

Understanding the mind of a terrorist

Rahul Chandawarkar

Pune: It was the Sarojini Market bombings in Delhi in 2005 that awoke in Major Mukul Deva, a retired infantry officer, a strong urge to write about terror and insurgency. Being a combat veteran himself, Deva chose the new genre of the military thrillers to vent his anger.

Deva's first military thriller, *Lashkar*, published in 2008 by Harper Collins India, was a runaway hit and his second novel 'Salim Must Die', of a four-part series, was released recently.

Deva, who will read from 'Salim Must Die' at the Crossword ICC towers book store in the city on February 28 at 6.30 pm, says, "I felt deep anger and frustration at the Government's lack of effective response to the Sarojini Market bombings. I decided to write about this response in a fictional form and that is how 'Lashkar' was born."

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About his latest novel, Deva says, "I have been researching world-wide terrorism trends for the last four years and realised that there are multiple aspects to terrorism. It is important to understand the mind of a terrorist and what makes him kill innocent people. I have also written about futuristic weapons of mass destruction like nuclear, biological and chemical weapons."

The latest Mumbai terror attacks, too, left Deva disturbed, he points out, "In my first book 'Lashkar', which I wrote two-and-a-half-years back, I had mentioned a combat unit using the sea route to reach the enemy. While in my second novel, which I completed one-and-half-years-ago, I mentioned the formation of a national intelligence agency (NIA). I sincerely feel, our Government must take quick, strategic action against Pakistan."

Deva is of the opinion that India should leverage its growing international clout to apply severe economic and diplomatic pressure on Pakistan. "Pakistan is a failed nation today. Their rate of inflation and unemployment have touched 20 per cent. This is the time to cripple their will and capabilities through



THRILLS APLENTY: Mukul Deva

strategic use of economic and diplomatic initiatives.”

Deva is not surprised by the developments in Pakistan's Swat valley. Says the retired army officer, “Historically, the Swat valley was under the control of militants from the time Benazir Bhutto was in power. It is only recently, that the Pakistan government has formally acknowledged their presence.”
