

MAURITIUS TIMES

• One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency. — Arnold H. Glasow

Interview: Jean Claude de l'Estrac

Changement: “Le ressenti est contradictoire.

D'un côté, il y a un soulagement.
De l'autre, une déception...”

• Débarquement de Beegoo:

‘Je pense que le tandem Bérenger-Pillay a su convaincre Ramgoolam du bien-fondé d'une telle décision’



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Air Mauritius: Depoliticise Now to Save a National Symbol

The abrupt resignation of the former Chairman of Air Mauritius (MK) on the heels of a public dispute with the Deputy Prime Minister has cracked open the lid on the deep-seated malaise afflicting the national carrier. The former Chairman's departure, described as the result of an "accumulation of frustrations" rather than a single event, serves as a flashpoint, encapsulating the toxic mix of political meddling, governance failures, and strategic uncertainty that has crippled the airline for years.

In his post-resignation interview, the former Chairman defended his tenure, highlighting significant efforts to reduce flight delays and address technical and governance flaws in a mere six months. He painted the picture of an airline chairman forced out not by business failure, but by a hostile political environment. His declaration of being "sad for the position of the Prime Minister and the Labour Party" reveals his concern that the Deputy Prime Minister's relentless, high-profile attacks have "put the Prime Minister in a delicate position," suggesting a political drama where political loyalties and personal dignity were being tested beyond acceptable limits.

This public spat, which a backbencher dismissively labelled a "children's war in a playground," is far more serious than a mere clash of egos. It distracts from the core issue: the urgent need for serenity and impeccable service at Air Mauritius. The airline is not just a commercial entity; it is a strategic economic tool vital to the nation's sovereignty, tourism, and development. It represents connectivity and diplomatic reach, positioning Mauritius as a crucial hub in the Indian Ocean. When the leadership of this vital entity devolves into a *mano a mano* political grudge match, it signals a deeper structural failing that undermines national confidence.

The Peril of Partnerships and the Question of Viability

The former Chairman's strongest warning shot was aimed at the proposed strategic partnership with Qatar Airways. He was categorical: any decision to sell a stake must be made when the company is financially "in good health, not when it is in the red." His caution stems from a hard-nosed assessment of Qatar Airways' reputation — a fear that they would "enter and destroy national companies to control prices." This stark warning taps into a broader regional fear, echoing the fate of other national carriers like Air Seychelles, which were left with only a handful of operational aircraft after similar strategic agreements. The lesson, he insists, is clear: investors often seek to dismantle the national carrier to seize control of the local market.

In contrast, he lauded the "concrete and responsible partnership" with Emirates, citing their loan of a Rolls Royce engine as a sign of genuine, mutually beneficial cooperation. This distinction — between a responsible partner and a potential market predator — is central to the future strategy of MK. He called on the government to heed this warning and "reflect carefully" on any strate-



gic partnership, ensuring it is a net positive for the national interest, not just a desperate injection of capital.

Despite the crises, the former Chairman insisted on the airline's viability, asserting that if the latest figures were made public, they would demonstrate an "initiated recovery." He attributes this progress to rigorous management, defending his "strict" approach as necessary to "impose unpopular decisions to guarantee the survival of the enterprise." The pressure, he admitted, was intense, serving as a testament to the overstretched system that forced management to juggle daily operations with crucial systemic overhauls.

The Legacy of Mismanagement and the Need for Accountability

The former Chairman's highly politicised exit is set against the backdrop of an even more troubling narrative: the story of Air Mauritius's chronic systemic failure. The airline, a former source of national pride and a crucial carrier of the national economy, is now limping, weighed down by years of chronic mismanagement, political interference, and staggering misuse of public funds.

The company's woes did not start with Covid-19; the pandemic merely laid bare the structural decay. Desperate measures, such as hurriedly selling new aircraft at bargain prices, dismantling others for parts, and terminating hundreds of skilled employees, were emblematic of a leadership scrambling to survive without a coherent recovery plan. These actions were rooted in a decade of political meddling and poor governance, where board appointments and major financial decisions frequently reflected priorities other than sound business judgment. The pattern of twelve CEOs in two decades — now welcoming a thirteenth — underscores the corrosive instability that thwarts any attempt at long-term strategic continuity.

More damning are the revelations concerning financial impropriety. The government has disclosed losses exceeding MUR 7.7 billion from aircraft sales and operating deficits between 2014 and 2024, alongside allegations of outright theft of funds. The appointment of Kroll and KPMG for forensic audits is a necessary, albeit late, step. Crucially, the government must ensure these

findings are made public and that prosecutions follow, regardless of who is implicated. Accountability cannot be selective; it must be real if public faith is to be restored.

Depoliticisation and the Road to Resilience

The problems at Air Mauritius are symptomatic of a broader malaise affecting many of the nation's State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The pattern is consistent: political meddling undermines technocratic institutions, appointments prioritize loyalty over competence, and public funds vanish without meaningful outcomes. This misuse of SOEs for political gain is not just inefficient; it is a deeply unethical betrayal of the taxpayer and the dedicated employees who built the airline's reputation.

If Mauritius is serious about restoring confidence, the reforms must be fundamental and far-reaching:

Complete Depoliticisation: The management structure must be entirely removed from political influence. The Board must set the general policy, and the newly appointed CEO must be granted full management autonomy to execute the business strategy without "lobbying, power games, banana skins and clannish loyalties."

Uncompromising Accountability: The forensic audit findings must lead to real consequences. Without genuine criminal prosecutions for misappropriation, the cycle of impunity will continue.

Business Model Modernisation: The airline must modernize more than just its fleet; it needs a competitive business model. It must move away from relying on state bailouts and become genuinely competitive. The past culture of perks and gratifications, such as free tickets and lifetime travel for board members who already receive handsome allowances, must be relegated to history.

Service Excellence: As the backbencher rightly insisted, MK must offer "quality, not empty talk." This extends beyond the aircraft to the airport experience. The final impression of a tourist should not be one of being held ransom for exorbitant prices at airport cafeterias — an experience that can swiftly undo a happy sojourn.

The former Chairman's exit serves a vital purpose: it forces the nation to confront the fact that Air Mauritius can only be salvaged through a painful process of truth-telling, structural reform, and unyielding accountability. The national carrier is not just a legacy brand; it must be the symbol of the country's outward-looking spirit and economic resilience, serving citizens and tourists with efficiency and integrity, free from the destructive interference of politics.

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Prakash Neerohoo

Flux financiers transfrontaliers

Un test de conformité pour le centre financier mauricien

Si Maurice veut être une juridiction propre en matière financière, elle a du terrain à rattraper

L'arrivée à Maurice de deux personnalités malgaches (un ancien Premier ministre et un homme d'affaires connu) par un jet privé dans des conditions d'atterrissement pas trop normales a placé le pays au centre d'un imbroglio politico-diplomatique. Il y a des doutes sur la célérité avec laquelle l'avion privé a obtenu l'autorisation d'atterrir chez nous pour débarquer des personnes qui ont fui leur pays, visiblement pour éviter d'être arrêtées par la nouvelle autorité de transition à Madagascar après la chute du gouvernement d'Andry Rajoelina, désormais ancien président de la République.

Est-ce que la manœuvre visait à leur permettre d'utiliser Maurice comme un tremplin pour chercher refuge ailleurs? Et plus fondamentalement, est-ce que la fuite de ces exilés malgaches avait pour but de sauvegarder leurs dépôts bancaires placés dans le centre financier mauricien? La manière dont le gouvernement mauricien traite ce problème sera une indication du degré de conformité du centre financier mauricien sous le régime AML/CFT (*Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism*) de la loi nationale. Ce sera surtout un test de la volonté politique du gouvernement de nettoyer le centre financier pour restaurer sa crédibilité comme une juridiction propre et conforme aux normes internationales en matière de gestion des risques de blanchiment d'argent transfrontalier.

Investissements faramineux

Selon des informations de presse, l'homme d'affaires malgache, qui est le président-directeur général du groupe SODIAT, Mamy Ravatomanga, aurait des placements bancaires de \$150 millions, soit Rs 6,7 milliards, dans le centre financier mauricien. Il a aussi des investissements dans des compagnies locales, y compris l'hôtellerie, tout en étant propriétaire d'une villa de luxe IRS (*Integrated Resort Scheme*) dans le Nord. Il aurait voulu transférer \$100 millions dans une banque à Dubaï, une juridiction réputée pour avoir accepté des fonds d'origine douteuse venant d'autres pays... Pic - africaintelligence.com



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Pour l'heure, la *Financial Crimes Commission* (FCC) a obtenu un ordre de la Cour suprême pour geler ces fonds en attendant la conclusion d'une enquête sur leur origine sous la loi contre le blanchiment d'argent, le *Financial Intelligence and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2002*.

Cette affaire comporte des aspects

troublants. Si un homme d'affaires malgache a effectivement transféré \$150 millions à Maurice, (à partir d'un pays où la majorité des habitants vivent en-dessous du seuil de pauvreté de \$3 par jour par personne, seuil fixé par la Banque Mondiale), c'est que la Banque centrale de Madagascar ou une banque commerciale située sur la Grande Ile a autorisé cette transaction. Ces fonds proviennent-ils des bénéfices accumulés (après impôt) des sociétés d'un conglomérat ou des recettes d'exportation de ces sociétés libellées en dollars dans un compte bancaire privé?

Considérons la première hypothèse: l'investissement des bénéfices non répartis (*retained earnings*) d'une société dans une juridiction étrangère ne serait pas illégal si l'impôt sur les bénéfices a été payé à l'Etat au préalable. D'ailleurs, des sociétés mauriciennes investissent elles aussi dans d'autres pays. Mais on ne sait rien des obligations fiscales du conglomérat malgache dans son propre pays.

Deuxième hypothèse: garder des

recettes d'exportation en devises étrangères dans un compte privé au lieu de les réinvestir dans l'économie locale relèverait d'une stratégie de fuite de capitaux.

Régime AML/CFT

Puisque les autorités malgaches ont demandé le 16 octobre, par voie d'un arrêt de mandat international, le rapatriement du PDG malgache, et éventuellement de ses fonds placés à Maurice, sous une accusation de blanchiment de capitaux, le gouvernement mauricien marche sur des œufs. Comment satisfaire la demande malgache tout en préservant la confiance des investisseurs étrangers dans le centre financier mauricien?

- Est-ce que la coopération régionale entre deux pays prendra le dessus sur la souveraineté nationale?
- Est-ce que le gouvernement accordera quelque importance à l'éthique des affaires au lieu de se cantonner dans le légalisme des affaires?

C'est là que tout le régime AML/CFT revêt une importance cruciale.

Maurice a sans doute ses propres lois financières, mais elle a aussi des obligations internationales. Pendant deux ans (2019-2020), Maurice fut placé sur la liste grise du Groupe d'Action Financière (GAFI) de l'OCDE en raison des carences stratégiques dans son régime AML/CFT. Sur 58 critères d'efficacité établis par le GAFI, Maurice ne satisfaisait pas cinq critères. Il a fallu une refonte de la législation mauricienne en profondeur pour pallier ces carences avec l'*Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2020*.

Toutefois, si le dispositif légal AML/CFT est impressionnant en théorie, dans la pratique la conformité des sociétés avec la loi laisse beaucoup à désirer. Comme on le dit en anglais, le pays est «high on legislation but low on compliance». Non seulement des fonds d'origine douteuse sont déposés dans le centre offshore, mais aussi des capitaux locaux sont exportés par des Mauriciens (individus et sociétés) pour être placés dans des paradis fiscaux ailleurs (Suisse, Dubaï, Panama) sans des contrôles adéquats de la Banque centrale locale.

“Le rapport de mai 2025 du ministère des Services Financiers sur l'évaluation des risques de blanchiment d'argent donne une note «élevée» au risque extérieur, comparée à une note moyenne au risque intérieur. Le flux financier entre Madagascar et Maurice confirme à posteriori le risque extérieur. Le pays est constamment sous l'œil inquisiteur des organisations internationales qui surveillent notre performance en matière de prévention et de répression des crimes financiers. En sus du GAFI, il y a l'*Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group* qui suit de près le pays. D'autre part, le pays est surveillé par Transparency International, dont l'indice de corruption en 2024 classait Maurice au rang de 56 sur 183 pays avec une note de 51 sur 100...”

● Suite en page 4

Flux financiers transfrontaliers

Un test de conformité pour le centre financier mauricien

● Suite de la page 3

D'ailleurs, les nombreuses enquêtes de la FCC sur des cas de blanchiment d'argent, avec des implications transfrontalières en termes de fuite de capitaux, témoignent du manque de conformité au régime AML/CFT.

Paradis fiscal

Maurice est toujours un paradis fiscal pour les individus richissimes d'ici et d'ailleurs. Ils peuvent s'offrir des villas de luxe IRS en payant rubis sur l'ongle (en dollars ou en euros) tout en bénéficiant d'exemptions fiscales sur l'achat et l'entretien de la propriété (pas de taxe immobilière ni de taxe sur la plus-value foncière à la revente). Ils peuvent faire des placements bancaires dans le secteur offshore et transférer des fonds à travers les frontières tout en bénéficiant d'une grande flexibilité pour ce type de transactions. Nos compagnies de gestion locales (*management companies*) s'arrangent pour faciliter les transactions. Les sociétés offshore paient un impôt minimum de 3% sur leurs bénéfices. Le PDG malgache n'est sans doute pas le premier ni le dernier investisseur étranger à se servir de la plateforme offshore mauricienne pour circuler leurs fonds dans des flux transfrontaliers en échappant au contrôle national.

Avant Mamy Ravatomanga, il y avait deux autres investisseurs de sinistre mémoire, notamment Isabel dos Santos, la fille de l'ex-président angolais José Eduardo Dos Santos, et l'investisseur angolais Alvaro Sobrinho. Grâce aux *Luanda Leaks*, on savait que Isabel dos Santos avait détourné des fonds de l'Etat angolais pour en placer une partie (Rs 17 milliards) dans le secteur offshore mauricien. Quant à Alvaro Sobrinho, il avait pillé des fonds publics d'une banque d'Etat en Angola (Rs 28 milliards) pour acheter des propriétés à Maurice, entre autres transactions. Il avait même obtenu une licence de banque d'investissement de la *Financial Services Commission* (FSC) grâce à des contacts avec des hommes du pouvoir chez

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nous. L'un d'eux disait avoir vu dans ses yeux un homme honnête. L'enquête sur ces deux affaires par l'ICAC (prédecesseur de la FCC) fut mise aux oubliettes.

Outre ces deux cas qu'on connaît grâce aux enquêtes faites dans d'autres pays (Angola, Angleterre), il y a sans doute d'autres investisseurs véreux qui ont fait des placements bancaires à Maurice. Mais on en ignore les détails en raison de l'opacité qui entoure le secteur offshore. Faut-il rappeler les prêts toxiques (Rs 3 milliards) accordés par la SBM à un investisseur indien qui a disparu dans la nature aux Emirats Arabes Unis? A ce jour, aucune enquête n'a été faite par les autorités. La SBM s'est contentée de rayer la dette. Faut-il aussi rappeler le scandale de la Silver

Bank qui a accordé des prêts toxiques de Rs 7 milliards à un investisseur étranger aux dépens des déposants mauriciens? La Banque de Maurice n'a rien fait pour élucider le mystère après dix mois de gestion calamiteuse jusqu'au départ de l'ancien gouverneur.

Sanctuaire bancaire

Malgré le fait que le pays soit sorti de la liste grise du GAFI en 2021, certaines questions demeurent pertinentes. Maurice est-il un sanctuaire bancaire pour des dépôts d'origine douteuse en devises étrangères en provenance d'investisseurs étrangers? Au nom de la facilitation des affaires pour attirer l'investissement étranger, la juridiction mauricienne doit-elle accepter toutes sortes de flux financiers sans se soucier de la légitimité des fonds?

En mars 2024, la *Financial Crimes Commission Act* fut promulguée en vue de centraliser le combat contre les crimes financiers (blanchiment d'argent, fraude et corruption). Avec l'arrivée du nouveau gouvernement depuis novembre 2024, la FCC est engagée dans une frénésie d'enquêtes sur beaucoup de suspects. Toutefois, à ce jour, aucune inculpation formelle n'a été logée devant une Cour de justice, et ce, même si le pays est impatient de constater des résultats concrets.

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Si Maurice veut être une juridiction propre en matière financière, elle a du terrain à rattraper.

Prakash Neerohoo

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Sovereignty vs. Safety: A Legal Inquiry into the Controversial Landing of the Malagasy Private Jet

The arrival of a private jet carrying a prominent Malagasy businessman and Politically Exposed Person (PEP) amid a backdrop of political crisis and a de facto coup in Madagascar has thrust the Mauritian jurisdiction into a complex legal and ethical spotlight. The incident raises profound questions that intersect international aviation law, national anti-corruption mandates, and principles of asylum and extradition. Was the controversial landing clearance a matter of prioritizing aircraft safety under global protocols, or an improper breach of public duty driven by political influence? Lex seeks to dissect the multilayered consequences of the event, analysing the potential administrative and criminal liabilities for local officials, the legal basis for asset freezing by the Financial Crimes Commission (FCC), and the delicate balance between sovereign justice and humanitarian law in an era of regional instability.

LEX

* Does the act of granting an irregular landing clearance to politically exposed persons amid a crisis, if done improperly, constitute a breach of public duty, or simply an unlawful act under Mauritian law?

A Politically Exposed Person (PEP) is an individual who is or has been entrusted with a prominent public function, either domestically, in a foreign country, or in an international organisation. Due to their position, they may be more vulnerable to bribery and corruption. So, if the passengers were PEPS, allowing them to land in an emergency would not be a criminal offence. But they should not have been allowed to leave the aircraft without a decision by the Government and more particularly the Minister responsible for internal security.

* What if it is found that political pressure or influence was exerted to bypass standard aviation or immigration protocols? What are the administrative or criminal consequences for the Mauritian officials who issued the clearance?

An investigation must be carried out to find out in what circumstances the plane was allowed to land. Until that is done, we cannot situate responsibility. Depending on the findings, officials could face administrative sanctions (disciplinary action, dismissal) for a breach of public duty or criminal charges (e.g., conspiracy, abuse of office) if corrupt influence or clear disregard for statutory procedures is proven.

* It is possible however that the Department of Civil Aviation acted correctly under international protocols by prioritizing the aircraft's safety, which overrides national political clearances in an emergency, isn't it?

Landing rules for commercial airlines in foreign airports are complex, but generally require obtaining a landing permit, which involves submitting a detailed application to the destination country's civil aviation authority. Key requirements include providing aircraft information, crew details, and flight schedules. It would appear that the plane from Madagascar had not complied with these rules. Probably it was allowed to land for reason of safety or humanitarian ground, which would typically supersede routine permits.

* What specific articles of the Chicago Convention govern an aircraft's right to land in a signatory state upon declaring a fuel emergency?

Fuel emergency is a critical situation requiring immediate action and is declared with the phrase "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, Fuel". The Chicago Convention provides the framework for international civil aviation, including establishing rules for emergency situations like fuel emergencies. The Convention sets the foundation for member states to develop regulations for safety and emergency procedures, which are detailed in ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) Annexes, like Annex 6, that require pilots to declare a fuel emergency when they will likely land with less than the planned final reserve fuel.



Pic - jeuneafrique.com

* Given the contradictory requests (medical emergency, tourism), does presenting false or conflicting justifications for a landing request, even if an emergency is also cited, constitute a separate criminal or regulatory offence?

It will be up to the authorities to determine whether false information was given to obtain landing permission. However, presenting false or conflicting justifications for a landing request can constitute a separate regulatory offence under national aviation laws, and may potentially lead to criminal charges depending on the jurisdiction and the intent to deceive, especially concerning a serious matter like a declared emergency.

* Could a subsequent finding that the fuel emergency was feigned or exaggerated lead to potential penalties against the pilot or aircraft owner?

A pilot giving false information to request permission to land can face severe legal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. The seriousness of aviation regulations is designed to ensure safety by requiring accurate flight plans and permissions for all landings. If a fuel emergency was feigned or exaggerated, both the pilot (for professional misconduct and potentially fraud) and the aircraft owner (for regulatory breaches) could face penalties.

* News reports suggest that Malagasy businessman Maminaina Ravatomanga - one of the passengers on the private jet - has invested in properties in Mauritius through one of the government's real estate schemes (PDS, RES, or IRS) and would hold a residency permit. What standard of proof does the FCC have to meet to freeze his assets, and how can the defence legally fight that decision?

Before a foreigner is allowed to invest in Mauritius, due diligence is carried out. Due diligence for foreign investors in Mauritius involves checking legal, financial, and operational

aspects, including verifying the legal status of a property, ensuring compliance with the Non-Citizens (Property Restriction) Act or obtaining a Foreign Acquisition Permit, and confirming the developer's track record and the property's compliance with regulations. For company investments, due diligence includes analyzing financial statements, business details, and ensuring the company is compliant with all local laws and registrations. If due diligence was properly carried out, on what basis has the FCC frozen the assets of the individual? The FCC must meet a reasonable suspicion standard.

* If the alleged offence (alleged money laundering/corruption or embezzlement) took place entirely in Madagascar, does Mauritian law still have jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute the money laundering offence?

Mauritius exercises jurisdiction over money laundering that originates from or involves foreign countries through its robust legal framework, international cooperation, and a risk-based approach. Our law provides a framework for identifying high-risk foreign countries and requires financial institutions to conduct enhanced due diligence on transactions involving them. Mauritius also implements United Nations sanctions and cooperates with international bodies to combat money laundering globally. This is based on the principle of territoriality (where the money is laundered) and extraterritoriality.

* If the Malagasy judiciary has issued an international warrant, is the FCC's action to freeze assets obligatory under international mutual legal assistance treaties or only discretionary?

The issue of an international warrant by the authorities in Madagascar has no legal effect as has been pointed out by the Attorney General Gavin Glover. While Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) treaties encourage cooperation, asset freezing is subject to the sovereign laws of Mauritius, ensuring due process and avoiding enforcement where there are political motivations or non-compliance with domestic legal standards.

* Given the backdrop of a political crisis and a de facto coup in Madagascar, is there a risk that any extradition request from the new Malagasy regime would be deemed a politically motivated prosecution, potentially violating the non-extradition for political offences principle in Mauritian law/international law?

Extradition of a political refugee from Mauritius is highly unlikely to succeed, as requests are not considered if the offence is deemed political. Mauritius also does not have a specific national asylum law, and while it treats refugee applications on a case-by-case humanitarian basis, it does not guarantee refugee status. Extradition requires a valid treaty, and the request will not be favourably considered if the offence is judged to be of a political nature, regardless of whether competing political parties exist.

* If Mr Ravatomanga has a valid Permanent Residency Permit, does this status offer him any additional protection from deportation or extradition compared to a regular visitor?

A residence permit in Mauritius can be revoked by the Minister for various reasons, including breaching permit conditions, providing false information, or for public interest. It can also be revoked for non-compliance with income requirements, as assessed in mid-term reviews. Even if the residence permit of Mr Ravatomanga is revoked, he will still be deemed to be a political refugee and is unlikely to be extradited, especially if there is no extradition treaty with Madagascar.



It Is Time to Reset the US-India Relationship

India's challenges are also America's challenges. It is vital that these two countries find ways to bolster each other

At the beginning of this month, nineteen members of the House of Representatives, all Democrats with no Republican joining, sent a joint letter to President Trump urging him to reset and repair the "critical partnership" that the US has forged with India.

These Representatives seemed focused primarily on Trump's announced hikes in tariffs as high as 50% on goods imported from India. These tariffs, they argue, hurt both the American consumer and American manufacturers dependent on the intricate supply chains that they depend on to bring products to market.

These members of Congress described their districts as "large, vibrant Indian American communities" that maintain strong familial, cultural and economic ties with India. They complained that Trump's recent actions had strained relations with India, the world's largest democracy with resultant negative consequences for both countries.

The signatories to the letter asked the President to review his announced tariff hikes and to abjure confrontation, urging dialogue and recalibration with India's leaders.

The Representatives stressed that the US-India trading partnership is exceptionally important and that it supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in both countries.

The letter went on to say: "American manufacturers depend on India for key inputs in sectors from semiconductors to health care, energy and more. American firms investing in India also gain access to one of the fastest-growing consumer markets in the world, while Indian companies have invested billions of dollars here in America, helping to create new jobs and opportunities in the communities we represent. This indiscriminate tariff escalation jeopardizes these ties, raising costs for American families, undermining the ability of American companies to compete globally, and undercutting ground-breaking innovation and cooperation."

Finally, the Representatives warned that Trump's hostile approach has "pushed the Indian government to increase its diplomatic and economic engagement" with Russia and China and that this may cause the US to lose India's "indispensable role as a counterweight to China's growing assertiveness." Stressing this, they referenced India's participation with the US, Australia, and Japan, in The Quad which seeks to rein in China's aggressiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

Frustration with the "so-called ally"

Back on July 31 this year, Secretary of State Marco Rubio appeared on Fox News. He echoed President Trump's frustration with Putin who would have "nice" conversations with Trump, only to go on and kill more people overnight.

The Fox host referred to a post by Trump on his social media outlet, Truth Social, complaining that Russia conti-



“One would have thought that India would celebrate the idea that its brains and talent that have been until now largely siphoned off to the US will choose to remain at home to lead India’s advancement into the 21st Century and beyond. But that has not been the case. It’s not just that other countries around the world, seeing an opportunity, are now welcoming Indian talent to their shores. There is more. Michael Beckley and Associate Professor of Political Science at Tufts University in Massachusetts, discusses some of the challenges facing India in an article in *Foreign Affairs*. He notes that only India has a workforce projected to grow in the next two or three decades and is thus shielded from demographic decline, which raises its hopes of becoming the next rising power. But he writes that India suffers from a crippling dearth of skilled workers...”

nued to be the top oil supplier to India during the first half of the year and that as a result, India would face a tariff of 25% plus a penalty for the above, starting on August 1st. The Fox News host went to ask: "But India continues to get, instead of small portion, a great portion of their discounted oil from Russia, which is fuelling their war machine. How disappointed are you in this so-called ally?"

Rubio's response was telling:

"Look, global trade – India is an ally. It's a strategic partner. Like anything in foreign policy, you're not going to align a hundred percent of the time on everything. India has huge energy needs and that includes the ability to buy oil and coal and gas and things that it needs to power its economy like every country does, and it buys it from Russia, because Russian oil is sanctioned and cheap and – meaning they have to – in many cases, they're selling it under the global price because of the sanctions. And that – unfortunately that is helping to sustain the Russian war effort. So, it is most certainly a point of irritation in our relationship with India – not the only point of irritation. We also have many other points of cooperation with them. But I think what you're seeing the President express is the very clear frustration that with so many other oil vendors available, India continues to buy so much from Russia, which in essence is helping to fund the war effort and allowing this war to continue in Ukraine."

This turn in US-India relations was a major switch from the warm embrace between President Trump and Prime Minister Modi in February 2025. In a Joint Leaders' Statement, they then announced the "US-India COMPACT

(Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) for the 21st Century" – to drive transformative change across key pillars of cooperation.

In that Joint Statement, there was mention of plans to sign this year a new ten-year **Framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership in the 21st Century**, a touting of the significant integration of US-origin aircraft, missiles and artillery into India's defence systems, the joint development of autonomous industrial technologies, and a pledge to elevate military cooperation across all domains – air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace – through enhanced training, exercises, and operations, incorporating the latest technologies.

On the non-defence trade front, the Joint Statement spoke to expanding trade and investment to make their citizens more prosperous, nations stronger, economies more innovative and supply chains more resilient. They resolved to deepen the U.S.-India trade relationship to promote growth that ensures fairness, national security and job creation. To this end, the leaders set a bold new goal for bilateral trade – **"Mission 500"** – aiming to more than double total bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030.

So, what happened? Some say that President Trump is peeved that Prime Minister Modi and India will not giving him credit for brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan during their most recent military confrontation. Pakistan's Army Chief of Staff and President Shabaz Sharif, on the other hand, have both praised Trump for being the moving force in that ceasefire and have nominated him or pledged to nominate him for the Nobel Peace Prize. Most recently, Pakistan's President once again touted Trump's role in bring peace, this time to the Middle East, when he joined the celebration of the Israel-Hamas ceasefire at Sharm-al-Sheikh in Egypt.

The Congressional Research Service summarized the situation with the new tariffs thus: "In 2024, India was the 13th-largest US goods export market by country; the United States was India's largest. The average most-favoured-nation (MFN) tariff rate was 3.3% for the United States, and 16.2% for India. Calling India, the "tariff king," President Trump has imposed higher tariffs on India, among other partners, since January 2025. Invoking the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, he applied: a 25% India-specific tariff effective August 7, in a response to "large and persistent annual US goods trade deficits" (the 10th-largest US bilateral goods trade deficit in 2024 was with India); and a 25% tariff effective August 27 to address India's imports of oil from Russia. Indian officials criticized the latter tariff as unfair, noting that other partners, such as the EU, do not face it. These measures, subject to some exceptions, would lead to a 50% tariff on India on top of existing tariffs."

On top of the tariff increases, the Trump administration's actions have reduced severely the number of foreign students coming to US colleges and universities and threatened to reduce the total number of H1-B visas issued every year, and as well, threatened to tack on a \$100,000 fee on each H1-B visa issued in future. India's government and American companies dependent on talent from India have expressed great consternation at these moves.

Brains and talent

One would have thought that India would celebrate the idea that its brains and talent that have been until now largely siphoned off to the US will choose to remain at home to lead India's advancement into the 21st Century and beyond. But that has not been the case. It's not just that other countries around the world, seeing an opportunity, are now welcoming Indian talent to their shores.

Cont. on page 7

It Is Time to Reset the US-India Relationship

Cont. from page 6

There is more.

Michael Beckley and Associate Professor of Political Science at Tufts University in Massachusetts and a non-resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, discusses some of the challenges facing India in an article in *Foreign Affairs*. He notes that only India has a workforce projected to grow in the next two or three decades and is thus shielded from demographic decline, which raises its hopes of becoming the next rising power. But he writes that India suffers from a crippling dearth of skilled workers with nearly a quarter of working age adults having no schooling at all. Of the remainder, 80% lack basic math and science skills. Nearly 90 percent of young Indians do not have essential literacy and numeracy. And the forces that want more H1-B visas in the US and those that invited Indians to other countries, only magnify this problem because of the brain drain. Beckley writes: "India sends more

skilled migrants to advanced economies than any other country." More than one-third of India's top scoring students leave the country.

Bekley also writes: "The Indian economy amplifies these weaknesses. Labour and industry remain constrained: more than 80 percent of workers are in the untaxable informal sector, and nearly half of all industrial sectors have contracted since 2015. Infrastructure and trade are also limited: India's busiest port handles only one-seventh the volume of China's, and a quarter of the country's trade with Europe and East Asia must pass through foreign hubs, adding three days in transit and roughly \$200 to the cost of every container. Finally, the heralded services sector is narrow, with growth concentrated in IT firms that cannot absorb a vast labour force, leaving about 40 percent of college graduates in their 20s unemployed. India will remain consequential — its market large, its military strong by regional standards, its diaspora influential — but it lacks



Pic - positiveindia.net.in

the foundations for true great-power ascent."

Notwithstanding all of the above, India's challenges are also America's challenges. It is vital that these two countries find ways to bolster each other to contain China.

So far, the brain drain from India has been a key factor in America's technological prowess. It is time for America to return the favour.

Cheerz...
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Jean-Claude de l'Estrac

Changement: "Le ressenti est contradictoire. D'un côté, il y a un soulagement. De l'autre, une déception..."

Dans cet entretien sans concession, Jean-Claude de l'Estrac, journaliste, ancien ministre et ancien Secrétaire général de la COI, décortique les enjeux majeurs qui définissent la première année de l'Alliance du Changement au pouvoir. Face aux défis économiques et aux promesses de réformes, l'analyse oscille entre « soulagement » démocratique et « déception » face à la lenteur des changements. De la délicate question de la souveraineté de Diégo Garcia aux nécessaires mais impopulaires réformes de la pension, en passant par la dynamique complexe du leadership bicéphale, Jean-Claude de l'Estrac livre un regard critique sur la marge de manœuvre du gouvernement et sur sa capacité à démanteler les résistances des « mandarins et potentats » pour engager véritablement la République de Maurice sur la voie de l'avenir.

intérêts divergent.

Quant à nos relations assez distantes avec les États-Unis, il est probable qu'elles se renforceront suite à l'accord sur Diégo Garcia et de l'alliance stratégique entre Washington et Delhi sur la sécurité dans l'océan Indien. L'apparent récent rapprochement entre Beijing et Delhi ne modifie en rien les rapports de force.

* Cette solution négociée et parlementaire au Royaume-Uni met-elle un terme définitif à toute possibilité de renvoi du dossier devant les instances internationales comme la Cour Internationale de Justice (CIJ) ou les Nations Unies ?

Pourquoi faire ? Je pense que le débat est clos pour un bon bout de temps. Dans son appli-



Mauritius Times: Une étape décisive dans la mise en œuvre de l'accord bilatéral entre le Royaume-Uni et Maurice a été franchie mardi dernier avec l'adoption du «Diego Garcia Military Base and Indian Ocean Territory Bill» par 320 voix contre 171. La souveraineté est désormais acquise, bien que des interrogations subsistent quant à sa nature exacte. Mais il semble qu'il n'était pas réaliste d'espérer mieux dans le contexte géopolitique actuel. Qu'en pensez-vous ?

Jean-Claude de l'Estrac: Il faut faire contre mauvaise fortune bon cœur comme dit l'adage. Chacune des parties dans ce conflit d'un demi-siècle peut prétendre avoir protégé ses intérêts, et ce n'est pas totalement faux.

Maurice s'est félicitée que la *British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT)* a disparu même si elle refait surface sous une appellation à peine différente dans le projet de loi qui vient d'être voté à la Chambre des Communes. C'est la conséquence du compromis trouvé.

La base militaire anglo-américaine se trouve maintenant sur un territoire que les Anglais nomment *Indian Ocean Territory* et non pas, comme nous l'affirmons, sur un territoire mauricien de pleine souveraineté. Il est vrai que la nouvelle loi prévoit la dissolution du BIOT. Mais elle annonce également «*a general saving, preserving all laws of or relating to BIOT as laws of or relating to Diego Garcia*». En clair, en ce qu'il s'agit de Diégo Garcia, rien ne change vraiment.

A la limite, c'est sans doute mieux ainsi. Je ne vois pas notre intérêt géopolitique de défendre la fiction que nous sommes souverains à Diégo Garcia. En revanche nous avons retrouvé notre souveraineté sur les autres îles de l'archipel, même si son exercice restera symbolique pendant longtemps.

* Comment cette situation pourrait-elle influencer l'équilibre géopolitique dans l'océan Indien et les relations futures de Maurice avec des puissances comme l'Inde, la Chine ou les États-Unis ?

Elle ne change pas la donne. La situation géopolitique reste la même. Malgré les incohérences de la diplomatie trumpiste, l'Inde reste un allié militaire des États-Unis face à leur adversaire commun, la Chine. Les États n'ont pas d'états d'âme.

Maurice, alliée inconditionnelle de l'Inde, ne devrait pas, cependant, enfourcher toutes les initiatives indiennes visant à contrecarrer la Chine. Je pense, par exemple, que Maurice a tout à perdre en continuant de refuser de se joindre au projet chinois de la Route de la Soie uniquement parce que l'Inde y est opposée. Malgré l'étroitesse de nos relations avec Delhi, il peut y avoir des situations où nos

« De ce que nous pouvons constater, s'il n'existe aucune arrière-pensée, on peut considérer qu'un vrai climat de confiance s'est instauré entre Ramgoolam et Bérenger. L'âge de la maturité ? Le syndrome du dernier mandat ? L'absence du coup d'après ? Chez Bérenger aussi rien n'a changé. Il est toujours aussi informé et efficace mais toujours rude, impatient, intolérant... »

cation demain, le traité qui sera signé pourrait donner lieu à des interprétations divergentes. Je suis sûr qu'il prévoit un mécanisme de médiation et d'arbitrage.

* En tant qu'ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères et Secrétaire général de la COI, quel regard portez-vous sur le repositionnement de Maurice sur l'échiquier régional et international durant cette première année ? Le nouveau gouvernement a-t-il réussi à imprimer une marque diplomatique distincte ?

Je ne le crois pas, et je ne vois pas la nécessité d'un « repositionnement » non plus. Peut-être pouvons-nous espérer une activité plus productive de nos ambassades. Mais il s'agit aussi d'une question de moyens.

« Maurice, alliée inconditionnelle de l'Inde, ne devrait pas, cependant, enfourcher toutes les initiatives indiennes visant à contrecarrer la Chine. Je pense, par exemple, que Maurice a tout à perdre en continuant de refuser de se joindre au projet chinois de la Route de la Soie uniquement parce que l'Inde y est opposée. Malgré l'étroitesse de nos relations avec Delhi, il peut y avoir des situations où nos intérêts divergent... »

De tout temps, nos représentants à l'étranger se sont plaints des misères infligées par les contrôleurs de Port Louis. Je n'ai pas l'impression que les choses ont changé. Et nos ambassadeurs, nouvellement nommés, sont tous partis sans des ordres de mission et sans indicateurs de résultats. Certains risquent d'être oubliés et de s'endormir.

* Le 10 novembre prochain marquera la première année au pouvoir de l'Alliance du Changement. Selon vous, quelle a été la plus grande réussite de ce gouvernement au cours de sa première année, et quelles sont ses principales faiblesses ou lacunes ?

Je ne comprends pas cette frénésie d'établir le bilan d'un gouvernement qui n'a pas encore fini de s'installer. Les dirigeants ont raison de faire valoir que le chantier est immense et qu'il faudra donner du temps au temps. Cela dit, comme dans toute aventure humaine, on trouve l'ombre et la lumière.

Au risque de me faire insulter, je trouve que la mesure la plus forte et la plus courageuse du Gouvernement a été la réforme de la pension. Elle était absolument nécessaire et a été trop longtemps repoussée. Elle était nécessaire parce que notre monde a changé, et ce, radicalement. Nous connaissons une transition démographique qui a transformé notre pyramide des âges. L'opposition MSM, qui pousse des cris de putois, a envisagé elle-même cette réforme — peut-être, il est vrai, sous une forme différente.

☞ Suite en page 9

L'alchimie Ramgoolam-Bérenger: "Si on est méfiant, comme je peux l'être, on se dira que c'est trop beau pour être vrai"

_suite de la page 8

En tout état de cause, même après la réforme, Maurice, dans sa catégorie socio-économique, reste un pays extrêmement généreux en termes de prestations sociales. Nous avons développé au fait un État-providence mais les finances de l'État ne le permettent pas vraiment. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous vivons à crédit. Tôt ou tard, il faudra passer à la caisse.

* Mais au regard du fonctionnement du gouvernement durant ces 12 derniers mois, diriez-vous qu'il a le potentiel nécessaire pour faire progresser le pays?

Le potentiel du pays est là, mais je n'ai pas changé d'avis: depuis des décennies, Maurice est le pays des opportunités perdues. Par la faute de nos dirigeants.

Je ne prendrais qu'un exemple, le sujet est d'actualité – les énergies renouvelables. J'ai été témoin des propositions de Joël de Rosnay, le scientifique et prospectiviste d'origine mauricienne qui estimait, qu'en la matière, Maurice était bénie des dieux. Il avait fait la preuve que Maurice pouvait produire un mixte d'énergie spectaculaire: solaire, éolienne, marine, hydraulique, biomasse. Il était prêt à nous soutenir.

Nous sommes passés à côté d'une immense opportunité. Et nous tergiversons toujours...

* En revanche, sur un autre plan, le pays respire mieux (critiques tolérées, crainte du SST estompée). Mais il est clair que les Mauriciens attendent des résultats substantiels et rapides. Face à cette attente, quelle doit être, selon vous, la priorité absolue pour transformer cet acquis démocratique en succès économique et social, et maintenir la confiance?

La pédagogie ! Il ne suffit pas de faire, il faut faire savoir. Et pour ce faire, il faut une communication professionnelle qui n'est pas seulement la seule transmission de l'information. La communication ne s'arrête pas à la transmission, elle s'intéresse à la réception. Pour cela, il faut, aussi souvent que possible, le contact direct.

La technologie ça va, mais rien ne remplacera, en politique plus qu'ailleurs, le contact direct. Gouverner n'est jamais simple, il faut sans cesse expliquer la complexité des choses.

En ce qu'il s'agit de la confiance, elle ne se mérite que grâce à l'intégrité et la transparence. Et là aussi, elle ne s'acquiert qu'avec le temps.

Ce qui me paraît encore très problématique, c'est le «succès économique» dont vous parlez, car il est essentiellement tributaire de la croissance.

Dans les circonstances actuelles, comment doper cette croissance et améliorer la productivité? Plus fondamentalement, comment réconcilier les Mauriciens avec le travail, l'effort et la discipline? Et surtout, quels sont les nouveaux piliers du développement, à l'heure où les anciens faiblis-

“Le gouvernement a fait preuve de courage en proposant la réforme de la pension. Sur le fond, personne ne peut contester le bien-fondé de la mesure sur le moyen et le long termes mais sur la forme, on peut en discuter à l'infini. J'espère que la contestation, compréhensible chez ceux directement impactés, ne poussera pas le gouvernement à renoncer à d'autres mesures impopulaires, le cas échéant. Mais il aura appris une leçon : il ne suffit pas d'avoir raison, il faut encore savoir convaincre...”

“La base militaire anglo-américaine se trouve maintenant sur un territoire que les Anglais nomment *Indian Ocean Territory* et non pas, comme nous l'affirmons, sur un territoire mauricien de pleine souveraineté. Il est vrai que la nouvelle loi prévoit la dissolution du BIOT. Mais elle annonce également “*a general saving, preserving all laws of or relating to BIOT as laws of or relating to Diego Garcia*”. En clair, en ce qu'il s'agit de Diégo Garcia, rien ne change vraiment...”



sent?

Dans le passé, c'est l'État qui avait montré la voie.

* Par ailleurs, quel est, selon vous, le ressenti de l'électorat sur la concrétisation de l'espoir de “change-ment” qui a porté cette coalition au pouvoir? Le risque de désillusion est-il plus grand aujourd'hui que six mois de cela?

Le ressenti est contradictoire. D'un côté, il y a un soulagement. De l'autre, une déception.

Le soulagement vient du fait que le vote était principalement un vote de sanction contre un régime qui avait perdu la confiance de la population. Il ne retrouvera pas la faveur des électeurs à coups de conférences de presse.

La déception vient de ce que l'Alliance du Changement avait beaucoup promis sans pouvoir tenir toutes ses promesses une fois au pouvoir. Non seulement elle ne tient pas des promesses faites mais elle fait ce qu'elle n'avait pas promis. Il y a de quoi susciter une certaine désillusion... Il y a sans doute des explications plausibles à cette situation, mais, pour l'instant, elles ne passent pas. Le sentiment ne changera que quand, ou si, les Mauriciens commencent à percevoir une amélioration dans leur vie quotidienne. Pas seulement sur le plan économique.

* Face à l'ampleur de la contestation du report de l'âge de la retraite — mesure extrêmement controversée —, le gouvernement dispose-t-il encore de la marge de manœuvre politique nécessaire pour impos-

ser d'autres «vérités désagréables» jugées indispensables à l'équilibre financier du pays?

Le gouvernement, je vous l'ai dit, a fait preuve de courage en proposant la réforme de la pension. Sur le fond, personne ne peut contester le bien-fondé de la mesure sur le moyen et le long termes mais sur la forme, on peut en discuter à l'infini.

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* Comment voyez-vous le gouvernement concilier, dans la conjoncture actuelle, les attentes des Mauriciens avec les besoins structurels du pays, et cela marque-t-il une rupture avec les approches passées?

Il y a sans doute une volonté de rupture, mais elle bute sur les résistances de ceux que j'avais nommés jadis les «mandarins et les potentats», tapis dans tous les rouages de l'État. S'en débarrasser n'est pas simple, d'autant plus que la relève ne court pas les rues d'une part, et que de l'autre, les dirigeants persistent trop souvent à chercher que dans leur petit bassin.

* Les relations entre le gouvernement et le secteur privé mauricien ont toujours été un baromètre économique. La nouvelle Alliance a-t-elle réussi à établir une relation de confiance constructive ou le climat des affaires est-il toujours empreint de prudence et d'incertitude face aux nouvelles orientations politiques?

À part des discours sur le partenariat public-privé, je ne vois pas de manifestations de travail en commun. Journaliste dans les années 70, je garde le souvenir des grandes messes régulières au bureau de sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, le Premier ministre, entouré de ses collègues et les représentants du secteur privé menés par leur chef, Maurice Patura. Les échanges étaient parfois très vifs, mais les problèmes posés sur la table. Le secteur privé n'est pas censé chercher à plaire à tout prix!

* Quelle est votre perception de la gestion des problèmes sociaux majeurs, tels que la pauvreté persistante... et la lutte contre le trafic de drogue, un an après le changement de gouvernement?

Ce sont deux vieux problèmes d'inégale complexité.

Avec une forte volonté politique, le problème de la pauvreté peut être géré. Dans un petit pays comme le nôtre, on connaît nos pauvres, on connaît leurs noms et prénoms, on sait où se situent les taudis où ils habitent majoritairement. Si le problème persiste, c'est qu'il y a un blocage. Je connais son origine...

Le problème de la drogue est infiniment plus difficile à régler parce qu'il y a énormément d'argent en jeu. Cet argent a corrompu beaucoup de gens, à la douane, dans la police, dans des administrations. Les moyens de l'État pour combattre cette mafia sont dérisoires et ses méthodes archaïques.

* Sur un autre plan, quelle opinion faites-vous de l'engagement de l'Alliance du Changement à engager Maurice sur la voie des réformes structurelles profondes nécessaires pour un meilleur avenir démocratique: observe-t-on une véritable rupture ou une simple alternance sans changement de système?

Le programme gouvernemental de l'Alliance du Changement a énuméré un certain nombre de réformes qui, si elles devaient effectivement se faire, changeraient la face de Maurice.

_suite en page 10

Débarquement de Beegoo: 'Je pense que le tandem Bérenger-Pillay a su convaincre Ramgoolam du bien-fondé d'une telle décision'



_suite de la page 9

Je cite deux de ces propositions: la réforme électorale avec l'introduction d'une dose de proportionnelle et un nouveau mode de nomination de cadres basé sur la méritocratie.

On n'a pas besoin de bouleverser totalement le système, nous pouvons l'améliorer.

Je vois qu'on parle de réforme électorale parce que les politiques sont directement concernés mais on ne parle plus de méritocratie.

* En ce qui concerne le leadership bicéphale du PTr et du MMM au sein de l'Alliance, comment évaluez-vous l'équilibre des forces et la cohésion entre les deux principaux leaders? Le partage du pouvoir est-il une force ou potentiellement une source de friction?

Il n'y a pas d'équilibre de forces. Numériquement le Parti Travailiste est largement majoritaire et le restera en toutes circonstances. Peut-être même qu'il pourrait se renforcer. En revanche, l'alchimie Ramgoolam-Bérenger, en tout cas publiquement, semble toujours résister aux désaccords qui existent. Ils existent, il ne faut pas se faire d'illusion, ils ont provoqué quelques secousses. Mais personne, pour l'instant, ne veut prendre l'initiative d'une action de non-retour.

* Nous observons la forte visibilité de Paul Bérenger qui, en tant que ministre sans portefeuille, s'exprime régulièrement

“Débarquement de Beegoo:
"En réalité, tout cela était parfaitement prévisible dès la nomination de Megh Pillay comme président exécutif d'Airport Holdings Ltd, principal actionnaire d'Air Mauritius. Il était évident que son chairman chercherait à reprendre la main. Il ne pouvait pas y avoir deux pilotes à bord — d'autant que M. Beegoo, doté d'un ego surdimensionné, n'a cessé de cibler Bérenger. Son véritable tombeur, c'est Megh Pillay — et sans doute à juste raison..."

calmer le jeu au sein du gouvernement. Était-ce prévisible, et jusqu'où Ramgoolam ira-t-il pour apaiser son allié?

Je ne suis pas convaincu qu'il s'agisse d'une mesure d'apaisement. Je pense plutôt que le tandem Bérenger-Pillay a su convaincre Ramgoolam du bien-fondé d'une telle décision.

En réalité, tout cela était parfaitement prévisible dès la nomination de Megh Pillay comme président exécutif d'Airport Holdings Ltd, principal actionnaire d'Air Mauritius. Il était évident que son chairman chercherait à reprendre la main. Il ne pouvait pas y avoir deux pilotes à bord — d'autant que M. Beegoo, doté d'un ego surdimensionné, n'a cessé de cibler Bérenger. Son véritable tombeur, c'est Megh Pillay — et sans doute à juste raison.

* La réforme électorale est un débat récurrent. Selon vous, le gouvernement montrera-t-il la volonté politique nécessaire pour mettre en œuvre une réforme complète, ou ce dossier sera-t-il relégué pour maintenir un statu quo électoral favorable?

Ici aussi, je suis méfiant. La seule vraie question de la réforme, c'est la dose de proportionnelle à introduire. Pour que la réforme électorale soit significative, il faudrait une dose minimum de 20%. J'attends de voir les Travailleuses accepter ce taux.

L'argumentaire courant et pernicieusement communal veut que cette réforme serait dans l'intérêt du MMM et pas nécessairement dans celui du Parti Travailleuses. Ce qui est faux, on a déjà vu combien le Parti Travailleuses a été victime de l'actuel système.

ment sur des dossiers variés, y compris ceux qui relèvent traditionnellement du Premier ministre. Ce phénomène contraste avec la discrétion de Navin Ramgoolam, qui ne réagit pas publiquement. Le silence de Navin Ramgoolam est-il une preuve de confiance, une tactique délibérée, ou bien une contrainte politique imposée par l'accord de coalition?

Qui peut lire dans les pensées profondes de Navin Ramgoolam? De tout temps, il a joué très près de ses cartes, déroutant sans cesse ses adversaires. De ce que nous pouvons constater, s'il n'existe aucune arrière-pensée, on peut considérer qu'un vrai climat de confiance s'est instauré entre Ramgoolam et Bérenger.

L'âge de la maturité? Le syndrome du dernier mandat? L'absence du coup d'après?

Chez Bérenger aussi rien n'a changé. Il est toujours aussi informé et efficace mais toujours rude, impatient, intolérant. Ses collègues ministres, MMM comme Travailleuses, n'apprécient pas toujours, mais Ramgoolam reste conciliant.

Si on est méfiant, comme je peux l'être, on se dira que c'est trop beau pour être vrai...

* Après Gérard Sanspeur et Rama Sithanen, voici un autre «potentat», comme vous les qualifiez, qui tombe: Kishore Beegoo, récemment débarqué d'Air Mauritius, paraît-il pour

“Il n'y a pas d'équilibre de forces. Numériquement le Parti Travailleuses est largement majoritaire et le restera en toutes circonstances.

Peut-être même qu'il pourrait se renforcer. En revanche, l'alchimie Ramgoolam-Bérenger, en tout cas publiquement, semble toujours résister aux désaccords qui existent. Ils existent, il ne faut pas se faire d'illusion, ils ont provoqué quelques secousses. Mais personne, pour l'instant, ne veut prendre l'initiative d'une action de non-retour... ”





The month of October, by any measure, has been a grim period for India's flagship carrier. In the space of seven days Air India moved from awkward explanations to passenger outrage — and regulatory scrutiny — leaving a simple question: can a carrier that talks up global standards still be trusted when machines and maintenance appear to conspire against it?

The headlines began with a curious technical incident on 4 October. As a Boeing 787 on approach to Birmingham, the aircraft's Ram Air Turbine (RAT) — a tiny windmill that swings out only when primary power is lost — unexpectedly deployed. The pilots found every instrument normal and landed safely, but the deployment was labelled "uncommanded" by the airline and prompted the Indian regulator to ask Boeing for answers. Aviation trackers and industry sites recorded the event; the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has since asked operators to re-inspect 787 RAT mechanisms.

Two days later, dozens of Diwali travellers were stranded in Milan when a 787 (VT-ANN) scheduled to return to Delhi was taken out of service for an "extended technical requirement." Hundreds were rehoused; one passenger with a rapidly expiring Schengen visa was hurried onto another carrier. Air India later scheduled a special flight to bring passengers home, but the episode fed a mounting narrative: too many wide-body Dreamliners, too little reliability.

And then came the social-media furor. A first-class passenger on the long Delhi→Toronto rotation posted photographs and a thread describing a litany of failures in the premium cabin: repeatedly malfunctioning seats, cracked panels, an overhead light that fell and cut a passenger, a USB port with a sharp edge, and — most alarming — bed-bugs allegedly present in the bedding. Air India offered a "goodwill" payment of ₹10,174 (roughly US\$116) and an apology; critics were quick to ask whether that token sum was adequate compensation for what a paying first-class customer described as a safety and hygiene failure. Aviation blogs and

“Modern airliners rely on layers of electronic redundancy and software logic that can, when they misbehave, produce startling and opaque results. The RAT deployment is not merely a curiosity; it is a safety system activating where no failure was recorded. Boeing service bulletins and airline maintenance checks tend to focus on fault trees and Bus Power Control Units — precise, narrow fixes — but they rarely satisfy public appetite for transparency. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation's request for information from Boeing is therefore not a bureaucratic nicety: it is a necessary step toward public assurance...”



Boeing service bulletins and airline maintenance checks tend to focus on fault trees and Bus Power Control Units — precise, narrow fixes — but they rarely satisfy public appetite for transparency. Pic - BBC

travel sites amplified the story.

Taken separately each episode might be dismissed as a one-off: a stray sensor, an inconvenient mechanical snag, an

activating where no failure was recorded. Boeing service bulletins and airline maintenance checks tend to focus on fault trees and Bus Power Control Units — precise,

“Air India's management will say that each event is being investigated, and that safety is the company's first priority. That is the obligatory line of every airline faced with embarrassment. But regulators and the flying public will want something more: clearer, faster disclosures from the DGCA; meaningful corrective action from Boeing and the operator; and compensation that recognises harm rather than papering it over. If Air India hopes to be a true global Maharaja, it must show that its golden crown is not merely cosmetic...”

embarrassingly small goodwill payment. Taken together, they point to a pattern that should worry flyers and shareholders alike: a fleet still absorbing the aftershocks of last summer's safety pause; a complex, software-heavy aircraft type whose quirks are easier to see in headlines than in technical reports; and a customer-service model that sometimes answers viral outrage with token cash rather than systemic fixes.

There are two separate risk vectors here. First, the technical: modern airliners rely on layers of electronic redundancy and software logic that can, when they misbehave, produce startling and opaque results. The RAT deployment is not merely a curiosity; it is a safety system

narrow fixes — but they rarely satisfy public appetite for transparency. The DGCA's request for information from Boeing is therefore not a bureaucratic nicety: it is a necessary step toward public assurance.

Second, the reputational: premium cabins sell more than a seat. They sell

assurance, privacy and hygiene. The first-class thread exposed a chasm between marketing and reality. Whether the problem was crew-level lapses, maintenance backlogs, or a systemic failure in line-maintenance oversight, the airline's response felt inadequate to many. In the age of social media, a token goodwill payment can look like an attempt to buy silence rather than to fix the root cause.

For Mauritius readers the practical detail is simple but relevant: the Indian-Mauritius air corridor is thinly served — the non-stop Delhi-Port Louis sector shows a single weekly non-stop service on public schedules, even as carriers juggle seasonal adjustments and codeshares. That limited capacity makes reliability on the route especially precious for Diaspora travellers heading home for festivals; poor dispatch reliability or last-minute cancellations do not merely inconvenience, they carry visa and family consequences.

Air India's management will say that each event is being investigated, and that safety is the company's first priority. That is the obligatory line of every airline faced with embarrassment. But regulators and the flying public will want something more: clearer, faster disclosures from the DGCA; meaningful corrective action from Boeing and the operator; and compensation that recognises harm rather than papering it over.

If Air India hopes to be a true global Maharaja, it must show that its golden crown is not merely cosmetic. Machines that "act on their own" are both a design problem and a test of institutional candour. Until the airline and its regulator answer plainly, passengers will be left to wonder who, in a cabin of software, hardware and human crews, is actually in command.

AAPRAVASI GHAT INDIAN INDENTURED IMMIGRANTS (Girmitya) Arrival Celebration Committee

191st Anniversary Celebrations of Indentured Immigrants (Girmitya) Arrival 2 November 1834 – 2 November 2025

The Aapravasi Ghat Indian Indentured Immigrants Arrival Celebration Committee is solemnly inviting you to the

ANNUAL YAJ CEREMONY

to pay tribute to the (Girmiyas) - Indian Indentured Immigrants

Venue : Aapravasi Ghat

Date : Sunday 2 November 2025

Time : 8.00 to 8.45 am

The programme will comprise of Yaj, prayers, tribute, lighting of lamps and Shradhanjali with offering of flowers. Please bring along garlands and flowers for the Shradhanjali.

Guests and participants are requested to be seated by 7.30 am sharp.

Dr Mrs Sarita Boodhoo
President

Sadhna Ramlallah
Vice President

Rita Ramlallah
Secretary

The Dodo's Second Coming

If the new dodo is to survive, it must learn politics as swiftly as flight

Two millennia ago, the philosopher Socrates walked the streets of Athens, questioning the nature of justice, virtue, and the good life. Had he lived in our modern age, he might have turned his gaze to the volcanic shores of Mauritius, where a most peculiar scientific and ethical question is now waddling to the fore: the resurrection of the dodo. This dialogue brings Socrates into conversation with Cephalus, who relays the strange news of this "de-extinction" project. What begins as a noble scientific endeavour quickly unravels into a humorous yet sharp inquiry into the true predators of the modern age — the politicians, the economists, the business leaders and the purveyors of cheap celebrity — forcing us to ask: Is it the dodo that must adapt to modern Mauritius, or must Mauritius finally prove itself worthy of the dodo?

Plutonix

Socrates: My dear Cephalus, I hear strange reports from the islands of the Indian Ocean — that the people of Mauritius, having long since lamented the loss of their most famous bird, now plan to bring it back to life. What sort of magic is this?

Cephalus: It is not magic, Socrates, but science — or at least the new priests of the laboratory so proclaim. They call it "de-extinction." They wish to recreate the dodo from the genes of its distant cousin, the Nicobar pigeon. They say they can hatch a bird that will waddle once more upon the volcanic soil of Mauritius.

Socrates: A noble ambition! And tell me, will this new dodo be taught to beware of sailors, of dogs, or perhaps of economists and politicians, businessman...?

Cephalus: That may be the greatest challenge. The old dodo lived in an island without predators; the new one shall awaken in a republic teeming with them — some feathered, some furred, and most of them bipedal. The modern dodo may find that the most dangerous species in Mauritius walks on two legs, speaks in parliament, and answers to no natural predator.

Socrates: Ah, the two-legged predator! I have met his kind before. He hunts not for food, but for influence. Tell me, Cephalus, will the new dodo at least be given a ministry — perhaps of Cultural Heritage — that it might defend itself through bureaucracy?

Cephalus: It might well deserve one. For if it returns, it will carry upon its plump shoulders the weight of Mauritian identity. Children will grow up saluting it, politicians will use it in their speeches, and some clever businessman will surely patent "Dodo Cola" or "Dodo Airlines." The poor bird may wish it had stayed extinct.

Socrates: I see. And how do the scientists propose to protect this resurrected

a marketplace.

Socrates: Indeed! I can imagine the dodo attending a press conference. "Gentlemen," it would say, "I have been resurrected to symbolize hope, not profit!" But the reporters would only ask whether its feathers could be monetized, or if its genome could boost biotech investments.

Cephalus: The irony, Socrates, is that the scientists who will recreate the dodo do so in the name of conservation, yet they must collaborate with those who



Pic - Colossal Biosciences

emblem from extinction once more? Will they place it behind glass, or allow it to roam free among the people?

Cephalus: They say they will restore the forests, purge the rats, and replant native trees. But you know, Socrates, how such plans end. Funds may vanish, committees may multiply, and soon the dodo will be eating imported maize in a resort garden, posing for selfies with tourists.

Socrates: A tragicomic fate — from extinction to exhibition! Yet I wonder, Cephalus, how the dodo will adjust to the new society of Mauritius. The bird once feared nothing. Now it will find itself surrounded by economists discussing growth rates, journalists chasing scandals, and citizens arguing over corruption. Even a dodo may grow anxious in such company.

Cephalus: You speak truth. And it is said the island is already embroiled in controversy over another species — the monkeys. Thousands are captured and shipped abroad for experiments. Some call it a trade in cruelty; others call it a necessary industry. The new dodo might find that Mauritius is not a sanctuary, but

once mastered the art of exploitation. If the new dodo is to survive, it must learn politics as swiftly as flight — though it never had wings for that.

Socrates: Then perhaps we should found a school — the Academy of Dodo Studies — where the bird may be trained in the ways of public relations, survival, and diplomacy. It could learn how to avoid predators wearing suits and how to deal with budget committees.

Cephalus: And what of its mental adjustment, Socrates? The dodo lived a simple life — eating fallen fruits and building nests on the ground. How will it react to social media, to influencers, to drone cameras hovering above? It may think the heavens themselves have filled

with metallic hawks.

Socrates: Perhaps it will tweet, Cephalus. Not in song, but on the platform where every creature chirps nonsense to the world. It may soon have more followers than the philosophers!

Cephalus: I would follow it myself — especially if it posts about ethics. Imagine a dodo reminding men that extinction is a human invention. Yet, knowing our times, it will soon be drawn into politics. One faction will call it a "left-wing bird," another a "foreign clone." Someone will even claim it was funded by foreign powers.

Socrates: In that case, its survival will depend not on science, but on public relations. Perhaps it will form its own party — the Dodo Revival Movement — with the slogan, "We are back, and this time we're voting."

Cephalus: And it will campaign on environmental reform, asking men to stop treating the island as a laboratory. Yet some cunning orator will accuse it of hypocrisy — "How dare you preach preservation when you were extinct!"

Socrates: Poor creature! It will learn that resurrection brings new torments. Death is peaceful; rebirth is political. But tell me, Cephalus, do you think the dodo's return will at least restore some harmony to the island's soul?

Cephalus: Possibly. It might remind Mauritians of what they once destroyed, and what they still can save. The dodo's second coming could inspire humility — if only men would listen to a bird that cannot even fly.

Socrates: Then let us hope the new dodo becomes a philosopher — one who observes humanity with calm detachment and teaches that survival is not merely a biological achievement, but a moral one. For truly, Cephalus, it is not the dodo who must adapt to the new Mauritius — it is Mauritius that must prove itself worthy of the dodo.

Cephalus: A fitting conclusion, my friend. Let the bird return, then, not as a curiosity, but as a mirror to our own folly. And if it disappears again, may it not be from our neglect — but from laughter at the absurdity of men who needed to resurrect a bird to remember their humanity.

Socrates: Well said. Now, let us pray that when the dodo comes back, it will forgive us — and that no one tries to turn it into a minister.

The dialogue between Socrates and Cephalus has waddled its way to an unsettling conclusion: the dodo's second coming may be a feat of science, but its survival will be a test of morality and politics. The bird that once perished from a lack of vigilance now risks being consumed by a new set of dangers: bureaucracy, commercial exploitation, and the relentless noise of the modern news cycle. The true irony lies in the fact that humanity is seeking to resurrect a symbol of its past folly while remaining blind to its current one.

- There is not yet any inventory of man's faculties. — Ralph Waldo Emerson



Philippe Forget

In the last issue of this journal the editorial commentator writes an interesting note on net fishing. He recalls that: "The Minister of Agriculture has had the happy initiative of accepting the recommendation of the Fisheries Committee to suspend the close season for net fishing this year," and comments: "This is certainly a wise decision which will greatly alleviate the fishermen who have suffered much during the cyclones. This is good as a temporary measure, and no one can guess what will happen in future." He goes on to look forward to the arrival of a fishing expert.

It is to be noted, first of all, that the absence of a close season for net fishing, although it will probably benefit net fishermen, will also probably be detrimental to professional line fishermen who, equally well, deserve commiseration for the bad 1960 season.

Further, one may wonder whether any firm data is available which could support the view that the decision is a wise one. Granted that the warm season is the time



most favourable to reproductive activities and development of the young fish, and that mature fish close up on the coast for reproduction at such times, it might be queried whether decimation of the number of mature females by means of net fishing might not be detrimental to the catches of fish in future years, and therefore, whether a close season for net fishing in summer is not a better decision. One fears very much that decisions of this kind might well have to be taken in the absence of

scientific facts.

This, in turn prompts another query. Would the passage of a fishing expert provide us with such incontrovertible facts? Would it not be better, in the fishing industry as in most other governmental technical departments, to open our eyes to the illuminating example of the Research Institute of the sugar industry? Everyone knows that the Research Institute, manned by a majority of Mauritian scientists, performs yeoman's service to the industry and to the country as a whole. Here is indeed the vital brain of our vital industry, giving, thanks to Mauritian scientists, a superb account of itself. It is a fact well worth stating that it is not expert advisers who do this kind of scientific work but the proper set-up and proper funds, geared to

the requisites of proper freedom of scientific methods that get results. One properly equipped Marine Biology Research Laboratory is worth ten successive experts to the fishing industry.

Mauritius is making itself a name in collecting expert reports which it cannot grow up to accept. Let the research and scientific work be done here, by us, among us, and we might be better hands at their application, having grown up with them.

MOTIONS

The following motions have been tabled by Mr B. Ramlallah:

1. "This Council is of opinion that due to difficulties the poorer classes of this island are experiencing in order to fulfil all the legal formalities to have a clear title of deeds to allow them to take loans on mortgage from the Mauritius Agricultural Bank and the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Committee it is expedient that Government should urgently study the possibility of waiving for a number of years the stamp duties, registration dues, Court and ushers' fees so as to facilitate people contracting loans up to an amount of Rs 8,000 for the purpose of building dwelling houses."
2. "This Council is of opinion that in the interest of secondary education of the island the Ministry of Education should be entrusted with the responsibility of conducting the examination for Forms I to IV in all secondary schools."
3. "This Council is of opinion that to stabilize the economy of the island Government should take immediate steps to set up a State Bank."
4. "This Council is of opinion that appropriate steps be taken to set up a Sugar Marketing Board."
5. "This Council is of opinion that it is
6. "This Council is of opinion that the Ministry of Education should grant junior and English scholarships on the basis of a means rest."
7. "This Council is of opinion that Government should implement the motion made by Hon J. N. Roy, the then second member for Grand-Port Savanne and adopted by the Council on the 24th of June 1949 on the subject of land tenure."
8. "This Council is of opinion that the Minister of Education should appoint a committee to make a thorough inquiry into the functioning of all non-aided secondary schools and to make necessary recommendations in order to improve the efficiency of these schools."
9. "This Council is of opinion that the present system of automatic promotion of the pupils in the primary schools be abolished, and a suitable method of promotion be instituted. This Council is further of the opinion that a half yearly test in all classes of primary schools be instituted."
10. "This Council is of opinion that the Education Ministry should henceforth grant junior scholarships based on the result of the VIth Standard examination and also abolish the post sixth standard (junior scholarship) classes now conducted in primary Government and aided schools."

Mauritius Times

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Thank you so much.
Mauritius Times

A Prayer Across Centuries: King Charles III and Pope Leo XIV Bridge a 500-Year Divide

In a moment laden with historical and religious significance, Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla joined Pope Leo XIV in prayer at the Vatican on Thursday, marking the first time in nearly 500 years that the titular head of the Church of England and the head of the Catholic Church have prayed together.

The historic ecumenical service, held in the awe-inspiring Sistine Chapel before Michelangelo's Last Judgment, saw King Charles, as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and Queen Camilla seated on golden thrones alongside Pope Leo XIV and the Anglican Archbishop of York. The symbolic unity was further underscored by hymns performed jointly by the Sistine Chapel choir and visiting members of the two royal choirs.



Pray together to stay together: King Charles meets Pope Leo XIV in historic public show of unity. Pic - Yahoo

Why this moment resonates through Christian history

This joint prayer service is not merely a diplomatic meeting; it is a profound gesture aimed at bridging a schism that dates back to the reign of King Henry VIII. The Anglican Church broke from the Catholic Church in 1534 when Henry VIII was denied a marriage annulment by the Pope. For five centuries, theological and administrative disputes — most recently over issues like the ordination of female priests and LGBTQ-affirming stances — have kept the two traditions separated.

Against this backdrop of enduring division, Thursday's service, which focused on readings and prayers celebrating God as creator, represents a major, albeit symbolic, step toward reconciliation.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, emphasized the importance of the event, telling the Associated Press, "Pope Leo and King Charles coming together before God in prayer is an example

of a genuine and profound co-operation." He highlighted that King Charles, while heading the Church of England, also plays a crucial role in safeguarding religious freedom across his kingdom, building on the ties established by his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, who visited Rome six times during her reign.

Deep-seated differences remain

While the shared prayer signals a forward-looking gesture, it takes place amid ongoing tensions within the wider Anglican Communion. The timing of the visit is notable, coming shortly after the election of Sarah Mullally as the first female Archbishop of Canterbury. Although Mullally did not attend the Vatican service — her formal installation is pending, with the Archbishop of York, the Most Rev. Stephen Cottrell, presiding in her stead — her appointment has strained relations with conservative blocs, such as the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (GAFCON). This conservative body, largely representing African members, has rejected traditional links within the communion over disagreements on social issues.

Despite these internal divides, the ecumenical service represents a commitment from the highest

levels of both the Catholic Church and the Church of England to focus on centuries of shared faith and move toward a more unified future.

A timely visit

The royal couple's trip to the Vatican, which was initially postponed due to the illness and subsequent death of Pope Francis, also provided a diplomatic opportunity amid mounting domestic scrutiny of the British royal family. The British monarchy is currently under pressure to formally strip Prince Andrew of his titles and remove him from his royal residence following renewed focus on his ties to convicted US sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Ultimately, however, the significance of the visit rests on its religious history. By bowing their heads in unison, the King and the Pope have created a landmark moment, signalling a desire for healing and cooperation that transcends the half-millennium-old wounds of the Reformation.

India's ties to Russia grow

India is unlikely to stop purchasing Russian oil, analysts said, despite US President Donald Trump's insistence to the contrary. Trump on Tuesday claimed India would halt its energy trade with Russia over the Ukraine war — his fourth such assertion in a week, per the Hindustan Times. But New Delhi hasn't confirmed such a shift — Trump's

statements are likely pressure tactics over trade negotiations "rather than a reflection of an imminent policy change," commodity intelligence firm Kpler wrote; Russia remains "deeply embedded" in India's energy system. New Delhi is boosting economic ties to the Kremlin in other realms with reported plans to buy Russian missiles, while its exports to Moscow are "steadily widening in scope," The Economic Times wrote.

Across the Globe

New call to stop superintelligence

Eduardo Munoz/Eric Gaillard/Brendan McDermid/Reuters



The OpenAI leaders say superintelligence will be more powerful than other technologies humanity has had to contend with in the past. Pic - Alamy

Hundreds of public figures across the ideological spectrum called for a ban on research that could lead to so-called "superintelligence," a hypothetical stage of AI that outperforms the best human minds. Prince Harry, rapper Will.i.am, and Donald Trump's former aide Steve Bannon were among those who signed the petition, which was organized by the Future of Life Institute.

The same group circulated a widely publicized letter in March 2023 pushing for a six-month halt on AI training, a call that Silicon Valley did not heed. Even as Trump embraces AI to troll opponents online, some of his ardent supporters on the far right, like Bannon, have signalled growing unease toward the tech.

Bubble watch: Fears extend beyond AI

It's not just AI: Analysts are warning of potential bubbles across markets. "Bubble talk has broken confinement," a *Financial Times* columnist wrote, after the IMF invoked "the risk of sharp corrections" as markets appear "complacent as the ground shifts." A German military software executive cautioned over a European defence tech bubble, while Transformer wrote that Silicon Valley is discussing the "when," not "if" of an AI crash.

Looking at earlier bubbles, however, such as the 1840s British railway craze, the eventual crash hurt investors but resulted in a thriving train network. Economist Noah Smith similarly noted the US housing bubble of the 2000s built many homes the country needed, even if it triggered a financial crisis.

The business of disaster recovery

The first half of 2025 was the costliest on record for weather disasters in the US, new figures show, with damages surpassing \$100 billion. The bulk of that total stemmed from punishing wildfires in California. As climate change makes extreme weather more common, disaster recovery is becoming a powerful economic driver.

Some 36% of US GDP growth since 2000 stemmed from disaster relief, Bloomberg wrote, as more money flows to insurers, waste haulers, engineering contractors, hardware stores, and storage facilities: "These are good businesses to be in in challenging times."



Wildfires in California. Pic - ABC News

Japan changes stance on morning-after pill

Japan will make the morning-after pill available over the counter for the first time. Emergency post-coital contraception has been available in pharmacies in most developed countries for decades. But in Japan, women still required a doctor's examination and prescription to obtain it, creating significant barriers to access, especially for younger women and rape survivors.

Japan has been slower to adopt female reproductive healthcare treatments than comparable countries, the BBC reported, with campaigners blaming conservative views about women's roles. In 1999, a controversy erupted when Viagra was approved within six months of being patented, while the contraceptive pill remained off limits after 30 years even though every other industrialized country had approved it.

* More on page 15

Russia Labels US Oil Sanctions an 'Act of War'

Russia has reacted fiercely to new US sanctions targeting its major oil companies, with a senior official calling the move an "act of war" and warning that the restrictions are "extremely counterproductive" to efforts to end the conflict in Ukraine.

On Thursday, Dmitry Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of Russia's Security Council, issued a sharp rebuke against the United States after its Department of the Treasury announced sanctions against two of Russia's largest oil firms: Rosneft Oil Company and Lukoil OAO.

Medvedev minced no words, stating that the sanctions represented "an act of war against Russia." He also turned his criticism toward US President Trump, describing the US as Russia's "enemy" and claiming that the supposedly "talkative 'peacemaker' has now fully embarked on the warpath with Russia." Furthermore, Medvedev asserted that Trump has now "fully aligned himself with loony Europe" in



Russia's foreign ministry said that the sanctions announced by the US were extremely counterproductive. Pic - HT

the collective effort to sanction Moscow.

The sanctions, which were announced on Wednesday, represent the first time President Trump has levied such restrictions on Russia during his second term, and they come as the war in Ukraine approaches its fourth year.

Sanctions Deemed Counterproductive: Russia's Foreign Ministry echoed the

sentiment that the sanctions were misguided. Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova told reporters in Moscow that the US goal of forcing Russia to stop the war in Ukraine through economic pressure was "extremely counterproductive." She reiterated that Russia's goals in Ukraine remain unchanged and emphasized that resolving the root causes of the conflict is

essential.

Zakharova also struck a defiant tone regarding the effectiveness of Western restrictions: "Our country has developed a strong immunity to Western restrictions and will continue to confidently develop its economic potential, including its energy potential," she stated. This was a direct dismissal of both the US sanctions and the 19th package of sanctions approved by European nations on the same day.

Russia also directed criticism at European elites, saying they "could not accept that their sanctions were not working."

Diplomatic Fallout: The escalating rhetoric was paired with a diplomatic freeze, as President Trump canceled an upcoming meeting with his Russian counterpart, President Putin, in Budapest. Trump reportedly stated that moving forward with the meeting "did not feel right" to him following the announcement of the new, stringent sanctions. The US action highlights a renewed effort to exert economic pressure on Russia in a bid to halt the military action in Ukraine.

S.Africa rebuffs US trade pressure

South Africa accused the US of politicizing trade talks, rebuffing Washington's pressure to scrap Black empowerment laws the White House argues are unfair. South Africa's Foreign Minister Ronald Lamola said the Trump administration was trying to force "domestic" issues into trade talks, which South Africa had hoped would lead to a

reduction of punishing tariffs Washington imposed in August.

The Trump administration has said Pretoria is subjecting its white population to a "genocide," and relations are unlikely to improve with a domestic political fight brewing over repealing race-based government procurement rules. Trump's tariffs could cost Africa's most industrialized economy as many as 100,000 jobs, with some fearing that the country could fall further into China's sphere.



Delhi Air Pollution. Pic - OneIndia

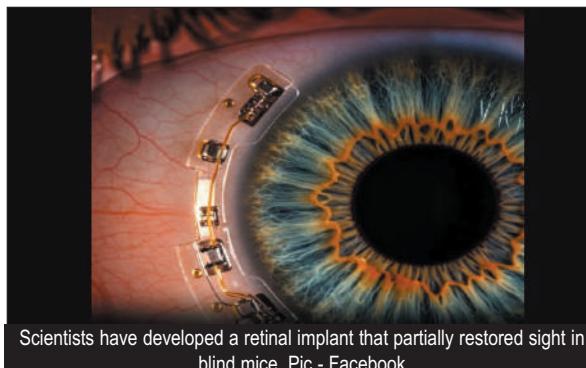
Delhi pollution hits five-year high

Air pollution in New Delhi hit a five-year high this week, as Diwali fireworks combined with farming fires to shroud the city in a toxic haze. The annual spike has become something of a tradition in the megalopolis, with some parts of the city this week recording an air-quality index reading of 1,800 — 20 times higher than levels the World Health Organization deems healthy.

The news points to the challenge facing Indian authorities as they look to combat pollution and cut carbon emissions: The country has made huge progress in deploying renewable energy, but will still need up to \$21 trillion in new investments in order to meet its 2070 net-zero target, according to government plans reported by Bloomberg.

Retinal implant restores vision

A retinal implant has restored sight to people suffering the most common causes of blindness in the developed world. Age-related macular degeneration kills light-sensitive cells in the central part of the retina that allows detailed vision. A trial had 38 legally blind subjects wear glasses containing a camera, which would send signals to a 2mm-square receiver implanted in their eyeball; that receiver would convert those signals into nerve impulses. The glasses allowed users to control the zoom, brightness, and contrast of their vision. By the trial's end, 26 subjects were able to read, although the system needed extensive training to use. The condition has two forms; "dry" macular degeneration, the kind studied in this research, affects 5 million people worldwide.



Scientists have developed a retinal implant that partially restored sight in blind mice. Pic - Facebook



Iran expedites solar panel imports to tackle electricity blackouts. Pic - IntelliNews

Iran's solar power boom

Iran is upping efforts to roll out solar power projects nationwide, the latest developing nation to turn to the sun in an effort to address power shortages and shore up energy security. Renewable electricity has "evolved from a supportive policy to a strategic necessity," an Iranian minister said in Tehran this week: The country's solar capacity doubled this year, and officials want to increase it a further fourfold in three years.

Other emerging markets are making even more aggressive progress: Pakistan has seen solar go from essentially nonexistent to accounting for nearly a fifth of all its power within a few years, while Africa overall saw a 60% increase of Chinese solar panel imports over the course of a year.

Compiled by K. Ramlallah

Beyond Looks

Can You Tune Your Voice to Sound More Attractive?

Many cultures recognize an immediately alluring tone of voice — the French call it “voix de chambre à coucher,” a deep, sultry “bedroom voice.” This phenomenon, where some people have objectively more attractive voices than others, is surprisingly universal and reveals a deep link to our evolutionary history.

Subtle differences in how we speak tell others about our health, social status, and competence in a fraction of a second. This, in turn, creates a “halo effect,” where we associate attractive voices with traits like competence, kindness, and trustworthiness, making the speaker seem more appealing overall.

The Universal Appeal of the Deep Voice

There's one vocal trait that appears to work for everyone, regardless of culture: a deep voice in men. From indigenous communities in the Amazon and Tanzania to Western societies, women consistently prefer lower-pitched male voices.

This preference is tied to evolution and perceived competence. People associate deep male voices with:

Strength and success (e.g., hunting abilities or career success).

Seriousness and electability (politicians with deeper voices often win a greater share of votes).

Higher testosterone levels, which signal biological quality.

In fact, the pitch of a man's voice is largely determined by their exposure to their mother's hormones (androgens) during pregnancy. This means that a trait vital to reproductive success and social dominance is largely set from childhood. It literally



Pic - Shutterstock

pays to go down an octave or two if you want to be seen as a competent speaker.

Women's Voice Preferences: A Complex Picture

For a long time, it was thought that men universally preferred women with high-pitch voices, as a higher pitch was seen as a proxy for youth and, therefore, more future years of fertility.

However, research suggests men's preferences are becoming more complex, particularly in Western cultures. A small speed-dating study of French adults, for instance, found that men actually preferred women with deeper voices. Bioacousticians like Katarzyna Pisanski suggest this might be indicative of changing tastes as men look for serious, ambitious, and career-driven women who exude maturity and competence, rather than just youth.

In line with this, some women may be adopting a lower pitch, perhaps explaining the rise of “vocal fry” among some young American women. Vocal fry—where the voice's pitch drops below a natural level, creating a rough sound—may be a byproduct of women trying to sound more dominant. However, studies show that if the pitch goes too low, it

can actually harm job prospects, as it can be culturally associated with unseriousness.

How Attraction Manipulates Pitch

Can we consciously manipulate our pitch to sound more attractive? Our voices are surprisingly dynamic in social settings:

Prosodic Entrainment: When we have a good conversation, we naturally adjust the pitch of our voice towards the other person's.

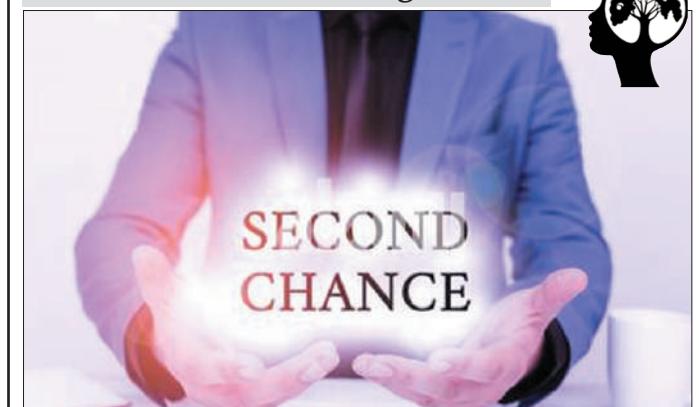
Attraction Signaling: When we are attracted to someone, the opposite is true. Men's pitch automatically goes down, and women's pitch typically goes up, playing into traditional gender stereotypes. The stronger the attraction, the greater the difference.

This difference isn't passive; it's a form of vocal manipulation that makes the other person more attracted to us. In a fascinating exception, some women in a speed-dating scenario lowered their pitch when speaking to the most popular men, perhaps trying to sound more serious and less naive than their competition, mirroring the low-pitch associated with electable politicians.

While we can slightly manipulate our voices, humans are excellent at detecting fakers. Ultimately, being authentic might be the best strategy. Furthermore, studies suggest that people with average looks and average voices are found attractive, possibly because average traits signal more heterozygous Major Histocompatibility Complexes (MHCs), which are linked to a robust and healthy immune system.

For those of us not driven purely by evolutionary pressures, the greatest attraction may simply be found in the satisfaction of a good conversationalist.

Tree of Knowledge



Importance of Second Chances

When we meet someone for the first time, we often create a defining image in our minds of who that person is. We also may determine whether or not that someone is worth getting to know.

Sometimes when an initial interaction is particularly uncomfortable or challenging, we decide to close our hearts to this new acquaintance entirely. But being too quick to judge can cause us to lose out on a potentially wonderful, enriching relationship. First impressions don't always give the complete picture, so if you meet someone who leaves you less than impressed, consider giving them a second chance. You might be pleasantly surprised.

Everyone deserves to be given a second chance. We know from personal experience how painful it can feel to be misunderstood or judged. When someone shuts us out before they even know who we are, it can feel frustrating, hurtful, and confusing.

By giving others a second chance, we can extend the same courtesy we would ask for ourselves. In this way, we set a precedent for all our relationships: to allow everyone the freedom and safety to simply be human. Whether it is a blind date, the man sitting next to you on the airplane, or your new neighbour, everyone has a full life outside of their interaction with you.

They may be preoccupied with a personal or business situation that affects the way they are presenting themselves, or maybe they had a rough day or received some bad news. If you give them the room to be who they are, where they are, you will allow yourself to do the same.

When you are considering giving someone a second chance, first check in with your inner knowing. If you find that your intuition is advising you to keep your distance, it is important to honour the guidance you receive. By honouring your intuition when it has wisdom to share, you can feel confident and happy in your decision to give others a second chance.

Daily Om

Sagittarius (22 November – 21 December)

A lively week ahead brings new opportunities for travel or expansion. Financial gains could come from a bold move or a well-timed decision. Stay grounded in relationships—honesty will keep things smooth.

Lucky numbers: 5, 9, 17, 23, 31, 36

Capricorn (22 December – 19 January)

Patience and strategy pay off. Expect recognition at work for consistent efforts. Family discussions may lead to a long-term plan. Avoid unnecessary expenses midweek.

Lucky numbers: 3, 8, 14, 21, 29, 33

Aquarius (20 January – 18 February)

Innovative ideas flow easily—perfect for launching new ventures. A social connection might open a door to collaboration. Keep emotions balanced when dealing with authority figures.

Lucky numbers: 2, 11, 18, 24, 27, 38

YOUR STARS

Pisces (19 February – 20 March)

Listen to intuition before making financial or personal decisions. A dream project could take shape if you stay organized. Romance blossoms through genuine communication.

Lucky numbers: 1, 6, 13, 19, 28, 35

Aries (21 March – 19 April)

Energy surges push you to act—but choose battles wisely. Career progress looks strong, especially if you showcase leadership. Watch health and avoid overexertion.

Lucky numbers: 4, 10, 15, 22, 26, 37

Taurus (20 April – 20 May)

Your steady nature wins respect this week. Financial stability improves, possibly through property or savings.

Loved ones seek your practical advice—offer it kindly.

Lucky numbers: 7, 12, 20, 25, 30, 39

Gemini (21 May – 20 June)

Communications bring both challenge and reward. A delayed project may finally move forward. Stay adaptable in relationships—quick words could cause confusion.

Lucky numbers: 3, 9, 16, 23, 27, 32

Cancer (21 June – 22 July)

Focus shifts to home and emotional renewal. Family matters resolve with patience. Career may require extra effort, but results are satisfying.

Lucky numbers: 2, 8, 14, 19, 24, 31

Leo (23 July – 22 August)

Charisma attracts attention and support. This is a good week for presentations or public appearances. Handle

finances cautiously—avoid impulsive spending.

Lucky numbers: 5, 11, 18, 26, 33, 37

Virgo (23 August – 22 September)

Details matter—double-check documents or messages. A health boost motivates better routines. A friendship may develop into a deeper bond.

Lucky numbers: 6, 10, 17, 21, 28, 34

Libra (23 September – 22 October)

Harmony returns after recent tension. Work partnerships thrive under honest dialogue. Take time to rest and recharge before new opportunities arise.

Lucky numbers: 1, 7, 15, 22, 29, 38

Scorpio (23 October – 21 November)

Powerful insights guide your week. Financial news could be better than expected. Romance deepens through shared vulnerability. Trust your instincts fully.

Lucky numbers: 4, 8, 13, 20, 27, 35

The Pain Switch: Blocking Discomfort Without Stopping Healing

Scientists at the NYU Pain Research Centre have made a breakthrough that could lead to the development of safer, smarter painkillers, free from the serious side effects of common drugs like ibuprofen and aspirin. The key is separating pain from inflammation.

Current non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) work by blocking the enzymes that produce prostaglandins -- hormone-like substances that mediate both pain and inflammation. While this reduces discomfort, it also inhibits the body's essential healing process, leading to long-term risks like stomach damage, increased bleeding, and heart issues.



Decoupling Pain from Inflammation

The NYU team, whose work was published in *Nature Communications*, focused on a specific prostaglandin (PGE2) and its four receptors. They found that one

receptor, EP2, acts as a single "pain switch" within Schwann cells (cells in the peripheral nervous system involved in pain).

In a surprising discovery, delivering drugs to silence only the EP2 receptor in mice successfully abolished prostaglandin-mediated pain without affecting inflammation. "We effectively decoupled the inflammation from the pain," said study author Pierangelo Geppetti.

This finding validates the idea that inflammation is often protective and that a better strategy for pain relief is to block the discomfort while allowing the natural healing response to proceed. By identifying a single, 'druggable' receptor that controls pain independently, researchers have paved the way for selective EP2 receptor antagonists. These new drugs could control pain in conditions like arthritis and migraines without the severe side effects of traditional NSAIDs, offering a promising path toward holistic care that supports both relief and recovery.



Why are women's shoes so pointy? A fashion expert on impractical but stylish footwear

Pointy shoes have been all the rage across cultures for centuries, and their role as status symbols continue today.

While people's actual feet are rounded on the end, women's dress shoes often come to a sharp point at the toe. Many people also feel these pointy shoes are uncomfortable to wear. So why do shoe designers keep making them this way?

With over two decades in the fashion industry, I've researched and taught on the influences behind fashion design and how it's used, even when certain traditions and styles seem impractical.

Revisiting the interesting history behind women's pointy shoes can help us understand the various reasons why they're still popular.



The pointy tip is the point for poulaines. Deutsches Schuhmuseum Hauenstein, CC BY-SA

Pointy poulaines for men

Several current fashion trends for women, including pointy shoes, were in fact initially adopted by men.

In medieval Europe, around the 14th and 15th centuries, pointy leather shoes were popular among wealthy men. Called poulaines -- or cracows, after the Polish city Kraków, where historians think they originated -- these shoes could run as long as 12 inches in length. To keep the stiff, pointy shape, the wearer would stuff the ends of the shoes with moss or wool.

Like most items of fashion, shoes signal the wearer's status to their peers. Poulaines were heavily decorated and

expensive to make, and their elongated design made it difficult to move around. Thus, wearing poulaines communicated to others that the wearer was wealthy, having no need to perform physical work that required mobility.

Pointy shoes as status symbol

These shoes became so popular that in 1463 King Edward IV of England passed laws limiting toe length to 2 inches for anyone below a lord in social ranking. This decree had social, political and religious effects.

Socially, restricting the longest-toed shoes to the nobility ensured the shoe would be a visual status marker associated with the upper classes. This obvious sign helped maintain social order and prevented lower-class people from trying to pass themselves off as higher in standing than they were.

Politically, the king used this same legislation to control the textile trade and protect English industries. By regulating the fabrics and accessories necessary to make excessively ornate shoes, Edward IV could limit foreign competition with English textile manufacturers and at the same time manage fashion trends.

From a religious perspective, King Edward IV passed these laws on the grounds that God was displeased by anything other than modest clothing -- for the lower classes, anyway. Additionally, religious leaders believed that the long toes prevented people from kneeling in a respectful, submissive manner and so restricted the ability to properly pray.

The pressure to literally "fit in" to these pointy shoes also came with a physical cost. Poulaines hurt the wearer's feet and could make their toe bones crooked. Bunions -- a bony bump that develops on the inside of the foot at the big toe -- became more common with the popularity of these shoes.



Fitting into lotus shoes required intentionally breaking one's feet. Daniel Schwen/The Children's Museum of Indianapolis via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA

Pain with a purpose

Various cultures have adopted pointy shoes throughout history, often to signify status, wealth or a connection to a specific subculture. A few examples include the juttis or khussas of Northern India and Pakistan, respectively; the lotus shoes once popular in China; and the pointed flat slippers worn during the Etruscan civilization.



Only nobility got to enjoy the longest pointy shoes England could offer. Loyset Liédet (circa 1470)/Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal

From a practical standpoint, however, pointy-toed shoes can lead to foot deformities and health problems. Why do people still wear pointy shoes if they're so painful?

One reason is a desire to belong. Your brain is programmed to seek out and find people who think and believe like you.

Like how early humans needed to stay with their tribe to survive, your brain thinks that being part of a group can help keep you safe.

Because high-heeled, pointed shoes are commonly worn by women, wearing them gives the wearer feelings of acceptance from other women. While there is nothing inherent about pointy shoes that make them feminine or attractive -- considering that they were often originally designed for men -- fashion often relies on trends that people unconsciously agree on. What is stylish is often influenced by accepted social norms.

Your brain also has clever shortcuts to help you make decisions quickly. One shortcut is to look at what other people are doing. If you see lots of people wearing a certain style or playing a particular game, your brain thinks, well, if everyone is doing this, it must be a good choice. This process helps you make decisions without having to think too hard about every little detail.

Scientists call the powerful, mental influence fashion has on both the person wearing it and the people seeing their outfit enclothed cognition. The shoes you wear may alter how you perceive yourself and others, as well as carry symbolic meaning. So designers might use elongated shoes to create the illusion of a long, slender silhouette to create a look that is not only seen but also personally felt as elegant and powerful.

With new technology and an increased consumer desire for comfort, the good news is that next time you get dressed and want to wear pointy, fashionable shoes, they may be at least a little less painful than they were in the past.

Michael Watson

Interim Associate Chair and Instructor of Retailing, University of South Carolina

Laughter is the Best Medicine

The Perfect Man

A man walked out to the street and caught a taxi just going by. He got into the cab, and the driver said, "Perfect timing. You're just like Brian!"

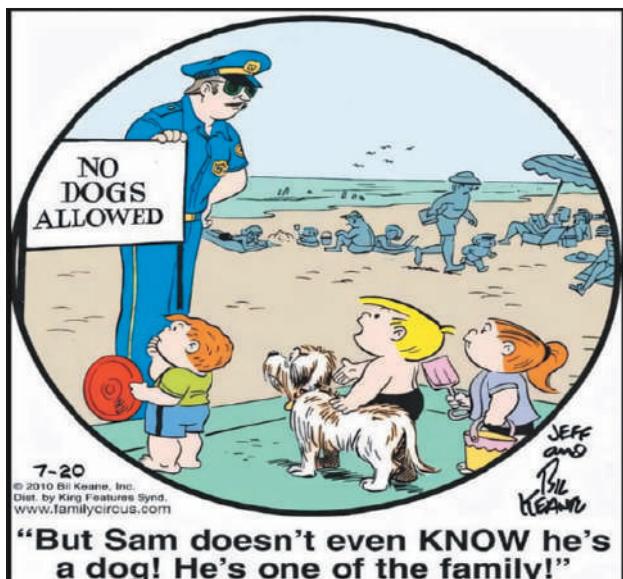
Passenger: "Who?"

Cabbie: "Brian Sullivan. He was a guy who did everything right all the time. Like my coming along just when you needed a cab -- things like that always happened to Brian Sullivan."

Passenger: "There are always a few clouds over everybody."

Cabbie: "Not Brian Sullivan. He was a terrific athlete -- could have won the Grand Slam in tennis, played golf with the pros, sang like an opera baritone, danced like a Broadway star, and you should've heard him play the piano. He was an amazing guy."

Passenger: "Sounds like he was something really special."



Cabbie: "There's more. He had a memory like a computer. Remember everybody's birthday. Knew all about wine, which foods to order, and which fork to eat them with. Could fix anything. Not like me -- I change the fuse and the whole street blacks out. But Brian Sullivan -- he could do everything right."

Passenger: "Wow, some guy then."

Cabbie: "He always knew the quickest route, never got caught in traffic. And he really knew how to treat a woman -- made her feel good, never argued back even when she was wrong. Always immaculately dressed, shoes polished to perfection. The perfect man! No one could ever measure up to Brian Sullivan."

Passenger: "An amazing fellow. How did you meet him?"

Cabbie: "Well, I never actually met Brian. He died. I'm married to his f..... g widow!"

Scottish Wit and Wisdom

A Scotsman crossing a field noticed a man drinking water from a pool with his hand. The Scotsman shouted, "Don't drink the water, it's full of cows'" (in Scottish dialect).

The man shouted back, "I'm English! Speak English.....I don't understand you."

The Scotsman shouted back, "Use both your hands -- you'll get more in it!"

When a Scotsman moved to London, he constantly bothered his English friends by boasting about how great Scotland was. Finally, one day, in exasperation, one of them said, "Well, if Scotland is so marvellous, how come you didn't stay there?"

"Well, they're all so clever up there I had to come down to try my chance here," he explained.

The following notice was posted in Argyll: **Drink Is Your Enemy**.

Adjacent to it was another poster which said: **Love Your Enemy**.

It was a bitterly cold day on the golf course, and the caddy was expecting a large tip from his wealthy client. As they neared the clubhouse, the caddy heard the words he was waiting for: "This is for a hot glass of whisky." He held out his hand -- and a sugar cube was placed in it.

A Scotsman bought two tickets for the lottery and won two million pounds.

"How do you feel about the big win?" he was asked.

"Disappointed -- my other ticket didn't win anything," replied the Scotsman.

Neighbour Wants Free Wi-Fi

Last year, I noticed my internet was slow. I checked my router and found two unfamiliar devices connected. So I changed my Wi-Fi password.

The next morning, my neighbour knocked. He calmly explained he had been using my Wi-Fi for months, and now that he couldn't, he needed the password because his new job pays less, and he wants to call his family online.

When I said no, he argued that neighbours should share Wi-Fi, offered to pay half the bill (then refused), and even threatened to sue me.

A year later, I haven't heard from him -- and I doubt any lawyer would take his case.

Moral of the story: "Neighbours don't always come bearing sugar... sometimes they just want your Wi-Fi."

My Favourite Math Joke

An Italian workman wants a job, but the foreman won't hire him until he passes a little math test.

"Here's your first question," the foreman says. "Without using numbers, represent the number 9."

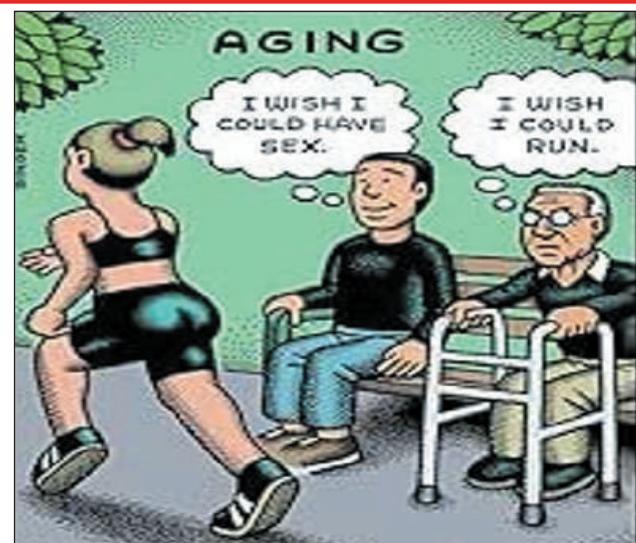
"Without numbers? Datsa easy," says the Italian. He draws three trees.

"What's this?" asks the boss.



METZGER

AGING



"Ave you gotta no brain? Tree and tree and tree makes a nine!" says the Italian.

"Fair enough," says the boss. "Here's your second question. Use the same rules, but this time represent 99."

The Italian thinks for a moment, then takes the picture and makes a smudge on each tree.

"Ere you go," he says.

"How on earth does that represent 99?" asks the boss.

"Each of da trees is a dirty now. So, it's dirty tree, and dirty tree, and dirty tree. Datsa 99!"

The boss is worried he might actually have to hire this guy, so he gives one last challenge.

"All right, last question. Same rules again -- represent 100."

The Italian studies the picture, then makes a small mark at the base of each tree.

"Ere you go. One hundred!"

The boss frowns. "You must be crazy if you think that represents a hundred!"

The Italian points to the marks and says,

"A little dog come along and do a turd by each tree. So now you have got a dirty tree and a turd, dirty tree and a turd, dirty tree and a turd. Datsa makes one hundred! So... whenna I start?"

Man Sends Widow an Email by Mistake

A man checked into a hotel and found a computer in his room.

He decided to send an email to his wife but accidentally typed the wrong address.

Without realizing it, he sent the message to a widow who had just returned from her husband's funeral.

The widow, expecting condolence messages from friends and family, opened her inbox.

After reading the first email, she fainted.

Her son rushed in, found her unconscious, and read the email on the screen:

To my loving wife,

I know you are surprised to hear from me.

They have computers here, and we are allowed to send emails to loved ones.

I've just checked in.

How are you and the kids?

The place is really nice, but I feel lonely here.

I have made the necessary arrangements for your arrival tomorrow.

Expecting you, darling.

I can't wait to see you.

History lives in quiet moments

The Invisible Lunch Fund

They call it "lunch shaming." I call it cruelty.

For 38 years, I watched it happen from my history classroom -- until one Tuesday, I decided to quietly break the rules.

My name is Arthur Harrison. For nearly four decades, my world was made of cinder block walls, the smell of old books, and the 2.15 pm bell. I taught American History. I spoke about the Great Depression, bread lines, and poverty -- trying to make black-and-white photos feel real to kids who live in colour and constant noise.

But the harshest history lesson I ever saw didn't come from a textbook. It happened in the cafeteria.

One Tuesday, I noticed Marcus -- a quiet sophomore who sat in the back of my third-period class. A good kid, always sketching Civil War soldiers in his notebook. He stood in the lunch line, and I saw the cashier say something to him. His shoulders dropped. Instead of a hot meal,

she handed him a cold cheese sandwich and a small carton of milk -- the "alternative meal." The IOU. The badge of shame.

He walked past his friends, eyes down, and sat alone at a table in the back. He didn't eat. Just stared at the wall. In that moment, he wasn't a student anymore -- he was a statistic. His family's struggles were on display between two slices of white bread.

Something inside me snapped. Decades of watching the system fail these kids finally broke something loose.

The next morning, I went to the main office before classes began. Linda, the cafeteria manager, was sorting receipts.

"Art," she said without looking up, "don't tell me the coffee machine's out again."

"It's fine," I replied, sliding a folded fifty-dollar bill across the counter. "I want to start a fund -- anonymously -- for kids who can't pay. When it happens, just use this. No more cheese sandwiches."

She looked at the bill, then at me. No words. Just a slow, understanding nod. She tucked it into her apron.

From then on, I did it every week. Fifty dollars, sometimes a hundred if my pension check allowed it. I called it 'The Invisible Lunch Fund'. Linda never spoke of it, but sometimes I'd see her hand a hot



meal to a student who couldn't afford one. Across the cafeteria, she'd catch my eye and give a small nod. Our silent agreement.

That went on for a year -- my quiet rebellion.

Then one afternoon, Sarah, one of my top AP History students, stayed behind after class.

"Mr Harrison?" she said softly, gripping her backpack strap. "It's not about homework."

"Go ahead," I said.

"I know about the lunch money," she whispered. "My mom works in the office. She sees Linda's books. There's a line

marked 'Donation.' I know it's you."

My heart sank. I expected trouble -- maybe even disciplinary action.

But Sarah's eyes weren't accusing. They were shining. "We want to help," she said.

The next Monday, my AP class held a bake sale in the main hallway. Their sign read:

"BAKE SALE FOR BENEDICT ARNOLDS -- because letting your friends go hungry is treason."

By lunchtime, a shoebox sat on my desk, overflowing with bills and coins -- over four hundred dollars. The administration saw it but said nothing.

Now I'm retiring. 'The Invisible Lunch Fund' is still alive -- now just The Fund -- completely run by the students. They've made it their own act of kindness.

For 38 years, I taught that history is shaped by big speeches and famous battles. I was wrong.

History lives in quiet moments -- in the simple acts of grace that go unseen. It's written not in textbooks, but on a lunch receipt when someone decides no child should be shamed for being hungry.

That's the America I believe in.

That's the lesson it took me a lifetime to learn.

Inspiration Quiet Love

Love is not always about fireworks or grand gestures. Often, it is found in the smallest and quietest moments. It is in the way someone notices your silence and understands it without a word. It is in the way their presence feels like a safe

place you can return to, no matter how heavy life becomes.

Real love is not about being perfect. It is about being seen -- seen in your flaws, doubts, and chaos -- and still being cherished. Love is the gentle reminder that you are not alone, and that even in your most fragile state, someone chooses you.

Chamod Senevirathne

10 Lessons for Mastering Volatility

The world is in the most difficult and dangerous time in the past 100 years. Here are 10 lessons to help you lead and serve brilliantly amidst the chaos.

1. Dark times are when real leaders emerge. Keep asking, "How can I use the mess to create more value for others?"

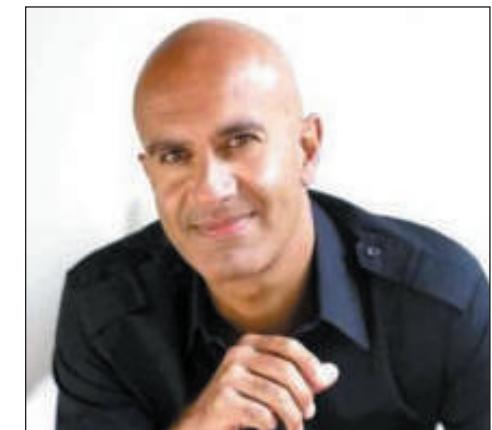
2. When in fear, don't blame or complain. Look within and observe your fear. Befriend it and work with it to release it. Meditation and journaling will help you here. As you process through the fear, it will dissolve, leaving you forever stronger. In this way, all the uncertainty of this era becomes a tool for your rise.

3. As the majority grows more scared, become more kind.

4. Suffering is a giant source of creativity. Don't stay stuck. Exploit this time to innovate. Question your winning for mula and venture into the blue oceans of striking possibility.

5. Protect your energy. Watch the news, but don't become obsessed with it. Gather information to help you navigate the storms and analyze data to help you predict the future. Yet don't allow it to bring you down. People count on you.

6. Keep perspective. Society moves through cycles. Breakthroughs require breakdowns. This geopolitical and economic danger has happened before -- many times. I don't like the way so many pundits call all of this "unprecedented." It's not only boring, but it's happened before,



and we all got through it.

7. Stay optimistic. Better days are definitely ahead. I must always be honest with you: I think we'll be in this mess for a while. That being said, know and trust that fantastic times will come. The dark will pass. The light will appear, and it will be bright.

8. Get even fitter. Work on your thinking. Nurture your emotional life. Run, bike, or walk. Put your feet on some grass or in some soil. Help someone in need. Rest. Stay healthy.

9. Read for an hour each evening. Study history to understand the future. Listen to smart podcasts and consume audiobooks while you bike, walk, and do your grocery shopping.

10. Push more magic into the marketplace. Even in economic depressions, fortunes are made. Upgrade your dedication to mastering your craft. Cause people to live better, and you'll do better, even when your competitors are falling.

Robin Sharma

Life Lessons & Personal Growth

I Kept Smiling

Once upon a time, I was told I would never amount to anything...

I kept smiling.

I was hurt physically and emotionally by people I was in relationships with over the years.

But I kept smiling.

I was done wrong, and when I walked away, people made up stories about me because they thought, "If they couldn't have you, then nobody else could either."

But I kept smiling.

I was homeless and lived in my old beat-up car for six months, surviving on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

But I kept smiling.

I was kicked while I was down, and people got angry every time I picked myself back up and pushed forward in life.



Time and time again... I kept smiling.

I just want to say...

Thank you to everyone who loved me when all I had to offer was my heart.

Cody Bret

Silent Saboteurs: Habits That Can Wreck Your Love Life

Maintaining a vibrant and satisfying love life often comes down to more than just emotional connection; it's heavily influenced by your daily routines and physical well-being. According to health and relationship experts, several common habits can quietly damage your libido, dampen performance, and undermine intimacy.

Diet and Physical Health

Your eating habits and overall physical state have a profound effect on your sexual health.

- Bingeing on Bad Foods:** Consuming large amounts of refined carbs, sugars, and unhealthy fats from junk food slows blood flow throughout the body, which can negatively impact sexual performance and desire. Swapping chips and fried foods for fruits, vegetables, and lean plant proteins like nuts and beans provides the clean fuel needed for energy, both inside and outside the bedroom.
- Too Much Salt:** A diet high in sodium can contribute to high blood pressure, which is a known libido killer. It's wise to skip highly processed and prepackaged foods and instead flavor your meals with fresh herbs and spices.
- Neglecting Your Waistline:** For men, excess weight -- especially a waistline over 40 inches -- is closely linked to issues like erectile dysfunction. Even modest weight loss can lead to improved sexual function.
- Lighting Up (Smoking):** Smoking severely harms blood flow, which is crucial for sexual response, and directly reduces desire. Quitting is a major boost to both your overall health and your sex life.



- Excessive Drinking:** While one drink might help you relax, overdoing alcohol can sink performance, particularly for men. It's best to stick to moderate consumption: up to one drink a day for women and two for men.

Stress, Sleep, and Self-Care

Unmanaged stress and poor self-care drain the physical and mental energy needed for intimacy.

- Chronic Stress:** Constant stress floods the body with hormones that are toxic to sexual desire. It's important to identify your personal triggers and actively seek out stress relief through activities like yoga, a walk in the park, or enjoying a good comedy.
- Skipping Sleep:** A lack of restful sleep saps both energy and desire. Numerous studies have established a direct link between getting more high-quality sleep and having a more frequent and satisfying sex life.
- Negative Body Talk:** Speaking negatively about your body erodes confidence and libido. Shifting

your focus to what you genuinely like about yourself, practicing self-care, and surrounding yourself with supportive people are essential steps to boosting self-worth and embracing intimacy.

Relationship and Intimacy Habits

The way you approach communication and time management can create distance or deepen your bond.

- Being Too Busy:** When life and work schedules are packed, intimacy is often the first thing to be dropped. To keep the bond and passion alive, you shouldn't let this happen. **Planning intimacy** -- even scheduling time for connection -- can actually strengthen your relationship.
- Sticking to the Same Routine:** Predictability is the enemy of excitement in the bedroom. To break out of a rut, it's beneficial to experiment with new positions, times of day, or different settings. Incorporating toys or a sensual massage can also spice things up.
- Skipping Foreplay:** Research confirms that greater stimulation leads to better, more satisfying love life sex. Foreplay is an excellent ways to extend the moment and boost mutual satisfaction.
- Not Speaking Up:** Bottling up frustrations, needs, or desires creates distance and hurts your connection. It's vital to share openly and honestly what's on your mind. Use "I" statements to express what you want or need without placing blame on your partner.

By mindfully adjusting these common habits, you can overcome many of the silent barriers that may be keeping you from a fulfilling and passionate love life.

Appearance Matters

Men's Skincare: 7 Myths You Need to Stop Believing Now

The quest for looking fabulous is not just the domain of women -- both genders deserve to look and feel their best. In the world of effective skincare and aesthetic treatments, it can be difficult to tell the difference between the myths and the facts. But fret not.

New York-based celebrity dermatologist Kiran Lohia and Ankit Khurana, CEO and Founder of BeYouPlus, an aesthetic app, share some pervasive beauty myths related specifically to men. It's time to set the record straight and upgrade your routine.

Myth 1: Chest shaving is the best way to get a bare look.

Reality: A bare chest is absolutely a personal choice, but shaving is a big no. It often gives you rashes, causes uncomfortable ingrown hairs, and encourages the hair to grow back faster and coarser. For a smoother, longer-lasting result, consider waxing or laser hair removal.

Myth 2: Aesthetic treatments are just a girl's thing.

Reality: You are mistaken! From non-surgical treatments like injectables to surgical procedures like facelifts and blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery), there's been a huge boom in the number of men choosing to pursue aesthetic enhance-

ments to look rejuvenated and competitive.

Myth 3: Men don't need to moisturize their skin; it's oily anyway.

Reality: This is a wrong and harmful notion. Without adequate hydration, your skin will overcompensate for the dryness by producing more oil, leading to clogged pores and breakouts. Look for serums, gels, and liquids instead of heavy, greasy ointments or thick creams to provide essential hydration without the shine.

Myth 4: Body soap is the best way to wash your face.

Reality: Stop drying out your skin! Body soap is formulated to be harsh enough for tougher body skin, making it too aggressive for your delicate facial skin. Using it on your face makes it drier, more irritated, and more likely to get allergies, infections, and even acne and zits. Always use a dedicated, gentle facial cleanser.

Myth 5: Men don't need shaving gel or cream to shave.

Reality: Dry shaves are not the way to go. Shaving without lubrication causes the skin to be dry, rough, and highly irritable, leading to razor burn and nicks. The best option? Use a gentle cleansing lotion or dedicated shave cream, apply it to the



area, and then shave with a sharp, clean blade.

Myth 6: Men need to wash their face three to four times a day to get rid of greasiness.

Reality: When you overwash your face, you strip it of its natural oils, signaling the oil glands to panic and produce even more oil than before. This creates a vicious cycle of excessive oil production. Never wash your face more than two to three times a day using a pH-balanced cleanser.

Myth 7: Men don't need sunblock

when indoors.

Reality: Sun damage is a 24/7 process. Even when you are sitting inside, UVB and UVA rays penetrate windows, working on your skin and causing long-term and short-term damages, including premature aging and skin cancer risk. Wear at least two tablespoons of broad-spectrum sunblock every single day, whether you're indoors or outdoors.

By adopting these simple, fact-based changes, men can move past outdated beauty myths and confidently achieve healthier, clearer, and more vibrant skin.

BollyByte**Bollywood's 'Dream Girl' Turns 77**

Bollywood's "Dream Girl" Hema Malini turns 77, marking over five decades of unmatched grace, talent, and stardom. From her iconic roles on screen to her contributions as a dancer, director, and politician, Hema Malini continues to inspire generations with her elegance and strength. In fact, few stars have defined grace, strength, and timeless beauty quite like Hema Malini. From her radiant screen presence to her powerful performances, these films capture the journey of a woman who became an icon for generations.

Dream Girl (1977)



It's all in the title. In addition to solidifying Hema Malini's reputation, this movie demonstrated her versatility by show-

casing her ability to play several disguises with grace and ease. She personified the dream and reality of being India's ultimate "Dream Girl" with her radiant presence, effortless charm, and deep emotional core.

Seeta Aur Geeta (1972)



Hema's portrayal of the shy Seeta and the feisty Geeta was a turning point in her career. This was one of Bollywood's most famous double-role performances because of her comic timing, intensity, and depth, which demonstrated that she was a powerful performer in addition to being a stunning face.

Sholay (1975)

Hema Malini made cinematic history as the vibrant Basanti. She became one of the most adored heroines in Indian cinema thanks to her lively energy and humorous dialogue delivery ("Basanti, in

kutton ke saamne mat nachna"). She shined brightly despite a strong cast, leaving Basanti unforgettable.

Satte Pe Satta (1982)

Hema brought warmth and quiet authority to the role of Indu, the caring but firm woman who turns a household of seven rowdy brothers around. Her chemistry with Amitabh Bachchan is still one of Bollywood's most enduring alliances, and the movie expertly struck a balance between heart, romance, and humour.

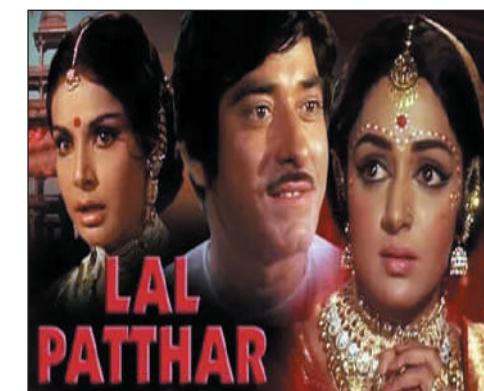
Meera (1979)



Hema demonstrated her range as an actress in Meera by playing the renowned saint-poetess with emotional integrity and spiritual serenity. Her performance, enhanced by the melancholic music of Ravindra Jain, demons-

trated that she was more than just a glamorous celebrity but also a performer with the capacity for deep reflection.

Lal Patthar (1971)



Lal Patthar demonstrated Hema's ability to portray strength and vulnerability with equal grace in a role that was intense and complex, pushing her beyond the traditional heroine stereotype. She became a serious actress and received critical acclaim for her nuanced performance opposite Raj Kumar.

Baghban (2003)

Hema maintained her elegance and depth of feeling decades after her debut. She and Amitabh Bachchan represented dignity, love, and tenacity in the role of Pooja Malhotra. Her appeal cut across generations, as the movie confirmed.

**How Dimple Kapadia bridged the gap between Sunny Deol and Hema Malini**

Hema Malini and Sunny Deol first spoke at length about a decade after her marriage to his father, Dharmendra, with actress Dimple Kapadia serving as the unexpected bridge between them. The conversation took place on the set of Hema Malini's 1992 directorial debut, *Dil Aashna Hai*.

The Unexpected Meeting on Set

Hema Malini, who married Dharmendra in 1980, revealed in her biography, *Hema Malini: Beyond the Dream Girl*, that her initial interactions with Dharmendra's children from his first marriage were limited. The situation changed due to a stunt sequence in her film, *Dil Aashna Hai*.

1. Dimple Kapadia's Role: Hema Malini was close friends with Dimple Kapadia and had cast her in a pivotal role alongside Shah Rukh Khan and Divya Bharti.

2. The Safety Concern: A scene required Dimple Kapadia to perform a risky shot involving an airplane and paragliding. Dimple was very scared, especially since the pilot for the sequence had recently been in an accident.

3. Sunny Deol's Intervention: Concerned for her safety, Dimple called Sunny Deol to the shoot for support. Sunny, who also had a close association with Dimple, came to the set.

4. The Conversation: Sunny Deol approached Hema Malini to ensure Dimple's well-being. Hema recalled, "I assured Sunny that she would be safe, and that's when I started talking to him." This marked their first significant conversation almost ten years after Hema's marriage to Dharmendra.

Current Relationship Status

Despite the famously complicated family dynamic, Hema Malini and her daughters (Esha and Ahana Deol) have maintained a respectful relationship with Sunny and Bobby Deol, often describing it as one that does not require public display.

• During the Accident: When Hema Malini suffered a car accident in 2015, she shared that Sunny Deol was the first person to visit her and ensured she received the best medical care. "Whenever it is necessary he (Sunny) is always there, along with Dharamji," she stated.

• Family Bond: Hema's daughter, Esha Deol, confirmed their quiet bond in the same biography, saying, "I don't need to tell the world about the relationship between myself and my half-brothers. I know the world talks about our relationships in different ways. But the Deol family members do not want to show off their relationships."

While the siblings are occasionally photographed together in public, the family maintains privacy regarding their personal equation.

Dua's Debut: Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh Share First Family Photos

After over a year of carefully guarding their daughter's privacy, Bollywood power couple Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh finally shared the first glimpse of their child, Dua Padukone Singh, in a series of adorable family photos posted on Instagram for Diwali.

The couple, who welcomed Dua on September 8, 2024, had maintained a deliberate shield around her, choosing not to share any images on social media until this week. The adorable pictures show baby Dua twinning with her mother, resting comfortably in her parents' arms, with the simple, celebratory caption: "Happy Diwali." The post was instantly met with an outpouring of love and well wishes from fans and industry peers, including actors like Rajkummar Rao and Neha Dhupia.

The photos offer a rare public insight into the family life of the private couple. Deepika has previously shared details about her journey into motherhood, including the care taken in choosing her daughter's name. In a chat with *Marie Claire*, she revealed that the couple took two months to decide on the name, waiting to hold the baby and "allow her personality to start developing a little bit" first. The name, Dua (meaning 'prayer' or 'blessing'), came to her late one night and "felt like a beautiful summary of what she means to us."

Ranveer Singh also confirmed the significant shift in their priorities since Dua's arrival, sharing that "Everything in Deepika's life now revolves around Dua. Everything else comes secondary, sometimes even her own health." The decision to share Dua's image during the festival of lights has delighted fans, offering a precious moment of connection with one of Bollywood's most beloved families.



Vendredi 24 octobre - 20.15

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner



Samedi 25 octobre - 20.15



Dimanche 26 octobre - 20.45



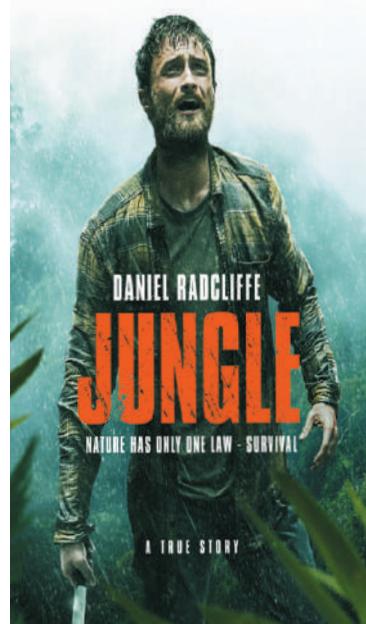
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Mardi 28 octobre - 20.10



Mercredi 29 octobre - 21.40



Mercredi 29 octobre - 15.00



Programme TV

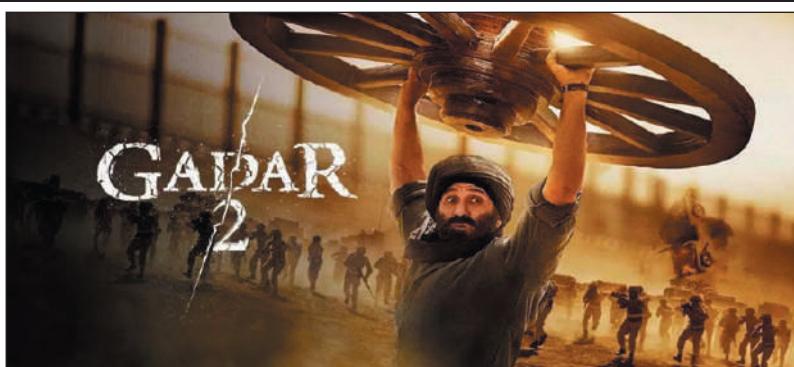


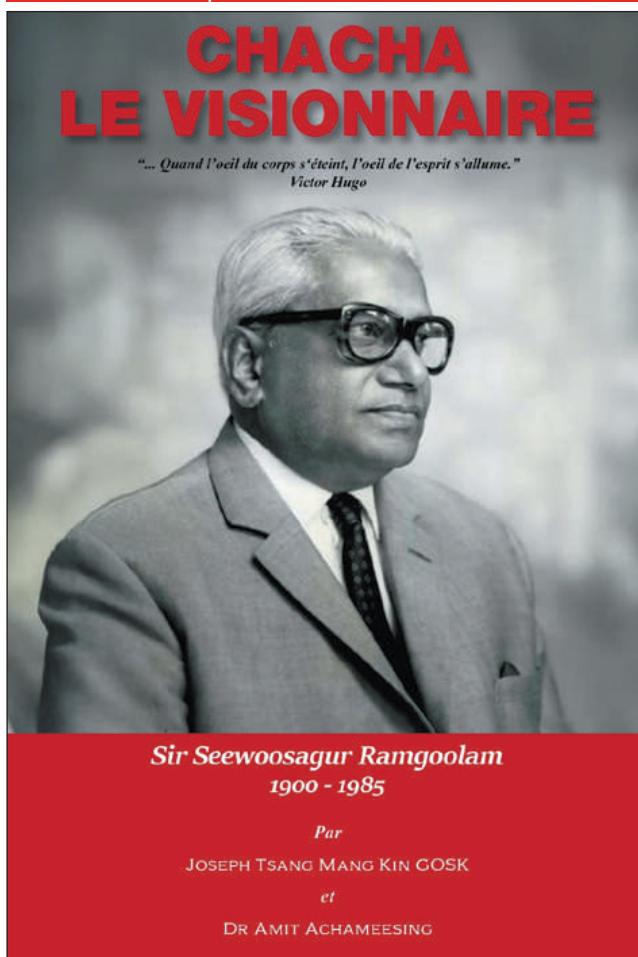
	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
mardi 28 octobre	04.01 Tele: Seref Meselesi 06.01 Serial: Passion And Power 08.36 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 09.30 Film: Guess Who's Coming To Dinner 11.30 Tele: Lying Heart 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie 13.15 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent 13.45 Tele: La Desalmada 14.15 Tele: Quantico 15.30 Film: In Full Bloom 17.30 Tele: Lying Heart 18.00 Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.55 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi 19.30 Le Journal 20.10 Film: Jungle 22.09 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie 22.59 Tele: Lying Heart 23.30 Le Journal	09.10 Local: Proze Dime 09.35 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante 10.30 Local: Mangeons Veg 10.56 Local: Business Connect 12.03 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin 13.25 La Journee Sous Le Regard 14.15 Local: Rencontre 15.29 Local: Point Culture 16.01 Local: Proze Dime 17.10 Local: Le Mag 18.00 Tele: La Desalmada 18.30 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 19.25 Local: Itinerer Rodrig 19.45 Local: Son Ladan Mem 20.00 Local: Anou Kombat Ladrog 20.30 Local: Priorite Sante 21.31 Local: Le Mag 22.23 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir... 23.00 Local: Zournal Rediffusion 23.19 Local: Point Culture 23.30 Local: Music Tour 2025	06.59 Mag: Fitness Plus 08.00 Ved Ki Shiksahein 08.26 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 10.00 Serial: Kundali Bhagya 11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 12.01 Film: Hum Intezar Karenge Cast: Mithun Chakraborty, Padmini Kolhapure, Vinod Mehra 12.12 Doc: Top Dive Sites 12.39 Mag: In Good Shape 13.06 Doc: Legacy Of Ancestors 13.58 Doc: Tomorrow Today 14.49 Doc: Japan Video Topics 15.00 D.Anime: Early Learning 15.05 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 15.45 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 16.02 D.Anime: Miraculous 16.24 D.Anime: Earth To Luna! 16.46 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 17.14 Serial: Penny Sur M.A.R.S. 18.00 Mag: REV 18.45 Mag: Transforming Business 19.00 Student Support Programme 20.01 Tele: L'Heritiere 20.50 Doc: Legacy Of Ancestors	07.00 Doc: Top Dive Sites 08.41 Mag: Tomorrow Today 09.11 Doc: Forging Into The Future 11.15 Mag: Eco Africa 12.12 Doc: Top Dive Sites 12.39 Mag: In Good Shape 13.06 Doc: Legacy Of Ancestors 13.58 Doc: Tomorrow Today 14.49 Doc: Japan Video Topics 15.00 D.Anime: Early Learning 15.05 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 15.45 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 16.02 D.Anime: Miraculous 16.24 D.Anime: Earth To Luna! 16.46 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 17.14 Serial: Penny Sur M.A.R.S. 18.00 Mag: REV 18.45 Mag: Transforming Business 19.00 Student Support Programme 20.01 Tele: L'Heritiere 20.50 Doc: Legacy Of Ancestors	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.55 Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 15.25 Film: Lawaaris Starring: Akshaye Khanna, Manisha Koirala, Jackie Shroff 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.03 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dil Ko Tumse Pyaar Hua 20.06 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho 20.29 Shrimad Ramayan 21.07 Anupama 21.29 Mere Sai 22.04 Dhruv Tara 22.34 Wagle Ki Duniya 23.04 Mahabharat 23.30 Film: Lawaaris Starring: Akshaye Khanna, Manisha Koirala, Jackie Shroff
mercredi 29 octobre	07.06 Serial: Columbo 08.09 Tele: L'Heritiere 08.31 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 09.30 Film: Jungle 11.33 Tele: Lying Heart 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie 13.15 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 13.40 Tele: La Desalmada 14.01 Serial: Nelle Tue Mani 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.25 Film: Mes Autres Vies De Chien 17.30 Tele: Lying Heart 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.55 Live: Grand Titre 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.10 Serial: Nelle Tue Mani 21.00 Serial: Chucky 21.47 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie 22.36 Tele: Lying Heart	09.40 Local: Le Mag 10.30 Rodrig Prog: Plat Du Chef 10.44 Rodrig Prog: Saver Lokal 12.01 Local: Couleur Marine 12.31 Local: Itinerer Rodrig 13.05 La Journee Sous Le Regard 14.30 Local: Nu Rasinn 16.05 Local: Glwar Dantan 16.54 La Journee Sous Le Regard 17.03 Local: Music Tour 2025 18.00 Tele: La Desalmada 18.30 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 19.30 Rodrig Spor 20.00 Local: Saver kiltirel 20.45 Local: Toc Toc Doc 21.00 Local: Agir Ensemble 21.30 Local: Les Klips 22.33 Local: Grand Titre 22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard Du Seigneur	06.59 Mag: Originals 08.26 Local: Prakriti 09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 10.00 Serial: Dharam Patni 11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 12.00 Film: Kabeela 15.05 Live: Samachar 15.21 Sayings Radha Krishna 15.21 Radha Mohan 16.04 Local: Aaj Ki Charcha 16.35 Radha Mohan 17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Local: Yatra 21.00 Film: Khatailal Mithailal Cast: Vinay Anand, Monalisa, Sushil Singh, Brijesh Tripathi 23.30 Serial: Mere Sai 00.20 Wagle Ki Duniya	08.48 Doc: Les Poissons, Pas Si... 09.45 Mag: Euromaxx 10.37 Doc: Little Britain In The... 11.59 Mag: Made In Germany 12.33 Mag: Global US 13.55 Mag: Business Africa 14.47 Japan Video Topics 15.00 D.Anime: Early Learning 15.03 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 15.27 D.Anime: Giving Tales 15.36 Messy Goes To Okido 15.47 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 16.53 Serial: The Avatars 17.09 Serial: Penny Sur M.A.R.S. 17.41 Mag: Unseen 18.00 Mag: Afrimaxx 18.30 Mag: Choices 18.45 Mag: Planet A 19.00 Student Support Programme 19.30 Doc: Ageless Gardens 20.01 Tele: L'Heritiere 21.00 Film: Transcendence	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.50 Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 15.30 Film: Four Two Ka one Starring: Jimmy Shergill, Nikita Anand, Kurush Deboo, Dinesh Hingoo 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Kundali Bhagya 19.02 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dil Ko Tumse Pyaar Hua 20.00 Na umra Ki Seema Ho 20.31 Shrimad Ramayan 21.00 Anupamaa 21.28 Mere Sai 22.05 Dhruv Tara 22.30 Mahabharat 22.51 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.58 Film: Four Two Ka one Starring: Jimmy Shergill, Nikita Anand, Kurush Deboo, Dinesh Hingoo
jeudi 30 octobre	06.01 Tele: Passion And Power 08.16 Serial: L'Heritiere 08.41 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 09.35 Film: What Dreams May Come 11.33 Tele: Lying Heart 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie 13.20 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 13.39 Tele: La Desalmada 14.10 Serial: Les Têtes Brûlées 15.25 Film: Transcendence 17.18 Tele: Lying Heart 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 19.00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu 19.30 Le Journal 20.10 Film: Gadar 2 Stars: Sunny Deol, Ameesha Patel 22.57 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie 00.17 Tele: Lying Heart	09.10 Local: Urgence De Tout 09.25 Fashion FX & Lifestyle 10.54 Local: Les Klips 11.46 Local: Grand Titre 12.06 Local: Passerelles 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard 14.00 Local: Toc Toc Toc 15.29 Local: Saveurs Plus 16.01 Fashion FX & Lifestyle 17.02 Local: Le Mag 18.00 Tele: La Desalmada 18.30 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 19.30 Rodrig: Komanter 20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.30 Local: Education 21.31 Local: Le Mag 23.03 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.00 Local: Zournal Rediffusion 23.28 Local: Son Ladan Mem 23.46 Local: Nou Later Nou Lamer Nou Rises	07.00 Mag: Tarane Purane 08.00 Local: Yatra 09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 10.00 Serial: Radha Mohan 12.00 Film: Tawaif Cast: Rishi Kapoor, Ashok Kumar, Rati Agnihotri 15.30 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile... 16.30 Aaj Ki Charcha 17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Local: Amrit Vani 18.43 Local: Bhajan Sandhya 21.21 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.42 Serial: Mere Sai 22.31 Wagle Ki Duniya 22.53 Local: Amrit Vani 23.05 Bhajan Sandhya 23.23 Finals Aradhna Ramayan Chanting Competition	07.00 Mag: Arts Unveiled 08.35 Mag: Close Up 09.31 Doc: So Long, Superstores? 11.06 Mag: Afrimaxx 12.04 Mag: Arts Unveiled 12.22 Doc: Ageless Gardens 12.49 Doc: Legacy Of Ancestors 13.36 Mag: Close Up 14.32 Breaking The Silence Over... 15.00 D.Anime: Early Learning 15.05 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 15.40 Messy Goes To Okido 15.58 D.Anime: Miraculous 16.20 Film: Gol Go! Cory Carson 16.41 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 17.09 Serial: Penny Sur M.A.R.S. 18.00 Mag: Eco India 18.45 Mag: Mapped Out 19.00 Student Support Programme 20.01 Tele: L'Heritiere 20.55 Serial: Columbo	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.00 Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 15.31 Film: Chintuji Stars: Rishi Kapoor, Priyanshu Chatterjee, Kulraj Randhawa 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Udaariyaan 19.30 Dil Ko Tumse Pyaar Hua 20.00 Na umra Ki Seema Ho 20.30 Shrimad Ramayan 21.02 Anupamaa 21.34 Mere Sai 22.01 Dhruv Tara 22.29 Wagle Ki Duniya 23.05 Serial: Mahabharat 23.31 Film: Chintuji Stars: Rishi Kapoor, Priyanshu Chatterjee, Kulraj Randhawa

Jeudi 30 octobre - 15.30 Stars: Rishi Kapoor, Priyanshu Chatterjee, Kulraj Randhawa



Jeudi 30 octobre - 20.10 Stars: Sunny Deol, Ameesha Patel





Published on 18 September 2025, to mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (SSR), the latest book "Chacha Le Visionnaire" stands as a major historical and intellectual achievement. Co-authored by Joseph Tsang Mang Kin and Dr Amit Achameesing, this comprehensive 476-page volume is far more than a mere biography. It is a profound national chronicle, an illustrated journey through the struggles, ideas, and accomplishments that fundamentally shaped modern Mauritius.

Combining narrative depth, rigorous local and international historical context, and rich photographic depiction, the book illuminates the extraordinary transformation of a poor island colony — marked by the deep scars of slavery, indentured labour and intense social division — into a thriving democracy and an emerging economy. This transition, the authors argue, was largely engineered through the vision, perseverance, and profound humanism of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, affectionately known to generations as "Chacha".

The Historical Canvas: From Colony to Consciousness

Structured in four parts and concluding with a powerful epilogue, "Chacha Le Visionnaire" retraces over two centuries of Mauritian history. The first part sets the essential historical foundation: the island's development under French rule (1721-1810) as a plantation colony built upon slavery and a rigid racial hierarchy. Even following the British abolition of slavery in 1835, social and economic inequalities persisted. The island's diverse population, comprising freed slaves, indentured labourers, and settlers, was held under rigid divisions that significantly delayed the emergence of a common Mauritian identity.

A new consciousness began to take shape after 1885, notably encouraged by Governor Sir John Pope Hennessy, who championed the idea that "Mauritius belongs to all Mauritians." This seed of nationalism led to the formation of pioneering movements, including the Action Libérale (1907), the National Trade Union of Mauritius (1921), and eventually the Mauritius Labour Party in 1936.

The Architect's Formative Years

Seewoosagur Ramgoolam's journey began humbly, born

'Chacha Le Visionnaire'

The Struggle and The Triumph: A Historical Portrait of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam
By Joseph Tsang Mang Kin and Dr Amit Achameesing

in Belle Rive on 18 September 1900. His early life was defined by hardship: the death of his father at seven, a debilitating eye injury at twelve, and continuous economic struggle. Yet, his perseverance and merit shone through. Completing his studies, he travelled to England in 1921 to study medicine. His trajectory gives credence to the famous lines of Sir Winston Churchill: "...The twinges of adversity, the spur of slights and taunts in early years, are needed to evoke that ruthless fixity of purpose and tenacious motherwit without which great actions are seldom accomplished."

London opened a new world for Ramgoolam. Despite financial difficulty, he immersed himself in the pivotal debates of the Indian National Congress. Influenced by towering figures such as Gandhi, Nehru, Tagore, and Subhas Chandra Bose, as well as members of the Fabian Society, Ramgoolam absorbed a potent blend of humanism, nationalism, and democratic socialism. These formative years forged his unwavering conviction that education, social justice, and moral leadership were the indispensable pillars of nation-building.

The second part of the book details Dr Ramgoolam's return to Mauritius in 1935. Opening a modest medical practice, he quickly emerged as the powerful voice of the poor and disenfranchised. His seminal essay for the centennial celebrations of the arrival of Indian immigrants, titled "Sons of Immigrants," articulated his core belief that every citizen bore a fundamental duty to serve, educate, and uplift the nation.

The Path to Nationhood and The Welfare State

Nominated to the Legislative Council in 1940, Ramgoolam commenced a decades-long campaign for a new constitution and universal suffrage. According to the authors of the book, it's through tenacious perseverance that he secured successive constitutional reforms, most notably the pivotal 1947 Constitution, which extended the vote to the vast majority of Mauritians. His newspaper, *Advance*, which he co-founded with Jaynarain Roy, became the rallying voice for the burgeoning labour movement.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Ramgoolam led the Mauritian delegations to several crucial constitutional conferences in London, securing progressive self-governance and, finally, independence on 12 March 1968. Crucially, his inclusive leadership — focused on building bridges across ethnic and religious communities — ensured that the challenging road to independence remained relatively peaceful and democratic, despite instances of communal riots.

Parallel to political reform, Ramgoolam laid the essential foundation for the Mauritian Welfare State, introducing universal old-age pensions and family allowances. Recognizing that true independence demanded economic sovereignty, he sought the counsel of distinguished economists, notably James Meade and Richard Titmuss. They proposed a model for development founded on population control, industrial diversification, and a massive investment in human capital. He also ensured the development of the nation's infrastructure — roads, water, electricity, and telecommunications — and founded numerous institutions, many even before independence.

The First Economic Miracle and the Perfect Storm

The third part of the book chronicles the achievements from 1968 to 1976. At the dawn of independence, Mauritius was widely dismissed as an economic "dead end," a view shared even by Nobel laureate James Meade. Over 95% of its exports came solely from sugar, unemployment exceeded 20%, and the island was heavily dependent on British aid. According to Tsang Mang Kin and Achameesing,

Ramgoolam's pragmatic vision and moral authority transformed this national despair into opportunity.

Understanding that political stability and economic modernisation were intrinsically linked, his historic coalition with Gaëtan Duval and the PMSD in 1969 secured vital unity. The same year, his meeting with General Charles de Gaulle was instrumental in opening preferential sugar access to the European Economic Community, guaranteeing critical export revenue.

A true turning point came with the launch of the First Five-Year Development Plan (1971-1975). The establishment of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in December 1970, which offered tax incentives and duty exemptions, attracted significant local and foreign investment in textiles, electronics, and light manufacturing. Simultaneously, his government cultivated tourism as a new growth engine through strategic partnerships with Air France and Club Med.

Within four years, the results were spectacular: EPZ exports and tourist arrivals quadrupled, employment rose by over 50,000, and GDP growth averaged a stunning 9% per annum. This phenomenal performance, achieved in a small island with limited natural resources, constitutes the First Mauritian Economic Miracle. It successfully integrated a model of balanced development — combining export-led industrialization, tourism, agriculture, social welfare, and basic infrastructure — all within a robust democratic framework.

The final and most turbulent period of his leadership, traced from 1977 to 1982 in the fourth part of the book, saw Ramgoolam confront a severe political and economic storm. Following a global downturn likened by *The Economist* to the Great Depression, Mauritius was forced into an IMF structural adjustment program in 1979. Local investments stagnated, foreign investors retreated, and the once-thriving EPZ collapsed, with its investment growth falling dramatically. The global OPEC crises (1973, 1979) caused oil prices to soar, crippling the emerging tourism sector. Meanwhile, domestic pressures, spurred by the Sedgwick (1973) and Chesworth (1977) reports, led to salary hikes that outpaced productivity, undermining competitiveness.

Compounded by devastating cyclones like Gervaise (1975) and Claudette (1979), this confluence of economic stagnation, social spending pressures, and natural disasters was, in retrospect, a perfect storm that culminated in the crushing electoral defeat of 1982.

The Enduring Legacy

The epilogue provides vital historical perspective, showing that the achievements of the succeeding government under Sir Anerood Jugnauth, which led to the Second Economic Miracle of the 1980s, were built directly upon the foundation laid by Ramgoolam. The creation of the Free Zone (EPZ), the guaranteed access to the European Economic Community (EEC) market via the Lomé Convention, and the stable revenues from the Sugar Protocol were all decisive advances. These elements, combined with a flourishing tourism sector consolidated by Gaëtan Duval's determined action, constituted the lasting economic legacy that facilitated the resurgence of growth after 1983.

"Chacha Le Visionnaire" is a vibrant tribute and a historical document that illuminates Ramgoolam's career while putting into perspective the struggles and transformations that forged modern Mauritian identity. Published at a key moment in the collective memory, the book serves as an invitation to reflect on the future of Mauritius in the light of its foundational past.