



The right words

The intolerance debate seems to have heated up at the ongoing Jaipur Literature Festival with KAJOL being the newest one to comment on it. At the launch of ASHWIN SANGHI's book, *The Sialkot Saga*, she said that the industry is a fraternity and it is the members' responsibility to speak well and in the right manner. RIYA SHARMA reports

She had loved *Chanakya's Chant* by entrepreneur turned author Ashwin Sanghi but did not know him in person. When he found her slipping through the pages one day, his reaction was 'Oh, you' and hers was 'Yes, but who are you'? That was the day when actress Kajol met Sanghi for the first time.

"My reaction was, 'I am the writer of this book.' And she immediately replied, 'I had loved your book, *Chanakya's Chant*.' And since then, I have been asking her to launch a book for me and I am glad that she is finally here," said Sanghi at the launch of his historical-mythological fiction, *The Sialkot Saga* at the ongoing Jaipur Literature Festival.

Sanghi shared that it is a story related to mythology. "Readers who have been waiting for Sanghi's mythological and historical drama, this book is for them. Though the backdrop is the Partition, it talks about events that unfold after that. The Partition is the genesis of the story and it reveals what happens afterwards. We need to read this story differently. It tells the story of conflict and a wonderful partnership between two individuals. I believe, I am not a writer but a storyteller and this is what I have tried to achieve through this book," he said.

The writer who writes mainly in the historical-mythological genre said that the two don't excite him individually. "These two don't excite me

Kajol's perspective

Kajol on the other hand, said that though she might write a book in the future but, "I think being a writer is a lonely job. You don't have an assistant who, while writing, can say, 'Ma'am, I can write a paragraph for you?' It is a one man's job inside the mind."

Commenting on Bollywood's idea of following the steps of Hollywood, she retaliated by saying, "Our culture does not follow anything — it follows itself. You never know, Hollywood might be following us in some ways." Though she requested everyone to stick to the questions related to the festival, she said something completely opposite of what Karan Johar sparked controversy with. "The film industry is one place where we have no barrier of colour, caste, creed or any kind of Intolerance. I think there is a certain kind of insensitivity in the country right now. I think as a public figure, it is our duty to speak well and correctly," she added.

individually, what excites me is the possible overlap," he pointed out.

Though he said that the book deals with ancient mythology but later while addressing the media, he said, "It is vicious. 90 per cent of it is contemporary story. I had been inspired by what has been happening around us and this

is what I have written about in the book."

When someone asked Kajol whether she thought that inviting celebrities is a way for writers to create a buzz, she instantly replied, "Ashwin is plainly here because of his writing. In the field of writing, recommendations don't matter." Sanjoy Roy who was also present at the interaction said, "Any endorsement that an author needs is the JLF."

As Sanghi is releasing at a time where India's relationship with Pakistan is at a very interesting point, has he mentioned that in his book as well? "I wrote the book much before. But wherever a country has a border and a neighbour, there will always be a conflict. Through these two characters (Arvind and Abbas) I have tried to explore that relationship and in the end, there is hope. And I hope my readers will get the message," the author said.

He lives with his characters. "The two characters in my book, Arvind and Abbas, I know their stories completely. If I don't know my characters, then I can kill them on any page. That is the power that I enjoy," explained Sanghi.

