

Chanakya set for Bollywood debut

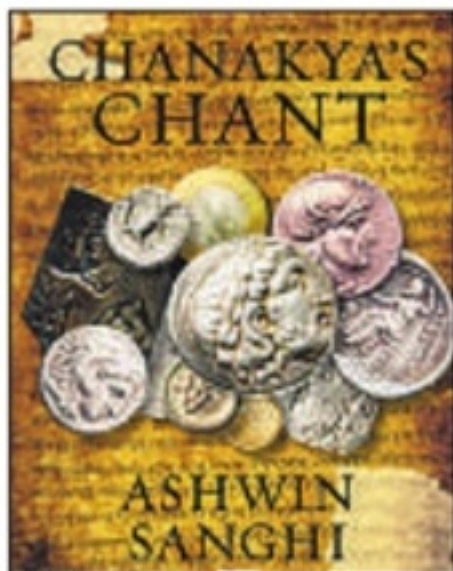
Ashwin Sanghi's 2010 bestseller, *Chanakya's Chant*, to be remade for silver screen

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Seems like adapting novels is in vogue with filmmakers. Even as Deepa Mehta finishes the adaptation of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, after Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* (based on Q&A) and Rajkumar Hirani's *3 Idiots* (*Five Point Someone*), UTV Motion Pictures joins the wagon, buying rights to Ashwin Sanghi's 2010 best-seller *Chanakya's Chant*.

"I didn't realise that *Chanakya's Chant* has a connect with both the past and the present. Things like the Anna Hazare movement have uncanny similarities with the past and found a way into my novel," says Ashwin. *Chanakya's Chant* retells the story of Chanakya whose machinations resulted in the installation of Chandragupta Maurya as the



emperor of Magadha. Parallel to that is the fictional tale of a Brahmin from Uttar Pradesh, Gangasagar Mishra, who decides to mentor a little girl from Kanpur's slums and groom her to become the Prime Minister of India.

"We have always been on the lookout for good literary pieces for our films. It's a beautiful book with superb characters and storyline," says Siddharth Roy Kapoor, CEO, UTV Motion Pictures.

According to Kapoor, the casting process is far from taking off. "Firstly, we have to zero in on a writer to adapt the novel into a story and screenplay, which will take about seven months. Then, we will get into the casting," he says.

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-Writer Ashwin Sanghi