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ACTOR SAMANTHA CONTINUES TO RULE TOLLYWOOD, NOW IN THE ROLE OF A PRODUCER, AS A GLEEFUL RISK TAKER AND AS AN ACTOR WITH AGENCY AND SPUNK. We chart out her journey from *Ye Maya Chesave* to *Subham* and what makes her 15-year journey remarkable



IN OUR NEW COLUMN COCKTAIL CONFIDENTIAL, PARTY ENTHUSIAST DEEPTI ALAPATI SPILLS THE SECRETS OF THE CITY'S VIBRANT PUB-HOPPING SCENE.

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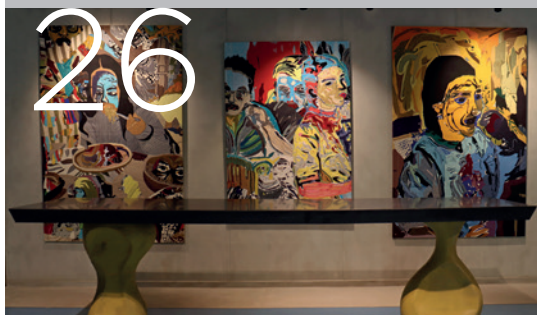
WE CHECKED OUT THE BEST CAFÉS AND DINERS TO VISIT THIS MONTH.

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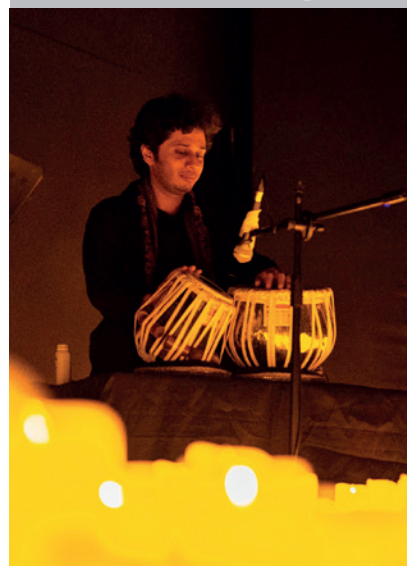
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this month

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Our guide to the exciting happenings in town



MULTILINGUAL THEATER FESTIVAL JUNE 6 TO 8

Shudrka Hyderabad Shilpi Tirtha Trust in association with the Department of Language & Culture, Govt. of Telangana is all set to hold a three-day **Multilingual National Theater Festival** that aims to provide a platform for lesser-known theater artists and groups from different corners of the country.

The festival includes exciting performances, seminars, and talks on three stalwarts: Badal Sircar, legendary dramatist, theater director and the proponent of Third Theater; Ritwik Ghatak, film director, screenwriter, actor and playwright; and Salil Chowdhury, music director, songwriter, lyricist, writer and poet.

The plays to look forward to at the 2025 theater festival include:

MATIR JONNYO (BENGALI) JUNE 6

This stirring Bengali play draws its inspiration from Rabindranath Tagore's poignant narrative *Dui Bigha Jomi*. Set against the rustic backdrop of Bengal, it is an evocative portrayal of a peasant's unbreakable bond with his land.

Directed by: Gautum Dashundi
Timings: 7 pm onwards

DORA (TELUGU) JUNE 6

The Telugu play *Dora* is a bold work of art that reimagines the classic figure of Don Quixote through the vibrant and deeply rooted tradition of Oggu Katha from Telangana. The timeless adventures of Cervantes' errant knight are reinterpreted

through the performative grammar of Oggu Katha — a tradition where storytelling, music, song, and ritual intertwine to celebrate mythic journeys and heroic quests.

Directed by: Swapan Mondal
Timings: 5 pm onwards

Venue: Ravindra Bharathi, Lakdikapul
Tel: 93910 46533, 98858 39098, 96184 93835
Booking: apnatickets.com

GATTAR (MARATHI) JUNE 8

This powerful Marathi play delves into the lives of Dalit sanitation workers, laying bare the brutal realities of caste-based discrimination and systemic exploitation.

Written & directed by: Virendra Ganvir
Timings: 7:45 pm onwards



OGGU KATHA JUNE 1

YK Antiques Home Museum presents the captivating folk-art form of Telangana, Oggu Katha — a powerful blend of storytelling and song, where ballads praising Hindu gods and goddesses are brought to life by devoted performers.

Venue: YK Antiques Home Museum, Lothkunta, Alwal

Tel: 99081 73637

Timings: 7 pm to 9 pm

Entry Fee: Rs 500 onwards



NISHANT TANWAR LIVE JUNE 13

Delhi-based comedian Nishant Tanwar is known for his unique, universal style of storytelling and humor that has made him a force to reckon with in the world of comedy. Touring and performing to packed houses across 14 countries, including the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Netherlands and more, Nishant now heads to the city of pearls to showcase his comedic chops.

Venue: The Comedy Theater, Gachibowli

Timings: 7:30 pm onwards

Ticket: Rs 499 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)



A SWIFTIES PARTY

JUNE 21

Get ready for a Cruel Summer party perfect for all the Swifties who would like to belt out Taylor Swift songs together. Bring your friendship bracelets and paper rings, put on your favorite outfit or one that echoes the hues of a TS era, and party away to smashing tracks with your besties.

Venue: Hard Rock Café, HITEC City
Timings: 4 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 699 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)

PERFORMING LIVE

JUNE 28

The trailblazing Kerala-based band Thaikkudam Bridge that redefines music with their genre-bending fusion of traditional and contemporary sounds is performing live in Hyderabad this month. Look forward to hits like *Fish Rock* and *Aarachar* that showcase their unique style, blending Malayalam folk, rock, and electronic elements.

Venue: Odeum by Prism, Financial District
Timings: 8 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 599 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)



TAKING THE STAGE

JUNE 1

Experience an unforgettable electrifying night of music and entertainment as Telugu musical sensation Band Capricio delivers their signature high-energy performances with a mix of popular hits and soulful melodies.

Venue: Urban Mayabazar - Family Bar and Kitchen, L.B. Nagar
Timings: 8 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 399 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)



LOCAL MEETS VOCAL

JUNE 7

Promising an ambience charged with energy and creativity, the event Lokovoko is ready to set the stage on fire with the raw energy of Rahul Sipligunj's signature style, the mesmerizing and soulful vocals of Chinmayi, and the electrifying, heart-pounding mixes of DJ Olly Esse.

Venue: Boulder Hills, Gachibowli
Timings: 7 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 1,299 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)

SOLO COMEDY ACT

JUNE 21

Comedian Anshu Mor brings to the city his brand-new stand-up comedy solo show, *Spoiler Alert!* in which he explores the ups and downs of fatherhood, reveals the absurdity of chasing dreams, and confronts his inner demons about friendships, mental health, and jokes that did not quite land.

Venue: The Comedy Theater, Gachibowli
Timings: 8 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 499 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)



SIT DOWN WITH STAND-UP COMEDIAN, ASHISH

JUNE 22

Sit Down Ashish is a stand-up comedy special featuring actor/comedian Ashish Vidarthi. The special is a tongue-in-cheek take on his life from Delhi to Mumbai – a journey over the last 30 years working in more than 300 films across 11 languages.

Venue: Aaromale – Café and Creative Community, Film Nagar
Timings: 8 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 499 onwards (bookmyshow.com)

If you'd like your event listed in the WOW! events' calendar, please mail it to wowhyderabad2023@gmail.com for the following month, before the 20th.



START-UP

MyAmericanDoctor, a Hyderabad-based initiative, offers expert second opinions and personalized concierge clinical services to Indian patients from certified American doctors

US Doctors on Call

Your next medical opinion might just come from Manhattan – via Manikonda. In an era where WhatsApp forwards often pass as health advice, and Google is the first doctor most of us consult, Hyderabad's latest start-up, **MyAmericanDoctor** is offering a smarter alternative: (almost) real-time medical second opinions from certified U.S.-based physicians, all through your smartphone.

The telemedicine platform has over 40 certified specialists from top American hospitals on board. They enable personalized care and trustworthy advice for Indian patients facing complex health issues. The platform has handled approximately 100 patients since its launch last year.

BRIDGING THE GAP

"The platform provides quick access to top-tier American medical insights at a fraction of the cost of international travel – all while coordinating with their existing medical team in India," explains Dr Deepak Thomas, cardiologist, co-founder and CEO. With alarming statistics like 44 percent of cancers being misdiagnosed and nearly a third of patients unsure about their treatment options, this platform addresses a critical need for informed decision-making, he adds. As Indian doctors juggle relentless

queues and packed schedules, and appointments often limited to just 20 minutes per patient, more and more people are turning to practitioners who can offer them a patient ear and more dedicated time on platforms such as MyAmericanDoctor.

THE FOUNDERS

The leadership team includes Dr Deepak Thomas, a seasoned cardiologist; Dr Vipul Pareek, a specialist in hematology and oncology; Dr Hrishikesh Ghanekar, an expert nephrologist and Dr Rajan Garg, a critical care specialist. There is a four-step process: schedule an appointment, undergo a live intake by one of their India based doctors and medical record upload, consult virtually with a U.S. specialist, and receive a detailed medical opinion – typically within 72 hours.

WHAT'S ON OFFER

"Over a million Indians travel abroad every year for treatment. Whether it's for rare diseases, privacy concerns, or the perception of better care, the demand for international medical opinions is real," says Dr Thomas. From neonatology to critical care and addiction medicine, they offer second opinions on an array of medical issues.



DR DEEPAK THOMAS

SEED FUNDING AND FUTURE INVESTMENTS

The founders invested half a million USD (Rs 4.2 crore) into the start-up (towards infrastructure development, technology integration, marketing and compliance systems) and future plans include launching Concierge Medicine, a premium healthcare model offering personalized, direct-access medical care, tailored to meet the needs of HNIs, NRIs, and globally connected families in collaboration with India based doctors. The platform also runs a "Ask My Doctor" series – live sessions on YouTube where their American specialists address real-time health-related questions from viewers free of charge. ■ MANJU

Medical Second Opinion Fees: For \$149 (Rs 12,728), patients get a live intake session, full medical record collection, a dedicated U.S. physician, a detailed written report, and a virtual consultation – all streamlined via the platform

Concierge Clinic: For \$100 per month for an individual and \$50 per month for their spouse, patients receive on-demand access to India-based doctors who collaborate with US-based doctors, providing medical care that meets American standards.

Tel: 99149 41494

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SPORTS

Meet eight-year-old **Shiv Tummala** who is racing toward a national title – and maybe a global one – in the go-karting circuit

CATCH HIM IF YOU KART

On school days in Hyderabad, Shiv Tummala is a playful third grader. But on race days in Bengaluru, suited up in his pro racing gear, the eight-year-old transforms into a rising go-karting star – already making waves since his debut last year.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

With no go-karting tracks in Hyderabad yet, Shiv has been flying to Bengaluru, Chennai, or Coimbatore twice a month for the past 18 months to train under Ameya Walavalkar, India's first go-karting coach. "It'll get easier once the Hyderabad track opens later this year," says his father, Sreeram Tummala.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

"During the COVID lockdown, I bought Gran Turismo, a realistic racing simulator for PlayStation, just to keep myself engaged. My son Shiv (who was just three years old then) started playing on it too. He would spend about an hour a day on the simulator. One of my cousins, who's into racing, noticed Shiv's natural talent. That's when I thought of nurturing his talent. He was already winning online gaming tournaments, so I wanted to see how he would progress when we put him in a real-life racing set-up." Shiv came fourth in Dubai in the 5 to 8-year-old category last year at the Bambino UAE Cup. That was his international debut and things fell into place from there," shares Sreeram.

THE GO-KARTING JOURNEY

This April, Shiv delivered an impressive performance at the MECO Meritus Cup opening round in Bengaluru. Competing in the Micro Max category for Team Peregrine Racing, he secured first place in the qualifying Sprint Race 1, and Sprint Race 2 and claimed maximum championship points. Named Best Rookie of the Year, Shiv's composed yet aggressive driving style drew praise from spectators and competitors alike as he topped the podium in both sprint races with a clear margin.

MAKING OF A GO-KARTING CHAMPION

Becoming a go-karting racer demands serious commitment – physically, mentally, and financially. It starts with buying a personal kart that costs around



Rs 4 lakh, safety gear worth Rs 1.5 lakh, and daily sessions priced at Rs 15,000, not including a coach, a mechanic, fuel, and a sports psychologist to ensure balance and focus. "Karting is no easy sport. While many imagine it as child's play, it's the launchpad for nearly every professional racing driver. It teaches critical race craft, strategic driving and high-speed control. Unlike casual four-stroke recreational karts, professional two-stroke racing karts reach turning speeds of up to 100 km/h, demanding tremendous physical strength, reflexes, and stamina – even from kids as young as Shiv," adds Sreeram.

UP NEXT

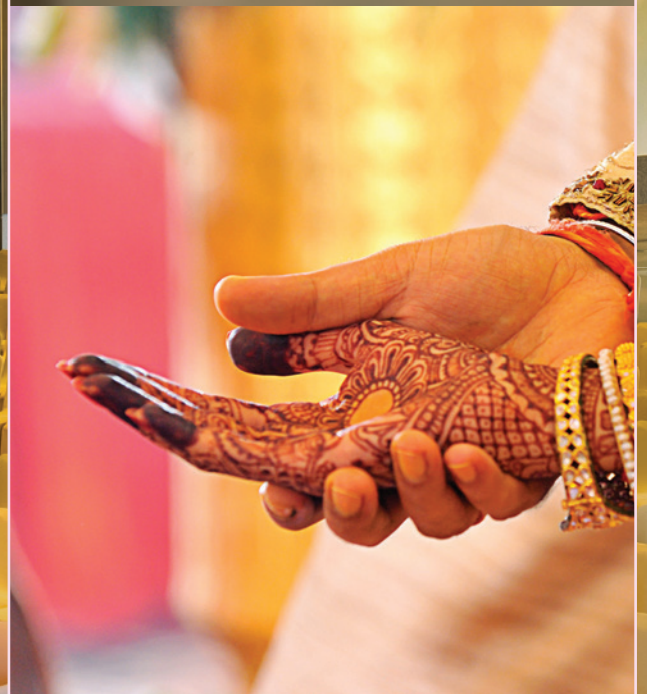
He's currently preparing for two rounds of the Meritus and National competitions this year. If he wins, he gets to represent India in the internationals in 2025 in Bahrain. Shiv is also training to participate in the Rotax Karting to be held in Malaga, Spain, this November. Eventually, he dreams of being a Formula car champion when he grows up. Here's wishing him the best. ■ MANJU





You celebrate. We orchestrate.

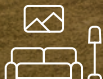
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CAUSE

With help from its key initiatives, this non-profit envisions better access to healthcare for everyone

Kneed of the Hour



Established by one of Asia's most prominent knee replacement surgeons, Dr A V Gurava Reddy, Hyderabad-based **Sarvejana Foundation** is a non-profit organization born with a vision to foster a healthier, safer, and more inclusive society. The foundation works to ensure access to healthcare, dignity, and safety for all, irrespective of their economic background.

MEANINGFUL BEGINNING

Sarvejana was founded in 2021 after Dr Reddy, having led Sunshine Hospitals for over a decade, felt he needed to further contribute to society in a more meaningful way. The Foundation was created with the aim of making a lasting difference in as many lives as possible with help from its key initiatives: HAPPYKNEES, SHARE, and STOP.

KEY INITIATIVES

HAPPYKNEES: Targeting primary breadwinners of the family in particular, HAPPYKNEES intends to help restore mobility, dignity, and livelihood through knee replacement surgeries for those who are economically disadvantaged and would otherwise live in pain and limited mobility.

SHARE: Short for Sarvejana Hip Academy for Research and Education, SHARE is a vertical dedicated to improving hip academics and research in India. With the primary objective to advance the art of science and hip surgeries, SHARE aims to train the next generation of orthopaedic surgeons, especially from Tier 2 cities.

STOP: The Foundation reveals that one valuable life is lost every four minutes on Indian roads. Leading causes being over-speeding, non-usage of helmets and seatbelts, overloading, distracted driving, and driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

STOP – Society to Prevent Accidents – aims to curb these life-altering situations with a focus on MoRTH-promoted (the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways) four essentials of road safety – Education, Enforcement, Engineering, and Emergency Care. In collaboration with prominent institutions and organizations across the country, Sarvejana aims to reduce accidents by five percent over the next 10 years through their road safety awareness program.



Dr A V Gurava Reddy

The Foundation – funded through ISR, CSR and donations – has also launched a STOP Road Accidents mobile app to actively engage students, young citizens, and the wider community in a dynamic learning of road safety. “We strive to reduce the number of road traffic accidents through awareness campaigns, education, and community outreach programs,” shares Dr B. Janardhan Reddy, IAS (Retd.), CEO.

ACHIEVEMENTS THUS FAR

- Approximately 120 free knee and hip joint replacements completed for economically disadvantaged individuals.
- Over 4,000 total patients screened through medical camps.
- 3,80,250 plus students reached through road safety awareness programs.
- More than 45 medical camps conducted in urban slums and rural areas.
- Over 62 first responder workshops conducted, training over 4,200 participants including police and disaster response teams.
- More than 1,100 road safety workshops conducted across schools.
- STOP Road Accidents mobile app launched to create mass awareness digitally.
- Wipro Junction in Hyderabad transformed into a pedestrian-friendly zone as part of infrastructure safety initiatives.
- Five villages adopted under community healthcare.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Volunteer
- Donate
- Spread the word ■ IPSHITA

Tel: 93976 12540

Website: www.sarvejanafoundation.org



3RD JULY

(10AM TO 8PM)

AT TAJ KRISHNA

SEASON 41

Festive Edit

Citizens urge peace, and fear the hidden costs of war

Hyderabad Speaks: War or Wisdom?

As tensions between India and Pakistan continue to ebb and flow with each diplomatic and military move, WOW! hits the streets of Hyderabad to gauge public sentiment. Are citizens fearful or hopeful? Do they feel secure, or are growing war clouds casting a shadow over their daily lives? Here are some voices.



I WANT TO INHERIT PEACE

As a young Indian, I feel torn. On one hand, I understand the need to protect our nation's sovereignty, but on the other, the idea of war feels like a step back. We are a generation trying to build bridges through culture, tech, and education, not destroy them with missiles. War doesn't just impact borders, it changes lives, economies, and futures. I wish our leaders would exhaust every possible diplomatic route before pushing us into conflict. I don't want to inherit hate. I want to inherit peace.

– Aarav Chandra, 20, student at St. Mary's College

PEACE LEADS TO PROSPERITY

The ripple effects of conflict are far-reaching: investor confidence drops, trade suffers, and economic progress stalls. As someone who's built enterprises that employ thousands, I worry about the future of our youth if we head down a path of destruction. India and Pakistan share more than borders – we share history, culture, and potential. I urge both governments to pursue dialogue with wisdom. Peace is the only sustainable path to prosperity.

– Hima Bindu Rao, 58, Chairman, RGI Enterprises Ltd



DIPLOMACY IS NOT WEAKNESS, IT'S WISDOM

I was a young man in my 20s during the 1971 war, and I still remember the sirens, the blackouts, and the silent prayers of mothers. War may bring headlines, but it leaves behind broken homes and scarred generations. We must not repeat history. Diplomacy is not weakness – it's wisdom. I believe dialogue, cultural exchange, and economic partnerships can do far more to secure our borders than bullets ever will. Let the younger generation not inherit our mistakes. Peace isn't just the absence of war – it's the presence of understanding. And that's what our leaders need to build, brick by brick, not bunkers.

– VSN Murthy, 79, Retired banker

WAR SHIFTS FOCUS TO SURVIVAL

As a start-up founder in Hyderabad, the escalating India-Pakistan tensions worry me. We thrive in an ecosystem built on collaboration, innovation and global connectivity. Any threat of war disrupts investor confidence, halts cross-border partnerships, and shifts the national focus away from growth to survival. My team includes young minds from across the country who dream big – but uncertainty crushes creativity. We've already seen delays in funding and hesitations in expansion talks. While national security is critical, so is economic stability. I hope diplomacy wins, because a stable, peaceful environment is what truly fuels the future we're all working so hard to build.

– Priyamvada Reddy, 36, Entrepreneur





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“Initially, I thought I'd direct. But once I faced the camera, I knew acting was where I belonged”

Meet actor **Surya Srinivas**, who shone in the role of ASP Ravi in *HIT 3* and is turning early struggles into a serious screen presence – one role at a time

‘Films are a calling, not just a career’

If passion had a bright, expressive and handsome face, it would be that of the upcoming actor Surya Srinivas. He has been nurturing his dream to be an actor ever since he was a teenager. While it took him a few years to get his share of recognition, watching himself on the screen – in the role of ASP Ravi in the Nani-starrer *HIT 3* – onscreen at Bhramaramba theater in Kukatpally was surreal. “I saw a theater full of people enjoying the movie in rapt attention. The laughter and the cheer that I got for my role are the biggest high so far,” says Srinivas.

The movie is extra special to him as the young actor is an ardent fan of Nani and to be able to co-star with him was a milestone, he shares. “Like Nani, I also started as an Assistant Director and I am an introvert like him. But now, I want to lead films. I believe that moment is near,” he adds.

Born and brought up in Andhra Pradesh, the actor eventually made Hyderabad home. A post-graduate with no formal film school training, his journey began with an ad film alongside Suhasini Mani Ratnam which came along by chance. That single gig became the stepping stone to a steady rise in the industry. **WOW!** talks to him to know more.

EARLY STRUGGLES, SMALL WINS

Surya played lead roles in films like *Karam Dosa*, *Nenosta*, *Parigetthu Parigetthu*, and *Ne Valle Nenunna*. However, it was his role as Tilak in Aha’s thriller *Kudi Yedamaithe*, directed by U-Turn’s Pawan Kumar, which brought him into the OTT limelight. In 2023, he played Sai Dharam Tej’s brother in *BRO*, starring Pawan Kalyan and directed by Samuthirakani. Most recently, he impressed as ASP Ravi in *HIT 3* (2025) – a part that made filmmakers and fans sit up and take notice.

ACTING WITHOUT A MAP

Surya never attended film school but gained industry experience assisting on TV shows and collaborating on scripts. A transformative 10-day acting workshop with Adishakti theater in Pondicherry changed his approach to performance. “It’s about breath, beat and emotion. I recommend it for actors and anyone looking for inner clarity.”



A CALLING, NOT A CAREER

His NCC years, especially as cadet captain, helped him shed his introverted shell and instilled leadership and confidence. “That’s where the dream took shape,” he says. “Initially, I thought I’d direct. But once I faced the camera, I knew acting was where I belonged.” There was no lightning-bolt moment. But growing up, he was often called ‘hero’ or ‘Maddy’ – and comparisons to actors like Uday Kiran instilled the desire to act – thanks to his conventionally good looks. “I wasn’t a big movie buff. But I felt the pull, even then.” And now, one film at a time, he’s answering that call.

NEW CHAPTERS

With lead roles in *3 Roses* Season 2 (Aha), *China Piece*, *Zamana*, and an untitled UK-based project, Surya is steadily carving a niche for himself. A completed sci-fi project also awaits release.

ULTIMATE GOAL

“Like Nani *anna*, I also want to entertain and inspire the audience through my work,” he says. And by the looks of it, his dream is already turning into reality. ■ MANJU



WOW!
Recommends
 Milo Apricot
 Toast

Coffee Sangam, from the House of Spicy Venue, brings quirky fusions to the city's café topography

Nostalgia gets an Upgrade

Skip the usual pizzas, burgers, and pastas for **Coffee Sangam**, as this is where the real excitement is. This newly opened café is a bold culinary experiment by Sampath Tummala of Spicy Venue fame and Chef Vignesh. It's a stylish love letter to Telugu flavors, presented with a modern, global twist. Think classics, and reimagined hits, and wildcards that will totally surprise you.

SEPIA SPECIALS

The ambience? Retro and heartwarming. With sepia tones ruling the roost, it evokes the charm of faded postcards and good ol' 90s nostalgia. We kicked things off with Peri Peri Punugulu and chutney followed by Vankaya Bajji with Perugu Talimpu (brinjal fritters served with a curd tadka). Both were not only flavor bombs but also absolute eye-candy – so Instaworthy.

BOBA BABY!

Don't miss their South Indian-inspired drinks with a Boba spin. The Sugandhi Soda with Boba is quirky, refreshing, and oddly addictive. Next up: Birthday Party Chicken Cutlet. Total throwback! Way before takeout and delivery ruled the roost, this is what moms would make at home for birthdays and **Coffee Sangam** nails that feeling. For chill evenings, the Keema Ragi Nachos make for a snackable, shareable winner with your crew.

CLASSICS AND TWISTS

They do offer familiar café staples like Cheese Omelettes and Chili Garlic Toast, but the sleeper hit? The Milo Apricot Toast. Unexpected, and totally worth it.

Coffee Sangam tries to be a clever celebration of South Indian flavors and aces it. ■ MANJU

Meal for two: Rs 1,200

Road No. 10A, Jubilee Hills
@CoffeeSangam on Instagram
 Timings: 8 am to 11 pm

This neighborhood café boasts a menu that combines American staples with the vibrant flavors of the tropics

United Tastes of America



WOW!
Recommends
 New York
 Hot Dog

Offering a taste of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and more, is the home-turned-neighborhood café, **Vincent's Papaya**. Founded by Preethi Naomi and Vishal John, the cozy nook provides an experience that is both familiar and unique with a menu that boasts a combination of American staples and vibrant flavors of the tropics. Committed to quality, the refreshing delectables served at **Vincent's Papaya** aim to ensure that every bite is a delightful sensation for the taste buds.

AMBIENCE AND FOOD

We walk into the café on a hot summer afternoon. Taking a seat outdoors in an intimate setting, recommendations from the menu include their beloved Buttermilk Biscuits with Black Currant Preserve and Butter, a savoury Falafel Shawarma, Philly Lamb Cheesesteak, Shrimp Sandwich, Pumpkin Wedges, the Italian Spinach Grilled Sandwich, and a taste of the Big Apple with the New York Hot Dog topped with mustard sauce.

We paired the lip-smacking food with their locally sourced 100 percent Arabica coffee, and a lineup of drinks so good that you cannot pick a favorite. It included the Agave Lemonade, Iced Strawberry Açaí, and Piña Colada.

To conclude to our meal, we dove into the perfect-for-summers Seasonal Sundae that highlights a seasonal fruit (we had mango) and is decked with wafers and completed with a cherry on top. ■ IPSHITA

Meal for two: Rs 300 onwards

305, Defence Colony Road, Hill Top Colony, Sainikpuri
 Tel: 63042 09615
 Timings: 12 pm to 12 am



With a trendsetting approach to vegetarian dining, this **Asian café** is all about bold flavors and cozy charm

BOLD FLAVORS

Creating a sensory *tamasha*, is the newly transformed vegetarian Asian café, **Ta.Ma.Sha**. Born from the vision of Mahender Vyas and championed by AK Solanky, Ta.Ma.Sha – known for its cozy charm and its reimagining of what vegetarian food can be – unveils a fresh look to match its expanding menu that is bigger, bolder and bursting with more flavor than ever.

VIBE

Attracting young folk, the Instagrammable space opens to a vibrant 2,500 sq.ft. area covered in faux green foliage and natural light. We plop ourselves down on their super comfy seats overlooking the city and flip open their extensive menu which includes Indo-Chinese, Korean, and Thai food.

FOOD

We indulge in a lineup that includes the

crispy yet soft Burmese Veg Parcel, a vegetables-filled dish wrapped in a thin pastry dough; the spicy Dragon Baby Corn; Indo-Chinese dish, Paneer Katsu; and the Ta.Ma.Sha Special Ramen, a flavor-rich dish influenced by Sichuan pepper corn and chilli oil.

We paired the spicy and savoury combos with mocktails – the edgy Cool Cucumber, and the sweet and delicate, Rose Gold. Their cool and creamy Ice Cream Bun and their seasonal fruits-inspired Mango Mousse and Sticky Rice with Mango concluded our lunch that left us feeling fully satiated. ■ IPSHITA

Meal for Two: Rs 800 onwards

Supreme Enclave, Madhapur Road, Sri Rama Colony, Jubilee Hills
Tel: 73865 23634
Timings: 11 am to 11 pm

WOW!
Recommends
Burmese
Veg Parcel



CHEFS MATHEW VARGHESE
AND EBAANI TEWARI

QUICK BITES WITH THE TASTEMAKERS

Chef Mathew Varghese and **Dr Shabnam Banu** tell us about the two-day coastal food pop-up in the city

Coastal Delights

WOW! caught up with chefs Mathew Varghese and Ebaani Tewari of Kari Apla who served a specially curated coastal pop-up menu in collaboration with Dr Shabnam Banu (academy member – Culinary Culture Co.) and the team at The Glass House, Jubilee Hills. The menu was a journey along India's coastline – from the spice-rich shores of Malabar and Konkan to beyond; at their much-anticipated pop-up held on May 24 and 25.

THE BANANA LEAF CONCEPT

We wanted guests to sample a wide range of our dishes in one sitting – small portions, big flavors. It's a great way to showcase the essence of Kari Apla.

HYDERABADI TWIST

We kept the original flavors intact, but yes, we've been told to up the spice levels. We added a little more chilli and masala – but without compromising on our recipes.

THE MENU

Coastal delicacies from Maharashtra to Goa, Kerala to Karnataka – our tribute to coastal India.

TOP THREE MUST-TRY DISHES

Mutton Cutlets, Turyani-style Prawn Roast, and our mango-tender coconut dessert using local Banginapalli mangoes.

THE NIZAMI FOOD TRAIL

We started with MLA Pottlam Biryani at Spicy Venue and cooled off with the Apricot Delight. We love eating local – always part research, part indulgence.

FORAY INTO HYDERABAD

No current plans as we're a small brand focused on Mumbai. But who knows? Never say never! ■ MANJU



WOW!
Recommends:
 Cropped embroidered jacket with a beaded floral skirt

Designer **Anamika Khanna's** new flagship store blends couture with culture

BY: MANJU LATHA KALANIDHI

Haute and Happening

Ace designer **Anamika Khanna** launched her flagship store in the city this May. Her design language that merges craft with contemporary sensibility is evident in the range on display. Known for her understated drapes and experimental silhouettes, the label caters to a growing clientele that appreciates design-led, occasion-worthy clothing. Anamika's designs turned heads at the Met Gala when business tycoon Isha Ambani walked the red carpet in her design; as well as when she adorned Ananya Panday with her silver collar at the Lakme Fashion Week earlier this year.

THE WALKTHROUGH

The atelier has been conceptualized as a minimalist space – muted tones, textured walls and an open-plan layout lend it a museum-like quietness. There's a deliberate simplicity in the way garments are displayed, allowing the detail and craftsmanship to stand out. The use of natural light and subtle materials gives the store an easy elegance without overwhelming the eye.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The full spectrum of the designer's offering – couture, bridal, menswear, and her more relaxed AK|OK line – is available. Visitors can spot her familiar design signatures: fine handwork,

asymmetrical drapes, and pieces that sit at the intersection of heritage and modernity. The usage of antique wood, stone, potted and outdoor plants give the space a royal look.

LET IT SOAK IN

There are also a few pieces created with local tastes in mind. You are tempted to linger, try, and take your time to engage with the materials, silhouettes, and the stories behind them.

The designer's handbag collection is also on display. Handcrafted by skilled metal artisans from Kolkata using traditional jewelry-making techniques, the range includes sculptural evening bags designed as modern heirlooms. We loved those statement pieces. Forget the OOTD, the new trend is of the BOTD. Every outfit stood out but with the wedding season around, this cocktail party outfit – a cropped embroidered jacket paired with draped floral skirt with beaded hip detailing – was our favorite.

Price: On request

*Achyutha Co-Operative Society,
 Road No. 10, Banjara Hills
 Tel:
<https://akok.in/>
Timings: 11 am to 7.30 pm*



The designer talks about launching her label in the city

“Fashion here isn't rushed”

WHY HYDERABAD

Launching our flagship store in Hyderabad has been a homecoming of sorts. We've always had an incredibly loyal and evolved clientele here, many of whom would make the trip to our Mumbai atelier for their special occasions. So, opening a permanent space in the city felt both natural and necessary.

“Their style is thoughtful, luxurious in a quiet way, and always rooted in a sense of self”
 – Anamika Khanna

THE CITY'S FASHIONISTAS

What I love about our Hyderabad clientele is their deep-rooted love for culture, celebration, and individuality. Fashion here isn't rushed. Especially when it comes to weddings, they're not just one-day affairs, they are layered, emotional and deeply personal. Clients understand that clothing carries memory and meaning. Whether it's a hand-embroidered sherwani or a custom draped lehenga, they look for pieces that speak to their journey. Their style is thoughtful, luxurious in a quiet way, and always rooted in a sense of self. That's something we resonate with deeply.

HYDERABAD INSPIRES

Hyderabad has this beautifully layered design sensibility, it's regal yet grounded, steeped in heritage but also incredibly aware of contemporary expression. That duality really inspired how we approached the design and curation of our new store.

Decoding the language
behind the designs

The AK Ethos

It's always an honor to see our work on global platforms and red carpets. For me, the AK factor lies in emotional storytelling. There's always a narrative, a certain depth to every design. The process begins with understanding what the moment means to the person, what they want to express. From there, it becomes a collaborative journey, balancing their personality and the occasion's energy with our aesthetic. We don't approach it as a costume, but as an extension of their identity. There's a great deal of thought, precision, and emotion involved – from the concept to the final fitting. There's an incredible sense of joy and pride, not just for me but for the entire team and the artisans who pour their soul into each creation.

“People are ditching heels for chic flats and blending traditional looks with laid-back, modern vibes”

AI AND FASHION TECHNOLOGY

Fashion has always reflected culture, creativity, and human expression – elements that technology can enhance but never fully replace. AI and algorithms offer exciting possibilities, from streamlining design processes to personalizing customer experiences and optimizing sustainability. However, at its core, fashion is deeply personal and emotional. The intuition, craftsmanship, and storytelling that designers bring to each piece remain irreplaceable. I see technology as a powerful tool that complements creativity, enabling us to push boundaries.



SUSTAINABLE AT HEART

Sustainability to me is about creating pieces that are versatile, wearable, and built to last – designs that go beyond seasonal trends and become cherished heirlooms. I believe in thoughtful fashion that encourages mindful consumption by offering timeless styles with quality craftsmanship, ensuring garments can be loved and worn across many occasions and years. Ultimately, sustainability is about designing with the wearer and the environment in mind, creating pieces that stand the test of time in every sense.

INDIAN FASHION IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Indian fashion is undergoing an exciting transformation, and it really mirrors how I approach design personally. More and more, people are ditching heels for chic flats and blending traditional looks with laid-back, modern vibes, even for weddings and big celebrations. That effortless mix of comfort and style is something I've always been passionate about.

The creative genius gives us a glimpse into the person she is

Life lessons and more



GROUNDING RITUALS

What keeps me grounded is finding balance between work and life – practicing yoga and meditation helps me stay centered amid the creative hustle. I also cherish quiet moments with loved ones and draw inspiration from art, music, and diverse cultures.

AK'S THREE LIFE LESSONS

- **Prioritize your well-being:** Taking care of yourself is a necessity, not a luxury
- **Adaptability is key:** Life will throw curveballs. Stay flexible and be open to change
- **Surround yourself with the right people:** Having the right team, friends, and family makes all the difference ■



DESIGNER SPEAK

WOW! chats with city designer **Gaurang Shah** about the show-stopping lehenga worn by Nandini Gupta at the 72nd Miss World

The making of the ensemble

FESTIVAL

When Miss India World Nandini Gupta walked the Gachibowli Stadium's runway with the Indian flag at the Miss World inauguration event, it was a goosebump moment for all. She walked gracefully in a crimson and gold lehenga crafted from hand-spun khadi, intricately woven with pure gold zari. The city's ace designer Gaurang Shah tells us what went into the look.

THE THEME

The brief was to showcase India's essence through its rich textile heritage. Blending diverse regional crafts, the ensemble became a seamless tribute to the nation's cultural legacy – a living museum of centuries-old artistry on the global stage.

BLEND OF WEAVES

Weaves from Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bengal came together.

The 'Bangdi Mor' motif, a treasured emblem from Maharashtrian folk culture, danced across the fabric with its elegant peacocks symbolizing grace, auspiciousness and celebration in rural tradition.

The leheriya-style zari work is a throwback to Rajasthan – capturing the undulating rhythms of desert dunes, with each golden wave meticulously rendered by local artisans. The khadi fabric, handspun of course, translated Mahatma Gandhi's vision of India's soul.

COLORS AND COMBINATIONS

The ivory base gave it a quiet elegance that the world understands. And, the gold detailing and handwoven textures spoke of luxury. Nandini's ensemble has taken three years to weave and finish.

NANDINI'S PERSPECTIVE

When she first saw and wore the outfit



NANDINI GUPTA

GAURANG SHAH

needed for the Miss India representation at the Miss World Festival, she embraced it wholeheartedly. What stood out was her commitment to maintaining the outfit's authenticity rather than trying to modernize or stylize it differently. She approached the experience with genuine curiosity, asking thoughtful questions about the traditional weaving techniques used in the costume and learning about other aspects of it as well.

■ MANJU

V Wrap curates gift hampers with an elite aesthetic

Gifting done right

Gifting today is as much about presentation as the present itself. At the *Naatu Naatu* Oscar win party, V Wrap Gifting Studio's custom hampers – featuring miniatures and the logo of the movie *RRR* – stood out. "It's for anyone who wants to focus on their guests, not the gifting hassle," says Sneha Nath, founder of the Khajaguda-based studio known for its customized and corporate handcrafted hampers.

HOMEGROWN IDEA

"Gifting is in my DNA," says Sneha. Inspired by her mother's knack for thoughtful return gifts, Sneha launched her gifting line on Instagram in 2020 as a new mom. Five years later, she now runs a 2,000 sq. ft. studio catering to personal and corporate clients.

PRODUCT RANGE

Starting with local events, she gradually built a network by curating candles, dry fruits and floral samples. Her big break came with a corporate order of 30 hampers priced at Rs 1,500 each. Today,



WOW!
Recommends:
Silver-coated
trays

she handles over 5,000 products a month, supplying to retailers and event managers.

CELEB FACTOR

Celebrity clients include actors Allu Arjun, Sharwanand, and Dil Raju Productions. For Allu Arjun's 20-year film journey, she curated a 30-inch plywood box featuring miniatures – from his first car and debut movie to *Pushpa* memorabilia.

Sneha travels across India to source authentic materials – wooden platters from Sambhal, trays from Delhi, leather toys from Andhra – and assembles them into elegant, reusable hampers. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 1,500 onwards for an individual hamper

1st floor, Masters building, above Apollo Pharmacy, Sai Vaibhav Layout, Chitrapuri Colony, Khajaguda
Tel: 72077 79017
Timings: 10 am to 7 pm

WHAT'S TRENDING IN GIFT HAMPERS?

1. Mini planters
2. Nut-wrapped chocolates
3. Cheese balls and cookies
4. Handpicked artefacts
5. Scented candles

5/6/7

SEPTEMBER 2025

HYDERABAD'S BIGGEST DESIGN SHOW IS BACK!

HITEX EXHIBITION CENTRE, HYDERABAD



PRESENTED BY



The Charcoal Project
HYDERABAD

FURNITURE
LIGHTING
FLOORING
ACCESORIES
FINE ART



Experiment with an extensive multi-cuisine spread with **Pawwa's** latest brainwave

THE QUARTER CULTURE

Ushering in the innovative quarter culture is **Pawwa Everyday Bar+Bites** that threw open its doors to the city early this year. "With three different serving sizes – quarter, half, and full – Pawwa's quarter culture reinvents the dining experience to accommodate all types of patrons, from casual eaters and light drinkers to those indulging in a substantial feast," states the Founder, Sanjay Kumar Reddy Mula.

A BOLD START

As we enter Pawwa, we are greeted by its majestic outdoor bar area. It is here that our cocktails Roman Fizz crafted for us. Created using vodka, amaretto, pineapple, kaffir lime, and vegan foam, the Roman Fizz offers a super strong kick.

CONTEMPORARY FOOT-TAPPERS

Mainstream tunes blasts through Pawwa's 6,000 sq.ft. space spread across two floors. Foot-tappers from *Survivor's Eye of the Tiger* to Taylor Swift's *Look What You Made Me Do?* fill up the entire place that includes three outdoor and two indoor areas. Additionally, they hold a magician's night every Thursday.

MULTI-CUISINE DELIGHT

Famished, we dive into Pawwa's multi-cuisine offerings that include small plates in the Bombay Lollipop, made with butter fried chicken drumsticks and served with green Schezwan sauce; Pawwa Fried Chicken – chicken tossed in a spicy onion sauce with crackling.

The highlights in the mains include Yata Mamsam Pulao, featuring tender pieces of mutton cooked with rice and spices; and Telangana Kheema Biryani, a dish that includes spicy minced meat inspired by Telangana's bold flavors. We ended our meal with the Pawwa Gadbad – a medley of ice cream, rabri, faluda, and dehydrated fruits. ■ IPSHITA

Meal for two (including alcohol):
Rs 2,500 onwards

Plot No. 188, Road No. 51, BN Reddy Hills, Cuckoo Hills, BN Reddy Colony
Tel: 70361 18111, 70361 17111
Timings: 12 pm to 11:30 pm
(Sunday to Thursday), 12 pm to 12:30 am (Friday and Saturday)

WOW!
Recommends:
Roman Fizz



COCKTAIL CONFIDENTIAL

Deepti Alapati, our nightlife sleuth, uncovered surprise drops, retro vibes, and a new speakeasy in Hyderabad last month



NEW COLUMN

MIXERS, MICS & MAGIC

May was a total vibe – humid nights, packed gigs and new spots popping up faster than you can say "one more shot, please." I've been dancing through the city's buzziest nights, from late-night gigs to secret bars you need a password for. Between the cocktails and concerts, I've been keeping tabs on all the freshest happenings, so you don't miss a beat.

STAR POWER AND SOUL

Actor-singer Shruti Haasan lit up Odeum by Prism with her first-ever Hyderabad concert, *Shadows & Silhouettes*. Dressed in noir glam and moody lighting, she gave us a haunting indie set, and when she broke into "Tada" from her dad's iconic film, the crowd lost its collective mind.

QAWWALI GOES WILD

Then came the Sagar Wali Qawwali spectacle at Quake Arena. Picture 4,000 people from Gen Z to millennials, grooving to a heady cocktail of Bollywood beats and soulful qawwalis. It felt like East met West, and bass met dholaks.

CRICKET, CIDER & CHEERS

Broadway, my old haunt, was buzzing with IPL vibes. My besties and I grabbed their limited-edition mango cider – light, juicy, and dangerously drinkable. Giant screens, great crowd, and enough beer taps to make a German weep with joy.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF LOQA?

Tucked away like a well-kept secret, Loqa is Hyderabad's answer to NYC's coolest speakeasies. Green interiors, old-school TV installations, and a bar that seats just 45. It's where you go when you want to impress a date.

The cocktails? South Indian spirits get a global glow-up. Try Ko Ko Kucumber or a curry leaf gin fizz. And the food? Avakai kulchas, shrimp nachos, and biryani in takeaway boxes. No drama, just delicious. May was a whole mood for me. What were you up to? Let's swap stories.

(The writer is a celebrity stylist, wine connoisseur and proud Hyderabad at heart)



WITH SHRUTI HAASAN

Under The Stars



Scan For Booking

A Dining Destination Designed for Lovers
of Fine Food and Beautiful Moments.

mist
poolside kitchen



Unplug from screens and take a crash course in farming while getting a taste of rural life with the **'One Day Kisan'** initiative

Be a farmer for a day

Psychologists advocate grounding with the “touch the grass” approach – encouraging outdoor experiences to promote mental well-being and a deeper connection to nature. **One Day Kisan** located on the Hyderabad-Warangal Highway offers an immersive farm experience that allows families to unplug and engage with the rhythms of rural life. It's a smooth introduction to life as it was back in the 70s for Gen Z. From being able to get their hands dirty in planting paddy saplings to milking the cow and making dung cakes for fun. They are also introduced to rainwater harvesting pits and pottery – that is being taught for a few thousand bucks in fancy cafés. Fun learning is the premise on which the concept has been conceived.

ACTIVITIES GALORE

At One Day Kisan, children and adults alike can participate in a variety of hands-on activities that provide insight into traditional farming practices:

Pottery: Enhance motor skills by molding clay, understanding the art and utility of pottery in daily life.

Scarecrow Making: Discover the purpose of scarecrows in agriculture and craft one using natural materials.

Hand Grinding: Experience the manual process of grinding grains, like the way your grandmothers used to so you can appreciate the effort that goes into making a meal.

EXPLORING AGRICULTURAL INNOVATIONS

The farm features a blend of old and new farming techniques such as ancient irrigation tools like the Persian Wheel and Archimedes Screw. You can explore a vintage borewell and a watchtower, and learn about modern methods like polyhouse farming for climate-controlled cultivation. Just in case the kids are bored, there is a live dance arena with a DJ belting out peppy numbers.

CONNECTING WITH FARM LIFE

Other activities include riding on a tractor or bullock cart to experience both modern and traditional farm transport. Spotting exotic and local birds while learning about their role in the ecosystem is also on offer and you can try vermicomposting and discover how earthworms help create rich, organic soil if you are a gardening enthusiast.

“So far, we’ve hosted over 30,000 students in the last three years, with hundreds visiting daily,” says Vijay Poshala from One Day Kisan. “While most visitors are primary school students, we also welcome families – young kids especially love the vintage tools and farm activities,” he adds.

THE EXPERIENCE

Students are warmly welcomed and start with a lively warm-up, followed by a quick quiz on farming basics. A short talk on respecting farmers sets the tone before they dive into 30+ hands-on activities. The farm walk-through offers a real taste of rural life. Visitors say the biggest takeaways are a deeper appreciation for farmers and greater respect for the food we eat. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 500 per head. A discounted price for group bookings for schools also is available

Adjacent to Hotel Vivera, Warangal Highway, Bhongir, Yadadri Bhongir District. About an hour's drive from Uppal Metro Station
Tel: 98497 98674 and www.onedaykisan.com

Timings: Open daily from 10 am to 10 pm

Workshops: Available throughout the month; prior registration recommended

Food is available at the venue and can be bought at the food court



FIRST THINGS FIRST FASHION

Because ordinary was

never the plan.



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“

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many teams to design
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SHE DIDN'T
WAIT FOR MALE-
CENTRIC FILMS TO
GIVE HER SPACE.
SHE CARVED HER
OWN, THROUGH
UNCONVENTIONAL
ROLES, CHOOSING
OTT PLATFORMS
AT THEIR
NASCENT STAGE,
OR TURNING
PRODUCER



FROM REIGNING ON THE SILVER SCREEN
TO PRODUCER, FITNESS MUSE AND FEARLESS
TRAILBLAZER – **SAMANTHA RUTH PRABHU**

is rewriting the rules of success in a
male-dominated arena

BYLINE: MANJU LATHA KALANIDHI

SAMANTHA: RISING, RESILIENT, RADIANT

In a world that often watches women fall apart in the face of personal storms, Samantha Ruth Prabhu chose to rise – gracefully, fiercely and unapologetically. One of the most striking images from 2025 wasn't from a film, but from the Zee Telugu Awards, where Samantha took to the stage to celebrate 15 years in cinema. As she looked back at her journey, thanking those who shaped her – including her ex-family – the camera caught Amala Akkineni, her former mother-in-law, smiling and applauding warmly. It wasn't just a moment of cinematic nostalgia; it was a quiet victory for dignity, healing, and grace under fire.

POWER MOVES AND BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES

Where does Samantha stand today? At the top – but not a shaky pedestal – more like a mountain full of challenges that she has climbed. She stands tall because she's earned every inch of her ground, not through the safety of stardom, but by choosing risk over comfort, authenticity over pretence, and growth over mere survival.

Samantha's career began with a dream launch in *Ye Maaya Chesave* (2010), where her portrayal of Jessie was nuanced, tender, and instantly iconic. She followed it up with crowd-pleasing entertainers like *Dookudu* (2011), where she leaned into the glam heroine role, and *Seethamma Vakitlo Sirimalle Chettu* (2013), where she stood her ground among industry heavyweights. But her real strength has always been her ability to surprise.

THE RISK TAKER

Who would've thought the petite girl-next-door would one day transform into a chilling antagonist in *The Family Man 2* (2021)? Or that she would hold an entire movie like *Oh! Baby* (2019) on her shoulders, shifting between comedy, sentiment, and fantasy with the ease of a seasoned pro? Or that she would do her own stunts in *Citadel: Honey Bunny* (2024), while quietly battling a rare autoimmune condition – myositis?

This is where Samantha is more than just a movie star. She is a woman with tremendous agency – a word we don't use enough when we talk about actresses. She didn't wait for male-centric films to give her space. She carved her own, through unconventional roles, choosing OTT platforms at their nascent stage, or, turning producer with the offbeat horror-comedy *Subham*.

NEW AVATARS

With *Subham*, Samantha isn't just backing content – she's backing new voices and fresh narratives. She's also using her position to speak up about gender disparities in the industry, saying firmly that she's open to producing big-star films – but only if there's equal pay. In an industry where silence is golden (and often coerced), that's nothing short of revolutionary. The film was not a bit by box office standards but it did receive positive reviews for its use of horror as a genre, the seaside settings and Samantha's cameo.

Of course, no story about Samantha is complete without acknowledging the personal battles she's fought – and continues to fight. Her highly publicized divorce from actor Naga Chaitanya could have easily reduced her to a tabloid headline. But Samantha reclaimed the narrative. She stayed quiet when it mattered and spoke out when it helped. Through social media posts, interviews, and eventually, her health and wellness podcast, she let the world know that vulnerability isn't weakness – it's power.

WARRIOR, NOT WORRIER

When Samantha revealed her diagnosis of myositis in 2022, fans were shocked. But instead of disappearing from the spotlight, she turned her illness into a mission. She educated people about invisible illnesses, became an advocate for holistic wellness, and showed that recovery is not always linear – but it is always possible with courage.



Even as she took time off to heal – emotionally and physically – she didn't let the world forget her. She worked quietly on herself, trained relentlessly, and returned sharper, stronger, and with her sense of humor intact. Her social media now balances glam photoshoots with raw, real insights into what it means to live with chronic illness and still want it all.

And that's perhaps the most inspiring thing about Samantha. She still wants it all. Love, career, travel, peace, passion. And why shouldn't she? As a woman who's faced public heartbreak, sexist trolling, and physical pain, Samantha now lives life by her own rules. She doesn't exist for validation – she exists for expression.

JESSIE TO RAJI

Her journey from Jessie to Raji, from commercial heroine to producer, from wife to independent woman, from strength to strength, is not just cinematic – it's symbolic. She is proof that you can be soft and strong, feminine and fierce, broken and still brilliant.

Samantha Ruth Prabhu doesn't just represent the modern Indian woman – she embodies her. With every choice, every performance, and every post, she reminds us: You can rewrite your story. And you can do it in style.

Boss Vibes: As a Producer

"I've always followed my heart, not the pay check"

As Samantha Ruth Prabhu steps into the role of producer as the Founder of Tralala Moving Pictures Private Limited, with her debut film *Subham*, she opens up about her new company, challenges, and aspirations.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO VENTURE INTO PRODUCTION WITH *SUBHAM*?

I've always followed my heart, not the pay check. After 15 years in the industry, I felt it was time to explore storytelling from a different perspective. Producing allows me to champion stories I believe in and offer opportunities to emerging talents.

DID YOU HAVE ANY APPREHENSIONS ABOUT TAKING ON THE PRODUCER'S MANTLE?

Absolutely. There were sleepless nights and moments of doubt. But embracing risk has always been essential for my growth. I don't think I've ever shied away from it.

TELL US ABOUT *SUBHAM*.

It is a quirky horror-comedy that delves into the world of serial dramas. It's a fresh take, and I believe it will resonate with audiences looking for something different.

HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE NAME TRALALA MOVING PICTURES FOR YOUR PRODUCTION HOUSE?

I wanted a name that reflects joy and creativity. Tralala embodies a sense of whimsy and freedom, aligning with the kind of content I aim to produce.

"EMBRACING RISK HAS ALWAYS BEEN ESSENTIAL FOR MY GROWTH. I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SHIED AWAY FROM IT"





Gym Girl: A Fitness Icon

“Pickleball is a delightful addition to my life”

YOU’RE KNOWN FOR YOUR FITNESS JOURNEY. HOW HAS THAT INFLUENCED YOUR WORK?

Fitness has been a cornerstone of my life. It’s not just about physical health but mental well-being too. I want to promote a lifestyle where eating and sleeping well, and staying active are integral.

YOU’VE MENTIONED PLAYING PICKLEBALL RECENTLY. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

Himank (Himank Duvvuru), my production partner, is a game fanatic, while I’m a health enthusiast. Pickleball became our shared activity, blending fun and fitness. It’s been a delightful addition to my routine.

“ FITNESS HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE OF MY LIFE. I WANT TO PROMOTE A LIFESTYLE WHERE EATING AND SLEEPING WELL, AND STAYING ACTIVE ARE INTEGRAL **”**



Voice of Cinema: As a Super Star

“Equal talent and experience should equate to equal pay”

HOW DO YOU DISCOVER NEW TALENT FOR YOUR PROJECTS?

Instagram is a treasure trove of talent. People today can create, direct, edit, and choreograph their content. Their versatility is astounding, and I often find inspiration scrolling through.

WITH *SUBHAM* HAVING RELEASED ON MAY 9, COINCIDING WITH THE RELEASE ANNIVERSARY OF *MAHANATI*, DO YOU SEE ANY SYMBOLISM THERE?

It's a beautiful coincidence. *Mahanati* was a landmark film, and releasing *Subham* on the same date feels serendipitous. I hope it brings similar joy to audiences.

YOU'VE BEEN VOCAL ABOUT PAY PARITY IN THE INDUSTRY. WHAT'S YOUR STANCE?

Equal talent and experience should equate to equal pay. I've been in situations where the compensation was dramatically different despite similar roles and responsibilities. It's time for change.

“INSTAGRAM IS A TREASURE TROVE OF TALENT. I OFTEN FIND INSPIRATION SCROLLING THROUGH”

HOW DO YOU HANDLE EXTREME FAN BEHAVIOR, LIKE TEMPLES BEING BUILT IN YOUR NAME?

While I'm touched by the love, I don't encourage such behavior. It's important to appreciate artists without crossing boundaries.

YOU'VE TAKEN A BREAK FROM ACTING RECENTLY. HOW HAS THAT PERIOD BEEN FOR YOU?

It's been two years since my last film, but this time allowed me to explore other avenues, like production and wellness. I wake up excited about the possibilities each day brings.

ARE YOU PLANNING TO ACT IN YOUR UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS?

Yes, in my second production, I'm taking on a role. We're also conducting auditions for other parts, aiming to bring fresh faces to the forefront.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE THE CURRENT GLOBAL POLICIES LIKE THOSE FROM THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION AFFECTING FOREIGN CINEMA?

Policies change frequently. Trump changes his mind every week. Let's wait and watch how things unfold.

In Perfect Sync: The Multitask Maestro

“There were days when I couldn't get up”

YOUR HEALTH JOURNEY HAS BEEN PUBLIC. HOW HAS IT SHAPED YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Being diagnosed with myositis was challenging. There were moments when I felt helpless. But it also made me realize the importance of health literacy. I want my audience to know where to turn when faced with health issues.

YOU'VE LAUNCHED A HEALTH-FOCUSED PODCAST. WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO LAUNCH IT?

I wanted to create a platform where discussions about health, wellness, and personal experiences are normalized. It's about sharing knowledge and fostering a supportive community.

HOW DID YOUR HEALTH CONDITION AFFECT YOUR ROLE IN CITADEL: HONEY BUNNY?

Filming was tough. There were days when I couldn't get up, and I even asked the directors to replace me. But with their support, I pushed through. Looking back, I'm grateful I did.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ASPIRING PRODUCERS AND ACTORS?

Follow your heart. Embrace risks. And always prioritize authenticity in your work.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

It's a continuous journey. I ensure I allocate time for self-care, family, and work. Setting boundaries and being present in the moment helps.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR TRALALA MOVING PICTURES?

We're exploring diverse genres and stories. The aim is to produce content that's both entertaining and thought-provoking.

HOW DO YOU UNWIND AFTER A HECTIC DAY?

Spending time with loved ones, playing pickleball, or simply reading a good book helps me relax and recharge.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN CINEMA IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT?

Indian cinema is gaining global recognition. With diverse stories and talents, we're poised to make a significant mark internationally.

WHAT ROLE DOES SOCIAL MEDIA PLAY IN YOUR LIFE?

It's a tool for connection and expression. While I share aspects of my life, I also ensure I maintain a balance to protect my privacy.

HOW DO YOU STAY GROUNDED AMIDST FAME AND SUCCESS?

By remembering my roots, staying connected to my values, and surrounding myself with genuine people who keep me anchored.■

“ BEING DIAGNOSED WITH MYOSITIS WAS CHALLENGING. THERE WERE MOMENTS WHEN I FELT HELPLESS ”





As US President Donald Trump's new immigration policies stir unease among Indian immigrants, renowned psychiatrist **Dr TKN Chary** offers solace and support through dedicated mental health interventions

Counselling Support for Deportation Anxiety



As Donald Trump's proposed immigration rules spark fear among thousands of immigrants in the U.S., a growing number of Indian-origin individuals, especially H-1B holders and undocumented residents – are bracing for an uncertain future. The looming threat of deportation is no longer a distant possibility but a stark, psychological reality for many.

“There's shame, a sense of failure, and stigma – both in the US and back home in India”

COPING WITH DEPORTATION

In response, Dr (Maj) TKN Chary, a Hyderabad-based psychiatrist and former Army medical specialist, is addressing the mental health fallout of deportation. In his workshops/sessions, he explores how returnees grapple

with depression, identity loss, cultural shock and alienation. “There's shame, a sense of failure, and stigma – both in the US and back home in India,” he says. His clinical insights stress the need for therapy, medication, and reintegration support to help deportees rebuild their lives. “Understanding these challenges is key to healing,” he adds.

A VETERAN HEALER WITH A GLOBAL LENS

Dr Chary's journey has taken him across Oman, the UK, New Zealand, and Canada – where he currently spends part of the year. A 1962 AFMC Pune graduate and wartime veteran, he retired from the Army in 1977 and has since made mental health his life's mission.

WELLNESS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Beyond deportees, Dr Chary works with aging veterans and seniors facing grief, loneliness, and declining health. His free counselling sessions offer a safe space to talk. “All conversations will remain confidential. A short, clear note with suggestions can be provided for your personal use, in line with international standards of care,” he adds. ■ MANJU

Fee: Free counselling, but by prior appointment only

77, Road No.3, Telecom Colony, Vayupuri, Sainikpuri, Secunderabad
Tel: 97043 68733
Timings: 6 pm to 8 pm Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

Try the head, neck & foot combo at **Ode Spa**

Spa Time @ the Airport

Flight delayed again? Instead of doom-scrolling at the gate or crafting a snarky Insta story, why not channel that energy into something infinitely better – a foot rub or a neck-and-shoulder massage. **Ode Spa**, Hyderabad's own homegrown wellness facility, has landed at the Domestic Departures zone of Rajiv Gandhi International Airport this May, offering frazzled flyers a chance to swap turbulence for tranquillity. “We want to turn layovers into luxurious “me time” with therapy sessions such as our popular ‘head, neck and foot’ combo massage package,” says Ritesh Mastipuram, Founder and Managing Director of Ode Spa.

BOOK AND BE DONE

Booking a session at Ode Spa is as easy as scanning your boarding pass. You can reserve a massage online or just walk in, he adds. The menu includes 30-minute head-shoulder or foot massages, perfect for travel-weary bodies. Opt for a dry shoulder and neck massage, and walk out de-stressed and recharged – just in time for that boarding call. You can choose from ancient healing traditions to AI-personalized wellness therapies, from Swedish and Balinese massages to hydrating wraps, scrubs, aromatherapy, and reflexology. We suggest opting for oil massage sessions only if you have a minimum of two hours to spare. “In future, we will be focussing on preventive health using your biomarkers,” he adds. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 2,303 onwards

Domestic Departure F Level,
East Bulb Gate No. 7,
Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
Tel: 92470 20202
Timings: 24x7





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**WHAT: THE REGENCY,
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**LOCATION: HARSHA SKY HIGH
IN FILM NAGAR**

DREAM HOME FOR:

Krishna Palla and his wife Dedeepya Palla and their teenaged children

BACKGROUND:

The family lived in the US for 15 years before they returned to India, and were looking for an international experience while living in Hyderabad. Their home was designed in a manner similar to high-end Manhattan residences with understated elegance, rich materials and superb finishes. Most products used have been sourced from Europe from vendors that are very climate-conscious.

OWNER SPEAK:

"Coming from the US, we wanted three things – a home theater, a kitchen island and a garden with outdoor plants that bloom around the year," says Dedeepya Palla.

FAVORITE CORNER IN THE HOUSE:

Balcony where they have their morning coffee and evening tea

ROOMS:

Formal living, family, dining, dry and wet kitchen, four bedrooms and a home theater

THE TEAM:

Principal designers: Faisal Vohra and Shamila Meeran of F+S Designs, assisted by Keerthana Meruva, Shruthi Ramesh, Sadhika V and Mohammed Jaleel

THE PROJECT:

Conceptualized as an expression of minimalist luxury, the house is all about bespoke craftsmanship and curated details taking center stage with spatial fluidity at the heart of the design. At the entrance, guests are welcomed into an internal foyer clad in custom made wood veneers. "This space features caramel-toned wood, noir marble walls, and a striking two-tone marble floor, headlined by golden-veined Alaskan grey," says Faisal from F+S Designs.

To the right, the formal living area extends towards a striking wrap-around balcony, lush with verdant landscaping. Here, a statement bespoke bar – styled like an aged gold metal sculpture evocative of fabric caught in motion – becomes an artistic and functional center piece, embodying the project's dedication to exclusivity



and craftsmanship. The balcony has grey Italian terrazzo tiles, providing a textural contrast to the home's primarily marble flooring.

The flooring follows a Regency-inspired color-blocking pattern. Linear black marble inlays punctuate a luxurious expanse of Armani grey marble, lending a sense of rhythm and architectural order. The white walls and sleek gypsum ceilings form a clean canvas, while plush rugs add warmth and elegance.

FAMILY LOUNGE AND MORE

Beyond the foyer, the formal living room and the bar in the balcony to the right establish an immediate connection to hospitality and entertainment. Further in, semi-private zones emerge, with the family lounge and its adjoining balcony positioned opposite the dining space, and the dry kitchen which is anchored by a monolith island table and illuminated by an ensemble of decorative lighting from Flos & Penta. As one ventures deeper, the layout transitions into the



KITCHEN ISLAND

private sanctuaries – each uniquely designed to reflect the personalities of its inhabitants.

The master bedroom is an intimate space of tailored luxury, featuring a Poliform walk-in wardrobe with dedicated his-and-her sections, centered around an elegant island. The children's rooms introduce playful individual identities – one imbued with soft blush tones for the daughter, the other articulated in cool blues for the son – creating spaces that resonate with personal comfort and charm.

EVERYTHING FOR THE FAM JAM

This stylish Hyderabad home for a family of four blends warmth and sophistication. The hand-blown glass pelican by Duccio Di Segna or the Philippe Starck mirror for Flos instantly catches your attention. A scroll to the left reveals the Baroque-inspired Liza lamp by Elisa Giovannoni for Slamp – lighting up from both ends!

OF PLAYFUL BUNNIES AND BATMAN VIBES

The living room opens to sweeping views of the city, with beige Turri sofas by Giuseppe Viganò and a tan Minotti armchair by Rodolfo Dordoni. A crafted rug by Hands Rugs ties it all together, while handpicked artefacts add flair. The showstopper? A golden bar in the

balcony – sculpted to mimic wind-blown fabric, crafted by Hoozinc, set against a ribbed cement wall and an asymmetric ceiling by Nuance.

The dining room features a dual-tone lacquer table with marble inlay by Hagit Pincovici and the iconic Coordinates pendant by Michael Anastassiades. Playful bunnies by Nitush & Aroosh add whimsy, while black stripes in the ceiling mirror the floor. The pooja room radiates quiet spirituality with a monolithic marble-leaf mandir and custom ceiling art evoking devotion.

The family room is cozy yet dramatic, with monochrome contrasts and

access to a lush balcony retreat. The guest bedroom offers deep woods, soft textures, and playful artwork – Batman might just stop by!

ROOMS WITH VIEWS AND THEMES

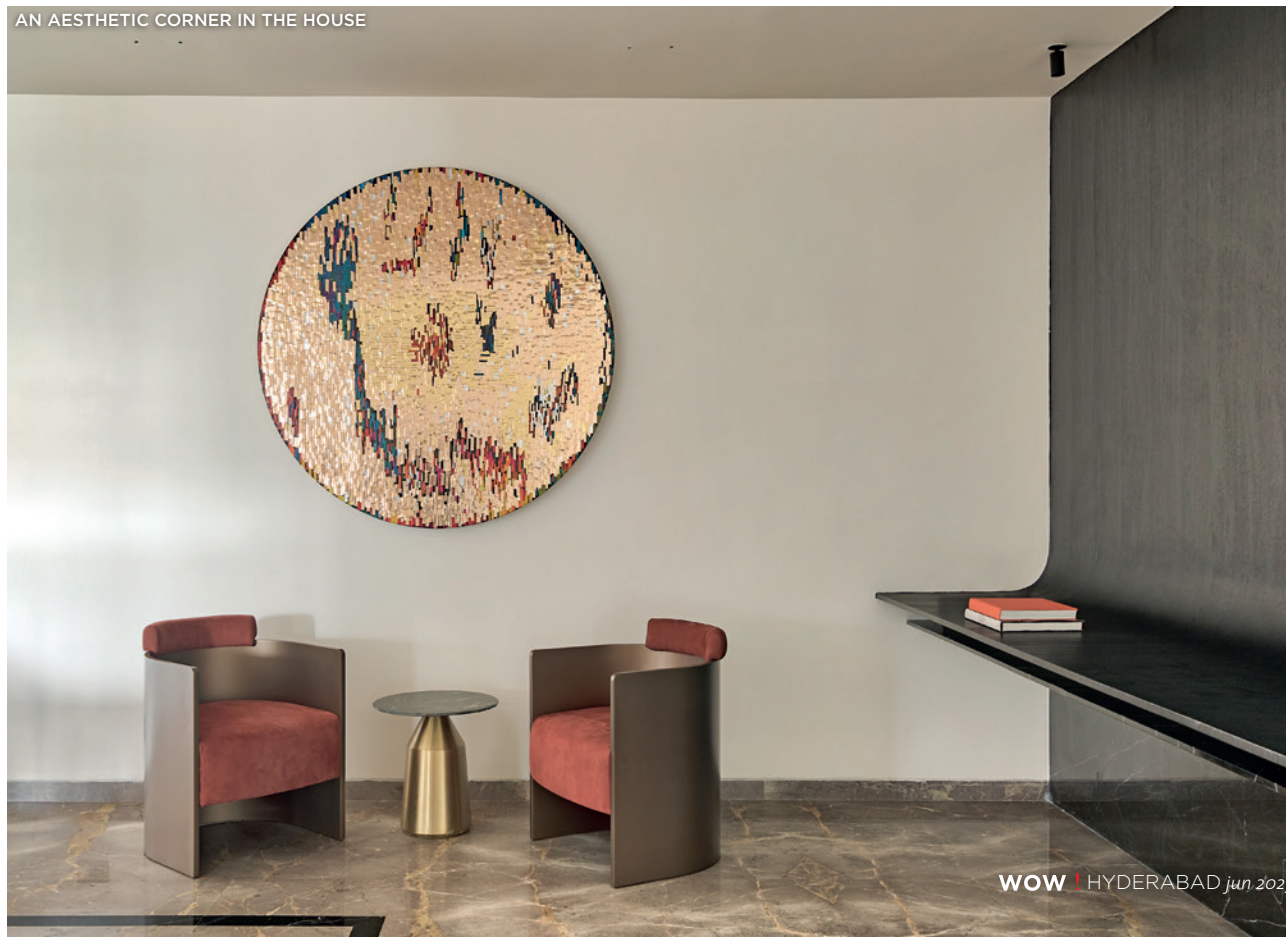
In their daughter's blush-hued room, wallpaper doubles as art, accented by bold curtain bands. The sunlit kitchen is the heart of the home – centered around a striking island unit that rises seamlessly from the floor, blending continuity and contrast. Finally, the master suite invites you in with a personal lounge and a bed made for nights inspiring deep sleep and page-turning reads.

■ MANJU



CHILDREN'S BEDROOM

AN AESTHETIC CORNER IN THE HOUSE



With the Y2K aesthetic still reigning supreme in the fashion world – and even clubs like Mindspace SOCIAL hosting Y2K-themed parties in the city – we delve into the timeless aesthetic that even has trendsetters nostalgic

Y2K STATEMENT COUTURE

TIE-DYE FEVER

Bringing the tie-dye back is Kiara Advani. Embracing the Y2K aesthetic, the *Kabir Singh* actress rocked a chic look in a white and green flared tie-dye denim co-ord set by the label Boohoo. She paired the outfit with white sandals and accessories from Lune and Bansri Mehta Designs.



TIE-UP CROP TOP

Having rocked tie-up crop tops several times, actress Aditi Rao Hydari's most interesting looks include the one by label Verb by Pallavi Singhee. It features a bold ikat print in shades of orange and blue paired with high-waisted mom jeans by Mango.

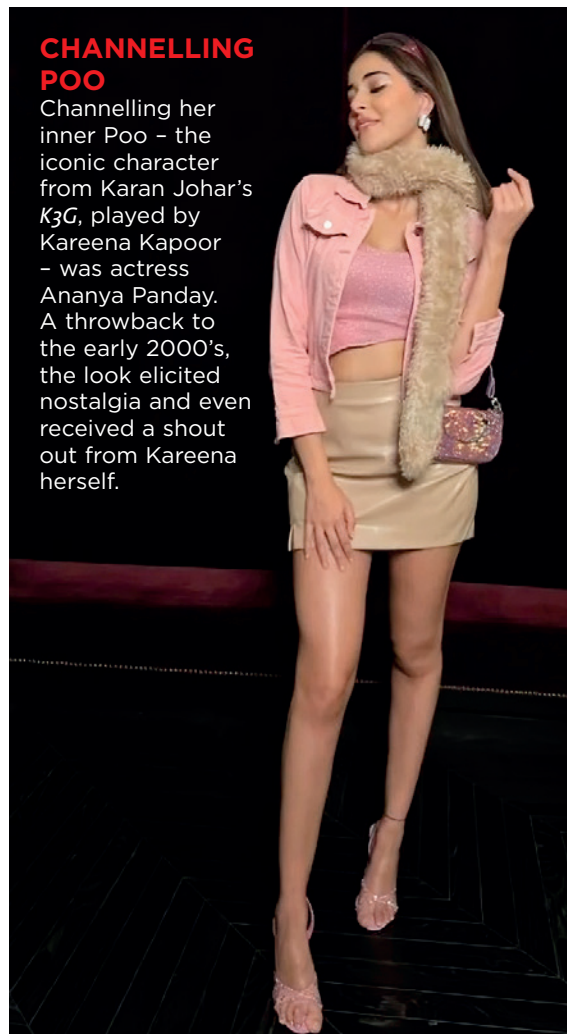
DENIM-ON-DENIM

A total showstopper, actress Sara Ali Khan's outfit here blends the Gen-Z style with the iconic Y2K denim-on-denim trend. The cropped jacket paired with embellished pants makes for quite the throwback look.



CHANNELLING POO

Channelling her inner Poo – the iconic character from Karan Johar's *K3G*, played by Kareena Kapoor – was actress Ananya Panday. A throwback to the early 2000's, the look elicited nostalgia and even received a shout out from Kareena herself.





BAGGY CHIC

Hollywood socialite and internet personality Kylie Jenner is known to incorporate Y2K trends into her fashion choices. One of her most famous Y2K outfits include her one-shoulder crop top that she paired with baggy, multi-pocketed jeans.



SATIN CHIC

Embracing the Y2K fashion movement was Blumarine's Spring collection which included this light blue satin gown donned by actress-singer, Rita Ora. It's floor-sweeping style features a plunging cowl neckline and open-back with a self-tie.



PREPPY STYLE

The Miu Miu Spring collection incorporated Y2K influences with a focus on preppy styles. A clear winner is the mustard yellow co-ord featuring a crop bandana top inspired by the handkerchief tops from the first decade of the 21st century. This strapless piece was seen donned by fashion's brightest including Gigi Hadid and Kim Kardashian.



POSH CHARM

Leaning into Y2K aesthetics was Victoria Beckham's Spring 2025 collection shown at Paris Fashion Week. This season Beckham explores the physical relationship between garment and body, with exciting pieces in trousers that are slashed open across the front and resin-glazed fabrics moulded to the body.



ACCESSORIES Y2K

Highlights in the Y2K-infused accessories include the newsboy cap – revived by actress Anne Hathaway, reminiscent of her style in the 2000's blockbuster, *The Devil Wears Prada*. Others include the Gucci Vault x Moon Boots preferred by Rihanna; crystal mini butterfly hair clips in varied hues; the fisherman-style bucket hats, chokers, and the Y2K 'It' bag, the classic baguette. ■ IPSHITA



A compelling exhibition on trace, memory and the personal archive of loss

What Stays, What Leaves



“Each piece at this exhibition speaks to the delicate balance between memory and loss”

— Bhargavi Gundala, Founder-Director, Dhi Contemporary

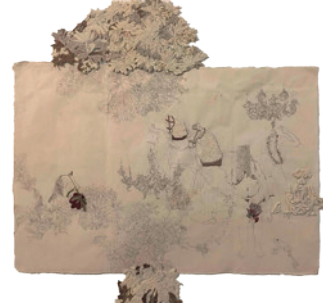
The *Speaking of Residues* exhibition explores the idea of trace and its impact on the personal and collective consciousness, where the artists constantly interplay with ideas of memory, displacement, and silence. The group exhibition at Dhi Contemporary features Athai Joham, Debashruti Aich, Deepanwita Das, Harun Al Rashid and Thasni M.A.

THEMES OF MEMORY AND LOSS

Debashruti Aich introspects about societal norms, revealing unspoken feelings and conventional boundaries. The artist incorporates tactile materials such as textiles and embroidery to craft deeply personal and resonant narratives.

Deepanwita Das' work explores the interconnectedness of nature and

humans. She is particularly fascinated by wildflowers and how they are a symbol of resilience despite the fragility of their life. On the other hand, traditional farming methods denoting the cycle of life in sync with nature dominate the artworks of Athai Jotham.



The works of Harun Al Rashid and Thasni M A strike a different note. Rashid delves deep into his family's history and memory and excavates discarded books, speaking about the transformative power of loss and longing. While Thasni captures cultural residues embedded in the body and how displacement to a new environment creates a site of isolation.

Through these diverse mediums and perspectives, the artists in this exhibition invite the viewers to a moment of introspection into the material aspects of trace, silence, and longing that evoke different meanings at every walk of life.

■ MANJU

On until June 20

Dhi Contemporary, Road No. 11, Kakatiya Hills, Guttala Begumpet, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur
Tel: 83410 63908
Timings: 11 am to 7 pm

Thota Vaikuntam, who made Telangana's vibrant soul a global canvas, bags the Yudhvir Award

Brushstrokes of Glory

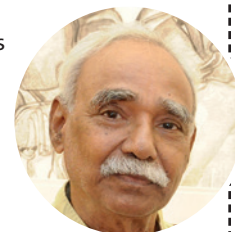


Celebrated artist Thota Vaikuntam, the master of Telangana's colors and characters, has been conferred the 32nd Yudhvir Foundation Memorial Award for his outstanding contribution to Indian art. At 83, the veteran painter remains a towering figure in contemporary figurative art, his work a lyrical homage to his roots in Karimnagar and the temple town of Vemulavada.

TELANGANA ON THE GLOBAL MAP

Infused with nostalgia and saturated pigments, Vaikuntam's canvas is a visual archive of Telangana's rustic charm. His signature style – marked by strong lines, earthy palettes, and sensuous, stylized village women – has become iconic. He started his journey with charcoal and ink, later transitioning to acrylics to capture the vibrancy of rural life. Theater, folk traditions, and everyday

village life shaped his early sensibilities – influences that echo in the drama and rhythm of his compositions.



An alumnus of the College of Fine Arts, Hyderabad, and later training under the legendary KG Subramanyan, Vaikuntam also wore many hats: he was the art teacher at Bal Bhavan, and the National Award-winning art director for films like *Daasi* and *Maa Bhoomi*.

THE INSPIRING JOURNEY

From Bharat Bhavan's Biennale Award in 1988 to the National Award in 1993, his accolades are many, but it's his unwavering commitment to regional identity that stands out. Aruna Bahuguna, chairperson of Yudhvir Foundation, aptly said the Foundation is proud to honor a maestro whose unique visual language has placed Telangana on the global art map. The award includes a citation and a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh – a small tribute to a giant in Indian art. ■ MANJU

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From Mozart to AR Rahman – hear your favorites, in an unusual setting in the city

5 Reasons to Love Candlelight Concerts

1 FLAMELESS CANDLES ONLY

A candlelight concert – but not the flickering flame kind you’d find in Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s *Heeramandi*. These modern renditions use over a thousand flameless LED candles, artfully arranged in varying sizes and heights to complement the mood of the music. The result? A stunning visual experience without the heat, smoke, or fire hazard. Safe, stylish, and utterly Instagrammable.

2 100 CITIES, AND A 3 MILLION AUDIENCE

Candlelight Concerts is a globally acclaimed series produced by Live Your City, a brand under the American company Fever Labs Inc. Candlelight Concerts began as an initiative to democratize access to classical music, transforming traditional performances into multi-sensory experiences. By hosting concerts in unique venues – ranging from iconic landmarks like the Eiffel Tower in Paris to modern rooftops with panoramic views – the series has captivated audiences worldwide. To date, Candlelight Concerts have been hosted in over 150 cities, offering audiences a chance to experience music in a new light. The concerts have been held in 100 cities around the world with over three million attendees so far.

3 ICONIC FILM SCORES

In June 2024, Candlelight Concerts made their Indian debut, with performances in Mumbai, New Delhi, and Faridabad. The inaugural event at the Grand Hyatt in Mumbai featured some of the best-known movie soundtracks, enchanting attendees with classical renditions of iconic film scores. Following the success of these initial concerts, the series expanded to other cities, including Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Pune, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, and Thiruvananthapuram. The one held in Visakhapatnam last year played blockbusters from several Telugu movies.

4 AV AT ITS BEST

Each Candlelight Concert is meticulously curated to provide a unique auditory and visual experience. Venues are transformed with the soft flicker of LED candles, creating an ambience that enhances the musical performance. Audiences are treated to a diverse repertoire, from classical masterpieces by Mozart and Chopin to contemporary numbers by artists like Coldplay, Queen, and A.R. Rahman. In Hyderabad, for instance, the Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel hosted a tribute to Coldplay, where local musicians delivered symphonic arrangements of the band’s iconic songs.

5 LOCAL TOUCH TO A GLOBAL EVENT

A distinguishing feature of Candlelight Concerts in India is the integration of local musical traditions and talents. Performances often feature Indian instruments like the sarangi and tabla, blending seamlessly with classical arrangements to create a fusion that resonates with diverse audiences. This approach not only showcases India’s rich musical heritage but also aligns with the series’ mission to make classical music accessible and engaging for all. The Hyderabad concert this month will have renditions of classics like *Yeh Shaam Mastani*, *Ek Pyaar Ka Nagma*, *Chura Liya to Kal Ho Na Ho* and *Kesariya* from *Brahmastra*. ■ MANJU

Details: [LiveYourCity.com](https://www.liveyourcity.com)

Candlelight: *A Tribute to R.D. Burman*

Venue: Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Banjara Hills

Time and Date: 9 pm on June 7

Price: Rs 1,399 onwards

Duration: 60 minutes (doors open 30 minutes prior to the start time and late entry is not permitted)

PRO TIP:

- You cannot record anything on your phone except in the last few minutes
- Choose your seating according to the zones, although for a small venue, you can choose any zone
- Food not allowed inside the venue
- The venue is wheelchair accessible

MEKONG

Unagi Maki

Unagi has been a popular dish since the Edo period, and it continues to be a staple in Japanese restaurants worldwide. The popularity of unagi is not just because of its flavor, but also its cultural significance.

*Taste a piece of history at Mekong.
Now open at Avasa.*



MOVIES

In theaters



THUG LIFE (TAMIL)

Mani Ratnam and Kamal Haasan reunite after three decades with the movie, *Thug Life*. Directed by Mani Ratnam with music by A.R. Rahman, the Tamil gangster action drama sees Kamal Hasan in the lead role as Rangaraya Sakthivel who is caught between crime and justice. It promises strong character arcs, grittiness, and style.

Date: 5th June



HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON (ENGLISH)

A live-action remake of the 2010 animated movie by the same name, *How to Train Your Dragon* is based on the friendship between Hiccup, a Viking, and Toothless, a night fury dragon. Their bond becomes key to both species forging a new future together as an ancient threat endangers both Vikings and dragons alike on the isle of Berk.

Date: 13th June



SITAARE ZAMEEN PAR (HINDI)

Eighteen years after the release of Aamir Khan and Amol Gupte's *Taare Zameen Par*, that addressed the challenges of dyslexia and gave us a knockout performance by Darsheel Safary, comes *Sitaare Zameen Par*. Directed by R S Prasanna and starring Aamir Khan and Genelia Deshmukh, the film is about a basketball coach sentenced to community service after a drunken incident. He is then assigned to train a team of neurodivergent adults who teach him how to truly live.

Date: 20th June

KANNAPPA (TELUGU)

An epic period piece directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh that depicts the folk tale of Kannappa, an atheist hunter who becomes a devotee of Lord Shiva and plucks out his eyes in an act of devotion. The cast includes Prabhas, Mohan Babu, Mohanlal, Akshay Kumar, Kajal Aggarwal, and Vishnu Manchu as Kannappa.

Date: 27th June



MATERIALISTS (ENGLISH)

Starring actors Dakota Johnson, Pedro Pascal, and Chris Evans, *Materialists*, directed by Celine Song of *Past Lives* fame, tells the story of a young New York City matchmaker whose lucrative business gets complicated as she finds herself torn between the perfect match and her imperfect ex.

Date: 13th June



F1 (ENGLISH)

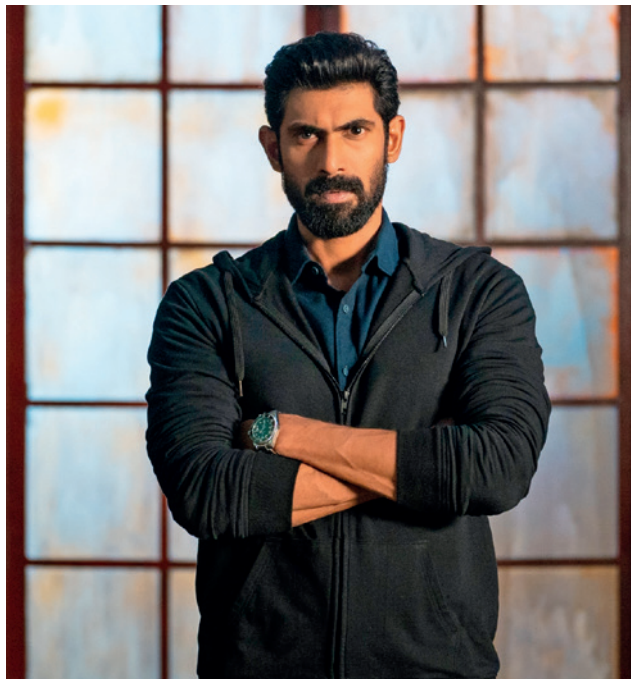
Helmed by filmmaker Joseph Kosinski and producer Brad Pitt, *F1* is about Sonny Hayes, a Formula One driver who was forced into retirement in the 90s after a horrible crash. He makes a comeback after he is requested to mentor rookie prodigy, Noah Pearce, for the Apex Grand Prix team. The summer blockbuster stars Brad Pitt, Damson Idris, Kerry Condon, Tobias Menzies, and Javier Bardem.

Date: 27th June



SERIES

Streaming Online



RANA NAIDU

(HINDI)
NETFLIX

It is official; this month will see the second season of *Rana Naidu* premiere on Netflix. The crime thriller starring actors Venkatesh, Rana Daggubati, Arjun Rampal, and Kriti Kharbanda follows Rana Naidu as he takes on one final job in order to secure the future of his family before leaving the fixing business for good. However, conflicts arise with loved ones and with the looming threat of an underworld figure from his past.



SQUID GAME

(ENGLISH)
NETFLIX

Picking up from the second season's cliffhanger, the third and final season of *Squid Game*, a South Korean survival thriller, returns to Netflix this month. The show that stars Lee Jung-jae, Lee Byung-hun, Wi Ha-jun among more, will see the new season thrust Gi-hun (Lee Jung-jae) back into the heart of the games as he tries to dismantle them in their entirety. ■ IPSHITA



DEVIKA AND DANNY

(TELUGU)
JIO HOTSTAR

The romantic drama series *Devika and Danny* follows Devika, a young woman from a middle-class background whose calm existence is turned upside down when Danny enters her world. He challenges her worldview and introduces her to a deeper emotional realm she never imagined. The series is directed by B. Kishore and stars actors Ritu Varma, Surya Vasistha, Siva Kandukuri, and Subbaraju.



THE BEAR

(ENGLISH)
JIO HOTSTAR

The highly anticipated Season 4 of *The Bear* begins streaming this June. With a cast lineup that includes Jeremy Allen White, Ayo Edebiri, Ebon Moss-Bachrach, Liza Colón-Zayas, Oliver Platt, and Abby Elliot, the Emmy-winning series picks up as Carmy, Sydney, and Richie aim not just to survive, but to elevate their restaurant amid internal tension and external challenges.



SNIPPETS

Red Carpet Rethink

Once a holy grail for high fashion and film royalty, the Cannes red carpet now feels more like a content creators' convention. What used to be a showcase for cinematic legends and couture drama has been gatecrashed by influencers striking poses in borrowed gowns, often without a clue about the films premiering. Sure, digital creators bring a buzz, but when TikTok stars outnumber auteurs, are we celebrating cinema or just selfies? Cannes is still glamorous, no doubt – but the velvet rope's stretching thin, and the sparkle's starting to feel more sponsored than special. Maybe it's time to hit pause and rethink the guest list. Thankfully, we had mainstream actors like Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Aditi Rao Hydari and our 2024 *Laapataa Ladies* star Nitanshi Goel to save the day with their success, talent and red carpet-worthy appearances.

Southern Spunk

Kayadu Lohar is the name lighting up South Indian cinema right now. With her breakout role as Pallavi in the Tamil hit *Dragon*, she's become an overnight sensation, captivating audiences with her expressive eyes and compelling performance. Hailing from Tezpur, Assam, Kayadu's journey from pageant winner to sought-after actress is as unconventional as her name. Before *Dragon*, she appeared in films made in Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, and Marathi, but it was this role that truly showcased her talent. Her social media is buzzing, with fans sharing reels and memes celebrating her rise. Kayadu's cheeky admission of creating her own memes – "Fake it till you make it" – only adds to her charm. With upcoming projects like *Idhayam Murali* and *Funky*, she's poised to be the next big thing in South cinema.



Haters Gonna Hype

They say love me or hate me, just don't ignore me – and Bhumi Pednekar is living proof. Her debut in *The Royals* might've sparked a thousand hot takes online, but guess what? Everyone's talking. From Reddit threads to red carpet reviews, Bhumi's bold choices and edgy portrayal have made her the star of the moment. Critics may squirm, fans may swoon, but silence? Nowhere in sight. That's the thing about "arriving" – it's not about playing safe; it's about making noise. Bhumi's not just acting anymore; she's owning space. And whether you're clapping or cringing, you're definitely watching.

All Hail Queen Nayanthara

After the smashing success of her candid, compelling documentary, Nayanthara, the lady superstar reminded everyone why she still reigns supreme. Now, she's stepping back into her queen bee avatar with an upcoming film 'thriller' titled *Rakkayie*, and the buzz is already royal-level loud. In an industry that's constantly chasing the next big thing, Nayanthara remains the big thing – graceful, grounded, and gloriously relevant. Whether it's real or reel life, she's commanding attention, breaking myths, and proving that true stardom doesn't fade. Rock on, queen.

■ MANJU



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“I love sharing my knowledge, and listening to raw, new voices on reality shows”

INTERVIEW

Legendary playback singer **KS Chithra** opens up about her craft, concerts and the calm behind the curtain

“Let music be the only addiction”

She's called a living legend for a reason. With 13.8 million monthly listeners on Spotify and over 20,000 songs in eight Indian languages, KS Chithra's voice continues to cast a timeless spell – especially on Telugu music lovers. From AR Rahman's haunting *Kannanule* to DSP's soulful *Yennallak gurtocchave vaana*, and her latest songs striking a chord with new-gen composers, the 61-year-old icon proves year after year that she's far from done.

Whether it's playback, reality shows, or sold-out live concerts – including five in Bengaluru last year alone – Chithra continues to ride the music wave with grace. After recent performances in Dublin, she's now headed to Melbourne, Sydney and Hyderabad. Catch her live in *Chitramrutham 2.0: 45 Years of Musical Magic* on June 14. WOW! caught up with the legend herself.

WHAT'S KEEPING HER BUSY:

Currently, I am a judge on several music reality shows, and I am enjoying the mentorship role. I love sharing my knowledge, and listening to raw, new voices on shows like *Star Singer* is such a rewarding experience.

ON PREPPING FOR A CONCERT:

The organizers usually send over the

setlist, usually 25 songs, and the lineup a week in advance. We jam together, understand each other's flow, and do a full-dress rehearsal the day before. That synergy is key.

“I hope to open a music college someday. That's my long-term dream”

ON AI IN MUSIC:

There's a lot of uncertainty. Everyone's anxious – not just in music. While AI can recreate voices like late singers such as Bhavatarini Raja's or Shahul Hameed's, and that's amazing, it can also mess with our emotions. We have to wait and watch.

PLAYBACK SINGING VS. LIVE CONCERTS:

Studio work is easier now – you can retake and tweak endlessly, and you know a hit is around the corner. But live concerts are electric. You get instant feedback and real emotion from the audience. No retakes, though – so it keeps me alert. I want both in my life, in equal measure.

ON STAYING SHARP:

When I'm not travelling or recording,

I continue learning. I still train with my gurus in different music forms. It's important – especially with so many talented Gen Z singers around.

DOWNTIME RITUALS:

When I'm home, I unwind by walking on the treadmill or organizing my cupboards. Cleaning helps reset my space – and I often hum while doing it. It's oddly therapeutic.

WHAT'S NEXT:

I have been running my recording studio – Krishna Digi Designs in Chennai – for two decades. I hope to open a music college someday. That's my long-term dream. I've sung for several new composers this year, so 2025 will be full of fresh releases. The concert schedule is packed too – I'm getting the best of both worlds!

ADVICE TO ASPIRING SINGERS:

- Learn music for the love of it – not just for fame or money.
- Practice every single day. It's the breath of a singer.
- Stay away from drugs. Let music be your only addiction. ■ MANJU

Chithramrutham 2.0

Venue: Akshaya Convention, Financial District

Time: 6 pm onwards, June 14

Price: Rs 999 onwards

Details: Bookmyshow.com

5 AMAZING MUSICAL FACTS ABOUT CHITHRA

1. She has sung over 20,000 songs so far
2. She has sung in over 10 languages including Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Hindi, English and French
3. She holds the record for most National Awards for Best Female Playback Singer – six in total
4. She is the first Indian woman to perform at the Royal Albert Hall in London
5. She received a Grammy certificate for her vocals on the album *Sacred Chants of India*

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BOOKS



THIS BOOK WON'T TEACH YOU PARENTING

Riri G Trivedi and Anagha Nagpal

This Book Won't Teach You Parenting by renowned psychotherapist Riri G. Trivedi and parent educator Anagha Nagpal provides a 'parenting

compass' that reflects an Indian worldview which might seem alien to the Western world. Addressing the unique challenges faced by Gen Z, this book delves into crucial topics like social media, phone usage, and teen relationships. It is rich with research-backed insights on parenting styles, personal anecdotes, practical checklists, and bilingual online resources. While delving into how traumas of parents impact their parenting styles, it also offers unusual insights and practical guidance, it's an essential resource for Indian parents seeking to understand and improve their parenting approach.

HARI KRISHNA'S CARTOONS

Hari Krishna



Hari Krishna's Cartoons is a collection of his cartoons that are a delightful escape into a world where everyday observations are twisted with gentle humor and rendered with a distinctive artistic flair. For Hari Krishna, cartoons haven't just been a pastime; they've been a lifelong passion, a constant companion. Containing 132 cartoons of various types, the book offers a comprehensive and engaging exploration of his unique comedic vision. The passerby seeking a phone charger instead of water, and the wife's reaction to her husband's disguise offer a wry commentary on the selfie-obsessed era.

MATRIARCH

Tina Knowles



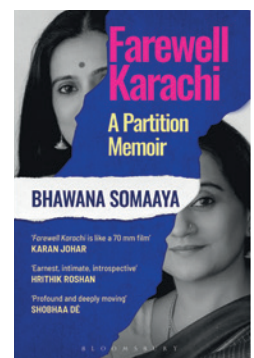
Matriarch is about the mother of icons Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Solange Knowles and her bonus daughter Kelly Rowland. She is known the world over as a Matriarch with a capital M: the woman who raised and inspired some of the great artists of our time. But this story is about so much more than that. For the first time ever, Tina Knowles shares her remarkable story in *Matriarch*. A life of grief and tragedy, love and heartbreak, the nurturing of her superstar daughters – and the perseverance and audacity it takes for a girl from Galveston, Texas to change the world. This intimate and revealing memoir is a celebration of the wisdom that women, mothers and daughters pass on to each other across generations. ■ MANJU



Farewell Karachi: A Partition Memoir by **Bhawana Somaaya** is about a family that is uprooted during partition

Displaced and displeased

Farewell Karachi: A Partition Memoir by Bhawana Somaaya traces the journey of a Gujarati family uprooted during Partition, from Karachi to Kutch to Bombay as it was called then. Spanning over a century and five generations, this intimate, mosaic-like memoir captures the lingering shadow of Partition and its impact on identity, belonging, and survival. Through stories, traditions, heartbreaks, and heirloom recipes, she reflects on what it means to build – and rebuild home. It is a sweeping family saga that confronts the inter-generational trauma of displacement and the unyielding quest for belonging.



AUTHOR SPEAK

When celebrity journalist Bhawana's therapist asked about her deepest fear, she instinctively replied, "Not having a roof over my head." Only then did she confront the generational trauma of displacement that had silently shaped her life. Her new book captures the essence of her journey.



AUTHOR BIO

Bhawana has been a film critic for over 40 years and has written for a galaxy of Indian publications. She is the former editor of *Screen* and has authored 19 books on cinema, including biographies of Hema Malini and Amitabh Bachchan. Several of her books are textbooks for students of cinema in India. She has served on the advisory panel of the Indian Central Board of Film Certification and the governing council of the Film and Television Institute of India. ■ MANJU

Book available on Amazon by Bloomsbury Publishing. Rs 349



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Glitterati Indeed

May 13, Banjara Hills

Zambian emeralds, kunzites and tourmalines besides power women were the glitterati who stole the show at Hyphen, the launch of a limited-edition capsule collection by fine jewelry brand Amaris, hosted by entrepreneur Prerna Rajpal.

SUNORY AND FRIENDS

NIKITA RAWAL

VED BHARAMBE AND RAVI PRAKASH

PRERNA AND SUSHILA

Twoood's Toast to Icons

May 8, Le Meridien

The International Iconic Awards made its Tollywood debut with a glitzy pre-launch on May 28, where the who's who of showbiz brought star power, sparkle, and serious photo ops.

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SULAGNA AND SINDHU



DIYA

Nights and Bites

May 2, Kondapur

Veto Bar & Kitchen's launch wasn't just a party — it was a masterclass in cocktails, curated bites, and a guestlist that screamed glam and exclusive with an exclusive playlist.



ARJUN AND BHAVANA



MARY AND HIMANSHU



MISS WORLD CONTESTANTS



Beauties With A Purpose

May 14, Palampet

Beauty queens from around the globe, who are taking part in the 72nd Miss World Festival in the city, were draped in exquisite Indian handloom sarees, with flowers and traditional jewelry, visited the Ramappa Temple.



**fashion
yatra**

by Kamini Saraf



Monsoon Edit

**26 JUNE
TAJ KRISHNA
HYDERABAD**



spotted



SARA AND ZARA
PUJI AND DEVESH

Sporty Does It

May 4, Sattva Knowledge Park

With 30 giant screens streaming the IPL, cocktails in full swing, and the DJ dropping bangers, the launch of Underdoggs Sports Bar & Grill gave the city's party crowd a night to remember.



RIHANNA, HITEN AND JASNEET



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