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# Mauritius News



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TM

**Truth  
&  
Justice**

January 2013 Issue No 301

Monthly - 80p 30th year

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## Welcome 2013

### Number 13 - I lucky for Some

Mauritius News (MN) intends to print an edition in Mauritius for circulation there for profit from sale and advertising. Invest in the project, you can't lose.

Mauritius News website can become the most important portal on Mauritius in terms of advertising revenue. your investment will pay dividends

MN creates jobs

MN provides free advisory service to the community

MN provides on the job training opportunities in office practice, accounting, DB Management, layout design

MN is facing the greatest challenge under the present economic climate. Countries are being bailed out. Shall we stand up to the challenge?

MN does not depend on government budget allocation. We spend our own money to help the community

MN in its unique position can become the voice of the Mauritian Diaspora, i.e. Mauritians in France, Canada, Australia etc

We will outsource some of the work to Mauritius. It will cost less to operate

Our advertising rates have stayed the same for years while all the overheads have shot through our heads: Printing, Royal Mail, Gas, Electricity, Water, Telephone etc, What is the answer?

**An Appeal to our patrons**  
 Most businesses insist on prepayment for their services. How can they expect MN to give credit all the time for advertising their products?

MN wants to create a Holidays Club to take readers to India, China, USA, Australia, Canada, etc INVEST IN THE CLUB, YOU CAN'T LOSE

**AN ELDERLY CARE HOME** - as a registered Charity - (for old UK Mauritians, - our own old folks.)

Mauritius News wishes to encourage the provision of an elderly care home for Mauritians in the UK, where they can play games of Cards, Dominoes, eat Dhalpours, Samoussas and Briani. Is it too much to hope for? A Home or Day Centre may be less isolated for them being together. The community is growing old.

Whatever will be,  
will be  
Que sera, sera

PC



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**SPONSORSHIP AND  
POWER OF ATTORNEY**



Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2012 marks exactly 10 yrs since Tom Abraham Gandhi, a widely renowned member of our British Mauritian community, was taken away from us after a brief battle with Cancer.

Tom was a highly respectable member of our community who was loved wherever he went and no doubt had a bright future ahead of him. My parents, Mr & Mrs Gandhi Applasami and I would like to thank all our family & friends who have helped us come to terms with the loss of our shining star.

On Saturday 29 December we will be hosting a Xmas/New year fundraising party at Jasmin's Banqueting Suite, 202 Upper Tooting Road, London SW17 7EW.

It will be a time to come together during the festive season to remember & celebrate the lives of our lost loved ones who are no longer with us.

The night promises to be a spectacular event with a live Segga Dance performance by the 'Tropical Flowers' segga dancers and a heavyweight line-up of top DJs spinning the best urban, tropical & segga beats. All proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to St. Christopher's Hospice (reg charity 210667) who cared for Tom in his final days. Your

Tricksta & friends present..... On

*Saturday 29th December 2012*

*Super Family Party*

@ Jasmin's Banqueting Suite  
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8.00pm - 3am

In special remembrance of  
*Tom Abraham Gandhi*  
(13.05.74 - 29.12.02) 10 years on.

support and presence at this event will be greatly appreciated. Merry Xmas & a Prosperous New Year 2013 to you all.

For ticket & more information,  
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## Cerebra Charity Children Awards 2012

### Mauritian wins award and acts as an inspiration for others



Bashir and Ally

Ally Khodabocus is proud Dad to Bashir, since he has won the Cerebra Charity Children Award, last December. Bashir was born with the down syndrome, and since Ally Khodabocus has done everything to ease the life of his son.

He can be described as a model parent ready to move mountains for his son and in 2008 he organised a concert with Sujeet Desai a famous singer who's was born with the same syndrome than his son. Ally also run a London based support group in order to help parents of children having the same syndrome than Bashir. He organises workshop, fun days...

Ally was nominated for the award by his son shoo said "if it was not for him i would not be here today". "Winning this award was recognition for myself and my family who over the years has taken pride in bringing my son up and giving him all the opportunities in life. Every parents have dream for their children but in our case it is like this poem (welcome to Holland which you can find on the net ) Your plan get change but you need to make the most of it because at the end of the day there is an innocent life that depend on. An attitude of guilt or rejection will not be good. You need to look around you and see what others have done. Even though i was the person nominated to me it was an achievement with the help of my wife and extended family. It is also a recognition of those 6 million unseen parents and carers. Winning this award also gave me the opportunity to meet others, to bring my child out and be an inspiration for others. If i can do it ,so can others" said Ally. Looking after his son over the past 18 years has not been easy. "A lot of people believe that because you are in the Uk life is easy. Let me tell you that this is not the case. You must be very strong and know your rights." Ally's website: <http://www.upsidedowns.org.uk>

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### Mauritius inspires Swedish's debut novel

19 after her first encounter with the Mauritian people, the Swedish writer Annika Kinch publishes her debut novel- And the Rainbow touched Mauritius-, inspired by her experience of this "paradise." It was love at first sight, like a medieval explorer discovering virgin islands, and claiming the territory in the name of his monarch. She fell in love for the "beauty and the people" of Mauritius. Since her first visit, she came back a dozen times with her husband Lasse and son Kalle. The idea of writing a book about Mauritius cropped while she was planning a holiday with her family.

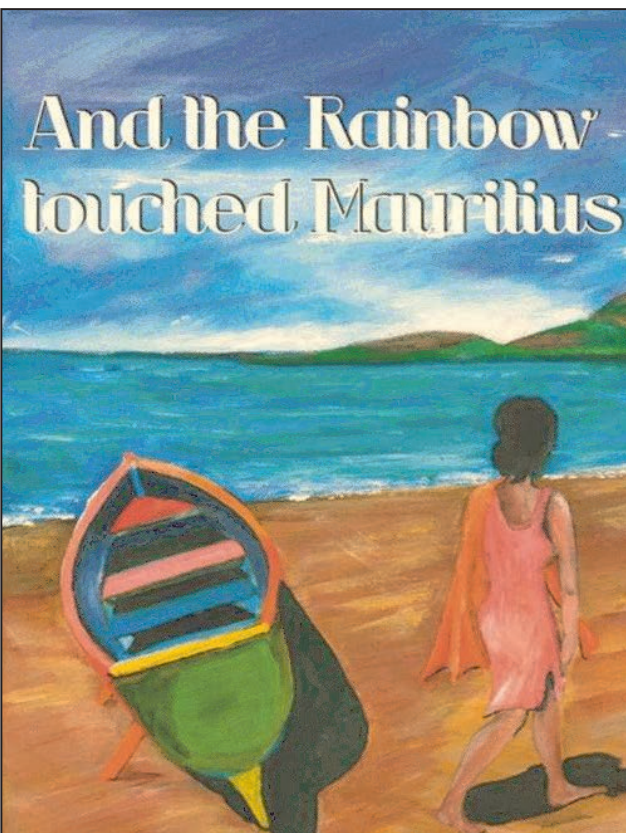
"More than 30 years later, I took the advice of my Swedish teacher not only by writing a book, but also in sustaining a partly traditional use of linguistics. The first book in a trilogy of the Rivière family, whose destiny is coloured by the resonance of history, is now complete. I have done much research and dug deep into the history of Mauritius. People who lived under extremely simple conditions have opened their doors and generously offered me of what they had and shared their history with me from their hearts. These are meetings I will never forget!" said the writer.



#### SAMPLE REAFDING

Mauritius is an island paradise where Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Buddhists live side by side in harmony. Might that be why the Mauritian flag unites all the basic colours of the rainbow? With the blue representing the ocean surrounding it. Red the rich soil. Yellow the shining sun and Green, the undulating sugar cane fields. Or are those dazzling colours inspired by the brightly painted pirogues, the traditional fishing boats? Just as dazzling is the novel And the Rainbow touched Mauritius. Warmth, humour, struggle and romance fill its pages. Together with Laval de Marques who is returning to his much - loved Mauritius, the reader penetrates this island right from the books first pages. This magic world of land and sea open itself to us like the unfolding of the islands indigenous heart – shaped anthurium flowers. Here we meet Francesca, the glamorous Italian bearing her caprices and

contradictions. And Valerie, with her striking fantasy garden, enjoying life to its fullest. Gaëtan – a true Mauritian, a patriot with an overflowing passion for his island. And of course, Laura, so tender and creative in heart and soul, a woman whose deepest passion is awakened by a sensual meeting one magical night. These events play out against the backdrop of the implacable past of Mauritius as we come face to face with the harsh realities of the lives of those who witnessed the building of this land: slaves and plantation owners. Sorrows and affections are intertwined, but at the same time intense joys and achievements inspire hope for a positive future. Present day happenings and a rich heritage blend together as the destinies of individuals across time and space introduce us to the history of Mauritius, the land where the rainbow has its home. Let And the Rainbow touched Mauritius colour your mind!



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### Mauritius' Central Statistics Office forecast that 1 million tourists will visit Mauritius in 2013

according to their December's report, the Central Statistics Office expects that the number of tourists' arrival will reach 1 million in 2013. 965,000 visited Mauritius in 2012. It said tourist arrivals for the first nine months of 2012 increased by 0.2% to reach 675,584, compared to 674,383 in the corresponding period of 2011. Around 9% of the tourists came for holidays while 4.7% were on business/conference trips and another 2.6% were in transit.

The arrivals from Europe that accounts for 58% of total tourist arrivals decreased by 7.7% - from 421,060 in the first nine months of 2011 to 388,649 in the corresponding period of 2012. The arrivals from France, the leading European market, decreased by 11.9% to 179,328.

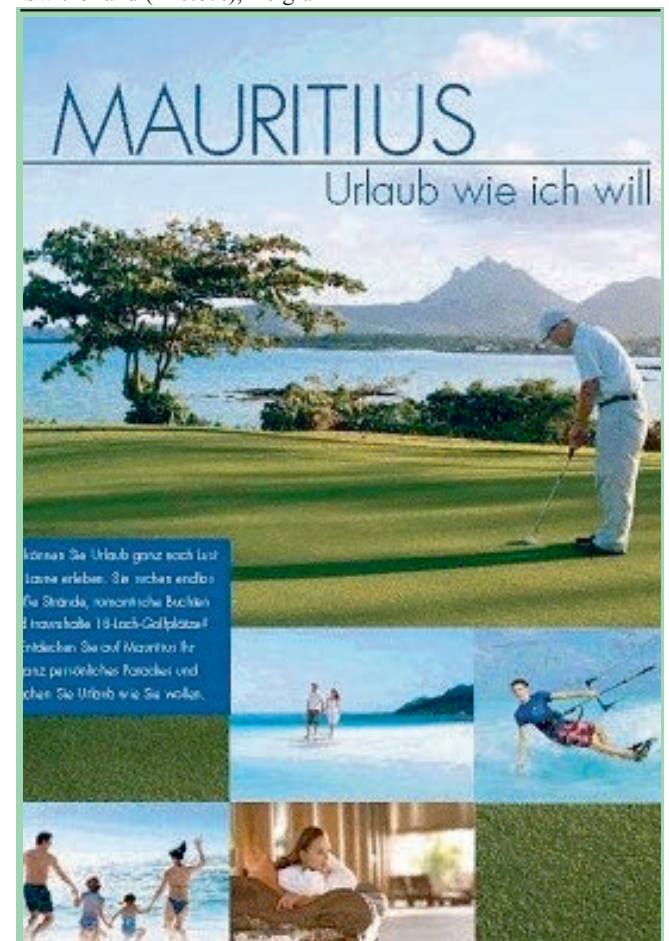
The arrivals from other major European markets changed as follows: Germany (-2.4%), United Kingdom (-3.8%), Italy (-25.6%), Russia (+91.2%), Spain (+0.6%), Switzerland (+10.6%), Belgium

(-7.4%), Austria (-9.8%), Sweden (-11.5%) and Netherlands (-18.9%). Meanwhile, arrivals from Africa with a share of around 27% of total tourist arrivals rose by 13.2% to 184,485.

The arrivals from La Reunion increased by 19.2% to 96,567 and those from South Africa were up by 2.9% to 61,252. The following changes were registered from the other African countries: Kenya (+43.5%), Madagascar (+19.9%), Zimbabwe (+10%), Comoros (+0.1%) and Seychelles (-16.4%).

The arrivals from Asia went up by 14.1% from 66,950 for the first nine months of 2011 to 76,378 for the same period of 2012. The following changes were noted: India (+0.7%), China (38.3%), Hong Kong (+110.7%), United Arab Emirates (+44.6%), Japan (+13%), Malaysia (+1%) and Singapore (-15.2%).

Africa Manager



### Mauritius receives the 'Destination of the Year 2013' and the Best Golf Destination Campaign 2012'

Design Reisen has appointed Mauritius to be Destination of the Year 2013. Design Reisen is one of the most prestigious and distinguished Tour Operator for the luxury segment in Germany. They are specialized in compiling individual luxury and premium travel experiences and destinations to their high-end customers. Amongst the clients of Design Reisen, one can find a lot of German celebrities and top managers who will automatically become ambassadors for Mauritius as a unique luxury and life style destination and to strengthen Mauritius' position as a destination for the "rich and beautiful".

By appointing Mauritius as 'Destination of the Year 2013', Design Reisen also commits itself to put a special focus and to allocate a special budget on promoting Mauritius next year. Mauritius has also been awarded for the "Best Golf Destination Campaign 2012" by Germany's most prestigious golf magazine "Golf Aktuell". Golf Aktuell is the most prestigious golf publication in Germany and has again secured its leading position with a circulation of more than 74,918 copies per issue (+5.37% compared to 2011).

"The MTPA's Campaign created a strong desire and demand to travel to Mauritius and to play golf in the paradise. Mauritius is a true jewel in the Indian Ocean with the whitest beaches and golfers can play all-year round even for beginners as well as for pros. I find it very exciting that Golf was already introduced in Mauritius back in 1844. The golf courses in Mauritius are some of the world's finest and demanding in the world, combining an exciting golf experience with Mauritius' unique nature..." said publisher, Goetz von Bentzel.

Our efforts have not gone in vain declared the Chairman of the MTPA, Robert Desvaux. All our investments in the tourism sport segment have proved its results and this shows that the segment is progressing.



# Fatal accident in St. Julien: 12 dead and four seriously wounded

A fatal accident happened recently at St Julien, in the Eastern part of Mauritius.

A mini-bus, carrying about 15 Bangladeshi workers on their way to work, and a HGV lorry transporting macadam collided. As a result of this collision, 12 people died on the spot with another dying in hospital two days later.

The dead bodies (11 Bangladeshis and the Mauritian mini-bus driver) are mostly employees from a nearby Textile Industry. All the Bangladeshi bodies were repatriated to Bangladesh.

Four victims are still fighting for their lives in the Intensive Care Unit of the SSR Hospital.

Police are still making inquiries about the cause of this accident.

**Former Lord Mayor found guilty of corruption**

Tirat Moosun, the former Lord Mayor of the City of Port Louis, was found guilty of corruption (conflict of interest) by Intermediary Court of Mauritius. Moosun was accused of breaching article 13 (2) (93) of the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002.

Moosun supposedly gave favour to his sister, a Mrs Vimla Callychurn, by not adopting the proper legal procedure, as stipulated by law.

His sister obtained a market stall without even applying for it. At the time when his sister obtained this market stall, Moosun was the Lord Mayor of Port-Louis.

Moosun bypassed all applications made by other people and offered the market stall to his sister.

This matter only came to light when two market traders complained about it to ICAC (Ind Commission against Corruption) and police.

**Reservoirs levels cause concern**

The situation of Mauritius’ reservoirs is still alarming. The government has decided to review the Water Rights Policy in Mauritius and all possible options to maintain a minimum water distribution have been considered.

Measures will be implemented to supply water to the different sectors of the economy throughout the year.

The Minister of Energy and Public Utilities announced his decision at a recent press conference.

He expressed the

determination of the government to review the water rights policy in Mauritius. He has the backing of other Cabinet Ministers.

**Comoros President visits Mauritius**

The President of Comoros Islands, Ahmed Mohamed Sambi’s first visit to Mauritius visit was focused primarily on the public health sector and the judiciary.

He was welcomed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Arvin Boolell. The President was accompanied by his Minister of Health, Dr Sounhadj Attoumaned.

On the Wednesday, he made a courtesy call to Prime Minister Ramgoolam before meeting the leader of the opposition, Paul Berenger.

The delegation held a workshop at the Ministry of Health. Discussions centred on the updating of a partnership agreement signed in 2001.

A courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, followed.

**Government purchases clinic**

The government has bought The Med Point Clinic for the sum of RS 145 million. The Minister of Health and Quality of Life, Maya Hanoomanjee, admitted that the institution will be converted into a specialized centre for the elderly.

Located in Solferino, the Med Point Clinic closed down last September owing to financial problems. The clinic was formerly run by Dr Malhotra, the son-in-law of President of the Republic, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, and the brother-in-law of the Finance Minister, Pravin Jugnauth.

The Med Point Clinic sale led to questions from various quarters.

**Officer attacked**

Two armed men attacked a police officer when he was heading home from the harbour station on his motorbike.

The aggressors were also on a motorbike. They overtook the police officer and then forced him to stop. They allegedly hit the officer on the head with their helmets. Then, one of them stole his motorbike.

The police are searching for the two men.

**Two hotel employees steal diamond ring**

Two employees from the Sugar Beach Hotel stole a diamond ring, valued at

1,800 Euros (Rs 74,790), from a hotel room. The victim is a French tourist who was on holiday in Mauritius.

The accused were named as Vijay Ramesh, a 28 year-old room servant, and Archanand Bindyah, a 47 year-old bar attendant. Both men confessed to police that they did steal the diamond ring when arrested.

The French tourist kept her diamond ring in the room of the Sugar Beach Hotel where she booked to stay whilst on holiday in Mauritius.

The tourist realised that her ring was missing from the place she kept it. She went to the police and complained.

**Dead woman in boyfriend’s house**

A woman in her thirties was found dead in her new boyfriend’s house at Pointe-aux-Biches in the new year. Police suspect that she died of an alcohol overdose.

The woman left her ex-boyfriend in Triolet six months ago to go and live with her new one. The police are investigating.

**Hit and run accident**

A 38 year-old woman in Baie-du-Tombeau was seriously injured when a car hit her recently and ran.

According to the investigators, the driver who hit her escaped immediately from the area.

People walking by found the woman next to the road. She had leg and head injuries. She was taken to the SSR National Hospital for attention.

Her condition is apparently critical. Police are still searching for the driver.

**Car wash banned in Mauritius**

Washing your car at a petrol station is now illegal. Anyone found wasting water either by having their car washed or using water for irrigation or cleaning purposes could be liable for a fine of up to Rs 200,000 and a maximum prison sentence of six months.

This drastic measure by the Central Water Authority (CWA) was taken because of the critically low level of water in the reservoirs and to mitigate water shortages.

**Driving test fees up**

Driving tests fees, as well as registration fees for taking the oral examinations component, have gone up. They are now Rs 300 and Rs 500 respectively.

According to a spokesman from the Driving Learner Institution, “practical tests to obtain a driving licence are done in three stages: firstly road driving, followed by reversing, and then parking”.

Learner drivers must pay Rs 500 to do these three different tests each time. And if the learner driver

fails, they must again pay Rs 500 to re-sit the exams.

**The Lam Po Tang case**

The atrocious murder case of Helene Lam Po Tang took a new dimension recently. A third suspect, 33 year-old Kishan Dhooky from Quatre Bornes, was arrested on in January.

Dooky was suspected of aiding and abetting. The new suspect is a close friend of Sanjeev Nunkoo, the alleged murderer who is in detention.

Gary Lam Po Tang, the victim’s husband is accused of having ordered the murder of his wife.

Helene Lam Po Tang was stabbed 39 times and died in her house at Tombeau Bay last October.

**Three year-old boy found dead in closed car**

A three year-old boy was found dead in his uncle’s car recently. He died of suffocation, as none of the car windows was open.

The car was parked on the family compound in Flacq. The boy had earlier been to the seaside with his dad and brother.

The father had borrowed the uncle’s car for the family outing. It is believed that the boy got back into the car when they got back home, and that he fell asleep with the doors and windows closed.

His father looked for him everywhere and finally found him on the floor of the car. He was lying unconscious between the front and the back seats.

The child was immediately taken to the Flacq hospital, where the doctors pronounced him dead.

**Indian doctor assaulted in Mauritius**

An Indian doctor was hit on the head with an iron bar by a truck driver during a traffic incident. The two men were driving their vehicles in a heavy traffic jam in La Louise, Quatre-Bornes.

According to the truck driver, the doctor forcibly got in front of his vehicle.

He horned to express his anger at which point the doctor allegedly insulted him.

When the two drivers came to the roundabout of La Louise, the truck driver decided to take action.

“I got out of my vehicle to explain myself, but he continued to provoke me. That is when I grabbed the iron bar which was lying in my truck...”.

He appeared in Court charged with “dangerous driving” and “assault with premeditation”.

**Attempted rape of South**

**African tourist**

A South African tourist was relaxing in a restaurant in Flic-rn-Flac when two men walked over to her table. They offered her a drink and the trio spoke for a while.

One of the men asked the lady if she wanted to go for a walk on the beach. She declined the offer. According to the woman, the man turned violent.

He allegedly forced her to leave the restaurant with him. He took her to an abandoned house, threw himself on her and tried to rape her. She fought back and managed to run away.

Shocked and with blood dripping from her face, she returned to Tamarin, where she was staying at a friend’s house.

The South African lady told her friend what had happened and they went to the police to report that matter.

The victim was taken to Victoria Hospital, in Candos, for a medical check-up. Police is still searching for the two men.

**Death threat by former police officer**

A former police officer from Rose-Belle allegedly spat on the face of a lawyer and threatened to kill him.

The lawyer says that he caught him trying to break a water pipe in his apartment.

The lawyer challenged him for an explanation but all he got was the spitting and the death threat, he said to the RoseBelle Police.

The former police officer was detained. He has appeared in court.



## Tablets available in February 2013

The PC tablets to be offered to each and every Form IV student, as mentioned in the Budget Speech, will be distributed in February 2013.

This measure replaces the One Laptop per Child project, meant for Lower Six students. Parents will have to pay Rs 500 to insurance cover but those who are on the Social Security Register will not have to pay for this.

## School van fees on the increase

Parents will have to pay an additional increase as from this month to school vans for transport for their children. Previously, it would cost Rs 500 monthly for a distance of 3km-4km. As from this month this will be Rs 600. Van owners argue that this increase has been rendered necessary with the introduction of the new regulation for a registered helper to be always present for pick up and drop for children.

## DWCP MoU for 2012-2014 signed

A memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2012-2014 for

## Civil Service Customer Satisfaction Survey in pipeline

As from this month the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms is putting in place a Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) which will help to measure the level of satisfaction the public gets from its various services provided by the Government.

The CSS would in the first instance target a limited number of public services and ultimately would widen the range to other Ministries/Departments.

The survey will enable to identify performance gaps, determine where training is needed, what type of training is needed, what type of training should be provided and for whom, so as to address any shortcomings hindering service delivery in the civil service.

## Prevocational studies more holistic by 2015

The prevocational courses given to primary school students not having made it through the Certificate of Primary Education exams, will be extended to four years for a more

Mauritius was signed recently by the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, Shakeel Mohamed and the International Labour Organization (ILO) assistant director general, regional director for Africa, Charles Dan.

The signing ceremony also included the signatures of the representatives of trade unions and the Mauritius Employment Federation.

The DWCP is based on three main priorities which are the creation of decent and productive employment with the provision of adequate social protection, strengthening of social dialogue and elimination of all forms of discrimination. The total cost of the programme is estimated at 2,080,658 USD.

## Norwegian assistance for research in fisheries sector

A strategic partnership will be struck between the Ministry of Fisheries and the Norwegian authorities for more research activities in the fisheries sector within the next three years.

The goal is to improve production efficiency and environmental sustainability of the fisheries sector in the island. This will add to the

holistic type of education.

The new curriculum will be based on four key fields of study namely, communication skills, numeric and problem solving skills, life skills and livelihood and trade skills. The new project will be phased in gradually as from the 2013 batch with transition arrangements for students already enrolled in prevocational education and be fully implemented by 2015.

## National Institute for Civic Education (NICE) launched

The National Institute for Civic Education (NICE), under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office, has been launched by the President of the Republic.

This pilot project will revolve around four themes: individual, community, society and country. The component 'individual' comprises leadership, creativity, healthy lifestyle and entrepreneurship skills.

The theme 'community' includes unity in diversity and promotion of harmonious living. Another component 'society' relates to discipline, societal norms and responsibility whereas the theme 'country' focuses on history, democracy and nation building.

collaboration already on between Norway and Mauritius in the sector. In 2011, for example, the Norwegians developed a fish pot for fishermen in the island. The pot is environmentally friendly and easy-to-use, and is well-suited to the highly productive temperate waters around the island, and to tropical seas as well.

## New NIC issued by October 2013

The new National Identity Card (NIC) will be operational by October 2013. Around 900,000 cards will be delivered by Singaporean company CrimsonLogic and the implementation of the new NIC system will cost Rs 1.1 billion.

The new card will be laser-engraved smart card technology and will have increased security with biometric features including guilloche printing, offset micro-text and rainbow printing.

## Phase 2 of Mont Choisy Promenade opening soon

Mont Choisy Opening Promenade which opened in early December will be fully operational in the

coming days with the introduction of a dozen food outlets.

Actually, the Promenade offers a unique combination of shops, in the words of Vincent Rogers and Alain Rey, respectively chairman and CEO of Mont Choisy Shopping Promenade, and a large choice of activities for children, such as the "Kids' Kingdom" which includes jumping castles, cartoon characters, clowns and free pony rides.

## Series of six programmes broadcast on Russian travel channel

As from March 2013 a series of six programmes on Mauritius will be used in Russia for the "ih Navy" show which is a specialized travel channel dedicated to showcasing culture, history, tourist destinations and lifestyles of people around the world.

The series of six programmes shot will be about 10 minutes each and will focus on the colonial history of the island, its cultural diversity, authentic food, local crafts, tea and rum factories, as well as all the activities and attractions that make Mauritius an outstanding tourist destination in the world.

It is obvious that Mauritius will get a good exposure as the Russian travel channel has approximately 113.8 million viewers.

## LAMBETH SOLICITORS

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## No visits for SA prisoners in Mauritius

### From Paradise to “Island of tears”



Patricia Gerber and her son Johann

An “island of tears”... that’s how Patricia Gerber, whose son Johann is serving a nine years sentence for drug smuggling in Beau-Bassin prison, describes Mauritius. In November, Patricia and nine others families were denied the permission to visit their loved ones serving sentences, most of them for drug trafficking, in Beau- Bassin prison. The Mauritian authorities did not grant them the right of visit on ground of a late application for a group visit.

As things stand presently, most of the detainees do not – or rather, for financial reasons, cannot –receive visit of their relatives. Conditions of imprisonment, in terms of loneliness, food and communication also leave a lot to be desired. The psychological stress is without a doubt, unbearable for both the detainees and their families. The Locked up Organization strongly believe that the incarceration is the punishment and not the isolation from their family and loved ones.

In 1996 Mr Mandela gave instructions to start negotiating Prisoner Transfer Agreements, which they were in the process of doing when Mr Mbeki was elected the new president. Jackie Selebi was appointed Director General of Foreign Affairs and when he got to hear about the negotiations, he immediately put a stop to it.

“My sister is HIV positive and we don’t know if we will see her alive again”

Some South Africans are serving sentences up to 32 years, which in effect means they will NEVER see their families again.

Thandi Mbweu’s sister was arrested for drug trafficking in 2007 in Mauritius and is now serving a 14 years sentence at the Beau-Bassin prison. Thandi said: “Since August 2007 we have never seen nor spoke to her. Since then, the only news I have got of my sister came from the department of foreign affairs telling me that she was critically ill. My sister is HIV positive, when I asked for her condition they were unable to answer me. She left her son in back home and he did not know if he will see her or speak to her again.”

“We don’t have any money to go to Mauritius. We just want the opportunity to see her alive as we don’t know for how long she will live due to her condition.”

Patricia Gerber is one of the voices of Locked Up organisation who fight for the rights of South African citizens locked up abroad. In 2007, Gerber’s son was convicted and sentenced to nine years in prison for smuggling heroin into Mauritius in 2005. Patricia Gerber

claimed that “her son was targeted to be a drug decoy and in his naiveté agreed to take money to Mauritius in return for a free holiday. At the last moment he was threatened, and forced to take the drugs”, Gerber said.

“We are not condoning what they have done but it does not help the South African Government boasting to have one of the best Constitutions in the world when they refuse to enter into a Prisoner Transfer Agreement with Mauritius. In fact it is stated ‘In terms of Section 35(2) of the SA Constitution, every prisoner has the right to detention conditions that are consistent with human dignity, which includes the right to communicate with and be visited by spouses and children’”, Gerber said.

The punishment is the imprisonment not the isolation from families

Besides Ghana, South Africa is the only other country in the world that does not have a PTA with foreign countries. That means that the South Africans held in the Mauritian prisons are the only foreigners who are not allowed to return home to serve the remainder of their sentences close to their families.

The isolation these men and women, having no visits from family has a devastating impact on the lives of both the families and their loved ones. There is no reintegration back into society program for them when they come back, nor reintegration back into their families.

Most of the families do not have the financial means to go to Mauritius. “In the past few months we have seen a marked increase of families who do not even have the money to support their loved ones on a monthly basis due to the economic situation of our country”, Patricia Gerber said.

“It’s very hard being separated from Johann; we’re a very close family. We have three other children and my husband, also named Johann, has struggled with losing their brother and son. My husband has taken it very badly he had a heart attack in September last year. He didn’t have high blood pressure or cholesterol. He has a broken heart!

For seven years I have not given up. Letters, meetings and phone calls with Interpol, presidents, Amnesty International, ministers and government officials have brought nothing. Some days are very painful, if I didn’t have God in my life I would have given up a long time ago!”

## Denise Aimes: “My mother’s wish is to hug her grandson before she passes away”

My nephew Edward Aimes has been in a Mauritian jail for 12 years and has never seen any of his family in that time. We send money to him and there is always a problem in him getting it.

We are not a wealthy family but we try to collect money and send it to him some money and the occasional parcel. My mother, his gran, is 79 years-old and all she hopes and prays for is that she is still alive when he is released; also his Dad is not a healthy person. We try to keep constant contact with him to let him know that he still has the support and love of his family and we are here for him when he comes home. I was given the opportunity earlier this year to go

and see him. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me as I would never have been able to afford to do that on my own, but when we were denied access to Mauritius. I was devastated. We spoke on the telephone and it was a very emotional conversation.

Edward is starting to feel the pressure, being away from the family for so long and is quite depressed. I last sent money to Edward at the beginning of November and as I am writing this it is the 27th of November and he still has not received it. Why can’t our children come home to fulfil their sentence and be near the family? We miss him so much. Please bring him home!



According to the Melbourne Homicide Squad, the attacker, David Hollingsworth, 30, of Chadstone, is of Mauritian background. The latter grabbed the victim’s gun after attacking him with a hammer in front of the Australian Parliament on December 10.

After stealing the gun, David Hollingsworth ran towards the Melbourne Cricket Ground where he shot himself minutes after the attack in front of the Parliament.

The policeman who remains in Royal Melbourne Hospital, had worked in factories before becoming a PSO seven years ago. He is father of two children, aged 29 and 19. He had undergone surgery after skull fracture caused by the hammer blow.

The Australian press reported that Mr Hollingsworth’s mother called Lifeline in the days before the incident in a desperate effort to get him help. According to police, Hollingsworth was known to their services and had mental health issues.

## The Chagos Archipelago legally belongs to Mauritius

The issue regarding the Chagos archipelagos remains very controversial. Aside from the dilemma of forceful deportation of its inhabitants lies the dispute over the sovereignty of the group of islands between the Mauritius and the UK. The UK, treating the islands as its own, has leased the largest islands of the archipelagos, Diego Garcia, to the USA for military purposes. However, under international law, it appears that sovereignty over the Chagos islands belongs to Mauritius.



Historically, Mauritius and the Chagos islands belonged to France. Following the capture of Mauritius by the British in 1810, France relinquished Mauritius and its entire dependencies, including the Chagos islands, to Britain. A legal document was drafted to that effect, namely the Treaty of Paris 1814, which is the starting point for the argument that the Chagos islands form part of the Mauritian territory.

In the beginning of the sixties, the USA became interested in the Chagos islands, Diego Garcia in particular, in order to set up its military base in the region and approached UK for a potential lease of the islands. However, at the same time, Mauritius had started negotiating its independence from the UK, which effectively meant that UK would cede sovereignty over the islands. Since USA would rather trust UK rather than a future Mauritian government, USA and UK conspired to detach the Chagos islands from the Mauritian territory before granting Mauritius its independence in 1968. In 1965 the UK government, by way of an Order in Council, enacted the ‘British Indian Ocean Territory Order (S.I 1965, No 1920)’ which sought to render the Chagos islands a separate colony from Mauritius and to be named as the ‘British Indian Ocean Territory’ (BIOT).

Nonetheless, although at that time UK had sovereignty over both Mauritius and the Chagos islands, it is suggested that the British Indian Ocean Territory Order was unlawful under international law. In 1960, five years before the enactment of the Order in Council, the UN General Assembly passed the Resolution 1514, which makes it unlawful and contrary to the UN Charter for any decolonising state to disrupt the territorial integrity of any of its colonies (paragraph 6). The Resolution makes it clear that UK’s attempt to sever the colonies was unlawful and that the British Indian Ocean Territory Order was contrary to international law. Therefore, Mauritius should possess the same territory and boundaries that it enjoyed before its independence.

Furthermore, the fifty-year lease of the Chagos islands to the US effectively violates the right of the Chagossian nation to be an independent state, which is known under international law as the ‘right to self-determination’. Such a right is recognised and codified under the same UN General Assembly Resolution 1514.

The possible defence argument for the UK might be that Mauritius did consent to the excision of the Chagos archipelagos from its territory. However, this argument does not seem to hold water. According to Paragraph 5 of the Resolution 1514, UK had the duty to transfer all the powers regarding Mauritian territories to the Mauritian people without any conditions or reservations. Thus it is clear that upon the negotiation towards the independence of Mauritius, any condition or deal imposed by the British on Mauritius about the surrender of the Chagos islands in exchange of granting independence, was also illegal. In any event, at the time of the negotiations Mauritius was not yet an independent state. Therefore, any negotiation about the excision of its territory could not have been made to a legitimate and competent Mauritian government who had the legal power to consent to a matter of such an importance.

Yet, the difficulty lies in affirming the Mauritian sovereignty in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The reality is that Mauritius cannot seek redress in the ICJ because UK had included a very crafty provision in its declaration of acceptance of the ICJ’s jurisdiction. The effect of that provision effectively prevents any Commonwealth country from suing the UK in that court. Following threats of the Mauritian prime minister, in 2004, to withdraw from the Commonwealth in order to sue UK, the provision was hastily amended to include previous Commonwealth countries as well. Therefore, it would hardly matter even if Mauritius leaves the Commonwealth.

Geoffrey Robertson QC, a distinguished member of the UN’s Internal Justice Council suggests that Mauritius should request an advisory opinion from the ICJ on the issue of sovereignty over the Chagos islands. Although advisory opinions are non-binding in nature, it does not mean that they lack legal power. In fact, they are highly regarded in international law as they are assertions made by the ICJ on international legal obligations. They also carry significant moral authority and contribute in interstate diplomatic negotiations. Hence, the more accurate question is not whether UK will comply with the Advisory Opinion, but rather whether it will comply with its legal obligations under international law. It is hoped that UK would avoid being branded a rogue state in the international arena and may consequently honour its obligations.

Kevin Sagum, LLB (Hons), LLM  
Enfield, United Kingdom

## Australian-born Mauritian attacked policeman in front of Parliament before committing suicide with the officer’s gun

## Somuth Soborun, Mauritian Ambassador to the United States fined for underpaying staff

Somuth Soborun pleaded guilty to the charge of misdemeanour for failing to pay a domestic worker the minimum hourly and overtime wages between December 2008 and August 2009. He was ordered by the US Magistrate Judge Patty Shwartz to pay a fine of more than 5 000 US dollars.

According to the prosecution case, Soborun "took advantage of the employee, who had no opportunity to socialise and worked for 12 hours a day, six days per week.

Counsel for the defence stated in his plea that his client understands "that what he did was wrong and has learned a valuable lesson." To add that the "shame and embarrassment" was enough as punishment. "Like all human beings, I have failed", said the ambassador. The latter has already paid more than 20,000 dollars to the domestic worker as restitution.

This case has been highly mediatised in the US since the case was called.



Municipal Elections 2012

The purple wave hits the towns



The recently concluded municipal elections highlight several points about the current trend of Mauritian politics and further fuel the debate about the actual strength of the Government. The alliance Mauritius Socialist Movement (MSM) and the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) won 53 seats, the Government coalition which comprises of the Labour Party (PT) and the Mauritius Social Democrat Party (PMSD): 36 seats and the Mauritius Social Democrat Movement (MMSD) one seat. In a snapshot, the overall results show that opposition alliance is the great winner of this political joust. But are they really the winners? Was this a “political tsunami” as forecast by Sir Aneerood Jugnauth ex-President of the Republic and leader of the MSM-MMM alliance aka Remake 2000?

The Prime Minister believes that the results show a “decline” in the influence of the MMM in urban areas and affirms that most of the population has faith in his Government. Ramgoolam stated to the press that he was satisfied with the issue of this joust. However, it’s obvious that his speech would have been different if his coalition had won this urban challenge. On the other hand, Paul Berenger in his speech in front of the Port Louis Municipality after the proclamation of the results said that “the remake 2000” has become stronger and that they were ready for the parliamentary election (in 2015).

“If you have a look at the results, you’ll see that there has not been a tsunami as predicted by the opposition” said Ramgoolam who also stated that he would contest the results of some councillors.

It’s the start of a new drama and the main actors will be Paul Berenger, The Jugnauths (father and son), Xavier-Luc Duval and Navin Ramgoolam. The script has not yet been written but we have clear indications that the political landscape will encounter drastic changes in the near future, as it always happens after the proclamation of elections’ results. Who will renegotiate? Will the remake 2000 split again? The answers will come sooner than we think.

But the star of this joust is not Ramgoolam, Berenger nor the Jugnauths (father and son). It is Eric Guimbeau, whose candidate won a council seat in the contested Curepipe area where both the PT-PMSD and the Remake 2000 won each seven seats. Ramgoolam, said that he was keen to back Mario Bienvenu, the MMSD candidate and former French boxing world champion, for the seat of Mayor of the City of Lights. The remake 2000 proposed Bienvenu to be the next deputy mayor. The choice seems easy.

The remake 2000 (2012 version) is getting “stronger.” They won three out of five towns and are now aiming at the national election scheduled for 2015. The PT-PMSD won the villages elections and did quite well

in the municipal elections despite their defeat. There is not a huge gap between the PT-PMSD (see chart) and the MSM-MMM.

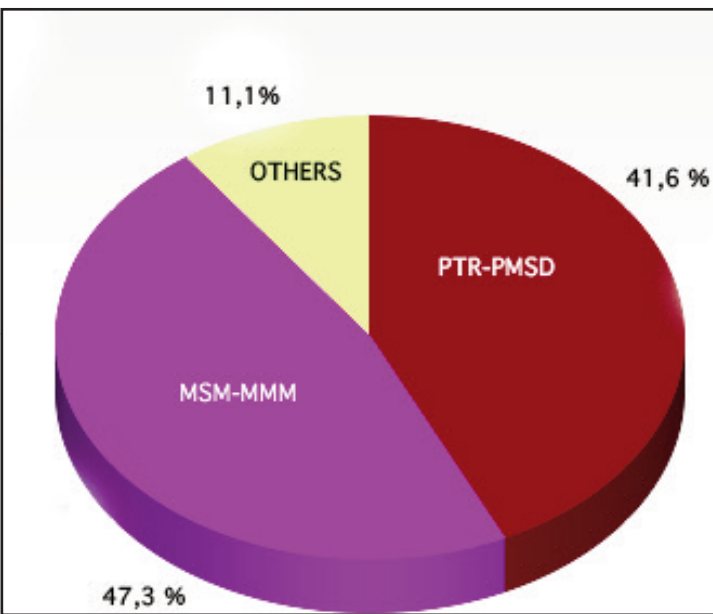
The race to 2015 is still open. None can say who will win the next parliamentary election. Will the country put their trust in the Remake 2000 (version 2015) with Sir Aneerood Jugnauth as Prime Minister at the age of 85, for a three-year term? No one knows. But everyone knows the reason of his comeback into the political arena. He stepped in, once again, to save his son who lacks credibility as a political leader. He lacks the charisma and leadership to hold the reigns of the MSM in the jungle of the Mauritian politics. He is like a small “nemo” swimming in a pond of sharks. He is also a nemo in the latin meaning of the word.

Furthermore, we must not write off the possibility of an alliance between the MMM and the PT “for the sake of the country.” The two parties are the best enemies in the world. They hate each others in the limelight but kiss in the dark. Winning the towns has increase the bargaining power of Berenger; the purple wave can easily reach the shores of the Labour Party. Months ago, the Best Loser negotiations gave the two leaders an excuse, in the eyes of the public, to talk, but everybody knows that the BLS was not the only topic on the agenda. This time the next “talk talk” meeting will be the political reforms, let’s wait and see.

In 2010 the MSM was in love with the PT-PMSD leaving the MMM all alone in the opposition. In 2015 maybe the role will swap.

Berenger as Prime minister and Ramgoolam as President with powers in the Second Republic of Mauritius. Let’s wait and watch this drama... The actors are getting ready to surprise us. Will Duval accept Guimbeau as an ally, when the latter is a threat to his party in his beloved Curepipe? Will the MMSD of Guimbeau surprise again? Answers soon ...

PERCENTAGE OF VOTERS



Quatre-Bornes

**Ward 1:**  
Beemadoo, Danen  
Darajen (MMM/MSM)  
Gunny, Reza  
(MMM/MSM)  
Ramkalawon, Rambha  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 2:**  
Boolell, Shakuntala  
(PT/PMSD)  
Khemloliva,  
Maheswarsingh  
(MMM/MSM)  
Meetoo, Dayamantee  
Rooma (MMM/MSM)

**Ward 3:**  
Diolle, Marie Alexandra  
Tania (MMM/MSM)  
Finniss, Marie Claire  
Vianney (MMM/MSM)  
Gaya, Raj (MMM/MSM)

**Ward 4:**  
Gaya, Shankar Tarachand  
(PT/PMSD)  
Rucnaje, Sookwantee  
(PT/PMSD)  
Thylam, Poonum  
(PT/PMSD)

**Ward 5:**  
Beedasy, Premanand  
Parsad (PT/PMSD)  
Ramkoomar, Dhanwantee  
(PT/PMSD)  
Troylukho, Guy  
Emmanuel (PT/PMSD)

Beau-Bassin  
Rose-Hill

**Ward 1:**  
Choolun, Jai  
Krishna Vishwanauth  
(MMM/MSM)  
Christian, Marie  
Noëlle Sindy  
(MMM/MSM)  
Ramsamy, Mardaymootoo  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 2:**  
Begue, Annie Georges  
(MMM/MSM)  
Boudou, Philippe  
(MMM/MSM)  
Ramene, Marie France  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 3:**  
Foo Kune, Eileen Karen  
Lee Chin (MMM/MSM)  
Daureeawoo, Rashad  
Racheed (MMM/MSM)  
Petit, Eddy (MMM/MSM)

**Ward 4:**  
André, Louis Toussaint  
(MMM/MSM)  
Aurokium, Gaetan  
(MMM/MSM)  
Sandapa, Maryline  
Dominique (MMM/MSM)

**Ward 5:**  
Auckbaraullee-  
Khodabux, Bibi Adiliah  
(MMM/MSM)  
Lai Kong Ling, Andy  
Kinsley (MMM/MSM)  
Rivet, Michel Jules  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 6:**  
Arlapen, Anita  
(MMM/MSM)  
Budlorun, Baboo  
Bhoopendrasingh  
(MMM/MSM)  
Sairally, Hayatullah  
(MMM/MSM)

Curepipe

**Ward 1:**  
Marguerite, Berty Hans  
(MMM/MSM)  
Lepredour, Marie Michelle  
(PT/PMSD)  
Beedassy, Sundee  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 2:**  
Varmah, Kamla Devi  
(PT/PMSD)  
Khemloliva, Malini  
(PT/PMSD)  
Lafolle, Errol Noel  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 3:**  
Gopee, Stephanie Nathalie  
Fabiola (PT/PMSD)  
Bissonauth, Dhaneshwar  
(PT/PMSD)  
Rajoo, Yogendranaden  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 4:**  
Bienvenu, Mario Desire  
(MMSD)  
Coret, Irene (MMM/MSM)  
Ramma, Jean Damien Kervin  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 5:**  
Beeharry, Kritanand  
(PT/PMSD)  
Chaton, Marie Lorence  
Dominique (PT/PMSD)  
Paul, Lindsay Toussaint  
(MMM/MSM)

Port-Louis

**Ward 1:**  
Augustin, Daniel Georges  
Jean (MMM/MSM)  
Chuckowry, Marie Christiane  
Dorine (MMM/MSM)  
Servansingh, Phalraj  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 2:**  
Seegoulam, Ahmad  
(PT/PMSD)  
Kawroo, Muhammad Eshan  
Ally (MMM/MSM)  
Utteenum, Aboobakar  
(PT/PMSD)

**Ward 3:**  
Chiffonne, Jean Claude  
(PT/PMSD)  
Gondeca, Mahendra  
(PT/PMSD)  
Cotry, Gino Nicolas France  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 4:**  
Jadoo, Roubina  
(MMM/MSM)  
Doba, Ismaël Yacoob  
(PT/PMSD)  
Bistoquet, Marie Audrey  
Martine (PT/PMSD)

**Ward 5:**  
Cadamally, Shameem  
Rassool (PT/PMSD)  
Choomka, Zareena Tawheen  
(PT/PMSD)  
Khatib, Shamima  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 6:**  
Abbas Mamode, Salim  
(PT/PMSD)  
Hossenally, Aslam Adam  
(MMM/MSM)  
Caserne, Louis Ludovic  
Michel (MMM/MSM)

**Ward 7:**  
Adebiro, Olujare Jenny  
(MMM/MSM)  
Laurent, Daniel Eric Clive  
(MMM/MSM)  
Tenermont, Marie Christine  
(MMM/MSM)

**Ward 8:**  
Bissessur, Ganeshwarsing  
(PT/PMSD)  
Oozeer, Sheik Ahad Khan  
(PT/PMSD)  
Hurceeram, Mahendranuth  
Sharma (MMM/MSM)



*Mauritius News  
wishes a very  
Happy Year  
throughout 2013  
to all readers,  
advertisers,  
contributors and  
well-wishers*

**mauritius  
news (mn) intends  
to print an edition in  
mauritius for circulation  
there for profit from sale  
and advertising. Invest  
in the project, you  
can't lose.**

**mn wants to create a  
Holidays Club to take  
readers to India, China,  
USA, Australia, Canada, etc  
INVEST IN THE CLUB, YOU  
CAN'T LOSE**

**mauritius  
news website can  
become the most  
important portal on  
mauritius in terms of  
advertising revenue.  
your investment will  
pay dividends**

**An  
Elderly CARE  
Home - as a registered  
Charity - (for old UK Mauritians,  
- our own old folks.)**

**mauritius news wishes to encourage the provision of  
an elderly care home for mauritians in the UK, where  
they can play games of Cards, dominoes, eat  
dhalpouri, Samoussas and Briani. Is it too  
much to hope for? A Home or day Centre  
may be less isolated for them being  
together. The community is  
growing old.**

# mAUrITIUS nEWS

## January

Sun	mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1 <small>new year's day</small>	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 <small>mauritian brother largest day</small>	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## Feb:

Sun	mon	Tue	Wed
3	4	5	
10	11	12	
17 <small>mauritian's day</small>	18	19	
24	25	26	

## April

Sun	mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1 <small>april fool's day</small>	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 <small>good day</small>	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 <small>earth day</small>	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## M

Sun	mon	Tue	Wed
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12 <small>mauritian's day</small>	13	14	
19	20	21	
26 <small>mauritian day</small>	27	28	

## July

Sun	mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 <small>independence day</small>	4	5	6
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28	29	30	31			

## Au

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11	12	13
18	19	20
25	26	27

## October

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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 <small>columbus day</small>	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 <small>haloween</small>	31		

## Nov

Sun	mon	Tue
3	4	5
10 <small>christmas day</small>	11	12
17	18	19
24	25	26



# S CAI EndAr 2013

## February

Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
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20	21	22	23
27	28		

## March

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31						

## May

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## June

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30						

## August

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## September

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

## November

Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
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27	28	29	30

## December

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				





## London Christmas Fair Alexandra Palace - December 1

by Mylene



In the true spirit of Christmas, Sabrina and Sam once again organised an exceptional shopping experience for this festive season at the Alexandra Palace in North London. It was the perfect setting for exhibitors to display their original array of crafts, gifts, tasty treats and services.

"The past fairs always had a theme," Sam told us. "This year we decided to make it international."



The organisers: Sam, Sabrina and son David

Away from the hustle and bustle of the High Street, visitors were able to stroll leisurely around the many stalls showcasing lots of inspirational gift ideas from jewellery to clothing, homemade food to home appliance.

Fairs are a one-stop shop that support the local community as well as large and small businesses. Alexandra Palace, endearingly known as The People's Palace is surrounded by 106 acres of beautiful parkland and grounds that boast a pub & restaurant, ice rink, boating lake and a pitch & putt course. With free parking for 1,500 cars it an ideal venue for any event.

"My home furnishing business focusses on the colours of the rainbow," says Neha-Gupta-Balaji of Rainbowweaver. Then I noticed that all her

wares, from cushion covers to table settings reflected the red, orange, yellow, green blue, indigo and violet of the colours of the rainbow. Bling, a personalised fashion company with the motto: You name it, we bling it on!

True to their word, clothes, dog accessories, toys, footwear, bridal, well, whatever it is, they will add a diamante flash and sparkle to it. DJ and Master of Ceremonies, Terry Lewis who has been nominated for 3 awards was on hand to answer any question relating to his bespoke entertainment.

"I am very happy that Mauritius News always supports our ventures. As you see on our banner the logo of the paper is there and we are proud to have it there with other Mauritian businesses," Sam concludes with a smile.



An array of crafts and gifts

### Books

## On early Mauritian postcards and Chagos



The President of the Republic Rajkeswur Purryag (2<sup>nd</sup> from the left) presenting his address, with, to his right, Yvan Martial, and to his left, Emmanuel Richon, director of the Blue Penny Museum, and André de Kervern (seated)

### archipelago

In the course of December, two books have found their way to the bookshelves of lovers, local and foreign, of Mauritian history. The first, co-authored by André de Kervern, who currently resides in Paris, and Yvan Martial, reproduces 500 early postcards of the island, is sold at Rs 950 and is available separately in English and in French. The second one by Jean-Marie Chelin, relates the history of the Chagos archipelago and is available at Rs 500.

The book on the early Mauritian postcards is a completely reshuffled and enriched version of "Cartes postales du passé - l'Ile Maurice" of the same authors. This new edition, from the well-known 'Editions Didier-Millet', has been launched by the President of the Republic, H.E.

Rajkeswur Purryag, at the Blue Penny Museum, on 7 December. The book is available in separate English and French versions under the titles "Mauritius, 500 Early Postcards" and "Ile Maurice, 500 cartes postales anciennes". The books are available at the Blue Penny Museum and Bookcourt.

The new edition reproduces 500 unpublished postcards in 300 pages compared to 140 in 85 pages in the old edition. Each postcard is accompanied by an elaborate historical feature which will be particularly useful to the Mauritian readers and the many tourists who will certainly appreciate this original and picturesque approach to the history of the island.

## The archipel of Chagos revisited through family reminiscences

Jean-Marie Chelin has done a wonderful and useful work and contributed in an original way to the historiography of the Chagos. Answering a query on the genesis of his work "LES ILES LAHAUT Histoire de l'Archipel des Chagos", Jean-Marie Chelin said: "Les raisons qui m'ont poussé à écrire et à rassembler les informations ayant trait au Chagos sont les suivantes: un lien familial, un grand-père qui a dirigé certaines îles, une grand-mère et sa soeur qui racontaient souvent les îles, une mère, des tantes et un oncle qui y sont nés, la nostalgie d'une habitante des îles faisant partie de la famille et le besoin d'une certaine réhabilitation des Chagossiens qui sont des victimes du système."

Jean-Marie Chelin has done a comprehensive work on the Chagos,

## Bicentennial Memorial Tribute to Harriet Atwood Newell

On the initiative of Professor Vinesh Hookoomsing, formerly Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Mauritius, a memorial tribute was paid to Harriet Atwood Newell, a Christian missionary lady who died in Mauritius (former Isle de France) on 30 November 1812. The ceremony which was held near the tombstone of the lady at the Western Cemetery at Les Salines, Port Louis, was attended by Troy Fitrell, Deputy Chief of Mission of the American embassy, and Marc Etive, Executive Director of the Bible Society of Mauritius. It is during the international conference held for the bicentenary of the Bible Society of Mauritius at Institut Cardinal Jean Margéot on November 9 that Professor Vinesh Hookoomsing first made a public reference to the lady missionary and her untimely death at the age of 19.



The tomb of Harriet Atwood Newell at Saint Georges cemetery, Port Louis, covered with flowers.

At the start of the bicentennial ceremony Professor Hookoomsing presented an address based on various sources he had consulted about the tragic fate of lady Harriet Atwood Newell whom he considered to have been a "Martyr of the British Empire" in India. As a matter of fact, the lady missionary and her husband Reverend Samuel Newell as well as another missionary couple Reverend Adoniram Judson and his wife Nancy, were not allowed by the British colonial authorities to do missionary work in India (the more so as Britain and USA were at war in 1812) and were asked to leave the country. They retreated to Mauritius (Isle de France) where Harriet met her tragic fate and lost her new-born daughter on the way at sea.

Professor Hookoomsing referred to a passage of the book "Sub-tropical Rambles in the Land of the Aphanapteryx" written by Nicholas Pike, American Consul stationed in Mauritius in the 1870's, in which he described the burial-ground as a place where "the very air oppresses" and "the absence of tall trees and shade, and the bright glare of a tropical sun, destroy the feeling of rest that such a place should give." The American Consul painstakingly reproduced in his book the inscription on the tombstone:

Sacred to the memory of Mrs. H. Atwood,  
Wife of the Revd. S. Newell,  
Missionary at Bombay.  
Born at Haverhill, Mass. U.S. America Oct. 10,  
1793;  
Died after a distressing voyage  
From India to this place, Nov. 30, 1812.  
Long devoted to Christ, her heart burned for the  
heathen.  
For them she left her kindred and her native land,  
And welcomed dangers and sufferings.  
Of excellent understanding, rich in  
accomplishments  
And virtuous. The delight of her friends.  
A crown to her husband, and an ornament to the  
missionary cause.  
Her short life was bright, her death full of glory.  
Her name lives in all Christian lands, and is  
pleading  
With irresistible eloquence for the heathen.  
This humble monument to her memory  
Is erected by the American Board of Commissioners  
For foreign mission

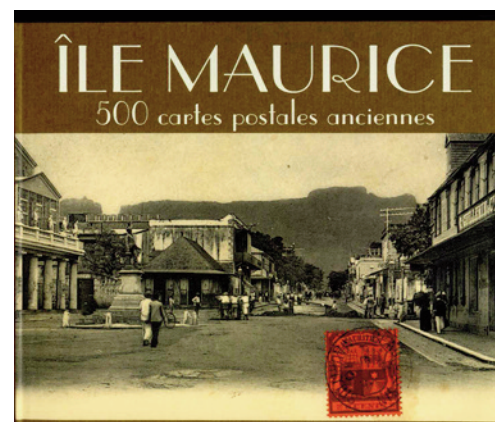
In view of the bicentennial ceremony held on Friday 30 November, Jean René, a craftsman, cleaned the marble tombstone and added a fresh coat of paint to bring out the inscription which had faded with the passage of time.

See also Page 11 for the Mauritian Reminiscences on the young missionary

although he avoids the political aspects of the whole issue of the tragic deportation of the Chagossians from their native land. "Le livre raconte l'histoire de l'Archipel depuis sa découverte, exploitation et déportation de ses habitants. J'ai évité intentionnellement l'aspect politique; d'autres ayant déjà abordé le sujet," said the author to

Mauritius News. The book is profusely illustrated with photos and first-hand evidence.

The book is on sale at Rs 500 at Le Trèfle and at the Société de l'Histoire de l'Ile Maurice at Curepipe, and at Bookcourt bookshops. The author can also be contacted at [tamarin98@yahoo.com](mailto:tamarin98@yahoo.com)



The cover of the French version of the book on the early postcards of Mauritius



Front cover of 'LES ILES LAHAUT Histoire de l'Archipel des Chagos'



## Commemorating a bicentenary

## The tragic adventure of missionary Harriet Atwood Newell in 1812

It is two hundred years back that Harriet Atwood Newell, described as "the first American heroine of the missionary enterprise" (1), died and was buried in Mauritius (which is referred to as 'Isle de France' in practically all writings on the American missionaries who called on the island in the first half of the 19th century, although the island had changed name and become Mauritius in the wake of the British conquest in 1810) at the Western Cemetery, Les Salines, in Port Louis.



Mrs. Harriet Newell (Illustration which appeared in a publication by Samuel T. Armstrong, Boston, 1814)

Mention of Harriet's grave has been made in the 1870's by the then American Consul posted in Mauritius, Nicholas Pike. "I was surprised once, when reading over the names, to come upon one of a countrywoman of my own – a name well known in America, and for those to whom she is still a household name." (2)

The Consul took trouble to copy the inscription on the tombstone and reproduce it in his book. The tombstone has been given a fresh coat of paint and the inscription brought out in view of a bicentennial memorial tribute paid to the missionary lady on 30 November last.

About a year later after the demise of Harriet Atwood Newell, her husband, Reverend Samuel Newell, evoked the tragedy in a moving letter addressed to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Atwood. An extract of the letter, written at Point de Galle in the island of Ceylon, reads thus:

"My dear, dear mother, It seems too much to believe that this paper will ever reach Haverhill, and be read in that peaceful dwelling, where I have spent so many hours. But your letters have safely reached me, and gladdened my sorrowful, desponding heart, in this distant region; and why should not mine be safely conveyed to my beloved mother? I hope this will reach you, and remind you of one – on whom you have bestowed the greatest blessing which any person on earth could bestow. That blessing, alas, how transient! – It was resumed by that sovereign God, from whom is every good gift, and I am left to mourn. – Yes, my dear mother, within ten short months from the day you gave your Harriet to me, I saw her sicken, waste away, and expire. In a strange land, without one friend to weep with me, I followed her, a solitary mourner, to the grave. She was interred in a retired spot, in the burying ground in Port Louis, under the shade of an evergreen. I often visited the spot with mournful satisfaction, during the

three remaining months of my residence in the Isle of France." (3)

#### From Salem, Massachusetts, to Calcutta, India, on the 'Caravan'

Harriet Atwood's interest in religion and mission work goes back to her schooldays. "In 1806, while at school at Bradford, she became deeply impressed with the importance of religion, and at the age of sixteen she joined the Church." (1)

On the 9th of February 1812, she married the reverend Samuel Newell, missionary to the Burmese Empire and in the same month they embarked on the 'Caravan' with their friends, Adoniram and Nancy Judson. The two couples were part of the first American mission set up to carry out missionary work abroad.

Reverend Luther Rice was also on board the 'Caravan' which left the port of Salem, Massachusetts on 19 February 1812 and set sail for India.

The reasons why the commissioning of the missionaries was held at the Tabernacle Congregational Church at Salem are twofold. "Tabernacle's minister at that time, Rev.

Dr. Samuel Worcester was a leader in the growing world mission movement. Salem was also the centre of the Far East trade and Salem port was the destination of most ships that went to the Orient, which is likely why this commissioning was held here." (4)

Another point worth mentioning is the reason why the missionaries were leaving Salem in full winter. "The date, in the

reaching Calcutta, the missionaries were welcomed at the residence of Dr William Carey, English Orientalist and Baptist missionary, who gladly made them visit the station.

However, their dreams to bring the Christian religion to the Indians were frustrated by the British authorities who did not hesitate to declare the missionaries *persona non grata* and ordered them to leave the land. "By invitation of Dr. Carey they visited the station, and were treated with the greatest kindness. But their hopes of usefulness were destined to be blasted.

The East India Company was opposed to all attempts to christianize the natives, and threw all their influence against the divine cause of missions. As soon as the government became apprised of the object of Mr. Newell and his associates, orders were issued for them to leave the country immediately." (6)

The opposition of the British East India Company to the presence of the missionaries was seemingly founded "on the expectation that the missionaries would interfere with its nefarious trading practices." (7)

But the British apprehensions were far deeper. "Besides, the English feared that the natives of India, finding themselves beset by the missionaries of a foreign religion, and their own sacred institutions undermined, would rise against the whole English race, and a war ensue which would be rendered more intense by the spirit of religious fanaticism.

The Oriental meekly submits to oppression, except where religious questions are involved; it was the greased cartridge which brought on the Sepoy rebellion. The English authorities feared, as once was stated in the House of Lords,



Tabernacle Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Salem, Massachusetts, where the Newells and the Judsons were commissioned as the first American missionaries

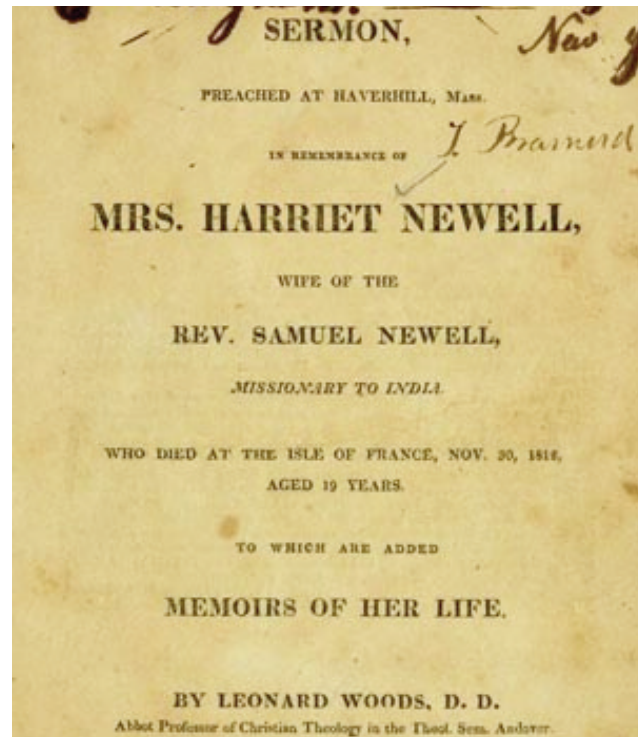
depth of a cold New England winter, was chosen because the British were threatening an immediate blockade of the harbour as the outset of "the War of 1812" loomed." (5) The strained relations between America and Britain would weigh heavily on the predicaments of the two missionary couples, the Newells and the Judsons, in their original mission land, India.

Declared '*persona non grata*' in India missionaries negotiate trip to Isle de France. Upon

"That every missionary would have to be backed by a gunboat."

There might arise endless complications, and they determined to arrest the danger before it really began." (8)

Fortunately, in due course, the missionaries were given the latitude to choose their destination. "After a vast deal of parleying with the civil powers, permission was obtained to reside at the Isle of France and on the 4th of August, 1812, Mr. and Mrs. Newell took passage on board the Gillepsie for that place." (6)



The cover of the publication printed by Samuel T. Armstrong, which reproduces a memorial sermon preached in Mrs. Harriet Newell's hometown of Haverhill, Massachusetts, and memoirs of her life.

However, the initial plan was that the two missionary couples, the Newells and the Judsons, would embark together for Mauritius. But circumstances were such that they travelled separately to Isle de France, the Newells first and the Judsons later. "They then asked if they could go to the Isle of France (Mauritius). This request was granted; but the only ship then setting sail for that port could convey but two passengers, and by common consent Mr. and Mrs. Newell embarked. Mr. and Mrs. Judson and Mr. Rice remained behind for another vessel." (8)

After some two months and quite a few administrative obstacles set by the British authorities, the Judsons and Rice managed to get a passport to sail to Isle de France on board "La Belle Créole". "After a voyage of six weeks they arrived in Port Louis, on the Isle of France, January 17, 1813." (Ibid)

#### Tragedy at sea and tragedy on land for the Newells

The Newells made their journey to Mauritius without the Judsons. So when tragedy would strike the couple twice, once at sea and another time on land, the Newells would indeed be all alone to shoulder their pain and mourn in silence. First, both husband and wife mourned the untimely death of a new-born.

"Three weeks before reaching the island she became the mother of a child, which died in five days." (1) This was indeed a trying time for the Christian missionary couple – to see their dear baby dying away.

"The day before its death, the rite of the church, by which the little stranger into this cold world was given to God, was performed. They called her by the mother's name, and watched over her until she breathed her last upon her mother's bosom, and then sunk the form into the cold waters of the deep." (6)

After losing the new-born, Reverend Samuel Newell witnessed the disease that carried his wife slowly away in Isle de France. She suffered from consumption (tuberculosis). "Soon after the death of her babe, Mrs. Newell discovered symptoms of the malady which soon carried her to an untimely grave.

From the first, she had no hope of recovery. Several of her

friends had died of the same disease, and when it fastened itself upon her system, she knew that her time had come. The slow, wasting consumption was on her frame, and her days were nearly run out." (Ibid) So, "on the 30th November, seven weeks and four days after her confinement, Mrs. Harriet Newell, at the age of twenty (19), expired, far from her home and friends." (1)

#### Isle de France: the land of disillusion for the missionaries

Upon their arrival at Isle de France, the missionaries Adoniram and Nancy Judson and Luther Rice were apprised of the sad fate of the Newells. "The scene of St. Pierre's pathetic tale of "Paul and Virginia," it was to our missionaries also who took refuge here, a place of sorrow. They learned of a death which rivals in pathos the fate of Virginia.

Mrs. Harriet Newell, the first American martyr to foreign missions, had only just survived the tempestuous voyage from Calcutta, and had been laid in the "healthy ground" of Mauritius; one who "for the love



The "Caravan" sailing from Salem with the missionaries on board for a four months trip that would take them via the Cape of Good Hope to Calcutta, India

of Christ and immortal souls, left the bosom of her friends and found an early grave in a land of strangers."

... What a sense of desolation must have crept over the little band of missionaries, now that death had so early broken into their ranks!" (8)

Isle de France proved also to be a land of disillusion to the Judsons insofar as it did not turn up to be the promised mission land which they were informed

about after they had been ordered out of India by the British authorities.

Isle de France had just been taken by the British which named it Mauritius (1810) and was ruled by a British governor, Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar. "La décision de Judson de venir en mission à Maurice est motivée par les échos qu'il avait eus et concernant l'attitude favorable du gouverneur Farquhar à la présence éventuelle d'un missionnaire aussi bien à l'île Maurice qu'à Madagascar." (9)

But stark reality soon broke down their missionary zeal. "Mais très vite ils vont découvrir un autre visage de l'île Maurice – une île Maurice réactionnaire, esclavagiste, opposé à tout projet visant à l'instruction religieuse des esclaves qui constituent alors la majorité de la population." (Ibid)

So, after "four months in Mauritius, largely spent in mission work with English soldiers" (8) and not with the masses, they embarked on the "Countess of Harcourt" on 7 May for Madras, India, whence, on June 22, they would proceed to Burma, the country they had initially planned to evangelize.

In the meantime, on February 24th, Mr. Newell embarked for Ceylon, and on the 15th of March, Mr. Rice proceeded to the United States to campaign for the setting up a Baptist Missionary Society to support the work of Baptist missionaries as Adoniram and Nancy Judson abroad. T

he latter would visit Mauritius from Burma on two occasions – in 1841, on account of ill-health of their children, and in 1845, "as his health and his wife's was so broken". (Ibid)

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## La mode et la culture indienne en France



**Qui sera la prochaine ambassadrice de la mode et de la culture indienne en France, deviendra-t-elle la plus indienne du monde en représentant la France à une élection internationale en Asie ? la trouvera-t-on en Thaïlande ou à Mumbai quand se déroulera la cérémonie de l'élection de « Miss Indian Princess International » en 2013 ? 9ème édition de l'élection de MISS INDIA France 2012**

En effet, le Samedi 27 Octobre à l'Espace Reuilly était choisie, parmi les 15 finalistes venues des grandes villes de France (Paris, Lyon, Toulouse, Montpellier, Aix en Provence,...), la nouvelle « Miss India France 2012 ». Quinze charmantes et élégantes jeunes demoiselles indiennes d'origine et françaises de nationalité ont été sélectionnées lors du casting de l'élection Miss India France 2012 pour gagner ce titre dans le but de représenter la culture et les valeurs de l'Inde en France. Elles ont défilé dans des tenues sublimes afin de montrer leur beauté et ont pu prononcer un discours, répondre aux questions du jury et présenter un talent afin de révéler leur différente personnalité.

Mademoiselle Anita Gosh candidate numéro 4 a été préférée par le public et le jury pour représenter la 9ème Miss India France 2012, et à ses côtés Nirosha élue première dauphine et Joelle élue deuxième dauphine. (notre cliché)

Anita, 1m63, est une ravissante métisse de mère française et de père originaire de Calcutta. A 23 ans, elle est en 2ème année d'école d'infirmière. La 1ère dauphine, Nirosha (N°7), 21 ans, étudiante en comptabilité, vient de Colombo au Sri Lanka. La 2ème dauphine Joelle (N°9), 19 ans, Pondichérienne est en seconde année

d'école de commerce international, elle qui avait interprété une danse sur une musique de film.

Le Jury : David Subash, le président, est fondateur de l'agence de communication Increa. Apoorva Srivastava : Première Secrétaire de l'Ambassade de l'Inde à Paris. Manisha Sen Gupta créatrice et fondatrice de la marque Gaur Kala, s'est déplacée de l'Inde spécialement pour habiller les candidates de Miss India France 2012. Marion Dumas : comédienne, actuellement à l'affiche avec Laurent Artufel. Ramesh Nair : Designer chez Moynat, groupe Lvmh.

Le défilé, en robe de créateur, fut conçu par Manisha Sen Gupta qui a aidé Gaurkala à montrer un choix unique de tissus, de styles variés et des idées d'habillement en confection et ses accessoires design. Un concept unique, une production de la créatrice Manisha de Pondichéry. Spectacle inoubliable et envoûtant, présenté par Sandra Murugiah et Laurent Artufel, qui a surpris le public ; une qualité exceptionnelle, et un choix surprenant d'artistes tel que le groupe dynamique Morjan's Art, les sensuelles Danseuses d'Or de samba, l'incroyable et moderne groupe d'hip hop Like Bounce de la célèbre émission Meilleur danse, les charmants danseurs d'Indian Ocean et la voix douce de la chanteuse Barbara.

La chorégraphie et la mise en scène furent l'œuvre de Mohan et Prem.

Un événement inoubliable et original, organisé et présenté à Paris, soutenu et patronné par l'ambassade de l'Inde en France. La 10ème édition promet d'être encore plus étonnante.

*Lena Goel & Gilles Berger (Paris)*



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### GANESH CHATURTI

The Mauritian Marati Society(UK) celebrated Ganesh Chaturti on 19th & 20th September in Palmers Green, North London. Devotees from the United Kingdom and other parts of Europe came to make their offerings and pay their salutations to Lord Ganesh. For the devotees the festival is a religious as well as a social event. It is an occasion when friends and relatives who have not seen each other for years come together and renew their ties. They also bring food and sweets to share—an act of selflessness.

The many volunteers and the weather contributed to make the festival a true success. This year the M.M.S. benefitted from the service of Acharya Pritviraj Bhugun who performed the Stapanah pooja (inaugural ceremony). Acharyaji was here for a short stay from Mauritius.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy NEW YEAR and happy MAAKAR SANKRANTY. God bless you all.

Suresh Gunputrao,  
Chairman M.M.S.(UK)

### Deaths announcement Kader Bhayat



Kader Bhayat, former MP, Commerce and Industry Minister in the MMM government passed away at his Quatre Bornes residence on November 16 at the age of 76.

His sudden death that occurred during the previous night came as a surprise to relatives and friends as he was known to be well and fit.

Kader, a lawyer by profession, was a very amiable person, everyone who knew him agrees to say.

### Darmalingum Pather

Darmalingum Pather, popularly known as Dangon, passed away in Mauritius on December 4 at the age of 70. Mourned by all members of the family in Mauritius and England.

Dangon was at one time a South London resident. He was the brother of late Sivon Pather, well-known local football player of the sixties, and who was before his demise a Vauxhall resident.

### Evangeline Carpanen



Mauritius News and the Père Laval Association (UK) wish to express their deepest sympathy to Regis Carpanen and his family on the passing of his wife, Evangeline, on December 1 in South London. She was only 60 years old.

Evangeline had been ill for some time and was looked after in her final days at the St Raphael's hospice.

In gratitude, the Carpanen family invites sympathisers to make donations to the Hospice that look after terminally ill patients and their families. Donations may be sent to <http://www.justgiving.com/Evangeline-Carpanen>

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## Use Caution When Using Contact Lenses

by Devinia Sookia (USA)\*

Millions of people wear contact lenses all over the world as it is very practical. The introduction of disposable daily lenses has encouraged more and more people to opt for contact lenses rather than glasses.

However not many wearers of contact lenses have seriously thought of the risks involved in using contact lenses. Recent warnings from scientists in the United Kingdom have drawn our attention to something that a lot of contact lenses wearers do without realising that this could result in blindness.

### Washing contact lenses in tap water

Contact lenses should never be washed with tap water as there is the risk of catching Acanthamoeba. Acanthamoeba is a naturally occurring single-celled organism that is found in untreated soil and liquids including tap water. If it gets into the lens and comes in contact with the eye, it can penetrate the cornea and cause Acanthamoeba keratitis. As a result great damage can occur to the eyes. Symptoms include redness and eye pain, tearing, light sensitivity, blurred vision, discharge and feeling as though there is a foreign body in the eye. As many of the symptoms resemble those associated with Pinkeye, Acanthamoeba keratitis can be difficult for an eye doctor to diagnose.

Acanthamoeba keratitis diagnosis is usually reached when the symptoms persist despite antibiotics. The presence of a ring-like ulceration in the eye can also be used as an indicator. While Acanthamoeba poses a risk to everyone, contact lens wearers are at particular risk. Statistics from the UK show that around 75 people have to deal with serious damage caused by Acanthamoeba per year.

Dr Fiona Henriquez from the University of the West of Scotland who has been conducting tests on new lens solutions to fight Acanthamoeba contamination said:

"It is a potential problem for every single contact lens wearer. The incidence is quite low but that may be a problem with diagnosis. There are no effective drug treatments. The drugs used are often ineffective. It requires hospitalisation and applications of a toxic substance to the eye."

"We're trying to improve the elimination of this parasite and prevent blindness. If treatment isn't effective, there is the possibility of blindness and the need for a corneal transplant. An estimated 3.7 contact lens wearers in the UK and more than 125 million worldwide are at risk from acanthamoeba".

Though this news is very disturbing, it is encouraging to know that some things can be

done as a means of prevention. There are a few simple things you can do to reduce the risk of infection.

### Taking extra care by following the following steps

Follow instructions on how to care for your lenses that were given you by your eye doctor.

\* Use only products that your eye doctor recommends.

\* Never use tap water to clean contact lenses.

\* Never swim, shower or use a hot tub while wearing them. If you must wear your contact lenses while swimming, make sure to wear airtight goggles and afterwards dispose of your lenses.

\* Single use daily contact lenses are considered safer than reusable ones.

\* If your lenses are not disposables, upon removing always clean them in multipurpose solution and then store them overnight in fresh disinfecting solution.

\* Make sure to replace your lenses as often as is recommended by your eye doctor.

\* Lastly always wash and thoroughly dry your hands before handling your lenses.

*Happy Holidays to the readers of this column*

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

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# THE SUGAR CANE *Gastro Pub and Lounge Bar* - formerly



The Lounge



The Bar

Historically, since 1875, a public house (pub) known as The Lordship in mock Tudor style, has stood at 606 Lordship Lane, down the road off Wood Green underground in North London.

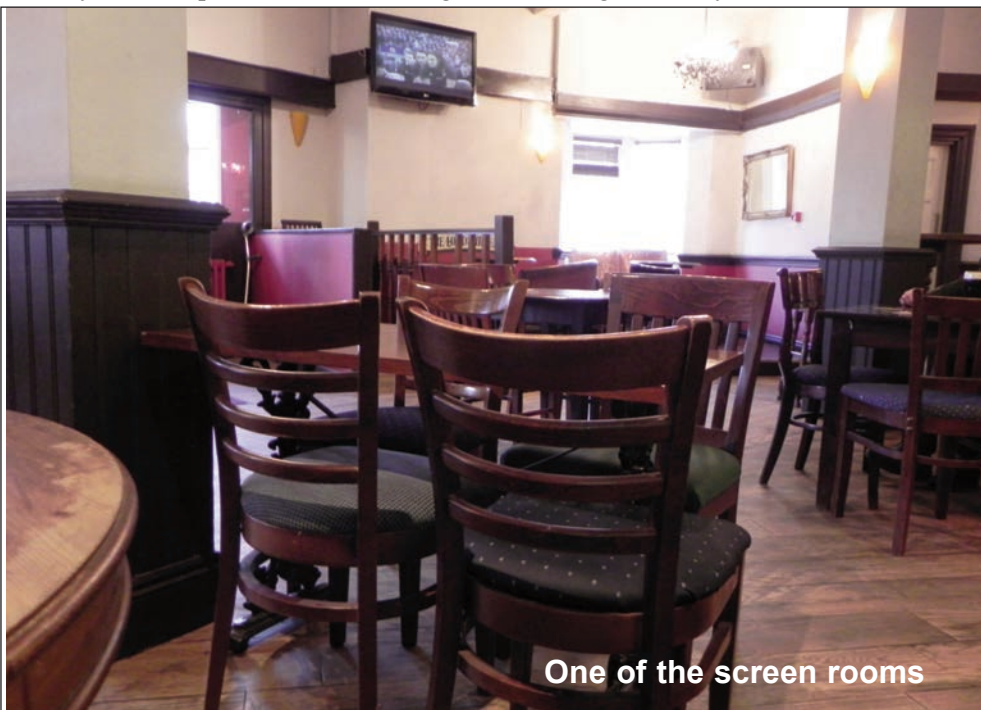
Now under new management, renamed with a Mauritian flavour, The Sugar Cane, Mauritian-born Amit is making ground-breaking changes to bring these premises into the 21st century. When I walked through the doors, the atmosphere was convivial. People sitting and chatting or watching football on the large screen TVs. As there are two satellite dishes, it is possible to screen two different football games at the same time. But, Sugarcane is much more than just a sports pub as Amit explains here to Mauritius News

## A place with a community spirit

Pub going is not really in the Mauritian culture, I would like to change that. So on my multi-cultural menu you can find, gateaux piments and Phoenix beer, as well as a full English Breakfast, French and Mauritian cuisine, Chinese, Mediterranean and Indian food. To top all that, there is traditional roast on Sundays

## It's an ongoing process

My background ranges from biomedical engineering through to professional photographer, so this business is new to me. The previous owners came in for a short while to show me the ropes, but everything else I am learning as I go along. Luckily, I am a quick learner, so things move along smoothly



One of the screen rooms



## A revamp

It's early days yet, but the beer garden will have its own entrance and will house up to 120 people. Improvements are being made all the time, for example the unique Shisha lounge. I am also creating a package for those who want to celebrate a special occasions such as birthdays or engagements, your special day will be tailor-made to suit your individual needs. After all, the place can hold 350 standing.

## Things happening

On Mondays, all pints are sold for less than the recommended price and Happy Hour is on Fridays & Saturdays from 7.30pm - 9.30pm. There are Mauritian sega DJ nights, live music and if you want to get vocal with your friends, there's the Karaoke evenings. There are other events and some of those cater for the local ethnic communities and of course, the venue is open for hire, and bookings have been coming in steadily

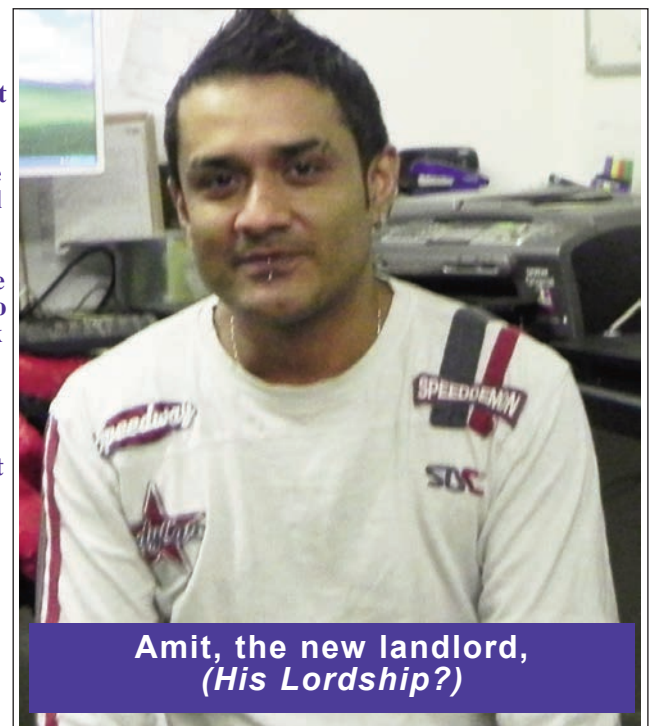
## My doors are open

Come in. Eat, drink and enjoy yourself in a friendly and family orientated

atmosphere. Historically, I understand that the Lord of the manor used to ride down this road and that's how the name, Lordship Lane came about and he would stop off for a drink at the Sugarcane which was then known as the Lordship Taverna.

## Great location

Wood Green is the nearest station. From there it's about a 10 mins walk or you can hop on a W3, 143 or 243 (24hr) bus. After visiting the The Mall Wood Green for all your shopping needs or watching a movie at Cineworld, why not make the Sugarcane your port of call to eat, drink, chill out and relax  
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Amit, the new landlord, (His Lordship?)