International Women's Day, 2026

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

Recently, the President of India graced the national-level program to celebrate International Women's Day 2026 at Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi.

- International Women's Day is ***observed globally on 8 March.***
- **Aim –** To honor the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women while advocating for gender equality.
- **Origin -** The day grew out of early 20th -century labor movements in North America and Europe. The first National Woman's Day was observed in the US in 1909.
- **International Recognition** - Clara Zetkin proposed an international day at the 1910 International Socialist Women's Conference.
- It was first observed internationally in 1911 in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland.

*In 2026, the world marks the **115th anniversary** of its first international observance in 1911.*

- **The 8 March Date** - This date became fixed following a 1917 strike by Russian women for "bread and peace," which eventually led to women gaining the right to vote in Russia.
- **UN Officialization** - The United Nations officially recognized the holiday in **1977**.
- **Key Symbols & Observance – Colours** - **Purple** (justice and dignity), **Green** (hope), and **White** (purity/solidarity) are the traditional colours of IWD.
- **Global Impact** - It is an official public holiday in many countries, including Afghanistan, China (for women), Russia, and Uganda.
- **Call to Action** - Beyond celebration, the day highlights that at current rates, full gender parity is not expected for another **132 years** (roughly

five generations).

Key Highlights, 2026

- **Global level -** For 2026, 2 major global campaigns are driving the conversation
  - **UN Theme: "Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls"** – This theme emphasizes that legal rights are insufficient without active justice and structural accountability to close legal gaps worldwide.
  - **IWD Campaign Theme: "Give to Gain"** – These focuses on the power of reciprocity and collective action, suggesting that when society gives women equal support and opportunities, the entire world gains from their leadership.
- **India level**
  - **Organized by –** Ministry of Women and Child Development.
  - **Theme –** *"Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls."*
- **Major Events & Highlights - Shakti Walk (#SheLeadsBharat) -** A flagship event held along **Kartavya Path** (New Delhi) on March 8.
- It featured women from diverse sectors, including the armed forces, science, and grassroots leadership, symbolizing the "stride of the women of Bharat."
- **Political Milestone-** During the 2026 Budget Session (March 9), the government reportedly sent "informal feelers" to the Opposition regarding an amendment to the **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam** (106th Constitutional Amendment Act).
- The aim is to potentially decouple the **33% reservation** for women from the delimitation process to speed up its implementation.

Reference

PIB | President of India graces International Women's Day

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