

Treatment that became a business

By LAM LI

NEETA Gosalia waited with mixed emotions for her name to be called for the Innovative Woman Entrepreneur of the Year award recently.

The excitement of gaining recognition from the National Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Malaysia was dampened by the fact that her father - one of the pillars in her life - was seriously ill and hospitalised.

"Throughout the award ceremony, I was praying that I would not receive a call from the hospital informing me of bad news," recalled Neeta, who later took the award to her father in hospital, barely a week before he died.

Neeta, 39, received the award under the health and medical products category for her success in developing

Neeta's Herbal that helped people with severe hair loss.

Over the last 18 years, the one shop in Jalan Tun Sambanthan, Brickfields in Kuala Lumpur, has multiplied into 14 branches nationwide and the home-grown brand has been exported to the United States and England.

Never did the mother of three dream that her own bitter experience of fighting severe hair loss would one day bring her wealth and fame.

"Losing hair at the age of 16 was the most depressing thing I had experienced," said Neeta.

"I felt like I had brought shame to the family when relatives and friends started whispering questions like 'Is she suffering from cancer? Will she ever get a husband?'"

"It was especially disturbing as my



Neeta (right) giving hair treatment to a client at her outlet in Jalan Tun Sambanthan.

father had no sons but six daughters, who, according to tradition, were a liability as a father would need to save money to marry them off," she said.

Her textile businessman father, however, was very supportive of her search for a cure and even sent her to India to try traditional herbal treatment.

That was when Neeta discovered *ayurveda*, an ancient healing science.

Initially, she was disgusted with the treatment which involved applying a

herbal mixture, that she claimed looked like cow dung, on her scalp.

Her negative attitude changed when her hair loss problem was cured in three months, and it made her stay on in India to pursue the study of *ayurveda* over two years.

Upon returning to Malaysia, she started Neeta's Herbal by blending her own brand of hair loss treatment herbs with a touch of fragrance.

Today, she is talking about business

expansion to the Middle East, Europe, China and Australia.

"As a wife, mother and entrepreneur, the biggest task is dividing my time.

"On many occasions, I cancelled trips to overseas branches because I wanted to be with my family.

"Luckily, I have a very understanding husband and children," she said.

For more information on Neeta's enterprising endeavour, visit www.neetasherbal.com.