

# IPS and supercop-on-screen pens crime thriller on Covid

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Kolkata: An IPS officer, known for his portrayal of a supercop in a popular Bengali serial, has written a crime thriller in the backdrop of the pandemic. According to him, the absence of post-mortem in suspected Covid deaths, has left room for criminals anywhere in the world to get away with cold-blooded murder. This story titled 'Covid 19', which is set in Europe, is now being adapted into a film.

Cops acting in Tollywood is not new. But Prasun Banerjee is perhaps the first IPS officer to be playing a cop in a Bengali megaserial on a regular basis. Way back in 2007, Banerjee had attended a three-month-long training by the United Nations in Italy. "When the pandemic was at its peak in Italy, I saw shocking visuals of bodies piled up outside the hospitals since the morgues were full. An Italian cop friend told me that the health

infrastructure there had completely collapsed. No post-mortem was being conducted of the deceased because of the sheer high death toll," said the DIG, Barasat Range.



*Prasun Banerjee in a still from 'Deshar Mati'*

As a cop, Banerjee has been aware that every unnatural death needs a post-mortem. “Fear is the key in the case of Covid. Anywhere in the world, there is a chance that a murderer can dispose of a body as a Covid suspect. Nobody will touch it for fear of contamination. So, the pandemic actually provides an opportunity for killers to settle scores this way,” Banerjee added.

He began writing his story after his conversation with the Italian cop in 2020. “If there is no post-mortem, a case can’t even be treated as murder. I thought this is the ideal time to set a revenge drama. Though my story is set in Europe, we will film in Kolkata. Computer graphics will take care of the rest,” he added.

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Subrata Sen, who will be directing the film, is “fascinated” by the script. “I think he could come up with such a story only because of his police background. I plan to begin the shooting next month. I have seen him act in theatre and have cast him in the role of a young journalist for this film.”

Before work on the film begins, Banerjee is busy shooting as IPS officer Avimanyu Dasgupta for ‘Deshar Mati’. “I have acted in four plays and been a part of a few documentaries and short films. I have also directed a documentary titled ‘Paradise Lost: From Dazzle to Despair’ on the rise and fall of the zamindari system in north Bengal,” he said.

On being asked about his time management skill, he said he is trained in compartmentalizing his priorities. “The makers – Saibal Banerjee and Leena Gangopadhyay – have been kind enough to adjust to my timings. I usually shoot once a week after five thirty in the evening,” he said. Thankfully, he hasn’t yet had to rush out of the sets to intercept a gang. Only once did he have to cancel a shooting after he had to rush out following a major accident on the Barasat highway.