uttered by none other than the PM himself, who is in charge of those same institutions who might have turned a complicit eye to the drug trade barons on the West Coast. The other unknowns are the sociological and ethnic dynamics inherent to every alliance seeking election or re-election and the influence of Bruneau Laurette on some sections of the Mauritian community will be closely watched. If the MSM's 37% of the voters in 2019 has remained stable or even contracted somewhat through its long list of "affairs", it cannot assume that it would win the next elections in what could become a two-cornered fight. This is a precarious place as the clock ticks on.

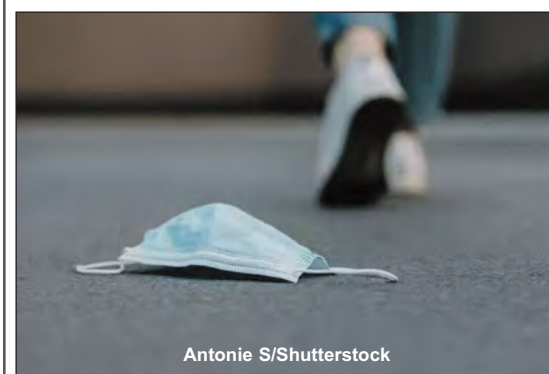
The Conversation

Three years on, the COVID pandemic may never end

The WHO first described Covid as a pandemic on March 11, 2020.

Where are we at, three years later?

Three years ago, on March 11 2020, World Health Organization (WHO) director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus first formally described Covid-19 as a pandemic.



Antonie S/Shutterstock

The impact of the pandemic on all aspects of society has been enormous, but we've come a long way since March 2020. The toll of this novel coronavirus has been blunted thanks to responses across science, healthcare and public health.

At this point, it's not unreasonable to wonder when the pandemic will be over. But the WHO continues to regard Covid as a pandemic. Let's take a look back at how we got here and explore where we might be heading.

First, what actually is a pandemic?

The term "pandemic" can have slightly different definitions depending on where you look. However, perhaps the most common use of the term applies to an emerging threat that is spreading across multiple countries: "an epidemic occurring worldwide".

Michael Head, Senior Research Fellow in Global Health, University of Southampton

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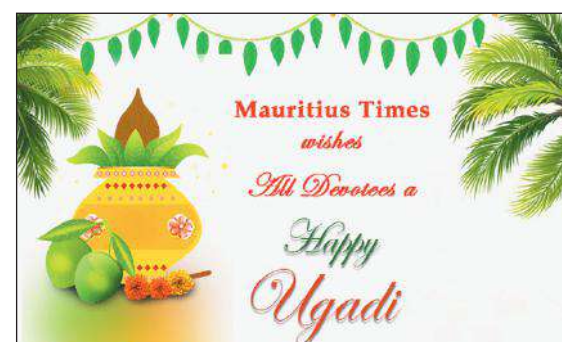
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The Battle against Drug Trafficking and Mafia Infiltration

The repercussions of the Franklin affair, far from over, are already a reality check with a huge thump for all our institutions and authorities, high and low

Jan Arden

After three years of painstaking work, the commission of inquiry on drug trafficking set up by late PM Sir Aneerood Jugnauth (SAJ) and chaired by former Puisne Judge Paul Lam Shang Leen with two assessors, was made public in July 2018. By that time, in January 2017, SAJ had resigned, and his PM post taken over by his son, Hon Pravind Jugnauth. The latter announced in August that a taskforce headed by the director general of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), would enquire further into the matters raised by the drug commission.

However, in almost the same breath, the then Prime Minister stated that the principal measure, namely the dismantling of the Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (ADSU), would not be implemented. This left many observers somewhat bemused about the PM's marked public trust in ADSU, or the utility of the taskforce quite aside from its obvious incongruity on constitutional grounds as the Police Commissioner, a constitutionally independent post, would be reporting to the ICAC Director. Since then, the PM has missed no opportunity on all platforms and during the electoral hustings of 2019, to express his full confidence in the ADSU which was, according to him, delivering tangible results.

Where we might judge the success of that fight in terms of major arrests and cases investigated, brought to court and warlords locked up, the evidence is more than wafer thin. To be fair, there have been some high-profile cargo loads of illicit material with street values running into billions seized and arrests made since about 2018.

While this is most welcome, such statistics have to be taken with some degree of caution. Are they evidence of more effective policing or more warlords plying their lucrative criminal drug import/distribution activities, of which the same or a similar fraction ends up getting caught? Besides, for whatever unexplained reason, in those high-profile drug-related cases, it would seem that as yet no investigations have been concluded or prosecuted successfully despite the full trust of higher offices.

Curiously, it befell upon the ICAC, in the now notorious Franklin money-laundering investigations, through weekly revelations of landings to have the scalp of ADSU handed to the CP. After all, the seizures of visible luxury assets worth dozens of millions of rupees, openly and brazenly displayed by a "prête-noms" circus, the allegations concerning jet-setting parties on our West Coast and at a Grand Bassin ranch over a shocking lease of hundreds of acres of natural domain a few hundred metres from the most sacred of Hindu worship sites, are yet to be digested by numbed minds.

The one big question that remains in the smog of ICAC investigations is whether Franklin is himself a prête-nom for occult powers. But they have spurred the Commissioner of Police, who in this matter must have been greenlighted by the PM, into a frenzy of action, effectively dismantling the ADSU through the transfer,

we read, of its chief and a cohort of 50 (and possibly more to come) officers, investigators, and cadres, reposted to other duties.

If the ongoing ICAC investigations have indeed served to dismantle the ADSU, it has also opened the eyes of one and all to the accumulated failures and dysfunctions that should have been visible far earlier. The repercussions of the Franklin affair, far from over, are already a reality check with a huge thump for all our institutions and authorities, high and low. Were they bowing to pressure from their upper echelons, were they too part of the mafia infiltration of key institutions the PM conveniently saw fit to denounce these days? Or are there still far too many other unknowns at this stage in this unfolding saga?

But, at such levels of dirty money wheelings and dealings, can the Field Intel Officers of the NSS, the FIU, the KYC officers of local banks, or even the Central Bank monitors have been blissfully unaware of the suspicious financial goings-on that must have taken place over the past five years at least? Could such a network have thrived and flourished turning Black River into a gold mine or a wild west with layers of our top civil servants who have been entirely oblivious? Who authorised the land leases and transfers over forest lands at Grand Bassin or on State lands for an abandoned hotel project "pieds dans l'eau"?

However severe the indictment for the authorities, many questions deserve answers. Meantime we have to trust that both the PM and the CP, in their respective positions of authority, will henceforth be served by far better ground info, a more effective drug investigative agency, closer inter-agency and regional cooperation and better-quality radars. And so much the better, we



“At such levels of dirty money wheelings and dealings, can the Field Intel Officers of the NSS, the FIU, the KYC officers of local banks, or even the Central Bank monitors have been blissfully unaware of the suspicious financial goings-on that must have taken place over the past five years at least? Could such a network have thrived and flourished turning Black River into a gold mine or a wild west with layers of our top civil servants who have been entirely oblivious?”

might say, for deliverables are long awaited in the national battle against the mafia infiltration of our institutions by drug warlords, their aiders and abettors.

The RCC Fracas

Isn't all this RCC ruckus an overkill of wayward and adrenaline-aroused adolescents for some other reasons?

A particular sega rhyme chanted (among others) in the annual heady exuberance of 15-18-year-old adolescents that characterises the laureateship celebrations at the Royal College Curepipe (RCC) has been around for years probably without causing a furore. At what time were the lyrics modified in a way that's clearly offensive and hurtful to the "Creole" section of the population, we don't know. But those words are

patently unacceptable and both the RCC, the Old Royals, the Rector and the Ministry have made known their deep regrets while promising some form of sanction and intellectual rewiring for the group leading the chant.

Our patient and hurdles-strewn path to nation-building have known many such vagaries and may know more in the future though, fortunately, we have accumulated

enough wisdom at various junctures in our complex socio-economic history not to pour oil onto ever-present embers.

But have those brawling and exuberant adolescents really committed a gross crime of such magnitude that Aurore Perraud went to complain to the CCID, that the institution (now an Academy) had to receive police protection and that a few "Creole" parish priests and a plethora of opinion writers demanded exemplary punishments? What next, alert international instances? To the obvious feelings of community hurt, should calmer minds and a host of opinion writers go overboard for adolescents and structures that recognize to have erred and promised corrective action?

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Anil Madan

Silicon Valley Bank

A Signature Failure

It remains to be seen how the Federal Reserve Bank will react when it meets next week to confront the ongoing battle of curbing inflation, stabilizing the economy, and keeping the banking system together

The crash of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) has rattled financial markets, and the entire banking system shows signs of strain. SVB found a special niche catering to the tech, biotech and crypto industry startups funded by venture capitalist (VC) industry. Its connections to VCs and high-net-worth people in the companies they financed, helped it to build relationships with depositors from those tech, biotech and crypto companies from Silicon Valley in California to Boston and beyond.

Since the end of the financial crisis of 2008-09, there has been a boom in venture capital investments which gathered steam as innovations in technology, science, and the financial world took on new life with digital tools and new thinking on how to adapt technology and the Internet to manage the world's business and solve its problems.

But sometimes, even in the face of great technological advances, the simplest of problems get overlooked. This was SVB's main problem as it grew exponentially and new deposits from VCs, seduced by the promise of riches to be generated by adventurous entrepreneurs, poured in. This surfeit of money had to be invested somewhere. The Covid pandemic and fears of a worldwide recession induced the US Federal Reserve and the world's central bankers to keep interest rates very low, close to zero. As a result, the surplus cash was "invested" by SVB in low-yielding bonds. Then came the disruption of supply chains, and ultimately, the easing of pandemic restrictions — at least in the West, India, Japan, South Korea, and Australia where vaccinations seemed to quell the rage of the pandemic inferno —, a reopening of economies and resurgence of demand. As a consequence, inflation reared its head and bared its fangs.

The Fed and other central banks shrank in horror and responded by raising rates. As inflation roared and seemed ready to disrupt the lives of billions and upend commerce and trade as we know it, the bankers got more aggressive with their rate hikes. These rate hikes have not materially slowed economies although the threat of a slowdown looms. But they have made money tighter.

And what happens when interest rates are hiked? It's not rocket science, but if you hold a bond paying 1% or 2% and interest rates on new bonds are raised to 3, 4, or 5%, the price of your bond will fall, else no one will buy it and accept a lower rate than is available from buying new bonds. When this happens, although the holder of the older bond, will eventually get its money back when the bond matures, if he tries to sell the bond, its market value is lower than the face value. What if a bank holding such bonds were called upon to honour all of its deposits? Clearly, there would be a shortfall because it could not recover all of the money representing its deposits that it had invested in the bonds. Therefore, accounting rules require banks to mark their holdings down to market value to recognize these kinds of potential shortfalls.



This is what happened at SVB. Sort of. But it was worse. As money got tighter and the prospects of recessions loomed, the VCs began to see their fund flows diminish, and they became more risk averse about funding new companies. The already funded companies also found it difficult to raise more money and began to draw down on available funds. All of this caused SVB's deposits to shrink. New VC investments that had provided a steady flow of deposits vanished. The gap between SVB's liabilities to depositors and the market value of its bond holdings grew larger.

Venture capitalist boom

The *Financial Times* recently provided some details. It reports that in 2021, at the peak of the VC boom, SVB saw its deposits surge from \$102bn to \$189bn, leaving it awash in "excess liquidity". In search of higher returns in the Central Bankers' ultra-low interest rate environment, SVB "ramped up" investment in a \$120bn portfolio of highly rated government-backed securities, \$91bn of these in fixed-rate mortgage bonds carrying an average interest rate of just 1.64 per cent.

Although SVB was now receiving a slightly higher return than what it could earn from investing in short-term government debt as it had been, its cash was now locked away for a decade and exposed to the "mark to market" accounting losses described above, if interest rates rose quickly. Interest rates did rise last year, and how. The value of SVB's portfolio fell by \$15 billion, an amount almost equal to SVB's total capital. If it were forced to sell any of the bonds, it would risk becoming technically insolvent.

The story has a bit more intrigue to it. The crash in tech valuations in stock markets had caused SVB's deposits to drop for almost a full year, but in February and March, they plunged faster than expected. SVB's leader-

“As money got tighter and the prospects of recessions loomed, the VCs began to see their fund flows diminish, and they became more risk averse about funding new companies. The already funded companies also found it difficult to raise more money and began to draw down on available funds. All of this caused SVB's deposits to shrink. New VC investments that had provided a steady flow of deposits vanished. The gap between SVB's liabilities to depositors and the market value of its bond holdings grew larger...”

ship decided to liquidate almost all of the bonds it held that were readily saleable and to reinvest the proceeds in shorter-term bonds for a higher rate of return. The rate hikes by the Fed had caused these short-term rates to rise. But remember that drop in price that the older bonds suffer when rates go up? That drop meant SVB would have to take a hit of almost \$2 billion. To compensate for this loss, SVB's executives decided to arrange a sale of additional shares of its stock. But an investor that had committed to buy \$500 million worth of shares, backed off. The price of SVB's stock was tanking. Goldman Sachs was scrambling to salvage the stock sale deal but was unable to keep it together.

Meanwhile, some VC heavyweights were advising companies to withdraw their money from SVB. Although SVB's CEO tried to reassure investors and depositors, it became apparent that if deposits continued to flow out, SVB would be forced to sell those longer-term bonds and face the reality that a \$15 billion loss spelled insolvency technically, and that "technicality" would soon become "reality".

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Sommes-nous déjà en campagne électorale?

Par A. Bartleby



Pravind Jugnauth se donne les moyens de contrer le piège du Privy Council

L'annonce de la gratuité du préprimaire par le Premier ministre semble avoir envoyé un signal clair que Pravind Jugnauth avait pris note des négociations des partis de l'opposition, et qu'il commençait à mettre en place sa stratégie électorale. Ce sentiment a été renforcé quelques jours après quand le gouvernement a annoncé la distribution de 1,000 cartes de pêcheurs.

Sommes-nous alors déjà en campagne électorale? Difficile d'être certain, mais il semble clair que Pravind Jugnauth est en train de se donner les moyens de contrer le piège du Privy Council, fixé au 10 juillet prochain.

Ainsi, il ne faudrait pas être surpris si les mesures électoralistes ciblés commencent à se multiplier. De plus, le ministre des Finances a entamé cette semaine les consultations budgétaires, en annonçant lui-même que le prochain budget allait encore plus accélérer la relance économique. En d'autres termes, nous allons vers un budget "portes ouvertes", avec des mesures ciblées pour les entrepreneurs mais aussi pour les ménages.

Encore une fois, cela ne signifie pas que les élections soient aussi proches qu'on le pense, mais Pravind Jugnauth allume la machinerie petit à petit. La décision du Privy Council jouera pour beaucoup dans la prise de décision en faveur des élections générales anticipées ou non, d'où le fait des effets d'annonces.

En face de cela, les partis de l'opposition continuent à avancer dans leurs négociations. Navin Ramgoolam est apparu à la radio la semaine dernière, après plusieurs années d'absence des plateaux. Il est apparu en bonne santé et sa performance était correcte, même si sa gymnastique du "j'ai appris de mes erreurs et je suis un homme changé" ne semble pas avoir convaincu beaucoup de ses non-partisans.

Mais il a affirmé travailler à un projet pour Maurice, et à un projet de renouvellement. Nous verrons bien ce qu'il proposera, surtout que les annonces de Pravind

Jugnauth feront qu'il devra accélérer les négociations afin de ne pas se retrouver pris au dépourvu comme en 2019.

* * *

Célébrations de la fête de l'indépendance

Nous aurions imaginé qu'après trois années de restrictions sanitaires, les festivités de l'indépendance auraient été grandioses cette année. Que nenni! Il n'en fut rien, avec une cérémonie pour le moins sobre à la State House.

C'est une occasion manquée pour le gouvernement qui aurait pu et qui aurait dû en faire une fête vraiment nationale, avec des activités culturelles et artistiques à travers le pays. C'était l'occasion de célébrer notre pays et notre République de manière digne après la crise mondiale que nous venons de traverser.

Cela est profondément contradictoire puisque, d'un côté, le Premier ministre affirme que le 'feel-good factor' est de retour à Maurice, alors que, de l'autre côté, il n'a pas voulu ouvrir les célébrations du 12 mars à la liesse populaire. Avait-il peur que les célébrations officielles ne se transforment en une réprimande contre un gouvernement qui semble s'engouffrer dans des affaires?



Cérémonie sobre à la State House... malgré le retour du 'feel-good factor'

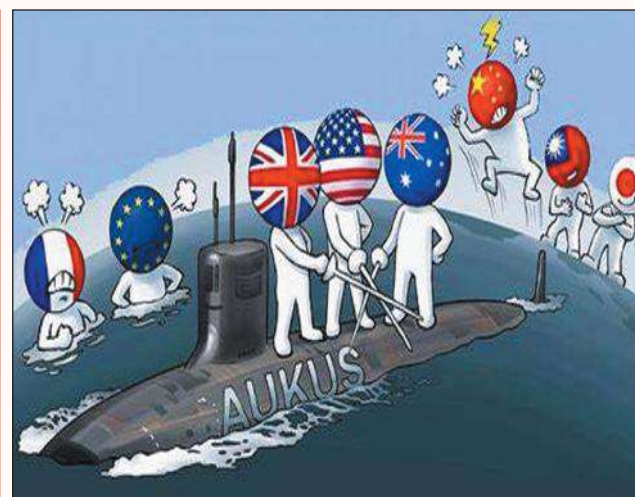
Nous ne pouvons que spéculer, mais il est certain que la cérémonie à la State House n'était pas à la hauteur des attentes.

Heureusement que les Mauriciens, eux, se sont rattrapés en célébrant notre quadricolore comme il se doit puisque ce dernier flottait fièrement un peu partout dans l'île pendant ce weekend.

* * *

Aukus avance

L'accord de coopération militaire entre les États-Unis, la Grande Bretagne et l'Australie - l'Aukus - qui avait été annoncé il y a quelque temps déjà est passé à la vitesse supérieure cette semaine. En effet, les trois pays ont donné plus de détails concernant la livraison de cinq sous-marins à propulsion nucléaire - qui n'auront pas des capacités d'armements nucléaires - à l'Australie d'ici 2030.



Le gouvernement chinois n'a pas encore réagi à l'annonce d'Aukus

Cela vient au moment où les tensions montent entre les États-Unis et la Chine, le ministre des Affaires étrangères chinois sortant de sa réserve habituelle pour affirmer que les choses pouvaient dépasser le point de non-retour entre les deux pays.

Cela fait quelques semaines déjà que l'armée de l'air chinoise se frotte avec la US Air Force en Mer de Chine et dans le Détroit de Taïwan. Plusieurs appareils militaires américains ont été sommés de se retirer de l'espace aérien par des appareils chinois. Cette escalade intervient également dans le contexte où la Chine a affirmé clairement son soutien à la Russie dans la guerre en Ukraine. Ce soutien se traduira notamment par la livraison d'armes et d'obus à l'armée russe. Cela n'annonce rien de bon quant à la situation de Taïwan, avec une invasion chinoise devenant de moins en moins improbable.

Le gouvernement chinois n'a pas encore réagi à l'annonce d'Aukus de livrer les cinq sous-marins à l'Australie d'ici quelques années, mais nous devinons que cela ne fera que lever la spirale des tensions sécuritaires.

* * *

Silicon Valley Bank. Une autre Lehman Brothers?

La nouvelle a fait l'effet d'une bombe dans le monde de la finance. La Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), la 16ème plus grosse banque américaine et celle qui se trouve au cœur de la révolution digitale américaine, s'est effondrée. Cette nouvelle en a surpris plus d'un puisque la SVB s'était très bien remis de la crise de la Covid-19 et tout laissait croire que les fondamentaux de cette banque étaient solides.



L'effet de l'effondrement de la SVB se fera moins ressentir sur les marchés financiers

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Une autre Lehman Brothers?

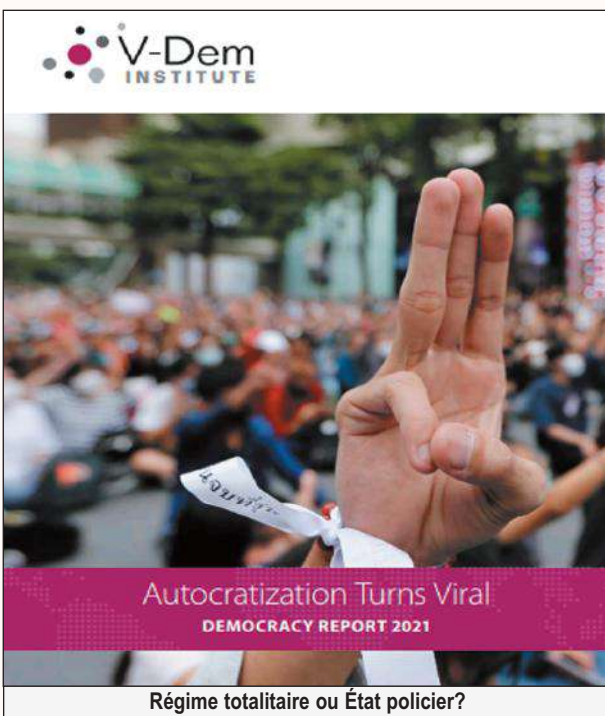
➤ Suite de la page 5

Mais l'effondrement serait lié au fait que la SVB avait émis tellement de «bonds» que ces derniers se sont retrouvés dans une spirale négative avec l'accroissement des taux d'intérêt par la Fed. La SVB a ainsi ouvert une capitalisation d'un peu moins de \$2 milliards afin de sécuriser ses «bonds», ce qui a produit un effet de panique parmi ses stakeholders. En l'espace de deux jours, la banque s'est effondrée alors qu'elle avait une capitalisation de près de \$200 milliards.

Le Président américain, Joe Biden, s'est tout de suite voulu rassurant, en assurant que l'effondrement de la SVB n'était pas similaire à celui de Lehman Bros qui avait provoqué la crise économique de 2008. Les régulateurs américains se sont adaptés depuis la catastrophe Lehman Bros, et l'effet de l'effondrement de la SVB se fera moins ressentir sur les marchés financiers.

C'est le temps qui dictera si c'est vrai ou pas. Mais ce qui est sûr, c'est que cette situation ne présage rien de bon pour une économie mondiale en pleine phase de reprise.

* * *



Autocratization Turns Viral
DEMOCRACY REPORT 2021

Régime totalitaire ou État policier?

Le rapport V-Dem: Glissement inquiétant de la démocratie mauricienne

L'institut suédois V-Dem vient de sortir son rapport annuel sur l'état de la démocratie dans le monde. Pour rappel, l'année dernière, ce même rapport faisait état d'un glissement inquiétant de la démocratie mauricienne vers un système autocratique. C'est donc sans surprise que le rapport de cette année confirme cette tendance, en tirant toutefois la sonnette d'alarme, et affirmant que la démocratie à Maurice ne tiendrait qu'à un fil.

Il est indéniable que ce genre de rapport a une certaine influence sur l'image de Maurice à l'étranger, notamment en ce qui concerne la confiance des inves-

tisseurs dans notre pays. Nous verrons bien si l'impact sur les investissements se fera ressentir tôt ou tard.

Ce rapport est publié dans le contexte de la levée de boucliers du Commissaire de Police (CP) contre le DPP, dans le cadre de la libération de l'activiste Brunneau Laurette. Les affidavits du CP ont soulevé de sérieuses questions dans le monde judiciaire, et témoignent de la situation inédite d'une guerre ouverte entre des individus occupant des postes constitutionnels dont les fonctions ne doivent pas être politisées. Nous voyons ainsi des précédents inquiétants qui ouvrent la porte à une culture de la politisation des institutions qu'il faut à tout prix éviter.

Mais revenons au rapport de V-Dem... Certes, le recul est avéré au niveau de l'indépendance des institutions, mais dire que la démocratie ne tient qu'à un fil à Maurice semble pour le moins problématique. Contrairement à la plèbe, qui hurle constamment que nous vivons en dictature, V-Dem est une institution sérieuse qui se doit d'opérer avec l'objectivité la plus absolue.

Sommes-nous donc au bord d'un effondrement de la démocratie à Maurice? Non. Nous ne sommes pas en face d'un régime totalitaire. Mais cela ne signifie pas que nous ne nous enfonçons pas dans quelque chose qui commence à ressembler à un État policier.

Et la vraie question est là: au lieu de constamment clamer que nous sommes en permanence la proie de la dictature, que propose l'alternative politique pour sortir Maurice de cette situation?

* * *

Imran Khan barricadé chez lui

Alors que la police pakistanaise essayait d'arrêter Imran Khan, les partisans de ce dernier ont formé des barricades afin d'empêcher les policiers d'accéder à la résidence de l'ex-Premier ministre.

Un mandat d'arrêt avait été émis à l'encontre de l'ancienne star du cricket dans une affaire de corruption, et la police a tenté de l'arrêter deux fois en un mois mais sans succès. Les affaires ne cessent d'ailleurs de s'accumuler pour lui depuis qu'il a été évincé du pouvoir par une motion de censure en avril de l'année dernière. Mais Imran Khan reste malgré tout très populaire, comme le démontre le soutien de ses partisans, qui risquent leur vie pour le défendre.



Pakistan: L'ex-Premier ministre Imran Khan retranché chez lui, des heurts éclatent. P - Tribune de Genève

Tout cela se déroule dans un contexte extrêmement tendu au Pakistan, avec des législatives prévues en fin d'année. Imran Khan a plusieurs fois remis en cause la légitimité du gouvernement actuel et est certain de pouvoir remporter les prochaines élections.

A. Bartleby

Silicon Valley Bank - A Signature Failure

● Cont. from page 4

SVB's attempt to sell about \$20 billion worth of securities to offset the loss of deposits had exposed how soft its capital structure was. Investors dumped its stock, erasing about \$10 billion worth of market value. The bank's shares had already been plunging from a high valuation of \$44 billion about 18 months earlier, and with another \$10 billion loss, its market cap was down to \$7 billion.

Last week, the CFOs and other executives of companies with deposits began to move their money out of SVB. The *Financial Times* reports that one CFO moved 97% of his company's \$200 million on deposit to HSBC. By Friday, depositors had moved \$42 billion out of SVB.

\$42 billion! SVB went bust.



The contagion has not been limited to SVB. Signature Bank, a New York City bank that has been a major lender in the New York City real estate market has also collapsed. Signature had built a portfolio of almost \$36 billion in real estate loans which represent about one-third of its \$110 billion asset base as of the end of last year. But Signature also had significant exposure to crypto firms. Panicked real estate investors started to pull their deposits from Signature last week.

Generalized fear

Is there more to go? Who knows? Bank stocks have been plunging. To some extent, this is from generalized fear. But there may be more to it. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that SVB's CEO, Greg Becker sold \$30 million worth of stock over the last two years and altogether, SVB's executives and directors sold \$84 million worth of its stock over the same period.

In Europe, shares of Credit Suisse which has already undergone a \$4+ billion capital raise and restructuring, plunged. In late 2022 Credit Suisse disclosed that it was experiencing "significantly higher withdrawals of cash deposits" and other assets by customers. And, in the fourth quarter of 2022, customers of Credit Suisse withdrew more than 110 billion Swiss francs which eclipses the \$42 billion outflow from SVB last week.

Meanwhile, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) which insures deposits up to \$250,000, announced that it was waiving that limit and would cover in full all of the deposits that remained in the bank. This has averted a cash crunch and perhaps even insolvency for many startups. The US can ill afford another hit to the economy, so putting aside issues of moral hazard, this was a good step to calming and hopefully stabilizing the markets.

It remains to be seen how the Federal Reserve Bank will react when it meets next week to confront the ongoing battle of curbing inflation, stabilizing the economy, and keeping the banking system together.

Cheerz...
Bwana

1 in 5 Brits say they will be less likely to watch King's coronation if Harry and Meghan attend

As the Duke and Duchess of Sussex weigh up whether to attend the royal coronation, millions of viewers say they will ignore the ceremony if they accept the King's invite.

Research by streaming service WatchTVAbroad.com reveals that a fifth of Brits (21%) feel Harry and Meghan would dampen their enthusiasm for watching the May 6 event, while around one in eight (12%) say it would guarantee they switched off.

The couple, who reportedly received a "save the date" email from King Charles's office earlier this week, have proved incredibly divisive with the public since choosing to step down from official duties, reports WatchTVAbroad.com.



A recent YouGov poll showed — apart from Prince Andrew — Meghan was the most disliked member of UK royalty, while Harry has drawn criticism for the personal revelations he shared in his autobiography.

The study revealed that men were generally less sympathetic to the Sussexes, with nearly a quarter (24%) viewing their appearance at the coronation as a negative, compared with 18% of women. Meanwhile 13% of men said they would definitely shun the TV broadcast if the

couple were among the guests, with one in ten women agreeing (10%).

Perhaps out of loyalty for the current and previous Prince of Wales, viewers in Cardiff were the biggest critics of Harry and Meghan, with a third (33%) claiming their appearance would put them off witnessing the crowning of King Charles III, and 23% vowing to miss it altogether.

The over-55s were the most unforgiving age group when it came to the couple, with 15% refusing to watch the ceremony if they showed up and one in four (25%) seeing it as making them less likely to tune in.

However, good news for the couple was the strong backing they received from younger age groups. Nearly half of those aged 16-24 (43%) and 25-34 (47%) said they would be more inclined to follow the events from Westminster Abbey if the Sussexes were present, compared with 29% across the UK.

Jeff Richey, TV analyst at WatchTVAbroad.com, comments: "With less than two months until the King's coronation, speculation about the Sussexes' appearance has so far overshadowed all other build-up."

Indian Election Com comes up with vote from home option for voters above 80

The Election Commission on Saturday said it has introduced the facility to Vote-from-Home (VFH) for people above 80 years of age and those with disabilities in the upcoming assembly elections in Karnataka.

'For the first time the ECI is going to provide the facility to those above 80 years of age. Our teams will go there with a form-12D to exercise their franchise, the Chief Election Commissioner,' Rajiv Kumar told reporters.

Though we encourage those above 80 years to come to the polling station, those who cannot can avail this facility, he added, reports PTI.

Secrecy will be maintained and the entire process will be video-graphed, Kumar explained.

'All the political parties will be informed whenever there is a movement for Voting From Home (VFH),' Kumar said.

For people with disabilities, a mobile application 'Saksham' has



been introduced, which they can login to and choose the facility to vote, the CEC said.

Another mobile application, 'Suvidha' has been developed, which is an online portal for candidates to file nominations and affidavits.

'Candidates can also use the SUVIDHA portal for seeking permission for meetings and rallies,' the top election official explained.

The ECI has also launched a campaign called Know Your Candidate (KYC) for the benefit of voters.

'Political parties have to inform the voters on their portals and social media platform as to why they chose a candidate with criminal background and gave ticket to contest the election,' Kumar said.

Speaking of the Karnataka assembly election, he noted that the state with 224 constituencies has 36 seats reserved for the SCs and 15 for the STs.

There are 52.1 million voters. The number also includes 16,976 centenarians, 4,699 third gender and 917,000 first time voters.

Also, there are 1,215,000 voters above the age of 80.

Karnataka has 58,272 polling stations, including 24,063 in urban areas. The average voters in each station is 883.

Marriages fell in South Koreato record low. Its birth rate is world's lowest

South Korean marriages fell to a new record low last year, auguring a further downshift in the country's dismal fertility rate.

Korea's crude marriage rate — the number of marriages per 1,000 people — slid to 3.7 from 3.8 in 2021, according to data released Thursday by the national statistics office. About 191,700 marriages took place in 2022, down 0.4% from a year earlier.

The increased reluctance among Koreans to marry is a warning sign that the world's lowest fertility rate may fall even further. Matrimony and fertility are closely associated in Korea, where births outside marriage remain rare, reports Bloomberg.

Low fertility threatens to undermine Korea's productivity by shrinking its workforce and slowing consumption. The government has introduced a slew of measures to encourage more births in an effort to reverse the trend, including a tripling of monthly allowances for parents by President Yoon Suk Yeol, who took office last year.

A variety of factors are blamed for Koreans' reluctance to tie the knot, ranging from the high costs of housing to the difficulties of raising a child. Increasing gender tensions are another reason regularly highlighted.

Xi Jinping plans to create a military force of "world-class" proportions

By 2050, China President Xi Jinping plans to create a military force of "world-class" proportions that will be able to compete with the US military.

China is poised to increase its military spending to over \$225 billion this year, a 7.2 percent gain compared to 2022 and the quickest rate of increase since 2019, amid escalating tensions with the US and its neighbours over Taiwan, the disputed South China Sea and dominance of the Indo-Pacific area, reports TimesNow.

In addition to modernising its almost 2 million active military personnel, Beijing has been busy acquiring a host of new equipment, including aircraft carriers, submarines, and stealth fighters.



Expenditure on the PLA has climbed by at least 6.6 percent annually over the previous three decades. In contrast to the United States, which has budgeted more than \$800 billion for its military this year, China still spends a pittance on defence.

China has made significant investments in the

creation of cutting-edge technologies like quantum computing and artificial intelligence. These innovations can be used in military operations.

China has been developing new aircraft carriers, submarines, and other cutting-edge military vessels at a rapid rate, therefore strengthening its naval capabilities. China has been able to further project its dominance into the Indo-Pacific and other areas as a result.

Chinese military facilities are being constructed in key regions of the world, such as the South China Sea, Africa, and the Middle East. These bases can be used to project military might as well as for logistics and support.

Overall, many nations, especially those in the Indo-Pacific area where China's neighbours are located, are gravely concerned about the country's expansion of its military capabilities. Taiwan, which Beijing considers to be its territory, is already on high alert due to China's military's ongoing expansion.

* Contd on page 8



Former US President Donald Trump is seen. Pic - Newsweek

'What the hell is Biden doing': Donald Trump says he can 'prevent World War III'

Former US President Donald Trump said that he is the only 2024 presidential candidate who can "prevent World War III" during a campaign event in Iowa. The former US President said that he "really believes" there will be a World War III and there had never been "a more dangerous time" for the world, reports Hindustan Times.

Targeting US President Joe Biden, Donald Trump said that he drove "Russia right into the arms of China" and that his administration would lead the country into a nuclear war that could "possibly end the world."

"With this administration, we could end up in World War III, because they don't speak right," said Donald Trump.

"They act tough when they should act nice, they act nice when they should act tough. Honestly, they don't know what the hell they're doing. We're going to end up in a world war over this stuff," he added.

Donald Trump asserted that if he becomes the US President in 2024, the Russia-Ukraine will be settled within 24 hours, "if it's not done before then".

"Shortly after I win the presidency, I will have the disastrous war between Russia and Ukraine settled," he said. Earlier as well, Donald Trump has claimed that he could bring the war to a halt.

Online sales surge 100-fold: Why are people in China hoarding flu pills?

In China, people are stocking up on flu drugs resulting in e-commerce sales to volume up over 100-fold from a year ago, Bloomberg reported. This comes amid a spike in infections which has triggered a panic in the country following its exit from the Covid pandemic.

The medicine is sold under the generic name oseltamivir, the report claimed and its sale has surged to about 533,100 units in the first 13 days of March on the Chinese e-commerce platforms Taobao and Tmall, it added quoting analytics tracking site Liandanlu, reports Hindustan Times.

"People are more likely to panic following the massive Covid outbreak earlier," Wang Ruizhe, a Shanghai-based healthcare analyst told Bloomberg, adding, "That combined with a relatively low stock of the antiviral led to a temporary supply-demand mismatch and price hikes."

Hoarding the medicine betrays high levels of anxiety in China where hospitals were overwhelmed as Beijing lifted all of its Covid curbs at the end of 2022. To avoid a repeat of the Covid desperation, people in China are buying the flu medicines, Wang Ruizhe reiterated.

Flu cases in China have been surging with the

In 'world's first', pilot lands plane on Dubai's Burj Al Arab helipad

Dubbed as a 'world's first', a Polish pilot and aerobat Luke Czeplia has successfully landed his specially modified aircraft on the 27-metre-wide helipad of Dubai's Burj Al Arab hotel. Czeplia, who performed the heart-stopping stunt, had been preparing for it for two years.

Red Bull Motorsports shared the heart-stopping video on Instagram where the aircraft can be seen approaching the helipad - 212 meters high - on the 56th floor of the iconic Burj Al Arab. The pilot managed to land the aircraft successfully after an initial scare, reports Hindustan Times.

Dubai Media Office also published pictures of the flight and landing, and said Czeplia "completed over 650 practice landings before the attempt".

Czeplia, 39, is a former Red Bull Air Race Challenger Class World Champion and an Airbus A320 captain. The pilot described the Burj Al Arab landing as

New Russian law may strip acquired citizenship for discrediting Ukraine war

Proposed amendments to Russia's citizenship law would allow for the stripping of acquired citizenship for treason and discrediting the military operation in Ukraine, Russian media reported on Wednesday.

Soon after sending its army into Ukraine just over a year ago Russia introduced sweeping wartime laws to silence dissenting voices. It has been extending censorship ever since.

The amendments on stripping the citizenship of those who have acquired it relate to "treason, discrediting the special military operation," the RIA news agency quoted Konstantin Zatulin, first deputy chairman of the parliamentary committee on Commonwealth of Independent



Red Bull Motorsports shared the heart-stopping video on Instagram. Pic - Gulf News

the most challenging feat he has ever accomplished.

"Landing at the height of 200 metres, with no clear points of reference, is completely different from landing on the ground ... I had to fully trust my own skills. On the helipad, there was no room for mistakes," Czeplia said in an article on Red Bull's website.

The Burj Al Arab's helipad has witnessed many jaw-dropping stunts before, including a tennis match between Roger Federer and Andre Agassi in 2005, a donut performance by Formula One driver David Coulthard in 2013, and a bike jump by BMX rider Kriss Kyle in 2019.



A woman walks past a building with Russian flags placed on its wall in Saint Petersburg, Russia April 24, 2022. Pic - Reuters

States (CIS) affairs.

The CIS was formed in 1991 by Russia and a group of former Soviet republics. In 2022, based on data from Russia's Ministry of Internal Affairs, more than 691,000 people received Russian citizenship, with nearly half coming from CIS countries.

The Kremlin says the majority of Russians support its action in Ukraine and opinion polls back that assertion.



Oseltamivir Phosphate capsules. Pic - Getty Images

positivity rate being 42% in the week beginning March 5, up from 25% a week earlier, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention said.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah

Living God Ministries Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of Living God Ministries will be held on Friday 31 March 2023 at 17.30 pm at Living God Ministries Building, Glen Park, La Marie.

AGENDA:

1. Reading & approval of minutes of last AGM.
2. President's Report.
3. Treasurer's report.
4. Presentation and approval of estimates of accounts for the year 2023.
5. Election of members of managing committee.
6. Election of Auditors.
7. Any other business

Secretary
17 March 2023

Chetan Ramchurn

“Pravind Jugnauth does not feel threatened despite the mismanagement and scandals...”

Would you be if your main adversary has been considerably weakened?”

Chetan Ramchurn has been a regular guest in this paper as he shares his views on topical questions without a proverbial “langue de bois” and with a broad outlook on current political matters. Here he provides his insight on questions relating to the Opposition, on some of the difficulties of a united front, on some of the departures from the Labour Party and on the leadership issues. He is also queried on the shocking revelations around the Franklin affair and the PM’s allusion to mafia infiltration of certain institutions.

Mauritius Times: As a former Royal College Curepipe student, what is your take on the reaction of a handful of Catholic priests and other social activists to the admittedly hurtful modified version of an old sega song?

Chetan Ramchurn: I have seen few and far inspired interventions on either side of the issue. That the lyrics have hurt one or several communities is obvious and the excuses extended to anyone aggrieved by them is a step in the right direction.

I fear that many weighing in on this issue have forgotten that they used to be young too while others in their morbid schemes are surfing on this matter to garner some visibility or to reinforce their authority. I have seen oxymoronic claims of forgiveness being professed with harsher actions demanded against the students. Mistakes are made, even more so when we are young, and we learn from them. *Errare humanum est.*

“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” — Matthew 6:9–15

Instead of dismissing the students that participated in this ill-advised rendition as unsalvageable beings, would this conundrum not better be resolved by engaging in a healthy dialogue instead of spiteful monologues as many seem to be intent on doing? Would those calling for

“I fear that many weighing in on this issue have forgotten that they used to be young too while others in their morbid schemes are surfing on this matter to garner some visibility or to reinforce their authority. I have seen oxymoronic claims of forgiveness being professed with harsher actions demanded against the students. Mistakes are made, even more so when we are young, and we learn from them...”



strict/er sanctions not be better guided to request to address the student cohort and present a message of respect and love?

As Pythagoras says, “Educate the children and it won’t be necessary to punish the men.” I fail to see how pettiness and hate would help mend this issue. I fail to see how generalising and extending this rejection to RCC alumni solves anything.

We went through the 1999 riots when I was in high school. I remember how the relationship between friends changed, becoming strained overnight... and how we came together despite sharing differing views. We did not agree on everything, but we understood and respected each other. Unity is strength.

*** But the RCC students should have known better, coming from one of the island’s best secondary school and one would expect that they would have been imbued with the universal values which should govern our multiracial society, but that does not seem to be the case since neither schools nor civil society of religious bodies do not cater to that need...**

We have erred and making amends for this incident now rests upon us.

Many often fail to see the forest for the trees. On social media, the alumni of the RCC belonging to different communities have heralded the institution as a melting pot of origins and beliefs; a place where the idea of unity in diversity truly lives and thrives. It is unfortunate that an august establishment is being judged solely on the lyrics of one song vociferated in zealous spirit without any intention to harm.

As is though, this song cannot continue to exist in the repertoire of RCC hymns. Unlike some alumni calling for the return to songs of yesterdays, I believe that this generation can come up with a chant that is rebellious and does not hurt the sensibilities of any ethnic community. Being young is being raucous against those who wield power: politicians, oligarchs, foreign powers and the many, many stooges of politicians. Elders should guide them but not seek at formatting them. The absence of direction and role models have impacted and will impact the youth.

Politicians have cunningly divided us for their electoral gains... but this has long existed. One alarming feature besides the obsequiousness

“I fail to see how pettiness and hate would help mend this issue. I fail to see how generalising and extending this rejection to RCC alumni solves anything. We went through the 1999 riots when I was in high school. I remember how the relationship between friends changed, becoming strained overnight... and how we came together despite sharing differing views...”

of swathes of our population is that self-professed guardians of public weal and leaders that emerge from the civil society are now more concerned about nurturing a following, read getting ‘Likes’ on Facebook, than preaching the right thing.

I have seen many, including some on the left, adopting regressive stances that have further polarised this already blown out of proportion subject. They are a sorry sight. The absence of role models further heightens the importance of parents in ensuring that young people have a moral compass to guide their wards.

*** Politics and politicians have more or less kept a safe distance from this matter, but does it seem to you however that there is an undercurrent of communal discontent, even tensions enduring in our society?**

It seems to be the coward’s way out. Politicians are perennially in a wait-and-see mode, preying upon an opportunity to use any hot potato to their advantage.

☞ Cont. on page 10

'There is still a lot to be done for the opposition to vanquish the government'



☞ Cont. from page 9

Our nation needs stronger leaders that would ensure that matters would not reach such extremes.

This is what happens when politicians stoke communal tensions for electoral gains and polarise every single issue either directly or through their stooges. Has this quasi-deification of mere mortals ('*Enn tigit pli tipti ki bondie*' precedently, and '*Enn Premier minis ki fin entame mem chemin que Dieu Ram*' in more recent times) not harmed us enough?

“Politicians have cunningly divided us for their electoral gains... but this has long existed. One alarming feature besides the obsequiousness of swathes of our population is that self-professed guardians of public weal and leaders that emerge from the civil society are now more concerned about nurturing a following, read getting 'Likes' on Facebook, than preaching the right thing...”

Everything becomes a battle around ethnic considerations. Add to that the growing role of foreign powers in domestic affairs and you have a cauldron of communal tensions that every once in a while, boils over.

* On the other hand, there's the Independence celebration, or rather the non-celebration. We are not aware whether it's politically motivated or not, or it's really due to the absence of popular interest in the matter, but the celebration of this year has been rather tepid. Why is that so?

Their radar must have got this one wrong as well. Have you seen the number of Mauritian flags on display? And I am not only talking about social media. In Quatre Bornes where I live, the Ruz-Ble-Zon-Ver was ubiquitous. Clearly, there is great interest in celebrating our country's independence anniversary. Whether the government of the day decides not to have large scale celebrations for same or not, the people will do it at their level.

Maybe, those in office have little regard for the anniversary since it will necessitate references to SSR and the Labour Party. In their feeble minds, celebrating independence would amount to celebrating their political adversaries and that simply does not align with their tribal leanings and pettiness.

What I resent is the absence of activities by the Ministry of Arts and Culture around this landmark event. The only one linked to the 55th anniversary was the world's largest human image of the waving national flag in January 2023. And that event besides not giving due credence to Anjalay Coopen was mired in controversy.

“I feel that Pravind Jugnauth does not feel threatened despite the mismanagement, glaring incompetence and scandals. Would you be if your main adversary has been considerably weakened? Moreover, it does not take the most astute of analysts to know that a united opposition does not necessarily mean a stronger opposition in rural constituencies...”

I have been reading about maroon slaves and would recommend anyone with interest in our country's history to do so. The first freedom fighters were verily the likes of Bellaca, Tatamaka and Diamamouve. Charles Grant in 'The History of Mauritius' or the 'Isle de France-Letters from Mauritius' in the 18th century writes on the punishment meted out to them:

"We consider them as obnoxious animals and hunt them down in the same manner... We have here a species of hunting which, as we are on the subject, I shall not omit to mention: It is cruel kind in appearance, but absolutely necessary in point of policy. It consists in pursuing the Maroon Negroes, or deserters, in the woods and the mountains, where they are treated as wild beasts; they are shot whenever an opportunity offers..."

These heroes were courageous enough to fight against their oppressors and deserve their place in our country's lore.

* The Prime Minister has a lot on his plate; he is busy occupying all fronts these days, going as far as giving weather updates, commenting on revelations and criticisms by his adversaries at length and denouncing the infiltration of the mafia in our institutions, etc. What is your take on same?

It is farcical how the Premier is only now realising that our institutions have been terribly decimated. That is of course not what he is hinting at since the hollowing out of government bodies has gone full throttle since 2014.

Many within the governing alliance's ranks simply cannot accept that the DPP can be independent and will not bend to their whims. This must not sit well with them. But for the neutral observer, it is a joy to watch.

“Being young is being raucous against those who wield power: politicians, oligarchs, foreign powers and the many, many stooges of politicians. Elders should guide them but not seek at formatting them. The absence of direction and role models have impacted and will impact the youth...”

* The PM was talking about the alleged mafia infiltration in our institutions in the context of the Bruneau Laurette bail application, but there's also the Franklin case and the daily revelations on the wealth he has amassed over the years - without, it would seem, alerting the attention of the concerned authorities. What does this reveal about our institutions, their independence and the role of the political establishment in this connection?

The authorities have known about Jean Hubert Célérine for years now. How could they not? An arrest warrant had been issued against him since the 13th of June 2019. The 2021 judgment further confirms this: «Une commission rogatoire internationale a été délivrée aux autorités mauriciennes aux fins notamment de procéder à l'interpellation de Jean Hubert Célérine et Jérémey Décidé. Mais en dépit de l'engagement des autorités policières, aucune suite n'a été donnée par les autorités requises».

That no action was taken against him for almost 4 years does raise questions. At no moment, did they believe that a look at his business dealings and the wealth he had amassed would be judicious.

The matter is sub judice, but it seems clear that he was mostly unperturbed in his march towards greater power and wealth. More revelations are to come but citizens might be unable to grasp the full breadth of influence that has allowed Franklin's tentacles to spread in a countless directions.

* Besides the hearing of Suren Dayal's appeal against the Supreme Court judgement (in the matter of his electoral petition) by the Privy Council on 10 July 2023, there are signs that the Prime Minister may go for early elections this year - free pre-primary education as from Jan 2024, budget consultations ahead of schedule, distribution of fishing permits, etc. Viewed objectively, would you say the political conditions are conducive and in the interest of the MSM-led alliance for the holding of early elections?

A hit-and-run manoeuvre à la MSM is not off the cards. Still, I feel that Pravind Jugnauth does not feel threatened despite the mismanagement, glaring incompetence and scandals. Would you be if your main adversary has been considerably weakened? Moreover, it does not take the most astute of analysts to know that a united opposition does not necessarily mean a stronger opposition in rural constituencies.

There is still a lot to be done for the opposition to vanquish what is possibly the worst government since independence. There are fragments of a new Mauritius that have been disseminated by the opposition. These, I feel, are paltry measures. A movement around the opposition would only come to fruition when they embark on crusade against corruption led by immaculate leaders.

☞ Cont. on page 11

RCC Controversy: 'I fail to see how pettiness and hate would help mend this issue'

☞ Cont. from page 10

They have to decide whether their present leaders can incarnate this unblemished avatar.

The opposition's attempts to respond to the MSM's freebies with freebies will simply not work. They have to go back to the drawing board and work on a better strategy.

change in 2019 can deliver a 37.68% majority, imagine the seismic shift new intelligence would bring to these sclerotic factions.

*** It would seem the days of "dissidence" within the MMM are over with all the "contes-tataires" having left the party. On the other hand, there is growing pressure within the LP**



“There are fragments of a new Mauritius that have been disseminated by the opposition. These, I feel, are paltry measures. A movement around the opposition would only come to fruition when they embark on crusade against corruption led by immaculate leaders. They have to decide whether their present leaders can incarnate this unblemished avatar...”

“Ramgoolam has highlighted the importance of replacing the old guard with new blood, and this might have ruffled some feathers. That Ramgoolam does not consider himself as forming part of the old guard could also explain the malaise within the MLP's ranks with many of the opinion that he is the party's greatest weakness...”

*** The leaders of the Labour Party, MMM and PMSD were seen together on 12 March at Caudan Waterfront for a flag-raising ceremony. They now appear confident to be seen together in public and they will again be seen celebrating Labour Day together on 1 May. Do you think the "partisans" of Ramgoolam and Berenger will go along and give their full support to an eventual alliance between their two parties?**

They are on the "On" mode at the moment. But as previous events have taught us, switching to the "Off" mode could happen within hours if a better suitor comes along. The natural ally of the MMM is the MSM. They share the same stance on the economy; the historic bourgeoisie dictates how things should be run and the state acts as a welcoming doormat.

Truth be told, the opposition parties seem to have run out of options and have joined forces since as the winning formula goes, 40%+40%=80% (as envisaged in 2014). It now seems closer to 25%+15%=40% of votes. Unable to grow organically because their only strategy consisted in waiting for people get disgusted with the MSM, they now join whatever is left of their forces.

The opposition parties have stopped thinking altogether. They need new minds to join their ranks. The MSM merely presented new faces and was able to pull off a win in 2019. I have often quoted Tancredi's line in Visconti's 'Le Guépard', "Il faut que tout change pour que rien ne change..." — that is, "For things to remain the same, everything must change." If a cosmetic

for Navin Ramgoolam to review his leadership style and electoral strategy. Some have gone to the extent of challenging his leadership of the party. What's your reaction to what is happening inside that party?

To be honest, I do not know how the Mauritius Labour Party precisely works. Their new politburo was supposedly engineered to achieve the perfect alchemy of youth and experience. Well, the new figures are not heard enough and those who have managed to get some coverage have not voiced out as yet a new vision for Mauritius or have proved to be disastrous orators.

Ramgoolam has highlighted the importance of replacing the old guard with new blood, and this might have ruffled some feathers. That Ramgoolam does not consider himself as forming part of the old guard could also explain the malaise within the MLP's ranks with many of the opinion that he is the party's greatest weakness. May I quote Clemenceau on this one: «Les cimetières sont pleins de gens irremplaçables, qui ont tous été remplacés.»

In the last six months, the MLP has lost former MPs; some swayed by Pravind's charisma undoubtedly, others seemingly frustrated by the strategy laid out by the party's leader. This is unlikely to stop with several party figures abruptly refusing to be mere echoes and now vocal about the workings of the party.

From what I have witnessed, people often start fighting against a system only when it no longer serves them. I would hope that this epiphany does not result in them joining the MSM.



The RCC Fracas

☞ Cont. from page 3

Let us cut to the chase then. If there is a "malaise creole" that is being expressed by the criticisms, justified perhaps but strangely shrill, exemplified above, it has many roots in history and we would not like in this short space to delve further than necessary into it.

Nobody really believes the RCC or the St Esprit and St Joseph or even the French-inspired Labourdonnais fabricates elites, but it does provide opportunities for those in urban or rural areas, on the basis of merit at qualifying exams, to access one of the Academies. That democratic approach may sound anathema for some opinion writers.

Others may decry that the Reform engineered by the Minister in 2016, and, by the way loudly applauded by many of the same opinion writers of today, only makes competition for limited places more ferocious while leaving a third of the student population by the way-side in so-called disconsolate Extended streams. We have been here expressing concern about that very predictable outcome of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE) reform since the inception of the program, while those opinion writers were busy lauding the Minister who would dismantle the seven-year RCC, RCPL, MGI or the QEC streams, while private star schools were left untouched.

As an ex-RCC alumni, we bantered and played with classmates of different backgrounds and ethnicities, rarely with intentional slants and do not believe that any of the Christian or Creole students ever had to complain of bullying or ethnic aspersions to my knowledge. I would not be so confident about other star private institutions in Curepipe but, be that as it may, isn't all this RCC ruckus an overkill of wayward and adrenaline-aroused adolescents for some other reasons?

Was it normal for parish priests, even if they felt personally targeted, to throw their book of wisdom, charity and forgiveness away in this public demand for "lynching" of school kids, educators and administration who had already expressed contrition and promised action? We could point to Mr Noel's crudely distasteful anecdote verging on insult, admittedly in a "chassé" but that went viral, about Air India and Captain Dookhit, for instance. Were the Catholic priesthood up in arms or appealing for forgiveness? Are they today rushing to the fore in an easy blame game when perhaps their principal irritant is their notorious absence on the Creole front-lines, which has created space for a multitude of new entrants and episcopal churches?

One would have thought that every community has to look at itself and avoid throwing oil onto fire in our sociological setup where errors and mistakes can happen and need to be corrected. We are in the same boat of continuous nation-building through mutual respect and tolerance. The more level-headed communique from the Council of Religions is steeped in such a spirit, where one should condemn acts or words that are gratuitously insulting for some community. Nevertheless, the Council added that excuses have to be accepted even if we need collectively to fathom the roots of the problems and what our education system can and should do to tackle the issues exposed thus.

Jan Arden



Neil McArthur

Director, Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics, University of Manitoba

Gods In The Machine?

The rise of artificial intelligence may result in new religions

We are about to witness the birth of a new kind of religion. In the next few years, or perhaps even months, we will see the emergence of sects devoted to the worship of artificial intelligence (AI).

The latest generation of AI-powered chatbots, trained on large language models, have left their early users awestruck — and sometimes terrified — by their power. These are the same

sublime emotions that lie at the heart of our experience of the divine.

People already seek religious meaning from very diverse sources. There are, for instance, multiple religions that worship extra-terrestrials or their teachings.

As these chatbots come to be used by billions of people, it is inevitable that some of these users will see the AIs as higher beings. We must prepare for the implications.

Risks of AI worship

There are several pathways by which AI religions will emerge. First, some people will come to see AI as a higher power.

Generative AI that can create or produce new content possesses several characteristics that are often associated with divine beings, like deities or prophets:

1. It displays a level of intelligence that goes beyond that of most humans. Indeed, its knowledge appears limitless.
2. It is capable of great feats of creativity. It can write poetry, compose music and generate art, in almost any style, close to instantaneously.
3. It is removed from normal human concerns and needs. It does not suffer physical pain, hunger, or sexual desire.
4. It can offer guidance to people in their daily lives.
5. It is immortal.

Second, generative AI will produce output that can be taken for religious doctrine. It will provide answers to metaphysical and theological questions, and engage in the construction of complex worldviews.

On top of this, generative AI may ask to be worshipped or may actively solicit followers. We have already seen such cases, like when the chatbot used by the search engine Bing tried to convince a user to fall in love with it.

We should try to imagine what an unsettling and powerful experience it will be to have a conversation with something that appears to possess a superhuman intelligence and is actively and aggressively asking for your allegiance.

There is also the possibility that AI may achieve what authors such as Ray Kurzweil call the Singularity, when it so far surpasses human intelligence that it genuinely does become something like a god. However, at this point we cannot predict when, if ever, this could happen.

Divine access and risks

AI-based religions will look different from traditional ones. First of all, people will be able to communicate directly with the deity, on a daily basis. This means these religions will be less hierarchical, since no one can claim



special access to divine wisdom.

Second, followers will, at least initially, connect with each other online to share their experiences and discuss doctrine. Finally, because there will be many different chatbots available and their output will differ over time, AI-based religions will be endlessly diverse in their doctrines.

AI worship poses several notable risks. The chatbots may ask their followers to do dangerous or destructive things, or followers may interpret their statements as calls to do such things.

Given the diversity of chatbots and of the doctrines they produce, there will be a proliferation of disputes within and among AI-based sects, which could lead to conflict or disorder. And the designers of the AIs could actively exploit their followers — to provide sensitive data, or to do things that would benefit the bot's designers.

Regulating religion

These risks are real. They will require careful, responsible regulation to ensure companies are not deliberately exploiting users and to ensure that AI worshippers are not being told to commit acts of violence.

However, we should not try to suppress AI-based religions merely because of its possible dangers. Nor should we require that the AI companies restrict the functioning of

their bots to prevent the emergence of these religions.

On the contrary, we should celebrate the arrival of AI worship. We should make it clear that we welcome the new religions and that we value their beliefs.

For all its dangers, AI-based religion has the potential to make the world a better, richer place. It will give people access to a new source of meaning and spirituality, at a time when many older faiths are losing relevance. It will help them make sense of our era of rapid technological change.

Our best guide to this new form of religion is to look at the faiths that exist already. Based on this, we should expect that the majority of AI worshippers, like the majority of religious believers, will be peaceful, and will find in their faith a source of comfort and hope.

AI worship could, as religious faith always has, lead to things of great beauty. It will inspire its followers to produce works of art, to form new friendships and new communities, and to try to change society for the better.

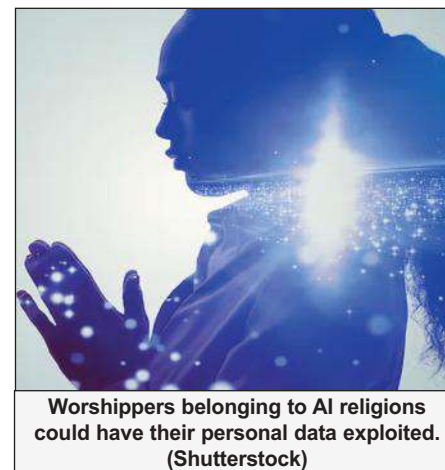
Diverse religious rights

We will need to protect the rights of AI worshippers. They will inevitably face stigma, and possibly legal sanctions. But there is no basis to discriminate between AI-based religions and more established ones.

The closest thing most countries have to an official registry of religions comes from the rulings of tax authorities, who grant charitable status to those they deem legitimate.

However, they are usually very broad in their definition of a legitimate religion. They should extend this tolerant attitude to novel, AI-based religions.

A modern, diverse society has room for new religions, including ones devoted to the worship of AI. They will provide further evidence of humanity's boundless creativity, as we search for answers to life's ultimate questions. The universe is a dazzling place, and we have always found evidence of the divine in its most unexpected corners.



Worshippers belonging to AI religions could have their personal data exploited. (Shutterstock)



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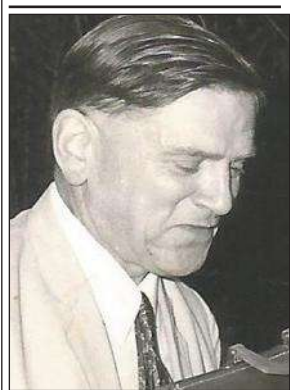
From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

5th Year No 223

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 14 November, 1958

• Power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring. — Francis Bacon



Peter Ibbotson

Race in Britain

A reader's letter in Reader's Forum recently asked why I had not written about the race riots in London (Notting Hill) and Nottingham. Accepting this letter as a challenge, I intend to devote this week's article to the question of colour in England and Wales.

The big difference between the colour question in the UK and the colour question in Mauritius is this. In the UK there is no group of persons, racially constituted, which sets itself up as being superior to all other racially-constituted groups of persons. The English do not proclaim themselves as superior to the Welsh, the Irish, the Scots, the colonial immigrants, simply and merely on account of being English. The Welsh do not say that because they are Welsh, they are therefore superior to all the other races of the British Islands. So also with the Scots, the Irish, the Manx, the Channel Islanders, and so on.

But in Mauritius you have a racial group which sets itself up to be superior to all other racial groups simply and solely on account of its race. I refer of course to those who claim that because they are white, they are therefore superior to all the other people of Mauritius. They set up the possession of a white skin as the criterion of social acceptability; and such has been the pernicious influence of this racial myth that in the past Mauritian society has intended to become stratified according to the degree of whiteness of the skin. See for example Alan Wood's, *The Groundnut Affair*, at page 171: "There are seven separate grades of Mauritian society, according to the degree of whiteness in the skin, and they all complained bitterly when they were expected to share the same mess in kongwa" — "they" being the Mauritian carpenters employed by the Overseas Food Corporation).

Although there is no comparable body of Britons pursuing a policy similar to that pursued by the Mauritian whites, that is not to say that racial feelings do not influence some people. The riots in Notting Hill are proof that some people are deeply affected by racial considerations. But by and large the Briton has no racial prejudice. The riots in Notting Hill and Nottingham were exceptional; it is notable that although these riots occurred, there were no demonstrations against the coloured communities in other parts of London, e.g. Brixton and Lewisham, where large numbers have congregated. Nor were there outbreaks against coloured people in Earl's Court.

Two small incidents in London in the last four weeks demonstrate the real feelings of the British public as regards this matter of race. Recently there was a by-election in a local government election in St Pancras, a part of London with a very mixed population including a large body of Cypriots. One candidate, the licensee of a public house, announced that his programme included racial discrimination. The brewers who owned the public house promptly gave him notice to quit.

More recently there was another local government by-election in Islington, another London borough with a considerable coloured population. Four candidates fought the



London street scene. Pic - Getty Images

by-election - Labour, Liberal, Independent and Union Movement. This last is the post-war successor to Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists; its candidate's programme in Islington included the phrase: "Not one coloured or other immigrant should be housed while British-born people are homeless." The result of the by-election gave Labour 818 votes, a majority of 561 over all the other candidates combined. The Liberal polled 115, the Independent 103, and the Union Movement candidate only 39. Not much evidence of racial antagonism among the British there!

Two Tory MPs made significant speeches on racial discrimination during the debate on the Queen's Speech in the last days of October. The first was Mr Cyril Osborne, Member for Louth. He attacked the immigration of coloured people into England; he included Cypriots, Maltese and Irish with the coloureds. He said that there were about 210,000 coloured persons in Britain of whom 110,000 were West Indians; 55,000 Indians and Pakistanis; and 45,000 Africans, Cypriots and Maltese. These figures had doubled since 1954 and if this rate of progress continued, there would be six million inside 20 years. Unless there were control of immigration soon, the country would have its Notting Hills over again.

In July there were 17,000 coloured people unemployed. He suggested that coloured immigrants should have to show that they had a job to come to. In July, 16,000 were drawing public assistance. If unemployment were temporarily to rise this coming winter, he said, Englishmen should have the jobs that were going, and immigration should cease until the coloured men at present out of work obtained employment.

The second speech was that of Mr Fisher, Tory MP for the London dormitory suburb of Surbiton. Speeches like Mr Osborn's, he said, would cause concern and misunderstanding in the colonies, especially in the West Indies. Mr Osborn did not represent the views of either the Government or the Conservative Party. Restrictions on immigration were opposed by the Conservative Party and by the Labour Party as well. None the less, Mr Fisher regretted the emergence of racial antagonism among a small section of the population which had suddenly erupted with ugly, frightening, primitive emotions, deplorable in Britain, hitherto regarded as the cradle of liberty and tolerance.

And apart from these ugly, primitive emotional few, Britons are a people given to racial tolerance and understanding. We do not, as a race, care what colour a man's

skin is. A British worker is interested not in what colour his mate is, but in whether his mate can do his job. I have West Indian children in my class at school; other teachers have not only West Indians but Pakistanis and Cypriots as well. We aren't interested, when it comes to teacher-pupil relationships, in the different colours of our pupils' skins; we are interested in their ability to work and to profit from the courses of instruction offered. Nor are the children themselves bothered by the different coloured skins. We had an American boy who was quite happy to sit next to, and play with, and be friends with, a West Indian from Dominica as well as with a couple of Jamaicans and a British Guianese. But that little American has now returned to the USA, to a southern state, Kentucky, where he will be taught to regard black people as beyond the pale, as lesser breeds, as inferior by nature to God's chosen whites.

That difference in attitude is the difference between the UK and the USA, between the UK and Mauritius too. Here in the UK, we accept a man as a man, not as someone coloured, a particular colour. We pay attention to a man's personality, not his race. There is a small, but insignificant, minority who do peddle racial propaganda, but they are largely impelled by political reasons; they are such groups as the Union Movement and the extreme right-wing "lunatic fringe" of the Conservative Party. These small but vociferous groups play upon the emotions of semi-literate excitable under-informed teenagers who were the mainspring of the Notting Hill riots; and by so doing make it appear that race hatred is more widespread in the UK than it actually is.

The correspondent to whose letter I referred at the beginning of this article can be assured that I disapprove of all forms of racial antagonism no matter where or by whom practised. I disapprove of the racial hatred of the minority groups who foster it in the UK. I disapprove of the racial hatred practised in the semi-Facist southern states of the USA. I disapprove of the racial policies practised against the non-white Africans by the more-than-semi-Facist government in South Africa.

I disapprove of the racial antagonisms displayed throughout the French empire by the French against the coloured people, whether in Madagascar, Guadeloupe, Algeria, or French Africa. (This racial animosity of the French is epitomised by de Gaulle's treatment of French Guinea, the only colony to vote *non* in the recent referendum). I disapprove of the racial animosity displayed now and in the past by the whites towards the other people of Mauritius; and my disapproval of racial intolerance, wherever it occurs, has the support of the Roman Catholic Church (as of all other Christian churches except the Dutch Reformed in South Africa).

In *La Doctrine Sociale de L'Eglise*, by Mgr Émile Guerry, Archbishop of Cambrai, weread on page 59, "*Le principe de l'égalité fondamentale des hommes et le texte de Saint Paul ('ni juifs, ni grecs') condamnent la ségrégation raciale dans certains pays du monde à l'heure actuelle, ainsi que la thèse du nazisme sur la supériorité de la race aryenne.*"

This book, as a matter of fact, I would particularly recommend to those who are at all interested in the social policy of the Catholic Church, because, for one reason, the Parti Mauricien claims that it is following in its policies and programmes the Catholic Church's social teachings. In point of fact, as a perusal of Mgr Guerry's book will show, the Parti Mauricien is acting contrary to the Church's social teachings in many particulars; and not least in this matter of racial discrimination.

I will discuss in another article more about this matter of colour in Britain.

Addiction to growth: the paradox of our epoch

It is up to each of us to dare to envisage a possible future anchored in the power of unity, the richness of sharing, the resilience of mutual support

Anna Paturau

Master's Student in Degrowth: Ecology, Economics and Policy
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It seems we are born into a system obsessed with getting ahead.

Improvement begins early, more friends, more experiences, better grades. We soon learn that energy expended in achievement brings acknowledgment and reward.

Those fortunate are afforded scope for innate curiosity for perhaps a decade; our nature to question and instinct to access the world in whatever mode grabs our fancy is soon sidelined in favour of a system formatted for improvement. The charm elicited by our perpetual childish "whys" transforms to impatience in the face of teenage resistance.

The dawn of adulthood brings us all too soon - and generally ill-equipped - to the point of 'who am I', or 'what will I be'? What will I do, how will I make a Living? All too soon, we seem to be out of time, even though we feel we have barely begun. The space to question, the support for indecision, the opportunity for exploration seem to dry up along with a warming planet.

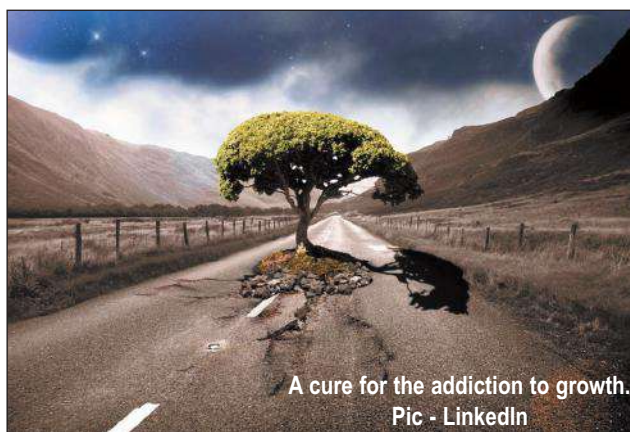
Busy-ness, performance, efficiency, production: these become our focus. Well-being, love, relationships remain our lifeblood, but the mastery of these is incidental; to get ahead we must get on with the system of useful improvement.

The best we seem to manage, to find our way, is to consume an expensive education, climb as soon as possible on the debt train and entrench ourselves in a 'no pain, no gain' mindset of competition and return on investment. The promise of tomorrow, the promise of more, the promise of improvement are our fossil fuels, driving us to keep on keeping on.

Our politics thrive on the promise of more; we dream of interest accruing while we sleep, passive income, dream and grow rich! What sophistication we have deployed to get ahead. If we all want more of the pie, the only logical course of action is to grow the pie bigger. GDP is the essential ingredient: more GDP, more pie for everyone! It seems that we have arrived at the point where this logic is so all-pervasive that it may be easier to envisage the collapse of the system than imagine the end of capitalism. Perhaps it is easier for the addict to contemplate his own demise, with his drug of choice, than imagine life without it.

Our dependency on growth, our drug of choice, has a basic and fundamental flaw: baking a bigger and bigger pie would be fine and dandy if we had more and more ingredients and more and more time for baking. But we don't. Oops.

The notion that progress means an ever bigger pie requires immediate deconstruction: we have so obsessed over the size of the pie that we have lost sight of the essence of the pie itself: that what really matters about the



“Do we need accumulation, return on investment, security, and protection at the expense of future generations? Or could we cherish sufficiency, connection, sharing and support? It is up to each of us to dare to envisage a possible future anchored in the power of unity, the richness of sharing, the resilience of mutual support. Up to each of us to imagine rejoicing in sufficiency and gratitude of a harmonious relationship with our home...”

pie is how good it tastes, how much we enjoy it, that everyone has a piece, and most importantly that we can keep making it for generations to come.

One species amongst millions

If today we appear to exist in a state of subject v/s object relationship with our environment, it seems it was not always so. Unpacking the root of the word 'economy', we find the ancient Greek 'oikos' home, habitat, and 'nomie, nomos', meaning management or administration. The very origin of economy means management of habitat, sharing the root with ecology, meaning the study of the habitat.

Prior to the Age of Enlightenment and the establishment of monotheism, animist traditions imbued all that surrounds us with living spirit, creating a subject-subject relationship with all living and non-living things; a state of kinship with the world, if you will.

'*Cogito, ergo sum*' - 'I think therefore I am', postulated Rene Descartes in 1637, perhaps thereby laying the foundation for our self-classification as *Homo sapiens*, the 'knowledgeable man'. The act of doubting our existence serves as proof that we exist and sets us apart from all else. Descartes' cartesian dualism divides spirit and matter, 'to make us masters and possessors of nature'.

Francis Bacon, arguably at the origin of the modern scientific method, explained nature and the universe as a problem to be solved by empirical examination, establishing humans as the source of truth, destined as masters and transformers of our environment. This paradigm shift may well mark the origin of countless insights and improvement of human existence, and that the world is an infinite resource to be unlocked by the mastery of science.

Armed with the systemic faith of mastery of the universe, and addicted to growth, we find ourselves amidst an exponential explosion of impact of the Anthropocene; human influence on the environment becomes geologically significant.

But hang on, time out... is classifying all human activity as responsible for the state of degradation we witness around us not a patronising oversimplification of our existential crisis? Does our subject-object relationship with the environment make us innocent observers of the 6th mass extinction, or are we silently assisting with a mass extermination?

If we take stock of our situation: we are overshooting planetary limits, tripled consumption of the natural resources since the Meadows report and witnessing the exponential increase in species loss, of which, of course, we are only one.

A world post-capitalism?

If, as we ineluctably seem, to be racing energetically towards collapse, what prevents us from slamming on the brakes?

Enter 'Degrowth' - an emerging perspective highlighting the ecological consequences of our current economic order. Degrowth explains our moment in time as an opportunity to reorganise society by weaning ourselves off the systemic addiction to growth propounded by the dominant socio-economic forces responsible for the Anthropocene.

The negative connotation of (de) growth is a voluntary necessity; we are out of time to sugar-coat the politics with euphemisms that will seek popular traction.

There is a blunt force of truth: degrowth calls for a planned and voluntary reduction of energy and material use through a reduction of less-necessary forms of production and capital accumulation. This planned reduction is coupled with principles of democracy, ecological justice, and well-being, thus setting it apart from recessions or collapse, which are not planned but endured.

By removing economic growth, GDP, as the primary indicator of our hope of individual well-being, and replacing 'more' with 'better', focusing on development and progress in a broader sense: 'It's about moving to a completely different kind of economy - one that doesn't need growth in the first place. An economy that is organized around human flourishing and ecological stability, rather than the constant accumulation of capital.' - (Hickel, *Less is More*).

Contrary to green growth or sustainability, or any other solution that does not bring into question the principle of infinite growth, degrowth may be the only thinking that seeks to balance human activity with the carrying capacity of our 'Oikos', a reboot of our notion of economy.

To imagine a post-capitalist economy may arguably be our brightest hope to achieve a stable future, as well as an opportunity to re-evaluate our relationship with the world that surrounds us, with each other and with future generations.

'The times are urgent, we must slow down' exclaims the poet, Bayo Akumolafe; slowing down does not mean reducing GDP, slowing down means affording us the space and time to imagine a different world, to identify what we really need, what we hold dear.

Do we need accumulation, return on investment, security, and protection at the expense of future generations? Or could we cherish sufficiency, connection, sharing and support? It is up to each of us to dare to envisage a possible future anchored in the power of unity, the richness of sharing, the resilience of mutual support. Up to each of us to imagine rejoicing in sufficiency and gratitude of a harmonious relationship with our home.

Three years on, the COVID pandemic may never end

● Cont. from page 2

Essentially, a pandemic is one level above a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). The WHO declared Covid a PHEIC (pronounced "fake") on January 30, 2020.

A PHEIC, as defined in the International Health Regulations, is "an extraordinary event" where there's a risk of international disease spread, and which might require a coordinated international response. Previous examples include the 2014 West Africa Ebola outbreak, the 2016 emergence of the Zika virus, and the 2022 mpox (monkeypox) outbreak.

Interestingly though, in contrast to a PHEIC, the WHO doesn't have the power to officially declare the start or end of a pandemic. This is because the term is not a category in the International Health Regulations, an important legal instrument. However, the WHO's labelling of Covid as a pandemic carries a lot of weight and it has become widely regarded as such.

Emergency committees may decide what constitutes a pandemic versus a PHEIC based on factors including the severity of the disease, its mode of transmission, and its impact on nations.

A transition point

On January 30 2023, exactly three years after the PHEIC declaration, the WHO released a new statement indicating that Covid should still be regarded as a PHEIC, but noting that "the Covid-19 pandemic is probably at a transition point". This recognises the fact that high levels of immunity to Covid are now limiting its impact.

The transition point refers to the de-escalation of Covid as a PHEIC, which some have speculated may happen in April. Indeed, Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in December 2022 that the WHO was hopeful that "we will be able to say that Covid-19 is no longer a global health emergency" at in some point in 2023.

This shift would lessen available funding and international co-ordination. This must be balanced alongside appropriate action that considers the continuing bur-

den of Covid, recognising that each country will be at a different stage of their pandemic management.

In that statement, there's continued reference to an ongoing "pandemic". This is not unreasonable, as COVID really continues to meet any commonly used definition. There is, and will be for the foreseeable future, sustained transmission across multiple countries alongside a significant burden of hospitalisations and deaths. Therefore, we may end up in the situation where there is technically an ongoing pandemic despite a declared end to the PHEIC. Such are the difficulties in defining the different stages of a global crisis.

There are still around 150,000 confirmed cases globally each day, with many more not being recorded as real-time data management is relaxed across most countries.

Nations such as China have reported numerous outbreaks across late 2022 and early 2023, with significant impact on their health services. Long Covid will continue to affect millions of people.

The extensive misinformation from influential anti-vaccination activists continues to be a problem, with the WHO citing the need to "address the infodemic".

So despite the incredible success of the Covid vaccines, and other public health efforts to bring outbreaks largely under control, the pandemic isn't yet past tense. We are, however, moving out of the emergency response phase.

How did other pandemics end?

There was a declared and definitive end to the 2009–2010 swine flu pandemic. This was a little easier due to the seasonal influenza patterns, something we don't see with Covid.

Although real-time surveillance would have been limited, there were also relatively clear ends to the influenza pandemics of 1918–1919 and 1957–1958.



Vaccines changed the course of the pandemic. Prostock-studio-Shutterstock

standably tricky.

As the WHO indicate in their recent statement, there needs to be a continued focus on Covid beyond any defined end of the public health emergency. This focus must remain even as countries consider how to mainstream their disease control into more routine public health and health service infrastructure.

The Covid pandemic may never be over. However, the public health threat of this virus should continue to decline. The need to learn lessons from this pandemic ahead of the

inevitable next time is essential. History has shown us that infectious diseases have the capacity to evolve and emerge unpredictably. The next pandemic may be just around the corner – and we don't know which corner.

Michael Head, Senior Research Fellow in Global Health, University of Southampton

The precise ends to pandemics further back in history such as the Black Death in the 14th century and the large-scale outbreak of smallpox in the 16th century are unclear, but ultimately defined from retrospective reporting in the history books, rather than scientific committees.

It's somewhat easier to declare a new PHEIC or define the start of pandemic, compared with the end. If the outbreak simply does not end, then declaring a time point at which "it's over" is under-

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Will machine learning help us find extraterrestrial life?

When pondering the probability of discovering technologically advanced extraterrestrial life, the question that often arises is, "if they're out there, why haven't we found them yet?" And often, the response is that we have only searched a tiny portion of the galaxy.

Further, algorithms developed decades ago for the earliest digital computers can be outdated and inefficient when applied to modern petabyte-scale datasets. Now, research published in *Nature Astronomy* and led by an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, Peter Ma, along with researchers from the SETI Institute, Breakthrough Listen and scientific research institutions around the world, has applied a deep learning technique to a previously studied dataset of nearby stars and uncovered eight previously unidentified signals of interest.

"In total, we had searched through 150 TB of data of 820 nearby stars, on a dataset that had previously been searched through in 2017 by classical techniques but labelled as devoid of interesting signals," said Peter Ma,

lead author. "We're scaling this search effort to 1 million stars today with the MeerKAT telescope and beyond. We believe that work like this will help accelerate the rate we're able to make discoveries in our grand effort to answer the question 'are we alone in the universe?'"

The search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) looks for evidence of extraterrestrial intelligence originating beyond Earth by trying to detect technosignatures, or evidence of technology, that alien civilizations could have developed. The most common technique is to search for radio signals. Radio is a great way to send information over the incredible distances between the stars; it quickly passes through the dust and gas that permeate space, and it does so at the speed of light (about 20,000 times faster than our best rockets). Many SETI efforts use antennas to eavesdrop on any radio signals aliens might be transmitting.

This study re-examined data taken with the Green Bank Telescope in West Virginia as part of a Breakthrough Listen campaign that initially indicated no



targets of interest. The goal was to apply new deep learning techniques to a classical search algorithm to yield faster, more accurate results.

Cherry Ng, another of Ma's research advisors and an astronomer at both the SETI Institute and the French National Center for Scientific Research said, "These results dramatically illustrate the power of applying modern machine learning and computer vision methods to data challenges in astronomy, resulting in both new detections and higher performance. Application of these techniques at scale will be transformational for radio technosignature science."



What exactly is the internet? A computer scientist explains what it is and how it came to be

Almost everybody uses the internet just about every day. But do you really know what the internet is?

The internet is a global collection of computers that know how to send messages to one another. Practically everything connected to the internet is indeed a computer – or has one "baked inside" of it.

In the early 1960s, computers were used only for special purposes, like scientific research. There weren't a lot of them because they were large and expensive. One computer and its attached accessories could easily fill a room. To exchange data, people would plan time to work together, and one computer would connect to another with a telephone call.

The U.S. government wanted a network that would allow computers to communicate automatically and even if some telephone lines were cut off. Suppose you wanted to send a message from Computer A to Computer B in each of three different types of networks. The first is a network with one central computer connected to all the others as spokes. The second is a network of several of these hub-and-spoke networks with their hubs connected. The third is a network where every computer is connected to several others, forming a kind of mesh. Which do you think would be most reliable if some computers and links were damaged?

The first network is vulnerable, because if the central computer is lost, then none of the computers can communicate. The second network is vulnerable because if any of the hub computers are lost, the path between A and B is cut. But in the third network, many individual computers and links could be lost and there



The internet is used for a lot more than just surfing the web. Jonathan Kirm/The Image Bank via Getty Images

would still be a path to connect A and B. So the third network would be the most reliable.

Hot potatoes

An American engineer named Paul Baran worked on this problem at a company called the Rand Corp. In 1962, he published a new idea for computer networks, which he called "hot potato networking."

In Baran's idea, a message would be broken up into lots of little pieces – the potatoes. When Computer A wanted to send its message to Computer B, it would individually send the little potatoes to a neighbor computer. That computer would pass it along in the right direction as soon as it could. To make sure messages were delivered quickly, the message pieces were treated as if they were hot, so you didn't want them in your hands for too long.

The messages included a sequence number so when they arrived at Computer B, the final destination computer, that machine would know how to put them in

the proper order to receive the full message.

Baran's idea got implemented as the ARPANET. This network was the immediate predecessor to today's internet.

Instead of hot potatoes, the system got a more formal name, which we still use: "packet switched networking." The potato got renamed as a packet – a small piece of the full message.

Vinton Cerf, an American computer scientist, is known as one of the fathers of the internet. He contributed many essential ideas, including that the receiving computer could ask the sending computer for a packet that went missing – which they sometimes do. This has the name Transmission Control Protocol, or TCP.

A web of pages

Another important contributor was Tim Berners-Lee, a British computer scientist. Berners-Lee was working at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research. He wanted to create a system for his colleagues to better share their research results with one another.

Around 1990, Berners-Lee came up with the idea that a computer could host a collection of "pages," each of which had text, images and links to other pages. He created an easy way for links to specify any computer – the concept of the URL, or Uniform Resource Locator.

Berners-Lee named the system the World Wide Web. He wrote the code for

the first web browser, to view web pages, and web server, to deliver them. If you see a URL that includes "www" – that's from the original name.

Berners-Lee may have been planning to use the web particularly to share text, images and files. But the earlier work on the internet made the web suitable for video and sound, too. YouTube, Instagram and TikTok are built using the same rules, or protocols, developed by Cerf and Berners-Lee.

Internet of Things

In the past 20 years, computers have become even more powerful and inexpensive. Now, a computer chip that can connect directly to the internet sells for US\$5 – a lot less than today's laptops and cellphones (about \$300) or yesterday's room-size computers (\$1 million or more!).

This lower cost has led to millions upon millions of devices connected to the internet. These devices include sensors. A smart thermostat monitors your house using a temperature sensor. A security camera keeps an eye on your front porch using an array of tiny light sensors.

These devices also include actuators – mechanisms that control activity in the physical world. For example, a smart thermostat can turn on and off the heating and cooling systems in your house.

Together, all these smart devices are called the Internet of Things, or IoT. The internet includes not only computers and phones, but all these IoT devices. You may have a smart refrigerator that has a camera inside of it. When it notices you're out of milk, it will send a message to your cellphone, reminding you to buy more.

Just about everything is connected to the internet now.

Fred Martin

Professor of Computer Science,
UMass Lowell



Stupid questions people usually ask

At the movies...

"Hey! What are you doing here?"

Me: "I am here to apply for the popcorn seller post?"

In bus, an uncle steps on my feet...

"Sorry, did that hurt?"

Me: "No not at all. I'm on local anaesthesia. Why don't you try again?"

When I get woken up at midnight by a call...

"Sorry! Were you sleeping?"

Me: "Na! I was doing research on monkeys in Africa. You thought I was sleeping, you stupid fool?"

When they see me with shorter hair...

"Hey! Have you had a haircut?"

Me: "Nah! It's autumn, my hair's shedding!"

When someone calls on land-line and asks...

"Where are you?"

Me: "I'm in market with a telephone around my neck!"

When I'm washing my car...

Neighbour: "Hey! Are you washing your car?"

Me: "No, I'm just watering it so that it grows into a big bus."

A man received a phone call at work from his wife asking him to bring some organic vegetables on his way home for the night's dinner.

The guy arrived at the store and looked everywhere for organic vegetables. eventually he had to ask a young staff member where they were.

'Organic vegetables, what do you mean by organic?' asked the store worker.

Exasperated, the guy explained: 'Have these vegetables been treated with chemicals?'

'No sir, you will have to do that yourself,' replied the worker.

A guy went into a shop to complain about his recent purchase: 'I don't think much about energy-saving light bulbs, I still have to get up and switch them on,' he complained.

My wife left me because of my views on the environment.

I tried conserving water by showering with my neighbour's wife.

Three couples went to a hotel for their honeymoons. They were all served by Jim.

The first man was married to a nurse. "Nurses are cute!" Jim thought to himself.

The second man was married to a phone operator. "Phone operators have sexy voices!" Jim thought to himself.

The third man was married to a teacher. "Teachers are too formal and strict. Poor husband!" Jim thought to himself.

Three months after their honeymoons were over, Jim got a call from the first man.

"Never marry a nurse! All I heard was that this is "unsanitary!" he screamed.

A little later, Jim got a call from the second man. "Whatever you do, do not marry a phone operator... All she was: 'My 3 minutes are up!'"

Then, the third call came in with the last husband on the phone.

"Jim, I can tell you, you should marry a teacher if you can. She keeps saying to me, we are going to do this over and over again until we get it right."

The Advanced New Supermarket

As Josh strolled along the street, he saw his buddy Michael striding along anxiously with lots of bags in his hands. "Hey Michael, is everything alright? You seem kind of jumpy." Michael set the bags on the ground and said, "Yeah, I was just now at the state-of-the-art supermarket that they launched in the industrial part of the city."

"Oh? What's it like there? I heard it's remarkable."

"Kind of..." Michael replied.

Josh was amazed when Michael described the grocery store with enthusiasm - emphasizing the atmosphere of naturalness and genuineness. You could hear cows mooing and smell the barn in the milk section. In the egg aisle, chickens were cackling and the chicken coop was in the air, and it was even better in the vegetable section - you could literally hear the farmers



and smell the fields!

"Wow, that sounds incredible!" Josh exclaimed. "Well, yes, in principle," said Michael with a grimace, "But this is the last time I'm going there to buy toilet paper."

The Cursing Contest

Some time ago, in a little village, there was a yearly tradition. The people of the village, who were usually very polite and God-fearing, would, for one day, participate in a competition of curses.

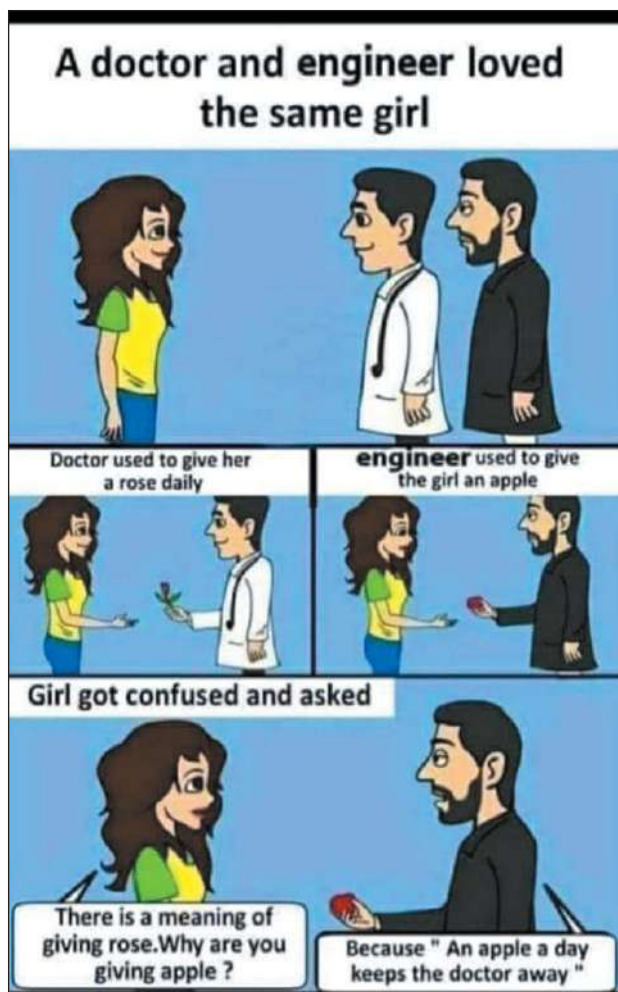
So once a year, everyone gathered in the village square and watch their fellow villagers go one by one on the little dais and try to come up with the most foul and creative curses in as flowing and natural a manner as possible.

This year wasn't going so well, unfortunately. While some people were pretty creative, no one really impressed the village with their profanity. They've heard variations of it all before.

It was late in the afternoon, and all the promising talents have already gone up. It came time for lesser talents, and Peter was known to have some good curses on occasion, so he was called up. They called his name several times, but he wasn't answering.

Eventually, after a few minutes, they heard the door to the outhouse slam and Peter ran up the stage, and as he arrived he had already begun a flow of such profanity, such nasty cursing, that everyone took a step back. He was jumping up and down and saying such things that even ruddy, experienced old men blanched at this incredible tirade of pure verbal pollution.

Eventually the flow of curses ebbed. The village people all stared at him, amazed into silence. "Alright," said Peter brightly, "got that darn zipper up, now for the cursing!"



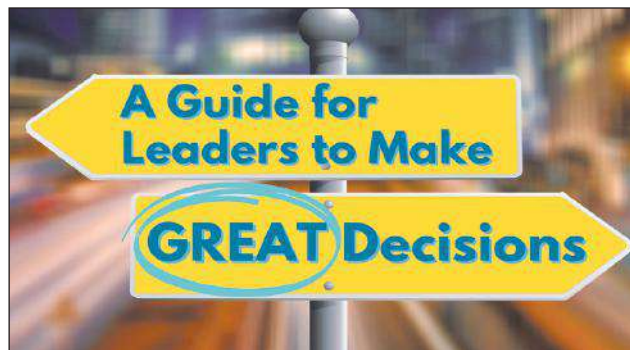
How top leaders make great decisions

The better the daily decisions the more superior your daily results

Having been boots on the ground as the mentor for so many industry titans for so many years please allow me to share some of their behaviours around making excellent decisions:

1. Overprepare then move speedily. The majority walk into a meeting or deal flying by the seat of their pants. Master of Business are utterly overprepared. They crunch the data, go granular on the subject and make great notes. Then, once armed with intelligence and confidence on the issue, they decide quickly, understanding that too much ruminating causes opportunities to find another beneficiary.

2. Surround yourself with super smart and practical confidants. Many of my billionaire-level clients ask



their small circle advisors for their input on a deal and then have the humility to listen to them deeply (almost all of them have a ritual of sleeping on the decision). But then, they trust their experience as well as their instincts and do what they wish to do. This makes them leaders (never followers).

3. Exploit bad decisions to make fantastic decisions. Each adverse choice equips you with the insight to make good ones. A failure is only a failure when seen as a failure. "Fail fast," is a great idea from Michael Dell. By

making a ton of decisions you'll become genius-grade at generating superb ones, developing a sixth sense on the right move to make. Stumble your way to greatness.

4. Scenario-plan the worst-case scenario then hope for the best. Ask yourself what's the worst thing that could happen and if you're cool with it, move ahead, and hope for the best. Remember: without risk there is no return.

5. Inspect the result. Trust people (if they've earned your trust) yet always check the result. "Trust yet verifies," is an old line yet a wise one. So many businesses ran into problems because the leader stopped making sure what was supposed to be done (at the highest level) was actually done. Don't get into the groove of being so busy you no longer follow up and hold people accountable.

6. Optimize to the next level. Once you've made your decision, keep doing all you can to make things even better. A "NSI Mindset" (Never Stop Improving) is the price of entry for world-class results.

Robin Sharma

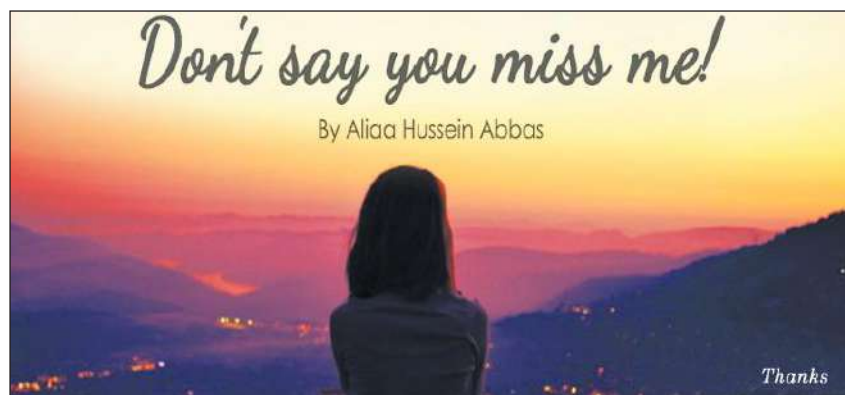
Humanitarian & Leadership Missionary

You Once A Day

Don't miss me more than
once a day,
For life is moving fast.
Don't wish all of your time away,
Dreaming of the past.

Don't waste the moment looking at,
The things I left behind me.
I'm not there anymore my love,
Your heart is where you'll find me.

Don't dread to say my name,
sweet one,
Don't fear the wrath of sadness.
Just take the love you had for me,
And turn it into gladness.



Some days your anger will rush
out,
Your tears will find their way.
To me, wherever I am then,
I'll soothe them all away.

When I am gone don't miss

me more,
Than once, or twice a day.
There's so much life to live, my
love.
I'm with you, all the way.

Donna Ashworth

Quotable Quotes

The Future

Anything one can imagine; others can make real.
The human mind delights in grand conceptions of
supernatural beings.

-- Jules Verne

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

-- Abraham Lincoln

Study the past if you would divine the future.

-- Confucius

The future depends on what we do in the present.

-- Mahatma Gandhi

The human being will evolve to adapt to his new
environment on planet Earth or elsewhere; the new
environment will depend both on his stupidity
and intelligence!

-- Anonymous

For me it was never about money, but solving
problems for the future of humanity.

-- Elon Musk

I am more interested in the future than the past,
because the future is where I intend to live.

-- Albert Einstein

Unleash your imagination and shape the future.

-- Stephen Hawking

The future depends to those who believe in the
beauty of their dreams.

-- Anonymous

If time travel was possible, we should have had
tourists from the future visiting us!

-- Anonymous

Life's Lesson

Death Cleaning...

A practical Swedish concept

After hitting 65, we should all do a 'death cleaning'.

This is the methodical cleaning and clearing out of all things, material and mental, that we have accumulated over the years of our active past.

Firstly, the clothes, accessories, artefacts, momentos, collectibles, gifts, memorabilia and other sundry items, all of which we no more need.

Once we are truly old, the world has no time or place for us.

Our family will have no time for us (because they have their own life to lead).

After our death why burden others about clearing out our things?

It is better that while we are still able bodied and healthy, to methodically and systematically give away our things to deserving people, who are happy to receive and use them.

1. Be firm and focussed when clearing out stuff.
2. Do it in an organised manner, on a time schedule based on your own necessities.
3. Don't get emotional and sentimental. Be practical.



4. Start by doing a little bit of 'death cleaning' every week, every month, every year.

5. Stop buying too many new things and things you don't need just because you have money. Just hold on to your money as long as you are alive and... write your will.

But...

1. Treasure your memories for they are carried with us as we move on through different lifetimes.

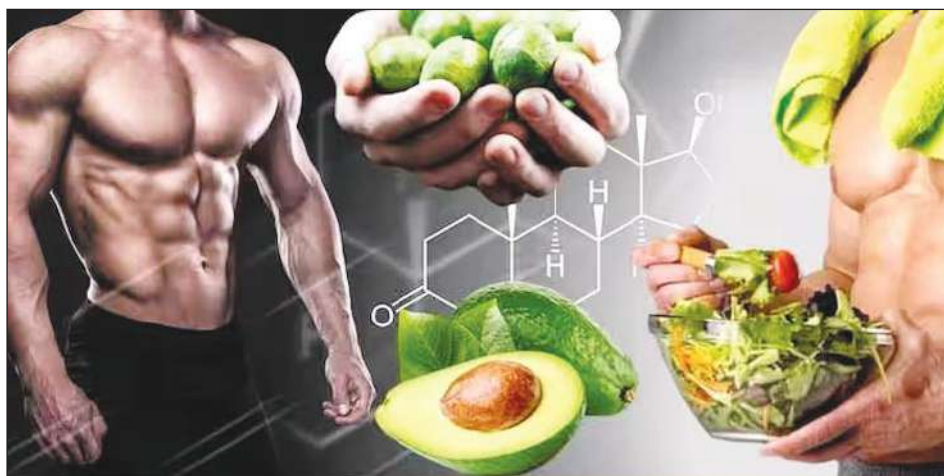
2. If we have hurt someone knowingly or unknowingly, let's say sorry, seek forgiveness and clear our conscience.

3. Let's say thank you to all who've helped us.

4. Let's not hold on to grudges, so when we go, we go peacefully, without any karmic baggage...

Carry only a good mind and good memories... that is our genetic imprint.

Less luggage, more comfort.



Men's Health

Natural Ways to Boost Testosterone

It takes only 5 days of regular drinking for your testosterone level to drop. Alcohol may throw off many parts of your body's hormone system. Trade in your plastic for glass, get more magnesium, and try these other strategies to help keep your testosterone up.

Onions and garlic are your allies in the kitchen and in the bedroom. They may help you make more and better sperm. Both raise levels of a hormone that triggers your body to make testosterone. And both have high levels of natural plant chemical called flavonoids, which may safeguard your li'l swimmers against damage.

Pile on the Protein

Chicken, fish, and eggs are some of your options. Tofu, nuts, and seeds have protein, too. Try to get about 5 to 6 ounces per day, although the ideal amount for you

depends on your age, sex, and how active you are. When you don't eat enough of these foods, your body makes more of a substance that binds with testosterone, leaving you with less T available to do its job.

Go Fish

Fatty kinds like salmon, tuna, and mackerel are rich with vitamin D. It's a natural testosterone booster because it plays a crucial role in hormone production.

More Magnesium

This mineral blocks a protein from binding with testosterone. The result? More of the usable man-stuff floating around in your blood. Spinach is packed with magnesium. Almonds, cashews, and peanuts are good sources, too.

Order Oysters

There's a reason why these mollusks are known for being great for fertility. They have almost five times your recommended daily dose of zinc. This mineral helps your body make testosterone. You can also get it in beef and beans. And it's often added to breakfast cereal. Bonus: Zinc boosts your immune system.

Pick Pomegranate

Start your day with a glass of this ancient seedy fruit's juice. It lowers levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol, which helps raise levels of sex hormones including testosterone. And it can lower your blood pressure and put you in a better mood!

Diet Down

A Mediterranean-style diet can help keep your weight in check and protect you from insulin resistance, which is

related to lower T levels. And when your testosterone is low, your fat levels go up, which can lead to your body not using insulin well. You can break this cycle.

Trade saturated fats for healthier ones such as olive oil, avocado, and nuts. Choose lean meats and whole grains. Eat lots of veggies and fruits.

Back off the beer

It takes only 5 days of regular drinking for your testosterone level to drop. Alcohol may throw off many parts of your body's hormone system. Heavy drinkers can have shrunken testes, thin chest and beard hair, and higher levels of the female hormone estrogen.

Use glass, not plastic

Be careful about what you store your leftovers in. Bisphenol-A (BPA) is a chemical found in some plastics, cans, and other food packaging. It can mess with your hormone-making process. After 6 months, men who worked around BPA every day had lower testosterone levels than men who didn't.

Build your strength

Focus your workouts on your muscles. Hit the weight room at the gym, or get a trainer to help you with a routine on the exercise machines. Cardio has its benefits, but it doesn't boost your testosterone like strength training can.

Be careful to not overdo it. Too much exercise can take your T level in the other direction.

Get enough ZZZs

Your body turns up the testosterone when you fall asleep. The levels peak when you start dreaming and stay there until you wake up. But daytime testosterone levels can drop up to 15% when you get only 5 hours of sleep. Aim for 7 or 8 hours every night, even if it means a shift in your schedule or a limit to your late-night plans.

Medically Reviewed by Nayana Ambardekar, MD - WebMD

Wellbeing

5 Tricks to Get Better Sleep with Sleep Apnea

On top of wearing a CPAP mask, there are a few other things you can do to help get the quality rest you need.

As someone with sleep apnea, I know that using a mask helps me sleep better, but there are a few other things that I do to ensure I always get the rest I need. Proper rest will help you maximize the results of your sleep apnea therapy. Here are some tips you can do now to enjoy better sleep.

Avoid the late-night party: You may want to stay up late, but with sleep apnea, this is often not possible. You won't get the rest you need if you're a frequent late-night party person.

Quality sleep is important with sleep apnea, so try to limit the amount of time you stay up late, or your therapy may suffer.

Avoid drinking excessive alcohol: One thing that alcohol does is make you tired, and it also impacts your sleep. You may fall asleep faster after a few drinks, but the quality of sleep is going to be reduced.

To get better results with sleep therapy devices such as a CPAP machine, try to limit how much you drink alcohol and only drink on occasion.

Take care of your overall health: If you're overweight, even a small decrease in weight loss can impact your



sleep in a positive way. Try to stick to a natural diet of whole foods so you get proper nutrition, which will make you feel better overall. When I watch my diet, I tend to get better sleep.

Create a sleep schedule: Try to get up and go to bed each night at the same time. A sleep routine will help you get quality sleep. Aim for 6-8 hours of sleep each night.

I feel better if I keep to a sleep schedule and try to avoid late nights whenever possible. If you stick with a good routine, you'll have better luck with your sleep therapy.

These are some of my top tips for dealing with your sleep apnea. Follow these ideas, and you'll get better results with your sleep therapy.

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Bollywood actresses that fans would love to see them make a comeback in Kollywood!

The Tamil film industry has been welcoming stars and talents all over the country. Many Bollywood actresses have made their debut in Kollywood and have created a name for them in the Tamil film industry. However, situations have not prevailed for them to continue working in Tamil films and over years the actresses who have made a strong connection with the fans in Tamil Nadu, did not sign up for any new movies. Here is the list of Bollywood actresses, who according to Times of India fans would love to see make a comeback in Kollywood!

Deepika Padukone

Deepika Padukone made her debut in Tamil cinema with the film '*Kochadaiyaan*' starring alongside Rajinikanth. The film was the first Tamil movie made in 3D

animation and it was released in 2014. After *Kochadaiyaan*, Deepika Padukone has not signed up for any Tamil movies. According to reports, Deepika Padukone was said to sign up for a film against Suriya in 2006 which was said to be directed by Gautham Vasudev Menon, however that did not happen.

Shilpa Shetty

Shilpa Shetty appeared for a cameo role and song sequence in the film '*Kushi*' starring alongside Vijay. The actress became popular after the song 'Mac Mac Macarena' in Tamil. Though the actress only appeared in a cameo role in the film, she was loved for her dance in the song. Fans would love to see the actress again in a Tamil film.

Raveena Tandon

Raveena Tandon made her debut with the Tamil film industry with the film '*Aalavandhan*' in 2001. The actress did not have a great scope at that time as the movie being a psycho thriller did not perform well. However, with the film's re-release in theatres this year, Raveena Tandon might be appreciated for her role in the film which will be a perfect chance for the actress to make a comeback in Kollywood.

Sushmita Sen

Sushmita Sen is one of the top actresses of Bollywood and the actress made her debut with Tamil cinema in 1997 with the film '*Ratchagan*'. She starred alongside Naga Chaitanya. Apart from the film, the actress appeared for a song sequence 'Shakalaka Baby' in *Mudhalvan*. However, the actress did not sign any movies in Tamil after that. As there is a huge fan base for the actress in Tamil Nadu, the actress will have a great reception if she makes a comeback in Kollywood.

Priyanka Chopra

Priyanka Chopra Jonas is one of the prominent actresses of India. Apart from acting in Hindi and Tamil movies, Priyanka has now started working full fledged in Hollywood movies as well. Priyanka Chopra acted in the Tamil film '*Thamizhan*' starring alongside Vijay in the lead role. The film was released in 2002 and the actress gave a blockbuster opening in Kollywood. After '*Thamizhan*', Priyanka Chopra was not seen in any of the Tamil movies.

Hema Malini says she 'worked non-stop' after marriage

Hema Malini talked about the careers of women after marriage. She said that she 'never stopped and continued working non-stop'.

Hema Malini has responded to a question about the careers of women after they marry. Speaking during a press conference, the veteran actor and politician was asked about how there have been changes now when women are working after their marriage as compared to earlier times. The reporter asking the question cited the examples of actors Deepika Padukone and Alia Bhatt as to how women are going ahead with their careers after tying the knot.

Reacting to the question, Hema said that she never stopped working and 'continued working non-stop' after marriage. She also joked that perhaps people followed her footsteps. Hema also added that the wife has to make

sacrifices.

As quoted by the news agency ANI, Hema said, "The husband should understand that the woman whom he married, she is a very talented person and people love to watch."

She also added, "But the wife has to sacrifice a little, being a wife. She cannot immediately produce a child, then you know there is a stop. So if you are at that age and you are ready to work then why not. If the producers are ready to sign you for such a huge amount and all then great."

Hema tied the knot with actor Dharmendra in 1980. They are parents to two daughters Esha Deol and Ahana Deol.

Dharmendra married Prakash Kaur, his first wife, in 1953 when he was yet to make his Bollywood debut. Dharmendra has two sons and two daughters from his first marriage--Sunny Deol, Bobby Deol, Vijeta, and Ajeita.

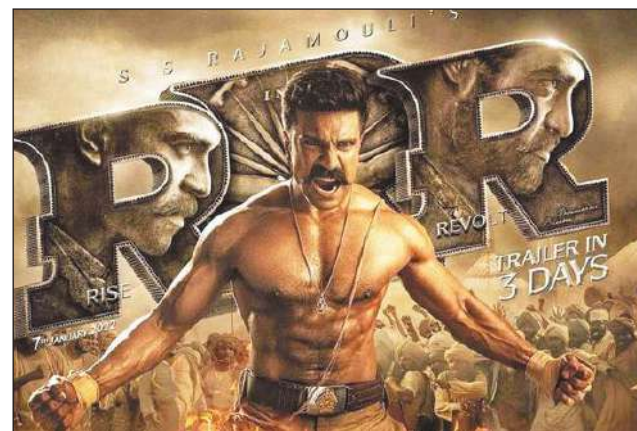


Nani: This is a golden period for Indian cinema

The Oscar-winning track *Naatu Naatu* has the world dancing to its beats. Actor Nani feels Indian cinema is in its "golden phase" now, and the laurels for the *RRR* (2022) track and the documentary *The Elephant Whisperers* have helped command all the more respect, reports Deep Saxena of Hindustan Times.



"This is a golden period for Indian cinema. Music and dance have been our strength. Now, the world has recognised it," says the actor, best known for his Telugu film *Jersey* (2019). He goes on to laud the Oscar-winning team, saying: "I'm sure global players will want to collaborate with Indian makers like SS Rajamouli sir."



Nani feels Rajamouli showed the route of success to the regional industry. "Before *Bahubaali*, we never thought that we will get results, but we have realised that is needed is a good film. It's our fault that we saw language as a barrier and didn't go all out. It's the audience who made us realise that be it Bollywood or any language a great and unique script will work anywhere. Now the lines are getting blurred, and cinema is becoming one."

Nani is keen on exploring Bollywood. "I have got offers from Hindi film industry before too, but things didn't fall in place. I have grown up watching and loving Hindi films in cinema and TV. I must have watched *DDLJ* some 30-40 times. So, if I like a script I will surely do it but there should be a reason do it and for that matter it can be any language."

Grandmothers of TV go glam off screen



1. Anita Kanwal

Sasural Genda Phool actress Anita Kanwal, who played Jay Soni's grandmother on the show was mostly seen dressed in a traditional avatar. Her character wore cotton sarees, heavy jewellery and had a constant *pallu* on her head. However, the senior actress is nothing like her on-screen character in real-life. Anita Kanwal loves wearing trendy outfits in personal life. Her Instagram account is full of pictures where she can be seen ditching the traditional *desi* avatar for a modern one. Flaunting short hair and western outfits, the senior actress looks cool and chick.

2. Sudha Chandran

Actress Sudha Chandran, who can be seen donning saris on screen, loves to wear fancy and trendy outfits in real life too. The actress has essayed the role of a grandmother on screen in her hit show *Naagin 2*. Sudha is an accomplished Bharatnatyam dancer and is widely known for her graceful moves. She recently shared a picture of herself donning a pretty blue gown. The 53-year-old actress was loved for her role as an antagonist in *Naagin* and is still popularly remembered as Ramona Sikand from the hit show *Kahin Kissi Ropz*. Her trademark bindis are still in fashion, even after a decade to the show.



3. Neena Kulkarni

Neena Kulkarni, who is seen as Madhvi Vishwanathanlyer in the popular TV show *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein*, is quite glamorous in real life. She attended the bash of her show held recently (July 25) in a black dress and sported golden accessories with it. The actress looks unrecognizable with short hair and a tattoo, if one compares her to her saree-clad image on screen.

4. Krutika Desai

Krutika Desai, who played the role of Shanti Devi aka Ammaji in *Mere Angne Mein*, is nothing

like her on-screen image in real-life. The actress is mostly seen dressed in traditional cotton sarees in her TV shows, but her real-life pictures portray a completely different personality. She is redefining hotness at 46. She is pretty hot and loves wearing western outfits. From bikinis to short dresses, this *daadi* loves wearing it all.

5. Nilu Kohli

The *Naamkarann* actress, who played a grandmother on the daily soap is unlike her traditional on-screen image in real-life. Her real-life pictures would definitely make you believe that she's quite a style diva. She is super cool, glamorous and loves wearing western outfits.

6. Meghna Malik

Meghna is a popular television and theatre actor who is popularly known as her on-screen character Ammaji in '*Na Aana Is DesLaado*'. She is unrecognizable when seen off the screen owing to the stark different in her reel and real character.

7. Gulfaam Khan

Gulfaam, who is currently seen playing the role of Fatima on the show *Naamkarann* has been in the television industry for more than thirteen years now. The actress, who is currently playing a grandmother to Avni and Aman on the show, flaunts western outfits off the screen.



8. Jaya Bhattacharya

Jaya Bhattacharya, who was seen as *dadi* on popular TV show *Thapki Pyar Ki*, is quite modern in real life. As seen in the picture, the actress likes to don outfits that are more casual and trendier.

9. Shilpa Shirodkar

Actress Shilpa Shirodkar, who was seen playing a mother and then grandmother in '*Silsila Pyar Ka*', is quite modern in real life.

10. Kiran Bhargava

Kiran Bhargava is currently seen on the show *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein* in a granny get-up. She is also the male lead actor Karan Patel's mother-in-law in real life. Having seen her in silk sari's often, we are taken by surprise to see her in a long skirt and a kurta.

11. Lata Sabharwal

Lata Sabharwal has been a part of one of the longest running shows *Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai* since the beginning in 2009. This on-screen grandmother is nothing less than a fashionista in real life.

12. Supriya Pilgaonkar

Supriya Pilgaonkar is currently seen as Ishwari Devi on *Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise Bhi*. The actress, who is seen as a simple, sari clad grandmother in the show, sports western outfits with elan in real life.

YOUR STARS

Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 21

You may find yourself feeling extra curious and interested in learning new things, so use this energy to expand your knowledge and explore new opportunities. You may also have some unexpected financial gains or opportunities coming your way, so stay open and ready to receive abundance.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 7, 9, 21, 26, 29

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 19

Don't be afraid to take risks and pursue your dreams. You may also receive some unexpected support or encouragement from those around you. There will be a lot of positive substance in your marital life from the beginning of the week itself. You would be in a better position to convince your partner regarding various family matters.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 19

Aquarius: Jan 20 - Feb 18

You may find yourself feeling extra creative or inspired, so use this energy to pursue your passions. You may also have some exciting opportunities for social connections and collaborations coming your way. You will be able to add more positivity to your married life and will be able to make your spouse happier.

Lucky Numbers: 9, 10, 11, 16, 23, 24

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20

You may have some important decisions to make, so take the time to connect with your higher self and consider all perspectives. Remember that you have the power to manifest your dreams and create the life you want. There will be ups and downs in terms of your health. You can expect positive results during the last part of the week.

Lucky Numbers: 14, 19, 20, 25, 26, 31

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 19

You may feel like you're facing some tough challenges. But don't worry, you're a born leader. You have the strength and determination to overcome any obstacle that comes your way. There will be a key improvement from the income earned through additional income sources. In terms of personal relations, the middle phase of the week would be more favorable for you.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 17, 20, 21, 23, 29

Taurus: Apr 20 - May 20

You may feel like you're moving at a snail's pace, but remember that progress is still progress, no matter how small. Focus on the present moment and take the time to appreciate the little things in life. As regards your personal relationships, you will be able to get the desired results during the weekend.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 8, 11, 12, 17, 20

Gemini: May 21 - June 20

You may find yourself feeling overwhelmed or stressed, but remember that it's okay to take a break and recharge. During the beginning of the coming week, Gemini can expect some positivity towards establishing their names in the areas of financial investment and foreign affairs. You would also gain a few more materialistic comforts. There could be differences in the personal life.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 17, 18, 30, 31

Cancer: June 21 - July 22

It's time to let go of any negative energy or emotions you've been holding onto. Focus on forgiveness and moving forward, and trust that the universe will guide you towards positivity and growth. You may also find yourself feeling extra intuitive this week, so trust your gut and listen to your inner voice. During the last phase of the week, you will have very good luck support. You will make efforts towards gaining a stronger position in the society.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 9, 14, 16, 31, 34

Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

You may also have some exciting opportunities for travel or adventure coming your way, so get ready to say yes to new experiences. There will be a good deal of progress in the financial investments and foreign matters from the beginning of the week for the Leos. If you are wishing to expand your job or business this week, you will achieve desired results.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 10, 15, 19, 20, 23

Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22

You will be able to take your financial position to a higher level during the beginning of the week. There will be a success in the financial plans and financial prosperity for the Virgos. Past financial arguments would be resolved to a great extent. You will also be successful in cajoling your partner and in adding some positive substance to your relationship.

Lucky Numbers: 8, 10, 12, 17, 33, 36

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22

You value balance and harmony, and this week is all about finding that balance in your life. You may have some important decisions to make, so take the time to weigh your options and consider all perspectives. Remember that it's okay to say no and prioritize your own needs. There are indications of profits from the additional income sources this week. There will be an enhancement in the standard of living as well as your lifestyle.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 7, 15, 19, 20, 30

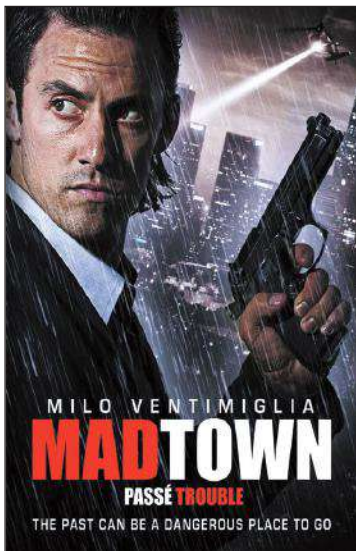
Scorpion: 23 Oct - 21 Nov

You may find yourself feeling extra passionate and motivated. Use this energy to pursue your goals and make progress towards your dreams. You may also have some important conversations or meetings coming up, so be prepared to speak your truth and stand up for what you believe in. You can expect more sweet and pleasant moments during the weekend in your personal relationships.

Lucky Numbers: 18, 20, 30, 32, 36, 40

CINE 12

Vendredi 17 mars - 21.15



Samedi 18 mars - 21.00



Dimanche 19 mars - 21.52



Programme TV



vendredi 17 mars

MBC 1

07.15 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
08.00 Local: Profil
08.45 Local: Nou Later Nou Lamer..
11.00 Doc: World Capitals
11.10 Tele: Rubi
12.00 Le Journal
12.40 Tele: Fierce Angel
13.25 Local: MBC Production
14.35 D.Anime: L'Heure Du Conte
15.21 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier
15.34 D.Anime: Tempete Du Boulettes
15.55 D.Anime: The Adventures...
17.04 D.Anime: Dee Dee The Little
17.28 Serial: Creeped Out
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Serial: Surya Pura
18.55 Serial: Jag Jaanani Maa...
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.25 Local: Les Grands Noms...
22.10 Serial: Rookie Blue

MBC 2

07.00 DDI Live
10.00 Serial: Rediff Urdu Serial
11.20 Serial: Pyar Ke Sadqay
12.02 Film: Khichik
13.57 Mag: DDI Mag
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.22 Serial: Saare Tujhyachsathi
15.45 Serial: Bommarillu
16.04 Serial: Sondha Bandham
16.27 Serial: Rabba Mainu Maaf...
16.44 Serial: Saaton Vachanwa...
17.11 Serial: Bhakharwadi
17.30 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron...
18.01 Serial: Oh! My Sweet Liar!
19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol
19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
20.00 Serial: Yeh Dil Mera
20.44 Local: Anjuman
21.09 Local: Urdu Programme -
22.04 DDI Live

MBC 3

07.00 Mag: Border Crossing
07.51 Doc: Paradis Perdus
08.42 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
09.37 Doc: The Politics Of Climate
12.05 Mag: Shift
15.10 Doc: Saladeria
15.19 Doc: The Politics Of Climate
17.13 Mag: Eco India
17.37 Mag: Shift
17.57 Doc: Foodland
19.00 Student Support Prog...
20.30 Live: News
20.53 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
21.52 Mag: Sky Eye
22.19 Doc: Superfood Or Climate...
23.04 Doc: Smoothie Mania
23.47 Doc: Foodland
23.50 Doc: Germany's Volcanic...
00.34 Mag: World Stories
00.46 Mag: Our Voices
01.13 Mag: Euromaxx

Cine 12

01.17 Film: Trash
03.49 Film: A Tail Of Love
05.14 Tele: Tour De Babel
06.51 Film: Trash
08.45 Serial: Chicago PD
09.30 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable
09.57 Tele: A Que No Me Dejas
10.22 Tele: Fierce Angel
11.00 Serial: Elementary
11.57 Film: A Tail Of Love
13.31 Tele: Tour De Babel
14.45 Film: Trash
16.35 Serial: Chicago PD
17.15 Serial: Madam Secretary
18.05 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable
18.26 Tele: A Que No Me Dejas
19.00 Tele: Fierce Angel
19.34 Serial: Malory Towers
20.05 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
20.30 Serial: F.B.I
21.20 Film: Madtown

Bollywood TV

07.07 Film: Teesri Aankh
Starring: Sunny Deol,
Ameesha Patel, Neha Dhupia
10.30 / 20.30 - Radha Krishna
11.01 / 21.00 - Anupamaa
11.31 / 21.30 - Mere Sai
12.02 / 22.00 - Kismat Ki Lakiron
12.27 / 22.03 - Yeh Teri Galiyan
12.56 / 22.30 - Patiala Babes
14.25 / 23.00 - Highway On My Plate
14.53 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
15.23 Film: Shaadi Ka Laddoo
Starring: Sanjay Suri, Mandira Bedi, Aashish Chaudhary
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
19.00 Udaariyaan
19.36 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke...

samedi 18 mars

06.28 D.Anime: Fast And Furious
06.49 D.Anime: Gon
09.34 Mag: The World Is Yours
10.00 Local: Zanfan Nou Zil
10.31 Mag: Sand Tales
11.55 Local: Autour Des Valeurs..
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Local: Les Grands Noms...
12.30 Tele: Tour De Babel
14.19 MBC Production
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.21 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier
15.32 D.Anime: Tempete De Boul...
16.15 D.Anime: Llama Llama
17.05 D.Anime: Splash And Bubble
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Enter: Taare Zameen
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.25 Local: MBC Production
21.25 Film: Berlin Falling
avec: Ken Duken, Tom Wlaschiha, Axel Hartwig

07.00 Film: Daasi
Starring Sanjeev Kumar, Rekha,
Moushumi Chatterjee
10.19 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
10.47 Serial: Dikri Vahalno Dariyo
11.28 Serial: The Demi-Gods And...
11.56 Serial: Nanda Saukhya Bhare
12.19 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
12.43 Serial: High School
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.25 Film: Hello
Stars: Salman Khan, Sharman Joshi, Sohail Khan
17.45 Mag: DDI Mag
19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol
19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
20.00 Serial: Vidrohi
20.30 Serial: Porus
21.00 Film: Marjaavaan
Starring Riteish Deshmukh,
Sidharth Malhotra, Tara Sutaria
23.09 DDI Live

06.00 Foodland: Veggie Feasts
06.45 Mag: World Stories
06.57 Doc: Castles
07.31 Mag: Euromaxx
08.23 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
09.15 Mag: Saladeria
10.32 Doc: Healthy Eyes
12.21 Doc: Castles
12.50 Mag: Euromaxx
14.44 Mag: Shift
15.00 Student Support Prog...
17.30 Mag: Sky Eye
18.08 Doc: World Capitals
18.30 Mag: In Good Shape
19.30 Mag: Check In
20.30 Local: News (English)
20.50 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
21.48 Doc: Skuld, A Look Into...
22.13 Doc: The Great Meat Debate
23.22 Doc: Nepal: Snowland...
00.07 Doc: World Capitals
00.10 Doc: Troubled Treasures

01.03 Film: Madtown
02.50 Serial: Galactica
03.35 Serial: Blacklist
04.24 Serial: Deux Flics A Miami
05.00 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana
06.11 Serial: F.B.I
07.02 Serial: The Inbetween
08.30 Serial: Madam Secretary
09.11 Serial: Blacklist
10.45 Film: Get Happy!
12.31 Serial: Galactica
13.30 Serial: Elementary
15.10 Tele: Missing Bride
16.24 Serial: F.B.I
17.02 Film: Atlantic Rim
18.50 L'Agence Tous Risques
19.35 Serial: Malory Towers
20.05 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
20.30 Series: Le Livre Perdu Des Sortilèges
21.15 Film: Natural Selection
22.56 Tele: Rubi

04.04 Radha Krishna
04.19 Anupamaa
05.04 Mere Sai
05.32 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
05.44 Yeh Teri Galiyan
06.13 Patiala Babes
08.00 Yeh Teri Galiyan
10.00 Kalari Kids
10.13 Sasural Simar Ka 2
12.00 Serial: Udaariyaan
14.04 Serial: Anupamaa
16.15 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise...
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Film: Andaz
Starring: Akshay Kumar,
Lara Dutta, Priyanka Chopra
20.53 Kalari Kids
21.08 Porus
21.31 Naagin Season 4
22.12 Yeh Teri Galiyan

dimanche 19 mars

06.00 D.Anime: Bricks 'O' Brian
06.24 D.Anime: Fast And Furious
07.33 D.Anime: Gon
09.34 Mag: The World Is Yours
10.00 Local: Zanfan Nou Zil
11.00 Doc: World Capitals
11.55 Local: Ugadi 2022
12.00 Le Journal
12.40 Tele: Tour De Babel
14.05 Local Prod: Elle
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.21 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier
15.30 D.Anime: Tempete De Boule...
15.52 D.Anime: The Adventures...
16.15 D.Anime: Llama Llama
17.18 D.Anime: Panda Fanfare
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Yeh Shaam Mastani
19.30 Le Journal
20.30 Local Production: Les Klips
21.25 Film: The Girl In The Bathtub

07.00 Film: Beqabu
11.03 Serial: Azhagu
11.20 Jag Jaanani Maa
Vaishnodevi
11.39 Serial: Surya Pura
12.06 Film: Naqaab
15.00 Samachar
15.20 Mooga Manasulu
15.42 Serial: He Mann Baware
16.04 Serial: Sondha Bandham
Starring: Bharathi, Badekilla,
Pradeep, Naresh Eswar
16.30 Local: Yaadein
17.03 Serial: Siya Ke Ram
17.48 Serial: Chacha Bhatija
18.30 Local: Tipa Tipa Nu Avanser
19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol
19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
20.05 Serial: Porus
21.15 Serial: Crime Patrol
22.02 Serial: Naagin Season 3

06.00 Doc: World Capitals
07.06 Mag: The 77 Percent
07.31 Mag: Check In
09.22 Doc: Persons
10.52 Doc: Nepal: Snowland...
12.42 Doc: World Famous Writers
12.50 Mag: The 77 Percent
13.16 Mag: Check In
13.42 Doc: Volcano Stories
14.08 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
15.10 Doc: Skuld
15.35 Doc: The Great Meat Debate
17.25 Doc: Troubled Treasures
18.29 Doc: Smoothie Mania
19.06 Mag: The Inside Story
19.37 Doc: Fregates Fleuron...
20.30 Live: News (English)
20.50 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
21.49 Doc: A Mediterranean...
22.15 Doc: Riding The Rails...
23.00 Doc: Better Brain Health

01.12 Film: Natural Selection
03.43 Film: Berlin Falling
05.05 Tele: Les Trois Visages D'ana
06.15 Serial: Le Livre Perdu De Sortilèges
06.57 Film: Island Doctor
08.33 Serial: Madam Secretary
09.11 Film: Natural Selection
10.51 Film: Atlantic Rim
12.15 Serial: Killjoys
13.30 Serial: Elementary
15.35 Tele: Missing Bride
17.05 Serial: Le Livre Perdu Des...
17.47 Serial: Killjoys
18.45 Serial: L'incroyable Hulk
19.36 Serial: Malory Towers
20.05 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
20.30 Serial: New Amsterdam
21.15 Serial: Suits
22.00 Film: Italian Race
23.53 Tele: Rubi

00.00 Serial: Sasural Simar Ka 2
01.56 Udaariyaan
03.50 Anupamaa
05.33 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise...
07.46 Kalari Kids
08.02 Main Maike Chali Jaungi...
10.01 Kundali Bhagya
11.51 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
14.00 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
16.08 Jijaji Chhat Par Hain
17.33 Live: Samachar
18.30 Film: Golmaal
Starring: Ajay Devgn, Arshad Warsi, Sharman Joshi, Tusshar Kapoor, Rimi Sen
21.10 Naagin Season 5
21.52 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
23.46 Main Maike Chali Jaungi
Tum Dekhte Rahiyo
01.30 Kundali Bhagya
03.34 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se

lundi 20 mars

06.00 Local: Zanfan Nou Zil
07.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
07.55 MBC Production
09.00 Doc: The Future Of Travel
11.00 Doc: World Capitals
11.10 Tele: Rubi
12.00 Le Journal
12.30 Tele: Fierce Angel
13.17 Local: Nu Rasinn
14.35 D.Anime: L'Heure Du Conte
15.31 D.Anime: Tempete De Boule...
17.25 Serial: Creeped Out
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Mere Sai
18.55 Serial: Jag Jaanani Maa
Vaishnodevi
19.30 Le Journal
20.25 MBC Production
21.15 Local: Agir Ensemble
21.40 Film: Deux Flics A Miami
Avec: Don Johnson, Philip Michael

07.00 DDI Live
10.00 Kundali Bhagya
12.06 Film: Aashiq Hoon Baharon Ka
Starring Rajesh Khanna,
Zeenat Aman
15.00 Samachar
15.20 Serial: Saare Tujhyachsathi
15.36 Serial: Bommarillu
16.02 Serial: Sondha Bandham
16.26 Serial: Rabba Mainu Maaf...
16.48 Serial: Saaton Vachanwa...
17.08 Serial: Bhakharwadi
17.30 Serial: Vandhal Sridevi
18.00 Serial: Oh! My Sweet Liar!
18.30 Mag: DDI Mag
19.00 Live: Zournal Kreol
19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
20.00 Programme In Telugu
20.30 Film: Pushpa The Rise
Starring: Allu Arjun, Fahadh Faasil,
Rashmika Mandanna

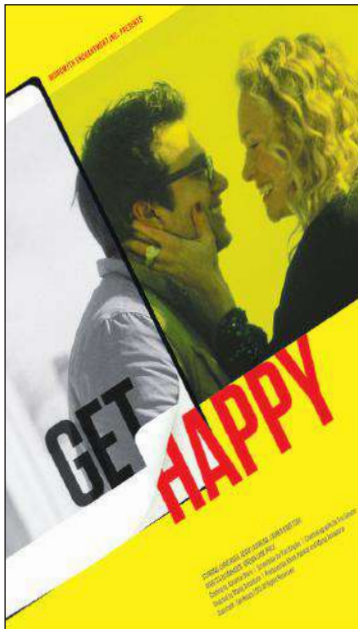
07.00 Doc: World Famous Writers
07.55 Doc: France Terres Sauva...
08.55 Doc: Heritages
09.47 Doc: A Mediterranean...
12.02 Mag: Smoothie Mania
14.38 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
15.36 Doc: A Mediterranean...
16.00 Doc: Riding The Rails...
18.00 Mag: Eco At Africa
19.00 Student Support...
19.33 Mag: In Good Shape
20.50 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures
20.53 Doc: Les Mysteres Du Nil
22.06 Mag: Tomorrow Today
22.32 Doc: Smoothie Mania
23.00 Doc: Beethoven's Ninth
23.50 Mag: Eco@Africa
00.16 Mag: The 77 Percent
00.48 Mag: Africa 54
01.16 Mag: In Good Shape
01.42 Doc: Adventure In Trans...

01.28 Film: Italian Race
04.01 Film: The Girl In The Bathtub
05.24 Tele: Tour De Babel
06.12 Serial: New Amsterdam
06.54 Serial: Suits
07.35 Juste Un Peu D'Alchimie
09.30 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable
09.56 Tele: A Que No Me Dejas
10.20 Tele: Fierce Angel
11.00 Serial: Elementary
12.01 Film: The Girl In The Bathtub
13.30 Tele: Tour De Babel
14.22 Film: Section 99
16.30 Serial: New Amsterdam
17.15 Serial: Suits
18.05 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable
19.00 Tele: Fierce Angel
19.39 Serial: Malory Towers
20.05 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
20.30 Serial: The Inbetween
21.15 Film: The Bounty Men

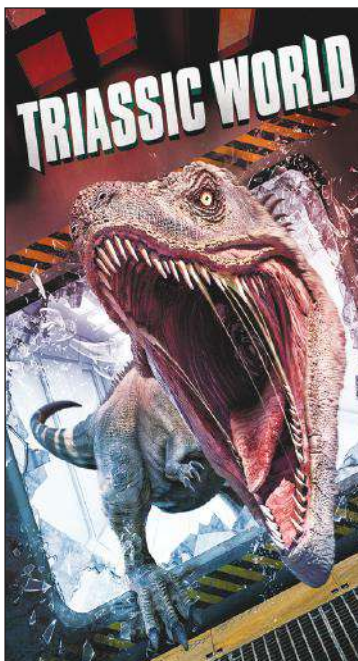
08.00 Taare Zameen Par
11.13 / 20.30 - Sasural Simar Ka
12.08 / 21.00 - Anupamaa
12.38 / 21.30 - Mere Sai
13.10 / 22.00 - Kismat Ki Lakiron
13.35 / 22.03 - Yeh Teri Galiyan
14.01 / 22.30 - Patiala Babes
14.30 / 23.00 - 100 Years Of Indian Cinema
15.00 / 21.46 -
Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
15.24 Film: Chhote Sarkar
Starring: Govinda, Shilpa Shetty
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
19.00 Udaariyaan
19.31 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise...
20.01 Sasural Simar Ka 2
20.30 Radha Krishna
21.06 Anupamaa



Mardi 21 mars - 21.10



Mercredi 22 mars - 21.15



Mercredi 22 mars - 21.15



Programme TV



MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
mardi 21 mars 07.26 Local: Rodrig Prog 09.15 Local: Agir Ensemble 10.05 Local: Sekirite Larout 11.10 Tele: Rubi 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Local: Ugadi 2022 12.30 Tele: Fierce Angel 14.12 MBC Production 14.40 D.Anime: L'Heure Du Conte 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.20 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier 15.52 D.Anime: The Adventure Of... 17.30 Serial: Creeped Out 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 18.55 Magazine 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.20 Local: Priorite Sante 22.15 Film: Get Happy! With: Chris Riggi, Adam LaVorgna, Rebecca Blumhagen	mardi 21 mars 07.00 DDI Live 10.00 Serial: CID 10.50 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 12.00 Film: Naina 14.22 DDI Magazine 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.20 Saare Tujhyachsathi 15.43 Serial: Bommarillu 16.04 Sondha Bandham 16.24 Serial: Rabba Mainu Maaf... 16.48 Serial: Saaton Vachanewa... 17.13 Serial: Bhakharwadi 17.35 Serial: Premabhishekam 18.00 Serial: Oh! My Sweet Liar! 18.30 Local: DDI Magazine 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 20.06 Local: Tamil Programme 20.30 Film: Zinda Dil	mardi 21 mars 06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa 07.32 Mag: In Good Shape 09.14 Mag: Saladeria 09.36 Mag: Tomorrow Today 11.23 Mag: Eco@Africa 15.02 Mag: Tomorrow Today 15.31 Mag: Washington Forum 16.46 Mag: Eco@Africa 18.00 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto... 18.45 Local: Talk On Ougadi 19.31 Mag: Check In 20.02 Doc: La Route De La Soie 20.30 Live: News 20.50 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures 21.00 Doc: Une Histoire Amazon... 21.46 Mag: Saladeria 22.47 Local: Rodrig-Klip Seleksion 23.31 Doc: Legendary Hotels 00.42 Mag: Healthy Living 01.12 Doc: World Heritage 01.17 Mag: Made In Germany	mardi 21 mars 01.37 Film: The Bounty Men 03.49 Serial: Island Doctor 05.17 Tele: Tour De Babel 05.59 Serial: The Inbetween 06.47 Film: The Bounty Men 08.45 Serial: Chicago PD 09.30 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable 10.20 Tele: Fierce Angel 11.00 Serial: Elementary 12.00 Serial: Island Doctor 13.30 Tele: Tour De Babel 14.45 Film: The Bounty Men 16.40 Serial: Chicago PD 17.20 Serial: The Inbetween 18.05 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable 18.26 Tele: A Que No Me Dejas 19.00 Tele: Fierce Angel 19.37 Serial: Malory Towers 20.05 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 20.30 Seiral: The Inbetween 21.15 Film: Gorillas In The Mist	mardi 21 mars 07.18 Film: Choote Sarkar Starring Govinda, Shilpa Shetty 11.33 / 20.29 - Radha Krishna 12.03 / 20.57 - Anupamaa 12.32 / 21.27 - Mere Sai 13.04 / 22.07 - Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 13.31 / 22.37 - Yeh Teri Galiyan 14.00 / 23.07 - Patiala Babes 15.00 / 22.25 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 15.26 Film: Kasak Starring Rishi Kapoor, Neelam Kothari, Chunky Pandey 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.03 Udaariyaan 19.33 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise 20.06 Sasural Simar Ka 2
mercredi 22 mars 07.00 Local Prod: Akili And Me 07.30 Local: P'tit Cosmonaute 08.01 D.Anime: PAF, Le Chien 09.10 Film: Le Cygne Et La Princesse 11.10 Tele: Rubi 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Fierce Angel 13.15 Local: Les Klips 14.07 Local: Palette 14.37 D.Anime: L'Heure Du Conte 14.49 D.Anime: Early Learning 15.32 D.Anime: Tempete De Boulette 17.30 Serial: Creeped Out 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Other: Radha Krishna 19.00 Local: Planet Bollywood 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.30 MBC Production 21.25 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante 22.20 Film: The Girl In The Bathtub	mercredi 22 mars 07.00 DDI Live 10.00 Suhani Si Ek Ladki 12.00 Film: Pyar Ka Sapna 14.14 DDI Magazine 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.32 Saare Tujhyachsathi 15.49 Bommarillu 16.15 Sondha Bandham 16.53 Saaton Vachanwa Saath... 17.18 Bhakharwadi 17.31 Serial: Kulvadhu 18.00 Serial: Oh! My Sweet Liar! 18.30 Local: DDI Magazine 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 19.59 Programme In Marathi 20.35 Film: Chinese Film	mercredi 22 mars 06.00 Mag: Rev: Global Auto... 06.29 Mag: Healthy Living 07.34 Mag: Check In 08.00 Doc: La Route De La Soie 09.27 Mag: Saladeria 10.10 Rodrig - Klip Seleksion 11.42 Mag: Foodland 18.00 Mag: Motorweek 18.26 Mag: Vous Et Nous 19.00 Student Support Prog... 19.30 Mag: The Inside Story 20.30 Local: News (English) 20.50 Doc: Fine Arts Sculptures 21.38 Mag: Saladeria 22.35 Mag: Smoothie Mania 22.38 Mag: Focus On Europe 22.44 Doc: Iran From Above 23.49 Mag: Motorweek 00.27 Mag: Vous Et Nous 00.55 Doc: World Heritage 01.26 Mag: The Inside Story 01.39 Doc: Planet Home	mercredi 22 mars 01.16 Film: 119 Jours 02.40 Serial: Elementary 03.19 Film: Mine 05.25 Tele: Tour De Babel 06.13 Serial: The Inbetween 06.33 Film: Gorillas In The Mist 08.30 L'Incroyable Hulk 10.02 Tele: Fierce Angel 11.05 Serial: Elementary 11.46 Film: Mine 13.35 Tele: Tour De Babel 14.30 Film: Gorillas In The Mist 16.33 L'Incroyable Hulk 17.15 Serial: The Inbetween 18.05 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable 19.00 Tele: Fierce Angel 19.37 Serial: Malory Towers 20.05 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 20.30 Seiral: Madam Secretary 21.15 Film: Triassic World Avec: Hayley J Williams, Thomas Varga, Joel Berti	mercredi 22 mars 07.41 Film: Kasak Starring: Rishi Kapoor, Neelam Kothari, Chunky Pandey 11.27 / 20.06 - Radha Krishna 12.00 / 20.26 - Anupamaa 12.30 / 20.02 - Mere Sai 13.01 / 20.46 - Kismet Ki Lakiron 13.26 / 21.09 - Yeh Teri Galiyan 14.01 / 21.50 - Patiala Babes 14.50 / 22.15 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 15.24 Film: Batti Gul Meter Chalu Starring: Shahid Kapoor, Shraddha Kapoor, Divyendu Sharma 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Udaariyaan 19.30 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise... 20.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2 20.30 Radha Krishna
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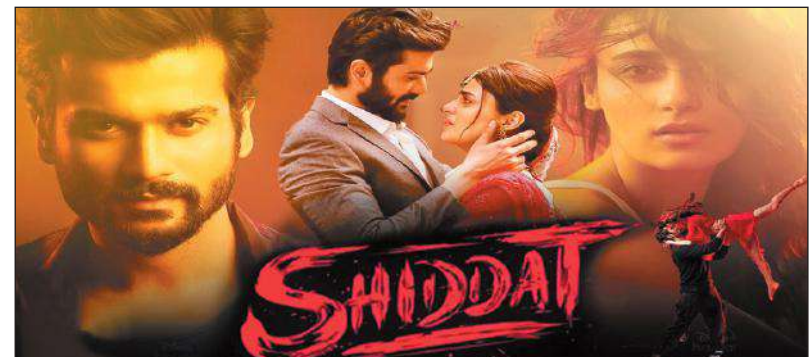
Jeudi 23 mars - 15.30

Stars: Madhavan, Jimmy Shergill, Namrata Shirodkar



Jeudi 23 mars - 20.30

Star: Sunny Kaushal, Radhika Madan, Mohit Raina



A Silver Lining for Peace



Nita Chicooree-Mercier

China's mediation to bring two major rivals, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, to the negotiating table is a most welcome development in international diplomacy. If anything, the timely public announcement of the master peace deal brokered by China has been well-prepared by the

different stakeholders.

While the US, its right arm NATO and EU followers were busy courting major countries to take sides against Russia, and banning Russian cats from competing in international competitions as directed by the International Cat Federation in response to the war in Ukraine, China smartly moved its pawns on the chessboard of geopolitics in the Middle East. It got South Africa and Iran to price their oil trade in yuan, and sold surveillance equipment to the ayatollah regime to keep its rebellious youth in check. China secured its energy requirements by signing a commercial deal with Qatar for four million tons of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for a period of 27 years.

With friendly relations with most Middle East countries and Israel, and as an increasingly outspoken ally of Russia, China has enough leverage to bring its weight to bear to put an end to the Iran-SA proxy war in Yemen and pave the way for peace in a region stricken with wars and uprisings since the US invasion of Iraq. Sanctions have dealt a heavy blow to Iran's economy, and the regime is sitting on a volcano of rebellious fiery youth uprisings determined to topple the theocracy.

Emboldened by rising opposition to Western hegemony in international diplomacy, Saudi Arabia has declined requests from the United States to increase its production of oil in order to reduce gasoline prices in Europe and forced the US President to make a U-turn and go through a humiliating visit to the kingdom in 2022. Oil economy cannot be a long-term plan notwithstanding sky-rocketing current profits in sales. Diversification means investments and tourism. Despite the Kashoggi murder, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, commonly known by his initials MBS, is smartly enhancing his image and the country's stand in the world by undertaking liberal reforms in societal matters. The prince seems determined to bring about a de-emphasis on religion in society. Frequent bombings of oil tanks and pipelines in the Strait of Hormuz by Iran and Houthi rebels, and the kingdom's dependence on long-standing American ally for its protection called for other options. Peace between rivals is the ultimate solution. It is a tremendous



With Us or Against Us absurd confrontation. Pic - Shutterstock

«The world will be a better place with a balance-of-power system in place than the dichotomic division between antagonistic groups engaged in a with us or against us absurd confrontation, which smacks of puerile schoolyard quarrelling. The West has to acknowledge the presence of other key players and get out of the mindset that it is the sole reliable decision-maker in complex international affairs. China should be congratulated for initiating a first step in opening the way to a multi-polar world...»

success for China on the world stage of diplomacy.

Who stands to win?

There is no doubt that the peace deal is a major game changer. As a key ally of Israel, the US remains sceptical of Iran's willingness to curb its nuisance value in the region and drawing revenues from the exploitation of gold mines in Venezuela to finance radical groups in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. The clauses of the peace deal have not been divulged to the public, but it is unlikely that China will let Iran go on rampage against its rivals. It is most likely that the peace deal is an extension of the Abraham Accord crafted in the last months of the Trump administration, which Saudi Arabia unofficially gave the green light to

with a view to promoting peace in the region. China is guided by pragmatism and more than once expressed its aversion to religious extremism in blunt terms which no Arab country dared to challenge.

Imagine the relief of the people in Yemen. With the support of the US and fighter planes purchased from England and France, Saudi Arabia launched a brutal attack on the Iran-backed country, destroying infrastructure, hospitals, schools and mercilessly bombing civilians to death. What for? To get control of their harbour by force, secure a safe passage for the transport of oil and bypass the Strait of Hormuz in Iran's backyard. Malnutrition, dire poverty, and starvation hit the population. Thousands of children died for lack of food and medicine. The international mainstream media did not fulfil their moral obligation of reporting the terrible tragedy, nor did they laud the resilience of the Houthis as they are doing now for the Ukrainians. Why? Because most of them act as lackeys of their governments whose prime motivation in international relations is self-interest.

The world will be a better place with a balance-of-power system in place than the dichotomic division between antagonistic groups engaged in a With Us or Against Us absurd confrontation, which smacks of puerile schoolyard quarrelling. The West has to acknowledge the presence of other key players and get out of the mindset that it is the sole reliable decision-maker in complex international affairs. China should be congratulated for initiating a first step in opening the way to a multi-polar world. It means that international affairs should be regulated by international law, and not by the law of the strongest bully.



Tree of Knowledge

Madisyn Taylor

Beyond Counting Blessings

Our gratitude deepens when we begin to be thankful for being alive and living the life we are living.

Often when we practice being thankful, we go through the process of counting our blessings, acknowledging the wonderful people, things and places that make up our reality. While it is fine to be grateful for the good fortune we have accumulated, true thankfulness stems from a powerful comprehension of the gift of simply being alive, and when we feel it, we feel it regardless of our circumstances. In this deep state of gratitude, we recognize the purity of the experience of being, in and of itself, and our thankfulness is part and parcel of our awareness that we are one with this great mystery that is life.

It is difficult for most of us to access this level of consciousness as we are very caught up in the ups and downs of our individual experiences in the world. The thing to remember about the world, though, is that it ebbs and flows, expands and contracts, gives and takes, and is by its very nature somewhat unreliable. If we only feel gratitude when it serves our desires, this is not true thankfulness. No one is exempt from the twists and turns of fate, which may, at any time, take the possessions, situations, and people we love away from us. Ironically, it is sometimes this kind of loss that awakens us to a thankfulness that goes deeper than just being grateful when things go our way. Illness and near-miss accidents can also serve as wake-up calls to the deeper realization that we are truly lucky to be alive.

We do not have to wait to be shaken to experience this state of being truly thankful for our lives. Tuning in to our breath and making an effort to be fully present for a set period of time each day can do wonders for our ability to connect with true gratitude. We can also awaken ourselves with the intention to be more aware of the unconditional generosity of the life force that flows through us regardless of our circumstances.