

# htcity

What shocked us in 2009 P 2

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2009, 12 PAGES www.hindustantimes.com

## The curious case of an engineer-cum-writer

Mayank Austen Soofi

Writers have two lives. Novelist Anuja Chauhan wrote her bestselling, *The Zoya Factor*, while working as an advertising professional during the day. Chetan Bhagat was an investment banker when he wrote his first book, *Five Point Someone*. Now we have an engineer out with a debut novel which, he says, is "one-fourth autobiographical".

**Name:** Neeraj Chhibba, 37  
**Claim to fame:** *Zero Percentile: Missed IIT Kissed Russia*, his first novel  
**His long bio:** Born in RK Puram, raised in Ashok Vihar and currently living in Pitamura, Chhibba works in a Guragon-based software company. He tried cracking IIT but couldn't get through so went to Volgograd, Russia, for mechanical engineering.  
**His tweet bio:** "A writer at heart and now a published author; not writing gives me an ulcer. Love to tweet on my observations on life."  
**His blog:** The Maven Haven (<http://chhibba.wordpress.com/>)  
**His creative life, in his own (blog) words:** "The entire process of writing changes your personality entirely. You are considered a nerd and your social value nosedives. What else do you expect if you resist invites to parties, miss New Year eves and knot your brows when someone visits your home uninvited on a weekend? Add to that your new found desire to get



The book cover



Neeraj Chhibba

published and the publisher's stubbornness in reading a new writer's book and you almost look like the photoshopped-image of a madman. But, since you have taken the plunge, you refuse to quit."