

'Every project feels like a new school': Nassar on dealing with success and failure

It's been four decades in the world of movies for Nassar and the veteran still remembers the word of advice from his guru K Balachander -- be a learner always.

"For me, every day is a learning process. Even now, the first day with a new director is very tense for me. He may be young but I don't know if I will be able to give what he wants. Maybe it's the old-timer's feeling, but this kind of thing helps me move ahead," the 67-year-old actor told PTI in an interview.

"I don't feel too excited when some success comes or feel too low when something fails. I remember what my guru said, 'It's better to be a student always, be a learner always,'" he added.

Nassar's versatile career spans over 700 films, and his acting is noted for its power, even in small roles. He made his screen debut in 1985 with Balachander's "Kalyana Agathigal" and then gained recognition with his role as a police officer in Mani Ratnam's "Nayakan" (1987).

Over the next 30 years, the actor has featured in films such as "Thevar Magan" (1992), "Bombay" (1995), "Anbe Sivam" (2003), and "Iruvar" (1997). He is also well-known for collaborating with renowned directors like Mani Ratnam and Kamal Haasan.

Asked about his extensive filmography, Nassar said it is all "just numbers".

The actor, who has worked across various film industries, gave the example of legendary



artistes like Manorama Amma, who featured in around 1500 films, and Telugu actor Brahmanandam, who holds a Guinness World Record for completing 1000 films.

"This is only a number, so I don't take it into account. But it feels nice when somebody says that you have done so many films and I understand that it brings a deeper responsibility, so I have to be more responsible towards my job," he said.

For him, every project is different and comes with new challenges.

"It makes me curious to go through all these projects and characters... I came to this industry in the late '80s, when films were actually shot on films. Now it has become digital. The attitude and approaches of the actors and the directors have also changed. Even though I'm there for all these 40 years, it's like going to a new school." And then there is dubbing work that still mesmerizes the actor.

As a dubbing artist, Nassar

has lent his voice for Tamil versions of many projects, including international titles like "Prince of Persia", where he dubbed for Ben Kingsley; Steven Spielberg's "The BFG", "Mufasa: The Lion King" and the first season of globally popular series "Squid Game".

"Actually, when I started my career in films, I started as a dubbing artist. My first grain of food from film came through dubbing. So I have been dubbing for a very long time," he said.

According to Nassar, it is very interesting to dub for other actors and characters.

"When I dub for myself, I have my own rhythm and interpretation, I can do it easily. When I'm trying to dub for others, I have to keenly watch their process, their expectations and their thing. So dubbing is as interesting as acting.

"I have done a lot of international films in that regard. 'Squid Game' was very interesting for me. I did one of Spielberg's films ('The BFG') as well. In a way, dubbing

keeps me relaxed in the busy schedule of acting," he said.

Nassar most recently starred in "Mayasabha", a gripping Telugu political drama series created and co-directed by Deva Katta alongside Kiran Jay Kumar.

Set against the volatile backdrop of Andhra Pradesh politics from the mid-1970s to the 1990s, it follows two once-close friends -- Kakarla Krishnama Naidu (played by Aadhi Pinisetty) and M S Rami Reddy (Chaitanya Rao Madadi) -- whose ideological divergence transforms them into fierce political rivals.

Nassar said he chose to work on the show as he found the story to be quite interesting.

"(It was) intense, very true to real life characters, with themes like ambitions, failures, success, betrayal. Everything was there.. To me, it was not like a biography or something like that. It was like a thriller because there were a lot of turning points in the series," he said.

In the show, Nassar stars as Shivaji Rao, a self made media baron and Andhra Pradesh's most influential business man, who believes that a strong regional party is essential to counter Delhi.

"It was very interesting for me because media barons, in any country and political system, are very important... They have to know what is happening around, what will be the future, what was the past, so they know they can judge better than anybody else. So it was very interesting to play that role," he said.

John Abraham's espionage thriller 'Tehran' clocks over 220 million watch minutes on ZEE5

John Abraham starrer espionage thriller Tehran clocked over 220 million watch minutes on Zee5, the streamer announced on Instagram on Saturday. "Tehran has got the whole nation hooked! #Tehran Watch Now, on #ZEE5," the streamer wrote on X.

Inspired by real events, the story revolves around ACP Rajeev Kumar (Abraham) , who finds himself on a high-stakes mission amid the changing equation between India, Israel and Iran, after a bombing near the Israeli Embassy in Delhi.

Released digitally on the streamer on August 14, the film also stars Manushi Chhillar and Neeru Bajwa. In a recent interview,



while talking about his role in the film, the 52-year-old actor expresses his concern over the growing audience for right-wing films like The Kashmir Files and Chhaava. He also added that such trends force filmmakers to question whether to chase commercial success or remain true to their vision, adding that he has chosen the latter.

"We need censorship, but the way it has been

overseen... It's a bit of a question mark. They have been good with us, but I have also been responsible for the way I have made my films. I am not right or left wing. I am apolitical. What is worrying to me is that right-wing films find a huge audience, and that's when you ask yourself as a filmmaker, what line will you toe — am I going to take the commercial line or stay true to what I want to say? I have chosen the latter," John said.

Shraddha Kapoor says LinkedIn flagged her account as fake, seeks platform's help

Bollywood actress Shraddha Kapoor said that LinkedIn has flagged her account as fake, appealing to the platform for a solution as she is eager to share her entrepreneurial journey with her fans.

The 38-year-old actress took to her Instagram stories and wrote, "Dear LinkedIn @linkedin_in, I'm not able to use my own account because LinkedIn thinks it's fake. Can someone please help



me?" "The account is made, premium and verified but no one else can see it. Want to start sharing my entrepreneurial journey, getting an account itself has become a journey," she added. The Stree 2 actress is the co-founder

and brand ambassador of the jewellery brand Palmonas, which was founded in 2022. Palmonas was founded by Pallavi Mohadikar and Dr. Amol Patwari, with Shraddha joining as a co-founder in 2023 after being a loyal customer.

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation receives RBI approval to acquire stake in Yes Bank

MUMBAL, AUG 24

Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) has received the RBI's approval to buy up to 24.99 per cent of Yes Bank, up from the 20 per cent reported earlier, the lender said in a stock exchange filing on Saturday, with the central bank further clarifying that SMBC would not be treated as a promoter of the bank.

The development follows Yes Bank's disclosure in May about SMBC's proposed acquisition of a 20 per cent holding in the lender for ₹13,482 crore, in what would be the largest cross-border investment in the Indian banking sector.

The 20 per cent stake sale plan included a secondary stake purchase of 13.19 per cent stake from SBI and 6.81 per cent share from seven other shareholders. The other shareholders are Axis Bank, Bandhan Bank, Federal Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, IDFC First Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank. Sources



familiar with the matter told Reuters last month that SMBC was seeking approval to buy an additional 4.9 per cent stake in Yes Bank. "In this regard, we are pleased to inform that SMBC has received the approval of the Reserve bank of India (RBI)'s to acquire up to 24.99 per cent of the paid-up share capital/ voting rights of the Bank vide letter dated August 22, 2025," Yes Bank said in a regulatory filing. This approval is valid for one year from the date of this letter, it added. The approval granted by the RBI is subject to other conditions, including compliance with the relevant provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, RBI guidelinesand

provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999. Besides, it said, other applicable laws and terms, including lock-in, any subsequent transactions being subject to conditions and the RBI's decision, among others, have to be followed. Further, the proposed transaction is subject to approval from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and customary conditions precedents as mentioned in the agreements referred to in our intimation dated May 9, 2025, it added.

SMBC, a scheduled foreign bank in India, is a subsidiary of SMFG, which manages assets of \$2 trillion as of December 2024 and has a significant global presence.

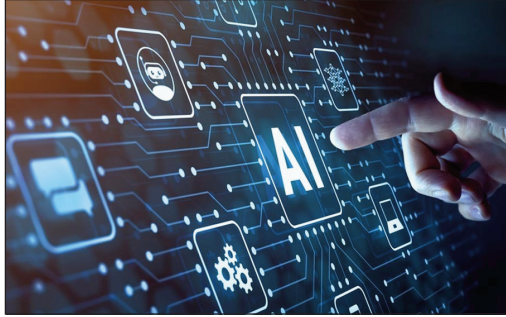
AI fluency vital, says Microsoft India chief; urges youth to 'hit the gym' with tools

NEW DELHI, AUG 24

Microsoft India President Puneet Chandok has urged the youth to build on AI fluency, terming it "super important" and stressing such skills cannot be learnt merely through theory or observation but by hands-on use of tools, as the top honcho drew a light-hearted analogy of fitness gained by actually working out in a gym.

Shrugging-off a recent MIT Media Lab study raising an alarm over AI and its potential cognitive consequences and neural costs, Chandok said he believes AI boosts rather than diminishes cognitive abilities by automating routine drudgery, freeing users to focus on value-adding, judgment-driven work. In an interview to PTI, Chandok also drew attention to new career avenues emerging with AI, from agent managers to prompt engineers, as he emphasised that job profiles are indeed changing and constant upskilling is vital as organisations adapt to evolving demands. Terming AI fluency as "super important", he advised youth to "learn to play around with these tools".

"This is not something you can learn in a classroom, not theory. I always joke that you can't get fit by watching others go to the gym. You have to go to the gym yourself. Same with AI tools. You can't learn by watching others use the tools, start using these tools," he advised. Chandok exhorted professionals to start building with AI tools, stressing that fluency in creating and managing digital agents alongside resilience, adaptability, agility and growth mindset will define future workplace success. "I think those three things, AI fluency, building AI, and ability to build agents and work with them and digital



colleagues. And third, just the basic skills around resilience, agility, speed, growth mindset will be even more important," he said. Many new roles, that didn't exist 12 months ago, are being created due to AI, Chandok asserted. "AI orchestrator, AI agent manager, agent boss, prompt engineer... There are many new roles that are coming up and how do we make sure that we create those roles and job opportunities for people across the country. Second, the color of the jobs will change... I think the skills required, if a lot of repetitive grunt work is taken away, drudgery is taken away, how do we constantly upskill our people to going back to build agents, to get agents to work for them, really use AI in the right way," he said. Here, constant upskilling would be crucial, he said. "And that's why we are excited both at Microsoft and across the country and across the customers about constant skilling of people on AI. And then the third I'll say is, as organisations, we are super agile. We are constantly readjusting based on the needs of our customers and the countries we operate in. "Invest in areas where we see a lot more demand for both skills and people in business. So we will constantly readjust based on what our customers and the country we operate in need from us," he said. India has rapidly

emerged as a frontier market for AI adoption, with global tech majors and domestic companies as well as startups sprucing up investments and workforce initiatives in the world's fastest growing major economy, that chugged at 6.5 per cent in 2024-25, and is eyeing similar numbers this fiscal year.

According to a recent report by BCG titled 'India's AI Leap', the country offers a unique launchpad for scalable, cost-efficient AI innovation, with over 700 million internet users, high mobile penetration, and robust digital public platforms like UPI.

"Unlike many past technologies, AI is as much a driver of innovation and growth as it is of enhancing performance and efficiencies, thereby unlocking entirely new growth pathways and redefining how businesses compete and scale," the BCG report had said how AI is transforming sectors by crunching underwriting time by 70 per cent in financial services, boosting retail conversions rates by 10-15 per cent, slashing media production costs by over 80 per cent, and extending healthcare reach through advanced diagnostics and remote consultations.

India's domestic AI market is projected to more than triple to USD 17 billion by 2027, making it one of the fastest-growing AI economies globally. "This momentum is fuelled by rising enterprise tech investments, a thriving digital ecosystem, and a robust talent base. India already has 600,000-plus AI professionals, with the number expected to double to 1.25 million by 2027," BCG report said. The country accounts for 16 per cent of the global AI talent pool, second only to the US, a reflection of both its demographic advantage and STEM education pipeline, it added.

India Post suspends postal service to US temporarily due to Donald Trump's tariff missive

NEW DELHI, AUG 24: Postal services to the US have been temporarily suspended by India Post after US-bound air carriers expressed their inability to accept postal consignments post August 25, citing a lack of operational and technical readiness on the back of a tariff missive by the Trump administration. However, services will continue for letters, documents

and gift items up to \$100, the ministry of communication notified. The development, which may signal disruption for cross-border MSME exporters relying on low-value, duty-free access to the US market, according to think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), follows an executive order issued by the US administration on July 30, 2025. According to the

order, goods valued above \$100 will be subject to customs duties in America with effect from August 29 onwards, ending duty-free imports under the \$800 de minimis threshold. Consequently, all international postal items destined for the USA, regardless of their value, shall be subject to customs duties as per the country-specific International Emergency Economic

Power Act (IEEPA) tariff framework. Customers who have already booked articles that cannot be dispatched to the US due to these circumstances may seek a refund of postage, the ministry informed, adding that it is closely monitoring the evolving situation in coordination with all stakeholders, and every effort is being made to normalise services at the earliest possible

opportunity.

Changing dynamics The executive order noted that transport carriers delivering shipments through the international postal network, or other "qualified parties" approved by the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP), are required to collect and remit duties on postal shipments. "While CBP issued certain

guidelines on August 15, 2025, several critical processes relating to the designation of "qualified parties" and mechanisms for duty collection and remittance remain undefined. Consequently, US-bound air carriers have expressed their inability to accept postal consignments after 25th August, 2025, citing lack of operational and technical readiness," a statement from the ministry said.