

Novel with a strong local flavour

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KOZHIKODE: How circumstances transform an individual is the central theme of Jyothi Menon's maiden novel *The Angel of God*.

Apart from its theme and gripping action, the novel in English will be of special interest to the people of Kerala in general and Kozhikode in particular since some of the turning points in the story take place in the city and its suburbs.

Besides the local colour imparted by its milieu, the novel also gets a strong local flavour because of the titles of some of its chapters - Kallai; Bypore; Chavakkad; Parappuram Tharavad; Beach Hotel, Valiangadi, to name a few.

The Angel of God was released by writer and social critic Zachariah for readers in Kerala at a function arranged by the Calicut Cultural Forum recently.

Kozhikode flavour of the novel will not be a surprise to those who know the author well; for, she is a native of Tiruvannur in Kozhikode and studied at St Joseph's Anglo Indian Girls School and Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College.

Though she studied engineering subjects, Jyothi has since switched her professional interest to human relations. It is after trying her hand in writing books on human resources that Jyothi turned to writing fiction.

Said Jyothi Menon about her experience in writing *The Angel of God*: "This work took me seven years to complete; it is a work whose main theme is that of transformation."

Her novel is about Moosa Bhai, a criminal born into the womb of poverty in slums in Mumbai, who emerges as an underworld don and his transformation into the angel of God.



"The book is not a celebration of his power, his wealth - but how he uses both to transform the lives of those who surround him," says the author.

About how circumstances change an individual, Jyothi, a senior vice-president (HR) in a subsidiary of Standard Chartered Bank in Chennai says: "People, I believe, come to work not only because they must - but also because they seek a personal transformation. It is in the disappointment of that transformation not materialising that many people quit jobs to seek other opportunities."

"In this belief is embedded the seeds of *The Angel of God* - the very same angel that we all seek to discover in order to transform our lives to mirror the closely held dreams that we cherish within our hearts," she said.

Jyothi has plans to write more books. One, which she has co-authored with her husband Bobby Menon, who is also an HR professional, is almost ready. She is planning to publish it in Malayalam.

Another book that she is planning to write is for children. "This also has transformational characteristics implanted into the advice that a magical goldfish provides a young boy," said Jyothi. A few film-makers have evinced interest in *The Angel of God*.