

Daily Defence Current Affairs

20 March 2025

International Day of Happiness 2026

- International Day of Happiness is celebrated globally on **March 20**. And this day as recognized by the United Nations to promote happiness and well-being as universal human goals.
- The United Nations General Assembly declared the March 20 as the International Day of Happiness through Resolution 66/281 in 2012.
- Bhutan played the key role to initiate the concept behind International Day of Happiness. Since the 1970s the country has focused on Gross National Happiness (GNH) instead of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a measure of progress.



Finland Tops World Happiness Report 2026

- The World Happiness Report 2026 has once again ranked the Finland as the happiest country in the world. World Happiness Report 2026 highlights the social media's negative impact on the youth's well-being.

- This report highlights the strong well being in Nordic nations and also points to declining happiness levels in parts of Western Europe and the Americas. The World Happiness Report 2026 is published by the Wellbeing Research Centre.
- **Top 10 Happiest Countries**
- Finland
- Iceland
- Denmark
- Costa Rica
- Sweden
- Norway
- Netherlands
- Israel
- Luxembourg
- Switzerland
- The World Happiness Report 2026 is published by the Wellbeing Research Centre.
- And this year it highlights which is the growing global concern about social media is negatively impacting youth happiness, especially in Western countries.
- Major findings are like,
- Increased screen time reduces well being
- Negative impact is higher among teenagers and young adults
- Teenage girls are particularly affected
- Social comparison and online pressure contribute to stress
- The World Happiness Report 2026 social media impact showed the worrying decline in well-being among young people under 25.
- Countries affected are,
- United States

- Canada
- Australia
- New Zealand
- India is ranked at the **116th** with a life evaluation score of around the 4.536.
- India position in ranking is in the lower half of the global rankings and also indicating challenges in factors such as social support, income levels, corruption and freedom to make life choices.
- **India's Neighbouring Countries – Rankings**
- China – Rank 65 (6.074)
- Nepal – Rank 99 (5.147)
- Pakistan – Rank 104 (4.868)
- Sri Lanka – Rank 134 (4.013)
- Bangladesh – Rank 127 (4.319)
- **Key factors considered for the ranking.**
- GDP per capita
- Healthy life expectancy
- Social support (having someone to rely on)
- Freedom to make life choices
- Generosity and trust
- Perception of corruption



Nepal's First Transgender Woman MP

- Bhumika Shrestha a 37 year old activist and became the Nepal's first transgender woman lawmaker on March 16, 2026. Her election to parliament marks the major milestone in the journey toward inclusivity and representation in South Asia.
- Bhumika Shrestha a well known LGBTQ rights activist and she has long been associated with advocacy for sexual minorities in Nepal. Her election in Nepal's first transgender woman MP represented the years of persistent activism and social struggle of her for the recognition and equal rights.



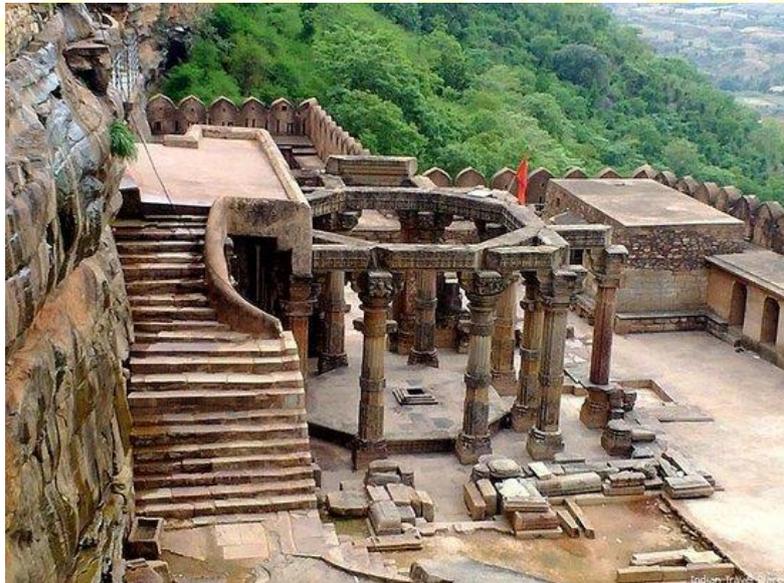
RELIEF Scheme 2026

- Amid rising tensions in West Asia and disruptions near the Strait of Hormuz India has launched the RELIEF Scheme 2026. The scheme to protect exporters from rising freight costs, insurance risks and supply chain delays.
- The scheme was announced on March 19 2026 and the scheme comes in response to rising logistics costs and risks due to tensions around the Strait of Hormuz. Under the Export Promotion Mission this time bound intervention aims to protect exporters from freight hikes, insurance costs and war like certainty.
- The RELIEF scheme 2026 under Export Promotion Mission is designed as the targeted response to global supply chain disruptions and it will affecting Indian exports. Due to rising geopolitical tensions in West Asia important shipping routes have become longer and more expensive and also impacting exporters significantly.
- The scheme was introduced after disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz in West Asia.
- And the Strait of Hormuz surrounding regions caused major challenges in maritime trade.
- These disruptions have led to vessel diversions, congestion at several ports and higher operational risks for exporters.
- The ECGC (Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd.) plays a central role to implement the scheme.
- It also acts as the nodal agency responsible for verification, claim processing and fund disbursement.



GSI Declared Kalinjar Fort a Geo-Heritage Site

- National geo Heritage Site designation conferred to Kalinjar fort Hill In Banda and it was declared by the Geological Survey of India (GSI). This recognition will bring attention to one of India's most unique geological formations.
- The move is not just about science but it is about history, tourism and local growth. The site records billions of years of Earth's evolution and making it both rare and valuable.
- Geo Heritage Site declaration by GSI to Fort will highlights the importance of preserving rare geological landmarks. It is located in Banda district of Uttar Pradesh and this now officially recognized for its scientific and natural value.
- This heritage structure is famous for a rare geological feature known as the Eparchaeon Unconformity. This formation represents a massive time gap in Earth's geological history and also making it extremely valuable for scientific study.
- A National Geo-Heritage Site is a location recognized for its unique geological features and scientific importance. These sites helps to researchers to study Earth's history and natural processes.



Ugadi 2026

- Ugadi 2026 will be celebrated on Thursday March 19 and this day is marking the beginning of the Telugu New Year. This important festival is widely celebrated in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana with traditional rituals and festive celebrations.

- The Ugadi symbolizes a fresh start, spiritual renewal and the arrival of spring. As per the Hindu calendar it falls on the first day of the Chaitra month and also marks the start of **Shaka Samvat**.
- The word Ugadi is derived from Sanskrit words 'Yuga' (age) and 'Adi' (beginning) and it means the start of a new era.
- It is believed that Lord Brahma has created the universe on this day and also making it spiritually significant.



Gudi Padwa 2026

- Gudi Padwa 2026 will be celebrated on the March 19, 2026. This day is marking the beginning of the Marathi New Year. This festival is widely celebrated in Maharashtra and Goa with great enthusiasm and devotion.
- This day falls on the Pratipada Tithi of Shukla Paksha in the month of Chaitra according to the Hindu lunisolar calendar. This festival symbolizes the new beginnings, prosperity and victory of good over evil.



REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. International Day of Happiness is celebrated on which date?

- A. March 15
- B. March 18
- C. March 20
- D. April 1

Answer: C. March 20

2. Which organization declared International Day of Happiness in 2012?

- A. World Bank
- B. United Nations General Assembly
- C. UNESCO
- D. IMF

Answer: B. United Nations General Assembly

3. Which country introduced the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH)?

- A. India
- B. Nepal

- C. Bhutan
- D. Sri Lanka

Answer: C. Bhutan

4. Which country topped the World Happiness Report 2026?

- A. Denmark
- B. Iceland
- C. Norway
- D. Finland

Answer: D. Finland

5. Which factor is highlighted as negatively impacting youth happiness?

- A. Education
- B. Sports
- C. Social media usage
- D. Travel

Answer: C. Social media usage

6. What is India's rank in the World Happiness Report 2026?

- A. 95
- B. 102
- C. 110
- D. 116

Answer: D. 116

7. Who became Nepal's first transgender woman Member of Parliament in 2026?

- A. Sunita Rana
- B. Anjali Lama
- C. Bhumika Shrestha
- D. Ritu Singh

Answer: C. Bhumika Shrestha

8. The RELIEF Scheme 2026 was launched due to tensions near which location?

- A. Red Sea
- B. South China Sea
- C. Strait of Hormuz
- D. Mediterranean Sea

Answer: C. Strait of Hormuz

9. Which organization declared Kalinjar Fort as a Geo-Heritage Site?

- A. Archaeological Survey of India
- B. UNESCO
- C. Ministry of Tourism
- D. Geological Survey of India

Answer: D. Geological Survey of India

10. Ugadi festival marks the New Year of which region?

- A. Punjab
- B. Maharashtra
- C. Gujarat
- D. Southern states (Telugu region)

Answer: D. Southern states (Telugu region)