

MAURITIUS TIMES

• “I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.” – Mother Teresa

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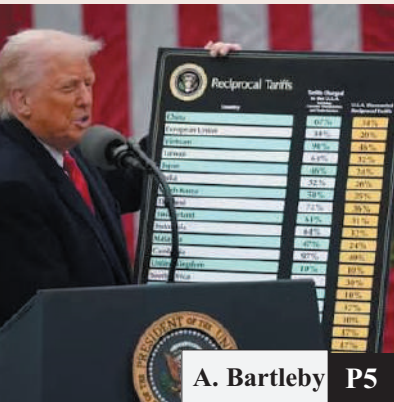
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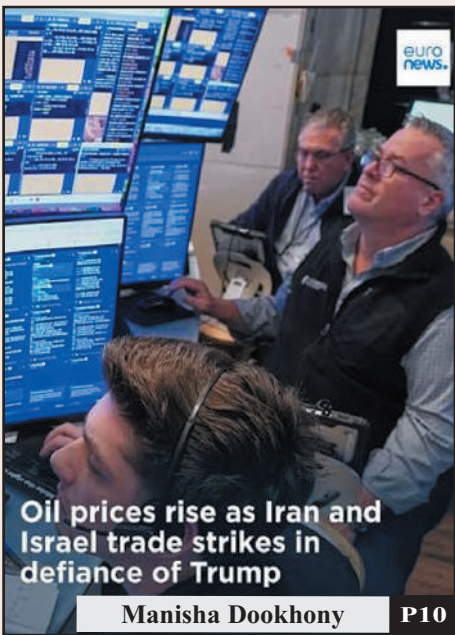


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Chokepoints and Consequences: Mauritius at the Crossroads

The government has less room to manoeuvre than before, and recent crises have highlighted the need to strengthen resilience before the next shock



Oil prices rise as Iran and Israel trade strikes in defiance of Trump

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When junior minister Kugan Parapen, speaking on a private radio station last week, acknowledged that certain electoral promises relating to pensions made by the Alliance du Changement were influenced by the need not to leave political space to the MSM during the election campaign, he triggered a controversy that went far beyond the immediate political reactions.

His remarks have been interpreted by critics as an admission that some promises were made primarily for electoral reasons. The MSM was quick to describe them as a confession that voters had been misled. Supporters of the government, however, have offered a different interpretation. They argue that the statement has been taken out of context and that the real issue is the economic and financial situation inherited after assuming office. According to this view, the full extent of the country's difficulties was not known before taking power, and previous commitments made by the outgoing government had themselves contributed to unrealistic expectations.

But beyond the partisan exchanges lies a much deeper question: Should a politician be condemned for revealing an uncomfortable truth about electoral politics, or should such honesty be welcomed as an opportunity for democratic reflection?

In a political culture where carefully crafted messages, strategic ambiguity and electoral calculations have become common features of modern campaigns, a candid admission about the pressures faced by politicians is unusual. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Kugan Parapen's remarks, his intervention has brought to the surface a reality that many political actors across the world privately acknowledge: elections often reward promises, while governing requires difficult choices.

The controversy therefore provides an opportunity to examine one of the greatest challenges facing modern democracies: the tension between statesmanship and populism, truthfulness and electoral expediency, leadership and followership.

The politics of promises

Democracy requires politicians to listen to citizens. A government that ignores public concerns cannot claim to represent the people. Yet there is a fundamental difference between responding to legitimate social needs and surrendering entirely to every demand expressed during an electoral campaign.

In many democracies, voters have increasingly come to regard certain benefits as acquired rights or unquestionable entitlements. The relationship between citizens and governments has sometimes evolved into one where the electorate expects continuous expansion of benefits, regardless of whether the economy can sustain them. The reactions of Facebookers and other social media platforms, particularly to the current government's pension reform proposals, epitomise this mindset. The expression often used is that the voter says: "I want my biscuits." The immediate demand takes precedence over wider questions: Who will pay for them? Are they sustainable? What will be the consequences for future generations?

The difficulty for politicians is obvious. A leader who explains that resources are limited, that reforms are necessary, or that some popular measures cannot be afforded may be accused of lacking compassion. A rival who promises more generous benefits may appear more attractive, even if those promises are financially questionable.

This is how the cycle of unrealistic expectations begins.

When the tail wags the dog

A healthy democracy requires governments to respond to citizens. But when political leaders become permanently guided by short-term electoral pressures, the relationship is reversed: the tail begins to wag the dog.

The Price of Telling the Truth



Instead of leaders explaining realities and persuading citizens about the best path forward, politicians increasingly become followers of public demands. They adjust their positions according to opinion polls, social media reactions and electoral calculations.

The consequences can be serious. Necessary reforms are postponed because they are politically risky. Pension reform, deferred by successive governments for decades, is a case in point. Public expenditure rises because reducing benefits becomes almost impossible. Governments accumulate debt because future costs are less visible than present rewards.

The problem is not unique to Mauritius. It is a challenge faced by democracies across the world.

Lessons from other countries

Greece's financial crisis illustrated the consequences of years of excessive public spending, generous commitments and insufficient attention to fiscal sustainability. When reality eventually caught up, citizens faced painful adjustments imposed under far more difficult circumstances.

Argentina has repeatedly experienced economic instability after governments adopted policies that were politically attractive in the short term but weakened economic fundamentals over time. Promises of extensive benefits proved difficult to maintain when productivity and public finances could not support them.

Sri Lanka's economic collapse provided another warning. Years of financially unsustainable decisions, including tax reductions without adequate compensation through growth or revenue, contributed to a crisis that severely affected ordinary citizens.

Even wealthy democracies are not immune. Britain experienced major political and financial turmoil after the 2022 "mini-budget", when unfunded tax cuts created doubts about fiscal credibility. France has repeatedly confronted strong public resistance whenever governments attempt pension reforms designed to address demographic realities.

These examples demonstrate a common lesson: governments cannot permanently escape economic realities. Eventually, arithmetic catches up with politics.

Political Leadership and Voter Responsibility

History also provides examples of leaders who understood that governing sometimes requires telling citizens difficult truths.

Singapore's leaders, particularly under Lee Kuan Yew, consistently explained to citizens that prosperity required discipline, competitiveness and long-term planning rather than immediate political rewards. New Zealand's economic reforms during the 1980s were deeply controversial and unpopular at the time. Yet they were undertaken because political leaders believed that delaying necessary changes would create greater problems later.

These examples demonstrate an important principle: leadership is not simply about reflecting public opinion. It is also about shaping public understanding and preparing citizens for challenges ahead. A true statesman does not ask only: "What will win the next election?" The more important question is: "What will protect the nation's future?"

However, the problem cannot be placed entirely at the feet of politicians. Democracies ultimately produce the political behaviour that voters reward. If electorates consistently punish politicians who speak honestly about economic constraints while rewarding those who promise immediate benefits, parties will naturally adapt. Electoral competition creates powerful incentives to offer attractive commitments.

Citizens also have a responsibility. Every government benefit has a cost. Every subsidy must eventually be financed through taxation, borrowing, economic growth or reduced spending elsewhere. Public money does not come from nowhere. A mature democracy requires not only honest politicians but also an electorate prepared to accept honest explanations.

Money politics and electoral auctions

The situation becomes even more complicated when money politics enters the equation.

In many countries, elections have increasingly become contests where parties seek support through direct financial benefits, subsidies, tax concessions or other material advantages. Such measures may bring electoral gains, but they can weaken institutions when public resources are used primarily as instruments of political competition.

The danger is that democracy becomes reduced to an auction: the party offering the most attractive immediate rewards wins, while the long-term consequences are left for future governments and future generations to manage.

Beyond the Parapen controversy

The controversy surrounding Kugan Parapen's remarks should therefore not be reduced to a question of whether one politician was right or wrong. The more important issue is what his statement reveals about modern politics.

If an honest acknowledgement of electoral pressures creates such a political storm, perhaps it is because it touches upon something many people already suspect: that *campaigns often involve compromises between conviction and calculation*.

The politician who tells citizens only what they want to hear may win applause today but create disappointment tomorrow. The leader who explains what citizens need to hear may face criticism in the short term but build a stronger foundation for the future.

Ultimately, democracy must decide what kind of leaders it wishes to reward: those who follow every demand of the moment, or those who have the courage to guide society through difficult realities.

When Marriage Does Not Mean Consent

Domestic Abuse, Marital Rape and the Debate for Legal Reform

The new Domestic Abuse Act represents a major shift in Mauritius' approach to addressing domestic violence by recognising that abuse is not limited to physical harm but may also involve emotional, economic, psychological, digital, and coercive control. However, the move from legal reform to meaningful protection raises important questions about enforcement, institutional readiness, evidence requirements, and safeguards against misuse. In this interview, we examine how the new legal framework is expected to operate in practice, the challenges faced by prosecutors and courts in dealing with offences committed in private, and the broader debate surrounding reforms such as the criminalisation of marital rape.

LEX

*** Government says the new Domestic Abuse Act is designed to provide stronger, more victim-centred protection for victims of abuse. In your view, what are the biggest challenges in implementing this new law effectively, and what practical measures are needed to ensure that it delivers meaningful protection for victims while safeguarding due process?**

The successful implementation of the new Domestic Abuse Act in Mauritius will depend on a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach that extends beyond the legislation itself. As the law broadens the definition of abuse to include economic, emotional, digital, and coercive violence, its effective implementation will require comprehensive training for law enforcement officers, greater public awareness, and stronger collaboration among the various agencies responsible for preventing and responding to domestic abuse.

*** Turning to the law itself, how does it distinguish between the ordinary disagreements and tensions that can arise in a marriage or relationship and conduct that amounts to emotional, psychological or economic abuse? How can the law be applied without trivialising genuine cases of domestic abuse?**

The Domestic Abuse Act distinguishes ordinary relationship conflict from abuse by focusing on intent, impact, and power dynamics. Healthy relationships may involve disagreements, occasional arguments, and mutual compromise, with both partners enjoying equal respect and decision-making power. Abuse, by contrast, is characterised by a deliberate and sustained pattern of coercion, control, intimidation, or manipulation designed to dominate, isolate, or subjugate another person.

The Act explicitly states that non-physical abuse must have a "substantial adverse effect" on the victim. It defines economic abuse as conduct that significantly restricts a person's ability to "acquire, use or maintain money" or to "obtain goods or services", thereby undermining their financial independence.

A key feature distinguishing abusive conduct is its purpose and effect: to create fear, dependency, and submission. The perpetrator seeks to manipulate, isolate, intimidate, or humiliate the victim, ultimately stripping them of their

independence, decision-making power, personal autonomy, and liberty.

*** Given that acts like marital rape or psychological abuse typically happen in private without independent witnesses, what standard of proof will the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) require to secure a conviction?**

The ODPP must prove every criminal charge **beyond a reasonable doubt**, in accordance with the constitutional guarantees of a fair trial in Mauritius. As acts of domestic abuse often occur in private and without independent eyewitnesses, the DPP frequently relies on a combination of circumstantial, forensic, digital, documentary, and corroborative evidence to satisfy this high evidential threshold.

To secure a conviction in the absence of independent eyewitnesses, the prosecution may rely on the following forms of evidence:

- **Victim's Testimony:** The sworn testimony of the victim is often the primary evidence in offences committed in private. Under Mauritian law, the testimony of a single credible and reliable witness may, by itself, be sufficient to sustain a conviction, provided the court is satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the evidence is truthful and has withstood rigorous cross-examination.

Evidence that the victim reported the abuse promptly to a third party — such as a family member, friend, healthcare professional, or police officer — may further strengthen the prosecution's case by supporting the victim's credibility and rebutting allegations of fabrication.

Medical evidence, including reports documenting physical injuries, findings from sexual assault examinations, and psychological or psychiatric assessments prepared by qualified medical professionals, may also provide important corroborative evidence of the abuse and its impact on the victim.

- **Corroborating Circumstantial Evidence:** Text messages, emails, voicemails, or social media records exchanged between the parties may be used as corroborating circumstantial evidence. In the absence of physical injury, records demonstrating a pattern of coercive behaviour can substantiate claims of psychological abuse.

- **Expert Testimony:** Psychologists or counsellors may be called to testify about the psychological impact of the abuse or the behavioural patterns commonly exhibited by victims, such as delayed reporting.

“The concern over false allegations in acrimonious disputes is a common argument raised in the debate on the criminalisation of marital rape. While the possibility of misuse exists in any legal system, human rights advocates and legal experts argue that this concern is often overstated and should not undermine the need to protect victims of sexual violence...”



“Human rights and legal equality advocates and international bodies have long called for the removal of any marital rape exception. They argue that marriage does not constitute permanent or unconditional consent, and that non-consensual sexual activity within marriage is a violation of bodily integrity, human dignity, and the fundamental right to personal autonomy, regardless of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim” Pic - DW

Courts evaluate the totality of the circumstances and the overall pattern of conduct, rather than requiring proof of a single, isolated act.

*** Domestic abuse allegations can sometimes arise in the context of acrimonious divorce or child custody disputes. What safeguards does the new law provide to protect individuals against false or malicious allegations, while ensuring that genuine victims receive prompt and effective protection?**

The newly enacted Domestic Abuse Act, together with existing Mauritian law, ensures swift protection for genuine victims through immediate protection and exclusion orders, expedited hearings, and a broader definition of abuse. At the same time, it safeguards against false allegations through mandatory investigations, due process guarantees, and penalties for perjury.

*** Allegations of domestic or sexual abuse often arise alongside divorce proceedings, maintenance claims or child custody disputes before the Family Division of the Supreme Court. How does the new legislation ensure that genuine victims receive timely protection while safeguarding against the risk that abuse allegations may be used strategically in family disputes?**

The new legislation seeks to balance two objectives: providing swift protection to genuine victims of domestic or sexual abuse while safeguarding due process and preventing misuse of abuse allegations in family disputes.

When Marriage Does Not Mean Consent

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The Domestic Abuse Act enables timely intervention through protection and exclusion orders, expedited hearings, and a broader definition of abuse that includes psychological, emotional, economic, digital, and coercive control. However, an allegation alone does not constitute proof of abuse. Courts must carefully assess the evidence, including witness testimony, digital records, medical evidence, and other corroborating material, while ensuring the accused person's right to a fair hearing.

In cases involving divorce, maintenance, or child custody, the courts must also focus on the best interests of the child, distinguishing genuine safety concerns from allegations motivated by conflict or strategic advantage. The success of the law will ultimately depend on effective investigations, judicial scrutiny, and close cooperation among all relevant institutions.

*** Ensuring that police officers, family support bureaux, and specialised medical and social services are properly trained and equipped to handle domestic abuse cases remains an institutional challenge in many countries, including Mauritius. Do you see this as one of the main obstacles to the effective implementation of the new law?**

Mauritius is actively addressing institutional gaps in the response to domestic abuse through collaborative training programmes for first responders and the specialised operations of the Police Family Protection Unit and Family Support Services. The Domestic Abuse Act seeks to further strengthen coordination among the medical, legal, and social support sectors.

The Mauritian Government and its institutional partners have established several mechanisms to enhance victim support and build institutional capacity. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare periodically conducts multi-agency capacity-building programmes, including training for first responders, to help police officers and healthcare professionals identify signs of abuse, respond with sensitivity, and improve referral mechanisms for survivors.

The Police Family Protection Unit, together with regional Family Welfare and Protection Unit offices, provides support services including psychological counselling, legal guidance, and assistance with applications for protection orders before the courts.

*** Government has announced that the Attorney-General's Office is working on amendments to the Criminal Code to recognise femicide and marital rape as specific criminal offences. Historically, under English common law, a husband could not be prosecuted for raping his wife because marriage was deemed to imply permanent consent to sexual relations. Do you consider the criminalisation of marital**



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rape to be a necessary and long-overdue reform?

The criminalisation of marital rape in Mauritius remains a critical and widely debated legal issue. While it is not currently recognised as an explicit criminal offence under the Penal Code, ongoing legal reviews have highlighted the need to address this gap in order to strengthen the protection of women's bodily autonomy and bring the legal framework closer to international human rights standards.

The debate encompasses several perspectives, including human rights and legal equality considerations. Advocates and international bodies, including the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), have long called for the removal of any marital rape exception. They argue that marriage does not constitute permanent or unconditional consent, and that non-consensual sexual activity within marriage is a violation of bodily integrity, human dignity, and the fundamental right to personal autonomy, regardless of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim.

*** One of the main concerns raised by opponents of criminalising marital rape is that false or malicious allegations could be made during acrimonious divorce, child custody or property disputes. How valid is this concern, and what safeguards should the law provide to prevent abuse of the legal process while ensuring that genuine victims are protected?**

The concern over false allegations in acrimonious disputes is a common argument raised in the debate on the criminalisation of marital rape. While the possibility of misuse exists in any legal system, human rights advocates

and legal experts argue that this concern is often overstated and should not undermine the need to protect victims of sexual violence.

Furthermore, studies from jurisdictions where marital rape is criminalised indicate that false allegations of rape are statistically rare compared with the actual, often underreported, incidence of sexual assault.

The risk of malicious allegations exists in relation to many criminal offences, including assault and theft; however, this has not resulted in the decriminalisation of such acts. Legal systems are equipped to distinguish between unfounded claims and cases supported by credible evidence through proper investigation and due process.

*** Marital rape is often one of the most difficult offences to prove because it usually takes place in private, without independent witnesses. Is physical or forensic evidence essential, or can other forms of evidence be sufficient to sustain a prosecution?**

To establish the offence beyond a reasonable doubt, prosecutors and courts rely on a combination of forensic evidence, the victim's credible testimony, corroborating digital and documentary evidence, and, where relevant, testimony from expert witnesses.

In many jurisdictions, in cases of marital rape, the victim's testimony alone may be legally sufficient to support a conviction, provided the court finds it credible and reliable. Prosecutors seek to establish credibility through factors such as consistency in the victim's accounts given to law enforcement officers, medical professionals, or support workers, particularly when reports are made shortly after the incident.

Physical and forensic evidence may also play an important role in demonstrating the absence of consent and the use of force. This may include medical reports documenting injuries consistent with a struggle or non-consensual sexual activity, such as bruising, lacerations, or genital trauma. The presence of biological material, including the husband's DNA or seminal fluid on the victim's body or clothing, may also be considered as part of the overall evidence.

*** What legal sanctions already exist — or should exist — to deter and punish knowingly false or malicious allegations of sexual assault made in the context of acrimonious domestic disputes?**

Existing legal sanctions for knowingly false or malicious allegations of sexual assault may include charges such as perjury, making a false police report, public mischief, or perverting the course of justice. In civil or family court proceedings, individuals who make malicious allegations may also face cost orders, including liability for the accused person's legal expenses, and such conduct may negatively affect their claims relating to child custody or spousal support.

While the law must protect genuine victims from stigma, intimidation, and fear of reporting abuse, maintaining a balance between victim protection and accountability for deliberate misuse remains a widely debated issue. Existing and proposed safeguards to deter false allegations include:

Criminal prosecution: Knowingly providing false information to law enforcement or deliberately making a false statement may constitute a criminal offence in many jurisdictions, carrying penalties such as fines or imprisonment.

Defamation or civil claims: Individuals who are falsely accused may, in certain circumstances, pursue civil remedies, including claims for defamation or malicious prosecution, to seek compensation for damage to their reputation, personal life, or livelihood.

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La forteresse tarifaire de Washington: entre délire impérial et roulette russe commerciale

Par A. Bartleby

Depuis le retour de Donald Trump au pouvoir, la politique commerciale des États-Unis s'est transformée en un champ de bataille permanent, structuré par l'arme douanière. L'escalade protectionniste, qui a débuté dès les premiers mois de son mandat, a connu un nouveau soubresaut avec l'entrée en vigueur, ce 24 juillet, d'une série de taxes de 10 % à 12,5 % ciblant pas moins de 60 partenaires commerciaux.

Officiellement justifiée par la lutte contre le travail forcé, cette mesure remplace un précédent dispositif global fragilisé par la justice américaine. Au-delà du prétexte humanitaire, elle illustre la pérennisation d'une doctrine: ériger le protectionnisme en pivot de la puissance économique américaine. Mais, à l'épreuve du temps, ces politiques ont-elles réellement permis à Washington d'atteindre ses objectifs initiaux?

Pour répondre à cette question, il convient de revisiter la genèse de cette stratégie. Dès sa première administration, les droits de douane massifs imposés sur l'acier, l'aluminium et des centaines de milliards de dollars de produits chinois étaient présentés comme la potion magique permettant de ressusciter l'industrie manufacturière américaine, réduire drastiquement le déficit commercial et forcer les rivaux géopolitiques à plier.

Or, le bilan dressé par les économistes au fil des ans nuance considérablement ces promesses. Si les taxes ont ponctuellement généré des recettes fiscales non négligeables pour le Trésor américain, elles n'ont pas enrayer le déficit commercial global de la superpuissance. Au contraire, les chaînes d'approvisionnement mondiales se sont simplement contournées, les importations transitant par des pays tiers, tandis que les consommateurs américains ont majoritairement absorbé la facture sous forme d'une hausse des prix.

Face aux obstacles juridiques intérieurs — notamment les camouflets infligés par la Cour suprême au début de l'année 2026 qui ont invalidé une partie de ses décrets —, la Maison-Blanche a dû faire preuve d'ingéniosité procédurale. En s'appuyant cette fois sur des dispositions spécifiques du droit commercial, comme l'utilisation de l'article 301 de la loi sur le commerce de 1974 pour cibler prétendument le travail forcé, l'administration démontre sa volonté farouche de maintenir la pression. Cette approche duale — modulant les taux à 10 % pour les pays disposant déjà de législations similaires (comme le Canada, l'Inde ou l'Union européenne) et grimant à 12,5 % pour des nations jugées récalcitrantes comme la Chine, le Japon ou la Corée du Sud — révèle une tactique d'encerclement réglementaire.



Les taxes rapportent gros au Trésor, certes, mais au prix d'un chaos géopolitique permanent où chaque allié devient un suspect et chaque partenaire, un otage en sursis. P - AustAsia Group

Cette nouvelle salve met en lumière un paradoxe fondamental: les tarifs douaniers ne sont plus seulement des outils de rééquilibrage commercial, ils sont devenus des instruments d'ingérence géopolitique et de coercition permanente. En liant le commerce à des critères sociaux ou environnementaux, Washington s'octroie un droit de regard unilatéral sur les pratiques de ses alliés comme de ses rivaux.

Les réactions ne se sont d'ailleurs pas fait attendre, qualifiant ces mesures d'«injustifiées» ou en l'expression de profonds «regrets», de Tokyo à Canberra. Même l'Union européenne, pourtant liée par des accords et des déclarations conjointes, observe avec une inquiétude légitime la fragilité de ses arrangements face à un partenaire imprévisible.

Pourtant, le pari de l'administration américaine repose sur une logique de «levier maximal». En maintenant une menace constante d'enquêtes sectorielles supplémentaires — notamment sur les surcapacités industrielles —, Washington espère contraindre ses partenaires à des concessions bilatérales permanentes. Des mesures ciblées et punitives prises récemment contre le Brésil ou le Canada confirment que le protectionnisme américain ne connaît plus de frontières diplomatiques.

En définitive, si l'objectif de Donald Trump était de signaler au monde que les États-Unis n'hésiteront pas à piétiner le multilatéralisme commercial pour imposer leurs vues, le succès est total. En revanche, sur le plan strictement économique, l'efficacité de cette stratégie reste hautement contestable. En fragmentant le commerce mondial, en irritant des alliés historiques et en institutionnalisant une insécurité juridique chronique, ces barrières douanières risquent à terme d'isoler l'économie américaine tout en alimentant des pressions inflationnistes persistantes. Le mur

tarifaire se dresse haut, mais il ressemble de plus en plus à une fortification assiégée, dont le coût d'entretien pèse lourdement sur l'équilibre géo-économique global.

Au-delà des superpuissances et des grands blocs industriels, ces barrières douanières extensives frappent de plein fouet les petites économies en développement du Sud, telles que l'île Maurice. Pour des nations insulaires dont la prospérité repose largement sur des exportations ciblées — qu'il s'agisse de textiles, d'habillement ou de produits agricoles — l'imposition brutale de droits de douane américains fragilise immé-

diatement la compétitivité extérieure.

Ne disposant ni du poids géopolitique nécessaire pour négocier des dérogations sur mesure ni de marchés intérieurs de substitution suffisamment vastes, ces petits États subissent de plein fouet la volatilité des coûts. Ils se retrouvent ainsi pénalisés par des mesures conçues à l'origine pour régler des différends avec des géants comme la Chine, illustrant la vulnérabilité structurelle des économies périphériques face au protectionnisme unilatéral.

En usant de prétextes normatifs tels que la lutte contre le travail forcé ou les surcapacités industrielles, l'administration américaine sous Donald Trump institutionnalise une diplomatie de la canonnière commerciale. Cette approche démontre une volonté manifeste de weaponiser (armer) les tarifs douaniers pour extraire des concessions réglementaires ou géopolitiques, qu'il s'agisse de plier de grands partenaires comme l'Union européenne ou d'exercer un rapport de force asymétrique sur des pays plus discrets ou de taille modeste, qu'ils se trouvent en Europe du Nord (comme la Finlande ou la Norvège) ou dans l'océan Indien. Le commerce international n'est plus régi par des règles multilatérales stables, mais soumis à une pression permanente où chaque État, grand ou petit, doit constamment négocier sa survie économique face aux décisions arbitraires de Washington.

En fin de compte, si le but était de prouver au monde entier que l'économie américaine pouvait se transformer en forteresse, c'est un triomphe absolu. Les taxes rapportent gros au Trésor, certes, mais au prix d'un chaos géopolitique permanent où chaque allié devient un suspect et chaque partenaire, un otage en sursis. Le mur tarifaire est bien là, dressé fièrement. Reste à savoir combien de temps l'édifice tiendra debout avant de s'effondrer sous le poids de ses propres absurdités.

Corps paraétatiques: la facture d'une décennie de mauvaise gestion

Les révélations faites récemment à l'Assemblée nationale par le Premier ministre au sujet de la santé financière des corps paraétatiques et des entreprises publiques confirment ce que certaines voix dénoncent depuis des années. Avec des encours de prêts qui se chiffrent en dizaines de milliards de roupies — atteignant 18,6 milliards pour les seuls corps paraétatiques et 48,9 milliards pour les entreprises d'État à la mi-2026 —, la situation financière du secteur public mauricien s'apparente à une poudrière budgétaire.

Ce panorama d'endettement abyssal, hérité en grande partie des largesses et du laxisme de l'ancien régime, met en lumière une réalité troublante: l'asphyxie financière des entités publiques ne relève pas de la fatalité, mais bien d'une chronique d'alertes répétées obstinément ignorées.

À cet égard, l'examen de ces chiffres vertigineux ramène inévitablement l'observateur aux constats annuels émis par le Bureau du Directeur de l'Audit. Année après année, les rapports successifs de cette institution indépendante dressent un réquisitoire implacable contre la gestion des deniers publics.

Gaspillage, opacité dans l'octroi des contrats, projets pharaoniques mal ficelés, absence de rentabilité des investissements publics et dérives des fonds de pension: les manquements pointés par le Directeur de l'Audit se suivent et se ressemblent avec une régularité métronomique. Pourtant, malgré la précision chirurgicale de ces diagnostics, les recommandations formulées demeurent, saison après saison, lettre morte.

Comment expliquer cette impunité institutionnelle où le constat d'une mauvaise gestion n'entraîne ni correction systémique ni sanction? La réponse réside dans une culture de la gabegie tolérée, où l'argent du contribuable a trop souvent servi de variable d'ajustement pour éponger les errements politiques.

Les chiffres fournis par le chef du gouvernement illustrent de manière crue cette fuite en avant.

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Vijay Makhan

Exit Starmer, Enter Burnham: Reading the Early Signals

Leadership transitions invariably invite scrutiny. The real question is not who occupies 10 Downing Street; it is what vision of Britain's place in the world accompanies the change. The composition of Andy Burnham's Cabinet and his first diplomatic initiatives already suggest that London's external posture may be entering a period of significant recalibration.

British foreign policy has never been static. Throughout the post-war period, it has repeatedly adapted to changing geopolitical realities — from the gradual dismantling of empire and Britain's embrace of Europe, through the Atlanticism that characterised successive governments, to the profound strategic questions raised by Brexit. Each transition has reflected not merely a change of government but an attempt to redefine Britain's place in an evolving international order.

Whether the Burnham administration represents another such moment remains too early to determine. Governments are rarely judged by their opening days alone. However, diplomacy often announces itself through signals long before policies are formally articulated. Cabinet appointments, the sequence of a Prime Minister's first international contacts and the language employed on major global crises frequently provide the earliest clues to a government's strategic instincts.

Taken together, the composition of Andy Burnham's Cabinet and his first diplomatic engagements suggest something more than the routine arrival of a new administration. They point, at least for now, towards what may become a careful recalibration of Britain's external posture.

The questions therefore become more significant than the answers.

Is Burnham signalling a genuine departure from the latter years of the Starmer administration? Does his choice of ministers indicate continuity or rupture? Is Britain seeking once again to project itself as a bridge between Washington and continental Europe? Can London rebuild closer relations with the European Union without reopening the divisive constitutional debate surrounding Brexit? And is Britain preparing to restore part of its international influence through renewed emphasis on diplomacy, multilateral engagement and pragmatic statecraft?

These are not merely British questions. They matter well beyond Westminster.

The Cabinet as the First Foreign Policy Statement

Every Prime Minister inherits both

opportunities and constraints. The first responsibility is to reassure allies that stability will prevail. The second is to demonstrate that a new administration brings fresh purpose and renewed direction.

UK Cabinets are therefore seldom assembled by accident.

Burnham appears to have struck a deliberate balance between continuity and renewal. Some familiar faces remain, ensuring experience and institutional memory. Others point to an unmistakable desire to draw a line under perceptions that increasingly came to define the closing phase of the Starmer government.

Politics, after all, has always possessed its share of irony. Those who chose to distance themselves from what many had begun to perceive as a floundering political vessel before it finally reached port appear to have found their experience neither forgotten nor undervalued. Indeed, politics rewards not only loyalty but also judgement.

Nowhere is the signal potentially more significant than at the Foreign Office. The appointment of Ed Miliband should not simply be viewed as a change of guard. Rather, it invites reflection on what it reveals about the Prime Minister's priorities.

Does this appointment herald a more outward-looking Britain? Will greater prominence once again be accorded to climate diplomacy, international law and multilateral institutions? Is London seeking to recover influence through persuasion as much as through military and economic weight?

It is far too early to provide definitive answers. But I believe they are unquestionably the right questions.

The Diplomacy of First Impressions

If Cabinet appointments offer the first indication of a government's strategic thinking, its earliest diplomatic engagements frequently reinforce the message.

Burnham's initial exchanges with President Trump, President Macron and President Zelensky appear carefully sequenced rather than coincidental. Washington was reassured that the transatlantic alliance remains the cornerstone of British security. Kyiv received an



Andy Burnham's Cabinet and his first diplomatic engagements suggest something more than the routine arrival of a new administration. They point, at least for now, towards what may become a careful recalibration of Britain's external posture. Pic - The Sun

equally clear assurance that Britain's commitment to Ukraine remains steadfast despite the change of leadership in London.

Burnham's early engagement with President Macron is most revealing. It suggests recognition that geography continues to shape strategy. However Brexit may have altered Britain's institutional relationship with Europe, it has not altered the geopolitical realities that bind both sides of the Channel through common security, economic and strategic interests.

Here lies what may become one of the defining features of the new administration.

Burnham does not appear to advocate reversing Brexit. Nor is there any convin-

cing evidence that such a course presently commands political consensus. What seems to be emerging instead is an effort to reduce the strategic costs that Brexit has imposed upon Britain's international posture by rebuilding habits of practical cooperation with European partners wherever common interests dictate.

Such an approach would not represent retreat. It would represent pragmatism.

A Different Tone in the Middle East

Another early indication of possible change concerns Britain's approach to the conflict in Gaza. While reaffirming Israel's legitimate security concerns, Burnham has appeared more prepared than his predecessor to speak openly about the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding before the world's eyes. His language has conveyed greater concern for civilian suffering and stronger emphasis on the imperative of respecting international humanitarian law.

Whether this ultimately translates into substantive policy adjustments is uncertain. Yet in diplomacy, tone matters. Governments frequently signal future direction through language before policy instruments begin to change. If Britain's voice on the Middle East becomes more balanced while remaining firmly anchored in the principles of international law, it could contribute to restoring some of the diplomatic credibility that many believe has diminished in recent years.

“Changes of leadership frequently create opportunities to revisit longstanding issues through a different political prism. Diplomatic style often proves almost as important as diplomatic substance. If the Burnham administration genuinely intends to reaffirm Britain's credentials as a principled advocate of international law, multilateral cooperation and responsible international leadership, then the unfinished Chagos question may, sooner rather than later, become an important measure of that commitment...”

Sanjay Matadeen, Economist

“Mauritius is approaching the end of one economic cycle rather than the end of its success story”



Mauritius Times: Many countries are confronting demographic, economic, technological, and social pressures, yet many have taken difficult decisions and implemented reforms to address them. Is Mauritius doing enough to prepare for the challenges ahead? If not, what explains our reluctance or inability to take the necessary decisions?

Sanjay Matadeen: This question must be considered within the broader global context of what is increasingly described as a **polycrisis**: a situation in which several economic, geopolitical, environmental, technological and social crises occur simultaneously. Geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, the ongoing Russia/Ukraine conflict, and the ensuing global economic ramifications are live examples. The situation with the USA's tariff wars is another example of how the world economic order is in turmoil. In fact, the situation has even moved from **polycrisis** to **permacrisis**; a situation of permanent crisis. This is the new normal.

The Mauritian economy is particularly vulnerable as it is a small, open island economy that depends heavily on imports, tourism, international trade, foreign investment, and financial services. However, the country is not starting from a position of failure. Mauritius still benefits from political stability, a relatively diversified economy, comparatively strong institutions, and significant foreign-exchange reserves. The unemployment rate, stagnating around 6%, does not represent significant economic risks. Structural weaknesses include labour shortages, skills mismatches, low productivity growth, and an ageing workforce. However, the country is relying on the achievements and economic structures of the past while the conditions that supported those achievements are rapidly changing.

It would nevertheless be incorrect to suggest that nothing is being done. Successive governments have introduced measures relating to pension reform, taxation, renewable

Mauritius faces a defining moment. An ageing population, slower growth, rising fiscal pressures, labour shortages, geopolitical uncertainty and rapid technological change are testing the resilience of its economic model. In this wide-ranging interview, economist and senior lecturer at Middlesex University Mauritius Sanjay Matadeen assesses whether the country is prepared for these challenges and outlines the structural reforms he believes are needed to secure sustainable growth, stronger institutions and long-term prosperity.

energy, digitalisation, infrastructure, healthcare, economic diversification, and fiscal consolidation. The main weakness is that reforms have often been partial, delayed, reversed, poorly coordinated, or inadequately explained to the population.

*** Mauritius also faces fundamental questions about the sustainability of its economic model. Low productivity, heavy reliance on services, rising public debt, investment choices, declining export competitiveness, the cost of doing business, and the search for new engines of growth have all come under scrutiny. Has our economic model reached its limits? If so, what structural reforms are needed to build a more competitive, resilient, and sustainable economy?**

I believe that the Mauritian economic model has reached the end of one development cycle rather than the end of its potential. The model that transformed Mauritius through sugar, textiles, tourism and financial services has served the country well, but it is no longer sufficient to sustain high growth in an era of **permacrisis**, ageing populations, artificial intelligence, geopolitical uncertainty and climate change, as I mentioned previously.

“International experience shows that poorly communicated windfall taxes can create significant market uncertainty. The term “fair share” must also be applied consistently: the objective should not be to penalise successful companies, but to ensure that extraordinary gains contribute proportionately during an exceptional period. Any revenue collected should therefore be transparently ring-fenced for clearly identified social or economic priorities, with a fixed expiry date...”

We are witnessing a gradual loss of competitiveness due to high operating costs, labour shortages, slower productivity growth and declining merchandise exports. Our economy remains heavily dependent on imports, making export-led growth more important than ever. The challenge is not that Mauritius has become a services economy, many successful countries are, but that we must move towards higher-value, export-oriented services while rebuilding our productive base. The objective should be growth driven by productivity, innovation and exports rather than relying primarily on consumption, construction and public spending.

The reforms required are therefore structural.

First, we need to improve the ease and cost of doing business by accelerating digitalisation, reducing bureaucracy and increasing the efficiency of public institutions. Second, we must redirect investment towards sectors that generate foreign exchange and high-value jobs, including advanced financial services, higher education, logistics, the blue economy, renewable energy and a reimagined tourism

sector focused on sustainability and culture. Third, Mauritius needs a national productivity strategy linking education, skills development, technology adoption and business innovation. At the same time, we must tackle labour shortages through a coherent migration policy while encouraging higher labour-force participation among Mauritians.

Ultimately, the country has not run out of opportunities; it has simply run out of easy growth. The next phase of development will depend less on discovering one new economic pillar and more on creating a competitive, innovative and export-oriented economy capable of thriving in a world of permanent uncertainty.

*** Public debt has become one of Mauritius's central economic concerns. While borrowing can finance development, questions remain about debt sustainability, persistent budget deficits, the efficiency of public spending, fiscal discipline, and the financial risks posed by state-owned enterprises. Has Mauritius reached the point where a fundamental rethink of fiscal management is required?**

Public debt has undoubtedly become one of Mauritius's major economic challenges, but I do not believe debt should be viewed in isolation. A country can sustain a relatively high level of debt provided its economy is growing, public finances are well managed, and the borrowed funds are invested in productive assets that generate future economic returns.

The more worrying issue is the persistent budget deficit, the widening balance of payments deficit and the fact that economic growth has slowed to around 2.8%. If the economy does not grow fast enough, servicing the debt will become increasingly difficult, regardless of whether the debt is domestic or external. The priority should therefore be to create wealth and expand the productive capacity of the economy rather than focusing solely on the debt.

At the same time, Mauritius needs a fundamental rethink of fiscal management. Fiscal discipline should not mean indiscriminate spending cuts or the reduction of essential social services. Instead, it should focus on eliminating waste, improving the efficiency of public expenditure and ensuring that every rupee borrowed generates measurable economic and social value.

The recurring weaknesses highlighted in the Audit Report and the Public Accounts Committee demonstrate significant scope to strengthen public financial management. Greater digitalisation of government services, better procurement practices, rigorous evaluation of major public projects and stronger oversight of state-owned enterprises would improve accountability while reducing unnecessary expenditure.

Fiscal sustainability will ultimately come from combining prudent financial management with stronger export-led growth, higher productivity and greater private investment, rather than through austerity alone.

● Cont. on page 8

'We should avoid creating the impression that every fiscal difficulty can be solved by repeatedly taxing the same formal businesses'



● Cont. from page 7

*** State-owned enterprises (SOEs) remain vital to the economy, but recurring controversies have raised concerns about governance, political interference, accountability, and operational efficiency. Questions persist about their management. Is Mauritius's model of state-owned enterprise governance still fit for purpose?**

SOEs remain essential to Mauritius, particularly in strategic sectors such as energy, water and transport. Acemoglu and Robinson, two respected economists in the field of development economics, have demonstrated that countries prosper when their institutions are efficient, accountable, and capable of adapting to change.

Many of our public institutions were created in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s to address the challenges of those decades. While they contributed significantly to Mauritius's development, some have become outdated and have not evolved at the same pace as the economy. Recurring governance issues and operational inefficiencies suggest that several institutions now require fundamental reform rather than incremental adjustments.

The priority should be to modernise the governance and performance of our public institutions. Greater transparency is essential, and the recommendations of the Audit Report and the Public Accounts Committee should no longer remain recurring observations but should be translated into concrete action plans with clear implementation deadlines and regular public reporting on progress.

Every SOE should also undergo periodic independent strategic reviews to determine whether it remains fit for purpose, whether its mandate should be redefined, whether overlapping functions should be merged, or whether the institution has simply become outdated as the economy has evolved.

At the same time, accelerating digital transformation, strengthening financial controls and fostering a stronger culture of accountability and performance would significantly improve operational efficiency and restore public confidence.

As pointed out earlier, the quality of a country's institutions largely determines its long-term economic performance. Modernising Mauritius's public institutions is therefore just as important as reforming its economic policies if the

“Several European countries have introduced additional taxes on banks since 2022, although the design and results have varied considerably. Properly structured, such a contribution could provide short-term revenue to protect vulnerable households, finance essential public services or support productive investment without imposing the entire burden of adjustment on ordinary taxpayers...”

country is to remain competitive in an increasingly complex global environment.

*** The future of the pension system is a defining public policy challenge. Mauritius must balance the long-term sustainability of the Basic Retirement Pension against rapid population ageing, declining fertility, labour shortages, and political resistance. What principles should guide policymakers in building a financially sustainable, socially equitable system that protects future generations?**

The debate on the future of the Basic Retirement Pension is undoubtedly one of the most important and heated public policy challenges facing the country. On the one hand, it has played a fundamental role in helping and comforting the elderly while remaining an important pillar of our social protection system. On the other hand, demographic trends such as an ageing population and declining fertility raise legitimate questions about its long-term sustainability.

This is not a uniquely Mauritian challenge; many countries are currently reviewing their pension systems as they face similar demographic pressures. The debate should therefore move beyond short-termism and focus on how we can preserve the pension system for future generations while maintaining social cohesion.

In my view, any reform of the pension system should be guided by three key principles: financial sustainability, social equity and intergenerational fairness. There is no single solution, and any changes should be gradual, evidence-based and developed through broad consultation with all stakeholders. The objective should not simply be to reduce public expenditure, but to ensure that the pension system remains affordable, protects the most vulnerable members of society and does not place an excessive financial burden on future generations.

At the same time, pension reform cannot be considered in isolation. It should form part of a broader national strategy that addresses economic growth, employment, labour-force participation, productivity and demographic change. Ultimately, a sustainable pension system will depend not only on how benefits are financed, but also on the strength of the economy that supports it.

*** Doesn't this make the restoration of strong and sustained economic growth the government's overriding priority? Without higher growth, can the State realistically continue to finance and strengthen its social protection system while meeting the demands of an ageing population?**

I believe that restoring strong, sustainable and export-led economic growth must indeed become one of the government's highest priorities because, ultimately, economic growth is what finances our social model. A growing economy generates more employment, higher incomes and stronger tax revenues, giving the State greater capacity to invest in healthcare, education, pensions and other essential public services.

Conversely, if growth remains weak while expenditure continues to rise because of an ageing population and increasing social demands, the pressure on public finances will inevitably intensify. The debate should therefore not be

framed as a choice between economic growth and social protection. The two are closely interconnected, and one cannot be sustained without the other.

At the same time, growth alone will not be sufficient. Mauritius must ensure that growth is accompanied by higher productivity, stronger exports, better-quality investment and more efficient public spending. Our development model has always been based on **export-led growth**, and we need to create new sources of foreign exchange and wealth to preserve our welfare state over the long term.

A strong economy is ultimately the best form of social protection because it provides governments with the resources needed to support the most vulnerable while ensuring that future generations are not burdened with an unsustainable fiscal position. The real challenge for policymakers is therefore to strike the right balance between promoting economic growth, maintaining fiscal discipline and preserving the social cohesion that has always been one of Mauritius's greatest strengths.

*** Given the current fiscal pressures, combined with heightened global uncertainty and the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, would you support introducing a temporary "Fair Share Contribution" or windfall levy on banks and large conglomerates? What would be the economic advantages and potential drawbacks of such a measure?**

I would not reject the idea outright, particularly in the present context of fiscal pressure, weaker growth prospects and heightened international uncertainty. A temporary Fair Share Contribution could be justified where certain sectors have generated exceptional profits partly because of circumstances beyond their own productive effort, such as wider interest margins or concentrated market power.

“Any reform of the pension system should be guided by three key principles: financial sustainability, social equity and intergenerational fairness. There is no single solution, and any changes should be gradual, evidence-based and developed through broad consultation with all stakeholders. The objective should not simply be to reduce public expenditure, but to ensure that the pension system remains affordable, protects the most vulnerable members of society...”

Several European countries have introduced additional taxes on banks since 2022, although the design and results have varied considerably. Properly structured, such a contribution could provide short-term revenue to protect vulnerable households, finance essential public services or support productive investment without imposing the entire burden of adjustment on ordinary taxpayers. Mauritius also needs to rebuild fiscal space as growth slows and external risks increase.

However, I would approach such a measure with considerable caution. It should be temporary, clearly defined and based only on genuinely exceptional profits rather than normal business earnings. A broad or unpredictable levy on banks and conglomerates could weaken investor confidence, discourage private investment, reduce lending or lead businesses to pass the cost on to customers through higher fees and prices.

International experience shows that poorly communicated windfall taxes can create significant market uncertainty.

● Cont. on page 9

'Mauritius must become a country where skilled people choose not only to work, but also to build their lives and raise their families'

● Cont. from page 8

The term "fair share" must also be applied consistently: the objective should not be to penalise successful companies, but to ensure that extraordinary gains contribute proportionately during an exceptional period. Any revenue collected should therefore be transparently ring-fenced for clearly identified social or economic priorities, with a fixed expiry date and parliamentary reporting on how the funds are used.

My position would therefore be one of conditional support rather than automatic endorsement. A temporary contribution may form part of a broader fiscal response, but it cannot replace structural reforms, stronger expenditure control, better tax administration and renewed economic growth.

Mauritius should avoid creating the impression that every fiscal difficulty can be solved by repeatedly taxing the same formal businesses, because this could eventually weaken the very investment and employment base on which public revenue depends.

*** Mauritius faces a growing labour market dilemma: increasing dependence on foreign workers, youth unemployment, skills mismatches, outward migration of talent, low female labour force participation, and weak productivity growth. What reforms are needed to strengthen human capital, raise productivity, and ensure that the labour market supports sustainable long-term growth?**

Mauritius needs a comprehensive labour-market strategy rather than a series of isolated measures. The country is increasingly dependent on foreign workers while, at the same time, many young people struggle to find suitable employment, skilled Mauritians leave for opportunities abroad, and female labour-force participation remains relatively low.

This apparent contradiction reflects a deeper mismatch between the skills produced by the education system and those required by employers. Education and training must therefore be more closely aligned with sectors that can generate future growth, including logistics, financial services, healthcare, digital activities, renewable energy, specialised manufacturing and the blue economy. Greater emphasis should be placed on technical education, apprenticeships, reskilling and lifelong learning, rather than focusing almost exclusively on academic qualifications.

Foreign labour will remain necessary, particularly in an ageing society, but it should form part of a coherent productivity policy. Businesses should not use imported labour simply as a substitute for investment in technology, training and improved working conditions. Mauritius must also encourage more women to enter or remain in employment through affordable childcare and flexible working arrangements, while creating stronger incentives for skilled members of the diaspora to return or contribute to the economy. Ultimately, productivity will rise only when better skills are combined with technology, efficient management and investment. The objective should be to build a labour market that does not merely fill vacancies, but supports higher-value production, stronger exports and sustainable long-term growth.

*** The issue of foreign labour raises at the same time important questions about housing, social integration, working conditions, demographic change, and national cohesion. What immigration and integration policies should guide the country over the coming decades?**

Given our ageing population, declining fertility and persistent labour shortages, Mauritius will almost certainly continue to depend on immigration over the coming decades. However, immigration policy should no longer be driven sole-



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ly by short-term labour shortages.

The country needs a comprehensive national migration strategy built around two complementary pillars. The first should address shortages in labour-intensive sectors such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism and care services. The second should position Mauritius as an attractive destination for highly skilled professionals, entrepreneurs, researchers and innovators who can help develop higher value-added sectors such as advanced financial services, fintech, artificial intelligence, the green economy, the blue economy, logistics, healthcare, higher education and scientific research.

Competing successfully for global talent will require much more than attractive employment opportunities. It will also require high-quality international schools, an efficient healthcare system, reliable public transport, affordable and attractive housing, a vibrant cultural and recreational environment, political stability, personal safety, environmental quality and an efficient public administration. In today's global economy, talented individuals choose not only where to work, but also where they and their families want to live.

In a highly competitive international environment, countries are competing not only for capital, but also for talent. Mauritius must therefore become a country where skilled people choose not only to work, but also to build their lives and raise their families.

*** AI has been identified as a strategic priority, but success will depend on digital infrastructure, skills development, regulation, sovereign AI capabilities, SME adoption, employment transition, and public-sector transformation. How prepared is Mauritius to harness AI, and what policies are needed to ensure it becomes a driver of inclusive development rather than greater inequality?**

Mauritius has made some progress in recognising artificial intelligence as a strategic priority, but we are still at an early stage of implementation. We should also remain realistic: Mauritius is unlikely to compete with major economies in developing large foundational AI models or advanced computing infrastructure.

AI should therefore be viewed mainly as a powerful enabler that can improve productivity, public services, and innovation across existing sectors. To benefit fully, the country will need reliable digital infrastructure, secure data systems, stronger cybersecurity, better access to cloud computing and a much larger pool of people with skills in data science, software development, AI governance and digital regulation. The real opportunity is to ensure that the benefits of artificial intelligence are shared across the entire economy. AI should not be seen as a tool reserved for government, banks or large corporations, but as a technology that enables

businesses of all sizes to become more productive, innovative and competitive. Small and medium-sized enterprises should be supported through access to affordable digital solutions, financing, technical assistance and training so that they can integrate AI into their day-to-day operations.

At the same time, our schools, universities and training institutions must equip both young people and the existing workforce with the digital and AI-related skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing labour market, while lifelong learning and reskilling become an integral part of workforce development. In many ways, measures presented in the last budget do address these requirements.

A strong governance framework will also be essential to build public trust and encourage responsible innovation. Mauritius should continue strengthening its policies on data protection, cybersecurity, transparency and the ethical use of AI, particularly in sensitive sectors such as healthcare, finance and public administration. Our focus should be on building sovereign digital capabilities by protecting critical public data and developing the expertise needed to deploy AI securely and effectively.

If implemented strategically, artificial intelligence can become a catalyst for higher productivity, better public services, stronger businesses and more inclusive economic growth, helping Mauritius enhance its competitiveness in an increasingly digital global economy.

*** In conclusion, how do you see the future for Mauritius?**

I believe Mauritius is approaching the end of one economic cycle rather than the end of its success story. The development model that brought us this far will not be sufficient to take us through the next twenty or thirty years. We need to redefine our role in a world being reshaped by artificial intelligence, climate change, demographic transitions, and shifting geopolitical alliances. Rather than seeing our small size as a limitation, we should leverage our agility, our institutions and our strategic location to position Mauritius as a regional platform in areas where we have or can develop a comparative advantage.



“Mauritius is unlikely to compete with major economies in developing large foundational AI models or advanced computing infrastructure. AI should therefore be viewed mainly as a powerful enabler that can improve productivity, public services, and innovation across existing sectors. To benefit fully, the country will need reliable digital infrastructure, secure data systems, stronger cybersecurity, better access to cloud computing ...”

One of Mauritius's greatest opportunities is to build a stronger national innovation ecosystem where government, businesses, universities, research institutions, regulators and civil society work together towards a shared long-term vision. By strengthening collaboration across these stakeholders, Mauritius can accelerate innovation, attract high-quality investment, commercialise research, nurture entrepreneurship and develop the skills required for tomorrow's economy.

I am optimistic about Mauritius's future because the country has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to reinvent itself.



Manisha Dookhony

Chokepoints and Consequences: Mauritius at the Crossroads

The government has less room to manoeuvre than before, and recent crises have highlighted the need to strengthen resilience before the next shock

On Thursday, Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi movement attacked two Saudi oil tankers, the *Encelia* and *Layla*, in the Red Sea near the Bab el-Mandeb strait. This marks the first such attack since the Houthis declared a blockade on Saudi-linked shipping, retaliating for the Saudi-led coalition's blockade on Yemen and a recent strike on Sanaa's international airport. Prior to that, the re-ignition of the war between the US and Iran and the situation in the Strait of Hormuz presented a sharp escalation of what was already a complicated geo-economic issue, leading Brent crude to briefly breach \$100 a barrel for the first time since May.

The strategic implications are profound. The Bab el-Mandeb is not just another waterway; it is a vital chokepoint at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, serving as the gateway to the Suez Canal through which approximately 12% of global trade and nearly a quarter of container traffic between Europe and Asia passes. The Houthi threat has already caused ships to turn back, and analysts warn that even selective attacks can create enough uncertainty for insurers to raise wartime premiums dramatically and prompt carriers to reroute around the Cape of Good Hope, adding roughly ten days of sailing time. This new threat is especially critical because Saudi Arabia had been routing much of its oil through the Red Sea port of Yanbu precisely to avoid the fighting around the Strait of Hormuz, meaning the Houthi attacks have effectively closed this "alternative route," creating a "double blow" to global oil transport.

The Strait of Hormuz handles roughly a quarter of the world's seaborne oil, and any tension there sends freight costs climbing and delivery schedules into disarray. Now, the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb have also become flashpoints, complicating Suez Canal traffic, while the Black Sea remains tense. The result is cascading disruptions through almost every major artery of Mauritius's import-dependent system.

The fuel import bill is the most immediate channel of



Houthis claim attacks on Saudi tankers in Red Sea, raising risk of new chokepoint in Iran war

“Mauritius is likely to face a fresh wave of imported inflation affecting fuel, food, transport, and other essential goods should the situation be expansive in time. Growth forecast is down to 2.8% for 2026, from an earlier 3.3–3.5%, and inflation is expected to climb to around 5.5% if oil averages US\$90 a barrel. But inflation is not just about the price tag; it is about time. Ships that used to take a month are likely to take longer, and that delay alone creates cost pressures across multiple sectors, from construction materials to retail goods...” — Pic - ET

impact. Petroleum already accounts for about a fifth of total imports, so when global oil prices spike, the effect is felt immediately, feeding directly into higher costs for electricity, transport, manufacturing, and food production. The pass-through to consumers has been partially absorbed by the government through the Price Stabilisation Account, but this has its limitations. A partial easing of global oil prices following a fragile US-Iran framework helped bring crude prices back towards US\$80 per barrel, providing some relief and contributing to inflation moderating to 3.7% in June from 4.3% in May.

Another important channel of impact is tourism and foreign investment. The temporary suspension of Emirates flights earlier this year served as a reminder of Mauritius's fragile connectivity and how investor confidence can be affected when major transit hubs are disrupted. Given that Emirates carried nearly 309,000 tourists to Mauritius in 2025, the suspension underscored the country's vulnerability to external geopolitical shocks.

Weaker global demand and heightened uncertainty also threaten foreign direct investment and flows through the Mauritius International Financial Centre, as we are also increasingly linked to the Dubai IFC. On top of all this, Mauritius's strategic petroleum reserve is inadequate for our level of development — there is a need to expand our storage capacity — and this is a vulnerability now magnified by simultaneous disruptions across multiple chokepoints.

Mauritius is likely to face a fresh wave of imported inflation affecting fuel, food, transport, and other essential goods should the situation be expansive in time. Growth forecast is down to 2.8% for 2026, from an earlier 3.3–3.5%, and inflation is expected to climb to around 5.5% if oil averages US\$90 a barrel. But inflation is not just about the price tag; it is about time. Ships that used to take a month are likely to take longer, and that delay alone creates cost pressures across multiple sectors, from construction materials to retail goods. So, while the official inflation figures may show a gradual uptick, the real pressure on household budgets can appear much more abruptly, within weeks of a shipping delay or a fresh spike in crude prices. Because Mauritius imports so much of what it consumes, from rice to diesel to machinery, that imported inflation does not linger at the docks; it moves straight onto shop shelves and into our bills.

The government has stepped in quite heavily to protect consumers, most visibly through the Price Stabilisation Account. There is also a broader Price Stabilisation Fund, which subsidises essentials like milk powder, edible oil, rice, canned food, and flour, and price controls are in place on essential items, with fixed prices on strategic goods like bread, gas, and rice. The government is trying to shield consumers, but this comes at a cost that is difficult to maintain. Public finances are already constrained, with a debt-to-GDP ratio above 85%, and such universal subsidies are expensive.

Our foreign exchange reserves are in a much stronger position than they were during the COVID-19 pandemic, which gives us more breathing room to manage currency volatility — that is a genuine improvement. But the fiscal picture is tighter now: our debt-to-GDP ratio is above 85%, so the government has less room to manoeuvre than it did during earlier crises. These crises have exposed deep structural vulnerabilities, and while we are better off in some areas, the real lesson is that we cannot afford to wait for the next shock to build resilience.

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Oil prices rise to \$96, a six-week high as US-Iran tensions escalate

Oil prices rose more than 1.5% to their highest in more than six weeks on Thursday, with the United States launching a new round of strikes on Iran and Yemen's Houthis targeting oil tankers in the Red Sea.

Brent crude futures rose \$1.93, or 2% to \$96 by 0011 GMT, the highest since June 8. It had settled over \$3 higher at \$94.07 in the previous session, just shy of a six-week high, reports HT.

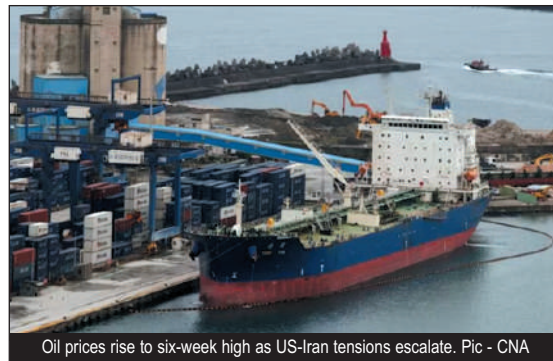
U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude rose \$1.44, or 1.7%, to \$88.27 after rising nearly 3% on Wednesday.

The U.S. military said it carried out a 12th consecutive night of attacks on Iran hours after U.S. President Donald Trump's vowed to destroy an Iranian bridge or power plant every time Iran shoots at a ship in the Strait of Hormuz, raising the stakes in the war with Iran.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said that an oil tanker had caught fire after an explosion while attempting to pass through what they described as a mined route south of the Strait of Hormuz, and that the two other tankers had turned back.

The Guards said the strait was under their control and "completely closed" while U.S. actions continued in the region, warning that no tanker would be allowed to enter or leave without coordination with Iran.

As well as the renewed conflict over control of that key waterway, the Iran-aligned Houthis have



Oil prices rise to six-week high as US-Iran tensions escalate. Pic - CNA

opened a new front in the war by threatening to target vessels carrying Saudi oil in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and announced a naval blockade of Saudi Arabia.

The Houthis said they had carried out a military operation targeting two Saudi oil tankers, and maritime security reports said one of the vessels named by the group, the Saudi-flagged tanker Encelia, had been hit in the Red Sea.

The Houthis said they had forced around 10 ships to retreat and return after warning vessels against sailing to Saudi ports. Reuters could not immediately verify this account.

The Houthis' naval blockade on Saudi Arabia in the Red Sea threatens to disrupt global energy supplies beyond the Gulf, while Iran's Revolutionary Guards' spokesperson also warned shipping companies that the Strait of Hormuz southern route is mined in a post on X.

On the U.S. supply side, crude stocks rose by 2 million barrels last week, the Energy Information Administration said, as refinery runs eased and crude exports dropped while imports rose.

Recognise Israel: Trump sets big condition after US announces Saudi nuclear deal

A day after formally approving the deal, US President Donald Trump on Thursday laid down a new condition for the US-Saudi Arabia nuclear agreement — the Gulf kingdom's recognition of Israel.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said the deal "will be approved, but is totally subject" to Saudi Arabia joining the Abraham Accords.

"The Civil Nuclear Deal (There will be no enrichment of material!) being made between the United States Department of Energy and Saudi Arabia, which pertains only to non-military use such as the ones that Iran and UAE (and others) already have, will be approved, but is totally subject to Saudi Arabia joining the very respected and successful Abraham Accords. The United States is not opposed to Civil (Non-Enriched) Nuclear Facilities. Thank you for your attention to this matter! President DONALD J. TRUMP"

Saudi Arabia has made clear that normalising relations with Israel would first require the establishment of Palestinian statehood, a demand the Israeli Prime Minister has dismissed, reports HT.

US-Saudi nuclear deal

The US-Saudi Arabia deal allows the kingdom to develop its own civilian nuclear programme.



The deal, known as a 123 agreement, is expected to last 30 years and is also expected that the deal would involve American companies providing technology and expertise to develop the Saudi program, CNN reported.

It would also allow the country to enrich its own fuel for civilian reactors. The agreement includes limits on what inspections might be carried out on the Saudi program, according to US officials and sources, according to CNN.

The agreement is expected to be submitted to Congress for review.

The Kingdom is not required to sign a standard agreement called the Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which would allow for more monitoring, inspections and verification, AP reported, citing a person familiar with the matter.

What are Abraham Accords? The Abraham Accords were first pushed by Trump in 2020 and are designed to normalise diplomatic, economic and security relations between Israel and several Arab nations.

Trump in May 2026 had urged Pakistan and West Asian countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and Jordan, to join the Abraham Accords and formally recognise Israel as part of a broader diplomatic effort to end the US-Iran conflict.

The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain were the first to sign, followed by Morocco and Sudan in 2020.

Across the Globe

Google faces record EU fine

The EU is reportedly preparing to impose a record fine on Google for breaching antitrust laws, potentially putting Brussels on a collision course with Washington. The bloc accuses the search giant of illegally using its market dominance to favour its own services.

Officials are expected to publish a decision shortly, with Handelsblatt reporting that the fine could reach €1 billion. The timing is awkward, as US President Donald Trump is expected to announce new tariffs soon. Although the EU and US agreed to a 15% cap on levies last year, a major fine against an American company could trigger retaliation.

Brussels is facing "one of the trickiest transatlantic balancing acts in months," Politico said.

Brazil promises \$3.7B tariff relief

Brazil approved \$3.7 billion in financing for companies affected by US President Donald Trump's 25% tariff on some exports.

The measures represent a fresh challenge for Brazilian presidential hopeful Flávio Bolsonaro. A new poll showed that 51% of Brazilians blame him and his family — including his father, a former president and Trump ally — for pressuring Washington into imposing the tariffs as a way to weaken Brazil's incumbent leader.

Six in 10 Brazilians believe the Bolsonaro family no longer has enough influence to persuade Trump to reverse the tariffs, leaving Flávio to face growing political pressure. His chances in October's presidential elections have declined since the tariffs were announced.

Intra-African trade key to growth



Tracking East Africa's top agricultural commodities and export destinations - New Report. Pic - TradeMark Africa

African countries must focus on strengthening intra-African trade to build their economies rather than concentrating on the legacy of colonialism, a prominent analyst argued in the Financial Times.

Although many on the continent view the 19th-century Berlin Conference as the original obstacle to greater African integration, Bright Simons argued that more recent challenges are more significant. Most countries have failed to commit to the 2019 African Continental Free Trade Area, meaning intra-African trade accounted for only 20% of total exports in 2024.

His argument comes as the continent faces tougher tariffs from Washington.

"The borders are a fact," Simons wrote. "The failure to build constituencies for integration within them is a choice."

Mideast conflict expansion risk

Attacks on tankers in the Red Sea and US bases in the Gulf have raised fears that the Middle East conflict could escalate.

Two Saudi ships were struck by Houthi militants after the Iran-backed group warned it would blockade the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, through which about 10% of global trade passes.

Washington has reportedly moved more troops and weapons to the Gulf as President Donald Trump considers increasing hostilities following Iranian attacks that killed three US soldiers. The accuracy and sophistication of Iranian strikes on CIA facilities have also raised questions about possible Russian involvement, Reuters reported.

The fighting and pressure on shipping pushed Brent crude prices above \$98 for the first time since early June.

Bangladesh president likely to resign soon, sources claim

Bangladesh's President Mohammad Shahabuddin is likely to resign soon, nearly two years ahead of his tenure, political sources and media reports said on Thursday.

Shahabuddin was elected to the highest office by the past parliament and happens to be the only person still holding his constitutional position long after the violent July-August 2024 student-led street protest that toppled prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government. Hasina fled to India and has been living there since August 5, 2024, reports PTI.

"It is likely that he will resign soon," a senior leader of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party told PTI without further elaboration.

However, reports carried by several mainstream Bangladeshi media over his resignation gained momentum in the past two days. Newspaper Prothom Alo quoted a high-level government source as saying that the government was unhappy with reports that Shahabuddin tried to re-establish contacts with Hasina recently.

A senior BNP leader told The Daily Star that a recently reported telephone conversation between Shahabuddin and Hasina was not the only reason behind his expected resignation and rather the issue was "more complex" as Bangladesh's political scenario has become more sensitive with Hasina's announcement to return home.

Earlier in the month, Hasina said she will return to Bangladesh in December.

Bangladesh said it "welcomed" Hasina's plans to



return home but asserted that she must face justice.

On November 17, 2025, Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal sentenced former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to death in absentia for crimes against humanity. The convictions arose from their command and leadership roles in the state's violent suppression of the student-led protests during the July-August 2024 uprising.

A 1971 Liberation War veteran and former lower judiciary judge, Shahabuddin had taken oath in April 2023 for a five-year term.

According to Bangladesh Constitution, if the president resigns, parliamentary Speaker Hafizuddin Ahmed will take the charge as the interim president until a new head of the state is elected.

Russia warns US over arms delivery to Ukraine, EU unveils new sanctions on

Russia on Thursday warned United States against what it termed as "unacceptable" arms deliveries to Ukraine, after Ukrainian strikes killed three people, including a child, in Russia and in Moscow-annexed Crimea. This comes even as US-led talks on resolving the conflict have stalled since Washington's attention shifted to West Asia.

Meanwhile, the European Union agreed to new sanctions against Russia over the Ukraine war after weeks of haggling. The new package includes a 2-month freeze on the Russian oil price cap, and a one-year exemption allowing the transfer of Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) to third countries, with automatic renewal, Reuters news agency reported citing two EU diplomats.

The technical work on the sanctions package will be concluded next, following which a written procedure for adoption will be launched on Thursday afternoon. Meanwhile Greece, whose veto had until now prevented a deal, secured an exemption to continue shipping Russian LNG to non-EU clients for the foreseeable future. "Member states showed solidarity with Greece and it's expected that Greece will do the same with others in the future," an EU diplomat said, Reuters reported.

Rubio holds 'good, frank talks' with Russia's Lavrov

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio met Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov on Thursday in the Philippines, with the former saying they had "good, frank talks." While the US state department offered few details regarding the meeting, a spokesperson said "the US-Russia relationship and the need to end the Russia-Ukraine war" was discussed.

"We are prepared to play a constructive role in bringing about an end to a senseless war and we're ready to do that," Rubio said after the meeting on the sidelines of a gathering of top diplomats in Manila, according to Reuters.

Across the Globe

Hopes for US-Iran Talks in Tatters

The US struck Iran for an 11th consecutive day, leaving a potential ceasefire deal in tatters amid growing fears of further escalation. Oil prices rose 4%, and Goldman Sachs forecast that they could increase by 30% by year-end if traffic through the Strait of Hormuz remains restricted — a scenario that appears increasingly likely.

US President Donald Trump raised the possibility that his forces could target an underground nuclear facility, while his secretary of state said Tehran was "not serious about talks." Iran's supreme leader warned that the US would suffer "unforgettable lessons."

Ultimately, Trump may be constrained more by domestic concerns than by external factors. Republicans are worried about the war's political consequences ahead of midterm elections, while US Treasury yields reached a two-month high amid inflation concerns.

First private Indian spacecraft reaches orbit

An Indian company has broken the US-China duopoly in commercial spaceflight.

India has operated a government-led space programme for decades and has even landed a rover on the Moon. However, Skyroot's Vikram-1 rocket, launched on Saturday, is the first privately developed Indian spacecraft to reach orbit.

India only opened its space sector to private companies in 2020, and Skyroot became the country's first



Skyroot Aerospace has successfully launched Vikram-1. Pic - The Week

space unicorn in June.

Despite the successful launch, the company's bigger challenges lie ahead: achieving reliable and profitable launches, developing larger rockets, and eventually building reusable launch vehicles.

China's private space industry is also expanding, but despite recent progress with reusable rockets, it remains unlikely to catch up with SpaceX, which continues to dominate the launch market.

US professor suspects AI cheating

ABrown University economist who suspected students of using AI to cheat on a take-home examination said his concerns were confirmed after he changed the final exam to an in-person format.

The average score on Professor Roberto Serrano's midterm was 96%, far above the historical range of 65% to 80%, and many answers appeared to have been generated by AI.

After the in-person final was announced, 18 of the 86 students dropped the course, nine did not sit the exam, and the average score fell to 48.6%.

Serrano subsequently voided the midterm results.

Growing concerns about AI-assisted cheating have prompted universities to revise examination policies. Princeton has ended its 133-year-old honour code tradition of unsupervised exams, and some institutions are returning to in-person assessments.

However, many universities have not followed suit. One academic told Inside Higher Ed that academics are "not incentivized to really prevent cheating."

US Agrees Saudi Nuclear Deal

The White House reportedly reached a nuclear agreement with Saudi Arabia that could allow the kingdom to enrich its own uranium. US companies would play a central role in Saudi nuclear plans, including the construction of enrichment infrastructure, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

The agreement aims to repair US-Saudi relations, which have been strained by the Iran war, according to *The New York Times*. However, it could face opposition in Congress and abroad, as many US lawmakers and Israeli officials fear the deal could give Riyadh the capability to develop nuclear weapons.

The Saudi crown prince has said he would pursue a bomb if Iran does so, an increasingly pressing concern after the collapse of an Obama-era nuclear inspection agreement.

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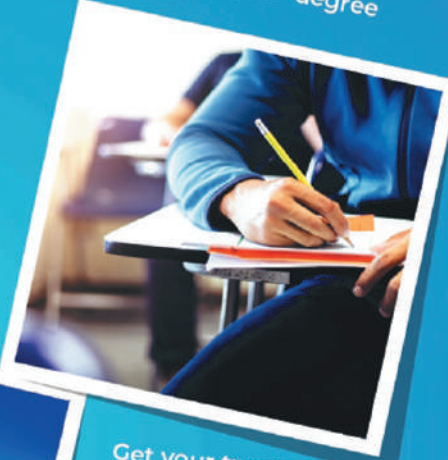
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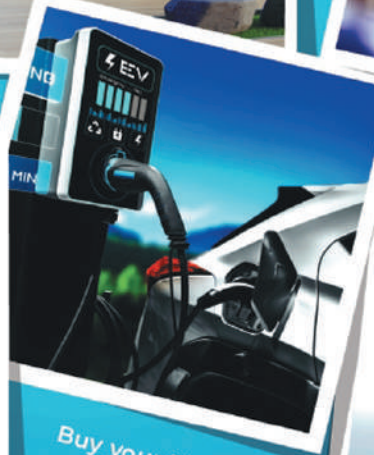
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From Our Archives -- A Glimpse into 1961

8th Year No 340

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 10 March, 1961

• "Scandal breeds hatred; hatred begets division; division breeds faction; and faction brings ruin." — Francis Quarles



Peter Ibbotson

The Meade and Titmuss Reports II

In the first part of this remarkable article, originally published in March 1961, Peter Ibbotson examined the publication of the landmark Meade and Titmuss Reports, two studies commissioned to assess Mauritius' economic and social future at a critical moment in its history. He highlighted the reports' warning that the country had long suffered not from a lack of expert advice, but from a persistent failure to implement necessary reforms. He also explored their candid assessment of communal divisions, weak national cohesion, and the urgent need for greater inter-racial cooperation as foundations for economic progress.

In this concluding installment, Peter Ibbotson turns to what both reports regarded as the island's most pressing challenge: rapid population growth and the imperative of voluntary family planning. He examines the fierce political and religious controversy surrounding the issue, while reflecting on the difficult choices facing Mauritius and the political courage required to confront them. More than six decades later, many of the questions raised in these reports continue to resonate in contemporary debates about the country's long-term economic and social sustainability.

The Challenge

The Government, I have said, faces a stern challenge to its courage and integrity. I am confident that it will react to the challenge with courage and integrity and seek to put into effect the far-sighted proposals made by Professor Titmuss, Professor Meade, and their various colleagues. After all, despite Professor Meade's many criticisms of the communalism which detrimentally pervades Mauritius today, the implication is nevertheless that to abandon communalism will be to work for the benefit of Mauritius; and the Government, enjoying as it does support from people of all races and creeds, is the only multiracial body in the island capable of operating the comprehensive plans needed under the two reports. The alternative governments (PM, or IFB or PM-IFB in coalition) are too dreadful even to contemplate.

In any case, only the present Government has espoused policies resembling those recommended by the Meade Report; the other parties who might form an alternative government have repudiated in advance suggestions for diversification of the economy such as have now been put forward; or else they are committed to the idea that massive emigration will solve all the problems — which Professor Meade's team has shown to be demonstrably false. And, of course, they are communalists.

If I am prejudiced in favour of the Meade and Titmuss reports, it is for two reasons. First, and more important, because they chart the course for the future prosperity of the island and the future well-being of its inhabitants; and the wellbeing of a human community is something in favour of which I am, as a Christian, naturally predisposed.

Second, the many recommendations of both reports vindicate what I have been saying in these columns for many years at one time and another. The whole principle of family planning is supported at great length and with authority. For years I have argued in favour of family planning in the *Mauritius Times*. Then take many others of the Meade recommendations. Large-scale emigration is only a minor mitigation of the population problem, but small-scale emigration on the Barbadian pattern should be studied (incidentally Seychelles has already not only studied, but adopted, such a proposal). This is a matter which I suggested in these columns long before the Meade Mission was set up. Don't expand sugar production ad lib., pleads the report; and a suggestion other than a quota system is put forward for limiting overall sugar production. This plea is one which I have made repeatedly in this paper; the editors too have pleaded for some upward limit beyond which sugar production should not be allowed to rise.

Land misuse is deplored; since its inception the *Mauritius Times* has asked that valuable land be taken from stag-breeders and given over to food crops. Particularly welcome (from a personal point of view as well as from the standpoint of the future Mauritian economy) is the proposal that an Agricultural Marketing Board be set up to market vegetables on behalf of growers who would thus be guaranteed a market at a guaranteed price. Allied with this is the recommendation that cold storage availability be extended, for fish as well as vegetables; and the "not too optimistic" thought of a future fish cannery. Then the Meade Report urges more sawmills, a bacon factory, development of milk production, development of the fishing industry (with the assistance of Japanese expertise, perhaps), introduction of the broiler poultry and rabbit industry, and an Industrial Development Board — all things which have been urged in my columns in the months and years past.

Also vindicated is my insistence that English be the medium of instruction with Creole used in the initial stages of the primary school.

In the past, various columnists in *Le Mauricien* and *Le Cerneen* have suggested that as a Londoner I ought not to comment on Mauritian affairs; that I should not make suggestions about the future development of Mauritius. Now that they see how my past views have been vindicated by on-the-spot experts, I hope that in future they will cease such criticisms.

The proposal for an Industrial Development Board is one of the most important recommendations of the whole Meade Report. In my view, the Government cannot afford to lose any time in giving effect to this recommendation; they should at once get hold of copies of the Barbados Development Act, 1955, and study the workings of the industrial development boards in Barbados and Malta (there are other similar boards in, for example Uganda and Jamaica, but Barbados and Malta afford close parallels to Mauritius economically and/or demographically).

And, of course, in anticipation that the Meade Report would make such a recommendation, I have written at length about such boards in other colonies in the



Don't expand sugar production ad lib: Professor Meade - Pic - vintagemauritius.org

Mauritius Times over the last five months.

Wage-Pegging

Two suggestions of the Meade Report in particular are certain to come under fire, and from different sections of the community. The suggestion that wages be pegged for some years ahead will not, at first sight, commend itself to the trade unions, especially those unions associated with the Destructive element. The proposal that labour on the estates be decasualised will not meet with the approval of the estates, who have already (in the Chamber of Agriculture's annual report) opposed decasualisation which Mr Luce put forward in his report two years ago. (Another example of the tendency to which both Meade and Titmuss Reports referred: the lack of will to act on advice when it has been tendered).

The proposals designed to restrict the powers and activities of the job contractors will not be welcomed everywhere; though I for one would be glad to see the job contractor system, full of abuses real and potential, abolished. I welcome the Meade proposals to curb the job contractors as an interim measure; I welcome too the proposals (which anyway I welcomed when Mr Luce made them) that labour on the estates be decasualised.

I can understand those union leaders who will, on purely economic grounds, oppose the proposals to peg wages; I can even begin to sympathise with them. I cannot, on the other hand, begin to sympathise with those opportunists among the trade unions who will seize on the wage-pegging proposals for political reasons to oppose the Meade Report and embarrass the Govt. Such opportunists belong to the Destroyers' faction and must be exposed.

Zordi, dime... **Vivii!**



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Exit Starmer, Enter Burnham: Reading the Early Signals



Andy Burnham celebrates victory in the Makerfield by-election
Pic - Christopher Furlong - Getty Images

Cont. from page 6

Britain, the World — and Mauritius

For Mauritius, these developments warrant careful attention rather than premature conclusions. Governments change; national interests endure. Nevertheless, changes of leadership frequently create opportunities to revisit longstanding issues through a different political prism. Diplomatic style often proves almost as important as diplomatic substance.

If the Burnham administration genuinely intends to reaffirm Britain's credentials as a principled advocate of international law, multilateral cooperation and responsible international leadership, then the unfinished Chagos question may, sooner rather than later, become an important measure of that commitment.

My observation here should not be misconstrued as undue optimism. Foreign policy remains shaped by enduring strategic interests, alliance obligations and domestic political realities. History also demonstrates that leaders pursuing identical national interests often employ markedly different diplomatic methods.

Mauritius would therefore be well advised to engage the new administration early, actively, constructively and without preconceived assumptions. Successful diplomacy has never consisted of waiting for opportunities to present themselves. It consists of recognising them when they begin to emerge and acting with foresight.

“History also demonstrates that leaders pursuing identical national interests often employ markedly different diplomatic methods. Mauritius would therefore be well advised to engage the new administration early, actively, constructively and without preconceived assumptions. Successful diplomacy has never consisted of waiting for opportunities to present themselves. It consists of recognising them when they begin to emerge and acting with foresight...”

Reading the Early Signals

It would be premature to offer judgment on a government that has scarcely settled into office. But then, diplomacy rarely begins with treaties. It begins with appointments, with conversations, with carefully chosen words and with signals.

The Burnham government has already sent several of them. Whether they ultimately evolve into a coherent foreign policy doctrine or merely reflect a different political style is a question that only time can answer. But they deserve close scrutiny. For, Britain may not simply be witnessing the arrival of a new Prime Minister; it may be witnessing the gradual emergence of a new diplomatic vocabulary — one that seeks to reconcile Atlantic partnership with renewed European engagement, national interest with international responsibility, and strategic realism with principled diplomacy.

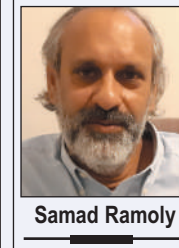
In an age marked by fractured alliances, great-power rivalry and an increasingly fragile multilateral order, such a recalibration would matter not only for Britain itself, but for its allies, its partners and countries such as Mauritius, whose own future remains closely intertwined with the health of the international rules-based system.

If these are indeed the first signals of that journey, they are signals well worth reading.

Vijay Makhan
22 July 2026

Opinion

Labels Don't Build Nations — Sound Policies Do



Samad Ramoly

The left-right spectrum isn't a law of politics — it's a historical accident. The terms come from the French National Assembly of 1789, where monarchy supporters sat right and revolutionaries sat left. We're still sorting today's problems into a binary built for one dispute in one room.



Ideologies bundle positions that aren't logically connected — just historically coupled through coalition-building. A more practical approach treats policy as a design problem: some solutions will lean “left” by convention (social provision), others “right” (market mechanisms) — whichever the problem actually calls for.

The real test isn't ideological consistency. It's whether a policy solves the problem, stays flexible as conditions shift, and is coordinated enough across domains that different stakeholders — not just one camp — can see their interests reflected in it. Legitimacy comes from that shared recognition, not from label loyalty.

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Corps paraétatiques: la facture d'une décennie de mauvaise gestion

☞ Suite de la page 5

- Depuis 2020, ce sont pas moins de 14,4 milliards de roupies de fonds publics qui ont dû être injectés en urgence pour permettre à des structures publiques d'honorer leurs obligations.
- Qu'il s'agisse des 11,5 milliards de roupies versés via la National Property Fund Ltd pour colmater les brèches consécutives à la liquidation brutale du conglomérat ex-BAI et au scandale du *Super Cash Back Gold Scheme*, ou encore des perfusions financières accordées à Metro Express et à MauBank, l'État a constamment joué les pompiers pyromanes.

Cette dynamique met en relief un contraste saisissant entre la gravité des rapports d'audit et l'inertie politique qui prévalait jusqu'alors. L'auditeur a beau avertir que l'accumulation des passifs contingents et la dépendance chronique à l'emprunt font peser un risque systémique sur la viabilité des finances publiques, les mécanismes de contrôle interne et de responsabilisation ont été mis sous le boisseau.

L'annonce de la mise en place imminente d'un comité de pilotage sur l'efficacité du secteur public, présidé par le chef de l'exécutif, constitue certes un signal fort de reprise en main. Elle traduit la volonté d'imposer enfin une discipline budgétaire rigoureuse et de traquer le gaspillage. Néanmoins, pour que ce sursaut salvateur porte ses fruits, il ne doit pas s'agir d'un énième exercice cosmétique sans lendemain.

Le véritable défi pour l'administration actuelle, c'est de briser la malédiction institutionnelle qui transforme les rapports de l'Audit en simples inventaires de dysfonctionnements sans lendemain. Tant que les recommandations du Directeur de l'Audit ne seront pas adossées à des mécanismes juridiques contraignants et à une reddition de comptes impérative, le contribuable mauricien continuera de payer le prix fort pour les dérives structurelles du passé.

Pour sauver la pérennité financière de l'État, cela exige non seulement des plans de transformation sectoriels, mais aussi et surtout un changement radical de culture politique, où l'utilisation des fonds publics n'est plus jamais subordonnée au clientélisme ou au mépris des règles de bonne gouvernance.

Smartphones en classe: de l'interdiction pure à l'usage contrôlé, le pari risqué de l'école mauricienne

A l'approche de la fin de ce deuxième trimestre 2026, le feuilleton de l'utilisation du téléphone portable dans les établissements scolaires mauriciens a connu un rebondissement de taille. Longtemps attendu, le cadre réglementaire entériné par le Conseil des ministres a pris une tournure inattendue.

Alors que les annonces initiales laissaient présager une interdiction stricte et globale des smartphones — à l'instar du ramassage de portables mis en scène au début de l'année dernière par le ministre de l'Éducation, Mahend Gungapersad, au Curepipe College —, le gouvernement a opté pour un «usage contrôlé». Désormais, les élèves peuvent apporter leurs appareils dans l'enceinte scolaire, à condition qu'ils restent éteints (ou sur mode silencieux) et rangés dans les sacs ou les poches. Cette mesure s'applique également au personnel enseignant et non-enseignant.

Ce revirement, fruit de consultations menées notamment avec les syndicats, et faisant suite à une levée de boucliers du corps enseignant, laisse pourtant les recteurs sur leur faim. Vikash Ramdonee, président de l'*United Deputy Rectors and Rectors Union* (UDRRU), n'a pas manqué de souligner le flou entourant l'application concrète de ces nouvelles directives. Entre la crainte de voir le management scolaire porter l'entière responsabilité en cas de vol ou de détérioration, et l'absence de consignes claires sur la gestion des sanctions ou des failles potentielles («*loopholes*»), le compte n'y est pas pour les chefs d'établissement qui plaident pour une interdiction nette et sans bavure.

Pour mesurer la pertinence de ce choix mitoyen, il est instructif de se tourner vers l'expérience internationale. Partout dans le monde, l'école tente de refermer la boîte de Pandore numérique, mais les méthodes diffèrent et leurs impacts sont scrutés de près.

- En France, pionnière en la matière



Maurice gagnerait à suivre l'exemple des pays ayant eu le courage politique d'interdire clairement les smartphones à l'école. P - Tribune de Genève

avec une loi interdisant l'utilisation des portables dans les collèges dès 2018, puis une phase d'expérimentation de «pause numérique» (confiscation à l'entrée de l'établissement) généralisée à la rentrée 2024, les retours des enseignants sont globalement unanimes: la suppression de l'objet connecté dans l'espace de vie scolaire réduit considérablement le cyberharcèlement, diminue les tensions dans les cours de récréation et favorise une reconcentration des élèves sur les apprentissages.

- Aux Pays-Bas, en Suède ou dans plusieurs États américains, des interdictions strictes ont été adoptées. Les études d'impact convergent. Des pays, comme la Suède, qui avaient initialement misé sur le tout-numérique, ont fait marche arrière face à la baisse des performances cognitives et des capacités de lecture, réinjectant des manuels scolaires et bannissant les écrans pour restaurer un climat propice à l'effort intellectuel. Lorsque l'interdiction est totale et assumée, les établissements constatent une nette amélioration du bien-être et aussi des résultats scolaires, les élèves étant soustraits à l'addiction des réseaux sociaux

et aux distractions permanentes.

À l'inverse, le modèle mauricien de l'«usage contrôlé» choisi *in extremis* risque de se heurter à des complexités logistiques insurmontables. En rejetant la responsabilité de la surveillance sur les épaules des recteurs sans offrir de dispositifs étanches — comme des casiers sécurisés ou une interdiction formelle de franchir les portails avec un smartphone —, l'administration risque de créer une zone grise ingérable. Si l'intention louable de renforcer la discipline et d'apaiser le climat scolaire transparaît dans ces nouveaux règlements, l'ambiguïté de leur mise en œuvre laisse craindre un transfert de charge sur le terrain.

Pour que cette réforme ne devienne pas une source de conflits permanents entre parents, élèves et administration, Maurice gagnerait à s'inspirer des bastions internationaux qui ont fait le choix du courage politique: un bannissement clair et sans compromis des smartphones à l'école.

Dans la bataille de l'attention, la demi-mesure s'apparente souvent à un statu quo déguisé.

Au-delà de la classe

L'interdiction des réseaux sociaux aux mineurs face à l'épreuve des faits

A lors que les gouvernements et les établissements scolaires s'arrachent les cheveux pour réguler la présence des téléphones portables dans l'enceinte des écoles, un autre front, bien plus vaste et radical, s'est ouvert à l'échelle internationale. Liée intrinsèquement au débat sur les écrans à l'école, l'interdiction des réseaux sociaux aux adolescents s'impose aujourd'hui comme l'un des sujets les plus incandescents de notre époque.

Face à une jeunesse hyperconnectée, prisonnière d'algorithmes conçus pour maximiser l'addiction, plusieurs nations ont décidé de passer des recommandations morales à la législation coercitive. Mais que sait-on réellement de ces initiatives audacieuses, et quelles leçons tirer des expériences étrangères?

A. Bartleby

☞ Suite en page 18

Au-delà de la classe

L'interdiction des réseaux sociaux aux mineurs face à l'épreuve des faits

☞ Suite de la page 17

La prise de conscience mondiale: vers un «devoir d'âge» numérique

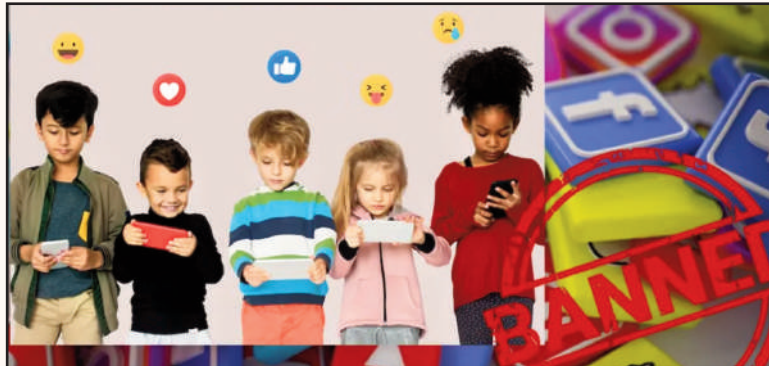
Pendant des années, le numérique a été vendu comme une promesse absolue d'émancipation et d'éducation. Aujourd'hui, le vernis s'est écaillé. Psychiatres, pédiatres et enseignants dressent un constat unanime: l'accès précoce et non régulé aux plateformes sociales (TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat) agit comme un poison lent sur la santé mentale des adolescents. Explosion des cas d'anxiété, vagues de cyberharcèlement, troubles du sommeil et chute spectaculaire des capacités de concentration, tout cela a transformé l'espace virtuel en un terrain miné.

C'est face à cette urgence sanitaire que l'idée d'une interdiction légale pour les moins de 15 ou 16 ans a cessé d'être une simple utopie pour devenir une réalité législative. Après l'Australie, pionnière en la matière, la France a voté le 21 juillet 2026 une loi interdisant l'accès aux réseaux sociaux aux mineurs de moins de 15 ans. D'autres pays emboîtent le pas, transformant ce combat sociétal en une bataille géopolitique contre la toute-puissance de la Silicon Valley.

Les leçons des pionniers: entre espoirs de régulation et défis techniques

L'observation des expériences internationales permet de mesurer l'immense complexité de ces interdictions.

- Samuel Cornell, chercheur en santé publique à



Abandonner les adolescents aux mains de marchands d'attention sans foi ni loi, c'est compromettre, l'œil complice ou résigné, l'avenir même de toute une génération. P - India TV News

l'Université du Queensland, souligne que six mois après l'entrée en vigueur de la loi australienne interdisant les plateformes aux moins de 16 ans, le premier réflexe a été de crier à l'échec.

- Une étude menée par la chercheuse Courtney Barnes de l'Université de Newcastle et publiée dans le *British Medical Journal* a révélé que plus de 85 % des adolescents continuent d'utiliser des applications restreintes comme TikTok, X ou Instagram, souvent via de simples déclarations d'âge fictives.

Faut-il pour autant enterrer l'idée? Pas du tout, soutient Samuel Cornell. Exiger que les jeunes abandonnent leurs habitudes du jour au lendemain relevait d'un rêve irréaliste. De plus, la mise en pratique se heurte à de redoutables

obstacles techniques: comment vérifier l'âge sans piétiner le droit à la vie privée ou pousser les adolescents vers de faux comptes et des recoins plus sombres du web?

Cependant, selon l'analyse de Samuel Cornell, il ne faut pas juger ces politiques à court terme car ce serait une erreur de calendrier. La logique de ces lois s'apparente à l'approche générationnelle désormais appliquée à la lutte contre le tabagisme: l'objectif n'est pas d'éradiquer instantanément les usages actuels, mais de faire grandir une génération pour laquelle l'accès aux réseaux sociaux ne sera plus la norme. Les bénéfices profonds de ces mesures — qui exigent une pression implacable, s'étalant sur une décennie, sur les plateformes — concerneront avant tout les enfants d'aujourd'hui qui n'ont pas encore ouvert de tels comptes.

Repenser le pacte numérique: l'urgence pour Maurice

Pour une société comme l'île Maurice, qui s'efforce de moderniser son cadre éducatif tout en luttant contre la dérive comportementale de sa jeunesse, ce débat international résonne avec une acuité particulière. Discuter du téléphone à l'école sans aborder la question de l'accès aux réseaux sociaux en dehors de la classe revient à traiter les symptômes d'une maladie tout en ignorant sa cause profonde.

Si les autorités choisissent de réglementer les écrans, la réflexion doit nécessairement s'élargir à l'âge d'accès aux plateformes algorithmiques. Protéger nos enfants, cela ne relève pas d'un conservatisme rétrograde, mais d'un impératif de santé publique.

À l'instar de ce qui se tente ailleurs, il est temps que les gouvernements imposent aux mastodontes du web de rendre des comptes. Car abandonner les adolescents aux mains de marchands d'attention sans foi ni loi, c'est compromettre, l'œil complice ou résigné, l'avenir même de toute une génération.

Entre urgence économique et mémoire historique

Maurice face au défi de la dignité des travailleurs migrants



Le vrai défi pour Maurice n'est pas d'importer de la main-d'œuvre à moindre coût, mais de veiller à ce que la compétitivité ne se fasse jamais au détriment de la dignité humaine. P - Defi Media

Avec près de 52 000 travailleurs étrangers recensés sur son sol au milieu de cette année 2026, l'île Maurice franchit un cap décisif dans sa mutation socio-économique. De la construction aux services en passant par le commerce de gros et le secteur agricole — où plus de 8 000 arpents de cannes sont menacés d'abandon faute de bras —, la dépendance de l'archipel envers une main-d'œuvre expatriée, venue majoritairement d'Asie du Sud et de Madagascar, est devenue une réalité incontournable.

Face à cette transition, l'État tente d'encadrer le phénomène, notamment à travers de nouveaux règlements pour les «labour contractors» dans les champs, tout en promet-

tant le principe fondamental «à travail égal, salaire égal». Néanmoins, cette course à la flexibilité économique soulève une question vertigineuse: l'île Maurice est-elle en train de répéter, sous une forme aseptisée, les tragiques erreurs de son passé colonial?

Il est impossible d'analyser l'arrivée massive de ces contingents de travailleurs sans regarder en face l'histoire douloureuse de l'île. Au lendemain de l'abolition de l'esclavage en 1835, le système de l'engagisme (*indentured labour*) avait vu le déracinement de centaines de milliers de travailleurs indiens, acheminés vers les plantations mauriciennes. Promis à un avenir meilleur, ces hommes et ces femmes ont trop souvent enduré une servitude déguisée, parqués dans des conditions indignes, soumis à l'arbitraire de patrons tout-puissants et privés de droits fondamentaux.

Aujourd'hui, alors que les syndicats mauriciens montent au front, les inquiétudes concernant les coûts exorbitants de recrutement, la précarité des logements, la menace sur les conventions collectives et les risques de surexploitation rappellent, avec un trouble persistant, les fantômes de cet héritage.

Certes, le gouvernement assure vouloir verrouiller le système: interdiction aux agences privées lucratives de faire la loi dans le secteur de l'agriculture, contrats types validés par le Parquet, contrôles réguliers de l'inspection du travail et garantie des *Remuneration Orders*. Mais entre les belles promesses de la tribune parlementaire et la dure réalité du terrain, un gouffre demeure.

Lorsque des milliers de travailleurs se retrouvent dépendants d'un statut précaire, logés par des intermédiaires et

exposés à des pressions pour ne pas perdre leur permis de séjour, le terrain est fertile pour les abus. Traiter l'être humain comme une simple variable d'ajustement économique que l'on loue, que l'on déplace au gré des saisons sucrières et que l'on renvoie une fois la tâche accomplie, c'est s'exonérer des leçons morales les plus élémentaires de l'histoire.

L'île Maurice ne peut construire une prospérité durable sur la précarité des autres. Si notre économie a impérativement besoin de ces bras étrangers pour maintenir à flot ses industries et ses champs, la République a le devoir absolu d'être irréprochable sur le plan de l'éthique humaine.

Le véritable défi pour Maurice n'est pas de savoir comment importer de la main-d'œuvre au meilleur coût pour préserver sa compétitivité, mais de s'assurer que le modèle de développement choisi ne sacrifie jamais la dignité humaine sur l'autel de la rentabilité économique. Pour que l'histoire ne bégaye pas tragiquement, chaque travailleur foulant notre sol doit être reconnu non pas comme un «quota» ou un outil de production jetable, mais comme un citoyen du monde à part entière dont le labeur mérite le respect inconditionnel de la nation.

A. Bartleby

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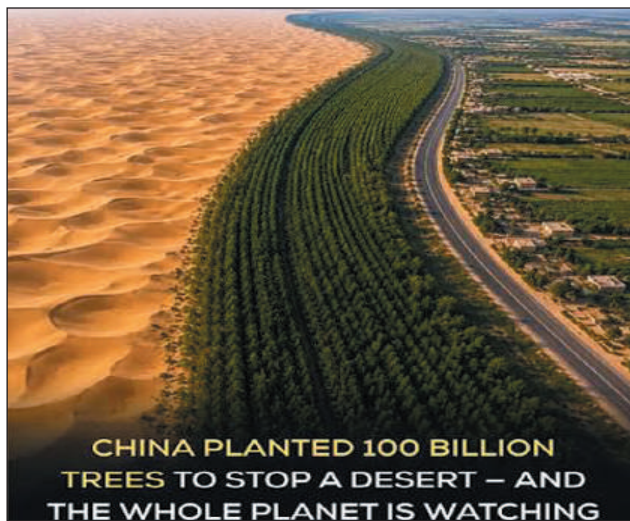
China Restores Over 10 Million Hectares of Desertified Land During 14th Five-Year Plan

China restored more than 10 million hectares of desertified land and nearly 2 million hectares of rocky desertified land during the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021–2025), according to the country's National Forestry and Grassland Administration.

The announcement was made on 17 June 2026 to mark the 32nd World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, underscoring China's continued efforts to reverse land degradation and improve ecological resilience.

According to the administration, the country's desertified land area has continued to shrink. Whereas desertification expanded by an average of 343,300 hectares annually in the late 1990s, the trend has now been reversed, with the area of desertified land declining by an average of 666,600 hectares per year.

The administration also highlighted significant progress under the Three-North Shelterbelt Forest Program, one of the world's largest afforestation initiatives, spanning 13 provincial-level regions across



northern, northwestern and northeastern China.

Since 2023, the central government has invested 88.9 billion yuan (approximately US\$13.2 billion) in 544 key

projects, covering a total of 16.3 million hectares.

China has also embraced innovative approaches to combating desertification. One such initiative combines photovoltaic power generation with desertification control, enabling the rehabilitation of 353,300 hectares of sandy land while simultaneously producing renewable energy.

Local governments participating in the programme have sought to balance environmental restoration with economic development by promoting sand-based industries tailored to local conditions, the administration said.

These combined efforts have generated substantial economic benefits. In 2025, the total output value of the forestry and grassland industry in the Three-North region reached 800 billion yuan.

The programme has also created significant employment opportunities for local communities. Through work-relief schemes, 1.526 million farmers and herders have been employed, receiving a total of 10.24 billion yuan in labour payments.



How deserts become the hottest places on earth

Antarctica, despite its freezing temperatures, is technically the world's largest desert

Why are deserts among the hottest places on Earth? While blazing sunshine and endless sand dunes may seem like the obvious answer, the science behind these extreme environments is far more fascinating.

According to Professor Shuang-Ye Wu, a climate scientist in the Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences at the University of Dayton (USA), deserts owe their intense heat to a combination of atmospheric circulation, cloud-free skies, the properties of sand and rock, and the scarcity of water.

Contrary to popular belief, a desert is not defined by temperature but by the amount of precipitation it receives. Climate scientists classify any region that gets less than 250 millimetres (10 inches) of rain, snow, or other forms of precipitation annually as a desert. This explains why Antarctica, despite its freezing temperatures, is technically the world's largest desert. It is extremely dry, with very little snowfall each year.

Most of the world's hot deserts, including the Sahara, the Arabian Desert, and Australia's Great Victoria Desert, lie around 30 degrees north and south of the Equator. Professor Wu explains that this pattern is no accident. It results from the way Earth's atmosphere circulates. Warm air rises near the Equator, cools, and releases its moisture as rain. The now-dry air then moves toward the subtropics, where it sinks, warms again, and creates the dry conditions that give rise to deserts.



Deserts - The hottest places on earth. Pic - Condé Nast Traveler

Several factors make these deserts exceptionally hot. One is the almost complete absence of clouds. In most regions, clouds reflect part of the Sun's energy and provide shade. Desert skies, however, are usually cloudless, allowing the Sun's rays to strike the ground with maximum intensity throughout the day.

The nature of the desert surface also plays a crucial role. Sand and rocks have a low specific heat, meaning they heat up very quickly when exposed to sunlight. Unlike water, which absorbs and stores heat over long periods, desert surfaces become scorching during the day but lose their heat rapidly after sunset. This explains why deserts often experience dramatic temperature swings, with sweltering daytime heat followed by surprisingly cold nights.

Another reason deserts become so hot is the lack of evaporative cooling. In greener landscapes, plants release water vapour into the atmosphere, helping to cool the surrounding air. Deserts have very little vegetation and almost no moisture in the soil, so this natural cooling mechanism is largely absent. As a result, heat accumulates near the ground.

Climate change is adding another dimension to the story. Professor Wu notes that global warming, driven largely by the burning of fossil fuels and de-forestation, is making many deserts hotter, drier and dustier while contributing to desertification — the expansion of desert conditions into previously fertile land. Yet the effects are not uniform. Some deserts, including parts of the Thar Desert in India and Pakistan, the southern edge of the Sahara, and regions of northern China, are receiving more rainfall as shifting weather patterns alter regional climates, leading to partial "greening."

Professor Wu's research at the University of Dayton highlights that deserts are not simply barren wastelands but finely balanced ecosystems shaped by complex interactions between the atmosphere, land and climate. Understanding these processes is becoming increasingly important as global warming continues to reshape some of the Earth's most extreme environments.

Shuang-Ye Wu

Professor of Geology and
Environmental Geosciences,
University of Dayton

Stress and Late-Night Eating: A Double Threat to Gut Health

Chronic stress is already known to disrupt digestion, but new research suggests that combining stress with late-night eating may create a "double hit" for gut health, increasing the risk of digestive problems and affecting the balance of beneficial gut bacteria.

The findings, to be presented at Digestive Disease Week (DDW) 2026, highlight the growing importance of chrononutrition — the study of how the timing of meals influences health, not just the type of food we consume.

Researchers analysed data from more than 11,000 participants in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey to examine the relationship between stress, eating patterns, and digestive symptoms. They found that people experiencing high levels of physical stress who consumed more than a quarter of their daily calories after 9 p.m. were about 1.7 times more likely to suffer from constipation or diarrhoea compared with those who had lower stress levels and earlier eating habits.

The pattern was confirmed in another analysis involving more than 4,000 participants from the American Gut Project. Those with both high stress and late-night eating habits were 2.5 times more likely to report bowel problems and also showed lower diversity in their gut microbiome — the community of microorganisms that plays an important role in digestion, immunity, and overall health.

The study's lead author, Dr Harika Dadigiri, a resident physician at New York Medical College, explains that meal timing may become particularly important during periods of stress because the body's internal rhythms and digestive processes can be disrupted.

Although the research shows an association rather than direct cause and effect, it adds to growing evidence that when we eat may matter as much as what we eat.

Experts suggest that simple habits — such as maintaining regular meal times, avoiding heavy late-night eating, and prioritising balanced meals earlier in the day — may help support digestive health, especially during stressful periods. The occasional late-night treat is unlikely to be harmful, but consistent routines may make a difference for the gut over time.



*Laughter is the
Best Medicine*



Paying a Debt

Two men are walking down a dark alley when a thief steps out and demands their money.

Reluctantly, they pull out their wallets and begin handing over their cash.

Just then, one man turns to the other, hands him a £20 note, and says,

"Hey, here's the twenty pounds I owe you."

The Movie-Loving Dog

A man is sitting in a cinema, completely absorbed in a comedy, when he notices that two seats away another man is watching the film with his dog.

The dog seems to be thoroughly enjoying the movie. He wags his tail at the funny scenes, barks happily at the jokes, and growls whenever the villain appears.

Amazed, the man leans over and says, "Excuse me, but your dog seems completely engrossed in the film. That's incredible!"

The dog's owner smiles.

"It surprises me too," he says. "He hated the book."

The Concerned Assassins

Two Jewish men learn that one of Hitler's generals is scheduled to appear on a street corner in Berlin at noon on Wednesday.

Determined to assassinate him, they gather their weapons, find a concealed position across the street, and wait.

At 11:55 a.m., they're ready, fingers on the triggers.

Noon comes... but there's no sign of the general.

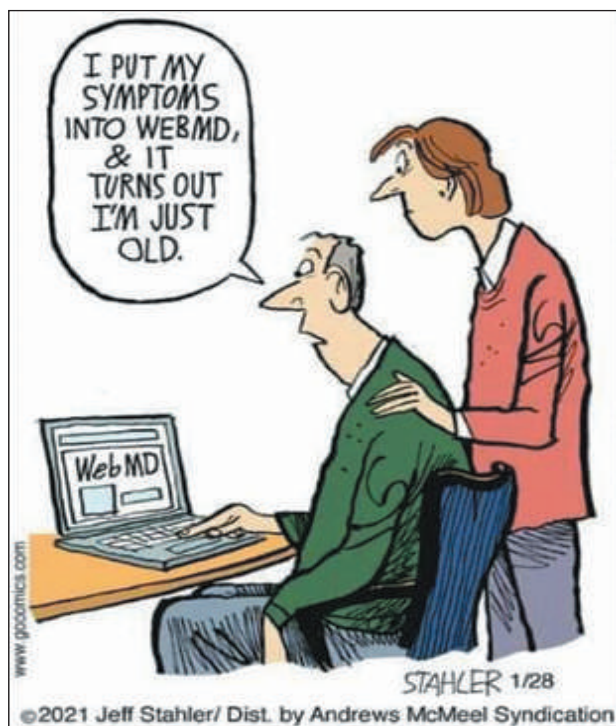
Five minutes passed.

Then ten.

By 12:30, the general still hadn't appeared.

One of the men turns to the other and says,

"I hope he's all right."



The Actor Who Forgot the Most Important Prop

An actor hadn't worked in years because he could no longer remember his lines. Then, after an outstanding audition, he finally landed a small role in a Broadway musical.

On opening night, the director gave him simple instructions:

"You only have one line. Walk onto the stage holding a rose in your right hand. Bring it up to your nose, take a deep sniff, and say, 'Oh, the smell of my lover.' That's it."

The actor nodded confidently.

The curtain rose, and right on cue he walked onto the stage. He lifted his hand to his nose, inhaled deeply, and declared:

"Oh, the smell of my lover!"

The audience burst into uncontrollable laughter.

Backstage, the director was furious.

The bewildered actor rushed over and asked, "What happened? Did I forget my line?"

The director sighed and replied:

"No... you forgot the rose!"



The 60th Class Reunion Surprise

A widower and a widow had known each other for decades. They had been high school classmates and had never missed a class reunion over the years.

At their 60th graduation anniversary reunion, they joined a table with two other single friends. It turned out to be a wonderful evening. They laughed, reminisced about old times, and enjoyed each other's company. Throughout the night, the widower kept casting admiring glances at the widow, and she responded with warm smiles.

Finally, during a dance, he gathered his courage and asked her:

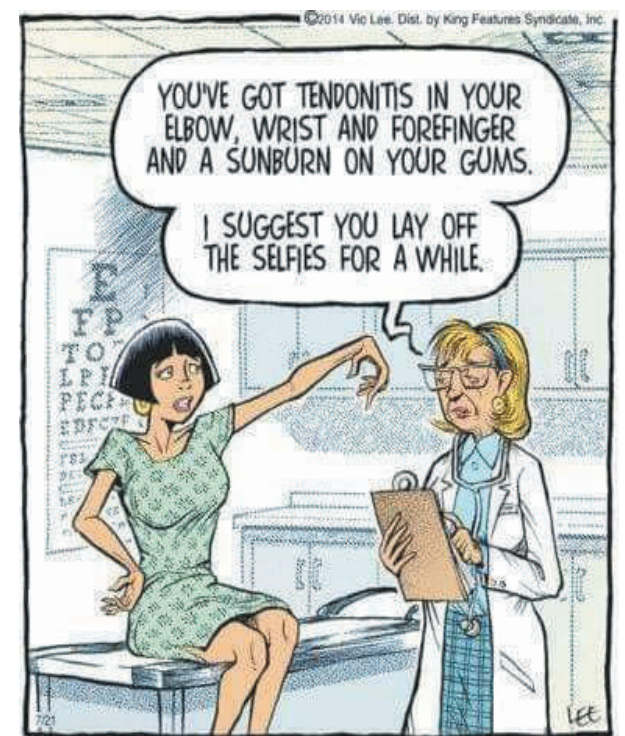
"Will you marry me?"

After about six seconds of careful thought, she replied:

"Yes, yes I will!"

The evening ended on a joyful note for the widower.

However, the next morning, he woke up with a problem. He couldn't remember her answer. Did she



say "Yes"? Did she say "No"? No matter how hard he tried, the details of that moment remained unclear.

He remembered asking the question, but her response was completely missing from his memory.

Feeling nervous, he decided to call her. When she answered, he explained:

"I'm afraid my memory isn't what it used to be. I was thinking about last night, and I need to ask you something. When I asked if you would marry me, did you say 'Yes' or did you say 'No'?"

The widow laughed and replied:

"Oh, you silly man! I said yes! Yes, I will! And I meant it with all my heart!"

The widower was overjoyed. His heart filled with happiness.

Then she added:

"And I'm so glad you called... because I couldn't remember who asked me!"

A reminder that love, laughter, and a little forgetfulness can make life even sweeter.

A Case of Mistaken Identity

A man called my phone and immediately started yelling, accusing me of stalking his wife and following her home from the bar.

I was furious at all the accusations and tried to explain, but he wouldn't listen.

Finally, I lost my patience and said:

"Careful what you say, you idiot... I know where you live!"

The joke works because the caller thinks he has caught someone, but the reply makes the situation even more suspicious and funny.

The Leather Skirt Surprise

When a man is in the same room with a woman wearing a leather skirt, his heart may start beating a little faster.

As he gets closer, his palms become sweaty, his knees feel weak, and his thoughts become a little irrational...

The reason?

She smells like a brand-new truck.

Thoughts to Live by**Lessons for a Fulfilling Life**

Life rarely unfolds in the neat, predictable way we imagine when we are younger. It bends, resists, surprises, and sometimes disappoints -- but within that unpredictability lies its greatest teacher: adaptability. The ability to adjust, to release rigid expectations, and to move forward with clarity rather than frustration is often what separates growth from stagnation.

One of the hardest but most freeing lessons is learning to let go of bitterness. Resentment can feel justified in the moment, but it quietly consumes the space meant for peace. Growth requires emotional lightness, not the weight of unresolved anger. Similarly, personal success begins with honesty -- especially honesty with oneself. Without self-truth, every ambition becomes distorted.

Relationships, too, shape much of our emotional landscape. Choosing a supportive partner can significantly influence one's sense of stability and direction. Yet it is equally important not to lose oneself in the pursuit of connection. A healthy relationship should never require self-abandonment, and love should never become an excuse for repeated emotional harm.

In a world where comparison is constant, it becomes essential to remember that everyone is living a different timeline. Some carry responsibilities early in life, especially those who support their parents, while others may not. Measuring your journey against someone else's often leads to unnecessary pressure. The more constructive path is to focus on your own direction -- chasing goals, not people.

The twenties, in particular, are often a defining period. They are not meant for perfection but for construction: building skills, discipline, identity, and resilience. Investing in oneself -- emotionally, intellectually, and even



in personal presentation -- is not vanity but self-respect. Confidence often begins with how one carries oneself in the world.

Equally important is learning emotional discipline. Not every thought needs to be spoken, and not every situation deserves reaction. Silence, when used wisely, can be more powerful than impulsive expression. Detachment, too, is not indifference; it is the ability to protect your peace by releasing what disrupts it.

Modern life also demands awareness of social perception. Social media, for instance, often presents curated versions of reality that can distort self-worth. What appears perfect is rarely complete. Likewise, not every act of kindness will be rewarded with appreciation. Being a good person does not guarantee fair treatment, but it does preserve integrity.

This is why boundaries matter. Not everyone deserves access to your plans, your emotions, or your personal struggles. Privacy is not secrecy -- it is protection. In the same spirit, protecting mental health means making deliberate choices about love, timing, and emotional

investment rather than acting from loneliness or pressure.

Growth also requires courage. The decisions we fear most are often the ones that transform us the most. Yet progress must not be rushed; rushing the process often damages what steady effort would have built naturally. True development is slow, consistent, and often invisible in its early stages.

Life will also test discernment in relationships. Some people return not to contribute, but to evaluate whether old versions of us still exist. Part of maturity is ensuring that we no longer operate at that earlier version. At the same time, it is equally important to recognize when certain relationships, environments, or influences no longer belong in our lives.

Financial responsibility is another quiet pillar of maturity. Before extending resources outward, it is essential to ensure that one's own foundation -- and family obligations -- are stable. Likewise, what is built quickly often dissolves quickly, while what endures usually demands effort, patience, and consistency.

Health and responsibility must also remain central. Choices around relationships and intimacy should always be made with awareness, respect, and protection of well-being. Respect for others, particularly women, is non-negotiable, and violence or abuse has no place in any form of relationship.

Finally, professionalism and self-respect extend into every environment, including the workplace. Not everyone at work is a friend, and clarity about roles often brings peace: do your job, earn your pay, and go home.

In the end, a fulfilling life is not built on perfection but on awareness -- of oneself, of others, and of the quiet principles that keep a person grounded while everything else changes.

Christina Sunday

Life's Stories**Behind Every Strong Man Is Someone Who Refuses to Let Him Fall**

This is the story of Mike Tyson and his wife, Lakiha "Kiki" Spicer.

Kiki was only 18 years old when boxing promoter Don King reportedly warned Tyson, "Stay away from her."

But he couldn't.

Two decades later, that same young woman became one of the main reasons Tyson was able to rebuild his life.

At the time, Tyson was battling a severe drug addiction. Years of cocaine abuse had taken a devastating toll on him. He was broken, bankrupt, and struggling to hold his life together.

Kiki became his anchor.

She did not simply stand by his side -- she helped him rebuild. She managed the family's finances, protected what remained of his assets, assisted with business decisions, and looked after his personal and professional interests. Most importantly, when Tyson felt like giving up, she supported him through his recovery and encouraged him to keep moving forward.

Reflecting on their relationship, Tyson later said:



"I'm so happy me and my wife got together, because I don't know how I would have survived out there."

Their story is a reminder that strength does not always mean standing alone. Even the strongest individuals sometimes need someone who believes in them when they can no longer believe in themselves.

Behind many successful people is someone who quietly provides support, stability and encouragement -- someone who refuses to let them fall.

Lessons from the Wild**The Lion and the Mouse**

A lion lay asleep in the forest, his great head resting on his paws. A timid little mouse came upon him unexpectedly, and in her fright and haste to get away, ran across the lion's nose. Roused from his nap, the lion laid his huge paw angrily on the tiny creature to kill her.

"spare me!" begged the poor mouse. "Please let me go and some day I will surely repay you."

The lion was much amused to think that a mouse could ever help him. But he was generous and finally let the mouse

go.

Some days later, while stalking his prey in the forest, the lion was caught in the toils of a hunter's net. Unable to free himself, he filled the forest with his angry roaring. The mouse knew the voice and quickly found him struggling in the net. Running to one of the great ropes that bound him, she gnawed it until it parted, and soon the lion was free.

"you laughed when I said I would repay you," said the mouse. "now you see that even a mouse can help a lion."

**The Fox and the Grapes**

A fox one day spied a beautiful bunch of ripe grapes hanging from a vine trained along the branches of a tree. The grapes seemed ready to burst with juice, and the fox's mouth watered as he gazed longingly at them.

The bunch hung from a high branch, and the Fox had to jump for it. The first time he jumped, he missed it by a wide margin. So he walked off a short dis-

tance and took a running leap at it, only to fall short once more. Again and again he tried, but in vain.

Now he sat down and looked at the grapes in disgust.

"What a fool I am," he said. "Here I am exhausting myself to get a bunch of sour grapes that are not even worth gaping for."

And off he walked, very, very scornfully.

Moral: It is easy to despise what you cannot get.

Attraction Outside Marriage: A Test of Boundaries, Commitment and Self-Control

Feeling attracted to someone other than one's spouse is a sensitive subject that many people hesitate to discuss. Yet attraction is a natural human emotion. Being married does not mean that one suddenly becomes unaware of other people's beauty, intelligence, personality or achievements. The important issue is not the feeling itself, but how one chooses to respond to it.

In a thoughtful reflection on the subject, Ratnamala Kamath highlights the difference between attraction and genuine admiration. She writes that she has met men who were "more handsome," "more intelligent," "much more wealthy," better dressed or held higher positions than her husband. Yet, she adds that she has never met a man whom she "liked or respected more than" her husband.

Her observation underlines an important truth: outward qualities do not necessarily determine the depth or value of a relationship. Someone may appear impressive from a distance, but qualities such as trust, kindness, loyalty, emotional



support and shared experiences often matter far more in building a lasting partnership.

Kamath compares attraction to seeing an attractive dress displayed on a man-

nequin in a shop window. It may immediately catch one's attention, but after entering the shop and trying it on, one may discover that it does not fit or is not as appealing as it first appeared. Similarly, a person who seems fascinating from afar may appear very different once one gets to know them more closely.

Finding another person attractive is not, in itself, a betrayal. Human beings naturally notice qualities they admire in others. However, admiration must be accompanied by self-awareness and respect for boundaries. A passing attraction does not have to become an emotional attachment or a physical relationship.

The danger begins when a temporary feeling is allowed to threaten a commitment built over many years. The excitement of something new can sometimes overshadow the deeper value of an established relationship, but the consequences of broken trust, guilt and regret can be long-lasting.

A healthy marriage does not depend on believing that one's partner is the only

admirable person in the world. Rather, it depends on recognising why that person was chosen and appreciating the qualities that make the relationship meaningful. A spouse may not always be the most attractive, successful or accomplished person one encounters, but they may be the person who provides the greatest sense of belonging, understanding and support.

Managing thoughts and emotions is therefore essential. A momentary attraction should not be allowed to destroy years of trust, companionship and shared memories. The excitement of a new connection often fades, while repairing damaged trust can be extremely difficult.

Ultimately, attraction may be unavoidable, but actions remain a choice. Maturity lies in understanding the difference between a passing emotion and a lasting commitment. Protecting a marriage requires honesty with oneself, respect for one's partner and the wisdom to value what truly matters over a temporary attraction.

Health& Life Hacks

Are You Drinking Water the Right Way? Common Mistakes That May Affect Your Health

Water is essential for life, supporting digestion, circulation, temperature regulation and overall health. Yet, according to health experts, many people may not be hydrating as effectively as they think. Simple habits — from the type of bottle we use to the way we consume water — can influence the benefits we receive.

One common mistake is drinking from plastic bottles that contain bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical used in some plastics. Research suggests that BPA can migrate into food and drinks, and prolonged exposure has been linked to concerns involving hormonal imbalance, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular health. Experts recommend choosing BPA-free bottles or alternatives made from glass or stainless steel.

Another misconception concerns cold water. Some people believe that drinking cold water harms digestion or narrows blood vessels, but there is little evidence to support these claims. Cold water can actually be a useful way to cool down and stay hydrated, especially in hot weather.

Adding fresh fruit, vegetables or herbs to water can make it more appealing, but hygiene is essential. Unwashed fruits and vegetables may carry harmful bacteria such as salmonella and E. coli. Always wash produce thoroughly before slicing it and adding it to drinks.

Hydration is also important when consuming alcohol. Since alcoholic beverages increase urine production, they can contribute to dehydration. A simple approach is to drink a glass of water between alcoholic drinks to maintain fluid balance.

People taking medication or supplements should also avoid swallowing pills with only a small sip of water. Drinking a full glass helps prevent tablets from becoming stuck in the oesophagus and improves the absorption of



some water-soluble vitamins.

Experts also caution against relying heavily on artificially flavoured waters and sweetened drinks. Some artificial sweeteners and additives may encourage cravings and have been associated with metabolic health concerns. Natural alternatives such as lemon, lime, cucumber, mint or herbs can add flavour without

unnecessary additives.

Fatigue can sometimes be a sign of dehydration. The body loses water constantly through breathing, sweating and normal bodily functions, even without intense exercise. Drinking small amounts regularly throughout the day is usually better than consuming large quantities at once.

Health professionals advise against "water loading" — drinking excessive amounts quickly in the belief that it boosts metabolism. The body absorbs water best when it is consumed gradually. Drinking too much late at night may also disturb sleep.

Finally, not all water sources are safe. Clear-looking water from rivers or streams can contain bacteria, parasites or chemical contaminants and should be treated before drinking.

The lesson is simple: staying hydrated is not only about drinking more water, but about drinking it wisely. Small changes in daily habits can help maximise the health benefits of this essential nutrient.

Exercise: 150 Minutes a Week Could Add Years to Your Life

You do not need an expensive gym membership or intense training routine to improve your health. Research suggests that simply getting 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week can significantly increase longevity.

A major study published in The Lancet, involving more than 140,000 people aged 35 to 70 across 17 countries, found that those who met this activity target had a 28% lower risk of death overall and a 20% lower risk of heart disease over the follow-up period.

Importantly, the study showed that exercise does not have to mean organised workouts. Everyday activities such as walking, gardening, housework, cycling to work, or taking the stairs can provide similar benefits

because the body responds to movement, regardless of how it is labelled.

Experts suggest simple ways to become more active: walk during breaks, reduce screen time, choose active transport, or exercise with a friend. Even small amounts of movement throughout the day can add up.

The message is simple: staying active is one of the most effective investments we can make in our future health.



BollyBytes

Ten Bollywood films that challenged social taboos

Bollywood has long been associated with romance and family entertainment, but several films have dared to tackle controversial themes that pushed the boundaries of mainstream Indian cinema. While many initially sparked public debate and censorship battles, they are now recognised for their bold storytelling, writes News18.

Among the most influential is Deepa Mehta's *Fire*, which broke new ground by portraying a same-sex relationship between two married women. *Lipstick Under My Burkha* explored female desire and personal freedom, overcoming censorship hurdles before earning critical acclaim.

Other notable productions include *Parched*, which



examined domestic violence, child marriage and women's empowerment in rural India, and *The Dirty Picture*, inspired by the life of South Indian screen icon Silk Smitha, which explored fame, objectification and female sexuality.

Films such as *Love Sex Aur Dhokha* tackled voyeurism, honour killings and media sensationalism through an experimental narrative style, while *Matrubhoomi: A Nation Without Women* imagined the devastating social consequences of female infanticide.

Other entries on the list include *B.A. Pass*, *Aastha*, *Ek Chhotisi Love Story* and Mira Nair's internationally acclaimed *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love*.

Although controversial at the time of their release, many of these productions are now regarded as important contributions to Indian cinema, demonstrating that films can entertain while encouraging discussion on complex social issues.



Bollywood's Biggest Winners of 2026

The first half of 2026 has delivered a mixed picture for Bollywood, producing record-breaking blockbusters alongside numerous disappointments. According to industry figures, only three films had crossed the ₹100-crore mark by the end of June, underlining the increasingly unpredictable nature of the box office.

According to a Rediff Box Office Report, leading the pack is *Dhurandhar: The Revenge*, starring Ranveer Singh. It shattered previous records by earning ₹1,108 crore — approximately MUR 5.5 billion — making it the highest-grossing Bollywood film ever. The action spectacle comfortably surpassed the success of its predecessor.

Second place belongs to *Border 2*, featuring Sunny Deol, Diljit Dosanjh and Varun Dhawan. Its earnings of ₹341.7 crore (around MUR 1.7 billion) confirmed Deol's remarkable career resurgence following the success of *Gadar 2*.

Akshay Kumar enjoyed a particularly successful year with two hit films. Horror-comedy *Bhooth Bangla* collected ₹168.3 crore (approximately MUR 840 million), while *Welcome To The Jungle* also emerged as a strong commercial performer and continues its theatrical run.

Other notable successes include *Cocktail 2*, *Mardaani 3*, *The Kerala Story 2*, *Raja Shivaji* (Hindi version), *Main Vaapas Aaunga* and *Haunted 3D: Echoes of the Past*, several of which exceeded expectations through positive audience word-of-mouth rather than expensive marketing campaigns.

The results suggest that compelling storytelling and favourable public reaction increasingly outweigh star power alone in determining a film's commercial success.

Bollywood Stars Who Found Love More Than Once

Bollywood has witnessed many memorable love stories, but for some celebrities, marriage has been a journey of fresh beginnings. Recent reports linking Aamir Khan to a third marriage have once again drawn attention to film personalities who have married three or more times.

Veteran playback legend Kishore Kumar tops the list, having married four times. His spouses included Ruma Guha Thakurta, the late screen icon Madhubala, actress Yogita Bali and finally Leena Chandavarkar, who remained with him until his death in 1987.

Actor Aamir Khan was first married to Reena Dutta before marrying filmmaker Kiran Rao in 2005. Following their separation in 2021, reports suggest he has now entered a new chapter in his personal life with Gauri Spratt.

Veteran actress Neelima Azeem has also been married three times, first to actor Pankaj Kapur, then Rajesh Khattar and later Raza Ali Khan. Her sons, Shahid

Kapoor and Ishaan Khatter, are both successful actors.

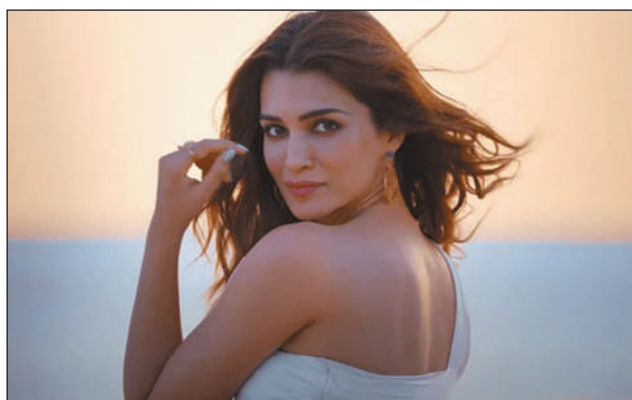
Actress Lakshmi has experienced three marriages over several decades, while actor Sanjay Dutt found lasting happiness with Maanayata Dutt after earlier marriages to Richa Sharma and Rhea Pillai.



Actor and politician Pawan Kalyan has likewise married three times.

Their experiences demonstrate that public figures, despite constant media attention, often navigate the same complexities of love, heartbreak and new beginnings as everyone else, reminding fans that life rarely follows a predictable script.

Kriti Sanon: The rejections that forged a National Award-winning actress



Today, Kriti Sanon is one of Bollywood's most accomplished actresses, a National Award winner and a successful film producer. Yet her journey to the top was anything but smooth, marked by repeated rejection, long periods without work and the challenges of being an outsider in an industry often dominated by established film families, reports Dainik Bhaskar.

Born in New Delhi, Kriti graduated in Electronics and Communication Engineering before a chance suggestion

led her into modelling. Despite early setbacks — including breaking down after her first photoshoot and being publicly criticised during her first fashion show — she persevered. Moving alone to Mumbai, she faced months without auditions, while several roles she tested for eventually went to star children.

Although her Bollywood debut *Heropanti* earned attention, opportunities remained scarce. Even after the success of *Bareilly Ki Barfi*, she reportedly went 15 months without signing a new film. Critics also questioned whether she was capable of playing substantial dramatic roles.

Kriti silenced those doubts with *Mimi*, portraying a surrogate mother in a performance that required physical and emotional transformation. Ignoring advice that the role could damage her glamorous image, she embraced the challenge and won the National Film Award for Best Actress.

Looking back, Kriti believes every rejection strengthened her resolve. Her story serves as a reminder that perseverance, talent and self-belief can ultimately overcome privilege and prejudice.



Vendredi 24 Juillet - 20.30



Samedi 25 Juillet - 20.15



Dimanche 26 Juillet - 21.14



Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 24 juillet

MBC 1

06.16 Serial: Living To Love
08.10 Tele: Un Amour Sauvage
09.00 Tele: La Desalmada
09.30 Film: Soudain Seuls
11.30 Tele: Happily Ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.35 Tele: Rosalinda
13.20 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
13.45 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Valentina
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Tele: Love Of My Life
17.00 Doc: China Farm
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
19.30 Le Journal
20.14 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine
20.30 Film: Le Gendarme à New York
22.12 Tele: Rosalinda
23.00 Tele: Happily Ever After

MBC 2

09.10 Quand Le Virtuel Derape
12.00 Local: Klip Seleksion
13.04 La Journee Sous Le Regard
14.03 Local: Itinerer Moris
14.18 Nou Later Nou Lamer Nou...
15.01 Local: Mangeons Veg
17.01 Local: La Sosiete
19.30 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
19.45 Local: Evasion
20.00 Local: Sekirite Lor Larout
21.15 Local: La Sosiete
22.36 Local: Generations J
23.32 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.27 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin
23.38 Mon Jardin Ma Maison
00.27 Local: Metie
00.38 Local: Saveurs Plus
01.04 Les Grandes Lignes
01.29 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
01.42 Local: Evasion
01.54 Local: Sekirite Lor Larout

MBC 3

06.00 Mag: Aastha TV
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha
10.14 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
11.32 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.00 Film: Ganga Ki Saugandh
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.20 Sayings Radha Krishna
15.48 Dil Ko Tumse Pyaar Hua
16.33 Aaj Ki Charcha
17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.00 Samachar
18.31 Local: Mati Ke Mol
18.57 Geet Gawai Ki Naya Peheloo
19.53 Local: Khel Khiladi
20.30 Serial: Tenali Rama
21.12 Serial: Beyhadh 2
21.45 Serial: Shrimad Ramayan
22.09 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya
22.48 Aaj Aur Kal Bollywood
23.53 Local: Mati Ke Mol
00.19 Geet Gawai Ki Naya Peheloo

Cine 12

06.00 Mag: Eye On SADC
06.38 Transforming Business
07.07 Charlotte Aux Fraises
08.30 D.Anime: Peanuts
11.01 Serial: Dance Academy
11.56 Mag: Eco India
12.34 Transforming Business
13.30 Film: Etincelle
14.51 D.Anime: Patamuse
14.55 Charlotte Aux Fraises
17.03 Serial: I Woke Up A Vapire
17.30 Mag: Eco India
18.40 Mag: The Dip
19.00 Mag: Eco Africa
19.28 Mag: Euromaxx
20.01 Tele: Un Amour Sauvage
20.30 News
20.50 Tele: Eclats De Vie
21.35 Descendants Of The Sun
22.38 Nigeria's Mysterious
00.08 The Secret Of The Stone...

Bollywood TV

14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
14.55 Serial: Tenali Rama
15.30 Film: Dabangg
Cast: Salman Khan, Sonakshi Sinha, Arbaaz Khan, Sonu Sood
18.30 Udné Ki Aasha
19.00 Do Chutki Sindoor
19.32 Pandya Store
20.01 Mannat - Har Khushi Paane Ki
20.30 Saavi Ki Savaari
20.55 Anupamaa
21.30 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya
21.57 Serial: Dhruv Tara
22.30 Wagle Ki Duniya
23.00 Serial: Aladdin
23.30 Film: Dabangg
Cast: Salman Khan, Sonakshi Sinha, Arbaaz Khan, Sonu Sood

samedi 25 juillet

06.16 Tele: Un Amour Sauvage
06.45 Serial: A Spy Among Friends
07.40 Serial: L'Incroyable Hulk
08.30 Serial: New Amsterdam
09.10 Serial: Quantico
09.55 Serial: Elementary
10.40 Serial: Les Têtes Brûlées
11.32 Tele: Un Amour Sauvage
12.00 Le Journal
12.30 Film: Seref Meselesi
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Film: Highlander II
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Dance Deewane Juniors
19.30 Le Journal
20.20 Film: Les Chevaliers Du Zodiaque
22.11 Serial: L'Incroyable Hulk
22.58 Serial: Chucky
23.43 Local: Le Journal Televisé
00.17 Serial: Quotes By Famous...
00.24 Serial: Les Têtes Brûlées

06.00 Local: Mon Jardin Ma Maison
06.30 Local: Tous Egaux
06.45 Local: Arsiv
07.31 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
08.00 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
09.30 Local: La Sosiete
12.30 Mon Jardin Ma Maison
12.56 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
13.40 Local: Evasion
14.00 Local: Sekirite Lor Larout
15.35 Local: J'ai Faim
15.20 Local: Tous Egaux
18.05 Tele: Wildflower
19.00 Journal Kreol
19.20 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine
19.24 Local: Metie
20.00 Local: Les Petits Genies
21.30 Local: Glwar Dantan
22.59 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.05 Journal Kreol
23.20 Local: Tous Egaux
23.30 Local: Saver Kiltirel

05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
08.30 Local: Abhyas Yog
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha
10.30 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
12.00 Dikri Vahalno Dariyo
13.17 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
14.00 Local: Aaj Ki Charcha
15.30 Film: Jab Pyar Kisi Se Hoto Hai
Cast: Salman Khan, Twinkle Khanna
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.32 Local: Puranya Pakwan
18.57 Local: Sangeet Sarita
19.24 Local: Gyan Vigyan
21.00 Film: SP Chauhan
Cast: Jimmy Shergil, Yuvika Chaudhry
23.07 Local: Puranya Pakwan
00.18 Local: Sangeet Sarita
00.44 Local: Gyan Vigyan
01.00 Duniya Mein Iss Saptah

06.00 D.Anime: Caillou
06.44 D.Anime: Carmen Sandiego
07.05 Charlotte Aux Fraises
08.43 D.Anime: Piper's Pony Tales
08.51 D.Anime: Edmond Et Lucy
10.07 Serial: Action Kidz
13.00 Doc: Words Of Peace
14.04 Doc: The Stone Age Diet
15.00 D.Anime: Patamuse
15.08 Charlotte Aux Fraises
15.30 D.Anime: Trolls
15.53 D.Anime: Team Zeniko Go
16.20 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter
18.00 Mag: In Good Shape
18.30 Doc: Forensics
19.00 Doc: Business Africa
19.28 Mag: Afrimaxx
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
21.53 Tele: Love Of My Life
22.20 Serial: Judge Dee's Mystery
23.42 Doc: America's Journey...
00.27 Invasive Fungal Infections

08.00 Pandya Store
10.02 Mannat - Har Khushi Panne Ki
12.08 Udaariyaan
14.02 Anupamaa
16.00 Shrimad Ramayan
17.30 Vidrohi
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Film: Aap Mujhe Achhe Lagne Lage
With: Hrithik Roshan, Ameesha Patel



21.30 Beyhadh 2

dimanche 26 juillet

06.15 Tele: Terre D'esperance
06.45 Film: Les Chevaliers Du Zodiaque
08.40 Serial: Elementary
09.25 Serial: Columbo
10.40 Serial: Les Têtes Brûlées
11.30 Tele: Terre D'esperance
12.35 Film: Soudain Seuls
14.22 Doc: China Farm
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Film: Le Gendarme à New York
17.51 Doc: Vegetarian Delights
18.00 Samachar
18.30 Serial: Laughter Chefs
19.30 Le Journal
21.14 Film: Kill Bill: Vol. 2
23.27 Tele: Laura, Una Vida Extraordinaria
00.09 Le Journal
00.44 Serial: Les Têtes Brûlées

08.45 Nou Later Nou Lamer Nou...
08.55 Local: Les Petits Genies
09.25 Le Rendez Vous Avec Sabrina Dubois
11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
12.00 Local: Mots & Ecrits
12.40 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin
12.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard
13.05 Local: Music Tour 2026
14.00 Ti Zanford Gran Talan
16.52 Local: Tous Egaux
17.11 Local: Les Petits Genies
17.37 Local: Glwar Dantan
18.05 Tele: Wildflower
19.20 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine
20.00 Local: Les Klips
21.01 Local Production
22.30 Local: Face Cachée
22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.00 Journal Kreol

05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
08.00 Local: Puranya Pakwan
08.26 Local: Sangeet Sarita
08.52 Local: Gyan Vigyan
10.30 Mahabharat
12.00 Film: Mann
Cast: Amir Khan, Manisha
15.00 Samachar
15.21 Puranya Pakwan
15.47 Sangeet Sarita
16.13 Gyan Vigyan
18.00 Samachar
18.31 MBC Prod
19.23 Local: Prakriti
20.30 Tenali Rama
20.51 Serial: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa L'il...
21.37 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar
23.03 Aaj Aur Kal Bollywood Hits
01.37 Film: Mann
Cast: Amir Khan, Manisha

06.00 D.Anime: Dragons
08.20 D.Anime: Les Petits Carnets...
08.42 D.Anime: Yetili
08.49 D.Anime: Edmond Et Lucy
09.28 Film: Le Cygne Et La Princesse
10.48 Serial: The Athena
12.41 Mag: Afrimaxx
13.30 Film: The Biggest Slime
15.00 D.Anime: Patamuse
15.08 Charlotte Aux Fraises
15.30 D.Anime: Trolls
15.55 D.Anime: Team Zenko Go
16.51 D.Anime: Sunny Girl No.23
17.33 Doc: Forensics 3.0
18.00 Mag: REV Special
18.12 Mag: Travel
19.22 Doc: Japan Video Topics
19.30 Doc: Arts Unveiled
20.00 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
21.45 Film: Papillon

08.15 Dhruv Tara
10.05 Kundali Bhagya
12.10 Dance Deewane
14.00 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya
16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya
18.30 Film: Mujhse Shaadi Karogi
Cast: Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar And Priyanka Chopra

21.30 Beyhadh 2
21.51 Mahabharat

lundi 27 juillet

05.24 Tele: Living To Love
06.58 Tele: Hawaii
08.02 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
08.25 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan
08.47 Tele: La Desalmada
09.15 Film: Papillon
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.15 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
13.45 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.00 Samachar
15.30 Film: Highlander II
17.29 Tele: Happily Ever After
18.00 Samachar
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
19.07 Live: Grand Titre
19.30 Le Journal
20.14 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine
20.20 Film: Transcendence
22.20 Serial: Rosalinda

09.25 Local: En Forme
09.45 Face Cachée
11.00 Local: Les Klips
12.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard
14.00 Rodrig - Zenn Aktif
15.00 Rodrig: Komantier
15.16 Local: Metie
15.30 Rodrig: Plat DU Chef
16.50 La Journee Sous Le Regard
17.00 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
18.00 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
18.30 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan
19.00 Journal Kreol
19.30 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel
20.00 Local: Avan Tro Tar
21.15 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
21.43 Local: 19 Minutes
22.10 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
22.54 La Journee Sous Le Regard du Seigneur

05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha
10.00 Local: Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar
12.00 Film: Mere Gaon Mera Desh
Cast: Dharmendra, Asha Parekh
15.00 Samachar
15.48 Kundali Bhagya
16.30 Local: Aaj Ke Charcha
17.30 Shiv Shakti
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Local: Ved Ki Shikshahein
18.57 Local: Ayush
19.24 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek
20.09 Local: Charcha
20.30 Dharm Yoddha Garud
21.00 Film: Pukaar
Cast: Amitabh Bachchan, Zeenat Aman, Randhir Kapoor
23.35 Shrimad Ramayan
23.57 Wagle Ki Duniya

07.37 D.Anime: Magic Wonderland
08.25 D.Anime: The Treflik Family
09.00 D.Anime: Harrison & Me
09.25 Film: La Fontaine Turns Filmmaker
10.05 Film: Percy Et Ses Amis
10.31 Serial: Dance Academy
13.30 Film: La Princesse Des Cygnes
15.00 Serial: Bo Bear
15.15 D.Anime: Les Carnets Nature De Lulu Vroumette
15.31 D.Anime: Trolls
15.54 D.Anime: Team Zenko Go
16.28 Les Gardiens Du Ciel
16.51 D.Anime: Sunny Girl No.23
18.00 Doc: Eye On SADC
18.30 Mag: Choices
19.30 Mag: In Good Shape
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
21.40 Film: Once Upon A Time In The Bronx

14.25 Radha Mohan
14.58 Dharm Yoddha Garud

15.30 Film: Achanak
18.00 Samachar
18.31 Udné Ki Aasha
19.00 Do Chutki Sindoor
19.30 Pandya Store
20.05 Mannat
20.30 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.00 Anupamaa
21.30 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya



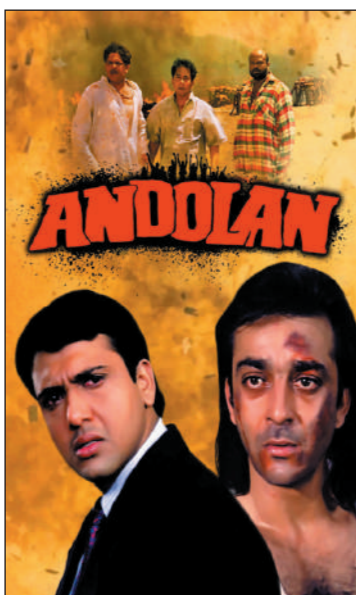
Mardi 28 Juillet - 21.21



Mercredi 29 Juillet - 20.20



Mercredi 29 Juillet - 15.00



Programme TV



mardi 28 juillet

MBC 1

05.36 Tele: Living To Love
07.04 Serial: Nautilus
07.55 Tele: All The Flowers
08.17 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
09.00 Tele: La Desalmada
09.30 Film: Once Upon A Time In The Bronx
11.30 Tele: Happily ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.20 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
13.45 Tele: Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.30 Film: Transcendence
17.30 Tele: Happily Ever After
18.00 Samachar
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.55 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
19.30 Le Journal
21.21 Film: Cyrano De Bergerac

MBC 2

09.30 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
11.35 Local: Grand Titre
12.15 Local: Toc Toc Doc
12.30 Rodrig Mo Pei
14.30 Local: Coin Jardin
14.45 Local: Tous Egaux
15.30 Local: Mangeons Veg
16.22 Local: Koze Fam
18.00 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
18.30 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
20.00 Local: Anou Kombat Ladorg
20.30 Local: Priorite Sante
21.30 Local: Parliamentary
22.35 Local: Arsiv 240
22.56 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.00 Zournal Kreol Rediffusion
23.20 Local: Ti Zistwar Zanfan
23.29 Music Tour 2026
00.21 Parlons Sante Senior

MBC 3

08.00 Local: Ved Ki Shiksahein
08.28 Local: Ayush
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 2025
10.00 Serial: Kundali Bhagya
11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.01 Film: Souten
Cast: Rajesh Khanna, Tina Ambani, Padmini Kolhapure
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.21 Sajjanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar
15.47 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya
16.30 Aaj Ki Charcha
17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 MBC Prod
18.57 Local: Natya Kala Guest
19.53 Local: Prakriti
20.30 Serial Dharm Yoddha Garud
21.00 Film: Zara Si Zindagi
23.29 Serial: Shrimad Ramayan

MBC 5

06.00 Mag: Eco Africa
06.38 Mag: Her: Women In Asia
06.52 Doc: Japan Video Topics
07.07 Charlotte Aux Fraises
09.25 Film: L'Epee Magique
10.50 Serial: Dance Academy
12.58 Mag: In Good Shape
13.30 Film: Hôtel Transylvanie
15.00 Serial: Bo Bear
15.10 Les Carnets Nature De Lulu
15.53 D.Anime: Team Zenko Go
16.16 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter
17.30 Mag: Eco Africa
18.00 Mag: REV: The Global Auto...
18.30 Mag: Shift
19.00 Mag: Made In Germany
20.01 Tele: Un Amour Sauvage
20.53 Tele: Eclats De Vie
21.38 Mag: Initiative Africa
22.06 Il Etait Une Fois Le Musee...
22.53 Mag: Euromaxx

Bollywood TV

14.25 Radha Mohan
14.55 Dharm Yoddha Garud
15.30 Film: Yeh Lamhe Judaai Ke
Starring: Shah Rukh Khan, Raveena Tandon, Navneet Nishan
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Udne Ki Aasha
19.03 Do Chutki Sindoor
19.33 Pandya Store
20.06 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
20.29 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.07 Anupama
21.29 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya
22.04 Dhruv Tara
22.34 Wagle Ki Duniya
23.04 Serial: Aladdin
23.30 Film: Yeh Lamhe Judaai...
Starring: Shah Rukh Khan, Raveena Tandon...

mercredi 29 juillet

05.16 Serial: Living To Love
08.10 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
08.55 Tele: La Desalmada
09.20 Film: Cyrano De Bergerac
11.35 Tele: Happily Ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.10 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
13.45 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Film: Les Chevaliers Du Zodiaque
17.30 Tele: Happily Ever After
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.55 Live: Grand Titre
19.30 Journal & La Meteo
20.15 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine
20.20 Film: La Vague
22.21 Tele: Rosalinda
23.02 Tele: Happily Ever After

09.38 La Barre De Recherche
10.39 Local: Saveurs Plus
11.30 Local: Les Petits Genies
12.01 Local: Nos Aines
12.30 Rodrig: Itinerer Rodrig
13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard
13.05 Local: Anou Kombat Ladorg
14.40 Local: Nu Rasinn
15.25 Local: Saveurs Plus
16.00 Local: Glwar Dantan
16.59 La Journee Sous Le Regard
18.00 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
18.30 Tele: Le Secret des Roldan
19.30 Rodrig Spor
20.00 Mon Jardin Ma Maison
20.30 Drogue Une Urgence...
21.00 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
21.15 Local: Agir Ensemble
21.45 Local: Les Klips
22.37 Local: Grand Titre
23.20 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.25 Local: Evasion

08.00 Local: Natya Kala Guest...
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 2025
10.00 Pyaar Ka Pehla Abhyaya
11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.01 Film: Manzil
Cast: Amitabh Bacchan, Moushami Chatterjee
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.47 Radha Mohan
16.30 Aaj Ki Charcha
17.10 Radha Mohan
17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Yatra
19.01 Hindi Conference
19.48 Local: Virasat
20.02 Local: Kaam Daam
20.30 Dharm Yoddha Garud
21.01 Film: Pati Patni Aur Bhootni
23.02 Shrimad Ramayan
23.24 Wagle Ki Duniya
23.45 Mag: Eco India

06.29 Mag: Shift
07.00 D.Anime: Les Quiquois
11.09 Serial: Dance Academy
13.30 Film: Polly Pocket
14.35 Film: Le Parfum De La Carette
14.59 Serial: Bo Bear
15.11 Les Carnets Nature De Lulu
15.14 D.Anime: Baby Dino Tales
16.26 D.Anime: Dragons
16.50 D.Anime: Suny Girl
17.30 Mag: REV: The Global Auto
18.00 Mag: Afrimaxx
18.31 Mag: Planet A
19.00 Mag: Arts Unveiled
19.30 Doc: Romania
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
20.50 Tele: Eclats De Vie
21.40 Film: Kill Bill: VOL.2
23.34 Mag: Close Up
02.40 Mag: Focus On Europe
03.23 Doc: On The Trail Of Fishing..

14.25 Radha Mohan
14.50 Dharm Yoddha Garud
15.30 Film: Andolan
Starring: Govinda, Sanjay Dutt
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Udne Ki Aasha
19.02 Do Chutki Sindoor
19.33 Pandya Store
20.00 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
20.31 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.00 Anupama
21.28 Pyaar Ka Pehla Abhyaya
22.00 Dhruv Tara
22.24 Wagle Ki Duniya
22.54 Aladdin
23.30 Film: Andolan
Starring: Govinda, Sanjay Dutt

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04.46 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie
05.29 Tele: Living To Love
07.45 Tele: All The Flowers
09.06 Tele: La Desalmada
09.35 Serial: Columbo
10.49 Doc: China Farm
11.30 Tele: Happily Ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.15 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
13.42 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.20 Film: La Vague
17.15 Tele: Happily Ever After
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
19.00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu
19.30 Le Journal
20.20 Film: Bade Miyan Chote Miyan
Cast: Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Prithviraj Sukumaran

10.10 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef
10.29 Local: Saver Lokal
11.35 Local: Grand Titre
13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard
13.31 Mon Jardin Ma Maison
14.00 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
15.30 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef
15.48 Rodrig: Saver Lokal
18.30 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.30 Local: Itinerer Moris
20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
20.30 Local: Paroles Agricoles
21.05 Local: Encounter
21.30 Local: Music Tour 2025
22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.00 Zournal Kreol Rediffusion
23.20 Local: La Sosiete
23.46 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel
00.15 Local: Tous Egaux
00.29 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef

07.50 D.Anime Tarak Mehta
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 2025
10.00 Serial: Radha Mohan
11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.01 Film: Dhool Ka Phool
Cast: Mala Sinha, Rajendra Kumar, Nanda
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.29 Sajjanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar
15.42 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
16.30 Aaj Ki Charcha
17.07 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Local: Amrit Vani
19.01 Local: Shrawan Mass 2026
19.58 Local: Hunarbaaz
20.30 Serial Tenali Rama
21.00 Serial: Shakti
21.37 Serial: Shrimad Ramayan

06.25 Mag: Planet A
08.24 D.Anime: The Treflik Family
11.04 Serial: Dance Academy
11.40 Mag: Afrimaxx
12.37 Mag: Arts Unveiled
13.30 Film: Joey & Ella
14.45 D.Anime: Patamuse
15.02 Serial: Do Bear
15.55 D.Anime: Team Zenko Go
16.18 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter
17.05 Serial: I Woke Up A Vampire
18.00 Mag: Eco India
18.30 Mag: Unseen
19.00 Doc: Destination Mars
19.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
20.30 Live: New
20.50 Tele: Eclat De Vie
21.30 Doc: The Secret Of The Stone
22.18 Doc: Smart Insects
23.00 Doc: Frontex Under Scrutiny

14.25 Radha Mohan
15.00 Tenali Rama
15.21 Film: Fight Club: Members Only
Stars: Suniel Shetty, Sohail Khan, Zayed Khan, Dino Morea...
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Udne Ki Aasha
19.00 Udaariyaan
19.30 Pandya Store
20.00 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
20.30 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.02 Anupama
21.34 Pyaar Ka Phela Adhyaya
22.01 Dhruv Tara
22.29 Wagle Ki Duniya
23.05 Aladdin
23.31 Film: Fight Club: Members Only
Stars: Suniel Shetty, Sohail Khan, Zayed Khan...



Jeudi 30 Juillet - 15.30

Stars: Suniel Shetty, Sohail Khan, Zayed Khan, Dino Morea...



Jeudi 30 Juillet - 20.20

Stars: Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Prithviraj Sukumaran



How to avoid being fooled by AI-generated misinformation

Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly transformed the way we create, access and consume information. While its benefits are undeniable—from improving healthcare and education to accelerating scientific research—it has also opened the door to a new and growing threat: AI-generated misinformation.

Today, sophisticated AI systems can produce remarkably realistic images, videos, audio recordings and written text that are often almost impossible to distinguish from genuine human-created content. As a result, false information can spread faster, more widely and more convincingly than ever before.

The implications are profound. From influencing elections and financial markets to damaging reputations and manipulating public opinion, AI-generated misinformation has become one of the defining challenges of the digital age.

According to the World Economic Forum, misinformation and disinformation are among the most significant global risks confronting societies today. Easier access to powerful AI tools has fuelled an explosion of synthetic content, including realistic voice cloning, counterfeit websites and fabricated videos that can deceive even experienced observers.

It is important to distinguish between **misinformation** and **disinformation**. Misinformation refers to false or inaccurate information that is shared without the intention to deceive. Disinformation, on the other hand, is deliberately created and disseminated to mislead, manipulate or influence public opinion.

Professor Hany Farid, a leading expert in digital forensics at the University of California, Berkeley, warns that AI has fundamentally changed the scale and speed with which deceptive campaigns can be launched. Unlike in the past, when sophisticated misinformation campaigns required substantial financial resources or state sponsorship, today's AI tools allow a single individual with modest computing power to generate thousands of convincing fake images, videos or messages within hours.

As Professor Farid observes, AI is increasingly "polluting the information ecosystem," making people question everything they read, hear and see.

Spotting AI-Generated Images

Although AI-generated images have become extraordinarily realistic, many still contain subtle inconsistencies that careful observers can detect.

Some common warning signs include distorted hands or fingers, irregular facial features, unnatural eye positions, inconsistent shadows and reflections, unusual lighting, or backgrounds that appear strangely artificial. Objects may seem physically impossible or historically inaccurate,



while certain scenes may depict situations that simply do not make sense.

Rather than glancing quickly at an image, taking a few extra seconds to examine the details can often reveal clues that something is amiss.

Recognising Deepfake Videos

Perhaps the most concerning development is the rise of deepfake videos, in which artificial intelligence convincingly alters a person's face, voice or expressions.

Although the technology continues to improve rapidly, many deepfakes still display subtle defects. Lip movements may not perfectly match speech, facial expressions may appear slightly unnatural, blinking may occur too frequently—or not enough—and lighting across the face may seem inconsistent. Hair movement, skin texture and body movements may also appear unusually smooth or slightly distorted.

These imperfections are becoming less obvious as AI advances, making careful viewing increasingly important.

Detecting AI Voice Cloning

Voice cloning technology can now reproduce an individual's speech with remarkable accuracy. Criminals have already used cloned voices in telephone scams, impersonation attempts and financial fraud.

Possible warning signs include unusual pauses, robotic intonation, speech that sounds overly smooth or unnaturally perfect, awkward sentence construction, or statements that contradict the person's known views or previous public comments.

Whenever an unexpected phone call requests sensitive information or urgent financial action, it is wise to verify the request independently before responding.

Identifying AI Bots

Social media has witnessed an explosion of AI-powered bots capable of generating convincing conversations and spreading false narratives.

These automated accounts often display repetitive sentence structures, excessive use of emojis or hashtags, unnatural lan-

guage patterns, and difficulty responding appropriately to direct or follow-up questions. Many operate under anonymous or recently created profiles with little genuine personal history.

While individual posts may appear credible, coordinated bot networks can create the illusion of widespread public opinion where none actually exists.

Developing Healthy Digital Scepticism

Perhaps the most important defence against AI-generated misinformation is not technology but critical thinking.

Before accepting or sharing any sensational image, dramatic video or surprising claim, it is worth asking several simple questions:

- Does the information come from a trust worthy source?
- Is it being reported by multiple reputable news organisations?
- Does the content seem emotionally manipulative or designed to provoke outrage?
- Are there inconsistencies in the image, video or audio?
- Can the information be independently verified?

Pausing before clicking "share" has become one of the most effective forms of digital responsibility.

A Shared Responsibility

No existing technology can reliably distinguish every AI-generated image, video or recording from authentic human-created content. As generative AI continues to evolve, synthetic media will become increasingly sophisticated and more difficult to detect.

For this reason, responsibility extends beyond individual users. Governments, regulators, technology companies and AI developers all have important roles to play in establishing safeguards, promoting transparency and developing tools capable of identifying manipulated content.

As Professor Hany Farid reminds us, "Technology is not neutral." Those who create and deploy these powerful systems must also be accountable for the risks they introduce into society.

The Way Forward

Artificial intelligence will undoubtedly continue to shape our future in extraordinary ways. It promises remarkable advances in medicine, education, communication and scientific discovery. Yet every technological breakthrough brings new ethical challenges.

In this new digital landscape, our greatest protection remains timeless human qualities: curiosity, sound judgement, patience and critical thinking. By questioning what we see, hear and read—and by verifying information before accepting or sharing it—we can help preserve truth in an increasingly synthetic world.

Ultimately, while artificial intelligence may generate convincing illusions, it is human wisdom that must remain our strongest defence.

Jeremy Hsu
New Scientist

Mauritius Times

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