

MAURITIUS TIMES

• The budget is not just a collection of numbers, but an expression of our values and aspirations. -- Jack Lew

Interview: Sameer Sharma, Investment Analyst & Financial Risk Manager

“There is a lot to do to fix the mess and the cost will be steep”

‘We either do this, get British compensation money for Chagos or/and we just devalue the currency’



• ‘Without meaningful reforms, we will continue to stagnate and hence rely on the inflation demon to bloat budget revenues’ P8

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Lesson from Singapore: Avoid magical thinking

In the wake of Minister Padayachy's Budget Speech last Friday, a widely circulated video on social media featured Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam discussing his government's financial principles. His remarks highlight a stark contrast between Singapore's meticulous fiscal management and the more relaxed - in some cases, irresponsible - approach observed in many other countries, including ours.

President Shanmugaratnam emphasized a principle that has become increasingly rare globally: avoiding "magical thinking" in budgeting. This approach involves spending only what the government can sustainably afford, rather than accumulating unsustainable debts in the hope that future revenues will somehow cover the shortfall. Singapore's budgeting philosophy is straightforward: plan prudently, execute transparently, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

In his March 22 statement, President Shanmugaratnam outlined the dire consequences of fiscal irresponsibility. Countries that engage in magical thinking often end up burdening future generations with debts they did not incur, leading to severe cutbacks in public spending, deterioration of critical infrastructure, and substantial tax hikes. This scenario, he argued, is fundamentally unfair and something Singapore's constitutional rules are designed to prevent.

This disciplined fiscal approach enables Singapore to prepare in advance for inevitable increases in healthcare spending due to an ageing population and investments in green energy to combat climate change. By ensuring that these expenditures are pre-financed, Singapore avoids the need to deplete its reserves, except in extraordinary circumstances. This method not only maintains fairness across generations but also fortifies the country's economic resilience.

Contrasting this with our own fiscal strategy, as outlined in successive budgets during the current government's mandate — especially the latest budget presented in the run-up to the general elections — reveals a cynical approach to financial management. While the recent budget has garnered praise in some quarters for its "social generosity," as highlighted by the MBC-TV primetime news bulletin, which showcased substantial benefits for retirees, women, young adults, farmers, and fishermen, critical voices highlight the absence of structural reforms necessary for balanced, inclusive, and sustainable development. Some stakeholders view the social policies as a relief amid rising living costs. But several measures are a repetition of unimplemented past budget announcements while others remind us that these handouts come from

taxpayers and consumers who are being partially compensated for what the Exchequer took during the year.

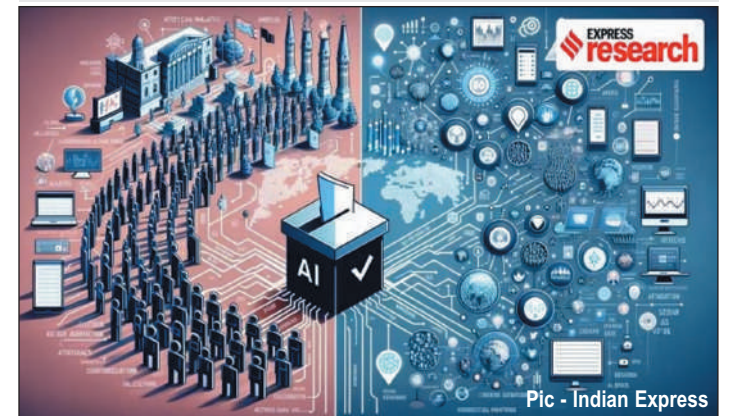
However, those knowledgeable in economics remain concerned about the ongoing erosion of purchasing power caused by rampant inflation and the steady depreciation of the rupee, which has fallen by 46% since 2014. Other stakeholders note that there are urgent unfinished business like the readjustment of skewed salary structures following past and current minimal revenue rises which may add a significant burden on the Treasury outside the budget.

At first glance, the budget appears to enhance the welfare state by expanding social benefits, tax concessions, and subsidies. However, a tax and public debt based pension system is clearly unsustainable. The budget fundamentally fails to shift the economic policy framework away from an opportunistic electioneering approach. It neglects to prioritize meaningful tax and structural reforms necessary to prevent stagnation and reliance on inflation to inflate budget revenues. Additionally, it fails to align budgetary allocations with national priorities and to enhance transparency in financial reporting while failing to promote new avenues or pillars for the economy. To face economic uncertainties more effectively and ensure a fairer distribution of resources across generations, we should be emulating Singapore's commitment to prudent planning, transparency, and long-term sustainability.

The key lesson from Singapore is clear: we must avoid magical thinking and instead adopt a disciplined, forward-looking approach to fiscal management. This will not only secure our economic future but also ensure fairness to both current and future generations. However, this might be too much to ask from the political class, whose vision is often limited to the next five years. On the other hand, whether the feel-good measures announced by Minister Padayachy in his fifth and last budget will secure enough votes from the targeted sections of the electorate to tilt the balance in favour of the current government remains uncertain as the after-effects may wear out rapidly in the reality of continued high fuel costs and price rises in supermarkets and pharmacies.

At a juncture when the world trade, food security and commodity prices look increasingly uncertain, our national currency depreciating continuously and dollar reserves or public debt worrying, we are treading on thin ice. Hoping future generations will finance our current lifestyles or keep governments in office, is all about magical thinking.

The Conversation



Indian election was awash in deepfakes – but AI was a net positive for democracy

As India concluded the world's largest election on June 5, 2024, with over 640 million votes counted, observers could assess how the various parties and factions used artificial intelligence technologies – and what lessons that holds for the rest of the world.

The campaigns made extensive use of AI, including deepfake impersonations of candidates, celebrities and dead politicians. By some estimates, millions of Indian voters viewed deepfakes.

But, despite fears of widespread disinformation, for the most part the campaigns, candidates and activists used AI constructively in the election. They used AI for typical political activities, including mudslinging, but primarily to better connect with voters.

Deepfakes without the deception

Political parties in India spent an estimated US\$50 million on authorized AI-generated content for targeted communication with their constituencies this election cycle. And it was largely successful.

Indian political strategists have long recognized the influence of personality and emotion on their constituents, and they started using AI to bolster their messaging. Young and upcoming AI companies like The Indian Deepfaker, which started out serving the entertainment industry, quickly responded to this growing demand for AI-generated campaign material.

In January, Muthuvel Karunanidhi, former chief minister of the southern state of Tamil Nadu for two decades, appeared via video at his party's youth wing conference. He wore his signature yellow scarf, white shirt, dark glasses and had his familiar stance – head slightly bent sideways. But Karunanidhi died in 2018. His party authorized the deepfake.

In February, the All-India Anna Dravidian Progressive Federation party's official X account posted an audio clip of Jayaram Jayalithaa, the iconic superstar of Tamil politics colloquially called "Amma" or "Mother." Jayalalithaa died in 2016.

Meanwhile, voters received calls from their local representatives to discuss local issues – except the leader on the other end of the phone was an AI impersonation.

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Le budget 2024-25 a attiré beaucoup de commentaires, les uns positifs et les autres plus critiques. Globalement, les commentaires positifs portent sur les cadeaux distribués à tour de bras à des groupes ciblés de l'électorat (retraités, femmes, jeunes de 18-25 ans, planteurs, pêcheurs, etc.). Les commentaires critiques ont trait à l'absence de mesures structurelles pour remettre le pays sur les rails en vue d'un développement équilibré, inclusif, équitable et durable.

Alors que les personnes optimistes voient dans la politique sociale quelque peu généreuse des motifs de soulagement face à la cherté de la vie, les personnes pessimistes ne voient pas d'embellie dans l'érosion du pouvoir d'achat écorché par l'inflation galopante et la dépréciation inexorable de la roupie (46% depuis 2014). En apparence, ce budget améliore de façon appréciable l'Etat-Providence en déployant un vaste éventail de prestations sociales, de concessions fiscales et de subventions diverses.

Mais fondamentalement, il ne change pas grand-chose à la politique économique, laquelle reste engluée dans un carcan de vieilles certitudes et de concepts archi-éculés. Au fond, ce budget consacre le néo-libéralisme économique des dix dernières années, fondé sur:

- la fiscalité directe légère,
- la facilitation des affaires,
- l'immigration de compétences étrangères,
- le modèle de développement axé sur l'immobilier, et
- le laxisme en matière de régulation environnementale.

Budget-manifeste

Un budget annuel représente davantage qu'un exercice comptable visant à (re)équilibrer les dépenses et les revenus. Il définit les orientations économiques pour l'année financière à venir en matière de fiscalité et de priorités d'investissement public. Or, ce budget apparaît comme le manifeste électoral d'un gouvernement arrivant à la fin de son mandat. Depuis l'annonce de vingt mesures pré-électorales par l'Opposition parlementaire, on s'attendait à ce que le



“La privatisation des services publics (santé et éducation) menace l'intérêt collectif. Le nombre croissant de cliniques et d'hôpitaux privés dans le pays, dont la création est encouragée par l'État avec des plans incitatifs, font concurrence aux hôpitaux publics en attirant les patients bien nantis. Il y a une désaffection grandissante envers l'hôpital public. La privatisation de l'éducation menace la viabilité de l'école publique. Le budget a introduit une déduction fiscale de Rs 60 000 par an par élève pour les familles admettant leurs enfants dans une école privée. Cette mesure accentuera les inégalités de classe dans l'éducation...”

gouvernement propose sa propre panoplie de mesures populistes afin de ne pas se laisser dépasser.

Ainsi, le budget 2024-25 a élargi l'État-providence horizontalement (avec de nouvelles prestations sociales) et verticalement (en majorant les prestations existantes). Toutefois, le gouvernement ne s'est pas donné les moyens fiscaux de sa politique sociale.

On ne trouve pas dans le budget de nouvelles sources de revenu, à part une nouvelle taxe de 2% sur le chiffre d'affaires des sociétés au-dessus de Rs 50 millions par an pour financer des actions visant à mitiger le changement climatique. En passant, cette mesure fiscale spécifique est salutaire, vu que les sociétés privées sont principalement responsables de

la dégradation de l'environnement avec tous ces projets immobiliers lancés tous azimuts au détriment des écosystèmes

naturels. Toutefois, on ne sait pas à ce stade si cette mesure s'appliquera aux sociétés d'exportation et sociétés offshores qui paient l'impôt sur le revenu à 3% (contre le taux général de 15%).

Il faut aussi noter certaines contradictions dans la politique visant à mitiger le réchauffement climatique, notamment cette nouvelle mesure d'étendre les facilités hors-taxe pour l'achat d'un véhicule tous les sept ans aux prêtres inscrits de toutes les religions, ce qui va à l'encontre de toute politique de transport en commun (autobus, tramway) visant à réduire la congestion routière.

Le gouvernement aura beau parler de la nécessité de balancer le progrès social et la croissance économique, l'expansion de l'État-providence se fait au prix d'un déficit budgétaire massif de Rs 62,8 milliards en 2024-25 (les dépenses de Rs 273,3 milliards moins les revenus de Rs 210,5 milliards) et, partant, d'un endettement public accru (Rs 575 milliards, soit 80% du PIB).

La soutenabilité financière de l'État-providence demeure une cause d'inquiétude dans le long terme avec le vieillissement de la population. Le budget ne donne pas un décompte des dépenses et des revenus estimés pour 2024-25. Le rapport de la MRA sur les recettes fiscales pour 2023-24 n'est pas disponible non plus. Comment le gouvernement va-t-il financer le déficit en 2024-25 ? Le rapport du FMI mentionne un prêt de \$250 millions (Rs 11,3 milliards) de la Banque Mondiale pour financer le budget.

Prestations sociales

Le budget a augmenté les prestations sociales de base (pension de vieillesse et allocations aux veuves, invalides et orphelins) de Rs 500 par mois à partir du 1er juillet et de Rs 1000 par mois à partir du 1er janvier 2025. Comme indiqué dans le tableau (voir: Table 1: Cost of Social Benefits as of Jan 1, 2025 – Tableau 1: Coût des prestations sociales au 1er janvier 2025), le coût de ces prestations atteindra Rs 64,5 milliards par année (civile) à partir du 1er janvier 2025 contre Rs 58,5 milliards avant le budget, soit une hausse de Rs 6 milliards (10,3 %).

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Table 1: Cost of Social Benefits as of Jan 1, 2025

Category	Number	Pension Rs	Monthly Amount (Rs)	Amount for 13 months (Rs)
Orphans	248	15,000	3,720,000	48,360,000
Invalids	28,086	15,000	421,290,000	5,476,770,000
Widows	17,064	15,000	255,960,000	3,327,480,000
Subtotal A	45,398		680,970,000	8,852,610,000
Pensioners:		Rs	Rs	Rs
60-64	82,692	15,000	1,240,380,000	16,124,940,000
65-74	123,135	16,000	1,970,160,000	25,612,080,000
75-89	54,818	17,500	959,315,000	12,471,095,000
90-99	4,422	25,210	111,478,620	1,449,222,060
100 years +	178	30,210	5,377,380	69,905,940
Subtotal B	265,245		4,286,711,000	55,727,243,000
Total A+B	310,643		4,967,681,000	64,579,853,000



Anil Madan

The Danger of Not Heeding Warnings

When we start treating warnings as just another fact, or another item of “Breaking News!!” the warnings elide into humdrum

In 2014, after Putin’s annexation of Crimea, there were those who warned that the world had not heeded warnings of Putin’s intentions in this regard, and that it ignored the prospect of future aggressive moves as a realistic threat to Ukraine’s security, and indeed to all of Europe and the world.

When Putin invaded Georgia and annexed a part of it, there were those who warned that this was only the beginning of Russia’s aggression in Europe. And there were those on the other side who warned, as they do now, about Russia’s assault on Ukraine, that these events were just a warning by Russia to NATO to keep from invading its space. Ignorance takes many forms.

The world continues to ignore warnings. China now rules Hong Kong with an iron fist and tells the world that it is merely an internal affair. Ditto, the Uyghurs — merely an internal affair. Taiwan? An internal affair — never mind that Taiwan is across the ocean from mainland China.

The world ignored warnings when Putin threatened to invade Ukraine. Even as Biden said an invasion was all but certain, Zelensky dismissed that idea. And, as I have written, Biden made a terrible mistake in not declaring that the US and NATO would respond to an attack on Ukraine with force. Today, after ignoring all those warnings, there are some European and NATO leaders who talk openly of sending troops to Ukraine, albeit in non-combat and defensive roles. It may be too late for Ukraine, as reconstructing that society may be impossible. I speak not of rebuilding the destroyed infrastructure, but of reconstituting a society, a people who have been displaced to foreign lands.

The world has too long ignored China’s utterly foolish pronouncements that Taiwan is a part of China and that there must be reunification. What nonsense!! Taiwan is no more a part of China than is Sri Lanka or North Dakota. And pray tell why does China, a nation of 1.4 billion people need 24 million more? True, President Biden has said that the US will come to Taiwan’s aid if China attacks, but the rest of the

world largely ignores the warnings that come with every Chinese attempt to squeeze the island nation. And it is not clear that the US has the capability or firepower to repel a Chinese invasion of Taiwan. Here, I speak of conventional forces. No sane person should contemplate the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances other than response to a nuclear attack by an adversary.

The world has too long ignored the threat that is posed to Israel’s existence. It comes principally from Iran. The Ayatollahs, too devious to act on their own until recently when they launched a missile attack, rely on proxies. And one can read some of their pronouncements as threatening the first use of nuclear weapons.

Yes, I understand that Bibi Netanyahu and his war cabinet have taken liberties in their assault on Gaza since the October 7th attack. I predicted and warned that this would happen, and I have questioned Netanyahu’s judgment that this is the right way to go.

The danger is that the world will forget what got us Israel in the first place, the world will forget what happened in the Holocaust. Indeed, there are those who accuse Israel of engaging in a holocaust of its own. That was always the danger. And that is why Netanyahu’s approach was, in my opinion, foolish.

But then, there is the reality that this is an existential struggle for Israel — allowing Hamas to exist and have military capability is merely to postpone the day of the next attack. Don’t take my word for it, that is what Hamas says. Eliminating Hamas’ military capability is an existential issue for Israel. Sadly, Netanyahu has made the survival of Gazans also an existential issue.

And then there is Hezbollah in the wings even if Hamas is emasculated. And Iran hovering above both wings.

These are warnings the world cannot afford to ignore. We cannot compound the Holocaust with a modern-day Holocaust of the destruction of Israel. Period.

The world ignored warnings of authoritarianism looming over India. In a tribute to



“The world appears not to take these warnings seriously because they sound so crazy. But then the world did not take warnings about Trump seriously because he sounded crazy. He still does. And the world pays little heed. Because he is crazy. It is dangerous to ignore warnings about people who are crazy...” Pic - Press Herald

India’s democracy, the voters rejected that notion. But in neighbouring Pakistan, a former Prime Minister remains stuck in jail, and the world largely ignores what is happening.

President Biden tells us that Israel has proposed a peace plan that the Israeli Prime Minister appears to endorse with a lukewarm embrace, while promising more war and more destruction. Hamas declares that it welcomes a United Nations resolution calling for a ceasefire, but then lays down conditions the Israelis are unlikely to accept. It may be an imperative for Biden to be seen as the champion of a peace plan, both for domestic consumption and for maintaining solidarity with the Arab nations and to bring Saudi Arabia into that orbit.

In Europe, there have been warnings about immigrants with fundamentalist radical views and agendas. These have been largely ignored as those who champion tolerance and freedom of worship fail to see that there is a difference between most immigrants who simply want a better life and those radicals who seek to use their religion as a vehicle for promoting their brand of violence and hate.

So, it is that the religious Christian fundamentalists in Europe and America seek to impose their ideas of intolerance on the populace at large. And the warnings about these actions are largely ignored. In America, we have people openly speaking of this country as a white Christian nation and a Supreme Court justice stating that the conflict between the two sides of this issue is irreconcilable and that one side must prevail. He means his side, the side

that he supports.

We have a candidate for President who attempted a seditious overthrow of the last presidential election. Yet, the warnings that the events of January 6, 2021, screamed at us, have largely been ignored. Trump is all but certain to be the nominee of the Republican Party for the 2024 presidential election. He threatens to destroy the core of the federal government and what his cronies call the deep state. He vows revenge on his enemies — pretty much anyone who has tried to hold him to account or disagrees with his craziness. And the Republicans in Congress and in positions of responsibility remain silent, even vowing to support him in his election bid.

Take three of these. Former House Majority and then Minority Leader Mitch McConnell who said that Trump was morally responsible for the events of January 6 but voted to acquit him at his impeachment. He now says he’ll vote for Trump. Or William Barr, the former Attorney General, who said that Trump’s claims of a stolen election were “bullsh*t”. He now says he’ll vote for Trump. Or Nikki Haley who declared Trump unfit to be President. Now she says she will vote for him.

Amidst these warnings and craziness, the US Supreme Court fails to see that the plain language of the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution disqualifies Trump from holding the office of President. If one reads that amendment as a warning to this nation from the 1860s, it is another warning we have ignored.

“In Europe, there have been warnings about immigrants with fundamentalist radical views and agendas. These have been largely ignored as those who champion tolerance and freedom of worship fail to see that there is a difference between most immigrants who simply want a better life and those radicals who seek to use their religion as a vehicle for promoting their brand of violence and hate. So, it is that the religious Christian fundamentalists in Europe and America seek to impose their ideas of intolerance on the populace at large. And the warnings about these actions are largely ignored...”

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Secousses politiques en Europe : L'extrême droite défie les pouvoirs traditionnels

Par A. Bartleby

Le récent scrutin au Parlement européen a marqué un tournant significatif dans le paysage politique, avec une montée en puissance des partis d'extrême droite qui ont secoué les pouvoirs traditionnels. Cette vague populiste a particulièrement humilié le président français Emmanuel Macron, qui a réagi en appelant à des élections législatives anticipées.

Les résultats indiquent que le Parlement de l'Union européenne, fort de ses 27 nations, a nettement basculé vers la droite. En Italie, la Première ministre Giorgia Meloni a dépassé le double du nombre de sièges de son parti au Parlement. Malgré les scandales, le parti d'extrême droite, Alternative pour l'Allemagne, a réussi à rassembler suffisamment de sièges pour dépasser les sociaux-démocrates en déclin du chancelier Olaf Scholz.

Saisissant la menace de l'extrême droite, les Démocrates chrétiens d'Ursula von der Leyen avaient déjà adopté une position plus à droite sur les questions de migration et de climat avant les élections, ce qui leur a valu de rester le plus grand groupe au Parlement européen, et de facto, les médiateurs des pouvoirs toujours croissants de l'assemblée.

Cependant, la montée des partis nationalistes et populistes à travers l'Europe compliquera considérablement l'approbation de législations sur des questions allant du changement climatique à la politique agricole pour les cinq prochaines années.

Le véritable vainqueur de cette nuit électorale remarquable est le parti Rassemblement National de Marine Le Pen, qui a dominé les élections françaises à un tel point que Macron a immédiatement dissout le Parlement national et appelé à de nouvelles élections dès la fin du mois. C'est un risque politique majeur, car son parti pourrait subir davantage de pertes, entravant le reste de son mandat présidentiel jusqu'en 2027.

Le Pen a accepté le défi avec joie: "Nous sommes prêts à changer la donne, prêts à défendre les intérêts des Français, prêts à mettre fin à l'immigration de masse", a-t-elle déclaré, reprenant le cri de ralliement de nombreux leaders d'extrême droite dans d'autres pays qui ont célébré des victoires substantielles.

Son Rassemblement National a remporté plus de 30 %, soit environ le double du parti centriste pro-européen de Macron, Renew, qui devrait atteindre moins de 15 %.

Macron a reconnu la défaite: "J'ai entendu votre message, vos préoccupations, et je ne les laisserai pas sans réponse", a-t-il déclaré, ajoutant que la convocation d'élec-



Europe: l'extrême droite renforcée, séisme politique en France. P - Le Devoir

tions anticipées soulignait ses convictions démocratiques.

En Allemagne, la nation la plus peuplée de l'UE, les projections indiquaient que les électeurs n'avaient pas été dissuadés par les scandales de l'AfD, qui est passé à 16,5 %, contre 11 % en 2019. En comparaison, le résultat combiné des trois partis de la coalition gouvernementale allemande a à peine dépassé les 30 %.

Le parti social-démocrate au pouvoir de Scholz a été humilié alors que l'Alternative pour l'Allemagne montait en deuxième position. "Après toutes les prophéties de malheur, après le barrage des dernières semaines, nous sommes la deuxième force la plus puissante", a déclaré une Alice Weidel, leader jubilante de l'AfD.

Dans l'ensemble de l'UE, deux groupes centristes et pro-européens, les Démocrates chrétiens et les Socialistes, sont restés dominants dans le vote qui s'est conclu dimanche. Les gains de l'extrême droite ont eu raison des Verts, qui devraient perdre environ 20 sièges et reculer à la sixième position du Parlement. Le groupe Renew de Macron, pro-business, a également subi de lourdes pertes.

Après avoir flirté pendant la campagne

électorale avec l'idée de travailler avec un groupe politique plus à droite, von der Leyen a proposé tard dimanche de former une coalition avec les Sociaux-démocrates, qui ont en grande partie tenu bon lors des élections, et les Libéraux pro-business.

"Nous sommes de loin le parti le plus fort, nous sommes l'ancre de la stabilité", a déclaré von der Leyen. Réfléchissant sur la montée de l'extrême droite et le bon résultat de l'extrême gauche, elle a ajouté que le résultat apportait "une grande stabilité pour les partis du centre. Nous avons tous intérêt à la stabilité et nous voulons tous une Europe forte et efficace".

Dans le législatif, les résultats provisoires ont montré que les Démocrates chrétiens auraient 189 sièges, en hausse de 13, les Sociaux-démocrates 135, en baisse de 4 et le groupe Renew pro-business 83, en baisse de 19. Les Verts ont chuté à 53, en baisse de 18.

L'Allemagne, traditionnellement un bastion des écologistes, illustre l'humiliation des Verts, dont on prévoyait qu'ils passeraient de 20 % à 12 %. Avec d'autres pertes attendues en France et ailleurs, la défaite des Verts pourrait bien avoir un impact sur les politiques de l'UE en matière de change-

ment climatique, encore les plus progressistes à l'échelle mondiale.

Les membres éminents des partis au Parlement européen devaient se réunir lundi pour discuter des alliances possibles. La question de savoir si l'extrême droite s'unira en un bloc suffisamment fort pour défier les principaux groupes pro-européens deviendra cruciale pour le fonctionnement futur de l'assemblée.

Les élections interviennent à un moment critique pour la confiance des électeurs dans un bloc de quelque 450 millions de personnes. Au cours des cinq dernières années, l'UE a été secouée par la pandémie de coronavirus, une récession économique et une crise énergétique alimentée par la guerre de la Russie en Ukraine. Cependant, la campagne s'est souvent concentrée sur des questions propres aux pays individuels plutôt que sur les intérêts européens plus larges.

Depuis les dernières élections européennes en 2019, des partis populistes ou d'extrême droite dirigent maintenant des gouvernements dans trois nations - Hongrie, Slovaquie et Italie - et font partie de coalitions au pouvoir dans d'autres pays, y compris la Suède, la Finlande et bientôt les Pays-Bas.

Ce nouveau développement met en lumière l'impact significatif des récents résultats électoraux au Parlement européen, marqués par une montée en puissance des partis d'extrême droite qui ont ébranlé les pouvoirs traditionnels. La décision d'Emmanuel Macron de convoquer des élections législatives anticipées en France suite à la domination du Rassemblement National de Marine Le Pen souligne les bouleversements politiques en cours en Europe. Les alliances futures et la dynamique entre les partis pro-européens et les nationalistes seront cruciales pour l'avenir politique et économique de l'Union européenne.

Budget, Promesses Électorales et Cadeaux: Risques potentiels et conséquences imprévues

Les cadeaux électoraux ne sont pas un concept nouveau dans de nombreuses régions du monde, notamment en Afrique et dans certains pays asiatiques. En dépit des critiques des commentateurs médiatiques, des partis d'opposition et même du système judiciaire, cette pratique persiste en raison de l'absence de délimitations légales claires.

En Inde, par exemple, les partis politiques se livrent une compétition acharnée pour offrir les meilleurs cadeaux afin d'attirer les électeurs. Les politiciens indiens promettent tout pour séduire les électeurs potentiels, allant de l'eau gratuite aux smartphones gratuits.

☞ Suite en page 6



Budget, Promesses Électorales et Cadeaux: Risques potentiels et conséquences imprévues

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Comme les traditionnels cadeaux d'eau et d'électricité gratuits ne suffisent plus, cette tendance a gagné en ampleur récemment avec des offres de plus en plus créatives.

À la suite d'un défi légal, la Cour suprême de l'Inde a statué en 2013 dans l'affaire S. Subramanian Balaji contre le gouvernement du Tamil Nadu. Tout en reconnaissant que «les promesses de campagne irréalistes et les cadeaux posent un problème grave qui nuit à l'équité des élections», elle a déclaré que «la loi de représentation des personnes et les autres lois applicables ne peuvent être utilisées pour interpréter les promesses faites dans le manifeste électoral comme une pratique de corruption, et par conséquent, la distribution de cadeaux ne peut être arrêtée lorsque le parti au pouvoir utilise des fonds publics à cette fin en adoptant des lois d'appropriation à l'assemblée de l'État». De plus, la cour a souligné qu'il «n'existe aucune loi régissant spécifiquement le contenu des manifestes électoraux».

Cette décision a été contestée par divers pétitionnaires. En août 2022, au motif que «le raisonnement du jugement est erroné car il n'a pas pris en compte diverses dispositions de la loi sur la représentation des personnes de 1951». Mais, vu la complexité des enjeux - certaines parties affirmant que «toutes les promesses ne peuvent être assimilées à des cadeaux car elles concernent des programmes de bien-être ou des mesures pour le bien public» - un banc présidé par le juge en chef de l'Inde NV Ramana a renvoyé l'affaire à un banc de trois juges pour réexaminer le jugement de 2013 dans l'affaire S. Subramanian Balaji contre l'État du Tamil Nadu.

Promesses électorales populistes à Maurice

La question des cadeaux et des promesses électorales populistes avait de nouveau fait l'objet de débats dans le cadre de la pétition électorale de Suren Dayal, contestant l'élection du leader du MSM, Pravind Jugnauth, et de ses deux colistiers aux élections de 2019, comme entendu par le Conseil privé. Divers points clés du jugement dans l'affaire Raj Ringadoo contre Ashok Jugnauth avaient été évoqués dans les soumissions de l'avocat de S. Dayal devant le Conseil privé, notamment



en ce qui concerne ce qui constitue des promesses électorales normales par rapport à des promesses illégales, que ces promesses soient contenues dans les manifestes électoraux ou non, et le moment où elles sont faites.

Les accusations de M. Dayal faisaient référence aux promesses faites par Pravind Jugnauth pendant la campagne électorale, à savoir augmenter la pension de retraite de base, accélérer les formes de rémunération et les conditions dans le secteur public, et verser des primes de performance exceptionnelles aux policiers, pompiers et agents pénitentiaires - toutes ces promesses constituant, selon lui, de la corruption telle que définie dans la loi sur la représentation des personnes, section 64, qui traite de la «corruption et des traitements». Suren Dayal a également allégué que la nourriture, les boissons et les divertissements fournis lors d'un événement organisé par le ministère de la Sécurité sociale, où Pravind Jugnauth a pris la parole, constituaient un tel traitement.

En ce qui concerne le premier chef d'accusation dans l'appel de M. Dayal relatif à la corruption, le raisonnement juridique appliqué par le Conseil privé, basé sur son interprétation de la section pertinente de la loi et les conclusions factuelles de la Cour suprême, l'a amené à conclure que «le simple fait qu'une promesse faite à l'électorat représente de l'argent et soit conçue pour gagner des voix ne signifie pas qu'un acte de corruption a été

commis». Cela, selon les Law Lords, constituerait une «campagne électorale normale». Le Conseil privé ajoute qu'«il sera toujours nécessaire de considérer tous les faits pertinents et les circonstances associées à ce genre de discours en détail. Il n'y a pas de règle ou de test strict. Au contraire, une approche flexible, adaptée aux faits de chaque cas, est requise.»

Quoi qu'il en soit, les promesses populistes d'un côté comportent le danger insidieux de pousser les autres partis à suivre le mouvement dans une dérive que le pays ne peut peut-être pas se permettre et qui pourrait mener l'économie à la dérive, la monnaie nationale en chute libre ou le fardeau de la dette à des sommets vertigineux.

Risques potentiels et conséquences inattendues

Mettre l'accent sur des mesures populistes et des cadeaux dans un budget, surtout sans sources de financement claires, peut entraîner plusieurs risques potentiels et conséquences inattendues. Sans sources de financement adéquates, le gouvernement pourrait être obligé d'emprunter de l'argent, entraînant une augmentation de la dette publique. Des niveaux élevés de dette peuvent être insoutenables et exercer une pression sur les budgets futurs.

Des dépenses excessives peuvent entraîner l'inflation si elles augmentent la demande sans une augmentation correspondante de l'offre. Cela peut éroder le pouvoir d'achat et avoir un impact négatif sur l'économie. Prioriser des mesures à court terme peut détourner des fonds des investissements essentiels à long terme et qui sont cruciaux pour une croissance économique durable.

Pour combler les déficits budgétaires, les gouvernements futurs pourraient devoir augmenter les impôts, ce qui peut peser sur les citoyens et les entreprises et potentiellement freiner la croissance économique. Bien que les mesures populistes puissent être populaires à court terme, elles peuvent entraîner une désillusion publique si elles conduisent à une instabilité économique ou si les avantages promis ne sont pas durables.

En fin de compte, c'est la population qui en paiera le prix, car tous les cadeaux proviendront finalement de leurs propres poches.



La première dame Jill Biden et Hunter Biden, fils du président américain Joe Biden, quittent le J. Caleb Boggs Federal Building le 11 juin. P - AFP

L'épreuve de la famille Biden Une saga publique et intime face à la dépendance

De nombreux membres de la famille de Hunter Biden ont été des figures marquantes du palais de justice de Delaware lors de son procès fédéral pour possession d'une arme à feu, certains témoignant pour l'accusation ou la défense.

En moins de 48 heures la semaine dernière, la première dame Jill Biden est passée d'une cérémonie en Normandie marquant le 80ème anniversaire du débarquement en France à la première rangée d'une salle

d'audience à Delaware, où Hunter Biden était jugé dans une affaire d'arme à feu, avant de retourner à Paris pour une visite d'État élaborée au palais de l'Élysée.

C'était une manifestation des efforts considérables que la famille Biden a déployés pour soutenir Hunter Biden alors qu'il est jugé à Wilmington, Delaware, accusé d'avoir menti sur un formulaire fédéral d'achat d'arme à feu en déclarant qu'il n'avait pas de problème de drogue.

A. Bartleby

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L'épreuve de la famille Biden

Une saga publique et intime face à la dépendance



Joe Biden: «En tant que président, je ne commente pas et ne commenterai pas les affaires fédérales en cours, mais en tant que père, j'ai un amour sans bornes pour mon fils». P - Getty Images

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Jill Biden a été une présence régulière dans la salle d'audience, soutenue par une rotation d'autres membres de la famille, rapportent Colleen Long, Darlene Superville et Claudia Lauer de l'AP.

Hunter Biden a plaidé non coupable des accusations, mais il ne nie pas avoir un problème de drogue. Ses mémoires, «Beautiful Things», racontent sa descente aux enfers après la mort de son frère Beau en 2015 d'un cancer. Mais ses avocats disent qu'il ne se considérerait pas comme un «addict» au moment où il a rempli le formulaire d'achat d'arme en 2018 pour acheter un revolver.

Chaque famille se débat avec des défis personnels, et les politiciens sont souvent laissés à naviguer ces dynamiques en public. Mais la révélation très expansive devant le tribunal des détails sordides entourant la dépendance de Hunter Biden – dans l'éclat d'une année électorale – est d'une ampleur bien plus grande. Et la famille du président a montré une détermination à s'assurer que Hunter Biden ne traverse pas cela seul.

À la fois président et père

Joe Biden s'est tenu à l'écart du tribunal et a peu parlé de l'affaire, soucieux de ne pas donner l'impression d'interférer dans une affaire criminelle menée par son propre ministère de la Justice. Mais le président a longtemps marché sur la ligne entre serviteur public et père.

À seulement 30 ans, le démocrate a été assermenté en tant que sénateur junior du Delaware depuis une chambre d'hôpital où ses jeunes fils se remettaient d'un accident de voiture qui a tué sa femme et sa fille.

Joe Biden a promis à l'époque que s'il y avait un conflit entre «être un bon père et être un bon sénateur», il démissionnerait.

«En tant que président, je ne commente pas et ne commenterai pas les affaires fédérales en cours, mais en tant que père, j'ai un amour sans bornes pour mon fils, confiance en lui et respect pour sa force», a-t-il déclaré. «Notre famille a traversé beaucoup de choses ensemble, et Jill et moi allons continuer à être là pour Hunter et notre

famille avec notre amour et notre soutien.»

Démonstration de soutien

Pendant la première semaine du procès, Jill Biden était au tribunal quatre jours sur cinq, ne manquant que jeudi en raison des événements du D-Day. D'autres personnes qui ont pris place dans la salle d'audience à divers moments sont la sœur de Hunter, Ashley, ses tantes Bonny Jacobs et Valerie Owens et sa femme, Melissa Cohen Biden.

La première dame s'est penchée sur la balustrade du tribunal pour embrasser Hunter, qui l'appelle maman depuis qu'elle a épousé Joe Biden en 1977. Elle a marché main dans la main avec lui en sortant de la salle d'audience. Elle a écouté des heures de témoignages.

Hunter n'a pas facilité la tâche à sa famille, et les preuves dans l'affaire ont été un tour hautement personnel de ses erreurs et de sa consommation de drogue, une sorte de version cauchemardesque de «C'est votre vie».

Les jurés ont écouté des heures de témoignages de son ex-femme, d'une ancienne petite amie et de la veuve de son frère, qui ont dressé un tableau de sorties dans des clubs de strip-tease, d'infidélités, de consommation habituelle de crack et de leurs efforts infructueux pour l'aider à se désintoxiquer.

Les jurés ont vu des images du fils du président torse nu et débraillé dans une pièce sale et à moitié nu tenant des pipes à crack. Et ils ont regardé une vidéo de son crack pesé sur une balance.

Les procureurs fédéraux ont soutenu que les preuves étaient nécessaires pour prouver aux jurés que Hunter Biden, 54 ans, était en pleine addiction lorsqu'il a acheté l'arme et a donc menti en cochant «non» sur le formulaire qui demandait s'il était «un consommateur illégal de, ou dépendant de» drogues.

Biden dit qu'il ne réduira pas la peine de son fils

Le président Joe Biden a déclaré qu'il n'utiliserait pas

son pouvoir pour réduire une éventuelle peine de prison infligée à son fils.

S'exprimant au sommet du G7 en Italie, le président Joe Biden a déclaré qu'il ne commuerait pas la peine de Hunter Biden pour une accusation fédérale de possession d'arme à feu. Le jury du Delaware a déclaré mardi Hunter Biden coupable d'avoir menti sur sa consommation de drogue lors de l'achat d'un revolver en 2018.

«J'ai dit que je respecterais la décision du jury. Je le ferai. Et je ne le gracierai pas», a déclaré le président jeudi.

Les présidents américains ont le pouvoir de commuer les peines pour les accusés condamnés pour des infractions fédérales. Ils peuvent également choisir d'accorder des grâces complètes, annulant ainsi entièrement les condamnations. Commuer une peine laisserait la condamnation intacte, mais remplacerait une peine prononcée au tribunal par une peine moindre.

Un récit familial

Patrick Kennedy, ancien membre du Congrès et voix de premier plan sur la santé mentale et la dépendance, a déclaré que l'histoire de Hunter Biden est si courante qu'il s'attendait à ce que de nombreux Américains y voient quelque chose de familial, aussi dérangeante ou embarrassante qu'elle puisse paraître. Kennedy lui-même a lutté contre la dépendance aux drogues et est le fils d'un législateur célèbre, feu le sénateur Ted Kennedy, D-Mass.

«La maladie de la dépendance semble être ce qui est jugé ici», a-t-il dit, arguant qu'une grande partie de l'affaire concerne la définition de la sobriété. Êtes-vous sobre lorsque vous ne prenez pas de drogues? Ou êtes-vous sobre lorsqu'il y a eu un changement profond dans votre pensée qui accompagne l'arrêt des drogues?

«La moitié dit que c'est physique, et l'autre moitié dit que c'est mental — et la vérité est que c'est les deux», a-t-il déclaré.

De nombreuses familles, qu'elles soient modestes ou influentes, à travers le monde, ont dû faire face à une tragédie similaire à celle de la famille Biden. La dépendance, avec ses ravages et ses défis, touche des personnes de tous horizons, sans distinction de statut ou de richesse. Chaque jour, des parents, des frères et des sœurs, des conjoints et des enfants voient l'un des leurs se battre contre les démons de l'addiction. C'est une lutte qui érode non seulement l'individu touché, mais aussi l'ensemble de la famille, qui doit composer avec la douleur, l'incertitude et souvent, le sentiment d'impuissance.

Cette épreuve n'est pas réservée aux personnalités publiques comme Hunter Biden ; elle est aussi présente dans les foyers anonymes des villes et des villages du monde entier. Peu importe leur position sociale, toutes ces familles partagent une expérience commune d'angoisse et de chagrin. Elles doivent affronter les complexités des soins de santé, les stigmates sociaux et les défis émotionnels, tout en essayant de maintenir une lueur d'espoir et de solidarité.

Il est essentiel de reconnaître la dimension humaine et universelle de cette bataille. Chaque famille confrontée à la dépendance mérite notre empathie et notre soutien. La compassion que nous montrons aux Bidens doit également s'étendre à toutes les familles qui luttent dans l'ombre. Ensemble, en tant que société, nous devons promouvoir un environnement de compréhension et d'aide, en soutenant ceux qui traversent ces épreuves et en encourageant les efforts de réhabilitation et de guérison.

A. Bartleby

Sameer Sharma, Investment Analyst & Financial Risk Manager

“There is a lot to do to fix the mess and the cost will be steep”

‘We either do this, get British compensation money for Chagos or/and we just devalue the currency’

Sameer Sharma, an Investment Analyst & Financial Risk Manager with a deep understanding of Mauritius’s economic dynamics, provides invaluable insights into the country’s financial strategies, challenges, and future prospects. With a keen eye for detail and a wealth of experience, Sharma sheds light on the complexities of Mauritius’s economic policies, offering critical analysis and thought-provoking perspectives on key issues such as fiscal sustainability, social equity, and the implications of global economic trends.

Mauritius Times: Minister Padayachy’s budget seems to have prioritized feel-good measures in the run-up to the next elections. The immediate beneficiaries will probably support the governing alliance for such “generosity,” but what are the medium- and long-term risks or unintended consequences associated with this emphasis on feel-good measures and freebies without clear funding sources?

Sameer Sharma: On the international front, the geopolitical landscape, as the world becomes increasingly multipolar, is becoming quite volatile. Decades of rising wealth inequality are leading to a gradual balkanization of global supply chains which will lead to lower productivity growth over time.

Major technological disruptions are beginning to impact lower value-added jobs with repeatable processes. Climate change is also becoming more costly. Mauritius also no longer has a one-sided and highly favourable double tax treaty with India, and we are losing market share in this space.

Domestically, our education system is not producing the quality of human capital we need to move to the next level. Our private and public sector firms are not dynamic enough, and we have many firms with oligopolistic positions. We are not open enough to free and fair competition, which

“Domestically, our education system is not producing the quality of human capital we need to move to the next level. Our private and public sector firms are not dynamic enough, and we have many firms with oligopolistic positions. We are not open enough to free and fair competition, which stifles innovation. Brain drain is accelerating while the population is ageing...”

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The population is becoming increasingly dependent on debt and inflation-funded public handouts as a percentage of total revenues which are self-defeating. Economic policies are inflating asset values such as land locally making the asset-rich richer and the asset poor, poorer. We have not seen the emergence of any new sectors of the economy for a while, and existing sectors are seeing more moderate growth.

‘Without meaningful reforms, we will continue to stagnate and hence rely on the inflation demon to bloat budget revenues’

Labour costs are rising faster than productivity growth. Additionally, our debt profile presents a complex landscape, encompassing not only public debt but also various other liabilities stemming from special purpose vehicles and contingent obligations related to governmental engagements with the Mauritius Investment Corporation (MIC). Moreover, there’s a pressing need for substantial recapitalization of the Bank of Mauritius, coupled with the substantial deficit in our public defined benefit plans. Total private and public debt is well above a trillion Rupees when added to contingent liabilities of government. All political parties seem to be competing for a populist race to the bottom.

Our international reserves portfolio now has a reserve adequacy metric known as the ARA metric of less than the recommended minimum of 100%. We essentially lack meaningful fiscal and external buffers to face the next external or internal shock to come. We rely a lot on inflation to deflate the real value of debt, and when the next economic shock happens - whether it comes from endogenous or exogenous sources -, we will need to quickly allow the currency to depreciate to smooth the impact of such shocks.

*** But nobody, not even the IMF, is suggesting that the government has gone**



“The IMF has essentially said that our sovereign debt risk is “elevated” and that we needed to engage in meaningful structural reforms, raise taxes and cut spending. We are instead using the inflation trick to increase revenues and reduce the real value of debt. The problem is that inflation hurts the asset poor and the lower middle class the most...”

leads to a vicious cycle of structurally high trade deficits along with an ever-weaker Rupee which then requires the consumer to borrow more money to continue to consume.

The pace of economic recovery in 2023, with real GDP merely 3% higher than its 2019 levels, places Mauritius among the slowest recovering small island economies and offshore centres within our peer group. Delving into the nuances of real GDP growth reveals an intriguing anomaly that warrants closer examination. While much discussion has centred around the inclusion of a portion of Global Business net income in GDP calculations, a less understood factor lies in the relationship between nominal GDP, the GDP deflator — a comprehensive measure of inflation — and real growth.

Importantly, nominal GDP comprises both the deflator and real growth components. Underestimating the deflator can artificially inflate the real growth figure, giving a misleading impression of economic performance. Given that a significant portion of domestic inputs in Mauritius relies heavily on imports, the rising prices of these inputs, including essential commodities like oil, due to the depreciation of the Rupee, have fuelled cost pressures. Factors such as increases in the minimum wage and rising labour costs further compound this challenge.

Analyzing the situation through the lens of an import-weighted nominal effective exchange rate reveals a depreciation rate of the Rupee substantial enough to suggest that the GDP deflator may be understated, thus inflating the reported real growth figures. To assess this, establishing a base index starting at 100 for 2019 and incrementing it annually by the deflator rate up to 2023 provides a clear picture.

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too far with its five budgets focused on feel-good measures, and that we have now reached dangerous waters. It has somehow managed to stay afloat, isn’t that correct?

We may be reading different IMF reports, but the latter has essentially said that our sovereign debt risk is “elevated” and that we needed to engage in meaningful structural reforms, raise taxes and cut spending.

We are instead using the inflation trick to increase revenues and reduce the real value of debt. The problem is that inflation hurts the asset poor and the lower middle class the most.

*** What implications, if any, does the budget have for key economic indicators such as inflation, unemployment, and GDP growth?**

Inflation as measured by both the Consumer Price Index and the GDP deflator will remain high, with the former remaining well above the 3.5% medium-term inflation target of the Bank of Mauritius, a level that is key to maintaining price stability and economic competitiveness vs. the rest of the world. This is because a debt-fuelled consumption model, which stimulates domestic demand via consumption in a country where we import most of what we consume, only

'The MIC has allowed the private sector to privatize gains while socializing losses via Rupee depreciation'

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Comparing the resulting 2023 index with the initial 2019 index yields a percentage increase over the four-year period, which should intuitively mirror the extent of Rupee depreciation against the US dollar, the currency in which most of our imports are denominated.

Despite facing significant cost pressures both internally and externally, the indices for the deflator between 2019 and 2023 appear disproportionately lower than the observed depreciation of the Rupee against the US dollar. This discrepancy raises concerns about the accuracy of reported real growth figures and underscores the importance of scrutinizing GDP calculations to ensure they accurately reflect economic realities.

Despite the severe price shocks, the GDP deflator looks understated. If the GDP deflator is a representative index of a far larger number of goods in the economy, why has it often been lower than the index for the CPI basket, which has, by definition, a downward bias? Explore this area and you will have difficulties in resolving what appears to be contradictory.

Put that question to Statistics Mauritius for the last 15 years. You will never get a satisfying response. So I do not completely buy those real GDP numbers given that I believe that the deflator is being underreported. Unemployment numbers depend on how Statistics Mauritius conducts its surveys and on how many people are what we term as discouraged workers who are not counted or when it comes to the underemployed.

*** To come back to the IMF, what do you make of its Article IV Consultation report released last May and its comments on the BOM and the MIC?**

This is perhaps the nastiest comment in the report no one is talking about. The IMF is essentially telling us that there are "potentially significant contingent liability risks to the central government from BOM's operations via MIC remain, and an independent audit of MIC's asset quality should be considered."

I have been saying the same for years. The MIC is some pretend sovereign wealth fund funded via money printing that has

"We will reconverge to this long-term potential rate of growth as from 2025, and then all those populist promises will either need to be rationalized or funded via more inflation. Unless Mauritius engages in meaningful tax and structural reforms with a supply-side bias, we will continue to stagnate and hence rely on the inflation demon to bloat budget revenues..."

inflated convertible bond and land values. It has allowed the private sector to privatize gains while socializing losses via Rupee depreciation. This notion that this is a Sovereign Wealth Fund a la GIC when the BoM essentially prints money to fund it is quite the sad joke.

One of the key priorities of the next Governor of the central bank would be to order an independent audit of MIC asset values which sit on the central bank balance sheet. International experts with no conflicts of interest and with expertise in valuing illiquid assets should be brought in and heads would need to roll. Those who got involved in make-believe debt structuring with no prior experience in the field will not be able to hide behind Board decisions and "the land valuer or auditor said so" excuses.

The Bank of Mauritius has a major asset liability problem which is why it has little credibility when it comes to the conduct of monetary policy and in defending the Rupee which has incidentally depreciated since the Budget was announced. An off-balance-sheet bankruptcy remote special purpose vehicle would need to be created, and it would purchase MIC assets at fair market value. The Government would need to fund this SPV along with banks. No more privatizing gains! The hole that will be left on the BoM balance sheet once assets are marked to market and sold will need to be plugged by Government debt too and/or depreciation over time.

This is the hard truth no one wants to hear and after we do this, we won't have that much money left for all those populist promises. A new and modern strategic asset allocation framework will need to be designed for the international reserves portfolio which has been poorly managed. New competent people with actual experience and track record in global markets should be brought in.

Fix the balance sheet, revamp the lousy way in which we have been managing international reserves, get more independence, get banks which benefited from the bailouts to also participate in fixing the central bank balance sheet problem. Impose steep levies on those who got 3.5% fixed coupon ultra-cheap convertibles until they pay back their debts as soon as possible. There is a lot to do to fix the mess and the cost will be steep. We either do this, get British compensation money for Chagos or/and we just devalue the currency. Your choice.

*** It's crucial to assess how the economy will fare in the coming years due to the policies implemented in recent times. Would you say there are compelling reasons for optimism regarding both the immediate future and the medium term?**

The Mauritian economy cannot sustain levels of growth well beyond 3.3% to 3.5%

per year based on our economic fundamentals. We will reconverge to this long-term potential rate of growth as from 2025, and then all those populist promises will either need to be rationalized or funded via more inflation. Unless Mauritius engages in meaningful tax and structural reforms with a supply-side bias, we will continue to stagnate and hence rely on the inflation demon to bloat budget revenues.

One of the objectives of the budget may be to promote social equity and inclusive growth. How effective are the proposed measures in addressing income inequality, poverty alleviation, and access to essential services for vulnerable groups?

When you run an economic model that relies so heavily on consumption, selling villas to foreigners and on inflation, the asset-rich benefit while the poor and middle class spend their time funding their own dependence via taxes on goods and services.

Yes, real income of those who are above 60 already receiving retirement pensions in addition to the successive rounds of hefty increases in old age pensions must have gone up. If both husband and wife have retired, they should be happy with their real income after adjustment with those understated inflation rates.

Of course, you can make real income go up by pumping and spending money. For how long? Government transfers for social security payments have shot up. Where did the money come from? Even the recently introduced pension fund, the CSG has been emptied. Of course, real incomes for the retired citizens may have gone up. What next? What will cause nominal income to go up and where will the money come from? BoM money printing again?

In my view GDP in real terms has not been growing at the official rate. At best, growth, if any, is marginal. That being said, asset values in an inflationary and pro-foreign villa sales environment have been going up making the asset rich richer and the asset poor poorer. That's why when you drive around towns in Mauritius, you see so much poverty and so many dilapidated buildings but notice luxury villas in gated communities elsewhere.

Remember, the private sector got the mother of all bailouts and wage assistance write-offs in a year of record profits. We really perfected the art of privatizing gains while socializing losses. Saying that this is a pro-poor macroeconomic policy stance is being economical with the truth.

*** How does our approach compare to Singapore's?**

Mauritius is no Singapore. Singapore privileges free market principles, good governance, meritocracy rather than nepotism and favouritism, and its leaders have big



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ambitions when it comes to the country's place in the world. Singapore is open to the world and does not function in its own bubble. It engages in responsible fiscal and monetary policies and has a right-sized tax regime that is well balanced. The country's private sector is dynamic and innovative rather than being one that is sometimes too rent-seeking.

It invests its savings via a real Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF), not a pretend SWF funded by money printing, to not only gain strategic clout internationally when the fund invests billions abroad but in order to grow wealth for future generations by generating high levels of risk-adjusted returns.

Singapore may have a high debt-to-GDP ratio of 174%, but its free cash flow-generating net asset position is highly positive, leading to an AAA rating from all three credit rating agencies. Singapore essentially borrows to invest and generates higher returns compared to its cost of debt.

Mauritius follows a debt-fuelled consumption model that invariably stimulates import demand, making foreign exporters richer and also leads to continuous depreciation.

Babies and Budgets: A Humorous Dialogue on Modern Governance

“More children mean more allowances. Why stop at one when you can have a whole football team?”

In the serene courtyard of ancient Athens, the philosopher Socrates and his friend Cephalus find themselves engaged in a lively discussion. The topic is as unexpected as it is humorous: the latest budget measures announced by the Mauritian government. Finance Minister Renganaden Padayachy has unveiled a series of feel-good policies, with a particular focus on encouraging families to have more children. This paradoxical turn from past policies of family planning to a new era of promoting childbirth has caught the attention of the philosophical duo. As they sip their wine and enjoy the afternoon, Socrates and Cephalus delve into the amusing and curious implications of these new measures.

By Plutonix

Setting: A sun-dappled courtyard in ancient Athens, with blooming olive trees casting gentle shadows over the marble benches. Birds chirp in the background, and a gentle breeze carries the scent of blooming flowers.

Socrates and Cephalus sit comfortably, enjoying a leisurely afternoon.

Socrates: Ah, Cephalus, my old friend! It is always a pleasure to see you. How have you been? And what news do you bring from the world of politics and policy?

Cephalus: Greetings, Socrates! I am well, thank you. I bring news from the beautiful island of Mauritius. The government has just presented its latest budget, filled with measures to spread joy and prosperity among its citizens.

Socrates: Ah, the art of governance and the quest for happiness! Pray, tell me more about these measures. What have the wise leaders of Mauritius devised for their people?

Cephalus: Well, Socrates, they have introduced a series of feel-good initiatives. They have made education completely free from pre-primary to university, increased the minimum guaranteed income, and raised pensions for the elderly. They are also providing various allowances under the Contribution Sociale Généralisée scheme to support purchasing power.

Socrates: That sounds quite commendable, Cephalus. Ensuring the well-being of citizens is the hallmark of a just society. But you mentioned something particularly interesting and humorous about encouraging families to have more children. What exactly is that about?

Cephalus: Ah, Socrates, you have a keen ear for the peculiarities of policy! The government has announced measures to

encourage families to have more children. They are increasing the household income ceiling to qualify for a Multiple Birth Allowance and raising the monthly allowance for families with twins, triplets, or more.

Socrates: Intriguing! So, while in the past, efforts were made to promote family planning, now the cry is for more offspring. How times change, do they not? But tell me, Cephalus, what is the rationale behind this newfound encouragement of procreation?

Cephalus: The rationale, Socrates, is to counter the ageing population and the decline in birth rates. An ageing population poses challenges to pension systems, and more children would ostensibly help balance the demographic scales.

Socrates: Ah, the cycle of life and the balancing act of demographics! So, it seems the Finance Minister, Padayachy, has donned the cap of a midwife, urging couples to “Go for it!” in order to secure the future. But is it not paradoxical that after years of advocating for fewer children, the call is now for more?

Cephalus: Indeed, Socrates, it is quite the paradox! It seems the pendulum of policy has swung from restraint to encouragement. The minister’s message seems almost like a cheerleader’s rallying cry, inspired perhaps by the unintended consequences of the pandemic lockdowns.

Socrates: Ah, the pandemic! A time when couples were confined not just to their homes, but also, it seems, to their bedrooms. Nature finds a way, does it not? But tell me, Cephalus, do you think the people will heed this call to procreate for the sake of pensions and demographic balance?

Cephalus: That, Socrates, is the great question. Human behaviour is influenced by many factors, and financial incentives may not be enough to spur a significant increase in birth rates. Yet, the attempt is there, and it adds a humorous twist to the serious business of governance.

Socrates: Indeed, Cephalus. It is a curi-



ous blend of economic policy and social engineering, wrapped in the language of encouragement. Let us hope that whatever the outcome, it leads to the well-being and happiness of the people. And perhaps, in the process, we might see a few more twins and triplets running around in Mauritius!

Cephalus: A delightful thought, Socrates. May the midwife minister’s efforts bear fruit, both literally and figuratively!

Socrates: Ah, Cephalus, you paint quite a vivid picture. I can almost see Minister Padayachy in a midwife’s apron, urging the citizens with a hearty, “Go forth and multiply!” How the times have changed from prudence to production!

Cephalus: Indeed, Socrates! One can imagine the minister standing in the agora, holding up a rattle and a baby bottle, proclaiming, “Citizens of Mauritius, your country needs you... and your future offspring!”

Socrates: And perhaps with a wink and a nudge, he might add, “Remember, more children mean more allowances. Why stop at one when you can have a whole football team?”

Cephalus: (laughs) Yes, Socrates, it seems the government is trying to turn every household into a small nursery. Perhaps they’ll start offering baby-making workshops next, with tips and tricks to boost productivity!

Socrates: And don’t forget the potential slogans: “A child a year keeps the pension fears at bay,” or “Make love, not just politics!” The possibilities are endless.

Cephalus: (laughs) Oh, the irony! In the

‘50s and ‘60s, the mantra was “Two is enough.” Now it’s more like, “Two is just a warm-up!” Perhaps they’ll even have contests for the most prolific families, with grand prizes for the largest litters.

Socrates: And think of the new public holidays! “National Conception Day” could be a time of celebration, with parades featuring strollers and cradles, and awards for the fastest diaper-changing parents.

Cephalus: (laughs) Imagine the streets filled with banners reading, “Do your part, grow the chart!” And the new hero of the nation might just be the one with the most kids. A new kind of heroism, indeed!

Socrates: It does make one wonder, Cephalus, if the government has considered the long-term consequences. With so many new children, perhaps they’ll need a new Ministry of Playgrounds and Prams, to manage the upcoming baby boom.

Cephalus: (chuckles) Yes and imagine the impact on the toy industry! Suddenly, toy manufacturers will be the new pillars of the economy. Tricycles and teddy bears could become the new currency!

Socrates: And schools, Cephalus! Think of the schools bursting at the seams with all these new pupils. Teachers might have to double as entertainers, to keep up with the surging youth.

Cephalus: Perhaps the government will even start offering tax breaks for babysitters and nannies. The more children, the bigger the breaks!

Socrates: A true win-win, Cephalus. And with all these initiatives, Minister Padayachy might even earn a new title: “Patron of Procreation,” celebrated for generations to come.

Cephalus: (laughs) Indeed, Socrates. History will remember him not just as a finance minister, but as the architect of the Great Mauritian Baby Boom. His legacy will be counted in giggles and diaper sales.

Socrates: So let us raise a toast, Cephalus, to this bold and humorous venture. May Mauritius thrive with the laughter of children and the prosperity of a rejuvenated population. And may Minister Padayachy’s midwifery skills be matched only by his financial acumen.

Cephalus: Hear, hear, Socrates! To a future full of life, laughter, and perhaps a bit of chaos. After all, what’s governance without a touch of humour?

Socrates: Well said, my friend. Now, shall we begin drafting our own proposal for a “Philosophers’ Guide to Parenthood”? I have a feeling it might be in high demand soon!

Cephalus: (laughs) Indeed, Socrates. Let’s get to it. After all, the future of Mauritius depends on it!

With a final clink of their wine cups, Socrates and Cephalus rise from their seats, their minds enriched by the day’s discourse. As they part ways, the gentle murmur of their conversation lingers in the air, a testament to the enduring power of philosophical inquiry and the importance of a well-timed laugh.

Budget 2024-25

L'Etat-Providence sur fond de néo-libéralisme économique



● Suite de la page 3

Le gouvernement accorde d'autres allocations sociales à partir de sa caisse générale (Consolidated Revenue Fund), qui inclut les fonds collectés par la Contribution Sociale Généralisée (CSG), une taxe sur les salaires des employés du secteur privé. Le Tableau 2 - Coût des allocations sociales (Table 2 - Cost of Social Allowances) contient une liste non-exhaustive des allocations sociales mentionnées dans le budget, lesquelles coûteront Rs 15, 3 milliards par an.

Faisant fi de la proposition du FMI à l'effet que la CSG soit réservée au paiement de la pension de retraite dans le secteur privé, le gouvernement continuera à puiser dans le fonds de la CSG pour payer diverses alloca-

tions sociales. Une somme totale de Rs 9,7 milliards sera puisée du fonds de la CSG, soit le même montant de CSG collecté en 2022-23. Donc, le fonds de la CSG n'a pas d'argent pour payer la pension de retraite dans le secteur privé.

Citant Jean Tirole, économiste français qui a reçu le Prix Nobel d'Économie en 2014, le ministre des Finances a dit que l'économie est au service du bien commun. Dans son livre «Economie du Bien Commun», Jean Tirole écrit ceci:

«L'économie est au service du bien commun; elle a pour objet de rendre le monde meilleur. A cette fin, elle a pour tâche d'identifier les instruments et les politiques qui promouvoir l'intérêt général. C'est pourquoi la

recherche du bien commun passe en grande partie par la construction d'institutions visant à concilier autant que faire se peut l'intérêt individuel et l'intérêt général.»

Pour Jean Tirole, l'économie de marché seule ne peut résoudre tous les problèmes. Il parle du droit à la santé, de l'égalité des chances devant l'éducation et des droits de l'homme, entre autres principes du bien commun.

Privatisation

A ce chapitre, Maurice recule de plus en plus. La privatisation des services publics (santé et éducation) menace l'intérêt collectif. Le nombre croissant de cliniques et d'hôpitaux privés dans le pays, dont la création est encouragée par l'État avec des plans incitatifs, font concurrence aux hôpitaux publics en attirant les patients bien nantis. Il y a une désaffection grandissante envers l'hôpital public.

La privatisation de l'éducation menace la viabilité de l'école publique. Le budget a introduit une déduction fiscale de Rs 60 000 par an par élève pour les familles admettant leurs enfants dans une école privée. Cette mesure accentuera les inégalités de classe dans l'éducation avec, d'une part, les enfants moins lotis confinés à l'école publique et, d'autre part, les enfants nantis recevant une instruction de qualité dans l'école privée. Déjà les taux d'échec aux examens de SC et de HSC sont forts dans l'école publique.

Dans sa vision du bien commun, le gouvernement n'est même pas fidèle aux principes de la social-démocratie, qui vise à établir une société égalitaire fondée sur la redistribution des richesses et des services publics financés par la fiscalité progressive, et non pas en majeure partie par la fiscalité indirecte régressive (TVA) et les taxes d'accise.

Le ministre se targue des Rs 4,9 milliards de crédits affectés aux subventions sur le riz, la farine et le gaz ménager. Or, les consommateurs paient Rs 7,20 par litre de carburant (diesel et essence) pour financer ces subventions. C'est l'argent qui est contribué par les contribuables qui leur est retourné.

Le budget donne des cadeaux aux jeunes de 18-25 ans (Internet gratuit, don de Rs 20 000 à ceux qui atteignent l'âge de 18 ans), mais n'apporte pas de réformes pour assurer le droit à l'emploi fondé sur la méritocratie dans le secteur public. Les jeunes talentueux émigrent de plus en plus pour chercher l'herbe verte ailleurs. A l'exode des cerveaux, les autorités ont trouvé une solution de facilité : encourager l'immigration de travailleurs et de cadres étrangers.

Maintenant les retraités étrangers résidant à Maurice dans les résidences IRS, PDS et RES pourront concurrencer les Mauriciens en ce qui concerne l'accès à l'emploi et à la propriété privée. Il y aura un déclassement social des Mauriciens en faveur des étrangers, ce qui est une menace à la cohésion sociale dans l'avenir.

Prakash Neerhoo

Breakfast with Bwana

The Danger of Not Heeding Warnings

● Cont. from page 4

There are ominous warnings about the use of nuclear weapons. As Iran is seemingly days away from having a nuclear bomb, its Supreme Leader still speaks of the annihilation of Israel. Kim Jong Un talks about using his nuclear arsenal against South Korea, Japan and the US. Putin and his cronies repeatedly threaten to use nuclear weapons against Ukraine or even a NATO country. The world appears not to take these warnings seriously because they sound so crazy.

But then the world did not take warnings about Trump seriously because he sounded crazy. He still does. And the world pays little heed. Because he is crazy. It is dangerous to ignore warnings about people who are crazy.

We take little heed of the destruction of habitats for animals and wildlife, or the disappearance of species. We take little heed of the need to deal with weather events that lead to floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, cyclones, and wildfires. Regardless of the cause of these, the world is ill-prepared in its mitigation and adaptation efforts. For too long, we have ignored warnings.

We take little heed of the threat of another pandemic. True, the world is engaged in a deep examination of mistakes and missteps made in the handling of the last pandemic.

There will be another. Will we be prepared? Have we heeded the warnings that scientists tell us are staring us in the face?

Are we even prepared to answer such questions honestly? No, we have just been warned again. And again, and again, and again ...

When we start treating warnings as just another fact, or another item of "Breaking News!!" the warnings elide into humdrum.

Cheerz...
Bwana

Table 2: Cost of Social Allowances

	Beneficiaries	Number	Amount Rs	Total Rs Monthly	Total Rs for 12 Months
CSG Income Allowance					
<Rs 20,000	Individual	110,000	3,000	330,000,000	3,960,000,000
<Rs 25,000	Individual	55,000	2,500	137,500,000	1,650,000,000
<Rs 30,000	Individual	50,000	2,000	100,000,000	1,200,000,000
<Rs 50,000	Individual	105,000	1,500	157,500,000	1,890,000,000
Subtotal A		320,000		725,000,000	8,700,000,000
School Allowance 3-10 yrs	Families	80,000	2,500	200,000,000	2,400,000,000
Free Internet Access 18-25 yrs	Individual	100,000	500	50,000,000	600,000,000
CSG Child Allowance 0-3 yrs	Families	36,000	2,500	90,000,000	1,080,000,000
Disability Allowance < 18 yrs	Individual	5,000	3,000	15,000,000	180,000,000
Maternity Allowance 9 Months	Individual	12,000	2,000	24,000,000	216,000,000
Equal Opportunity Allowance	Families	50,000	2,000	100,000,000	1,200,000,000
Employment premium for women unemployed or working part-time	Individual	6,000	7,500	45,000,000	540,000,000
Subsistence allowance for poor families	Families	20,000	1,500	30,000,000	360,000,000
Subtotal B				554,000,000	6,576,000,000
Total A + B				1,279,000,000	15,276,000,000

Record 120 million people forcibly displaced by war, violence globally: UN



At the end of last year, 117.3 million people were displaced.
Pic - Bangladesh Sangbad Sangtha

A staggering total of 120 million people are living forcibly displaced by war, violence and persecution, the UN said Thursday, branding the ever-increasing number a "terrible indictment on the state of the world".

The United Nations' refugee agency UNHCR said forced displacement globally had once again smashed records, with conflicts in places like Gaza, Sudan and Myanmar forcing even more people to flee their homes.

The global displaced population is now equivalent to that of Japan, reports AFP.

At the end of last year, 117.3 million people were displaced, UNHCR said in a report.

And by the end of April, the number had swelled further, with an estimated 120 million people around the

world living in displacement.

The number is up from 110 million a year ago, and has been rising for 12 consecutive years -- nearly tripling since 2012 amid a combination of new and mutating crises and a failure to resolve long-standing ones, UNHCR said.

UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi said he had been shocked at the high displacement figure when he took the job eight years ago.

Since then it has "more than doubled", he said, describing this as "a terrible indictment on the state of the world".

Figures will keep rising

Grandi pointed to a palpable increase in crises, and also highlighted how climate change is impacting population movement and driving conflicts.

UNHCR last year declared 43 emergencies across 29 countries -- more than four times what was common just a few years ago, he told reporters.

In particular, Grandi noted "the way conflicts are conducted ... in complete disregard" of international law, and "often with the specific purpose of terrorising people".

Grandi acknowledged there currently seemed to be little hope of bucking the trend.

"Unless there is a shift in international geopolitics, unfortunately, I actually see the figure continuing to go up," he said.

Of the 117.3 million displaced at the end of 2023, 68.3 million people were internally displaced within their own country, Thursday's report showed.

'Human tragedies'

Sudan's civil war has been a key factor driving up the numbers.

Since the war broke out in April 2023 between rival generals, it has displaced more than nine million more people, leaving nearly 11 million Sudanese uprooted at the end of 2023, UNHCR said. The numbers were still rising.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo and Myanmar, millions more people were also internally displaced last year by vicious fighting.

And in the Gaza Strip, the UN estimates 1.7 million people -- 75 percent of the population -- have been displaced by the war sparked eight months ago by Hamas's October 7 attack inside Israel.

As for the war raging in Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, the UN estimated that around 750,000 people became newly displaced inside the country last year, with a total of 3.7 million internally displaced people registered by the end of 2023.

Syria remains the world's largest displacement crisis, with 13.8 million people forcibly displaced inside and outside the country, UNHCR said.

Aliens might be living among us disguised as humans, Harvard study claims

A new Harvard study claims that aliens might be living among us on Earth disguised as humans. The paper, "The cryptoterrestrial hypothesis: A case for scientific openness to a concealed earthly explanation for Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena," explores various theories about these extraterrestrial beings. The study by Harvard University's Human Flourishing program also states that UFOs and UAPs are spaceships that visit Earth, reports Hindustan Times.

Do aliens live among us? Here's what new Harvard study says

The study brings forward the idea that "UAP may involve forms of non-human intelligence (NHI) that are already present in Earth's environment in some sense, existing alongside us in distinct stealth," per NY Post. It pushes four theories on aliens:

1. Human Cryptoterrestrials - A technologically advanced ancient human civilization that was destroyed long ago by disasters like floods but continued to persist in a remnant form.

2. Hominid/Theropod Cryptoterrestrials - The descendants of ape-like hominids or "unknown, intelligent dinosaurs" that were part of a technologically advanced non-human civilisation, consisting of a terrestrial animal that evolved to live in stealth.

3. Former extraterrestrial/extratemporal cryptoterrestrials - The Harvard study



New Harvard study claims that aliens could be living among us disguised as humans. Pic - Amar Ujala

notes that such beings may have arrived on Earth from space or from the human future, respectively. It adds that they concealed themselves in stealth, most likely the Moon.

4. Magical Cryptoterrestrials - According to the research paper, "magical cryptoterrestrials" or the CTH 4 are entities best described as "earthbound angels." Their examples include fairies, elves, or nymphs.

5. The paper reads, "The author became increasingly aware of the depth of evidence and theory that also tentatively supports another ultraterrestrial explanation: the "cryptoterrestrial" hypothesis (CTH) -- our focus here -- which holds that UAP may reflect activities of NHIs concealed here on Earth (e.g., underground) and its environs."

Kuwait fire that killed 42 Indians triggers crackdown by authorities

The devastating blaze in Kuwait that killed 49 people, mostly Indian workers, is being described as the worst building fire in the country's history and has triggered a crackdown on housing violations by the local government.

At least 42 Indians were among those who died on Wednesday when the fire engulfed a seven-storey building at Mangaf in southern Kuwait that housed foreign workers. Kuwait's health minister Ahmad Al-Awadhi said 56 injured people were taken to local hospitals.

The incident was the worst building fire in Kuwait's history and triggered calls for action against landlords and company owners who "violate the law to house large numbers of foreign laborers in extremely unsafe conditions to cut costs", reports Hindustan Times.

Kuwait's first deputy prime minister and interior minister, Sheikh Fahad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah, said authorities will begin inspecting apartment buildings from Thursday and crack down on all violations without warning. The owner of the building where the fire occurred will be kept in custody till an investigation is completed, he said.

Al-Sabah said Kuwait's Public Authority of Manpower will examine the issue of overcrowding of expatriate workers in buildings and the failure to comply with safety conditions.

The building had been rented by NBTC group, an engineering and con-

struction firm partially owned by an Indian national, to house more than 195 workers, most of them Indians from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and northern states. Most of the dead and injured were from Kerala, local reports said.

The fire erupted just after 4 am when most of the residents of the building were asleep. It resulted in thick clouds of smoke that suffocated most of the victims, Kuwait Times reported, quoting officials from the country's interior ministry and fire department.

There has been no official word on the cause of the fire, though some sections of the local media reported it could have been caused by a gas leak in the building's ground floor.

The head of investigations at Kuwait's fire department, Col Sayed Al-Mousawi, said the team probing the fire had found an inflammable material was used as partitions between apartments and between rooms, and this caused the black clouds of smoke. Many of the victims suffocated while trying to run down stairwells filled with smoke, and people couldn't go to the rooftop because the door was locked, he said.

The blaze was the second largest fire disaster in Kuwait in terms of the death toll. In August 2009, a woman, angry over her husband getting married for the second time, had set a wedding tent on fire, killing 56 women and children.

* Contd on page 13



Gaza's Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar says Palestinian civilians' deaths are 'necessary sacrifices'. Pic – New York Post

Gaza's Hamas leader says Palestinian civilians' deaths are 'necessary sacrifices'

A top Hamas official in Gaza has admitted that he thinks the deaths of Palestinian civilians are "necessary sacrifices" to keep its war against Israel going. The remarks, made by Yahya Sinwar who helped mastermind the October 7 attack, were made in disturbing messages that have been leaked.

Sinwar boasted about his efforts to stall ceasefire talks. "We have the Israelis right where we want them," he said in a message to Hamas officials meeting with Qatari and Egyptian negotiators.

Sinwar appeared cold in the dozens of messages reviewed by the Wall Street Journal. Some of the messages were addressed to Hamas' top political leader, Ismail Haniyeh, whose three sons were killed on April 10 in an Israeli airstrike, reports Hindustan Times.

Sinwar told Haniyeh that the deaths of his sons, along with other Palestinians' deaths in Gaza, would only "infuse life into the veins of this nation, prompting it to rise to its glory and honour."

'That should not have happened'

The IDF arrested Sinwar in 1988, but released him in 2011 in a hostage exchange. His letters, sent to Hamas officials and negotiators, revealed that even he was shocked by the brutality the terrorists unleashed on October 7.

"Things went out of control," Sinwar said in a message talking about women and children being kidnapped. "People got caught up in this, and that should not have happened."

From the messages, it appeared as though Sinwar wishes to make the war last as long as possible. He condemned his superiors' talks to seek an agreement with Israel.

"As long as fighters are still standing and we have not lost the war, such contacts should be immediately terminated," he said. "We have the capabilities to continue fighting for months."

Top US economist predicts stock market crash worse than 2008 recession, 'This is over'

"I think we're going to see the S&P go down 86% from the top, and the Nasdaq 92%," American economist Harry Dent said. Economist Harry Dent warns there will be a stock market crash "bigger" than the Great Recession in the near future, reports Hindustan Times.

In an interview with Fox News, the 71-year-old financial author cautioned that there is a calm before the storm as stocks ended the month of May with gains. Dent asserted that the "everything" bubble hasn't burst as of yet, and when it does, it would be the "crash of a lifetime."

Harry Dent warns of a 'bigger' stock market crash

Dent, who is the founder of HS Dent Investment Management, is a renowned economist known for being outspoken about his views on the US economy. His 2009 book, 'The Great Depression Ahead', appeared on the New York Times Bestseller List.

During Tuesday's interview, Dent said, "In 1925 to '29, it was a natural bubble. There was no stimulus behind that, artificial stimulus per se.



A expert economist has warned that the US could be on the verge of another financial collapse. Pic - Getty

So this is new. This has never happened," recalling brutal market crashes of the past.

He continued, "What do you do if you want to cure a hangover? You drink more. And that's what they've been doing," adding, "Flooding the economy with extra money forever might actually enhance the overall economy long-term. But we'll only see when we see this bubble burst."

"And again, this bubble has been going 14 years. Instead of most bubbles [going] five to six, it's been

stretched higher, longer. So you'd have to expect a bigger crash than we got in 2008 to '09," Dent further told the outlet.

In light of the recent gains of top-performing stocks like Nvidia, Dent stressed that the situation will not be the same for long. "I think we're going to see the S&P go down 86% from the top, and the Nasdaq 92%. A hero stock like Nvidia, as good as it is, and it is a great company, [goes] down 98%. Boy, this is over," he said.

British judges' resignations spotlight Hong Kong rule of law

Two senior British judges recently resigned from Hong Kong's top appeals court as international concerns mounted over the rule of law in the city. This follows the convictions of 14 prominent democratic activists amid a national security crackdown.

"Hong Kong, once a vibrant and politically diverse community, is slowly becoming a totalitarian state. The rule of law is profoundly compromised in any area about which the government feels strongly," wrote one of the judges, Jonathan Sumption, in an editorial in the Financial Times on June 10.

Another judge on the court, Beverley McLachlin, announced on Monday that she would step down when her three-year term expires on July 29, according to Reuters.

Why are the resignations significant?

Hong Kong has traditionally relied on a deep pool of legal professionals across its courts, commerce, and academia. Since 1997, foreign judges have been appointed to sit on the five-person Court of Final Appeal for certain cases. They have been described as a "canary in the coalmine," providing confidence in Hong Kong's judiciary as an independent entity free from outside interference since the city's return to Chinese rule in 1997.

These foreign judges help maintain Hong Kong's ties to British common law traditions. However, critics, including the U.S. government, argue that these traditions are under threat following the imposition of a sweeping national security law in 2020 and additional

security legislation in March this year.

A roster of local judges, designated by Hong Kong's pro-Beijing leader to hear specific national security cases, has delivered jail terms to scores of opposition figures for various offenses, including rioting, unauthorized assembly, and most recently, conspiracy to commit subversion. The International Bar Association said the latest national security legislation, known as Article 23, "significantly enables further crackdowns on human rights in Hong Kong."

The Hong Kong and Chinese governments have repeatedly stated that the city's judiciary remains independent and that the laws are necessary to ensure stability.

Could the resignations spark others to leave?

It is unclear if these resignations will lead to others. Retired judges say jurists discuss the broader environment among themselves but rarely publicly or with outsiders. "As a judge, one is schooled in how to stay totally above the fray," one retired senior judge told Reuters. "If anyone can keep the pressures from bothering them, an old judge certainly can. I'm not surprised many have stayed this long."

International pressure on those who remain is likely to continue, especially as more high-profile national security cases progress, with some defendants, like media tycoon Jimmy Lai, facing possible life imprisonment. When asked about Western criticism, Hong Kong's top judge Andrew Cheung said in January he was confident he would still be able to recruit leading foreign judges. He later noted that they had "played a significant role" in the courts in some of the most substantive appeals heard. However, foreign judges have not been involved so far in the most high-profile national security cases.

• Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. — Ralph Waldo Emerson



B. Ramlallah

Sweden, Land of Prosperity

On October 20th, the Uritsky set sail from Copenhagen to Stockholm. After twenty-four hours of travel towards the North Pole in the Baltic Sea, it came across a few islets. These islets were nothing less than huge blocks of oval grey and white granite. Then, other islets, bigger than the previous ones, appeared. They were covered with green Soothfir trees interspersed with yellow-leaved birch trees. A few red-roofed bungalows were perched on them.

Just then, the port pilot mounted on board. I thought that in a few minutes we would reach the port. But to my amazement and delight, the ship kept on gliding and steering cautiously at half speed between scores of islets for three hours in the bay of Stockholm. The water was dark green and as calm as a lake. We rushed to the top deck and from there had a full view of the islets around us. Though the sun was not shining, the sight was marvellous. The yellow leaves of the birch trees mingled with the green leaves of the fir trees, superimposed by red-roofed bungalows, all on brown and white granite, presenting a most wonderful, unforgettable sight.

On the left side of the quay of Stockholm stands a huge granite rampart about 100 feet high and a quarter of a mile long. It is evenly cut throughout its length, and from place to place, tunnels have been dug into the rocks. At Stockholm, I was received by Rector Richard Hakansson, the Director of the Swedish Agricultural Information Office. He was recommended to me by the Swedish Embassy in London. We had a long talk on Swedish agriculture and the fishing industry of Sweden. He gave me some pamphlets dealing with these subjects.

* * *

Sweden, the largest of the Scandinavian states, presents a variety of landscapes. Its wide forests, expansive views, and thousands of lakes make it a tourist's paradise. It enjoys a relatively temperate climate due to the warm Gulf Stream that washes its western coast.

Sweden has a bicameral parliamentary system. The executive power is vested in the King-in-Council. The king is bound to accept the advice of his ministers chosen from the majority group. The highest judiciary power is vested in the King's Supreme Court, and the legislative authority is shared between the King and Parliament. Parliament is all-powerful in the sphere of public finance.

Sweden has witnessed a series of varied post-war developments and experiments, including social security, old-age pensions, children's allowances, and national health insurance. Workers are entitled to a three-week vacation every year, stipulated by law, and work 45 hours per week. Nine years of comprehensive schooling are being gradually introduced, and English is a compulsory subject in secondary schools.

The coalition government formed by the Social Democrats with the Agrarian Party broke up in 1947 over a disagreement on retirement pensions. The government had proposed a national retirement pension, with contributions to be paid by the employers. The motion was defeated due to the walk-out of the Agrarian Party from the government. But the Social Democrats, who had rein-

forced their majority, are confident to get the bill through this year. Large-scale social reforms have generally received the backing of all parties.

The government is committed to the creation of larger farms in the interest of greater efficiency. Since 1814, Sweden has not been at war with any country. She has at the same time stuck to her nonalignment policy. She is one of the few countries of Western Europe which is not a member of NATO. But to protect her independence and democratic institutions, a strong defence force is maintained. Because of her strict non-alignment policy, she is chosen from time to time for mediation assignments, as in the case of the Korean conflict. Mr Dag Hammarskjold's election to the post of Secretary-General of the UN is a tribute to the respect which Sweden commands at the UNO.

To prevent the economic division of Western Europe, Sweden is strongly committed to the creation of a European free trade area. Although Sweden, Denmark, and Norway differ in their policies, they work closely together in the economic, social, and cultural spheres.

The Swedish judicial system has been recently revised. The jury, in the Anglo-American sense, is only resorted to in press libel suits. In ordinary trials, a panel of elected laymen is used instead. Judges in the lower courts are assisted by panels of 7-9 laymen, popularly elected for long periods. Contrary to Anglo-American practice, the Swedish panel also has a voice in deciding the punishment. The judge may be overruled by seven members of this group.

Cases dealing with questions of administration and administrative law are eventually referred to a supreme administrative court. Three supreme court justices and one member of the supreme administrative court constitute the law council, which examines most bills before they are presented to parliament. The highest prosecuting authority is the state prosecutor, while the Attorney General, as the chief law supervisor, oversees the observance of the law and maintains a check on all officers. Both are appointed by the government. The 1000 members of the Bar Association may style themselves advocates or attorneys. There is no segregation of lawyers into barristers and solicitors. An accused who cannot afford the services of a lawyer can get legal help free of charge.

There is no death penalty in Sweden. There are 38 walled penal institutions and 43 open ones. The inmates of the open institutions often live in camps. They are engaged in farming, lumbering, road construction, and are paid for their work.

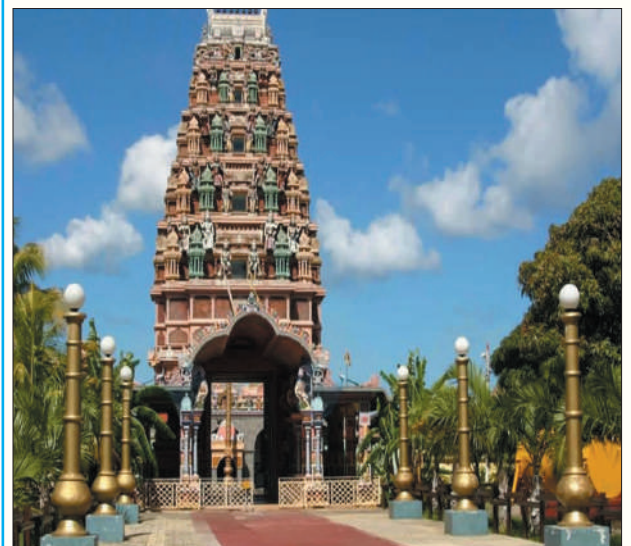
The Swedes were converted to Christianity in the ninth century. Almost all belong to the Lutheran church, which is financed from its own funds and taxes. Roman Catholics number about 30,000. By law, Lutheranism must be the faith of the King. As of this year, women will be admitted to Holy orders. Various church organizations provide care to Swedish sailors in many ports of the world. Widespread missionary work is carried on by the church. In 1954, about 1,500 Swedish missionaries were serving in Africa and India.

• Government must always be a step ahead of the popular movement. — Count Von Arnim

Sokalingum Meenatchee

Ammen Temple: A Historical Landmark

On Monday, the Maha Kumbabishegam (consecration ceremony) of the renovated Sokalingum Meenatchee Ammen Temple on Nicolay Road, Port Louis, took place amidst a large gathering. One might wonder why an age-old temple, existing for over a century, is being consecrated now. The answer is straightforward: timely and costly repairs were necessary to prevent the temple from falling into ruins. How much did these repairs cost? Thousands of rupees, we are informed. And why invest thousands in this old temple? Delving into its history reveals that the Sokalingum Meenatchee Ammen Temple of Port Louis is one of the oldest historical edifices on the island.



True to the grand traditions of Indian art, the temple's builders left no trace for us to ascertain who constructed it and when. Not a single inscription adorns its walls. True artists and craftsmen eschew self-promotion; they seek to perpetuate the glory of God, not their own fame. However, fragmentary oral accounts suggest that the temple was erected in the early 1840s by South Indian sailors who arrived in Mauritius. It is believed that Indian architects conceived the entire temple complex, which was then crafted by Indian artisans.

The anonymous creators of the Sokalingum Meenatchee Ammen Temple stipulated, in keeping with ancient Hindu traditions, that the temple be situated beside a river. Hence, it was built near the Riviere des Lataniers. Though the river now runs almost dry, the temple remains—a silent witness to the eternal flow of history.

An intriguing aspect of this temple is the presence of a Buddha statue within its compound. It's noteworthy that over 2400 years after his passing, his statue was erected for the first time in Mauritius. This isn't the only nod to Buddhism: opposite the temple's entrance stands an Arasa Maram tree, a specimen of the Maha Bodhi Tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment in Gaya, Bihar.

This is a subject that should pique the interest of all students of Mauritian history.

Indian election was awash in deepfakes – but AI was a net positive for democracy

● Cont. from page 2

Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) workers like Shakti Singh Rathore have been frequenting AI startups to send personalized videos to specific voters about the government benefits they received and asking for their vote over WhatsApp.

Multilingual boost

Deepfakes were not the only manifestation of AI in the Indian elections. Long before the election began, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a tightly packed crowd celebrating links between the state of Tamil Nadu in the south of India and the city of Varanasi in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. Instructing his audience to put on earphones, Modi proudly announced the launch of his “new AI technology” as his Hindi speech was translated to Tamil in real time.

In a country with 22 official languages and almost 780 unofficial recorded languages, the BJP adopted AI tools to make Modi’s personality accessible to voters in regions where Hindi is not easily understood. Since 2022, Modi and his BJP have been using the AI-powered tool Bhashini, embedded in the NaMo mobile app, to translate Modi’s speeches with voiceovers in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Odia, Bengali, Marathi and Punjabi.

As part of their demos, some AI companies circulated their own viral versions of Modi’s famous monthly radio show “Mann Ki Baat,” which loosely translates to “From the Heart,” which they voice cloned to regional languages.

Adversarial uses

Indian political parties doubled down on online trolling, using AI to augment their ongoing meme wars. Early in the election season, the Indian National Congress released a short clip to its 6 million followers on Instagram, taking the title track from a new Hindi music album named “Chor” (thief). The video grafted Modi’s digital likeness onto the lead singer and cloned his voice with reworked lyrics critiquing his close ties to Indian business tycoons.

The BJP retaliated with its own video, on its 7-million-follower Instagram account, featuring a supercut of Modi campaigning on the streets, mixed with clips of his supporters but set to unique music. It was an old patriotic Hindi song sung by famous singer Mahendra Kapoor, who passed away in 2008 but was resurrected with AI voice cloning.

Modi himself quote-tweeted an AI-created video of him dancing – a common meme that alters footage of rapper Lil Yachty on stage – commenting “such creativity in peak poll season is truly a delight.”

In some cases, the violent rhetoric in Modi’s campaign that put Muslims at risk and incited violence was conveyed using



Pic - Economic Times

generative AI tools, but the harm can be traced back to the hateful rhetoric itself and not necessarily the AI tools used to spread it.

The Indian experience

India is an early adopter, and the country’s experiments with AI serve as an illustration of what the rest of the world can expect in future elections. The technology’s ability to produce nonconsensual deepfakes of anyone can make it harder to tell truth from fiction, but its consensual uses are likely to make democracy more accessible.

The Indian election’s embrace of AI that began with entertainment, political meme wars, emotional appeals to people, resurrected politicians and persuasion through personalized phone calls to voters has opened a pathway for the role of AI in participatory democracy.

The surprise outcome of the election, with the BJP’s failure to win its predicted parliamentary majority, and India’s return to

a deeply competitive political system especially highlights the possibility for AI to have a positive role in deliberative democracy and representative governance.

Lessons for the world’s democracies

It’s a goal of any political party or candi-

date in a democracy to have more targeted touch points with their constituents. The Indian elections have shown a unique attempt at using AI for more individualized communication across linguistically and ethnically diverse constituencies, and making their messages more accessible, especially to rural, low-income populations.

AI and the future of participatory democracy could make constituent communication not just personalized but also a dialogue, so voters can share their demands and experiences directly with their representatives – at speed and scale.

India can be an example of taking its recent fluency in AI-assisted party-to-people communications and moving it beyond politics. The government is already using these platforms to provide government services to citizens in their native languages.

If used safely and ethically, this technology could be an opportunity for a new era in representative governance, especially for the needs and experiences of people in rural areas to reach Parliament.

Vandinika Shukla - Fellow, Practicing Democracy Project, Harvard Kennedy School & **Bruce Schneier** - Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School

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Michael Hornberger
Prof of Applied Dementia
Research, University of
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Is it really possible to have Alzheimer's yet no symptoms?

A special group of people appear to have genes that protect them from the worst effects of Alzheimer's disease

Some people seem to be more resilient to developing Alzheimer's diseases, despite having the biological hallmarks of the devastating disease. For obvious reasons, scientists are very interested in studying this special group of people.

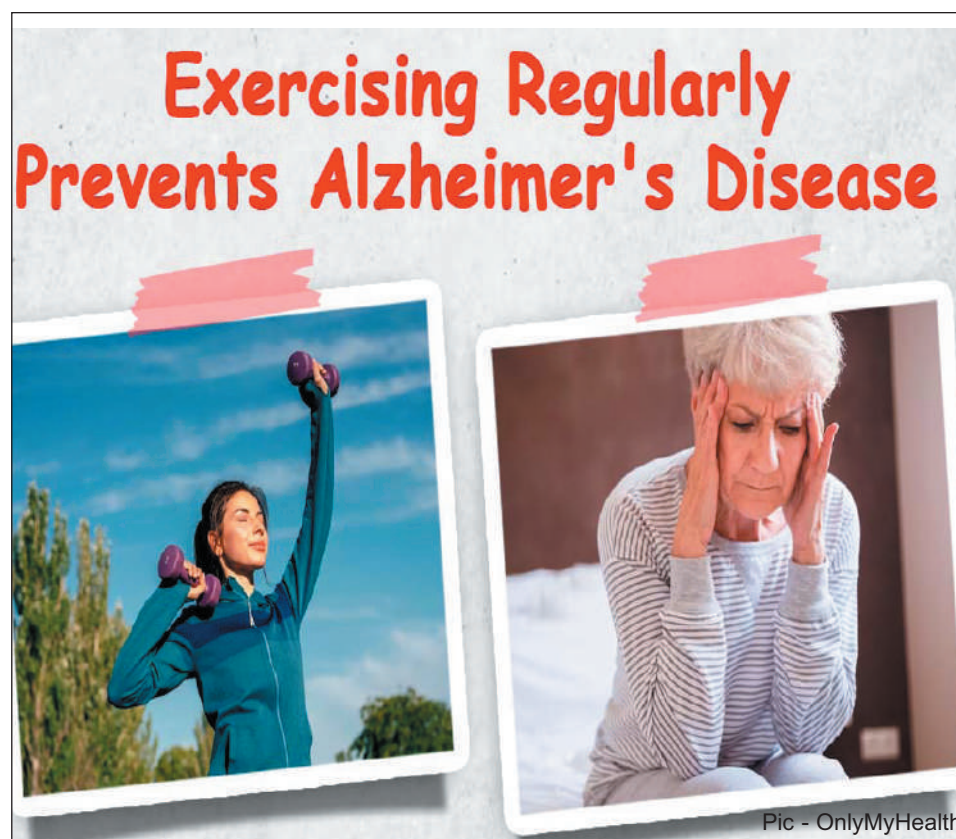
Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia, is thought to start because of a build-up of two proteins in the brain: amyloid and tau. Once these proteins accumulate, for yet-to-be-determined reasons, they become toxic to brain cells (neurons) and these cells start dying. As a result, people develop symptoms such as memory loss because the brain can't function properly with all these dead neurons.

This cascade of events has been known for many years and is how the disease progresses in most people with Alzheimer's. Most people, except a special group who are more resilient. But why are they resilient?

How resilient we are against Alzheimer's?

A recent study in the journal *Acta Neuropathologica Communications* investigated whether our genes might influence how resilient we are against Alzheimer's disease symptoms when there are high levels of amyloid in our brain.

The scientists conducted a study on



the brains of three groups of people. The first group comprised people who had died with Alzheimer's disease. The second were healthy people who died of natural causes. And the third comprised people who had high levels of Alzheimer's proteins in the brain but never developed symptoms of the disease during their lifetime – or at least never had a diagnosis of

Alzheimer's disease.

The last group, they considered as being resilient to Alzheimer's disease since they had the proteins in their brains but did not have the symptoms or a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease during their lifetime.

The scientists found that genes relat-

ed to the activity of the immune system seem to have been more active in the Alzheimer's resilient group. This would make sense as it is well established that the immune system helps clear the excess proteins from the brain, so genes that help this process might make us more resilient to developing symptoms of the disease.

How to become resilient – even if you don't have the genes

This is great if you have inherited these genes from your parents, but what does it mean for the rest of us who do not have those genes? Is there a way we can make ourselves more resilient to developing Alzheimer's disease regardless of our genes?

"Yes" is the short answer.

There is now good scientific evidence that lifestyle changes and drugs allow us to reduce our risk of developing Alzheimer's disease in the future.

In particular, physical activity has been shown to reduce our risk of developing Alzheimer's, probably because it has a well-known beneficial effect on our immune system and hence helps clear those rogue proteins accumulating in our brains. This means that being more physically active might have the same effect on our Alzheimer's resilience as those lucky people who have the "right" genes.

Interestingly, we do not know how physically active the resilient people in the study were and how this might have influenced their resilience to Alzheimer's disease.

As so often in science, it is not clear whether nature (genes) or nurture (lifestyle) contributed to their resilience. The other interesting aspect is that the resilient people in the study died of another cause than Alzheimer's disease, but they might have developed Alzheimer's disease eventually if they had lived longer.

YOUR STARS

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

Whether it's a spontaneous trip or exploring new philosophies, your zest for life is contagious. Professional opportunities might arise from unexpected places, so stay open-minded. Towards the weekend, take some time to connect with family and friends to share your experiences and joy.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 11, 17, 23, 30, 36

CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Strategic planning and disciplined efforts will bring you closer to your ambitions. Financial stability is within reach but avoid impulsive investments. Mid-week might test your patience, but perseverance and a calm approach will see you through.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 10, 15, 21, 29, 36

AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

You'll be bursting with new ideas and the drive to implement them. Collaboration with like-minded individuals can amplify your success. However, ensure you don't

neglect personal relationships; make time to reconnect with loved ones and nurture those bonds.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 13, 19, 26, 31

PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

Pisces, this week encourages you to focus on inner peace and mental health. Professional life may be hectic, but maintaining a calm demeanour will help navigate through it. Artistic pursuits or spiritual activities will provide a much-needed escape and rejuvenation.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 11, 18, 20, 24, 33

ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

This week, Aries, your energy is through the roof, and you'll find yourself eager to start new projects. Harness this momentum to tackle long-standing goals. However, be cautious of potential conflicts in your personal life around mid-week. Practicing patience and clear communication will help navigate through any turbulence.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 12, 18, 22, 29, 36

TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

Taurus, this week is all about balancing work and relaxation. You might feel a bit overwhelmed by your responsibilities but remember to take breaks and indulge in self-care. Financial matters come to the forefront; be

prudent with your spending and consider budgeting.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 9, 14, 21, 27, 35

GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Your intellectual side is highlighted, making it a great time for learning and exploring new interests. Social interactions are particularly fruitful, bringing new connections and opportunities. Just be wary of spreading yourself too thin; prioritize tasks to stay efficient and avoid burnout.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 11, 16, 23, 28, 37

CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22

Spend some time reflecting on your goals and relationships. Mid-week, you may encounter a situation that requires emotional resilience. Trust your intuition and don't hesitate to lean on loved ones for support. By the weekend, you'll feel more grounded and ready to move forward.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 13, 19, 25, 30, 3

LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22

Leo, your charisma is at an all-time high, making this an excellent week for networking and social events. Your natural leadership skills will shine, drawing people to your ideas and projects. Teamwork will bring you closer to your goals and help strengthen professional relationships.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 8, 15, 20, 26, 33

VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22

Your attention to detail will be crucial in managing both personal and professional tasks. Mid-week might bring some unexpected changes; stay flexible and adaptable. Health-wise, focus on routines that promote well-being, like balanced nutrition and regular exercise.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 10, 17, 24, 31, 38

LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22

Libra, partnerships are key this week. Whether in business or personal life, collaboration will lead to success. You may face some conflicts early in the week, but your diplomatic nature will help in resolving them. Use the latter half of the week to focus on creative projects or hobbies that bring you joy and satisfaction.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 12, 18, 21, 27, 32

SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV

This week, Scorpio, you'll delve deep into your passions and ambitions. Your determination will help overcome obstacles but remember to maintain balance and not overexert yourself. Relationships may demand extra attention, especially around mid-week. Open communication will be essential in maintaining harmony.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 22, 29, 34

Talking politics with strangers isn't as awful as you'd expect

Initiating political discussions with strangers often evokes trepidation, as many fear the dialogue may descend into acrimony or discomfort. However, recent research suggests that engaging in these conversations is more rewarding than anticipated.

In a series of experiments involving hundreds of U.S. adults, a team of scientists discovered that individuals tend to underestimate the potential for social connection when conversing with strangers who hold opposing viewpoints. The findings, published in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science, shed light on the dynamics of political discourse.

According to behavioral scientists Kristina A. Wald (University of Pennsylvania), Michael Kardas (Oklahoma State University), and Nicholas Epley (University of Chicago), these underestimated expectations may contribute to the perception of extreme views among those on the opposite end of the political spectrum. Fear of negative interactions, they argue, not only hampers interpersonal connections but also impedes opportunities for mutual understanding and learning.

The researchers conducted experiments both online and in person, revealing a prevalent tendency among people to



shy away from contentious topics, especially when engaging with dissenting opinions. Participants often advised friends and family to steer clear of such discussions as well.

Contrary to these apprehensions, Wald, Kardas, and Epley hypothesized that discussions about political differences would yield more positive outcomes than anticipated. They believed that individuals fail to recognize the enlightening nature of dialogue and its capacity to foster closeness.

To test their theory, the researchers paired nearly 200 participants to discuss divisive topics, such as abortion and climate change. Some participants were informed in advance of their partner's agreement or disagreement on

the topic, while others entered the conversation unaware of their partner's stance. Despite initial expectations, participants consistently reported more positive experiences than predicted, even in cases of disagreement.

In a subsequent experiment, the researchers explored the impact of conversational format on participants' perceptions. They observed that engaging in dialogue, as opposed to passive monologues, significantly enhanced the positive outcomes of the interaction. The back-and-forth exchange of ideas, they noted, played a crucial role in fostering connection and understanding.

While the experiments focused on interactions with strangers, the researchers emphasized the broader implications for interpersonal communication. They underscored the importance of engaging in meaningful conversations, particularly in an era dominated by online debates and social media diatribes.

By challenging the notion that discussing differences inevitably leads to discord, the authors advocate for open dialogue as a means of promoting social cohesion and intellectual exchange. Ultimately, they suggest that our reluctance to engage in constructive discourse deprives us of valuable opportunities for connection and growth.



How do you build tunnels and bridges underwater? A geotechnical engineer explains the construction tricks

Underwater construction is a complex and difficult task, but engineers have developed several ways to build underwater ... mostly by not building underwater at all.

Several decades later, I'm a geotechnical engineer. That means that I work on any construction projects that involve soil. Now I know the real answers to things people wonder about infrastructure. Oftentimes, like Calvin's dad, they're thinking about things from the wrong direction. Engineers don't typically determine the load limit on a bridge; instead, they build the bridge to carry the load they're expecting.

It's the same with another question I hear from time to time: How do engineers build things underwater? They actually don't typically build things underwater – instead they build things that then end up underwater. Here's what I mean.

Building underground, beneath the water

Sometimes when you're building underwater, you're really building underground. It's not about the water you see at the surface but rather what surrounds the actual structure you're building.

If there's rock or soil all around what you're constructing, that's typically thought of as underground construction – even if there's a layer of water above it and that's all you see from above.

Underground construction usually uses powerful tunnel-boring machines to excavate soil directly. This machine is often called a mole for a reason. Like the animal, it creates a tunnel similar to a burrow by excavating horizontally through the ground, removing the excavated material out behind it. Done with care, this method can successfully build a tunnel through the ground beneath a body of water that can then be lined and reinforced.

Engineers used this method to build the Chunnel, for instance, a railway tunnel beneath the English Channel that connects England and France.



No sign so far of an alien civilization nearby. janiecbros/E+ via Getty Images

While modern machinery is quite advanced, this method of construction started about 200 years ago with the tunneling shield. Initially, these were temporary support structures that provided a safe space from which workers could excavate. New temporary structures were built deeper and deeper as the tunnel grew. As the designs improved with experience, the shields were built to be mobile and eventually evolved into the modern tunnel-boring machine.

Building on dry land before moving into place

Some structures will ultimately be surrounded by water, resting on a riverbed or ocean floor. Luckily, engineers have some tricks up their sleeves to build bridges and tunnels that have components in direct contact with the water.

Underground construction is dangerous and hard to access. Dealing with water brings additional challenges. While soil and rock can be moved aside to create a stable opening, water will always move in to fill any gap and must continuously be pumped away.

Human beings, materials and machinery don't really work well underwater, either. People need a constant air supply. Placing concrete is difficult underwater, and some

materials work only on dry land. And since gas engines rely on air to operate, underwater equipment is very limited.

Some smaller tasks – aligning and joining pre-built sections of tunnel or inspecting to make sure submersion didn't damage anything – are performed beneath the waves, but the bulk of construction is unlikely to be. Once the structure is in place, there's constant monitoring and assessment happening underwater.

Because people generally can't build underwater, there are two options: Do the building in the open and move it underwater, or temporarily transform the underwater site into a dry one.

For the first option, crews typically build parts of the structure on dry land and then sink them into place. For instance, the Ted Williams Tunnel in Boston was constructed in sections in a shipyard. Workers dredged the tunnel's future path in Boston Harbor, cleaning mud and other refuse out of the way. Then they placed the sealed segments along the prepared trench. Once the segments were connected, they opened the ends of the segments to create one long, continuous tube. Finally, the tunnel was covered with soil and rock. Very little of the construction process was actually done underwater.

In other cases, such as in shallow water, construction workers may be able to build directly from the surface. For instance, workers can drive waterfront retaining walls made out of sheet metal into the soil directly from a barge, without having to divert the water.

Temporarily clearing the water away

The second option is to get rid of the underwater problem entirely.

While creating a dry site at the bottom of a body of water is difficult, it does have a

long history. After leading the sack of Rome in 410 C.E., Visigoth king Alaric died on his way home. In order to protect his magnificent burial from grave robbers, Alaric's people temporarily diverted a local river to bury him and his loot in the riverbed before letting the river rush back over.

Nowadays, a project like this would use a cofferdam: a temporary, watertight enclosure that can be pumped dry to provide an open and safe site for construction. Once the area is enclosed and pumped free of water, you're in the realm of regular construction.

Using a caisson is another way to provide a dry area at a site that is typically underwater. A caisson is typically a prefabricated and water-tight structure, shaped like an upside-down cup, that a crew sinks into the water. They keep it pressurized to ensure that water will not rush in. Once the caisson is on the floor of the body of water, the air pressure and pumping keep the site dry and allow construction workers to build inside. The caisson becomes part of the finished structure.

Builders constructed the piers of the Brooklyn Bridge using caissons. Although the caissons were structurally safe, the difference in pressure affected many workers, including the chief engineer, Washington Roebling. He developed caisson disease – more commonly known as decompression sickness – and had to resign.

Underwater construction is a complex and difficult task, but engineers have developed several ways to build underwater ... often by not building underwater at all.

Ari Perez

Associate Professor of Civil Engineering,
Quinnipiac University



Trump critics are going to love this

Trump talking to the press on his way back after meeting with the Pope:

"I met with Pope Francis today. He's a really great pope — great, great pope. You know he's the leader of the Catholic Church — big church.

"I couldn't believe it when he told me how many Catholics there are. Way more than I thought. They have churches all over the world; some are very, very close (so close) to my hotels and golf courses. He tells me he's elected for life, probably copying that Xi guy in China. Fantastic idea, though. Fantastic. It turns out the pope is a lot like me, you never see him with his wife.

"He told me he's infallible. I said that's great, you'll never have to worry about breaking a hip. And told me about a Mary Magdalene, beautiful girl, beautiful. I asked him for her number. Didn't catch his answer. I'm told he said it in Latin. I give the guy credit because he doesn't look Latino.

"He took me into the Sistine Chapel. Beautiful ceiling. Not the usual white stucco stuff. I don't think too many people even know about this place. The paintings are great, I'm telling you. Lots of colours.

"The Pope (great guy, by the way, knows more about the Bible than almost anybody — we got along great, I think he really likes me) told me the whole thing was painted by this Italian. I think he's from LA because his name is Mike L Angelo. At least that's what Francis (we're great friends) called him, I think.

"Trust me, we're going to hear more about this guy. He's really artistic, and everybody tells me I have the greatest eye for the best art. It's natural, just like my incredible understanding of science. All the renowned scientists say they can't believe it.

"When we left, the pope gave me a bible. Huge book. (Huge.) I told him I have the full set. You get one for free every time you take a porn star to a hotel room." [pauses]

"Unbelievable. Just heard. The lamestream media is at it again. Fake news. Fake news. I just saw something on TV. They claim Mike the painter died 450 years ago. Sad. I've got people looking into this and you won't believe what they're finding."

Classy Army Joke

Once, a lieutenant submits a letter as a draft for approval. After several amendments, the Commanding Officer signs and again reviews the letter. He asks the lieutenant to replace a 'has' with an 'is'.

Frustrated to the core, the Lieutenant asks, 'Sir, how will an 'is' make a difference in a three-page letter?'

The Commanding Officer makes the youngster sit down and says, "There is a lot of difference when I say... 'What an ass she 'is', and 'What an ass she 'has' !' The lieutenant was speechless.

Silence is Golden

As Air Force One arrives at Heathrow Airport, President Trump strides to a warm and dignified reception from the Queen. They are driven in a 1934 Bentley to the edge of central London, where they change to a magnificent 17th-century carriage hitched to six white horses. They continue on towards Buckingham Palace...

Suddenly, the right rear horse lets out the most horrendous earth-shattering fart ever heard in the British Empire. The smell is so atrocious that both the passengers in the carriage must use handkerchiefs over their noses. The fart shakes the coach, but the two dignitaries of State do their best to ignore the incident.

The Queen politely turns to President Trump: "Mr. President, please accept my regrets... I am sure you understand there are some things that even a Queen cannot control."

Trump, always trying to be "Presidential," responded: "Your Majesty, do not give the matter another thought. Until you mentioned it, I thought it was one of the horses."

Moral of the story: "Silence is Golden"

Dead Birds Don't Fall out of the Nest

During the Second World War, a conference was organized at Malta. Churchill, Stalin, and all allied nations attended.

Churchill's Foreign Secretary gave him a small chit on which Churchill wrote something and returned.

The Russian Secret Service retrieved the chit from the dustbin and gave it to Stalin. The chit had a line: 'Dead birds don't fall out of the nest.'

Stalin read it and he was convinced that it was a vicious allied plan against the USSR.

Finally, after two days in the formal banquet dinner, he asked Churchill about the message on the chit and what he meant by it. Churchill was having his whiskey and cigar and he replied: 'Ohhhh that! Frank had written to me that your fly was open, and I had replied 'Dead



Alors que nous on a tout et on fait rien



birds don't fall out of the nest'.

Pants Troubles in Paris

Pakya went to Paris and needed to get a pair of pants tailored urgently. The only one available was a lady's tailor. So having no choice, an order was placed.

The next day Pakya goes over, gets the pants, and tries them on. The conversation between him and the tailor is somewhat like this.

Tailor: Is it good?

Pakya: Yes! Tailor: Nice color too!

Pakya: Aye.

Tailor: Any problem?

Pakya: Well, you know the Eiffel Tower?

Tailor: Oui Monsieur, who in Paris does not!

Pakya: You know the restaurant on top?

Tailor: But of course, who does not!

Pakya: And the ballroom below that?

Tailor: Monsieur, there is no ballroom below that!

Pakya: Ah...that is the same problem with these pants!

A Husband's Lament

She cooked her curry spicy And baked her cakes just fine; Her biscuits, though a tad too hard, Reminded me of mine.

Her coffee, not to my taste, Her stew lacked a certain flair; No socks of mine found solace In her needle's gentle care.

I searched for some solution, A way to bridge the gap; Yearning for resolution, In this motherly mishap.

Then one day, the answer clear, A revelation, true: In her eyes, I saw it near— A taste of mother's shoe.

But as I smiled, she struck with might, A slap as firm as fate; In that moment, in her light, I tasted mother's hate.

Reviving dead engine

An engineer was dismantling the engine parts of a motorcycle when he noticed a renowned heart surgeon in his shop.

Walking up to the surgeon, he remarked, "Look at this engine... I opened its heart, removed and repaired the valves, and put them back in place. Yet, I receive a modest salary while you earn substantial sums. Why is that?"

The doctor smiled at the engineer, leaning in close to his ear, and replied, "Try doing the same when the engine is running."

The engineer, with a confident grin, reciprocated, whispering into the doctor's ear, "But doctor, I can revive any dead engine and make it roar to life... can you do the same for a still heart?"

Food for Thought

Facts about life that cannot be disputed

1. Do not keep stupid friends all in the name of "No one knows tomorrow." They may not allow you to see that tomorrow, so be very careful.
2. Marrying a lady with children doesn't mean you are a fool. A fool is the biological father that ran away from his responsibility.
3. When you care too much, you will be treated as a fool because they think you can't live without them. Therefore, be wise.
4. If you want to go far in life, train your heart to accept disappointments, even if it comes from those you trusted. Because every disappointment has a reason.
5. A friend who becomes an enemy after a little misunderstanding has been an enemy all along. They were just pretending. So hold yourself.
6. Stop keeping clothes and shoes for special occasions; start wearing them when you can. Because nowadays, being alive alone is a special occasion.
7. If nobody is mocking or criticizing you, it means you are a nobody. No one throws stones at a fruitless tree. Continue to be fruitful.
8. If you want to become useless in life, I mean very useless, depend on people. Put your trust in God. It's only God that can never fail.
9. When you find out that no one is correcting you, don't think you are perfect; you are just beyond repair.
10. Don't expect me to hate someone just because you hate him or her. Let me educate you; hate is not a communicable disease. Suffer your hate virus alone and don't involve me.
11. Did you know that one of the definitions of madness is the act of increasing your speed when you know that you have missed the road, way, direction? So wake up.
12. Life is a teacher; the more you live, the more you learn.
13. Attitude is everything in life. While you are moaning your lack of shoes, somebody without a leg is celebrating that he is alive. Be grateful.
14. Happiness is free; don't expect someone to give you one; make yourself happy today.

Let Me Go

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me
I want no rites in a gloom filled room
Why cry for a soul set free?

Miss me a little, but not for long
And not with your head bowed low
Remember the love that once we shared
Miss me, but let me go.

For this is a journey we all must take
And each must go alone.
It's all part of the master plan
A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick at heart
Go to the friends we know.
Laugh at all the things we used to do
Miss me, but let me go.

-Christina Rossetti-
(1830-1894)

From the diary of Sayed Jaffrey

"Love accepts people as they are"

'Some people lose diamonds in search of stones', and that's what happened with Saeed when he undervalued his wife Mehrunima and left her for another woman. However, his poignant regret resonates deeply. His tribute to his first wife came out a few years after he passed away...

At 19, I married Mehrunima, then 17. Fascinated by British colonial culture in India, I adopted English fluency, suited elegance, and impeccable etiquette. However, Mehrunima remained the antithesis—a homely, traditional housewife. Despite my attempts to change her, she remained obedient, nurturing, and domestic.

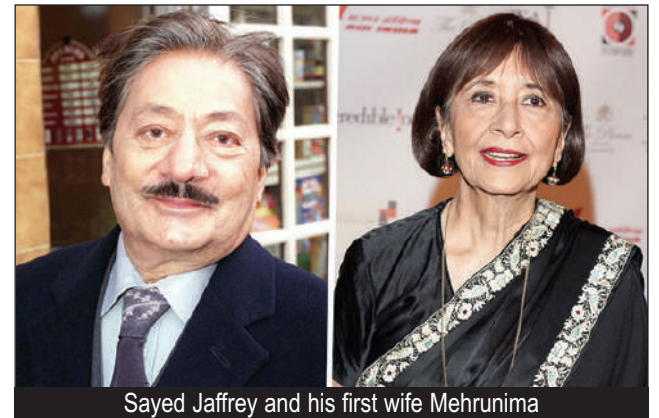
But she wasn't what I desired. My efforts to alter her only distanced us further. Over time, she transformed from a cheerful young girl to a subdued, insecure woman. Meanwhile, I grew infatuated with a co-actor who embodied my ideal wife.

After a decade, I divorced Mehrunima, leaving home for my co-actor. I ensured financial security for Mehrunima and our children. Initially, my new marriage seemed promising. But soon, I realized my new wife lacked the warmth and care of Mehrunima. I missed her nurturing touch and concern.

Life progressed, but my new marriage lacked intimacy. We were two individuals in a house, not one soul in a home. I never checked on Mehrunima and our children.

Years later, I stumbled upon an article about Madhur Jaffrey, an accomplished chef. Shockingly, the elegant lady in the picture was Mehrunima. She had remarried and changed her name.

I flew to the US to meet her. Despite her refusal, I spoke to our children, now under the care of her new husband. They shared poignant insights.



Sayed Jaffrey and his first wife Mehrunima

Their new father understood true love. He embraced Mehrunima, nurturing her without trying to change her. He let her evolve naturally, fostering her growth and confidence.

In contrast, my selfishness and refusal to accept her crushed her spirit. I realized the greatest lesson of my life: love accepts people as they are.

* * *

Relationships' Three Stages

In a relationship, there are always three phases or stages:

The first stage is where everything is happiness. It's filled with nice words, no problems, and everything seems to be going perfectly.

The second stage is when you start to notice the imperfections of the other person. This is where meaningless fights begin. This stage can be the most challenging because both partners are not always willing to work through the issues, leading some to give up.

The final stage is the most beautiful. It's when you truly fall in love and see their perfect imperfections. At this stage, you know how to resolve problems without yelling or hurtful words, and you genuinely learn to love each other.

Wisdom for Parenting

- Avoid giving your child everything he asks for. He will grow up believing that he has the right to get everything he wants.
- Avoid laughing when your child speaks insulting words. He will grow up thinking that disrespect is entertainment.
- Avoid remaining insensitive to bad behaviour that he can display without scolding him for his bad behavior. He will grow up thinking that there are no rules in society.
- Avoid picking up anything that your child messes up. He will grow up believing that others must take responsibility for his responsibilities.
- Avoid letting him watch any program on TV. He will grow up thinking that there is no difference between being a child and being an adult.
- Avoid giving your child all the money he asks for. He will grow up thinking that getting money is



easy and will not hesitate to steal for it.

- Always avoid putting yourself on his side when he is wrong against the neighbours, his teachers, the police. He will grow up thinking that everything he does is right, it is the others who are wrong.
- Avoid leaving him alone at home when you go to the place of worship; otherwise, he will grow up thinking that God does not exist.

- Avoid talking down about a family member or spouse; it will teach them to hurt others and that conflict and hurting others are okay.

- Avoid showing them that not helping others in need is okay; it will give them a lack of grace.

To make things simple, teach them grace and kindness in all things and treat them the way you would want them to be treated.

13 Ways to Lower Your Stroke Risk

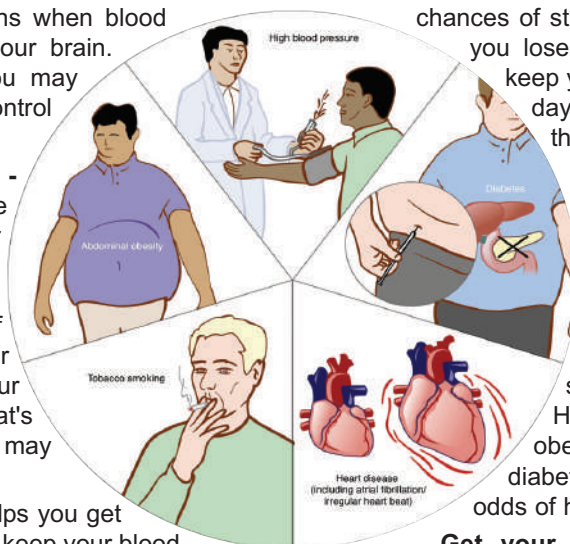
What Is a Stroke? It happens when blood stops flowing to part of your brain. The cells begin to die, and you may have damage to areas that control muscles, memory, and speech.

Watch your blood pressure - If you have high blood pressure and don't manage it well, your chances of getting a stroke go up. Ideally, your blood pressure should be under 120 over 80. If yours is too high, talk to your doctor about ways to change your diet and get more exercise. If that's not enough to control it, they may prescribe medication to help.

Break a sweat - Exercise helps you get to or stay at a healthy weight and keep your blood pressure where it should be—two things that can lower your odds of having a stroke. You'll need to work out hard enough to break a sweat 5 days a week for about 30 minutes. Talk to your doctor first if you're not in great health or haven't been that active in a while.

Keep stress in check - Stress can make it more likely you'll get a stroke, maybe because it causes inflammation in parts of your body. If you're stressed at work, try some simple things to help dial it back. Get up and move around often, breathe deeply, and focus on one task at a time. Make your work area a calm space with plants and soft colors. And be sure to spend a healthy amount of time away from the office.

Lose weight - Obesity and the health issues it can cause—diabetes and high blood pressure—boost your



chances of stroke. You can lower the odds if you lose as few as 10 pounds. Try to keep your calorie count under 2,000 a day, and make exercise a regular thing.

Have a (single) drink - For years, doctors thought that a drink a day may help protect against stroke, but the latest research suggests that this may not be true. And if you have more than two, your stroke risk quickly shoots up. Heavy drinking can also lead to obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes—all things that raise your odds of having a stroke.

Get your cholesterol checked - High levels of LDL "bad" cholesterol and low levels of HDL "good" cholesterol can raise your chances of having plaque buildup in your arteries, which limits blood flow and can lead to a stroke. Cutting down on saturated and trans fats can help lower your LDL, and exercise can boost your HDL. If those don't do the trick, your doctor may prescribe medication to help with your levels.

Pay attention to your heartbeat - Atrial fibrillation (AFib), an irregular heart rhythm, makes you five times more likely to have a stroke. If you notice a racing or irregular heartbeat, see your doctor to find out what's causing it. If it's AFib, they might be able to treat you with medicine that lowers your heart rate and cuts the odds you'll get blood clots. In some cases, they may try to reset your heart's rhythm with medication or a brief electrical shock.

Manage your diabetes - This condition affects how your body uses glucose, an important source of energy for your brain and the cells that make up your muscles and tissues. It can raise your odds of having a stroke, so it's important to watch your blood sugar carefully and follow your doctor's instructions.

Fibre up - The magic number here is 7: For every 7 grams of fiber you add to your daily diet, your stroke risk goes down by 7%. You should get about 25 grams a day: six to eight servings of whole grains, or eight to 10 servings of vegetables.

Eat (a little) dark chocolate - Flavonoids are plant-based chemicals in cocoa that have all kinds of health benefits. For example, they can help with inflammation, and that can relieve pressure on your heart. Studies show a little dark chocolate a day helps prevent heart attacks and strokes in people with a higher chance of having heart disease. Just don't overdo it because chocolate has sugar and saturated fat.

Don't smoke - Smoking makes your blood more likely to clot, thickens and narrows your blood vessels, and leads to the buildup of plaque—all of which make you more likely to have a stroke.

Choose the right foods - A balanced diet of fruits, veggies, fish, lean meats, and whole grains can help lower your cholesterol. That means plaque is less likely to build up in your arteries and form clots. It also can help protect you from other conditions that raise your odds of having a stroke, like diabetes and high blood pressure.

Take your meds - This sounds like an easy one, but a lot of people have a hard time with it. Take your medicine for blood pressure, diabetes, and heart health on time and as prescribed. If you're concerned about side effects, talk to your doctor before skipping your medications.

Medically reviewed by
Melinda Ratini, WebMD

Style & Beauty

6 skin care habits that make acne worse, no matter your age

Acne occurs when your pores become clogged with dirt, oil, and dead skin cells, which can cause whiteheads, blackheads, and other kinds of pimples, according to the Cleveland Clinic. As adults, acne breakouts are often triggered by fluctuating hormone levels, according to the AAD. Women tend to see their hormones shift around their periods, after taking (or stopping taking) birth control pills, and during pregnancy, perimenopause, or menopause, reports Erica Sweeney of HuffPost. Stress, a family history of acne, certain medications, and some skin and hair products can also cause acne.

What can make acne worse?

If you're dealing with acne and can't seem to get rid of it, dermatologists say your skin care routine could be to blame. Here are some habits to break:

1. Your products are too oily. One of the most common acne contributors is using skin care products that are "too heavy and rich," said David Kim, a board-certified dermatologist. Hair care, skin care, and makeup products with a "high comedogenic index," meaning they'll likely clog your pores, can cause or worsen acne, Farnsworth said. This includes items containing ingredients like

shea butter, cocoa butter, petrolatum, or mineral oil. Choosing oil-free products or ones labelled as "non-comedogenic" will minimize breakouts, Farnsworth said.

2. You're not showering after working out. Getting excessively sweaty can cause oil, dirt, and bacteria to build up on your skin, which might trigger acne. Farnsworth said showering after a sweaty workout can minimize the effect.

3. You're using a harsh scrub. It may be tempting to scrub your skin when you have acne, but Kim said it can actually cause more irritation. "Scrubs are harsh on the skin, and no one really needs a facial scrub because gentle facial cleansers are sufficient," he adds. If you do want to use a scrub, he recommends a mild one, such as Tatcha's The Rice Polish, but only use it about once a week.

4. You're not taking off your makeup. Sleeping in your makeup or wearing it during a sweaty workout can trigger an acne breakout, as cosmetics can clog your pores, according to the AAD. Be sure to wash your face before going to sleep or use oil-free makeup remover wipes to lower your risk for breakouts.

5. You're using too many skin care products. Browsing Sephora or following advice from skin care TikTokers might



inspire you to stock up on lots of different products. But layering on these items can break out your skin, Kim said. "People have more disposable income in their 30s and 40s and tend to buy more skin care products they've seen in ads," he said. "As a result, their skin can get irritated from using too many different types of products." A basic skin care routine only needs three items: a gentle cleanser, a non-comedogenic moisturizer, and sunscreen.

6. You change your skin care routine too often. It's tempting to try the latest trendy skin care items, but switching things up too often also might irritate your skin. Kim said it could take a couple of months for your skin to respond to

products, especially if you're using acne treatments. Even when you start an acne-fighting skin care routine, you might see a breakout, but it should resolve in a week or two, Farnsworth said. "Clogs are freed, and the materials trapped beneath are finally extruded from the skin."

You can typically treat acne at home. You can usually treat mild acne at home using over-the-counter products. Here's how:

- **Benzoyl peroxide.** The AAD recommends using a benzoyl peroxide face wash to minimize bacteria on the skin.
- **Adapalene.** This over-the-counter retinoid used to be a prescription-only cream, Kim said. It helps with oil regulation and acne scarring. He suggested using adapalene 0.1% gel one to three times a week.
- **Salicylic acid.** This substance helps flush out the oil, dirt, and dead skin cells that clog pores, Farnsworth said. You can use a salicylic acid cleanser or serum.

Know when to see a dermatologist. If you've tried acne products at home for about two months with no improvement, see a dermatologist, especially if you notice scarring.

Dilip Kumar, Shilpa Shetty, Rajesh Khanna: Bollywood actors who married their fans

In the world of Bollywood, where fairy-tale romances often play out on the silver screen, there are instances where reel-life love transcends into real-life matrimony. Some Bollywood actors have found their soulmates not among their peers but in the hearts of their ardent fans. From Dilip Kumar, Shilpa Shetty, to Rajesh Khanna; here's a look at some of the iconic actors who tied the knot with their admirers, as reported by Times of India.

Dilip Kumar

Dilip Kumar, the tragedy king, found his eternal love in Saira Banu. Saira, who was a big fan of Dilip Kumar, confessed her admiration for him since her teenage years. Their love story blossomed against all odds, and they got married in 1966, setting an example of timeless romance.

Rajesh Khanna

The first superstar of Bollywood, Rajesh Khanna, swept his biggest fan, Dimple Kapadia, off her feet. Dimple, who was just 16 years old when she first met Rajesh Khanna, became his devoted



admirer. Despite facing objections from their families due to their vast age difference, they married in 1973, creating headlines and leaving fans in awe.

Shilpa Shetty

Shilpa Shetty, known for her grace and charm, found love in London-based businessman Raj Kundra. Raj, a big admirer of Shilpa's work, was smitten by



her beauty and personality. Their love blossomed, and they tied the knot in 2009, proving that love knows no boundaries, not even geographical ones.

Vivek Oberoi

Vivek Oberoi, the charming actor, found his life partner in Priyanka Alva, daughter of renowned danseuse Nandini Alva and politician Jeevaraj Alva. Vivek's

mother was keen to get him married and forced him to meet Priyanka in Florence. They got married in 2010, celebrating their love amidst family and friends.

Jeetendra

Jeetendra and his wife Shobha stand as an iconic couple in Bollywood. Shobha, a young British airline air hostess, was deeply enamoured by the veteran actor, Jeetendra, ultimately becoming his fan. They tied the knot in October 1974, and together they parent Tusshar and Ekta Kapoor. Their enduring love story continues to inspire many in the industry.

Mumtaz

Mumtaz, the veteran Bollywood actress, commanded immense admiration in the industry, particularly among male fans, drawn to her captivating smile and irresistible charm. Among her many admirers was Mayur Madhavni, who, enchanted by her aura, became her husband in May 1974. This union between star and fan remains a remarkable chapter in Bollywood's history.

Deepika Padukone on bringing Indian Cinema to Hollywood

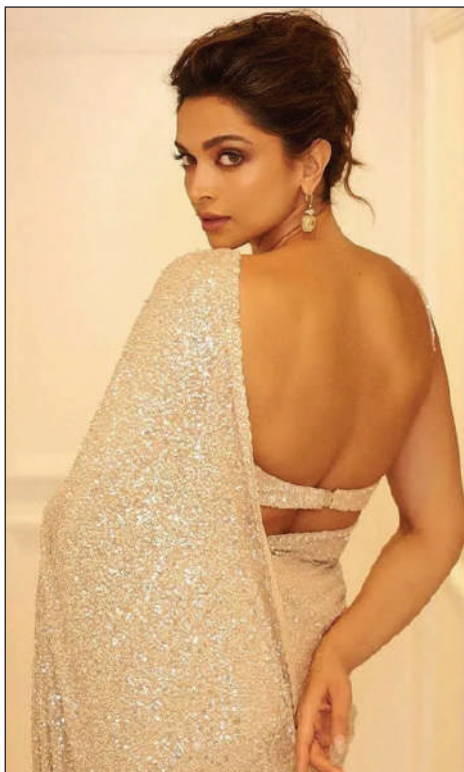
and tackling mental health taboos

For two consecutive years, Deepika Padukone has kickstarted India's box office with a bang. In 2023, the acclaimed actor and producer reunited with her 'Om Shanti Om' co-star Shah Rukh Khan for the espionage actioner 'Pathaan,' which earned \$76 million in India and crossed the \$100 million global box office milestone, even without a release in China. This year, Padukone starred in Viacom/Marflix's Hindi aviation actioner 'Fighter' (directed by Siddharth Anand), grossing \$43 million globally in just 30 days.

"Of course, the success of a movie is important, and box office is important, and the awards and accolades are important, but for me, as a person, the time I've had with people and the experiences I have on the set of a film are the most important," Padukone tells Diana Lodderhose of deadline.com.

Padukone, now one of India's biggest female stars, first broke into the Hindi cinema scene in 2007 with the blockbuster hit 'Om Shanti Om,' opposite Bollywood legend Khan. The film, largely considered one of the country's classics, catapulted her to stardom, despite her initial disbelief at being cast without an audition.

Since then, Padukone has starred in numerous hit films such as 'Cocktail,' 'Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani,' and 'Chennai Express,' among others. She has also ventured into Hollywood with her English-language debut in 2017's 'xXx: Return of



Xander Cage.'

Looking beyond entertainment, Padukone is a staunch advocate for mental health awareness. She openly shared her battle with depression and anxiety in 2015, breaking the stigma surrounding mental health in India. Through her non-profit organization, the Live Love Laugh foundation, Padukone aims to raise awareness and promote accessibility to mental health resources in India, including rural areas and corporate sectors.

Katrina Kaif 'couldn't stand, say her lines, or even dance': Shekhar Suman

Actor Shekhar Suman and his son Adhyayan Suman have received acclaim for their roles in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's 'Heeramandi.' The show has notably revitalized Adhyayan's career, though he recently expressed his disappointment over seeing the size of his posters diminish over time. Shekhar Suman, sharing his insights, highlighted Katrina Kaif's inspiring journey in Bollywood as an example of perseverance and growth.

In an interview with Bollywood Hungama, Adhyayan reflected on his career trajectory, saying, "I began my career being the hero of all my films, and then the poster size kept getting smaller and smaller. I know how much that hurts. Now the fight is to make it bigger again—that's the whole journey."

Shekhar Suman, responding to Adhyayan's comments, offered advice by pointing to other actors' journeys. "Take a cue from other people's journeys. Look at Katrina Kaif. When she came in Boom, she couldn't stand, say her lines, or even dance, but look at where she reached. Look at her performance in 'Rajneeti' and 'Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara.' Even in 'Dhoom 3,' you could never say that she is the same girl who had started like that. It happens to the best of people. Even Deepika Padukone grew into a beautiful actress. Ananya Panday used to go through a lot of trolling until 'Kho Gaye Hum Kahan' happened. So you have to take it on your chin with a pinch of salt and a sense of humor."

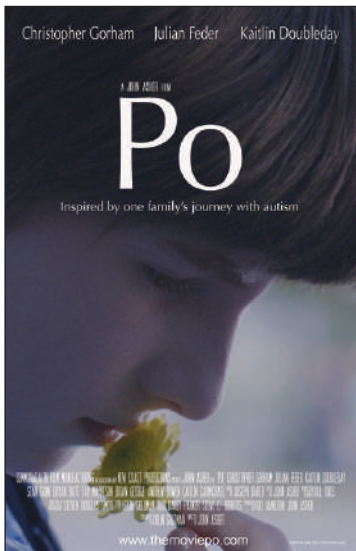
Adhyayan Suman, who played the



double roles of Zorawar and the younger version of Zulfikar in "Heeramandi," also shared his thoughts on his recent success. He said, "It is a different thrill to prove people wrong."



Vendredi 14 juin - 21.15



Samedi 15 Juin - 20.30



Dimanche 16 Juin - 20.30



Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 14 juin

MBC 1

06.20 Tele: Tour De Babel
07.15 Film: The Mustang
08.51 Le Livre Perdu Des Sorti...
09.35 Tele: L'Amour A Mort
10.00 Tele: Amour Secret
10.23 The Gardener's Daughter
10.45 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
11.10 Tele: La Reina Del Flow
12.00 Le Journal
12.40 Tele: Entre Justice Et Vengeance
13.25 Tele: Fierce Angel
13.45 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
14.15 Live: Samachar
15.30 Film: Stormboy
17.40 The Gardener's Daughter
18.30 Other: Radha Krishna
19.00 Serial: Swaran Ghar
20.30 Filler: A Boy Called Po
22.00 Entre Justice Et Vengeance
22.45 The Gardener's Daughter

MBC 2

06.29 Local: Les Grandes Lignes
08.55 Local: Generations J
10.30 Local: J'ai Faim
11.00 Rodrig - Klip Seleksion
12.41 Rodrig: Les Grandes Lignes
13.12 Emotion En Avant Plan
13.27 Local: Evasion
15.23 Local: Generations J
16.26 Local: J'ai Faim
18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
18.30 Tele: Amour Secret
19.20 Le Magazine De L'emploi...
19.30 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
20.00 Local: Animalia Nos Amis...
21.03 Local: Come On Let's Dance
21.00 Local: La Societe
22.51 Le Journee Sous Le Regard
23.53 Local: Retrovizer
00.06 Local: Parkour
00.32 Local: Couleur Marine

MBC 3

07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail
08.01 MBC Prod: Amrit Vaani
10.07 Serial: Agniphera
12.00 Film: Anokhi Raat
Starring: Sanjeev Kumar, Zahida, Aruna Irani, Mukhri
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Serial: Senhur
16.00 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron
16.36 Serial: Bhakharwadi
17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Local: Mati Ke Mol
19.00 Local: Khel Khiladi
19.38 Live From MGI: Celebrating The Golden Voice Of The Legendary Singer Kishore
23.00 Serial: Mere Sai
23.47 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya
00.10 Serial: Senhur
00.36 Local: Mati Ke Mol

Cine 12

06.30 Mag: Shift
06.38 Mag: Carnet De Sante
06.53 Mag: Border Crossing
07.54 Doc: Tomorrow Today
08.35 Doc: Craft Chocolate
09.21 Doc: The Last Shelter
10.12 Doc: Disappear
10.26 Doc: Shift
11.00 Mag: Eco India
11.39 Mag: Carnet De Sante
12.15 Mag: Border Crossing
12.27 Mag: Tomorrow Today
15.00 D.Anime: Giant
15.26 D.Anime: Rainbow Rangers
15.48 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
16.10 Les Nouvelles Aventure De...
16.20 D.Anime: Robin Des Boix
16.32 The New Adventure Of...
17.20 Mag: Lab 360
17.28 Serial: Apple Tree House
18.00 Doc: Sos Amazon

Bollywood TV

14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
15.00 Serial: Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
15.23 Film: Samrat & Co
Starring Rajeev Khandelwal, Madalsa Sharma
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Kundali Bhagya
19.01 Udaariyaan
19.25 Fanaa
20.01 Sasural Simar Ka 2
20.25 Radha Krishna
21.01 Anupamaa
21.30 Mere Sai
22.01 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se
22.32 Swaran Ghar
22.59 Serial: Rajaa Betaa
23.29 Film: Samrat & Co
Starring: Rajeev Khandelwal, Madalsa Sharma

samedi 15 Juin

03.21 Serial: Madam Secretary
04.44 Tele: A Que No Me Dejas
06.30 Tele: Amour A Mort
07.00 Serial: Zoo
07.45 Serial: Seal Team
08.30 Serial: NCIS
09.15 Serial: Madam Secretary
10.05 Serial: Blue Bloods
10.45 Serial: Chicago Med
11.30 Tele: Amour A Mort
12.00 Le Journal
12.25 Serial: La Reina Del Flow
13.15 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
15.25 Live From Port Louis Waterfront
17.00 Tele: Imperio De Mentiras
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Enter: Dance India Dance...
19.30 Le Journal
20.30 Film: Kingsman
22.50 Serial: Blue Bloods
00.16 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis

06.00 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
07.10 Local: Voyage Au Feminin
07.52 Rodrig: Ala Nou Vini
09.46 Rodrig: Zenn Aktif
10.31 Local: Parkour
12.00 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
12.13 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
13.28 Local: Animalia Nos Amis...
14.29 Local: Zanfou Nou Pei
14.45 Local: Couleur Marine
16.00 Local: Son Ladan Mem
16.14 Local: Mon Jardin Ma Maison
16.45 Local: En Forme
18.00 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
19.00 Journal Kreol
19.40 Rodrig: Coin Zen
20.00 Local: Les Petits Genies
20.29 Local: Deba Klima
21.29 Local: Glwar Dantan
22.01 Local: Extrait Concert
23.00 Le Journal
00.05 Local: Lavi Zoli An XXL

07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail
08.26 MBC Prod: Mati Ke Mol
10.38 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
12.20 Local: Mati Ke Mol
12.46 Local: Khel Khiladi
13.12 Mag: Power Of Listening
14.06 Serial: Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.30 Film: Aazmayish
Starring Dharmendra, Rohit Kumar
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Puranya Pakwan
19.00 Duniya Mein Is Saptah
19.12 Local: Virasat
21.00 Film: Halfpace
Starring Rituraj Wankhede, Aditya Sharma, Shreyash Atkar
22.49 Local: Puranya Pakwan
23.15 Duniya Mein Is Saptah
23.30 Local: Virasat
23.45 Local: Gyan Vigyan

06.00 D.Anime: Giant
06.25 D.Anime: Stan Lee's
09.45 Mag: Lab 360
09.50 Serial: The Avatars
10.50 Doc: Sos Amazon
12.32 Doc: Multi Tasking
14.41 Mag: Choices
15.00 D.Anime: Giant
15.24 Serial: Rainbow Rangers
15.48 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
16.10 Les Nouvelles Aventures De...
16.20 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
16.54 Magazine: Lab 360
17.02 Serial: Apple Tree House
18.10 Mag: In Good Shape
20.01 Tele: L'Amour A Mort
20.30 Live: News
20.50 Serial: The Queen Of Flow
21.40 Film: Ghost Light
23.20 The Language Of Whales
00.18 Doc: The Lithium Ion

08.00 Swaran Ghar
10.19 Sasural Simar Ka 2
11.59 Udaariyaan
13.52 Anupamaa
16.00 Fanaa
18.31 Film: Lootera
Starring Ranveer Singh, Sonakshi Sinha
20.54 Gadget Guru Ganesha
21.06 Porus
21.19 Crime Patrol
22.06 Swaran Ghar

dimanche 16 juin

03.59 Tele: A Que No Me Dejas
05.36 Tele: Amour A Mort
06.00 Film: Kingsman
08.25 Serial: New Amsterdam
09.10 Film: Stan The Man
10.50 Serial: Chicago Med
11.34 Tele: Amour A Mort
12.00 Le Journal
12.40 Film: Apache Drums
15.00 Live: Samachar
15.25 Film: Kingsman
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.31 Enter: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa
19.23 Sayings Shiv Shakti
19.30 Le Journal
20.30 Film: Hollow In The Land
Avec Dianna Agron, Shawn Ashmore
22.02 Serial: New Amsterdam
22.43 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis

07.03 Local: Glwar Dantan
07.29 Local: Les Petits Genies
09.35 Local: Extrait Concert
11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
11.50 Rodrig: Coin Zen
13.05 Local: Extrait Concert
14.26 Local: Glwar Dantan
14.52 Les Grands Noms Interna...
15.00 Meshiagare, Bon Appetit!
17.00 Prod: Deba Klima
18.00 Tele Gout De L'Amour
19.00 Journal Kreol
19.20 Local: Elle
20.00 Local: Tipa Tipa Nou Avanse
20.30 Le Challenge
20.45 Local: Les Klips
22.30 Local: Clin D'Oeil
23.00 Journal Kreol
23.20 Local: Arsiv MBC: Fer Roule
23.46 Local: Mangeons Veg

07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail
08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness Challenge
08.23 Local: Puranya Pakwan
12.00 Film: Lovers
With Kumar Gaurav, Padmini Kolhapure, Danny Denzongpa
16.53 Local: Ekta
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Local: Planet Bollywood
19.00 Local: Tohar Rashi
19.23 Local: Tohar Farmaish
20.00 Local: Yaadein
20.30 Serial: Porus
21.00 Serial: Crime Patrol
21.45 Serial: Naagin Season 4
22.28 Serial: Bahubali
23.01 Serial: Saaton Vachanwa
Saath Nibhaib Sajna
00.37 Local: Tohar Rashi
01.29 Local: Yaadein

06.00 D.Anime: Giant
06.25 D.Anime: Stan Lee's Super...
07.13 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
09.45 Mag: Lab 360
09.49 Serial: The Avatars
10.38 Mag: D.I.Y.
10.50 Mag: In Good Shape
11.58 Mag: Afrimaxx
12.29 Doc: Deep Sea Greed
13.53 Doc: The Lithium Ion
15.01 D.Anime: Giant
15.26 D.Anime: Rainbow Rangers
15.48 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
16.20 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
16.31 D.Anime: The New Adventure
16.53 Mag: Lab 360
16.54 Serial: Apple Tree House
17.29 Serial: Superstore
19.30 Mag: Arts Unveiled
20.00 Tele: L'Amour A Mort
20.50 Serial: The Queen Of Flow

00.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2
01.42 Udaariyaan
03.35 Anupamaa
05.21 Fanaa
08.00 Tenali Rama
08.15 Patiala Babes
10.02 Kundali Bhagya
12.00 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
14.03 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se
16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya
18.38 Film: Pink
Starring: Amitabh Bachchan, Tapsee Pannu, Kirti Kulhari, Andrea Tariang
21.07 Tenali Rama
21.19 Dance India Dance Little Masters
22.53 Serial: Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2

lundi 17 Juin

06.17 Tele: Tour De Babel
06.45 Film: Les Demeiselles De Rochefort
08.50 Serial: Heartland
09.35 Tele: L'Amour A Mort
10.00 Tele: Amour Secret
10.25 The Gardener's Daughter
10.50 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis
12.00 Le Journal
12.30 Entre Justice et Vengeance
13.10 Tele: Fierce Angel
13.50 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
14.15 Serial: Heartland
15.25 Film: Hollow In The Land
17.30 The Gardener's Daughter
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar
19.30 Le Journal
20.40 Serial: Zoo
21.24 Serial: Seal Team
22.06 Entre Justice Et Vengeance

07.08 Tipa Tipa Nou Avanse
08.34 Local: Clin D'Oeil
10.41 Local: Le Challenge
11.00 Local: Les Klips
12.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard
13.54 Local: Elle
14.29 Rodrig: Komanter
15.12 Local: En Forme
15.23 Local: Les Klips
16.15 Local: Le Challenge
17.04 Local: Concert
18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
18.30 Tele: Amour Secret
19.20 Le Magazine De L'emploi
19.30 Local: Konn Ou Drwa
20.00 Local: Notre Petite Vie
20.48 Local: Tous Egaux
21.01 Upclose And Personal
22.51 La Journee Sous Le Regard
23.20 Local: Lir - Ekri Kreol

07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail
09.48 Serial: Bahubali
10.27 Serial: Saaton Vachanwa...
12.02 Film: Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi
15.00 Live: Samachar
16.00 Kundali Bhagya
17.31 Serial: Radha Krishna
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.29 Local: Ved Ki Shikshayen
19.00 Local: Ayush
20.00 Local: Vaad Vivaad
20.43 Film: Mere Huzoor
Starring: Mala Sinha, Raaj Kumar and Jeetendra
23.26 Serial: Mere Sai
00.19 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya
00.43 Local: Ved Ki Shikshayen
01.09 Local: Ayush
02.15 Local: Vaad Vivaad
02.41 Serial: Senhur
02.59 Local: Vad Ki Shikshayen

06.00 Mag: SADC
08.18 Doc: Cobalt Rush
09.42 Doc: To Tell A Tale
10.29 Doc: Our Future Cities
11.00 Doc: Beneath The Waves
11.26 Doc: The Happy Worker
12.08 Mag: Arts Unveiled
12.34 Doc: Wake Up On Mars
14.45 Mag: Women In Asia
15.00 D.Anime: Giant
15.26 D.Anime: Rainbow Rangers
15.48 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
16.10 D.Anime: Les Nouvelles Aventures De Caillou
16.18 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
16.30 D.Anime: The New Adventure
17.20 Mag: Lab 360
17.30 Serial: Tree House
18.30 Mag: The 77 Percent
18.55 Student Support Prog..
20.01 Tele: L'Amour A Mort
21.40 Film: The Dead Don't Die

14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
15.00 Serial: Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
15.25 Film: Drona
Starring: Abhishek Bachchan, Priyanka Chopra, Kay Kay Menon
18.00 Live: Samachar
18.30 Kundali Bhagya
19.00 Udaariyaan
19.31 Fanaa
20.08 Sasural Simar Ka 2
20.29 Radha Krishna
21.06 Anupamaa
21.34 Mere Sai
22.04 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se
22.28 Swaran Ghar
23.06 Serial: Rajaa Betaa
23.30 Film: Drona
Starring: Abhishek Bachchan, Priyanka Chopra, Kay Kay Menon



Mardi 18 Juin - 20.30



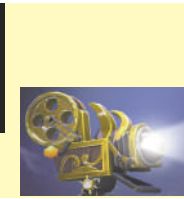
Mercredi 19 Juin - 21.30



Jeudi 20 Juin - 21.40



Programme TV



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
mardi 18 juin	06.00 Tele: Tour De Babel 06.54 Mag: Hollywood Best Film 07.19 Serial: Zoo 07.59 Serial: Seal Team 08.45 Mag: Ultimate Countdown 09.30 Tele: L'Amour A Mort 09.54 Tele: Amour Secret 10.20 The Gardener's Daughter 10.45 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 11.11 Tele: La Reina Del Flow 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Entre Justice Et Vengeance 13.03 Tele: Fierce Angel 13.44 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.10 Tele: Gout De L'Amour 15.25 Film: Secrets De Guerre 17.30 The Gardener's Daughter 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar 20.30 Film: Street Fighter 22.10 Entre Justice Vengeance	07.19 Local: Notre Petite Vie 09.32 Local: Itinerer Moris 09.43 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin 10.10 Rodrig: Zenn Aktif 11.59 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel 13.32 Eclariage Economique 13.59 Local: Upclse And Personal 15.12 Rodrig: Zenn Aktif 15.30 Rodrig: Saver Lokal 17.02 Local: Le Mag 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.26 Tele: Amour Secret 19.20 Le Magazine De L'Emploi 19.39 Local: Son Ladan Mem 20.00 Local: Generations J 20.46 Local: Priorite Sante 21.04 Local: Le Mag 21.52 Local: Elle 22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.21 Local: Mots & Ecrits 00.03 Local: Profil	07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail 08.00 Local: Ved Ki Shikshayen 08.26 Local: Ayush 08.52 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek 09.32 Local: Vaad Vivaad 10.00 Serial: Kundali Bhagya 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Main Tulsī Tere Aangan Ki Starring: Nutan, Vinod Khanna... 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.30 Serial: Badki Malkaain 16.00 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Local: Tark Vitark 19.15 Local: Bhojpuri Dhamaka 20.00 Chikitsa Aur Swasthya 20.30 Film: Anupama 22.54 Serial: Mere Sai 23.58 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya	06.03 Mag: Eco Africa 08.34 Mag: Tomorrow Today 09.02 Mag: Washington Forum 10.59 Mag: Eco Africa 11.28 Mag: The 77 Percent 11.56 Mag: Africa 54 12.24 Mag: In Good Shape 13.35 Mag: Tomorrow Today 14.06 Doc: Washington Today 15.00 D.Anime: Giant 15.26 Serial: Raindow Rangers 15.48 D.Anime: Hunter & Hunter 16.21 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois 16.30 D.Anime: The New Adventure 17.20 Mag: Lab 360 17.30 Serial: Apple Tree House 18.00 Mag: Rev 18.45 Mag: Red Carpet 19.00 Student Support Prog... 20.01 Tele: L'Amour A Mort	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.58 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 15.23 Film: Parwana Starring Ajay Devgan, Amisha Patel 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.03 Udaariyaan 19.33 Fanaa 20.06 Sasural Simar Ka 2 20.29 Radha Krishna 21.08 Anupama 21.30 Mere Sai 22.08 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.30 Serial: Swaran Ghar 23.06 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Parwana Starring Ajay Devgan, Amisha Patel
mercredi 19 juin	07.21 Film: Extortion 08.53 Serial: Heartland 09.32 Tele: L'Amour A Mort 09.55 Tele: Amour Secret 10.25 The Gardener's Daughter 10.50 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 11.15 Tele: La Reina Del Flow 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Entre Justice Et Vengeance 13.15 Tele: Fierce Angel 13.50 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.15 Serial: Heartland 15.20 Film: Street Fighter 17.32 The Gardener's Daughter 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.55 Serial: Swaran Ghar 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.41 Serial: Nelle Tue Mani 21.30 Film: Oblivion 23.22 Entre Justice Et Vengeance	07.07 Local: Generations J 08.10 Local: Mots & Ecrits 08.41 Local: Profil 09.31 Local: Le Mag 10.21 Local: Koze Zom 11.00 Local: Elle 12.02 Rodrig Prog: Plat Du Chef 12.29 Local: Son Ladan Mem 13.08 Local: Generations J 15.00 Prod: Deba Klima 16.42 Le Journee Sous Le Regard 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.30 Tele: Amour Secret 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.20 Le Magazine De L'Emploi 19.30 Local: Rodrig Spor 20.26 Local: Toc Toc Doc 20.45 Local: Equinoxes 21.30 Local: Les Klips 23.29 Local: Proze Dime 00.34 Local: Kot Nou	07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail 07.08 Serial: Kiswa 08.26 Local: Bhojpuri Dhamaka 08.56 Local: Ayur Yoga 09.26 Chikitsa Aur Swasthya 10.00 Serial: Jijaji Chhat Par Hain 11.32 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Swami Starring: Shabana Azmi, Vikram, Girish Karnad 15.30 Serial: Senhur 16.00 Serial: Zindagi Mere Ghar Aana 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Local: Yatra 19.00 Local: Darshan 20.00 Local: Virasat 20.15 Local: Gyan Vigyan 21.00 Film: Ek Saazish Jaal 23.31 Serial: Mere Sai	06.41 Mag: Red Carpet 08.35 Mag: Initiative Africa 09.32 Doc: The Bitter Sweet Deal 10.14 Doc: Marvel 11.28 Mag: Healthy Living 11.43 Mag: Red Carpet 11.58 Mag: Made In Germany 13.35 Doc: Business Africa 14.08 Doc: Euromaxx 15.00 D.Anime: Giant 15.26 Serial: Rainbow Rangers 15.49 D.Anime: Hunter & Hunter 16.11 Les Nouvelles Aventures... 16.32 D.Anime: The New Adventure 16.54 D.Anime: Words And Sounds 17.20 Mag: Lab 360 17.30 Serial: Apple Tree House 18.00 Mag: Motorweek 18.30 Mag: The Other Berlin 18.45 Mag: Planet A 20.01 Tele: L'Amour A Mort 21.40 Film: Ghost Light	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.18 Film: Kundan Starring: Dharmendra, Jaya Prada, Amrsh Puri 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Udaariyaan 19.30 Fanaa 20.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2 20.30 Radha Krishna 21.06 Anupamaa 21.36 Mere Sai 22.05 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.31 Swaran Ghar 23.01 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.31 Film: Kundan Starring: Dharmendra, Jaya Prada, Amrsh Puri 02.11 Kundali Bhagya 02.40 Udaariyaan
jeudi 20 juin	08.05 Serial: Nelle Tue Mani 08.45 Serial: Madam Secretary 09.30 Tele: L'Amour A Mort 09.54 Tele: Amour Secret 10.21 The Gardener's Daughter 10.45 Tele: L'Envers Du Paradis 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Entre Justice Et Vengeance 13.15 Tele: Fierce Angel 13.45 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.10 Serial: Gout De L'Amour 15.25 Film: The Bounty Men 17.15 The Gardener's Daughter 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.56 Serial: Swaran Ghar 19.30 Le Journal 20.30 Film: Shaadi Ke Side Effects Stars: Farhan Akhtar, Vidya Balan, Vir Das 22.44 Tele: Entre Justice Et Vengeance	07.11 Local: Toc Toc Doc 08.33 Local: Proze Dime 11.00 Local: Les Klips 12.06 Local: Rodrig Spor 12.29 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 12.55 Local: Toc Toc Doc 13.07 Local: Equinoxes 14.00 Local: Les Klips 16.00 Come On Let's Dance 16.57 Local: Aktiv 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.31 Tele: Amour Secret 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.20 Rodrig - Li Bon Ou Konnin 20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.30 Local: Vivaldi Music School 21.29 Local: Le Mag 22.21 Les Grandes Voix Féminines 22.53 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.21 Rodrig: Sa lavi La 00.12 Rodrig: Klip Seleksion	07.00 Serial: Tik Tak Tail 07.20 Cinema Ico - Nita Chandra 08.27 Local: Darshan 08.53 Local: Prakritik Chikitsa 09.17 Local: Virasat 09.34 Local: Gyan Vigyan 10.03 Serial: Zindagi Mere Ghar Aana 11.27 Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Aan Baan Starring: Rakhee Gulzar, Rajendra Kumar 15.30 Serial: Badki Malkaain 16.00 Serial: Agniphera 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Local: Amrit Vaani 19.06 Local: Surya Namaskar 19.32 Local: Ayush 20.30 Local: Shiv Shakti 21.00 Serial: Yashomati Maiyya 21.30 Mag: Dharam Yatra	07.24 Doc: From Gray To Green 08.32 Mag: Close Up 09.27 Doc: Under Poisoned Skies 10.59 Mag: Motorweek 12.02 Mag: Arts Unveiled 12.59 Doc: The Arctic 13.42 Mag: Close Up 13.56 Doc: Hot Times 14.50 Doc: Japan Video Topics 15.00 D.Anime: Giant 15.24 D.Anime: Rainbow Rangers 15.46 D.Anime: Hunter & Hunter 16.11 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier 16.20 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois 17.20 Mag: Lab 360 17.30 Serial: Apple Tree House 18.00 Mag: Eco India 18.30 Mag: Shift 20.01 Tele: L'Amour A Mort 21.40 Film: Coup De Fouet En Retour	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.16 Film: Khel: No Ordinary Game Stars: Sunny Deol, Sunil Shetty, Celina Jaitley 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Udaariyaan 19.30 Fanaa 20.00 Sasural Simar Ka 2 20.30 Radha Krishna 21.02 Anupamaa 21.30 Mere Sai 22.01 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.37 Swaran Ghar 23.02 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.31 Film: Khel: No Ordinary Game Stars: Sunny Deol, Sunil Shetty, Celina Jaitley 02.12 Kundali Bhagya 02.41 Udaariyaan



Jeudi 20 Juin - 15.30

Stars: Sunny Deol, Sunil Shetty, Celina Jaitley



Jeudi 20 Juin - 20.30

Stars: Farhan Akhtar, Vidya Balan, Vir Das





Nita Chicooree-Mercier

Quand la vérité prend l'eau...

L'île est recouverte d'un manteau gris depuis des jours, un temps qui n'est pas boudé par le bon peuple tant la fin des chaleurs a été vivement attendue. C'est une véritable aubaine pour la terre assoiffée et la fringale éphémère d'une végétation destinée à être luxuriante. Un trait culturel très répandu incline le peuple à l'acceptation de ce qui est à la place des lamentations sur ce qui n'est pas; d'où un sentiment de gratitude envers la nature. N'est-ce pas avec quelques gouttes d'eau que le lever du soleil est accueilli dès l'aube?

La puissance sacrée de l'eau

Sharmila jure:

- Je ne te dis que la vérité. Regarde ce verre d'eau que je tiens à la main, je ne peux pas mentir.

Deux jours plus tard à Port-Louis, c'est Leena qui tient le même langage :

- Je ne déforme pas la réalité. J'ai l'eau à la main, que je sois punie si je mens!

L'eau est sacrée. Toutes les deux sont issues des milieux populaires, ont reçu peu ou presque pas d'éducation formelle mais elles sont imprégnées de bon sens et un sens de droiture qui ne fait pas de compromis. Un franc-parler ponctué de dictons hérités de leur culture première, mais dont seulement le moyen d'expression a été dilué au fil des décennies.

Un changement culturel au fil du temps

Ailleurs, les adultes diront plutôt :

- Je jure sur la tête de mon fils (ou de ma fille).

L'individualisme a fait du chemin dans certaines contrées où le profane a chassé le sacré, et jurer sur le livre sacré est perçu comme rétrograde tant la fiabilité de ces livres est passée au peigne fin des controverses dans certains pays au fil des siècles, tandis qu'un autre subit un véritable assaut dans des débats passionnés à l'ère d'internet.

Dans ces lieux, on ne jure pas non plus sur le drapeau d'un pays à une époque où le patriotisme a mauvaise presse grâce aux idéologues et aux médias complaisants qui assimilent le patriotisme au fascisme en passant par l'ex-trême-droite. C'est à se demander combien de volontaires parmi la jeunesse ramollie prendront les armes pour leur pays en cas de guerre...

Donc, le transfert du sacré s'est déporté sur la famille proche : Mon fils, ma fille, ma femme (jusqu'au prochain divorce!), le tout n'étant autre que le prolongement de l'ego masculin, en fin de compte.

A Maurice, nous serions tentés de penser qu'une certaine manière de penser fait la résistance et est imperméable au mimétisme langagier idiot qui franchit les frontières par le biais des radios privées, certaines répandant des inepties importées sans filtre sur les ondes.

Ce serait faire l'impasse sur le narcissisme qui pousse les parents, en première ligne les pères, à régler un compte musclé à l'enseignant



Pic - CherylRamalho - Shutterstock.com

qui ose faire des remontrances au fils, au camarade de classe dont le fils subit une moquerie des plus bénignes, sans parler de cas où ce genre d'incidents métamorphosent les pères en meurtriers...

Un retour vers le passé?

Appréciations, donc, pour l'instant le sens sacré de l'eau en tant qu'élément universel. Tout de même, ne perdons pas de vue qu'en ces temps d'inondations déchaînées dans les quatre coins du monde, où les voitures naviguent sur les "flash floods" répétés à Port-Louis, et que le règne du pétrole est menacé à l'avenir, c'est l'aspect matérialiste de l'eau qui déclenchera les guerres. L'or bleu est déjà objet de convoitise et les armes s'affûtent un peu partout... Qu'il pleuve ou qu'il neige, jurer sur l'eau prendra alors tout son sens.

* * *

Est-ce que je peux me mettre à votre table?

La Victoria Urban Terminal s'est dotée d'une salle faisant office de salle à manger pour les consommateurs de passage. Très bien entretenue, une employée fait le tour des tables munie d'un chiffon, d'une éponge et d'une pelle pour garantir la propreté du lieu.

Un espace attrayant

Jusqu'à présent, c'est un des espaces publics les plus classes que nous avons visité. Il suffit de prendre son farata, son roti, son dholl puri, son pain kebab, son plat de mines ou de riz aux diverses échoppes et de s'y installer le temps de satisfaire un creux à l'estomac.

- Les mines sont servies avec des caris? nous lui demandons.

- Oui, on peut demander ce qu'on veut, légumes ou viande, nous répond-elle. Disposant de peu de temps, le roti fait bien notre affaire. Souriant et affable, notre voisin de table ne s'est pas fait prier pour débarrasser les tracasseries de sa journée surchargée, facture d'électricité mirobolante, règlement des patentes en hausse, un projet en panne, son compte en banque subissant les conséquences de plein fouet, etc. Il voit rouge et tire à boulets rouges sur le gouvernement actuel.

- Ah bon? De quoi s'agit-il exactement? Que l'électricité à usage commercial revienne à un coût plus élevé, cela ne date pas d'hier. S'il se targue d'avoir plusieurs business, c'est que les affaires vont plutôt bien. Suivons le dialogue.

- Le problème, c'est la taxe sur les entreprises, se plaint-il.

- C'est-à-dire...?

- Par exemple, si un business rapporte Rs500,000, le MRA perçoit Rs 150,000. Vous voyez, c'est trop. C'est donc 30 %, selon ses dires.

- Au temps des travaillistes, j'avais fait construire trois maisons. Depuis quelques années, j'ai commencé une maison et je n'ai plus les moyens de la terminer.

Trois maisons, c'est déjà pas mal. Salaires en hausse, aides aux jeunes, gratuité des études et du transport, les pensionnaires soulagés, le phénomène mondial de l'inflation et des dettes, nous égrenons une liste des mesures sociales qui améliorent nettement la vie des gens.

- Le partage des richesses apporte la paix sociale, je laisse en rappel.

- Mais non! C'est de la poudre aux yeux ! Vous allez voir les dettes que nos petits-enfants auront à payer ! Pour l'instant, les dirigeants s'en mettent plein les poches..., tempête-t-il.

- Et les 250 millions...?

- Eux, c'est encore pire... C'est peut-être un die-hard rouge qui est très remonté.

- Et d'ailleurs, vous allez voir, les gouvernants ont tout intérêt à ne pas baisser le prix de l'essence, sinon, les caisses seront vides... Bah!

Un espace patrimonial

La maquette de la Victoria Terminal annonçait une belle réalisation lors de sa conception. Pendant des années, alors que l'autobus scolaire du Q.E.C déversait sa ribambelle de collégiennes devant la gare, ce bâtiment, malgré son style colonial en pierre taillée, faisait partie des fantômes tout de noir vêtus de Port-Louis. Je le trouvais obscur et déprimant.

La nouvelle bâtisse a conservé son cachet d'antan, les pierres taillées sombres se sont illuminées au contact d'une architecture moderne, les divers commerces apportent une animation dans ce lieu excentré de la capitale tout en cassant marchands de rue et boutiques de mode.

C'est un véritable joyau qui a conservé le nom d'un passé impérialiste britannique. Comme le cheddar, il bénéficie d'une intégration au patrimoine local par assimilation au style mauricien, et plutôt, indien. Une réussite que les adeptes de 'tout part à l'eau' auront du mal à nier.

Tree of Knowledge

The Sun Is Always Shining



If darkness has fallen, know that the sun is shining at this very moment, somewhere not too far away.

There are times when gloom or darkness causes us to momentarily lose sight of the light. It is at these times when the thought of the sun can help us. Its warm, glowing rays brighten even our thoughts, and it's good to remember that the sun is shining right now. We may not be able to see it at this very moment, but if clouds block our view, they are filtering the sun's light only temporarily. If darkness has fallen, we know that the sun is still shining somewhere not too far away. It's only a matter of time before it will shine on us again.

When we remember that the sun is shining, we know that things are still in motion in the universe. Even if life feels like it is at a standstill, sometimes all we need to do is have faith and wait for the time when everything is in its perfect place. Or we can choose to follow the cues of the sun and continue doing our work and shining our light, even when we can't see results yet. In doing so, we exercise our patience, making sure we are prepared when opportunity knocks, and all other elements are in their right and perfect places.

The sun also reminds us that our own shining truth is never extinguished. Our light shines within us at all times, no matter what else occurs around us. Though the sun gives us daily proof of its existence, sometimes our belief in our own light requires more time. If we think back, however, we can find moments when it showed itself and trust that we will see it again. Like the sun, our light is the energy that connects us to the movements of the universe and the cycles of life. It is present at all times, whether we feel its glow or not.