

MAURITIUS TIMES

• *Where Slavery is there Liberty cannot be; and where Liberty is there Slavery cannot be. -- Charles Sumner*

Interview with Sada Reddi, Historian: Reflections on the New Government and Mauritius' Future

“There may be delays, but the electorate is watching closely and expects tangible results”

‘We all want wrongdoers to be held accountable, we all want to see those responsible for Kistnen’s murder brought to justice...’

- **‘The Bhadain-Valayden and Bodha group could pose a formidable challenge to the Labour Party-MMM, especially if they fail to deliver or build a new, younger leadership’**



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Air Mauritius and Our SOEs

Air Mauritius, once the pride of the island, is still battling for survival, weighed down by years of mismanagement, political interference, and mounting financial pressures. The airline has undergone numerous crises, including a near collapse during the 2019-2020 period when it was forced into receivership and injected with billions in public funds to prevent liquidation. During Covid it rushed to sell for petty cash brand new aircraft it had just received and refurbished ones while hundreds of experienced staff were laid off and more billions were injected in the new holding company that swallowed it up.

Despite these substantial financial injections, the company has failed to regain its former glory. Instead, it has continued to face challenges such as delayed flights, cancellations, poor customer service, and questionable management decisions. With the appointment of its next (thirteenth) CEO in just over two decades, it's evident that Air Mauritius' leadership struggles continue to impact the airline's future.

The current situation at Air Mauritius is a direct reflection of the company's turbulent past, where political interference and inconsistent management practices have consistently undermined its operations. Political appointments to the company's board and top management have often resulted in decisions driven by political considerations rather than the strategic needs of the airline and its operational effectiveness. This has left the airline vulnerable to poor management practices, which have taken a toll on its finances and reputation.

In the latest development, Dass Thomas, who had been initially considered for the role of CEO, was passed over before he even had the chance to settle into the position. Instead, André Viljoen, a former CEO, is set to return to lead the company. The constant turnover of CEOs, with twelve different leaders since 2000, speaks volumes about the instability at the top of the company. The lack of continuity in leadership has made it difficult for Air Mauritius to implement long-term strategies that could help stabilize and grow the airline.

One of the critical factors in Air Mauritius' continued struggles is the open skies policy and the competition that has emerged as a result. While the policy has brought benefits in terms of increased access to international routes, it has also put tremendous pressure on the national carrier to stay competitive. The arrival of new airlines and the expansion of regional competitors has forced Air Mauritius to rethink its business model and service offerings. Yet, it would seem the airline has been slow to adapt to these changes. While political interference has stifled the company's ability to make swift and appropriate decisions, Air Mauritius has nonetheless attempted to maintain its position in the market, relying on its reputation for quality service as a primary differentiator.



Historically, the quality of service offered by Air Mauritius has been a major factor in sustaining its position in the competitive airline industry. However, in recent years, trade unionists and insiders suggest that the airline's increasing customer dissatisfaction has been due to poor maintenance, the unavailability of spare parts, and the lack of qualified personnel. The public has become increasingly vocal about these issues, and with every flight delay and cancellation, the airline's reputation has taken a further hit. The frustration of passengers, many of whom have missed connections or appointments, is understandable. Air Mauritius, once considered the gold standard of service in the region, now finds itself struggling to meet even the most basic expectations.

Beyond the operational challenges, Air Mauritius is also grappling with deeper financial issues. The airline's management has repeatedly failed to make sound financial decisions, such as engaging in hedging contracts beyond their means for fuel oil during a period of significant volatility in international oil prices. These decisions placed the company in a precarious financial position. Coupled with this, the new regime's rush to order new aircraft set the stage for its eventual insolvency in 2020. To stave off liquidation, the then government injected more than Rs 25 billion into the airline, a move that ultimately raised questions about the governance of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Mauritius.

The fate of Air Mauritius highlights the broader issue of accountability and transparency in the management of SOEs in Mauritius. Despite receiving significant public funds, Air Mauritius, like other major state-owned entities, has been largely immune from scrutiny. The lack of oversight and accountability has allowed mismanagement to persist, with little consequence for those responsible. This issue is not unique to Air Mauritius, as other state-owned enterprises have also faced similar challenges related to governance and oversight during the last ten years despite boasting our top public servants at

their Board levels.

The absence of effective checks and balances at their Board levels has allowed political appointees and senior officials to act with relative impunity, often making decisions that benefit their own interests or those of their political masters, rather than the long-term viability of the companies they oversee. One example of this is the questionable decision to dispose of Air Mauritius' new Airbus planes and lease older aircraft at unfavourable terms. These decisions have not only hurt the airline's operations but have also damaged its public image and credibility. The lack of transparency surrounding these decisions, as well as the failure to provide adequate explanations to the public, has only served to fuel suspicions of corruption and mismanagement.

To address these issues, it is imperative that the government takes a more proactive approach in ensuring the good governance of its state-owned enterprises. One potential solution is the establishment of a permanent Select Committee, chaired by an independent figure, to oversee the operations of SOEs like Air Mauritius. This committee would be empowered to monitor the performance of these companies, ensure compliance with good governance practices, and hold management accountable for any deviations from established protocols. Additionally, the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act could provide greater transparency and allow the public to scrutinize the activities of state-owned enterprises more effectively.

Ultimately, the future of Air Mauritius depends on the ability of the government and management to put the airline back on track. This will require a clear focus on rational decision-making, free from political interference, and a commitment to professional management. Air Mauritius is more than just a company; it is a vital link between Mauritius and the rest of the world, and its continued success is integral to the island's economic future. By ensuring that the airline is managed with the expertise and dedication it deserves, Air Mauritius can once again become a symbol of national pride, capable of weathering the challenges of a competitive and ever-changing global aviation industry.

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The “Rupture” Agenda

Rewriting the Rules: Will the LP-MMM-ND-ReA government deliver meaningful electoral reform?

M.K.

One can well understand that it is nearly impossible to satisfy all interest groups in a multi-racial and complex society like Mauritius, particularly when it comes to electoral reform. The question of reform has been raised time and again, yet meaningful change has remained elusive. The newly elected Labour Party-MMM-ND-ReA alliance, elected on a platform of “rupture” with past dysfunctions, now faces the challenge of delivering on its various promises and also implementing long-overdue reforms that will ensure a fairer and more

Breaking the Cycle of Inefficiencies

When politicians attempt to change electoral rules, interpretations of their motives vary. Opposition parties often critique such moves, attributing ulterior motives. However, the fundamental issue at hand is the pressing need to dismantle the structural inequities of a system that risks perpetuating itself. Without genuine reform, politics in Mauritius will continue to be plagued by the same fragilities that hinder good governance and stifle capable leaders from emerging. It is not in the country’s best interest to maintain a political renewal system that results in third- or fourth-best solutions when we should be striving for first-rate governance led by true reformers.

A comprehensive electoral reform must address critical issues such as political party financing, the skewed delimitation of constituencies that undermines the principle of one-person-one-vote, and the democratisation of political parties. However, achieving these reforms requires strong political will — something that has historically been lacking. The recent proposals from the new government regarding political financing will serve as an early test of their commitment to real change.

Political Financing: The Root of Many Ills

Past attempts to introduce legislation on political financing, such as in 2019, were widely criticized for favouring established parties and failing to ensure true transparency. That proposal notably exempted donations made to Trusts, thereby placing political parties on an unequal footing. Moreover, the legislation would have formalized corporate influence on Parliament, essentially allowing powerful business entities to determine public policies through strategic financial contributions to political campaigns.

It is an open secret that the private sector plays a significant role in financing electoral campaigns. The correlation between political donations and government endorsements of business projects is undeniable. As economist K. Parapen pointed out in an earlier interview, major economic decisions — from the privatization of power production to the allocation of Smart City development permits — raise serious questions about the influence of financial contributions on political decision-making. Tax exemptions for certain private pro-



“The extravagant spending observed during political campaigns further exposes the necessity of regulating campaign financing. The recent elections demonstrated yet again that significant funds flow into political machinery from undisclosed sources, allowing politicians to remain unaccountable for the true cost of their campaigns. A potential solution to this problem would be the implementation of state-funded political campaigns. By legislating that all political financing comes from public funds, spending limits can be enforced, ensuring a level playing field for all candidates. While this would require public investment, the long-term benefit would be a governance model free from corporate interests...”

jects, the granting of major public works contracts to specific firms, and the controversial approval of environmental impact assessments for hotel developments in ecologically sensitive areas further underscore this troubling trend.

A glaring example of government largesse was highlighted by Mrinal Roy regarding the Victoria Terminal project. Built by a private sector consortium under the Metro Express scheme, it benefits from significant tax exemptions, including an eight-year corporate tax holiday, VAT exemptions on capital goods, and Customs Duty waivers. Even more concerning is that this project was granted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) exemption despite being located on reclaimed land. Such preferential treatment raises valid concerns about the motivations behind these decisions and the extent to which political financing influences them.

Legislating for Transparency and Accountability

Albie Sachs, in his 2001/02 report on Constitutional and Electoral Reform, noted the dangers of corporate influence in politics, arguing that many democratic countries have outright banned corporate political patronage. He cited the testimony of a former minister who recommended banning political contributions by corporate executives using shareholder funds, noting: “They never give something for nothing.” This statement remains relevant today, emphasizing the need for stronger legislative measures to eliminate undue private sector influence on governance.

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campaigns further exposes the necessity of regulating campaign financing. The recent elections demonstrated yet again that significant funds flow into political machinery from undisclosed sources, allowing politicians to remain unaccountable for the true cost of their campaigns. A potential solution to this problem would be the implementation of state-funded political campaigns. By legislating that all political financing comes from public funds, spending limits can be enforced, ensuring a level playing field for all candidates. While this would require public investment, the long-term benefit would be a governance model free from corporate interests, enabling policies to be designed in the national interest rather than in favour of a privileged few.

A Call for Meaningful Change

The status quo benefits those who control party finances, and past administrations have shown little inclination to disrupt this advantageous arrangement. However, the newly elected government, which campaigned on a platform of “rupture,” has the opportunity to break away from these dysfunctional practices. The people of Mauritius expect the Labour Party-MMM-ND-ReA alliance to move beyond rhetoric and enact substantial reforms that will restore public trust in the

political system.

The government must prioritize a holistic approach to electoral reform, addressing:

The democratization of political parties – Ensuring internal party processes are transparent and inclusive.

Fair constituency delimitation – Eliminating discrepancies in constituency sizes to uphold the principle of one-person-one-vote.

Political financing regulation – Banning corporate donations to political parties and mandating state-funded campaigns with clear spending limits.

Transparent governance mechanisms – Strengthening institutions that oversee political financing and election processes to ensure accountability.

Mauritians have placed their faith in this new government to lead with integrity and to break free from the patterns of favouritism and opacity that have plagued previous administrations. It is now up to the Labour Party-MMM-ND-ReA alliance to prove that their commitment to “rupture” is not just a campaign slogan but a genuine roadmap for lasting reform.

The success of this administration will not be measured by isolated policy announcements but by its willingness to challenge entrenched systems of power and to implement long-overdue changes. By prioritizing transparency, accountability, and fairness in the political process, the new government can usher in a new era of governance that truly serves the people of Mauritius.

High-Profile Appointments and Transparency: Are We Doing Enough?

Ensuring a fair and merit-based selection process should be a priority to strengthen governance and public trust

Transparency and accountability in governance are fundamental to upholding public trust and preventing corruption. Around the world, many countries have implemented laws requiring individuals in strategic or high-profile positions to disclose their assets, liabilities, and financial interests. These measures aim to deter misconduct, mitigate conflicts of interest, and reinforce institutional integrity. However, the effectiveness of such regulations varies across jurisdictions.

In this week's Q&A column, LEX explores Mauritius' approach to asset declaration and how it measures up against international best practices in enforcement and transparency. This issue is particularly relevant now, as the newly elected government moves forward with appointing high-ranking officials, advisers, and CEOs of state-owned enterprises. Given past experiences under different governments, it is crucial to learn from previous shortcomings and ensure that the same failures are not repeated.

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*** In many countries, laws, regulations, or guidelines require individuals appointed to strategic or high-profile positions to declare their assets, liabilities, and interests, such as financial holdings, business affiliations, and property ownership, to promote transparency, uphold integrity, and prevent conflicts of interest. How does Mauritius compare to other nations in terms of enforcing this?**

According to a study conducted by the OECD, a large number of countries around the world have introduced systems of asset declaration for public officials in order to prevent or combat corruption. Many believe that asset declarations can be a powerful tool in this regard; however, the impact of such systems on actual levels of corruption is not well known.

The aim, however, is to increase transparency and citizen trust in public administration by disclosing information about the assets of politicians and civil servants, showing that they have nothing to hide. This also helps heads of public institutions prevent conflicts of interest among their employees and resolve such situations when they arise, in order to promote integrity within institutions.

“Institutions responsible for receiving declarations, such as the FCC or the MRA, have the necessary means to verify their accuracy. However, the extent of their auditing and review processes, particularly for high-profile appointees, depends on the legal framework and oversight mechanisms in place. Independent bodies, if established, would play a crucial role in ensuring transparency and accountability in asset declarations...”

It also monitors wealth variations of politicians and civil servants to dissuade them from misconduct and protect them from false accusations, as well as clarifies the full scope of illicit enrichment or other illegal activity by providing additional evidence.

This philosophy is reflected in the Mauritius Declaration of Assets Act.

*** Are there specific laws or guidelines mandating interest disclosures for key appointments in the public sector?**

The Declaration of Assets is governed by the Declaration of Assets Act, which was enacted in 2018 and came into effect in 2019. The Act follows more or less what obtains in other major democratic European countries. It requires public officers, including top civil servants, to make comprehensive declarations of their assets and those of their spouse and children. Judicial officers are excluded. Employees of the Financial Crimes Commission (FCC) must declare to the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), while other officers make their declarations to the FCC (formerly ICAC).

*** How effective are these declarations of interests in practice?**

The law is effective in the sense that it covers a wide range of persons, including those in State Enterprises, who are compelled to make a declaration.

Furthermore, the definition of assets is extensive and includes a wide spectrum of assets. These are:

- (a) money in any currency, in local and foreign banks;
- (b) cash in hand exceeding one million rupees; in any



Pic - Sunday Observer

“One of the most corruption-prone areas remains the awarding of contracts. Officials involved in these decisions, including the ministers overseeing them, must declare their assets. However, if an official has already accepted a bribe and had time to conceal the illicit funds, uncovering hidden assets becomes significantly more difficult. Strengthening legal provisions in this area could enhance oversight and enforcement, ensuring greater transparency and accountability...”

- (c) currency accepted as legal tender in any country;
- (d) securities, including stocks, bonds, treasury bills, or other units held in Mauritius or abroad;
- (e) shares or any interest in a company, société, or partnership;
- (f) any item of jewellery, precious stone, or metal, or watch, exceeding 500,000 rupees in value;
- (g) any freehold or leasehold immovable property – (i) registered in Mauritius or abroad; (ii) which, at the time of declaration, has been purchased but is still subject to registration in Mauritius or abroad; motor vehicles, boats, ships or aircrafts;
- (g) assets held by a person for and on behalf of the declarant in the declarant's capacity as ultimate beneficiary;

*** Are the current interest disclosure regulations and practices aligned with international best practices, or do gaps remain in ensuring full transparency and accountability?**

Our law is aligned with international practices. The law defines who must declare, including:

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High-Profile Appointments and Transparency: Are We Doing Enough?



Pic - dreamstime.com

The law currently requires a broad range of individuals to declare their assets, including Members of the National Assembly and municipal councillors. One of the most corruption-prone areas remains the awarding of contracts. Officials involved in these decisions, including the ministers overseeing them, must declare their assets. However, if an official has already accepted a bribe and had time to conceal the illicit funds, uncovering hidden assets becomes significantly more difficult. Strengthening legal provisions in this area could enhance oversight and enforcement, ensuring greater transparency and accountability.

Judicial officers are excluded from the scope of the law, though the rationale for their exemption remains unclear. Requiring judicial officers to submit regular asset declarations would not only enhance transparency but also strengthen public confidence in the judiciary.

Until thorough investigations and prosecutions are conducted, it remains difficult to assess which other institutions should be brought under the law's purview and what additional measures should be implemented to reinforce accountability.

*** Should the interest disclosures of high-profile appointees be made accessible to the public? If so, how?**

The FCC is responsible for receiving, disclosing, and monitoring the declaration of assets and liabilities of high public officials to detect and investigate corruption, money laundering, and unexplained wealth.

Under ICAC, asset disclosures — excluding bank account details — could be made public. A similar provision may apply under the FCC.

*** What penalties or consequences are in place for failure to disclose or for providing false declarations?**

Any person who fails to make a declaration or wilfully makes a false or incomplete disclosure commits an offense and, upon conviction, is liable to a heavy fine.

While no prosecutions have occurred under the Declaration of Assets Act, the law remains broad enough to penalize those who contravene it.

*** Politicians often prefer appointing individuals they trust or with whom they share a personal rapport to key positions in the civil service, government bodies, and state-owned enterprises. This pattern has been evident across successive governments. What's your take on that?**

While this practice is not uncommon in politics, it raises concerns about meritocracy, transparency, and the overall efficiency of public institutions. Such appointments, if based on loyalty rather than competence, can undermine public confidence and hinder the effective functioning of these entities.

It is crucial to learn from past controversies and failures related to transparency in high-profile appointments. Ensuring a fair and merit-based selection process should be a priority to strengthen governance and public trust.

“According to a study conducted by the OECD, a large number of countries around the world have introduced systems of asset declaration for public officials in order to prevent or combat corruption. Many believe that asset declarations can be a powerful tool in this regard; however, the impact of such systems on actual levels of corruption is not well known. The aim, however, is to increase transparency and citizen trust in public administration by disclosing information about the assets of politicians and civil servants, showing that they have nothing to hide...”

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- (a) every member of the National Assembly, including the Speaker of the National Assembly, and every Minister;
- (b) every member of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, including the Chairperson of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, and every Commissioner;
- (c) every Councillor of a Municipal City Council, Municipal Town Council or District Council;
- (d) every Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of a Municipal City Council, Municipal Town Council or District Council, as the case may be;
- (e) every senior public officer;
- (f) every Chief Executive of a Municipal City Council, Municipal Town Council or District Council, and every officer of such Councils drawing salary in a scale the initial point of which is equivalent to the initial point of the salary scale of Deputy Permanent Secretary and above;
- (g) every Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of State-owned enterprises and statutory bodies, and every officer of such enterprises and statutory bodies drawing salary in a scale the initial point of

- (h) every adviser and officer employed on a contractual basis in Ministries, drawing salary in a scale the initial point of which is equivalent to the initial point of the salary scale of Deputy Permanent Secretary and above; and
- (i) such other persons as may be prescribed.

Declarants are required to update their declarations whenever there is a change in the status of their assets.

*** What mechanisms exist to verify the accuracy and completeness of declared interests? Are there independent bodies tasked with auditing and reviewing the interests of high-profile appointees?**

Institutions responsible for receiving declarations, such as the FCC or the MRA, have the necessary means to verify their accuracy. However, the extent of their auditing and review processes, particularly for high-profile appointees, depends on the legal framework and oversight mechanisms in place. Independent bodies, if established, would play a crucial role in ensuring transparency and accountability in asset declarations.

*** Are there specific roles or institutions that require stricter interest disclosure requirements?**



Anil Madan

Israel and Gaza after the Ceasefire. What's next?

The UN reports that 90% of Gaza residents have been displaced and forced to move repeatedly since the October 7 attack by Hamas in Israel. As well, some 60% of buildings including schools and hospitals, and 92% of homes have been damaged or destroyed.

Almost exactly one year before the end of President Biden's term as President, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken made clear to the Israeli government that Palestinians must be allowed to return to their homes in Gaza "as soon as conditions allow" and must not be displaced from the strip, the top US diplomat said Tuesday.

Just one week after his inauguration, President Donald Trump revealed that he broached the idea with Jordan's King Abdullah II, about moving more than one million Palestinians from Gaza to Jordan and Egypt. Trump's idea apparently involves constructing temporary housing for the Gazans, though he acknowledged it could become long-term. He disclosed that he asked the King to take in more Palestinians. "I said to him that I'd love you to take on more, because I'm looking at the whole Gaza Strip right now and it's a mess, it's a real mess."

At first blush, it might appear that Trump is suggesting that Gazans need to be housed temporarily while their homes are rebuilt for their eventual return. But this is not entirely clear. Trump, adverted to the centuries-long conflicts in the region, and added: "You're talking about a million and a half people, and we just clean out that whole thing. I don't know, something has to happen, but it's literally a demolition site right now. Almost everything's demolished, and people are dying there, so I'd rather get involved with some of the Arab nations and build housing in a different location where I think they could maybe live in peace for a change."

The idea that Gazans might live in peace away from Gaza certainly suggests an end to any notion of a two-state solution that might include Gaza.

Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi dismissed the idea, affirming Jordan's commitment to "ensuring that Palestinians remain on their land." He emphasized, "Our refusal of displacement is a steadfast position that will not change. Jordan is for Jordanians, and Palestine is for Palestinians."

Likewise, Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs rejected displacement of Palestinians through forced eviction. The ministry's statement went on to state: "Such actions threaten stability, risk

extending the conflict further in the region, and undermine opportunities for peace and coexistence."

Notably, Ayman Safadi reiterated Jordan's "firm and unchanging" position favouring a two-state solution and the Egyptian Foreign Ministry appealed to the international community to support efforts toward achieving a two-state solution.

So, what exactly is Trump up to? It is difficult to draw firm conclusions, but CNN reports that an Israeli analyst cited Israeli officials and reported Trump's move was "not a slip of the tongue but part of a much broader move than it seems, coordinated with Israel." CNN claims that a second source confirmed the reporting but gave no further details.

The logistics of reconstructing Gaza are formidable. Last week, I exchanged messages with an engineer about the Herculean task of reconstructing the thousands of buildings that were destroyed by wildfires in Los Angeles. In one message he wrote that there are no landfills near Malibu big enough to handle the debris that has to be removed. He expects that the Army Corps of Engineers will be handling most of the debris removal when a suitable landfill can be found. He estimates that rebuilding will take 15-30 years.

Think about the logistics involved in rebuilding Gaza. There is, of course, the problem of debris removal. But what of the almost 2 million people who live there? Will they be forced to live in a construction site or does Trump's idea of temporary housing have merit. Or will "temporary" housing just become a permanent condition, with Gazans displaced to Jordan and Egypt? Will Israel be content to leave the reconstruction unsupervised, or will it want to ensure that new tunnels and hidden missile launch sites, factories, and ammunition depots are not being constructed? And if Hamas does not cooperate, will Israel allow reconstruction at all?

Putting all that aside, there is the question of how building materials will be shipped to Gaza. Who is going to organize and coordinate the supply chains? It appears that with the fall of its Syrian proxies, Iran is now out of the picture in terms of its ability to send supplies to Gaza.

Who will fund the reconstruction of Gaza? It seems inevitable that the Arab nations will make demands on Israel to restore what it has destroyed. The rich oil nations, UAE and Saudi Arabia may be willing to fund reconstruction, but surely,



Pic - bbc.com

“The ceasefire agreements that Israel has reached with both Hezbollah and Hamas, are cause for hope, but experience tells us that peace, even between Arabs, in the Middle East is often fragile. Peace between Arabs and Israel is always fraught. There are forces, on both sides, that would rather see hostilities continue than peace to break out. Arabs, notably Hamas and Hezbollah oppose peace with Israel for strategic and ideological reasons and the same is true of certain Israeli factions...”

they will insist on a two-state solution. Will their influence help rein in Hamas?

There are more questions than answers.

Not to be overlooked are questions arising from the October 7 attack by Hamas and Israel's ongoing and future response. The ceasefire agreements that Israel has reached with both Hezbollah and Hamas, are cause for hope, but experience tells us that peace, even between Arabs, in the Middle East is often fragile. Peace between Arabs and Israel is always fraught.

There are forces, on both sides, that would rather see hostilities continue than peace to break out. Arabs, notably Hamas and Hezbollah oppose peace with Israel for strategic and ideological reasons and the same is true of certain Israeli factions. The Iranian Ayatollahs have an ideological hatred of Israel and whereas they might have been somewhat defanged, it is not clear how much their ability to fund proxies has been diminished.

Some of Prime Minister Netanyahu's right-wing coalition partners have resolutely opposed the cease-fire. Some have threatened to sabotage the coalition if the war is not restarted. If Trump is serious about his insistence that he will not tolerate an ongoing war, Netanyahu has a dilemma. And his political survival may

depend on how he responds.

Trump's grandiose plans seem to include peace among Israel and the Arabs and a multibillion-dollar defense and technology deal among Israel, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. This, in turn, should put enormous pressure on Iran and perhaps allow Trump to reach a deal with the Ayatollahs on its nuclear program.

Those plans, of course, conflict with pressure from the Israeli public for the government's focus to be unrelentingly on the release of all the remaining hostages.

It has been reported that Trump put pressure on Netanyahu to agree on the cease fire deal. Writing in *Foreign Affairs*, Amos Harel notes that Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Yoel Smotrich - both Israeli far-right politicians - have said they would rejoin the coalition if Netanyahu halts the deal's implementation and resumes the war.

There is widespread concern among Gazans that even a "temporary" absence from Gaza will become permanent and they will lose their right to return. Both Ben-Gvir and Smotrich have openly supported the migration of Gazan residents to other countries. Last month, Smotrich told Israeli media that the removal of around 90% of Palestinians from the area would make Israel safer.

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Sada Reddi, Historian: Reflections on the New Government and Mauritius' Future

“There may be delays, but the electorate is watching closely and expects tangible results”

‘We all want wrongdoers to be held accountable, we all want to see those responsible for Kistnen’s murder brought to justice...’

The political landscape in Mauritius took a significant turn in November 2024 with the installation of a new government, following an overwhelming electoral victory. The nation now faces the challenge of transitioning from election promises to tangible actions. To shed light on these developments, we spoke with Sada Reddi, former academic at the University of Mauritius and historian with deep insights into the country’s political evolution and societal dynamics.

In this candid conversation, Sada Reddi offers his perspective on the government’s first steps, the public’s expectations for accountability, and the obstacles it faces in terms of resources and leadership. He also touches on the growing impatience among the electorate, the complexities of governance, and the long-term sustainability of the current political alliance. He also reflects on the broader implications of the election results and the ongoing debates surrounding key national issues such as the Chagos dispute.

Mauritius Times: A new government took office in November 2024, with 24 ministers appointed to lead the country’s affairs. Do you see tangible signs of positive change taking root, or does it remain largely rhetorical?

Sada Reddi: One cannot say that the government’s programme is merely rhetorical. It is based on the electoral manifesto presented before the elections, and most of its measures, as outlined in the Government Programme presented by the President of the Republic, have been well thought out and agreed upon consensually by the four parties that constitute the government.

“We all want wrongdoers to be held accountable, we all want to see those responsible for Kistnen’s murder brought to justice, and we seek greater clarity on cases of alleged suicides. However, thorough investigations must be completed, and admissible evidence must be gathered before any legal action can be taken. Unfortunately, this process takes time for various reasons — but not due to any lack of determination or goodwill on the government’s part. There may be delays, but the electorate is watching closely...”

From what I gather from the media, the programme has been well received by the public. As many observers have noted, what matters most is its implementation. The government has already fulfilled some promises regarding salary payments, despite the widely acknowledged challenging conditions.

Moreover, ministers and junior ministers have been actively assessing the situation they inherited and have taken immediate measures to address urgent problems. This demonstrates the determination of the Prime Minister and his government.

* There is, nevertheless, a growing sense of impatience among the public to witness tangible changes and, more importantly, to see those believed to have been involved in wrongdoings — such as fraud, corruption, or even murder — held accountable. While the police and other investigative bodies undoubtedly have a heavy workload, the public understandably seeks assurance that the promise of “rupture” will not remain an empty word, and that justice will be served in a timely

I agree. Everyone is eager to see immediate changes following these historic elections. This impatience is both legitimate and natural, but people also understand that the government must follow due processes, abide by legal principles, and ensure that the rule of law prevails. Additionally, every government must also grapple with bureaucratic challenges. As the Government Programme highlights, the workload ahead is immense, especially given that the resources of the state were not just severely mismanaged but, one could say, outright plundered by the previous regime, affecting almost every major institution.

A simple example is the Rs 200 million budget deficit at the University of Mauritius, a situation mirrored across many debt-ridden institutions. We all want wrongdoers to be held accountable, we all want to see those responsible for Kistnen’s murder brought to justice, and we seek greater clarity on cases of alleged suicides. However, thorough investigations must be completed, and admissible evidence must be gathered before any legal action can be taken. Unfortunately, this process takes time for various reasons — but not due to any lack of determination or goodwill on the government’s part.

There may be delays, but the electorate is watching



closely and expects tangible results, as you rightly point out.

* The 24 ministers will be supported by junior ministers and civil service cadres. Additionally, some senior and retired civil servants, as well as private sector professionals, have been inducted. What does this signify to you? Do you see a strong determination to deliver, backed by the right expertise and resources? Or does it also reflect a failure of past governments to establish a system that nurtures and promotes the best talent organically within the administration?

There are 24 ministers, supported by junior ministers and civil servants.

● Cont. on page 8

'The Bhadain-Valayden and Bodha group could pose a formidable challenge to the Labour Party-MMM, especially if they fail to deliver or build a new, younger leadership'

● Cont. from page 7

I wish I had the time to examine the Government Programme in depth to determine how many of the various measures fall under each ministry. Some measures are specific, while others are more general in nature, requiring additional work or even a blueprint for implementation. Certain laws were already drafted during the 2005-2010 period and now simply need to be updated.

As for civil servants, their quality and competence vary, which inevitably impacts implementation. At the PMO, we have seen the government rely on retired civil servants who have the experience and ability to deliver. Similarly, just as ministers play a crucial role, younger and more dynamic civil servants should also be given opportunities. While experience is valuable, the dynamism, innovation, and fresh perspectives of younger officials are equally essential in tackling the many challenges ahead.

*** The Government Programme 2025-2029 is undoubtedly comprehensive in terms of the change the current administration seeks to bring to the country. However, it may be too ambitious given the financial and human resources available. What are your thoughts on this?**

Financial resources are undeniably crucial. This is why the Government's priority is to revive the economy, combat inflation, reduce debt, and stimulate economic growth — because without robust economic growth, little can be achieved. Efficiency and innovation must therefore be at the core of all ministries and institutions. Additionally, the wastage of scarce resources, which the Director of Audit regularly highlights, should be tackled at its source.

As for human resources, there is no shortage of young and dynamic professionals in various fields, but many of them remain unknown to the government. Before turning to the diaspora, we should first tap into the talent that already exists locally. However, identifying these professionals is a challenge, as they are often outside the limited circles of ministers and government officers.

The Government should take an approach similar to the Minister of Integration, who has invited expressions of interest — not for immediate appointments, but to create a register of professionals across different fields. When expertise is needed, candidates can then go through the proper appointment process. This is one of the most effective ways to maximize existing resources while also encouraging professionals from the diaspora to apply for positions where their expertise is required.

*** Viewed from a distance, do you think the apparent chemistry at the top leadership level of the government alliance is sustainable in the long term — specifically, over the course of a five-year mandate? Could it also be a do-or-die situation for the leadership of both the Ptr and MMM?**

It is not merely wishful thinking; I believe there are several objective and subjective factors that will contribute to a durable collaboration between the Prime Minister and his Deputy.

At their age, they have acquired the experience and maturity needed to tackle any thorny issues that may arise. People do change with age; they are no longer the same individuals they were 20 or 30 years ago. They no longer harbour the same ambitions as in their younger years, and at this stage of their lives, they are likely focused on leaving



“I do not see the MSM government returning to power for a simple reason: its disastrous governance, totalitarian and sectarian tendencies, and policies have been etched in the minds of the people as the antithesis of democracy and liberty. The MSM government consciously led the country down a path marked by unprecedented corruption and nepotism...”

“For me, the 2024 elections were unprecedented — not because of the results (as we've seen 60-zero results in the past), but due to the role and determination of the electorate to safeguard their liberty and democratic rights. Even as early as November 2023, just a year before the elections, some supporters of the MSM present at a wedding in the constituency of Rivière du Rempart privately expressed their opposition to a third mandate for the government, even though they did not make it a public declaration...”

a richer legacy for the country than they have in the past.

The formation of L'Alliance du Changement itself was a significant step in halting the country's downward spiral, and the changes to come will help further consolidate our democracy and liberty. This represents their greatest achievement in the 21st century, and I do not foresee them wrecking this legacy. Despite their flaws, they remain steadfast in their belief in democracy and liberty.

*** The preceding MSM-led government alliance, which secured the support of at least 27% of the electorate, remains cornered, likely waiting for the right moment to strike. Do you think they will be able to rise again and become a force to be reckoned with, or will the true opposition emerge from the Bhadain-Valayden-Bodha group?**

I do not see the MSM government returning to power for a simple reason: its disastrous governance, totalitarian and sectarian tendencies, and policies have been etched in the minds of the people as the antithesis of democracy and liberty. The MSM government consciously led the country down a path marked by unprecedented corruption and nepotism.

Take, for example, Constituency No. 8. While there has been notable infrastructure development, and people have benefited from various allowances under the MSM government, the MSM misjudged the people's deep attachment to liberty, democracy, and freedom from fear. This is why Pravind Jugnauth was defeated, with his share of votes dropping from 21,308 in 2019 to 17,582 in 2024. In contrast, the leading candidate from L'Alliance du Changement scored 25,821 votes.

Of the 8 percent increase in votes for L'Alliance du Changement compared to their combined votes in 2019, around 5 percent may reflect a swing from the MSM alliance, while approximately 3 percent could represent new and young voters. This trend is expected to grow in the coming years, as the memory of the MSM's totalitarian practices becomes increasingly unappealing to future electorates.

The Bhadain-Valayden and Bodha group could pose a formidable challenge to the Mauritius Labour Party-MMM, especially if the Labour Party and MMM fail to deliver or build a new, younger leadership. However, the influence of this group is currently limited to a few urban constituencies, and it has yet to demonstrate the willingness or capacity to break out of its comfort zone.

*** We have not heard, to date — three months later — any analysis from the defeated parties in the last elections, nor any reflection on the lessons that the political parties, including the victors, should be drawing from the election results. What is your take on what happened in the lead-up to the outcome on November 10, 2024?**

It may be a difficult exercise for the defeated alliance, as in a totalitarian party, no one would blame the leadership or its inner circle, who must shoulder all the responsibility. As a result, the best course of action might be to avoid any analysis altogether. On the side of L'Alliance du Changement, they may not feel the need to conduct such an exercise, given their victory. They might leave it to political scientists or historians to analyze the events that led to the 2024 elections.

● Cont. on page 9

'For the last 300 years, we have lived peacefully in a plural society...

... it is the government's responsibility to ensure that this continues in our society today and in the future'



“Undoubtedly, the blunders of the MSM were numerous and had alienated all sections of the population. The sensational “Moustass Leaks” merely confirmed what everyone had suspected. But, even without the leaks, which paralyzed the MSM alliance, victory for change had become inevitable — unless there was electoral fraud, which many people feared might occur. The fear of fraud during the election, which I would compare — within limits — to the “Grande Peur” of the French Revolution, explains the memorable revolutionary fervour displayed by activists on the eve of the elections...”

● Cont. from page 8

For me, the 2024 elections were unprecedented — not because of the results (as we've seen 60-zero results in the past), but due to the role and determination of the electorate to safeguard their liberty and democratic rights. Even as early as November 2023, just a year before the elections, some supporters of the MSM present at a wedding in the constituency of Rivière du Rempart privately expressed their opposition to a third mandate for the government, even though they did not make it a public declaration.

Similarly, in the South, a prospective candidate who had not yet secured a ticket organized a small dinner with potential agents. He was surprised to see a large crowd turning up in support of that party. He assured me at the time that if this level of mobilization was sustained, there would be a 60-zero result. Of course, I remained sceptical, despite everyone I met — high or low — saying they would vote against the government.

With the mobilization of L'Alliance du Changement, from Mare d'Albert to Rivière du Rempart, it became increasingly clear that the days of the MSM were numbered. Even those dissatisfied with the organization of the Labour Party-MMM alliance for the elections concluded that, despite the apparent disorganisation, victory would still come by default.

Undoubtedly, the blunders of the MSM were numerous and had alienated all sections of the population. The sensational “Moustass Leaks” merely confirmed what everyone had suspected. But, even without the leaks, which paralyzed the MSM alliance, victory for change had become inevitable — unless there was electoral fraud, which many people feared might occur.

The fear of fraud during the election, which I would compare — within limits — to the “Grande Peur” of the French Revolution, explains the memorable revolutionary fervour displayed by activists on the eve of the elections. Around 2 am, I watched live on Facebook as activists gathered outside a state college in Vacoas, suspecting irregularities within the school. A similar situation unfolded in Chemin Grenier, where activists mistakenly believed ballot papers were being transported in a blue car, prompting them to go to the police station to file a declaration.

At Beau Vallon, just minutes later, a similar event occurred. Activists managed to enter the school, inspect every room, check the red car belonging to the Ministry of Education, and even tried to get the security officer involved so they could inspect the premises further. At Duperre Government School in Mahébourg, an unprecedented scene took place when activists, in a show of commitment, insisted on body checks of the Mobile Force members, who complied politely before entering the school.

The level of commitment shown by the people to defend their rights during this general election is unprecedented and reflects the national mood to bring about a change of government through the ballot box.

*** On the other hand, there may be a need for succession planning within the mainstream political parties, excluding the MSM, which is likely to remain a family-run party. Recently, there has been some activity within the MMM with Joanna Bérenger gradually rising to the top; what about the Labour Party (PTTr)?**

All the main parties must plan for the emergence of their future leaders if they want to remain relevant. As the electorate

continues to evolve, they will want to see new personalities rise through democratic processes, which is not yet the case. If parties fail to democratise at all levels, they risk being sidelined for a long time. The Labour Party must not only elect its leader democratically but also democratise its structure, allowing for the infusion of new blood at all levels.

Regarding the structure of the Labour Party, very few people are familiar with its constitution, how to become a member, and the criteria for acceptance at different levels. If these procedures do not exist, the constitution must be reviewed. Most importantly, the grassroots organisation must reflect the electorate in all constituencies. Only through the democratisation of the party can a dynamic leadership and party be ensured.

A possible model could be the British Labour Party model, where members and candidates are screened by local party organisations rather than the informal and ad-hoc structures that seem to operate currently.

*** The November 2024 election was called after the then-government reached a deal with the United Kingdom to resolve the Chagos dispute. We know what has happened since. Have we missed out on what, in the current geopolitical circumstances — especially in this part of the world — might be considered a reasonable opportunity, even if it did not come with full recognition of our sovereignty over the Archipelago?**

Although I am no diplomat and have limited knowledge of diplomacy, I would refrain from answering a question on Chagos as this could be perceived as reflecting public opinion in Mauritius, especially since negotiations are still ongoing. In principle, diplomacy and negotiations should be carried out discreetly and not on public platforms. Any public declaration can impact the negotiation process, as it can be used as a

“For the last three hundred years, we have lived peacefully in a plural society, where intercultural relations have always existed at the grassroots level. We have learned to appreciate and respect our differences, and it is the government's responsibility to ensure that this continues in our society today and in the future...”



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bargaining tool.

I can only say that the government, supported by its team of lawyers and diplomats, has already submitted the terms and conditions under which it seeks to reach an agreement. It has been emphasized that this issue is not solely a matter of financial compensation but is about safeguarding our national interests for generations to come.

*** What positive changes do you expect a 60-0 government elected with an absolute majority mandate to bring about in the lives of the people and the governance of the country?**

My expectation is the same as that of every Mauritian: to have a decent standard of living and to live in a peaceful environment, with justice and social equity for all. We want a country where the rule of law is respected and where all our human rights — both old and new — are equally upheld. We are determined to rid the country of drugs, and we expect the government to allocate more resources to protect our population.

People should be provided with the means to engage in healthy pastimes and to practise more sports, starting from primary school. This is why I would have liked to see the revival of primary school football tournaments, as we had during my school days.

For the last three hundred years, we have lived peacefully in a plural society, where intercultural relations have always existed at the grassroots level. We have learned to appreciate and respect our differences, and it is the government's responsibility to ensure that this continues in our society today and in the future.



Dr R Neerunjun Gopee

World Religion Day

The Hindu Perspective & Interfaith Dialogue

The duty of critical intelligence, to be exercised alongside the right to belief...

Practically every day some World Day is celebrated, to highlight issues pertinent to the theme under consideration. It's only several days after World Religion Day on January 15 that I became aware of it. In this connection I thought that it would be appropriate to present the Hindu perspective, starting with a brief overview of Hinduism.

Hinduism is a voyage of discovery of the Self through a process of self-control that leads to self-mastery, the outcome of which is a noble individual who ennoble society. This is achieved by following principles and practices based on the Vedanta, which is the essence of the Upanishads, themselves the 'philosophical portions' of the four sacred scriptures known as the Vedas. A little more elaborately:

1. Their inward search led our ancient sages, the *rishis*, to the discovery that there is a Universal Truth or Ultimate Reality ('God') underlying existence. This Truth is reflected by our minds which itself is expressed through our body, by means of our organs of sense and of action.
2. The purpose of life is to discover this Truth by our own efforts through approaches known as *yoga*.
3. They are: devotion and worship (*bhakti yoga*), selfless action (*karma yoga*) and mental control (*raja yoga*) which culminate in the Higher Knowledge or *jnana yoga* that frees us from our enslavement or bondage to material things.
4. During this quest, in harmonizing our thoughts, words and actions we gradually obtain mastery of the Self, resulting in peace within which allows us to live in harmony with all that is, from the living to the non-living.

Peace: state, process and outcome

Generally, peace is defined in negative terms as the absence of war – hence the well-known saying: 'if you want peace, prepare for war.' The Vedic equivalent of peace, *Shanti*, has a deeper meaning. It refers to a positive state of being in which one has transcended wants (not needs), fear and suffering. For a more pragmatic version of this idea, I would paraphrase the World Health Organisation's definition of health, viz., peace is not only the absence of war, but it is a complete state of physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being.' This, of course, implies providing and securing the external conditions for such well-being.

However, it must be clear that we must begin by *desiring* to be in such a state, what I would call the initial condition for peace. And since desires arise in the mind, it is there that we must first direct our efforts, conditioning it as one would for a commitment to peace.

This is in fact what the Vedas, which probably contain the earliest recorded spiritual yearnings of mankind, carry as a leitmotiv in the many hymns of the Rig-Veda in particular. Not only that, the Vedas insist that "*Vaade Vaade Jayate Tattva Bodhah*" – it is only through discussion and dialogue that the truth, i.e. the subtle essence of existence can emerge and be apprehended. So there is an invitation to thrash things out in the open, without any barriers whatsoever. A spirit of give and take is encouraged, and this idea is captured in this other *kavya* or saying from the *Rig-Veda*, "*Ā no bhadrāḥ kratavo yantu viśvataḥ*" – 'Let noble thoughts come to us from everywhere.'

For the *rishis*, this was no mere lip-service; it was an acknowledgement of the Oneness of mankind for, they proclaimed, "*Udāra-caritānām tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*" – 'For right-minded people the world is one family.'

When put into practice, these three core ideas – Truth through discussion, the universality of noble thoughts and the world as One — can only lead to *Shanti*, and thus *Om Shanti* is present constantly in all Vedic prayers. One never prays for oneself alone but for the welfare of one and all. The following prayer, which is chanted towards the end of every Hindu spiritual function, expresses this fundamental conviction very clearly:

*Sarve bhavantu sukhinah / sarve santu niramayah
Sarve bhadrani pasyantu / ma kascit dukha
bhag bhavet*

'May all be happy. May all be free from disease. May all enjoy prosperity. May none experience sorrow.'

Interfaith dialogue

Faith implies belief or a system of belief without proof or evidence, according to the dictionary definition. But in Hinduism systematic enquiry that proceeds by observation and analysis of existence – starting with the visible world of changing phenomena – is a critical requirement so as to obtain evidence that must accord with human reason, knowledge and experience. And such evidence must be demonstrable *here, in this life* and not in a hypothetical *hereafter*.

This must be clearly understood and appreciated if we are to have a genuine interfaith dialogue because, if we are to make amalgams such as stating that all religions proclaim the self-same eternal verities, then we shall be fooling ourselves and this may lead us to irreconcilable if not conflictual positionings. It was Swami Agehananda Bharati, an Austrian who was born into the Catholic faith and subsequently converted, who warned that a dangerous implication of such an approach was that, should inconsistencies be brought to light in the fundamentals of the world's religions, then interfaith existence would crumble down.

It is well known that the findings of science are overturning many long-held religious beliefs. As their foundations get shaken, faiths tend to become even more radicalized into their belief systems, leading to a conflict between the proven, verifiable findings of science and the unverifiable beliefs of religion.

For Hinduism, though, scientific discoveries and knowledge do not pose a problem. That is why Hinduism is not so much a faith as a view or *darshana* of life, the end of which, liberation from the bondage of material life, is achievable by a self-validating process of progression to the Ultimate

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Pic - Hinduism Today

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Reality based on facts and phenomena within the reach and control of the individual by the use of both rational and non-rational faculties.

It becomes important therefore to point out that, of the three possible categories of faith-based subjects namely doctrine, core beliefs and principles, and customs and practices derived from values for living, the first two are less open to dialogue than the last one, on which we should concentrate because the possibility of consensus is greater there.

This leads me to a set of propositions from a Vedic perspective, on which I think there can be general agreement, and which can be the foundation for the emergence of genuine peace:

1. We are all the children of One Divine Creator, who has wished us to be like the multiple and different flowers in a beautiful garden, the one he has created for us, planet Earth.
2. The same spark of divinity is reflected in each one of us and we ought to accept and respect each other as we are.
3. We must respect human life from the womb to the tomb.
4. We must show respect for and avoid cruelty to all living things.
5. We must respect and protect nature of which we too are a part, and respect Mother Earth who nourishes us.
6. We must try to understand and respect each other's beliefs and practices without trying to impose or enforce any particular one — but at the same time make the necessary accommodation that will allow us to co-exist in peace.
7. We must promote dialogue and understanding at all times by keeping channels of communication at all levels open.

Om Shanti

OpenAI researcher quits, claims labs are taking 'very risky gamble'

OpenAI safety researcher Steven Adler announced on an X post that he left the company last year after four years of a "wild ride." Adler criticised the race toward AGI, adding that the AI labs are taking a "very risky gamble" and that he is "terrified by the pace of AI development."

"Some personal news: After four years working on safety across OpenAI, I left in mid-November. Honestly I'm pretty terrified by the pace of AI development these days. When I think about where I'll raise a future family, or how much to save for retirement, I can't help but wonder: Will humanity even make it to that point?" reports Hindustan Times.

In the follow-up posts, he added that the "AGI race is a very risky gamble, with huge downside." He posted that no labs in the world have a



OpenAI has been embroiled in several public scandals that appeared to stem from internal disagreements over AI safety, including one incident in late 2023 that saw CEO Sam Altman (above) briefly removed from the company. Pic - Yahoo

solution to AI alignment, adding that it seems like people are stuck in a "really bad equilibrium."

"Even if a lab truly wants to develop AGI responsibly, others can still cut corners to catch up, maybe disastrously. And this pushes all to speed up. I

hope labs can be candid about real safety regs needed to stop this," he continued.

What's next for Steven Adler?

"As for what's next, I'm enjoying a break for a bit, but I'm curious: what do you see as the most important & neglected ideas in AI safety/policy? I'm especially excited re: control methods, scheming detection, and safety cases," he posted on X.

Currently, DeepSeek dominates the AI news cycle. The Chinese firm's AI chatbot shocked the world, revealing that it was created at a fraction of the cost of its competitors.

AI experts and the tech world were taken by surprise by this AI chatbot, which was supposedly designed without massive hardware and infrastructure resources used by companies like OpenAI.

U.N. Human Rights chief seeks \$500 million funding for 2025 amid global challenges



The office's appeal for \$50 billion for this year was only 43% fulfilled as of last month. Pic - Shutterstock

The U.N. human rights chief appealed on Thursday for \$500 million in funding for 2025 to support its work such as investigating human rights abuses around the world from Syria to Sudan, warning that lives hang in the balance.

The U.N. human rights office has been grappling with chronic funding shortages that some worry could be exacerbated by cuts to U.S. foreign aid by President Donald Trump. The annual appeal is for funds beyond the allocated U.N. funds from member states' fees, which make up just a

fraction of the office's needs.

"In 2025, we expect no let-up in major challenges to human rights," High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk told member states in a speech at the U.N. in Geneva, reports Reuters.

He said any shortfall would mean more people remain in illegal detention; that governments are allowed to continue with discriminatory policies; violations may go undocumented; and human rights defenders could lose protection.

"In short, lives are at stake," he said.

The human rights office gets about 5% of the regular U.N. budget, but the majority of its funding comes voluntarily in response to its annual appeal announced on Thursday.

Western states give the most, with the United States donating \$35 million last year or about 15% of the total received in 2024, followed by the European Commission, U.N. data showed. Still, the office received only about half of the \$500 million it sought last year.

Ruby Dhalla, in race to become Canada PM, once starred in Hindi movie

Ruby Dhalla, an India-origin leader of Canada's Liberal Party, recently announced her bid to participate in the party's leadership race and potentially become the next prime minister of Canada. Born in Canada to an immigrant family from Punjab, Dhalla was first elected to the House of Commons in 2004 - shortly after the release of her first and only movie.

Ruby Dhalla, 50, starred in a Bollywood-style, Hindi-language movie over two decades ago. The film, titled *Kyon? KisLiye?* is a Bollywood-inspired Hindi-language film that was shot on a low budget. Directed by Vinod Talwar, the movie is loosely based on the real-life murder trial of Hamilton serial killer Sukhwinder

Dhillon, reports Hindustan Times.

The controversy

Ruby Dhalla starred as a police officer in the film, which was released in 2003. In 2004, she was elected to the House of Commons of Canada as a Member of Parliament for Brampton, Springdale. She held the position till 2011.

The Indian-origin politician tried to block the DVD release of *Kyon? KisLiye?* arguing that her images in film's promotional materials were doctored.

The filmmakers denied her accusations. According to a CTV report from 2009, producer Charanjit Sihra said that none of her images were doctored

or altered in any way.

"She came to Hamilton and she always wanted to be a Bollywood star," Sihra said. "I gave her a chance in the film."

More about Ruby Dhalla

Ruby Dhalla was among the first women of Indian origin to be elected to the Canadian parliament, along with Conservative Nina Grewal.

She was re-elected to the House of Commons in 2006 and 2008, but lost in 2011.

Besides pursuing her political ambitions, she has also been a model and hotelier. She finished as a runner up in the Miss India Canada pageant in 1993.

Michelle Obama issues statement amid divorce rumors

On Wednesday, Michelle Obama posted an emotional message on Instagram alongside her husband, former President Barack Obama, amid swirling rumours about their marriage. In her post, the former First Lady revealed that The Obama Presidential Centre would be honouring Hadiya Pendleton, a talented honour roll student whose tragic death in 2013 shocked the nation. Pendleton, who performed at Barack Obama's second inauguration just days before her death, will be memorialized through this special tribute.

Michelle Obama shared the heartfelt message with Barack Obama, announcing plans for a memorial garden dedicated to Hadiya Pendleton at the Obama Presidential Centre. (AP)

Also Read: JD Vance Alleges Biden Admin Knew Names and Addresses of Criminal Migrants but Refused to Act, 'It Really Should Shock...'



Michelle writes 'Barack and I' amid divorce rumours

The Obamas announced plans to open a memorial garden in honour of Pendleton at the Obama Presidential Centre in Chicago in the coming years. In her Instagram message, Michelle wrote, "To this day, I carry Hadiya's story with me everywhere I go. She had an extraordinary light that will not be forgotten, and Barack and I look forward to honouring her memory through a dedicated space at the Obama Presidential Centre," as reported by Daily Mail.

She also referred to Barack as "my husband" in the message shared directly on the center's website. The emphasis on her choice of language follows speculation over the past few weeks about the couple heading for divorce. Rumours began after Michelle announced that she would not be attending President Donald Trump's swearing-in ceremony, while Barack was present.

Michelle absent from various important events

Michelle's decision to skip the swearing-in ceremony came after her absence from President Jimmy Carter's funeral, which she attributed to a "scheduling conflict" while spending an extended holiday in Hawaii. Since the passing of her mother, Marian Robinson, in May, the former First Lady has kept a relatively low public profile.

Reflecting on her grief, Michelle shared during her speech at the Democratic National Convention in August that it nearly prevented her from stepping onstage. At Chicago's United Centre, she told the crowd, "I still feel her loss so profoundly—I wasn't even sure I'd be steady enough to stand before you tonight." Despite this, she headlined several campaigns for Democratic nominee Kamala Harris during her run for President.

Meta agrees to pay \$25 million to settle Donald Trump's lawsuit over Jan. 6 suspension

Meta has agreed to settle a lawsuit filed by former President Donald Trump for \$25 million, following the suspension of his accounts after the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. The settlement comes after months of negotiations and marks another instance of Trump securing a significant corporate settlement, adding to the list of legal victories amid ongoing controversies regarding his presence on social media platforms.

According to three people familiar with the settlement, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, the agreement includes a \$22 million contribution to a nonprofit that will support the construction of Trump's future presidential library. The remaining funds will be allocated to legal fees and other litigants.

Meta's decision to settle reflects ongoing efforts to mend relationships with Trump, particularly after his return to the political scene. In November, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg visited Trump at his private Florida residence, and during their meeting, Trump brought up the lawsuit.

This conversation led to a two-month period of negotiations, culminating in the settlement. Additionally, Meta made a \$1 million donation to Trump's inaugural committee, signaling a desire to align with the incoming administration.

Trump's lawsuit, filed months after his first term ended, accused social media giants like Meta of "illegal, shameful censorship" of the American people. The lawsuit claimed that the suspension of his accounts was politically motivated. These claims are part of a broader critique by Trump and some conservative politicians, who argue that platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Google abuse their Section 230 protections by censoring content they deem unfavorable.

Under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, social media platforms have immunity from lawsuits related to user-generated content, as long as they moderate content in "good faith." Trump,



Trump had been suspended on Jan 6, 2021 by Meta. Pic - AP

however, has called for this immunity to be revoked or limited, accusing platforms of unfairly targeting him and his supporters.

Meta's settlement also comes on the heels of another major settlement involving Trump. ABC News agreed to pay \$15 million last month to Trump's presidential library as part of a defamation lawsuit. The network had aired a false statement by anchor George Stephanopoulos, which inaccurately suggested Trump had been found civilly liable for raping writer E. Jean Carroll. The settle-

ment included a \$1 million contribution to Trump's legal fees.

Trump's litigious nature has extended beyond the realm of social media. He is also involved in lawsuits against CBS News for allegedly airing misleading content in an interview with his 2024 opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris. Additionally, Trump is suing The Des Moines Register and its pollster, Ann Selzer, for allegedly releasing a biased poll in Iowa before the 2020 election, which understated his support.

The Meta settlement underscores the ongoing tension between the tech industry and the political sphere, especially as platforms continue to grapple with the challenges of moderating content while managing the political fallout. As Meta and other companies work to rebuild relationships with the former president, it is clear that the intersection of technology, politics, and legal disputes will remain a significant issue in the years ahead.

Sunita Williams, Butch Wilmore finally step outside space station together after 8 months



Sunita Williams has been stranded in space for the last eight months. Pic - The Economic Times

NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore, who are stranded in space for the last eight months, ventured out of the International Space Station for their first spacewalk together.

Indian-origin astronaut and Commander Sunita Williams floated out of the space station to perform maintenance work with Wilmore on Thursday. The two astronauts also wiped the International Space Station's exterior for any microbes that may still be alive after launching from Earth.

"Here we go," Wilmore said as he emerged 420 kilometres above Earth, in a video livestreamed by NASA on X, reports Hindustan Times.

"We can't sanitise everything we send to space and humans carry their own microbiomes and continuously regenerate microbial communities. It's important to understand and address how well current

designs and processes prevent or limit the spread of human contamination," NASA said.

Stranded in space

Both Williams and Wilmore were expected to return to Earth after a week in space in June. But their spaceship, Boeing's Starliner capsule, encountered many problems and NASA decided to return it empty.

That left the two test in orbit until SpaceX can send another spacecraft to bring them home. That won't happen until late March or early April, extending their mission to 10 months because of a SpaceX delay in launching their replacements.

Two weeks ago, Williams performed a spacewalk with another NASA astronaut. Thursday marked Wilmore's first time outside this trip. Both racked up spacewalks during previous space station stays.

"Nasa and SpaceX are expeditiously working to safely return the agency's SpaceX Crew-9 astronauts Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore as soon as practical, while also preparing for the launch of Crew-10 to complete a handover between expeditions," a NASA spokesperson said.

US President Donald Trump said he had asked Elon Musk's SpaceX to return the two NASA astronauts from the International Space Station.

Prince William and Kate Middleton introduce Prince George to royal role

Prince William and Kate Middleton are reportedly adopting a unique approach as they introduce their eldest child, Prince George, to the responsibilities and expectations of his future role as monarch. The couple is said to be using a "chat sofa" to ease George into understanding his future place within the royal family while maintaining a "hands-off" approach to ensure he develops at his own pace.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, parents to Prince George, Princess Charlotte, and Prince Louis, are mindful of balancing their children's royal duties with their personal well-being. In a recent conversation, Prince William spoke about how George is beginning to comprehend complex topics, making it an appropriate time to discuss important historical events with him, such as those commemorated on Holocaust Memorial Day.

"George is getting to the age where he's starting to understand things. So, it's getting interesting to talk to him about what happened," William shared during a meeting with Holocaust survivors, including Alfred Garwood and Sabina Kadic-Mackenzie.

As reported by the New York Post, William and Kate tailor their conversations to each child's age and understanding. Former butler to King Charles, Grant Harrold, explained how the conversations about sensitive topics, such as Kate's own experience with cancer, were adjusted according to the children's maturity levels. "For Louis, I'm sure the conversation was more sugarcoated than it was with George and Charlotte," Harrold noted,

emphasizing the importance of keeping these discussions positive yet appropriate for their ages.

Paying tribute to Holocaust victims

William and Kate have also taken part in solemn Holocaust Memorial Day events, showing their dedication to remembering the lives lost in genocides throughout history. The royal couple attended a memorial service, sharing their tribute on Instagram: "A solemn moment of remembrance and hope for the future at today's Holocaust Memorial Day service. Honoured to take part in this important event to commemorate the lives lost in the Holocaust and other genocides."

In addition to the ceremony, Kate reconnected with Holocaust survivors Steven Frank and Yvonne Bernstein, whom she had photographed with their grandchildren back in 2020. Kate reflected on the deep personal nature of the project: "I wanted to make the portraits deeply personal to Yvonne and Steven — a celebration of family and the life that they have built since they both arrived in Britain in the 1940s." She added, "It was a true honour to have been asked to participate in this project, and I hope in some way Yvonne and Steven's memories will be kept alive as they pass the baton to the next generation."

Through their thoughtful and sensitive approach, William and Kate are ensuring that their children, especially George, are introduced to the royal family's responsibilities in a way that respects both their future roles and their personal growth.

From the Pages of History - MT 70 Years Ago

7th Year No 294

MAURITIUS TIMES

Friday 15 April, 1960

• Common souls pay with what they do; nobler souls, with what they are. — Emerson

Editorial

1960 is, it is said everywhere, a year of decision for the whole world. That it is one for Mauritius is unquestionable. More than that, it is also a year of hope. After the last General Election, a false sense of disappointment gripped a large section of the population — a normal post-electoral phenomenon, which is but a natural reaction to the gap between pre-electoral promises and post-electoral achievements. The ill-timed increase in parliamentary allowances, coupled with the insidious campaign of the opposition, created a sort of widespread disappointment, and the defeat in the by-election in Curepipe gave the impression that the Labour Party was drifting toward perdition. The rapid rise in population, the effects of two devastating cyclones, and, again, the confusion created by the opposition tended to make matters worse. We wondered whether there would be no hope, no salvation... While we wondered, the public waited, and the opposition attacked, the Government was engaged in what Mr. Wilson calls a period of "silent meditation," and today, we see some of the results of this meditation. There is hope now!

The budget speech of Mr W.G. Wilson contains the boldest decisions the present Government has taken since it was voted into office last year. These are decisions with far-reaching consequences which, if not sabotaged, will place this country on a very sound footing economically and socially. Before going into the details of the Government's financial policies, we would like to congratulate the Government on deciding to put "the whole weight of its resources and authority behind a policy of family planning, officially implemented, with the core of that policy being to encourage the limitation of families to three children only." For years now, the *Mauritius Times* has advocated the necessity of birth control; it seems that we needed the views of Professors Meade and Titmuss before acting on what we already knew had to be done. Be that as it may, we welcome the Government's decision, feeling that it is always better late than never. We must now ensure that this decision is successfully implemented. Lest we forget, let us also congratulate the Government on having taken this step at the risk of "political unpopularity."

As expected, the Government's decision to resort to family planning is being insidiously exploited by opponents of birth control. Already, *Le Mauricien* has begun misleading its readers. *Les Enfants Du Crime*, it shrieked yesterday. What crime? Who is going to compel anyone to accept any specific method of birth control? No Roman Catholic will be forced to adopt artificial methods of birth control, nor will they

Island of Hope



be compelled to work in that service. So why object? Why this wilful distortion of Government's intentions? Let those who oppose artificial birth control understand this once and for all: one may claim the freedom to do or not do as one pleases, but no one has the right to prevent others from acting according to their beliefs. There should be no mistake about this. This is a country where the religious beliefs of all sections of the population must be equally respected.

It is now clear that the country will be able to face its economic difficulties. The country is not ruined, as some would have us believe. Mr. Wilson has certainly dispelled — hopefully once and for all — the myth that this Five-Year Plan is too ambitious. The tax increases will offset the deficit caused by cyclones and help us build stronger reserves in the future. We believe that the suggestion of Hon. J. E. Piat to increase the contribution of cane planters to the Cyclone and Drought Insurance Fund must be implemented. This would provide a strong safeguard. Although workers will now pay a few cents more for cigarettes and rum, they will pay less for imported fish. But that is not enough; we look forward to a reduction in the price of rice, oil, and flour. We welcome the Government's decision to take 20 cents more per gallon of petrol from oil companies. However, it seems that more could be extracted from them. The time has certainly come for the Government to examine what can easily be described as the end-of-the-year compensation racket flourishing in private firms and sugar estates. There is no doubt that the large compensations granted to already well-paid employees of private firms are among the principal causes of inflation. This must be addressed. The Ministry of Finance must extend its reach to this so far untouched sector of the economy. Mr. Wilson also seems to have overlooked the vast amounts of money notaries collect each year.

We have great hopes now, and Mr. Wilson's speech signals a bright future for this country. But we cannot rejoice too soon; we must wait, watch, and do our part. Beyond the contents of Mr. Wilson's speech, we have also been asked to look forward to the announcement of other

important decisions that will align with the Government's plan. Additionally, we have been assured — another major decision! — that once our reconstruction plans are ready, our Constitution will be revised. Mr Macleod has been very categorical about this, meaning that in the near future, the silhouette of the Chief Minister will rise. Again, we hope that our already outdated Constitution will be improved. We are, therefore, on the threshold of a new era in our island's history, and we are reminded of the brave words of a no less brave statesman:

"Man's possession is life, and since he is given but one, he must live it in such a way that he is not haunted by the shame of a cowardly existence and a trivial past, so that, when dying, he may say: all my life and all my strength were given to the finest cause in the world—the liberation of mankind."

* The quote is attributed to Nikolai Ostrovsky, a Soviet writer best known for his novel *How the Steel Was Tempered*. Ostrovsky's works and speeches often reflected themes of perseverance, dedication to communist ideals, and the struggle for social justice.

Mauritius Times

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Thank you so much.
Mauritius Times

Israel and Gaza after the Ceasefire. What's next?



As the ceasefire came into force on 19 January 2025, this drone view shows Palestinians walking past the rubble of houses and other buildings in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip. - Pic - Mahmoud Al-Basos/Reuters

● Cont. from page 6

The US State Department called these comments "inflammatory and irresponsible." Both Smotrich and Ben-Gvir live in West Bank settlements.

Netanyahu has distanced himself from his ministers' statements, but it is not clear whether he will view Trump's call as giving him cover to be more supportive of the far-right elements of his cabinet.

Such a step by Netanyahu would be a direct challenge to Trump's vision and like-

ly put an end to any deal with the Saudis. On the one hand, one might expect Netanyahu to stick with Trump on this. The Israeli public appears to favour no more war so long as all the hostages are not free, if recent polls are to be believed. On the other hand, an Israeli journalist Amir Tibon has stated: "Netanyahu is deceiving Trump and preparing to sabotage the cease-fire agreement."

As the ceasefire has taken hold in Gaza, Hamas troops have reappeared. So, Israel has not destroyed Hamas. It remains to be seen if there is any hope of negotiating a peaceful transition to the rebuilding of Gaza and the resettlement of its population while rebuilding is going on.

Going forward, it is likely that both Hamas and Israel will use any period of relative calm and no hostilities to regroup, resupply, and rearm. Perhaps a massive injection of aid from the Saudis and Emiratis will provide incentive for Hamas and the Gazans to seek a life of peace. How to make Gaza, or indeed the West Bank, part of a two-state solution remains the unanswered question.

Anil Madan

Cheerz...
Bwana

“As the ceasefire has taken hold in Gaza, Hamas troops have reappeared. So, Israel has not destroyed Hamas. It remains to be seen if there is any hope of negotiating a peaceful transition to the rebuilding of Gaza and the resettlement of its population while rebuilding is going on. Going forward, it is likely that both Hamas and Israel will use any period of relative calm and no hostilities to regroup, resupply, and rearm...”



Tree of Knowledge

Declaring Our Intentions



Pic - life-coach-training-sa.com

If you're feeling stuck in life and are ready for change, take time to declare to the universe that you're ready.

There comes a point in most of our lives when we feel ready to experience a change, we've had trouble carrying out. Maybe we've been stuck in a home, a relationship, a job, or a town that hasn't felt right for a long time, but we've been unable to shift our circumstances in the direction we want to go. At times like this, it can help to declare to the universe that we are ready for a change. Think of it as informing a helpful friend that you need her assistance to move to the next level in your life. If the time is right, the universe will respond with opportunities and offers designed to help you create the change you wish to see.

You can begin the process of making your declaration by determining what exactly you want to change. Whenever we ask anyone for help, they can assist us that much better if we are specific. The universe also appreciates our clarity and has an easier time answering a direct communication than a vague yearning. When you are clear on what you want, write your declaration on a piece of paper and place it on your altar, if you have one. If you don't, put it under your pillow or in a box on your nightstand. Set aside a period of time every day to be silent with your wishes for change, repeating your declaration like a mantra. This lets the universe know that you are ready to change and will be receptive to its efforts.

Feel free to continue to refine and redefine your declaration and remember to be open to the many different ways in which the change you seek might come to be. Remember also to be active in your own efforts, taking opportunities that come your way, watching for signs, and always taking responsibility for your intentions. If things don't happen quickly, try not to be discouraged. It might take time to free up energy that has been blocked or is possibly serving a purpose beyond what we can understand. If you continue your conversation with the universe, declaring yourself clearly and openly, you cannot help but experience the magic of changing and being changed.

SODNAC ISLAMIC SOCIETY

(REGISTRATION NUMBER:2598)

BAIT UL MUKARRAM Masjid, 10 AVENUE DES MOUETTES, SODNAC, QUATRE-BORNES

Members of the Sodnac Islamic Society are invited to attend its Annual General Meeting on Sunday, 16 February 2025, at 9.00 am at the seat of the Bait-Ul-Mukarram Masjid, 10 Avenue des Mouettes, Sodnac. Quatre-Bornes.

AGENDA

1. Reading and approval of minutes of the last A.G.M
2. Matters Arising
3. President's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Approval of final accounts for year 31st December 2024.
6. Approval of estimates of Income/Expenditure for year ending 31st December 2025.
7. Motions, if any.
8. AOB
9. Election of New Office Bearers
10. Nomination of two Auditors

Motions, if any, should reach the secretary by Monday 10 February 2025 at latest.

In case there is no quorum, the meeting will be re-scheduled for Sunday 23 February 2025 at the same place, same time and same agenda.

If a founder Member wishes to stand as candidate for the forthcoming election, he is requested to inform the secretary in writing by Monday 10 February 2025 at latest, failing which his name will not appear on the ballot.

Any member whose membership is not up to date will not be allowed to stand as candidate and will not be allowed to vote in the election.

The treasurer will not deal with any payment made on AGM Day.

If a member is unable to attend the meeting, he may appoint a member to vote on his behalf by filling in the prescribed Proxy Form. A proxy may vote for a maximum of 2 persons.

Riaze Ramjan
(Secretary, SIS)

Ruchika (better known as Chobhairavi) and Krishna Gunesssing



Kishore Teelanah

The second-generation Mauritians in the UK are British-born children of Mauritian parents and some of mixed marriages. After interviewing several hundreds of these children and observing them over three decades with their families, these stories show their close ties to Mauritius and their culture. To get a better picture of these children, they have been active in a wide variety of cultural and social events, with their families, their education, and work environment for many years. Their parents came to the UK since the 1960s and 1970s and a few even as early as 1950s to take up nursing as a career. Some came in the 1980s and 1980s for other studies such as accountancy and law. As more Mauritians came to the UK and settled, many got married to Mauritian brides and grooms, British whites, and other Europeans. Many of the British-born children have a very close-knit Mauritian culture and tradition. They look forward to travel to Mauritius to meet their eagerly waiting grandparents and other relatives. They all love the beautiful island and often wonder as to why their parents left Mauritius.

I first met the parents of Ruchika (Ruchi for short) and Krishna at a Mauritian Hindu Association, Sankranti function in London. I was invited to pray at their place, and I was struck by how their daughter Ruchi, and son Krishna conducted the puja. They impressed me about their knowledge in the intricacies and procedures of the mantras. They both recited the Sanskrit prayers with aplomb and won my praise in celebrating what these British born can do. They have adapted to both British values and Hindu culture very well. They dress up with the beautiful Indian outfits accordingly to occasions such as Diwali, Durga puja, Maha Shiv Ratri, Krishna Janmashtami, and other related pujas. Both Chobhairava and Krishna, and their parents are thoroughly involved in these pujas and keep a well-balanced British life with family and friends.

Chobhairavi, 22, had just completed her degree in Biomedical Science at St Georges Hospital and now wants to pursue her career in Medicine. Currently she is working in administration at a General Practice at Charring Cross hospital in the Imaging department. She can understand Hindi from watching Bollywood movies and is fluent in creole. She is fully committed to all her prayers, fasting and follows the same routine as her parents. She helps her family to update all the flyers

for the pujas and other related functions.

Krishna is 17 and received an outstanding result in his GCSEs with many distinctions. He is now studying for GCE Advanced level in Maths, Further Maths and Physics. He would like to be an Engineer. He loves Mauritian food cooked by his mother. His favourite food is Mine bouilli and gateau Napolitaine. He is also fluent in creole.

The balanced lifestyle and dedication to organising for all the pujas are credit to both the father, Raj and mother, Prema. They both recite their Ramayana regularly and Chobhairavi and Krishna picked these up at the tender age of three and which resulted in their current knowledge and interest. Their parents used to read and recite these regularly. Raj also learnt from his mentor, Mataji, who is also a staunch practitioner of the various pujas and rituals. Both Raj and Prema are established accountants.



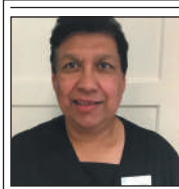
Mother Prema, Mataji, Religious Mentor and Head of BBABA UK (Bhakt Bhakti Aur Bhagwan Ashram), Father Raj, and Chobhairavi at the 17th Anniversary of BBABA UK

Chobhairavi's Graduation in Biomedical Science from University of London

The upbringing of their parents and influence of the grandparents have proved to be beneficial to the British-born children. They instilled a sense of pride and to do better in their education and jobs as they did not have the same opportunities. The second-generation Mauritians and other ethnic minorities do much better in education than the white majority despite much less advantageous economic backgrounds (Platt and Zuccotti, 2021). However, after completing their education, they are less likely to be employed, and some ethnic groups are less likely to reach managerial and professional occupations, than the white majority.

However, despite the these disadvantages these Mauritians strive to do better in their lives and jobs as well as status. As Mauritius has become a well-known destination for first generation Mauritians, more of the second and third generations have an affinity to visit this beautiful island almost every year. As second or third generations, they remain attracted to their ancestral land of family traditions and culture and beauty.

Kishore is a semi-retired teaching and learning expert in science. He had worked in the NHS in the 1970s followed by a teaching career in Further and Higher Education until recently. He now writes blogs, science articles, adviser in teaching and learning and promoting Mauritian diaspora in the UK.



Dr. Randhir Seewoodharry Buguth

Poverty in the UK

This title might shock many readers as the UK is the 6th largest national economy in the world by GDP. It relies mainly on tourism, manufacturing, and financial services. Behind this London glittering facade, there are a lot of hidden hardships despite the pound sterling being one of the strongest currencies in the world.



Homeless people opposite London Victoria station
Pic - wsws.org

The UK, which used to be a pioneer in science, technology, art and education, is seriously lagging behind.

UNICEF (United Nations for children fund) placed UK 37 out of 39 in an overall league table which combined both their most recent income poverty rate (up to 2021) and their success in reducing child poverty. It was ahead of only Turkey and Columbia.

4.2 million Children do not have basic needs and 1.3 million of them are found in London. They lack a proper warm home, nutritious food, and go to school without breakfast or clean clothes.

In 2017, the introduction of the 2 children benefit cap was introduced and parents could not claim tax credit or universal credit for more than 2 children. Removing this cap would lift 250,000 children out of poverty. The actual labour government is resisting calls to lift up the cap.

Households are considered to be in poverty if their income is below 60% of the median income which is 37,430 pounds sterling per year or 728 pounds weekly for a couple.

DWP (Department of work and pension) finds that 1 in 6 people live in relative poverty and increase to 1 in 5 (14.4 million people) after housing costs are accounted for. In that category of relative poverty, 37% belong to the working age citizens but are not working and 10% have at least one family member working.

The highest group belongs to the householders of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin and the lowest is the white ethnic group.

Britain is witnessing the worst squeeze in incomes in a generation as struggling households are hit by soaring housing and energy costs along with rocketing inflation.

2.1 million UK pensioners live in poverty with 1 meal a day and having to choose between food or heating in winter.

There are 300,000 UK citizens who are homeless and sleep rough outside in tents,

sleeping bags, parks, bus stops, side roads and corner buildings. They come from different backgrounds: intermediate or no jobs, health issues, broken families, gamblers and drug addicts. There are obviously more men than women for security reasons. There are organisations which supply clean, sterile needles for the drug users with less risk of infection or deaths which in turn would be a burden to the overwhelmed NHS hospitals. Methadone is available as well as a rehabilitation programme.

We can understand the frustration and anger of UK citizens when foreign legal and illegal migrants are homed in hotels with 3 meals a day. They feel let down by the system and this has caused acts of violence in certain areas where migrants were involved in criminal acts towards British people.

Long term sickness benefits have surged for citizens less than 35 years old with mental health issues.

3.12 million people used food banks in 2024 to have a free parcel of food to eat compared to 26,000 in 2008/2009.

Sadly nurses, shop assistants and youth workers were among those who needed these charity food parcels.

Many people eat according to the price of the commodities rather than for The Joseph Rowntree foundation is a philanthropic organisation pursuing charitable causes like many other organisations to help needy people. Heriot-Watt University found that in 2024, 3.8 million people face destitution in the UK, with an average of 40 pounds sterling a week to live on.

This is a big contrast compared to the 227,000 millionaires who live in London showing great inequality in our society. Apparently 6,000 of them are leaving the UK for another country in the EU to avoid the labour government tax grab.

In 2006 I decided to migrate to the UK. Late Margaret Thatcher's words still ring in my ears 'We need migrants, but we need the brightest and the best'. This was a challenge for me but in 2025, I have witnessed how uncontrolled low skills, legal and illegal migrants have caused a lot of harm to the British society.

The gates were widely opened for economic migrants, and this has put unbearable pressure on the housing, education and health sectors along with the social services overwhelmed with benefits applications.

Politicians are supposed to lead a country with a plan to improve the wellbeing of its citizens and not to experiment with different models to reshape society without risk assessments. One clear example is the disastrous situation of NHS dentistry which was working fine until 2006. It is a shame for the whole world where people are trying to remove their own teeth with a pair of pliers. The British Dental association told the government in 2006 that this new contract is not fit for purpose. Who Cares?

Shocking!

YOUR STARS

SAGITTARIUS: NOV 22 - DEC 21

Home life will require your attention, and you may feel the need to create a comfortable, stable environment. If you've been thinking about home improvements or family matters, now is the time to take action. Trust your intuition in personal decisions.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 11, 16, 22, 28, 39

CAPRICORN: DEC 22 - JAN 19

Your mind will be sharp, making it a great week for intellectual pursuits. Communication flows easily, and you'll likely have fruitful discussions with others. Be mindful of spending too much time on work-related tasks at the cost of your social life.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 10, 15, 23, 29, 35

AQUARIUS: JAN 20 - FEB 18

Money matters take center stage, with opportunities to reassess your financial goals. It's a good time to save, invest, or plan for the future. Be cautious with major purchases and ensure you're not overspending in any area of life.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 7, 12, 19, 26, 38

PISCES: FEB 19 - MAR 20

This week, your personal life takes the spotlight. You may feel the urge to redefine your goals and how you present yourself to the world. Take time for self-care and reflection. Trust your instincts in social situations and be open to changes in relationships.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 13, 18, 24, 31, 34

ARIES: MARCH 21 - APRIL 19

You'll find yourself with a burst of energy, making it an excellent time for tackling projects that require initiative. Work and relationships will benefit from your clear communication. However, be mindful of impatience—take time for reflection before acting.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 21, 27, 38

TAURUS: APR 20 - MAY 20

This week brings a focus on personal growth and deepening your emotional connections. Some moments might feel tense, but trust your instincts, especially regarding family matters. Financial opportunities may arise, but exercise caution.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 17, 22, 30, 39

GEMINI: MAY 21 - JUNE 20

Collaboration will be your key to success. Reach out to colleagues or friends for advice and support. Energy this week encourages travel or learning, which could lead to exciting new experiences. However, be mindful of misunderstandings — ensure clear communication.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 11, 16, 23, 28, 35

CANCER: JUNE 21 - JULY 22

You may feel the need to focus on your career this week but ensure a balance between work and personal life. Financial matters could require your attention. At home, it's a good time to strengthen your bond with loved ones, especially in deep, one-on-one conversations.

Lucky Numbers: 4, 10, 15, 24, 29, 38

LEO: JULY 23 - AUG 22

This week is perfect for self-reflection and exploring new ideas. Don't shy away from creative pursuits or educational opportunities. Keep an open mind, as new perspectives could lead to unexpected insights. Just avoid overextending yourself.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 7, 12, 19, 26, 34

VIRGO: AUG 23 - SEPT 22

Matters of the heart are highlighted, so it's a good time for romance or nurturing close relationships. If in a partnership, focus on deepening your connection. Financial matters need careful review, especially investments or joint ventures.

Lucky Numbers: 6, 13, 18, 25, 31, 37

LIBRA: SEPT 23 - OCT 22

Your focus shifts toward work and health. It's a good time to organize your schedule and ensure a healthy work-life balance. Keep an eye on your physical well-being. Partnerships may require extra attention — clear communication will be key.

Lucky Numbers: 3, 9, 14, 20, 27, 33

SCORPION: 23 OCT - 21 NOV

Creativity and romance are highlighted this week. Pursue hobbies that inspire you or connect with someone special. Professionally, you'll experience growth opportunities but be patient and stay consistent in your efforts.

Lucky Numbers: 2, 8, 17, 21, 30, 36



VACANCY

HELP DESK OFFICER (HR/103/HDO 01/25)

21 January 2025

The Bank of Mauritius invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Help Desk Officer.

JOB SPECIFICATIONS AND TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

A copy of the job specifications and terms of employment can be downloaded from the Bank of Mauritius website at <https://www.bom.mu/job-vacancies>.

MODE OF APPLICATION

Application forms should be downloaded from <https://www.bom.mu/pdf/Vacancies/af.pdf>, and submitted through email, along with an updated curriculum vitae, a motivation letter and copies of all supporting documents for the position (National Identity Card, academic and certified professional certificates, evidence of any experience claimed), on human.resources@bom.mu or in a sealed envelope, with the job reference clearly marked on the top left hand corner of the envelope, addressed to:

Human Resources Section
Bank of Mauritius
Sir William Newton Street, Port Louis

The deadline for the submission of applications is **Tuesday 04 February 2025 at 4pm (local time)**.

Only the best qualified candidates will be called for an interview. They may be required to undergo psychometric, written and numerical tests, and/or any other selection process relevant to the position.

Any person who, directly or indirectly, by himself or by other person and in any manner, influences or attempts to influence any decision of the interview panel or the Bank or the Board shall commit an offence and shall be automatically disqualified from the recruitment process and may be liable to criminal prosecution.

The Bank reserves the right not to make any appointment following this advertisement without any obligation to give any reason to the candidate(s) of the grounds of its actions.

About the Bank of Mauritius

The Bank of Mauritius has as primary objective the maintenance of price stability and promotion of orderly and balanced economic development. Other objectives of the Bank are to regulate credit and currency in the best interests of the economic development of Mauritius and to ensure the stability and soundness of the financial system of Mauritius.

BANK OF MAURITIUS Sir William Newton Street, Port Louis, Mauritius
Telephone: +230 202 3800 Email: communications@bom.mu Website: www.bom.mu

Living God Ministries

Annual General Meeting

Members are kindly invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Living God Ministries on Sunday 23 March 2025 at 12.30 hrs at Living God Ministries Building, Glen Park, La Marie.

AGENDA:

1. President's report.
2. Reading and approval of minutes of last AGM.

3. Treasurer's report.
4. Presentation and approval of estimates of accounts for the year 2025.
5. Election of members of managing committee.
6. Election of Auditors.
7. AOB

Secretary
31 January 2025

Research shows solitude is better for your health when it's not too intense

When it comes to solitude, it's not about the amount of alone time but the intensity of that time that matters for our well-being, according to recent research from Oregon State University. Activities like hiking alone deep in the forest, while peaceful, do not restore energy or enhance social connectedness as effectively as less intense forms of solitude, such as reading in a café or listening to music while commuting.

The study, conducted by Morgan Quinn Ross, assistant professor of communication at OSU, and Scott Campbell from Ohio State University, involved nearly 900 adults in the United States. It suggests that "less complete" solitude—like watching a movie alone or playing a game on your phone—offers more benefits than fully isolated experiences. These more moderate forms of solitude are more likely to replenish energy and help maintain a sense of connection with others.

The role of solitude in health

Understanding solitude's impact is important because it plays a key role in building social connectedness, which is crucial for maintaining overall health. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has long linked strong social ties with a longer lifespan, better mental health, and a lower risk of serious health conditions like heart disease, stroke, and dementia.

Ross and Campbell's findings underline the need for a balance between social interaction and solitude, especially in an age where social connection is often just a click away. The researchers also examined how technology and the presence of others can "shade" the solitude experience. For example, being alone in a room with a smartphone or listening to a podcast while driving may reduce the feeling of being isolated.



Understanding the solitude matrix

The researchers developed a "solitude matrix," which categorizes different levels of solitude. At one end, there's no interaction with others (the base level), while at the other extreme, solitude means being completely inaccessible and disengaged from any media (the total level). The matrix allowed Ross and Campbell to investigate whether experiencing solitude more completely maximizes energy restoration, while less complete solitude maximizes feelings of connection.

Ross explained, "Our study suggests that solitude is not simply the opposite of social interaction. While

intense social interaction builds connection but depletes energy, intense solitude drains both energy and connection." In other words, solitude is not just a way to recharge after socializing—it can also be detrimental when experienced too intensely.

Solitude's impact on extroverts and introverts

Interestingly, the study's findings hold true for both extroverts and introverts. The researchers discovered that the key factor in how solitude impacts a person's well-being is whether they view it as a means of restoration and connection, regardless of their social energy levels.

Ross suggests that people with a positive attitude toward solitude are more likely to benefit from it. "If you use solitude to restore energy and know that you will reconnect with others later, then it's likely to improve your well-being," he said. On the other hand, if solitude is sought because of a negative attitude toward social interaction, it can lead to feeling worse.

Practical takeaways

The findings have practical implications for how we approach solitude in our daily lives. Instead of seeking complete isolation, individuals can benefit from less intense forms of solitude that allow for both energy restoration and connection. For example, brief moments of solitude, like enjoying a quiet cup of coffee or going for a solo walk in the park, may offer significant health benefits without the negative effects of intense isolation.

As the study suggests, balance is key. By consciously choosing solitude when we feel constructively motivated to do so, we can foster a healthier, more fulfilling relationship with ourselves and others.



Why is the sky blue?

The answer has to do with molecules.

You might think that explaining why the sky is blue would be kind of simple. But even a brief explanation of it requires a lot of science. The colors of everything you see are produced in different ways. Some of those colors are explained with physics, others by my own field of chemistry.

The nitrogen and oxygen that you are breathing right now are made up of very small particles called molecules. A molecule of nitrogen or oxygen is really, really small. Each molecule is only about 0.4 nanometers, or 16 billionths of an inch. It would take 250,000 nitrogen molecules to equal the width of one strand of your hair. You can think of the molecules as behaving like very tiny balls that constantly bounce around.

When sunlight travels through the atmosphere, it passes between lots of those teeny nitrogen and oxygen molecules. Sometimes the light runs right into one of them.

In short, the sky looks blue because the blue portion of sunlight is much more likely to bounce off the molecules in the atmosphere than the other colors of light.

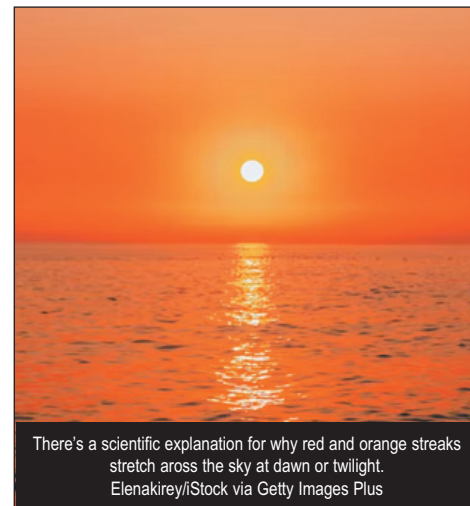
Tennis balls and marbles

Now, picture the nitrogen and oxygen molecules as tennis balls and the light as

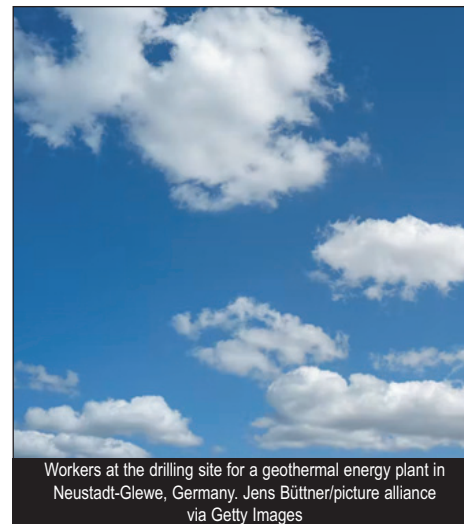
heaps of marbles.

When one of those light marbles hits a nitrogen or oxygen tennis ball, the tennis ball "eats" the marble and then very quickly spits it back out again, but in a random direction. That process is what physicists call scattering.

It was around 1870 when the British physicist John William Strutt, better known as Lord Rayleigh, first found an explanation for why the sky is blue: Blue light from the Sun is scattered the most when it passes through the atmosphere. His discovery is



There's a scientific explanation for why red and orange streaks stretch across the sky at dawn or twilight. Elenakirey/iStock via Getty Images Plus



Workers at the drilling site for a geothermal energy plant in Neustadt-Glewe, Germany. Jens Büttner/picture alliance via Getty Images

why the scientific term for this effect is called Rayleigh scattering.

The other gases in the atmosphere can be really important too, such as the effects of carbon dioxide or methane on the global climate. But they have only a very small effect on the color of the sky.

If there were no scattering, the sky would be dark like it is on the Moon, which does not have an atmosphere.

A rainbow represents all the different components that make up sunlight. As that light passes through the water droplets suspended in the air, it is broken up into the component colors called the visible spectrum — red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet, more easily remembered as ROY G. BIV.

Light at the blue end of the rainbow is scattered more efficiently than the other colors. It is as if the tennis balls are very selective in terms of which marbles they eat, and they prefer the blue ones over the other colors.

The result is that the blue light is scattered across the sky so you see blue everywhere on sunny days. The rest of the colors mainly travel straight through the atmosphere.

Redder when the Sun sets and rises

Of course, the sky is not always blue.

And Rayleigh scattering also explains why the sky tends to be reddish when the Sun is close to the horizon — at sunrise and sunset.

When the Sun is near the horizon, its light passes through a lot more of the atmosphere to reach the Earth's surface than when it is directly overhead. The blue and green light is scattered so well that you can hardly see it. The sky is colored, instead, with red and orange light.

Colors mean a lot to us in so many different ways. Understanding the science behind colors and expressing ourselves through art with colors have been important for humans for our entire recorded history. That's something to keep in mind as you decide what color shirt to wear tomorrow morning.

Daniel Freedman

Dean of the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Management, University of Wisconsin-Stout



Tales from the Hospital Bed

A man was brought to Mercy Hospital for coronary surgery. The operation was successful, and as the groggy patient regained consciousness, he found a Sister of Mercy waiting by his bedside.

"Mr Cecil, you're going to be just fine," the nun said, gently patting his hand. "However, we're unsure how you intend to settle the bills for your stay here."

"Are you covered by insurance?" she asked.

"No, I'm not," the man whispered hoarsely.

"Can you make a cash payment?"

"I'm afraid I'm short of funds, Sister."

"Do you have any close relatives, then?"

"Just one sister, but she's a spinster nun," he replied.

"Nuns are not spinsters, Mr Cecil," the nun corrected him. "They are married to the Lord."

"Okay then," the man said with a smile, "bill my brother-in-law."

La dernière confidence de Mamie à Papy !

Mamie, proche de la mort, est dans son lit... Papy est à ses côtés.

Mamie lui demande : Vas dans le grenier, au fond à gauche, tu trouveras une boîte.

Papy monte au grenier et y découvre, sous la paille, une petite boîte contenant 3 œufs et 15 000 euros.

De retour auprès de mamie, il demande : C'est quoi ces 3 œufs ?

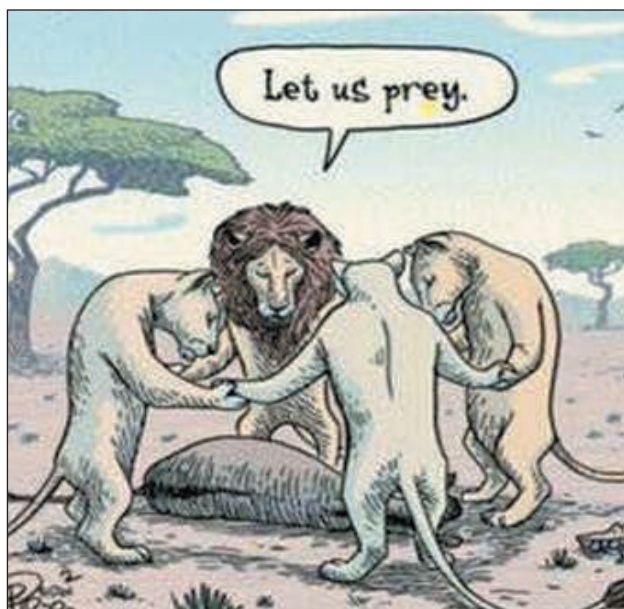
Mamie répond : Chaque fois que je n'avais pas d'orgasme avec toi, pendant ces 50 ans d'amour, je mettais un œuf dans cette boîte.

Papy, très fier de n'y trouver que 3 œufs en 50 ans, demande alors : Et les 15 000 euros ?

Mamie rétorque : Chaque fois que j'en avais une douzaine, j'allais les vendre au marché !

The Code Word

An old priest grew weary of the number of people confessing to adultery. One Sunday, during his sermon, he announced, "If I hear one more person confess to



adultery, I'll quit!"

The townsfolk, fond of the priest, decided to create a code word. Anyone who had committed adultery would simply confess that they had "fallen". This solution satisfied the old priest, and everything went smoothly – until the priest passed away at an advanced age.

A week later, a new priest arrived. During a visit to the mayor of the town, the new priest appeared concerned. "You have to do something about the sidewalks in this town," he said. "When people come to confession, they keep talking about having fallen!"

The mayor began to laugh, realizing no one had informed the new priest about the code word. Before the mayor could explain, the priest pointed an accusing finger and said, "I don't know what makes you laugh – your wife fell twice this week!"

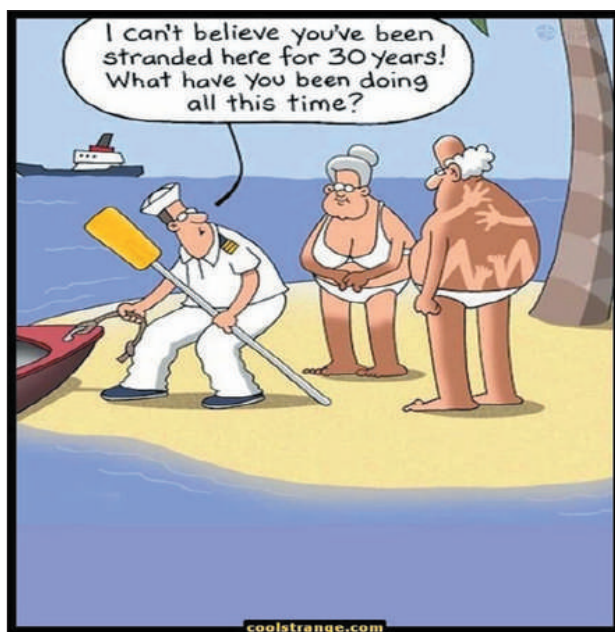
The sin of lying

One Sunday, a priest informed his congregation, "Next week, I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I'd like you to read Mark 17 beforehand."

The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the priest asked for a show of hands. "How many of you read Mark 17?" he inquired.

Every hand in the congregation went up.

The priest smiled and said, "Mark has only 16 chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying



Little Tom's Pain

In Sunday school, the children were learning about how God created everything, including human beings. Little Tom was particularly attentive when the teacher explained how Eve was created from one of Adam's ribs.

Later that week, Tom's mother found him lying on his bed, looking unwell. Concerned, she asked, "Tom, what's the matter?"

Little Tom replied, "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

A small boy is sent to bed by his father. A few minutes later...

"Daad."

"What?"

"I'm thirsty. Can you bring me a glass of water?"

"No, you had your chance. Lights out."

Five minutes later...



"Daad."

"What?"

"I'm really thirsty. Can I have a drink of water?"

"I told you no. If you ask again, I'll have to hit you."

A few minutes later...

"Daaaaaad."

"What?"

"When you come to hit me, bring me a glass of water."

A woman wanted to call a record shop but dialled the wrong number.

"Do you have 'Eyes of Blue' and 'A Love Supreme'?" she asked.

"Well, no, but I have a wife and ten children," answered the puzzled guy on the line.

"Is that a record?" she inquired.

"I don't think so, but it's as close as I want to get," replied the man.

The easiest way to get a child's attention is to sit down and look comfortable.

Two newlyweds were arguing whether to get a puppy or have a baby.

They weren't sure if they wanted to ruin their lives or their carpet.

Humorous Encounters and Surprising Turns

A woman was worried whether her husband had made it to heaven, so she prayed earnestly for God to allow her to speak to him.

"Hello, sweetie, this is Peter."

"Peter, I just want to know if you're happy there in the afterlife. What's it like?"

"Oh! It's more beautiful here than you can imagine," Peter replied. "The sky is blue, the air is cleaner, and the pastures are lush and greener than I expected. I don't lack anything. The only things I do all day long are eat and sleep, over and over."

"Thank God, you made it to heaven!" his wife jumped with joy.

"Heaven? I'm a cow in Devon," he answered.

The oldest lady in the country is 110 years old, and she hasn't got any grey hair on her head. How come? She's completely bald.

What do you call a pen with no hair? A bald point.

Life: You Become What You Think

Our thoughts have the power to shape our lives, influencing not only our actions but also the outcomes we experience. In *You Become What You Think*, Shubham Kumar Singh explores this profound connection between mindset and reality, offering practical insights for personal growth and success.

This empowering book emphasizes the importance of cultivating positive thinking, breaking free from limiting beliefs, and embracing a mindset of continuous learning and improvement. Singh provides actionable advice on leveraging tools like visualization, affirmations, and emotional intelligence to overcome challenges and unlock your full potential.

Here are ten key lessons from *You Become What You Think*, each designed to help you harness the power of your thoughts and take meaningful steps toward a fulfilling life.



The Power of Thoughts: Thoughts shape reality. Positive thinking influences actions and outcomes.

Mindset Matters: Embrace a growth mindset for resilience, adaptability, and learning from failure.

Visualization Techniques: Imagine desired outcomes vividly to create a mental roadmap for success.

Affirmations for Change: Reprogram the subconscious with positive affirmations to combat self-doubt.

Emotional Intelligence: Manage emotions and empathize with others for better relationships and decisions.

Taking Responsibility: Own your thoughts and actions to change your circumstances.

Overcoming Limiting Beliefs: Identify and challenge beliefs that hinder progress to unlock potential.

Consistency and Persistence: Stay committed to goals, even through setbacks, for long-term success.

Surrounding Yourself with Positivity: Create a supportive environment with uplifting influences.

Continuous Learning and Improvement: Embrace lifelong learning and remain open to growth opportunities.

"*You Become What You Think*" empowers readers to harness their thoughts, cultivate positivity, and achieve a fulfilling life.

Life's Lesson

Letting Go



Julia Roberts once said, "When people leave you, let them go. Your destiny is never tied to those who leave you, and that doesn't mean they are bad people. It simply means their part in your story is over." These words remind us of a truth we often forget not everyone who enters our lives is meant to stay forever. People come into our lives for different reasons—to teach us lessons, to share experiences, or to walk with us through certain seasons. But when they are gone, it's important to recognize that their part in our journey has been fulfilled, and our paths must now diverge.

Holding on to those who are meant to leave only delays your growth and keeps you from moving into the fullness of your destiny. It's not about rejecting or blaming the person who leaves but rather understanding that your story continues beyond that chapter. Sometimes,

stepping away creates room for new opportunities, deeper connections, and new discoveries of yourself. Letting go isn't always easy, but it's essential for moving on to the next step in your life. It doesn't diminish the importance of the relationship you once shared. Every encounter has value, shapes who you are, and helps you grow. But when someone leaves, it's a sign that your journey no longer aligns.

Their departure doesn't make them a villain in your life, but simply someone whose role ended naturally. When you release yourself from the weight of someone who's gone, you create space for the people meant to stay and enrich your life in a meaningful way. Letting go is not an act of giving up; it is an act of acceptance—accepting the course of life and understanding that not everyone is meant to accompany you to every destination.

Remember, your destiny belongs to you. No one can take it away from you, and no one else can walk the path that was set for you. So, when someone leaves, trust that it's for your greater good. This person was part of your story, but now the rest is yours to write, and it looks even more promising.

If you go looking for a friend, you're going to find they're very scarce. If you go out to be a friend, you'll find them everywhere.

Zig Ziglar

PICTUREQUOTES.COM

The Art of the Good Life: Practical Wisdom for Living Well

In a world full of distractions and constant demands, it's easy to lose sight of what truly matters. Rolf Dobelli's *The Art of the Good Life* offers a refreshing perspective on how to live a fulfilling and meaningful life by focusing on the things that bring true happiness and well-being. Below are seven key lessons from the book that can help guide you toward a more purposeful and contented life.



1. Prioritize Experiences Over Possessions

Dobelli emphasizes the importance of valuing experiences rather than material possessions. Creating meaningful memories and engaging in activities that enrich your life leads to greater happiness than accumulating things. Whether it's traveling, learning a new skill, or spending time with loved ones, these experiences create lasting fulfillment.

2. Practice Mental Accounting

Mental accounting is the practice of treating losses as wins and interpreting costs in a constructive way. This approach helps you manage your finances and decisions more effectively, leading to a more positive outlook on life. Instead of focusing on what you've lost, reframe situations to find the value in every experience.

3. Embrace Radical Acceptance

Radical acceptance involves accepting reality as it is, rather than how you wish it to be. Dobelli encourages readers to let go of resistance to circumstances beyond their control, fostering resilience and adaptability. Accepting the present moment can lead to greater peace of mind and emotional freedom.

4. Limit Information Overload

In today's information-rich world, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Dobelli advises being selective about the information you consume. Reducing exposure to unnecessary data helps you focus on what truly matters and empowers you to make better decisions without being distracted by irrelevant noise.

5. Invest in Your Mental Fortress

Building a strong mental framework is essential for navigating life's challenges. This includes cultivating a positive mindset, developing critical thinking skills, and surrounding yourself with supportive influences. By investing in your mental strength, you'll be better equipped to handle adversity and grow through difficult times.

6. Avoid the Comparison Trap

Constantly comparing yourself to others can lead to dissatisfaction and unhappiness. Dobelli suggests focusing on your own journey and progress instead of measuring your worth against others. Embracing your unique path enhances self-esteem and allows for greater contentment.

7. Cultivate Gratitude

Practicing gratitude can have a profound impact on your overall well-being. By regularly acknowledging and appreciating the positive aspects of your life, you foster a more optimistic outlook and increase your happiness. A simple habit of gratitude can transform your perspective and enrich your day-to-day experience.

These lessons from *The Art of the Good Life* provide practical insights for leading a fulfilling life. They encourage readers to focus on what truly contributes to their happiness and well-being, guiding them toward a deeper sense of purpose and contentment.

Aging Gracefully: What Science Recommends

Aging brings valuable experiences and wisdom, but maintaining physical and mental health is essential to fully enjoy these years. Here are science-backed strategies to promote healthy aging:

1. Take Stock

- **Regular Checkups:** Visit your doctor, dentist, and eye doctor to catch potential issues early. Essential checks include:

- * Cholesterol levels
- * Blood pressure
- * Cancer screenings (cervical, colon, breast, prostate)
- * Osteoporosis

2. Eat Whole Foods

- **Healthy Diet:** Focus on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, and low-fat dairy while limiting fatty meats, butter, sugar, salt, and packaged foods. This diet:

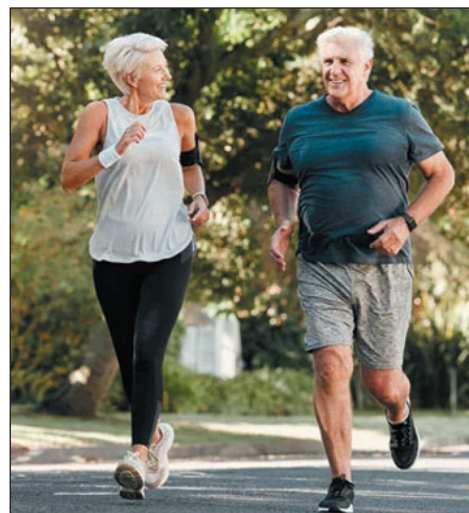
- * Extends lifespan
- * Protects against heart disease, cancer, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's
- * May modify aspects of chromosomes linked to aging

3. Walk

- **Daily Exercise:** Aim for 30 minutes of walking daily or break it into shorter sessions. Benefits include:

- * Improved brain health and mood
- * Stronger bones and muscles
- * Better sleep
- * Reduced risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol

4. Stay Connected



- **Social Engagement:** Combat loneliness by:

- * Staying in touch with friends and family
- * Participating in social activities or volunteer work
- * Addressing feelings of isolation promptly

5. Add Fibre

- **Dietary Fibre:** Incorporate fiber to:
- * Control weight
- * Lower cholesterol levels
- * Reduce risks of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and colon cancer
- * Prevent constipation
- * Recommendation: 30 grams/day for

men and 21 grams/day for women after age 50

6. Curb Bad Habits

- **Tobacco:** Quitting smoking:
 - * Reduces heart disease risk
 - * Lowers cancer risks
 - * Improves overall longevity
- **Alcohol:** Limit intake to:
 - * No more than two drinks/day for men
 - * One drink/day for women

7. Try Tai Chi

- **Benefits:** This gentle exercise combines slow movements and deep breathing to:
 - * Improve balance and flexibility
 - * Ease stress and arthritis pain
 - * Help prevent falls

8. Select Supplements

- **Nutritional Needs:** After 50, consider more of these:
 - * **Calcium:** For bone health
 - * **Vitamin D:** For limited sun exposure
 - * **Vitamin B12:** Found in fortified cereals or supplements
 - * **Vitamin B6:** Maintains healthy red blood cells
 - * **Tip:** Consult your doctor to avoid medication interactions.

9. Stay Optimistic

- **Positive Thinking:** A hopeful outlook can:

- * Extend lifespan by up to 7.5 years
- * Reduce risks of heart attacks and depression
- * Improve overall well-being

• Practices:

- * Smile (even if forced)
- * Keep a gratitude journal
- * Engage in acts of kindness
- * Surround yourself with positive people

10. Stick to Sleep

- **Improve Sleep:** To manage insomnia:
 - * Keep a regular sleep schedule
 - * Make your bedroom dark and distraction-free
 - * Avoid caffeine and alcohol in the evening
 - * Limit naps to 20 minutes
 - * Consult a doctor if medications disrupt sleep

11. Challenge Your Mind

- **Mental Stimulation:** Activities like puzzles, chess, or reading can boost brain health and potentially lower the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

By incorporating these practices, you can enhance your physical and mental well-being, making the most of every stage of life.

The Laws of Monumental Leadership

Robin Sharma
Humanitarian + Leadership Missionary

Early this morning, I reflected on the standout traits — laws, if you will — of the greatest leaders I've mentored over the past 30+ years. These individuals have consistently demonstrated what it takes to lead with excellence, inspire teams, and create lasting impact.

This list is not a quick read. In a world where attention spans are fleeting, I want to ensure that what I share with you is meaningful, robust, and transformative. I encourage you to study these laws deeply, share them with your team, and apply them in your leadership journey.

Now, without further delay, here are 49 elements of extraordinary leaders:

1. They listen even better than they speak.
2. They deeply care about growing people.
3. They don't mind giving away the credit.

4. They understand that the bigger the dream, the more important the team.

5. They are generous.

6. They are kind.

7. They possess unconquerable strength.

8. They know that until their mission becomes their obsession, their business will never evolve into a movement.

9. They build strong family lives, recognizing that a fortified home base is essential for peak productivity and resilience.

10. They disrupt their industries by enthusiastically introducing groundbreaking products and services.

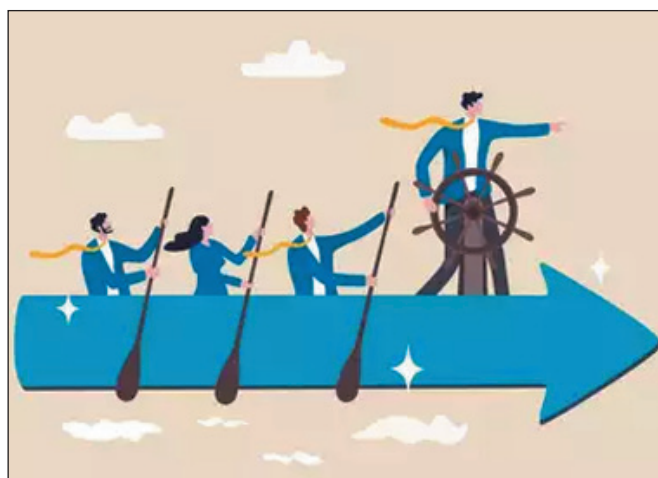
11. They have bold visions that often make others label them as weird, strange, or crazy.

12. They are laser-focused on their big bets, resisting the distraction of shiny new opportunities.

13. They are honest, knowing that integrity is everything and that decades of reputation can be destroyed in moments of poor judgment.

14. They spend significant time alone, understanding that solitude fosters their most sensational ideas.

15. They prioritize physical fitness



because poor health is a major vulnerability.

16. They never neglect their financials, ensuring their business remains strong and sustainable.

17. They excel at hiring top talent — a skill refined through the experience of hiring poorly in the past.

18. They are agile, pivoting swiftly during tough times to not just survive but thrive.

19. They remain hungry and hyper-vigilant, knowing that success breeds complacency.

20. They build exceptional systems to ensure consistency and quality.

21. They master the art of saying "no" politely but firmly, maintaining monumental productivity.

22. They are givers, not takers.

23. They rest strategically, recognizing that peak performance requires regular recovery periods.

24. They value constructive opinions but disregard negative criticism, knowing an opinion is just that — an opinion.

25. They guard against complacency, never allowing constant praise to inflate their egos.

26. They are voracious readers with expansive libraries.

27. They actively attend learning conferences and take extensive notes.

28. They nurture spiritual lives, dedicating themselves to causes larger than their own interests.

29. They are relentless in getting back up after every setback, no matter how many times they fall.

30. They rise early, leveraging the quiet hours of dawn for planning, exercise, and personal reflection.

* More Next Week

Tina Ahuja Reflects on her Bollywood Journey and Life Beyond

Govinda's daughter, Tina Ahuja, has opened up about her short-lived Bollywood career and the shift in her professional and personal priorities. Tina, who made her Bollywood debut in 2015 with *Second Hand Husband* alongside Gippy Grewal and Dharmendra, has since stayed away from films. However, she has appeared in a few music videos and now dedicates her efforts to supporting her father's career, even as Govinda faces professional challenges of his own, reports Indian Express.

Moving On From Bollywood

In an interview with Bollywood Bubble, Tina shared her thoughts on why her Bollywood career didn't take off as expected. When asked about being labeled as 'the reverse side of nepotism,' she candidly admitted, "To be honest, I moved on very quickly. After a point, it became very irritating when people said, 'But you have an institute at home, why are you struggling outside?' It became so annoying. Why should I answer the same question again and again?"

Tina revealed that she found satisfaction working alongside her father, Govinda, and has embraced this new phase of her life. "I decided that I might as well start



working with my dad and doing things that I enjoy. If things have to happen, they'll happen. I don't need to run the house, by the grace of God. I actually started enjoying working with my father, and I didn't even realize that I'd left a lot of things behind. I was like, 'Chuck it, I don't want to do this. I would like to do things that I want to be a part of,'" she said.

Misconceptions in the Industry

Tina spoke about the misconceptions that plagued her time in Bollywood. "I was open to doing look tests, but people thought that I'm a star-kid, I'm Govinda's daughter, so I might not be open to doing look tests. I can't help it if people want to cook up stories about me in their own head. I was open to look tests, I was open to screen tests. But it's fine. You can't be answering the same question to every casting person. So, I moved on."

A Life of Luxury and Newfound Contentment

While Tina's Bollywood dreams may not have materialized as planned, she has found joy and contentment in other pursuits. Working with her father not only allowed her to bond with him but also to embrace a more luxurious lifestyle. "I was getting better luxuries and treatment doing plan B. Why would I be a main lead and travel by economy when I can work with dad and get a first-class ticket?" she remarked with a laugh.

Tina added that shedding the 'unnecessary pressure' she had been carrying enabled her to focus on what truly mattered to her. "I decided to let go of the pressure and just live the life I was blessed with," she said.

Actors are investing in residential and commercial real estate



Bollywood stars are increasingly drawn to real estate investments, purchasing properties in luxury projects across Mumbai's prime areas, including Bandra, Khar, Lokhandwala in Andheri, and Worli. According to a report by Hindustan Times, these investments appeal not only for potential financial gain but also for benefits like portfolio diversification, tax savings, rental yields, privacy, and nostalgia. Read on:

Real estate experts note that Bollywood stars tend to invest at a project's launch stage or just before possession, allowing them to take advantage of better pricing and tax advantages. For example, Amitabh Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan recently purchased 10 apartments in Oberoi Realty's Eternia project in Mulund for approximately \$2.99 million, bringing their real estate portfolio to an estimated \$12 million in 2024. Between 2020 and 2024, their property investments reached \$26.4 million, including exits from properties like flats in Oberoi 360 West and family estates.

According to data from SquareYards, 62% of Bollywood's real estate transactions involve residential properties, with commercial assets becoming increasingly popular due to their stable rental yields. Major investments include Jhanvi Kapoor's \$20.28 million and Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone's \$18.72 million across various properties. Property values in these prime areas have shown consistent growth; Oberoi 360 West, for instance, increased from \$936 per square foot in 2017 to \$1,644 per square foot when Shahid Kapoor made his purchase there.

Commercial investments on the rise

Commercial properties in Mumbai are also attracting Bollywood stars for their rental income potential. Notable deals include Ajay Devgn's office lease in Andheri West, which generates a monthly rental of \$10,800, and Amitabh Bachchan's rental agreements on four commercial units in Oshiwara, yielding an annual income of \$248,400. Stars such as Kartik Aaryan, Manoj Bajpayee, Sara Ali

Khan, and Kajol also hold office spaces in the Lotus Signature Tower in Andheri. Additionally, Sonu Nigam purchased commercial properties in Andheri for \$1.36 million.

Privacy and end-use

Privacy is a significant factor for celebrities when selecting high-end properties. Many stars prefer homes with exclusivity or proximity to family members. Deepika Padukone's company, KA Enterprises, recently bought an apartment in Bandra West for \$2.14 million near her mother-in-law's home, emphasizing the preference for private yet family-centered living spaces. Similarly, Amitabh Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan acquired apartments on the same floor in Oberoi Sky City, Borivali, to enhance family convenience and privacy.

Emotional purchases and nostalgia

Emotional attachment to specific properties also influences celebrity purchases. Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan recently acquired two floors in a South Delhi building where his parents once lived, paying \$4.44 million. Akshay Kumar has similarly expressed interest in repur-

chasing his childhood home, formerly rented out for a modest \$6 per month, driven by nostalgic value. According to Amit Goyal of India Sotheby's International Realty, such sentimental transactions can set pricing benchmarks but are ultimately guided by market dynamics.

New destinations and land purchases

Stars are also exploring properties outside Mumbai. Amitabh Bachchan's recent acquisitions include land in Ayodhya and Alibaug, worth \$1.74 million. Similarly, Kriti Sanon invested in land at the Sol de Alibaug project, aiming for peace, privacy, and portfolio expansion. These land purchases often serve as personal retreats and potential long-term investments.

Market impact and disturbance quotient

While celebrity property buys don't always translate to increased sales, they significantly enhance a project's visibility. However, some boutique developers hesitate to sell to Bollywood stars due to potential disruptions in high-net-worth residential areas.

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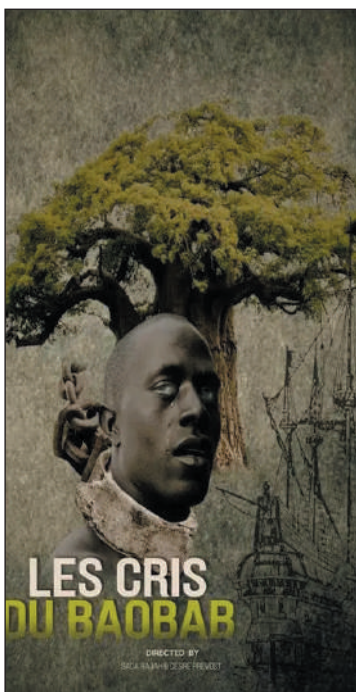




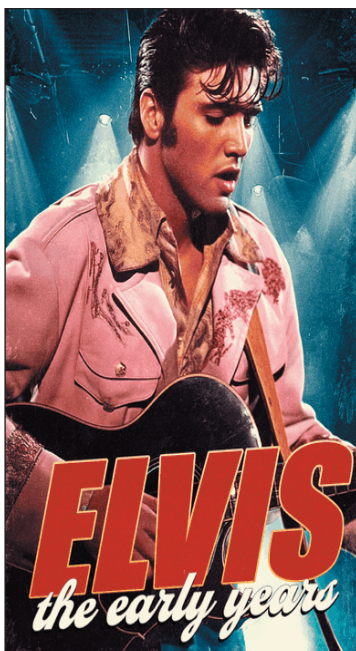
Vendredi 31 janvier - 20.10



Samedi 1 février - 20.10



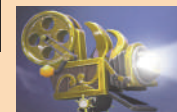
Dimanche 2 février - 20.10



Programme TV



SERIAL



vendredi 31 janvier

samedi 1 février

dimanche 2 février

lundi 3 février

MBC 1

07.30 Serial: Under Pressure
 08.35 Les Riches Pleurent Aussi
 09.40 Film: Lonely Are The Brave
 11.30 Your Love Is My Fortune
 12.00 Le Journal
 12.40 Tele: Wildflower
 13.30 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
 14.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder
 15.00 Live: Samachar
 15.21 Film: Christina Noble
 17.30 Your Love Is My Fortune
 18.30 Serial: Shiv Shakti
 19.00 Serial: Doree
 19.30 Le Journal
 20.35 Film: Pearl Harbour
 23.38 Tele: Wildflower
 00.57 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
 01.22 Serial: The Bionic Woman
 02.11 Serial: Le Chemin Du Destin
 02.35 Mag: Hollywood
 03.01 Mag: Red Carpet

03.46 Serial: Under Pressure
 04.35 Serial: Doc - Nelle Tue Mani
 06.16 Tele: All The Flowers
 06.42 Serial: Hooten & The Lady
 08.10 Serial: Blue Lights
 09.19 Serial: Under Pressure
 09.53 Serial: Doc - Nelle Tue Mani
 10.47 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
 15.21 Film: Skyscraper
 16.59 Tele: L'Empire Du Mensonge
 18.00 Live: Samachar
 18.31 Enter: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa...
 19.30 Le Journal
 20.10 Film: Les Cris Du Baobab
 21.40 Serial: Doc - Nelle Tue Mani
 22.34 Tele: Sublime Mensonge

02.22 Film: The President: Lyndon...
 05.37 Serial: Gout De L'amour
 06.20 Tele: All The Flowers
 06.50 Film: Les Cris Du Baobab
 08.20 Serial: Airwolf
 09.06 Film: Christina Noble
 10.48 Serial: F.B.I
 11.30 Tele: All The Flowers
 12.00 Le Journal
 12.35 Film: Lonely Are The Brave
 15.22 Film: Patch Adams
 18.00 Samachar
 18.31 Serial: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa L'il...
 19.18 Sayings Radha Krishna
 19.30 Le Journal Televisé
 20.10 Film: Elvis: The Early Years
 21.35 Serial: Airwolf
 22.21 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
 23.30 Le Journal
 00.05 Tele: Sublime Mensonge
 00.58 Serial: F.B.I

03.00 Tele: Wildflower
 03.50 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent
 05.06 Tele: Gout De L'Amour
 05.50 Serial: Amour Secret
 07.34 Serial: Stan Lee's Lucky Man
 08.42 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent
 09.35 Film: Elvis: The Early Years
 11.30 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune
 12.00 Le Journal
 12.25 Tele: Wildflower
 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin
 14.10 Serial: Stan Lee's Lucky Man
 15.00 Samachar
 15.20 Film: The Book Thief
 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: Wildflower
 22.45 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune

MBC 2

06.00 Rodrig: Komanter
 06.49 Local: Mémoire Et Liberté
 07.25 Local: Bricolo Ecolo
 10.25 Rodrig: Saver Lokal
 12.00 Rodrig: Komanter
 13.05 Local: Ti Zistwar Zanfan
 13.45 Rodrig: Nou La Ter
 14.15 Local: Proze Dime
 15.00 Local: Metie
 16.41 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 18.00 Seiral: Passion And Power
 18.30 Les Riches Pleurent
 19.25 Rodrig: 13 Minit Natir...
 19.45 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
 20.57 Local: Dance Fever
 22.53 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 23.00 Journal Kreol Rediffusion
 23.20 Rodrig Otantik
 23.52 Local: Couleur Marine
 00.21 Local: Saver Lokal
 00.39 Local: Meshiagare,....

06.00 Local: 13 Minit Natir Rodrig
 06.55 Local: Aktiv
 07.10 Local: Mémoire Et Liberté
 08.32 Local: Meshiagare...
 10.00 Local: J'ai Faim
 10.20 Live: Commemoration Of
 The 190th Anniversary Of
 The Abolition Of Slavery
 12.25 Enn Semenn Dan Lafrik
 13.10 La Journee Sous Le Regard...
 13.15 Local: Mémoire Et Liberté
 14.15 Local: Meshiagare...
 15.00 Local: Son Ladan Mem
 16.22 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 18.05 Serial: L'Homme Qui Valait
 Trois Milliards
 19.00 Zournal Kreol
 19.40 Rodrig: Coin Zen
 20.06 Local: Les Petits Genies
 20.30 Emission Speciale A
 L'Occasion De L'Abolition De
 L'Esclavage

06.15 Rodrig Prog: Coin Zen
 07.09 Local: En Forme
 09.05 Local: Saver Kiltirel
 09.35 25e Edision Festival Kreol
 10.21 Local: Artizan
 11.55 Emission Speciale
 13.25 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 14.10 Local: Exceptionnelles
 14.40 Local: En Forme
 17.15 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 17.20 Local: Tous Egaux
 17.33 Local: En Toute Intimite
 18.05 Serial: L'Homme Qui Valait
 Trois Milliards
 19.00 Zournal Kreol
 19.24 Local: Info En Langue...
 20.15 Local: Les Klips
 21.10 Local: Exceptionnelles
 21.36 Festival International Kreol
 23.05 Le Journee Sous Le Regard
 23.10 Zournal Kreol Rediffusion

08.40 Local: Glwar Dantan
 09.20 Local: Ti Zistwar Zanfan
 10.10 Local: Bricolo Ecolo
 12.00 Local: Nu Rasinn
 12.52 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 13.05 Local: Clin D'Oeil
 15.02 Local: Exceptionnelles
 16.00 Local: Les Klips
 16.43 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 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: Konn Ou Drwa
 21.01 Local: Tous Egaux
 21.15 Morisien Konn Ou La Sante
 22.07 Les Grandes Lignes
 22.31 Lir - Ekri Kreol Morisien
 22.58 La Journee Sous Le Regard
 23.25 Rodrig Mo Pei

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: Karambhumi
 Starring: Krishna Abhishek
 15.00 Live: Samachar
 15.20 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 Vishnou
 Hurry & Mahen Hurrupaul
 20.00 Local: Khel Khiladi
 20.30 Serial: Vidrohi
 21.00 Film: Heroine No 1
 Cast: Yash Mishra, Sameera
 Sheikh
 22.47 Serial: Mere Sai
 23.31 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya

05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
 06.59 Mag: Spotlight Cinema
 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 Vishnou...
 14.00 Serial: Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
 14.30 Mag: Talaash
 15.00 Samachar
 15.30 Film: Main Krishna Hoon
 Cast: Juhi Chawla, Paresh
 Ganatra, Namit Shah
 18.00 Live: Samachar
 18.30 Saying Radha Krishna
 19.15 Local: Gyan Vigyan Theme
 21.00 Film: Game
 Cast: Abhishek Bachan,
 Kangana Ranaut
 23.39 Local: Puranya Pakwan

06.59 Mag: Lights Camera
 08.00 Local: Hamar Fitness
 08.26 Local: Puranya Pakwan
 08.52 Local: Duniya Mein Iss...
 10.00 Serial: Mahabharat
 12.00 Film: Takkar
 15.00 Samachar
 15.30 Serial: Radha Krishna
 17.00 Bollywood Express
 18.00 Live: Samachar
 18.30 Planet Bollywood
 19.30 Local: Tohar Rashi
 20.31 Serial: Porus
 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein
 21.14 Naagin
 22.54 Serial: Bahubali
 23.33 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
 01.16 Planet Bollywood
 01.40 Local: Humni Ke Sitaare
 03.18 Local: Yaadein
 04.55 Film: Takkar

05.00 Mag: Aastha TV
 07.00 Tenali Rama
 07.12 Gadget Guru Ganesha
 07.23 Lambu G Tingu G
 08.00 Local: Planet Bollywood
 08.27 Local: Humni Ke Sitaare
 08.57 Local: Tohar Rashi
 09.40 Bahubali
 10.20 Dulhin Uhe Jo Nanad Man...
 11.30 Radha Krishna
 12.00 Film: Naalayak
 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: MBC Production
 20.30 Serial: Ramayan
 21.07 Film: Teen Deviyani
 With: Dev Anand, Nanda
 Karnatak, Simi Garewal
 23.01 Serial: Mere Sai

Cine 12

07.00 Mag: Border Crossing
 08.55 Doc: Protecting The Climate
 10.24 Doc: Multi Tasking
 11.37 Mag: Shift
 11.49 Mag: Carnet De Sante
 12.30 Mag: Tomorrow Today
 13.00 Mag: Rev Special
 14.07 Doc: Protecting The Climate
 15.00 Les Aventures Du Petit...
 15.26 D.Anime: Patamuse
 15.46 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go!
 16.11 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
 17.02 D.Anime: The Avatars
 17.30 Mag: Eco India
 18.00 Doc: Notre Dame De Paris
 18.42 Mag: Music Maestra
 19.28 Mag: Vous Et Vous
 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
 20.50 Doc: Smart Insects
 21.31 Doc: Collecting, Storing...
 22.18 Doc: Deep Sea Greed

06.00 D.Anime: Miraculous...
 06.43 D.Anime: Drole De Bocal
 08.34 Film: Bikes
 09.56 D.Anime: Baby Einstein 2
 10.08 Serial: Penny Su M.A.R.S
 10.53 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover...
 12.44 Doc: Smart Insects
 13.35 Film: Le Royaume De Dawn
 15.08 Les Aventures Du Petit...
 15.52 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go!
 16.10 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
 16.49 D.Anime: The Avatars
 17.15 Doc: Transylvania
 18.05 Mag: In Good Shape
 18.30 Doc: Top Div Sites
 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
 20.50 Doc: Europe's Oak...
 21.40 Film: The President: Lyndon
 23.22 Doc: Wake Up On Mars
 00.14 Doc: Green Shipping
 00.56 Doc: Europe Revealed
 Feeding Europe

08.41 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: Penny Sur M.A.R.S
 10.45 D.Anime: D.I.Y. Discover
 11.50 Mag: In Good Shape
 12.16 Doc: Top Dive Sites
 12.41 Mag: Afrimaxx
 15.00 Les Aventures Du Petit...
 15.11 D.Anime: Anna Et Ses Amis
 15.35 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob
 15.46 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go!
 16.11 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
 21.40 Film: The Birth Of A Nation
 Cast: Nate Parker, Armie Hammer, Mark
 Boone Junior

06.25 Doc: Brilliant Corners
 07.18 Mag: Arts Unveiled
 08.30 Doc: Smart New World
 10.00 The Language Of Whales
 10.43 Doc: Cobalt Rush
 11.25 Doc: Ageless Gardens
 11.48 Doc: Brilliant Corners
 12.43 Mag: Arts Unveiled
 13.09 Doc: A World Without Bees?
 15.00 Les Aventures Du Petit...
 15.27 D.Anime: Patamuse
 15.34 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob
 15.46 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go!
 16.20 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter
 17.04 D.Anime: The Avatars
 17.30 Doc: Punk Mum
 18.00 Mag: Eco Africa
 18.30 Mag: The 77 Percent
 19.30 Mag: In Good Shape
 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers
 21.20 Film: Skycraper
 Cast: Dwayne Johnson, Neve Campbell

Bollywood TV

14.25 Serial: Radha Mohan
 14.55 Serial: Doree
 15.30 Film: Door Ke Darshan
 Cast: Manu Rishi, Mahie Gill,
 Dolly Ahluwalia
 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 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se
 22.30 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan
 22.59 Serial: Rajaa Betaa
 23.30 Film: Door Ke Darshan
 Cast: Manu Rishi, Mahie Gill,
 Dolly Ahluwalia

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: Four Two Ka One
 With: Jimmy Shergill, Nikita
 Anand, Kurush Deboo, Dinesh
 Hingoo



20.50 Gadget Guru Ganesha
 21.00 Keh Doon Tumhein

00.00 Mithai
 02.35 Udaariyaan
 04.27 Anupamaa
 06.38 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki
 Kahani
 07.45 Tenali Rama
 08.00 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey
 10.00 Kundali Bhagya
 12.00 Rajaa Betaa
 14.00 Kismet Ki Lakiron Se
 16.00 Wagle Ki Duniya
 18.38 Film: Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki
 Jaan
 Cast: Salman Khan, Pooja
 Hegde, Venkatesh Daggubati
 20.48 Tenali Rama
 21.00 Mahabharat
 22.05 Dance India Dance Super
 Dances
 22.56 Rajaa Betaa
 00.46 Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey



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



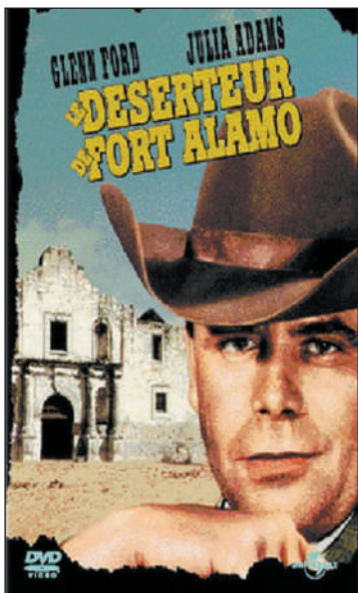
Mardi 4 fevrier - 20.10



Mercredi 5 fevrier - 20.45



Jeudi 6 fevrier - 21.20



Programme TV



	MBC 1	MBC 2	MBC 3	MBC 5	Bollywood TV
mardi 4 fevrier	04.53 Tele: Gout De L'Amour 05.40 Serial: Amour Secret 08.06 Tele: All The Flowers 09.30 Film: Skyscraper 11.31 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Wildflower 13.20 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 13.40 Tele: Passion And Power 15.21 Film: The Boat 17.35 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 18.00 Samachar 18.31 Serial: Shiv Shakti 18.58 Serial: Doree 19.30 Le Journal 20.10 Film: Commando 21.40 Tele: Wildflower 23.00 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 23.30 Le Journal 00.05 Doc: Nelle Tue Mani 01.00 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin	07.41 Local: Tous Egaux 10.27 Local: Mangeons Veg 11.15 Rodrig Prog: It's My Day 12.00 Rodrig: Feminin Pluriel 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Regard 13.31 Local: Tous Egaux 14.25 Lir - Ekir Kreol Morisien 15.15 Rodrig: Ala Nou Vini 15.38 Rodrig: Deccouvertes 16.50 La Journee Sous Le Regard 16.55 Local: Aktiv 18.00 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 18.29 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.04 Journal Kreol 19.24 Le Magazine De L'Emploi 20.04 Local: Encounter 20.33 Local: Priorite Sante 21.00 Local: Paroles Agricoles 21.35 Local: Le Mag 22.30 Local: Mots En Ecrits 22.54 La Journee Sous Le Regard	07.00 Serial: Tenali Rama 07.23 Serial: Lambu G Tingu G 08.00 MBC Production 10.07 Kundali Bhagya 11.41 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.01 Film: Ghar Dwaar 15.21 Other Serial: Radha Krishna 15.30 Serial: Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile Hamar 17.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Local: MBC Production 20.30 Serial: Ramayan 21.00 Film: Oh Bewafa Cast: Rajendra Kumar, Yogeeta Bali 23.36 Serial: Mere Sai 23.55 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya 00.47 Local: MBC Production	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 12.20 Mag: In Good Shape 13.00 Mag: Tomorrow Today 13.31 Mag: Washington Forum 14.57 Les Aventures Du Petit... 15.35 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob 15.50 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go! 16.21 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 17.30 Mag: Eco Africa 18.00 Mag: REV 18.30 Mag: Healthy Living 18.45 Mag: Red Carpet 17.30 Mag: Eco Africa 18.00 Mag: REV 18.30 Mag: Healthy Living 18.45 Mag: Red Carpet 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: Kyon Ki Cast: Salman Khan, Kareena Kapoor 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 Kismat Ki Lakiron Se 22.34 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 23.04 Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Kyon Ki Cast: Salman Khan, Kareena Kapoor 02.00 Kundali Bhagya 02.30 Udaariyaan
mercredi 5 fevrier	06.11 Serial: Amour Secret 07.28 Serial: Stan Lee's Lucky Man 08.12 Tele: All The Flowers 09.30 Film: Christina Noble 11.33 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune 12.00 Le Journal 12.25 Tele: Wildflower 13.14 Tele: Le Chemin Du Destin 13.37 Tele: Pasion Y Poder 14.15 Serial: Stan Lee's Lucky Man 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 20.10 Serial: Under Pressure 21.00 Serial: The Last Kingdom Cast: Alexander Dreymon, Emily Cox, Millie Brady	07.08 Local: En Forme 08.00 Nou Later Nou Lamer Nou... 09.30 Local: Le Mag 11.00 25e Edision Festival Kreol 12.00 Local: Itinerer Rodrig 12.39 Local: Son Ladan Mem 13.00 La Journee Sous Le Ragard 13.41 Rodrig Prog: Zenn Aktif 14.30 Local: Nu Rasinn 15.19 Local: A Nou Kwi 16.13 Local: Inspirasion 16.45 Local: En Forme 17.00 Local: Music Tour 18.00 Tele: Passion And Power 18.30 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent... 19.00 Journal Kreol 19.30 Local: Rodrig Spor 20.00 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 20.30 Local: Toc Toc Doc 20.45 Local: En Forme 21.00 Local: Agir Ensemble 21.30 Local: Les Klips	07.00 Tenali Rama 07.13 Gadget Guru Ganesha 07.33 Lambu G Tingu G 08.00 Local: MBC Production 10.00 Shaurya Aur Anokhi Ki Kahani 11.30 Serial: Radha Krishna 12.00 Film: Heera Cast: Sunil Dutt / Asha Parekh / Shatrughan Sinha 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: MBC Production 20.30 Talaash 21.00 Film: Ardhanari 23.30 Serial: Mere Sai 00.12 Serial: Wagle Ki Duniya	07.00 Mag: Made In Germany 08.34 Mag: Business Africa 10.00 Doc: Nato: Old Friends... 11.20 Mag: REV 12.46 Mag: Global US 13.15 Doc: Mothers In The Board... 15.01 Les Aventures Du Petit... 16.34 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob 16.46 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go! 16.20 D.Anime: Hunter X Hunter 17.04 D.Anime: The Avatars 18.30 Mag: Business Beyond 18.45 Mag: Planet A 19.00 Student Support Prog... 19.30 Doc: Superfood Berries 20.01 Tele: All The Flowers 20.30 Live: News 20.50 Doc: Choices 21.05 Film: Elvis: The Early Years 22.35 Mag: Close Up 23.01 Mag: Focus On Europe 23.27 Doc: The Lithium Ion	14.25 Radha Mohan 14.50 Doree 15.30 Film: Tell Me O Khuda Cast: Esha Deol, Arjan Bajwa, Sudhanshu Pandey 18.00 Live: Samachar 18.31 Kundali Bhagya 19.02 Udaariyaan 19.33 Dharam Patni 20.00 Mithai 20.31 Shrimad Ramayan 21.00 Anupamaa 21.28 Mere Sai 22.05 Keh Doon Tumhein 22.20 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 22.51 Serial: Rajaa Betaa 23.30 Film: Tell Me O Khuda 02.00 Kundali Bhagya 02.30 Udaariyaan 03.00 Dharam Patni
jeudi 6 fevrier	06.11 Tele: Amour Secret 08.09 Serial: All The Flowers 08.35 Tele: Les Riches Pleurent 09.30 Film: The Thaw 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 Milliards 15.25 Film: Elvis: The Early Years 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: Bezubaan Ishq Stars: Mugdha Godse, Sneha Ullal, Nishant Malkani 22.20 Tele: Wildflower 23.05 Tele: Your Love Is My Fortune	06.50 Local: Aktiv 07.59 Local: Glwar Dantan 08.30 Local: Evasion 10.46 Local: Saveurs Plus 12.00 Rodrig Spor 12.26 Mon Jardin Ma Maison 13.05 La Journee Sous Le Regard 14.05 Local: Generations J 15.00 Local: Saveurs Plus 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: Komanter 20.00 Local: Les Grandes Lignes 20.35 Local: Ti Zistwar Zanfan 20.50 Local: Evasion 21.00 Local: Le Mag 21.52 Rodrig-Klip Selektion 22.38 Local: Proze Dime	07.00 Tenali Rama 08.00 Local: MBC Production 10.00 Serial: Radha Mohan 12.00 Film: Saaya Cast: Shatrughan Sinha, Poonam Dhillon, Danny Denzongpa 15.00 Samachar 15.30 Sajanwa Bairi Ho Gaile... 15.56 Agniphera 17.30 Radha Krishna 18.00 Samachar 18.30 Sayings Radha Krishna 18.41 Local: MBC Production 20.35 Serial: Ramayan 21.01 Serial: Shiv Shakti 21.30 Yashomati Maiyya Ke Nandlala 21.57 Mag: Dharam Yatra 22.20 Mere Sai 23.08 Wagle Ki Duniya	07.00 Mag: Arts Unveiled 07.47 Apart-Mothers In Us Prisons 08.31 Doc: Close Up 10.10 Doc: I Want More 10.52 Doc: Japan Video Topics 11.01 Mag: Afrimaxx 12.05 Mag: Arts Unveiled 13.33 Mag: Close Up 14.42 Mag: Shift 15.00 Les Aventures Du Petit... 15.25 D.Anime: Patamuse 15.34 D.Anime: Kika Et Bob 15.47 D.Anime: Go Astro Boy Go! 16.13 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 21.05 Film: Le Deserteur De Fort...	14.25 Radha Mohan 15.00 Doree 15.25 Film: Sweetiee Weds NRI Stars: Himansh Kohli, Zoya Afroz, Darshan Jariwala 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 Keh Doon Tumhein 22.29 Mere Dad Ki Dulhan 23.05 Rajaa Betaa 23.31 Film: Sweetiee Weds NRI Stars: Himansh Kohli, Zoya Afroz, Darshan Jariwala



Jeudi 4 fevrier - 15.30

Stars: Himansh Kohli, Zoya Afroz, Darshan Jariwala



Jeudi 4 fevrier - 20.10

Stars: Mugdha Godse, Sneha Ullal, Nishant Malkani



Mauritian Connections in South Africa's Wine Industry

Angela van Bengale : The Indian Slave Brewer in South Africa

Is it not fascinating that a brewery started by the son of a Mauritian governor was inherited by a woman with Indian mother? One a slaver and another a slave.

Baljinder Sharma

Groot Constantia is one of South Africa's finest breweries. Its list of clients include General Napoleon Bonaparte, author Jane Austen, German Count Bismarck, King Philippe of France and poet Charles Baudelaire.

Before its establishment, sometime around 1685, the first governor of the Dutch Cape Colony, himself a botanist, Simon van Der Stel, had carried out an extensive survey in the region and found Constantia to have the best soils for grape plantations and wine production.

Like most Indians, I don't understand wine.

Yet, over the last three decades, I have acquired the essential skills to distinguish a good wine from a bad one. The wine at Groot Constantia is good - I can say. I drank a lot of it - freely mixing the red and white - eventually remem-



bering nothing except that it was a pleasant experience.

That day, last year, while tasting the beautiful wines in the sprawling precinct of Simon - a restaurant named after its founder, and reading its history in the brochure, one name caught my attention. It was Anna de Koningh.

But what is so special about Anna de Koningh? Well, she was a rare woman who owned a brewery in the seventeenth century Cape.

Anna de Koningh was the wife of Olof Bergh, who bought the portion of the land from Simon van Der Stel after his death. This place became known as Groot Constantia, and when Olof Bergh passed away in 1724, Anna de Koningh inherited the winery.

The most interesting thing about Anna de Koningh is that she was the daughter of a freed slave called Angela van Bengale, an Indian who was brought to Cape Town aboard the ship Pins Willem in 1662 and was sold to Jan Van Riebeeck, the then colonial administrator and a well-known name in South African history.

It is believed that Angela (perhaps her original name was Anjali) was kidnapped as a child in the Ganges plains by slave catchers and then transported and sold in the bazaars of Batavia (modern day Indonesia),

She was resold to another burgher (that is how Dutch settlers were called in South Africa) and when her owner Abraham Gabbema, left for Jakarta - she was freed.

As a free woman, Angela van Bengali was taken on by several men including the Belgian businessman François de Koninck, who is the presumed father of Anna de Koningh.

Angela had subsequently married Arnoldus Willemsz Basson, with whom she went on to have seven more children.

Through her early arrival at the Cape, as well as through the parentage of several children, Angela is considered to be a "founding mother" ("stammoeder") of many present-day South Africans, including the Basson family.

The brewery has a strange Mauritian connection too.

Its founder Simon van Der Stel - the then Governor of Cape Colony, was the son of Adriaan van Stel, an official of the Dutch East India Company and Maria Lievens - a creole mother (Dutch father and Malay mother) who he had married in March 1639 in Batavia (Indonesia).

Simon was born at sea and spent his youth in Mauritius where Adrian served as the Governor from 1640 to 1645.

The Dutch East India Company, as the name suggests, was established in 1602 to trade with countries bordering the Indian Ocean. This was nearly a century after the Portuguese explorer Vasco Da Gama discovered a maritime route to the East by successfully navigating the southernmost tip of Africa, Cape of Good Hope, and reaching Calicut in 1498.

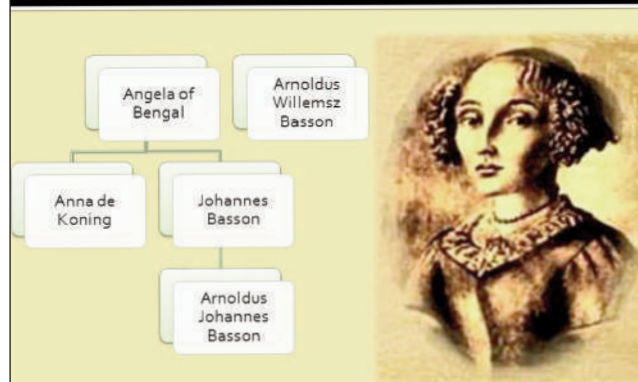
By that time, the Portuguese, the French and the British had monopolised the lucrative spice trade with India. The Dutch were therefore compelled to go further East to look for alternative source of spices. They were to hit gold with the discovery of nutmeg - a wonder fruit that had near magical properties - given its use in medicine and in food preservation. The Cape was an important resting place between Batavia and Netherlands.

Is it not fascinating that a brewery started by the son of a Mauritian governor was inherited by a woman with Indian mother?

One a slaver and another a slave. And how history fused them so tightly that the stout black guide who supervised our wine tasting that day was absolutely unaware of it.

But that is how history is told and retold. Remembering and reinforcing certain parts. Forgetting others.

Angela of Bengal



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