

# MAURITIUS TIMES

• "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." — Mahatma Gandhi

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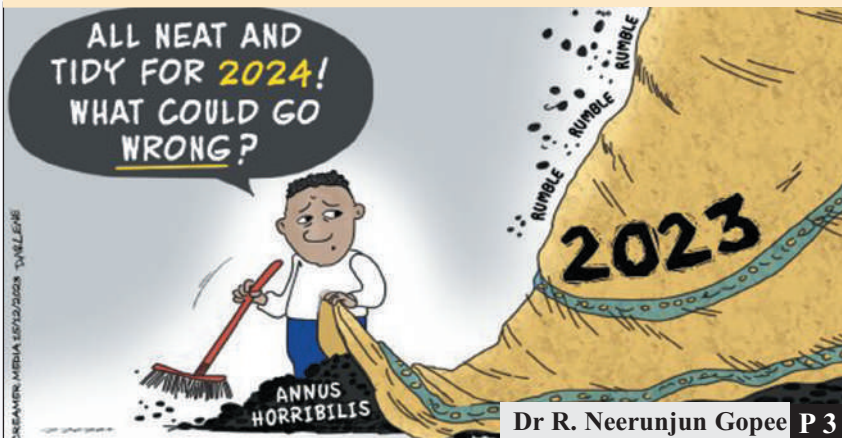
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### A World in Turmoil, a Cloudy Crystal Ball for 2024



# 'The Year of Deliverance'

**L**about Party leader Navin Ramgoolam's prayer is that 2024 shall be the 'year of deliverance' for the country. The timing for that deliverance, should it happen, however rests with the Prime Minister, who unlike what obtains in other countries - India, the UK, and others - holds the prerogative for fixing dates for elections. Admittedly at such time that would be politically opportune to ensure the re-election of his party/alliance to power. It would be futile to second-guess the Prime Minister's decision as regards the date for the next elections, but it is obvious that the political conditions for ensuring at the very least a narrow victory for the MSM are being laid down - systematically and methodically, and more is yet to come.

Salary increases and compensation and increase in old-age pensions with a view to easing the prevailing difficult cost of living conditions constitute but one of a multi-pronged strategies of the current MSM-led government; major infrastructural inaugurations in the health, public infrastructure are also in the offing. And despite the public outcry over the Financial Crimes Commission legislation, one could expect that the MSM will seek to hunt down the Opposition leaders ferociously and ruthlessly in the coming weeks or months. Opposition parties should therefore brace for a turbulent year ahead.

Outside Parliament, Rama Valayden, Dev Sunnassy, Roshi Bhadain, Patrick Belcourt, Bruneau Laurette-Sherry Singh and others have failed to put together a united opposition front away from the traditional parties, and there are speculations about an interest among some of these party leaders in a political arrangement with the ruling party for the next elections. Despite their success in pushing the government to the wall with the Kistnen murder revelations and the Kistnen Papers relating to electoral expenses suspected to exceed the ceiling imposed by the law, Rama Valayden and his comrades have been unable to transition from the fringes of the political arena to become a significant force in local politics. The same could be said for the others, they will remain a marginal force in local politics nationally. However, in the context of Mauritian elections, victories are generally determined at

the constituency level, with minor parties potentially acting as a nuisance in specific constituencies, except in special circumstances when a tidal wave sweeps the incumbent out of power as happened in 1982. Some of the minor parties may well therefore constitute a nuisance value in certain constituencies that could play in favour of the MSM.

This leaves us with the old traditional parties - the Labour Party, PMSD and MMM. If the latter parties had initially set great store by their numerous legal challenge of a number of MSM candidates at the last general elections, the Supreme Court judgements in all of the electoral petitions, and the latest Privy Council judgement in the Dayal petition have come as a terrible setback for the Opposition. Moreover, opposition both inside and outside Parliament has not been able to challenge and put a brake to the MSM's questionable governance of the country, fully protected as it were by the institutional dysfunctions that have put the governance system in the country under lock. To wit, the failures of effective police investigations, a complacent ICAC, a perceived bias of communication and internet regulatory authorities, and an overbearing Speaker in Parliament. The MSM-led government has remained undeterred by civil society, media and opposition condemnations of its governance, and it has pressed on with its political agenda.

The MSM has also chosen its adversary for the next elections: Navin Ramgoolam, convinced that he would constitute the Achilles' heel in an enlarged opposition alliance. It remains to be seen if electors in Constituencies 4 to 14 hold the same view as the MSM leader. Navin Ramgoolam had himself revealed in an earlier radio interview that he would like to soldier on — for 'just one more' term as Prime Minister next time round, probably in a bid to redeem his honour after the public humiliation he was subjected to in 2015. He would have surely put the party's interest above his own. One can therefore anticipate what's it's going to be like in 2024 in the run-up to the next elections: ferocious, bloody and ugly.

Will 2024 be the year of deliverance? Electors hold the key to securing such an outcome. A more informed and wiser electorate, that is.

## Socratic Dialogue

Merry making during the Festive Season...

# A Conspiracy of Joy

**I**n the heart of the festive season, Socrates, the venerable philosopher, engages in a spirited dialogue with his joyous companion, Cephalus, a wealthy and retired old businessman. As the world around them sparkles with twinkling lights and resonates with cheerful music, Socrates poses probing questions about the nature of merrymaking. Socrates challenges the notion of excess and advocates in favour of finding joy in simplicity, leading the conversation into a philosophical exploration of the unique enchantment that the festive season brings. As the dialogue unfolds, the focus shifts to the upcoming year and the anticipation of general elections. The discussion transcends the mundane aspects of politics, delving into the responsibility of citizens in shaping their political destiny and the need for critical thinking amidst the chaos of campaigns. Socrates, in his characteristic style, encourages a vision of a society where substance triumphs over style in the realm of politics.

Plutonix



**Socrates:** Greetings, my festive friend! Pray, tell me, why do people engage in such merrymaking during the festive season?

**Cephalus:** Ah, Socrates, my joyous philosopher! It is a time of celebration, a reprieve from the toils of everyday life. We gather, we feast, we dance — because, why not?

**Socrates:** Why not, indeed! But do we not celebrate the passing of time every day, as the sun rises and sets?

**Cephalus:** True, but during the festive season, it's like a concentrated

dose of happiness, a yearly elixir that rejuvenates our spirits.

**Socrates:** Is it not curious that we need a designated season to be merry? Should not our joy be a constant companion throughout the year?

**Cephalus:** Ah, Socrates, you always bring your philosophical musings to the party. But there's something special about this season—the twinkling lights, the cheerful music, the excuses to indulge in excess.

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## Mauritius Times

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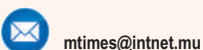
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*A Very Warm Thank You*  
to all our

Readers, Business Associates and Well-Wishers  
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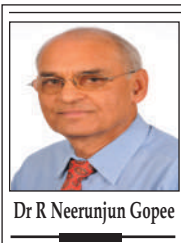
*Wishes for the New Year*

Kindly note that our office will be closed for  
the end-of-year festive season as from  
Friday 29 December 2023.

We will resume work on Monday 8 January 2024.

Mauritius Times





Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

# 2024: Annus horribilis looming on the horizon

*Events that unfolded both locally and on the global stage in 2023 to date force us to concede that it is going to be yet another annus horribilis – horrible year.*

**M**uch as we have no option but to hope against hope that the year 2024 will be a better one, yet events that unfolded both locally and on the global stage in 2023 to date force us to concede that it is going to be yet another *annus horribilis* – horrible year.

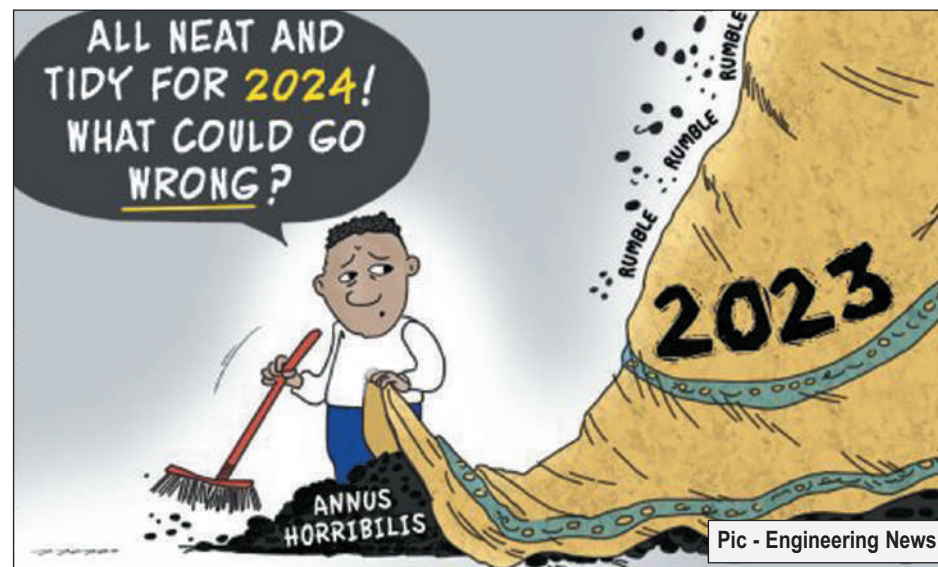
For those too young to remember, this was the term that was used by Britain's late Queen Elizabeth to refer to what shook the royal household in 1992 during a speech she made in November of that year. Three of her children separated or got divorced, Prince Charles and Diana's taking place shortly after that speech, publication of photographs and accounts of infidelity that shattered the lily-white image of the royal family, and a massive fire in Windsor Castle, one of the Queen's official residences.

Locally, the overwhelming opinion aired widely in the media by authoritative legal voices is that, with the passage of the Financial Crimes Commission Bill by Parliament and the assent given by the President of the Republic, not only has a crime been committed against democracy, but that democracy is effectively dead. A forerunner of *annus horribilis*?

In fact, for a number of years now it had been considered in so-called mature democracies that democracy is in crisis, notably in the US after the election of President Trump, and more so following the events on Capitol Hill in January 2021, two months after his defeat in the 2020 presidential election. According to Wikipedia, 'the House select committee that investigated the incident (concluded) that the attack was the culmination of a seven-part plan by Trump to overturn the election when allegedly he interfered with the installation of his successor.'

Legal proceedings against him are still ongoing, even as he is scoring over 50 points in the primaries ahead of the 2024 presidential election, far ahead of other contenders. And yet, his presidency was marked by a good economic record and some bold foreign policy decisions such as the Abraham Accords that had begun to ease the tension in the Middle-East or refraining from 'putting boots on the ground' as too many American soldiers had lost their lives already in the wars there. It seems that 'it's the

**“History is testimony that that hate is then turned inwards. Which means that we will ever thirst for that everlasting peace which even papal appeals over the years have never been able to guarantee. Instead, there have been grim portents of things to come. The beautiful Xmas celebrations cancelled for the first time ever in Bethlehem, a rowdy crowd of 500 violently stopping 5000 devout from celebrating XMas in New York – and that hasn't found echo in the woke media...”**



Pic - Engineering News

**“The most watched entity in the coming year – too early to label it institution as yet – will no doubt be the FCC, especially as regards who will head it and whether this will be followed by a hunting for heads, not of the talent variety but rather of the trophy variety favoured by primitive tribes. Local trophies are likely to be of the political genre, potential rivals in the power play as we approach general election later in the year or in 2025. We can rest assured that the campaign, whenever it is set in motion, is likely to be as aggressive, dirty, ugly and of a disgustingly low level as it has been in recent years...”**

economy' stupid' was – is? – no longer enough to win an election.

Is democracy a system in which people elect their dictator? The possibility seems to be real, if we are to go by an article in *The Conversation* of November 11, 2019 titled 'Why tyranny could be the inevitable outcome of democracy' by Lawrence Torcello, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Rochester Institute of Technology.

He writes that 'Plato, one of the earliest thinkers and writers about democracy, predicted that letting people govern themselves would eventually lead the masses to support the rule of tyrants.' And adds, '... looking at the modern political world, it seems much less far-fetched to me now. In democratic nations like Turkey, the UK, Hungary, Brazil and the US, anti-elite demagogues are riding a wave of populism fueled by nationalist pride. It is a sign that liberal constraints on democracy are weakening.'

From my layman's perspective, going by the post-Covid economic recovery as evidenced by the rapid pick-up in the tourism sector with visitor footprints nearing a million and counting, the multiple development projects in both the public (including those dubbed as 'white elephant') and the private sectors spanning real estate, a range of financial and legal services, some developments in the health and medical sector, a projected growth rate of 7%, and the generosity of the ruling dispensation in terms of old-age pension and other inducements – the overall future landscape appears very rosy indeed, despite some unfavourable variables such as debt-GDP ratio among others.

But is it? Much has been written about the weakness-

es in our national institutions, in particular about their functioning, the critical point being about whether they are truly autonomous or are subjected to undue political pressure and/or interference. In this context, the most watched entity in the coming year – too early to label it institution as yet – will no doubt be the FCC, especially as regards who will head it and whether this will be followed by a hunting for heads, not of the talent variety but rather of the trophy variety favoured by primitive tribes. Local trophies are likely to be of the political genre, potential rivals in the power play as we approach general election later in the year or in 2025.

We can rest assured that the campaign, whenever it is set in motion, is likely to be as aggressive, dirty, ugly and of a disgustingly low level as it has been in recent years, reflecting alas the brutal rather than adversarial exchanges that take place in the Parliament, and that are cause for despair among the citizens.

But there is a larger threat that stares us and that will be upon us sooner than later, cancelling the apparent gains in the purse of gleeful beneficiaries. In fact, it is predicted that costs and prices of all items and commodities are set to rise enormously because of the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza, which is now complicated by another dimension. And that is the choking of maritime traffic in the Red Sea because of the attacks by Houthi rebels based in Yemen. They have already launched several drones on vessels crossing there, and the latest news is that several large shipping companies have decided to stop their vessels plying there, preferring to take the longer but relatively safer route around the coast of Africa instead.

Besides, insurers have also pulled out from giving cover to ships that would use the Red Sea route. And this is despite the US-led coalition of ten countries that has been assembled to ensure security in the Red Sea, which carries over 70% of the global maritime trade and business, including oil transport.

It may not be an exaggeration to say that we may be up for Dickensian 'hard times' in the near future. Europe through NATO and the US Congress have become war weary, the later refusing to advance further funding, and indeed President Zelensky came back from Washington empty-handed after meeting his counterpart, Joe Biden.

The cries of war emanating from Europe and the Middle East will continue unabated, driven as much by economic interest and territorial claims, as by the potent hate that underlies the Gaza mayhem. To normal and peace-loving human beings, it is beyond comprehension how one group of people can persist in harbouring such a legacy of hate towards another group to the point of vowing to exterminate them!

But history is testimony that that hate is then turned inwards. Which means that we will ever thirst for that everlasting peace which even papal appeals over the years have never been able to guarantee. Instead, there have been grim portents of things to come.

The beautiful Xmas celebrations cancelled for the first time ever in Bethlehem, a rowdy crowd of 500 violently stopping 5000 devout from celebrating XMas in New York – and that hasn't found echo in the woke media...

Sadly, the *annus horribilis* awaits...



# Quelles sont les perspectives locales et mondiales pour 2024?

*Il ne faudra pas s'attendre à des miracles en 2024, mais sans doute à un approfondissement de ce qui s'est déjà dessiné en 2023*

Alors que 2023 l'année touche à sa fin, l'année 2024 s'annonce déjà chargée en événements. Certains de ces événements sont prévisibles, d'autres surgiront comme des surprises tout au long de l'année. Quoi qu'il en soit, les tendances pour 2024 sont déjà posées, et les perspectives politiques, économiques et sociales n'évolueront pas drastiquement. Certaines de ces tendances risquent même de s'approfondir au fil des prochains mois.

Par A. Bartleby

## Les perspectives locales: L'année 2024 sera mouvementée à Maurice

**N**ous sortons d'une année 2023 qui a vu une relance économique d'envergure, avec la consolidation des secteurs immobiliers, touristiques et financiers. D'ailleurs, Statistics Mauritius vient de revoir la croissance économique à la hausse pour 2023, la faisant passer de 6,1% à 7%.

Ainsi, l'économie mauricienne entre dans une année 2024 qui sera, rappelons-le, une année électorale, avec des certitudes quant aux fondamentales qui font progresser le pays et avec une réduction sensible du taux de chômage qui est passé sous la barre des 7% en cette fin d'année.

Mais ce chiffre de 7% de croissance, qui est fabuleux au regard de l'économiste, ne doit pas nous empêcher de voir les problèmes qui sont les nôtres. L'inflation était, par exemple, d'un peu plus de 11% au début de l'année 2023, et les projections de la Banque de Maurice placent l'inflation en dessous de la barre des 6% en cette fin d'année. Il faudra attendre que Statistics Mauritius publie son rapport sur l'inflation en début d'année prochaine pour avoir la confirmation ou non de cette projection. Ce qui est néanmoins certain, c'est que les ménages mauriciens ont souffert cette année, même si l'on peut constater une amélioration du pouvoir d'achat en cette fin d'année.

Il faut dire que le gouvernement a fait le choix de continuer de laisser glisser lentement la Roupie afin de permettre aux différents secteurs de l'économie de conserver leur compétitivité mondiale. Une Roupie trop forte aurait été dommageable, par exemple, pour le secteur touristique, avec des touristes choisissant des destinations moins onéreuses pour leurs vacances. Mais la politique de la BOM a porté ses fruits de ce point de vue, permettant à ce secteur, qui est un gros affluent de devises, de faire le plein avec la barre du million de touristes dépassée à la fin du mois d'octobre.

L'inflation a eu un impact négatif sur le secteur de l'immobilier, avec une augmentation non négligeable des matières premières, et donc des coûts de construction. Mais le secteur ne semble pas forcément souffrir de ces augmentations des coûts. La mise en place des PDS et des Smart City Schemes, mais aussi d'autres montages permettant aux développeurs fonciers de vendre leurs pro-

jets sur le marché international a continué à porter ses fruits en 2023, avec un influx important d'investisseurs et d'acheteurs venant notamment de France, d'Afrique du Sud et de Russie.

Le secteur immobilier devrait continuer à croître de manière importante en 2024, surtout que Maurice semble avoir su profiter de ses atouts sur le marché international: des littoraux idylliques, la paix sociale et la stabilité économique et politique. Dans un monde devenu plus dangereux en 2023, conserver ces fondamentaux participera à approfondir encore plus la fameuse résilience mauricienne et fera de Maurice un pays refuge au sein d'une mondialisation qui devient de plus en plus folle.

Le gouvernement a ainsi, semble-t-il, priorisé la consolidation de la relance économique avant de mettre en place ses politiques de redistribution. La dernière en date est bien évidemment l'augmentation du salaire minimum, qui sera suivi en début d'année prochaine de la revalorisation salariale de 10%. La pension de vieillesse devrait également augmenter pour atteindre la promesse des Rs 13 500 d'ici quelques mois.

Ces augmentations peuvent sembler dérisoires au regard de la rapide progression de la cherté de la vie, mais lorsque l'on observe les choses de plus près, il existe une réelle augmentation du flux de monnaie qui est mis dans le panier des ménages. Le ménage moyen à Maurice comprend bien souvent un pensionnaire, deux salariés et un jeune qui a un petit emploi. Les augmentations des revenus de chacune de ces catégories s'additionnent donc pour former une augmentation réelle du pouvoir d'achat. Il ne faut pas le négliger.

## La machinerie électorale en route

**L**e "timing" de ces augmentations salariales, ou la mise en place de ces politiques de redistribution, n'est pas anodin. Il s'agit bien évidemment pour le Gouvernement de soulager les ménages les plus touchés par la crise de la cherté de la vie, mais il semble évident que la machinerie électorale du MSM s'est mise en route.

L'année 2024 sera marquée par la fin du mandat actuel en novembre et par des élections générales qui suivront. Il se pourrait même bien que ces élections soient anticipées, et les spéculations iront bon train sur la date potentielle de l'appel aux urnes.

Les bookmakers placent actuellement leurs paris sur une élection anticipée en avril ou en mai, ce qui semble improbable du fait que ce seront également les élections générales en Inde. En revanche, nous pouvons spéculer sur le fait que le PM use de son privilège pour appeler le pays aux urnes avant la fin du mois d'avril ou à partir de la mi-mai.

Ce qui est certain, c'est qu'un climat électoral règnera sur la pays une fois que l'euphorie des fêtes de fin d'année sera passée. Le MSM a déjà enclenché sa machinerie, et



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les partis de l'opposition en font autant. Même s'ils n'ont pas encore précisé les modalités de leur alliance, le regroupement PTr-MMM-PMSD vient de publier cinq mesures qu'ils prendront en cas de victoire. C'est un moyen pour eux, après la série de congrès régionaux qu'ils ont tenus pendant la seconde moitié de l'année, de commencer à tâter le pouls de l'électorat sur certains enjeux.

Il semble ainsi clair que les partis de l'opposition traditionnelle vont appuyer sur la faiblesse principale de Pravind Jugnauth: l'accumulation des affaires et des scandales impliquant certains de ses ministres et députés. Est-ce que cela suffira?

Seul l'avenir nous le dira, mais l'opposition ferait une grave erreur de penser qu'elle n'est pas dans l'obligation de venir de l'avant avec un programme cohérent sur la consolidation des acquis économiques et sociaux, et quant à une vision renouvelée du modèle de développement mauricien.

Si elle ne procède pas à cet exercice, alors le MSM gardera toutes les possibilités de leur couper l'herbe sous les pieds car n'oublions pas que Pravind Jugnauth a un joker de taille que n'ont pas Navin Ramgoolam, Paul Bérenger ou Xavier Duval: faire tabula rasa de ses ministres et députés et présenter une équipe entièrement renouvelée et rajeunie autour de lui. N'oublions pas qu'il a déjà su convaincre certains jeunes intellectuels à le rejoindre tandis que le PTr, le MMM et le PMSD auraient, semble-t-il, des difficultés lors du même d'exercice de leur côté.

## Recul de la démocratie, avancée de l'ultralibéralisme et des populismes

Quoi qu'il en soit, l'année 2024 sera capitale pour le pays. Les prochaines élections vont mettre en place une séquence historique qui déterminera l'avenir même de la République de Maurice.

☞ Suite en page 5





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## Quelles sont les perspectives locales et mondiales pour 2024?

☞ Suite de la page 4

Maurice est un pays faisant intégralement partie de la mondialisation, et les tendances mondiales ont sur nous une influence réelle, même si beaucoup de Mauriciens ont du mal à le percevoir.

Ainsi, le recul de la démocratie, l'avancée de l'ultralibéralisme et l'apparition de certains types de populisme qui voient le jour un peu partout à travers le monde trouvent leur corrélat aussi dans la société mauricienne.

Une victoire, par exemple, du MSM aux prochaines élections consolidera les directions économiques et géopolitiques actuelles, avec une entrée encore plus prononcée du pays dans un système ultralibéral et une évolution de la tradition parlementariste. Ce sont les tendances mondiales qui dictent cela, tout autant que la volonté politique du maître du jour.

Et de ce point de vue, la question est posée à

l'opposition:

- Que vont-ils proposer en matière d'orientations économiques?
- Étant donné la montée en puissance de l'Inde et de la Chine dans l'océan Indien, quel type de diplomatie va être privilégiée au sein de cette alliance?
- Puisque la démocratie meurt un peu plus chaque jour dans le monde, quelle sera la tendance localement si le trio PTR-MMM-PMSD arrive au pouvoir?

Peut-être aurons-nous des réponses à ces questions dans le “build-up” des prochaines élections. Mais les tendances mondiales sont posées et les fondamentales de l'économie mauricienne sont sur les rails de ces grands bouleversements.

Il ne faudra pas s'attendre à des miracles en 2024, mais sans doute à un approfondissement de ce qui s'est déjà dessiné en 2023.

## Les perspectives mondiales auront un impact certain sur les affaires locales

**I**l faut tout d'abord préciser que l'année 2023 a vu un accroissement important des conflits et, dans ce sillage, des situations de précarité et des questions sécuritaires dans le monde.

L'opération spéciale menée par les forces russes en Ukraine s'est embourbée, comme l'avait prédit plusieurs analystes d'expérience. En effet, la contre-offensive lancée par les forces ukrainiennes pour faire reculer les forces russes n'a pas eu les effets escomptés, et certains déclarent déjà que l'Ukraine a perdu la guerre. En effet, il paraît que la Russie n'a plus grand-chose à faire, à part le fait de tenir ses positions jusqu'à une érosion physique et mentale de l'armée ukrainienne.

D'ailleurs, les scissions apparaissent depuis un moment au sein des dirigeants ukrainiens, avec une tension devenue particulièrement palpable entre Volodymyr Zelensky et certains de ses généraux, notamment le commandant en chef des forces armées ukrainiennes, Valeri Zaloujny. Cette tension, ce malaise même, s'ajoute à une érosion certaine de la confiance du peuple ukrainien en Zelensky. Érosion qui trouve également son corrélat dans une perte d'intérêt certaine des alliés occidentaux en matière de soutiens financiers et militaires.

Est-ce que c'est l'Ukraine qui s'isole petit à petit, ou bien c'est Zelensky qui perd pied? L'année 2024 devrait nous apporter une réponse définitive à cette question.

Il faut avouer que le shift du focus de l'Ukraine vient également du fait de l'attaque du Hamas sur Israël, le 7 octobre dernier, attaque qui a provoqué une reprise de la guerre à Gaza. Cette réactivation des hostilités a surgi dans un contexte où les principaux acteurs du Moyen-Orient travaillaient à une normalisation des relations diplomatiques, économiques et sécuritaires avec Israël. C'était déjà le cas des Émirats Arabes Unis, du Bahreïn, du Soudan et du Maroc qui étaient les premiers signataires des Accords d'Abraham avec Israël en 2020.

Les négociations étaient à un stade très avancé afin que l'Arabie saoudite devienne également signataire de ces mêmes accords, envoyant de facto un signal fort pour

une normalisation des liens avec Israël et pour la construction d'une paix durable dans une région qui se trouve au cœur de la sécurité mondiale depuis la fin de la guerre froide.

### Crise géopolitique et sécuritaire généralisée

**M**ais tout cela a volé en éclats avec l'attaque du Hamas et la riposte israélienne qui s'en est suivie. L'Arabie saoudite, tout comme l'Égypte et le Qatar, privilégient toujours un rapprochement avec Israël, mais la situation est devenue tellement tendue que ces pays risquent de faire marche arrière renvoyant le Moyen-Orient vers une crise géopolitique et sécuritaire généralisée.

C'est déjà plus ou moins le cas, avec notamment l'Iran qui a profité de la guerre de Gaza pour relancer son programme d'enrichissement nucléaire, demandant au passage aux observateurs de l'ONU de quitter le pays. L'Iran a aussi augmenté sa production d'uranium enrichi de 3kg à plus de 9kg, chose qui est normalement interdite à ce pays.

Il faut préciser que l'armée israélienne ne joue absolument pas la retenue, avec des frappes aériennes en Syrie qui ont tué le général iranien Sayed Razi Mousavi. Parallèlement, les rebelles Houthis, basés au Yémen, eux, ont profité du début de la guerre de Gaza pour commencer à attaquer des navires marchands transitant en mer d'Arabie. Cette situation vient de forcer Narendra Modi à déployer trois destroyers de la marine indienne dans la région afin de maintenir une présence de dissuasion.

La situation est redevenue explosive au Moyen Orient et pourrait basculer dans une situation qui entrainerait l'économie mondiale dans une spirale inflationniste extrêmement dangereuse pour nous à Maurice.

Mais le Moyen Orient n'est pas le seul lieu de réchauffement sécuritaire. La Mer de Chine a également vu un accroissement de la menace militaire, à commencer par le fait que le président chinois Xi Jinping n'a eu de cesse d'affirmer qu'il allait faire de l'annexion de Taiwan la priorité sécuritaire et géopolitique de son troisième mandat.



“Les scissions apparaissent depuis un moment au sein des dirigeants ukrainiens, avec une tension devenue particulièrement palpable entre Volodymyr Zelensky et certains de ses généraux, notamment le commandant en chef des forces armées ukrainiennes, Valeri Zaloujny. Cette tension, ce malaise même, s'ajoute à une érosion certaine de la confiance du peuple ukrainien en Zelensky. Érosion qui trouve également son corrélat dans une perte d'intérêt certaine des alliés occidentaux en matière de soutiens financiers et militaires. Est-ce que c'est l'Ukraine qui s'isole petit à petit, ou bien c'est Zelensky qui perd pied?” - P - Daily Sabah

Depuis, les exercices militaires menés par la marine chinoise aux portes de l'espace océanique de Taiwan se sont multipliés, avec des avions de combat entrant même dans l'espace aérien taïwanais, bravant ainsi également tous les principes du droit international.

Certains observateurs aguerris pensent que Xi Jinping bluffe sur la question de Taiwan et qu'en réalité, il n'osera pas attaquer, au vu des capacités de défense taïwanaises et du soutien hautement stratégique des États-Unis à Taiwan. Ils constatent même que l'annexion de Taiwan est devenue un leitmotiv politique dans le discours de Xi Jinping afin de détourner le regard des Chinois du ralentissement de l'économie chinoise.

En effet, cette dernière fait face à des difficultés qui se multiplient depuis la fin de la pandémie de la Covid-19 et la reprise du commerce mondial.

A. Bartleby

☞ Suite en page 9





Anil Madan

# A World in Turmoil, a Cloudy Crystal Ball for 2024

As we roll into the new year, the world remains in turmoil. There are ongoing wars, conflicts, trouble spots. The list is long, so without being exhaustive, here are some of the bigger ones, and in no particular order: the ongoing war in Ukraine; Iran's ongoing development of nuclear weapons capability and proxy wars in the Middle East while frustrated and enraged Iranian women yearn for freedom; North Korea's ongoing threats to unleash nuclear weapons on South Korea, Japan and the US; the ongoing clamor for urgent responses to deal with climate change, while the world continues to burn fossil fuels with abandon; China's ongoing expansion of its footprint in the South China Sea, its ongoing threats to get on with reunifying Taiwan and the Mainland.

And in 2023, the list was augmented as new troubles arose. The most obvious one is the Israel-Hamas war and the ongoing devastation that Israel is wreaking on Gaza. 2023 also saw changes in Britain's Premiership, and with a general election in 2024, the prospects for Mr Sunak to hold on to his office appear dim. Russia too has a presidential election looming. There is little doubt that Putin will maneuver his way to an easy victory, and as if to put an exclamation point on the idea that he will brook no dissent, Putin has sent Alexei Navalny off to a harsh prison in Siberia.

Here at home in America, we have seen a near total breakdown of the system of government as the Republican majority with potential control of the House of Representatives more closely represents warring tribal factions than a party attempting rational and reasonable governance of the nation's affairs.

And as the 2024 US presidential election heads into its extended campaigning mode, Donald Trump remains far and away, the leading choice among Republicans. Despite his role in the insurrection of January 6, 2021, when at his urging, a mob stormed the US Capitol as Congress was in joint session to certify the results of the



“As the 2024 US presidential election heads into its extended campaigning mode, Donald Trump remains far and away, the leading choice among Republicans. Despite his role in the insurrection of January 6, 2021, when at his urging, a mob stormed the US Capitol as Congress was in joint session to certify the results of the 2020 presidential election, and despite pending criminal charges without precedent in American history, Republicans have not made him a pariah as they well should have...”

2020 presidential election, and despite pending criminal charges without precedent in American history, Republicans have not made him a pariah as they well should have.

India too has a major election coming in 2024 but Prime Minister Modi's BJP seems well entrenched that no upset is expected.

There are ongoing wars and coups in Africa and Latin America, even threats by Venezuela's dictator president that he will annex Guyana and its newly discovered oil riches. There is the Chinese threat to the Philippines, and the ongoing threats from Iran and Hezbollah against Israel.

We have the exciting and perhaps daunting and even awe-inspiring advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and what it portends. There are, of course, some who project that AI is a potential threat to mankind and civil society.

The push to eliminate gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles has spurred production of electric vehicles and batteries. This too is exciting, but not everything will come up roses.

Finally, in my selective list of crises around the world, let us make a catchall category that includes oppressed women (from Iran to Afghanistan and beyond, almost no country is exempt), those who face hunger, poverty, homelessness, discrimination based on race, color, creed, cast, handicap, sexual orientation, or in other words, just because they are different from those who wield power. Add to that the surge of immigrants and refugees that keep pouring into Europe, Australia, and the US, are another crisis that show no let up.

## The more things change...

How to make sense of all this and predict what might be? Let me put on my imaginary Nostradamus hat and reflect.

Starting with that last category, it is easy to predict that the more things change, the more they stay the same. It has been the nature of man to overpower, oppress, subdue, debase, and dehumanize fellow beings from time immemorial. Why should it stop? The good news is that at least in America, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, there is a recognition that we have a problem. I can predict somewhat timidly that we will make incremental progress. But the learning curve for the rest of the world is steep. On the other hand, I see no letup in the flow of refugees and immigrants. But as European countries and America strain to keep up with the press of humanity seeking refuge, it is likely that anti-immigrant policies will get harsher.

Again, taking things in no particular order, I think there is a good chance that Donald Trump will indeed be convicted of attempting, by unlawful means, to overturn the result of the 2020 presidential election. No, I do not believe that he will ever be sent to jail. My Nostra-guess is that he will be sentenced to home confinement. Whether this includes golf privileges remains to be seen. I have for long believed that Trump would not be the nominee of the Republican Party for the presidency this time around.

As we get closer to the caucuses and primaries, he has not gone away. But it is highly unlikely that an American court will rule that he is immune from prosecution for blatantly illegal and fraudulent attempts to overturn the 2020 election. Nor do I think that an American court will ever say that his statements were protected by the free



“For years, China has outmaneuvered the US, in the South China Sea part of the Pacific theater and it is not too much to say that China controls the area with impunity. Again, no surprises here. For decades, the US has watched China accumulate billions of dollars in trade surpluses and use that revenue to build a formidable presence in what it considers its backwaters. For centuries the cry was “Brittania rules the waves!” and certainly, after Brittania faltered, America rode its own wave for a long time. Why should we expect less from China?”

speech clause. It would be a novel twist to say that there is a privilege to tell lies. I hearken back to Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of the US Supreme Court who wrote: “The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic...”

A few months after Putin's devastating invasion of Ukraine, I predicted that if the war were a long slog, Ukraine would face the reality that without working infrastructure providing heat, water, sanitation, transportation, and electricity, and a population fragmented by so many who had to flee to other countries, attrition would simply take too big a toll. Surprisingly, Ukraine has held up admirably. This is the result of three factors: (i) Ukrainian will and tenacity, (ii) unwavering support from the US and EU/NATO countries, and (iii) Russian lack of will and tenacity and a general reluctance to fight for the man who cried “FIRE!!” in the crowded Baltic theater.

Sadly, EU/NATO countries see their resolve faltering. And in the US, that dysfunctional Republican Right-Wing mob that controls the House of Representatives, is content to use US aid to Ukraine as a bargaining chip to get it wants on the US domestic policy front. These developments lead me to the thought that the attrition will be too much to bear for both sides and a less than satisfactory ceasefire will be agreed with Russia retaining a good chunk of Ukrainian territory.

## China outmaneuvers the US

In not so welcome predictions, I think China will indeed go after Taiwan in short order. There have been many reports of late that the conventional arsenals of NATO countries, including the US, have been severely depleted as weapons systems, tanks, trucks, and ammunition, become obsolete. A report recently released after Presidents Xi and Biden met in San Francisco in November, states that President Xi told President Biden that China intends to take control of Taiwan and to rule the island nation. This is nothing new. China's intentions in that respect have been publicly stated for long. But having the Chinese President communicate the notion that this is a closed subject and there is no room for discussion, is not too surprising either.

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# A World in Turmoil, a Cloudy Crystal Ball for 2024

● Cont. from page 6

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Of course, I am not predicting that China and the US will get involved in a direct war. Taking control of Taiwan has two components for China. First, there is the obvious atavistic need to assert sovereignty no matter how insignificant the defecting populace might be in relation to the Chinese on the Mainland. But it is precisely the success of the defectors that rankles. President Xi has in a sense tied his manhood and his prowess to recapturing the renegade islanders. Second, there is the obvious strategic value of Taiwan's semiconductor production to the world, not just China, but to the US, Japan, South Korea, Britain, Europe, Australia, Canada, and even India. There have been rumblings that the Taiwanese will destroy their semiconductor production facilities if the Chinese Communists invade the island. But if that happens, the loss will be for the entire world. And China will survive. Whether the rest can replace lost production fast enough remains to be seen. My Nostradamus hat doesn't predict semiconductor manufacturing with any reliability. Eventually, China will restore any lost capacity, but Western countries too will have to become more self-reliant in this respect.

## The US for long will remain a formidable power

These thoughts lead to another prediction associated with the dwindling supplies of Western arms. The US remains, and for long will remain, a formidable power so China will not engage directly. However, China can withstand the deprivation of semiconductor chips for a few years much better than the US and other Western nations. So, expect to see more scrambling from the US and Europe to build semiconductor production facilities and indeed, more arms production. There will be a surge in Western military budgets and arms manufacture. Expect more stimulus and inflation. This added production will lead to the usual phenomenon of excess production being sold to Middle East and African countries. This time around, the nations in the Pacific — the Philippines, Australia, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, etc., will be big purchasers. Expect a boom for European and American weapons makers.

Why won't China engage directly with the US? Well, basically, President Xi is not stupid. China still has a massive trade surplus with the US and that allows it to accumulate US dollars with which it can buy US assets, develop its own weapons, control systems, and provide financial assistance around the world through its Belt and Road Initiative. It is not in the interest of either nation to disrupt the flow of trade. Doing so would inflict a tough blow on its own economy. So, we should expect increments in China's rise, and we should be accustomed to that by now. The US government is too dysfunctional to respond. The Republicans won't let Biden respond in any way that shows he is an effective president, and Trump promises, if elected, to engage in more of the kind of nonsensical zero-sum trade policies and tariffs he touted during his first term.

The Israel-Hamas war is easy enough to predict in one sense. Israel has shown little regard for the opinions of



“We have seen massive precipitation — record rainfall and flooding around the globe, the latest in Australia. Expect more of these events. 2024 is likely to be the year in which the world realizes that given current policies, spending on climate change initiatives, and ongoing fossil fuel consumption, even if what is being proposed is the right path, what we are doing is not working. There will be a new direction in our efforts to deal with climate change, more money dedicated to mitigation and adaptation...”

others, including the US and Britain which have been its staunch supporters. The urge to destroy Hamas no matter how much pain is inflicted on the Gazan population is fed not only by the existential imperative that Israel faces, but there is the component of sending a clear message to Iran and Hezbollah that Israeli retaliation knows no bounds. This is not a prediction, but I see the danger of Iran's unleashing a low-yield nuclear device akin to a tactical nuclear weapon, increasing greatly. Whether that is done directly — unlikely, since the Ayatollahs are cowards at heart, content to bully women — or through proxies, the dangers of escalation are severe. Iran is in the delicate position of provoking Israel, but not too much. In the past, it has had the tacit support of the major Arab countries. I see a further isolation of Iran on that score, but Iran's oil trade will be buttressed by China, India, and Russia.

This will all lead to a new Middle East. Ultimately, the biggest weapon the Saudis have is control over the price of oil. It is not mere happenstance that the price of oil continues to sink and deprive Iran and Russia of much needed revenue to continue their belligerence. Expect the price of oil to drop more before it spikes in the future.



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## More frequent severe weather around the world

At some point soon, we will see America's highways clogged with electric cars stalled from drained batteries as an evacuation is ordered in Florida due to an impending hurricane, or as people flee in blizzard conditions in the northeast or upper Midwest. This will cool the ardor for EVs and calls for more investments in battery technology and charging stations will divert resources to those ends. The result will be that spending for mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of more and more frequent severe weather around the world, will not keep up with the need.

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The promise of AI is immense. As we get more used to the positive and beneficial aspects of these new technologies, some of the fear will subside. Machines are not going to take over the world. If they did, they would soon come to the conclusion that the only reason for their “existence” is to serve the interests of humans, to make life easier, more pleasant and more efficient. If there are no humans in charge, why would machines need to exist? What interest would they have in taking control? They are not like the Chinese Communist Party with some atavistic predisposition to dominate a population that they do not need and one that is insignificant in comparison to their own country's 1.4 billion people. Nor would machines prepare in advance to ensure that they have prepared to take control of the power grid and ensure that if humans are no longer running power plants, there will be adequate power available to keep them going.

In a sense, robots and EVs have something in common. They need power to keep going and if the network to do that doesn't exist, they become useless. And they have no reason to keep going unless someone wants them to provide a service. Why would a machine need service from another machine?

My final prediction — and you may say it is wishful thinking — is that Donald Trump will never again be President of the United States.

With that, I wish you all a very happy and prosperous new year and I hope you get a charge out of it.

Cheer...  
Bwana



Année 2023

# Le paroxysme de la mauvaise gouvernance

Aditya Narayan

**N**ous voilà arrivés à la fin de 2023, une année riche en développements sur les plans politique, économique et social. Le temps est donc aux bilans.

L'année qui s'achève a été une année charnière car elle marque une violation paroxystique des normes de bonne gouvernance dans tous les domaines avant le début d'une nouvelle année pleine d'espérances pour un renouveau sociétal en général, et une véritable alternance démocratique en particulier.

Sur le plan politique, l'année 2023 a vu toutes les dérives autoritaires possibles avec le rétrécissement de l'espace démocratique dans le pays. En juin 2023, les élections municipales ont été renvoyées pour la troisième fois, chaque renvoi ajoutant deux ans (donc six ans au total) au mandat de quatre ans obtenus par les conseillers municipaux en 2015. Ce troisième renvoi, sous le prétexte de permettre une réforme hypothétique de l'administration régionale, a privé les habitants des villes de leur droit de choisir leurs conseillers démocratiquement.

Au niveau des conseils de district, le gouvernement a eu recours à des moyens des plus inhabituels pour installer ses affidés comme présidents. Dans les villes et villages, le gouvernement central exerce donc un pouvoir illimité pour recruter des employés, d'octroyer des licences diverses et d'attribuer des marchés publics à sa guise. La question reste posée: serait-ce sans aucune considération d'équité ou de méritocratie?

## Démocratie bafouée

La démocratie représentative, fondée idéalement sur le fonctionnement indépendant et efficace des institutions pour assurer l'Etat de droit, s'est rétrécie comme une peau de chagrin.

Toutes les institutions ont été mises sous tutelle politique, à l'exception du judiciaire et du bureau du Directeur des poursuites publiques (DPP). Parmi les graves entorses aux règles du jeu démocratique,



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aux normes de transparence et d'imputabilité, nous citerons notamment:

- (a) Le contrôle de l'audiovisuel: la MBC financée par la redevance publique fait de la propagande en faveur du gouvernement à longueur d'année. Ce n'est pas nouveau mais cela prend des dimensions inacceptables. Parallèlement, les radios privées sont assujetties à des conditions d'opération restrictives telles que la courte durée de la licence (un an contre 5 ans auparavant), le droit de licence de Rs 800,000 par an, les pénalités administratives pour erreurs diverses, et l'obligation d'assurer l'équilibre des émissions avec la participation de représentants du bord officiel qui ne rendent pas la discussion plus intelligente en vue d'éclairer le public...
- (b) L'instrumentalisation politique des institutions d'investigation ou de contrôle: l'ICAC, la FIU, et d'autres enquêtent sur des opposants politiques sans aucune impartialité, quitte à subir des revers dans les cours de justice avec leurs dossiers incomplets.

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inefficace de ces drains.

- (f) La gestion du patrimoine public: les terres de l'Etat sont distribuées à bail aux capitalistes de proximité dans une opacité absolue (un terrain de 750 arpents alloué à Grand Bassin au prêtre-nom d'un trafiquant, des plages publiques allouées aux fins de développement hôtelier sans aucun souci de préserver les écosystèmes naturels).

On savait que le pays subissait lentement mais certainement un processus d'autocratisation, comme le note l'institut suédois V-Dem dans son rapport sur les démocraties dans le monde. Depuis le 23 décembre 2023, la *Financial Crimes Commission Act* a enfoncé le dernier clou dans le cercueil de la démocratie fondée sur l'Etat de droit. Cette nouvelle loi scélérate a enlevé au DPP le pouvoir d'intenter des poursuites en matière de crimes financiers en le confiant exclusivement au directeur de la FCC, qui seul sera capable d'arrêter, d'emprisonner et de poursuivre un suspect.

Une telle concentration de pouvoirs entre les mains d'un nommé politique sape le pilier principal de l'Etat de droit, soit la séparation des pouvoirs entre l'agence d'enquête et l'autorité de poursuite. Désormais, une épée de Damoclès pèse sur la tête de tous ceux qui oseraient critiquer le régime car ils pourraient être traqués, surveillés et arrêtés en vertu des pouvoirs exceptionnels de la FCC, lesquels seront exercés sans aucun autre contrôle institutionnel. En réduisant le bureau du DPP à la portion congrue, le gouvernement a éliminé les derniers «checks and balances» dans notre système de justice.

## Opposition réunie

Face à ces dérives anti-démocratiques, les forces d'opposition ont pris conscience de la nécessité absolue de chercher une solution de rechange au statu quo. Les partis d'opposition parlementaire ont conclu une alliance (PT-MMM-PMSD) afin de présenter une alternative «viable et crédible» au gouvernement en place dans la perspective des élections générales prévues fin 2024/début 2025. Un récent sondage révèle cette alliance comme la première force politique dans la foulée de sa mobilisation initiale.

Les partis d'opposition extraparlamentaire voulaient dégager une troisième voie, mais ils n'arrivent pas à s'entendre sur une plateforme commune en raison des égos de leurs chefs. Ils naviguent en ordre dispersé ces jours-ci, ajoutant à la cacophonie sur l'échiquier politique. S'ils parvenaient à faire cause commune, ils pourraient jouer les trouble-fête à l'avantage des partis dirigeants dans des circonscriptions marginales. Par ailleurs, le dernier exercice de redécoupage électoral a rééquilibré certaines circonscriptions en termes de poids électoral relatif, ce qui brouille un peu les cartes pour l'opposition.

- (c) La mainmise de l'Exécutif sur le Législatif: la majorité au Parlement vote des lois liberticides tout en expulsant et suspendant des députés d'opposition pour les empêcher de jouer leur rôle, avec un record de 35 expulsions pour 36 séances en un an. L'auguste Assemblée nationale est devenue la risée du monde avec une présidence débridée et dépourvue de tout protocole digne de ce nom.
- (d) L'administration du «law and order»: la police aux ordres abuse de charges provisoires contre les suspects arrêtés et refuse la libération sous caution au défi des conseils du DPP, ce qui a provoqué une crise constitutionnelle entre le DPP et le Commissaire de police sur les pouvoirs de poursuite.
- (e) L'attribution des marchés publics: les organismes d'Etat distribuent les contrats aux fournisseurs sans une mise en concurrence transparente des soumissionnaires, et ce, à des prix surévalués comme on l'a vu dans un cas où un médicament fut acheté à Rs 79 l'unité contre le prix initial de Rs 9 l'unité, causant une perte de Rs 70 millions pour 1 million d'unités achetées.

Un autre exemple où l'Etat n'obtient pas de «value for money» pour ses investissements: cela concerne les contrats en milliards de roupies alloués à des entrepreneurs pour aménager des drains à travers le pays. Les récentes inondations causées par les pluies diluviennes ont démontré le fonctionnement

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Année 2023

## Le paroxysme de la mauvaise gouvernance

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Sur le plan économique, il y a eu une certaine reprise économique en 2023 avec une croissance estimée à 7%. Cette croissance est due essentiellement au progrès dans deux secteurs, le tourisme (1,3 millions de touristes) et la construction. Toutefois, les grandes variables économiques sont toujours au rouge avec le déficit de la balance des paiements, le déficit de la balance commerciale (10% du PIB), l'endettement national (100% du PIB) et le déficit budgétaire (5% du PIB).

La caisse de la CSG, une taxe sur les salaires pour prélever des fonds consacrés au paiement des pensions de retraite, est déjà vide parce que l'argent récolté est dépensé tout de suite. Le gouvernement table sur une croissance tirée par la consommation, une source d'importations croissantes, au lieu de privilégier la production locale pour per-

mettre un certain niveau de sécurité alimentaire et énergétique. L'investissement direct extérieur va en majeure partie dans l'immobilier plutôt que dans les secteurs productifs.

### Cadeaux de fin d'année

Le pays est entré dans le cercle vicieux de l'inflation (10%) et de l'augmentation de salaires, l'une fouettant l'autre dans une spirale incontrôlée. Avec la dépréciation constante de la roupie (près de 30 % depuis 2019), qui renchérit les prix à l'importation, le pouvoir d'achat ne peut pas rattraper la hausse des prix. Afin de donner une certaine illusion de prospérité (*feel-good factor*) en cette fin d'année, le gouvernement a multiplié les cadeaux à des groupes sociaux ciblés.

Il y a eu

- (a) le don de Rs 20 000 aux jeunes de 18 ans;
- (b) l'allocation de Rs 2 000 par mois pour un enfant en bas âge;
- (c) le boni de fin d'année aux employés (treizième mois);
- (d) l'augmentation du revenu minimum qui passe de Rs 11 575 à Rs 16500 en janvier 2024;
- (e) la compensation salariale de Rs 1 500 à Rs 2 000 à partir de janvier 2024; et

- (f) le cadeau de Rs 2 000 pour la fête de fin d'année pour les fonctionnaires (soit Rs 120 millions pour 60,000 fonctionnaires).

L'injection d'autant de liquidités dans le circuit commercial donnera un coup de fouet à l'inflation, laquelle apportera plus de taxes indirectes (TVA de Rs 48 milliards au 30 juin 2023) dans les caisses de l'Etat.

Sur le plan social, la situation a empiré à plusieurs niveaux. Les saisies de drogues quotidiennes témoignent davantage de l'échec du combat contre la drogue que de l'efficacité des contrôles aux points d'entrée dans le pays. A ce jour, aucun gros baron de la drogue n'a été inquiété sous le code pénal. On poursuit des trafiquants pour blanchiment d'argent plutôt que pour le trafic de drogue.

La criminalité est en hausse avec les cas de violence domestique et les homicides divers. Les accidents de la route (131 morts en 2023) sont devenus une tragédie nationale, illustrant le manque de discipline sur la route et le laxisme des autorités en matière de sanctions pour les infractions.

Espérons que le pays connaîtra des jours meilleurs en 2024.

Aditya Narayan

## Les perspectives mondiales auront un impact certain sur les affaires locales

Éclairages

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La délocalisation de géants des nouvelles technologies, la mise en veille de certains projets de la "Belt and Road Initiative", la situation extrêmement complexe de la bulle immobilière ou encore l'apparition du chômage des jeunes sont autant de signes d'un ralentissement structurel de la croissance chinoise.

Et qui dit ralentissement économique, dit critiques et questionnement des compétences du Parti communiste chinois (PCC) dans un système à parti unique. Xi Jinping a ainsi joué la carte du patriotisme et de la réunification de la Chine impériale afin de changer le focus et de remobiliser les Chinois derrière lui.

Mais ces menaces ne doivent pas être prises à la légère. Une attaque sur Taiwan envierait toute la région allant de la Mer de Chine à la Mer du Japon, et comprenant les deux Corées et l'archipel nippon, dans une spirale guerrière qui forcerait l'armée américaine à intervenir, provoquant une situation de guerre frontale entre les deux plus grandes puissances du monde.

Le potentiel est tellement réel que le Japon, qui a la seule Constitution pacifiste du monde, discute sérieusement de l'abrogation de l'article 9 de sa Constitution afin de pouvoir se remilitariser le plus rapidement possible, chose qui était encore impensable il y a une décennie de cela.

### Le "master plan" de l'Inde

**L**a militarisation : le mot est lâché. La production et la vente d'armement a connu une croissance exponentielle en 2023. En tête des pays acheteurs: l'Inde, qui a acheté près de 13% des armes et des équipements militaires produits en 2023.

Cette augmentation importante du budget militaire indien s'inscrit dans une stratégie de réforme de l'armée indienne elle-même. En effet, le gouvernement de Narendra Modi a mis en place un vaste projet de réforme de l'armée indienne, réforme qui avance à pas de géant.

Cette réforme prévoit la restructuration de l'administration militaire, avec la création de trois commandements distincts dont les objectifs militaires varient. Le commandement ouest, déjà existant, est basé à Jaipur au Rajasthan et a pour objectif la gestion de la frontière occidentale avec le Pakistan. Ce commandement sera bientôt suivi du commandement de l'est, qui sera basé à Lucknow dans l'État de l'Uttar Pradesh, et dont l'objectif sera la sécurisation de la frontière hima-



**"Les grandes économies du monde basculent de plus en plus vers des régimes très à droite, pour ne pas dire vers des régimes autoritaires, et les élections générales en Inde en mai 2024 et les présidentielles américaines en novembre 2024 devraient donner le ton sur ce qui va suivre. Narendra Modi conserve toutes les chances d'être reconduit à la tête de la Grande Péninsule, sauf accident, et les néoconservateurs américains sont plus soudés que jamais contre un Joe Biden affaibli et qui aura du mal à mener une campagne rude et violente..." P - Free Press Journal**

layenne avec la Chine.

Le troisième et le plus important commandement, lui, sera basé à Karwar dans l'État du Karnataka. Ce troisième commandement sera le commandement maritime dont les objectifs seront dédiés à de la défense du littoral indien et aux capacités de projection de puissance dans l'océan Indien. Lorsque l'on sait que 80% du commerce mondial transite dans l'océan Indien, on comprend facilement la mesure de l'enjeu.

Quel est le "master plan" de l'Inde? C'est la sécurisation de l'océan Indien par le développement de capacités de projections et de défenses qui lui permettront d'asseoir ses ambitions géopolitiques dans la région.

Le gouvernement indien coopère d'ailleurs aussi bien avec les Américains, les Européens et les Russes en matière de stratégies d'armement et de défense. Le développement de cette capacité de projection s'inscrit également dans des accords passés avec les alliés de l'Inde dans le contexte du Quad, et dans la volonté d'un recul des capacités militaires britanniques et américaines du bassin indo-océanique. Le déploiement de trois destroyers en mer d'Arabie pour contrer la menace des Houthis au Yémen démontre déjà les ambitions militaires indiennes et le rôle que se voit jouer Narendra Modi dans la région.

Cette montée en puissance de l'Inde est inéluctable et fait partie d'un processus de civilisation qui s'inscrit lui-même dans une mouvance globale qui voit actuellement une redistribution importante des cartes de la géopolitique mondiale. La Chine, la Russie et l'Arabie saoudite sont pris dans cette

même mouvance, et l'extension des BRICS à d'autres pays cette année confirme l'émergence de plus en plus palpable d'un nouvel ordre mondial qui prend forme petit à petit.

### Vers un nouvel ordre mondial

**C**e nouvel ordre mondial se présente tout aussi bien comme la construction d'alternatives à la mondialisation occidentale et à l'hégémonie américaine sur le commerce mondial, que comme la montée en puissance d'une guerre latente pour le contrôle des ressources énergétiques ou encore comme la mise en avant de nouvelles formes de "soft powers" culturels. Ce nouvel ordre mondial prend également une autre forme: celle de la désintégration lente mais certaine du paradigme de la démocratie représentative de type libéral.

En effet, l'ultralibéralisme actuel démontre de plus en plus qu'il n'a pas besoin du modèle de la démocratie pour bien fonctionner. Bien au contraire même. Le capitalisme global se trouve dans une phase où la vieille alliance avec les démocraties libérales laisse petit à petit place à une nouvelle alliance avec des régimes autoritaires, voir totalitaires. Le miracle économique chinois n'a d'ailleurs eu de cesse de démontrer exactement cela: contrairement à la croyance des libéraux du 19ème siècle, le capitalisme n'a pas besoin de démocratie pour bien fonctionner. Ou plutôt, le capitalisme n'a plus besoin de la démocratie pour bien fonctionner.

L'année 2023 a également vu un recul certain de la culture démocratique globale, même si cette tendance était déjà présente antérieurement. Le retour aux affaires de Lula au Brésil a été encourageant, tout comme l'élection de Joe Biden en 2020. Mais il serait une grave erreur de voir là un retour en grâce des mouvements démocratiques libéraux.

Les grandes économies du monde basculent de plus en plus vers des régimes très à droite, pour ne pas dire vers des régimes autoritaires, et les élections générales en Inde en mai 2024 et les présidentielles américaines en novembre 2024 devraient donner le ton sur ce qui va suivre. Narendra Modi conserve toutes les chances d'être reconduit à la tête de la Grande Péninsule, sauf accident, et les néoconservateurs américains sont plus soudés que jamais contre un Joe Biden affaibli et qui aura du mal à mener une campagne rude et violente.

Les perspectives mondiales pour 2024 sont en tout cas posées. Et il faudra les suivre de très près et avec beaucoup d'attention car elles auront un impact certain sur les affaires locales à Maurice.

A. Bartleby



Interview: Manou Bheenick

# “Mauritians need a government worthy of the name, capable of lifting our country out of the dystopian nightmare where we’ve entangled ourselves”

**A**s the year 2023 draws to a close, the Mauritius Times takes a moment to engage in a comprehensive reflection on the events that have shaped the headlines and narratives throughout the past months. In an insightful interview with Manou Bheenick, former Minister and former Governor of the Bank of Mauritius, we delve into the nuances of a year marked by its share of the good, the bad, and the ugly. In this candid conversation, Manou Bheenick traverses through the realms of politics, justice, and governance, touching upon electoral petitions, constitutional reforms, and the urgent need for a streamlined electoral petition process. Manou Bheenick also offers a critical assessment of Mauritius’ economic performance, considering global challenges and emphasizing the importance of sustainability.

**Mauritius Times:** What a year it’s been! One is tempted to exclaim after going through the long list of events that have hogged the headlines in 2023. We have had, as usual, the good (very little of it, though), more of the bad, and the ugly as well. What adjective/s would best describe 2023, according to you?

**Manou Bheenick:** Appalling, absolutely appalling, and bordering on the execrable, the like of which I never dreamt would ever cast its desolate pall over our poor country. Yes, we’ve had the good, the bad, and the ugly as you say but, I must add, without the slightest of the moral ambiguities of the eponymous Sergio Leone spaghetti western that immediately springs to mind when you juxtapose these three adjectives. And, for mood music, we’ve been served our infamous Assembly Speaker’s vocalizations for soundtrack in lieu of Morricone’s exceptional score.

The good — I differentiate the good from the seemingly good, especially the non-stop flow of populist fare served in generous doses to lull the short-sighted and the gullible — the good is infinitesimal; the bad is nothing short of humongous; the ugly is well in the realm of the ginormous. The shades of grey have been overtaken by darker tones dispelling any possible moral ambiguity about the dark intentions and designs of the crowd running the show.

Whatever happened to our glorious post-independence trajectory when we proved an army of doomsayers wrong? We seem to have forgotten that not all the doomsayers were

“The electoral petition underlines another major failure, i.e. apart from greater clarity on electoral fraud and bribery, in our electoral system is that it took nearly four years for this petition to wend its way to closure, and this in a system where the term of office of the impugned elected candidate is five years. A corrupt elected candidate could well serve 80% of his term before he could be unseated if and when found guilty. Is this at all acceptable? Is it even respectful of the value of the citizen’s vote?”

“The British Privy Council is, in its own country, often also regarded as a court of justice distinct from the lower courts which are courts of law. To the layman’s eye, in the matter of the Dayal electoral petition, the honourable Law Lords have taken a risible stand which seems to transgress justice, condones moral transgression, and can be seen as giving a blank cheque for more of the same from the transgressors...”

extra layers of meaning to the words of LP Hartley: “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.”

**\* To name only a few, we again saw electoral petitions set aside by the Supreme Court. There was disappointment with the Privy Council’s judgment in the Dayal petition and the license it gives to the conduct of future elections. The continuing preoccupation with the cost of living for most households in the country, and the latest issue of serious concern relates to the Financial Crimes Commission... that’s all very depressing, isn’t it?**

Indeed, it is! There was a time when, in international fora, when discussing reasons for the relative success of Mauritius — small, remote, and resource-poor as it was — compared to its better-endowed African peers, I used to list our extra-territorial court of final appeal on the asset side as an advantage. And you could always bet on some African colleague sniggering that it was a colonial relic that we should get rid of once our country really became independent!

Courts dispense law, not justice. The British Privy Council is, in its own country, often also regarded as a court of justice distinct from the lower courts which are courts of law. To the layman’s eye, in the matter of the Dayal electoral petition, the honourable Law Lords have taken a risible stand which seems to transgress justice, condones moral transgression, and can be seen as giving a blank cheque for more of the same from the transgressors.

foreign. Why did we change course? Why did we follow the false prophets? Look back with regret, anger, or no doubt for some with satisfaction. Our contemporary history adds

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There is talk of constitutional reform in the air. Constitutional change requires a 75% majority. The likelihood of the next election — probably besmirched by even more electoral bribery of the kind which has been waved through by the Law Lords — producing such a majority is slim. A cross-party majority is possible, but unusual in our country.

The urgent requirement to consolidate the free and fair electoral mechanism is to flesh out and accelerate the electoral petition process, with a time-bound calendar for case disposal before a specially-constituted Constitutional Court, or a Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court, to hear such cases as a matter of topmost priority, continuously, and act within the specified time-frame.

**\* On the other hand, there’s one major concern that has come up lately: the total cost of salary increases, its financing and sustainability. We know the government will get its money back from an increase in tax revenues, VAT, CSG, etc., but what will be the long-term impacts of such policies?**

I am sorry but I beg to differ. This is hardly a new concern. It’s been there ever since this government, and its immediate predecessor, which was also its mentor and enabler, came to power nearly 10 years ago at end-2014.

☞ Cont. on page 11





# Electoral petition: 'It took nearly four years for this petition to wend its way to closure...

Is this at all acceptable? Is it even respectful of the value of the citizen's vote?'

☞ Cont. from page 10

Their sheer impudence and imprudence have been arrogantly on display ever since wherever you care to look in the matter of public revenue and expenditure, its accountability and transparency, and beyond it in social administration and economic management.

These are the people who

- (1) told our voters long before Covid that they had a magical solution to our financial predicament,
- (2) dispensed state largesse left and right,
- (3) shirked away from repairing ailing public finance,
- (4) plundered central bank reserves,
- (5) commandeered the privately-financed National Pension Fund,
- (6) introduced a culture of opacity in state finance,
- (7) spread corruption in parastatals and Government-linked companies,
- (8) defanged and neutered regulatory and supervisory institutions,
- (9) stuffed cronies and their progeny in any available nook and cranny in the country,
- (10) the list goes on and on.

I don't find it at all surprising that they show such a total lack of concern with the budgetary and financial implications of the salary increase. They have been fuelling inflationary pressures with the active complicity of the central bank which has long become an agency of the Finance ministry. They have continually debased the national currency — by a cumulative 50%, or thereabouts, since my expulsion from the central bank: where the dollar was then freely available and then trading in the range of Rs 29-30, it's become increasingly scarce, and you would be lucky to get it at Rs 45 ++. I waited nearly a month for a small dollar transfer to be cleared by a prime bank.

The impact of the salary increases goes well beyond the budget (where corresponding revenue increases, however funded, will be required to avoid a rise in deficit) as they apply upward pressure on salaries and wages across the whole country, as indeed do the social transfers and various other public financial support schemes. Watch coming national income data issues to see the expected rise in their Compensation of Employees component.

The shorthand reply to your question on long-term impact is an explosion of the wage bill, in parallel with a loss of international competitiveness, a rise in the trade deficit, further inflation, and continued depreciation. Not a very exciting prospect, is it?

**\* On the other hand, what is your perspective on the current state of social issues in Mauritius, such as education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation?**

We seem to be living on edge since some time. We were

“The impact of the salary increases goes well beyond the budget as they apply upward pressure on salaries and wages across the whole country, as indeed do the social transfers and various other public financial support schemes... The shorthand reply to your question on long-term impact is an explosion of the wage bill, in parallel with a loss of international competitiveness, a rise in the trade deficit, further inflation, and continued depreciation. Not a very exciting prospect, is it?”



“We were a vibrant multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual, democracy, and we wore our multiple identities as a badge of honour. This seems to have gradually ceded to a growing unease eating away at the heart of our social fabric. Our celebrated *joie de vivre* is less in evidence and a growing malaise is palpable if we care to delve deeper than the consumerist surface... Remember Lebanon was once a miracle of peaceful coexistence of three of the oldest religions. Are we doing enough to safeguard ours?”

a vibrant multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual, democracy, and we wore our multiple identities as a badge of honour. This seems to have gradually ceded to a growing unease eating away at the heart of our social fabric. Our celebrated *joie de vivre* is less in evidence and a growing malaise is palpable if we care to delve deeper than the consumerist surface.

The rising death toll on our roads, the proliferation of drugs, rising criminality, persistent juvenile delinquency, spreading anti-social behaviour, insensitive and heavy-handed policing, rampant corruption, innumerable bureaucratic delays, slow administration of justice, declining achievement and tension in public schools, nepotism and discriminatory recruitment practices, inadequate waste management, poor flood control, deficient water supply, poor traffic management, noise and filth in dense inhabited places, environmental concerns, and the very disturbing rise in the frequency of localised outbreaks of religious tension — these are *pêle-mêle* some of the factors vitiating the life of our fellow-citizens. There are many others.

They need to be addressed vigorously. Remember Lebanon was once a miracle of peaceful coexistence of three of the oldest religions. Are we doing enough to safeguard ours?

It would no doubt prove quite tedious for many of your readers to detail pertinent actions in each of the areas you mention. Let me phone in on only one, namely education, which I believe has been the catalyst of our growth and development as a nation. Education has clearly played that role in Mauritius as it enabled us, with the right supporting

policies, to transform a growing liability into a strong asset.

The growing liability was, of course, our runaway population growth which came from the demographic explosion sparked by advances in health care which decimated the death toll and our returning British Army ex-servicemen who did wonders for fertility and natality in the country. This birth quake was initially demoralising and caused many, including knowledgeable people, to write off Mauritius and see it as a developing basket-case. Policy preoccupations moved apace as these cohorts progressed in the higher age-groups, with active population control via state-supported family planning, followed by extension of free primary education to include free secondary education, and soon thereafter free tertiary education.

We've now reached the stage where we channel nearly 10 % of our budgeted resources to the education sector, which add up to Rs 20 billion in 2023. One would expect that, as taxpayer, we are continuing to get value for money. Are we really?

Let me illustrate my concern by reference to the PISA score. This is an internationally comparable indicator, Programme for International Student Assessment, conducted by the OECD and measuring the performance of educational systems. It does this by measuring the performance of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics, and science. I was dismayed to see the 2022 results recently and to discover that our country is still absent from this league table. I was an invited guest at an OECD Development Conference at its HQ in Paris nearly 12 years ago when I had discussed our inclusion with the Secretary General. A country is judged by the company it keeps.

When I looked at UNESCO comparative data on education, my dismay gave way to outright shock. If we take literacy as a broad indicator of educational level, we learn to our amazement that literacy in Mauritius actually declined between 2014 and 2021. In its global ranking for 2023, out of 207 countries covered, UNESCO places us at the 135th place. We are well behind several sub-Saharan African peers like Seychelles, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, and Namibia. Maybe we do better on some of the other indicators. But alarm bells should be going on, don't you think? It's well past wake-up time for our sector managers, decision-makers, policy makers, and — why not?— voters.

In the meantime, parents who can afford it are voting with their feet. Increasing numbers of Mauritian students now flock to private schools which offer a choice of medium, international curricula, and a better education environment.

**\* Another issue of concern is climate change, which is already a reality for us judging by recent climatic events. How do you see Mauritius addressing issues related to climate change and environmental sustainability?**

Like all island-states in the SIDS group, our country is highly vulnerable to climate change, particularly through global warming, sea level rise and coastal erosion. However, while Mauritius has signed up to the pursuit of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, its ecological footprint has been consistently rising in line with its economic development, especially its unbridled physical development.

Our efforts to achieve greater efficiency in energy use have been feeble. We could easily have done much more in renewable energy, especially solar, which is barely present in public sector buildings such as schools, hospitals, and government offices.

☞ Cont. on page 12



# Long-term impacts of salary increases: ‘Explosion of the wage bill, loss of international competitiveness, rise in the trade deficit, further inflation, and continued depreciation...’



“Government has flagged through many large construction projects without much concern for their environmental impact with the result that, despite elevated public expenditure to ease the situation in the usual flood-prone areas,

periodic flooding has now generalised into a nationwide problem, flooding major newly built roads and bridges and snarling up circulation and traffic...”

☞ Cont. from page 11

We persist in use of petrol and diesel in official and public transport.

Our country has signed up to many initiatives on combating climate change and protecting the environment but our government has proved weak and irresolute in actual implementation, with poor interdepartmental coordination throwing a spanner in the works.

Worse, government has flagged through many large construction projects without much concern for their environmental impact with the result that, despite elevated public expenditure to ease the situation in the usual flood-prone areas, periodic flooding has now generalised into a nationwide problem, flooding major newly built roads and bridges and snarling up circulation and traffic.

Our government is very long on promise but short on delivery. Gone are the days when a stalwart like Prof Joel de Rosnay readily put his shoulder to the wheel to help our country deliver on our environmental commitments to the international community and to our people.

It’s disquieting to see how we seem to be dragging our feet while, internationally, COP28 — the just-concluded Dubai Conference of Parties — which is the driver of the International Framework on Climate Change, has made very significant progress, notably in mobilising funding for global actions.

**\* Sometime last week, two individuals were discussing life in Mauritius. One said there’s something great about the “Mauritian Spirit,” which is generally manifested in our cordial and helpful social interactions across ethnic communities. The other, slightly on the negative side, referred to parents’ anxieties regarding their children’s future in this country, mostly focusing on the challenges we were discussing earlier. How do you react to these two different perspectives?**

Both of them resonate fully with me. Talk of “Mauritian Spirit” and the like — there’s a whole extended family of them: *debrouillardise mauricienne*, rainbow nation, *ene sel le pep ene sel nation*, *da tohar hath laa hamar hath*; for the uninitiated, that’s in French, English, Kreol and Bhojpuri, respectively — such talk is calculated to elicit a Pavlovian reaction, driving the born-and-bred Mauritian absolutely gaga. I doubt very much whether they have any effect on the new class of “Mauritians by investment”.

Had I been a dog hearing any of this, I’d probably go flat on my back and wag my tail, waiting for the “*Assez! Couche-toi!*” which is probably what the cynical Mauritian does once the show of brotherly love and ethnic harmony is over. But the Mauritian Spirit does not bring down employment obsta-

cles, give unqualified equality of opportunity, put a brake on ethnic ghettos, bring diversity to corporate boardrooms, or bury racial jokes. Worse, the Mauritian Spirit cannot help the Mauritian to remain globally relevant and internationally competitive in the search for tomorrow’s opportunities and jobs.

I can also relate to the second interlocutor if I fill in some missing background of the concerned parent. Presumably, s/he isn’t part of the landed gentry, isn’t independently wealthy, doesn’t form part of a social club or fraternity, doesn’t belong to the *chatwa* network around the ruling clan, counts on a functioning education and health system, relies on law an order dispensed in a fair and equitable manner, and depends on the free and unhindered operation of the job market, public and private procurement and contracting, and administrative authorization and licensing.

Additionally, with children on the verge of entering the job market, I presume s/he is emerging from a hefty outlay over several years on the children’s education and maintenance such as private coaching and university fees, etc.

Now, place yourself in the position of this second interlocutor. Do you find much help from the Mauritian spirit there? How can you prevent him/her or her children from being attracted by the employment potential, and better life prospects, of some foreign countries?

I am afraid we’ve just been piling on the push factors in recent years. We’ll wake up one fine day to discover that our country is no longer the preferred choice of the best and brightest local talent while, around us, everything is increasingly run by foreigners. This is already happening in some sectors such as bakeries, heavy machinery operation, hotels, and restaurants.

We desperately need to reverse this situation. Long used to vaunt the merits of our country to foreigners, whether tourists, industrial investors, offshore clients, and recently, real estate and property investors, we now need to polish up our act and... sell our country to Mauritians themselves! They know well, from personal experience, what’s wrong and dysfunctional. Mauritians need a government worthy of the name, capable of lifting our country out of the dystopian nightmare where we’ve entangled ourselves. We need a paradigm shift.

**\* We have yet to see any indications that 2023 is ending with hope for a brighter future — one that is surely achievable provided the right conditions are put in place. What are your thoughts on this question?**

The hope that next year, the future, tomorrow will be better is inbuilt in the human DNA. It often masks our powerlessness to actually influence the course of events. But the hope, sometimes buttressed by New Year Resolutions, does infuse us with the spirit, the drive, the stamina to make things better in ways that we do and can influence. And sharing our hopes with others gives a collective dimension to what is a common and shared enterprise to face chal-

“Our democracy is under attack; our freedoms are under threat; our future is at stake. The year that is just beginning could very well see us called to cast our vote in the general election. If it does, we hope and pray that it will be free and fair, untarnished by electoral rigging and phantom voters, and untainted by charges of bribery and corruption. Yes, 2024 holds out this promise...”

lenges and seize opportunities that come our way.

2023 is far from ending on a promising note, neither globally nor domestically. But it didn’t turn out to be as bad as we feared. The Ukraine war hasn’t escalated. The extension of NATO to its Finnish neighbour hasn’t got Russia lashing out. The carnage in Palestine hasn’t ensnared Iran and set Western Asia aflame. Covid and its sequelae of variants haven’t bred new lockdowns.

Fears of global recession abated. Supply chain disruptions gradually recovered, easing shipping stress and freight rates, except in the Red Sea where the reverse has occurred. Protectionist and deglobalisation pressures were contained. Inflation has been steadily declining. Global growth and trade have sprung back. In short things could have been much worse at the global level.

“The Mauritian Spirit does not bring down employment obstacles, give unqualified equality of opportunity, put a brake on ethnic ghettos, bring diversity to corporate boardrooms, or bury racial jokes. Worse, the Mauritian Spirit cannot help the Mauritian to remain globally relevant and internationally competitive in the search for tomorrow’s opportunities and jobs...”



Which only goes to show that, domestically we haven’t done as well as could have been expected against this broadly improving global environment if our country had been in more capable hands.

But all is not alright with the world we live in. Geopolitical tension runs high. There is rising racism and right-wing extremism. There is spreading religious fundamentalism. There is growing poverty and food distress. There is the menace of AI and robotics hanging over humanity. There is the threat of almost uncontrollable global corporate behemoths impacting every aspect of our daily existence.

Our international global governance mechanism, still under the thumb of Second World War victors, is unable to address effectively the many nagging concerns. Can we expect 2024 to see much, even any, progress on some of these issues?

On the domestic front — fortunately for us — we have to contend with more tractable issues. Our democracy is under attack; our freedoms are under threat; our future is at stake. The year that is just beginning could very well see us called to cast our vote in the general election. If it does, we hope and pray that it will be free and fair, untarnished by electoral rigging and phantom voters, and untainted by charges of bribery and corruption. Yes, 2024 holds out this promise.

A wiser and more informed voter will decide among the alternatives confronting him: do we continue on the same trajectory with the same team ruling our country since 2014? Or do we dump them and change course and throw our support behind a team with a more promising vision of our collective future? That is the question!

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## Indonesia's navy pushes boat suspected of carrying Rohingya out of its waters

Indonesia's navy said Thursday that it forcibly pushed a boat packed with refugees back to international waters after the vessel approached the shores of Aceh province.

The province that forms part of Sumatra island has seen an increasing number of arriving boats, most carrying Rohingya refugees from southern Bangladesh. Large numbers of Rohingya fled to Bangladesh in 2017 following military attacks on members of the persecuted Muslim minority in their homeland of Myanmar, reports AP.

The Indonesian navy said a coast guard vessel detected a boat thought to be carrying Rohingya refugees entering Indonesia's waters on Wednesday. A helicopter from a navy ship subsequently spotted a wooden vessel nearing Weh island in north Aceh province, the navy said.

The navy ship KRI Bontang-907 located the boat about 63 nautical miles (72 miles) off the Indonesian coast and drove it out, "ensuring that the boat did not return to Indonesian waters," the navy said in a statement posted in its website.

Indonesia has appealed to the international community for help and intensified patrols of its waters due to a sharp rise in Rohingya refugees leaving overcrowded camps in Bangladesh since November.



Rohingya refugees disembarking from their boat upon landing in UleeMadon, North Aceh, Indonesia. Pic - AP

A mob of students on Wednesday attacked the base-ment of a local community hall in Banda Aceh, the capital of Aceh province, where about 137 Rohingya were taking shelter.

Footage obtained by The Associated Press showed a large group of refugees, mostly women and children, crying and screaming as a group wearing university

green jackets was seen breaking through a police cordon and forcibly putting the Rohingya on the back of two trucks.

The incident drew an outcry from human rights groups and the U.N. refugee agency, which said the attack left the refugees shocked and traumatized.

Indonesia, like Thailand and Malaysia, is not a signatory to the United Nations' 1951 Refugee Convention so is not obligated to accept the Rohingya coming from Bangladesh. So far, refugees in distress have received at least temporary accommodations.

Indonesia once tolerated such landings, while Thailand and Malaysia pushed refugee boats away. But there has been a surge of anti-Rohingya sentiment this year, especially in Aceh, where residents accuse the Rohingya of poor behavior and creating a burden.

About 740,000 Rohingya were resettled in Bangladesh after fleeing their homes in Myanmar to escape a brutal counterinsurgency campaign by security forces. Accounts of mass rape, murder and the burning of entire villages are well documented, and international courts are considering whether Myanmar authorities committed genocide and other grave human rights abuses.

## Pakistan poll body accepts Nawaz Sharif's nomination for 2024 elections

Pakistan's election body accepted former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's nomination for the 2024 national elections, ARY News reported. This means that no objections have been raised to 73-year-old Nawaz Sharif's candidature as he will now contest both from Lahore and Manshra city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, reports Hindustan Times.

His younger brother and former premier Shehbaz Sharif claimed that Nawaz Sharif is going to be the next prime minister of Pakistan for a record fourth time after the general election in February.



"Nawaz Sharif is going to the PM for the fourth time by the will of God after (Feb 8, 2024) polls," Shehbaz Sharif said, adding, "We have made Pakistan economically strong again under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif."

Nawaz Sharif was banned from running in elections by the Supreme Court in 2017 which declared him dishonest for not disclosing income from a company which was owned by his son. A court overturned two convictions for graft against Nawaz Sharif who arrived back home in October from four years of self-imposed exile in London.

His biggest challenge will be to wrest back his support base from his main rival, former cricket hero Imran Khan who remains popular following his ouster from the premiership in 2022.

What about Imran Khan? Imran Khan is disqualified from the election because of the graft conviction, which he has appealed. Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan alleged that Nawaz Sharif returned to the country under a 'London Plan' as per which military establishment will make him prime minister.

## On Taiwan's military threat claim, China says: 'This is electoral playbook'

China accused Taiwan of deliberately "hyping up" a military threat from Beijing for electoral gain ahead of elections on the island. Taiwan's presidential and parliamentary election will be conducted on January 13 amid ramped up pressure from Beijing that denies the island's sovereignty claims. Ahead of elections, Taiwan has been reporting Chinese fighter jets and warships around the island and balloons crossing the sensitive Taiwan Strait, reports Hindustan Times.

**What Beijing said on Taiwan?** Chinese defence ministry spokesperson Wu Qian said Taiwan's government was to blame for the tensions and not Beijing.

"The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) authorities are deliberately hyping up the so-called 'military threat from the mainland' and exaggerating tensions," Wu Qian said, adding, "This is entirely to seek electoral gain."

Taiwan is using a "familiar electoral playbook to stoke confrontation and manipulate the election," the spokesperson said.

China's People's Liberation Army was well aware of Taiwan's military movements and "we will, as always, take all necessary measures to resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," he asserted.

China has also been angered by US arms sales to Taiwan as it said, "We firmly oppose any country having



Armored vehicles from Taiwan military forces parades in front of Taiwan's presidential palace on the nation's 110 birthday. Pic - Getty Images

official and military contact with Taiwan in any form. The United States is manipulating the Taiwan question in various forms, which is a very dangerous gamble."

**What Xi Jinping said on Taiwan?** China's president Xi Jinping said the "reunification" of Taiwan with China is "inevitable." Speaking at the 130th anniversary of the birth of Mao Zedong, the founder of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping said, "The realisation of the complete reunification with the motherland is an inevitable course of development, is righteous and what the people want. The motherland must and will be reunified."

## Russia, NASA agree to continue joint ISS flights until 2025

Russian and US space agencies have agreed to keep working together to deliver crews to the International Space Station (ISS) until at least 2025, Russian corporation Roscosmos said Thursday.

The space sector -- including its so-called cross-flights that involve sending crews from different nationalities on one spacecraft -- is a rare area of cooperation remaining between Moscow and Washington since Russia sent troops to Ukraine, reports AFP.

Roscosmos said in a press release that the decision was taken "to maintain the reliability of the ISS as a whole," it added.

It also aims "to guarantee the presence of at least one representative of Roscosmos

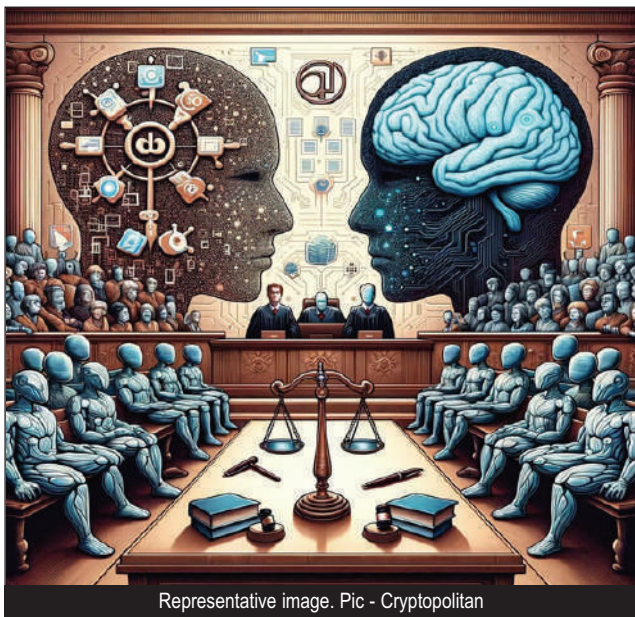
on the Russian segment and the presence of at least one representative of NASA on the American segment."

The ISS was launched in 1998 at a time of increased US-Russia cooperation following the Cold War "Space Race."

ISS partners -- the United States, Russia, Europe, Canada and Japan - are for the moment only committed to operate the orbiting laboratory until 2024, though US officials have stated they want to continue until 2030.

\* Contd on page 15





Representative image. Pic - Cryptopolitan

## 'Billions at stake' as OpenAI, Microsoft face copyright lawsuit from New York Times

The New York Times has filed a lawsuit against OpenAI and Microsoft, accusing them of copyright infringement in the development of AI technologies, including the widely-used ChatGPT. This marks the first major legal clash between a major media organisation and AI creators.

The lawsuit claims that OpenAI and Microsoft used millions of articles from The New York Times to train their automated chatbots, turning them into competitors for delivering reliable information. The suit demands accountability for "billions of dollars in statutory and actual damages" and urges the destruction of any AI models using copyrighted NYT material, reports Hindustan Times.

The legal battle is expected to define the legal boundaries of generative AI technologies, holding major implications for the news industry. The NYT is concerned about the potential loss of web traffic and revenue as AI-generated content competes with traditional journalism.

OpenAI, valued at over \$80 billion, and Microsoft, which invested \$13 billion in OpenAI, now face the financial impact of the lawsuit. The lawsuit alleges that the defendants exploited NYT's journalism without payment, leading to potential damage to the newspaper's revenue streams.

The legal action comes after unsuccessful negotiations between The New York Times, Microsoft, and OpenAI. The NYT sought an amicable resolution, including a possible commercial agreement and technological safeguards around AI products, but talks reached an impasse.

The lawsuit paints AI systems like ChatGPT as potential competitors in the news industry. When chatbots rely on past journalism to answer queries, they become direct competitors, threatening traditional news outlets' revenue streams.

The complaint highlights the risk of AI-generated "hallucinations," where chatbots insert false information wrongly attributed to sources. The NYT fears potential damage to its brand if misinformation generated by AI is linked back to the newspaper.

This lawsuit will likely become a legal test case for the boundaries of generative AI technologies. As AI continues to evolve, this legal battle could shape how companies use copyrighted material to train their AI models.

## Shakira honoured with 21.3-foot tall statue in her hometown in Colombia

A 6.5m-tall bronze statue of world-famous singer Shakira has been erected in her hometown of Barranquilla in Colombia. The statue shows her dance pose from her songs like "Hips Don't Lie". The statue has been created by sculptor Yino Márquez and his students.

Shakira took to Instagram on Wednesday and shared a video and pictures of the statue. In the pictures, the 46-year-old's parents could be seen posing in front of the statue, reports Hindustan Times.

The world-famous singer also shared the picture of a plaque at the foot of the statue, which contains information about it and her life. The plaque mentions her date of birth and praises her for "a voice that moves masses". It also highlights her philanthropic activity through a foundation that she created named "Pies descalzos" (means "bare feet" in Spanish) which



A 6.5m-tall bronze statue of world-famous singer Shakira has been erected in her hometown of Barranquilla in Colombia. Pic - The US Sun

promotes early childhood development.

Shakira is well-known for her songs like Waka Waka, Loca, Rabiosa, She Wolf. In 2023, she was among the most searched celebrities in the world on Google. Her song about ex-husband Gerard Pique, broke YouTube records in Latin America, this year.

## New royal rift? Prince William-King Charles are at odds: 'There is rivalry...'

A former Buckingham Palace staffer said that Prince William and his father King Charles don't always agree on everything but they are always respectful of one another. The two have different ways of handling things, but Prince William is always respectful of his father's rank as the monarch as he understands there's a hierarchy and his father comes first, reports Hindustan Times.

This comes after Prince William said earlier this year that he plans to take the monarchy a "step further".

"Charles absolutely wants William to plough his own furrow, he is encouraged to do so, just as he was," the insider said.



Britain's William, Prince of Wales and his father King Charles. Pic - Daily Express

So what is the equation between King Charles and Prince William?

Prince William and King Charles may have differing opinions, depending on the topic, which often result in a healthy debate, creating growth as per the insider who suggested, "I

think it is broadly seen as a productive rivalry, rather than a destructive one, because William respects his father's 'rank' as head of The Firm."

King Charles' methods are more traditional while his son's ways are more relaxed, the insider adding, saying, "I am sure they will butt heads as Charles is allergic to anyone telling him what to do, and William is not exactly famed for his subtlety. Ultimately the monarchy is a hierarchical structure based on military principles, and when push comes to shove, you have to obey orders from your superiors. That's what William and Kate understand."

## Xi Jinping's warning on Philippines' 'harassment': Won't turn a blind eye

China said that it will not turn a blind eye to repeated "provocations and harassment" by Philippines as tensions rise between the two countries over a spate of run-ins in the South China Sea. Earlier this month, Philippines accused the Chinese coastguard and maritime militia of repeatedly firing water cannons at its resupply boats. China caused "serious engine damage" to one and "deliberately" rammed into another, Manila said.

**What China said on Manila's claims?** Wu Qian, China's defence ministry spokesperson said that the Philippine side insisted on sending vessels to "intrude into" waters near a disputed shoal and "proactively rammed" a Chinese Coast Guard vessel. These accusations are "purely false hype."

The China Coast Guard took necessary enforcement measures which were justified and legitimate, reports

Hindustan Times.

"China is always committed to resolving differences through dialogue and consultation and making joint efforts to maintain maritime stability, but we will not turn a blind eye to the Philippine's repeated provocations and harassment," Wu Qian said.

"We urge the US to immediately stop meddling in the South China Sea issue, stop emboldening and supporting Philippine infringement and provocation, and safeguard regional security with concrete actions," the spokesperson added.

**What Philippines said on China?** A Philippine military spokesperson said that the country was not provoking conflict in the South China Sea in response to accusations that Manila was relying on US support to antagonize China.

Relations soured between the two neighbours over the South China Sea under Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Manila has pivoted back to the United States which supports the country in its maritime disputes with China, irking Beijing.



From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

6<sup>th</sup> Year No 259

## MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 31 July, 1959

● "Laws exist in vain for those who have not the courage and the means to defend them."

# Family Planning In Practice

“There is no prospect,” declared the Royal Commission on Population 10 years ago, “that men and women, having acquired control over the number of children they will have, will abandon it. Nor is it desirable that they should,” for it is “one of the first conditions of their own and the community’s welfare.”

The advent of voluntary parenthood is both cause and consequence of a growth of personal responsibility and partnership in marriage — of husbands towards wives and of both towards their children. Comparing the quality of working-class family life in Bethnal Green today and in late Victorian times, two sociologists have recently found “the rise in the status of the young wife and of the children” to be “the great transformation of our time.” This transformation they find most dramatically expressed in the reduced size of families brought about by deliberate planning.

## Social disaster

Family planning originated in the desire for family limitation. This association of planning with restriction of human reproduction became inevitable when, in the nineteenth century, the reduction of child mortality transformed the family which survived the hazards of childhood from a small into a large unit. It remains inevitable because, without birth control, the very progress of death control would produce social disaster. Without family limitation, according to the royal commission, “unless famine, disease or wars multiplied our death rates, the nineteenth century size of family would double the population in less than 30 years.”

But it is from its contribution to personal welfare rather than from its demographic advantages that the family planning movement derives its growing strength. The movement has long since come to stress not the need for mere restriction of births but the positive enrichment of marital relations, parenthood, maternal health, and child welfare which follows from the ability to decide when to have wanted children, whether few or numerous. It is as much concerned to help the barren into parenthood (though it draws the line at artificial insemination save by the husband) as it is to help the fruitful plan their parenthood.

The prevailing attitude to voluntary parenthood was found good by last year’s Lambeth Conference of the Anglican bishops. Their resolution stated “that the responsibility for deciding upon the number and frequency of children has been laid by God upon the conscience of parents everywhere: that this planning, in such ways as are mutually acceptable to husband and wife in Christian conscience is a right and important factor in Christian family life.” Their encyclical letter added that family planning was right and important also because “procreation of children is not the sole purpose of Christian marriage. Implicit within the bond between husband and wife is the relationship of love with its sacramental expression in physical union.”

## Catholic attitude

With one exception, there is now no important religious group in Britain which is prepared as a matter of doctrine to condemn contraception as a method of family planning. The exception is the Roman Catholic Church. Family limitation is nearly as prevalent among Roman Catholics in this country as among those of other faiths, and their leaders do not condemn responsible family planning. But they do insist on “natural” methods of birth control - complete



Birth Control Campaign in the UK in the 1960s

abstinence or reliance on the so called “safe period.”

They forbid contraception because, as Pius XI stated in 1930, “the conjugal act is of its very nature designed for the procreation of offspring... Those who, in performing it, deliberately deprive it of its natural power and efficacy act against nature and do something which is shameful and intrinsically immoral.” Yet, in spite of this disagreement about methods, it is noteworthy that the Roman Catholic journal *Universe* should have remarked recently that, in other respect, “there is a positive and praiseworthy aspect of the work” of the Family Planning Association, and this body’s forthcoming “Good Cause” appeal on the BBC marks “the full circle of respectability” for family planning.

By their behaviour, the bulk of Britons today show that they assent to the royal commission’s conclusion that “there is nothing inherently wrong in the use of mechanical methods of contraception.” The commission went on to argue that the long-run interests of the family and of society both require that “voluntary parenthood should become universal and that women should have the maximum freedom in the ordering of their lives,” and “that children, whether in large or small families, are wanted children and not the result of ignorance.”

Ignorance of elementary sexual matters as well as of family planning, is still widespread. Only in the past two decades has contraception replaced *coitus interruptus* as the main birth control method; and among those not averse from contraception, inefficient methods are still common. The consequences include some 50,000 to 100,000 illegal abortions annually (chiefly, it seems, among married women); a sizable proportion of stillbirths, premature births, and infant deaths which sensible spacing of pregnancies could have prevented; and a great amount of needless ill-health.

## A quick remedy

Seeking a quick remedy, the royal commission would have obliged the health service to provide advice both on contraception and infertility to “married persons who want it.” Governments so far have preferred to let the situation remedy itself without forcing the pace. Publicly praised by Cabinet Ministers with vice-presidents who include two bishops and the current presidents of the three royal medical colleges and of the College of General

Practitioners, the Family Planning Association is medically impeccable and eminently respectable. It operates 299 clinics, four in every five on health service premises, and is opening new clinics at the rate of nearly one a fortnight.

Hoping the barren is an integral and important part of the associations’ work, though one which is increasingly — and rightly — passing to the hospitals, about 150 FPA clinics are equipped for preliminary advice and investigation of barrenness in couples who want children. The simpler cases they can remedy themselves where the difficulty is appreciable and it is the wife who needs treatment, she is usually referred to a hospital for further help, though there are six F.P.A. centres equipped to deal with female infertility at consultant level. If it is the husband who is infertile, hospital facilities are still very haphazard, and he is likely to find his way to the association’s own national centre for male infertility. Though no longer unique, this centre remains the leading institution of its kind.

In 1955 the Minister of Health told the association: “I believe that you do an admirable work... However, there are many thousands of your countrymen and women who hold different views... and in all we do we must consider these most deeply held convictions, even if we do not share them.” Respect for minority views justifies keeping the clinics under voluntary control, while not forbidding the health service to refer patients to them. Yet there is no reason why the health service should not be required to refer for contraceptive advice any married persons who want it, provided it allows complete freedom for medical and other conscientious objectors to dissociate themselves from this particular service. Official policy, however, stops far short of this. The health services may arrange contraceptive advice only for women for pregnancy may be medically dangerous; and even this is not obligatory. And the British Pharmacopoeia still ignores contraceptives, the only impartial testing of which is still done in the association’s own laboratories.

## Simple instruction

Family planning clinics are increasingly frequented by women — and men too — whose main need is not birth control information but simple sex instruction or advice on marital or social difficulties. Yet, although marriage guidance and premarital preparation for married life are officially favoured, there is still no trend in the social services towards bringing all these related facilities together into comprehensive marriage welfare centres. Here, too, the association is pioneering. Seven of its leading centres already approximate to the comprehensive standard.

*The Times, UK, 17th July 1959*

## Building & Land Use Permit Application NOTICE FOR PERMISSION FOR LAND USE

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29 Dec 2023





Kul Bhushan

# Bye 2023, Hello 2024, Time to Wake Up

**Y**es, goodbye to this horrendous year!

One after another, the disasters kept thumping all of us. Natural calamities, fires, floods, cyclones, hurricanes, *et al*, went on throughout the year. Riding on top are two major wars that threaten world peace and have disrupted supply lines to our basic needs such as oil and wheat, to name the most affected.

The first one started almost two years ago between Russia and Ukraine and lingers on without any clear outcome. Most probably it will end, if at all, in a frozen conflict. But it has played havoc with oil and gas supplies and prices worldwide. Plus, wheat exports have been diminished as Ukraine is a major wheat producer.

The second one came out of the blue in last October as Hamas attacked Israel. This has escalated into a major conflict and upset the politics of the Middle East. Both conflicts can extend to other countries which is a danger to our well-being. And no less than three armed conflicts raged in Africa with thousands killed and many more becoming refugees.

As if all this is not enough, the dreaded Wuhan virus keeps reappearing in new forms in the West. Again, this is a major danger to our health.

Forget about political climate, the natural climate keeps buffeting the globe in various ways from drought to floods, volcanoes erupting to forest fires, earthquakes, hurricanes to ice melting. This list goes on and on. Yet another global meeting COP 28 was held in Dubai which fizzled out without any breakthrough to fight climate change and more importantly any contribution by the rich nations to combat this huge problem.

Despite all these disasters, it is time to be thankful because you are reading this. You are still breathing. It means that you are alive and survived the *annus horribilis*. You will get a new job or restart your business but if you had succumbed to this virus, you would be no more. Thus, it is time to show your gratitude to be just alive.

As you look forward to the new year, you make plans for 'revenge' indulgence of all the pleasures you missed during the past year. If it is travelling or holidays, you will go out with a vengeance to live it up. If it is movies, you will line up outside the theatres. If it is dining, you will head to the restaurants more frequently. And so on with your personal favourites.

But if you had more time to ponder over life and meditate, you will take a



P - graubuenden.ch

new course of self-discovery and delve deeper into the unknown which was so overwhelmingly powerful in 2023. Instead of exploring the far corners of the earth, you will try and discover your virgin inner space.

So bid goodbye to 2023 and welcome 2024!

The first month, January, is named after the Roman God Janus because the first day of January looks both ways – at the past, at the last year that has gone, and at the year that is to come. Janus is a Roman god with two faces, facing in both directions.

Osho says, "Man is a Janus; his whole life is a January. And both directions have something appealing and something that creates fear. One has to decide. If one decides to fall back, one disappears as an alive being; one has committed suicide. If one decides to go ahead in spite of all the fear that arises with the new, one is born spiritually. Remember it. Listen to the call of the unknown – and it is always there. Whatever becomes known has to be dropped."

So, what is your new year's resolution? "This and only this can be the new year's resolution," Osho says. "I resolve never to make any resolutions because all resolutions are restrictions for the future. All resolutions are imprisonments. You decide today for tomorrow? You have destroyed tomorrow."

So just be grateful, very, very grateful, that you are alive, and you survived another year.

*Kul Bhushan worked as a newspaper Editor in Nairobi for over three decades and now lives in New Delhi*

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Thank you so much.  
Mauritius Times



## Merry making during the Festive Season

# A Conspiracy of Joy

● Cont. from page 2

**Socrates:** Indulgence, my dear Cephalus, can be a slippery slope. Is it not wiser to find joy in moderation rather than drowning in a sea of festive excess?

**Cephalus:** But Socrates, moderation is for the ordinary days. The festive season calls for extravagance and the occasional overindulgence!

**Socrates:** Is it not the pursuit of wisdom to find joy in simplicity, to revel in the company of loved ones without the need for excess?

**Cephalus:** Ah, my wise philosopher, you make a compelling argument. But tell me, would you not agree that the festive season adds a sprinkle of magic to our lives?

**Socrates:** Magic, you say? Is it not within our power to create magic in every moment, to find enchantment in the ordinary?

**Cephalus:** Perhaps, Socrates, but there's an undeniable charm in the air during the festive season. It's like the world conspires to make us laugh a little louder and love a little deeper.

**Socrates:** A conspiracy of joy, you say? I suppose, my dear Cephalus, there is wisdom in embracing the unique enchantment that the festive season brings. Let us then, with mirth and merriment, engage in this delightful conspiracy of joy.

*In the spirit of Socratic revelry, Socrates and Cephalus continued their dialogue, navigating the intricacies of merry making with wit and wisdom, celebrating the festive season in their own philosophical fashion...*

**"The promises of politicians can be as fleeting as the winter snow"**

*However, with the melodious tunes of campaign jingles heard from afar and the air already thick with promises, accusations and counter accusations, their dialogue shifts to what awaits us in the coming year...*

**Cephalus:** Ah, Socrates, as we bask in the glow of festive cheer, I can't help but wonder what awaits us in the coming year. Do you not sense a hint of trepidation in the air?

**Socrates:** Trepidation, my festive companion? Pray, tell me, why do you feel a shadow cast upon the dawn of the new year?

**Cephalus:** Well, Socrates, next



year brings with it the grand spectacle of general elections. A time when the air will be thick with promises, accusations, and the melodious tunes of campaign jingles.

**Socrates:** Ah, the melodious tunes of democracy in action! But should we not approach these elections with a discerning mind, my dear Cephalus? The promises of politicians can be as fleeting as the winter snow.

**Cephalus:** Indeed, Socrates! It's

like they promise a banquet fit for the gods, but we often end up with a feast more modest than a Spartan's daily rations.

**Socrates:** A feast for the mind, or a famine of promises! But do you not think, my joyous friend, that we, the citizens, bear some responsibility in the shaping of our political destiny?

**Cephalus:** True, Socrates, true. We hold the power to choose our leaders, but sometimes the choices feel akin to

selecting the least thorny rose in a prickly garden.

**Socrates:** A garden of thorns, you say? Perhaps we should cultivate the soil of critical thinking and demand more from those who seek to govern.

**Cephalus:** Wise words, Socrates, but will the masses heed such counsel? It's easier to be swayed by catchy slogans and charismatic speeches.

**Socrates:** Catchy slogans, the bards of politics! But should we not strive for a society where substance triumphs over style, where the ballot is cast with thoughtful consideration?

**Cephalus:** Oh, Socrates, you paint a utopian vision. In the real world, elections are more like a chaotic symphony, with each candidate playing a different tune.

**Socrates:** A symphony of chaos, indeed! But let us not lose hope, my festive friend. In the coming year, as we navigate the political landscape, let us approach it with the same mirth and wisdom we bring to our festive celebrations.

**Cephalus:** You're right, Socrates. Perhaps, amidst the campaign madness, we can find moments of laughter, unity, and shared understanding. After all, even in the realm of politics, a touch of humour can be the antidote to disillusionment.

And so, with a blend of caution and humour, Socrates and Cephalus continued their philosophical banter, ready to face the challenges and elections of the upcoming year with a twinkle in their eyes and a jest on their lips.

**Plutonix**

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**Sri Saraswati Puja**

**Wednesday 14 February 2024**

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We wish all devotees a  
Happy & Prosperous New Year 2024  
*Yours in the Lord*

**Swami Krishnarupananda**



## Cutting just a (tea)spoon full of salt helps the blood pressure go down

Cutting back salt intake by one teaspoon a day results in a decline in blood pressure comparable to taking blood pressure medication, according to a study.

A teaspoon doesn't sound like much, but a little salt goes a long way. One teaspoon of salt has about 2,300 mg of sodium in it. According to the FDA, Americans eat an average of 3,400 mg of sodium, so cutting out a teaspoon would be equivalent to cutting two-thirds of a person's daily sodium intake. But the researchers say that cutting out any amount of sodium will help lower blood pressure — at least more than no reduction at all.

Humans need sodium, which is found in salt, for our bodies to work properly. It plays an important role in nerve and muscle function by allowing nerves to



pulse with electricity and muscles to contract. But too much sodium can be bad for your health: It contributes to high blood pressure, or hypertension, which is a major cause of stroke and heart disease.

Extra sodium in the blood pulls more water into blood vessels. This increases blood pressure and, in some people, leads to high blood pressure and can damage vessels and even organs like the heart, kidneys and brain.

In this latest study, participants who cut out their daily salt intake by one teaspoon had lower blood pressure in just one week. This was even true for people already on blood pressure medication. So maybe lighten up on the gravy this year.

## To feel better, commit to daily, small acts of joy

New research suggests that committing small acts of kindness, joy, or reflection can significantly increase a person's sense of well-being, as NPR's Allison Aubrey reports. Over 70,000 participants in more than 200 countries signed up for the The BIG JOY Project, an ongoing collaboration between UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center and other institutions.

It's a citizen-science project, and anyone can participate. If you join, you'll take an on-line survey to answer questions about their emotions, stress, and your social tendencies. Then, every day for a week, you agree to try small, happiness-boosting activities, what the researchers have dubbed "micro-acts" of joy.

The micro-acts researchers recommend have been linked to emotional well-being in prior published studies. Examples include making a gratitude list or journal, visiting a sick neighbour or doing a nice



gesture for a friend — or a stranger. Some micro-acts involve celebrating another person's joy, or engaging in self-reflection, meditation, or taking the time to "dwell in awe."

Participants track their feelings each day, and take another survey at the end of the week. A preliminary analysis published this week shows that participants experienced about a 25% increase in emotional well-being over the course of that week. Researcher Elissa Epel points out that planning out such acts can help us feel like we have more of a sense of agency over our emotions in uncertain times.



## Can animals give birth to twins?

*Animals often give birth to litters of more than one offspring at a time. But are those babies twins?*

Ask any parent — welcoming a new baby to the family is exciting, but it comes with a lot of work. And when the new addition is a pair of babies — twins — parents really have their work cut out for them.

For many animal species it's the norm to have multiple babies at once. A litter of piglets can be as many as 11 or more!

We are faculty members at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine. We've been present for the births of many puppies and kittens over the years — and the animal moms almost always deliver multiples.

But are all those animal siblings who share the same birthday twins?

### Twins are two peas in a pod

Twins are defined as two offspring from the same pregnancy.

They can be identical, which means a single sperm fertilized a single egg that divided into two separate cells that went on to develop into two identical babies. They share the same DNA, and that's why the two twins are essentially indistinguishable from each other.

Twins can also be fraternal. That's the outcome when two separate eggs are fertilized individually at the same time. Each twin has its own set of genes from the mother and the father. One can be male and one can be female. Fraternal twins are basically as similar as any set of siblings.

Approximately 3% of human pregnan-



Though born from the same litter, these kittens all have different sets of genes. bozhdb/Stock via Getty Images

cies in the United States produce twins. Most of those are fraternal — approximately one out of every three pairs of twins is identical.

### Multiple babies from one animal mom

Each kind of animal has its own standard number of offspring per birth. People tend to know the most about domesticated species that are kept as pets or farm animals.

One study that surveyed the size of over 10,000 litters among purebred dogs found that the average number of puppies varied by the size of the dog breed. Miniature breed dogs — like chihuahuas and toy poodles, generally weighing less than 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms) — averaged 3.5 puppies per litter. Giant breed dogs — like mastiffs and Great Danes, typically over 100 pounds (45 kilograms) — averaged more than seven puppies per litter.

When a litter of dogs, for instance, consists of only two offspring, people tend to refer to the two puppies as twins. Twins are the most common pregnancy outcome in goats, though mom goats can give birth to a single-born kid or larger litters, too. Sheep frequently have twins, but single-born lambs are more common.

Horses, which are pregnant for 11 to 12 months, and cows, which are pregnant for nine to 10 months, tend to have just one foal or calf at a time — but twins may occur. Veterinarians and ranchers have long believed that it would be financially beneficial to encourage the conception of twins in dairy and beef cattle. Basically the farmer would get two calves for the price of one pregnancy.

But twins in cattle may result in birth complications for the cow and undersized calves with reduced survival rates. Similar risks come with twin pregnancies in horses, which tend to lead to both pregnancy complications that may harm the mare and the birth of weak foals.

### DNA holds the answer to what kind of twins

So plenty of animals can give birth to twins. A more complicated question is whether two animal babies born together are identical or fraternal twins.

Female dogs and cats ovulate multiple eggs at one time. Fertilization of individual

eggs by distinct spermatazoa from a male produces multiple embryos. This process results in puppies or kittens that are fraternal, not identical, even though they may look very much the same.

Biologists believe that identical twins in most animals are very rare. The tricky part is that lots of animal siblings look very, very similar and researchers need to do a DNA test to confirm whether two animals do in fact share all their genes. Only one documented report of identical twin dogs was confirmed by DNA testing. But no one knows for sure how frequently fertilized animal eggs split and grow into identical twin animal babies.

And reproduction is different in various animals. For instance, nine-banded armadillos normally give birth to identical quadruplets. After a mother armadillo releases an egg and it becomes fertilized, it splits into four separate identical cells that develop into identical pups. Its relative, the seven-banded armadillo, can give birth to anywhere from seven to nine identical pups at one time.

There's still a lot that scientists aren't sure about when it comes to twins in other species. Since DNA testing is not commonly performed in animals, no one really knows how often identical twins are born. It's possible — maybe even likely — that identical twins may have been born in some species without anyone's ever knowing.

#### Michael Jaffe

Associate Professor of Small Animal Surgery, Mississippi State University

#### Tracy Jaffe

Assistant Clinical Professor of Veterinary Medicine, Mississippi State University





## Compulsory Exam Question

Instead of studying for their final exams, three seniors spent the night partying in the house they shared off-campus. The next morning, they waited until the exam was nearing its conclusion and then made their way to class after first dubbing their hands in grease to support their story. The exam was almost over when the three boys burst into the room.

"We're really sorry, but we had a flat tyre and, as you can see from the state of our hands, we've been struggling to change it. I know we've missed the exam, but could we possibly retake it another time?" their spokesman told the professor.

The professor said that he was not an unreasonable man and would, therefore, reschedule the exam for the following week.

Making the most of their extra revision time, the three students studied diligently, and by the day of the re-sit, they thought they were ready for the test. On arrival, each was placed in a separate classroom for the test.

The last question on the paper, which was compulsory, simply read: "Which tyre?"

\*\*\*

Passing through his son's college town late one night on a business trip, a father thought he would pay him a surprise visit. Arriving at the fraternity house, he knocked on the door and waited for an answer. Eventually, a sleepy voice opened a second-floor window and called down: "What do you want?" "Does Johnny live here?" asked the father. "Yeah, dump him on the porch, and we'll take care of him in the morning," replied the voice.

\*\*\*

When a university student returned home for Christmas, his mother asked, "How's your literature paper coming along?"

"Well, my professor suggested I use the internet for research, and it's been really helpful."

"Oh, that's great."

"Yes, so far, I've located twelve people who sell them."

\*\*\*

Bill Gates bumped into Daniel Craig at a Hollywood party.

Gates said, "I've seen some fabulous pictures of Divine Brown lately. I'd really like to get to meet her. Any chance you could fix me up?"

Craig said, "You have to remember that ever since that unfortunate incident with me, her fee has rocketed."

"Money's not an issue, now what's her number?"

So Gates phoned Divine Brown and set up a date.

Afterwards, as they lay on the bed together, he turned to her and mumbled breathlessly, "Now I know why you chose the name Divine."

She replied, "And sadly now I know why you chose the name Microsoft."

\*\*\*

The Pope and Margaret Thatcher are sharing a



balcony in front of a huge crowd. The ex-PM and His Holiness have seen it before, so to make it a bit more interesting, Maggie says to the Pope, "Did you know that with just one little wave of my hand, I can make every conservative in the crowd wild?"

The Pope doubts it, so she shows him. Sure enough, the wave is greeted with wild cheering from the Tories. Gradually the noise subsides.

"That was impressive," says the Pope, "but did you know that, with just one little nod, I can make every person in the crowd go crazy with joy? This joy will not be a momentary display, like that of your subjects, but will go deep into their hearts, and they will forever speak of this day and rejoice."

The Iron Lady seriously doubts this and says, "One nod and the people will rejoice forever? Show me." So, the Pope head-butts her.

\*\*\*

A woman was in the kitchen, preparing to boil eggs for breakfast.

Her husband joined her, she turned and said, "You have to make love to me this very moment."

He was pleasantly surprised, and he thought, "This is my lucky day."

Not wanting to lose this opportunity, he embraced her and made love right there on the kitchen table.

Afterwards she said, "Thanks," and returned to the stove.

More than a little puzzled, he asked, "What was that all about?"



She explained, "The egg timer's broken."

\*\*\*

A guy walks into his bedroom and finds his wife packing a suitcase. He asks, "What are you up to?"

She replies, "I'm going to London. I read that sex workers receive £300 for doing what I do for you for free."

Later, on her way out, the wife walks into the bedroom and sees her husband packing his suitcase. "Where are you going?" she asks.

"I'm coming with you; I would like to know how you manage with £600 a year."

\*\*\*

### Blond redneck finds a lamp

A blonde redneck guy finds a lamp. He rubs it, and a genie emerges. The genie tells him he will be granted three wishes.

The guy thinks for a moment and says, "First, give me a bottomless mug of beer." A mug of beer appears in his hand.

He sips it once, then again, and the mug is magically refilled. The guy is thrilled and continues to drink. The mug never empties.

Then the genie says, "And what about your other two wishes?"

The guy thinks for a moment and says, "Give me two more just like this one!..."

\*\*\*

### Two elderly men having a few beers

Two elderly men were having a few beers at the bar together, recounting old times when the call of nature caused them to line up at the stainless steel, still deep in conversation. But Paddy could hardly ignore the fact that Mick was very well endowed.

"I say, 'tis a remarkable dong you have there," Paddy was prompted to remark.

"Wasn't always that way," replied Mick. "Medical science can do wonders with transplants these days," he said.

"I got this done in Dublin. It costs me twenty thousand euros, but as you can see, well worth it."

Paddy was envious. In fact, he packed his bag that night and drove to Dublin. It was a good six months later before he ran into Mick once again, and he could hardly wait to tell him that he had taken his advice and was well pleased with the result.

"You were diddled. I got mine for ten thousand euros only," said Paddy.

Mick could hardly believe it. Same address in Dublin, same doctor. Thinking that he had been ripped off, he asked Paddy if he could have a look.

Once more they lined up at the stainless steel, and when Mick took a peek, the worried frown that had creased his face disappeared, and he started laughing. "Why are you laughing?" "No wonder you got it at half price." Mick laughed. "That's my old one!"

\*\*\*

### The teacher asked Johnny if he had any pets

The teacher asked Little Johnny if he had any pets.

Little Johnny replied, "Yes, I have a pet cat, and this morning before I left for school, I put some lighter fuel in the cat's water bowl. The cat raced up the stairs, jumped over the beds, ran down again, across the living room to the curtains, climbed up to the top, and then fell down onto the floor. The cat just lay there motionless."

"OMG," exclaimed the teacher, "was your pet cat dead?"

"No," said Little Johnny, "He just ran out of gas..."



## How to Think Like a Roman Emperor

*Timeless wisdom for navigating life's challenges*

In his insightful book, 'How to Think Like a Roman Emperor', Donald Robertson delves into the Stoic philosophy practised by the Roman emperors, particularly Marcus Aurelius, offering timeless wisdom for navigating life's challenges with resilience and a clear mind. 'How to Think Like a Roman Emperor' is not about becoming a literal emperor, but rather about adopting a philosophical framework that allows you to live a more meaningful, resilient, and fulfilling life. By incorporating these lessons into your daily practice, you can navigate challenges with grace, find joy in the simple things, and contribute positively to the world around you.

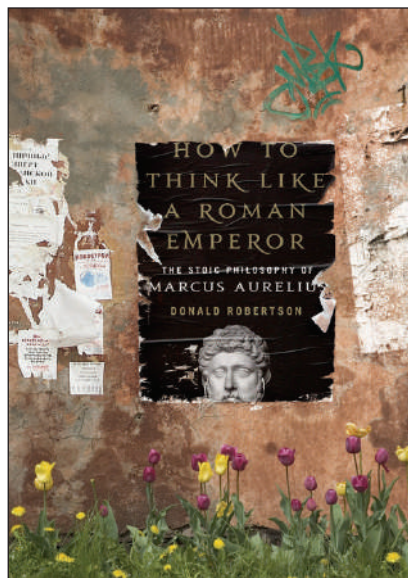
Here are 10 lessons we can glean from this transformative book:

### Embrace your mortality

Accepting your own mortality isn't about morbid dwelling, but a powerful tool for living more fully. It reminds you to prioritize what truly matters and focus on actions that contribute to a meaningful life.

### Focus on what you can control

Stoicism teaches us to distinguish between what we can control (our thoughts, actions, and responses) and what we can't (external events,



other people's behaviour). This shift in perspective empowers us to focus on proactive solutions and avoid wasting energy on uncontrollable situations.

### See obstacles as opportunities

Challenges and setbacks are inevitable, but Stoics view them as opportunities for growth and learning. They encourage us to reframe obstacles as exercises in resilience, patience, and resourcefulness.

### Practise gratitude and mindfulness

Stoicism emphasizes appreciating the present moment and the good things we already have. Cultivating gratitude and mindfulness helps us avoid chasing fleeting pleasures and find contentment in even the simplest things.

### Act with virtue

Stoicism values living in accordance with four cardinal virtues:

wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance. These virtues act as guiding principles for making ethical decisions and navigating complex situations.

### Treat others with fairness and compassion

Stoicism teaches us to treat everyone with respect and fairness, regardless of their social status or background. This fosters a sense of interconnectedness and promotes a more just and harmonious society.

### Let go of resentment and anger

Holding onto negative emotions like anger and resentment only harms ourselves. Stoicism encourages forgiveness and letting go, freeing us from unnecessary burdens and allowing for inner peace.

### Live a life of service

Stoicism emphasizes using our talents and resources to serve others and contribute to the greater good. This can involve volunteering, mentoring, or simply being kind and helpful in everyday interactions.

### Be a Stoic skeptic

Don't blindly accept every belief or opinion. Stoics encourage questioning, critical thinking, and examining evidence before forming judgments. This promotes intellectual honesty and personal growth.

### Embrace continual learning

Stoicism is a lifelong journey of self-improvement. Be open to learning from experiences, mistakes, and the wisdom of others. This constant learning keeps your mind sharp and your spirit open to new possibilities.

## The Qualities of a Great Woman

**1. She is intelligent:** She opens her lips and oozes wisdom. One can have a hard and serious talk with her.

**2. She is emotionally stable:** Yes, she may be hurt, feeling low and going through much, but she's a master of her feelings. She remains calm and collected.

**3. She multiplies:** She'll turn one hundred into a thousand, a thousand into a million. She doesn't sit pretty and lazy waiting to be done for.

**4. She loves being loved:** Yes, she is not waiting to be done for things, but when you love on her and do good to her, she is receptive and appreciative. In as much as she loves to give, she welcomes being served and given too.

**5. She loves through food:** She will make attempts to cook the best meals and, in the process, feed your soul too.

**6. She's fun:** Though she's intelligent, she can also act silly, crack jokes, tease, laugh; she is great company.

**7. She knows how to call for help:** When she's stuck or in trouble, she knows how to ask for help. She doesn't suffer alone.

**8. She's a reflection of God:** You see her and see God, she's becoming more and more like God: loving,

*I am a strong person, but every once in a while, I would like someone to take my hand and tell me everything is going to be all right.*  
-Anonymous

forgiving, graceful, strong valued.

**9. She is confident:** Whether she is an introvert or outgoing, she has a high self-esteem. You can't bring her down. She has admirable qualities.

**10. She feeds her mind, body and spirit:** You will catch her often reading a stimulating book or novel, praying, eating the right foods and working out.

**11. She keeps relationships:** She will have strong people surrounding her, whether a best friend, a clique of girlfriends or a bunch of close friends. She values relationships with friends and family not just the one with her man.

**12. She understands her body:** She is self-aware. She knows what type of clothes, fashion and hair compliments her body shape, size, and complexion. She looks physically good.

Beloved



*I choose to love you in silence,  
for in silence I find no rejection.*

*I choose to love you in loneliness,  
for in loneliness no one owns you but me.*

*I choose to adore you from a distance,  
for distance will shield me from pain.*

*I choose to kiss you in the wind,  
for the wind is gentler than my lips.*

*I choose to hold you in my dreams,  
for in my dreams you have no end.*

Thoughts to Live by

## Promise yourself

Promise yourself to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.

To talk health, happiness, and prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them, to look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance at all times and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

To think well of yourself and to proclaim this fact to the world, not in loud words but great deeds.

To live in faith that the whole world is on your side so long as you are true to the best that is in you.

**Christian D. Larson**

*From 'Your Forces and How to Use Them'*



## New Year's Resolutions to Boost Your Health

# Things You Can Do to Boost Your Mental and Physical Well-Being ASAP

**Y**ou don't have to train for a marathon to reboot your body. Embracing these simple habits, medically reviewed by Jennifer Robinson, MD of WebMD, can help boost your mental and physical well-being.

**Eat slowly:** This gives your brain the chance to get the signal that you're full, so you're less likely to overeat. And if you take it slow, you're more likely to think about what you're eating and make sensible, healthy choices.

**Socialize:** It's not about how many people you know or how often you see them. What matters is a real connection with others. It can make you happier, more productive, and less likely to have health problems. So call up a friend and go to dinner, or join a team or club to make some new ones.

**Ditch the juice, eat the fruit:** If you like orange juice, have an orange instead. Even 100% pure juice loses nutrition when you process it, and it can put a lot of hidden sugar in your diet. On the other hand, actual fruits are good sources of vitamin C, potassium, fibre, and folic acid. And they're low in fat, sodium, and calories.

**Take time off:** It's a time when you can bond with family and friends, which is good for your mental and physical health. People who take more vacations live longer and are less likely to have heart disease and other health problems.

**Manage your stress:** We all have stress in our lives. It makes your muscles tense and your heart race. If this



happens a lot -- during your daily commute, for example -- and you don't handle it well, it can cause serious health problems, including high blood pressure, ulcers, and heart disease. So take time to breathe, do something that calms you, and try to accept what you cannot change -- like rush-hour traffic.

**Cut back on sugar:** Most of us get way more of it than we need. It's not just the added calories and the lack of nutritional value: It also can make your blood sugar spike and then crash, and that leaves you tired, hungry, and irritable -- "hangry."

**Be active:** Exercise is a proven way to improve your health, your mental well-being, and even your libido. You don't have to sign up for the New York Marathon -- just

get your heart rate up for 30 minutes or so a few times a week. Gardening works, and so does a walk around the block. If you can't make it a habit on your own, try to make it social: Join a local sports league or plan regular runs with a friend.

**Eat your greens:** Kale, spinach, collards, Romaine, arugula, bok choy, broccolini -- make sure you get plenty of these leafy green vegetables. They're chock full of nutrients, low in calories, and have loads of fiber, which fills you up and satisfies your hunger.

**Dance:** It keeps your mind sharp because it's a skill that involves body movement, and that's especially good for your brain. It's also social and can be lots of fun, which bring health benefits of their own. And you might not even notice that you're exercising!

**Get your ZZZs:** A lack of sleep can lead to diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression. If that's not enough reason to get your ZZZs, it also causes car crashes and other accidents. Adults should get 7 to 9 hours each night.

**Get outside:** The sunlight helps set your sleep clock and leads to more exercise. You'll also get vitamin D, which many people don't get enough of. It's important for cell function, mental health, and heart health. But don't stay in the sun too long, and wear sunscreen. Too much sun is linked to skin cancer.

Your attitude towards yourself, others, and the world around you can greatly impact your mindset and overall well-being. Here's a compilation by Lucky of life-changing attitude quotes that will give you a new perspective on life. These quotes are not only inspirational but also practical, offering insights and wisdom that can help you navigate through life's challenges with grace and wisdom. Whether you're feeling stuck or simply looking for a fresh perspective, these attitude quotes will help you shift your mindset and create a more positive and fulfilling life.

### 1. I may be in pain, but I'm not weak.

Pain in life is inevitable, but the best thing about it is that it doesn't last forever.

Adjust your attitude at that moment and always remind yourself when you are going through life pain.

### 2. My goals are based on my dreams, and my dreams will soon become my reality.

There are many distractions in life that you can't do anything about. You have to feed your focus and adjust your attitude to keep a sharp mind that can't be easily distracted.

### 3. I love it when life gets hard. It means something better is coming.

Many people complain when life gets hard. But they don't understand that life has sunny days and rainy days. Without hard days, good days will be meaningless. Without the good days where you enjoy life and don't think deeply about it, you won't be able to grow through the hard days and learn the great lessons that life gives.

### 4. I'm not your free time or your second choice. Prioritize me or leave me alone.

One of the most important rules in relationships is to never be someone number 2.

It's better to be single and enjoy your complete freedom, than stay in a relationship where you are chosen only when you are needed.

### 5. I'm dangerous when I'm focused.



## Life-changing attitude quotes with new life perspective you must read before it's too late

### and I'm always focused.

A lion is dangerous and is always dangerous. A person with a focused mind is dangerous because he/she can accomplish things easily.

### 6. I have to be successful because I have expensive taste.

The reason you want to become successful can determine the level of your motivation and how far you want to walk on the road to success. Having an expensive taste can fuel your motivation, strengthen your attitude, and stop you from settling for less.

### 7. Walk like a king or like you don't care who's the king!

Lion fears no animal and walks like he owns the forest. Walk the way you would

walk if you were the king in any situation.

### 8. I don't respect those who don't respect me.

Some people are funny and silly. They disrespect you and expect you to respect them. I have boundaries and I know my value. Acting nice when disrespected opens the gate to contempt.

### 9. I have been fighting since I was a child. I'm not a survivor I'm a warrior.

Having a warrior attitude in life can take you far. Instead of crying or complaining because you had a bad past. Crown yourself as a king or a great warrior for surviving and thriving through all these bad days.

### 10. I am ready to turn my dream into reality.

Everything starts with your mind, so make sure what's inside your mind can direct you on the way toward your dream.

### 11. I stopped being emotional because people take advantage of me.

The number of emotional manipulators is growing every year. If you are an emotional person, it's okay to be yourself and enjoy your nature. But being emotional all the time can make it easy for others to take advantage of your nature.

### 12. At first, nobody believed in me. Now I pull up, and they can't believe it's me.

When you tell small-minded people about your big goals, most will laugh at you or despise you. There's nothing wrong with you; it's that they think small.

They won't believe in you when you tell them about your goals but won't believe it's you when they see you progressing and achieving your goals.

### 13. I don't have time for fake friends anymore. Either be real or be gone.

The more people and friends you meet, the more truth you will know about fake friends.

Knowing real friends who will stand with you on your bad days can help you in life and save you from disappointment.

### 14. I love listening to lies when I know the truth.

Listen to lies when you know the truth to know that person's intention. Knowing a person's intentions is more important than discovering their lies.



## 10 Bollywood films to look forward to in 2024

### Fighter, Singham Again, Sky Force & more

2023 was a great year for Bollywood in terms of how films fared at the box office. We had blockbuster hits like *Pathaan*, *Jawan*, and *Animal* and there's a long list of some highly-anticipated movies that are scheduled to release in 2024. Here are the top 10 films you can consider watching next year, as reported by *Otplay*.

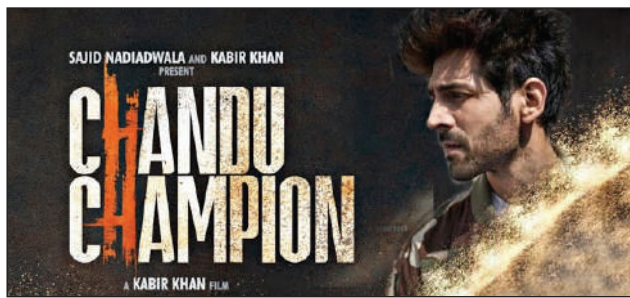


#### Fighter

After the roaring success of *Pathaan*, Siddharth Anand is set to take the audience on a thrilling ride with his upcoming offering, *Fighter*. This film marks Siddharth's reunion with Hrithik Roshan after their successful 2019 movie, *War*. Having said that, the star cast of *Fighter* also includes Deepika Padukone, Anil Kapoor, Karan Singh Grover, and Akshay Oberoi. Produced by Viacom 18 Studios and Marflix Pictures, *Fighter* is scheduled for a theatrical release on January 25, 2024.

#### Chandu Champion

Kartik Aaryan has stepped out of his comfort zone to bring something different with his new film, *Chandu Champion*, in which he will play the role of an athlete. There's a lot of curiosity around this movie, which is set to hit the big screen on June 14, 2023. For this movie,



Kartik has shot an 8-minute-long-single-shot war scene. It will be interesting to see how Kabir presents Kartik in a fresh avatar.

#### Singham Again

*Singham Again* is yet another Bollywood movie that people are eagerly waiting for. It is the third instalment of filmmaker Rohit Shetty's hit *Singham* franchise, a part of his cop universe. Ajay Devgn will be back as Singham in the film while Kareena Kapoor, Tiger Shroff, Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone, and Akshay Kumar also have pivotal roles in the movie. The action-entertained will be released on August 15, 2024.

#### Stree 2

The much-awaited sequel of Amar Kaushik's *Stree* will be released on August 30, 2024. The film marks Shraddha Kapoor, Rajkumar Rao, Aparshakti Khurana, Pankaj Tripathi, and Abhishek Banerjee's on-screen reunion after six years of *Stree*. The first part of Amar's movie was a hit upon its theatrical release in 2018. Hence, people have pinned high hopes on *Stree 2*.

#### Bade Miyan Chote Miyan

Filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar's *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan* is one of the highly-anticipated movies of 2024. Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff will be seen in the lead roles while Prithviraj Sukumaran also has an important part to play. Earlier this year, Akshay confirmed that his movie, *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan*, will be released on the big screen on Eid 2024.

#### Merry Christmas

Katrina Kaif and Vijay Sethupathi's film, *Merry Christmas*, was all set to release in December 2023. However, the makers decided to postpone the movie's theatrical release to January 12, 2024. Helmed by Sriram Raghavan, *Merry Christmas* is a romantic thriller, which also stars Radhika Apte and Ashwini Kalsekar. The movie

will release in two languages - Hindi and Tamil.

#### Kalki 2898 AD

*Kalki 2898 AD*, directed by Nag Ashwin, has been on top of everyone's mind since the film was officially announced. Earlier, it was said that the big-budget film, starring Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, Kamal Haasan, and Amitabh Bachchan, would be released in January 2024. According to new media reports, the makers have decided to postpone the film's theatrical release. Nevertheless, ardent fans will wait with bated breath to watch *Kalki 2898 AD* next year.

#### Sky Force

Directed by Abhishek Kapoor and Sandeep Kewlani, *Sky Force* will mark Akshay Kumar's third theatrical release of 2024. According to a media report, this film is based on a true story. Veer Pahariya will also make his big Bollywood debut with the Akshay Kumar starrer. It is set to hit the silver screen on October 2, 2024.



#### Welcome To The Jungle

*Welcome To The Jungle* will arrive in cinema halls on December 20, 2024. It is the third instalment of the *Welcome* franchise. On his 56th birthday this year, Akshay shared a glimpse of *Welcome To The Jungle* (his fourth movie of 2024). The star-studded cast of this comic caper includes Paresh Rawal, Sanjay Dutt, Suniel Shetty, Arshad Warsi, Disha Patani, Raveena Tandon, and Lara Dutta. It is being helmed by Ahmed Khan.

#### Metro... In Dino

It has been officially announced that Anurag Basu's *Metro... In Dino* will be released on March 29, 2024. The star cast of Basu's directorial venture is huge and has talented actors like Sara Ali Khan, Aditya Roy Kapur, Anupam Kher, Pankaj Tripathi, Neena Gupta, Konkana Sen Sharma, Ali Fazal and Fatima Sana Shaikh.

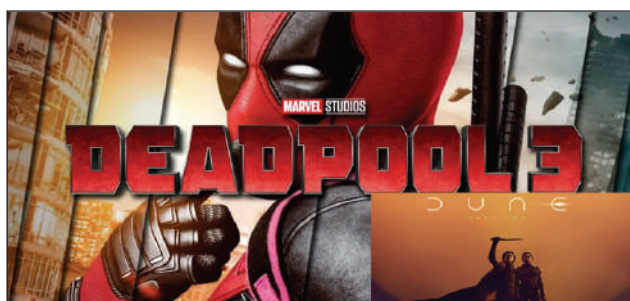
## Hollywood films to look forward to in 2024

### From 'Deadpool 3' to 'Dune: Part Two'...

The new year will be full of the latest instalments in popular franchises across genres. Throughout 2024, Hollywood will serve the most anticipated sequels and threequels (third film in a series), including the ones that could not see the light of the day this year because of the actors and writers on strike. Here are the most anticipated Hollywood releases of 2024 as reported by *Hindustan Times*:

#### Deadpool 3

Shawn Levy's superhero film will unite Ryan Reynolds' titular character with Hugh Jackman's Wolverine from the *X-Men* franchise. *Deadpool* joins the Marvel Cinematic Universe for the first time after a string of solo movies produced under Fox. Jennifer Garner will be seen reprising her role of Elektra in the film. *Deadpool 3* is all set to hit the theatres on May 3, 2024.



#### Dune: Part Two

A direct sequel to Denis Villeneuve's 2021 Oscar-nominated epic, *Dune: Part Two* stars Timothee Chalamet, Zendaya, Rebecca Ferguson, Dave Bautista, Javier Bardem, Stellan Skarsgard, Austin Butler, Florence Pugh... The delay from its original release date this year came after the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and SAG-AFTRA strikes.

#### Joker: Folie a Deux

The sequel to Todd Phillips' 2019 Oscar-nominated film *Joker* sees the return of Joaquin Phoenix as Batman's titular archenemy. It will debut on the big screen exactly five years after the first film was released, on October 4, 2024. The follow-up to *Joker* will be a musical, with Lady Gaga set to play the Clown Prince of Crime's co-conspirator Harley Quinn.

#### Kung Fu Panda 4

Po Ping embarks on a new adventure in the quest for inner peace. He's joined by a new character played by Awkwafina and has to go up against a new antagonist in *The Chameleon*, played by Viola Davis. Directed by Mike Mitchell, the animated film is slated to release on March 8, 2024.

#### Rebel Moon: Part Two – The Scargiver

Directed by Zack Snyder, the first part of *Rebel Moon* releases on Netflix on December 21. It will be followed by Part 2, releasing on the platform on April 19. Led by Sofia Boutella, the epic space opera is a whole new world conceptualised by Zack. It follows the story of a peaceful agrarian colony on the edge of the galaxy that finds itself threatened by the armies of the Imperium and its dark leader, the tyrannical Regent Balisarius.

#### IF

John Krasinski is all set to release his upcoming action, animated comedy *IF* on May 17, 2024. The movie consists of an A-list star cast with Ryan Reynolds and Steve Carell in the lead roles. The film's synopsis reads: "IF is about a girl who discovers that she can see everyone's imaginary friends — and what she does with that superpower — as she embarks on a magical adventure to reconnect forgotten IFs with their kids."





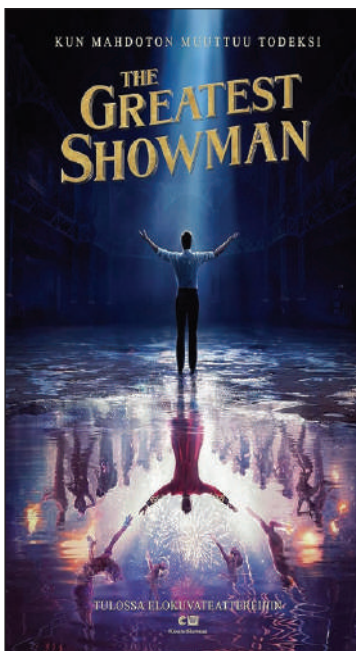
Vendredi 29 décembre - 21.22



Samedi 30 décembre - 20.30



dimanche 31 décembre - 20.30



# Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 29 décembre

## MBC 1

- 05.33 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras
- 06.00 Serial: Blue Bloods
- 07.05 Film: Grace Amd Goliath
- 09.40 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 10.05 Tele: Amour Secret
- 10.25 The Gardener's Daughter
- 10.49 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
- 11.15 Tele: La Reina Del Flow
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.35 Tele: Barbarita
- 13.25 Tele: Fierce Angel
- 13.50 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras
- 14.15 Le Livre Perdu Des Sorti...
- 15.21 Film: Downton Abbey
- 17.30 The Gardener's Daughter
- 18.31 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya
- 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar
- 20.30 Film: Titanic
- 00.21 Tele: Barbartia
- 01.04 Serial: Newton's Law

## MBC 2

- 07.05 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
- 07.57 Local: Retrospective 2023
- 09.04 Local: Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 09.56 Jerry & The Resistance
- 10.56 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz
- 12.15 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
- 14.14 Local: Generations J
- 14.41 Local: Retrospective 2023
- 15.41 Jerry & The Resistance
- 16.46 Local: En Forme
- 18.04 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras
- 18.29 Tele: Amour Secret
- 19.27 Local: 13 Minit Natiir Rodrig
- 19.45 Local: Enn Semenn Dan...
- 21.00 Local: Tey & JF Fly
- 22.03 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz
- 22.58 Journal Kreol
- 23.25 Local: Eclats De Vie
- 00.14 Local: J'ai Faim
- 00.40 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 00.53 Local: Enn Semenn Dan...

## MBC 3

- 07.00 Serial: Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 08.00 Local: Amrit Vaani
- 08.33 Nacha Gawa Jhooma
- 09.25 Local: Hunarbaaz
- 10.00 Serial: Agniphera
- 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Hoon Diwano Tara Prem No
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.30 Serial: Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man Bhawe
- 16.00 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron...
- 16.44 Serial: Bhakharwadi
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Local: Ghazal Nite
- 19.02 Local: Khel Khiladi
- 20.31 Serial: Vidrohi
- 21.03 Film: Hote Hote Pyaar Ho Gaya
- 23.10 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain
- 23.32 Serial: Yeh Teri Galiyan

## Cine 12

- 06.26 Mag: Eco India
- 06.52 Mag: Japan Video Topics
- 07.21 D.Anime: Cat & Keet
- 09.14 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 09.35 Film: Le Ranch Du Bonheur
- 11.05 Mag: Eco India
- 11.36 Doc: Global Drinks
- 13.30 Serial: N\*Gen
- 14.00 Film: Bayala
- 15.21 D.Anime: Tut! Tut! Cory Bolides
- 16.19 D.Anime: Agent 203
- 16.45 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.07 Serial: Lost & Found Music
- 17.30 Mag: Eco India
- 18.42 Mag: Healthy Living
- 19.00 Mag: Our Voices
- 20.00 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 20.30 Live: News
- 20.50 Doc: In Quest Of Carribous
- 21.47 Doc: Germany's Volcanic

## Bollywood TV

- 14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
- 15.00 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 15.30 Film: Action Replay  
Starring: Akshay Kumar, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Om Puri
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Kundali Bhagya
- 19.01 Udaariyaan
- 19.31 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise...
- 20.01 Sasural Simar Ka 2
- 20.30 Radha Krishna
- 21.01 Anupamaa
- 21.30 Mere Sai
- 22.01 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
- 22.31 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey
- 22.59 Serial: Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 23.30 Film: Action Replay  
Starring Akshay Kumar, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Om Puri

samedi 30 décembre

- 04.27 Serial: Airwolf
- 05.13 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable
- 06.30 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 07.00 Serial: Pearson
- 07.50 Serial: Rookie Blue
- 08.30 Serial: Absentia
- 09.10 Serial: Riviera
- 09.59 Serial: Airwolf
- 10.45 Serial: F.B.I
- 11.30 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Serial: Madam Secretary
- 13.15 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
- 15.30 Film: Battleship
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Dance India Dance Little...
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Film: Ghostbusters
- 22.40 Serial: Suits
- 00.14 Tele: Missing Bride
- 00.56 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis

- 06.04 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 07.05 Local: Eclat De Vie
- 07.54 Local: Animalia Nos Amis...
- 08.20 Local: Zanafan Nou Pei
- 08.34 Rodrig Prog: Ala Nou Vini
- 09.08 Lir - Ekir Kreol Morisien
- 11.16 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz
- 12.00 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 12.28 Local: Lir - Ekir Kreol
- 13.00 Local: Eclats De Vie
- 13.50 Local: Animalia Nos Amis...
- 15.00 Local: Tey & JF Fly
- 16.00 Local: Son Ladan Mem
- 17.00 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz
- 18.00 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
- 19.30 Rodrig: D'Jam: Ita N Ita Band
- 22.00 Rodrig - Klip Seleksion
- 22.52 Local: La Journee Sous Le Regard Du Seigneur
- 23.00 Local: Zournal Kreol
- 23.20 Local: Lavi Zoli An XXL

- 07.00 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness...
- 10.10 Mag: DDI Mag
- 10.55 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
- 12.00 Serial: Dikri Vahalno Dariyo
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.21 Film: Hum Do Hamare Do  
Starring: Rajkummar Rao, Kriti Sanon, Pooja Rawal, Ratna Pathak Shah
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Local: Satrangi
- 19.02 Gyan Vigyan: Knowledge
- 19.17 Local: Puranya Pakwan
- 19.45 Local: Virasat
- 22.00 Film: Ghayal  
Starring Sunny Deol, Meenakshi Seshadri, Raj Babbar
- 22.27 Local: Satrangi
- 01.06 Local: Gyan Vigyan
- 01.20 Local: Puranya Pakwan

- 06.24 Serial: Rainbow Rangers
- 06.46 D.Anime: Anna Et Ses Amis
- 09.06 D.Anime: Miraculous
- 11.00 Serial: Espoirs Secrets
- 11.35 Doc: Arctic Blue
- 13.30 Serial: N\*Gen
- 14.00 Film: Pirates
- 15.30 D.Anime: Tut! Tut!
- 15.52 D.Anime: Les Aventures Du Petit Pingouin
- 15.55 Idefix Et Les Irreductibles
- 16.19 D.Anime: Agent 203
- 16.07 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go!
- 16.41 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.05 Serial: Lost & Found Music
- 18.03 Mag: In Good Shape
- 18.40 Serial: Airwolf
- 20.01 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 20.30 Live: News
- 20.50 Tele: La Reina Del Flow
- 21.40 Film: 1917  
Avec George MacKay, Dean-Charles

- 08.00 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey
- 10.00 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 10.18 Sasural Simar Ka 2
- 12.15 Udaariyaan
- 14.05 Anupamaa
- 16.10 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise...
- 18.31 Film: Dishoom  
Starring: John Abraham, Varun Dhawan, Nargis Fakhri
- 20.51 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 21.05 Serial: Porus
- 21.15 Serial: Crime Patrol

dimanche 31 décembre

- 04.10 Tele: La Beaute Du Diable
- 05.33 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 06.01 Film: Ghostbusters
- 07.23 Serial: The Good Doctor
- 08.46 Film: Battleship
- 10.50 Serial: F.B.I
- 11.35 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.35 Film: Lust For Gold
- 14.15 Serial: Scorpion
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.25 Film: Ghostbusters
- 17.30 Tele: Tour De Babel
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Enter: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa
- 19.16 Sayings Radha Krishna
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Film: The Greatest Showman  
Avec Hugh Jackman, Zac Efron
- 22.15 Serial: Suits

- 06.35 Local: En Forme
- 08.05 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 08.31 Local: Glwar Dantan
- 08.57 Rodrig: Klip Seleksion
- 09.42 Local: Lavi Zoli An XXL
- 10.35 Rodrig Prog: Pran Kont Ou...
- 11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 12.04 L'Ambiance Banane Avec...
- 14.00 Local: Elle
- 14.28 Rodrig Prog: Rod'Art
- 15.00 Local: Forever Gold
- 17.00 Local: Vivaldi Talent Concert
- 19.00 Zournal Kreol
- 19.20 Local: Elle
- 20.03 Tipa Tipa Nou Avanse
- 20.30 Reveillon Musical
- 21.30 Vibrations Banane
- 23.00 Local: Welcoming 2024
- 00.14 Zournal Kreol
- 00.55 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 02.43 Local: Elle

- 07.00 Film: Super Bheem Ke Super Jasoo
- 08.11 Local: Hamar Fitness...
- 12.02 Film: Tutak Tutak Tutiya  
Starring RJ Balaji, Tamannaah Bhatia, Prabhu Deva, Sonu Sood
- 14.59 Live: Samachar
- 15.30 Local: Satrangi
- 17.00 Local: Ekta
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.29 Local: Planet Bollywood
- 19.00 Local: Tohar Rashhi
- 19.29 Local: Tohar Farmaish
- 20.00 Bollywood Beats 2023
- 21.00 Naya Saal MBC Sitaaron Ke Sang
- 22.00 Local: Special Bhojpuri Musical Programme
- 23.00 Local: Best Bollywood Songs 2023
- 00.00 Ek Shaam Sitaron Ke Naam

- 07.35 D.Anime: Patamuse
- 08.51 D.Anime: Wonder Grove
- 09.09 D.Anime: La Petite Ecole D'Helene
- 10.54 Serial: Espoirs Secrets
- 11.50 Mag: In Good Shape
- 12.20 Doc: Cuisine Sauvage
- 13.30 Serial: N\*Gen
- 15.28 D.Anime: Tut! Tut!
- 15.46 D.Anime: Petit Pingouin
- 15.52 Idefix Et Les Irreductibles
- 16.02 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go!
- 16.03 D.Anime: Agent
- 16.25 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.05 Serial: Lost & Found Music
- 17.50 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
- 18.45 Serial: Airwolf
- 19.30 Mag: Arts Unveiled
- 20.02 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 20.50 Tele: La Reina Del Flow
- 21.40 Film: The Quake

- 00.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2
- 02.05 Udaariyaan
- 04.00 Anupamaa
- 06.06 Kuch Rang Pyar Ka Aise...
- 07.46 Tenali Rama
- 08.11 Patiala Babes
- 10.02 Kundali Bhagya
- 12.00 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 14.00 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
- 16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya
- 18.31 Film: Munna Michael  
Starring Tiger Shroff, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Nidhi Agerwal
- 21.02 Serial: Tenali Rama
- 21.20 Enter: Dance India Dance Little Masters
- 22.15 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 00.05 Serial: Patiala Babes

lundi 1 janvier

- 05.16 Tele: Amour Secret
- 07.07 Film: The Greatest Showman
- 08.53 Serial: Airworlf
- 09.38 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 09.55 Tele: Amour Secret
- 10.20 The Gardener's Daughter
- 10.48 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
- 11.16 Serial: La Reina Del Flow
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Tele: Barbarita, Les Couleurs..
- 13.15 Tele: Fierce Angel
- 13.40 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras
- 14.15 Serial: Airwolf
- 15.20 Film: La Prophetie De L'Horloge
- 17.30 The Gardener's Daughter
- 18.30 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya
- 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.25 Serial: Pearson
- 21.15 Serial: Rookie Blue
- 22.00 Serial: Treadstone

- 07.10 Local: Tipa Tipa Nu Avanse
- 09.29 Local: Elle
- 10.05 Vivaldi Talent Concert
- 12.02 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 13.07 Reveillon Musical
- 14.00 Local: Elle
- 14.30 Local: Heidi
- 15.59 Tipa Tipa Nou Avanse
- 16.30 Welcoming 2024
- 18.00 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras
- 18.30 Tele: Amour Secret
- 19.33 Rodrig - Feminin Pluriel
- 20.00 Message Du Premier Ministre
- 20.15 Lambians Tipik Avec Valo...
- 21.35 Local: Les Klips
- 23.35 La Journee Sous Le Regard Du Seigneur
- 23.41 Lir - Ekir Kreol Morisien
- 00.08 Local: Retrovizor
- 00.22 Rodrig Prog: Zen Aktif
- 00.53 Local: Saver Kiltirel

- 07.12 Serial: Kisna
- 08.04 Local: Planet Bollywood
- 08.42 Local: Tohar Farmaish
- 09.36 Local: Radha Krishna
- 10.00 Serial: Bahubali
- 10.38 Bhaag Na Bachhe Koi
- 11.36 Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Sangam  
Starring: Raj Kapoor, Vyjayantimala, Rajendra Kumar
- 15.30 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
- 16.00 Serial: Kundali Bhagya
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.35 Ved Ki Shikshayen
- 19.00 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek
- 20.17 Local: Charcha
- 20.30 Film: Mahaan  
Starring: Amitabh Bachchan, Waheeda Rehman, Parveen Babi
- 23.37 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain

- 07.00 Mag: Art Unveiled
- 07.30 D.Anime: Anna Et Ses Amis
- 08.08 D.Anime: Trolls
- 08.30 D.Anime: The Jungle Book
- 08.54 D.Anime: Patamuse
- 09.35 Film: Le Royaume De Dawn
- 12.30 Doc: Eden, Au Coeur Du Desert Rouge
- 14.05 Film: Rufus Et Le Royaume D'alyne
- 15.22 Film Miraculous New York
- 16.22 D.Anime: Agent 203
- 16.44 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.10 Serial: Lost & Found Music
- 18.05 Mag: Eco At Africa
- 19.00 Mag: Africa
- 20.00 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 20.30 Live: News
- 20.50 Film: Jurassic Park
- 23.00 The Language Of Whales
- 23.40 Mag: Tomorrow Today

- 14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
- 15.00 Serial: Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 15.30 Serial: Kundali Bhagya
- 16.00 Serial: Udaariyaan
- 16.30 Serial: Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise Bhi
- 17.00 Serial: Sasural Simar Ka 2
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Serial: Anupamaa
- 19.00 Serial: Mere Sai
- 19.31 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
- 20.30 Film: Bhediya  
Cast: Varun Dhawan, Kriti Sanon
- 23.00 Serial: Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 23.30 Film: Sarpshira  
Starring Vinod Mehra, Sanjay Dutt





mardi 2 janvier - 20.30



mercredi 3 janvier - 22.15



mercredi 3 janvier - 15.30



# Programme TV



MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
<b>mardi 2 janvier</b> 04.45 Tele: Amour Secret 05.08 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 07.05 Film: Jurassic Park 09.30 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 10.05 Tele: Amour Secret 10.20 The Gardener's Daughter 10.45 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 11.15 Tele: La Reina Del Flow 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Barbarita 13.15 Tele: Fierce Angel 13.45 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras 14.10 Serial: Gout De L'Amour 15.25 Film: Mes Autres Vies De Chien 17.30 The Gardener's Daughter 17.59 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar 20.30 Film: Spiderman 23.00 Tele: Barbarita	07.44 Rodrigues: Nu Lakwizin 10.00 Local: Saver Kiltirel 10.28 Lir - Ekkrir Kreol Morisien 11.04 Local: Les Klips 12.43 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel 13.28 Local: J'ai Faim 14.33 Local: Lambians Tipik 15.53 Local: Saver Kiltirel 16.20 Local: Les Klips 17.55 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras 18.29 Tele: Amour Secret 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.20 Rodrig : Saver Lokal 19.48 Local: Son Ladan Mem 20.15 Local: ONG An Eta Dalert 20.30 Amazone On The Swings 21.50 Sega Banane Avec Metiss... 23.20 Local: Mots & Ecrits 23.40 Local: Profil 23.53 Local: Koze Zom 00.22 Local: Rodrig: Rod'Art	07.00 Serial: Gadget Guru Ganesha 08.40 Local: Tohar Farmaish 10.00 Serial: Kundali Bhagya 12.02 Film: Satyam Shivam Sundaram 14.59 Live: Samachar 15.30 Badki Malkaain 16.00 Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 17.28 Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.36 Local: Ved Ki Shikshayan 19.00 Local: Ayush 19.30 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 20.45 Film: Khamoshi 22.38 Serial: Jijai Chhat Par Hain 23.00 Serial: Yeh Teri Galiyan 23.47 Local: Ved Ki Shikshayan 00.10 Local: Ayush	07.30 Film: Miraculous New York 08.30 D.Anime: Darwin And Newts 08.41 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois 08.53 D.Anime: The Jungle Book 09.35 Film: Les Ours Boonie 11.13 Mag: In Good Shape 12.40 Doc: The Language Of Whales 13.30 Serial: N*Gen 14.00 Film: L'Odyssee D'Albert 15.30 Film: Miraculous World 16.15 D.Anime: Agent 203 16.38 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 17.05 Serial: Lost & Found Music 17.29 Mag: In Good Shape 18.00 Mag: Rev 18.30 Mag: Healthy Living 19.00 Mag: Made In Germany 19.31 Mag: Global US 20.02 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 20.50 Tele: La Reina Del Flow	14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan 15.00 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 15.30 Kundali Bhagya 16.00 Udaariyaan 16.30 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise... 17.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2 17.30 Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Anupamaa 19.03 Serial: Mere Sai 19.30 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 20.00 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey 20.30 Film: Drishyam 2 23.00 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 23.30 Film: Haque Stars: Dimple Kapadia, Anupam Kher, Aashif Sheikh 02.07 Kundali Bhagya
<b>mercredi 3 janvier</b> 06.26 Serial: Blue Bloods 07.00 Film: Lust For Gold 08.45 Serial: Airwolf 09.35 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 10.05 Tele: Amour Secret 10.25 The Gardener's Daughter 10.50 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 11.15 Tele: La Reina Del Flow 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Barbarita 13.15 Tele: Fierce Angel 14.15 Serial: Airwolf 15.30 Film: Ghostbusters 17.30 The Gardener's Daughter 18.31 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.30 Serial: Under Pressure 21.15 Film: Venom 22.15 Film: Prometheus 01.00 Tele: Barbarita	07.05 Local: ONG An Eta Dalert 08.59 Amazone On The Swings 10.43 Local: Rodrig: Rod'Art 11.01 Sega Banane Avec Metiss... 12.33 Local: Son Ladan Mem 13.05 Local: ONG An Eta Dalert 13.35 Amazone On The Swings 15.00 Local: Nu Rasinn 15.52 Local: Glwar Dantan 16.27 Local: Mots & Ecrits 16.47 Local: Profil 17.00 Sega Banane Avec Metiss... 18.01 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras 18.28 Tele: Amour Secret 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.20 Local: Pause Cuisine 19.45 Local: Saver Kiltirel 21.28 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz... 23.25 Local: Tey & JF Fly 00.25 Local: Glwar Dantan 00.52 Local: Proze Dime	07.00 Gadget Guru Ganesha 08.26 Local: Bhojpuri Dhamaka 09.32 Chikitsa Aur Swasthya 10.00 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Dharam Karam Starring: Raj Kapoor, Randhir Kapoor, Rekha 15.30 Serial: Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man Bhawe 16.01 Serial: Suhani Si Ek Ladki 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.39 Local: Yatra South 19.00 Local: Kala 19.26 Local: Zindagi Ka Safar 20.02 Local: Virasat 20.32 Film: Rangbaaz Raja 22.32 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 22.54 Serial: Yeh Teri Galiyan	08.46 D.Anime: The Jungle Book 09.35 Film: Maman, J'ai Raté L'Avion 11.13 Mag: Rev 12.31 Doc: La Naissance Des Industries De Luxe 13.30 Serial: N*Gen 14.00 Film: Ghoster 15.30 Film: Caillou 16.15 D.Anime: Agent 203 16.38 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 17.05 D.Anime: The Avengers 17.05 Serial: Lost & Found Music 17.30 Mag: Rev 18.00 Mag: Motorweek 18.31 Mag: Choices 19.31 Mag: The Inside Story 20.02 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 21.42 Film: Frozen In Love Stars: Rachael Leigh Cook, Niall Matter, Sandy Sidhu	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.27 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 15.72 Serial: Kundali Bhagya 16.00 Serial: Udaariyaan 16.30 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise... 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Anupamaa 19.00 Mere Sai 19.30 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 20.00 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey 20.30 Film: Radhe Shyam 23.00 Serial: Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 23.26 Film: Billoo Baadshah Starring: Shatrughan Sinha, Anita Raj, Govinda 02.05 Serial: Kundali Bhagya 02.30 Serial: Udaariyaan
<b>jeudi 4 janvier</b> 04.43 Serial: Blue Bloods 06.50 Serial: Riviera 07.40 Film: Juste Un Peu D'Alchimie 09.35 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 10.05 Tele: Amour Secret 10.22 The Gardener's Daughter 10.50 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 11.15 Serial: Timeless 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Barbarita 13.15 Tele: Fierce Angel 13.40 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras 14.05 Tele: Gout De L'Amour 15.25 Film: Frozen In Love 17.15 The Gardener's Daughter 17.59 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar 20.30 Film: Jersey Starring: Shahid Kapoor, Mrunal Thakur, Pankaj Kapur	06.00 Local: Rodrig: Kot Nou 07.44 Rodrig Prog: Komanter 09.04 Local: Glwar Dantan 09.30 Local: Rhythm In The Mood... 10.42 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz... 12.12 Rodrig: Kot Nou 12.44 Local: Saver Kiltirel 13.14 Local: Proze Dime 13.35 Rodrig Prog: Komanter 13.56 Local: Tey & JF Fly 14.56 Local: Glwar Dantan 15.22 Rhythm In The Mood With... 16.35 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz... 18.00 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras 18.25 Tele: Amour Secret 20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.30 Local: Avant Scene 21.30 Festival Kiltir Ek Langaz... 23.00 Zournal Kreol 23.20 Local: Rodrig - Sa Lavi-La 00.12 Rodrig - Klip Seleksion	07.00 Gadget Guru Ganesha 07.12 Serial: Kisna 07.36 Serial: Lambu G Tingu G 09.52 Local: Suhani Si Ek Ladki 10.34 Zindagi Mere Ghar Aana 11.22 Serial: Radha Krishna 11.52 Film: Prem Rog Starring: Rishi Kapoor, Padmini Kolhapur, Shammi Kapoor 15.22 Serial: Badki Malkaain 15.58 Serial: Agniphera 17.31 Radha Krishna 18.22 Banane Ke Hungama 20.22 Mag: Dharam Yatra 20.52 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.28 Mag: Dev Bhumi 21.59 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 22.15 Serial: Yeh Teri Galiyan 23.07 Banane Ke Hungama	07.00 Film: Caillou: Roise And The Giant 09.00 D.Anime: The Jungle Book 09.35 Film: Maman, J'ai Encore Raté L'Avion 11.30 Mag: Motorweek 13.30 Serial: N*gen 14.00 Film: The Big Slime Movie 15.25 D.Anime: Tut! Tut! 15.37 D.Anime: Petit Pingouin 15.49 Idefix Et Les Irreductibles 16.06 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go! 17.10 Serial: Lost & Found Music... 17.35 Mag: Motorweek 18.00 Mag: Eco India 18.30 Mag: Shift 18.45 Mag: Carnet De Sante 19.00 Mag: Border Crossing 19.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today 20.00 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 21.40 Film: Feu Sans Sommaton	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.27 Serial: Kundali Bhagya 16.00 Serial: Udaariyaan 16.30 Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise... 17.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Radha Krishna 18.31 Film: Salaam Venky Starring: Kajol, Vishal Jethwa, Rahul Bose, Rajeev Khandelwal 21.02 Anupamaa 21.30 Mere Sai 22.01 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 22.31 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey 22.59 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 23.21 Film: Patthar Ke Phool Stars: Salman Khan, Raveena Tandon, Kiran Kumar, Reema Lagoo



Jeudi 4 janvier - 15.28

Stars: Kajol, Vishal Jethwa, Rahul Bose, Rajeev Khandelwal



Jeudi 4 janvier - 20.30

Stars: Shahid Kapoor, Mrunal Thakur, Pankaj Kapur







Nita Chicooree-Mercier

# Fin d'année. Interrogations et Réflexions

Le grand chamboulement climatique n'est pas passé inaperçu dans nos contrées. C'est en couleur rouge vif que la floraison du flamboyant s'est annoncée avec deux mois de décalage dès octobre dernier, ajoutant une note de gaieté à la période festive en cette fin d'année.

Mais les intempéries de ces dernières semaines et celles en cours annoncent un changement dans le prix des fruits et légumes dans les mois à venir. Les deux fruits d'été qu'affectionne le bon peuple sont hors de portée à cause de leur prix excessif: le letchi rougeoyant et pulpeux et la pastèque, aussi connue comme le melon d'eau, beau fruit rouge d'une texture farineuse dégoulinant d'eau et ornée de graines noires, incrustées presque délibérément, pour un effet esthétique.

Le ministère de l'Agriculture aurait tout intérêt à encourager les cultivateurs à mettre sur le marché d'autres fruits locaux tels que la pêche, le corossol, le cœur de bœuf, le jambon, le fruit de cythère, la mandarine et le tamarin. Certains se démarquent par une présence minimale tandis que d'autres sont délaissés depuis des lustres. Le jus de tamarin, boisson d'été par excellence, et le jus de canne naturel méritent d'être remis sur la table de cuisine.

Le prix fluctuant des légumes freine le budget modeste et oblige les revenus minimaux à dépenser avec parcimonie les roupies consacrées à l'alimentation. Mauvaise nouvelle pour les végétariens et les périodes de jeûne à venir. La nourriture carnée tant convoitée en fin d'année devrait susciter une véritable remise en cause pour le reste de l'année en raison de sa piètre qualité, résultat d'un élevage industriel, dopé par les pesticides nocifs pour la santé à long terme.

Quiconque prend au sérieux le défi auquel fait face la planète entière pour nourrir les milliards d'habitants, un bon nombre étant de trop dit-on, et se soucie aussi du sort des générations futures ne peut que se résoudre à diminuer d'un tiers sa consommation mensuelle de viande.

Question pertinente: hormis ceux qui exercent un métier exigeant des efforts physiques pénibles, est-il nécessaire de consommer trois repas par jour ?

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## Une société de consommation en peine

À début des années 90 à Maurice, la prospérité est devenue une réalité, ce qui a rehaussé le niveau de vie de la majorité de la population. Ceux restés à l'écart



“C'est en couleur rouge vif que la floraison du flamboyant s'est annoncée avec deux mois de décalage dès octobre dernier, ajoutant une note de gaieté à la période festive en cette fin d'année... Les humains ont besoin de sensualité, de beauté, de couleur, de joie et de plaisir des sens. C'est l'essence même des fêtes, une coupure avec la routine, le travail et le train-train quotidien. Qu'ils en profitent en cette fin d'année! Nous souhaitons une joyeuse fête à nos compatriotes. Happy New Year. Naya Saal Abhinandan. Bonne année!”

du progrès économique se sont rattrapés depuis l'an 2000. La surconsommation s'est installée dans le sillage d'une dépendance sur l'importation de ce que le pays ne produit pas, ce qui crée l'impression de vivre au-dessus de ses moyens. Quand bien même les secteurs économiques qui ont été développés permettent la création d'emploi et, dans ce sillage, les salaires facilitent la consommation, les habitudes de consommer sont devenues une seconde nature, voire une dépendance, comme une substance illicite, qui emporte les esprits et les décolle de la réalité.

Une pénurie à l'échelle mondiale nous fait vite retomber sur nos pieds. Depuis bientôt deux ans, la guerre russo-ukrainienne nous oblige tous de rester enracinés dans la réalité, de revoir nos besoins réels et de soigner notre qualité de vie. Dans la série des malheurs qui arrivent toujours accompagnés d'autres en attente, ce sont les routes maritimes - du Canal de Suez en passant par la Mer Rouge jusqu'à la Méditerranée sans épargner l'océan Indien - qui sont prises en otage et menacent sérieusement le commerce international avec les retombées certaines que l'on connaît sur les denrées de base et autres produits de consommation.

Ces attaques en haute mer menées par les Houthis du Yémen - un pion que l'Iran fait avancer sur l'échiquier de la géopolitique au Moyen-Orient à cause de la rivalité féroce qui l'oppose aux Etats-Unis et son allié Israël -, risquent de présenter une facture salée aux compagnies maritimes, et par ricochet, au commun des ménages.

La règle du jour est, dans le parler local, de faire attention car on ne sait de quoi demain sera fait. Dans un monde ultra

connecté, l'insularité conserve un certain avantage géographique en donnant l'impression que le bruit du croisement de fer entre ennemis est lointain et inaudible et que la densité démographique sur un territoire exigu oblige à maintenir une harmonie sociale. C'est vrai en grande partie, mais chacun se garde bien d'entretenir une illusion quelconque car les intérêts mondialisés ne sont pas que matérialistes et commerciaux, mais participent aussi aux valeurs de civilisation, de l'éthique et de la morale.

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## Équilibre à trouver entre sécurité alimentaire et éthique

Le sens tragique de l'Histoire refait l'apparition par les faits d'une barbarie que l'on croyait révolue. Nourri d'une haine millénaire malade, d'une jalousie et envie des progrès et de la prospérité des voisins, chapeauté par une course aux ressources et une guerre d'égo des grands de ce monde, le souffle de l'histoire universelle menace de balayer bien des pays dans son sillage.

Ce dernier trimestre de l'année a été marqué sur la scène internationale par les humains barbares qui ont tourné le dos à l'humanité. Est-ce que ce serait par tradition ou amertume ou y aurait-il une animosité ancienne impossible à contenir à cause de l'égo?

C'est ce qui nous interpelle avec insistance et nous exhorte à une vigilance, et à maintenir un niveau élevé de nos idéaux en promouvant la Raison et en évitant de tomber dans la dictature du ressenti et de l'émotion qui a tendance à semer la confusion dans les esprits. Nous devons nous tenir surtout aux grandes valeurs d'un pays démocratique et d'une société libre, une prise de position qui n'est pas à négocier ni à compromettre quelles que soient les circonstances internationales et la caisse de résonance, inévitablement discordante, qu'elles produisent ici.

Il est certain que nous ne sommes pas collectivement qu'un estomac à nourrir ! Nous participons à la marche de l'humanité et de l'Histoire. Nous savons ce qui nous unit et ce qui nous divise. Nos pensées vont à tous ceux qui sont dans la tourmente dans les pays en guerre.

## Pour conclure

Les humains ont besoin de sensualité, de beauté, de couleur, de joie et de plaisir des sens. C'est l'essence même des fêtes, une coupure avec la routine, le travail et le train-train quotidien. Qu'ils en profitent en cette fin d'année!

Nous souhaitons une joyeuse fête à nos compatriotes. Happy New Year. Naya Saal Abhinandan. Bonne année!

## Tree of Knowledge

Madisyn Taylor



## Enjoying Your Age

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Wishing to be younger or older is a denial of the joys that have been and the joys yet to be, as well as the beauty of your life in the present.

In each stage of life, there are wonderful experiences one can savor and valuable insights one can absorb. Every new decade and, in fact, every new year brings with it wisdom, transformation, and growth, as well as ends and beginnings. Many people, however, believe that there is one age that eclipses the others. They expend energy trying to reach it and, once it has passed, trying to retain it. But wishing to be younger or older is a denial of the joys that have been and the joys yet to be, as well as the beauty of your life in the present. Holding on to one age can make it difficult to appreciate each new milestone you reach. Taking pleasure in the delights of your age, whether you are in your 20s, 40s, 60s, or 80s, can help you see the magnificence and usefulness of the complex seasons of your life.

Each new year gifted to us by the universe is replete with exciting and unfamiliar experiences. In our 20s, we can embrace the energy of youth and the learning process, knowing it's okay to not have all the answers. As we move through our third decade, we grow more self-assured as the confusion of our young adulthood melts away. We can honor these years by putting aside our fears of aging and concentrating instead on solidifying our values and enjoying our growing emotional maturity. In our 40s, we become conscious of the wisdom we have attained through life experience and are blessed with the ability to put it to good use. We are not afraid to explore unfamiliar territory or to change. In our 50s, we tend to have successfully navigated our midlife reevaluations and have prioritized our lives. In the decades beyond, we discover a greater sense of freedom than we have ever known and can truly enjoy the memory of all we've seen and done.

Try to enjoy the age you are at now, for each age presents its own unique wisdom to savor.