

MAURITIUS TIMES

• "When you can stop, you don't want to. And when you want to stop, you can't. That's addiction."- Anonymous

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Turning Maritime Rights into Sustainable Value

What the CLCS decision means for Mauritius

Mauritius has every reason to regard the recent decision of the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) as a major national achievement. On 30 July 2026, the Commission approved the recommendations concerning Mauritius's submission for an extended continental shelf in the region of Rodrigues, recognising outer limits extending over approximately 147,000 square kilometres.

This is the culmination of a long and painstaking process. Mauritius first lodged its submission in May 2009. A sub-commission began examining it in 2014, but the process was subsequently paused to allow Mauritius to collect additional scientific data and strengthen its case. A Mauritian de-legation made its final presentation in February 2026 before the recommendations were approved in July.

Seventeen years of scientific, technical and legal work have therefore produced a result of considerable significance. However, the practical reality of the decision is more nuanced than some accounts suggest. The August 20, 2026 report by *Business Insider Africa*, for instance, implies a direct acquisition of territory and resources that does not fully reflect the procedural and legal realities of the UN commission's findings. That may not be exactly the case.

The CLCS decision recognises Mauritius's entitlement to an extended continental shelf in the Rodrigues region. This gives Mauritius sovereign rights over the seabed and subsoil for the exploration and exploitation of natural resources. It does not mean that Mauritius has acquired 147,000 square kilometres of new sovereign territory, nor does it give the country unrestricted sovereignty over the entire water column above the seabed.

The distinction matters. The continental shelf is a valuable legal and economic asset, but it should not be confused with territorial waters. What the decision does provide is a much stronger platform from which Mauritius can develop its maritime interests. For a small island state with limited land resources, that could prove enormously important over the long term.

From island state to ocean state

Mauritius has spoken for years about developing a blue economy. Yet the expression has sometimes remained more a policy aspiration than a fully developed national strategy.

The extended continental shelf gives the concept greater substance. The maritime area around Rodrigues offers opportunities for marine scientific research, oceanographic studies, marine spatial planning and potentially the exploration of seabed resources. It could also contribute to the development of fisheries, marine biotechnology and other ocean-based activities. Depending on technological, environmental and economic considerations, offshore renewable-energy projects may also form part of the wider maritime strategy.

But opportunity should not be confused with immediate economic gain. Reports referring to cobalt, nickel, copper, rare earth elements and polymetallic nodules should be treated with caution. The fact that geological formations may contain valuable minerals does not mean that commercially exploitable deposits have been established. Nor does it mean that extraction would necessarily be economically viable or environmentally acceptable.

There is a considerable distance between having sovereign rights over a seabed area and having a profitable



mining industry. Mauritius must therefore resist the temptation to present the CLCS decision as a new mineral bonanza. The real achievement is the acquisition of internationally recognised rights that may, with sufficient scientific investigation and responsible management, create valuable opportunities for future generations.

Science made the difference

One of the most encouraging aspects of this development is the role played by science. Mauritius's claim was not based simply on political assertion. It was supported by extensive geological, geophysical and geochemical evidence designed to establish the required geological relationship of the extended continental shelf to Mauritius. When additional scientific information was considered necessary, Mauritius paused the process and strengthened its submission. That persistence eventually paid off.

There is a lesson here for the country. Mauritius has often spoken about developing a knowledge economy, but the importance of specialised scientific expertise is sometimes underestimated. The Rodrigues continental-shelf case demonstrates precisely how a small country can use science, international law and sustained institutional effort to defend and advance its national interests.

The same approach should now be applied to what comes next. Mauritius needs to know much more about this vast maritime area: its geology, ecosystems, mineral potential, environmental sensitivities and possible economic uses. It needs marine scientists, geologists, oceanographers, environmental specialists, maritime lawyers and data experts. It needs the capacity to map, monitor and manage its seabed resources properly.

The CLCS decision should therefore be seen not as the end of the process, but as the beginning of a new phase.

Challenges in Managing Resources

There is also a cautionary lesson. The global race for critical minerals is accelerating. Cobalt, nickel, copper and rare earth elements are important for batteries, renewable-energy technologies, electronics and other advanced industries. It is understandable that the possibility of deposits in Mauritian waters should attract attention.

Experts would caution against rushing into seabed exploitation simply because the minerals are strategically valuable. Deep-sea mining remains technologically demanding and environmentally controversial. Before contemplating commercial extraction, Mauritius would need detailed environmental assessments, robust regulatory safeguards and a clear understanding of the economic costs and benefits.

The country must avoid the familiar mistake of treating a

natural resource as an automatic source of wealth. Resources become assets only when institutions are capable of managing them transparently and sustainably. The temptation to announce grand investment projects before the science is properly established must be resisted.

Chagos is a separate but important question

The *Business Insider* report also links the Rodrigues development with the continuing Chagos dispute and reports speculation that the United States could consider purchasing the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in order to safeguard the strategic interests associated with Diego Garcia.

The Rodrigues continental-shelf decision and the Chagos sovereignty question are distinct matters. The former arises from Mauritius's scientific and legal submission concerning its continental shelf around Rodrigues. The latter concerns the sovereignty of the Chagos Archipelago and the future of the Diego Garcia military facility.

There is, of course, a wider geopolitical context. Mauritius occupies an increasingly important position in the Indian Ocean, a region where strategic competition among major powers is intensifying. The importance of Diego Garcia to the United States and Britain is well known, while Mauritius's sovereignty claim over Chagos has received significant international legal and diplomatic recognition.

But reports of a possible American "purchase" of the Chagos Islands should not be treated as established fact without careful verification. Sovereignty over territory cannot simply be reduced to a commercial transaction. Any future arrangement concerning Chagos and Diego Garcia will have profound legal, political and strategic implications and must be considered separately from the CLCS decision.

Turning entitlement into national value

The Government now faces a more difficult task than securing the continental-shelf entitlement: how to turn that entitlement into a genuine national asset. That will require a long-term strategy rather than another collection of disconnected initiatives.

Mauritius should establish a comprehensive national ocean policy bringing together marine research, environmental protection, fisheries, maritime security, resource exploration, renewable energy and economic development. Rodrigues must be at the centre of this strategy, rather than being treated merely as the geographical reference point for a continental-shelf claim.

If commercial opportunities eventually emerge, Mauritius must ensure that the benefits are shared nationally and that future generations are not deprived of their inheritance through short-term exploitation.

The temptation will be to celebrate the 147,000 square kilometres as though Mauritius has suddenly become richer. The more responsible response is to recognise that the country has acquired something potentially more valuable: the legal and scientific foundation for a much larger maritime future.

Mauritius has spent 17 years establishing its rights. It should now spend the next decade acquiring the knowledge, technology, institutions and expertise needed to use those rights wisely.

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Justice: How Long Is Too Long?

'Better coordination and specialised resources among the FCC, DPP and courts are essential to reduce delays and prevent cases from collapsing on technicalities'



The DPP's recent communiqué — covering Supreme Court prosecutions such as *State v. Lilram Deal*, *State v. Rajanah Dhaliah*, *Harryduth Ramnarain & Maneesh Gobin*, and *State v. (Ken) N. Poonoosamy*, alongside three cases returned to the FCC — highlights an ongoing concern: Why do major criminal and financial-crime cases take so long to move from investigation to final determination?

While complex investigations, extensive evidence, numerous witnesses, disclosure requirements and defence applications can legitimately cause delays, the question remains: how much delay is unavoidable, how much can be controlled, and who bears responsibility for ensuring that justice is not lost to procedural inertia? Lex examines the causes of delay, the respective responsibilities of the Financial Crimes Commission (FCC), the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and the courts, the rights of both prosecution and accused, and whether stronger mechanisms are needed to ensure timely justice without compromising due process.

LEX

“When the Office of the DPP in Mauritius returns a file to the FCC for clarification or further enquiries, it generally indicates that the investigation has not yet reached the required standard for a definitive charging decision. It does not necessarily mean that the evidence is insufficient or that the case has been dropped. Rather, it reflects a procedural requirement to ensure that the file is sufficiently robust, complete and legally sound...”

*** To what extent can the complexity of financial investigations, the volume of documentary evidence, and the number of accused persons and witnesses legitimately account for prolonged proceedings?**

Financial investigations legitimately take longer because they often involve complex data analysis, massive volumes of multi-jurisdictional bank records, and large numbers of co-defendants or witnesses. Courts may accept these factors as valid reasons for delay, provided the State acts with continuous diligence and avoids systemic institutional backlogs.

Investigations may require tracing hidden funds, forensic auditing and expert analysis. Shell companies and offshore accounts can obscure the true flow of money, while decrypting digital evidence and tracing cryptocurrency transactions can further slow the discovery process.

*** What specific responsibility does the prosecution bear in ensuring that investigations are completed within a reasonable period before a case reaches the courts?**

In financial crime cases, the prosecution must ensure that proceedings move forward without undue delay. It has a duty to monitor ongoing police investigations, prevent unnecessary delays, and bring charges as soon as there is sufficient evidence. This protects accused per-

sons from prolonged uncertainty and helps ensure a fair trial.

The prosecution must also ensure that investigators do not unduly delay the collection and analysis of financial records. Complex bank records and paper trails should be examined efficiently to determine whether there is a sufficient basis for prosecution. Once the evidence is adequate, charges should be brought without unnecessary waiting. At every stage, the prosecution must ensure that delays do not prejudice the accused's ability to prepare and present an effective defence.

*** When the DPP returns a case to the FCC for clarification or further enquiries, what does this normally indicate about the state of the investigation or prosecution file? Does it necessarily mean that the evidence is insufficient, or can it simply reflect the need to ensure that the case is properly prepared before proceeding?**

When the Office of the DPP in Mauritius returns a file to the FCC for clarification or further enquiries, it generally indicates that the investigation has not yet reached the required standard for a definitive charging decision. It does not necessarily mean that the evidence is insufficient or that the case has been dropped. Rather, it reflects a procedural requirement to ensure that the file is sufficiently robust, complete and legally sound before proceedings are initiated in court.

“Under Mauritian law, the right to a trial within a “reasonable time” is guaranteed by Section 10(1) of the Constitution. This means that a criminal charge must be heard and determined without unnecessary, oppressive or systemic delay. There is no fixed statutory time limit; rather, courts apply a contextual assessment that takes into account the complexity of the case, institutional backlogs, and the conduct of both the prosecution and the accused...”

*** Is there a danger that repeated requests for clarification or further investigation can result in an effectively open-ended process? What safeguards exist to prevent this?**

Repeated requests for clarification or further investigation by the ODPP can create a risk of a protracted process, but constitutional and administrative safeguards prevent the process from being truly open-ended.

When investigative bodies such as the Police or the FCC submit weak or incomplete files, the ODPP may return them for further enquiries rather than proceed with a prosecution on insufficient evidence. However, repeated cycles of queries, clarifications and further investigations can delay final resolution, leaving suspects in a state of prolonged uncertainty, particularly where provisional charges are involved.

*** Once a case is before the courts, what factors outside the control of the DPP or the FCC can contribute to delays, and how significant are defence applications, interlocutory proceedings, appeals and other procedural challenges?**

Once a criminal or corruption case managed by the DPP or the FCC reaches the courts, multiple procedural and external factors can contribute to significant delays. These factors largely fall within the jurisdiction and administrative framework of the judiciary rather than the prosecution.

A high volume of cases before the Intermediate Court and Supreme Court can result in long gaps between mention dates and trial dates. Witness availability, the sudden illness or unavailability of magistrates or judges, and complex or flawed initial police investigations may necessitate repeated adjournments.

Defence motions challenging police conduct or alleging an abuse of process, including claims of political bias or delayed disclosure, can further delay proceedings and, in some cases, bring a trial to a temporary halt. Interlocutory applications and appeals can also add to the length of proceedings.

Justice: How Long Is Too Long?



“The delays in reaching a final determination in high-profile cases involving figures such as Maneesh Gobin and Rajanah Dhaliyah, including the Eco Deer Park/Stag Party affair, stem from a combination of systemic and procedural factors. These may include lengthy investigative processes at anti-corruption bodies such as the FCC, complex review of evidence by the ODPP, and procedural challenges or legal contestations raised by the defence...”

Cont. from page 3

*** What does the requirement for a trial to be conducted within a “reasonable time” mean under Mauritian law and applicable constitutional or human-rights standards, and at what point can delay become legally or constitutionally problematic?**

Under Mauritian law, the right to a trial within a “reasonable time” is guaranteed by Section 10(1) of the Constitution. This means that a criminal charge must be heard and determined without unnecessary, oppressive or systemic delay. There is no fixed statutory time limit; rather, courts apply a contextual assessment that takes into account the complexity of the case, institutional backlogs, and the conduct of both the prosecution and the accused.

Delay may become constitutionally problematic where the passage of time is excessive and undermines the fairness of the proceedings. Cases involving highly complex, multi-party fraud or systemic financial crimes may legitimately require more time for investigation, preparation and trial than straightforward offences. Conversely, delays may be less attributable to the prosecution where they are caused or prolonged by the defence, for example through repeated interlocutory applications, requests for adjournments or the accused absconding.

*** Can prolonged proceedings prejudice both sides — for example, through fading memories, loss or deterioration of evidence, or the unavailability of witnesses for the prosecution, while also imposing serious consequences on accused persons even when they are**

ultimately acquitted?

Prolonged legal proceedings can prejudice both sides. They may cause evidence to fade or disappear and witnesses to become unavailable, weakening the prosecution’s ability to establish the truth. Physical evidence may be lost, while witnesses may forget important facts, change their accounts or become less certain about what they recall. They may also move away, fall ill or die before they can testify. Such difficulties can make it harder to prove guilt, potentially affecting public safety and undermining confidence in the justice system.

For the accused, prolonged proceedings can impose significant personal, financial and psychological costs. The accused may live for years with anxiety, uncertainty and reputational damage. Legal expenses can accumulate, while employment, business opportunities and personal relationships may also suffer.

*** Looking specifically at the cases referred to in the DPP’s communiqué, are there common procedural or institutional factors that may help explain why some of them have taken so long to reach final determination?**

The delays in reaching a final determination in high-profile cases involving figures such as Maneesh Gobin and Rajanah Dhaliyah, including the Eco Deer Park/Stag Party affair, stem from a combination of systemic and procedural factors. These may include lengthy investigative processes at anti-corruption bodies such as the FCC, complex review of evidence by the ODPP, and procedural challenges or legal contestations raised by the defence.

*** Is there a need for stronger coordination between the FCC, the DPP’s Office and the courts so that weaknesses or gaps in investigations are identified and addressed at an earlier stage? Would greater specialised prosecutorial and judicial resources make a significant difference?**

Stronger coordination and specialised resources among the FCC, the DPP and the courts are vital. Early cooperation can help prevent flawed investigations, reduce systemic backlogs and ensure that complex financial crimes are prosecuted effectively rather than collapsing on technicalities.

Involving legal expertise during the investigative phase helps ensure that evidence meets strict admissibility standards before formal charges are filed. Better communication can prevent procedural objections over minor technical gaps from causing months or even years of court delays.

LEX



Central Electricity Board (CEB)

COMMUNIQUÉ

CEB AGRIVOLTAICS (CAV) II SCHEME RÉVISION DES LIMITES DE CAPACITÉ

Le Central Electricity Board (CEB) informe les développeurs de projets (demandeurs) ainsi que le grand public que la limite minimale de capacité des projets dans le cadre du **CEB Agrivoltaics (CAV) II Scheme** a été révisée.

Avec effet immédiat, le CEB acceptera désormais les demandes pour des projets agrivoltaïques d’une capacité allant jusqu’à 4 MW dans le cadre du CAV II Scheme. **Aucune limite minimale de capacité n’est désormais applicable aux projets.**

Cette révision vise à élargir la participation au développement de projets agrivoltaïques et à contribuer à la démocratisation continue de la production d’énergie renouvelable à Maurice.

Les demandeurs ayant soumis une demande dans le cadre du **premier CAV Scheme**, mais n’ayant pas reçu de lettre d’intention du CEB, pourront soumettre une nouvelle demande dans le cadre du CAV II Scheme. Les frais de traitement acquittés dans le cadre du premier CAV Scheme seront automatiquement transférés au CAV II Scheme. Les demandeurs qui ne souhaitent pas poursuivre leur projet pourront, quant à eux, solliciter le remboursement des frais de traitement déjà acquittés.

Jusqu’à nouvel ordre, aucune restriction ne sera appliquée quant au nombre de projets pouvant être accueillis dans le cadre du CAV II Scheme. Cette mesure vise à offrir davantage de flexibilité pour la soumission et l’approbation des projets, sous réserve du respect des critères d’éligibilité, des exigences applicables aux demandes ainsi que de la disponibilité des ressources.

Pour plus d’informations, veuillez contacter le Corporate and Research Department du CEB au **404 2000** ou la CEB MSDG Unit au **601 1100**.

15 août 2026

National Crime Agency : une réforme majeure qui mérite un débat à la hauteur des enjeux

Par A. Bartleby

La réforme annoncée de l'appareil de lutte contre la criminalité à Maurice franchira une première étape en septembre, avec la présentation en première lecture du *National Crime Agency Bill*. Le texte devrait modifier huit lois existantes et entraîner également une modification de la Constitution. Les débats de fond sont prévus en octobre, après une période qui doit permettre aux parlementaires, aux professionnels concernés et au public de prendre connaissance du projet et de formuler leurs observations.

Le projet s'inspire notamment de la *National Crime Agency* (NCA) britannique et de certaines caractéristiques historiques du FBI américain. À Maurice, l'objectif serait de rapprocher ou de coordonner des compétences actuellement dispersées entre plusieurs institutions, notamment la *Financial Crimes Commission* (FCC), le *Central Criminal Investigation Department* (CCID) et la *Financial Intelligence Unit* (FIU).

La future agence devrait intervenir notamment dans les domaines de la grande fraude, de la corruption, du blanchiment d'argent, du financement du terrorisme et de la criminalité financière et transnationale. Elle devrait également disposer d'un *Criminal Intelligence Fusion Centre*, destiné à croiser les informations provenant de différentes sources — enquêtes criminelles, données financières, douanes, activités maritimes et autres renseignements pertinents.

Sur le papier, le raisonnement est convaincant. Les organisations criminelles modernes ne respectent pas les frontières administratives séparant la police, les services financiers, les douanes ou le renseignement. Un réseau impliqué dans le trafic de drogue peut utiliser des sociétés-écrans, des comptes bancaires, des transactions immobilières, des importations et des circuits internationaux pour dissimuler ses activités. Une réponse fragmentée peut donc permettre aux criminels de profiter précisément des failles qui séparent les institutions.

Enseignements du modèle britannique

La NCA britannique a été créée en octobre 2013 par la *Crime and Courts Act 2013*, en remplacement notamment de la *Serious Organised Crime Agency* (SOCA). Elle a regroupé plusieurs compétences autour de pôles consacrés notamment au crime organisé, à la criminalité économique, à la police des frontières, à la cybercriminalité et à la protection des enfants.

Le modèle britannique montre surtout que la valeur d'une telle agence ne réside pas uniquement dans le fait de regrouper des services sous une même appellation. La NCA a été conçue comme une organisation ayant à la fois ses propres capacités opérationnelles et une fonction de coordination nationale. Elle peut mener ses propres opérations, apporter un soutien spécialisé aux autres forces et assurer une coordination des ressources et du renseignement.

Elle dispose, par ailleurs, d'une capacité particulièrement large : certains de ses agents peuvent être investis de pouvoirs de *Police Constable*, d'agent d'immigration ou de douanier, selon leurs fonctions et leur habilitation. La NCA britannique est aujourd'hui un département gouvernemental non ministériel, décrit comme opérationnellement indépendant, avec un directeur général responsable de sa



Le projet de *National Crime Agency* offre une occasion rare de repenser notre architecture de lutte contre la criminalité, avec ambition et prudence.

performance devant le ministre de l'Intérieur et, indirectement, devant le Parlement. Elle est également soumise à des mécanismes de contrôle et de transparence.

Cette expérience britannique offre donc à Maurice à la fois un modèle et une mise en garde.

Le modèle montre l'intérêt d'une capacité nationale de renseignement, d'analyse et de coordination. Mais la mise en garde est tout aussi importante : la création d'une agence puissante ne suffit pas à garantir son efficacité. Il faut définir clairement ses rapports avec la police, les autres services d'enquête, le gouvernement et surtout le parquet.

Sur ce dernier point, les propositions mauriciennes méritent une attention particulière. Selon les orientations annoncées, la future *National Crime Agency* n'aurait ni pouvoir d'arrestation ni pouvoir de poursuite. Les arrestations resteraient de la compétence des services habilités et les poursuites demeureraient sous l'autorité du Directeur des poursuites publiques.

Cette séparation est saine. Celui qui enquête ne devrait pas nécessairement être celui qui décide de poursuivre. Elle permet de préserver l'équilibre entre l'efficacité de l'enquête et l'indépendance de l'action publique.

Il faudra cependant examiner très précisément, lors des débats parlementaires, les pouvoirs d'enquête dont disposera la nouvelle agence. Le Premier ministre a indiqué que la législation ne traiterait de la surveillance que dans le cadre des enquêtes criminelles. Cette précision est importante, mais elle devra être traduite dans des dispositions légales suffisamment claires pour empêcher toute extension progressive des pouvoirs au-delà de leur finalité initiale.

Les pouvoirs intrusifs — accès aux données, surveillance, perquisitions, interceptions ou obtention d'informations financières — doivent être entourés de garanties solides. Le principe devrait être simple : plus le pouvoir de l'État est intrusif, plus le contrôle doit être rigoureux.

C'est pourquoi la référence annoncée à un contrôle judiciaire mérite d'être examinée avec soin. Les garanties ne doivent pas rester de simples déclarations de principe. Le Parlement devra déterminer quelles autorisations seront nécessaires, dans quelles circonstances, pour quelle durée, avec quels mécanismes de recours et sous quelle supervision.

La question de l'indépendance

Le projet prévoit une agence «totalement indépendante», avec des mécanismes de responsabilité et de contrôle. Mais l'indépendance institutionnelle ne se décrète

pas simplement dans une loi. Elle dépend aussi du mode de nomination du directeur, de la durée de son mandat, des conditions de sa révocation, du financement de l'agence, de ses obligations de rendre compte et de la protection de ses responsables contre les interventions politiques.

L'expérience britannique est instructive : la NCA est opérationnellement indépendante, mais elle demeure *accountable* au Home Secretary et au Parlement. L'indépendance et la responsabilité ne sont donc pas contradictoires. Une agence puissante doit être indépendante dans ses opérations, mais pleinement responsable devant les institutions démocratiques.

Pour Maurice, le défi sera d'éviter

deux écueils opposés.

Le premier serait de créer une agence trop faible, dont les compétences se chevaucheraient avec celles de la police, de la FCC ou de la FIU, ajoutant une couche bureaucratique supplémentaire sans améliorer les résultats.

Le second serait de créer une institution tellement puissante qu'elle deviendrait elle-même difficile à contrôler.

Entre ces deux extrêmes se trouve le véritable objectif : une agence spécialisée, compétente, technologiquement moderne, dotée d'un renseignement criminel intégré, mais soumise à des règles strictes de responsabilité et à un contrôle indépendant.

Le recrutement sera également essentiel. La criminalité contemporaine exige des compétences que les structures traditionnelles ne possèdent pas toujours en nombre suffisant : analystes financiers, spécialistes de la cybercriminalité, experts en renseignement, spécialistes de la criminalistique et enquêteurs capables de suivre des flux financiers internationaux.

Mais les compétences techniques ne suffiront pas. Une agence de cette nature doit également développer une culture professionnelle fondée sur l'intégrité, la discrétion, la neutralité politique et le respect de l'État de droit.

C'est pourquoi le débat parlementaire d'octobre devra aller bien au-delà de l'organisation administrative de la future agence. Les députés devront poser les questions difficiles : qui nommera ses dirigeants ? Qui contrôlera ses pouvoirs ? Qui pourra enquêter sur elle ? Comment éviter les chevauchements avec la police et la FCC ? Comment protéger l'indépendance du DPP ? Comment garantir que le renseignement criminel ne deviendra pas un instrument politique ?

La réforme est trop importante pour être réduite à une bataille entre ceux qui veulent «plus de pouvoir» pour les enquêteurs et ceux qui craignent les abus de pouvoir.

Maurice a besoin d'un appareil de lutte contre le crime à la hauteur de la sophistication croissante de la criminalité organisée. Mais une démocratie a également besoin que cet appareil soit plus puissant contre les criminels et plus contrôlé lorsqu'il exerce ses pouvoirs contre les citoyens.

Le projet de *National Crime Agency* offre donc une occasion rare de remettre à plat notre architecture de lutte contre la criminalité. Il faudra saisir cette occasion avec ambition, mais aussi avec prudence.

➔ Voir plus en page 17



Vijay Makhani

A Tale of Three Wars — The World Order Coming Apart?

You can bomb. You can destroy. You can occupy. But ultimately you must negotiate. Peace requires compromise

Ukkraine, Gaza and the US-Israel-Iran war tell three different stories but carry one disturbing warning — military might is proving easier to unleash than to translate into peace, old security certainties are wavering, and the multilateral order constructed from the ruins of the Second World War is steadily coming apart.

There is a lesson which history has taught us time and again and which, strangely enough, appears to escape those who embark upon wars — **a war is infinitely easier to start than to end.** I have returned to this proposition in several of my recent writings and, indeed, in my forthcoming book on the geopolitics of the Indian Ocean. I wish events would prove me wrong. They stubbornly refuse to do so.

Leaving aside the appalling Sudanese debacle and other conflicts which barely make the headlines, three wars stare us in the face — Gaza, Ukraine and Iran. Different wars. Different histories. Different circumstances. However, one disturbing thread runs through all three, military might is proving far easier to unleash than to translate into peace.

Iran: Sixty days — and then what?

President Trump should by now know something about that. When the United States, egged on by Israel, attacked Iran, we heard the familiar grandiloquence: overwhelming force, obliteration, indeed the annihilation within weeks of a civilization several millennia old.

That was in February. We are now in August. In between came the 60-day ceasefire, duly declared and signed. That period has expired.

And what, precisely, has been resolved? Has the nuclear question been settled? Has the confrontation between Iran and Israel ended? Is the region any safer?

Hardly. The guns may have been temporarily silenced. The causes which made them fire remain. Meanwhile, Hormuz has demonstrated once again how one narrow stretch of water can hold much of the world economy hostage, affecting energy, shipping, insurance and trade. Add to that the psychological impact of war fatigue on board the USS Lincoln which has had to be recalled!

America also confronts an uncomfortable reality. Even the greatest military arsenal on earth is not bottomless. Depleted stocks of missiles, interceptors and precision weapons inevitably raise questions about its ability to sustain commitments accumulated across the globe.

Vietnam. Iraq. Afghanistan. Different wars. Different circumstances. But the lesson remains: winning battles is not the same as winning wars — and winning wars is certainly not the same as winning the peace.

Putin: The other side of the coin?

Russia should derive little comfort from America's predicament. When Vladimir Putin sent Russian forces into Ukraine in February 2022, little did the Kremlin imagine that more than four years later it would still be fighting.

Cities destroyed. Millions displaced. Countless lives lost. Europe strategically transformed. And still no decisive victory. Putin and Trump are very different men operating in very different circumstances. Yet, somehow I feel that Putin and Trump are both sides of the same coin.



Both illustrate the uncanny temptation of great powers to believe that superior military might gives them the ability — even the right — to impose their will upon other countries and peoples. But History repeatedly demonstrates that peoples have a habit of refusing to behave according to plans drawn up for them in distant capitals.

And Gaza?

Then there is Gaza. How much more destruction will be required before it is accepted that there can be no purely military solution to the Palestinian question? Years of warfare have produced devastation which will scar generations. How then are Israelis and Palestinians ultimately to coexist in security and dignity? A fundamental question!

Trump's Board of Peace was supposed to provide an answer. But, even Israel, after years of near-unconditional American backing, is critical of elements of Washington's peace project.

Again, the same wall. You can bomb. You can destroy. You can occupy. But ultimately you must negotiate. Peace requires compromise. And compromise remains the one weapon no military arsenal contains.

Old friends hedging their bets

Something else is happening while these wars drag on. America's friends are watching — and drawing their own conclusions. Europe, after decades beneath the American

defence umbrella, is increasing military expenditure and speaking with greater urgency about assuming responsibility for its own security.

More revealing perhaps are developments in the Middle East. Who would have imagined, only a few years ago, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye — hardly the closest of strategic companions — entering, together with Pakistan, into a defence arrangement bearing something of NATO's principle that an attack against one would be treated as an attack against all?

Riyadh has gone further. At the end of July, Saudi Arabia launched a multinational maritime defence initiative covering the Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb and the Gulf of Aden. Fourteen countries have associated themselves with its founding declaration.

For decades, when these strategic waterways were threatened, eyes instinctively turned towards Washington and the Western naval powers. Now regional states are increasingly organising themselves. America has certainly not become irrelevant to Gulf security. But countries construct additional security arrangements because they perceive a need for insurance. One does not purchase insurance unless one perceives a risk.

Is this the end of the American security umbrella? Certainly not. But is the world preparing for the possibility that the umbrella may no longer always be there? That question is increasingly difficult to dismiss.

From guarantor to what?

Which brings us to an uncomfortable contradiction.

For decades, the United States assumed — at times, indeed, arrogated to itself — the role of guarantor of world peace and principal defender of the rules-based international order. How then are we to understand the increasingly cavalier pronouncements from Washington about territories and strategic spaces belonging to others?

First Greenland. Now the Strait of Hormuz. What next? Oman? One may dismiss such talk as Trump's penchant for provocative hyperbole. I hesitate to do so. Words matter in diplomacy, infinitely more when uttered by a US President.

To talk casually of acquiring, controlling or "**Americanising**" territories and strategic spaces over which others possess sovereign rights is hardly what one expects from the leader of a

superpower claiming to uphold sovereignty and international law. If strategic necessity permits America to covet what belongs to another, upon what principle does Washington object when Russia invokes its own alleged strategic imperatives in Ukraine?

The situations are not identical. But principles cannot be infinitely elastic. One cannot insist upon the sanctity of sovereignty in Kyiv while treating it as negotiable elsewhere.

That road leads back to spheres of influence — to a world where great powers decide that geography, military might and "strategic necessity" confer special rights over the territories and destinies of others. And here lies an irony which should concern us, inhabitants of the Indian Ocean. At one end lies Hormuz, around which we hear the language of American control. At the other lies Bab el-Mandeb, where regional states are organising collectively to defend a maritime artery upon which much of the world depends. One speaks the language of control. The other, however untested, the language of collective security.

A revealing contrast — evidence of a world becoming more regionalised, fragmented and less willing to assume that security must invariably be organised from Washington or the old European capitals.

Cont. on page 7

A Tale of Three Wars — The World Order Coming Apart?



❦ Russia should derive little comfort from America's predicament. When Vladimir Putin sent Russian forces into Ukraine in February 2022, little did the Kremlin imagine that more than four years later it would still be fighting. Cities destroyed. Millions displaced. Countless lives lost. Europe strategically transformed. And still no decisive victory...'

☞ Cont. from page 6

For Mauritius, sitting as we do in this very Indian Ocean, these are hardly developments on somebody else's geopolitical chessboard.

And what of "We the Peoples..."?

And that brings me to perhaps the greatest casualty of these three wars. Multilateralism.

The United Nations Charter has not disappeared. Its opening words — "**We the Peoples of the United Nations...**" — stare at us from a document born of the determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

Yet, where has the United Nations been as these conflicts have unfolded?

Too often marginalised when wars are started. Circumvented while they are fought. Then summoned to feed the hungry, shelter the displaced and help clear the rubble afterwards. Surely this is not what was envisaged at San Francisco in 1945. Have we reached a dangerous point where international law no longer consistently restrains power but, increasingly, determines when international law is convenient. When the powerful pick and choose which rules apply to them, why should anyone else feel bound by those rules?

Small states cannot be indifferent

For Mauritius and other small states, this is not some distant intellectual debate. We have neither vast armies nor military capabilities. **Our armour is international law.** Our protection lies in sovereign equality, multilateralism and institutions capable of ensuring that rules apply to the strong as well as to the weak, a position I constantly hammer.

Mauritius knows what international law and multilateral institutions can mean when the rights of a small state come up against the interests of considerably more powerful ones. We therefore cannot remain indifferent while the international order upon which we depend is progressively weakened.

Three wars. One warning

Ukraine. Gaza. Iran. Three wars which will eventually

end — all wars eventually do. But what will remain when they do?

America is discovering the limits of military supremacy. Russia is learning the same lesson at enormous cost. Gaza demonstrates that military domination cannot resolve a fundamentally political problem. Europe is reassessing its strategic dependence. Gulf states are constructing additional security arrangements. New alignments are questioning older assumptions.

And the United Nations? Still there. Still indispensable but increasingly marginalised, precisely when the world most

needs the principles upon which it was founded. Those who emerged from the carnage of the Second World War constructed the multilateral system after witnessing the carnage unbridled power can unleash.

Eighty years later, are we really ready to suffer the same fate again? For, the greatest danger posed by these three wars is not ultimately who wins them.

It is that, while fighting them, **we may all be losing the international order that was supposed to prevent them.**

Vijay Makhan
17 August 2026



STC
STATE TRADING CORPORATION

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

OPEN INTERNATIONAL BIDDING

FOR

SUPPLY OF CANNED TOMATOES AND CANNED FISH

Procurement Reference: **STC/CP/2026/03**

1. The State Trading Corporation (STC), trading arm of the Republic of Mauritius, falling under the aegis of the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection, is inviting bids from eligible bidders for the Supply of Canned Tomatoes and Canned Fish as per requirements contained in the bidding document.
2. Bidding document may be downloaded from the website of the STC, <https://www.stcmu.com> free of charge.
3. Bids must be submitted, in PDF format, through STC's secured email address tender@stcmu.com by latest **03 September 2026 up to 14.00 hrs (Mauritian Time)**.
4. Bids received after the submission deadline and/ or submitted to an email address other than the above-mentioned secured email address shall not be considered.
5. Bids will be opened at the STC, Head Office, Ebène, on **03 September 2026 at 14.01 hrs** in the presence of bidders/ representatives who may choose to attend.
6. Any request for clarification in respect of the bids shall be submitted by **27 August 2026** on the email address: query-food@stcmu.com
7. The STC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, split, annul the Bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to award of the Contract, without thereby incurring any liability to any Bidder.

14 August 2026

Interview: Kunal Naik - CEO, National Agency for Drug Control



Mauritius Times: How would you assess the current drug situation in Mauritius? Official figures show large numbers of drug offences and substantial seizures every year. What do these figures tell us about the drug problem — and what do they not tell us?

Kunal Naik: I have said it before publicly, and I say it again as the CEO of the NADC: the drug situation in Mauritius is critical.

All over the world, we are witnessing an onslaught of cheap synthetic drugs and the emergence of new psychoactive substances almost on a daily basis. The World Drug Report 2025 of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime mentions that, in 2024, 755 new psychoactive substances were recorded, the highest number in a single year so far. That was two years ago.

In Mauritius, according to intelligence reports, we are aware that approximately 60 psychoactive substances have been identified since 2013. Globally, responses are being formulated, strategies are being put into place and tested. Unfortunately, emerging threats and challenges currently hold the upper hand, and enforcement agencies are playing catch-up with the rise of new, more dangerous products, markets, and trafficking routes.

Acknowledging that the situation is critical is not conceding that we are failing. It simply means that we have a lot of work to do, and we will require the support of everyone.

*** Are we measuring the success of the fight against drugs correctly? Should we look beyond arrests and seizures to indicators such as drug consumption, addiction, overdoses, deaths, treatment outcomes, relapse and the size of the illicit market?**

Allow me to nuance the question. First of all, speaking of the measure of success in the fight against drugs, as you mention, is a very narrow approach to the issue. The UNODC itself speaks of “drug control” and not “drug eradication”.

The international community has realised that repression through enforcement alone does not work. Drug traffickers do not operate within the same legal parameters as law enforcement or within sovereign frontiers. They can often adapt faster than enforcement agencies.

The trend now is to focus on prevention and harm reduction through a continuum of care. What this means, in essence, is that the State should recognise that people will use drugs, whether they are legal or not, and should exercise its duty of care by warning citizens about the dangers of drug use, providing them with information on the risks and consequences and social and health support wherever possible to

“The Drug Situation in Mauritius is Critical”

Recognizing our critical situation isn't conceding failure; it simply highlights the heavy work ahead and our need for everyone's support

Mauritius is facing an increasingly complex drug problem, with the rapid spread of cheap synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances adding a new dimension to the challenge. At the same time, there is growing recognition that arrests and seizures alone cannot measure success. In this interview, Kunal Naik, CEO of the National Agency for Drug Control (NADC), discusses the changing drug landscape, the need for prevention, harm reduction, treatment and rehabilitation alongside enforcement, and the policy choices facing Mauritius. He also explains the thinking behind the National Drug Control Masterplan 2026–2030 and why the country needs to move beyond the traditional “war on drugs” approach.

minimise the harms of drug use. It should offer medical support in the event of addiction and, finally, provide a treatment and rehabilitation route, helping the individual return to society. That is what harm reduction seeks to do, meeting an individual where he may be on the continuum of use (addiction cycle) to connect him to the continuum of care.

It is imperative to distinguish fundamentally between a drug user and a drug trafficker; only the latter is a criminal. The real measure of the fight against drugs is therefore a dashboard view of the continuum of care including, as you , key health and social statistics, alongside trafficking and drug-use statistics.

The NADC has been set up with this approach in mind, and the National Drug Control Masterplan 2026–2030 paves the way for each institution, public and private, concerned with the fight against drugs in Mauritius to develop projects and initiatives that contribute to this continuum of care.

*** Regarding the proliferation of cheap synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances (NPS), how serious is this threat compared with traditional substances like heroin and cannabis? Does it require a significant rethink of Mauritius' drug-control strategy?**

Traditionally, in Mauritius, we had cannabis, dating back to the arrival of the indentured labourers, followed by the introduction of heroin in the form of brown sugar in the 1980s, and subsequently the introduction of laboratory-created drugs — ecstasy, LSD, MDMA and so on — during the late 1990s and 2000s, essentially coinciding with the advent of the entertainment industry.

The first forms of synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances appeared in Mauritius as early as 2012 and were subsequently listed within the Dangerous Drugs Act (DDA) as synthetic cannabinoids and their derivatives in 2013. Back then, people were talking about “designer drugs”, such as *Black Mamba* or *Batdanlatet*. Today, the variants are so diverse and random in composition that they aren't branded anymore.

People have absolutely no idea what they are buying or what substances are in it. This is why we see people in a state of neurological distress on the streets. These people need

immediate medical assistance, and we are currently working with law enforcement and medical services on a pathway to address this.

But coming back to your question, we are observing an alarming trend where heroin consumption is on the decline and synthetic drugs are on a sharp rise. We are also seeing poly-drug use. Previously, people addicted to opioids tended to remain within that category, and similarly for other drugs. Nowadays, we are hearing of people mixing synthetic drugs with cocaine, for example. Currently no medical service can fully anticipate the consequences of every possible combination.

This is why education is important: people need to know and understand the risks they are taking.

*** How quickly can Mauritius identify a new synthetic substance once it appears on the market? Does the country have an effective early-warning system capable of keeping pace with the rapid evolution of synthetic drugs?**

At the NADC, we have a Supply Reduction Division which is mandated by the NADC Act to liaise and coordinate with law enforcement agencies and the judicial services. The Forensic Science Laboratory is part of this committee. We are already in talks with the new management to identify the processes and pathways that would facilitate the quick identification of new psychoactive agents appearing in the country.

This is the crucial first step towards setting up an Early Warning System, another project we are currently working on with various partners and stakeholders, including the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, NGOs and the police.

I do not want to say too much at the moment, but we already have an idea of the architecture, and the major stakeholders have been contacted and are aware of what contribution is expected from them.

*** Mauritius has made substantial drug seizures and thousands of arrests. But how much of the trafficking infrastructure is actually being dismantled?**

The appearance of synthetic drugs has drastically changed the drug landscape in Mauritius. Drug dealers in Mauritius are no longer only simple middlemen in an import-export chain, with a financier at one end and “jockeys” at the other. That model is increasingly obsolete.

We are increasingly seeing elements of a much more sophisticated model: individuals well versed in the procurement of psychoactive agents and legal precursor chemicals including through online networks and cryptocurrency transactions, the chemical preparation of drugs, the supply chain that gets them onto the streets, and the laundering of money through legitimate business ventures.

☞ Cont. on page 9

“The State should recognise that people will use drugs, whether they are legal or not, and should exercise its duty of care by warning citizens about the dangers of drug use, providing them with information on the risks and consequences and social and health support wherever possible to minimise the harms of drug use. It should offer medical support in the event of addiction and, finally, provide a treatment and rehabilitation route, helping the individual return to society...”

'Drugs are not a battle we can ever declare finished; they are a problem we must manage intelligently and continuously'



☞ Cont. from page 8

Just imagine the picture we have set. We cannot expect law enforcement authorities to identify, investigate, arrest and prosecute an entire ecosystem without setting off alarms and seeing the whole ecosystem disappear as if it imploded without a trace.

This is why we need to invest in awareness, education, prevention and treatment, while also becoming better at identifying the organisers, financiers and facilitators of the trade. We must address the demand side as much as we invest in supply reduction.

*** Would you agree that an increase in drug seizures may sometimes reflect a greater availability of drugs rather than more effective enforcement? If so, how should seizure figures be assessed alongside other indicators to provide a more accurate picture of the country's drug situation?**

Data is important and is required to drive research, from which strategies and tactics are developed. However, we need to be aware that statistics can be interpreted in different ways. While drug seizures are an interesting KPI to judge the efficiency of our supply-reduction initiatives, they are not a measure of the real situation in the country.

That is why we work with every stakeholder, from law enforcement to NGOs and peer educators who have a stronger link to the ground. The whole picture only makes sense if we look at the dashboard as a whole, not at one indicator in isolation.

*** Is Mauritius doing enough in prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and aftercare? In particular, do we have reliable data on relapse rates and on how many people remain drug-free after treatment?**

I would say that Mauritius is doing more today, but we are not yet doing enough. We have treatment and harm-reduction services which includes the methadone programme, NGOs providing psychosocial support and rehabilitation services, and the Drug Users Administrative Panel is creating a pathway towards rehabilitation rather than punishment for people who use drugs.

But the real weakness has been the lack of a coordinated response including a national rehabilitation and reintegration pathway, particularly after a person leaves treatment. The National Drug Control Masterplan 2026–2030 recognises this and provides for structured rehabilitation, psychosocial follow-up, family reintegration, employment support and community follow-up.

On relapse, I would be very cautious. Unfortunately, we

do not yet have sufficiently reliable national longitudinal data to tell you with confidence how many people remain drug-free one, two or five years after treatment. That is precisely why monitoring and evaluation is one of the priorities of the Masterplan.

Treatment is not the end of the journey. Recovery is a continuum. To measure success properly, we must follow the person beyond the treatment centre and know whether he or she has reintegrated into society and remained in recovery.

*** What are your views on how a person found in possession of a small quantity of drugs for personal use should be treated? Should such a person be regarded primarily as a criminal offender, or as someone who may need medical, psychological or social support?**

I believe we need to make a clear distinction between a drug user and a drug trafficker. A person caught with a small quantity for personal consumption may have broken the law, but that does not necessarily mean that the best response is to treat that person primarily as a criminal. In many cases, an underlying health or social issue needs to be addressed.

☞ **The State should recognise that people will use drugs, whether they are legal or not, and should exercise its duty of care through health support, risk education, and harm reduction'**

This is where the Drug Users Administrative Panel, or DUAP, comes in. The DUAP provides an alternative pathway for certain people found in possession of a small quantity of drugs for personal use. Instead of going through the full criminal-justice process, the person can be assessed and, where appropriate, referred for treatment, rehabilitation and other support services.

In essence, I would describe this as a form of depenalisation focused on diversion. The offence remains an offence, but the response shifts from punishment to intervention and rehabilitation.

This also makes practical sense. If we can divert users who need medical or social assistance towards the appropriate services, we allow law enforcement and the justice system to concentrate more resources on traffickers, financiers and organised criminal networks. The objective is not to be soft on drugs. It is to respond smarter.

*** We understand the NADC has been consulting stakeholders on cannabis policy. What options are currently being considered — depenalisation, decriminalisation, medical cannabis, regulated recreational use, or a combination of these? And what does the evidence tell us about the potential benefits and risks, particularly for young people?**

We have been consulting stakeholders on cannabis policy, but I think we need to frame the discussion properly. The evidence does not provide a single, universally applicable answer. Different studies can identify different benefits and risks, and one important question is how that evidence applies to the particular policy model and to Mauritius.

The real question for Mauritius is: can we afford to maintain the status quo?

As I said earlier, a form of depenalisation is already in place through the Drug Users Administrative Panel. So, the reality is that we have already moved away, to some extent, from treating every person who uses drugs purely through the criminal-justice system.

The discussion now needs to be evidence-based and

specific to Mauritius. We need to examine the different options — depenalisation, decriminalisation and, potentially, regulated and responsible adult use — and understand what each model would mean for public health, law enforcement, public safety and, particularly, young people.

Consulting on an option does not mean endorsing that option. My position is that we should not import a policy simply because it works somewhere else. We need to determine what Mauritius can realistically regulate, monitor and enforce. Protecting young people must remain central to whichever policy option we ultimately recommend.

*** Countries such as Uruguay and Canada have introduced regulated cannabis markets, while Portugal has adopted a more health-oriented approach to personal drug possession. What lessons does the NADC draw from these experiences, and are any elements of these models applicable to Mauritius?**

We cannot simply copy any model. Uruguay, Canada and Portugal provide useful lessons, but each responded to its own realities. For Mauritius, the Portuguese approach to health and diversion is particularly relevant, since our DUAP already represents a form of depenalisation. We should learn internationally but develop a Mauritian model.

*** If you had to identify one major weakness in Mauritius' current response to drugs, what would it be? And conversely, what is the one development that gives you the greatest confidence that Mauritius can turn the situation around?**

If I had to identify one weakness, I would say this carefully: it is not the people, but the administrative systems we inherited, which cannot be changed at the flip of a button.

Sometimes, the machinery between an idea and its implementation is simply too slow. By the time we act, the identified issue we sought to address has already moved on. What gives me confidence is the NADC and the National Drug Control Masterplan 2026–2030, which give us the framework to break silos and act more coherently.

☞ **“Drug dealers in Mauritius are no longer only simple middlemen in an import-export chain, with a financier at one end and “jockeys” at the other. That model is increasingly obsolete. We are increasingly seeing elements of a much more sophisticated model: individuals well versed in the procurement of psychoactive agents and legal precursor chemicals including through online networks and cryptocurrency transactions...”**

*** Finally, what should the public expect the NADC to have achieved by the end of 2027/28 that would allow you to say: Mauritius is no longer simply fighting the drug problem — we are beginning to win the battle against it?**

I would put it differently: winning was never really an option, and neither was losing. Drugs are not a battle we can ever declare finished; they are a problem we must manage intelligently and continuously — using compassion where it is needed and enforcement where it is appropriate.

By 2027/28, I want us to have a functioning continuum of prevention, early warning system, harm reduction, treatment and rehabilitation, supported by solid, reliable data and coordinated institutions.

If we can intervene earlier, treat better, disrupt trafficking smarter and help more people return to productive lives, then we will know Mauritius is moving in the right direction.



Nandini Bhautoo

The Digital World: A New Reality, but with Guardrails

The real challenge is no longer whether to engage with the digital world, but how to inhabit it without losing the distinction between reality and its representation

Can we still imagine that something can happen today “outside” the digital world? The question would have seemed absurd twenty years ago. Yet it has become an important one at a time when an increasing part of our social, political and cultural reality is experienced through screens.

Jean Baudrillard had already anticipated this question in *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*. He was not, of course, claiming that the 1990 Gulf War itself had not happened. Rather, he argued that, for most of the public, the war was experienced through images, news reports, official briefings and media narratives. The representation of the event could therefore become almost more real to the viewer than the event itself. This is the significance of his concept of the simulacrum: a representation that no longer simply reflects reality but eventually comes to stand in for it.

means of communication. It is a space for socialisation, discovery, consumption, identity formation and the construction of opinion. What we eat, where we go, what we watch, what we think and even what we feel is increasingly photographed, filmed, shared and commented upon. The experience itself can sometimes seem to require documentation in order to become fully real.

This transformation has a major consequence: an institution, business, cultural organisation or government can no longer regard the digital world as merely an adjunct to traditional communication. The digital sphere is now a public space in its own right. To be absent from it is often to leave others to tell your story for you.

But this new freedom also carries dangers.

The same technology that allows verified information to circulate instantly can also spread rumours, accusations, defamation and misinformation. On social media,

the speed at which content travels is often inversely proportional to the time required to verify it. A claim repeated thousands of times can acquire the appearance of truth. An image taken out of context can become more powerful than the event it supposedly represents.

This is where guardrails become essential.

This does not mean returning to a culture of control or censorship. Freedom of expression is precisely one of the great strengths of the digital world. But freedom must be accompanied by responsibility: fact-checking, respect for the reputation and dignity of individuals, a clear distinction between opinion and information, transparency about sources, and the willingness to correct mistakes

quickly.

The real challenge, therefore, is no longer whether we should engage with the digital world. We have to. The question is how we can inhabit it without losing the fundamental distinction between reality and its representation.

For in the digital universe, what is visible is not necessarily what is true; what is viral is not necessarily what is important; and what is repeated is not necessarily what actually happened.

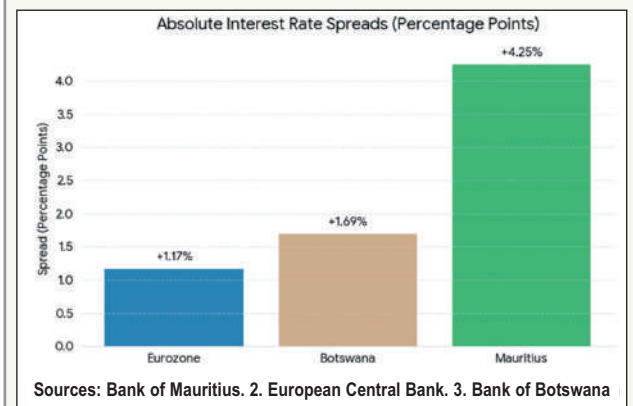
The challenge of our time is ultimately this: to ensure that truth can still compete with spectacle, rumour and emotion in a world where the representation of reality has itself become part of reality.

How Banking Spreads Hurt Mauritian Citizens and Entrepreneurs — And How to Fix Them



Samad Ramoly

The chart below measures the interest rate spread, representing the percentage-point difference between a central bank's benchmark policy rate and the average prime lending rate (PLR) charged by commercial banks. This metric serves as a direct indicator of monetary policy transmission efficiency and financial sector friction. A wider spread indicates that the central bank's efforts to lower borrowing costs are losing momentum before reaching the real economy, resulting in an expensive cash premium for local businesses and consumers.



Unlike Botswana — where the central bank actively stepped in with strict regulatory directives to cap prime lending rates and shield consumers—the Bank of Mauritius allows market forces to determine commercial margins. Without regulatory intervention to force compression, commercial lending rates remain structurally high.

“Unlike Botswana — where the central bank actively stepped in with strict regulatory directives to cap prime lending rates and shield consumers—the Bank of Mauritius allows market forces to determine commercial margins. Without regulatory intervention to force compression, commercial lending rates remain structurally high...”

The Solution: A Two-Pronged Monetary Strategy

To break this cycle, Mauritius must pivot to a bold framework that defends the currency while directly attacking banking inefficiency:

- **Increase the Repo Rate:** Raising the central bank baseline rate will defend the Mauritian Rupee, curb capital flight, attract foreign investment, and cool imported inflation—instantly protecting citizen purchasing power and relieving the foreign exchange crunch for businesses.
- **Cap the Commercial Interest Spread:** To ensure that higher base rates do not translate into predatory lending costs for local entrepreneurs, the Bank of Mauritius must emulate Botswana's regulatory playbook and legally cap the absolute spread that commercial banks can charge above the policy baseline.

This dual approach aggressively compresses the uncompetitive 4.25% banking margin, forcing local banks to absorb the structural friction instead of passing the bill to the Mauritian public.



“Three generations now coexist. First, there are those who remember a world before the Internet and social media and still regard them, at times, as little more than a waste of time. Then there is a transitional generation: people who remember the world before social media but have recognised that the rules have changed and that this new space must be engaged with. Finally, there is the new generation, which has grown up with smartphones and digital platforms and for whom the boundary between the “real” and the virtual world has become increasingly blurred...” — Pic - Getty Images

With social media, this logic has entered a new phase.

Three generations now coexist. First, there are those who remember a world before the Internet and social media and still regard them, at times, as little more than a waste of time. Then there is a transitional generation: people who remember the world before social media but have recognised that the rules have changed and that this new space must be engaged with. Finally, there is the new generation, which has grown up with smartphones and digital platforms and for whom the boundary between the “real” and the virtual world has become increasingly blurred.

For this generation, social media is not merely a



Dr Shravan Nosib

Emperor's Last Crown: Lingua Franca, Coloniality, and the Child's Mind

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart". — Nelson Mandela

I read with interest the article by Mr Soobarah in *Mauritius Times* (August 7th, 2026) with respect to introduction of Kreol Morisien (KM) in parliament and in the mainstream educational curriculum. I wish to emphasize few pertinent points with respect to language and its educational import. I am multilingual.

The battlefield nobody names

Territory is usually imagined as land — borders, checkpoints, flags. But colonisation also claimed a quieter, more intimate ground: the mouth. When a child in Riviere-du-Rempart, Delhi, Lagos, Lima, or Manila opens a textbook in English, French, or Spanish, they are stepping onto contested territory as surely as if they'd crossed a border. The tongue itself becomes colonised space — a place where power decides which words count as knowledge and which are demoted to "dialect," "vernacular," or worse, silence. Dialect is a derogatory colonial term used to destroy ancestral languages.

This is why the debate over which language should lead in education is never purely technical. It is a debate over sovereignty — who governs the space between a child's thoughts and their expression of them. And because it involves real children learning in real classrooms, it also has to answer to scientific evidence, not just symbolism. The two pressures — the political weight of linguistic territory and the practical science of how children actually acquire language — turn out to point toward similar conclusions.

Mauritius: Layered hierarchy and linguistic paradox

Few places illustrate the above as vividly as Mauritius. Settled by nobody before colonisation, then ruled successively by the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British atop the labour of enslaved Africans and later indentured workers from India and China, the island built a linguistic hierarchy so precise it functions as a social map.

At the top sits French — not the official language, but the language of prestige, inherited from the Franco-Mauritian planter class. An unaccented "pure" French still signals proximity to the old plantation elite, and French dominates the press and polite public life. English holds the formal "Emperor's crown" — Parliament, the courts, the curriculum — yet is rarely anyone's mother tongue; the British left the French-speaking elite undisturbed and used English instead as an administrative layer, a gatekeeping credential for global commerce and white-collar work.

Beneath sits KM, born of forced contact between enslaved Africans and French



“Nigeria has more than 500 languages; India has dozens of major ones. In such settings, no single indigenous language is neutral enough to serve as a national language without privileging one ethnic group over the rest. A shared second language, however it arrived, can function as neutral ground precisely because it belongs to no single group inside the country...” Pic - school.nations.gy

colonists. It only gained a standardised orthography in 2011 and entered primary schools as an optional subject in 2012 — a genuine, if belated, act of reclamation.

A second ethnic axis runs alongside Bhojpuri, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telegu, Marathi, and Mandarin, carried by indentured labourers and Chinese settlers — long relegated to "ancestral" heritage subjects tied to religious identity but which assume political leverage come elections. KM speakers are folded into a residual category, their language treated as belonging to everyone and so, politically to no one.

New emperor wears no crown

Today's linguistic colonisation needs no flags or treaties. It arrives through admissions requirements, scientific publishing, and search algorithms. English functions as what linguist Robert Phillipson called "linguistic imperialism" — enforced not by decree but by the architecture of global systems.

Artificial intelligence adds a new layer. Large language models trained disproportionately on English text risk flattening the idioms and reasoning of other linguistic traditions, nudging parents to raise children in the tongue the machine understands. The mechanism has changed — from missionary school to app store — but the transaction is familiar: access to modernity, exchanged for linguistic conformity.

The case for reclaiming the territory

The evidence gathered by UNESCO and echoed across African and Latin American education research is fairly consistent: children build stronger foundational literacy and numeracy when first taught in their mother tongue. The early years of school are when a child is learning how to learn — decoding symbols, linking sound to meaning, grasping abstraction. Doing this in an unfamiliar language adds friction that has

nothing to do with the material itself.

There is also a cost that outlives any single child's education. Many indigenous and ancestral languages are endangered, and schools are frequently the last institution positioned to keep them alive. When a language is territory, losing it isn't just losing vocabulary — it's losing the specific way a people historically organized memory, law, humor, and relationship to land. And there is a structural inequity baked into colonial-language schooling: children who already speak the colonial language at home — usually urban, wealthier families — get a head start before the race even begins. The classroom quietly reproduces the same hierarchy the coloniser built.

The case for holding the shared ground

The counterargument isn't nostalgia for colonial history — it's coordination. Nigeria has more than 500 languages; India has dozens of major ones. In such settings, no single indigenous language is neutral enough to serve as a national language without privileging one ethnic group over the rest. A shared second language, however it arrived, can function as neutral ground precisely because it belongs to no single group inside the country.

There's also the matter of what already exists on that ground. Higher education, scientific literature, legal systems, and international trade still run largely through English, French, or Spanish. Fluency in these languages carries genuine economic return. And practically, building textbooks, training teachers, and designing assessments across dozens of local languages simultaneously is slow and expensive for already under-resourced systems. Abandoning the shared language entirely risks trading one inequity — cultural erasure — for another: cutting children off from the

wider economic and academic world.

What successful systems actually do

The pertinent question isn't whether the coloniser's language should yield territory — it's how the handoff is sequenced and resourced. Countries getting this right generally follow a pattern: mother-tongue instruction for the first three to six years, building deep foundational literacy, followed by a planned, well-supported transition into the global or national language for later grades. South Africa, Ethiopia, and the Philippines have all tested versions of this model. Where it has failed, the cause has almost always been underfunding and inadequate teacher training — not a flaw in the sequencing itself.

This is, in effect, a negotiated settlement over disputed territory: local languages hold the earliest and most formative ground, while global languages are granted access later, on the child's terms rather than imposed from the start.

What the science of multilingual children adds

What's often missing from this debate is that children are simply better built for holding multiple linguistic territories at once than policy conversations assume. There is no fixed ceiling on how many languages a child can learn. Kids raised in genuinely multilingual households or regions — parts of India, Switzerland, Nigeria, Mauritius — regularly become fluent in three or four languages, sometimes more. The limiting factor isn't brain capacity; it's the quality and consistency of exposure to each one.

This directly supports the mother-tongue-first, transition-later model: it isn't asking children to do anything cognitively unnatural. It mirrors how multilingual children already navigate multiple linguistic territories in naturally multilingual settings. And while multilingual children sometimes hit individual-language milestones slightly later than monolingual peers, their combined language development typically keeps pace or exceeds it. The apparent "delay" is an artifact of measuring one territory in isolation instead of the whole map.

Redrawing the linguistic map

Framed this way, the debate over colonial versus local languages in education stops being a binary fight over which flag flies over the classroom. It becomes a question of sequencing sovereignty: which territory does a child inhabit first, and how is the border crossing into a second or third language managed, so it opens doors instead of erasing ground.

Mother-tongue-first education, done well, is not a rejection of global languages, and it is not an attempt to freeze a colonial-era hierarchy — inverted or otherwise — in place. It is an attempt to let children hold their ancestral territory securely first, then expand outward into shared, global ground on terms that serve them rather than terms imposed by history.

References: UNESCO's *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education* (2009), *Right to Education Handbook*, and *Convention against Discrimination in Education*



Shyam Bhatia

Olara Otunnu: The man who invented the UN straw poll now faces his own test

There is a delicious irony in Olara Otunnu's bid to become the next Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Forty-five years ago, as Uganda's representative to the United Nations and president of the Security Council, Otunnu devised the informal straw-poll procedure that helped break one of the most stubborn deadlocks in the organisation's history.

Today, that same procedure is being used to judge his own candidacy.

Otunnu, 75, is the seventh and latest candidate to enter the race to succeed António Guterres, whose second term ends on December 31. Uganda formally nominated him on July 24, unusually late in a process in which the other candidates had already undergone their General Assembly interactive dialogues.

He is nevertheless no newcomer to the organisation he now hopes to lead.

Otunnu was Uganda's ambassador to the UN in the 1980s, served briefly as foreign minister, and later became UN Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, a position he held from 1997 until 2005. He subsequently headed the International Peace Academy, now the International Peace Institute.

But his journey to the top of international diplomacy began in the darkness of Idi Amin's Uganda.

Otunnu grew up under Amin and has described the strange transformation by which a political leader who could initially appear charming and persuasive became the ruler of a murderous regime. Disappearances became commonplace. Families could lose relatives without ever knowing precisely what had happened to them.

The experience left Otunnu with a visceral understanding of what happens when institutions designed to protect people cease to function. It also shaped his view of the United Nations.

During our exclusive conversation, he returned repeatedly to the idea that the UN must recover its ability to prevent conflicts rather than merely manage their consequences.

His own career has taken him through many of the organisation's most difficult theatres. As Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, he travelled through war zones and turned the plight of children caught in conflict into a major international issue.

He argues that today's UN faces an even more fundamental crisis of authority.

Wars in Ukraine, Gaza and elsewhere have exposed the inability of the Security Council to act collectively. Great-power rivalry has paralysed the organisation pre-

cisely when the world most needs an effective international mediator. At the same time, the UN faces financial pressure, institutional fatigue and growing scepticism about whether multilateral diplomacy can still deliver.

Otunnu's programme therefore goes well beyond a change of personnel at the top.

He has proposed reforms involving the Security Council, conflict prevention, peace building, climate and development. He has also called for international governance of artificial intelligence, arguing that AI is developing too rapidly to be left entirely to governments and corporations acting independently.

His argument is essentially that the UN has to become relevant to the problems that will shape the next generation rather than simply preserve the structures created for the previous one.

But Otunnu's most unusual qualification for the job lies in the fact that he has already solved a problem which the organisation is confronting again.

In 1981, the Security Council was deadlocked over the choice of a successor to Kurt Waldheim. Several candidates had been blocked, and the superpowers appeared unable to agree.

As president of the Council, Otunnu introduced an informal secret ballot in which members could indicate whether they encouraged or discouraged a candidate or had no opinion. The purpose was not to elect somebody immediately but to expose opposition without forcing governments into an embarrassing public confrontation.

The device became known as the Otunnu Formula.

It helped clear the way for Javier Pérez de Cuéllar of Peru, a compromise candidate who had not initially been regarded as the obvious favourite. The Security Council eventually selected him, and the General Assembly approved the choice.

The formula has survived because it answers a peculiar problem at the heart of the UN: the Secretary-General must be acceptable not merely to a majority of countries but to the five permanent members of the Security Council, each of which possesses a veto.

That means the race is never simply a popularity contest.

The candidate who starts with the most supporters is not necessarily the person who



“Otunnu has lived through dictatorship and exile. He has represented a government at the centre of international diplomacy. He has worked inside the UN bureaucracy. He has negotiated with governments that disagreed profoundly with one another. And he has spent years dealing with conflicts in which the international community's failure to act has had devastating consequences for ordinary people...” Pic - The EastAfrican

will eventually get the job. What matters is whether the leading powers can live with the eventual choice.

That may be Otunnu's strongest argument for describing himself as a potential consensus candidate.

The first straw poll, however, was distinctly unpromising. In the July 30 ballot, Costa Rica's Rebeca Grynspan emerged as the early leader, followed by Guyana's Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett and Argentina's Rafael Grossi. Otunnu was last, with two members encouraging his candidacy, five discouraging it and eight expressing no opinion.

Yet the result was not a final verdict. The process can continue through several rounds, and the decisive question will ultimately be whether any of the five permanent members is prepared to block a candidate.

There is also a powerful regional consideration. Several of the strongest contenders are from Latin America and the Caribbean, while there is considerable pressure for the UN's first woman Secretary-General.

Otunnu therefore faces an uphill battle. But he has something few of his rivals possess: a personal history that mirrors many of the UN's own contradictions.

He has lived through dictatorship and exile. He has represented a government at the centre of international diplomacy. He has worked inside the UN bureaucracy. He has negotiated with governments that disagreed profoundly with one another. And he has spent years dealing with conflicts in which the international community's failure to act has had devastating consequences for ordinary people.

His recollections of Uganda's Asian

expulsion in 1972 also reveal something of the complexity of his political thinking. The expulsion was an enormous human and economic catastrophe, yet Otunnu has pointed out the uncomfortable reality that for some Asians caught up in Amin's terror, exile may also have meant escape from a much more dangerous future.

It is precisely this ability to look at political events from several angles that he believes a Secretary-General requires.

Otunnu has a phrase for his own education: “Oxford was my first United Nations.”

His years at Oxford exposed him to a world beyond Uganda and helped prepare him for the international life that followed. But it was his subsequent experience of the real United Nations — its compromises, frustrations, private negotiations and occasional capacity to achieve the impossible — that shaped him as a diplomat.

There is another quality that runs through his career: an instinct for finding mechanisms when conventional diplomacy becomes stuck.

That was the lesson of the Otunnu Formula in 1981.

It was also the lesson of his work on children in armed conflict, where he helped turn an issue that had previously been treated as a humanitarian afterthought into an established part of the international security agenda.

And it is the lesson he now brings to a UN confronted by a new generation of problems, including artificial intelligence, climate change, fragmented geopolitics and wars in which the organisation's authority is increasingly challenged.

The question is whether the governments that must ultimately choose the next Secretary-General believe that the man who helped devise one of the UN's most successful diplomatic mechanisms is the person to revive the organisation itself.

Otunnu's General Assembly interactive dialogue on August 19 will give members states their first formal opportunity to question him about his programme, leadership record and vision for the organisation. The Security Council is then scheduled to hold its second informal straw poll on August 21.

By the time these words are read, the process will have moved another step forward. But the result will not necessarily settle the race. Secretary-General selections can involve multiple rounds of bargaining, withdrawals and compromises before the permanent members settle on a candidate.

That is something Otunnu knows better than most. For he was there the last time the system became hopelessly stuck.

He was the man who devised a way of quietly discovering which candidates the great powers could — and could not — accept.

Now the straw poll carries his own name. The man who invented the test is about to take it himself.



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Trump's remarks about aide Natalie Harp spark questions

President Donald Trump has sparked renewed attention with unusually personal remarks about Natalie Harp, a close aide who has become a familiar presence around him in the White House.



Trump has reportedly told staff that Harp is among the people closest to him and that she may be one of the few people who "loves him" as much as his wife, Melania Trump, and his children. He has also reportedly said that, unlike other members of his team who may eventually move on, Harp "will never leave me."

Harp, who serves as an executive assistant to the president, previously worked as an anchor for the right-wing One America News Network before joining Trump's political cam-

paign in 2022. She returned to his orbit after his second presidential victory and has since been seen frequently at his side.

A recent video showing Harp sitting beside Trump while apparently helping draft posts for his Truth Social account has added to the public interest surrounding their relationship and her unusually close access to the president.

Reports have also claimed that Harp has written deeply admiring letters to Trump, including one reportedly declaring: "You are all that matters to me."

The remarks have inevitably generated speculation about the nature of their relationship. However, the available reports do not establish anything beyond a close personal and professional association between Trump and his aide.

The episode nevertheless highlights the unusual degree of personal loyalty that Trump appears to value among those closest to him. Harp's role also raises questions about the influence wielded by informal advisers and aides who operate within a president's inner circle.

For an administration in which access to the president can translate into significant political influence, the extent of Harp's proximity to Trump is likely to remain a subject of public and media scrutiny.

South Korea to introduce voluntary conscription from 2027

South Korea is set to introduce a voluntary conscription system starting next year, marking a significant shift in its military policy. Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back announced the upcoming rollout following calls from President Lee Jae-Myung for sweeping military reforms. Under the country's long-standing mandatory system, all eligible men aged 19 and older have historically been required to serve at least 18 months, with alternative social or civil service roles assigned to those with specific medical conditions. Rare exemptions have traditionally been reserved for elite classical artists and international sports medallists.

The newly announced framework, however, moves toward a "selective and smart conscription" model, as reported by HT and Yonhap news agency. While Seoul will retain the foundational structure of universal service, the reforms expand opportunities for recruits to opt into longer-term service as professional non-commissioned officers. This strategic pivot is driven partly by South Korea's demographic challenges, particularly its declining birth rate, which necessitates a leaner, more technologically integrated force.

The modernized military structure will heavily emphasize high-tech warfare



According to President Lee, this "voluntary enlistment system" will aim to broaden the path to long-term professional military roles. Pic - AFP

domains, including artificial intelligence, autonomous drones, and advanced cybersecurity. President Lee emphasized the need to transform the armed forces into an elite, technology-driven military while ensuring that service members can secure better educational and career prospects, shifting away from the perception of military duty as a lost period.

Rooted historically in the unresolved tensions of the Korean War — which concluded with a 1953 armistice rather than a formal peace treaty — South Korea's defense strategy has long relied on sheer manpower to counter the threat from North Korea. By embracing these 2027 reforms, Seoul aims to balance national security imperatives with the modern socio-economic aspirations of its youth.

Across the Globe

Deutsche Bank to settle yuan

Deutsche Bank has become the first non-Chinese bank allowed to settle yuan transactions in Europe, a major step in Beijing's ambitions to dislodge the supremacy of the US dollar.

China has made increasing the use of the yuan in international transactions a key priority of its latest five-year plan, including financing development projects abroad in its currency. US President Donald Trump's

"erratic" trade policies have added urgency to Beijing's ambitions, the *Financial Times* argued, while historically low interest rates in China have also made the yuan more attractive to lenders.

However, the Chinese currency has a long way to go: The dollar continues to underpin the vast majority of international finance, with 64% of global debt denominated in the currency.



The People's Bank of China has named Deutsche Bank as a renminbi clearing bank in Europe, making it the first non-Chinese lender on the continent. Pic - Instagram

Ebola went unnoticed for months

The latest outbreak of Ebola in Central Africa started at least three months before authorities officially declared it, the World Health Organization said, underscoring the challenge of containing the virus.

The spread of the Bundibugyo strain, which a study suggested was transmitted from animals to humans, unlike other recent variants, has been aided by a lack of medical equipment and widespread misinformation.

Health authorities have been forced to play catch-up as the fastest outbreak on record has killed more than 2,000 people in DR Congo, though experts warn the true figure may be far higher. While vaccine trials are ongoing, none is expected to be released for months.

"The virus is ahead of us," the WHO's Africa director said.

Youth unemployment on the rise

Global youth unemployment increased in 2025, new data showed, as weaker economic growth and geopolitical tensions slowed hiring, with experts fearing AI could make it even harder for young people to find work.

The UN's International Labour Organization warned of a widespread decline in entry-level jobs, feeding Gen Z's generalized apprehension about the impact of the technology. According to a recent Quinnipiac poll, those born between 1997 and 2008 are the most pessimistic about the impact of AI on their lives, with 78% saying they are at least somewhat concerned.

"Younger generations now want to reclaim agency over their futures, rather than just blindly embrace AI," an expert wrote in *The Conversation*.

Research monkeys in short supply

The price of a lab monkey in China has nearly doubled to \$26,000 as the country races to catch the US in biotech. Primates remain the best animal



Future vaccines depend on test subjects in short supply. Pic - The NYT

models for drug effects on humans, and supply is a major bottleneck in trials worldwide: France is expanding breeding capacity, and US prices hit \$50,000, Bloomberg reported. The squeeze is sharpest in China, which now accounts for a third of the new-drug pipeline, and analysts forecast an annual shortfall of 15,000-20,000 animals until 2028, compounded by regulatory requirements that the monkeys be at least three years old. The crunch may deepen: AI is accelerating hypothesis generation and experiment design, but those

hypotheses still need to be tested on animals.

Oil hits three-week high as Strait of Hormuz shipping fears intensify

Oil prices climbed to a three-week high on Wednesday, driven by escalating trader anxiety regarding the safety of commercial vessels navigating the vital Strait of Hormuz and ongoing disruptions to global crude supplies.

According to Reuters and HT, Brent crude futures rose 45 cents (0.49%) to \$91.47 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) gained 45 cents (0.53%) to \$85.39 a barrel. Both benchmarks reached their highest levels since late July.

The upward pressure stems primarily from severe uncertainty surrounding the waterway following the expiration of a

temporary ceasefire agreement. With diplomatic efforts reaching a stalemate and a senior Iranian official signaling a shift toward a fully offensive military posture, most shipowners are actively avoiding the route. US President Donald Trump maintained that the strait remains open and that no talks are underway with Iran, contrasting sharply with Tehran's assertions that the passage is shut.

As a critical artery carrying roughly one-fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas supplies prior to the outbreak of the US-Israeli conflict with Iran in February, any restriction in the Strait of Hormuz immediately commands a heavy geopolitical risk premium.



any restriction in the Strait of Hormuz immediately commands a heavy geopolitical risk premium. Pic - Outlook

Analysts like Pepperstone's Ahmad Assiri warn that prolonged disruptions could potentially push Brent crude back above the \$100 threshold. In response to the bottleneck, nations like Iraq are diversifying export pathways, approving a three-month alternative routing system starting September 1.

Meanwhile, markets await official U.S. inventory data from the EIA to assess whether tightening domestic stockpiles will provide further momentum to surging global energy prices.

Spiritual leader Morari Bapu commences nine-day 'Ramcharitmanas' recital at Harvard University

Renowned Indian spiritual leader Morari Bapu has commenced a nine-day recital of the sacred Ramcharitmanas at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre in Cambridge, according to PTI. Titled 'Manas Guru Prasad', the spiritual gathering began on August 15 and runs through August 23, accompanied by a specialized three-day scholarly discussion held from August 16 to 18.

The prestigious academic setting provided a unique backdrop for exploring the epic's cultural footprint. Prof Diana Eck, Faculty Director at Harvard's Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute, reflected on the journey of Ram, Sita, and Lakshmana, describing them as "primordial pilgrims" whose 14-year exile transformed the geography of India into sacred sites. She noted that this historical pathway eventually inspired the traditions of Ramlila, expanding far beyond India's borders into



Indian spiritual leader Morari Bapu commences 9-day 'Ramcharitmanas' recital at Harvard University. Pic - Big News Network

nations like Thailand, Indonesia, and Cambodia.

Adding to the event's cross-cultural resonance, UK House of Lords member Dolar Popat remarked that Harvard's historic motto, Veritas (Truth), deeply harmo-

nized with the core spiritual values of Satya, Prem, and Karuna (Truth, Love, and Compassion). The programme also observed Tulsi Jayanti on August 19, celebrating the birth anniversary of the revered poet-saint Tulsidas. Morari Bapu established the annual Tulsi Jayanti observance in 2010 to honour individuals dedicated to preserving and interpreting the Ram Katha tradition.

Organising team member Paavan Popat OBE highlighted the significance of uniting one of the world's oldest recitation traditions with a premier global center of learning. Bapu's global outreach includes over 980 discourses across more than 900 international locations—ranging from the Vatican and the United Nations headquarters to the University of Cambridge in 2023.

Across the Globe

Japan's pubs feel the pinch

Surging food and utility costs are squeezing thousands of izakayas across Japan, with experts fearing a record number of bankruptcies. The country's beloved pubs, known for serving cheap drinks and small snacks, have long been a staple of Japan's nightlife culture. But rising costs and a shift in the country's drinking culture are piling on the pressure, with a record 118 izakaya operators going bankrupt in the first six months of the year. Owners now face the tough decision of raising prices and risking losing customers or absorbing higher costs and sacrificing profits. "If we raise prices much further, people will stop ordering," the owner of an izakaya famed for its straw-seared bonito told Nikkei.

Greek island suffers 'touristification'

The plight of the Greek island of Amorgos illustrates the dangers of "touristification," an essayist argued. Distinct from tourism, touristification transforms a destination into one "moulded to the needs primarily of tourists and the aspirations of tourism businesses," often rendering the original attractions unrecognisable. Alia Malek argued in Now Voyager. So far spared the ravages of Santorini — where the waste of 3.4 million annual visitors was dumped in a caldera — touristification is appearing on Amorgos, where a millennia-old mountain path was illegally plowed to make an 11th-century monastery accessible by car, thus defeating the pur-

pose of visiting an ancient and remote monastery. By crowding out technology and manufacturing investment in favour of tourism subsidies, overtourism can also hamper economic diversification.

Africa's new era of megaprojects

African countries are undertaking major infrastructure projects at an unprecedented pace in an effort to strengthen energy independence and improve transport and logistics. However, analysts warn that rising debt levels could undermine long-term progress. The conflict in the Middle East, a key supplier of Africa's fuel,



The return of the African megaproject. Pic - Getty images

exposed the continent's dependence on energy imports and accelerated investment in new refineries and pipelines.

At the same time, competition between China and the United States for influence in Africa has brought billions of dollars in infrastructure funding, ushering in a new era of large-scale development projects. Despite this momentum, growing debt repayments and reductions in foreign aid are placing increasing pressure on public finances. As The Economist noted, ambition alone will not be enough to guarantee success.

mRNA cancer vaccine sees success

An experimental vaccine prevented the return and spread of cancer in high-risk melanoma patients, Moderna and Merck announced Wednesday, marking a milestone in the pursuit of cancer therapies. Built on the mRNA platform that allowed Moderna to quickly roll out COVID-19 vaccines five years ago, intismeran is a genetically personalized vaccine that instructs the patient's immune system to attack tumours, slowing melanoma's progression and spread. Such "neoantigen" vaccines have long been viewed as a promising cancer treatment, but this late-stage trial was the first aimed at "definitively proving their benefit," STAT News wrote. Moderna's shares surged more than 175% on Wednesday. "We have started to demonstrate the potential of an entirely new class of medicine," its CEO said.

Compiled by K. Ramlallah

From Our Archives -- A Glimpse into 1961

8th Year No 343

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 31 March, 1961

• "Truth does not conform itself to us; we must conform ourselves to it." — Marcus Claudius

By L. Seetanah

I was invited the other day to take part in a debate on *L'Entité Mauricienne* at the Youth House and was asked to write on the subject in the interest of youth clubs which are at present taken up with the idea. This urge on the part of the youth of this country is, in itself, a healthy sign that Unity is the much-sought-after solution to most, if not all, of our problems. It is a sure sign that communalism is now universally believed to be an impediment to this country's progress, socially and economically, not to mention all the unhealthy emotional feelings which cause us to be at variance with one another, and which stand in the way of good relationships and harmony. It is a sign that we are not, after all, utterly devoid of patriotic sentiments which alone can transcend and rise above our parochial and petty differences.

The questions that ought to crop up in our minds to be answered now should be: What makes us keep apart? Why is it that a rapprochement seems so impossible? To answer these, we must go to the roots of our differences; we must empty our minds of all the prejudices that have gathered there from our infancy; we must examine and understand the psychological facts about our likes and dislikes which are the direct outcome of the influences on our minds brought about by the way we have been brought up and by the environments in which we have lived in the past.

There must have been many occasions in our childhood when what was taught to us by our parents and what our parents did were incompatible, but we were not perhaps particular about questioning anything they did or said because we accepted them as our guides and protectors, and the love we naturally have for them besides prevented us from caring overmuch about what seemed to us to be improper. What we are, therefore, is the result of what we then thought and believed. What we did not question then, we accepted as thoroughly true, and no great wonder, therefore, that we cannot now explain why we cannot see things in a different light.

From this argument we can satisfactorily come to the conclusion that our beliefs are not all of them right, or rather that there is a possibility they can be wrong. If we can reason with ourselves in this way, then there is no doubt that we can bring ourselves to understand our friends who have been brought up differently from ourselves.

I admit that this standard of reasoning cannot be easily reached by everybody, but for our intelligentsia, among whom we include our students, it should not be all that difficult. Since we are out in search of the truth about our Unity, we must now answer this question: How are we to strive undividedly — without jeopardising the very unity we are striving for — to reach it? The



answer to this will be better understood — since I have already explained what procedure in our reasoning we should follow — if I quote myself, though very copiously, from a letter which I addressed to a Franco-Mauritian friend of mine in London, when we were considering the possibility of creating the Mauritius League there:

"The barriers of religion, race, creed, class, colour, etc., are just imperfect creations of our imperfect minds. Human beings remain as they are in spite of such puny creations in their minds. The world is a unity, and however much we would try to divide it, the unity will remain, and so, therefore, why not contribute towards this unity instead of going against the natural current? I am confident that we can work together although we disagree on points of principle.

"So, let us view the problems of Mauritius, you and I, as just two young human beings, two detached observers, unbiased and disinterested. What do we see? We see an old generation moving towards its end, leaving behind its class, race, creed, and political hatreds, and the young stepping gradually into its place and reviving and perpetuating the old hatreds, having unquestioningly and sheepishly accepted as gospel truth everything indiscriminately that the old generation is leaving behind.

"We see children being born, pure in heart and mind, and then suddenly absorbing the pride, prejudice, hatred, jealousy, fear, etc., of their parents. They grow up to worsen things instead of to improve and remedy them. What should you do? Do we stand there and do nothing, or do we make it our bounden duty to remedy the evils before we are driven and drowned by the current?

"We, the Mauritian youth of today, must learn to understand, tolerate and live side by side with one another, whether we are Franco-Mauritians, Indo-Mauritians or Sino-Mauritians; whether Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Confucians, Mohammedans or pagans; whether we are clerks or labourers, so that posterity might say that we knew how to live in our day. Civilisation and education

must be judged by the extent to which people can and will understand and tolerate others and live in harmony together. At this stage of Mauritian history, we need people, like yourself, of goodwill and understanding to come fearlessly forward and help create a harmonious future for the good and welfare of all of us."

If we can struggle first with ourselves to eradicate all our prejudices which have, through no fault of ours, found their way into the pure mind and heart with which we were born, we shall, without the shadow of a doubt, succeed in bringing about Unity into our society. The move on the part of our youth now was bound to come. Order and

harmony are inherent in the nature of this God-created world, and all interferences by puny mortals who are, after all, its offspring, inevitably must, at some stage or other, give in to the Absolute Power which is Truth itself.

What is taking place in the minds of our youth today in the form of this move towards Unity is simply the effect of this Absolute Power which seeks to restore order in a deeply divided society through its younger creatures here. Also, the existence of this country has been unjustly ignored by the outside world, which has always sought its own interest through cheap labour at our expense. This will slowly be remedied when the youth of this country will together put up a timely struggle and win respect and recognition for their country from the outside world. This recognition, however, must be earned and demands their sustained efforts; it demands their pledge and dedication to a just cause.

Our youth will be gratified to know how just a cause theirs is in their struggle to restore order, peace and harmony in this country. For them, we quote these well-known verses from Lord Tennyson, so that they may realise how great their task is:

*"The old order changeth,
yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should
corrupt the world."*

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Mauritius Times

Réseaux sociaux: lutter contre les abus sans transformer Internet en espace sous surveillance

Les réseaux sociaux sont devenus un espace incontournable de communication, de débat et d'expression publique. Ils sont aussi devenus un terrain privilégié pour les escroqueries, le cyberharcèlement, les menaces, la diffamation, l'usurpation d'identité et la diffusion de contenus haineux ou trompeurs. Le gouvernement entend donc renforcer la réponse à ces dérives et réfléchit notamment à un système de «verified identities» permettant d'établir l'identité des utilisateurs.

Le débat est légitime. Mais il mérite d'être abordé avec une certaine prudence car la question n'est pas simplement de posséder les outils nécessaires pour identifier les auteurs d'abus. Elle concerne aussi la manière de déterminer comment protéger les citoyens sans affaiblir la liberté d'expression, la vie privée et la possibilité de s'exprimer sous pseudonyme.

Dans un communiqué publié le 17 août, le ministère des Technologies de l'information, de la communication et de l'innovation a rappelé que Maurice dispose déjà d'un arsenal légal permettant de sanctionner plusieurs abus commis en ligne. La *Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Act 2021* vise notamment le cyberharcèlement, certains usages abusifs de faux profils et la diffusion de contenus indésirables.

La section 23 concerne notamment les contenus trompeurs ou inexacts diffusés dans l'intention de diffamer, menacer, abuser ou induire le public en erreur, ainsi que ceux qui menacent la santé ou la sécurité publiques, la sécurité nationale ou font la promotion du racisme.

Le gouvernement souligne également que la responsabilité ne concerne pas seulement celui qui publie le contenu. Les administrateurs de pages, groupes ou autres espaces en ligne peuvent être tenus d'agir lorsqu'un contenu problématique leur est signalé par une autorité d'enquête compétente.

Les sanctions annoncées sont lourdes : selon les dispositions citées par le ministère, une condamnation peut entraîner une amende allant jusqu'à Rs 1 million et jusqu'à 20 ans de servitude pénale.

La première question à poser est donc simple: le problème est-il réellement l'absence de loi, ou plutôt l'application efficace des lois existantes?

Avant de créer de nouvelles obligations d'identification, il serait utile d'évaluer combien de plaintes pour cyberharcèlement, menaces, escroqueries, usurpation d'identité ou diffamation en ligne sont reçues chaque année, combien font l'objet d'enquêtes, combien aboutissent à des poursuites et combien conduisent effectivement à des condamnations.

Cette évaluation permettrait de déterminer où se situe réellement le déficit : dans la législation, dans les moyens d'enquête, dans la coopération avec les plateformes internationales ou dans la capacité du système judiciaire à traiter les affaires numériques.

L'identité vérifiée: une solution, mais pas une panacée

L'idée d'une identité vérifiée peut sembler séduisante. Un utilisateur qui sait que son identité peut être retrouvée sera peut-être moins enclin à menacer, harceler ou escroquer autrui.

Mais il faut distinguer identité vérifiée et identité publiquement affichée.

Un système pourrait permettre à une plateforme ou à une autorité compétente de vérifier l'identité réelle d'un utilisateur sans obliger celui-ci à publier son nom à côté de chaque commentaire. Cette distinction est essentielle.



La liberté d'expression n'autorise ni menaces, ni harcèlement, ni escroquerie, ni incitation à la haine. Mais la lutte contre ces abus ne doit pas donner à l'État ou aux plateformes un pouvoir excessif sur ce qui peut être dit. P - Forbes

L'anonymat ou le pseudonymat ne sont pas toujours synonymes de malveillance. Des victimes de violences, des lanceurs d'alerte, des journalistes ou des personnes craignant des représailles peuvent avoir des raisons légitimes de ne pas exposer publiquement leur identité.

L'expérience d'autres démocraties montre d'ailleurs qu'il n'existe pas de modèle unique.

Le Royaume-Uni: responsabiliser les plateformes

Au Royaume-Uni, l'approche retenue avec l'*Online Safety Act 2023* n'est pas fondée sur l'obligation générale pour chaque utilisateur de révéler publiquement son identité. Le système met surtout l'accent sur les obligations imposées aux plateformes.

Les réseaux sociaux et autres services concernés doivent mettre en place des systèmes destinés à réduire les risques liés aux activités illégales et prendre des mesures contre les contenus illégaux lorsqu'ils apparaissent. Le régulateur Ofcom est chargé de superviser l'application du dispositif.

Le gouvernement britannique avait déjà identifié les risques liés aux comptes anonymes ou multiples, mais son approche consiste notamment à demander aux plateformes d'évaluer et de gérer ces risques plutôt qu'à abolir purement et simplement l'anonymat en ligne.

C'est une distinction importante pour Maurice: la responsabilité peut être renforcée sans nécessairement supprimer le pseudonymat.

L'Union européenne: responsabiliser, informer et permettre les recours

L'Union européenne est allée encore plus loin avec le *Digital Services Act* (DSA), pleinement applicable depuis février 2024.

Le DSA impose aux plateformes des mécanismes simples permettant aux utilisateurs de signaler des contenus illégaux. Les plateformes doivent traiter ces signalements et informer les personnes concernées de leur décision. Les utilisateurs disposent également de mécanismes pour contester la suppression de leur contenu ou la suspension de leur compte.

Pour les très grandes plateformes, qui comptent plus de 45 millions d'utilisateurs actifs dans l'Union européenne, les obligations sont plus importantes. Elles doivent évaluer les risques systémiques liés notamment à la diffusion de contenus illégaux, aux menaces contre les droits fondamentaux, aux processus électoraux et à la sécurité publique.

L'expérience européenne est particulièrement intéressante parce qu'elle cherche à établir un équilibre entre sécurité et droits fondamentaux. Il ne suffit pas de demander aux plateformes de supprimer des contenus. Il faut aussi assurer la transparence, expliquer les décisions et permettre aux utilisateurs de les contester.

Les résultats montrent d'ailleurs que cette possibilité de recours est loin d'être théorique: la Commission européenne indique que, depuis 2024, les utilisateurs ont contesté plus de 165 millions de décisions de modération concernant les très grandes plateformes et moteurs de recherche, avec près de 30 % de décisions finalement renversées.

L'Australie: un régulateur doté de véritables pouvoirs

L'Australie offre une autre approche. Son *Online Safety Act* donne à l'eSafety Commissioner un rôle central dans la lutte contre les abus en ligne.

Le dispositif comprend notamment des mécanismes de plainte concernant le cyberharcèlement des enfants, les abus graves visant les adultes et la diffusion non consensuelle d'images intimes. L'autorité peut également mener des investigations contre les plateformes et leur demander des informations dans le cadre de ses pouvoirs légaux.

L'Australie a également introduit un système d'assurance de l'âge pour les réseaux sociaux afin d'empêcher les moins de 16 ans d'avoir des comptes sur les services concernés. L'approche retenue ne prescrit pas une technologie unique : les plateformes doivent mettre en œuvre des méthodes appropriées de vérification de l'âge.

Là encore, la logique est instructive: on peut réglementer le comportement des plateformes et protéger certaines catégories vulnérables sans nécessairement imposer une identification publique universelle à tous les utilisateurs.

Ce que Maurice devrait retenir

Maurice pourrait donc s'inspirer de ces expériences sans les copier.

Une réforme devrait probablement reposer sur plusieurs piliers: une application effective du *Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Act*; une meilleure coopération avec les grandes plateformes internationales; des procédures rapides permettant de signaler les contenus manifestement illégaux; une autorité clairement responsable de la supervision; des mécanismes de recours pour éviter les suppressions arbitraires; et, lorsque cela est nécessaire dans une enquête criminelle, la possibilité pour les autorités légalement habilitées d'obtenir l'identité réelle d'un utilisateur.

La question de la protection des données devra être centrale. Une base contenant l'identité de millions d'utilisateurs constituerait une concentration considérable d'informations personnelles. Qui y aurait accès? Dans quelles circonstances? Pendant combien de temps? Qui contrôlerait les accès? Quels recours aurait un citoyen victime d'une utilisation abusive de ses données?

Ces questions doivent être réglées avant, et non après, la mise en place d'un système d'identification.

Il faut enfin se méfier d'une confusion : la liberté d'expression ne signifie pas la liberté de menacer, harceler, escroquer ou inciter à la haine. Mais inversement, lutter contre les abus ne doit pas devenir un prétexte pour donner à l'État ou aux plateformes un pouvoir excessif de décider ce qui peut ou ne peut pas être dit.

Le véritable objectif devrait être de rendre l'espace numérique plus responsable sans le rendre moins libre.

A. Bartleby

➔ Voir plus en page 18

La situation de l'eau à Maurice devient de plus en plus préoccupante. Avec des précipitations cette année nettement inférieures à celles de l'année dernière et des années précédentes, les principaux réservoirs sont sous forte pression à l'approche de la période sèche.

Le problème n'est pourtant pas nouveau. Chaque année ou presque, ménages, agriculteurs et entreprises sont confrontés à des coupures, des horaires de distribution modifiés et des appels à économiser l'eau. À force de se répéter, la question mérite d'être posée: sommes-nous face à une succession de mauvaises années pluviométriques ou à un problème structurel de gestion de l'eau?

Les chiffres communiqués le 30 juillet par la Water Resources Commission et la Central Water Authority (CWA) sont préoccupants. Alors que la station météorologique avait prévu environ 70 % des précipitations normales pour la saison hivernale, seulement 37 % des pluies attendues avaient été enregistrées à cette date. D'ailleurs, le déficit n'est pas récent. Après un mois de novembre 2025 particulièrement pluvieux, la situation s'est rapidement détériorée à partir de janvier 2026. La saison estivale 2025-2026 s'est finalement achevée avec seulement 889 mm de pluie, soit 66 % de la moyenne saisonnière de 1 352 mm.

La situation est encore plus inquiétante si on examine les principaux réservoirs. Mare-aux-Vacoas, qui joue un rôle central dans l'approvisionnement du pays, affichait récemment un taux de remplissage de seulement 41,2 %, tandis que La Nicolière se situait à 48,3 %.

Selon les responsables de la CWA, si la consommation reste au niveau actuel et si les pluies ne reviennent pas suffisamment, ces réserves pourraient atteindre des niveaux extrêmement bas au cours des prochains mois.

La production d'eau, elle aussi, est affectée. La CWA indique qu'au 29 juillet, la production quotidienne était tombée à 897 648 m³, contre une production normale de 1 092 418 m³. Le déficit atteint ainsi près de 195 000 m³ par jour, soit une diminution de 17,8 %. Plus préoccupant encore, les nappes phréatiques, qui fournissent environ 55 % de la demande nationale, enregistrent elles aussi un déficit estimé à environ 30 %.

Il ne s'agit donc plus seulement d'un problème de réservoirs. C'est l'ensemble du système hydrique qui est sous pression.

Effets du changement climatique

Le changement climatique constitue certainement un facteur important. Les régimes de pluie deviennent plus irréguliers et les périodes sèches peuvent être plus longues ou plus difficiles à prévoir. Comme l'a souligné Shyam Thanoo dans une déclaration à un quotidien, les effets du changement climatique se font déjà sentir à Maurice, avec des différences importantes de pluviométrie entre les régions. Le pays doit donc se préparer à un avenir dans lequel les précipitations ne correspondront plus nécessairement aux schémas du passé.

Mais invoquer uniquement le changement climatique, ce serait trop facile. Cette question est aussi liée à notre capacité à gérer une ressource devenue plus incertaine.

Des pertes d'eau difficiles à justifier

L'un des problèmes les plus préoccupants concerne les pertes dans le réseau de distribution. Selon la CWA, le taux de «non-revenue water» dépasse actuellement 60 %, principalement en raison des fuites.

Cette situation pose une question fondamentale.

EAU MAURICE FACE À UNE PÉNURIE STRUCTURELLE

Ressources en baisse, demande en hausse :
l'île doit agir durablement

L'eau doit cesser d'être une urgence saisonnière pour devenir une priorité nationale et stratégique, pensée bien au-delà des échéances politiques et électorales.



cela est économiquement et écologiquement viable, le dessalement.

La CWA étudie déjà la faisabilité du dessalement. Toutefois, il faudra veiller à son coût énergétique et environnemental. Par ailleurs, les entreprises qui puisent dans les nappes phréatiques pourraient être appelées à réduire temporairement leurs prélèvements si la situation devenait critique.

La question de l'agriculture est particulièrement délicate. La Nicolière fournit également de l'eau aux agriculteurs, notamment pour la canne à sucre et les légumes. Il faudra donc trouver un équilibre entre la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en eau potable et la sécurité alimentaire.

Responsabilité: Quand l'effort collectif ne suffit plus

La population a évidemment un rôle à jouer. Éviter le gaspillage, récupérer l'eau de pluie et limiter les usages non essentiels

— lavage des véhicules, nettoyage à haute pression, remplissage des piscines ou arrosage excessif — sont des gestes nécessaires.

Mais la responsabilité ne peut pas être transférée uniquement au consommateur.

La crise actuelle doit être l'occasion de repenser profondément la politique nationale de l'eau. Maurice ne peut pas contrôler la pluie, mais elle peut contrôler ses pertes, améliorer ses infrastructures, planifier son développement et diversifier ses sources d'approvisionnement.

La véritable question n'est donc plus seulement de savoir combien de pluie tombera cette année. Elle est de savoir si Maurice est prête à gérer un avenir dans lequel l'eau sera plus rare, plus imprévisible et plus précieuse.

L'eau doit cesser d'être une urgence saisonnière pour devenir une priorité nationale et stratégique, pensée bien au-delà des échéances politiques et électorales.

A. Bartleby

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Comment demander aux ménages de réduire leur consommation lorsque plus de la moitié de l'eau produite ne génère pas de revenus pour la CWA et est largement perdue, notamment à cause de fuites?

La modernisation du réseau constitue donc une urgence. Le remplacement annoncé de 115 kilomètres de conduites de gros diamètre, avec le soutien d'une ligne de crédit indienne, est à saluer. La CWA travaille également avec l'Agence française de développement et des experts indiens sur des technologies de détection des fuites faisant appel notamment à l'intelligence artificielle et aux drones.

Mais ces efforts devront être considérablement accablés si Maurice veut réduire durablement ses pertes.

Une planification à long terme s'impose

La situation actuelle soulève également la question de la planification. Maurice continue de se développer: nouvelles zones résidentielles, projets touristiques, Smart Cities, IRS et autres développements immobiliers. Tous ces projets ont un point commun: ils ont besoin d'eau.

Il faut donc poser, avant toute nouvelle autorisation importante, une question simple: d'où viendra l'eau nécessaire au projet, aujourd'hui mais aussi dans vingt ou trente ans?

La transparence est également indispensable en ce qui concerne l'utilisation des ressources publiques. Toute allégation relative à une canalisation ou à un détournement illégal de l'eau des réservoirs publics au profit de projets privés doit être vérifiée et, le cas échéant, faire l'objet d'enquêtes. Mais, de manière générale, l'allocation de l'eau entre ménages, agriculture, industrie, tourisme et immobilier doit être transparente et fondée sur des critères d'intérêt public.

Une stratégie diversifiée

La réponse ne peut pas être limitée à la construction de nouveaux réservoirs. Maurice doit envisager simultanément la réhabilitation des infrastructures existantes, la collecte des eaux de pluie, la réutilisation des eaux usées traitées, la protection des nappes phréatiques et, lorsque

Why You Are More Productive on Some Days Than Others

Have you ever experienced a day when everything seems to fall into place — ideas come easily, decisions feel effortless, and tasks are completed faster than expected? New research suggests that these fluctuations in productivity are not simply a matter of motivation or discipline. They may be closely linked to daily changes in how sharp and efficient your brain is functioning.

A study from the University of Toronto Scarborough, published in *Science Advances*, found that higher levels of mental sharpness on a given day can significantly improve productivity. Researchers estimated that being mentally “on” could translate into 30 to 40 additional minutes of productive work, while the difference between a person’s best and worst days could amount to around 80 minutes.

Led by Cendri Hutcherson, associate professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto Scarborough, the study followed university students over 12 weeks. Participants completed daily cognitive tests

measuring how quickly and accurately they thought, while also reporting on their goals, productivity, mood, sleep, and workload.

The researchers found that on days when participants were sharper than usual, they were more likely to set ambitious goals and successfully complete them. On less focused days, even routine tasks became more difficult. Personality traits such as self-control and determination mattered, but they did not eliminate these daily fluctuations.

The study also identified factors that influence mental sharpness. Better-than-usual sleep, working earlier in the day, and feeling motivated were associated with improved performance. In contrast, poor mood and prolonged stress



reduced cognitive efficiency.

Interestingly, workload had a double effect. Short periods of intense effort could temporarily boost performance, but sustained overwork eventually reduced mental sharpness and productivity.

Researchers suggest that improving daily performance is not about forcing constant productivity, but about creating conditions that support a healthier brain. Adequate sleep, avoiding burnout, maintaining emotional well-being, and recognising that some days will naturally be less productive can all help.

The findings offer a useful reminder: productivity is not only about working harder — it is also about understanding how our minds work and giving them the conditions they need to perform at their best.



The Milky Way is huge. But just how huge?

The diameter of the Milky Way is a billion billion kilometres.



The Milky Way stretches across the sky near the Hungarian border village of Tachty in Slovakia. EPA/PETER KOMKA

The Milky Way is the galaxy we live in. A galaxy is a system of millions or billions of stars. They’re all mixed together with gas and dust, and the whole lot is held together by gravity. As far as astronomers like me can tell, there are about one hundred billion galaxies in our Universe. There may be more that we just haven’t been able to observe yet.

The Milky Way contains between 100 and 400 billion stars. One of these is our Sun, which looks huge to us here on the ground, but is not even one of the biggest in the Milky Way.

And the Milky Way is also nowhere near being the largest of the galaxies we know about. But before I tell you how we know that, I need to explain a bit more about the Milky Way itself and how we measure something that’s just so incredibly big.

Shaped like a Frisbee

The Milky Way is shaped a bit like a Frisbee, with a bulge in the middle. This “space Frisbee” is really big: the diameter — the distance from one edge to the other — is a billion billion kilometres.

It’s hard to deal with numbers that big. So astronomers often use “light years” instead of kilometres to measure really big distances like the size of galaxies. A light year is the distance light would travel in a year. Light zips through space at 300 000 kilometres per second, so this makes the Milky Way just over 100 000 light years across.

But it’s also tough to imagine something that big. So let’s think about it another way to help put it in perspective.

If we shrank our whole solar system down to the

size of a grain of sand, the diameter of the Milky Way would be about 50 kilometres.

The thickness of the Milky Way’s disk depends on where you are in the galaxy. It’s thicker nearer the centre and gets thinner as you move out towards the edge. But on average it is 1000 light years thick.

The stars in the Milky Way aren’t uniformly distributed in the disk, instead they are arranged

in spiral arms stretched out from the bulge in the centre. The Earth is found in one of these spiral arms, about two thirds of the way out from the middle of the galaxy.

Big, but not the biggest

Now that you know all of these things, you’ll probably be wondering about the answer to your original question: just how big is the Milky Way?

Well, it’s actually quite hard to measure the exact size of the Milky Way from within it (which is where we are!) and scientists are always trying to improve these measurements. In fact a new study last year found that the stars at the edge of the Milky Way disk might be twice as far from the centre as we’d previously thought.

And, as I said earlier, while the Milky Way is big, it’s far from being the largest galaxy in space. Our nearest neighbour is the Andromeda Galaxy, which spans 220 000 light years. That makes it over twice as big as the Milky Way.

But they would both be dwarfed by the galaxy IC 1101, one of the largest known galaxies. It stretches across 4 million light years.

So our galaxy is big. But it’s still tiny compared with our neighbouring galaxies. There’s also lots and lots we still don’t know about, which is why life as an astronomer is so exciting.

Imogen Whittam

Post-doctoral researcher in Astrophysics,
University of the Western Cape

Mangoes and Diabetes: New Research Challenges Old Assumptions

For generations, people with diabetes have often been advised to avoid mangoes because of their natural sweetness and potential impact on blood sugar levels. In India, where the mango is celebrated as the “king of fruits” and forms an important part of summer culture, one of the most common questions patients ask their doctors is: Can I still enjoy mangoes if I have diabetes?

New Indian research suggests that the answer may be more nuanced than previously believed. Two clinical studies indicate that, when consumed in controlled quantities and as part of a balanced diet, mangoes may not worsen blood sugar levels and could even contribute to improvements in certain metabolic indicators.

A pilot study involving 95 participants, led by Dr Sugandha Kehar and colleagues, examined three popular Indian mango varieties — Safeda, Dasheri, and Langra. The researchers found that mangoes produced similar or even lower glucose responses compared with white bread. Continuous glucose monitoring showed that, among people with type 2 diabetes, post-meal blood sugar fluctuations were significantly smaller after consuming mangoes.

A second eight-week randomised clinical trial, led by Prof Anoop Misra of the Fortis C-DOC Centre for Diabetes and Allied Sciences in New Delhi, with support from the Indian Council of Medical Research, reinforced these findings. The study found that adults with type 2 diabetes who replaced their breakfast bread with 250 grams of mango experienced improvements in fasting glucose, HbA1c levels (a measure of average blood sugar control), insulin resistance, weight, waist circumference, and HDL cholesterol.

The researchers emphasise that these findings do not mean people with diabetes can consume unlimited amounts of mangoes. The key is moderation: mango should replace other carbohydrate sources rather than be added to the diet as an extra calorie source.

Doctors recommend sensible portions, eating mangoes between meals rather than as dessert, and combining them with protein or fibre while avoiding sugary preparations such as juices and milkshakes.

Beyond nutrition, the mango remains deeply rooted in Indian culture, with more than 1,000 varieties grown across the country and a role extending from festivals to diplomacy. New research now suggests that this beloved fruit may deserve a more balanced reputation — not as a food to fear, but as one that can be enjoyed responsibly as part of a healthy diet.

Laughter is the Best Medicine

The magic of marketing



In our house, the first question asked for an arranged marriage is:

"What does the groom do?"

Appa Rao's family also went to see a girl for their son.

After tea, biscuits, and the usual small talk, the girl's father finally came to the main point:

"Okay, what is your son doing now?"

Appa Rao adjusted his glasses, cleared his throat, and began:

"Our son is currently the Founder and Managing Director of an agro-based Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) startup. We mainly operate in the Organic Health and Wellness sector."

Hearing this, the girl's father was already 50% impressed.

"Wow! So, what's your product?" he asked.

Appa Rao replied:

"Our portfolio mainly includes high-protein roasted legumes and traditional caramelized sweets. We source our raw materials directly from the wholesale supply chain and dry-roast them in our own thermal processing unit. And the biggest highlight is... our packaging is 100% eco-friendly and biodegradable!"

Everyone in the girl's family was amazed.

It sounded like he was running a big multinational company!

The girl's uncle couldn't hold back and asked:

"Where is your company's head office? And how many employees do you have?"

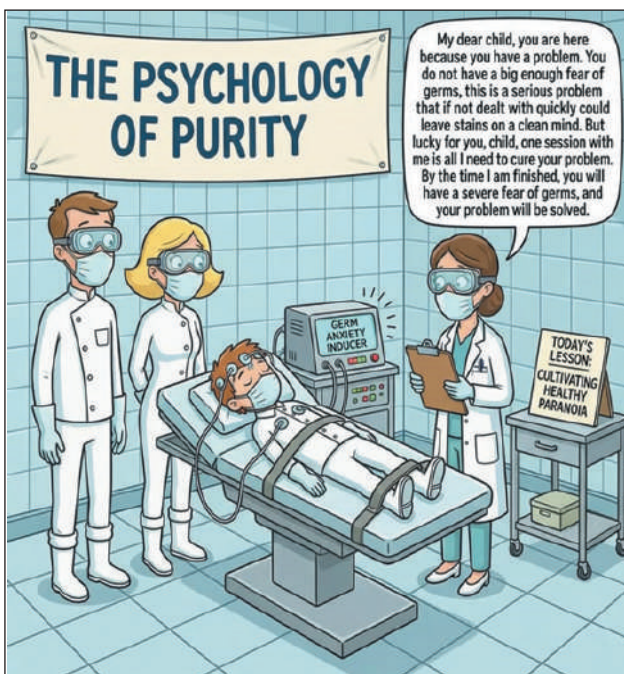
Without missing a beat, Appa Rao replied:

"This is the modern lean startup era. We don't have unnecessary expenses like shop rent or electricity bills. We operate through a mobile retail outlet that changes location every day depending on traffic and customer demand. All operations are managed by our son alone — he is a solopreneur!"

Now the girl's father was completely confused.

He didn't understand a single word of this marketing jargon.

"Sir, I don't understand this business language. Just



**In the end,
Nothing goes with you.**



tell me plainly... what does your son actually do?"

Then the boy's close friend quietly stepped in.

"Uncle... what he's trying to say is..."

"Our boy sells roasted peanuts from a cart near the highway. He roasts groundnuts in hot sand (that's the 'thermal processing') and wraps them in old newspapers (that's the '100% biodegradable packaging')."

The teacup slipped from the girl's father's hand and shattered on the floor.

You can imagine what happened next...

Moral: The magic of marketing words is incredibly powerful. With the right presentation, even a simple peanut business can sound like a billion-dollar startup!

* * *

Life Lessons and Humorous Sayings

The easiest way to make your old car run better is to check the price of the new model.

How to differentiate between a good and a great lawyer?

A good lawyer knows the law.

A great lawyer knows the judge.

A nurse: a beautiful lady who holds your hand for one full minute and expects your pulse to be normal.

Boss: "We are keen on cleanliness. Did you wipe your feet on the mat as you came in?"

New employee: "Yes, sir."

Boss: "We are also keen on truthfulness; there is no mat."

Why don't dogs marry?

Because they are already leading a dog's life.

What's the difference between a mother and a wife?

One woman brings you into the world crying, and the other ensures you keep on crying.

* * *

The French Toast Surprise

One Saturday morning, three brothers come downstairs and sit around the breakfast table.

Their mother turns to the eldest son and asks:

"What would you like for breakfast?"

He replies:

"I'll have some f*ing French toast**."

Shocked by his language, his mother slaps him and sends him upstairs.

After calming down, she turns to the middle son:

"And what would you like?"

He shrugs and says:

"Well, I guess that leaves me the f*ing French toast**."

Outraged again, the mother slaps him and sends him upstairs.

Finally, she looks at the youngest son and asks:

"And what would you like to eat?"

The little boy thinks carefully and says:

"I don't know... but I definitely don't want the f*ing French toast," he says quietly.

* * *

The Restaurant Review

Customer: "The food was terrible."

Manager: "Why did you eat everything?"

Customer: "I wanted to make sure I hated it."

* * *

The Accountant

Why did the accountant break up with his girlfriend?

Because she couldn't balance his life.

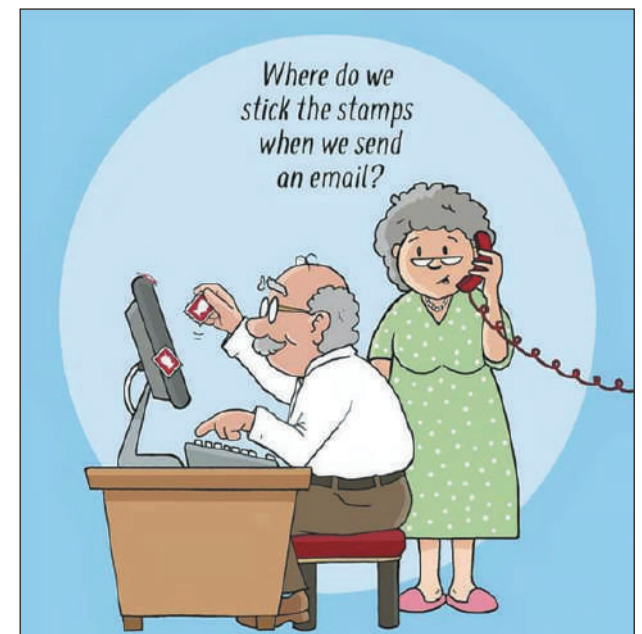
* * *

The Alarm Clock

Alarm clock: "Wake up!"

Man: "Why?"

Alarm clock: "Because everyone else wants you awake."



* * *

The Husband's Help

Wife: "Can you help me clean the house?"

Husband: "Of course."

Wife: "Great, start by moving out."

* * *

The Bank Loan

Bank manager: "Why do you need a loan?"

Man: "To pay my debts."

Manager: "And your debts?"

Man: "They are to pay my loans."

* * *

The Forgetful Husband

Wife: "Do you remember our anniversary?"

Husband: "Of course."

Wife: "What date is it?"

Husband: "The date when you remind me."

The Way to the Top Success Is Built on Habits, Not Motivation

People often say success comes down to luck, timing, or natural talent. But anyone who has built something meaningful -- whether a thriving business, a strong relationship, a healthier body, or a calmer mind -- knows the truth: Success is the result of consistent habits repeated long after motivation disappears.

We often attribute success to talent, luck or being in the right place at the right time. While these factors may play a role, they are rarely what separates high achievers from everyone else. More often than not, lasting success is the product of simple, disciplined habits practised consistently -- especially on the days when motivation is nowhere to be found.

Successful people understand that waiting to "feel inspired" is an unreliable strategy. Instead, they cultivate routines that become second nature. These daily habits enable them to remain productive, focused and resilient even when they are tired, stressed or discouraged.

A productive day usually begins with clarity rather than chaos. Instead of immediately reaching for their phones or reacting to emails and social media, successful people take a few moments to identify their priorities. By deciding what truly matters, they are more likely to direct their energy towards meaningful goals rather than



becoming consumed by distractions.

Physical activity is another habit they rarely neglect. Whether it is a brisk walk, stretching, yoga or a more vigorous workout, regular exercise enhances energy, sharpens concentration, reduces stress and supports long-term health. The emphasis is not on intensity but on consistency.

Equally important is the ability to protect one's attention. In today's digital world, endless notifications, online debates and constant interruptions can easily fragment concentration. Successful individuals consciously create periods of uninterrupted work and learn to say "no" to activities or commitments that do not align with their priorities.

They also devote time to self-reflection. Through meditation, journaling or simply pausing to think, they assess their progress, recognise unhelpful habits and

ensure that their actions remain consistent with their values. This capacity for honest self-examination enables continuous personal growth.

Rather than waiting for the perfect opportunity, successful people make steady progress through small daily actions. Writing a page, learning a new skill, saving a little money or having a difficult but necessary conversation may seem insignificant in isolation. Over time, however, these seemingly modest efforts accumulate into remarkable achievements.

Their surroundings also matter. An organised workspace, healthy relationships and a supportive environment encourage creativity, productivity and emotional well-being. At the same time, they recognise that sustained performance requires adequate rest. Sleep, recovery and time away from work are viewed not as signs of weakness but as essential ingredients of long-term success.

Finally, successful people deliberately step outside their comfort zones. Whether confronting a fear, embracing a new challenge or speaking up when it matters, they understand that genuine growth seldom occurs without a degree of discomfort.

Ultimately, success is not built on dramatic breakthroughs or fleeting moments of inspiration. It is the result of disciplined choices repeated day after day. While motivation may come and go, habits endure. And it is those enduring habits -- stronger than excuses -- that quietly shape extraordinary lives.

Lachlan Brown

Inspiration Balancing Self With Family Life

Taking time for daily self-care is vital and necessary and should not be seen as a luxury

Many of us have a hard time balancing taking care of ourselves with taking care of our family responsibilities. For people with young children, this can be especially challenging, but even people without children have obligations to care for extended family, partners, pets, and the home in which they live.

It's easy to lose track of our own needs as we give ourselves to the people, pets, and places we love. However, it is essential to their well-being that we take care of ourselves, filling our own wells with water so that we have something to offer when we return home each day.

It is easy to get caught up in the demands of home life because they never stop. There is always one more thing you can do, another dish in the sink, a counter that needs wiping, or a person who needs a ride somewhere. If you don't set some boundaries, you will find yourself on an endless journey of housework and doing for others. Eventually, you will probably feel drained and out of touch with your inner life force.

Instead of waiting for this to happen, integrate self-care into your daily schedule. Even Buddha insisted that he have one hour completely to himself every day. There are times when even that will not be possible -- for example, you may have a new baby or a sick relative. At times like this, retreating inward energetically can be a lifesaver. You can always find five minutes to close your eyes and breathe consciously. You may even be able to meditate.

Most of the time, though, it is possible to set aside a full hour for yourself each day. In addition, scheduling a longer interval of time, perhaps on a weekly basis,



can really help to restore your energy. Get a massage or go to a movie or out with a friend. Taking time to experience the world outside of your home makes returning home all the more wonderful. In the same way, taking care of yourself is a natural complement to taking care of your home and family.

Lessons from the Wild The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

A town mouse once visited a relative who lived in the province. For lunch, the country mouse served wheat stalks, roots, and acorns, with a dash of cold water for drink. The town mouse ate very sparingly, nibbling a little of this and a little of that, and by her manner making it very plain that she ate the simple food only to be polite.

After the meal, the friends had a long talk, or rather the town mouse talked about her life in the city while the other mouse listened. They then went to bed in a cosy nest in the hedgerow and slept in quiet and comfort until morning. In her sleep, the country mouse dreamed she was a town mouse with all the luxuries and delights of city life that her friend had described for her. So, the next day, when the town mouse asked the country mouse to go home with her to the city, she gladly

said yes.

When they reached the mansion in which the town mouse lived, they found on the table in the dining room the leavings of a very fine banquet. There were sweetmeats and jellies, pastries, delicious cheeses -- indeed, the most tempting foods that a mouse can imagine.

But just as the country mouse was about to nibble a dainty bit of pastry, she heard a cat mew loudly and scratch at the door. In great fear, the mice scurried to a hiding place where they lay quite still for a long time, hardly daring to breathe. When at last they ventured back to the feast, the door opened suddenly and in came the servants to clear the table, followed by the house dog.

The country mouse stopped in the other mouse's den only long enough to pick up her carpetbag and umbrella.

"you may have luxuries and dainties that i have not," she said as she hurried away, "but i prefer my plain food and simple life in the country with the peace and security that go with it."

Stray Thoughts

Define Today

Today is the opportunity to perform better than yesterday.

* * *

The Three Stages of Life

Teenage: Has time and energy, but no money.

Working years: Has money and energy, but no time.

Old age: Has money and time, but no energy.

* * *

The Journey Within

"There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own Soul.

One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious."

-- Carl Jung

Relationships

What Makes a Healthy Partnership?

What does it really mean to have a healthy relationship? According to psychotherapist Alysha Jeney, a healthy relationship is one in which both partners are equally invested, committed and respectful of each other's needs. It is built around shared values and goals, but also requires communication, intimacy and a willingness to keep the connection alive.

In "An Expert Weighs In: This Is How to Have a Healthy Relationship," Christie Calucchia draws on Jeney's advice to explain the foundations of a strong and mutually supportive relationship.

Communication comes first

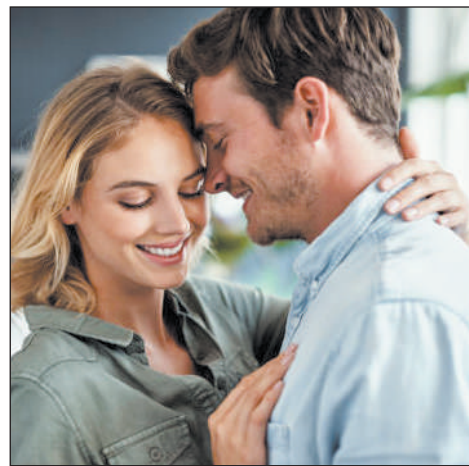
Good communication is essential, but it involves more than simply talking. Jeney believes that vulnerability — the ability to express feelings and needs without fear of being dismissed — is a crucial sign of a healthy relationship.

Partners should make time for meaningful conversations, including discussions about everyday responsibilities as well as deeper emotional concerns. Equally important is learning to listen. Rather than immediately defending oneself or preparing a response, partners should try to understand what the other person is saying and acknowledge their feelings.

Self-awareness is also important. Before blaming a partner, it is useful to ask: What am I feeling? What do I need? Am I projecting my own frustrations onto the other person? Remaining calm during difficult conversations can prevent disagreements from escalating.

Intimacy is more than sex

Physical intimacy matters, but Jeney rejects the idea that there is a fixed amount of sex that determines whether a relationship is happy. Every couple has different needs.



Intimacy can take many forms: sharing a meal, having a meaningful conversation, showing affection or simply spending uninterrupted time together. Couples should openly discuss what intimacy means to each of them and what they expect from the relationship. Finding the right balance between comfort, companionship and maintaining romantic connection is essential.

Keep dating each other

Finally, couples should continue making time for one another, even after years together. Jeney recommends setting aside intentional time each week to reconnect. This does not necessarily mean an expensive dinner or elaborate outing. Cooking together, visiting a gallery, walking on the beach, looking through old photographs or simply talking about the week can strengthen the bond.

The underlying message of Christie Calucchia's article is simple: healthy relationships do not happen automatically. They require communication, honesty, intimacy, mutual respect and regular effort. Most importantly, couples should remain authentic and continue choosing to connect with each other.

Career Planning

Four Habits of People Who Keep Learning

In a rapidly changing job market, acquiring new skills is no longer a one-time exercise but an essential part of career development. In his article "4 Habits of People Who Are Always Learning New Skills," published in the Harvard Business Review, Mike Kehoe, co-founder of BitTiger and former Deloitte consultant and Citi HR analyst, identifies four habits that help people turn learning into a lasting career advantage.

First, focus on emerging skills. Rather than enrolling in courses simply because they are easily available online, successful learners identify the skills that are becoming increasingly important in their profession. Kehoe recommends studying job advertisements from leading companies and speaking to professionals already working in the field. This helps learners distinguish between skills that are genuinely valuable and those that may soon become outdated. Courses should ideally have practical relevance and be taught by recognised experts or developed with industry partners.

Second, make learning interactive. Online learning offers flexibility, but studying alone can also lead to isolation and declining motivation. Kehoe argues that real-time interaction with teachers and fellow learners can significantly improve commitment and learning outcomes. Where live courses are unavailable, learners can form a small "synchronous cohort" with colleagues or friends pursuing similar goals. Discussing ideas,

asking questions and explaining concepts to others can reinforce understanding and memory.

Third, put new knowledge into practice immediately. Learning theory without application is easily forgotten. Kehoe stresses that people should look for opportunities to use new skills as soon as possible — through workplace projects, personal experiments, simulations or collaborative assignments. Practical application not only strengthens memory but also exposes learners to challenges that may not be apparent from textbooks or online lectures.



Finally, set a clear career benchmark. Learning is more sustainable when it is linked to a specific objective, such as securing a new job, obtaining a promotion or taking responsibility for an important project. A clear goal provides motivation when the immediate benefits of learning are difficult to see.

Kehoe's central message is that learning should become a career-long habit rather than a short-lived New Year's resolution. Once one professional objective has been achieved, another should take its place. In an economy where skills and technologies are constantly evolving, continuous learning may ultimately be one of the most valuable career skills of all.

Health & Life Hacks

Can You Prevent an Enlarged Prostate?

For most men, an enlarged prostate is an unavoidable part of ageing. Known medically as benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), it affects around nine in 10 men by their 80s. While there is no proven way to prevent BPH, understanding the risk factors and adopting healthy habits may help keep symptoms under control.

BPH can cause frequent urination, waking several times at night to urinate, a weak or interrupted stream, difficulty starting urination and dribbling after finishing. These symptoms should not simply be dismissed as part of getting older.

Age and family history are important risk factors. The likelihood may also be higher in men with obesity, diabetes, heart disease or erectile dysfunction.

Although lifestyle changes cannot prevent prostate enlargement, regular exercise and a heart-healthy diet can help maintain a healthy weight and support urinary

health. Limiting caffeine and alcohol may reduce urinary urgency, while avoiding excessive fluids before bedtime can minimise nighttime trips to the bathroom. Some cold and allergy medicines can also worsen urinary symptoms.

Seek urgent medical attention if you cannot urinate, have blood in your urine, severe lower-abdominal pain, or painful urination accompanied by fever or chills.

An enlarged prostate may be common with age — but troublesome urinary symptoms deserve medical attention.

Is It Normal Ageing or Alzheimer's?

Forgetting a name, misplacing your keys or occasionally wondering where you parked your car can happen to anyone, particularly as we grow older. Mild memory lapses are often a normal part of ageing and do not necessarily mean dementia. The important question is whether the changes begin to interfere with everyday life.

Repeatedly asking the same questions, forgetting information you have just learned, struggling to manage

bills or follow a familiar recipe, or having difficulty carrying out routine tasks may be warning signs that deserve attention. Regularly losing things without being able to retrace your steps, becoming confused about dates or seasons, getting lost in familiar places, or having increasing difficulty finding familiar words can also indicate a more serious memory problem.

Changes in behaviour may provide another clue. A person experiencing cognitive decline may withdraw from family and friends, lose interest in favourite hobbies or struggle to follow conversations.

If you or someone close to you notices persistent changes in memory or thinking, speak to a doctor. Assessment can help distinguish normal ageing from Alzheimer's disease and other causes of memory problems, including medication effects or depression.

Staying mentally and physically active may help protect brain health. Reading, puzzles, social engagement, regular exercise, healthy eating and managing stress are all worthwhile habits.

Occasional forgetfulness may be normal. Persistent changes that affect daily life should not be ignored.

BollyBytes

Vivek Oberoi lived in a Mumbai Slum to prepare for *Company*

Vivek Oberoi's breakthrough in Bollywood did not come easily. Before winning the role of Chandu Nagre in Ram Gopal Varma's 2002 crime drama *Company*, the actor faced rejection because the director felt his polished appearance did not suit the rugged character.

According to NDTV, Oberoi revealed that he was initially asked to return after three weeks because Varma was unconvinced that he could convincingly portray the role. Rather than simply waiting for another audition, Oberoi decided to immerse himself in the world he was expected to portray.



He went directly to a nearby Mumbai slum, rented a small *kholi* in a chawl and lived there for three weeks. The experience allowed him to observe the surroundings

closely and study the body language, mannerisms and everyday habits of people living there. He also worked with a struggling photographer to develop the visual appearance of his character.

The transformation apparently made a powerful impression. When Oberoi returned for the next round, he was dressed in loose trousers, a torn vest and worn-out flip-flops, looking almost unrecognisable from his earlier polished appearance. His photographs in character further convinced Varma that he was suitable for the part.

Oberoi has said that he could have accepted an easier route into Bollywood through his father, actor Suresh Oberoi, but deliberately chose to prove himself independently. He said he struggled for 18 months and faced considerable rejection before landing *Company*.

Rhea Chakraborty reflects on her 28 days in jail

Actress Rhea Chakraborty has spoken candidly about her experience in prison, describing how her 28 days in judicial custody in 2020 changed some of her perceptions about people and society. Her comments came during a conversation with comedian Tanmay Bhat on his YouTube channel.

According to the NDTV, published on August 13, 2026, Chakraborty said that her experience inside prison was very different from what she had expected. She observed that many people in the women's undertrial prison were innocent and said that the absence of social hierarchy meant that everyone was treated equally.

Chakraborty was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau on September 8, 2020, during an investigation linked to the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. She was



accused of procuring drugs for him and was granted bail on October 7 that year.

Looking back at her time behind bars, she also recalled moments of

camaraderie among the women prisoners. They would reportedly sing and dance to pass the time and prepare thecha, a spicy Maharashtrian preparation. Her recollections of prison food were delivered with humour, reflecting her attempt to look back on a difficult period with some lightness.

Chakraborty also discussed life after the investigations surrounding Rajput's death. The Central Bureau of Investigation filed a closure report on March 22, 2025, concluding that Rajput's death was a suicide and clearing Chakraborty of charges. She subsequently regained her passport and described her first overseas trip with her parents as an emotional experience.

Today, Chakraborty has returned to entertainment and is appearing in Karan Johar's reality show *The Traitors 2*.

Sridevi: The female superstar who commanded a fortune

Sridevi remains one of the most influential female stars in the history of Indian cinema, remembered for her extraordinary versatility, screen presence and commercial power. Her career, which began as a child artiste, eventually made her one of the highest-paid stars of her generation.



According to NDTV, Sridevi began appearing on screen at the age of four in the 1967 Tamil mythological film *Kandhan Karunai*. Her Hindi career began as a child artiste in *Julie* in 1975, followed by her first Hindi lead role in *Solva Sawan* in 1979. She subsequently became a major force across Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam cinema, appearing in more than 300 films.

Her stardom reached extraordinary levels during the 1980s and 1990s. NDTV reports that Sridevi became the first female actor to command a reported fee of Rs 1 crore for a film, for the 1993 release *Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja*. At the time, even leading male stars were reportedly earning comparable or lower amounts.

Her celebrated performances in *Mr India*, *Chaalbaaz*, *Lamhe*, *Khuda Gawah*, *Gumrah*, *Laadla* and *Judaai* established her reputation as an actress capable of handling comedy, romance, drama and powerful characters.

After marrying producer Boney Kapoor, Sridevi took a long break from films but returned triumphantly with *English Vinglish* in 2012. She reportedly commanded Rs 3.5 crore to Rs 5 crore per film after her comeback.

Sridevi died accidentally in Dubai in 2018 at the age of 54. According to figures cited by NDTV, her estimated net worth was Rs 250 crore, reflecting the enormous commercial success of a career that continues to inspire audiences.

Ranbir Kapoor's *Ramayana* set to make box office history, predicts astrologer

Nitesh Tiwari's highly anticipated mythological epic *Ramayana* is generating immense buzz ahead of its theatrical release on Diwali 2026. The two-part film stars Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Ram, Sai Pallavi as Sita, and Yash as Ravana, positioning it as one of the most ambitious projects in Indian cinema. Adding to the pre-release momentum, noted astrologer and Vastu expert Dr. Khoja has predicted that the film has the strong potential to emerge as one of the biggest blockbusters of recent years. According to News18, the astrological readings suggest the project will deeply resonate with audiences, driving exceptional box office success when the first part arrives in November 2026.

Beyond the silver screen, Dr. Khoja has also forecasted strong television ratings for the upcoming season of *Bigg Boss 20*. Holding a PhD in Vastu Studies and recognition as a gold medalist, Dr. Khoja uniquely combines astrology, numerology, face reading, and Vastu in his professional practice. His broader mission, termed "Sukhi Bharat," aims to leverage his multidisciplinary expertise to help as many individuals as possible navigate life's challenges.

Abhishek Bachchan reveals the Aishwarya Rai connection behind Jaipur Pink Panthers

For actor Abhishek Bachchan, purchasing the Pro Kabaddi League franchise Jaipur Pink Panthers in 2014 was much more than a standard business investment — it was deeply personal. Speaking with Sanjeev Krishnan on PwC India's podcast *Future Unplugged* (as reported by the Hindustan Times), Bachchan shared the sentimental history tied to the city. Jaipur holds a special place in his life because he shot parts of his debut film *Refugee* there, and it was also where his relationship with Aishwarya Rai Bachchan began.

Even the team's branding carries family significance: the color pink was chosen because it was his daughter's favorite color at the time, while the "Pink Panther" inspiration honors Aishwarya's role in *The Pink Panther 2* (2009). The franchise's panther logo even features blue-green eyes mirroring his wife's. Alongside his sports ventures — which also include Chennaiyin FC and the European T20 Premier League — Abhishek is gearing up for his next major cinematic project, playing the antagonist in Shah Rukh Khan's upcoming film *King*, scheduled for a Christmas 2026 release.



Programme TV



vendredi 21 août	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	Cine 12	Bollywood TV
	06.11 Serial: Séparé Par L'Amour 08.07 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 08.52 Tele: La Desalmada 09.20 Film: Cyrano De Bergerac 11.30 Tele: Happily Ever After 12.00 Le Journal 12.35 Tele: Rosalinda 13.20 Tele: Lying Heart 13.45 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite 14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.30 Tele: Love Of My Life 17.00 Doc: China Farm 17.30 Tele: Happily Ever After 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti 19.30 Le Journal 20.14 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine 20.30 Film: Le Gendarme Et Les Gendarmettes 22.15 Tele: Roselinda	09.05 Local: Paroles Agricoles 12.00 Local: Klip Seleksion 13.04 La Journee Sous Le Regard 14.03 Local: Viens Decouvrir 14.15 Nou Later Nou Lamer Nou... 15.00 Local: Artizan 17.01 Local: La Sosiete 19.30 Local: Parlons Sante Senior 19.45 Local: Evasion 20.15 Local: Sekirite Lor Larout 21.30 Local: La Sosiete 22.26 Local: Generations J 22.56 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.20 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin 23.38 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 00.22 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	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: Tumhare Bina 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 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 19.53 Local: Khel Khiladi 20.30 Serial: Tenali Rama 21.12 Serial: Beyhadh 2 21.33 Serial: Shrimad Ramayan 21.56 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 22.48 Aaj Aur Kal Bollywood 00.07 Local: Mati Ke Mol	06.40 Mag: Asia 2050 07.21 Mag: Tomorrow Today 08.13 Doc: Stumbling Stones 10.24 Doc: The New Face 11.10 Mag: Eco India 11.36 Mag: Art Unveiled Special 13.24 Doc: Stumbling Stones 14.52 Doc: Japan Video Topics 15.08 Charlotte Aux Fraises 15.14 D.Anime: Word Party 17.58 Serial: The Worst Witch 17.35 Mag: Eco India 18.30 Mag: The Dip 19.00 Student Support Programme 19.28 Mag: Euromaxx 20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 20.30 News 20.50 Tele: Eclats De Vie 21.35 Doc: Eco Heroines 22.28 Doc: The Apple Story 23.24 The Dark Side OF Bright...	14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan 14.55 Serial: Tenali Rama 15.30 Film: Highway Cast: Alia Bhatt, Randeep Hooda, D. Kumar 18.00 Samachar 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: Highway Cast: Alia Bhatt, Randeep Hooda, Durgesh Kumar
	06.16 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 06.40 Serial: A Spy Among Friends 07.40 Serial: L'Incroyable Hulk 08.30 Serial: New Amsterdam 09.10 Serial: Quantico 09.50 Serial: Nautilus 10.45 Serial: Heartland 11.32 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 12.00 Le Journal 12.30 Serial: Seref Meselesi 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.30 Film: December Horses 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Dance Deewane Juniors 19.30 Le Journal 20.20 Film: Abduction 22.00 Serial: L'Incroyable Hulk 22.46 Serial: Berlin Station 23.41 Le Journal 00.16 Quotes By Famous People 00.19 Doc: Food Up!	06.00 Local: Mon Jardin Ma Maison 06.30 Local: Tous Egaux 06.45 Local: Point Culture 07.31 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 08.00 Local: Parlons Sante Senior 09.35 Local: La Sosiete 12.30 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 13.10 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 13.45 Local: Evasion 13.30 Local: Parlons Sante Senior 14.00 Local: Sekirite Lor Larout 15.05 Local: Point Culture 15.20 Local: Tous Egaux 18.10 Tele: Wildflower 19.00 Journal Kreol 19.20 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine 19.30 Rodrig - Coin Zen 20.15 Local: Les Petits Genies 21.45 Local: En Toute Intimite 22.59 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.05 Journal Kreol	05.00 Mag: Aastha TV 08.30 Local: Abhyas Yog 09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 10.23 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 12.00 Dikri Vahalno Dariyo 13.17 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 14.00 Local: Aaj Ki Charcha 15.22 Film: Waqt Hamara Hain Cast: Akshay Kumar, Ayesha Jhulka 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.32 Local: Sangeet Sarita 19.56 Local: Bhojpuri Geet 21.00 Film: Naina Cast: Urmila Matongkar, Anuj Sawney 22.42 Mag: Eco India 23.07 Local: Sangeet Sarita 23.33 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 00.29 Local: Bhojpuri Geet 01.25 Local: Sangeet Sarita	06.00 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier 07.33 Magic Wonderland 08.18 D.Anime: Ice Hockey Storm 08.56 D.Anime: Yétili 09.19 D.Anime: Peanuts 09.54 Serial: The Wonder Gang 13.03 Doc: The Apple Story 14.41 Mag: Shift 15.00 Charlotte Aux Fraises 15.26 D.Anime: Ready Jet Go! 15.50 D.Anime: Badjelly 16.12 D.Anime: Agent 16.33 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter 18.00 Mag: In Good Shape 18.30 Doc: The Gen Z Reading... 19.00 Doc: Business Africa 19.28 Mag: Afrimaxx 20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 20.50 Tele: Love Of My Life 22.24 Doc: Marilyn Monroe 23.20 Doc: Surviving Globalisation 00.03 Doc: Bhutan	08.00 Pandya Store 10.02 Mannat - Har Khushi Panne Ki 12.08 Udaariyaan 14.02 Anupamaa 16.21 Shrimad Ramayan 17.30 Vidrohi 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Film: Hasee Top Phasee With: Parineeti Chopra, Sidharth Malhotra, A. Sharma 21.30 Beyhadh 2 21.51 Crime Patrol
	06.15 Tele: Terre D'esperance 06.40 Film: Abduction 08.30 Serial: Nautilus 09.25 Serial: Columbo 10.40 Serial: Heartland 11.30 Tele: Terre D'esperance 12.35 Film: Abduction 14.25 Doc: China Farm 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.30 Film: Le Gandarme Et Les Gendarmettes 17.51 Doc: Vegetarian Delights 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Serial: Laughter Chefs 19.30 Le Journal 20.15 Film: The Woman King 22.28 Tele: Laura, Una Vida Extraordinaria 23.10 Serial: Berlin Station 23.59 Le Journal 00.34 Serial: Heartland	08.45 Nou Later Nou Lamer Nou... 09.00 Local: Les Petits Genies 10.35 Rodrigues: Nu Lakwizin 11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn 12.00 Local: Mots Et Ecrits 12.26 Local: Artizan 13.21 La Journee Sous Le Regard 13.30 Snow White Musical Annual 14.30 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 15.00 ELTS Spelling Bee Competi.. 16.55 Local: Tous Egaux 17.18 Local: Les Petits Genies 17.44 Local: En Toute Intimite 18.10 Tele: Wildflower 19.20 Zero Stress Avek Miselaine 20.15 Local: Les Klips 21.10 Local Production 22.35 Local: Itinerer Moris 22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.00 Journal Kreol 23.20 Local: Coin Jardin	05.00 Mag: Aastha TV 08.00 Local: Sangeet Sarita 08.26 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 09.22 Local: Bhojpuri Geet 10.30 Mahabharat 12.00 Film: Ahista Ahista Cast: Abhay Deol, Soha Ali Khan 15.00 Samachar 15.21 Sangeet Sarita 16.43 Local: Bhojpuri Geet 18.00 Samachar 18.31 Local: Prakriti 20.30 Tenali Rama 20.51 Serial: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa L'il... 21.41 Sajjanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar 23.54 Aaj Aur Kal Bollywood Hits 00.50 Local: Prakriti	06.00 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier 06.19 D.Anime: Luna, Chip & Inkie 07.15 Charlotte Aux Fraises 09.00 D.Anime: Edmond Et Lucy 09.19 D.Anime: Peanuts 10.53 Serial: Home Sweet Rome! 10.56 Film: Le Trésor Perdu De Tom Sawyer 12.25 Doc: The Gen Z Reading... 15.02 Charlotte Aux Fraises 15.09 Les Carnets Nature De Lulu 15.26 D.Anime: Ready Jet Go! 16.12 D.Anime: Agent 203 16.33 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter 17.26 D.Anime: Action Kidz 18.00 Mag: REV Special 18.14 Mag: Travel 19.30 Mag: Arts Unveiled 20.00 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 21.45 Film: The Call 23.36 Doc: My Body, My Heart	07.52 Dhruv Tara 10.05 Kundali Bhagya 12.00 Serial: Laughter Chefs 12.38 Dance Deewane Juniors 14.00 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya 16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya 18.30 Film: Duplicate Cast: Shah Rukh Khan, Juhi Chawla, Sonali Bendre, Kajol 21.30 Beyhadh 2 21.50 Mahabharat
	05.22 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour 07.07 Tele: S.W.A.T. 08.12 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 08.35 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan 09.04 Tele: La Desalmada 09.30 Film: Maigret 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Rosalinda 13.15 Tele: Lying Heart 13.40 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite 14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie 15.00 Samachar 15.20 Film: The Woman King 17.32 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 20.40 Film: Love Again 22.27 Serial: Rosalinda	09.15 Local: Metie 09.30 Local: En Forme 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: Komanter 15.35 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef 16.55 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 Journal Rodrig 21.15 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante 21.45 Local: 19 Minutes - Le Point 22.10 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 22.35 Local: Grand Titre 22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard du Seigneur	05.00 Mag: Aastha TV 09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 10.00 Local: Sajjanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar 12.00 Film: Tumhare Liye Cast: Sanjeev Kumar, Vidya Sinha 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 19.24 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 20.09 Local: Charcha 20.30 Dharm Yoddha Garud 21.00 Film: Vishnu Puran Cast: Avtar Vaishnani, Aman Mishra 23.14 Shrimad Ramayan 23.37 Wagle Ki Duniya	07.21 Mag: Arts Unveiled 08.37 Doc: My Body, My Heart 09.24 Doc: Nenets V/s Gaz 10.16 Doc: Project Enlightenment 11.45 Mag: REV Special 13.00 Mag: Arts Unveiled 14.46 Mag: Shift 15.00 Charlotte Aux Fraises 15.09 D.Anime: Les Carnets Nature De Lulu Vroumette 15.13 D.Anime: Word Party 15.26 D.Anime: Ready Jet Go! 16.33 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter 16.44 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes 16.57 Serial: The Worst Witch 18.00 Doc: Eye On SADC 18.30 Mag: Choices 19.30 Mag: In Good Shape 20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance 20.50 Tele: Eclats De Vie 21.35 Doc: Endangered Amazon 22.21 Doc: A Construction Revo...	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.58 Dharm Yoddha Garud 15.30 Film: Mickey Virus 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 25 Août - 21.30



Mercredi 26 Août - 20.20



Mercredi 26 Août - 15.00



Programme TV



mardi 25 août

MBC 1

05.24 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour
07.04 Serial: Nautilus
07.52 Tele: All The Flowers
08.17 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
09.02 Tele: La Desalmada
09.30 Film: Love Again
11.30 Tele: Happily ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.15 Tele: Lying Heart
13.45 Tele: Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.30 Film: La Passion Du Christ
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
20.25 Film: Morbius
Cast: Jared Leto, Matt Smith (XI)...

MBC 2

09.35 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
11.35 Local: Grand Titre
12.00 Rodrig Mo Pei
12.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard
14.30 Local: Coin Jardin
14.45 Local: Konn Ou Drwa
15.15 Local: Fam Model
16.31 Festival Kreol 2025
18.00 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
18.30 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.25 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
20.15 Local: Anou Kombat Ladorg
20.45 Local: Priorite Sante
21.15 Local: Nu Servis An Aksion
22.42 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
23.00 Zournal Kreol Rediffusion
23.04 Local: Fam Model
23.24 Local: Music Tour 2025
00.24 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
00.35 Local: Mangeons

MBC 3

08.00 Local: Ved Ki Shikshahein
08.28 Excerpts From Shiv Abhihek
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 2025
10.00 Serial: Kundali Bhagya
11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.01 Film: Kabzaa
Cast: Sanjay Dutt, Amrita Singh
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar
15.50 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya
16.30 Shiv Shakti
16.59 Excerpts From Maha Yagya
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Local: RM 2 & RM 3 Ek Saal, Ek, Safar Masti & Manoran Jan Ke Saath
20.30 Serial Dharm Yoddha Garud
21.00 Film: Humse Na Jeeta Koi
Cast: Amjad Khan, Randhir Kapoor, Raj Kiran, Ranjeeta

MBC 5

06.00 Mag: Eco Africa
07.22 Mag: In Good Shape
07.46 Endangered Amazon
08.29 Doc: A Construction Revo...
09.18 Mag: Tomorrow Today
10.34 PFAS-Poisoned For Eternity?
11.29 Mag: Eco Africa
15.26 D.Anime: Ready Jet Go!
15.38 D.Anime: Bad Jelly
16.06 D.Anime: Agent
17.30 D.Anime: Action Kidz
18.00 Mag: REV: The Global Auto...
18.30 Mag: Shift
19.00 Student Support Programme
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
20.53 Tele: Eclats De Vie
21.35 Mag: Initiative Africa
22.06 Doc: A La Reconquete Des...

Bollywood TV

14.25 Radha Mohan
14.55 Dharm Yoddha Garud
15.30 Film: Phoot Aur Kante
Starring: Ajay Devgn, Madhu
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Udne Ki Aasha
19.03 Do Chutki Sindoor
19.33 Pandya Store
20.06 Mannat - Har Khushi...
20.29 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.07 Anupama
21.29 Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya
22.04 Dhruv Tara
22.34 Waggle Ki Duniya
23.04 Serial: Aladdin
23.30 Film: Phoot Aur Kante
Starring: Ajay Devgn, Madhu

mercredi 26 août

05.20 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour
08.21 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
09.07 Tele: La Desalmada
09.35 Film: Morbius
11.30 Tele: Happily Ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.15 Tele: Lying Heart
13.45 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.15 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Film: Abduction
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: The Call
22.15 Tele: Rosalinda
23.00 Tele: Happily Ever After
23.30 Le Journal

09.00 Local: Festival Kreol 2025
10.30 Local: Saveurs Plus
11.30 Local: Les Petits Genies
12.01 Local: Nos Aines
12.25 Rodrig: Itinerer Rodrig
13.02 La Journee Sous Le Regard
13.10 Local: Anou Kombat Ladorg
14.35 Local: Nu Rasinn
15.30 Local: Saveurs Plus
16.00 Local: Glwar Dantan
16.30 Rodrig - Zenn Aktif
18.00 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
18.30 Tele: Le Secret des Roldan
19.30 Rodrig Spor
20.00 Zournal Rodrig
20.45 Drogue Une Urgence...
21.15 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
21.30 Local: Agir Ensemble
21.56 Local: Les Klips
22.47 Local: Grand Titre
23.28 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.32 Local: Evasion

07.00 Mag: Sunehre Haath
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 2025
10.00 Pyaar Ka Pehla Abhyaya
11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.01 Film: Awaara
Cast: Raj Kapoor, Nargis Dutt
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.47 Radha Mohan
16.30 Shiv Shakti
16.59 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek Organised By MSDTF At Badrinath Mandir
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Yatra
19.01 Local: Bhai Behen Ka Pyar
19.28 Local: Shrivani Upakarma
19.58 Local: Virasat
20.02 Local: Kaam Daam
20.30 Dharm Yoddha Garud
21.01 Film: Ardhanari
23.28 Shrimad Ramayan
23.50 Waggle Ki Duniya

06.00 Mag: REV: The Global Auto...
06.49 Mag: Made In Germany
11.12 Rev: The Global Auto...
12.00 Mag: Made In Germany
13.30 Doc: A La Reconquete Des Rocheuses
14.25 Mag: Euromaxx
15.00 Charlotte Aux Fraises
15.09 Les Carnets Nature De Lulu...
15.26 D.Anime: Ready Jet Go!
16.12 D.Anime: Agent
16.33 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter
17.34 Mag: Shift
18.00 Mag: Afrimaxx
18.31 Mag: Planet A
19.00 Student Support Programme
19.30 Doc: Will Non-Alcoholic Wine
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
20.50 Tele: Eclats De Vie
21.39 Doc: By Train Through...
22.22 Mag: Close Up
22.53 Mag: Focus On Europe

14.25 Radha Mohan
14.50 Dharm Yoddha Garud
15.22 Film: Superstar
Starring: Kunak Khemu, Ashwina Sawney
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Udne Ki Aasha
19.02 Do Chutki Sindoor
19.33 Pandya Store
20.00 Mannat - Har Khushi Paane Ki
20.31 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.00 Anupama
21.28 Pyaar Ka Pehla Abhyaya
22.00 Dhruv Tara
22.24 Waggle Ki Duniya
22.54 Aladdin
23.30 Film: Superstar
Starring: Kunak Khemu, Ashwina Sawney

jeudi 27 août

04.35 Tele: Le Roman De La Vie
05.21 Tele: Séparé Par L'Amour
07.10 Serial: The Lazarus Project
07.50 Tele: All The Flowers
09.06 Tele: La Desalmada
09.30 Serial: Columbo
10.45 Doc: China Farm
11.30 Tele: Happily Ever After
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Tele: Rosalinda
13.03 Tele: Lying Heart
13.45 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
14.10 Tele: Eclats De Vie
15.20 Film: The Call
17.16 Tele: Happily Ever After
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
19.00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu
19.30 Le Journal
20.20 Film: Veerey Ki Wedding
Cast: Pulkit Samrat, Kriti Kharbanda, J. Sheirgill, C. Bakshi

10.20 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef
10.33 Local: Saver Lokal
11.35 Local: Grand Titre
13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard
13.40 Drogue une Urgence...
14.10 Local: Parlons Sante Senior
14.55 Fun Friday With Jerry
18.00 Une Famille Pas Si Parfaite
18.30 Tele: Le Secret Des Roldan
19.00 Zournal Kreol
19.25 Local: Viens Decouvrir
20.00 Zournal Rodrig
20.45 Local: Paroles Agricoles
21.15 Local: Encounter
21.41 Local: Music Tour 2025
22.54 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.00 Zournal Kreol Rediffusion
23.40 Local: La Sosiete
00.04 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel
00.49 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef

08.03 Local: Yatra
09.00 Aaj Ki Charcha 2025
10.00 Serial: Radha Mohan
11.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
12.01 Film: Nadiya Ke Paar
Cast: Sachin Pilgaonkar, Sadhana Singh
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.29 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar
15.42 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
16.30 Aaj Ki Charcha
17.10 Na Umra Ki Seema Ho
17.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Local: Amrit Vani
19.01 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek
20.00 Local: Hunarbaaz
20.30 Serial Tenali Rama
21.00 Serial: Shakti

06.25 Mag: Planet A
08.33 Mag: Close Up
09.31 Doc: The World's Biggest
11.39 Mag: Afrimaxx
14.10 Mag: Close Up
14.42 Mag: Shift
15.01 Charlotte Aux Fraises
15.26 D.Anime: Ready Jet Go!
15.50 D.Anime: Bad Jelly
16.33 D.Anime: Audrey's Shelter
16.44 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes
18.00 Mag: Eco India
18.30 Mag: Mapped Out
19.00 Student Support Programme
19.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today
20.01 Tele: Terre D'Esperance
20.30 Live: New
20.50 Tele: Eclat De Vie
21.30 Doc: Ice Grave
22.30 Doc: Turning Childhood...
23.17 Doc: Where Women Rule...

14.25 Radha Mohan
15.00 Tenali Rama
15.21 Film: Dhanwaan
Stars: Ajay Devgn, Manisha Koirala, Karisma Kapoor
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Udne Ki Aasha
19.00 Udaariyaan
19.30 Pandya Store
20.00 Mannat - Har Khushi Paane Ki
20.30 Saavi Ki Savaari
21.02 Anupama
21.34 Pyaar Ka Phela Adhyaya
22.01 Dhruv Tara
22.29 Waggle Ki Duniya
23.05 Aladdin
23.31 Film: Dhanwaan
Stars: Ajay Devgn, Manisha Koirala, Karisma Kapoor



Jeudi 27 Août - 15.30

Stars: Ajay Devgn, Manisha Koirala, Karisma Kapoor



Jeudi 27 Août - 20.20

Stars: Pulkit Samrat, Kriti Kharbanda, J. Sheirgill, C. Bakshi



NIC Programme Equips 30 Women Entrepreneurs for Growth

The atmosphere at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee auditorium in Moka on Friday, August 14, reflected the spirit of a unique initiative. Thirty women entrepreneurs received certificates after successfully completing the first cohort of the National Insurance Company's (NIC) Entrepreneurial Empowerment Programme (EEP), an initiative designed to strengthen the skills and confidence needed to build sustainable businesses.

The blue hexagons projected across the walls and screens of the auditorium, resembling the cells of a honeycomb, were a fitting reminder of the NIC's bee symbol. The image of a hive, sustained by the collective effort of its members, captured the spirit of a programme built around learning, collaboration and growth. Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning Jyoti Jeetun was the chief guest at the ceremony.

Launched in April 2025, the EEP provides fully funded training over eight weeks, covering key areas such as business strategy, leadership, marketing, finance, human resources and customer communication. The 30 graduates, who completed their training between January and March 2026, followed the programme in two batches.

NIC Chairman Santosh Gujadhur described the EEP as the foundation of a broader ecosystem aimed at supporting entrepreneurs. This includes Lady Bees, an insurance scheme specifically designed for women entrepreneurs, as well as Busy Man, a similar initiative for men that is in the pipeline. The NIC group also plans to introduce microfinance facilities for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Addressing the graduates, Santosh Gujadhur spoke not only as chairman of the group but also from his own experience as an entrepreneur, recalling the sleepless nights associated with cash-flow pressures and the uncertainty of securing the first customers. The objective, he stressed, was not to create a symbolic programme but to build genuine entrepreneurial capacity. He also announced plans for a permanent SME support unit within the group.



Entrepreneurial Empowerment Programme Awards: NIC Chairman Santosh Kalachand and Dr Rishi O. Sookdawoor, Group Officer in Charge & COO, with some of the awardees

The initiative, he added, is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8, which promotes inclusive economic growth, productive employment and decent work.

Minister Jeetun praised the NIC initiative as an unusual example of private-sector involvement in an area more commonly associated with NGOs. She illustrated the potential of entrepreneurship through the story of a woman she has followed for some two decades.

The entrepreneur began by preparing snacks in her kitchen and taking them by bus to supermarkets in an effort to persuade them to stock her products. With no formal training in business management, she gradually built a company that now employs about a dozen people, has its own production facility and exports its pro-



The Most Promising Start-Up Award, presented by Minister of Financial Services and Economic Planning Jyoti Jeetun, went to Ashna Sungkur

ducts.

Minister Jeetun recalled that she had once questioned the entrepreneur's decision to focus exclusively on vegetarian products rather than maintain a mixed offering. With hindsight, she admitted that she had underestimated the entrepreneur's instinct and understanding of her market. Sometimes, she said, "your instinct, your knowledge of the business, your experience of what you do" can matter as much as formal qualifications.

For the minister, such stories underline the importance of entrepreneurship as a vehicle for economic mobility, particularly as Mauritius considers its long-term economic vision for future generations.

The ceremony also brought an unexpected competitive element. The 30 participants had not realised that submitting their projects would also enter them into a competition. Awards were therefore presented in five categories.

Marie-Catherine Chikoree received the Innovation Excellence Award. The Sustainability Impact Award was shared by Darshana Damini Beegun, Ketty Sally Jane Green Hoybun and Beebee Mushiirah Mungroo after the jury found it impossible to separate the quality of their projects. Husna Banu Yacoob Patel won the Creative Concept Award, while Noemie Edgar

received the Jury's Choice Award. The Most Promising Start Up Award, presented by Minister Jeetun, went to Ashna Sungkur.

A Special Mention Award was also presented to 73-year-old Iradhidevy Irany Rungasamy, a mother of three whose determination to continue learning throughout the programme earned particular recognition.

The first edition was exclusively for women, but the next chapter is already taking shape. The second edition of the EEP is set to open soon and, while remaining fully funded, will be open to all.

The bee may have provided the visual theme, but the message of the ceremony was clear: entrepreneurship, like a hive, grows stronger when knowledge, effort and support come together.

Science & Medicine

Microfinancing has largely failed

Once hailed as capitalism's tool for ending poverty, microfinancing has proven largely ineffective and, in some cases, actively predatory. Economist Muhammad Yunus pioneered the idea of small loans to the very poor in Bangladesh, but 20 years after he won the Nobel Peace Prize for it, evidence suggests limited improvement in borrowers' economic outcomes, The Wall Street Journal reported. Commercial lenders have entered the market, pushing interest rates above 400% in some cases in Mexico and collateralizing debt against borrowers' land.

The practice has, however, helped build financial institutions in some places and supported the expansion of existing businesses.

Fears grow over health AI



A Brazilian woman's family has blamed her death on an AI medical triage system, highlighting structural risks in the introduction of AI into critical infrastructure. Her family alleges the state-run system wrongly downgraded the severity of the 32-year-old's symptoms. The case raises concerns about the potential for AI to make lethal mistakes in healthcare systems.

Response, analysts and activists have called for a global agreement on how the technology is controlled, fearing that unrestrained development could lead governments to delegate critical decisions. "The time to prepare for this is now," the *Financial Times'* chief economics commentator warned. "If we do not act, it will be far too late."