

More medals please

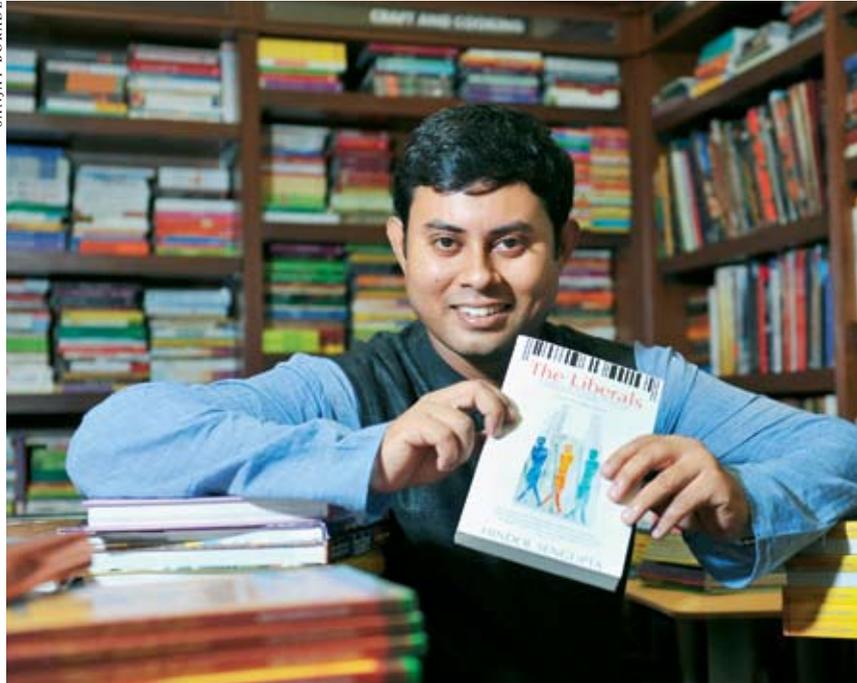


SANJAY BORADE

India definitely has the potential, and the London Olympics 2012 has proven it. India picked up its biggest ever medal haul in its history of Olympic Games, with no small thanks to the **Olympic Gold Quest** (OGQ). Four of India's six medallists were supported by OGQ; reason enough for their enthusiasm being doubled and the many celebrations that followed. A stupendous achievement considering the extreme paucity of facilities, infrastructure and encouragement that our red tape-ridden government provides.

We need the magic of our own Usain Bolts that we can be proud of, when they leap effortlessly through the finish line – taking the Indian flag leaps and bounds ahead, in stature and sport. Yes, Amitabh Bachchan was right when he shared at the recent OGQ celebratory dinner that the days of the World Wars are (hopefully) over. Today, we fight matches of sport on platforms like the Commonwealth Games and the Olympics. And you might ask where heroes like Vijay Kumar (silver, 25 m rapid fire pistol) and Mary Kom (bronze, women's 51 kg boxing), Gagan Narang (bronze, 10 m air rifle) and Saina Nehwal (bronze women's singles badminton) get their thrust and sponsorships from. It's the inspired non-profit organisation – Olympic Gold Quest.

Niraj and Minal Bajaj, who have devoted time, energy and intellect along with co-founders Geet Sethi and Prakash Padukone and other member Viren Rasquinha, to bring it where it is today. ogq and the sports stars are determined that the number will be bettered four years later in Rio de Janeiro. Like their key founder, Rakesh Jhunjhunwalla said, every year we've been coming back with more medals since Olympic Gold Quest made it their business to 'make it all happen'. Thronging the celebratory party at the Taj Crystal Room was Mumbai's 'set', unabashedly pushing to be photographed with the sports heroes. Yes, even Amitabh Bachchan was emotionally stirred when the winners came onto stage to receive their trophies from him, and he unequivocally offered his support to the OGQ board – heroes in their own right. OGQs success motivated them to announce the scholarship programmes for six youngsters across two disciplines – badminton and shooting. ♦



Drive away the blues

SUDIPTA BANERJEE



It was a glittering launch at South Mumbai's Shiro. Released by actor Arshad Warsi, **Don't Think of a Blue Ball** is **Malti Bhojwani's** first book. A 'self-help' or 'personal development' book about plugging in, which is establishing one's own connect with the universe or higher self, taking a stand for what one wants and making declarations, learning to turn antagonists into allies, letting go, forgiveness, honing intuition, gratitude and compassion. "It is laced with 'Thinking Pink Exercises' to support the reader in creating lasting change," says Bhojwani. A professional certified life coach, Bhojwani, "aims to serve, not to fix or to help". She coaches individuals mainly by phone and Skype and leads workshops to help create lasting changes. "I have also recently developed a 'Virtual Life Coach', which will support people for a fraction of the cost of personal-coaching." ♦

Samaj versus samay

Anil Dharkar recently launched **Hindol Sengupta's** new book, *The Liberals* at Kitab Khana in Mumbai. Sengupta, who is senior editor at the Indian edition of *Fortune*, and founding trustee of the Whypoll Trust, India's only open government trust, has written two other books on the Indian luxury industry. *The Liberals* describes the time after the Indian economy opened up to world, when it was "becoming a more consumerist society". Sengupta, who was 11 when economic liberalisation took over the country in 1991, traces his personal journey through the subsequent years. Speaking about society today, he talks about the "long-time struggle between the illiberal and liberal," which has always fascinated him, he says. According to Sengupta, liberalisation has irretrievably changed what nurtures people's habits, what he calls the "samaj versus samay." In his opinion, whereas earlier people's behaviour depended upon the communities from where they hailed, today, it depends upon the time from which they come. Dharkar opines that the flexibility with which people are willing and enthusiastic about major career changes is one of the most notable things about liberalisation, and Sengupta agrees. "The rigid boxes in India are breaking," he says. ♦



Banker makes headlines

THE SUNDAY READ www.mumbaimirror.com/city
**A tale of ty
 banker**
 American poet T S Eliot, and his translator, retire
 Arun Sharma, share a love for words and accou



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Birds of a feather flock together. That the idiom holds true for bankers as well, as was amply illustrated by **Arun Sharma**, a retired banker. Sharma found his muse in the celebrated poet T. S. Elliot, who ironically was a banker too and drew upon the *Bhagvad Gita* for his *Four Quartets*.

Sharma's translations of *Four Quartets*, *Gerontion* and *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* won acclaim and approval from the UK-based T.S. Eliot Society. For Sharma the inspiration was not so much the words but the exploration of man's place in the Universe, his thoughts on the elements of nature and his study of Sanskrit and the Gita, he says. After having translated Shakespeare's *King Lear*, next on the agenda for Sharma is *Macbeth*. Sharma considers his efforts in translating Eliot the most gainful use of his time in his retirement years. ♦

Checking in

Lenny Menezes (right), chairman, **Hilton India**, is a busy man. He was in Goa recently to launch the second upscale **Doubletree** brand in the leisure segment, the first being at New Delhi. Entering into an agreement with **Braganza's** Riviera De Goa, Double Tree by Hilton will mark its affiliation to its new partners with a range of refurbishments, at an investment of ₹20 crore. "The trend of smaller hotels tying up with established brands is a win-win situation all around," says Menezes. So, with the Hilton all set to establish 50 hotels by 2015, with six already operational in New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai, Menezes is bringing in the entire repertoire of the Hilton range. While Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn have a presence in India, next in line are luxury brands Waldorf Astoria and Conrad and the mid-market brand, Hampton. Menezes' mandate is simple – one hotel in the country every 45 days, in a bid to take advantage of the hospitality boom hitting India. ♦