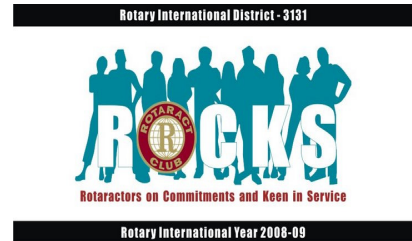


# Missing Daughters of India!



Hosted by:-

**ROTARACT CLUB OF CHINCHWAD - PUNE**  
R.I. Dist 3131, INDIA

<http://rotaract-chinchwad.tripod.com/>

## Participating Clubs:-

Rotaract Club Byblos, RID 2450  
Rotaract Club of Dessouk, RID 2450  
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*Woman..... Life Begins With Her!!!!*

# History of International Women's Day.

**A look at the history of Women's Day, the numerous struggles for equality that women around the globe faced and how this day came to be so honored.**

Divided by borders, languages, cultural, economic and political differences; this day is celebrated by women across countries to represent decades of struggle for equality, justice, rights, peace and development.

This occasion was first celebrated at the turn of the century, around the 1900's when the world was in a period of expansion and turbulence, booming in population growth and radical ideologies. Following is a brief chronology of the most important events:

## **1909**

The first Women's Day was observed across the United States on 28 February.

## **1910**

A conference of over 100 women from 17 countries established International Women's Day to honor the movement for women's rights.

## **1911**

As a result of the decision taken the previous year, International Women's Day was marked for the first time on 19 March in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, where more than 1 million women and men attended rallies. In addition to the right to vote and to hold public office, they demanded the right to work, to vocational training and to an end to discrimination on the job.

## **1913-1914**

As part of the peace movement brewing on the eve of World War I, Russian women observed their first International Women's Day on February 1913. The very next month, women around Europe held rallies to protest the war and express solidarity with their sisters.

## **1917**

After 2 million Russian soldiers died in war, women ran a strike for 'bread and peace'. Even with strong opposition from influential political and radical leaders, the women went on anyway. Days later, the Czar was forced to abdicate and women were granted the right to vote.

## **1945**

The United Nations Organization signed the first international agreement to proclaim gender equality as a fundamental human right.

## Messages....



Dear Rotaractors,

I am glad to see Rotaractors initiating creative projects for World Rotaract Week. Through projects completed by Rotaractors around the world, both during World Rotaract Week and throughout the year, the world becomes a better place. The countless hours of service given by Rotaractors, such as the members of the Rotaract Club of Chinchwad - Pune, are truly making a difference for humanity. Keep up the excellent work, and here's to the continued efforts of Rotaractors worldwide!

Mary Kathryn DeLodder  
07-09 RI Rotaract Committee  
Rotaract Club of Greater Louisville  
R.I. District 6710 - Kentucky, USA



Hi,

I am glad to present this E-bulletin on the alarming topic of 'Sex Selective Abortion'.

In India, the Male:Female ratio is very poor as compared to other countries. According to 2001 Census, the sex ratio among the major states ranged from 861 in Haryana to 1058 in Kerala.

For multiple reasons, India's experience is crucial to understand the current increase in the proportion of males versus females in populations across Asia. First, rising sex ratios in India have been recorded since the early 1980s, and have since continued increasing with no sign, so far, of reversing course. The impact of this early rise is already visible among the adult population of several Indian districts. Second, even if sex-ratio values in India are still beneath those of China, its potential contribution to the overall "masculinization" of Asia (and, consequently, of the world's population) is particularly formidable in view of India's demographic weight. The prospect of further worsening of India's sex composition requires close monitoring of current sex-ratio trends in the country. Lastly, the Indian scenario of female discrimination is extremely complex in view of India's social and economic diversity: the interplay of cultural and economic factors, along with the impact of policy initiatives, has produced a heterogeneous situation.

Women have done wonders in past and are continuing to do so, but with innovative techniques we are killing them before they begin their journey. In this bulletin we have published a few stories on successful, inspirational women to prove that a girl child is not a liability but an asset and that she can also be a great resource.

I would like to appreciate Rtr. Mary Kathryn DeLodder for her inspiring words in the message. I also thank all the participating clubs for contributing towards this e-bulletin and sharing with the world the concerns about precious girl child mortality.

Rtr. Amit A Kulkarni  
President (08-09)  
Rotaract club of Chinchwad – Pune  
RID – 3131.

## OUR CONCERNS

**“India now accounts for termination of some 10 million female foetuses over the past 20 years”**

India is growing dynamically in every field. Today, economically, innovative technologies and improved infrastructure have become our nation's pride. The country has witnessed advancements in all fields but bias against a girl child still prevails. This social evil is deep rooted in Indian ethos and the most shocking fact is that the innovative and hard high end technologies are brutally killing the Indian girl child. Innovative techniques, like biopsy, ultrasound, scan tests and amniocentesis, devised to detect genetic abnormalities, are highly misused by number of families to detect gender of the unborn child. These clinical tests are highly contributing to the rise in genocide of the unborn girl child.

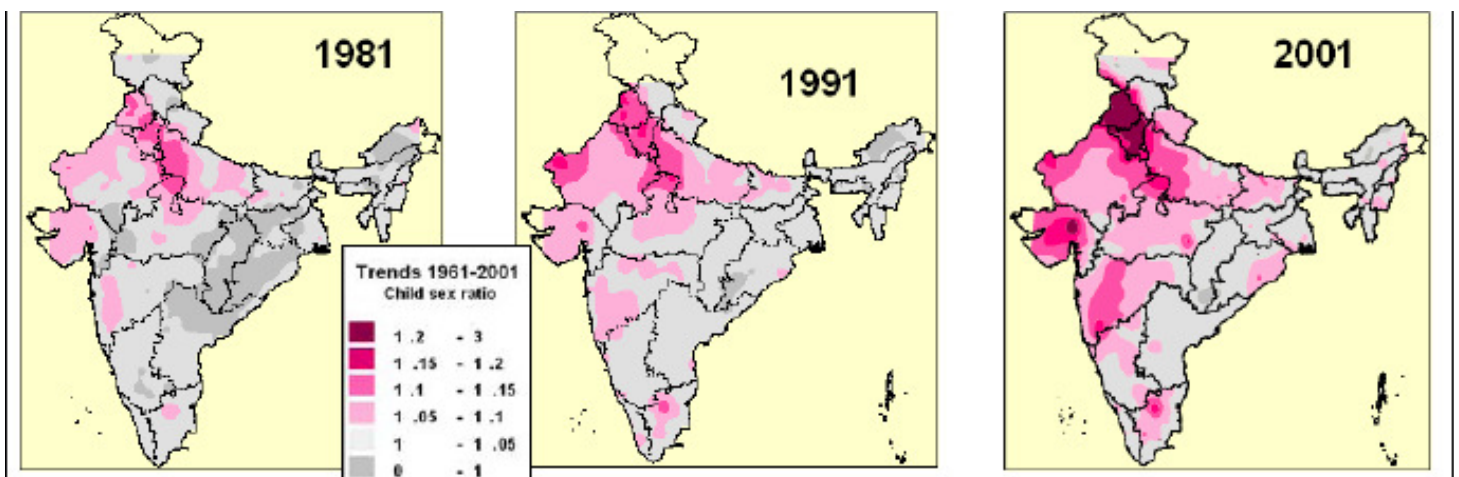
The 2001 Census conducted by Government of India, showed a sharp decline in the child sex ratio in 80% districts of India.

India, in all its glory of being an IT superpower and one of the fastest developing countries, tragically represents the lowest child sex ratio in the world.

Systematic gender discrimination in India is reported to have claimed up to a whopping 10 million female lives. The Census Report of 2001 reveals a highly skewed child sex ratio (0-6 year-olds), that fell from 945 females per 1,000 males in 1991 to an all-time low of 927 in 2001. The ratio even dropped further to 800:1,000 in some specific parts of the country.

Additional data from the India's birth and death registration service indicates that the figures have further fallen to fewer than 900 females per 1,000 men over the last few years.

### Child sex ratio in India at district level, 1981-2001



## **Legal Response**

Sex selection in India does not take place in a legal vacuum. In fact, just a few years after the introduction of the new ultrasound and amniocentesis technologies, in 1983 the Indian Parliament banned the practice of sex determination in all public institutions. In 1988, a pioneer law was passed in Maharashtra to prevent sex determination, following pressure from local activists. But the prime legislation at the all-India level remains the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, the PNDT Act, passed in 1994. [20<sup>th</sup> September, 1994: Act No. 57 of 1994]

### **The law against sex selection**

The PNDT Act prohibited doctors and clinics from using pre-natal diagnostic techniques, such as scans, to determine the sex of a foetus. First offenders faced a penalty of up to three years of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000 (US\$ 230), and repeat offenders risked a five-year imprisonment and a Rs 50,000 fine. The act also prohibited any advertising for diagnosis facilities. Another provision of the law established the presumption that women were compelled to perform sex determination by their husband or another relative, who could in turn be similarly subjected to a three year imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000. Until 2003, however, the law was largely ignored by private providers and families. In fact, the country's SRB recorded a rapid increase during this period, due to the large number of sex-selective abortions. The context changed with the publication of the 2001 census results, which brought starkly to light the country's deteriorating sex-ratio levels. Two years earlier, public-interest litigation had also been filed by activists and NGOs, questioning the failure of the 1994 law. The Act was subsequently amended in 2003, and renamed the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, the PC & PNDT Act, in order to include pre-implantation techniques. But it also attempted to strengthen the control of scan providers, by requiring registration and detailed records of scans provided to pregnant women. The law was unsuccessfully challenged in 2005, and further amendments to the PC & PNDT Act are now in the offing.

The amended law bans sex selection before and after conception, and further regulates the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for strictly medical purposes. In particular, the law restricts the use of diagnostic techniques to registered institutions and operators, which have to maintain detailed records. It also expressly prohibits persons conducting pre-natal diagnostic procedures from communicating the sex of the foetus by "words, signs, or in any other manner", while also banning the advertisement of such techniques. "District Appropriate Authorities" provide registration for such units, and are in charge of inspection and investigation, as well as the penalizing of defaulters, with quasi-judicial power. In addition, the National Inspection and Monitoring Committee assesses the ground realities through field visits, and provides its reports to the concerned state authorities and the Health Ministry at the Centre.

## I WISH MY WOMB HAD WINDOWS!!!!!!

Eighteen years old and a young girl in love  
seemed all that mattered to me  
My boyfriend was all I had  
and all I would ever need

Then one day I realized  
a change inside of me  
I was just a child and this child  
was going to have a baby

If my womb had windows  
I could truly see  
my precious little baby  
smiling back at me

If my womb had windows  
it would bring tears to our eyes  
to see many mommies  
taking their own babies lives

But my womb had no windows  
and confused at the time  
I aborted my babies life and  
committed a terrible crime.

Tears flow down my face today  
realizing what I had done  
God knows the pain I have  
for my precious little one

If my womb had windows  
I could truly see  
It was not a baby  
but a new life gifted to me.

If my womb had windows  
I could hear the shouts and cries  
before I feel sorry  
for the truth beneath the lies

God knows the hurt I have inside  
each day of my life  
so if God gives you a child  
Please think twice

Think about their precious life  
that God gave you and I  
that precious baby needs you mommy  
so please don't let them die.....



# **INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN'S**

1. Anju George
2. Anushka Shankar
3. Chanda Kochhar
4. Florence Nightingale
5. Frida Kahlo
6. Helen Keller
7. Indra Nooyi
8. Jane Austin
9. Jhumpa Lahiri
10. Judit Polgar
11. Kalpana Chawla
12. Kiran Muzumdar  
Shaw
13. Lucila Gamero De  
Medina
14. Majida el Roumi
15. Marie Curie
16. Nujood Ali
17. Soad Hosny



## **Anju Bobby George** (Born April 19, 1977)

She is an Indian athlete. Anju Bobby George made history when she won the bronze medal in Long Jump at the 2003 World Championships in Athletics in Paris. With this achievement, she became the first Indian athlete ever to win a medal in a World Championships in Athletics clearing 6.70 m. She went on to win the silver medal at the IAAF World Athletics Final in 2005, a performance she considers her best.

### **Early life**

Anju was born in Kochuparambil family in Changanassery, Kerala to K.T.Markose. She was initiated into athletics by her father and her interest was further developed by her trainer in Koruthode school. She did her schooling in CKM Koruthode School and graduated from Vimala College. In the School Athletic meet in 1991-92, she won the 100 m hurdles and relay and stood second in long jump and high jump events, thus becoming the women's champion. Anju's talent was noticed in the national schools games where she won third place in 100 m hurdles and 4x100 m relay. She was in Calicut University

### **Professional career**

Although she started with Heptathlon, she later began to concentrate on her jump events and went on to win long jump medal in the 1996 Delhi junior Asian championship. In 1999 Anju set the national record for triple jump in the Bangalore Federation Cup and Silver medal at the South Asian Federation Games in Nepal. In 2001 Anju bettered her own record in long jump to 6.74 m in the National Circuit Meet at Thiruvananthapuram. In the same year she also won gold for triple jump and long jump in the Ludhiana National games. Anju reigned supreme in her events in the Hyderabad National games also. She won the bronze medal clearing 6.49 m at the 2002 Commonwealth Games at Manchester. She also won the gold medal at the Asian Games in Busan. She made history when she won the bronze medal clearing 6.70 m in Long Jump at the 2003 World Championships in Athletics in Paris, becoming the first Indian athlete ever to win a medal in a World Championships in Athletics. She achieved her personal best of 6.83 m at the 2004 Olympic Games at Athens that brought her the sixth position. In September 2005, she won the gold medal in the women's long jump at the 16th Asian Athletics Championship in Incheon City of South Korea with a leap of 6.65 metres. She went on to win the silver medal at the IAAF World Athletics Final in 2005 with a leap of 6.75 m, a performance she considers her best. She won silver medal in women's long jump in 15th Asian Games, 2006 held at Doha. In 2007, Anju won silver medal in 17th Asian Athletics Championship at Amman ( Jordan) with a jump of 6.65m and this qualified her for Osaka World Championship in August 2007 where she finished 9th. Anju start her 2008 season with silver medal in 3rd Asian Indoor Championship in athletics at Doha ( Qatar) with a jump of 6.38m and she improved her distance to 6.50m by winning gold in the 3rd South Asian Athletics Championship at Kochi ( Kerala, India).



## ANOUSHKA SHANKAR



The Grammy nominated sitar player spent most of her childhood in London and Delhi. She gave her first public performance at the age of 13 and signed her first record contract at 16. Rather than attending college like every other youngster, Anoushka, with her clarity and conviction, decided to pursue music as a career in 1999. She was trained by her father - Indian sitar maestro Pandit Ravi Shankar.

"I am waiting for the time when I will be called Anoushka's father... Anoushka has indeed a rare talent... there is something spiritual in the way she plays... she feels the music and gives in to it" the maestro quoted.

She released her first album titled 'Anoushka' in 1998 and became the first woman to perform at The Ramakrishna Centre in Kolkata. Anoushka was nominated for the Grammy awards in 2003. As a matter of fact, her half sister Norah Jones was also nominated in the same year. Anoushka was given the Woman of the Year award on the occasion of International Women's day in 2003.

Anoushka performed with her father at the 'Concert for George' held at the Royal Albert Hall' in London. The concert was held in honor of the departed 'The Beatles' band member George Harrison.

## CHANDA KOCHHAR



Chanda Kochhar is the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ICICI Bank. She will assume her position on May 1 2009.

Chanda received her degree from the Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies in Mumbai. She also holds a degree in cost and works accountancy from the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India. Chanda began her career in 1984 with ICICI Bank. She has worked in the areas of corporate credit, infrastructure financing, e-commerce, strategy and retail finance. Chanda was appointed as an Executive Director of ICICI Bank in 2001. In 2006, she was elevated to the position of Deputy Managing Director of the bank.

During her academic years, Chanda received the J N Bose Gold Medal in Cost Accountancy and the Wockhardt Gold Medal for Excellence in Management Studies. She has also been consistently featured in the Fortune's list of Most Powerful Women in business. She debuted in the list at the 47th position in 2005. Currently she holds the 25th rank in the list.

From a management trainee to the post of the ICICI Bank's chief executive officer, it has been a winning journey for Chanda Kochhar. Work is passion for Kochhar who believes that there is no substitute to hard work.

# Florence Nightingale



Florence Nightingale was born into an upper-class British family at the Villa Colomba, Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and was named after the city of her birth.

Nightingale's parents were William Edward Nightingale and Frances Nightingale née Smith. Motivated by what she took as a Christian divine calling, experienced first in 1837 at Embley Park and later throughout her life, Florence announced her decision to enter nursing in 1845, in spite of the strong anger and distress of her family, mainly her mother. As their family wanted a woman of her status to become a wife and mother, Nightingale worked hard to educate herself in the art and science of nursing, in spite of conflict from her family and the restrictive societal code for affluent young English women.

Florence Nightingale's most famous contribution came during the Crimean War, which became her central focus when reports began to filter back to Britain about the horrific conditions for the wounded. In 1854, she and a staff of women volunteer nurses, trained by Nightingale and including her aunt Mai Smith, were sent to Turkey, where the main British camp was based.

The death count was the highest of all hospitals in the region. During her first winter at Scutari, ten times more soldiers died from illnesses such as typhus, typhoid, cholera and dysentery than from battle wounds. Conditions at the temporary barracks hospital were so fatal to the patients because of overcrowding and the hospital's defective sewers and lack of ventilation.

Lo! in that hour of misery  
A lady with a lamp I see  
Pass through the glimmering gloom,  
and flit from room to room.

The Famous poem of this Great Lady.....

## **Frida Kahlo** (1907-1954) - Artist



She was born in 1907, although she claimed to have been born in 1910, the year of the beginning of the Mexican Revolution, saying “I was born with the Revolution”, because she wanted her life to start with the modern Mexico.

That was her personality, characterized from childhood for a deep sense of independence and rebelliousness against the social and moral standards of the time. She was very proud of being Mexican and of her cultural heritage, wearing traditional outfits all the time, facing the more and more common customs of the USA with a very peculiar sense of humor.

She had a lot of health issues throughout her life, starting with poliomyelitis when she was only 6 years old. In 1921 she suffered a severe tram accident, where she had a fractured spine, several ribs, neck, pelvis, foot, a dislocated shoulder, and a handrail driven through her stomach. She had 32 surgeries during her life as a consequence of this, and she was never able to have children. The boredom of being in bed all the time was the reason why she started painting.

She married Diego Rivera, a renowned Mexican muralist, and her biggest fan. They divorced after he had an affair with Frida’s younger sister, but got back together after a year.

Frida Kahlo was the first female Mexican artist to get international renown, with exhibits in cities like New York and Paris. Her work was often described as surrealistic, but as Frida herself said: “They thought I was a surrealist, but I wasn’t. I never painted my dreams. I painted my own reality”.

## Paintings

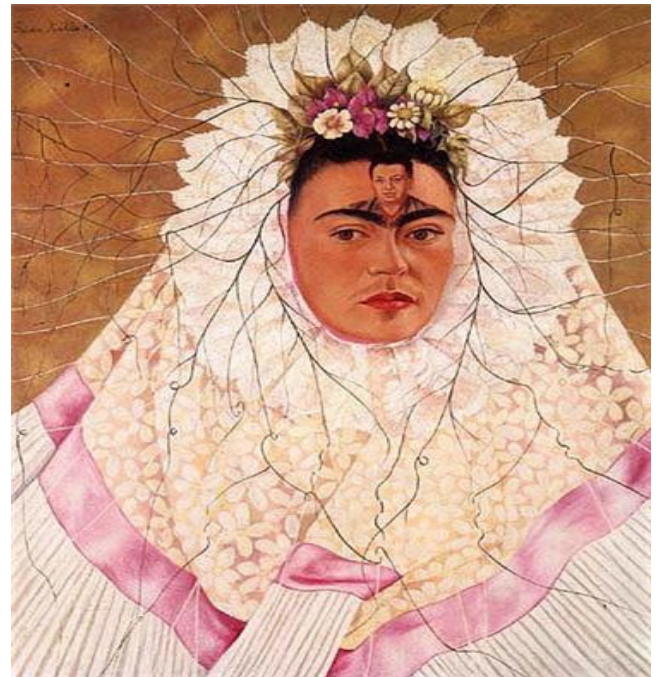


### 1) Las Dos Fridas (The two Fridas) - 1939

A little after her divorce from Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo finished a self-portrait representing two personalities. This painting was a way of dealing with her marital crisis, through the separation between the Frida in Mexican traditional clothes (Diego's favorite), and the other Frida, of European roots, who existed before Diego entered her life. The hearts of the two women are connected through a vein, the rejected European Frida losing her blood.

### 2) Autorretrato como Tehuana (Self portrait as a Tehuana) - 1943

This self portrait is also known by two other titles: "*Diego in My Thoughts*" and "*Thinking of Diego*". Frida's husband, Diego Rivera, continued to be an incorrigible womanizer, and Frida's desire to possess him expressed itself in this portrait. Diego's miniature portrait on her brow indicates Frida's obsessive love for the fresco painter....he is constantly in her thoughts. She is wearing the traditional Tehuana costume that Diego greatly admired. She painted herself wearing it to attract Diego and entice him closer. The roots of the leaves which she wears in her hair suggest the pattern of a spider's web in which she seeks to trap her prey... Diego.



# Helen Keller



Where there is a will there is a way. This saying aptly suits a lady who carved herself a unique place in the history of mankind. Helen Keller is the lady who despite of being deaf and blind is known for her communication, literary excellence, and priceless contribution the society. On the Women's Day let us salute Helen Keller.

Before she was 2 years old, Helen Keller lost her sight and hearing after a high fever. She was often frustrated and the family spoiled her considerably, though until Dr. Alexander Graham Bell urged them to find a teacher from the Perkins Institute for the Blind, she was unable to communicate.

Anne Sullivan was that teacher. The next events are well-known: Helen Keller learning to understand language through the combination of water from a pump on one hand and the spelling of "water" with the manual alphabet into her other hand. Helen Keller said later, "That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!"

Helen Keller progressed with language quickly under Anne Sullivan's tutorage. She learned Braille at the Perkins Institution and learned to speak at the Horace Mann School for the Deaf. Helen Keller went on to study at the Wright-Humason School for the Deaf, the Cambridge School for Young Ladies, and to Radcliffe College, from which she graduated in 1904 with high honors.

For the rest of her life, Helen Keller worked for improving education for the blind, deaf, and mute. She traveled and lectured extensively, even in vaudeville (1922-24).

Helen Keller wrote her autobiography, publishing *The Story of My Life* (1903) and *Midstream: My Later Life* (1929) as well as publishing several other books, including *The Practice of Optimism* (1903, 1915), *My Religion* (1927), and *Teacher, Anne Sullivan Macy: A Tribute by the Foster Child of her Mind* (1955). She also worked for socialism and for women's rights and raised money for the American Foundation for the Blind.

Anne Sullivan Macy, who married Keller's editor John Albert Macy, remained a companion and support to Keller until her death in 1936. Helen Keller survived Anne Sullivan Macy by more than thirty years, until she died on June 1, 1968. Helen Keller is buried at Washington Cathedral, Washington, D.C.

Helen Keller's life was told in "The Miracle Worker," originally a play by William Gibson and later made into the film of the same name with Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke, both of whom won Oscars for their performances.



## Indra K. Nooyi

Women in top management positions are still a rare species. But things are changing and more and more women are heading teams and delivering results. So what does it take for a woman to get to the top, and more important, stay there? Read on...

53 Years Old INDRA K Krishnamurthy. NOOYI, (born October 28, 1955 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India), has served as Pepsi Co's Chairman of the Board since May 2007 and Chief Executive Officer since October 2006. On August 14, 2006, Nooyi was named the successor to Steven Seinemund as chief executive officer of the company.

She completed her schooling from 7-11 Vanasthali High School, Madras. She received a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry from Madras Christian College in 1974, and immediately entered the PGDBA (Post-Graduate Diploma in Business Administration) program at the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. After graduating from IIM-C in 1976, she worked in India. Soon after completion of her MBA she joined ABB and then Johnson and Johnson (J&J) in Mumbai She was admitted to Yale School of Management in 1978 for a master's degree in Management.

While at PepsiCo, Indra Nooyi has played a vital role in starting Tricon, which is currently known as Yum! Brands Inc. Nooyi recommended spinning off Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut, arguing PepsiCo couldn't bring enough value to the fast food industry. Nooyi also took the lead in the acquisition of Tropicana in 1998, and merger with Quaker Oats Co. According to Business Week, since she became CFO in 2000, the company's annual revenues have risen 72%, while net profit more than doubled, to \$5.6 billion in 2006. Nooyi was named on Wall Street Journal's list of 50 women to watch in 2005, and was listed among Time's 100 Most Influential People in The World in 2007 and 2008. Forbes named her the #3 most powerful woman in 2008. She is also a member of a highly secretive group known as Bilderberg Group and attended the meeting in 2004

Nooyi was named on Wall Street Journal's list of 50 women to watch in 2005, and was listed among Time's 100 Most Influential People in The World in 2007 and 2008. As a typical tycoon of the business from her acumen she has predicted the slowdown in the popularity of aerated soft drinks in the markets worldwide. Her quick decision making ability and sticking to the work until it's got accomplished has drawn this comment from the Enrico that "If she gets an idea, she goes after it. There's no stopping her." No doubt her firmness and go getting attitude has won her laurels in the company and this helped her to build a strong foundation in the career graph to reach the top echelons in the organization where many people just day dreams to reach...

In 2007, she was awarded Padma Bhushan by Government of India. In 2008, she was elected to the fellowship of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

For Indra this has been a both tough and exciting experience. As she has said in her own word that being a woman, immigrant and colour made it thrice difficult for her to reach to this destination, but only mantra which she followed during the course of time was working hard twice as the male counterpart.

Indra connection with her India is conspicuous by looking at her attire. In most of the office ceremony she wears sari to show that her heart beats for India and her culture. Most of the woman would be envying her knowing to this fact that she has a great boss both in office and in home.

Indra Nooyi lives in Greenwich, Connecticut with her husband Raj Kishan Nooyi and their two daughters Preetha, age 25 and Tara, age 16. Indra Nooyi very chirpy and has a great sense of humor. She has the inclination towards arts which is supported by the fact that she is a member of the Boards of the Lincoln Center for the performing Arts in the New York City.

## Jane Austen



Jane Austen was a major English novelist, whose brilliantly witty, elegantly structured satirical fiction marks the transition in English literature from 18th century neo-classicism to 19th century romanticism.

Jane Austen was born on 16 December, 1775, at the rectory in the village of Steventon, Hampshire. The seventh of eight children of the Reverend George Austen and wife, Cassandra, she was educated at home and never lived apart from her family. From her older sister, Cassandra, she was inseparable. To amuse themselves, the children wrote and performed plays and charades, and as a little girl Jane was encouraged to write. Reading the books in her father's extensive library provided material for the short satirical sketches she wrote as a girl.

At the age of 14 she wrote her first novel, *Love and Friendship* (sic) and then *A History of England*. In her early twenties Jane Austen wrote the novels that were later to be re-worked and published as *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey*.

After her father's death in 1805, his widow and daughters suffered financial difficulties and were forced to rely on the charity of the Austen sons. Then, in July, 1809, on her brother Edward offering his mother and sisters a permanent home on his Chawton estate, the Austen ladies moved back to their beloved Hampshire countryside. It was a small but comfortable house, which provided the settled home which Jane Austen needed to write. In the years that she lived in this house, she revised *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* and published them (in 1811 and 1813) and then embarked on a period of intense productivity. *Mansfield Park* came out in 1814; *Emma* in 1816 and she completed *Persuasion* (which was published together with *Northanger Abbey* in 1818, the year after her death). None of the books published in her life-time had her name on them — they were described as being written "By a Lady". In the winter of 1816 she started *Sanditon*, but illness prevented its completion. She died at 41 years old, in July 1817.



## Jhumpa Lahiri



She is the author of one of the best written cross-culture novels and certainly not a one book wonder. Does she even need an introduction? For those who do need one, Jhumpa Lahiri is an American author with Indian roots.

Lahiri was born in London, the daughter of Bengali Indian immigrants. Her family moved to the United States when she was three; Lahiri considers herself an American, stating, "I wasn't born here, but I might as well have been." Lahiri grew up in Kingston, Rhode Island, where her father worked as a librarian at the University of Rhode Island; the protagonist of Lahiri's story "The Third and Final Continent" is based on her father. Lahiri's mother wanted her children to grow up knowing of their Bengali heritage, and her family often visited relatives in Kolkata (Calcutta), India.

Her debut short story collection titled 'Interpreter of Maladies' that was released in 1999 won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Her first novel 'The Namesake' was adapted into the popular film directed by Mira Nair. Lahiri's second collection of short stories 'Unaccustomed Earth' was released in 2008. She has bagged a total of 11 awards in literature including the PEN/Hemingway Award in the Best Fiction Debut of the Year for her first collection of short stories.

# Judit Polgar



Judit Polgar is by far the strongest female chess player in history and the only woman in world top 100 players, the youngest of the three famous Hungarian sisters, who, particularly in the early 1990s, enjoyed superstar status due to their phenomenal chess playing ability.

Judit Polgar was born in Budapest (Capital of Hungary) on 23rd July 1976. Her childhood consisted of an extensive chess education from her father and her sisters, and she began to compete internationally as early as 1984. She was a prodigy from an early age. She first defeated an International Master at age 10, and a Grandmaster at age 11 and by 12 was already one of the highest rated women in the world. By winning the Hungarian Championship in 1991 (believed to be the first time a woman of any age had won a major national championship) she completed the requirements for the “men’s” grandmaster title at the age of 15 years and 5 months, at the time youngest ever. She had been highest rated woman player since January 1990 list. She has an exceptional direct and aggressive style of play, based on thorough opening preparation.

She has always preferred men's events, making it clear from the beginning that she wanted to become the true world champion.

On the January 1996 FIDE (world chess federation) ratings list, Polgár's 2675 rating made her the number 10 ranked player in the world the first woman ever to enter the world's Top Ten.

In the July 2005 FIDE list she ranked 8th with her highest ever rating 2735, and also became the first woman to take part in the final of the FIDE World Championship.





## Kalpana Chawla

“Kalpana” – The name itself inspires us to enliven the imagination (kalpanas) within us! The first Indian-American to reach space, Kalpana Chawla dreamt big, beyond the impossible. By daring to dream differently, she became a great source of inspiration for the youth, and more importantly – for all women!

Unfortunately, in several parts of India, women are still ruled by their destiny. First their decisions are influenced by parents and after marriage by their husbands. But Kalpana made her own destiny. She was never ruled by it. She was destined to achieve through her sheer grit and determination. In a society where independence in a young girl is disdained, Kalpana broke all stereotypes in everything that she did. Her achievements did not come easy. The very first challenge before her was to prove to the world that being a woman did not rule out the option of a career in aeronautics. She was the only girl at that time to join the aeronautical engineering stream at the Punjab Engineering College in Chandigarh. She fought and overcame opposition from her parents and migrated to USA for further studies. Here, she joined the University of Texas to pursue her Masters and later, University of Boulder, Colorado for her doctorate.

Kalpana's sights were so completely focused on her goals that even her small town trappings were no constraint for her. Born and raised in the town of Karnal, Haryana, India, Kalpana's love for stars and for flying led to her career as a NASA astronaut. In completing her first mission, Kalpana Chawla traveled 6.5 million miles in 252 orbits of the Earth and logged 376 hours and 34 minutes in space. In Chandigarh, her professors still recount how after her first mission a large number of young women were inspired to opt for Aerospace Engineering. This is no small contribution in a State where, even in the year 2003, the birth of a girl child is hardly a cause for celebration!

Kalpana represented a rare combination of accomplishment and modesty. She was a go getter who proved that "Will power takes people a long way". She showed us that we can dream, and dream big, and still achieve our dreams by working hard in a disciplined fashion. She profoundly affected everyone she came in touch with as a wife, daughter, sister, student, friend, colleague and role model. We are inspired by Kalpana's deeds to create similar inner strengths in our present and future generations to achieve higher goals. Though she is not amongst us today, she still continues to inspire us in many ways. So today, on this special occasion of Women's Day, let's resolve to live up to her message:

"The path from dreams to success does exist. May you have the vision to find it, the courage to get on to it, and the perseverance to follow it, wishing you a great journey."

## Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw



Dr. **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw** (b. 23 March 1953 in Bangalore) is an Indian entrepreneur. She is the Chairman & Managing Director of Biocon Ltd. In 2004, she became India's richest woman.

Termed by the New York Times as India's Mother of Invention, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is the Chairperson and Managing Director of Biocon Ltd. Biocon Ltd is presently the biggest biopharmaceutical firm in India. Kiran founded Biocon Ltd in collaboration with Biocom Biochemicals Ltd with a capital of Rs 10,000 (200 USD) in 1978.

Kiran completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology from Bangalore University in 1973. She continued her education at the Ballarat Institute of Advanced Education in Australia where she was qualified as a master brewer in 1974. In 1978, Kiran joined Biocom Biochemicals Limited as a trainee manager in Ireland. Following her stint with the Irish company, Kiran founded Biocon Ltd in 1978.

Kiran is also a civic activist and an ardent art collector. She has authored the book 'Ale and Arty' that features paintings of some renowned Indian artists. The book illustrates the process of brewing beer through paintings.

She was termed *India's Biotech Queen* by The Economist and Fortune. She was recognized with prestigious awards like Wharton Infosys Business Transformation Award (2006), Padma Bhushan (2005)

## LUCILA GAMERO DE MEDINA



Lucila Gamero is one of the first Honduran writers who was able to produce a literary piece that is considered solid and futuristic, given the society and women of her time, in the novel genre. She was born in the town of Danlí, Honduras, in 1873, and passed away in 1964. She lived for many years in Mexico, where she published a great part amount of her work. She is considered the “great lady of Honduran writing”.

Her extense literary production occupies the late period of the Latin-American romantic novel: love and family are the basic themes that compose her narrative arguments. Her most published novel is called *Blanca Olmedo*.

Lucila Gamero wrote many novels, and among her main ones, we can find:

- *Páginas del corazón* (Pages from the Heart)
- *Adriana y Margarita* (Adriana and Margarita)
- *Aída, novela regional* (Aida, regional novel)
- *Betina* (Betina)
- *La secretaria* (The secretary)
- *Blanca Olmedo* (Blanca Olmedo)
- *Amor exótico* (Exotic love)

Lucila Gamero was born in Danlí, El Paraíso, three years after the Honduran Liberal Reform, daughter of Dr. Manuel Gamero and Camila Moncada. Her family, although not exactly wealthy, was of the Honduran high class. That is why she behaved with much dignity and pride, and began writing at a very young age. Her first novel was *Amalia Montiel*, in 1895, that was published by chapters in the weekly paper *El Pensamiento*, that was run by Honduran author Froylan Turcios, and was the first literary publishing space that gave an opportunity to women. She had the honor of publishing the first novel in Honduras, *Adriana y Margarita*, in 1897, of a total of seven novels and a book of short stories.

## Majida El Roumi



She is a Lebanese singer and a soprano who started her musical career in the early 1970s when she won the gold medal for best female singer. She became one of the most successful and respected singers of the Arab world as well as a UN Goodwill Ambassador.

Majida El Roumi was appointed an ambassador for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on World Food Day, October 16, 2001 in an official ceremony in Rome, Italy. She participated in numerous round-table discussions on the role of FAO ambassadors in helping the Organization combat world hunger. As FAO ambassador, Majida inaugurated the First Annual Agricultural Week in Lebanon and dedicated the book prepared by FAO *Sanabel El Kheir* on 8 November 2005 during an official ceremony to celebrate World Food Day 60th Anniversary at the UNESCO Palace in Beirut.

She was granted the National Order of the Cedar (Knight), Lebanon, 1994.

Majida performed at various international festivals throughout the Arab world such as festivals of Beiteddine, Jerash, Bosra and Carthage as well as the Cairo Opera House.

Her last international appearance was when she performed "Light The Way," a duet with the international opera star, José Carreras, on December 9, 2006 during the opening ceremony of the 15th Asian Games Doha 2006.

However, one can't deny that Majida El Roumi has conquered a leading place in the Arabic song. So many, she has become a symbol and idol. Whether she is a diva, or elected as the 'Voice of Love' or 'Singer of the Arab conscience', Majida remains a simple human, a faithful wife, a caring mother and a true friend.

No wonder why she refuses any proposed titles; Majida El Roumi is enough.

## MARIE CURIE



**Marie Curie**, *née* Maria Skłodowska, was born in Warsaw on November 7, 1867. She received a general education in local schools and some scientific training from her father. In 1891, she went to Paris to continue her studies where she obtained Licentiatehips in Physics and the Mathematical Sciences. She met Pierre Curie, Professor in the School of Physics, in 1894 and in the following year they were married. She succeeded her husband as Head of the Physics Laboratory at the Sorbonne, gained her Doctor of Science degree in 1903, and following the tragic death of Pierre Curie in 1906, she took his place as Professor of General Physics in the Faculty of Sciences, the first time a woman had held this position. She was also appointed Director of the Curie Laboratory in the Radium Institute of the University of Paris, founded in 1914.

Her early researches, together with her husband, were often performed under difficult conditions. The discovery of radioactivity by Henri Becquerel in 1896 inspired the Curies in their brilliant researches and analyses which led to the isolation of polonium, named after the country of Marie's birth, and radium. Mme. Curie developed methods for the separation of radium from radioactive residues in sufficient quantities to allow for its characterization and the careful study of its properties, therapeutic properties in particular.

Mme. Curie throughout her life actively promoted the use of radium to alleviate suffering and during World War I, assisted by her daughter, Irene; she personally devoted herself to this remedial work. She retained her enthusiasm for science throughout her life and did much to establish a radioactivity laboratory in her native city - in 1929 President Hoover of the United States presented her with a gift of \$50,000 donated by American friends of science, to purchase radium for use in the laboratory in Warsaw.

Mme. Curie, quiet, dignified and unassuming, was held in high esteem and admiration by scientists throughout the world. She was a member of the Conseil du Physique Solvay from 1911 until her death and since 1922 she had been a member of the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations.

The importance of Mme. Curie's work is reflected in the numerous awards bestowed on her. Together with her husband, she was awarded half of the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1903, for their study into the spontaneous radiation discovered by Becquerel, who was awarded the other half of the Prize. In 1911 she received a second Nobel Prize, this time in Chemistry, in recognition of her work in radioactivity. She also received, jointly with her husband, the Davy Medal of the Royal Society in 1903 and, in 1921, President Harding of the United States, on behalf of the women of America, presented her with one gram of radium in recognition of her service to science.

Mme. Curie died in Savoy, France, after a short illness, on July 4, 1934

# WOMEN OF THE YEAR 2008

## Nujood Ali



The most talked about honoree of the 2008 Glamour Women of the Year awards was a small child of 10. Nujood Ali, who flew all the way from her native Yemen for the ritzy Carnegie Hall gala, was married off by impoverished parents to a 30-year-old man who raped and abused her.

Her father, who drew an annual salary equivalent to \$900, had 18 children and couldn't afford to clothe and feed Ali so he gave her up for marriage. Though her older husband promised to wait years before becoming intimate with his child bride, he beat her and raped her on their wedding night. Ali had enough.

Taking a solo trip to a Yemen courthouse, she sat until a judge took notice and heard her pleas for help. After the lawyer linked her up with a human rights lawyer named Shada Nasser, the brave girl became the country's first child bride to legally end her marriage with a divorce.

"I didn't like my husband so my stepmother told me if I wasn't happy, I should go to court," Ali told The Daily News through a translator. "But no one was willing to take me. So I went on my own."

And thus begun her journey to free herself from the clutches of medieval tribal perverted culture. She knew the consequence of divorce might mean being harmed by her relatives for the "shame" she will bring to their family but not enough to intimidate her to do what is right and just.

Luckily for her Nasser a leading human rights lawyer volunteered to represent her for free and a sympathetic judge heard the case and divorce was granted. Nasser was so outraged at Nujood Ali's plight that she called on the press inspired by her courage. The news spread around the world where donors poured in to help Nujood and probably save her from harm if it did not become a celebrated case.

While Nujood's father and husband was arrested and jailed initially there is no law in Yemen that penalize what is considered legalized pedophilia in most of the civilized world. End of story and Nujood Ali can go back to being a child and pursue her dreams of becoming a lawyer but it just does not end there. Something so nasty and revolting ensued since there is no provision in Yemeni law that provides for prosecution on sexual abuse charges within a marriage. The husband and father were free as a bird of prey. To add insult to injury and to further highlight their criminal perversion Thamer demanded \$250, the equivalent of four months' salary for a poor Yemeni, to agree to a divorce. Now how sick is that instead of paying for his crimes he gets paid instead and one of the lawyers has to dole out the cash for the "wronged" pervert.

This is from a pervert who lied through his teeth that he was not aware that Nujood was that small, yeah like does he expects a full grown woman at age 10? When he bought 3 dresses did he not notice this was a child and spending \$20 for a wedding ring and reception for 40 people surely gave him quite a profit when he demanded \$250... Now that is not just disgusting that is a freaking barbaric monstrosity of the feudal tribal medieval past that haunts Yemen society to this day.



# Soad Hosny



Soad Mohamed Hosny (January 26, 1942 – June 21, 2001) was an Egyptian actress. Hosny was known as the "Cinderella" of Egyptian cinema and one of the most influential actresses in the artistic arena. She ascended to stardom in the end of the 1950s, performing in more than 83 films between 1959 and 1991. A majority of her films were shot in the 1960s and 1970s. Her final screen appearance was in the 1991 film *The Shepherd and the Women*, directed by her ex-husband Ali Badrakhan.

Hosny started her career at a very young age, through singing *Okht El Qamar* (Sister of the Moon) in the famous radio children program *Baba Sharo*. A family friend, Abdel Rahman el-Khamissy (a writer/director) discovered her acting talent and asked an Arabic language teacher at the time to give her singing lessons. Abdel Rahman was screening for the film *Hassan We Na'ima*, and wanted to present Hosny as his new discovery in the role of Na'ima. The film was produced and directed by Henry Barakat.

A notable family member includes Father: Mohammad Hosny - Egyptian calligrapher, Half sister: Nagat el Saghira - Egyptian singer, Brother: Ezz Eddin Hosny - music composer, Brother: Sami Hosni - Cello musician / Jewelry designer / Arabic calligrapher

Hosny died in London, England in 2001. This occurred after she had suffered severely from an unknown illness for five years. Hosny had sought treatment in the UK after sustaining a spinal fracture which had forced her to leave Egypt.

Sadly, on June 22nd, 2001, she fell from a window from her best friend's London flat and died. Soad Hosny's death was the third in a series of Egyptian notable death; all had died in the same way. Hosny was under therapy for depression at the time. Ironically, the same day as Abdel Halim Hafez's birthday, the one she loved.

To this day, she goes down as one of the most legendary and most classically beautiful actresses in Middle Eastern history.

Some of her movies

*Hassan wa Na'ima* (Hassan and Na'ima) (1959). *Esha'a hob* (Rumour of Love) (1960). *Banat waal saif, El* (The Girls and the Summer) (1960). *Ariss yassel ghadan, El* (The groom Arrives Tomorrow) (1964). *Tareek, al-* (The Road) (1964). *Gharamiyat Imraa* (A Woman's Affairs) (1966). *Shakket el talaba* (Students' Apartment) (1966). *Chakawet rejala* (The Awful Men) (1966). *Lailat el zafaf* (The Wedding Night) (1966). *Al-Kahira thalatheen* (Cairo 1930) (1966). *Saghira ala elhob* (Too Young to Love) (1966). *Shabab magnoun geddan* (Very Crazy Youth) (1967).



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~~She~~

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