

# COMMUNITY NEWS IN BRIEF



FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU
High: 82 Low: 69	High: 83 Low: 70	High: 81 Low: 71	High: 82 Low: 65	High: 76 Low: 61	High: 76 Low: 61	High: 77 Low: 64

## Miss Universe joins Sanjana Jon tour to India



Miss Universe Olivia Culpo and Sanjana Jon pose with Consul General of India Dnyaneshwar M. Mulay

6th reigning Sanjana Jon Tour to Indian with Miss Universe for charity.

Announcing the tour Consul General of India Dnyaneshwar M. Mulay described it as a very significant initiative as it would help create 'stronger connection between the youths of the two countries.' "You are going to act as a bridge between India and US", CG told Olivia. "So understand India, connect with the people and inspire them."

"I'm so excited", said Olivia. "I've heard so much about India. I can't wait to be there."

Sanjana said that tour will be to the capital New Delhi, Mumbai, Agra and several key cities in India to promote and propagate "Celebrate the Girl Child", Women Empowerment and AIDS Awareness but focus would be to eradicate female feticide specially in states like Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan.

The Tour has been supported by Salman Khan to highlight the different causes and several other celebrities like Sohail Khan, Sajid-Wajid Khan, Suhasini-Mani Ratnam, Venkatesh, Padmabhushan Dr KJ Yesudas, Padmashri Shobana, Usha Uthup to name a few.

This time the tour will effectively reach out to the masses and try to bring more creative constructive support on the whole by creating "Community of Love n Light" a movement to "Share n Care".

## IN SIGHT: A VISUALLY IMPAIRED WOMAN'S INCREDIBLE JOURNEY FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

*At the age of 12 she was suddenly diagnosed with Macular degeneration which is an incurable eye disease thus making her visually impaired. But she refused to let her handicap dictate the terms of her life. She chose to take the road less travelled and created new ones where none existed.*



BY BIDISHA ROY

Now Miram Batliwala, better known as Mimi, has written a book, 'In Sight' where she described her incredible journey.

Mimi's parents a crucial role in her fight against all odds as they never ever let her feel, handicapped or incompetent in any of her activities such as sports, swimming, golf, piano or at school, giving her the courage to be like the others and find her own way to participate in all activities. She studied in a boarding school in Nazareth Convent in Ooty, then at St. Xavier's College, Bombay, studied Italian in the University for foreigners in Perugia, and then studied French. Mimi worked in Geneva for six months and then got a job with the Indian Tea Board in Brussels for four years. The job entailed working at international exhibition all over Western Europe for the promotion of Indian tea – all this while being unable to see.

Having studied yoga with Yogacharya B.K.S Iyengar since 1978 and after intensive

teachers training program in 83 and 84 with the Guru in Pune, she started teaching yoga in Mumbai, the Iyengar Institute in New Jersey, USA, as well as the blind boys at Happy Home School. The combination of the support that she received coupled with her own determination and daring courage enabled her to overcome any obstacle with confidence. She won the Golfer of the Year in 1993 at Willingdon Sports Club.

Presently she is a trustee of D.M. Girls Orphanage Trust and Wecan (Women's Empowerment Centre and Network), Mahim, Mumbai. This orphanage houses orphan girls from the age of 6 and up and provides education and other facilities to empower the girl child. She is also a trustee of the H.I.M.S Botawala Charities in Surat which runs a girls and boys school, a boys orphanage, a dispensary for free medical facilities and scholarships for the underprivileged.

On 25th August 2012 Mimi won the award for Achievers of Excellence – Women

Achievers in the field of Social Work. This award was presented to her by the Bombay Management Association along with N.L. Dalmia Institute of Management Studies and Research and FOSTIIMA – The Business School set up by IIM-A Alumni.

On 20th of June, 2012 Mimi launched her book, and since then has been invited to talk at the Willingdon Sports Club, Bombay Gymkhana, Time & Talent Club, two rotary clubs in Bangkok, IMC – Ladies Wing, and the Indian Women Association in Singapore where she talked about her book and life experiences. In December 2012, she addressed 150 blind children and their parents at the Rotary Club in Manila. This was really a highlight of her talk as the parents were so inspired as she emphasized the importance of their attitude towards the child. She was recently invited at Tata Literature Live Festival where a Panel discussion was held on "First Book Blues".

It is incredible that Miriam always has a smile to cheer others. She is a great

inspiration to all, that self-pity can only cause pot hole full of sorrows. She depicts an image of individuality in the competitive world conveying that, no matter what life holds for one, it should be taken in the spirit of challenge and in one's own stride.

"It's only true commitment coupled with positive actions and powerful thoughts and 100% faith that bring about miracles. And miracles do happen! Miriam Batliwala is a living, breathing proof of that", said Prof. S. Natarajan – Executive Chairman & Managing Director of Aditya Jyot Eye Hospital Pvt. Ltd.

"Gifted with so many talents, she has used them to improve the lives of underprivileged girls, and in the process made their lives and her very own, in the words of Mother Teresa, 'Something beautiful for God'", said Father Joe H. Pereira – Founder & Managing Trustee of Kripa Foundation

Julio F. Ribeiro – Former Commissioner of Police, Mumbai, is equally impressed by Mimi's undaunted spirit. "I could have

Mimi chose to take the road less travelled and created new ones where none existed.

never imagined that someone who lost her vision at the age of twelve achieved so much – finished college, played the piano, travelled and lived abroad on her own, worked for the Indian Tea Board for four years, played golf, hockey and tennis, married and brought up a son – while trying to hide her disability from others! After reading this book I am truly inspired."

"She is a great role model for us all and her book is a gift to all those who read it!" says Shiamak Davar – Founder and Artistic Director of Shiamak Davar Institute of Performing Arts.

The Indo-American Arts Council will launch the book In Sight on September 12th from 7-9 pm at the Sundaram Tagore Gallery, 547 West 27th Street, Chelsea, New York City. Mimi will talk about her experiences and books will be available for sale and signing.

## Manisha Koirala to begin shooting from November

BY BIDISHA ROY

Cancer-free' Manisha Koirala who underwent treatment for ovarian cancer in New York City for six months, will start shooting for her new film from November this year. Manisha came to the Indian Consulate NY Aug 21 to lend her support to Sanjana Jon tour to India for charity supporting and celebrating the girl child and women empowerment-AIDS awareness.

In a quick chat with hi INDIA, Manisha shared few things:

**About New York City**

It has become my 'second home.' This is the place where I recovered and got a new life. It

really feels great to be here. This time I came for a routine health checkup. I'm absolutely fine now.

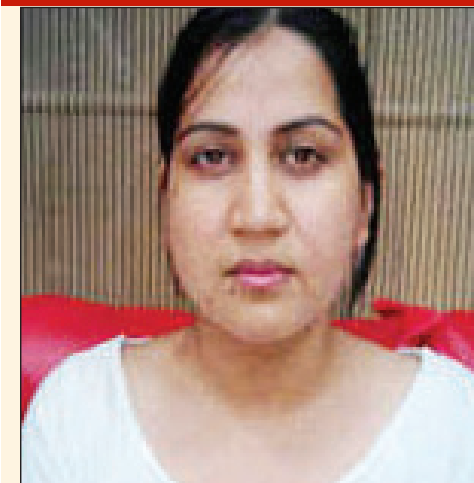
**About her next film**

The script and everything of my new film is ready. I'm going to start shooting in November.

**About the untimely death of one of her favorite directors Rituparno Ghosh (Manisha acted in the late director's Bengali venture 'Khela' opposite Prosenjit Chatterjee**

I came to know about it (the news of Rituparno's demise) from Deeptri (Naval). It was a huge shock. But when I came to know that he died peacefully during sleep, I thanked God.

## Driver's daughter from Haryana gets scholarship from US varsity



Poonam Dhull, daughter of a driver in Haryana bagged a scholarship of \$50,000 for pursuing Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of South Carolina

BY A STAFF WRITER

Poonam Dhull made headlines when she made her way from India to America. Poonam, daughter of Sureshpal, a driver in the Public Relations Department, Haryana Government, who hails from Bhana village in Kaithal District, has made the state proud by bagging a scholarship of \$50,000 for pursuing Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of South Carolina.

Poonam completed her senior secondary from OSDAV Senior Secondary School, Kaithal, and pursued her B.Sc. (Medical) and M.Sc. in Chemistry from Panjab University, Chandigarh. She pursued research work under the supervision of Prof. P. Venugopalan who guided her on the project titled "Structure-activity relationships in a-fluorohydrins and their derivatives: A structural investigation".

## Padma Lakshmi urges physicians to deal with patients holistically

BY A STAFF WRITER

The Association of American Physicians of Indian Origin or AAPI, the AAPI New York City Metro Chapter, the New York County Medical Society, and Pranna Restaurant organized the first ever inspirational symposium titled, 'Women's Health and Wealth: Leadership in the 21st Century' on Sunday, August 18th at Pranna Restaurant in midtown Manhattan. The educational symposium discussed the changes impacting women's health care while also educating women physicians about the entrepreneurial opportunities and challenges they face within a dynamic and changing healthcare landscape.

Padma Lakshmi, the Indian-born American cookbook author, actress, model, television host and co-founder of The Endometriosis Foundation of America (EFA) who was diagnosed with Endometriosis at a very late stage, described her decades of emotional, physical and mental suffering, stating, "It



Monica Mehta, Dr. Poonam Alaigh, Dr. Devyani Khobragade, Padma Lakshmi, and Dr. Devi Nampiarampam at the Symposium

is...an isolating disease, a lonely one. I did not want to talk about it to anyone else." She

went on to elaborate, "Chronic pain affects every aspect of your life," to an audience of

physicians who were captivated by her personal story.

"When you come across such patients with chronic pain, deal with them holistically," Padma Lakshmi appealed to the nearly 200 physicians who had come from across the nation to participate in the symposium. She candidly recounted her trauma and expressed her sincere wish that nobody ever goes through the same pain and suffering as she did.

Dr. Devyani Khobragade, a physician by training who currently serves as the Deputy Consul General of India in New York, shared with the audience the need to understand human suffering. She indicated that while both medicine and civil service are paths to reduce human suffering, she believed civil service would offer a larger avenue to do so.

Dr. Poonam Alaigh, who was the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services for New Jersey, a state cabinet position, spoke about opportunities for medical entrepreneurship in a dynamic healthcare

landscape.

Dr. Devi Nampiarampam, an Assistant Professor at New York University Medical School, who appears as a medical expert on CNN, Fox, CBS, and the Dr. Oz Show, spoke about leadership and personal branding in the healthcare arena.

Author and business leader Monica Mehta's inspirational speech on learning to take entrepreneurial risks was received with enthusiasm by many physicians who are entrepreneurs themselves. She spoke about the ability to take risk as a major factor of success.

Dr. Jayesh Shah, President, AAPI, in his inaugural address, lauded the many women leaders in the AAPI tradition, who have led AAPI in various capacities.

The symposium raised over \$5,000, which includes the matched funds provided by national AAPI. The money will support the noble cause of EFA, said Dr. Ami Shah, AAPI's national Women's Forum Chair.



Manisha at the Indian Consulate