

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 26, 2023

NATIONAL

- **The Passing Out Parade (POP) of the first batch of Agniveers - is scheduled to take place at INS Chilka on March 28**
- ✓ The historic POP is scheduled to be conducted post-sunset, a first of its kind in the Indian armed forces
 - ✓ Traditionally, Passing Out Parades have been conducted in the morning hours
- ✓ The POP marks the successful completion of training of close to 2,600 Agniveers, including 273 women Agniveers, undergoing training at INS Chilka in Odisha.
- ✓ This first batch of Agniveers also includes those Agniveers (men and women) who were part of the Indian Navy Republic Day Parade contingent on the Kartavya Path on January 26 this year
- ✓ Admiral R Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff will be the Chief Guest, and the Reviewing Officer of the POP
- ✓ PT Usha, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and President of the Indian Olympics Association, and Mithali Raj, former captain of the Indian women's cricket team and recipient of Arjuna Award and Maj Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, will also participate in the event.
- ✓ As part of their transformation to sea warriors, the Agniveers underwent 16 weeks of *ab initio* training at INS Chilka, the premier sailors' training establishment of the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The successful trainees would be deployed on frontline warships for their sea training
- ✓ During the POP, deserving Agniveers would be presented awards by the chief guest in various categories.
- ✓ This year onwards, acknowledging the contribution of the first Chief of Defence Staff, late Gen Bipin Rawat, the Indian Navy has instituted two new awards.
- ✓ The first award, Gen Bipin Rawat Rolling Trophy, will be handed over for the 'Woman Agniveer Trainee Standing First in Overall Order of Merit'.

- ✓ This trophy would be presented to the deserving woman Agniveer by the daughters of Gen Rawat
- ✓ The second award is the Gen. Bipin Rawat's rolling trophy for the 'Most Spirited Officer' undergoing the Naval higher command course at the Naval War College in Goa.
- ✓ On June 14, 2022, the defence minister and the three Service chiefs launched the Agnipath Scheme
- **The Centre – has announced tuberculosis preventive therapy and updated treatment guidelines for drug-resistant TB on World TB Day summit in Varanasi**
 - ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the Summit held on March 24
 - ✓ With this, TB patients can have a speedier access to the new and more effective six-month oral regimen later this year.
 - ✓ The existing treatment guidelines for drug-resistant TB (DRTB) —which includes 12-13 pills given daily for a period of nine to 24 months — was formulated in 2021.
 - ✓ TB therapy is supplied free under the government-run National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP).
 - ✓ India saw a 13% increase in tuberculosis cases in 2022 compared to 2021, according to the annual India TB report released by the Prime Minister during the summit
 - ✓ National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) recorded a high notification of 24.2 lakh cases in 2022, an increase of 13% as compared to 2021.
 - ✓ The report 'Leading the way – India TB report 2023' was launched by the PM on World TB Day.
 - ✓ On the occasion, the Prime Minister also launched the TB-Mukt Panchayat Initiative and New Shorter Regimen for TB Preventive Therapy to raise awareness about TB and prevent the spread of the disease that affects the lungs.
 - ✓ In 2022, the highest case notification rate among states was seen in Delhi (546 per lakh population) and the lowest in Kerala (67 per lakh population).
 - ✓ Of the total cases, about 39 % were female, 5.6% belonged to the paediatric age group (less than or equal to 14 years of age), and 23.6% were 55 years or above, the report said.
 - ✓ In India, it is estimated that the five risk factors to which TB cases are mainly attributed are undernourishment (7,38,000), harmful use of alcohol (2,58,000), smoking (1,10,000), diabetes (1,05,000) and HIV (93,000).
 - ✓ These risk factors together account for 44% of the total estimated incident TB in India
 - ✓ The report said 2022 saw an increase of 32% in the number of Multi-Drug Resistant (MDR)/ Rifampicin-resistant (RR)-TB cases compared to 2021.
 - ✓ In 2021, India saw a 19% increase in new and relapsed tuberculosis (TB) patients as compared to 2020.

- ✓ In 2019-2021, a higher prevalence of pulmonary TB was found in older age groups, including males, malnourished, smokers, alcoholics and known diabetics.
- ✓ With 28% of cases, India was among the eight countries accounting for more than two-thirds (or 68.3%) of the total TB patients' count, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said
- ✓ India aims to eliminate TB by 2025, five years ahead of the global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 2030.
- ✓ World Tuberculosis Day is observed annually on March 24 to raise awareness about the health, social, and economic consequences of the respiratory infection, tuberculosis

INTERNATIONAL

- **Utah – becomes the first U.S. state to require parental permission for anyone under 18 to use social media platforms as Instagram, TikTok and Facebook.**
- ✓ On March 23, Utah Governor Spencer Cox signed two laws intended to restrict social media use by minors and to make it easier to sue social media companies for damages.
- ✓ The new bill prohibits kids under 18 from using social media between the hours of 10. 30pm and 6. 30am
- ✓ The bills require all users to submit age verification before opening a social media account.
- ✓ Minors under the age of 18 seeking an exception would need permission from a parent.
- ✓ The bills come into effect from March 2024
- **The UK Space Agency and British jet engine and car major Rolls-Royce - are working on setting up a small nuclear-powered reactor on Moon**
- ✓ The reactor will be designed to serve as a long-term energy source for human bases that will be set up there for further exploration of the Earth's natural satellite.
- ✓ The UK Space Agency had recently announced £2. 9 million of new funding for the nuclear project, apart from the £249,000 funded by the agency in 2022
- ✓ The project seeks to deliver an initial demonstration of a British lunar modular nuclear reactor.
- ✓ With the new funding, Rolls-Royce hopes to have a demonstration model for a modular micro-reactor ready to deliver to the Moon by 2029.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **The Second G20 Framework Working Group (FWG) meeting under the Indian G20 Presidency - successfully concluded in Chennai on March 25.**



- ✓ The two-day meeting was co-chaired by Dr V Anantha Nageswaran, Chief Economic Adviser and Ms Clare Lombardelli, Chief Economic Adviser, UK Treasury.
- ✓ Around 87 delegates from G20 member countries, invitees, and international organizations attended the meeting.
- ✓ In addition, several International Organizations, including WBG, IMF, FAO, IEA, NGFS and OECD, made detailed technical presentations on various issues to inform the FWG outcomes.
- ✓ The agenda for the meeting involved discussions on the global economic outlook and risks with a particular emphasis placed on inflation, macroeconomic implications of food and energy insecurity, climate change, and transition policies.
- ✓ The Framework Working Group focuses on global macroeconomic issues and deliberates on how policy cooperation can be enhanced to achieve strong, sustainable, balanced, and inclusive growth

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- Asia's largest four-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope - was inaugurated recently at the Devasthal observatory in Uttarakhand



- ✓ The inauguration of the instrument was done by Union Science & Technology Minister Dr Jitendra Singh in the presence of Lt. Gen (Retd.) Gurmeet Singh, the Governor of Uttarakhand on March 21
- ✓ It is the largest aperture telescope and the first optical survey telescope of the country.
- ✓ The modernistic telescope has the ability to generate almost 10-15 Gigabytes of data.
- ✓ The telescope is situated at an altitude of 2450 metres at the observatory, which lies at the campus of Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES)
- ✓ ARIES is an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in Nainital, a popular tourist city in the state of Uttarakhand.
- ✓ According to ARIES, the four-metre telescope is set to explore the night skies, spotting celestial objects like asteroids and supernovae
- ✓ The International Liquid Mirror Telescope has a 4-meter-diameter rotating mirror made up of a thin layer of liquid mercury to collect and focus light
- ✓ It was collaboratively constructed by a team of researchers belonging from various prominent institutions across the globe, such as the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, York University, the Ulugh Beg Astronomical Institute of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, and Poland's Poznan Observatory.

DEFENCE

- **On March 24, the defence ministry - signed a Rs.3,000 crore contract for procurement of two integrated electronic warfare systems under 'Project Himshakti' for the Indian Army**



- ✓ The contract signed with defence PSU Bharat Electronics is under the “Buy Indian (indigenously designed, developed and manufactured)” category
- ✓ ‘Project Himshakti’ encourages participation of Indian Electronics and associated industries, including MSMEs, which are sub vendors of BEL.

- ✓ It aims to generate employment of approximately three lakh man-days over a period of two years.
- ✓ The project aims to develop indigenous capabilities making the country 'Aatmanirbhar', as per the Make-in-India initiative of the Government.
- **Indian Navy aircraft P8I – is currently participating in the third edition of Exercise Sea Dragon 23 at Guam, United States**



- ✓ Exercise Sea Dragon 23 is a coordinated multi-lateral annual, multinational anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercise
- ✓ The ASW exercise is conducted by the US Navy from March 15th to 30th, focusing on coordinated anti-submarine warfare amongst participating nations.
- ✓ India, the USA, Japan, Canada, and South Korea are regular participants in the exercise, which was launched in 2014
- ✓ The exercise involves more than 270 hours of in-flight training and activities ranging from tracking simulated targets to tracking a US Navy submarine.
- ✓ Sea Dragon 23 will also test the capabilities of the aircraft participating to track simulated and live underwater targets and is highly aimed to share mutual expertise.
- ✓ During the exercise, pilots and flight officers will discuss strategies and tactics in training sessions
- ✓ The exercise will culminate with awarding the Dragon Belt Award for the country scoring the highest points.

AWARDS

- **Argentine-American mathematician Luis Caffarelli – won this year's Abel Prize for his contribution in the field of Mathematics**
- ✓ Caffarelli was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, making him the first Abel laureate from South America
- ✓ Currently, he is a professor at the University of Texas, Austin.



- ✓ Cifarelli has been one of the leading figures in the study of partial differential equations for over five decades.
- ✓ He was awarded Abel prize “for his seminal contributions to regularity theory for nonlinear partial differential equations including free-boundary problems and the Monge-Ampère equation”
- ✓ First awarded in 2003, the Abel prize “recognises pioneering scientific achievements in mathematics”.
- ✓ It is named after Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel (1802-29), who in his short life made pioneering contributions in a multitude of fields.
- ✓ It is often considered to be an equivalent of the Nobel prize – which does not have a category for mathematics – and has been modelled as such.
- ✓ The prize includes a monetary award of 7.5 million kroner (roughly \$ 720,000) and a glass plaque designed by Norwegian artist Henrik Haugan.
- ✓ It is awarded by The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

SPORTS

- **India's Nitu Ghanghas - defeated Mongolia's Lutsaikhan Altantsetseg in the finals to win the gold medal in the 48kg category of the IBA Women's Boxing World Championship 2023.**



- ✓ She defeated the two-time Asian Championships bronze medallist Lutsaikhana Altantsetseg 5-0 after a unanimous decision to win India's first gold in the ongoing tournament.
 - ✓ Nitu became only the sixth Indian boxer, male or female, to become a world champion after Mary Kom (2002, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, and 2018), Sarita Devi (2006), Jenny RL (2006), Lekha KC (2006), Nikhat Zareen (2022)
 - ✓ Two-time World Youth champion Nitu was playing her maiden final at the World Championships
 - ✓ The 22-year-old Indian, who is a 2022 Commonwealth Games champion, was competing in her second World Championships
 - ✓ **Later in the day, three-time Asian medallist Saweety Boora defeated 2018 World Champion Wang Lina of China in the 81kg final via a split verdict to win the country's second gold medal**
 - ✓ Saweety had settled for a silver in 2014, when she defeated top international boxers to reach the finals of World Championship
 - ✓ On the final day of the World Boxing Championships on March 26, last year World champion Nikhat Zareen and 2021 Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Lovlina Borgohain will be in action in the summit clash.
 - ✓ If Lovlina and Nikhat are able to win gold medals, it will match India's best ever performance in the tournament's history.
 - ✓ The country had won four golds in the 2006 edition, which also took place in Delhi.
- **Indian pistol shooter, Manu Bhaker - clinched a bronze medal in the women's 25m pistol event of the ISSF Rifle/Pistol World Cup 2023 at the Madhya Pradesh State Shooting Academy in Bhopal on March 25**



- ✓ Manu Bhaker, a 2018 Youth Olympic Games gold medallist, finished third behind the gold medal winner World No. 2 Doreen Vennekamp of Germany and 15-year-old Ziyue Du of China, who settled for silver.
- ✓ Earlier, India's Rudranksh Patil won the country's fifth medal - a bronze - in the 10m Air Rifle event on March 25

- ✓ This is Rudraksh's second medal in this World Cup after winning a bronze medal in the mixed event a day earlier, in association with his partner Narmada Raju.
- ✓ India now have a total of six medals at the tournament - one gold, one silver and four bronze – and is placed second in the medals tally
- ✓ Sarabjot Singh claimed India's solitary gold in the tournament so far in the men's 10m air pistol on March 22.
- ✓ China leads the medals tally with six gold medals, two silver and two bronze.
- ✓ Germany is third with one gold and one silver each while Hungary is fourth with two silver medals

RANKINGS

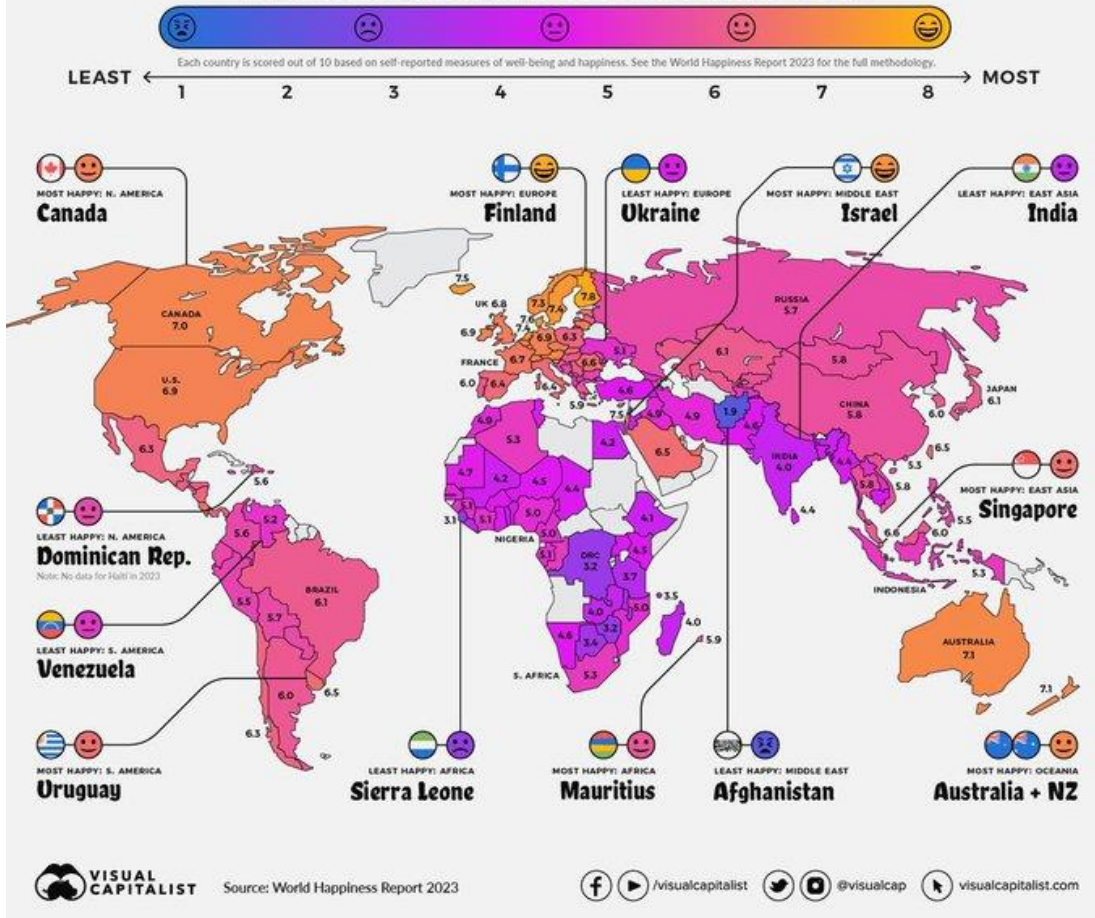
- **Finland - has maintained its position as the world's happiest country for the sixth consecutive year, according to the 10th edition of World Happiness Report published recently on March 20.**



- ✓ Denmark is ranked in second place followed by Iceland.
- ✓ Israel occupied fourth position, up five spots from last year, followed by Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Luxembourg and New Zealand to complete the Top 10 countries
- ✓ India ranked 125th in the World Happiness Report 2023, as against 136th spot on the list last year
- ✓ However, the country is still behind close neighbours like Sri Lanka (112), Pakistan (108) and Nepal (78).

Global Happiness Index 2023

THE MOST & LEAST HAPPY COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD



- ✓ At the very bottom of the list is Afghanistan at the 137th spot.
 - ✓ Other countries at the bottom of the list include Lebanon, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of Congo, etc.
- ✓ Released on International day of Happiness, observed on March 20, the report ranks global happiness basis survey data from people in over 150 countries.
- ✓ The report is published by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network
- ✓ It ranks countries on happiness which is, further, based on three preceding years' data of their average life evaluations.
- ✓ The ranking uses six key factors to measure happiness — social support, income, health, freedom, generosity, and absence of corruption.

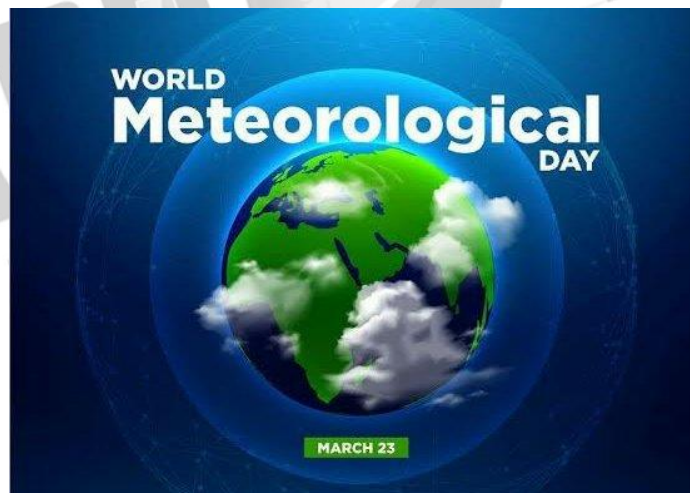
INTERNATIONAL/NATIONAL DAY

- **Martyrs' Day (Shaheed Diwas) – March 23**
- ✓ The Day is observed every year in honour of the valour and commitment of those who sacrificed their lives for the country.



- ✓ On this day, freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar were hanged to death at the Lahore Central Jail in Lahore by the British rulers of India in 1931
- ✓ The trio was found guilty of killing deputy police superintendent JP Saunders in 1928, to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.
- ✓ Besides March 23, the day Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated, January 30, is also marked as Shaheed Diwas.

➤ **World Meteorological Day – March 23**



- ✓ The Day is observed every year to highlight the importance of individual role and actions to be taken in preserving Earth's atmosphere
- ✓ World Meteorological Day is celebrated annually to mark the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which was founded on March 23, 1950.
- ✓ Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, WMO became a United Nations (UN) specialised agency in 1951
- ✓ The first World Meteorological Day was celebrated on March 23, 1961.
- ✓ The intergovernmental organisation currently has 193 countries as its member states.
- ✓ Theme 2023 – 'The Future of Weather, Climate and Water across Generations'

- ✓ The Nobel Peace Prize 2007 was awarded jointly to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was co-sponsored by the WMO, and Al Gore, former Vice-President of the USA.
- ✓ Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohapatra is the Permanent Representative from India at the WMO.
- ✓ He is the Director General of Meteorology at the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).

➤ **World Water Day – March 22**



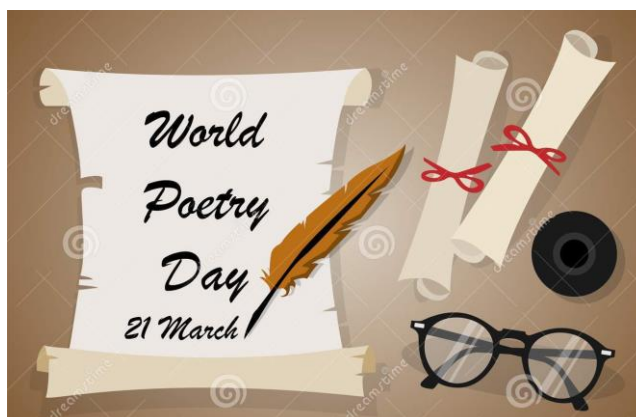
- ✓ The day is observed every year to raise awareness about the importance of water and educate people to conserve it.
- ✓ The day raises awareness that about more than 2 billion people are living without access to safe water.
- ✓ United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 6 aims to ensure safe water and sanitation for all by 2030.
- ✓ Theme 2023 – 'Accelerating Change'.
- ✓ The UN 2023 Water Conference was held from March 22 to 24 in New York, marking the first summit on water in 50 years
- ✓ The conference resolved to bring greater focus on water, which is a critical foundation for many of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals
- ✓ According to the World Meteorological Organization, around 3.6 billion people struggle to get enough water to meet their needs for at least one month every year
- ✓ World Water Day was officially established by a resolution approved at the United Nations General Assembly conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992
- ✓ In the same year, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution by which March 22 was declared World Day for Water
- ✓ The first ever World Water Day was observed in the year 1993

➤ International Day of Forests - March 21



- ✓ The day is observed annually to raise awareness the importance and significance of forests and raise awareness about forest restoration
- ✓ In 1971, World Forestry Day was established at the 23rd General Assembly of the European Confederation of Agriculture.
- ✓ The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed March 21 as the International Day of Forests in the year 2012
- ✓ Later, the United Nations General Assembly united the two international commemorations i.e. World Forestry Day and International Day of Forests, and decides to celebrate on March 21 every year
- ✓ According to the UN, forests are home to about 80% of terrestrial biodiversity across the world, with more than 60,000 tree species.
- ✓ According to a UN estimate, more than 1.6 billion people are directly dependent on forests for food, medicines, shelter, energy, shelter, income etc.
- ✓ The United Nations Forum on Forests and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) organise tree planting campaigns in collaboration with governments.
- ✓ Theme 2023 - 'Forests and health.'

➤ World Poetry Day – March 21



- ✓ The day is observed every year to honour the poets, revive oral traditions of poetry recitals, and promote the reading, writing, and teaching of poetry
 - ✓ UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has decided to observe World Poetry Day at the 30th General Conference in Paris in 1999
 - ✓ As per UNESCO's documents, it was the Moroccan National Commission, which requested that an International Poetry day be declared.
- **World Down Syndrome Day – March 21**



- ✓ The Day is observed every year to increase awareness about the hereditary disorder, Down Syndrome
- ✓ The UN General Assembly in 2011 adopted a resolution to observe World Down Syndrome Day annually.
- ✓ The first ever World Down Syndrome Day was celebrated in 2012
- ✓ Theme 2023 – 'With Us Not For Us'
- ✓ According to the United Nations, the global incidence of Down Syndrome is estimated to be between 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 1,100 live births
- ✓ Down syndrome, a genetic condition, was first described by British physician John Langdon Haydon Down in the year 1862
- ✓ However, it was only in 1959, the French physician Jérôme Lejeune identified Down syndrome as a chromosomal condition
- ✓ In Down syndrome, a person is born with an extra chromosome (chromosome 21) due to faulty cell division, which can cause physical and mental challenges in the infant.
- ✓ A child with Down syndrome is usually shorter than the rest, with flattened face, slender neck, protruding tongue, muscle tone issues etc.
- ✓ Each year, approximately 3,000 to 5,000 children are born with this chromosome disorder, according to United Nations.

