*How important do you think MK Gandhi's ideology is to the world in this new century?*

If Truth, Love and Peace are important to humanity Gandhi will always remain important. As he said, "Truth, Love and Peace are not invented by me they are as ancient as the mountains and rivers. Thus these are the corner stones of the formation of society and civilisation will always remain important to us if we value life and more so quality of life. As the World faces threat from violence against humanity and against our environment and we see its effects which are now threatening our existence on this earth the belief of Gandhi, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammad become more and more relevant. When the darkness is blackest then a spark gives us hope about the coming emergence of light, this is true for Gandhi and his relevance too. The war on terror is making us even more susceptible to terror and violence, people challenge the advocates of non-violence to prove how non-violence can address terrorism. Nonviolence cannot stop a suicide bomber but nonviolence if applied with honesty and humility will be able to address the cause which creates the suicide bomber. Bullets may stop a terrorist but terrorism has not been known to have been deterred by bullets and bombs. If we want this world to become safer we will have to take recourse in nonviolence practiced with honesty and compassion.



If greatness was hereditary there would have been so many Mahatmas and Prophets. But greatness is not inherited it is achieved

*Many say that the idea of secular India has failed. What is your response to this view?*

Apparently the idea of Secularism has failed in India. But the fact that India survives as a multi religious nation is proof that we are basically a secular people who have learned to coexist despite our differences, suspicions and prejudices. Since Bangladesh and Pakistan were created with a communal belief Secularism has not been able to take root in these two nations and today we see radical and fanatic elements dominating the societies in both the nations. In India there is a lunatic fringe which tries to assert and dominate from time to time but by and large we have survived and managed to keep our national fabric well knit. It will take a lot more aggravation to tear apart the century old bonds that Indians of any Religion, Caste or Ethnicity have formed with their motherland. The Narendra Modis, L. K. Advanis and Praveen Togadias are the aberrations not representatives of Indian civil society.

*You, I gather, studied art. Do you paint?*

Although I did do a diploma in arts it was in printing technology. I have always fancied that there is a painter in me waiting to break out but till date all my attempts at art have ended up in me making one big mess.

*Will you please tell our readers a little about the ideas behind your book 'Let's Kill Gandhi!'*

'Let's Kill Gandhi!' deals with the events of the last four years of the life of my great grandfather, Bapu. It specifically deals with the conspiracy to murder him, chronicles the many attempts to murder him which failed, profiles his murderers and their conspirators and patrons, the bungling by the police and the investigation after the murder, the trial, sentencing, appeal and execution and then the report of the commission of inquiry. My reason for writing the book was not because I was going to throw