

Mahlya is dead, the entire village mourns

When I woke up from my afternoon siesta on a hot summer afternoon, the words that I kept hearing all around were, "Mahlya is dead." Apparently, he had been hit by a car while he tried to cross the highway. My eight-year-old daughter said, "I was there. He had a small streak of blood at the corner of his mouth. The rest of his body seemed fine. How did he die of such small injury? How did a whole car hit him and he had only a little blood at the edge of his lips?" I tried to explain internal bleeding and haemorrhaging to her, but I was also distracted by all the parallel conversations going on among the people of our village.

When I asked her if she was afraid, she said, "His hands were just like mine, and his eyes too. He looked a little like me. That's why I was not scared when I saw him dead."

"I did not know he was dead when I first saw him. I thought he was just lying down," she added quickly. "Taty (her grandfather) buried him behind the Maruti Mandir (Hanuman temple). Lots of people from the village came to see him," she said. Mahlya was not unpopular in the village, but people were tired of his stealing. He was always perched on the neem tree at the edge of the village and made a run for whatever he could get his hands on: a kernel of maize from someone's field, raw mangoes plucked from the tree, bitten into and then dropped to the ground, half-eaten guavas. He never touched sitaphal (custard apple). The skin was too bitter for him.

The first time I saw Mahlya was on the terrace of our house on the farm. I have a little room on the terrace, which I use as an office. I was in a meeting on Zoom when I heard a loud crunching sound outside. I came out to find Mahlya munching on the Kabuli chana that my mother had spread on a bedsheet to dry. He stared at me with his golden eyes and dark face. His black hands were frozen mid-air between the floor and his mouth, with a few chanas held firmly. His lips were slightly apart and his canines were clearly visible. His long silver tail was now caught behind his back, arching like a question mark.

I made the first move. I tried to shut the door of my room. Two ripe mangoes were next to my laptop, and I was worried that my computer might get damaged if Mahlya lunged for them. When I turned back after closing the door, Mahlya was already halfway to the parapet of the terrace. In one jump, he made it to the cassia tree next to the house and then on to the tamarind tree, and then he jumped to the ground where our dog Mowgli tried to chase him. I knew it was Mahlya the langur the moment I saw him. He was big but not threatening. I had seen threatening langurs before; I had even been attacked, but Mahlya was not like that. He stole food but he was tolerated by the village. He was not liked by anyone, yet everyone cared for him.

They often left a chappati or jowar roti in the backyard, knowing that Mahlya would come and eat it. At first, Mahlya was not his name. My father explained that in rural Marathi, Mahlya meant the alpha male of a langur troop, morkhya vanhar (lead monkey). But our Mahlya did not have a troop and so it became his name. He was ousted from his position as Mahlya in his troop by another large but younger male only a few days before the Forest Department sent a monkey catcher to our village at the behest of the panchayat. The troop was a nuisance. They had become bold enough to enter houses and steal warm jowar roti from right next to the earthen chulha. Some langurs chased little kids if they had food in their hands, and others jumped on the tin roof, which would cve in from the weight.

The monkey catcher got everyone, but Mahlya escaped. He was still licking his wounds outside the village at the edge of the forest. The troop and the new alpha male were taken to the Gyanganga wildlife sanctuary, some 60 km away, never to be seen again. When people from my village saw Mahlya after that, they recognised him and felt sorry for him and perhaps a little ashamed of their actions, and so the guilt made them care for him.

But now, he was dead. He had been hit by a car and my father and daughter had buried him, and many people from the village came to see him, a langur, one last time.

Election, wedding, disgust

As drama unfolds in the US, the Ambani wedding tamasha keeps India engrossed, and an iconic Canadian writer's sordid story leaves one stunned

There are weeks when I don't know what to do as I sit down to write my column. Nothing happens and the world seems to be asleep. However, this time, there is such a surfeit of events that I don't know where to start. So let's begin with the drama unfolding in the US. After the high-octane national elections here, all those suffering from withdrawal symptoms were delighted to plug into another political battle. Initially, it seemed like a pow-wow between two well-defined political actors who had nothing but hot air to offer. We giggled at the gaffes that a doddering Biden made and, after his disastrous performance in the first presidential debate, political chatter shifted to whether he was even fit to be a candidate. Then came the ear-splitting din created by the gunshot that rang out at Trump's rally where he escaped literally by a hair's breadth. Memes were created and shared widely, each one funnier than the last. Seriously, though, the consequences of this election are going to affect the rest of the world in the coming years, so it's no laughing matter any more. The latest is that Biden has tested positive for Covid. God save America is all I can say. Come now to the mban wedding that soaked up all the oxygen in India and large parts of the world. The sheer scale of the vulgarity, shameless display of wealth and bad taste left many of us swooning. No matter how hard one tried to escape it, virtually every national channel (many owned by the Ambanis), social media sites and gossip columns made sure that you were compelled to see it, week after week. The size of the emeralds (bigger than tindas) Nita Ambani wore, the designer lehengas and sherwanis the rest of the assembly wore (no matter how comical they looked), the long roster of celebrity guests from around the world, the gifts received by the newly-weds — all are by now public knowledge, thanks to the well-oiled PR machinery that was pressed into service.

Jokes apart, could there have been a more dignified way of celebrating a wedding in the House of the Ambanis? The answer is an unqualified yes, but in a country that is now staring into its phones all the time, the wonder of the spectacle trumped (sorry for this word) all such considerations. Look around yourselves and tell me which Indian family has the



courage today to hold a quiet, private wedding? From our helpers to our family, friends and colleagues, Indian parents pay a fortune to the beauticians to lather their daughters with fistfuls of lightening creams and make-up, to the caterers who provide the multi-cuisine feast laid out and for the clothes, jewellery and cash that they have to cough up as dowry — the difference lies only in the scale. In the aspirational society that we have created, austerity and modesty are unknown concepts. Add to that the serials and films that celebrate tamashas, there can be no going back to those days when wedding feasts were cooked at home by a halwai and the bride wore her mother or grandmother's wedding sari. In the Punjab of the Seventies and Eighties, I recall being almost stupefied by the scale of the weddings in a land where the quiet dignity of an Anand Karaj ceremony was only a small part of the chikan-shikan and dance-doonce at other accompanying parties. Naturally, a huge industry has cropped up for curating such mega events and rare is the family that can afford to buck this trend.

I want now to shift to a topic that has made me so sick that I cannot even begin to register my disgust. Alice Munro, the iconic feminist writer, died in May this year at 92 and reams were written about

her insightful gaze that revealed the lives of women in provincial Canada. It was the kind of prose that touched you deeply because it was written from the heart. Then, in a recent shocking article written by her daughter, Munro was revealed as a woman who her readers did not know. Munro's daughter, from her first marriage, lived with her and the stepfather and was sexually abused by the stepfather over years. Like all little girls (she was just nine when this happened first), she found it difficult to speak of it. Eventually, when she did, Alice Munro refused to confront her husband and told her daughter she could not live without him. The sordid story finally reached the court and although he was indicted and convicted, the case was hushed up and never made it to any newspaper or public platform. It was as if there was an unspoken omerta in Canada to not sully the famous writer who had been awarded its first Nobel Prize! This story has many dimensions. The lack of space restricts me from writing a fuller account of how many girls are groped or sexually abused at some point in their early life by a family member or helper. In our childhood, many such girls were shushed up by their mothers. However, the MeToo movement lifted the veil of shame that had made silence mandatory until then.

Kanwar Yatra row

UP order threatens communal harmony

THE BJP government in Uttar Pradesh has ordered all food and beverage shops along the Kanwar Yatra routes to display the name and identity of the operator/owner. Though maintaining the sanctity of the pilgrims' faith and ensuring peaceful movement of kanwariyas have been officially cited as the reasons for the move, there is an unmistakable intention to single out the minority Muslim community. No wonder Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has warned of action against vendors selling halal-certified products.

The fortnight-long Kanwar Yatra has occasionally witnessed violence, with kanwariyas and shopkeepers getting into an argument over food, particularly the sale of meat. In August 2018, the Supreme Court had taken a serious note of 'grave incidents of vandalism' of private and public property during the yatra in western



Uttar Pradesh and the National Capital Region. In 2022, an Army man was allegedly murdered in Haridwar by a group of yatriks from Haryana following an altercation.

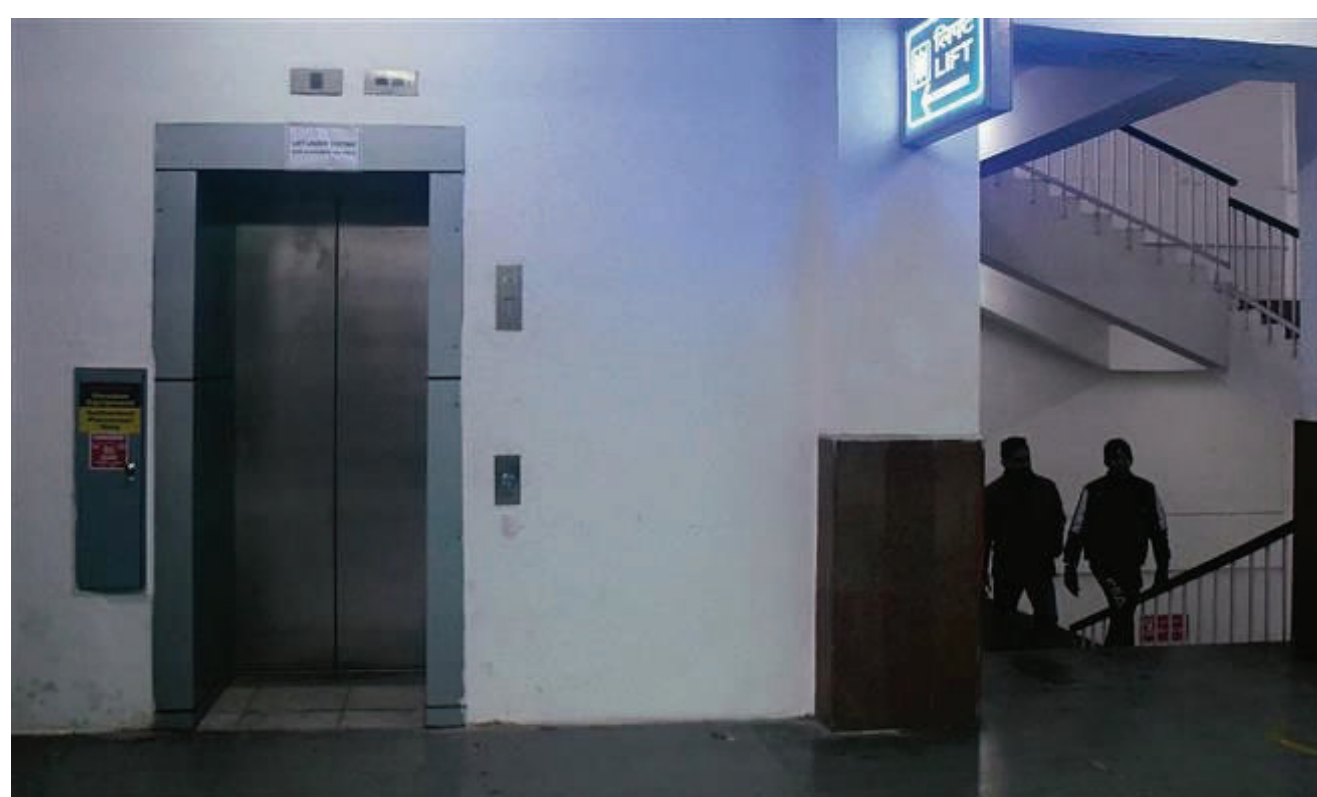
The onus is on the state government concerned to deploy an adequate number of police personnel along the route so that clashes or disturbances can be averted. Marking out shops run by Muslims will only fuel communal disharmony and no way guarantee that there will be no confrontation between kanwariyas and vendors/passersby. Notably, two BJP allies — the Janata Dal (United) and the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) — have slammed the UP order. BSP supremo Mayawati has called it 'unconstitutional'. The polarisation playbook did not do the trick for the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha polls in UP. However, the party apparently cannot resist the temptation of trying it out ahead of the Assembly byelections. Finding itself on a weak wicket after the electoral reversal, the BJP seems desperate to win over disenchanted Hindu voters. However, the ploy may backfire and worsen the party's woes in UP.

42 hours in an elevator, what it tells

Kerala resident Ravindran Nair's 42-hour ordeal, trapped in a dark and dingy elevator, is really the stuff nightmares are made of. One must really appreciate the man's tenacity for surviving the horror — without food, water, light, or any means of communication with the outside world! The ghastly incident draws attention to the poor state of elevators in many of our public, commercial and even residential buildings, and more particularly, to the absence of an effective, foolproof system of communication and rescue operations in emergencies. A good alarm and communication system is the lifeline in case of an emergency, where every minute counts — but this is the most neglected part of elevators in India. Nair's experience is typical. He kept on pressing the alarm or the emergency button provided in the lift, but there was no response! There was no other means of communication in the lift to contact anyone trained for rescue in such cases. The lift displayed emergency numbers, but there was no response from any of them when he called from his cell phone!

Even as he was desperately re-dialing those numbers, his phone fell and stopped working. So, he was stuck in the lift of the Thiruvananthapuram Government Medical College from noon on Saturday till Monday morning, when the liftman reported for duty!

In March this year, 44-year-old Sahabuddin Molla's leg was trapped in the gap between the floor and the elevator shaft at the Alipore treasury building in Kolkata, for two-and-a-half hours. As the lift door



opened on the fifth floor and he was stepping out, the elevator jerked and went down a little, trapping his leg. In this case, too, the emergency alarm did not elicit any response. There were 10 people other than Molla, stranded in the lift. Finally, they called the police, who in turn called the fire service and the state disaster management authority — it took them two hours to free the 10 people and another half an hour to extricate Molla's leg. In such emergencies, delays

could cost a life or a limb and that's the reason why the emergency communication system must be infallible and the response immediate. Besides, many of these entrapments are tricky and the rescue operations should be handled by those trained for the job. If there is an alarm, it should be heard at a place where someone is always available 24/7, maybe where the security staff are located. If there are emergency numbers, those calls should go

simultaneously to at least three first responders entrusted with the job.

More importantly, the emergency communication should not be dependent on the elevator user's cell phone, because the person may not have it, or it may not work. So, there must be a provision for two-way communication at a height that is easily reachable by even a short person, or someone sitting in a wheelchair. Besides analogue, there should be a VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone so that if one fails, the other would be available.

Today, many countries are mandating the most advanced communication technologies, keeping in mind the safety of elevator user. In fact, the International Building Code now requires emergency phones in elevators to provide for two-way video and text communication (through a keyboard), keeping in mind those who may have hearing problems or speech impairment. And our lifts do not even have basic phones, and nobody responds to emergency calls or the alarm bells — a gross violation of the consumers' right to life and safety! This must change. Those regulating the elevators should not only ensure reliable communication systems, but also mandate that they be checked regularly. Failure should invite hefty penalties, and the victims should seek compensation and punitive damages from all those responsible for the upkeep of the lift, including the enforcement agencies.

I must also emphasise the need for liftmen/security personnel in public and commercial buildings to always check the lifts before locking the building. If only the liftman at the medical college in Kerala had followed this drill, 59-year-old Nair would not have had to go through that terrifying experience.

Markets tank in early trade dragged by Reliance, Kotak Mahindra Bank, weak global peers

New Delhi. Equity benchmark indices declined in early trade on Monday dragged by Reliance Industries and Kotak Mahindra Bank along with weak global market trends.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 504 points to 80,100.65 in early trade. The NSE Nifty dropped 168.6 points to 24,362.30. Among the Sensex pack, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro, ICICI Bank, IndusInd Bank and Axis Bank were the biggest laggards. UltraTech Cement, NTPC, HDFC Bank and Power Grid were among the gainers. HDFC Bank climbed 1.57 per cent after the company's consolidated net profit grew 33.17 per cent to Rs 16,474.85 crore in the June 2024 quarter. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai were trading lower while Hong Kong quoted in the positive territory.

Wipro shares fall over 8% after poor Q1 results. Should you buy or sell

New Delhi. Shares of IT giant Wipro slipped over 8% in early trading on Monday following the release of its Q1 earnings report. Wipro reported a 5.21% year-on-year (YoY) rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 3,036.60 crore compared with Rs 2,886 crore in the same quarter last year. However, revenue fell 3.79% to Rs 21,963.80 crore in the June 2024 quarter against Rs 22,831 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. Wipro's IT service revenue came in at Rs 21,896 crore.

In the current session, Wipro's stock fell 8.41% to Rs 510.40 on the Bombay Stock Exchange at 11:15 am.

Looking ahead, Wipro expects September quarter revenue from its IT Services business segment to be in the range of \$2,600 million to \$2,652 million, amounting to a sequential guidance of minus 1% to 1% in constant currency terms. In dollar terms, the IT services segment revenue fell 1.2% sequentially to \$2,625.9 million and 5.5% YoY. In constant currency terms, IT Services segment revenue slipped 1% QoQ and 4.9% YoY. Wipro's IT services operating margin stood at 16.5%, up 0.1% QoQ and 0.4% YoY.

Should you buy or sell Wipro stock?

Brokerages have responded to Wipro's Q1 results with lowered price targets. Nuvama has assigned a price target of Rs 557 to the stock. Wipro's soft start to the year leaves much to be desired. While we do see signs of gradual improvements, especially in consulting, BFS, and consumer, we believe the path to industry-average growth is a long one. We continue to anticipate Wipro to underperform peers while its inexpensive valuation and high dividend yield limit the downside potential. Retain 'HOLD/SN,' said Nuvama.

Choice Broking is bearish on the IT stock, assigning a REDUCE call with a revised target price of Rs 558. "Wipro has made substantial investments to strengthen its capabilities across the organisation. The investments in AI360 ecosystem, combined with the strategic value the consulting business brings to clients will help Wipro to stay competitive, resilient and a preferred partner for its clients. With significant upward stock movement over the last month, we downgrade our rating to REDUCE with a revised target price of INR558, implying a 22x PE on FY26E EPS of Rs 25.3," said Choice Broking.

Economic Survey 2023-24: AI casts huge pall of uncertainty over impact on workers across skill levels

NEW DELHI. The Economic Survey on Monday said the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) casts a "huge pall of uncertainty" with regard to impact on workers across all skill levels. The Economic Survey 2023-24 tabled in Parliament predicted that the new-age technology, while turbocharging productivity, has the potential to disrupt employment in certain sectors.

The Survey described AI as "phenomenal in its rapid pace of innovation and ease of diffusion" but also cautioned that the the future of work will be reshaped by it. "The advent of Artificial Intelligence casts a huge pall of uncertainty as to its impact on workers across all skill levels -- low, semi and high," it said.

The biggest disruption for the future of work is the accelerated growth in AI, which is poised to revolutionise the global economy, the Survey noted. "India would not remain immune to this transformation. AI is being recognised as a general-



purpose technology, like electricity and the internet, which is phenomenal in its rapid pace of innovation and ease of diffusion. As AI systems continue to get smarter and adoption increases, the future of work will be reshaped," it said.

The Survey said AI has considerable potential for boosting productivity, but "also has the potential to disrupt employment in certain sectors".

"Routine tasks, including customer service, will likely witness a high degree of automation; creative sectors will see extensive usage of AI tools for image and video creation; personalised AI tutors can reshape education and sectors like healthcare can witness accelerated drug discovery," it said.

'Indian economy on strong wicket': Key highlights from Economic Survey 2023-24

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharman on Monday tabled the Economic Survey 2023-24, which highlighted that the Indian economy is "on a strong wicket and stable footing". The survey, released a day before the budget presentation on July 23, projected a real GDP growth of 6.5-7% in FY25. Here are some of the key takeaways from the Economic Survey 2023-24: The Economic Survey highlighted that the economy is growing strongly, demonstrating resilience despite challenges. "The Indian economy is on a strong wicket and stable footing, demonstrating resilience in the face of geopolitical challenges. The Indian economy has consolidated its post-Covid recovery with policymakers - fiscal and monetary - ensuring economic and financial stability," the Economic Survey said.

Sustained recovery challenge

However, the survey went on to highlight that for the recovery to be sustained, there has to be "heavy lifting on the domestic front "because the environment has

become extraordinarily difficult to reach agreements on key global issues such as trade, investment and climate."

Inflation under control, private investment 'encouraging'

According to the Economic Survey 2023-24, headline inflation remains largely under control, despite elevated rates for some specific food items. The trade deficit for FY24 was lower compared to FY23, with the current account deficit around 0.7% of GDP and a surplus recorded in the last quarter. Foreign exchange reserves are ample, supporting economic stability. Public investment has driven capital formation in recent years, and the private sector, having begun investing in FY22 after addressing balance sheet issues, is now poised to sustain this momentum. The signs for increased private investment are encouraging.

Job creation in private sector

The Economic Survey 2023-24 said job creation mainly occurs in the private sector. Additionally, many of the factors



influencing economic growth, job creation, and productivity are within the purview of state governments. Therefore, India needs a tripartite compact—among the central government, state governments, and the private sector—more than ever before to meet the rising aspirations of its citizens and achieve the goal of a developed India by 2047. Agricultural growth engine

The survey highlighted that the agriculture sector is crucial for India and ripe for a comprehensive pan-India dialogue. It said that India heavily subsidises water,

electricity, and fertilizers for farmers, often providing the former two virtually free. Farmers' incomes are untaxed, and the government offers a minimum support price (MSP) for 23 selected commodities, along with monthly cash support through the PM-KISAN scheme. Despite significant spending by national and sub-national governments, a re-orientation of existing and new policies could better serve farmers. Currently, a mix of conflicting policies is harming farmers' interests, destroying soil fertility, depleting groundwater, polluting rivers, and contributing to environmental issues. These policies also undermine public health by promoting diets rich in sugar and carbohydrates instead of fiber and protein. Untangling these policy knots could yield immense benefits, restoring faith in the state's ability to guide the nation towards a better future and delivering substantial socio-economic advantages.

HDFC Bank shares jump 2% after positive Q1 results. Is it worth a buy

New Delhi. HDFC Bank's shares climbed over 2% in Monday's trade, reaching a market capitalization of Rs 12.53 lakh crore following the release of its June quarter results. The bank's Q1 results were largely in line with street estimates, with deposit mobilisation being a key variable impacting loan growth and net interest margin (NIM).

Analysts have mostly maintained their 'Buy' ratings on the stock, believing that most negatives are already priced in. The HDFC Bank stock rose 2.3% to hit a high of Rs 1,644.20 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). Despite today's rise, the stock is down 3.45% in 2024 so far and 2.3% over the past year.

A reduction in the loan-to-deposit ratio (LDR) continues to be a focal point of HDFC Bank's strategy and is expected to guide the bank's overall

direction. JM Financial highlighted that systemic challenges in deposits are likely to result in slower loan growth for HDFC Bank in the near term but expects the



LDR to drop below 100% by March 2026. "We forecast RoAs of 1.82% and RoEs of 15% for HDFC Bank for FY25E/26E. The ability to restructure

the balance sheet (by faster-than-expected accretion in deposits) remains a key upside risk. Maintain BUY with a revised target price of Rs 1,950," JM Financial said. HDFC Bank's CEO reiterated that while there is no regulator-imposed LDR, the bank aims to lower the LDR sooner rather than later. Nuvama noted that this balance sheet course correction should continue for the next six to seven quarters until the LDR falls below 100% from its current 105%. "We are tweaking earnings to factor in lower asset growth. Revising target price to Rs 1,850 from Rs 1,750. Retain 'BUY' as most negatives appear priced in,"

Nuvama said. Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited (MOFSL) maintained its 'Buy' rating on the stock with a target price of Rs 1,850.

Reliance shares fall 3% after Q1 results. Should you buy, hold or sell

RIL share price: Analysts predict up to a 22% increase in the stock's value despite trimming FY25 earnings estimates by 2-3%.

New Delhi. Reliance shares fell 3% after weak Q1 results, but analysts see potential upside due to key catalysts like the anticipated Reliance Jio IPO, the refining and petchem upcycle expected in FY26-27, the upcoming AGM, and the commencement of New Energy operations. Analysts predict up to a 22% increase in the stock's value despite trimming FY25 earnings estimates by 2-3%. Nomura India cut its FY25 and FY26 EBITDA estimates for Reliance by 3% and 2%, respectively, but still maintained a 'Buy' rating with a target price of Rs 3,600, citing

optimistic outlooks in retail and Jio's tariff increases. "RIL is our top pick in the sector. We note the outlook across segments remains optimistic: Retail



underpinned by store additions, strong growth of digital/new commerce and operating leverage; and Jio's tariff increase will lead to value creation and monetisation of investments, enabling an improvement in FCF generation and return ratios; we note upside risks to our FY26F/FY27F ARPU growth estimates," Nomura said. Emkay

Global also adjusted its estimates and suggested a target of Rs 3,335 per share, raising Jio's multiple to 12 times EV/EBITDA. It noted, "The whole retail sector has seen weakness in discretionary categories," and highlighted positive triggers such as vertical monetisation and new energy developments. MOFSL is bullish on the refining business due to anticipated global oil demand growth and sees a 12% ARPU CAGR in telecom over FY24-26. It suggested a price target of Rs 3,435, stating, "We also remain positive on the retail business, where we are modeling 19 per cent revenue/Ebitda CAGR each over FY24-26." Nuvama raised its target price to Rs 3,786, highlighting the growth potential from RIL's New Energy rollout. "RIL's New Energy rollout will unleash the next leg of growth, along with conventional businesses," Nuvama said.

PLI scheme for auto sector sees investment proposals worth Rs 67,690 crore: Eco Survey

NEW DELHI. The production-linked incentive scheme (PLI) for automobile and auto components has so far attracted a proposed investment of Rs 67,690 crore, said Economic Survey 2023-24 tabled in Parliament on Monday. A capital of Rs 14,043 crore has been invested till end-March 2024, it stated. Applicants have proposed employment generation of 1.48 lakh, against which 28,884 of jobs have been generated till March 31, 2024, the Economic Survey 2023-24 stated. So far 85 applicants have got approval under the scheme, it noted. The PLI scheme for automobile and auto components has a budgetary outlay of Rs 25,938 crore from FY23 to FY27. The scheme has been subdivided into the champion OEM incentive scheme and the component champion incentive scheme. Besides, the government approved the National Program on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage in May 2021 with a budgetary outlay of Rs 18,100 crore. The growth in the value of domestic production and consumption of automotive parts moderated during FY20 to FY23,



compared to the preceding five years, as per the latest Economic Survey. In the first half of the last decade, passenger vehicles, such as cars and utility vehicles, experienced significant growth, it said. However, the pandemic had a substantial impact on all segments of the automotive industry, it added. "While passenger

vehicles quickly recovered, the recovery period for two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and commercial vehicles is longer," it stated. In FY24, the country produced around 49 lakh passenger vehicles, 9.9 lakh three-wheelers, 214.7 lakh two-wheelers, and 10.7 lakh commercial vehicles, it stated.

Capital markets becoming prominent in India's growth story: Eco Survey

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Congress needs share in power for party's growth in Tamil Nadu: Karti Chidambaram

Karti Chidambaram emphasised the need for Congress to have representation in state and local governments in Tamil Nadu to ensure the party's growth, also highlighting the challenges posed by new political formations.

Chennai: Congress MP Karti Chidambaram on Sunday stated that representation in power at the state and local levels is needed for the growth of the party in Tamil Nadu. These remarks came as the Congress leader raised concerns about the party's alleged diminishing relevance in the state. The Congress, which is an ally of the ruling DMK, does not have any ministers in the state. While the DMK has 133 MLAs in the 234-member house, Congress has 18 MLAs. "Without representation in local and state government, the party can't grow. Especially in a crowded field, if we are going to be away from positions of authority, it is going to be difficult to sustain and grow the party," Karti Chidambaram said in an interview with India Today.

The Congress MP, who noted that the party has not been in government since 1967, said that "space for us in politics is getting rather crowded" in Tamil Nadu and keeping away from power "is definitely making our committed cadres restless." Chidambaram, MP from Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga, further

commented that the Dravidian parties' motto of 'Alliance in the Centre, Autonomy in the State' was not the position of the Congress party. "It has been the slogan of Dravidian parties, but ground realities are changing. If we are only going to be focused on



parliamentary representation and not focused on assembly representation and participate in state government, or having authorities in local government, how will the cadre grow?" he asked. The Congress leader further said, "The party cannot run only for a dozen people. It has to run for the committed cadres who are in thousands and lakhs in

number. Unless we have authority at the district or state level, how will the party grow? This is a fundamental question and I think there is a lot of resonance from within the party for what I said." When asked if the DMK has lost its grip on the state, forcing it to share power, Karti said that the Dravidian parties still remain prominent. "DMK is the number one political party in Tamil Nadu. I have no doubt about it, and the AIADMK is the second. They are in a confused state right now, but it is a very large political formation. I don't disrespect or diminish their importance. Choosing to face an election with an alliance or without it is a call they must take," he said.

Chidambaram argued that Congress was the "premiere political party" in Tamil Nadu once and over the years, its position has slipped and newer political formations are crowding the field. "Younger people are having options. People are having options from a national party perspective. Earlier, the Congress party was the only choice, but today there is another choice as well," he

noted. When specifically questioned if Seeman's Naam Thamizhar Katchi (NTK) and actor Vijay's Thamizhar Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) are the parties he meant by those crowding the political field, the Congress leader remarked that NTK has already struck a chord with the youngsters in the recent elections.

"They are a party which doesn't have infrastructure on the ground. In fact, they keep changing candidates election after election because most of them leave the party in five years, but something about that party is striking a chord. Vijay is a popular cinema actor also jumping in with his own formation will attract like Vijaykanth in the initial stages.

He could have quite a pull in his direction. If young people have the option of going to NTK or TVK, it will be very difficult for the Congress party to attract their vote," he remarked. On the possible elevation of Sports Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin as the Deputy Chief Minister, Chidambaram said that it is the prerogative of the Chief Minister.

Jawan injured in terrorist attack on security post in J&K's Rajouri, gunfight on

New Delhi: One jawan was injured after terrorists attacked a security post in the Gundha area of Rajouri in Jammu and Kashmir, early on Monday. Sources said the Army camp which was attacked by nearly three Pakistani terrorists is located near the residence of a village Defence Group member, who was recently awarded Shaurya Chakra for his role in an anti-terror operation in the same area in 2023.

However, the attempt was foiled by the Army. The attack



happened at nearly 4 am, after which a nearby column retaliated, the Army said, adding, the operations were still underway. According to news agency PTI, security forces launched a cordon and search operation after terrorists fired in the Gundha area of Rajouri.

On July 19, two terrorists were killed as security forces foiled an infiltration attempt at the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Keran sector. Earlier, two soldiers were injured in an encounter with terrorists in the Kastigarh area of Doda district in Jammu and Kashmir. The encounter came days after four army soldiers, including an officer, were killed while battling terrorists in the Doda encounter.

Why Are Food Prices Rising? Centre Answers In Key Document Before Budget

New Delhi: The central government's timely interventions and stability measures by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) helped maintain retail inflation at 5.4% despite the pandemic and geopolitical tensions, according to the Economic Survey 2024. Headline inflation, which the RBI expects at 4.5% in FY25 and 4.1% the following year, is "under control", said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The inflation rate of some food items, however, is elevated, the government admitted. Economic Survey 2024, which gives an insight into the current state of the economy, was tabled by the Finance Minister in the Parliament this morning, a day before presenting her seventh Budget.

The survey said supply disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and global conflicts led to an increase in the prices of consumer products and services in FY22 and FY23. However, timely policy interventions by the government helped maintain the retail inflation at 5.4% in FY24, it added. This is the lowest the retail inflation has eased since the pandemic. The survey also attributed the low retail inflation rate to price cuts for LPG and fuel by the government. The government reduced LPG prices by 200 across India last August and cut petrol and diesel prices by 2 this March.

The RBI raised policy rates by a cumulative 250 bps between May 2022 and February 2023, managed liquidity levels efficiently, and maintained consistent and coherent communication with market participants, the effect of which was reflected in the latest inflation data, the survey said. The retail inflation for last month was at 5.1%. The core inflation has declined to a 4-year low, the survey added. Food inflation, which stood at 6.6% in FY23, increased to 7.5% in FY24. The survey attributed the rising food prices to adverse weather conditions, depleted reservoirs, and crop damage, which impacted farm output and food prices. Tomato prices spiked due to region-specific crop disease, early monsoon rains, and logistical disruptions, it said.

The survey also said that the Indian economy has recovered and expanded in an orderly fashion post pandemic. The economy is expected to grow between 6.5% and 7% this financial year, the government said.

"Cops Can't Force...": Supreme Court Pauses Kanwar Yatra Food Stalls Order

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has stayed, till Friday, a controversial Uttar Pradesh government order directing eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display names of owners and employees "to ensure... no confusion..." The order had been slammed by the opposition; AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi - who has claimed this move is to ensure no 'kanwariya' (pilgrim) buys from a Muslim-owned shop - had compared it to Apartheid in South Africa and the boycotting of Jewish business in Nazi Germany. The court, directing the UP government order be paused, referred to the "... implication of directives" and served notice to the UP, Uttarakhand, and Madhya Pradesh governments. Crucially, it also noted

"... the threat of police action in the event of non-adherence to the directives..." "...until returnable date we deem it appropriate to pass interim order prohibiting enforcement of directive. Food sellers must not be forced to display names of owners, staff..." the court ordered. The bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice SVN Bhatti also made some strong observations this afternoon, noting "it is permissible for authorities to ensure kanwariyas (pilgrims) are served vegetarian food conforming to their preferences (and) maintaining hygienic standards..." "Compelling all proprietors to display names and address, also of their staff, can hardly achieve intended objective..." Justice Roy reasoned, also adding, "...without

support of provisions, if the directive is permitted to be enforced... it will infringe the secular character of Republic of India..." "Worrying Situation..." "ood, and who cooks and serves at restaurants, was at the core of arguments this morning." "You go to a restaurant depending on the menu, not who is serving. The idea of this directive is exclusion by identity. This is not the Republic of India we envisaged in Constitution..." senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the petitioners, said forcefully. "There are a lot of 'pure vegetarian' restaurants run by Hindus... but they may have Muslim employees. Can I say I won't eat there? Because food is somehow 'touched' by them?"

RSS-linked ban lifted, Congress says 'bureaucracy can now come in knickers'

New Delhi: The Narendra Modi-led central government recently lifted a decades-old ban on government employees associating with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its activities, according to senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh. In a post on X, Ramesh shared the purported order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) on July 9, stating that the ban on government staff taking part in RSS activities, which was in place since 1966, has been removed.

The RSS was initially declared an unlawful organisation in 1948 due to concerns over its activities after a member, Nathuram Godse, assassinated Mahatma Gandhi. Ramesh said, "Sardar Patel had banned the RSS in February 1948 following Gandhi ji's assassination.

Subsequently, the ban was withdrawn on assurances of good behaviour. Even after this the RSS never flew the Tiranga in Nagpur." In 1966, a fresh



ban was introduced, the Congress leader pointed out. The order stated, "As certain doubts have been raised about the government's policy with respect to the membership of and participation in the activities of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh and

the Jamaat-e-Islami by government servants, it is clarified that government have always held the activities of these two organisations to be of such a nature that participation in them by government servants would attract the Central Civil Services Conduct Rules."

Ramesh lambasted the lifting of the ban and questioned the timing of the move, saying, "After June 4th, 2024, relations between the self-anointed non-biological PM and the RSS have nosedived. On July 9, 2024, the 58-year ban that was in force even during Mr Vajpayee's tenure as PM was removed." "The bureaucracy can now come in knickers too I suppose," Ramesh jibed, alluding to the RSS uniform of khaki shorts which was replaced by brown trousers in 2016.

8 Indians rescued from Myanmar job scam, embassy warns against fake offers

Eight Indian nationals, victims of a job scam in Myanmar's Myawaddy region, have been rescued. The Indian embassy advises caution against fake employment offers.

New Delhi: Eight Indians, who were victims of a job scam in Hpa Lu region of Myanmar's Myawaddy, have been rescued, the Indian embassy in Yangon said on Sunday. The embassy has reiterated its earlier advice calling upon Indian nationals looking for jobs in that



country to be careful so that they are not lured into fake or illegal employment. "8 Indian nationals, victims of a scam centre in Hpa Lu, Myawaddy, were rescued and handed over safely to Myanmar police/immigration yesterday," the embassy posted on 'X'. "Support of Myanmar authorities and local assistance was crucial. We thank them, and strongly reiterate our advisory

on fake job rackets," it said. In an advisory last month, the embassy said an international crime syndicate is active in the Myawaddy region on Myanmar-Thailand border and urged Indians to exercise caution before taking up job offers in the region. "There has been an increase in the incidents of Indian nationals falling victim to the international crime syndicates active in

IAS Smita Sabharwal questions disability quota in civil services, sparks row

New Delhi: Days after Puja Khedkar, a controversial probationary IAS officer, who got selected under disability criteria, a senior bureaucrat has questioned the need for quotas for the specially-abled in the civil services. In an X post, Smita Sabharwal - member-secretary of the Telangana Finance Commission, said, "With all due respect to the Differently Aabled. ? Does an Airline hire a pilot with disability? Or would you trust a surgeon with a disability." "The nature of the AIS (IAS/IPS/IFoS) is field-work, long taxing hours, listening first hand to people's grievances-which requires physical fitness."

Amid the row, Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi responded to Sabharwal's tweet and termed it a "pathetic" point of view. "This is such a pathetic and exclusionary view to have. Interesting to see how bureaucrats are showing their limited thoughts and their privilege too," Priyanka Chaturvedi said. IAS officer Sabharwal was quick to reply, saying,



"Madam, with due respect, if bureaucrats do not speak on pertinent issues of governance, then who will? My thoughts and concern, stem from a career of 24 odd years... no limited experience." "Kindly read the view in entirety. I have stated that the AIS has different demands compared to other Central Services. The talented differently-abled can surely find great opportunities," her tweet read.

However, the IAS officer was again slammed by Chaturvedi, who said, "I haven't seen bureaucrats criticising the misuse of the quota such as EWS/Non creamy layer or Disabilities and getting into the system but rather about doing away with a reservation that promotes diversity and inclusion."

"I don't know how you telling about the number of years in service is relevant to your point. Thanks anyway." Puja Khedkar secured an All India rank of 821 in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exams and was transferred from Pune to the Washim district of Maharashtra after allegations of misusing her authority.

the Myawaddy region on the Myanmar-Thailand border," the embassy said.

"We would re-emphasise the importance of adhering to our advisories on the subject for not taking any such job offers without consulting the respective Indian embassies," it said in the advisory. "A new location at Pha Lu area, South of Myawaddy town is reported to have emerged recently where most of the Indian victims are being trafficked into, via Thailand, after being recruited from India as well as from countries like Malaysia, the UAE, etc," it said.

The embassy urged Indians not to take up job offers made through social media.

"In view of the above, it is reiterated that Indian nationals should not accept such job offers floated through social media platforms or other unverified sources," it said.

"Indian nationals are advised to check/verify credentials of foreign employers through the Indian embassy," it added.

NEWS BOX

Obama praises Biden after ending White House bid, warns of 'uncharted waters'

World Former US President Barack Obama on Sunday (local time) applauded President Joe Biden for his decision to end his re-election campaign, calling him a "patriot of the highest order". However, he did not make clear whether he backed Biden's decision to endorse Vice-President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee, although he stated that Biden "has never backed down from a fight".

"But I have extraordinary confidence that the leaders of our party will be able to create a process from which an outstanding nominee emerges," Obama said. Praising Biden's record, Obama said the 81-year-old President had "every right" to run for re-election and said his decision to back out from the White House showed his "love for the country".

Biden announced his decision to drop out of the presidential race, saying he was doing so in the best interest of his party and the country. He said he would now solely focus on fulfilling his duties as President and Commander-in-Chief for the remainder of his term which ends on January 20, 2025.

Philippines 'to assert our rights' after South China Sea deal

MANILA: Philippines on Monday insisted that it will continue to "assert our rights" over a hotspot South China Sea reef, after reaching a deal with Beijing for resupplying Filipino troops stationed on a grounded warship. The Philippine foreign ministry also rejected suggestions by China that the "provisional arrangement" announced on Sunday required Manila to give Beijing "prior notification" and verification of deliveries to the BRP Sierra Madre on Second Thomas Shoal.

The fish-rich shoal has been a focus of violent clashes between Chinese and Philippine ships in recent months as Beijing steps up efforts to push its claims to almost the entire South China Sea. A Filipino sailor lost a thumb in the latest June 17 confrontation when Chinese coast guard members wielding knives, sticks and an axe foiled a Philippine Navy attempt to resupply its troops.

Kamala Harris gets chance to press reset on 2024 race against Trump



WASHINGTON. For the past year, the presidential campaign seemed destined to be a monotonous slog featuring two candidates, President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump, that voters didn't really want. But that all changed on a quiet Sunday afternoon just 107 days before the election.

Trump doesn't hate you: Elon Musk vs Indian-American billionaire in X debate

At least 20 people have died while several others have been missing in northern and southwest China after a week of deadly downpours across the country.

World Indian-American billionaire Vinod Khosla and Tesla CEO Elon Musk clashed over their differing views on Donald Trump's presidential candidacy after US President Joe Biden dropped out of the 2024 race and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee.

Shapiro as alternatives to Harris. He said America needed a president who neither swings to the far-right nor is too woke. "Time to have an open convention and get a more moderate candidate who can easily beat @realDonaldTrump. @GovWhitmer and @GovernorShapiro would be a great thing for America not held hostage between MAGA extremists and DEI extremism. Unique opportunity for a better moderate path. Every socially liberal, climate and fiscal voter should want it to balance our approach," Khosla tweeted.



Khosla strongly rejected Musk's suggestion, citing Trump's personal values and policies as reasons for his opposition. "Hard for me to support someone with no values, lies, cheats, rapes, demears women, hates

immigrants like me," he replied. He may cut my taxes or reduce some regulation but that is no reason to accept depravity in his personal values. Do you want President who will set back climate by a decade in his first year? Do you want his example for your kids as values?" Khosla said. Musk countered by saying that Trump does not hate Khosla and that his administration would promote meritocracy and individual freedoms.

the real story, but what they printed was diabolically false? Well, it's way worse in politics, which is a blood sport," the X boss said. Acknowledging that Trump is not "without flaws", Musk asserted that America needs "an administration that is more likely to be meritocratic and promote individual freedoms over the heavy hand of government. Many years ago, that was the Democratic Party, but now the pendulum has swung to the Republican Party".

Delta Airlines yet to recover from global IT outage, cancels 1,000 flights

Atlanta, US Delta Air Lines struggled to restore normal operations on Sunday after last week's crippling global cyber outage, cancelling about 1,000 flights on top of the 3,500 it had already scrapped.

The Atlanta-based airline, which cancelled just over a quarter of its schedule on Sunday and delayed another 1,700 flights or 46 per cent, is facing ongoing operational problems caused by the outage's impact on its crew tracking system. The issue has stranded thousands of Delta travellers across the country, with some resorting to car rentals to drive hundreds of miles and others facing days for new flights or cancelling trips altogether.

A software update by global cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike triggered system problems for Microsoft customers including many airlines on Friday. While other US airlines have largely recovered, Delta has struggled to return to normal. United Airlines cancelled 9 per cent --



or 262 -- of its flights on Sunday, second most among carriers. Delta CEO Ed Bastian said the issue impacted its Microsoft Windows systems, snarling a critical application. "In particular, one of our crew tracking-related tools was affected and unable to effectively process the unprecedented number of changes triggered by the system shutdown". Bastian told customers in an email. He told employees in a separate note on Sunday that Delta "will continue to

tactically adjust our schedule as needed to ensure the safety of our operation". Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg spoke with Bastian on Sunday, according to an official, reminding Bastian of the carrier's responsibilities to customers and the department's enforcement role. CrowdStrike said on Sunday a significant number of the 8.5 million Microsoft devices impacted as a result of a global tech outage were back online.

Record-breaking heat forecast for western US, wildfire threat looms large

UPDATED The western part of the United States is sweating through another round of record-breaking heat as a wave is forecast to produce triple-digit temperatures in cities from Southern California to northern Idaho through the middle of the week. Some 30 million people are under heat advisories or excessive heat warnings in effect through Wednesday, with some projections topping 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43 Celsius), the National Weather Service (NWS) said on Sunday. Those states include parts of California, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Research shows fossil fuel-driven climate change is helping to produce dangerous heat waves across the world. Officials are warning of major health risks associated with extreme heat, including heat stroke. The northwest part of the US will experience the largest weather anomalies, including much of Washington state where temperatures are 20 degrees higher than usual this time of year.

part of the US will experience the largest weather anomalies, including much of Washington state where temperatures are 20 degrees higher than usual this time of year, according to Oravec. Major cities like Seattle and Portland will be spared the extreme heat. Temperatures are forecast to climb above 100 F (38 C) and break records in cities like Yakima, Spokane and Mack in Washington. Boise, Idaho could tie a record of 107 F (42 C), Oravec said. Much of the West Coast will see temperatures that are about 10 degrees above normal.

20,000 protesters rally against overtourism in Spain's Mallorca

Palma (Spain). Some 20,000 protesters hit the streets of Palma in Mallorca Sunday for a mass demonstration against overtourism, demanding changes to a touristic model they say is harming the Spanish Mediterranean island. Under the slogan "Let's change course and set limits on tourism", the demonstrators formed a sea of brightly-coloured flags and banners as they surged through the city's most visited streets, in the latest in a wave of mass anti-tourism protests in Spain.



the protests, with police estimating 20,000 participants. Earlier, the central government's delegation in the islands had said 12,000. Last year, a record 17.8 million people visited the Balearic Islands, from mainland Spain and abroad, and the figures are expected to be even higher this year. The demonstration followed another mass protest across the archipelago's three main islands at the end of May, in which many thousands of marchers hit the streets to demand steps to limit overtourism under the slogan: "Our islands are not for sale".

Republicans call for Biden to resign from President's post: Not mentally fit

Following President Joe Biden's announcement to withdraw from the 2024 re-election race, prominent Republicans are calling for his immediate resignation, questioning his mental fitness to serve. Vice President Kamala Harris has been endorsed as the Democratic nominee.

Washington. Republicans led by their vice presidential nominee Senator J D Vance have asked President Joe Biden to resign from his post after he decided not to seek re-election in November, saying his move to withdraw from the race is a clear admission that he is not "mentally fit enough" to serve as the commander-in-chief. Biden, 81, announced on Sunday that he decided to give up running for re-election as president of the United States and endorsed his deputy Kamala Harris to

be the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party— with just 107 days left until the November 5 elections. "If Joe Biden ends his re-election campaign, how can he justify remaining President? Not running for re-election would be a clear admission that President Trump was right all along about Biden not being mentally fit enough to serve as commander-in-chief. There is no middle ground," Vance said. Last week, the 39-year-old Ohio Senator was picked as a running mate by Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump. "Joe Biden has been the worst President in my lifetime and Kamala Harris has been right there with him every step of the way," he said. Over the last four years, she co-signed Biden's open border and green scam policies that drove up the cost of housing and groceries, Vance alleged. "She owns all of these failures, and she lied for nearly four years about Biden's mental capacity—saddling the nation with a president who can't do the job," he said. "President Trump and I are ready to save America, whoever's at the top of the



Democrat ticket. Bring it on," Vance said as he was joined by several others from the Republican Party. House Speaker Mike Johnson said if Biden is not fit to run for President, he is not fit to serve as President. "He must resign the office immediately. November 5 cannot arrive soon enough," Johnson said. House Majority Whip Tom Emmer said if the Democrat party has deemed Biden unfit to run for re-election, he's certainly unfit to control America's nuclear codes. "Biden must step down from office immediately," Emmer said. Arkansas Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders also demanded Biden's resignation. "Not fit to run for president,

not fit to serve as president. Biden should resign immediately," Sanders said. Senator Rick Scott said if Joe Biden cannot run for re-election, he is not capable of serving as president for the next six months and needs to resign today. "While we welcome the news that one of America's most destructive presidents will be denied a second term, it changes very little as to the stakes of this election. We cannot allow the American dream to be destroyed and replaced with California socialism. Come November, we will defeat the Democrats, elect Donald J Trump, take back the Senate and the House, and save our country," he said. "Then resign your office. If you can't run a mere political campaign, you can't be President," Senator from Missouri James Hawley said. Senator Marsha Blackburn from Tennessee said finally, Biden has realised what the rest of the American people and even his own party already knew that he is not only the wrong leader for America but is wholly incapable of doing the job of President of the United States.



Jasmin Bhasin

Shares Update After She Suffers Corneal Damage Due To Lens Mishap: 'Can't See Properly'

In an unfortunate incident Jasmin Bhasin, one of the most popular television actresses, has suffered corneal damage due to a mishap with her contact lenses, which has severely affected her vision. The news has gone viral and the actress also shared the update in a conversation with the Bombay Times.

Fans have also reacted to it. Talking to Bombay Times, Jasmin revealed, "I was in Delhi for an event on July 17, for which I was preparing. I don't know what exactly went wrong with my lens, but after wearing it, my eyes started hurting, and the pain gradually intensified. I wanted to see a doctor, but due to work commitments, I decided to participate in the event first and then visit the doctor. I wore sunglasses during the event and the team helped me with handling things, as I couldn't see properly after a while. We went to an eye specialist late at night, who diagnosed me with corneal damage and placed bandages on my eyes."

Updating on her current condition, she expressed, "I am in a lot of pain. Doctors have told me I should recover in the next four to five days, but until then, I need to take good care of my eyes. It's not easy because I can't see properly and the pain makes it difficult even to sleep." Jasmin remains hopeful of returning to work soon. "Fortunately, I didn't have to postpone any of my commitments. I hope to recover in a few days and get back to work," she said. Jasmin Bhasin is currently not seen in TV shows. She often grabs headlines for her relationship with Aly Goni. Both are madly in love with each other. In a recent interview, Jasmin was asked about her marriage plans with Aly when she shared that they will do it when they "feel like". She also stated that for now, both of them are busy with their respective work schedules. "Honestly on that front, both of us don't have any plans. We have not sat and had this conversation ki kal kar lete hai ya parso kar lete hai. (We will do it tomorrow or day after). Every time we discuss, we say that we will do it when we feel like but both of us also are very ambitious and strong individuals," Jasmin said as quoted by TellyChakkar. She made her debut in the Punjabi film industry in 2022 with the movie Honeymoon, which also starred Gippy Grewal in the lead. She will soon be seen in Ardaas Sarbat De Bhale Di which will hit theatres in September this year.

Rhea Chakraborty on Polarizing Rooms After Sushant Singh Rajput's Death: 'Half Would Think I'm a Witch'



Actress Rhea Chakraborty, who was under intense scrutiny following the unnatural death of her boyfriend, actor Sushant Singh Rajput, in 2020, faced severe trolling and was later arrested in September 2020 on charges of procuring drugs for the late actor. She spent a month in Byculla Jail before being granted bail in October 2020. Years later, Rhea has now launched a new chat podcast show called "Chapter 2," with former Miss Universe and actress Sushmita Sen as her first guest. In conversation with Sushmita, Rhea opened up about her current career status, confirming that she no longer acts in films or shows. She addressed the curiosity about her financial situation and said that while she isn't acting, she manages her expenses. "Ok, people are confused about what I do for a living anymore. I am not acting in films, I do other things, I do motivational speaking and that's how I earn my money," she said.

During the chat, Rhea also shared what she considers her superpower: the ability to polarize any room she enters. She noted that half the people might view her as a witch, while the other half might see her as a resilient woman who has endured a lot of hardships. She said, "I often joke that I have a big superpower. I enter a room and I can polarize it! Half of them would think, 'She has done something, she is a witch, she practices black magic,' and the other half would think, 'She's a strong girl who fought through it, she had courage.' I can sense it the moment I enter a room. I will experience this at the dentist's clinic, the gym, the airport. This has also made me understand that it doesn't matter. Those who love you, great, those who hate you, that's also okay, it doesn't matter."

Bad Newz: Vicky Kaushal Surprises Fans At Mumbai Late Night Show, Sings 'Tauba Tauba' With Them, Watch



Vicky Kaushal is going all out to promote his latest film, 'Bad Newz.' Recently, he made a surprise appearance at a late-night show in Mumbai, delighting the audience with his presence. The film which also stars Triptii Dimri and Ammy Virk in lead roles has witnessed a good box office opening after its release. On Sunday, Vicky Kaushal took to Instagram to share a heartwarming video from Saturday night, capturing his visit to a cinema hall screening his film "Bad Newz." Dressed in a white kurta, Vicky expressed his gratitude to the audience who braved the heavy rain in Mumbai to attend the late-night show. As the viral end-credit song "Tauba Tauba" played on the big screen, Vicky joined the audience in singing along, while many fans captured the moment on their phones.

In the video, Vicky humorously acknowledges the late hour and suggests it's time for him to leave. However, when fans request selfies, he playfully quips that he would stay until 4 AM to accommodate them. A heartfelt moment occurs when a senior audience member requests a photo, and Vicky graciously embraces him before posing for the picture. He captioned the post with his thoughts on the wonderful evening.

It read, "The city's been put on alert due to rains and you guys still turn up and make it a HOUSEFULL show! Thank you for making this weekend a joyous one for the team of #BadNewz... we hope we have succeeded in doing the same for you. Only gratitude for all the love pouring in. Pyaar aapka sach mein #TaubaTauba hai. Love you all!" "Bad Newz," featuring Vicky Kaushal, Triptii Dimri, and Ammy Virk, has made an impressive mark at the domestic box office, earning ₹19.17 crore within its first two days of release, according to the film's makers on Sunday.

Launching in theaters across the country on Friday, the film is directed by Anand Tiwari, who gained recognition for his directorial debut with 'Love Per Square Foot' in 2018. 'Bad Newz' had a strong opening, garnering ₹8.62 crore on its first day, followed by a substantial increase to ₹10.55 crore on its second day, showcasing its growing popularity among audiences.

Sanjeeda Shaikh

Slips Into a Bikini, Takes a Dip in Pool Under Rain, Sexy Photos Go Viral

Heeramandi star Sanjeeda Shaikh raised temperatures with her bikini-clad photos. The actress took to Instagram and revealed she spent Sunday morning enjoying a swim in the rains. In the photos, Sanjeeda was seen a bikini featuring the combination of blue, black and white colours which she styled with a pair of shorts. The Fighter star struck numerous sensuous poses for the camera. She shared the photo without a caption. Many fans took to the comments section and praised the actress. "Jannat ??wondrous beauty," a comment read. "Sunday's sukoon ??," added another. "Sexy as always @jamsanjeeda," a third comment read.

Sanjeeda had two big releases this year. The first was Fighter, in which she was seen playing Karan Singh Grover's wife. She shared the screen with Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone. She was then seen Heeramandi. The actress delivered a memorable performance. In conversation with Filmygyan, Sanjeeda Shaikh said that she was aware that Sanjay Leela Bhansali was making a show called Heeramandi, and she had a meeting with him. She stated, "It was a brief meeting of 10 minutes, and sir mujhse 10- 15 saal pehle mil chuke the, I thought he would not remember about the meeting, but he did, and he was like, You are looking better, looking fresher, and looking happier. And then he asked me not to tell anyone about this meeting." The actress stated that she went home hoping that she



would get the role. "There was no audition...Sir did not audition, he just called for a look test after 3 4 months of the meeting." She added that when she went for the look test the team started doing prosthetics because the character had a scar on her face, which made her feel like, "wow this is getting intense." She further tried different outfits, and Sanjay Leela Bhansali was taking the look test himself. He asked her to do various elements for her character. The actress stated, "I was doing everything, and suddenly he said, Ye hai meri Waheeda." She shared the screen with Manisha Koirala, Aditi Rao Hydari, Sonakshi Sinha and Sharmin Segal.

