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UNIVERSITY OF SEYCHELLES



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

A judgment was delivered in the Court of Appeal this week involving a case in which the government of Seychelles was found to be in the wrong when it terminated a contract it had with the USAIM (University of Seychelles- American Institute of Medicine).

In 2000, the USAIM was given a presidential charter, Albert Rene was the president. The charter granted the USAIM approval to establish a school of medicine in the Seychelles. That same year an agreement was signed for the establishment of a private university in Seychelles. Apart from obtaining a certificate for the operation of a private training institution, the agreement also made provision for long term lease of the premises of the university. Seychelles would stand to benefit as the agreement stipulated that the USAIM would not only provide two doctors for the country annually but they would also be involved in the training of other specialists in the health profession.

Under President Michel and his ambitious plan to create a University in Seychelles of which he would be Chancellor and his main advisor at the time, Rolph Payet, would be the Vice Chancellor, the government of Seychelles issued instructions to have the USAIM closed. The University of Seychelles was inaugurated in November 2010.

The USAIM represented by lawyer Anthony Derjacques



USAIM had to close down to make way for UNISEY

filed a case in 2011 after the government of Seychelles had terminated the USAIM's contract without reasonable cause.

The case was originally dismissed by Judge Ngonda Ntende; he stated that the USAIM had not been incorporated as a company when it signed the agreement but the same was overruled by the Appeal's Court.

In its ruling the Court of Appeal has given the USAIM and

the government six months to come to a mutual agreement failure of which it will award damages to USAIM.

The lawyer for USAIM Mr Anthony Derjacques has confirmed he will write to the president requesting a meeting with him in the hope that an agreement is reached which will be beneficial to both parties. He has not discounted the possibility that USAIM works in collaboration with the Unisey.

Ralph Volcere floored



Editor of the Independent newspaper and former law student, Mr Ralph Volcere, had filed an action against members of the CAA (Constitutional Appointments Authority) and the Leader of the Opposition (LOTO), Hon Wavel Ramkalawan. He was of the opinion that Article 141 of the Constitution had been infringed as some members of the CAA were not of proven integrity and impartiality. They could therefore not be seen to be impartial and independent.

Lawyer Derjacques representing the CAA brought a motion to dismiss the case. The court looked at the issue and decided that Ralph Volcere doesn't have sufficient standing before the court to pursue such a petition against the CAA and the three officers named including the LOTO. The case was dismissed without being heard on the merit.

Anse Boileau - Back to the ballot box

With the resignation of Pat Pillay from the National Assembly, there will be a bye election in the district of Anse Boileau within the next 30 days. The bye election will be crucial for both the LDS and Parti Lepep; both will definitely be out for

a win as all resources will be concentrated in a single district.

In the last election, Pat Pillay won convincingly over his opponents. As far as LDS is concerned, the process for the selection of candidates has already started and a win is inevitable.



"Nou bezwen servi nou mazorite dan Lasanble Nasyonal pour nou anmenn sanzman" - Roger Mancienne, tyermenn LDS

LDS READIES FOR 2018

The LDS led National Assembly is poised to be more pro-active during 2018 and the surprised resignation of the Speaker has not dampened their spirits. The State of the Nation address is expected to be delivered on the 20th February but the various commit-

tees of the National Assembly are already busy.

Next week the deliberations of the FPAC (Finance and Public Accounts Committee) in respect of the FIU/NDEA investigation is expected to go live on National television. The following week, the FPAC will meet to study the report

of the Auditor General which is also expected to be transmitted live.



Roger Mancienne

Party Leader

January 30, 2018

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Has the police given up?

The NDEA (National Drug Enforcement Agency) no longer exists; it has been transformed into the Anti-Narcotics Bureau under the command and control of the Commissioner of Police who was also the last chief of the NDEA. In fact the former NDEA boss and his two assistants have been promoted to Commissioner of Police and deputy commissioners respectively and the Anti-Narcotics Bureau turned into a sub unit of the police. During their short spell at the head of the NDEA, the trio enjoyed a spell of glory as politicians perceived they had done a spectacular job at a point in time.

The NDEA was very active in the districts making the life of drug pushers difficult though their effectiveness in apprehending traffickers was always questionable. As part of a bigger organization, it was expected the effectiveness of the Anti-Narcotics Bureau will be more visible. It does not seem that all police officers are convinced that dealing with the drug problem is part of



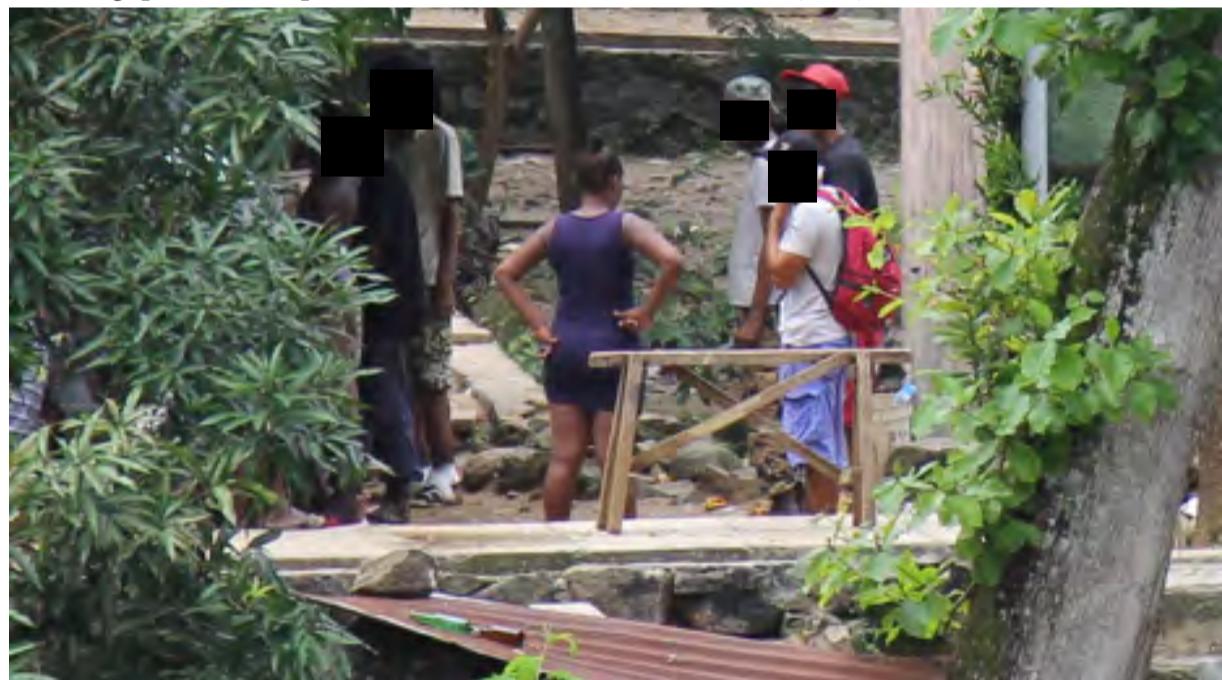
Former NDEA bosses have been elevated

their duties otherwise pushers would show more respect for uniformed policemen.

Interestingly, the man directly responsible for the Anti-Narcotics Bureau is no other than Deputy Commissioner of Police Romano Songor. He is responsible for visible policing and specialized operations. However, the visibility of the police in ensuring that pushers do not sell their stuff freely is practically nonexistent. There is a need for uniformed police officers to make their presence felt in all hot spots in the country

where drugs are sold but the same is not happening. Some areas have literally turned into drug supermarkets where sellers compete against each other openly and addicts inject themselves without a care in the world.

Many parents are frustrated with the situation especially those with addicted children; they feel betrayed. The situation is made worse with the recent deaths directly attributed to drug abuse. Does the police have any intentions of doing something to give families some sense of hope in the system?



Doing their stuff freely at Corgat Estate

Central Bank to introduce new R10 coins

The Central Bank of Seychelles is to introduce a new ten rupee coin to replace the batch of ten rupee coins introduced in December 2016.

The new coin will be of a different metal content but will have the same design and colour as the coins currently in circulation.

This decision follows mutual agreement between the Central Bank of Seychelles and its UK-based coin supplier, The Royal Mint, following results

of testing of the coins by The Royal Mint as well as independent tests conducted by MegChem (Pty) Ltd based in South Africa.

It is to be recalled that the ten rupee coins were observed to show signs of accelerated tarnishing and rusting, issues that the test results have attributed to the effect of our humid climate on the metal composition of the coin.

The new ten rupee coins, which will bear the year 2018, are currently being produced in the UK by The Royal Mint,

The new 10 Rupee coin to be issued into circulation in the first quarter of 2018



Obverse



Reverse



Ann politisen Endyen i vreman annan skil. Zot in donn lotorite Seselwa kloroform e menm bann ki ti dir nou pa oule pe kriy welele e dir napa dimoun pli bonker ki bannla. Zot in donn nou bato, avyon, elikopter e prezan zot pe al donn nou erport e lasose lo zil Asonmsyon. Eski nou lespri pa dir nou sa se en kado anpwazonnen? Seselwa entelizan in fini vin gogot. Zot dir zour lager pou deklare, lagreman pour annile. Sepa lekel ki pou anonse ler lager pou deklare. I annan ki ankor krwar nou pe viv dan letan Romen. Sinwan osi in travay dir pour adousi leker Seselwa; zot in donn nou lekol, lopital, lakour, batiman Lasanble, avyon, bato me zot malsanse akoz tou politisen lorizin Sinwan in fini mor.

I annan en ta lannen Seselwa pe dir fer sir nou pa vin par ey Moris. Laba bann kreol i dan karo kann. Isi Sesel, bokou nou ti krwar tou Seselwa sete bann kreol. Dernyerman nou pe realize ki sa pa le ka ditou. Ler nou selebre nou festival kreol, pa tou Seselwa ki selebre. Konmela nou annan Seselwa divers lorizin e pour sa nou annan la semenn Endyen, la semenn Sinwan e la sezon kreol ki refleri detanzantan. Byento nou kapab annan la semenn Larisi e la semenn Arab. Pa vwar drol si byento nou osi tande ki la semenn Endyen oubyen la semenn Sinwan i promote e vin festival Endyen oubyen festival Sinwan. Apre tou, zot ki annan tou kandyou.

Konfizyon dan kan bann For. Gran frer prezidan i dir lo kote Lenn zot parlman ti'n fini ratifye lakor avek Sesel me lo nou kote, Lasanble Nasyonal pa ti ratifye e alor i pe anvoy sa devan nou Lasanble pou ratifikasyon. Pti frer ki sekreter d'eta i dir bann Endyen pa tro kontan koz lo sa bann zafer defans an piblik e zot kapab enpe annwiye ler nou isi Sesel nou pe fer sa piblik. Zot lakordeon pa akorde bannla. Apre tou; eski Endyen i kapab anpes nou koz lo nou zil? Ki pli gou ankor ... baz se pour konbat lapes ilegal. La mazorite lapes ilegal i ariv dan nor me baz i dan sid.

Antretan ankour en bann zafer pe pase. Gouvernman Sesel pou bezwen retourn lo son parol sinon lakour pou fer zot anval lakras. Dan zot pe tro an pikpok pour vin sanselye e vis sanselye dan zot prop liniversite, zot in al fer lenbesilit. Ti annan ki ti la avan zot me sa pei i annan tro bokou dimoun ki oule tou latansyon enpe parey mon zanmi. In fou en kes devan lakour ki ni ziz pa oule ekoute.

Lafyev eleksyon pe retourn ankor; erezman demisyons Ton Pat in donn nou en rezon pou komans pil ankor. Le 25 Fevriye pour annan bokou grensman dedan. Deza en bann pe tay enpe partou pou rode lekel ki pou al pran en ben dan plas Arrisol. Meriton a bezwen komans konpran ki savedir eleksyon. Ki zot pou vin avek sa voyaz? Pa glise??

using a metal composition which will be more resistant to the Seychelles climate. The coins will be received and put into circulation during the first quarter of 2018.

apart from the change in year, both batches of coins will circulate alongside each other. The 2016 ten rupee coins will be gradually taken out of circulation through the normal process of daily withdrawals and deposits by the commercial banks.

As there will be no visible difference between the look of the 2016 and 2018 coins

The Central Bank wishes to reassure the general public that it is committed to ensuring that all circulation coins and banknotes, along with the new ten rupee coins, are of the highest quality.

GRANNY'S WISDOM DOING UNTO OTHERS...

I am not a bible totting old lady but its words of wisdom have stood me in good stead over the years. At least I have been able to have a fall back point when things have not gone my way and I have needed a fall guy. I apologize to the biblical authors for using and abusing them all but this is the way of the world and maybe when they walked this earth it was not as bad as it is today.

Do you get the feeling that life is getting very complicated these days especially with respect to loyalty, forgiveness, support and the general feeling of camaraderie that existed in days of yore? I may be called naïve but as one who has seen so much – been there, done that – there is a certain level of ‘promoting belongingness’ that one expects from family, relatives and friends.

I also feel that people were more forgiving and prepared



to give each other ‘the benefit of the doubt’ than we are prepared to do today. For example, when the zealots of the day castigated dear old Mary Magdalene (and she was not necessarily our first top up), when they were asked to cast the first stone if they felt they were without sin, they all dropped their stones and from thence the dear lady became almost a Mother Theresa in their midst. Whether they felt that they had no moral grounds to take her on or that they bent to the authority of the Master will probably never be known because the days in which to disaggregate this data has passed its ‘use by date’ to say the least.

I was browsing through Facebook the other day and read a post where a per-

son confided with the whole world and more than that she had not spoken to her mother for twenty four years. That came as a shock to my system because however annoying my mother could be – and she could be some – I could not imagine not talking to her for twenty four minutes unless she had inflicted her style of punishment upon me. Since I have never been lost for words the punishment of ‘nil by mouth’ was the worst ever. My thought on reading this post was if this person had so much hate – or whatever it is you have that stops you from communicating with the person who gave you life – what would you feel about a real enemy? Both these individuals must be suffering from real heartache and yet is it pride that hinders reconciliation or have they forgotten how to treat people the way they would want to be treated?

It has been said that we have dysfunctional families in Seychelles and the result is social degradation and a general malaise that does not augur well for the future of the country and its people. This has warranted the establishment of a specific Ministry for Family Affairs although I feel that they too are grappling in the dark trying to come to terms

with the issues before solutions may be found. I believe, however, that these are personal mores that calls for individual concentration on dealing with people on a one-to-one basis to begin with.

The postings that I read make me cringe because many of them smack like a society high on steroids with the simple desire to hurt, to maim and to cause discomfort to others. They say there are many ways to skin a cat – nice ways (oh well, one can try) and not so nice ways. At the end of the day I think it is human – and humane – to inflict the least hurt on a fellow human being. Whatever political, religious or social group we may belong to we still form part of the unity of homo sapiens that raise us all above the bar of animalistic instincts with the capacity to think before we act.

We also like to believe that we espouse democratic principles and if this is the case we must give credence to the fact that we are all entitled to certain freedoms whilst recognising that all others enjoy the same rights and freedoms. Both of us have no right to slander each other or to denigrate each other to the extent that we are soon going to be known as a nation of name

callers and brain bashers.

During the last two elections such terrible acts of slandering did crest to a peak, aided and abetted by leaders who should have known and done better. I hope that we have all learnt our lessons and that this time around we do things in a civilized and fitting manner that will earn accolades rather than a place in the Guinness Book for Records for yet another negative situation.

History is full of people – especially leaders – who were knifed in the back but then again it has also taught us that such things are not au fait and therefore not fit for emulation. ‘E tu Brute’ has never been a nice phrase to read or hear so let us strive not to do what we would not like others to do unto ourselves. Once again I am reminded of our great Nelson Mandela when he managed to forgive his gaolers and all those who treated him worse than they would have treated their dogs. Let this be the part that we follow. My dear lady out there with a grudge against your mother please, I beg you, seek her out and talk to her – she brought you into this world and for just this charitable act she deserves better.

Overcrowding at Seychelles' main market pushes officials to set up a temporary one on the capital's outskirts



The main market in Victoria is getting overcrowded and some people are selling their items on the street. (Gerard Larose, Seychelles Tourism Board)

In a bid to reduce congestion in the main market of Victoria, a temporary market will be constructed on the outskirts of Seychelles' capital, said a top official of the Agriculture Agency.

The temporary market will be located at Bois De Rose while the agency seeks a location to build a permanent one.

“This is because the main market in Victoria is getting overcrowded and some people have even gone to the street to sell their items. It is therefore

clear that the availability of space is an issue,” said Linetta Estico, the deputy chief executive of the Seychelles Agricultural Agency.

The deputy chief executive said that a plan of the additional market will be submitted to the Seychelles Planning Authority this week and construction will begin as soon as the approval is given.

Seychelles, a group of 115 islands in the western Indian Ocean, has one main market in the capital -- Sir Selwyn Selwyn-Clarke Market -- built in

1840 and renovated in 1999. The market, which is the bustling heart of Victoria, has a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and fish among items. The place is an attraction for visitors as it gives a feel for the Seychellois way of life.

Estico said that the temporary market will accommodate up to 28 vendors, preferably farmers selling fruits or vegetables at the Sir Selwyn Selwyn-Clarke Market. It will also take up local craftsman under the management of the Small Enterprise Promotion Agency (SEnPA).



The temporary market will accommodate 28 vendors preferably farmers selling fruits or vegetables. (Gerard Larose, Seychelles Tourism Board)

A vendor, Marcel Suzette, who is currently selling at the market in Victoria, said that the idea of having an additional one is a good initiative for both vendors and shoppers.

“It will provide another convenient option for shoppers as the Victoria market is getting packed,” he added.

Suzette hopes that the temporary market and those that will be built in the future will have more entertainment that will attract visitors and local shoppers alike.

Seychelles News Agency

THE ASSUMPTION CONUNDRUM

The amended agreement has been signed between India and Seychelles; it is expected that the endorsement by the cabinet of ministers and the National Assembly will only be a formality but will it really or will the Assumption debacle leave major imprints on the political future of Seychelles? Have our modern day politicians decided to turn Seychelles into an extension of India's strategic arm in the Indian Ocean Region.

India's Strategic ambition in the Indian Ocean Region

"Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas in the twenty-first century, the destiny of the world will be decided in these waters." US Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan quoted by Cdr. P K Ghosh in **Maritime Security Challenges in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, 18 January 2004**

Whilst 80% of world maritime trade is transacted across the Indian Ocean, 90% of India's trade volumes and 90 per cent of its oil imports pass through the sea routes of the Indian Ocean. India has a myriad of interests in the region, ranging from energy security, economic growth and safety of the sea lanes to its maritime ambition to play a leading role in shaping the security architecture in the region. For India, the Indian Ocean Region is a "nerve centre" for its Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs). With its growing military and economic capabilities, India is poised to develop its blue economy to ensure inclusive growth and job creation. While the United States have established the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean decades ago and established itself a major base on Diego

Garcia, the economic and military resurgence of China and its growing influence in the region has led India under Prime Minister Modi to overhaul India's strategic outlook in the Indian Ocean Region.

From acting the regional hegemon, India has shown a shift towards encouraging strategic co-operation with its neighbours in order to balance China's increasing strategic influence. India's Indian Ocean policy is centred on providing security and political stability to its "maritime neighbourhood", which includes the Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka. 'Isn't it time for the 'owners' of the Indian Ocean to get together to protect their own interests?' is the new line being tagged by India as compared to the 'Indian Ocean has to be really Indian' of yesteryears?

In response to China's strategic ties with Sri Lanka and the Maldives with a view to dilute India's influence in these countries, India has taken to revamping its maritime strategy by helping Indian Ocean littoral states enhance their capabilities seeking a more integrated and cooperative approach for the future.

India signed a joint defence agreement with Mozambique which included mounting of periodic maritime patrols off the Mozambican coast, supply of armaments to all the Mozambican defence services and reorganizing their military infrastructure. India is also building a high-tech monitoring station in northern Madagascar as well as negotiating with Mauritius for the lease of Agalega islands for 'tourism' development infrastructure. Further, India has plans to set up more Coastal Surveillance Radar Systems in Mauritius, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.



Surveillance radar system - Delivered for free?

And where does Seychelles fit in all of this?

On its part, it does not seem that Seychelles has followed closely the evolving strategic security arrangements in the region and taken the necessary steps to steer clear of the ongoing power play between India and China. However, both India and China have identified the strategic importance of Seychelles and the even more strategic role of the Seychelles Coastguard (SCG). Both nations have rushed to 'gift' the SCG operating platforms; both the Indians and the Chinese have provided patrol vessels and aircrafts. While Seychelles have enjoyed close military ties with India over many years through the ITEC (Indian Technical Economic Cooperation) and other programmes, the Chinese have extended their military assistance to Seychelles only recently. From the benevolence of the two most populous nations on the planet, the SPDF (Seychelles People's Defence Forces) benefits from more courses and equipment than it actually needs. Both India and China are in the business of winning hearts and minds of local politicians.

The use of Assumption island by India will enable it to keep a close vigil over the Chinese warships in the area

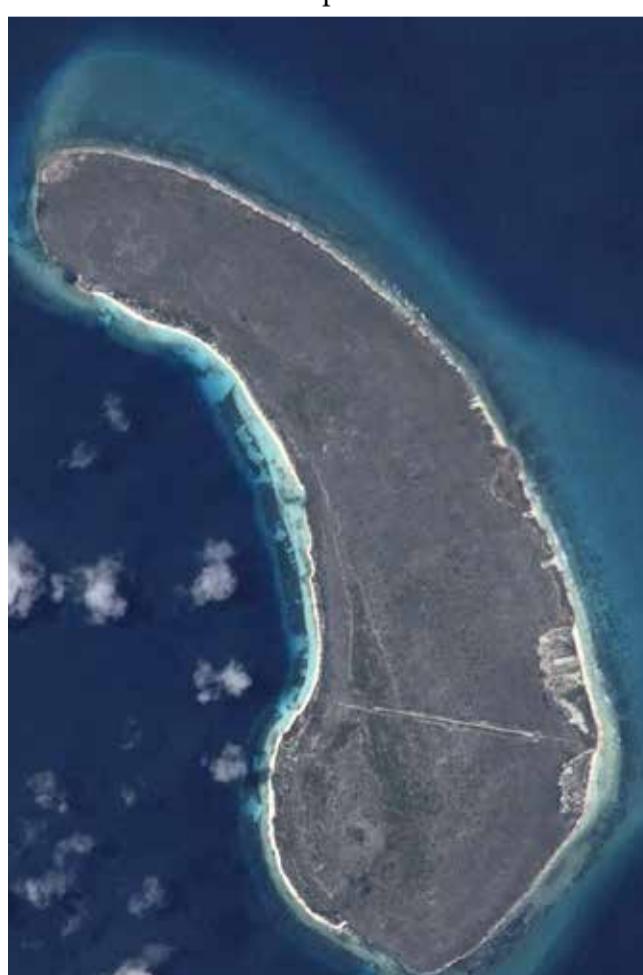
as well as a close watch on the all-important Mozambique Channel. To that effect, Modi has already inaugurated the Coastal Surveillance Radar System when he stated: "We hope that Seychelles will soon be a full partner in the maritime security co-operation between India, Maldives and Sri Lanka". If indeed Seychelles is seen to be assisting India in countering Chinese influence in the region, how will this impact on relations between China and Seychelles? Opinions will vary. It is worth noting that India and China will remain strategic rivals due to their competing energy and security interests in the Indian Ocean Region. It is also worth taking into account that India and China fought a border war in 1962 and China's current patronage of India's arch enemy, Pakistan, as well as the Tibetan issue all give rise to an uneasy peace between the two countries.

The local politics over Assumption

In 2015 when President Michel signed the agreement with India, he had his reasons for keeping it out of the public domain. Knowing that he was on his way out, it was not going to be his problem anyway. With increased activity on Assumption, questions had to be asked for which no answers have

been given to date. For no apparent reason, President Danny Faure handed over a copy of the agreement to the Leader of the Opposition and simultaneously requested a renegotiation of the same with the Indian counterpart. It might have been a wise political move on his part. The onus of ratifying the agreement rests henceforth with the LDS led National Assembly; all eyes have been directed at the Leader of the Opposition, himself a politician of Indian descent.

Are the implications of the agreement fully understood? Is Seychelles not just a pawn on the strategic chessboard? If indeed we are, what can we do about it? Small Seychelles suddenly finds itself drawn into an arena with the two most populous countries



Seychelles and ASSUMPTION island fit well in the web of Indian facilities and influence in Northern Madagascar and Mozambique



in the world with matching military, economic and political might.

At the press briefing, all present failed to make convincing arguments why we need to allow the Indian government to make use of Assumption for 20 years.

The Secretary of State Ambassador Barry Faure insisted that the initial agreement was a good one but it needed to be made more precise especially the legal aspects but he did not give details of what the agreement really entails; in fact all present were vague as to the agreement proper. What is known is that 500 million dollars will be spent in infrastructures to be maintained by India and used jointly by the two countries.

On his part, the Chief of Staff of the SPDF, Colonel Rosette made it known that the SPDF had long wanted a forward base for EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) surveillance, search and rescue operations and disaster response. He went as far as stating that SPDF air and naval platforms will be prepositioned on Assumption. This is simply wishful thinking. The cost and resources needed to maintain platforms that far away from the main island would be exorbitant though not impossible. However, major recruitment of personnel will have to be undertaken. Assumption is the island located furthest away from the main island and it is certain the choice of location must have been made by the Indian counterpart. In fact, it is the Indian government that provides the military advisors to the Seychelles defence establishment. Because of that, the Indian government is privy to the

best intelligence and in a position to influence local security thinking. India is well aware of the limitations of the SPDF in terms of manpower and technical know-how; the Assumption base will end up being manned mostly by them for obvious reasons. Their assessment that SPDF will not be able to provide much in the maintenance and security of the communication station, the airfield, its allied facilities, the port and refueling facilities as well as other infrastructures will prove correct in the very near future. The thinking that India treats Seychelles as an equal partner in a security arrangement is a fantasy shared by many.

Interestingly many are of the opinion that the aero naval base which Assumption is soon going to be will not pose any threat whatsoever to Seychelles. It is even believed that the agreement will be nullified should India go to war with another nation. Should India's enemies be under the impression that Assumption poses a threat to their interests, they will blow it sky high at a time convenient to them. The time when wars were declared before a shot was fired is long gone. For India's enemies, any military installation being used by India becomes a military target.

Interestingly EEZ surveillance, search and rescue operations and disaster response are all functions of the coastguard and the Indian Coastguard is one of the biggest in the world. Why then has the relation between the coastguards of the two countries not been developed? Would it not have been more appropriate and Seychelles would have been spared the present predicament it finds itself in?

The National Assembly will deliberate on the agreement shortly; at the end of the day it will be a political decision based on the belief systems of politicians shaped by their perceived political interests which will not necessarily serve the best interests of the creoles. The difference between a creole and a Seychellois has never been more profound.

“.. the world is not rotating on the axis of human justice. Every country in this world advances its own interests. It is economic and trade interests that determine the order of the present world, not the moral law of justice nor the rights of people. International relations and diplomacy between countries are determined by such interests. Therefore we cannot expect an immediate recognition of the moral legitimacy of our cause by the international community.” Velupillai Pirabaharan



Indian Navy Buoy



The massive Indian Coastguard could have been a worthwhile partner to the Seychelles Coastguard. Why has the Seychelles chosen to partner with the Indian Navy instead?

Seychelles allows India military infra on island

NEW DELHI: Overcoming a hiccup, India and Seychelles signed a revised agreement that will allow India to build military infrastructure on Assumption Island, that will expand its strategic reach in the Indian Ocean.

Foreign secretary S Jaishankar signed the agreement in Victoria on Saturday.

In a statement, Jaishankar said, “India and Seychelles have drawn up a co-operation agenda that covers within its purview joint efforts in anti-piracy operations, and enhanced EEZ surveillance and monitoring to prevent intrusions by potential economic offenders indulging in illegal fishing, poaching, drug and human trafficking. The co-operation is further exemplified by the operationalisation of the Coastal Surveillance Radar System in March 2016, and our commitment to augment Seychelles’ defence assets and capability.”

After meeting Jaishankar, the island nation’s President, Danny Faure, said “Today we will sign a revised version of the Agreement for the development of facilities on Assumption Island. This project is of utmost importance to Seychelles, and it attests to the kinship and affinity that exists between our two countries. We are proud to have India as a partner in realising our development aspirations.”

The agreement had been signed in 2015 during the visit of PM Modi but it ran into trouble because it had not been ratified by the Seychelles parliament by the previous president, James Michel. The first sign that the agreement was in trouble came in August 2017, when Faure said in a press conference that it would have to be re-negotiated. “We would like to relook at the agreement which does not have a legal statute on the Seychelles side. But for India, it has a legal statute. We have to go back to the drawing board.”

That took Jaishankar to Seychelles in October, and the two sides restarted discussions on amendments to the agreement. The negotiations were

completed after the Seychelles opposition party gave a thumbs up to it.

Faure worked with the opposition and after including several amendments cleared it with his cabinet on January 22. A statement after the Seychelles cabinet meeting said, “Cabinet agreed on the main purpose of the agreement which is to provide a framework for assistance to the Government of Seychelles by the Government of India to enhance the military capabilities in control and maritime surveillance of our EEZ, protection of our EEZ and the outer islands and search and rescue in the region for the benefit of air and shipping traffic.” After the signing, the agreement would be ratified by Seychelles parliament. The ratification is expected to be a formality because the new agreement has been agreed to by both government and opposition.

The agreement is very important for India, as it works hard to mark a military presence on both Seychelles and Mauritius (Agalega island), in its drive to extend its strategic footprint in the Indian Ocean.

The Faure government put the brakes on the agreement with India in 2017 — after the 2016 elections, Faure’s party, People’s Party lost their majority in parliament, which went to the opposition coalition, Linyon Demokratik Seselwa (LDS). Its leader, Indian-origin Wavel John Charles Ramkalawan was important to build political consensus on the agreement.

During his recent visit to India as part of the PIO parliamentarians’ conference in New Delhi, Ramkalawan indicated that a consensus had been achieved and the deal would be done shortly. The signing of the agreement is among the last actions by Jaishankar, who will be replaced by Vijay Gokhale as foreign secretary.

The importance of the agreement this time is that it will be more solid, having full political approval from both ruling and opposition parties in Seychelles.

Sudden resignation of Seychelles' National Assembly Speaker brings praise, but also questions

The sudden resignation of Patrick Pillay as the Speaker of the National Assembly and an elected member of Anse Boileau district has brought about mixed reactions in Seychelles, with many political leaders thanking Pillay for his service but other residents questioning why no reason for his resignation was given.

Pillay submitted his resignation letter to the office of the clerk of the National Assembly on Monday. Danny Faure -- the head of state of Seychelles -- an archipelago in the western Indian Ocean, has thanked Pillay for the leadership role he had played as Head of the Legislature since his election as Speaker.

Faure said, "Pillay has discharged his responsibilities in his own unique style, that he had transformed the National Assembly by opening it up and bringing it closer to the population."

The resignation of Pillay as the elected member of the Anse Boileau district means voters from that electoral area will go to the polls in the next 30 days to choose a new representative. The Electoral Commission has announced that the bi-election will take place on February 24 and 25.

Pillay, the leader of the Lalyans Seselwa party, was part of the opposition coalition Linyon Demokratik Seselwa (LDS), comprised of four parties formed in 2016. The leader of the Linyon Demokratik Seselwa (LDS), Roger Mancienne, said the members of the Executive Council respect Pillay's decision and that he has made a great contribution to bringing about a new era in the political development Seychelles.

Pillay became the third speaker of the assembly in the Seychelles Third Republic in September 2016.

Mancienne said the situation poses some challenges and that "the LDS Executive Council will deal with them with the best interests of the party and the country in mind."

"Already we have had meetings of the leaders and of our National Assembly team. I am fully confident in the future of LDS and I believe we will maintain unity and forge ahead with our work," he added.

Mancienne said that the one point of divergence that Pillay spoke to him about is that "he is dissatisfied with the pace at which the present political set-up is dealing with the problems faced by the country."

The leader of the opposition in the National Assembly, Wavel Ramkalawan, also thanked Pillay for his personal contribution in the effort to bring about change to the country and in particular the political landscape in Seychelles.



Pillay submitted his resignation letter to the office of the clerk of the National Assembly on Monday

Ramkalawan reassured all LDS supporters of the party's commitment to unity, hard work and the need to forge ahead with the programme under which the people gave the LDS a majority in the National Assembly.

SNA spoke to the several members of the public on their reaction to the resignation of Pillay, who has not specified the reason behind his departure.

Ricky Pierre said that whether Pillay resigned for personal or other reasons, he should have given a proper explanation at least to his supporters, they deserve that.

"I feel he has let them down. Leaving room for speculation is not in his interest or that of the opposition parties," he said.

Peter Leon said he is shocked by this sudden decision. "Everything seemed to be going fine. There is a lot of speculation, but I am still in the dark as to why."

In a post on Social media, Noellie Alexander, an executive member of Lalyans Seselwa, a political party of which Pillay is the leader, said the speaker is a man with more guts, integrity and selflessness than so many can ever hope to be.

The main objective of Pillay and Lalyans Seselwa was to get Parti Lepep out and not to build any nest or seek personal power or position said Alexander in her post. "Now we can get back to our original objective! Like so many before us, we've been offered all sorts of things - including big money - but we remained true to our cause."

Another person SNA spoke to, Peter Rosalie said, "Ton Pat, as he is popularly known, is a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi. The question of principles is the key to his decision. I respect that man."

Antoinette Magnan told SNA she was not expecting the news as Pillay was doing a good job as Speaker and that for the bi-election she will exercise her civic rights and then wait for the outcome.

The next National Assembly elections in Seychelles are scheduled for 2021.

(Seychelles News Agency)

Kales Kase



Tou keksoz dan lavi i sanze, menm klima i sanze. Sepandan i annan tro bokou dimoun swadizan entelizan ki pa konpran sa. Menm dan lafore kot dimoun pa frekante, keksoz i sanze. Zannimo i ne e mor, pye dibwa i tonbe e pouri e dan son plas en lot pye i pouse. Akfer fodre nou fatig nou latet avek sanzman klima si tou keksoz i kontinyelman sanze? In ariv ler pour nou aret ekout bann syantis ki lespri pe dereye. Zot menm zot ki dir nou ki dinosor ti disparet akoz klima ti tro fre e ozordi zot pe blanm resofman klima lo aksyon zomn. Si zomn pa ti egziste, eski klima pa ti pour resofe? Larepons i senp; later ti pour kontinyelman resofe. Sa se lalwa lanatir sa. Apre lafreser, lasaler; apre lizour, fernwanr.

Dan sa pti lepok ti mon'n viv, bokou keksoz in sanze. Pa tro lontan nou ti met penwanr e dans sega avek moutya. Konmela nou dans sege avek rege. Nou ti reste dan lakaz anpay e alim veyez letan i fernwanr; plitar fannal avek kolmann in mele. Tousala in fini e konmela nou pez bouton e lalimyer i arive. Nou konportman osi in sanze; nou pli voras konmela e nou'n blyie mannyer pou partaze. Menm relasyon imen in sanze. Lontan zomn ti marse e atrap lanmen kamrad koman en zes lanmitye; konmela bann zomn ki tyonbo lanmen i tonn dan en lot kategori. Zomn i konmela mont menaz avek zomn; menm zafer avek fanm. Letan nou bann vyeyar pe dir bondye pe al pran son se li akoz sa bann konportman degoutan, Misel in fer tousala vin legal. Aprezan nek zomn i fri zot 'chips' dan boulwar e fanm i kontinyelman fit zot kouto. Zot apel zot lekor bann ge. Zot fer mwan mazin bann bouse ki frot de kouto ansanm; lekel ki fit lekel zanmen mon'n konnen me la osi zanmen mon'n demann bann bouse lekel kouto ki pe

azir koman gre. Atan ki mon en garson enpe byen fournen, mon'n fer mon resers aprofondi lo sa bann zafer e ozordi mon annan gran plezir partaz sa ki mon'n dekouver ziska la.

Mon'n toulstan krwar ki bann relasyon de gos avek de drwat i mars parey bann relasyon en gos avek en drwat. Lo televizyon, mon ti tann en fanm pe dir li osi i anvi annan son fanm avek son bann zanfan. Mannyer zot pou fer zot zanfan mon pa konnen me mon'n deswit krwar ki ant de fanm, enn i koul fanm e lot i koul zomn me zafer i pli konplike ki sa. Omwen dan kominate zomn ki ge, zafer pa mars koumsa. Enn-de zour pase mon'n bat avek en group zomn ge kot 'Barrel'. Zot apel zot lekor kominate ge dan Sesel. Enn antre zot in kriy mwan e envit mwan pour vin ekout zot soufrans. Zot in fer mwan konpran ki "nou fanm nou soufer dan Sesel". Enn pli ardyese in esplik mwan zot sitiasyon. Pa bezwen dir ou, zomn ge anba lenfliyans lalkol en fenomenn enpe tre partikilye dan li menm. Mon pa ti konnen ki dan zot kominate, sakenn i annan zot non boulwar. Mon dalon i apel Mer e limenm li ki enpe pli fran; sirtou ler in tap de sopin. Avan in komans akont mwan son soufrans, in demann mwan pour swazir enn ki mon oule antre sa aepre en dizenn zot ki ti la. Erezman mon napa la-peti pour sa bann zafer sansan mon ti a gout kitourz sa swar.

Mon'n toulstan krwar lavi bann ge i en zafer antre zot

menm me pa ditou. Dapre Mer, zot prensipalman bann viktum sirtou avek bann droger e zomn marye. Mon ti soke konnen droger i abiz zot pou ganny larzan; droger ki determinen konbyen larzan en ge pou bezwen donn zot pour en servis. Ki kantite pit-en en zomn ge i kapab piten i depaan antyerman lo kantite larzan i gannyen; tou keksoz i materyel dan zot monn - omwen isi dan Sesel. I osi annan zomn marye ki depaan lo bannla pou anmenn dile e manze kot zot lakour maternel. Lapeti in vin an manzan; pli konversasyon i vin pli long, pli i annan kestyon pour demande. Finalman Mer i deside koz en kou lo limenm.

"Mwan konmela zis mon asize e gete. Zot tou zot kas anba mwan. Mon ansyen partner ki pe fer sikse konmela. Lontan letan bann dil ge pa ti ankor popiler parey konmela, nou ti al fer nou dil an Frans. Laba nou ti kapab mars lanmen dan lanmen e anbrase dan publik me konmela nou zis zanmi. Ki'n arive dapre ou? Bannla in donn mwan talon. Sepoutan mwan ki ti entrodwir zot avek li. Ou konnen bokou zot pe rod fasilité. Li i bonker e osi bet an-espri. In donn enn mon zanmi ki travay lo avyon laboutik e apre bougla in kit li an plan. La i avek mari marie en fanm laba Perseverans; i krwar zomn pour li. Li nek i aste penmpers pour piti, donn zomn gro telephon nef e fer bougla lager avek son fanm tou la zournen. Mon'n dir li en zour i pou lo lapay".

Konversasyon pa ti aret la. Mer konmela pe reste avek en lesbienn; lavi i gou pour li. Nek i fer parti tou le wikkenn e envit bann zoli zomn avek bann zoli fanm ki annan potansyel pou deside reste apre parti e fer enn de zorzi. Mon'n ganny envite en parti e mon krwar mon pou ale pour mwan kapab kontinyen mon resers dan sa bann zafer de gos avek de drwat. Mon pe al aprofondir dan sa zafer kot en bann i pas anba e en lot bann i pas anler. Mon vreman enterese dan sa bann zafer zwe loto avek elikopter.

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New Human Rights Commission

A new bill which seeks to create a new Seychelles Human Rights Commission is being proposed; it is still in the white paper stage and will be presented to the National Assembly this year. There exists actually a National Human Rights Commission consisting of two lawyers as members and the chairperson which by law is the Ombudsman. Mrs Nichole Gherardi-Tirant was sworn in as the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission by President Faure in July last year.

The proposal makes provision for the new commission to be comprised of one chairperson, a deputy and three commissioners.



ELECTORAL COMMISSION PRESS RELEASE

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2018

The Electoral Commission met this morning and agreed the way forward following the resignation of its chairman, Mr. Hendricks Gappy and to plan the by-election. To that end, the Electoral Commission is guided by the Constitution, Section 115 C (6) which states that the Electoral Commission continues to act, and function, notwithstanding this one vacancy in its membership. To regulate its own proceedings, Members of the Electoral Commission,

have this morning endorsed fellow Member Mr. Bernard Elizabeth to be responsible for the functions of the Chairperson, until such time that the vacancy in the membership of the Commission is filled.

The Electoral Commission is pleased to inform the electorate that the by-election for Anse Boileau electoral area which has been triggered with the resignation of Mr. Patrick Pillay as Member of National Assembly will be done according to the Constitution and the Elections Act (2017) and so informs of the closing of Voter



Register for Anse Boileau today Tuesday 30 January 2018; that Nomination Day is Monday 5 February 2018 with the main polling day on Sunday 25 February 2018. Voting will take place at the Anse Boileau secondary school.

Additional information will be made public as it becomes available.

SPPF/Parti Lepep kile les lekip LDS kondwir sa avyon akoz zot in fini bite



Msye Editer,

Mon ti soke ler mon ti antann Msye Afif kot biro Prezidan akiz nou travayer Seselwa pou dir zot ki Sesel i tonm 100 ekek lo 190 dan lemonn pou 'Ease of Doing Business'. Msye Afif, ou fer en 'big mistake'. Pa travayer Seselwa ki ou devret blanmen, blanm ou sef Danny Faure. Se

li avek James Michel ek zot Parti Lepep ki'n mal fer plan pour sa pei Sesel depi 1977. Pei pa'n zanmen bouze, pa'n zanmen marse. Si oule fer en biznes dan Sesel fodre ou en siporter Parti Lepep.

La mon pe lir, dan lartik TODAY 26 Zanyve 2018, 'RISE OF FUEL PRICES'. Msye Benoiton ti dir 'In 2014 we were paying SCR 12.45 for a dollar today it is SCR 14.15'. People must realise that Parti Lepep has failed this country.

An 2015 James Michel ti dir

avek lepep donn li ankor 5, i pou fer dolar Ameriken desann pou vin SCR 12.00. Ankor sa Parti lepep in fel. Pa fini; ki nou vwar? Danny Faure pe fer Lasnable aprouve pou I.O.T pey son travayer trezyenn mwan saler an 2016 ek 2017. Zot pran 3-an pou prepare kan zis dan en mwan i ti pou aprouve. Sa i montre ou ki Parti Lepep in fini bite.

Msye Peter Larose pa vin zwe bon boug avek lepep Seselwa. Seselwa in fatige avek sa sistem Parti Lepep. Pa vin lo televizyon avek radyo pou vin dir pep Seselwa ki ou pou fer kou lavi dan Sesel desann. Dokter Larose, bennzin in monte, PUC in monte, bis SPTC in monte, dan bazar karang an 2018 in ariv 200 roupi. Oli lavi bonmarse?

Mersi



You reap what you sow

Over the years we have complained about the same things over and over again. Losing focus has not helped our cause. The inability to hold our ground and remain committed has led to us achieving nothing. 2018 started with a bang- as always we are presented sweet nothings.

The theme for 2018 is "Working Towards Shared Prosperity for the People" - yet we have not set the course for prosperity in any form; we continue to live in denial and refuse to do the sensible thing. The more government ministries fail, the more money they are allocated to build bigger and nicer buildings. We call this reinvigoration. Sad but true.

During political campaigning PL candidates boast about free education and the subsidies but always fail to say that things are really not getting any better.

All too often parents are blamed for the children's misbehavior in schools. By law, it is mandatory for children to go to school whether they are interested or not. If the parents do not force the children to go to school, expect the social services or the police to interfere. As a result government provides all the necessary tools, albeit of low quality. Things are being done just for the sake of it.

As a parent I am appalled! The massive budget, the efforts to retain teachers by giving bonuses based on appraisal and the construction of new classes has brought the worst results ever. Clearly most students who have reached S3 are uninterested in the kind of schooling being offered. For 2017, 1286 students registered for exams. For combined science, out of 1184 who were present for the exam, only 66, that is 6% of those who sat for their exams got a C or better. Out of 1184 who sat for Combined Science only 802 passed. This result may seem good to a lot of parents but it is not, because if you haven't got a C or better in S3, you probably will not make it to IGCSE- from then on it gets tougher... so if we weren't in denial only 66 students would be eligible to go on for further studies for Combined Science! Generally speaking, only 19% students should move up to S4 and S5. The rest should be setting out to get a career or learn something technical that will prove to be productive for both the country and themselves.

What is it going to take for the people to finally say that we are done with these shenanigans? When do we call it quits? The answer has always been simple: when people feel they have gotten enough. But then again when is enough really enough? When will people take the initiative to become aware of the perceptions that keep them inactive... it is really just a matter of building the momentum. And then change is inevitable, acceptable, welcomed. It is not experienced as loss, but the fruition of hard work and due diligence.

We all have an inkling of what has been off, what could improve and what we seriously do not need anymore... lets act on it!



WAVEL HAS GOT IT WRONG

I write this article in response to and on behalf of concerned citizens specially those who have suffered during the Coup D'état and the period that followed until President Faure became President on 16 October 2016. Our web site www.seychellestruthreconciliation.sc and our phones have been inundated with calls since Wavel Ramkalawan gave his interview on SBC and announced his idea of how the Truth and Reconciliation process should proceed. People are saying "Wavel has gone mad" and his idea will lead us into chaos and an unsatisfactory resolution to this delicate matter. They say clearly Wavel has not done any homework and he is copying what other countries have done and taking us down the same precipice. To be fair to Wavel we must admire his relentless quest to be the President of Seychelles, a feat that has eluded him so many times and yet the man keeps pushing the mountain and not giving up. In the words of Kelly Rowland "Never give up your dream because you never know what the Lord can bless you with". We also recognise Wavel has great stamina because he has been fighting for a number of years, the evils of the last 40 years of one party state and autocratic previous regimes.

There is however one matter he has got wrong because he has not done any research or read the report we provided him with a copy. Wavel is proposing a dangerous path that is fraught with failures and instead of achieving closure we will end up with an absolute mess that other countries have suffered and yet he is not prepared to learn from other countries' mistakes. I delivered a presentation to Members of the National Assembly Committee on Truth and Reconciliation yet they are not challenging Wavel as to why he is leading them and us into this dangerous path towards disaster that so many countries have undertaken to their peril. Are these Committee Members just following Wavel like the piped piper and can't they fathom out that Wavel's approach is impractical and will fail? Surely even though he is Chairman of this Committee, the Committee members have the right to question his motives, yes?

Wavel said in his SBC interview on Tet a Tet programme last week, which was repeated, that the National Assembly is waiting for the Truth and Reconciliation Act, currently being prepared by the Attorney General's Office, to be received and passed by the National Assembly then names will be proposed (by whom, he doesn't say?) to the Constitutional Appointment Authority (CAA) for the CAA to appoint a 7 members Truth and Reconciliation Committee which will then go to President Faure for the final seal of approval before the Act becomes law. This has got to be one of Wavel's worst proposals and I do not believe he can come on national TV and make such a careless statement. He is clearly not taking any notice of the hard work

done by others in this area and he is behaving like a bull in a china shop and bulldozing his way into a now defunct way of doing things because he just wants to copy what other countries have done. For the love of God why do we do things in this way? Has the CAA got the knowledge to choose 7 people proposed to them? Does the CAA know the right background needed to form an organisation to handle such a Project? Has the CAA done any research to know what kind of people need to be appointed or recruited or is it as long as they are buddies of so and so they will be appointed? This is the death of depravation we are prepared to indulge in to save the skin of a few buddies. Come on father Wavel, please regain your faculties, you are leading us down the devil's path.

As soon as the programme on SBC was over our web site was deluged with activities and our phones started to ring with callers asking has Wavel gone mad? People say they are aware that when Wavel asked them to send their documents to the National Assembly that the security of their documents was seriously violated and now following several months of delay Wavel is proposing a hair brained scheme that so many countries have used and have failed. They point to South Africa, which was widely publicised because of Apartheid and Mandela, nothing else, where to this day they have not resolved some of the issues and they wonder why is Wavel taking us down that same road to failure?

Seychelles Truth Reconciliation and Peace Platform (STRPP) is an independent and registered NGO, we answer to no political pressure and we were founded specifically to undertake the research, implementation and finalisation of the Truth and Reconciliation process in Seychelles. STRPP have spent 2 years researching into 51 countries to find out where they went wrong and what they got right so that we do not go down that same path of failure. STRPP is in continuous contact with some of the sufferers who attended our two public seminars and we are trying to keep the lid on this delicate matter because some of them have threatened to hold a demonstration in Victoria which will be bad for our tourism industry. Now Wavel comes up with this ridiculous approach that is used to appoint members to the Board of SBC or SEYPEC or STC and other parastatals and he wants to use this method to appoint the experts needed to run a Truth and Reconciliation organisation, which is chalk and cheese.

We strongly advise Wavel to please read our report which he has a copy and so has President Faure, the Judiciary, Speaker of the National Assembly, Attorney General's office and several leading members of our society. The main reason for failure in nearly every country we researched was a political cover up by either the outgoing President who tried to cover up his/her atrocities before he/she stood down or the incoming President who



STRPP presenting its in-depth report to President Faure

was not prepared to take the blame of his/her predecessor's atrocities and in every case millions of dollars of the people's money mysteriously went missing and mass graves were discovered. In every country a Committee was formed made up of buddies who either destroyed the evidence or made sure the truth was not told and sometimes they even held fake hearings by hand-picked judges who declared the guilty innocent. We do not want this farce and shenanigans in Seychelles, Mr Ramkalawan.

We have to question Wavel's motives for taking us down this path where so many have trod and have failed? Is it really because he has not done his homework or right now he has too much on his plate and he doesn't know which bone to chew on next but please Mr Ramkalawan if you cannot handle it leave it to others who have worked very hard to arrive at a process that is suitable for Seychelles based on in-depth research at no cost the Tax payers. Let us not jump into something that has failed when we have overwhelming evidence that this is not the way to do it, so why do you see that we should follow in the path towards failure? This peaceful nation was robbed of its infancy and virginity by a handful of greedy politicians most of whom are dying and they will pay the price for their crimes in the after-life, because what we are looking for is the truth so that those who have suffered can achieve closure therefore there is no need to appoint 7 wise men/women into a "Committee wielding a fake big stick" to protect those who have committed the atrocities because this process requires a structure of people from different background and professions and no retribution or apportion of blame nor any finger pointing is intended, just truth and the matter will be closed.

I am surprised that the Attorney General has not consulted with STRPP so far which means the Act is being written the way the politicians want it, in which case it will be rejected by the civil society and it will be a waste of tax payers money but this is the way we do things in Seychelles, we get it wrong first then we go back and correct our mistakes. STRPP should have been consulted because the politicians

have been consulted therefore I smell a rat here. This delicate process must be undertaken by an organisation not a Committee of 7 gurus because of the vast amount of work variation which includes social dismemberment re-alignment, behavioural and physiological re-adaptation, induced mental disorders and conditions, psychological disorders and behavioural problems, loss of possessions and property, violation of Articles 1 to 30 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Charter, loss of family members counselling, stress meta-analysis and post-traumatic stress disorders and the list goes on which a 7 member Committee, no matter who they are, cannot effectively do justice to this subject and bring about closure to those who have suffered and are still suffering.

This is no time to play games because the sufferers have waited long enough and creating a micky mouse Committee to try and save the skin of fellow buddies is not now necessary, so please let us move forward and create a structure that will be effective from day one. Our team is not complete yet, by any means, therefore we would welcome any nomination of anyone who believes he/she can add to the success of this process. We have published our Head Count Plan, Operational budgets for 5 years, Constitution, Code of Conduct, Modus Operandi and Implementation Plan all of which can be found on our web site www.seychellestruthreconciliation.sc. STRPP was specifically founded to handle this project and not for anything else, we did so because we wanted this process to be politically unbiased. So father Wavel we pray the Lord will guide you to turn round from the destructive path you are leading us into and if we take the alternative path as proposed in our report, where all parties have a role to play to find the truth, achieve peace, harmony and reconciliation, because we have suffered long enough and now let us engage in achieving a successful closure.

Contributed by:

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ANGRY!!

I am fuming! Some world-travelled friends of mine came to Praslin to enjoy a peaceful holiday. They stayed in a charming bungalow at the Cote d'Or Footprints. They loved their room, ten steps away from the magnificent beach. Envisaging a well-deserved rest, they settled down in their comfortable old-fashioned 'fotey' to admire the distant tropical rain clouds looming in a paradiac setting. Unfortunately, as they later realised, they wished they had gone to the Maldives instead! Within the first ten minutes the first mobile disco went past blasting thunderous noise from mighty woofers and shaking the ice cubes in their gin and tonic. Thinking of it as a one-off incident they turned their attention to the raindrops pelting the lazy swells. That very first night their sleep was shattered by more stomach-churning loud music from the road. They could not comprehend why, with a population of only 6000, our Police force cannot control a few idiots terrorising the peace! I told them that I had been writing about disturbing loud music for the last ten years to a point where readers condemned me for being 'tediously boring' but that the authorities had taken no action. It was only recently, I told them, that letters slamming loud music had begun appearing in local newspapers and the Government had made a few sheepish and pitiful efforts on television and in time-wasting meetings to try and contain the scourge. My friends left on

Saturday morning having much appreciated their seaside stay at the Cote D'Or Footprints but with anger at having been daily tormented by loud music from passing vehicles! I would like, at this juncture, to express my deep-rooted bitterness for the President, Police Commissioner, the ministers of Health and Environment and the Church leaders for allowing loud music to get out of hand causing horrific stress and irritation for thousands! Verily, they have shown as much concern for nerve-wracking noise pollution as a Malagasy woman gutting a fish at the IOT! By not seriously addressing the problem and by not educating the mass about respect in classrooms, pulpits, on television and radio they have in fact condoned it! And, not only are we being buffeted by loud music from home stereos, mobile discos and boats but, wait for it, individuals walking the streets with highly amplified music from the latest small but powerful speakers tucked under their arms!

After years of vainly begging the Government, in this column, to do some work on the Anse La Blague road to make it more motorable and less dangerous I was elated when someone assured me that the last budget included funds destined for such a project. After being back in this country for some twenty-five years I have become sceptical of Government promises. My elation was short-lived when I noticed that a few potholes had been filled with tar and not

much else happening. To be fair, I guess it is still early in the new year and that the filled-in potholes are simply routine maintenance work and that sooner or later our local SLTA guys will be attacking the dreaded road with fruitful vengeance! Hopefully, gone will be the days when tourists panicked when confronted with huge SPTC buses and five-ton construction trucks on sharp and narrow corners and having to back up or down steep inclines to allow the monsters to pass; when we, local fellows, had to physically lift rented cars out of gutters and having to pull over into bushes and any available narrow, natural sidings to give way to other vehicles! The only anguish I have is that if the Government does provide us with a decent motorable road our beautiful Anse La Blague will be invaded by those damn mobile discos, trucks and red-plated vehicles brimming with picnickers who, hopefully, will not leave the beaches littered with ti-pom bottles and plastic and, mindless noise lovers who will approach residents for extension cords to connect their massive speakers for beach parties! But then, I have learnt that one cannot have everything one wishes for in life. So, let the SLTA boys pull up their sleeves, kickstart their dormant excavators and tar machines and give the residents of Anse La Blague and everybody else using the road their tax money's worth!

Singapore may be expensive in terms of shopping but what a beautiful and clean country! Everything seems to have been made with patriotic zeal and careful planning! In Petit Anse La Blague, a fallen casuarina

tree has been lying on the beach for over a year, obstructing tourists and sticking out as an eyesore. No attempt has been made to remove it. Not far away, an old bridge was demolished and replaced. That was about two years ago. The contractor has left behind some large piled-up concrete slabs dangerously close to the road. The authorities concerned with the maintenance of roads must believe that this blot on the landscape is a Picasso masterpiece to be revered by our awe-struck visitors! Not long ago, driving from Baie Ste Anne to Cote D'Or was like gliding through a tropical rainforest with majestic trees lining the road. Lately, trees on one side of the road are being felled to be replaced by ugly-looking flats! Other concrete buildings are quickly materializing out of the once verdant roadside. Soon it will be like driving through Chinatown with fluttering clothes drying on the balconies serenaded by tied-up howling dogs! Have we got no vision! Who is responsible for this butchery! As one drives around Singapore, especially on the way to Malaysia one cannot help but marvel at the way the authorities have effectively embellished roadsides with lovely plants and left the existing trees to hide buildings. What is stopping us from leaving a belt about five to ten meters wide of existing forest along the Cote D'Or road as a sign of respect to the environment? In contrast, I take this opportunity to thank those responsible for the eye-pleasing landscaping bordering the Airport/Grand Anse road. Great job, guys! The beauty of your exceptional work will stand out when those unsightly overhead

wires are placed underground!

Praslin has lost one of her most well-respected and loved elderly belles. Mireille Lablache's remains now lie buried on top of husband Alfredo's coffin in the peaceful Vallee de Mai cemetery. Sorry, Ton Pat, for not dragging myself into the church for the service. I would have felt so uncomfortable! Between passing mobile discos I could hear the beautiful farewell songs, Anne, Walter and you were singing to the accompaniment of your acoustic guitars and I did have a lump in my throat. Even if I do have a loathing for religions, I fully appreciate the many incredibly touching songs passionate religious people have composed through the centuries! Personally, I believe the two Ave Marias are the most poignant songs ever! This may sound like a contradiction, but a beautiful song, whether it is composed by an Atheist or a believer is a beautiful song! I prematurely thank you Ton Pat, Walter and Andy for one day singing those same songs as they plonk my useless carton-clad body in a hole, of course, after having bypassed all churches! I was honoured to help carry the coffin up the steep and treacherous slope. It is mind boggling that this Government has never bothered to build a small concrete path or steps to the top of the hill. And a small suggestion to coffin builders: please, do something about those sharp handles- by the time we made the top of the hill Ton Joe and his son Gregory, muscleman Matthew, the two guys bringing up the rear and I had our fingers almost severed! However, for 'Tante' Mireille's last journey, it was worth the effort and pain! Rest in peace, lovely lady and thank you for looking after so many of us kid, including the Killer Drummer, at your Mont Fleuri home so long ago! Later, at Ton Baz's residence a minute's silence was observed, not only for the departed but to have a respite from WA's endless chattering! We learned from the professor that Anse La Mouche was now called Rock La Mouche after the Planning department had allowed the felling of coastal trees and the dumping of tons of unsightly rocks in a butchering effort to try and stop erosion when, according to him, one or two groins would have encouraged a new build-up of sand. Tourists and locals who used to picnic on the once lovely sandy beach under spreading takamaka branches must now sit precariously on jutting rocks in an un-Seychelles like setting!

YOUNG COUPLE
ENJOYING BEACH
AT
ROCK LA MOUCHE

