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INDIA'S ONLY FILM BIZ MAGAZINE FOR THE WORLD
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PICKLE AFM EDITION



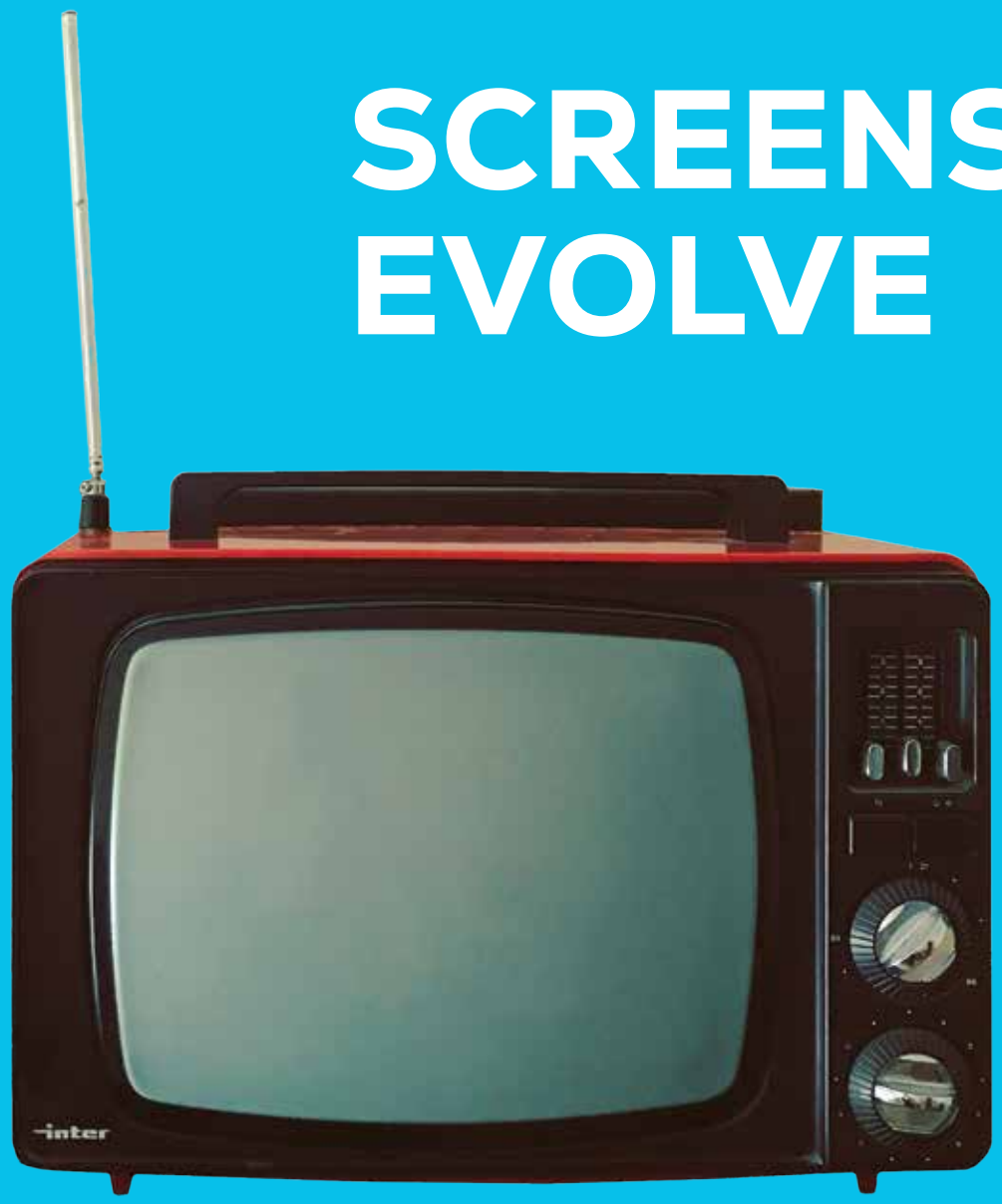
Namit Malhotra
Chairman & Global CEO, DNEG

India's Global Image Maker

With Ramayana, Namit Malhotra takes India's storytelling ambitions centre stage

AMERICAN FILM MARKET®

SCREENS EVOLVE



SO DO WE

November 10 – 15, 2026
Fairmont Century Plaza
Los Angeles

americanfilmmarket.com

FROM THE EDITOR

Pickle has been present on American Film Markets trade racks since 2008, connecting India's creative businesses with the international independent film community. We are delighted to return for the 47th AFM edition, celebrating a marketplace where relationships can become projects and conversations can become lasting partnerships.

Bringing together professionals from more than 85 countries, AFM connects creators, sales agents, buyers and financiers across the independent screen business. Its appeal lies in that purposeful exchange: discovering stories, assembling finance, finding distribution and moving films towards audiences.

LocationEXPO connects filmmakers with film commissions and production partners, while the expanded Innovation Hub brings emerging technologies into the conversation. These encounters can help independent producers discover collaborators.

India deserves a place in those conversations from the beginning, not merely when a production needs a finishing service. Think of India as a creative collaborator, from story development to global distribution.

Namit Malhotra's ambitions for Ramayana offer a compelling starting point: bringing an Indian epic to audiences worldwide through a collaboration of Indian and international talent. The proposition invites a broader conversation about developing Indian stories for global audiences, rather than viewing India only as a services destination. For AFM delegates, that is an invitation to explore partnerships around storytelling, technology and international reach.

India's investment framework permits up to 100 per cent foreign direct investment through the automatic route in film production and several other entertainment activities, subject to applicable regulations. That openness offers a concrete starting point for international businesses considering deeper engagement.

India's strength is the combination of creative talent and technology. Its artists, technicians and engineers underpin global visual effects, animation and postproduction, exemplified by DNEG's substantial Indian workforce.

For international producers, India's emerging AI film labs offer another avenue for collaboration. Explore their capabilities while protecting artistic control, rights and informed consent.



The second edition of WAVES Summit returns in October 2027, while the Indian Institute of Creative Technologies is developing talent through industry-driven training. Put WAVES on your collaboration calendar: identify Indian partners at AFM, begin project discussions and carry those relationships forward to India.

Please contact us if you want to connect with someone in the Indian M&E business.

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Pickle is an ad supported business guide tracking the filmed entertainment business in India.

SPOTLIGHT YOUR FILMS. SHOWCASE YOUR LOCATIONS. BE IN PICKLE.

PICKLE EDITION IN IFFI GOA AND WAVES FILM BAZAAR 2026

Pickle reaches out to audio visual companies in over 50 countries; Targets global buyers and distributors; Film Festivals and markets; Animation production companies; Global companies looking at offshoring from India; Co-production seekers and location service providers. Pickle business guide tracks the entertainment business in India.

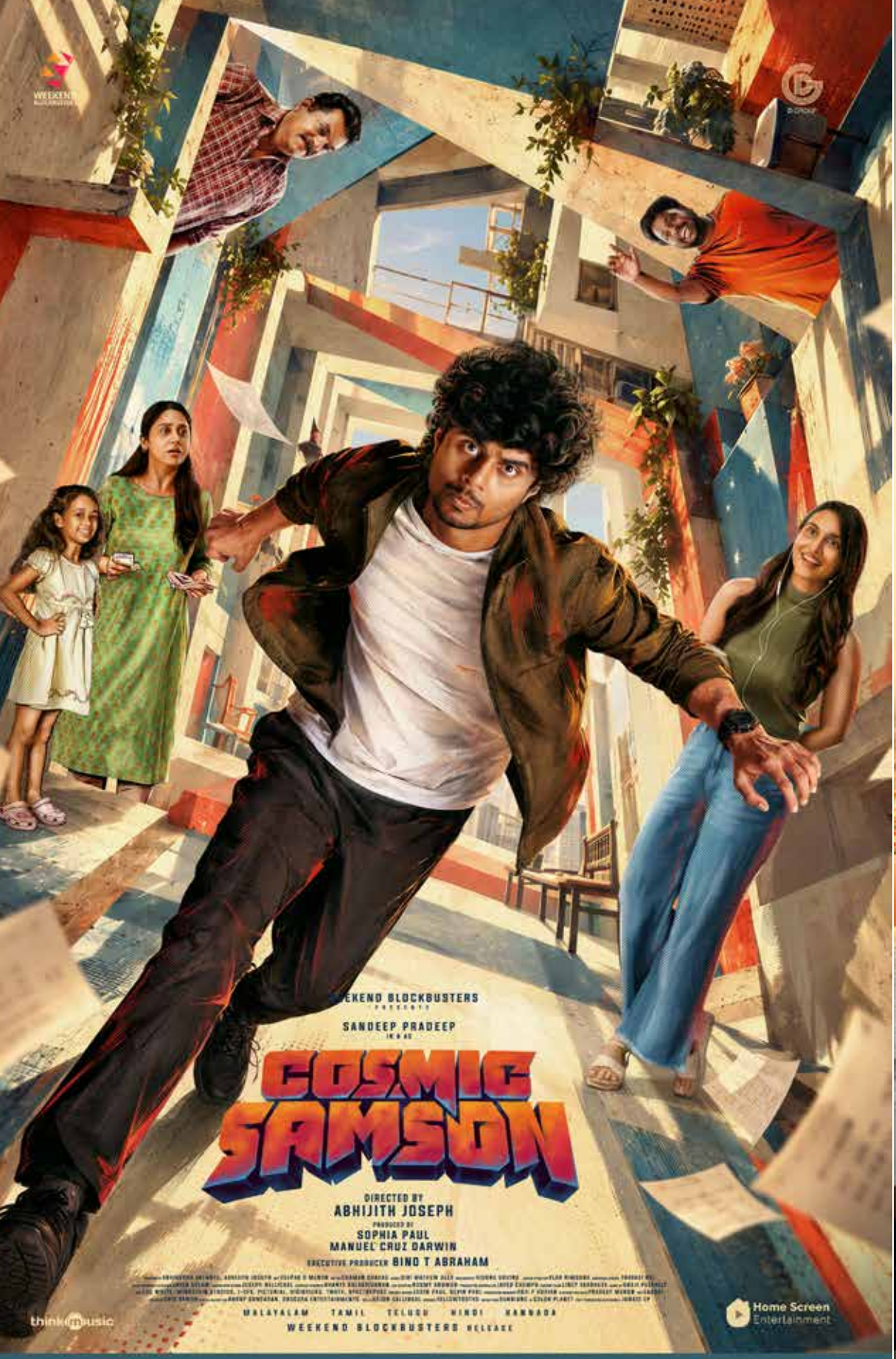
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Inside American Film Market

SCREEN ECONOMY

"Our business is at an inflection point, and we can't move forward by looking backward," says Jackie Brenneman, President and CEO of IFTA, which produces AFM. Her message frames AFM's first unifying theme, The New Global Screen Economy, connecting discussions on finance, production, distribution, technology and audience behaviour while urging independent companies to help define the industry's next chapter together.

OPENING SUMMIT

AFM's inaugural New Global Screen Economy Summit opens November 10, with keynotes from IFTA President and CEO Jackie Brenneman and media analyst Evan Shapiro, alongside discussions on production incentives, intellectual property, studios and audience discovery. Delegates should note that the summit requires a separate ticket, with limited capacity, rather than assuming their regular market badge automatically includes admission to proceedings.

LOCATION ADVANTAGE

LocationEXPO connects AFM delegates with film commissions, production facilities and service companies offering guidance on locations, incentives, crews, permitting, scouting and casting for upcoming projects. The 2026 participant list includes Ramoji Studio, Japan Film Commission, Thailand Film Office, Czech Film Commission and Egypt Film Commission, giving producers a practical starting point for comparing destinations and identifying potential international production partners.

AUDIENCE ACCESS

AFM's collaboration with AMC A-List and B-List Movie Club gives selected films access to frequent moviegoers alongside industry buyers, creating opportunities for audience feedback as projects enter the marketplace. Screenings run November 10–13 at AMC Century City 15, with expanded options including world and market

BY THE NUMBERS

85+
Countries

215+
Exhibitors

45+
Sessions

premieres, slate showcases, hospitality enhancements and red-carpet moments for participating sales companies, producers and filmmakers.

INNOVATION BASE

The new AFM House adds 15,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space at The Pavilion at Century Park, across from the Fairmont Century Plaza, with access for all registered badge holders. Open November 11–14, it houses the expanded Innovation Hub with Cannes Next, offering delegates technology demonstrations, presentations and networking around emerging tools and business models for filmed entertainment.

CINEMA FUTURES

The Cinemas Club makes its North American debut at AFM House, bringing theatrical exhibition and moviegoing into focus through programming open to all AFM badge holders across four days, November 11–14. Delegates can explore box office and release windows on November 11, followed by anime, concerts, faith content and alternative programming on November 12, connecting distribution decisions with evolving audiences.

FINANCE FOCUS

AFM's November 11 finance sessions examine where capital is flowing and the changing economics of independent film, with announced speakers including Adrian Ward, Miguel Palos Jr., Miranda Bailey and Juliana Lubin. Main Stage

What Deleates Should Know

access requires a Platinum or +Sessions Badge, making badge selection important for delegates seeking these discussions before assessing financing structures, production incentives and potential partners for projects.

DATA ADVANTAGE

IFTA has named The Numbers its official data partner, with planned initiatives including comparable-film analysis, research, educational webinars and data support for AFM programming to strengthen decision-making across the independent sector. Preferred access to custom Comp Analysis Reports and research services is earmarked for IFTA members, a distinction delegates should note when exploring resources for financing, positioning, sales and distribution.

INDIAN COMPANIES TO MEET AT AFM

Company	Name	Designation
3 WHEELER STUDIOS	TEJAS SHUKUL	*Writer, Director and Producer*
AADARSH TECHNOSOFT	ANKITA SHRIVASTAVA	*Director*
CONTENT FLOW STUDIOS	BOBBY BEDI	MD
DIMENSION PICTURES PVT LTD	LIAQUAT ALI GOLA	*Owner*
DOLPHIN FILMS PVT. LTD.	PAPARAO BIYYALA	*Producer*
IMPRIMISMEDIA PRIVATE LIMITED	ARPIT AGARWAL	
KALINGA INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY (KIIT)	SMRUTI CHOUDHURY	
KYNZO MEDIA GROUP PRIVATE LIMITED	JAYAKUMAR NAIR	CEO
LIONSGATE PLAY	ROHIT JAIN	*Founder, CEO*
M15	MADHUSUDHAN BALASUBRAMANIAN	*Founder | Filmmaker*
NE MEDIA SYNDICATION	VAIDYANATHAN NAAGARAJAN	CEO
PHANTOM MEDIA GROUP	RAJAN ETHIRAJA	Chief Business Officer
PICKLE MEDIA PVT LTD	NATARAJAN VIDYASAGAR	*Editor*
PIXSTONE IMAGES PVT. LTD.	PRADEEP SRINIVAS	*Executive Producer*
PVR INOX PICTURES LTD/PVR INOX LTD.	KAMAL GIANCHANDANI	*President*
RAMOJI FILM CITY DBA USHAKIRON MOVIES PRIVATE LIMITED	VIJAYESWARI CHERUKURI	MD
RISING NOVA	DILIP ADVANI	*Owner*
TOONZ MEDIA GROUP	VISHWANATH RAO	CEO

AFM VOICES SHAPING TOMORROW'S SCREENS

Who can help the screen business turn disruption into durable value? ***Pickle*** *brings together* ***30 voices*** *from AFM's speaker programme and Innovation Hub, arranged around six themes: capital, data, production, creators, audiences and international opportunity*

CAPITAL & STRATEGY

MAPPING MEDIA



Evan Shapiro (United States), **founder** and **CEO** of **ESHAP**, turns the changing media landscape into maps, essays and pointed industry commentary. His Media Universe Map and podcasts connect corporate strategy with shifts in audience behaviour. For producers and distributors, his value lies in challenging inherited assumptions about where attention, influence and sustainable screen businesses are heading.

ATTENTION ECONOMICS



Hernan Lopez (United States), **founder** of **Owl & Co,** connects audience attention with enterprise value through his Streamonomics framework. The Wondery founder and former Fox International Channels chief now examines vertical video and emerging storytelling businesses . His perspective is useful for separating fashionable formats from business models that can turn viewing time into lasting commercial value.

INDEPENDENT AMBITION



Glen Basner (United States), **founder** and **CEO** of **FilmNation Entertainment**, combines filmmaker relationships with international financing and sales expertise. His public conversations emphasise adaptability, early distributor involvement and protecting distinctive creative voices. He is worth hearing on how independent companies can retain ambition while changing their commercial structures, rather than allowing market uncertainty to dictate every creative decision.

GLOBAL INDEPENDENCE



Stuart Ford (United States), **chairman** and **CEO** of **AGC Studios**, has built independent businesses spanning development, financing, production and international sales. His interviews connect creative risk with financial discipline , arguing that budgets must fit identifiable audiences and realistic markets. For producers seeking international scale, he offers a practical perspective on making ambitious projects without abandoning commercial responsibility.

FINANCING REALITY



Phil Hunt (United Kingdom), **co-founder** and **CEO** of **Head Gear Films**, brings the perspective of a financier operating across film, television and games. His YouTube interviews examine shrinking revenue windows, lending and portfolio risk. Listen for an unsentimental assessment of what buyers want, which budgets are defensible and how independent producers can structure projects that remain financeable.

INDEPENDENT ENTERPRISE

Steven Paul (United States), **chairman** and **CEO** of **SP Media Group**, combines independent production, international sales and distribution experience. His AFM appearance addresses the proposed federal production incentive and the economics of keeping filmmaking competitive. He is worth hearing on how policy, financing and ownership of intellectual property can strengthen the business foundations of independent cinema.

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DATA & RIGHTS

SMARTER GREENLIGHTS



Tobias Queisser (United States), **co-founder** and **CEO** of **Cinelytic Group**, focuses on decision intelligence rather than AI-generated entertainment. Cinelytic combines film and talent analytics, financial models and forecasting tools to inform business decisions. His relevance lies in helping producers question assumptions about projects and release strategies, while distinguishing useful analytical support from promises that algorithms can guarantee hits.

SMARTER GREENLIGHTS



Alex Gocke (United States), **vice president** of sales at **Largo.ai**, connects filmmaking with data-driven development and commercial decision-making. Largo's Cannes Next pitching programme brings AI forecasts into conversations with financiers and distributors. His perspective is useful for producers exploring how audience analysis and financial modelling can sharpen a pitch without allowing predictive tools to dictate creative choices.

VOICE OWNERSHIP



Louise Edwards (Sweden), **founder** and **CEO** of **Voxifyer**, is building a business around licensed digital voices and human identity rights. The platform places consent, ownership and payment at the centre of voice production and localisation. Her perspective matters as producers seek multilingual reach and production efficiencies without treating performers' voices as unrestricted raw material for artificial intelligence.

AI & PRODUCTION

PRODUCTION INTELLIGENCE



Benjamin Lock (United States), **principal AI executive** at **Amazon MGM Studios**, works with filmmakers and department heads on adopting generative AI within production. His background spans Lucasfilm, Aardman, Framestore and ILM . He matters because the next AI debate needs production experience: where tools genuinely remove friction, expand creative choices and support directors, rather than simply generating impressive demonstrations.

RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION



Joanna Popper (United States), **CEO** of **Laurel Beach** , works across AI strategy, emerging media and film production. Her experience includes CAA, HP, immersive storytelling and industry innovation initiatives . She is an important voice on moving beyond technological novelty towards production choices that balance creative integrity, operational value and responsible adoption, especially for companies deciding where experimentation belongs.

INFLUENTIAL VOICES

DIGITAL HUMANS



Ed Ulbrich (United States), **founder** of **Ulbrich Advisory**, connects decades of visual-effects leadership with AI production strategy. His career includes Digital Domain, Benjamin Button's digital-human breakthrough and neural-performance work at Metaphysic. He offers a grounded perspective on integrating new tools into complex productions, where creative ambition must meet technical reliability, secure workflows and the realities of delivery.

HYBRID CRAFT



Conrad Curtis (United States), production and partnerships lead at **Beeble**, connects physical filmmaking with AI-assisted visual effects. His work centres on relighting, virtual production and preserving filmmaker control, informed by more than fifteen years in production. He is worth hearing on whether emerging tools can survive real shooting conditions and improve workflows rather than merely deliver impressive demonstrations.

CREATIVE ACCELERATION



Jethro Rothe-Kushel (United States), **co-founder** and **CEO** of **Ritual Ads**, brings commercial-production experience to human-directed, AI-powered filmmaking. His Cannes Lions interview with Under Armour explores AI's role in creative work. For the screen economy, he offers a useful perspective on faster experimentation, audience-facing marketing and retaining creative judgement as new tools reshape how promotional content is produced.

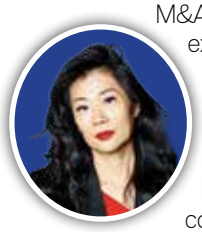
CREATORS & COMMUNITIES

CREATOR ENTERPRISE



Monica Khan (United States), **founder** and **CEO** of **Creator Revolution**, helps creators and brands build scalable, audience-led businesses. Her experience at YouTube, Meta and Spotter informs her writing and speaking on modern media strategy . Listen for how creator relationships can become a lasting business capability, rather than a promotional add-on attached to a film after production ends

CREATOR OWNERSHIP



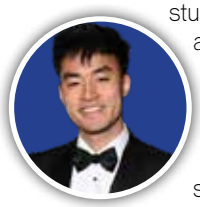
Tyler Chou (United States), **founder** and **CEO** of **Tyler Chou Law** for Creators and CreatorArq M&A Advisory, brings legal and transaction expertise to creator businesses. Her LinkedIn and YouTube commentary covers copyright, licensing, negotiations and exits. She matters wherever online popularity must become defensible ownership, better contracts and a business that retains value beyond an individual platform.

CREATOR STUDIOS



Mickey Meyer (United States), **president** of **Global Creator Studios** at Blink49 Studios, develops film and television opportunities with digital-native storytellers. His background includes Maker Studios, JASH and Group Nine Studios, connecting online audiences with longer-form entertainment. He is worth hearing on co-development and co-ownership: how audience-proven ideas become durable intellectual property without reducing creators to promotional talent.

INTERNET GREENLIGHTS



Wesley Wang (United States), **director** and **founder** of **Wesley Wang Media**, is testing a creator-led studio model shaped by internet audiences. His YouTube breakthrough, nothing, except everything, opened a route into studio development. His experience offers a useful, still-evolving case study in how filmmakers can demonstrate demand, build negotiating leverage and challenge conventional assumptions about who gets discovered.

AUDIENCE PARTNERSHIP



Jon Leland (United States), **co-founder** and **CEO** of **Popular Demand**, is building an artist-first studio around fan participation and creator control. The former Kickstarter chief strategy officer brings crowdfunding, community organising and ticket presales into project development. His approach merits attention because it asks audiences to help shape a project's viability before conventional financing and distribution decisions are settled.

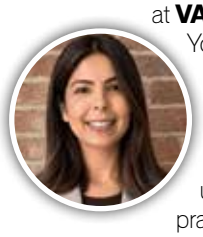
FAN CAPITAL



Paul Scanlan (United States), **co-founder** and **CEO** of **Legion M**, puts fans inside the entertainment company's ownership and development model. His background includes co-founding mobile-television pioneer MobiTV. He is worth listening to on whether community participation can strengthen financing, discovery and distribution together, while recognising that enthusiasm and shared ownership do not remove the commercial risks of filmmaking.

AUDIENCES & DISTRIBUTION

LIBRARY REVIVAL



Amrita Punjabi (Australia), **network director** at **VA Media**, works where film libraries meet YouTube distribution and advertising-supported viewing. Her expertise spans channel operations, analytics, audience development and monetisation. For rights holders, particularly those with underused catalogues, she offers practical thinking on treating YouTube as a destination for premium, long-form content rather than merely a place to upload trailers.

GENRE ECONOMICS



Yolanda Macias (United States), **chief motion pictures officer** at **Cineverse**, brings acquisition and distribution experience to audience-driven genre filmmaking. Her public discussions of Terrifier explain the importance of committed fans, filmmaker conviction and targeted distribution. She offers an instructive perspective on building a release around an identifiable community instead of assuming that visibility requires a conventional blockbuster marketing machine.

ANIMATION ACCESS



Dave Jesteadt (United States), **president** of **GKIDS**, has helped build American audiences for international and independent animation. His work spans distribution, English-language production and films including Wolfwalkers and The Breadwinner . For animation producers seeking global reach, he offers insight into the patient work of positioning distinctive films, cultivating audiences and connecting artistic identity with a sustainable theatrical presence.

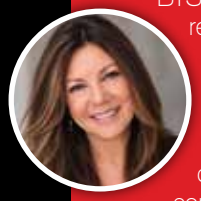
FANDOM COMMERCE



Mitchel Berger (United States), **executive vice president** of global commerce at **Crunchyroll**, oversees businesses spanning theatrical releases, manga, consumer products, collectibles and content sales. His distribution experience includes major anime releases . He matters to anyone building screen IP beyond a single release, showing why audience commitment, theatrical participation and adjacent products deserve to be considered together.

INFLUENTIAL VOICES

EVENT AUDIENCES



Kymberli Frueh (United States), **executive vice president** of content acquisitions and programming at **Trafalgar Releasing**, specialises in bringing performances and cultural events to cinemas. Her work includes BTS and the Grateful Dead's recurring theatrical events . Her perspective helps exhibitors and rights owners explore how shared experiences can attract communities whose cinema habits extend beyond conventional feature-film releases.

MARKETS & TALENT

ASIAN INTELLIGENCE



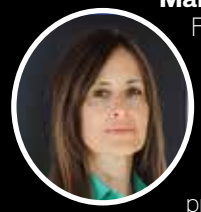
Rance Pow (United States), **founder** and **CEO** of **Artisan Gateway**, brings extensive Asian and North American cinema-market experience. His company advises studios, exhibitors and investors on business development, investment and market intelligence. He is valuable for producers pursuing cross-border partnerships who need to test ambitions against local audience behaviour, distribution conditions and the practical economics of market entry.

MARKET CONNECTIONS



Guillaume Esmiol (France), **executive director** of the **Marché du Film**, works at the intersection of international dealmaking and industry innovation. His background includes innovation leadership at TF1 and expanding market programmes for financing and co-production. Listen for how film markets can deliver more useful connections between producers, capital and technology, rather than relying on attendance alone as evidence of value.

EXPANDING IP



Tanja Meissner(Germany), **director** of **Berlinale Pro** and the **European Film Market** at the Berlin International Film Festival, combines international sales experience with producer development. Her public thinking embraces animation, cross-media IP and practical business-model innovation. She matters to producers seeking growth beyond isolated projects, while preserving the distinct creative logic of cinema, games and other formats.

INDEPENDENT INFRASTRUCTURE



Jackie Brenneman (United States), **president** and **CEO** of the **Independent Film & Television Alliance and American Film Market**, connects independent filmmaking with exhibition, policy and international business. Her experience includes National Cinema Day and the Attend Theatrical Marketplace . She offers a valuable perspective on the shared infrastructure, commercial access and industry cooperation needed for independent stories to reach paying audiences.

TALENT CONNECTIONS



Rich Botto (United States), **founder** and **CEO** of **Stage 32**, has built an international platform connecting screen professionals with education, development resources and industry opportunities. The author of Crowdsourcing for Filmmakers also speaks on networking and production . His relevance lies in the human side of growth: helping talent build skills, relationships and routes into an increasingly international screen economy.



AN EPIC GAMBIT

RAMAYANA

READY TO FLY INTO GLOBAL RECKONING

By Saibal Chatterjee

The story is centred on Rama but it is Ravana who holds sway over Ramayana – Rise of a Legend, which is the first of two proposed parts of a sprawling and spectacular screen adaptation of a mythological epic that defines India culturally and spiritually.

Using state-of-the-art VFX, the makers of the mammoth movie do everything in their power – the resources available to them are enormous to the point of being limitless – to ensure that the execution matches their ambition. Does it? Yes, it does – and then some.

Ramayana – Rise of a Legend is a film that gives full rein to the imagination of the writers as it repurposes a familiar story for modern times. Its mind-blowing magnitude places it in a league entirely its own.

The musical score by Hans Zimmer (working in an Indian film for the first time) and the ever-reliable A.R. Rahman serves to enhance the soundtrack.

While staying firmly rooted in the ancient ethos and traditions from which the characters and their impulses spring, the film brings to the screen a hoary tale in a manner that does not look either outdated or unduly derivative.

The makers do a great job of aligning the production with its global distribution ambitions. While one may debate the efficacy of the overly straightforward and somewhat reductive rendition of the story, the technology that is pressed into the service of a film that tells a rooted tale with an eye on the world is of the highest order.

The look and texture of Ramayana – Rise of a Legend, imparted to it by DNEG, which is a producer of the film along with Namit Malhotra's Prime Focus Studios and star-actor Yash's Monster Mind Creations, elevate the viewing experience to a level that is unprecedented in the annals of Indian cinema, whether you watch out in 3D or IMAX.

The film is marked by striking technical finesse on one hand and remarkable visual pizzazz on the other as an impressively wide spectrum of storytelling and visual elements are put together with unwavering cohesion.

The work of the cinematographers Pankaj Kumar and Mahesh Limaye is seamlessly intertwined with the CGI-heavy frames that the film assembles in pursuit of perfection. The VFX is consistently top-notch with all the flying elephants, trees turning into monsters, galloping rhinos and shape-shifting monsters displaying the rigour that has gone into conceiving and reimagining these creatures for the screen.

The creative prowess on show reaches its zenith in Jatayu, the vulture that lays down its life in trying to prevent Ravana from abducting Sita. The film has many such creatures that capture the imagination. If Ramayana – Rise of a Legend is intended to be India's answer to The Odyssey, it comes pretty close to its avowed goal.

The film has on board powerful commercial entities. While Sony Pictures Entertainment is in charge of international distribution, one of India's premier film production companies, Dharma Productions, is handling the North Indian distribution of the film.

Indeed, Ramayana – Rise of a Legend lacks nothing as it aims to put Indian commercial cinema on the world map in a way that no film has ever done before.

The cast has two of India's biggest movie stars – Ranbir Kapoor and Yash – playing Rama and Ravana respectively. The former conveys the serenity and steeliness of a royal warrior who swears by his filial duties and commitment to his people – the inhabitants of Ayodhya.

It is Yash who ups the film's ante with a power-packed performance that projects Ravana as a composite of super-evil inclinations, powers granted to him by Brahma the Creator and Shiva the Destroyer, and a great range and depth of knowledge.

He represents an adversary who is no ordinary mortal. The battle that Rama faces as he prepares to rescue his consort, Sita, from the Kingdom of Lanka where Ravana holds her captive after abducting her is bound to heighten the anticipation of western audiences that might not know how it is all going to end.

All Indians are familiar with Valmiki's Ramayana. Director and co-scriptwriter Nitesh Tiwari (who has collaborated with Shridhar Raghavan on the screenplay) make it a point to keep the narrative as simple and straightforward as possible.

That creative approach has clearly been dictated by the need not to make it difficult for the global market to warm up to its innate allure as an epic tale about duty, devotion and righteousness severely tested by the pride, arrogance and the craze for power of a man who is near-invincible.

Ramayana – Rise of a Legend is peopled by a multiplicity of characters played by a host of well-known names from the Indian cinema firmament, including Sunny Deol as Hanuman, Rakul Preet Singh as Ravan's sister Shurpanakha, Kajal Agarwal as Ravana's consort Mandodari and Lara Dutta as Rama's stepmother Kaikeyi.

The actor who stamps her presence in every scene that she is in is Sai Pallavi, whose casting as Sita was greeted with a degree of scepticism. She is as luminous in royal finery as she is in the garb of a spartanly attired woman who follows her husband into exile in a forest.

Sai Pallavi demonstrates why she is regarded as one of the most effortlessly competent actresses of her generation. She ensures that her presence is registered in no uncertain terms in a film that is woven essentially two powerful male characters.

Part 2 is in the offing. If Part 1 is anything to go by, there is no reason why the world not be waiting for more with bated breath.





Namit Malhotra, Chairman & Global CEO, DNEG

NAMIT MALHOTRA
INDIA'S GLOBAL IMAGE MAKER

From a Mumbai garage to Hollywood, the DNEG chief has built a career making the improbable visible. His film Ramayana is drawing an enthusiastic response from audiences worldwide. With an international workforce and an expanding technology ecosystem, his ambition is larger: to change what the world sees in India

At the Los Angeles premiere of Ramayana, Namit Malhotra had an admission that cut through the customary confidence of a producer promoting his biggest project: he could scarcely believe the occasion belonged to him. "I still feel like I've just come for somebody else's event," he told MUSE TV on the red carpet.

Inside, he sounded certain. "This is my Oscar moment," he told the audience, recalling the teenager who had started in a Mumbai garage with an Apple computer and three of his teachers. The contrast is the story: an entrepreneur accustomed to delivering other people's impossibilities, suddenly confronting the scale of his own.

Ramayana brings together director Nitesh Tiwari, Ranbir Kapoor as Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita and Yash as Ravana, with Hans Zimmer and A.R. Rahman composing the score. For Namit Malhotra, however, its most consequential transformation may be less visible than anything on screen: the move from helping Hollywood imagine its worlds to asking global audiences to enter an Indian one.

THE APPRENTICESHIP

The garage was real; the absence of a cinematic inheritance was not. His father, Naresh Malhotra, produced Shahenshah, while his grandfather, M.N. Malhotra, was a cinematographer; Namit Malhotra initially wanted to direct. What makes his beginning interesting is not a mythology of starting with nothing, but his decision to approach the family business through a different door.

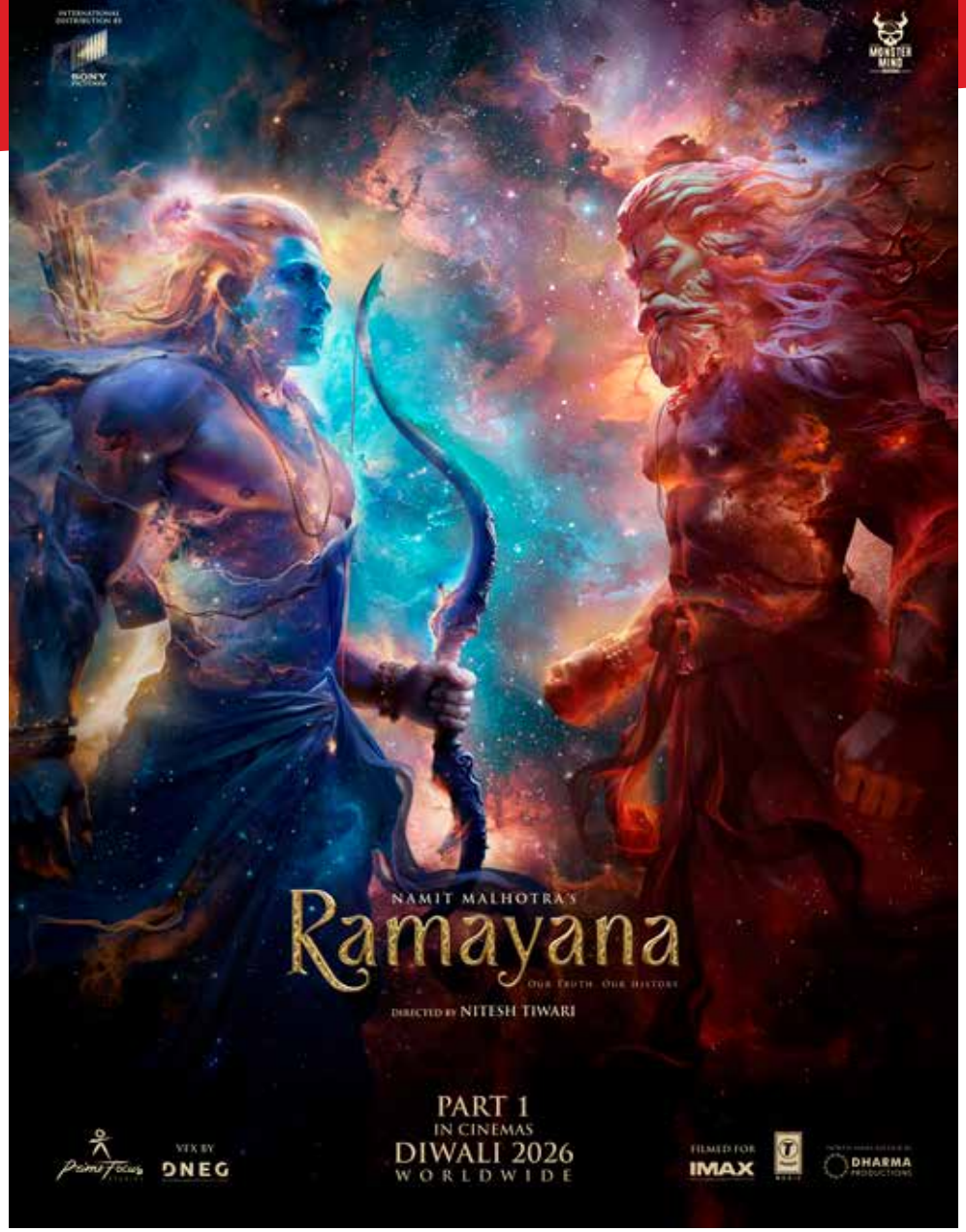
Jurassic Park supplied the revelation: technology could enlarge what storytelling made possible, he recalled. In 1995, he established Video Workshop with an Apple Mac and three people who had taught him computer graphics, working on television programmes, advertisements and music videos. Before the imagined kingdoms came Boogie Woogie and Colgate Top 10.

By his account, within two years the operation had grown from one editing studio to seven, with 15 television shows airing weekly; Prime Focus followed in 1997. The method was incremental rather than prophetic: set an attainable leadership target, reach it, then choose a bigger one. Ambition, in this telling, was something exercised, not announced.

Hollywood tested that discipline. Namit Malhotra arrived in Los Angeles in 2007 and, he told the Ramayana premiere audience, lost 90 per cent of his wealth in the following year's financial crisis.



Namit Malhotra with the cast of Ramayana at the film's Los Angeles premiere



The migration towards opportunity had become an education in exposure.

The deeper obstacle was trust: filmmakers wanted collaborators who understood their intentions, not merely a cheaper production address, he explained. That distinction remains essential to understanding him. The ambition was not simply to make India useful to Hollywood, but to make Indian leadership credible within it.

In 2014, Prime Focus World merged with London's Double Negative, bringing together two histories rather than conjuring a global studio from scratch. Double Negative had already won the visual-effects Oscar for Inception; seven further wins followed, culminating in Dune: Part Two in 2025. These are collective triumphs, built on the contributions of extraordinary creative teams.

Across Interstellar, Ex Machina, Blade Runner 2049, First Man, Tenet and the two Dune films, DNEG's award-winning work spans cosmic spectacle, artificial life and the machinery of human aspiration. For its leader, the accumulated achievement offers something more useful than decoration: a persuasive answer when someone asks whether an Indian epic can command comparable craft.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PICTURES

The image maker's achievement is inseparable from the talents of others. DNEG's workforce comprises thousands of artists, producers, technicians and support staff, with Indian centres including Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru and Mohali connected to an international studio network. The significance for India lies not simply in the jobs, but in the proximity to demanding creative work: the opportunity to develop judgement alongside technical skill.

There is an apprenticeship behind the spectacle, too. DNEG's Greenlight India programme has offered paid training, classroom instruction and expert mentorship, with successful participants considered for junior artist roles. Such pathways matter because a creative industry cannot live indefinitely on the discovery of exceptional individuals. It needs ways to help talent become accomplished, employable and capable of teaching the next generation.

This is the less photogenic part of Namit Malhotra's success story: the construction of an ecosystem in which ambition can become a profession. The garage is an appealing origin; the deeper achievement is making the route beyond it less solitary for others. For India, excellence in making images must become a repeatable capability, not an occasional miracle.

The ecosystem extends from the artist's workstation to the software underneath it. Prime Focus Technologies, founded by Ramki Sankaranarayanan and acquired by DNEG Group in 2024, contributes CLEAR and CLEAR AI, tools for managing media, collaborating on video and automating production and distribution workflows. These are not interchangeable with visual effects; they address the less visible challenge of organising content and moving it through a business.

Brahma AI takes the technology ambition further. Led by founder and chief executive Prabhu Narasimhan, it draws on capabilities developed across DNEG, Metaphysic and Prime Focus Technologies; its Core platform addresses content intelligence and management, while Studio encompasses visual AI, digital humans, voice and multilingual performance. The larger possibility is that experience acquired making films can also produce tools used far beyond them. India need not choose between supplying creative talent and developing creative technology.

There is physical infrastructure alongside the software. Prime Focus Group says its Mumbai production complex already includes eight soundstages, with post-production facilities nearby; its announcement with Maharashtra outlined plans for a further entertainment destination. The direction is clear: connect people, production facilities and proprietary tools so that more of a filmmaker's ambition can be realised within India.

BRINGING THE WORLD HOME

On LinkedIn, Namit Malhotra introduced Ramayana with "Ten years of Aspiration" and "Relentless Conviction", stressing both international collaboration and reverence for the story. The capital letters belong to a promoter; the pairing of reverence and ambition defines the assignment. Familiarity must not become complacency, nor spectacle a substitute for feeling.

At San Diego Comic-Con, he offered a revealing distinction between "fans and the believers". A producer addressing both has a delicate task: the newcomer needs an inviting story, while the devotee brings an intimate relationship with its

A BREAKTHROUGH FOR RAMAYANA COULD MAKE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS MORE RECEPTIVE TO OTHER INDIAN PROJECTS, ENCOURAGING INVESTMENT NOT ONLY IN SPECTACULAR EPICS BUT IN UNFAMILIAR VOICES, GENRES AND IMAGINATIVE TRADITIONS

characters. Neither audience should feel that the other has been purchased at its expense.

His account of recruiting the composers is more disarming. An A.R. Rahman admirer who had become deeply attached to Hans Zimmer's music, Namit Malhotra has said that he approached Hans Zimmer about bringing the two together and was surprised by his enthusiasm. The global dealmaker is still recognisably a film enthusiast assembling his dream collaboration.

At CinemaCon, Namit Malhotra reached for a Hollywood shorthand, describing the film as "Avatar meets Gladiator". It is a salesman's bridge between the known and the unknown, but also a measure of the change he is attempting. The reference points may be American; the imaginative centre is not. He is borrowing the language of the blockbuster without surrendering the provenance of the story.

There is strategy beneath the enthusiasm. Sony Pictures is handling distribution outside India, while Dharma Productions leads distribution in North India's Hindi-speaking markets. This is a potentially pathbreaking arrangement for this particular ambition: international reach built into the release, rather than left as an aspiration attached to a domestic success. Distribution cannot manufacture affection, but it can give unfamiliar audiences a chance to develop it.

By the Los Angeles premiere, he was measuring progress in the city itself. He pointed to Ramayana hoardings across the American metropolis and distinguished a mainstream Western audience from a screening organised principally for Indians abroad. An image maker could hardly choose a more revealing yardstick: not just the pictures inside the cinema, but whose stories occupy the streets outside it.

Namit Malhotra has also described two master versions, including an English version whose script was rewritten rather than simply translated, designed for people encountering Ramayana for the first time. That is an important distinction. Cultural confidence need not mean expecting the visitor to arrive already fluent.

Brahma AI makes that argument tangible. According to Nitesh Tiwari and Namit Malhotra, human artists performed the dubbed voices, while AI-assisted technology adapted the actors' lip movements for the international version. Their account places technology in service of performance, not in its place. The test is whether audiences feel closer to the characters rather than conscious of the machinery.

Yet his most expansive pitch is also perhaps his simplest of all. On the premiere red carpet, he described the epic as a story of "love, sacrifice, family", values he believed could resonate anywhere. That conviction is the human counterweight to the machinery. Technology can make a world convincing; only the people inside it can make an audience care enough to return.

The commercial logic extends beyond one film. Namit Malhotra has linked the move into producing content to the vulnerability exposed by the pandemic and Hollywood strikes: creating projects of his own could help protect the business he had built. Owning more of the opportunity also means carrying more of the risk. A supplier's celebrated craftsmanship does not guarantee a producer's successful wager.

A DOOR, NOT A DESTINATION

This is where the possibility of an Indian "K-pop moment" becomes compelling, provided it is treated as an ambition rather than a prediction. A breakthrough for Ramayana could make international partners more receptive to other Indian projects, encouraging investment not only in spectacular epics but in unfamiliar voices, genres and imaginative traditions.

The real prize would be curiosity that survives the closing credits. An audience drawn towards another Indian film, another musical idiom or another story would represent something more durable than a single opening weekend. For that to happen, a hit would need successors, distribution relationships, patient marketing and room for creative difference. The workforce and tools matter precisely because they could help turn a breakthrough into a continuing supply of accomplished work.

It would also require resisting the temptation to make one sacred epic stand for an entire country. India's next global story need not resemble Ramayana in scale, setting or belief. The most valuable door this film could open is one through which very different storytellers can walk.

For now, the wager remains unresolved, with the first instalment released on November 5, 2026. The achievement already visible is the assembly of the opportunity, not proof of the outcome. Namit Malhotra's success story is more interesting for being unfinished.

Asked whether he still wanted to direct, he offered a different destination: "I think now I could be the best producer in the world." It is the garage instinct, enlarged.

RAJINIKANTH: INDIA'S BOND GOES GLOBAL

RAJINIKANTH'S TIGER BLENDS MENACE, HUMOUR AND FAMILY LOYALTIES, OFFERING GLOBAL AUDIENCES A DISTINCTLY INDIAN ALTERNATIVE TO JAMES BOND'S ENDURING APPEAL. BY DR S RAGHUNATH



Jailer 2 is not a bond film. But it may be the strongest case yet that india already has a franchise hero of its own. Bond carries a licence to kill. Tiger carries a licence to thrill

Dr S. Raghunath
Professor of Strategy
Indian Institute of Management Bangalore

RAJINIKANTH'S TIGER BLENDS MENACE, HUMOUR AND FAMILY LOYALTIES, OFFERING GLOBAL AUDIENCES A DISTINCTLY INDIAN ALTERNATIVE TO JAMES BOND'S ENDURING APPEAL

Rajinikanth is 75 and still one of Indian cinema's most bankable stars. Half a century after his debut, Jailer 2, released on October 15, 2026, offers the latest proof. Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar for Sun Pictures, it follows a 2023 original that grossed more than ₹600 crore worldwide.

As the American Film Market gathers in Los Angeles from November 10 to 15 under the theme "The New Global Screen Economy," buyers should take a closer look. Watch Jailer 2 carefully and a familiar silhouette appears: a calm man in sharp clothes, licensed to do whatever the plot requires. Tiger Muthuvel Pandian may be the closest thing India has to James Bond.

The resemblance starts with temperament. Both men are serene in a crisis and lethal one frame later. Both serve an institution, MI6 for one and the prison service for the other, yet live by a private code. Both know that the walk towards a fight matters as much as the fight itself.

The differences are where the fun lies. Bond never retires; he gets recast. Tiger has retired and spends the film being dragged back by men who never read his file. Bond needs Q's laboratory. Tiger needs sunglasses and a slow turn of the head.

Bond finds a new companion in every port. Tiger has one wife, played by Ramya Krishnan, and she is more frightening than any villain. Bond's martini is shaken, not stirred. Tiger's menace is home-brewed, like filter coffee, and comes from a family man in a plain shirt.

The Bond franchise recasts when its lead turns grey. Rajinikanth, in his seventies, turns his age into a weapon. Bond fights for king and country. Tiger fights for family, haunted by the death of his son, Arjun, and the question of who killed him.

The deepest contrast is the deal with the audience. A Bond film invites you to wonder whether 007 will survive. A Rajinikanth film never pretends there is any doubt. The pleasure lies in watching how the inevitable happens.

Bond's humour is a dry one-liner delivered over a body. Nelson Dilipkumar's is a running conversation, and Jailer 2 has more of it than the original. Critics broadly agree that the sequel is funnier, with jokes that land better and sit more naturally within the story.

The standout is Namo Narayanan as Moorthy, whose delivery, body language and costumes steal scene after scene. Yogi Babu and Suraj Venjaramoodu supply the counterpunches. The pattern is consistent: henchmen and hangers-on talk too much, misread the danger and bicker among themselves, while Tiger says almost nothing. The joke lives in the gap between their chatter and his stillness.

Where Bond's quips release tension, Nelson Dilipkumar's banter builds it, making the eventual explosion feel earned. This dark, deadpan comedy needs no knowledge of Tamil cinema to work, which is exactly why it travels.

On paper, Jailer 2 is an action thriller. In India, it belongs to a more specific genre: the "mass" film, built around a star's entrances, his punchlines and the roar of the crowd. Nelson Dilipkumar laces it with dark comedy and a revenge story rooted in family.

The script balances its cast better than the first film did. Characters get room to breathe, and the plot feels less hastily assembled. Its weakness is familiarity: the film retraces the beats of the original. Where the story should carry the weight, the screenplay leans on cameos.

The film holds several lessons for filmmakers. Pair menace with comedy: noisy supporting characters around a silent lead make the star look bigger. Use an ageing star's age, writing it into the character instead of hiding it. Treat cameos as spice: they thrill for a moment but cannot replace a story. Cut for each market: a 165-minute version plays at home, but international audiences need a tighter edit.

Bond's custodians spend years deciding who the next 007 should be. Rajinikanth has played versions of the same unbeatable man for five decades, and audiences still queue at dawn. For buyers mapping the new global screen economy, the lesson is that star power, banter and spectacle travel together.

Jailer 2 is not a Bond film. But it may be the strongest case yet that India already has a franchise hero of its own. Bond carries a licence to kill. Tiger carries a licence to thrill.

IFFI 2026 OPEN DOORS BEYOND BORDERS

New filmmakers and global storytelling take centre stage as IFFI returns to Goa from November 20 under director Ashutosh Gowariker's leadership

The 57th International Film Festival of India will run through November 20-28 under the theme "Stories Without Borders," bringing together world cinema, Indian discoveries and a renewed emphasis on developing talent. Competitive screenings, Indian Panorama, masterclasses and public events will anchor the nine-day program.

For Ashutosh Gowariker, the ambition extends beyond showing films. He has already outlined a festival that would help newcomers take their work "right from the desk to the market."

His interpretation of the theme reaches beyond national frontiers to social divisions, domestic concerns and women's empowerment. Documentaries and shorts, he said, deserve a stronger place within the festival rather than being treated as peripheral attractions.

"I want to see how we can be more consistent," Ashutosh Gowariker said, reflecting on the gaps between Indian films achieving international recognition. His priorities connect the discovery of new voices with the support needed to sustain their careers.

Indian Panorama will showcase films across languages, regions and formats, with features, nonfeatures, debut work and New Horizons. Its regulations allow up to 26 features and 21 nonfeatures, including eligible National Film Award winners; the limits do not constitute a final selection.

New Horizons emphasizes premieres, giving audiences an early look at Indian films beginning their public journeys. The award for best debut director of an Indian feature carries 500,000 rupees.

The international competition will consider up to 15 features, including up to three Indian entries. The Golden Peacock for best film carries 5.1 million rupees, shared equally between director and producer, with other awards recognizing direction, performances and special artistic achievement.

A separate competition honors the best debut feature by a director. The ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Medal recognizes films reflecting tolerance, intercultural dialogue and peace.

Beyond competition, the program framework includes international festival selections, emerging filmmakers, documentaries, experimental cinema and restored classics. Mission LiFE brings environmental storytelling into the mix, while gala premieres provide a red-carpet showcase.

Streaming will feature through the Best Web Series award, recognizing original Indian-language work released on digital platforms. Its 1 million rupee prize rewards storytelling, artistic merit, technical excellence and overall impact.

Masterclasses, conversations and workshops will give students and aspiring professionals opportunities to examine filmmaking beyond the finished work. Creative Minds of Tomorrow adds a dedicated talent-development platform, complementing the festival's emphasis on mentorship and emerging voices.



The public program includes opening and closing ceremonies and an IFFI Mela featuring cultural events and film-themed exhibitions. Accessibility provisions include sign language interpretation at the ceremonies, audio description for selected films and wheelchair-accessible facilities.

Goa's filmmaking community will also receive attention, with Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announcing recognition for director Aditya Suhas Jambhale. The state's ambitions extend beyond hosting the festival.

"We want Goa to be seen not only as a beautiful destination, but as a place where meaningful stories are created," Pramod Sawant told Pickle in an earlier interview. His comments place local filmmaking alongside Goa's role as an international meeting point.

Founded in 1952 and held in Goa since 2004, IFFI is organized by the National Film Development Corporation under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, with the Goa government and Entertainment Society of Goa. WAVES Film Bazaar will run alongside the festival Nov. 20-24, providing a separate industry marketplace.

WAVES FILM BAZAAR BUILDS CONNECTIONS

WAVES Film Bazaar returns November 20-24 with a new Goa venue, connecting South Asian filmmakers with international partners and buyers.

The market's 20th edition will run through Novemberr 20-24 at Taj Cidade de Horizonte, bringing producers, sales agents and festival programmers together around projects seeking creative and financial partnerships. Held alongside the International Film Festival of India, the five-day event focuses on the business of getting films developed, completed and seen.

Its programs span feature and documentary co-production markets, market screenings, a Viewing Room, a Work-in-Progress Lab, screenwriting and producing labs, and the Knowledge Series. That range gives filmmakers at different stages a reason to attend, whether their projects are still taking shape or ready to seek audiences.

The distinction between the programs matters. The Work-in-Progress Lab is a closed workshop for unfinished films, not a public showcase, while the Viewing Room allows industry participants to discover completed and unfinished work and explore its prospects.

The co-production markets put potential partnerships at the center of the event. Screenwriting and producing labs address development, while screenings and the Viewing Room connect films with professionals involved in their onward journey.

That focus on the work surrounding a film echoes a concern raised by IFFI director Ashutosh Gowariker at Cannes earlier this year. He called for stronger international business expertise around Indian filmmaking, alongside creative ambition.

Artificial intelligence will also be part of the market's offering, with the CinemAI Hackathon listed among its programs. The National Film Development Corporation has advocated responsible adoption, emphasizing intellectual property, artists' rights and the continuing importance of human creativity.

Ashutosh Gowariker has welcomed AI's technical possibilities while drawing a distinction between assistance and authorship. "I'll say best friend," he said of the technology at 2026 Cannes Film Festival , while maintaining that stories should remain the work of human writers and directors.

For visiting professionals, the calendar creates two distinct opportunities: five days of market activity followed by further festival screenings and events through Nov. 28. Planning meetings around the Nov. 20-24 window will be essential for those attending primarily to find partners.

At its new venue, WAVES Film Bazaar's central proposition remains practical: bringing filmmakers and prospective collaborators into the same room.



CINEMA PARTNER

YOUR INDIAN PARTNER BEYOND THE SHOOT

__Platoon One Films__ offers American Film Market delegates an Indian partner for production, festivals and distribution



When an international filmmaker comes to India, the questions are rarely about ambition. They are practical. Who will get the permissions? Who can protect the schedule when it shifts? And once the film is finished, who will help it find a festival, a buyer and an audience?

Shiladitya Bora, founder of Platoon One Films, has answered those questions on more than 20 feature films as producer, executive producer or associate producer. He has also worked on over 120 films as distributor, marketer or consultant.

When the Going Gets Tough:

Bhagwan Bharose is a good place to start, Shiladitya took on two roles at once. He directed and produced this intimate story about belief, innocence and social conditioning, and shot during COVID with masks and safety protocols shaping every day on set. The film premiered at the 25th UK Asian Film Festival, where it won the Flame Award for Best Film. It then reached audiences through theatrical releases in India, North America and the UK, and Channel 4 acquired the UK rights. On digital, it topped the charts on iTunes India, YouTube Movies India and Prime Video India.

Yours Truly began with a story he believed in and a rights negotiation to win. He acquired the adaptation rights from HarperCollins, financed the film in full and produced it in Kolkata. The result was a world premiere at Busan and a sale of all rights to Zee.

Bayaan was the most personal of the three, and it demanded the most. He carried it from the first idea through casting, production and post, then built the festival and sales strategy around it. It premiered in the Discovery section of the 50th Toronto International Film Festival and had its Asian premiere at Busan.

Films that made an impact:

Earlier in his career, as CEO of Drishyam Films, he led the business side of *Masaan*, including financing, festival strategy and rights sales. The film won two prizes in Un Certain Regard at Cannes. He managed *Newton* from script development to delivery, and it became India's official entry to the 90th Academy Awards. *Dhanak* earned a Crystal Bear Special Mention at the Berlinale.

Made to Be Seen:

Selling a film is a craft of its own. *Picasso* became Amazon Prime Video's first direct-to-OTT Marathi release. *Waiting*, with Naseeruddin Shah and Kalki Koechlin, premiered in Dubai with a release strategy built around finance, distribution and positioning.

This side of the work goes back to his years at PVR Cinemas, where he created PVR Director's Rare, which supported the theatrical release of more than 90 feature films. Before that, he founded the Ahmedabad International Film Festival. In 2015, Berlinale Talents selected him from over 2,500 applicants across 117 countries. Through Platoon Distribution, he continues to bring thoughtfully curated cinema to Indian theatres.

What Platoon One can do for you:

Platoon One Films, founded in 2017, is a Mumbai-based independent studio and a turnkey partner for production, marketing, distribution and syndication. Its belief is that quality cinema need not be boring, inaccessible or limited by boundaries.

- **Line production and co-production** - The team turns your vision into a workable plan covering budgets, schedules, locations, crew, logistics, government liaisoning and regulatory clearances. It then carries that plan through on the ground.
- **Festival strategy** - The team builds premiere plans, develops relationships with programmers and finds openings at markets and industry platforms. Films it has worked with have reached the Berlinale, TIFF, Cannes Critics' Week, Karlovy Vary and Tallinn Black Nights.
- **Distribution and sales** -The team identifies each film's strengths and audience, then maps its route to market across theatrical release, digital platforms and international sales.
- **Financing and monetisation** - Shiladitya brings experience in financing structures and long-term monetisation across digital, satellite and international rights.

Your partner from first day to first audience:

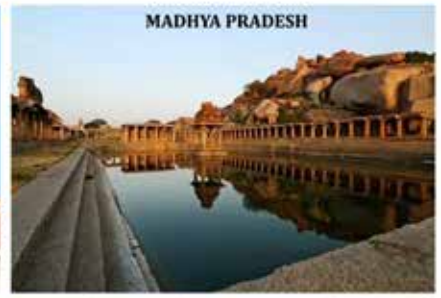
The team that gets you through the shoot is often not the team that helps the film find its audience. Platoon One is built to be both.

(If you are planning a shoot or looking for a co-production partner in India, write to team@platoon.one or visit www.platoon.one.)

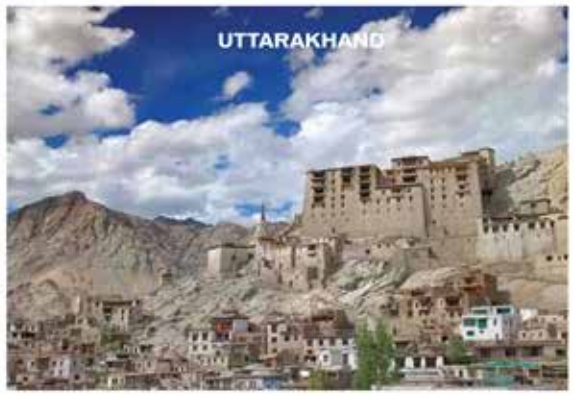
INDIA'S STATES BACK YOUR FILM SHOOT











Indian states offer international filmmakers financial incentives, fee waivers and facilitation support, with distinct eligibility rules, spending thresholds and reimbursement limits

A growing number of states now run their own schemes, and global filmmakers can use these to build a workable incentive plan. A close look at the incentives landscapes of India it can be seen that States such as Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand explicitly offers cash incentives on local spend, along with fee waivers and single-window permissions for shoots. These incentives are reimbursement of the Qualifying production spends and not grants. Each state sets its own eligibility rules, minimum spend thresholds, caps and payout timelines, so a producer can select a state according to the story's locations, budget and schedule rather than depending on one national scheme. Because states compete for productions, they often negotiate on location fees, security, logistics support and access to heritage sites or public infrastructure. This can reduce costs and speed up approvals.

International producers can improve their results by partnering with an experienced Indian line producer or co-producer, who can handle state-specific paperwork, GST and local-spend documentation, and by splitting a shoot across several states to draw on more than one incentive, where the rules allow. Engagement of local Line producer is most often a mandatory requirement of the Sates. Producers should also confirm the current terms with each state's film promotion body before locking in budgets, since schemes, rates and caps change often and are not uniform across states.

Steps for unlocking the Indian Sates Incentives :

Step 1
on board a local line producer / co producer in india

Step 2
Obtain permission for shooting in India through India Cine Hub (https://indiacinehub.gov.in/)

Step 3
Apply for shooting permission and Incentives (pre qualifying) from respective States.

Step 4
Submit relevant documents to State Nodal Agency for incentives disbursal

MADHYA PRADESH

THE CLEAREST HIGH-CAP ROUTE

Madhya Pradesh's Film Tourism Policy 2025 creates a dedicated category for international films. An eligible production can receive the lower of ₹10 crore or 10% of the expenditure it incurs in the state, provided it has Government of India approval, shoots at least 10 days in Madhya Pradesh and secures an international release.

Category	Pays	Main conditions
Film / TV serial/ TV show/ web series or original shows of OTT platform.	Upto 10% of COP or 10 Crore on shooting of international projects	Minimum 10 days shoot in case of International project

The ₹10 crore figure is a ceiling, not a grant. A production would need ₹100 crore of accepted in-state spending to reach it at the 10% rate, which makes the route most relevant to a large feature or series that genuinely bases much of its work in the state. Domestic films follow a separate formula, and the two should not be mixed when modelling an international budget. The policy also advertises a 40% discount at the state tourism corporation's hotels and specified services, which can matter on accommodation-heavy schedules.

The state pairs the cash with process. Applications run through the Film Facilitation Cell of the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, with a single-window online portal and a stated 15-calendar-day target for permissions. Producers should still treat the incentive as reimbursement after the event. Obtain an eligibility letter first, confirm which cost categories are accepted, and model the payment timetable before counting the money as a receivable.

https://www.mptourism.com/

India's States Back Your Film Shoot

GUJARAT

IN DETAIL: 25%, WITH CAPS AND CONDITIONS

Gujarat's Cinematic Tourism Policy, formally the Investment Incentive Scheme for Promotion of Cinematic Tourism 2022-2027, was issued by the state's Industries and Mines Department on 9 September 2022 and runs for 60 months. Its preamble says plainly whom it is for: regional, Bollywood and Hollywood film, television and streaming producers. In September 2026, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel repeated the invitation to "Indian and international" filmmakers at the 72nd National Film Awards, according to a news report.

The headline is simple. This Incentive Scheme is applicable for local, regional, and international films. Film makers/ Production companies across the globe are eligible to apply for this incentive scheme. The film (part/ full) should be shot in Gujarat to claim the incentive under this scheme. Films in any language receive 25% of eligible production cost incurred in Gujarat. The detail lies in the caps and thresholds, which differ by category.

Category	Pays	Cap	Main conditions
Feature film	25% of eligible Gujarat cost	₹1.5 crore (first film), ₹2 crore (second), ₹2.5 crore (third onward), per production house	Budget of at least ₹50 crore; 30 shoot days or ₹1.5 crore of eligible spend; 90+ minutes; release on more than 75 screens
Brand-affiliated film	25%	Same as features	15 shoot days or ₹75 lakh of eligible spend; must promote named Gujarat locations or heritage on screen
Prestigious project (₹100 crore or more)	25%	None stated	First three films each year; 45 shoot days or ₹5 crore; five Gujarat destinations and at least five Gujarat artists; prior committee approval
Web series or TV serial	25%	₹0.75 crore, ₹1 crore, ₹1.5 crore (first, second, third onward)	Budget of at least ₹10 crore; 75 shoot days or ₹3 crore; 150+ minutes; top-five streaming platform or TV; 20 Gujarati artists and crew or 10 Gujarat locations shown
Documentary	25%	₹25 lakh	At least ₹50 lakh of cost; 7 shoot days; 30+ minutes; subject approved in advance

https://gujarattourism.com/

UTTARAKHAND

CLEAREST FOREIGN-LANGUAGE PROVISIONS

Uttarakhand's Film Policy 2024 contains one of the clearest foreign-language provisions in the country. A foreign-language film with more than ₹3 crore of expenditure in the state can receive the lower of 50% of that expenditure or ₹3 crore. It needs Government of India permission and must satisfy technical, banking, audit, credit and release conditions. The release test is the catch: the policy expects a substantial theatrical release outside India together with streaming approval or availability, so the producer carries distribution risk after the shoot.

Category	Pays	Main conditions
Foreign Language Films	50 % of the expenditure incurred in the State or up to Rs. 3 Crores, whichever is less.	Incurred a minimum expenditure of more than Rs 3 Crore in the State. Films Eligible for the grant are solely those films, that have been exhibited in more than of 50 cinema screens in their home country and/or in other countries, in addition to having been streamed on relevant over-the-top (OTT) platforms within their region. Accordingly, the amount of the grant will be determined. 90% of total expense must be paid through bank, cheque, online medium, internet banking, UPI, digital mediums, etc.

India's States Back Your Film Shoot

DELHI

WHERE POINTS MATTERS

The Delhi Film Policy 2022 covers national and international productions through a points system. A foreign production needs at least 20 points and can receive 10% to 25% of eligible below-the-line cost in Delhi, with an overall ceiling of ₹3 crore. The operational guidelines then bar any production that receives central or state monetary assistance for the same film.

https://delhitourism.gov.in/

STATES COMPETE FOR PRODUCTIONS, SO A PRODUCER CAN SELECT A STATE ACCORDING TO THE STORY'S LOCATIONS, BUDGET AND SCHEDULE

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

STACKING OF INCENTIVES NOT ALLOWED

The Jammu and Kashmir Film Policy 2024 offers a non-local feature the lower of 5% of cost or ₹1 crore, subject to a ₹10 crore minimum cost, at least 20 shoot days, release evidence and at least 10 local artists. Foreign projects need central permission, and like Delhi the policy excludes any production that receives other government funding for the same film.

https://film.jk.gov.in/

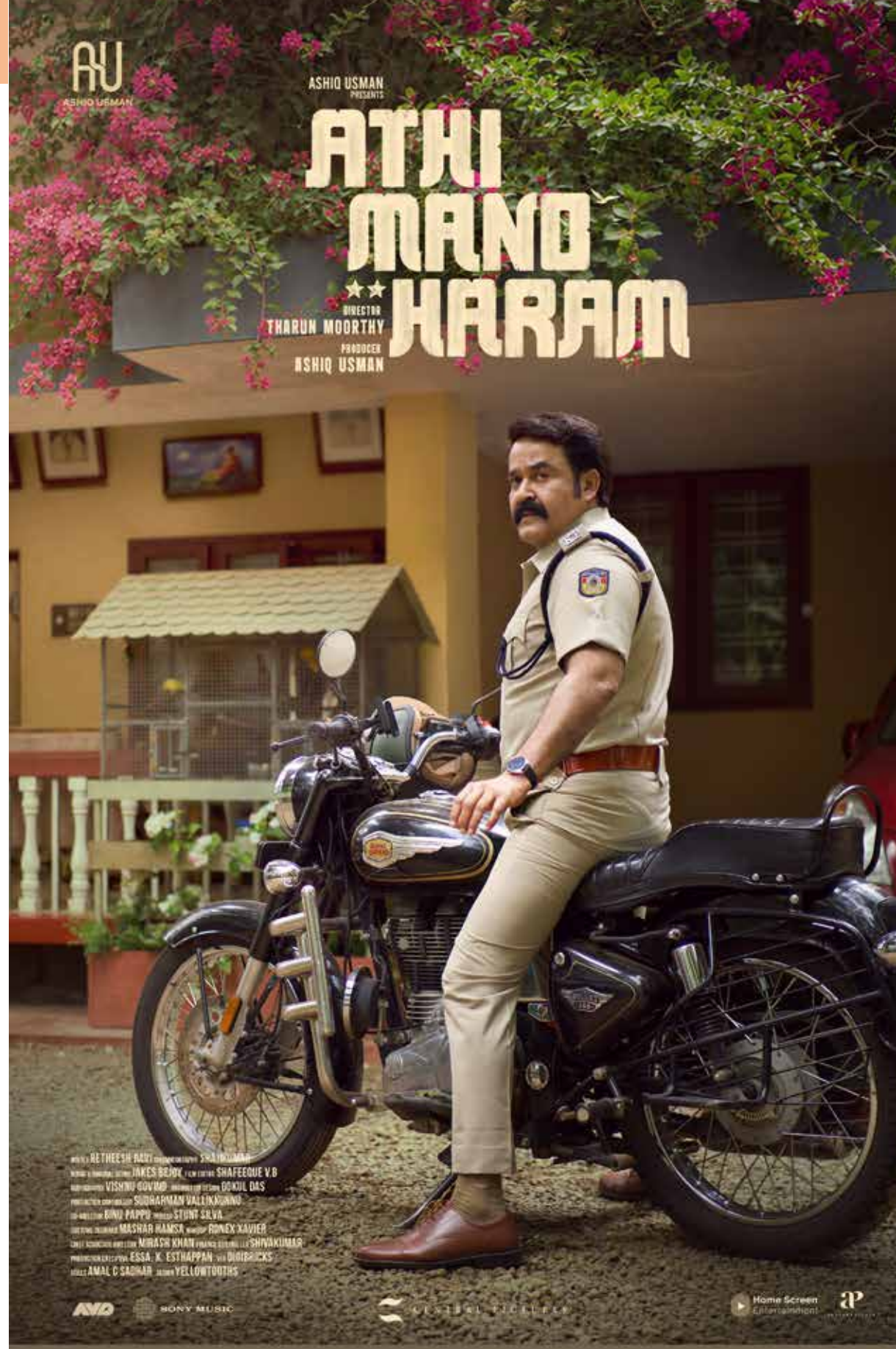
THE FINER POINTS TO REMEMBER

Treat every figure here as a starting point for a conversation with the issuing body, not as a budget line.

Policies expire or change. It is imperative that you find the right policy to refer to. Talk to the State Officials to understand the rules of procedure completely before finalising your location.

Stacking incentives is not guaranteed : States such as Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir expressly bar combining with other public money. Read the guidelines thoroughly.

Release is part of the deal of several State incentives. Several schemes pay only after a qualifying release both national and international.





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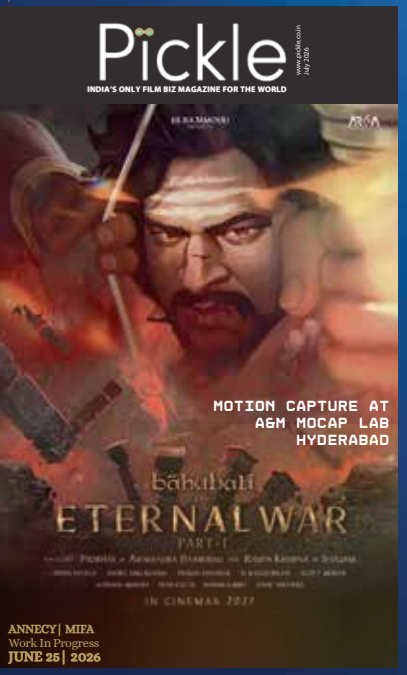
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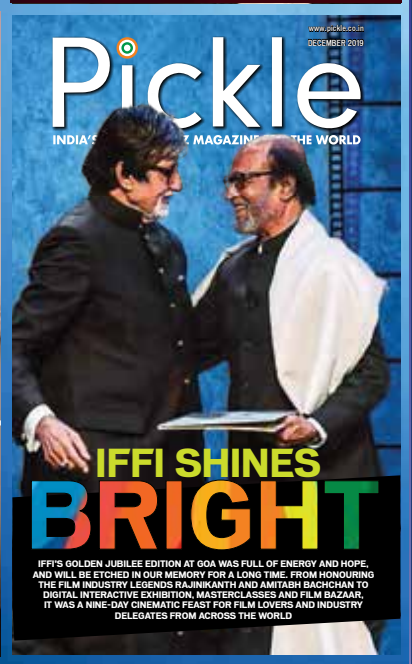














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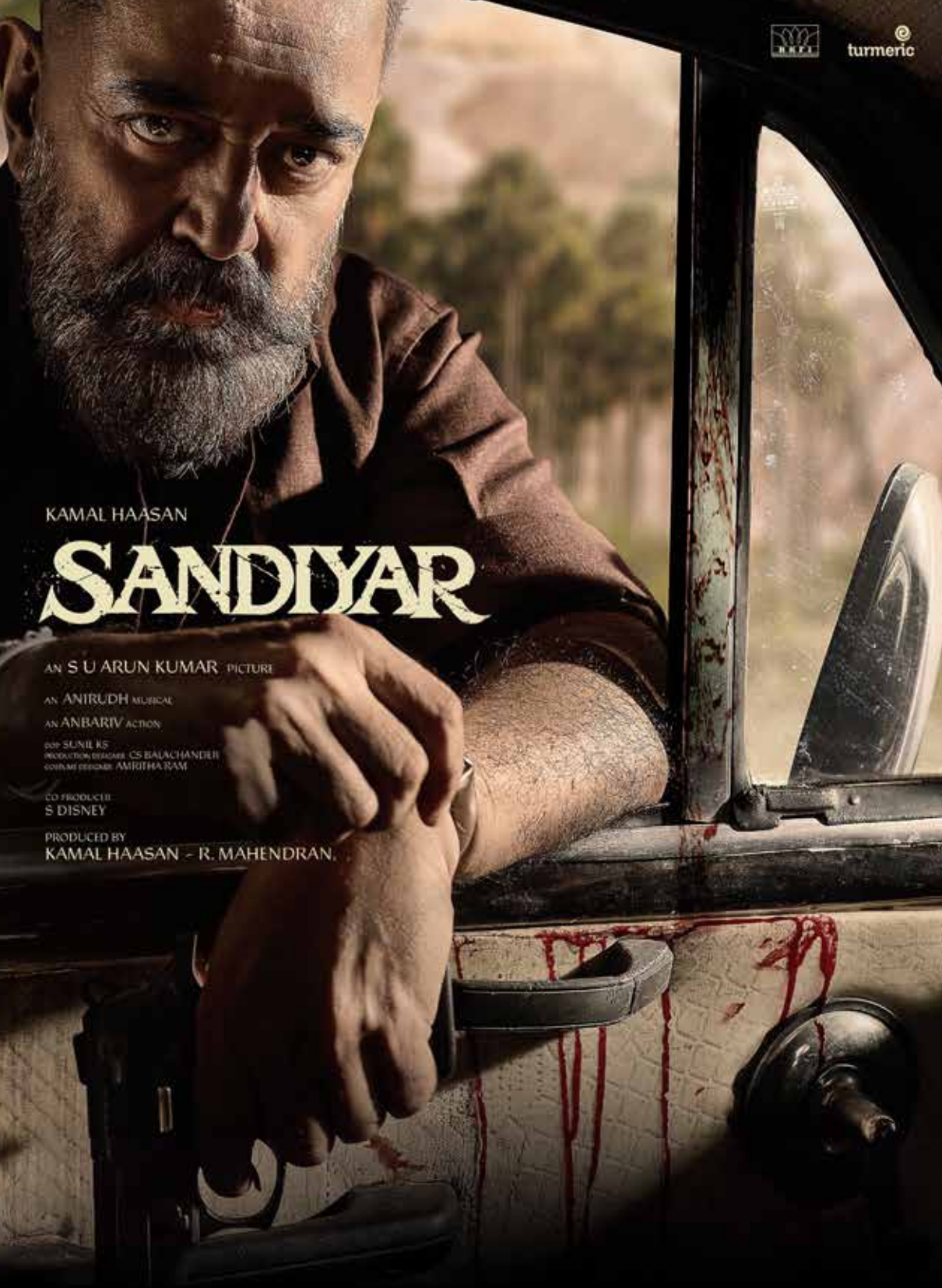
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