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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- AP has become the first state to grant gratuity to ASHA workers, offering ₹1.5 lakh on retirement and six months' paid maternity leave for the first two deliveries. The government also raised the retirement age of health assistants from 60 to 62 years.
- CM Chandrababu Naidu thanked PM Modi for approving a semiconductor unit with South Korea's AFACT, set to produce 96M units/year. The project will boost backend semiconductor capacity and support a complete electronics ecosystem.

Delhi

- CM Rekha Gupta proposed setting up mini secretariats in all districts to centralise public services and reduce citizen inconvenience. She also reiterated plans for a gaushala in each district and reviewed grievance redress systems.
- The Delhi Jal Board is finalising bids to upgrade its revenue management system and shift to cloud infrastructure, enabling rollout of a bill amnesty scheme. The ₹15,000 crore domestic bill pendency plan includes 100% waiver of late payment surcharges.
- Relocating Delhi's 1 million stray dogs to shelters could cost ₹11 crore daily, with ₹110 per dog for food, care, and utilities. The MCD plans selective relocation, microchipping, and joint monitoring with activists following a Supreme Court order.

Goa

- The Goa Human Rights Commission has issued a notice to the Public Works Department over unsafe conditions on the Utorda–Calata–Majorda road, following a resident's complaint, directing the Principal Engineer to respond before the September 15 hearing.
- Parliament has passed a long-pending bill to reserve seats for Scheduled Tribes in the Goa Assembly, awaiting Rajya Sabha nod, while also approving stricter casino laws with fines up to ₹75 lakh and provisions for licence cancellation for repeat violations.

Gujarat

- Gujarat's Food and Civil Supplies department flagged 55 lakh suspicious ration cards, including those of landlords, company directors, and tax-payers, converting 15.66 lakh to non-NFSA status, amid allegations of misuse of free grain meant for the poor.
- India has officially bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games, proposing Ahmedabad as the venue, with full government funding pledged and improved chances after Canada's withdrawal; the final host decision is expected in November.

Haryana

- Haryana's Health Dept held a State TB Forum meet to speed up TB elimination, stressing inter-departmental cooperation, early detection, community awareness, and patient support as key priorities.
- Over 6,000 eligibility certificates were distributed to Kumhar/Prajapati families in Sonapat and Panipat, with leaders highlighting the community's role in self-reliance, tradition, and India's development goals.

Himachal Pradesh

- The Himachal Road Transport Corporation has introduced a formal policy for scheduled halts at dhabas to ensure hygiene, passenger comfort, and transparency, with strict empanelment rules, periodic reviews, and penalties for non-compliance.
- Deputy CM Mukesh Agnihotri asserted the state's full cooperation in ongoing railway projects, citing swift land acquisition and Rs 1,070+ crore contributions for the Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri and Chandigarh-Baddi lines.

Karnataka

- PM Narendra Modi flagged off the Bengaluru–Belagavi Vande Bharat Express, cutting travel time by 1 hr 20 min over 611 km in 8.5 hrs, as part of three new high-speed train launches, bringing Karnataka's Vande Bharat services to 11.
- Karnataka registered 2,544 POCSSO cases in 2025, with Bengaluru reporting the highest (319), Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara told the Assembly, highlighting concerns over low conviction rates and delays in case disposal despite rising reporting.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- Andhra Pradesh's first GoM meet will review district boundaries and names amid demands to expand to 32 districts. Key proposals include renaming Tirupati as Sri Balaji and creating new districts in Gudur, Madanapalle, and others.
- Governor S Abdul Nazeer launched the AP Climate Action Plan and Amaravati Plastic-Free City Campaign to make the capital free of single-use plastics. One lakh Youth Red Cross volunteers will reach 10 lakh families to promote environmental protection.

Delhi

- Delhi will pilot retrofitting devices on 30 heavy vehicles to cut emissions by over 70%, replacing blanket bans with tech-driven solutions. If successful, the model could be scaled to other cities and sectors.
- The Assembly will host the All India Speakers' Conference on Aug 24–25 to mark 100 years since Vitthalbhai Patel became the first Indian Speaker. Amit Shah will inaugurate, Om Birla will preside over the closing, and a commemorative stamp will be released.
- DMRC will make the Pink Line (Majlis Park–Shiv Vihar) fully driverless by year-end, following automation on the Magenta Line in May. The transition, begun in March 2025, is now in stage-2 and will complete within 3–4 months.

Goa

- Goa will set up a Drone Design & Aero Centre at Quitol under its Tourism Aero Hub for design, testing, and trials, boosting its drone industry. The move builds on the 2022 drone policy to foster innovation, jobs, and sector-wide applications.
- Goa Medical College will soon start specialist outpatient services at Tuem Hospital, bringing tertiary care closer to Pernem residents. The tie-up aims to ease travel, improve access, and strengthen rural healthcare infrastructure.

Gujarat

- Micron's ₹22,516 crore semiconductor plant in Sanand is 70% complete, with RAM and NAND production expected to begin by Dec 2025 or Jan 2026, as Tata Group nears handover and bids open for phase two.
- Gujarat Police have linked village sarpanches with local stations via WhatsApp groups to speed up incident reporting, boost rural coordination, and aid operations like border patrols, with similar programmes expanding across districts.

Haryana

- Karnal DC Uttam Singh reviewed Smart City projects, warning agencies of penalties for delays, while inspecting new facilities like an old-age home, community centres, and sports complexes to ensure timely public use.
- The ₹3,167-cr, 61.23-km Chandigarh-Ambala Greenfield Expressway is nearing completion, with the 31.23-km Mohali-Kurali bypass set to open next month and the 30-km Ambala-Mohali stretch by March 2026.

Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Pradesh has issued draft rules to amend its Land Revenue Act, aiming to generate ₹1,000 cr annually by levying up to 4% revenue on non-agricultural land, with objections invited within 15 days.
- Himachal Pradesh will soon introduce FASTag at all entry points, starting with four major highways, along with integrated toll facilities like Tipra in Parwanoo, while also stepping up checks against illegal liquor with multiple district-level teams.

Karnataka

- Karnataka will soon notify its first elephant corridor policy, with 53 identified corridors across 2,500 sq km to curb man-elephant conflict, secure habitats, and link routes with neighbouring states, pending cabinet approval and stakeholder consultations.
- Karnataka will hire six senior industry specialists through the Invest Karnataka Forum on three-year contracts (Rs 20–45 lakh) to attract global investments in sectors like EVs, defence, semiconductors, biotech, and FMCG, aiming for targeted, expert-driven pitches



INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh's exports grew 6% in FY 2024-25 to ₹66,218 crore, pushing the state to 11th place nationally, led by pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, and soy products, with Dhar, Indore, and Ujjain as top exporting districts.
- The MP Board removed the rule requiring Apaar ID for Class 9-12 exam forms for 2025-26, simplifying the process for parents and teachers, with corrections now allowed at local cluster or block-level camps.

Mumbai

- The BMC has identified 4,325 abandoned scrap vehicles across Mumbai and towed 1,927 of them to contractor-run yards, as part of commissioner Bhushan Gagrani's drive to clear roads, ease traffic, and improve public spaces.
- Mumbai generates 10,000 tonnes of construction debris daily, with waste often dumped in wetlands, mangroves, and protected areas; new C&D waste disposal rules take effect in April 2026, but enforcement faces hurdles due to limited processing capacity.
- The Bombay HC has directed BMC to seek public suggestions before deciding on allowing controlled pigeon feeding from 6-8 am, while stressing that earlier bans were in public interest amid health concerns from droppings and feathers.

Pune

- From August 15, MoRTH and the youth affairs ministry launched the "Road Safety Mitra" initiative in 19 Maharashtra districts, training 18-28-year-old volunteers to promote safe driving, assist in emergencies, and identify accident-prone spots.
- Traffic police, in coordination with PMC, removed over 5,000 abandoned vehicles in six months to ease congestion and improve safety. The drive, targeting derelict vehicles in central and narrow lanes, has improved traffic flow and addressed security risks.
- PMC has set up an independent squad to inspect over 2,200 bulk waste generators and ensure they treat wet waste at source. The team will monitor daily and take action against housing societies that remain non-compliant, despite claiming property tax rebates.

Punjab

- The Punjab and Haryana High Court struck down the Punjab government's move to extend the PEDDA Director's service beyond retirement, terming it illegal and upholding a petition by Additional Director Jaspal Singh, the rightful successor.

Rajasthan

- Jaipur hosted an event showcasing Rajasthan's rise as a tech and innovation hub, recognizing startups in AI, blockchain, and IoT, while focusing on digital infrastructure, partnerships, and inclusive technology access.

Tamil Nadu

- Over 270 participants from industry, academia, and associations attended; event highlighted Tamil Nadu's 11.9% economic growth, a scholarship program for 200,000 girls, and the push for women-led tech start-ups and inclusive digital innovation.
- State launches six-week sessions for girls (classes IX-XII) on digital safety, cyberbullying, and mental health, with female teachers mentoring students on safe and balanced digital use.

Telangana

- The High Court ruled that power supply to high-rises cannot be released without an occupancy or completion certificate, rejecting a plea seeking exemption. Justice Nagesh Bheemapaka directed applicants to first obtain certificates from GHMC.

Uttar Pradesh

- The Uttar Pradesh assembly held a 24-hour debate on 'Vision 2047', highlighting departmental achievements and the state's role in the Viksit Bharat goal. Suresh Khanna stated the GSDP had risen to ₹29.78 lakh crore, aiming for over ₹40 lakh crore.
- The CAG reported that Uttar Pradesh's GSDP rose 10.31% between 2019-2020 and 2023-2024 to ₹25.48 lakh crore, but the share of spending on health and education fell from 5.53% to 5.27% and from 15.34% to 13.16%, respectively.
- The UP government surpassed its 2025-26 target by extending old-age pensions to 61 lakh beneficiaries in Q1, raising the goal to 67.5 lakh, with payments made directly to Aadhaar-linked accounts through a fully digital single nodal account system.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh CM Dr. Mohan Yadav in Ratlam pledges to make the state a "milk capital" by 2028, promising to buy cow milk and boost farmers' incomes, while attacking Congress and assuring all police posts will be filled.

Mumbai

- Mumbai's Eastern Waterfront, stretching from Wadala to Colaba, is set to be leased in ad hoc plots for 30 years, risking loss of a vital public asset that could address open space shortages, boost public amenities, link regional transport, and strengthen climate resilience.
- The ₹1,016.34 crore BKC pod taxi project, expected to finish in three years and serve up to 6 lakh commuters daily, has received coastal authority clearance but will impact 0.14 ha of mangroves and require cutting 431 trees.
- Central Railway is extending platforms at 34 suburban stations to fit 15-car trains by August-end, aiming to ease overcrowding after the June Mumbra accident; work covers CSMT-Kalyan, Thane-Kalyan, and Kalyan-Kasara/Karjat/Khopoli routes.

Pune

- The Baner-side ramp of the SPPU Chowk double-decker flyover is set to open by the end of August, with full project completion expected by October 2025. Most construction, including road widening and ramp work, is complete, while signages are still underway.
- Maharashtra will revamp 60 prison libraries, providing new bookcases and racks to promote reading and rehabilitation. The project will be executed under RRRLF's Matching Grant Scheme in collaboration with the State Directorate of Libraries.
- Pune Airport will get a record 235 slots in the winter schedule, up from 220, enabling more flights on existing routes and new destinations. Airlines are preparing proposals, with DGCA approval awaited for operations to begin.

Punjab

- The Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered the Centre to gradually replace military trucks used for transporting schoolchildren with safety-compliant school buses, stressing adherence to AIS 063:2005 and CBSE guidelines after a PIL flagged risks.
- The Punjab Cabinet approved the denotification of the Land Pooling Policy days after its withdrawal, following strong farmer protests against acquiring 65,000 acres, while a Parliamentary Committee sought details of the rollback.

Rajasthan

- The government announced a new recruitment process for RIMS, modeled on AIIMS Delhi, allowing only qualified candidates, banning private practice by faculty, and ensuring selection strictly on merit.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu plans to launch a streamlined GCC approval portal to boost global investments and set up a guidance office in Silicon Valley. The state also seeks collaborations with UK-based sectors, particularly in offshore wind and R&D.

Telangana

- South Central Railway announced that trains affected by Secunderabad station redevelopment will resume original routes from September. From Sept 7, Satavahana Express will again operate from Secunderabad, easing travel as key works finish.
- Telangana government will launch ₹12,478 crore road projects spanning 13,000 km under the Hybrid Annuity Model. The plan aims to link villages, mandals, districts, and Hyderabad with all-weather roads.

Uttar Pradesh

- UP CM Yogi Adityanath announced that the state would fully cover treatment costs for critically ill poor patients through the Chief Minister's Discretionary Fund, ensuring access to top hospitals without financial burden.
- After the Mahakumbh, the UP government began plans to develop Prayagraj as the 'City of Temple Corridor', launching a tourism tracker to monitor visitors, infrastructure, and events while preparing projects for the upcoming Ardh Kumbh.
- The Prayagraj Municipal Corporation announced a ₹100 crore plan under the 15th Finance Commission to widen and reconstruct key drains, replacing inadequate pipelines and resolving long-standing waterlogging issues in several localities.



GLOBAL UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Africa

- Uganda has inaugurated its first large-scale gold mine, a \$250M Chinese-owned project in Busia, expected to produce 1.2 tons of refined gold annually. The move marks a major shift from artisanal mining, with gold already contributing \$3.4B (37% of exports) in 2023.
- Nigeria's defence chief defended military actions against insurgents, saying operations are often halted to prevent civilian harm. He called for revising international laws that limit state forces while armed groups act freely.

America

- Brazil's President Lula and China's Xi held a phone call discussing BRICS, the G20, and expanding bilateral trade, especially in agriculture. Xi praised ties as "at their best in history" and pledged joint efforts against tariffs and global challenges.
- Brazil's President Lula said a proposal to regulate social media is ready and will be sent to Congress. He also invited Trump to COP30 in Brazil and plans talks with EU leaders on the Mercosur trade deal.

Asia Pacific

- Myanmar's military chief Min Aung Hlaing ordered tighter security for candidates and voters ahead of December-January elections dismissed in the West as a sham. The polls are expected to be dominated by military proxies amid ongoing civil war and opposition boycotts.

China

- At least 10 people died and 2 remain missing after a flash flood in Inner Mongolia, northern China, where a river burst its banks and swept away campers. Weeks of extreme monsoon rains have triggered floods, displacements, and heavy economic losses across the country.
- India and China are cautiously improving ties with resumed flights, trade talks, and upcoming high-level visits after years of border tensions. The thaw comes as U.S. tariffs strain India-U.S. relations, pushing New Delhi and Beijing closer.

Europe

- Romania's defence minister says the Black Sea de-mining task force with Bulgaria and Turkey should expand to include patrols protecting energy facilities and trade routes. He added Romania is boosting defence with Turkish warships, corvettes, and support for Ukraine.
- Spain is battling 14 major wildfires worsened by heat and strong winds, killing seven and burning land the size of London. Galicia and Zamora face evacuations, with authorities warning of extreme fire risks as temperatures hit 40°C.

Middle East

- Thousands of Israelis joined a nationwide strike and protests demanding a Gaza ceasefire and release of hostages, blocking major roads and rallying nationwide. Police detained 38 demonstrators, while Netanyahu said such calls only harden Hamas' stance.
- Hamas rejected Israel's plan to relocate Gaza City residents, calling it a "new wave of genocide and displacement" and a deception disguised as humanitarian aid. Israel says the move aims to protect civilians ahead of a new northern Gaza offensive.

Pakistan

- Nearly 200 people were killed in torrential rains and flash floods in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province within 24 hours. Buner was worst hit with 100 deaths, while a rescue helicopter also went down amid the severe weather.
- Militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa carried out 13 attacks on police, killing six and injuring nine, timed with Pakistan's Independence Day. The TTP claimed responsibility, highlighting rising militant violence since ending its 2022 ceasefire.

United Kingdom

- Britain's economy grew 0.3% in Q2, slowing less than the Bank of England's 0.1% forecast, aided by public spending and stockpiling ahead of U.S. tariffs. Weak consumer spending and falling business investment, however, may force Finance Minister Reeves to raise taxes to meet budget goals.

United States

- Pro-democracy activists held over 300 rallies protesting Trump's push for Texas redistricting favoring Republicans, with tens of thousands attending. Texas Democrats fled the state to block the vote, while California unveiled a plan potentially adding five Democratic congressional seats.
- The Trump administration unveiled stricter rules requiring wind and solar projects to complete substantial physical work to qualify for federal tax credits. Industry groups warn this could delay renewable energy development and raise electricity costs for American consumers.

Upcoming News/Events

Africa

- Isuzu plans to make South Africa its hub for commercial truck production, targeting West Africa to boost exports. The automaker aims to raise Africa's share of volumes from 23% to 45%, leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- The U.S. has approved potential arms sales to Nigeria worth \$346M, including munitions, precision bombs and rockets. Contractors involved are Lockheed Martin, RTX Missiles and Defense, and BAE Systems.

America

- Brazil is in talks with Canada to revive stalled Mercosur free trade negotiations, with Canada's trade minister set to visit Brasilia on Aug 25. Both sides see the deal as relatively obstacle-free, with formal talks possibly resuming by late September or October.
- The Panama Canal will launch a tender early next year for two new ports as part of an \$8.5B expansion plan, including cargo, storage, and gas facilities. A separate LPG pipeline tender is also in preparation, while the Rio Indio reservoir project faces legal challenges.

Asia Pacific

- Indonesia will not impose new taxes in 2026, with revenue growth instead driven by internal reforms, Finance Minister Sri Mulyani said. President Prabowo proposed a \$234B budget targeting a 9.8% revenue increase.
- South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung will restore the suspended 2018 military pact with North Korea, halting some border activities to ease tensions. The move marks his latest attempt at rapprochement, though Pyongyang's response remains uncertain.

China

- China urged Cambodia and Thailand to pursue a lasting ceasefire after recent border clashes, offering support through the Lancang-Mekong forum. It also proposed deeper cooperation in security, agriculture, and clean energy.
- China has deployed a 5G- and AI-powered robotic antelope in Tibet to monitor endangered species, blending into real herds while collecting migration and behavior data. This highlights Beijing's push to expand surveillance and 5G infrastructure even into its most remote regions.

Europe

- EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen says she will meet U.S. President Donald Trump and other European leaders at the White House on Monday Aug 18th, following a request from Ukraine's President Zelenskiy. She will first host Zelenskiy in Brussels for a meeting with EU leaders.

Middle East

- Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa voiced hope to avoid conflict with U.S.-backed Kurdish forces, stressing that Turkey and Washington seek a peaceful settlement for northeast Syria. He warned of mixed signals from Kurdish leaders while rejecting partition as "dreaming."
- The U.S. State Department has approved a potential \$500 million sale of M142 HIMARS rocket systems and related equipment to Bahrain. The Pentagon confirmed the proposed deal, reflecting Washington's continued defense partnership with the Gulf state.

Pakistan

- Pakistan will establish an Army Rocket Force to oversee missile combat capabilities, a move seen as aimed at India after recent cross-border conflict. PM Shehbaz Sharif said the new command will strengthen conventional war readiness with modern technology.
- The U.S. signaled interest in cooperating with Pakistan on critical minerals and hydrocarbons, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio highlighting opportunities for joint ventures in Balochistan. The move follows improved trade ties and marks a shift toward stronger economic engagement.

United Kingdom

- UK plans to offer households near new electricity pylons up to £250 (\$334) per year in bill discounts to encourage acceptance of grid upgrades needed for decarbonisation by 2030. Suppliers will also face stricter rules from 2026 on smart meter installations and timely repairs, with compensation for delays.
- UK government will not support its bioethanol industry, forcing major plants like Vivergo to close by August 31 due to U.S. trade deal tariffs removal. This collapse threatens jobs, animal feed production, and sustainable fuel output despite green economy plans.

United States

- Fed Chair Jerome Powell will speak on Friday August 22nd at Jackson Hole on the economic outlook amid slowing jobs and tariff-driven inflation, fueling expectations of a 0.25% rate cut. President Trump seeks lower rates and a potential replacement for Powell.

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