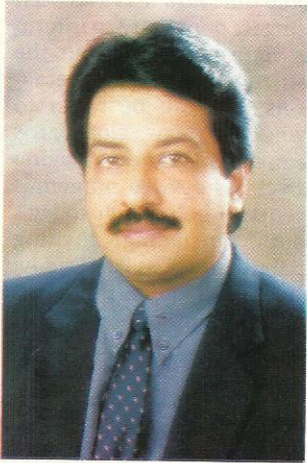


Aesthetically perfect noses are rare. Cosmetic surgeon **Vijay Sharma** says, "Every time I look at a person I begin evaluating the face trying to figure out how it can be improved and often fail to recognise people because of this preoccupation," says Sharma, who has been a judge at beauty contests. He has turned many a celeb's nose into a piece of art like Cleopatra's. Sharma's expertise in reversible rhinoplasty and the 3-D nasal implant have won him an award from the National Bulgarian Society of Aesthetic Surgery & Aesthetic Medicine that places him as the top 10 cosmetic surgeons in the world. The \$5,000 cash award carries an official citation. In India where rhinoplasty was born around 600 B.C., Sharma has set right the



noses of over 200 persons: executives, actors and models. "And even housewives," he hastens to add. The implant costs between Rs4,000 to Rs12,000, the hospital charges are around Rs4,000 and the cost of surgery is between Rs15,000 and Rs20,000. The outpatient procedure and can be reversed immediately if the patient is not satisfied. Cosmetic surgery has grown 600 per cent from 1987 till mid 2002, according to Sharma. "Society suffers from hyper-aesthetic tension today; at times I have to dissuade patients from undergoing cosmetic surgery," he says. ♦