

Film fame beckons Sanghi

PRATEEK CHOUDHURY

HT City Correspondent

■ letters@hindustantimes.com

A good book does not necessarily make a good film, feels Ashwin Sanghi, which is probably why he was initially sceptical when UTV Motion Pictures wanted to buy film rights to his book, *Chanakya's Chant* (2010). However, Sanghi, who also wrote the best-selling *The Rozabal Line* (2008), agreed when told that Ashutosh Gowariker would be directing the film.

In town recently for a discussion at Starmark South City, Sanghi recalled how he loved Martin Scorsese's film *The Godfather*, but didn't quite like Mario Puzo's book. On the other hand, he didn't like the film version of *The Da Vinci Code* as much as he did Dan Brown's book.

UTV Motion Pictures CEO Siddharth Roy Kapoor felt *Chanakya's Chant* is a "perfect film plot", but Sanghi was worried about disparities. "I was convinced only when Ashutosh was roped in," he said.

Speculation is rife that Ranbir Kapoor or Shahid Kapoor will play the film's lead. "As of now, the book is being scripted. Then, casting will begin. It will be a challenging role. Ashutosh wants the same actor to play both Chanakya and Gangasagar Mishra," Sanghi explains.

However, he won't be part of the film. "It is better to stay away. Only if the director wants me will I consider it," says the author, whose third book will be a "business thriller with a historical foundation". Subjects closer to his roots, such as religion, politics, and history, will play important roles in the plot.



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Interestingly, Sanghi calls his family business his 'day job', and he has kept it, even after publishing his best-sellers. Like other contemporary authors such as Amish Tripathi, he vehemently supports self-marketing, too. "Who else can understand and feel your book?" he asks. "It's like giving birth to a child and not taking the responsibility to bring him/her up."

Sanghi had to toil hard to

get a publisher in the beginning, being rejected 63 times. "Quite a record," he laughs, and credits his second book's success to his interactions with people on social networking sites. "Feedback from people on Twitter and Facebook helped me while writing *Chanakya's Chant*," he says.

Sanghi has always been a fan of the "art of war", and adds that politics is "war without bloodshed".

"Before my first book, I didn't write anything longer than 1,000 words. I goofed up all along. I took over six months to research and two more months to develop the plot. Then, I wrote the book to join the dots," he smiles.