

Usha Stud farms' Ameeta wants to diversify into exporting horses



Horsing Around

International Polo player Late Major P.K. Mehra's daughter Ameeta carries forth her father's legacy of breeding race horses

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IT'S not only the passion for horses that eldest daughter Ameeta has inherited from her late dad Major Pradeep Mehra but also the determination to put the Indian racing industry on the world map. Major Mehra, Commandant of the President's guards died in the plane crash along with his wife last year leaving behind a huge responsibility to daughters Ameeta and Devika.

Realising that her father, be given the tribute that he deserved, she organised 'The Usha And Mehra Stud Million' race and screening of the film 'Legend makers' based on her parents, produced by both sisters. "I wanted to record his contributions for the archives of the racing and breeding industry. He brought Stallions of international standards. Today we are exporting horses to South East Asia. . We have produced six Indian Derby winners till now," says Ameeta

proudly, who is also part of a team which will soon organise international sales of horses in Delhi.

Her other ambition is to bring in a sense of integrity and ethics in the profession,' says Ameeta.

The screening of the film recently (managed by E factor) saw the presence of Rajmata Gayatri Devi of Jaipur, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Yasho Raje Scindia with Adhiraj Singh, Billy Sodhi, Ritu Nanda and FERA violator Abhishek Verma and ex-CBI Director Joginder Singh, currently a steward at the Delhi Race Club.

Ameeta, an IIM graduate from Ahmedabad who later studied Equine and Stud Farm Management from 'The Irish National Stud' was initially hesitant to follow in dad's footsteps. "He saved all his earnings to construct the Usha stud farms in 1973. We led a simple life and I often wondered why I could not have money to buy sweets," says Ameeta adding that, "I always wanted to do something different. I only joined him

when he threatened to close down the farms. We signed a pact that gave me the freedom to breed international quality horses," recalls Ameeta.

Apart from racing Pradeep Mehra also captained the Indian Polo team, playing with the likes of Prince Charles and Maharaja of Jaipur. Says a nostalgic Rajmata Gayatri Devi, chief guest at the function, "I came from a racing family but married into a polo family. Mehra was all over the newspapers in England during his polo match there."

Like her father Ameeta is also a multi-faceted personality. She started the meditation centre, 'Gnostic Centre' and a school for tiny tots called 'Lavenir' (future) at the farms. "Since the beginning I was inclined towards meditation which is why I started the centre where I teach meditation, the Upanishads and the Geeta," she says. Ask her how she juggles so many things and she says, "I don't waste my time at all. I live on the farm and lead a very disciplined life."