

## Elected mayor to Lord Mayor: show your 'Indian grace'

As Britain's first Indian woman Lord Mayor Manjula Sood began her historic job in the city of Leicester Thursday she was told to cultivate 'Indian grace.'

The advice for her came from Britain's first elected Asian woman mayor.

'She will have to do everything gracefully. But there's no problem there - Indian women already are very graceful,' said Lata Patel, who was the Mayor of Brent from 1996-97.

The Lord Mayor is a nominated and largely ceremonial position, whereas the Mayor is an elected post, with the candidate usually fielded by his or her political party.

'I am very proud and very happy for Manjula. This shows that Indian women are coming up very quickly in Britain. People are recognising Indian women,' Patel told IANS.

'Earlier, people thought only Indian men could be successful, but now you see a lot of young Indian and other Asian women succeeding in business, professions and politics.'

Patel also stressed the importance of what she called 'glare and flair.'

'It's very important in politics you know,' she said.

'Manjula will have to be in and out of every function. Today mayors don't want to go out, but I used to go out a lot - attend a lot of religious functions.'

Drawing a parallel between the two women, she said since her days as Mayor, 'the men have changed.'

'Earlier they would never acknowledge successful women. Now they recognise the ability of women.'

Both Brent - a London suburb - and Leicester have ethnically diverse populations. According to some population projections, Leicester will become the first British city - in 2011 - where whites will be in a minority.

And at 55 percent of the population, ethnic minorities are already in a majority in Brent.

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