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## What's in a name? - Suggest a title, win a prize!



**MUKUL DEVA**

One is not asked to write a fortnightly column very often. So, when Ajit Chak, Senior Editor, of the prestigious Daily World asked me, I was naturally very excited. And confused - about the title, what I should talk about etc.

I asked Ajit. I've known him for decades and respect him. Of course, jab we met (in grade three), I had that special respect for him; the kind we reserve for our criminal compatriots. Heinous crimes like pinching comics from the library (which earned usa memorable hiding from our respective mothers). There followed a spate of offences, which I shall gloss over; I'm unsure about the statute of limitations on bunking classes, reading comics (and other soft porn) in class,

bumming beedis from gardeners and such dastardly deeds.

Ajit's ability to cut through the crap is uncanny. But he disappointed me by responding with a dry, 'Would you like me to write it for you?'

'Bro, be serious. You realise this is my Khushwant Singh moment?' (Which amongst us hasn't relished and laughed WITH MALICE TOWARDS ONE AND ALL?)

He responded with a raised eyebrow. 'You think you're Khushwant Singh?'

'Of course not.' I backpedaled. 'Though the similarities are uncanny.' His disdainful look forced me to elaborate. 'We've both written several books. Both have a house in Kasauli. Both like Scotch... and Butter Chicken.'

The last was a desperate guess, but I guessed a probable one; who doesn't like Butter Chicken?

Yes, I know, vegetarians don't, but they're a miniscule minority and like the current national ruling dispensation I'm not big on minority appeasement; unless it suits me; in which case I give it some fancy Sabka-Saath-Sabka-Vikas type slogan first. Slogans are so much easier than actual governance and sit well with the unwashed masses.

I was still being gazed at witheringly, so ploughed on. 'Having served in the Sikh Light Infantry, I can be considered an Honorary Singh. And I'm Khush most of the time... at least I want to be. So why not? Remember, Mark Twain told us not to part with our illusions, for when they're gone, we may still exist, but have ceased to live.'

Methinks that's what broke the camel's back; in ibid case, Ajit's patience. 'You do realise there's

difference between illusions and delusions?'

This was a Biblical question; hard to answer and yielded little clarity on my predicament. That's why I decided to bring my problem to the people I'm writing for. You.

Mitron I want to ask you:

What should I title my byline?

Which topics will bring positivity, entertainment and enlightenment in your life?

You'll agree these are important. Especially these days with so much negativity, divisiveness and hatred in the air. Life is short and should be fun. Problems will always exist and we do need to deal with them; after all, when we are born, we're given a birth certificate, not a warranty card.

That is precisely why all of us need those moments when we can stop, smell the roses and

relish the fresh air of positivity. Which of us doesn't need a reminder that we're all born extraordinary and its only our intentions and attitude that keep us there or render us ordinary?

Which of us doesn't need a reminder that we are mostly limited by our beliefs, seldom by any real lack of capability?

We all do. So that we can enjoy that moment of inner peace and joy, which is the essence of life.

If you agree, then Positivity-Entertainment-Enlightenment is a good title. My only reservation is that PEE is not a very attractive acronym; an essential act to be sure, but not inspiring.

Alternatively, I could segment my thoughts under four headings - Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Spiritual - since we all seek fulfilment in the seareas. PIEsare

good and much more palatable than PEE. Another possibility is Positivity, Palak Paneer, Butter Chicken and Other Seriously Spiritual Things. It's a tad long but consider it objectively; Palak Paneer does take into consideration the feelings of vegetarians. And Spiritual will allow me to wax eloquent on Scotch, Vodka and such crucial issues. What about 245 Shades of Saffron-White-Green? I suggest it because there are 245 positions described in the Kamasutra and I will definitely talk about matters sexual. As for the colours - gray is too mainstream for someone like me, with the artistic pretentious desirable in every struggling writer.

Irreverently Relevant is another possibility. The world needs a bit of irreverence; too many people sauntering around with the certainty (and poverty of judgement) of zealots. No?

Or do you think Man Ki Baat is better? We would be talking

about random things that drop into my head.

I'd love to hear your suggestions for a title - please share them on my links below. I promise to send the winner a signed copy of one of my thrillers.

Help make this byline something you want to... no wait to read.

Till then, Sat Sri Akal. Sayonara. Sab Changa Si. (I always wonder if that's a factual statement, an aspirational one or a question.)

Oh well.

See you... next Sunday.

**MUKUL DEVA.** An alumnus of La Martiniere College Lucknow, ex-Indian Army officer, successful entrepreneur and internationally bestselling author of the LASH-KAR and RAVINDER GILL series, Mukul is a globally sought-after keynote speaker, executive coach and mentor. He can be contacted at [mukul.deva@gmail.com](mailto:mukul.deva@gmail.com)

