



Extra Chromosome - Extraordinary



May 2026

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TRIBUTE



We fondly remember Mr. Ramachandran, President of the Asia Pacific Down Syndrome Federation, whose vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment greatly strengthened the movement for persons with Down syndrome across the Asia-Pacific region.

A passionate advocate for inclusion and equal opportunities, he played a pivotal role in advancing the work of APDSF on international platforms. Through his dedicated efforts, APDSF established important connections with the United Nations and was represented at United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ensuring that the voices of self-advocates with Down syndrome were heard and respected at the global level.

Mr. Ramachandran continuously sought opportunities to spread awareness, promote dignity, and create a more inclusive society where persons with Down syndrome could participate fully and confidently. He strongly believed in empowering self-advocates and encouraging their leadership, independence, and meaningful representation in all aspects of society.

His legacy will remain an inspiration to the entire Down syndrome community. His dedication, compassion, and tireless service have left a lasting impact that will continue to guide APDSF and all those working towards inclusion and acceptance.

May his vision continue to inspire us to do more!

PRESIDENT SPEAK



Dear Friends,

As I write this message for the first time as President of the Asia Pacific Down Syndrome Federation, I do so with mixed feelings. I am looking forward to interacting with all of you in the days ahead while still recovering from the loss of my father.

This edition of the APDSF e-News was meant to reach you last month, but following the passing of our Past President, Mr. N. Ramachandran, as a family we needed time to come to terms with the loss.

My father, Mr. Ramachandran was dedicated to the cause of building a stronger and more connected Down syndrome community across the Asia Pacific region. Taking over this responsibility from him is a great honour for me, and I look forward to working with all of you and building on the great foundation you have all created together. He was firmly committed to the values of inclusion, dignity and advocacy without borders, principles that will be central to my approach as well

Across the region, our member organizations came together in meaningful ways to mark World Down Syndrome Day — from awareness walks and community events to policy dialogues and social media campaigns – this issue showcases highlights from these activities across our member countries. It beautifully captures the spirit of World Down Syndrome Day celebrations held across many countries in our region.

I am grateful for the kindness, support, and condolences received from friends and member organizations across our APDSF family during this difficult period.

As we move ahead, I look forward to working together to strengthen inclusion, encouraging self-advocacy, and creating more opportunities for persons with Down syndrome and their families across our region.

Warm regards,
T. R. Narayanaswamy (Rahul)
President
APDSF

BHUTAN

World Down Syndrome Day observed annually on 21st March, is a global awareness day dedicated to advocating for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of persons with Down syndrome. The day highlights the importance of building an inclusive society where individuals with Down syndrome are respected, empowered, and supported to lead meaningful lives. Ability Bhutan Society (ABS) has been consistently observing World Down Syndrome Day every year as part of its ongoing commitment to promoting awareness, inclusion, and support for children and individuals with disabilities. Through these annual observances, ABS continue to engage families, communities, and partner organizations in fostering greater understanding and acceptance.

This year's theme, *"Together Against Loneliness,"* emphasizes the importance of meaningful connections, strong support systems, and inclusive communities to ensure that individuals with Down syndrome and their families do not feel isolated.

Objectives

- Raise awareness about Down syndrome
- Promote inclusion and social participation
- Provide health support and guidance to children and their families
- Strengthen collaboration with partner organizations

Activity Conducted

To mark the occasion, Ability Bhutan Society organized a meaningful program in collaboration with Project DANTAK, who generously conducted a medical camp for children with disabilities and their parents.

The program included:

- Highlights on importance of the Day by Executive Director
- Highlights by Dentak Chief Engineer
- General health check-ups for children and Parents
- Dental Check-up
- Consultation and guidance for parents
- Interaction sessions between families and medical professionals
- Awareness sharing on care and well-being

In addition, staff members actively engaged in creating a warm and inclusive environment for all participants, ensuring that both children and parents felt supported and valued.

Program outcome

- Improved access to basic health services for children
- Increased awareness among parents regarding care and support
- Strengthened partnership with Project DANTAK
- Enhanced sense of inclusion and community among participants

Acknowledgement

Ability Bhutan Society would like to extend sincere gratitude to Project DANTAK for their continuous support and commitment in organizing the medical camp. Their contribution played a vital role in making the event meaningful and impactful.

Conclusion

The observance of World Down Syndrome Day 2026 was successfully conducted, reinforcing the importance of inclusion, care, and collective responsibility. The event highlighted the significance of working together to ensure that individuals with Down syndrome are not left behind and are fully included in society.



Figure 1: Cake cutting ceremony with Children with Down syndrome.



Figure 2: Highlights on the importance of the day by Executive Director.



Figure 3: Highlights by Chief Engineer of Project Dantak.



Figure 4: General Check up for Children



Figure 5: Dental Checkup for children



Figure 6: General checkup for the Parents.

HONG KONG

"Pure and True" 321 Smile Photo Exhibition Let the world see our smiles!

In celebration of World Down Syndrome Day (WDS) 2026 on March 21, the Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association organized a two-day photo exhibition on March 21–22, 2026.

The campaign centered on the theme of "smile" – showcasing the genuine, joyful expressions of individuals with Down syndrome. Through photography, guided tours, inclusive workshops, and interactive activities, the event aimed to let the public see their happiness, their connections, and their life stories.

Twelve Smile photos of individuals with Down syndrome were shown accompanied by a personal story from each individual. Apart from the photo exhibition, there were photo exhibition guided tour, inclusive handicraft workshop, postcard message corner and photography corner, all are carried out by a group of Down syndrome Ambassadors to enhance their interaction with public so as to strengthen public's understanding on their abilities.

The event successfully attracted over 400 public visitors. We are grateful to see the positive impact: individuals with Down syndrome gained confidence through public speaking, teaching, and co-creation; public gained more understanding and acceptance towards Down syndrome; achieve the goal of "inclusion as walking together, not giving"



Inspired by the lovely smiles of people with DS, the association president, Mrs. Victoria Tang-Owen, designed the "321 Smile" logo as a memorable symbol to share their positive energy with the community. Design concept:

- A ribbon fashioned from mismatched socks conveys a friendly and gentle impression, symbolising our friends with Down syndrome.
- Blue and yellow represent hope, happiness and our acceptance of and support for individuals with Down syndrome.



Photo Exhibition : Let the world see our smiles!



Down syndrome Ambassadors interacted with public through the guided tour and handicraft workshop.



Postcard message corner: Postcard are given to public for free, and they are invited to send the postcard to their love one, to spread the message of happiness.



INDIA

This year's World Down Syndrome Day celebrations unfolded with remarkable energy across India — from illuminated landmarks and buddy walks to sports meets, art exhibitions, health camps, and heartfelt community gatherings. Here is our round-up of everything that made March 2026 an unforgettable month of inclusion, joy, and milestones.

India Shines in Yellow & Blue for Down Syndrome Awareness

In a powerful gesture of solidarity and inclusion, iconic landmarks across India were illuminated in the signature yellow and blue colours of World Down Syndrome Day. From heritage buildings to leading hospital chains, these landmark lightings sent a clear message: people with Down syndrome are an integral and celebrated part of our society.

Heritage Landmark

Ripon Building, Chennai Tamil Nadu's Historic Municipal Headquarters glowed in yellow and blue, making a bold statement of civic solidarity.



Apollo Hospitals Network



In an extraordinary show of support, 44 Apollo Hospital campuses across India lit up simultaneously making this one of the largest healthcare solidarity gestures ever seen for Down syndrome awareness in India.

Celebrations Across India

From the tip of Tamil Nadu to the plains of Punjab, March 2026 saw communities rise together in celebration, awareness, and heartfelt inclusion. Here is a city-by-city snapshot of the joy that unfolded.

Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Ms. Babli Ramachandran's dance set a joyful tone. The beloved Buddy Walk returned with Vellore Institute of Technology partnering with DSFI — students walked alongside self-

advocates and curated a fun program, kindling hope for an inclusive tomorrow.



Hyderabad, Telangana

Parents and self-advocates gathered to prove that being different does not mean being distant. Hyderabad's WDS celebration affirmed the rights of individuals with Down syndrome as equal members of society.



Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Held at Vishnu Mandir Committee Hall, Sahid Nagar, the event included a health check-up for children. Chief guest Sannyas Behera, District Social Service Officer, addressed challenges faced by children with intellectual disabilities.



Mumbai & Surat

Mumbai's vibrant Down syndrome community marked the day with celebrations bringing together advocates, families, and supporters. Surat held a spirited event reaffirming commitment to an inclusive society. History Made on the Field In a landmark moment for inclusion in India, WDSO 2026 witnessed the country's very first competitive Even Field Meet for neurodiverse athletes. Athletes competed across multiple track and field events, demonstrating speed, strength, focus, and determination.

Delhi: A Month of Milestones

Delhi led the way with a remarkable array of events throughout March 2026 — from cultural performances at Rashtrapati Bhawan to an inspiring art exhibition and a life-saving disaster preparedness program.

Purple Fest at Rashtrapati Bhawan

For the 3rd consecutive year, Team DSDS participated in the Purple Fest. Over 30 families registered. Ms. Aashi Gupta performed Ganesh Vandana, 15+ self-advocates danced, and Mr. Aditya Kohli wowed audiences with a table performance.



Medical Camp at Maharaja Agrasen Hospital

Organised on March 21 at Maharaja Agrasen Hospital Charitable Trust, Punjabi Bagh, in coordination with IAP, the camp offered health screenings and specialist consultations. The entire hospital team was praised for being helpful and supportive.



NDRF Training

Organised by NDRF in coordination with IAP West Delhi and Indira Gandhi Hospital, Dwarka, this program empowered self-advocates to prepare for a safe future.

Art n Dreams presented Indradhanush — a stunning showcase of over 200 artworks by 44 neurodiverse artists. Paintings, sculptures, and creative works filled the gallery with colour and inspiration. Indradhanush Art Exhibition

Theatre - Communication at its best

Andher Nagri Chaupat Raja

In a true celebration of inclusion and artistic excellence, Smiling Dandelion Foundation, in association with Discover Ability Special School and the Down Syndrome Federation of India, staged the path-breaking theatrical production Andher Nagri Chaupat Raja at Punjab Kala Bhawan,



The Performance

Performed by persons with intellectual disabilities, this production demonstrated that inclusion in the arts is not only possible — it is transformative. The play created confidence among participants and awareness among audiences.

The Impact

The production established a replicable model for inclusive engagement across communities — placing talent and expression at the very forefront of the WSD celebrations.



Health & Wellness Initiatives

Health Camp — Indore

Organised by Acropolis and CSIT at the District Disability Rehabilitation Center on March 26, this health camp offered diagnosis, awareness sessions, and community support. Partners included SRJ Eye Hospital, Index Hospital, and the Indore Association of Paediatricians. About 50 self-advocates consulted with specialists, with parents expressing great satisfaction. A month-long fitness initiative spanning the length and breadth of India, self-advocates logged their daily activities via the Strava app. Those who completed the challenge were rewarded with medals, certificates, and a special T-shirt — turning wellness into celebration.



Knowledge & Advocacy: Online Sessions

National Trust Online Session

Dr. Surekha Ramachandran (President-DSFI) spoke on the importance of accepting persons with Down syndrome to build confident individuals. She emphasized understanding and

empathy so that self-advocates and caregivers never feel neglected by society. Mr. Anil Joshi (Technical Advisor - DSPS & Former Board Member NT) talked about how persons with Down syndrome can live a successful life

IAP Neurodevelopmental Paediatrics Session

Presided over by Dr. Surekha Ramachandran, President of DSFI, this session for the Indian Academy of Pediatrics addressed the medical needs of persons with Down syndrome and the critical role the medical community must play in supporting caregivers. She underscored the importance of empathy from healthcare professionals as the primary source of hope for self-advocates' health needs. WSDS 2026 extended its reach far beyond physical events through impactful online sessions that connected professionals, caregivers, and communities across India.

Looking Forward with Hope

"WSDS celebrations in India reflect a growing awareness and commitment to creating an inclusive society where individuals with Down syndrome are valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential."

— Dr. Surekha Ramachandran, Down Syndrome Federation of India

JAPAN

February and March were busy months with JDS as we prepared for and celebrated WDS 2026. On February 22nd, we held a special anticipatory kickoff event in Okayama to get things started. We also held a tshirt campaign so that families could wear fun shirts to celebrate the day, released a video from our November conference that highlighted our participants with Down syndrome, launched a website to commemorate the day, and held many local community events.

<https://jdss.or.jp/wds2026/>

Across the country, multiple cities lit up landmarks and public buildings in blue and yellow to celebrate WDS. Additionally, we collaborated with both Japan Autism Society and United Nations University in Tokyo for increased visibility and awareness.



In a broader scope, JDS has published a mother's memoir chronicling her experience with NIPT testing in hopes to bring her story to others, and on a global scale, we were privileged to send one of our own young ladies to speak at the UN.



MYANMAR

The Myanmar Down Syndrome Association (MDSA) is moving inclusion from the "training room" to the "public stage." Our mission is to establish a scalable blueprint for social harmony in Myanmar through three strategic activities:

Inclusive Showcase (The Gathering Point)

MDSA serves as a central hub, uniting various special needs schools. By sharing a stage, we replace isolation with a Unified Voice, exchanging best practices to ensure the entire intellectual disability community thrives together.

Social Harmony & Synergy Games

These collaborative games are designed to break social barriers, involving over 300 participants including individuals with Down syndrome, guardians, and volunteers. This activity provides practical experience in embracing diversity. It also demonstrates how strategic volunteerism can bridge human resource shortages within the disability sector.

Thematic Awareness Gallery: "Snapshots of Our Inner Worlds"

The venue is transformed into a visual narrative of cartoons, poems, and stories. This gallery reveals the creative talents of our members, fostering deep empathy for the challenges families face while attracting partners to co-create pathways for community development.

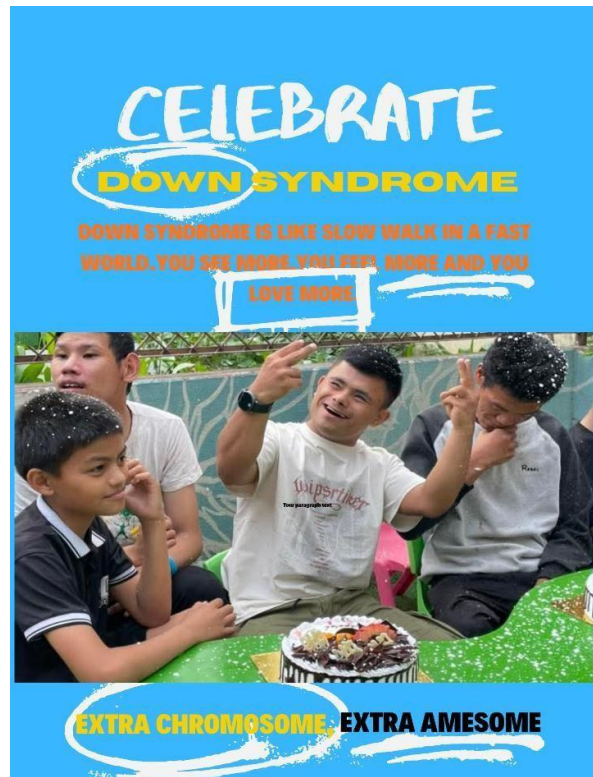
Our Goal: To make inclusion a natural habit citywide, ensuring a society where no one is left behind.



NEPAL

Poster designing competition

Organized by Mission Brain KU, Lions Club of KTM, Nepal Medical College doctors, in collaboration with Down Syndrome Support Health Association -Nepal (DSSHA)



Notice was put up on the Facebook page of DSSHA Form Kathmandu Medical College 8 students participated in the poster and video design competition. There were no video submissions. Selection done by representatives of DSSHA and the Lions Club of Kathmandu, judgment based on picture, content, and message conveyed, and originality.

KMC students won 1st, 2nd, 3rd, a cash prize of Rs 1000, Rs 750, and Rs 500, and 1 appreciation certificate. The prizes would be presented at a formal program later, after their exam.

APDSF GAMES January 2026 - Running 50 meters NEPAL stood first & second



The first-ever APDSF games start in 2026 in Jawaharlal Nehru Sports Stadium on 29,30 January. Seven countries participated. Two children with Down syndrome participated from Nepal. Ashish Joshi ranked 1st and Basanta Poudel ranked 2nd. The glow on their faces was admirable.



DSSHA - Nepal

TOGETHER AGAINST LONELINESS



WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY 2026

CAREGIVER RETREAT Program

Aim Of Program :

- 1 Sharing & learning
- 2 Discussing personal concerns with Health professionals
- 3 Recreation to enhance GOOD MENTAL HEALTH & HAPPINESS

Organized By:
Down Syndrome Support Health Association Nepal
New Baneshwor 31, Kathmandu, Nepal

In Collaboration With:
Kathmandu Metropolitan City
New Plaza, Kathmandu, Nepal

Venue : Himalaya Drishaya Resort, Dhulikhel
Date : 14 Chaitra 2082 (28 March 2026)
Bus pick up spot : Civil Service Hospital, Min Bhawan, Kathmandu
Time : 7:00am-7:30am
Return From Dhulikhel : 4:00 pm



The first time in Nepal, the "Parents Retreat Program" was organized on 29th March in the Himalaya

Drishaya Resort, Dhulikhel, with great ambience and scenic beauty. 32 parents and 3 adults with DS participated. Ashish Joshi and Grisma Pant. gave opening and closing remarks.

Men of the family, especially fathers, should also help their better half in raising and caring for their children, in equal partnership.



Seve health professionals: Dental, Physiotherapist, Psychiatrist, Obstetrician & Gynecologist, Music Therapist, Psychologist, and Occupational Therapist, to address the personal concerns of the caregivers.



PAKISTAN

World Down Syndrome Day is observed annually on 21st March to raise awareness about Down syndrome and to advocate for the rights, inclusion, and well-being of individuals with this condition. The day emphasizes acceptance, dignity, and equal opportunities for all. The Pakistan Down Syndrome Association regularly commemorates this important occasion in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Down Syndrome Federation, reinforcing regional efforts toward awareness and inclusion. In 2026, the day was celebrated by PDSA at Karachi through a well-organized and inclusive event.

The key objectives of the celebration were:

- To raise awareness about Down syndrome
- To promote inclusion and equal participation in society
- To support families and caregivers
- To highlight the importance of early intervention and therapy
- To reduce stigma and encourage community acceptance

The event witnessed significant participation from parents and caregivers of children with Down syndrome, reflecting strong community engagement and interest. The presence of families played a vital role in making the event interactive, supportive, and impactful.

Participants included:

- Children with Down syndrome
- Parents and caregivers
- Healthcare professionals and therapists
- Representatives from civil society
- Volunteers and community members

Informative sessions were conducted by renowned experts and professionals. Abid Lashari, CEO of the Pakistan Down Syndrome Association, addressed the audience and emphasized the importance of inclusion, awareness, and collective responsibility toward individuals with Down syndrome.

Dr. Lajwanti, a renowned behavioral therapist, delivered an insightful session focusing on:

- Behavioral development
- Early intervention strategies
- Practical guidance for parents and caregivers

Both sessions were highly appreciated by the audience for being informative, practical, and

engaging.

The celebration successfully:

- Strengthened engagement with a large number of parents and caregivers
- Enhanced awareness and understanding of Down syndrome
- Provided practical knowledge through expert-led sessions
- Encouraged community support and inclusion
- Reinforced the role of the Pakistan Down Syndrome Association and its collaboration with the Asia Pacific Down Syndrome Federation

The World Down Syndrome Day 2026 celebration in Karachi was a meaningful and impactful event. The active participation of parents, caregivers, and professionals, along with insightful sessions by Abid Lashari and Dr. Lajwanti, contributed to the overall success of the event.

The event concluded with a strong commitment to continue collaborative efforts at both national and regional levels to promote inclusion, awareness, and empowerment of individuals with Down syndrome.

The following recommendations were made at the end of the event:

- Increase parent and caregiver support programs
- Expand access to behavioral therapy and early intervention services
- Promote inclusive education systems
- Strengthen partnerships between organizations and stakeholders
- Continue organizing awareness events at the community level

PHILIPPINES



3 2 1 and Beyond: The Philippines' Largest World Down Syndrome Day Celebration

In celebration of World Down Syndrome Day 2026, the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines, Inc. (DSAPI), in partnership with SM Cares and nationwide stakeholders, organized the Happy Walk for Down syndrome across Manila, Cebu, and Bacolod. The event gathered more than **10,500 participants**, including **770 persons** with Down syndrome and their advocates—the largest Down syndrome awareness gathering in the Asia-Pacific region.

Anchored on the theme **3 2 1 and Beyond: Raising Aspirations, Inclusions, Support and Empowerment for People with Down syndrome**, the celebration brought together families, self-advocates, educators, volunteers, government agencies, and corporate partners to promote inclusion beyond awareness and toward meaningful participation in education, employment, and community life. The simultaneous multi-city walk reflected the growing national movement supporting persons with Down syndrome in the Philippines.

The event featured talent showcases such as **DS Got Talent 2026**, interactive partner booths, and community activities that highlighted the abilities, dreams, and contributions of persons with Down syndrome.

Complementing the walk was **Project 21: Through Their Eyes**, implemented with Camerahaus at the Quezon City Presidential Car Museum. Volunteers mentored children with Down syndrome in photography, with selected works later exhibited and sold during the Happy Walk to support DSAPI programs nationwide.

The celebration strengthened nationwide partnerships and inspired communities to continue advancing inclusion and opportunities for persons with Down syndrome.

National Media and News Pick up for DSAPI Happy Walk 2026

Key Media Metrics

Total Reach: 27MM++ of PH population Total Views: 1.5MM++ views

Bilyonaryo News Channel

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1376652547482154> – SMX Convention Center

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1566056827532165> - Bacolod City

PTV 4

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xa3p606> <https://www.facebook.com/reel/34515623561416480> - Cebu City

https://www.facebook.com/groups/53343128860/posts/10162833825368861/?mibexti_d=wwXlfr

DAILY NEWS ARTICLES PHOTOS

Business Mirror

https://issuu.com/businessmirror/docs/businessmirror_march_30_2026

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2026/03/30/10500-advocates-celebrate-the-down-syndrome-community-at-largest-happy-walk-to-date/>

Philippine Star

<https://www.magzter.com/PH/Philstar-Daily-Inc./The-Philippine-Star/Newspaper/2375358>

Manila Times

<https://www.manilatimes.net/2026/03/30/print-edition/todays-front-page-march-30-2026/2310076>

<https://reader.magzter.com/preview/agz3a47z0jhe6gy60zbl723740420/2374042>

Manila Standard

<file:///C:/Users/DSWD/Downloads/mspdf20260330-1.pdf>

<https://www.magzter.com/PH/Peoples-Independent-Media/malaya-Business-Insight/Newspaper/2374056>

Pilipino Mirror <https://www.instagram.com/p/DWfK5lamGIQ/>

Manila Bulletin

<https://manilabulletin.pressreader.com/manila-bulletin/20260330>

Philippine Star

<https://www.magzter.com/PH/Philstar-Daily-Inc./Business-World-Philippines/Newspaper/>

SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10163551006262535sset=pcb.10163551006667535>

SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10163551008717535sset=pcb.10163551006667535%20https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fdownsyndromeassociationofthephilippinesinc%2Fphotos%2Fwhat-an-incredible-happy-walk-2026-an-estimated-10500-strong-came-together-to-ce%2F1361766726312617%2F>

SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia

<https://www.facebook.com/downsyndromeassociationofthephilippinesinc/photos/what-an-incredible-happy-walk-2026-an-estimated-10500-strong-came-together-to-ce/1361766726312617/>

SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=122174070362610124sset=pcb.122174070368610124>

SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia

<https://www.facebook.com/communicaretherapycenter/posts/1357663563028144/>

<https://www.facebook.com/canonphils/posts/we-walked-we-laughed-we-made-a-differencecanon-marketing-philippines-proudly-joi/1365182612643355/>

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FaxKI2sNgrldE877KkL7A3udyOWxesVK>

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WwQmmGF36WLIM1R2A8ldgjDfakF8NbG0>

Cebu City <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1382486817236668sset=pcb.1382461607236456>

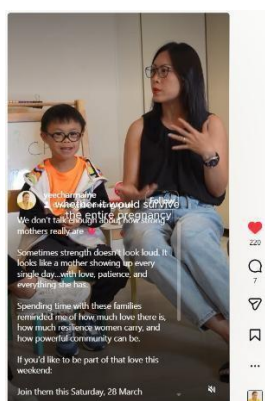
Bacolod City <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=646338114742728sset=a.1111303061876572>

SINGAPORE

Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) (“DSA”) celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2026. In support of the global theme, ‘Together Against Loneliness’ and aligned to DSA’s 30th anniversary theme of ‘Our DSA HEART – A Lifetime of Love’, we held different activities March 2026, culminating in a week-long carnival with our signature annual WSDS Community Walk and an attempt to set a new record of the highest number of people wearing mis-matched socks in the Singapore Book of Records. The activities were intentionally held in the community and involved different community partners to increase awareness of issues of loneliness among individuals with Down syndrome and their families and promoting their meaningful community participation and social inclusion. The activities included:

Instagram Reels

In collaboration with a local influencer, two young self-advocates and their mothers share their journey together as a family and with the community in a 2-part Instagram reel. The reels leverage on the power of social media and highlights the potential of children with Down syndrome and power of families and the community coming together in supporting them. The reels can be accessed via the links <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DWYfNbUSNdF> and <https://www.instagram.com/p/DWc-rKEkg4q>.



‘Together Against Loneliness’ Roundtable

Our self-advocates gathered for a roundtable discussion on the topic ‘Together Against Loneliness’ and shared their perspectives on loneliness, how it impacts them and what they wished could happen to address loneliness. They shared their views with invited professionals from different disciplines from medical practitioners to social workers, allowing their voices to be heard directly by service providers who often have influence and power on how to create support network and services for individuals with Down syndrome.



Charity Bowl

The Charity Bowl invited our donors, sponsors, volunteers, members, and their families to play together. Our community partners were teamed up with our members with Down syndrome in the games. The top teams and individual players were awarded with a trophy. Through an equal playing field in the inclusive games, our members with Down syndrome were able to display their Bowling skills while interacting with their neurotypical teammates, getting to know one another better and forming valuable friendships.



WDSO Carnival at Suntec City

A weeklong carnival was held at the highly popular mall, Suntec City, which attracts an estimated daily average of over 66,000 visitors. The event featured (i) information panels to raise awareness of Down syndrome and the different types of support and services available for the community, (ii) art exhibition showcasing the artistic talents of our members, (iii) performances by our members and partners and (iii) various booths selling merchandise handmade by our volunteers and members to raise funds for DSA in furthering its cause to serve the Down syndrome community. The week-long carnival attracted and engaged about 5,000 visitors to understand more about Down syndrome and individuals with Down syndrome.



WSDS Community Walk

The WSDS Community Walk is a signature activity of DSA to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day every year. Open to everyone, this year the walk attracted about 500 participants including our partners, members of the public and our members with Down syndrome. The inclusive walk symbolised our joint commitment to journey with individuals with Down syndrome and be part of the community promoting their meaningful social inclusion every step of the way.



Singapore Book of Records for the Highest Number of Individuals wearing Mis-matched Socks

Every year, DSA organises the 'Rock Your Socks' campaign to encourage people to wear colourful mis-matched socks, resembling chromosomes, to represent the support for individuals with Down syndrome and to celebrate the beauty of diversity and differences. This year, aligned with the global theme 'Together Against Loneliness' DSA brought the campaign to new level and sought to set a new record in the Singapore Book of Records for the highest number of individuals wearing mis-matched socks to symbolise the strength of the community coming together in breaking down any barriers and fight against loneliness. DSA successfully set a new record of 231 individuals wearing mismatched socks



SRI LANKA

The planned activities for World Down Syndrome Day this year were significantly affected due to the ongoing situation in the Middle East, which impacted our hotel program.

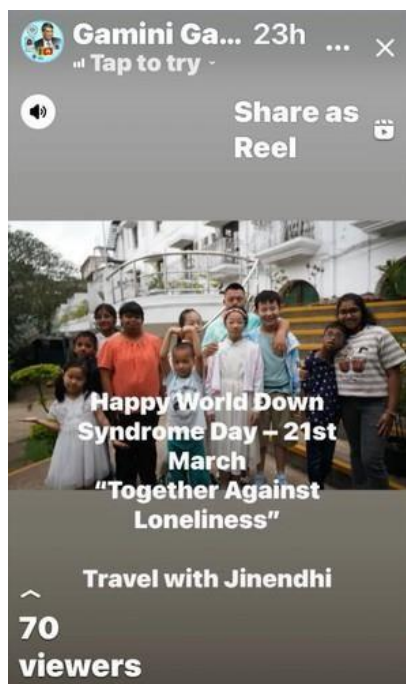
As part of our travel program and its follow-up initiatives, the hotels we visited had agreed to invite children and their parents for special visits. These programs were designed to include fun-filled activities for the children, along with a hosted lunch shared with hotel guests, promoting inclusion and joyful interaction.

However, due to petrol restrictions and cancellations of hotel bookings, we were compelled to cancel these arrangements. We are pleased to note that the participating hotels have agreed to implement these programs once the tourism sector returns to normal.

Additionally:

Other daycare centers and homes were informed to celebrate the day according to their own plans and schedules.

Dr. Dayaratne participated in a celebration held at a daycare center in his local area. Awareness posts and messages were continuously shared across our social media platforms. An awareness program for medical allied professionals in the North Eastern Province, which was to be conducted by Dr. Dayaratne, had to be postponed. This program will be organized in the near future.



TAIWAN

This year, our exhibition features a special wall. From one side, it reads “Down Syndrome Day,” and from the other is “Our Inclusion Day,” showing that while we are celebrating for people with Down syndrome, those around them are equally important. Therefore, our theme this year is about inclusion, across religion, education, and personalities. We invited guests from diverse backgrounds to celebrate this day with us. One of our most important partners is Mazu, the goddess of the sea, who offered blessings and protection, helping create warmth and a sense of community in our exhibition. The Ambassador of Saint Christopher and Nevis shared that “the event was a wonderful display of inclusion, togetherness, love and compassion.”

Not only was the main exhibition held in one of the most popular locations in Taiwan, but we also arranged a themed Metro train that traveled across the capital city throughout the month to promote WSDS in Taiwan.

With support from our community, we welcomed nearly 20,000 visitors in 9 days, more than double last year. We will remain committed to promoting inclusion and creating a society where every individual is valued, respected, and included as we look forward to WSDS 2027.



