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THE INTERVIEW  
**RAHUL  
BOSE**

WHERE DOES  
RANBIR KAPOOR  
GO FROM HERE?

DRIVEN:  
**THE VIRAT  
KOHLI STORY**

LIQUEURS YOU  
SHOULD TRY

**THE WORLD'S BEST  
SMARTPHONES**

48 HOURS IN  
MADRID

UNUSUAL  
HOMESTAYS

BREGUET'S  
FASCINATING  
HERITAGE

**WHEELS**

- JAGUAR F-PACE •
- PORSCHE 718 CAYMAN •
- HONDA ACCORD HYBRID •
- TATA HEXA •

**THE SUIT  
SPECIAL**

THE FINEST  
LUXURY SUITS

SUIT CARE

ME AND  
MY SUITS

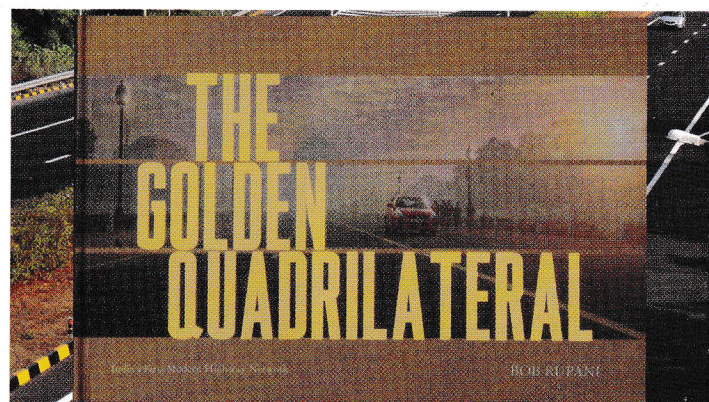
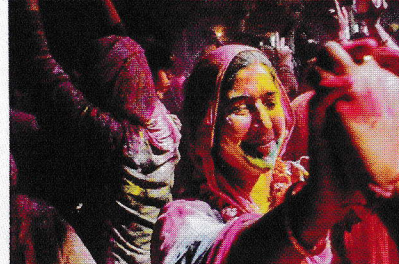
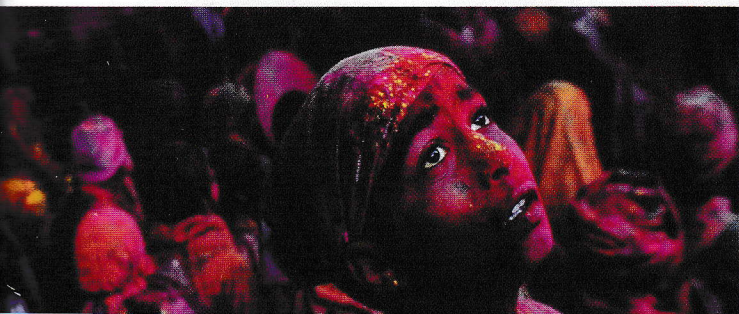
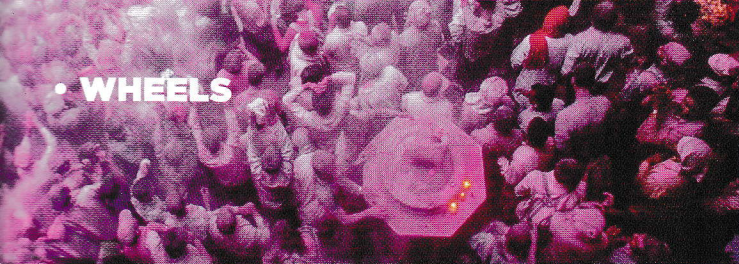
BANDHGALA  
RULES



# BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH



## • WHEELS



## Driving the G-Quad

Automotive journalist Bob Rupani's new book, *The Golden Quadrilateral*, tells you what it's like to drive the length of India's first proper highway network.

By Pablo Chaterji

**NARAYAN 'BOB' RUPANI is a bit of a legend, in the world of automotive journalism.**

Among his peers, he's renowned as a no-nonsense character, a scrupulously unbiased man who brooks no bullshit and isn't afraid of speaking his mind (his impressive moustache can often be seen bristling). This doesn't always endear him to those in the automotive industry, especially those who're at the receiving end of one of his forthright reviews, and it is precisely the reason he is the long-standing chairman of the Indian Car Of The Year award's jury – not many other than Bob can handle the multifarious egos that are thrown together every year, during the judging process. Bob is also one of the most jovial people you're

likely to encounter, ever ready to sit down over a drink or two and slap you on the back while he unleashes a from-the-belly laugh. Most of all, he's an adventurer and raconteur par excellence, having driven all over the country and the world, with a vast archive of stories and anecdotes tucked away in his brain (remember to ask him about the time a ghost sat on his chest, if you ever cross paths). **There is, thus, nobody that's better qualified to write a book on driving the Golden Quadrilateral,** and it's an interesting effort all right.

The book takes you on a journey along the G-Quad (as it's popularly known) and the states through which it passes, with a large selection of photographs documenting the drive. The largest highway

project in India, the G-Quad is also the 5th-longest highway network in the world, and it has helped transform the way the country travels, apart from contributing to economic growth. These are the good parts – there are downsides too. Bob laments the loss of many things that you could once take for granted on India's highways – the trees lining them, a lot of which were cut down when the G-Quad was built; milestones marking distances, which have all but disappeared; STD booths, and a host of other memories. He points out, quite rightly, that because of these new divided highways, Indians have become even worse drivers, since a lot of them simply drive down the wrong side instead of going ahead and finding a U-turn. Hilariously, he also writes about how, in their well-intentioned efforts to make the highways greener, the authorities have put plants on the dividers.

The catch? Locals bring their cows and goats to graze on them, creating a traffic hazard.

One of the most interesting chapters is by Gautam Sen, a close friend of Bob's and a well-known automotive journalist himself. He paints a vivid picture of the joys (and travails) of road trips after Independence and leading up to the 1980s – the dak bungalows, the food, water and spare parts you had to carry, the pleasure of driving on empty, pollution-free highways, the wildlife you often encountered. I remember a lot of these things myself, from road trips as a kid, and the chapter brought home some great memories. I feel the photographs could have been selected more judiciously, and their captions written more evocatively, but other than that, it makes for an enjoyable read, especially if you haven't done much driven around the country.