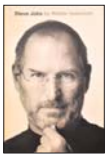
DESI, WITH A 'PHOREN' TOUCH

Books, conventional as well as electronic, took us to worlds beyond our individual immediate. Readers took to memoirs as well as fiction, even as they sought perspectives, both Indian and Western, to understand life and people

By Roopinder Singh



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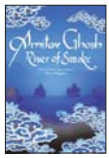

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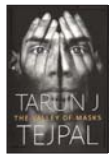

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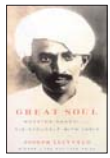

GREAT SOUL
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REVOLUTION 2020: LOVE. CORRUPTION. AMBITION
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DOES HE KNOW A MOTHER'S HEART?
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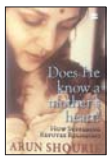

A SHOT AT HISTORY
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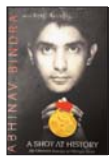

BROKEN REPUBLIC: THREE ESSAYS
BY ARUNDHATI ROY

THE year of the man who contributed the most towards moving us from words printed on paper to those on electronic screens became a runaway bestseller of 2011. Steve Jobs gave us the devices that changed our reading habits, and here he was, being celebrated not only in his preferred media, but also in the traditional pulp book format. Reports of the 'death of the book' have been greatly exaggerated. Readership expanded, and both traditional publishers and e-book publishers gained.

Internationally, authors too gained, since they were now being courted by both kinds of publishers. Of course, those who wrote really good books, like the Delhi-born Siddhartha Mukherjee, added new feathers to their cap. This doctor-author got fresh recognition for his last year's much-acclaimed book, *The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer*. While on his side of the pond, he won the prestigious 2011 Pulitzer Prize in the general non-fiction category, on the other side; he also bagged the Guardian First Book Award just before the year ended.

The writer of tomes Arun Shourie's *Does He Know a Mother's Heart?* touched the heart of everyone who read the story of his family's battle with disabilities. We had yet another book, and another controversy, on Mahatma Gandhi, with Joseph Lelyveld's *Great Soul: Mahatma Gandhi and his Struggle with India*.

Arundhati Roy, the great cerebral controversy queen, published a book without writing one, and thus we had *Broken Republic: Three Essays*. Talking of writers who published books without writing them, the king of the bestseller charts continued his winning streak with *Khushwant Singh on Women, Sex, Love and Lust*, which was compiled and edited by Ashok Chopra, as was *Agnostic Khushwant: There is No God!* which came out near the end of the year.

The man who has changed what the word 'bestseller' means for Indian publishing, Chetan Bhagat, built on his reputation by selling lakhs of books within days of releasing *Revolution 2020: Love. Corruption. Ambition.* Often books that critics love don't make that much of an impact on bestseller lists. Among the top-10 list we consistently have two other Bhagat titles — *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* and *The Three Mistakes of My Life*. Talking of numbers, we now have Nielsen BookScan which is gathering data from book stores and publishers nationwide.

We seek new understanding of the new world order and this has brought new books like *Indian Mujahideen: The Enemy Within by* Shishir Gupta and *The Good Muslim* by Tahmima Anam.

On the fiction front, Amitav Ghosh won much acclaim with his detailed and multi-layered work *River of Smoke*, Aravind Adiga gave us *Last Man in Tower*, Aatish Taseer *Noon*, and Tarun J. Tejpal *The Valley of Masks*.

Memoirs formed a significant part of our reading appetite, be they those of the veteran journalist S. Nihal Singh who wrote *Ink in my Veins*, or *No Higher Honour* by the former US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice. Chandigarh's own Abhinav Bindra teamed up with sports writer Rohit Brijnath and gave an interesting account in *A Shot at History: My Obsessive Journey to Olympic Gold*. Business tycoons gave their accounts of their lives, be it Vinay Bharat Ram whose *From the Brink of Bankruptcy: The DCM Story* made it to the bestseller list, or real estate magnates Ansals and DLF.

Yes, while international publishers sold many books to Indian readers, including some through various kinds of electronic devices and e-book readers, it was the traditional book that ruled the roost, and largely Indian authors found resonance among avid readers.

THE ENTERTAINERS

Sunny side up

Sunny Leone, the Indo-Canadian adult film actress, emerged as India's most-Googled celebrity, beating Katrina Kaif, Kareena Kapoor and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan. Mahesh Bhatt, who had met Sunny inside the house of *Bigg Boss Season 5*, offered her a role in *Jism 2*. He chose her over Mallika Sherawat and Bipasha Basu. Sunny was born Karen Malhotra to Sikh Punjabi parents in Ontario, Canada.

Going Tanglish

Officially released on November 16, *Why This Kolaveri Di*, a song from the soundtrack of the upcoming Tamil film 3, written and sung by Dhanush, instantly became viral on social networking sites for its quirky "Tanglish" (portmanteau word of Tamil and English) lyrics. Soon, the song became the most-searched YouTube video in India. Within a few weeks, YouTube honoured the video with a Recently Most Popular Gold Medal Award for receiving a large number of hits in a short time. The song was composed by music director Anirudh Ravichander.

Chammak challoed, not *Ra.One*

Ra.One, an action-packed sci-fi thriller directed by Anubhav Sinha and produced by Shah Rukh Khan himself, promised to take Hindi cinema to the next level. However, despite a bumper opening, the most-talked about film of the year failed to click with the audience. "*Chammak Challo*", a song filmed on Kareena Kapoor and sung by Akon, however, was named the most downloaded song and video of the year.

Saadda controversy

A major part of the controversial song "*Saadda Haq*" starring Ranbir Kapoor from Imtiaz Ali's *Rockstar*, which became a rage with the youth, was shot at the Norbulingka monastery in McLeodganj, Dharamsala. The sequence saw people waving the Free Tibet flag in the backdrop. Following orders from the Censor Board to blur the flag and the slogan, Ali removed the sequence. Deletion of the Tibetan flag from the video caused wide protests in Tibet, Dharamsala and Chennai.

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GROUND-BREAKING RESULTS IN KNEE REPLACEMENT
People in Punjab have a lot of misplaced misconceptions regarding the outcome of knee replacement. People still believe that patients cannot walk without support (without stick or without walker support) for upto 6 WEEKS after knee replacement. But in my experience most patients are able to walk without support (without stick or walker stand support) after just 6 DAYS of knee replacement. This result has been achieved in patient Avtar kaur village Kadi Khalsa (Gurasi) and Paliani Harjeet Kaur. village Nasruwal (Hoshiarpur).
Secondly people believe that only with the use of a new type of a very expensive model of knee, known as the high flex knee, patients can sit cross legged on the ground. But I have used the older conventional model of the knee, which has been available in the market for the last 15 years and still my patients are able to sit cross-legged on the ground after just 3 weeks of knee replacement. Thirdly people believe that it is not possible to climb stairs after knee replacement but all patients are able to climb stairs after 6 weeks of replacement. Paliani Bakhsi Singh of Sangowal (Nakodar) was able to drive a bicycle after 4 weeks of replacement. Patient Jagir Singh of Pelian Kurd (Jalandhar) was able to drive a tractor after 5 weeks of replacement and patient Gurmeh Singh of Village Uji (Jalandhar) was able to drive a motorcycle by 6weeks of replacement, but despite giving such results people in Punjab still believe that knee replacement is not a successful surgery and are afraid to undergo knee replacement. Also people believe that a very expensive machine called computer navigation system is required to do knee replacement properly,but I have not used any computer or any new technique.The conventional technique which is available for the last 15 years is reliable minimum 15 years and could be made less been used in all these cases.Therefore, these operative results prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the results of knee replacement depend on the dexterity of the surgeons hand and not on the use of a computer navigation system or any new operative technique or any new model of knee replacement.For more information contact Dr. Ajay Deep Singh Orthopaedic surgeon at Pasricha Hospital, Near Kapurthala Chowk Jalandhar. Mobile : 9876626779. Qualification D.Orth,MCH (Orth), F.A.S.I.F. (Germany). Fellow of 1) King George Hospital, London ,2) Hillingdon and Mount Vernon Hospital London,3) University Clinic Muenster, Germany for the above mentioned results Dr.Ajay Deep Singh has been awarded the prestigious Bharat Jyoti Award by Bhaiwan Narain Singh, former governor of Tamil Nadu and GVG Krishnamurthy,former chief election commissioner of India ,at a function presided over by Joginder Singh former director of CGI.Dr.Ajay Deep Singh has also been awarded Gold Medal by the American Institute Of Medicine for securing All India first rank in the Orthopaedic Super speciality MCH(Orth) Exam
Caption - Patient Nirmal Singh, village Sandaran (Hoshiarpur) sitting cross-legged even with the use of conventional model of knee replacement. Patient operated at K.D.M. Hospital. Important-Patients may feel free to consult any doctor after reading this article.
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