

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be Guest of Honour for Mauritius's 12th March Independence Day Celebrations

Prime Minister Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam announced to the National Assembly on Friday, 21 February, that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accepted his invitation to be the Guest of Honour on the occasion of the commemoration of the 57th Independence Day Anniversary on 12th March 2025. (Ed note: The commemoration has so far been known as the Independence and Republic Day Celebrations.)

Dr Ramgoolam said “it’s a singular privilege for our country to host such a distinguished personality who is doing us this honour in spite of his heavy schedule . . . The visit, he said, is a testimony of the close relations between our two nations.

Can Modi mollify Trump to give back the Chagos Archipelago to Mauritius as agreed by Britain?

In our MOG Issue No 51(January 2025) we said that “India’s intervention to President Trump in favour of Mauritius will be of the highest importance. Trump is a character who is determined to turn Planet Earth on its head. To assuage his fury when he is at the White House, Indian PM, Narendra Modi, may try to convince Trump that as long as he (Modi) can keep the Mauritian leaders under India’s wings, there is no fear that they (the Mauritians) will accommodate the Chinese in the Chagos.

Following Dr Navin Ramgoolam’s announcement that the Indian PM will be the Guest of Honour for the independence celebrations, some local observers have expressed the view that Mr Modi, as a result of his close tie with the American President, may play a significant part in getting him to agree not to stand in the way of Mauritius having the Chagos as part of its overseas territory. MOG said that in its Issue No 51 as stated above

BBC says American President Donald Trump accepts the agreement between Britain and Mauritius about the Chagos

Take it or Leave it ... No Diego!

In 1965, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson told Mauritian Premier Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (SSR) “You can have independence for Mauritius but without the Chagos.” *It was a matter of Take it or Leave it.* Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam accepted independence.

Sixty years later, SSR’s son, Navin Ramgoolam, is told by British Prime Minister, Sir Keith Starmer, “You can NOW have the Chagos as Mauritius territory but without Diego Garcia.” This was the term agreed between the former Mauritian PM Pravind Jugnauth and British PM Sir Keir Starmer on Oct 3, October 2024.

Following his sweeping victory at the 11November 2024 General Election, the new PM, Navin Ramgoolam told the nation that it was a bad deal between his predecessor and the British PM. *It was a sell-out on the part of his predecessor*, he told the people. He said that he was going to renegotiate. After démarches upon démarches by PM Ramgoolam both with British envoys to Mauritius and Mauritian delegations to London, Sir Keir stuck to his gun. *It’s still Chagos without Diego Garcia.* It’s again a matter of “*Take it or Leave it*”.

This is the proposal which Sir Keith took to the States on 27 February to be vetted by the US Manitou. According to the BBC report of 27 February, the Big Chief has said OK, as long the US keeps the tenancy of Diego Garcia. It was feared that he might *mettre enne bar dans la roue*.

Has the Indian Prime Minister effectively spoken to the Boss *pour l’amadouer* as we stated in our Issue No 51 in January?

In the very first issue of Mauritius News, in Issue No 1, in November 1983, we asked the question: “Diego Garcia base to stay?”

Yes, it has taken 42 years for a definite answer.

Yes, the US military base on Diego Garcia will stay for many many years following a new lease of 99 years to the US which is subject to a renewal of another 40 years. A lot of years will pass under the bridge. The children of our grand children will still be dealing with this issue.

The picture on the left shows a copy of the First Issue of Mauritius News published in November 1983. High Commissioner Gian Nath and his wife Chitra have both long gone since then.

Ed. Note: The word ‘Garcia’ in this first edition was misspelt by typesetters in 1983

I introduced Mauritius News to the Mauritian expatriates in the UK in 1983, the first ever Mauritian newspaper outside Mauritius. It was published under the trade name of the Mauritius Publishers Co Ltd (MPCL). The publication survived for 32 years until the business was sold in 2015. Though Mauritius News itself has ceased to appear, the MPCL is still on the register of Companies House in London as an ongoing concern.

In that article, we said, as far back as 1983, that at the end of the 50-year lease of the Chagos granted to the U.S. in 1965 (before the Mauritius government was invited that year to discuss the independence of the country), the Archipelago should return to Mauritius. Of course, in 2015, the British Government, under the Conservatives, would have none of that. The issue of a new lease of the Chagos to the Americans has been dragging on since then. The British Government, under a Labour admin-

istration, is now willing to give the Chagos, minus the island of Diego Garcia, back to Mauritius. In our 1983 article, we said then, “negotiations must be started with the Americans with a view to getting some rent from them.” 42 years later, talking of the latest arrangement between the UK and Mauritius, President Trump, according to the BBC, is reported to have said “The agreement includes a plan to lease back the strategically important US-UK military base on Diego Garcia at **British taxpayers’ expense**.

Mention has recently been made in Mauritius of the payment to Mauritius by Britain of £18 billion (subsequently reduced to £9 billion). Is it the sum total of rent money for the whole 99 years lease of Diego Garcia to the Americans?

As was expected, Trump will have Diego but will not pay the rent. This is his term, so far, on which Mauritius may have the Chagos

P.C.

Fun in the Snow in Hokkaido, Japan - Zoo & Other Activities

From
Mylene



As someone who loves basking in the sun, I never imagined that there could be so much enjoyment in the cold and a country so blanketed in snow

Forget skiing, ice skating and skateboarding, there are so many more activities to explore in Hokkaido, Japan's northern island.

Ski Jumping World Cup took place on 15 & 16 February

Once a year, Sapporo, hosts the thrilling Viessmann FIS Ski Jumping World Cup at the renovated Okurayama Ski Jump Stadium, that was originally revamped for the 1972 Winter Olympic Games.

Watching the athletes glide through the air at speeds up to 90km/h and staying airborne for about 5 seconds before landing gracefully is really exhilarating.

During last weekend's competition, Japan's Ryoyo Kobayashi clinched consecutive World Cup golds with impressive jumps spanning 132 and 137 metres.

Snowshoe Walking

In cities and residential areas, roads are cleared to ensure smooth traffic flow and pedestrian safety. However, stepping into the countryside reveals a different scene, where you might unexpectedly find yourself trudging through snow up to your armpits.

Enter Kanjiki, the traditional snowshoes designed to help residents navigate from point A to B without sinking into the soft snow underneath.

Crafted by bending thin wood pieces with heat and securing them with ropes, these snowshoes have a wider base that evenly distributes body weight, making it easier to walk on snowy surfaces without sinking.

When my brother Marco visited Japan recently, he was able to tick that from his bucket list.

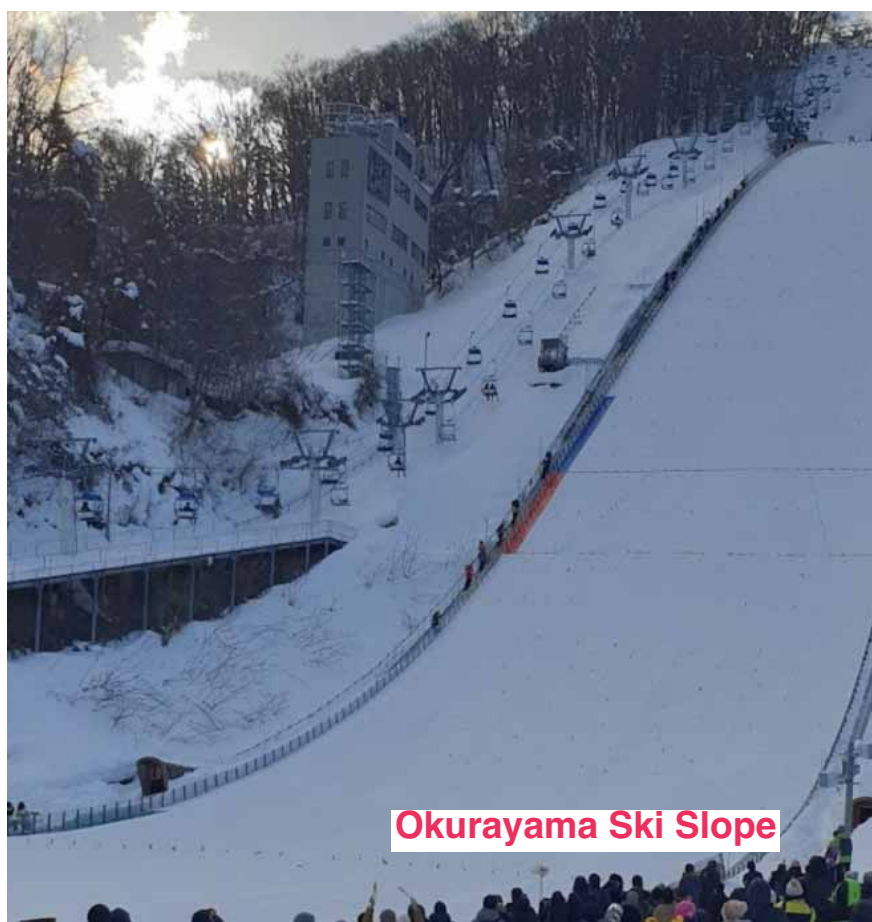
Smelt Fishing

Smelt are sleek, small silver-coloured fish.

In wintertime, tents are set up and a hole is drilled into the frozen river where a fishing rod is lowered through the opening in the hope of catching these fish. In Hokkaido, freshly caught smelt are swiftly coated in batter and fried to create a dish known as tempura.



Gold for Japan. Silver and bronze for Norway. 15 February 2025



Okurayama Ski Slope



A Penguins Parade



A roaming bear



Sitting in a tent, Mylene and brother Marco fishing from holes in snow

FOR SALE

in Pereybere (Mauritius)



2 x 3 Bedroom Apartments close to Pereybere Public Beach

Tel: (WA):+23059848941 (Mru) / +447913292163 (UK)



Mauritius Open Air Festival 2025

The Countdown is ON!



We're getting ready for the **BIGGEST** celebration of Mauritian music, culture, food, and family fun in London! From live Segga performances to mouthwatering street food, kids' activities, and good vibes all around,



This is your chance to reunite with friends & family and soak up the island spirit!

Save the date: Sunday 13th July 2025

Swipe through to see what's waiting for you!

More info & tickets coming soon!

Be the first to know when they go on sale.

visit mauritiusfestival.com and register now!

Friendship

Time changes and we change with Time, but never in the ways of Friendship.

Yet, nothing in this world lasts forever.

I am not in this world to do your bidding. You are not in this world to do my bidding.

When we meet, it's beautiful. We travel together for the short while, we are here, though not on the same road.

Reflexions on Ash Wednesday from others and self.