



“JioStar’s Vision: Bold, Culturally Rooted and Scalable Storytelling for a Young, Diverse India” – Alok Jain & Krishnan Kutty at APOS 2025

~ JioStar shares its intent to increasing South programming volume for Gen Z by 7 to 10 times~

~Content Chiefs emphasize the broadcaster's role as a collaborator rather than a gatekeeper~

Bali, June 26, 2025: JioStar Entertainment leaders, Alok Jain and Krishnan Kutty, outlined a compelling vision for the future of Indian storytelling - one that’s bold, inclusive, emotionally resonant, and built for scale - at the Asia Pacific Video Operators Summit (APOS) 2025, hosted by Media Partners Asia (MPA) in Bali.

In a fireside session titled ‘*Inside the Next Wave of Indian Storytelling*’, moderated by Vivek Couto, Executive Director and Co-Founder of MPA, Alok Jain and Krishnan Kutty articulated JioStar’s intent to redefine the entertainment ecosystem by investing in culturally rooted narratives, championing local voices, programming for the youth and creating a truly platform-agnostic content experience.

On how JioStar is supporting new creative voices, Jain said, *“In a country as creatively diverse as India, it’s no longer about scaling content, it’s about resetting the creative ecosystem. **At JioStar, we’re committed to ensuring creators are not boxed in by platforms, formats, or legacy structures.** Today’s storytellers move seamlessly, from short-form to long-form, social to television, digital to streaming. **Our role is not to act as gatekeepers, but as collaborators.**”* He continued, *“We’re building mechanisms that empower creators to move fluidly across mediums, with opportunities that evolve with their voice. That’s how we grow the ecosystem and expand its impact.”*

On the shifting definition of boldness in storytelling, Kutty said, *“What was considered bold five or six years ago is not what’s considered bold now. Back then, it was about scale and visual spectacle. **Today, boldness is about pushing societal norms, asking deeper questions, and doing it within the Indian context. We’re not in California; we’re in India and we need to be rooted in our cultural values.** Our job is to push boundaries, but also to carry our audience with us.”*

Jain spoke about the platform’s role in evolving formats. *“The Indian consumer is constantly evolving. **It’s a young country. People are exposed to new things, and they’re demanding and unforgiving. If the story isn’t great, they won’t watch, regardless of who stars in it.**”* He added, *“We must go back to first principles, not just to innovate in stories but in formats. Take ‘Thukra Ke Mera Pyaar’, a 19-episode show with 50-minute episodes each, a debut director, debut star cast — and it was a hit from day one. That’s proof that the audience will embrace newness if the content speaks to them. We’re also exploring non-fiction, micro dramas, and more. Innovation isn’t a tactic for us. It’s the baseline.”*



Kutty and Alok concluded the session talking about JioStar's acute focus on youth audiences going forward. Kutty said *"While MTV and the youth cluster are doing some outstanding work, broadcasters and streamers have not programmed enough for Gen Z. **For the South, we are committed to increasing our programming volume for that audience by 7 to 10 times.**"*

Jain added, *"**If the industry is to run in a sustainable manner, we must drive content profitably — and focusing on youth is a big one for us.**"*

Additional Quotes

Krishnan Kutty

- Talking about building content for multiple Indias, Kutty emphasized *"The diversity of India is a gift from a content creator perspective - every state, every region is a source of different perspectives which provides a wealth of stories. What's remarkable is how audiences across the country embrace content beyond their own language or state. A small state like Kerala, for instance, creates stories that travel nationwide. 80% of the consumption on JioHotstar for Malayalam content is outside the state. By adapting successful shows across our 10-language network, we see firsthand that great stories truly transcend borders."*
- *"India's digital video's scale is massive with 500–600 million users consuming 4–5 hours of content daily across all formats. The real challenge isn't what to do, but what not to do. There's significant headroom for both subscription and ad growth. We see untapped opportunity in the space between premium long-form dramas and social storytelling. What makes India truly exciting is its multilingual ecosystem, where diverse storytelling formats and innovative monetization models are actively being explored and adopted."*
- *"Great stories are emerging from every corner of the country, and we're listening closely. Whether it's a creator from Tirunelveli crafting a youth drama or a gripping cop story rooted in Kochi, we're seeing incredible authenticity. We're especially looking at young creators from smaller towns who've earned audience trust and who bring lived-in perspectives." He added, "What we're backing are stories that speak to universal values — stories about identity, aspiration, family and justice. These are the kinds of narratives that connect deeply and scale widely. We believe these are the stories that will travel across regions, platforms and generations."*
- *"I can reflect on what feels like a broken economic model. In streaming, we've escalated prices to a point where producers have become B2B entities, creating primarily for the platform, not the end consumer. That has led to a disconnect in the kind of content being*



created. Now we're seeing cost bases increase — talent costs, production costs, while consumer demand is softening. Unless the model is reset, I believe it's deeply broken."

Alok Jain

- *On the state of theatrical entertainment in India, Jain said, "Every industry goes through phases of change, and the theatrical space is no different. We've been in a difficult period where people aren't coming to theatres unless the movie is really, really good." He added, "Creators need to tell more authentic stories, and theatre owners must reinvent, whether through pricing, experience, or value delivery. Watching a film today means a three-hour commitment, and that's a big ask. Theatrical viewing needs to feel like an experience, not just a screening."*
- *"If the industry is to run in a sustainable manner, we must drive content profitably — and focusing on youth is a big part of that."*
- *"Consumers are adapting to multiple formats, and I believe the space will settle. There's a reset in process, and the industry is very cognizant of that. A lot of work is already underway. This economic space is available across all content types in the country, whether it's theatrical films or digital-first content. There's a big reset required. But that also means there's a big opportunity to rethink, reformat, and rebuild."*
- *On India's unique market opportunity, Alok Jain said "With a billion young people, 22 languages, and a thriving economy across sectors, India is unmatched in scale and diversity. What makes it unique is how TV and digital coexist, 800 million viewers watch the JioStar network, and 400 million viewers stream on JioHotstar. What makes India exciting is not just its size, it's the scale, youth, diversity, and openness to change, making it a strategic market."*
- *"There are approximately 320K hours of content on JioStar, cutting across many languages. The common thread across them is human emotion and shared experience. Our focus is to tell authentic stories from every corner of the country—stories that resonate universally. That emotional truth is what allows Indian content to scale and even travel globally."*

About JioStar (Entertainment):

JioStar's Entertainment business offers India's finest storytelling across TV and Digital and is a dominant force in film entertainment. It is home to some of the most popular and iconic entertainment brands such as Star Plus, Colors, MTV, Nickelodeon, National Geographic, and more. With an impressive reach of over 750 million viewers weekly, it delivers unparalleled content that captivates audiences every day. JioStar's Entertainment portfolio includes high-impact dramas, disruptive reality formats, and blockbuster movie premieres in 10 languages, shaping cultural narratives on a grand scale. Spanning over 80 television



channels and JioHotstar, JioStar sets the standard across genres like general entertainment, youth, music, regional, infotainment, and kids' content.