



## 20-year old Indian woman with Type 1 diabetes conquers White Mountains in Crete, Greece

*Maitry Pancholi from Ahmedabad successfully completed 'Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge - White Mountains, Crete', established by Sanofi Diabetes in partnership with SWEET and World Diabetes Tour*

*The only Indian to join an international team of 11 teens and young adults with Type 1 diabetes on the challenging trek aimed to inspire young people living with Type 1 diabetes, to strive for control and dare to dream*

**Ahmedabad, October 1, 2015:** Sanofi India Limited and reputed diabetologist & endocrinologist Dr. Banshi Saboo today shared the inspiring story of Maitry Pancholi, a young woman from Ahmedabad with Type 1 diabetes. Maitry recently completed the 'Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge, White Mountains, Crete' established by Sanofi Diabetes in partnership with SWEET and World Diabetes Tour.

The Type 1 Diabetes Challenge, established by Sanofi Diabetes in partnership with the World Diabetes Tour in 2013, is committed to raising awareness, giving hope to people with Type 1 diabetes and encouraging better overall diabetes management. In the first and second editions of the T1D Challenge, international teams successfully hiked up Mount Kilimanjaro and Machu Picchu. For the third edition, the focus remained on young people with Type 1 diabetes and for the first time SWEET e.V.; an international network of Centers of References for pediatric and adolescent diabetes, was the leading partner in the 2015 Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge.

20-year old Maitry Pancholi, a post-graduate student from Ahmedabad, was part of an international team of 11 teenagers and young adults living with Type 1 diabetes who trekked up to the 2,080 meters high summit of Mount Gingilos in Crete, from August 25<sup>th</sup> to August 28<sup>th</sup>. The trek took the team through the famous Samaria Gorge, one of the longest gorges in Europe. The 11 participants aged between 15 and 20 years from Brazil, Canada, India and 8 European countries, took this challenge to inspire and demonstrate to the global Type 1 diabetes community that their condition does not have to stand in the way of achieving their goals and aspirations and that by striving for control, anything is possible and they can dare to dream. This is the second time that a young Indian has participated in the Type 1 Diabetes Challenge. In 2014, Eshaan Shevate from Pune, having Type 1 diabetes, successfully climbed to Machu Picchu in Peru with another young group of international Type 1 diabetes patients.

In India, diabetes is a major public health challenge and globally, the country today has the second largest number of diabetes patients. While Type 2 diabetes has received considerable attention in interventions, it has not been so for Juvenile or Type 1 diabetes, even though 1 out of 5 children with

Type 1 diabetes in the world would be an Indian<sup>1</sup>. With more people being diagnosed at a younger age, patients are faced with the prospect of dealing with Type 1 diabetes and its complications earlier and for more of their lifetime.<sup>2</sup>

**Speaking on the occasion, N. Rajaram, Country Head and General Manager - Pharmaceutical Operations, Sanofi India** said, *“The ‘Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge’ established by Sanofi Diabetes in partnership with SWEET and World Diabetes Tour, provides the participants an opportunity to share their experiences and feelings; support each other through the expedition; and become global ambassadors for Type 1 diabetes in young people. Together they have demonstrated that with control of Type 1 diabetes, they can go beyond diabetes and achieve their aspirations. We are very proud that for the second year we have a participant from India taking the ‘Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge’; a young Indian woman having diabetes, who has achieved this unique feat! We believe Maitry’s story is a clear message that young patients with diabetes can overcome almost all obstacles in their way to lead a normal healthy life as long as they receive timely support and follow their treatment plan religiously.”*

Maitry was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when she was only 12 years old. Her life changed dramatically upon learning that she suffered from diabetic ketoacidosis and had to be immediately put on insulin.

Maitry’s doctor **Dr. Banshi Saboo**, diabetologist & endocrinologist, and founder of Dia Care, Ahmedabad, stated that, *“Completing the ‘Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge’ established by Sanofi Diabetes in partnership with SWEET and World Diabetes Tour, is a huge achievement for Maitry and I am absolutely delighted that she was successful in reaching the summit. Maitry has already travelled a challenging road! When she first came to me, she and her family were completely shattered by the diagnosis. Being a single parent, it was initially very difficult for her mother and she had lost all hope. But the family has really stood together and today, Maitry is managing her diabetes so well. She is very compliant with HbA1c testing ensuring it is always under control. She is keen on helping society, and especially after this unique experience of trekking in Crete with other Type 1 diabetes international patients, she now wants to spread awareness amongst other young patients that with proper control, nothing can stop a diabetic from achieving success”.*

Despite initial challenges, today Maitry lives a happy, normal life and looks back at this challenge as a way to show the world that diabetes does not hold her back from pursuing her dreams.

**Sharing her experience of the inspiring and spectacular journey, Maitry Pancholi** said, *“The trek to the White Mountains was an experience I will cherish all my life.. Meeting and interacting with fellow diabetics, and learning about their individual experiences in managing diabetes was inspiring. Together we trekked for over 6 hours each day, while managing our diabetes under tough circumstances. After 4 days of hiking, we reached the summit of Mt. Gingilos, which is 2080 m above sea level. It was a long and tough hike and the sun made it extremely difficult for us to climb. I am very proud to have completed the ‘Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge’. I am grateful to Dr. Saboo for his continuous support and motivation that has always helped me control my diabetes, and to Sanofi India for giving me this opportunity to set a positive example and inspire young Type 1 diabetic patients.”*

For young people dealing with their condition every single day, diabetes can have a significant – sometimes overwhelming - impact on their lives and emotional well-being. Poorly controlled levels of

blood sugar can result in frightening and potentially damaging hypoglycemia (low blood glucose) or hyperglycemia (high blood glucose).<sup>2,3,4</sup>

*'With the incidence of Type 1 diabetes increasing every year in our country, we must educate and sensitize all stakeholders, give parents more information on primary and tertiary care centers and provide sufficient support to kids for their complete care – treatment, education and career,' added Dr. Saboo.*

## About Type 1 Diabetes Youth Challenge

On August 27, 2015 an international team of 11 young people living with Type 1 diabetes (T1D) hailing from Brazil, Canada, India and 8 European countries successfully completed the T1D YOUTH Challenge to The White Mountains, Crete in Greece. The White Mountains (or Lefka Ori) is a mountain range located in Western Crete. The White Mountains have over 30 summits that are more than 2,000 meters high. The highest is Pachnes which is 2,453 meters above sea-level. There are also about 50 gorges, the most famous being the Samaria Gorge which is one of the longest in Europe.

The T1D YOUTH Challenge (<http://www.epresspack.net/t1dchallenge/>) aims to raise awareness and give hope to other young people with T1D and demonstrates that it is possible to go beyond diabetes and make the most of each opportunity. To support the T1D YOUTH Challenge, Sanofi Diabetes, SWEET e.V. 'Better control in Pediatric and Adolescent diabetes; Working to create Centers of Reference' and the World Diabetes Tour joined forces for the first time.

In previous years, the T1D Challenge teams have taken on Mount Kilimanjaro (<http://www.epresspack.net/t1diabetes-kilimanjaro-expedition/>) and Machu Picchu (<http://www.epresspack.net/T1D-Challenge-Machu-Picchu/type-1-diabetes-challenge-machu-picchu/>) but this year's team was solely composed of people aged 15-20 years living with type 1 diabetes, to advocate the importance of self-empowerment and emotional support in the management of diabetes during adolescence and early adulthood. They had been selected by SWEET to participate in the T1D Youth Challenge.

Supported by an experienced medical team from SWEET centers, and two mentors who both participated in the previous T1D Challenges, the 11 young trekkers began their journey on August 24, 2015, their 4-day arduous hike took them through the Samaria Gorge through a grueling terrain in high temperatures, before climbing Gingilos Mount to reach the summit 2,080 meters above sea level. The trek conditions were challenging for the young people, but all of them completed the trek, successfully managing their blood sugar levels and demonstrating to people living with diabetes that their condition doesn't have to stand in the way of achieving their goals and aspirations.

## About SWEET

SWEET e.V. is an international network of Centers of Reference for pediatric diabetes care. Initiated with support of the EU Public Health Program in 2006, the SWEET group has over 6 years of experience in creating and sustaining a high quality professional network based on agreed standards of care, criteria for certification, international guidelines and quality control, including peer review and data collection, sharing and benchmarking. In the meantime, SWEET is organized as a registered charity with close ties to scientific organizations such as the International Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Diabetes (ISPAD) and NGO's such as IDF Europe.

Find out more about SWEET on their website: [www.sweet-project.eu](http://www.sweet-project.eu)

## About Sanofi

Sanofi, a global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

In India, Sanofi is present since 1956.

## About Sanofi Diabetes

Sanofi strives to help people manage the complex challenge of diabetes by delivering innovative, integrated and personalized solutions. Driven by valuable insights that come from listening to and engaging with people living with diabetes, the Company is forming partnerships to offer diagnostics, therapies, services and devices, including blood glucose monitoring systems. Sanofi markets both injectable and oral medications for people with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes.

Aligned to the Sanofi Group's commitment to diabetes, Sanofi Diabetes India strives to become a true 360-degree partner for patients and healthcare professionals. Through an integrated approach to diabetes management - comprehensive portfolio, patient support program 'Saath 7'; 'Made in India' reusable insulin pen AllStar™, public awareness drives and ongoing scientific initiatives - Sanofi endeavors to make a sustainable difference to the diabetes ecosystem in India-- centered on patient needs.

## About World Diabetes Tour

The World Diabetes Tour association was founded in 2008 by Christophe Crampé and Delphine Arduini. The association was created to help people with type 1 diabetes and raise awareness of the condition. They aim to deliver a positive message of hope – diabetes doesn't need to limit anyone from realizing their goals in life and living out their dreams.

The association unites the type 1 community around the world, so that together they can be stronger, and learn from each other. They have ventured on numerous sporting challenges around the globe and during their world tour they have held meetings and conferences in France, India, Thailand, Japan, Polynesia and China. Sharing advice and feedback through the association's community they highlight what other people with type 1 diabetes achieve and how they manage their condition.

Find out more about the World Diabetes Tour association on their website: [www.worlddiabetestour.org](http://www.worlddiabetestour.org)

## About Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes, a form of diabetes mellitus, is one of the most common chronic conditions in childhood. It is caused by an autoimmune response where a person's insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas are destroyed by the immune system.

In 2011, the number of people of all ages with type 1 diabetes was estimated at over 30 million worldwide, however, in many countries this data is not available.<sup>5</sup> Figures from 2014 suggest that incidence of type 1 diabetes is increasing by 3% annually, with around 79,100 new cases each year in young people under the age of 15 – one every 7 minutes. Of the world's 1.9 billion young people under 15 years, about 497,000 have type 1 diabetes. The regions with the highest numbers of young people under the age of 15 with type 1 diabetes are Europe (estimated at almost 130,000), North America and the Caribbean (estimated at almost 110,000), and South-East Asia (estimated at almost 80,000).<sup>2</sup>

To manage their blood glucose levels, people with type 1 diabetes must administer multiple daily insulin injections or have continuous infusion of insulin through a pump.<sup>4</sup> Diabetes complications and emotional impact could be lessened through effective management and support, thereby enabling patients to have

an improved quality of life.<sup>3</sup> Controlling type 1 diabetes is the first step in enabling people with the condition to fulfill their dreams.

### **Sanofi India Media Contacts:**

#### **Aparna THOMAS**

Senior Director - Communications & CSR (India and South Asia), Sanofi  
Tel.: + (91) 22 2803 2169  
aparna.thomas@sanofi.com

#### **Ruchita MEHRA**

Associate Director- Communications (Corporate and Pharma), Sanofi  
Tel.: + (91) 22 2803 2233  
ruchita.mehra@sanofi.com

### **References**

1. International Diabetes Federation. IDF Diabetes Atlas, 5th edn. Brussels, Belgium: International Diabetes Federation, 2011
2. IDF Diabetes Atlas, 6th edition, 2013 and update on 2014 figures. Available at: <http://www.idf.org/diabetesatlas>. Date accessed: July 2015
3. Jacobson AM et al. The long-term effects of type 1 diabetes treatment and complications on health-related quality of life: a 23-year follow-up of the Diabetes Control and Complications/Epidemiology of Diabetes Interventions and Complications cohort. *Diabetes Care* 2013; 36 (10): 3131–3138
4. Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Type 1 diabetes Facts. Available at: <http://jdrf.org/about-jdrf/fact-sheets/type-1-diabetes-facts/>. Date accessed: July 2015
5. IDF Diabetes Atlas, 5th edition, 2012. Available at: [http://www.idf.org/sites/default/files/da5/5eDiabetesAtlas\\_2011.pdf](http://www.idf.org/sites/default/files/da5/5eDiabetesAtlas_2011.pdf). Date accessed: July 2015