



“There is no purpose nobler than to build communities of acceptance for all.”

- Eunice Kennedy Shriver



# Champions

Newsletter July 2021

Greetings from Special Olympics Bharat

## Eunice Kennedy Shriver the founder of Special Olympics

*a game-changer and a champion for bringing together people with and without Intellectual Disabilities.*

10 July each year shifts the spotlight, on the inspiration, impact and indomitable spirit of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the founder of the Special Olympics movement. This year the celebrations marked her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday

In 1968, Eunice Kennedy Shriver (EKS), started a summer camp in that backyard for children with intellectual disabilities (ID). She was determined to show the world that people with ID are capable, that they're athletic, and that they should be treated as equals. While over 5.3 million Special Olympics athletes and millions of coaches, families, fans and friends live her legacy and lead our movement every day, we unite on Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day in over 190 countries and thousands of communities to show the world the power of unity to create opportunities of acceptance. [Read more about EKS](#)

Your BRAVERY can become a mighty FORCE ....

CELEBRATE THE LEGACY OF EUNICE KENNEDY SHRIVER  
10 July 2021 #EKS100

...against centuries of ignorance and oppression



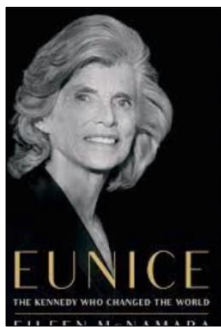
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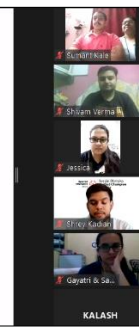
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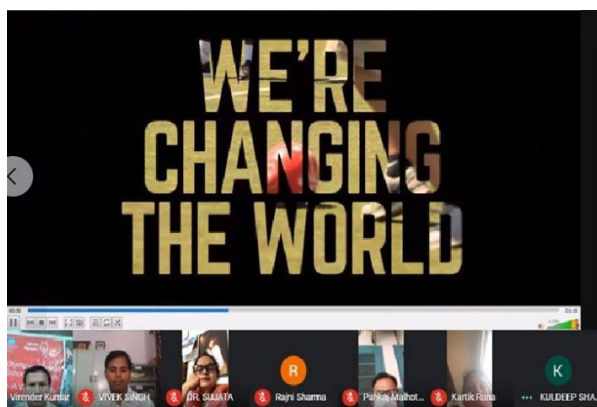
1921-2009

Special Olympics founder Eunice Kennedy Shriver left a powerful, lasting legacy—her heart lives on in the smiles of all 6 million of our athletes. For more than half a century, millions of people’s lives have been changed forever by a woman who insisted to the world that they were just like everyone else. Today is her 100th birthday. She has inspired millions around the globe, giving people with intellectual disabilities the rights and acceptance they deserve.



Unable to conduct outdoor activities due to the pandemic, many states of India honoured her through Social Media posts. The recently held Floorball National Camp concluded with a signature campaign that brought together the Athletes and Coaches from 15 States, Special Olympics Bharat officials as well as the officials of the YMCA (venue of the camp) in her honor. The National Youth Activation Committee, which is an Inclusive Youth leadership forum, dedicated the first half hour of their bi-monthly meetings to paying tribute to Ms Shriver. In the first of its kind, a virtual meeting saw a live signing of the young members along with brainstorming thoughts that denoted Inclusion to them

## Celebrating the end of the SNF project but moving ahead with the Unified School Programming it powered

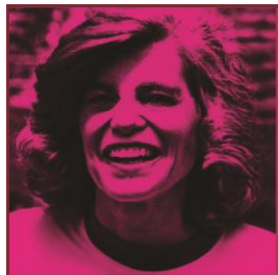


Siddhant Nath and Param Ahuja , SO Bharat Youth leaders participated in the virtual celebration organized by the Special Olympics International in June 2021. A Unified pair, from each of the Special Olympics regions shared their experiences unfolding the impact of the program world over. The Session was chaired by Ms Mary Davis, CEO of SOI and Mr David Evangelista , President and Managing Director , Special Olympics Europe Eurasia.

Over the past three years, Special Olympics has successfully delivered on an ambitious vision to transform school settings into communities of acceptance and inclusion for youth with intellectual disabilities. Through the Play Unified: Learn Unified

initiative supported by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF), Special Olympics implemented its transformative school-based programming—Unified Schools—in 14 countries reaching out to over 1950 schools and over 200,000 youth. India added 417 more Unified Schools engaging 3371 Athletes and Unified partners across the four states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal , through the SNF support.





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## Determined to blaze a path of glory



Paramjeet , 24 yrs, brings a ray of hope to the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. If selected, he would create history by being the first Athlete to represent Jammu and Kashmir at the Special Olympics World Winter Games. The Snow Shoeing probable was at risk of losing the opportunity of a lifetime, had he not received the support of the SO Bharat State Chapter and the Regional passport authorities. He did not possess a passport. He resides 40 kms from the Jammu, near to the politically disturbed international border in the remote village of Chak Prema; combined with a weak internet connectivity things become harder. Battling documentation, red tapism, distance woes and the ongoing pandemic, the persistent resolve of the State Area Director Dr Ashwini Jojra and his team made it happen! In an unprecedented move, the Passport office especially opened to do the needful, more so now, during the lockdown. Paramjeet received his passport within hours of

applying for it. Mr Shil, the Regional Passport Officer, praised the determination of Paramjeet and wished him luck for the Kazan Winter Games 2022. [Read More](#)

## Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International celebrate a 20-yr partnership





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Special Olympics bi-weekly global webinar celebrated the success of the Special Olympics 20-year partnership with the Lions Clubs International. Chairman of the Board, **Tim Shriver** shared his thoughts and made a special introduction to the Lions panel. David Evangelista, the Regional President & Managing Director of SO Europe/Eurasia led a panel of Lions Club International Foundation representatives, directors, volunteers and athletes to discuss the partnership. [Read More](#)

Past International Director/Trustee Ms **Aruna Abhey Oswal** joined the distinguished panelists. *“Special Olympics is, no doubt, the biggest change maker by bringing about transformation in social attitudes towards Intellectual disability by spreading awareness and sensitivity through Unified Sports, cultivating joy, courage and dignity in the lives of the Athletes and their families throughout the world. The project Mission Inclusion was launched in 2017 in India substantiating the importance of mainstreaming Persons with Intellectual Disability”*

Mission Inclusion Bharat was a historic commitment made by Mrs. Aruna Oswal, through the Aruna Abhey Oswal Trust, to create an expanded inclusive development platform across India to benefit children and adults with intellectual disabilities, their families and their communities. The launch was a national extension of the global Special Olympics- Lions Clubs International global partnership of “Mission: Inclusion”.

Mission Inclusion: Bharat made over 50 Unified events possible, along with 42 health screenings providing over 860 glasses to the Athletes while engaging 407 Lions volunteers and 653 LEOs

[Glimpses of Mission Inclusion Bharat](#)

## Virtual Cricket Competition concludes leaving behind a legacy of Sporting Creativity- supported by ESPN



A month-long Virtual Cricket Competition concluded on 19 June 2021, with SO Bharat Delhi securing the first position amongst the 15 participating states. In the presence of over 200 viewers, Delhi and Puducherry clashed across two skills, Wall-toss and tapping the ball, to finalize the score that had fluctuated throughout the month, binding the audience in a trip grip, one session after the other. Maharashtra and Chattisgarh secured the third and the fourth positions respectively. The final competition commenced, with Pondicherry participating first, as a result of winning the toss. The event witnessed

the distinguished presence of Mr Dipak Natali, President and Managing Director- SOAP; Mr Coen Van Putten, Manager Sports, SOAP, Mr Dr (Ms) Mallika Nadda, Chairperson SO Bharat and Mr Gaurav Thakur, Director- Marketing & Business Development, ESPN India





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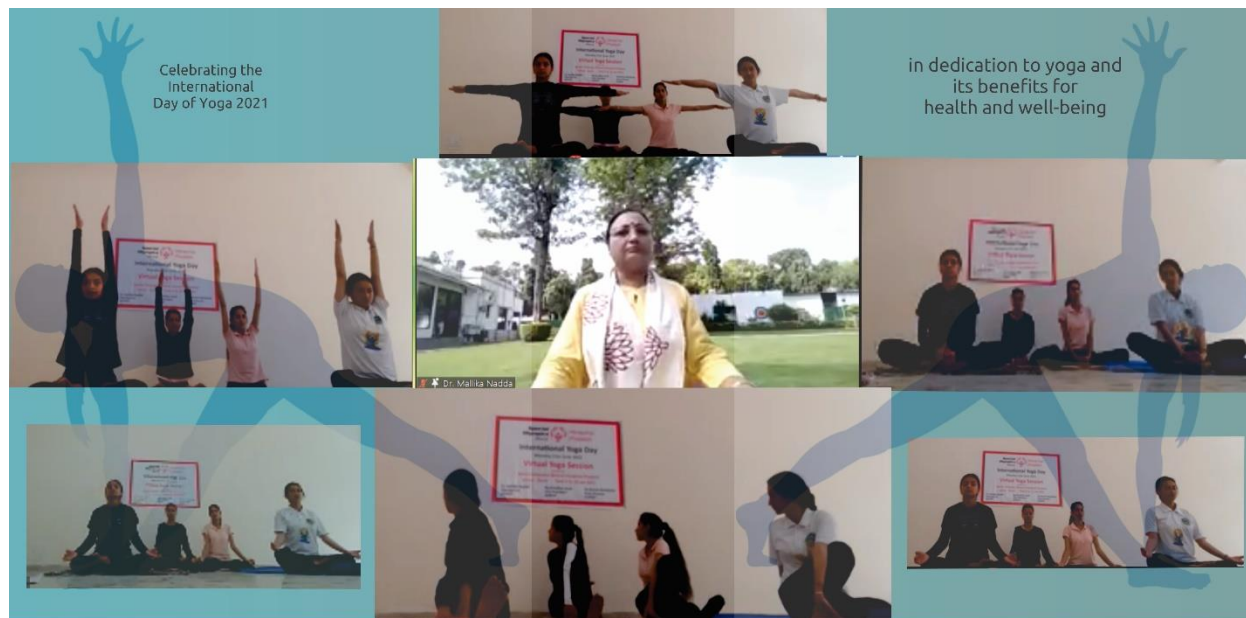
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The Event opened with an anecdote shared by Ankush Saha, Athlete leader (Golfer and long-distance runner) from Karnataka. *He is the first Athlete of SO Bharat who was filmed by an ESPN filming crew that visited India in April 2015. “The stories of Special Olympics Athletes are remarkable and it has been our endeavor to bring these inspiring stories out, driving meaningful growth in support of the Special Olympics movement. It is a matter of pride and honour for me to be here and be a small part of this beautiful journey of using sports to change lives. The relationship of ESPN and SOI has been built on a bedrock of shared belief in the power of sports to impact lives.”- said Mr Gaurav Thakur* [View Event Highlights](#)

## International Yoga Day

21 June 2021 turned the focus on Yoga, something that is fast becoming a routine across all ages. The pandemic that has turned the attention to Mental and Physical well-being, inevitably has enhanced the role of Yoga that is known for providing both.

an hour- long Yoga session was organized by the SO Bharat Himachal Pradesh Chapter, inviting all the states, and led by Dr. Shamsheer Singh Rathore, Professor of Physical Education at the Himachal University and also a National Trainer with SO Bharat.



Dr Mallika Nadda , Chairperson of SO Bharat, before practicing the routine herself, addressed the audience of over 170 at the webinar , on the importance of Yoga in our daily lives. She upheld the role of the Prime Minister of India , Mr Narendra Modi, in spreading awareness of this age-old practice and making it a household name beyond boundaries

The Delhi NCR Unified Champion Schools engaged in inclusive Yoga sessions reaching out to the Special Olympics Athletes namely, the Tagore International School East of Kailash and the Ananth Centre who



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were connected through the MBZ UCS project. **Ms Monica Dinesh, principal, Anand Centre , Okhla Delhi:** “I was apprehensive earlier about the Youth Activation program. I was not sure what it is and how would it add value. Now I feel that it is a program that would break barriers between mainstream and special schools. We usually function by ourselves but now I am so glad that we are joining hands with Tagore International School EoK, to carry forward inclusive activities that will go a long way in building sensitization amongst the youth”

Saathi, an initiative of the Jaypee Public School, Greater NOIDA, took wings on the yoga day, encouraging and promoting several Inclusive activities engaging their Mainstream and special wings.

## INCLUSIVE YOUTH ACTIVATION

Supported by Hasbro the youth and schools in Mumbai and Pune continue to learn lessons of Empathy and Compassion



The Youth in Mumbai and Pune have re-ignited their activities with the support of the Hasbro Children’s funding. Fueled once again with their support for the third year, the youth continue to expand the movement into new schools and new batches within the existing ones, reaching out to more youth leaders and stakeholders. Bringing on board the Ferguson College, Pune, more are slated to join the movement in the next few months. A Coaches training too was held across 6 districts of the state. Simultaneously recreational activities continue to roll through the planning and execution of the youth leaders with the phenomenal support of the SO Bharat

Maharashtra State Chapter. A state level sibling forum and a collaboration with an organization to introduce Music therapy for Athletes, is in the pipe line as well

Hasbro has been a supporter of Special Olympics Unified Schools. Hasbro’s philanthropy is focused on “instilling empathy in children around the world” and through their ‘**Be Fearless, Be Kind**’ initiative they aim to nurture empathy and compassion in youth and help put kindness into action”

International Olympic Day



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The Youth leaders planned a special session to highlight the day making it interactive. The session began with four break-out rooms each having an Athlete to lead drills for the viewers, who could select a drill of their choice.

The program was joined by the SO Bharat leadership who answered the questions asked by the Youth leaders and also participated in a quiz based on Olympics.

Mr Anand Menzes, who represented India in the 2000 Sydney Olympics as well as many other international circuits, graced the occasion, that had him interact with the Athletes telling them

about his sporting journey and asking them for their experiences as well

## PARTNERS IN INCLUSION



[www.specialolympicsbharat.org](http://www.specialolympicsbharat.org) | [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#),

[SO Bharat Young Athletes Facebook page](#) and [YouTube](#)