

PRESS RELEASE

East of India Shows Higher Financial Realism and Stronger Preparedness in HDFC Life's Ready for Life Index

- While all of India shows a 26-point gap between perceived and actual financial readiness, the East region posts a narrower 20-point gap.
- The region leads in Emergency Preparedness and Health & Well-being, driven by faster fund accessibility, lower cost of living, preference for liquid investments and proactive focus on fitness.
- Term insurance ownership in East stands at par with national levels, but emotional security emerges as a stronger trigger for purchase.

Kolkata, 24th March, 2026: HDFC Life has released its region-specific insights for East of India, from its Ready for Life Index (RLI), revealing that East region demonstrates stronger financial realism and preparedness across key life-readiness pillars when compared with the national average.

The *Ready for Life Index 2025* is a proprietary research initiative by **HDFC Life**, conducted in partnership with **Ipsos India**. Based on **1,836 face-to-face interviews** with working men and women aged 25–55 years across metros, Tier 2, and Tier 3 cities, the study evaluates India's life readiness across four key pillars — Financial Planning, Emergency Preparedness, Health & Well-being, and Retirement Strategy.

The index aims to bridge the gap between perception and preparedness, encouraging a shift from short-term savings to structured, long-term financial planning.

Across India, the RLI shows a 26-point gap between perceived and actual readiness, but East records a significantly lower gap of 20-points, indicating a more realistic self-assessment and disciplined financial behaviour.

Robust Emergency Preparedness & Health and Well-being

The region shows the highest preparedness levels on two fronts: *Emergency Planning* and *Health & Well-being*.

- 53% of East region respondents have emergency funds that can sustain their lifestyle for over four months, compared with 41% at the national level.
- While only half of urban Indians claim they can access emergency funds within 48 hours, nearly three in four consumers in the East possessed the ability. The comparatively better capabilities to access emergency funds could be attributed to a relatively lower cost of living, a preference for liquid assets and prudent financial habits.
- Health consciousness in the region is also stronger. Respondents demonstrate greater participation in daily fitness routines and regular health check-ups, pushing the East region to the top on the pillar of *Health & Well-being*.

Greater Focus on Family, Stability, and Responsibility

While *children's education* remains the top savings priority, as is the case across the rest of the country, consumers in East region place relatively higher emphasis on *planning for exigencies* and *supporting ageing parents*. This indicates a more holistic view of financial responsibility.

- The region continues to favour traditional, risk-averse, and more liquid savings instruments, particularly fixed deposits and life insurance.

- Term insurance ownership in the East region stands at 24%, at par with the figures for the country, as revealed by the study.
- Interestingly, a rational mindset plays a stronger role in the region. While half the respondents cite *peace of mind* or *emotional security* as their primary trigger for purchasing term insurance, 2 in 5 cite *family security*.
- Barriers mirror the general perceptions across the nation. As in the rest of the country, *lack of awareness* and perceived *wastage of premium* if one outlives the policy term, weigh heavily on consumers' minds here, too.

Leading in Retirement Planning Despite Gaps

The East region shows significantly higher action in retirement planning, with 68% respondents having initiated some form of retirement saving, compared with just **55%** nationally. However, expectations about the ideal corpus remain conservative.

- Most respondents who have started planning for retirement, are of the opinion that a corpus of ₹50 lakhs – ₹1 crore would last about 17 years, which could prove to be a gross underestimation considering inflation and increasing lifestyle costs.
- Dependence on family remains high across India, and East mirrors this trend – with about two in three respondents anticipating full or partial financial support from family post-retirement.

Vineet Arora – Executive Director & Chief Business Officer, HDFC Life, elaborated more on the insights for the Eastern sector, “East of India seems relatively better prepared and more grounded in assessing its financial readiness. Their discipline in emergency planning and health consciousness is an example worth emulating across the country. However, there is a gap noticed in terms of retirement corpus expectations and awareness of protection products. This also highlights the importance of continuous and consistent financial education. Our aim through this study is to enable individuals recognise the difference between confidence and true preparedness, and to empower them to build long-term financial security with the right tools and guidance.”

About HDFC Life

Established in 2000, HDFC Life is a leading, listed, long-term life insurance solutions provider in India, offering a range of individual and group insurance solutions that meet various customer needs such as Protection, Pension, Savings, Investment, Annuity and Health.

The Company has over 70 products (individual and group products), including optional riders in its portfolio, catering to a diverse range of customer needs. HDFC Life continues to benefit from its increased presence across the country, having a wide reach with branches and additional distribution touch-points through several new tie-ups and partnerships.

The count of distribution partnerships is over 500, comprising banks, NBFCs, MFIs, SFBs, brokers, new ecosystem, partners amongst others. The Company has a strong base of financial consultants. For more information, please visit www.hdfclife.com. You may also connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.