

## A dose of discomfort

**D. Murali**

No organisation, like no individual, or no jalebi, is like another, declares Shombit Sengupta in *Jalebi Management from Response* (www.sagepublications.com).

Jalebi, for starters, is a common Indian sweet that adorns the cover page of the book. Wikipedia traces the origin of the sweet to Punjab. "The Persian word for jalebi is 'zoolbiah'. It is made from deep-fried, syrup-soaked batter and shaped into a large, chaotic pretzel shape," explains <http://en.wikipedia.org>.

The jalebi's peculiarity is its decidedly rounded shape, despite idiosyncratic gaps that can have jagged edges, as Sengupta describes with verve. His book, equally idiosyncratic, is about blending 'the ocean of humanity with industry', even as big businesses are racing to India and China for the vast markets these countries provide.

"Historically, Western management know-how, evolving from Caucasian innovative capacity, marketing attitude and social norms, has influenced the business practices of emerging economy countries," says the author. The flaw, however, with such know-how is that it does not "conform to, or seamlessly mesh with, the societal aspects." The billion-mindset is different from the million one, writes Sengupta. He prescribes a dose of discomfort for the billion-mindset so used to contentment. "When a globally reputed company (GRC) unveils a competing product, the Indian company complacently questions, 'Will it succeed?' instead of finding a better alternative to the GRC's offering." Rather than study the root cause of GRC's success, the desi company typically resorts to quick-fixing the deliverable for short-term gains.

Sengupta exhorts the billion-mindset economies "to grow a disciplined business mentality that can dissect success."

A riotous journey through the author's mind, which should appeal to those who relish the nebulous golden dish at the halwai-wallah.