

MAURITIUS **TIMES**

• *What the new year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the new year. — Vern McLellan*



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Interview: Manou Bheenick

“The ‘Alliance du Changement’ offers a strong foundation for the deep reforms and restructuring the country needs...

So, Navin, Paul, and Team, put your shoulder to the wheel; pull us out of this rut; and get on with the job!”

• **‘Let there be no doubt: in 2024, our economy is weaker than it has ever been at any point of regime change, whether in 1982 or 1995’**

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Legal Fees and Political Connections: A Growing Concern in Mauritius

“The previous government should be held accountable for disbursing such high fees to some privileged lawyers”



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As the year draws to a close, the global media begins its annual ritual of selecting a *Person of the Year*. In the United States, *Time* magazine recently named Donald Trump, underscoring his continued influence on political discourse. This tradition begs the question in the local context: Who deserves similar recognition in Mauritius in 2024? After the electorate's resounding verdict in the recent elections, it's tempting to argue that the people of Mauritius themselves should be crowned the true "*Persons of the Year*".

The 2024 election outcome in Mauritius delivered an unambiguous message: the electorate spoke with clarity and conviction about the leadership they desire. In a political environment often marked by disillusionment and cynicism, voter turnout and the significance of their decision cannot be overstated. This was a triumph of democracy, where citizens, irrespective of their political affiliations, asserted their right to steer the nation in a new direction. Some might argue, however, that the series of video clips collectively known as "*Missie Moustass*" leaks could have played a major role in the scale of the triumph and could therefore qualify too. Ultimately, though, the responsibility for the final decision rested with the Mauritian voters. Most voters recognized the gravity of the situation and acted decisively and responsibly to address the challenges facing the nation at that critical moment.

Indeed, the Mauritian electorate's decision stands out as a testament to a democratic process which, despite its flaws, still holds promise. It is rare to witness a political shift as decisive as the one that occurred last November, and it serves as a reminder that the power of the people should not be underestimated, nor should the electorate be taken for granted. To some extent, one could therefore argue that it's not just the politicians but the electorate who are most deserving of recognition in this context.

However, the clarity of the electorate's mandate for change contrasts with their conflicting expectations regarding economic benefits. The demand for a 14th-month bonus — a privilege virtually unheard of in other countries — illustrates this complex dichotomy. While there is no question that Mauritians deserve fair compensation for their labour, this demand reflects a level of impatience or even entitlement that is difficult to reconcile with the nation's current financial realities.

The challenge lies in the fact that public expectations often clash with available economic resources. It's easy for the electorate to call for higher wages or additional benefits without fully understanding the constraints of managing a small island nation with a limited economy. The 14th-month bonus, for example, was a prominent electoral promise, but its financial feasibility was always in question. The government's decision to cap the bonus for those earning up to Rs 50,000, due to the inability to fund the full demand, has understandably sparked discontent.

Is it fair for the electorate to expect such benefits without understanding the nation's fiscal position? The government's responsibility is to balance these demands with the economic realities of Mauritius, which, as revealed by the publication of *The State of the Economy*, is far from being in a healthy position. The critics of the government's handling of this issue suggest that the leadership should have been more transparent about the country's financial limitations prior to making such promises. Could the government, which has been in Opposition for near ten years, have anticipated the funding shortfall earlier on? Most unlikely. But making promises during an election cycle is a double-edged sword, especially when faced with the pressures of voter expectations. Political leaders often find themselves between a rock and a hard place: satisfy the electorate's

Persons of the Year

The Mauritian Electorate's Defining Moment



short-term demands and risk compromising long-term fiscal stability or take a more cautious approach and face the wrath of voters who feel misled.

Regarding the state of the Mauritian economy today, most economists would argue that, despite years of relative growth, we are today undeniably teetering on the edge of a precarious situation. While the numbers may suggest steady progress, the reality on the ground is far more complex. We are grappling with rising debt levels, increasing inflation, a depreciated currency, a yawning gap between exports and imports and a challenging global economic environment. These issues are further exacerbated by the fiscal demands of the electorate, who are understandably eager for tangible improvements to their quality of life.

In many ways, economists would argue that we find ourselves in a situation reminiscent of 1982, when the economy faced a perfect storm of domestic and international pressures. This comparison is particularly relevant given the looming threat of a credit rating downgrade, as highlighted by Deputy Prime Minister Paul Bérenger. The risk of financial instability is real, and the government's ability to manage the economy effectively will be crucial in preventing a crisis.

However, it is not all doom and gloom. The key to dealing with these challenges lies in tough decisions — decisions that will require political courage and fiscal discipline.

The prospect of seeking assistance from friendly countries, as well as from the IMF and the World Bank, as suggested by DPM Bérenger, is a realistic one. However, it comes with its own set of challenges. Such negotiations often carry conditions, including austerity measures typically prescribed by institutions like the IMF, which may not be well-received by the electorate.

The big question that remains, however, is: How long will it take to restore the economy to its full potential? Given the scale and complexity of the challenges facing Mauritius, the road to economic recovery will not be a short or straightforward one. It will likely take several years for the nation to achieve meaningful and sustainable economic stability. Structural issues such as rising debt levels, inflation, a depreciating currency, and persistent trade imbalances cannot be addressed overnight. These problems require well-thought-out policies, consistent implementation, and, above all, political will. The road ahead will undoubtedly be rocky, with difficult and sometimes unpopular decisions needed. Transparency and accountability will also be essential to ensure that any sacrifices demanded of the population are matched by responsible governance and tangible outcomes.

In this challenging context, the political alliance between the Labour Party, the MMM, Resistans ek Alternativ, and the Nouveaux Démocrates could prove to be a critical factor in facing these challenges. While the alliance may have been born out of pragmatic necessity, they represent a rare moment of political cohesion in a typically fragmented landscape. If these parties can set aside their ideological differences and focus on shared goals, they could provide the stability and strategic direction needed to rebuild confidence in both local and international stakeholders. However, unity within such alliances is not guaranteed. History has shown that coalition governments often face internal tensions and competing agendas, which can undermine their effectiveness. To succeed, the leadership of these parties must prioritize national interest over partisan concerns and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the long-term welfare of the country.

In conclusion, as we reflect on 2024, there is no easy answer to the question of who deserves to be named *Person of the Year* in Mauritius. While the electorate's decisive action is commendable, the path forward will require collaborative efforts from all sectors of society. The challenges ahead are daunting, but with the right leadership, Mauritius can emerge from this period stronger and more resilient.

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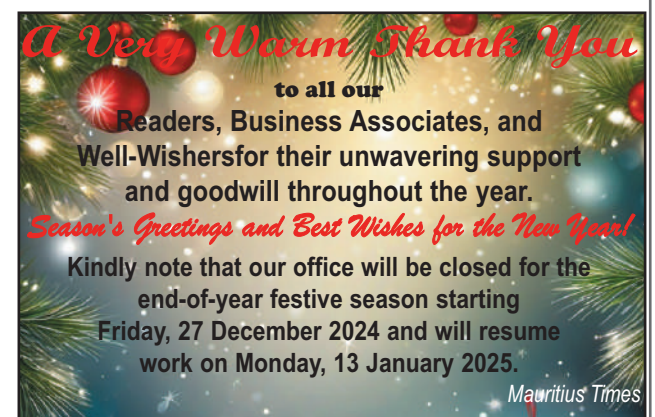
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Demain n'est jamais certain: Que sera sera...



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

All of us belonging to my generation have fond memories of humming that beautiful melodious song 'Quand j'étais tout petit maman me disait...' and which ends with the soulful lines 'Demain n'est jamais certain: Que sera sera...' It still rings inside us, especially at times of turning points such as the change from the passing year to an incoming new year.

Equally haunting are the concluding lines from the iconic poem by Robert Frost (which he recited at the inauguration of John Kennedy as the 35th US President in January 1961), 'Stopping by Woods on a snowy Evening':

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep*

This is a philosophical poem, wherein 'sleep' refers to death. The implied message is that before death one has to complete one's duties and responsibilities. Given that Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, one wonders in retrospect whether these lines of Robert Frost were prescient...

One could recast them it as:

*Our future, bright with hope, beckons
We have pledges to fulfil
And new pages to write
And miles to go before the next round...*

As Robert Frost's poem was recited in a political context, I thought that the paraphrased version I have penned is an apt one for the leaders of our country who have taken over from the previous regime, especially for the older ones among them who have been around for very long. As we emerge from the turmoil of the past ten years, we certainly wish that they are around to complete the current mandate with promises kept and delivered. Five years is not a long time in the history of a country, but there is never any certainty about the outcome of an election, for it's equally true that *demain n'est jamais certain* – and we have seen that haven't we, in previous electoral bouts.

As 2024 comes to its end and 2025 rolls in, it is customary to take a look back at the year gone by and wish or hope for a better and brighter future. This exercise, which I think most people – whatever their status – do in one way or another, invites the individual to select or highlight those things that impacted him (her also: him will be used for the sake of convenience) the most, depending upon personal situation as well as upon occupation and interests. I recall a cartoon on this theme in a US paper showing a couple looking at two boards resting on two separate stands. On one is written '← year X' and on the other is 'Year Y →'. The caption read 'I don't know which I should be



“Numerous were the reported cases of alleged corruption at high levels, fraud and financial manipulations with siphoning of billions of taxpayers' money, the MIC saga at the Bank of Mauritius and emptying of its coffers. Compounding all these were institutional dysfunctions and a shameful conduct of affairs in Parliament. These not only generated a climate of fear that hung as a perpetual sword of Damocles over the country, but they seemed to have all the characteristics of state capture by a selected coterie, oblivious of the sufferings of the citizens not to speak of indifference to the image of the country internationally...”

more apprehensive of.'

Indeed, with the traumatic events that have marked 2024, both locally and globally, the concern that this caption expressed is not surprising. For my part, I thought I'd have a go at some issues of interest, starting with my town Curepipe.

Curepipe: 'Ville de lumiere' anew?

For many years I have been saddened and rather ashamed to face the hard fact that Curepipe is no longer the 'Ville de Lumiere', that was its claim to fame in the not-too-distant past. And with justification too. But given that municipal elections are in the air, this is both a cry and an appeal to those who will be called upon to govern it, come soon, to make it shine once again and regain its rightful place in the Mauritian lands-cape.

I remember that quite some years ago there had been a beginning of improvement after a new team had been voted in. Several railings along the Royal Road and Chasteauneuf Street had been painted in a combination of blue, yellow and white, extending to Jan Palach, along the Sivananda road down to the Curepipe Road junction, and a little further up along Leclezio Street, Lees Street near the Manhattan complex, and some other sites too. The paint has long since been the victim of weathering!

To be fair, the infrastructure works connected with the so-called metro, as well as the metro itself – whatever its merits or otherwise – have no doubt upgraded that part of the Curepipian region, from Jan Palach to Curepipe Road, and so much the better.

Before the November elections, street

markings in the main business areas of the town were freshly painted – but these need to be extended to some other parts too. Will it happen?

As with other towns, a major problem is increasingly constrained parking space, and with more cars on the roads this is bound to get worse, notably on weekends. So, I look forward to some practical solution being worked out soon enough, especially to help senior citizens like me. Along with other matters, such as the many taxis which monopolise space at numerous sites, the state of the roads, etc., I hope that as the year goes by the initiatives already taken will trigger further visible and tangible improvements in a continuing bid to 're-look' Curepipe.

* * *

Cry – or Cry not, my beloved country?

At country level too, much before the explosive revelations of the 'Missie Moustass' leaks, the media had been awash with the brutalities being perpetrated, such as the assaults on sundry personalities, with well publicized arbitrary arrests by the notorious Special Striking Team and interrogations of several politicians amongst others.

Numerous were the reported cases of alleged corruption at high levels, fraud and financial manipulations with siphoning of billions of taxpayers' money, the MIC saga at the Bank of Mauritius and emptying of its coffers. Compounding all these were institutional dysfunctions and a shameful conduct of affairs in Parliament. These not only generated a climate of fear that hung as a perpetual sword of Damocles over the country, but they seemed to have all the characteris-

tics of state capture by a selected coterie, oblivious of the sufferings of the citizens not to speak of indifference to the image of the country internationally.

Besides, the damage done to public morale is incalculable. There is great expectation and hope that henceforth the direction the country should take should, *prima facie*, safeguard the national interest rather than individual, narrow or vested interests: a common call across the world in all mature democracies. If we are one, as we claim to be, then... let's hope we will be swimming in clearer and more still waters as 2025 unfolds.

People are definitely enjoying a new air of freedom and gaiety in this festive season. The party will not last forever, but let us pray for the fresh breeze to last the mandate at least – and beyond too why not...

* * *

Let there be peace

As we look forward to a better world, we may like to reflect on a short write-up on anthropologist Doug Fry's important book 'War, Peace and Human Nature', in which he summarizes the findings of 'decades of research on peaceful societies around the world and argues that assumptions about the war-like nature of humans and the inevitability of war are both erroneous (according to sound archaeological and anthropological data) and deeply ingrained in our culture – and thus need to be countered with a clear alternative vision of a peaceful society'. He writes, 'The importance of developing an alternative vision is often overlooked. A common assumption is that a dramatic social transformation away from war is not possible. Such an attitude easily becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.'

Happy people are peaceful people. Let us therefore pray to be happy and peaceful in 2025 and the years to come... Happy New Year to all.

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Looking into a Cloudy Crystal Ball at 2025

It seems we'll enter the coming year with a full plate, as the world faces challenges from Africa to Latin America, Belarus, Myanmar, and beyond



Anil Madan

The major hotspots of the world that we have viewed with fearful apprehension continue to be such: the Middle East, where Israel's attacks on Gaza continue, and the Iranians and Houthis inject varying degrees of uncertainty; Ukraine, where Russia's ongoing war continues to obliterate its infrastructure and make life miserable; Taiwan, where China continues to threaten a blockade or worse and carries out naval and air maneuvers. We can add Syria to these.

Add to these geopolitical issues, universal concerns about the future of Europe and NATO, catastrophic weather and climate events, plastics pollution, famines, repression, human rights abuses, and disease, and it seems that we will enter 2025 with our plates full. From Africa to Latin America, to Belarus, to Myanmar, and beyond, the world is beset with problems. If Donald Trump's second term as President generates what his detractors fear as their worst nightmares, we might see full plates heaped to overflowing.

Generating a sense of foreboding is easy, but fear is not necessarily predictive. The irony-laced apocryphal Chinese curse — "May you live in interesting times" — suggests, with its predicted overtones, that the year ahead will indeed be "interesting times".

An earth-shaking turn in the Middle East

Events in the Middle East have certainly taken an earth-shaking turn. The fall of Bashar al-Assad, as welcome as the fall of any inhumane tyrant ever was, is much better understood as a wider collapse of the Axis

of Discord and Hate championed by the twin pillars of evil, the Ayatollahs of Iran and Putin of Russia.

For a while, it appeared that Iran and Hamas, aided by Hezbollah and the Houthis, had achieved a breach in Israel's defenses. But that all fell apart as Israel systematically decimated the leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah, degraded and destroyed their respective destructive capabilities. The fall of Syria is widely attributed to the failure of Russia and Iran to continue their support of Assad, but this does not explain why his forces suddenly capitulated. Somehow, the Syrian opposition to Assad, led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), collaborated with the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army (comprising detractors from Assad's forces) to overthrow Assad.

This, of course, has thrown Syria into turmoil. Turkiye is a major player and views the Kurdish YPG militia — the dominant player in the Syrian Democratic Forces supported by the US — as nothing more than a part of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) militia. The PKK is banned in Turkiye and has been engaged in a rebellion in that country for 40 years. Complicating all this is the fact that the leader of HTS, Abu Mohammad al-Julani (also known as Ahmad Hussein al-Sharaa), was a member of the Islamic State group ISIS. So, we have Turkiye and Israel vying for control of parts of Syria, the US ambivalent about embracing a former ISIS leader notwithstanding his declarations that he is inclined to make Syria an inclusive and democratic state, Russia anxious to reclaim its air and naval facilities, and Iran viewing with alarm the severing of its Shia Crescent and supply routes to Hezbollah. Add to this the uncertainty of what Biden will do as he exits and Trump as he assumes the presidency, and the situation remains fluid.

Who will prevail in Syria? Perhaps Turkiye? It is not clear. For now, absent major changes, the losers appear to be Iran and Russia and perhaps even the US. Will Donald Trump see his way clear to establishing a presence in Syria and an alliance with al-Sharaa? I am skeptical. Trump has



Pic - Reuters

“Trump remains an unknown commodity when it comes to Taiwan and NATO/Europe as well. He has declared that he will not come to Taiwan's aid if China attacks and offered the laughable explanation that Taiwan has stolen America's semiconductor business... Will Trump see an independent Taiwan as a key part of America's strategic need to keep the waters of the Pacific, and the so-called South China Sea free, and to keep ocean-based trade flowing? These are the unknowns about Trump and cause for the unease and trepidation that people around the world have. Going beyond the question of Trump's support for Ukraine, Trump's intentions vis-à-vis NATO are also unknown...”

not shown any appetite for alliances especially those in which the US is providing military support for third parties. It seems that Israel and Turkiye will stake out their respective areas of control. From a western standpoint, at best, Turkiye will be a proxy for NATO, but at worst, Erdogan will have delusions of reconstituting at least part of the Ottoman Empire and act independently of NATO and Europe. Who knows what alliances he may make with Russia or Iran? The wildcard here is that Erdogan is not likely to want to be seen as supporting a Syrian nation that is not committed to Islam. And whether Ahmad Hussein al-Sharaa is truly secular or putting on a good act, remains to be seen.

This brings us back to Israel which had two imperatives and now three. The first two were to defang the Iranian threat while finding a way to cabin Hamas and Hezbollah. Now, we must add the Houthis to that mix. It appears that Hamas and Hezbollah have been dealt major blows by Israel. By the confluence of events described above, Iran has suffered a setback. Will we see the end of the Iranian clerical theocracy? Many commentators suggest precisely such an eventuality. Whether there is enough organized opposition within Iran to bring that about is unknown. Can such opposition spring up and coalesce? That too is unknown, but it can happen in Iran as it did in Syria. If Israel can successfully attack Iran's nuclear installations and further destabilize the Ayatollahs, the odds of such an uprising increase.

The Houthis have been emboldened but have the shown poor judgment in making missile attacks on both Israel and US warships.

● Cont. on page 5



Pic - JK Policy Institute

“I simply do not see a two-state solution as being viable in the short-term. Neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians seem enthusiastic about the conditions required to make it happen. The Palestinians know that Israel will never accept an armed state on its border. Israel knows that the Palestinians will demand the right to arm as a necessary condition of sovereignty and to maintain their security. It is a non-starter. Meanwhile, it is not clear to what extent the Israeli hard right wingers are emboldened about the prospect of annexing parts of Gaza and the West Bank. This situation is just too volatile to allow any predictions...”

Looking into a Cloudy Crystal Ball at 2025



Pic - bbc.com

“Ukraine presents another mess that seems incapable of resolution so long as Ukraine and Russia have the capacity to continue fighting. The Ukrainians have defied all odds and stood up to the Russians. But recent reports confirm what I predicted shortly after Putin started his attacks: that Ukraine would run short of manpower and supplies. Reports from Ukraine confirm that there is a severe shortage of manpower, and the Ukrainians are increasingly using drones to counter the Russians. Meanwhile, Russia has suffered massive casualties among its forces and lost significant military material...”

● Cont. from page 4

It is unlikely that either Israel or the US (whether it is President Biden as he exits or President Trump as he assumes control) will let these actions go unanswered. It is but a matter of time before Israel and the US silence these attackers. If there is anything I am reasonably sure of in 2025, it is that the Houthis will be brought to heel.

Two-state solution

As for Israel, Hamas, and the West Bank, I simply do not see a two-state solution as being viable in the short-term. Neither the Israelis nor the Palestinians seem enthusiastic about the conditions required to make it happen. The Palestinians know that Israel will never accept an armed state on its border. Israel knows that the Palestinians will demand the right to arm as a necessary condition of sovereignty and to maintain their security. It is a non-starter. Meanwhile, it is not clear to what extent the Israeli hard right wingers are emboldened about the prospect of annexing parts of Gaza and the West Bank. This situation is just too volatile to allow any predictions.

Ukraine presents another mess that seems incapable of resolution so long as Ukraine and Russia have the capacity to continue fighting. The Ukrainians have defied all odds and stood up to the Russians. But recent reports confirm what I predicted shortly after Putin started his attacks: that Ukraine would run short of manpower and supplies. Reports from Ukraine confirm that there is a severe shortage of manpower, and the

Ukrainians are increasingly using drones to counter the Russians. Meanwhile, Russia has suffered massive casualties among its forces and lost significant military material.

Enter Donald Trump and who knows what will happen. He has boasted that he will be able to stop the war in short order. To most observers, this means withdrawing support for Ukraine and pressuring Zelenskyy to cede territory in exchange for peace. The problem with such an approach is that Ukraine will be left without security guarantees that have any meaning. Recent reports show that Putin continues to chart his own course and showing no inclination to accommodate Trump's presumed approach to a cessation of hostilities. Whether that will motivate Trump to make even more concessions or to harden his negotiating position is unknown. For now, the sad truth is that the devastation of Ukraine is likely to grind on.

Trump, an unknown commodity

Trump remains an unknown commodity when it comes to Taiwan and NATO/Europe as well. He has declared that he will not come to Taiwan's aid if China attacks and offered the laughable explanation that Taiwan has stolen America's

semiconductor business.

How allowing Taiwan's semiconductor business to fall under Chinese control helps his cause is not explained. But then Trump's logic is difficult to discern if it exists at all.

Will Trump see an independent Taiwan as a key part of America's strategic need to keep the waters of the Pacific, and the so-called South China Sea free, and to keep ocean-based trade flowing? These are the unknowns about Trump and cause for the unease and trepidation that people around the world have.

Going beyond the question of Trump's support for Ukraine, Trump's intentions vis-à-vis NATO are also unknown. But there is some indication that his continuing talk about breaking NATO up is just bluster. He has pivoted to demanding that NATO members spend an even larger percentage of GDP on defense. Ultimately, the defense of NATO depends on American technology and America's ability to deploy the military might of a coordinated NATO. Calling on NATO members to dedicate more of their spending on defense is a boon to the US defense industry and reduces the ability of European countries to compete with the US. Does Trump calculate this way? Who knows?

Meanwhile, Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer is not sanguine about security. He is calling for a more robust alliance between Britain and Europe to provide for common defense and securi-

ty. This shows the seriousness of concerns about Trump's unpredictability.

COP29 and climate change

As I have previously written, the COP29 climate change meeting in Azerbaijan produced little of any value and no more progress on the goals set by the Paris Climate Accords. Trump seems likely, once again, to withdraw the US from those accords and this will likely put the COP29 "commitments" which were anything but binding in further disarray. The poorer nations will have to wait for another day before they can convince the richer nations to allot more funds for their perceived needs for mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

The plastics pollution treaty also seems unlikely to gain any traction. So long as we continue to see de facto blame-shifting among the factions that represent the feedstock stage, the design stage, and the waste management stage of plastics production and design, and disposal, we will make no progress. Each of these sectors must acknowledge that it has a shared responsibility for the problem. Even so, we must not assume that recognition of a shared responsibility for creating a problem necessarily leads people to accept a shared responsibility for its solution.

That seems to be true of most problems that humans have caused.

Cheerz...
Bwana



Pic - enkingint.org

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Reforming the Education System

Why should 30% of our children face failure?

Jan Arden

Two weeks ago, we commented here on the welcome approach of the new Minister of Education and Human Resources, Mahend Gungapersad, as the widest possible consultations were held with all stakeholders to address both the immediacy of a successful «*rentrée scolaire*» and to consider viable alternatives to the calamitous story of the Extended Stream left behind by his predecessor and her advisors. There was little time to waste on either front as the 13th of January loomed ever larger.

In a wide-ranging press conference held Monday last, the Minister, surrounded by his top IVTB House cadres, addressed head-on the proposals those consultations have led him to regarding the abolition of the Extended Stream and transitional arrangements for the thousands of our children trapped in that dead-end. We learn that private and public partners and state institutions like the MIE, the MES, the MQA, the MITD and others joined hands to propose a replacement of the Extended stream by a new three-year Foundational Course based on three pedagogic pillars leading to a competency validation certificate rather than the National Certificate of Education (NCE) and one that can be used seamlessly for admission to the MITD. The outline of the curricular activities is sufficiently advanced, it seems, for the MIE and MITD to work jointly on the necessary retraining of those educators who will be called upon to entrench that new pathway as from January 2025.

For years, we have railed — both here and elsewhere — like other voices in the desert, unheard by an establishment that seemed oblivious to the ongoing disaster of the Extended Stream. This establishment appeared comfortable with its obsession with an elitist and competitive philosophy, the unnecessary burden of the added NCE, and the pompous irritants of Academies. To top it all, there was the exclusive fiat requiring five credits to pursue college studies.

Now, however, the exclusion of adolescents from ever pursuing their A-levels or HSC due to the 5-credit requirement is a thing of the past, and the abomination of the Extended Stream will also be abolished starting from the 2025 intake. It is no mean achievement to have brought



Pic - lokmat.com

“The exclusion of adolescents from ever pursuing their A-levels or HSC due to the 5-credit requirement is a thing of the past, and the abomination of the Extended Stream will also be abolished starting from the 2025 intake. It is no mean achievement to have brought our best educational brains, their cumulative experience and, more or less the same Education establishment and cadres to sketch within 2-3 weeks a new era for our children and the country. If the same spirit of consultation and dialogue governs the Assises for Education announced for the April break, the Minister and his key cadres can prepare to go beyond those first steps and develop a more resilient and equitable education system...”

our best educational brains, their cumulative experience and, more or less the same Education establishment and cadres to sketch within 2-3 weeks a new era for our children and the country. If the same spirit of consultation and dialogue governs the Assises for Education announced for the April break, the Minister and his key cadres can prepare to go beyond those first steps and develop a more resilient and equitable education system geared to our country's needs by providing multiple personal development and skilling avenues for the non-academically oriented while ensuring better quality education for those in the academic stream. Two issues in particular should retain the attention of our body of well-intentioned pedagogues, administrators and teachers as the April horizon approaches:

* Do we need the National Certificate of Education (NCE)?

At a time when pupil cohorts are regularly dwindling, causing foreclosure of

several private schools, what was the necessity of another competitive exam at Grade Nine (the NCE, which has been the object of many criticisms) and the corollary discrimination between «normal» regional high schools and the restricted-access twelve Academies for higher grades. Has there been any assessment undertaken of the overall benefits, of the impact of another change of venue (after Primary School Achievement Certificate - PSAC) on the selected children's lives and studies or of the demoralisation of those regional schools bereft of their brighter role-models?

If we had the resources twenty years ago of a single locus secondary school, why then do we need the extra NCE competition bundled in after the PSAC and prior to the O-levels for Academies? The more so as those non-academically gifted pupils who may represent at term 30% or more of the secondary school population will be better cared for elsewhere allowing teachers to focus on those with academic bent...To

non-practitioners like me, it seems like a glorious waste of time, money and efforts and an exemplar of the exacerbated competitive spirit and pressures left behind as legacy.

The Minister, to my mind, should have no qualms in April to press participants for ending both the NCE and the Academies. Readers may recall that the private and confessional streams, despite pressures to fit in, declined to convert their colleges into two-stage schools, a sort of Junior College to Grade Nine and an Academy, following which the reform contraption and disruption was thrust onto the public sector only.

Readers are also cognizant of the fact that for too many children of academic bent, and often their accompanying parents, school life is reduced to rushing after school hours to tuition centers from Grade IV onwards, through PSAC, the NCE, the O-levels, to their final year A-levels or HSCs.

☞ Cont. on page 8

Legal Fees and Political Connections: A Growing Concern in Mauritius

“The previous government should be held accountable for disbursing such high fees to some privileged lawyers”

In some countries, legal fees charged by barristers and solicitors are exorbitantly high, often to an unreasonable extent. This issue is particularly pronounced in nations where lawyers and solicitors maintain close ties with, or enjoy the patronage of, the political leadership. These legal professionals are frequently the primary beneficiaries of lucrative contracts for government-related legal work, including services for parastatal bodies and state-owned enterprises.

Revelations in Mauritius regarding legal fees charged under the previous government for advice or other legal assistance provided to the State Trading Corporation (STC), the former Commissioner of Police, and the Gambling Regulatory Authority and other bodies suggest they may have been excessively high. Or are such fees simply considered the norm in the legal profession? It would be remiss not to acknowledge that this contentious issue predates the previous government. However, it appears to have taken on a new dimension over the past 5 to 10 years.

Lex delves into the complexities of this vexing issue.

LEX

* Several concerning issues arise regarding the reliance of various government institutions, including parastatal bodies and state-owned enterprises, on external legal services - both locally and from the UK. These include seemingly exorbitant fees, the repeated appointment of the same legal professionals on a retainer basis or for litigation purposes, the retention of private legal counsels for public officials, etc. What are we to make of all this?

Any individual or institution has the right to retain a legal adviser, with fees discussed on a private basis. However, it is shocking to see the exorbitant fees paid to private lawyers by the STC, a parastatal body managed with public funds. The public had no say in allocating such high fees to private lawyers.

There is also a perception that some individuals closely associated with the previous regime were often retained, with notably high fees allocated to them. Was proper authorization from those managing the funds obtained? Who was responsible for selecting those legal advisers? All of this will need to be thoroughly investigated.

* High fees seem to have become the new norm,



“As a rule, a government or semi-governmental department would first consult the State Law Office for legal advice and representation. State Law Officers do not require additional fees to represent the government, though reasonable fees may apply when representing a parastatal body. Did the STC or the GRA consult the State Law Office before allocating substantial fees to private lawyers? Who authorized the STC, the GRA and so many other parastatal bodies to spend public funds as if they were privately owned? Was the amount of the fees negotiated beforehand?”

based on revelations about the charges by private lawyers to parastatal and State-Owned Enterprises. Is this acceptable?

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Did the STC or the GRA consult the State Law Office before allocating substantial fees to private lawyers? Who authorized the STC, the GRA and so many other parastatal bodies to spend public funds as if they were privately owned? Was the amount of the fees negotiated beforehand?

* Should the government implement term limits, rotation policies, and fee caps for lawyers working with state agencies to prevent excessive billing?

Any semi-public body is free to retain the services of a lawyer. However, it seems that under the previous

regime, among the lot a select few close to the PMO were also chosen, and there is little doubt that the previous government should be held accountable for disbursing such high fees to some privileged lawyers.

It would be wise for the new government to issue clear directives to all public or semi-public departments, stipulating that the State Law Office should be contacted first. If the State Law Office is unable to act for the institution, then a private lawyer can be retained, with fees discussed and negotiated. Additionally, it would be beneficial to establish a pool of highly experienced private lawyers, with their services retained on a rotation basis.

* It would seem there is no existing mechanism to regulate the legal fees charged by barristers and solicitors. Are such mechanisms effective anyway?

There is no official mechanism in place, and it's essentially a free-for-all when it comes to legal fees. A lawyer might charge a few thousand rupees for legal advice or a court appearance, while others may demand millions for the same service. This disparity remains a mystery.

Some lawyers are treated like demigods, believed to be able to win any case. However, the Betamax case, which also involved many foreign lawyers and law firms, has proven this belief to be unfounded.

* There is also the issue of conflict of interest. Could policies be better enforced in the legal sector to address this concern effectively?

The Code of Ethics for lawyers outlines clear rules of professional conduct, and lawyers are bound to adhere to them. However, one might question how often this Code remains a guiding principle when financial gain becomes the primary focus. For some, the pursuit of substantial fees may at times overshadow ethical considerations.

* Are there international best practices that could be adopted to ensure ethical boundaries between legal professionals and political leaders?

It's not merely a question of best practices but one of good governance and minimizing political interference in government departments and semi-government bodies.

☞ Cont. on page 8

Legal Fees and Political Connections: A Growing Concern in Mauritius

"Did the STC or the GRA consult the State Law Office before allocating substantial fees to private lawyers?"

☞ Cont. from page 7

It is no secret that the previous regime exerted significant control over both public and private institutions, fuelling widespread concerns about billions of rupees alleged to have been mismanaged or squandered.

*** Are there examples of successful reforms in other countries that could serve as models?**

There are no set rules regarding legal fees. Some lawyers may charge a fixed fee, while others might request an initial fixed fee and then bill additional hourly fees based on the time spent working on a case.

*** What role can professional legal associations play in ensuring accountability and ethical conduct among their members?**

Well, we have the Bar Association for barristers and the Law Society for solicitors. Can these associations legitimately issue directives to their members on how fees should be regulated? It's doubtful whether they can do that.

*** It appears there are no rules against the retention of private legal counsel for public officials, such as the former Commissioner of Police. Does this case indicate a deeper issue between the political establishment and the State's legal professionals?**

The case of the former Commissioner of Police is unique. The issue was not so much the retention of private lawyers, but the complete erosion of the independence of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). This process began after the 2014 general elections with the Prosecution Commission Bill. There was also an attempt to arrest the former DPP.

It is alleged that orders were given to the Commissioner of Police (CP) to ensure that no case went to the DPP, and that matters concerning individuals' liberty should be handled by the CP. This resulted in a battle between the pre-



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vious government and the DPP's Office, with the CP at the forefront, all at the expense of public funds.

*** What about the fees charged by UK lawyers in cases for the Mauritian government and parastatal bodies? While they may seem exorbitant to the uninitiated, is it correct to say they are bound to adhere to professional rules?**

According to guidance from a law firm in the UK, the fees are as follows

“There are two main ways in which barristers charge.

“On an hourly basis (similar to how most solicitors charge for their time). The hourly rate applied will be based on their level of experience, both in terms of the level of specialisation required and the length of time that they have been practicing. Barristers will record their time, and the bill will depend on how many hours the work takes.

“On a fixed fee basis. Most work undertaken by barristers is charged on this basis. A client will agree a fee in advance for the piece of work to be done – whether that is a hearing at which the barrister is to appear, or drafting of a particular document, or some other work.

“The most common form of fixed fee is a ‘brief fee’ which is the fee charged for a hearing. Brief fees will be calculated according to the length of the hearing; the amount of preparation required; and the seniority and experience of the barrister being briefed. For a hearing which is to last for a day or less, the brief fee will cover all of the preparation and attendance at court, and (in most cases) the time spent by the barrister in drafting an order to put the judge's decisions into effect.”

In contrast, Mauritius has no standardized fee structure, with individual lawyers applying their own rules, leading to inconsistency in the legal market.

LEX

Reforming the Education System

Why should 30% of our children face failure?

☞ Cont. from page 6

*** Do we need to fail children at PSAC?**

This is another question that needs addressing in April by our best pedagogues working constructively with the Ministry and Establishment. Expressed this way, it may sound strange to those within the system, but if the three-year Foundational Course becomes a reality during the year, with the dedicated efforts of every stakeholder, then the natural question arises, why should we (or the system) wait until the non-academically gifted has floundered at PSAC before offering him or her a different avenue of personal develop-



ment?

Psycho-pedagogues have long known that a school or a body of teachers at the school can easily identify the non-academically gifted ones after 3 (at most 4) years of primary schooling. One must remember that the school is very often a hostile environment for such students, where they make few friends and isolated and where teachers pressed by syllabi fail to adequately help them out. There is no logic in keeping them constrained for longer than is needed before inviting their parents to consider an alternative education pathway leading to the

Foundation Course for Grades 7. No two-year exams for PSAC but an orientation that is voluntary, the decision being made by parents after explanations by the school staff. That means a 2–3-year bridge program that should in priority reconcile the non-academically gifted students with learning in a friendlier and more cooperative setting where learning is fun and activity-driven.

If our community of pedagogues can devise such a cursus (and there is no reason to feel otherwise) that seams into the Foundation Course, and if our administrators can work out the logistics, we would have gone a long way to doing away with the academic straitjacket and establishing an enduring double-barrelled system of education more in tune with our socio-economic realities while catering for skills and competencies in the country's future work-force.

Jan Arden

Manou Bheenick

“The ‘Alliance du Changement’ offers a strong foundation for the deep reforms and restructuring the country needs...”

So, Navin, Paul, and Team, put your shoulder to the wheel; pull us out of this rut; and get on with the job!”

As Mauritius faces a range of economic challenges in 2024, the 'Alliance du Changement' government is tasked with delivering on its electoral promises while grappling with limited resources. One key pledge -- the controversial 14th-month bonus -- has been partially capped for those earning up to Rs50,000 due to financial constraints, as highlighted in the recent *State of the Economy* report.

To better understand the current situation, we turn to historical lessons. How does the 2024 crisis compare to the economic landscape of 1982? What insights does the current *State of the Economy* report offer that the IMF or Moody's may have missed? As the nation faces the potential threat of credit rating downgrades and the possibility of seeking external assistance, difficult decisions are ahead. Can the current political alliances, such as the Labour Party and MMM, provide the stability needed to steer through this tumultuous period?

Manou Bheenick offers his insights into these critical issues, drawing from his extensive experience in public service, having served as Minister of Economic Planning, Finance Minister, and later as Governor of the Bank of Mauritius. His background provides a unique perspective through which to assess the current situation and its historical parallels, offering informed reflections on the political and financial decisions that will shape the country's future.

Mauritius Times: This is the time of year when media outlets around the globe name their Person of the Year. With 2024 being an eventful year for Mauritius and in light of the clear and uncompromising verdict delivered by the electorate in the recent elections, who stands out to you as most deserving of this title?

Manou Bheenick: It is in keeping with the spirit of the times to look back and seek to identify an individual who stood head and shoulders above his peers, his countrymen, or whatever the category of people we're talking about, during the year. This exercise rarely goes without creating a ripple or two, as is evidently the case with the old/new President of the US.

I would unhesitatingly place the Mauritian voter on this pedestal, or more precisely, the 7 out of every 10 of them who enabled us to make such a clean sweep at the polls with the *Alliance du Changement* walking off with every contested seat. The other 3 also deserve a pat on the back for helping us achieve such an impressive turnout. So, well done, folks!

* **Yet, that same electorate, which just a few weeks ago delivered its verdict on the leadership it desires for the country, can seemingly overnight become unreasonable when it comes to monetary benefits — such as**



« I strongly suspect there's worse to come, as we come to grips with the balance sheet of all the parastatals and state-controlled companies. Their deferred capital investments in much-needed infrastructure must be addressed as a matter of urgency... In parallel, waste, mismanagement, overstaffing, and corrupt practices must be rooted out, and ecosystems changed, to ensure value for money in all future investments. No more billions in boondoggles such as ventilators that do not work or procurement practices that apparently create an urge to commit suicide among procurement officers! »

« The aberration of a 14th month is done, and it doesn't make the task ahead any easier. Many of us do regret this first blunder from a government that gave the impression that it meant business. On this score, it's proved startlingly little different from the discredited regime it supplanted. However, if we put on our positive-thinking hat, there's a glimmer of hope there after all: *targeting* isn't any longer such a dirty word... »

the demand for a 14th-month bonus, a benefit that seems to be non-existent anywhere else. Isn't that surprising?

We must not blame the electorate for what would appear to be an unreasonable, or worse an irrational, behaviour. I choose to make a distinction here between their electoral behaviour and their everyday behaviour as a citizen of the country going about the ordinary business of everyday life.

They chose wisely among the plethora of political parties and alliances, big and small, old and new, which spread out their wares to entice the electorate. The most enticing for the politically naive, immature and gullible was certainly the outgoing regime which had specialised in lulling our people into a false-comfort zone, with handouts and freebies of every description, while destroying the country's work culture, pro-

ductivity, employability, and ability to pay its way in a mercilessly competitive world. The electorate turned their back on the rampage of dilapidation and depreciation and won back our country from the claws of the kleptocrats who have brought it to ruins.

Once you get to the ordinary business of life, you have to contend with the bad habits of depending on the public purse in the mistaken belief that it was free and costless and could be increased and extended at the Prime Minister's mere will and would go on forever and ever. That was the kind of public impression that was, additionally, most conducive to diverting torrents of public funds into the grubby hands of party hacks and cronies.

When the reality of cooked public accounts, bankrupt public agencies, insolvent pension funds, massaged national statistics, rising state indebtedness, widening public sector deficits, chronic elevated inflation, and continual currency depreciation all begin to sink in, the electorate must wake up to this unwelcome reality, however indigestible it may seem.

* **The 'Alliance du Changement' government has been forced to cap the 14th-month bonus for those earning up to Rs50,000 due to insufficient funding, as confirmed by *The State of the Economy* report. Some critics argue that the government should have anticipated this financial shortfall. Do you think that's a fair assessment?**

The 14th month happened in the in-between zone when we are yet to fully wake up and apprehend reality. Perhaps, there are others — and not just Mr(s) Public — who need to wake up...

Then, perhaps some decision-makers have an alternate view of electoral platforms. I have always held the view that an electoral platform is much like a railway platform: it's something to *get in on*, not something to *stand on*, if you want to reach your destination.

Anyway, the aberration of a 14th month is done, and it doesn't make the task ahead any easier. Many of us do regret this first blunder from a government that gave the impression that it meant business. On this score, it's proved startlingly little different from the discredited regime it supplanted.

However, if we put on our positive-thinking hat, there's a glimmer of hope there after all: *targeting* isn't any longer such a dirty word — unlike the dirty ones of the surprisingly foul-mouthed former Prime Minister! It can come in very handy as we cope with our newly-discovered straitened financial circumstances.

* **You initiated a similar exercise on the state of the economy when you assumed office as Minister of Finance in December 1995. What additional insights could that report offer — now and in 2024 — that the IMF or Moody's did not or could not have known about the real state of our economy, both in 1995 and today?**

Yes, indeed, I did. Prime Minister Ramgoolam had agreed with me to have such an exercise conducted as a curtain-raiser for our strategising over the broad lines of our first budget.

☞ Cont. on page 10

'Let there be no doubt: in 2024, our economy is weaker than it has ever been at any point of regime change, whether in 1982 or 1995'

Cont. from page 9

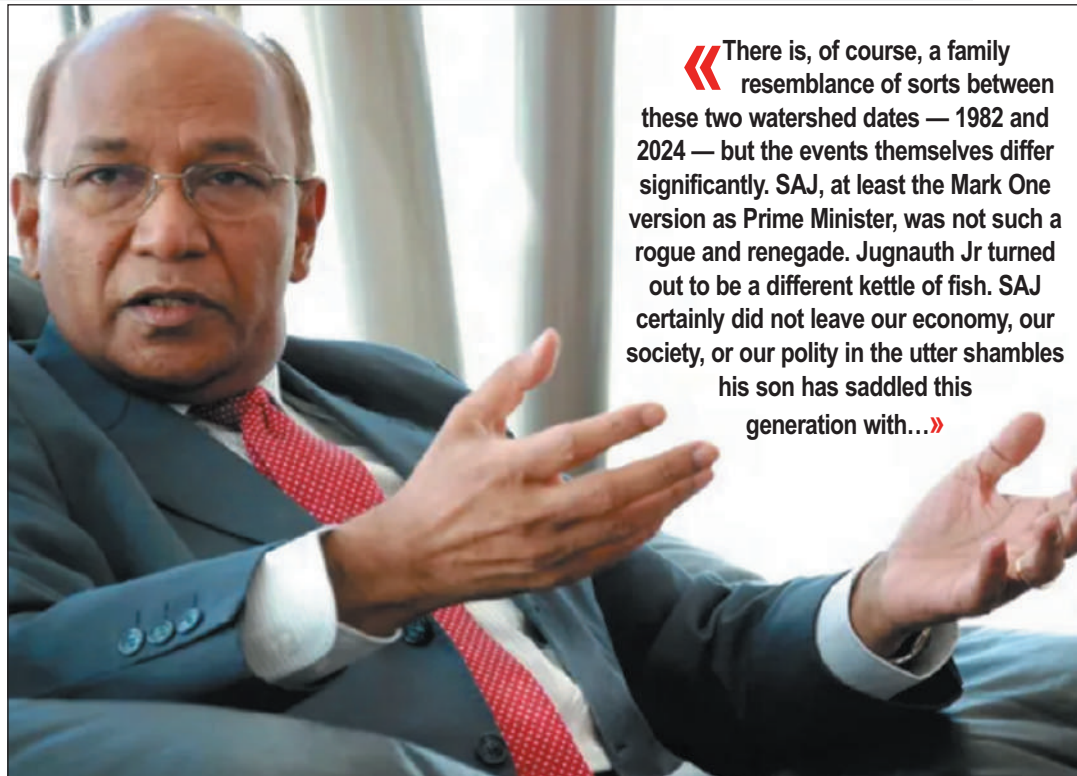
The outgoing PM had raised the stakes by promising to raise Old Age Pensions, during the last week of the campaign, and we had little choice but to fall in line to avoid electoral disaster. We were not sure whether Sir Anerood Jugnauth had provided enough leeway for such unforeseen expenditure. So, we had to take stock of the financial situation before proceeding to pay the increased pensions.

We discovered that the last budget had glossed over a massive public borrowing in the form of a Floating Rate Note and had set aside an IMF-recommended fiscal reform which would have mobilised the extra resources. The underlying economic situation was much better; national statistics were not tampered with, budgets were budgets and not an exercise in public titillation and political chicanery, the Minister of Finance was competent, there was a policy dialogue with the IMF, and ignoring the latter's advice on fiscal strategy was an understandable policy decision in the run-up to a general election.

As for Moody's rating, it didn't matter all that much to us at the time as we were neither overborrowed, nor had we spun a web of lies around our public finances and indebtedness levels. A downgrading would have mattered little then; it would be catastrophic now. Its shockwave would affect not just Mauritian international borrowers but also the foreign exchange flows into our offshore business sector.

We were wrong in not providing sufficient parliamentary time for a full discussion of our *State of the Economy*, published in mid-February 1996. It could have benefited from a fuller discussion, rather in the manner of the British Spring budget discussions. I paid the price for that, but not before I had repaired our reputation with both Moody's and the IMF and set in train the work that catalysed the rollout of the VAT system rapidly after my departure: I inducted a French VAT expert (the French invented this mechanism after all). I also ran into a wall of opprobrium when I minimised/rationalised the proliferating *tax expenditures* in the sole budget which I presented before I was hung out to dry. This facilitated the introduction of the VAT at a lower rate than would otherwise have been the case. "*Après moi, le déluge*" was not our mantra!

I honestly feel that we should have used the current report as stage-setting for a deeper parliamentary discussion of the issues at stake. Quite apart from aiding understanding of current economic/ financial issues within Cabinet and the Government benches, it would have helped Mr(s) Public to appreciate the complexities and trade-offs in carrying on the calamitous legacy of the last Jugnauth



« There is, of course, a family resemblance of sorts between these two watershed dates — 1982 and 2024 — but the events themselves differ significantly. SAJ, at least the Mark One version as Prime Minister, was not such a rogue and renegade. Jugnauth Jr turned out to be a different kettle of fish. SAJ certainly did not leave our economy, our society, or our polity in the utter shambles his son has saddled this generation with... »

« In 1982, the political dimension of the regime change was a cause for some nervousness for the rare democracy that we then were in this part of the world. It was the era of one-party states. That fear is now gone. We must now consolidate our democracy with constitutional change to prevent the excesses and violations of the Jugnauths and to equip us to face the future, where we may not again have the three-quarters majority required to effect constitutional change... »

regime.

We had never pulled the wool over the eyes of the IMF (Fund) before 1995 and they knew the exact state of our economy then. The 1996 *State of the Economy* gave additional insights by lifting the veil on the policy dialogue with the institution, in particular, the ignorance of its tax advice as I mentioned earlier. The 2024 *State of the Economy* could have rounded up our knowledge and understanding of how this policy dialogue evolved during the Jugnauths' last two regimes when we fielded an economic ignoramus as our Minister of Finance. This would have helped the public to appreciate and understand why we have fallen behind and how much catching up must be done.

* **What about the IMF's insight into the true state of our economy? Could they have overlooked it?**

I have no reason to believe that the Fund does not know the *true state* of the economy; it does but may choose not to publish some

things in its published diagnosis. These would, however, figure in its ongoing policy dialogue with the country.

That's why I regret that the 2024 *State of the Economy* report chose not to give us a flavour of the dialogue during the period when we introduced so many financial innovations and novelties such as laughable budgets, Special Purpose Vehicles, Special Funds *à gogo* to escape parliamentary oversight, pharaonic public investments, hijack of central bank reserves, government direction of monetary policy, financing private capital expenditure from money printing, resorting to export credit finance for lumpy public projects with little or no payback capacity, etc., etc.

If these went unaddressed in the policy dialogue, then the IMF was well and truly dozing at the wheel!

* **In light of the 2024 State of the Economy report, what's your assessment of how the economy is truly faring? Would you say we are facing a situation similar to that of 1982?**

There is, of course, a family resemblance of sorts between these two watershed dates — 1982 and 2024 — but the events themselves differ significantly.

SAJ, at least the Mark One version as Prime Minister, was not a rogue and renegade. Jugnauth Jr turned out to be a different kettle of fish. SAJ certainly did not leave our economy, our society, or our polity in the utter shambles his son has saddled this generation with.

Sonny boy's regime — remember, SAJ stepped down mid-term to install him in his place — has left the country deeply in debt. It has devastated parastatals and publicly-

owned corporations. The regime weaponized the police, the tax authority, and, to a lesser extent, parts of the judiciary.

It bowdlerized regulatory bodies, manipulated the national books, and massaged national income figures to obscure the true reality. It resorted to money-printing with the reckless abandon of an addict craving ever-larger doses, fuelled sustained currency depreciation, and stoked chronic inflation.

Sonny boy's regime turned Parliament into a house of ill repute, with a speaker who brought ridicule upon the institution in polite society. It brought Mauritius crashing down from the respected position we had painstakingly earned over the years since independence, in the comity of nations, diplomacy, democracy, and international performance rankings.

In summary, then, let there be no doubt that we now have a much weaker economy in 2024 than we have ever had at a time of regime change, whether in 1982 or in 1995. Stripped of the money illusion and false accounting, we are barely better off now than we were, going into Covid. Our capacity to plan and undertake policy reforms is sharply constrained by institutional weakening across the board, especially in the upper echelons of the higher civil service. We must revive and sustain our policy dialogue with all stakeholders to address national issues and facilitate buy-in.

Our fiscal position is dire. We have transformed the tax authority into a paying agent for all sorts of social support. Fiscal consolidation cannot be further postponed. It also requires a thorough review of the tax authority which we last reformed by building on its predecessor, the Unified Revenue Board, which had itself consolidated all revenue collection agencies under its purview. The Mauritius Revenue Authority is ripe for review.

Our population must rediscover the work culture and we must reduce dependence on imported labour. We must revisit our dependence on expatriates and limit real estate sales to foreigners. We cannot save our country for our people by selling the choicest parts to foreigners. Induction in Mauritian values of religious tolerance and multi-ethnic co-existence must become a precondition for residence permits to all foreigners, whether workers or investors.

In 1982, the political dimension of the regime change was a cause for some nervousness for the rare democracy that we then were in this part of the world. It was the era of one-party states. That fear is now gone. We must now consolidate our democracy with constitutional change to prevent the excesses and violations of the Jugnauths and to equip us to face the future, where we may not again have the three-quarters majority required to effect constitutional change.

'Social transfers should not become entitlements. Our Minister of Finance should not fancy himself as Father Christmas'

☞ Cont. on page 11

☞ Cont. from page 10

We must, above all, give our people new hope that we finally have a government in place which is working for them and their descendants, and not destroying, plundering, and dilapidating national resources to enrich themselves and their cronies.

*** Deputy PM Paul Bérenger, in his intervention on *The Special Allowance Bill*, stated that, given the current state of the economy, difficult decisions will have to be made. He also did not rule out the threat of a downgrade of the country's credit rating by Moody's and emphasized that assistance might need to be sought from friendly countries such as India, the US, the UK, and China, as well as from the IMF and the World Bank. That sounds like a Greek scenario - with the potential for social unrest if the expectations of the people are not satisfactorily met, doesn't it?**

Yes, it does indeed! There's, however, a fundamental difference or two, from the Greek debacle, which we'd do well to bear in mind, to appreciate the full extent of our fall from grace.

First, the Greeks were advised by Goldman Sachs when they started on their creative accounting and extraordinary malinvestment journey which led to their perdition.

We, on the other hand, did all that, under our own steam, led by the deadly duo of Jugnauth/Padayachy, ably aided and abetted by a compliant and supine finance and economic technocracy, with celebratory headlines applauding every misguided and ill-inspired annual budget in the domestic — or, should I say? domesticated — mainstream press, while the Opposition was effectively muzzled and debate stifled, by means fair and foul, in what had become a simulacrum of a Parliament.

Mauritius was still basking in the positive glow of its inherited reputation for good management and its position as *numero uno* in Africa. The IMF was hypnotised and snoozed on. Moody's, the rating agency, looked the other way.

Second, Greece was part of a currency union, the Eurozone, managed by the collective and fiercely independent European Central Bank. We had an independent, free floating, currency managed by our own central bank. We had — at least, I had — consistently fought against sustained assaults against the central bank's policy independence and continual attempts to direct monetary policy from the Treasury.



☞ **In 1982, the political dimension of the regime change was a cause for some nervousness for the rare democracy that we then were in this part of the world. It was the era of one-party states. That fear is now gone. We must now consolidate our democracy with constitutional change to prevent the excesses and**

violations of the Jugnauths and to equip us to face the future, where we may not again have the three-quarters majority required to effect constitutional change...»

With a complaisant and incompetent Governor and Deputy Governors, the Bank of Mauritius was an early victim of State capture. The opening shot was the hijacking of central bank reserves by Jugnauth Jr, then Minister of Finance, facilitated by Padayachy as Deputy Governor, in lieu of fiscal consolidation. This was hailed as a miracle, in a newspaper headline which should have known better, with a former Central Bank Governor also voicing his support!

The Greek debacle ended with an IMF programme in place and Eurozone support to help the Greeks adjust and purge their economy of the excesses which landed them in such dire straits. And, yes, Greek citizens paid part of the price, too, but they had the freedom to look for better prospects elsewhere in the European Union.

The upshot for us, here in Mauritius, is continued currency depreciation and currency shortage, and an unacknowledged foreign currency queuing system, which we are all experiencing. Paul Bérenger is quite right here when he says we need IMF and other external support. He's probably the only one in our Cabinet who lived throughout the 1979-82 financial crisis when the sugar boom fizzled out and we were left high and dry. He knows full well the rigours and travails of our IMF Stabilisation Programmes and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes. Indeed, our Structural Adjustment Loan is a rare success in the genre in Africa. It was conceived and executed by us; we did not have the

☞ **I think the four-party alliance provides a solid platform to undertake the kind of deep reform and restructuring the country clearly needs at this juncture. If they do not address themselves to that, it'll be a missed opportunity that we'll live to regret. And our children will pay a heavier price still as we would be leaving them a legacy which we could hardly be proud of. So, Navin, Paul, and Team, put your shoulder to the wheel; pull us out of this rut; and get on with the job! But do not expect instant results...»**

supine and complaisant finance and economic technocracy that has become part of our problem.

Part of the credit for the success of our International Monetary Fund/World Bank programmes of the early 1980s undoubtedly goes to Berenger as he steered clear of the facile route of denouncing them and chose instead the arduous route of convincing, first, his Cabinet colleagues, second, his party faithful, and third, the electorate, that we had to stay the course. Stayed, we did; and the results speak for themselves.

Other countries mostly take their cue from the IMF and the World Bank when it comes to their lending or other financial assistance programmes. I'm not too sure whether this includes their *export credit support programmes*, of the type that financed the notorious metro system. This could be more akin to the Chinese financial support for infrastructure in Sri Lanka where their unravelling/resolution of the debt burden is mostly a bilateral/ quasi-commercial matter.

The Fund will probably field a new team to work on Mauritius. Moody's will be scrambling to catch up with ground realities that eluded it. And we, government, opinion-leaders, commentators, and influencers have our work cut out for us. And that is to coax our people (note, I don't speak of the elec-

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torate any more, as the election is behind us) to climb down from their high expectations because the *heritage* left by the demolition team that we were pleased to call our government for the last decade is uncontestedly the worst ever left by an outgoing regime in our entire history as an independent nation.

And, coincidentally, Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam has not entrusted any specific portfolio to his Deputy Prime Minister. Paul Bérenger is the man to step into these shoes and help the people adjust to reality and do some much-needed mentoring and hectoring.

*** Given these pressing challenges, how long do you think it will take to restore the economy to good shape?**

The *State of the Economy* lifts the veil only on part of the damage done to our economy. I strongly suspect there's worse to come, as we come to grips with the balance sheet of all the parastatals and state-controlled companies. Their deferred capital investments in much-needed infrastructure must be addressed as a matter of urgency if state public assets are not to lapse into decrepitude.

In parallel, waste, mismanagement, overstaffing, and corrupt practices must be rooted out, and ecosystems changed, to ensure value for money in all future investments. No more billions in boondoggles such as ventilators that do not work or procurement practices that apparently create an urge to commit suicide among procurement officers!

We must clean up our act before we spend our public money. And, we must realise, public money is our money; it comes from our tax rupees. It comes from taxes on our income, our consumption and other expenditure. It's always better to leave the maximum of their income in the income-earners's hands, for earned income. Capital can be taxed more to ensure fairness and achieve other social objectives. And it is better to have *less* government. And so on and on the list of things to be done to bring our economy to a more or less fit state, say to the state it was in 2014, is nearly endless, given the extensive damage inflicted in the last decade.

So, in effect, you're asking me how long it will take us to do all that. Who can tell? It depends on the speed with which the Government sets about restructuring and rectifying. This, in turn, depends in the Government's appetite for reform. And, given the nature of things to be done — some of which are more in the nature of whisking the baby bottle away from the baby's mouth. If the expected outcry is too much, any government would shirk away or go *softly softly*. Which would drag out the reform and return to shape.

I think things will be a bit clearer with the *Discours Programme* and especially the debates around it which



Together We Grow

INTEGRITY

RESPONSIVENESS

FAIRNESS

TRANSPARENCY

ACCOUNTABILITY

At the **Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA)**, we believe that a thriving workplace starts with listening to our people.

Through our **Employee Engagement Survey**, we're charting a course for continuous improvement—enhancing satisfaction, reinforcing our strengths, and addressing challenges together.

Because when our team thrives, so do our services!

The Future is Here

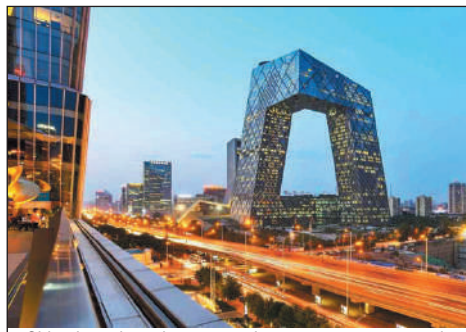
What the world will look like in 2025

As the year 2025 approaches, the world stands on the brink of remarkable transformation. Technology has drastically reshaped our lives over the past decade, and the pace of innovation shows no signs of slowing. From self-driving cars to 3D-printed houses, the only limit appears to be our imagination. Here, Godwin Michael of Medium explores the trends poised to redefine society in the years ahead.

China: A Global Leader

By 2025, China is projected to cement its status as an economic superpower, with an economy substantially larger than its closest competitor. Beyond economic growth, China is expected to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth, creating a less stressful and more pleasant environment for its citizens.

Already an industrial powerhouse, China has attracted corporations with its competitive labour costs and business-friendly regulations. Moving forward, the country's focus on increasing income levels and fostering social mobility could significantly enhance the quality of life for



China is projected to cement its status as an economic superpower. Pic - Wisata App

its population. This transformation will position China as a leader not only in manufacturing but also in social and economic innovation.

Unlocking the Mysteries of the Brain

Advances in neuroscience are set to revolutionize our understanding of the human brain. In 2013, scientists estimated that the brain's storage capacity exceeds that of today's largest computers, with each human brain containing around one quadrillion synapses. Simulating even one second of brain activity would take current supercomputers over a million years.

By 2025, researchers aim to map and replicate these neural connections, unlocking possibilities for medical break-

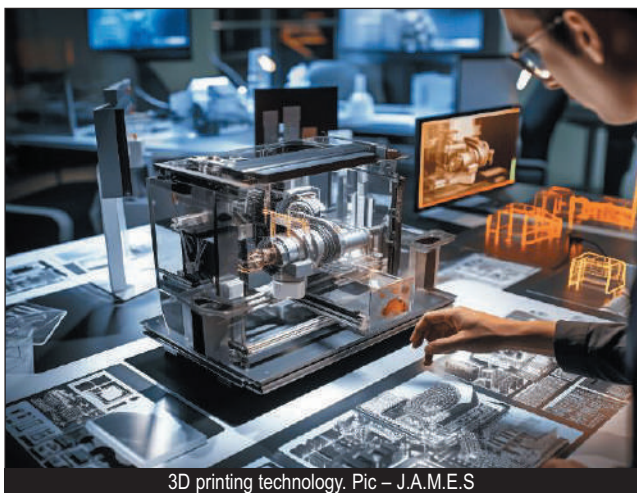


Understanding of the human brain. Pic - Wallpaper Flare

throughs, artificial intelligence, and even digital consciousness. This work could pave the way for new treatments for neurological disorders and expand our understanding of human cognition.

3D Printing: The Future of Manufacturing

Once a niche technology, 3D printing is poised to become a mainstream tool by 2025. Recent innovations have made it faster, cheaper, and more accessible, allowing individuals and companies to create products on demand.



3D printing technology. Pic - J.A.M.E.S

The democratization of 3D printing will enable anyone with a creative idea to design, print, and sell goods from home. This technology could revolutionize industries ranging from construction — with 3D-printed houses — to healthcare, where customized medical devices and prosthetics become the norm.



Recycling: A Global Priority

Entire environmental sustainability will remain a pressing issue. Countries like China have already taken significant steps, banning the import of certain types of solid waste and committing to ambitious ecological initiatives. By 2025, recycling and waste reduction could become cornerstones of global policy.

One such initiative includes the creation of ocean sanctuaries, such as China's proposed eco-bank. These efforts will not only protect marine ecosystems but also foster international cooperation in combating climate change.

Driverless Cars: A Transportation Revolution

Imagine a world where commuting becomes an opportunity to relax or work. Driverless cars, expected to become ubiquitous by 2025, promise to redefine transportation. These autonomous vehicles will provide an efficient, eco-friendly alternative for those unable or unwilling to drive.



Autonomous vehicles will provide an efficient, eco-friendly alternative for those unable or unwilling to drive. Pic - The Conversation

The rise of driverless technology will also reshape urban landscapes. Cities may shift away from car-centric designs, creating more spaces for walking, biking, and recreation. With fewer accidents and less congestion, driverless cars could make transportation safer and more sustainable than ever before.

Virtual and Augmented Reality: Transforming Daily Life

By 2025, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies will be integral to work, entertainment, and social interactions. Advanced features like gaze tracking and immersive environments will enhance how we connect and collaborate.

Applications like Google Earth VR will enable users to explore and create virtual worlds, while AR overlays will make navigation and remote interactions seamless.



Virtual reality and augmented reality technologies. Pic - Kaspersky

These tools will redefine the boundaries between the physical and digital worlds, opening up new possibilities for education, gaming, and telecommunication.

The future promises a world of incredible possibilities, where technology transforms every aspect of life. As 2025 draws near, these trends inspire excitement and anticipation for what's to come. The only certainty is that innovation will continue to surprise and amaze us — because the future is truly here.

* Contd on page 14

The Future is Here

The Top 10 Skills You'll Need in 2025

The World Economic Forum recently published their prediction of the top 10 skills workers – and organizations – will need in 2025 – and they might not all be the skills you might expect.

The events of 2020 and the global pandemic have driven widespread change across sectors around the world. From small independent businesses to international giants, every organization worldwide has felt the impact of rapid change and uncertainty. In fact, by 2025, the hours of work performed by humans and machines will be equal, showing the massive impact of automation.

Automation, digitization and rapid change will bring with it a whole host of new job roles – particularly around data analysis, process automation and information security. In contrast, we will see the decline of roles focusing on data entry, assembly and factory work and stock-keeping, many of which will be replaced by automated processes.

While the loss of certain job roles may seem alarming, it's not all doom and gloom. In fact, if you're working in a role likely to be affected by the impact of automation, digitization and the changing world of work, there are plenty of skills you can work on right now to help you reskill and stay relevant, ranging from technical skills to problem solving and soft skills.

1. Analytical thinking and innovation

In an increasingly complex world, the ability to think analytically is crucial. It's never too early for your people to learn how to analyze the challenges arising in their roles, the wider business context and how to combat them. Analytical thinking doesn't come naturally to



everyone, but the good news is that you can build it into your learning program to benefit virtually everyone in your workforce.

2. Active learning and learning strategies

It may seem surprising that “learning how to learn” makes the list, but any HR professional knows that simply delivering a learning program is not enough to ensure people really learn. Embracing informal learning via your learning experience platform (LXP) is a great place to start encouraging your employees to ask questions, share knowledge and collaborate on projects.

3. Complex problem solving

It shouldn't come as a shock that the problems we face in the workplace are becoming increasingly complex. The ability to figure out those tough challenges is only going to become more important in the coming years. Gamification is a great way to help your people develop their problem solving skills and think differently about the challenges they face every day.

4. Critical thinking and analysis

Critical thinking skills are invaluable for people in every role. Critical thinking is about “connecting the dots” and thinking clearly and rationally about the problems you might encounter. A computer can only go so far – very often you need the human touch of critical thought and analysis to really get to the bottom of your challenges.

5. Creativity, originality and initiative

Creativity is very difficult, if not currently impossible, to automate. Computers can “be creative” to some extent (they can even write passable articles), but they can't understand nuance, or intangible values such as branding, tone or specific approaches. Creativity and originality will always be valuable for workers, so these skills should be honed in order to stay relevant in the years to come.

6. Leadership and social influence

While you can buy followers on social media, this isn't the same as social influence. Real social influence comes

from building up a reputation and relationships over time. It's not easy, but once you've earned that influence, it becomes an invaluable tool in your kit. The same applies to leadership – being respected as a leader is earned with time and effort, as well as a healthy dose of charisma and people skills.

7. Technology use, monitoring and control

Unsurprisingly, technology skills will be vital for workers going forward. Getting to grips with technology quickly, understanding how it's used and being able to impart this wisdom to others will soon be vital in every sector, if it isn't already, as will the ability to monitor the use of technology in your organization.

8. Technology design and programming

The amount of technology available to you is increasing exponentially, and it's crucial that your people know how to make it work for you. Technology design and programming skills will ensure that you can tailor your technology solutions to your needs, or even create your own solutions.

9. Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility

The events of 2020 exposed the need for resilience and flexibility in the workplace. Staying calm under pressure, rolling with the punches and not letting stress overwhelm you has never been more vital. Employee wellbeing programs should be built into your employee engagement strategy to help your people build the resilience they need to thrive in the coming years.

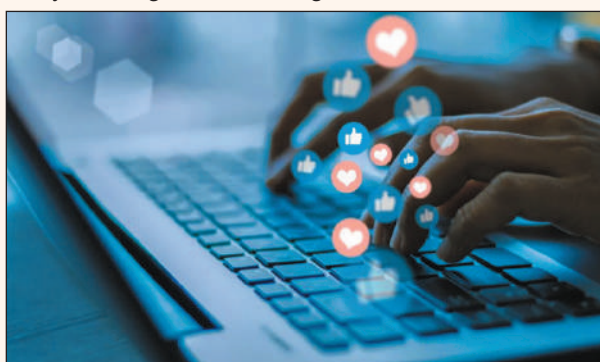
10. Reasoning, problem solving and ideation

When the work environment is changing rapidly, your people need the skills to generate ideas and assess how to move forward in difficult circumstances. One way to improve ideation skills is with live brainstorming workshops or dedicated online workspaces for coming up with ideas to improve processes and approaches. Other employees can then build on their colleagues' ideas and point out what works, what doesn't and how to refine ideas to make them viable.

The Future is Here

What the world will look like in 2025 The Ubiquity of Online Presence

In the digital age, maintaining an online presence has become second nature — and by 2025, even toddlers will have a digital footprint. A recent study found that 75% of teens have an online presence, with many creating accounts long before adulthood.



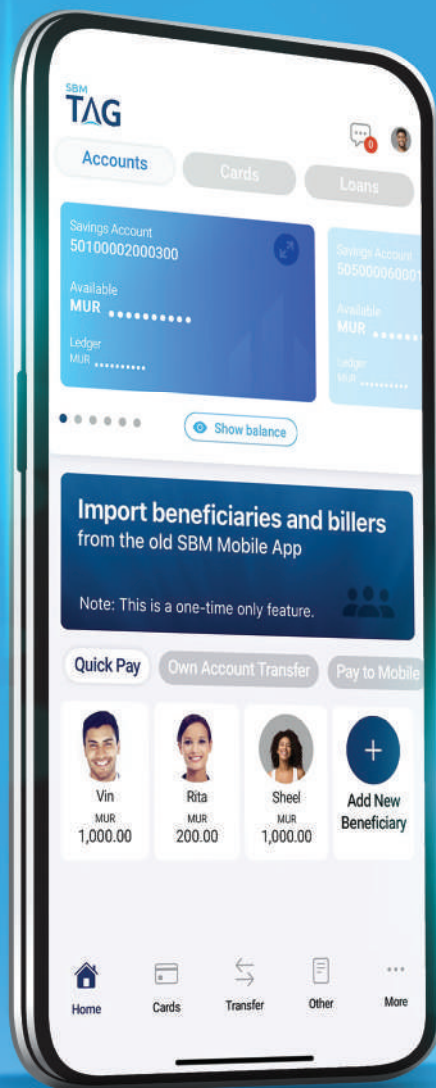
Maintaining an online presence has become second nature. Pic – Ceo Today

This shift raises questions about privacy and digital identity. As technology evolves, so too will the need for education and safeguards to ensure a responsible and secure online experience for future generations.

The future promises a world of incredible possibilities, where technology transforms every aspect of life. As 2025 draws near, these trends inspire excitement and anticipation for what's to come. The only certainty is that innovation will continue to surprise and amaze us — because the future is truly here.



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'SAJ, at least the Mark One version as PM, was not a rogue and renegade. Jugnauth Jr turned out to be a different kettle of fish'

☞ Cont. from page 11

The first budget will be set in a more realistic context than the electoral programmes on offer only some weeks ago. The *State of the Economy* has clarified a few things, which had long been suspected, on the financial side. But there are lots of other issues that require a similar stocktaking before programmes can be fashioned. I give some of them *pêle-mêle*:

- (1) the global trade environment for our export products and services,
- (2) the domestic human power situation,
- (3) public service and parastatal overstaffing,
- (4) the skills deficit by concerned sector,
- (5) the incidence of foreign labour in the formal and informal economy by sector,
- (6) the competitiveness of the country in new growth sectors,
- (7) the adequacy of the education sector outputs at various levels to the skills levels required by the job market,
- (8) the productivity/competitiveness of domestic labour and facilities such as the harbour, cargo-handling, the airport, etc.

You can add to the list to your heart's content by looking at what doesn't quite work anymore in our country.

Only after sizing up the problem in all these areas, can we assess the remedial measures required, their cost and expected time for implementation... Only then can we hazard a guess about how long it would take us to get back in a fighting-fit state to take on the competition internationally, and begin to move once again in the right direction in regional or international league tables where we have recently only impressed by our precipitous fall.

I salute the decision to restore the economic planning function in the ministerial portfolio of a Cabinet member. Over the past years, we have paid a very heavy price for our failure to think and plan strategically or even just to plan our capital investments properly. These are not matters to be decided on the run by line Ministers, not even by the Prime Minister, even less by subcontracted agencies like the Economic Development Board. Major expenditure plans cannot just be left, as the previous regime did, to the *bon vouloir* of the clueless Minister of Finance in his folkloric Budget Speeches, yes, the self-same joker who announced the demolition of Emmanuel Anquetil Building, a fairly modern government-owned facility in the town centre, not because there was asbestos insulation in it as claimed (rightly), but in all likelihood just to facilitate renting of comparable office space from cronies, as was the *modus operandi* of the regime.

Now, we have a government minister charged with the economic planning function. Well and good. I would have much preferred if the Prime Minister had kept the function under his ambit in the form of a Planning Commission, on the lines of the respected and long-established Indian Planning Commission.

SSR had done something like that when he established the Economic Planning Unit in the PMO in the mid-1960s. That's where I cut my teeth along with two others, Baguant and Foo Pak Sen Foo Fat. The EPU transformed into a full-fledged Ministry under Guy Ollivry when Gaëtan Duval's PMSD entered into a post-election coalition with SSR's Labour Party and the CAM partner. Armed with a four-party alliance, Navin Ramgoolam is resurrecting the economic planning function. SSR would have been proud.

*** With hindsight, one could argue that the alliance between the Labour Party and the MMM — along with Resistans ek Alternativ and Nouveaux Démocrates — might be exactly what the country needs at this point to contain any potential unrest. What's your view on this?**



« We, government, opinion-leaders, commentators, and influencers have our work cut out for us. And that is to coax our people (note, I don't speak of the electorate any more, as the election is behind us) to climb down from their high expectations because the *heritage* left by the demolition team that we were pleased to call our government for the last decade is uncontestedly the worst ever left by an outgoing regime in our entire history as an independent nation... »

« The nature of the task confronting a Minister of Finance — one worthy of the title, which we haven't had for long — at this particular juncture is such that an ordinary line Minister, assuming he were inclined to embark on the path of reform in the first place, would have trampled on so many toes in Cabinet, in Parliament, and elsewhere in the country that they would quickly have been shown the exit door. With the Prime Minister helming it, we have some firmer expectation that the job will actually get done... »

I think our population has gained enough in maturity for us to discount social unrest as a possibility which we should reckon with. Unrest is certainly NOT the solution to our economic and financial predicament. Admittedly, the after-effects of the systematic *abêtissement*, which they underwent during the last ten years in the hands of a benighted regime, will leave some pockets of resistance and breed withdrawal symptoms among the affected population as reforms begin to bite.

We must inculcate the work habit in our population. Social transfers should not become the go-to object in life for our citizens. There was a joke doing the rounds during the last elec-

tion as the outgoing Prime Minister was busy promising freebies at every political rally. A newborn will bring a harvest of state support to parents and child(ren) until age 18 or so. All that remained for the desperate Prime Minister was to bring the retirement age down to 18 — and the population would be in clover for their whole life in the Jugnauthian never never land!

Social transfers, by whatever name called, must be seen for what they are: public charity paid for by the taxes of hard-working citizens. Transfers should not become entitlements. Our Minister of Finance should not fancy himself as Father Christmas, dispensing largesse at the taxpayer's expense.

I would like to believe that transition measures targeting specific cohorts (now that targeting seems to be gaining respectability given the sharply-limited financial affordability) can be fashioned in a time-limited manner to contain the fall-out for the public treasury and the work culture.

For a recent example where electoral promise may be skewing public policy in the wrong direction, look at the lowering of educational achievement standards for remedial classes: No, Minister of Education Gungapersad, you do not strike a blow for educational excellence, — surely the foundation for excellence in other activities to come after school — by *lowering* standards. A time-limited solution would have left us with an ongoing issue for the current cohort, whose progress in the workforce could have been closely monitored, with targeted remedial programs introduced to help them catch up gradually.

And, yes, the 97% failure rate is itself a major scandal to be put to the credit of the outgoing government. It should be fully investigated and the culprits brought to heel. That is part of the solution too, unless we want to close our eyes because we are still in the campaign mode: *nou dimoune ça!* What a waste of resources paid for by the public!

I think the four-party alliance provides a solid platform to undertake the kind of deep reform and restructuring the country clearly needs at this juncture. If they do not address themselves to that, it'll be a missed opportunity that we'll live to regret. And our children will pay a heavier price still as we would be leaving them a legacy which we could hardly be proud of. So, Navin, Paul, and Team, put your shoulder to the wheel; pull us out of this rut; and get on with the job! But do not expect instant results... structural reforms take time to work through and yield results. We must have the patience to stay the course.

*** There must surely be political reasons, more than anything else, why the Prime Minister chose to keep the finance portfolio under his watch. Is that good for the economy?**

We have little doubt about the Prime Minister's determination to deliver on the job. It's the same determination that got him to work so patiently on cobbling together the alliance which he now leads.

The nature of the task confronting a Minister of Finance — one worthy of the title, which we haven't had for long — at this particular juncture is such that an ordinary line Minister, assuming he were inclined to embark on the path of reform in the first place, would have trampled on so many toes in Cabinet, in Parliament, and elsewhere in the country that they would quickly have been shown the exit door. With the Prime Minister helming it, we have some firmer expectation that the job will actually get done.

We can thus confidently look forward to the day when we regain our lost international respectability and claw back, step by step, the reputation which we had previously enjoyed as a smart big little country with the bad habit of punching above its weight.

From the Pages of History - MT 70 Years Ago

5th Year No 290

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 18 March, 1960

• *Tragedy warms the soul, elevates the heart, can and ought to create heroes. — Napoleon*

Items of Interest

Sugar News



Peter Ibbotson

Just how profitable is sugar-growing in Mauritius for the estates? The estates are very coy about revealing details of their financial results. We cannot make any firm estimates of the profitability of the sugar industry to the estates from the income-tax departmental reports or from the Chamber of Agriculture's reports. All we do know is that Mauritius is a low-cost producing area, while the West Indies are a high-cost producing area.

Since the guaranteed price for sugar under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement is the same for all areas, it therefore follows that where costs are low, profits are high; where costs are high, profits are low. Since costs are low in Mauritius, profits must be high; higher than, for example, in the West Indies.

But the wages of the estate workers in Mauritius remain very low. Not until the labourers' unions have amalgamated into one and can speak for and on behalf of the majority of the estate workers, can we expect a decent level of wages freely negotiated by union action. Until then, we must have a Wages Board for the sugar industry to lay down and regulate a decent level of wages for all labourers. (It occurs to me that perhaps the forthcoming Economic Commission will be able to do what no previous enquiry has done — find out some financial facts from the estates.)

In Jamaica, there has been another rise in wages recommended for estate labourers recently. A Sugar Industry Commission of Enquiry has just recommended that the Sugar Manufacturers' Association and the unions concerned should enter an agreement providing for the payment of a 12½ per cent bonus for the 1959 crop, and a 12½ per cent increase in wages from the beginning of the 1960 crop. Will the Economic Commission in Mauritius be able to get figures showing whether such an increase is possible in Mauritius too? Mr Luce could not get any figures to indicate whether



Pic - Vintage Mauritius

the estate workers were being underpaid in relation to the profits being made by the estates; all he was able to say was that the wages actually paid were far too low. And that we all knew beforehand.

Also in Jamaica, the All-Island Cane Farmers' Association is to carry out a propaganda drive to persuade its members, and cane farmers generally, to produce more canes per acre than in the past. If this can be done, the Association points out that farmers will have more land available on which they can produce other crops, and thus improve their finances. This propaganda drive in Jamaica resembles what we of the *Mauritius Times* have been pointing out for years: that if production per arpent increases, less land is needed to produce the same tonnage of sugar, thus releasing land for food crops. But, if they are to grow food crops (and this would reduce dependence on imported food), farmers must have a guaranteed market and guaranteed prices. Therefore, it is necessary for the Government's agricultural policy to envisage agricultural subsidies for farmers growing food crops and to make sure that credit is readily available for such farmers.

It is interesting to note the basis for sugar workers' bonuses in British Guiana. The target for sugar production for 1959 was originally set at 268,000 tons. This was increased later in the year to 272,000 tons, and later still increased to a final target figure of 275,000. Each estate also sets an individual target of production. For reaching the individual estate target, workers qualified for a bonus of three days' pay.

For reaching the original overall colony target, another three days' pay was earned. An extra day's pay was paid for reaching the second colony target, and yet another day's pay when the final target figure was reached. Thus, the total

bonus earned was eight days' pay for reaching all the production targets for 1959.

* * *

Road Behaviour

In Trinidad, the police have been given instructions to warn and, if necessary, prosecute "jay-walkers" where pedestrians do not obey signals given by policemen on duty. A draft bill has been issued to amend the motor vehicles and road ordinance.

One innovation is that magistrates will be empowered to order the inspection of any vehicle by the Licensing Authority. It is also proposed to issue provisional driving licences to enable a holder, when accompanied by a qualified driving licence holder who has held their licence for more than two years, to drive a motor vehicle. Easier hire purchase terms have made it possible for a motor car to be paid for over three years.

* * *

Educational Administration

I cannot believe that the present administrative set-up in the Education Department, an inheritance from the colonial days, is really necessary. There is a Director, a Deputy Director, and three Assistant Directors. In the field of primary education, there are no fewer than 12 superintendents of schools. This all adds up to a top-heavy administrative superstructure, particularly now that there is a Minister of Education in whose name all decisions are taken.

The retirement of Messrs Snell and Glover opens the door to an overdue reorganization of the administration of the Education Department, a reorganization which the Minister will not be loth to carry out. I would tentatively suggest that since the Minister is ultimately responsible for the administration of his department, this should be recognised and the style of the Director of Education be changed to that of "Chief Education Officer."

At present, the Director has a Deputy, three Assistants, and a Chief Finance Officer. I suggest that the duties of all these five gentlemen could be shared between two only; these two would be styled "Deputy Chief Education Officer (Finance)" and "Deputy Chief Education Officer (Administration)." The Chief Superintendent of Schools should remain but under a different style: Chief Inspector of Schools, with powers of inspection over all schools, not just primary. His salary, like the salaries of both deputy chief education officers, could well be no more than Rs 24,000.

SPECIAL EVENT

ACACIA CREATION FAMILY FUNDAY

Date: Sunday 29 Dec 2024

Time: 11.00 hrs to 16.00hrs

Venue: Pascal Football Playground
Brisee Verdiere

FREE ENTRY

Activities

- Football (Seven a Side)
- Tire a L'arc
- Musical Chair
- Jumping Bag
- Race (50mt/100mt)
- Spoon Eating
- Quad Bike
- Face Painting
- Live Music (Raquel Jolicoeur, Billygane, Sayaa)

Chief Guests

Hon. Anil Kumar Bachoo
(Minister of Health & Wellness)
Hon. Beechook Raviraj Sinha
(Member of Parliament)
Hon. Chandraprakash Ramkalawon
(Member of Parliament)
Hon. Chetan Baboolall
(Member of Parliament)
Hon. Kaviraj Rookny
(Member of Parliament)
Hon. Dr Sandeep Prayag-Nitin
(Member of Parliament)
MC. Khemraj Sanmukhiya



Star Prize

- 2 Bed
- 1 Stool Bar
- 2 Book Shelf
- 1 Tea Table
- 3 La table 6p
- 3 Decoration Fense
- 1 Panier
- 5 Chaise
- 2 Meuble T.V
- 1 Set Arena 3pcs
- 2 Car Mat
- 1 Bateau Gonflable
- 1 Caddy Ration

Free Gift

- 4000 T.Shirt
- 1500 Toys
- 1000 Chapeau
- 1000 Serviette

Free Gift Distribution Will be Given at the End of the Event

Registration Begin at 08.00 a.m

Contact Person : - 5925 2643 (Mr Jamal) - 52787747 (Mr Ibrahim)
58895394 (Mr Jamil) - 54293288 (Mr Shoubam)

Organized by Belvedere / Brisee Verdiere Young Star

The Road to Riches: Essential Financial Lessons from 'Rich Dad Poor Dad'

In *Rich Dad Poor Dad*, Robert Kiyosaki offers powerful insights that challenge conventional wisdom about money and success. Drawing from his own experiences, Kiyosaki presents life-changing lessons that can reshape your approach to wealth and financial independence. The principles outlined in this book emphasize the importance of mindset, financial education, and smart investments over working for a paycheck. Through these lessons, Kiyosaki shows how anyone, regardless of their background, can achieve financial freedom by shifting their focus from earning money to building wealth.

❑ Don't work for money

The rich don't work for money. If you work for money, you'll think like an employee. Shift your mindset to think like the wealthy: focus on building your asset column. Every dollar in your asset column becomes your hardworking employee.

❑ Don't be controlled by emotions

Fear and greed often control people's lives. Fear traps people in a cycle of working hard and earning money, while greed tempts them to seek quick riches without financial education. Educate yourself to overcome fear and avoid greed.

❑ Acquire assets, not liabilities

Avoid buying liabilities disguised as assets. The rich buy assets first, which then fund their luxuries. For example, they purchase properties to rent out and use the income to pay for their luxuries. The poor, on the other hand, buy luxuries first.

❑ Follow the kiss principle

Keep It Simple, Stupid (KISS). Don't overcomplicate your path to financial freedom. Remember: assets put money into your pocket, and liabilities take money out. Focus on buying assets.

❑ Know the difference between assets and liabilities

Assets generate income (e.g., stocks, real estate, rental



properties). Liabilities drain income (e.g., your home, car, or debt). Your house is an asset only if it generates income, such as when it's rented out.

❑ Don't be financially illiterate

Financial education is crucial. Many educated professionals are financially illiterate because schools and colleges don't teach financial literacy. Start learning today—read *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* for insights.

❑ Increase your wealth

Wealth is your ability to survive without working. Consider how long you could sustain your lifestyle if you stopped working today.

❑ Mind your own business

If you have a job, keep it, but start a part-time business. Use your free time wisely to build your own business. Never leave your job until your business is stable. Don't spend your life working for someone else — grow your own enterprise.

❑ Train your mind

Your greatest asset is your mind. While most people see opportunities with their eyes, a trained mind can recognize opportunities others miss.

❑ Learn technical skills

Boost your financial IQ with these skills:

- **Accounting:** Understand numbers and assess business strengths and weaknesses.
- **Investing:** Master the science of making money.
- **Understanding markets:** Learn supply and demand dynamics.
- **The Law:** Knowledge of tax laws and corporate structures can accelerate wealth-building.

❑ Find hidden opportunities

"Great opportunities are not seen with your eyes but with your mind." Train your mind to identify opportunities others overlook.

❑ Learn to manage risk

Investment itself isn't risky; lack of knowledge is. Reduce risk by increasing your financial education through books and mentorship from experienced investors.

❑ Master management skills

Key management skills include:

- Managing cash flow
- Managing systems
- Managing people

Sales and marketing are essential. The ability to sell and communicate effectively is fundamental to personal and professional success.

❑ Conquer fear

"Failure inspires winners; failure defeats losers."

Everyone fears losing money, but success comes from learning to manage and overcome that fear.

IN THE INTERMEDIATE COURT OF MAURITIUS

In the matter of :-

Adnaan Hussein MOWLABACCUS, of Royal Road Caroline Bel-Air Riviere Seche

PLAINTIFF

v/s

Rudra Pratap Narain Singh also called Shri R P N Singh in his capacity as Managing Trustee of the Indian Ocean Medical Institute Trust, service to be effected at the Indian Ocean Medical Institute Trust's SSR Medical College, Belle Rive, Phoenix, Mauritius

DEFENDANT

NOTICE IN DENUNCIATION

In compliance with a Judge's Order dated 19/11/2024 made by Her Ladyship, the Honourable Mrs S. TEELock, the abovenamed Plaintiff has been authorized to cause Substituted Service to be effected upon you the abovenamed Defendant by way of publication.

TAKE NOTICE you the abovenamed Defendant, that you may not plead or pretend ignorance of same that the abovenamed Plaintiff has lodged a Plaintiff with Summons before the Intermediate Court bearing Cause No. 406/24 and an Amended Plaintiff With Summons dated 24/10/2024, praying the above Court for a Judgment condemning and ordering you, the above named Defendant to (a) declaring that the Defendant's breach has brought an end to the contract; (b) ordering the Defendant, in his capacity as Managing Trustee of the IOMIT, to reimburse to the Plaintiff the sum of USD 21,000/-; and (c) ordering the Defendant, in his capacity as Managing Trustee of the IOMIT, to pay damages to the Plaintiff in the sum of Rs. 300,000/- **WITH INTERESTS AND COSTS.**

NOW TAKE FURTHER NOTICE you the abovenamed Defendant, that the above matter is coming for **SUBSTITUTED SERVICE on Monday the 13th day of January 2025 at 09.30 am**, before the Intermediate Court of Mauritius, situate at the New Court House, Pope Hennessy Street, Port Louis and on which day and hour you are hereby most formally required, called upon and summoned to be and appear.

WARNING YOU, in case you will not be present in Court on the aforesaid day and hour, the Plaintiff will proceed with the above matter and Judgment may be delivered against you in favour of the abovenamed Plaintiff.

Under all legal reservations.

Dated at Port Louis, this 09th day of December 2024.

Me. Navin RAMA

Of Suite 701, 6th Floor, Chancery House, Lislet Geoffroy Street, Port Louis.

PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY

YOUR STARS

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

Adventure and exploration take center stage. Travel plans or new experiences invigorate your spirit. Stay mindful of work deadlines to maintain balance. An unexpected reunion with an old friend brings joy.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 10, 19, 23, 31, 39

CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Hard work pays off as your efforts align with long-term goals. Family relationships improve through open dialogue. Financial stability is within reach, and a surprise opportunity may boost your confidence.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 12, 16, 22, 27, 34

AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

Your innovative ideas shine this week, earning admiration from peers. Friendships flourish but set boundaries to protect your energy. A thoughtful gesture from someone close warms your heart.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 8, 13, 25, 30, 38

PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

Dream big and trust your intuition to guide you. A mentor or colleague provides valuable insights. Spending time in a calming environment, such as near water, helps you recharge and refocus.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 11, 17, 21, 28, 33

ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

This week calls for collaboration. Team projects at work or home yield great results. Financial caution is advised, as unexpected expenses may arise. Over the weekend, focus on nurturing personal relationships, as they bring joy and clarity.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 7, 14, 18, 26, 33

TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

Opportunities to showcase your talents emerge early in the week. Stay grounded and practical in your approach. A family matter may require your attention, and your wisdom will be appreciated.

Romance is steady and comforting.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 10, 15, 22, 29, 34

GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Communication is your strength this week. Resolve pending issues with colleagues or loved ones. Social engagements bring new connections and potential collaborations. Stay organized to avoid feeling stretched thin.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 9, 16, 20, 27, 38

CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22

Focus on your well-being. Work responsibilities demand extra effort, but balance is key. A close friend or partner may seek your support — be there for them. Trust your instincts when making decisions about the future.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 8, 12, 19, 25, 31

LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22

Your confidence is magnetic, drawing attention and opportunities. Leadership roles suit you well, but remember to remain humble. Financial gains are likely, and a romantic gesture could deepen your bond with someone special.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 11, 17, 23, 30, 36

VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22

Your meticulous nature shines as you tackle tasks efficiently. A work project benefits from your attention to detail. Health and wellness improve with small lifestyle adjustments. Plan a peaceful weekend to recharge.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 13, 18, 21, 28, 35

LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22

Balance and harmony define your week. Strengthen bonds with loved ones through meaningful conversations. Creative ideas flow effortlessly, so share them confidently. Keep an eye on your spending to maintain financial stability.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 24, 29, 37

SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV

Transformation is on the horizon. Embrace change with an open mind, whether in your career or personal life. Financial planning brings peace of mind. A deep conversation with a loved one fosters understanding and connection.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 7, 15, 20, 26, 32

Gaming for the good: Online gaming enhances workplace skills, new report finds

A new study challenges the negative stereotypes often associated with online gaming, revealing that massive multiplayer online (mmo) gamers develop valuable workplace skills. Published in human resource development international, the research, led by melika shirmohammadi, assistant professor at the university of houston's college of technology, shows that gaming can enrich skills like problem-solving, teamwork, leadership, and self-confidence, all of which are transferable to the workplace.

"online gaming often gets a bad reputation, but our study reveals a different story," shirmohammadi said. "we found that gaming can actually help people develop valuable workplace skills. Our research shows that gaming, when done in moderation, can be a way for people to grow both personally and professionally."

Gaming truths

With millions of people worldwide participating in mmo games like world of warcraft, destiny 2, and final fantasy, companies are already benefiting from the skills developed by gamers. These games require players to collaborate in virtual worlds, coordinate tasks to achieve common goals, follow team norms (like punctuality), and avoid reckless behavior that could hinder team progress. These activities mimic real-world workplace scenarios and can enhance key job-related skills.

The study, which examined 23 employed mmo gamers with an average of 20 years of gaming experience, found that these games promote skills



directly transferable to the workplace. "the purpose of the present study was to examine how mmo gaming positively enriches the work domain," shirmohammadi explained.

Positive outcomes of gaming

Participants in the study shared numerous benefits of gaming that helped them excel at work. Gamers reported developing a mindset that views challenges as solvable puzzles, increasing their patience and perseverance when tackling difficult tasks. One engineer participant explained, "i just see a puzzle, and i'm motivated to solve it. It's affected my mindset in that way, such that i look at things as solvable..."

Additionally, many participants credited their gaming experience with boosting their self-confidence. The

success they achieved in the virtual world translated into a sense of accomplishment in real life. Gamers also developed self-awareness as they received feedback on their performance and how they worked with others in team settings.

Coaching and leadership skills, such as providing feedback, evaluating performance, and motivating teammates, were another key takeaway from the gaming experience. One it specialist reflected on how gaming helped him excel in training new employees at work: "since i kind of go out of my way in game to do all the coaching, i've become ahead of some of my colleagues in explaining how to do certain things [to new employees]."

Gaming for the good

Shirmohammadi's study underscores the potential for gaming to serve as a platform for personal and professional growth. "our study extends the understanding of nonwork-to-work enrichment and reveals how a hobby, like gaming, could benefit work," she said.

As one famous gaming quote puts it, "failure doesn't mean the game is over, it means try again with experience." this philosophy rings true in the professional world as well, where the lessons learned in gaming can help individuals thrive in their careers.

In conclusion, the study highlights the positive impact gaming can have on skill development and suggests that, when done in moderation, it could be a powerful tool for personal and professional growth.



Empowering engineering students through storytelling

Researchers asked engineering students to tell stories about challenges they had faced. Telling the stories, students said, made them more likely to stay in their major.

Stories of self-doubt are common among engineering students. That was a key finding of a study conducted recently at Boise State University by a team of researchers.

Students surveyed questioned their abilities. They were sure everyone else understood the material. They said they didn't fit in. They wondered whether they should quit engineering and find a different major.

Many students who possess the aptitude to become engineers choose not to persist in their major because of the stories they tell themselves – about not belonging, about not being the "type" of person who can become an engineer. This is not just a problem for students and engineering or STEM culture. Because of the need to fill a growing number of STEM-related jobs, it affects society at large.

We – an interdisciplinary team of researchers with backgrounds in materials science, engineering education, educational technology and consumer psychology – are conducting research on a new approach to support students who question whether they fit in engineering.

With the aid of National Science Foundation funding, we are two years into testing a simple idea. We started with the assumption that the stories students tell themselves about whether they belong in engineering are related to their negative



A sense of belonging is essential for engineering students. SolStock/E+ via Getty Images

beliefs about their abilities. And then we asked educators at Boise State University to try a novel approach to changing those stories. While our research is still under review, preliminary findings suggest storytelling could be a game changer.

New assignment: Tell a story

Through a partnership with The Story Collider, a nonprofit that helps people learn the art of storytelling, engineering faculty at BSU have begun giving engineering students a new assignment: Tell stories about how they overcame a problem.

Students write their stories, receive feedback to help them better develop their ideas, then record themselves narrating their work.

Toward the end of the semester, a few

students present their stories in a professionally produced storytelling show. Recent shows, available online, featured stories about realizing potential, starting over and being volunteered for unwanted work.

We conducted before-and-after surveys with 113 students and in-depth interviews with 22 students over the first two years – or four semesters – of the program. The students who participated in the storytelling project identified more strongly as engineers, had a stronger sense of belonging in an engineering community and were more likely to state they intend to continue in their major. The research team is still gathering data to discover whether more students actually stay with their majors and finish engineering degrees.

One student said writing about a time

she "freaked out" in a research lab allowed her to validate herself as an engineer. "Yeah, mistakes can happen. But that's OK."

Positive effects of creating the narrative

The storytelling exercise resulted in more than one benefit. By telling a story about overcoming a challenge, students' perception of their abilities – as measured on empirically validated self-report scales – improved.

Research shows that the lack of diverse representations of scientists fosters a stereotypical view of engineers. Hearing the students read their stories also reduced listeners' stereotypes of engineers as competent but nerdy and lacking empathy. Audience members surveyed after the presentations said they viewed engineers as more likable and trustworthy.

Like many stories, this project also has a moral: The change in students' self-image after telling their stories, as shown by our research, highlights the ability of something as simple as sharing a story to effect change. When educators recognize this ability and encourage students to take control of their personal narrative, they can ultimately help more students find success.

Anne Hamby, Eric Jankowski, Krishna Pakala,
Patrick R. Lowenthal
Associate Professor of Marketing,
Boise State University

*Laughter is the
Best Medicine*



Bill Gates' Decision

Bill Gates did not survive a car accident. He found himself in purgatory, facing God.

"Well, Bill, I'm really facing a difficult decision on whether to send you to Heaven or Hell," God said. "After all, you enormously helped society by placing a computer in almost every home in the world, yet you also created that ghastly Windows 95. I'm going to let you decide where you'd like to go, something I have not done before."

Bill replied, "Well, thanks, but what's the difference between the two?"

God said, "I'm prepared to let you visit both places briefly if it can help you make a decision."

"Fine, where do we start?" asked Bill.

"I'll let you decide."

"OK, then let's try Hell first."

So Bill visited Hell. It was a lovely place -- clean, sandy beaches with clear waters. There were hundreds of beautiful women running around, playing in the water, laughing, and frolicking about. The sun was shining, and the temperature was perfect. Bill was very pleased.

"This is fantastic!" he told God. "Now I'd like to visit Heaven."

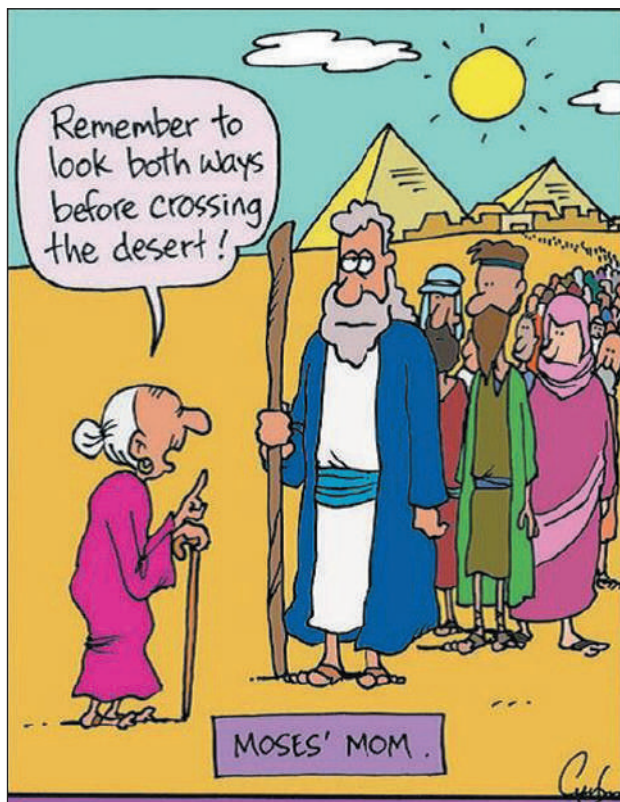
Off they proceeded to Heaven.

Heaven was a high place in the clouds, with angels drifting about, playing harps and singing. It was nice, but not as enticing as Hell. Bill thought for a while, then he announced his decision to God.

"I think I prefer Hell," he said.

"Fine, as you wish," God replied.

So, Bill Gates went to Hell.



Weeks later, God decided to check on the late billionaire to see how he was doing in Hell. When God arrived, he found Bill shackled to a wall, screaming in the hot flames of a dark cave. He was being burned and tortured by demons.

"How's everything going, Bill?" asked God.

Bill replied, his voice full of anguish and disappointment, "This is awful! This is not what I expected. I can't believe this happened. What happened to the place with the beaches and the beauties playing in the water?"

God replied, "That was the screensaver."

* * *

Happy Men's Day!

Who is a man?

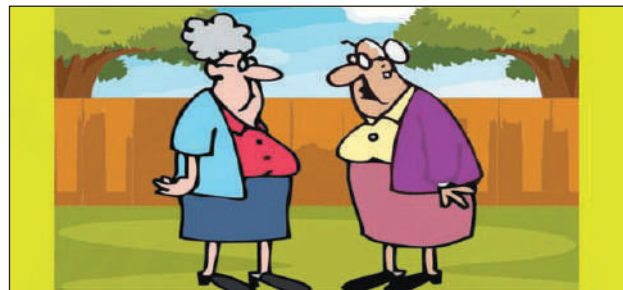
A man is the most beautiful part of God's creation.

He sacrifices his dreams for just a smile on his parents' face.

He spends his entire pocket money buying gifts for the lady he loves, just to see her smiling.

He sacrifices his full youth for his wife and children by working late at night without any complaint.

He builds their future by taking loans from banks and repaying them for his entire lifetime.



Two elderly ladies are sitting on the front porch, doing nothing.

One old lady turns to the other and asks, "Do you still get horny?"

The other replies, "Oh sure I do." The first old lady asks, "What do you do about It?"

He struggles a lot and still has to bear scolding from his mother, wife, and boss.

His life ends up only by compromising for others' happiness.

If he goes out, he is careless.

If he stays at home, he is lazy.

If he scolds his children, he is a monster.

If he doesn't scold them, he is an irresponsible man.

If he stops his wife from working, then he is an insecure man.

If he doesn't stop his wife from working, then he is somebody who lives on his wife's earnings.

If he listens to his mom, he is mama's boy.

If he listens to his wife, he is his wife's slave.

If he does not play, he is too serious, stern, and stiff.

Pastor, I really need to see the Church Elders, and tell them to bring a BUCKET.



If he plays, he is a joker who never matures.

If he dresses well, he is extravagant and a possible womanizer. If he doesn't dress well, he is a loser who is not a gentleman.

If he helps his wife, he is taken for a fool. If he doesn't help his wife, he is cruel and wicked.

Worth sending to every man to make him smile

Happy Men's Day! Which never comes...

* * *

Killer Joke

Husband was sipping his whisky while sitting in the balcony with his wife.

He says, "I love you so much, I don't know how I could ever live without you."

Wife asks, "Is that you, or the whisky talking?"

Husband replies, "It's me... talking to whisky."

* * *

A Nigerian Mother's Cleverness

A Nigerian mother was lucky enough to see her three daughters get married the same year, so she called them after the wedding and told them:

"Don't forget to text me your first night experience and text it in code."

So... after a week, the first daughter texted:

"NESCAFE"

And the next week, the second daughter texted:

"BENSON"

The mother, being an intelligent woman, went to get a Nescafe tin and read the label:

"Fantastic till the last drop."

She went to her husband's pack of Benson cigarettes and read:

"Extra long, king size."

She smiled and said, "Not bad for their ages."

After the next week, the third daughter texted:

"NAIROBI to MOMBASA"

The mother then called Kenya Airways helpdesk to enquire about their Nairobi-Mombasa flight, and they replied:

"It's 3 times daily, 7 days a week, and the flight duration is 75 minutes."

The mother fell down and shouted:

"Igweeeeeeeee!!! This one will kill my daughter!!!"



The Art of the Good Life

In *The Art of the Good Life*, Rolf Dobelli explores the keys to a fulfilling and meaningful life, emphasizing the importance of focusing on what truly matters. Dobelli's approach is grounded in the idea that by controlling what we can and letting go of the rest, we can live more contented, peaceful, and purposeful lives. The lessons in this book offer practical advice on how to navigate life's challenges with a positive mindset, avoid common pitfalls, and prioritize experiences that bring lasting joy. From cultivating gratitude to embracing rad

Prioritize experiences over possessions

Value experiences over material goods. Meaningful memories and enriching activities bring lasting happiness, unlike accumulating things.

Practice mental accounting

Reframe losses as wins and interpret costs constructively. This mindset fosters better financial decisions and a positive outlook.

Embrace radical acceptance

Accept reality as it is, not as you wish it to be. Letting go of resistance to the uncontrollable builds resilience and peace of mind.

Limit information overload

Be selective with the information you consume. Reducing unnecessary data helps you focus on what truly matters and make sound decisions.

Invest in your mental fortress

Cultivate a strong mental framework with a positive mindset, critical thinking skills, and supportive influences to navigate challenges effectively.

Avoid the comparison trap

Stop comparing yourself to others. Focus on your own journey to boost self-esteem and find contentment in your progress.

Cultivate gratitude

Regularly appreciate the positives in your life. Gratitude enhances well-being and fosters a more optimistic outlook.

These lessons offer practical insights to lead a fulfilling, meaningful life by focusing on what truly contributes to happiness and well-being.

That's Life

Why do we love children?

Children have a unique way of seeing the world that often brings joy, laughter, and unexpected wisdom to our lives. Their innocent observations, unfiltered honesty, and pure curiosity make them endearing and unforgettable. In their simple yet profound remarks, they remind us of life's lighter, more humorous moments. This collection of stories showcases the delightful, often hilarious things children say and do, offering a glimpse into their candid view of the world, and reminding us why we love them so much.

Nudity

One warm summer evening, I was driving with my three young children when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved—completely naked! As I reeled from the shock, my 5-year-old shouted from the back seat, "Mom, that lady isn't wearing a seat belt!"

Opinions

On the first day of school, a first-grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. It read, "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents."

Ketchup

A woman struggled to get ketchup out of the bottle when the phone rang. She asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer it. The little girl dutifully said, "Mommy can't come to the phone right now. She's hitting the bottle."

More nudity

A little boy got lost at the YMCA and wandered into the women's locker room. When the women screamed and grabbed towels to cover themselves, he looked around in amazement and asked, "What's the matter? Haven't you ever seen a little boy before?"

Police #1

While taking a vandalism report at an elementary school, I was interrupted by a 6-year-old girl. She looked me up and down and asked, "Are you a cop?"

"Yes," I replied.

"My mom said if I ever need help, I should ask the police. Is that true?"

"Yes, it is," I assured her.

"Good," she said, extending her foot toward me. "Would you tie my shoe?"

Police #2

At the end of the day, I parked my police van in front of the station. As I gathered my equipment, my k-9 partner, Jake, barked from the back. A little boy stared at



the van and asked, "Is that a dog you've got back there?"

"It sure is," I replied.

The boy looked puzzled. Finally, he asked, "What'd he do?"

Elderly

While delivering meals to elderly shut-ins, I often brought my 4-year-old daughter along. She was fascinated by canes, walkers, and wheelchairs. One day, she stared at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. Finally, she whispered, "The tooth fairy will never believe this!"

Dress-up

A little girl watched her parents get ready for a party. When her dad put on his tuxedo, she warned, "Daddy, you shouldn't wear that suit."

"Why not, sweetheart?" he asked.

"Because it always gives you a headache the next morning!"

Death

Our minister overheard his 5-year-old son and his friends conducting a funeral for a dead robin they'd found. They had a small box, cotton batting, and a freshly dug hole. The minister's son solemnly intoned his version of a prayer:

"Glory be unto the faaather, and unto the sonnn, and into the hole he gooos."

(I want this line used at my funeral!)

School

After her first week of school, a little girl told her mother, "I'm just wasting my time. I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!"

Life's Story

The Inspirational Story of Mr Bean

Rowan Atkinson, known for his iconic role as Mr Bean, faced significant challenges in his early life. Born into a middle-class family and struggling with a stutter, Atkinson was often bullied and isolated. Despite his difficulties, he pursued his passion for acting and comedy, overcoming numerous rejections and setbacks. His breakthrough came with Mr Bean, a character that allowed him to communicate without the constraints of his speech



disorder.

Atkinson's journey from a shy, stuttering child to a globally renowned actor illustrates the power of perseverance, passion, and hard work. His story reminds us that success is not determined by one's initial disadvantages but by one's dedication to overcoming them. It's a testament to the idea that with persistence and self-belief, one can achieve greatness despite obstacles.

Moral of the Story: No one is born perfect, and everyone faces challenges. Embrace your passion, work hard, and persevere, and you can accomplish remarkable things despite your weaknesses and setbacks.

These Are the 5 Stages of a Dying Marriage — Are You in One of Them?

Understanding the lead-up to divorce can help you identify warning signs and potentially save your relationship, according to a therapist specializing in marriages in crisis, reports Kelsey Borresen of HuffPost.

When a marriage is in decline, it tends to follow a predictable pattern. Recognizing the signs early can give couples a chance to repair their relationship before it's too late.

Becky Whetstone, an Arkansas-based marriage and family therapist and author of the forthcoming book *I (Think) I Want Out*, has spent over 20 years counselling couples in crisis. She wrote her Ph.D. dissertation at St. Mary's University in San Antonio on the stages of marital deterioration.

"This is the most important thing couples could know," Whetstone told HuffPost. "[It's] similar to understanding the symptoms and stages of cancer: early detection is key."

These stages typically occur internally, within the mind of the "decider" — the person initiating the breakup. Often, this individual doesn't express their concerns until late in the process.

"Unfortunately, unhappy partners often keep their feelings a secret until it's almost too late," Whetstone said. "It's crucial for couples to stay in touch emotionally and share their struggles with one another."

Below are the five stages of a dying marriage, as outlined by Whetstone. The first four align with Vaughan's findings, while the fifth emerged from Whetstone's own research.

Stage 1: Disillusionment

In this initial phase, one partner begins to feel unhappy but decides to take a "wait-and-see" approach.

"They mull it over, thinking, 'Relationships have ups and downs; maybe my feelings will change,'" Whetstone explained.

However, as Vaughan noted in a 1986 *Washington*



Post interview, keeping relationship concerns private can create a significant breach. "It widens the gap," Vaughan said.

Stage 2: Erosion

At this stage, unhappiness persists, and one partner begins to recognize its seriousness. However, they avoid considering divorce due to factors like children, finances, or societal expectations.

"The cracks begin to show," Whetstone said. "They might make sarcastic remarks, complain, or roll their eyes, but the tension remains largely behind closed doors."

Stage 3: Detachment

The detachment phase is marked by emotional withdrawal. The unhappy partner seeks solace outside the marriage, such as through hobbies, fitness routines, or even infidelity.

"They make a deal with themselves: 'I can stay married if I find satisfaction elsewhere,'" Whetstone said.

By this stage, resentment often becomes visible to others, as "poisonous feelings seep out," she noted.

Stage 4: 'The Straw'

At this point, the frustrated partner reaches their breaking point — triggered by a specific incident or

realization.

"They gain sudden clarity that they can't continue the marriage," Whetstone said.

This breaking point can stem from something big or small, but the emotional disconnection becomes irreversible.

Stage 5: Death of the Marriage

In the final stage, the marriage as it once existed is over.

"Divorce is likely, but it's possible to create a new dynamic with the right circumstances," Whetstone said. "What's certain is that the status quo is off the table."

How — and When — to Save the Relationship

Whetstone advises couples to seek counseling during the erosion stage, when it's clear that issues won't resolve on their own.

"Allowing resentment to pile up makes it exceedingly difficult to repair the relationship later," she said.

Many couples wait too long, mistakenly believing therapy is only for marriages in severe distress. Northern California therapist Kurt Smith, who specializes in counseling men, recommends seeking help early.

"The sooner, the better," Smith told HuffPost. "Sadly, many wait until they're close to calling a divorce lawyer — or already have."

Smith emphasized that marriage counseling works best when it's proactive, not reactive.

"If you notice signs of trouble, don't delay. At that stage, therapy is quicker, less expensive, and more effective," he said.

What if your partner refuses to go? Smith suggests going alone.

"Marriages can change even if only one person is trying," he said. "Often, when one partner starts counseling, the other eventually joins. The key is to act early and put in the effort to create lasting change."

Health Tips

Replace Plastic Dishes and Utensils with Steel, Glass, or Copper

Plastic remains prevalent in many households. Kitchens are often filled with plastic jars, containers, utensils, garbage bags, and more, and their usage continues to rise at an alarming rate. Not only does this contribute to environmental pollution, but plastic also poses significant health risks.

Priyanka Kheruka, Brand Head of Borosil Ltd., explains: "When food is heated in plastic, harmful chemicals such as phthalates are released from the plasticizers. As much as 95% of these chemicals can migrate into our food. Fatty foods like meats and cheese are especially prone to leaching, and microwaving them in plastic containers can lead to exposure that directly affects the lungs, kidneys, and liver. BPA, another chemical found in plastics, is linked to heart disease and type 2 diabetes."

In contrast, materials like glass are free from toxic chemicals and retain the



natural flavour of food during heating. Glass is also environmentally friendly, as it decomposes without releasing harmful substances. Using airtight glass containers for storage reduces the need

for plastic wrap, preventing food from spoiling or absorbing chemicals.

Stainless steel utensils, too, have a positive impact on health. Unlike plastic, steel does not erode or release harmful

chemicals during cooking. It's durable, easy to clean, and helps retain the original flavor of food. Stainless steel bottles, which come in various styles and designs, are an eco-friendly alternative to plastic bottles. Many of these bottles are food-grade, rust-proof, and capable of maintaining your beverage's temperature.

Copper utensils are another excellent option. Copper is an ideal conductor of heat, and its hygienic, corrosion-resistant properties make it a great choice for cooking and storage. Drinking water from copper vessels can benefit the skin and offer therapeutic effects.

Incorporating these sustainable materials into our kitchens can have a lasting impact on both our health and the environment. Being mindful of the utensils we use helps foster good health for our families, communities, and society, while also leaving a positive ecological footprint.

Seven Bollywood Stars Who Ruled Both Big Screens and OTT in 2024

Bollywood in 2024 witnessed an exhilarating blend of cinematic grandeur and compelling OTT storytelling. A select group of actors emerged as true powerhouses, delivering performances that resonated across platforms. From blockbuster films to binge-worthy series, these seven stars proved that talent knows no boundaries. Here are the standout performers who captivated audiences on both the big screen and OTT platforms this year, as reported by Indulge Express:

1. Richa Chadha – *Heeramandi*

Richa Chadha mesmerized viewers with her role as Lajjo in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's visually stunning *Heeramandi*. Set against the backdrop of courtesans in a bygone era, Richa's portrayal was marked by grace and emotional depth. Critics hailed her performance as one of the finest in Indian period dramas, making her a standout figure on OTT in 2024.

2. Abhishek Banerjee – *Stree 2*

Abhishek Banerjee reaffirmed his versatility in *Stree 2*, reprising his beloved role as Jana. His impeccable comic timing, paired with layers of fear and suspense, stole the spotlight in an ensemble cast. Abhishek's ability to transition seamlessly between theatrical hits and



OTT gems cemented his status as a scene-stealer this year.

3. Akshay Oberoi – *Fighter*

Akshay Oberoi soared to new heights with *Fighter*, playing a fighter pilot alongside Bollywood's heavyweights. His performance balanced intensity and vulnerability, connecting deeply with audiences. With equally impactful appearances on OTT, Akshay demonstrated his range and adaptability, earning wide-

spread praise.

4. Ravi Kishan – *Laapataa Ladies*

Ravi Kishan's portrayal of a witty yet thoughtful cop in *Laapataa Ladies* was a masterclass in blending humor with gravitas. The feminist comedy-drama gave him a platform to explore diverse emotions, and his impeccable timing elevated the film. Ravi's dynamic presence across formats made 2024 another remarkable year in his career.

5. Pratik Gandhi – *Madgaon Express*

Pratik Gandhi continued to captivate audiences with his role in the intense drama *Madgaon Express*. Known for tackling morally complex characters, Pratik's riveting performance kept viewers on the edge of their seats. His consistency across big-screen and streaming projects reaffirmed his reputation as a versatile and dependable actor.

6. Vir Das – *Call Me Bae*

Vir Das brought humor and heart to his flamboyant role in the OTT series *Call Me Bae*. Known for his stand-up comedy, Vir showcased his narrative storytelling prowess, blending laugh-out-loud moments with surprising emotional depth. His performance earned him a new legion of fans and solidified his place as a multidimensional entertainer.

7. Tillotama Shome – *Tribhuvan Mishra CA Topper*

Tillotama Shome delivered one of the most emotionally charged performances of the year in the web series *Tribhuvan Mishra CA Topper*. As Bindi, she explored themes of survival, agency, and dreams with raw vulnerability and strength. Her portrayal was both captivating and inspiring, making her one of the year's most impactful performers.

Top Controversies of Bollywood in 2024

As 2024 comes to a close, Bollywood has once again proven itself to be a hotbed of drama and controversy. From shocking revelations to bitter feuds and legal battles, the industry buzzed with stories that kept fans and critics glued to the headlines. Here's a rundown of the top 10 Bollywood controversies that defined the year, as reported by PinkVilla.

Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai separation rumours

Rumors of a split between Bollywood's power couple dominated gossip columns this year. Speculation was fueled by Abhishek's alleged closeness with *Dasvi* co-star Nimrat Kaur. However, the couple put these rumors to rest with public appearances, including their daughter's school events, emphasizing their commitment to family.

AR Rahman and Mohini Dey face link-up rumours

The music maestro found himself amid controversy when his separation announcement coincided with bassist Mohini Dey's divorce news. Social media speculated about a relationship between the two, but Mohini dismissed the rumors, calling them baseless and reaffirming their strictly professional bond.

Salman Khan faces fresh death threats

Salman Khan's long-standing feud with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang took a dangerous turn as he received multiple threats this year. In April, gunshots were fired near his home, and November saw a new message reaching the Mumbai Police. The threats trace back to the blackbuck poaching case of 1998, with tensions remaining unresolved.

Arshad Warsi's 'Joker' comment on Prabhas

During a podcast, Arshad Warsi criticized Prabhas'



role in *Kalki 2898 AD*, likening the character to a "joker." The remark enraged fans and the Telugu film fraternity. Warsi later clarified that his critique was aimed at the portrayal, not the actor, but the damage was already done.

Raveena Tandon attacked during road rage incident

In a shocking turn of events, Raveena Tandon was attacked by a mob in Mumbai following accusations of rash driving. The incident escalated when allegations emerged that she had assaulted locals. Video footage sparked widespread debate, though Raveena denied the accusations, stating she was the victim of a misunderstanding.

Credit war over *Stree 2*

The success of *Stree 2* was marred by a credit battle between leads Rajkumar Rao and Shraddha Kapoor. Publicists on both sides claimed their star was pivotal to the film's achievements, fueling online debates about the actors' contributions.

Copyright clash between *Singham Again* and *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*

A copyright dispute erupted when T-Series filed a strike against Rohit Shetty's *Singham Again* for using the original *Singham* theme. Amid a box office rivalry, the track was re-uploaded with edits, marking a legal and competitive showdown.



Vendredi 27 decembre - 20.30



Samedi 28 decembre - 20.30



Dimanche 29 decembre - 20.30



Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 27 decembre

MBC 1

- 07.30 Serial: Under Pressure
- 08.36 Les Riches Pleurent Aussi
- 09.35 Film: Spider In The Web
- 11.30 Your Love Is My Fortune
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.35 Tele: Terre Nostra
- 13.30 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 14.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.21 Film: Deliver By Christmas
- 17.30 Your Love Is My Fortune
- 18.00 Samachar
- 18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
- 19.00 Serial: Doree
- 19.20 Sayings Radha Krishna
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Film: Maman, J'ai Encore Raté L'Avion
- 22.30 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 00.15 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 00.39 The Bionic Woman

MBC 2

- 06.05 Les Grandes Lignes
- 06.05 Local: Recettes Festives
- 07.40 Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 09.10 Rodrig: J'ai Faim
- 12.00 Rodrig: Decouvertes
- 13.10 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 14.35 Local: J'ai Faim
- 15.55 Christmas Carols Held...
- 17.20 Local: En Forme
- 17.33 Local: La Sosiete
- 18.00 Seiral: Passion And Power
- 18.30 Les Riches Pleurent
- 19.25 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 19.45 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
- 20.05 Local: Animalia Nos Amis...
- 20.30 Local: Lir - Ekriir Kreol
- 22.30 Local: La Sosiete
- 23.20 Local: Meshiagare...
- 23.33 Rodrig Otantik
- 20.15 Local: Itinerer Moris
- 00.18 Rodrig Prog: Zenn Aktif

MBC 3

- 07.00 Mag: Tenali Rama
- 07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 08.09 Local: Amrit Vani
- 10.00 Serial: Agniphera
- 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Jo Baka Taklif Of Rehvani
- Starring: Nishith Brahmabhatt, Preshi Nayak
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.33 Serial: Jai Jai Shiv Shankar
- 16.00 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron
- 17.00 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 18.30 Local: Mati Ke Mol
- 19.00 Best Of Mukesh Nite
- 19.30 Local: Khel Khiladi
- 20.00 Serial: Vidrohi
- 21.00 Film: Jabu Kehu Dil Mein Sama Jala
- Starring: Pawan Singh, Rani Chatterjee

Cine 12

- 07.36 D.Anime: Sonic Boom
- 08.00 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob
- 08.42 Film: A.R.I
- 10.04 Film: Garfield 2
- 11.35 Mag: Eco India
- 12.29 Mag: Tomorrow Today
- 12.58 Film: MBC Cinema
- 14.30 Serial: N*Gen
- 15.01 D.Anime: Nuzo And Zamia
- 15.22 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes
- 15.40 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
- 15.59 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.11 D.Anime: Dragonero
- 16.33 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 16.55 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi
- 17.16 Doc: Wild Isles
- 18.00 Doc: Bhutan
- 18.42 Mag: Choices
- 19.28 Mag: Vous Et Vous
- 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 21.05 Film: Hollow In The Land

Bollywood TV

- 14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
- 14.55 Serial: Doree
- 15.25 Film: Patel Ki Punjabi Shaadi
- Cast: Rishi Kapoor, Paresh Rawal, Vir Das
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Kundali Bhagya
- 19.01 Udaariyaan
- 19.32 Dharam Patni
- 20.01 Mithai
- 20.31 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala
- 21.01 Anupamaa
- 21.31 Mere Sai
- 22.01 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
- 22.30 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
- 22.59 Serial: Rajaa Betaa
- 23.30 Film: Patel Ki Punjabi Shaadi

samedi 28 decembre

- 03.27 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 04.47 Serial: Wanted
- 06.30 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 07.00 Serial: Hooten & The Lady
- 08.20 Serial: Blue Lights
- 09.20 Serial: Under Pressure
- 10.00 Serial: Wanted
- 10.52 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 11.33 Tele: Le Temps D'Aimer
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Serial: Seal Team
- 13.18 Tele: Barbarita...
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.25 Film: For The Love Of The Game
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Enter: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa...
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Film: The Mummy
- 22.30 Serial: Wanted
- 23.16 Mag: Red Carpet
- 23.28 Le Journal

- 06.00 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 06.15 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
- 07.25 Local: Meshiagare
- 08.10 Local: Animalia
- 09.35 Local: La Sosiete
- 10.25 Local: Dance Fever
- 12.00 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir
- 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard...
- 13.25 Local: Couleur Marine
- 14.50 Local: La Sosiete
- 15.45 Local: Retrovizer
- 16.21 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 18.05 Serial: The Six Million Dollar...
- 19.00 Journal Kreol
- 19.30 Rodrig Prog: Kot Nou
- 20.00 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 20.26 Local: Recettes Festives
- 20.31 Local: La Nuit Du Sega
- 21.40 Local: En Toute Intimite
- 22.10 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 23.00 Journal Rediffusion
- 23.20 Local: Lavi Zoli An XXL

- 05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
- 06.59 Film: Superbheem Bana Vajraveer
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
- 08.34 Local: Abhyas Yog
- 10.27 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 12.00 Serial: Dikri Vahalno Dariyo
- 12.30 Local: Mati Ke Mol
- 14.00 Serial: Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
- 14.30 Mag: Talaash
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.30 Film: The Camp
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Saying Radha Krishna
- 19.00 Local: Shaam-E-Ghazal
- 20.00 Local: Bollywood Express
- 21.00 Film: Gadar: Ek Prem Katha
- Cast: Sunny Deol, Ameesha Patel, Amrisha Puri
- 23.56 Local: Puranya Pakwan
- 00.22 Local: Shaam-E-Ghazal
- 02.14 Film: Gadar: Ek Prem Katha

- 06.00 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 06.31 Les Aventures Du Petit Pin...
- 09.21 D.Anime: Superstore
- 10.16 Mag: D.I.Y. Discover Your...
- 10.12 Film: MBC Cinema
- 13.00 Film: Maman, J'ai Encre Raté L'avion
- 14.58 Serial: N*Gen
- 15.48 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes
- 16.25 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.37 D.Anime: Dragonero
- 16.58 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi
- 17.21 Doc: Japan Video Topics
- 18.05 Mag: In Good Shape
- 18.30 Doc: Top Dive Sites
- 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
- 20.30 Live: News
- 21.30 Film: Devious Deeds
- 23.02 Doc: Where Women Rule...
- 23.44 Doc: Princess For A Day
- 00.23 Doc: Mothers In The Board...

- 08.00 Dharam Patni
- 09.53 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 10.02 Mithai
- 12.00 Udaariyaan
- 13.49 Anupamaa
- 16.03 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 17.30 Vidrohi
- 18.30 Film: Ki & Ka
- With: Amitabh Bachchan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Arjun Kapoor
- 20.28 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein

dimanche 29 decembre

- 03.40 Film: Devious Deeds
- 04.30 Serial: Gout De L'amour
- 05.12 Tele: All The Flowers
- 05.38 Film: The Mummy
- 07.38 Serial: Pearson
- 08.24 Film: For The Love Of The Game
- 10.45 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 11.30 Tele: All The Flowers
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.35 Film: Devious Deeds
- 14.10 Serial: Zoo
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.30 Film: Happy Death Day
- 17.10 Tele: L'empire Du Mensonge
- 19.30 Le Journal Televisé
- 20.30 Film: Murder On The Orient Express
- 22.20 Serial: Pearson
- 23.02 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
- 23.45 Le Journal

- 06.00 Rodrig Prog: Kot Nou
- 07.45 Local: La Nuit Du Sega
- 09.05 Local: Saver Kiltirel
- 09.52 Rodrig Prog: Promnad
- 10.15 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 12.53 Local: Recettes Festives
- 13.03 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 14.30 Noel Avec United Rising...
- 16.30 Local: The Dukesbridge's...
- 17.22 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 17.35 Local: En Toute Intimite
- 18.03 The Six Million Dollar Man
- 19.00 Journal Kreol
- 19.45 Local: Info En Langue...
- 20.05 Local: La St Sylvestre Sun
- 20.15 Local: Les Klips
- 22.50 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 23.00 Journal Rediffusion
- 23.20 Local: Clin D'oeil
- 23.32 Local: Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La

- 05.00 Programme From Aastha TV
- 07.00 Film: Supar Bheem
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
- 08.36 Local: Shaam-E-Ghazal
- 10.35 Serial: Mahabharat
- 12.00 Film: Shakalaka Boom Boom
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.21 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 17.00 Local: Bollywood Express
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Local: Planet Bollywood
- 20.31 Serial: Porus
- 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein
- 21.30 Naagin
- 22.12 Serial: Bahubali
- 22.52 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
- 00.48 Local: Planet Bollywood
- 01.15 Local: Masti Ke Raat
- 02.15 Local: Yaadein
- 02.42 Local: Planet Bollywood

- 09.13 D.Anime: Caillou
- 09.19 Film: Go! Go! Cory Carson
- 09.39 D.Anime: Kids Songs
- 09.46 D.Anime: Superstore
- 10.23 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover...
- 10.35 Film: MBC Cinema
- 12.36 Mag: Skuld
- 13.00 Film: MBC Cinema
- 14.30 Serial: N*Gen
- 14.57 D.Anime: Nuzo And Zamia
- 15.23 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes
- 15.37 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
- 16.00 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.56 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi
- 17.24 Doc: Japan Video Topics
- 18.00 Doc: Ageless Gardens
- 18.30 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 19.30 Mag: Arts Unveiled
- 20.00 Tele: All The Flowers
- 20.50 Doc: Animal Instincts
- 21.42 Film: Tower Block

- 00.00 Mithai
- 01.45 Udaariyaan
- 03.38 Anupamaa
- 05.53 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 07.41 Tenali Rama
- 08.12 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey
- 10.00 Kundali Bhagya
- 12.00 Rajaa Betaa
- 14.00 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
- 16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya
- 18.30 Film: Tutiya Dil
- Cast: Sidhant Kapurtris, Maity, Suzanna Mukherjee
- 20.35 Tenali Rama
- 21.00 Mahabharat
- 21.47 Dance India Dance Super Moms
- 22.35 Rajaa Betaa
- 00.23 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey

lundi 30 decembre

- 05.11 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
- 06.01 Serial: The Queen Of Flow
- 07.26 Serial: Airwolf
- 08.12 Tele: All The Flowers
- 09.30 Film: The Quake
- 11.31 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 15.21 Film: Murder On The Orient Express
- 17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 18.00 Samachar
- 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti
- 18.58 Serial: Doree
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Serial: Belgravia
- 22.13 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 22.58 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 23.30 Le Journal Televisé
- 00.15 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin

- 08.36 Local: Clin D'Oeil
- 09.29 Local: Mangeons Veg
- 10.01 Local: Les Klips
- 11.31 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 12.23 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 13.02 Local: Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 13.50 Local: Clin D'Oeil
- 14.58 Rodrig Prog: Komanter
- 15.44 Local: Les Klips
- 18.00 Tele: Passion And Power
- 18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent...
- 19.20 Local: Elle
- 19.45 Celebrations De Fin D'annee
- 20.00 Local: Metie
- 20.15 Local: Detox
- 20.45 An Evening With Jan Braai Making Barbecue On TV From South African To Mauritius
- 22.06 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante

- 07.00 Tenali Rama
- 07.12 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 07.21 Lambu G Tingu G
- 07.51 MBC Production
- 09.34 Serie
- 12.00 Film: Raaz (1967)
- 15.20 Serie
- 18.00 Samachar
- 18.30 MBC Production
- 20.28 Serie
- 20.55 Film: Ram Tera Desh
- Cast: Hema Malini, Ashok Kumar, Vijayendra Ghatge
- Synopsis: Ramdas, his wife, Savitri, son, Prakash, and daughter, Sunita, live a lower middle-class existence in Bombay. They would like to get Sunita get married, and soon receive a proposal through Champabai for her to be married to Prem Kumar Saxena. They find the proposal suitable and Sunita gets married to Prem, and moves into his house. Prem lives with his possessive mothe...
- 23.17 Serie

- 07.00 Miraculous, le3s Aventures...
- 07.21 D.Anime: Drole De Bocal
- 08.35 D.Anime: Idefix Et Les Irreductibles
- 10.05 Film: Anastasia
- 11.24 D.Anime: D.I.Y
- 11.35 Doc: Ageless Gardens
- 12.00 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 13.00 Film: Over The Edge
- 15.00 Serial: Nuzo And Zamia
- 15.23 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes
- 15.37 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
- 15.51 D.Anime: Rockabye Island
- 16.02 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.14 D.Anime: Dragonero
- 16.58 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi
- 18.30 Mag: The 77 Percent
- 19.30 Mag: In Good Shape
- 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
- 20.50 Film: The Devil Wears Prada

- 14.25 Radha Mohan
- 14.51 Doree
- 15.25 Film: Raksha Bandhan
- Starring: Akshay Kumar, Bhumi Pednekar, Manu Rishi Chadha
- 18.00 Samachar
- 18.31 Kundali Bhagya
- 19.00 Udaariyaan
- 19.30 Dharam Patni
- 20.05 Mithai
- 20.33 Yashomati Maiyya Ke
- 21.09 Anupamaa
- 21.32 Mere Sai



18.30 Film: Ki & Ka
With: Amitabh Bachchan, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Arjun Kapoor



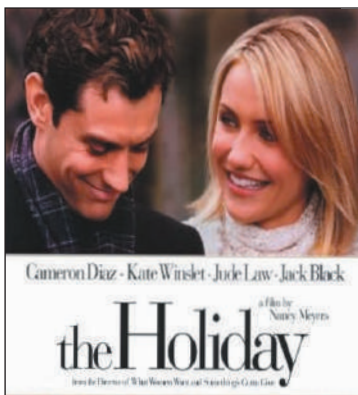
18.00 Samachar
18.31 Kundali Bhagya
19.00 Udaariyaan
19.30 Dharam Patni
20.05 Mithai
20.33 Yashomati Maiyya Ke
21.09 Anupamaa
21.32 Mere Sai



Mardi 31 decembre - 20.30



Mercredi 1 janvier - 20.45



Jeudi 2 janvier - 21.00



Programme TV



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
mardi 31 decembre	05.14 Tele: Gout De L'Amour	08.09 Local: Itinerer Moris	07.00 Serial: Tenali Rama	07.00 D.Anime: Miraculous...	14.25 Radha Mohan
	06.01 Serial: The Queen Of Flow	10.30 Rodrig Mo Pei	07.23 Serial: Lambu G Tingu G	07.31 D.Anime: Sonic Boom	14.55 Doree
	08.12 Tele: All The Flowers	11.30 Rodrig Prog: Feminin Pluriel	08.00 Local: MBC Production	07.43 D.Anime: Kika et Bob	15.30 Film: Sooryavanshi
	09.30 Film: Devious Deeds	12.22 La Journee Sous Le Regard	10.07 Serie	08.09 D.Anime: Eddue Is A Yeti	Cast: Akshay Kumar, Katrina Kaif, Jackie Shroff, Ajay Devgn, Ranveer Singh
	11.31 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	13.27 Local: itinerer Moris	12.01 Film: Around The World	09.54 Film: L'Ecole Des Magiciens	18.00 Live: Samachar
	12.00 Le Journal	13.45 Entrepreneuriat Au Feminin	Cast: Raj Kapoor, Rajshree	12.26 Mag: In Good Shape	18.30 Kundali Bhagya
	12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra	14.37 Rodrig Prog: Zenn Aktif	15.21 Serie	13.00 Film: The Biggest Slime	19.03 Udaariyaan
	13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin	15.11 Local: Saver Lokal	18.00 Live: Samachar	14.29 D.Anime: Kids Songs	19.33 Dharam Patni
	15.21 Film: The Devil Wears Prada	16.37 Local: Aktiv	18.31 Local: MBC Production	14.57 D.Anime: Nuzo And Zamia	20.06 Mithai
	17.06 Mag: Hollywood's Best Film	18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder	20.24 Serie	15.35 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois	20.29 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala
17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent...	21.00 Film: Bawarchi	15.58 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs	21.07 Anupama	
18.00 Samachar	19.00 Zournal Kreol	Cast: Rajesh Khanna, Jaya Bhaduri, Asrani, Harindranath Chattopadhyay, A.K. Hangal, Durga Khote, Manisha, Kali Banerjee, Usha Kiran, Raju Shrestha	16.10 D.Anime: Dragonero	21.29 Mere Sai	
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti	19.20 Local: Son Ladan Mem	23.05 Serie	16.32 D.Anime: Miraculous...	22.04 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se	
18.58 Serial: Doree	19.40 Rodrig Prog: Plat Du Chef	00.23 Local: MBC Production	16.54 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi	22.34 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan	
19.30 Le Journal	20.00 Reveillon Musical	02.07 Serie	18.00 Mag: REV	23.04 Rajaa Betaa	
20.30 Film: The Jumanji: Next Level	21.00 Local: Bel Sangat		18.30 Doc: The Baobab: A Universe Of Its Own	23.30 Film: Sooryavanshi	
22.20 Tele: Terra Nostra	22.00 Reveillon: Club Med		19.12 Mag: Red Carpet	Cast: Akshay Kumar, Katrina Kaif, Jackie Shroff, Ajay Devgn, Ranveer Singh	
00.01 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	23.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard		20.01 Tele: All The Flowers		
00.24 Serial: Wanted	23.25 Welcome 2025		21.05 Tele: Seref Meselesi		
01.08 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin	00.40 Compilation: Gran Konser Fik		22.25 Mag: Initiative Africa		
mercredi 1 janvier	06.02 Serial: The Queen Of Flow	07.12 Local: Mots Et Ecrits	07.00 Tenali Rama	09.30 D.Anime: Adventure In Duckport	14.25 Radha Mohan
	07.28 Serial: Airwolf	08.30 MBC Production	07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesha	10.02 Film: Le Royaume De Terracotta	14.50 Doree
	08.40 Les Riches Pleurent Aussi	09.23 Rodrig Prog: D'Jam	07.33 Lambu G Tingu G	11.27 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover...	15.30 Film: Selfiee
	09.35 Film: Trois Hommes Et Un Bebe	11.08 MBC Production	07.36 Serie	12.17 Mag: Healthy Living	With: Akshay Kumar, Emraan Hashmi
	11.33 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	11.08 MBC Production	12.00 Film: Devdas	13.00 Film: Ice Age	18.00 Live: Samachar
	12.00 Le Journal	13.50 Christmas Carols	Cast: Sharukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai	14.30 Mag: N*Gen	18.31 Kundali Bhagya
	12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra	12.18 Rodrig Prog: D'Jam	15.00 Samachar	14.57 Serial: Nuzo And Zamia	19.02 Udaariyaan
	13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin	12.43 Rodrig Prog: Rod'Art	15.20 Serie	15.25 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes	19.33 Dharam Patni
	13.46 Tele: Pasion Y Poder	14.31 Local: Glwar Dantan	18.00 Live: Samachar	15.41 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois	20.00 Mithai
	14.15 Serial: Airwolf	14.57 Local: Mots Et Ecrits	18.30 MBC Production	15.53 D.Anime: Rockabye Island	20.31 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala
15.00 Live: Samachar	15.51 Local: En Forme	21.00 Film: Hum Hain Dulha Hindustani	16.02 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs	21.00 Anupamaa	
15.25 Tele: Seref Meselesi	16.33 Local: Music Tour	Cast: Amrapali Dubey, Surendra Pal	16.14 D.Anime: Dragonero	21.28 Mere Sai	
17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	18.00 Tele: Passion And Power	23.44 Serie	16.58 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi	22.05 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se	
18.00 Live: Samachar	18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent...	01.02 MBC Production	17.30 Mag: REV	22.20 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan	
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti	19.20 L'Ambiance Banane Avec Groupe Anonyme		18.00 Mag: Greek Islands	22.51 Serial: Rajaa Betaa	
18.55 Serial: Doree	20.13 Local: Rodrig Spor		18.45 Mag: Planet A	23.30 Film: Selfiee	
19.20 Sayings Radha Krishna	20.39 Message Du Premier Ministre, L'Honorable Navin Ramgoolam		19.00 Transylvania	With: Akshay Kumar, Emraan Hashmi	
19.30 Journal & La Meteo	20.45 Sega Tipik Avec Clarel Armel		20.01 Tele: All The Flowers	02.00 Kundali Bhagya	
20.30 Film: The Holiday			21.05 Film: Venom: Let There Be...	02.30 Udaariyaan	
22.40 Tele: Terra Nostra					
jeudi 2 janvier	06.03 Tele: The Queen Of Flow	06.50 MBC Production	07.00 Tenali Rama	07.00 D.Anime: Miraculous...	14.25 Radha Mohan
	08.11 Serial: All The Flowers	08.37 Rodrig Prog: Kot Nou	08.00 Local: MBC Production	07.47 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob	15.00 Doree
	08.37 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent	08.53 Local: Proze Dime	12.00 Film: 12th Fail	08.35 Idefix Et Les Irreductibles	15.25 Film: Desi Boyz
	09.30 Film: The Holiday	10.33 Rodrig Prog: A Nou Kwi	Cast: Vikrant Massey, Anant Joshi	10.00 Film: Le Royaume De Dawn	Stars: Akshay Kumar, John Abraham, Deepika Padukone, Chitrangada Singh, Anupam Kher, Sanjay Dutt
	11.33 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	12.39 La Journee Sous Le Regard	15.00 Samachar	11.35 Transylvania	18.00 Live: Samachar
	12.00 Le Journal	12.44 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion	15.20 Serie	12.22 A Mediterranean Journey	18.30 Kundali Bhagya
	12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra	14.10 MBC Production	18.00 Samachar	12.45 Doc: Japan Video Topics	19.00 Udaariyaan
	13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin	15.10 Rodrig Prog: A Nou Kwi	18.30 MBC Production	13.00 Film: Gnomeo Et Juliet	14.57 D.Anime: Kids Songs
	13.45 Tele: Pasion Y Poder	16.19 La Journee Sous Le Regard	20.18 Serie	14.30 D.Anime: Nuzo And Zamia	15.22 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes
	14.15 Serial: The Six Million Dollar Man	16.24 Local: Aktiv	21.36 Magazine Serial	15.39 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois	15.51 D.Anime: Rockabye Island
15.25 Film: Venom: Let There Be...	18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder	22.02 Serie	16.02 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs	16.37 D.Anime: Miraculous...	
17.15 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	18.31 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent...	23.20 MBC Production	17.04 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi	17.04 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi	
18.00 Live: Samachar	19.00 Zournal Kreol	01.08 Serie	18.00 The Secrets Of Wetlands	18.42 Mag: Shift	
18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti	19.20 Local: Glwar Dantan	01.28 MBC Production	19.00 Doc: Glacier Express	20.01 Tele: All The Flowers	
18.56 Serial: Doree	20.00 Local: Tam Tam Zilwa Avec Grup Zilwa	03.16 Serie	20.01 Tele: All The Flowers	21.00 Film: Alien: Covenant	
19.30 Le Journal	21.05 Local: Festival Internasional Kreol 2024				
20.21 Film: Bade Miyan Chote Miyan	23.01 La Journee Sous Le Regard				
Stars: Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Prithviraj Sukumaran	23.06 Zournal Rediffusion				
23.04 Tele: Terra Nostra	23.26 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion				



Jeudi 2 janvier - 15.30

Stars: Akshay Kumar, John Abraham, Deepika Padukone, Chitrangada Singh, Anupam Kher, Sanjay Dutt



Jeudi 2 janvier - 20.21

Stars: Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Prithviraj Sukumaran





Kul Bhushan

Honky-dory 2025: New Thrust in Twenty-Four Days

After Captain America trumpets changes, all problems solved

Just twenty-four days! Yes, all you need is a mere 24 days (starting today), and every — yes, every — problem in this world will be solved in the new year. And everything will be honky-dory.

How? Simple! The new global ruler will impose his absolute will, commanding and managing the world according to his orders and direction.

Trumpeting his arrival, Captain America will move into the capital city and immediately sign dozens of commands with his massive signature that looks like a world map and the action begins. Or ends in some cases. Faced with a massive to-do list, he has to end two global wars in full swing, stop the arrival of thousands upon thousands of desperate hordes to the good life in his country, flood of cheap goods bursting in the shops, impose higher taxes due to unfair trade agreements, overspending and over-staffing in his realm, and the list goes on and on.

Wars End

The wars demand urgent response. He has assured everyone that his one phone call to his bearish friend will end the European war within 24 hours. Really? Yes, it's that simple. What has been going on since February 2022 with attacks by land and sea, bombing, killing and destruction. All this will stop in 24 hours once he attends to it.

“As a shrewd businessman takes over weak companies, he does not mind acquiring some more countries. Already he has dubbed his northern neighbour as the 51st state and ordained its governor, even if in jest. South of his border is a crucial canal vital for shipping which his country built but gave away in 1999 but now he wants it back because his ships are charged higher rates to use it. Moreover, he has made noises to acquire a remote Artic country as well...”

The other one in the Middle East is equally complicated. Here is a single country fighting around half a dozen enemies on different fronts since October 2023 when Arab radicals attacked Israel and took 251 hostages. Despite constant bombing by Israel and killing of 45,000 in Gaza, 117 hostages have been released although backstage negotiations have been going on. American aid in billions of dollars has financed this war and Captain America is not happy about all this cash flow. As a tough paymaster, he has threatened to reduce if not end this aid to end this war. Will this work?

Stop Illegals

At home, he has vowed to stop the huge march of illegal entrants into his country. The massive inflow of thousands upon thousands of non-residents trying to become citizens makes him livid. They take away jobs from locals, commit crimes and increase poverty, he claims. He does not bother if these newcomers perform unskilled jobs, keep the economy moving, pay taxes, add to national revenue. He just wants them out by sending them back and for this humongous task, he is willing to deploy his army, if needed.

Then he wants to cut the size of his government by reducing its staff and spending. For this task, he has appointed the world's richest man to slash the flab. This announcement has sent shivers down the spines of civil servants. Watch out!

Expanding Borders

As a shrewd businessman takes over weak companies, he does not mind acquiring some more countries. Already he has



With his orders signed on the first day, Donald Trump claims this big new thrust to change the world will become honky dory in just 20 days in the new year. The world is waiting for these surprises and shocks. Pic - AP

dubbed his northern neighbour as the 51st state and ordained its governor, even if in jest. South of his border is a crucial canal vital for shipping which his country built but gave away in 1999 but now he wants it back because his ships are charged higher rates to use it. Moreover, he has made noises to acquire a remote Artic country as well.

Reshape Trade

Most of all, he wants to reshape global trade which he strongly believes is unfair for his country by raising tariffs on imports. This will be a major shakeup for international trade. His other tasks are aimed at energy, health, education, internal security, crime, climate among others. To carry them out, he has appointed his team of loyalists, many of whom are millionaires, if not billionaires, to bring business sense to his government.

With his orders signed on the first day, he claims this big new thrust to change the world will become honky dory in just 20 days in the new year. The world is waiting for these surprises and shocks.

Anand Kul Bhushan is a writer, journalist, UN media consultant and workshop/meditation leader.

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Tree of Knowledge

Being Aware of Your Thoughts



We seldom accept negative comments from others; however, we so often accept our own inner negative chatter

Few people enjoy the company of individuals whose attitudes are persistently negative. Yet, many of us tolerate the critical chatter that originates in our own minds. Since we are so used to the stream of self-limiting, critical consciousness that winds its way through our thoughts, we are often unaware of the impact these musings have on our lives. It is only when we become aware of the power of such thoughts that we can divest ourselves of them and fill the emptiness they leave with loving, peaceful affirmations.

Many people, upon paying careful attention to their thought patterns, are surprised at the negativity they find there. But when we take notice of involuntary thoughts in a nonjudgmental way, we initiate a healing process that will eventually allow us to replace intimidating and upsetting self-talk with positive, empowering thoughts.

While the occasional downbeat or judgmental thought may have little impact on your contentment, the ongoing negativity that passes unnoticed can have a dampening effect on your mood and your outlook. When you are aware of the tone of your thoughts, you can challenge them. Try to be conscious of your feelings, opinions, and judgments for a single day. From sunup to sundown, scrutinize the messages you are feeding into your subconscious mind. Consider your thoughts from the perspective of a detached observer and try not to judge yourself based on the notions that come unbidden into your mind. Simply watch the flow of your consciousness and make a note of the number of times you find yourself focusing on gloomy notions or indulging in self-directed criticism.

As you become increasingly aware of your patterns of thought, whether positive and negative, you will gradually learn to control the character of your stream of consciousness. Always endeavour to remember that the images and ideas that pass through your mind are transient and not a true representation of who you are. In training yourself to be cognizant of your thoughts, you gain the ability to actively modulate your mood. The awareness you cultivate within yourself will eventually enable you to create a foundation of positivity from which you can build a more authentic existence.

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