

ENTERPRISING WOMEN

Balancing the power equations

What comes to your mind while reading these names— Indra Nooyi, the CFO of PepsiCo, Chanda Kochhar, MD and CEO ICICI Bank, Shahnaz Hussain, CEO Shahnaz Herbal Inc, fashion designer Ritu Kumar and Ekta Kapoor, creative director of Balaji Telefilms? An unequivocal, "Power", we assume, as these Indian women fire the imagination of every young entrepreneur, and their success stories are the stuff that have inspired and will continue to inspire a whole generation of women seeking a place in the sun. As we celebrate the idea of womanhood on International Women's Day on March 8, *MetroLife* speaks to some Delhi-based entrepreneurs to learn about

the crests and troughs of their journey, their success mantras and of course, extract some nuggets of wisdom for the budding entrepreneurs.

"Dreams deferred are usually never realised. So, never postpone your dreams of starting your venture because of other commitments. Situations would never be ideal, it is entirely in your hands to mould them to your advantage," says Rashi Bajaj, principal designer, Carpet Couture.

The 30-year-old Rashi Bajaj is a 'couture carpet designer' who recently won the 10th Silver Stevie Award in the Young Female Entrepreneur category in New York. In the little SoHo of Delhi, Lado Sarai, her passion for contemporary design carpets comes alive in her



Sminu Jindal

store. She advises that when you chase your dreams, "make sure that you are able to carve out your 'We' time with the loved ones. Another thing, be impatient."

Is being a businesswoman

still considered novel? Another entrepreneur, Sarika Bhattacharyya, co-founder Biz Divas India answers, "Though the number of women entrepreneurs have increased in the last few years, yet we still have a long way to go. But this is changing. And I believe women entrepreneurs are more capable at adapting to ever-changing dynamic business opportunities."

And where does she find



Rashi Bajaj

ahead, take some risks because you will never taste success otherwise."

"Coming from a business family, I wanted to be a businesswoman right from the time I was a child," shares Sminu Jindal, MD, Jindal Saw Ltd. Having had the privilege of having leaders and successful entrepreneurs around her, she adds, "By entering into hardcore manufacturing business and also one of the core sectors of the economy, I am able to break down the myth that women cannot perform in the so-called muscle businesses like steel, coal, power, oil and gas etc."

Being wheelchair-bound herself, she understands the challenges faced by the disabled and through her initiative 'Svayam', she says, "I have been working towards providing independence and dignity to people with reduced mobility by making public infrastructure accessible to all."



Sarika Bhattacharyya

her enterprise heading to in the next 10 years? Says Sarika, "We see it as an 'aggregator', pulling together the nation's leading women's organisations under one umbrella. It will be a national network of professional women, generating a unified, unbiased voice on issues important to women."

Her word of advice for youngsters: "No ideas are unique, it is how we execute them that makes it unique. Ideas, when not executed are merely hallucinations. So go



INSPIRING Sky is the limit for young women seeking to carve a niche for themselves in professions hitherto dominated by men