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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- Andhra Pradesh has approved land pooling of 1,941 acres across three districts to support the 'Bay City' expansion under NITI Aayog's G-Hub strategy. The plan aims to boost Vizag's growth through projects like Vizag Metro and urban infrastructure.
- CM Chandrababu Naidu unveiled a green vision to make Amaravati India's largest lung space city under the 'Amaravati in Nature' plan. The project includes eco-friendly infrastructure, international-standard parks, and native plantations.

Delhi

- Delhi's Ranjit Singh Flyover, repaired ahead of the G20 Summit, has deteriorated rapidly with cracked surfaces, broken barriers, and poor sanitation. Its current state raises serious concerns about infrastructure upkeep near key political and commercial hubs.
- The MCD has informed the NGT that it has approved setting up an ingesta plant at the Ghazipur abattoir, a key step toward reopening it after over three years. The plant will convert animal waste into bio-fertilizer, with installation expected in 3–6 months.
- Delhi government has unveiled a plan to transform Naini Lake into a cultural and recreational hub with laser shows, LED fountains, and water sports. Safety measures like CCTV and lifeguards will be in place before launching activities.

Goa

- Goa installs three indigenous weather stations in partnership with BITS Pilani Goa to strengthen climate tracking under the NMSKCC, with real-time data supporting village-level climate vulnerability assessments and public outreach.
- Goa government intensifies its crackdown on illegal bull fishing with plans to deploy drone surveillance and establish complaint offices at all jetties, aiming to protect marine resources and support traditional fishermen.

Gujarat

- The Gujarat ACB forms an SIT to probe Vadodara's Gambhira bridge collapse, focusing on alleged misuse of power and public funds. Five R&B officials are under scrutiny, with raids conducted and structural negligence suspected.
- AMC's ₹25 crore radiation-based fertiliser plant in Pirana still lacks a licence to sell its output, making the operation economically unviable. Despite a 100-tonne daily capacity, only 3–5 tonnes are used internally as the product doesn't fall under any category.

Haryana

- The Cabinet approves new rules for contractual staff, defining disciplinary powers and appellate authorities for Group B, C, and D posts. It also extends medical benefits for MLAs' families and pensioners, with a ₹10,000 monthly allowance for members above 60.
- Despite the order to implement new collector rates from August 1, 83 tehsils across 16 districts have yet to update them, stalling property registrations. In contrast, places like Panipat and Ambala proceed smoothly with updated rates and resumed registration.

Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla flagged off three relief vehicles for disaster-hit Mandi and Kullu, carrying essentials like tents and blankets. He assured continued support and plans to visit affected areas personally.
- Himachal Pradesh launches face authentication in its public distribution system to boost Aadhaar integration, with 56% Aadhaar coverage among children under five. Camps in schools are set up to fast-track pending biometric updates.

Karnataka

- L&T has exited Bengaluru's Suburban Rail Project due to land acquisition delays, halting work on Corridors 2 and 4. K-RIDE must now re-tender, likely delaying the project by at least six months and increasing costs.
- Bengaluru, Davanagere, and Hubballi-Dharwad have reported a 20–40% drop in PM10 levels under the NCAP. However, challenges persist in effective fund utilisation and full-scale implementation of clean air plans.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- CM Chandrababu Naidu will launch the Annadata Sukhibhava scheme providing Rs 7,000 aid to 46.8 lakh farmers in the first phase. The scheme offers Rs 14,000 annually from the state and Rs 6,000 from the Centre, totaling Rs 20,000 per farmer.
- Google will invest \$6 billion to build a 1GW data centre in Visakhapatnam, as announced by IT Minister Nara Lokesh. TCS and Cognizant will also begin operations soon, marking a major boost to Andhra Pradesh's tech and investment landscape.

Delhi

- The Delhi government will install mist sprayers on 511 poles across 25 locations to tackle dust pollution before winter. Phase 1 covers 10 major roads, with the ₹19 crore project aiming to reduce PM2.5 levels through continuous misting.
- DTC and the tourism department will relaunch Delhi's tourist bus service after five years, with two evening circuits running from 4–9 pm. The revamped service will feature electric buses and include attractions like the PM Sangrahalaya and war memorial.
- The Centre has sanctioned ₹821.26 crore to Delhi for 33 infrastructure projects across health, education, transport, housing, and Metro Phase-IV. CM Rekha Gupta called it a step toward realizing the 'Viksit Delhi' vision under the SASCI scheme.

Goa

- Goa CM Pramod Sawant announces a financial aid scheme for warkaris undertaking the Pandharpur pilgrimage, along with a proposal to build a "Warkari Bhavan" in Pandharpur for accommodation and support.
- The Goa Assembly passes a bill to regularise unauthorised homes built on government land before a cutoff date, offering a six-month application window while excluding eco-sensitive zones like forests and CRZs.

Gujarat

- AMTS decides to run 225 electric buses at ₹94/km—the highest rate in India—despite a ₹6,000 crore debt. Concerns rise as the selected operator is new and penalties are capped at 10%.
- Gujarat HC directs the Home Department to submit a report on CCTV status in all police stations after lawyers were allegedly assaulted at a station lacking cameras. Accountability must be fixed where CCTV systems are absent.

Haryana

- Twelve MLAs from Haryana, including Rohtak MLA Bharat Bhushan Batra, are set to attend the NCSL Legislative Summit 2025 in Boston from August 4, joining global lawmakers to discuss governance, policy, and innovation.
- To enhance tourist safety, Kurukshetra police and KDB will install 100 CCTV cameras across 20 key spots, including Brahma Sarovar and Sannihit Sarovar. Locations also cover temples, chowks, and entry points, with features like number plate recognition for vehicles.

Himachal Pradesh

- Solan councillors grow anxious ahead of municipal polls as key projects like parking lots and road repairs remain incomplete. Despite foundation stones laid earlier, work on facilities worth over ₹26 crore is yet to begin.
- Himachal is expected to receive normal to above normal rainfall in August, except for parts of Lahaul, Spiti, Kinnaur, and Chamba. In July, Mandi saw the highest rainfall at 574.7 mm, while Lahaul and Spiti recorded the lowest at 32.2 mm.

Karnataka

- Karnataka will now fully fund knee and hip replacement surgeries in government hospitals under the ArK scheme, raising reimbursement to 100%. The plan includes a mentor surgeon model with higher incentives to improve surgical training and expand access.
- Karnataka will draft a special incentive policy to boost investments in sectors like space tech and electronics. Ministers MB Patil and Priyank Kharge aim to streamline existing schemes and develop major parks and an Industrial Water Security Policy.



INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- Bhopal's ₹45 lakh SAM 2.0 aquifer recharge project remains stalled due to lack of contractor interest despite approvals. Experts say the delay wastes monsoon rainfall and worsens water quality concerns in areas like Islamnagar and Sarvar.

Mumbai

- After public backlash, DCM Eknath Shinde intervened to roll back BMC's hike in road-digging fines for Ganesh mandals from ₹15,000 to ₹2,000 per hole. He also urged mandals to avoid damaging newly concretised roads.
- BMC has relaunched the Aapli Chikitsa Yojana, offering subsidised diagnostic tests at 100 civic health centres after a 7-month gap. The scheme covers 83 tests and aims to expand to all municipal hospitals by August 15, with reports shared via WhatsApp.
- Maharashtra government bans employees from criticising policies or sharing official documents on social media without approval. The move aims to curb misuse and warns of disciplinary action for violations.

Pune

- PCMC brings all 57 civic services online under the Right to Services Act as part of the CM's 150-day plan. Citizens can apply via the website or 94 CFCs, with real-time tracking and digital certificates.
- NHAI rectified 16 out of 22 accident-prone 'black spots' across national highways in Pune division, with the rest under development. Improvements were made through coordination with PMC, PCMC, and the district collectorate.
- PMC warns contract sanitation workers about rising fraud cases, where agents falsely promise permanent jobs in exchange for money. Officials clarify there is no plan to regularize these positions.

Punjab

- Floods submerge thousands of acres in Kapurthala's Bhulath sub-division, destroying crops and displacing families. Farmers demand urgent relief, blaming poor river management and seeking long-term flood prevention.
- Despite a rising subsidy burden, Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) posted a record profit of ₹2,630.42 crore in FY 2024-25. This marks a sharp rise from ₹800.41 crore in FY 2023-24, driven by higher revenue and controlled expenses.

Rajasthan

- Jaipur Municipal Corporation identifies 48 dilapidated buildings; 8 have been sealed and demolition of 3 structures is set to begin from next week to prevent monsoon-related mishaps.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu leads India in FASTag usage with 1.26 billion toll payments since 2022, followed by Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. The Centre noted only 0.03% error rate in transactions, with strict penalties for false deductions and quick refund mechanisms.
- IIT Madras and CTCL signed an MoU under Tamil Nadu's Thooimai Mission to create a scientific solid waste management framework. The partnership aims to promote sustainable methods aligned with UN goals across local bodies.

Telangana

- ICRISAT launches an AI-powered climate advisory initiative under Monsoon Mission III to provide smallholder farmers with hyper-local, real-time weather insights and farming recommendations via tools like the upgraded iSAT and WhatsApp bot.
- Telangana CM Revanth Reddy orders the creation of a third state-wide DISCOM to manage all free electricity schemes, aiming to ease loan burdens on power utilities and shift government institutions to solar energy.

Uttar Pradesh

- New circle rates come into effect in Lucknow with a 15-25% hike, aligning land values with current market trends. Key growth zones near expressways and metro routes see the sharpest rise, boosting property prices.
- With just two days left for UP chief secretary Manoj Kumar Singh to retire, uncertainty prevails as the Centre has yet to decide on the state's request for his extension. Singh, a 1988-batch IAS officer, was appointed in June 2024.
- CM Yogi Adityanath stresses that strong dialogue with public representatives is key to fast, quality development. He urges statewide implementation of this model to ensure inclusive progress.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- Gwalior High Court has directed the Centre to create a database identifying narcotics cultivation and sources, including in Madhya Pradesh. It also sought technical suggestions and ordered the Home Ministry to submit an affidavit.

Mumbai

- BEST faces a looming crisis as 180 CNG buses approach retirement in 6-8 months, with replacements delayed. The fleet shortage is likely to worsen, prompting concerns and protests over public transport services.
- BMC has scrapped the plan to convert a defunct cycling track in Sion into a parking lot, citing violations of a Bombay High Court order. The underground Tansa water pipeline cannot bear added pressure, and a 10-metre encroachment-free buffer is mandatory.
- Uttan-Virar sea link project gets coastal authority's approval, aimed at boosting access to Vadhavan port. It will affect mangroves and forest land, with final clearance pending from the Union Environment Ministry.

Pune

- Maharashtra is expected to receive below-normal rainfall in August, with IMD projecting a possible rebound in September; Pune may also see a shortfall, though isolated heavy showers are likely.
- The state government approves four PMRDA town planning schemes, paving the way for infrastructure growth in areas like Wadachiwadi, Autade-Handewadi, Holkarwadi, and Fursungi; 15 more schemes are under consultation.
- PMC launches a first-of-its-kind initiative to train onsite construction staff to detect and eliminate mosquito breeding spots. The move aims to curb dengue and chikungunya by addressing risks at construction sites directly.

Punjab

- Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann said feedback from all stakeholders on the Land Pooling Policy will be further considered to ensure inclusive development. He reaffirmed that no land will be forcibly acquired, countering opposition claims of farmer exploitation.
- Punjab seeks ₹113 crore from Haryana for repair of Bhakra canal systems, citing overdue reimbursements for maintenance. FM Harpal Cheema confirms formal communication and reiterates opposition to CISF deployment, backing Punjab Police for BBMB security.

Rajasthan

- Under the PM Suryaghar Yojana, the Centre aims to provide rooftop solar to homes, potentially making electricity bills free within 3 years; subsidies are available, but many residents remain unclear about the process.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu launches the 'School of Semiconductor' initiative with a ₹100-crore grant to train 4,500 students and boost R&D in chip-making. Set up at Taramani with IIT Madras, it aims to position the state as a key player in India's semiconductor ecosystem.
- Coimbatore Municipal Corporation allocates ₹1 crore to set up rest areas with bath and toilet facilities for 108 ambulance drivers across five municipal zones. Two rest zones for gig workers with AC and Wi-Fi are also planned at Avinashi Road and DB Road.

Telangana

- Telangana Cabinet is set to review the PC Ghose Commission report on the Kaleshwaram project on August 4, with a committee of top officials tasked to submit a detailed synopsis ahead of the meeting.
- Telangana government directs all departments to submit updated monthly performance reports by August 5, aiming to improve accountability and ensure analytically stronger, insight-driven governance reviews.

Uttar Pradesh

- PM Modi laid the foundation for 52 projects worth ₹2,183 crore during his 51st visit to Varanasi on August 2, focusing on infrastructure, health, education, and connectivity. He also addressed a public gathering and released the 20th PM-Kisan installment.
- The Agniveer recruitment rally under the Agnipath Scheme begins in Ayodhya on August 5, covering 13 districts under Amethi ARO. Nearly 11,972 shortlisted candidates will participate, based on the CEE held from June 30 to July 10.
- Uttar Pradesh allocates ₹10,732 crore to develop Lucknow as India's first AI City under the IndiaAI Mission. The plan includes AI infrastructure, policy draft, and large-scale training with tech giants.



GLOBAL UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Africa

- South Africa launches an Export Support Desk to assist exporters impacted by Trump's 30% tariffs, with job losses expected in auto and agriculture sectors. Pretoria also explores alternative markets and prepares a support package.
- Senegal PM Sonko unveils an economic recovery plan aiming to fund 90% domestically and cut debt. Measures include spending cuts, new taxes, and targeting a deficit drop from 12% to 3% by 2027.

America

- Panama Canal's \$1.6 billion reservoir plan faces a Supreme Court challenge as 2,500 residents risk displacement; locals argue it violates constitutional and environmental rights, despite claims it would boost transit and water supply.
- Following a massive earthquake, authorities in Chile and Ecuador order evacuations on Easter Island and the Galapagos due to tsunami warnings. Tourists and residents move to higher ground and designated safe zones.

Asia Pacific

- The Talisman Sabre military exercise expanded into Papua New Guinea for the first time, involving U.S., Australian, and PNG forces across seven regions. Activities include disaster recovery and joint operations, amid strategic U.S. interest following China's growing presence in the Pacific.
- Heavy rains trigger floods and mudslides in Vietnam's Dien Bien province, leaving at least 14 people dead or missing. Xa Dung village is worst hit, while ongoing rain hampers rescue operations. Power and road access remain cut off in several areas.

China

- Russian and Chinese navies conduct joint "Maritime Interaction-2025" drills in the Sea of Japan, involving destroyers, submarines, and rescue ships. These pre-scheduled exercises focus on artillery, anti-submarine warfare, and air defense, signaling deepening military coordination.
- China has allocated \$12.5 billion for childcare subsidies in 2025, offering 3,600 yuan annually per child under three. While aimed at boosting the declining birth rate, experts say the amount is too low to counter economic pressures discouraging parenthood.

Europe

- Russia lifts the tsunami warning for Kamchatka after a 7.0 magnitude quake hits the nearby Kuril Islands. Hours later, the dormant Krasheninnikov Volcano erupts for the first time in 600 years, sending ash 6,000 meters high, though no populated areas lie in its path.

Middle East

- Turkey, Italy, and Libya hold talks in Istanbul on tackling irregular Mediterranean migration and boosting regional cooperation in energy, defense, and trade. Erdogan calls for long-term, multilateral solutions to migration and joint efforts in unmanned aerial vehicle production.
- Russian President Putin and FM Lavrov met Syria's new foreign minister in Moscow, marking the first official visit since Bashar al-Assad was ousted. Russia invited new President al-Sharaa to the upcoming Russia-Arab League summit as it seeks to maintain ties with the new regime.

Pakistan

- Pakistan's inflation rose to 4.1% in July from 3.2% in June due to higher food, fuel, and medicine prices. The central bank held interest rates at 11%, citing worsening inflation risks and high energy costs amid IMF-backed economic reforms.
- Over 100 PTI members, including top lawmakers, were sentenced by a Pakistani anti-terrorism court for 2023 military site riots; 58 received 10-year terms, others 1–3 years. Imran Khan, jailed since 2023, faces separate trial for related charges.

United Kingdom

- The UK Supreme Court overturned a 2024 ruling on car finance commissions, relieving banks of potential multi-billion-pound liabilities. It ruled that dealers owe no fiduciary duty to buyers, easing fears of a major redress scheme and boosting bank shares.
- UK PM Keir Starmer has recalled his cabinet during summer recess to discuss a Gaza peace plan amid pressure from MPs to recognise a Palestinian state. He discussed the crisis with Trump and is coordinating with France and Germany for a ceasefire effort.

United States

- The U.S. government has canceled the MAGLEV high-speed rail project between Washington and Baltimore, withdrawing \$26 million in grants due to poor planning, opposition, and high costs. The developer called it a missed opportunity for advancing transportation technology.

Upcoming News/Events

Africa

- Rwanda and DR Congo agree on an outline for a regional economic framework as part of their Washington-brokered peace deal, focusing on cooperation in energy, minerals, infrastructure, and health. A joint security coordination meeting is set for August 7.
- Zambia has requested a 12-month extension of its \$1.7 billion IMF programme, aiming to consolidate economic reforms into 2026. Having received \$1.55 billion so far, the country continues to recover from its 2020 debt default and restructure remaining obligations.

America

- The IMF has eased Argentina's reserve accumulation targets under its \$20 billion programme and postponed the next review until after October elections. While \$14 billion has been disbursed so far, repayment risks remain high, depending on Argentina's policy implementation and market access.
- Canada and the U.S. are coordinating efforts to manage countries unwilling to accept deportees, as both nations ramp up migrant removals. Canada aims to increase deportations to 20,000 annually despite resistance from some home countries.

Asia Pacific

- Thailand returns 2 of 20 detained Cambodian soldiers ahead of next week's defense talks in Malaysia, aiming to uphold a ceasefire after deadly border clashes. Recent fighting killed 43, displaced 300,000, and paused US tariff talks.
- Bangladesh approved buying 220,000 tons of U.S. wheat at \$302.75/ton to ease trade tensions amid tariff threats from the Trump administration. This forms part of a broader five-year deal to import 700,000 tons annually, shifting from aid to direct trade.

China

- China's top polysilicon makers plan a \$7 billion fund to shut down one-third of lower-quality production and restructure the struggling sector. GCL Technology says the move would act like an "OPEC for polysilicon," with centralized supply controls and production quotas.

Europe

- The U.S. and NATO are finalizing a new plan, called PURL, allowing European nations to fund U.S. weapons for Ukraine. This transatlantic mechanism responds to President Trump's pressure on Moscow and aims to streamline arms delivery amid ongoing conflict.
- German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the EU will now negotiate specific steel export quotas with the U.S. to avoid high tariffs, following last month's trade deal with Trump. Merz called the agreement "painful" but necessary to prevent a larger trade conflict.

Middle East

- UK PM Keir Starmer and Oman's Sultan Haitham agreed to deepen ties in energy, tech, defence, and security. They urged urgent aid to Gaza and backed a peace plan including recognition of Palestine, with the UK warning of a September deadline.
- Saudi Arabia and France urge UN members to back a declaration calling for irreversible steps toward a two-state solution. The plan includes ending the Gaza war, forming a transitional committee under the Palestinian Authority, and deploying an international stabilization mission.

Pakistan

- Pakistan's Finance Minister Aurangzeb has departed for his second U.S. visit in two weeks to finalise a potential trade deal, which officials say is "very close." His office stated final discussions will occur during this trip, following earlier talks with top U.S. trade officials.

United Kingdom

- Britain's energy regulator Ofgem has launched a review of how energy system costs are shared, aiming for fairer pricing amid a shift to renewables. The review considers protecting vulnerable consumers as fixed costs rise to support cleaner energy.
- British water regulator Ofwat has proposed an £62.8 million enforcement action against Anglian Water over poor sewage network maintenance and excessive storm overflow spills, calling it a serious and unacceptable breach.

United States

- The Trump administration is planning a five-year pilot to include weight-loss drugs like Wegovy and Mounjaro under Medicare and Medicaid starting in 2026–2027. This would mark a significant shift in policy, addressing obesity but raising affordability concerns due to high drug costs.
- The U.S. plans to allocate up to \$7.85 million to support Costa Rica in deporting migrants, using funds from its economic support budget. The initiative, similar to a past deal with Panama, has sparked concerns among migrant advocates and lacks clarity on who will be deported.

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