

Santosh Sharma/DNA



Mukul

BLOWS HOT

When former CMs and other political types begin frequenting book readings, you can say things are hotting up on the Jaipur literary scene! Mukul Deva's second book launch in the city on Friday certainly points to it



(L-R) Vasundhara Raje and Vidya Devi

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JAIPUR is becoming more active on the literary front. And why not? With five lit fests under its belt and several more 'bookish' events round the year, it's no wonder.

On Friday, it was the launch of Mukul Deva's (dubbed India's 'literary storm trooper' by his publisher, Harper Collins) third thriller *Blowback* at Sheraton Rajputana that satisfied the literary appetites of the city's readers, including the former CM, Vasundhara Raje, who seemed to thoroughly enjoy it.

Even the writer could not stop himself! "Jaipur audience are vocal and interactive and it's fun to be with them," he said. After all, he was impressed with the way his readers, some old and some potential ones, actively participated in the Q&A session on his book.

In conversation with Siyahi's Mita Kapur, Deva, who wears the crown of India's premier military

thriller writer, shared his experiences in his usual witty style. When asked about following the genre of military action thriller, he responded, "I wanted to bring out the reality of terrorism through fiction as nobody had attempted it India. I get mails from different corners asking for more such books, which proves the public interest in the genre."

Quick on the uptake as always, Deva neatly sidestepped some of the wingers that came his way (as adeptly as he must have dodged enemy bullets in his previous military *avatar*). And not just that, he suavely and smilingly lobbed the ball in Ms Raje's direction when the discourse came to political will in dealing with Kargil, Mumbai 26/11 and civic matters.

So, when someone in the audience mouthed the oft-repeated line that middle class intelligentsia satisfies itself with when things go wrong as they often do—that 'you

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