

foodService

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OUR BRANDS HAVE CHANGED THE EATING-OUT MARKET

– Zorawar Kalra

Founder & MD, Massive Restaurants Pvt. Ltd.

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New gastronomic hot spots in Mumbai

A passel of operators are bringing a whiff of fresh change with novel food concepts and formats

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Noodle bars in QSR play

Wai Wai City shows the way by offering exciting flavors at friendly prices

Featured inside: Kripesh Sanghvi | Chef Gurpreet Singh Gehdu | Rahul Lall | Lokesh Krishnan | Andrea Freeborough



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India's Food & Beverage industry is undergoing a massive transformation. Unlike a few years ago, when dining out was more of an occasion-based activity, people and families are eating out more often today as a matter of convenience. Eating out has become a part of the present day culture, especially in the metros, mini-metros and Tier I cities. This trend is being driven by the rise in income and increasing numbers of nuclear families and working women/ men.

As the trend of dining out on a regular basis gathers momentum, having a distinct value proposition – in terms of food customization, nouvelle cuisines, safe and healthier food offerings, ingredients and the pricing of dishes – is becoming increasingly critical. People are demanding and favoring increased customization of food! They are willing to experiment with the novelties in cuisines and combinations. Consumers love dishes that offer diversity in taste, style and origins.

To cater to this growing trend, F&B players are crafting recipes to suit the flavors and palates of their customers. Chefs are innovating to the extent of personalized plating, live kitchens and even food-on-the-go. Indian F&B counters have an array of exciting and delightful choices to offer their customers. The blending of cuisines, like Italian with Thai, is another evolved trend fast catching in vogue. At the same time, restaurants, which focused solely on food, are now adding and expanding their beverage offerings. This has boosted the development of both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages at both the product and retail levels.

Going ahead and into the new year, we can expect to see a more pronounced shift towards customer engagement with the dining spaces and a further elevation in the country's foodservice industry benchmarks. The months ahead will see us enter another exciting period of big learnings about the Indian food market.



Amitabh Taneja

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With over 12,000 foodservice outlets and around 2.8 m inhabitants, the restaurant density in Dubai is irrefutably high. From international fast-food outlets in the numerous mega malls, via cafes and casual eateries, to fine dining establishments in five-star hotels, the dining options are many and varied.

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“We have created brands that are trendsetters and changed the eating-out market”

— Zorawar Kalra
Founder and MD, Massive Restaurants Pvt. Ltd



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New concepts and formats raise Mumbai’s gourmet benchmarks

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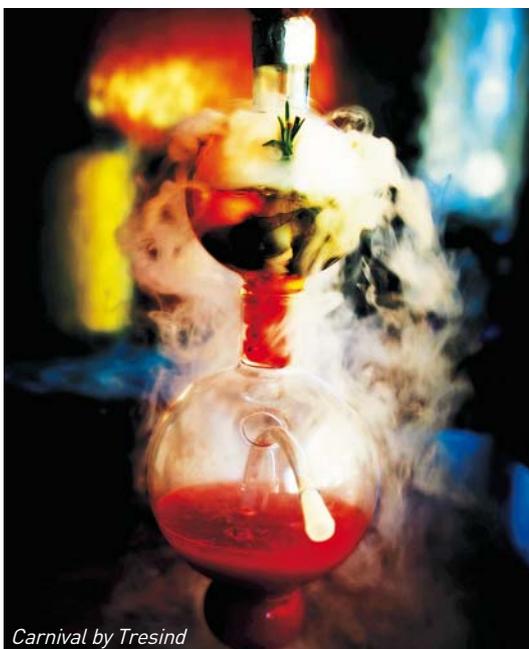
“Indian chefs have a better understanding of the science of cooking”

Chef Saurabh Udinia of Farzi Café & Masala Bar at Massive Restaurants Pvt Ltd., speaks about the innovative twists to Indian cuisine at his outlets and how he sees various ethnic and regional Indian dishes evolving in the future.

A Foodie

Paradise

With over 12,000 foodservice outlets and around 2.8 m inhabitants, the restaurant density in Dubai is irrefutably high. From international fast-food outlets in the numerous mega malls, via cafes and casual eateries, to fine dining establishments in five-star hotels, the dining options are many and varied. And it is with good reason that the city is considered a foodie capital of the region. Over the last couple of years, competition has intensified resulting not only in the emergence of more creative dining-out experiences but also in the rise of homegrown concepts tailored to the needs of Dubai's visitors and residents. Bettina Quabius explores the most talked about restaurant openings in recent months.



Carnival by Tresind



Bazzar



Nick & Scott

City Guide: Dubai

Though in the midst of an economically challenging period, Dubai's restaurant market is continuing to grow steadily. The number of restaurant openings in 2017 more than tripled over the last two years with international franchise operators expanding their business as well as more and more local independent players developing new and exciting concepts. The high percentage of expats from all over the world, an affluent and well-travelled local population plus rapidly increasing tourism figures (2016 the world's fourth most popular travel destination with 14.9 m visitors) help to ensure that an interesting mix of cuisines, restaurant formats and styles has been shaping the city's dining scene over the years.

Multi-cuisine food hall

In a city famed for its novel dining experiences, what would somewhere truly fresh, vibrant and exciting look like? As an answer to this question Kunal and Rania Lahori, CEO and co-founder of Dubai-based Create Hospitality, launched Bazzar, a multi-cuisine eatery located at the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC). Based on the food hall concept, it features a casual Vietnamese station serving steamed bao buns, traditional soups and noodles; a 'meat district' selling American-style burgers, sandwiches and hotdogs; an elegant dining room offering a good selection of classic salads, pizza and pasta and signature fish and meat dishes, a Mediterranean bakery and coffee counter, and a cocktail bar. The multilayered venue has soon become popular amongst Dubai residents, not just for its diverse food offer but also for its Happy Hour and its 'Prohibition Brunch' on Fridays with unlimited starters, choice of one main and dessert.

The interiors by Bishop Design feature a combination of contemporary art (including a portrait of Argentinian leader Ernesto 'Che' Guevara), rustic wooden flooring, mesh metal work with brass finishes, and custom-designed leather furnishings. www.bazzar.com

Gastronomic fiesta

With their post-modern take on Indian cuisine Carnival by Tresind has successively changed the Dubai landscape of Indian fine dining since its opening in September 2016. Catering to the myriad of cultures that flaunt the bustling corporate hub of DIFC, the restaurant is a celebration of Indian food in an ambience that is both chic and minimalistic. As the name narrates, 'Carnival' is a gastronomic fiesta, a mélange of fun and food. The idea of its founders, Passion F&B Management Consultancies, is to revisit the past

and bring back culinary techniques that wouldn't be popularized and have always been intrinsic to India. The spectacular presentation of dishes such as 'Don't Be Shellfish', 'Meatilicious' or 'Utterly Butterly' goes along with masterfully prepared cocktails and mocktails.

The welcoming interiors of the restaurant are finished in colourful hues and are perfectly complemented with the brushed cream and black wooden floors and ceiling. Eye-catching elements such as trees in metallic bronze reaching skywards or a custom made bottled glass ceiling of the open bar add a very special dramatic flair to the place. www.carnivalbytresind.com

Purity and simplicity

In the heart of City Walk, one of Dubai's trendy outdoor shopping and entertainment destinations in Jumeirah by Dubai based holding company Meraas, two-Michelin Star Chef Tim Raue in November 2016 launched his first foray outside of Germany, Dragonfly. It is a contemporary Pan-Asian restaurant which believes in "simplicity in presentation and complexity in creation", offering a modern approach to Asian cooking – from source to plate, purity and simplicity are at the heart of every dish. Dragonfly boasts a menu that has elements of familiarity as well as thrilling new additions, which the team behind head chef Christian Singer who has been working under Raue's mentorship since 2011, are constantly updating by combining methods and ingredients reaped from diverse cultures – Japanese product quality, French technique, Thai flavours and Chinese spices. Dragonfly does not serve alcohol, so the culinary team developed tasteful alternatives which they call jines (a word combination of 'juice' and 'wine') which have been

carefully selected to complement and enhance the simple Asian flavours. Diners can ask the sommelier for recommendations and sample exquisite pairings that give way to unexplored senses. The lush interiors with bold colours and luxurious textures are the perfect counterpart to the sophisticated simplicity of its dishes. Asian-inspired lanterns add atmosphere and personality to the venue, drawing attention in a stylish way. www.dragonfly.ae

Informal take on modern dining

Set up in a prime location in Souk Madinat Jumeirah, folly by Nick & Scott is a new venture from Nick Alves and Scott Price, two young restaurateurs and pioneers of Dubai's food scene who worked for Gordon Ramsay for fifteen years before launching their own restaurant and – together with Viktorija Paplauskiene – successfully building up the Taste Kitchen brand. Since early 2017, the homegrown concept offers an informal take on modern dining in a relaxed, welcoming environment. When entering the venue, guests are lead through a secret tunnel up a narrow staircase into the very heart of the bustling restaurant. Exposed brick walls, light blue banquettes and traditional dark wood tables and chairs create a classic, timeless feel. Besides an intimate dining area and open kitchen, the restaurant has two

With their post-modern take on Indian cuisine Carnival by Tresind has successively changed the Dubai landscape of Indian fine dining since its opening in September 2016.



Dragonfly



Nick & Scott



Poke Poke

“We have **created brands** that are **trendsetters** and changed the eating-out market”

Zorawar Kalra, Founder and Managing Director of Massive Restaurants Pvt. Ltd, which operates popular and cutting edge brands such as Masala Library by Jiggs Kalra, Farzi Cafe, KODE, BBQ'D, among others, is appreciatively hailed as the 'Prince of Indian Cuisine'. A pioneer and innovator, he is one of the most admired and influential restaurateurs in India and credited with setting several benchmarks in service and hospitality excellence through his innovative F&B brands and novel dining concepts.

Sanjay Kumar of Foodservice India catches up with the trendsetting restaurateur to get him to talk about his love of the foodservice business and his relentless pursuit of unique concepts and novel formats through his pioneering brands, which have helped introduce many enduring trends in the country's eating-out market.

Which new F&B concepts did you introduce this year at your restaurants?

It has always been our constant endeavor to delight patrons with novel, memorable dining experiences. This year Massive Restaurants launched quite a few F&B novelties. We introduced our first craft beer brewery – BBQ'D – showcasing an assortment of unique, handcrafted, premium craft beers in UB City, Bengaluru. BBQ'D is a modern, cutting edge grill and brewery concept which, for the first time, amalgamates serious dining and a fun brewery atmosphere under one roof. We also launched a freestyle bar and kitchen concept with KODE and another modern Asian bistro concept at Colaba, Mumbai, with Pa Pa Ya.

How much do you believe in these concepts standing the test of time and resonating with the ever evolving consumer tastes?

All our F&B brands have won critical acclaim and top awards, which testify to the enduring appeal of their concepts. Masala Library by Jiggs Kalra, since its inception, has always been at the



Zorawar Kalra

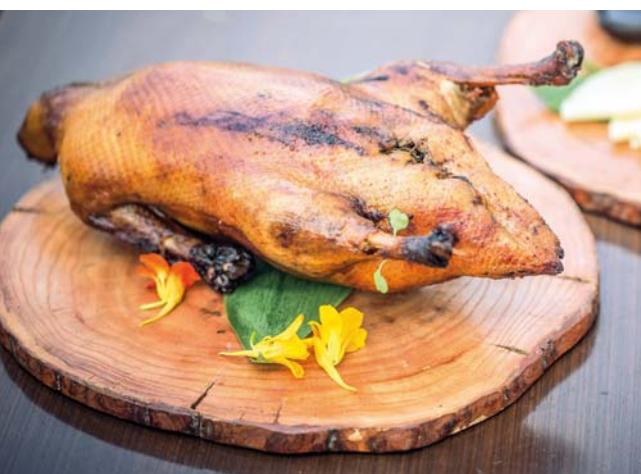
forefront of culinary innovation and excellence. In the smart casual dining format, Made in Punjab is a name to reckon with. Farzi Café has pushed the envelope of the modern Indian bistro concept. Pa Pa Ya, and MasalaBar offer a cutting edge, post-modern, scientific laboratory style bar experience to revolutionize the Indian nightlife. Similarly, the launch of our sixth concept – KODE – raises the bar of post molecular dining experience with global cuisine reinvented in a freestyle bar & kitchen setting.





the implementation of GST and demonetization and also partially on account of the liquor ban. Thankfully, their impact has now mostly been reversed. But the industry perhaps had one of its worst years ever due to circumstances outside its control. Though some of the effects of GST and demonetization seem to have tapered off, the end results are still lingering. We expect the second half of the year October–March to be significantly better than the first half has been.

Due to the season time coming in with better conditions across the country and with the general propensity to consume to slightly improve due to better sentiments, the business of eating out will be back in the groove. So I think there might be some kind of an increase in business going forward. I am definitely expecting the numbers



With God's grace and our continued efforts, Massive Restaurants has already achieved unprecedented growth over the past year. Having said that, this is just the beginning. In the works is a new signature gourmet Indian confectionary concept, which will be yet another "by Jiggs Kalra" concept to be introduced shortly. The coming months shall see our brands expanding across some key cities in India and globally as well.

Which of your restaurants you would like to mention for having shown exceptional performance and what are the reasons that you would attribute for their success?

A lot of our restaurants have shown excellent performance and results. We don't want to name any single one out but definitely our brands such as Farzi Café, Masala Library and Pa Pa Ya continue to show impressive growth. Our new freestyle bar & kitchen concept KODE has also developed an amazing fan following and is growing extensively. Similarly, our new brand BBQ'D has also been received very well. Overall, we are very happy with the performance of our F&B brands.

What is your take on the foodservice business this year and how do you see it shaping up next year?

The foodservice business this year has taken a bit of beating because of various events such as

to be significantly better than the first half of the year. But the downward pressure of some of these major economic events will continue to have a drag effect on the overall sales forecast. The companies that are able to survive this period will come out as much stronger and we expect the sentiments as well as the consumption patterns to significantly improve starting from the first quarter of fiscal year 2018–2019.

Which are the technology tools you have adopted for better service delivery and customer satisfaction?

We are extensively doing a lot of CRM activities and have incorporated a lot of software into our system to be able to better improve our customer relationships and through that our overall sales. The use of IT is imperative to the growth of F&B brands. It is not just limited to the back-end tools but also pertains to the use social media. In fact, 90% of our overall marketing budget is towards social media. We are also in the advanced stages of incorporating a high level ERP system through which our overall systems and processes can become a lot better. For delivery, our company does not use any software as we do not believe in deliveries at the moment from our retail outlets. We are very keen on online reservation systems because they help in becoming an extension of our

Masala Library by Jiggs Kalra, since its inception, has always been at the forefront of culinary innovation and excellence.

New concepts and formats raise Mumbai's gourmet benchmarks

by Kripesh Sanghvi

The new and emerging food hot spots in Mumbai, novel food concepts gaining ground and the kind of new foodservice establishments opening up are changing the city's culinary landscape in delightful ways.

While India has always been a food-loving country with each region having its own special cuisine, Indians have never been very big on eating out. But all that is changing now. The restaurant industry in India has been growing at a rapid pace over the past decade or so and the growth story is set to continue for the next foreseeable future.

Mumbai has long been India's commercial and film capital but the city is fast becoming a formidable art, style, culinary, and design destination as well. Lower Parel is Mumbai's newest Central Business District and has seen a tectonic transformation over the last decade. Its excellent rail and road connectivity has ensured the proliferation of a large number of corporations, retail outlets and media and entertainment places.

Powai truly represents the ethos of our generation – youthful, ambitious, adaptive and ever-evolving. It has seen a transformation over the last decade and it isn't done growing just yet. This is the perfect place for young entrepreneurs who are planning to unwind new eating options in a progressive resident area. When we talk about new food hotspots, we should not forget about Andheri. If Powai Valley is Mumbai's start-up hub, Andheri, especially the east, is cool by association and proximity.

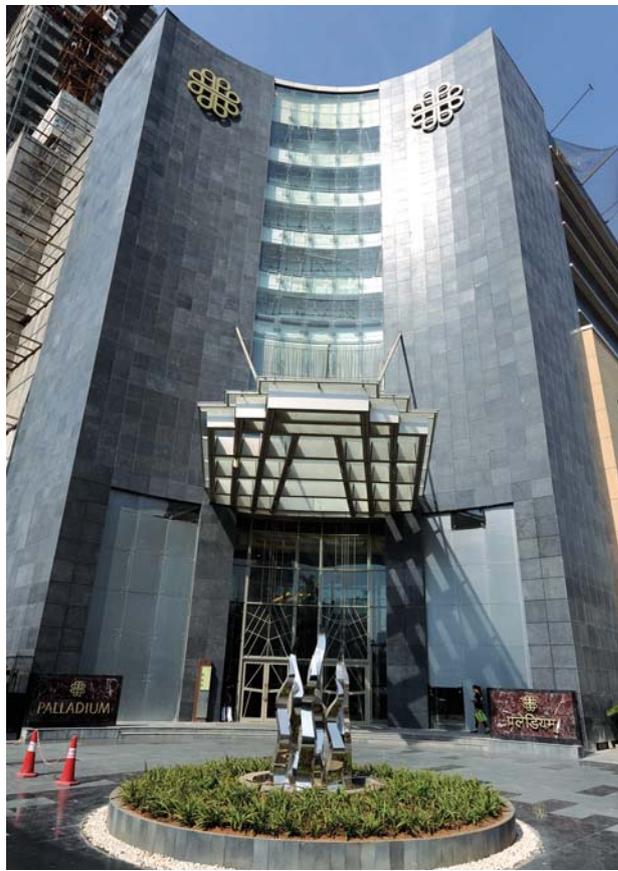
A lot of new F&B players have set up shop within Palladium mall and High Street Phoenix. New F&B spaces are also operating in some of the nearby mills and along the high street, with all of them seeing brisk business throughout the year. While more than 50 F&B brands operate out of the Victoria-Kamala Mills compound alone, 20 more operators are located along the high street stretch of Senapati Bapat Marg.

The strong 'pull' factor of this area as a standalone F&B hub is remarkable. Most customers visit the area for sampling different cuisines and ambiances or to let their hair down at the upscale pubs. Thanks to the big residential and office catchment, business is brisk throughout the day. What also helps is the abundant availability of parking, especially at Kamala Mills and also at the Phoenix-Palladium malls.

The cuisines available in the Lower Parel-Worli belt range from Indian to Thai, Vietnamese, Italian, Continental, Chinese and Japanese. The evolution of this hub is a great example of how changing socio-economic factors can help an F&B destination of this scale emerge out of an erstwhile industrial district and flourish on the back of unique 'pull' factors.

Talking of 'pull' factors, nowadays restaurants' menus have turned quite accommodative to meet special requirements and demands. Major modifications are being done in food, for example,





the advent of pink sauce is a fantastic evolution amongst Italian sauces on a lighter side. Further, food customization is fast catching on. Today, we see quite a few food concepts that have gained a lot of popularity. Some such concepts include:

Bowl Food: Bowls are the new palates & plates concept. All sorts of creative foods in a one-dish meal are now being served in a bowl. This concept has mainly emerged from the East Asian countries and is playing a very important role in terms of taste, preference and healthy food choice for people who don't prefer being served food belonging to different varieties. There are various kinds of bowl food, which are now being served in restaurants across the world and in India. The response to bowl food is overwhelming as it offers the advantage of enjoying food on a budget and having it in one shot. Some of the more popular examples of this food concept are protein bowls, Buddha bowls, broth bowls,

The story of our cuisine is actually a journey of rich flavors with carefully preserved recipes.

“Experimenting with the concept of a **veg rooftop restaurant** in bar format”

Kripesh Sanghvi, Co-owner of 1Above in Lower Parel, Mumbai, talks to FoodService India about the strength of his new restaurant's concept that seeks to create a niche brand by curating a unique dining experience in pairing vegetarian food with an exquisite bar menu.



Kamala Mills, Mumbai has emerged as a hotspot of food service. How does it help opening a restaurant at this location?

The mills of Mumbai, once famous for churning out maximum business in the city, are now home to the best nightlife in the city. Kamala Mills has emerged as the Mecca of food retail, a popular restaurant hub and is the most preferred location for restaurants in Mumbai. Being a foodie, I was always very passionate about opening a restaurant in Mumbai and what better option than to start your dream restaurant in Kamala Mills. Today, this location is the undisputed leader when it comes to bars and eateries. People don't have to think much to visit Kamala Mills and it helps us to pull the crowd very easily.

As the location is crowded with restaurants, what do you make of the market potential of your outlet in such a place?

There has been an explosion in the restaurant scene. A lot of structured players have entered the business in a very big way. There are so many dynamics at play. With the number of outlets increasing, it is getting better for people as they are getting more choices and it makes sure that we are on the toes every single moment. By being a pure veg rooftop in bar format, it gives us an added advantage as not many people have experimented with this idea. We are not even a year old but have managed to become a well-known place for gigs, live performances and ambience.

What is the brand positioning you are looking to create? Which are the other food service brands that you feel have been successful in leveraging similar value propositions?

The restaurant business is not about money or glamour. Nowadays, you have to work at conceptualizing, positioning, getting it all right. We at 1Above are



Kripesh Sanghvi

Never-before noodle flavors at pocket-friendly prices

CG Corp Global, Nepal's first and only billion dollar corporation with a historical legacy of 150 years and also the parent company behind the widely popular Wai Wai noodles, has recently forayed into foodservice operations with Wai Wai City, the first-of-its-kind chain of quick service restaurants in the noodle category. FoodService India speaks to Varun Chaudhary, Executive Director, CG Corp Global, about the noodle bar concept of Wai Wai City and his plans for taking forward this format across the country and overseas.



Varun Chaudhary



What is the business rationale and value proposition of your new noodle outlets venture?

Wai Wai City (WWC) is an extension and evolution of our three-decade-old noodle brand Wai Wai Noodles (WWN). While we've built a cult following around our widely popular noodle brand over the last three decades, WWC aims to reach out to a larger audience while giving its customers a unique and refreshing experience.

By and large, people generally prefer buying a noodle pack and cooking it at home. Why should they visit your outlet for simply eating noodle? Why do you think that a QSR model around noodle will succeed?

Wai Wai City offers a menu of never-before flavours in a QSR format at pocket-friendly prices that appeal to all ages and tastes. Our outlets transcend the convenience factor of a Quick Service Restaurant. They bring along visual appeal with an inviting ambience to create a space that showcases the transparency of an open kitchen and allows people to catch up over a comfortable meal.



What is the core USP around which you hope to build on your noodle retail business?

We give our users the option to customize their flavour experience with an option of noodles, veggies and sauces. Wai Wai City outlets provide an interactive experience by offering unlimited flavours/combinations at pocket-friendly rates that no other QSR chain has managed to do.

How many Wai Wai City outlets have you opened till date and where?

We have 12 operating outlets as of now – three in Delhi/ NCR, two in Pune and one outlet each in Siliguri, Chandigarh, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Vadodara.

How many such stores you plan to run over the next one year?

We plan to open 40 outlets by the end of the year.

What has been the response and feedback from customers to your retail outlets? What is the average footfall and sales per day?

The response has been great. Customers are

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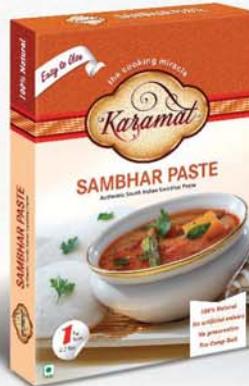
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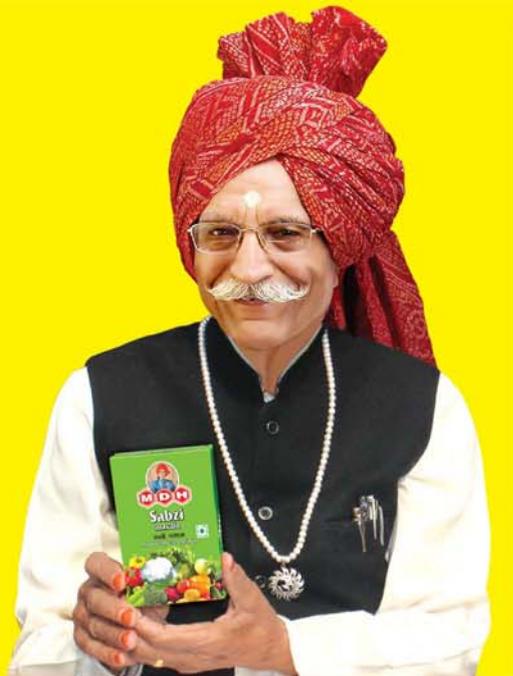
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