

# Crossing the 'Line'

**T**he *Rozabal Line* almost didn't make it to India. Mumbai-based Ashwin Sanghi took two years to write his gem, but had to independently publish his book abroad before he was noticed 'by chance' here. The witty author gets talking to *CT*.

## ● *Rozabal Line* in essence

It is a book that revolves around the premise that there could be a bloodline of Jesus living in India. Apart from my own research, there are bits of studies by others, which have till now been discussed only in a non-fiction or scholarly fashion. My book has been compared to the *Da Vinci Code* (great for publicity!), but the similarity ends with the fact that both books explore the 'maybes'. Maybe Jesus didn't die on the cross, maybe he was married... There are also little interesting side trips. For eg, in a little French town called La Saint-Marie, a festival called La Sara Kali is celebrated. It is dedicated to the day Mary Magdalene arrived on boat with her daughter. I have talked about how this could be connected to 'La'kshmi, 'Sara'swathi and 'Kali'.

## ● You write about politics, history and religion. Is there a common inspiration?

Oddity inspires me. The conspiracy theory enthuses me. For example, when you compare the Zoroastrian language-Avesthan and Sanskrit from the Rig Veda, they are 99 percent identical. Hindus have the 'asuras' and the 'devas'. Zoroastrians have the 'ahuras' and the 'devas'. This kind of oddity in commonality inspires me.

## ● The incidents in your book had strange similarities with the Mumbai terror attacks. How did you handle the link-ups?

I was honestly shattered. It was a spooky twist of coincidence. The book got the kind of publicity that I didn't want. I wish I

either hadn't written those things, got the kind of publicity...or better still, I wish the incident hadn't happened at all.

## ● Favourite authors

The usual...Archer, Sheldon, Forsyth and Ludlum. Arthur Hailey is my favourite because he worked on a lot of tightly researched facts. There are no Indians on the list because they predominantly write intellectual literature; not thrillers.

## ● Recession and the writer

It is like a double-edged sword. On one hand, book sales have gone up, but on the other, publishing houses are cutting down on the books they publish. New talent is at a disadvantage.

## ● About the reading...

It is going to be an arena for exchange of ideas. People who have read my book till date say that it attempts to show that ultimately we are all one. Religion is one.

*Ashwin Sanghi will take part in a book reading and discussion today at Landmark at 6 pm and give a talk at Apparao Galleries, at 7:30 pm, presented jointly by the US Consulate General.*

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**PASSING THROUGH**



**MAN OF 'MYSTERY':**  
Ashwin Sanghi