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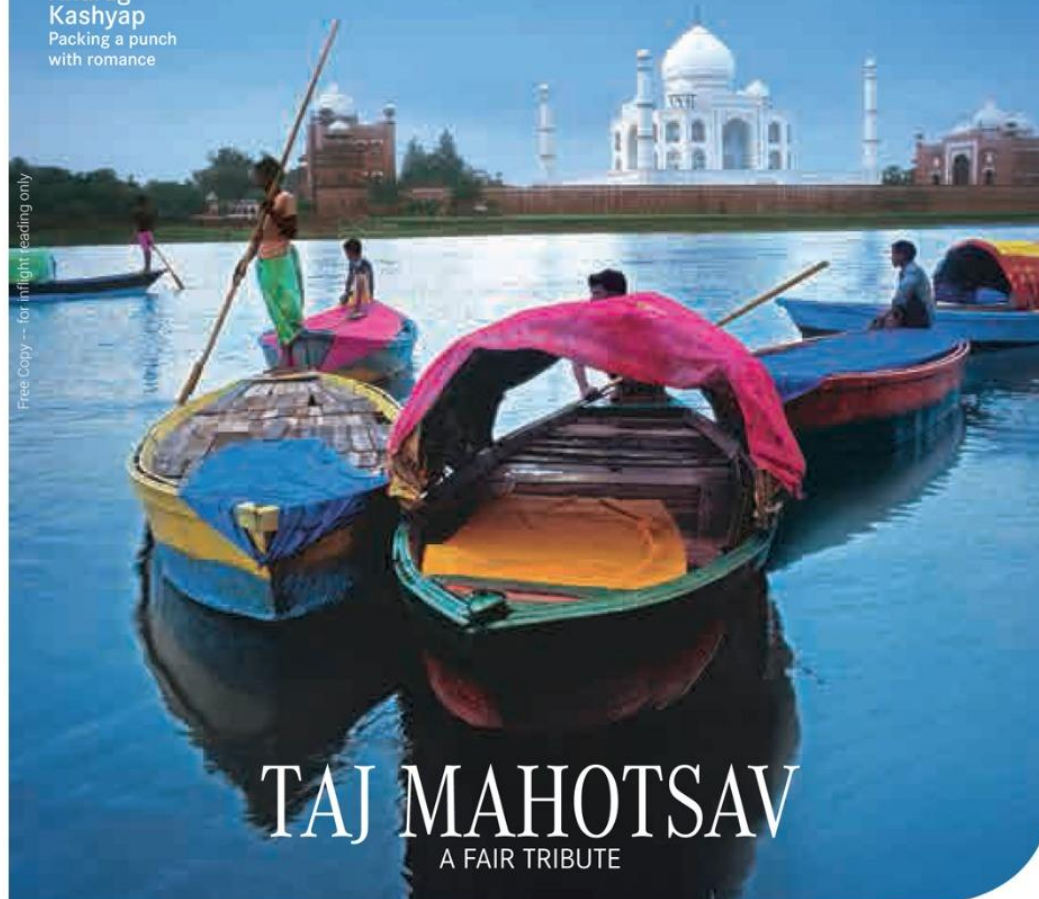
Sands of silence

Lesser-known beaches from across India

Anurag Kashyap

Packing a punch with romance

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TAJ MAHOTSAV

A FAIR TRIBUTE



THE RISE OF RISHABH PURI THROUGH HIS STORY: BUSINESSMAN, AUTHOR AND PARAGON OF GENEROSITY

Having overcome serious health troubles in the past, Rishabh Puri believes in using his second lease on life to give something back to those in need

When people ask how I've achieved so much success in my life, I always stop to appreciate the question. I use it as a time for self-reflection. It's an answer I'm still trying to figure out myself. And it's one with secrets that are still unfolding, too. I pray that I'm still on the rise, improving every day and seeing good things in my future. If not, I need to put my nose to the grindstone rather than trying to tell other people that what I've done, works!

Life, from the first time I drew breath, has been a fight for me. I developed drive and self-discipline as I developed the ability to read and do sums. Think of it this way: you're a little kid sitting in a hospital. Your best friends are all nurses and doctors. Crown-ups. You can't go to school with the other kids. You can watch TV or read, but apart from that, you can't go out to play football. You can't go play with friends. You're trapped. How hard would you fight to get better if that was your life?

I was fighting for more than my life. I was fighting to have a normal life. Fighting against the boredom of a hospital bed, waiting for a clean bill of

health that might never come. And that drive, that dedication became such a part of me that it's carried me through every other aspect of my life. In business, I'm driven not just to succeed, but to fight against boredom. To fight the tried-and-true, the conventional and the tiresome. Sometimes, the best way to escape life's prisons is by thinking outside of the box.

That was what led me to writing. It was an impulsive decision, done completely for my own enjoyment. I didn't pick up a pen for fortune or fame, just to process my own world and learn about myself in the process. I wanted to explore love and everything it could possibly mean. And that exploration led me to understand more about the world around me, and to see for myself a place in it that I never had before.

There are chains that keep people bound to suffering through their whole lives. The chains of poverty, of ill health, of misery, of denial. We live in a world where greed is rewarded. Generosity is often done for tax benefits, not for the love of seeing the world around you become a better place. In this world, what would it look like to actually give oneself to others? I've tried with my words to inspire hope in the people who read them. I've tried

with my actions to bring smiles to the faces of my friends and family, to tell funny jokes and to keep life light. But my foot was hovering over the precipice. I was uncertain how to take the next step forward.

And then it came to me: I should use the profits from the sales of my books to give someone else the light of hope. There are many children living right now who are fighting for their lives, the way I did when I was their age. The problem is that many of them were not blessed with prosperity the way that I have been. They may survive the fight for their lives, but wind up weighed down by medical bills forever. That will snuff out the light of hope that they may have gained from survival.

That's why I've decided to use the proceeds from my novels to fund heart surgery for underprivileged children. I was given a chance to survive, and because of that, I've thrived. I've made a lot of money, but what good is that if I'm not using it to give back? If just one child takes their new lease on life and decides to live for others, that's one person I've helped. Who knows what they might grow up to do? Every child comes into this world with the ability to make it better. The light they bring makes it easier for others to see hope in the darkness. If I can play a part in ensuring that a child facing serious illness survives, unburdened by debt, to bring goodness to this world, then my survival, as well as theirs, means something to the whole world.

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