

BOOK REVIEW

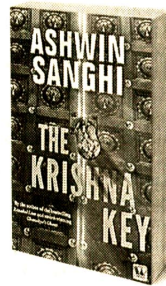
ANONYMOUS



Serial killer Taarak reveals the legacy of the Blue God

AUTHOR ASHWIN Sanghi prefers spinning stories around characters that are multi-dimensional and rooted in history, mythology and politics. And he sticks to this 'fundamental DNA' by exploring the life of Lord Krishna in his new page-turner.

In *The Krishna Key*, the arrival of a murderer who executes his gruesome and brilliantly thought-out schemes in the name of god is the first clue to a sinister conspiracy to expose an ancient secret — Krishna's priceless legacy to mankind. Historian Ravi Mohan Saini breathlessly dashes from the submerged remains of Dwarka and the mysterious lingam of Somnath to



The Krishna Key
Ashwin Sanghi
Westland
475 pages,
₹250

Krishna is a perfect grey character — the lovable cowherd as well as the shrewd statesman

the icy heights of Mount Kailash, in a quest to discover the cryptic location of Krishna's most prized possession.

But why Krishna? "It is from Krishna that we first hear the Bhagvad Gita, the very essence of *dharma*. Krishna is a perfectly grey character. On the one hand, he is the lovable cowherd and butter-thief of Vrindavan. On the other hand, he is the shrewd, cunning and at times devious statesman at Kurukshetra. "I have always preferred spinning stories around characters that are multi-dimensional. In that respect, Krishna was the perfect choice," says Sanghi, who has a passion for writing historical fiction in the thriller genre.

His debut work *The Rozabal*

Line was compared to *The Da Vinci Code* by critics and his second novel *Chanakya's Chant*, narrating two parallel political tales — Chanakya's puranic Bharat 2,300 years ago and post-independence contemporary India will be made into a movie by UTV Motion Pictures.

Sanghi says turning history and mythology into bestselling stories is not an easy process. "Months of research, plotting, writing and editing go towards creating a page-turner. Often, there are conflicts between pace and content. One has to continuously work towards achieving a fine balance," he said.

He feels *The Krishna Key* is his most challenging work till date. "With *The Rozabal Line*, I was dealing with material that went back around 2,000 years. With *Chanakya's Chant*, it went back 2,500 years. With *The Krishna Key*, the historical elements relate to 5,000 years ago. As one digs deeper one finds that the

struggle between myth and history is much more pronounced."

AFTER THREE books with characters firmly rooted in his 'fundamental DNA', Sanghi looks for a change in his next. "It is a business story. The only throwback to history is the fact that it kicks off in 1948 immediately after India's independence. My DNA seems to have mutated," he says.

While preparing to write *The Krishna Key*, Sanghi started reading the *Mahabharata*, the *Harivamsha*, the *Kalki Purana* and other texts. "In all, I ended up reading over 50 books during the eight months that I invested in research. I also interviewed individuals with unique views on ancient science or the interpretation of myths in a historical or scientific framework. And I pored over more than 100 papers on esoteric subjects such as levitation, the Big Bang theory and ancient nuclear weapons." —PTI