69th Year -- No. 3867

Friday, June 28, 2024 www.mauritiustimes.com

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24 Pages - ePaper

MAURITIUS TIMES

• A Budget is telling your money where to go, instead of wondering where it went. — John C. Maxwell

Interview: Rama Sithanen, Former Minister of Finance

# "The MSM will not require close to 50% of votes to win the elections.

It simply has to win where it matters"

• 'Inflation, the worst enemy of the population, has become the darling of the Minister of Finance'





# Electoral promises Is a 14th Month Salary a Viable Proposition?

# The Nuclear Landscape -A Rules-Based Disorder





Eclairages La lutte contre le trafic de drogue à Maurice: un combat en péril?

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# The Ongoing FCC Controversy

he establishment of the Financial Crimes Commission (FCC), through the enactment of the Financial Crimes Commission Act 2023, has sparked significant controversy and legal challenges. At the heart of this contentious issue is whether the FCC is being weaponized as a political tool both to target government opponents and to provide clearance to the nomenklatura, rather than solely focusing on combating financial crimes effectively. Worse still, none of the FCC's decisions would be amenable to DPP oversight or court challenge, an unprecedented situation say Opponents and civil society.

Central to this contentious issue are significant legal challenges, including a constitutional case initiated by Navin Ramgoolam, leader of the Labour Party and former Prime Minister. His case highlights broader concerns regarding the FCC's operational framework and its potential impact on democratic norms

Navin Ramgoolam's challenge revolves around the legality and perceived bias of the FCC's actions under the FCC Act 2023. He argues that the Act, which replaced the previous Good Governance Integrity Reporting Act, appears tailored to target him and members of his party. This assertion raises doubts about the FCC's independence and susceptibility to political influence, particularly given provisions in the Act allowing the President to appoint key officials with limited Opposition consultation.

At the core of Navin Ramgoolam's argument lies the application of "Unexplained Wealth Orders" (UWOs) against him, aimed at seizing assets allegedly linked to illicit activities. His defence contests the FCC's authority to investigate and adjudicate without traditional checks and balances, notably those overseen by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

Navin Ramgoolam's case is not merely about individual legal grievances but about safeguarding the principles of separation of powers and judicial independence enshrined in Mauritius' Constitution. By contesting the FCC's actions, he aims to ensure that the Commission operates within constitutional bounds, free from partisan agendas or undue political influence.

The outcome of Navin Ramgoolam's constitutional challenge, along with legal actions brought by former DPP Satyajit Boolell, will significantly influence Mauritius' governance trajectory and anticorruption efforts. These cases mark a critical juncture where the judiciary must balance combating financial crimes with upholding fundamental rights

| and democratic principles.

Satyajit Boolell's contention against the FCC Act focuses on its perceived infringement of constitutional principles, particularly Articles 1, 3, and 10. He argues that granting the FCC unchecked powers without prior DPP consent risks political interference and diminishes procedural safeguards in judicial matters.

Recently, current DPP Rashid Ahmine also challenged the FCC in a constitutional complaint. His plea questions the FCC's attempt to exceed powers granted by the Constitution, specifically as outlined in Article 72. Rashid Ahmine expresses concerns that the FCC's discretion not to transmit investigation files to the DPP limits his ability to fully exercise constitutional powers, as required under the Prevention of Corruption Act's provisions.

Critics argue that while the FCC Act aims to bolster Mauritius' ability to combat financial malfeasance, it risks undermining judicial oversight and fostering a climate of political persecution. Consolidating prosecutorial powers under the FCC, alongside opaque appointment processes, amplifies concerns about executive overreach and potential erosion of judicial due processes and impartiality. Moreover, with the FCC now overseeing various investigative agencies, including the ICAC, which has shown little willingness to hold ruling party officials accountable for nearly a decade, raises concerns about public trust.

Proponents of the FCC contend that centralizing authority enhances efficiency in tackling complex financial crimes, crucial for maintaining Mauritius' reputation as a stable financial centre. However, the extent to which these presumed gains compromise constitutional safeguards remains contentious and under legal scrutiny.

As these constitutional cases progress through Mauritius' courts, the nation faces a pivotal moment in defining the balance between robust anticorruption measures and safeguarding democratic institutions, including an independent DPP and judiciary. The judiciary's role in resolving these challenges will be crucial in shaping the FCC's future mandate and its credibility as a fair investigative agency.

Ultimately, the resolution of these legal disputes will resonate internationally, influencing perceptions of governance and rule of law beyond Mauritius. The stakes are high, emphasizing the imperative of upholding constitutional integrity and ensuring that efforts to combat financial crimes do not undermine fundamental rights or democratic principles.

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#### **Mauritius Times**

Founder/Editor: Beekrumsing Ramlallah - Aug 1954-Sept 2000 Editor-in-chief: M. Ramlallah / Senior Editor: Dr RN Gopee This epaper has been produced with the assistance of Doojesh Ramlallah, Sultana Kurmally and Kersley Ramsamy Pearl House 4th Floor Room 406 - Sir Virgil Naz Street, Port Louis facebook.com/mauritius.times Tel: 5-29 29301 Tel/Fax: 212 1313

## The Conversation

# Electioneering brings a deluge of information but not everyone engages

with it in deciding who to vote for. Avpics/Alamy

# Some people never listen to politicians, no matter what they say

A healthy democracy and proper societal cohesion require that all voices are heard. If societal progress is to be beneficial and enduring, it must also be inclusive

jostle for votes on July 4, the British electorate is faced with an avalanche of politically related materials and debate through all forms of media outlets.

Ideally, in what we might describe as an "ideas-informed" society, all citizens would engage with new information with an open and critical mindset, in order to improve both their own lives and that of their community.

For instance, research shows that living more healthily can reduce our chances of avoidable cancers. It can also lead to less strain on public services. Being ideas-informed would see citizens both engaging and ideally, acting on these findings

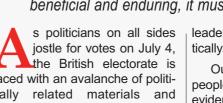
In terms of the election, an ideas-informed citizen might be interested in understanding both the content of the manifestos being offered and how the democratic system operates. Voters would thus be equipped to see beyond the rhetorical spin in the leadership debates and vote tactically.

Our research looks at how people engage with ideas and evidence in order to make decisions about their lives. We have found that no matter what politicians say, some of the electorate just aren't listening.

In his 1893 book, The Division of Labour in Society, French sociologist Émile Durkheim described a state of "anomie" that people can experience during challenging times. Instead of seeing the difficulties as a source of motivation and an opportunity to effect progressive change into society, people can become disconnected from society at large.

Durkheim said that our understanding of morality is based, not on universal laws, but the social norms provided by a functioning stable society. In turn, this stability provides people with a predictable framework within which to make decisions.

Ruth Luzmore, Research Fellow & Chris Brown, Prof of Education, University of Southampton



### **Mauritius Times**

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Friday, June 28, 2024 www.mauritiustimes.com facebook.com/mauritius.times Analyse

# **Electoral promises**Is a 14th Month Salary a Viable Proposition?



While the government might resort to deficit financing to cover additional payroll costs in the public sector, there is no economic rationale for imposing additional labour costs on private sector enterprises...

n the run up to the next legislative elections, likely to be held between August and December 2024, many electoral promises have been made by both the parliamentary Opposition alliance (Labour-MMM-New Democrats) and the government. The 2024-25 budget contained a wide array of freebies (social benefits and allowances) and fiscal concessions to different segments of the population. It seems that this pre-electoral exercise of competitive welfarism is not over yet. We are likely to see more promises, some being more reckless fiscally, in the coming months as political parties scramble to secure the votes of the electorate.

One such promise catching public attention is the proposition to grant a 14th month salary to employees in the public and private sectors. The first person to float this idea was the leader of the PMSD who raised it in a question in Parliament while he was leader of the Opposition. Apparently, the promise of a 14-month salary would be one of the ideas to be coopted by a future alliance between the PMSD and the ruling party to give it an extra mileage over the Opposition. Since the government's goodwill with old-age pensioners is being impaired by rampant inflation that is eroding their purchasing power, the temptation to appeal to active workers in general is irresistible.

If that promise makes its way into the political manifesto of an MSM-PMSD alliance, it could be a game-changer in the election if the electorate falls victim to such political baiting. But economically it would a hard sell to private sector employers. There is already a 13-month salary (end-of-year bonus) that is a permanent and irrevocable feature of employee compensation, mandated by law (under section 54 of the Worker's Rights Act). Probably Mauritius is the only country that provides a 13-month salary as a vested

**66** The IMF has asked government to restrict CSG payouts to retirement pension for private sector workers. If it were to take more money from CSG funds to finance a 14-month salary in the private sector, government would be using funds raised from private sector employees to pay them a 14-month salary. It's like taking money from the right pocket only to put it back into the left pocket. "

#### employee's right.

In 35 years of practising accounting and taxation in a developed country, I have not come across any public or private entity paying a 13-month salary to their employees as an acquired right, irrespective of performance or productivity. If employers are required to pay a 14-month salary, that would have serious economic implications for the country. As far as I recall, some companies in the sugar industry paid a 14-month salary in one year in the 1970s when high export sugar prices brought in substantial windfall gains. That was a one-time payment that was never repeated subsequently.

#### **Public sector**

What would be the impact of a 14-month salary on payroll in the public sector, which comprises central government, local government, para-statal bodies and State-owned enterprises? The central government has already a huge budget deficit of Rs 63 billion for 2024-25 (6% of GDP) which will be financed by more borrowings internally and externally. Public debt has already reached Rs 575 billion, or more than 80% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Para-statal bodies and State-owned enterprises are not faring well financially, as most of them are running deficits. The central government's total employee compensation is estimated at Rs 42 billion for 2024-25 (for 13 months). One additional month of pay (14th)on public payroll would costRs 3.2 billion. Such a generous move without productivity gains would certainly be a huge drag on public finances for vears to come.

When we see long queues of patients at public hospitals or long lineups of clients waiting for hours to be served at government offices delivering services to the public, can we prevent any reasonable person from thinking that a 14-month salary would be a reward for the status quo instead of bringing some much-needed efficiency. Just take the example of the National Transport Licensing Authority (NTLA), whose offices see daily long lineups of clients waiting for the processing of their requests for vehicle registration or transfer of ownership. Hopefully the project to implement digitalization of NTLA services, announced in the budget, will cut down the processing delays to a reasonable timeframe.

#### Private sector

In the private sector, the impact of a 14month salary on employers would vary from industry to industry. Big corporations doing well could probably absorb the additional



GeBut in the process no funds would be saved to pay future retirement benefits to private sector employees. Ideally CSG funds should be kept in a separate account and invested at reasonable rates of return to fund pension obligations in the future..."

payroll cost, which would reduce before-tax profits subject to corporate tax (15% in general) while lowering after-tax profits available to pay dividends to shareholders. However, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) would be hit with an additional payroll cost retirement benefits to retirees, income support allowances to workers whose employerpaid salary was less than certain income thresholds (see table: 'Social allowances paid from CSG in 2024- 25') and other social allowances.

Table: Social allowances paid from CSG in 2024- 25								
Allowances	Beneficiaries	Number	Amount Rs	Total Rs monthly	Rs Total for 12 months			
CSG Income Allowance:								
< Rs 20,000 Salary	Individual	110,000	3,000	330,000,000	3,960,000,000			
< Rs 25,000 Salary	Individual	55,000	2,500	137,500,000	1,650,000,000			
< Rs 30,000 Salary	Individual	50,000	2,000	100,000,000	1,200,000,000			
< Rs 50,000 Salary	Individual	105,000	1,500	157,500,000	1,890,000,000			
CSG Child Allowance 0-3 years	Families	36,000	2,500	90,000,000	1,080,000,000			
Total		356,000		815,000,000	9,780,000,000			
CSG Revenue:								
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25			
Rs Billion	5.3	8.4	9.5	11.4	13.8			

coming in the heels of an increase in minimum wage (from Rs 16,000 to Rs 18,000 in 2025). These enterprises would have three options: (a) reduce staff to keep payroll at a sustainable level, (b) fall back upon government wage assistance schemes, and (c) request income support for employees. One income support scheme being used now is the "CSG Income Allowance" payable to employees drawing less than Rs 50,000 per month.

The "Contribution Sociale Généralisée" (CSG) is a payroll tax paid by employers (6%) and employees (3%) in the private sector to raise funds for the payment of retirement benefits. It is credited to the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) instead of a pension account.

From 2020-21 to 2023-24, the government has exhausted the CSG fund to pay The income support allowance will continue to be provided in 2024-25 to workers whose wages are less than the minimum guaranteed income of Rs 20,000 per month (effective July 1, 2024) and to employees drawing less than Rs 50,000 per month. For 2024-25, at least Rs 9.8 billion will be drawn from the CGG fund to provide income support and a child allowance (see table: 'Social allowances...').

As we have stated in previous articles, the CSG was originally meant to raise funds for paying retirement benefits (work pension) to private sector employees, but government has deposited all CSG contributions collected in its CRF to pay for all kinds of social benefits and allowances that otherwise would fall under the budget of the Ministry of Social Security. Éclairages

#### **Mauritius Times**

# La lutte contre le trafic de drogue à Maurice: un combat en péril ?

Par A. Bartleby

ommes-nous en train de perdre la bataille contre le trafic de drogue? C'est une question légitime à la lumière des rapports quotidiens dans la presse sur le

nombre de toxicomanes arrêtés par la police dans différentes régions de l'île. D'un côté, les autorités multiplient les

saisies avec l'engagement de plusieurs unités policières conjointement avec les douanes. Pourtant, sur le terrain, une triste réalité persiste: la drogue continue de se vendre librement, dévastant beaucoup de familles. Nombreux sont ceux qui affirment que cela reste l'une des principales causes du sentiment d'insécurité qui règne dans le pays...

L'Anti-Drug and Smuggling Unit (Adsu) déclare mener un combat acharné contre le trafic de drogue. Cependant, une toute autre réalité se dessine sur le terrain.

De jour comme de nuit, la drogue se vend comme des petits pains dans plusieurs régions du pays, notamment à Karo Kalyptis, Roche-Bois et à Cité Ste-Claire à Goodlands.

Le gouvernement, notamment le Premier ministre, met souvent en avant le nombre de saisies de drogue effectuées ainsi que la valeur marchande des stupéfiants retirés du marché. Pravind Jugnauth a récemment déclaré devant les nouvelles recrues de la police lors de la Passing Out Parade de la semaine dernière que 25 343 suspects ont été arrêtés pour des délits liés à la drogue de 2015 à 2024. Il a ajouté que la valeur marchande totale des stupéfiants saisis s'élève à plus de Rs 16 milliards.

Cependant, des travailleurs sociaux soutiennent que la réalité sur le terrain montre que la situation reste inchangée. Ils estiment que ce sont les arrestations de petits consommateurs, qui sont pris dans les filets de la brigade antidrogue, qui font gonfler les statistiques sur les saisies dans certains cas.

Quoi qu'il en soit, les conséquences catastrophiques de la prolifération des drogues sur la société sont bien connues. Nous ne saurons peut-être jamais dans quelle mesure la société a été gangrenée par ce fléau, étant donné la nature fondamentalement secrète de cette activité. Les estimations des agences dédiées et des ONGs devraient probablement être triplées ou quadruplées. On estime que le nombre de consommateurs de drogues non injectables dépasse actuellement les 50 000, tandis que le nombre d'usagers de drogues injectables s'élève à environ 10 000.



La réalité sur le terrain est tout autre que ce que nous disent les autorités. P - Discovery House

Ce qui est apparu clairement et est souligné dans les rapports de deux commissions d'enquête différentes - présidées par les juges Rault et Lam Shang Leen - c'est l'implication de certains politiciens de bas niveau et de fonctionnaires qui auraient mis des institutions clés impliquées dans la lutte contre la drogue et la criminalité en conflit avec elles-mêmes. Des institutions censées être à l'avant-garde de la lutte contre la drogue dans le pays se sont laissé infester par le vers de la corruption et de la cupidité.

Il faut se rappeler que Sir Anerood Jugnauth avait été obligé de prendre le taureau par les cornes suite à la soumission du rapport Rault, de peur que le fléau de la drogue ne puisse potentiellement faire tomber son gouvernement pendant son mandat de Premier ministre. Par la suite, ses actions décisives avaient aidé son parti à éviter une débâcle électorale.

Actuellement, ce répit contre le fléau de la drogue ne durera pas longtemps, comme en témoignent les récentes déclarations du Premier ministre sur les milliards de saisies de drogues et les milliers d'arrestations de la police. Ces chiffres ne fournissent aucune indication de ce qui a pu échapper à la détection de nos agences. Nous ne connaissons pas encore toute l'ampleur des ramifications perverses de cette industrie illicite dans le pays aujourd'hui,

bien que certains estiment que les recettes représentent un pourcentage très important de notre PIB.

La question est de savoir si nous devrions considérer la lutte contre la prolifération des drogues comme étant perdue d'avance si elle a vraiment réussi à s'infiltrer à ce point dans le système. Si elle peut embarrasser aujourd'hui une grande partie des responsables chargés du maintien de l'ordre et de la lutte contre les puissants cartels de la drogue, peut-elle être traitée efficacement? Si les partis politiques ont également bénéficié de dons pervers de cette source, contribueront-ils d'une manière quelconque à y mettre un terme?

> Le bon sens nous dit que, à moins d'actions fortes, la situation est destinée à se détériorer et pourrait bientôt devenir ingérable. En tout cas, cette situation soulève des questions. Nos diverses agences de renseignement disposentelles peut-être, sous le boisseau, d'une liste d'individus dans chaque région dont le mode de vie et les avoirs (directs ou par le biais de prêtenoms suspects) sont largement au-delà de leurs moyens officiels? Plus important encore, existe-t-il de puissants gangs de la drogue de type mafia qui opèrent et pourraient éventuellement menacer la paix et la tranquillité du pays?

L'importation de drogue a connu des passages par le port, l'aéroport et les hors-bords, comme le souligne le rapport Lam Shang Leen. Tout est-il fait pour assurer leur sécurité et l'effica-

cité de l'assistance transfrontalière avec nos îles voisines? Des sommes énormes d'argent sale reposent sur une forme de patronage politique et nécessitent des mécanismes de blanchiment d'argent quelque peu sophistiqués (jeux d'argent, casinos, fast-food, circuits de distribution, etc.) que nos agences ne peuvent ignorer. Faisons-nous suffisamment pour remonter à la source et traquer les financiers de ce trafic de drogues?

En conclusion, la situation du trafic de drogues à Maurice semble être à un carrefour critique. Malgré les efforts déployés par les autorités pour multiplier les saisies et afficher des résultats spectaculaires, la réalité sur le terrain demeure alarmante. Les implications profondes de cette industrie illicite sur la société et l'économie appellent à une réponse collective et coordonnée. Cela inclut non seulement des efforts renforcés de répression et de saisie, mais aussi une vigilance accrue contre la corruption et le blanchiment d'argent.

En définitive, la résolution de ce problème complexe nécessitera une volonté politique ferme, une coopération internationale renforcée et une mobilisation sociale continue pour protéger notre société contre les ravages du trafic de drogue et garantir un avenir plus sûr pour tous les Mauriciens.

# **Glissement à gauche en Grande-Bretagne** Le changement est-il à l'horizon?

l'approche des élections en Grande-Bretagne la semaine prochaine (le jeudi 4 juillet), le Parti conservateur dirigé par le Premier ministre Rishi Sunak fait face à une possible défaite après 14 années de règne, alors que le mécontentement généralisé et un déficit important dans les sondages face au Parti travailliste de Keir Starmer semblent annoncer un changement historique de pouvoir.

Les élections générales pourraient effectivement mettre fin à 14 années de règne conservateur, marquées par des turbulences économiques, le Brexit, des scandales politiques et des bouleversements

Suite en page 7



Le Premier ministre britannique Rishi Sunak (à droite) et le chef du Parti travailliste Keir Starmer traversent le hall des pairs pour assister à l'ouverture du Parlement, au Palais de Westminster à Londres, le 7 novembre 2023. P - AP

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# Glissement à gauche en Grande-Bretagne

Suite de la page 4

Le Premier ministre Rishi Sunak et ses Tories de droite semblent sur le point de perdre le pouvoir, le mécontentement étant répandu concernant leur bilan gouvernemental et l'état du pays.

**Nunak** n'a pas réussi à combler Viénorme déficit de 20 points dans les sondages face au Parti travailliste de centre-gauche de Keir Starmer, au cours d'une campagne électorale largement terne. Un sondage a même suggéré que Sunak pourrait devenir le premier Premier ministre britannique en exercice à perdre son propre siège.

Certains analystes prédisent que les Conservateurs pourraient faire face aux pires résultats de leur histoire bicentenaire et que le Parti travailliste pourrait obtenir une majorité record, le dernier passage au pouvoir remontant à Gordon Brown en 2010. En effet, il parait que de plus en plus les électeurs semblent prêts à envoyer un message aux Conservateurs que leur temps est révolu, certains Tories indiquant déjà qu'ils ne peuvent que limiter l'ampleur de la victoire du Labour.

#### "La Grande-Bretagne brisée"

avid Cameron a porté les Conservateurs au pouvoir en 2010, imposant des mesures d'austérité sévères à la suite du crash financier mondial, réduisant le financement des services publics et le pouvoir d'achat des citoyens.

Cameron a ensuite tenté d'apaiser les anti-européens de son parti en orga-

nisant un référendum sur l'appartenance à l'Union européenne, qui s'est retourné contre lui lorsque le public a voté étroitement en faveur du Brexit en 2016.

Le Brexit et sa forme ont coûté leur poste aux premiers ministres successifs, Cameron, qui soutenait le "remain", puis Theresa May, qui n'a pas réussi à faire adopter son accord de divorce par le Parlement.

Boris Johnson, qui lui a succédé, a obtenu une majorité de 80 sièges lors des élections anticipées de 2019, mais sa gestion de la

crise du Covid, ainsi que des allégations de corruption et de copinage, l'ont conduit à sa perte.

Le bref mandat de Liz Truss en septembre et octobre 2022 s'est achevé après que ses plans de réduction d'impôts non financés ont fait fuir les marchés et ont fait chuter la livre.

Sunak, cinquième leader et Premier ministre du parti depuis 2010, a tenté de redresser la barre en promettant de faire baisser l'inflation galopante et réduire les niveaux records d'immigration.

Mais il a des difficultés à apaiser la colère publique face à la hausse du coût de la vie, à la frustration due aux longs délais pour les rendez-vous médicaux, aux services publics réduits et à l'infrastructure défaillante.

"Rien ne fonctionne plus dans ce



de l'opposition travailliste Keir Starmer, lors d'un débat le 26 juin 2024, à Nottingham, P - AFP

pays et personne au gouvernement ne semble s'en soucier", a déclaré Paul Nowak, leader du Congrès des syndicats, en septembre dernier. "Les Conservateurs ont brisé la Grande-Bretagne."

#### "Changement"

Même dans la presse nationale qui soutient traditionnellement les Conservateurs, la foi en ce parti vacille.

"Presque tout empire, et presque rien ne s'améliore", a écrit le chroniqueur Allister Heath dans le «Daily Telegraph» plus tôt cette année, bien qu'il prédise que les choses ne s'amélioreraient pas sous le Labour.

D'autres commentateurs politiques prédisent que le pays est à un "point d'inflexion" historique et a l'occasion de se réinitialiser, même si Starmer ne promet pas de réforme radicale.

Il y a cinq ans, sous la direction du vétéran socialiste Jeremy Corbyn, le Labour avait présenté un programme de gauche radicale axé sur des dépenses publiques massives et la renationalisation, subissant sa pire défaite électorale depuis 1935.

Starmer, ancien avocat des droits de l'homme et ancien procureur général, a pris les rênes en 2020 et s'est attelé à mettre fin aux querelles idéologiques qui avaient entravé les perspectives électorales du parti.

Il a également agi contre les accusations d'antisémitisme, expulsant même Corbyn lui-même dans le cadre d'un plan visant à ramener le parti au centregauche.

"Nous avons fait campagne en tant que Labour transformé et nous gouvernerons en tant que Labour transformé", a déclaré Starmer, 61 ans, au «Daily Mail» qui soutient les Conservateurs, dans une interview publiée mercredi.

Mais la promesse du parti de "changement" est prévue comme un défi, surtout avec les finances publiques du pays sous contrainte.

Les Conservateurs ont mené une campagne négative, mettant en garde contre la prodigalité du Labour et des impôts plus élevés, tout en promettant une action plus sévère en matière d'immigration et de sécurité.

Leur part du vote de droite pourrait être divisée avec le parti anti-immigration «Reform UK» de Nigel Farage, champion du Brexit, ce qui pourrait les conduire dans l'opposition politique.



# **Glissement vers la droite en Europe**

La montée des partis de droite au Parlement européen pourrait avoir des répercussions pour l'Europe et au-delà



à droite du spectre politique. P - FranceTV

es récentes élections au Parlement européen marquent un moment significatif dans l'Histoire de l'Europe d'après-guerre. Comme prévu, les électeurs à travers l'Europe ont montré une préférence pour les partis situés à droite du spectre politique, tandis que les socialistes, les verts, les libéraux et l'extrême-gauche ont dans l'ensemble perdu des sièges. Le groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (PPE) a remporté 184 sièges, maintenant sa position de force principale au Parlement européen. Le centredroit a gagné 9 députés de plus qu'auparavant. Les Socialistes et Démocrates (S&D) européens sont arrivés en deuxième position avec 139 sièges, conformément aux attentes.

Selon de nombreux analystes, l'attrait électoral croissant de l'extrême droite constitue un

défi majeur pour la démocratie libérale et pour l'Union européenne (UE). L'ère de stabilité qui a vu émerger et se consolider l'UE est désormais révolue. La guestion qui se pose est de savoir dans quelle mesure l'extrême droite est

significative et si elle marque une dérive dangereuse vers l'autoritarisme en Europe, dans un contexte de plus grande instabilité

Pour Gérard Delanty, professeur de sociologie à l'Université de Sussex, une contextualisation s'impose. Bien que de plus en plus d'électeurs - notamment un nombre étonnamment élevé de jeunes électeurs en Allemagne - aient soutenu des partis d'extrême droite, la majorité des Européens ne l'ont pas fait. Comme il est bien connu, les élections au Parlement européen n'ont pas le même impact que les élections nationales. Cependant, malgré la dérive vers l'extrême droite, il semble que le centre ait prévalu, malgré un défi significatif. "Cela ne signifie pas que nous pouvons nous complaire et penser que rien n'a changé. L'extrême droite a réalisé des gains importants. L'Alternative pour l'Allemagne (AfD) a remporté le deuxième plus grand nombre de votes en Allemagne, après l'opposition de centre-droit. Cependant, l'extrême droite n'est pas un bloc cohésif, surtout en termes de représentation au Parlement européen, où elle ne parle pas d'une seule voix", soutient Delanty.

A. Bartleby Suite en page 16

# The Nuclear Landscape – A Rules-Based Disorder



The monster must feed itself. The inevitability consequence of producing destructive weapons is that it is virtually impossible to let go of them

e often hear about the socalled rulesbased order that governs, or at least should

govern, the way in which the world's nations relate to each other. The principles that the US and its allies would like to see as the most enduring are that all nations will recognize the territorial integrity of other nations, not start wars, and conduct trade fairly and in a free market not manipulated by government subsidies, and perhaps even that countries should have free and fair elections.

We have seen, of course, that this ideal does not reflect reality, not by a long shot. As Russia has flouted the territorial integrity of Ukraine, as China threatens to violate Taiwan's, as Tibetan Buddhists and Uyghurs are repressed, as Belarus and many other countries cannot conduct a free election, and as wars, intellectual property theft, manipulated markets, subsidies and the like are common rather than the exception, the rules-based order is a chimera.

To a certain extent, the world can live with that geopolitical mess. Less so, when it comes to nuclear weapons. Here, we have what I call a rules-based disorder. It is no surprise that the world finds itself in a nuclear mess as well as in the geopolitical mess.

If we are to understand why this was destined to happen, we must take a trip back in history to the original five nuclear capable and armed countries, which also happened to be the five Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Of course, the People's Republic of China would eventually supplant Taiwan as the holder of that status. Together with a seat as a Permanent Member, came the veto power over UNSC resolutions.

The theory was that the five nuclear powers, the US, Soviet Union, China, United Kingdom, and France, were "entitled" to be nuclear powers and could be counted on to be responsible.

And whenever politicians, or indeed human beings in any endeavour, come up with an artificial construct, there arises a need to "sell" that to the rest of the world. In this case, the sale consisted of three parts. First, there was the idea that the responsible nuclear powers would never threaten any non-nuclear state with such weapons, second that no responsible state would engage in the first-use of nuclear weapons, the socalled first strike or preemptive strike, and finally, the pièce de resistance, which was the non-proliferation treaty, a device designed to ensure that the five nuclear powers would maintain their monopoly, or exclusivity as they liked to call it.

Not unsurprisingly, this construct, hastily and unthinkingly articulated without regard to



66 When it comes to nuclear weapons, there is little room for tolerance of those who ignore the norms and rules of rational and civilized conduct. At the same time, we must recognize that it is not only the budding nuclear club hopefuls, but also countries with established arsenals who see the need to bluster and posture in this arena. As those responsible for guarding against terrorist threats often point out, terrorists have to get it right only once to cause devastation, but the defense against terrorism must be right 100% of the time. So, it is with the task of preventing the use of nuclear weapons..."

the existential concerns of India and other countries was not durable. Surely, it was obvious that India would not tolerate a nuclear armed China on its doorstep. And, if India had nukes, certainly Pakistan would not sit idly by. So, China, India, and Pakistan form a deadly triad of nuclear armed nations. The Pakistanis have long feared that India has designs on a territorial conquest of their former land divided by the British in 1947. The fear has been groundless. As a practical matter, India has no need to absorb the problems that Pakistan or Bangladesh would present to an already overstressed and overpopulated nation.

#### Security guarantees

But getting back to the nuclear issue, South Africa is the only country to have built and then given up nuclear weapons. Why did the apartheid regime build them in the first place? Perhaps as a deterrent against attacks by neighbouring countries seeking to end its apartheid policies. Perhaps simply because it had the resources to do so.

Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan inherited their nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union. Each chose to give them up in return for security guarantees. In Ukraine's case, those guarantees have proved to be vaporware. One can imagine a certain amount of regret at giving up what might have been a security shield, is felt in Ukraine. Russia has conducted tactical nuclear drills with Belarus and threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons on Ukraine. Whether Russia has carried out its threat and proliferated such tactical nukes into Belarus is unknown.

Israel is widely reputed to have nuclear weapons. One can imagine that faced with

hostile neighbours who had repeatedly waged war against it, with the intention of ending its existence, the Israelis sought the reassurance of having a means to defend their country. On the other hand, Israel's nuclear arms may be intended as nothing more than a deterrent against attacks. This may explain why its surrounding Arab neighbours have given up the idea of attacking Israel, and even Iran, but for its recent direct missile attack — deemed by most experts to have been of little military value — has conducted its campaign against Israel through proxies rather than directly.

North Korea is another case in point. This country is known to have an established nuclear weapons capability and multiple warheads. It is developing missile deployment technologies to deliver warheads and indeed, may already have such capability. North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un often speaks to unleashing his arsenal against South Korea, Japan, and the US. Other than longstanding hatred for the Japanese, it is not clear what motivates the hostility toward that country, or indeed, to South Korea. Of course, South Korea is a prosperous, freedom loving nation, the antithesis of everything that the Kim family has built. So, there is resentment. Perhaps there is also a desire to end, once and for all, any idea of unification of the two Koreas. That does seem an unfulfillable dream scenario. As for the US, one can understand the deep resentment at the sanctions this country has imposed. Not the least, having nuclear weapons engenders a sort of recognition often mistaken for respect.

Sue Mi Terry, a Senior Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International

Studies, and a former CIA analyst, who has also served on the US National Security Council (NSC) and the National Intelligence Council (NIC), writes in 'Foreign Affairs' that North Korea "has amassed up to 60 nuclear warheads and enough fissile material to build at least six additional bombs every year. More alarming still, these weapons can now most likely reach the continental United States. North Korea already fields longrange missiles capable of hitting the East Coast. It is impossible to know for certain whether it has figured out how to place a nuclear warhead on top of those missiles, but the available evidence suggests that it has." She counsels that treating the threat of North Korea's nuclear arsenal as a nonurgent matter is dangerously misguided.

n another 'Foreign Affairs' article, Eric Brewer of the Nuclear Threat Initiative's Nu-clear Materials Security Program, and a person who also has served on the NSC and NIC, writes that the Iranian missile strike on Israel took the Middle East on a nuclear turn. As the world awaited Israel's response, he writes that Iran's military commander in charge of defending the Islamic Republic's nuclear sites warned that if Israel attacked those sites, Iran would revise its nuclear doctrine. That revision would be to build nuclear weapons in response. Of course, if Iran does so, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has said that Saudi Arabia will be forced to get nuclear weapons as well.

#### Acting responsibly

The rules-based order in respect of nuclear weapons is predicated on the notion that responsible nations will act responsibly. The standoff between the US and the Soviet Union during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the subsequent strategic arms limitation treaties between the two countries and then with Russia attest to that. But one cannot count on all leaders of all countries to act responsibly all the time. This has been proved time and again in the non-nuclear areas of conflict where countries wage war on each other, attack the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other countries, violate the civil rights of their own people, fund proxy wars, and engage in predatory economic and trade behaviour.

When it comes to nuclear weapons, there is little room for tolerance of those who ignore the norms and rules of rational and civilized conduct. At the same time, we must recognize that it is not only the budding nuclear club hopefuls, but also countries with established arsenals who see the need to bluster and posture in this arena. As those responsible for guarding against terrorist threats often point out, terrorists have to get it right only once to cause devastation, but the defense against terrorism must be right 100% of the time. So, it is with the task of preventing the use of nuclear weapons.

China has refused to negotiate with Russia and the US on limiting nuclear warheads and missiles.

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## Electoral promises Is a 14th Month Salary a Viable Proposition?

#### • Cont. from page 3

The IMF has asked government to restrict CSG payouts to retirement pension for private sector workers. If it were to take more money from CSG funds to finance a 14-month salary in the private sector, government would be using funds raised from private sector employees to pay them a 14-month salary. It's like taking money from the right pocket only to put it back into the left pocket. Top of Form

But in the process no funds would be saved to pay future retirement benefits to private sector employees.

Ideally CSG funds should be kept in a separate account and invested at reasonable rates of return to fund pension obligations in the future. One wonders how government would meet retirement pension liabilities for CSG contributors if the CSG fund is already running out of money due to misappropriation of funds for the payment of social allowances.

Without support from CSG funds, SMEs would have to either lay off staff or raise their product or service prices to consumers, which would impair their competitiveness, especially in export markets. Having a new element of fixed cost (14-month pay) in payroll cost as part of total operating costs (labour, materials and overheads) is not a prospect that any enterprise is ready to face in these times of economic uncertainty.

#### Flawed concept

Beyond the practical funding implications, the concept of a 14-month salary is basically flawed. Any addition to payroll cost is usually linked to costof-living compensation (for inflationindexed wages), to upward movement in a salary scale by employees getting more money after years of service or to the hiring of additional staff warranted by an output increase. A 14-month salary imposed as a fixed annual cost would not be justified without productivity gains. There are alternatives to this kind of universal compensation methodology.

Under modern Human Resources management practices, productivity gains are typically compensated through performance bonus payments to employees and/or profit-sharing schemes. In some countries, public and private employers pay a performance bonus (3 to 5% in general) to employees who meet or exceed expectations at work. This payout requires an annual performance appraisal that sets specific goals against which actual performance is measured. For example, a tax revenue agency may pay a performance bonus to auditors who achieve a high audit recovery of unreported or unpaid taxes from taxpayers (both individual and corporate).

In a private company, a CEO may be rewarded with a bonus based on year-end corporate profits or with stock options (to buy company shares at an issuance price). At a more basic level, a sales representative may get a basic pay plus a bonus for bringing in new clients or increasing sales to existing clients.

#### Profit sharing

profit-sharing scheme is another way to compensate employees for their hard work and contribution to the enterprise's output and sales. When a company makes profits, it may allocate a percentage of before-tax profits to be paid out to employees in recognition of their contribution to the company's bottom line. In most countries, company contributions to a profit-sharing scheme are tax deductible for corporate tax purposes. Payouts to employees are usually taxable at marginal tax rates but employees are still better off with an after-tax benefit (75% of gross amount with an average tax rate of 25%).

Instead of contemplating a 14month salary, government should introduce a performance bonus system in the public sector based on performance that is evaluated by objective criteria and not subjective management preferences. That would be an incentive for employees to work hard and deliver efficient public services. As far as the private sector is concerned, government should encourage companies to establish profit-sharing schemes to attract and retain talent, especially at a time when increasing emigration of young talent is causing a brain drain for the country.

Government has exhausted its imagination to use social policy to distribute freebies to specific segments of society, but its generosity still does not amount to redistribution of wealth within the confines of fiscal policy. A genuine Welfare State requires equal access to quality public services (heath, education, training, employment, housing, etc.) and equitable access to social benefits (positive discrimination in favour of the poor). Paying a 14-month salary would constitute social engineering of employee compensation, lacking economic justification. While the government might resort to deficit financing to cover additional payroll costs in the public sector, there is no economic rationale for imposing additional labour costs on private sector enterprises unrelated to profitability, productivity, or cost-of-living compensation.

Prakash Neerohoo

### Breakfast with Bwana

# The Nuclear Landscape **– A Rules-Based Disorder**

#### • Cont. from page 6

The ostensible reasoning is that because China's arsenal is only a fraction of the arsenals that the US and Russia possess, it makes no sense for China to speak about cutting back until those countries' larger arsenals are trimmed. The alternative is for China to build a large enough cache of its own to be treated as a credible negotiator at that three-way talks.

Then, there is the reality that the stockpiles of both the US and Russia are aged and need to be replaced or modernized. Indeed, there are serious questions about whether much of the US arsenal of missiles is reliable and will work as intended.

Russia withdrew from the nuclear test ban treaty and suspended its participation in the New START Treaty. It is not clear whether Russia intends to ignore the limitations on the number of nuclear warheads each nation possesses.

#### New nuclear arms race

Meanwhile, the world is witnessing what is most likely going to evolve into a new nuclear arms race in Asia among China, India and Pa-kistan, in addition to impending race among the US, Russia, and China. The first two account for about 90% of the world's nuclear warheads.

Back in 2015, President Obama backed a plan to spend some \$350 billion through 2024. The investment in new nuclear delivery systems, upgraded warheads, resilient command networks and industrial sites for manufacturing related hardware, would also have been directed to maintaining the existing arsenal.

Spending on nuclear weapons is on the increase around the world. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) reported that 2023 saw an increase in spending on nuclear weapons by every country that is nuclear-armed.

The US increased spending on nuclear weapons by 18% to a total of \$51.5 billion and China was the second biggest spender at almost \$12 billion. Russia, said to be under duress from sanctions and a stagnating economy, nonetheless spent more than \$8 billion.

As I have previously mentioned, India is not likely to sit idly by as China enlarges its arsenal, given that Beijing has already announced that it intends to double its stockpile or nuclear warheads by 2030.

India is concerned not only about any first strike capability that China might acquire, but also of the threat of a Pakistani attack following an attack by China. Likewise, Pakistan will not sit idly by as India builds its arsenal. Nor is Pakistan likely to trust China either.

Meanwhile, for the US there is concern about facing two heavily armed nuclear adversaries, Russia already at parity and beyond with the US, and China seeking to achieve Big Boy status at the negotiating table. On the other hand, it seems unlikely that China is building an arsenal of weapons simply to dismantle them as part of a planned future agreement on arms reduction with the US and Russia. Its intentions remain inscrutable.

China's military spending is, of course, not limited to its nuclear arsenal. China has built a formidable naval presence and control of vast tracts of the South Pacific Ocean is the prize.

The US must also take account of European security concerns. Whether the US will oblige by locating tactical nuclear weapons in the European theater is unknown. Whether it has already done so, is also unknown.

#### Upgrading nuclear weapons

For perspective, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimates that there are just over 12,000 nuclear warheads around the world. Almost 4,000 are deployable by either missiles or aircraft. The US has retired about 1,200 warheads and must dismantle them. The US has 1,419 warheads deployed, but Russia has more.

Why would a country need to upgrade its nuclear weapons? There are many reasons. The extant system in the US uses the Minuteman III missiles. These are being replaced by the Sentinel missile. America's ocean-based part of its nuclear triad involves replacing the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine with the newer Columbia-class subs which are expected to be in service by 2030.

The airborne leg of the triad is also scheduled for upgrades. The old B-2A aircraft will be replaced by the B-21 Raider Stealth bombers. The very large B-52 Stratofortresses will remain in service for now.

Russia's suspension of participation in the New START treaty may trigger another round in the nuclear arms race.

Other reasons for a spurt of building new weapons include the false sense of national pride that comes from having a nuclear arsenal and from upgrading it, and for Presidents and members of Congress to get projects for their districts. There are, however, some very critical strategic reasons for such upgrades. We have seen American and Europeans stockpiles of arms, weapons, and ammunition depleted because of the need to supply Ukraine. Those must be replaced. The nation also needs to maintain its knowledge base and expertise in engineering and production systems. Knowledge must be transferred to the next generation of workers. And the defense contractors will go out of business unless they have long-term contracts to deliver such systems.

The monster must feed itself. The inevitability consequence of producing destructive wea-pons is that it is virtually impossible to let go of them. The technology behind these systems is not so complicated that other countries or non-state actors cannot gain access to it. A large part of future defense efforts will involve curbing upstarts and non-state threats.

The race is still underway.

Cheerz... Bwana

#### Friday, June 28, 2024

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# **Does Power Corrupt?**

ourtesy both traditional means of communication and social media we are swamped with

news and information coming from all over the world, much of it rather depressing. We thus learn about corruption perpetrated by the high and mighty, by those who wield power, especially political power, though most times we forget that there is a corruptor and a corrupted.

Conventional wisdom holds that 'power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' Going against this grain, however, Osho also known as Rajneesh proposed, in his book 'Power, Politics and Change,' that 'those who seek power are already corrupt,' according to the blurb on the back cover of the book. 'Once they attain their goal, their corruption simply has the opportunity to express itself. That's why even those who seek power to bring about radical change so often fail, despite their best intentions.

From the Hindu philosophical perspective human beings are born with three psycho-mental tendencies, namely sattva which is about goodness, purity, balance; rajas, which is about ambition, passion, activity; and tamas, which is about inertia, sloth, dark thoughts. Each individual has a variable mix of these three tendencies, usually with one predominating.

Osho, an Indian thinker and philosopher (1930-1990) who promoted meditative practices and love instead of hate, had understood human nature in depth, and wielded global influence by his unorthodox thinking, which he propagated in discourses. These, along with his other books, make up a voluminous collection full of his insights which do give us, literally, food for much thought and provoke us at the very least to re-examine our staid positions.

Some of his views may appear to be quite extreme, as for example, 'Politicians and criminals are not basically different people. Politicians are successful criminals. Criminals are unsuccessful politicians. Criminals are poor, pitiable. They had tried but failed. Politicians are of the same tribe, with only one difference: they have succeeded.'

However, nowadays there are innumerable examples of billionaire criminals in the world, perhaps they were less in number and not as ostentatious in Osho's lifetime.

Accounts of criminal gangs - which are usually associated with thefts, hackings, sex-trafficking or drugs that we come across detail the power that the barons wield over the people who make up their networks, such that they can only escape at the risk of death.

> unknown in the political world either, where the deaths of potential rivals or those who



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otherwise come in the way can give rise to suspicion of foul-play commandeered from above.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, the so-called free world has settled for a system of government known as representative democracy, where the people are called upon to vote candidates who stand for election in a bid to defend the interests of the electorate. That it is not an ideal system was stated by the British politician Winston Churchill, who was Britain's prime minster during the Second World War. He had said that democracy is the least bad of systems of government.

Over the past few decades, we have seen how democracies deemed to be the foremost examples of this system have been undergoing crises that result from faultlines and positionings arising from differing ideological underpinnings, self-interest, pressures from corporates or lobbies which press their own agendas. In the UK nowadays, the prime example of parliamentary democracy, and some other European countries too such as Germany, appeasement politics is vitiating democraсу.

The democracy model is supposed to promote good governance and economic growth, and overall prosperity. The overwhelming progress made by China has challenged this hallowed notion and is rattling the 'west', since it has been able to successfully combine market reforms post-Mao while retaining its communist mode of

CGiven Osho's vast and deep understanding of human nature and his wide experience of the world and the structures of power, together with the public spectacles that political regimes of all hues are rife with, it is not possible to altogether dismiss the observation of Osho about the similarities between politicians and criminals. And so much is heard too about the politicians-criminals nexus that we are bound to subscribe to the saying that 'there can be no smoke without fire'"

governing the country.

Given Osho's vast and deep understanding of human nature and his wide experience of the world and the structures of power, together with the public spectacles that political regimes of all hues are rife with, it is not possible to altogether dismiss the observation of Osho about the similarities between politicians and criminals. And so much is heard too about the politicians-criminals nexus that we are bound to subscribe to the saying that 'there can be no smoke without fire.'

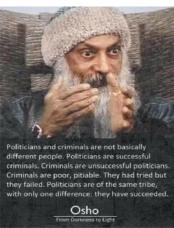
To be fair, though uncommon, we do have some examples in history of politicians whose primary goal was to genuinely serve the interests of their people and develop their countries, empowering people and building the robust institutions needed for good governance, ensuring fairness and justice, recognizing merit. They were less or perhaps not at all prone to corruption by money power or the allure of glorification, focusing on the advancement of their people and their country.

In my view, we can with some justification say that this is the spirit that drove the trade-unionists and politicians who became engaged in the struggle to improve conditions of workers and eventually to obtain the independence of our country. They sought power more to achieve these public goals rather than line their pockets, so it seems in retrospect, compared to what has been happening subsequently, and that has given rise to the expression that politics is business by another means. That is, leveraging political power to make money by means fair or foul.

It is up to the political parties, old ones and those coming up, as well as the politicians, to prove their genuineness to the people. But the people too have their role to play for, so it is said too, we get the government we deserve.

I guess this sums it up, and perhaps Osho too would have agreed...

This may not be



Opinion

Interview

#### Mauritius Times

### Rama Sithanen, Former Minister of Finance

# "Inflation, the worst enemy of the population, has become the darling of the Minister of Finance"

n an insightful interview with Rama Sithanen, former Minister of Finance, we delve into the critical issues shaping the country's economic landscape amidst political maneuvering and electoral strategies. Against a backdrop of escalating

feel-good measures by the current government, Rama Sithanen offers a stark assessment of Mauritius' economic health, highlighting the stark disparities between official narratives and economic realities. With a keen focus on sustainability and structural reform, his perspectives cut through the haze of electoral promises to address the urgent need for economic stability and resilience. His analysis provides a sobering reflection on the challenges ahead and the imperative for decisive action to safeguard Mauritius' future prosperity. Additionally, Rama Sithanen shares

astute observations on the dynamics of the upcoming elections, emphasizing the complex interplay of rural-urban divides, economic

policies, and voter sentiment that will define the political landscape in the coming months.

Mauritius Times: The MSM-led government has heavily relied on feel-good measures over the past five years, and even since 2014, despite disapproval from the IMF and local critical voices, in order to cultivate an electoral base and secure election victories. The recent budget, along with anticipated announcements, appears poised to escalate this strategy further. How far can it go without plunging the economy into serious trouble?

**Rama Sithanen:** The economy is already in dire straits if we consider the true figures of GDP, budget deficit, public debt, export of services and foreign exchange reserves. And the money illusion effect. These key macroeconomic indicators are being cynically doctored to hide the reality.

The very beneficiaries receiving these 'feel-good measures' are paying an extremely high price with inflation, loss of purchasing power, rupee depreciation, more taxes, new taxes, a scarcity of foreign exchange and an official black market.

In addition, the population is also being hit substantially with higher VAT revenue and other indirect taxes rising very fast in an economic model based on high consumption, high imports, high depreciation, high inflation, high taxes and high debt. This is clearly unsustainable.

\* However, most people are not economists and do not understand these technical issues such as money illusion and foreign exchange deficits. They often only perceive the feel-good measures, don't they?

There is an immediate payback already. The population



feels the exorbitant prices when they go to buy foods. And the lack of foreign exchanges when they carry out daily operations and transfers. The fiscal and monetary expansion have poured gasolene on the flames of inflation.

The Minister's toxic mix of these two policies is responsible for 75% of inflation for the last three years. Only 25% of inflation is due to external factors. The prices of some basic necessities have soared by over 20% in twelve months. So, people realise that they are being fooled by higher pensions that are immediately engulfed by higher food and medicine prices. Inflation, which is the worst enemy of the population, has become the darling of the Minister of Finance.

There is a conspiracy of silence about the costing and funding of these measures. The opacity is driven by their unsustainability. They have not been adequately costed, and we do not know how they will be funded in the future.

\* Regardless of the outcome of the upcoming elec-

66 We urgently need a drastic change in strategy to enhance food security and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. The corporate sector, which owns most of the land of the country, bears a responsibility to increase investment in agricultural production and energy security. Short of a land reform, we need a land use reform to have a fair balance among the competing uses of land for food security, renewable energy, real estate..." tions, if your assessment of an impending economic crisis due to the current government's populist measures, as evoked by you in a recent radio interview, proves correct, what are the key economic priorities that the next government should focus on, and what policies could effectively tackle these challenges?

Friday, June 28, 2024

All economists worth their salt will tell you that the current economic model is unsustainable, as it is based on the illusion of money. We are trapped in a vicious circle and cycle. To address these structural challenges, we need comprehensive structural reforms and economic adjustments, along with the right combination of fiscal and monetary policies.

In his Budget Speech, the Minister has ignored the key problems facing the country, both in the short and long term. In the short term, there's nothing on how he will deal with inflation, depreciation, lack of foreign exchange, shortage of workers to run the economy, and nothing on how he will improve the effectiveness in the implementation of measures so that they do not remain 'des effets d'annonce'.

The Bank of Mauritius (BOM) must intervene to supply USD, it should stop the colourable device of 'T1 and T2 forward rates' which is basically an official black market. The Governor should also apply pressure on some corporates that are hoarding foreign currencies for purely speculative purposes. He must also rein in short-term USD/MRU swaps that are distorting the market.

66 The population feels the exorbitant prices when they go to buy foods. And the lack of foreign exchanges when they carry out daily operations and transfers. The fiscal and monetary expansion have poured gasolene on the flames of inflation. The Minister's toxic mix of these two policies is responsible for 75% of inflation for the last three years. Only 25% of inflation is due to external factors..."

On the other hand, there was no mention in the Budget Speech of how to build a robust, resilient, and sustainable economic future. There was no strategy presented to address pressing issues such as the demographic challenges, climate change, the skills gap, and the significant migration of talent, nor was there any plan for the crucial transition towards technology and AI. Additionally, we have not developed a single new sector for a long time. How do we diversify the economy and elevate it through upmarket transformation? Equally important, how do we enhance productivity, bolster competitiveness to maintain relevance, and establish internal and external buffers to mitigate unforeseen economic shocks?

If we do not address these key issues and do not introduce economic reforms, we are heading towards a major economic crisis like in many other countries such as Ghana, Sri Lanka, Argentina and Greece. How long can we use the depreciation and inflation as an adjustment residual? It is only a question of time before the shit hits the fan.

The severity of the crisis will depend on the duration of the government's irresponsible actions. If prolonged, it may compel intervention from the IMF, resulting in shock therapy measures that could disproportionately impact the poor and middle-income classes.

\* Do you think it's time to reconsider policies aimed at attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in the real estate and property development sectors? It seems that these one-off investments in our land-constrained country haven't had a significant impact and are affecting our food security. What are your thoughts on this?

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#### Interview Mau

#### **Mauritius Times**

# **'For the Opposition to secure victory, the Labour Party must persuade enough voters in the** North, East, and South regions to shift away from the MSM'

#### • Cont. from page 9

It benefits very few corporates that convert agricultural land into property development, and they gain from tax advantages. However, there is very little FDI into productive and strategic sectors. It is plain that real estate development is crowding out both the nation's food and energy security.

The food security and renewable energy strategy of government has failed to deliver on its agenda. Neither in terms of import substitution in some key vegetables and fruits, in milk and meat and in agro-processing, nor in terms of lowering the share of fossil fuels in our energy mix.

We urgently need a drastic change in strategy to enhance food security and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. The corporate sector, which owns most of the land of the country, bears a responsibility to increase investment in agricultural production and energy security.

Short of a land reform, we need a land use reform to have a fair balance among the competing uses of land for food security, renewable energy, real estate and other development objectives.

66All economists worth their salt will tell you that the current economic model is unsustainable, as it is based on the illusion of money. We are trapped in a vicious circle and cycle. To address these structural challenges, we need comprehensive structural reforms and economic adjustments, along with the right combination of fiscal and monetary policies..."

We have to tweak the tax and subsidy equation and the incentive framework to achieve balanced and sustainable socio-economic land development, as we have successfully done in the past. For every acre of land converted for property development, we should allocate areas for food security and renewable energy, which also require land.

\* There is also the pressing issue of climate change and its profound impact on our tourism industry. What immediate and long-term measures do you believe are essential for mitigating these effects and ensuring longterm environmental sustainability?

Tourism and climate change have a reciprocal relationship. On one hand, tourism, particularly long-haul destinations like Mauritius, significantly contributes to climate change as one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases. On the other hand, climate change effects such as rising temperatures, sea level rise, beach erosion, and coral bleaching threaten tourism infrastructure and the attractiveness of the industry. Therefore, it is imperative that we thoroughly analyze the current and future impacts of climate change on tourism to design adaptation strategies aimed at mitigating these impacts and promoting sustainable tourism. Simultaneously, we must adopt a new tourism model to reduce tourism's impact on climate change. Urgent measures are needed, including adaptation policies, mitigation efforts, and building resilience.

The strategy must absolutely take into account the current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, the carrying capacity in terms of infrastructure while meeting the needs of visitors, the tourism industry, the environment, communities, and the nation as a whole. It must be driven by national interests and the need for resilience and sustain-



ability. The industry must also be more inclusive and must open up the circle of opportunities to our deserving children.

It's evident that Mauritius' current linear tourism model, focused solely on metrics like tourist numbers and gross earnings, is flawed and unsustainable. This approach will simply impair the unique selling proposition of the sector as it contains the seeds of its own destruction. Also, its net contribution to the economy after we factor in the very high leakages is relatively modest. We urgently need to adopt a new business model centred around low-impact, high-valueadded tourism. This model should prioritize moderate growth, high-end tourism, increased net earnings, market diversification, resilience, and enhanced local production support. It's crucial not to bury our heads in the sand by resorting to greenwashing tactics while perpetuating an outdated model.

\* At the end of the day, as you are aware, good economics alone do not ensure electoral victory; good politics does. The MSM did it in 2014 and again in 2019, with feel-good measures playing a significant role on both occasions, much to the discomfiture of the Labour Party and the MMM, whether in alliance or separately. Have circumstances today changed enough to prevent a recurrence of those earlier victories?

Yes and no. While circumstances and context are different, it will still be a close contest driven essentially by two key factors: a rural/urban divide and the positive pocket vote versus the negative purchasing power vote. Crucially for the Opposition, there will not be a three-cornered fight as in 2019 even if in some urban constituencies there will be some fragmentation in the anti-MSM votes with third party participation.

The big question is whether the MSM can win a majority with only 37% of national votes as in 2019. There is also the antiincumbency factor as it has been in power for a long time, and many people want change. There is revulsion against some of policies of the government in terms of democratic backsliding, allegations of fraud, corruption, cronyism and institutional decline. However, very few people vote on these niche subjects as most are concerned with bread-and-butter issues and who offers more in the electoral auction of freebies. The Achilles' heel of the government is likely to be the severe loss of purchasing power and the drug scourge.

The governing alliance will play its trump cards and we

all know what these are: its flagship social measures and its infrastructure achievements. There is clearly a pocket vote as many will vote the government because of these generous and targeted social measures. Especially the old and the low-income groups. This will be counterbalanced by the negative purchasing power vote in favour of the Opposition and the change factor. The MSM will weaponise its comparative advantage in the 4 to 14 constituencies.

66 The big question is whether the MSM can win a majority with only 37% of national votes as in 2019.... There is revulsion against some of policies of the government in terms of democratic backsliding, allegations of fraud, corruption, cronyism and institutional decline. However, very few people vote on these niche subjects as most are concerned with bread-and-butter issues and who offers more in the electoral auction of freebies. The Achilles' heel of the government is likely to be the severe loss of purchasing power and the drug scourge..."

We should not ignore that around 50% of voters are still undecided. They need to be 'seduced'. Besides the core electorate of the two main alliances, many voters have become cynical, perceiving little difference in actual policies between them, viewing elections as merely a change in who runs the country. However, while anti-incumbency sentiments might favour the Opposition, it may not be sufficient to cross the line. The ruling party will vigorously defend its position, especially in a two-party race where the stakes are higher. The Opposition knows the playbook of the MSM very well.

\* How do you think the next elections will play out between the MSM and the LP-MMM? Will the MSM be able to have more than 37% of the votes to win the election in a two-cornered fight? Or will change prevail with a united LP-MMM opposition?

Too early to call as there are many uncertainties. Many people ask me this question and seem to believe that the MSM needs close to 50% of votes to win in a two-cornered fight. This is absolutely false, and the Opposition has to be very careful about this. It needs to win where it matters. PEROID.

I follow elections across the world. What matters in a First Past The Post (FPTP) system is not national vote but the distribution of votes in each of the 20 constituencies. I keep telling people who care to listen that the MSM can win the elections with around 40% of the national vote. Let me explain in very simple terms. Electoral experts characterize this as a combination of the geography of votes and wasted votes. It can only happen in FPTP system which we have.

While the MSM polled 37% of national vote in 2019, there was a colossal urban/rural divide between its 30% of vote in constituencies 1,15,16,17,18, its 25% in constituencies 19 and 20 and its 20% of vote in constituencies 2 and 3. However the MSM obtained more than 40% of votes in 4, 5, 6, 12, 13 and 14, more than 45% in number 10 and 11 and around 50% in constituencies 7, 8, 9.

#### Interview Mauritius Times

# 'The MSM will not require close to 50% of votes to win the elections...'

#### • Cont. from page 10

The PM was elected with 57% of votes in number 8 and Hurdoyal with 55% in 10. Maudhoo in 9, Gobin in 7 and Jagutpal in 13 were all elected with over 50% of the votes. Seeruttun in number 11 and Callychurn in 5 won easily with over 45% of the votes.

That makes a total of 7 constituencies already and if the MSM holds its 2019 tally, it can potentially win around 19 to 20 seats out of 21.

One can do a similar exercise in constituencies 4, 6, 12 and 14 and show that they will be tightly contested.

On the other hand, Osman Mohamed in number 2, Shakeel Mohamed in 3 and Bérenger in 19 were returned with over 50% of the vote.

As usual, averages hide many key regional differences which are critical in election strategy.

\* How will the distribution of votes across different geographical areas, including wasted votes, influence the electoral strategies of the two main alliances? And which alliance is likely to benefit more from this dynamic?

It seems to me that there will be almost the same pattern of the geography of votes and wasted votes in the forthcoming election. The intensity and amplitude may differ. The MSM knows it extremely well and will craft its electoral strategy around this rural/urban divide. Looking at how candidates are being fielded, I am not sure the Opposition fully grasps the significant implications of this divide in the geography of votes and wasted votes. At its own risks and perils.

Dr Ramgoolam and the LP need to be extremely careful and vigilant about the ramifications of this phenomenon in mapping out his strategy and tactics. For the Opposition to secure victory, the Labour Party (LP) must persuade enough voters in the North, East, and South regions (commonly referred to as belt 4 to 14) to shift away from the MSM. This is crucial as the MMM is relatively weak in many rural constituencies and has even forfeited deposits in some. The support is more balanced in urban ridings between LP and MMM. This is the cruel reality of electoral maths. It has been like this since 1967 and it is unlikely to change except with a few 60-0. And if it is not well understood, it will have devastating consequences.

So clearly the MSM will not require close to 50% of votes to win the elections. It can do it with around 40%. It simply has to win where it matters. Hence the putative strategy of the MSM in the 4 to 14 cluster. There's nothing mysterious about it — simply concentrating where its electoral strength lies.

The PM will focus heavily on winning most seats in the 4 to 14 belt (33 seats) and will try his level best with his partners and may be the PMSD to take some urban seats, especially where the MSM polled more than 30% of the votes in 2019 (1, 15, 16, 17, and 18) and in case the LP-MMM makes strategic blunders by fielding weak candidates. The split in the anti-MSM vote in some urban constituencies (four-cornered fight in some ridings) may lower the bar for the MSM to win some seats in urban ridings.

\* But just like in 2014, it may require more than electoral arithmetic to win the next elections. Do you believe the Opposition alliance has what it takes in terms of leadership, the right team and front bench, innovative ideas, and effective campaign tools to make it this time round?

More than electoral arithmetic, it will depend on how the LP-MMM candidates are aligned in the 20 constituencies.



Few are straightforward, some are slightly difficult while some are highly complicated. Assuming all else remains constant, winning requires aligning candidates to maximize electability by leveraging the synergy of their respective socio-demographic allegiances. It's no secret where each party draws its support, and this must be carefully reflected in candidate selections. This attention to detail is granular but crucial. The MSM campaign will be based of this too.

Besides Ramgoolam and Bérenger, we do not know who will be in charge of key ministries, especially Finance, the composition of the front bench and some other key appointments such as President and the Speaker. We are not aware of the candidates that will be fielded across the 20 ridings. It has not published its manifesto yet except for the 20 measures announced by Dr Ramgoolam on 1st of May.

For the time being it is campaigning on the 'change' slogan. More a negative vote than an affirmation vote. The Opposition will need more than revulsion and negative vote to win the elections. It needs a conviction vote, a vote of hope that things will be different in terms of form, style and substance. We have not seen this yet.

With the geography of votes and wasted votes, it is possible for the MSM to lose the national popular vote and still win the elections because of the 4 to 14 phenomenon and many wasted votes and split votes in some urban constituencies.

The MSM will heavily rely on the several social measures to aggressively campaign for another term in office. It will also highlight its infrastructure achievements. It will likely an-

# 66 Many people ask me this question and seem to believe that the MSM needs close to 50% of

votes to win in a two-cornered fight. This is absolutely false. I follow elections across the world. What matters in a First Past The Post system is not national vote but the distribution of votes in each of the 20 constituencies. I keep telling people who care to listen that the MSM can win the elections with

around 40% of the national vote..."

nounce other measures such as addressing the wage relativity discrepancies in the public and private sectors, decreasing the price of mogas and even gran-ting an exceptional 14th month bonus in 2024.

Politically the MSM will forcefully deploy an arsenal of firepower to vilify Ramgoolam, Berenger and Mohamed, to appeal strongly to identity politics in the belt of constituencies 4 to 14 by arguing that Berenger will run the country and not Ramgoolam. It will also use, if not abuse, the state apparatus, the MBC and its huge financing capability. Pravind Jugnauth will also campaign that he represents stability as he is the only boss on board compared to the bicephal or tricephal leadership of the current opposition. So, the LP-MMM should factor these into their broad strategy and their granular tactics.

66 Besides Ramgoolam and Bérenger, we do not know who will be in charge of key ministries, especially Finance, the composition of the front bench and some other key appointments such as President and the Speaker. For the time being the Opposition is campaigning on the 'change' slogan. More a negative vote than an affirmation vote. The Opposition will need more than revulsion and negative vote to win the elections. It needs a conviction vote, a vote of hope that things will be different in terms of form, style and substance. We have not seen this yet..."

The LP-MMM manifesto should highlight the key differences in policies. Many have become cy-nical and will say that both will have the same policies in government while not acknowledging it during the campaign. As there is little perceived difference in actual policies, the Opposition absolutely needs to make the difference on renewal and competent faces and a fair number of female candidates to reflect the legitimate aspiration of 50.5% of the population. It must have the right balance in terms ofmen and women, those with experience and expertise and those with competence, innovative ideas and passion. It will be difficult for the Opposition if it does not field enough women and youth as the MSM already has 5 women Ministers and will likely have many women candidates. Diversity is important as women and youth know their rights.

The Opposition manifesto must distinguish itself from the governing alliance's on critical issues such as education, health, drug, the environment, the management of the economy and many other issues. In substance and not in rhetoric only. There will not much difference in terms of social measures as it will be an auction between the two. However, the Opposition, like in the UK, will be under more pressure to clarify the width and depth of its goodies, their costs and how they will be funded. I hear it every day, especially among the 50% of the population who have not yet decided and are also weighing their options for the upcoming elections.

As far as campaign tools and means are concerned, the Opposition has a major hurdle as the MSM has both the money and the institutions to sell its ideas, especially after the almost blank cheque given by the judgement of the Privy Council. Spotlights | Mauritius Times

### 'The people have spoken': Kenya withdraws finance bill after violent protests

Kenyan President William Ruto said Wednesday that a bill containing contentious tax hikes would "be withdrawn", dramatically reversing course after more than 20 people were killed in clashes with police and parliament was ransacked by protesters opposed to the legislation.

The initially peaceful demonstrations were sparked last week by the 2024 finance bill -- which politicians passed Tuesday afternoon -- and took Ruto's administration by surprise as rallies gathered momentum across the country, reports AFP.

But the Gen Z-led protests spiralled into violence Tuesday when police fired live bullets at the crowds outside parliament, leaving the complex ransacked and partly ablaze. Nineteen people were killed in the capital Nairobi, a state-funded rights watchdog said.

"I concede and therefore I will not sign the 2024



finance bill and it shall subsequently be withdrawn," Ruto told a press briefing. "The people have spoken," he said. "I will be proposing an engagement with the young people of our nation, our sons and daughters, for us to listen to them," he said, in a marked shift from his late-night address Tuesday when he likened some of the demonstrators to "criminals".

Speaking after Ruto, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua laid the blame elsewhere, stating it had been "a failure in intelligence".

#### Cost-of-living crisis

Ruto came to power in 2022 promising to champion the needs of impoverished Kenyans, but tax increases under his government have only made life tougher for those already struggling with high inflation.

The Kenyan leader had already rolled back some tax measures last week, prompting the treasury to warn of a gaping budget shortfall of 200 billion shillings.

Ruto said Wednesday that withdrawing the bill would mean a significant hole in funding for development programmes to help farmers and schoolteachers, among others.

The cash-strapped government had said previously that the increases were needed to service Kenya's massive debt of some 10 trillion shillings (\$78 billion), equal to roughly 70 percent of GDP.

The unrest has alarmed the international community, with Washington and the EU calling on Kenya to respect the right to peaceful protest on Wednesday, and the UN urging "accountability" for the bloodshed.

Ruto's administration is under pressure from the IMF, which has urged the country to implement fiscal reforms in order to access funding.

### Brazil's top court votes to decriminalize personal weed use



**B**razil's Supreme Court said Tuesday a majority of judges had voted to decriminalize possession of marijuana for personal use, after a lengthy and divisive trial.

Eight of the top court's 11 judges voted for small amounts of cannabis possession to remain an "illicit act" -- but one that is not punished by criminal proceedings.

"We have a majority" to decide that "possession of cannabis for personal use is an illicit act" but not "of a criminal nature," said court president Luis Roberto Barroso.

The judges also debated what amount of marijuana differentiates a casual user from a trafficker, with proposed thresholds ranging from 25 grams up to 60 grams.

The matter was taken to the Supreme Court by lawyers defending a prisoner who received an additional term for hiding three grams of cannabis in his cell, reports AFP.

The trial began in 2015 and has been interrupted on several occasions.

Brazil's current law, dating to 2006, considers it a crime to "acquire, possess or transport drugs without authorization."

That law removed prison sentences for

the crime, but did not clarify what quantity is deemed to be for personal use -- which carries lighter punishments like community service -- or when one is considered to be trafficking in the substance, which does carry a heavy prison term.

That interpretation was left up to police, prosecutors and trial judges.

In voting in favor of decriminalization in August, Supreme Court Judge

Alexandre de Moraes said existing laws punish above all "young people, especially black people, who are treated as drug traffickers for possessing small amounts."

The issue is highly controversial in Brazil, where powerful conservative movements are firmly opposed to any decriminalization of marijuana.

In April, the conservative-majority Senate approved a bill which aims to make possessing any amount of drugs a constitutional offense. This amendment will soon be debated in the lower house Chamber of Deputies.

Medicinal use of cannabis has also sparked debate, with patients forced to go to court to get permission for treatments based on CBD, the non-psychotropic molecule of cannabis, for certain severe forms of epilepsy.

Multiple countries have decriminalized the recreational use of cannabis in recent years, waiving prison sentences for users, but those to legalize its use are rare. Uruguay did so in 2013, and Germany this year became the biggest European Union country to legalize recreational cannabis, accompanied only by Malta and Luxembourg.

# Conservatives heap pressure on Trudeau with by-election win

# TRUDEAU'S PARTY STUNG BY LOSS IN SPECIAL ELECTION



The Conservatives have narrowly snatched the Toronto-St Paul's seat from the Liberals, in a political earthquake that is expected to intensify political pressure on Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Candidate Don Stewart won the closely watched by-election by a little more than 500 votes. Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre described Mr Stewart's win as a "shocking upset", saying locals "voted to axe the tax, build the homes, fix the budget and stop the crime".

In response to the stunning loss, Mr Trudeau said he hears Canadians' "concerns and frustrations".

Canadian political experts have described the loss as an embarrassment to Mr Trudeau and his party, as the electoral district was considered a Liberal stronghold - the party had held it for 30 years, reports BBC News.

Conservatives have long struggled to win support in "Canada's major urban cores", so it is remarkable that they have successfully "penetrated fortress Toronto", said Alex Marland, a politics professor at Acadia University in Nova Scotia.

Mr Trudeau said in a statement that it

was "obviously not the result we wanted", and vowed to listen to frustrated Canadians.

"These are not easy times. And it is clear, I and my entire team, have much more hard work to do to deliver tangible, real progress that Canadians can see and feel," he said.

He also told reporters on Tuesday that he plans to stay on as Liberal leader despite the upset.

The result comes as Mr Trudeau has seen a significant drop in his popularity since taking over as PM in 2015, due to a host of issues including cost-of-living pressures.

A recent lpsos poll for Global News suggested that as many as 68% of Canadians want Mr Trudeau to step down.

The Canadian prime minister has repeatedly pledged to lead his party into the next nationwide poll, which is expected by October next year.

It would be his fourth time running for prime minister.

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#### Spotlights | Mauritin

#### **Mauritius Times**



Creditor Committee. Pic - Moneycontrol

### Sri Lanka finalises debt restructuring agreement with Official Creditor Committee

**S**ri Lanka's government said on Wednesday it has finalised a long-delayed debt restructuring agreement for USD 5.8 billion with its bilateral lenders, including India and China, in Paris to meet a key condition of an IMF bailout.

This was announced by President Ranil Wickremesinghe's office, which said the agreement grants significant debt relief allowing Sri Lanka to allocate funds to essential public services and secure concessional financing for its development needs, reports PTI.

The statement came ahead of a televised address to the nation later tonight by President Wickremesinghe, who has steered the effort to take the island out of the economic crisis since Sri Lanka declared its first-ever sovereign default in 2022.

President Wickremesinghe, who also holds the portfolio as the finance minister, is expected to contest the presidential election in the coming months. It is understood that Wickremesinghe, 75, will 'declare an end to bankruptcy' following the agreement reached with bilateral creditors and private bondholders on external debt restructuring.

State Finance Minister Shehan Semasinghe announced that the Sri Lankan authorities are also in the process of signing bilateral debt treatment agreements between Sri Lanka and the Export-Import Bank of China.

"On behalf of Sri Lanka, I would like to sincerely thank the OCC chairs - France, India, and Japan - as well as the Export-Import Bank of China for their leadership in this process, as well as all OCC members for their unwavering support," he said.

According to the Treasury figures, as of the end of March 2024, the debt stock outstanding remained at USD 10,588.6 million.

The official creditor committee comprised the Paris Club of Nations - Japan, the UK, and the US, while the non-Paris Club nations were China, India and the rest.

Sri Lanka in mid-April of 2022 declared its first ever sovereign default since gaining independence from Britain in 1948.

The International Monetary Fund had made external debt restructuring conditional to the USD 2.9 billion bailout – the third tranche of which came to be released last week.

In July 2022, Wickremesinghe was elected through parliament to become stop-gap president for the balance term of Gotabaya Rajapaksa who resigned following public protests over his inability to handle the economic crisis.

## Russia considering downgrading relations with the West

The Kremlin said on Thursday that Russia is considering a possible downgrading of diplomatic relations with the West due to the deeper involvement of the United States and its allies in the Ukraine war, though no decision has yet been made.

"The issue of lowering the level of diplomatic relations is a standard practice for states that face unfriendly or hostile manifestations," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked about the possibility of such a move.

"Due to the growing involvement of the West in the conflict over Ukraine, the Russian Federation cannot but



consider various options for responding to such hostile Western intervention in the Ukrainian crisis."

Peskov said that no decision had yet been made on the matter and that Russia was considering different ways to respond to the West, reports Reuters.

### UK elections: Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer clash in testy final TV debate

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour leader Keir Starmer went head-to-head on Wednesday in their last debate before an election next week, with both launching highly personal attacks over their and their parties' credibility.

With Sunak's Conservatives trailing Labour by around 20 points in the polls, the prime minister went on the attack, accusing Starmer of not being straight with the country on migration, tax and women's rights, and urging voters not to "surrender" to the Labour Party, reports Reuters.

Starmer responded that Sunak was too rich to understand the concerns of most ordinary Britons. A snap YouGov poll said the debate had been a tie, with both on 50%.

On immigration, one of the top concerns for British voters, Sunak rejected Starmer's argument that he would seek to return migrants to their home countries, saying many had arrived in Britain from Iran, Syria and Afghanistan.

Polls indicate that Labour's Starmer is on course to win the elec-



tion with a large majority, ending 14 years of Conservative rule. The two leaders have met at several debates or public sessions with voters, increasingly focusing on who was better suited to lead the country.

Starmer argued the country was exhausted after 14 years of Conservative "chaos", and that he would better understand the challenges of many families who have struggled under soaring inflation and a cost of living crisis.

#### Heavy Criticism

Sunak's campaign has struggled since the beginning. He launched the election in pouring rain in Downing Street and was heavily criticised for failing to attend a D-Day memorial event.

He has also had to contend with a betting scandal after five party officials, including two candidates, were investigated over bets that were placed on the timing of an early election.

Starmer has also faced criticism at public events, being accused by voters of sticking to a script and being robotic, and failing to give enough information on how he would fund much-needed improvements to public services.

One questioner, Robert, seemed to speak for much of the audience when he set out his feelings. He called Sunak a "pretty mediocre prime minister" and said he thought that Starmer's strings were being pulled by senior members of the Labour Party.

"Are you two really the best we've got to be the next prime minister of our great country?" he said, to loud applause. He later told the BBC he had still not decided who to vote for.

### Biden to pardon US military personnel convicted under law barring homosexuality

**P**resident Joe Biden will issue a proclamation giving mass clemency to US service members convicted of charges under a Cold War-era purge of gay and lesbian people, reversing a decades-long policy of discrimination that forced an estimated 100,000 people from the military.

The pardons will be effective with the signing of the proclamation Wednesday, but individual veterans would need to apply to the Department of Defense for a certificate confirming the decision, according to administration officials familiar with the plans who spoke on condition of anonymity to detail them.

The action coincides with Pride Month. White House officials on Tuesday said Biden thought the time was right

to correct a historic wrong and the timing wasn't related to electoral politics, reports Bloomberg.

A Bloomberg News/Morning Consult poll of battleground states shows Biden leading Trump among LGBTQ voters by a nearly 2-to-1 ratio.

Beginning in the 1950s, at the height of the Cold War, LGBTQ Americans were barred from serving in federal government posts, a period known as the "Lavender Scare." Unfounded fears that LGBTQ employees posed a national security threat led to thousands of workers being investigated and forced from their jobs in the following decades.

It's the second time Biden has used mass amnesty, even as he's been historically stingy in granting pardons for individual offenders. In 2022, he granted "full, unconditional and categorical pardon" to anyone convicted of simple marijuana possession.

Compiled by Doojesh Ramlallah

History

#### **Mauritius** Times

Friday, June 28, 2024 14

6<sup>th</sup> Year No 277

# **MAURITIUS TIMES**

Friday 4 December, 1959

Reason is progressive; instinct stationary. — Charles Caleb Colton

From the Pages of History - MT 60 Years Ago



**A Book For Teachers** 

Lurge the Ministry of Education to allocate approximately £100 or Rs 1350 for the purchase of this book. Additionally, I propose that each teacher invest 10 shillings in obtaining their personal copy of a recently published book commissioned by the English Ministry of Education. Furthermore, I rec-

ommend that the Ministry of Education in Mauritius procure about 200 copies of this book. This will enable the distribution of one copy to every Government and Aided primary school, intended for the use of the staff, with additional copies allocated to the Training College library and the Education Library.

What book has prompted such enthusiasm from me? It is simply titled *Primary Education*. This book was published just twenty-four hours prior to my writing this article, on November 27. I have already read it and wholeheartedly endorse it.

So, what is it about? Who are the authors? It has been compiled by several Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, commonly known as HMIs. They have written it primarily for teachers of children under the age of 11. The first part covers the development of primary school children, the school environment and organization, and the role of teachers. The second part discusses the teaching of specific subjects in the curriculum.

HMIs have no authority to mandate directives for teachers; their role is purely advisory. However, their guidance stems from extensive experience visiting various schools. They observe teachers in action, witness the application of teaching methods, and gather and disseminate exemplary practices to benefit interested teachers and enhance their work. The book references numerous such practices, each carefully selected from the best ideas observed during HMIs' extensive school visits.

Certainly, not every aspect of the book will directly apply to primary school teaching in Mauritius. Nevertheless, enough content is relevant to justify the investment of resources by teachers and the Ministry.

In England and Wales (Scotland and Northern Ireland have separate Ministries of Education, thus the book pertains solely to a segment of the UK), the primary school years, from ages 5 to 11, are divided into two stages: infants (ages 5 to 7) and juniors (ages 7 to 11). In larger towns, infants and junior schools are typically separate, while in smaller towns and rural areas, both stages often combine in one school.

Children attend infant school for just two years, during which they undergo significant developmental changes. At age 5, they are still very dependent, while by age 7, they have grown into self-reliant school children capable of interacting confidently with peers. For only children or those from sheltered homes, the infant years are crucial for social development, learning to live and adjust within a community. The infant school environment ideally fosters a relaxed pace that prevents both children and teachers from feeling rushed. Since young



children at age 5 are naturally slower in performing even simple tasks, it is imperative not to force them beyond their capability. A balanced school program must allow for leisurely activities to complement periods of learning, ensuring a harmonious educational experience.

Success in learning is crucial during the infant years, but it must be accompanied by effort. Teachers play a pivotal role in stimulating children's effort and effectively utilizing it once triggered.

Junior school teachers, responsible for children aged 7 to 11, face a challenging task. The book emphasizes that if a teacher or school fails to engage a pupil's genuine interest and cooperation, the pupil may learn to exert the minimal effort required to "get by." This mindset, prevalent among some pupils, risks sowing the seeds of potential delinquency. Therefore, every teacher must ensure that each pupil strives to achieve their full potential.

The issue of automatic promotion remains contentious in Mauritius. The book addresses this matter, noting historical class structures and the evolving approach to educational classification based on attainment, ability, and age.

This emphasis on age-based classification has led to classrooms where children of similar ages exhibit varying abilities. Before 1939, separate junior schools were not as widespread in England, necessitating teachers to adapt to diverse abilities within the same class. This flexibility in teaching methods, accommodating individual or group learning, demonstrates the artistry of teaching as practiced in England and Wales — a stark contrast to the more scientific approach to pedagogy on the continent.

The book also discusses the implications of selection examinations for secondary school placement, cautioning against practices that overly prioritize examination success at the expense of a balanced curriculum. Such practices can narrow children's educational experiences and prematurely instill a competitive mindset.

Unlike in England, bilingualism poses a unique challenge in Wales and particularly in Mauritius. The book briefly touches on bilingual education, highlighting its growing importance worldwide and its relevance in diverse educational settings. Chapters devoted to specific subjects in the school curriculum offer detailed insights, though they may not hold universal appeal compared to broader discussions on educational philosophy and organization. Nonethe-

less, these chapters are recommended for teachers, administrators, and college lecturers in Mauritius. They cover religious education, physical education, language arts (reading and writing), mathematics, art and craft, needlework, handwriting, music, history, and geography. For those focusing on junior school curriculum issues, reading these chapters alongside other relevant publications is advised.

In conclusion, I have highlighted this specialized book because it holds significant implications for Mauritius' educational future. Widespread circulation and thoughtful implementation of its recommendations promise to fortify the education system. I reiterate my initial hope that the Ministry of Education ensures every primary school, training college, and education library in Mauritius has access to this invaluable resource. Every primary school teacher, as well as each head teacher, should consider acquir-

ing a personal copy — I am confident that Nalanda will fulfill all such requests.

### Appointments & Promotions in the Civil Service

#### PROMOTIONS

Mr P. E. Toussaint, Nursing Officer Grade II, promoted Radiographer, Health Department.

Miss S. Prosper, Clinical and Clerical Assistant, promoted Assistant Nutritionist, Health Department.

#### APPOINTMENT

Miss S. Ravel, appointed Typist.

#### ACTING APPOINTMENTS

- Mr E. T. J. Mabbs, Deputy Comptroller of Customs, Landing Surveyor and Commissioner of Excise, to act as Comptroller of Customs and Granary Superintendent.
- Mr R. O. Béchet, Supervisor of Customs, to act as Deputy Comptroller of Customs, Landing Surveyor and Commissioner of Excise.
- Mr P. R. Maurice, Chief Preventive Officer, to act as Supervisor of Customs.
- Mr J. R. D. Dalais, Senior Examiner, to act as Chief Preventive Officer.

The following list of promotions in and appointments to the Public Service during the week ended 3rd Dec. 1959, is released from the Colonial Secretary's Office:

#### PROMOTIONS

- Miss L. Bundhun, Clerical Officer, promoted Executive Officer.
- Miss J. Babajee, Staff Nurse, promoted Ward Sister, Health Department.

#### APPOINTMENTS

- Mr L. S. G. Leguen appointed First Engineer, Harbour and Quays Department.
- Mr D. Mungapen appointed Prison Officer.
- Mr R. Chhaganlal, Misses M. L. Permal and M. Latour appointed Temporary Typists.

# Some people never listen to politicians, no matter what they say

#### • Cont. from page 2

But, during times of societal transition or economic, political or social crisis, the resulting insecurity means that, rather than stability, people can lose clarity over what social norms are. They find themselves adrift in a fog of normlessness.

In 2022, we conducted an analysis of 1,000 UK adult citizens. Almost a third – 29% of our sample – of our respondents did not see value in engaging with ideas.

Some people never discuss current affairs with friends or family or work colleagues. Others don't participate in activities that provide them access to ideas. Our subsequent study in 2023 looked at why this is.

During focus groups, people told us they avoid staying up to date with current affairs because, as one interviewee put it: "Mostly news is pretty depressing anyway, so there's never really anything good."

For some, not engaging is a deliberate act of self-protection from too much bad news. Journalism scholar Nic Newman has shown that this phenomenon is see-



mingly on the rise.

We found this anxiety was linked to a perceived powerlessness. As another respondent said: "All I can do is control my own little bubble."

Others revealed that they avoided discussing current affairs with their friends

and colleagues as they were concerned about potential conflicts. People cited the "atmosphere" that voicing different views can cause. Similarly, others said that fears of being "trolled" for saying the "wrong thing" had made them limit their use of social media.

Alongside these fears, we found a distinct distrust of the media. People said they felt it was feeding them false information or fake news. For some, this feeling was aligned to a belief that being presented with different perspectives on a topic was evidence of a lack of truthfulness, rather than an acceptable plurality of opinion.

Finally, we asked them about values, including living in a just and inclusive society, looking after mental wellbeing and businesses adop-

ting ethical and sustainable practices. We found that the perception of society as increasingly embracing difference saw some people feeling like the norms they were used to were not being reflected back at them. They said they felt that what we

#### might label as "progressive" ideas were of benefit to "others". One participant said: "I think they're addressing the issues of the minority of people, rather than the majority."

For most of these ideas-refusers, the cultural malaise associated with anomie comes hand in hand with navigating the complexity of the contemporary society. The choice to stop listening presents itself as a solution.

As a society, then, we must find ways to connect with people who feel disconnected. This means tackling the endless bad news cycle, promoting more civil forms of debate and using friendships and wider networks to diversify the spread of information.

A healthy democracy and proper societal cohesion require that all voices are heard. If societal progress is to be beneficial and enduring, it must also be inclusive.

Ruth Luzmore, Research Fellow & Chris Brown, Prof of Education, University of Southampton

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Thank you so much. Mauritius Times

# Glissement vers la droite en Europe

#### Suite de la page 5

Il existe une grande variété de partis à travers l'Europe qui prônent l'autoritarisme, des partis populistes de droite aux plus radicaux d'extrême droite, voire néo-fascistes. C'est un spectre volatile de forces qui a capté une grande partie du terrain des partis établis de gauche et de droite, mais ils ne sont pas tous néo-fascistes.

#### Quelles sont les perspectives pour l'extrême droite?

Selon Delanty, nous assistons probablement au point culminant de l'extrême droite. "Il se peut que l'extrême droite ait également atteint le point de consolidation, mais compte tenu de la volatilité des partis et de leur soutien électoral, cela n'est nullement évident. Ce qui semble plus clair, c'est la normalisation de leurs préoccupations politiques – anti-migration, anti-vert et anti-UE. Cependant, cette normalisation est tout aussi susceptible de se produire au niveau national des grands partis de droite et de gauche qui adaptent leurs politiques à l'extrême droite. Cela peut être le témoignage ultime de leur influence, conduisant à une dérive plus générale vers l'idéologie de droite mais pas nécessairement à une prise de pouvoir par l'extrême droite. L'exception ici est la Hongrie, mais le parti Fidesz est plus un exemple de populisme de droite que d'extrême droite."



Si l'on regarde l'UE et la zone européenne élargie, y compris le Royaume-Uni, on peut affirmer que l'Europe dans son ensemble est plus unie que divisée et que les véritables divisions se situent à l'intérieur des pays nationaux. Pourtant, de nombreux pays se sont éloignés du précipice. La Pologne et l'Espagne ont clairement rejeté l'extrême droite lors des récentes élections nationales. L'issue des élections générales au Royaume-Uni le mois prochain conduirait presque certainement à un gouvernement travailliste, et ce, avec une majorité écrasante.

La France est peut-être le pays le plus troublé. Son

# Verdict rendu : Bernard Maigrot reconnu coupable du meurtre de Vanessa Lagesse après 23 ans



Meurtre de Vanessa Lagesse : Bernard Maigrot jugé coupable après 23 ans. P - Channelnews.mu près 23 ans de procédure, Bernard Maigrot a été déclaré coupable du meurtre de Vanessa Lagesse par le jury des Assises, le jeudi 27 juin 2024. Le verdict, rendu en soirée avec sept voix contre deux, marque une conclusion longuement attendue dans cette affaire tragique.

Les proches de Vanessa Lagesse, présents à la Cour suprême, ont préféré ne pas faire de commentaires immédiats suite au verdict. En revanche, Bernard Maigrot a été immédiatement placé en détention provisoire sur ordre de la juge en attendant la sentence qui sera prononcée le 16 juillet prochain.

L'affaire remonte à mars 2001, lorsque le corps de la styliste avait été découvert dans son bungalow à Grand-Baie. Après avoir plaidé non coupable à nouvaste secteur agricole, source de nombreuses tensions, est menacé et probablement insoutenable dans son organisation actuelle. Dans l'ensemble, l'extrême droite a une capacité limitée à gouverner tout en exerçant une influence idéologique considérable à mesure que leurs agendas deviennent de plus en plus normalisés. La leçon de l'échec monumental du Brexit est également clairement visible. Produit de la politique de droite radicale, il a été un échec manifeste et un avertissement pour les autres de ne pas suivre cette même direction.

#### Pourquoi l'extrême droite est-elle populaire?

L'essor de l'extrême droite doit être considéré dans le contexte de grands changements structurels de la société et dans le contexte de la politique mondiale. Selon Delanty, "L'Europe, comme une grande partie du reste du monde, subit des bouleversements sociétaux majeurs en raison de la double transition vers l'économie numérique et l'économie verte, une transition qui se déroule dans le contexte du changement climatique et, maintenant, de l'insécurité due à la nécessité d'une augmentation des dépenses militaires pour la défense contre la Russie. Tout cela se déroule dans le contexte de grands changements démographiques et de l'effondrement de la possibilité d'une société inclusive. La nation est devenue une zone de lutte et de division."

veau devant les Assises, Bernard Maigrot a désormais été reconnu coupable du crime pour lequel il a toujours clamé son innocence.

À sa sortie du tribunal, Gavin Glover, le représentant de Bernard Maigrot, a exprimé sa surprise face au verdict mais a souligné le respect dû à la décision du jury. Il a également affirmé que la bataille pour réhabiliter l'innocence de son client allait se poursuivre, quel que soit le temps que cela prendra.

Cette affaire illustre non seulement la complexité des procédures judiciaires, mais aussi l'importance d'un système juridique qui recherche la justice même après de nombreuses années. Le verdict suscite des réactions variées et souligne l'impact durable des crimes graves sur les victimes, leurs familles, ainsi que sur les accusés et leurs proches. La sentence à venir sera cruciale pour déterminer les conséquences finales de ce long processus judiciaire.

A. Bartleby

#### YOUR STARS

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

It's an ideal time to plan a trip or embark on a new learning journey. Your curiosity will lead to exciting discoveries. At work, think outside the box to solve problems. In relationships, spontaneity will keep things fresh and exciting. Embrace the unknown with optimism. *Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 21, 28, 35* **CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19** Capricorn, this week is all about hard work and determination. Your focus on career goals will bring tangible results. Stay disciplined and methodical in your approach. Financial stability is within reach, so review your investments and savings. In your personal life, create a balance between work and relaxation. Loved ones will appreciate your efforts. *Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 15, 22, 30, 37* AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

Aquarius, innovation and creativity will be your strengths this week. You'll be drawn to unconventional ideas and projects that stimulate your mind. Collaborate with like-minded indivi-duals to bring these ideas to life. Maintain open communication in relationships to avoid misunderstandings. *Lucky Numbers:* 4. 10, 16, 20, 26, 32

#### PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

Pisces, this week is a time for introspection and spiritual growth. You'll benefit from quiet moments of reflection and meditation. Your intuition will be heightened, guiding you in personal and professional decisions. In relationships, empathy and compassion will foster deeper connections. *Lucky Numbers: 1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31* **ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19** This week, Aries, you'll find yourself energized and ready to tackle new challenges. Expect a surge in your confidence, which will help you take bold steps in your career. Your dynamic energy might lead to exciting opportunities. On the personal front, communication with loved ones will be clear and heartfelt. Take time to enjoy outdoor activities to recharge. *Lucky Numbers: 7, 9, 12, 15, 22, 23* 

#### TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

Taurus, this week is all about focusing on stability and security. Financial matters will take center stage, and you might find yourself strategizing for long-term gains. Pay attention to your spending and savings habits. In relationships, patience and understanding will be key. A romantic gesture or quality time with a partner will strengthen your bond. Lucky Numbers: 5, 11, 18, 23, 29, 36 GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

For Gemini, this week brings a whirlwind of social activities and networking opportunities. Your charm and wit will attract new connections that could benefit your career. Stay open to collaborations. However, be mindful of spreading yourself too thin. In your personal life, clarity in communication will prevent misunderstandings. Prioritize self-care amidst the hustle.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 21, 28, 35 CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22 Cancer, this week you'll find yourself reflecting on your goals

and ambitions. Trust your intuition when making decisions. Family matters may require your attention, so ensure you balance your professional and personal responsibilities. Emotional honesty will strengthen your relationships. *Lucky Numbers:* 2, 8, 15, 22, 30, 37

#### Leo: July 23 - Aug 22

Leo, expect a week full of creative energy and enthusiasm. Your leadership skills will shine, making it an excellent time to spearhead new projects or initiatives. Don't hesitate to showcase your talents. Social gatherings will be enjoyable and may lead to significant connections. Ensure you carve out time for rest to maintain your vibrant energy.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 10, 16, 20, 26, 32

#### VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22 This week, Virgo focus on organization and productivity. Your attention to detail will help you excel in work-related tasks. It's a great time to declutter your space and streamline your routines. Health and wellness should be a priority, so incorporate balanced meals and exercise into your schedule. In relationships, be open to compromise and cooperation. *Lucky Numbers:* 1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31

LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22 Libra, harmony and balance will be your guiding themes this week. In your professional life, diplomacy will help resolve conflicts and foster teamwork. You might find yourself mediating between colleagues. Romantic relationships will benefit from your nurturing approach. Plan a date night or a relaxing activity with your partner to deepen your connection. Lucky Numbers: 6, 12, 17, 24, 27, 34 SCORPION: 23 OCT – 21 NOV Scorpio, this week encourages you to delve deep into

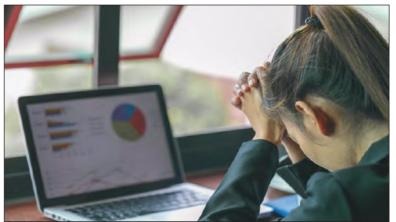
personal growth and transformation. You might uncover hidden strengths or passions that propel you forward. Financial investments or strategic career moves will pay off. In your personal life, open up to loved ones about your aspirations. Emotional vulnerability will enhance your relationships. *Lucky Numbers:* 5, 11, 18, 23, 29, 36

# Study finds link between early career work hours and long-term health

New research published in the open-access journal PLOS ONE on April 3, 2024, suggests that the hours individuals work earlier in life may have lasting effects on their health in later years. Wen-Jui Han from New York University conducted the study, which utilized a life-course approach to examine how work schedule patterns over the course of one's career can impact health outcomes in middle age.

Drawing on data from The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth-1979 (NLSY79), which tracked over 7,000 individuals in the US for more than 30 years, Han investigated the association between employment patterns in younger adulthood and health outcomes at age 50, focusing on sleep, physical health, and mental health.

The findings reveal that individuals with nonstandard work schedules, such as those working outside the traditional nine-to-five workday, experienced worse health outcomes compared to those with stable daytime hours throughout their career. Specifically, participants with more volatile work schedules reported sleeping less, lower sleep quality, and higher levels of depressive



symptoms at age 50. Notably, this effect was particularly pronounced among those who transitioned from stable work hours in their 20s to volatile schedules in their 30s.

Moreover, the study uncovered racial and gender disparities, with Black Americans being more likely to experience adverse health effects associated with volatile work schedules. This underscores how certain demographic groups may bear a disproportionate burden of the health consequences stemming from nonstandard employment patterns.

Han suggests that the instability inherent in volatile work schedules can lead to poor sleep, physical fatigue, and emotional exhaustion, ultimately contributing to an unhealthy lifestyle. The research further highlights how positive and negative impacts of work schedules on health can accumulate over time and contribute to health inequities, particularly in an increasingly unequal society.

In conclusion, Han emphasizes the need to address the precarious nature of modern

work arrangements, which have transformed from sources of sustenance to potential threats to overall well-being. The study underscores the importance of recognizing and mitigating the health consequences associated with nonstandard work schedules, especially among vulnerable populations such as women, Black individuals, and those with lower levels of education.



# Why do you get pins and needles in your legs when you sit on them?

The feeling of pins and needles, which you might also call 'bubbles' or 'tingles', comes from our nerves.



Maybe you've had pins and needles when you've sat on the floor for a long time playing. Lopolo/Shutterstock

There are a few reasons we might get a feeling of pins and needles inside our bodies. Sometimes, this feeling happens when we get sick or hurt ourselves. It can also happen because of different health conditions, or because of our genes (we inherit our genes from our parents).

We might also experience pins and needles when we sit in the same position for too long, or when we squish a particular part of our body, like our legs. This is what you've asked about, so that's what we'll talk about in this article.

The feeling of pins and needles, which you might also call "tingles", comes from our nerves.

Nerves are made up of special cells that send electrical signals – basically messages – between our brain and our body. So nerves help our brain talk to our muscles and other parts of our body to control things like movement.

Let's take a closer look at nerves, and

what role they play in giving us pins and needles.

#### Squishing our blood vessels

The nerves in our body need many things to work well, such as nutrients (the good stuff we get from the food we eat), oxygen from the air we breathe, and lots of blood. Our blood helps carry this oxygen, the nutrients and other useful things around our bodies.

The heart pumps blood to all the parts of our body through blood vessels, which are like little tubes.

If we sit on our legs for too long, it can squash some of the smaller blood vessels in that part of our body. This means the blood cannot flow properly anymore. And then, any nerves which need a supply of blood from those vessels are no longer getting the nutrients or oxygen they need.

This causes the nerves to slow down, trying to save their energy. It's a bit like they've fallen asleep. The area will become quite numb and you won't feel ' much. You might get this feeling when you sit

in one position for too long, or squash a hand or arm under your weight for a while. Have you ever woken up in bed with a dead arm?

Then, when you finally move around, the blood vessels instantly open, and blood rushes into the area and wakes the nerves up.

The nerves can then start firing their electrical signals. As they wake up, we get a strange feeling. This is the pins and needles sensation. Often, the area might also feel numb, or become a bit hard to move.

#### There's no need to worry

The medical term for this tingling, pins and needles, bubbles or numbness is



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"paraesthesia".

Some people might find this feeling a bit scary. But there's usually no need to worry. If you've just been sitting on your legs a little too long, or sleeping on your arm, the area will fill with blood again as soon as you move around a bit.

Then the nerves will once again receive the nutrients and oxygen they need, and you'll be back to normal in no time.

Christian Moro Associate Professor of Science & Medicine, Bond University

Jacob Thorstensen Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences & Medicine, Bond University



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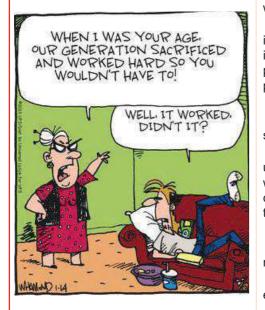
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#### Unwind | Mauritius Times



Russian Jew was finally allowed to emigrate to Israel. At Moscow Airport, Customs found a Lenin statue in his baggage and asked, "What is this?"

The man replied, "What is this! Wrong question, comrade. You should have asked, 'Who is he?' This is Comrade Lenin - who laid the foundations of Socialism and created the future and prosperity of the Russian People. I am taking it with me as a memory of our dear Hero."



The Russian Customs Officer let him go without further inspection.

At Tel Aviv airport, the Israeli Customs Officer also asked him, "What is this?"

He replied, "What is this? Wrong question, Sir. You should be asking - Who is this? This is Lenin, the bastard, who caused me, a Jew, to leave Russia. I take this statue with me so I can curse him every day."

The Israeli Customs Officer said, "I apologize, Sir. You are cleared to go."

Settling into his new house, he put the statue on a table. To celebrate his immigration, he invited his friends and relatives to dinner.

One of his friends asked, "Who is this?"

He replied, "My dear friend, 'Who is this?' is a wrong question. You should have asked, 'What is this?' This is ten kilograms of solid gold that I managed to bring with me without paying any customs duty and tax."

*Moral:* Politics is when you can tell the same thing in different ways to fool different

audiences, and steal their money, and allow yourself to look good in every way.

#### What doctors do...

A couple rushed to the emergency room with severe abdominal pain and met the doctor on duty.

Doctor: "How can I help you, Ma'am and Sir?"

Wife: "Doc, I'm five months pregnant and experiencing unbearable pain in my abdomen."

Doctor: "What seems to be the reason for the pain?" he asked, jotting down notes.

Husband: "You're the doctor here, how would we know?" he replied, slightly annoyed.

Doctor: "I apologize. Patients often come with self-diagnoses from Google, which is why I asked. I didn't mean to offend."

Husband: "It's alright, doc. She's in real pain. Please, can you do something?"

Doctor: "Certainly. Let me examine her." Wife: "Please check me and find out what's wrong."

Doctor: "I'm sorry, recently there was an incident where a specialist faced legal issues for examining a patient without proper consent. I cannot proceed unless you provide legal permission."

The couple exchanged puzzled looks. Husband: "Can't you just do an ultrasound to see if everything's okay?"

Doctor: "That's a good suggestion, but unfortunately, conducting an ultrasound without proper justification can lead to legal consequences related to sex determination. Our hospital can't take that risk."

The couple sighed in frustration.

Husband: "Then please prescribe some medication for her pain."

Doctor: "Sure. Would you prefer branded or generic?"

Wife: "What difference does it make? Just give me something for the pain."

Doctor: "Due to regulations, I can only





prescribe generic medicines now. However, we currently don't have generic drugs available."

Husband: "So, what are we supposed to do?"

Doctor: "You could try visiting another hospital or clinic. Sometimes that's the best option."

Husband: "Why can't you admit her here?"

Doctor: "I could, but there have been recent incidents where hospitals were accused of admitting patients unnecessarily for financial gain. It's a difficult situation."

Frustrated, the husband asked, "What exactly do you do here then?"

Doctor: "Apart from paperwork and filing, we comply with hospital regulations. Much of the decision-making now involves other stakeholders - the press and politicians - and legal considerations."

#### Just for Laughs

**66**Lexophile" describes those who love sentences such as, "You can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish," and "To write with a broken pencil is pointless."

An annual competition is held by the 'New York Times' to find the best original lexophile creations. This year's submissions:

- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crèpes.
- A girl today said she recognized me from the Vegetarians Club, but I'd swear I've never met herbivore.
- I know a guy who's addicted to drinking brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
- A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.
- I got some batteries that were given out free of charge.
- A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail.
- A will is a dead giveaway.
- With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- Police were summoned to a day-care

centre where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

- Did you hear about the fellow whose entire left side was cut off? He's all right now.
- A bicycle can't stand alone; it's just two tired.
- The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine last week is now fully recovered.
- He had a photographic memory, but it was never fully developed.
- When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she thought she'd dye.
- Acupuncture is a jab well done. That's the point of it.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- Did you hear about the crossed-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- Those who get too big for their pants will be totally exposed in the end.

#### **A Company Policy**

Company had a policy of hiring only married men.

Concerned about this, the leader of a local Women's Liberation Front called on the CEO of the company and asked him, "Why do you limit your employees to married men? Is it because you consider women weak, dumb, cantankerous, tantrum-throwers, and bossy?"

The CEO replied, "Not at all, Ma'am. Our policy is to hire staff who are used to obeying orders without questioning, are accustomed to being shouted at, know how to keep their mouths shut, and would put up with anything when I yell at them. And we found all these qualities only in married men!"

HARVEY WHAT YOUR BEST IF FRIEND JUMPS OFF TALKIN' BOUT YOU BEEN MY BEST A BRIDGE, FRIEND YOU GONNA 7 FOR JUMP YEARS Too? I WOULD JUMP STRAIGHT HARVEY .. INTO HELL WITH YOU, MAN

#### Life can be different

### **You Become What You Think**

1. Thoughts shape reality: By consciously controlling your thought patterns, you can cultivate happiness, personal growth, and improve your relationships and mental well-being.

2. Identify limiting beliefs: Our subconscious harbours hidden beliefs that can hold us back. The book encourages introspection to identify limiting beliefs like "I'm not good enough" or "I can't achieve my goals." Once identified, these beliefs can be challenged and replaced with empowering ones.

3. Practise positive affirmations: Repeating positive affirmations about yourself and your abilities can reprogram your subconscious and foster a more optimistic outlook. The book suggests finding affirmations that resonate with you and repeating them

#### regularly.

4. Embrace gratitude: Cultivating an attitude of gratitude can significantly improve your outlook. Practise gratitude journaling, expressing appreciation to others, and focusing on the positive aspects of your life.

5. Reframe negative thoughts: When faced with negative thoughts, challenge them and find alternative interpretations.

6. Develop growth mindset: Embrace challenges as opportunities for learning and growth. Adopt a growth mindset instead of a fixed mindset, believing your abilities can be improved through effort and dedication.

7. Focus on the present moment: Mindfulness practices like meditation and focused breathing can help you stay present and reduce anxiety.

From "You Become What You Think: Insights to Level Up Your Happiness, Personal Growth, Relationships,

and Mental Health" by Shubham Kumar Singh

#### A Story with a Valuable Lesson

# If to correct you must humiliate; you don't know how to teach

An old man meets a young man who asks, "Do you remember me?"

The young man replies that he was the old man's student.

"Well, I became a teacher," the young man says.

"Ah, how good, like me?" said the old man.

"Well, yes," the young man continues, "In fact, I became a teacher because you inspired me to be like you."

Curious, the old man asks the young man at what time he decided to become a teacher.

The young man then tells him the following story:

One day, a friend of mine, also a student, came in with a nice new watch, and I decided I wanted it. I stole it, I took it out of his pocket. Shortly after, my friend noticed his watch was missing and immediately complained to our teacher, who was you. Then you addressed the class saying, 'This student's watch was stolen during classes today. Whoever stole it, please return it.' I didn't give it back because I didn't want to.

"You closed the door and told us

do it.

Approach our older loved

ones with empathy

When you become frustrated with older people because of what they cannot do, think of how

frustrated they must feel because they can no longer

loved one struggles with tasks that once seemed simple

for them. Watching them grapple with technology, for-

It's easy to feel a surge of frustration when an older

This student's watch was stolen during classes today

all to stand up and form a circle. You were going to search our pockets one by one until the watch was found. However, you told us to close our eyes, because you would only look for his watch if we all had our eyes closed. We did as instructed. You went from pocket to pocket, and when you went through my pocket, you found the watch and took it. You kept searching everyone's pockets, and when you were done you said 'Open your eyes. We have the watch.'

"You didn't tell on me and you never mentioned the episode. You never said who stole the watch either. That day you saved my dignity forever. It was the most shameful day of my life. But this is also the day I decided not to become a thief, a bad person... You never said anything, nor did you even scold me or take me aside to give me a moral lesson. I received your message clearly. Thanks to you, I understood what a real educator needs to do. Do you remember this episode, professor?"

The old professor answered, "Yes, I remember the situation with the stolen watch, which I was looking for in everyone's pocket. I didn't remember you, because I also closed my eyes while looking."

This is the essence of teaching: If to correct you must humiliate; you don't know how to teach.

getful moments, or physical limitations can test our patience.

However, in these moments, it's essential to remember that our frustration is but a shadow of what they must be experiencing internally.

In the grand tapestry of life, the roles we play often shift. Today, we may be the ones offering support; tomorrow, we might find ourselves in need of it. By approaching our older loved ones with empathy, we honour their journey and enrich our own, creating a legacy of compassion that transcends generations.

#### <u>Quotable Quotes</u>

### When times get tough...

#### Interesting lines that will keep you going

Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful. — Joshua J. Marine

Accept responsibility for your life. Know that it is you who will get you where you want to go, no one else.

— Les Brown

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

— Confucius

When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on.

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

To be tested is good. The challenged life may be the best therapist.

— Gail Sheehy, Author

When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

#### — Joseph Kennedy

You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.

#### — Maya Angelou

The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. Because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don't want it badly enough. They're there to stop the other people.

- Randy Pausch

Life may be hard, but resilient people are harder.

Mirror is your best friend, because when you cry, it never laughs.

But remember that real situations reveal fake friends.

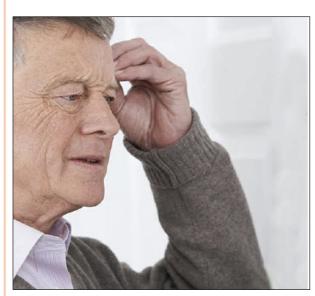
Life is so much simpler when you stop explaining yourself to people and just do what works for you

#### Friday, June 28, 2024 20

#### Preventing dementia and Alzheimer's

## 8 Habits That Can Hurt Your Brain

Understanding how daily habits impact brain health is crucial for maintaining cognitive function and preventing conditions like dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Here are eight common habits (medically reviewed by Jennifer Robinson, MD for WebMD) that can harm your brain, along with expert advice on how to mitigate their effects.



**Lack of Sleep:** Skipping out on sleep can contribute to dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Establish regular sleep patterns and create a calming bedtime routine to improve sleep quality.

**Isolation:** Humans thrive on social interaction. Cultivate meaningful connections with friends and engage in activities that involve socializing to boost happiness, productivity, and brain health.

**Poor Diet:** A diet high in junk food can shrink brain regions involved in learning and memory. Opt for brain-boosting foods like berries, whole grains, nuts, and leafy greens instead of processed snacks.

**Excessive Headphone Use:** Listening to music at high volumes can damage hearing and may contribute to brain problems like Alzheimer's. Limit headphone use to no more than 60% of maximum volume and take breaks.

**Lack of Exercise:** Physical inactivity increases the risk of dementia, diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure, all of which are linked to brain decline. Aim for regular exercise sessions, such as walking or gardening, at least 3 days a week.

**Smoking:** Smoking can shrink the brain, impair memory, and double the risk of dementia, including Alzheimer's. Quitting smoking reduces these risks and improves overall health.

**Overeating:** Excessive food intake, even of healthy foods, can hinder brain function and lead to weight gain, which is associated with heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure — all detrimental to brain health.

Lack of Natural Light: Insufficient exposure to natural light can contribute to depression and impact brain function negatively. Spend time outdoors or ensure well-lit environments indoors to support brain health.

By addressing these habits, you can protect your brain health and reduce the risk of cognitive decline and memory problems.

# Health & Beauty Surprising Ways to Reduce Wrinkles

Sleeping on your back can help you maintain a youthful glow. See what else you can do to help keep your skin looking smooth. Tips medically reviewed by Debra Jaliman, MD, of WebMD:

To maintain youthful skin, prioritize these essentials:

- Avoid prolonged sun exposure.
- Use broad spectrum sunscreen daily.
- Wear protective clothing (long sleeves, pants).
- Refrain from smoking.
- Apply moisturizer regularly.

#### Sleep on Your Back

Sleeping positions can lead to "sleep lines," which can become permanent wrinkles. Sleeping on your side can cause cheek and chin wrinkles, while sleeping face down can create forehead furrows.

#### Eat More Salmon

Salmon and other cold-water fish are rich in protein and omega-3 fatty acids, essential for nourishing and maintaining skin's youthfulness. These nutrients can help minimize wrinkles and keep skin plump.

#### Don't Squint -- Get Reading Glasses!

Repetitive facial expressions like squinting can lead to wrinkles over time. Wear reading glasses to reduce eye strain and invest in sunglasses to protect the delicate skin around your eyes from sun damage.

#### Use Alpha-Hydroxy Acids (AHAs)

AHAs help exfoliate the skin by removing dead cells,

#### Health & Diet

# Expert Diet Tips for Weight Loss

In a recent WebMD webinar "Eating for a Healthy Weight," Carolyn Newberry, MD, of Weill Cornell Medicine of Cornell University, answered viewer questions about how to create a healthy diet for weight management.

1. Margarine, low-fat butter-like spreads, and real butter each have their considerations. For someone without a history of heart disease or coronary artery disease, consuming less processed butter in moderation is acceptable, despite its higher fat content. Opting for a small amount of fresh, farm-made butter on wholegrain toast is perfectly fine.

2. Products labelled "low fat" or "low sugar" often contain additives, artificial sweeteners, or other nonnatural ingredients that can lead to health issues. It's generally better for the average person without specific health concerns to choose more natural, less processed foods with fewer additives.

3. Eggs can be a beneficial protein source for most people, including those without high cholesterol concerns. Eating both the egg white and yolk provides a more complete nutritional profile. Recent research suggests that saturated fats from sources like whole milk products or processed meats are more likely to raise cholesterol levels than dietary cholesterol from eggs.

4. Balancing between cardiac and diabetic diets involves common principles, as both diets benefit from a focus on lower sugar intake and higher fiber content. The Mediterranean-style diet, rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and plantbased proteins like nuts and legumes, is particularly beneficial for cardiovascular health.

5. Organic foods are generally more expensive and may not always offer significant advantages over non-organic options. Choosing less processed foods with minimal ingredients is a better guideline for most people.

6. Moderate alcohol consumption can be acceptable for many individuals, especially within the context of a Mediterranean diet that includes red wine in moderation. Opting for less sugary alcoholic beverages and limiting consumption is advisable.

7. Fresh or frozen fruits, without added sugars, are nutritious choices for most diets. Processed fruit products like juices, which strip away fiber and concentrate natural sugars, should be consumed sparingly. Making smoothies with whole fruits can be a healthier alternative.

reducing the appearance of pores, fine lines, and surface wrinkles, particularly around the eyes. Stronger AHAs may even stimulate collagen production, enhancing skin strength and firmness. Remember to apply sunscreen daily as AHAs can increase sun sensitivity.

#### **Avoid Over-Washing Your Face**

Frequent washing with tap water can strip your skin of natural oils and moisture, which protect against wrinkles. Opt for a meisturizing coop or gol clopper to meister

moisturizing soap or gel cleanser to maintain skin's natural barrier.

#### Incorporate Vitamin C

Studies suggest that topical vitamin C can boost collagen production, protect against sun damage, and improve skin tone. Look for products containing L-ascorbic acid for optimal wrinkle relief.

#### Consider Soy for Skin Care

Applying soy topically or taking it as a supplement may help improve skin structure, firmness, and even out skin tone. It could also protect against sun damage.

#### Trade Coffee for Cocoa

Cocoa rich in antioxidants like epicatechin and catechin can protect skin from sun damage, enhance blood flow to skin cells, and improve skin hydration, resulting in smoother-looking skin.

By integrating these practices into your skincare routine, you can effectively reduce the appearance of wrinkles and maintain youthful, healthy skin.

> 8 .Liquid calories, often found in sugary drinks or heavily processed beverages, provide minimal nutritional benefits. While coffee and occasional fruit juice can be enjoyed, water remains the best choice for hydration.

> 9 .A balanced diet should avoid excessive consumption of any single food. Fad diets that overly restrict fats or carbohydrates may not provide adequate nutrition. It's essential to maintain a diet with balanced macronutrients to support overall health.

> 10. While a daily multivitamin may benefit some individuals during calorie restriction, getting essential nutrients from food is preferable. Certain groups may require supplements, such as postmenopausal women needing calcium and vitamin D or vegetarians needing iron and vitamin B12.

> 11.Intermittent fasting may offer benefits for some individuals by reducing overall calorie intake. However, its suitability depends on personal preferences and health conditions.

> 12.Hydration recommendations suggest approximately eight glasses of water daily. Sparkling water is as hydrating as still water, but watch for added sugars or flavours. Tap water can be a suitable option in areas where it is safe and adequately processed.



#### - BollyBytes –

### Akshay Kumar opens up about his past heartbreaks before marrying Twinkle Khanna

Ashay Kumar and Twinkle Khanna are among Bollywood's most beloved celebrity couples. Their relationship has withstood the test of time, capturing the hearts of millions.

In a recent interview with a media portal, Akshay Kumar candidly discussed the multiple breakups he experienced before marrying Twinkle. He shared insights into how he coped with heartbreak during those times.

Appearing on Ranveer Allahabadia's The Ranveer Show podcast alongside Tiger Shroff to promote his film "Bade Miyan Chote Miyan," Akshay opened up about his past relationships and the challenges of dealing with breakups.

Akshay offered advice to young people on handling heartbreak, revealing that after each breakup (two or three in total), he focused on physical exercise to channel his emotions constructively. He emphasized the importance of directing anger in a positive direction during such phases.



Before his marriage to Twinkle in 2001, Akshay Kumar was romantically linked with actresses including Shilpa Shetty, Raveena Tandon, and Pooja Batra. The couple now has two children, Aarav and Nitara.

On the professional front, Akshay Kumar was last seen in "Bade Miyan Chote Miyan," directed by Ali Abbas Zafar. He has upcoming projects like "Sarfira," featuring Paresh Rawal, Radhika Madan, and Seema Biswas, directed by Sudha Kongara, scheduled for release on July 12.

### Sara Ali Khan finds it surreal to return to the city that once housed "96 kilos" of her

**S**ara Ali Khan expressed her surreal feelings about being back in the Big Apple, a city she fondly refers to as the place where she once weighed 96 kilograms.

Sharing moments from her visit on Instagram stories, Sara reminisced about her student days at New York's Columbia University, a time when she struggled with weight gain. Sara, the daughter of Bollywood stars Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh, has been candid about her challenges with Polycystic Ovarian Disease (PCOD) and obesity, topics she openly discussed on the sixth season of 'Koffee With Karan'.

Before making her debut in the 2018 film 'Kedarnath' alongside the late actor Sushant Singh Rajput, Sara focused on regular workouts



such as cardio, pilates, and yoga, complemented by a simple diet, to shed the extra weight. The 28-year-old actress gained further prominence with roles in films like 'Simmba' alongside Ranveer Singh, and subsequent appearances in 'Love Aaj Kal', 'Coolie No. 1', 'Atrangi Re', 'Gaslight', 'Zara Hatke Zara Bachke', 'Murder Mubarak', and 'Ae Watan Mere Watan'.

Upcoming projects for Sara include 'Metro... In Dino' directed by Anurag Basu, and 'Sky Force', an action thriller directed by Abhishek Anil Kapur and Sandeep Kewlani. The latter reportedly stars Akshay Kumar, Veer Pahariya, Nimrat Kaur, Sharad Kelkar, and Suniel Shetty, and revolves around India's retaliatory attack on the Sargodha airbase of Pakistan during the Indo-Pakistani

### Sridevi's daughter Khushi Kapoor doesn't regard herself as the 'rage'

Khushi Kapoor, daughter of late veteran star Sridevi and producer Boney Kapoor, stepped into the world of Hindi cinema in 2023 and quickly became a social media sensation. Despite her rapid rise to fame, the actress doesn't label herself as a "rage" and is grateful for the constructive criticism she receives, saying "I'm really just taking the time to learn, grow, and focus on myself and my work."

When asked about her feelings on becoming such a sensation after just one project, Khushi told IANS, "I wouldn't call myself a rage, but I'm really blessed and grateful for the love I'm getting."



Khushi played Betty Cooper in 'The Archies', directed by Zoya Akhtar. The film also stars Agastya Nanda, Suhana Khan, and Vedang Raina, among others.

The younger sister of actress Janhvi Kapoor is thrilled to be part of the Hindi film industry: "It's nice to finally be out there in the industry, and I'm happy to be starting to find my way."

However, 'The Archies' isn't Khushi's first stint in front of the camera. She made her acting debut in 2016 with the YouTube short film 'Bhasm Ho: Pyaar Ka Takraar' and later starred in the 2020 student short film 'Speak Up'.

Looking ahead, Khushi Kapoor has an exciting lineup of projects. She will be seen in 'Naadaniyaan' alongside Ibrahim Ali Khan, who makes his debut in Hindi cinema. Additionally, she has a film with Junaid Khan, known for his recent release 'Maharaj'.

### Aamir Khan visits Mahatma Gandhi's ashram in Sevagram, reflects on Bapu's influence

air war of 1965.

A amir Khan visited Sevagram in Maharashtra for the first time on last Sunday, expressing his deep admiration for Mahatma Gandhi and acknowledging the profound impact the Father of the Nation has had on him.

Sevagram, situated in Maharashtra, served as Mahatma Gandhi's ashram and residence from 1936 until his passing in 1948, holding significant historical importance after Sabarmati.

Speaking to the media, Aamir remarked, "This is my first visit to Sevagram. There is a magical energy here. I have been a follower of Bapuji, and his thoughts have deeply influenced me. I am delighted to be in a place where he lived and spent his days. Seeing the things he used... it's an



indescribable feeling. It's truly a wonderful place."

Aamir has delivered successful films like 'Dhoom 3' and 'PK', though some of his projects like 'Thugs of Hindostan' and 'Laal Singh Chaddha' received mixed reviews.

Recently, Aamir produced 'Laapataa Ladies', a comedy drama directed by his ex-wife Kiran Rao. The film features Nitanshi Goel, Pratibha Ranta, Sparsh Shrivastava, Chhaya Kadam, and Ravi Kishan, telling the tale of two young brides who inadvertently swap places during a train journey to their husbands' homes.

Up next, Aamir has 'Sitaare Zameen Par' in the pipeline, a sports drama directed by R.S. Prasanna and co-produced by Aamir and Kiran.

#### What's On

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#### What's On

#### **Mauritius Times**





A tribute to an esteemed economist

**Pierre Dinan bids farewell** 

Pierre Dinan, a distinguished economist and accountant, passed away on Thursday, June 27th, at the age of 87. His legacy in the fields of economics and finance, both nationally and internationally, is profound and enduring.

Born in 1937, Pierre Dinan pursued a stellar academic career, earning a BSc in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science

in 1961. In 1964, he became a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (FCA). Pierre Dinan embarked on his impressive professional journey as an Investment Officer at the Development Bank of Mauritius from 1964 to 1967. He later served as Chief Economist and Accountant at the Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture from 1968 to 1975. From 1976 to 1984, he held the position of Chief Accountant at the WEAL Group of Companies. Between 1985 and 2004, he was a Senior Partner at De Chazal Du Mée, concurrently serving as Director of Multiconsult Ltd from 1992 to 2004 and as Resident Director of several global business

companies

From 2005 to 2007, Pierre Dinan served as a director at the Indian Ocean International Bank Ltd. From 2002 to 2011, he was a board member of the JP Morgan Indian Investment Trust plc. In addition to these roles, he contributed significantly as a member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of Mauritius and chaired the audit committees of various local

companies and financial service institutions in the manufacturing sector.

Internationally, Pierre Dinan was a consultant for the Africa Development Project Facility (APDF), established by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). He also undertook missions for the World Bank in several African countries, including Zaire, Burundi, Kenya, and Zambia.

A prolific author, Pierre Dinan wrote two major books on the Mauritian economy, in addition to a collection of articles. True to his commitment, he published his final work titled "La foire aux cadeaux" on his website (pmdinan.com).

Pierre Dinan's unwavering dedication to advancing economic discourse and his exemplary professional achievements will be cherished by those who had the privilege to know him and appreciate his profound insights as an economist.

Throughout his illustrious career spanning decades, Pierre Dinan not only excelled in academia but also applied his expertise in various key roles, from investment officer to senior partner and board member. His tenure as Chief Economist and Accountant at the Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture and his leadership at De Chazal Du Mée exemplified his deep understanding of economic principles and his ability to navigate complex financial landscapes.

Beyond his professional achievements, Pierre Dinan was known for his humility and sharp intellect. Colleagues and peers admired not only his expertise but also his approachable demeanour and willingness to mentor aspiring economists and finance professionals.

In this time of mourning, our thoughts and condolences are with Pierre Dinan's wife Monique, with whom he shared 55 years of marriage, his family, and loved ones. His legacy as a respected figure in economic circles will continue to inspire students as well as professionals striving for excellence in economics and governance.

# **Remembering Dev Manraj**

Auritius mourns the passing of Dev Manraj, who breathed his last, last week, at the age of 75. Born on March 30, 1949, Dev Manraj was not only a distinguished civil servant but also a pivotal figure in shaping the economic landscape of the nation.

Dev Manraj embarked on his illustrious career in 1974 as a Principal Accountant in the public sector, steadily rising through the ranks over the next few decades. By 1990, his leadership qualities and financial acumen led him to the prestigious position of Financial Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, a role he fulfilled for many years under different governments.

Educated at the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland, Dev Manraj earned accolades as a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (FC-CA). His academic achievements were matched by his significant impact on Mauritius' economic development, particularly through his stewardship of key government and semi-governmental enterprises.

As Chairman of entities like the State Bank of Mauritius (SBM), the State Insurance Corporation of Mauritius Ltd (SICOM), and the Airport Development Corporation Ltd (ADCO), Dev Manraj played a pivotal role in advancing strategic initiatives such as the Ebene Cybercity. He also played a key role in the establishment of crucial institutions like the Financial Services Commission and the State

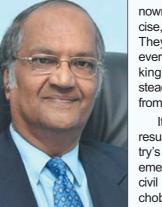
Investment Corporation. Internationally, Dev Manraj represented Mau-

ritius as the Alternate Governor at the World Bank, contributing significantly to bilateral agreements such as the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. His expertise was instrumental in strengthening Mauritius' global economic relations and positioning the country as a hub for investment and financial services.

Dev Manraj's meticulous approach to fiscal policies and budget formulation set a benchmark for excellence in governance, inspiring countless civil servants and economists during his tenure.

As we reflect on Dev Manraj's legacy, it's also important to ac-knowledge that the British colonial legacy bestowed upon their former colonies a robust civil service. This legacy propelled the best and brightest individuals to the pinnacle of leadership.

Those fortunate enough to have served in the civil service before independence and in the early post-independence years can recall the names of some top civil servants whose contributions left an indelible mark on the departments under their watch: Hinchey, Craig, Simpson. Their minutes were re-

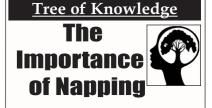


nowned for being "succinct, precise, coordinated, and decisive." They meticulously scrutinized every aspect of issues before making decisions and remained steadfast against undue influence from petty politicians.

It was this tradition of delivering results and prioritizing the country's interests that fostered the emergence of dedicated Mauritian civil servants such as the Burrenchobay brothers, Hervé Duval, Honoré, Maudave, Adolphe, Tirvengadum, Bram Ghoorah, Régis

Yat Sin, Rundheersing Bheenick, Madhukar Baguant, Dawood Zamanay, Vishwanaden Sooben, and so many others in the central government, parastatal bodies and State Owned Enterprises. They shared common traits of rigour in their work, visionary drive, and a commitment to flawless execution. Importantly, they left behind a legacy of substantial achievements and improved public service, building the foundation upon which modern Mauritius stands today. Dev Manraj contributed his bit to that enterprise.

In this time of sorrow, our heartfelt condolences go out to Dev Manraj's family. His contributions to Mauritius' economic development will be remembered as foundational pillars upon which our nation continues to build its future.



The desire for a short nap during the day does not arise out of laziness, rather the need for the body to rejuvenate.

In the modern world, we re often compelled to be as productive as possible during as many hours of the day as we can be. While this can lead to great feats of accomplishment, we may become exhausted and find ourselves craving rest and rejuvenation. We may feel like taking a nap but feel guilty about indulging in even ten minutes of rest. This need for personal downtime, which many people experience in the early afternoon, isn t a sign of laziness nor is it necessarily related to how much sleep you had the night before. There was even a time when taking a nap was considered a natural part of everyone s day.

Napping is a pleasurable yet brief period of sleep when our minds and bodies can take a break. Though judged by many to be a pastime for children or the elderly, napping can benefit people of all ages. The desire to nap is a trait shared by many mammals, and napping is still an important part of the day in some countries. Snoozing for a half-hour can be an enjoyable way to promote physical well-being, and naps have been known to improve your mood and memory. A 20-minute nap can sharpen your senses and revitalize you, while a ten minute nap can leave you feeling more cheerful. Falling into a light sleep during the daytime can feel meditative. The thoughts you have as you are taking a nap and the dreams you experience may offer you insights about your life that you may not have at night when you are in a deep sleep.

In order to fully enjoy the benefits of napping, you may need to give yourself permission to nap. Feeling guilty about snoozing or worrying about your to-do list won t do you much good when you are trying to take a nap because your thoughts or feelings will keep you awake. Try to nap at the same time each day, and use an alarm clock to ensure that you don t sleep for too long. Learning to nap and enjoy its restorative benefits can help you wake up restored, rejuvenated, and ready for the rest of your day. Daily Om