

# purple**béret**

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Mukul Deva wears many hats - author, mentor, coach, trainer, speaker, entrepreneur and a crusader for corporate social responsibility. Yet, the man remains as approachable and down to earth as the lad who completed his formal education from La Martiniere College, Lucknow, the National Defence Academy, Pune, and the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun. In the year 1981, Deva was commissioned in the Sikh Light Infantry and enjoyed his fauji tenure, which included a decade of operational service in India and overseas.

From the army playgrounds and battlefields, Deva entered the corporate world of competitive warfare and carved a niche for himself as an entrepreneur by establishing MSD Security Pvt Ltd that provides security solutions for its customers. With the support of his team, he ensured that his company grew dynamically and professionally. Today, headquartered in Delhi, the company operates in seven Indian states. His next venture is the Singapore-registered Vithi Training & Consulting LLP that helps to create / open up new avenues through experiential learning.

Apart from being a much sought after keynote speaker, Deva is a mentor with The UNITAR Afghanistan Fellowship that helps the Afghan Civil Services in building capacity. He also conducts writing workshops and provides aspiring writers with the required guidance to craft and complete their books. As a coach he empowers people to live more effective and meaningful lives - through life, business, executive, leadership and transition coaching. As a trainer/facilitator he has dealt with business continuity management, disaster management, Belbin team roles and cross-culture.

But the multi talented Deva knew it was time to don yet another hat, this time one that was his first love. He plunged into the world of ink and paper. The result was a series of books spanning several genres, like Time after Time...it all happened, Striptease - The Art of Corporate Warfare, M.O.D.E.L – The Return of the Employee, Lashkar, Salim Must Die and Blowback. Deva himself is busy tying up loose ends of his eagerly awaited novel, Tanzeem, the final book of his best-selling Lashkar series. The novel is expected to be out in January 2011. Ask him about the plot and Deva keeps his readers guessing, "I will not be able to say much about it, except that it goes into the history of the menace of terrorism that the world faces. I am sure those readers who have been following this series avidly, would like to know how life progresses for Iqbal now that Tanaz is not by his side. I am very excited about this book and eagerly await reader/media feedback on it..."

Explaining the influence of his days in the Indian Army, Deva says, "The life of a soldier is so often misunderstood. Few people have ever bothered to ask themselves, 'who are these men who, for a few paltry rupees are so ready to sail into harm's way and lay down their lives. And I must confess, I did want to bring out the futility of warfare too. Does the man on the streets ever realize, ever stop to ask himself, that we soldiers have families too? Families that wait for us? And often in vain. Lastly, it is the Indian Army that taught me how to work in a planned and disciplined manner. Today, if I have been successful in anything it is because of this."

Deva is possibly one of only Indian writers to have delivered three successive bestsellers (in the English language) in three consecutive years and certainly the country's first military thriller writer. Hailed as India's literary storm trooper and one of the pioneers of the Indian thriller novel, major Indian newspapers have praised his literary genius. They have called him the God of all things, the man with a Nostradamus touch and a license to thrill. "My writing style has struck a chord with my readers because I have told the stories as they really are on ground. My army background enabled me to impart a lot of realism to the action. Being the first with this genre certainly helped – since till Lashkar was released Indians had to look to the West when they wanted to read military action thrillers."

Unwilling to rest on his laurels, Deva decided to tread yet another path, again, off the beaten track. 'I wanted to do something more than just make profit. I wanted to make a difference. After all,' he adds, 'the journey has to be meaningful, otherwise what price is the destination?' And so was born CANassist - an India-specific not for profit organization that helps resolve professional and personal conflicts. It helps people who desire a simple solution to their problem, one that avoids expensive litigation. "CANassist reviews the problem and puts you in touch with a suitably qualified professional who helps you find an appropriate solution. CANassist professionals are highly successful people who wish to make a difference to your lives. They attempt to ensure your problems are taken care off at a minimal cost. A part of the CANassist philosophy is that we may call on you for help to assist some other soul in distress. It's not your money we want, it's your time - provided, of course, you are willing," explains Deva.

Juggling his diverse roles successfully, Deva sums it up aptly by saying, "If you can imagine it, you can achieve it."