

Deepika Padukone breaks silence on exit from ‘Spirit’, ‘Kalki 2898 AD’ sequel

Several male actors have worked eight hours a day for years, said Deepika Padukone in a recent interview, addressing the controversy surrounding her demand for an eight-hour work shift as a new mother, which led to her exit from Sandeep Reddy Vanga’s Spirit.

“By virtue of being a woman, if that’s coming across as being pushy or whatever, then so be it. But it is no secret that a lot of superstars, male superstars, in the Indian film industry, have been working for eight hours for years, and it’s never made headlines,” said the 39-year-old actress, adding that a few actors also refuse to work on weekends.

“I don’t want to take names now and make this into a whole thing, but it is very commonly, publicly known that a lot of male actors have been working



for eight hours a day for years. A lot of them only work for eight hours Monday to Friday. They do not work on weekends,” Deepika told news portal CNBC-TV18.

Deepika reflected on the “disorganised” nature of the film industry and emphasised the need for a more structured work culture.

Earlier this year, Sandeep Reddy Vanga seemingly took a dig at actress Deepika Padukone for allegedly “ousting” the script of his upcoming film Spirit and “putting down a younger actor”, possibly alluding to Triptii Dimri.

The tweet came days after Triptii replaced Deepika as the female lead for Spirit alongside

Prabhas. Earlier, Deepika was set to play the female lead. However, she was later removed from the cast due to disagreements over remuneration and alleged unprofessional behaviour, as per media reports.

In September, production banner Vyajanathi Movies announced that Deepika has been dropped from Nag Ashwin’s Kalki 2898 AD sequel. As per the social media post, the filmmakers hinted that they were unable to find a ‘partnership’ with Deepika despite working with her for a long time during the making of the first film.

Deepika is currently shooting for the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer King, directed by Siddharth Anand. The film is also expected to star Suhana Khan, Saurabh Shukla, Abhishek Bachchan and Jaideep Ahlawat.

‘Nishir Daak’ trailer: Hoichoi’s latest thriller blends music with the supernatural

Hoichoi has dropped the trailer for Nishir Daak, a supernatural series directed by Joydeep Mukherjee, where music becomes a conduit for the unknown.

Set in the remote village of Sonamukhi, the series follows six PhD students who arrive to research a long-forgotten classical singer, Nishigandha Bhaduri, who was once praised by Rabindranath Tagore.

Their academic pursuit soon turns sinister as they uncover whispers of a curse, blurring the line between melody and menace. “Nishir Daak brings together folklore, fear, and the haunting pull of music into a gripping supernatural experience,” Hoichoi said in a press



communicate. The ensemble cast includes Sreeja Dutta, Binit Ranjan Moitra and S u r a n g a n a cinematography by Bandyopadhyay, Rajdeep Gupta, Somak Ghosh, Rik Chatterjee, Sweta Mishra. Arunava Dey, Raunak Bhowmick, Mukul Kumar Jana, Satyam Bhattacharya, Mainak Banerjee, Anubhav Kanjilal, Arnab Banerjee, and Chhandak Choudhury

and written by Sreejib, the series features music by fear grows. The footsteps of a disembodied being approach. What awaits at the end of the story? Liberation or death,” the streamer wrote in the social media caption.

Nishir Daak will premiere on Hoichoi on October 17. Conceived by Arya Ray

Bodybuilder-actor Varinder Singh Ghuman dies of cardiac arrest at 53

Bodybuilder-actor Varinder Singh Ghuman, who shared screen with Salman Khan in 2023’s Tiger 3, died of cardiac arrest at the age of 53 in Amritsar on Thursday, his family said.

Varinder breathed his last at a private hospital in Amritsar. His manager informed the actor was experiencing shoulder pain and had gone to the hospital for treatment.

According to the actor’s nephew Amanjot Singh Ghuman, who spoke to the media in Jalandhar, he suffered a heart attack at the hospital that evening.

Originally from Gurdaspur, Varinder was living in Jalandhar, up



where he also ran a gym. Popularly known as a “vegetarian bodybuilder,” he was deeply passionate about fitness and often shared his workout routines on Instagram.

Standing 6 feet 2 inches tall, Varinder won the Mr India title in 2009 and was the first runner-up at the Mr Asia

pageant. Varinder went on to feature in Hindi films like Roar: Tigers of the Sundarbans (2014) and Marjaavaan (2019). He also made his mark in Punjabi cinema with Kabaddi Once Again (2012). He had also spoken about his intention to contest the Punjab Assembly elections in 2027.

Hansal Mehta calls out exhausting work culture ‘normalised’ across film industry: ‘Rest is a privilege’

Filmmaker Hansal Mehta on Friday opened up about the exhausting work culture that has been normalised across the film industry, saying that a 12-hour workday is politely called a “shift” and breaks are looked upon as a “privilege”.

Taking to X on the occasion of World Mental Health Day, the 57-year-old filmmaker wrote, “In our line of work, a 12-hour day is politely called a “shift.” The truth is, between the chaos of shoots, the endless commute, hurried meals and barely a few hours of broken sleep, there’s little left of us. Where does our mental health or physical well-being fit into this equation?”

“Weekends are rarely weekends. Breaks are looked down upon. Somewhere along the way exhaustion became normalised and rest became a privilege. Sometimes I wonder : can this really be called an industry if it runs on the



relentless draining of its people,” he added.

Mehta revealed that the hardest hit is faced by those who have the “least power” — the daily wage workers. “They are always the first to arrive and the last to leave surviving in conditions we’d call inhuman anywhere else. On television it’s worse and now even OTT and films have slipped into the same pattern,” The Buckingham

Murders director said.

He continued, “We often celebrate the arrival of global corporations believing they’ll bring better systems. But more often than not they simply adapt to the broken ones we already have. Because it’s profitable.”

Signing off, Mehta explained, “I truly believe that if we cared about well-being, ours and especially those who hold up the base of this pyramid we’d not

only work better, but live better. The irony is that quality, efficiency, and even profit would follow. But first, we need to stop scoffing at the simple idea of rest. Because without that, what are we really building?”

Recently, Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone has found herself in the middle of a heated debate as she stepped out of filmmaker Sandeep Reddy Vanga’s action drama Spirit after reportedly demanding to work for eight hours a day.

According to media reports, she was replaced by Triptii Dimri due to disagreements over remuneration and alleged unprofessional behaviour.

Following that, Vyjayanthi Movies announced that Deepika is no longer a part of Kalki 2898 AD due to their inability to find a ‘partnership’ with her despite working with her for a long time during the making of the first film.

RBI’s new cheque clearing system faces delays as banks struggle with teething issues

NEW DELHI, OCT 10

The RBI’s move to implement a continuous cheque clearing and settlement system has run into early hiccups, leaving bank customers waiting for more than two days for their cheques to be cleared, instead of the planned clearance in a few hours.

“I had deposited an Indian Bank cheque into my IndusInd current account on Tuesday morning. Initially, I was told the cheque would be cleared the same day under the new process. Later that evening, when the amount did not reflect in the account, I was told that there was some “scanning machine issue”, so it had to be sent for clearing the old way. I was assured the funds would be deposited by the next evening, as it used to be. However, even after 48 plus hours, there is no update,” said a resident of



Jadavpur.

What has changed?

Under the continuous clearing and settlement system, RBI has proposed to reduce the cheque clearing time from T+1 to a few hours.

The regulator set two time frames — a presentation session of 10 am to 4 pm, where cheques received by the bank branches shall be scanned and sent to the clearing house immediately and continuously. The confirmation session is

between 10 am and 7 pm, where for every cheque presented, the drawee bank shall generate either a positive confirmation (for honoured cheques) or a negative confirmation (for dishonoured cheques). Settlement will arrive every hour till the end of the confirmation session.

The first phase of the new system came into effect from October 4, under which banks must confirm cheques by 7 pm. From Phase 2 (January 3, 2026

onward), banks get just 3 hours to respond.

Why the delay?

Bank officials acknowledged that there are implementation issues with the shift from the earlier batch processing to continuous processing. Key challenges include rushed scanning leading to errors in the form of poor quality of scans, blurring and incomplete cheque images, resulting in settlements getting delayed.

Staff at bank branches are also undergoing training on the updated regulations.

A PSU bank official said that the problem is more acute in non-metro branches where the staff are yet to get accustomed to the new process. “There were initial teething problems too when the CTS system was introduced. We understand the customer issues and expect the situation to stabilise soon,” the official said.

Sensex rises nearly 300 points in early trade, Nifty trades above 25,250 on realty, utilities buying

MUMBAI, OCT 10

Benchmark Sensex rose by nearly 300 points while Nifty traded above the 25,250 level in the early session on Friday, following buying in realty and utilities stocks. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 299.21 points or 0.36 per cent to 82,471.31 in the morning trade. The NSE Nifty increased by 70.05 points or 0.28 per cent to 25,251.85.

Among Sensex firms, Power Grid, Adani Ports, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, NTPC, Asian Paints, ITC, HDFC Bank, Bharat Electronics Ltd, and Titan were the major gainers.

However, Tata Steel, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, Sun Pharmaceuticals and Bharti Airtel were the laggards.

IT behemoth Tata Consultancy Services dropped over 0.7 per cent even as it reported better-than-expected results on revenue and margin fronts for the September quarter.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,308.16 crore on Thursday, according to exchange



data. “The overall market environment is turning positive. Domestically, there are indications of a trade deal between US and India with India ‘rebalancing’ its oil purchases. These positive developments and the shift in FII strategy (FIIs were buyers in the cash market in the last three trading days) bode well for the market,” VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments, said.

The better-than-expected results from TCS, which reported better revenue and margin numbers, can lift sentiments for IT stocks, Vijayakumar added.

In Asian markets, Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index, Tokyo’s Nikkei 225 index, and Shanghai’s SSE Composite index were trading lower while Seoul’s Kospi is quoting in the positive territory.

TCS Q2 results: Net profit at Rs 12,075 crore, restructuring costs impact earnings

NEW DELHI, OCT 10: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Thursday reported a consolidated net profit of ₹12,075 crore for the quarter ended September 30 (Q2FY26), a modest 1.4 per cent rise from ₹11,909 crore in the same period last year. The IT major incurred restructuring expenses of ₹1,135 crore following a sharp reduction in headcount.

Revenue from operations rose 2.39 per cent year-on-year to ₹65,799 crore, against ₹64,259 crore in Q2FY25, beating market expectations. However, the profit remained below estimates due to severance payments related to the restructuring exercise. The company reported a total contract value (TCV) of \$10 billion, driven by multiple large deals across sectors. In a filing

to the stock exchanges, TCS said it had launched restructuring initiatives in July, releasing employees whose redeployment was not feasible. “Termination benefits have been provided under a policy devised for this purpose. Such termination benefits, due to their size, nature or occurrence, are disclosed as ‘exceptional item’ in the audited consolidated interim

financial results,” the company said. “We have delivered good performance in the backdrop of continued macro challenges. All verticals except consumer business and all geographies except the United Kingdom returned to positive sequential growth,” K. Krithivasan, MD and CEO of TCS, told analysts at the earnings call on Thursday evening. “Our deal pipeline

continues to show strong momentum with a healthy mix of cost optimisation and transformation deals as well as services and platform deals across new and existing businesses based on client conversations,” he said.

Operating margins improved to 25.2 per cent in Q2FY26 from 24.5 per cent in the previous quarter, despite the rollout of the wage hike.

“Giving a wage hike to our employees was our priority, and so we have rolled out our increments for 80 per cent of the workforce,” said Samir Seksaria, CFO of TCS.

Sudeep Kunnumal, chief HR officer of TCS, said it will be quick to adapt to the new H1B visa and immigration policies, having significantly localised its workforce in the US.