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NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Dignity for all

This January, the National Human Rights Commission pays tribute to one of the world's most compelling moral leaders: Dr Martin Luther King Jr. His life tells a powerful story of how justice can be pursued without violence, and how moral conviction – rooted in faith – can transform societies. King's legacy is not limited to the securing of civil rights for Black Americans; it lies in his enduring message that "injustice anywhere threatens justice everywhere", and that unjust systems can be dismantled through principled, non-violent resistance.



“INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE”

● *Martin Luther King Jr.: Faith, Non-Violence, and the Moral Struggle for Human Dignity*

► **Faith as foundation: A calling rooted in the Church**

The fight against racial discrimination was not an abstract cause King embraced later in life – it was deeply rooted in his upbringing and spiritual formation. Born into a family of pastors, King was the grandson and son of Baptist ministers, raised in the rich tradition of the Black Baptist Church. This tradition was not merely religious; it was a centre of resistance, dignity, and community leadership for African Americans living under segregation.

The Baptist movement shaped King's understanding of justice as a moral and spiritual imperative. Christian teachings – love of neighbour, human dignity, sacrifice, and redemption – guided his worldview. From an early age, King learned that faith was inseparable from social responsibility, and that silence in the face of injustice was itself a moral failing. These Christian values, combined with his later exposure to Gandhian non-violence, formed the ethical backbone of his leadership.

► **Montgomery, Alabama: Law promises equality, reality denies it**

In 1953, shortly after marrying Coretta Scott, King moved to Montgomery, Alabama, to serve as pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. The early 1950s were a period of global transformation. Following the devastation of the Second World War, the international community recognised the need to give practical meaning to the ideals of human dignity and equality. The United Nations Charter identified the promotion of human rights as one of the core aims of the United Nations (UN). This commitment was further reinforced in 1948 with the unanimous adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly in Paris. Article 1 boldly stated:

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

At the same time, independence movements were gaining momentum across Asia and Africa, as colonised people sought freedom and self-determination.

Yet in Montgomery, constitutional guarantees rang hollow. Despite the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery and the 14th Amendment guaranteeing equal protection, African Americans lived under the oppressive Jim Crow system – segregated, disenfranchised, and treated as second-class citizens. The law, rather than protecting dignity, was being used to deny it.

► **Hope through the law: Brown v. Board of Education**

The seeds of change had nevertheless been sown. In 1954, a group of parents challenged the constitutionality of racial segregation in public schools. Although earlier court decisions had upheld segregation under the doctrine of “separate but equal” established in Plessy v. Ferguson, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed this position in the landmark case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. On 17 May 1954, Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the unanimous decision declaring state-sanctioned segregation in public schools unconstitutional as a violation of the 14th Amendment.

This historic ruling marked the end of the “separate but equal” doctrine and became a catalyst for the expanding civil

rights movement of the 1950s. As a young pastor, King welcomed the decision with hope and conveyed to his congregation, at Holt Street, his belief that equality and justice were finally within reach.

► **Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott: Finding his voice**



That hope was tested a year later. On 1 December 1955, Rosa Parks (picture) was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger. This was the second arrest of a Black woman, after that of Claudette Colvin (then aged 15), some nine months earlier. The Black community of Montgomery responded with outrage – and resolve. They turned to King for leadership.

On 5 December 1955, King addressed the gathered community. He acknowledged their anger but urged restraint. The protest, he insisted, must remain peaceful and principled. No riots, no violence. The proposed response was simple but powerful: Black residents would stop using the buses until the system gave way.

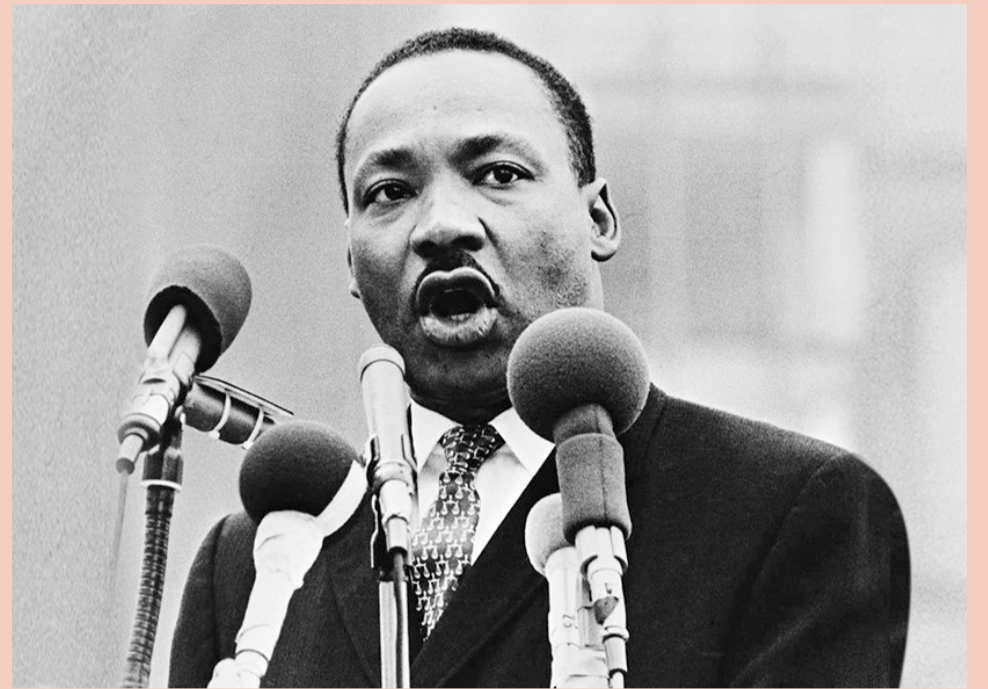
King grounded his argument in both constitutional and moral reasoning. “If we are wrong,” he declared, “the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong. If we are wrong, the Constitution of the United States is wrong. If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong.” The Montgomery Bus Boycott proved to be a turning point. It was ultimately successful and led to the desegregation of buses in Montgomery and beyond. King had found his public voice and emerged as a national leader of the civil rights movement.

► **From local pastor to national conscience**

Following the success of the boycott, King became a national figure. He travelled extensively across the United States (US) and abroad, lecturing on non-violent protest and civil rights. He also visited India, where he met with followers of Gandhi, further reinforcing his commitment to non-violence. Together with other Black church leaders, he co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organisation dedicated to coordinating non-violent campaigns against racial segregation throughout the South.

► **Birmingham and the moral case for civil disobedience**

Between 3 April and 10 May 1963, King led protests in Birmingham, Alabama, one of the most segregated cities in the country. The brutal response of authorities – fire hoses, police dogs, mass arrests – shocked the nation. While imprisoned, King penned his seminal *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, responding to white clergymen who criticised the protests as “unwise and untimely.” In the



King articulated a vision of a nation where people would be judged not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character. The speech captured the moral urgency of the civil rights struggle and transformed it into a shared national aspiration.

letter, King explained the urgency of his actions and articulated a central moral principle: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” He argued that individuals have a moral duty to disobey unjust laws – those that degrade human dignity and perpetuate injustice – while upholding just laws that affirm equality.

This letter is so powerful that I thought it wise to reproduce an extract here:

“...the nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jet-like speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse and buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, ‘Wait.’ But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six year old daughter why she can’t go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five year old son who is asking: ‘Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?’; when you take a cross-county drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading ‘white’ and ‘colored’; when your first name becomes ‘nigger’, your middle name becomes ‘boy’ (however old you are) and your last name becomes ‘John’, and your wife and mother are never given the respected title ‘Mrs.’; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of ‘nobodiness’ – then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.”

► **March on Washington and the “I Have a Dream” speech**

A defining moment of the civil rights movement came on 28 August 1963, when King addressed more than 250,000 people gathered at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Speaking from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, King delivered what would become known as the “I Have a Dream” speech, one of the most influential speeches in modern history. Drawing on the ideals of the American Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and biblical imagery, King articulated a vision of a nation where people would be judged not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character. The speech captured the moral urgency of the civil rights struggle and transformed it into a shared national aspiration. Widely broadcast and reported, it helped galvanise public opinion, strengthened support for civil rights legislation, and firmly established King as the moral conscience of the movement. The March on Washington and King's address are widely regarded as pivotal in paving the way for the passage of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964 and the *Voting Rights Act* of 1965.

► **From moral protest to legal change**

King's leadership combined moral suasion with sustained pressure. He endured imprisonment, surveillance, threats, and violence. Yet within a decade of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, his efforts bore legislative fruit. The *Civil Rights Act*, *Voting Rights Act*, and *Fair Housing Act* dismantled legal segregation and discrimination.

Tragically, King did not live to see the full measure of his legacy. He was assassinated in 1968 at the young age of 39, suffering the same fate that had befallen Mahatma Gandhi, whom he deeply admired. A week after his death, the *Fair Housing Act* became law.

► **An enduring legacy**

Martin Luther King Jr.'s life demonstrates that faith-anchored leadership, moral clarity, and non-violent resistance can reshape nations. His struggle was not merely political—it was profoundly spiritual, grounded in Christian values. Today, as societies continue to confront discrimination and inequality, King's message remains urgent: *justice delayed is justice denied, and silence in the face of injustice is never neutral.*

Ajit BOOLELL

Kemp Chatteris

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 117 OF THE INSOLVENCY ACT 2009

MountainPeak Investment Holdings Ltd (In liquidation)

Notice is hereby given that on 24 December 2025, a resolution of the shareholders was passed, whereby **MountainPeak Investment Holdings Ltd** would be wound up voluntarily under Section 137 of the Insolvency Act 2009 and Mr Stephen Robert Konfortion, FCA, Registered Insolvency Practitioner, has been appointed liquidator of the company.

Notice is also given to any person who reckons that the company holds property belonging to him or property in which he has rights, should submit his claim in writing to the liquidator with all supporting documents in respect of such ownership or right by 27 February 2026.

All persons holding any property documents, books and records of the company are requested to deliver them forthwith to the liquidator.

Any enquiries should be sent to Mr S. Robert Konfortion, Kemp Chatteris, 3rd Floor, Cerné House, La Chaussée, Port Louis, Mauritius.

Dated this 26 January 2026.

S. Robert Konfortion FCA
Liquidator

DÉCÈS

On nous prie d'annoncer le décès de **Monsieur Peter John AH QUAH** aussi connu sous le nom de Ringo, âgé de 61 ans, habitant de Terasson, Pointe aux Sables
La veillée mortuaire aura lieu à la Chapelle Ardente de Moura à route Royale, Petite Rivière, aujourd'hui mercredi 28 janvier 2026 à partir de 19h30.
Le convoi mortuaire quittera la Chapelle Ardente de Moura à route Royale, Petite Rivière, demain jeudi 29 janvier 2026 à 12h15, pour se rendre à 13h00 à la Cathédrale Saint-Louis, Port-Louis, puis, delà au cimetière de Gebert, Les Salines, Port-Louis.