

# MAURITIUS TIMES

• *The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government. -- Thomas Jefferson*

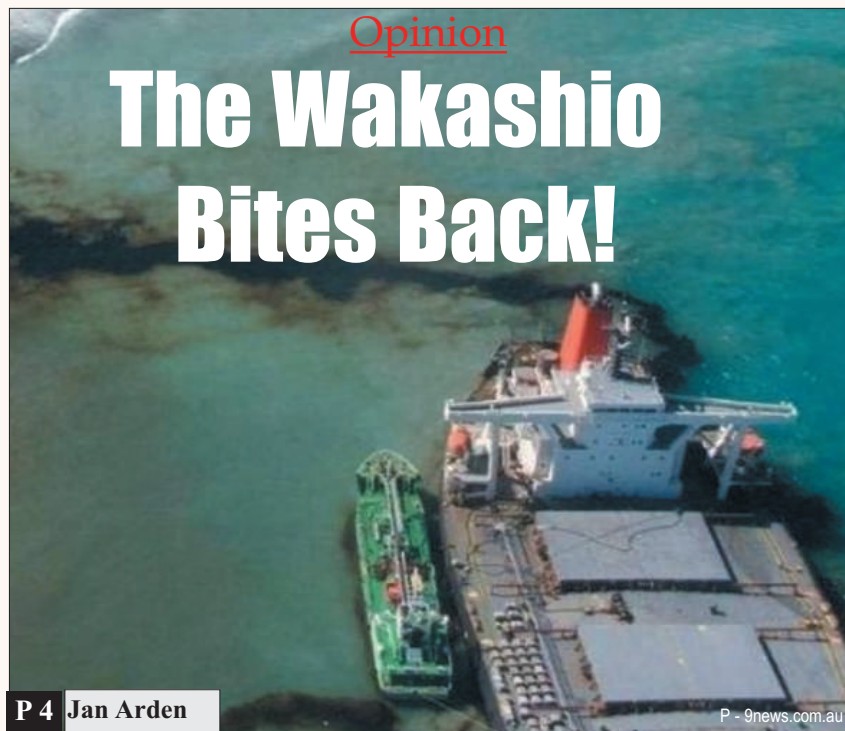


Analyse

Prakash Neerohoo P3

Changement politique

## A quoi sert un président de la République?



Opinion

## The Wakashio Bites Back!

P 4 Jan Arden

P - 9news.com.au



Breakfast with Bwana

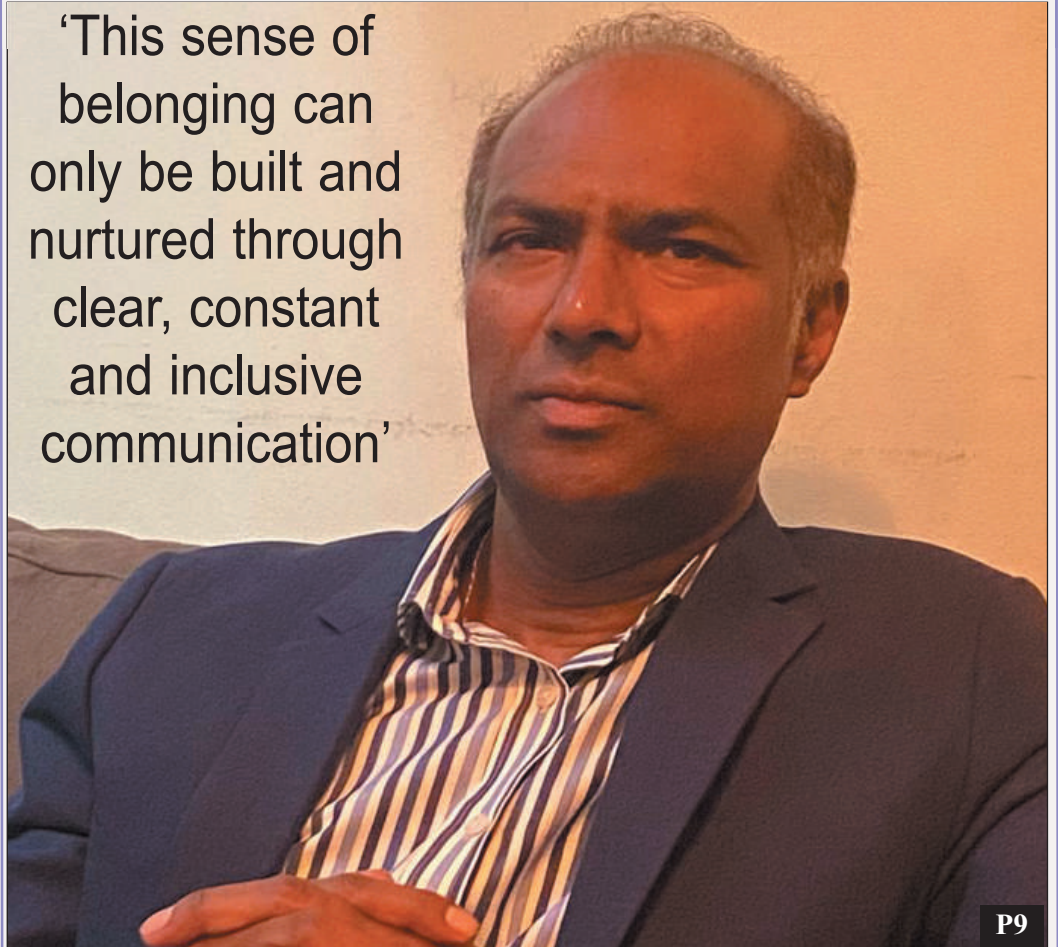
Anil Madan P8

## COP 29 – Looking for Trillions, Disappointed with Billions

Interview: Dr Vinaye Ancharaz, International Economic Consultant

## “For change to be effective, it must be owned by the people”

‘This sense of belonging can only be built and nurtured through clear, constant and inclusive communication’



P9

• ‘The MSM govt cooked up GDP figures to make the situation look rosier than it really was’

Eclairages

## Une proportion grandissante de jeunes Mauriciens explore des perspectives internationales



P - YouTube

A. Bartleby P5

# Audit and the Road Ahead

**T**he recent announcement by the new government of Mauritius regarding an audit of the country's economy has raised significant questions about the fiscal health of the nation and the effectiveness of past economic policies. The necessity of such an audit, especially in light of the current state of public finances, implies that there may be more to the story than what the public has been led to believe. The fiscal health of Mauritius, including the levels of public debt, the fiscal deficit, and revenue generation, already provides a clear picture of the country's economic situation. Public debt, which has reached a concerning level, combined with a persistent fiscal deficit, indicates that the economy is struggling to maintain fiscal discipline. Revenue generation, though it has improved in recent years, remains insufficient to cover the country's growing expenditure. These indicators alone should suffice to provide a snapshot of the economy's health.

However, while these metrics are valuable, an audit could offer a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the economic situation. An audit would likely uncover not only the raw figures but also the underlying causes behind the current fiscal challenges. It could reveal whether specific government policies or financial mismanagement contributed to unsustainable debt levels or whether unforeseen global economic conditions played a larger role. More importantly, an audit could help identify areas of inefficiency and corruption that may have been concealed by previous administrations.

There was widespread suspicion, particularly within the former Opposition, that the previous government may have concealed or downplayed the true state of the economy. The possibility of deliberate obfuscation is deeply troubling. In a democracy, transparency and accountability are supposed to be pillars of governance. However, as observed in many countries, governments sometimes underreport or manipulate economic data to maintain an illusion of stability, particularly during election periods. If the previous government did obscure the true state of the economy, it would signify not only a failure of leadership but also a betrayal of public trust. Should institutions responsible for economic oversight, such as Statistics Mauritius and the central bank, be found complicit in presenting a misleading picture of the economy, they too would bear responsibility. This is especially critical because the integrity and independence of institutions tasked with collecting and reporting economic data must remain beyond reproach to ensure public confidence in the information provided.

## Excessive reliance on debt

One of the key factors contributing to the current economic situation is the excessive reliance on debt to fund government spending. The previous administration borrowed extensively to finance public infrastructure projects, social welfare programs, and electoral promises. While some of these projects may have been necessary, the



absence of a sustainable repayment plan has led to ballooning public debt. Another contributing factor is the sluggish growth of the private sector. The Mauritian economy has historically depended on a few key industries, such as tourism, sugar, and textiles. However, the former government's failure to diversify the economy or invest in new sectors has left the country vulnerable to external shocks, particularly the global downturn caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The lack of innovation and investment in sectors such as technology, renewable energy, and manufacturing has exposed Mauritius to the whims of global markets. Additionally, high levels of inefficiency in public services have created economic distortions.

**L**ooking ahead, one of the most pressing questions is how much fiscal space the government will have to implement necessary policy reforms without worsening the current economic challenges. Given the state of public finances, it is unlikely the government can undertake large-scale reforms without carefully considering their fiscal implications. The government may need to prioritize key reforms, particularly in education, healthcare, and infrastructure, while addressing the fiscal deficit. Some reforms may need to be delayed or scaled back to avoid further debt accumulation. However, implementing policies that stimulate private sector growth and reduce public sector inefficiency could create the necessary conditions for fiscal consolidation in the medium to long term. Additionally, while social welfare programs aim to support the vulnerable, the ineffective targeting of these programs means they often fail to reach those most in need. A more targeted and efficient social welfare system could alleviate some of the economic pressures.

The implementation of the 14th-month bonus, a key electoral promise by the 'Alliance du Changement,' presents a significant challenge. While it is a popular measure, the previous government notably avoided addressing the possibility of reducing petroleum product prices, a more tangible way to alleviate the cost of living. Implementing the 14th-month bonus may prove more difficult than anticipated, given the limited fiscal space. In the context of limited fiscal space, the government may need to explore

progressive taxation to generate the necessary revenue. Progressive taxation would involve taxing higher income brackets at greater rates, ensuring that wealthier individuals and businesses contribute more to national coffers. This approach could help generate additional revenue while promoting greater social equity. However, implementing progressive taxation will require careful planning to avoid disincentivizing investment or driving businesses away.

## Mobilizing Revenue

**E**conomist Vinaye Ancharaz, speaking to the *Mauritius Times* this week, noted, "There are other ways to mobilize revenue than reforming the income tax system. The impact of the reform on tax revenue, introduced in the 2023-24 Budget which introduced a dose of progressivity, needs to be studied before implementing further changes. Higher tax rates may not always yield increased tax revenues due to the so-called Laffer-curve effect." The government will need to balance generating revenue with fostering an environment conducive to economic growth.

Regarding the disbursements made by the MIC to the so-called "distressed companies" following the Covid pandemic, little is known to date about the conditions attached to these "loans," aside from the amounts allocated to individual companies. The government must ensure that these loans and other facilities are fully repaid, creating the fiscal space needed to fund its programs, particularly in priority areas.

On the other hand, improving the efficiency of public spending will be crucial for Mauritius' long-term economic health. The government should focus on optimizing resource allocation, particularly in areas such as social welfare, infrastructure, and public services. Streamlining operations, cutting wasteful spending, and enhancing public service delivery could free up resources for more productive investments. Reviewing social welfare benefits, including pensions, may also be necessary to ensure they are targeted and effective. A more focused approach could ensure the most vulnerable receive the support they require. Stabilizing commodity prices, particularly for essentials like food and fuel, will also be a major challenge.

Finally, the government must effectively communicate its economic reforms and fiscal policies to the public. The road ahead will be challenging, and transparency about the obstacles and a clear commitment to addressing them will be crucial. The road ahead for Mauritius will not be easy. The government's decision to conduct an economic audit is an essential step toward understanding the true state of the economy. However, it is only the beginning. Skilfully managing fiscal limitations, implementing necessary reforms, and maintaining open communication with the public will be vital to ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for the country.

## Mauritius Times

**Founder/Editor: Beekrumsing Ramlallah**  
Aug 1954-Sept 2000

**Editor-in-chief: M. Ramlallah**  
**Senior Editor: Dr RN Gopee**

*This paper has been produced with  
the assistance of*

**K.Ramlallah, Sultana Kurmally  
& Kersley Ramsamy**

28 Jawaharlal Street (formerly Wellington Street),  
Port Louis - Tel: 5-29 29301  
Tel/Fax: 212 1313

mtimes@intnet.mu ; www.mauritiustimes.com; facebook.com/mauritius.times



Prakash Neerohoo

## Changement politique

# A quoi sert un président de la République?

Ce vendredi, le Parlement approuvera la nomination d'un nouveau président de la République pour succéder au président sortant Pradeep Roopun, dont le mandat de cinq ans a expiré le 2 décembre 2024. A quoi sert un président dans la République de Maurice? Cette question paraît anodine, mais elle revêt une importance particulière dans le contexte du changement politique qui a porté au pouvoir un nouveau gouvernement. Ce dernier s'est installé la semaine dernière en faisant le plein de ministres (24) et de ministres adjoints (10) prévus dans la Constitution.

D'abord, considérons le rôle du président tel qu'il est défini dans l'alinéa 28(1) (b) de la Constitution (voir la référence ci-dessous). Le président est tenu de soutenir et de défendre la Constitution afin de s'assurer que :

- les institutions de la démocratie et l'Etat de droit soient protégés ;
- les droits fondamentaux de tous soient respectés; et
- l'unité de la nation mauricienne dans sa diversité soit maintenue et renforcée.

En théorie, le rôle du président est celui d'un gardien de la Constitution avec pour attributions spécifiques de protéger la démocratie au sens large du terme, d'assurer les droits civils et de préserver l'unité nationale. Mais, dans la pratique, les choses ne se passent pas de façon aussi souple. Tous les gouvernements sont parfois tentés de restreindre les libertés civiles et rétrécir le champ d'action des contre-pouvoirs (judiciaire, presse, syndicats, opposition) afin de se prémunir contre les critiques. Lorsque cela arrive dans la réalité, on s'attend à ce que le président s'élève à la hauteur de ses responsabilités pour veiller que la démocratie ne soit pas entravée ou muselée.

### Rôle fantôme

Sur ce plan, il faut dire malheureusement que tous les présidents dans l'Histoire de la République ont joué un



« Lorsque le président ne joue pas son rôle de garant de la Constitution, c'est la Cour suprême qui est appelée à trancher les litiges constitutionnels et, en attendant toute décision de cette instance judiciaire, c'est l'Etat de droit qui en pâtit. Dans une démocratie fondée sur l'équilibre des pouvoirs, les institutions devraient fonctionner en toute indépendance sans un recours abusif à la procédure légale... »

rôle passif face au gouvernement du jour, à l'exception de l'ex-président Cassam Uteem, qui avait démissionné de son poste en février 2002 en raison de son objection contre certaines dispositions d'un texte de loi sur le terrorisme qu'il jugeait anti-libertaires. Un autre président, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, avait démissionné en mars 2012, mais il ne l'avait pas fait à cause de quelque divergence grave sur un texte de loi. Il était plutôt parti pour rejoindre l'opposition après la démission du MSM du gouvernement PTr-MSM issu des élections de 2010.

A l'exception de ces deux personnes, tous les présidents à ce jour se sont accommodés docilement des actes du gouvernement de leur époque, jouant un rôle fantôme pour apposer leur signature

sur tous les textes de loi qui leur furent soumis pour être ratifiés. Ils ne sont jamais prévalus de l'article 64(2) de la Constitution qui prévoit que le président peut demander au conseil des ministres de reconsidérer une décision s'il juge qu'elle n'est pas satisfaisante dans l'intérêt public.

Sous ce rapport, la présidence de Roopun durant la période du 2 décembre 2019 au 2 décembre 2024 a été particulièrement sans lustre. Il s'est contenté d'un rôle honorifique, décernant son satisfecit à tous les textes de loi votés au Parlement, ne faisant aucune intervention publique digne d'intérêt national et gardant un silence absolu sur les enjeux de société cruciaux qui dépassent les clivages politiques (notamment le trafic de drogue, l'écologie, la criminalité et la pauvreté). Il n'a pas joué son rôle de garant de la Constitution dans deux cas particuliers, l'un concernant le rôle de la Financial Crimes Commission (FCC) et l'autre concernant le rôle du Directeur des Poursuites Publiques (DPP).

### Deux cas d'inaction

Dans le premier cas, le gouvernement MSM a fait voter en décembre 2023 une loi instituant la FCC avec pour rôle d'en-

quêter sur les crimes financiers et de poursuivre les suspects sans passer par le bureau du DPP. Cette usurpation du pouvoir de poursuite du DPP sous l'article 6 de la nouvelle loi fut vivement critiquée à l'époque par des observateurs avertis (voir notre article intitulé « La FCC, une commission de poursuite 2.0 » dans notre édition du 8 décembre 2023).

Le DPP lui-même a contesté cette disposition particulière de la nouvelle loi devant la Cour suprême, qui n'a pas encore donné son jugement. Le président, pour sa part, est resté motus et bouche cousue sur cette entorse à la séparation des pouvoirs entre l'organisme d'investigation et l'autorité de poursuite. Le DPP vient de demander au gouvernement d'abroger cette partie de la nouvelle loi qui lui enlève le pouvoir exclusif de poursuite tel que garanti dans la section 72 de la Constitution.

Dans le second cas, le commissaire de police a contesté devant la Cour suprême le pouvoir du DPP de consentir à la libération sous caution de certains suspects arrêtés pour trafic de drogue allégué, ce qui a donné lieu à une crise constitutionnelle entre ces deux détenteurs de postes constitutionnels. Là aussi, l'équilibre des pouvoirs entre deux institutions a été remis en cause. Le président aurait pu agir comme l'arbitre du conflit constitutionnel pour amener les deux parties à s'entendre dans l'intérêt de la séparation des pouvoirs, mais il a gardé un silence assourdissant.

Lorsque le président ne joue pas son rôle de garant de la Constitution, c'est la Cour suprême qui est appelée à trancher les litiges constitutionnels et, en attendant toute décision de cette instance judiciaire, c'est l'Etat de droit qui en pâtit. Dans une démocratie fondée sur l'équilibre des pouvoirs, les institutions devraient fonctionner en toute indépendance sans un recours abusif à la procédure légale.

### Nouvelles attentes

Les attentes de la population envers le prochain président de la République sont d'autant plus grandes qu'elle vient d'exercer un vote massif en faveur de la démocratie avec pour piliers l'indépendance des institutions, la séparation des pouvoirs entre les trois branches de l'Etat (l'exécutif, la législature et le judiciaire) et le fonctionnement efficace de l'Etat de droit.

Dans le contexte de la rupture promise avec les pratiques despotiques et de mauvaise gouvernance de l'ancien régime, on espère que le nouveau président sera conscient de ses devoirs et responsabilités pour empêcher toute dérive anti-démocratique. On s'attend aussi qu'il privilégie l'intérêt public en prenant un rôle de leadership dans la conscientisation populaire autour des enjeux de société fondamentaux (trafic de drogue, défense de l'environnement, unité nationale, promotion de la culture, combat contre la criminalité, etc.).

☞ Suite en page 16

« Dans le contexte de la rupture promise avec les pratiques despotiques et de mauvaise gouvernance de l'ancien régime, on espère que le nouveau président sera conscient de ses devoirs et responsabilités pour empêcher toute dérive anti-démocratique. On s'attend aussi qu'il privilégie l'intérêt public en prenant un rôle de leadership dans la conscientisation populaire autour des enjeux de société fondamentaux - trafic de drogue, défense de l'environnement, unité nationale, promotion de la culture, combat contre la criminalité, etc... »

# The Wakashio Bites Back!

Jan Arden

Citizen Pravind Kumar Jugnauth will now have time, away from sycophants and a previously regal posse of advisors, to reflect on the series of events that led to his government and the MSM being viewed as unwelcome by the electorate, ultimately resulting in their rejection after just one term in office. Many observers might say the writings were on the wall since the historical demonstration in the capital organised by NGOs where the now-famous local version of "Boot Him Out" was coined and loudly chanted under the august windows of the Treasury Building in the wake of the shockingly lackadaisical handling of the Wakashio maritime disaster in 2020.

This was a disaster where foreign interests - a Japanese built, owned, operated and insured vessel that ran aground on our south-east coast coral reefs, which it never should have been close to and which our radars, coast guards and national security agencies should have prevented. Evidence indicates that Mauritius was very well equipped; the event did not come as a surprise and the large ship's trajectory away from the safe international passageway was known for days. Importantly, the country had dealt with similar incidents very successfully before.

To this day, many questions remain unanswered about that tragedy, some forever sunk in the Indian Ocean. In a ghastly twist, four unfortunate crew members of the Sir Gaetan Duval tug from the East coast had also lost their lives in the aftermath of that disaster.

It may have been a shock to MSM elec-



“The Wakashio maritime disaster in 2020 was a catastrophic event where foreign interests - a Japanese built, owned, operated and insured vessel that ran aground on our south-east coast coral reefs, which it never should have been close to and which our radars, coast guards and national security agencies should have prevented. Evidence indicates that Mauritius was very well equipped; the event did not come as a surprise and the large ship's trajectory away from the safe international passageway was known for days. Importantly, the country had dealt with similar incidents very successfully before...”

toral strategists that Wakashio came back with such a ferocious bite, as no threats and bullying, no promises, dish-outs or financial pledges from empty state coffers and mountainous public debts could buck the angry nationalistic trend from those early days. That anger would of course be reinforced by the dubious cover-ups in the suspicious murder of MSM chief agent Kistnen in Moka cane fields in the PM's own constituency.

In the follow-up atmosphere of oppression and numerous scandals yet to be properly unearthed, one could sense the rhythmic tunes of "Les Misérables" echoing silently in thousands of hearts: ***"Do you hear the people sing, singing the song of angry men? It is the music of a people who will not be slaves again."***

\* \* \*

## State finances and iconic promises

The Ministry of Finance and the economic team at Bank of Mauritius and PMO will be busy scanning the real state of the Mauritian economy and fish out real figures

from the rosy but discredited ones dished about by former Minister Padayachy. They obviously have to take stock before addressing the iconic promises of a lowering of pump-fuel prices and a one-off fourteenth month to those who suffered the most, without endangering the survival of SMEs.

The gradual re-evaluation of the rupee would alleviate scarcity of forex in the market and, with lowered diesel prices, reduce the inflationary prices in grocery stores and supermarkets. Any call for making the 14th month a regular annual feature costing some Rs 5 billion, without even considering gains in output and productivity, sounds like sheer demagoguery at this stage.

In the medium term, the authorities should emphasize the re-industrialisation of Mauritius and actively seek or promote new pillars of growth to stop relying on easy property sales and reduce the yawning gap between imports and exports. The Economic Development Board, in its current form and function, should be seriously revamped; several entrepreneurs have

turned their backs on us when faced with the questions from courtiers and intrigants hovering at the institution.

\* \* \*

## Correcting the fundamentals!

Among symbolic measures of significance to the Mauritian public, the Pomponette Beach, a rare relaxation area for the general public, would be reclaimed as public beach and, hopefully, fitted with decently maintained public amenities. All Ministers would be poring over the legacy of their predecessors, especially those most concerned by the parlous state of our roads and drains infrastructure in view of the cyclonic or heavy rains period ahead. Others should be busy preparing the legislative changes to make the whimsical postponement of regional elections a thing of the past and encourage women participation by the same token.

Scorched earth policies are one thing, but challenges and pitfalls lie in every Ministry. At Health, Minister Anil Baichoo will have his hands full dealing with the hubris of the previous regime. At Agriculture and Fisheries, Dr Arvin Boolell has been there before and has the experience to bring innovation and concrete help to his portfolio. At Education, the designated Minister, Mahend Gungaparsad, has the innate ability to listen to all stakeholders over the derelict, exam-ridden, competitive spirit of mainstream education which labels 30% or more of our children as failures.

That elitist philosophy, cloaked in empty rhetoric, was evidenced in the new exam introduced at the NCE, the obnoxious extended stream and its predictably dismal results and the arrogant dismissal of children with only 3 credits to pursue their studies. This cannot be addressed with mere band-aid solutions to an overwhelming failure. We certainly deserve better as a nation!

# What now? Clean the Augean stables!

After the thumping majority handed to the Quad forces of Labour Party, Mouvement Militant Mauricien, Nouveaux Démocrates and Resistans ek Alternativ, under the unifying quadricolour flag, many are the expectations from all quarters, some impatiently demanding the pound of flesh.

There is a strong call for defaulters, scammers, and the corrupt that blithely plunged their hands into state coffers be properly investigated. This must be done not as an act of political vendetta or a witch hunt, as seen in past years since 2015, but with impartiality, ensuring that justice is served without fear or favour.

Equally, there is a call for political appointees at all levels — including CEOs, Directors-General, and Boards — to vacate their offices without delay and without angling for some reprieve, undignified handshake or turn-coat appeals. Officers in Charge (OICs) can oversee operations until the government appoints the most qualified individuals to these critical roles. Institutions like the MBC, Mauritius Telecom, Air Mauritius, State Bank, Ports and Airport, investigative agencies, Public Service and Disciplined Forces Commissions, Electoral Commission, and SICOM stand out as priority areas demanding immediate and

thoughtful attention.

Up till now, moving albeit cautiously, the mix of experience and youth in appointments for Cabinet and ministerial duties or those designated to key posts have been generally welcomed: the President Dharam Gokhool, the CP Rampersad Sooroojally, Attorney-General Gavin Glover, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Sec-Cab amongst others.

A necessary reorganisation is under way at Police Headquarters which has to tackle several high-profile cases swept under the carpet. This includes instances where the former police hierarchy outrightly refused to conduct proper investigations, as requested by a presiding court magistrate and even the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). One notable example is the cold-blooded murder of MSM activist Soopramanien Kistnen, which demands thorough and transparent investigation.

Despite all this, it remains somewhat baffling and even irksome that many posts are still being manned by appointees of the MSM's "La Kwizin". The Augean stables need cleaning!



“A necessary reorganisation is under way at Police headquarters which has to tackle several high-profile cases swept under the carpet. One notable example is the cold-blooded murder of MSM activist Soopramanien Kistnen, which demands thorough and transparent investigation...”  
Pic - NewsMoris

# Une proportion grandissante de jeunes Mauriciens explore des perspectives internationales

Par A. Bartleby

**L**es jeunes Mauriciens, qui représentent environ 30 % de la population, envisagent de plus en plus leur avenir à l'étranger, attirés par de meilleures opportunités et des conditions de vie plus favorables. C'est l'une des principales conclusions du dernier sondage Afrobaromètre, qui examine les priorités, les évaluations et les perspectives de cette tranche de la population.

Pour cette enquête, l'équipe Afrobaromètre à Maurice, dirigée par StraConsult, a interrogé un échantillon nationalement représentatif de 1 200 Mauriciens adultes entre avril et mai 2024. Des sondages similaires avaient précédemment été réalisés en 2012, 2014, 2017, 2020 et 2022, permettant une analyse des tendances au fil du temps.

Malgré une baisse notable du chômage des jeunes ces dernières années – de 23,2 % en 2013 à 18,2 % en 2023 – ces derniers restent trois fois plus touchés par le chômage que la population en général. Cette situation reflète non seulement des défis économiques globaux, mais aussi des obstacles spécifiques aux jeunes, tels qu'un manque de formation professionnelle adéquate et une absence d'expérience demandée par les employeurs.

Les jeunes âgés de 18 à 24 ans sont particulièrement préoccupés par l'écart entre les qualifications académiques et les exigences du marché du travail, un problème cité par 20 % d'entre eux. En outre, certains employeurs perçoivent les jeunes comme peu enclins à accepter des emplois dans des secteurs jugés moins attrayants, tels que l'agriculture ou les métiers exigeants. Cependant, seuls 10 % des jeunes partagent ce point de vue, révélant une



L'absence d'opportunités pour les diplômés et les professionnels qualifiés ne pousse pas seulement ces talents à quitter le pays, mais décourage également le retour des membres de la diaspora mauricienne. P - YouTube

déconnexion entre les perceptions des générations plus âgées et les réalités vécues par la jeunesse.

## L'exode des compétences: un défi national

Par ailleurs, une des tendances les plus alarmantes pour l'avenir de Maurice est l'augmentation significative du nombre de jeunes envisageant l'émigration. En 2024, près de trois jeunes sur quatre (74 %) âgés de 18 à 24 ans ont déclaré avoir pensé à partir, dont 38 % y ont réfléchi « beaucoup ». Chez les jeunes de 25 à 34 ans, le chiffre est similaire, avec 73 % exprimant le même désir.

**L**es motivations derrière cet exode sont principalement économiques: 57 % des jeunes citent la recherche de meilleures opportunités professionnelles comme raison principale de leur désir de partir. L'absence d'opportunités pour les diplômés et les professionnels qualifiés ne pousse pas seulement ces talents à quitter le pays, mais décourage également le retour des membres de la diaspora mauricienne, malgré les efforts déployés pour les inciter à

revenir.

Outre les motivations économiques, certains jeunes mentionnent la quête d'une éducation de meilleure qualité, tandis qu'une minorité cherche à fuir des conditions de vie difficiles ou souhaitent explorer d'autres cultures.

## Les priorités et les perceptions des jeunes

Les jeunes Mauriciens expriment des préoccupations claires quant aux principaux problèmes du pays. Pour les 18-24 ans, la lutte contre les drogues est la priorité absolue, citée par 40 % d'entre eux, tandis que les 25-34 ans mettent en avant la hausse du coût de la vie, également à 40 %. L'insécurité et le chômage figurent également en tête de liste des préoccupations, avec des taux de réponse significatifs dans les deux groupes.

Cependant, les jeunes sont très critiques envers le précédent gouvernement en ce qui concerne ses performances sur ces questions clés. Seulement 35 % des jeunes de 18 à 24 ans et 34 % des 25 à 34

ans approuvent les efforts du gouvernement sortant en matière de création d'emplois, et encore moins d'entre eux le jugent efficace pour stabiliser les prix ou réduire la criminalité.

En revanche, une majorité de jeunes reconnaissent les réussites du gouvernement sortant dans des domaines tels que l'éducation, la santé, l'entretien des infrastructures et la fourniture d'électricité. Cela montre que, malgré les critiques, certains efforts sont bien accueillis, mais ils restent insuffisants pour résoudre les problèmes structurels affectant la jeunesse.

## Un avenir incertain mais prometteur

Malgré les nombreux défis, les jeunes Mauriciens restent un moteur potentiel de transformation pour le pays. Leur dynamisme, leur créativité et leur aspiration à un avenir meilleur peuvent contribuer à la construction d'un pays plus prospère, à condition que leurs préoccupations soient prises en compte.

**L**e nouveau gouvernement, élu en novembre 2024, a une opportunité unique de répondre à ces attentes. En investissant dans l'éducation et la formation professionnelle, en favorisant la création d'emplois de qualité et en s'attaquant aux inégalités économiques, il peut non seulement réduire les taux d'émigration, mais aussi transformer Maurice en un lieu où les jeunes veulent non seulement vivre, mais prospérer.

L'avenir de Maurice repose sur sa jeunesse. Cependant, l'augmentation de l'émigration des jeunes révèle une crise latente qui nécessite une action urgente. Si des réformes profondes ne sont pas entreprises pour améliorer les conditions économiques et sociales, Maurice risque de perdre une partie importante de son capital humain.

Pour inverser cette tendance, il est impératif que les décideurs politiques, les entreprises et la société civile collaborent pour créer un environnement où les jeunes peuvent s'épanouir. Ce n'est qu'en répondant à leurs aspirations que Maurice pourra réaliser pleinement son potentiel en tant que nation moderne et prospère.



**L**e président Joe Biden a accordé une grâce à son fils Hunter, évitant ainsi à ce dernier une possible peine de prison pour des condamnations fédérales liées à des infractions sur des armes à feu et des taxes, et

# Hunter Biden gracié: Joe Biden face à un dilemme moral et politique

revenant sur ses précédentes promesses de ne pas utiliser les pouvoirs extraordinaires de la présidence pour favoriser sa famille.

Le président démocrate avait précédemment déclaré qu'il ne pardonnerait pas son fils ni ne commuerait sa peine après ses condamnations dans deux affaires, l'une dans le Delaware et l'autre en Californie. Cette décision, prise dimanche dernier, survient quelques semaines avant que Hunter Biden ne soit condamné, après sa condamnation dans l'affaire des armes à feu et sa plaidoirie de culpabilité dans l'affaire fiscale, et à moins de deux mois de retour attendu de Donald Trump à la Maison Blanche.

Cela marque la fin d'une saga juridique de longue durée pour le fils cadet de Biden, qui avait publiquement

révélé en décembre 2020 être sous enquête fédérale -- un mois après la victoire de son père à la présidentielle --, terminant ainsi l'héritage du président.

Joe Biden, qui avait promis à maintes reprises de restaurer les normes et le respect de l'État de droit après le premier mandat de Trump, a finalement utilisé sa position pour aider son fils, rompant ainsi sa promesse publique de ne pas intervenir pour sa famille.

Dans une déclaration publiée dimanche soir, Biden a déclaré : « Je crois en le système judiciaire, mais tout en luttant avec cette décision, je pense aussi que la politique brute a contaminé ce processus et a conduit à une injustice. »

☞ Suite en page 6

# Hunter Biden gracié: Joe Biden face à un dilemme moral et politique

☞ Suite de la page 5

Le pardon accordé par le président couvre non seulement les infractions liées aux armes à feu et aux taxes, commises par Hunter Biden, mais aussi d'éventuelles «infractions contre les États-Unis qu'il a commises ou pourrait avoir commis ou auxquelles il a pu participer entre le 1er janvier 2014 et le 1er décembre 2024.»

En juin, Biden avait catégoriquement exclu tout pardon ou commutation pour son fils, affirmant aux journalistes que, face au procès de son fils dans l'affaire des armes à feu dans le Delaware, «je respecterai la décision du jury. Je ferai cela et je ne le pardonnerai pas.»

**M**ême le 8 novembre dernier, après la victoire de Trump, la porte-parole de la Maison Blanche, Karine Jean-Pierre, avait exclu toute possibilité de pardon ou de clémence pour Hunter Biden, affirmant: «Nous avons été interrogés à plusieurs reprises à ce sujet. Notre réponse reste la même, c'est non.»

Le président a publiquement soutenu son fils unique, Hunter, qui a lutté contre une addiction grave à la drogue et a plongé sa vie familiale dans le chaos avant de se reprendre ces dernières années. Ses rivaux politiques ont souvent utilisé les erreurs de Hunter Biden pour attaquer son père: lors d'une audience, des législateurs ont même exposé des photos de son fils sous l'emprise de la drogue, à moitié nu



Joe Biden, qui avait promis à maintes reprises de restaurer les normes et le respect de l'État de droit après le premier mandat de Trump, a finalement utilisé sa position pour aider son fils... P - Le Journal de Montréal

dans un hôtel sordide.

Les républicains de la Chambre des représentants ont également tenté d'utiliser les années d'affaires douteuses à l'étranger de Hunter Biden dans une tentative d'*impeachment* avortée de son père. Ce dernier a toujours nié toute implication dans les affaires de son fils ou en avoir tiré profit.

«Les accusations portées contre lui n'ont vu le jour qu'après que plusieurs de mes opposants politiques au Congrès les aient instiguées pour m'attaquer et s'opposer à mon élection», a déclaré Biden dans sa déclaration. «Aucune personne raison-

nable, qui regarde les faits des affaires de Hunter, ne peut arriver à une autre conclusion que Hunter a été pris pour cible uniquement parce qu'il est mon fils.»

«J'espère que les Américains comprendront pourquoi un père et un président ont pris cette décision», a ajouté Biden, précisant qu'il l'avait prise ce week-end.

Joe Biden n'est pas le premier président à utiliser ses pouvoirs de grâce pour favoriser ses proches.

Dans ses dernières semaines en fonction, Donald Trump a pardonné à Charles Kushner, le père de son gendre Jared

Kushner, ainsi qu'à plusieurs alliés condamnés dans l'enquête du procureur spécial Robert Mueller sur la Russie. Trump a également annoncé ce week-end son intention de nommer le père de Kushner ambassadeur des États-Unis en France lors de son prochain mandat.

**T**ump, qui a promis de réorganiser en profondeur le ministère de la Justice et d'y installer des partisans après sa mise en accusation pour son rôle dans la tentative de renverser l'élection présidentielle de 2020, a qualifié le pardon accordé à Hunter Biden de «véritable abus et erreur judiciaire.»

«Ce pardon donné par Joe à Hunter inclut-il aussi les otages du 6 janvier, qui sont maintenant emprisonnés depuis des années?» a demandé Trump, faisant référence à ceux condamnés dans l'émeute violente du 6 janvier 2021 au Capitole par ses partisans.

La décision de Joe Biden de gracier son fils Hunter, bien que compréhensible sur le plan humain, soulève de nombreuses questions sur l'intégrité des institutions et la promesse d'impartialité qu'il avait mise en avant lors de sa campagne présidentielle. Alors qu'il avait juré de ne pas intervenir dans les affaires judiciaires concernant sa famille, ce pardon donne l'impression que les standards éthiques sont malléables lorsqu'il s'agit de ses proches.

Si l'humanité et la compassion d'un père envers son fils sont compréhensibles, l'enjeu ici est la perception publique d'un double standard, notamment à un moment où la polarisation politique atteint des sommets. Pour un président qui a promis de restaurer la foi dans les institutions démocratiques, cette grâce risque de ternir son héritage bien plus que de le protéger.

## Un cas rare: Le gouvernement irlandais réélu malgré les vents contraires mondiaux

**D**ans un contexte global où de nombreux gouvernements ont été sanctionnés par les électeurs en 2024, l'Irlande fait figure d'exception. Les partis du centre-droit Fianna Fáil et Fine Gael, membres de la coalition au pouvoir, ont réussi à éviter le sort habituel réservé aux sortants. Ensemble, leurs votes de première préférence n'ont diminué que de 0,4 point, atteignant 42,7 % par rapport aux élections générales de 2020.

Ce résultat est remarquable, compte tenu du coût de la vie élevé et de la crise persistante du logement. La performance de Fine Gael est d'autant plus notable qu'il est au pouvoir depuis 2011.

### Sinn Féin: Une perte de dynamique

Lors des élections de 2020, le Sinn Féin avait surpris en devenant le premier choix de 24,5 % des électeurs. Cependant, en raison d'un nombre insuffisant de candidats, le parti n'avait pas pleinement capitalisé sur



Le Fianna Fáil de Micheal Martin devrait devenir le plus grand parti au Dáil, cela dans un contexte global où de nombreux gouvernements ont été sanctionnés par les électeurs en 2024. P - AP

cet élan et avait obtenu moins de sièges que Fianna Fáil. Depuis, le Sinn Féin s'est positionné comme un gouvernement en attente, avec des sondages atteignant un

sommet de 36 % en 2022.

**T**outefois, cette popularité a chuté, notamment en raison du refus du parti d'adopter une position anti-immigration, un

sujet de plus en plus politisé en Irlande. Les élections locales et européennes de juin ont confirmé cette baisse, avec un maigre score de 11,8 %. Des scandales récents autour du parti, des deux côtés de la frontière, ont encore terni son image.

**L**ors des élections générales de cette année, le Sinn Féin a obtenu 19 % des votes de première préférence, marquant une reprise partielle mais insuffisante. Avec une baisse de 5,5 % par rapport à 2020, le parti n'a pas de voie réaliste pour accéder au pouvoir.

### Pourquoi le vote pour le gouvernement sortant a-t-il tenu?

Selon Lisa Keenan et Gail McElroy, professeurs de science politique au Trinity College de Dublin, les électeurs ont récompensé Fianna Fáil et Fine Gael pour leur gestion économique. L'Irlande bénéficie d'un excédent budgétaire de 23 milliards d'euros, soutenu par des recettes élevées provenant de l'impôt sur les sociétés. Cet excédent a permis à tous les partis de proposer d'importantes augmentations des dépenses publiques, tant courantes que d'investissement.

A. Bartleby

☞ Suite en page 16



Anil Madan

# COP 29 – Looking for Trillions, Disappointed with Billions

*Overall, the Baku conference evoked sentiments of disappointment and failure to meet meaningful climate finance goals*

**T**he COP29 Conference has just concluded in Azerbaijan. The conference website sponsored by the nation proclaimed under the caption 'Our fixed objective': "We all have a moral duty to avoid overshooting the 1.5°C temperature target. But the window of opportunity is closing, and we must focus on the need to invest today to save tomorrow. Our fixed priority is delivering deep, rapid and sustained emission reductions now to keep temperatures under control and stay below 1.5°C, while leaving no one behind."

Another caption, 'Enhance ambition and enable action' offered this word salad: "The COP29 Presidency's plan is based on two mutually reinforcing parallel pillars. The first pillar — to 'enhance ambition' — combines key elements to ensure all parties commit to ambitious national plans and transparency. The second pillar — to 'enable action' — reflects the critical role of finance, a key tool to turn ambition into action and reduce emissions, adapt to climate change and address loss and damage."

The discerning reader will see that the sponsors saw finance as a key tool to bring about action. As a practical matter, this means that rich countries should pay poorer countries to adapt to climate change and compensate them for loss and damage. The tip of the hat to reducing emissions shouldn't fool anyone. Poorer countries seeking financial assistance often argue that they bear little responsibility for global emissions, as their fuel consumption emissions are minimal compared to the substantial emissions historically produced by richer nations. Indeed, the poorer countries, large and small, are victims. Obviously, any lowered emissions by these countries would be a very tiny fraction of what is needed to meet worldwide emissions reduction goals and, in the big picture, meaningless.

**I**t appears that developing countries came to Baku with the objective of securing commitments from wealthy nations to provide \$1 trillion annually to build emission-free power generation plants and to mitigate the effects of heat, outsize storms and flooding, wildfires, and drought. Last minute negotiations led to an agreement on promises of \$300 billion a year of funding to combat climate change. Even so, the consensus seems to be that even this large sum, if it is ever actually made available, will simply not be sufficient to meet the Paris Climate Accords goal of keeping global temperature rise to below 1.5°C.

India's negotiator called the \$300 billion



**“For climate activists, COP29 was a deep disappointment and a failure. It cannot be said that there was disappointment because more was expected. Indeed, expectations were low and COP29 was not anticipated to deliver compensation for harm already inflicted or claimed to have been inflicted. Nor was it expected to make measurable progress to stem what many view as catastrophic heating. Against this are projections that this year will be the hottest recorded...” - Pic - BBC**

“deal” an optical illusion. Indeed, most of the money supposedly pledged will be in the form of loans and not grants. For many nations, this is a non-starter since they cannot afford to take on more debt. Nor is the pledge of \$300 billion per year adjusted for inflation. If financing was the goal, it was not achieved.

One seemingly positive development was that 25 countries plus the EU pledged that they would not commit to building any more new unabated coal power plants. China, India, and the US did not join in this pledge. They are among the largest users of coal for power generation.

Much touted by the COP29 host was an agreement to fully operationalize international governance of carbon credit markets based on Article 6 of the Paris Climate Accords. The general idea is to allow countries to trade emission reductions to meet climate targets. Critics say that in practice this means that those who can afford it, buy the right to pollute. The advantage on the other side is that the money is dedicated to emissions reduction, green energy, and the like, consistent with meeting the Paris Agreement's goals.

Carbon credit markets involve potentially huge amounts of money transfers. Oxford University's State of Carbon Dioxide Removal report estimates that 7-9 billion tonnes of carbon will have to be removed every year between now and 2050 to have any chance of meeting the Paris

Agreement's 1.5°C goal.

Use of carbon credits by businesses to achieve sustainability goals is not without controversy. In 2022, the Climate Change Committee asserted that voluntary carbon markets remain ineffective and risk delaying net-zero carbon emission targets. Adding to its criticism, it stated that offsets purchased in such markets can mask companies' insufficient efforts to cut emissions.

The Baku COP29 was able to amass a list of impressive declarations. These are not necessarily binding, but they do show a focus on the major issues. Some examples are declarations on cooperating on climate finance, investment and trade; pledges and declarations on energy storage grids and hydrogen endorsed by 150 attendees; focused actions on climate health; reduction of methane from organic waste; streamlining financing for farmers' initiatives in food and agriculture; urban climate finance to enhance climate action in cities; initiatives in sustainable tourism practices; and an overall approach to combat the causes and impacts of climate change on water basins and water-related ecosystems. But declarations are just statements, not action.

Mexico announced its commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050, so that all G20 members have committed to a net-zero target.

Various other countries announced increased financing for initiatives across the climate space. Over 50 shipping companies

committed to zero and near-zero emissions fuels by 2030.

Overall, the Baku conference evoked sentiments of disappointment and failure to meet meaningful climate finance goals. It did not deliver a breakthrough announcement on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The COP get togethers have more and more become an occasion for poorer and less developed countries to demand more and more financing from the richer nations. There is scant attention paid to accountability and actually meeting worldwide goals for emissions reduction. As noted above, the poorer countries may well be victims of past emissions, but their collective actions are unlikely to produce any dramatic change in the trajectory of temperature increases and global weather-related catastrophes.

**A**zerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev, opened the conference with the observation that oil and gas were a "gift from God." This did not sit particularly well with avid climate change activists. There was also some consternation that Saudi Arabia was pushing to retract earlier statements calling for a transition away from fossil fuels.

Azerbaijan is the second petrostate to host a COP. There was pushback from climate scientists and experts, and even former UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon that countries actively expanding fossil fuel production should not chair future COP meetings. Their argument is that the "current structure simply cannot deliver the change at exponential speed and scale" needed to address the climate crisis.

In the background, the return of Donald Trump as President of the US looms. He is expected to withdraw the US from the Paris Climate Agreement as he did during his first presidency, and perhaps withdraw entirely from all activities involving the climate negotiating process. In an interesting twist, there were calls for China to step up into a leadership role on climate change. These included John Podesta who led the American delegation.

For climate activists, COP29 was a deep disappointment and a failure. It cannot be said that there was disappointment because more was expected. Indeed, expectations were low and COP29 was not anticipated to deliver compensation for harm already inflicted or claimed to have been inflicted. Nor was it expected to make measurable progress to stem what many view as catastrophic heating. Against this are projections that this year will be the hottest recorded. NOAA, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates that atmospheric carbon is probably at the highest level in almost three million years.

**I**f reduction of emissions and removal of carbon are the key to controlling catastrophes from rising temperatures, over and above those already witnessed, the message is that COP29 did not move meaningfully toward a solution and there is precious little time to do so.

*Cheerz...  
Bwana*



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

# Is there a magic pill for health?

## Regular walking is the magic pill

One of the biggest issues – in fact if not the most critical – in the provision of healthcare in all countries is its financing. This is usually reckoned for comparison purposes in terms of healthcare expenditure as a percentage of the country's GDP.

This ranges from the lowest of about 2% or less in less developed countries (mainly in Africa) to above 10% in the most developed countries, with the USA having the highest at 17.2% in 2022. Yet, as was revealed in the first ever global evaluation of health systems performance by the WHO (World Health Report 2000), the US ranked low among the lowest among the developed countries, and according to an online source, this was still the case as of 2022. Unsurprisingly, at No. 1 was Singapore.

Like for other services, the costs of healthcare keep going up. Most of this goes into expensive investigations and treatments of established disease. This can be easily confirmed by anyone who has had to undergo such an experience.

Logically, therefore, one would think that any reasonable person would prefer not to fall ill and, instead, to keep in good health so as not to have to undergo what can more often than not be catastrophic expenditure. Although, admittedly, disease can strike one nevertheless, a harsh reality.

Unfortunately, the general trend is one of 'eat, drink and be merry' as a release from the stresses of modern life (*'metro-boulot-dodo'*), and when disease befalls one expects to be prescribed a magic pill that will effect instantaneous and miraculous cure. Alas, there is *no magic pill for cure*.

However, there is one that helps to promote good health and a longer life. It is called walking.

In the words of anthropologist Jeremy DeSilva, who has dedicated his career to studying human evolution through the lens of bipedalism, 'we are constantly searching for a magic pill that will give us health and longevity. We have it: taking a daily walk.'

Bipedalism is the ability to walk upright on two legs, which only humans can do, and in the evolutionary scale this happened about 3 million years ago. DeSilva has written a book on the subject, *First Steps: How Walking Upright Made Us Human*, in which he 'combines history, science, and culture to explore how bipedalism shaped humanity and helped us become the dominant species on Earth.' He gave an interview to *El País* via video call from his office at Dartmouth College and, interestingly, 'remained standing throughout the entire interview.'

He goes on to discuss the advantages of bipedalism to the human species from an evolutionary point of view, but I will skip this aspect to focus on the health benefits of walking, many of which have been explored and repeatedly confirmed by detailed scientific studies. They are further elaborated upon in another article by Karelia Vazquez in *El País* (April 18, 2023) 'Why going for a walk can cure (almost) anything.'

As well as emphasizing some well-known facts, interesting new findings are presented which explain the 'why' of the positive effects on both the physical and mental health of the individual.

Thus, says Bruno Ribeiro, professor in the Human Anatomy and Psychobiology department of the University of Murcia, Spain, 'If you walk in places, you already know, the first positive effects are cardiovascular activation: if you move your legs, you move your heart.'

Further: 'As you walk, you turn your head: your field of vision changes and you encounter visual stimuli to the right and to the left. In this way, both cerebral hemispheres are activated. The walk makes them communicate with each other. That is a magnificent exercise, because in the brain, one hemisphere tends to dominate the other.'

But there are even more benefits when we walk through unknown landscapes – in elevation of our mood. Because 'our brains release dopamine, a neurotransmitter (chemical substance) that marks novelty in the brain and allows us to identify danger or pay attention. A good daily dose of dopamine will increase another neuro-

transmitter, serotonin, which is responsible for our mood. The walk helps to keep both neurotransmitters at high levels.'

Furthermore, when we walk, we do tend to think more about the present and not worry too much about the past or the future, so it's a kind of meditation as well. Most people believe that meditation means quietly sitting in one place, closing your eyes and silencing your mind. No doubt that also is meditation, but I prefer the view of Swami Suddhananda (who has visited Mauritius a few times and given spiritual discourses) that 'every moment should be a meditation' – concentrate fully on what

what was the secret of his longevity. I cherished and remembered his answer which concluded the interview: 'However busy you are, walk one hour every day.' At that time, he was completing his 25th book, and he went on to live till 103.

However, over the years I have also learnt from my own personal experience as a regular walker and my experience as a doctor with many patients in various states of health. And my simple advice is: walk regularly (4-5 times per week on average), preferably in the open (i.e. in nature), for 45-60 minutes, combine slow pace with some brisk walking – enough that you don't run short of breath when you are talking (to someone or



**“When we walk, we do tend to think more about the present and not worry too much about the past or the future, so it's a kind of meditation as well. Most people believe that meditation means quietly sitting in one place, closing your eyes and silencing your mind. No doubt that also is meditation, but I prefer the view of Swami Suddhananda (who has visited Mauritius a few times and given spiritual discourses) that 'every moment should be a meditation' – concentrate fully on what you are doing at all times or, as it is more commonly expressed now, 'mindfulness'...”** Pic - SpineINA

you are doing at all times or, as it is more commonly expressed now, 'mindfulness.'

There are many recommendations about various aspects of walking: how many steps you take, slowly or briskly, how often and how long one should walk, whether to walk before or after a meal (especially breakfast for early morning walkers like me), where you should walk and so on. Many studies have been and continue to be conducted, with the result that the recommendations keep varying and can confuse the professionally uninitiated about health and medical matters.

I myself have tended to be guided by what I consider the simplest and most direct advice of a centenarian, a biologist to boot, Dr Ernst Mayr, who was mini-interviewed by the American journal *Scientific American* when he turned 100 a couple of decades ago. Predictably, he was asked

singing to yourself: that also is preventive therapy!), and fit in some free hand exercises at intervals. *Voilà!*

Best is to choose a setting where you can breathe fresh unpolluted air, soak your eyes in an expanse of varied greenery, feel a light cool breeze on your face, enjoy full-throated laughter with several friends, watch the sun rise and the clouds gliding smoothly even as they change shape and colours as the sun's rays light them up, listen to birds singing, look at the golden orange-hued sky descending to become as one with the horizon, marvel at the outlines of hills or mountain ranges in the distance taking shape in the emerging dawn...

All this is available on our small island in the sun. For our enjoyment and good health and long life...

**“Over the years I have also learnt from my own personal experience as a regular walker and my experience as a doctor with many patients in various states of health. And my simple advice is: walk regularly (4-5 times per week on average), preferably in the open (i.e. in nature), for 45-60 minutes, combine slow pace with some brisk walking - enough that you don't run short of breath when you are talking (to someone or singing to yourself: that also is preventive therapy!), and fit in some free hand exercises at intervals. *Voilà!*...”**



Dr Vinaye Ancharaz, International Economic Consultant

# “For change to be effective, it must be owned by the people”

‘This sense of belonging can only be built and nurtured through clear, constant and inclusive communication’



**I**n this week’s interview, we speak with Dr Vinaye Ancharaz, an International Economic Consultant, to gain insights into the current state of Mauritius’ economy and the challenges ahead. The new government has expressed its intention to audit the country’s fiscal health, but how much can an audit reveal beyond the public debt, fiscal deficit, and revenue generation figures already available? Dr Ancharaz provides a critical analysis of the previous government’s economic performance, scrutinizing its policies and their implications for the future. He examines key issues such as fiscal management, public debt, inflation, and the pressing need for structural reforms. Offering a deep reflection on the economic decisions that have shaped Mauritius’ current challenges, he shares his recommendations for how the current government can deal with the complex economic landscape to secure sustainable, long-term prosperity. candid interview, a nuanced analysis of the electoral dynamics, the implications of controversial revelations, and the challenges facing the newly elected government as it seeks to address pressing economic, institutional, and democratic challenges.

This interview not only sheds light on the key takeaways from the 2024 elections but also examines broader issues such as governance, accountability, and Mauritius’ place in the global arena...

**Mauritius Times:** The new government has made known its intention to conduct an audit of the state of Mauritius’ economy. Does not the current state of Mauritius’ fiscal health, including public debt levels, fiscal deficit, and revenue generation tell us how good or bad the economy is faring, or would an audit tell us more?

**Vinaye Ancharaz:** If we go by the MSM government’s assessment, the economy is faring rather well. You may recall that, in presenting the 14th-month bonus proposal days before the election, the then Minister of Finance, Dr Padayachy, claimed that the economy was in a boom! He was probably referring to the ‘exceptional’ GDP growth of 8.9% in 2022, the ‘strong’ growth of 7% in 2023, and the growth forecast of 6.5% this year. The truth, however, is that the economy has just come out of the hole it had slipped into following the massive 14.5% GDP decline in 2020. According to a recent IMF report, real GDP per capita at the end of 2023 (US\$11,417) was about the same as in 2019 (US\$11, 408) before the pandemic.

In fact, the hike in GDP growth to 8.9% in 2022 following a timid recovery (GDP growth of 3.4%) in 2021 is largely due to a major change in national income accounting, which saw the inclusion of primary income from the global business sec-

tor in the computation of GDP. I believe that the MSM government cooked up GDP figures to make the situation look rosier than it really was.

Similarly, the inflation rate is reportedly on a downward trend, falling from a peak of 10.8% in 2022 to 7% in 2023 and to a projected 4.5% at the end of 2024. However, earlier this year, Statistics Mauritius adopted a revised CPI basket based on the 2023 Household Budget Survey. The new basket features significantly higher weights given to several items, notably gasoline and pharmaceutical products. If this basket was applied before, the inflation rate for 2023 would be above 7%.

Moreover, the MSM government proclaimed that public sector debt was on a declining path. But this is in relative terms (that is, as a ratio to GDP) only. In fact, public debt is expected to reach Rs 567 billion by the end of 2024, Rs 55 billion higher than in December 2023. And let us not forget that these figures understate the true debt level as the former government used a variety of Special Purpose Vehicles (read ‘debt-disguising tactics’) to conceal debt. In the same vein, the budget deficit may also be understated by over-estimating revenues and under-estimating expenditure. No wonder the MSM government has called for supplementary budget financing of billions of rupees every year over the past 5

years!

Last, but certainly not least, the former Minister of Finance painted a very positive picture of the country’s export position, rejoicing in the fact that exports were increasing in value. However, he omitted to say how much of the increase was due to the depreciation of the rupee, nor did he make any mention of merchandise imports, which have soared since 2020, with the result that the trade deficit reached a staggering Rs 182 billion in 2023. Again, the sad truth is that, in US\$ terms, goods exports in 2023 were 26% lower than in 2014 when the MSM government took office.

All the above points to the necessity of a statistical audit, which will reveal the true state of the economy and its financial situation. I won’t be surprised if the inflation rates and budget deficits in recent years were higher, and growth rates and the level of reserves lower, than official data suggest.

\* The necessity of this audit would also suggest that the true picture of the state of the economy would have been hidden by the previous government and the institutions directly connected with the economy and public finance – the Ministry of Finance itself, Bank of Mauritius, possibly Statistics Mauritius. How can that be possible especially in an open and democratic country?

Indeed, government manipulation of economic data was once unthinkable — until the previous regime, that is. And it was possible because there is no required audit of government statistics, as is the case, for example, with company accounts. One may recall an incident when Statistics Mauritius was forced to remove a report that it had just posted online – because it con-

« Government manipulation of economic data was once unthinkable — until the previous regime, that is. And it was possible because there is no required audit of government statistics, as is the case, for example, with company accounts. One may recall an incident when Statistics Mauritius was forced to remove a report that it had just posted online – because it contained GDP growth forecasts that were lower than those that the Minister of Finance had presented earlier. MCB Focus suffered a similar fate, demonstrating the length to which the MSM government went to create and perpetuate a statistical illusion... »

tained GDP growth forecasts that were lower than those that the Minister of Finance had presented earlier. MCB Focus, a periodic publication by the MCB, suffered a similar fate, demonstrating the length to which the MSM government went to create and perpetuate a statistical illusion.

☞ Cont. on page 10

# 'The MSM govt cooked up GDP figures to make the situation look rosier than it really was'

☞ Cont. from page 9

I won't blame Statistics Mauritius for misreporting economic data, *if they ever did*. Statisticians swear by a strict ethical code, but sadly, they were subject to pressure and intimidation by the Ministry of Finance under the MSM government.

However, it is also not correct to say that there are no checks and balances on economic data accuracy in an open, democratic country. These controls are exercised by external agencies, such as the IMF/World Bank, and Moody's.

The IMF has decried the MSM government's manipulation of economic statistics and provided its own counter-estimates. For example, the IMF projects a GDP growth rate of 4.9% this year – as opposed to Dr Padayachy's 6.5%. Similarly, the IMF's inflation forecast of 4.9% is higher than the previous government's 4.5%.

As an international watchdog, Moody's can punish any country with a credit-rating downgrade if it finds that economic data has been manipulated to create a better picture of the country's credit worthiness.

**\* Economists are in a better position to identify the key areas where the previous government's policies may have caused long-term harm to the economy. In your view, what are the main villains that have contributed to the current situation?**

I will refer to two among many of the previous government's policy failures. One is that the government made big electoral promises without assessing the economy's capacity to deliver them. The second is that it relied on consumption as the economy's engine of growth.

It all started with the MSM's promise, in October 2019, to double the basic retirement pension (BRP) to Rs13,500 during their term in office. As soon as they came to power, they raised the BRP to Rs 9,000, paying Rs 18,000 in December 2019, including the traditional 13th-month bonus. To finance the pension hike, the government ploughed Rs 18 billion from the Bank of Mauritius' reserves in January 2020. This was the beginning of the end, and it started even before Covid-19 hit us. The pandemic only made things worse, prompting the government to seek further financing (Rs 60 billion) from the central bank.

And then, in June 2020, the MIC was set up with a capital injection of Rs 80 billion from the BoM's reserves. These repeated drawdowns on the Bank's reserves weakened its ability to defend the national currency, causing the rupee to fall relative to major currencies, and unleashing an inflation spiral, which got worse as the government kept up its spending frenzy. Further increases in the BRP were financed through the inflation tax as the government discovered that giving money brings back more tax revenue as prices rise.

The second mistake was to make consumption the locomotive of economic growth. This is in contradiction with a

☞ I always said that the MSM government had considerable fiscal space to implement its expenditure programme since it relied on inflation-tax financing. However, this option is not available to the new government. The government needs to implement its electoral promises, stabilize the rupee, develop new growth poles to stimulate the economy and boost exports, and achieve a degree of food security. These measures will require significant financing...☞



basic tenet of growth theory, which holds that growth is driven by investment. The government did invest massively in public infrastructure – perhaps for political reasons – but investment in the real sectors was neglected. As a result, agriculture, manufacturing and exports have continued to decline; the bulk of foreign direct investment has flowed to the real estate sector; and no new growth pillar has emerged since 2014. The pharmaceutical industry, announced with great pomp in 2021, is yet to see the day while food security remains a mere concept.

In light of the above, there is an urgent need to rethink our model of economic development. This must be the new government's top priority.

**\* While it may be premature given the upcoming audit, how much fiscal space do you anticipate the government will have to implement key policy reforms without exacerbating the current economic challenges?**

In the past, I always said that the MSM government had considerable fiscal space to implement its expenditure programme since it relied on inflation-tax financing. However, this option is not available to the new government. The government needs to implement its electoral promises, stabilize the rupee, develop new growth poles to stimulate the economy and boost exports, and achieve a degree of food security. These measures will require significant financing. On the other hand, slashing excise duties to ease petrol prices and cutting VAT rates to bring basic food prices down will reduce the government's revenue. Rental income from the Chagos deal is also in jeopardy as the Trump administration will likely call for its renegotiation.

All things considered, the fiscal space to implement the new government programme is rather limited at the moment. But this was expected. There is no magic bullet to economic prosperity. Economic reforms, if any, must be carefully phased to reduce their adverse impacts. But I believe that the challenges facing the economy today call more for innovative policies and improved economic management rather than painful structural reforms. Over time, the fiscal space

will expand as the economy picks up.

**\* The 'Alliance du Changement' has had to compete with the electoral promises of the Lepep Alliance, particularly regarding the proposed 14th-month bonus. It's worth noting though that the previous government was notably silent about any potential decrease in petroleum product prices. Implementing the 14th-month bonus may prove to be more challenging than it initially appears, wouldn't you agree?**

☞ Some political measures are inherently time-inconsistent: they lose their relevance after the election. For example, the proposal to revamp the MBC-TV licence fee may not be necessary if the masses start enjoying watching the MBC again. Moreover, several of the proposed measures are motivated by the need to make up for the erosion of purchasing power due to ongoing inflation. However, if the government manages to bring inflation under control, measures such as free internet and free public transport may become insignificant...☞

Indeed, it will be more challenging. The previous government did not reduce petrol prices, which many were hoping for as a last-minute electoral bribe, nor did it make any explicit promise to cut petrol prices in their next mandate, if any. That was because the MSM government exploited petrol taxes as a cash cow. Slashing these taxes while increasing pensions and paying a 14th-month bonus will be doubly challenging for the current government.

However, I believe that the government will find the means to pay the extra month's salary later this month and assist financially distressed SMEs to do the same. My understanding is that this measure will be one-off. Going forward, better expenditure management, improved tax buoyancy in a more dynamic economy, and enhanced revenue mobilization can help finance some of the other electoral promises.

**\* Financing electoral pledges and additional commitments will undoubtedly demand substantial funding. In this context, do you believe that introducing some form of progressive taxation could be a necessary measure to generate the required revenue?**

First, I believe that the government should review its electoral pledges in a comprehensive manner with a view to rationalizing them. Some political measures are inherently time-inconsistent: they lose their relevance after the election. For example, the proposal to revamp the MBC-TV licence fee may not be necessary if the masses start enjoying watching the MBC again. Moreover, several of the proposed measures are motivated by the need to make up for the erosion of purchasing power due to ongoing inflation. However, if the government manages to bring inflation under control, measures such as free internet and free public transport may become insignificant.

On the other hand, as I said earlier, there are other ways to mobilize revenue than reforming the income tax system. The 2023-24 Budget introduced a dose of progressivity, starting with 2% on base chargeable income (Rs 390,000) and rising in steps of 2% to a maximum of 20% on taxable income above Rs 2,390,000. The impact of this reform on tax revenue needs to be studied before implementing any further changes to the tax system.

☞ Cont. on page 11

# ‘The previous govt exploited petrol taxes as a cash cow. Slashing these taxes while increasing pensions and paying a 14th-month bonus will be doubly challenging’



« Unless we are ready to depoliticize and desensitize the pension issue, reforming the BRP will remain as elusive as ever. The current government has been given a clear mandate to bring about several constitutional changes. My hope is that the government also re-opens the debate on pension reform with a view to finding mutually acceptable, lasting solutions. In this, communication will be key...»

☞ Cont. from page 10

Higher tax rates may not always yield increased tax revenues – due to the so-called Laffer-curve effect. The government should explore other options to mobilize revenue, such as rationalizing tax exemptions, casting the tax nets wider, and cracking down on tax evasion.

**\* How about the scope of improving the efficiency of public spending, particularly in areas such as social welfare, infrastructure, and public services?**

There is substantial scope to improve public service delivery so that the government gets value for money. Annual audit reports have systematically revealed lapses in public financial management, poor project monitoring and coordination failures that the MSM government failed to address. There was a proposal in the 2021-22 Budget to up a Project Implementation and Monitoring Agency (PIMA) within the Ministry of Finance to assist in the effective execution of budgetary measures. Unfortunately, PIMA never quite lived up to its promise, largely because most ministries failed to comply.

I was hoping that the new government would bring back the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development of the old days and strengthen its coordination role. Perhaps this is something that the Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning might consider. Better coordination across the public sector can help reduce wastage, maximize synergies and enhance efficiency.

**\* Do you think it might also be necessary to review social welfare benefits, including pensions, to make them more effective, ensuring they reach those who are truly in need?**

Mauritius has a complex three-tiered pension system consisting of a universal, non-contributory basic retirement pension (BRP); funded, income-related schemes – the National Pension Fund (NPF) and the National Savings Fund (NSF) for private-sector employees, and a separate civil service pension scheme for public officers; and private, voluntary schemes. I believe your question refers to the BRP, so I will focus on this tier. Suffice it to say that the replacement of the NPF by the CSG in 2020 has been a reform in the wrong direction. The CSG is not specifically earmarked for welfare benefits, and CSG funds are totally fungible. As such, there is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to meet pension obligations in the future, in which case contingent liabilities will fall on the government.

The BRP has played a key role in redistributing income and alleviating poverty in old age. However, in its current form, the BRP is unsustainable in the face of an ageing population. As early as in 2004, the World Bank proposed two

sets of reforms to make the BRP fiscally viable. The first relates to the eligibility criteria; the second concerns the benefit level. Currently, any citizen reaching age 60 is eligible for the BRP. This is a contradiction given that the retirement age is officially 65. The burden of the BRP on public finance could be reduced if the eligibility age is brought closer to the retirement age.

Moreover, since the BRP is meant to provide a living income, it could be better targeted to those who really need it, rather than paying it out indiscriminately. The second reform suggests that the amount of the BRP could be adjusted according to the government's capacity to pay. Technically, this means reducing the benefit level to relieve the fiscal pressure on the government budget.

These reform proposals have been extensively debated in the past and wholesomely rejected. Trade unionists have vehemently opposed any changes to the BRP that would adversely impact employees, claiming the BRP as a 'droit acquis' and its universality sacred. Targeting has been a hotly contested political issue since 2005. Conversely, the MSM government had made pension politics a central part of its electoral strategy, raising the BRP repeatedly and further segmenting it by age group. In nominal terms, the BRP has more than doubled in the past 5 years and is set to increase progressively in the next 5 years to reach Rs 21,500 by 2029.

« I trust that the new team at the helm of the Bank of Mauritius will focus on the Bank's primary mandate, that is maintaining price stability. An independent central bank can inspire confidence among market participants in ways that could lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, if economic agents believe that the BoM is serious about fighting inflation and stabilizing the rupee, they may choose to sell the foreign exchange that they have been hoarding, thereby causing the rupee to appreciate...»

Unless we are ready to depoliticize and desensitize the pension issue, reforming the BRP will remain as elusive as ever. The current government has been given a clear mandate to bring about several constitutional changes. My hope is that the government also re-opens the debate on pension reform with a view to finding mutually acceptable, lasting solutions. In this, communication will be key.

**\* How can the government stabilize commodity prices, particularly for basic food items and fuel, without relying on unsustainable subsidies, while also addressing the cost of living—especially in areas like housing and healthcare—to improve the affordability of essential goods and services?**

There is no alternative to stabilizing prices other than halting the depreciation of the rupee. I trust that the new team at the helm of the Bank of Mauritius will focus on the Bank's primary mandate, that is maintaining price stability. An independent central bank can inspire confidence among market participants in ways that could lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, if economic agents believe that the BoM is serious about fighting inflation and stabilizing the rupee, they may choose to sell the foreign exchange that they have been hoarding, thereby causing the rupee to appreciate.

Subsidies on rice, flour and household gas are clearly

unsustainable. These subsidies are financed through levies on petrol, so they are just a means of redistributing income. It would be better to target the subsidies to the most vulnerable households by topping up their income allowances. This question also needs to be thoroughly considered by the government.

On the issue of healthcare, the government has proposed a system of vouchers that would enable patients to purchase drugs not available at public hospitals from private pharmacies. Going forward, the government should tackle the vested interests that prevented the MSM government from cracking down on the cartels involved in drug imports and the over-invoicing that they are known to practice.

As for housing, there is a need to review the property development schemes that have resulted in land-price inflation and distorted FDI incentives towards the real estate sector. The government should also come up with a plan to build and deliver social housing units in a phased manner during its mandate.

**\* The road ahead may prove to be more challenging than the 'Alliance du Changement' anticipated. It may therefore be crucial for the government to have the right team at the helm and to communicate its economic reforms and fiscal policies effectively through a "politique de vérité" to ensure public support and understanding. What are your thoughts on this approach?**

The people were helpless spectators of the institutional decay caused by incompetent political nominees in key positions under the MSM regime. The Alliance du Changement government has signalled a "politique de rupture", which is already evident in the handful of appointments made to date. The government is serious about putting the right person in the right place as the country will need to leverage on all its competent might to forge ahead.

The "politique de rupture" also means a different way of doing things, one that restores the democratic values that were so often buffeted under the previous regime; one that does away with the cronyism and nepotism that had become the hallmark of the MSM government; one that re-instills meritocracy and transparency; one that prioritizes a "politique de vérité", as you put it.

For change to be effective, it must be owned by the people. This sense of belonging can only be built and nurtured through clear, constant and inclusive communication. A revived MBC can surely play a role in this process as will the unfettered press.

« The "politique de rupture" also means a different way of doing things, one that restores the democratic values that were so often buffeted under the previous regime; one that does away with the cronyism and nepotism that had become the hallmark of the MSM government; one that re-instills meritocracy and transparency; one that prioritizes a "politique de vérité"... For change to be effective, it must be owned by the people. This sense of belonging can only be built and nurtured through clear, constant and inclusive communication...»





Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau. Pic - HT

## 39% Canadians feel Justin Trudeau mishandled ties with India

Nearly 40 per cent of Canadians feel that the Justin Trudeau government was not handling their country's bilateral relationship with India, which is at an all-time low in recent months, a survey has claimed.

The survey was carried out by the non-profit Angus Reid Institute (ARI) in partnership with the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada (APF) Canada.

According to the survey, 39 per cent of Canadians felt the Trudeau government was not handling the relations well as compared to 32 per cent who thought the opposite.

The survey claimed that 39 per cent of the Canadians felt there will be no improvement in relations between India and Canada under Trudeau, reports Hindustan Times.

At least 34% of Canadians felt about the future of the bilateral relationship under India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The relations between India and Canada deteriorated last September when Justin Trudeau alleged before Canadian parliament that Indian government agents were involved in the murder of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was gunned down in Surrey on June 18, 2023.

In October, the ties between both the countries nosedived after Canadian authorities named Indian high commissioner Sanjay Verma and other diplomats as "persons of interest" in its probe into Nijjar's killing.

Rejecting Canada's act, India withdrew its high commissioner and expelled six Canadian diplomats.

Last month, a Canadian official alleged that Union home minister Amit Shah ordered a campaign of violence, intimidation and intelligence-gathering targeting pro-Khalistani extremists inside Canada.

Canada's deputy foreign affairs minister David Morrison told Parliament members of the national security committee that he had confirmed Shah's name to The Washington Post, which first reported the allegations.

New Delhi condemned Canada's allegation as "absurd and baseless".

"The Government of India protests in the strongest terms to the absurd and baseless references made to the Union Home Minister of India," Randhir Jaiswal, a ministry of external affairs spokesperson said on November 2.

Jaiswal also said a Canadian diplomat in New Delhi was summoned on Friday and handed out a letter to formally protest the allegation. "Such irresponsible actions will have serious consequences for bilateral ties," he warned.

## China's Xi stresses need to fight graft in military

China's President Xi Jinping stressed the need to enforce discipline and fight corruption in the military, as well as boost information warfare capabilities, said state broadcaster on Thursday.

Since last year, China's military has undergone a sweeping anti-corruption purge, with at least nine People's Liberation Army generals and a handful of defence industry executives removed from the national legislative body, reports Reuters.

"It is necessary to strictly enforce discipline and crack down on corruption to ensure that the military remains absolutely loyal, absolutely pure, and absolutely reliable," Xi said.

His remarks come after the defence ministry said last week that a top-ranking military official had been suspended and was under investigation for "serious violations of discipline".

Xi was making his first inspection of the military's new information war-



China's Xi stresses need to fight graft in military. Pic - China Daily

fare department, established in April, which reports directly to the powerful Central Military Commission.

Part of the biggest restructuring of China's armed forces since 2015, the new unit points to the ruling Communist Party leadership's increased focus on military modernisation and non-conventional forms of warfare.

"The status and role of network information systems in modern warfare are prominent to an unprece-

dent degree," Xi told officers, according to a CCTV report.

The People's Liberation Army Information Support Force, as the new unit is known, is first and foremost a "combat force", he added.

Previously part of the PLA's Strategic Support Force, combining cyber, information and space warfare units, the new force is tasked with protecting China's military information systems from cyber and electronic warfare attacks.

## Donald Trump's crypto push propels Bitcoin to break \$100,000 barrier



President Trump's election has reignited interest in Bitcoin, with potential regulatory changes and the nomination of crypto-friendly SEC leadership. Pic - India Today

Bitcoin rose above \$100,000 for the first time on Thursday as the election of Republican Donald Trump as president of the United States spurred expectations that his administration will create a friendly regulatory environment for cryptocurrencies.

Bitcoin has more than doubled in value this year and is up about 45% in the four weeks since Trump's sweeping election victory, which also saw a slew of pro-crypto lawmakers being elected to Congress, reports Reuters.

It last traded at \$100,027 as of 0240 GMT, up 2.2% on the previous session, after earlier rising as high as \$100,277.

"We're witnessing a paradigm shift. After four years of political purgatory, bitcoin and the entire digital asset ecosystem are on the brink of entering the financial mainstream," said Mike Novogratz, founder and CEO of U.S. crypto firm Galaxy Digital.

"This momentum is fueled by institutional adoption, advancements in tokenization and payments, and a clearer regulatory path."

More than 16 years after its creation, bitcoin appears on the cusp of mainstream acceptance, despite naysayers and a history of controversies.

"Bitcoin crossing \$100,000 is more than just a milestone; it's a testament to shifting tides in finance,

technology, and geopolitics," said Justin D'Anethan, a Hong Kong-based independent crypto analyst.

"The figure not that long ago dismissed as fantasy, stands as a reality."

Trump embraced digital assets during his campaign, promising to make the United States the "crypto capital of the planet" and to accumulate a national stockpile of bitcoin.

Crypto investors see an end to increased scrutiny under U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Gary Gensler, who said last week he would step down in January when Trump takes office.

On Wednesday, Trump said he would nominate Paul Atkins to run the Securities and Exchange Commission. Atkins, a former SEC commissioner, has been involved in crypto policy as co-chair of the Token Alliance, which works to "develop best practices for digital asset issuances and trading platforms," and the Chamber of Digital Commerce.

A slew of crypto companies including Ripple, Kraken and Circle are jostling for a seat on Trump's promised crypto advisory council, seeking a say in his planned overhaul of U.S. policy, according to several digital asset industry executives.

Trump's businesses may also have a stake in the sector. He unveiled a new crypto business, World Liberty Financial, in September. Although details about the business have been scarce, investors have taken his personal interest in the sector as a bullish signal.

Trump's social media company is in advanced talks to buy crypto trading firm Bakkt, the Financial Times reported last week, citing two people with knowledge of the talks.

Trump Media and Technology Group, which operates Truth Social, is close to an all-stock acquisition of Bakkt, according to a report.

## Pope Francis gets an electric 'Popemobile' from Mercedes

Pope Francis has got a new ride with German automaker Mercedes-Benz delivering an electric popemobile to the pontiff on Wednesday.

A modified version of the Mercedes G-Class, it is believed that the all electric car will be used by the Pope, who has repeatedly called for global action on the climate crisis, for greeting pilgrims at the St. Peter's Square.

The vehicle has a raised seat under a glass canopy from which the head of the Catholic Church can see and be seen by the crowds of well-wishers that throng the Vatican.

"The pearl-white popemobile is powered by an electric motor that is "adapted to the particularly low speeds required for public appearances" by the pope, Mercedes said.



Pope Francis gets an electric 'Popemobile' from Mercedes. Pic - The Express Tribune

Chief executive Ola Kallenius and engineers working on the special project presented Pope Francis with the custom-made vehicle in person at the Vatican, reports Hindustan Times.

"Producing cars for the papacy was a special honour for our company", Kallenius said.

The Stuttgart-based automaker has supplied the Vatican with popemobiles for the past 45 years, according to the company.

### Pope Francis and his Climate action agenda

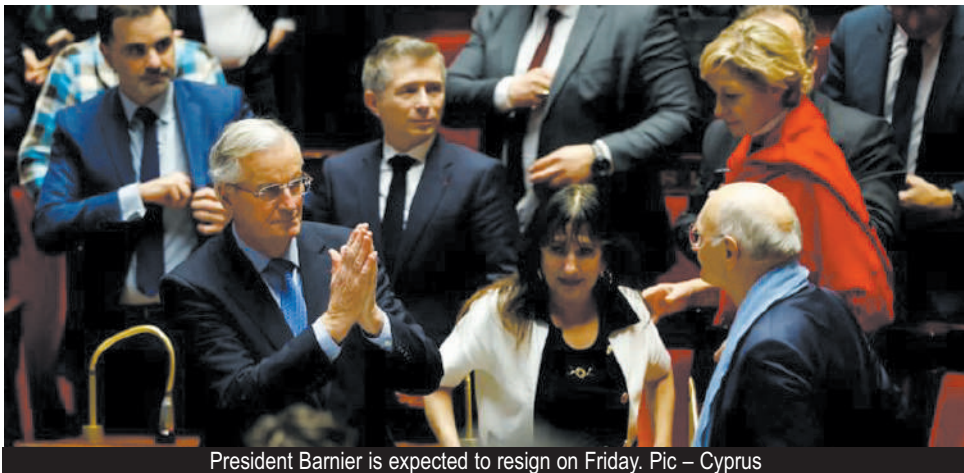
The switch to electric popemobiles was in keeping with Pope Francis's move to make the environment one of the main themes of his Papacy since taking it over in 2013.

The Pope made an urgent appeal for climate action in his 2015 encyclical "Laudato Si", in which he urged global solidarity to act together to protect "our common home".

Pope Francis updated his landmark thesis in 2023 when he criticised slow climate action, and then became the first pope to attend the United Nations climate talks in person.

The Mercedes popemobile is not the first electric vehicle to be used by the Vatican. French automaker Renault presented Francis's predecessor, Benedict XVI, with an electric people carrier in 2012.

## Barnier expected to resign as France's festering political crisis rumbles on



President Barnier is expected to resign on Friday. Pic - Cyprus

French Prime Minister Michel Barnier is expected to resign on Thursday after far-right and leftist lawmakers voted to topple his government, plunging France into its second major political crisis in six months.

Barnier, a veteran politician who was formerly the European Union's Brexit negotiator, will be the shortest serving prime minister in modern French history. No French government had lost a confidence vote since Georges Pompidou's in 1962.

The hard left and far right punished Barnier for ramming an unpopular budget through an unruly hung parliament without a vote. The draft budget had sought 60 billion euros in savings in a drive to shrink a gaping deficit, reports Reuters.

Barnier's resignation will cap weeks of tensions

over the budget, which Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally said was too harsh on working people. It also further weakens the standing of President Emmanuel Macron, who precipitated the current crisis with an ill-fated decision to call a snap election ahead of the summer Paris Olympics.

Macron faces growing calls to resign, but he has a mandate until 2027 and cannot be pushed out. Still, the long-running political debacle has left him a diminished figure.

France now risks ending the year without a stable government or a 2025 budget, although the constitution allows special measures that would avert a U.S.-style government shutdown.

France's political turmoil will further weaken a European Union already reeling from the implosion

of Germany's coalition government, and weeks before U.S. President-elect Donald Trump returns to the White House.

Trump is due to visit Paris on Saturday for the unveiling of the renovated Notre Dame cathedral, and Macron wants to name a prime minister before then, Reuters reported on Wednesday.

France now faces a period of deep political uncertainty that is already unnerving investors in French sovereign bonds and stocks. Earlier this week, France's borrowing costs briefly exceeded those of Greece, generally considered far more risky.

Any new prime minister would face the same challenges as Barnier in getting bills, including the 2025 budget, adopted by a divided parliament. There can be no new parliamentary election before July.

## US tech millionaire reacts to Bengaluru hotel selling 'clean air'

Bryan Johnson, the anti-aging tech guru chasing immortality, might not have expected his biggest challenge in India to be... breathing. After a hazy encounter in Mumbai and checking out Delhi's infamous AQI rankings, he's now in Bengaluru, where he discovered a five-star hotel selling "clean air" as a luxury service.

Sharing the quirky find on X, Johnson posted a picture from The Oberoi Bengaluru. But leave it to Delhiites to blow up the comments, rushing to defend the city's AQI which is far better and healthier than theirs, reports Hindustan Times.

In the middle of his India tour to promote his book 'Don't Die' and gush over the country's famous 'jugaad' system, Johnson has been flooding social media with his Indian discoveries—taking his breath away. After Mumbai's air crisis and a Delhi AQI shocker at 310, Johnson has now landed in Bengaluru. Here, he stumbled upon a hotel offering "clean air as a service." On December 5, 2024, he shared a photo on X showing The Oberoi Bengaluru's indoor AQI of 2.4—so clean, that it makes New York (8.7), London (5.0), and Tokyo (6.0) look smoggy in comparison.

"Bruh, not sure if you're whitepilled on India or actually trolling us," a social media user commented on the post pointing the millionaire's 'obsession' with the country. "South India - South Karnataka, Kerala and Tamilnadu are the Cleanest in India in Air Quality," another joined the conversation. "I am in Delhi and trust me when I say! Bangalore is much better than other Indian cities," a third wrote. "Oh come on leave Bangalore alone, yes we Delhiites are here for the criticism," a fourth defended.

India's air pollution crisis has hit critical levels in cities like Delhi-NCR, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Mumbai, and Kolkata. However, southern states such



The bar, which receives around 15-20 customers on any ordinary day, has been witnessing an appreciable growth in business amid a public health emergency due to a harmful spike in pollution levels. Pic - The Economic Times

as Karnataka and Tamil Nadu continue to fare quite better, with Bengaluru maintaining an AQI under 50 and Tamil Nadu regions recording even cleaner air, ranging between 25-30.

Clean air as a luxury isn't new to India, as some X users reminded Bryan Johnson. Even several malls in Delhi have promoted their relatively breathable indoor air in the past.

### Bryan Johnson says he loves 'Indian Jugaad'

Johnson, currently in India for a six-day trip, left many Indians surprised with his latest post where he expressed admiration for a term that's a staple of desi slang. "I love the culture of ba\*\*\*odi in India. It perfectly captures my worldview: take your work seriously, not yourself," he shared on X, leaving many go rofl.

Poking fun, a user threw another classic Indian term into the mix, asking, "How about jugaad? Koi blueprint ka sasta jugaad batao," giving a cheeky nod to Johnson's anti-aging project, Blueprint.

Johnson jumped into the conversation and said, "I like jugaad — most innovation comes from frugality. But if it means taking shortcuts, we are in trouble. Fixing air pollution in India will require an overhaul, can't be done with jugaad."

From the Pages of History - MT 70 Years Ago

7th Year No 289

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 11 March, 1960

• "It is no such heinous matter to fall afflicted, as being down, to lie dejected." — Saint Chrysostom

# The Cruelty of Carol

## My night of terror

By The Island Wife from Hampstead

From Daily Mail, 1 March 1960

What is it like to live through a hurricane? In Mauritius is Mrs. Sonia Manton, a 39-year-old mother of three.

She lived through "Alex," the hurricane that, a month ago, left 20,000 people homeless. Mrs Manton, an Admiralty secretary, described it as "the most frightening experience of my life." This is her story, as written in a letter to her mother, Mrs. Joan Fawcett, who lives in Hampstead, N.

"We got a preliminary warning, after two earlier ones, while I was at the office and were told to 'Abandon ship' at 3.30 pm. I rushed in to get the last odd cyclone stores (paraffin, candles, matches, biscuits, tinned food, tinned milk, etc.) and got home as fast as I could. "Ray (her husband, an executive in charge of the island's electricity supply) then told me he would have to go to the other end of the island to his cyclone station. You can imagine how I felt."

### Frail Home

"At five to one, I woke up to a terrible crash of glass. I leaped out of bed, ran to the front of the house, and, to my horror, saw the verandah leaning over and about to collapse. The wind was about 90 mph.

"I leaned on the verandah with all my weight while Jack and Robin (who is 14) ran to the kitchen to find wood to shore it up. If the verandah went, the whole front would cave in.

"We sloshed around in rain, broken glass, rotten wood, and dirt, hammering pieces of wood across the top, nailing a rug over a gap, and shoring up the front with wood.

"It was the most ominous noise I have ever heard — like an express train coming through a tunnel at 120 miles an hour. The inside doors began to pull out of my hands when I tried to hold them shut, and I had to put armchairs and heavy suitcases up against them to hold them at all."

### Trees Fall

"Pieces of the roof kept banging and crashing over our heads. The back verandah started to lift. The garage had collapsed over the car. Big trees were falling in the garden and hit the house next door.

"We made everything as fast as we could and got mopped up a bit while there was a sort of lull, and then we sat down and had a beer and ate peanuts. The children were very good.

"By now, it was 2.30 in the afternoon. I felt I had lived through ten years in the time Ray was away. "I struggled out through the side glass verandah on the way to the bathroom. The whole side of the house is glass, and the rain was horizontal, like thick, wide clouds hitting the windows. As I opened the door, the roof lifted. I slammed the door and rushed back."

### Homeless roam city without bread

Thousands of hungry, bewildered refugees wandered in the streets of the island's capital, Port Louis, today. There is no bread in the city, and lorries trying to bring in food are hampered by roadblocks. Every report that comes in



P - histoiresmauriciennes.com

adds to the story of indescribable chaos and devastation. Electricity, telephone, and water services are completely disrupted in many places. Rivers are in flood, and the Governor has ordered mass typhoid immunisations.

Carol came shrieking down from the north on Saturday night, lashing Mauritius with winds of up to 100 mph.

All through Sunday, the heart of the cyclone hovered over the island, giving Mauritians a few hours of comparative calm to try to lash down all movable objects and secure their homes.

On Sunday night, the winds struck again, smashing, leveling, and killing — lifting whole buildings into the air and hurling them hundreds of yards like shuttlecocks. Three big churches were flattened, and the Roman Catholic bishop's palace was severely damaged.

Officially, it is described as the worst cyclone since 1892, but back then, it was mainly Port Louis that was hit. Carol left her trail of devastation throughout the entire island.

\* \* \*

From Daily Telegraph, 1 March 1960

### Mauritius Ordeal

Mauritius went through the ordeal of a devastating cyclone weeks ago. As if this were not already a cruel enough blow, this small tropical Colony has had to bear the brunt of yet another and far more terrifying one. The second blow has fallen before the disruption of the first could be repaired. The greater scale of this disaster, falling as it does on weakened resources, sets an altogether new problem in relief.

The loss of life, fortunately, might have been worse, but one-third of the population is homeless; in other words, thousands are desperate.

What most people know about Mauritius is associated with stamp collecting. But that is sufficient to pinpoint it as a dot in the Indian Ocean, isolated from the sort of resources that are quickly brought to bear on a disaster area on the mainland.

There, it is sufficient to declare an emergency and mobilise manpower and supplies from unaffected areas. But Mauritius has no such hinterland, and the nearest British cruiser with provisions and medical supplies has to start from 2,500 miles away in Ceylon.

Mr Macleod gave the reassuring reply in the Commons yesterday that the RAF was also standing by to take relief supplies to the people of Mauritius. The Red Cross and the

Order of St John are already active on the scene, since, as always, voluntary and official aid must play their parts. Help of the most valuable kind can often be provided only outside official channels.

\* \* \*

### British Red Cross

The President & Members wish to thank all those who have given so generously in money and kind since the recent cyclone caused so much suffering.

These donations have enabled the Red Cross to relieve much distress. During both Alix and Carol, members of the Red Cross were out and about helping the wounded to reach hospitals and applying First Aid. Work has been ongoing night and day in the aftermath, and Red Cross Centres have been set up all over the island, providing food and medical aid.

Food and supplies have also been taken to more remote places, and the Red Cross is now assisting the Government with inoculations and maintaining hygiene. Many people, in addition to giving money to the Governor's Cyclone Fund, wish to assist the Red Cross further in its work. In addition to money, the immediate needs are:

1. Bundles of used gunnies for bedding
2. Cardboard cartons for transporting supplies

Trained nurses are in great demand, and help from such persons will be much appreciated. The distribution of supplies is also creating a transport problem, and offers of help from car drivers will be gladly accepted.

An emergency headquarters has been set up at RNVR Centre, Artillery Square, Port Louis, and all offers of help should be made to the President:

**Lady Deverell**

Red Cross HQ

RNVR Centre, Artillery Square,

Port Louis — Telephone 1061

or to **Miss Esclapan**

Red Cross Headquarters, Curepipe

— Telephone 1304

Publish Your Notices  
in  
Mauritius Times Digital Editions

- Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- General Assembly
- Applications for Building and Land Use Permits
- Corporate - Company Notices

Send Your Notices + Proof of ID by Email or  
WhatsApp No - 5 2929301

Payment: Bank Transfer or by Juice No. 5782 9861

Contact us: Tel: 212 1313 -- 5 2929301  
Email: mltimes@intnet.mu

# Tribute to Joseph Tsang Mang Kin

Dr Amit Achameesing

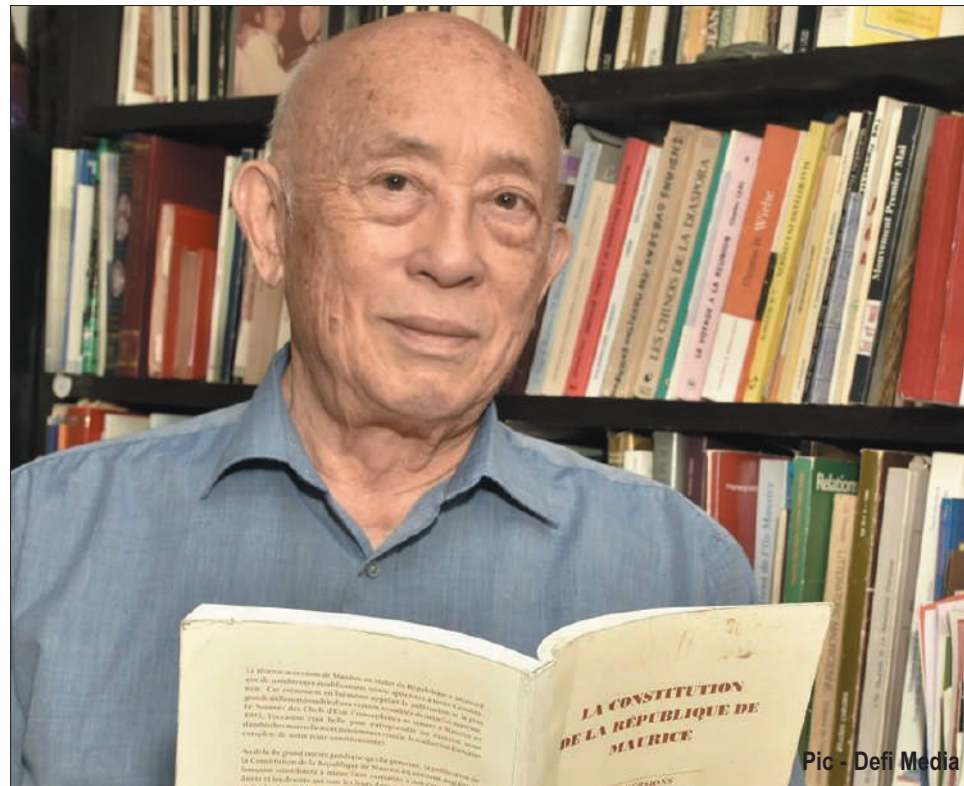
Today, I pay my most heartfelt tribute to an exceptional man, Joseph Tsang Mang Kin — an intellectual, poet, diplomat, Freemason, humanist, and man of great compassion whose life deeply touched all those fortunate enough to cross his path. Joseph departed on 16th November 2024 in the early hours, but his legacy will endure through his writings, ideas, and the many lives shaped by his tireless commitment.

Born on March 12, 1938, in Mauritius, Joseph devoted his life to science, the arts, and practical endeavours. His remarkable journey, marked by achievements in various fields, was consistently guided by a profound passion for justice, history, and societal transformation. He was a visionary, a man of action, and one of reflection and sharing. His unwavering commitment to his country, Africa, and the world set him apart.

Joseph played a pivotal role in establishing the Mauritius embassies in France and Belgium after our island's independence in 1968 — a landmark moment for our nation. Later, he amplified Mauritius' standing in the global community through his work with the Commonwealth Foundation and the African Peer Review Mechanism of the African Union. Beyond diplomacy, he was a man of culture, poetry, and philosophy, whose writings in French and English will continue to illuminate future generations.

What made Joseph unique was his ability to unite seemingly disparate worlds. He was simultaneously a poet and philosopher, an intellectual, and a man of action. He penned sonnets, essays, and plays, exploring subjects as diverse as Mauritius' history, Chinese philosophy, slavery, Francophonie, and the cultural divide between China and the West. He was a bridge between cultures, a tireless advocate for free thought and intercultural dialogue. His works in both French and English remain invaluable contributions to Mauritian and global literature.

Joseph did not seek the limelight. Instead, he worked quietly, advancing the causes dear to him with humility and discretion. Yet his influence was profound, spanning diplomatic, political, and intellectual spheres. His life was steeped in wisdom, enriched by his passion for Taoist philosophy and Freemasonry. He approached subjects like Taoism and personal themes such as the his-



tory of his Hakka heritage with great affection. The work of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, affectionately called "Chacha," was his greatest inspiration.

I vividly recall Diwali on 31st October 2024. I was with him and his daughter Sabrina by his side. That day, Joseph, with characteristic wisdom, entrusted me with a precious mission. He said, his eyes gentle, "You know, my book on Chacha might remain unfinished, like Mozart's *Requiem*, and it will be for you to finish it." These words embody his essence — a deep sense of commitment and an extraordinary ability to pass on the torch, inspiring those close to him to carry forward his mission.

Throughout his life, Joseph was not only a source of knowledge but also a master of sharing. He transmitted his wis-

dom, passions, ideals, and love for global culture and traditions. Though we mourn his loss today, we know that Joseph's

work does not end here. His spirit and passion live on in his writings, ideas, and the many lives he inspired. Calling me his spiritual son, he taught me that life is not only about achievements but also about sharing, transmitting, and pursuing an unceasing quest for righteousness and truth.

\* \* \*

## I KNOW

I know I'm going to die and I'm not sad!  
It's in the order of things and therefore I submit to it

I'm going to leave here without asking  
Just like my coming that I didn't ask for.  
But what a joy to have come to this earth  
With consciousness, eyes, and senses

Who allowed me to see and enjoy  
the friendship of flowers and the  
sound of birds

And better, to feel united with Life  
Who makes me breathe, inhabits  
me and that I inhabit.

Also, I know I'm never alone, too  
That when it's time to leave, I will  
be with Her.

Life, death, I say, and I have  
always known it:

It is the in-between of the same  
continuity...

**Joseph Tsang Mang Kin**  
Floréal, January 27, 2024

## Mauritius Times

Even if you are receiving a free copy of  
the paper from your contacts or  
WhatsApp/Email groups

### YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

As a reader-funded newspaper, the Mauritius Times relies on the support of those who are in a position to help. We know that you are fully conscious of the important role of an independent media, so even if you are receiving a free copy of the paper from your contacts or WhatsApp/Email groups, your support in the form of a subscription or patronage will allow us to pursue our mission and protect our editorial independence. That is why we would kindly request you to consider becoming a regular subscriber by sending us your contribution.

**Our Annual Subs Rate amounts to Rs 1500.**  
Your support, however much you can contribute will be greatly appreciated.

#### Payment Options - Any one of the following

- By cheque drawn to the order of **The Prakash Ramlallah Foundation**. Kindly post the cheque to our postal address as above.
- Via MCB Juice to the following Phone No **5 782 9861**.
- Bank transfer, paid to **The Prakash Ramlallah Foundation**, to any one of the following bank accounts:

Bank	Account No	Swift Code	IBAN
MCB	000448214277	MCBLMUMU	MU71MCBL0901000448214277000MUR
SBM	50300000703075	STCBMUMU	MU17STCB1101000000703075000MUR
SBI	156000504401	INILMUMU	MU47INIL0801156000504401000MUR

Please send us your personal details - Name, Postal Address, Email and Telephone / Mobile number by email or WhatsApps for immediate processing of your subscription.

Another option is to subscribe by going to our Google Form by clicking on the link below:

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**

Please know that we are at your disposal for any clarification and assistance that you may require. You may please contact us on:

Tel - 5 2929 301 - 5 782 9861 - 212 1313 -- Email: [mtimes@intnet.mu](mailto:mtimes@intnet.mu)

Pearl House - 4th Floor - Room 406, Sir Virgil Naz St -- Port Louis

Thank you so much.  
Mauritius Times

## Un cas rare: Le gouvernement irlandais réélu malgré les vents contraires mondiaux



En Irlande, la coalition des partis Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil et Vert a élu le dirigeant du parti de centre droit Fianna Fáil, Micheal Martin, premier ministre.  
P - Getty Images - Charles McQuillan

☞ Suite de la page 6

Fianna Fáil et Fine Gael ont ainsi rivalisé avec les partis de gauche, proposant des réductions d'impôts, une augmentation des pensions de l'État et des consultations médicales gratuites pour les enfants de moins de douze ans. Fine Gael, en particulier, a promis l'abolition des frais pour les étudiants de l'enseignement supérieur et la création de comptes d'épargne pour les nouveau-nés, avec une contribution initiale de 1 000 euros de l'État.

L'immigration, un sujet sensible dans d'autres pays, n'a pas pesé lourd dans le choix des électeurs. Seuls 6 % de votants l'ont identifié comme un enjeu prioritaire, contre 28 % pour la crise du logement et de l'itinérance. Contrairement à 2020, où le Sinn Féin dominait sur ce sujet, tous les partis ont désormais des plans solides pour

augmenter l'offre de logements, réduisant ainsi cet avantage compétitif.

L'élection en Irlande de 2024 est un événement remarquable dans un contexte mondial où de nombreux gouvernements ont été sanctionnés par les électeurs. Fianna Fáil et Fine Gael, malgré des défis majeurs comme la crise du logement et la hausse du coût de la vie, ont réussi à maintenir une large base électorale. Cela témoigne d'une gestion économique jugée positive, soutenue par un excédent budgétaire impressionnant. Leur capacité à proposer des mesures concrètes, comme les réductions d'impôts et les promesses d'augmentation des pensions, a certainement contribué à leur succès, malgré la montée des préoccupations sociales.

Le déclin de Sinn Féin, qui semblait être le grand vainqueur de 2020, révèle la volatilité des électeurs irlandais. Bien qu'ayant émergé comme un acteur clé sur la question du logement, le parti n'a pas su capitaliser sur ses gains initiaux, notamment à cause de son manque de clarté sur des enjeux comme l'immigration. Le scandale autour du parti, de part et d'autre de la frontière irlandaise, a encore entaché son image, réduisant ses chances d'accéder au pouvoir.

En somme, ces élections montrent un pays qui reste attaché à une gestion économique saine, mais qui a aussi besoin de réformes profondes pour traiter des questions sociales, telles que le logement, la pauvreté et les inégalités. La stabilité offerte par Fianna Fáil et Fine Gael devra se traduire par des actions concrètes pour éviter de perdre la confiance des électeurs lors des prochaines élections.

A. Bartleby

## Analyse

Changement politique

### A quoi sert un président de la République?

☞ Suite de la page 3

#### Équité fiscale

Dans l'esprit de l'égalité des droits devant la loi, il serait souhaitable que le gouvernement abolisse l'exemption fiscale sur le revenu accordée au président et au vice-président sous l'article 30A(3) de la Constitution. Cela permettrait l'équité fiscale pour tous les citoyens dans une société démocratique. Dans toute démocratie parlementaire, les dirigeants de l'État (président ou Premier ministre) sont assujettis à l'impôt sur le revenu. Il n'y a aucune raison économique ou morale de leur accorder une exonération fiscale. Maurice n'est pas une monarchie où certaines personnes doivent bénéficier d'un traitement de faveur...

Le concept d'immunité fiscale pour un chef d'État n'implique pas un déni de la responsabilité citoyenne de payer l'impôt sur le revenu. Le président et le vice-président peuvent être dispensés de tout contrôle fis-

cal, mais ils doivent être tenus de soumettre une déclaration de revenu, avec le paiement d'impôt à la source, sous le régime de conformité volontaire (*voluntary compliance*) imposé sur chaque citoyen.

Par ailleurs, il n'y a pas de raison d'être pour l'existence du poste de vice-président dans un petit pays comme Maurice qui a des ressources financières limitées. Le chef juge (la cheffe juge) peut très bien assurer la suppléance si le président est en voyage ou indisponible pour quelque raison. Ce poste fut introduit dans un souci de représentation ethnique au sommet de l'État, mais il a toujours été perçu comme une sinécure.

En votant massivement pour le changement, le peuple a démontré une volonté de faire table rase des pratiques anachroniques. L'abolition du poste de vice-président enverrait un signal clair au public que le gouvernement entend faire des économies en ces temps de déficits budgétaires.

Prakash Neerohoo

## Constitution of Mauritius

### 28 The President

- (1) There shall be a President who shall
  - (a) be the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Republic of Mauritius;
  - (b) uphold and defend the Constitution and ensure that
    - (i) the institutions of democracy and the rule of law are protected;
    - (ii) the fundamental rights of all are respected; and
    - (iii) the unity of the diverse Mauritian nation is maintained and strengthened.

### 30A Privileges and immunities

- (3) The President or the Vice-President shall be entitled,
  - (a) without payment of any rent or tax to the use of his official residence; and
  - (b) to such emoluments, allowances and privileges, exempt from any tax thereon, as may be prescribed.

### 64 Exercise of President's functions

- (2) The President may request the Cabinet to reconsider any advice tendered by it and shall act in accordance with such advice as may be tendered by the Cabinet after such reconsideration.

### SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

Find joy in small tasks and embrace spontaneity when opportunities arise. Your optimism inspires others. Midweek, a long-standing issue resolves, allowing you to move forward with clarity and confidence. Balance duties with moments of exploration.

**Lucky Numbers:** 5, 8, 18, 21, 27, 34

### CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Stay focused professionally, but don't neglect personal relationships—loved ones value your time. Financially, reassess long-term goals and make necessary adjustments. Constructive feedback from colleagues sharpens your approach, paving the way for success.

**Lucky Numbers:** 2, 10, 19, 23, 29, 36

### AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

Creativity abounds this week, Aquarius. Innovative ideas emerge, making it an excellent time for brainstorming or starting ventures. Be mindful in relationships; minor misunderstandings need empathy to resolve. Social events provide meaningful connections.

**Lucky Numbers:** 7, 13, 17, 24, 31, 39

### PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

Your intuition guides you, Pisces, especially in personal matters. Trust your instincts when making decisions.

## YOUR STARS

Prioritize self-care and avoid overcommitting. Cherish a heartwarming family moment that brings joy. By nurturing emotional well-being, you prepare for future growth.

**Lucky Numbers:** 1, 6, 12, 20, 25, 38

### ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

Motivation peaks, making it an ideal time to start projects or complete tasks. However, avoid impulsive decisions; think carefully before committing. Financially, midweek brings surprises but resist overspending. Relationships flourish when you listen actively.

**Lucky Numbers:** 3, 9, 13, 21, 27, 36

### TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

A calm, steady week awaits, Taurus. Focus on nurturing personal relationships, especially within your family. Patience diffuses tensions, fostering harmony. Financial discipline ensures stability—curb unnecessary expenses.

Progress at work may seem slow, but it promises long-term rewards.

**Lucky Numbers:** 4, 10, 18, 22, 28, 34

### GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Social engagements dominate your week, Gemini. Your

natural charm attracts opportunities. Clear communication prevents misunderstandings, especially professionally. Be alert for unexpected career advancements. Support a loved one who may need your attention.

**Lucky Numbers:** 5, 6, 14, 21, 27, 34

### CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22

This week calls for introspection, Cancer. Reevaluate your goals and reconnect with your inner self. Financial challenges may test your budgeting skills. Family or close friends may lean on you emotionally, so set healthy boundaries. A peaceful weekend dedicated to self-care or creative outlets will recharge your spirit.

**Lucky Numbers:** 5, 7, 12, 20, 29, 33

### LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22

Your leadership skills take center stage, Leo. People seek your guidance, and your confidence inspires others. Stay humble to strengthen relationships. Romance flourishes, with heartfelt moments enhancing connections. Singles may meet someone captivating. Financial stability is solid but stick to long-term planning to maintain it.

**Lucky Numbers:** 1, 8, 16, 24, 30, 39

### VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22

Organization and attention to detail define your week, Virgo. Professional efforts gain recognition, so embrace new responsibilities. Address minor health concerns promptly and prioritize wellness. A friend may seek your advice on a sensitive matter; your practical perspective will be invaluable.

**Lucky Numbers:** 6, 14, 17, 25, 31, 35

### LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22

Balance is key this week, Libra. With many demands on your time, efficient management is crucial. Creative projects flourish as you let your imagination shine. Romance blossoms, making this a great time to deepen bonds or meet someone new. Revisit your budget to align with long-term goals.

**Lucky Numbers:** 3, 9, 13, 22, 26, 37

### SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV

Responsibilities take precedence over adventure, Sagittarius. Find joy in small tasks and embrace spontaneity when opportunities arise. Your optimism inspires others. Midweek, a long-standing issue resolves, allowing you to move forward with clarity and confidence. Balance duties with moments of exploration.

**Lucky Numbers:** 4, 11, 15, 20, 28, 32



## Time in nature benefits children with mental health difficulties

A research team from McGill University and Université de Montréal's Observatoire pour l'éducation et la santé des enfants (OPES) has found that spending just two hours a week in a natural environment can significantly reduce emotional distress among 10- to 12-year-olds with significant mental health challenges. The study, led by Sylvana Côté and recently published in JAMA Network Open, highlights how nature-based interventions can be an inexpensive, effective way to support vulnerable children.

The study comes at a time when the importance of green spaces for children's mental and physical development is increasingly recognized, including a recent UNICEF report underscoring the benefits of nature for children's growth. In the spring of 2023, the researchers examined the effects of spending time in nature on the behavior and mental health of over 500 schoolchildren across Quebec. The findings suggest that children who experienced the most severe mental health issues before the program, including anxiety, depression, aggression, and social difficulties, showed the greatest improvements after spending time outdoors.

At the end of the three-month period, teachers reported noticeable improvements in behavior, such as increased calmness, relaxation, and attentiveness in class. "We found that children with higher mental health symptoms at baseline showed greater reductions in



symptoms following the intervention," said senior author Marie-Claude Geoffroy, an associate professor at McGill's Department of Psychiatry. She also noted that nature-based programs could provide targeted benefits for children with high mental health vulnerabilities, potentially acting as an equalizer in mental health across school-aged children.

The study involved approximately 1,000 children, all between the ages of 10 and 12, from 33 elementary schools throughout Quebec. The schools were located within one kilometer of a park or green space, ensuring accessibility to nature for all participants. The children were divided into a nature-based intervention group and a control group. Half of the students participated in the intervention, which included weekly sessions of classwork conducted outdoors, combined with brief activities aimed at promoting mental health, such as drawing, mindful walking, or writing haikus inspired by nature.

This randomized controlled trial builds on previous observational studies and provides concrete evidence of the mental health benefits of nature exposure. The results are especially relevant for educators, policy-makers, and mental health professionals who are looking for cost-effective and accessible strategies to support vulnerable students. "The intervention was low-cost, well-received, and posed no risks," said Tianna Loose, a post-doctoral fellow at Université de Montréal and the paper's first author. "It's a promising strategy for schools with access to green spaces."



## Do Mom and Dad really know what's best? A psychologist explains why kids see their parents as bossier than they are

*The brain science behind the power struggle between parents and their children.*

Nobody likes getting bossed around, but your parents' bossiness is probably well-intentioned.

As a psychologist who studies family relationships, I can tell you that a parent's No. 1 job is to keep their kids safe. When a kid becomes a teenager, their world becomes more dangerous. Relationships with friends can become complicated and even toxic. Drugs and alcohol become more readily available and more tantalizing. Mental health can take a nose-dive, and social media doesn't help.

There are a bunch of reasons why these risks increase as you grow up, but peer pressure is mostly to blame.

To protect their teens from those dangers, parents have lots of strategies. They may discipline their kids – "You're grounded!" – or challenge them to do better with phrases like, "When I was your age, I didn't behave like that." Or they might reprimand you: "I'm really disappointed in you."

If your parents have ever acted like that with you, then it is likely about keeping you safe. Most parents understand the dangers you face. They may have experienced them personally and want you to avoid the same mistakes they made. If your parents' guidance is keeping you from harm, I'd say that they really do know what's best.

### Your brain is still developing

OK, I got that out of the way. Are you



The finger wag: Always in style. H. Armstrong Roberts/ClassicStock/Getty Images

still reading? I hope so, because this next part is more interesting and nuanced, and it's about you and your brain.

Right now, your brain is undergoing remarkable growth. Starting around 10 years old, there's a flurry of activity in what's called the subcortical regions of your brain – a scientific term for the brain's inner core. These parts of the brain are associated with emotions like anger, anxiety and defensiveness.

Are you feeling those emotions pretty regularly these days? If so, congratulations! You are 100% normal.

As you get older, your brain's outer regions will become more developed, too. The last bit to mature is right behind your forehead, in an area called the prefrontal cortex. That area is associated with the ability to understand how someone else feels, and to put yourself in their shoes.

Experts who study brain development call this skill "perspective-taking." It means that when you're reprimanded for breaking the rules – for example, by staying out late – you don't lash out defensively. Instead, you acknowledge that the person doing the reprimanding is worried or scared, or simply looking out for you.

### Seeing life from another perspective

For adults, this perspective-taking can be really hard. For teens, I'm sorry to say, it's even harder. That's because your prefrontal cortex simply hasn't finished developing yet; it won't be fully functional until about age 25.

Your teenage brain currently allows you to do many incredible things, but you are biologically inclined to see life from your own perspective and struggle to understand why other people act the way they do.

In other words, your perceptions of your parents as bossy are based on the abilities of your yet-to-be fully developed brain. Meanwhile, what is fully developed is the part of your brain associated with those big emotions. That's a tough combination.

A final note: You might think that your parents "always act like they know what's best," but, in my parenting research, it's clear that they're often unsure how to handle certain situations. Over 40% of the parents in my last study shared self-critical thoughts about how they're doing as a parent. In other words, they're struggling, too.

If you can, give your parents a break – and maybe even a hug.

**Annie Pezalla**

Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology,  
Macalester College



## Johnny's Disobedience

Johnny's mother dragged him in front of his dad during a football match on TV.

"Talk to your son; he refuses to obey what I say."

The father turned to his son angrily, "Johnny, how dare you disobey your mum? Do you think you're better than your old man?"

\* \* \*

### The Punishment Swap

A frustrated father was complaining in the pub, "When I was a kid, I was disciplined by being sent to my room without any food. But in my son's room, he has a TV, phone, and laptop."

"So what did you do?" asked his friend.

"I sent him to my room," exclaimed the father.

\* \* \*

### Fire and Theft

The other day my house caught fire.

The insurance agent asked what kind of coverage I had.

I replied, "Fire and theft."

The agent frowned and said, "Wrong kind -- it should be fire or theft."

Apparently, the only way I could make a claim with this coverage is if the house is robbed while it's burning down.

\* \* \*

### 4-letter words after honeymoon

A young couple got married and left on their honeymoon. When they got back, the bride immediately called her mother. Her mother asked, 'How was the honeymoon?'

'Oh, mama,' she replied, 'the honeymoon was wonderful! So romantic'

Suddenly she burst out crying. 'But, mama, as soon as we returned he started using the most horrible language... things I'd never heard before! I mean, all these awful 4-letter words! You've got to come get me and take me home.... Please mama!'

Her mother said, 'Calm down! Tell me, what could be so awful? What 4-letter words?'

Still sobbing, the bride said, 'Oh, mama...words like



DUST, WASH, IRON, COOK...!!!

\* \* \*

A funeral service is being held for a woman who has just passed away. At the end of the service, the pall bearers are carrying the coffin out when they accidentally hit a wall, jarring the coffin, they hear a faint moan coming from inside.



They open the coffin and find that the woman is actually alive! She lives for ten more years, and then dies.

Once again, a ceremony is held and at the end of it, the pall bearers are again carrying out the coffin, as they move closer towards the door, the husband cries out, "Watch out for that frigging wall!"

\* \* \*

A father saw his 4 year-old daughter staring very inquisitively at the fingers on her hand. He promptly took hold of his daughters hand and pretended to eat it making the noise of a lion's roar in the process.

The daughter giggled as her daddy released her hand and once again looked at her fingers but this time looked puzzled before asking... "Where's my bogie gone?"

(In British slang, "bogie" can also be used to refer to a "booger" or "snot" (nasal mucus) in informal or humorous contexts.)

\* \* \*

### 'Wife' and 'Girlfriend'

A grandson asks his grandpa a question while on the way back from school:

"What is the difference between a 'Wife' and a

'Girlfriend'?"

Grandpa thought for a minute and simplified the explanation like this:

"Listen, child,

Wife is like a TV and Girlfriend is like a mobile phone. At home, you watch TV, but when you go out, you take your mobile.

Sometimes you enjoy TV, but most of the time, you play with your mobile.

TV is (as good as) free for life, but for the mobile, if you don't pay, the services will be terminated.

TV is big, bulky, and most of the time old, but the mobile is cute, slim, curvy, replaceable, and portable.

Operational costs for TV are often acceptable, but for the mobile, they are often high and demanding.

TV has a remote, but the mobile doesn't.

Most importantly, the mobile is two-way communication (you talk and listen), but with the TV, you must only listen (whether you want to or not)!

Last but not least,

TVs are superior because TVs don't have viruses, but mobiles often do!

And mobiles can be easily hacked or stolen.

Take care. Stick to TV only.

\* \* \*

### The Cowboy and the Farmer

A cowboy approaches a farmer and asks for a job.

The farmer tells the cowboy that he has no vacancies, but if the cowboy can do something special, he might consider it.

The cowboy replies, "Well, sir, I understand animals."

"Ha," the farmer says, "How many times have I heard that before?"

At this moment, a cow moos from behind a shed.

"So, what's it saying, cowboy?" the farmer asks with a wicked grin.

"Well, sir, the cow says she has some feathers on her udder, and the tickle is almost unbearable for her."

They go have a look—and it's true! The farmer removes the feathers, and the cow stops mooing.

Just then, a horse neighs loudly.

"So, what's his problem?" the farmer asks.

"Well, sir, the horse says there's a nail in his hind right hoof that sticks out and really bothers him."

They go have a look -- and the cowboy was right again.

At that moment, a sheep in the stable baas loudly.

The farmer explodes, "Will you just shut up! It was only once, and I was totally stoned!"



## The Ultimate Guide to being the Best Version of Yourself

**Groom yourself:** Even if you live alone, keep your beard clean and trimmed. Girls may also wax if necessary.

**Carry essentials:** Always have a wallet, comb, belt, perfume, and a pen with you.

**Workout regularly:** Exercise at least one hour a day. It keeps your body healthy, boosts confidence, and helps prevent pimples.

**Practise good manners:** Cover your mouth while sneezing or coughing and say 'Sorry' or 'Excuse me' afterward.

**Invest in personal hygiene:** Floss your teeth, clean your mouth,



and wear cologne.

**Think before you speak:** Speak less and consider your words carefully, as one wrong word can hurt.

**Silence is powerful:** When disrespected, staying silent can be the most impactful response. It shows strength and self-control.

**Validation over love:** Sometimes, she seeks validation more than love. Compliments and attention can matter more than deep

emotional connections.

**Mind changes:** Women may change their minds frequently. Learning to stay detached can help you navigate these changes.

**Mission over relationship:** Focus on your personal goals. This makes you more attractive and fulfilled rather than relying on a relationship for happiness.

**Emotional impact:** Showing your emotional side, even if it makes her cry, can create vulnerability and intimacy.

**Communication matters:** Pay attention to non-verbal cues. Girls often communicate through body language and subtle hints rather than direct words.

**Independence is attractive:** Women are drawn to men who are independent and self-sufficient. Show that you have your own life and interests.

-- Sree

### Life's Lesson

## True Elegance and Character

-- Robert De Niro

Having multiple partners doesn't define your masculinity, just as having many admirers doesn't determine your beauty. Material possessions attract shallow individuals, while time takes youth and superficial beauty away. What truly matters is character.

Women and men are not defined by their attire but by the richness of their minds, the depth of their spirits, and the strength of their character. True elegance lies in knowing one's desires and carrying oneself with grace.

Let's not waste our lives on fleeting and superficial



emotions. We must teach our children that success isn't measured by possessions and simplicity isn't a sign of poverty.

### That's Life

## I know it hurts

By Cody Bret

It's a very strange feeling how someone can be in your life for months or even years and then one day... all of a sudden not be there anymore.

Maybe the relationship ended on good terms... or maybe it was completely catastrophic.

Either way... it's so bizarre how relationships can change so vast and rapidly.

And you know what... you may not be at peace with what happened between the two of you... and that's perfectly fine.

Sometimes the end of a relationship can literally be one of the hardest things we go through in life.

I want you to know it's okay that your heart still hurts because of what happened.

You have made a lot of memories with this person.

And these memories that you have made is something you can't erase no matter how hard you try.

Whether you like it or not, they are a part of your story.

I know looking on these memories can be hard, and you may wish you could forget them.

But instead of forgetting, maybe we should try to focus on what came from the relationship.

You two joined paths for a particular reason.

Maybe you walked through some of the hardest times together.

Maybe you understood each other in a way no one else ever did.

Maybe you encouraged one another to be strong or to embrace who you genuinely were as a person.

Or maybe your relationship with them opened your eyes to what you truly needed in your life.

Regardless of what the reasoning was, it's okay to acknowledge that that person meant a lot to you.

And it's okay if they still do.

It's also okay that they aren't in your life anymore.

What a lot of people don't understand is, not every relationship we encounter will last a lifetime.

You shouldn't be lingering in the past questioning why everything happened the way it did.

What you need to do .... is to take what you've learned from that relationship and move forward in your life.

Knowing there are other relationships that will give you exactly what you've always dreamed of and more.

I need you to know that you're not going to feel this way forever.

You will continue to move forward and you will continue to grow with everyday that passes.

Take my advice and remember ....

Sometimes the people you wanted as part of your story, are only meant to be a chapter.

## Life's Lesson Cutting Out the Negative: People to Avoid

While it's essential to cultivate connections that uplift and inspire you, some individuals can drain your energy and derail your ambitions. In "Seven Types of People to Avoid," Mr Pro examines explore various negative personality types that can hinder your progress and sap your enthusiasm. By recognizing these detrimental influences, you can take proactive steps to surround yourself with positive, supportive individuals who truly enhance your life.

**Wheelbarrow People:** These individuals are energy drainers and time wasters. They expect you to solve their problems and contribute nothing in return. After you've put in the effort, you still have to push them along. They consume your energy, time, and resources.



Cutting Out the Negative - People to Avoid. Pic - The Positivity Blog

**1. Mosquito People:** These people extract benefits from you but offer nothing in return. They only come around when they need something and will often criticize or undermine you once they've received it. They sing your praises only when they have something to gain.

**2. Scaffolding People:** These individuals seek to control you because they have helped you in the past. They want to be a constant presence and dictate your actions. While scaffolding is useful short-term, it's dangerous to keep around permanently. Recognize when they start hindering your personal growth and discard them if necessary.

**3. Crocodile People:** These are pretenders who get close to learn your secrets and potentially use them against you. They are liars, backstabbers, and gossipers who pretend to empathize with you only to exploit your vulnerabilities later.

**4. Chameleon People:** These individuals are envious and competitive. They pretend to be aligned with you but secretly monitor and undermine your progress. They are jealous of your success and will highlight your failures while minimizing your achievements.

**5. Naysayer People:** These dream killers won't support your ambitions and will provide endless reasons why your dreams are impossible. They focus on your failures rather than your efforts and try to drain your passion and hope.

**6. Garbage Pusher People:** These are the worst, spreading negativity and discouragement. They offer no positive value and are quick to share bad news and demoralizing information. They are always ready to broadcast unfortunate events.

It's your responsibility to assess the people around you and ensure they contribute positively to your life. Surround yourself with positive influences and distance yourself from negativity.

Mr Pro

## If you're wondering, "Is she the one?"

**H**ave you noticed that your life has improved since she entered it -- not just because of her presence, but because of her influence? You may find yourself more goal-oriented, motivated to improve your life, and striving to become a better version of yourself -- not because she asks it of you, but because you want to be the kind of person she deserves. Real love can be a powerful motivator for self-improvement, so if she inspires you in this way, don't let her go.

### She actively listens to you

Active listening is a crucial, yet underrated, skill in successful relationships, especially romantic ones. When someone is actively listening, they aren't just hearing the words you say -- they are fully engaged in the conversation, paying attention to non-verbal cues, asking open-ended questions, and paraphrasing to ensure mutual understanding. If she makes a point of truly listening to you, it's a strong sign that the answer to "Is she the one?" is yes.

### She includes you in her plans, both present and future

A key sign she might be the one is how much of a part of her plans you are -- whether it's in the present, like ensuring you're included in family gatherings or carving out time for you even if it's just a text, or in the future, assuming you'll be together five or even ten years from now. If she envisions building a life with you, the odds are that yes, she is the one.

### You feel safe being vulnerable with her

Being vulnerable can be difficult, especially for those who've been socialized to be "strong" or "tough." A good way to determine if she's the one is to ask yourself whether you feel comfortable being vulnerable around her. While vulnerability is never easy, studies show it can



strengthen relationships. Having a supportive partner can make it easier to work through emotional challenges -- and if she's the one, she'll be there by your side.

### It's more than just sex with her

Don't get us wrong, sex is great. Studies have shown that regular consensual sex can increase happiness and quality of life. However, if you're wondering "Is she the one?" it's important to consider how you connect outside of the bedroom. After all, there will be times in your life when you may not have the time or energy for sex -- due to work or having young children. Having a deep bond that isn't solely based on sexual attraction is essential for long-term happiness.

### You trust her

If you're at ease when she spends time with friends and don't worry when she goes on trips, secure in her feelings for you, that's a clear sign she might be the one. While a little occasional jealousy is normal -- after all, we're all human -- once you've found the one, trust in her and your love for each other will outweigh any

insecurities.

### You know how to resolve your relationship conflicts

Disagreements are natural in any relationship, but it's how you fight that matters. Can you resolve conflicts respectfully, without attempting to "punish" the other person? Do you strive to find a compromise where both of you can be happy? If your answers to these questions are "yes," it increases the likelihood that the answer to "Is she the one?" is also yes.

### You're friends as well as romantic partners

Long-lasting couples are often friends as well as lovers. If you're happy spending time together, if you make each other laugh constantly, if you share many of the same goals and values, and if she makes you smile just thinking about her -- those are all signs that she might be the one. Studies show that friendship is a crucial element in a successful long-term relationship. So, if she's both your friend and romantic partner, that's a strong indicator she could be the one.

### She accepts your flaws

Despite what online articles or magazines may tell you, women aren't seeking perfection. A good way to gauge whether she's the one is by observing how she reacts to your flaws. Does she accept them as part of who you are? Does she encourage you to improve without being judgmental? If she's the one, she'll accept your flaws as part of the beautiful whole that is you.

### You just know she's the one

Sometimes, our hearts know before our minds can catch up. Pay attention to how you feel around her -- does she make you happy? Do you smile just thinking about her? Do you feel at ease when she enters the room? Does being with her feel natural and effortless? Do you share inside jokes that nobody else understands, no matter how many times you try to explain? When you picture your life in five, ten, or even twenty years, can you imagine her by your side? If you answered "yes" to most (or all) of these questions, then you know she's the one.

**Eharmony**

## Health Tips

# Foods that Raise your Blood Pressure

**C**ertain foods can secretly spike your blood pressure, even if they seem healthy at first glance. Here's a look at some of the worst offenders, as medically reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD

**Restaurant Food** - Many restaurant meals are loaded with sodium, which can increase blood pressure. Most sodium in U.S. diets comes from restaurant and packaged foods. Opt for low-sodium menu options or ask for meals without added salt. Use alternatives like lemon juice to flavor your food instead.

### Frozen Meals

Convenient but sodium-packed, frozen meals should be limited. If you need a quick option, choose meals with 600 milligrams of sodium or less per serving.

### Salty Snacks

Chips, crackers, and popcorn often have high sodium content. For a healthier



alternative, choose low-sodium snacks or enjoy fresh veggies like carrots or celery sticks.

### Pickled Foods and Their Juices

Foods like kimchi and sauerkraut, along with their juices, are high in sodium. Three ounces of pickle juice alone can contain around 900 milligrams of sodium. Instead, try marinades with vinegar, pineapple juice, or citrus fruits for flavor without the sodium.

**Bread** - Though it doesn't taste salty, bread can be a hidden source of sodium.

A slice of white bread can contain 80 to 230 milligrams of sodium. Opt for whole-grain bread or other low-sodium alternatives.

**Soup** - Soup is often high in sodium, especially canned varieties. For example, one cup of tomato soup can contain 700 to 1,260 milligrams of sodium. Choose low-sodium versions or make your own at home, seasoning with herbs and spices.

**Tomato Juice and Sauces** - A small serving of canned tomato juice can pack over 600 milligrams of sodium. Look for

low-sodium alternatives to keep your intake in check.

**Processed Meat** - Lunch meats, hot dogs, bacon, and other processed meats can be very high in sodium, with a serving containing 750 milligrams or more. Stick to lean meats like chicken and fish instead.

**Pizza** - Whether frozen or from a restaurant, pizza is a sodium bomb. A slice of cheese pizza can have between 370 and 760 milligrams of sodium. Opt for thin crust and load up on vegetables for a healthier choice.

**Beer, Wine, and Alcohol** - Excessive alcohol consumption can raise blood pressure. Men should limit themselves to two drinks per day, and women to one. Though red wine may be linked to heart health, moderation is key.

**Cheese** - Some cheeses, especially processed and hard varieties like American or cottage cheese, can be high in sodium. Choose lower-sodium options like Swiss, goat cheese, or fresh mozzarella instead.

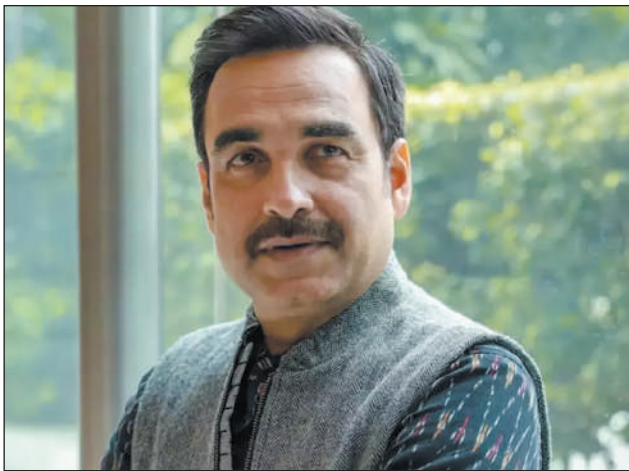
**Condiments** - Common condiments like ketchup, soy sauce, and salad dressings are often sodium-rich. Look for low-sodium versions or use alternatives like lemon juice and vinegar for flavor.

## Pankaj Tripathi: From hotel employee in Patna to Bollywood icon

**P**ankaj Tripathi's journey from the kitchens of a hotel in Patna to the glitz of Bollywood is a testament to perseverance, passion, and humility. Known for his versatile roles and grounded personality, the *Mirzapur* star's story inspires countless dreamers who aspire to carve their own paths in life.

Hailing from a small village in Bihar, Tripathi's early years were far removed from the glamour of the film industry. Unlike many Bollywood aspirants who recount tales of struggle involving hunger and homelessness, Tripathi's challenges were different. In the early 1990s, he worked at the Maurya Hotel in Patna, taking up night shifts in the kitchen to support himself while pursuing his love for theater during the day.

"I learned how to make breads and cake bases during my time there," he shared in an interview. For two years, he balanced exhausting hotel shifts with theater rehearsals, sleeping only a few hours before starting the



cycle anew.

### A heartwarming reunion

Recently, Tripathi revisited the Maurya Hotel, where he encountered 15 of his former colleagues. The experience was deeply emotional for the actor. "I used to enter the hotel from the back gate, like all staff members. This time, I walked through the main entrance and was greeted warmly by the general manager. It was a meaningful moment for me," he recounted.

This reunion highlighted the actor's humility and his ability to cherish his roots despite his soaring fame.

Tripathi's big break came with Anurag Kashyap's *Gangs of Wasseypur* in 2012, a film that brought him critical acclaim and opened doors to larger projects. However, his rise to stardom was not overnight. Years of hard work and smaller roles in films like *Masaan* and *Newton* prepared him for the recognition he deserved.

### Stardom with substance

Today, Tripathi is celebrated for his organic acting style and the depth he brings to his characters. From the ruthless Kaleen Bhaiya in *Mirzapur* to nuanced roles in *Sacred Games* and *Stree*, he has demonstrated his range as an actor. His ability to balance comedy, drama, and thriller genres has cemented his place as one of India's finest performers.

### Cherishing His Roots

Despite his success, Tripathi remains deeply connected to his past. He once shared a nostalgic memory of actor Manoj Bajpayee staying at the Maurya Hotel during his tenure there. Tripathi, a young admirer of Bajpayee at the time, kept a pair of the actor's slippers as a memento -- a simple act that underscores his humility and admiration for those who paved the way before him.

## Taapsee Pannu: The Feminist icon reshaping Bollywood's narrative



**I**n an era where Bollywood is finally embracing the complexity and strength of women, Taapsee Pannu stands as a beacon of change. Known for her powerful performances and fearless choices, Pannu has carved a niche for herself, portraying characters that challenge societal norms while redefining what it means to be a Bollywood heroine.

Taapsee Pannu's journey in Bollywood has been nothing short of extraordinary. From playing light-hearted roles in films like *Judwaa 2*, she transitioned to portraying fierce, multi-layered characters in films such as *Pink*, *Thappad*, and *Haseen Dillruba*. This evolution reflects not just her growth as an actor but also Bollywood's gradual acceptance of women as central, powerful figures in storytelling.

### The voice of empowerment

In *Pink*, Pannu's portrayal of Minal brought to light the harsh realities of societal judgments women face when seeking justice.

Her performance captured the pain, resilience, and courage of a woman fighting to reclaim her dignity. The film was more than just a courtroom drama -- it was a rallying cry for consent and women's rights.

Similarly, in *Thappad*, Pannu delivered a deeply moving performance as Amrita, a woman whose life is upended by a single slap from her husband. Through her quiet yet searing portrayal, Pannu forced audiences to confront uncomfortable questions about respect, self-worth, and boundaries in relationships. The film's resonance lies in its simplicity, magnified by Pannu's ability to embody a character grappling with heartbreak and empowerment simultaneously.

In *Haseen Dillruba*, Pannu ventured into morally ambiguous territory as Rani Saxena, a femme fatale balancing seduction with depth. Her performance as a flawed, captivating protagonist added nuance to Bollywood's portrayal of women,

proving that female characters can be as complex and layered as their male counterparts.

Her upcoming film, *Gandhari*, promises to take this narrative further. As a mother fighting against all odds for her child, Pannu is set to embody resilience and the indomitable spirit of motherhood. Partnering with writer Kanika Dhillon, who has been a driving force behind some of Bollywood's most impactful stories, the duo is poised to deliver another cinematic masterpiece.

### Redefining Bollywood's Heroines

In an industry that often reduces women to mere eye candy, Taapsee Pannu stands out as an actress who brings substance and strength to every role. She effortlessly balances the glamorous with the fierce, the entertaining with the thought-provoking.

With each project, Pannu is not just acting; she is shaping the way women are perceived in cinema. She proves that heroines can be unapologetically real, fiercely independent, and emotionally complex.

### A Heroine for Today

Taapsee Pannu is more than just an actor -- she is a symbol of the changing face of Bollywood. By choosing roles that matter and delivering performances that resonate, she continues to lead the charge for meaningful representation of women in cinema. As Bollywood evolves, Pannu ensures her voice is one that cannot be ignored, making her the feminist icon the industry truly deserves.



## Nargis Fakhri's Sister Aliya Fakhri Arrested in Double Murder Case

**B**ollywood actress Nargis Fakhri's sister Aliya Fakhri has been arrested in a double murder case. She was nabbed in the murder probe of her ex-boyfriend Edward Jacobs and his friend Anastasia Ettinne in Queens, New York. She allegedly set a two-storey garage on fire, killing them both.

As per reports, the incident took place on 2nd November. She arrived at the garage earlier in the day and yelled, "you are all going to die today" at Jacobs who lived upstairs. The building was discovered in fire by a witness who came out after hearing her voice.

Reports further stated that Anastasia came downstairs but went back in to save her friend who was sleeping. However, none of them could escape the building in time. They died from smoke inhalation and thermal injuries.

The grand jury charged her with four counts of murder in the first degree, four counts of murder in the second degree and accused of arson. If convicted, Aliya will face a maximum of life imprisonment.

The next appearance is on 9th December.

A witness in this case said that Aliya had earlier threatened to burn down Jacob's house after he broke up with her and she couldn't handle the rejection.

Nargis Fakhri is yet to comment on this.



Vendredi 6 decembre - 21.05



Samedi 7 decembre - 20.30



Dimanche 8 decembre - 15.20



# Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 6 decembre

### MBC 1

- 07.30 Serial: Under Pressure
- 08.38 Les Riches Pleurent Aussi
- 09.35 Film: High Plains Drifter
- 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: Get Happy!
- 16.46 Mag: Hollywood's Best Film
- 17.30 Your Love Is My Fortune
- 18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
- 19.00 Serial: Doree
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Film: Kingsman: Le Cercle...
- 22.40 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 23.33 Le Journal
- 00.16 Your Love Is My Fortune
- 00.42 Serial: The Bionic Woman
- 01.30 Serial: Le Chemin Du Destin

### MBC 2

- 06.15 Les Grandes Lignes
- 06.45 Local: En Forme
- 07.30 Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 10.40 Rodrig: J'ai Faim
- 12.00 Rodrig: Decouvertes
- 13.15 Rodrig: Sa Lavi La
- 14.45 Local: J'ai Faim
- 15.30 Rodrig Prog: Lavi Fam
- 16.44 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 17.03 Local: La Sosiete
- 18.00 Seiral: Passion And Power
- 18.30 Les Riches Pleurent
- 19.20 Le Magazine De L'emploi...
- 19.30 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
- 20.05 Local: Animalia Nos Amis...
- 20.30 Local: Lir - Ekriir Kreol
- 21.44 Local: La Sosiete
- 23.20 Local: Meshiagare...
- 23.33 Rodrig Otantik
- 00.04 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
- 01.16 Local: Retrovizor

### MBC 3

- 07.00 Mag: Tenali Rama
- 07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesh
- 08.09 Local: MBC Production
- 10.00 Serial: Agniphera
- 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Honeymoon
- Starring: Anil Dhawan, Leena Chandravakar
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.30 Serial: Jai Jai Shiv Shankar
- 16.00 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron
- 16.40 Serial: Bhakharwadi
- 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 18.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 20.00 Local: Khel Khiladi
- 20.30 Serial: Vidrohi
- 21.00 Film: Laat Saab
- Starring: Rajiv Singh Dinkar, Roobi Singh, Priya Sharma
- 23.29 Serial: Mere Sai

### Cine 12

- 08.16 Brewster The Rooster
- 08.32 D.Anime: Messy Goes To...
- 10.04 Film: Snow White's New Ad...
- 11.30 Mag: Eco India
- 11.56 Mag: Shift
- 12.12 Mag: Carnet De Sante
- 12.58 Film: Ferdinand
- 14.44 Mag: Animal DNA
- 14.49 D.Anime: Hiccup And Sneeze
- 15.31 D.Anime: Patamuse
- 15.40 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois
- 15.52 D.Anime: Semi In The Magic...
- 16.05 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.17 D.Anime: Agi Bagi
- 16.39 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 17.01 Serial: The Avatars
- 18.00 Doc: The Baobab
- 18.42 Mag: Business Beyond
- 19.28 Mag: Vous Et Vous
- 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 21.05 Film: The Night We Met

### Bollywood TV

- 14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
- 14.55 Serial: Doree
- 15.30 Film: Saina
- Cast: Parineeti Chopra
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Kundali Bhagya
- 19.01 Udaariyaan
- 19.32 Dharam Patni
- 20.01 Mithai
- 20.31 Serial: 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: Saina
- Cast: Parineeti Chopra

samedi 7 decembre

- 03.26 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 05.02 Serial: Treadstone
- 06.30 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 07.00 Serial: Heartland
- 08.30 Serial: Blue Lights
- 09.15 Serial: Under Pressure
- 10.00 Serial: Treadstone
- 10.49 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 11.30 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Serial: Seal Team
- 13.25 Tele: Barbarita...
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.25 Film: Kingsman: Le Cercle...
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Enter: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa...
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.30 Film: Nine Days
- 22.30 Serial: Treadstone
- 00.18 Serial: Sublime Mensonge
- 01.59 Serial: Under Pressure

- 06.00 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 06.24 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
- 07.05 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
- 08.02 Local: Lir - Ekriir Kreol
- 09.30 Local: La Sosiete
- 10.22 Rodrig Otantik
- 12.00 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir
- 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard...
- 13.30 Local: Couleur Marine
- 14.45 Local: La Sosiete
- 16.25 Local: Retrovizor
- 16.40 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 18.05 Serial: Heartland
- 19.00 Journal Kreol
- 19.20 Mag De L'emploi Et Des Metiers
- 20.06 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 20.33 Local: Upclose And Personal
- 21.25 Local: Glwar Dantan
- 22.00 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 23.00 Journal Rediffusion
- 23.20 Local: Lavi Zoli An XXL

- 05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
- 06.59 Local: Aaj Aur Kal Bolly...
- 07.26 Mag: Tarane Purane
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
- 08.30 Local: Abhyas Yog
- 10.27 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 12.00 Serial: Dikri Vahalno Dariyo
- 12.17 Local: MBC Production
- 14.00 Serial: Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.30 Film: Good Boy Bad Boy
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Saying Radha Krishna
- 19.15 Local: MBC Production
- 21.00 Film: Traffic Signal (2007)
- Cast: Kunal Khemu, Konkona Sen
- 23.08 Local: MBC Production
- 01.19 Film: Traffic Signal (2007)
- 03.24 Local: MBC Production

- 06.00 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 06.28 D.Anime: Anna Et Ses Amis
- 09.31 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier
- 09.53 D.Anime: Superstore
- 10.35 Mag: Recipes For Kids
- 10.36 Film: Black Beauty
- 13.00 Film: The Enchanted Mountain
- 15.00 Serial: Hiccup And Sneeze
- 15.28 Serial: Patamuse
- 15.49 D.Anime: Semi In The Magic
- 16.02 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.14 D.Anime: Agi Bagi
- 16.58 Serial: The Avatars
- 17.30 Doc: Bee-Keeping
- 18.05 Mag: In Good Shape
- 18.30 Doc: Top Div Sites
- 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 20.50 Doc: Journey To The Center
- 21.40 Film: Breveheart
- 00.33 Doc: Rodeo Girls
- 01.16 Doc: Europe Revealed

- 08.00 Dharam Patni
- 10.15 Mithai
- 12.00 Udaariyaan
- 14.10 Anupamaa
- 16.07 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 17.36 Vidrohi
- 18.30 Film: Teri Meri Kahaani
- With: Shahid Kapoor, Priyanka Chopra
- 21.01 Keh Doon Tumhein
- 21.19 Porus

dimanche 8 decembre

- 03.07 Film: Counting Bullets
- 04.45 Serial: Gout De L'amour
- 05.29 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 05.56 Film: Nine Days
- 07.56 Serial: Pearson
- 08.40 Film: 90 Feet From Home
- 10.45 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 11.30 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.35 Film: High Plains Drifter
- 14.18 Serial: Zoo
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.20 Film: Night School
- 17.15 Tele: L'empire Du Mensonge
- 19.30 Le Journal Televisue
- 20.30 Film: Le Mans 66
- 22.13 Serial: Pearson
- 22.56 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
- 23.47 Le Journal
- 02.08 Serial: NCIS: New Orleans
- 02.50 Mag: Hollywood's Best

- 06.00 Rodrig Prog: Coin Zen
- 07.45 Local: Glwar Dantan
- 09.15 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 09.41 Rodrig Prog: Promnad
- 10.07 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 11.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 12.26 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 13.03 Local: Hansel And Gretel...
- 14.30 Live: En Direct Du Thabor
- 16.35 Local: Saver Kiltirel
- 17.05 Local: Tous Egaux
- 17.35 Local: Glwar Dantan
- 18.03 Serial: Heartland
- 19.00 Journal Kreol
- 19.24 Local: Info En Langue...
- 20.05 Local: Les Klips
- 21.51 Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 23.00 Journal Rediffusion
- 23.20 Arsvi MBC - Fer Roulle
- 23.46 Local: Mangeons Veg
- 00.13 Rodrig Prog: Komanter

- 06.59 Serial: Popular Hindi Songs
- 07.22 Mag: Wellness Watch
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
- 08.26 Local: MBC Production
- 10.40 Serial: Mahabharat
- 12.00 Film: English Vinglish
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.21 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 16.00 Local: MBC Production
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Saying Radha Krishna
- 18.32 Local: MBC Production
- 20.31 Serial: Porus
- 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein
- 21.30 Naagin
- 22.12 Serial: Bahubali
- 22.59 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
- 01.06 Local: MBC Production
- 02.00 Film: English Vinglish
- Cast: Sridevi, Adil Hussain, Mehdi Nebbou

- 08.22 Brewster The Rooster
- 08.38 D.Anime: Messy Goes To...
- 09.22 D.Anime: Sam Le Pompier
- 09.44 Serial: Superstore
- 10.24 Mag: Recipes For Kids
- 10.28 Film: Les Aventuriers Du Vaisseau Perdu
- 12.41 Mag: Unseen
- 13.00 Film: The Three Musketeers
- 14.40 Mag: Animal DNA
- 14.59 Serial: Hiccup And Sneeze
- 15.27 D.Anime: Patamuse
- 16.00 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.56 Serial: The Avatars
- 17.15 Doc: Japan Video Topics
- 18.00 Doc: Ageless Gardens
- 18.30 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 19.30 Mag: Arts Unveiled
- 20.00 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 20.30 Live: News
- 21.40 Film: Baby Doll

- 00.01 Mithai
- 01.45 Udaariyaan
- 03.45 Anupamaa
- 05.49 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 07.40 Tenali Rama
- 08.00 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey
- 10.00 Kundali Bhagya
- 12.00 Rajaa Betaa
- 14.00 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se
- 16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya
- 18.38 Film: Happy Bhaag Jayegi
- 20.32 Tenali Rama
- 21.00 Mahabharat
- 21.47 Dance India Dance Super Moms
- 22.35 Rajaa Betaa
- 00.21 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey

lundi 9 decembre

- 02.35 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 03.28 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent
- 04.45 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
- 05.28 Serial: The Queen Of Flow
- 06.59 Serial: Supercopier
- 08.10 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent
- 09.05 Film: Le Mans 66
- 11.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
- 14.10 Serial: Supercopier
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.25 Film: Baby Doll
- 16.45 Mag: Hollywood's Best Film
- 17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 18.46 Serial: Shiv Shakti
- 19.07 Serial: Doree
- 20.30 Serial: Belgravia
- 21.15 Serial: Blue Lights
- 21.56 Tele: Heartland

- 07.54 Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 09.19 Local: Fer Roule
- 10.31 Local: Mangeons Veg
- 11.55 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 12.47 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 12.53 Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 13.54 Local: En Toute Intimite
- 14.50 Rodrig Prog: Komanter
- 16.06 Local: Les Klips
- 17.07 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
- 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
- 18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent...
- 19.30 Le Magazine De L'emploi
- 19.25 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel
- 20.00 Local: Metie
- 20.15 Local: Sega Tipik-Nu Leritaz
- 20.45 Local: Tous Egaux
- 21.00 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
- 21.50 Local: En Toute Intimite
- 22.20 Local: Lir - Ekriir Kreol
- 22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard

- 07.00 Tenali Rama
- 08.26 Local: Planet Bollywood
- 08.53 Tohar Rashi
- 09.17 Tohar Farmaish
- 09.40 Bahubali
- 10.20 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
- 11.30 Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Maa Beti
- 15.21 Serial: Kisma
- 15.30 Jai Jai Shiv Shankar
- 15.56 Kundali Bhagya
- 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 18.30 Radha Krishna
- 18.57 Local: MBC Production
- 20.30 Serial: Ramayan
- 20.55 Film: Ek Phool Char Kante
- With: Sunil Dutt, Waheeda Rehman
- 23.11 Serial: Mere Sai
- 00.04 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya

- 06.25 Doc: Cool & Clever
- 07.22 Les Nouvelles Aventures...
- 07.35 D.Anime: Sonic Boom
- 08.41 D.Anime: Idefix Et Les Irreductibles
- 10.05 Film: Strange Magic
- 10.23 Doc: Recipes For Kids
- 11.35 Doc: Ageless Gardens
- 11.51 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 13.03 Film: The Boy, The Bog And The Clown
- 15.15 D.Anime: Patamuse
- 15.24 D.Anime: Robin Des Boix
- 15.38 D.Anime: Rockabye Island
- 15.49 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.01 D.Anime: Agi Bagi
- 16.23 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 16.45 Serial: The Avatars
- 18.30 Mag: The 77 Percent
- 19.30 Mag: In Good Shape
- 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'aimer
- 21.05 Film: Zombieland

- 14.25 Radha Mohan
- 14.51 Doree
- 15.25 Film: Sanam Teri Kasam
- Starring: Harshvardhan Rane, Mawra Hocane
- 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



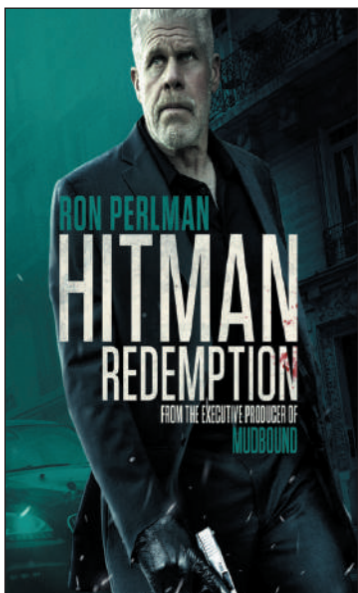
Mardi 10 decembre - 20.30



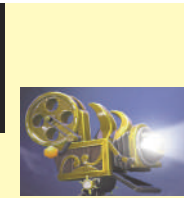
Mercredi 11 decembre - 20.30



Jeudi 12 decembre - 21.00



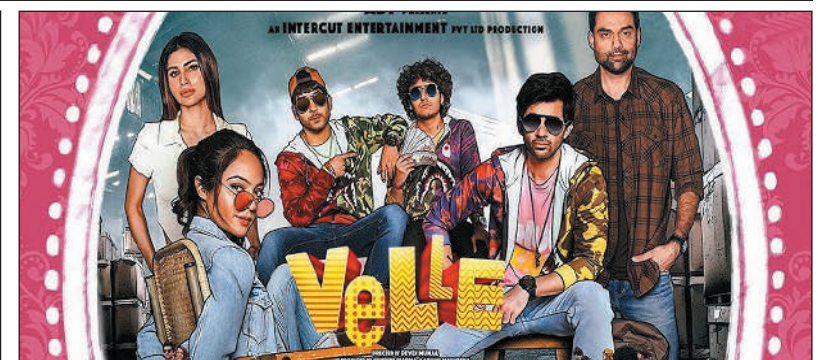
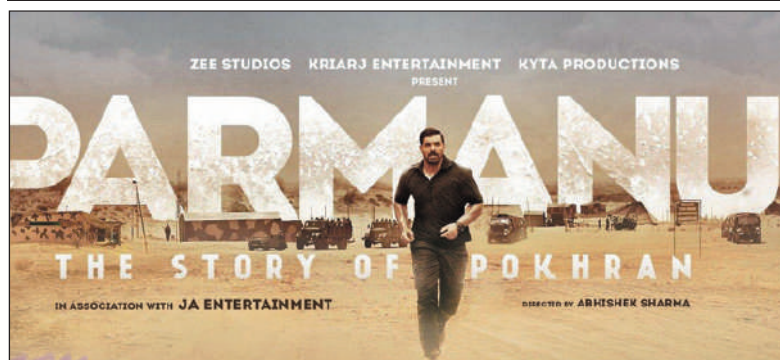
# Programme TV



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
<b>mardi 10 decembre</b>	05.11 Tele: Gout De L'Amour 06.01 Serial: The Queen Of Flow 08.10 Tele: Le Temps D'Aimer 09.30 Film: The Bounty Men 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: Breaking In 17.00 Mag: Hollywood's Best Film 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 Film: Love Under The Stars 22.00 Tele: Terra Nostra 22.58 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 00.15 Serial: Treadstone 00.59 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin	07.45 Local: Tous Egaux 10.30 Rodrig Prog: Saver Lokal 11.19 Rodrig Mo Pei 11.54 Rodrig Prog: Feminin Pluriel 12.35 Local: Sega Tipik-Nu Leritaz 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard 12.52 Local: Metie 15.40 Rodrig Mo Pei 16.16 Local: Metie 17.07 Local: Le Mag 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.20 Le Magazine De L'Emploi 20.27 Local: Priorite Sante 21.00 Local: Paroles Agricole 21.35 Local: Le Mag 22.27 Local: Mots & Ecrits 22.54 La Journee Sous Le Regard 23.00 Zournal Rediffusion 23.20 Local: Music Tour 00.15 Local: Profil	07.30 Serial: Lambu G Tingu G 08.00 MBC Production 09.59 Kundali Bhagya 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.01 Film: Pyar Bhara Dil 15.21 Other Serial: Radha Krishna 15.30 Serial: Sajanwa Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Local: MBC Production 20.30 Serial: Ramayan 21.00 Film: Jeevan Mrityu Cast: Dharendra, Rakhee Gulzar, Ajit Khan 23.18 Serial: Mere Sai 00.31 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 00.47 Local: MBC Production 02.44 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile... 03.05 MBC Production	07.00 D.Anime: Miraculous... 07.31 D.Anime: Sonic Boom 07.43 D.Anime: Kika et Bob 08.19 Messy Goes To Okido 10.06 Film: Even Bigger Slime 12.54 Mag: In Good Shape 13.30 Film: Le Ranch Du Bonheur 15.03 D.Anime: Animal DNA 15.23 Serial: Hiccup And Sneezee 15.51 D.Anime: Patamuse 15.59 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois 16.23 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 16.35 D.Anime: Agi Bagi 16.57 D.Anime: Miraculous... 17.19 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi 18.00 Mag: REV 18.30 Mag: Healthy Living 19.00 Mag: Made In Germany 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'Aimer 21.05 Film: Nine Days With: Winston Duke, Zazie Beetz	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.55 Doree 15.30 Film: Veer 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.03 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dharam Patni 20.06 Mithai 20.29 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.07 Anupama 21.29 Mere Sai 22.04 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.34 Serial: Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 23.04 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Veer 02.00 Kundali Bhagya 02.30 Udaariyaan 03.00 Dharam Patni 03.30 Mithai
<b>mercredi 11 decembre</b>	06.00 Serial: The Queen Of Flow 07.26 Serial: Airwolf 08.42 Les Riches Pleurent Aussi 09.35 Film: Love Under The Stars 11.33 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 13.46 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.15 Serial: Airwolf 15.00 Live: Samachar 15.25 Film: Nine Days 17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.55 Serial: Doree 19.20 Sayings Radha Krishna 19.30 Journal & La Meteo 20.30 Film: Legacy Cast: Louis Mandylor, Luke Goss, Elya Baskin 22.04 Tele: Terra Nostra	07.25 Local: Priorite Sante 08.50 Local: Profil 09.00 Rodrig: Rod'Art 10.58 Local: Music Tour 12.00 Rodrig: Plat Du Chef 12.15 Local: Son Ladan Mem 13.05 Local: Priorite Sante 13.30 Local: Paroles Agricole 14.47 Local: Nu Rasinn 16.40 La Journee Sous Le Regard 16.45 Local: En Forme 18.07 Tele: Passion And Power 18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.20 Le Mag De L'emploi... 19.30 Rodrig Spor 20.00 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 20.30 Local: Toc Toc Doc 21.00 Local: Agir Ensemble 21.26 Local: Les Klips 22.30 Local: Proze Dime 23.00 Zournal Rediffusion 23.18 Local: Dance Fever	07.00 Tenali Rama 07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesha 07.33 Lambu G Tingu G 08.00 MBC Production 10.00 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Padosan Cast: Sunil Dutt, Saira Banu, Mehmood 15.00 Samachar 15.20 Serial: Kisna 15.33 Jai Jai Shiv Shankar 15.53 Radha Mohan 17.30 Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Local: Radha Krishna 20.30 Mag: Talaash 21.00 Film: Naagraj 23.30 Serial: Mere Sai 00.07 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya	07.00 D.Anime: Miraculous... 09.39 D.Anime: Riley Rocket 10.02 Film: Vinski Et La Poudre Magique 11.30 Mag: REV 12.06 Mag: Healthy Living 13.00 Film: A Christmas Star 14.30 Mag: Animal DNA 14.48 Serial: Hiccup And Sneezee 15.13 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes 15.30 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois 15.54 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 16.01 D.Anime: Agi Bagi 16.48 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi 17.15 Doc: By Train Through... 18.00 Mag: Afrimaxx 18.30 Transforming Business 18.45 Mag: Planet A 19.00 Arts Unveiled 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'Aimer 21.05 Film: Happy Death Day	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.50 Doree 15.30 Film: Freaky Ali Starring: Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Arbaaz Khan, Amy Jackson 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Kundali Bhagya 19.02 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dharam Patni 20.00 Mithai 20.31 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.00 Anupamaa 21.28 Mere Sai 22.05 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.20 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 22.51 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Freaky Ail Starring: Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Arbaaz Khan, Amy Jackson
<b>jeudi 12 decembre</b>	06.03 Tele: The Queen Of Flow 08.11 Serial: Le Temps D'Aimer 08.37 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent 09.30 Film: Oblivion 11.33 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Terra Nostra 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 13.45 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.15 Serial: Heartland 15.25 Film: Legacy 17.15 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.56 Serial: Doree 19.30 Le Journal 20.21 Film: Velle Stars: Abhay Deol, Mouni Roy, Karan Deol, Anya Singh 22.18 Tele: Terra Nostra 23.11 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 23.31 Le Journal	07.10 Local: Toc Toc Doc 07.30 Local: Agir Ensemble 11.55 Rodrig Spor 12.25 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 12.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard 13.30 Local: Agir Ensemble 14.41 Local: Proze Dime 15.01 Rodrig: A Nou Kwi 15.26 Local: Dance Fever 16.56 La Journee Sous Le Regard 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.31 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.00 Zournal Kreol 19.15 Le Magazine De L'Emploi 20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.30 Local: Ti Zistwar Zanan 21.15 Local: Le Mag 22.02 Rodrig: Klip Seleksion 22.52 Zournal Rediffusion 23.20 Rodrig: Lavi Fam	07.00 Tenali Rama 08.00 Local: MBC Production 10.00 Serial: Radha Mohan 12.00 Film: Anpadh Cast: Ashok Kumar, Parikshit Sahni, Zarina Wahab 15.00 Samachar 15.30 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile... 15.56 Agniphera 17.30 Radha Krishna 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Sayings Radha Krishna 18.46 MBC Production 20.30 Serial: Ramayan 21.01 Serial: Shiv Shakti 21.30 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.57 Mag: Dharam Yatra 22.57 Mere Sai 23.49 Wagle Ki Duniya 00.13 Local: MBC Production	07.00 D.Anime: Miraculous... 07.47 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob 08.39 Idefix Et Les Irreductibles 10.00 Film: Mechant Menteur 2 11.34 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover... 12.28 Mag: Arts Unveiled 13.00 Film: Blinky Bill 14.30 Mag: Animal DNA 14.49 D.Anime: Hiccup And Sneezee 15.16 D.Anime: Meteo Heroes 15.30 D.Anime: Robin Des Bois 15.54 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs 16.01 D.Anime: Agi Bagi 16.26 D.Anime: Miraculous... 17.04 Serial: Sept Nains Et Moi 18.00 Mag: Eco India 18.42 Mag: Carnet De Sante 19.00 Mag: Border Crossing 20.01 Tele: Le Temps D'Aimer 21.00 Film: Hitman Redemption	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.00 Doree 15.25 Film: Parmanu Stars: John Abraham, Boman Irani, Diana Penty 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dharam Patni 20.00 Mithai 20.24 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.02 Anupamaa 21.34 Mere Sai 22.01 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.29 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 23.05 Rajaa Betaa 23.31 Film: Parmanu Stars: John Abraham, Boman Irani, Diana Penty

**BTV** Jeudi 12 decembre - 15.30 Stars: John Abraham, Boman Irani, Diana Penty

**MBC 1** Jeudi 12 decembre - 20.21 Stars: Abhay Deol, Mouni Roy, Karan Deol, Anya Singh





Nita Chicooree-Mercier

# Common Sense in Education

The topic of education is too important to be left solely in the hands of politicians without consulting relevant partners, such as experienced educators, sociologists, and child psychologists. Fortunately, the current minister is conducting extensive consultations, including a two-day session starting Monday and an upcoming assembly scheduled for April.

By now, any honest citizen who has considered the views published by journalists in the press and aired on private radio stations should be aware of the lack of objectivity that permeates the media's assessment of public education. Why? The media in Mauritius has a history of systematically running down anything that comes out of the Ministry of Education, believing that policies implemented there are inherently flawed. Their opinions are not based on any in-depth analysis of the system itself or a critique of its shortcomings, but rather on the belief that ministers, and their aides have no real understanding of what education truly means. Most of these media spokespersons and opinion makers send their children to private French schools, thereby fostering a condescending attitude toward public education. This attitude has been fuelled for decades by resentment over the selective system that has sent 11-year-olds to prestigious schools.

The main argument often shouted from rooftops has been that the system "robs children of their childhood". The selection process was wrongly seen as elitist and discriminatory toward other children. However, children from all social backgrounds — whether they are the children of labourers, tailors, shopkeepers, food vendors, farmers, masons, nurses, teachers, or doctors — could make their way to these "star" schools. The process was based on merit, not on favouritism, the colour of the skin, creed, or race. Now that the former minister has already streamlined the CPE for a smoother transition to college by delaying exams until Grade 9 (formerly Form 3), one might wonder if there are plans to postpone it further.

The new minister has vaguely hinted at this idea on television, citing an example from Japan, where teenagers in secondary schools do not take exams until the age of 14 or 15. However, the economic and socio-cultural context of Japan cannot be overlooked. Japan moved from a cut-throat competitive education system in the 1980s and 1990s,

which helped propel it to the world's second-largest economy, but with it came a high rate of teenage suicide. Has Mauritius faced similar issues? In today's Japan, college pupils clean their classrooms at the end of the day before heading home. This practice is meant to instil a sense of civic responsibility and discipline in youngsters. Japan's homogeneous ethnic group and culture are factors that need to be considered before blindly adopting policies from such a specific context.



**"The idea of mixed-ability classes, which has been hailed in some circles in Mauritius, has proven ineffective in France, a model inspired by ideology rather than common sense. Over time, this approach has become a real headache for both teachers and students, negatively impacting the quality of the Baccalaureate. The single exam at the age of 17 is increasingly being questioned. In response, the Ministry of Education in Mauritius has reintroduced "classe de niveau" (level-based classes), a politically correct term for a return to selective, homogeneous classes. Interestingly, French educators today appreciate the selective, exam-based system in Mauritius because their own system has failed..."**

There are several points in primary and secondary education that require serious attention, such as the burden of unnecessary subjects heaped on young minds at an early age. For instance, Environmental Studies — should 13-14-year-olds be required to attain 4 credits in such a subject? Should standards be lowered to allow a greater number of pupils to take part in exams? Judging from the minister's statements, it seems that the introduction of 3 credits may be on the cards to be more inclusive. However, does the fault of low performance lie in the number of subjects, or are there other factors restricting students' ability to invest in their studies?

Youngsters should understand that the years spent in college are meant to prepare them for their future. In Australia, authorities are trying to ban Facebook and TikTok for those under 16, despite some opposition. Given the dire state of formal education in advanced countries, such a measure may actually be a reasonable one. In Mauritius, however, this proposal is likely to provoke protests from the youth, supported by the

media.

The idea of mixed-ability classes, which has been hailed in some circles in Mauritius, has proven ineffective in France, a model inspired by ideology rather than common sense. While mixed-ability teaching is still the norm, there are ongoing debates in France about its effectiveness and whether it meets the needs of all students, especially given the varying levels of academic performance and learning styles within a single class. Over time, this approach has become a real headache for both teachers and students, negatively impacting the quality of the Baccalaureate. The single exam at the age of 17 is increasingly being questioned. In response, the Ministry of Education in Mauritius has reintroduced "classe de niveau" (level-based classes), a politically correct term for a return to selective, homogeneous classes. Interestingly, French educators today appreciate the selective, exam-based system in Mauritius because their own system has failed. Everyone agrees that every teenager should be given the opportunity to carve out a place in society. However, we are all aware that Mauritian society does not equally respect everyone, based on their social status or occupation. Thousands of jobs are filled by foreign workers. A shift in mindset within society could encourage those who struggle academically to learn trades and boost their self-respect, instead of hopelessly attempting to meet the demands of the HSC.

The display of immaturity and vulgarity, often seen in Mauritius among both educated and uneducated groups, reflects a concerning decline in standards of behaviour. This should raise serious concerns about how formal education contributes to the development of a critical mind. It is not solely the responsibility of the authorities to promote free thinking, as they may feel challenged by civil society voices. The definition of an average standard of refinement that an educated mind should develop is also an issue that deserves attention.

In the Classical Era, poetry and physics were the indispensable yardsticks of proper education. Poetry engendered new forms of literary tradition over the centuries, while physics was considered the foundation of mathematics and the sciences. Today, poetry and its offspring have almost disappeared from modern education, while physics and the sciences continue to nurture rationality, pragmatism, reason, and logic. What is needed now is a dose of common sense to honestly evaluate the quality of knowledge transmitted by the current system — what should be maintained and what needs modification.

## Tree of Knowledge

### Understanding All Sides



*Looking at only one side of our life can make us blind to the many other ways of looking at our situation*

Whenever we examine our lives, we often examine them from a particular side or angle. Most of us tend to favour one side over the others. For example, we may tend to look at things from an emotional perspective rather than a financial perspective, or we may prefer to think in terms of details rather than the big picture, or vice versa. To a certain degree, this is not a problem, and these tendencies add colour to our individual personalities. However, they also can make us one-sided, blind to the many other ways of looking at our situation. Even if we have decided that we are most happy when we focus on one particular side of things, it is always worth exploring the other sides. When we do, we become well rounded, more understanding of other viewpoints, and even more solid in our own.

Perhaps you are a person who tends to see your life in terms of your spiritual well-being. As a result, other concerns such as financial comfort or social standing may not be prominent in your mind as you make decisions. However, taking just a moment to consider those angles will help you in several ways. One, it will enable you to see more clearly what your priorities are and how they influence your life situation. Two, it will enhance your sense of confidence because you will see your situation from all sides, even as you choose one. And three, it will help you communicate with others about who you are and what you are doing because you will come from a place of understanding that your own biases and tendencies are unique as theirs.

Most of us instinctively come at things from a particular angle, and in many cases, this is the right way for us. Still, understanding the other angles only strengthens us. When we look at our lives from all sides, we shed light on the big picture, giving ourselves access to many points of view and highlighting more clearly the one we have chosen to take.

DailyOM