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World Down Syndrome Day Special



From the President's Desk



Greetings to all our members.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all our member countries on having successful World Down Syndrome Day Celebrations across the region. We can all take pride in the fact that our region is changing and there is considerable involvement from everyone in making the events successful. People are now less embarrassed by their family member with Down syndrome and are willing to come out for an inclusive society.

The APDSF is 2 years old as a registered body (we registered on 2 March 2017) however we have taken giant strides and today are a well-known Federation in this space. We are looking at aligning ourselves with like-minded organizations globally so that our region can get the support that we need to create a society where inclusion is the norm.

This is just the beginning and there is a lot to accomplish. Our primary goal is inclusion, and towards this goal, let us march this year too and make the world a place where a person with Down syndrome can lead their life with dignity.

All the best!

Regards,

N. Ramachandran

APDSF at the United Nations

UN - One of the most prestigious organizations to be associated with. Recognizing the need to be associated with the UN and its affiliate bodies that dealt with Intellectual Disability, APDSF was represented at the United Nations on the occasion of World Down Syndrome Day on the 21st of March 2019.

The WDSD event was inaugurated by Mr. David A. Chikvaidze, Chef de Cabinet of the Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva. Mr. N. Ramachandran, President – APDSF spoke about the various activities being planned and carried out in the region to help persons with Down syndrome lead better lives.

This was the second time that APDSF was represented at the UN, the first time being last year when India, Nepal and Singapore spoke about Down syndrome in their respective countries. This time it was Mongolia and India that spoke about Down syndrome in their respective countries and the positive changes and developments that are helping them lead better lives.



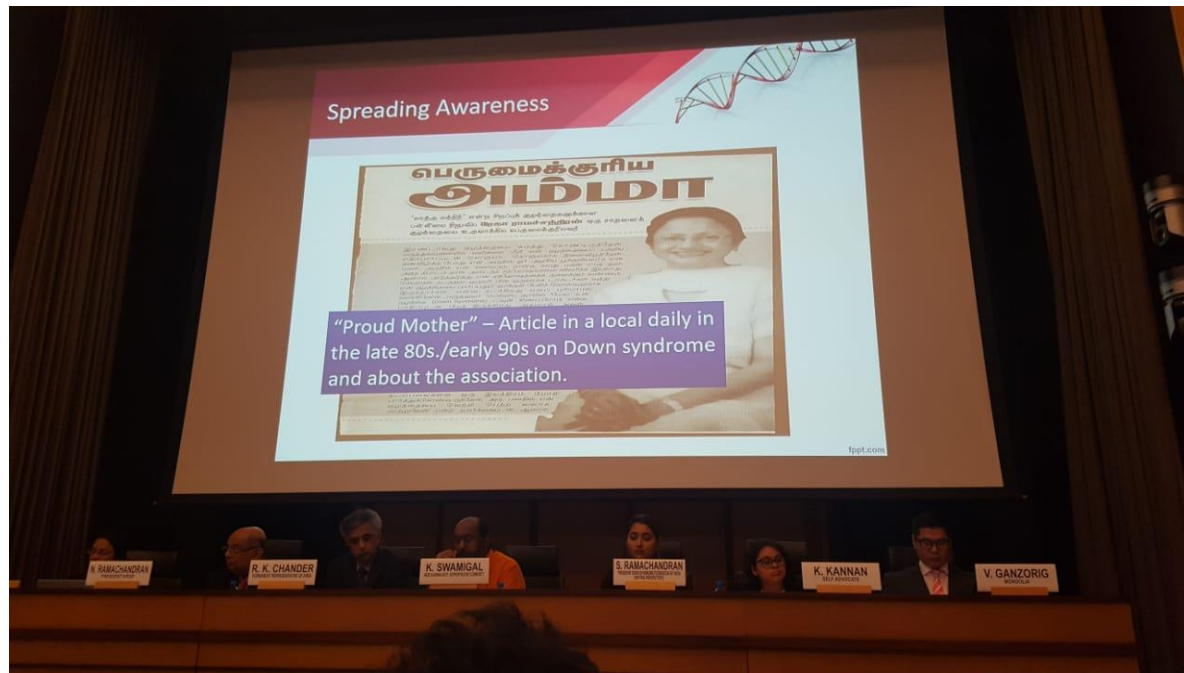
At the Kazakh Hall, United Nations Office at Geneva



Presentation by Ms. Karishma Kannan, Self-Advocate, India



The APDSF Team at the United Nations



Presentation by Dr. Surekha Ramachandran, India

WDSD in India

India is a large country – both in size and in population. With a birth rate of almost 30,000 persons with Down syndrome, it is but natural that the celebrations across the length and breadth of the country was truly an impactful one.

Chennai, the headquarters of the Down Syndrome Federation of India, Chennai marked the day with a rally at the famous Besant Nagar Beach in Chennai. It was a great awareness campaign as more people came to know about Down syndrome. For that day, Besant Nagar beach became a sea of Yellow and Blue. Questions were raised and answers were given about Down syndrome.

Chennai



Events were organized in various other locations across the country – with rallies, cyclothons, Health Camps, Government supported initiatives all a part of the mega celebrations to celebrate persons with Down syndrome.

Another highlight was the lighting up of the Apollo Hospitals in Chennai. One of the biggest hospital chains in the country, they lit up 7 of their hospitals in the city of Chennai in Yellow and Blue of Down syndrome. Ripon

Building, the Commissioner's office in Chennai was lit up in yellow and blue making it a bright WDSD for India



Ripon Building



Apollo Hospital



Bangalore



VHS, Chennai



Cyclothon at India Gate, New Delhi



Delhi – a sea of Yellow and Blue



Hyderabad



Chandigarh

WDSD at Australia

Australia's Governor-General and patron of Down Syndrome Australia, Sir Peter Cosgrove, has delivered a clear message to people with Down syndrome, their family and friends, and to the community.

Lady Cosgrove and the Governor-General, resplendent in [Lots of Socks](#), hosted a reception at Government House to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day on 21 March 2019.



"To be involved and included, to have every opportunity in life. To go to school, to learn, and make friends. To have a job, to experience the fulfilment and satisfaction it brings.

"To live as independently as we can and live life to the full. This is all any of us want. But unfortunately, people with Down syndrome don't always get to experience them as fully as they would like," the Governor-General said.

"Too often there can be stigma associated with having an intellectual disability and a resistance to inclusion. On World Down Syndrome Day, we tell the world to *Leave No One Behind*.

"This is a day of global awareness and a day for a global voice. A day for recognition and advocacy. A day for inclusion, recognition, respect and pride."

Also at the reception were DSA chair Angus Graham and DSA chief executive Dr Ellen Skladzien. They were joined by Sir Angus Houston, who is a patron of World Down Syndrome Congress (WDSC) in Brisbane in 2022, and many local families.

After the Governor-General's speech, Ruth Faragher, who is a member of the WDSC organising committee, announced Tasmania's Matt Hoori and Texan resident Charlie French as the joint winners of the [WDSC 2022](#) logo competition.



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"It was a big moment for me. I was excited to speak in front of such a large audience that included the Governor-General and announce the winners," Ms Faragher said. "I can't wait for the World Down Syndrome Congress in 2022. I'm really happy that people with Down syndrome are being so involved already."

DSA chief executive Dr Ellen Skladzien said the winning logo brings together two creative minds from



opposite sides of the world.

"Down Syndrome Australia will host the Congress in Brisbane in 2022, so we invited people with Down syndrome from around the world to come up with a logo for the event," Dr Skladzien said.

"We had six people on the judging panel, including two people with Down syndrome. Our judges were especially impressed with the concepts put forward by Matt Hoori and Charlie French. When we put those two entries together, we knew we had an outstanding design," Dr Skladzien said.

(From the DS Australia Website)

WDSD in Bangladesh

Down Syndrome Society of Bangladesh, Department of Communication Disorders, University of Dhaka, Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital and AMDA Bangladesh have jointly observed World Down Syndrome Day on 21st March, 2019.

To create massive awareness on Down Syndrome and to observe the 14th World Down Syndrome Day, in line with the DSI declaration, **Down Syndrome Society of Bangladesh, Department of Communication Disorders, University of Dhaka, Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital and AMDA Bangladesh** along with other organizations jointly celebrated the important event on 21st March, 2019. This is the third time such a daylong event has been observed at Dhaka University campus.

Various programs had been undertaken to mark the day:

1. A month long free health check-up and counseling: Specialist doctors of different discipline have advised children, adolescent and adult with Down syndrome at Japan Bangladesh Friendship Hospital, Dhanmondi.

2. A daylong Seminar: Awareness raising on Down Syndrome issues in

Bangladesh organized at **Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) Auditorium, University of Dhaka**. (Children and adult with Down syndrome and their parents and relatives from different districts have joined the event.)

3. Colorful Rally (400 Children and adult with Down syndrome and their parents along with 150 volunteers from different college and Universities have organized a colorful rally)

4. Buddy Cycling (25 Volunteers engaged for the promotion of awareness on Down Syndrome)

5. WDSD Global Video Events presentation (Bangladesh was included for in WDSD Global Video Events in 2019)

Event organized at Out-reach Dhaka:

Besides, we have taken initiatives with Districts Chapters of Down Syndrome Society of Bangladesh to raise the global single voice for persons with Down syndrome in 4 other districts named Bogura, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Munshiganj. There were seminars and rally in each district to promote awareness on Down syndrome

Government Initiatives:

Thanks to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh to take initiative to mark the 14th World Down Syndrome Day at the auditorium of Department of Social Welfare, Agorgong, Dhaka with other organizations. We were in the observance committee and contributed to make it a successful one.

The first ever DRAMA was played by the children with Down syndrome at TSC Auditorium in University of Dhaka on 21 March as an initiative by the Down Syndrome Society of Bangladesh for inclusion of persons with Down syndrome in the community



WDSD in Hong Kong

To raise public awareness of World Down Syndrome Day, an inclusive art exhibition was held on 24 March 2019 at the Piazza of the K11 Art Mall in Tsim Sha Tsui. The event exhibited 23 artworks, of which 22 were joint creations between our Down Syndrome members and non-disabled kids. Though various forms of art expression, the Association hopes to spread information about Down Syndrome and the message behind wearing mismatched socks. Art draws out the natural talent of people with Down Syndrome, and gives expression to their desire for a harmonious society.

We kicked off the event with a large-scale painting. The officiating guests included Victoria Tang-Owen, our President of the Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association; Mr. Sean Leung, Senior Charities Manager of The Hong Kong Jockey Club; Ms. Judy Lam, General Manager (Operation) of K11 Concepts Limited, and Ms. Rita Ho, founder and artistic director of Art Playground Academy of Arts. Together with Po Ling, a member of the Association, they used brushes to color in three socks drawn on a large canvas, which symbolizes our wish to create a respectful, friendly and inclusive community.

The actor and singer Mr. Zac Kao also participated, supporting our event by wearing mismatched socks. He was very impressed by the drawing as well as the simple and sincere character of people with Down Syndrome. Stressing mutual respect and inclusiveness, Mr. Kao urged continued support for the Association during the event. In addition to the exhibition, we also held skipping performances and creative workshops, attracting the attention of many a passer-by. Together we celebrated the arts in happiness and harmony!



WDSD in Malaysia

This year KDSF-National Centre celebrated World Down Syndrome Day on 20th & 21st March 2019.

We had a KDSF-National Centre Open Day on 20th March 2019. Through an Open Day, we aim to bring more awareness and educate the general public (especially parents, teachers of kindergartens, medical staff, the media, etc.) on Down Syndrome whilst showcasing the programmes that we provide for children with Down Syndrome.

On World Down Syndrome Day, 21st March 2019, KDSF-National Centre had a mini Carnival/Experiential Exhibition at the Centre and invited all parents, Alumni and interested persons to come and celebrate the day with our students. The Deputy Minister of Women, Community and Family Development (YB Puan Hannah Yeoh) came to our event and launched three events that are important to KDSF:

- World Down Syndrome Day
- Kiwanis 36th Motor Treasure Hunt (a fundraising event for KDSF-National Centre)
- KDSF Football Club (KDSF-National Centre's first ever Football Club)





WDSO in Mongolia

WDSO 2019 Event for families and guests took place on March 24 generously sponsored by Shangri-la Hotel Ulaanbaatar. Over 400 participants including children of all ages and young adults with DS, their families and caregivers, teachers, doctors and partner organizations of DSAM enjoyed the largest party full of useful information, music, dance and finest food. They made new friends, and most importantly proved that a happy life with Down Syndrome is real.

The highlight of the Event was HYMN OF Down Syndrome Association Mongolia.

Down Syndrome Association Mongolia has been organizing WDSO Event for families with children with Down Syndrome since its establishment in 2008.

Speech at UN WDSO 2019 Conference in Geneva "Leave no one behind" by Mr GANZORIG Vanchig, Chairman of DSAM, who represented Mongolia as part of APDSF.

Golden and silver medalists with DS dedicated their victory in Abu Dhabi to WDSO.

In total, Mongolian athletes won 18 medals in Sp, Olympics in Abu Dhabi, March 2019.

Educational seminar dedicated to WDSO 2019 in Eastern Gobi.

The seminar was organized by DSAM for parents with children with Down Syndrome and other types of disabilities in one of the most remote provinces of Mongolia - Eastern Gobi, Sainshand on March 22 in co-operation with Governor of the province.

About 80 participants, including nomadic families, teachers, doctors and social workers have had an extended information and private consultations given by Professionals' Support Group of Down Syndrome Association and representative of Autism Association Mongolia. Self-advocates with Down Syndrome and autism have been the most active presenters.

Early Intervention Center of DSAM for kids with Down Syndrome aged 0-6 has been renovated to WDSO.

New project of DSAM on home-based services for families with children with Down Syndrome aged 0-6 will be launched this year.



WDSD in Myanmar

World Down Syndrome Day event was held on the 24th March (Sunday) because it's a public holiday so that it's convenient for the people to come and participate.

However, on 21st March (World Down Syndrome Day), we lightened the office building of Myanmar Down Syndrome Day association with yellow and blue to give awareness to the public. It was also posted in Down Syndrome Myanmar Association page on Facebook.

The opening speech was by Mr. U Zaw Aye Maung (Minister of Rakhaine Ethnic Affairs for Yangon Region Government). Other important people gave speeches at the event including Dr. U Ko Ko Oo - Executive committee member of Myanmar Federation of Persons with disabilities. This was followed by a cake cutting with the "Happy World Down Syndrome Day" song. Sponsors and donors were honored with certificates. There was a questions & answers sessions and presents were given to those who gave the correct answers.

Finally an entertainment program was organized by the children with Down syndrome and famous singers. More than 1000 people attended the ceremony. There was a donation of juice and fish crackers (called Satudithar) for any people who attended the ceremony. Sharing of colouring books and crayons by a public donors was also included.

We made an announcement of using the creativities (drawings) of the people with Down Syndrome as stickers on T-shirts by a group called "DOH AHTU". Not only that, there were games prepared by the teachers. As a special arrangement for families of people with Down Syndrome, one of the volunteer medical team did body composition analysis for them.

In conclusion, we hope our objectives for celebrating World Down Syndrome Day ceremony :

- to have a chance of making friends, exchange knowledge and get encouragement among the people with Ds and family members
- to raise public awareness about the qualities and capabilities of the people with Ds
- to collect technical knowledge and datas of chances concerning with the people with Ds
- to create a single global voice for advocating for the equal rights, inclusion and wellbeing of the people with DS would be fulfilled through this ceremony.





WDSD in Nepal

Down Syndrome Association of Nepal (DSAN) is non- profit NGO established in 2006, by parents of children with Down syndrome. The main aim was to provide needed assistance to children with Down syndrome so that they can live as independent and productive citizens in the society with dignity, create awareness about Down syndrome and advocate for their rights in health, education, social participation and employment We also provide prenatal / pre-pregnancy counselling services to at high risk couples by Genetic counselors and Obstetrician and Gynecologists , guide and train parents for care /support of their children and provide comprehensive Early Intervention services for physical and intellectual development of these children.

All people with Down syndrome must have opportunities to live fulfilling lives, included on a full and equal basis with others, in all aspects of society. The 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, a global plan of action for people, planet and prosperity, pledges that “no one will be left behind”.

The reality today is that prevailing negative attitudes, low expectations, discrimination and exclusion, ensure that people with Down syndrome are left behind. There is a lack of understanding of the challenges individuals face across their lifetimes and a failure to support them with the opportunities and tools needed to live fulfilling lives. People with Down syndrome and those who support and work with them must be empowered to advocate for these opportunities

On 21st March, 2019 (7th Chaitra, 2075) In Nepal World Down syndrome day celebrated with lighting of Gaddi Baithak located at Basantapur Durbar square, Kathmandu with blue and yellow color. Restoration of a part of the historical monument damaged in devastating earthquake 2015 completed and inaugurated in June 2018 by the Prime Minister Honorable K P Oli ; which falls under UNESCO World Heritage Site .Yellow evokes happiness and creates a feeling of energetic quality in the body and mind as well as an optimistic view. Also blue is a color that spreads happiness among people. Yellow and blue mix shows dependability and productivity. Also a drama about Down syndrome staged to raise awareness about the condition. All children with Down syndrome and others with full zest and energy enjoyed flash mob dance and various fun activities .The chief guest of the program were Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mayor Bidhya Sundar Shakya and Chief guest Australian Ambassador His Excellency Peter Budd.The program sponsored by Australian government.

The program began with welcome speech by Ashish Joshi (Proud Down syndrome self-advocate awardee 2018) he called upon every person with Down syndrome to tell the world that they are no less than anyone else and urged the Government and stakeholders to “Leave no one behind” . A solo Newari dance performance by child with DS Sammriddhi Shakya followed by awareness drama, the highlight of the event. An informative video relating to various important aspects of Down syndrome was screened and the huge public mass was thrilled to have participated in the program conducted by DSAN. The Mayor promised to support Down syndrome population in every way possible and Ambassador also gave word to sponsor such awareness events in future too and appreciated the event.

To conclude in the words of Miguel de Cervantes taken from his masterpiece ‘Don Quixote’, that “a leap over the hedge is better than good men’s prayers”. Another message which are useful when we are searching for relative truths in the obscure jungle of Nature, an optimistic one “There is a remedy for everything except death”. We all need to join in solidarity and work for the common goal ,betterment of our children with Down syndrome and give them life of respect and dignity not looking upon others to do the work for us.



WDSD in the UAE

Shaikh Mansour Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, chairman of the Higher Committee for the Protection of the Rights of People of Determination, participated in the celebration organized by the Emirates Society for Down Syndrome on the occasion of the International Day of Down Syndrome, which falls on March 21 of each year under the theme "Leave no one behind" at the Global Village in Dubai.

Accompanied by HE Saeed Mohammed Hareb, Secretary General of Dubai Sports Council (DSC), Dubai Police Military Music Band, community leaders, people with Down Syndrome, their families, and the general public. Shaikh Mansour started the walkathon from the main stage of the Global Village until the kids' theatre, and he took pictures with those who participated, People with Down Syndrome.

His Highness expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the Association to rehabilitate, include and empower people with Down Syndrome, provide them with a better life, explore their abilities and potentials, to enable them to participate effectively in social, sports, cultural and educational activities.

Shaikh Mansour praised the efforts of the Association and its success in hosting the World Down Syndrome Congress Dubai 2020, in conjunction with the World Expo 2020 Dubai. This is a first of its kind event that is held in the Middle East and North Africa, reflecting the country's keenness to support People of determination, improve their quality of life and provide full support to their families.

WDSD in Vietnam



