

Tamil Haasan

Vanakkam.

I am honoured to share this stage with **our Hon. Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu , Thiru Udhayanidhi Stalin and Hon. Minister Thiru MP Saminathan; and Shri Kevin Vaz, CEO - Entertainment, JioStar; Thiru Krishnan Kutty, Head - Entertainment, South, JioStar; Thiru Sushant Sreeram, Head - Marketing & SVOD, JioStar; Thiru R Balachandran, Executive Vice-President, JioStar Tamil;** My greetings as well to distinguished members of the industry, and to my friends **Mohanlal and Nagarjuna, Vijay Sethupati.**

We are gathered at a moment when India's Media & Entertainment sector is not merely growing – it is transforming. For the first time, this shift is not driven by a device or a format, but by the audience itself.

Today, stories are truly screen-agnostic. They travel with the viewer. **The audience has become the platform.** And when that happens, the relationship between the medium and the message changes forever. **Stories do not belong to any screen; they always travel with the listener and belong to people.** Screens simply follow them.

It is this tectonic shift that makes JioHotstar's initiative so consequential for Tamil Nadu – not only for its ambition, but for the architecture of opportunity it unlocks. In this new world, every Tamil creator, producer, and storyteller can reach every Indian, on every screen, every day.

Today, regional is becoming the new national, and ethnic the new international. Stories born in Madurai, Malappuram, Mandya or Machilipatnam are no longer “regional cinema” – **they are national cultural events.**

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A film rooted in coastal Karnataka's folklore like *Kantara* can electrify the whole country;

A Malayalam mystery like *Drishyam*, where an ordinary man outwits extraordinary power, crosses borders effortlessly;

A Telugu saga like *Baahubali* or *Pushpa* becomes everyday vocabulary from Mumbai to Malaysia;

And from Tamil Nadu, the relentless manhunt of *Vikram* or the tender courage of *Amaran* show that what truly travels is not budget, but sincerity – stories that are rooted, yet resonant.

These successes affirm a simple truth: **authenticity is a currency that can never be demonetised.**

Tamil Nadu has lived this truth for centuries – through the continuum of **iyal, isai, nadagam, and koothambalams of Cheranadu**, where literature, music, and theatre merge into a single cultural heartbeat. Today's creators may use new tools, but the instinct remains the same: to be rooted and to be bold in telling your story.

And this is not just an Indian phenomenon. **A Korean series in a regional dialect spoken by 80 million people like *Squid Game* reached billions around the world. Southern Indian languages speak to an audience of more than 275 million – the potential is exponentially larger.**

But storytelling cannot thrive on talent alone. Creative economies flourish only when their ecosystems grow together

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— creators, technicians, platforms, and policymakers moving in alignment.

That is why leadership matters. **Shri Kevin Vaz** has given *South Unbound* its clarity of purpose — treating the South not as a market, but as a creative centre of gravity. **Thiru Sushant Sreeram** and **Thiru Krishnan Kutty** have helped ground that vision in a platform strategy that expands genuine opportunities for regional creators.

On the policy side, our Hon. Deputy Chief Minister **Thiru Udhayanidhi Stalin**, guided by the vision of our Hon. Chief Minister **Thiru MK Stalin**, has championed talent development, training, and long-term creative infrastructure — giving this sector a shared future to work toward.

Under this leadership, the South Unbound Letter of Intent signed today between the Government of Tamil Nadu and JioStar is not a slogan but a ₹12,000-crore commitment to southern storytelling — with over ₹4,000 crore earmarked for Tamil Nadu alone over the next five years.

And as we build this future, I humbly urge Jio to partner in **pioneering media-studies programmes across colleges all over India**. If we can seed structured training in writing, cinematography, sound, editing, animation, and VFX, we will create not just content — but careers. Our youth deserve pathways that match their talents which need upgrading every five years — skill development in action truly!

So, ladies and gentleman Where does India's Media & Entertainment sector stand today?

- A young audience with limitless appetite;
- A digital universe expanding at historic pace;
- A regional movement shaping national taste;

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- A state like Tamil Nadu committed to leading and nurturing talent pipelines;
- And a global market looking to India for its next wave of ideas.

There has never been a better time to be a storyteller. And if we do not seize this moment, we may never see another like it.

So let us commit – boldly – to taking the Indian Media & Entertainment sector toward a \$100-billion future, and in doing so, strengthen Tamil Nadu's journey toward becoming a \$1-trillion economy. I've dreamt of it now is the time we enact it!

To every creator, producer, and young dreamer here today, I want to say this: **The barriers are gone. The tools are in your hands. Permission is irrelevant. Courage is the differentiator.**

Let Tamil Nadu lead with creative courage – bringing together language, sound, and performance into stories that stand tall on the world stage.

Let us build an industry where collaboration replaces fear, experimentation replaces formula, and imagination replaces limitation.

**The world is watching.
The platform is ready.
The audience is waiting.**

Let us create – boldly, honestly, fearlessly – for Tamil Nadu, for India, and for the world.

Thank you.

