

MAURITIUS TIMES

• Don't be afraid to take a big step when one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small steps. -- David Lloyd George

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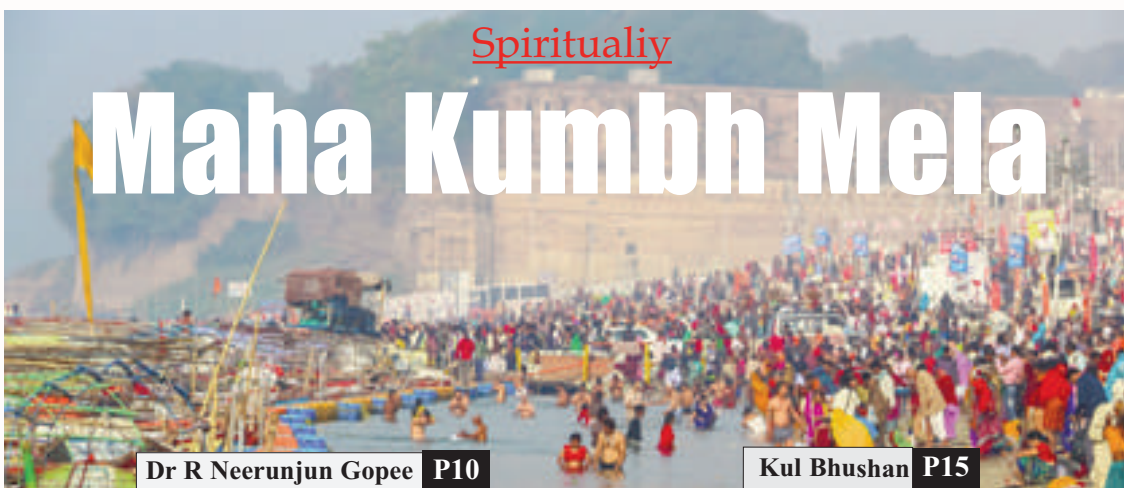
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The Chagos Deal

A New Chapter or a Missed Opportunity?

The controversy surrounding the Chagos Islands has reignited old debates about sovereignty, geopolitics, and historical justice. This time, however, it is entangled in a web of transatlantic politics, right-wing manoeuvring, and the shadow of US influence. At the heart of the matter is the question: should the United Kingdom proceed with handing over the sovereignty of the Chagos Archipelago to Mauritius, as international law suggests, or yield to domestic and international pressures to delay, if not derail, the deal?

The Chagos Islands have been a focal point of international contention since the 1960s. The excision of the Chagos prior to granting independence to Mauritius and the forcible removal of the Chagossians to make way for a joint UK-US military base on Diego Garcia remains a blight on Britain's colonial legacy. For decades, Mauritius has claimed sovereignty over the islands, a position supported by a 2019 ruling from the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The ICJ unequivocally declared the UK's continued administration of the archipelago under the contrived appellation British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), illegal and called for the return the sovereignty of the Chagos sovereignty to Mauritius. That ruling, called for by the UN General Assembly, was a damning indictment of decades of obdurate UK diplomacy.

Both the Tory and the Labour government under Sir Keir Starmer appeared poised to address this historical injustice through negotiations with Mauritius. However, the process has now stalled amidst a coordinated effort by right-wing political figures, including Nigel Farage, Liz Truss, and Suella Braverman, who argue that the deal undermines British interests. Their opposition, bolstered by tacit support from the incoming Trump administration, threatens to overturn years of diplomatic progress. It must be remembered that several Tory figureheads are locked in leadership tussle for the Tory party.

At the core of this dispute lies the Diego Garcia military base, a strategic linchpin for US and UK operations in the Indo-Pacific. Critics of the deal warn that relinquishing what they claim to be British sovereignty over the islands could jeopardize Western security interests and potentially pave the way for Chinese influence in the region. These fears are amplified by what these same critics "Mauritius' growing economic ties with China", including a free trade agreement that some interpret as a gateway for Beijing's ambitions in the Indian Ocean.

Yet, these arguments obscure key facts. The proposed deal includes provisions for the continued operation of the Diego Garcia base under a long-term lease agreement. Far from undermining security, this arrangement could strengthen UK-Mauritius relations while addressing a long-standing grievance. Moreover, fears of Chinese encroachment are nothing less than unfounded, given that Mauritius has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to Western partnerships.

The resistance to the Chagos deal is not just about



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geopolitics; it also reflects the evolving dynamics of British domestic politics. An open letter opposing the agreement, signed by 23 leading figures on the right, including Nigel Farage (along with a number of other Reform MPs), former Tory PM Liz Truss, former Tory home secretary Suella Braverman, and former Reform leader Ben Habib, and published on Wednesday in the British media signals a growing alignment between these factions. As Claire Bullivant, editor of the Conservative Post, noted recently, this episode has "laid the groundwork for potential cooperation" between the two parties.

This alignment is significant, particularly as Kemi Badenoch's Conservative leadership seeks to regain footing after recent electoral challenges. By opposing the Chagos deal, right-wing politicians in Britain have found a rallying issue to galvanize their base, emphasizing themes of sovereignty, national pride, and economic prudence. Badenoch's dismissal of the agreement as "a dumb deal" encapsulates this strategy, positioning her party as the guardian of British interests against what she portrays as Labour's capitulation.

Labour's foreign secretary, David Lammy, has defended the deal as a balanced solution that secures the base's future while addressing the ICJ's ruling. Yet, critics argue that the financial terms — reportedly involving a £9 billion package — are overly generous to Mauritius. This narrative feeds into a broader critique of the British government's spending priorities, with opponents questioning why funds are available for the Chagos agreement but not for pressing domestic needs.

The involvement of the Trump administration adds another layer of complexity. Reports suggest that Trump's team has worked behind the scenes to delay the agreement, citing concerns over US security. This intervention reflects a broader trend of American unilateralism, where strategic interests often override multilateral commitments.

The irony is that the current deal aligns with the interests of the outgoing Biden administration, which has supported the negotiations. Trump's opposition, therefore, appears less about the specifics of the agreement and more about signalling a hardline stance on China and reasserting US dominance in global affairs. This divergence between administrations underscores the precariousness of international agreements dependent on the whims of shifting poli-

tical landscapes.

By yielding to pressure from domestic critics and the incoming US administration, the UK risks squandering an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and moral authority. Delaying the deal undermines Britain's credibility on the international stage, reinforcing perceptions of a nation struggling to reconcile its colonial past with its modern role.

The Chagos dispute also has broader implications for the rules-based international order. Upholding the ICJ ruling would signal a commitment to the principles of justice and sovereignty that underpin global governance. Conversely, capitulating to domestic and international pressures sets a troubling precedent, where political convenience trumps legal and ethical obligations.

It is to be hoped that the UK will not allow short-term political considerations to derail a deal that is not only legally mandated but also morally imperative. While concerns about security and financial implications deserve attention, these should be addressed through transparent dialogue and pragmatic solutions, not obstructionism.

The Chagos Islands dispute is a litmus test for Britain's ability to face the complexities of a post-Brexit world. It is a chance to demonstrate that the UK's foreign policy is guided by principles, not parochial politics.

On the other hand, it is clear that the newly-elected Mauritian government faces a precarious balancing act. Reneging on the earlier Pravind Jugnauth-Keir Starmer "political agreement," which included provisions allowing the UK to exercise sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, was undoubtedly the right decision. The terms of the deal guaranteeing the operation of the Diego base seem to have been vetted by the US military/naval establishments and the Biden/Blinken political team. With Starmer, under intense pressure, now saying it is only fair that the incoming Trump administration have a look at the deal, we cannot second-guess what might be the outcome of that review for UK foreign policy and Chagos sovereignty.

The new US administration may harbour perceived Chinese threats to Western interests in the region. They cannot ignore the fact that the West has key allies and robust alliances in the region (the AUCKUS, the Quad, India and France) and several aero-naval bases that should alleviate fears of Chinese influence. But Trump is known for his brand of disruptive politics and bullying and nobody can say how that review asked by Starmer might go.

It is to be hoped that this impasse does not leave Mauritius without any deal, as such an outcome would be politically damaging for all parties involved. The Mauritian government must now deal with these geopolitical tensions with great care, ensuring that its sovereignty claims over the Chagos Archipelago are upheld while addressing the strategic anxieties of the West. A failure to strike a balanced resolution now also risks undermining — or delaying — Mauritius's long-standing territorial aspirations, which have been legitimized by both the United Nations and the International Court of Justice.

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Nominations dans les institutions

Quelle conception de la méritocratie?



Prakash Neerohoo

Depuis le 11 décembre 2024, à la suite du changement de gouvernement, les nouvelles nominations dans le secteur public (présidents de conseils d'administration, directeurs d'organismes publics, hauts fonctionnaires ou conseillers) se succèdent à un rythme soutenu. Les mandarins de l'ancien gouvernement sont remplacés par de nouveaux hommes selon certains critères telles que l'expérience, la compétence ou la proximité. Si certaines nominations sont bien accueillies, d'autres font froncer les sourcils. On dit que le gouvernement est obligé de placer des hommes de confiance à la tête des institutions stratégiques (Banque centrale, Mauritius Telecom, Air Mauritius, etc.) afin de parer au plus pressé durant une période de transition. Toutefois, des questions se posent sur le mode de nomination et les critères.

Primo, on se demande pourquoi il n'y a pas d'appels de candidatures pour certains postes dont les titulaires doivent réunir les meilleures compétences dans la mesure où il s'agit d'entreprises stratégiques (par exemple, Mauritius Telecom et Air Mauritius) dont les opérations sont commerciales.

Certes, il y a des cadres qui ont prouvé leur compétence dans le passé et sont intéressés à revenir aux affaires, mais un concours parmi les candidats potentiels élargirait le champ de sélection et permettrait de mieux dénicher l'oiseau rare.

Comité parlementaire

Secundo, est-ce que le gouvernement tiendra sa promesse d'instituer un comité parlementaire (ou un comité des sages) pour passer à la loupe les nominations proposées à certains postes clés en vue de connaître la vision et les idées des titulaires potentiels? Il est possible que la réalisation de cette promesse requiert une loi d'habilitation, ce qui prendra du temps. Espérons que cette proposition deviendra une réalité dans le futur.

Dans certaines démocraties parlementaires (Etats-Unis, Royaume Uni, Canada), les nominations dites stratégiques (par exemple, le gouverneur de la Banque centrale) sont sujettes à l'approbation du Parlement. On s'attend à ce que le titulaire potentiel du poste assure le Parlement de sa capacité d'assumer ses fonctions avec compétence et intégrité. En juillet 2013, lorsque Marc Carney, gouverneur de la Banque du Canada, durant la période février 2008- juin 2013, fut appelé à prendre les rênes de la Banque d'Angleterre pour la période juillet 2013- mars 2020, il fut soumis à un feu roulant de questions par des députés sur sa vision de la politique monétaire devant un comité de la Chambre des Communes à Londres.

Tertio, quelle est la conception de la méritocratie à introduire dans le secteur public et les entreprises publiques? Est-ce qu'elle englobe la formation acadé-



“On ne nomme pas un individu comme directeur général de Mauritius Telecom s'il ne connaît rien des technologies de communication. On ne nomme pas non plus un individu comme directeur général d'Air Mauritius s'il ne comprend rien à l'aviation civile ou l'aéronautique. En passant, le nouveau conseil d'administration de la compagnie aérienne semble pléthorique avec 14 directeurs. La compagnie semble avoir plus de directeurs que d'avions en service!”

mique, les compétences techniques, l'expérience professionnelle et l'ancienneté?

S'il est vrai que les présidents des conseils d'administration et les conseillers des ministres sont des nommés politiques, bien qu'ils puissent avoir certaines compétences dans des domaines spécifiques, il n'en demeure pas moins que les directeurs des départements de l'Etat et des organismes publics devraient avoir les compétences techniques requises.

On ne nomme pas un individu comme directeur général de Mauritius Telecom s'il ne connaît rien des technologies de communication. On ne nomme pas non plus un individu comme directeur général d'Air Mauritius s'il ne comprend rien à l'aviation civile ou l'aéronautique. En passant, le nouveau conseil d'administration de la compagnie aérienne semble pléthorique avec 14 directeurs. La compagnie semble avoir plus de directeurs que d'avions en service!

Il faut souligner que beaucoup de nominations dans le secteur public dans le passé furent teintées de favoritisme

ou de népotisme, ce qui mettait en cause l'intégrité des institutions comme la Public Service Commission (PSC). Un cas de maldonne flagrant a été celui du Dr Vishal Jaunky, un économiste académicien qui fut privé d'un poste de chargé de cours au Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) en faveur d'un candidat moins qualifié, sous le gouvernement MSM. Même lorsque la Cour suprême lui donna gain de cause dans sa plainte contre le MIE, cette institution ne fit rien pour le rétablir dans ses droits. C'est dire que tout le système de recrutement est à revoir pour prévenir des passe-droits.

Le cas de la Banque centrale

L'exemple de la Banque centrale nous paraît particulièrement intéressant et pertinent dans le contexte du débat sur les nominations. Dès le lendemain des élections, le Premier ministre a annoncé la nomination du nouveau gouverneur de la Banque centrale (Rama Sithanen). Par la suite, deux gouverneurs adjoints ont été nommés par le Président de la République sur recommandation du Premier ministre.

Ce sont des choix unilatéraux dont le Premier ministre détient la prérogative sans doute sous l'actuel système. Selon les conventions qui existent dans d'autres pays (Etats-Unis, Grande Bretagne, Canada), le gouverneur et ses adjoints sont appelés à définir leur vision économique avant leur nomination, surtout leurs idées sur la politique monétaire, l'inflation et la politique des changes.

La Banque centrale a annoncé la semaine dernière la nomination des directeurs indépendants (en sus du gouverneur et ses deux adjoints) qui vont siéger sur son conseil d'administration, le comité de politique monétaire de la Banque, et le conseil d'administration de la Mauritius Investment Corporation (MIC), une filiale de la Banque.

Selon la Banque, les nouvelles nominations, qui comprennent un certain nombre de femmes, tiennent compte des mérites, de la diversité et de l'inclusion. Il faudrait déconstruire le concept de méritocratie et le concept de «Diversité, Inclusion et Equité» (DIE) dans le contexte mauricien. La méritocratie est-elle fondée sur une gamme de diplômes dans un domaine spécifique ou est-elle un concept plus vaste qui englobe les diplômes, l'expérience professionnelle et les compétences requises pour le poste?

Le concept DIE, qui a fait ses débuts dans la gestion des ressources humaines dans les pays sociaux-démocrates avancés sous la poussée des forces progressistes, est une innovation à Maurice comme une politique volontariste.

Certes, il y a eu des femmes à la tête de départements publics dans le passé mais leur titularisation dans ces postes relevait davantage du hasard que d'une planification pro-active. Lorsqu'on choisit volontairement des femmes pour occuper des postes clés en vue d'atteindre la parité de genre, il y a une politique délibérée.

● Suite en page 5

“Lorsqu'on choisit volontairement des femmes pour occuper des postes clés en vue d'atteindre la parité de genre, il y a une politique délibérée. La parité de genre est un idéal louable. Mais encore faut-il qu'elle s'appuie sur la méritocratie afin d'assurer l'efficacité et la productivité. Si le concept DIE (Diversité, Inclusion et Equité) est une condition nécessaire pour assurer la parité de genre à quelque niveau du management, il n'est pas une condition suffisante pour garantir l'efficacité s'il ne s'appuie pas sur des compétences pointues dans un domaine donné...”



Sada Reddi

ZEP Education Revisited

The objective of achieving zero failure should guide our decisions. Planning must begin immediately, particularly regarding teacher training and recruitment

What happens, one can legitimately ask, when equity in education, particularly in primary education, is constantly deferred? Every year for the last fifty years, many children, after six or seven years of primary schooling, fail to attain the required standard of literacy and numeracy. As one ex-minister once reminded me some years ago, this means about ten thousand pupils without basic educational tools were being thrown into society, and in ten years this amounted to 100,000 pupils with all the consequences that this entailed. The situation is no different today. Fortunately, many of these pupils were able to catch up, make good use of their skills and aptitudes, and limit the initial drawbacks, leading a productive and meaningful life. Nonetheless, one cannot overlook the depressing annual statistics reminding us that among the unemployed, a high proportion are from those who have not successfully completed their primary education.

At present, with a new government and a new, proactive Minister of Education, there is consensus that it is high time to implement a zero-failure educational system. This is a very tall order for a new government, especially after the messy legacy left at all levels of our education system by a dogmatic, and self-opinionated minister. So far, despite some murmurs of impatience here and there, there is some satisfaction in the hope that the new minister means business. The few changes demanded by many before the election have since been implemented, pending a major conference on education in April.

The minister, who is all for dialogue with the numerous stakeholders, has placed the welfare of the child at the core of the education agenda. The national conference on education is expected to provide a blueprint that is implementable in the future. Some of the changes expected concern decentralization, more autonomy to rectors and head teachers, redesigning the curriculum to suit local conditions, redesigning textbooks to provide for home learning, and proper training courses for teachers. While all these issues and many more are important and will occupy the attention of the minister and all stakeholders, in my view, the basic and perennial problem at pre-primary and lower primary levels should trump all other issues and require the utmost attention of the Ministry to realize a 'zero failure' policy.

As said earlier, it is not going to be an easy task for the minister to deliver, given the inherited bureaucratic structure, but it is not impossible as the minister is deeply



Pic - Sunday Times

“At the primary level, especially and even at other levels, we should get rid of the notion, once and for all, that some pupils are educable and others are not, when we have done little to nurture their skills and competencies. However, one has to recognize that many of our children come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and this is particularly the case in most of the ZEP (Zones d'Éducation Prioritaires) schools. It is there that we should focus our efforts to improve teaching and learning, both now and in the future...”

committed to completing his mission and will muster all the human and other resources to eliminate this wastage and inefficiency in primary education. The country cannot allow 30% of our pupils to leave primary schools without being equipped with the basic tools of numeracy and literacy, given that all our pupils are educable.

Learning deficits

A recent UNESCO report by an officer of the Ministry of Education, published in 2024, highlights some of the challenges. For example, in a data set of 7,597 Grade 3 pupils in 2019, there was a response rate of 69 percent. In the domain of literacy, while 92 percent could distinguish phonemes, only 57 percent could retrieve information. What was not known was whether remedial education had been implemented to address the deficits in learning. Since the examination results at the end of primary education did not show any major progress in subsequent years, this suggests that remedial education, even if implemented, had not yielded the expected results.

At the primary level, especially and even at other levels, we should get rid of the notion, once and for all, that some pupils are educable and others are not, when we have done little to nurture their skills and competencies. However, one has to recognize that many of our children

come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and this is particularly the case in most of the ZEP (Zones d'Éducation Prioritaires) schools. It is there that we should focus our efforts to improve teaching and learning, both now and in the future.

There is no shortage of reports and research on primary education in Mauritius to guide the ministry in its endeavour, not only from a theoretical perspective but also from empirical studies and feedback from practitioners. Two reports published by UNESCO, one in 2013 providing valuable insights on the strengths and weaknesses of ZEP schools, and the second one on evidence from diagnostic tests in lower primary education carried out in 2019 and published in 2024, provide much-needed guidance.

Given the view that ZEP schools should be priority number one for the minister, and not necessarily for the Ministry, it is for the minister to devise a well-thought-out policy on how to teach children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This implies that the teacher's relationship with his pupils — the most important element in the education and development of the child — should receive the utmost attention in reforming the sector.

A reform is crucial because parents and educators know from experience, and this is confirmed in educational literature, that teachers play a crucial role in the education

of not only the child but any student, from pre-primary to university. We all remember, at various stages of our education, the multiple roles played by educators in our educational and personal development, and we cherish the memories of these relationships.

Even today, parents who resort to private coaching often do so because of the trust that the personal attention students receive in a small group can offset the impersonal teaching in a bigger classroom. This is true at university level with tutorials and seminars. At the level of pre-primary and lower primary, the relationship between the educator and the child is invaluable for the emotional, social, and educational development of the child.

While such relationships may exist in many schools for many pupils, they may not be present for all children from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially in ZEP schools, for several reasons, which are well known to all and need not be elaborated.

'Bridging the Gap'

But the big question remains: how to tackle this major problem at the classroom level? Educators and researchers may come up with various solutions, and these have been tried in the past through projects like 'Bridging the Gap', expansion of free pre-primary education, better classroom environments, support teachers, innovative teaching and learning methods, group work, and diagnostic assessments. But unfortunately, and regrettably, the results have been meagre. Not every child has received that personal attention, that initial personal bonding, which is the necessary basis for a child's emotional well-being, upliftment, and development.

This is not to blame our teachers in the ZEP schools, who do their best in the circumstances, as they have not been trained to teach children with poor family or social backgrounds. This is the job of a specialist teacher and professional, and we do not have these specially trained educators in our school system. Even support teachers do not have those specialist skills. Even the Mauritius Institute of Education cannot be blamed, as the teacher education specialists may not have been trained to teach such teachers.

Writing in a different context, Rajendra Sewpersadsing, an experienced educationist, wrote in the forum of *Le Mauricien* on 11 January 2024, "I am afraid the training provided by MIE, particularly to EP educators, was far from the target. It is the opinion of many educators equally.

● Cont. on page 5

Nominations dans les institutions

Quelle conception de la méritocratie?

● Suite de la page 3

La parité de genre est un idéal louable. Mais encore faut-il qu'elle s'appuie sur la méritocratie afin d'assurer l'efficacité et la productivité. Si le concept DIE est une condition nécessaire pour assurer la parité de genre à quelque niveau du management, il n'est pas une condition suffisante pour garantir l'efficacité s'il ne s'appuie pas sur des compétences pointues dans un domaine donné.

Directeurs indépendants

L'idée de nommer des directeurs indépendants sur des conseils d'administration est de s'assurer d'avoir une variété de perspectives sur des questions complexes. Nul doute que les directeurs indépendants nommés par la Banque centrale ont des diplômes impressionnants ou une expérience professionnelle dans leur domaine respectif, mais combien d'entre eux ont des connaissances pointues ou une expérience certaine en matière de politique monétaire, ou encore une vision globale de l'économie? La politique monétaire est un domaine très complexe avec diverses composantes telles que le marché des changes, la dépréciation/déévaluation de la roupie, la masse monétaire dans l'économie, les taux d'intérêt et la politique du crédit.

Dans la conjoncture présente, la Banque centrale a besoin d'un conseil d'administration

composé de directeurs qui peuvent débattre vigoureusement des choix de politique monétaire avec une compréhension claire des marchés financiers internationaux et une vision lucide des objectifs macro-économiques du pays (la stabilité des prix, la croissance économique, la balance des paiements, les crédits disponibles, les taux d'intérêt, les réserves en devises étrangères). Il a besoin d'un débat contradictoire à l'interne sur la politique monétaire en s'appuyant sur des analyses variées et des perspectives différentes.

Il ne manque pas à Maurice d'économistes connus qui ont fait pendant des années des analyses de la politique économique, avec un accent sur la politique monétaire, l'inflation, le modèle de croissance et la politique fiscale. Parmi eux, je citerai trois noms :

- Sushil Kushiram, un économiste qui a travaillé à la Banque centrale et la BAD en sus d'être ministre des Services financiers dans le passé,
- Dr Vinay Ancharaz, un consultant économique qui a écrit beaucoup sur les questions économiques dans la presse, et
- Sameer Sharma, un économiste qui a une expérience dans la Banque centrale locale et la finance internationale.

Pendant plus de dix ans, ces trois économistes nous ont gratifiés de leurs analyses profondes et lucides sur l'économie tant dans la presse écrite que la presse parlée, sans peur ni faveur. Ils ont été dans les tranchées du débat national avec des interventions ponctuelles au moment du budget ou lorsque des problèmes conjoncturels appelaient leur attention. J'aurais souhaité que ces trois économistes soient des directeurs indépendants de la Banque centrale ou du comité de politique monétaire, vu leur grande expérience professionnelle.

Je suis sûr qu'ils ne sont pas demandeurs, mais les autorités concernées devraient pouvoir identifier les individus compétents qui peuvent apporter une contribution certaine à la formulation des choix de politique économique.

Prakash Neerhoo

Opinion



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ZEP Education Revisited

● Cont. from page 4

I had surveyed the EP educators, and most of them have great difficulty in teaching students with big learning difficulties and students with acute behaviour problems."

In such challenging circumstances, we have no choice but to rely on other countries, as a small nation like ours cannot afford to have specialists in every field. For instance, while we have orthopaedists, we may lack specialists in subspecialties such as spine surgery, trauma surgery, or paediatric surgery, which is why many patients are sent to India for treatment. Similarly, when dealing with the recent fire at Mare Chicose, we sought guidance from Reunion Island. There is no shame in acknowledging our limitations and seeking technical assistance from other countries, as we have consistently done in the past.

Achieving zero failure

In the field of education, for example, we could consider bringing in a few teacher trainers for the MIE to instruct one or two batches of students in a proper course designed to teach children with disabilities. Typically, such a course would be a full-time program lasting 12 months. If trainers cannot be made available in person, exploring online courses in partnership with a foreign university could be a viable alternative.

Another major factor concerns the recruitment of teachers for ZEP schools. Determining who the students for this new course will be requires careful consideration. It is not advisable to offer such courses to in-service teachers whose values may not align with the needs of ZEP schools or their pupils. A fresh batch of students could be considered if the recruitment criteria include values that assess their commitment to working in ZEP schools. Regarding teachers, it may be necessary to recruit from overseas, given the undeniable fact that 60 percent of teachers in ZEP schools seek transfers, as highlighted

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by a UNESCO report. Additionally, we have yet to address the other resources required to create a conducive school and classroom environment for both pupils and teachers, as well as the incentives needed to sustain teachers' commitment.

The challenges mentioned above cannot be addressed immediately, but it is crucial to reflect on these issues now and develop a plan incorporating various scenarios. The objective of achieving zero failure should guide our decisions. Planning must begin immediately, particularly regarding teacher training and recruitment, as it takes at least a year to prepare a new batch of teachers. With the commitment of the government, ministers, and other stakeholders, it is hoped that the Ministry of Education will secure the necessary resources from the Ministry of Finance to plan effectively for the future well-being of all citizens. This will serve as the cornerstone of a policy aimed at fostering social inclusion.

Sada Reddi



Pic - Maclean's-Reuters

“Dans certaines démocraties parlementaires (Etats-Unis, Royaume Uni, Canada), les nominations dites stratégiques (par exemple, le gouverneur de la Banque centrale) sont sujettes à l'approbation du Parlement. On s'attend à ce que le titulaire potentiel du poste assure le Parlement de sa capacité d'assumer ses fonctions avec compétence et intégrité. En juillet 2013, lorsque Marc Carney, gouverneur de la Banque du Canada, durant la période février 2008- juin 2013, fut appelé à prendre les rênes de la Banque d'Angleterre pour la période juillet 2013- mars 2020, il fut soumis à un feu roulant de questions par des députés sur sa vision de la politique monétaire devant un comité de la Chambre des Communes...”

Tackling Past Wrongs and Forging a New Future

'The government has made a start with the MIC, but it should be given time to deliver on its promises'

The newly elected 60-0 government in Mauritius faces a formidable challenge as it begins its tenure, tasked with undoing the systemic issues inherited from the previous regime. With an absolute majority mandate, the government now has both the opportunity and the responsibility to deliver transformative change. Yet, the road ahead is fraught with difficulties, from addressing years of governance failures to combating entrenched corruption and inefficiencies — all while upholding democratic principles and the rule of law. In this week's Qs & As, Lex delves into the critical priorities for the new administration, analyzing the structural reforms required, the complexities involved, and the potential hurdles on the path to meaningful change.

LEX

* The current government is confronted with a 'vaste chantier' in terms of undoing the wrongs and dysfunctions of the preceding MSM-led regime, and, by virtue of its absolute majority, holds a significant mandate to govern and implement a progressive agenda. The question is: Where should it start, while ensuring that its use of power aligns with democratic principles?

There are numerous instances of bad governance, malpractice, corruption, wastage, and the disappearance of public funds, which require time for the government to address effectively. The government has only been in power for two months, and the public is understandably frustrated that the alleged culprits from the previous regime have not been arrested. While the public's frustration is understandable, individuals cannot be arrested solely based on public outcry. The rule of law must prevail. The government has made a start with the MIC, but it should be given time and an



opportunity to deliver on its promises.

* One oft-repeated promise concerns the introduction of a Freedom of Information or Right to Information

“When Tony Blair was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, he introduced the Freedom of Information Act, believing that it enshrined a “general right of access” to information held by all public bodies, subject to certain absolute exemptions and instances where disclosure was not considered to be in the public interest. Over time, however, Blair changed his position. Although he initially believed the legislation would benefit the public, he later felt that it had “tilted the scales” in favour of the media and their ability to publish confidential policy discussions. This highlights the need for caution when drafting such legislation. It should not be a law that allows the public to invade all aspects of the private lives of politicians and other individuals...”

Act. Despite frequent mention, this promise has yet to materialize, with preceding governments arguing that the issue is too complex to legislate without proper consultations and thorough analysis of its implications for governance. Yet, similar legislation exists in other countries, where it appears to deliver on its promise of transparency and fairness. So why can't it be done here? Is it safer for governments and their agencies, like the earlier ICAC, to remain shielded from such legislations?

When the MSM won the 2014 elections, Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth stated in Parliament that although many jurisdictions had adopted a Freedom of Information Act, the nature

and scope of such legislation were still evolving. He emphasized the need for the Freedom of Information Act to adopt innovative processes to improve access to information, rather than merely promoting access in name only. However, this never materialized. Any government would be cautious about such legislation, as a law that is too broad could lead to the release of all kinds of sensitive information, while a restrictive law would prompt public dissatisfaction.

When Tony Blair was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, he introduced the Freedom of Information Act, believing that it enshrined a “general right of access” to information held by all public bodies, subject to certain absolute exemptions and instances where disclosure was not considered to be in the public interest. Over time, however, Blair changed his position. Although he initially believed the legislation would benefit the public, he later felt that it had “tilted the scales” in favour of the media and their ability to publish confidential policy discussions.

This highlights the need for caution when drafting such legislation. It should not be a law that allows the public to invade all aspects of the private lives of politicians and other individuals. Careful consideration must be given to striking the right balance between transparency and privacy.

* Closely related to the previous question is the ongoing issue of governments' refusal to provide transparency regarding the operations of State-Owned Enterprises, such as Mauritius Telecom, Air Mauritius Holdings, and projects like the Safe City Project and the Mauritius Investment Corporation. These entities are frequently shielded from parliamentary scrutiny under the guise of being private (commercial) companies, invoking banking secrecy ('secret bancaire'), or citing confidentiality clauses, particularly in projects funded by foreign countries. Shouldn't the 'rupture' agenda of the Alliance du Changement government seek to end these practices?

The policy of refusing to release information about State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) on the grounds that shareholders have an interest in such enterprises is sheer nonsense. There must be legislation that compels transparency regarding how these enterprises are managed and operated. Take, for example, the mess at the STC, where millions of rupees have been squandered on legal fees. It is to be hoped that the new government will take a firm stance on this issue, whether it concerns the STC, Air Mauritius, or other state-owned enterprises.

☞ Cont. on page 7

'The government has made a start with the MIC, but it should be given time to deliver on its promises'

☞ Cont. from page 6

In the book *A to Z* by Touria Prayag, one contributor wrote: "Theoretically, as indicated in the Constitution and Standing Orders, the government is accountable to Parliament regarding the use of public funds. However, and perhaps as expected, the effectiveness of Parliament's role in this regard is severely diminished, to the point of being qualified as negligible. The multiple cases of misuse, waste, and abuse of public funds reported every year by the Director of Audit go unsanctioned, exposing the little consideration the government shows for representatives of the people in terms of accountability."

This highlights the urgent need for greater accountability and transparency in the management of public resources.

*** During the previous two mandates of the MSM-led governments, the resolution of electoral petitions took an unreasonably long time, creating prolonged uncertainty for petitioners and the electorate, with judgments in several cases being delivered almost on the eve of the next election. In countries like the UK and India, similar cases are resolved within six months. While this doesn't undermine the integrity of the judiciary, it raises concerns. Similarly, we saw legal challenges by Opposition MPs against various controversial decisions made by the former Speaker of the National Assembly, Sooroojdev Phokeer, drag on for an extended period. So, what should the new 60-governor do to address this issue?**

The Privy Council has repeatedly drawn the attention of the Supreme Court to the excessive time it takes to determine a case. An electoral petition, in particular, has significant political repercussions. When and if the Supreme Court accommodates all manner of motions and requests for postponements from lawyers representing government members, the public has a right to be suspicious. While a judge may be independent in their mind, if the public perceives that they are not, this becomes a cause for concern.

The Constitution should be amended to establish a time limit for judgments to be delivered by the Supreme Court and lower courts. This would ensure timely justice and reinforce public confidence in the judicial system.

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tem.

*** There also seems to have been a reluctance by preceding governments to move forward with the establishment of a Constitutional Court, a proper Court of Appeal, and other reforms from the Mackay Report. These reforms were intended to enhance the effectiveness of Mauritius' legal system and ensure alignment with international standards of justice and fairness. Why were these reforms not implemented? Can we now expect positive change under the current government?**

The reasons behind this prolonged delay remain unclear. Now, the Attorney General has announced plans to establish a constitutional court. We will have to wait and see how this develops.

Additionally, the creation of a separate Court of Appeal should also be a concern for the government. There are complex issues to address, such as the composition of each court and the specific jurisdiction assigned to each one.

*** It's also necessary to ensure the independence of key institutions critical to the proper functioning of our democracy, such as the judiciary, police, Financial Crimes Commission, Electoral Commission, and others, so that they are shielded from political influence. How can the government ensure that these institutions remain truly independent in practice?**

We may have any number of institutions in a country, but each must fulfill its intended role with complete integrity and honesty. The persons at the helm of these

institutions should resist political influence and pressure. Once appointed, these commissions are expected to act independently. However, independence is a difficult concept to define. It is a mindset, an attitude. The independence and integrity of institutions depend on the individuals who make them up.

Can these institutions operate with complete independence and adhere to the principle of acting without fear or favour? Can they, despite the temptation of easy gains, carry out their functions with serenity? Can their members be perceived as fully independent from the government of the day? While the government cannot monitor independence daily, it is ultimately up to the individuals within these institutions to uphold these values.

*** What else should a 60-0 government do, or rather, what should it avoid doing if it aims to bring about transformative change in the country?**

This question is quite broad and speculative, as it covers various aspects of governance and transformation. It would be more prudent to wait for the President's speech, which is expected to outline the specific policies and vision of the government. Such a speech will provide a clearer direction and framework for the transformative changes the government aims to implement, along with the priorities and strategies they plan to adopt. Until then, any discussion on the steps or actions of the government would be premature, as it would not be grounded in the official policy and objectives the President will set forth.

Harnessing Efficient Governance and Free Market Capitalism

The Key to Mauritius' Prosperous Future



Sameer Sharma

Free market capitalism, when combined with lean and good governance is the best path to economic prosperity. Governments that maintain tight fiscal discipline focus on targeted spending, and that as well allow free markets to work well tend to have more successful outcomes than those that do not. Governments that focus on fiscal policies that penalize rent seeking whilst having tax policies that encourage competition, innovation and investments tend to achieve superior economic outcomes v/s those that do not.

There has for long been a disconnect between what politicians across the political spectrum want to give to Mauritians v/s what most Mauritians truly want. "Change" has often revolved around changing people rather than in engaging in meaningful structural reforms. While the majority of Mauritians seek greater freedom, including economic freedom, equal opportunity, and empowerment, politicians appear intent on offering only a diluted version of economic freedom.

Politicians have historically wanted to maintain a system of political spoils which enhances their power and influence on our daily lives while large players in the private sector have sought to preserve their economic dominance, which often borders on oligopolistic control over the economy. At the same time, too many politicians in Mauritius still seem to believe that governments are good at running businesses or that badly performing state owned enterprises can be reformed by having the right political nominees at the right places despite countless and increasingly expensive failures from unproductive ports to state-owned banks, bankrupt casinos to yet again insolvent airlines. Granted, some appointees may perform moderately better than others, but over time and across regimes, mediocrity remains the norm through a relentless mean reversion. We fail repeatedly, yet persist in the misguided belief that politicians know how to run businesses or that simply changing faces can yield lasting positive outcomes.

Competition and rivalry among firms are crucial drivers of a country's economic growth, innovation, and productive investment. The decisions businesses make about where to allocate their resources and capital significantly influence sectoral growth, employment, and the expansion of various industries.



“While an insolvent Air Mauritius and its associated Airport Holdings Ltd may seem like obvious candidates to a gradual disinvestment, even a profitable entity like the State Bank of Mauritius trades at a significant discount to its book value compared to the Mauritius Commercial Bank, which enjoys a healthy premium. The difference between the two? One is a listed company with a diversified shareholder base while the other is run by the state and its chosen nominees. Both foreign and local investors should be encouraged to participate in state disinvestment schemes, preferably through the stock market where it is most efficient and transparent...”

The level of market rivalry determines whether firms compete on price or through non-price strategies such as innovation. In highly competitive markets, firms are incentivized to innovate and improve efficiency to gain an edge. Conversely, in markets where competition is weak, firms may exploit their market power, extracting rents without being disciplined by competitive forces. This lack of competition can stifle innovation and hinder overall economic progress.

According to the World Bank's report entitled "Through the Eye of a Perfect Storm - Coming back stronger from the Covid crisis", close to 70% of all economic sectors in Mauritius can be considered as being highly concentrated using conventional measures. When it comes to players involved in the import of goods, close to 60% of the value of imports could be categorized under the "high concentration" bucket. While having monopolies and oligopolies does not necessarily equate to an abuse of market power, the World Bank report notes that more scrutiny may be needed when

assessing competition risks, especially in the import linked sectors.

Multiple factors can explain why Mauritius has such economic concentration. Historically land has played a pivotal role and has enabled key economic players to diversify from. There is a strong correlation between the relatively concentrated nature of land ownership in Mauritius and economic concentration. This author has long argued that taxing rent-seekers who own large land assets through moderate land value taxation — excluding agricultural land under active cultivation — while offering tax rebates for qualified productive investments on the land, would significantly increase land supply, reduce land prices, and stimulate further investment.

Conglomerates in Mauritius have become increasingly vertically integrated with ever greater intergroup transactions and have significant advantages when it comes to access to financing, pricing power and terms. Their ability to obtain favorable terms from the state via badly structured MIC bailouts at low fixed

rates v/s other mid-sized and smaller firms did not help matters either. As the World Bank report points out: "To the extent that collaboration with a conglomerate limits the ability to appropriate profits, this could result in diminished returns to innovation for SMEs while at the same time reducing the incentive for conglomerates to risk their own resources for innovative expansion." State owned enterprises on their part also in many cases hold dominant market shares in key sectors such as transportation, airlines, telecommunications, etc., which inhibit competition.

While such levels of concentration can be partly explained away given the country's size and neocolonial context, a disempowered Competition Commission has not helped matters. In Mauritius, exclusive territorial restrictions imposed by private companies and brands are common. These restrictions are supported by a quasi-national exhaustion system, which allows trademark or design rights holders to take action against parallel imports. While such arrangements can offer certain efficiencies, it is crucial to implement them in a manner that does not excessively limit competition and ensures the promotion of broader social welfare objectives.

There are of course cases where greater competition has not offered better pricing to retail consumers while it has perversely improved the economic advantages of conglomerates over the rest. Take the banking sector for example. While there are many players including state-owned and private players within the banking sector, the top two banks in the country typically have floating charges coupled with high collateral rankings which smaller banks eager to gain market share in the corporate banking space do not have.

In a corporate banking market that is characterized by too much money chasing too few deals, credit risk pricing has often been distorted with smaller banks having to offer credit spreads that may not always be justified by their collateral rankings. In a nutshell, these smaller banks take on more risk for similar or even lower returns than their larger competitors. In such circumstances, it may be important for governments, as policymakers, to tailor regulations appropriately to level the playing field or to create a more balanced competitive landscape.

The Competition Commission of Mauritius (CCM) is currently actively enforcing competition law in response to complaints, as established by the Competition Act of 2007. This authority is tasked with curbing the abuse of market power and collusion among dominant firms. However, its mandate is limited, as it does not cover the review of anti-competitive regulations in network industries or state-owned enterprises.

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To enhance its effectiveness, the World Bank report notes that the CCM could broaden its focus beyond strict enforcement of competition law to advocate for a more comprehensive competition policy that fosters economic growth. This could include conducting more market investigations, collaborating closely with regulators and policymakers, studying the impact of vertical integration and conglomerates on competition, and ensuring fair competition between state-owned and private enterprises.

At a time when public debt, combined with the state's contingent liabilities, has reached unsustainable levels, Mauritian policymakers should consider a gradual disinvestment from state-owned enterprises. For instance, while an insolvent Air Mauritius and its associated Airport Holdings Ltd may seem like obvious candidates, even a profitable entity like the State Bank of Mauritius trades at a significant discount to its book value compared to the Mauritius Commercial Bank, which enjoys a healthy premium. The difference between the two? One is a listed company with a diversified shareholder base while the other is run by the state and its chosen nominees.

Both foreign and local investors should



“Multiple factors can explain why Mauritius has such economic concentration. Historically land has played a pivotal role and has enabled key economic players to diversify from. There is a strong correlation between the relatively concentrated nature of land ownership in Mauritius and economic concentration. This author has long argued that taxing rent-seekers who own large land assets through moderate land value taxation — excluding agricultural land under active cultivation — while offering tax rebates for qualified productive investments on the land, would significantly increase land supply, reduce land prices...”

be encouraged to participate in state disinvestment schemes, preferably through the stock market where it is most efficient and transparent. The state can keep a strong

25% minority stake in key companies and there are many ways in which shareholder agreements can allow the seller and the soon-to-become minority shareholder to have veto rights and to impose certain KPIs that meet the national interest without needing to run the company as a majority shareholder. More importantly, such a setup will greatly enhance productivity over time. The bar for a company to remain state-owned should be high.

What Mauritius needs to move to the next level is not just having more independent and well-functioning institutions, an improved human capital base, a greater openness to skilled immigration, greater fiscal discipline and a tax regime that encourages investment and work whilst taxing rent seeking - but by also having greater economic freedom and opportunities for all.

Governments are best at focusing on being good policy makers and ensuring that independent institutions act as fair referees within free market setups rather than being key economic actors themselves. In Mauritius, the state tends to want to drive all too often while the private sector takes the back seat. The reverse needs to happen.

Sameer Sharma

Politics & Society

Trump, Truss and the Age of Vaulting Ambition

The best sort of ambition seems to involve working for the common good, and is not about the selfish pursuit of individual glory

Stefan Stern

Visiting Professor of Management Practice,
Bayes Business School, City St George's,
University of London

Donald Trump's inauguration as the 47th president of the United States of America (on Monday, January 20, 2025) will be a moment of supreme vindication for him. After being convicted in the New York courts and fighting a ferocious election campaign, during which his opponent declared that "we're not going back", well, here we are.

January 20 will also represent a triumph of ambition. Whether Trump's deepest ambition is to lead his nation or simply to stay out of jail is not necessarily clear, but he has made his quest to return



January 20 will also represent a triumph of ambition. Whether Trump's deepest ambition is to lead his nation or simply to stay out of jail is not necessarily clear. Pic - The Conversation

to power everyone's business, essentially since he left the White House in 2021.

Trump's electoral success – troubling for some, thrilling for others – forces us to consider the question of ambition anew. What explains this unrelenting drive, this ruthless determination to attack and pulverise his opponents? How does a 78-year-old man maintain this level of commitment to a political struggle when he'd obviously really rather be doing financial deals or playing golf?

Shakespeare can, as so often, offer us a possible explanation. Few have understood or portrayed ambition as powerfully as the great dramatist did. He knew that, in the worst cases, immoral ambition can prove fatal.

This, of course, is the central theme of his play 'Macbeth', which inspired my latest book. In it I consider different aspects of ambition, both good and bad, each introduced by selected lines from the play which touch upon them.

As early as act one, Lady Macbeth wonders whether her husband has got "the right stuff" to get to the very top:

**"...Thou would'st be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it."**

She fears that Macbeth lacks a certain killer instinct.

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Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

Only in India

Maha Kumbh Mela: Largest spiritual gathering of humanity

Maha means vast, mela means crowd, kumbh means a vessel. This leads us to the origins of the Kumbh Mela in times immemorial when, according to tradition, there was a churning of the ocean or Samudra Manthan by the Devas (Gods) and Asuras (Demons) to obtain Amrit, the nectar of immortality.

During this process, a vessel (Kumbh) containing Amrit emerged. Before the Asuras could claim it, Lord Vishnu fled with the Kumbh. Drops of Amrit fell at four locations: Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain, and Nashik, which became sacred pilgrimage destinations for followers of Sanatan Dharma aka Hinduism. Taking a holy dip in the waters at these sites confers spiritual benefits upon those who participate in the festival.

A Kumbh Mela is held every 6 ('Ardh Kumbh') and 12 years. But the Maha Kumbh Mela takes place after completion of 12 cycles of 12 years each. Thus, the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 is being held after 144 years. Clearly, this is a blessed opportunity of a lifetime for the devotees who will be fortunate enough to make the pilgrimage over the 45 days of the festival, from Jan 13 to Feb 26. They will come from across the world: nearly 10 million foreign devotees from Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, the US, Russia, Israel, Germany, Italy, Spain, South Korea, etc.

One of the most illustrious devotees there is the widow of Apple founder Steve Jobs, Laurene Powell Jobs who has come with a 60-strong delegation. She is participating as Kamala, the new Sanatani name she has been given by her Guru, with whom she visited the Kashi Vishwanath Mandir in Kashi (Banaras) before travelling to Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh where the Maha Kumbh Mela is being held. She is doing this to fulfil a wish of her husband who came to India in the 1970s and was inspired by the life and teachings of Neem Karoli Baba to launch Apple.

Prayagraj in the state of Uttar Pradesh is where the three rivers, Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati (no longer extant, but proven by the scriptures and modern geological tools to have existed) meet, and their confluence known as Triveni Sangam is where the bathing takes place.

With the sheer number of devotees expected, almost 10 million per day totalling nearly 450 million in all (equal to the combined populations of US, Australia and Canada), one can imagine that the Maha Kumbh Mela is 'poised to be a monumental spiritual event,' which 'showcases centuries-old traditions and cultural grandeur. With cutting-edge technology, advanced safety measures, and extensive planning, it promises a secure and transformative experience for pilgrims' – thus writes Executive Content Writer Kirti Barua for the GK section of Jagran Josh New Media, wherein she has given a comprehensive account of the arrangements made by the UP-state government led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The statistics related to this Mela are simply mind-boggling. It is worth pointing out that this is the first time that a Kumbh Mela is being held in the era of social media, and as expected there is extensive daily 24/7 coverage that includes on-ground Reporters' Diaries and visuals from which much information is available.

To start with, aerial drone pictures give an idea of the



scale and the topographic outlay of the site of nearly 4000 hectares. The bathing area stretching along 12 km of the river bank is demarcated from the main body of water by a line of floats. Adjoining it are to be seen the hundreds of thousands of devotees awaiting their turn, and further inland are seen the tent cities that have been put up: 150,000 in all, with a similar number of toilets and urinals.

The logistical and other arrangements to provide for this mega-event are 'a testament to India's ability to manage large-scale gatherings, reflecting the nation's rich cultural heritage,' according to Kirti Barua, from whose article some of the main features are presented in what follows:

The gathering will include ascetics (sadhus), pilgrims, and visitors who engage in various rituals such as fasting, charity (e.g. an eye camp for nearly 300,000 people), and communal prayers, fostering a sense of unity among participants and transcending all differences as they pass down rituals and practices through generations.

It is estimated that 3-5 million devotees will stay there for the entire duration of 45 days. There will be Peak Days on key bathing dates, during which 40 to 50 million visitors may participate.

The area of 4000 hectares into 25 sectors, with a parking space 1,850 hectares, and a total road length of over 450 kilometres. Further, multiple checkpoints have been established to screen visitors entering the region, and Intelligence Squads are actively monitoring the area to detect suspicious activities, ensuring vigilance throughout.

The comprehensive plan in place to handle emergencies comprises as well Fire Safety using Advanced Measures, a Hi-Tech Security Infrastructure as the Uttar Pradesh government has prioritised a 'Digital Maha

Kumbh' by employing cutting-edge security measures: AI and Aerial Drone Surveillance of the expansive Mela grounds, as well as Underwater Drones operating up to 100 meters deep, transmitting real-time data to the Integrated Command and Control Centre.

Cybersecurity Measures by a dedicated team will secure the digital infrastructure, ensuring safety for global visitors. Besides, Multi-Disaster Response and Emergency Readiness is in place with State-of-the-art equipment is being deployed to tackle emergencies effectively (Advanced Vehicles, Life-Saving Equipment, Remote-controlled life buoys etc).

Other measures include a Seven-Tier Security Framework from the outer perimeter to the core areas, and Intensive inspections of hotels, restaurants, street vendors, and unauthorized settlements and vehicles entering Prayagraj and the Mela grounds. About 45000 Police personnel are also present, as well as High-tech Lost and Found Centres.

Besides the ritual bathing, activities over the 45 days will include: Sankirtan and Bhajans, Yoga and Meditation, Spiritual Discourses and Community Gatherings.

While the budget for managing the Maha Kumbh Mela has been set at around ₹7,000 crores (approximately \$800 million), the expected financial transactions during the event could reach up to \$30 billion.

But the most important dimension of the Mela is the atmosphere of spirituality, serenity, love and peace that has been highlighted by all the pilgrims who were interviewed, in particular the foreign devotees who praised the courtesy and helpful attitude of the police, the cleanliness and security that they have been experiencing and the efficiency of services with a smile.

Now for the next Maha Kumbh Mela! In 2169... who knows that I may be there!

Israel and Hamas reach a ceasefire and hostage release agreement after 15 months of devastating war

The bloodshed of thousands and entire Gaza almost in ruins - that is what it took before Israel and Hamas could reach a ceasefire and hostage release agreement after 15 months of devastating war.

Qatar and the United States, two of the major negotiators along with Egypt that brokered the indispensable ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel, announced the major framework of the plan, which will be implemented in three phases.

Hours after the announcement, however, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the ceasefire agreement is not complete, and the "final details" of the agreement are still being worked out.

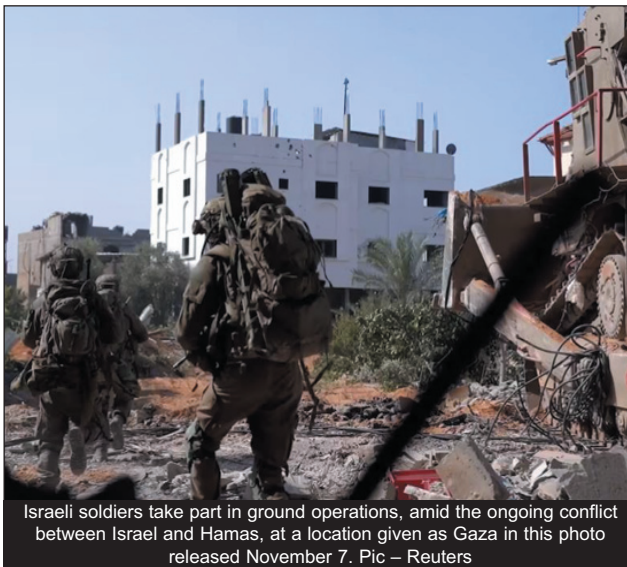
The three phases

While the details of the ceasefire and hostage release agreement are still hazy, Qatar Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani said the first phase of the agreement will come into effect from Sunday, January 19, 2025.

"We hope that this will be the last page of the war, and we hope that all parties will commit to implementing all the terms of this agreement," he said while announcing the agreement.

US President Joe Biden, in a press conference after the announcement, shared some details of the plan.

The first phase of the agreement will be six-week long and will see a complete ceasefire in Gaza, he said. The initial phase also includes the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the populated areas in Gaza and the release of



Israeli soldiers take part in ground operations, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, at a location given as Gaza in this photo released November 7. Pic - Reuters

some of the Israeli hostages - including "women, elderly and wounded", said Biden.

Qatar Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed, in his address, said children will also be released in the 42-day-long phase one, according to an AFP report.

Biden also said in exchange for these hostages, Israel would also release "hundreds" of Palestinian prisoners. "During phase one, Palestinians can also return to their neighbourhoods in all areas of Gaza, and a surge in humanitarian assistance in Gaza will begin, and the innocent people can have greater access to these vital

supplies," he added.

Biden said during the first phase, Israel will negotiate terms for implementing the second phase of the agreement. However, if negotiations take longer, the ceasefire will stay in place as long as necessary.

The second phase, whenever implemented, will see the return of remaining living Israeli hostages, including "male soldiers", said Biden. "Remaining Israeli forces will be removed from Gaza, and the temporary ceasefire will become permanent," he added.

However, Israeli forces would not fully withdraw from Gaza until "all hostages are returned", news agency AFP reported, citing an unnamed Israeli official.

Phase three of the agreement will include a reconstruction plan for Gaza, which remains in ruins for now with no health or any kind of infrastructure in place. "Finally, phase 3, any final remains of hostages who have been killed will return to their families and a major reconstruction plan for Gaza will begin," said Biden.

What's going in Gaza?

Soon after the announcement of the peace plan between Israel and Hamas on Wednesday night, the former intensified deadly air strikes on Gaza, killing 32 people, Reuters reported, citing Gaza medics. The strikes continued till Thursday morning and destroyed houses in several parts of Gaza city, said the report.

The ceasefire agreement will come into effect from January 19, which leaves a three-day window for Israel to pound already-battered Gaza.

Trudeau announces he won't run in upcoming federal polls

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will not contest the next federal elections, which are scheduled for October this year but may occur earlier.

During the course of a press conference in Ottawa, on Wednesday, Trudeau said, "In terms of my own decisions, I will not be running in the upcoming election."

The media interaction came after a meeting between Trudeau and the premiers of Canada's provinces, aimed at crafting a common strategy to deal with the incoming Administration of US President-elect Donald Trump.

Trudeau expressed uncertainty as to what his post-political life will be, as he said, "As to what I might be doing later, I honestly haven't had much time to think about that at all, I am entirely focused on doing the job that Canadians elected me to do in an extraordinarily pivotal time right now."

On January 6, Trudeau announced his intent to resign as Prime Minister once a new leader of the ruling Liberal Party was elected. That leadership election process will conclude on March 9 and the winner will succeed Trudeau as PM.



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Pic - Reuters

Potential contestants have till January 23 to formally join the race. Among those who are expected to be the principal contenders are former Bank of Canada (and Bank of England) Governor Mark Carney and former Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland. Carney is expected to announce his run on Thursday in Edmonton. Freeland could follow suit with an announcement by January 20.

Trudeau, who turned 53 on December 25, became the leader of the Liberal Party in April 2013. By the summer of 2015, his campaign to become Prime Minister gathered momentum and he swept into power on October 19 that year, as his party captured a comfortable majority of

184 of the 338 seats in the House of Commons.

However, he never managed another majority mandate in the elections in 2019 and 2021. The Liberal have languished in polls in recent months, with support at about 20 per cent or even lower and trailing the opposition Conservative Party by nearly 25 per cent.

By the end 2024, Trudeau was facing an internal revolt, which burgeoned with the shock resignation of Freeland, who also held the Finance portfolio, on December 16. That spiraled into calls by nearly 100 of his MPs, including the caucuses from Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic region, seeking his early departure. That ultimately led to Trudeau announcing he was planning to leave his post and now, his intent to quit electoral politics.

Those who have formally said they will contest the leadership include Indo-Canadian MP Chandra Arya. However, several Cabinet Ministers, considered potential frontrunners, have said they will focus on their current responsibilities and refrain from running, including Mélanie Joly, Dominic LeBlanc, François-Philippe Champagne and Anita Anand, an Indo-Canadian.

Joe Biden drops a subtle yet ominous warning about Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg

The burning subject of extreme wealth and power in America seemed to burn in the President's heart as Joe Biden stood before the cameras in the Oval Office to give his last message as the President of the United States of America.

During the 20-minute speech, Biden recounted his four decades of public service and the accomplishments of his presidency. He credited his administration for achieving a Gaza ceasefire and cleverly brushed off Trump's credit. As he walked away, a journalist asked the Prez, "Who gets credit for this? You or Trump?" Biden quickly replied, "Is that a joke?"

"It will take time to feel the full impact of all we've done together. But the seeds are planted, and they'll grow and they'll bloom for decades to come," he said.

"I wish the incoming administration's success because I want America to succeed. That's why I have held my duty to ensure a peaceful and orderly transition of power, to ensure we lead by the power of our example," he cautioned.

Biden also took a moment to thank his family, Vice President Kamala Harris, and Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, praising Harris as a "historic vice president." His wife, Jill Biden, showed a warm gesture by holding Harris' hand during the speech amidst rumours of tension between the two women.

"It's been the highest honor of my life to lead you as commander in chief... My eternal thanks to you, the American people," Biden stated.

* Contd on page 12

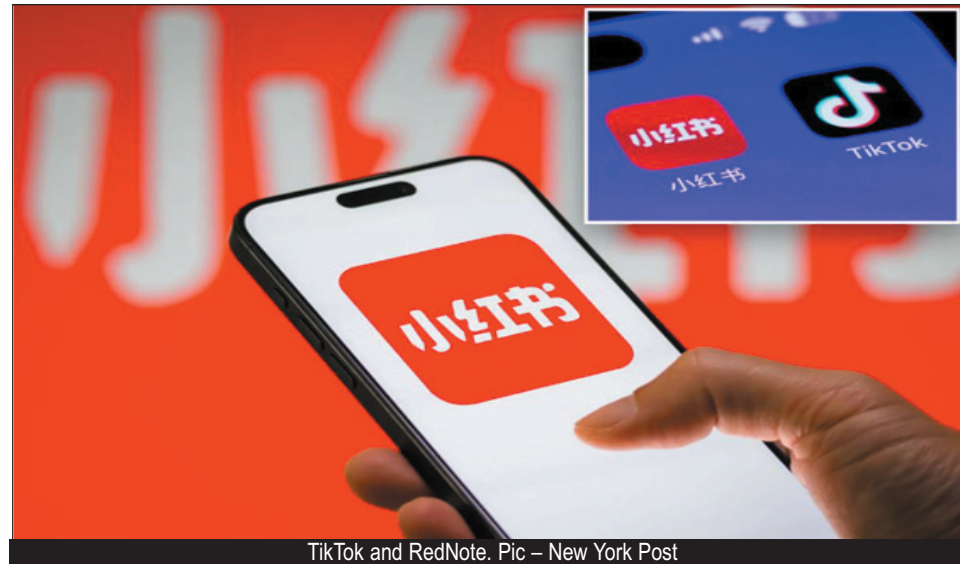
The 'TikTok Refugee' Exodus: RedNote sees an influx of millions of American users before TikTok ban

If you're someone who prides themselves in being chronically online, you've probably heard about the ongoing shift from TikTok to RedNote. This shift has been closely tied to the US government's proposal to ban TikTok, sparking a wave of users moving to the Chinese social media app RedNote in what can only be termed as a digital exodus. As this movement grows, the term '#TikTok-Refugee' has emerged, capturing the attention of netizens everywhere.

What is happening?

The situation began unfolding when the US government proposed a ban on TikTok over national security concerns, citing the app's ties to China and its handling of user data. The ban, which is scheduled to go into effect on January 19 (unless the Supreme Court halts it), would see TikTok removed from US app stores, making it unusable for many American users unless they install a VPN client.

In anticipation of the ban, many Americans have started migrating to other platforms. One of the most notable alternatives is Xiaohongshu or RedNote, a Chinese social media app that has quickly gained popularity as TikTok's possible replacement; Xiaohongshu means 'little red book' in Mandarin. As more and more



TikTok and RedNote. Pic – New York Post

Americans turn to RedNote, the term '#TikTokRefugee' began trending on the platform and other social media apps. Furthermore, the app saw 100 million views under the hashtag this Tuesday and sparked around 2.5 million discussion threads according to The New York Times.

RedNote, owned by Shanghai-based Xingyin Information Technology, was established in 2013. It is a Chinese-language lifestyle, social networking, and e-commerce platform that blends

elements of Instagram and Pinterest. Unlike other US-based alternatives like Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, which many users feel are less creator-friendly, RedNote offers a more engaging, community-oriented platform.

Who are the 'TikTok Refugees'?

The users joining RedNote are primarily American TikTok users or creators who are looking for a way to continue sharing their content, interacting with their audience, and discovering new

trends. As more Americans join the platform, the term '#TikTok Refugee' has gained traction, with millions of users migrating from their beloved TikTok to a newer, less native format.

Unsurprisingly, the shift to RedNote has put American users in closer contact with Chinese users who were already using the app; this direct connection has also led to a unique cultural exchange between users from both countries sharing tips on how to navigate the app which is primarily designed for Mandarin speakers. One other notable change is the increasing number of American TikTok refugees learning Mandarin to better interact with the platform leading to a significant spike in new Mandarin learners across platforms like Duolingo. The app reported a 216% growth in US users learning Mandarin since last year.

The rise of the '#TikTokRefugee' movement signals a shift in the digital landscape, with American users turning to RedNote as a potential replacement for TikTok. As the ban on TikTok looms, RedNote is positioning itself as a key alternative; the shift is also sparking cultural exchanges with many claiming this to be a 'digital cold war'.

Bangladesh commission proposes sweeping constitutional reforms

In a landmark development, the Constitution Reform Commission in Bangladesh has recommended significant changes to the nation's guiding charter, suggesting the removal of "secularism," "socialism," and "nationalism" as fundamental principles of state policy. These proposals, submitted to interim government leader Muhammad Yunus, aim to redefine the nation's political framework while addressing long-standing governance challenges.

The commission, chaired by political scientist Ali Riaz, advocates replacing the existing principles with five new state ideals: equality, human dignity, social justice, pluralism, and democracy. According to Riaz, these changes reflect the aspirations of the 1971 Liberation War and the demands voiced during the mass uprisings of 2024.

Notably, the commission suggests a shift from the current unicameral parliamentary system to a bicameral structure, comprising a National Assembly and a Senate with 400 and 105 seats, respectively. The proposed parliament would have a shorter term of four years, with the National Assembly based on majority representation and the Senate on proportional representation.

Limiting Power and Strengthening Accountability

The commission identifies the concentration of power in the prime minister's office as a root cause of "autocratic authoritarianism" in Bangladesh over the past 16 years. To address this, it has recommended instituting a



Bangladesh at crossroads as it pursues sweeping constitutional reform. Pic - VOA

two-term limit on the prime minister's tenure.

A proposed National Constitutional Council would oversee checks and balances across the executive, judiciary, and legislature. This council, envisioned as a constitutional body, would include key figures such as the president, the chief justice, the prime minister, and opposition leaders, ensuring transparency in appointments and fostering accountability.

The commission has also called for the reintroduction of referenda to amend the constitution, replacing the

current system where amendments can be enacted solely by a two-thirds parliamentary majority. This change seeks to engage the public directly in critical constitutional decisions.

Controversy Over "Mujibist" Charter

The recommendations follow a wave of public dissatisfaction that culminated in the ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who led for nearly 16 years. Student-led movements criticized the 1972 Constitution as a "Mujibist" document, accusing it of fostering a centralized power structure associated with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the nation's founding leader and Hasina's father.

While the Awami League has opposed the proposed changes, its rival, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), has demanded early elections, opposing Yunus's suggested timeline of mid-2026. The BNP maintains that reforms should be ongoing, citing its 2016 "Vision 2030" initiative and a 31-point reform plan introduced in 2023.

Path Forward

These sweeping reforms mark a critical juncture in Bangladesh's political evolution. However, they are not without controversy. Critics argue that removing secularism and socialism could erode the values that have shaped the nation's identity since its independence. Meanwhile, the suggested bicameral system and term limits signal a shift toward a more inclusive and accountable governance model.

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From the Pages of History - MT 70 Years Ago

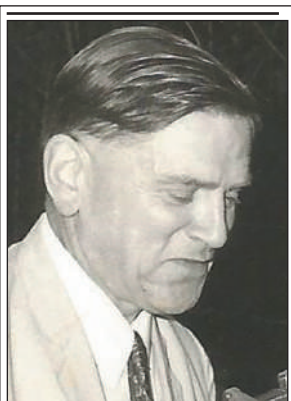
5th Year No 291

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 25 March, 1960

• The lower nature must always be denied when you are trying to rise to a higher sphere. — Henry Ward Beecher

Automatic Promotion



Peter Ibbotson

This is a vexed problem in Mauritius. Many people are not yet convinced that it is the right way to have tackled one of the many educational problems faced in the last ten years. I would suggest, however, that the fault lies neither with the fact of automatic promotion nor with the teachers who have had to cope with its effects. The fault lies — as it has for nearly ten years — with the unsatisfactory state of affairs at the very top of the

and pity the teacher. What frustration and waste of effort!" The quoted comment is Mr Ward's.

Automatic promotion is a means of ensuring that children do not get stuck in the lowest class for several years. It is a means of ensuring that children stay at school long enough to benefit from their schooling. In 1952, a conference of educationists was held at Cambridge to discuss education in the colonies, with special reference to Britain's African colonies. In his book *Educating Young Nations*, to which I referred in these columns some weeks ago, Mr Ward says: "The Cambridge conference of 1952 suggested no fewer than fourteen ways of attacking the problem. The most drastic, and probably in the long run the most effective, is that children who have attended school regularly should not repeat a class but should be automatically promoted at the end of the year. This implies that the class should no longer be regarded as an achievement group but as an age-group. If the school is efficient, the programme for each school year should be regarded as a programme which children of a certain age should normally be able to accomplish. Clearly, automatic promotion may solve the problem of wastage, but only by creating a new problem: that of the child who moves up the school without ever mastering the rudiments. But if the school is efficient, such children will be in a minority, and this is a price worth paying."

The number of children who move up the school without ever mastering the rudiments will be reduced to a minimum if teachers of the first and second classes are encouraged — by their heads, by the Department, and by public opinion — to regard teaching these classes as important as teaching the scholarship classes. Indeed, I would suggest that the teachers of the first and second classes are more important than the teachers of the upper classes. For the teachers of standards V and VI could not do their work if the teachers of standards I and II had not first done theirs. Children come to school unable to read and write; the teachers in standards I and II have the satisfaction of seeing their pupils learning to read and to write — of seeing their pupils transformed into beings with the beginnings of the basic tools of modern civilization — reading and writing — at their fingertips. It is the hardest job in teaching, to teach beginners to read and write;



the teachers of the lowest classes are doing the most important single job in education for their pupils.

But this was never properly communicated by Messrs Oppen and Snell or their deputy. Mr Ward would have communicated it; he had the inestimable gift of ensuring that people understood what was being done in education and understood too why it was being done. And this second understanding is more important than the first. Mr Ward had been in Mauritius only a few months when he started persuading people how the then scholarship examination system was wrong; and he got it changed. Had he, and not Mr Snell, introduced the system of automatic promotion following the Cambridge conference's recommendation, there would not now be the complaints that still exist that automatic promotion is not in the schools' best interests.

What the Education Department has lacked for ten years is a man able to communicate to the public the reasons underlying changes in education policy. The present Minister is remedying that lack; the way is clear for Mr Beejadhur to improve still further relations between the Education Department and the public.

Education Office.

After Mr Ward's departure, we had two Directors of Education, Messrs. Oppen and Snell, who, though doubtless estimable gentlemen, lacked the necessary common touch. Both were aloof from the public. Both seemed to lack the realization that good public relations count for a great deal in departments such as Education, Public Assistance, and so on. In any case, Mr Oppen was on loan to UNESCO for much of his tenure, and his deputy, Mr Ardill, was more than once detached from the Education Department to act as publicity officer for one or other VIP (Princess Margaret's visit, for example).

Had the necessity for automatic promotion been presented in the right way, much of the public disquiet which still exists would not exist. Automatic promotion is a means of avoiding wastage among school attendees. In the past in Mauritius, and in the present in a number of colonies (and, for that matter, independent states), many children enrolled at school for the first year, but — since compulsory school attendance was lacking — left school after only a year or two instead of completing their full primary school course. Some left even before they had learned to read and write. Why was this?

In 1950, in Sarawak, there were 21,708 children in the lowest class; only 9,256 were under eight, while as many as 356 were over thirteen! Many of these 12,000 children aged nine or more were in the lowest class because they were repeating the class year after year, while brighter children were promoted over their heads. "The clear water flows over the dam; the silt accumulates at the bottom. Pity the children;

Trade Union Elections

There is widespread interest in the recent elections in the Electrical Trades Union. Charges of ballot-rigging have been raised against the union leadership in respect of the recent election of a general secretary. The press, the radio, and the television have all alleged that the Communist leadership of the union has manipulated the election machinery to ensure that the Communist candidate for general secretary was re-elected. Unfortunately, the trade union movement has become, in the UK, the happy hunting ground for the worst kind of sectarianism. In

the heat of charge and countercharge, the real basis of trade unionism has been in danger of being lost. Look at recent elections:

- Electrical Trades Union — election for secretary: the two candidates were Haxell (Communist) and Byrne (Roman Catholic).
- Amalgamated Engineering Union — election for president: the two candidates were Carron (Roman Catholic) and Birch (Communist).
- AEU — election of full-time official in Scotland: the two candidates were Sherriff (Communist) and Maley (Roman

Catholic).

This state of affairs has prevailed in elections in other unions, notably the Foundry Workers. The final ballot is Roman Catholic versus Communist; people vote Communist to keep the Catholic out, or Catholic to keep the Communist out. Neither candidate is really voted into office on the strength of his industrial record. Nor is either faction, Catholic or Communist, really representative of British trade unionism. But by allowing the spotlight to be diverted to the struggle between these factions, the whole movement is being weakened.

Northern Gahlot Rajput Federation

Reg No 6482

Delegate members of the Northern Gahlot Rajput Federation are kindly requested to attend the Annual General Meeting to be held on
Wednesday 19 February 2025 at 7.00 pm at Ramkissoon Hall,
Fond du Sac.

AGENDA:

1. Reading and Approval of minutes of the last AGM
2. Matters arising
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Consideration and Approval of Financial Statements for the year 2024
6. Consideration and Approval of proposed estimates for year 2025
7. Election of Managing Committee for 2025 & 2026
8. Election of two Auditors for 2025 & 2026
9. Any motion to be presented
10. AOB

As per Article 5.2.1 of the Northern Gahlot Rajput Federation, each member-association shall be entitled to send a maximum of three candidates to the Managing Committee. Notice of candidate and every motion purported to be on the agenda should be given in writing to the Secretary on or before 12 February 2025.

Please note that as per Article 6.2 of the Northern Gahlot Rajput Federation each delegate of the compliant member-association shall be entitled to one vote provided the member-association is not in arrears with its membership subscription for more than three months.

Also note that in case there is no quorum the meeting will be held on 05 March 2025.

Mr Ramduth Luchoo
Secretary,
Madame Azor, Goodlands,



Kul Bhushan

As the sun rises feebly over the misty horizon, in bone-chilling wind and freezing temperature, clad in minimum clothes, millions of pilgrims took a holy dip in icy-cold waters of the holy Rivers of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati at Prayagraj, India. Rose petals rained from the sky to welcome them. Over 17 million - repeat over 17

million - pilgrims took the holy dip on 13 January 2025 to start the biggest human gathering on this planet, the Maha Kumbh Mela which can be seen from space.

Maha means great and Kumbh means a pitcher while mela is a fair. This humungous gathering happens every twelve years when the planet Jupiter is in Taurus, and the Sun and Moon are in Capricorn. The Kumbh is held at Prayagraj every twelve years, but this year's Kumbh is special as it happens after 144 years. If you take this holy dip during this celestial period from 13 January to 26 February, moksha or eternal life is yours, believe the Hindus.

Three Rivers

No wonder 450 million devotees from all across India and many countries are expected to perform this ritual along with saints, sadhus, monks, gurus, singers, artists, scholars, and, of course, tourists.

The entire venue was given a fresh artistic look with 'wall art' all over by hundreds of art students and artists depicting religious and environmental themes.

Prayagraj where three holy rivers converge has been upgraded, transformed, beautified, enlarged and digitised with a budget of \$813 million. A temporary tent city has sprung up to accommodate the visitors and the saints. Spread over 10,000 acres, the city can accommodate one million guests with increased bathing space on the banks with 30 new pontoon bridges for smooth movement of pilgrims and traffic.

Luxury Tents

In addition to the existing hotels, most visitors stay in tents which start at Rs 1,500 per night for basic tents going up to Rs 100,000 for luxury tents with all modern facilities. Some 'dome tents' with a 360-degree view are also available for Rs 125,000 on special bathing days. A few private boats are on offer with a hole in the deck allowing for a private dip!

To reach Maha Kumbh, 13,000 trains and 250 flights have been organised, 100 parking lots for half a million vehicles, 50,000 police force for security, a special mobile app - KumbhSahAlyak with maps plus other information, a FM station for all the latest local news and much more have been created.

All Comforts

Basic amenities like 24-hour power supply, clean drinking water, hygienic toilets, waste treatment, seven layered digital security, solar-powered thematic lighting on major roads with loudspeakers, over 30,000 CCTV cameras and 1,000 AI face recognition cameras, overhead and underwater drones to monitor security, medical care with a fully equipped hospital, clinics and health centres, fire stations, fire-fighting staff and vehicles, lost and found computerized centre, numerous 'war rooms' for monitoring crowd movement, traffic and security, expansion of railway stations and airport, parking for 5,000 buses and vehicles, changing tents near bathing areas, around 150,000 smell-free toilets - blue for men and pink for women, 10,000 sanitation workers with three primary schools for their children... the list goes on and on. Around \$185 million has been earmarked for waste management.

The mastermind behind all this planning and execution is the chief minister of India's largest state Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath, a saffron clad monk, who also heads the spiritual Gorak Nath monastery in Gorakhpur.

Over two dozen global institutions, including Harvard



Pic - Upstock

and Stanford, will study Maha Kumbh organization and operations as an event of this scale has never occurred with at least a million daily and an estimated 30 million on its holiest day, 4 February. A total of 450 million people are expected over 45 days. Of course, the media is all over. Major Indian TV channels have set up camp offices for non-stop coverage. Global media, print media, news agencies and most of all social media are all hyperactive. Influencers, vloggers and bloggers are uploading posts and videos going viral.

Business Billions

Maha Kumbh is also a humungous business since it is estimated to generate \$23 billion, yes \$23 billion. All these millions are also consumers and need at least the basic goods plus some clothing and other items. No wonder the FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) giants are spending millions to produce, transport and promote their products as they gear up for massive sales from street stalls, shops, hotels and restaurants.

No international sports match nor any top rock concert attracts so many people as the Maha Kumbh to which no one is invited and has no tickets. And yet millions turn up on the right days from all across India for thousands of years. The ancient Hindus exactly calculated the movement of the planets since time immemorial. Without the Greenwich or NASA observatory, they accurately calculated the movement of the planets for at least ten thousand years. Kumbh is mentioned in the Rig Ved, the first ancient Hindu scripture and in Mahabharata over 5,000 years ago. The Buddha mentioned it in his discourses 2,500 years ago. The famous Chinese scholar who visited India, Hieu Tsang, during 629-645 AD wrote about it. UNESCO declared it as Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2017.

Big Fight

Its mythical origin can be traced back to the ancient Hindu texts, the Puranas. It is said that the gods and the demons swirled up the ocean as they fought a great battle over a pitcher containing *amrit* or the elixir for immortality. The gods held the tail of the huge serpent as the demons grabbed the head as they heaved and churned the pitcher or a Kumbh. During this struggle, twelve drops fell out: four in heaven, four in hell and four on the earth at Hardwar, Ujjain, Nasik and Prayagraj. Thus, a Kumbh gathering is held every six years at three venues and every twelve years at Prayagraj. The 2025 gathering is very special as it

is happening after 144 years or twelve such gatherings.

Royal Entrance

As per protocol, the gods are believed to take the first dip, followed by the saints and swamis and then everyone else. When the 'royal' dips start at dawn, the first of the 13 groups of saints make a grand, ceremonial entrance with the head of the sect riding a colourfully decorated elephant led by brass bands, hundreds of disciples dancing, singing and chanting. These ash-covered sadhus and devotees with sunflowers in their matted hair sway with flags, spears, tridents and swords as flowers rain from bowing spectators. This saffron wave glides towards the banks. The first group of heavily garlanded sadhus is called *naga* or naked sadhus smeared only with ash. This spectacle gets repeated as twelve other groups make their equally grand entrance to the bathing banks.

The air is filled with loud chants and cries of 'Har Har Mahadev' or glory to the great god Shiva, 'Jai Ganga Maiya', hail Mother Ganges or 'Jao Shri Ram' or hail Lord Ram praises for other gods and goddesses.

Holy Dip

The male pilgrims usually take to dip in a loincloth while the women are fully dressed in saris. When they emerge shivering with cold, the men quickly change into dry clothes on the open-air banks while the women rush to nearby changing rooms for dry clothes. Their top priority now is a steaming cup of hot tea. This is conveniently available on the roadside in all open-air stalls and is eagerly sipped with gratitude.

As they walk on, they are lured by stalls selling trinkets, toys, ornaments, souvenirs and many other attractive goods. But most of them keep walking to one of the thirteen *akadhads* or religious groups. Here they can hear spiritual discourses, listen to 'katha' or spiritual legends, sing devotional songs or volunteer to work in the community kitchen to prepare and serve free meals.

Guru Shopping

Here is the best opportunity for 'guru shopping' which means you can listen to different gurus and go back to the one who appeals to you and become his disciple.

There is top-class entertainment too for many renowned singers have been invited to present spiritual concerts.

● Cont. on page 16

Biggest Gathering of Humans on Planet

Maha Kumbh blends Tradition with Technology



Pic - ETV Bharat

● Cont. from page 15

They include popular singers Shanker Mahadevan, Anup Jalota, Kailash Kher, Sonu Nigam, Vishal Bharadwaj, Shreya Ghosh, Richa Sharma, Jubin Nautiyal, plus classical singers. Among top movie stars who are coming include Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Ashutosh Rana, Ravi Kishan plus well-known poets and authors.

Then there are visitors/tourists from all over the world who have come for a spiritual experience, or just the adventure and thrill of exploring the real India which is on show. Among an expected 50,000 visitors are the young adventurers and serious seekers. The most famous so far is one of the richest women in the world, Laurene Powell Jobs, the widow of Apple founder Steve Jobs, with a group of 40 friends who first went to Varanasi and was initiated a Hindu with a new name Kamala. Then she came to Prayagraj with her guru for the holy dip and made big news. Hollywood star and Dalai Lama follower Richard Gere is also coming.

Lost Found

With this activity and non-stop action in crowds numbering thousands at every venue, one is bound to get se-

parated from relatives. And Kumbh is notorious for children and seniors getting lost. In fact, many Hindi films show brothers getting separated at Kumbh and finding each other after many years. However, this has been addressed digitally now. The visiting children can wear personalized name tags, lanyards with QR codes, glow-in-the-dark badges and accessories plus Google sharing special landmarks as meeting points to locate the lost with a computerized centre to monitor such incidents. On the first day of Maha Kumbh with 1.7 million people, around 250 went astray but were reunited within an hour!

Eternal Sanatan

Among all these colourful scenes, shrill sounds and hectic activity, there emerges a silent pause to search for the meaning of all this hoopla. This is when the real meaning and purpose of Maha Kumbh becomes clear as Sanatan or eternal. Here is Sanatan to revere the awesome and powerful natural elements and the magic and mystery of life all around.

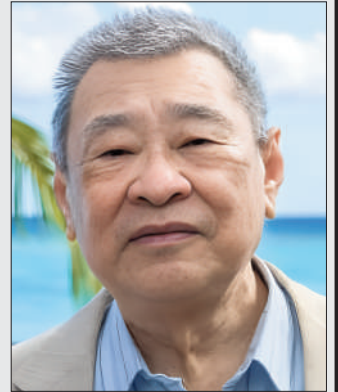
This Sanatan Dharma or the eternal way of life originated before any religion and has continued down the centuries, surviving all dire challenges and is vibrantly alive today. Many ancient kingdoms, empires and civilisations have come and gone but Sanatan lives today. Wrongly named as Hinduism, Sanatan Dharma is the original name for this way of life as it pulsates in a hundred million followers and in Maha Kumbh now blending technology with tradition. The pilgrims keep coming for once in a lifetime spiritual experience as the Maha Kumbh goes on.

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

Obituary

Marc Ah-Chuen, Managing Director of ABC Foods

It is with profound sadness that the ABC Group of Companies announces the passing of Marc Ah-Chuen, Managing Director of ABC Foods, who breathed his last on Wednesday at the age of 79.



Marc Ah-Chuen will be remembered as a pivotal figure in the history of ABC Foods and the ABC Group, where his dedication and leadership steered the foods cluster through decades of remarkable success and growth.

The youngest of the Ah-Chuen brothers, Marc began his career at the age of 19, joining Chue Wing & Co Ltd (now known as ABC Foods) as a storekeeper after completing his secondary education at St Mary's College. Starting at the bottom rung of the ladder, he steadily climbed the ranks, playing a key role in the diversification of ABC Foods.

Among his many accomplishments was the establishment of Oriental Foods in 1982, a factory producing Asian sauces, including the renowned Yeo's brand. Under his vision, ABC Foods became the distributor of instant Apollo noodles and other internationally acclaimed brands such as Bakers and Tsingtao in Mauritius.

Marc assumed leadership of ABC Foods in the 1990s. He oversaw significant milestones, including the relocation of the company's headquarters and distribution centre to Trianon in 2010, the launch of Dolly milk, and the expansion of the company's distribution channels to include the HORE-CA sector.

Under his stewardship, ABC Foods broadened its portfolio, introducing non-food items such as cosmetics, personal care products, and more recently, pharmaceuticals and parapharmaceuticals. Marc witnessed and contributed to the transformation of the ABC Group from a small store into the thriving conglomerate it is today.

Marc Ah-Chuen leaves behind a legacy of hard work, loyalty, and respect for others, values that have become deeply ingrained in the fabric of the company he helped shape.

Madame Azor Gahlot Rajput Sabha

Reg No 6507

Members are kindly requested to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Madame Azor Gahlot Rajput Sabha to be held on **Wednesday 05 February 2025 at 7.00 pm** at the residence of Mr Ramduth Luchoo, Madame Azor, Goodlands.

AGENDA:

1. Reading and Approval of minutes of the last AGM
2. Matters arising
3. President's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Consideration and Approval of Financial Statements for the year 2024
6. Election of Managing Committee 2025-2026
7. Election of Auditors 2025-2026
8. Consideration and Approval of proposed estimates for the year 2025
9. Any motion to be presented
10. AOB

Notice of candidate and every motion purported to be on the agenda shall be given in writing to the President/Secretary on or before Wednesday 29 January 2025.

Also note that in case there is no quorum the meeting will be held on 19 February 2025.

Mr Ramduth Luchoo

President

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

This week is all about adventure and learning. You may feel drawn to travel or explore new hobbies that energize you. Avoid overcommitting to tasks; focus on quality over quantity. Personal relationships benefit from your enthusiasm and positivity.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 15, 19, 26, 33

CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Financial rewards come from unexpected sources, boosting your confidence. Family matters take precedence, offering emotional fulfillment. Maintain a disciplined approach to health and avoid overindulgence. This is a good time to plan for long-term goals.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 10, 16, 21, 27, 34

AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

Networking opens doors to exciting prospects. A creative idea you've been nurturing gains traction, bringing recognition. Prioritize mental well-being and avoid overthinking. Spend time with friends or indulge in activities.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 11, 18, 22, 28, 39

PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

Your intuition leads you to meaningful decisions, especially in personal matters. Career growth is steady, though patience is required for long-term success. Personal connections bring comfort and joy, helping you feel supported as you navigate the week.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 8, 13, 19, 25, 31

ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

This week brings opportunities for professional growth. A sudden breakthrough at work could

YOUR STARS

help you achieve long-term goals. Stay focused and avoid distractions. Romantic encounters will be uplifting, and single Aries may meet someone intriguing.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 7, 12, 18, 25, 33

TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

Financial stability improves as a past investment bears fruit. This is an excellent time to plan for future goals. Open communication will resolve them quickly. Take some time to indulge in self-care and enjoy simple pleasures with loved ones.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 10, 14, 19, 26, 37

GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Communication is key this week. Your ability to express ideas boldly will shine, especially in professional settings. Travel plans may surface unexpectedly, bringing excitement and a change of pace. Nurture your relationships, as minor misunderstandings could arise if you're not attentive to others' needs.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 15, 20, 29, 34

CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22

A rewarding week for finances and career growth. Your intuition will guide you well in personal matters, helping you navigate any emotional challenges. Balance is essential — avoid letting work overshadow family commitments. Strengthen connections with loved ones for emotional support.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 9, 16, 21, 28, 36

LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22

Your leadership skills come to the forefront as new opportunities arise. This could be a pivotal week for career advancement. While your confidence soars, keep an eye on unnecessary expenditures. Romantic opportunities deepen, whether you're in a relationship or exploring new connections.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 6, 13, 22, 27, 31

VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22

Personal growth takes center stage. Focus on improving your health and well-being. A long-pending project gains momentum, giving you a sense of accomplishment. Loved ones may turn to you for advice, strengthening bonds and fostering a sense of belonging.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 11, 17, 23, 30, 35

LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22

Partnerships, both personal and professional, flourish this week. Collaborative efforts bring success, so lean into teamwork. Social events may lead to unexpected opportunities. Keep an eye on your spending habits, as indulgence could strain your finances.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 9, 14, 20, 25, 32

SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV

A transformative week awaits, particularly in career matters. Embrace change and let go of past grievances to make room for growth. Relationships require open and honest communication. Your resilience will help you navigate challenges effectively.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 12, 18, 24, 29, 38

Parents struggle to manage children's anger: study finds many need support

Seven in ten parents admit to struggling with their own anger management, and four in ten worry about their child's behavior

Many parents face challenges when it comes to managing their children's anger, with common frustrations ranging from sibling arguments to battles over screen time limits. A new national poll suggests that some parents may be uncertain about how to help their children handle intense emotions.

One in seven parents believe their child becomes angrier than their peers, and four in ten say their child has faced negative consequences due to their anger. These may include conflicts with friends, trouble at school, or even self-harm. The University of Michigan Health C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health reveals these findings, highlighting that many parents also feel they sometimes set a bad example for managing their own anger.

"Children are still learning emotional regulation, which means they can react strongly to minor frustrations. Without the right guidance on how to express these feelings appropriately, it can lead to disruptive behaviors, academic struggles, and strained relationships," said Sarah Clark, M.P.H., co-director of the Mott Poll.

The survey, conducted in August 2024, included 1,031 parents of children ages 6-12. While many parents report seeing improvements in their children's anger management, they still worry about the long-term effects of their child's emotional reactions.

Some Children Express Anger More Frequently

Though over a third of parents say their child is getting better at managing anger, 40% remain concerned about their child's emotional struggles. More parents of boys than girls report that their child has faced negative consequences due to anger, including conflict with peers or getting in trouble at school.

Fourteen percent of parents feel their child gets angrier more often than other children their age, and these parents

are more likely to worry that their child's anger will cause problems in the future. They are also more likely to feel they themselves model poor anger management.

"Children who express strong emotions might feel different from others, and if they are shamed for their anger, it can make the situation worse," Clark noted. "It's essential for parents to reassure their children that feeling angry doesn't make them a bad person — it's just a matter of learning to manage it."

Despite these challenges, many parents lack effective tools for teaching their children anger management. One in three parents say they haven't received advice on how to help their child process anger effectively.

While over 60% of parents report that their child's school provides support through teachers or counsellors, fewer than half say their school provides parents with information on how to manage anger at home.

Strategies to Help Children Manage Anger

The poll reveals several strategies that parents use to help their children deal with anger. These strategies include time-outs, drawing, deep breathing exercises, and moving away from stressful situations. Some children may also benefit from physical outlets, such as squeezing a stress ball or ripping paper, which is more commonly encouraged by parents of boys. Others may simply need to talk about their emotions.

"For many children, the key to managing anger is taking a break to cool down and regain control," Clark said. "Every child is different, so it's important for parents to explore different methods and find what works best for their child."

Recognizing the Roots of Anger

Most parents recognize the role they play in preventing angry outbursts. Many try to ensure their child gets enough sleep, exercises regularly, avoids stressors, and isn't overscheduled. Understanding that anger often stems from fear or disappointment can help parents approach situations with empathy.

"Anger is often a secondary emotion, triggered by other

feelings such as frustration or anxiety," Clark explained. "Recognizing this can help parents respond with patience and understanding."

Modeling Calm Responses to Anger

Many parents acknowledge that they sometimes fail to model appropriate anger management themselves. By acknowledging their own feelings and apologizing when necessary, parents can demonstrate healthy coping mechanisms to their children.

Clark recommends that parents explain their self-soothing strategies, such as saying, "I'm feeling frustrated, so I'm going to take a deep breath." This not only shows children how to manage their own emotions but also turns difficult moments into valuable teaching opportunities.

Positive Reinforcement

Clark emphasizes the importance of positive reinforcement when children manage anger constructively. Praising children for using calming techniques—such as saying, "Great job taking deep breaths instead of yelling" — reinforces their positive behaviors. However, she warns against punishing children simply for feeling angry. Instead, parents should focus on teaching constructive anger management techniques.

"Some children are more prone to frustration due to their temperament, which can lead to intense emotional reactions," Clark said. While it's important to validate a child's feelings, she advises parents to set clear boundaries against aggressive behaviours like hurting others or breaking things.

Seeking Professional Help

If a child's anger becomes too frequent, intense, or unmanageable, it may be time to consult a professional. Children dealing with underlying issues like anxiety, trauma, or learning difficulties may need specialized support. Therapy or counselling can provide tailored strategies and help families manage emotional challenges more effectively.



Why does a rocket have to go 25,000 mph to escape Earth?

A rocket needs to overcome the force of gravity to leave Earth behind.

There's a reason why a rocket has to go so fast to escape Earth. It's about gravity — something all of us experience every moment of every day.

Gravity is the force that pulls you toward the ground. And that's a good thing. Gravity keeps you on Earth; otherwise, you would float away into space.

But gravity also makes it difficult to leave Earth if you're a rocket heading for space. Escaping our planet's gravitational pull is hard — not only is gravity strong, but it also extends far away from Earth.

Like a balloon

As a rocket scientist, one of the things I do is teach students how rockets overcome gravity. Here's how it works:

Essentially, the rocket has to make thrust — that is, create force — by burning propellant to make hot gases. Then it shoots those hot gases out of a nozzle. It's sort of like blowing up a balloon, letting go of it and watching it fly away as the air rushes out.

More specifically, the rocket propellant consists of both fuel and oxidizer. The fuel is typically something flammable, usually hydrogen, methane or kerosene. The oxidizer is usually liquid oxygen, which reacts with the fuel and allows it to burn.

When going into space and escaping from Earth, rockets need lots of force, so they consume propellant very quickly. That's a problem, because the rocket can't carry enough propellant to keep thrusting forever; the amount of propellant needed would make the rocket too heavy to get off the ground.

So what happens when the propellant runs out? The thrust stops, and gravity slows the rocket down until it gradually begins to fall back to Earth.

Fortunately, scientists can launch the rocket with some sideways momentum so that it misses the Earth when it returns. They can even do this so it continuously falls around the Earth forever. In other words, it goes into orbit, and begins to circle the planet.

Many launches intentionally don't completely leave Earth behind. Thousands of satellites are orbiting our planet right now, and they help phones and TVs work, display weather patterns for meteorologists, and even let you use a credit card to pay for things at the store or gas at the pump. You



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with its Crew Dragon capsule launches from Cape Canaveral, Fla., in January 2024. Chandan Khanna/AFP via Getty Images

can sometimes see these satellites in the night sky, including the International Space Station.

Escaping Earth

But suppose the goal is to let the rocket escape from Earth's gravity forever so it can fly off into the depths of space. That's when scientists do a neat trick called staging. They launch with a big rocket, and then, once in space, discard it to use a smaller rocket. That

way, the journey can continue without the weight of the bigger rocket, and less propellant is needed.

But even staging is not enough; eventually the rocket will run out of propellant. But if the rocket goes fast enough, it can run out of propellant and still continue to coast away from Earth forever, without gravity pulling it back. It's like riding a bike: build up enough speed and eventually you can coast up a hill without pedaling.

And just like there's a minimum speed required to coast the bike, there's a minimum speed a rocket needs to coast away into space: 25,020 mph (about 40,000 kilometers per hour).

Scientists call that speed the escape velocity. A rocket needs to go that fast so that the momentum propelling it away from Earth is stronger than the force of gravity pulling it back. Any slower, and you'll go into an orbit of Earth.

Escaping Jupiter

Bigger, or more massive, objects have stronger gravitational pull. A rocket launching from a planet bigger than Earth would need to achieve a higher escape speed.

For example, Jupiter is the most massive planet in our solar system. It's so big, it could swallow 1,000 Earths. So it requires a very high escape speed: 133,100 mph (about 214,000 kilometers per hour), more than five times the escape speed of Earth.

But the extreme example is a black hole, an object so massive that its escape speed is extraordinarily high. So high, in fact, that even light — which has a speed of 370 million mph (about 600 million kilometers per hour) — is not fast enough to escape. That's why it's called a black hole.

Benjamin L. Emerson

Principal Research Engineer, School of Aerospace Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology



A Saint among Sinners

There were two evil brothers who were both rich and powerful. They used their wealth to hide their misdeeds from the public eye. Despite their ways, they attended the same church and pretended to be good Christians.

One day, the priest of their church retired, and a new one took over. The new priest, not only able to see through their deception, spoke with conviction and truth. Under his leadership, the church began to grow, and a fundraising campaign was launched to build a bigger place of worship.

Suddenly, one of the brothers died. The surviving brother approached the new priest the day before the funeral and handed him a large cheque to cover the cost of completing the new church building.

"I have only one request," he said. "At the funeral service, you must say my brother was a saint."

The priest agreed and accepted the cheque.

At the funeral, the priest spoke honestly: "He was an evil man. He cheated on his wife and abused his family."

After continuing in this vein for a while, the priest concluded, "But, compared to his brother, he was a saint."

* * *

The Silent 'H'

When I was in school, I used to ask a lot of questions!

One day, I asked Ms Doris, our English teacher: "Why do we ignore some letters in pronunciation, like the letter 'H' in words like hour, honest, and honour?"

Ms Doris replied: "We are not ignoring them; they are considered silent."

(I was even more confused...)

During lunch break, Ms Doris handed me her packed lunch and said: "Please go heat this in the cafeteria."

I ate all the food and returned the empty container.

Ms Doris exclaimed: "What happened? I told you to

heat my food, and you're returning an empty container?" I replied: "Madam, I thought 'H' was silent."

* * *

A Dead Duck

A woman brought a very limp duck to a veterinary surgeon.

As she placed her pet on the table, the vet pulled out his stethoscope and listened to the duck's chest.

After a moment, the vet shook his head sadly and said: "I'm sorry, your duck, Cuddles, has passed away."

The distressed woman wailed: "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I am sure. The duck is dead," the vet replied.

"How can you be so sure?" she protested.

"I mean, you haven't done any tests. He might just be in a coma or something."

The vet rolled his eyes, turned around, and left the room.



A few minutes later, he returned with a Labrador.

The dog stood on its hind legs, sniffed the duck from head to foot, and then looked up at the vet with sad eyes, shaking its head.

The vet patted the dog on the head and took it out of the room.

A few minutes later, the vet returned with a cat.

The cat jumped on the table, sniffed the duck delicately from head to foot, and sat back, shaking its head before meowing softly and strolling out.

The vet turned to the woman and said: "As I said, this is most definitely, 100% certifiably, a dead duck."

The vet then turned to his computer, typed a few keys, and handed the woman a bill.

The woman, still in shock, exclaimed: "Rs 3000! Rs 3000 just to tell me my duck is dead?"

The vet shrugged: "I'm sorry. If you had taken my word for it, the bill would have been Rs. 100, but with the Lab Report and the Cat Scan, it's now Rs 3000."

* * *

Triplets Surprise

In a New York hospital, a nurse approached a new but arrogant white American father.

Nurse:

"Congratulations, your wife just had triplets."

The American replied smugly:

"I'm not surprised, lady. My tool is as big as a chimney!"



The nurse retorted:

"Then better get it cleaned. They're all Black!"

* * *

Masterpiece

Georges, 88 years old, visits his doctor for a routine check-up.

Doctor: "How are you doing, Georges?"

Georges: "Very well, Doctor. God is watching over me."

Doctor: "What do you mean?"

Georges: "Well, for example, last night I woke up to use the bathroom. When I opened the bathroom door, bam, the light turned on by itself... God is watching over me."

And when I was done, I closed the door, and bam, the light turned off again... God is watching over me."

The doctor, intrigued by Georges' revelation, decides to call Georges' wife.

Doctor: "Georges came to see me today and told me that God is watching over him, turning the light on and off for him when he goes to the bathroom at night. Is that true?"

Georges' Wife: "Good heavens! Don't tell me he peed in the fridge again!"



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That's Life**When does a man's life change?**

* Socrates: When he realizes that he knows nothing.

* Seneca: When he understands the limits of his abilities.

* Dostoevsky: When he suffers in solitude.

* Nietzsche: When he transcends himself.

* Sartre: When he embraces his freedom.

* Viktor Frankl: When he discovers meaning in his life.

* Schopenhauer: When he overcomes his will.

* Cioran: When he faces death.

* Spinoza: When he changes out of necessity, not freedom.

* Milan Kundera: When he realizes the world is beyond repair.

* Simone de Beauvoir: When he bares his heart and soul.

* Carl Jung: When he confronts his shadow and recognizes the seeds of evil within.

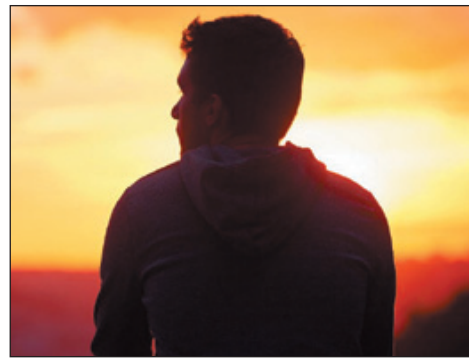
* * *

The Silent Sacrifice of a Husband and Father

Did you know that your husband is often scolded by his boss?

Did you know that your husband is frequently insulted at work?

Did you know that your husband



might have risked his life today for you and your children?

Do you know that sometimes, your husband goes without food just to bring home money?

Before you criticize or make him angry, take a moment to consider how many millions of drops of sweat he's poured into his work.

Look closely into his eyes; you may not realize that those eyes have shed many tears just to see you smile.

No head of a family wants to see their loved ones unhappy.

Before you get upset with him, think about what your husband is doing — how hard he's working to provide for his family.

Some parents find it difficult to share their struggles with their wives and children; they carry the burden alone. He doesn't want you to know how hard he's fighting. He doesn't want to appear weak in front of his family. He simply wants you to be proud of the work he does.

For all the parents out there...

May the new year bring blessings from the tiredness of your hard work.

When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Life often confronts us with profound questions, especially when tragedy strikes those who seem least deserving. Harold Kushner's *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* delves into this age-old dilemma, offering wisdom, solace, and practical guidance. Drawing from his personal experiences and spiritual insights, Kushner reframes suffering not as a punishment but as an integral part of life's unpredictability. Through ten transformative lessons, he explores the power of resilience, faith, and human connection, showing how we can find meaning and hope even in the darkest times. This compassionate book is both a source of comfort and a roadmap for navigating life's inevitable hardships.

• Suffering is Not a Punishment

Bad things happening to good people is not divine punishment but a result of life's natural randomness.

• Life is Inherently Unpredictable

The world operates on natural laws, and randomness can lead to unfair outcomes beyond human control.

• God's Role is Compassion, Not Control

God does not cause suffering but offers strength and comfort to help endure it.

• The Importance of Meaning

Finding meaning in suffering helps individuals cope, even if the pain itself cannot be fully explained or justified.

• Resilience Comes from Faith and Community

Supportive relationships and faith in



something greater provide strength to navigate hardships.

• Let Go of the Need for Answers

Seeking to rationalize every tragedy often deepens pain. Acceptance fosters healing.

• Focus on What You Can Control

While suffering may be unavoidable, your response shapes your experience and healing process.

• Human Connection Heals

Acts of kindness, empathy, and understanding from others bring solace and strength during difficult times.

• God Works Through People

Divine support is often felt through the love and care of those around us.

• Embrace Life's Fragility

Accepting life's fleeting nature inspires gratitude, deeper relationships, and living fully.

Harold Kushner's book is a compassionate guide to reconciling suffering with spiritual and philosophical beliefs. It reminds us that even in pain, love, community, and faith can bring healing and hope.

The Beauty of Complexity

Reflections by Victoria Erickson
The Duality Within

“Half of me is filled with bursting words and half of me is painfully shy. I crave solitude yet also crave people. I want to pour life and love into everything yet also nurture my self-care and go gently. I want to live within the rush of primal, intuitive decision, yet also wish to sit and contemplate. This is the messiness of life — that we all carry multitudes, so must sit with the shifts. We are complicated creatures, and ultimately, the balance comes from this understanding. Be water. Flowing, flexible, and soft. Subtly powerful and open. Wild and serene. Able to accept all changes, yet still led by the pull of steady tides. It is enough.”

* * *

The Essence of Soulmates

“Soulmates aren't the ones who make you happiest, no. They're instead the ones who make you feel the most. Burning edges and scars and stars. Old pangs, captivation, and beauty. Strain and shadows and worry and yearning. Sweetness and madness and dreamlike

surrender. They hurl you into the abyss. They taste like hope.”

* * *

The Power of Softness

“Just because you are soft doesn't mean you are not a force. Honey and wildfire are both the color gold.”

* * *

Conversations of Depth

“I wanted to ask you about your vision of perfection in an imperfect world, or what side of the earth calls out to you when you touch a physical globe, or maybe about your greatest heartache and how you still go on as your world continues turning, or what you do with a memory once lodged inside your bones that's still breathing and burning. But you're still a stranger, and I'm overly polite, so I'll ask all about your day when I'd rather know about your life.”

* * *

The Call of Mountains

“Although I deeply love oceans, deserts, and other wild landscapes, it is only mountains that beckon me with that sort of painful magnetic pull to walk deeper and deeper into their beauty. They keep me continuously wanting to know more, feel more, see more.”

* * *

Becoming Your Desires

“If you inherently long for something,



become it first. If you want gardens, become the gardener. If you want love, embody love. If you want mental stimulation, change the conversation. If you want peace, exude calmness. If you want to fill your world with artists, begin to paint. If you want to be valued, respect your own time. If you want to live ecstatically, find the ecstasy within yourself. This is how to draw it in, day by day, inch by inch.”

* * *

The Wildness of Being

“To be fully human is to be wild. Wild is the strange pull and whispering wisdom. It's the gentle nudge and the forceful ache. It is your truth, passed down from

the ancients, and the very stream of life in your blood. Wild is the soul where passion and creativity reside, and the quickening of your heart. Wild is what is real, and wild is your home.”

* * *

Discovering Yourself

“Often times, a person will think they know you by piecing together tiny facts and arranging those pieces into a puzzle that makes sense to them. If we don't know ourselves very well, we'll mistakenly believe

them, and drift toward where they tell us to swim, only to drown in our own confusion. Here's the truth: it's important to take the necessary steps to find out who you are. Because you hold endless depths below the surface of a few facts and pieces and past decisions. You aren't only the ripples others can see. You are made of oceans.”

* * *

Embracing Sensitivity

“Rather than fearfully shutting down your sensitivity, dive in deeper into all possible feeling. As you expand, keep only those who are not afraid of oceans.”

— Victoria Erickson

The Mind-Body Connection

10 Ways Your Mind Can Help Your Body

The mind-body connection refers to how your mental and physical health are interconnected. Rather than being separate, your mental and physical health influence each other. For example, physical illness can increase the risk of anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges. Conversely, unmanaged stress, anxiety, and depression can weaken your immune system and contribute to physical symptoms. This article has been reviewed by Dr C. Nicole Swiner of WebMD.

1. Reduce pain

Meditation can trigger the release of endorphins in the brain, which help reduce pain. Focusing on calm, peaceful thoughts can also reduce inflammation and shift your attention away from discomfort, helping you manage pain more effectively.

2. Improve sleep

Mindfulness techniques that focus on deep breathing and present-moment awareness can improve sleep quality. These practices help break the cycle of anxiety-provoking thoughts and activate your body's relaxation response, making it easier to fall asleep.

3. Lower blood pressure

Meditation can help lower blood pressure, primarily by increasing the production of nitric oxide. This compound helps relax and widen blood vessels. Regular meditation may encourage your body to produce more nitric oxide, contributing to better cardiovascular health.

4. Boost immune response

Harnessing the power of your mind can support a healthier immune system. Practices like meditation and deep breathing activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps control inflammation and boosts your body's ability to fight off diseases more effectively.



5. Decrease anxiety

Your mind can help alleviate anxiety and related conditions such as phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Meditation fosters a deep state of relaxation, helping you focus your attention and quiet the mental chatter causing stress. This promotes both mental and physical well-being, reducing anxiety.

6. Increase energy

Relaxation and positive coping techniques can help combat the fatigue and listlessness often caused by stress. By slowing your heart rate and improving sleep quality, relaxation allows you to wake up feeling refreshed and energized.

7. Lower blood sugar

Stress typically causes blood sugar levels to rise. Meditation and other relaxation techniques help counteract this effect, improving blood sugar control. Practices like music therapy, massages, yoga, art therapy, and deep breathing can all provide relaxation benefits to help regulate blood sugar.

8. Improve digestive function

Stress can inhibit digestion. When your body is in a state of "fight or flight," it prioritizes survival over digestion. Activating your relaxation response can help relieve digestive issues, including:

- Acid reflux
- Constipation
- Nausea
- Stomach pain

9. Improve concentration

Research from Columbia University Medical Center suggests that relaxation can positively affect the brain's function and structure. Meditating for just a few minutes a day can reduce distractions and enhance your ability to concentrate. Techniques that improve focus include:

- **Mindfulness:** Observing your thoughts without judgment
- **Concentrative meditation:** Focusing on a specific point
- **Moving meditation:** Slow, repetitive movements

10. Control anger

Meditation has been shown to help reduce anger, negativity, and aggression. It fosters awareness of your thoughts and emotions, allowing you to shift your perspective on frustrating situations. Guided meditation, which includes the following steps, is particularly effective:

- Physical relaxation
- Independent meditation
- Guided meditation
- Focusing on your inner voice

By incorporating relaxation techniques into your daily routine, you can significantly enhance both your mental and physical health, leading to a more balanced and harmonious life.

Relationships

The Power of a Woman's Tongue: A Double-Edged Sword

-- Dayan Masinde

The tongue, though small, wields immense power -- especially in the life of a woman. It is said that while men often rely on physical strength, a woman's greatest influence lies in her words. Her tongue can be a tool for building or a weapon for destruction, a source of life or an agent of harm.

With her words, a woman can inspire a man to reach his greatest potential or tear him down to his weakest state. She can shape her children's self-esteem, nurture friendships, or shatter relationships. The tone she sets with her tongue influences not only her home but also her career, dreams, and overall peace of life.

Dayan Masinde explores the profound influence of a woman's words, offering insights into how her tongue can either build or destroy the people and the world around her.

There is power in her tongue -- how she uses it defines everything.

• **Words as Power:** A woman's words hold significant power. Unlike men, who may rely on physical strength, a woman can wield her tongue to uplift or bring

down a man. The more a man loves her, the more influence she holds over him.

• **Encouragement or Discouragement:** A woman's words can be a source of inspiration or fear. They can motivate a man or become his greatest nightmare, depending on how she uses them.

• **Impact on Children:** The way a woman speaks to her children can shape their self-esteem. Her words of hope and love can uplift, while harsh words can diminish their self-worth.

• **Flirtation and Misunderstanding:** A woman's suggestive language can be interpreted as flirtatious, potentially leading to misunderstandings or insecurities in her relationships.

• **Friendship Dynamics:** A woman's tone and choice of words can either drive friends away or foster a nurturing environment that keeps them close.

• **Gossip and Destruction:** Engaging in gossip can lead to the destruction of relationships and reputations. A woman's involvement in gossip can negatively impact her and those around her.

• **Marital Dynamics:** The nature of a woman's communication can affect her



relationship with her husband. Loving words can make him feel at home, while a toxic tone may drive him away.

• **Emotional Stability:** A woman's emotional stability influences her speech. An unstable woman may lash out, while a stable one manages her responses more thoughtfully.

• **Conflict Resolution:** A woman's words can provoke or pacify conflicts. The right words can defuse tensions and foster understanding.

• **Home Environment:** The tone of a woman's speech sets the mood of her home. Her communication can either create a warm, inviting atmosphere or a tense, uncomfortable one.

• **Influence on Progress:** A woman's words have the power to either hinder or advance her personal goals and aspirations. She can use her speech to empower her dreams and those around her.

10 exciting new Bollywood pairs to watch in 2025!

Bollywood is gearing up for a thrilling 2025, with a line-up of fresh and exciting on-screen jodis ready to captivate audiences. From star kids making their debut to seasoned actors teaming up with fresh faces, these new Bollywood jodis (pairs) promise to deliver unforgettable chemistry and make a mark at the box office. Here are 10 Bollywood pairings you should definitely watch out for in 2025 as reported by the Statesman.



1. Junaid Khan and Khushi Kapoor

Aamir Khan's son, Junaid Khan, and Sridevi's daughter, Khushi Kapoor, are all set to make their big-screen debut in *Loveyapa*, a quirky rom-com releasing on February 7, 2025. This marks Junaid's first foray into romantic comedy, and fans are eager to see the chemistry between these star kids.

2. Dhanush and Kriti Sanon

After a standout 2024 with three consecutive hits, Kriti Sanon is ready to shine in 2025 alongside South Indian superstar Dhanush in *Tere Ishk Mein*, directed by Aanand L Rai. This romantic drama promises to be an emotional rollercoaster, and fans are excited to see the on-screen magic between Kriti and Dhanush.



3. Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna

Rashmika Mandanna, fresh off her successes with *Animal* and *Pushpa 2*, will star opposite Vicky Kaushal in *Chhaava*, a historical drama. Vicky will portray the Maratha king Sambhaji, and the anticipation around their pairing is steadily building.

4. Aaman Devgan and Rasha Thadani

Raveena Tandon's daughter, Rasha Thadani, will make her debut alongside Ajay Devgn's nephew, Aaman Devgan, in *Azaad*, directed by Abhishek Kapoor. The film, releasing on January 17, 2025, has already created buzz with its first song showcasing the chemistry between the two newcomers.



5. Ibrahim Ali Khan and Khushi Kapoor

Saif Ali Khan's son, Ibrahim Ali Khan, is making his debut in *Naadaniyaan*, produced by Karan Johar and directed by Shauna Gautam. Starring alongside Khushi Kapoor, their debut pairing is already sparking interest.

6. Shahid Kapoor and Pooja Hegde

Shahid Kapoor will star alongside Pooja Hegde in the upcoming action-drama *Deva*, releasing on January 31, 2025. Fans are eager to see how the duo's chemistry translates into this high-octane action-packed film.

7. Sidharth Malhotra and Janhvi Kapoor

Sidharth Malhotra and Janhvi Kapoor will star together in *Param Sundari*, a cross-cultural romantic drama directed by Tushar Jalota. The film's poster has already generated buzz, and fans are excited to see this fresh pairing unfold on screen.



8. Salman Khan and Rashmika Mandanna

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is set to share the screen with Rashmika Mandanna in *Sikandar*, directed by AR Murugadoss. Scheduled for an Eid 2025 release, this pairing has fans eagerly awaiting their on-screen collaboration.

9. Vikrant Massey and Shanaya Kapoor

Shanaya Kapoor, daughter of actor Sanjay Kapoor, will make her Bollywood debut in *Aankhon Ki Gustakhiyan*, based on Ruskin Bond's short story *The Eyes Have It*. Starring opposite Vikrant Massey, this pairing promises a blend of charm and depth.

10. Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan

Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan are set to star together in *Metro... In Dino*, directed by Anurag Basu. The fresh pairing has already generated significant buzz, and the film is expected to offer a unique mix of romance and drama.

Small Screen to Big Dreams: TV Stars who conquered Bollywood

Over the years, the entertainment industry has witnessed a fascinating trend of television stars transitioning seamlessly into Bollywood, carving a niche for themselves on the silver screen. These actors, adored for their iconic roles on the small screen, bring a massive fan following and a wealth of acting experience. From Mrunal Thakur to Vikrant Massey, these stars have redefined stardom, showcasing their versatility and ability to captivate audiences across platforms, as reported by Filmibeat.

Mona Singh

Mona Singh became a household name with her debut as the lead in *Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin*. She later appeared in popular TV series like *Kya Hua Tera Vaada* (2012–2013) and showcased her acting range in web series such as *Kehne Ko Humsafar Hain* and *Made in Heaven*. Mona transitioned to Bollywood with a memorable role in *3 Idiots* and went on to star in films like *Laal Singh Chaddha* and *Munjya*, among others.



Mouni Roy

Mouni Roy started her career with *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and gained immense popularity as Sati in *Devon Ke Dev...Mahadev* and later in *Naagin*. She made her Bollywood debut opposite Akshay Kumar in *Gold* and followed it with roles in films like *Made in China*, *London Confidential*, and *Brahmastra*, where her performance as

the antagonist earned significant praise.

Mrunal Thakur

Mrunal Thakur began her journey with the popular TV serial *Mujhse Kuchh Kehti...Yeh Khamoshiyaan* and rose to fame as Bulbul in *Kumkum Bhagya*. She transitioned to Bollywood with her debut in *Love Sonia* and later gained acclaim for her performances in films like *Super 30* and *Sita Ramam*. Her impressive acting skills have cemented her place as a promising Bollywood actress.

Radhika Madan

Radhika Madan rose to fame with her role as Ishaani Vaghela in the popular TV show *Meri Aashiqui Tum Se Hi*. She made her Bollywood debut with the critically acclaimed *Pataakha* and followed it with noteworthy performances in *Angrezi Medium* (2020), alongside Irrfan Khan,

and *Shiddat* (2021). Radhika's ability to adapt to diverse roles has earned her widespread recognition.

Shweta Tiwari

Shweta Tiwari became an icon with her portrayal of Perna Sharma in the long-running TV series *Kasautii Zindagii Kay*. Though her Bollywood journey has been limited, she appeared in films like *Madhoshi* (2004) and *Aabra Ka Daabra* (2004). Recently, Shweta made a significant comeback with her performance in Rohit Shetty's action-packed film *Singham Again*, showcasing her talent on the big screen.

Vikrant Massey

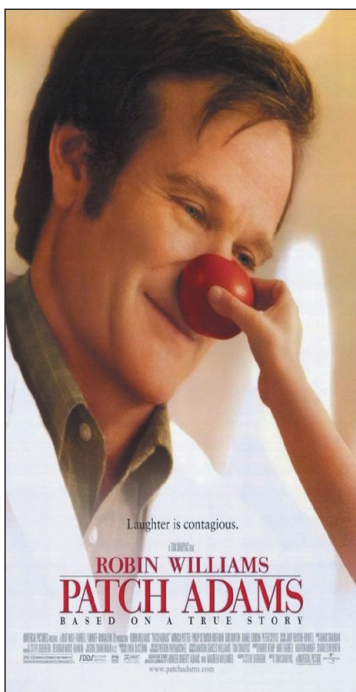
Vikrant Massey began his career in television with *Kahaan Hoon Main* and gained recognition through roles in popular shows like *Dharam Veer*, *Balika Vadhu*, and *Baba Aiso Varr Dhoondo*. He transitioned to Bollywood with his debut in *Lootera* and further showcased his talent in films like *Chhapaak* and *Haseen Dillruba*. Vikrant has also impressed audiences with his performances in web series such as *Mirzapur* and *Criminal Justice*.



Vendredi 17 janvier - 21.05



Samedi 18 janvier - 20.10



Dimanche 19 decembre - 15.20



Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 17 janvier

MBC 1

- 07.30 Serial: Under Pressure
- 08.35 Les Riches Pleurent Aussi
- 09.30 Film: Joe Kidd
- 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: The Boat
- 17.30 Your Love Is My Fortune
- 18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
- 19.00 Serial: Doree
- 19.20 Sayings Radha Krishna
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.10 Film: King Kong
- 23.09 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 00.02 Le Journal
- 00.37 Your Love Is My Fortune
- 01.03 Serial: The Bionic Woman
- 01.52 Serial: Le Chemin Du Destin

MBC 2

- 06.00 Rodrig: Decouvertes
- 06.43 Local: En Forme
- 07.39 Rodrig: Sa Lavi-La
- 10.42 Rodrig: J'ai Faim
- 12.00 Rodrig: Decouvertes
- 13.37 Rodrig: Nu Lakwizin
- 14.34 Local: J'ai Faim
- 15.05 Local: Metie
- 16.06 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 16.57 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 18.00 Seiral: Passion And Power
- 18.30 Les Riches Pleurent
- 19.25 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir...
- 19.42 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
- 20.57 Local: Dance Fever
- 22.53 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 23.00 Journal Kreol Rediffusion
- 23.20 Local: Meshiagare...
- 23.33 Rodrig Otantik
- 23.59 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
- 00.14 Rodrig Prog: Zenn Aktif

MBC 3

- 07.00 Mag: Tenali Rama
- 07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 08.09 Local: Amrit Vani
- 10.00 Serial: Agniphera
- 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Naqab
- Starring: Rishi Kapoor, Farha Naaz
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.30 Serial: Jai Jai Shiv Shankar
- 16.00 Serial: Ishaaron Ishaaron
- 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 18.30 Local: Mati Ke Mol
- 19.00 Local: Gammat With Basant Soopaul & Beekram...
- 20.00 Local: Khel Khiladi
- 20.30 Serial: Vidrohi
- 21.00 Film: Dewar Bina Angana Na Shobhe Raja
- 23.25 Serial: Mere Sai
- 00.14 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya

Cine 12

- 07.00 Mag: Border Crossing
- 08.32 Doc: Indonesia
- 10.10 Doc: Operations 1005
- 11.27 Mag: Shift
- 12.24 Mag: Tomorrow Today
- 12.50 Mothers In The Boardroom
- 13.33 Doc: Indonesia
- 14.30 Doc: Beneath The Waves
- 15.00 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids
- 15.33 Story Time With Mr. Booksy
- 15.53 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.17 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.02 D.Anime: The Avatars
- 17.30 Mag: Eco India
- 18.00 Doc: A Gold Rush In Space
- 18.42 Mag: Music Maestra
- 19.28 Mag: Vous Et Vous
- 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
- 20.50 Doc: Tsunamis
- 21.31 Doc: So Long, Superstores?
- 22.18 Doc: The Cyber Mobbing...

Bollywood TV

- 14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
- 14.55 Serial: Doree
- 15.30 Film: Looter
- Cast: Ranveer Singh, Sonakshi Sinha
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Kundali Bhagya
- 19.01 Udaariyaan
- 19.32 Dharam Patni
- 20.01 Mithai
- 20.31 Shrimad Ramayan
- 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: Looter
- Cast: Ranveer Singh, Sonakshi Sinha

samedi 18 janvier

- 03.21 Mag: Red Carpet
- 04.24 Serial: Under Pressure
- 06.25 Tele: All The Flowers
- 06.55 Serial: Hooten & The Lady
- 08.30 Serial: Blue Lights
- 09.30 Serial: Under Pressure
- 10.10 Serial: Wanted
- 10.45 Serial: F.B.I
- 11.30 Tele: All The Flowers
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.25 Serial: Seal Team
- 13.18 Tele: Barbarita...
- 15.00 Live: Samachar
- 15.20 Radha Krishna
- 15.30 Film: The Holiday
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.31 Enter: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa...
- 19.30 Le Journal
- 20.10 Film: Patch Adams
- 22.05 Serial: Wanted
- 22.39 Tele: Sublime Mensonge

- 06.00 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
- 06.31 Local: Aktiv
- 07.05 Local: Itinerer Rodrig
- 08.16 Rodrig: Ala Nou Vini
- 09.35 Rodrig Otantik
- 10.02 Local: Dance Fever
- 11.35 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir
- 12.29 La Journee Sous Le Regard...
- 12.52 Local: Couleur Marine
- 14.01 Rodrig: Ala Nou Vini
- 15.41 Local: Retrovizer
- 16.01 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 18.05 Serial: L'Homme Qui Valait Trois Millions
- 19.00 Journal Kreol
- 19.30 Rodrig: Kot Nou
- 20.06 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 22.03 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 22.51 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 22.59 Journal Kreol Rediffusion
- 23.20 Local: Lavi Zoli An XXL

- 05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
- 06.59 Mag: Eco India
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
- 08.30 Local: Abhyas Yog
- 10.27 Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2
- 12.00 Serial: Dikri Vahalno Dariyo
- 12.30 Local: Mati Ke Mol
- 12.55 Gammat With Basant...
- 14.00 Serial: Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
- 14.30 Mag: Talaash
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.22 Film: Tell Me O Khuda
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Saying Radha Krishna
- 19.15 Local: Sankranti Ke Jalsa
- 21.00 Film: Kachche Dhaage
- Cast: Ajay Devgn, Saif Ali Khan, Manisha Koirala...
- 23.25 Local: Puranya Pakwan
- 23.51 Duniya Mein Iss Saptah
- 00.46 Bollyworld Express
- 01.38 Film: Kachche Dhaage

- 06.00 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 06.26 D.Anime: Drole De Bocal
- 09.05 D.Anime: Adventure In Duck...
- 09.34 D.Anime: Tut! Tut! Cory...
- 09.45 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 2
- 10.39 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover
- 13.00 Doc: So Long, Superstores?
- 14.34 Doc: Punk Mum
- 15.00 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids
- 15.53 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.17 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 16.40 D.Anime: Miraculous...
- 17.01 D.Anime: The Avatars
- 18.05 Mag: In Good Shape
- 18.30 Doc: Top Div Sites
- 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
- 20.50 Mag: Skuld
- 21.40 Film: American Dreamer
- 23.22 Doc: Naples Under The...
- 00.05 Doc: From Refugee To Mayor
- 01.13 Doc: Top Dive Sites
- 01.39 Mag: Eco Africa

- 08.00 Dharam Patni
- 09.49 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 10.02 Mithai
- 12.00 Udaariyaan
- 14.10 Anupamaa
- 16.00 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 17.36 Vidrohi
- 18.30 Film: Bewafaa
- With: Anil Kapoor, Akshay Kumar, Kareena Kapoor



- 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein
- 21.26 Porus

dimanche 19 janvier

- 02.15 Film: American Dreamer
- 04.48 Serial: Gout De L'amour
- 05.29 Tele: All The Flowers
- 05.56 Film: Patch Adams
- 07.51 Serial: Pearson
- 08.35 Film: The Holiday
- 10.45 Serial: F.B.I
- 11.30 Tele: All The Flowers
- 12.00 Le Journal
- 12.35 Film: Joe Kidd
- 14.10 Serial: Zoo
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.20 Film: The Quake
- 17.10 Tele: L'empire Du Mensonge
- 18.31 Serial: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa L'il...
- 19.30 Le Journal Television
- 20.10 Film: A Mouthful Of Air
- 21.50 Serial: Pearson
- 22.34 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
- 23.30 Le Journal
- 00.05 Tele: Sublime Mensonge

- 06.00 Rodrig Prog: Coin Zen
- 07.09 Local: Saver Kiltirel
- 09.05 Local: Les Petits Genies
- 09.38 Rodrig: Spektak Tradisionel
- 10.18 Rodrig Prog: Klip Seleksion
- 12.00 Rodrig: Coin Zen
- 12.50 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 13.55 Songs For The Season 2024
- 15.58 Local: En Forme
- 16.40 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 15.58 Local: En Forme
- 16.12 Local: Saver Kiltirel
- 16.38 Local: Tous Egaux
- 16.55 Local: Aktiv
- 19.00 Journal Kreol
- 19.24 Local: Info En Langue...
- 20.19 Local: Les Klips
- 21.16 Upclose And Personal
- 22.13 Rodrigues: Nu Lakwizin
- 22.51 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 23.00 Journal Kreol Rediffusion

- 06.59 Mag: Kuch Lamhe Fursat
- 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
- 08.33 Local: Puranya Pakwan
- 08.56 Sankranti Ke Jalsa
- 10.30 Serial: Mahabharat
- 12.00 Film: Kaali Topi Lal Rumaal
- 15.00 Samachar
- 15.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 17.00 Bollyworld Express
- 18.00 Live: Samachar
- 18.30 Planet Bollywood
- 19.00 Local: Tohar Rashi
- 20.31 Serial: Porus
- 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein
- 21.30 Naagin
- 22.12 Serial: Bahubali
- 22.56 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
- 00.52 Planet Bollywood
- 01.19 Tohar Rashi
- 03.30 Local: Yaadein
- 04.52 Film: Kaali Topi Lal Rumaal

- 08.22 D.Anime: Patamuse
- 09.25 D.Anime: Caillou
- 09.33 D.Anime: Tut! Tut! Cory...
- 09.49 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 2
- 10.00 Serial: Intelligence
- 10.44 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover
- 11.00 Mag: In Good Shape
- 11.26 Doc: Top Dive Sites
- 13.07 Mag: Skuld
- 15.00 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids
- 15.26 D.Anime: Story Time With...
- 15.40 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob
- 15.54 D.Anime: Les Schtroumpfs
- 16.40 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.03 D.Anime: The Avatars
- 18.00 Doc: Ageless Gardens
- 18.30 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 19.30 Mag: Arts Unveiled
- 20.00 Tele: All The Flowers
- 20.30 Live: News
- 21.40 Film: The Stylist

- 00.00 Mithai
- 01.45 Udaariyaan
- 03.45 Anupamaa
- 05.49 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani
- 07.41 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: Main Tera Hero
- Cast: Varun Dhawan, Ileana D'Cruz
- 21.00 Mahabharat
- 22.05 Dance India Dance Super Moms
- 22.55 Rajaa Betaa
- 00.39 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey

lundi 20 janvier

- 03.00 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 03.53 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent
- 05.06 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
- 06.06 Serial: The Queen Of Flow
- 07.20 Serial: Supercopier
- 08.37 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent
- 09.35 Film: Jurassic World
- 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: A Mouthful Of Air
- 17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
- 18.00 Samachar
- 18.46 Serial: Shiv Shakti
- 19.07 Serial: Doree
- 20.10 Serial: Hawaii
- 20.55 Serial: Blue Lights
- 21.50 Tele: Terra Nostra
- 22.45 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune

- 08.10 Local: Clin D'Oeil
- 09.27 Upclose And Personal
- 10.20 Local: Rodrig: Komanter
- 12.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
- 12.57 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 13.15 Rodrig: Sa Lavi La
- 14.01 Local: Clin D'oeil
- 16.08 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 16.13 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
- 19.34 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel
- 20.24 Local: Metie
- 20.45 Local: Tous Egaux
- 21.06 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
- 21.53 Les Grandes Lignes
- 22.23 Lir - Ekri Kreol Morisien
- 22.54 La Journee Sous Le Regard
- 23.20 Local: Itinerer Moris

- 07.00 Tenali Rama
- 07.12 Gadget Guru Ganesha
- 08.00 Local: Planet Bollywood
- 08.41 Local: Hunarbaaz
- 09.40 Bahubali
- 10.20 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
- 11.30 Radha Krishna
- 12.00 Film: Mangal Pandey
- 15.21 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 15.30 Jai Jai Shiv Shankar
- 15.50 Kundali Bhagya
- 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
- 18.30 Radha Krishna
- 18.57 Local: Ayush
- 19.30 Excerpts From Shiv Abhishek - Mount Ory
- 20.34 Serial: Ramayan
- 21.07 Film: Jhumroo
- With: Arun Govil, Ram Deepika Chikhalia, Sita Sunil Lahri...
- 23.20 Serial: Mere Sai

- 06.25 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 07.18 Mag: Arts Unveiled
- 07.48 Doc: Collecting, Storing...
- 09.13 Doc: The Last Town
- 10.42 Doc: Gracia, Messi
- 11.23 Doc: Ageless Gardens
- 11.45 Doc: Brilliant Corners
- 12.37 Mag: Arts Unveiled
- 13.49 Doc: Holding Up The Sky
- 15.00 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids
- 15.27 Serial: Story Time With Ms...
- 15.41 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob
- 16.02 D.Anime: The New Adventure
- 16.16 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
- 17.02 D.Anime: The Avatars
- 17.30 Doc: Cool & Clever
- 18.00 Mag: Eco Africa
- 18.30 Mag: The 77 Percent
- 19.30 Mag: In Good Shape
- 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
- 21.05 Film: In Full Bloom

- 14.25 Radha Mohan
- 14.51 Doree
- 15.25 Film: Jungle
- Starring: Vidyut Jammwal, Pooja Sawant, Asha Bhat



- 18.00 Samachar
- 18.31 Kundali Bhagya
- 19.00 Udaariyaan
- 19.30 Dharam Patni
- 20.05 Mithai
- 20.33 Shrimad Ramayan
- 21.09 Anupamaa
- 21.32 Mere Sai



Mardi 21 janvier - 20.10



Mercredi 22 janvier - 20.45



Jeudi 23 janvier - 21.20



Programme TV



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
mardi 21 janvier	05.23 Tele: Gout De L'Amour 06.01 Serial: The Queen Of Flow 08.15 Tele: All The Flowers 09.30 Film: Florence Foster Jenkins 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: Autumn Stables 17.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 18.00 Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 19.30 Le Journal 20.10 Film: Trois Hommes Et Un Bebe 21.50 Tele: Terra Nostra 22.38 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 23.10 Mag: Red Carpet 23.30 Le Journal	07.33 Local: Saver Kiltirel 10.27 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 11.20 Rodrig Mo Pei 12.00 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard 13.10 Local: Tous Egaux 14.35 Lir - Ekir Kreol Morisien 15.02 Rodrig: Zenn Aktif 16.49 Local: Aktiv 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.24 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.04 Journal Kreol 19.24 Le Magazine De L'Emploi 20.04 Local: Encouner 20.27 Local: Priorite Sante 21.00 Local: Paroles Agricoles 21.30 Local: Le Mag 22.25 Local: Mots En Ecrits 22.55 La Journee Sous Le Regard	07.00 Serial: Tenali Rama 07.23 Serial: Lambu G Tingu G 08.00 Local: Ved Ki Shikshahein 10.07 Kundali Bhagya 11.41 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.01 Film: Natak (1975) 15.21 Other Serial: Radha Krishna 15.30 Serial: Sajjanwa Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Local: Tark Vitark 20.30 Serial: Ramayan 21.00 Film: Joroo Ka Ghulam Cast: Nanda Karnataki, Rajesh Khanna, Sharad Kumar 23.27 Serial: Mere Sai 00.15 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 00.47 Local: Tark Vitark 01.14 Darshan Spirituality And Youth With Sri Dinesh....	07.00 Mag: Africa 54 07.23 Mag: In Good Shape 07.49 Mag: Travel 08.04 Mag: Tomorrow Today 11.07 Mag: Eco Africa 12.27 Mag: In Good Shape 13.00 Mag: Travel 14.06 Doc: Marvel 14.57 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids 15.35 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob 15.50 D.Anime: The New Adventure 16.14 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 17.30 Mag: Eco Africa 18.00 Mag: REV 18.30 Mag: Healthy Living 18.45 Mag: Red Carpet 19.30 Mag: Global US 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers 20.50 Tele: Seref Meselesi 22.18 Mag: Business Africa 22.43 Mag: Euromaxx	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.55 Doree 15.30 Film: Shaadi Teri Bajayenge Hum Band Cast: Rahul Bagga, Radha Bhatt, Shrashti Maheshwari 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.03 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dharam Patni 20.06 Mithai 20.29 Shrimad Ramayan 21.07 Anupama 21.29 Mere Sai 22.04 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 22.34 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 23.04 Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Shaadi Teri Bajayenge Hum Band 02.00 Kundali Bhagya 02.30 Udaariyaan
mercredi 22 janvier	06.02 Serial: The Queen Of Flow 07.28 Serial: Airwolf 08.22 Tele: All The Flowers 09.35 Film: Trois Hommes Et Un Bebe 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 Tele: Seref Meselesi 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 20.45 Film: Aliens, Le Retour Cast: Sigourney Weaver, Michael Biehn, Lance Henriksen	07.08 Local: En Forme 08.20 Local: Mots Et Ecrits 09.30 Le Mag 11.00 Local: Music Tour 12.00 Local: Rodrig - Plat Du Chef 12.15 Local: Son Ladan Mem 12.30 Local: Encounter 13.30 Local: Paroles Agricoles 14.30 Local: Profil 15.35 Local: Glwar Dantan 16.05 Local: Mots et Ecrits 16.40 Local: En Forme 17.00 Local: Music Tour 18.00 Tele: Passion And Power 18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.30 Local: Rodrig Spor 20.00 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 20.30 Local: Toc Toc Doc 20.41 Local: En Forme 21.05 Local: Agir Ensemble 21.35 Local: Les Kliips 22.35 Local: Profil	07.00 Tenali Rama 07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesha 07.33 Lambu G Tingu G 08.00 Local: Tark Vitark 10.00 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Maa Beta Cast: Manoj Kumar, Ameeta, Vijay Dutt 15.00 Samachar 15.20 Serial: Radha Krishna 15.33 Jai Jai Shiv Shankar 15.53 Radha Mohan 17.30 Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Sayings Radha Krishna 19.00 Local: Kala 20.30 Talaash 21.00 Film: Tu Diya Aur Bati Hum 23.35 Serial: Mere Sai 00.27 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya	07.00 Mag: Made In Germany 08.34 Mag: Business Africa 10.22 Doc: Princess For A Day 11.35 Mag: Healthy Living 12.35 Mag: Global US 13.00 Doc: Bhutan 14.40 Mag: Rev Special 14.57 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids 15.29 D.Anime: Story Time With... 15.54 D.Anime: The New Adventure 16.16 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 17.01 D.Anime: The Avatars 17.30 Mag: Rev 18.00 Mag: Afrimaxx 18.30 Mag: Music Maestra 18.45 Mag: Planet A 19.00 Student Support Programme 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers 20.30 Live: News 20.50 Doc: Hallig Life In The Climate 21.31 Doc: Arctic Blue	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.50 Doree 15.30 Doc: Socha Na Tha 18.00 Live: Samachar 19.01 Kundali Bhagya 19.20 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dharam Patni 20.00 Mithai 20.31 Shrimad Ramayan 21.00 Anupamaa 21.28 Mere Sai 22.05 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 22.20 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 22.51 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Socha Na Tha 02.00 Kundali Bhagya 02.30 Udaariyaan 03.00 Dharam Patni 03.30 Mithai 04.00 Shrimad Ramayan
jeudi 23 janvier	06.03 Tele: The Queen Of Flow 07.56 Serial: All The Flowers 08.22 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent 09.15 Film: Aliens, Le Retour 11.33 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Wildflower 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 13.45 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.15 Serial: L'Homme Qui Valait Trois Millions 15.25 Film: The Quake 17.18 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.56 Serial: Doree 19.30 Le Journal 20.10 Film: Suraj Pe Mangal Bhari Stars: Manoj Bajpayee, Diljit Dosanjh, Fatima Sana Shaikh 22.23 Tele: Wildflower 23.08 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	06.50 Local: Aktiv 07.59 Rodrig: Kot Nou 08.45 Local: Proze Dime 10.45 Rodrig Prog: A Nou Kwi 12.00 Rodrig Spor 12.26 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 13.05 Local: Toc Toc Doc 14.05 25e Edison Festival Kreol 15.25 Local: Dance Fever 17.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard 17.10 Local: Le Mag 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.31 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.00 Journal Kreol 19.30 Rodrig Prog: Decouvertes 20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.30 Local: Ti Zistwar Zanfan 20.45 Local: Evasion 21.05 Local: Le Mag 21.55 Local: Mots & Ecrits 22.23 Local: Proze Dime	07.00 Tenali Rama 08.00 Local: Yatra 10.00 Serial: Radha Mohan 12.00 Film: Mome Ki Gudiya Cast: Ratan Chopra, Tanuja Samarth, Premnath Malhotra 15.00 Samachar 15.30 Sajjanwa Bairi Ho Gaile... 15.56 Agniphera 17.30 Radha Krishna 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Sayings Radha Krishna 18.41 Local: Bhajan Sandhya 20.35 Serial: Ramayan 21.01 Serial: Shiv Shakti 21.30 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.57 Mag: Dharam Yatra 22.20 Mere Sai 23.18 Wagle Ki Duniya 23.40 Local: Amrit Vani	07.00 Mag: Arts Unveiled 07.47 Doc: Hallig Life In The... 08.24 Doc: Arctic Blue 10.00 Doc: A Devious Disease 10.45 Doc: The Last Shelter 11.35 Mag: Afrimaxx 12.05 Mag: Music Maestra 13.00 Doc: Suddenly, I Was Deaf 13.28 Doc: Hallig Life In The... 15.00 D.Anime: Ubongo Kids 15.25 D.Anime: Patamuse 15.34 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob 15.47 The New Adventures Of... 16.09 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 16.55 D.Anime: The Avatars 18.00 Mag: Eco India 18.30 Mag: Shift 18.42 Mag: Carnet De Sante 19.00 Student Support Programme 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers 21.20 Film: Bent	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.00 Doree 15.25 Film: Barah Aana Stars: Naseeruddin Shah, Vijay Raaz, Arjun Mathur 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.30 Kundali Bhagya 19.00 Udaariyaan 19.30 Dharam Patni 20.00 Mithai 20.24 Shrimad Ramayan 21.02 Anupamaa 21.34 Mere Sai 22.01 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se 22.29 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 23.05 Rajaa Betaa 23.31 Film: Barah Aana Stars: Naseeruddin Shah, Vijay Raaz, Arjun Mathur



Jeudi 23 janvier - 15.30

Stars: Naseeruddin Shah, Vijay Raaz, Arjun Mathur



Jeudi 23 janvier - 20.21

Stars: Manoj Bajpayee, Diljit Dosanjh, Fatima Sana Shaikh



Trump, Truss and the Age of Vaulting Ambition

● Cont. from page 9

He eventually proves her wrong, but (spoiler alert) with deadly consequences for them both. The troubling thought is that Lady Macbeth probably has half a point when she describes intense, obsessive commitment – “illness”, in her terms – as a vital ingredient for success. We all know of powerful figures whose “insane” drive, as with Trump, has taken them far.

Many people – especially, perhaps, British people – struggle with ambition, not being sure what the correct level or intensity of ambition is right for them. The judgment call we need to be able to make in our own lives is recognising what is really important to us, and knowing when we have achieved enough. It is not so much a case of being “careful what you wish for”. Rather, we need to be thoughtful about what we wish for.

The case of Liz Truss

A British political figure who would have benefited from brushing up her Shakespeare is Liz Truss.

The former Conservative cabinet minister and (very briefly) prime minister might have recognised that reckless ambition for the top job could lead to disaster. In her case it seems that sheer force of will and ambition were not matched by ability and judgment. This was a dangerous imbalance.

Such is her (continuing) belief that she has been badly wronged by critics and opponents that she has instructed lawyers to send the prime minister, Keir Starmer, a cease and desist letter, requiring him to stop accusing Truss of crashing the economy. The letter says that these statements from Starmer are “false and defamatory”.

Unfortunately, given that she sacked the top civil servant at the Treasury and did not (in a departure from usual convention) seek an assessment of her budget plans from the Office for Budget Responsibility, any claim of innocence regarding the economic turmoil of October 2022 and the subsequent market reaction would not be terribly convincing.

It is hard to be certain what Truss’s motives are. Does she genuinely believe she has been wronged, and is the innocent victim of the mysterious “deep state”? Or is she merely trying to curry favour with the online Trumpian world, using one of the president-elect’s favourite tactics (ridiculous but distracting legal action) to keep her name in the news? Either way, her ambition still burns brightly and without any apparent sense of shame.

Perhaps Truss is a (very) extreme example of what my colleague, Professor Laura Empson, calls “insecure overachievers” – professionals who strive to achieve more but sometimes at considerable cost to themselves and others. Leaders need to be alert to this phenomenon (although some bosses will be insecure overachievers themselves). Good leaders avoid creating a culture where “insecure overachievement” is demanded as a universal behavioural norm.

Ambitious for the right sort of ambition

“When ambition ends, happiness begins,” said Thomas Merton, a 20th century Catholic monk. That may seem like an extreme view. Without healthy ambition nothing good can happen. Businesses cannot improve, and society will not function better. It is the harmful excesses of behaviour which we need to avoid.

We can and we should aim to achieve more. Our natural gifts and hard-won abilities should be displayed. As Michelangelo is supposed to have said: “The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short,



Liz Truss: ‘Sheer force of will and ambition were not matched by ability and judgment. This was a dangerous imbalance’. Pic - BBC

“Many people – especially, perhaps, British people – struggle with ambition, not being sure what the correct level or intensity of ambition is right for them. The judgment call we need to be able to make in our own lives is recognising what is really important to us, and knowing when we have achieved enough. It is not so much a case of being “careful what you wish for”. Rather, we need to be thoughtful about what we wish for...”

but in setting our aim too low and achieving our mark.”

We look at the extremely ambitious, sometimes with admiration, and sometimes with horror. But the best sort of ambition seems to involve working for the common good and is not about the selfish pursuit of individual glory. As far as Trump is concerned, well, we have seen this movie before. He divides audiences, to put it mildly. Forgive me if I don’t see him as a positive role model.

Soap and Detergent Workers Union

Affiliated to CTSP - Rose Hill
Tel – 454 9919 / 5 947 3201 – Fax 465 2677
Annual General Meeting

Members are kindly invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the **Soap and Detergent Workers Union** to be held on 17 February 2025 at 07.00 am at the Soap and Allied Industries Ltd, Welfare Block, Bell Village.

AGENDA:

1. Reading & approval of minutes of proceedings of last AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. President’s report
4. Treasurer’s report
5. Election of Committee Members for the year 2025.
6. Any other business

Members wishing to stand for the Executive Committee for the year 2025 must send their applications to the Secretary no later than 4:00 PM on 10 February 2025.

Motions, if any, must also be submitted by the same deadline.

Rehaz Toonah
President

Tree of Knowledge

Labouring Under a Label



Many of us find ourselves labouring under a label that has a negative connotation, but this can be reversed.

We live in a culture that uses labels as a means of understanding the world and the people living in it. As a result, many of us find ourselves labouring under labels that have a negative connotation. Unless we can find a way to see the good in such labels, we may feel burdened by an idea of ourselves that is not accurate. It is important to remember that almost nothing in this world is all good or all bad. Most everything is a complex mixture of gifts and challenges. In addition, different cultures revere certain qualities over others, but this does not mean that certain qualities are inherently good or bad. For example, a culture that elevates outgoing behaviour will label an introvert in a negative way, calling them antisocial. In truth, the ability to spend time alone is one that great artists, mystics, and visionaries share. Owning the positive side of this label can lead us deeper into our vision and fertile imaginations.

When we look into the lives of many of the great people in history, we find that they had quirks and eccentricities that earned them less-than-ideal labels from the societies in which they lived. Many famous artists and musicians were considered to be isolated loners or disruptive troublemakers, sometimes both, yet these people altered history and contributed an original vision or advances in our understanding of the universe to the world. If we can remember this as we examine ourselves and the labels people use to describe us, we can find that there is a bright side to any characterization.

If you have been labelled, remember that all you have to do to see the positive side is to turn the label around. For example, you may be called overly emotional, and the fact that you are perceived this way may make you feel out of control. But also notice the gifts of being able to feel and express your emotions, even in a world that doesn’t always encourage that. You might begin to see yourself as brave and open-hearted. You also may see that there are certain paths and professions in which this is a necessary ability. As you turn your label around, the light of your true nature shines to guide you on your way.