

Rolling the Dice

The 'Crime Patrol Girl', Geetanjali Mishra, enters the big league with *Ludo*



Geetanjali Mishra; (left) a screen grab from *Crime Patrol*

By BINDU GOPAL RAO

Geetanjali Mishra remembers suddenly receiving a call from a neighbour to fill in for an actor who failed to turn up. That two-minute chance tryst with the camera charted a career path she had never thought of. With TV shows such as *Crime Patrol*, *Phir Subah Hogi*, *Ek Ladki Anjaani Si* and many more under her belt, she recently made the giant leap to the big league with filmmaker Anurag Basu's *Ludo*. The film boasts an ensemble cast of Pankaj Tripathi, Aditya Roy Kapur, Abhishek Bachchan, Rajkumar Rao, and others. "*Ludo* is a dark comedy of four different concept-based stories set in different cities leading into situational comedy scenarios," says the actor who has completed more than a decade in the industry.

While she admits that every show is equally important for her, she singles out her role in *Phir Subah Hogi* for Zee TV as the most challenging. "It was the character of a prostitute, the owner of a *kotha*. It was difficult for me to adopt the body language needed, the attitude and the appearance. I felt more pressure because the reference character was Shabana Azmi's role from the film *Mandi*."

Best known for her roles in Sony TV's *Crime Patrol*, she says that the

two crime series—*Crime Patrol* and *Savdhaan India*—boosted her career. She was seen in over 80 shows of the *Crime Patrol* series playing various characters, from the victim, to the accused as well as the investigator. Any particular role she liked? "I personally liked my act in the Kolkata case in which I played the role of Rita Gomez," says this actor who quit *Crime Patrol* three years ago but is still known as the 'Crime Patrol Girl'.

Today, the 'Crime Patrol Girl' has travelled quite a distance. Not many know that her show *Rangrasiya* has also been telecast in Indonesia, Thailand and Egypt. Before Basu's much-acclaimed *Ludo*,

she made an appearance on OTT with the web series *Abhay 2*. Having worked in different formats, Geetanjali says that every sector has its own set of demands. She compares films/web series and television to a teenage phase vis-a-vis that of a mature phase in life.

"But the camera should be your only love when you are in front of it," says the actor, who counts Irrfan Khan, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Rani Mukerji, Tabu, Nargis Dutt, Waheeda Rehman, Dilip Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan and Rekha among her favourites.

Geetanjali admits to having a soft corner for negative roles. "The

audience tends to remember the negative roles for a longer time. Also, it gives me a chance to showcase my acting skill," she smiles. The actor is in talks for a couple of web series and short films and is set to enter the Zee TV show *Kundali Bhagya*. In the Balaji telefilms long-running serial, she will replace Kasturi Banerjee as Ramona.

What next? "I would like to go with the flow and see what lies ahead," says the actor who believes that it is the roles that choose the actors and not the other way round. Let's see which special character comes looking for her next.

