

LIKE FATHER, LIKE DAUGHTER...

"I HAVE ONLY SEEN CLEAN POLITICS IN MY FATHER'S WORK. HE WORKED FOR THE PEOPLE'S WELFARE AND THAT'S WHAT I DO," SAYS PRIYA DUTT, MP, MUMBAI (NORTH WEST)



Priya Dutt, the MP of north-west Mumbai, made her full fledged entry into the world of politics after her father, Sunil Dutt's untimely demise in 2005. Sunil Dutt, an actor turned politician, was elected for the fifth time as MP in 2004, but unfortunately could not complete his tenure. It was then that Priya Dutt came forward and took up the

responsibility to realize her father's vision and dream for their constituency. Soon, she was elected as an MP of the same constituency. A woman of her demeanor did find it difficult to arrive at a decision to enter politics. But she looked on it as a platform to serve the people and took a plunge in the world of politics which is often said to be 'Dirty'. I have only seen clean politics in my father's work. He worked for the people's welfare and that's what I do," affirms Priya. Though she looks up to her father as her ideal, she has her own way of functioning, and believes in 'out-of-the-box' thinking. She is tough and makes it a point to meet people in person, listen to their grievances, and take necessary measures to solve them.

Life is not entirely smooth sailing for her, as it may seem. "I do get frustrated when things don't happen on time or the system does not work accordingly. I then empathize with the common people that if being an MP I have to face this, what about them," admits Priya. Sometimes, she gets so agitated that she feels the pinch of her father's absence in her life. Fighting against all this, an urge to serve people brings her back to the office every new day because she knows there are many helpless people looking up to her as a ray of hope. "Women are the only species on the earth who can multi-task," adds Priya proudly. According to her, women are more capable than men when it comes to managing home and work together. She admits that her priority is her family, and goes on to hint that most of the successful women in politics today are unmarried and only then are they able to give adequate amount of time and effort to their work. A pillar of strength and support system to her family at the time of crisis, her true victory was achieved when the special TADA court acquitted her brother Sanjay Dutt of terrorism and conspiracy charges for 1993 Mumbai serial blasts.

Priya has done her Diploma in Television Production, Directing, Editing, Camera,

Switcher or T.D. from US and acting is believed to be in her genes. She has scripted a documentary film on Child prostitution. "It is not a commercially viable subject to work on, so no one has evinced interest in investing money," explains Priya whose claim to fame as MP is working for theunglamorous causes.

"We were free to choose our career as per our interest and our parents never imposed anything on us," says Priya in disagreement to the belief that interest lies within family boundaries. "All I inherit from my mother is that I am straight forward and connect with people easily," Priya adds. She firmly believes in calling a spade, a spade and agrees that it doesn't always work in her favour. "If you want to



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earn money in politics, then this is not for you. One should have a well-defined and unselfish reason to be in politics," confirms Priya to the aspirants of politics. Women reservation is one cause that Priya strongly favours. "Women reservation in Panchayati Raj has worked successfully upto the Sarpanch level," says Priya. She would never impose politics on anyone in her family but her niece does assist her in her work. "I allow her to help me, not for inculcating her interest in politics but to introduce her to the real world and to see a common man's life closely. In the end, it



is her choice about a career that matters," says Priya profoundly.

Taking the message further, she says, "Be the change, you want to see." According to her it is not necessary to be in politics to eradicate corruption or malfunctioning of the system. "It is easy to raise a finger on others but before that, one should see what they have done for the society," she concludes.

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