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AUTHOR PROFILE
The God Of All Things

Crime fiction author Mukul Deva dons many hats. The one of a writer is what he loves to wear the most.

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It's tough describing Mukul Deva. You could call him a former army officer turned author whose writings span such different genres as short stories, business leadership, women in Indian cinema, corporate warfare and crime fiction. But then, he's also an entrepreneur who runs a security firm in New Delhi. In addition, Deva is also a corporate trainer on disaster management and business continuity. So, who exactly is Mukul Deva?

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"At heart I am a writer. But in India writers starve so I have to run a business to sustain my passion hence I am a businessman. Deep down, I am still an army man because you can take a guy out of the army but not the army out of the guy." Finding time to write amidst managing all the roles is a tough task, but not for Deva. "I have a two-hour window where I only write. I need six hours to run my business and four hours to be with my kids and family. I sleep, watch movies and read during the remaining 12 hours!"

Born in Lucknow in 1961, Deva is an alumnus of the La Martiniere College, Lucknow, the National Defence Academy, Pune and the Indian Military academy in Dehradun. He was an army officer until 1981, after which he took premature retirement and started his security business in New Delhi.

Although Deva's writings span a various genres, his most widely acclaimed book has been *Lashkar*, an action thriller based on the 2005 blasts in Sarojini Nagar in New Delhi. And his latest offering is its sequel *Salim Must Die* with terrorism as its central theme.

About his books Deva says "I wrote *Lashkar* because I was angry at the way these terrorists were striking at us. Also, given my army background I had a potent story to tell which gave me another reason to write it. While writing *Lashkar*, the principal characters — Anbu and Iqbal — were literally crying to be taken forward which is why I am doing a four-book series of which *Salim Must Die* is the second."

Despite his anger, Deva prefers to confine to writing and not be in the fore to assist investigations given his army credentials. "You know, the Indian government, over the last 30 years has proven its inability to think strategically," he says. "They think in tactical, short-term methods. They are trying to cure the symptom and not tackle the disease. So, I thought writing a book which would actually tell the public about other alternatives to the government's actions" reasons Deva.



On his books, Deva says that both his works are completely different from each other. "I found to my horror that, a lot of what I wrote in *Salim..* a year-