

Feeling of a New Dawn over Mauritius



**It is felt that the wind of change
has blown over the island**

It is said “Vox Populi Vox Dei”

The voice of the people is the voice of God

The People have spoken Loud and Clear

They want Change. Change is the Key Word

They scooped
all the
parliamentary
seats



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The new Prime Minister taking oath of office



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the first statesman to congratulate Navin Ramgoolam



Archives picture

I, Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK FRCP, do solemnly affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Mauritius, according to law . . .

. . . I will be a true and faithful Prime Minister

In fact, The Indian Prime Minister sought to speak to Dr Ramgoolam on the phone even when the votes were being still counted on November 12. Dr Ramgoolam left the counting station to go to his home in order to have a private conversation with Mr Modi on the phone.. Hereunder is a message that Mr Modi posted on his internet account

Had a warm conversation with my friend, congratulating him on his historic electoral victory. I wished him great success in leading Mauritius and extended an invitation to visit India. Look forward to working closely together to strengthen our special and unique partnership.



Dr Navin Ramgoolam has declared that Paul Bérenger and himself have learned from their past mistakes. He has thanked the voters (62%) for giving him back “mon honneur et ma réputation”.

He had been in the political wilderness for 14 years, going through a lot of ups and downs. In a way, the electorate seems to have given him a second chance. He looks like a new man with a new dynamism in the hot seat of Prime Minister of Mauritius.

He holds a qualification in Medicine and a qualification in Law, a feat which he is the only person known in Mauritius to have accomplished. He also had been Prime Minister of Mauritius on the three previous occasions. Yet, at one time his reputation had been greatly tarnished.

What of the future?

Peter Chellen

No More Phone Tapping

Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam has promised that there will be no more phone tapping and no more telephone message leaks, as being one of the priority measures of his new government.

See Pages 3 & 4 for coverage on L'Alliance Lepep



A Jubilant crowd welcoming the election results

Pravind Out - Navin In

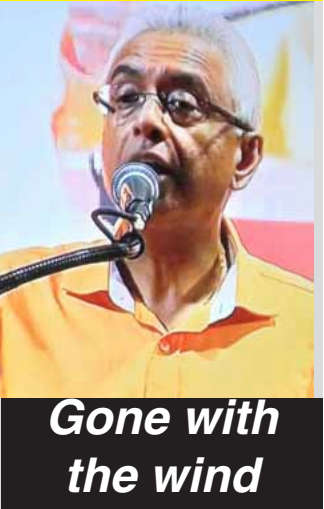
A note from the Editor:

On the first two pages of this issue we talk of the feeling of a new dawn prevailing in Mauritius following the massive victory of the L'Alliance du Changement with 67% of the votes cast by the electorate.

For a balanced view, we now try to gauge the depth of despair that this massive victory has caused among the four partners making up L'Alliance Lepep, the party that was riding on the crest of the wave until crushed by the tsunami predicted by Sherry Singh and subsequently by Labour leader Dr Navin Ramgoolam.

From various quarters, especially in the press, there have been attempts to understand the reasons for the **massive defeat** of the L'Alliance Lepep who was the ruling coalition until dissolution of Parliament for the general election. How could this have happened? With the exception of MMM's Rajesh Bagwan who declared at a meeting at Bambous (in his own constituency) on 11 October, a month before the date of the election, "I think we are moving towards a repeat of 1982". No one elsewhere within the L'Alliance du Changement could predict another 60-0 results. Various elements of that group (l'Alliance du

Changement) have themselves declared that they expected to win but not by such a margin. What are the reasons that have turned the greater part of the electorate against the outgoing government, depriving them of any seat in the House? To different people that this question is put, one gets a different answer to the point that it may be safely said that a series of reasons have motivated the people to vote against the outgoing government in spite of its positive *bilan* for the past five years, and the numerous promises made to the electorate for the uplift of the welfare of the nation.



A salute to victory

Gone with the wind

So, what are main reasons for the trashing of the outgoing group?

First and foremost, the electorate has voted for change. After five years, the people of Mauritius got tired of looking at the same faces. This is the main lesson to learn from the ousting of the People's Alliance (l'Alliance Lepep). Given an opportunity, the nation would opt for a system whereby a government will not hold office for more than two terms of five years each. A period of ten years is long enough for any government to achieve its objectives. But then how do we account for the fact that Dr Navin Ramgoolam has been going and coming several times? This topic demands an analysis of its own.

On the other hand, after five years of bashing from every quarter, the faces of the outgoing politicians were smashed to a pulp. There was a feeling that Maneesh Gobin, Ivan Collen-davelloo, Alan Ganoo, Xavier Duval and so many others of the "Alliance Lepep" had become the sort of faces "*a great part of the nation*" no longer wanted to see. That *great part of the nation* namely from among the younger voters has been conditioned to hate those faces. Yet, those people believed that the majority of the population who voted them in power in 2019 still entertained the same sympathy for them. This has proved wrong.

A large proportion of the Hindu community may have admiration for the MSM leader but not for the other pale figures of the MSM bunch. Maneesh Gobin with his untidy beard did not look pleasing and pleasant. His alleged rave party at Grand Bassin will have alienated or created doubt among many MSM Hindu sympathisers and brought the Government into disrepute.

Look at the Alliance du Changement candidates, they all have clean and tidy bearing. This sort of appearance appeal to the tpeople while many of the MSM candidates look tired and worn out. Steven Obeegadoo added to the criticism when the lease of a land in Port Louis in the name of his parents was renewed in a jiffy when it takes ages for similar cases to be dealt with for members of the public,

Ousting of L'Alliance Lepep

Now, where do we go from here to delve into the reasons that helped to push out the l'Alliance Lepep coalition who, all the same, had a few achievements to their credit?

As mentioned above, the reasons given by readers to the Mauritian Overseas Gazette for such a thrashing are varied. Perhaps it will not be inappropriate to start with the former Speaker Sooroojdev Phokeer whose decisions while chairing debates in the National Assembly were considered objection-able and unacceptable by the members of the Opposition benches. His reactions created a lot of commotion in the House to an unacceptable level. Opposition members were frequently, and too frequently, ejected from the House. His replacement by PMSD Adrien Duval was thought to be unconstitutional. The Opposition did not like him. They argued that the Deputy Speaker, from the Parti Liberator, Zahid Nazurally, should have been nominated for the period of the remaining life of the last parliamentary session. The Government took a lot of attack for this. And the PM's decision to welcome the PMSD to the Alliance Lepep, as a partner, was not considered a wise move, and now PMSD leader Xavier Duval is the first to leave the sinking ship.

The outgoing PM took immense bashing from the revelations of the so-called Missie Moustass Leaks, making lots of allegations of insults from the wife of the Prime Minister. The revelations of the alleged conversations between her and her close friends contain alleged insults towards all sections of the community, who have forcefully protested. Within the Hindu community itself the Maraz (grand nation) took exception of the reference made to them. The Tamils believe they have been insulted by the statements mentioned in the leak. Furthermore, many Tamils expressed grievances earlier this year against the cancellation of the grant of a portion of land made to them by the Government at Réduit for the construction of a cultural centre.

The Muslims, too, were extremely unhappy as they, also, have been targeted in the alleged conversation of Mrs Jugnauth, The Catholics were aggrieved at alleged insulting remarks towards the Virgin Mary allegedly uttered by the

Commissioner of Police. During the electoral campaign, a Chinese figure suddenly came out to denounce the fact that the Alliance Lepep did not field a single Chinese candidate. Perhaps Mauritian ambassador Alain Wong, and other ambassadors and High Commissioners should have been brought home to help with the campaign.

Thus, there was a concoction of race hatred against the outgoing government! Fortunately, the White community (the original Franco-mauriciens) does no longer seem to give a damn about the elections in Mauritius.

So, when one realises that all the components of the Mauritian society have a bone against the outgoing government, one can imagine the bearing of the grudge on the voting outcome.

Added to that, for a few days before the election, the Internet connection in Mauritius was suppressed by the Government for security reasons. This was fodder to the Opposition, and the bashing reached its summum. The outgoing government was accused of suppressing public opinion.

Overseas Mauritians who have left Mauritius for one reason or another also contributed their bashing on the social media.

To crown it all, there was the bashing from the local media: radio, internet broadcasts, and the press. Following the election results some were consistent and merciless. Some presenters have been congratulated by their audience "for their campaign".

It may be said that the outgoing Prime Minister was overconfident of victory. At some stage he did look unbeatable. Did he wait too long to go back to the people? Should he have opted for a snap election? His postmortem, when it's done, will tell him.

During the elctoral campaign, while the PM and his team were still bothered with the affairs of State, Navin Ramgoolam, with his *Bâton de Pèlerin* in hand was going from door to door in his constituency doing his mea culpa and promised the inhabitants to be a better boy henceforth.

Quo Vadis, Pravind?

Ed Note: If, as one daily has said, his Government was allegedly involved in drugs planting in an autocratic administration, then the outgoing PM has little to regret about the defeat. He should know that the people would not stand for it



The crowd at the meeting de remerciement on 16 November in front of Government House in Port Louis