

MAURITIUS TIMES

• Politics: A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage. -- Ambrose Bierce

Interview: Lindsay Rivière



“On a maintenant l’assurance d’une belle bagarre électorale dans les mois à venir”

‘Avec 50% d’indécis qui peuvent basculer d’un coté comme de l’autre, c’est le scénario parfait pour un suspense électoral passionnant’

• ‘Ramgoolam et Bérenger ne vont pas se laisser faire facilement, même privés de Xavier Duval’

P 8

Breakfast with Bwana

Cross-Currents – Marching into Different Centuries



Anil Madan P6

Eclairages



A. Bartleby P4

Les mensonges et la tromperie n'ont pas leur place dans la gouvernance

Opinion

The Big Budget Bluff

Ignoring critical IMF recommendations, such as to rebuild fiscal buffers and restore prudent macroeconomic management, the Budget risks compromising economic stability and the country's credit rating



Vinaye Ancharaz P 3

Trust in surgeons is high

Surgery is thus not merely about carrying out operations on patients – for patients are people, and people like to know that the surgeon is not just a technician, but a true-blue professional with warmth and feelings too

Opinion



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee P7

Testing Times Ahead

As elections near, Mauritius finds itself in uncertain times, which could significantly impact its political landscape. It is unclear whether the general elections will happen before or after the scheduled by-election at Constituency No. 10 on October 9th. This ambiguity not only affects the timing of electoral contests but also profoundly influences the dynamics and power balances within the nation's political arena.

The incumbent government has strategically leveraged favourable conditions in preparation for the electoral battleground. The recent expansive distribution of popular measures within the national budget exemplifies a calculated move to strengthen its electoral prospects. At the same time, there are efforts to weaken opposition forces through legal actions. This includes renewed interest in an earlier case involving Richard Duval and Cindy Legallant, and potential revelations, widely suspected, regarding Navin Ramgoolam's past. These are indicative of a broader strategy aimed at neutralising the political adversaries, with the latter one being the principal challenger of the MSM leader.

Amidst these manoeuvres, the pivotal question emerges: what will ultimately sway the voter when they step into the polling booth? In a climate where economic concerns often overshadow broader democratic debates, the electorate's focus on personal economic well-being could outweigh considerations of institutional integrity or governance ethics. This practical perspective highlights the challenge for political contenders to connect with the public on real issues of livelihood and economic stability.

Has the opposition adequately positioned itself for success, both in terms of leadership, cohesion and the efficacy of its campaign strategies? Questions abound regarding the readiness of opposition forces to effectively challenge the incumbent's narrative and policies, crucial in a highly competitive electoral environment. The departure of Xavier Duval from the opposition alliance, coupled with his potential alignment with the MSM-led coalition, introduces another layer of complexity. While the exact reasons for Duval's departure are unclear, its impact on coalition dynamics and electoral results cannot be fathomed at this stage, more so as he has been a staunch critic of many of the actions and policies of the MSM-led dispensation over several years from Opposition benches. We recall that the Duvals lately pooh-poohed an offer believed

to be of 8 MP tickets seats in the defunct LP-MMM-PMSD alliance and would be expected to push for a better bargain with the MSM in terms of tickets and various responsibilities. How will the current junior partners of the MSM welcome such a move and the demands Duval may make to get him over, or how the latter's own constituency and electoral base would react are therefore largely unknown variables.

With stakes running high for leaders across party lines — Navin Ramgoolam and Paul Bérenger from the opposition, and Pravind Jugnauth leading the MSM — strategic considerations loom large. Each leader's handling of these challenges will not only determine their electoral success but also influence the future course of Mauritius' governance, politics and economic policies.

Looking beyond electoral politics, any government will face an imminent economic crisis, as highlighted by Rama Sithanen in a recent radio interview, necessitating bold fiscal reforms and strategic policy interventions. The sustainability of current populist measures is increasingly called into question, highlighting the urgency for sustainable economic policies and long-term planning.

Key economic and social priorities for the next government will need to centre on addressing inflationary pressures, managing public debt, and fostering inclusive growth. Developing effective policies will require a balanced approach, especially in navigating a potentially divided parliamentary landscape to ensure necessary legislative backing.

Moreover, the unprecedented consolidation of state apparatus and apparent politicisation of "independent" institutions pose grave concerns for Mauritius' democratic framework. With the succession of mishaps, the police and other investigative institutions have received in our courts, particularly through provisional charges of "conspiracies" on political opponents, there is a perception that misuse of institutions has to be hemmed in so as to safeguard democratic principles and reinforce public trust in institutions.

In the coming months, the nation's resilience and ability to deal with these multifaceted challenges will be tested. The choices made now will not only shape the outcome of the upcoming elections but also set the course for Mauritius' socio-political landscape in the years ahead.

The Conversation



Flickr/Keir Starmer, CC BY-NC-ND

Is Keir Starmer a socialist?

“I would describe myself as a socialist. I describe myself as a progressive”. These were Labour leader Keir Starmer's words in May 2024 shortly after his first speech of the election campaign. Labour's constitution defines it as a democratic socialist party. So, in theory, Starmer is a socialist.

But what is socialism? One concept of socialism characterises it as being about collective ownership in pursuit of the public good, over private ownership for profit.

Some see a commitment to economic equality as what distinguishes socialism from other ideologies. Others specify co-operation and community reigning over individualism as defining socialism. Or, socialism can be seen as a movement for, or of, the working class.

Whichever it is, democratic socialism is about building a society beyond capitalism.

The day after Starmer proclaimed himself a socialist, his shadow chancellor Rachel Reeves was asked about his statement and responded that she was a social democrat. Social democracy is about socialism, but within capitalism rather than beyond it.

Reeves' definition of social democracy in terms of equal opportunities, good public services, and secure work that pays (very much in tune with Starmer's platform) does not go as far as socialism within capitalism. Others across the political spectrum could agree with the values she outlined.

Starmer was active in socialist politics in his youth. But we should decide where he stands by what he says and does now. Labour's purges of socialists in the party have led some to conclude that Starmer wants rid of those who might try to hold him to socialist principles.

What do Starmer's statements of values and principles tell us? In 2020 he argued for “moral socialism”, so an approach that is based on values as much as structures.

He highlighted injustice especially, but also inequality. There's a left-of-centre or even socialist tone to the moral socialism he advocated then. But was he just trying to win over Corbynite members for his party leadership bid?

In a 2021 pamphlet on his philosophy as leader Starmer shifted to values of security and opportunity, which he has since continued to put centre stage. He said class holds people back, stressed community over individualism, and active government over the free market.

Luke Martell,

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Vinaye Ancharaz

The Big Budget Bluff

Ignoring critical IMF recommendations, such as to rebuild fiscal buffers and restore prudent macroeconomic management, the Budget risks compromising economic stability and the country's credit rating

Every Budget since this regime's first – in 2020 – has had a decisively overt populist flavour and, as such, the population has gotten used to a generous shower of perks at every Budget Speech. With elections on the horizon, the 2024-25 Budget came with pent up expectations; ultimately, it turned out to be a huge disappointment. To be fair, it doled out a string of 'social measures' to various segments of the population, but many were left hungry for more. And middle-income families, the government's cash cow, were tossed some measly crumbs. The Budget had promised to focus on the economy, on social welfare, and on the environment, but it failed miserably in boosting economic resilience or creating a 'feel-good' factor.

There were some positive measures and a few innovative ones, such as the 2% CCR levy on companies, and the setting up of a Climate and Sustainability Fund (CSF), to finance climate change adaptation and mitigation projects. While a modest start toward rallying the Rs 300 billion needed to meet the country's climate needs, this will still leave a financing gap of about 1.6% of GDP per year over 15 years, according to IMF estimates. This amount must be mobilized from global climate funds and by novel instruments such as green or blue bonds. The Budget, including its annexes, failed to make a statement on the future of climate financing in Mauritius.

The Budget has been widely critiqued, and it is none of my intention to repeat what has been said. However, as with Dr Padayachy's past four Budgets, this one too will be remembered, not for what it delivered, but for what it did not; not for the half-truths it said, but for the lies it concealed. Paragraphs 12-20 of the Budget Speech paint a very positive picture of the economic situation but, as usual, the devil lies in the detail.

We're just out of the woods

The Budget speaks of 'strong' GDP growth of 7% in 2023 and 'exceptional' growth of 8.9% in 2022, with GDP reaching Rs 651.7 billion in 2023. However, the Minister omitted to mention that, despite this growth, real GDP per capita at the end of 2023 (\$11,417) was the same as in 2019 before the pandemic (\$11,408). These figures come from the IMF's Article IV Consultation report released last month, and they are a damning verdict on the government's cover-up of the true state of the economy.

The truth is that the economy has only now emerged from the hole it slipped into

following the massive 14.5% decline in output in 2020. During this time, the government engaged in a spending frenzy as if the economy were in a boom!

Investment is up, but consumption remains the locomotive of growth

Gross domestic investment is on the rise, driven mainly by public investment in infrastructure projects, such as the tramway and flyovers. However, this increase is not sustainable and, despite the surge in investment, consumption remains the locomotive of growth in Mauritius.

Moreover, investment as a share of GDP (about 20% in recent years) remains below that of peer countries like Singapore (23%) and Ireland (36%). For long-term growth, it is crucial that investment flows into the productive sectors of the economy. There is a risk that continued heavy investment by the government crowds out critical investment by the private sector.

The bulk of FDI swallowed up by the real estate sector

The Minister celebrated the fact that foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows reached a record high of Rs 37 billion in 2023, but he conveniently forgot to mention that over 60% of these flows have been directed to hotels and property development, with productive sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing together receiving less than 10%, on the average, between 2021 and 2023.

It seems that the Integrated Resort Scheme (IRS) and its recent innovations, such as the Property Development Scheme, have distorted the risk-return trade-off so much in favour of investing in luxury villas (significantly higher return for lower risk) that investing in other sectors

“Inflation has fallen from 10.8% in 2022 to 7% in 2023 and is projected to fall further to 4.9% this year. However, a drop in the inflation rate should not be confused with falling prices. It only means that prices will keep rising, albeit at a reduced pace. Moreover, the inflation forecast of 4.9% does not consider the effects of the budgetary measures, which will increase liquidity in the economy, and cause a further degree of inflation...”



“If measured in US dollars, merchandise exports in 2023 were 26% lower than in 2014 when the MSM government took office. There has been no attempt to diversify exports over the past 10 years, more precisely since the emergence of the tuna canning industry in the early 2000s. Whatever happened to the pharmaceutical hub...? The flourishing business of monkey exports is testament to a country that has run out of ideas...”

has become unattractive for foreign investors. Food security will remain a mere concept unless investment incentives are reset to attract larger volumes of FDI into agriculture and agro-processing.

Stagnating exports

Exports have increased in value...but imports have increased even more. The trade deficit reached a record Rs180 billion in 2023. Imports are three times bigger than exports. Moreover, the Minister conveniently omitted to mention that the increase in exports – whether of goods only, or of goods and services – is purely in nominal terms. If measured in US dollars, merchandise exports in 2023 were 26% lower than in 2014 when the MSM government took office.

There has been no attempt to diversify exports over the past 10 years, more precisely since the emergence of the tuna canning industry in the early 2000s. Whatever happened to the pharmaceutical hub that was announced with great pomp in the 2022-23 Budget? The flourishing business of monkey exports is testament to a country that has run out of ideas.

Services exports too are on an upward trajectory, driven mainly by recovery in the tourism sector, but part of the increase is surely due to a weakening rupee, which inflates all foreign currency receipts.

An annex to the Budget states that the Economic Development Board will develop a national strategy for adventure tourism. This is a welcome initiative to

diversify the tourism product, but there is need to rethink the future of the tourism industry to make it more resilient to external shocks; strengthen its linkages with the local economy; and ensure that the bulk of the sector's foreign exchange earnings is remitted to Mauritius, thus relieving the constant pressure on the rupee.

In other service sectors, the Budget had nothing to propose other than 'blueprints'. For example, a 5-year blueprint is the 'mesure phare' for the Digital Industry, now in 2024, confirming how far the country has fallen behind the digital wave. Similarly, the blueprint for the financial services sector will be reviewed.

Unemployment has become entrenched

Unemployment was down to 6.1% in 2023 according to the Minister. In fact, it should be 6.3%, according to both Statistics Mauritius and the IMF. The IMF predicts that this rate will persist until 2029, which means that structural unemployment, arising from a persistent skills mismatch, has become systemic. The Budget makes no attempt to address this problem – not even mention of a study, or the ubiquitous blueprint.

Elsewhere, the Budget commits to continue supporting the clothing industry by subsidizing wages. Is this strategy viable in the long term given that the industry's workforce is predominantly foreign?

● Cont. on page 16

Par A. Bartleby

Les mensonges et la tromperie n'ont pas leur place dans la gouvernance

Le Pays de Galles pourrait devenir le premier pays à criminaliser les politiques qui mentent

A lors que les élections générales au Royaume-Uni font la une des journaux, une proposition au Senedd (parlement gallois) cherche à résoudre le problème de la perte de confiance dans la politique britannique et le système électoral en introduisant une nouvelle législation criminalisant les mensonges des politiciens.

Une des principales raisons de cette défiance est la croyance généralisée que certains politiciens ont pris l'habitude de mentir au public. Selon Stephen Clear de l'Université de Bangor, une recherche publiée en 2022 montre que le public britannique souhaite massivement voir les politiciens menteurs sanctionnés. Si cette proposition est adoptée, le Pays de Galles deviendrait le premier pays au monde à sanctionner pénalement les politiciens pour mensonge.

Une proposition révolutionnaire

Les propositions sont menées par l'ancien leader de Plaid Cymru, Adam Price, qui décrit un "fossé de crédibilité" dans la politique britannique comme un "abîme béant". Price pousse pour de tels changements depuis le milieu des années 2000, lorsqu'il a fait campagne pour la destitution de Tony Blair à cause de la guerre en Irak.

Selon les propositions, il serait une infraction pénale pour un membre du Senedd, ou un candidat à l'élection au Senedd, de faire ou publier délibérément une déclaration fautive ou trompeuse. Les poursuites devraient être engagées dans les six mois suivant la date de la déclaration.

Il serait considéré comme une défense s'il pouvait être "raisonnablement déduit" que la déclaration était une opinion, ou si elle était rétractée avec des excuses dans les 14 jours. Être poursuivi en vertu d'une telle loi disqualifierait une personne d'être membre du Senedd.

Nécessité d'une telle loi?

Le code ministériel gallois existe déjà pour maintenir les standards de conduite des ministres. Le Senedd dispose d'un commissaire aux standards indépendant, qui fournit des conseils impartiaux sur toute question de principe relative à la conduite des membres du Senedd.



Une recherche publiée en 2022 montre que le public britannique souhaite massivement voir les politiciens menteurs sanctionnés. P - Le Point

Il existe également les principes de Nolan, qui s'appliquent à ceux qui sont élus ou nommés à des fonctions publiques à travers le Royaume-Uni. Ces principes incluent "l'intégrité", "l'ouverture" et "l'honnêteté". Le problème du régime actuel est un manque d'application. Au-delà de la responsabilité envers les électeurs lors des élections, il y a très peu de répercussions lorsque les politiciens trompent le public.

Vers un changement de culture politique

Les lois pourraient être un tremplin pour rétablir la confiance et faciliter l'application de normes d'une manière différente, avec des garanties légales. En termes de standards, cela alignerait davantage les politiciens sur ce qui est attendu d'autres professions, telles que celles des avocats et des médecins. Ces professionnels ne sont pas criminalisés à moins de violer explicitement la loi, mais ils sont tenus responsables s'ils ne respectent pas certaines normes et peuvent être radiés en conséquence.

La confiance dans la politique est un problème à l'échelle du Royaume-Uni, et il est triste de constater qu'une loi rappelant aux politiciens de ne pas mentir est même envisagée. Cependant, un changement de culture en politique est manifestement nécessaire.

L'introduction d'une législation criminalisant les mensonges des politiciens serait une avancée significative dans la restauration de la confiance du public dans le système politique. Cette proposition de loi au Pays de Galles est une réponse audacieuse à la méfiance généralisée envers les politiciens. Elle pourrait servir de modèle pour d'autres pays, tout comme le nôtre, confrontés à des défis similaires.

Cependant, la mise en œuvre de cette loi pourrait s'avérer complexe. Il faudra surmonter des obstacles juridiques et politiques

considérables, notamment en ce qui concerne les compétences dévolues et la définition précise de ce qui constitue un mensonge ou une déclaration trompeuse. Malgré ces défis, l'idée d'une telle loi souligne l'importance de l'intégrité et de la transparence dans la politique. Si elle est adoptée, cette loi pourrait contribuer à un changement culturel nécessaire, en rappelant aux politiciens qu'ils sont responsables de leurs paroles et de leurs actes.

A Maurice, les citoyens restent sceptiques malgré les efforts déployés par certains politiciens pour rétablir leur honneur face à des accusations de malversation et de corruption, que ce soit en lien avec des emplois fictifs, des fêtes de luxe (Stag/Rave Parties), ou l'attribution de contrats dans des secteurs tels que l'énergie et les infrastructures publiques. Les nombreux cas non-résolus au sein de l'ICAC témoignent de l'ampleur du problème et alimentent une méfiance généralisée envers les politiciens.

Selon Henley & Partners

Maurice: l'un des meilleurs 'millionnaires' havens' à l'échelle mondiale



Maurice - l'un des huit meilleurs refuges fiscaux pour les millionnaires. P - Pam Golding Properties

Maurice a récemment été désignée comme l'un des huit 'millionnaires' havens' (meilleurs refuges fiscaux pour les millionnaires) à l'échelle mondiale. Cette reconnaissance fait suite à une série de rapports mettant en lumière les raisons populaires qui poussent les millionnaires à migrer vers des destinations telles que Maurice.

Un pays refuge est une nation souveraine offrant des niveaux élevés de sécurité, protégée en grande partie des problèmes économiques et politiques mondiaux. Selon un récent rapport sur la migration de la richesse publié par Henley & Partners, la reconnaissance de Maurice en tant que

refuge fiscal pour les millionnaires souligne non seulement ses attraits économiques et sécuritaires, mais aussi "son ascension remarquable sur la scène mondiale de la richesse". Cette tendance de migration vers des destinations comme Maurice reflète les choix stratégiques des individus fortunés à la recherche de stabilité et d'opportunités d'investissement dans un monde en constante évolution économique et politique.

D'autres pays de cette catégorie comprennent l'Australie, la Suisse, Singapour, les Émirats Arabes Unis, la Nouvelle-Zélande, Malte et Monaco, rapporte Business Insider Africa. Ces pays ont réussi à dynamiser leurs économies en attirant des individus fortunés à s'y installer, avec tous prévoyant un afflux net de plus de 200 millionnaires en 2024.

Maurice, actuellement le marché de la richesse à la croissance la plus rapide en Afrique et le troisième au niveau mondial, a connu une augmentation impressionnante de +87 % du nombre de millionnaires au cours de la dernière décennie. Seule nation africaine de cette liste, Maurice est devenue une destination de plus en plus prisée pour les millionnaires en provenance d'Afrique du Sud, du Royaume-Uni et de France.

☞ Suite en page 5

Selon Henley & Partners

Maurice: l'un des meilleurs 'millionnaires' havens' à l'échelle mondiale

Suite de page 4

Pourquoi les pays refuges attirent-ils les riches du monde entier?

Les raisons courantes qui poussent les millionnaires à migrer vers ces pays incluent les niveaux élevés de sécurité, les systèmes bancaires et de gestion de la richesse bien développés et respectés, ainsi que des bases solides pour investir sur les marchés boursiers mondiaux, ce qui est particulièrement important pour les investisseurs et financiers internationaux.

Le rapport de Henley & Partners pour 2024 présente les derniers flux nets de millionnaires (c'est-à-dire la différence entre le nombre de "High Net Worth Individuals" (HNWIs) ayant une richesse investissable liquide de 1 million de dollars ou plus qui déménagent dans un pays et ceux qui en émigrent) projetés par la firme mondiale de renseignement sur la richesse, New World Wealth, qui surveille les tendances de migration de la richesse depuis plus d'une décennie.



P - sothebysrealty.mu

L'année 2024 s'annonce comme un tournant majeur dans la migration mondiale de la richesse, avec un nombre sans précédent de 128 000 millionnaires attendus pour s'installer dans divers pays à travers le monde. Cette migration massive est un indicateur clé des changements profonds qui affectent le paysage mondial et les dynamiques de pouvoir et de richesse, avec des implications

significatives pour l'avenir des nations qu'ils quittent ou là où ils s'établissent.

Les Émirats Arabes Unis maintiennent leur position de leader mondial

Avec son absence d'impôt sur le revenu, ses visas dorés, son style de vie luxueux et sa situation stratégique, les Émirats Arabes Unis se sont solidement établis comme la destination numéro un mondiale pour les millionnaires migrants. On estime qu'ils accueilleront un afflux net et record de 6 700 millionnaires cette année seulement. Avec des entrées importantes en provenance du Royaume-Uni, de l'Europe et de la Russie, les Émirats Arabes Unis devraient attirer près de deux fois plus de millionnaires que leur plus proche concurrent, les États-Unis.

Singapour occupe à nouveau la troisième place cette année avec des entrées nettes de 3 500, tandis que les destinations populaires traditionnelles pour les millionnaires migrants, comme le Canada et l'Australie, suivent respectivement aux 4e et 5e places avec des entrées nettes de 3 200 et 2 500.

En conclusion, la migration des millionnaires vers ces pays est non seulement bénéfique en termes de revenus de devises étrangères, mais elle stimule également la création d'emplois locaux grâce à la proportion élevée d'entrepreneurs et de fondateurs d'entreprises parmi eux. Cette tendance de migration, alimentée par des motivations telles que la recherche d'un style de vie amélioré, de meilleures conditions de sécurité et d'accès à des services de santé et d'éducation de qualité, continue de redéfinir les dynamiques économiques mondiales et régionales.

Trump n'est pas encore un criminel condamné

Un professeur de droit de Yale critique le verdict du procès sur l'argent versé pour acheter le silence de Stormy Daniels



Donald Trump est devenu jeudi 30 mai le premier président américain à être condamné par la justice pénale. P - Le Journal de Montréal

L'ex-président américain Donald Trump est devenu jeudi 30 mai le premier président américain à être condamné par la justice pénale lorsqu'un jury new-yorkais l'a déclaré coupable d'avoir falsifié des documents pour dissimuler un paiement visant à réduire au silence une star du porno Stormy Daniels avant l'élection de 2016.

Après deux jours de délibérations, les 12 membres du jury ont annoncé qu'ils avaient reconnu Donald Trump, en campagne pour un retour à la Maison-Blanche, coupable des 34 chefs d'accusation retenus contre lui. L'unanimité était requise pour tout verdict.

Le candidat présumé du Parti républicain pour 2024 sera condamné le 11 juillet,

ce qui pourrait finalement l'envoyer en prison juste à temps pour la Convention nationale républicaine à Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Cependant, en attendant, un professeur de droit de Yale, Jed Rubinfeld, a lancé un nouveau podcast, «Straight Down the Middle», affirmant que l'ex-président n'est pas encore un criminel condamné. En disséquant comment l'équipe juridique de Trump pourrait atténuer l'impact du verdict du procès criminel sur les prochaines élections présidentielles, Rubinfeld a pesé sur les options dont dispose l'ancien président.

Selon le professeur de droit constitutionnel, bien que Trump puisse contester la condamnation par un appel à travers le système de la Cour d'appel de New York pour se tourner vers la Cour suprême, cela

«prendrait des années» pour fonctionner en sa faveur et pourrait même infliger un «préjudice irréparable».

«Bien sûr, cela prendrait des années, et c'est un problème ici... C'est un problème parce que l'élection aura eu lieu, et si cette condamnation est illégale et inconstitutionnelle, cela pourrait avoir un effet sur cette élection», a déclaré Rubinfeld dans son podcast.

En considérant que la condamnation pourrait être annulée en appel des années plus tard, Rubinfeld a souligné que les effets néfastes se seraient déjà produits d'ici là.

Se tournant également vers les sondages montrant une augmentation considérable de la popularité de Trump depuis le verdict de culpabilité, avec de nombreux électeurs affirmant qu'ils voteraient encore pour l'ancien président s'il est condamné, Rubinfeld a déclaré qu'une condamnation illégale, dans ce cas, pourrait interférer avec, et en fait décider du résultat de, la prochaine élection du prochain président des États-Unis.

En même temps, Rubinfeld a détaillé comment c'était une «très mauvaise image pour ce pays» de cibler pénalement un ancien président. Il a insisté que c'est une image particulièrement mauvaise lorsque les personnes portant l'affaire et le juge sont membres du parti politique opposé. En outre, il a allégué que l'État «cachait le contenu des charges réelles jusqu'au procès

et... pendant le procès» car le crime de Trump est «si flou».

* * *

Se présenter à la présidence des États-Unis depuis la prison? Eugene V. Debs l'a fait, il y a un siècle

Cependant, même si la sentence de Trump implique du temps derrière les barreaux, cela ne signifie pas que sa campagne pour revenir à la Maison Blanche prend fin. Il ne serait même pas le premier candidat à se présenter à ce poste tout en étant emprisonné. Ce morceau d'histoire appartient à Eugene V. Debs, qui s'est présenté sous la bannière du Parti socialiste en 1920 - et a recueilli presque un million de voix, soit environ 3 %.

Les circonstances sont évidemment différentes. Debs, malgré son influence et sa renommée, était effectivement un candidat marginal cette année-là; Trump a déjà occupé le poste et se présente comme le candidat quasi-certain de l'un des deux principaux partis politiques du pays. Mais il y a aussi des similitudes.

Qui était Debs?

Debs, né en 1855, est devenu une voix forte plaidant pour les causes des travailleurs dès son jeune âge. Membre et dirigeant syndical fervent, il a été envoyé en prison pour six mois après la grève ferroviaire de Pullman en 1894, car il avait violé une injonction fédérale contre la grève.

A. Bartleby

Suite en page 16



Anil Madan

Cross-Currents – Marching into Different Centuries

Thailand took one step forward and one backward. Thailand moved forward into the 21st Century when it became the first country in Southeast Asia to recognize same-sex marriage. At about the same time, the former Prime Minister of Thailand, Thaksin Shinawatra was indicted for defaming the country's monarchy. He returned to Thailand last year from a self-imposed exile, or perhaps to evade a jail term, on corruption charges. He served his sentence in a hospital and was released on parole in February.

Thaksin Shinawatra remains a force in Thai politics as the unofficial power behind the leading party in the government. This upsets the conservative establishment that ousted him from power in 2006. Thailand continues to enforce the doctrine of *lèse majesté* as it marches back to the 14th Century. Or is it the 12th?

Getting back to Thailand's march forward, its Senate voted overwhelmingly in favour of the same-sex marriage bill. For those who care to check the tally, out of 152, it was 130 in favour, 4 opposed, and 18 abstaining.

Thailand follows Taiwan and Nepal in legalizing same-sex marriage.

India's Supreme Court, undecided about which Century it wishes to inhabit, has issued contradictory rulings. In 2018, it signalled a move into the 21st Century when it decriminalized consensual same-sex conduct.

Meanwhile the Indian government refused to recognize same-sex marriages under the Special Marriage Act.

India's Supreme Court has long been accused of pandering to the government. Before the case challenging the government's obduracy was to be heard, the Solicitor General represented that a parliamentary committee would be formed to study providing limited rights to same-sex partners. This was a signal as to the desired outcome.

In October last year, the Supreme Court obliged by posturing as a Colossus straddling two centuries and declared that while discrimination against same-sex couples must end, it is for the Parliament of India to legalize same-sex marriage.

India remains mired somewhere between the 12th and 14th Centuries.

Meanwhile, in the US there is Project 2025, a movement of right-wing yahoos seeking a retro march for this nation.



Thailand moved forward into the 21st Century when it became the first country in Southeast Asia to recognize same-sex marriage. At about the same time, the former Prime Minister of Thailand, Thaksin Shinawatra was indicted for defaming the country's monarchy. Pic - apnews.com

They envision creating a new America based on their so-called "Christian" values tinged with hatred and intolerance. Under their preferred regimen, the government would no longer treat abortion as health care and healthcare plans would no longer provide contraception services. Among the so-called Christian principles they espouse, pornography would be criminalized, and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity would no longer be illegal. It is not clear how they intend to avoid the Supreme Court's decision legalizing same-sex marriage, but they have plans. After all, respect for the law is a new-fangled concept in their universe.

The Center for Reproductive Rights reports that over the past 30 years, more than 60 countries and territories have liberalized their abortion laws. From

“From Putin’s attempt to destroy the Ukrainian people to Iran’s call for the destruction of Israel, to Hamas’ and Hezbollah’s echo of that message, to Bibi Netanyahu’s unrelenting assault on the civilian population of Gaza, there is no end to the destruction that we humans visit on each other. China threatens to invade Taiwan. To what end? When you ponder all this, it really is a surprise that some fool has not set off a nuclear war...”

Ireland to Nepal, abortion rights are becoming recognized as fundamental human rights for millions of people worldwide. And in Latin America, Colombia, Mexico, and Argentina have joined the march to the 21st Century.

Meanwhile, back in the US, the Supreme Court took the nation on an archaeological dig back to the 12th Century by declaring that the US Constitution does not guarantee a woman the right to decide if she will carry a pregnancy to term.

America's right-wing fundamentalists, fascists, misogynists, and low life Neanderthals, exult in what they see as the restoration of their power to control the lives of women. There are movements afoot in many southern states in America to limit or deny access to abortion and to impose criminal penalties not only on women who seek abortions, but on health care professionals and others who assist them in getting abortion services and care, even when they are victims of abuse, rape, or in danger of dying from unstable pregnancies and associated medical complications.

Doctors, nurses, and midwives now fear that they will be prosecuted by zealous right-wing prosecutors if they try to help women who are desperately in need of abortion health care. Farah Diaz-Tello, a senior counsel and legal director for the abortion rights group If/When/How, reported that a social worker warned her that clients seeking an abortion had to be

reported to law enforcement because abortion was illegal, and they (the clients) were a threat to the unborn child. This is, of course, wrong "on so many levels, it's staggering," she said.

What we are seeing is, as television host Bill Maher put it, the emergence of a new kind of apartheid against women. It is not just the hijab or burqa, or niqab, that shuts women in and deprives them of their personalities and the right to interact with fellow humans, but the unmistakable message that they are lesser beings.

A Texas woman who became pregnant with twins and learned that one of them would not survive could not even get medics to utter the word "abortion" for fear that they would be prosecuted. One specialist tore of his gloves in frustration and told her she would need to leave the state.

"He was right," she recalled. Days later, she was back in the hospital vomiting so severely that she feared the placenta would detach and she would bleed out. "I was at risk of organ damage to my kidneys and brain — but I wasn't dead enough for an abortion in Texas."

The Ayatollahs of Iran seek to enforce their hijab requirements in draconian fashion. Is Mahsa Amini dead enough for them?

It's not just the march back to antediluvian times when it comes to abortion and same-sex marriage. There are those hellbent on marching backwards and killing their fellow man.

From Putin's attempt to destroy the Ukrainian people to Iran's call for the destruction of Israel, to Hamas' and Hezbollah's echo of that message, to Bibi Netanyahu's unrelenting assault on the civilian population of Gaza, there is no end to the destruction that we humans visit on each other. China threatens to invade Taiwan. To what end?

When you ponder all this, it really is a surprise that some fool has not set off a nuclear war since Hiroshima and Nagasaki taught us — maybe — that the march to a previous Century is merely a step backward where we will find the worst of ourselves.

It almost makes one afraid to contemplate what we will see of ourselves in the next Century. If we make it.

Cheerz...
Bwana



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

Trust in surgeons is high

Surgery is thus not merely about carrying out operations on patients – for patients are people, and people like to know that the surgeon is not just a technician, but a true-blue professional with warmth and feelings too

In general, the health sector and the medical profession in particular are the frequent targets of negative criticisms. Common in normal times, this was boosted during the Covid pandemic, when health services in all countries including the most advanced ones with the highest healthcare expenditures. Overwhelmed, they came under fire for their inadequate organizational response and incapacity to cope with the quasi-tsunami that the pandemic was. In many countries its protracted impact is still being felt, in terms of lengthy appointment times for consultations and needed interventions.

So, it was a redemption of sorts to see the positive vibes on the bright cover of the American Newsweek magazine recently. Below the headline 'A Cut Above' one could read the following reassuring words – 'Why **surgeons** are the **most trusted** health care operators.'

Since I am a surgeon, that message naturally warmed the cockles of my heart, as the saying goes. And just as naturally I promptly went on to read the extensive article that expanded on the topic to find out the details. Along with the views of several prominent surgeons in different specialties, it also had the typically American 'Ivy League' list of the best surgeons in major specialties across the country.

Two well-known common words came to the fore: trust and touch. Not a mystical or a magical touch, but just a warm, comforting human touch that signals healing, and that flows from the trust on which rests the sacrosanct doctor-patient relationship. Unlike in other specialties, where the doctor treats either with medications or intermediary procedures such as XRays/scans/ laboratory investigations, in surgery the patient literally hands over his body to the surgeon to operate upon, most often under general anaesthesia, and has no control whatsoever over what is being done: which he performs assumes must be for his good.

And that is the reason why that fundamental element of **trust** is an absolute.

But before that stage in the patient-surgeon consultation is reached and successfully seen through to the expected outcome, many other factors come in: attentive listening and questioning, clarity in communication between the two parties, empathy and compassion, understanding, confidence, availability – these are some of the essential variables that colour the human and humane dimension



Pic - Medika Life

“Any kind of surgery can be associated with complications, both during the procedure and afterwards, in what is known as the post-operative period. One must be trained to recognize and deal with these. For example, one of the most feared complications in any kind of surgery is unexpected and sometimes uncontrollable bleeding, which not only stresses the surgeon but poses an enormous challenge as he attempts to stop the bleeding. In this context, the words of... Prof John Bailey come to my mind: 'I can train a monkey to do this operation in seven days, but if a complication were to develop during the operation, it will take me seven years to train that monkey to deal with it!'”

that is the hallmark of any surgical endeavour. It can lead the 'parties' into a partnership that can even at times blossom into life-long friendships. Certainly, for me and a few of my seniors in our country, this has been our fortunate and happy experience, and that has contributed to make our lives mutually more purposeful and meaningful.

Surgery is thus not merely about carrying out operations on patients and being done with it – for patients are people, and people like to know that the surgeon is not just a technician, but a true-blue professional with warmth and feelings too, over and above being competent. In other words, humans like him or her.

On the other hand, surgery does not mean treatment solely by means of operation, for there are three stages that a surgeon goes through in the course of his professional career:

1. **How** to operate – i.e. learning the techniques of operating, ideally in an apprenticeship system, but nowadays supplemented by training in virtual reality mode where this is available;
2. **When** to operate – what surgeons

call the 'indication' for operation, which includes its timing; and

3. **When not** to operate, perhaps the most critical of the three stages, which comes with experience and where the advice of an experienced colleague may need to be sought by the surgeon newly embarking on his career.

For often the young surgeon wanting to prove himself quickly is keen to do as many operations as possible, what in the jargon is called being 'knife-happy'.

The fact is, however, that operation may not always be necessary even if this appears to be so initially. A judicious period of waiting and close observation may lead the careful surgeon to change his opinion about the need for surgery.

Further, any kind of surgery can be associated with complications, both during the procedure and afterwards, in what is known as the post-operative period. One must be trained to recognize and deal with these. For example, one of the most feared complications in any kind of surgery is unexpected and sometimes uncontrollable bleeding, which not only

stresses the surgeon but poses an enormous challenge as he attempts to stop the bleeding.

In this context, the words of two famous surgeons come to my mind. Prof John Bailey, whose 'Textbook of Surgery' (co-authored with Prof Love) was the standard text for generations of medical students and trainee surgeons (at least in the Anglo-Saxon world) wrote in his account of emergency appendix operation in his other book 'Emergency Surgery': 'I can train a monkey to do this operation in seven days, but if a complication were to develop during the operation, it will take me seven years to train that monkey to deal with it!'

The other surgeon is Prof Francis D. Moore, who was on the cover of TIME magazine when I was in HSC and had already decided then that I would be a doctor. In reply to a question from the journalist, he said, 'There is no such thing as minor surgery or major surgery; there are only minor surgeons and major surgeons.' Not until I became a surgeon did I fully understand the import and importance of these words, amongst others that even minor surgery can be complicated by an adverse event that requires as much skill to handle as when tackling a major procedure.

Of course, we are far from the days of the bloody wars such the Crimean War or the American Civil War, when surgeons had to, among others, amputate mangled or gangrenous limbs without anaesthesia, with attendants holding down the screaming soldier despite a dose of opium or of a strong alcoholic drink. For the advent of anaesthesia has dramatically transformed the practice of surgery, which is now carried out painlessly and in a much safer environment to minimize the risk of infection.

The goals of surgery are universal: 1. Save life 2. Save Limb 3. Prevent infection 4. Prevent deformity – and they are aligned with the core objective of all medical treatment, namely: returning the patient to the community in the fittest state possible to fulfil his role as a useful member of society.

Readers interested to explore further these dimensions of surgical practice in the Mauritian context may wish to go through 'My Most Memorable Patients' (available on Amazon.com in Kindle format), which details the surgical encounters of about 70 patients selected from the thousands that were treated over a lifetime of practice.

Lindsay Rivière

“On a maintenant l’assurance d’une belle bagarre électorale dans les mois à venir”

‘Avec 50% d’indécis qui peuvent basculer d’un côté comme de l’autre, c’est le scénario parfait pour un suspense électoral passionnant’

Maurice traverse une période d’incertitude politique car le paysage politique est en constante évolution. Des questions demeurent persistantes sur la date des prochaines élections générales qui pourraient être avancées avant l’élection partielle prévue le 9 octobre dans la circonscription n° 10 ou cette date pourrait aussi être annulée pour adopter une autre stratégie électorale. Cette incertitude influence non seulement le calendrier électoral mais aussi la dynamique politique et les rapports de force entre les différents acteurs politiques. Face à ces enjeux cruciaux, Lindsay Rivière, analyste politique chevronné, partage ses perspectives sur la situation politique actuelle dans le pays.

Mauritius Times: Nous sommes actuellement dans une période d’incertitude, que ce soit concernant la tenue des prochaines élections générales (qui devraient avoir lieu soit avant l’élection partielle au No. 10 fixée pour le 9 octobre prochain, soit après), ou la dynamique politique et le rapport des forces prévalant sur l’échiquier. Quelle est votre analyse de la situation politique actuelle dans le pays?

Lindsay Rivière: Le Premier ministre cultive, en effet, le flou quant à la date ou la période des élections, ce qui lui permet de demeurer le maître du jeu et ce qui lui donne la possibilité de prendre à tout moment ses adversaires par surprise. C’est là son privilège et il entend bien l’utiliser à son avantage. Il faut espérer qu’il ne nous fera pas «un coup à la Macron» avec une trop courte campagne aux allures de plébiscite et ne permettant pas à tous de s’y préparer comme il le faut.

Des «élections anticipées», disons en août, lui permettraient d’exploiter à fond les effets du budget qui, généralement, a

été bien reçu par une bonne partie de la population. S’il opte pour cette période, il ne faudrait pas trop attendre pour cela, car l’effet des mesures populaires du budget s’évaporerait avec le temps et avec la montée inexorable des prix et les difficultés de la vie quotidienne.

Il ne faut pourtant pas exclure la possibilité que les mesures budgétaires récentes ne soient que la première de deux séries de ‘sweeteners’ prévus, avec une deuxième opération du genre un peu plus tard, vers octobre/novembre pour préparer définitivement la voie à des élections, cette fois en décembre. Le gouvernement a peut-être à l’esprit un 14ème mois (surtout si Xavier Duval en fait une condition essentielle d’une alliance PMSD-MSM), précédant l’entrée en vigueur de la pension à Rs 15,000 le 1er janvier 2025.

A ne pas exclure une possible baisse importante des prix du pétrole et du gaz, etc. Des élections en décembre se dérouleraient aussi dans une ambiance festive plus décontractée, avec un ‘feel-good factor’ plus grand. Personnellement, je crois



toutefois qu’août aura les faveurs de Pravind Jugnauth. N’oublions pas que beaucoup de choses (positives ou négatives) peuvent arriver d’ici décembre, quand tout le monde aura oublié le Budget.

*** Comment cette incertitude impacte-t-elle la vie politique mauricienne, selon vous?**

Cet air de mystère paralyse quelque peu le jeu politique, en ce sens que

l’Opposition, aux moyens limités, n’ose pas lancer dans de grandes réunions de mobilisation coûteuses, et que

ceux qui espèrent se porter candidats ne peuvent pas véritablement se positionner et travailler des circonscriptions.

Toute confirmation de candidatures plongerait les partis dans des soubresauts internes qui pourraient bien résulter en des mécontentements, divisions et départs qu’aucun leader ne souhaite vraiment.

*** Qu’en est-il du rapport de forces**

actuel? Quelle analyse en faites-vous?

Je crois que les meetings du 1er Mai et le Budget ont permis une utile clarification des enjeux et du rapport de forces.

Devant la surprenante apathie de l’Opposition Ptr-MMM avant le 1er mai, certains penchaient vers un possible ‘walk-over’ aux prochaines élections. Or, avec l’ampleur de la mobilisation réussie de l’Opposition, on a maintenant l’assurance d’une belle bagarre électorale dans les mois à venir. Avec deux grands blocs nationaux s’équilibrant plus ou moins et 50% d’indécis qui peuvent basculer d’un côté comme de l’autre, c’est le scénario parfait pour un suspense électoral passionnant.

Ce qui est sûr désormais, c’est que Ramgoolam et Bérenger ne vont pas se laisser faire facilement, même privés de Xavier Duval. Pendant longtemps, la force du gouvernement aura surtout été la faiblesse apparente de l’Opposition.

☞ Suite en page 9

“Le gouvernement bénéficiera du contrôle des institutions et de l’agenda électoral, des promesses budgétaires et de moyens matériels étendus pour confondre le PTR et le MMM, relégués à une opposition jugée stérile depuis dix ans. Le ralliement, aujourd’hui probable, de Xavier Duval et du PMSD viendrait accentuer symboliquement la force de frappe du MSM. On assistera donc à un choc frontal entre deux grands blocs ‘nationaux’ multi-ethniques...”

'Ramgoolam et Bérenger ne vont pas se laisser faire facilement, même privés de Xavier Duval'

☞ Suite de la page 8

L'Opposition confirme qu'elle réclamera essentiellement un 'vote-anti', axé sur le pouvoir d'achat qui se dégrade, la hausse vertigineuse et incontrôlée des prix, les difficultés du quotidien, les dangers confrontant la démocratie et les institutions et, enfin, l'indignation par rapport à la gouvernance du pays, etc.

En face, le gouvernement entend bien utiliser au mieux sa force de frappe considérable liée à son bilan des sept dernières années (à partir de 2017) et à la solide politique sociale menée. Il bénéficiera du contrôle des institutions et de l'agenda électoral, des promesses budgétaires et de moyens matériels étendus pour confondre le PTr et le MMM, relégués à une opposition jugée stérile depuis dix ans. Le ralliement, aujourd'hui probable, de Xavier Duval et du PMSD viendrait accentuer symboliquement la force de frappe du MSM. On assistera donc à un choc frontal entre deux grands blocs 'nationaux' multi-ethniques, semblable à celui de 2014.

* Et quid d'une troisième force?

Les autres petits partis extra-parlementaires, selon moi, n'ont aucune chance de s'affirmer et d'obtenir des élus hors d'un ralliement même tardif à l'un des deux blocs, en raison de notre système électoral.

Il est toujours possible qu'après réflexion, Xavier Duval tente de faire venir à lui Bruno Laurette et Patrick Belcourt pour renforcer le PMSD. Puis, dans un deuxième temps, faire le lien avec Nando Bodha, Rama Valayden et Roshi Bhadain pour constituer un autre bloc



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lui permettrait de faire taire les frustrations chez les Bleus, etc.

Le PMSD, avec son optique «Rézilta lor rézilta» est psychologiquement davantage un parti de gouvernement qu'un parti d'opposition.

* Mais Xavier Duval semble hésiter à officialiser son ralliement à l'alliance dirigée par le MSM. Par ailleurs, il n'a pas encore expliqué les véritables raisons de son départ de l'alliance de l'opposition. Avez-vous compris ce qui a motivé son départ?

Xavier Duval aime bien Navin Ramgoolam avec lequel il a une longue amitié et collaboration, mais il déteste profondément, instinctivement, Paul Bérenger. Duval se situe toujours politiquement là où Bérenger n'est pas. Il est embêté que Bérenger ait pris la place du PMSD auprès de Ramgoolam et obtienne deux fois plus de tickets (17) que le PMSD (8).

En politique, il est connu, après un peu d'hypocrisie, les masques tombent.

Xavier Duval déteste l'arrogance proverbiale de Paul Bérenger, ainsi que son manque de respect envers ses alliés et ses adversaires. La raison profonde du dernier désaccord semble être le fait que Bérenger aurait voulu exercer pratiquement un droit de veto sur les candidatures et les circonscriptions du PMSD. D'ailleurs, le leader du MMM ne semble pas être trop contrarié par le départ de Xavier Duval de l'alliance: il a immédiatement récupéré 5 des 8 tickets alloués au PMSD, portant ainsi le quota du MMM à un niveau plus honorable de 22, contre 35 pour Ramgoolam.

Il faudra maintenant voir ce qu'il adviendra des Nouveaux Démocrates auxquels on a alloué 3 tickets. Paul Bérenger et le MMM, historiquement, ne croient que dans le rapport de forces, pas trop dans les sentiments. Les Nouveaux Démocrates devront maintenant faire leur preuve qu'ils apportent quelque chose au banquet. Autrement...!

* En fin de compte, ce qui est évident toutefois, c'est que les enjeux sont élevés pour les leaders de l'Opposition, notamment Navin Ramgoolam et Paul Bérenger, ainsi que pour celui du MSM, Pravind Jugnauth. Ils en sont conscients, sans aucun doute. Comment cela pourrait-il influencer leurs stratégies à l'approche des élections?

Avec le départ de Xavier Duval, Navin Ramgoolam et Paul Bérenger sont désormais condamnés à s'entendre. À 77 ans, c'est leur dernier combat électoral. Sans alliance, le parti de chaque leader serait laminé dans de nombreuses circonscriptions, tandis que Pravind Jugnauth, à 62 ans, serait là pour encore dix ans. La cohabitation Ramgoolam-Bérenger durera donc. Nécessité fait loi!

'Il est temps que tous les Mauriciens bénéficient du développement extraordinaire des 40 dernières années. Mon souhait est de voir émerger une immense classe moyenne à Maurice'

électoral et rechercher une 'troisième voie' alternative «Ni Jugnauth, ni Ramgoolam» qu'il pourrait, lui, peut-être diriger. Mais cette manœuvre pourrait se révéler hasardeuse et même dangereuse pour lui car le PMSD pourrait être complètement éliminé de la scène politique.

Mais ceci n'exclut pas cela : Une fois ces rapprochements effectués et Xavier Duval prenant la direction effective d'un troisième bloc, rien n'empêcherait qu'un PMSD renforcé négocie une alliance avec l'un des deux

autres blocs, soit pour mieux négocier avec Pravind Jugnauth, ou pour revenir plus fort vers Navin Ramgoolam. L'état-major et les partisans PMSD sont fatigués d'être dans l'opposition, après 10 ans de traversée du désert. Ils veulent retrouver et exercer le pouvoir. Et ce n'est fort probablement pas une alliance avec Linion Moris qui permettra au PMSD de revenir au pouvoir.

* Pourquoi Pravind Jugnauth aurait-il autant besoin du PMSD?

Pour la valeur symbolique de ce parti auprès des minorités. Le PM a beaucoup courtisé l'électorat rural pendant son deuxième mandat, mais moins le vote des minorités et cela a des conséquences. Il lui faut désormais des ralliements qui lui permettent d'améliorer ses chances auprès des électeurs de la population générale et du milieu musulman. La Plateforme Militante de Steven Obeegadoo et d'Alan Ganoo ne semble pas pouvoir lui apporter, en régions urbaines, ce que Xavier Duval et le PMSD lui apporteraient.

Le PMSD, en retour, pourrait négocier avec le PM une quinzaine de tickets, le poste de Premier ministre-adjoint, des ministres, des nominations dans les ambassades et les corps parapublics, une répartition plus équilibrée des postes dans la fonction publique et parapublique, ce qui

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☞ Suite en page 10

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Suite de la page 9

* Le pouvoir met en place de manière systématique et réfléchie des conditions favorables en vue de la bataille électorale : distribution élargie de mesures populaires dans le cadre du dernier budget, et tentative de fragilisation de l’opposition à travers la poursuite des adversaires politiques. Richard Duval en a fait l’expérience dans une affaire datant de 16 ans impliquant Cindy Legallant. Il est probable que Navin Ramgoolam soit également sous le feu des critiques ou des révélations concernant les coffres-forts saisis chez lui en 2015 lors des débats sur le “Political Financing Bill”. Quelle est votre opinion sur cette situation?

Il y aura une personnalisation extrême de la campagne. Le MSM sait que Navin Ramgoolam est vulnérable sur plusieurs aspects, et concentrera donc la campagne sur lui, sur son passé, son âge, les procès qu’il traîne et ses outrances passées.

L’Opposition visera le Premier ministre en lui faisant porter le chapeau pour tout ce qui ne va pas dans ce pays, le dépeignant comme un incompetent pour le poste, faible envers ses amis, et responsable d’une dégradation sans précédent de la vie publique. Il est probable que cette campagne sera dure, tendue, voire même sale, et il sera crucial de gérer efficacement les tensions qui en résulteront.

* Au regard de l’opportunité de l’électorat dont une grande partie

“Il est plus que temps que tous les Mauriciens indistinctement trouvent leur compte dans l’extraordinaire développement qu’a connu le pays depuis 40 ans. Pour assurer cela, il faut pourtant des politiques de progression de la richesse nationale plus agressives. Mon souhait secret est que se développe à Maurice une immense classe moyenne, qui serait une garantie de stabilité sociale et de progrès continu...”

serait probablement plus préoccupée par leur portefeuille que par des questions liées à la santé de notre démocratie ou d’autres débats intellectuels, la question qui se pose, et qui reste insaisissable, est la suivante: qu’est-ce qui aura finalement un poids déterminant lorsque l’électeur se retrouvera dans l’isolement?

L’opportunité existe et existera toujours en politique. Il y aura donc de nombreux électeurs qui choisiront «ceux qui leur donnent plus», soit le réflexe «What’s in it for me?», mais il y aura beaucoup d’autres qui ramèneront davantage leur choix «déterminant» comme vous le dites à quelques questions essentielles:

Est-ce que je vis mieux ou plus mal aujourd’hui qu’il y a quelques années?

Suis-je satisfait ou pas de l’état général du pays sur les plans économique, social, moral et administratif avec ce gouvernement ou faut-il passer à autre chose?

Ai-je peur de l’avenir pour moi-même et pour mes enfants ou suis-je relativement optimiste pour l’avenir?

Il s’ensuivra une impression générale de bien-être ou de mal-être, et ce sera là le prélude du vote.

Une chose est sûre : C’est le quotidien qui prédomine et détermine le vote de l’électeur moyen. Tout le reste sera secondaire. Je ne crois pas beaucoup que les programmes vont principalement influencer les électeurs. Ils ne sont qu’une petite composante du choix. Souvent, les programmes ne valent guère plus que le papier sur lequel ils sont imprimés. Il n’y a qu’à voir le nombre de promesses non-tenues par divers gouvernements. C’est la vie quotidienne qui prédomine

Je crois fermement que les gens passent la plus grande partie de leur vie à penser à eux-mêmes, à leurs problèmes et à leurs espoirs et ambitions pour eux-mêmes et à leur famille plutôt qu’aux autres ou à l’idéologie.

Les partis politiques ne font plus rêver. La loyauté partisane s’est estompée. C’est aujourd’hui le règne de l’individualisme. C’est donc à la lumière de ces questions que se feront les choix, surtout chez les indécis. C’est là le talon d’Achille

de tous les gouvernements à travers le monde.

* Quelle que soit l’issue des prochaines élections, le prochain gouvernement sera confronté à la gestion d’une crise économique qui, selon Rama Sithanen, se profile à l’horizon en raison des mesures populistes de l’actuel gouvernement. Cette crise serait suffisamment grave pour nécessiter une révision des taxes et des dépenses publiques, ainsi que potentiellement la vente de quelques bijoux de l’État. Qu’il ait raison ou non, cette politique populiste ne peut pas durer indéfiniment, n’est-ce pas?

Malgré l’affirmation du contraire, l’économie nationale demeure fragile: inflation accélérée par l’accent mis sur la consommation pour stimuler la croissance, au lieu de la production de biens exportables; déficit budgétaire; importations hors de contrôle et déficit commercial extraordinaire (Rs 200 milliards); roupie en dépréciation constante; dette nationale explosée; etc.

Or, les tendances actuelles de l’Etat à



“C’est le quotidien qui prédomine et détermine le vote de l’électeur moyen. Tout le reste sera secondaire. Je ne crois pas beaucoup que les programmes vont principalement influencer les électeurs. Je crois fermement que les gens passent la plus grande partie de leur vie à penser à eux-mêmes, à leurs problèmes et à leurs espoirs et ambitions pour eux-mêmes et à leur famille plutôt qu’aux autres ou à l’idéologie...”

dépenser condamnent tout prochain gouvernement alternatif à poursuivre la spirale engagée aujourd’hui. Il faut réagir d’urgence, adopter des politiques économiques à plus long terme ; consolider les acquis; rechercher d’autres pôles de croissance (économie bleue ; bunkering, fabrication de produits pharmaceutiques, etc.); être plus inventif.

* Faisons nous trop de social?

On ne fait jamais trop de social dans un pays comme le nôtre, où historiquement de nombreux Mauriciens ont été oubliés, laissés sur la touche et où il existe une misère sociale évidente. La finalité de la politique est d’organiser et d’améliorer la vie des citoyens. Beaucoup a été fait, mais beaucoup reste encore à faire.

J’ai toujours soutenu le concept du ‘Welfare state’, le salaire minimum vital, la progression des pensions, des initiatives plus généreuses envers les plus faibles. Il est plus que temps que tous les Mauriciens indistinctement trouvent leur compte dans l’extraordinaire développement qu’a connu le pays depuis 40 ans.

Pour assurer cela, il faut pourtant des

politiques de progression de la richesse nationale plus agressives. Mon souhait secret est que se développe à Maurice une immense classe moyenne, qui serait une garantie de stabilité sociale et de progrès continu.

* C’est probablement la première fois dans l’histoire du pays qu’on observe un tel accaparement de l’appareil d’État et de certaines institutions censées être indépendantes, rendant toute contestation futile. Le temps qu’il faut pour débattre des pétitions électorales, l’impuissance de l’opposition au sein du Parlement, ainsi que les enquêtes dans les affaires “high-profile” qui s’éternisent... Pouvez-vous imaginer quel serait l’avenir du pays si le statu quo devait être maintenu après décembre 2024?

Le jeu institutionnel commence à être largement faussé dans le pays. Il faut revenir à une gestion du pays plus efficiente, moins partisane, une notion de plus grande tolérance, un partage du pouvoir plus équitable entre toutes les com-

posantes du pays. La forte perception de pourrissement du pays entraîne la migration de très nombreux jeunes ou qui souhaitent s’en aller, et cela coïncide avec la politisation outrancière de toute la vie publique. Par conséquent, les politiciens doivent apprendre à se mettre davantage en retrait et à rester à leur place.

“Le jeu institutionnel commence à être largement faussé dans le pays. Il faut revenir à une gestion du pays plus efficiente, moins partisane, une notion de plus grande tolérance, un partage du pouvoir plus équitable entre toutes les composantes du pays. La forte perception de pourrissement du pays entraîne la migration de très nombreux jeunes ou qui souhaitent s’en aller, et cela coïncide avec la politisation outrancière de toute la vie publique...”

How to influence electors and win votes

In the bustling agora of ancient Athens, amidst the lively exchanges and spirited debates, Socrates and Cephalus find themselves engrossed in a Socratic Dialogue on the art of political persuasion. Surrounded by marble columns and under the shade of olive trees, they engage in philosophical discourse that transcends time, pondering the timeless challenge of winning over electors and securing votes.

By Plutonix

Socrates: Ah, Cephalus, my friend, have you noticed how politics seems to attract the most ambitious souls? It's like a magnet for those who fancy themselves as future rulers of the realm!

Cephalus: Indeed, Socrates! It's as if there's a signpost saying, "Ambitious

Cephalus: Precisely, Socrates! They must be poets of policy, artists of the anecdote, and occasionally, acrobats of ad-lib to win over the sceptical masses.

Socrates: Ah, the art of political persuasion! But tell me, Cephalus, how does one strike the balance between authentic leadership and pandering to public opinion?

Cephalus: Well, Socrates, therein



dreamers, this way to power and glory — caution: potholes ahead!"

Socrates: And yet, my dear Cephalus, in today's electoral circus, it's not merely about dreaming big — it's about convincing electors to trust you with their sacred vote. How does one achieve such a feat?

Cephalus: Ah, Socrates, that's the million-dollar question! Electors nowadays are as picky as ancient Athenians at a wine symposium. They want promises fulfilled, palms greased, and perhaps a dash of charm to seal the deal.

Socrates: Charm and promises, you say. It sounds like our modern politicians must be part bard, spinning tales of prosperity and conjuring visions of a utopian future — all while avoiding the traps of empty rhetoric and campaign clichés!

lies the challenge. A candidate must be as cunning as they are candid, as persuasive as they are principled.

Socrates: A delicate tightrope walk, I imagine. One misstep, and they risk falling into the pit of political obscurity or, worse yet, being bombarded with rotten tomatoes!

Cephalus: Indeed, Socrates. In this age of instant scrutiny and social media snark, electors demand not just promises, but proof of character and a track record of actual achievements — not just selfie ops and staged handshakes!

Socrates: And what of those who opt for shortcuts — taking advantage of the popularity or success of other candidates for attention or resorting to flashy gimmicks?

Cephalus: Ah, the electoral acrobatics of piggybacking! While it may garner attention, Socrates, true leadership requires substance over style — though a bit of flair never hurt anyone's campaign trail.

Socrates: Substance, the cornerstone of true leadership! For in the realm of politics, one must earn votes not just through rhetoric but by genuinely connecting with the hearts and minds of the people they aim to serve.

Cephalus: Well said, Socrates! So, as our aspiring leaders don their campaign armour and sharpen their rhetorical swords, let them not forget: in the game of politics, a sprinkle of humour and a dollop of humility can make all the difference between a standing ovation and a tomato shower!

Socrates: Indeed, Cephalus. And let us hope they do not lose sight of the greater good amid the clamour of campaign promises and the occasional political pratfall.

Cephalus: Agreed, Socrates. Now, shall we continue unravelling the mysteries of politics, or perhaps indulge in a cup of hemlock with a side of political satire?

Socrates: Ah, hemlock can wait, my friend. Let us continue our discourse on the art of governance and the eternal quest for laughter in the hallowed halls of power. Ah, Cephalus, my friend, as we delve deeper into the labyrinthine world of politics, one cannot help but marvel at the audacity of those who dare to seek office!

Cephalus: Indeed, Socrates! It takes a brave soul to navigate the treacherous waters of public opinion and the occasional scandalous rumour mill.

Socrates: And yet, amidst the chaos and confetti of campaign rallies, how does a candidate ensure their message resonates with the electorate?

Cephalus: Ah, Socrates, that's where the magic — or perhaps, the dark arts — of political persuasion come into play! Picture this: a candidate with the eloquence of Demosthenes, the wit of Aristophanes, and the stage presence of Dionysus himself!

Socrates: A formidable combination, indeed! But does mere charm suffice in winning the favour of the discerning electors?

Cephalus: Certainly not, Socrates! Today's voters demand substance, solutions, and maybe a sprinkle of scan-

dalous gossip to keep things interesting.

Socrates: Scandalous gossip, you say? It seems our modern politics have borrowed a leaf from the tragedies of Euripides — a plot twist here, a revelation there, and suddenly, everyone's glued to their scrolls!

Cephalus: Precisely, Socrates! It's all about mastering the art of intrigue while juggling policy proposals and baby-kissing duties.

Socrates: Ah, the perils of political multitasking! But tell me, Cephalus, amidst the fervour of electoral promises, how does one maintain their integrity and avoid becoming entangled in the web of political machinations?

Cephalus: Well, Socrates, that's the ultimate challenge! A candidate must be as transparent as the waters of the Aegean Sea and as resilient as Odysseus navigating the Cyclops' cave — avoiding traps and keeping their ship of state afloat.

Socrates: A maritime metaphor, Cephalus! Admirable indeed. But what of those who resort to gimmicks and flashy displays to captivate the fickle hearts of the electorate?

Cephalus: Ah, the circus of political theatrics! While it may draw applause and a few coin tosses, Socrates, genuine leadership demands more than smoke and mirrors—it requires a steady hand on the tiller and a vision that extends beyond the next election cycle.

Socrates: Vision, the beacon that guides us through the stormy seas of governance! For in the realm of politics, one must not only promise prosperity but possess the wisdom to steer the ship toward calmer waters.

Cephalus: Well said, Socrates! So, as our intrepid candidates prepare for the electoral battleground, let them remember: in politics, a dash of humour, a pinch of humility, and a healthy appetite for hemlock — metaphorically speaking — can make the difference between victory and a one-way trip to exile.

Socrates: Indeed, Cephalus. And as we unravel the mysteries of political intrigue and the quest for power, let us toast to laughter in the halls of power — and perhaps a side order of political satire to go with our philosophical musings.

Cephalus: Agreed, Socrates. Here's to navigating the choppy seas of democracy with wit, wisdom, and a bit of comic relief! Farewell, Socrates, until our next discourse beneath the shade of these ancient olives, where wisdom blooms eternal and the dialogue of democracy echoes through the ages.

Socrates: Farewell, my friend. May the ideals we cherish today inspire the leaders of tomorrow, as they embark on their journey to govern with wisdom and courage.

'Unthinkable' normalized two years after US abortion ruling

Two years after the decision to end a woman's constitutional right to an abortion, Americans continue to grapple with the fallout from the Supreme Court ruling. The 2022 decision has led to increased restrictions on abortion access, affecting people from all walks of life.

Doctors now feel at risk of criminalization, women's lives have been endangered, and victims of sexual abuse have had to cross state lines for medical help. Some states have further tightened reproductive rights, deepening the national divide, reports Reuters.

"Things that were previously unthinkable are



Anti-abortion protesters outside the Supreme Court in Washington on June 14. Pic - The New York Times

becoming more normalized," said Farah Diaz-Tello, senior counsel and legal director for If/When/How. Misunderstandings and stigmas around abortion have

created lasting effects, advocates say. Women seeking abortions have faced significant challenges, including being tracked down out of state and airlifted for emergency care.

In conservative states like Texas, which enacted a "trigger ban" on abortion and imposed penalties on those assisting with out-of-state abortions, women have been directly impacted. Lauren Miller, pregnant with twins in 2022, was told she needed to leave Texas for an abortion when one twin wouldn't survive. She later faced severe health risks but couldn't get an abortion in Texas, reports US News.

Abortions increased in 2023 compared to 2020, especially in states bordering those with bans. Democratic-leaning states have passed "shield laws" to protect providers, and abortion medication remains available by mail. The Supreme Court upheld federal approval of mifepristone.

US Governor pardons 175,000 marijuana convictions

The governor of Maryland issued a mass pardon of drug offenses on Monday, forgiving 175,000 low-level marijuana convictions spanning multiple decades. Democrat Wes Moore, Maryland's first Black governor, called it "the most sweeping state-level pardon" in American history, aiming to address social and economic injustices disproportionately impacting Black communities.

Moore emphasized that his action intends to right the "decades of harm" caused by drug policies that targeted African Americans, depriving them of housing, education, and employment opportunities. Nearly half of all state drug arrests during the early 2000s were for cannabis, with Black Marylanders three times more likely to be detained for cannabis-related charges than white residents. Despite being 33% of the state's population, Black men make up more than 70% of Maryland's incarcerated population reports AFP.

After a statewide referendum, Maryland legalized cannabis for adults and retail sales of the drug in 2023. The pardons extend to anyone with a misdemeanor conviction for possession of marijuana or paraphernalia. Moore noted that the pardons, affecting approximately 100,000 people, represent a "sweeping and unapologetic" action to erase criminal justice inequities as more states nationwide ease marijuana laws.

Cannabis is a multibillion-dollar industry in the United States, with over half of the states legalizing recreational and medicinal use, a change overwhelmingly supported by Americans according to polling. However, cannabis is still classified by the federal government as a Schedule I drug, along with heroin, ecstasy, and LSD, meaning it is deemed to have no accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

In 2022, Joe Biden became the first US president to initiate a federal review of marijuana policy to align it more closely with public opinion. He recently proposed downgrading marijuana to a Schedule III drug, placing it alongside substances like ketamine and painkillers containing codeine, considered to have a moderate to low likelihood of dependence. This change wouldn't make it legal but could lead to fewer federal arrests.

The issue is seen as a potential vote-winner for Biden in the upcoming election, particularly among younger voters whom the Democratic incumbent struggles to court.

China says Dalai Lama must correct his political propositions for talks

China on Thursday asked the Dalai Lama to thoroughly reflect and completely correct his political propositions for it to hold talks with him and asked the US to respect its sensitivity and importance to Tibet-related issues as Washington is set to pass a tough Tibet policy law.

On the central government's contact and talks with the 14th Dalai Lama, China's policy is consistent and clear, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a media briefing, reports PTI.

China watched warily the high-powered US Congressional delegation's visit to Dharamshala and its meeting with the 88-year-old Dalai Lama besides the strong remarks made by its leading members US House Foreign Affairs Committee chair Michael McCaul and former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi questioning China's policy towards Tibet and their call to Beijing to hold talks with the Dalai Lama.

Their visit came as US President Joe Biden was set to sign the Tibet policy bill adopted by both the US Senate and the House of Representatives. The bill awaits Biden's signature to make it into law.

The bill seeks to counter China's narrative about its control over Tibet and promote dialogue between the Chinese government and the Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, who is based in India since he fled the Himalayan region in 1959.

On Tuesday, Beijing urged Biden not to sign the Tibet policy bill, warning of "resolute measures".

On the US delegation's visit to Dharamshala and its talks with the Dalai Lama, Lin said, "We urge the US to clearly see the sensitivity and importance of Xizang-related issues and earnestly respect China's core interests on its comments on Xizang, refrain from any forms with the Dalai



Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama exchanges greetings with former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi during their meeting at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh, on India. Pic - Reuters

group and stop sending out to the world wrong signals."

He also criticised the reported remarks by the Tibet government-in-exile that it is going to use the new Tibet legislation passed by the US Senate and Congress to try to force China to come to the negotiating table and urge other countries to put pressure on Beijing to hold talks with it.

After the US Congressional talks with the Dalai Lama, McCaul said on Wednesday that the Tibetans have the right to self-determination and should be allowed to practise their religion freely.

At a felicitation ceremony held after the seven US Congress members met the Tibetan leader, McCaul said the delegation had defied a warning from the Chinese Communist Party.

"The Tibetan people possess a distant religion, culture and historic identity and they should have a say in their own future. You should be

able to freely practise your religion and that is why we are here today in defiance of the CCP (Communist Party of China) warning," he said.

Referring to the Tibet policy bill, McCaul said at the later event that the timing of the visit could not be better. The bill also required aggressively challenging the CCP propaganda on Tibet, he added.

"I presented the Dalai Lama with a wind chime, which will remind him of our support," he said. "Like many of you, I wish that this meeting was happening in your homeland of Tibet, but 65 years ago you were forced to flee after the Chinese Communist Party annexed Tibet and slaughtered tens of thousands of Tibetan people," he said.

The delegation leader claimed that the CCP was determined to eliminate Tibetan culture and forcibly bring the Tibetan people under its control.



Stormy Daniels, 45, admitted that she had never intended to become a stripper, but she did so in 1996 so that she could feed her horse. Pic – The Independent

Stormy Daniels gives bizarre reason for entering adult entertainment industry: 'I made more money in two...'

Former adult film star Stormy Daniels appeared on Daily Mail's exclusive podcast, 'Everything I Know About Me', after Donald Trump was found guilty in the hush money case. She gave weird reasons for entering the adult entertainment industry and acknowledged that her scandalous past goes far beyond her relationship with former US President Trump.

Daniels, 45, admitted that she had never intended to become a stripper, but she did so in 1996 so that she could feed her horse.

"I made more money in two songs than I did in a week of shoveling horse manure," she said, spilling the beans on the podcast.

She further explained why she thinks Melania Trump "knows I'm telling the truth" regarding her affair with the former president, reports HT.

Daniels and Trump's alleged affair started when he was a reality TV celebrity and billionaire real estate tycoon and was all set to welcome his first child with Melania.

Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, disclosed her involvement in the hush money trial in New York and expressed her displeasure with the numerous misunderstandings that resulted from it.

She described to the jury how Trump's team paid her \$130,000 to keep their relationship a secret ahead of the 2016 election.

While Daniels claims that they encountered each other at a celebrity golf tournament in 2006, Trump insists he never met her.

The former film adult star states in her sensational testimony that she regretted sleeping with Trump, but she chose to ignore the memories, saying it left her "staring at the ceiling."

Stormy Daniels also revealed how she was sexually molested when she was just nine years old, and how her love of horses helped her get through a difficult upbringing. Daniels' next-door neighbour began sexually abusing her best friend, whom she addresses as "Vanessa" in both her biography and this interview.

In the podcast, Daniels named her abuser, but she stressed that she was not permitted to do so in her memoir. "He's dead now, by the way, because I later went back to kill him," she said. "And he was already, he was already deceased."

She spent her childhood in a dilapidated house in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Her father made sure Daniels remained in his life with wife No. 2, Susan. It was her dad who took her for horseback riding for the first time.

Coca-Cola heir ordered to pay employee \$900mn in one of largest sexual assault verdicts in history

Alki David, Coca-Cola heir and celebrity hologram creator with string of sexual assault convictions against him, has been directed to pay \$900 million to a former employee by Los Angeles jury. This is said to be the largest-ever award for sexual damages in history.

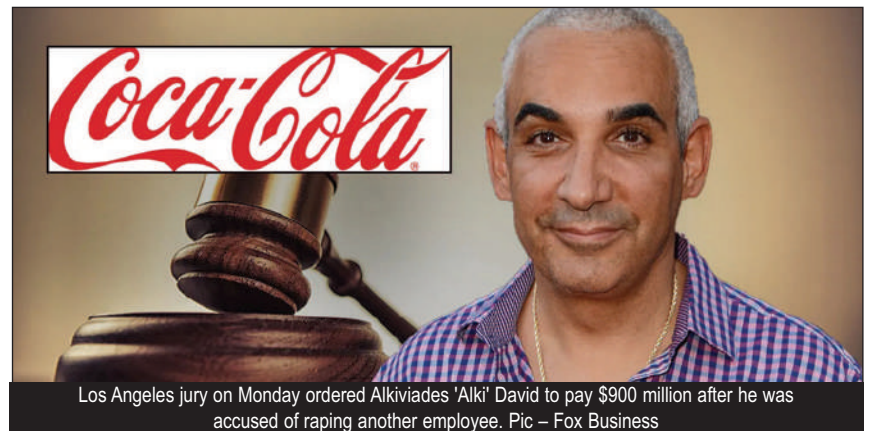
According to the attorney of a woman, who goes by the name Jane Doe in her case against Alki David, said she was sexually assaulted and harassed for three years between 2016 and 2019.

"It's so despicable, the facts of this case. He raped my client while on trial in another case," Doe's lawyer Gary Dordick stated, reports HT.

Back in 2019, David was cautioned against even thinking of assaulting another woman's body following the \$58 million sexual violence verdict that Mahim Khan, a former production assistant, won against him.

He has been found guilty in several other cases involving sexual misbehavior, and he and his companies have been compelled to pay damages totaling around \$70 million.

David's enterprise, Hologram USA, is well-known for producing



Los Angeles jury on Monday ordered Alki David to pay \$900 million after he was accused of raping another employee. Pic – Fox Business

holographic images of deceased celebrities.

All you need to know about Jane Doe's case

Jane Doe, the plaintiff in the lawsuit is a thirty-year-old model who worked for David at Hologram USA and recognised him as a "media mogul and billionaire" when he hired her.

The woman said that she had been concerned about David's behavior at the office since the beginning of her job. According to the lawsuit, a female coworker informed Doe that David had kissed her against her will. Additionally, the plaintiff claimed that in 2016 while on a business trip to his private island in

Greece, David made an attempt to kiss her, to which she refused and he apologised.

The woman claimed that in April 2019, he sexually assaulted her in a small room during a business meeting.

David's current \$3.7 billion wealth derives mostly from his wealthy Cypriot family, according to the Sunday Times annual Rich List. However, he has stated that media estimations of his wealth are massively inflated.

Judge Christopher L. Lui's overwhelming ruling on Monday includes \$800 million in punitive penalties in addition to \$100 million in compensatory damages.

Ukraine refugees treated better than victims of other ongoing wars: Council of Europe

Ukrainians who fled their homes to escape Russia's invasion have received better treatment than those displaced by other ongoing wars and emergencies, Europe's top human rights group said on Thursday, calling on member states to support all equally.

In its annual report, the Council of Europe's anti-racism commission (ECRI) said "admirable efforts" have been made to support Ukrainians since the war started in February 2022.

But it said treatment of people from Ukraine had varied depending on their ethnicity, reports Reuters.

For instance, accommodation conditions offered to Roma with Ukrainian citizenship were lower quality than those offered to other Ukrainians in the same situation, ECRI said.

Shortly after the start of the war, the African Union said it was disturbed by reports African citizens in Ukraine had been refused the right to cross borders to safety.

Significant differences have also been observed between the quality of reception centres and services provided to Ukrainians compared with refugees and asylum seekers from elsewhere, ECRI added.

Asked if there was more solidarity towards Ukrainians

because most were white, ECRI's chairperson Bertil Cottier said: "When people are more or less like you, it's always easier."

ECRI said all displaced people, irrespective of their nationality, skin colour or religion, should be offered adequate protection and support.

According to ECRI, anti-Ukrainian hate incidents have been reported but overall the public discourse remained of solidarity and support and hostile narratives, including



A scene from the Palanca-Maiaki-Udobnoe border crossing point, between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine on 1 March 2022. Pic - UN Women

by politicians, were more prevalent against people from other parts of the world.

There are around 6 million displaced Ukrainians across Europe.

From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago

6th Year No 275

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 20 November, 1959

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



B. Ramlallah

A Glimpse of Oxford

On August 31st, the Mauritian press delegation visited Oxford University, which proved to be one of the most thrilling and instructive experiences of our tour.

None of us had a university education, so exploring Oxford University, known as the Mecca of learned men and women from around the world, was particularly unique for us.

We boarded a train at Paddington at 9:45 am and arrived at Oxford Station after an hour and fifteen minutes. From there, we were escorted to the Mitre Hotel on High Street, often acclaimed as "the most beautiful street in the world." The Mitre Hotel is the most luxurious and spacious in Oxford City, offering various comforts and amenities. An interesting feature, common to many Oxford hotels, is a beautifully bound Bible placed in a cloth bag near each bed. These Bibles are indexed by subjects such as bravery, charity, friendship, hope, and truth. The introductory remarks printed on the book's flap were so compelling that even in my fatigue that evening, I could not resist reading a few pages before succumbing to sleep.

We set out on foot from the hotel for a guided tour of several central university buildings. Accompanying us was a representative from the British Council, who expertly narrated the history, unique features, architecture, academic subjects, and significant events associated with each college.

For lunch, we dined at the Regency Restaurant, where we were joined by a professor from the university specializing in agriculture, along with a Mauritian student, Mr Gunnee. Since the university was on vacation, we

missed encountering other students or witnessing classes in session.

During dinner, we had the pleasure of Dr and Mrs T.P. Soper, MA, PhD, Deputy Warden of one of the university's colleges, joining us.

Among the colleges and libraries we visited was the Radcliffe Camera, which houses part of the university library. The Radcliffe Camera, a massive Palladian-style building, was funded by Dr John Radcliffe, personal physician to Queen Anne and an alumnus of Oxford University. The library holds not only books but also ancient manuscripts on papyrus, leather, or cloth in lan-



Leonard Rice-Oxley, Tutor in English (1921-60) with students in Fellows' Garden

guages such as Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and Arabic. Notably, it houses a large, beautifully illustrated old Bible with gold-plated illustrations and titles, a testament to the precision and craftsmanship of its time.

St. Mary's Church serves as the centre of religious ceremonies in the university and, prior to the construction of the Sheldonian Theatre, was also its administrative headquarters.

Founded in 1571 by Dr Hugh Price, Jesus College aimed to provide education to Welsh scholars who were previously underrepresented at Oxford. Among its notable alumni are historian John Richard Green and Lawrence of Arabia.

Lincoln College, although founded by two Bishops of Lincoln, is closely associated with John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, who was a fellow of the college for twenty-five years.

Magdalen College, celebrated as one of Oxford's most beautiful colleges, dates back to the fifteenth century, with much of its original architecture preserved. The old examination schools, built in 1439 and partially rebuilt in the seventeenth century, now house part of the renowned Bodleian Library, which received significant funding from the Rockefeller trustees.

Originally founded by Thomas Cobham in the fourteenth century and later re-established by Sir Thomas Bodley during Queen Elizabeth's reign, the Bodleian Library today holds invaluable manuscripts and over a million books, many distinguished by their magnificent book binding.

By B. Ramlallah

Inside a British Hospital

Reflecting on past experiences, even if they were challenging, often brings a sense of satisfaction. This account, though personal, offers a glimpse into the workings of a British hospital that may intrigue Mauritian readers.

During an official visit by the Mauritian Press Delegation, I fell unexpectedly ill while residing in Sloane Gardens, London. Initially dismissing it as temporary, it soon worsened, with escalating fever and cardiac issues. Late into the night, I urged my landlord, Mr Corbett, to seek medical help. Unable to contact a private doctor, he called the Health Emergency Services, who promptly dispatched assistance. A decision was made to admit me to St Stephen's Hospital on Fulham Road, where an ambulance swiftly transported me.

At St Stephen's Hospital, I was treated with quintessential British courtesy. Upon arrival, my vital signs were quickly assessed, and I was settled into Ward 5B amidst a quiet, night-time atmosphere. Despite my feverish state, the nurses' gen-

tle reassurances provided solace, transporting me into a surreal experience that was both unsettling and enlightening. This marked my first hospital admission, offering a unique perspective on hospital management during challenging times.

St Stephen's, part of the Chelsea group of hospitals, boasts 450 beds and accommodates various departments including maternity, paediatric, and TB wards. It serves as a semi-teaching hospital affiliated with London University, where medical students observe and study complex cases. In Ward 5B, under the supervision of Cardiologist Dr Raymond Daley, students frequently observed treatments for cardiac patients, receiving detailed explanations of each case.

Ward 5B features 28 beds, each with movable curtains for privacy. Patients have access to headphones connected to the hospital's main radio, while emergency oxygen inhalers are on standby. Wooden lockers with formica tops are standard, supplied without competitive tendering, a deci-

sion that stirred controversy among medical authorities.

Daily routines in the hospital were punctuated by morning tea and breakfast served by night-shift nurses, followed by mid-morning coffee or Ovaltine, and lunches delivered by the ward sister and nursing staff. Afternoon tea and supper continued the routine, with patients able to dine in bed or, for a more formal setting, at a shared table. The abundance of food often challenged patients to finish their meals, with attentive nurses ensuring comfort and satisfaction.

The hallmark of British hospitals lies in the personal care and empathy displayed by medical staff. Consultant Physician Dr Harvey greeted patients warmly during morning rounds, setting a compassionate tone. Ward sisters, like the one in charge of Ward 5B, fostered a familial atmosphere, greeting each patient daily and ensuring their well-being. This camaraderie extended beyond nationality, with a diverse nursing staff and patient communi-

ty enriching the hospital environment.

Visitation policies allowed evening visits daily and longer hours on weekends, fostering familial connections crucial to patient recovery. Visitors often brought flowers, placed in vases by nurses as tokens of goodwill. The hospital's Almoner, a trained social scientist, managed patient welfare beyond hospital walls, updating families and supporting patients emotionally.

Mutual appreciation between patients and staff was evident, with gestures like offering flowers to nurses and returning after discharge to express gratitude. This reciprocal care underscored a shared ethos: service to patients as service to a higher calling, supported by the Ministry of Health's vigilant oversight and responsiveness to public concerns.

In essence, my hospital experience illuminated the blend of professionalism and compassion inherent in British healthcare, revealing a system upheld by dedicated professionals committed to patient well-being amidst diverse challenges.

Published in Mauritius Times, Friday
4th December, 1959

Is Keir Starmer a socialist?

● Cont. from page 2

You don't have to be a socialist to believe in security and opportunity. However, class inequality, community, and active government have left-of-centre or socialist connotations.

From values to policies

But the proof of a philosophy is in the practice. Labour will set up Great British Energy, a publicly owned company to invest in renewables. Starmer says he will bring passenger train services in-house, and facilitate municipal insourcing and ownership, and more co-ops.

These are small steps to more collective ownership in the economy and public services. But social ownership could be much more widespread, especially given public support for it, including for the energy utilities, water supply and the Royal Mail.

Starmer talks about the tackling the "class ceiling" for working class people and about inequality, especially in policies (or intentions) on education and the new deal for working people. But the emphasis is on equal or minimum opportunities for all rather than a more economically equal society.

He will fund policies by clamping down on tax breaks for the privileged and a windfall tax on energy utilities. But significant redistributive changes to the tax structure, on income or wealth, aren't pro-



Starmer with Labour's 2024 election manifesto. Alamy

posed.

Starmer expresses sentiments of community and co-operation over individualism. But these tend to be used in relation to policies on security, devolution, localities, a more active state, or partnership with business, rather than institutions of a more specifically socialist sort.

In fact, Starmer's perspective on community has metamorphosed into advocacy of a "contribution society". This is used to mean varying things, such as that people and business should contribute rather than being individualistic, and that their

contribution should be rewarded decently. This is about responsibility and reward as much as community in a socialist sense.

What is modern socialism?

If socialism on the definitions I've outlined isn't being proposed by Starmer, it

could be that he's redefining socialism for modern Britain. If this involves new means for pursuing socialism, he's not propounding this.

If it's redefining socialism as something beyond collective ownership, equality, and co-operation, that's not rethinking socialism for a new era. It's dropping what makes socialism distinctive.

If it involves a more intersectional socialism, Starmer is proposing measures on race equality and violence against women, but these match his self-description as "progressive" more than being "socialist".

Starmer could be putting forward limited policies for the general election, only to then come out as more leftist in office. Active government could be extended to wider social ownership; opportunities for the working class expanded to a more equal structure to society, a foundation also for greater community. Starmer is not advocating such a route. But down it, he could just have a case for calling himself a socialist.

Luke Martell, Professor of Political Sociology, University of Sussex

Mauritius Times

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The Big Budget Bluff

● Cont. from page 3

Moreover, will the manufacturing sector be able to cope with the restructuring of salaries when it happens, or will the government then have to pay out even more to keep it afloat?

Given all these challenges, isn't it time for a holistic review of the national employment strategy – or a blueprint?



“Inflation has fallen from 10.8% in 2022 to 7% in 2023 and is projected to fall further to 4.9% this year. However, a drop in the inflation rate should not be confused with falling prices. It only means that prices will keep rising, albeit at a reduced pace. Moreover, the inflation forecast of 4.9% does not consider the effects of the budgetary measures, which will increase liquidity in the economy, and cause a further degree of inflation...”

Lower inflation doesn't mean lower prices

Inflation has fallen from 10.8% in 2022 to 7% in 2023 and is projected to fall further to 4.9% this year. However, a drop in the inflation rate should not be confused with falling prices. It only means that prices will keep rising, albeit at a reduced pace.

Moreover, the inflation forecast of 4.9% does not consider the effects of the budgetary measures, which will increase liquidity in the economy, and cause a further degree of inflation. Nor does it factor in downside risks arising from the geopolitical tensions in the Gulf, which are already exacerbating freight costs.

A trillion-rupee debt trap?

Public sector debt (PSD) stood at 78% of GDP at the end of 2023 and is projected to fall to 74.5% by June 2024 and further to 71.1% at the end of June 2025. True, debt is on a declining path, but in relative terms only. The PSD stood at Rs 512 billion in

December 2023 and is expected to reach Rs 567 billion by the end of this year, that is, an increase of Rs 55 billion in just one year! At this rate, government debt will soon hit the Rs 1 trillion milestone! More worrying, external debt will increase by at least Rs 14 billion in 2024/25.

Dr Padayachy takes pride in showcasing the falling debt-to-GDP ratio toward the long-term anchor of 60%. While GDP reflects an economy's debt-carrying capacity, ultimately it is the people who pay the debt. The idea of Ricardian equivalence suggests that debt is just deferred taxes. From this perspective, the true measure of the debt burden is in per capita terms. Currently, public debt per head amounts to a whopping Rs 416,000, and this figure is bound to rise as debt increases and the population declines.

Where will economic growth come from?

The Budget forecasted GDP growth at 6.5% for 2024 (compared to the IMF forecast of 4.9%, and 3.3% in the medium term). Where will this higher growth come from? In 2022, GDP growth soared to 8.9% (after a timid 3.4% in 2021) following a major change in national income accounting, which saw the inclusion of primary income of the global business sector from abroad in the computation of GDP. Are GDP figures being cooked up again?

Conclusion

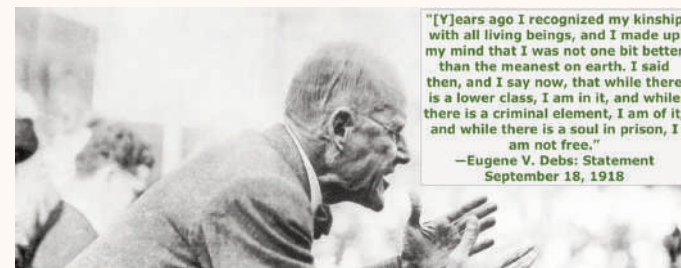
The 2024-25 Budget, like previous ones, is rife with populist measures, creating misleading optimism. Despite showcasing economic growth and high FDI, it glosses over stagnant real GDP per capita, an unsustainable reliance on consumption, and the twin deficits (i.e., budget and trade deficits). Many sectors, including agriculture and manufacturing, remain underfunded, revealing the Budget's bluff.

Going forward, ignoring critical IMF recommendations, such as to rebuild fiscal buffers and restore prudent macroeconomic management, the Budget risks compromising economic stability and the country's credit rating, with drastic consequences for the global business sector and FDI.

Vinaye Ancharaz, PhD, FCMI, formerly a principal economist at the African Development Bank and a senior lecturer and Head of Department at the University of Mauritius, is an international economic consultant specializing in trade and development.

Éclairages

Se présenter à la présidence des États-Unis depuis la prison? Eugene V. Debs l'a fait, il y a un siècle



“[Y]ears ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on earth. I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, and while there is a criminal element, I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.”
—Eugene V. Debs: Statement September 18, 1918

Être incarcéré dans une prison fédérale à Atlanta n'a pas diminué la stature d'Eugene V. Debs. En 1920, il a été à nouveau désigné comme candidat présidentiel. P - Radical Scholarship

☞ Suite de la page 5

Il est devenu un socialiste engagé et un membre fondateur du Parti socialiste d'Amérique. Il s'est présenté à la présidence en tant que socialiste en 1900, 1904, 1908 et 1912.

En 1918, cependant, il a été envoyé en prison pour avoir pris la parole contre l'implication américaine dans la Première Guerre mondiale, ce qui constituait une violation de la loi sur la sédition récemment adoptée. Mais être enfermé dans une prison fédérale à Atlanta n'a pas diminué le profil de Debs, et en 1920, il a de nouveau été nommé candidat présidentiel du parti.

Comment a-t-il géré sa campagne en prison?

Être en prison n'a pas rendu la campagne impossible non plus. Bien que Debs ne puisse évidemment pas se déplacer à travers le pays lui-même, son parti a fait de son statut un point de ralliement, en utilisant son numéro de détenu sur les boutons de campagne. Des substituts ont parlé pour lui, ainsi qu'un extrait de film de lui étant informé de sa nomination a été diffusé à travers le pays, a déclaré Thomas Doherty, professeur d'études américaines à l'université Brandeis.

«La renommée de Debs et la nouveauté de sa candidature à la présidence depuis la prison lui ont donné une certaine crédibilité», a déclaré Doherty. «C'était une campagne crédible, considérant que vous vous présentez depuis la prison.»

L'affaire Trump est unique et complexe, et les ramifications politiques et juridiques de cette situation continuent de susciter des débats passionnés. Quoi qu'il arrive, les élections à venir seront scrutées de près, et l'impact de ces événements se fera sentir pendant longtemps.

Cette affaire soulève des questions cruciales sur la politique et la justice américaines, avec des implications potentielles profondes pour les futures élections présidentielles.

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

For Sagittarius, this week is all about expanding your horizons. Travel or exploration could lead to valuable insights and new perspectives. Trust in your abilities at work or in creative endeavours, and don't be afraid to take calculated risks. Romance may blossom with someone who shares your adventurous spirit.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 11, 18, 24, 31, 36
CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Capricorn, focus on achieving your long-term goals with determination and discipline this week. Take practical steps towards your ambitions, and don't be afraid to seek guidance from mentors or experts. A romantic gesture or heartfelt conversation could deepen a special bond.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 15, 22, 29, 37
AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

This week, Aquarius, focus on nurturing your social connections and building community. Embrace your individuality and express your unique perspective with confidence. Take time for self-care and relaxation to recharge your energy. Romance may blossom unexpectedly through shared interests or mutual friends.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 12, 19, 25, 32, 38

YOUR STARS

PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

For Pisces, this week is about finding inner peace and emotional balance. Reflect on past experiences to gain insights into your current path. Spiritual practices or creative pursuits will bring you a sense of fulfillment. Nurture your closest relationships with compassion and understanding.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 8, 16, 23, 30, 40
ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

This week, Aries, you'll find yourself deeply focused on personal growth and development. Take time to reflect on your long-term goals and consider what steps you can take now to move closer to them. A spontaneous adventure could bring unexpected joy and new connections.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 39
Taurus: APR 20 - MAY 20

For Taurus, this week is about finding balance between work and play. Focus on your professional goals, but don't forget to nurture your personal relationships. A creative project could bring recognition and new opportunities. Pay attention to your health and well-being by prioritizing self-care routines.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 11, 18, 24, 31, 36

GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Gemini, communication is key for you this week. Express your thoughts and feelings clearly to avoid misunderstandings. Collaborative efforts at work or in your social circle will be highly rewarding. Embrace change and be open to new ideas and perspectives. Romance may bloom unexpectedly,

so stay open-hearted.
Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 15, 22, 29, 37
CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22

This week, Cancer, focus on creating a harmonious environment both at home and at work. Your nurturing nature will be appreciated by those around you. Trust your instincts when it comes to financial decisions but avoid impulsive spending.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 12, 19, 25, 32, 38
LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22

For Leo, this week is all about self-expression and creativity. Share your ideas boldly and don't hold back. Take care of your physical health by staying active and maintaining a balanced diet. Romance may spark with someone who shares your passions.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 8, 16, 23, 30, 40
VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22

Virgo, focus on creating stability in your daily routines this week. Organize your tasks and prioritize your goals to maximize productivity. Pay attention to your emotional well-being by setting aside time for relaxation and self-care.

A family gathering or intimate conversation could bring you closer to loved ones.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 10, 17, 26, 33, 39
LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22

This week, Libra, focus on finding balance in your relationships. Listen actively and communicate openly to strengthen connections with others. A creative project or hobby could provide a much-needed outlet for self-expression. Financial opportunities may arise, so stay vigilant and trust your instincts when making decisions.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 13, 20, 27, 34, 40
SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV

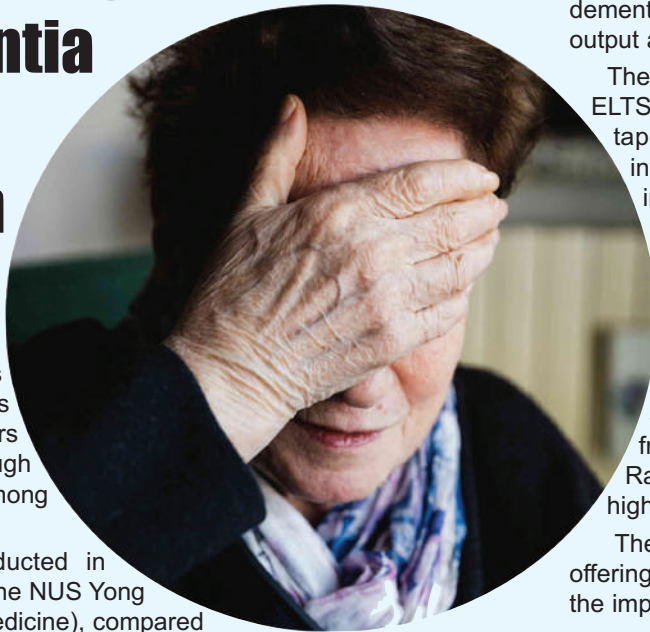
Scorpio, this week is about personal transformation and growth. Embrace change as an opportunity for renewal and self-improvement. Trust your intuition in matters of the heart, and don't be afraid to express your true feelings. Focus on fostering a supportive network of friends and allies who uplift and inspire you.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 39

Detecting early linguistic signs of dementia in seniors' natural speech

A study led by linguists from the Department of English, Linguistics, and Theatre Studies (ELTS) at the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) has unveiled how early linguistic markers of dementia can be discerned through the analysis of natural speech among senior Singaporeans.

This pioneering research, conducted in collaboration with researchers from the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (NUS Medicine), compared



the speech patterns of cognitively healthy individuals with those experiencing mild cognitive impairment (MCI), unveiling distinctive linguistic features associated with dementia. Notably, participants with memory-related MCI exhibited reduced speech output and employed fewer, yet more abstract, nouns

The study, spearheaded by Professor Bao Zhiming from the NUS Department of ELTS, underscores Singapore's unique linguistic landscape, characterized by a rich tapestry of languages and dialects, offering fertile ground for such investigations. "Prior research often relied on targeted language assessments involving structured interviews or picture narratives, analyzing limited language samples. Our study, however, marks a departure by focusing on spontaneous and unstructured speech, facilitating comprehensive analysis," remarked Professor Bao Zhiming.

Emeritus Professor Kua Ee Heok, a psychiatrist from NUS Medicine and an Advisory Board Member at the Yeo Boon Khim Mind Science Centre (YBK MSC), emphasized the pressing need for innovative approaches to address Singapore's escalating dementia rates amid its aging population. Drawing data from the Community Health Inter-generational (CHI) Study, spearheaded by Dr. Rathi Mahendran, the study aligns with CHI's overarching objective of identifying high-risk seniors and devising interventions to promote healthy aging.

The findings represent a significant stride in the realm of dementia research, offering insights into early detection and intervention strategies crucial for mitigating the impact of dementia on aging populations.



Why do people hate people?

It can be easy to mistake feelings like fear and anger as hate. When biases are acted out in harmful ways, however, speaking up can help stop hate from getting worse.

Have you ever said "I hate you" to someone? What about using the "h-word" in casual conversation, like "I hate broccoli"? What are you really feeling when you say that you hate something or someone?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary describes the word "hate" as an "intense hostility and aversion usually deriving from fear, anger, or sense of injury." All over the world, researchers like us are studying hate from disciplines like education, history, law, leadership, psychology, sociology and many others.

If you had a scary experience with thunderstorms, you might say that you hate thunderstorms. Maybe you have gotten very angry at something that happened at a particular place, so now you say you hate going there. Maybe someone said something hurtful to you, so you say you hate that person.

Understanding hate as an emotional response can help you recognize your feelings about something or someone and be curious about where those feelings are coming from. This awareness will give you time to gather more information and imagine the other person's perspective.

So what is hate and why do people hate? There are many answers to these questions.

What hate isn't

Hate, according to the U.S. Department of Justice, "does not mean rage, anger or general dislike."

Sometimes people think they have to feel or believe a certain way about another person or group of people because of what they hear or see around them. For example, people might say they hate another person or group of people

when what they really mean is that they don't agree with them, don't understand them or don't like how they behave or the things they believe in.

It is easy to blame others for things you don't believe or experiences you don't like. Think about times you might have heard someone at school say they hate a classmate or a teacher. Could they have been angry, hurt or confused about something but used the word hate to explain or name how they were feeling?

When you don't understand someone else, it can make you nervous and even afraid. Instead of being curious about each other's unique experiences, people may judge others for being different – they may have a different skin color, practice a different religion, come from a different country, be older or younger, or use a wheelchair.

When people judge people as being less important or less human than themselves, that is a form of hatred.

What hate is

The U.S. Department of Justice defines hate as "bias against people or groups with specific characteristics that are defined by the law." These characteristics can include a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability and national origin.

One way to think about hate is as a pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid, hate is a feeling that grows from biased attitudes about others, like stereotypes that certain groups of people are animals, lazy or stupid.

Sometimes these biased attitudes and feelings provide a foundation for people to act out their biases, such as through bullying, exclusion or insults. For example,



Biases against certain groups of people can escalate into acts of violence if left unchecked.
Paul Taylor/Stone via Getty Images

many Asian people in the U.S. experienced an increase in hate incidents during the COVID-19 pandemic. If communities accept biases as OK, some people may move up the pyramid and think it is also OK to discriminate, or believe that specific groups of people are not welcome in certain neighborhoods or jobs because of who they are.

Near the top of the pyramid, some people commit violence or hate crimes because they believe their own way of being is better than others'. They may threaten or physically harm others, or destroy property. At the very top of the pyramid is genocide, the intent to destroy a particular group – like what Jewish people experienced during World War II or what Rohingya people are experiencing today in Myanmar, near China.

Hate at the middle and higher levels of the pyramid happens because no one took action to discourage the biased feelings, attitudes and actions at the lower levels of the pyramid.

Taking action against hate

Not only can individual people hate, there are also hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan that attack people who are not white,

straight or Christian. Sometimes hate has been written into law like the Indian Removal Act or Jim Crow laws that persecuted Native and Black Americans. If we stay silent when we encounter hate, that hatred can grow and do greater levels of harm.

There are many ways you can help stop hate in your everyday life.

Pay attention to what is being said around you. If the people you spend a lot of time with are saying hateful things about other groups, consider speaking up or changing who you hang out with and where. Be an upstander – sit with someone who is being targeted and report when you see or hear hate incidents.

Start noticing when you are letting hateful words or behaviors into your thoughts and actions. Get to know what hate looks and sounds like in yourself and in others, including what you see online.

Be open to meeting others who have different experiences than you and give them a chance to let you know who they are. Be brave and face your fears. Be curious and kind.

You are not alone in standing up to hate. Many human rights groups and government initiatives are doing the work of eradicating hate, too. We all have a "response-ability," or the ability to respond. As civil rights leader the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that."

You just might find that it is easier to love other people than to hate them. Others will see how you behave and will follow your lead.

Kristine Hoover

Professor of Organizational Leadership,
Gonzaga University

Yolanda Gallardo

Dean of Education, Gonzaga University



Event Management

During a wedding dinner, the anxious father of the bride hurried to the Event Manager, whispering, "Everyone is only taking Carrot Halwa, and the Gulab Jamun is being neglected. What if we run out of Halwa and have excess Jamun? My reputation is on the line!"

"Fret not, Sir. I'll handle it," assured the Event Manager. He swiftly dialled a number and instructed, "Hello, Sanjay, listen carefully. Relocate sexy Monica from the Halwa station to the Jamun counter. And have Abdul Chacha serve Halwa in her place."

You can't become a successful Event Manager just like that!

Cheryl and the Portrait Painter

Cheryl, an LIC employee, visited a portrait painter and requested him to depict a Rs 20 million necklace around her neck, despite not wearing one.

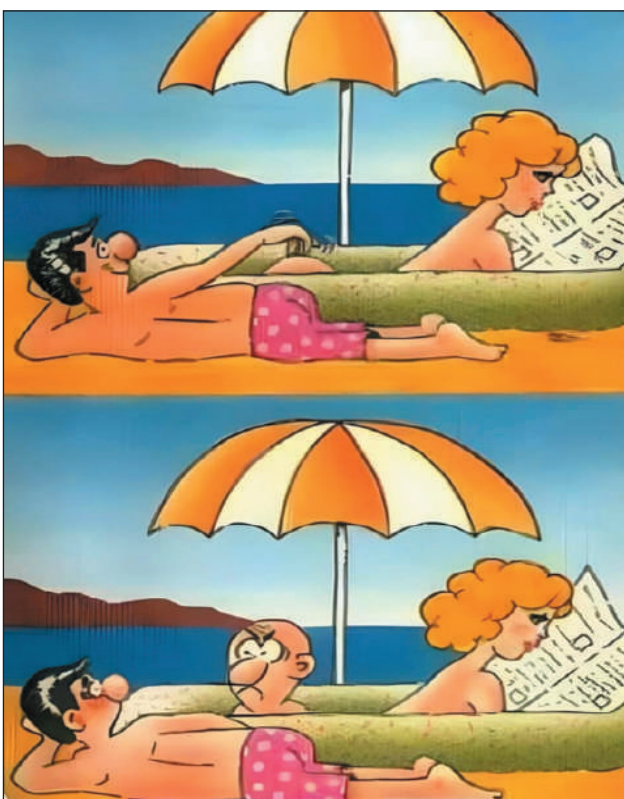
When asked why, she replied, "If I pass away, Freddy might remarry. The new wife, upon seeing the painting, will endlessly search for the non-existent necklace. Their disputes will grant my soul true peace."

Two-liners

- The difference between in-laws and outlaws? Outlaws are sought after.
- Alcohol is a perfect solvent: It dissolves marriages, families, and careers.

Puns

1. A man wanting a pretty nurse must be patient.
2. A man who leaps off a cliff jumps to conclusions.
3. A man running in front of a car gets tired; behind a car, he's exhausted.



The Mischievous Sons

A couple had two sons, aged seven and eight, who were excessively mischievous. They were always getting into trouble, and their parents were aware that if any mischief occurred in their town, their children were most probably involved.

The boys' mother heard that a priest in town had been successful in disciplining children, so she met the clergyman and requested his help. The priest agreed but insisted on seeing them individually. So, the mother sent her seven-year-old first thing in the morning, with the elder one to meet the priest in the afternoon.

The clergyman, a tall man with a booming voice, met the younger kid and asked him sternly, "Where is God?" The boy's mouth dropped, but he made no response, sitting wide-eyed with his mouth hanging open.

The priest repeated the question in an even sterner tone. Again, the boy made no attempt to answer. So, the priest raised his voice even more, shook his finger in the boy's face, and bellowed, "Where is God?"

The boy screamed and bolted from the room, ran directly home, and dived into his room, slamming the door behind him. When his elder brother found him there, he asked, "What happened?"

Gasping for breath, the younger brother replied, "We're in big trouble this time. God is missing, and they think we did it."

The Babysitter's Dilemma

A young man agreed to babysit one night so a single mother could have an evening out. At bedtime, he sent the youngsters upstairs to bed and settled down to watch a basketball match. One child kept creeping down the stairs, but the young man kept sending him back to bed. At 9 p.m., the doorbell rang.

It was the neighbor, Mrs. Jackson, asking whether her son was there. The young man brusquely replied, "No." Just then, a little boy appeared over the banister and shouted, "I'm here, Mum, but he won't let me go home."

The Seagull and Heaven

A three-year-old girl and her father went to the beach. There was a dead seagull lying on the sand. The girl asked her father, "Dad, what happened to the birdie?"

Her dad replied, "The bird died and went to heaven."

The girl then asked, "And God threw him back down?"

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Decision on Kids

A little girl said to her friend, "I'm never having kids. I hear they take nine months to download..."

5-year-old son (after reading the story of a king)...

Son: Mom, I also want three wives... one will cook, one will sing, one will bathe me.

Mom: And which one will put you to sleep?

Son: No, Mom, I will still sleep with you...

Mom's eyes filled up with tears... God bless you, my son!

Mom: But who will sleep with your three wives?

Son: Let them sleep with Daddy...

Daddy's eyes filled up with tears... God bless you, my son!

Laws Isaac Newton forgot to tell us

Workshop Law of Bread: When the buttered slice of bread falls, it always falls on the buttered side.

Law of Queue: If you change queues, the one you just left starts to move faster than the one you are in now.

Law of Mechanical Repair: After your hands become coated with grease, your nose begins to itch.

Law of the Tools: Any tool, when dropped, rolls to the least accessible corner.

Bath Theorem: When the body is immersed in water, the telephone rings.

Law of Encounters: The probability of meeting someone you know increases when you are with someone you don't want to be seen with.

Law of the Result: When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, it will!

Law of Biomechanical: The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.

Law of Coffee: As soon as you sit down for a cup of hot coffee, your boss will ask you to do something which will last until the coffee is cold.

Law of Exam: A book will remain in a state of rest or covered in dust until exam time.

Law of Sleep: The nap becomes enjoyable when the alarm sounds.

Law of Cheaper Things: You always get the cheaper things once you have bought the expensive one.





Being a woman is priceless

When God created woman, He was working late on the 6th day...

An angel came by and asked, "Why spend so much time on her?"

The Lord answered, "Have you seen all the specifications I have to meet to shape her?"

- She must function in all kinds of situations.
- She must be able to embrace several children at the same time.
- Have a hug that can heal anything from a bruised knee to a broken heart.
- She must do all this with only two hands.
- She cures herself when sick and can work 18 hours a day.

The angel was impressed, "Just two hands?! Impossible! And is this the standard model?"

The angel came closer and touched the woman. "But you have made her so soft, Lord."

"She is soft," said the Lord, "But I have made her strong. You can't imagine what she can endure and overcome."

"Can she think?" the angel asked. The Lord answered, "Not only can she think, she can reason and negotiate."

The angel touched her cheeks... "Lord, it seems this creation is leaking! You have put too many burdens on her." "She is not leaking... it is a tear," The Lord corrected the angel.

"What's it for?" asked the angel. The Lord said, "Tears are her way of expressing her grief, her doubts, her love, her loneliness, her suffering, and her pride."

This made a big impression on the angel. "Lord, you are a genius. You thought of everything. A woman is indeed marvelous."

The Lord said, "Indeed, she is.

- She has strength that amazes a man.
- She can handle trouble and carry heavy burdens.
- She holds happiness, love, and opinions.
- She smiles when she feels like screaming.
- She sings when she feels like crying. Cries when happy and laughs when afraid.
- She fights for what she believes in.
- Her love is unconditional.
- Her heart is broken when a next-of-kin or a friend dies, but she finds strength to get on with life."

The angel asked, "So she is a perfect being?"

The Lord replied, "No, she has just one drawback. "She often forgets what she is worth."

Life can be different

Take Risks, Break Barriers, and Create Success

1. Clearly define what you want to achieve.
Set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals for direction and motivation.
2. Approach your career and life strategically.
Identify opportunities, anticipate challenges, and plan actions to align with long-term objectives.
3. Success often requires stepping out of your comfort zone.
Take calculated risks to seize opportunities and accelerate growth.
4. Cultivate a diverse and supportive network of mentors, sponsors, and peers.
Networking provides valuable insights, opportunities, and support.
5. Continuously seek knowledge and skills to stay relevant and competitive.
Embrace new challenges and learn from experiences.
6. Perseverance is crucial for overcoming obstacles and setbacks.
Maintain a positive attitude and stay focused on goals despite challenges.
7. Be your own advocate in pursuing opportunities and promotions.

Clearly communicate your value and accomplishments to others.

8. Pursue ambitions while staying true to yourself.
Authenticity builds trust and credibility, both personally and professionally.
9. Prioritize tasks aligning with goals and manage time efficiently.
Learn to say no to activities not contributing to objectives.
10. Regularly seek feedback to improve and grow.
Reflect on experiences to learn from both successes and failures.
11. Be proud of your ambition without guilt or apology.
Embrace drive and determination to achieve goals.

From "Unapologetically Ambitious: Take Risks, Break Barriers, and Create Success on Your Own Terms" by Shellye Archambeau

The Japanese say you have three faces.



AwesomeQuotesAndsayings

The first face, you show to the world.
The second face, you show to your close friends, and your family.
The third face, you never show anyone.
It is the truest reflection of who you are.

A Story with a Valuable Lesson

Stop chasing fleeting butterflies

A young boy asked his grandfather, "Grandpa, I want to be a star, I want to be in movies. When I grow up, I want to see the world, drive nice cars, and live in a house made of glass. Yes, I really want to be successful and great. So tell me, how do I chase all my goals, and catch them faster?"

The grandfather stopped for a moment, turned around, and then spotted a huge and super beautiful butterfly dancing on a flower. At once, he said, "Oh, my God! What a magnificent butterfly! Now, hurry... hurry and chase after it! Make sure you catch it! Don't let it fly away! Move!"

The young lad hurriedly ran to the butterfly, but as he tried to take hold of it, the butterfly suddenly flew up into the wind. He ran after it, trying to catch it, but it was flying so fast. He ran around and around the garden until he got tired, and then he could

no longer see the butterfly.

Panting with loss of breath, he returned to his grandfather, wheezing, "I couldn't catch it, grandpa! It flew away!"

The grandfather smiled for a moment, then held the young lad by his hand and took him to a corner. He waited until he calmed down, then he whispered into his ear, "Listen, boy, let me teach you a lesson, a valuable life lesson. If you spend your time chasing butterflies, they'll fly away. But if you spend your time creating a beautiful garden, the butterflies will come to you. You see... that butterfly is like your goals in life.

"In our journey of success, it's easy to get caught up in the pursuit of immediate goals, the fleeting butterflies of life. However, the real magic happens when we focus on building something substantial, akin to cultivating a vibrant garden. Instead of relentlessly chasing, channel your energy into creating and nurturing.

"Build something meaningful, whether it's a project, a skill, or a relationship. The beauty you will cultivate will attract opportunities, experience, and success naturally. So don't chase love, money, or success. Become the best version of yourself and those things will come to you."



Being Mum & Dad

9 Things Parents should Never Say to their Kids

Parenting is both rewarding and challenging, filled with countless decisions that shape our children's lives. In moments of stress or exhaustion, we may say things to our kids that we later regret. While some statements seem harmless at the time, they can leave lasting impacts on a child's well-being. Here are 9 confessions from parents about things they wish they had never said to their kids, along with reasons why these words should be reconsidered.

1. **"I wish I had more time for myself."** Many parents feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of raising children and managing daily life. Expressing a need for personal time is natural, but saying it directly to children can unintentionally make them feel like a burden. It's important to communicate the importance of self-care in a way that reassures children of their value and importance.

2. **"We can't afford that."** Financial limitations are a reality for many families, but bluntly stating "we can't afford that" can create feelings of inadequacy and insecurity in children. Instead, focus on prioritizing spending and teach them about budgeting and saving for



future goals.

3. **"You were an accident."** Children need to feel loved and wanted unconditionally. Even if a pregnancy was unplanned, framing their arrival positively can reinforce their sense of belonging and self-worth within the family.

4. **"I'm disappointed in you."** Expressing disappointment can deeply affect a child's self-esteem and confidence. Instead, address specific behaviors or decisions constructively, focusing on opportunities for

learning and growth.

5. **"Life is unfair."** While acknowledging life's challenges is important, telling children "life is unfair" may lead to a negative outlook. Teach resilience and problem-solving skills, emphasizing the opportunities for growth and success in overcoming obstacles.

6. **"You should have been more like your sibling."** Comparing children fosters rivalry and undermines their unique strengths. Celebrate each child's individuality and encourage them to pursue their own paths and goals.

7. **"The world is a scary place."** While it's vital to educate children about safety, emphasizing only the dangers can create unnecessary fear and anxiety. Provide balanced perspectives and teach them about kindness, bravery, and making wise choices.

8. **"I don't believe in your dreams."** Encourage children to dream big and support their aspirations, even if they seem unrealistic. Show interest in their interests and goals, helping them develop confidence and determination.

9. **"You don't look a certain way."** Comments about appearance can impact a child's self-esteem. Instead, focus on praising their qualities, talents, and efforts, promoting a positive self-image based on inner strengths.

Parenting involves dealing with these sensitive areas with care, fostering a nurturing environment where children feel loved, supported, and valued for who they are.

Signs You Aren't Getting Enough Sleep

A good night's sleep repairs the body and mind, which helps you function at your best

If you're not getting good sleep, your skin may soon show it. Some studies have found a link between a lack of ZZZs and acne, perhaps related to how sleep controls hormones in your body. Sleep deprivation also hurts the immune system, leaving your body open to many different issues. Some sleep tips by Dany P. Baby, MD of WebMD:

* Your eyes don't look good

Redness, puffiness, dark circles, and bags -- all signs that you're not getting enough shut-eye. The sleep-deprived tend to get more wrinkles, lines, swelling, and droopiness, studies show. Why? It may be that your body misses out on the hormone control and tissue repair that happens in deep sleep stages.

* You gain weight

When you get a good night's rest, your body can properly control ghrelin and leptin -- the hormones that affect how hungry you feel. Without them, you may feel the urge to eat more than you need, which can make you gain weight.

* You crave junk food

After a sleepless night, you may be more likely to pick that cheeseburger and fries over a salad for



lunch. A sleep-deprived brain is more likely to crave unhealthy snacks and meals. It may be that judgment and decision-making aren't as sharp when you're tired, which makes it easier for other desires to take over.

* You chug more caffeine

Not a huge surprise: If your usual 2 cups of joe just aren't cutting it, you may not be as rested as usual. Caffeine may seem like an answer to poor sleep, but it quickly can become part of the problem. In the short term, the pick-me-up of coffee or soda may make you more alert, but in the long term, it can lead to insomnia or anxiety.

* You feel moody

Irritability is a big sign of poor sleep. One study limited people to 4 1/2 hours of sleep a night for a week. The result: More stressed, angry, and mentally exhausted people. They felt better when they returned to their normal schedules.

* You Feel depressed

Depression and poor sleep are also closely related. Worse, they're circular -- depression can lead to poor sleep, and the reverse can happen, too.

* Focus and memory feel dim

Even a little less sleep -- losing just 2 hours if you usually snooze 8 hours a night -- can make you groggy and affect concentration and memory. This may make you less skilled at work -- or worse, behind the wheel of your car. More than one-third of people admit dozing off while driving.

* Mornings feel crummy

Waking up with a sore throat, dry mouth, or headache could point to a medical reason you're sleeping poorly -- sleep apnea, snoring, or acid reflux, for example. If you notice symptoms over and over, talk to your doctor. They can figure out if medication or other treatment would help you.

* Get the rest you need

Most adults need 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night. Make sure it's restful. Stick to a schedule, which means going to bed and waking up about the same time each day. Keep your room cool, quiet, and dark. Exercise regularly, especially workouts that get your heart pumping. It may promote deeper sleep.

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Bollywood stars who faced insecurities over their skin tone

Bollywood has long been a realm of dreams, dazzling lights, and larger-than-life personas. Yet, beneath its glitter, many stars have privately battled insecurities about their skin tone. Their journeys toward self-acceptance and resilience serve as inspirations, encouraging a broader conversation about diversity and inclusivity in Bollywood and beyond. Here are some luminaries who have openly discussed their struggles, as reported by Times of India, and how they triumphed over them.

Priyanka Chopra: In a candid interview with Allure, Priyanka Chopra revealed how seeing few individuals on TV who resembled her skin tone deeply affected her during childhood. She highlighted prevalent desires across Asia to lighten skin tones, where many girls are made to feel their darker complexion is less desirable. Chopra admitted to battling insecurities during her teenage years, harbouring a profound dislike for her natural colour. However, she has since embraced and grown to appreciate her complexion, expressing gratitude for her skin today.

Shilpa Shetty: Renowned for her dynamic career, Shilpa Shetty once grappled with profound insecurities about her complexion, especially in comparison to her fair-skinned sister, Shamita Shetty. In a revealing interview, Shilpa confessed to fears that Shamita's debut would overshadow her own opportunities, fueling her insecurity about her darker skin tone. Over time, Shilpa has come to embrace her unique beauty, transforming her insecurities into a source of strength. Today, she stands out not only for her talent but also for her fitness, style, and striking presence in Bollywood.

Kajol: Despite trolls, Kajol has always remained true to herself. Addressing rumours about skin-lightening treatments, she clarified that her darker skin was due to years spent working outdoors. Now with less sun exposure, her complexion has naturally lightened. Kajol humorously termed this change as a "stay-at-home surgery," emphasizing it was never about altering her skin colour but simply a change in lifestyle.

Nawazuddin Siddiqui: Despite success, Nawazuddin faced colour discrimination, often being typecast in roles reinforcing stereotypes. In an interview with Bollywood Bubble, he revealed past struggles with



insecurities over his skin tone, once using fairness creams to alter his appearance. However, he eventually embraced his natural look, understanding that true acceptance comes from within.

Mithun Chakraborty: Despite success, Mithun's early career was fraught with challenges related to his skin colour. In a revealing interview, Mithun spoke about facing discrimination, recalling how his complexion was a source of ridicule. Despite obstacles, he transcended biases and emerged as one of Bollywood's icons.

Nandita Das: A prominent advocate against colourism in India, Nandita Das has frequently addressed challenges with societal biases regarding her skin tone. Labelled as "dark/dusky Nandita Das," she was advised to lighten her skin for roles. As a supporter of the 'Dark is Beautiful' campaign, Nandita actively challenges the

narrative around skin colour in India.

Chitrangada Singh: Vocal against colourism, Chitrangada Singh posted photos on social media with the caption "brown and happy" in response to Suhana Khan's callout. She has never endorsed fairness creams, opposing practices that promote discrimination based on skin colour. She shared her experience of losing a modelling assignment due to her skin tone, highlighting industry challenges.

Esha Gupta: Early in her career, Esha Gupta faced suggestions from colleagues to lighten her makeup. Makeup artists applied heavy layers, sometimes even painting her body, leaving her feeling uncomfortable. Despite such pressures, Esha has since spoken out against these practices, advocating for natural beauty and self-acceptance.

BollyBytes

Suniel Shetty reveals secrets to 41 years of marriage with wife Mana Shetty

Suniel Shetty and his wife Mana Shetty have celebrated 41 years of marriage. In a recent interaction on the YouTube channel Bharti TV, the Bollywood actor credited their enduring marriage to Mana's patience and understanding of his earlier rough-around-the-edges persona.

Praising his wife, Suniel remarked, "She is incredibly patient, as are my children." Reflecting on how Mana adjusted to his past self, he admitted, "I used to be quite a rebel. I had long hair and would keep the top button of my shirt open. This was long before I became an actor, but Mana was remarkably patient."

Suniel also shared insights into their relationship timeline, revealing that they dated for nine years before tying the knot. Despite initial resistance from his mother about their union, Suniel remained steadfast in his commitment to Mana. He explained, "Mana and I were together for nine years before we got married. Whenever my mother brought up marriage, I would tell her, 'I am committed to someone.



Marrying someone else would hurt two women. It's better not to marry at all.' I respected her views but stood firm."

In an earlier interview on The Ranveer Show, Suniel fondly recalled their love story, saying, "I fell in love with her the moment I saw her. Back then, I was seen as a rebel due to my bike, long hair, and physique, with many women around me. But Mana saw beyond that image."

Discussing their enduring bond, Suniel shared, "We would meet at four in the morning on Christmas and New Year's, and not once did she complain. Her caring and loving nature struck me from the start. Despite my parents' initial concerns, Mana's parents embraced me warmly, and her mother and I shared a great rapport."

Suniel and Mana finally exchanged vows on December 25, 1991. Their journey together saw the arrival of their first child, Athiya, in 1992, followed by their son Ahan in 1996.

Flight Attendant's Remarks on Kiara Advani, Janhvi Kapoor, and Ananya Panday spark interest

A viral video featuring a flight attendant sharing her impressions of Bollywood stars Kiara Advani, Janhvi Kapoor, and Ananya Panday has stirred curiosity among fans.

In the video, the attendant describes Kiara Advani as having an assertive attitude, contrasting with Janhvi Kapoor, whom she describes as sweet-natured. According to the attendant, Ananya Panday is the most humorous among the three.

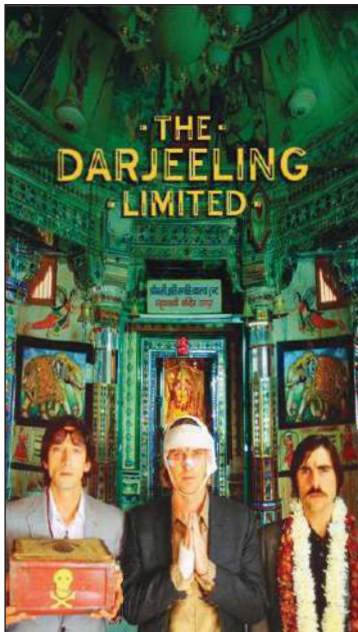
The attendant recounts an incident involving Kiara Advani declining almonds and cashews offered by the crew, instead preferring her assistant to handle the request. She clarifies that her observations were based on crew accounts rather than direct interaction. This commentary has sparked varied reactions on social media, with some criticizing Kiara and labelling her as 'overhyped,' while others defend her, citing the need for fair judgment.

Regarding Janhvi Kapoor, the attendant notes her pleasant demeanour even when awakened from sleep for emergency instructions near an exit row. She also praises Ananya Panday for her amiable and humorous personality, recalling an incident where Ananya urgently needed to use the restroom.

Kiara Advani, who recently appeared in "Satyaprem Ki Katha," has several upcoming projects, including "Game Changer" alongside Ram Charan and reportedly "War 2" and "Don 3" with Ranveer Singh.



Mardi 25 Juin - 20.30



Mercredi 26 Juin - 21.30



Jeudi 27 Juin - 21.40



Programme TV



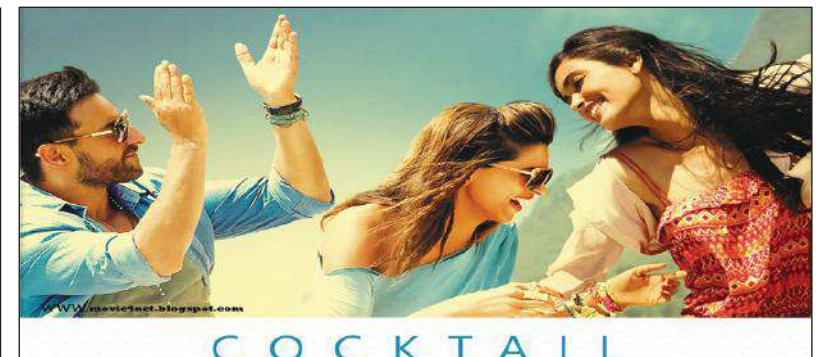
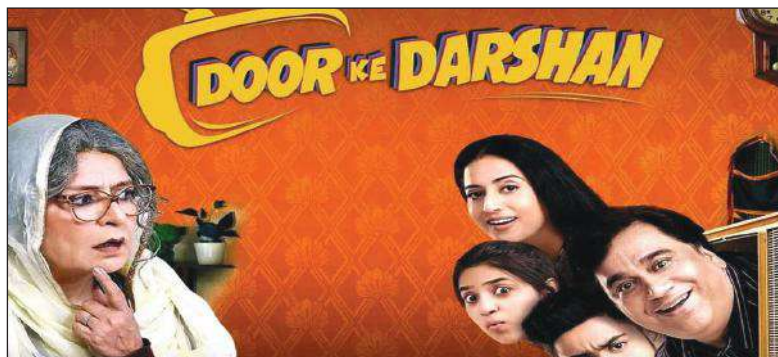
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Jeudi 27 Juin - 15.16 Stars: Mahie Gill, Manu Rishi



Jeudi 27 Juin - 20.30 Stars: Deepika Padukone, Tina Desai, Saif Ali Khan





Beth Driscoll
Associate Professor in
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Melbourne

At a time of crisis, reading books can help us make sense of the world

Reading on its own can't solve every problem. But it can help us gather the resources we need to live in a way that is meaningful

Why do any of us read books these days? There are so many other forms of information and entertainment that are much easier to consume. With 20 minutes to hand, why wouldn't you just scroll for a while through TikTok, or check in on a news app?

Yet sometimes bite-sized doesn't work. I want to share an example from my own reading. At the end of 2023 and the start of 2024, I was following the Israeli offensive in Gaza the way I usually follow news media. Which is to say, I mostly read headlines and saw photos. I knew something shocking was happening, but that very sense of shock sent my brain into short-circuit. I couldn't stay with the story; I couldn't understand it.

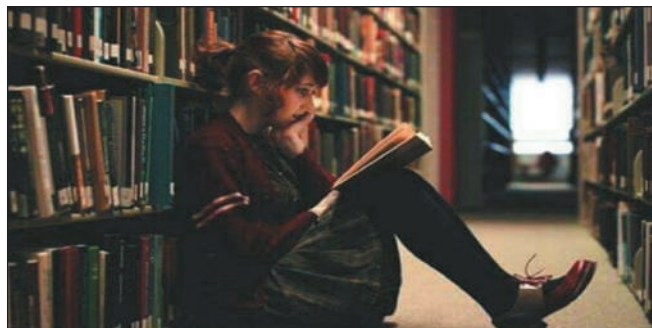
Then my friend and research partner, Claire Squires, told me about a book she had just read: 'Don't Look Left: A Diary of Genocide' by Atef Abu Saif.

The Palestinian Authority's Minister for Culture, Abu Saif was visiting Gaza from the West Bank with his 15-year-old son when the bombing started. 'Don't Look Left' is his diary of the next 85 days, shared with his publisher through WhatsApp messages and voice memos.

Reading this book clicked with me in a way other media hadn't. Over the course of its 288 pages, I got to know Abu Saif, his extended family and his friends. The diary format and the ever-present threat had the immediacy and urgency of news media, but the way the diary unfolded helped me to see people and places in a new way. I learned the names and nuances of different neighbourhoods – like Jabalia refugee camp, where the author was born in 1973, and the tent city of Rafah.

Abu Saif conveyed what it was like to make daily decisions about where it was safe to sleep. He describes seeking out the most fortified parts of a building, lying awake listening to missiles. I gained insight into the harrowing quiet moments between bombings, staring out shattered windows at night. The texture of everyday life and survival amid terror – searching for food, finding somewhere to charge batteries, checking messages from friends and family, helping neighbours search the rubble of bombed buildings – was woven into something profound that has stayed with me.

Since reading 'Don't Look Left', I have been able to remain engaged when the news feels overwhelming, to place the ongoing horrors in Gaza into a framework



of deeper understanding.

Aesthetic and moral

Reading may sometimes seem invisible or quiet, but it is a highly dynamic activity, infused with energy. In my book, 'What Readers Do', I explain that reading is both aesthetic and moral.

Reading 'Don't Look Left' had an aesthetic dimension, because its narrative structure offered me a shape I could recognise and a pace I could absorb. It aligned with my brain and helped me find meaning in the world around me.

It also had a moral dimension, because it enabled me to empathise with others. The book helped me see Gaza at eye level, as a person walking through its alleys and buildings, not just as a series of aerial images.

Books remain powerful. Amid all the offerings of digital media – from bingeable shows to news blogs and funny videos – reading still has a place for many of us. Adaptable and enduring, books have not been replaced by new media, but sit alongside them: they circulate not only in print form, but as audiobooks and online serials; they are adapted for other media.

Globally, the book publishing industry generated US\$132.4 billion in 2023, more than the movie and music industries, though less than video games. The figure has stayed steady for many years.

Book festivals proliferate and celebrities run book clubs on Instagram. Book sales surged during the Covid pandemic. And book reading is not just for one demographic. While many studies suggest a majority of readers are highly educated women, reading cuts across ages and cultural groups.

A 2021 report on US reading habits by Rachel Noorda and Kathi Inman Berens, for example, found that avid book engagers were younger and more ethnically diverse than the general survey population.

Solitary and social

As books persist and develop, so do reading practices.

The moral and aesthetic dimensions of reading occur in a range of different settings. Reading can take place alone, but it

can also be sociable. It is a practice that sometimes includes digital technology, and sometimes eschews the digital in favour of print.

Readers act aesthetically when they use books to give their lives style or structure. For example, people are drawn to different genres, like poetry or crime fiction, that resonate with their sense of

life's shape. I looked to 'Don't Look Left' for a narrative form that was meaningful to me. Other people might seek out beautiful language, complex characters or heroic quests.

Readers also engage in aesthetic conduct when they visibly identify as bookish: posting curated shelves on Instagram, cosplaying as a favourite character, or carrying a Penguin Books tote bag. The books people read find their way into how they live their life.

Readers can use books to test ideas of right and wrong. Some books pose moral dilemmas that readers can use to refine their own position. Richard Osman's most recent Thursday Murder club book 'The Last Devil to Die', for example, raises the issue of assisted dying.

Readers can also use books to develop the moral capacity of empathy by seeking out writers with perspectives that are new to them. For example, I am one of over 41,000 followers of the Blackfulla Bookclub on Instagram, led by Teela Reid and Merinda Dutton, which highlights First Nations writers and storytellers.

People connect books to their personal and political views, and express those views through social interactions. On social media, readers sometimes engage in moral conduct by expressing views on the behaviour of authors, publishers or others involved in book culture. Maybe this is "cancel culture" – or maybe it is simply activism and influence.

But reading can also happen quietly and alone. For some, private reading can be a sensory, even erotic pleasure: inhaling the smell of a book, lying on the beach or the grass. For others, private reading can be training in sustained attention, "deep reading" that helps the brain. And for others, it can be a form of mindfulness, a restorative balm that counters the overwhelming aspects of modern life.

Reading, on its own, can't solve every problem. But it can help us gather the resources we need to live in a way that is meaningful. It can be a practice that helps us make sense of the world and our place in it.

Tree of Knowledge

Creating What We



Don't Want

When our thoughts become consumed with worry, we become a beacon of worry to the world.

If prayer is an intention that we announce to the universe in order to create a desired outcome, then our every thought is a prayer. This includes thoughts of worry as well as of hope. All thoughts are subtle creative energy. Some thoughts are more focused or repeated more often, gathering strength. Some are written down or spoken, giving them even greater power. Every thought we have is part of a process whereby we co-create our experience and our reality with the universe. When we use our creative energy unconsciously, we create what is commonly known as self-fulfilling prophecy. In essence, when we worry, we are repeatedly praying and lending our energy to the creation of something we don't want.

The good news is, we can retrain our minds and thoughts to focus our energy on what we desire to bring into our lives. Since most worry is repetitive, it will take more than one positive thought to counteract the energy we've created. The simplest antidote to worry is affirmations. When we hold these positive thoughts, repeat them often, speak them, write them, and refer to them throughout our day, we are using focused energy to create positive results.

We can start right away, together: I am a creative being, using my energy to co-create a wonderful world. I know that I create my experience of life from within, and as I do so, I also create ripples of energy around me that echo into the world. My positive thoughts gather together with the thoughts and prayers of others. Together, we create enough positive energy to heal not only our own lives, but the world we share. I am grateful for the ability to co-create good in my life and in the world.

A lot of times we have concerned loved ones who worry about us. When this happens they also are sending out a worry prayer to the world. A loving conversation letting them know what is happening is the easiest solution. Also, ask them to send you positive affirmations rather than worry about you. After all, worry doesn't do them any good either. Explain to them that worry can actually be energetically harmful to you and that wishing good things for you is much more beneficial and much more fun, too.