

# Truth behind the ancient deal



Author ASHWIN SANGHI's *The Krishna Key* tries to find out if the tenth avatar of Vishnu, who promised to save the world during Kalyug, exists or not. By DIVYA KAUSHIK

On the eve of the great war of *Mahabharata*, sage Vyas met Dhritrashtra and warned him about terrible planetary omens. Most of us would know this but not what the omens were. One was a conjunction of Saturn with Aldebaran, another a retrograde Mars before reaching Antares and the third a lunar eclipse near Pleiades.

Computer simulations of the said positions prove the appropriateness of mythical time depicted in the *Mahabharata*. Researchers have done astronomical dating of events in the epic and worked on scientific advancements of the period. Author Ashwin Sanghi, who believes the *Mahabharata*

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means more than what people tend to see as a fable, explains this further in his forthcoming book *The Krishna Key*. Facts rooted in history, mythology and politics have always interested Sanghi, which he has woven into his fiction. His first book *The Rozabal Line* explored the possibility of Jesus Christ surviving the crucifixion and travelling to India. His next *Chanakya's Chant* linked ancient stories about Chandragupta's wily political strategist with present-day Indian politics.

The new book begins with the 10th avatar of Lord Vishnu, a successor to Krishna, who promises to save the world during Kalyug.

"Five thousand years ago, there came to earth a magical being called Krishna, who brought about innumerable miracles for the good of mankind. Humanity despaired of its fate once the Blue God died but was reassured that he would return in a fresh avatar when needed in the eventual Dark Age — the Kalyug. This is precisely the basis of the book. I wanted to take Krishna not just as a mythological subject but a narrator of history and events, as somebody who could be around even today," explained the author.

Presenting facts through fiction,

especially in a thriller format, has always given him an adrenaline rush. Just as it has won him young readership.

"Today's X-Box generation or Gen Y, whatever you call them, are not interested in historical or mythological stories. They are not interested in the linear plainness of *Amar Chitra Katha*. We need to package them in a modern and contemporary way. This is why I research most of my subjects to make each of my episodes logical and real," shared Sanghi.



The plot centres around a vigilante, who believes he is the tenth avatar of Vishnu and cleansing the world "in the name of God." But for mortals he is a wanted criminal, a serial killer. Will the Dark Lord rise to save humanity?

The book is divided into 108 chapters, each beginning with a story on Krishna.

For example, the first chapter begins with the story of King Yayati, who was cursed by the sage Shukracharya for being unfaithful to his wife, Devyani. He was cursed to age prematurely. Later, the sage softened and said Yayati would be

spared if one his sons, Yadu or Puru, accepted the consequences of the curse. Yadu refused and was denied the throne. He settled down in Mathura and his descendants are Yadavs, who are such a potent entity in today's India. Puru went to Hastinapur and birthed the clan of Pandavas and Kauravas. And the political battles and subterfuges continue.

Christ, Chanakya and now Krishna... is it a coincidence that his three books are based on characters about whom more than enough has been written.

"These subjects found me rather than me looking out for them. It is difficult to present someone like Krishna, for example, in a new light. I could not have tampered with what is written about him in mythology and at the same time link historical events together. I had to look out for present-day incidents and studies that suggest Krishna existed or the war of *Mahabharata* actually happened. If it did, then what kind of a war was it, who manufactured the weapons because certainly the weapons didn't materialise with the reciting of the *mantra*. Is there any historical proof or data? I had to dig into some 50 books and research papers to collect information. One event or query led to the other and the process really went on for a long time. Then archaeologists have found the submerged city of Dwarka. It is a modern reference point for the myth and that connect interests modern readers," Sanghi explained.

The author says giving out some message with the help of history is not his only motive but if it happens in the process, he is happy his well-researched piece is reaching out to readers. Before he got to know of the Kalki avatar and the ten incarnations of Krishna, the author started writing a novel. It might come as news to those who believe that he is only interested in a certain kind of fiction. "It is based on 1950s India," Sanghi informed.