

# Harshaali Malhotra, who played Munni in ‘Bajrangi Bhaijaan’, set to make her Telugu debut

Harshaali Malhotra, the little girl who played Munni in Salman Khan-starrer Bajrangi Bhaijaan, is set to make her Telugu cinema debut with Boyapati Sreenu’s Akhanda 2: Thaandavam, she said on Wednesday.

“Munni was not just a character; she was a feeling, a memory, a heartbeat –something that stayed with you, and with me,” Harshaali wrote on Instagram, remembering her character in the 2015 blockbuster.

“After all these years, I’ve held on to your love -patiently, silently, and with a heart full of gratitude. While you were remembering Munni, I was preparing, learning, growing, and becoming. So that one day, when I return, I return not just as that little girl, but as someone ready to feel everything again on screen, with you,” she added alongside her first-look



poster from the upcoming Telugu film.

The 17-year-old actress said she will be essaying the role of Janani in Akhanda 2: Thaandavam, set to hit theatres on September 25.

“And now, I’m finally ready to share her with you. Meet Janani - a new story, a new emotion, a

new chapter of me. She laughs, she dreams, she speaks from the heart, and I’ve poured my soul into every scene. From Munni’s silence to Janani ‘s voice, this isn’t just my return- It’s ours,” Harshaali concluded. The upcoming Telugu film is a sequel to Boyapati Sreenu’s 2021 release Akhanda. Akhanda 2 stars

Nandamuri Balakrishna in the lead. The film is backed by 14 Reels Plus. Harshaali made her Bollywood debut in 2015 with Kabir Khan’s Bajrangi Bhaijaan. In the film, she portrayed Shahida Aziz, aka Munni, a mute Pakistani girl who gets lost in India and bumps into Pawan (Salman Khan). Pawan then undertakes the mission to send Munni back to her home safely.

The film emerged as a box office hit, earning Rs 918.18 crore worldwide, as per media reports. The cast of Bajrangi Bhaijaan also includes Kareena Kapoor Khan and Nawazuddin Siddiqui.

Harshaali has also appeared in television shows like Qubool Hai and Laut Aao Trisha.

Akhanda 2: Thaandavam will release in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam languages.

# Aamir Khan to play Dahaa in Rajinikanth-starrer ‘Coolie’; first-look poster out

Production banner Sun Pictures on Thursday dropped the first-look poster of Bollywood actor Aamir Khan from Tamil superstar Rajinikanth’s upcoming film Coolie, set to hit screens on August 14.

The poster features Aamir in a never-before-seen avatar, as he smokes a pipe and flaunts his buffed-up physique. The 60-year-old actor will essay the role of Dahaa in the upcoming film.

“Introducing #AamirKhan as Dahaa, from the world of #Coolie. #Coolie is all set to dominate IMAX screens worldwide from August 14th,” wrote the makers alongside the poster on X.

The film boasts a star-



studded cast, including Nagarjuna, Pooja Hegde and Malayalam actor Soubin Shahir. Kannada actor Upendra, Shruti Haasan, and Sathyaraj round off the cast of the actioner directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj.

While Shruti Haasan plays Preethi in Coolie, Sathyaraj is set to play Rajasekhar.

Rajinikanth wrapped up shooting for Coolie earlier this year.

The music for Coolie

has been composed by Anirudh Ravichander, who had previously composed the music for Rajinikanth’s Jailer.

Coolie marks Lokesh Kanagaraj’s seventh directorial venture. In 2019, he established the Lokesh Cinematic Universe (LCU) with Kaithi, which he followed up with Vikram (2022) and Leo (2023). It remains to be seen if Coolie is also part of the LCU.

# Instagram accounts of Mawra Hocane, Ahad Raza Mir blocked again for Indian users after brief access

Instagram accounts of several Pakistani celebrities — including actors Mawra Hocane, Ahad Raza Mir, Yumna Zaidi and Danish Taimoor — have been blocked again in India, days after they became temporarily visible to users in the country.

According to media reports, officials in the thick of events clarified that the temporary visibility was due to a technical error that caused the accounts to be inadvertently unblocked.

Accounts of Pakistani celebrities, athletes and diplomats, including Fawad Khan, Atif Aslam, Mahira Khan, Hania Aamir, Shoaib Akhtar and Hocane were first suspended in May, following the April 22



Pahalgam terror attack, which claimed at least 26 lives.

On July 1, however, Indian users noticed that Instagram accounts of some of these public figures, including Hocane and Zaidi, had become visible. The brief access reportedly triggered strong criticism from the All Indian Cine Workers Association (AICWA), which demanded a total severing of cultural ties with Pakistan in a letter addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. At the time the report

was filed on Thursday, an attempt to view the restricted Instagram accounts yielded the following message: “Account not available in India. This is because we complied with a legal request to restrict this content.”

After the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, Hocane had expressed grief over the incident on social media. However, the actress called India’s retaliatory Operation Sindoor on May 7 a “cowardly act”, drawing the ire of netizens.

# ‘The Last Of Us’ co-creator Neil Druckmann steps back from Season 3 of HBO show

Neil Druckmann, the co-creator and co-showrunner of the critically-acclaimed HBO series "The Last Of Us", has decided to take a step back from the show's upcoming third season.

"The Last Of Us", which features Pedro Pascal and Bella Ramsay, is based on the video game franchise of the same name, which was created by Druckmann and produced by Naughty Dog. He served as the creator, showrunner, writer and director alongside Craig Mazin.

Druckmann announced his exit from the series in a statement posted on the official Instagram account of Naughty Dog.

“I’ve made the difficult decision to step away from my creative involvement in 'The Last of Us' on HBO. With work completed on season two and



before any meaningful work starts on season three, now is the right time for me to transition my complete focus to Naughty Dog and its future projects, including writing and directing our exciting next game, 'Intergalactic: The Heretic Prophet', along with my responsibilities as Studio Head and Head of Creative," he said. Druckmann further said

that creating "The Last of Us" series has been a "career highlight" for him.

“It’s been an honor to work alongside Craig Mazin to executive produce, direct and write on the last two seasons. I’m deeply thankful for the thoughtful approach and dedication the talented cast and crew took to adapting 'The Last of Us Part I' and the continued

adaptation of 'The Last of Us Part II,'" he added.

Besides Druckmann, co-writer and executive producer Halley Gross is also exiting the series, she announced on social media.

"The Last of Us" started in 2022 with its first season, which took place 20 years after modern civilization was destroyed by a deadly virus.

It featured Pascal as Joel, a hardened survivor, who is hired to smuggle Ellie (Ramsey), a 14-year-old girl, out of an oppressive quarantine zone to the Fireflies, a cure-searching organization.

The second season, which came out earlier this year, picks up five years after the events of the first season. Joel and Ellie are drawn into conflict with each other and a world even more dangerous and unpredictable than the one they left behind.

# Why are farm goods holding up the India-US trade deal?

UNITED STATE, JULY 3

U.S. and India trade negotiators were pushing on Wednesday to finalise a tariff-reducing deal ahead of President Donald Trump's July 9 negotiating deadline, but disagreements over U.S. dairy and agriculture remained unresolved.

WHY ARE FARM GOODS IMPORTS SENSITIVE IN INDIA?

Agriculture and its allied areas contribute just 16% to India's \$3.9 trillion economy, but sustain nearly half of the country's 1.4 billion population. As farmers remain the most powerful voting bloc, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government was forced into a rare retreat four years ago when it tried to push through controversial farm laws.

The prospect of cheaper imports from the United States threatens to drive down local prices, handing the opposition a fresh opportunity to attack the government. New Delhi has traditionally kept agriculture out of Free Trade Agreements with other nations. Granting market access to the U.S. could force India to extend similar concessions to other



trading partners. HOW DO INDIAN AND US FARMS COMPARE?

The average Indian farm comprises just 1.08 hectares, compared to 187 hectares in the United States. In dairy, the average herd size in India is two to three animals per farmer, compared to hundreds in the United States.

This difference makes it difficult for small Indian farmers to compete with their U.S. counterparts.

Farming in India remains largely unmechanized because small, fragmented land holdings leave little room for large machinery. In many regions, farmers rely on techniques passed down through generations, a sharp

contrast to U.S. farms, where cutting-edge equipment and AI-driven technologies have raised productivity.

WHICH PRODUCTS IS US LOBBYING FOR? WHY IS INDIA RESISTING?

The United States is pressing India to open its markets to a wide range of American products, including dairy, poultry, corn, soybeans, rice, wheat, ethanol, citrus fruits, almonds, pecans, apples, grapes, canned peaches, chocolates, cookies, and frozen French fries. While India is willing to grant greater access to U.S. dry fruits and apples, it is holding back on allowing imports of corn, soybeans, wheat, and dairy products.

India does not allow

genetically modified (GM) food crops, while most U.S. corn and soybean production is GM-based.

Dairy remains a sensitive issue in India, where cultural and dietary preferences strongly influence food choices. Indian consumers are particularly concerned that cattle in the U.S. are often fed with animal by-products, a practice that conflicts with Indian food habits.

WHY DOES INDIA OPPOSE US ETHANOL FOR BLENDING WITH GASOLINE?

A key aim of India's Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) program is to cut dependence on energy imports by blending domestically-produced ethanol with gasoline. Significant investments by domestic companies mean that India is now close to achieving its ambitious target of blending 20% ethanol. Importing ethanol would undermine those companies.

The EBP also helps manage surpluses of rice, sugarcane, and corn by diverting them to ethanol production. Allowing imports of U.S. ethanol would be a serious setback for India's emerging distillery sector.

# Stock markets decline on fag-end selling, financial stocks drag; Sensex drops 170 points

MUMBAI, JULY 3

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty pared intra-day gains to close lower on Thursday due to last-hour selling in financial and metal shares. The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 170.22 points or 0.20 per cent to settle at 83,239.47. During the day, it jumped 440.4 points or 0.52 per cent to 83,850.09.

The 50-share NSE Nifty declined by 48.10 points or 0.19 per cent to 25,405.30.

Among the Sensex firms, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Adani Ports, Trent, State Bank of India, Titan and Tata Consultancy Services were the laggards.

However, Maruti, Infosys, NTPC, Asian Paints, Eternal and Hindustan Unilever were among the biggest gainers.

"Markets traded volatile on the weekly expiry day and ended marginally lower, continuing the ongoing consolidation phase," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

Sector-wise, the trend remained mixed – auto and



pharma posted gains, while metal and realty were among the top losers, he added. The broader indices also mirrored this movement and closed on a flat note. In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index settled higher while Hong Kong's Hang Seng ended lower.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. The US markets ended mostly higher on Wednesday. The Indian services sector growth touched a ten-month high in June aided by robust expansion in international sales and job creation, amid positive demand trends and ongoing improvement in sales, a monthly survey said on Thursday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India

Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from 58.8 in May to 60.4 in June, driven by sharp upturn in new business orders. In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.03 per cent to USD 68.40 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,561.62 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

On Wednesday, the BSE Sensex ended 287.60 points or 0.34 per cent lower at 83,409.69. The Nifty declined by 88.40 points or 0.35 per cent to settle at 25,453.40.

-RNI No. JKENG/2009/30688

Printed Published Edited and Owned by Sushil Kumar Jain, Printed at Kanhya Offset Printing Press 42 Mast Garh Pirkho Road Shitla Mandir Jammu. Published from H.No. 60, Gali Khilonia, Jammu. Mob:- 94191-07060 E-Mail: 29xnews@gmail.com