

FEATURED ARTICLE

A secret Brotherhood of Indian revolutionaries declares war on the East India Company, a.k.a John Company. The year is 1856. The prologue of *The Vedic Warriors of 1857* takes you into the dense forests of Central India where native tribes valiantly fight the colonial army. Right from the word go, author Nikita Khanna Pani transports you into 19th century pre-independence India. From the rustic and gritty world of a secret brotherhood – nicknamed the ‘Vedic Warriors’ by the British – to the opulent world of Rajas and Maharajas, the canvas is expansive, and the writing detailed. The intricacy of every visual reflects the depth of research to the discerning mind.

The author goes on to build the universe of the story, revealing the characters slowly and weaving them seamlessly into the plot. Mythology is used cleverly, with the Vajra being the symbol of the secret brotherhood. As explained by the author, it is the divine weapon used by Lord Indra to annihilate evil.

The Vedic Warriors of 1857 pays homage to the heroes of the First War of Independence, some known, some relatively unknown. They have been integrated into the fictitious world of the Vedic Warriors who aspire to win India her freedom. One would commonly presume that the story is about the Indian mutiny, but that is not the case. While the mutiny is integrated into the story, the actual plot is completely fictional.

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NIKITA KHANNA PANI

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The Vedic Warriors of 1857

Nikita Khanna is born and brought up in Mumbai. She graduated from Jai Hind College in Mass Media and did her post graduation from Sophia's Polytech. She started an exciting career in the Film and Television industry in 2006. This is where she discovered her passion for writing. Being a history buff, she was drawn toward India's rich historical past. The French Revolution served as an inspiration and left her questioning India's First War of Independence which is popularly known as the Mutiny of 1857. Her research on the subject shook her understanding of history as it had been told in history books.

Thus the idea of *The Vedic Warriors of 1857* was conceived in the year 2010 as an ambitious alternate version of history; a fantasy many of us wished was true. For many years the daunting extent of the subject kept her away from it. The pandemic locked all of us in and thus Nikita decided to pursue a long standing dream of penning the book. Through the lockdown she read and wrote and *The Vedic Warriors of 1857* started to take shape from a mere concept to a full fledged novel.

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