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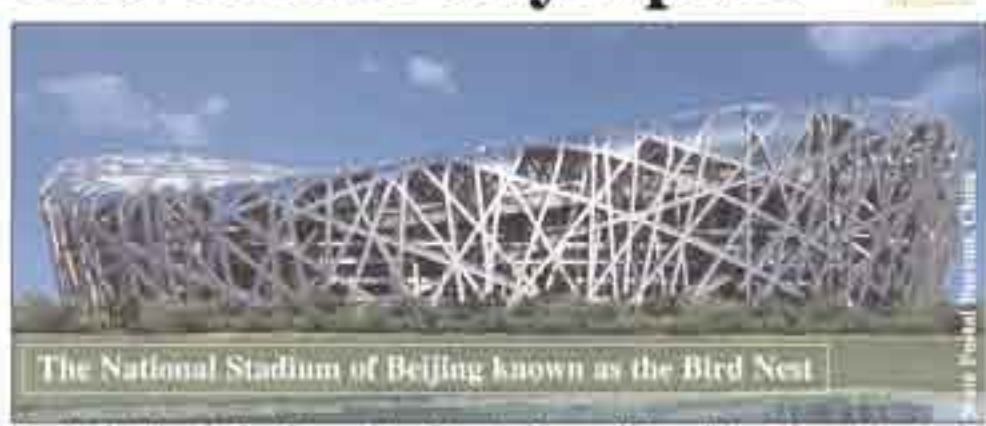


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International event
The China Olympiad



The National Stadium of Beijing known as the Bird Nest

For the first time in the history of the Olympic Games, China will host the greatest series of competitions on earth. The countdown is nearing the end and the games will be full swing soon.

It was on July 31, 2001 on the occasion of the 112th session of the International Olympic Committee in Moscow that China was designated as the 2008 host country among such contenders as Turkey, Japan, France and Canada.

The Opening Ceremony will start at 8 hours 8 minutes 8 seconds of the evening (local time) of 8 August 2008 (08-08-08-08-08-08) - the Number 8 being a symbol of prosperity within the Chinese culture. It will then be 1pm in England and 2 o'clock in France. The XXIXth Olympiad will last up to August 24, and is expected to enlist the participation of 10,000 competitors from 200 nations.

The variety of events will take place in the city of Beijing itself - in the Olympic Park Zone, in the North and West Zones, the University Zone and other quarters of this immense and magnificent metropolis.

Some events will be held outside the Chinese capital. In the provinces, some towns are co-organisers of certain competitions. Football matches will be organised in Shanghai, Tianjin, Qinhuangdao and Shenyang (Manchuria). Sailing at the international marina of Qingdao - 690 km from Beijing, and Riding in Hong Kong.

It may be noted that the Paralympic Games will take place in September which we may cover in our next issue.

See Page 19 for some of the Olympic venues



Gilles Berger (Paris)

Le Morne inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage List



The World Heritage Committee, which met in Quebec City in early July inscribed Le Morne (Small mountain), south of Mauritius, on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

According to UNESCO, Le Morne was used as a shelter by runaway slaves (maroons), through the 18th and early years of the 19th centuries. Protected by the mountain's isolated, wooded and almost inaccessible cliffs, the escaped slaves formed small settlements in the caves and on the summit of Le Morne.

The oral traditions associated with the maroons, have made Le Morne a symbol of the slaves' fight for freedom, their suffering, and their sacrifice, all of which have relevance to those countries from which free people were captured and made into slaves, namely the African mainland, Madagascar, India, and South-east Asia.

Mauritius, an important stopover in the eastern slave trade, also came to be known as the 'Maroon republic' because of the large number of escaped slaves who lived in Le Morne, says UNESCO.

Mr Kemalkhan Jawas of Scotland, lucky winner of MN June Draw for a return ticket to Mauritius offered by Air Mauritius. "I've just come back from Mauritius, and thanks to Mauritius News and Air Mauritius I'll go again!" he told us on reading the news of his good luck in the paper. Congratulations once again to Mr Jawas.
 (You could be the next winner!)



Destination: Sri Lanka, country to visit. See Page 7

For your diary:
 Events in August
 See page 10

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Electoral Reform

The Tamil Status within the Mauritius Constitution

by Dr Sattyvel P. Moolien

Forty years after independence, I believe it is now the right time, to debate and resolve the various discrepancies and misnomers that exist in the Mauritius Constitution since any electoral reform should be done in the context of a constitutional reform exercise.

There is now a pressing need to debate and resolve what some people have over the years invariably called the 'Hindu Question' or the 'Tamil dilemma'. Both expressions succinctly epitomize the problem in question.

Preceding Independence, the Fathers of the Mauritius Constitution recognized the need to acknowledge the existence of various ethnic groups that made up the Mauritian population. This is in line with normal practice anywhere in the world, as the plethora of needs of the population cannot be effectively met if the precise ethnic mix is not known.

The initial breakdown was very crude but understandable within the context of a population reaching not even the million mark at the time. The action of the political scalpel resulted in a division along country of origin, that is, Indo-Mauritians, Sino-Mauritians and by default the 'catch-all' denomination: General Population.

Then in a remarkable move, Sir R Mohamed replicated what Jinnah had achieved in 1947 India. He triggered the subdivision of the Indo-Mauritian group into Hindus and Muslims. Sir R Mohamed, the then leader of the Comité d'Action Musulman achieved his mission: uphold the interests of the Muslim population right from the outset of the Mauritian nation. Unfortunately, T Narrainen and the other leaders of the Tamil United Party failed to grasp the nettle and consequently did not see it fit at that time to demand a separate Tamil denomination. Was it shortsightedness or political expediency? We may never know.

It is vital that we do not miss the boat this time round. Although most Tamils are of Hindu faith, the interests of the community would be better served if they were not lumped together with other Mauritians of Hindu faith irrespective of ethnicity in order to achieve the mythical 52% to form the majority of the electorate. The Tamils have had enough of playing the role of makeweight, the 10% or so that continuously props up the so-called Hindu majority with little or no achievement to show for it.

In Mauritius, the Tamils are a distinct ethnic group of about 100 000 Hindus, Catholics, Church of England and other religious denomination. We share a common Dravidian ancestry that dates back thousands of years, a common language and culture and more importantly a distinct identity that we wish to preserve by fending for ourselves within the Mauritian microcosm. We have little in common with the other Hindus.

Apart from a small Telegu element, the other Mauritian Hindus are of a totally different ancestry, culture, tradition and language. Even the practice of the glorious Vedic rituals by the Tamils is largely different due to its immunity of influence from Mogul India. Indeed, I have yet to come across a Mauritian Tamil in Mauritius, UK or anywhere in the world who thinks of himself as fundamentally of Hindu denomination. The individual is first and foremost a Mauritian Tamil.

Copy of this article has been sent to H.E. Mr M. Kundasamy, Mauritius High Commissioner (UK); Dr Vel Pillay, Editor, Vannakkam, Moka, Mauritius; Mr Seeven Arassen, President, l'Union Tamoule de Maurice, Belle Etoile, Mauritius; Mr Retnon Poyendee, President, Tamil League, Reduit, Mauritius.

Editor's Note: In a previous article, Dr Moolien advocated the Right to Vote in Mauritius for overseas Mauritians.

The Tamils are proud of their distinct identity and their glorious past. We have had the confidence to 'go it alone'. We have had enough of being the metaphorical wugging tail of the dog. Indeed this is what we have been doing since Independence. The majority element of the mythical 52% of the electorate has always flexed its muscle and took the unfairly bigger share of the Mauritian cake.

Before some Mauritians become agitated and start to cry foul, the Tamils have never in 40 years of independence engaged in any activity that might undermine ethnic harmony and diversity in Mauritius. Even the incident associated with the infamous bank note saga of a few years ago was not originated by us. In this instance, the Tamils were the innocent victims of the action of others. They came together and successfully fought back.

The Tamils wherever they are in the world rightly think of themselves as Tamils, not as Hindus. In Mauritius, the existence of social organizations such as the Tamil League, Union Tamoule and Vannakkam (an active monthly Tamil newspaper) are examples of a distinct ethnic group.

There are only two countries that actively recognize and firmly acknowledge the Tamils as a distinct ethnic group irrespective of religious faith: India and Singapore. Needless to say these are the two countries where the Tamils have contributed the most to the building of a vibrant nation while improving their status and welfare in the community.

At the other end of the spectrum is Sri Lanka where effectively the Tamils are the marginalized victims of Sinhalese hegemony. The President of India until last year, Dr A Kalam, hails from Tamil Nadu. Although he is a Tamil of Muslim faith, he was regarded as the 'representative' of all Tamils irrespective of their religions.

Being swamped in a Hindu potpourri is and will never be the way forward for the Tamils in Mauritius. The time has come to rectify the mistakes of the past and to engage confidently in the future within the Mauritian rainbow of brotherhood and mutual respect. We need to climb from a position of being offered crumbs to a position where we truly enjoy the bread of our endeavour in all fields.

Over the last 40 years we have been driving into the future while looking in the rear view mirror. An eloquent example of this is the choice of the Thaipoosum Cavadee as the annual holiday for the Tamil community. This is a fervent religious occasion for the Tamils of Hindu faith marked by days of strict fasting. The appropriate day that should have been chosen is the Varusha Pirappu, the Tamil New Year. This would have provided an ideal annual platform for Tamils of all faiths to come together, to 'fly the flag' and pave the way forward.

I am urging Vannakkam, Mauritius News, the Tamil League, l'Union Tamoule de Maurice, and organisations of a similar ilk to come together and lobby the government in a sustained way to finally achieve what we should have achieved 40 years ago. Our identity needs to be unequivocally restored so that we can rightly take our legitimate place at the table of Mauritian progress and development. The Creoles are leading the way, we certainly have the brains and brawns, in our midst, to do likewise.

Allegation of abuse of power

A letter to us from reader, S (Moti) Seechurn, MA, LL.B, LL.M, LONDON, draws attention to the appointment of a Mauritian folksinger as Cultural Adviser attached to the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) office in London. Mr Seechurn's letter has been published in full in *Le Défi*, a weekly paper in Mauritius.

Mr Seechurn assumes, in his mail, that the folksinger, in his post as a cultural adviser, is going "to teach the British (white) people to dance the sega, preserving our culture."

Because the folksinger has been sent from Mauritius to work at the MTPA office in London, Mr Seechurn argues that "in the UK, among the Mauritian immigrants, we have lots of Mauritian young people who can dance the sega, and who at the same time hold Degrees and Masters in Travel and Tourism. They can do the same job ..."

Mr Seechurn attacks "politicians who abuse their power." He makes allegations of another case of unfairness which occurred under a previous government which led to the transfer of a civil servant from the Mauritius High Commission in London to make room for another person from France. He says "I personally, as a Mauritian settled in the U.K, voiced my feeling, expressed my disgust ... and ruffled a few feathers. It was then and only then that a lady from Mauritius was ushered in to calm the situation."

Mr Seechurn alleges that the above incident occurred under Paul Bérenger as PM. "I am fully aware that in Mauritius, like me, there are many other people who reckon that politicians of any party, regardless of which colour, abuse their power. Unfortunately those people cannot voice their feeling for fear of reprisal," says Mr Seechurn.

MN comments: This is a very strong-worded email of 700 words we have received from Mr Seechurn, from which we have taken above extracts of less than 300 words.

Mr Seechurn's point that an employee posted from Mauritius had to return home may find answer in the fact that under the MMM government of 1982, it was made clear that after a tour of duty of three years in an overseas mission, officials had to return to base in Mauritius, or be moved to other diplomatic missions.

At the end of their tour of duty, officials knew they had to make room for other diplomats to have the opportunity to serve in the UK. That alleged victim referred to by Mr Seechurn could have reached the end of her tour of duty at the High Commission when she was asked to come back home.

Sir Dayendranath Burrenchobay, Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office in the late 1960s, under whose control were the Embassies and High Commissions before the creation of the External Affairs Ministry, wrote to the High Commissioner in London to say that civil servants posted to the mission should not be allowed "to take roots" in the UK.

Even the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Whitehall) once wrote to respective governments (through their Embassies and High Commissions) to intimate that it was their responsibility to ensure that their diplomats and other officials leave the UK at the expiry of their posting. All that, probably, with the idea of preventing that 'Mugabe syndrome' when people want to stay put especially when the salaries, privileges, the perks, and the good life are so attractive, and even wonderful. The problem is made worse when spouses (male as well as female) do not want to go home. This is a dilemma for the Mauritius Ministry of External Affairs.

As regards Mr Seechurn's comment about the new posting to the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA), such posting is really baffling when, to all intents and purposes, the MTPA London office should have been closed some time ago. From what we understood from Tourism Minister Xavier Duval's speech in London in March, the British firm BGB, specialists in PR and Travel (see more on BGB's website), had been appointed to replace the MTPA office in London. Why the MTPA HQ from home is still appointing new people, or make new appointments to the London office, baffles not only Mr Seechurn. We receive quite a bit of comments about this practice especially from readers with grievances against the administration. We are solicited to give publicity to those comments, but we try to remain neutral, as much as possible.

Earlier this year, college students marched in the streets of Port Louis to protest against the government's intention to abolish the subsidy on the entry fees for the Overseas Cambridge School Certificate and Higher School Certificate examinations. When the Government in the end gave way, it was made known that a sum of 140 million rupees had been transferred from the budget of the MTPA to finance the subsidy on those overseas examinations. It was announced then that this cut would result in the closure of the MTPA's London and Paris offices.

Perhaps, after all 'le pays regorge d'argent' as one political figure used to say. "We have put the smile on people's face, said the Finance Minister recently, following the substantial salary increase to civil servants, parliamentarians and all.

Peter Chellen

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Patrimoine mondial

Le Morne et l'Aapravasi ghat

par Khal Toorabally

Maurice possède la chance exceptionnelle de réunir deux sites du Patrimoine Mondial sur son territoire

Plus qu'une juxtaposition, il nous faut un itinéraire doublé d'une passerelle entre l'Aapravasi ghat* et le Morne

Ce 7 juillet 2008, le Morne, après l'Aapravasi ghat, devient le deuxième lieu mauricien à être inscrit au Patrimoine Mondial de l'Humanité de l'Unesco, et il importe de nous ouvrir à cette magnifique opportunité de faire de notre pays la terre de prédilection du dialogue entre ces deux mémoires. C'est mon plaisir.

Je le dis d'emblée: je me réjouis de l'inscription du Morne au Patrimoine Mondial de l'Humanité. Ce double classement est une chance extraordinaire offerte à Maurice pour mener un travail de mémoire, et je félicite ici le gouvernement de Navin Ramgoolam pour ses efforts couronnés de ce beau succès.

Et je ne saurais comprendre une absence de volonté de conjurer les symboliques de ces deux lieux. Il s'agit de créer un mouvement vers et entre eux, propre à la politique interculturelle de l'Unesco. C'est dans ce sens qu'ont été créés les programmes intitulés la « Route de la Soie », voie mythique entre l'Est et l'Ouest, où marchandises, idées et civilisations ont transité et dialogué, et la « Route de l'Esclave », qui, dans la matrice du commerce triangulaire, a façonné l'histoire de l'Afrique et des Amériques, ou des « Routes de l'Héritage Al-Andalus » articulant les cultures, savoirs et arts de l'Europe, du monde arabe et de l'Afrique noire. Ces itinéraires ont mis en exergue ce que les histoires et les civilisations se doivent les unes aux autres. Ces routes ou chemins développent un tourisme culturel basé sur la connexion des voies touristiques existantes et des sites de valeur symboliques tels le ghat ou le Morne. « Via Romana », par exemple, a relié les attractions touristiques et les sites archéologiques romains, notamment à travers l'Italie, la France, la Belgique, le Royaume-Uni...

Aussi, considérant la chance exceptionnelle que Maurice possède de réunir deux sites du Patrimoine Mondial sur son territoire, il serait impensable que l'état n'établisse point un itinéraire entre ghat et Morne, dans le cadre d'un « Itinéraire de la mémoire », par exemple, proposant un programme culturel et historique qui donnerait du poids au tourisme culturel durable. Il serait judicieux de s'y pencher déjà, non seulement pour engranger les bénéfices économiques d'une telle conjonction, mais aussi pour agrandir les consciences et approfondir la lecture des histoires, ici et ailleurs.

Donner une symbolique fraternelle, transculturelle à ce dialogue entre esclavage et engagement, c'est notre mission à tous, gouvernement, intellectuels, artistes et citoyens et citoyennes de ce pays et au-delà des frontières mauriciennes. A l'orée des travaux de la Commission Justice et Vérité, ce classement ne pouvait mieux indiquer la voie à suivre...

Que peut-on lire du ghat et du Morne ?

Le ghat et le Morne laissent poindre l'ancrage d'un d'humanisme du Divers, en adéquation avec la poétique de la coolitude (1), née du terroir mauricien et d'autres visions de la mémoire et des identités, qui sont loin de définitions exclusives, meurtrières, car mon but n'est pas de renoncer à la diversité en m'ouvrant sur les points nodaux de l'expérience de l'engagé cool, que j'appréhende sous l'angle de son statut juridique, économique et esthétique, et principalement sous l'angle des brassages des mémoires, des cultures et des identités plurielles. Humanisme du Divers, car nous sommes, sur ces rives, tous autant enfants des Indes, de Chine, de l'Europe, des Afriques comme de l'espace arabo-musulman (2).

Dans la coolitude, pour expliquer simplement un concept de la complexité, je mets en présence les différences, les similarités, les visions du monde de ces pages de l'Histoire façonnée par la division internationale du travail du 19^{ème} siècle, en rappelant la mosaïque des peuplements des terres où esclaves et engagés ont froissé leurs seurs et leurs cultures pour donner à tant d'autres géographiques et humaines ce visage particulier où les Indes et les autres espaces ont été mis en présence. Ce processus de mise en relation s'en trouve amplifié avec la globalisation actuelle. Sans préjuger des futures

productions, des négociations ont lieu actuellement, par exemple, entre Hollywood et Bollywood, pour développer leurs présences cinématographiques aux Indes comme ailleurs. Autre signe que la coolitude n'attend pas et suit un mouvement incontournable de brassage de mémoires et d'imaginaires.

Maurice, puisque le classement du Morne est confirmé, est devenu le premier lieu au monde peut, avec ses spécificités et à sa mesure, servir de réceptacle à ce brassage entre les diverses mémoires de l'engagement et de l'esclavage. Maurice aura donc le rare privilège de croiser deux lieux de mémoire, ghat et Morne, et non de les livrer à des considérations susceptibles d'entériner des exclusions ou des fermetures à l'encontre même de la symbolique de ces lieux classés comme patrimoine de l'humanité et non de groupes particuliers. Ce lieu doit être un contenant digne, et propulser une symbolique, un sens éducatifs pour l'ensemble des humains, c'est sa vocation intrinsèque. Le travail de la coolitude a commencé ici il y a plus de 20 ans : Maurice peut se prévaloir de ce capital culturel, intellectuel et humain pour développer une essence humaine.

Le devoir du travail de mémoires entre Ghat et Morne

L'Aapravasi ghat, ex-coolie ghat et le Morne, deux lieux sur la mer indienne, en cette terre mauricienne exigüe. L'un pour accueillir les engagés de divers pays et l'autre pour héberger des esclaves marrons qui s'y sont suicidés pour ne pas sombrer dans l'asservissement, comme le souligne la mémoire collective.

Une topographie contrastée mais une relation à l'espace très proche : un morne est un flanc de montagne, souvent au bord de l'eau, un ghat est un endroit au bord de l'eau aussi. L'un pour l'entrée au pays mauricien, et aussi pour un transit des engagés. L'autre pour un refuge et une sortie tragique.

Ces deux trajets, ces deux trajectoires, cependant, aussi éloignés qu'ils puissent paraître, ont un chemin de traverse fondée sur une logique économique inique, induisant des migrations massives, forcées ou d'apparence consentante. Avec leurs tailles de représentations qui se mêlent, se brouillent, avec des itinéraires à établir.

Si l'esclavage fut la clé des voûtes des systèmes plantationnaires tels que le sucre, le coton, le café, l'indigo ou l'hévéa, il n'en demeure pas moins que c'est la même logique qui eut recours à l'engagement pour poursuivre les productions coloniales, avec une différence juridique considérable : le coolie avait un statut de migrant et de salarié, défini par un contrat, normalement respecté au lendemain des abolitions de la traite, alors que l'esclave ne fut que pièce d'ébène, objet, charrie, outil aratoire. Il fut même privé de son nom.

Deux espaces symboliques qui doivent continuer à oeuvrer pour le recouvrement des mémoires, et à indiquer un dépassement dans une articulation pouvant créer les prémisses d'une meilleure compréhension entre descendants de deux histoires qui ont acquis un statut désormais reconnu de la part de pays qui ont pratiqué l'esclavage, les traites négrières et l'engagement, comme l'attestent le classement du ghat, la célébration du bicentenaire de l'abolition de l'esclavage en GB ou l'établissement de la Journée de la mémoire annuellement en France.

Le ghat ouvre la voie vers le Morne, cette pente se fendant d'une chute vertigineuse dans l'océan Indien. Le Morne regarde vers cet espace d'autres damnés de la canne, où le dialogue reste à faire.

(A suivre)

* N de la R: Aapravasi Ghat est l'hindoustani pour l'expression Coolie Gate, une série de marches en pierre à côté du port à Port-Louis où débarquèrent les travailleurs engagés de l'Inde durant le 19^e siècle.

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| Sat 28 Jun | 7 - 12 - 19 - 23 - 46 - 48 - 28 |

Euro Millions (Draw every Friday)

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Fri 25 | 7 - 11 - 15 - 24 - 29 - 2 - 7 |
| Fri 18 | 10 - 14 - 16 - 29 - 44 - 5 - 6 |
| Fri 11 | 9 - 11 - 13 - 19 - 37 - 3 - 4 |
| Fri 04 | 7 - 19 - 22 - 27 - 48 - 5 - 7 |
| Fri 27 Jun 08 | 5 - 20 - 26 - 44 - 50 - 5 - 7 |

These results have been obtained from the National Lottery, Mauritius News accepts no liability for any misprints or discrepancies in the results published in this column

Exchange Rates

| | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1.00 GBP = | 1.269 EUR |
| 1.00 EUR = | 41.56 MUR |
| 1.00 USD = | 26.63 MUR |
| 1.00 GBP = | 52.74 MUR |

*Figures correct at the time of going to press

A thought for the month

Earth was created first, and then used
as a model for the creation of hell.

Anom

Mauritius holidays for 2008

For the rest of the Year

August 15 - Assumption

September 4 - Ganesh Chaturthi

October 1 - Eid-ul-Fitr *

October 28 - Divali

November 2 - Arrival of Indentured Labourers

December 25 - Christmas

* Subject to the validity of the moon

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The Travel Scene

Sri Lanka: The focal point in The Ramayana

The Ramayana tells the story of Rama, considered by many Hindus as the incarnation of God. Rama is also the name by which God is known by monotheist Hindu believers - as the one and only God. God is known by different appellations in the other monotheistic religions according to local language.

The Ramayana was written in Sanskrit by sage Valmiki over one thousand years BC. It is an epic made up of the Vedas and the Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita etc. These books are considered by Hindus as being the Holy Scriptures for the purpose of worship.

The events of The Ramayana of course took place in India and the action unfolded in many localities of the subcontinent in the same way that the history of the birth of other religions took place in different countries of the world.

Sri Lanka was, in its early history, part of India before being thrown apart by any geographical convulsion. The ancient people of Sri Lanka would have been close to the Hindu faith associated with The Ramayana before the later visit of The Buddha to that country, a couple of 100 years BC.

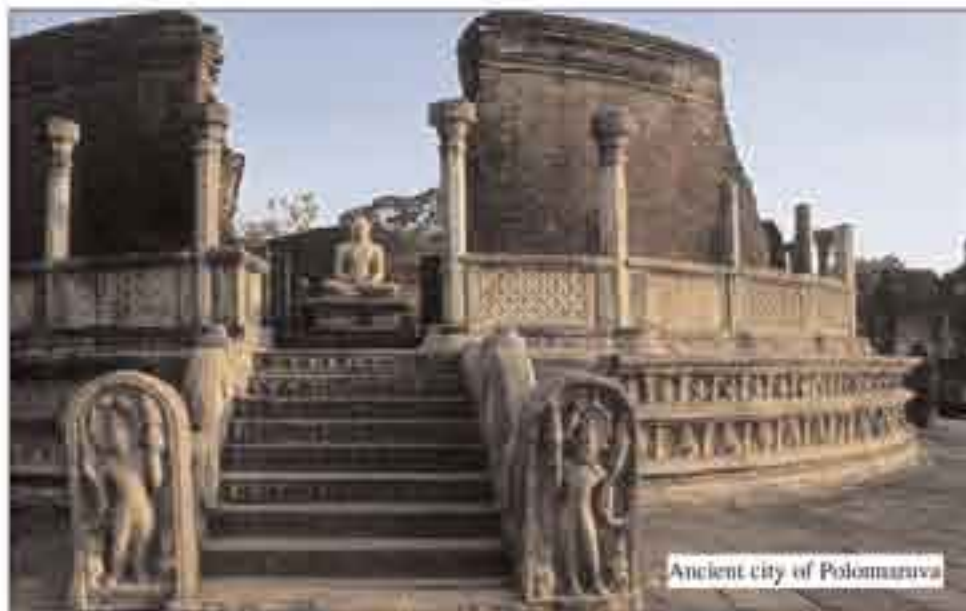
The article below on Sri Lanka from the country's tourist office, attempts to indicate to visitors those localities which were connected with the events of The Ramayana. It will be of greater interest to readers with a grasp of the story told by author Valmiki.

P.C.



Dambulla caves in South of Sri Lanka. Inset: Szejiya, one of the amazing carvings on cave walls.

The Christening and Nomenclature: Some amusing facts



Ancient city of Polonnaruwa

Sri Lanka has always been referred to as "Ratna Dweepa" (Isle of Gems), and is well reputed for having 75 of world's 200 minerals which qualify to be classified as gemstones.

The tear-drop shaped island of exotic beauty mentioned in the stories of Sinbad, this land of three visits by Lord Buddha between 528 BC and 520 BC has also impressed 5th century Chinese monk Fa-Hien and 11th century traveller Marco Polo. Referred to as Taprobane by Romans and Serandib by the Arabs, it was called Ceilao by the Portuguese who controlled it from 1505 for cinnamon and other spices. Zeilan by the Dutch who seized control in 1656, and Ceylon by the British who finally established crown colony and controlled it wholly by 1815. The country gained independence in 1948 and adopted its current name in 1972.

Predominantly Buddhist, Sri Lanka shares a special bond with India geographically, historically, culturally and spiritually. The 7-chapter epic Ramayana begins with King Dasarudha's Ayodhya in India and climaxes at Ravana's Lankapuram.

Millions of years ago, Sri Lanka was geologically linked with India and other countries in a land-mass called Gondwana, and was

seismically propelled into a separate land mass while part of it submerged into the sea. This submerging is widely attributed to the misdeeds of King Ravana.

Unveiling the road to Ramayana

The following are the Sri Lankan sites associated with Ramayana.

Weragantota (located close to Mahiyangana town): The first place where Ravana brings Sita Devi into Lanka in his plane Pushpaka Vimana and holds her captive in queen Mandodari's beautiful palace in **Sita Kotuwa** (now in Gurulupotha near Hasalaka town) before moving her to Ashok Vatika. The palace is said to have been surrounded by streams and waterfalls in a beautiful setting. Weragantota means a place for aircraft landing in Sinhalese.

The Chariot Path (Ramboda Hills): This is the beautiful route taken by Ravana while relocating Sita Devi to Ashok Vatika. Part of the path is still visible. A pond is believed to have been formed by the tears of Sita which has not dried up even during severe droughts when the adjoining rivers do. This area is also unique to bright coloured Sita flowers

which have a peculiar configuration resembling a human figure with a bow.

Sita Eliya and Ashok Vatika (close to Nuwara Eliya city): Sita was held captive in Sita Pokuna at the top of Hakgala Rock jungle. The Hakgala Gardens located at the base form part of Ashok Vatika.

Istripura (in Welimada area): An area having a network of caves, tunnels and paths, it refers to the place that had renunciate of ladies Ravana made available to look after Sita.

Ussangoda (on the southern coast): Lord Hanuman uproots trees and causes destruction to gain Ravana's attention and invite battle. As a punishment, his tail was set on fire by the rakshasa guards. This is one of the torched areas which hold burnt effect as a reminder of Hanuman's escapade.

Rumassala Sanjeevani drops near Galle: Hanuman was summoned to get life-saving herbs from Sanjeevani Parvatha situated near Mt. Kailash in the Himalayas that are necessary to save unconscious Lakshmana hit by powerful arrows. As Hanuman was not able to identify the herbs, he is said to have uprooted the whole mountain and brought it. Besides here, parts of the mountain fell at 4 other places in Sri Lanka.

Laggala (behind Dumuville Lake near Matale and Wasgamuwa National Park): The sentry point from where glimpse of Rama's army was sighted and reported to Ravana. Lord Rama fired Brahmastram arrow from Dumuville which eventually killed Ravana at Laggala.

Divurumpola (near Sita Eliya): The place where

Sita Devi performed Agni Pariksha, the test of fire. Villagers still pledge their fidelity or take oaths here. Even the legal system permits and accepts these oaths at the temple while settling disputes.

Manavari, Thiru Koneshwaram, Thiru Ketheshwaram in Sri Lanka and Rameshwaram in India: Ravana was a Brahmin. Killing him results in Brahmahatya Dosham. Upon praying at **Muneshwaram** and seeking remedy for removing it, Lord Shiva advised Rama to install and pray four Lingams at these places.

Kelaniya Buddhist temple (near Colombo): Vibhishana ruled this place after being crowned by Lakshmana. Murals are enshrined outside the Buddhist temple depicting the crowning.

Annually about 100,000 people from the UK and Ireland visit Sri Lanka which also offers excellent beaches, water sports, wildlife, spa treatments and famed Ceylon tea. A wide range of hotels, boutiques and guest houses is available. No mandatory inoculations are required. Approximately £1=LKR 220

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau



Text compiled by Ragasudha Vinjamuri, Senior Lecturer in Tourism



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Job Opportunities in a World-Class Hospital in Mauritius

Apollo Bramwell Hospital will opening during the early 2009 and will be a new high-tech 200 bed multidisciplinary hospital situated in Moka, providing world class health care in Mauritius.

Apollo Bramwell Hospital is being set up in collaboration with the Apollo Group of Hospitals, India, the largest Healthcare Group in Asia with more than 7,000 beds in over 38 hospitals worldwide.

We are now looking for highly motivated and dedicated medical, nursing and medical technical professionals to join our health care team in the following positions:

MEDICAL (ABH/MD08)

(a) **Consultants** with a minimum of 5 years post graduation / super specialization experience in the following specialities:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| - Anaesthesiology | - Gastroenterology - Medical | - Nephrology | - Psychiatry |
| - Cardiology | - Gastroenterology - Surgical | - Neurology | - Respiratory Medicine |
| - Cardiothoracic Surgery | - General Surgery | - Neurosurgery | - Rheumatology |
| - Cosmetic Surgery | - General / Internal Medicine | - Obstetrics and Gynaecology | - Chief of Radiology |
| - Dental | - ICU / ICU / CTU | - Oncology - Medical | - Urology |
| - Dermatology | - IVF | - Ophthalmology | - Vascular Surgery |
| - Diabetology/Endocrinologist | - Head of Laboratory Services | - Orthopaedics | |
| - ENT | - MMC | - Paediatrics - Medical | |
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(b) **Senior Registrars** with a minimum of 3 years post graduation experience in the following super specialities:

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| - Cardiology | - Nephrology | - Neurosurgery | - Urology |
| - Neurology | - Cardiothoracic Surgery | | |

(c) **Registrars** with 1 to 3 years post graduation experience in the following specialities:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| - Anaesthesiology | - General / Internal Medicine | - Histopathology | - CT |
| - ENT | - ICU / ICU / CTU | - Obstetrics and Gynaecology | - MRI |
| - Emergency | - Biochemistry | - Orthopaedics | |
| - Gastroenterology - Medical | - Haematology | - Paediatrics - Medical | |
| - General Surgery | - Microbiology | - X Ray | |

(d) **Resident Medical and Health Officers** with MBBS and 1 to 5 years experience for the various clinical departments of the Hospital.

(e) **Dentists** with BDS and a minimum of 3 years experience.

NURSING & MEDICAL TECHNICAL

Theatre In Charge (Ref ABH/NST08)

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Nursing Supervisors - Ward / Operating Theatre / Critical Care Unit (Ref ABH/NS508)

Qualifications and Experience:

Preferably Degree level with a minimum of 5 years experience.

MEDICAL TECHNICAL (Ref ABH/PAR08)

We also require Technicians with the appropriate degree or diploma together with a minimum of 3 years experience in the following areas:

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
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| - CT Scan | - Audiometry | - Ophthalmologist | - PFT |
| - Cath Lab | - Physiotherapy | - Biochemistry | - IVF |
| - X - Ray | - Echo | - Haematology | - Perfusionist |
| - Ultrasound | - TMT | - Microbiology | - Operating Theatre |
| - Mammography | - Dialysis | - Histopathology | |
| - Colour Doppler | - Endoscopy | - Blood Bank | |

Nurses - Ward / Operating Theatre / Critical Care Unit

(Ref ABH/W5G08)

Qualifications and Experience:

Preferably Degree level with a minimum of 1 year post graduate experience.

Midwives (Ref ABH/NSW08)

Qualifications and Experience:

Preferably Degree level with a minimum of 3 years experience as a Midwife.

HOW TO APPLY

If you meet the above requirements and are ready to take up the challenge and be part of the Apollo Bramwell Hospital team, kindly submit your application in writing with a full Curriculum Vitae and copies of your qualifications together with a passport sized photograph in an envelope marked with the appropriate reference. Please ensure that your application includes a contact email address and/or a direct telephone number. Application should be submitted not later than 15 August 2008 to the:

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British American Hospital Enterprise Limited
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Or Email: info@apollobramwell.intnet.mu

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The Lawyers' Ball



Sanjay Bhuckory, Chairman of Air Mauritius, pictured with winner (far left) of the holiday trip to Mauritius offered Susie Freeman (second from right).

Susie Freeman's travel agency offered the prize of the holiday in Mauritius for the ball's raffle organised by the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple on its 400th anniversary in July.

Sanjay Bhuckory, a former student of the Middle Temple himself, while in London to represent a private case before the HM Privy Council, was invited to attend the ball.

In September last, Susie Freeman's agency organised the trip to Mauritius of 34 Middle Templars and their partners. "The purpose of the visit was to reinforce the Inn's links with Mauritius...to give a series of lectures, and lead discussions on subjects of concern to the Mauritian Bar and the judiciary."

The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple "has pledged its support to Centrepoint to help tackle homelessness faced by many young people in the city." A sum of £35,000 was raised at the ball.

Gavin Gooljar's Charity Run

Running for a good cause - Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

The British London-run route passed through famous landmarks, such as the London Eye and St Paul's Cathedral and Gavin went head to head with the top participating athletes. The race began at Hyde Park Corner and finished at Horse Guards Parade, Whitehall, Mum, Dad and members of the family cheered as Gavin reached the finishing line for such a good cause to combat Multiple Sclerosis (MS).



Multiple Sclerosis is a condition of the central nervous system, a neurological disease among young adults and is most often diagnosed in people between the ages of 20 and 40, and women are almost twice as likely to develop it as men. MS affects around 85,000 people in the UK and many more worldwide.

The simplest way to understand what happens in MS is to think of your nervous system as an electrical circuit, with your brain and spinal cord acting as the power source and the rest of your body being the lights or computers.

Your nerves are like the electrical cables linking all of the appliances together and the 'myelin' is the plastic insulation surrounding these cables.

Surrounding and protecting the nerve fibres of the central nervous system is an important substance, the myelin, which helps messages travel quickly and smoothly between the brain and the rest of the body.

If the insulation gets damaged, the electrical current to appliances can become faulty or temperamental and there may be a short circuit, preventing the appliances from working properly.

There are MS Society local branches, and regular support group meetings helping many sufferers from MS. Services providing support guidance are available from MS Therapy Centres.

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Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Do you suffer from bouts of constipation and diarrhoea?
Do you regularly feel bloated after a meal?
Do you often experience pain around the abdomen?

You may have....
Irritable Bowel Syndrome



Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) can be described as a disorder of the large intestine characterised by a pattern of symptoms which can be exacerbated by emotional stress.

IBS is the most common gut condition that affects people of ages between 20 and 45 with most presenting patients being female.

The gastrointestinal system starts from the mouth and ends at the anus. In order for food to transit along the lower gastrointestinal tract (GIT), muscles surrounding the intestine wall contract and relax resulting in a propulsion effect.

The exact cause of IBS is unclear but it has been proposed that this lower GIT disorder may arise due to focal areas of abnormal intestinal muscle contractions (occur secondary to over activity of gut muscle which is controlled by part of the nervous system). The abnormal intestinal muscle contractions may then lead to cramping pain, with changes in bowel habit.

Risk factors

- Low fibre diet
- Emotional stress
- Excessive use of laxatives
- A past history of infectious diarrhoea or temporary inflammation of the bowel

Symptoms

Please note that you may not experience all of the (below) symptoms. Clinical manifestations of IBS vary from patient to patient.

- Abdominal cramps – which arise usually after a meal and which are eased by passing wind or opening bowels.
- Bloating and abdominal distension usually after meals
- Diarrhoea or constipation/ or alternating bouts of diarrhoea coupled with constipation
- Feeling of incomplete emptying of the rectum when bowels are opened
- Other associated symptoms include:
 - Chronic fatigue
 - Headaches
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Loss of appetite

Diagnosis

The diagnosis of IBS is usually based on the clinical history of symptoms that the patient experiences. Special investigations are not usually performed (especially within the common age group of 20 to 45).

If a patient is above the age of 45 and is experiencing the above symptoms, which appear to be similar to IBS, he/she is then referred to a hospital specialist where a colonoscopy (live internal fibre optic camera view of the inside wall of the large intestine) and biopsy of the larger intestine may be performed. This is done to rule out any other conditions such as infections, colitis (inflammation of the bowel) and malignancy.

Treatment

Sometimes patients may experience very mild symptoms and this may not warrant treatment. Patients who experience

moderate to severe symptoms are treated based on symptomatic control.

Conservative measures include a change in lifestyle and diet: Some types of food may aggravate IBS and make the symptoms worse. Patients who experience diarrhoea as part of IBS are usually intolerant to certain food types and stopping these may attenuate symptoms. Having a bland diet may help the patient in identifying which type of food he/she may be intolerant to.

The most common foods that have been reported to cause IBS symptoms are:

- Wheat (found in bread and cereals)
- Rye
- Barley
- Dairy products
- Coffee/tea and other drinks high in caffeine

Consulting a dietician may help in formulating a patient-tailored dietary regimen.

Stopping excessive alcohol intake and smoking has been shown to be beneficial in controlling symptoms of IBS. In addition, regular sessions of cardiovascular exercise can also be helpful.

Medical treatment can be employed in patients whose symptoms are not being controlled by the above conservative treatment options.

For diarrhoea your G.P. may prescribe loperamide (*Imodium*) which is an anti-diarrhoea medication. Patients usually take this (in tablet form) when required but also before outings and social events.

Constipation may be relieved with an increase in intake of fibre and drinking plenty of water (2 to 3 litres of water per day). If this does not help, various types of laxatives may be prescribed which may be of benefit in relieving the constipation. It is worth noting that the excessive use of laxatives may result the patient experiencing persistent diarrhoea and erratic bowel habits. Please follow the instructions of the prescribing G.P.

Antispasmodic medication, such as mebeverine, may help in decreasing the excessive intestinal contractions which results in less cramping pain.

Antidepressant medication from the Tricyclic group has shown to be beneficial in patients who experience pain and diarrhoea. It is usually prescribed for patients who have frequent flare ups and severe abdominal cramping.

Psychological therapy can be effective in patients with IBS where high emotional stress and trauma predominate in their lives.

Prognosis

Symptoms of IBS may be transient and in many patients, may persist for many years. Contrarily, some patients with mild IBS may not experience any symptoms for long periods of time and in a minority of cases, the symptoms of IBS may clear up for good. Firstly, it should be emphasised that treatment for IBS tends to address symptoms and flare-ups rather than providing a definite cure. Secondly, having IBS does not lead to a higher mortality rate and neither does it increase the chance of cancer of the bowel.

By Dr. Darren K Patten
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Please note that the above editorial by no means serves as complete literature regarding the topic of interest. For more detailed information, please consult your local GP or visit:
The Gut Trust - <http://www.ibeguttrust.org>

References:

- The Oxford Clinical Handbook of Specialities, 7th Edition, 2006
- GP Notebook - <http://www.gpnotebook.co.uk>



By
Dr Darren Patten
BSc MBBS

Taking Your Medicines Correctly



By Devinia Sookia

Taking medicines correctly is very important to stay healthy. However it is not easy to do so, especially if you are taking several medicines. It can be hard to remember how and when to take each medicine. You often have to rely on someone else such as a spouse or relative.

You can reduce the risks of putting your health at risk if you know about your medicines and how to take them. The trick is to follow a few simple steps. Here are some tips:

Get Organised

Make a list of all your medicines including non prescription drugs such as Ibuprofen, Panadol or Tylenol, supplements such as vitamins and herbal products such as garlic tablets. Write down the dosage and how often you are supposed to take each one.

Take this list to all your doctor's appointments so that he is aware of what medicines you are taking. This will prevent any new medicine he prescribes from interacting with something you are already taking.

Use Reminders

Use a pill container with compartments that help to organise your medicines by day and week. Automated pill containers feature electronic reminder alarms that beep.

You can also set your alarm clock or watch alarm to remind you to take your medicines.

Check Labels on

Medicines before leaving Chemists

Make sure you received the

right medicines before you leave the chemist. Make sure you ask every question about the medicine which you are not sure about. Such questions can be as to how many times a day you are supposed to take your medicine and whether you have to take it with or without food.

You can also ask whether the medicine can be stored at room temperature or needs to be refrigerated. Another important question is whether any other prescription drug, or over the counter drug or supplement might interact with this medicine and cause side effects.

Side Effects

If a medicine causes side effects, skip doses or stop taking it. Immediately tell your doctor about it. He will prescribe an alternative or a lesser dosage that will work for you and not cause any problem.

Remember that your health is very important and that even the most effective medicine will not help if you are not taking it properly.

* Devinia Sookia is a barrister-at-law, journalist, writer and attorney.

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