

MDCL launches toll-free grievance helpline

PNS ■ HYDERABAD The Telangana Mineral Development Corporation Limited (TGMDCL) has introduced a toll-free number, 155242, to streamline grievance redressal concerning sand loading and transportation across the state.

NITI Aayog praises TASK, KTR welcomes recognition

PNS ■ HYDERABAD The Telangana Academy of Skill and Knowledge (TASK), established by the previous BRS government, has received praise from NITI Aayog for its significant contribution to skill development and employment generation.



We gave several gifts to BJP and soon we will give them another: Sridhar Babu

PNS ■ HYDERABAD Minister Sridhar Babu hit back at BJP MP Bandi Sanjay over his remarks on the Ramzan gift scheme, questioning whether the BJP and BRS had jointly given the gift to each other.



Jagga Reddy heads to Delhi to meet Rahul Gandhi, denies seeking MLC seat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD Senior Congress leader Jagga Reddy has dismissed speculation about his interest in an MLC seat, asserting that he has no intention of seeking the position.

EPFO is temple for workers, says Mandaviya

PNS ■ HYDERABAD The Union Minister for Labour and Employment, Mansukh Mandaviya, said that the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is a temple for workers, emphasising its crucial role in addressing their concerns.

SCCL to hike female workforce participation: Kishan Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy emphasized the growing role of women in the mining sector and other industries, stating that their participation is essential for India's progress.



Politics takes a backseat as BRS, BJP, Cong leaders attend weddings

PNS ■ HYDERABAD In a rare display of camaraderie beyond political rivalries, leaders from BRS, BJP and Congress came together to attend weddings, proving that weddings have no party lines in Telangana politics.

Future City to come up ...

Continued from page 1 Policy 2025-2030 has also been approved, focusing on developing 27 special tourism zones and attracting investments of Rs 15,000 crore in the next five years.

BJP emerging as alternative...

Continued from page 1 Dismissing Congress's claims of a referendum, Kishan Reddy said the ruling party must introspect instead of making excuses.

Harish slams TG gov for...

Continued from page 1 While Telangana maintained a consistent GST growth rate of over 6% in the last six years - barring the pandemic period - under the Congress government, the growth rate in February crashed to just 1%.

CM Revanth to visit ...

Continued from page 1 The Congress high command is likely to take a final call after reviewing the recommendations, with an official announcement expected soon.

BJP MP Tejasvi ties knot

PNS ■ BENGALURU Bengaluru South MP and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha national president Tejasvi Surya tied the knot with Carnatic classical singer Sivavasi Skandaprasad in a traditional ceremony here on Thursday.

Cadaver dogs roped in for ...

Continued from page 1 Later, the NDMA Secretary, along with NDRF personnel and the Kerala dog squad, entered the tunnel to assess the situation firsthand. Plans were made to deploy the cadaver dogs early Friday morning to assist in locating the trapped workers.

Table with 2 columns: Time/Event and Duration. Includes events like Ashtami, Navami, Rakshatram, and festival timings.

HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Partly Cloudy Temp: 36° Humidity: 61% Sunrise: 6:21 AM Sunset: 6:16 PM

LOST

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FIRST COLUMN

THE RISE OF EU-INDIA DIGITAL COOPERATION

The EU and India are strengthening ties in digital governance, AI and semiconductor resilience



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Even as President Trump of the USA was busy being the world's most popular content creator, the global forces were turning the gears of a strategic realignment. After the televised, admonishment of Ukrainian President Zelensky by US President Trump and his VP JD Vance, the former was seen with several leaders of the European Union. As the case may be European leaders didn't have much to offer to Ukraine, except a subtle message to make peace with the US President. It may be a matter of time, before, Ukrainian President Zelensky has to evacuate his bunker office in Kyiv and perhaps make way for a more, current US head of state worldview representative. The message for the world was clear, the US would no longer be happy to bankroll, what it considers vague political narratives, potentially considered to be the hallmark of a free liberal world order.

This world order, incidentally a post-World War creation, by the US, ensured free fair open markets, meant for the prosperity of all. What this free world order has achieved in the past many decades can be debated, however, it has ensured the US retains its supremacy in the economic prosperity index and so have many of the aligned nations including India (since the 1990s). Just before the US and Ukraine visible spat, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen led a large delegation of senior ministers to Delhi to re-establish the high-level EU India Trade and Technology Council conversations. Given the current geo-political landscape, one of the major focus areas was Digital Economy and Governance.

The European Union (EU) and India reaffirmed their commitment to deepening digital cooperation, emphasising shared values through their Working Group 1 on Strategic Technologies, Digital Governance, and Digital Connectivity. Both sides pledged to accelerate human-centric



digital transformation and advance key technologies, including AI, semi-conductors, High-Performance Computing and 6G, to benefit both economies and societies. The two parties agreed to enhance research and innovation to improve competitiveness and economic security while promoting a cyber-secure global digital ecosystem. They also stressed the importance of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in fostering inclusive digital economies. Both sides committed to ensuring interoperability between their respective DPIS, safeguarding human rights, and protecting personal data and intellectual property. They also discussed mutual recognition of e-signatures to facilitate cross-border digital transactions.

On semiconductor collaboration, the EU and India focused on strengthening the resilience of supply chains and expanding joint research in areas such as chip design and sustainable technologies.

The two sides underscored their shared commitment to the responsible development of AI, agreeing to further cooperation through joint projects and the development of frameworks for ethical AI. They also plan to enhance cooperation on large language models and AI applications in sectors like climate change and bioinformatics. They also committed to implementing the Global Digital Compact, which was endorsed at the UN General Assembly in September 2024, and ensuring continued global support for multi-stakeholder internet governance at the upcoming World Summit on Information Society +20. It may be the right click for both the EU and India. The EU and India are seizing the opportunity to strengthen their digital and technological ties. Their renewed partnership signals a commitment to fostering a resilient, secure, and inclusive digital future, underpinned by shared values and mutual economic interests. As old alliances shift, new partnerships may define the contours of the evolving world order.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Namaste at Oscars: Indian cinema has arrived



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

Indian storytelling captivates and inspire audiences worldwide. With the right strategy, this moment can shape the future of Indian cinema



The Namaste at the Oscars 2025 has reinforced the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: "The world is one family," a vision that transcends borders yet thrives on respect, mutual interdependence and a shared spirit of creativity. This symbolic gesture was not merely a greeting but a powerful moment of inclusivity, reflecting cinema's unique ability to bring together artists, audiences and creators from across the globe.

This moment at the Academy Awards highlights how soft power is no longer confined to diplomacy alone; it now permeates events, institutions, and cultural exchanges. Cinema, often regarded as the perfect brand platform for fostering relationships, stood at the centre of this phenomenon.

The Namaste was a gateway, introducing the legacy of Indian storytelling to a diverse global audience and reinforcing the deep cultural interconnect between nations through the lens of cinema. Beyond its immediate impact, this gesture has set the stage for the future of the Oscars and similar global platforms. It paves the way for cultural ethos to play a larger role in how nations and their creative industries collaborate and connect.

A simple, well-timed Namaste has given Incredible India a renewed global identity, transforming its participation in world cinema from occasional recognition to strategic influence.

Conan O'Brien's decision to open the Oscars with Namaste was not accidental. It was a statement, an acknowledgement that Indian cinema is no longer at the periphery of global storytelling. This was not a token mention of India, nor was it a cursory reference to its billion-strong audience. This was a recognition of India's growing cinematic legacy and influence. India has long been part of Oscar history, but often through an external gaze. Films like Gandhi (1982) won big, Lagaan (2001)



A SIMPLE, WELL-TIMED NAMASTE HAS GIVEN INCREDIBLE INDIA A RENEWED GLOBAL IDENTITY, TRANSFORMING ITS PARTICIPATION IN WORLD CINEMA FROM OCCASIONAL RECOGNITION TO STRATEGIC INFLUENCE.

came close, and Slumdog Millionaire (2008) swept the Academy Awards, yet these narratives were largely shaped by Western filmmakers. The paradigm began to shift with R (2022), which not only won an Oscar for Naatu Naatu but also forced global audiences to acknowledge the unapologetic, high-energy storytelling of Indian filmmakers.

This shift was further cemented when Payal Kapadia's All We Imagine as Light (2024) won the Grand Prix at Cannes, a rare honour for Indian cinema. Films like Chaitanya Tamhane's The Disciple (2020), Rima Das's Village Rockstars (2017), and Nandita Das's Manto (2018) have been steadily breaking barriers, proving that Indian cinema is no longer defined by stereotypes but by diverse, powerful narratives.

The power of this Namaste must be harnessed beyond the Oscars. As India gears up for Cannes 2025, this moment should serve as a launching pad for stronger positioning. India's representation at global film festivals must be strategic; ensuring that films sent to these platforms reflect the depth, diversity, and dynamism of Indian storytelling.

The Cannes Film Festival has already been a crucial stepping stone for Indian cinema. From Neecha Nagar (1946) winning the Palme d'Or to Masaan (2015) winning the Un Certain Regard prize, India's legacy at Cannes has been long-standing. However, now is the time to transition from isolated wins to sustained influence.

The government and industry stakeholders must work together to ensure that Indian cinema is not just participating but actively shaping the conversation. One powerful example of how such moments create ripples is Life of Pi (2012). When director Ang Lee won the Oscar for Best Director, he greeted the audience with a Namaste, acknowledging the deep Indian cultural influence on the film.

That moment reinforced India's storytelling traditions, but the Namaste at the Oscars 2025 is even more significant; it wasn't just about one film, it was about the entire Indian cinematic movement.

India must now leverage this momentum through platforms like WAVES, the country's film export initiative. WAVES has the potential to push Indian cinema into untapped markets, ensuring that films from independent, regional, and mainstream creators reach wider international audiences.

By riding the wave of this Namaste moment, WAVES can position Indian cinema not just as entertainment, but as a formidable cultural force. Strategic collaborations, international distribution networks, and dedicated Oscar campaigns must now be part of the plan.

If South Korea could orchestrate a global push for Parasite (2019), resulting in its historic Oscar win, India must now do the same, systematically pushing its best films into the international awards circuit.

This is not just about recognition; it's about claiming a rightful place in world cinema. The Namaste at the Oscars 2025 should serve as a wake-up call, a reminder that Indian cinema has evolved from

a land of fantasy to a nation of action. It is no longer a question of whether Indian films will win the Oscar; it is now a matter of when and how often. India is no longer a guest at the global film table-it is a host, a creator, and an influencer.

The Namaste was not just a greeting; it was an invitation for the world to recognise Indian cinema's true potential. The time to capitalise on this moment is now. With the right vision and action, this could be the defining decade when Indian cinema not only participates in global storytelling but leads it.

The world has acknowledged India. Now, Indian cinema must ensure that every frame, every story, and every festival presence echoes the power of that Namaste. The Namaste at the Oscars 2025 was more than a greeting-it was a defining moment for Indian cinema on the global stage. It symbolised India's growing influence in storytelling, marking a shift from sporadic recognition to strategic presence. To sustain this momentum, India must leverage platforms like WAVES, push for global collaborations, and ensure strong representation at festivals. The world has acknowledged India's cinematic potential; now, it is time for Indian cinema to lead. With the right strategy, this moment can shape the future, ensuring that Indian storytelling continues to captivate and inspire audiences worldwide.

(The writer is former civil servant writes on cinema and strategic communication. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)

Ganges dolphin resurfaces in Charikadia river after 25 years

The conservation of the Gangetic dolphin is not just about protecting a single species; it is intrinsically linked to keeping the Ganga clean

The recent sighting of the endangered Ganges dolphin (Platanista gangetica) in Assam's Charikadia River at Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur district, has sparked immense interest. Locally known as Sihu, this marks the first recorded presence of the species in the river since 1998, ending a 25-year absence. The prolonged disappearance of the Ganges dolphin from this watery had fueled concerns over its dwindling numbers and possible extinction.

The disappearance of the species from the Charikadia River has been attributed to several factors, including hunting, habitat destruction, and depletion of food sources. Historically, Ganges dolphins thrived across major river systems in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, including the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems. However, their population has now become fragmented, with significant numbers surviving only in isolated sections of these river systems. The Ganges dolphin is a unique freshwater species that is functionally blind and relies



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

on echolocation to hunt. Despite its remarkable adaptations, the species faces severe threats, primarily due to habitat degradation from large-scale development projects, including dam construction, drainage works, and embankments. Pollution further exacerbates the risks to their survival. Recognizing the urgent need for conservation, India has taken steps to protect the Ganges dolphin. The National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC), the country's first dedicated research facility for this species, was inaugurated on March 4, 2024, in Patna, Bihar. Located on the Patna University campus, near the Ganges River, the center spans 4,400 square meters and aims to conduct in-depth research

on dolphin behavior, survival, and threats. It also provides training to fishermen, equipping them with conservation techniques to protect dolphins during fishing activities. Despite conservation efforts, human infrastructure projects continue to pose significant challenges. The collapse of a four-lane bridge under construction over the Ganga River at Sultanganj-Agwani in Bihar for the third time has drawn attention to the environmental impact of such developments. In 1990, the Bihar government declared a 60-km stretch of the Ganga River from Sultanganj to Kahalgaon as the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, aiming to protect the species while promoting eco-tourism. Recognizing the ecological



significance of the Ganges dolphin, the Government of India designated it as the national aquatic animal in October 2009 during the inaugural meeting of the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA), chaired by then-Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary currently hosts approximately 250 dolphins, frequently observed between Shankar Talkies and Manik Sarkar Ghat. While government agencies have made efforts to protect the species, conservationists emphasize that illegal sand mining must be curbed to ensure its survival. Large-scale sand extraction disrupts river ecosystems by altering water flow and destroying the dolphins' habitat and food sources, such as small fish. Mechanized sand mining further exacerbates environmental damage, creating deep trenches that negatively impact

river health. Experts warn that unless illegal activities are controlled, the already fragile dolphin population will continue to decline. On a more optimistic note, Union Water Resources Minister C.R. Patil has stated that the Namami Gange Mission-a large-scale initiative aimed at rejuvenating the Ganga-has contributed to a rise in the dolphin population. Experts view this as an encouraging sign of improving environmental conditions. According to the Wildlife Institute of India, approximately 4,000 Gangetic dolphins currently inhabit the Ganga and its tributaries, with nearly 2,000 residing in Uttar Pradesh alone. In response, the Uttar Pradesh government has introduced a tourism policy designating a dolphin sanctuary within the Chambal Sanctuary to bolster conservation efforts. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's launch of Project Dolphin has significantly increased public awareness of the species. This initiative strengthens conservation measures while promoting the ecological health of the Ganga River. Further emphasizing its commitment to protecting the species, the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife has designated October 5 as National Dolphin Day. With increasing awareness and conservation initiatives, there is renewed hope that these remarkable creatures will continue to thrive in their natural habitat.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)

what's brewing?



Bindu Priya, a native of Armoor District, Nizamabad, and currently a corporate leader in London, has been crowned Mrs. India Telangana 2025 in the NRI category. She will now represent Telangana on the national stage at Mrs. India in September 2025. A multifaceted and dynamic personality, Bindu Priya is known for her confidence, resilience, and spiritual outlook.



Osteoarthritis on the Rise, Expert Warns

Once considered an age-related condition, osteoarthritis is now increasingly affecting young adults aged 25-40, with women being slightly more prone due to hormonal and structural factors. This degenerative joint disease occurs when the protective cartilage that cushions the bones wears down over time, primarily impacting the hands, knees, hips, and spine. Dr. Balaji Patel Kola, Senior Interventional Radiologist at Maven Medical Center, Hyderabad, warns that sedentary lifestyles, prolonged sitting, poor posture, and lack of physical activity are driving this alarming trend. Additional risk factors such as obesity, unhealthy diets, repetitive joint stress from high-intensity sports or physically demanding work, and even mental stress-induced inflammation are accelerating joint degeneration. However, modern medical advancements offer effective non-surgical solutions. Minimally invasive treatments like Genicular Artery Embolization (GAE) and Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy are revolutionizing osteoarthritis care by reducing pain, improving mobility, and eliminating the need for surgery.

Empowering Women in STEM

On International Women's Day, vivo India launched Project vivo KanyaGyaan, a nationwide initiative aimed at empowering young women from underserved communities to pursue careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Addressing the gender gap in these fields, the program goes beyond scholarships, offering mentorship, skill development, and industry exposure. So far, it has positively impacted 150 women, with over 60% coming from families earning less than ₹1 lakh annually and 15% raised by single parents. By supporting first-generation graduates and breaking financial and societal barriers, vivo is not only transforming individual lives but also contributing to a more diverse and inclusive STEM workforce. To further amplify this message, vivo has launched a digital campaign showcasing the inspiring journeys of young women overcoming challenges to succeed in STEM, reinforcing the need for a more inclusive and diverse future in technology.

Healthy Smiles

L I S T I N G S

Maintaining good oral hygiene is essential for overall well-being, as poor dental health has been linked to conditions like heart disease and diabetes. On this Dentist's Day, Dr. Sonia Datta, a renowned public health dentistry expert with over 27 years of experience, shares expert-recommended practices to ensure long-term dental wellness. She emphasizes the importance of a structured daily routine, which includes brushing twice a day with a clinically tested toothpaste like Dabur Red Paste to remove plaque and strengthen enamel. Using an antibacterial mouthwash with Ayurvedic ingredients such as pudina and clove helps combat oral bacteria and maintain fresh breath. Staying hydrated is also crucial, as drinking water throughout the day washes away food particles and supports saliva production, which naturally protects teeth. While brushing is the

foundation of oral hygiene, incorrect techniques can lead to plaque buildup or enamel damage. Dentists recommend using a soft-bristled toothbrush to prevent gum irritation, brushing for at least two minutes to cover all tooth surfaces—including the tongue—and replacing the toothbrush every 2-3 months for optimal effectiveness. By incorporating these simple yet effective practices, one can maintain a healthy smile and reduce the risk of long-term dental complications.



● Vemulapally Sowjanya



● Bommidi Kavita

In celebration of International Women's Day, Airtel Payments Bank honored the outstanding contributions of women business correspondents (BCs) from Telangana, recognizing their vital role in driving financial inclusion. During a special event in Hyderabad, the Bank acknowledged the dedication and impact of these women, who serve as a crucial bridge between banking services and marginalized populations. The event was attended by retired IAS officer Chiranjeevulu Togarla.



● Divya Sree



● Dannina Veena Kuman



● Arelli Navya

PARTY

Photos by- SV Chary

Coromandel International Limited, one of India's leading agri-solutions providers, has inaugurated its second Sulphur manufacturing plant at its Visakhapatnam facility in Andhra Pradesh. The site is the company's wholly backward integrated unit and produces approximately 12 LMT of complex fertilisers along with Phosphoric acid and Sulphuric acid. The site also hosts a Sulphur Fertiliser plant with 25000 MT production capacity. With the inauguration of this new plant, the company's Sulphur fertiliser capacity is doubled, ensuring a steady supply of high-quality bentonite Sulphur fertilisers to the farmers.



NUTRITION IN IN

One of the biggest players in the sulphur fertiliser in India. Unique Fast Sulphur Release In...



Mahila Dakshata Samithi (MDS) Educational Institutions in Gangaram, Chandanagar, Hyderabad, hosted a captivating lecture on the Kumbh Mela, exploring the intersection of science and spirituality. The event witnessed the presence of distinguished guests, Anju Poddar, an eminent speaker and author, Sheel Kumar Jain, President of Hindi Arts College and Smt. Vimala Badruka, Trustee of Rogi Sahayata Trust.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



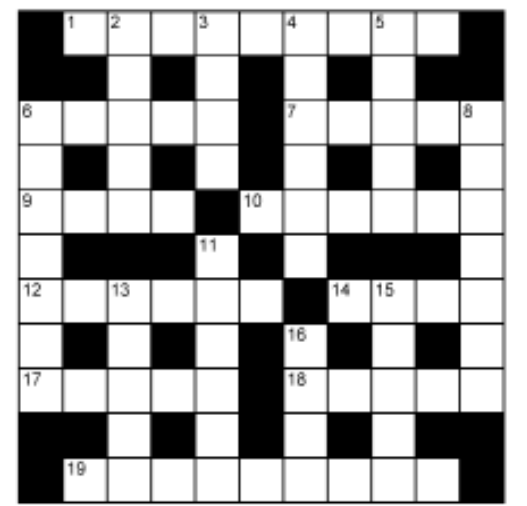
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

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Yesterday's solution

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Rules
• Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
• The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- An exact copy
- Someone who decides who won
- Tiny bread scrap
- Young woman
- Shout this to attract attention (3-3)
- A frozen drip
- Went quickly
- Dirt
- Sea
- Tried

DOWN

- Beneath
- Told a fib
- This type of clock has a mechanical bird in it
- Hard to chew
- Slow running for exercise
- Make wider
- An arm cover
- Very foolish person
- Fragment
- Use this when washing

SOLUTION



'I GOT 50 OFFERS AFTER CINEMABANDI, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO DO SAME KIND OF ROLE'

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

Rag Mayur is a name that has been making waves in Telugu cinema. From his recent hit web series Sivarapalli, which has remained in the top 10 even after seven weeks, to his acclaimed roles in Gandhi Tatha Chettu and Veeranjanyula Vihara Yatra, the young actor is proving his mettle with every project. His versatility has left a lasting impression, leading many to believe that he has the potential to excel in a variety of roles if given the right opportunities. "I want to explore all shades—positive, negative, or grey. But my only condition is that each role should be different from the previous ones. That's why I am selective about my projects," says Rag Mayur.

Born and raised in Hyderabad, Rag Mayur completed his degree in Computer Science from Osmania University. Growing up near RTC Cross Roads, a hub for cinema enthusiasts, he was constantly surrounded by the magic of movies. "Every day, I used to see the theaters—Sandhya, Sudarshan, Devi, Odeon—and watch films of Chiranjeevi and Shah Rukh Khan. Maybe that's what ignited my passion for cinema," he shares. Despite being a bright student, the allure of films remained strong in his mind.

After earning his degree, he moved to the USA for his Master's but soon realized he wasn't happy there. "I missed home, so I returned to Hyderabad and started working," he recalls. Around 2014, he began his professional journey in Bengaluru as an IT employee. With weekends free, he joined a theater group and started writing about films for a website. He also

experimented with film-making, directing and

acting in short films. One of his projects, Rama Kanavemira, went viral in 2016, garnering over a million views. That success reinforced his decision to focus solely on acting, prompting him to send portfolios and attend auditions.

His big break came when director Praveen Kandregula cast him in a demo film for Cinemabandi. "Usually, demo films are made to pitch the concept to production houses, and when a project gets approved, established actors

are brought in. But producers Raj & DK insisted that the original cast remain intact. That's how Cinemabandi became my debut, and it turned out to be a major success, staying at the top for two weeks," says Rag Mayur.

Following Cinemabandi, he received nearly 50 offers from both small and big films. However, he was careful not to get typecast. "Many wanted me to play similar village-based roles, but repeating the same character is the fastest way to fade out in the industry. So, I made a conscious decision to be selective," he explains.

One of his standout performances came in Keedaa Cola, directed by Tharun Bhascker, where he played a unique role that earned him critical acclaim. His next project, the web film Veeranjanyula Vihara Yatra, released on ETV Win, was both commercially and critically successful. "I played a serious role in this film. Interestingly, the director had seen my short film years ago and

remembered me for this part," he says.

His latest hit, Sivarapalli, streaming on Amazon, is an adaptation of the Hindi series Panchayat, but with a fresh take in Telugu. "I watched the original three times to understand its essence but made sure not to copy the acting. Bringing my own interpretation was a big challenge, but I'm grateful for the appreciation," he shares.

A standout aspect of Rag Mayur's journey is his ability to master regional accents. In Cinemabandi, he perfected the Rayalaseema dialect, in Keedaa Cola, he adopted a Telangana accent, and for his upcoming film Garividi Lakshmi, he trained rigorously for 40 days to nail the challenging Srikakulam dialect. "I play a Burrakatha artist in this one," he reveals.

Stepping into villainous territory, Rag Mayur took on a negative role in Gandhi Tatha Chettu, directed by Padmavathi. "Initially, they wanted a 50-year-old actor, but the director felt I could do it. The team had doubts, but after seeing my audition, they were convinced," he shares.

He is meticulous in preparing for his roles, maintaining a notebook where he jots down details about each character. "I don't consider myself a spontaneous actor. I prepare thoroughly, consult with directors, and adapt as needed. That preparation allows me to make last-minute changes effortlessly," he explains.

With roots in both Vijayawada and Hyderabad, Rag Mayur attributes his ease with different accents to his family background. "My grandparents are from Andhra, which might be why I can adapt to different regional tones easily," he says.

Looking ahead, he plays Anupama Parameswaran's love interest in Paradh, directed by Praveen Kandregula. He has also signed a film with Geetha Arts 2. "It's a completely different role from anything I've done before, and I'm excited for audiences to see it," he concludes.

With his dedication to craft, keen script selection, and ability to bring diverse characters to life, Rag Mayur is undoubtedly a rising star to watch in Telugu cinema.



MAKERS CLARIFY

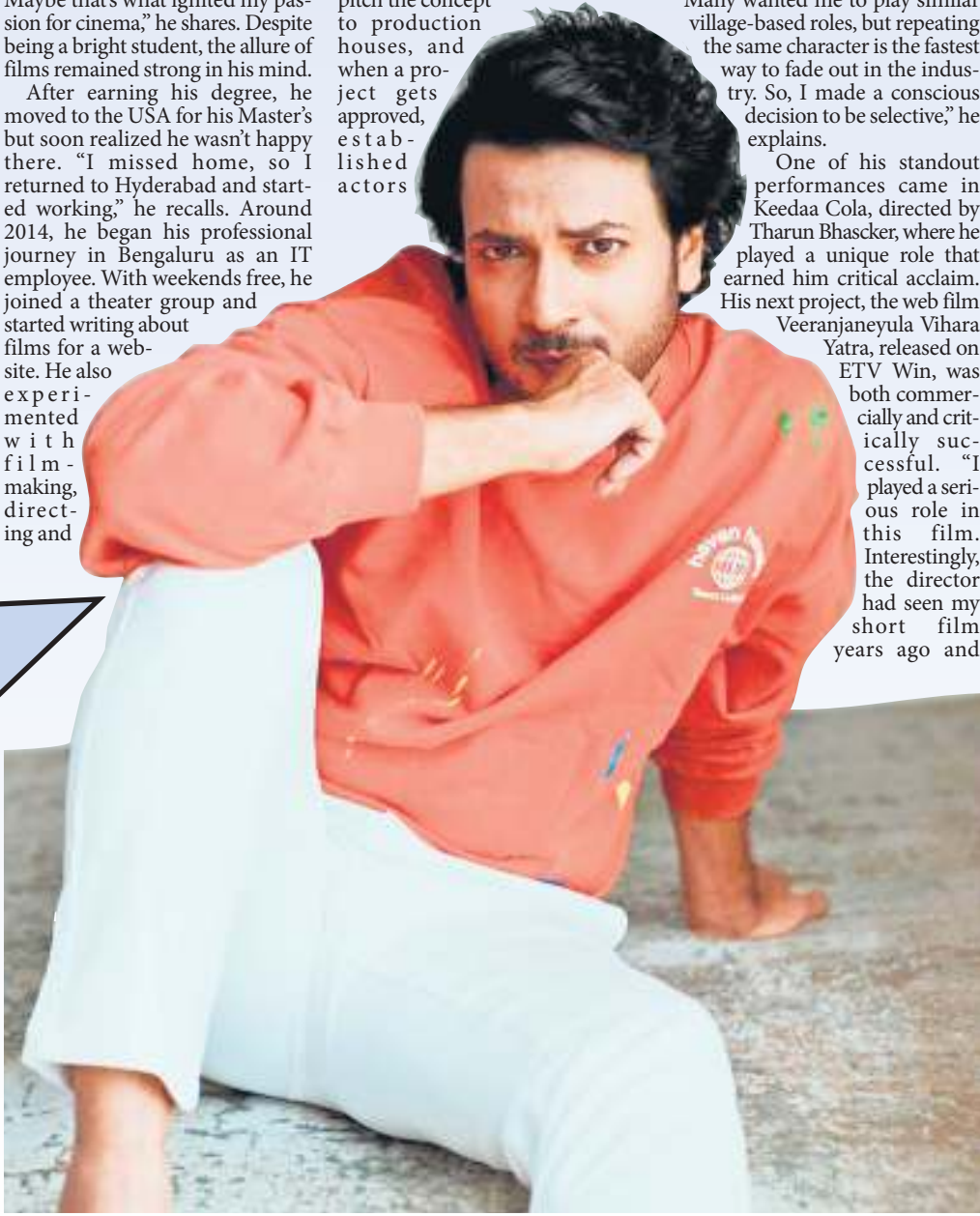
Janhvi's b'day post isn't her film look

Usually, when an actor or actress celebrates their birthday, the makers release a glimpse of their look from an upcoming film. However, on Thursday, as Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor celebrated her birthday, there was no such reveal from her highly anticipated film alongside Ram Charan, directed by Buchi Babu. Despite the film's shooting having begun weeks ago, with a schedule completed in Mysore featuring both Ram Charan and Janhvi, the makers chose not to unveil her look. Instead, they shared a casual picture of Janhvi on the film's set. Apart from her Hindi films, Janhvi Kapoor has now entered

Telugu cinema with her debut film Devara opposite Jr NTR. She is already in high demand and has signed her second Telugu film, this time opposite Ram Charan. On her birthday, the makers shared a picture from the set to extend their wishes, which led to speculation that it was her look from the film. However, they clarified that the image was not her official look but a candid shot taken during the first schedule in Mysore.

Janhvi took part in the first schedule in Mysore in November 2024 and will soon be joining the ongoing shoot in Hyderabad, which began on Thursday. This 12-day schedule will focus on filming crucial sequences.

Rag Mayur's journey from a boy growing up in Hyderabad's RTC Cross Roads to becoming a sought-after actor in Telugu cinema is nothing short of inspiring. Known for his versatility and ability to take on unconventional roles, he has carved a niche for himself in the industry



Raa Raja is an experimental film: Shiva Prasad

Director B. Shiva Prasad is set to introduce a unique cinematic experience with his experimental film Raa Raja, in which the actors' faces are never shown—a concept rarely explored in mainstream cinema. "These days, content-driven films are doing well, and audiences are supporting them. So, I decided to make a story-driven film without showing the actors' faces," said Shiva Prasad.

Initially a producer, Shiva Prasad started his career with Maathru. However, while working on that project, he conceived the idea for Raa Raja and decided to direct it himself. "That's when I chose to take on this project as both producer and direc-

tor," he shared. Despite not revealing the actors' faces, the film aims to capture all kinds of emotions. "Audiences will still experience love, comedy, horror, and every other emotion. The film will keep them engaged and entertained until the end," he assured. He further added, "We made this film to offer a unique theatrical experience. Even though the actors' faces aren't shown, the film won't feel incomplete. I hope audiences support this experimental project."

Raa Raja is set to release on Friday, March 7. The filmmaker also revealed that he has several projects lined up, including one with veteran actress Suhagini Maniratnam.

I AM A BIG FAN OF PAWAN KALYAN: DIVYA BHARATHI

Music director-turned-actor GV Prakash Kumar is gearing up for the release of Kingston, which hits screens on March 7 in Tamil and Telugu. The film stars Divya Bharathi as the female lead. Having played a small role in Maharaja, a film that turned out to be a massive success, she is now reuniting with GV Prakash after their previous collaboration in Bachelor. "Compared to Bachelor, Kingston is completely different. It's India's first sea adventure thriller. I am also excited that this is GV Prakash Kumar's first film as a producer. He has put in immense effort, and I'm really happy to be a part of this project," said Divya Bharathi.

The actress also performed action sequences for the first time. "Doing action scenes was a thrilling experience. I even performed rope sequences, and that's when I realized how tough action scenes can be! I've already watched the film, and I'm really happy with the final result," she said.

Playing a village girl in the film, she revealed that Kingston is set to become a franchise. "Yes! My character will continue in the upcoming sequels," she confirmed.

Divya Bharathi has also ventured into Telugu cinema with GOAT opposite Sudigali Sudheer and is improving her Telugu-speaking skills. "My assistant is Telugu-speaking, so I practice with him. That's how I'm learning the language," she shared. The actress further revealed that she has completed two Tamil films and is currently in talks for two Telugu projects. She ended on an enthusiastic note, expressing her admiration for Power Star Pawan Kalyan. "I'm a huge fan of Khushi! And, of course, I love Pushpa Raj, Allu Arjun," she said.



Telangana Speaker Supports Mr. Reddy Team at Teaser Launch

T. Narasimha Rao (TNR), popularly known as Gold Man Raja, is making his acting debut in Mr. Reddy, a film that he is also producing. The teaser was launched by Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad, who extended his best wishes to the team.

Lead actor TNR expressed his gratitude to the Speaker and other dignitaries at the event. "We have all worked hard on this film, and I hope everyone supports our efforts," he said, adding that the release date will be announced soon. Directed by debutant Venkat Voladhri, the film brings together a team of fresh talents. "Most of us are newcomers, and we have put in our best efforts to make this film a success," the director shared.

Several politicians, including Patnam Sunitha Reddy and Nalgonda Gaddar, praised the team's dedication. The film also stars Anupama Prakash, Mahadev, Deepthi, and Bhaskar in key roles.



