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**Editorial Office:** India Today Mediaplex, FC 8, Sector 16/A, Film City, Noida-201301; Tel: 0120-4807000; Fax: 0120-4807150  
**Advertising Office (Gurgaon):** A1-42, Enkay Centre, Ground Floor, V.N. Commercial Complex, Udyog Vihar, Phase 5, Gurgaon-122001; Tel: 0124-4948400; Fax: 0124-4030919  
**Mumbai:** 1201, 12th Floor, Tower 2 A, One Indiabulls Centre (Jupiter Mills), S.B. Marg, Lower Parel (West), Mumbai-400013; Tel: 022-66063355; Fax: 022-66063226; Chennai: 5th Floor, Main Building No. 443, Guna Complex, Anna Salai, Teynampet, Chennai-600018; Tel: 044-28478525; Fax: 044-2436942; Bangalore: 202-204 Richmond Towers, 2nd Floor, 12, Richmond Road, Bangalore-560025; Tel: 080-22212448, 080-30374106; Fax: 080-22218335; Kolkata: 52, J.L. Road, 4th floor, Kolkata-700071; Tel: 033-22825398, 033-22827726, 033-22821922; Fax: 033-22827254; Hyderabad: 6-3-885/7/8, Raj Bhawan Road, Somajiguda, Hyderabad-500082; Tel: 040-23401657, 040-23400479; Ahmedabad: 2nd Floor, 2C, Surya Rath Building, Behind White House, Panchwati, Off: C.G. Road, Ahmedabad-380006; Tel: 079-6565093, 079-6565092; Fax: 079-6565293; Kochi: Karakattil Road, Kochi-682016; Tel: 0484-237757, 0484-237758; Fax: 0484-370962  
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# From the Editor

Most of us are lucky if we get fifteen minutes of fame. You can be famous, but not rich. Fame is fleeting, and unless you are V.S. Naipaul, your best shot at fame is when you are young or Amitabh Bachchan, in good health, good to look at, and very good at what you do. If you are an athlete, or a sporting sensation, or an actor, then the opportunity to cash in on your fame is very limited – as comedian Fred Allen said, celebrity “has the life expectancy of a small boy who is about to look into a gas tank with a lighted match”. A shower of advertising asteroids bombards us every day, and chances are we will remember products that have famous faces associated with them – even when you can fast-forward past the commercials in a digital world. We have been weaned on stories about genteelly poor Indian cricketers; a recent tribute to Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi recounts how even the nawab and Sharmila Tagore were travelling economy class on a flight to a match. And I remember a riveting documentary on how Russian tennis players were on starvation diets until Boris Yeltsin decided to take the game under his wing. Things started to change for Indian celebrities in the 1990s, and Mark Mascarenhas – until his death eleven years ago – had a lot to do with the transformation. His WorldTel first shot into the headlines when it grabbed the rights to the 1996 cricket World Cup, and his first five-year contract with Sachin Tendulkar, worth \$7.5 million, was followed by an even bigger second deal.

Those numbers are dwarfed by today’s endorsement deals, and Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who some of us felt was flaming out only to reincarnate against the Australians, makes upwards of ₹100 crore (\$18 million) in just one year. That is why he is on our cover this fortnight, and you will really enjoy the rambunctious, swashbuckling tale

of big names and big money in the package starting on page 62. Executive Editor Suveen K. Sinha clearly had fun writing the Dhoni story, and so did Associate Editor Ajita Shashidhar and correspondents Manasi Mithel and Dearthon Thomas Hector. Take note though – even when celebrities fall off their pedestals they do not stop making money. Lance Armstrong, who was making about \$20 million a year from companies like Nike, Anheuser-Busch and RadioShack until he confessed to Oprah Winfrey that he had been consuming performance-enhancing drugs for years, still stands to make a pretty penny from speaking engagements, a book deal, and even possibly his own television show. It’s a very thin line between celebrity and

notoriety. Not even Tiger Woods, he of infidelity fame, has suffered much. I counted at least ten big-name sponsors on his website, including Rolex, Nike Golf, and NetJets (although Nike has given Rory McIlroy a deal that would make Tiger salivate).

Having lived vicariously through all that, I must now tell you proudly about a new milestone in *Business Today’s* constant endeavour to bring you the highest-quality analysis. This issue, we launch a new quarterly survey to gauge the mood of the market. The *Business Today-Morningstar* Asset Allocation Survey gets projections from India’s leading mutual fund houses on key indicators such as GDP growth, fiscal deficit, policy rate movements, rate of inflation, and their views on sectors that look attractive from an investment perspective on asset classes such as gold, and much more. This is an invaluable tool to aid your investment decisions. Together with our quarterly Business Confidence Index, the Asset Allocation Survey should be on your must-read list – and we hope you will preserve back copies so you can track changing investment moods.

Last fortnight saw the 12<sup>th</sup> India Today Conclave bring together a fascinating mix of celebrities big and small, and our coverage is dominated by an excellent and exclusive interview by Deputy Editor K. Sai Srinivas (page 58) with British-Canadian writer Malcolm Gladwell, the *New Yorker* staff writer whose books have made words like “tipping point” and “outliers” part of today’s lexicon.

*Chaitanya Kalbag*  
[chaitanya.kalbag@intoday.com](mailto:chaitanya.kalbag@intoday.com)  
[www.busesstoday.in/editor](http://www.busesstoday.in/editor)

