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## INDIA UPDATE

### Highlights of this week

#### Andhra Pradesh

- AP IT Minister Nara Lokesh sought ₹5,684 crore for education infrastructure and proposed a ministers' conclave in Andhra Pradesh. He also urged funding for 1,514 schools under the PM Sri scheme and met key Union ministers and Google Cloud MD for sectoral reforms.
- Saraswathi Malluvalasa, a sustainability champion from Andhra Pradesh, was featured at 'Sustaina India 2025' in New Delhi, she participated in the exhibition With Each Seed We Sing alongside the India Art Fair.

#### Delhi

- The BJP secured a landslide victory in Delhi, winning 48 of 70 seats, ending AAP's dominance. The win was driven by booth-level management, RSS support, and a campaign highlighting corruption allegations against Kejriwal and his ministers.

#### Goa

- Goa CM Pramod Sawant admitted 24x7 water supply is unfeasible, aiming for 4-hour daily supply by 2026 amid infrastructure upgrades. Meanwhile, MLA Michael Lobo urged halting new construction in Calangute, where locals receive water only for 30 minutes every two days.
- CM Pramod Sawant informed the Goa Legislative Assembly that the government had borrowed only Rs 1,500 crore out of its Rs 4,500 crore borrowing limit, with additional funds of Rs 1,485 crore received from the Centre. He also highlighted that the fiscal deficit remains under 3% of the GSDP.

#### Gujarat

- Waaree Energies Limited has started commercial manufacturing at its solar cell facility in Chikhli, Gujarat, with an initial capacity of 1.4GW. The first phase focuses on monocrystalline PERC cells, and the second phase will boost total capacity to 5.4GW. This includes 4GW of high-efficiency TOPCon solar cells.

#### Haryana

- Haryana's Chief Secretary, Vivek Joshi, met with CBC Chairman Adil Zainulbhai to discuss 'Mission Karamyogi Haryana,' focusing on training government employees. The initiative aims to enhance skills, including AI, with HIPA planning to train 3.17 lakh employees and provide Hindi modules.
- Haryana government has unveiled a Rs 564-crore plan under its Clean Air programme to help industries transition to cleaner fuels. The plan includes financial support for shifting 1,000 biomass boilers to gas and 2,400 industrial units to less-polluting generators.

#### Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Pradesh earned an additional ₹2,200 crore in revenue through systematic reforms in excise, tourism, power, and mining, despite financial constraints, said CM Sukhu. He credited these reforms for the encouraging results.
- Himachal Pradesh's higher reaches experienced light to moderate snowfall, ending a dry spell on Wednesday. Key locations like Manali, Kullu, and Shimla districts received significant snowfall, with Kothi near Manali recording 33 cm.

#### Karnataka

- Under the Shramik Sanjeevini Yojana, 18,379 construction workers in Dharwad district were treated last year. The mobile treatment units offer free healthcare at construction sites, workers' colonies, and their homes.
- Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah has ordered the formation of a committee to study the rising sudden deaths among youth, focusing on heart attacks and brain-related ailments. The committee will investigate potential links to Covid-19 and vaccine side effects, following public concerns.

### Upcoming News/Events

#### Andhra Pradesh

- VMRDA will create base and land use maps for newly merged mandals across 2,456 sq km to aid master planning. The maps will be developed using DGPS and topographic surveys for accurate zoning and development plans.
- The JAC of tribal groups and political parties will observe a 48-hour "Manyam Bandh" on Feb 11-12. The protest opposes AP Speaker Ch Ayyanna Patrudu's proposal to amend the 1/70 Act for private tourism investments in tribal areas.

#### Delhi

- Delhi residents may benefit from Uttar Pradesh's new excise policy, which merges beer and foreign liquor outlets while promoting vineyards and microbreweries. With limited liquor options since Delhi's 2021-22 policy rollback, UP could offer buyers a closer alternative to Gurugram.

#### Goa

- Panaji Smart City officials plan to shut key roads to complete 3.5km of pending work before the March 31 deadline. General Bernardo Guedes Road and two other market-area roads will close for 20 days, contingent on the completion of sewerage work.
- CM Pramod Sawant assured the Legislative Assembly that no coal hub will be set up at Goa's new proposed railway stations. Concerns over potential coal handling at Mayem, Neura, and Sarzora were raised, with opposition urging discussions to address environmental and community impact.

#### Gujarat

- Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel announced a five-member committee, led by retired SC judge Ranjana Desai, to draft the state's Uniform Civil Code (UCC) within 45 days. The government will decide based on the committee's recommendations.
- Rajkot airport has been approved by the customs department to clear cargo and baggage, marking the first step toward international flights. The immigration setup is expected soon, and passenger operations will shift to the new terminal.

#### Haryana

- The Union environment ministry is launching the 'Aravali Green Wall' project to conserve biodiversity by creating a 5-10km buffer zone in key broken mountain areas. Haryana has collaborated with experts from Delhi, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and the state for this initiative.
- The election to 33 municipal bodies in Haryana, including eight municipal corporations, is scheduled for March 2. The counting of votes will take place on March 12, with by-elections for mayoral posts and municipal committee members held simultaneously.

#### Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu flagged off 50 meritorious government school students for an 11-day academic tour to Cambodia and Singapore. The initiative aims to provide global learning experiences, with plans to expand to 100 students, including orphans, next year.
- Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla has approved the Bill denying benefits to contractual employees from the date of joining, granting them benefits only after regularization. The Bill was passed in December 2024.

#### Karnataka

- Bengaluru Metro will implement a fare hike starting February 9, with the maximum fare increased to ₹90. The minimum fare will remain at ₹10 for journeys up to 2 kilometers. Smart card users will receive a 5% discount, with further reductions on weekends and non-peak hours.
- The BBMP is seeking public feedback on the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill, aiming for decentralized, efficient governance. Citizens can participate in zonal discussions organized by the Karnataka Legislative Assembly Joint Scrutiny Committee.

## INDIA UPDATE

## Highlights of this week

## Madhya Pradesh

- The Supreme Court summoned Madhya Pradesh's law secretary, criticizing excessive delays in state appeals. A bench highlighted the state's repeated late filings, including a 656-day delay in a high court appeal and an additional 177-day delay in its Supreme Court challenge.
- Over 2 lakh students in Indore faced APAAR ID registration issues due to Aadhaar mismatches. Authorities have launched special Aadhaar correction camps to rectify errors in names, birth dates, and addresses for smooth processing.

## Mumbai

- BMC has set a ₹74,427 crore budget for 2025-26, marking a 14.19% increase over the previous year. The funds will prioritize infrastructure, urban development, and improved civic amenities across Mumbai.
- Mumbai reported its first suspected Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) case on February 7, 2025, with a 64-year-old Andheri resident hospitalized. The total number of suspected GBS cases in Maharashtra have now reached 180.

## Pune

- The Pune Division Railway's ticket-checking drive over the last ten months resulted in ₹15.86 crore in fines from 2.93 lakh ticketless passengers. The campaign led to a decrease in ticketless travel but still highlighted persistent violations, especially in reserved sleeper coaches and excess luggage cases.
- The Maharashtra government has allocated ₹500 crore to set up a water purification plant for six villages affected by the Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) outbreak. This initiative aims to provide clean water, improving health conditions and curbing GBS spread in the region.

## Punjab

- Punjab has the highest percentage of beneficiaries opting out of the Atal Pension Yojana, which aims to provide financial security to vulnerable workers in the unorganized sector. About 60 lakh workers in the state are registered on the e-Shram portal.
- Ludhiana faces a shortage of principals in government-run senior secondary schools, with 38% of schools lacking leadership. The delay in filling vacancies is due to ongoing court proceedings, affecting academic and administrative operations.

## Rajasthan

- RPSC has released the district information for the Rajasthan Librarian exam, which candidates can download using their application number and date of birth. The exam is scheduled for February 16, 2025, in two shifts, with negative markings for incorrect answers.

## Tamil Nadu

- All preparations are in place for the Erode East byelection, with electronic voting machines moved to polling stations. The election follows the death of Congress MLA EVKS Elangovan, and 46 candidates, including DMK's VC Chandhirakumar and Naam Tamilar Katchi's MK Seethalakshmi, are contesting.
- Tangedco faces a shortage of 39,393 field staff, including over 25,500 field assistants, 13,200 wiremen, and 626 gangmen, across 12 distribution circles in Tamil Nadu.

## Telangana

- Telangana CM Revanth Reddy vowed to use caste survey results to benefit backward classes. Despite the opposition's doubts, the assembly endorsed the survey and urged the Union government to conduct a national survey.

## Uttar Pradesh

- The trial run of the Namo Bharat train began on a six-kilometer stretch between Meerut South and Shatabdi Nagar. Once operational, it will provide quick connectivity between New Ashok Nagar and Shatabdi Nagar, reducing traffic on the Delhi-Meerut road.
- The Centre allocated ₹19,858 crore for Uttar Pradesh's railway development in 2025-26, marking a significant boost in infrastructure. ₹1.04 lakh crore investment is advancing double-line expansions, station upgrades, and modern Vande Bharat train services.

## Upcoming News/Events

## Madhya Pradesh

- CM Mohan Yadav announced plans to request the Centre to declare the Tapti Basin Mega Recharge Project a national water project. MP and Maharashtra are set to sign an agreement soon, aiming to optimize water use for irrigation, industry, and drinking purposes.
- CM Mohan Yadav will release five cheetahs into Kuno National Park. This follows the birth of two cubs by cheetah Veera, bringing new hope to India's cheetah reintroduction program.

## Mumbai

- BMC will open seven new bridges by March 2025 to ease congestion at key traffic points, including Bandra-Dharavi and Vikhroli ROB. These bridges will improve east-west connectivity and streamline vehicular movement across Mumbai.
- Mumbai suburban railway will soon get new-design trains with better acceleration, ventilation, and suspension to ease overcrowding. The time gap between trains will be reduced from 180 to 120 seconds for improved frequency.

## Pune

- Pune's civic administration and MSRTC have urged Maha Metro to speed up pending work at Swargate Chowk. Despite the underground Metro station opening in October 2024, incomplete entry/exit points and a subway continue to worsen traffic congestion, especially during rush hours.
- The exit route at Panvel towards Mumbai on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway will remain closed for six months starting February 11 due to construction at Kalamboli Circle. Alternative routes have been provided to prevent congestion, with diversions through Konfata, Palspe Circle, and National Highway 48.

## Punjab

- The Supreme Court has asked CAQM to meet with officials from Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh on plans for crop diversification and residue management. Proposed solutions include residue management strategies and awareness programs.
- The Punjab government has launched a WhatsApp helpline (90-56-009-884) for NRIs to report grievances. Complaints will be forwarded to the relevant government departments and the NRI wing of the Punjab Police for prompt action.

## Rajasthan

- RBSE will implement daily video surveillance and CCTV monitoring at sensitive exam centers for the Class 10 and 12 board exams starting March 6. The exam's question paper opening will also be videographed to ensure security and confidentiality.

## Tamil Nadu

- Coimbatore City Corporation has proposed an additional animal birth control center near Vellakinaru with a Rs 2 crore funding request. The center aims to sterilize 50 dogs daily and address the stray dog issue in all corporation zones.
- Water supply will be disrupted in 21 wards of Madurai on Feb 12 and 13 due to pipeline replacement for a new cement channel project at Sellur. The ₹11 crore project aims to improve flood management and water flow by diverting surplus water from Sellur tank to the Vaigai River.

## Telangana

- Telangana's 2025-26 Budget will be presented in March, prioritizing local body elections. This decision marks a return to the traditional schedule, moving away from the recent February presentations aligned with the Union Budget.

## Uttar Pradesh

- Relaxation of traffic diversion plans in Varanasi on Saturday, Feb 8, caused severe congestion, particularly near Kashi Vishwanath Dham. In response, officials reinforced strict traffic measures on Sunday, Feb 9, barring outstation vehicles from entering the city. These diversion plans will remain in effect until Feb 26.
- The Uttar Pradesh cabinet approved the new excise policy for 2025-26, introducing an e-lottery system for liquor shop allotment. The cabinet also set the state budget session to begin on February 18, 2025.

## GLOBAL UPDATE

### Highlights of this week

#### Africa

- Egypt, in coordination with Arab partners, rejected U.S. suggestions to displace Palestinians from Gaza, emphasizing support for a two-state solution. Arab nations criticized Trump's plan as a violation of international law and a threat to regional stability.
- Over 50 people were killed in an ambush near Gao, Mali, on Friday, with civilians and military casualties reported. Armed assailants, linked to Islamic State and Al Qaeda, targeted a convoy and its army escort in the region.

#### America

- Colombia's Environment Minister Susana Muhamad resigned from her post but will remain as president of COP16 on biodiversity. Her resignation follows opposition to the appointment of Armando Benedetti over allegations of violence and influence peddling.
- Mexico has received nearly 11,000 deported migrants from the U.S. since January 20, including 2,500 non-Mexicans. President Sheinbaum emphasized that repatriations are voluntary and accompanied by support to return home.

#### China

- China expressed regret over Panama's intention to exit the Belt and Road Initiative, urging the nation to reconsider its decision. The Chinese Foreign Ministry emphasized the move was not in Panama's best interests.
- Taiwan has sent officials to Washington to discuss potential U.S. tariffs on chips, with preparations in place if imposed. Taiwan's Economy Minister Kuo Jyh-huei confirmed the actions following Trump's threats to target imports.

#### Europe

- Ukraine's military downed 70 of 151 Russian drones in an overnight attack, with 74 others likely disrupted by electronic warfare. President Zelenskiy highlighted Russia's reliance on sanctions evasion and called for increased global efforts to limit its oil industry and support Ukraine's defense production.

#### Middle East

- Saudi Arabia has firmly rejected Israeli PM Netanyahu's remarks about displacing Palestinians, with Egypt and Jordan also condemning the idea. The kingdom emphasized the importance of Palestinian territory and its historical ties to the land.
- Lebanon formed a new government with Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, focusing on financial reforms and reconstruction, following U.S. intervention. The U.S. opposed Hezbollah's involvement, marking it as a "red line."

#### Pakistan

- Pakistan's LNG deal with Qatar allows renegotiation talks in 2024, but no decision has been made yet. The agreement, signed in 2016, includes a price renegotiation clause after 10 years.
- FIFA suspended the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) for not revising its constitution to ensure fair and democratic elections, barring the federation from international competitions until the necessary changes are made.

#### United Kingdom

- Britain's crackdown on illegal migration is denying support to thousands of modern slavery victims, despite the 2015 Modern Slavery Act. New 2023 rules are eroding protections and deterring victims from seeking help.

#### United States

- President Trump signed an executive order to cut U.S. aid to South Africa, citing disapproval of its land policy and genocide case against Israel. South Africa's foreign ministry criticized the order, calling it inaccurate and neglectful of its history.
- U.S. President Donald Trump attends the Super Bowl on Sunday, Feb 9, becoming the first sitting president to do so, despite his controversial history with the NFL and blending politics with sports.

### Upcoming News/Events

#### Africa

- The Sudanese army plans to form a technocratic wartime government after recapturing Khartoum. Army head Burhan stated the government would focus on completing military objectives and expelling rebel forces.
- Leaders at a summit of Eastern and Southern African blocs called for direct talks to resolve the crisis in Eastern Congo, where M23 rebels recently captured Goma. Despite a ceasefire, fighting continues as tensions rise over the conflict.

#### America

- Canada aims to strengthen economic ties with the EU and support global trade rules amid U.S. tariff threats, according to Trade Minister Mary Ng. This follows a successful 2017 trade agreement and continued cooperation on raw materials.
- Brazil's finance minister expects inflation to stay above 4.5% until June, despite the central bank's tightening measures. He also anticipates positive economic surprises, including stronger-than-expected GDP growth.

#### China

- China will scale back subsidies for renewable energy projects after a record surge in solar and wind installations, hitting its 2030 target early. The government plans market-driven changes to policy to encourage clean energy projects.
- Hong Kong plans to file a complaint with the WTO over the U.S. imposing 10% tariffs on its goods. This move comes as part of U.S. President Trump's broader tariff strategy targeting Chinese imports.

#### Europe

- Sweden's government plans to tighten gun laws following the deadly mass shooting at Orebro's Campus Risbergska, where the attacker used licensed firearms. The vetting process for gun ownership will be strengthened, and security in schools will be increased.

#### Middle East

- An Israeli delegation has arrived in Qatar for further Gaza truce talks, with indirect negotiations set to focus on technical issues. The discussions will not cover larger matters like Gaza's post-war administration.
- Egypt will host an emergency Arab summit on 27 February to address "serious" developments for Palestinians, following global condemnation of Trump's suggestion to take over Gaza and resettle Palestinians.

#### Pakistan

- An IMF mission will visit Pakistan for a Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment under the 2024 Extended Fund Facility, focusing on corruption vulnerabilities in key state functions. The findings will guide structural reforms and improve transparency and governance.
- China and Pakistan plan to upgrade Pakistan's railway network and develop Gwadar port, with Chinese investments in Pakistan's offshore oil and gas sectors. The cooperation highlights the strengthening of ties between the two nations, with a shared strategic focus on countering regional influences.

#### United Kingdom

- Britain supports the ICC's independence and has no plans to sanction its officials, despite U.S. sanctions targeting ICC investigators. The UK views the matter as a U.S.
- King Charles and Queen Camilla will visit Italy and the Holy See in early April, meeting Pope Francis to celebrate the 2025 Catholic Holy Year. This will be Charles' first overseas trip this year, marking their 20th wedding anniversary.

#### United States

- U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem is collaborating with Elon Musk to enhance the department's efficiency, conducting a federal government audit to identify improvements.
- U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson insists on a "one big bill" strategy to pass President Trump's tax cuts and fund border and military priorities, despite Senate Republicans' \$340 billion budget plan.

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