

MAURITIUS TIMES

• *There are three essentials to leadership: humility, clarity and courage. -Fuchan Yuan*

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là sur un terrain
inconnu, dans un no
man's land juridique ”**

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Regulation of Social Media Content

In an article published in its issue of March 10 2018, the UK magazine *The Economist* points out that that 'on Twitter at least, false stories travel faster and farther than true ones.' This conclusion was based on a study carried out by 'MIT's Laboratories for Social Machines' which statistically examined every one of 4.5 million tweets sent between 2006 - 2017 (126,000 stories in all).

Further, the researchers found that the reason things spread faster through social networks was that 'they are appealing, not because they are true.' Untrue stories, it appears, are more appealing because 'they inspire emotions such as fear, disgust and surprise,' and moreover, 'people prefer to share stories that generate strong negative reactions.'

The government has released a 'Consultation Paper on proposed amendments to the ICT Act for regulating the use and addressing the abuse and misuse of Social Media in Mauritius' (14 April 2021) with a deadline for submission of comments by 05 May 2021, and has added a list of questions as a guide (to which others may be added by those making submissions).

The paper refers to 2051 incidents reported on the Mauritian Cybercrime Online Reporting System (MAUCORS) from January 2020 to January 2021 of several types: Hacking, Online Harassment, Offensive Contents, Sextortion, Identity Theft, Cyberbullying, Cyber Stalking, Online Scams and Frauds, Phishing, Malware. Along with apparent lacunae in the ICTA which limits its scope, the MAURICORS data are deemed to further reinforce 'the need for appropriate corrective measures to be undertaken in Mauritius.'

The paper indicates that 'The issue at hand is when these abuses, even though perpetrated by few individuals/groups, go viral, the damage created is very far reaching. In the early 2000s, social media firms argued that they simply created tools that enable distribution of information. They did not regulate the content on their platforms.'

However, with the increasing number of complaints that have been made across the world, the social media platforms (Google, Facebook, etc) have had to introduce self-regulating measures. 'But legal provisions prove to be relatively effective only in countries where social media platforms have regional offices. Such is not the case for Mauritius. The only practical solution in the local context would be the implementation of a regulatory and operational framework which not only provides for a legal solution to the problem of harmful and illegal online content but also provides for the necessary technical enforcement measures required to handle this issue effectively in a fair, expeditious, autonomous and inde-

pendent manner.'

These amendments purport 'to come up with operational measures in an autonomous and independent manner without the need to solely rely on social media administrators for actions. It is also imperative to do due diligence by building appropriate safeguards in this operational framework so as to avoid infringing the constitutional rights of the Mauritian citizens as to their freedom of expression and fundamental democratic values.'

This will be done by the setting up of a two-pronged operational framework:

- a **National Digital Ethics Committee (NDEC)** as the decision-making body on the contents; and
- a **Technical Enforcement Unit** to enforce the technical measures as directed by the NDEC.

There are two major points that arise in respect of this framework;

1. The composition of the NDEC, the proposal being that 'the Chairperson and members of the NDEC be **independent, and persons of high calibre and good repute.**'

The key issue here is HOW are these persons going to be selected? Are they going to be political nominees? - in which case bye-bye to independence, etc. More information is definitely required about this process, and the definitive criteria which the general terms 'high calibre and good repute' leave too open.

2. At the outset, it should be made clear and spelt out that 'enforcement' will not mean 'force' - such as police squads with blaring sirens and blinding lights forcing their way into residences at odd hours, as happened in no less that the 'case' of the DPP, and recently in the case of Ms Aruna Gangoosingh.

There will have to be a minimum of decency and respect for the 'suspect' or 'accused', and all his/her legal rights guaranteed, including access to legal adviser/advice before any action on the spot is taken.

In principle, there is definitely a need to **exercise oversight** over social media content, as several jurisdictions cited as examples in the Consultation Paper are undertaking, but there must be delivery on the due diligence pledged in the paper, as well as all the other guarantees that are to be expected in the democracy that we pretend to be.

The current atmosphere of trust deficit in the country's establishment should not be further enhanced by *manu militari* legislation or action - if need be more time must be given for thorough consultations to be completed, as this is such a serious matter.

The Conversation

The secret to Taiwan's Covid success

There were two main ingredients to Taiwan's Covid victory, researchers have found



Life is almost back to normal in Taiwan. Photo - Ritchie B. Tongo/EPA

Taiwan has been widely applauded for its management of the pandemic, with one of the lowest per capita Covid-19 rates in the world and life on the island largely returning to normal.

Just 11 people have died from Covid-19 in Taiwan since the pandemic began, an impressive feat for a country that never went into lockdown.

At the start of the pandemic, Taiwan was considered a high-risk country for COVID-19 due to its proximity to China and the frequent travel that takes place between the two countries.

With a history of SARS in 2003, which was not considered to be handled particularly well, the Taiwanese government acted quickly to close its borders this time around. It set up a Central Epidemic Command Centre on January 20 2020 to coordinate cooperation across different government ministries and agencies, and between government and businesses.

A new study in the Journal of the American Medical Association has examined further just why Taiwan did so well at conquering COVID-19. The study's authors, from a range of health institutes and hospitals in Taiwan and the US, compared the estimated effectiveness of two types of COVID-19 policy in the early months of the pandemic: case-based and population-based measures.

Case-based measures include the detection of infected people through testing, isolation of positive cases, contact tracing and 14-day quarantining of close contacts. The population-based measures included face mask policies, personal hygiene and social distancing.

The effects of these policies were quantified by estimating the effective reproduction number (R number).

The R number is a way of rating an infectious disease's ability to spread - it represents the average number of people that one infected person will pass a virus onto.

Patricia Fitzpatrick

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Showdown at Natanz - Iran's Centrifuges Spin



Anil Madan

The subject of negotiations with Iran over its nuclear ambitions is a stew of contradictions. On the one hand, Iran has insisted all along that its nuclear research is entirely peaceful and that it is not seeking to develop nuclear weapons. If that is true, there was no need for the deal with the Obama administration in the first place when Iran agreed not to do what it was not doing anyway. On the other hand, the JCPOA agreement reached with Iran by the US, China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the European Union, was hailed as extending the lag time for Iran to gather enough fissile material to produce a nuclear bomb from 2-3 months to 12 months, and giving the US and the IAEA enough time to assess whether such an effort was underway. That is, of course, the nuclear bomb that Iran was not developing.

The IAEA did certify way back in 2016, that Iran was in compliance with steps it had agreed to undertake to keep its nuclear program exclusively peaceful. In return, the US had agreed to lift nuclear-related sanctions. Notwithstanding the IAEA report, there was ongoing concern that Iran was not allowing adequate access to all of its nuclear installations and that it was not to be trusted. Moreover, Iran continued its proxy wars in the Middle East and its support of terrorism, actions that were not addressed by the JCPOA.

President Trump changed things dramatically when he announced that he was withdrawing from "the Iran deal" which he called the "worst deal in history." President Trump's actions validated Iran's assertions that the US could not be trusted. Trump not only restored the previous sanctions but added more stringent restrictions.

What is not generally appreciated is that the "deal" was a non-binding political commitment under US law. It was not a treaty required to be ratified by the Senate. And provisions allowing Congress to vote on it were of little consequence as even a resolution to extend the time for Congressional review did not pass. But from Iran's point of view, it was a binding commitment by the US.

Iran saw Trump's action as a reason to step up its nuclear activities, implementing measures that would have been prohibited by the JCPOA. The US protested but that protest rang hollow with Trump's disavowal of America's commitment to the deal. On the other hand, Germany and the other EU countries who still had a "deal" with Iran cried out in anguish for Iran to continue to comply.

Notwithstanding President Trump's efforts to impose additional sanctions on Iran, he found no support from China, Russia or Germany and the EU countries.

The lack of trust goes beyond the mutual distrust that the US and Iran have. Israel and the Sunni majority countries in the Middle East, led by Saudi Arabia, feel threatened by Iran and do not trust the Ayatollahs. They see an urgency to ensuring that Iran does not develop nuclear weapons.



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif pose for a photo after signing a 25-year agreement in Tehran, Iran on March 27. Photo: AFP

Under these circumstances, why would Iran talk to the US and why would the US want to talk to Iran at all? The simple truth is that to the extent that Iran's nuclear program can be contained, the world is safer. More importantly, if Iran's nuclear program is not cabined, it is likely that Saudi Arabia will seek to develop its own nuclear capability. And who knows which other Middle East nations will feel compelled to follow suit? Israel, of course, is already reputed to be a nuclear power. But that fact only increases the likelihood of pre-emptive action against Iran especially if it is viewed as an existential threat to Israel. That Iran is an existential threat to Israel cannot be doubted because the Ayatollahs and Iran's presidents have called for the destruction of Israel. Just how far Iran has to go before Israel feels compelled to act is not something anyone wants to find out.

So, what's the problem? If Iran has no interest in developing nuclear weapons, why should it be so difficult to get to an agreement that it will not do so? The problem, in large measure, is that the US, urged on by

“President Biden announced well before he was elected that he would rejoin the Iran nuclear deal as if coming in and out of the "deal" is a unilateral choice by the US Iran, as expected, rejected that approach and rejected the idea of negotiations with the US. At the same time, Iran has found a way to negotiate with the US. Recently, China has announced an accord with Iran under which China will invest \$400 billion in Iran over the next 25 years in exchange for oil. The significance of this deal is that it effectively wipes out the punitive effect of US sanctions. And it effectively substitutes China as Iran's negotiator....”

Israel, acts as if Iran cannot be trusted on this subject and Iran, while insisting that it has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful research, sees great leverage in maintaining opacity about whether it indeed can be trusted. Kim Jong Un of North Korea has demonstrated how that kind of leverage works as his country's nuclear program has progressed from one threatening a nuclear weapons capability to one capable of testing nuclear explosions.

How do two nations, one that does not trust the other, and the other that acts as if it cannot be trusted, come together to negotiate a deal? Under the Obama administration, they found a way. In large measure, the path was one by which the US pretended that Iran could be trusted not to build nuclear weapons capability and Iran pretended that it had no intention to build such a capability while taking baby steps on the way to doing precisely that.

Today, the situation has changed. President Biden announced well before he was elected that he would rejoin the Iran nuclear deal as if coming in and out of the "deal" is a unilateral choice by the US Iran, as expected, rejected that approach and rejected the idea of negotiations with the US. At the same time, Iran has found a way to negotiate with the US.

But why should this be so? After all, Iran wants US sanctions lifted and the best way to do that is to negotiate an indirect deal with the US. Or is it?

Iran had a different strategy in the wings. Recently, China has announced an accord with Iran under which China will invest \$400 billion in Iran over the next 25 years in exchange for oil. The significance of this deal is that it effectively wipes out the punitive effect of US sanctions. And it effectively substitutes China as Iran's negotiator.

So, Iran suddenly announced that it would negotiate with the US. But it did so in an insulting way.

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Cricket and colonialism - Legacy, resistance and nationalism entwined

Jan Arden

Those of us who watched the gripping India test-series tour of Australia, starting with humiliation at Adelaide through a bounce-back win at Melbourne, followed by a draw in Sydney, and ending with a crazy run chase in the Waga grounds, will remember the intensities and technical prowess of both teams during the pandemic. India had breached the fortress and won the series again on Aussie soil, an exploit they will long cherish. Quick on its heels came the England tour of India in March, another formidable opponent, for three successive tests: a 5-day test series, an ODI (one-day internationals of 50 overs) series and a T20i series (limited overs of 20 each). India, despite some faltering and regular loss of the toss, raised its game sufficiently in a month-long fiesta of high-intensity emotions, to bludgeon the fearsome "tourists", winning all three series convincingly (3-1, 2-1 and 3-2 respectively).

To understand and convey to non-cricket buffs the whys and wherefores behind the intensities, the palpable thrills, the bitter and rancorous tastes of defeat, the sublime ecstasy of wins and the whirlwind of emotions jam-packed into such international encounters, I will delve slightly into the history of this most peculiar and fascinating of sports that was born in England and somehow got even more popular in diverse outposts of its former Empire.

Although not uniformly though. In North America, Canada was far too cold and the USA would have none of this colonial quackery, favouring instead their own home-grown baseball. In New Zealand, the Maoris and Kiwis found the rugged contests of rugby far more to their rumbustious tastes and cricket plays second fiddle to the national All Blacks game. In South Africa the development of the game was marred by apartheid, later racial quotas and exclusion from the international cricket governing body (ICC) which it had helped to found. Despite regaining ground since readmission, it has failed to earn much silverware since. So, the real cauldrons of cricket outside England are the West Indies, Australia and South Asia (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh).

Origins of the game

Before going further, one should remember cricket's origins as a ruling and upper middle-class peculiarity, the property in a way of Harrow and Eton "public" schools whose outputs were to be polished at either of the Oxbridge universities. During the 18th to 19th century when Britannia ruled the waves and extracted much of its wealth from overseas colonies, character, poise, team-work, controlled aggressiveness and ability to withstand duress, rather than academic credentials were deemed prime requisites for those



"Spreading cricket to the colonies was not therefore just a simple matter of nostalgia or British colonial entertainment, but stemmed from a deeper need to impress locals of the lofty values of the self-proclaimed pinnacle of civilization. In 1902 a British touring cricketer summed it this way: 'It provides a moral training, an education in pluck and nerve, and self-restraint, far more valuable to the character of the ordinary native than the mere learning by heart of a play by Shakespeare or an essay by Macaulay...'"

who would be dispatched to far corners of the globe to administer the conquests of the Empire that would take over the mantle of the merchants (the East India Company and its private army).

The rules and laws were devised in England, deliberately complex and inherently strategic one can guess, so as to be enjoyed by local "old crusts" and later by wine or whisky-sipping colons and their hated women-folk in pristine Club gardens, the epitome of Britishness which commoners and still less foreign locals, even the educated ones, could only marvel at but would hardly ever grasp. After all, these were leisurely five-day affairs for the rulers and administrators, steeped in the David Livingstone (1813-1873) colonizing motto "Commerce, Christianity and Civilization". The temples of cricket were both in London obviously, The Oval and Lords being the two emblematic cricket stadiums of the Empire.

Spreading cricket to the colonies was not therefore just a simple matter of nostalgia or British colonial entertainment, but stemmed from a deeper need to impress locals of the lofty values of the self-proclaimed pinnacle of civilization. In 1902 a British touring cricketer summed it this way: "It provides a moral training, an education in pluck and nerve, and self-restraint, far more valuable to the cha-

acter of the ordinary native than the mere learning by heart of a play by Shakespeare or an essay by Macaulay." Colonial administrators brought in their trunks cricket bats and balls, the paraphernalia of the game, and encouraged visits by touring naval and military teams, the whole wrapped as a means of civilizing the "primitive" folk. That was then the colonial legacy.

Resistance and nationalism

It was not surprising therefore that at some stage anti-colonial and post-colonial countries would catch on to the colonial mind-game and the value of cricket as a counter-outlet for frustration and a means of bloodless resistance by overturning the tables on the colonists. The West Indies were a patchwork of islands and nations but undoubtedly cricket and the "Windies" as the team is known, became a unifying focal point of resistance and nationalism. They were the first to blow the British apart through ball and bat, with a set of blistering fast bowlers and an equally remarkable list of fearless batsmen, a team that dominated cricket throughout the seventies and eighties. All the players were fully aware that they were, as Michael Holding said "representing something more significant than cricket." When Vivian Richards, a star performer said: "We had a mission... we believe in ourselves. We are

just as good as anyone" clearly the reference was a resistance mind-game response, that of standing up as equals and often thrashing the former masters on their own turf and rules.

Cricket has been an important part of the Australian way of life for over a century without the overhang of colonial resistance although the pleasure of a pitched test against the "pommies" was always welcome. A first Aussie test victory in London in 1882 was the occasion of much rejoice down under, with a mocking obituary that read "In Affectionate Remembrance of English cricket, which died at The Oval on 29 August 1882. Deeply lamented by a large circle of sorrowing friends and acquaintances RIP. ***NB - the body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia." That was the origin of the now famous hotly contested Ashes between the two nations.

Team India as a unifier

In colonial India, cricket had a collaborative beginning. In 1911 some Hindu princely loyalists, enterprising Parsis, Muslim enthusiasts and financiers joined hands with British administrators to create an Indian team and conduct a London tour intended to project a positive image of India and reassure authorities in Britain that the colony would remain a loyal jewel. It was only in 1971 when a visiting Indian cricket team defeated the former colonizers at their own game, on their own turf and twelve years later, when they won the World Cup at Lords, the cathedral of cricket, that cricket would become the undisputed Indian national sports, spanning the country's diversity and regions. A matter of national pride rather than an offshoot of colonial resistance battles.

The critically acclaimed *Lagaan* (2001), via a cricket allegory, reflects upon identity politics and power relations in both colonial and post-colonial contexts. Meantime, newer and faster-paced versions (limited-overs cricket) had been developed and since 2009 the money-spinning Indian Premier League, attracting many foreign players, has become an undisputed new force in international cricket governance. "Team India" embodies the new pan-India nationalism that even engages its diaspora far and wide. While it may fluster some internal anti-India lobbies, none would dare challenge the ferocious sense of national identity it has brought, making alive the famous saying that "Cricket is an Indian game accidentally invented by the English".

Of course, many polarizing factors nowadays between any of these listed countries make for eagerly awaited international festive, if not emotive, occasions followed by countless millions of TV subscribers worldwide. Lovers of the quaintness of the older more sedate test-games or of the brisk pace of modern cricket, can only hope for more enthralling contests where emotions are reigned in and batted out on the pitch in this most peculiar and fascinating of sports. They will be eagerly awaiting the World Test Championship final between New Zealand and India to be played out during autumn in England.

US planned to assassinate Fidel Castro's brother Raul in 1960: declassified documents



Raul Castro's departure ends a near six-decade family hold on power in Cuba that started in 1959. Photo - img.jakpost.net

The CIA made its first known attempt to assassinate a leader of the Cuban revolution in 1960, offering \$10,000 to a pilot flying Raul Castro from Prague to Havana to arrange an "accident," according to declassified documents published Friday.

Pilot Jose Raul Martinez, who had been recruited by the CIA, asked for - and received -- assurance from the agency that it would provide university education to his two sons if he died during the operation, according to the documents published by the

Washington-based National Security Archive research institute.

After Martinez left for Prague, CIA headquarters in the United States told its Havana station to cancel the mission.

"Do not pursue," the cable said. "Would like to drop matter."

At that point, the pilot was already out of contact. When he returned to Cuba, Martinez told his handler that "he had no opportunity to arrange an accident such as we had discussed."

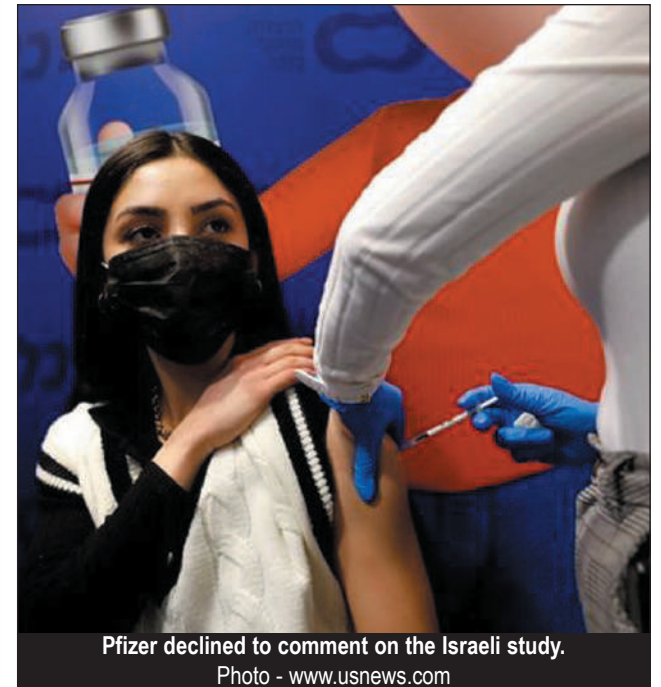
The plot came to light as Castro, the 89-year-old brother of late revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, prepares to leave Cuban politics by stepping down as head of the all-powerful Community Party of Cuba. Raul's departure ends a near six-decade family hold on power in Cuba that started in 1959. The reins will now pass to 60-year-old Miguel Diaz-Canel, who has served as Cuba's president since 2018.

"These documents remind us of a dark and sinister past in US operations against the Cuban revolution," National Security Archive analyst Peter Kornbluh told AFP.

"As the Castro era officially comes to an end, US policymakers have the opportunity to leave this historical baggage behind and engage Cuba's post-Castro future."

Fidel Castro defied 11 American presidents and survived numerous assassination plots -- 638 according to Guinness World Records -- as well as a failed 1961 attempt by 1,400 anti-Castro Cubans, who were trained and financed by the CIA, to land at the Bay of Pigs in an attempt to overthrow the communist regime.

South African variant may "break through" Pfizer vaccine protection, says study



Pfizer declined to comment on the Israeli study. Photo - www.usnews.com

The coronavirus variant discovered in South Africa can break through the protection provided by Pfizer Inc and BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine to some extent, a real-world data study in Israel found. However, the variant's prevalence in Israel is very low and the vaccine remains highly effective.

The study was released on the medRxiv pre-print site on April 9 and has not been peer reviewed. It compared almost 400 people who had tested positive for COVID-19, after they received one or two doses of the vaccine, against the same number of unvaccinated patients with the disease. It matched age and gender, among other characteristics.

The South African variant, B.1.351, was found to make up about 1% of all the COVID-19 cases across all the people studied, according to the study by Tel Aviv University and Israel's largest healthcare provider, Clalit. But among patients who had received two doses of the vaccine, the variant's prevalence rate was eight times higher than those unvaccinated - 5.4% versus 0.7%, reports Reuters.

This suggests the vaccine is less effective against the South African variant, compared with the original coronavirus and a variant first identified in Britain that has come to comprise nearly all COVID-19 cases in Israel, the researchers said.

The researchers said the study was not intended to assess overall vaccine effectiveness against any variant, since it only looked at people who had already tested positive for COVID-19, not at overall infection rates.

Separate real-world Israeli studies on the vaccine's overall effectiveness, including by Clalit, have shown the Pfizer shot to be more than 90% effective.

"We found a disproportionately higher rate of the South African variant among people vaccinated with a second dose, compared to the unvaccinated group. This means that the South African variant is able, to some extent, to break through the vaccine's protection," said Tel Aviv University's Adi Stern.

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French president Emmanuel Macron foresees some summer tourists in Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron says he foresees at least some tourists returning to Paris this summer if they have gotten vaccinated or have proof of testing negative for the coronavirus as France moves to progressively lift infection-control restrictions.

"We are building a certificate to facilitate travel after these restrictions between the different European countries with testing and vaccination," Macron said in an interview that aired Sunday on the CBS News show "Face the Nation."

Macron spoke as the French government is preparing to impose tough, new entry restrictions on travellers from four countries - Argentina, Chile, South Africa and Brazil - in hopes of keeping out especially contagious virus variants. The number of countries on the list could grow, France's foreign minister said Saturday.

The restrictions include mandatory 10-day quarantines with police checks to ensure people arriving in France observe the requirement. Travellers from all four countries will be restricted to French nationals and their families, EU citizens and others with a permanent home in France.

France has been among the hardest-hit European countries and is now guarding against highly contagious variants, notably deciding to target four countries at present.



France has been among the hardest-hit European countries and is now guarding against highly contagious variants. Photo - AP

Under the new restrictions, travellers must provide an address for where they plan to observe the 10-day confinement period and police will make visits and fine those who are found in violation, the government said.

Along with the mandatory quarantine, France is requiring more stringent testing for the coronavirus. Travellers must show proof of a negative PCR test taken less than 36 hours instead of 72 hours before they boarded a flight, or a negative antigen test less than 24 hours.

France has reported the deaths of 100,000 people in the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ukraine-Russia tensions rise, UK to send warships to Black Sea



An anti-submarine Type 23 frigate will leave the Royal Navy's carrier task group in the Mediterranean and head through the Bosphorus into the Black Sea. Photo - Reuters

Britain's NATO allies, the newspaper reported.

Tensions between Moscow and Kyiv have been rising amid a build-up of Russian troops along the border and clashes in eastern Ukraine between the army and pro-Russian separatists.

Officials at the UK Ministry of Defence were not immediately available for comment.

A ministry spokesman told the newspaper that the UK government was working closely with Ukraine to monitor the situation and continued to call on Russia to de-escalate.

British warships will sail for the Black Sea in May amid rising tensions between Ukraine and Russia, the Sunday Times newspaper reported, citing senior naval sources. The deployment is aimed at showing solidarity with Ukraine and

"The UK and our international allies are unwavering in our support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity", the newspaper quoted the spokesman as saying.

Scientists find only 3% of land areas unblemished by humans



Very little of today's world resembles Planet Earth from 500 years ago. In fact, only about 3 per cent of land surfaces might be ecologically intact -- still home to their full range of native species and unblemished by human activity, according to new research.

The finding -- published last Thursday in the journal *Frontiers in Forests and Global Change* -- is far lower than previous estimates based on satellite images, which suggested around 20 per cent to 40 per cent of land ecosystems were undamaged.

For the new study, however, scientists conducted an extensive survey of forest cover and species losses to understand bet-

ter what was happening beneath the world's tree canopies.

"I was particularly surprised to see how low it really is," said Andrew Plumptre, a conservation biologist at the University of Cambridge. "It shows how rare such intact places are. It's scary just how little the world looks like what it was just 500 years ago."

The term ecosystem describes the complex relationships within a natural area that, altogether, help to sustain a healthy and balanced diversity of life. Lose just one or two key species, and the whole system could fall apart.

Today's still-pristine habitats, containing the same species abundance as in the year 1500

A.D., were mostly found in regions considered less hospitable for humans, including the Sahara Desert and chilly regions of Greenland and northern Canada.

Other intact habitats were in areas under extreme pressure from deforestation and development, including parts of the Amazon in Latin America.

The authors argue that these areas should be a priority for future conservation. Though currently, only 11 per cent of these areas are under protection, the study found.

"The idea of focusing on intact areas is so that you don't have to work to remove the human footprint," Plumptre said.



Israel and Greece sign record defence deal

Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz wears a face mask as he looks out from the window of a helicopter during a tour of the Gaza border area, southern Israel. Photo - s.yimg.com

Israel and Greece have signed their biggest ever defence procurement deal, which Israel said on Sunday would strengthen political and economic ties between the countries.

The agreement includes a \$1.65 billion contract for the establishment and operation of a training centre for the Hellenic Air Force by Israeli defence contractor Elbit Systems over a 22-year period, Israel's defence ministry said.

The training centre will be modeled on Israel's own flight academy and will be equipped with 10 M-346 training aircraft produced by Italian company Leonardo, the ministry said.

"I am certain that (this programme) will upgrade the capabilities and strengthen the economies of Israel and Greece and thus the partnership between our two countries will deepen on the defence, economic and political levels," said Israeli defence minister Benny Gantz.

The announcement follows a meeting in Cyprus on Friday between the UAE, Greek, Cypriot and Israeli foreign ministers, who agreed to deepen cooperation between their countries.

European Super League

A dozen of Europe's richest football clubs, including six from the Premier League, have agreed to join a new European Super League. Liverpool, Manchester United, Manchester City, Chelsea, Arsenal and Tottenham have announced plans to establish the competition along with AC Milan, Atletico Madrid, Barcelona, Inter Milan, Juventus and Real Madrid. It is anticipated three more clubs will join the breakaway group as founding members of the new mid-week competition, which will begin "as soon as practicable".

The 15 regular participants, who will be granted automatic entry each year, will be joined by five more teams, who can qualify annually based on achievements in the prior season. The plans have faced widespread criticism for creating a "closed shop" at the summit of European club football. Mr Johnson has described the move as "very damaging" for the domestic game.

* * *

Britons who have received their first vaccine dose have subsequently become infected by new coronavirus variants, NHS Track and Trace's chief medical adviser has said. Dr Susan Hopkins told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show on Sunday that both the South African and Kent variants have been identified in people "who have had their first dose of vaccine". She added: "That's to be expected, we know that these vaccines aren't 100 per cent protecting you against infection and that's why we ask people to take caution. You can see that they're not as good against the South African variant as they are against our own B117 at preventing infection and transmission."



Catherine Boudet - Politologue

ICTA: "On s'aventure là sur un terrain inconnu, dans un *no man's land* juridique"

Avec Catherine Boudet, politologue, nous abordons une question affectant de plus en plus toutes les sociétés aujourd'hui, à savoir la place de l'éthique et de la morale en politique. En effet, les autorités régulatrices mauriciennes ont beaucoup à faire pour circonscrire les transgressions à la norme établie, notamment la violence engendrée par la *cancel culture* sur internet. Notre invitée nous livre les résultats de ses longs mois d'observation de ce phénomène localement. Elle nous invite à réfléchir et à contribuer à ce débat complexe en même temps que les autorités concernées. Y a-t-il des principes à ne pas dépasser, que l'on appartienne à la classe politique ou citoyenne? Y a-t-il des valeurs à promouvoir afin que chacun respecte des limites implicites ou explicites?

Mauritius Times: Vous avez fait une sortie sur différentes plateformes, sur votre blog et dans la presse, à propos des attaques et des lynchages verbaux que l'on retrouve massivement sur les réseaux sociaux ces derniers temps. Selon vous, ceux-ci font partie d'une *cancel culture* locale qui consiste à menacer et à injurier des personnes cibles pour essayer de les faire taire. Parlez-nous de cette *cancel culture*, de ses origines et ses méthodes.

Catherine Boudet: Le terme de *cancel culture* nous vient des Etats-Unis. C'est sans surprise puisque les Américains sont toujours en avance dans la théorisation et la conceptualisation. Il y a beaucoup de littérature sur Internet concernant ce phénomène à l'étranger, ses différents aspects et ses modes opératoires. A Maurice, pour le moment, cela existe déjà. Mais personne ne l'avait encore conceptualisé dans ses modes opératoires locaux.

La *cancel culture* que je choisirai de traduire par «culture de la suppression» parmi les différentes traductions possibles, est un phénomène typique de l'ère des

“Ce *consultation paper* n'équivaut évidemment pas à un référendum sur la question, surtout que cet amendement pose un grand risque de violation des libertés et de la vie privée. Cet amendement propose de permettre à l'Etat d'accéder aux contenus des internautes en amont et de juger, en amont de toute procédure juridique, de leur caractère éventuellement répréhensible et dangereux...”

réseaux sociaux. En résumé, il s'agit de *cancel*, c'est-à-dire de supprimer symboliquement une personne, en particulier une personnalité publique. En fait, c'est une version moderne des bûchers de sorcières du Moyen-âge. Au lieu de supprimer physiquement la personne, on le fait symboliquement par les mots sur le réseau social.

Pour cela, il y a toute une panoplie de techniques. Ce qui m'a intéressée en tant que politologue, c'est de constater que nous sommes en présence d'une *cancel culture* locale qui prend des formes particulières.

La *cancel culture* telle qu'elle est pratiquée ici, cherche à déshonorer une personne dans le débat public afin d'inciter à la haine contre cette personne. L'objectif est toujours de chercher à détruire la réputation de la personne ciblée afin de mettre dans la tête du public que ses idées, ses paroles ou ses actions n'ont aucune valeur, qu'elle ne mérite que le mépris ou la haine. La personne est ciblée parce que ce qu'elle dit ou représente dérange la vision que tentent d'imposer les *cancel lists*.

Il y a, donc, deux aspects importants dans cette chasse aux sorcières : la haine et la norme. La haine devient un outil privilégié pour tenter d'imposer une norme. En supprimant la personne du débat, on tente de supprimer le débat d'idées.

* Est-ce un phénomène récent à Maurice?

Le phénomène a commencé à prendre de l'ampleur à Maurice depuis les dernières élections générales, mais je ne l'avais pas encore identifié en tant que tel à ce moment-là. Il a quand même fallu plusieurs mois d'observation sur les réseaux sociaux, pour identifier, analyser, comprendre et expliquer le phénomène.

L'observation est venue d'abord du fait que j'en ai été

moi-même la cible à partir de la campagne électorale de 2019 suite à mes analyses politiques. J'en avais été extrêmement surprise d'ailleurs, surtout je ne fais pas de politique partisane. J'étais également surprise des pseudo-arguments utilisés, très inventifs, violents, injurieux, voire même mensongers.

J'ai constaté que les stratégies étaient les mêmes concernant d'autres personnes ; j'ai aussi constaté qu'il y avait des ciblage organisés. A partir de là, je me suis mise à étudier en détail le phénomène et je me suis même mise à faire des tests sur Facebook pour vérifier mes hypothèses. Ma démarche a donc été celle qu'on appelle en anthropologie, l'observation participante, un peu comme chez Levi Strauss ou Marcel Mauss.

“Si l'Etat se propose de décrypter les contenus digitaux des citoyens, ce sera au tour des citoyens de décrypter ce *consultation paper*. On s'aventure là sur un terrain inconnu, dans un *no man's land* juridique, alors autant que l'Etat et la société civile s'y aventurent ensemble afin que l'un n'y plante...”

Donc j'ai pu constater qu'il y a une *cancel culture* mauricienne qui s'exprime de façon spécifique et qui est en rapport avec une recomposition du champ politique mauricien dans le sillage des dernières élections générales. Et, c'est en fait une technique de guérilla politique sur les réseaux sociaux.

* Qui ont été les cibles de cette *cancel culture* sur le plan local ces derniers temps? Et quelle opinion faites-vous des mesures prises par ceux ciblés en vue de protéger leur réputation?

On remarque que les principales cibles de cette guérilla politique, qu'est la *cancel culture*, ont surtout été de jeunes politiciens du bord gouvernemental. Parmi eux, deux cibles de choix ont été Tania Diolle d'abord, puis Oliver Thomas. Deux critères en ont fait des victimes sacrificielles pour les *cancel lists*. D'une part, il y a leur jeunesse donc leur fort potentiel politique ; d'autre part, il y a le fait qu'ils portaient l'étiquette de «transfuge» ou d'«opportuniste» ayant rejoint récemment le camp gouvernemental, autrement dit le fait qu'ils représentaient un capital politique qui avait échappé à l'opposition parlementaire ou extra-parlementaire.

Après son entrée au Parlement dans la majorité gouvernementale, Tania Diolle a subi une campagne de lapidation intense, régulière et répétée pendant plus de six mois, à la fois dans les médias et sur les réseaux sociaux. Ensuite, à partir d'août 2020, cette campagne de lynchage a été transférée sur Oliver Thomas quand il a rejoint le parti au pouvoir.

Face à ces attaques de la *cancel culture*, chacun a adopté une stratégie différente. Tania Diolle a choisi de les ignorer et de continuer son travail de PPS sur le terrain, tandis qu'Oliver Thomas a adopté la technique des judokas en confrontant ses détracteurs sur les réseaux sociaux. Dans les deux cas, on remarque que les deux cibles ont fait peu de cas de leur réputation justement, c'est ce qui leur a permis de ne pas tomber dans le piège de la *cancel culture*.

La dernière cible en date, c'est Joanna Bérenger la semaine dernière, pourtant député de l'opposition, qui a été visée par un post Facebook extrêmement violent et sexiste relevant de la *cancel culture* venant des mêmes quartiers. Ce qui montre bien que les cibles de cette guérilla politique virtuelle sont mouvantes en fonction des enjeux et, surtout, en fonction de conceptions relativement instables de la notion d'ennemi politique.

☛ Suite en page 8

'Si l'Etat se propose de décrypter les contenus digitaux des citoyens, ce sera au tour des citoyens de décrypter le *consultation paper* de l'ICTA'



“Les petits jeux de pouvoir au sein de l'hémicycle – évitement d'un côté, provocation de l'autre – ne datent pas d'hier. Mais ils ont pris une ampleur inédite depuis la diffusion en direct à la télévision et sur les médias en ligne. Le jeu parlementaire est ainsi devenu un véritable théâtre qui, par effet de vases communicants, crée un impact émotionnel fort sur la population spectatrice...”

☛ Suite de la page 7

* Quelles mesures devrions-nous prendre pour nous protéger? Comment devrions-nous réagir à ce phénomène?

Les pratiquants de la *cancel culture* ne s'attaquent pas qu'aux politiciens. Ils choisissent des boucs émissaires au gré des circonstances. Les *cancellists* cherchent à imposer un ordre établi. Dès lors qu'une personne dit ou représente quelque chose qui dérange cet ordre, elle peut devenir leur cible.

Ainsi, le 7 avril dernier, c'est Anishta Seesurrin, connue pour son implication dans le travail social et les *socioculturels*, qui a été ciblée parce qu'elle allait participer à un débat en ligne avec l'un des Avengers de l'opposition, Me Rama Valayden.

Il est difficile de préconiser des mesures spécifiques contre la *cancel culture*. Le premier réflexe est de se tourner vers la CyberCrime Unit pour porter plainte, car ces attaques, de par leur violence, leur caractère insultant, diffamatoire et calomnieux relèvent de la cybercriminalité. Cela dit, la CyberCrime Unit est débordée et leur action est limitée en raison de l'usage intensif de *fake profiles* par les *cancellists*, surtout que ces derniers,

tels des prédateurs, marchent en meute pour mieux s'exciter et se soutenir les uns les autres quand ils s'acharment sur leur proie.

Personnellement, je crois davantage dans l'importance et l'efficacité de la sensibilisation ou l'*awareness*. C'est d'ailleurs dans cet esprit que j'ai commencé ma campagne #SayNoToCancelCulture en février dernier, avec une déposition suivie d'une conférence de presse. J'aurais pu faire cette déposition bien avant, vu le nombre d'attaques injurieuses des *cancellists* envers ma personne depuis novembre 2019. Mais ma démarche n'était pas à but personnel.

Et puis la finalité n'était pas la déposition puisque la portée des actions de la CyberCrime reste limitée. L'important pour moi, à mon niveau, était d'arriver d'abord à analyser le phénomène pour être ensuite en mesure de l'expliquer, afin d'aider les victimes à se défendre et surtout de sensibiliser l'opinion publique.

* Après l'affaire impliquant Pierre Noël, l'*Agricultural Development Manager* d'Alteo Ltd, et sa "blague" controversée dans une vidéo qui avait circulé sur les réseaux sociaux, ce qui lui avait valu une convocation au CCID, voilà Aruna Gangoosing qui répond d'une accusation provisoire de *Breach of ICTA* suite à ses propos tenus sur Facebook. Arnaud Lagesse, CEO d'IBL Ltd, considère que ces propos sont "insultants envers la population" et il a déposé une plainte. Quelle analyse faites-vous de ces deux cas?

Ces deux cas que vous citez ne relèvent pas de la *cancel culture*.

1. Dans le cas de Pierre Noël, il s'agissait d'une blague à relent communal, qui était faite dans une sphère privée, et qu'un *leak* a fait atterrir dans le domaine public, à l'insu d'ailleurs de l'intéressé. Il a dû répondre de ses propos devant le CCID et il a présenté des excuses publiques. Mais il n'y avait pas une intention de nuire à la base de ses propos, qui d'ailleurs faisaient bien rigoler le public présent.

Le problème posé ici c'est plutôt le décalage qui peut exister entre les normes sociales et les normes en vigueur à l'intérieur des groupes ethniques.

Certaines blagues et jugements à teneur raciste ou communaliste envers les autres groupes ethniques circulent dans des cercles privés, mais évidemment ces mêmes propos exposés dans l'espace public deviennent inacceptables. Pierre Noël a fait l'amère expérience de ce décalage.

2. Concernant Aruna Gangoosing, c'est encore différent. Elle a choisi volontairement et délibérément l'exposition sur les réseaux sociaux pour pousser des coups de gueule. Et son concept a eu du succès : elle dit tout haut et avec une certaine verve ce que beaucoup pensent tout bas, surtout qu'elle dénonce différentes choses, que ce soit des lenteurs administratives, des aberrations politiques ou des injustices.

Le problème, c'est qu'en plus de commettre des *breaches of ICTA* à répétition, ce qui lui a valu plusieurs arrestations, il y a une grande violence dans ses propos... amplifiés par le caractère viral et répétitif des vidéos.

Au final, son cas est emblématique d'une étape importante que traverse actuellement la démocratie mauricienne, une phase de transition impulsée par les réseaux sociaux. On est passé rapidement d'une période postindépendance où les élites politiques et économiques décidaient tout d'un commun accord et où la population avait finalement très peu voix au chapitre, à un début de modernité politique où les réseaux sociaux permettent l'émergence d'une démocratie délibérative.

La parole des citoyens est ainsi soudainement libérée. Du coup, les revendications explosent... tout comme les façons de les exprimer. Quand on passe d'un extrême à l'autre, c'est encore difficile de trouver un juste équilibre. Il faudra certainement du temps avant que l'exercice de la parole citoyenne trouve une certaine modération d'expression.

“La *cancel culture* telle qu'elle est pratiquée ici, cherche à déshonorer une personne dans le débat public afin d'inciter à la haine contre cette personne. L'objectif est toujours de chercher à détruire la réputation de la personne ciblée afin de mettre dans la tête du public que ses idées, ses paroles ou ses actions n'ont aucune valeur, qu'elle ne mérite que le mépris ou la haine...”

* Mais il n'y a pas que sur les réseaux sociaux que le bât blesse, au Parlement aussi, non? Il y a quand même des décisions inacceptables, comme le refus d'octroyer le WAP aux parlementaires de l'Opposition, la disproportion des sanctions du Speaker contre Arvin Boolell, Paul Bérenger et Rajesh Bhagwan dans le sillage de l'incident survenu au Parlement récemment...

La *cancel culture* locale a un lien de parenté certain avec la violence politique. La violence qui s'exprime sur les réseaux sociaux fonctionne en vases communicants.

D'une part, avec la violence virtuelle qui est pratiquée sur les réseaux sociaux à l'extérieur, d'autre part avec la violence physique qui existe dans le tissu social local, et enfin, avec la violence structurelle qui s'exerce à partir des instances politiques de l'Etat.

Vous en citez certains exemples récents qui interviennent comme des biais dans le fonctionnement de la démocratie parlementaire, comme le refus initial d'accorder des WAP et l'application de sanctions disproportionnées envers les députés de l'opposition. (Il faut noter que l'interdiction du WAP pour les députés de l'opposition sera finalement levée cette semaine après un bras de fer juridique).

Tout cela alimente des sentiments d'injustice, de colère et d'impuissance chez les citoyens qui vont trouver leur exutoire sur les réseaux sociaux.

De plus, les petits jeux de pouvoir au sein de l'hémicycle – évitement d'un côté, provocation de l'autre – ne datent pas d'hier. Mais ils ont pris une ampleur inédite depuis la diffusion en direct à la télévision et sur les médias en ligne. Le jeu parlementaire est ainsi devenu un véritable théâtre qui, par effet de vases communicants, crée un impact émotionnel fort sur la population spectatrice.

☛ Suite en page 9

Cancel Culture: 'une version moderne des bûchers de sorcières du Moyen-âge'

☛ Suite de la page 8

Ajoutez à cela les stratégies politiciennes qui se greffent dessus, puisque les réseaux sociaux sont devenus une annexe du Parlement pour les députés et surtout ceux de l'opposition.

Il ne faut pas oublier que les premiers à faire usage de mots stigmatisants, y compris racistes et sexistes, ont été les politiciens eux-mêmes dans le cadre de leurs stratégies de déstabilisation de l'adversaire et de conquête d'électorat. Les adeptes de la *cancel culture* n'ont fait que reprendre et raffiner ces pratiques politiciennes de la violence verbale et psychologique. Ils tirent un capital politique des sentiments de colère et frustration des citoyens en canalisant et en redirigeant la haine comme nous l'avons expliqué tout à l'heure, avec des agendas bien précis.

“La démarche de l'ICTA dans son *consultation paper* part du constat selon lequel l'outil légal ne suffit plus, et qu'il faut aussi des moyens techniques pour l'exercice de la justice en ce qui concerne les réseaux sociaux. L'ICTA cherche donc à mettre en place un cadre régulateur et opérationnel, en plus du cadre juridique traditionnel...”

* Un *Consultation Paper* circule sur un projet d'amendement de *The Information and Communication Technologies Act 2001* en vue de "regulating the use and addressing the abuse and misuse of Social Media in Mauritius". Parmi les incidents rapportés au *Mauritian Cybercrime Online Reporting System (MAUCORS)* durant la période janvier 2020-janvier 2021, il y a eu parmi d'autres 379 cas de *Offensive Contents*. Pensez-vous que la situation est suffisamment inquiétante pour que l'Etat décide de renforcer le dispositif légal?

La situation est certes inquiétante car la prolifération des dérives sur les réseaux sociaux contribue à rendre le contexte sociopolitique particulièrement inflammable, par effet de vases communicants. Parmi les *offensive contents* (qui ne sont qu'une petite partie de la cybercriminalité), on retrouve pêle-mêle: contenus à caractère sexuel et pédophile, diffamation et calomnies, incitations à la violence, à la haine raciale et à la haine tout court, et même, je rajouterai, incitation à la sédition.

Dans tous ces contenus à fort potentiel destructeur,

1. il y a une violence sociale qui s'exprime liée à la conflitualité des relations sociales et interethniques dans le pays, amplifiée par les réseaux sociaux ;
2. ensuite, il y a un certain nombre de perversions à l'œuvre, notamment sexuelles, qui y trouvent un terrain privilégié ;
3. troisièmement, on trouve également des formes de mécontentement, de frustration et de colère venant des citoyens, qui sont légitimes mais s'expriment souvent de façon débridée avec le recours aux propos agressifs voire haineux ;
4. enfin, quatrième facteur, c'est la guérilla politique menée sur les réseaux sociaux par les partis politiques eux-mêmes ou par des groupuscules à vocation politique et qui sont les pratiquants d'une



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cancel culture massive, organisée avec des moyens financiers et des stratégies bien définies.

Donc, face à cette situation complexe et hors de contrôle, les actions de l'Etat, via ses institutions telles que la Cyber Crime Unit, l'ICTA et le MAUCORS trouvent leurs limites pas seulement légales, mais aussi techniques, d'où effectivement l'initiative de l'ICTA de procéder à une consultation populaire en vue d'amender la loi.

* L'intention du Gouvernement est clairement d'imposer des limites à ne pas franchir. Mais il faut veiller à ce que la protection contre les *Offensive Contents* et *Hate Speech* soit soigneusement mise en balance avec le droit fondamental à la liberté d'expression et nos valeurs démocratiques, n'est-ce pas? Exercice délicat, non?

Exercice d'autant plus délicat que les éléments qui pèsent dans la balance ne sont plus seulement la liberté d'expression vs la protection contre les abus. Désormais la technologie mondialisée s'est invitée comme limite importante à l'action légale de l'Etat.

Du coup, la démarche de l'ICTA dans son *consultation paper* part du constat selon lequel l'outil légal ne suffit plus, et qu'il faut aussi des moyens techniques pour

l'exercice de la justice en ce qui concerne les réseaux sociaux.

L'ICTA cherche donc à mettre en place un cadre régulateur et opérationnel, en plus du cadre juridique traditionnel. L'intention du législateur ici, plus que de poser des limites, est de chercher à intervenir en amont contre les dérives, et pour cela à renforcer la capacité d'intervention de l'Etat.

Du coup, cela pose aussi des questions non seulement légales et techniques, mais également éthiques, et c'est ce que ce *consultation paper* de l'ICTA cherche à prendre en considération.

A ce stade, l'exercice se veut une démarche consultative, avant tout dans le but affiché de dissiper à l'avance les perceptions selon lesquelles l'amendement serait de nature répressive. L'ICTA a certainement tiré des enseignements par rapport à l'introduction en 2018 de l'amendement précédent sur la notion d'*annoyance*. C'était un outil législatif qui visait à renforcer la protection des victimes et à permettre aux autorités d'agir plus vite, mais qui a fait grincer beaucoup de dents en raison de son caractère subjectif, ce qui ouvrait la porte à des répressions de nature politique.

Cette fois, l'approche consultative adoptée par l'ICTA s'inscrit dans une démarche de démocratie délibérative en entendant associer le public et les *stakeholders* à l'élaboration de l'amendement. Cette philosophie consensuelle présente un double bénéfice. D'une part, cette participation du public, déjà demandeur de démocratie délibérative, devrait permettre une meilleure conscientisation, essentielle pour lutter contre la cybercriminalité et la *cancel culture*.

D'autre part, des apports techniques, légaux et éthiques de la part des *stakeholders* seront très utiles pour éclairer tous les aspects du problème posé à la fois par les abus et par le remède proposé.

Reste à savoir si cette philosophie consensuelle se poursuivra lors des étapes ultérieures de l'élaboration de l'amendement, d'autant que ce *consultation paper* n'équivaut évidemment pas à un référendum sur la question, surtout que cet amendement pose un grand risque de violation des libertés et de la vie privée. Cet amendement propose de permettre à l'Etat d'accéder aux contenus des internautes en amont et de juger, en amont de toute procédure juridique, de leur caractère éventuellement répréhensible et dangereux.

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Si l'Etat se propose de décrypter les contenus digitaux des citoyens, ce sera au tour des citoyens de décrypter ce *consultation paper*. On s'aventure là sur un terrain inconnu, dans un *no man's land* juridique, alors autant que l'Etat et la société civile s'y aventurent ensemble afin que l'un n'y plante pas son drapeau de conquête au détriment de l'autre.

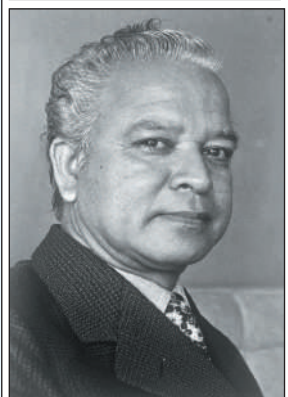
From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

4th Year No 162

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 13 September 1957

● A good memory and a tongue tied in the middle is a combination which gives immortality to conversation. -- Mark Twain



Somduth Bhuckory

Horse-Racing & Self-Respect

Last Saturday was a race day which ten years ago would have been the biggest race day of the year. It was the day known as the **Journée Populaire**. So great was this day that tradition has settled a press holiday for it. Yes, the dailies did not appear last Saturday as on every other *journée populaire*.

But there was nothing striking about the day itself. The *journée* has ceased to be *populaire*. Tradition has had a break and the racing history of our island has taken another turn.

What has happened to the most colourful of race days? Why has it lost its colour and popularity? Where are the greasy pole and the surging crowd? That day is gone and gone forever to live only in our memories. But why? Because of self-respect. Indians were turning up in such vast numbers that the day had been contemptuously associated with them. To be true, it was their day. But the contempt turned out to be too much for them. And ten years ago, started a campaign that has borne its fruits as expected.

Ten years ago, Messrs Bissoondoyal Bros started the campaign of boycotting that particular race day. They appealed to the Indians. They made of the boycott a means to drive the lesson home that the self-respect of a community could not be trampled upon. The message was far from being a cry in the wilderness. It went straight to the hearts of the people concerned. What seemed practically impossible, was made possible.

On the 29th of this month, the 10th anniversary of the boycott is going to be celebrated not very far from the Champ de Mars – the physical target of the boycott. This celebration will no doubt make a lot of people ponder over self-respect. It will also, we hope, make a lot of others realize that much can be achieved given a good cause and sound leadership.

Ten years ago, it was nothing short of a revolutionary innovation to associate self-respect with horse-racing. We were inclined to take so many things for granted. The spirit of challenge has asserted itself since. After the Indians, it's the coloured population that has been given the opportunity of pondering over their self-respect. And this brings us to the boycott of the races by Dr Millien, the Mayor of Port Louis.

* * *

It was in the racing tradition to invite the Mayor of Port Louis to attend the races every year and the Mayor used to attend them from his reserved place at the grandstand. From the time Dr Millien has become Mayor he has abstained from following in the footsteps of his predecessors. That is to say, there has been another break in the racing tradition.

At the meeting of the Municipal Council on the 4th of



Photo - vintagemauritius.org

this month, the Mayor was asked to explain his attitude regarding his boycott. He was also asked why he did not attend the ceremony at the Cathedral in connection with Saint Louis. In both cases, the reason centres round discrimination. As we are concerned with racing only here, we shall not deal with the Saint Louis incident.

The correspondence that has taken place between Dr Millien and the Secretary of the Mauritius Turf Club has been published in the press. Refusing the invitation of the Mauritius Turf and the Mauritius Jockey Club, Dr Millien wrote: "*J'ai le regret d'avoir à adopter une attitude que vous comprenez, j'espère. Il est de notoriété public que le Mauritius Turf Club n'admet parmi ses membres que des Mauriciens de la population blanche. Comme homme de couleur, et Maire de Port Louis, je me vois donc dans l'impossibilité d'accepter l'invitation à participer à une fonction de ce club.*"

So, the stand of Dr Millien is clear: because the Mauritius Turf Club is an exclusive white club, he Dr Millien, who is a coloured man, cannot attend the races organized by that club. It is to be seen whether this attitude is going to be adopted by all coloured mayors henceforth. Anyway, Dr Millien has taken a courageous stand as far as he is concerned.

The irony of it all is, however, that the Municipality of Port Louis itself has leased the Champ de Mars to the racing clubs. It will be said that when the lease was granted the political climate was different. Well, if the racial discrimination of the clubs is resented, will the Municipality take any step now or in future about not leasing the Champ de Mars to the exclusive clubs?

* * *

The review of events involving self-respect would not be complete if we did not allude to the absence of the Indian and Pakistani flags on the stand on race days. The absence is striking when we find so many common and uncommon flags floating. Are so many flags

unfurled there just to decorate the place or have they any meaning? The impression that we have is that anything Western is welcome and anything not Western is boycotted.

And to say that just across the street is the Indian Commission! The representative of a Commonwealth country has to bear this sight every time races are run. Surely, the racing clubs must be inviting him also to attend. We don't pretend to be the spokesman of the Commissioner for the Government of India in Mauritius. But as an observer, we can't help feeling that the race organisers seem to be deliberately ignoring to honour him and his country.

We hear far too much about *entente cordiale* in this place. It's high time some emphasis was laid on the Commonwealth. Of the independent countries in the Commonwealth, India and Pakistan especially deserve to be fairly treated because of the great number of Hindus and Muslims who live here but who look up to India and Pakistan respectively for cultural inspiration just as others look up to France.

Now that the question of self-respect has come to the forefront, we hope that those who are responsible for dealing blows to it will realize that it is dangerous to be exclusive and to try to be friendly at the same time. We have seen how reactions have been sudden and far-reaching so far. Who knows what may happen next?

What has happened so far may be said to have only scratched the surface. The self-respect of the people may one day be so wounded that it will produce an indignation that will know no bounds. Then, it's not one race day that a whole community will boycott and it's not one man that will boycott all the races but all the affected people will boycott all the races as one man. What seemed impossible yesterday has become possible today. What is seeming impossible today may well become possible tomorrow.

Showdown at Natanz - Iran's Centrifuges Spin

☛ Cont. from page 3

Iran refuses to meet with the US directly because its Supreme Leader says the US cannot be trusted. Iran will meet with the Europeans in Geneva who will be go-betweens with the Americans who are staying at a different hotel. Strange as it may seem, the US agreed to this arrangement. In the negotiations under the Obama administration, Iranian foreign minister Javad Zarif often spoke of the need for Iran to be treated with respect and as an equal. John Kerry, the US Secretary of State obliged. Now, Iran turns that notion on its head and treats the US with disrespect, in effect not recognizing its existence.

So, what is going on here? In recent days, the Iranians have announced that the talks are showing signs of progress and an agreement is likely to be reached. Well,

“If Iran has no interest in developing nuclear weapons, why should it be so difficult to get to an agreement that it will not do so? The problem, in large measure, is that the US, urged on by Israel, acts as if Iran cannot be trusted on this subject and Iran, while insisting that it has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful research, sees great leverage in maintaining opacity about whether it indeed can be trusted. Kim Jong Un of North Korea has demonstrated how that kind of leverage works...”



Photo - niacouncil.org

this is not surprising since no one other than the US, Israel, and Saudi Arabia seems to be in favour of continuing sanctions against Iran. The US already realizes that sanctions have effectively been eviscerated by China's deal with Iran.

It is not more important to curb Iran's development of a nuclear bomb more than it ever was, if only to prevent proliferation that will see Saudi Arabia and perhaps a Gulf nation become nuclear powers.

Iran's announcement, in recent days, that it would

enrich uranium to 60% purity adds urgency to the situation. Iran has said that it would use 60% enriched uranium for nuclear powered ships. That's fine, except Iran has no nuclear-powered ships. There's the trust factor rearing its ugly head again.

Last week an explosion rocked Iran's Natanz facility. Not unexpectedly, Iran blames Israel.

So what can we expect from this latest round of talks? There is hope for an agreement of some sort. The Biden administration is desperate to get to an agreement not the least because it shows up Trump. Iran is anxious to get sanctions lifted and has the backing of China and probably Russia as well. India, more inclined to the US now than at any time in the past is also reliant on Iranian oil supplies so the US has sketchy support from Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The only consideration that militates against a US deal with Iran is that if Iran's threat to Israel and the Middle East is negated, the incentive for Israel and Saudi Arabia to work toward rapprochement is lessened. Against that, the notion of a safer, nuclear free Middle East is far more attractive.

The net result is that we can expect an agreement that is not favourable to the US position of isolating Iran. And most certainly, Iran will get relief from US sanctions. Even if it doesn't, it is clear that the Chinese couldn't care less about US sanctions and they have the clout to not to care.

Cheerz...
Bwana

☛ Cont. from page 2

An R number of greater than 1 means the virus will continue to spread and outbreaks will continue. An R number below 1 means that case numbers will start to reduce.

While previous studies in other countries have simulated hypothetical scenarios, this paper combined transmission modelling with detailed real data to estimate effectiveness.

The authors collected data on 158 cases between January 10 and June 1 2020 from the Taiwan Centers for Disease Control, and all cases were confirmed by PCR testing. The data related to locally acquired cases, confirmed clusters, and imported cases in people who entered Taiwan before March 21 2020.

They then compared the outcomes they found in Taiwan with an estimated R number of 2.5, based on the estimated equivalent number in nearby China at the beginning of its COVID-19 outbreak.

The winning combination

The study found that the case-based policies alone, like contact tracing and quarantining, could lower the R number from 2.5 to 1.53. Quarantine contributed the most to lowering the R number.

The secret to Taiwan's Covid success



Taiwan combined case-based policies like quarantine with population policies like masking to fight COVID-19. Photo - David Chang

Case-based interventions could not substantially prevent transmission from one person to another, but could reduce transmission onwards from those secondary cases to a third or fourth person, as long as close contacts quarantined.

Population-based policies like social distancing and face masks, meanwhile, reduced the R number from 2.5 to 1.3.

The authors concluded that it was the combination of case-based and population-based poli-

cies, along with widespread adherence, that led to Taiwan's success in containing Covid. Combining both approaches led to an R number estimated using two different methods to be 0.82 and as low as 0.62. They also found that considerable population-based policies were needed to achieve containment even though the number of circulating infections was small.

Neither approach would have been sufficient alone, even in a country with an effective public health system and sophisticated

contact tracing.

What does this mean for other countries?

Acknowledging that all models make assumptions, and this analysis is no different, this paper does confirm that the full suite of public health measures we have been using fairly consistently across the world – to varying degrees of length and stringency – have been necessary. Though it's worth noting that the results in the study reflects a time when new variants with greater transmissibility were not a problem.

The authors assumed that testing and isolation occurred simultaneously. This was the case in Taiwan, but not in other countries, for example England, where delays between testing, results and isolation diminish the effectiveness of case-based measures.

Taiwan is an island nation with the ability to control the introduction of new cases through border control, and the authors acknowledge the findings of this study may not be fully applicable to other countries. This is the reason the authors focused on the effectiveness of

case-based and population-based interventions on local transmission, rather than on border controls on the number of introductions of Covid-19.

The authors conclude that intensive contact tracing is not possible when public health systems are overwhelmed. This never happened in Taiwan due to the success of its strategies, but it did, for example, take place in Ireland in January 2021, which experienced a damaging third wave of Covid-19.

This paper also found similar results for seven-day and 14-day quarantine and suggest that the quarantine period could be shortened. This is being considered by some countries, including the USA, but it has not been introduced on a widespread basis to date.

We already knew there was much to be learned from Taiwan's success in preventing Covid-19 from taking hold. Now, as vaccines roll out and new variants emerge, we have more information about the comparative and combined contributions of public health measures.

Patricia Fitzpatrick
Full Professor of Epidemiology &
Biomedical Statistics, University
College Dublin

Dementia: eating plenty of apples, berries and tea linked to lower risk - new research

Foods rich in flavonoids (such as apples, berries, or tea) are important for cognitive health, research suggests

We're often told to eat more fruits and vegetables - and for good reason. Many of the nutrients found in fruits and vegetables are responsible for numerous health benefits, in particular preventing a wide range of diseases, including heart disease and diabetes.

A growing body of evidence even suggests that flavonoids, a group of compounds found in almost every fruit and vegetable - including tea, citrus fruit, berries, red wine, apples, and legumes - can actually reduce your risk of developing certain cancers, heart disease and stroke. Now, recent evidence even suggests that diets high in flavonoids can actually lower your risk of dementia.

Flavonoids are thought to lower cancer risk by making malignant cancer cells less able to divide and grow. They also act as antioxidants, which can prevent or slow damage to cells caused by unstable molecules. They even reduce inflammation in the body, which is a common feature of many chronic diseases. Most of these mechanisms explain the health benefits reported in animal or cell-based studies - and the data from these studies can be incredibly valuable in understanding how flavonoids work on the human body, too.

However, previous studies using animal or cell models don't necessarily translate to people. In humans, even when diets are high in flavonoids, these aren't readily absorbed into the gut. Flavonoids are also difficult to study as they belong to a very diverse group of chemical compounds. Not much is known about how they're metabolised after being consumed, or their potential to enter and act in certain tissues of the body, such as the brain.

We know that Alzheimer's disease is associated with a number of factors, including genetics, family history, ageing, environmental factors, health conditions (particularly obesity and diabetes), race and sex. This is why predicting and preventing the disease is often difficult.

But several studies suggest that consuming flavonoid-rich diets can help manage some of the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, and benefit cognitive ability. Which is perhaps not surprising, as dementia is linked to chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and stroke. Flavonoids have already been shown to be beneficial in managing and preventing these diseases.

Until now, studies have struggled to pinpoint which



flavonoids makes the difference. But this latest study has been able to show which flavonoids are linked with lower risk of dementia.

Alzheimer's and diet

A recent study, which is one of the most detailed to date, has found that diets high in flavonoids decreased risk of developing dementia.

The researchers followed 2,801 subjects between the ages of 28 and 62, over a period of 19.7 years. Participants had their consumption of flavonoids measured throughout. These numbers were also statistically adjusted if participants changed the amount of flavonoids they ate on average during the study.

The researchers found that higher long-term dietary intake of flavonoids is associated with lower risks of dementia in American adults. Though the study doesn't state the specific amount of flavonoid-rich foods, or if a

specific group of flavonoids were associated with lower risk. However, it does show that people who ate the most flavonoids, had a lower risk of developing dementia compared to those who consumed the least.

Given the complexity of flavonoids, the authors looked at the effect of different types of flavonoids in the diet. They found eating a higher amount of three classes of flavonoids (specifically flavonols, anthocyanins, and flavonoid polymers) had lower risk of dementia. Flavonols and anthocyanins had a similar effect for Alzheimer's alone.

The foods they looked at included orange juice, tea, oranges, apples, blueberries, pears and strawberries. Tea, apples and pears were common sources of flavonols and flavonoid polymers. Anthocyanins are found in berries and red wine.

However, these types of studies can be affected by many variables in the sample study. These include a wide range of population factors, known as "confounders", that have to be accounted for, as they can impact the reported results. Confounders can include anything from social status, gender, race, weight and occupation.

The study accounted for several confounders including age, sex, education level, energy intake, smoking, cholesterol levels, hypertension, genetics, and diabetes. They were able to show that regardless of these confounders, eating a diet rich in flavonoids over your lifetime was beneficial for reducing Alzheimer's risk.

Though this study doesn't explain why flavonoids have this beneficial effect on Alzheimer's disease, it's clear that high, long-term dietary intake of a wide range of flavonoids is associated with lower risks of dementia in adults. However, it doesn't claim flavonoids cure dementia, nor will consuming flavonoids on their own prevent it.

Evidence from this study shows clearly that eating foods rich in flavonoids over your lifetime is significantly linked to reducing Alzheimer's disease risk. However, their consumption will be even more beneficial alongside other lifestyle changes, such as quitting smoking, managing a healthy weight and exercising.

Eleftheria Kodosaki, & Keith Morris,
Cardiff Metropolitan University

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Dad at the mall

I took my dad to the mall the other day to buy some new shoes (he is 82). We decided to grab a bite at the food court. I noticed he was watching a teenager sitting next to him.

The teenager had spiked hair in all different colours: green, red, orange, and blue. His clothes were equally colourful: bright blue pants, electric green shirt, yellow belt and I think there was eye make-up involved, too. My dad kept staring at him. The teenager would look and find him staring every time.

When the teenager had had enough, he sarcastically asked, "What's the matter old man? Never done anything wild in your life?"

Knowing my Dad, I quickly swallowed my food so that I would not choke on his response, knowing he would have a good one, and in classic style he did not bat an eye in his response:

"Got drunk once and had sex with a peacock. I was just wondering if you were my son."

A lawyer runs a stop sign and gets pulled over by a sheriff. He thinks he's smarter being a big shot lawyer from New York and has a better education than an

sheriff from West Virginia.

The sheriff asks for license and registration. The lawyer asks, "What for?" The sheriff responds, "You didn't come to a complete stop at the stop sign." The lawyer says, "I slowed down and no one was coming." "You still didn't come to a complete stop. License and registration please," say the sheriff impatiently.

The lawyer says, "If you can show me the legal difference between slow down and stop, I'll give you my license and registration and you can give me the ticket. If not, you let me go and don't give me the ticket."

The sheriff says, "That sounds fair, please exit your vehicle." The lawyer steps out and the sheriff takes out his nightstick and starts beating the lawyer with it. The sheriff says, "Do you want me to stop or just slow down?"

Two factory workers are talking. The woman says, "I can make the boss give me the day off." The man replies, "And how would you do that?" The woman says, "Just wait and see."

She then hangs upside down from the ceiling. The boss comes in and says, "What are you doing?" The woman replies, "I'm a light bulb." The boss then says, "You've been working so much that you've gone crazy. I think you need to take the day off."

The man starts to follow her and the boss says, "Where are you going?" The man says, "I'm going home, too. I can't work in the dark."

A thief stuck a pistol in a man's ribs and said, "Give me your money."

The gentleman, shocked by the sudden attack, said, "You cannot do this,

I'm a congressman!"

The thief replied, "In that case, give me MY money!"

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

"A doctor."

"And why's that?" "Because it's the only profession where you can tell women to take off their clothes and then stick their husbands with the bill."

A doctor and a lawyer are talking at a

Three doctors are discussing which types of patients they prefer.

Doctor Watson says, "I prefer librarians. All their organs are alphabetized."

Doctor Fitzpatrick says, "I prefer mathematicians. All their organs are numbered." Doctor Ahn says, "I prefer lawyers. They're gutless, heartless, brainless, spineless, and their heads and rear-ends are interchangeable."

A local United Way office realized that the organization had never received a donation from the town's most successful lawyer. The person in charge of contributions called him to persuade him to contribute. "Our research shows that out of a yearly income of at least \$500,000, you did not give a penny to charity. Wouldn't you like to give back to the community in some way?" The lawyer mulled this over for a moment and replied, "First, did your research also show that my mother is dying after a long illness, and has medical bills that are several times her annual income?" Embarrassed, the United Way rep mumbled, "Um, no." The lawyer inter-

rupted, "Or that my brother, a disabled veteran, is blind and confined to a wheelchair?" The stricken United Way rep began to stammer out an apology, but was interrupted again. "Or that my sister's husband died in a traffic accident," the lawyer's voice rising in indignation, "leaving her penniless with three children?!" The humiliated United Way rep, completely beaten, said simply, "I had no idea." On a roll, the lawyer cut him off once again, "So if I don't give any money to them, why should I give any to you?"

party. Their conversation is constantly interrupted by people describing their ailments and asking the doctor for free medical advice.

After an hour of this, the exasperated doctor asks the lawyer, "What do you do to stop people from asking you for legal advice when you're out of the office?"

"I give it to them," replies the lawyer, "and then I send them a bill."

The doctor is shocked, but agrees to give it a try. The next day, still feeling slightly guilty, the doctor prepares the bills. When he goes to place them in his mailbox, he finds a bill from the lawyer.

When you and your friends survive a bear attack and celebrate with ice cream



rupts, "Or that my brother, a disabled veteran, is blind and confined to a wheelchair?" The stricken United Way rep began to stammer out an apology, but was interrupted again. "Or that my sister's husband died in a traffic accident," the lawyer's voice rising in indignation, "leaving her penniless with three children?!" The humiliated United Way rep, completely beaten, said simply, "I had no idea." On a roll, the lawyer cut him off once again, "So if I don't give any money to them, why should I give any to you?"

Granny's message on Work from Home

A youngster was attending a video conference with his manager, who was upset with the background noises. The youngster turned around and told his grandmother to keep quiet.

She walked towards the youngster to take a look at what he was doing; she saw a person on the monitor and asked, "Who is he?"

The youngster muted his audio and video and said: "He is my manager."

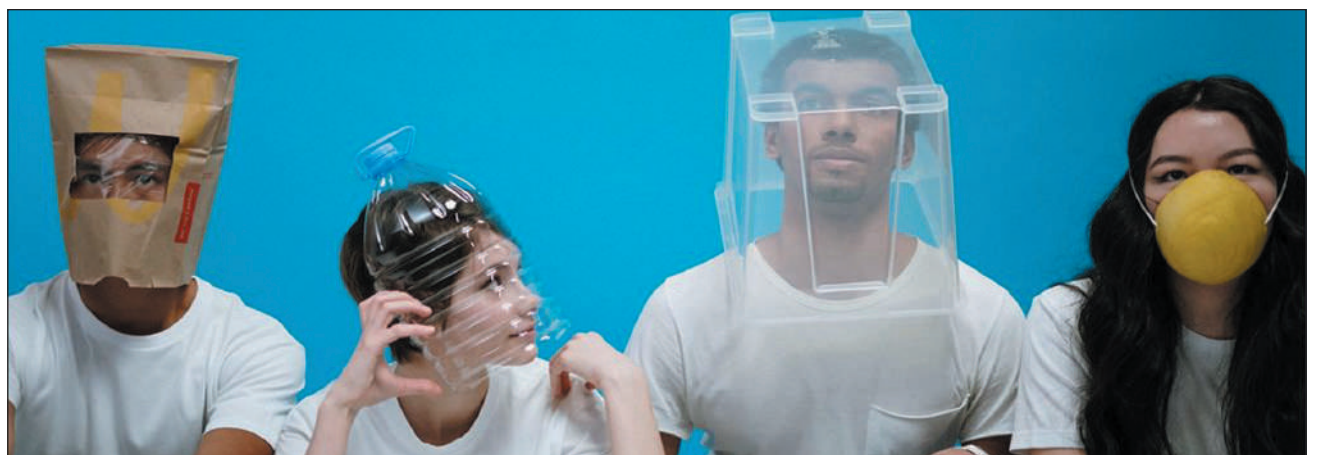
She said "I want to talk to your manager," but the youngster refused. By that time the manager started pinging the youngster; the youngster unmuted his audio and his grandmother shouted: "Manager, I want to talk to you."

The manager agreed, and the youngster unmuted the video. His grandmother greeted the manager, and said, "You look upset!"

The manager said, "Yeah, some kind of work tension, a lot of noise around and we are not able to complete the meeting in time"

The grandmother asked, "Can I solve your problem?"

The youngster was telling her to keep quiet, but the



manager said, "It's ok, let her speak."

The grandmother narrated: "Once there was an young man who taking rest under a tree; he was continuously hearing a bird making some weird noise. He started chasing the bird, but the bird came closer to him and said, "You are taking rest under my nest, I will not ask you to leave the place, but you should learn to co-exist with us."

The old lady looked at both of them and said, "Your home is your nest" where you are supposed to take rest and bond with your dear and near ones. I do understand the Covid-19 situation, but you should also understand that a home is not your office. When we come to visit our

family members at your office, we are expected to behave professionally and maintain decorum. Similarly, when you are using our home, you should understand the situation here. There is nothing wrong with working from home, but remember, it is the family members' benevolent nature that's keeping corporates functioning today and economy running."

She looked at the manager and asked, "Am I right?"

The manager's mother peeped in and said, "You are absolutely right."

Be safe at home, but maintain the sanctity of home while working from home.

Pregnancy is an experience governed by a woman's choice. It is not something that can be imposed or forced, but given the biological risks associated with late pregnancy, some women might feel the need to conceive sooner. But getting pregnant in your 20s, 30s or 40s has its own equal share of risks and benefits. Needless to say, that pregnancy is a challenging process and may take a toll over your physical and mental well-being, but it has its own pros, which might overshadow all the difficulties.

Getting pregnant in your 20

Becoming pregnant in your 20s is not just the safest time to conceive, but it is also when you are the most fertile. Your eggs are fresh and healthy during this time and so it raises your chances of getting pregnant and also ensures a safe pregnancy. However, women in their 20s can still experience infertility. While the quality of your eggs may not be the concern, your ovarian reserve may lack the necessary numbers of eggs required to ensure a pregnancy.

Other factors such as unhealthy lifestyle habits like smoking, drinking can affect fertility in younger women. Apart from that, maintaining a healthy weight with regular physical activities can boost fertility in young women.

From a social perspective, becoming a mother at a young age may have its cons too. If you're settled in life and have a secure future, then surely you can plan a family, however, given that raising a child can be challenging, you must also take other things into consideration. An insight by the Times of India:

Getting pregnant in your 30s

When you're in your 30s, you may be more mature to

Being Mum

Getting pregnant in your 20s, 30s and 40s: What you need to know



handle children and may have the resources to raise a kid, but physically, you may have to try harder. With your age, your eggs in your ovary age as well. Even if you have a spectacular health record and no medical condition, there is a possibility that you face difficulties in conceiving.

According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, women in their 30s have an increased risk of miscarriage as the quality and quantity of the eggs in the ovarian reserve may decrease over time.

During this period, women also may be prone to chronic conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, which complicate pregnancy. Which is why it is important to keep a check on your health.

Getting pregnant in your 40s

If you're in your 40s or beyond, it will be extremely difficult for you to conceive. Given the declining quality and quantity of eggs, your fertility may suffer during this time, slowing down the process of conception. During this period of time, you may also develop risks of chromosomal abnormalities and miscarriage. Your menstrual cycle may also become increasingly irregular which could also hamper your fertility.

Additionally, due to the decline in quality and quantity of eggs, risks of severe medical conditions such as gestational diabetes, hypertension and chromosomal abnormalities, also increase with age.

While conceiving in your 40s is difficult and dangerous, it is not impossible. It is important that you resort to a healthy lifestyle and engage in regular physical activities. Do not compromise with your sleep and keep your stress levels at bay.

From Alia Bhatt to Priyanka Chopra Jonas...

5 haircare routine celebs follow for smooth and shiny hair

5 haircare routine celebs follow for smooth and shiny hair

If you are dealing with dry and frizzy hair, then don't underestimate the power of homemade masks and packs

If you are among those unlucky ones who deals with dry and frizzy hair in all seasons, then don't you worry. India.com has compiled a list of amazingly natural haircare routine followed by some of our favourite Bollywood divas, including Alia Bhatt, Kareena Kapoor Khan, and Priyanka Chopra Jonas among others, that will help you get lustrous hair -- just like them.

Priyanka Chopra



PC is one of the few celebrities in the Bollywood industry who aces in everything she does. Even for taking care of her luscious mane, PeeCee believes in natural home remedies to protect it from any kind of damage. The global star applies yogurt to add moisture to her hair.

What to do: Mix half a cup of yogurt with 2 teaspoons of lemon juice, and then apply it to your scalp. Leave it on for about 30 minutes. Rinse off.

Alia Bhatt



Undoubtedly, Alia Bhatt takes extremely good care of her skin and hair. Well, here's the secret. According to reports, the Raazi actor takes a daily dose of Vit A, and washes off her hair every alternate day to keep greasy scalp and dirt at bay.

Kareena Kapoor



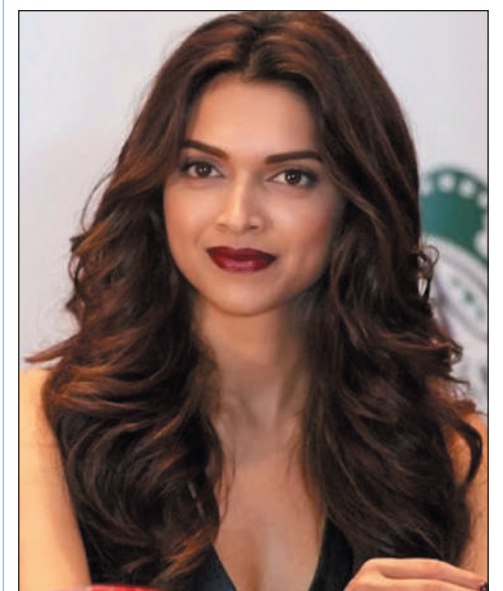
Kareena Kapoor, the diva that she is, is naturally blessed with shiny healthy hair. The secret to Kareena's gorgeous hair is going for a head massage with four of her favourite oils (coconut, castor, olive and almond oil) at least once in every 30 days. In fact, the 40-year-old actress also prefers to blow dry her hair to add volume to it.

Jacqueline Fernandes



When it comes to taking inspiration for staying fit and eating healthy, Jacqueline Fernandez comes to the mind first. Well, that also reflects in her beautifully flawless skin and long healthy hair. She applies egg whites homemade mask on her scalp for strong, gorgeous hair. And like most actors, she too loves a hot coconut oil massage every now and then. You can follow this too!

Deepika Padukone



When it comes to hair care, coconut oil is Deepika Padukone's best friend. She loves applying coconut oil to hair every now and then to protect it from any kind of damage. Deepika relies on oiling and head massage to repair the damage chemicals and pollution does to the hair. Get inspired by our South Indian girl here!



Arshad Warsi: I have met the strangest kind of people in Bollywood

Arshad Warsi talks about the irrational beliefs some people hold in the film industry, and how perceptions about an actor change every Friday.

He admits he has not really 'learnt' from his stint in the film industry so far, but Arshad Warsi sure has had a lot of encounters with all sorts of people. "I am the way I was when I came in this profession, nothing has changed. I have met more people, the strangest kind of people," he quips.

In fact, he doubts whether his experience would have been the same anywhere else. "I don't think if I was in any other profession, I would have met so many people who are so not normal. I met them being here," he says.

The 52-year-old continues, "Just generally, the way people are. Take my example. When I came into this industry, everybody was like 'this guy is so good' and this and that. The my movies started not doing well, and they said 'I knew he was not a good actor, he won't go anywhere'. All of a sudden, it became 'I always knew he was a good actor!' Then you have guys who have absolutely zero talent."

Though he has made good equations as well within the industry, what he found funny is some people possessing beliefs which they thought would make things work.

8 highly anticipated Bollywood movies of 2021

The much-anticipated release of new movies from Bollywood has been pushed back to next year. Reasons are galore - right from Coronavirus pandemic to several movements related to the Bollywood film industry, many film critics have expressed their disappointment about the delay in Bollywood movie releases. Whatever be the reason, we are expecting great things from Bollywood this year.

Gangubai Kathiawadi

Gangubai Kathiawadi is Alia Bhatt's dream project with Sanjay Leela Bhansali. She professes to be a brothel madam, and the film is based on one of the chapters of the book *Mafia Queens of Mumbai* by Hussain Zaidi. Since its announcement and beginning of filming, the project has faced many challenges. Nonetheless, Bollywood celebs, on the other hand, have returned to work while the lockdown has gradually



eased.

Radhe

Radhe, starring Salman Khan, will be launched in the coming 2021 Eid holidays. This year's celebration of Eid is primarily for his fans, who are joyous about this gift's return. According to media reports, Bhajjan will make a grand comeback on the big screens with this film.

Sardar Udham Singh

The film *Sardar Udham Singh*, featuring Vicky Kaushal, is set to hit theatres soon. The star has a long list of achievements to his signature acting skills. In this movie, Vicky plays a fearless freedom fighter.

Pathan

Shah Rukh Khan has been absent from the large screen over the last two years. But King Khan is making a comeback this 2021 with *Pathan*. In the film, he'll be paired with Deepika Padukone. And in his new look for the project, the celebrity has already been spotted in the region.

Brahmastra

Brahmastra is a film that is both intriguing and awaited for a multitude of reasons, including the fact that it stars three of Bollywood's biggest stars: Amitabh Bachchan, Ranbir Kapoor, and Alia Bhatt. The movie has been on hold for a long time. Since 2019, fans have been awaiting its release. Around the middle of 2021, the film will be in theatres.

'83

The film '83 shows the Indian cricket team winning the 1983 World Cup. Ranveer Singh will play Kapil

Dev in the movie. The film will be directed by Kabir Khan and will be released in the first half of 2021. We can't wait to see it on the big screen because it has such a good plot and one of the best Indian actors of today.

Laal Singh Chaddha



The Hindi film *Laal Singh Chaddha* is a recreation of the classic Hollywood film *Forrest Gump*. And Bebo, aka Kareena Kapoor Khan, co-stars alongside the lead actor in the movie. Tom Hank is played by Aamir Khan, who is depicted as a lazy and intellectually challenged man who finally achieves excellence in the film.

Sooryavanshi

Rohit Shetty's *Sooryavanshi*, releases with a bang in theatres in the first quarter of 2021. Katrina Kaif will be seen romancing with our handsome cop Akshay Kumar in the film. And this film is the most recent iteration in the director's cop galaxy!

Sharad Malhotra: TV actors work twice as hard than Bollywood actors

Sharad Malhotra has recently wrapped up fantasy drama series, *Naagin 5*, and now is yearning to explore other mediums.

"As an actor, I want to see myself in different mediums. I've been seeing myself on television for the last 15 years," says Malhotra, adding that his love for television will always be there.

"It's my bread and butter. It has given me an identity. People know me because of the small screen. How can I call it downmarket or how can I say that it is not as great as compared to cinema?" asserts the 38-year-old.

The actor, who first came into spotlight through a talent hunt show in 2004, doesn't approve of the comparisons between television and films, reports Sugandha Rawal of Hindustan Times.

"Cinema is a different ball game altogether. It's larger than life, while television is a small little box. We're trying to sell dreams and make shows which people watch while sitting in the comfort of their homes," he explains.

Known for shows such as *Banoo Main Teri Dulhan*, *Bharat Ka Veer Putra - Maharana Pratap* and *Kasam Tere Pyaar Ki*, the actor asserts that people know him because



of the "amazing characters" he has played over the years.

"And let me tell you, working on television is a lot of hard work. For instance, I work 11 hours or 12 hours a day. A television actor probably works twice as hard than a Bollywood actor. And that's because you play the same character for 365 days, yet you give your best shot every time," he says.

Having said that, Malhotra did have his tryst with the big screen when after tasting success on TV he went on to try his luck in Bollywood, and did films such as *From Sydney With Love* (2012) and *Ek Tera Saath* (2016). However, turned out to be a damp affair on the box office.

"I'm not ashamed of that fact. I tried, and I gave it my best shot. A lot of hard work went into it, but it did not turn out to be as I expected to be," he shares.

Till now, he's harbouring a dream of coming on the big screen. "But that doesn't mean I will quit television. TV will always be my first love," he ends.

Ram Kapoor: 'It took me 10 years to impress my father'

Ram Kapoor's father, Anil Kapoor, one of the doyens of the Indian advertising industry passed away in Mumbai on April 12. Ram, who has never spoken about his legendary father in his entire career span, shares in an exclusive interview with Tanvi Trivedi of Times of India the reason why his father and he kept their professional lives separate, how he never used his father's name to further his career and the time they spent together in his last few days. Excerpts...

Your father had been unwell and undergoing treatment in Singapore...

My father was detected with cancer 10 years ago and the doctors then said that he had around 6-12 months left. We started his treatment and miraculously he recovered, stunning the doctors. He lived a pain-free life for 10 years, travelled around the world, worked well and was fine. But last year around February, he travelled with his friends to Singapore and that's when the cancer came back and his situation deteriorated.

While your father was one of the advertising industry veterans, you chose to become an actor. Why did you not want to use his name to get work?

I learnt a lot about theatre at Sherwood boarding school in Nainital. So, when I told my father about my decision to pursue acting as a career, he did not take me seriously. He did not discourage me either and just told me to follow my dreams. Also, when I went abroad to learn acting, he thought I wasn't serious and I would quietly come back and do something else after the initial struggle.



So, it was a challenge within myself to prove to him that I would create my path and make him proud, one day. I wanted to prove to him that I could make my career without his help and support. I was highly inspired by Nicolas Cage, a Hollywood star who is also the nephew of director Francis Ford Coppola, but he never took the surname and created his own identity.

So, what was wrong in using your father's name or his connections?

I don't see anything wrong in fathers or mothers helping their kids in showbiz, but in my case, the reason why I never used his name was that his respect and confidence in me mattered to me the most. He was a self-made man and a true legend, and I wanted to prove

to him that I could also be a self-made man like him.

Today, I feel happy that I have carved a place for myself in the profession. People take my name with respect and though I am nowhere near my legendary father, my work and career has reached a stage, where people started identifying my father as Ram Kapoor's father.

It took me 10 years to impress him, and from a rocky relationship that I shared with him during those initial years, we went on to become great buddies. He used to proudly tell people how I was his best friend.

You mentioned how you bonded with him in the last few years...

Both he and I had busy careers and it was challenging to be physically present and share common things. But we bonded a lot over phone calls and long conversations, which lasted for 2-3 hours. We used to fight, argue and have the best advice for each other. It is because we kept our work lives separate and were self-reliant, we became such a close father-son duo.

In many ways, I am similar to my dad and that's why I am what I am, today. And though I was aware of how he turned around a dying ad agency to one of the top five agencies in the country and his achievements, I always detached from his profession. Similarly, he must have watched all my films, my TV shows and series, but he never once complimented me on my work. Through my wife, mother or sister, he would convey that he was very happy with my achievements. He had a lot of expectations from me and I am happy I fulfilled them.

While men are objectified too, women are subjected to body shaming more often: Sayantani Ghosh

Trolls are among the biggest downsides of social media, who often take advantage of anonymity and pass nasty, cheap, and hurtful comments that leave an unpleasant and lasting impression. During an interactive session on a social media platform earlier this week, actor Sayantani Ghosh was asked about the size of her bra. While Sayantani gave a befitting reply to the troll, which was applauded by many, she later posted a lengthy message on social media condemning such acts and talking about the importance of loving and accepting your body in all shapes and sizes. Excerpts from a chat with Shreya Iyer of Times of India:

'I have been asked such questions earlier also but this time, I decided to speak up'

Talking about the incident and how such instances have affected her, Sayantani explains, "To be honest, this wasn't the first time when I had been subjected to such a disrespectful and cheap comment. Not just as an actor but even as a woman, I have been often subjected to uncomfortable gazes and comments. All

these years, I avoided it not because of the fear of speaking up but I didn't want to give any undue attention to these things. However, this time around, I decided to vent it out through a long post. I realised that being an actor, there are higher chances that people would read and react to your post. So, I thought that if I could talk about important issues and if it encourages and inspires even one person to take a stand for themselves, then it's worth it."

'People don't understand that their comments can affect someone deeply'

In her post, Sayantani also highlighted how these comments often affect you emotionally. "Since I began my modelling career very young, I have often seen people staring at my body or passing unwanted comments. People don't understand that these comments can affect someone deeply," she shares. Recounting the first time someone body-shamed her, she shares, "One of the first instances that I recall is from when I was 17-18 and doing a modelling shoot in Kolkata. While we have always conceived



models to be tall, skinny, and slim, I was slightly on the heavier side. A woman came up to me and passed a distasteful remark about my breasts. Often, I have seen that it's not just men but even women who make us feel bad about our bodies. A lot of these issues stem from our conditioning and mentality which needs to change. We have so much modern tech at our disposal but if our thinking is still limited to how a person should look, then it's sad."

Sayantani adds, "People don't think about how their one small comment can shake up and leave a deep scar on the other person. For the longest time, these

remarks have affected me and I have struggled to not let these stereotypes affect me."

'I'm still a work in progress and very proud of it'

Self-love and self-acceptance are the best tools that can help us navigate through tough days. But practising it daily is not that easy. She shares, "It can be harrowing to live up to the yardstick of the society when it comes to the ideal body type. But we have to keep on practising self-love and accept our bodies, as that's the only way to break this vicious cycle. It's an everyday practice because the healing process takes time and effort from our side. Even today, I often feel that I shouldn't wear a certain type of ensemble as it may highlight a certain part of my body and I try to camouflage it. It took time but I've been finally able to make peace with my body type. One must aspire for a healthy body and a peaceful state of mind."

'One must use social media wisely'

While she enjoys the benefits of social media, she warns the young generation, especially young girls, to be mindful when it comes to the medium. "Get inspired but don't try to ape everyone. Always try and add your individuality to things. Be smart to draw the line between the real and virtual world, and always have attainable and practical goals," she advises.



Mardi 20 Avril - 21.15

Mindhunters

Star: Val Kilmer, LL Cool J, Christian Slater



MBC 1

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.35 Serial: Radio Free Roscoe
11.00 Mag: Le Saviez Vous?
11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
12.50 Local: Les Grands Noms...
14.12 D.Animes: Spirit: Au Galop...
14.38 D.Anime: Sindbad And The 7...
15.05 D.Anime: The Twisted Whis...
15.12 D.Anime: Kung Fu Panda
15.35 Film: Starship Troopers
17.05 Serial: Mustangs Fc/ Mighty...
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Ram Nawmi & Nawrat...
18.55 Local: Charcha - Online...
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.35 Local Prod: An Eta Dalert
21.10 Film: Mindhunters
23.00 Le Journal

MBC 2

10.00 Serial: CID
10.48 Serial: Ye Vaada Raha
12.04 Film: Bhai Ho To Aisa
Starring: Jeetendra, Hema Malini, Shatrughan Sinha
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.23 Serial: Aamhi Doghi
15.45 Serial: Mooga Manasulu
16.08 Serial: Apoorva Raagangal
16.29 Serial: Suno Chanda
16.53 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
17.32 Telugu - Premabhishekam
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone
18.30 DDI Magazine
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Local: Tamil Programme
20.30 Film: Amar Deep
Star: Dev Anand, Vyjayanthimala, Pran

MBC 3

06.00 Mag: Eco@Africa
06.52 Mag: Voa Connect
07.27 Mag: In Good Shape
07.53 Doc: Amazing Gardens
08.19 Mag: Future Mag
09.43 Mag: Global 3000
10.38 Doc: Beyond Men And Mas...
11.23 Mag: Eco@Africa
11.49 Mag: Arts And Culture
12.15 Mag: Voa Connect
12.51 Mag: In Good Shape
13.43 Mag: Future Mag
14.15 Doc: 360 GEO
15.00 Mag: Global 3000
15.32 Mag: Washington Forum
16.48 Mag: Eco@Africa
17.14 Mag: Arts And Culture
18.02 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto...
19.00 Open Univ: Student Support
19.31 Mag: Made In Germany
20.04 Doc: Ville En Fête

Cine 12

01.26 Film: Astronaut
02.58 Serial: Hawaii 5-0
03.38 Film: 2 Years Of Love
05.04 Tele: Muneca Brava
06.49 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv...
09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire
09.45 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: Chicago Med
12.00 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv...
13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.15 Mag: Hollywood On Set
14.45 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv...
16.41 Serial: Chicago Fire
17.23 Serial: Absentia
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: Absentia
21.15 Film: Model Citizen
23.00 Tele: Muneca Brava

Bollywood TV

08.00 Film: Chaar Din Ki Chandni
12.04 / 19.54 - Sanjivani
12.26 / 20.11 - Radha Krishna
12.50 / 20.32 Agniphera
13.09 / 21.09 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.28 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.51 / 21.59 - Naagin Season 3
14.33 / 22.25 - Ikyawann
14.52 / 22.56 - Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.23 Film: One Two Three
Starring: Neetu Chandra, Esha Deol and Vrajesh HirjeeVV
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
18.52 Serial: Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka
19.15 Serial: Bhakharwadi

mardi 20 avril

mercredi 21 avril

jeudi 22 avril

07.00 Dessin Anime
10.35 Serial: Radio Free Roscoe
11.10 Tele: Soleil Levant
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
12.50 Prod Indepen: Met Seryer
13.00 Local: Groov'in
14.00 D.Anime: The Hive
14.07 D.Anime: Spirit: Au Galop...
14.31 D.Anime: Sindbad And The 7
14.54 D.Anime: The Twisted Whis...
15.05 D.Anime: Kung Fu Panda
15.30 Film: Red Dog: True Blue
17.00 Serial: Mustangs FC
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Ram Nawmi & Nawratri
18.55 MBC Production: Kala
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.25 Local: MBC Production
21.20 Film: Death Fighter
23.10 Local: Le Journal

10.00 Ram Nawmi Celebrations
12.00 Film: Jai Santoshi Maa
14.09 DDI Magazine
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.22 Aamhi Doghi
15.44 Mooga Manasulu
16.10 Apoorva Raagangal
16.30 Serial: Suno Chanda
16.53 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.12 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
17.33 Serial: Kulvadh
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone
18.30 Serial: DDI Magazine
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 DDI Magazine
20.00 Programme In Marathi
21.02 Film: Justice Bao: Beating The Royal Robes
22.32 DDI Live

06.00 Rev: The Global Auto...
06.26 Doc: When Food Become...
06.52 Mag: Check In
07.26 Mag: Made In Germany
07.53 Doc: Ville En Fête
10.05 Local: Klip Seleksion
10.47 Doc: Abbas By Abbas
11.58 Doc: When Food Become...
12.26 Mag: Check In
12.59 Mag: Made In Germany
13.25 Doc: Ville En Fête
13.51 Doc: Olivia's Garden
15.14 Mag: Close Up
16.24 Doc: Abbas By Abbas
17.04 Mag: Rev: The Global Auto...
17.30 Doc: When Food Becomes...
18.00 Mag: Motorweek
18.30 Mag: Le Saviez-Vous?
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.31 Mag: Tendance XXI
20.40 Doc: Comme Un Poisson...
21.31 Mag: Initiative Africa

00.20 Serial: Absentia
01.28 Film: Model Citizen
02.55 Serial: Hawaii 5-0
03.35 Film: Hope Dances
05.04 Tele: Muneca Brava
06.54 Film: Fairfield Road
09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire
09.44 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: Chicago Fire
12.00 Film: Hope Dances
13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.45 Film: Fairfield Road
16.40 Serial: Chicago Fire
17.20 Serial: Absentia
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: 19-2
21.15 Film: Gun Fury
22.45 Tele: Muneca Brava
23.30 Serial: Chicago Fire

08.00 Film: One Two Three
12.04 / 20.06 - Sanjivani
12.24 / 20.26 - Radha Krishna
12.46 / 20.02 - Agniphera
13.10 / 20.46 Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.30 / 21.09 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.53 / 21.31 - Naagin Season 3
14.35 / 21.46 - Ikyawann
14.36 / 21.59 - Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.16 Film: Main Krishna Hoon
Starring: Juhi Chawla, Paresh Ganatra, Namit Shah, Hrithik Roshan, Katrina Kaif
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kumkum Bhagya
18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhed Ka
19.13 Bhakharwadi
19.35 Siddhi Vinayak

06.00 Local: Klip Seleksion
06.45 Local: Sur Prise
08.53 D. Anime: Investion Story
10.05 D. Anime: Astrology
10.35 Serial: Radio Free Roscoe
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
12.50 Mag: Urban Gardens
13.00 Local: RDV Muzikal
14.30 D.Anime: The Hive
15.00 D.Anime: Kung Fu Panda
15.30 Film: The Baby Boss
17.05 Serial: Mustangs FC
17.30 Live - Covid-19
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Jamai Raja
18.55 Local: Tirth Yatra
19.30 Le Journal
20.15 Film: Shortkut
Stars: Anil Kapoor, Sanjay Dutt, Amrita Rao, Akshaye Khanna

10.00 Karm Phal Data Shani
12.05 Film: Neel Kamal
Starring: Waheeda Rehman, Raaj Kumar, Manoj Kumar
15.00 Serial: Ek Deewana Tha
15.18 Aamhi Doghi
15.47 Mooga Manasulu
16.05 Apoorva Raagangal
16.27 Serial: Suno Chanda
16.46 Serial: Achra Ke Moti
17.07 Kullfi Kumarr Bajewala
18.00 Serial: Colourful Bone
18.30 Serial: Ghar Pahucha Da...
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.20 DDI Magazine
20.05 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
20.26 Local: Evasion
20.56 Local Prod: Profil
21.09 Film: Thirteen Days
Starring: Kevin Costner, Bruce Greenwood, Shawn Driscoll

06.00 Mag: Motorweek
06.25 Mag: Vous Et Nous
06.59 Doc: Garden Party
07.54 Doc: The World From Above
09.40 Mag: Focus On Europe
10.06 Doc: Contest Of The Cathe...
10.51 Mag: Motorweek
11.17 Mag: Vous Et Nous
14.58 Doc: Contest Of The Cathe...
15.43 Mag: Motorweek
16.37 Doc: Garden Party
17.06 Mag: Tendance XXI
17.33 Doc: The World From Above
18.00 Mag: Eco India
18.30 Mag: Le Saviez-Vous?
19.00 Student Support Prog...
19.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.05 Mag: Science Ou Fiction
20.30 Local: News (English)
21.32 Doc: Blood Trade
22.14 Doc: On Route 7 Into The...

01.26 Film: Brush With Danger
02.58 Serial: Hawaii 5-0
03.38 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv...
05.21 Tele: Muneca Brava
06.43 Film: Gun Fury
09.00 Serial: Chicago Fire
09.45 Tele: Daniella
10.35 Tele: Tanto Amor
11.01 Serial: Chicago Med
12.00 Film: Signed, Sealed, Deliv...
13.30 Tele: Muneca Brava
14.15 Mag: Hollywood On Set
14.45 Film: Gun Fury
16.41 Serial: Chicago Fire
17.23 Serial: Absentia
18.05 Tele: Daniella
19.00 Tele: Tanto Amor
20.05 Tele: Le Prix Du Désir
20.30 Serial: 19-2
21.15 Film: The Misfits Club
23.00 Tele: Muneca Brava

08.00 Film: Main Krishna Hoon
12.05 / 19.54 - Sanjivani
12.22 / 20.11 - Radha Krishna
12.44 / 20.32 Agniphera
13.07 / 21.09 - Bade Acche Lagte Hai
13.29 / 21.24 - Zindagi Ki Mehek
13.48 / 21.46 - Naagin
14.29 / 21.59 - Ikyawann
14.51 / 22.52 Yeh Hai Mohabbatein
15.20 Film: Aasoo Bane Angaarey
Starring: Jeetendra, Madhuri Dixit, Deepak Tijori
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
18.51 Ek Rishta Saajhed Ka
19.12 Serial: Bhakharwadi



Mercredi 21 avril - 21.15

Death Fighter



Jeudi 22 Avril - 21.15

Avec: Kevin Costner, Bruce Greenwood, Shawn Driscoll



Mercredi 21 avril - 15.20

Star: Juhi Chawla, Paresh Ganatra, Namit Shah, Hrithik Roshan, Katrina Kaif



Jeudi 22 avril - 20.15

Stars: Anil Kapoor, Sanjay Dutt, Amrita Rao, Akshaye Khanna



Sikhs in America: A religious community long misunderstood is mourning deaths in Indianapolis mass shooting

A scholar explains the religious beliefs of Sikhs as well as the prejudices and barriers that many Sikhs in America face

On April 16, 2021, a gunman opened fire at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis killing eight people and injuring several others before taking his own life. Four members of the Sikh community were among those gunned down.

The site was reported as having a significant number of Sikh employees, and the massacre has left the community shaken and in grief.

"I have sat with families from our community and so many others at the Holiday Inn Express as they wait to hear the fates of their loved ones," said Maninder Singh Walia, a member of the Indianapolis Sikh community. "These kinds of violent attacks are a threat to all of us. Our community has a long road of healing - physically, mentally, and spiritually - to recover from this tragedy."

The shooter's motive is not yet known. In a statement following the incident, the Sikh Coalition, an advocacy group, called on authorities to conduct a full investigation "including the possibility of bias as a factor."

Sikhs have in the past been targeted in racist attacks. As a scholar of the tradition and a practicing Sikh myself, I have studied the prejudices and barriers that many Sikhs in America face. I have also experienced racial slurs from a young age.

The bottom line is there is little understanding in the U.S. of who exactly the Sikhs are and what they believe. So here's a primer.

Founder of Sikhism

To start at the beginning, the founder of the Sikh tradition, Guru Nanak, was born in 1469 in the Punjab region of South Asia, which is currently split between Pakistan and the northwestern area of India. A majority of the global Sikh population still resides in Punjab on the Indian side of the border.

From a young age, Guru Nanak was disillusioned by the social inequities and religious hypocrisies he observed around him. He believed that a single divine force created the entire world and resided within it. In his belief, God was not separate from the world and watching from a distance, but fully present in every aspect of creation.

He therefore asserted that all people are equally divine and deserve to be treated as such.

To promote this vision of divine oneness and social equality, Guru Nanak created institutions and religious practices. He established community centres and places of worship, wrote his own scriptural compositions and institutionalized a system of leadership (gurus) that would carry forward his vision.

The Sikh view thus rejects all social distinctions that produce inequities, including gender, race, religion and caste, the



Sikh Day parade on Madison Avenue, New York. AP Photo/Craig Ruttler

predominant structure for social hierarchy in South Asia.

Serving the world is a natural expression of Sikh prayer and worship. Sikhs call this prayerful service "seva," and it is a core part of their practice.

The Sikh identity

In the Sikh tradition, a truly religious person is one who cultivates the spiritual self while also serving the communities around them - or a saint-soldier. The saint-soldier ideal applies to women and men alike.

In this spirit, Sikh women and men maintain five articles of faith, popularly known as the five Ks. These are: kes (long, uncut hair), kara (steel bracelet), kanga (wooden comb), kirpan (small sword) and kachera (soldier-shorts).

Although little historical evidence exists to explain why these particular articles were chosen, the five Ks continue to provide the community with a collective identity, binding together individuals on the basis of a shared belief and practice. As I understand, Sikhs cherish these articles of faith as gifts from their gurus.

Turbans are an important part of the Sikh identity. Both women and men may wear turbans. Like the articles of faith, Sikhs regard their turbans as gifts given by their beloved gurus, and its meaning is deeply personal. In South Asian culture, wearing a turban typically indicated one's social status - kings and rulers once wore turbans. The Sikh gurus adopted the turban, in part, to remind Sikhs that all humans are sovereign, royal and ultimately equal.

Sikhs in America

Today, there are approximately 30 million Sikhs worldwide, making Sikhism the world's fifth-largest major religion.

After British colonizers in India seized power of Punjab in 1849, where a majority of the Sikh community was based, Sikhs began migrating to various regions controlled by the British Empire, including Southeast Asia, East Africa and the United Kingdom itself. Based on what was available to them, Sikhs played various roles in these communities, including military service, agricultural work and

railway construction.

The first Sikh community entered the United States via the West Coast during the 1890s. They began experiencing discrimination immediately upon their arrival. For instance, the first race riot targeting Sikhs took place in Bellingham, Washington, in 1907. Angry mobs of white men rounded up Sikh laborers, beat them up and forced them to leave town.

The discrimination continued over the years. For instance, after my father moved from Punjab to the United States around the time of the Iran hostage crisis in 1979 and racial slurs like "Ayatollah" and "raghead" were hurled at him. It was a time when 52 American diplomats and citizens were taken captive in Iran and tension between the two countries was high. These slurs reflected the racist backlash against those who fitted the stereotypes of Iranians. Our family faced a similar racist backlash when the U.S. engaged in the Gulf War during the early 1990s.

The racist attacks spiked again after 9/11, particularly because Americans did not know about the Sikh religion and conflated the unique Sikh appearance with popular stereotypes of what terrorists look like.

The rates of violence against Sikhs surged after the election of President Donald Trump. The Sikh Coalition estimated in 2018 that Americans Sikhs were being targeted in hate crimes about once a week.

Scholars and government officials estimate the Sikh American population to number around 500,000.

As a practicing Sikh, I can affirm that the Sikh commitment to the tenets of their faith, including love, service and justice, keeps them resilient in the face of violence. For these reasons, many Sikh Americans, including those affected by the mass shooting in Indiana, I believe, will continue to maintain their unique Sikh identity, proudly and unapologetically.

Simran Jeet Singh

Visiting Professor,
Union Theological Seminary



Tree of Knowledge

Madisyn Taylor

Grateful - The World in a Bright Light

There is always something to be grateful for, even when life is hard and times are tough.

Everyday is a blessing, and in each moment there are many things that we can be grateful for. The world opens up to us when we live in a space of gratitude. In essence, gratitude has a snowball effect. When we are appreciative and express that gratitude, the universe glows a bit brighter and showers us with even more blessings.

There is always something to be grateful for, even when life seems hard. When times are tough, whether we are having a bad day or stuck in what may feel like an endless rut, it can be difficult to take the time to feel grateful. Yet, that is when gratitude can be most important. If we can look at our lives, during periods of challenge, and find something to be grateful for, then we can transform our realities in an instant. There are blessings to be found everywhere. When we are focusing on what is negative, our abundance can be easy to miss. Instead, choosing to find what already exists in our lives that we can appreciate can change what we see in our world. We start to notice one blessing, and then another.

When we constantly choose to be grateful, we notice that every breath is a miracle and each smile becomes a gift. We begin to understand that difficulties are also invaluable lessons. The sun is always shining for us when we are grateful, even if it is hidden behind clouds on a rainy day. A simple sandwich becomes a feast, and a trinket is transformed into a treasure. Living in a state of gratitude allows us to spread our abundance because that is the energy that we emanate from our beings. Because the world reflects back to us what we embody, the additional blessings that inevitably flow our way give us even more to be grateful for. The universe wants to shower us with blessings. The more we appreciate life, the more life appreciates and bestows us with more goodness.