70th Year -- No. 3877 Friday, September, 6, 2024 www.mauritiustimes.com facebook.com/mauritius.times 26 Pages - ePaper **IAURITIUS** The man who has confidence in himself gains the confidence of others. – Hasidic Proverb Interview: Kugan Parapen, Economist and Member of Resistans ek Alternativ "Once Parliament is dissolved, the political cauldron will heat up and the serious matters will then start" Very few sitting Prime Ministers have seen their mandates out until the very last day. We see this positioning as a sign of weakness for the incumbent' **P 8** Breakfast with Bwana ion **Thoughts For The Ages** NA-FSK17 Prakash Neerohoo **P3** Bail de terres de l'Etat et centres culturels Un test du droit de propriété Anil Madan P 4 dans un pays libéral **Musings** Ganesha: Not an elephant 'God' La construction de la Cité Administrative à Côte d'Or de

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Mauritius' Coalition Politics

The Quest for Stability in a Fragmented Landscape

auritius, a small island nation with diverse ethnic and social groups, has a complicated political system due to its electoral system and societal makeup. Neither of the major parties — the Labour Party (LP), the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM), nor the MSM — can secure enough votes alone to form a stable government. Consequently, forming coalitions with smaller parties has become a common feature, particularly with our First Past The Post (FPTP) voting system. The current political scene reflects this reality, with negotiations underway between Resistans ek Alternativ and the Labour Party-MMM alliance, while the PMSD engages in discussions with the MSM which is already tugging along the Ivan Collendavelloo's Muvman Liberater and Linite Militant of Steven Obeegadoo and Alan Ganoo. These negotiations are part of the usual process involved in alliance formation.

Historically, coalition politics in Mauritius has been a double-edged sword. On one hand, it has contributed to political stability by preventing severe ethnic polarization. Since independence in 1968, coalition governments have managed the complexities of ethnic and communal representation effectively, except in 1982 when the political environment was particularly volatile. However, the coalition model also introduces challenges, including the risk of weak governance driven by sectional lobbying and compromises.

In Mauritius' First-Past-The-Post electoral system, the idea that "the winner takes all" often does not hold true. To establish a stable government, winning parties must forge alliances with smaller parties, which can lead to necessary but potentially problematic compromises. This coalition dynamic can sometimes undermine coherent and effective governance, creating a political environment where various sectional interests may dilute decision-making. As a result, the benefits and privileges of coalition partners might be prioritized over the broader welfare of the population. While some argue that this system fosters broader consensus, others believe it may lead to decisions that cater more to sectional interests rather than the national good.

On the other hand, the division between urban and rural constituencies has become a critical factor in electoral strategy. Political parties and alliances leverage this divide to swing

votes in their favour, with rural constituencies (4-14) often pitted against more urban ones. As we approach the general elections slated for late 2024, the effectiveness of these strategies will be tested. New alliances, such as Linion Moris led by Rama Valayden and Nando Bodha, and the coalition of Roshi Bhadain and others, add further complexity. For instance, Linion Moris positions itself as a national alternative to traditional parties, formed through various agreements and strategic alignments. These newer coalitions could disrupt traditional electoral equations, and their impact on swing constituencies and overall electoral balance remains uncertain. The effectiveness of these alliances in shaping electoral outcomes will be closely scrutinized.

Meanwhile, the current government may still have strategic advantages. Immediate benefits, such as salary compensations and fiscal incentives presented as social welfare measures, might sway public opinion, especially among those feeling the effects of rupee depreciation and the rising cost of living. However, whether these short-term financial reliefs can outweigh the long-term implications of ongoing scandals and governance issues remains to be seen. Increasingly, many Mauritians feel that the slew of financial measures and promises announced helter-skelter, will ultimately be funded by VAT on consumers and tax-payers, a free-falling Rupee and by an already ballooning public debt.

Ultimately, the challenge for any major party — be it LP, MMM, or MSM — is to secure a sufficient majority within their alliance to govern effectively without being overly reliant on alliance partners. Achieving this would involve overcoming the entrenched dynamics of coalition politics and addressing the needs of a diverse and fragmented electorate. The quest for a stable, effective government that serves the broader public interest beyond sectional considerations is both a pressing need and a formidable challenge.

As Mauritius moves forward, the interplay of electoral strategies, coalition dynamics, and governance issues will shape its political future. The nation stands at a crossroads, with the potential for both significant disruption and meaningful reform. The outcome will depend on the ability of its political leaders to manage these complexities and deliver a government that truly serves the broader public interest.

Mauritius Times Founder/Editor: Beekrumsing Ramlallah - Aug 1954-Sept 2000 Editor-in-chief: M. Ramlallah / Senior Editor: Dr RN Gopee This epaper has been produced with the assistance of K. Ramlallah, Sultana Kurmally & Kersley Ramsamy Pearl House 4th Floor Room 406 - Sir Virgil Naz Street, Port Louis Tel: 5-29 29301 Tel/Fax: 212 1313

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The Conversation When did the climate crisis begin?

A new book argues that climate change rose from imperialism and capitalism

How old is the climate crisis?

was born in 1994, when the concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere was measured at 360 parts per million; today it is close to 420. Furnaces, engines and former forests emitted 23 billion tonnes of this planet-warming gas in 1994;



The Cure to Climate Anxiety? Smashing Capitalism. Pic - Left Voice

today they spew more than 37 billion tonnes. With some exceptions (economic downturns, the pandemic), humanity has released more CO into the atmosphere each year than the one before for at least two centuries.

Earth is not only hotter as a result of all this additional greenhouse gas, it is also getting hotter at a faster and faster rate. Where did it all begin? Figuring that out can tell us who or what is responsible – and what a possible solution looks like.

One way to answer the question at the start of this newsletter is to identify when people first noticed that the planet was warming. This happened during the mid-20th century. Tragically, it did so among scientists whose funders preferred that the world remain ignorant.

The 1970s: a critical decade

One company intimately involved with the emerging science of climate change was Exxon (now ExxonMobil). Scientists working for this oil and gas giant were modelling Earth's climate in the 1970s to understand how the increasing carbon content of the atmosphere would affect temperatures – and Exxon's future as a business.

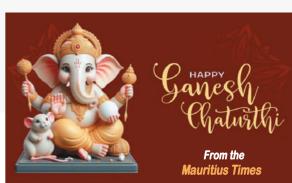
According to a study published in 2017 that involved scouring the company's internal documents, Exxon scientists acknowledged back then that climate change was real and overwhelmingly caused by burning the same fossil fuels Exxon sold."Yet over 80% of Exxon's editorial-style paid advertisements over the same period specifically focused on uncertainty and doubt, the study found," says Katharine Hayhoe, professor and director of the Climate Science Center at Texas Tech University.

Exxon knew better – a lot better. An investigation published last year showed that forecasts of the future climate made by Exxon scientists in the 1970s were remarkably accurate. The company knew where the world was headed by continuing to burn coal, oil and gas and instead endeavoured to cover it up.

The fossil fuel industry not only delayed a coordinated response to climate change, allowing it to grow into an existential threat to life on Earth. It also warped

our understanding of who is responsible says Marcelle McManus, a professor of energy and environmental engineering at the University of Bath.

Jack Marley Environment & Energy Editor, The Conversation



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Opinion

Mauritius Times

Bail de terres de l'Etat et centres culturels Un test du droit de propriété dans un pays libéral



plane sur la décision du

gouvernement de reprendre un terrain alloué à la Mauritius Tamil Cultural Centre Trust (MTCCT) à Réduit pour la construction d'un centre culturel en échange d'un autre terrain à Côte d'Or. Une manifestation pacifique organisée par le mouvement «Rann Nou Later» mercredi le 28 août 2024 a tourné en eau de boudin lorsque la police a arrêté de façon musclée certains manifestants qui protestaient contre cette décision.

Cette affaire est multidimensionnelle, touchant à la fois à l'État de droit, à la démocratie et à la culture. Au-delà des passions qu'elle déchaine, sur fond de sentimentalisme ou de religiosité, elle soulève trois problématiques essentielles:

- 1. Le droit de propriété dans une économie libérale;
- 2. La liberté d'expression dans un pays démocratique; et
- 3. Le rôle de la culture dans une société multiculturelle.

Contexte historique

Pour mieux comprendre cette affaire, il faut d'abord situer le contexte historique. En 2001, sous l'Illovo Deal, l'État avait fait l'acquisition des terres de l'établissement sucrier Highlands de la Lonrho Sugar Corporation à Ebène pour créer une cyber-ville. À l'époque, le gouvernement MMM-MSM caressait l'idée de créer un Culture Hub, juxtaposé à l'Education Hub de Réduit. Il avait alors donné un terrain sur un bail à construction à quatre organisations socioculturelles, nommément la Hindi Speaking Union, l'Indo Mauritian Catholic Association (IMCA), le Mauritius Tamil Cultural Center Trust (MTCCT) agissant au nom de la Mauritius Tamil Temples Federation (MTTF) et l'Urdu Speaking Union, pour leur permettre de construire chacune leur centre culturel.

En avril 2023, le ministère du Logement avait adressé une correspondence officielle au président de la MTCCT, le sommant de démarrer la construction de l'immeuble dans le Triangle de Réduit, faute de quoi le bail serait résilié «de plein droit». En début d'année, l'État a confirmé qu'il prendrait en charge la construction de bâtiments pour abriter les centres culturels sur un nouveau terrain à Côte d'Or. Cette propo-

Image: Construction of the second of the

Comme d'autres sociétés multiculturelles, Maurice a adopté le multiculturalisme comme un modèle de coexistence pacifique entre les communautés, c'est-à-dire l'unité dans la diversité. Idéalement, le multiculturalisme requiert le respect de toutes les ethnies, religions et cultures dans l'égalité de droit et de fait, et non pas la domination d'une ethnie, religion ou culture par une autre. C'est ce que le sociologue appelle le «pluralisme égalitaire» à l'opposé du «pluralisme ethnique», qui est la coexistence d'une variété de communautés et d'ethnies distinctes dans une société..."

sition a été refusée par la MTTF et l'IMCA, qui a d'ailleurs déposé une plainte en Cour suprême contre «l'expropriation» de son terrain à Réduit.

Le 7 juillet 2024, lors d'une assemblée des délégués dela MTTF, sur 137 délégués des temples (kovils) du pays, 110 ont voté une resolution pour affirmer leur «droit» d'occuper le terrain de Réduit, et 6 ont voté pour accepter la proposition d'un terrain à Côte d'Or.

Le droit de propriété

En échange du terrain de Réduit, le gouvernement a offert un terrain d'un arpent à Côte d'Or plus une aide financière pour financer la construction du centre culturel tamoul. Le gouvernement veut reprendre le terrain de Réduit en arguant que le site n'a pas été développé depuis 2001. Or, certains soupçonnent le gouvernement de vouloir le donner à un capitaliste de proximité qui compterait y lancer un gros projet de développement urbain.

La MTTF a un attachement sentimental au site sis à Réduit, qui a une histoire d'immigration tamoule dans le pays, et ne veut pas lâcher du lest dans son bras de fer avec le gouvernement. La question qui se pose est de savoir si la reprise du terrain de Réduit par l'État constitue une rupture du contrat de bail et, partant, une expropriation d'un bien d'une société cul-

turelle.

La Cour statuera sur cette question de droit de propriété dans l'avenir. Un bail sur un terrain de l'État est-il résiliable selon la volonté du gouvernement en place ou accorde-t-il un droit de propriété absolue au locataire?

La propriété est solennellement définie par l'article 544 du Code civil mauricien: «la propriété est le droit de jouir et disposer des choses de la manière la plus absolue, pourvu qu'on n'en fasse pas un usage prohibé par la loi ou les règlements» (page 67, Droit de l'Ile Maurice, publié par Bibliothèque de l'Association Henri Capitant). L'argument du gouvernement que le non-développement du site de Réduit par le locataire (MTTF) justifie une résiliation du contrat de bail ne semble pas trop plausible dans la mesure où, dans d'autres cas, des locataires ont laissé leur(s) terrain(s) en friche pendant des années sans qu'ils soient rappelés à l'ordre. Certains locataires ont même revendu leur droit d'occupation à une tierce partie.

Dans un pays démocratique, l'expropriation de biens par l'État, sans aucune considération pour les droits des propriétaires, est anticonstitutionnelle. Selon l'article 8 de la Constitution de Maurice (voir la référence ci-dessous), aucun bien privé ne sera acquis obligatoirement par l'État sauf quand l'intérêt public l'exige, le propriétaire reçoit une compensation adéquate et il peut faire appel contre l'acte d'expropriation à la Cour suprême. Si le gouvernement propose un marché (comme un échange de terrain) pour se prévaloir sur les droits d'autrui, cela est toujours contestable devant une Cour de justice. Il y a certains précédents d'expropriation qui indiquent que l'État peut agir comme un rouleau compresseur pour empiéter sur les droits de propriété d'autrui sans aucune compensation.

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Par exemple, le conglomérat BAI, qui était en concurrence avec le capitalisme historique, fut démantelé et tous ses biens furent expropriés par le gouvernement qui les a vendus à rabais à des capitalistes de proximité. Récemment, le Mauritius Turf Club, un club hippique historique, a été privé de ses droits d'occupation exclusive sur l'hippodrome du Champ de Mars pour faire de la place à une autre entreprise privée. Celle-ci n'ayant pu organiser les courses dans les conditions idéales, le gouvernement négocie maintenant avec le MTC pour qu'il reprenne les rênes au Champ de Mars.

La liberté d'expression

Les manifestants ont été arrêtés, et puis relâchés, sous une charge de «rogue and vagabond», au moment où le Premier ministre remettait des titres de propriété aux associations socioculturelles qui ont obtenu un terrain alternatif à Côte d'Or. Peu importe le slogan qu'ils avaient lancé à haute voix, les manifestants n'avaient pas dépassé le seuil légal de 11 personnes permis pour un rassemblement public sous la loi (*Public Gathering Act*).

La police a-t-elle employé la manière forte ce jour-là pour envoyer un signal de fermeté ou d'intolérance aux manifestants potentiels dans l'avenir en cette période de campagne électorale?

En tout cas, le passé récent indique que le pays a une tradition d'arrestations sous des charges provisoires. Sous la Constitution, les libertés fondamentales qui comprennent la liberté de conscience, la liberté de s'exprimer et la liberté de mouvement (articles 3, 5, 11, 12 et 15) sont garanties. Toute violation de ces libertés est une entorse à l'Etat de droit.

Le multiculturalisme

Toute cette affaire a donné lieu à un débat sur la raison d'être des centres culturels à Maurice, lesquels ont été encouragés par des gouvernements successifs depuis 2001. Certains y voient des compartiments ethniques qui exacerbent les différences identitaires alors que d'autres y voient l'expression d'une diversité culturelle qui fait la force d'une nation arc-enciel.

Les tenants du mauricianisme intégral voudraient voir un centre culturel mauricien représentant toutes les cultures plutôt que des centres culturels séparés fondés sur une identité religieuse ou communautaire spécifique.



Thoughts For The Ages

The world has long worried about a population bomb. It seems that we must also worry about an ageing bomb

t is a reasonable bet that if the subject of the world's burgeoning population came up, one would have adverted to either China or India. the former the world's most populous country for oh, ever so long, and the other close on its heels.

One would have paid scant attention to Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, or Iran, or indeed, any number of countries that have had explosive population growth from the 1960s to date.

The fDi Intelligence website, part of the Financial Times, projects that the top gainers, percentagewise, in population with increases over 90% by 2050, will be mostly African countries, Congo (DRC), Central African Republic, Angola, Somalia, Niger, and Chad.

The UN expects that by 2050, 126 out of 237 countries will see population growth. These include India, Indonesia, Nigeria and the US, already among the most populous countries in the world.

In contradistinction to these projections, that are based on seeing the world's population grow from 8.1 to 9.6 billion by 2050, are some jarring reports.

A spokesman for the Chinese government explained that China's National Social Security Fund was established in 2000, is a "strategic reserve fund for social security needs during the peak period of population aging and the ballast of my country's social security system." Whatever

What is significant is that China just announced that it will shore up the almost 3 trillion-yuan fund, making it bigger and stronger, to help support its rapidly ageing population as the birth rate drops and the number of younger workers to support the system shrinks.

Ageing Bomb

The world has long worried about a population bomb. It seems that we must also worry about an ageing bomb. Over the next ten years, almost 300 million Chinese will retire. This is close to the total US population. Euromonitor, a data analytics firm, estimates that one-half of all people aged over 65 in the Asia-Pacific region will be found in China by 2040

The US birthrate — a calculation of how many babies the average American woman is expected to have over her lifetime - has dwindled to a record low of 1.62 births per woman in 2023. The alarm that this has engendered among demographers and economists was reflected in the statements by



The world's population is in flux. It seems reasonable to expect that capital deployment will tend to favour automated and robotic production. Whereas the lower cost of real estate in developing countries might favour locating factories there, there are concerns about security, currency risk, and shipping costs. Population flows from Latin American and African countries to the US and Europe will surely continue, but the downside to automated factories and robots is that there will be lower demand for human workers. Ultimately, the twin problems of caring for an aged population and of providing jobs for younger workers will run into major obstacles ... "

Yoram Hazony, chairman of the Edmund Burke Foundation: "If you are not having children, your nation is finished," and "America has now followed Europe into an inability to guarantee another generation.'

Politicians of all persuasions have wrestled with ideas to deal with this crisis. So far, their prescriptions are limited to providing child support payments or cash rewards for having children. All of this is of little effect. The number of births in the US last year was the lowest since 1979.

On the other side of the coin, the United Nations estimates there will be 1.3 billion people in the world between the ages of 15-24 within the next six years, by 2030. Given the massive rates of population increase in African countries, it is no surprise that most countries that will have younger populations are on that continent.

As might be expected, African countries have the lowest median age. Monaco has the highest median followed by Japan, Italy and Andorra. India's median age is just north of 28 years. Indonesia, with a population of 168 million has a median age of 30 years. Vietnam, with a population of 41 million has a median age of 33 years. In Latin American and Caribbean countries, over 90% of the population is under the age of 65.

The implication for economic development seems reasonably clear. One would think that the world's manufactories of the future will be in India, Indonesia, and Vietnam in Asia, Africa, or Latin America. But, given the advent of Artificial Intelligence and robotics, people centric manufacturing doesn't quite seem to be in the cards.

Do the world's leaders reflect a similar age distribution? Not necessarily. The Pew Research organization reports that the median age of current national leaders is 62, as of May 1, 2024. The largest share of global leaders today (34%) are in their 60s. Roughly a quarter (22%) are in their 50s; 19% are in their 70s; and 16% are in their 40s. Biden is among the 5% of leaders who are in their 80s.

Pew suggests that countries that are less free tend to have older leaders.

Pew also reports: "In most countries, the leader is significantly older than the

median member of the population. For example, the median American is 38, according to UN population projections for 2024, while Biden is more than twice as old. In fact, the only countries that have a leader who is younger than the median resident of the country are Montenegro, Ireland and Italy. Andorran Prime Minister Xavier Espot Zamora, at 44, is the same age as the median Andorran resident."

Economic Impact

The world's population is in flux. It seems reasonable to expect that capital deployment will tend to favour automated and robotic production. Whereas the lower cost of real estate in developing countries might favour locating factories there, there are concerns about security, currency risk, and shipping costs. Population flows from Latin American and African countries to the US and Europe will surely continue, but the downside to automated factories and robots is that there will be lower demand for human workers.

Itimately, the twin problems of caring for an aged population — yes, there will soon come a time when the ageing population has aged — and of providing jobs for younger workers will run into major obstacles and may be insurmountable

Consider that Apple does most of its manufacturing in China. The cost of labour is significantly lower in China than in the US. But soon, Indonesia, Vietnam, and India may offer even lower rates. On the other hand, robot factories in Arizona or Texas could operate around the clock and with far greater efficiency. As long as supply chains are robust enough to support production on a home base, it seems a no-brainer for Apple to relocate its production to the US. The downside is that its access to foreign markets might be curtailed

It will be a challenge for countries to provide jobs for their populations. In America, immigrants do the work that most Americans don't want to do. As AI and robotics eliminate more and more production jobs, and what remains is just service work that requires a human worker, will American citizens have no choice but to do the work that they now don't want to do? In other words, will America become like the rest of the world where employment opportunities do not abound in the manufacturing sector?

We are witnessing major changes in technology and communications. At the same time, the world's population is presented with different and often conflicting challenges depending on the country involved and whether it has a younger population or an aged one.

In time, we shall see. Time marches on.

> Cheerz... Bwana

Éclairages

Mauritius Times

La construction de la Cité Administrative à Côte d'Or de nouveau au centre des débats

Par A. Bartleby

a construction de la Cité Administrative de Côte d'Or refait surface dans les discussions politiques et économiques. Ce projet ambitieux, inscrit dans le programme d'investissement pour les trois prochaines années, vise à créer une nouvelle ville administrative sur une superficie de 18 arpents.

Un plan directeur détaillé du projet a été dévoilé, et Landscope Mauritius prévoit de lancer un appel à manifestation d'intérêt pour attirer des investissements privés. La Cité Administrative de Côte d'Or sera financée conjointement par le secteur public et le secteur privé. Quatre bâtiments administratifs y seront construits pour héberger les ministères et d'autres départements publics. Deux de ces bâtiments seront capables d'accueillir plus de 2 000 fonctionnaires dans la première phase du projet.

En plus de la Cité Administrative, Landscope Mauritius prévoit la construction d'une Technopole et de la Revenue House, le nouveau siège de la Mauritius Revenue Authority. Le gouvernement, par l'intermédiaire de la Côte d'Or International Racecourse, Leisure and Entertainment Complex Ltd, envisage également de bâtir un hippodrome sur 175 arpents. Ce projet comprendra aussi 1 000 unités de logements pour les fonctionnaires. La zone de Côte d'Or sera également dotée d'une académie de police, d'un morcellement résidentiel, de centres culturels, de logements sociaux, de quatre hôpitaux spécialisés et d'un campus académique.

Pour la réalisation de ces projets, l'État sollicite des financements privés. Les promoteurs privés potentiels seront responsables de la conception, de la construction et de la maintenance des bâtiments. Cependant, les documents budgétaires ne fournissent pas d'estimation du coût total de

ce mégaprojet pour les trois prochaines années.

Retour sur le projet de "Heritage City"

Pour rappel, en octobre 2016, le Premier ministre d'alors, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, semblait soutenir fermement le projet de Heritage City, visant à établir une nouvelle capitale politique à Highlands.

Toutefois, le ministre des Finances d'alors, Pravind Jugnauth, et d'autres ministres avaient exprimé des objections concernant le manque de clarté entourant ce projet. Bien qu'ils n'étaient pas opposés à l'idée de déplacer la capitale politique, ils avaient décidé de ne pas soutenir le projet tel qu'il avait été élaboré par le ministre de la Bonne Gouvernance d'alors, Roshi Bhadain, et les fonds prétendument versés aux consultants du projet sans suivre les procédures appropriées.

Par exemple, sur la base de l'accord G2G avec Dubaï, non divulgué, l'un des premiers pays à avoir hésité face à ce plan d'investissement doré, Stree Consulting fut recruté pour fournir des « services professionnels... pour un montant ne dépassant pas 4,3 millions USD pour le plan directeur détaillé; la conception d'ingénierie des bureaux gouvernementaux; la conception schématique incluant la conception des infrastructures, l'infrastructure ICT, le composant en énergies renouvelables des 6 bâtiments gouvernementaux», comme l'avait indiqué le ministre de la Bonne Gouvernance dans sa réponse au Parlement le 19 avril 2016

C'est la raison pour laquelle, après avoir examiné un rapport défavorable sur le projet proposé de la part du "Senior Adviser" du ministre des Finances, M. Gérard Sanspeur, le Cabinet avait décidé, en l'absence du Premier ministre du pays, de ne pas poursuivre le projet tel que proposé, annulant ainsi sa décision antérieure prise



Heritage City (1): Stree Consulting fut recruté pour fournir des « services professionnels... pour un montant ne dépassant pas 4,3 millions USD. P - Stree Development

sous la présidence de SAJ. Cela ressemblait à une manœuvre de sauvetage. Mais le ministre de la Bonne Gouvernance n'avait pas toléré cette opposition, choisissant de faire une déclaration auprès de la police accusant le "Senior Adviser" du ministre des Finances.

Un schisme potentiel en raison de cette démonstration de force était alors dans l'air. Il semblait très problématique que le Premier ministre se trouvât publiquement en opposition au ministre des Finances concernant la mise en œuvre de ce projet. Avant de se rendre à l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies début septembre de la même année, le Premier ministre avait déclaré qu'il envisageait de démissionner. Le conflit, devenu de plus en plus difficile à gérer sur plusieurs fronts, notamment avec le ministre des Finances, semblait atteindre un point critique.

La question devait être réglée une fois pour toutes ou laissée à se détériorer jusqu'à ce qu'elle devienne complètement intenable pour le gouvernement, étant donné que le ministre des Finances était également le leader du parti majoritaire au gouvernement.

Un communiqué émis par l'Office du

Premier ministre le 11 octobre 2016 avait indiqué que les décisions suivantes avaient été prises à cet égard par le comité ministériel dirigé par le Premier ministre :

l'idée de créer une ville administrative pour mieux gérer les dépenses gouvernementales liées aux loyers des bâtiments pour différents ministères était maintenue ;

la localisation et la mise en œuvre progressive de cette ville, qui inclura également un nouveau bâtiment pour le Parlement, feront l'objet d'une étude approfondie; et un comité présidé par le ministre des Finances dirigera le « nouveau » projet.

Cette décision du Cabinet avait eu pour effet de mettre fin à la vaste controverse publique suscitée par ce qui était devenu une épine dans le flanc du gouvernement.

Ce projet de Cité Administrative à Côte d'Or marque une étape importante dans la modernisation des infrastructures publiques à Maurice. Cependant, ce type d'initiative, bien qu'ambitieux, n'est pas sans rappeler les défis rencontrés lors de la tentative avortée de créer Heritage City. La transparence et la gestion des fonds publics resteront des aspects cruciaux à surveiller de près pour éviter les erreurs passées et garantir le succès de ce nouveau projet.



Après 25 ans au sein du MMM, Dave Kissoondoyal a décidé de quitter ses fonctions. P - Top FM

Dave Kissoondoyal quitte le MMM

a semaine dernière, le MMM a connu une nouvelle démission majeure avec le départ de Dave Kissoondoyal, après celles de Rouma Bahadoor et de Sheila Bunwaree. Après 25 ans au sein du parti, Dave Kissoondoyal a décidé de quitter ses fonctions.

Sa démission était accompagnée d'une lettre expliquant les raisons de son départ, dans laquelle il évoque des humiliations de la part du leader du parti. Paul Bérenger aurait exprimé son mécontentement de manière assez désagréable, en utilisant la remarque "pa fer mwa tranglé ou" lors d'une réunion d'une branche du parti.

La direction du parti a pris cet incident au sérieux et a cherché à engager une médiation avec Ajay Gunness et Jyoti Jeetun. Ils ont demandé à Dave Kissoondoyal de passer à autre chose sans faire de vagues.

Ainsi, Dave Kissoondoyal devient un autre membre du bureau politique à quitter le parti. Il est le deuxième à fournir des raisons concrètes et précises pour sa démission, mettant en lumière des comportements qu'il juge inappropriés pour un parti qui se veut démocratique et distinct des autres. Sheila Bunwaree avait également publié une lettre expliquant les raisons de son départ, ce qui a révélé certains aspects préoccupants de la culture interne du parti.

Ce n'est pas une nouveauté pour ceux qui ont travaillé avec Paul Bérenger, dont le caractère est souvent décrit comme difficile. Ses expériences et engagements témoignent de sa vision pour une autre île Maurice. Cependant, certaines limites ne devraient pas être franchies, en particulier celles liées à des questions sensibles comme l'ambiguïté raciale dans une société multiethnique. Éclairages

Dave Kissoondoyal quitte le MMM

Suite de la page 5

Il semble que Paul Bérenger ait de plus en plus de difficultés à éviter ces limites. Il est notoire qu'il donne peu de place aux autres lors des réunions du parti et tend à couper court aux discussions internes, parfois de manière très ferme et humiliante.

ertains "insiders" soutiennent en privé que cette absence de débat interne contribue à une atrophie structurelle du parti, qui peine à se renouveler malgré son potentiel pour une révolution du personnel politique. De plus, le parti n'a pas organisé d'élections internes depuis plusieurs années, et les postes vacants sont cooptés plutôt que soumis à des élections. Toujours, selon ces mêmes "insiders", cette situation pourrait être attribuée à la crainte que le parti ne se tourne davantage vers les circonscriptions rurales, entraînant ainsi une centralisation du pouvoir en son sein.

Rouma Bahadoor, Sheila Bunwaree et Dave Kissoondoyal partagent un point commun: audelà de leur appartenance ethnique, ils se distinguent par leur expertise professionnelle et leur contribution significative à un parti qui, ces dernières années, a souffert d'un manque d'intellectuels et de cadres. Les adversaires de Bérenger, qu'ils soient d'anciens membres du même parti ou issus d'autres formations politiques, interpréteront sans doute les récents événements au MMM comme des signes de tensions communautaires, et ils ne manqueront pas de propager ce message auprès de tous ceux qui sont particulièrement sensibles à ce type de discours.

Séisme politique en Allemagne

Le parti d'extrême droite, l'AfD, remporte sa première élection régionale depuis 1945

e parti d'extrême droite allemand, Alternative pour l'Allemagne (AfD), a remporté une victoire historique lors des élections régionales en Thuringe, dans l'ex-Allemagne de l'Est, selon les premiers sondages réalisés à la sortie des urnes. Cette victoire représente un revers majeur pour le chancelier Olaf Scholz, à moins d'un an des élections nationales de 2025.

Avec un score compris entre 30,5 et 33,5 % des voix, l'AfD devance de loin le parti conservateur CDU, qui se classe en deuxième position avec environ 24,5 %. En Saxe, un État voisin où des élections régionales ont égalementété tenues, la CDU garde une courte avance, mais l'AfD la talonne de près.

Bien que l'AfD ait remporté cette victoire éclatante, la formation d'un gouvernement semble hors de portée, car les autres partis politiques ont exclu toute coopération avec l'extrême droite. Pourtant, cette victoire marque un tournant dans l'histoire politique allemande : c'est la première fois depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale qu'un parti d'extrême droite remporte une élection d'État.

Si ces résultats sont confirmés, ils infligeraient un coup sévère aux sociaux-démocrates de Scholz (SPD) et à ses partenaires de coalition, les Verts et le FDP, qui peinent à convaincre les électeurs. Le SPD n'aurait recueilli que 6,5 à 7 % des voix en Thuringe, et entre 7,5 et 8,5 % en Saxe, des résultats particulièrement faibles pour un parti traditionnellement influent.

Durant la campagne, l'AfD a su tirer parti du mécontentement croissant envers le gouvernement, notamment sur des questions comme la migration et le soutien à l'Ukraine. Alice Weidel, coprésidente du parti, a qualifié ce résultat de "succès historique", tandis que son homologue Tino Chrupalla a affirmé que l'AfD détenait désormais un "mandat clair pour gouverner" en Thuringe.

La Thuringe: un bastion historique de l'extrême droite

La Thuringe, État rural au cœur de l'Allemagne, a une longue histoire de soutien à l'extrême droite. Dès 1930, le parti nazi y a pris le pouvoir dans le cadre d'une coalition. BjoernHoecke, chef de l'AfD en Thuringe et figure controversée du parti, a salué cette victoire en déclarant que l'AfD était désormais "le parti du peuple en Thuringe".

Cependant, Hoecke a souvent été au cœur de polémiques pour ses déclarations provocatrices, qui flirtent avec l'idéologie nazie. Cette année, il a été condamné à deux reprises pour avoir sciemment utilisé un slogan nazi interdit lors de ses rassemblements.

Les partenaires de la coalition de Scholz, les Verts et le FDP, ont également enregistré des résultats décevants dans les deux États. Marianne Kneuer, professeure de sciences politiques, a qualifié ces résultats comme étant "préoccupants". Selon elle,



Heritage City (1): Stree Consulting fut recruté pour fournir des «services professionnels... pour un montant ne dépassant pas 4,3 millions USD. P - Stree Development

l'addition des voix pour l'AfD et le parti BSW dépasse les 40 % en Thuringe et en Saxe, un signe alarmant du recul des partis démocratiques centristes.

Un débat national sur l'immigration ravivé

Ces élections surviennent peu après une attaque au couteau qui a fait trois morts à Solingen, une ville de l'ouest de l'Allemagne. L'agresseur, un Syrien de 26 ans avec des liens présumés avec l'État islamique, avait échappé à l'expulsion. Cet incident a ravivé les tensions autour de la question de l'immigration, un sujet largement exploité par l'AfD dans sa campagne.

Face à ces préoccupations croissantes, le gouvernement a annoncé un durcissement des lois sur le contrôle des armes blanches et une révision des règles concernant les migrants en situation irrégulière.

Inquiétudes autour des mémoriaux de l'Holocauste

La montée de l'AfD suscite également des inquiétudes dans les lieux de mémoire liés aux crimes nazis, notamment au mémorial de Buchenwald. Jens-Christian Wagner, historien et directeur du mémorial, a exprimé ses craintes face à la banalisation des crimes nazis par l'AfD, tout en dénonçant des incidents récents tels que des graffitis de croix gammées et des actes de vandalisme sur le site.

Wagner accuse l'AfD de minimiser les crimes du régime nazi et d'en faire des références positives dans son discours. Bjoern Hoecke, en particulier, a suscité l'indignation en 2017 lorsqu'il a qualifié le mémorial de l'Holocauste à Berlin de "monument de la honte". Selon Wagner, de telles déclarations "remettent en cause les fondements mêmes de la démocratie allemande". Alors que l'Allemagne se prépare à de nouvelles élections en 2025, l'influence croissante de l'AfD sur la scène politique continue d'alimenter un débat national intense.

Le Bangladesh prêt à résoudre les "questions de 1971 avec le Pakistan"

e Bangladesh cherche à régler les différends liés à la guerre de libération de 1971 avec le Pakistan et à consolider les relations entre les deux pays, dans le but de garantir une Asie du Sud démocratique, a affirmé Nahid Islam, ministre des Technologies de l'information et de la diffusion du gouvernement intérimaire, lors d'une rencontre avec l'envoyé pakistanais à Dhaka, rapporte le «Hindustan Times». Les relations entre le Bangladesh et le Pakistan avaient atteint un point bas durant le mandat de Sheikh Hasina, notamment après son inculpation de plusieurs dirigeants de la Jamaat-e-Islami du Bangladesh pour crimes de guerre liés à la guerre de 1971.

Les propos d'Islam, l'un des dirigeants du mouvement étudiant qui a renversé le régime de l'ancienne Première ministre Sheikh Hasina le mois dernier, surviennent dans le cadre d'une série de réunions entre des acteurs clés du gouvernement intérimaire dirigé par Muhammad Yunus et le Haut-Commissaire du Pakistan au Bangladesh, Syed Ahmed Maroof.

Lors de la réunion avec Islam, le 1er septembre, Maroof a déclaré que le Pakistan souhaitait "résoudre la question de 1971", selon un communiqué officiel du bureau du ministre. Maroof a affirmé que "le gouvernement précédent ne nous a donné aucune opportunité de discuter de [cette question] et a maintenu la question de 1971 en suspens". Il a ajouté que cette question aurait pu être réglée depuis longtemps et que le Pakistan était désormais disposé à établir des relations avec le Bangladesh.

A. Bartleby Suite en page 7

Le Bangladesh prêt à résoudre les "questions de 1971 avec le Pakistan"

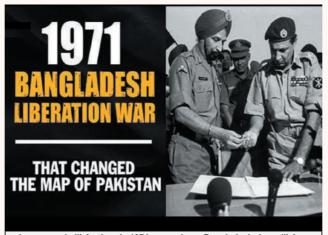
Suite de la page 6

D'après le communiqué officiel, Islam a répondu que 1971 était "une question importante dans l'histoire politique du Bangladesh". Il a précisé: "Selon la Ligue Awami, 1971 représentait le 'dernier chapitre de l'histoire'. Mais pour nous, cela fait partie d'une continuité historique", a déclaré Islam, selon le communiqué.

La guerre de libération de 1971 a marqué la lutte du Bangladesh pour se libérer du régime oppressif de l'ancienne Pakistan occidental, et l'armée pakistanaise a été accusée de nombreuses atrocités qui, selon certaines estimations, auraient causé environ trois millions de morts.

Depuis longtemps, le Bangladesh réclame des excuses de la part du Pakistan pour ces événements et cherche la reconnaissance internationale du génocide. Malgré des relations fluctuantes au cours des 53 dernières années, aucune solution définitive n'a été trouvée à ce différend.

Rappelant que la création du Bangladesh n'aurait



La guerre de libération de 1971 a permis au Bangladesh de se libérer du régime oppressif du Pakistan occidental, avec l'armée pakistanaise accusée d'atrocités ayant causé environ trois millions de morts. P - YouTube

pas été possible sans les événements de 1947 - lorsque les Britanniques ont quitté l'Inde et que le pays

a été partitionné – ou le mouvement pour le Pakistan, Islam a déclaré : "Nous voulons résoudre la question de 1971 avec le Pakistan. Une Asie du Sud démocratique exige que nous renforcions nos relations mutuelles."

Le Bangladesh est prêt à entretenir des relations avec tout pays tout en préservant son indépendance, sa souveraineté et ses intérêts nationaux, a ajouté Islam. "Nous sommes intéressés à résoudre les questions de 1971 dans l'intérêt national et à développer nos relations," a-t-il précisé.

Sheikh Hasina a démissionné et s'est réfugiée en Inde le 5 août, et le gouvernement intérimaire a pris le pouvoir trois jours plus tard. Depuis, des diplomates de plusieurs pays, y compris le Pakistan, rencontrent les dirigeants du gouvernement intérimaire pour renforcer leurs relations avec le Bangladesh.

Lors de sa rencontre avec Islam, Maroof a également évoqué les difficultés rencontrées par les Pakistanais au cours des 15 dernières années, notamment en *matière de délivrance de visas et de traitement dans les aéroports, en raison de pressions politiques.*

Énergies renouvelables: Un tournant historique

40 % de l'électricité mondiale générée par des sources renouvelables pour la première fois en 2023

a transition mondiale vers les énergies propres a franchi un cap historique en 2023, selon deux nouveaux rapports de Bloomberg NEF (BNEF). Pour la première fois, plus de 40 % de l'électricité mondiale a été produite à partir de sources d'énergie sans carbone, dont 14 % grâce à l'énergie solaire et éolienne.

En 2023, près de 91 % des nouvelles capacités de production d'électricité installées dans le monde provenaient des énergies solaire et éolienne, contre 83 % en 2022. En revanche, les énergies fossiles ne représentaient que 6 % des nouvelles installations — leur plus faible part jamais enregistrée, souligne un communiqué de BNEF.

«Nous assistons à une transformation radicale en faveur des énergies renouvelables par rapport aux années précédentes. Il est désormais indéniable que celles-ci sont devenues la principale source de nouvelle production d'électricité à l'échelle mondiale», a déclaré Sofia Maia, auteure principale du rapport «*Power Transition Trends 2024*».

Au cours du premier semestre 2024, les investissements dans les énergies renouvelables ont atteint 313 milliards de dollars, un niveau similaire à celui de la même période en 2023. Les énergies renouvelables ont représenté près d'un tiers de la production mondiale d'électricité en 2023, soit une augmentation de 5 % par rapport à l'année précédente.

D'après les rapports, l'hydroélectricité a compté pour 14,7 % de la production, l'énergie solaire et éolienne a établi un nouveau record à 13,9 %, et le nucléaire s'est maintenu à 9,4 %.

Les deux rapports publiés par BNEF, «Renewable Energy Investment Tracker 2H 2024» et «Power Transition Trends 2024», indiquent que l'élan vers les énergies vertes s'accélère de manière significative.

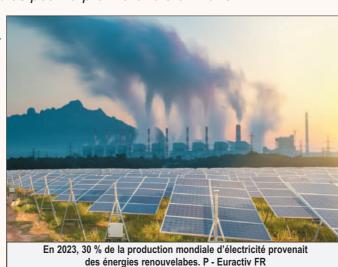
La Chine en tête des investissements mondiaux

La Chine a conservé sa position de leader en matière d'investissements dans les énergies renouvelables, malgré une baisse de 4 % due à une réduction des coûts des équipements. Au cours des six premiers mois de 2024, les États-Unis ont été le deuxième plus grand marché au monde, enregistrant une augmentation impressionnante de 63 % des investissements grâce à l'adoption de la loi sur la réduction Act»). Le Pakistan a également émergé, passant de la 14e à la 5e place

des plus gros investisseurs dansl'énergie solaire en 2024. Le rapport «*Power Transition Trends»* constitue l'analyse la plus complète des données sur la production et les capacités énergétiques mondiales. Il couvre 140 marchés et des données agrégées internationales, révélant les progrès des pays dans la décarbonation de leurs éco-

nomies. Le «*Renewable Energy Investment Tracker*», publié deux fois par an, évalue les investissements mondiaux dans les nouvelles capacités d'énergie renouvelable ainsi que le capital levé par les entreprises spécialisées.

Le rapport montre que la capacité mondiale de production d'électricité a atteint 8,9 térawatts en 2023. L'énergie éolienne représente désormais un térawatt de cette



capacité, tandis que 428 gigawatts de capacité solaire ont été ajoutés l'an dernier — une augmentation de 76 % par rapport

— une augmentation de 76 % par rapport à l'année précédente — portant la capacité solaire installée à 1,6 térawatt dans le monde.

«Dix économies ont produit près des trois quarts de l'énergie renouvelable mondiale en 2023. La Chine continentale s'est distinguée, comme elle le fait depuis une décennie, générant près d'un tiers de la production mondiale d'énergie renouvelable. Les États-Unis, le Brésil, le Canada et l'Inde complètent le top cinq, représentant ensemble 60 % de la production mondiale», indique le communiqué de BNEF.

L'énergie solaire progresse, mais le vent ralentit

Au premier semestre 2024, les investissements dans l'énergie éolienne ont atteint 90,7 milliards de dollars, soit une baisse de 11 % par rapport à 2023. L'éolien offshore a connu un ralentissement marqué, tandis que l'éolien terrestre fait face à des difficultés croissantes liées aux raccordements aux réseaux électriques et aux permis. Néanmoins, les pro-

jets avancent, bien que l'énergie solaire bénéficie d'un élan plus fort.

es investissements dans le solaire ont atteint 221 milliards de dollars au premier semestre, tant pour les petits projets que pour les installations à grande échelle. Toutefois, la croissance commence à ralentir en raison de la baisse des coûts des modules, nécessitant moins d'investissements pour obtenir la même capacité, et des goulets d'étranglement dans les

réseaux qui freinent certains marchés. «Même si les grands groupes pétro-

«Merne si les grands groupes peroliers réduisent leurs investissements dans les énergies renouvelables, cela n'a pas freiné les investissements mondiaux», a déclaré Meredith Annex, auteure principale du «*Renewable Energy Investment Tracker*». «Il est clair que là où des projets sont prêts à démarrer, les capitaux suivent. Il est donc essentiel de simplifier le développement de l'éolien et du solaire à travers le monde.»

Un avenir renouvelable en pleine accélération

Avec ces progrès, l'avenir de l'énergie renouvelable semble plus prometteur que jamais. Les investissements mondiaux continuent de se concentrer sur le solaire et l'éolien, malgré certains défis. La transition énergétique globale est bien en marche, avec un impact croissant sur la réduction des émissions de carbone et la durabilité énergétique.

A. Bartleby

-7

Interview

Mauritius Times

Interview: Kugan Parapen, Economist and Member of Resistans ek Alternativ

"Once Parliament is dissolved, the political cauldron will heat up and the serious matters will then start"

Mauritius Times: How does Rezistans ek Alternativ (ReA) assess the progress of the discussions with the Labour Party and MMM in the context of the upcoming general elections?

Kugan Parapen: It is widely known that ReA has long advocated for a unification of opposition forces for the forthcoming general elections. Indeed, we regularly met with major parliamentary and extra parliamentary parties over the last two years to drive home the desirability and necessity of a unified front to defeat the MSM regime. We are of the view that the stakes could not be any higher in 2024 - the very foundation of our democracy is on the line.

While most opposition parties were very receptive to our plea in private, few were publicly vocal about the need to form a grand alliance to overcome the shortcomings of our First Past The Post electoral system. As recently as 2019, we witnessed firsthand the inherent democratic vulnerabilities of the Westminsterian model in a multi-cornered electoral contest - that is, an electoral outcome which bestows political supremacy to a minority party.

So, when the leader of the Labour Party reached out to ReA earlier this year to discuss the possibility of an electoral arrangement with the Labour Party and the MMM, ReA agreed to hold discussions with them as this was in line with the party's desire to unify opposition forces ahead of the next general elections. Over the last few weeks, ReA has had several meetings with the leaders of

66 ReA advocates for issues that are not necessarily mainstream at

this point in time in our society. We are often frustrated that these issues are not picked up by the mainstream media or if they are, they are

distorted in such a way that they fail to appeal to a wider audience, much to the satisfaction of the capitalist power brokers who own most of the so-called free press. That frustration is certainly shared by the left in Mauritius..." n the lead-up to the next general elections in Mauritius, the political landscape is rife with strategic maneuvering and coalition-building efforts. One of the key players in this evolving narrative is *Rezistans ek Alternativ* (ReA), a party advocating for a unified opposition front to challenge the ruling regime. To gain insight into the current state of these crucial discussions, the *Mauritius Times* speaks with Kugan Parapen, an economist

and member of ReA. In this interview, Kugan Parapen provides an in-depth assessment of the ongoing negotiations with the Labour Party and the MMM, reflects on the historical and economic context influencing these talks, and shares ReA's vision for future political and economic reforms.



the Labour Party and the MMM. While the discussions have evolved over the meetings, there are still some important issues which are pending as we speak.

We are aware that there is a strong desire within the population for these talks to be concluded as quickly as possible but then again, some issues are more sensitive than others and are unfortunately more time-consuming. That said, we remain hopeful that these can be resolved soon.

* People matter, and your interlocutors also play a significant role in the workability of an alliance. What is your assessment of the motivations of the LP and MMM leaders, and their willingness to include ReA in the Opposition alliance?

G We have proposed to introduce the right to revoke an MP in-between two elections as a major step forward for our society. Such a measure must be well thought of in order to discourage frivolous and partisan attempts to revoke MPs but should be practical enough to make it feasible to really revoke an MP who has grossly erred in his/her duties as a representative of the people. Can we imagine the impact this would have on the conduct of MPs if they knew they could be revoked by their electorate in-between elections?"

Both the Labour Party and the MMM have strong historical ties with labour struggles. While this part of their history is somewhat forgotten by many of the younger generations nowadays, we feel that this has influenced their decision to hold talks with Rezistans ek Alternativ. Both Navin Ramgoolam and Paul Berenger have alluded to this shared DNA as being one of the reasons why they are considering forming an alliance with Rezistans ek Alternativ.

Obviously, with the departure of the PMSD from the then parliamentary opposition alliance to seemingly cross the floor to the government's side, this has created a vacuum.

Interview N

'Very few sitting Prime Ministers have seen their mandates out until the very last day.

We see this positioning as a sign of weakness for the incumbent'

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We are also aware that influential groups within the respective parties, especially the progressives and the youth, have rooted for a rapprochement with ReA. Last but not least, anyone with an iota of objectivity will admit that ReA has been at the forefront of many political struggles over recent years and has influenced the political bearing in one way or the other.

* ReA has advocated for issues that are not necessarily, or only partly, supported by both the LP and the MMM, which have, over the years, adopted a more pragmatic approach to politics. Working together to bring about positive change will require compromises. But ultimately, it will be the 'rapport de forces' within the alliance that decides whether changes will occur or not. You must have taken that into account, haven't you?

First and foremost, we need to point out that if any alliance is concluded, ReA will be a minority partner (with a maximum of three candidates). Members of the party are not naive, neither should the population. However, it is good to remember Dalia Lama's advice in this context: *"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito."*

ReA will not be the driving force of a new government. However, what we lack in terms of numbers, we intend to make up in terms of ideas, proposals and advocacies. And we are confident that some MPs within the ranks of the other parties can stand for the greater good when required. Will it be enough? We have to make sure it will be when it matters most.

But as you rightly pointed out, ReA advocates for issues that are not necessarily mainstream at this point in time in our society. We are often frustrated that these issues are not picked up by the mainstream media or if they are, they are distorted in such a way that they fail to appeal to a wider audience, much to the satisfaction of the capitalist power brokers who own most of the socalled free press.

That frustration is certainly shared by the left in Mauritius. Do we remember when was the last time leftists had a voice of their own in Parliament? There are so many issues that go under the radar owing to a lack of representation in Parliament. This is also one of the reasons why we need ReA in Parliament.

Geshaping our economic model is vital. The population has been made worse off under the MSM regime and addressing fundamental and structural economic issues has to be a priority. We need to create an economic model that works towards the betterment of the economic wellbeing of Mauritians and there are some vital decisions to be taken at this level. New pillars of the economy need to be developed while addressing the imbalance between exports and imports is a priority..."



* If the Opposition were to find itself in government after the next elections, what would ReA like to see accomplished - in terms of doable and achievable goals - in the immediate and medium term?

We are adamant that a regime change should not equate with what we have often witnessed in the past that is more of the same. The main reasons ReA has sought a grand alliance of the opposition are twofold: first, the urgency and necessity of ousting Jugnauth and his clan from power; and second, equally important, the need to bring about real change in Mauritian society.

ReA has dedicated a large part of its interactions with the leaders of the Labour Party and the MMM to go over the proposals that ReA would like to bring to the table. In a nutshell, we identified three major layers that we would like addressed, namely democratic/constitutional reforms, enhancement of labour rights, and finally environmental protection.

With respect to the strengthening of our democracy, we have proposed to introduce the right to recall an MP in between two elections as a major step forward for our society. Such a measure must be well thought of in order to discourage frivolous and partisan attempts to revoke MPs but should be practical enough to make it feasible to really revoke an MP who has grossly erred in his/her duties as a representative of the people. Can we imagine the impact this would have on the conduct of MPs if they knew they could be revoked by their electorate in-between elections?

Additionally, ReA has long advocated for the right for all Mauritians to stand as candidates at general elections on the basis of their citizenship alone, without having to mandatorily declare their ethnic belonging. Obviously, electoral reform is also a necessity including the introduction of a proportional system with a reasonable threshold for eligibility.

With respect to labour rights, we have witnessed a lot of issues in recent years when it comes to the disparity between private sector employees and public sector ones in times of extreme climatic conditions. ReA proposes to streamline the process so that the disparity is eliminated but more so ensure that the safety of all employees is paramount to all considerations. Actually, with climate change, there needs to be an in-depth rethink about how our economy adapts to such disruptions. The protection of the environment is also central to ReA's agenda and the inclusion of nature's rights in the Constitution would be a game changer with respect to ensuring a sustainable socio-economic model.

66 Our electoral system favours the bipolarisation of the political spectrum and essentially the dominance of traditional mainstream parties. If we assess the situation in other countries which use the FPTP electoral model, we can see that the Mauritian syndrome is not an isolated case. In the UK, the Labour Party and the Torries have dominated proceedings for as long as one can remember. In India, the BJP and Congress have remained the main political protagonists over time. So maybe we should be referring to a FPTP syndrome instead...²⁷

Lastly and most importantly, reshaping our economic model is vital. The population has been made worse off under the MSM regime and addressing fundamental and structural economic issues has to be a priority. We need to create an economic model that works towards the betterment of the economic wellbeing of Mauritians and there are some vital decisions to be taken at this level. New pillars of the economy need to be developed while addressing the imbalance between exports and imports is a priority.

* The concept of renewing the political class and introducing innovative ideas ("renouvellement de la classe politique et des idées") has been widely discussed in intellectual circles locally. Despite this, the electorate has consistently chosen to support the traditional parties. Does this indicate that the country may not yet be ready for such renewal?

The "renouvellement de la classe politique" has been a much-debated topic and it is true that the country has not witnessed significant progress on this issue. As argued previously, our electoral system favours the bipolarisation of the political spectrum and essentially the dominance of traditional mainstream parties. If we assess the situation in other countries which use the FPTP electoral model, we can see that the Mauritian syndrome is not an isolated case.

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Interview

Mauritius Times

"Regime change should not mean more of the same as in the past"



Freebies and social welfare policies have featured prominently in the months leading to general elections in Mauritius but yet the empirical data does not suggest that such largesses necessarily have a major impact on the electoral outcome,

especially in the case of unpopular governments. From living memory, 1995, 2000, 2014 are prime examples of election years where unpopularity superseded the 'generosity' of the then ruling government. There is a strong case that 2024 will be the same..."

• Cont. from page 9

In the UK, the Labour Party and the Torries have dominated proceedings for as long as one can remember. In India, the BJP and Congress have remained the main political protagonists over time. So maybe we should be referring to a FPTP syndrome instead.

While ReA is not advocating for the demise of the FPTP model as such, we see a strong case to adjust the system to favour more diverse representation. Hence the need to introduce a proportional representation reform to supplement the existing electoral model and ensure adequate representation of all voices within Parliament.

* Like the mainstream parties, the electorate today tends to be pragmatic, focusing more on their well-being, living conditions, and material needs rather than on ideological considerations. What impact do you think the freebies and 'social welfare' policies, as characterized by the Privy Council in its judgment in the Dayal v Jugnauth case, will have on this electorate?

It is rather unfortunate that the schedule of elections and political events—can significantly influence the formulation and implementation of public policy, as politicians often prioritize policies that will gain them electoral support or address immediate concerns to appeal to voters. This influence is observed not just locally but it has been a feature of politics worldwide.

Politicians in power tend to focus on reelection as from mid-mandate rather than fulfilling a progressive socio-economic agenda. Freebies and social welfare policies have featured prominently in the months lea-

66 When you factor in the rapprochement with the PMSD, the strategy seems to suggest that the government would rather have more time on their hands than less as they are aware that it will take some time for a synergy, if any, to emerge from this cumbersome electoral arrangement. Also, the backtracking on Phokeer as Speaker of the House and the ousting of Lee Shim from the Champs de Mars suggest that the MSM house is on fire. Will they be able to put out the fire?" ding to general elections in Mauritius but yet the empirical data does not suggest that such largesses necessarily have a major impact on the electoral outcome, especially in the case of unpopular governments.

From living memory, 1995, 2000, 2014 are prime examples of election years where unpopularity superseded the 'generosity' of the then ruling government. There is a strong case that 2024 will be the same.

* How sustainable is this

approach — this culture of freebies that has emerged in recent years, with successive governments turning it into a form of political auction to secure electoral support — before it begins to harm the economy?

In economics, it is well known that there is no such thing as a free lunch. It is essentially a zero-sum game, where actions inevitably have consequences. However, the complexity of economics can make these consequences less perceptible to the general population, particularly to those who are not well-versed in economic matters.

An important case study is Liz Truss's brief tenure at

Downing Street. Elected by her party to replace Boris Johnson as Prime Minister of the UK, she was forced to resign within 50 days. The primary reason was that her Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kwasi Kwarteng, presented an unfunded budget - that is one that lacks a clear or adequate plan for how its proposed expenditures will be financed - to Parliament. This budget raised alarm bells in financial markets and resulted in a significant increase in the UK's financing costs (the expenses incurred by the UK government when it borrows money).

Do you think the tandem Jugnauth/Padayachy would have lasted more than 50 days in the UK? We doubt it.

* When you see the Prime Minister acting decisively and consistently to secure the re-election of his MSM-led alliance, and on the other hand, an opposition alliance still looking for its footing, what does this situation suggest about the likely outcome of the next elections?

We would not read too much into this. Once Parliament is dissolved, the political cauldron will heat up and the serious matters will then start. We are more perplexed about the reluctance of the Prime Minister to call for general elections ahead of schedule. Very few sitting Prime Ministers have seen their mandates out until the very last day. We see this positioning as a sign

of weakness for the incumbent.

The by-election in constituency number 10 will be a litmus test - if ever Jugnauth decides to hold this byelection, it will be a clear sign that the days of his regime are numbered. When you factor in the rapprochement with the PMSD, the strategy seems to suggest that the government would rather have more time on their hands than less as they are aware that it will take some time for a synergy, if any, to emerge from this cumbersome electoral arrangement.

Also, the backtracking on Phokeer as Speaker of the House and the ousting of Lee Shim from the Champs de Mars suggest that the MSM house is on fire. Will they be able to put out the fire?

* Regardless of the outcome of the next elections, would you, as an economist, say that the incoming government might face a challenging economic situation partly due to the current government's spending in the lead-up to the elections?

I have no illusion about the abysmal economic legacy that Padayachy will leave behind. He will go down in history as one of the worst Finance Ministers that this country has known. And I am pretty sure that there are many skeletons lying around in the Ministry of Finance. Re-engineering the economy from this point will be daunting, but it is an uphill task that must be completed.

Generally speaking, public spending under the MSM regime has been off the charts. While the pandemic justified running huge budget deficits at the time, the same was not required in more recent years. If anything, there

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was actually a case to reverse the expansionary fiscal and monetary policies to curb inflationary pressures. In hindsight, it is crystal clear that Jugnauth planned all along to monetise the reserves of the central bank to finance his electoral promises from 2019. All along, ReA said that these promises were unfunded and so it proved to be.

Padayachy tore out the old inflation trick from his playbook to pave the way for increased nominal social benefits. By pursuing inflationary policies, Padayachy and Seegoolam (the inflation brothers) engineered a widespread impoverishment of the population to create an illusion of prosperity. The illusion did not last long, alas, for them.



Musings

Ganesha: Not an elephant 'God'

There is no important activity or auspicious occasion which the Hindu starts without invoking

Shri Ganesha, who is Vinayaka (the Best of Guides), Vighneshwara (Remover of Obstacles) as well as being possessed of wise learning: He was the scribe who wrote down the well-known epic, Mahabharata, as Vyasaji was narrating it.

According to late Dr Sarvapelli Radhakrishnan, Philosopher-President of Bharat, as it evolved Hinduism chose colourful diversity over dull uniformity. The many festivals in the Hindu calendar are a living expression of this truism - the richness of Hindu culture - through the plurality of customs and practices that they have been associated with since practically time immemorial in Bharat. Hindu festivals are strewn along its calendar throughout the year, for the gift of life is meant to be always glorified.

This can only happen to a healthy body possessed of a pure mind – which prepares the individual to live life in the Hindu spirit, which is – again according to Dr S Radhakrishnan, 'that attitude towards life which regards the endless variety of the visible and temporal world as sustained by the invisible and eternal spirit'. If properly understood and celebrated, Hindu festivals meet all these objectives of a purposeful and meaningful life.

The fundamental aspect of the festival is of course the symbolism that underlies it in all its dimensions. Through the ideas and concepts that symbolism encompasses, an attempt is made to represent the Hindu vision of existence. The objective is to facilitate understanding of the profound truths and abstract concepts by means of forms and objects which are more or less familiar to all of us.

Symbols that are more frequently used are either geometrical forms, such as the triangle, the circle, the dot, or natural objects from the world of plants and animals.

For the latter possess characteristics which can be similar, different or even surpass those of man - such as strength (the lion), speed (the cheetah), hearing (the bat), vision (the owl) and so on. If we have any superiority in the spectrum of the living, it is that we possess *chaitanya* or consciousness which supports a mind with which we can think and reason. This allows us to explore and seek knowledge of the external world with which we transact, which in Hindu tradition we call *lower knowledge*.

However, this same urge to enquire makes us seek answers to questions such as who we are, where we come from, and what happens when we die. This kind of internal enquiry carried out profoundly by our rishis (sages) in ancient times led them to the conclusion that the whole of existence emanates from a supreme source possessed of all knowledge, all intelligence and all power to create – sustain – destroy the universe in a perpetual cycle of renewal (hence: multiverses), and to That Supreme – the underlying eternal spirit - they gave the name Brahman, with the powers of creation-sustenancedestruction vested in divinities referred to as Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva respectively.

That *Higher Knowledge* also known as *Spiritual Knowledge* is the One Truth or Ultimate Reality of existence, and our purpose in life is to discover it for ourselves through spiritual seeking, which Hindu festivals help us to do, since preparation for them entails following *sadhana* or spiritual discipline.



According to late Dr Sarvapelli Radhakrishnan, Philosopher-President of Bharat, as it evolved Hinduism chose colourful diversity over dull uniformity. The many festivals in the Hindu calendar are a living expression of this truism - the richness of Hindu culture - through the plurality of customs and practices that they have been associated with since practically time immemorial in Bharat. Hindu festivals are strewn along its calendar throughout the year, for the gift of life is meant to be always glorified..."

This recognition of an underlying eternal spirit, rather than a God in the Abrahamic sense of the term who is outside of the creation, is why we affirm that Hinduism is a culture of all-sacredness. This means that we are all part of a whole that includes living and non-living things. And thus we can see that all forms and names, in other words, all objects that exist in nature, can be considered to be permeated by and representing that underlying eternal spirit or Brahman. Certain objects have been chosen to act as symbols for the divine because of the characteristics they possess, and the elephant is one of them.

According to our scriptures, Shiva and his consort Parvati live on Mount Kailash in the Himalayas. Once Shiva was returning from one of his meditation wanderings, and he was stopped from entering their abode by Ganesha who was barring the entrance. Using her special powers, Parvati who was feeling lonely in Shiva's absence, had brought forth Ganesha from her own body, and Shiva having been absent could not recognize his own son. Using his trishul (the three-pronged weapon) he cut off Ganesha's head.

When Parvati-Mata came out and saw this, She was appalled and told Shiva to bring their son back to life. So, he went out and the first creature he came across was an elephant. He cut off the elephant's head and placed it on the body of Ganesha, thus restoring him to life.

This story may sound fantastic and unbelievable – until we understand the profound symbolism that it conveys. But first, one must understand what is the mind. In the Hindu perspective, the mind has four dimensions: *manas* – thinking, that is analyzing inputs it receives, internal and external; *buddhi* – intellect, coming to a conclusion on the basis of the analysis; *chitta* – memory; and *ahankar* – ego.

Ganesha as a child is the small human being who has

a big ego (like most of us) and the only way to get rid of the ego is by means of acquiring Spiritual Knowledge which confers enlightenment. As we sometimes do when we go to sleep over a problem, and on waking up in the morning we suddenly realise we have the solution, so too comes the Eureka moment of enlightenment as suddenly – so say the rishis. Ignorance, i.e. the ego disappears forever. That is the profound significance of the sudden cutting of Ganesha's head – in which resides the ego - by Shiva, and its replacement by the big head of the elephant, which represents intelligence and Higher Knowledge.

Thus, by understanding of the symbolism associated with a festival, not only does one gain a clearer appreciation of all the steps and aspects involved, but also derive joy in doing so because this contributes to elevate and purify the mind, which in turn translates into a higher quality of living and learning.

Such learning makes us realise, among other things, that the elephant because of its size is mightily strong and in spite of its size is a very gentle creature; it loyally responds to man's requests for its services without ever complaining, granting its favours without discrimination; it does not kill other creatures for its pleasure or for eating; it has a very good memory, and it allows children and even adults who are so inclined to play with it without getting irritated or angry, displaying an almost infinite patience.

Readers are invited to consult the abundant sources available to understand further the symbolism associated with Ganesha's large ears, his small squinting eyes, the trunk curved inwards and upwards, the single tusk and that too broken! the large belly, the mouse over which he rides... It is fascinating exploration into Higher Knowledge. Aum Shri Ganeshayanamaha.

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Representational Image. Pic - F

India, China, and Brazil could mediate Ukraine talks: **Vladimir Putin**

 ${f R}$ ussian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday suggested that India, China, and Brazil could serve as mediators for peace talks with Ukraine, citing his "relations of trust and confidence" with the leaders of these countries

Speaking at the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, Putin argued that an agreement reached during talks between Russian and Ukrainian negotiators in Turkiye in March 2022 - just weeks after the Russian invasion — should be the foundation for future negotiations, according to reports by Hindustan Times.

Responding to a moderator's question, he said, "If Ukraine is willing to continue negotiations, I am ready to proceed, but based on the agreements reached in Istanbul '

Putin was referring to the March 2022 talks in Turkiye, where he claimed a document was drafted and endorsed by the Ukrainian side. He asserted that this agreement was not implemented due to Western influence, which he said urged Ukraine to continue fighting to secure Russia's "strategic defeat.'

The panel discussion also featured Chinese Vice President Han Zheng and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, both of whom emphasized the global benefits of a "just and fair" peace. Ibrahim noted that such peace would significantly aid not only Russia and Ukraine but also the global economy, which has been severely disrupted by the conflict.

Putin's remarks come after visits by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to both Russia in July and Ukraine in August. During these visits, Modi reiterated that a solution cannot be found on the battlefield and urged both sides to return to dialogue and diplomacy.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has proposed that India could host a second peace summit on Ukraine. However, he stressed that this would only be possible if New Delhi endorses the joint communique from the first peace summit, held in Switzerland in June. While India participated in the summit, it did not sign the communique.

During his July 8-9 visit to Moscow, Modi told Putin that peace talks cannot succeed "under the shadow of the gun" and that resolving the conflict would require Russia's involvement. Modi also emphasized that India's position is not one of neutrality, but rather one "on the side of peace."

India's balancing act reflects its efforts to mediate the conflict while facing increasing pressure from Western countries to play a more active role in finding a solution, especially given India's leadership role in representing the Global South.

India has not publicly condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has abstained from voting on Ukrainerelated resolutions at the United Nations.

Malik Obama, Barack Obama's half-brother, latest to endorse Donald Trump

alik Obama, the half-brother of former President Marack Obama, has made headlines once again by endorsing Donald Trump for the 2024 U.S. presidential election. Despite once celebrating his younger brother's historic election in 2008, Malik has publicly supported Trump since 2016. He recently declared on social media, "I'm a registered Republican and I'm voting for President Donald Trump," reaffirming his political alignment.

Malik, who once served as the best man at Barack Obama's wedding and received the same honour in return, has experienced a strained relationship with his brother over the years. In 2016, Malik supported Trump and was even invited as a guest to one of the debates by the Trump campaign. His reasons for backing Trump include his opposition to same-sex marriage, dissatisfaction with Barack Obama's presidency, and frustration over U.S. intervention in Libya, particularly the ousting of former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

Malik Obama has also cited personal grievances, such as Barack's lack of support for a foundation he set up in their father's name. He expressed disappointment that his brother didn't back him more on this initiative, which deepened the rift between them.



Malik's life has not been without controversy. He ran for governor of Siaya County, Kenya, in 2013 and has faced allegations of domestic abuse. Additionally, reports suggest he has multiple wives, although he disputes the claim of having as many as 12.

His continued support for Trump highlights ongoing family and political tensions, and his public endorsements are fueling discussions across political and social circles.

NASA and Boeing 'were split' over Sunita Williams rescue plan



Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore at the ISS. Pic

NASA and Boeing had differing opinions on the rescue plan for astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore aboard the Starliner spacecraft, as confirmed by Steve Stich, NASA's Commercial Crew Program manager. After extensive discussions, NASA ultimately decided it was too risky for the astronauts to return to Earth aboard the faulty Starliner, which has been plagued by helium leaks and thruster malfunctions. Instead, the spacecraft will return to Earth uncrewed on September 7.

Williams and Wilmore, originally scheduled to travel back on Starliner, will remain at the International Space Station (ISS) until Elon Musk's SpaceX Crew-9 mission rescues them in February 2025.

During a September 4 teleconference, Stich acknowledged tensions between NASA and Boeing, noting that the teams were "split" over the best course of action. Boeing had confidence in its model predicting thruster performance, while NASA identified limitations in the data. Ultimately, NASA chose to prioritize astronaut safety over Boeing's assurances, leading to the decision for an uncrewed return.

NASA's ISS Program Manager Dana Weigel stated that Boeing wasn't in a position to make the final risk assessment, as the responsibility lay with NASA. Boeing accepted the decision, with Mark Nappi, head of Boeing's Commercial Crew Program, expressing confidence in a safe and successful uncrewed return. Despite disagreements, Stich emphasized that discussions remained professional and focused on ensuring crew safety.

These revelations follow earlier reports of heated discussions within NASA, with some insiders criticizing Boeing's stance as irresponsible. Nonetheless, both organizations are now focused on safely completing Starliner's return mission.

* Contd on page 13



Spotlights

Israel's Netanyahu sets condition to leave Gaza: 'Until that happens, we're there'

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reiterated that Israel will maintain control of Gaza's border with Egypt until specific conditions are met, a stance that could jeopardize ongoing cease-fire negotiations. Netanyahu's remarks came as the U.S. works on a new proposal aimed at ending the nearly 11-month conflict and securing a cease-fire and hostage release.

A major sticking point in the negotiations is the Israeli control of the Philadelphi Corridor—a narrow strip along Gaza's border with Egypt, seized by Israeli troops in May. Hamas is demanding a complete Israeli withdrawal from Gaza as part of a multi-phase truce deal, while Egypt, the U.S., and Qatar, as mediators, have called for a clear timeline for the withdrawal.

In a press briefing, Netanyahu emphasized that controlling the corridor is crucial to prevent Hamas from rearming through smuggling. He stated that maintaining this control is essential to ensure Hamas cannot repeat its October 7 attack on Israel. "Gaza must be



demilitarized, and this can only happen if the Philadelphi Corridor remains under firm control," he said, citing the discovery of numerous tunnels beneath the border. Netanyahu said Israel would consider withdrawing from the corridor only if an effective alternative force could be provided to manage it. "Show me anyone who can prevent smuggling effectively," he challenged. "Until that happens, we're staying."

The families of hostages held by Hamas have intensified their demands for a deal, accusing Netanyahu of prioritizing border control over the lives of their loved ones. Protests have erupted in Israel, with citizens calling for a resolution and the safe return of hostages.

Despite the mounting pressure, Netanyahu defended his position, stating that it is necessary to ensure Hamas does not remain a threat to Israel. "I understand the pain of the families," he said, "but leadership requires not just empathy but also sound judgment."

When asked about a timeline for ending the conflict, Netanyahu did not provide one, saying, "We will continue as long as it takes to achieve victory. We are getting closer."

Pope Francis praises Indonesians for choosing children over cats, unlike some...

Pope Francis praised Indonesians on Wednesday for their commitment to large families, highlighting this choice in contrast to the growing trend in other countries where people are increasingly opting for pets over children.

In Jakarta, during a joint appearance with President Joko Widodo, the 87-year-old pontiff lauded Indonesia's family values, stating, "Your country has families with three, four, or even five children, which positively influences the nation's demographics."



He also pointed out a troubling global trend where people are choosing pets over children. "Keep it up; you're setting an example for other countries where families might prefer a cat or a small dog instead of a child," he remarked with a smile.

Pope Francis has previously addressed the issue of declining birth rates and the growing preference for pets, warning that some homes are "filled with objects and emptied of children." He has noted, "There is no shortage of little dogs and cats, but there is a lack of children."

Despite health challenges, Pope Francis has been actively engaged in his 11-day tour of Southeast Asia and Oceania, visiting four countries.

He commended Indonesia for its rich tapestry of cultural and religious diversity, while also urging the need to safeguard this balance.

The visit comes at a time when Indonesia has experienced episodes of religious violence, including a 2021 suicide bombing outside a Catholic cathedral. Amnesty International has expressed hope that the pope's visit will help address intolerance and bolster religious freedom in the country.

How much did Google's founders pay for the garage where it all began?

Google celebrated its 26th anniversary yesterday. Founded on September 4, 1998, by Stanford PhD students Larry Page and Sergey Brin, the company has transformed how we access and communicate information. What began as a modest enterprise in a garage has evolved into one of the most influential tech giants in the world.

The initial workspace was the garage of Susan Wojcicki, the former CEO of YouTube who passed away last month after a battle with cancer. Wojcicki rented the garage to Page and Brin for \$1,700 a month. She later joined Google—now known as Alphabet—as its marketing manager in 1999, according to reports.

Today, "Googling" has become a staple of daily life, with Google dominating over 90% of the global search engine market.

Google's humble beginnings

Google's story is a quintessential Silicon Valley success. The company started in a small garage in Menlo Park, California. Page and Brin, driven by their fascination with information retrieval, aimed to create a search engine that surpassed existing technologies in organizing web data. Their venture quickly gained traction, attracting

Trudeau vows to avoid early election after NDP ends agreement

Hours after the New Democratic Party (NDP) ended its agreement with the ruling Liberal government, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau emphasized that he does not want an early election and indicated his willingness to continue working with the NDP despite the split.

Speaking in Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador, Trudeau stated, "I look forward to conversations with Mr. (Jagmeet) Singh about how we're going to keep showing that confident countries invest in their citizens and their future—because that's what we're doing." This statement came just hours after Singh announced his party's withdrawal from the Supply and Confidence Agreement, which had been in place since March 2022.

With Trudeau's Liberals holding a minority in the House of Commons, the opposition Conservative Party is already preparing to push for an election, potentially through a



both investors and technology enthusiasts.

Within a year, the company relocated to Mountain View, California, marking the beginning of its remarkable growth.

Google's impact on the internet

Over the past 26 years, Google has expanded far beyond its initial search engine. The company now offers a range of services including Gmail, cloud computing, and the Android operating system. Google has also led advancements in artificial intelligence, advertising, and more, profoundly shaping the internet as we know it.

no-confidence motion when Parliament resumes on September 18, according to Hindustan Times.

Trudeau expressed hope that snap elections could be avoided, saying, "I certainly hope the NDP stays true to its core values—ensuring Canadians receive the support they need—rather than enabling the austerity and cuts that would come under a Conservative government."

Canada's next federal election is scheduled for October 2025, but with just 154 MPs, Trudeau's Liberals are in a minority in the 338-seat House of Commons. Until Wednesday morning, the Liberals had maintained power with the support of the NDP's 25 MPs.

In a video message on Wednesday, Singh said he had "torn up" the agreement, declaring, "Canadians are fighting for the future of the middle class. Justin Trudeau has repeatedly caved to corporate greed. The Liberals have let people down—they don't deserve another chance from Canadians."

The announcement came amid growing unpopularity for the Trudeau government, a sentiment that has also affected the NDP. According to a recent survey by the Angus Reid Institute (ARI), the Conservatives currently hold 43% support—22 points ahead of the ruling Liberal Party.

History

Somduth Bhuckory

MT @ 70 MT: Mirror of its Times

The Mauritius Times appeared in August in the same year. Before it celebrated its first anniversary, I had become one of its regular contributors.

From the day it was born, Mauritius Times was a paper

with a mission. As an opinion paper, it aimed at moulding public opinion. The best English pens were to join forces with it in furthering the cause of socialism in this country and in fighting enemies of progress.

It should not be forgotten that *Mauritius Times* came into existence in Mauritius which was very different from what it is today. Thirty-five years ago, the political struggle was uppermost in the minds of the people. That was the time when universal adult suffrage was unknown here, and therefore the masses were not actively participating in public life.

The spirit of co-existence which is so much in evidence today was conspicuous by its absence. Even the majority community had to experience all sorts of onslaughts on its religion, language and culture. That was the time when NMU was spitting his venom from the columns of *Le Cernéen*. He was unable to accept the rise of other political forces, and he used to distill his hatred daily. He was obsessed with Hindu hegemony. I remember an editorial of him which was published shortly after my return *"Le désir de s'élever"*. He found it strange why the children of the common man should be anything but common. NMU did everything in his power to stifle *Mauritius Times* which had become a thorn in his flesh. He used to call it *"feuille de chou."* Little did he think that the *"feuille de chou"* was going one day to outlive his own paper. Vanity and prejudice had made him blind.

Taking all the foregoing into account, it can be imagined what an uphill task *Mauritius Times* had before it. What is remarkable is that it accepted the challenge and it has never swerved from its path of duty.

The credit for this should go first of all to Beekrumsing Ramlallah. We all know that it is not easy to run an English paper. One cannot help admiring therefore his undaunted courage and his unflinching perseverance. Hats off to him!

One of the prominent contributors of *Mauritius Times* has been D. Napal. His series of articles on *Mauritian History* broke new ground indeed. His was not the beaten track. He shed a new light on our history in a way that had a popular appeal. It is a pity that Napal's articles have not been published in book form.

The makers of *Mauritius Times* were mostly young people, but they wrote with such a conviction that they did not fail to command the attention of their elders. And they wrote on all the burning problems of the day. It can be said without any hesitation that they contributed in no small measure in infusing their youthful vigour into public life.

The appeal of *Mauritius Times* was so great that even a seasoned writer like J.N. Roy could not resist it. When I think of his contributions, the titles of two his articles come to my mind: *"Hang the Hindu"* and *"Publish and be damned!"*

The success of *Mauritius Times* in the early years was also due to a cartoonist, Krishna. His weekly cartoon was a feature to which people looked forward eagerly to enjoy. Krishna conveyed more by his few lines than what many words could ever express. I still remember vividly his cartoons "Le Renard et le Bouc" and "Ministerial Carrots".

Thirty-five years have gone by, but fortunately, the struggle has not been in vain. The achievements of *Mauritius Times* are there for all to be told. *Mauritius Times* has been the mirror of its times. I am sure that writers of Mauritian history will find a mine of information in its files.

The good work has to go on of course, and it will go on. And so, while I say "Many Happy Returns of the Day", I also say "Bon Courage!"

Somduth Bhuckory's recollections were published in the Mauritius Times of Friday 17 August 1984 in our 30th Special Anniversary Issue

Education

Modern College marks 55th anniversary with celebrations and reflections

Odern College proudly celebrated its 55th anniversary with the 18th edition of its Annual Prize Giving Ceremony, held amidst a mix of joy and solemn reflection. Mr Yogesswarnath Sanmukhiya, Rector/ Manager read out the message of the college's founder Megnath Sanmukhiya, to a packed audience, extending a warm welcome to parents and guardians of academic award recipients after a hiatus due to Covid-19 and grant system issues.

The event was marred by the recent passing of Mr. Geerish Ramjug, a beloved member of the college's academic staff. Mr Ramjug, who dedicated 19 years to the institution despite ongoing health challenges, passed away just twelve days prior to the ceremony. In his honour, Mr Sanmukhiya announced a special tribute to celebrate Mr Ramjug's unwavering commitment to his



students.

Amid the sombre note, the ceremony highlighted several outstanding academic achievements:

At the NCE level, 9 students attained Aggregate 10, 12 students achieved Aggregate 9, and 19 students secured Aggregate 8

At the SC level, 17 students earned

Aggregate 16-20, 21 students received Aggregate 11-15, and 13 students obtained Aggregate 6-10. A significant milestone was achieved with six candidates securing Aggregate 6, including one student who completed the SC examinations in just three years. Additionally, several students were ranked in the top ten nationally across nine different subjects.

At the HSC level, three students were listed among the Top 500 in Mauritius. Notably, one student achieved 7th place in the Mauritius Economics Side Girls Scholarship and 13th in the Mauritius Economics Side All Scholarship. Another student was recognized as the Top in the World in Hindi at the AS (Subsidiary) Level.

Macknowledged the impressive performances of students not only in academics but also in various extracurricular activities, emphasizing that these successes are a testament to the institution's commitment to holistic education.

However, he also addressed a concerning trend: the quality of HSC results has declined compared to previous years. The number of students achieving top grades at Subsidiary and Principal Levels has dropped. This issue was attributed to careless errors and a lack of thorough revision, underscoring the need for meticulous attention to detail.

Reflecting on the college's 55-year journey, Mr Sanmukhiya invited attendees to consider the impact of Modern College on Central Flacq and the opportunities it has provided. He praised the collective effort that has transformed the institution from modest beginnings into a leading educational establishment.

Despite these achievements, the college faces financial challenges due to the current grant system. He expressed concern over inadequate compensation for the use of school premises and called for an urgent review of the grant system. He highlighted the need for a round-table discussion involving all stakeholders to address these financial constraints and ensure the sustainability of private secondary schools.

As Modern College celebrates this significant milestone, it stands at a crossroads, balancing its proud legacy with the need for ongoing support and adaptation to secure its future success.



Opinion

Mauritius Times

Bail de terres de l'Etat et centres culturels Un test du droit de propriété dans un pays libéral



• Suite de la page 3

Or, le mauricianisme ne signifie pas le déni des identités culturelles. C'est plutôt la diversité culturelle dans un esprit d'appartenance à une nation.

Comme d'autres sociétés multiculture relles, Maurice a adopté le multiculturalisme comme un modèle de coexistence pacifique entre les communautés, c'est-àdire l'unité dans la diversité. Idéalement, le

A travers les subventions d'Etat. les baux de terrains et les privilèges hors-taxe, le gouvernement, quel qu'il soit, exerce une influence insidieuse sur les organisations religieuses et associations socioculturelles dont les dirigeants aiment se montrer du bon bord politique (à l'exception de certains qui gardent une neutralité politique). L'idéal serait l'autofinancement des organisations religieuses, assuré par les contributions des coreligionnaires qui soient déductibles de l'impôt sur le revenu, comme dans certains pays. Cela permettrait l'indépendance des organisations religieuses par rapport aux politiciens ... "

multiculturalisme requiert le respect de toutes les ethnies, religions et cultures dans l'égalité de droit et de fait, et non pas la domination d'une ethnie, religion ou culture par une autre. C'est ce que le sociologue appelle le «pluralisme égalitaire» à l'opposé du «pluralisme ethnique», qui est la coexistence d'une variété de communautés et d'ethnies distinctes dans une société.

Pour permettre une coexistence harmonieuse et prospère, le multiculturalisme mauricien devrait reposer sur une laïcité effective de l'État. Les liens incestueux entre les associations socio-culturelles et le pouvoir politique ont dénaturé les rapports entre la religion et la politique. À travers les subventions d'Etat, les baux de terrains et les privilèges hors-taxe, le gouvernement, quel qu'il soit, exerce une influence insidieuse sur les organisations religieuses et associations socioculturelles dont les dirigeants aiment se montrer du bon bord politique (à l'exception de certains qui gardent une neutralité politique).

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En matiere de multiculturalisme, Maurice peut sans doute apprendre de l'expérience d'autres pays ayant une population hétérogène. Au Canada, par exemple, le multiculturalisme est codifié dans la «Canadian Multiculturalisme Act of 1998», qui stipule que «All Canadians are full and equal partners in Canadian society». Le Departement du Multiculturalisme et de la Citoyenneté fut établi en 1991 avec pour but d'encourager toutes les minorités ethniques de participer pleinement dans tous les aspects de la vie canadienne en maintenant en mème temps leurs identités ethniques et pratiques culturelles distinctes.Si chaque communauté a le droit de pratiquer sa religion et/ou culture, elle le fait dans le respect de l'autre sans être assimilée à une culture dominante. Toutes les communautés partagent une citoyenneté commune et égalitaire fondée sur la Charte des Droits et des Libertés.

Comme l'écrivain libanais Amin Maalouf, membre de l'Académie française, suggère dans ses ouvrages classiques (*Les Identités Meutrières, Le Naufrage des Civilisations*), l'idéal exige de chacun qu'il assume l'ensemble de ses appartenances (communautaire, ethnique, religieuse ou nationale), et un peu aussi celles des autres,afin d'éviter les dérapages meurtriers du désir d'identité.

Prakash Neerohoo

Constitution of Mauritius

Article 8. Protection from deprivation of property

- (1) No property of any description shall be compulsorily taken possession of, and no interest in or right over poverty of any description shall be compulsorily acquired, except where –
 - (a) the taking of possession or acquisition is necessary or expedient in the interests of the defence, public safety, public morality, public health, town and country planning, the development or utilisation of any property in such a manner as to promote the public benefit or the social and economic well-being of the people of Mauritius; and
 - (b) there is reasonable justifications for the causing of any hardship that may result to any person having an interest in or right over the property; and
 - (c) provision is made by a law applicable to that taking of possession or acquisition
 - (i) for the payment of adequate compensations; and
 - (ii) securing to any person having an interest in or right over the property a right of access to the Supreme Court, whether direct or on appeal from any other authority, for the determination of his interest or right, the legality of the taking of possession or acquisition of the property, interest or right, and the amount of any compensation to which he is entitled, and for the purpose of obtaining payment of that compensation.

YOUR STARS

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21 Adventure calls, and you may feel restless next week. Whether it's travel, learning, or exploring new ideas, embrace the opportunity for growth. Just be mindful of overcommitting—balance your enthusiasm with practicality to avoid burning out. *Lucky Numbers:* 5, 12, 16, 25, 30, 38 CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Your hard work begins to pay off next week, Capricorn. Career matters take the spotlight, and you'll feel a sense of achievement for your efforts. However, make time for relaxation, as the week may be demanding. Patience will

help you navigate any obstacles. *Lucky Numbers:* 2, 9, 18, 23, 27, 36 AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

This week brings an influx of innovative ideas, making it a great time for creative problem-solving. You may feel drawn to group activities or causes but remember to balance socializing with time for personal reflection. Keep an open mind for new perspectives. Lucky Numbers: 6, 10, 15, 24, 32, 37 PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20 You may feel a deep connection to your emotions and spiritual side, which could lead to important personal revelations. Creative outlets will help you process these feelings, so allow yourself time to explore

your imagination. Lucky Numbers: 4, 11, 17, 20, 26, 35 ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19 Next week brings a surge of energy and opportunity. You may feel inspired to tackle new challenges, especially in your professional life. Stay open to collaboration, as teamwork will enhance your success. Balance your drive with self-care to avoid burnout. Lucky Numbers: 3, 7, 14, 19, 25, 36 TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

You'll find comfort in routine and stability this week, Taurus. Financial opportunities may arise, but think carefully before making major decisions. Relationships could benefit from your calm and steady presence, so

spend quality time with loved ones. Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 11, 22, 29, 38 GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20 This week may feel fast-paced, with new information coming at you from all sides. Your communication skills will be crucial, so ensure you're clear and concise in conversations. Stay flexible to adapt to changes but carve out time for personal reflection. Lucky Numbers: 5, 12, 16, 23, 27, 32 CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22 You'll be focusing on home and family matters this week. Your nurturing side is in full force, and it's a great time to resolve lingering issues with loved ones. Trust your instincts when navigating emotional situations, but don't shy away from asking for support. Lucky Numbers: 6, 10, 18, 21, 30, 35 LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22 A creative spark will ignite this week, giving you the motivation to pursue a passion project or hobby. You'll be radiating confidence, which will draw others toward you.

However, stay grounded by avoiding overindulgence and taking time for rest when needed.

VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22 Next week emphasizes attention to detail and organization. You'll feel the need to streamline your schedule and get your priorities in order. It's a great time for productivity but be mindful not to become overly critical of yourself or others. Keep a balanced perspective. Lucky Numbers: 4, 13, 17, 20, 26, 33 LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22 Harmony and balance are key themes for you this week, Libra. You may feel torn between different obligations, but maintaining a peaceful mindset will help you find solutions. Lean on your diplomatic nature to navigate any interpersonal tensions. Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 19, 22, 31, 39 SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV Passions run high for you this week, Scorpio, especially in your personal relationships. Use this intense energy to deepen bonds, but be careful not to let jealousy or possessiveness creep in. Professionally, you'll benefit from a focused, determined approach. Lucky Numbers: 3, 8, 14, 21, 29

Lucky Numbers: 1, 9, 15, 24, 28, 37

Spirituality

Mauritius Times

Swami Sivananda: A Blend of Science and Spirituality



Born on September 8, 1887,

wamber Swami Sivananda was a doctor who manifested

such divine qualities that he came to be regarded as a saint. He led a life of selfless love and service, exemplifying these values in his personal life.

In 1936, Swamiji founded the Divine Life Society and wrote over 300 books on various topics, ranging from the conquest of the mind to sure ways for success in life and God-realization. In 1945, he also founded the All-World Religious Federation with the objective of bringing all faiths together, proposing that each person should fully develop within their own faith.

He expressed his views and insights on various spheres of life through his seminars and travels.



Education

To him, education was not mere intellectual achievement but the development of moral and spiritual qualities. He believed in the importance of balancing knowledge with wisdom, learning to discriminate between the projections of the senses and the spirit within, integrating science with philosophy, and inquiring into the values and nature of things.

Swamiji regarded culture as something lively, not abstract. Its vitality is transmitted from age to age through the discipline of the head, heart, and hand. Cultures may differ, but the core elements remain the same, even as they absorb new ones over time.

Yoga Asanas

Swamiji emphasized the need to practise yoga asanas to maintain good health and energy. To achieve peace of mind, he taught various ways to control the mind through prayer, meditation, self-control, and introspection.

He used to say, "The world is a *mela* (festival) for two days, life is a bubble for two seconds" and "Give, give, give — this is the secret of abundance."

Swami used simple ways to communicate life's lessons. He introduced eighteen "ities," which, when practised, allow a devotee to attain immortality: Serenity, Regularity, Absence of Vanity, Sincerity, Simplicity, Veracity, Equanimity, Fixity, Non-Irritability, Adaptability, Humility, Tenacity, Integrity, Nobility, Magnanimity, Charity, Generosity, and Purity.

Friday, September 6, 2024

Being a disciple of Swami Sivananda, Swami Venkatesananda taught yoga and spread the message of universal love and service in Mauritius starting in the 1960s. The Sivananda Ashram in Rose Hill, built in the 1960s, stands as a place of worship for all Mauritians. Mr Krylov Ramtohul, former Postmaster General, has been a pillar of strength in keeping the Ashram active in spreading Swamiji's messages.

The legacy of Swami Sivananda is one of unity amidst diversity, love amidst ill will, truth and nonviolence amidst turbulence, and a sense of hope for all of us who crave a peaceful society.

New Vacancies at Afreximbank

The African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) is a multilateral financial institution established in 1993 to promote and finance intra- and extra-African trade. Headquartered in Cairo, Egypt, Afreximbank's mission is to stimulate the expansion, diversification, and development of African trade while providing financial services, such as trade finance, project financing, export development, and investment banking. The Bank supports both public and private sector projects across the continent, playing a critical role in advancing Africa's economic integration and development.

Managing Director – Client Relations, Based in Cairo, Egypt

The Managing Director will report to the Senior Executive Vice President and lead the Bank's global Client Relations, providing strategic direction across business development, government relations, service delivery, and portfolio management, while ensuring profitability and alignment with the Bank's strategic goals.

- Lead the Global Client Coverage team, coordinating origination, business development, government relations, and client services across the Bank, branches, and digital channels.
- Foster relationships with the Bank's clients at the highest level of seniority on an individualized basis and deliver the Bank's full product offering from a 'one stop shop', positioning Afreximbank as the partner of choice to support high development impact operations in the country.
- Demonstrate sound judgement in risk management particularly credit risk, monitoring strict adherence to regulatory requirements and efficient preparation for audit reviews.
- Engage staff regularly and manage direct reports to obtain maximum output. Provide guidance, leadership support and strategic direction in the execution of the Afreximbank Group strategy.

To apply for this role contact Shearidan Rabsch srabsch@caglobalint.com

To view the full job descriptions, visit www.caglobalint.com

Deputy Group Treasurer, Based in Cairo, Egypt

The Deputy Group Treasurer, reporting to the Managing Director, Group Treasury & Markets, will oversee daily Treasury & Markets operations and lead the Client Solutions Unit. This role supports the Bank's goal of boosting Africa's global trade share through growth and diversification, with a focus on generating non-funded income and meeting the revenue targets set in the Bank's budget.

- Manage Treasury & Markets Client Solutions, collaborating with Client Relations to market products effectively, aiming to become the go-to for treasury risk management solutions.
- Design client-specific financial risk management solutions and launch an automated portal for clients to manage these solutions.
- Support the Group Treasurer in updating the treasury and markets strategy, ensuring alignment with the Bank's overall strategy.
 Implement the Group Treasury Strategy as part of the Bank's medium-term plan. Create an annual Treasury and Markets work plan.
- Review and ensure Treasury & Markets resources meet strategic needs with the Group Treasurer. Oversee planning, analytics, reporting, and performance management. Collaborate on the annual Treasury and Markets plan.
- Regularly update the Group's Cash and Liquidity strategy with the Group Treasurer. Manage daily operations, working with Liquidity & Relationship and Balance Sheet Risk Management teams.

To apply for this role contact Scott Fraser - sfraser@caglobalint.com



CA Global Finance has been exclusively retained to search and select the final shortlists for these positions. To apply, please visit our website <u>www.ca-finance.com/latest-jobs</u> or for more information contact **Bryan Le Roux**, Managing Director at CA Global Finance on +27 (0) 216599200.



Friday, September 6, 2024 17

When did the climate crisis begin?



Climate change is the Symptom, Capitalism is the Problem. Pic - Common Dreams

• Cont. from page 2

Take a concept like the carbon footprint. This calculates how much CO_2 is emitted in the process of making, using and disposing of something – cars, electrons, buildings. Such an analytical tool is useful, McManus says, but its most heavily promoted application has been in measuring the impact of individuals.

How differently history might have unfolded if the fossil fuel industry hadn't obscured what was happening to the climate for several decades. John Grant, a sustainability expert at Sheffield Hallam University, argues that the crisis could have been solved by now – and the enormous potential of renewable energy realised much sooner.

Instead, a selection of companies, chiefly concerned with maximising profit, were allowed to decide the fate of all Earth's inhabitants. Perverse as that may seem, our economic system enables this by leaving the means of producing the things people need (like energy) in private hands.

From Amsterdam to the world

One of the first entities we might recognise as a private business (with shares that could be bought and sold on the Amsterdam Stock Exchange) was the Dutch East India Company. Granted a monopoly over trading activities in Asia by the Dutch state in 1602, the Dutch East India Company violently dispossessed the Bandanese people of Indonesia to gain control of the trade in nutmeg, a valuable spice.

Amitav Ghosh, an author of 20 historical fiction and non-fiction books on colonialism and other topics, locates in this story the seeds of the climate crisis.

"Colonialism, genocide and structures of organised violence were the foundations on which industrial modernity was built," he writes. By making such destruction economically rational, capitalism encouraged activities that gradually degraded Earth's living systems, say Julia Taylor and Imraan Valodia, climate and inequality researchers familiar with Ghosh's work.

For a sense of how this legacy still frustrates efforts to solve climate change, look no further than the international negotiations convened by the United Nations.

The COP27 summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt was the fifth to be held in Africa. One debate at COP27 asked whether African countries had the right to exploit their natural gas reserves, as many richer countries had already done. Those same "developed countries", in UN parlance, may owe their wealth to past plunder in Africa. And despite promises to the contrary, few countries are meeting their pledges to finance renewable energy in Africa.

"Calls to cease all gas exploration in Africa that fail to account for where historical responsibility for climate change lies and the need to close the current finance gap are the most audacious kind of climate imperialism," say Chukwumerije Okereke and Youba Sokona, environment and development experts at the University of Bristol and UCL respectively.

"On this basis, it is argued that developed countries are enacting a renewed form of colonialism – what some might call climate colonialism."

By Jack Marley, Environment & Energy Editor, The Conversation

Notice for Building & Land Use Permit Application Notice for Permission for Land Use

Take notice that I, **Reshad Kurreemun**, will apply to the District Council of Moka for a Building and Land Use Permit for a proposed retail sale of other goods in specialized stores (Ready made goods) at Royal Road, Dagotière.

Any person feeling aggrieved by the proposal may lodge an objection in writing to the above-named Council within 15 days as from the date of this publication.

06 September 2024

Remembrance

In loving memory of our beloved father Deokeenanun Ramdharry (Deokee), CBE

Dad, it has been twenty-three years since you left us for the heavenly abode. Time is often said to be a great healer, but we find ourselves missing you more as the days go by. You remain ever-present in our hearts and minds. Remembering you is easy, but the heartache of missing you never goes away. You are a piece of our hearts that lives in heaven. We continue to regret your sudden departure, and there remains a strange emptiness in our lives — an empty space that time can never fill.

Yet, you have left us with cherished memories that we will treasure forever. You are always in our prayers, and our love for you remains as strong as ever. Words cannot fully capture how important you were to us and the powerful influence you continue to have as a very precious and priceless father.

We find solace in knowing that wherever you are, you are watching over us, guiding us, and showering us with your blessings. *Love you, Papa.*

Sadly missed by Mum, Neeroo, Honey, Ougen, Harry, Mila, Momone, Raj, and Chris.

Mauritius Times

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Thank you so much. Mauritius Times

Wellness

Mauritius Times

How 22 minutes of exercise a day could reduce the health risks from sitting too long

Sedentary lifestyles come with substantial health risks. But even small increases in our daily physical activity may go some way to mitigating these risks.

eople in developed countries spend an average of nine to ten hours a day sitting. Whether it's spending time in front of a computer, stuck in traffic, or unwinding in front of the TV, our lives have become increasingly sedentary.

This is concerning because prolonged time spent sitting is linked to a number of health issues including obesity, heart disease, and certain types of cancers. These health issues can contribute to earlier death.

But a new study suggests that for people over 50, getting just 22 minutes of exercise a day can lower the increased risk of premature death from a highly sedentary lifestyle.

What the researchers did

The team combined data from two studies from Norway, one from Sweden and one from the United States. The studies included about 12,000 people aged 50 or older who wore wearable devices to track how active and sedentary they were during their daily routines.

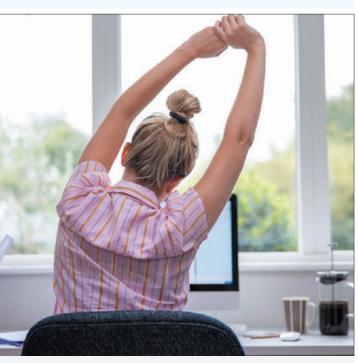
Participants were followed up for at least two years (the median was 5.2 years) during the study period, which spanned 2003-2020.

Analyses took several lifestyle and health factors into account, such as education, alcohol intake, smoking status, and previous history of heart disease, cancer and diabetes. All this data was linked to national death registries.

A 22 minute threshold

A total of 805 participants died during follow up. The researchers found people who were sedentary for more than 12 hours a day had the highest risk of death (a 38% higher risk than people who were sedentary for eight hours)

However, this was only observed in those who did less than 22 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily. So for people who did more than 22 minutes of exercise, there was no longer a significantly heightened risk that is, the risk became generally similar to those who were sedentary for eight hours.



Sitting down for too long carries risks for our health. **Pic - Shutterstock**

Higher daily duration of physical activity was consistently associated with lower risk of death, regardless of total sedentary time. For example, the team reported an additional ten minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day could lower mortality risk by up to 15% for people who were sedentary less than 10.5 hours a day. For those considered highly sedentary (10.5 hours a day or more), an additional ten minutes lowered mortality risk by up to 35%.

The study had some limitations

The team couldn't assess how changes in physical activity or sedentary time over several months or years may affect risk of death. And the study included only participants aged 50 and above, making results less applicable to younger age groups.

Further, cultural and lifestyle differences between

Notice for Building & Land Use Permit Application

Notice for Permission for Land Use

Take notice that I, Nazeer Raouf, will apply to the District Council of Moka for a Building and Land Use Permit for a proposed General Retailer Foodstuffs (excluding Liquor and Non Foodstuffs) at Sans Souci Road, Montagne Blanche.

Any person feeling aggrieved by the proposal may lodge an objection in writing to the above-named Council within 15 days as from the date of this publication.

06 September 2024

countries may have influenced how data between studies was measured and analysed.

Ultimately, because this study was observational, we can't draw conclusions on cause and effect with certainty. But the results of this research align with a growing body of evidence exploring the relationship between physical activity, sedentary time, and death.

It's positive news

Research has previously suggested physical activity may offset health risks associated with high sedentary time.

The good news is, even short bouts of exercise can have these positive effects. In this study, the 22 minutes wasn't necessarily done all at once. It was a total of the physical activity someone did in a day, and would have included incidental exercise (activity that's part of a daily routine, such as climbing the stairs).

Several studies using wearable devices have found short bursts of high-intensity everyday activities such as stair climbing or energetic outdoor home maintenance activities such as mowing the lawn or cleaning the windows can lower mortality, heart disease and cancer risk.

A recent study using wearable devices found moderate to vigorous bouts of activity lasting three to five minutes provide similar benefits to bouts longer than ten minutes when it comes to stroke and heart attack risk.

Several other studies have found being active just on the weekend provides similar health benefits as being active throughout the week.

Research has also shown the benefits of physical activity and reducing sedentary time extend to cognitive health.

Routines such as desk jobs can foster a sedentary lifestyle that may be difficult to shift. But mixing short bursts of activity into our day can make a significant difference towards improving our health and longevity.

Whether it's a brisk walk during lunch, taking the stairs, or even a short at-home workout, this study is yet another to suggest that every minute counts.

By Matthew Ahmadi, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Faculty of Medicine and Health & Emmanuel Stamatakis, Professor of Physical Activity, Lifestyle, and Population Health, University of Sydney

Notice for Building & Land Use Permit Application

Notice for Permission for Land Use Within **Residential Zone**

Take notice that "Fast Biz Farming Limited" will apply to the District Council of Flacq for a Building and Land Use Permit for a proposed Extension of a Building at First Floors (2 Buildings) to be used as Poultry Pen for rearing up to 14,800 birds at Naga Road, Brisée Verdière.

Any person feeling aggrieved by the proposal may lodge an objection in writing to the above-named Council within 15 days from the date of this publication.

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Al-generated faces appear more realistic than human faces

Astudy conducted by experts at The Australian National University (ANU) has found that Al-generapted white faces are increasingly seen as more realistic than real human faces. Participants in the study were more likely to identify Al-generated white faces as human compared to genuine human faces. However, this was not the case for images of people of color.

Dr. Amy Dawel, the senior author of the study, attributes this discrepancy to the fact that AI algorithms are predominantly trained on white faces. "If white AI faces are consistently perceived as more realistic, this technology could exacerbate racial biases online," Dr. Dawel explained. "Current AI technologies often alter the skin and eye colors of people of color to resemble those



Mauritius Times

of white individuals, leading to problematic representations."

One significant issue with AI 'hyper-realism' is that individuals frequently do not recognize they are being deceived. Elizabeth Miller, co-author and PhD candidate at ANU, noted, "Those who mistake AI faces for real ones are often the most confident in their judgments, making them unaware that they are being tricked."

The researchers identified why AI faces deceive people. "AI faces, particularly white ones, are often more proportionate, which people misinterpret as a sign of authenticity," Dr. Dawel said. "As AI technology advances, these differences are likely to disappear."

The study highlights potential risks associated with AI-generated images, including misinformation and identity theft. The researchers advocate for increased transparency in AI development to address these issues proactively. "AI technology must not be an exclusive domain of tech companies. Greater transparency is essential to allow researchers and the public to identify problems early," Dr. Dawel emphasized.

Public awareness is also crucial in mitigating the risks posed by AI technology. "Since detecting AI-generated faces is becoming increasingly difficult, society needs tools to accurately identify these imposters," Dr. Dawel concluded. "Educating the public about the realistic nature of AI faces could help foster a more skeptical approach to online images."



Currous What is love? A philosopher explains it's not a choice or a feeling – it's a practice

What makes a relationship last when feelings fade or circumstances change? Can you force yourself to love someone you hate or don't care about?

Love is confusing. People in the U.S. Google the word "love" about 1.2 million times a month. Roughly a quarter of those searches ask "what is love" or request a "definition of love."

What is all this confusion about?

Neuroscience tells us that love is caused by certain chemicals in the brain. For example, when you meet someone special, the hormones dopamine and norepinephrine can trigger a reward response that makes you want to see this person again. Like tasting chocolate, you want more.

Your feelings are the result of these chemical reactions. Around a crush or best friend, you probably feel something like excitement, attraction, joy and affection. You light up when they walk into the room. Over time, you might feel comfort and trust. Love between a parent and child feels different, often some combination of affection and care.

But are these feelings, caused by chemical reactions in your brain, all that love is? If so, then love seems to be something that largely happens to you. You'd have as much control over falling in love as you'd have over accidentally falling in a hole – not much.

As a philosopher who studies love, I'm interested in the different ways people have understood love throughout history. Many thinkers have believed that love is more than a feeling.

More than a feeling

The ancient Greek philosopher Plato thought that love might cause feelings like attraction and pleasure, which are out of your control. But these feelings are less important than the loving relationships you choose to form as a result: lifelong bonds between people who help one another change and grow into their best selves.

Similarly, Plato's student Aristotle claimed that, while relationships built on feelings like pleasure are common, they're



less good for humankind than relationships built on goodwill and shared virtues. This is because Aristotle thought relationships built on feelings last only as long as the feelings last.

Imagine you start a relationship with someone you have little in common with other than you both enjoy playing video games. Should either of you no longer enjoy gaming, nothing would hold the relationship together. Because the relationship is built on pleasure, it will fade once the pleasure is gone.

Compare this with a relationship where you want to be together not because of a shared pleasure but because you admire one another for who you are. You want what is best for one another. This kind of friendship built on shared virtue and goodwill will be much longer lasting. These kinds of friends will support each other as they change and grow.

Plato and Aristotle both thought that love is more than a feeling. It's a bond between people who admire one another and therefore choose to support one another over time.

Maybe, then, love isn't totally out of your control.

Celebrating individuality and 'standing in love'

Contemporary philosopher J. David Velleman also thinks that love can be disentangled from "the likings and longings" that come with it – those butterflies in your stomach. This is because love isn't just a feeling. It's a special kind of paying attention, which celebrates a person's individuality.

Velleman says Dr. Seuss did a good job describing what it means to celebrate a person's individuality when he wrote: "Come on! Open your mouth and sound off at the sky! Shout loud at the top of your voice, 'I AM I! ME! I am I!" When you love someone, you celebrate them because you value the "I AM I" that they are.

You can also get better at love. Social psychologist Erich Fromm thinks that loving is a skill that takes practice: what he calls "standing in love." When you stand in love, you act in certain ways toward a person.

Just like learning to play an instrument, you can also get better at loving with patience, concentration and discipline. This is because standing in love is made up of other skills such as listening carefully and being present. If you get better at these skills, you can get better at loving.

If this is the case, then love and friendship are distinct from the feelings that accompany them. Love and friendship are bonds formed by skills you choose to practice and improve.

Does this mean you could stand in love with someone you hate, or force yourself to stand in love with someone you have no feelings for whatsoever?

Probably not. Philosopher Virginia Held explains the difference between doing an activity and participating in a practice as simply doing some labor versus doing some labor while also enacting values and standards.

Compare a math teacher who mechanically solves a problem at the board versus a teacher who provides students a detailed explanation of the solution. The mechanical teacher is doing the activity – presenting the solution – whereas the engaged teacher is participating in the practice of teaching. The engaged teacher is enacting good teaching values and standards, such as creating a fun learning environment.

Standing in love is a practice in the same sense. It's not just a bunch of activities you perform. To really stand in love is to do these activities while enacting loving values and standards, such as empathy, respect, vulnerability, honesty and, if Velleman is right, celebrating a person for who they truly are.

How much control do you have over love?

Is it best to understand love as a feeling or a choice?

Think about what happens when you break up with someone or lose a friend. If you understand love purely in terms of the feelings it stirs up, the love is over once these feelings disappear, change or get put on hold by something like a move or a new school.

On the other hand, if love is a bond you choose and practice, it will take much more than the disappearance of feelings or life changes to end it. You or your friend might not hang out for a few days, or you might move to a new city, but the love can persist.

If this understanding is right, then love is something you have more control over than it may seem. Loving is a practice. And, like any practice, it involves activities you can choose to do – or not do – such as hanging out, listening and being present. In addition, practicing love will involve enacting the right values, such as respect and empathy.

While the feelings that accompany love might be out of your control, how you love someone is very much in your control.

> Edith Gwendolyn Nally Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Missouri-Kansas City

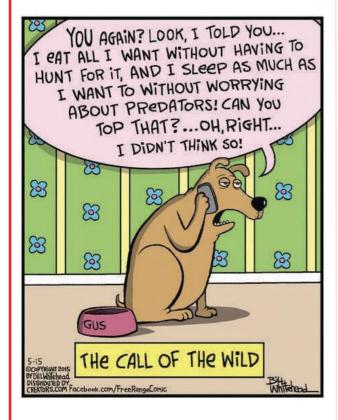


The Workaholic's Promise

A workaholic man never wastes a second trying to make as much money as possible. He even made his wife promise that he would be buried with all his money when he passed away.

One Tuesday, he dies of a severe heart attack caused by stress and hypertension. During the funeral, the widow approaches the coffin and inserts a small purse into his coat pocket.

Her mother asks if she has been so foolish as to bury all the money with him, and she replies, "I'm Christian, and therefore I had to keep my promise. I took all his money and put it in my account, then I wrote a check for the exact amount, which I placed inside the purse. If he can cash the check, the money is his to spend."



Beethoven's Decomposition

When Beethoven passed away, he was buried in a churchyard. A few days later, a drunkard was walking through the cemetery and heard a strange noise coming from the place where Beethoven was buried.

Terrified, the drunk ran to persuade the priest to come and listen. The holy man also heard some faint, unrecognizable music coming from the grave. The priest ran to call the magistrate.

When the magistrate arrived, he bent his ear to the grave, listened for a while, and said, "Ah, yes, that's Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, being played backward."

He listened a bit longer and said, "That's the Eighth Symphony, and it's backward too -- most puzzling."

"There's the Seventh, the Sixth, the Fifth ... "

Suddenly realizing what was happening, he stood up and announced to the crowd that had gathered in the cemetery, "My fellow citizens, there's nothing to worry about; it's just Beethoven decomposing."

* * * The Dentist's Dilemma

A woman fell in love with a new dentist and soon lured him into a series of passionate encounters in the dental clinic after hours. But one day he said sadly, "Darling, we have to stop seeing each other. Your husband is bound to get suspicious."

"No worries," she assured him. "He's as dumb as a post. Besides, we've been together for a couple of months now and he doesn't suspect a thing."

"True," said the dentist, "but you're down to one tooth."

"Agreed," the woman said. "To qualify as a dentist, you have to go through a lot of boring drills."

Fly Swatter Standoff

A woman walked into the kitchen to find her husband stalking around with a fly swatter.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"Hunting flies," he responded.

"Oh. Killing any?" she inquired.

"Yep, 3 males, 2 females," he replied.

Intrigued, she asked, "How can you tell?"

He responded, "3 were on a beer can, 2 were on the phone."

The Can Opener Dilemma

A mathematician, a physicist, and an engineer are stranded on a desert island after a shipwreck. They find an entire case of canned food, but no can opener!

The engineer says, "We can gather some flexible branches from palm trees, get a sharp rock, and attach it to a stick with palm fronds. Then we can use it like an axe to cut open the cans."

The physicist says, "We can make a fire with loose driftwood, and then put the cans in the fire. The heat will cause the cans to explode, and then we can eat the food. Plus, it'll be hot, as a bonus!"

The mathematician says, "Assume we have a can opener."

The Orange Headed Man

A regular customer walks into a bar with an orange for a head.

The bartender says, "Hey man, why do you have an orange for a head?"

The guy says, "Get me a drink and I'll tell you." The bartender pours him a drink, passes the glass, and puts his elbows on the bar. The guy takes a sip and sets the drink down.

"Last night, I was cleaning out my attic and I found an old, antique glass bottle. I rubbed it, and to my surprise, a genie popped out! He granted me three wishes. For my first wish, I asked for my house to become a mansion. The genie snapped his fingers and immediately, my modest home turned into a lavish mansion marble floors, high ceilings with glass chandeliers, fountains in the main entrance. It was complete luxury."

The bartender says, "That's cool, man, but why the orange for a head?"

The guy says, "For my second wish, I asked for a brand-new, high-powered sports car. The genie snapped his fingers, and a cherry-red Ferrari appeared in my driveway. It sparkles, goes 0-60 in less than a second, and handles like a champ. The first time I drove it, I hit almost 180 mph. It was amazing!"

The bartender says, "Awesome, man! But still, the

orange for a head."

The guy takes another sip from his drink and puts it down. "For my third wish, I asked for an orange for a head."

* * *

The Eternal Roommates

Just beyond the Gates of Hell, an alcoholic, a womanizer, and a stoner find themselves standing in front of three identical doors.

Satan greets them and explains the secret to getting into Heaven: Each man must spend 1,000 years in a room with their greatest vice. If at any point they ask to be let out, they will be trapped inside forever.

The first man, a lifelong alcoholic, is presented with a room resembling his favourite drinking spot. His old drinking buddies are there, along with an endless supply of spirits. Ecstatic, he rushes inside and slams the door behind him.

The second man, known for his womanizing ways, is faced with a room filled with every woman he has ever fantasized about. Without a word, he rushes inside and closes the door.

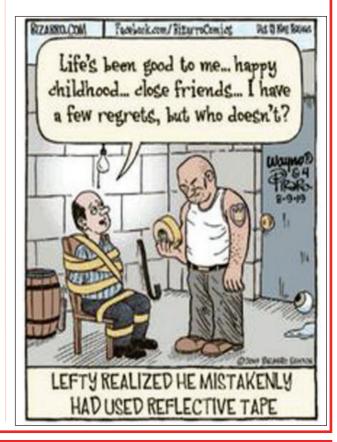
The third man, a cannabis connoisseur, is amazed to find a forest filled with every strain of marijuana imaginable. He happily enters the room, eager to get eternally stoned.

1,000 years later ...

Satan, true to his word, checks on each man. He opens the first door and finds a nightmarish scene: blood, booze, and bodily fluids cover the floor. The man's friends lie dead, and he is found shrivelled and crying, surrounded by broken bottles. Satan reminds him of the condition of his imprisonment, and the man is trapped inside forever.

Opening the second door, Satan is met with a flood of people -- men, women, and children -- along with the stench of waste and burnt flesh. The second man is riding the wave of people, screaming to be let out. Satan seals the door forever.

Finally, Satan opens the third door to find the stoner meditating in the untouched forest, surrounded by a pool of tears. The stoner, with a look of disbelief, rushes over and asks, "Do you have a lighter, man?!"



All Things Life

Mauritius Times

Life Lessons **Insights from President Xi Jinping**

When I was a child, I was very selfish and always wanted the best for myself. Slowly, everyone left me, and I had no friends. I didn't think it was my fault; instead, I criticized others.

My father taught me three valuable lessons that helped me in life.

One day, my father cooked two bowls of noodles and placed them on the table. One bowl had an egg on top, and the other bowl did not.

He said, "My child, you choose which bowl you want." Eggs were rare at that time, usually only available during festivals or New Year.

Naturally, I chose the bowl with the egg. As we began eating, I congratulated myself on my wise decision and quickly devoured the egg.

To my surprise, my father's bowl contained TWO eggs at the bottom, hidden beneath the noodles! I regret-



ted my hasty choice and scolded myself for being so quick to decide.

My father smiled and said to me, "My child, you must remember that what your eyes see may not be the whole truth. If you intend to take advantage of people, you will end up losing!"

The next day, my father cooked two more bowls of noodles: one with an egg on top and the other without.

He placed the bowls on the table again and said, "My child, you choose which bowl you want."

This time, I thought I was smarter and chose the bowl without an egg on top.

To my surprise, there was not a single egg at the bottom of the bowl! Again, my father smiled and said,

"My child, you must not always rely

on your past experiences because sometimes life can trick you. But you must not be too annoyed or sad; just treat it as a lesson. You cannot learn this from textbooks."

On the third day, my father cooked two more bowls of noodles: one with an egg on top and the other without

He put the bowls on the table and said, "My child, you choose which bowl you want."

This time, I told my father, "Dad, vou choose first. You are the head of the family and have contributed the most."

My father did not decline and chose the bowl with the egg on top. As I ate my bowl of noodles, I was sure there would be no egg inside mine

To my surprise, there were TWO eggs at the bottom of my bowl!

My father looked at me with love in his eyes and said, "My child, remember, when you think of others and put their needs first, good things will naturally come to you."

I always remember these three lessons from my father and applied them to my life and business. True enough, my business became a roaring success.

Life's journey



Co this is your life, and you **D**are going to be both moved and confused by it. You are going to experience things that will inspire you, and things that you will never quite come to terms with.

You are going to love people that you will sometimes lose, but you will also find those who stay. Appreciate those people,

let them know that you care.

You are going to laugh until you cry, you are going to ache in ways you never thought possible; you are going to be exhausted by the chaos of it all and ignited by the beauty. You are going to be hurt, and

Sometimes you will be the bad person. Sometimes you will be the one who makes the mistake. Sometimes you will have to give yourself your own closure. Sometimes you will have to let go. Sometimes you will have to find comfort in being

Yes, this is your life, and though it can be unpredictable, and messy, even though it can break you down - you are going to survive it. You will always survive it.

Bianca Sparacino

What if Aliens are Future **Versions of Humans?**

- 1. Could it be that monuments built a few thousand years ago on Earth, like the Pyramids of Egypt, some Ancient temples in India, Stonehenge in the UK... had the participation of Aliens?
- 2. What if you found out you had a long-lost relative? And what if that long-lost relative was from an extrasolar planet in our Galaxy? (There could be billions of exoplanets in our galaxy!)
- 3. And what if that faraway exoplanet was home to aliens, who are future versions of humans?
- 4. But these "future humans" do not look like us because they are from the future!
- 5. How far ahead of us would they be? Would we be able to understand each other?
- 6. What would meeting future humans mean for humanity on Earth? What advanced technologies are they using in their spacecraft? Could they be using a higher percentage of their "brain," having more" senses" and more refined?

Quotes on Aliens, with a Subtle Dose of Hilariousness

"If aliens visit us, the outcome would be much as Columbus landed in America, which didn't turn out well for the Native Americans."

Nothing you love is lost

66 Nothing you love is lost. Not really.

Things, people, they always go away, sooner or later. You can't hold them any more than you can hold



moonlight.

they're still yours.

you hold inside your heart."

-- Stephen Hawking "Two possibilities exist: Either we are alone in the Universe or we are not. Both are equally terrifying! I'm sure the Universe is full of intelligent life. It's just been too intelligent to come here!"

-- Arthur C Clarke

"Aliens might already be among us but are invisible to us. They might already be present in some of us. Or some of us are communicating with them in a hidden dimension like the Akashic field."

-- Anonymous

"Most extraterrestrials do not believe in the existence of human beings!"

-- Pierre Legare

"If we are really the only form of intelligence in the Universe, and we continue to destroy our planet and all forms of life on Earth, Who will continue to observe the Universe!"

But if they've touched you, if they're inside you, then

The only things you ever really have are the ones

-- Anonymous

Bruce Coville

Short Sories Life: How Do You Want to Be Remembered?

ore than a decade ago, a More man a down to read his

morning newspaper. To his surprise and horror, he discovered his name in the obituary column. The newspapers had mistakenly reported his death. Shocked by the news of his own demise, he read the article to see what people had said about him.

The obituary described him as the "Dynamite King" and labeled him as the "merchant of death." This man was the inventor of dynamite, and upon reading these words, he pondered deeply.

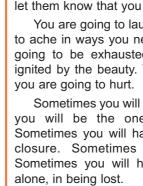
"Is this how I will be remembered?" he asked himself. Realizing that this was not the legacy he desired, he resolved to make a change.

From that day forward, he dedicated himself to working toward world peace. His name was Alfred Nobel, and today he is remembered for establishing the prestigious Nobel Prize, one of the greatest honors bestowed upon individuals who excel in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature, and the promotion of peace.

Since 1901, the Nobel Prize has celebrated the achievements of men and women worldwide, all thanks to the vision of Alfred Nobel, whose last will established the foundations for this esteemed award in 1895.

Moral: It's never too late to start anew and change the course of your legacy.

Thoughts to Live by



Productivity and well-being

The best time to do everything: Science-backed timing tips

If you're aiming to maximize productivity and well-being, timing can make a significant difference. From when to exercise to the best time for a nap, science offers insights into optimizing various activities. Here's a guide to help you make the most of your day.

1. Weigh Yourself

Wellness

To get an accurate picture of your weight, step on the scale once a week, ideally on Wednesdays. Midweek weigh-ins provide a more reliable reflection of your weight, as people tend to eat more on weekends and burn calories throughout the week. Consistency in timing is key, but the middle of the week is typically the most representative.

2. Nap

The optimal time for a nap is between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. This timing aligns with a natural dip in blood sugar levels postlunch and avoids interfering with your nighttime sleep. A 20-minute nap is ideal to boost alertness and mood. Napping longer can lead to grogginess as you enter deeper sleep stages.

3. Solve Problems

Problem-solving is most effective when your energy levels are lower, and you're not at peak focus. A relaxed mind can approach problems more creatively, offering new perspectives and solutions.

4. Learn Something New

Learn new information before a good night's sleep. Research shows that

memory consolidation occurs during sleep, making it easier to retain and recall new skills or knowledge. Avoid all-nighters to ensure you get the full benefit of sleep on learning.

5. Take a Break

For optimal productivity during an 8-hour workday, take a 15-minute break about an hour into your shift and another before the end of the day. Additionally, a 30-minute lunch break in the middle of your workday helps maintain focus and energy.

6. Interview for a Job

Schedule interviews early in the day. Interviewers may become biased after meeting several candidates, so being one of the first can give you an advantage. Early interviews are less likely to be influenced by interview fatigue.

7. Compete

Timing for physical competitions depends on whether you're a night owl or a morning person. Athletes who perform better later in the day should schedule events accordingly. For instance, if you're a night owl, avoid early morning matches to optimize performance.

8. Sleep Late

Consistency in your sleep schedule is crucial. Aim to wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends, to regulate your sleep patterns and promote better overall sleep quality.

9. Be Open and Honest



Address difficult conversations earlier in the day. Willpower and moral resolve tend to weaken as the day progresses, so it's best to tackle tough discussions when you're most alert and principled.

10. Put on Sunscreen

Apply sunscreen about 15 minutes before going outdoors to give it time to absorb and start protecting your skin. Reapply every two hours, or sooner if you swim or sweat, to maintain effectiveness.

11. Exercise

Exercising in the morning is generally more effective for maintaining a routine and improving sleep quality. If mornings are not feasible, however, exercising later in the day is still beneficial compared to not exercising at all.

12. Have Surgery

The time of day for surgery has less impact on outcomes than previously thought. Focus on scheduling surgery at a time that works best for you and your healthcare provider, rather than worrying about the specific time of day.

13. Take Asthma Meds

For inhaled steroids used to control asthma, the late afternoon, between 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., might offer the best effect. However, consistency in taking your medication daily is more important than the exact timing. Consult your doctor for personalized advice.

Wellness Want to Live Longer? Follow This Advice from People in 'Blue Zones'

In today's quest for longevity and vibrant health, insights from the world's "Blue Zones" offer compelling guidance. These regions, including Okinawa (Japan), Sardinia (Italy), Nicoya Peninsula (Costa Rica), Icaria (Greece), and Loma Linda (California), are renowned for their high numbers of centenarians and robust health spans. Here's a look at their secrets, as listed by J. Wilson of HuffPost, and how you can adopt them into your own life.

1. Plant-Forward Eating

People in Blue Zones predominantly consume plantbased diets supplemented with modest amounts of animal protein. This diet, rich in fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains, is known for reducing cholesterol and blood pressure, thereby lowering the risk of heart disease. Incorporating more plant-based meals into your diet can be a significant step towards enhancing your health span.

2. Mindful Eating

The practice of "hara hachi bu" in Okinawa exemplifies mindful eating, where individuals stop eating when they feel about 80% full. This practice not only prevents overeating but also helps in staying attuned to your body's hunger and satiety cues. By adopting similar mindful eating practices, you can ensure that your nutritional needs are met without excess calorie intake.

3. Strong Social Connections

Across all Blue Zones, community and social engagement play vital roles in longevity. Whether through close-knit family ties, deep friendships, or participation in faith-based communities, strong social connections are associated with better emotional well-being and overall health. Cultivating meaningful relationships can significantly impact your longevity by reducing stress and enhancing happiness.

4. Prioritizing Movement

Daily physical activity is integrated naturally into life in Blue Zones. Whether it's walking, gardening, or other forms of moderate exercise, staying active throughout the day contributes to better cardiovascular health and overall vitality. Incorporating more movement into your daily routine, such as taking walks or using stairs instead of elevators, can foster similar health benefits.

5. Stress Management

Blue Zone inhabitants excel in managing stress, which is crucial for maintaining overall health. Chronic stress can lead to inflammation and other health issues, impacting longevity negatively. Strategies like mindfulness, regular exercise, and engaging in hobbies can effectively mitigate stress levels and promote better health outcomes.

6. Finding Purpose

Having a sense of purpose is a cornerstone of life in Blue Zones. Whether it's through work, community service, or personal goals, having a clear sense of purpose enhances mental resilience and contributes to a fulfilling life. Finding activities that provide meaning and align with your values can contribute positively to your emotional well-being and longevity.

Applying Blue Zone Principles to Your Life

While residing in a Blue Zone offers a distinct advantage, adopting their lifestyle principles is achievable regardless of your location. Start by making gradual changes such as increasing your intake of plant-based foods, practicing mindful eating, and nurturing social connections. Incorporating regular physical activity, managing stress effectively, and pursuing activities that bring purpose and fulfillment can significantly enhance your health span.

By aligning with the evidence-based practices observed in Blue Zones, you can cultivate habits that promote longevity and well-being. Remember, small changes can lead to substantial benefits over time, paving the way for a longer, healthier, and more fulfilling life.

In embracing these principles, you join a global movement towards healthier aging and a greater quality of life, proving that the secrets to longevity are within reach for everyone, no matter where you live.

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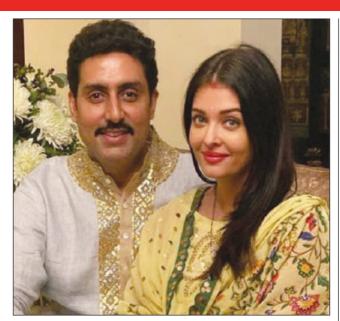
BollyBytes

Aishwarya Rai Sspotted at Bachchan Home Jalsa with daughter Aaradhya amid separation rumors

Abhishek Bachchan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan was recently seen visiting her in-laws' residence, Jalsa, in Mumbai. She was accompanied by their daughter, Aaradhya Bachchan. Reports have suggested that Aishwarya, who is currently busy with her work on Ponniyin Selvan, has been living apart from the Bachchan family, staying with her mother in Mumbai, according to Indian Express.

In a recently viral video, Aishwarya and Aaradhya are seen arriving at Jalsa. Aishwarya is dressed in an elegant olive green outfit, while Aaradhya, appearing to have come directly from school, is still in her school uniform. The mother-daughter duo chose not to pose for photographers gathered outside the residence.

Speculation about trouble in Aishwarya and Abhishek's marriage intensified after the couple attended a recent Ambani wedding but posed separately for the media. Aishwarya was photographed with Aaradhya, while Abhishek posed with his family, including his parents, Amitabh and Jaya Bachchan, and his sister



Shweta Bachchan's family. Despite this, photos from inside the wedding showed the couple sitting together and laughing with Hrithik Roshan.

Following the wedding, Aishwarya and Aaradhya took a trip to New York, while Abhishek traveled to Paris for the Olympics. Despite the swirling rumors, neither Aishwarya nor Abhishek has addressed the situation publicly.

Aishwarya and Abhishek, who have appeared together in films like Guru, Dhoom 2, and Raavan, were married in 2007. They welcomed their daughter, Aaradhya, in 2011.

Twinkle Khanna asks Rajesh Khanna why he barred Dimple Kapadia from working after marriage



In a 1990 interview with Movie magazine, Hindi cinema legends Rajesh Khanna and Amitabh Bachchan discussed a sensitive topic: their decision to halt their wives' acting careers after marriage. This conversation sheds light on Khanna's rationale behind barring Dimple Kapadia from continuing her acting career.

Dimple Kapadia, who was on the cusp of major stardom, left the film industry shortly after her marriage to Rajesh Khanna. She appeared in only one film before dedicating the next decade to raising their daughters, Twinkle and Rinke. During this period, Khanna's ego strained their marriage, eventually leading to their separation in the 1980s. In the interview, Khanna addressed the allegations that he forced Kapadia to quit acting.

Khanna explained his stance by saying, "I had no problems with my wife working. But when I married Dimple, I wanted her to be a mother to our children. I didn't want them to be raised by servants. At that time, I had no knowledge of her talent; Bobby hadn't even been released yet. When Twinkle grew older and expressed interest in acting, I told her I would produce a film for her. She questioned why I allowed her to act but not her mother. I told her, 'For the simple reason that I am your father and not your husband.'" He further admitted, "Had I known that Bobby would reveal Dimple's talent, I would not have stopped her. Suppressing talent is cruel. By the time I saw Bobby, our first daughter was already born." Khanna mentioned that he did not prevent Tina Munim from working when they were together later on. "I made a film for her and worked in several films with her. Even though she wasn't very interested, I encouraged her to work and get it out of her system. I didn't want to repeat the same mistake."

In the mid-1990s, after Khanna's acting career had waned and he moved to New Delhi, he made a public appearance at one of Twinkle's launch events. When asked for advice for her in the competitive world of Bollywood, he said, "She often seeks my advice, and I tell her that I had no godfather in the industry when I started out, so she must find her own way. I advised her not to seek her mother's advice, as it might only confuse her further."

Reflecting on how Twinkle handled her parents' separation, Dimple Kapadia noted at a Jaipur event, "She's an amazing child. She must have been only seven or eight when we separated. Despite her young age, she showed immense maturity, constantly checking to see if I was okay and if everything was alright."

Zeenat Aman opens up like never before

about her struggles with meaningful relationships

Zeenat Aman, a revered icon of Bollywood's golden Zera, has always been a subject of intense public interest, particularly regarding her personal life. Recently, the 72-year-old star took to Instagram to share some profound and candid reflections on her struggles with forming meaningful relationships, reports Masala.com.

Despite her illustrious career, Aman's personal life has often been under scrutiny. In a heartfelt Instagram post, she discussed how her public image has sometimes overshadowed her true self, making it challenging to build genuine connections. She shared, "I haven't had too many meaningful personal relationships. While I didn't dwell on this when I was younger, I've been reflecting on it now. There's a saying, 'It's lonely at the top.' Well, it's lonely at the bottom too. I have experienced both."



Zeenat Aman's public and private struggles

Aman's relationship history has been notably tumultuous. In 1978, her name was linked with the already married Sanjay Khan, and their relationship ended in 1979 amid allegations of abuse. Later, in 1985, she married actor Mazhar Khan, but this relationship was also fraught with difficulties, ultimately ending with Khan's death in 1998.

Aman revealed, "In my private reflection on my life, I have realized a harsh truth. Meaningful relationships have been elusive because my public persona has often overshadowed my true self. The image people have of me has been both a privilege and a prison. With men, the intent was often flattering but ultimately superficial. With women, societal comparisons led to envy and strained connections."

Reflecting on meaningful relationships

Aman elaborated on what she believes constitutes a meaningful relationship: "For me, a meaningful relationship is one characterized by reciprocity—celebrating each other's successes, enduring tough times together, and being able to speak and hear honest truths. Above all, it's about reaching a point where you can remove your outward masks."

Despite the challenges she has faced, Zeenat Aman's reflections highlight her resilience and deep appreciation for the meaningful relationships she has managed to nurture. Her openness provides a rare glimpse into the personal battles that often remain hidden behind the glamour of public life. As Aman poignantly stated, "Sadly, I have had limited success in this arena. The silver lining is that it has made me cherish the meaningful relationships I do have all the more."

What's On

Mauritius Times

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China's expanding influence: Mauritius becomes third RMB Clearing Hub in Africa



hina has been Africa's largest trading partner for the past 15 years, with bilateral trade reaching a record high of \$283 billion last year. The deepening cooperation and growing trade between African nations

and China have paved the way for increased use of the renminbi (RMB), the official currency of the People's Republic of China, on the African continent. Additionally, the emergence of the RMB as a significant player in the global financial landscape underscores China's ascendance in the world economic structure.

As part of Mauritius's enhanced financial services cooperation under the Mauritius-China Free Trade Agreement (MCFTA), the People's Bank of China (PBOC) is set to appoint the Bank of Mauritius (BoM) as the RMB clearing centre for Mauritius once an agreement is finalized.

During the "Mauritius-China Economic Cooperation Forum" held on December 7, 2022, in Mauritius, Finance Minister Hon Renganaden Padayachy reiterated his commitment to launching a RMB clearing centre, as previously announced in the Mauritian National Budget for 2022-2023 in June 2022. Subsequently, on December 16, 2022, Mauritius became the third RMB clearing centre on the African continent, during a ceremony held at the Bank of Mauritius.

On September 4, 2024, on the sidelines of the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the Bank of Mauritius and the People's Bank of China signed a bilateral currency swap agreement. According to the PBOC statement, the agreement is valued at 2 billion yuan (approximately 281.1 million US dollars) or 13 billion Mauritian rupees. The agreement is valid for three years and can be renewed upon mutual consent.

Bilateral currency swap agreements enable direct currency exchanges between nations, bypassing the need for a common reserve currency like the US dollar. Over the past 15 years, China has made significant progress in currency swaps with African nations, signing agreements with countries such as South Africa, Morocco, Egypt, and Nigeria. South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya have adopted the RMB as a reserve currency. Additionally, in 2017, the Bank of China's Johannesburg branch issued the first offshore RMB-denominated bond in Africa. As of September 2023. China had established swap agreements with 40 central banks or monetary authorities, with a total value exceeding 4 trillion RMB.

Given that the Bank of Mauritius is the



Mauritius's payment infrastructure, its DTAAs, and the MCFTA positions it as an optimal hub for developing into a major RMB clearing house for regional trade. Pic - China Daily

settlement bank for the COMESA Regional Payment and Settlement System (REPSS), and the RMB is now among the top five most-used currencies globally, today's currency swap agreement is highly significant. It will elevate Mauritius into the top financial jurisdictions maintaining a special economic relationship with China. This initiative will further strengthen financial cooperation between Mauritius and China, expand the use of both currencies, and elevate bilateral trade and investment to new heights.

Moreover, Mauritius, a key player in important regional payment systems in Africa such as SADC's RTGS (regional cross-border real-time gross settlement) and the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), will enhance its trade and investment base in the region. Mauritius also has double taxation avoidance agreements with 16 African countries or regional groupings and a well-regarded legal and regulatory framework. Thus, the combination of Mauritius's payment infrastructure, its DTAAs, and the MCFTA positions it as an optimal hub for developing into a major RMB clearing house for regional trade.

With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in effect, the operation of the Mauritius RMB Clearing Centre is expected to further boost bilateral trade between Africa and China, facilitating international settlements without the need for an intermediary currency.

From a trade perspective, following the ratification of the MCFTA, Mauritius' exports to China surged by 148 percent in 2021. The RMB Clearing Centre and the recent currency swap agreement will enable Mauritian exporters and importers to transact directly with Chinese suppliers in RMB, streamlining payments and reducing transaction costs. This direct trading in RMB is likely to enhance trade effectiveness and

strengthen trade relations in 2024 and beyond.

rom an investment perspective, recent statistics from the Ministry of Commerce of China indicate that China's direct investment in Mauritius amounted to approximately \$238.56 million in 2021, with a stock of around \$1.059 billion. Since the ratification of the MCFTA, the Bank of China (Mauritius) Co. Ltd. has completed international settlement transactions worth \$2.504 billion as of January 1, 2021. According to Chinese statistics, from January to October 2022, the Bank of China (Mauritius) Co., Ltd. had a transaction volume of approximately \$2.491 billion, a 22.47 percent increase year-onyear. During the same period, the cross-border RMB payment and clearing business volume reached 779 million yuan, marking a new high for RMB transactions in Mauritius.

This strategic manoeuver will further establish Mauritius as an international financial centre in the African region. Combined with its DTAAs, payment infrastructure, MCFTA, and the new RMB Settlement Centre, the currency swap mechanism will bring tangible benefits to businesses, investors, citizens, and the government. It will significantly reduce transaction costs and currency exchange risks, enhancing the efficiency of international trade and investment, and supporting economic growth and development for both Mauritian and Chinese stakeholders.

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Peace starts within us — we cannot bring to the world what we do not have

to offer.

t times, we look at the outside world and find it in a state of seeming chaos or disorder. We feel compelled to transform the situation from one of turmoil into one of peace, yet we are often disappointed in our best attempts to do so. One reason for this is that we cannot bring to the world what we do not have to offer. Peace starts in our own minds and hearts, not outside of ourselves, and until its roots are firmly entrenched in our own selves, we cannot manifest it externally. Once we have found it within, we can share it with our family, our community, and the whole world. Some of us may already be doing just that, but for most of us, the first step is looking within and honestly evaluating the state of our own relationship to peacefulness.

Interestingly, people who manifest peace internally are not different from us: they have chattering thoughts and troubled emotions like we all do. The difference is that they do not lend their energy to them, so those thoughts and feelings simply rise and fall like the waves of the ocean without disturbing the deeper waters of peacefulness within. We all have this ability to choose how we distribute our energy, and practice enables us to grow increasingly more serene as we choose the vibration of peace over the vibration of conflict. We begin to see our thoughts and feelings as tiny objects on the surface of our being that pose no threat to the deep interior stillness that is the source of peacefulness.

When we find that we are able to locate ourselves more and more in the deeper waters and less on the tumultuous surface of our being, we have discovered a lasting relationship with peace that will enable us to inspire peace beyond ourselves. Until then, we help the world most by practicing the art of choosing peace within.

Forum