Techie turns novelist with terror thriller

By *Saibal Sen*, TNN | Nov 27, 2012, 06.25 AM IST

KOLKATA: 26/11 has touched many lives. For many it has changed the way they looked at life. For Dev Saha, a 31-year-old techie, the horrific carnage, cold-blooded brutality and the mindless deaths left him with several unanswered questions.

Was terrorism only cross-border? Didn't we - as a society, as a nation - fail the 166 innocents that were killed? It is these questions that led Saha to his debut novel 'The Brotherhood', a thriller on a 26/11-type coordinated attack on major airports, including Kolkata.

'The Brotherhood' is likely to hit the stores anytime now. The novel follows a daredevil Bengali police officer, Ranjit Sanyal, who loses his wife and child in the attack and goes seeking revenge. There is the predictable hue and cry over the attack, but it is here that Saha tries to be different.

As the book's title suggests, the 'brotherhood' is all about a cabal of all-powerful politicians and industrialists who virtually run the nation from the background. They thrive on terror because this provides the fodder to their flagship companies to rake in the moolah. They secretly patronize several terror groups. It is when one of these modules turns rogue that all hell breaks loose and it shatters Sanyal's family.

The story is about how the brotherhood tries to use the seething anger in Sanyal to hunt down the terrorists. Until the police officer learns the truth.

"The trigger to this book is perhaps the unanswered questions in my mind. I put in some general research and have seen how terror is justified to hike up state budgets, though the reality may be completely different," Saha told TOI. "I always loved to read. I remember one day, when leafing through a book, it suddenly stuck me - why don't I write one myself and bring to the fore the questions in my mind," he said. It is with good reason that his novel kicks off with a Mary McCarthy quote: "In violence we forget who we are." It concludes with a promise: Tomorrow is another day.

Saha, a Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan alumnus, completed his graduation in computer science and his MBA from Pune University. He is now employed with an IT MNC. "For nearly eight years I studied and worked in Pune, but Kolkata is my home," he smiled.