

# All part of the drill



India's only military-thriller author and ex-army major, **MUKUL DEVA**, talks about his latest book – *Salim Must Die*

## SUJATA CHAKRABARTI

• c.sujata@dnaindia.net

**ROARING** guns and bullets whizzing past you — a soldier's nightmare and also probably one of the most adrenalin-rushing moments in life — all come alive through the pages of *Salim Must Die*, a book that promises to be a realistic portrayal of the subcontinent and the Middle East burning in the fire of dictatorship and unrest. The author, ex-army major, 48-year-old, Mukul Deva, India's only military-thriller writer is back with the sequel to his first book *Lahkar*, that went on to become a bestseller in the Indian sub-continent.

Deva who falls into this niche category of writers of military fiction exclaims, "It cannot get more real than experiencing it yourself."

What he says next is definitely interesting for a layman, "When I wrote *Lashkar* two and half years ago, I had chalked out a plot where specific Indian forces went into Pakistani territory to assassinate certain terrorist figures. The path these

## SCREENING REQUESTS

While his current book is part of a four-book package, Deva had already received and rejected a film offer within three days of his first release. He reasons that he would rather wait till the filmmaker understands the trajectory of his story before deciding how characterise it.

fictional characters took turned out to be the exact same sea route that the recent Pakistani terrorists took to create havoc in our country."

While it definitely feels "cool" to be a one-of-a-kind author, writing a military thriller is a laborious job. Deva says, "While there are a lot of sensitive issues like weapon systems, setting up bombs and military strikes, it becomes necessary to take some poetic freedom to distort certain facts. You cannot take a chance with who lays hands on my books."