One of a kind

Ketan Tirodkar/*Dombivli*

NINETY six per cent in physics, chemistry and biology; a distinction in MBBS and the first rank among the female students in the MS exam...is the academic profile of Dr Vandana Dhaktode, the first and presently the only lady surgeon in Dombivli.

Master of Surgery from GS Medical College (KEM) Hospital, Mumbai, young and attractive, Vandana came to Dombivli in 1992 after completing her MBBS.

"I gained a lot of useful experience during my stint with the municipal hospital in Dombivli as I came across a variety of cases from various parts of the Thane district. Being the only MS in the municipal hospital, every major case was referred me," recalls Vandana. She would perform around four surgeries a day in the municipal hospital, and developed into an experienced surgeon.

"I also had the opportunity to lecture at the MGM College and Terana Medical College," says Vandana.

Married to her senior at KEM Hospital, Dr Sharad Dhaktode, Vandana joined him in his Sai Shraddha Hospital and learnt the ins and outs of hospital management, before she launched Om Hospital on December 31 last year, in Ramnagar, Dombivli (East). She is the first female surgeon to found a hospital in this city.

The infrastructure is as attractive as the pioneer. The hospital is well equipped with all the necessary facilities, such as X-ray, ECG and anaesthesia. Vandana is now expanding it to house more equipment, such as sonography, ICCU, and such other facilities.

"Dombivli has given me a stable and consistent practice, and I am committed to giving my best to this township," assures Vandana.

"This suburb probably has the finest medical talent, in Dr Dilip Thakur of Laxmi Hospital; Dr Arun Patil of Sanjivni Hospital and Dr UR Prabhakar Rao of Mamta Hospital, known as the Jaslok of Dombivli. There are some shortcomings - such as the lack of sufficient ambulances, absence of MRI test facilities...but then generally speaking, the township is well equipped to take care of any medical emergency,"

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... FEELS Vandana.

The approach of a medical professional is supposed to be more human than professional, and with such an attitude, success is assured in the long run.

"There are temptations in this profession as in all other professions. But then, a medical professional succumbing to temptation is more harmful to society than a chartered accountant or a lawyer doing so," opines Vandana. "Refusing admission to a patient on any grounds is not fair. It is unethical. Curing the disease should be the main criteria rather than making a profit," she asserts. "Monetary gains follow automatically with an honest approach."

That is the message this young, dynamic and charming first lady surgeon of Dombivli has for the freshers in the profession.

"I am proud of being the first one on this city, but I do not want be the only one," she reveals. "More females should