Definitely not a breeze!

Hi, Everyone! I have no idea how other authors do it, but soon after beginning to write, I developed a workable system for myself.

Though I have only two parts in my novel, for the research and writing of it I had it divided into more:

- Andaman
- Khilafat Movement and the Moplah riots
- 1938
- Hyderabad Civil Disobedience Movement
- 1944 to 1946
- Noakhali
- Partition
- Gandhi-murder

I first read all books and online information connected to the specific topic. I underlined important paragraphs. I even scribbled in the margins—this did not do me any good for rarely could I understand my scribbles! But it satisfied some need.

Then I read the books over. I prepared a time-line chart—many thanks to all those websites which give calendars for the historical years, including information like phases of the moon!—indicating which incident was coming where and noting the book and page number where it occurred.

I read the books over again, this time sticking to the parts I had picked.

Then I thought about the scenes, until they appeared like a movie in my head. If only one could transfer thoughts onto paper in a magical way, writing the book would have been a snap!

I found out the hard way, there is a world of a difference between seeing the scenes in my mind's eye and penning them on paper (or rather Microsoft Word).

Even so, I did need to see them so before I could move on. Then I surrounded myself with all the books (open to the pages required for the particular scene I was writing) I needed, referring to them for each and every scene as I wrote. Since all incidents and facts are true, this was critical.

With this my first 'layer' was ready.

'Layer' is the name I have given to all stages of writing the scenes. When the first layer of the scenes was ready, I would study it to see what information needed to be added.

To give an example: in Savarkar's recovery scene, I studied and collected information on flowers that bloomed in that season. I did not want the flowers to be out-of-tune. I added those in the next 'layer.'

I have a dialogue re ‘the sugar-coated bitter pill.’ I had to go to Google and check and see if indeed sugar-coated pills were available in 1920 . . . ! Fortunately, they were.

When all such layers were added, my first draft was ready. After that I edited, trimmed, revised only a million times or so.

The writing was not a breeze by any means, but with this organized process I got a grip on it.

Anurupa