Chapter- 4

A Truly Beautiful Mind

STUDY NOTES

- The chapter is a biographical account of Nobel Laureate and "scientific genius" Albert Einstein.
- "A quiet and modest life brings more joy than a pursuit of success bound with constant unrest," the note, which was written while the physicist was on a lecture tour in Tokyo.
- Albert Einstein was born on 14 March 1879 in the Germany city of Ulm. His mother thought he was a freak because his head seemed unusually large. He didn't speak until the age of two-and-a-half. When he finally started speaking, he uttered everything twice.
- He loved mechanical toys and preferred being by himself. The headmaster of Einstein's school told his father that no matter what career Einstein would choose, he'd never be successful.
- He played the violin and later became a gifted amateur violinist. He went to high school in Munich and left the school at the age of 15 because of feeling stifled.
- His parents had moved to Milan and left him in Munich with relatives. He got to continue his education in the city, much more liberal than Munich. He was interested in Physics and was highly gifted in mathematics. He studied at a university in Zurich.
- Albert fell in love with Mileva Maric whom he thought was a "clever creature."
- At the age of 21, he was a university graduate but unemployed. He worked as a teaching assistant and gave private lessons. He secured a job in 1902, as a technical expert in Bern. In 1905, one of the famous papers was Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, according to which time and distance are not absolute.

- He also derived world's most famous formula that describes the relationship between mass and energy; $E = mc^2$.
- Einstein wanted to marry Mileva after finishing his studies but his mother did not approve of it as she thought Mileva was too old for him and was "a book", just like he was. They finally got married in January 1903 and had two sons. Unfortunately, they divorced in the year 1919. Then, Einstein married his cousin Elsa, the same year.
- In 1915, he had published his General Theory of Relativity. An eclipse of the sun in 1919, proved that it was accurate. He had correctly calculated the extent to which the light from fixed stars would be deflected through the sun's gravitational field in advance. His work was considered scientific revolution.
- Albert moved to U.S. in 1933, when the Nazis came to power in Germany. There was an expectation that Nazis could build and use an atomic bomb. He wrote a letter to American President on 2 August 1939, warning him about the happenings and the bombs the Nazis had planned to use. He wrote a public missive to the UN, proposing the formation of a world government but had no impact. He died in 1955 at the age of 76. He was known and celebrated as a visionary and world citizen as much as a scientific genius.