

A SUCCESSFUL LADY ENTREPRENEUR-

- Smt. ALKA SANE



Alka Suresh Sane, B.A. (Economics) & M.A. (Sociology) was born in a typical middle class family in 1946. She is better known by her maiden name - Alka S. Chakradeo as a State level Badminton player. She was also selected to represent India in the World Masters Badminton Championships, held at Copen Hegan in the year 1986.

Though she lived a normal life of a middle class women, soon the family circumstances forced her to earn her livelihood. The options left before her were to take up a job which was hard to find or be a self employed person. Her strong personality, tenacity, hard working nature, devotion and extreme faith in God made her opt for self employment. According to her line of thinking a job had limited scope of earning, which would not have been sufficient to provide enough funds to rear two children, as

well as have decent standard of living.

Her business started with making of Sandwiches and supplying them to tea shops where many college going students gather early in the morning. Slowly she switched over to stitching tool kit bags for one of the well known two wheeler manufacturer in Pune. Her unit by the name M/s PRASAD ENTERPRISES further took up job work of SPRING CORD assembly which is used in Gas cylinder caps. This work was carried out on three hand-presses in her house and was a sub-contract for Indian Oil Corporation. Her brother, who is settled in United States had come to her rescue and had given her some money for day to day expenses. She saved Rs. 7000/- out of that and bought three hand-presses and got made the necessary jigs and fixtures. But soon after, special purpose machines entered in this field and her hand-made springs were no longer competitive in the market. With this business, which could be described as a cottage industry, she gained lot of confidence which enabled her to take up job works and execute the orders effectively with her efficient management.

Here was a turning point in her life. Mr. Kotwal who was a family friend, offered her job work in the field of Elec-

tronics i.e. capacitors when she did know the difference between electric and electronic. She learnt many things from him and started even spot welding, when she did not know ABC of welding electrodes, weld cycles etc. Alka's nature is basically inquisitive and she always likes to learn new things in life. At present she has a job work about six lacs pieces of capacitors from one of the largest capacitor manufacturing company. M/s Prasad Enterprises now a stable and established firm.

Alka was not satisfied only with the job work, because she felt, her income was always dependent on quantum of job work that she was getting. So while she was supervising this job work, she thought of starting a Tourist Taxi Service for which mainly you get business on phone once you are established. State Bank of India, Dattawadi Branch, financed her for the taxis. She took lot of efforts to visit different industries to get business. This business is still carried out in the name and style of Navnath Travels. Her contacts in the Badminton field were also proved to be useful in getting business. After getting business, she earned a good name in this service industry by being most punctual and giving courteous service. At times when driver did not turn up in time, she has driven vehicles by herself. One after another Alka paid Bank's loans and had three cars to her credit. She has received a letter of appreciation from L.I.C. of India for arranging round the clock transport for three days for 2000 Agents conference which was held in Pune on Police Ground.

After establishing two business suc-

cessfully, she thought of having her own production. She chose manufacturing of floor Mosaic Cement Tiles because, it has endless demand. She procured all the necessary information about the tiles, their ideal proportion, the machinery required. She and her now grown up son went and stayed at Morbi in Sourashtra, which is a well known place for Mosaic tile Factories in India. She had the practical experience of working in the Tile Factory with the kind courtesy of Bombay Tiles & Beauty Tiles in Morbi. For six months she was collecting information, contacting suppliers in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Chota Udepur, and personally meeting them for establishing a rapport. She also studied in the area of possible technical hazards, break down of machinery, availability of spare parts, market conditions, competition, supply and availability of skilled labour, moulds, machinery so on and so forth.

After all the preparation, availability of funds was the main problem. One gentleman Mr. M. Y. Patil offered his 5000 Sq. ft. of land along with a shed on rent. She had to sale her two vehicles to raise funds for Tile Factory. Project report was prepared and State Bank happily financed her unit 'Prasad Tile' by giving sufficient cash credit. 'Prasad Tile' picked up business within two years and is having good reputation at present as quality manufactures of Mosaic Tiles.

Starting her business career with Big Zero in 1986 today. Alka's total turn over is more than twenty lakhs per annum and is happily settled in her life.

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