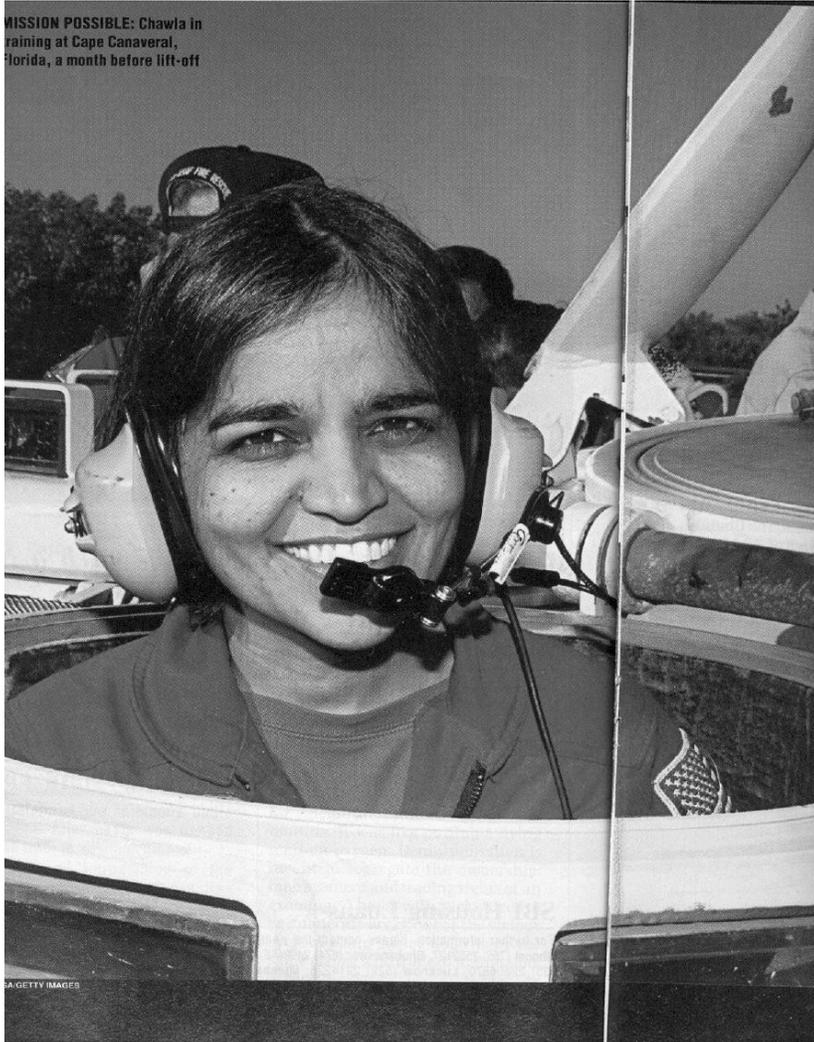


## KALPANA CHAWLA'S LAST INTERVIEW

# “ LISTEN TO THE SOUND OF NATURE TAKE CARE OF OUR FRAGILE PLANET ”



Flight Engineer KALPANA CHAWLA spoke to chief of Bureau (New York) Anil Padmanabhan just before taking off on her & final mission.

Q. from Karnal to space as an American astronaut, how has your original Indian identity played out for you in the course of this great achievement?

Ans. “I was not born for one corner. The Whole world is my native land.” So said Seneca, the philosopher, I have felt that connection & stewardship for earth for as long as I can remember. And not just for earth, but the whole Universe. In summers, while growing up in India, we often slept in the courtyard under the stars. We gazed dreamily at the Milky way, and once in a while caught some shooting stars. Times like those gave me the opportunity to wonder & ask all those very basic questions. That scene of awe for the heavens started there. The family & the surrounding community were mostly folks who had come to the area after partition, most of them without many possessions. You lose by working hard & everyone seemed to follow that rule. It helped instill the notion that no matter what the circumstances, you could indeed follow your dreams.

Q. What has been the central element of this success?

Ans. In one word, perseverance. There have been other factors too, like reading & exploring that have helped widen perspectives & enriched the journey.

Q. Any message for Indian Children?

Ans. It is humbling to be asked. Material interests are not the only guiding light. It is something that

you'd enjoy doing in the long run. Take the time to figure out. how to get there. The quickest way may not necessary be the best. The journey matters as much as the goal. Listen to the sounds of nature. Wishing you the best on your trek towards your dreams. Take good care of our fragile planet.