

The Book Highlights The Life Journeys Of Seven Achievers Who Came From Typical Middle Class Backgrounds, Says Mohan Lakhamraju

Braving All Odds

India is currently going through a golden age of entrepreneurship. Never before in centuries has the entrepreneurial ecosystem been as supportive or the economic drivers been as conducive for budding entrepreneurs. One of the most essential ingredients of any thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem is the celebration of successful ones and the telling of their stories. Given the travails that every entrepreneur faces during his/her journey, knowing about others who had to overcome similar hurdles provides inspiration when it is needed the most.



Entrepreneurial stories of every hue and colour abound in thriving hubs such as Silicon Valley, not just those of successful ones, but also of failure and mistakes. In India, however, there has been a paucity of such stories, particularly those highlighting entrepreneurial journeys of the “aam aadmi”. We do have stories of celebrated heroes such as Ratan Tata, Narayana Murthy, Dhirubhai Ambani and Anil Agarwal.

However, it is the magnitude of their success and impact that makes them outliers and hence difficult for ordinary folks to relate to. What was in short supply are entrepreneurial stories that every young person can relate to. It is here that Ridhima Verma's *Seven Uncommoners* (FingerPrint) makes an invaluable contribution.

The book highlights the life journeys of seven achievers (Pawan Jain, Vishal Gondal, Nishith Desai, Mahesh Singhi, Prasad Lad, Jagdish Gupta and Patu Keswani), who came from typical middle class backgrounds and just based on their sheer hard work created thriving businesses and, in the process, generated substantial wealth for themselves, their employees and investors. What makes it further interesting is the diversity of the industries that these uncommoners come from. These are not the glamorous and often reported tech Cinderella stories of overnight success. From logistics to infrastructure to financial and legal advisory services to facilities management and hospitality, these industries represent as good a mix as any of what constitutes our economy. In highlighting these stories, Verma

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One aspect Verma could have done differently is to focus on how the protagonists made key decisions that determined their path and the emotions that were involved. There is substantial narrative that documents the journey without necessarily adding to the reading experience that can be done away with.



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