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INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Andhra Pradesh

- The government has prepared an action plan for Cyclone Montha, ensuring readiness through PDS stock positioning, fuel and paddy management, and relief measures as the storm is set to hit near Kakinada on October 28 with winds up to 110 kmph.
- CM Chandrababu Naidu invited the Telugu diaspora and UAE investors to explore opportunities in renewable energy, food processing, and real estate, after meeting UAE Minister Dr. Thani Bin Ahmed Zeyoudi, who agreed to form a team to study investments.

Delhi

- The revamped Terminal 2 at Delhi airport reopened on October 26, with Air India and IndiGo operating 120 domestic flights daily. The upgrade strengthens Delhi as a major transfer hub and handles rising passenger traffic.
- The Delhi government has mandated a minimum age of six years for Class 1 admissions from the 2026-27 session, aligning with NEP 2020 reforms. The foundational stage will expand from two to three classes starting 2027-28.
- The Fire Service rejected NBCC's Sarojini Nagar GPRA colony plans for violating fire safety norms, including inadequate rescue access, hydrants, and evacuation routes, and directed the developer to revise and resubmit them.

Goa

- CM Sawant stated that homes on Comunidade land were built with community consent and urged efforts to legalise them. He assured the government would facilitate the process through compensation, respecting both community and individual property rights.
- Vasco taxi operators issued a 15-day ultimatum to the government over exclusion from cruise terminal operations and rising illegal parking issues. MLA Krishna Salkar assured to escalate the matter to the Chief Minister and seek RTO intervention.

Gujarat

- GSRTC earned ₹96.89 lakh between October 16–24 by operating 709 extra buses during Diwali, with the highest revenue of ₹33.73 lakh recorded on October 18 as part of its expanded festive services across Gujarat.

Haryana

- BKU (Charuni) alleged a major paddy procurement scam in Haryana and demanded a CBI probe, accusing officials and millers of irregularities and bogus stocks from other states, while also seeking higher crop prices and farmer relief measures.
- Air quality in several parts of Haryana and Punjab remained 'poor to very poor,' with Fatehabad recording an AQI of 329 and Bathinda 227, as pollution levels continued to rise across both states.

Himachal Pradesh

- The government is running welfare schemes in Pangi, Chamba, to uplift ST communities through better education, healthcare, employment, and infrastructure. Financial support includes loans up to ₹50 lakh and concessional schemes for self-employment and women entrepreneurs.
- Himachal Cabinet extended the terms of mayors and deputy mayors from 2.5 to 5 years and approved a ₹300 monthly hike for 510 special police officers. It also sanctioned honorarium increases for teachers, mid-day meal workers, and part-time water carriers.

Karnataka

- Karnataka's energy department plans to explore using fly ash from the Bidadi waste-to-energy plant for roadworks, seeking CRRI's testing on its suitability. The initiative aims to improve roads and leverage fly ash already used in construction and cement industries.
- Karnataka Dy CM DK Shivakumar directed the Urban Development Department to prepare a new master plan for Bengaluru, prioritising road widening. He also suggested surveying outskirts, which will fall under the Greater Bangalore Authority in the future.

Upcoming News/Events

Andhra Pradesh

- Following the Kurnool bus tragedy, Andhra Pradesh's Transport Department launched statewide safety checks on private buses, inspecting emergency equipment, documents, and driver licences, while penalizing operators for safety violations.
- The Pedda Gedda reservoir in Andhra Pradesh will get a Rs 67.56 crore piped irrigation network under the MCAD scheme, funded jointly by the Centre and State, to ensure fair water distribution and revive 12,000 acres of farmland before the next Kharif season.

Delhi

- The PWD plans three flyovers in west, southwest, and northwest Delhi along the Ring Road, with feasibility studies underway. Consultants will handle design, traffic surveys, social impact assessments, and greenery along the corridors.
- Delhi will open an emporium at Connaught Place showcasing over 650 GI-tagged products from across India, including local crafts from Uttam Nagar, Seepampur, and Sangamvihar. The initiative aims to promote traditional craftsmanship and support artisans.
- Delhi will fast-track its earthquake preparedness plan and set up a State Disaster Management Force, focusing on community readiness and emergency response. The plan includes resilient housing, early warning systems, and retrofitting high-risk buildings.

Goa

- The IMD issued a Yellow Alert for Goa until October 29, warning of thunderstorms, lightning, and strong winds with gusts up to 50 km/h. Residents were advised to stay cautious, avoid open areas and the sea, and follow official safety guidance.
- The Goa Cabinet approved including all uninventoried mining dumps in the state's official records to ensure proper assessment and management, with auction plans to be decided later.

Gujarat

- The IMD issued a yellow alert for Gujarat until October 28th, forecasting heavy post-Diwali rainfall across districts including Saurashtra, south Gujarat, Vadodara, Surat, Rajkot, and Valsad.

Haryana

- Kurukshetra DC Vishram Kumar Meena directed the Thanesar Municipal Council to install high-quality CCTV cameras around Brahma Sarovar and key city points, ensuring better security and maintenance ahead of the foggy season.
- Haryana will resume desilting and deepening of the Tangri river from mid-November along a 20-km stretch to enhance water flow and prevent flooding. The work also includes building three causeways and installing a water-lifting pump near Ramgarh Majra village.

Himachal Pradesh

- A six-member expert committee will study 89 landslide-affected villages in Kullu to identify causes and suggest mitigation measures, with a report expected before next year's monsoon. The study covers severely impacted areas including Nirmand, Banjar, Anni, Kullu, and Manali subdivisions.
- Dharamsala will host the 14th International Film Festival from October 30 to November 2, featuring independent films and masterclasses. The festival opens with Neeraj Ghaywan's "Homebound" and includes collaborations with the Sydney Film Festival.

Karnataka

- Karnataka's winter legislative session is likely to begin on December 8 in Belagavi, with two days reserved for North Karnataka issues. Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti confirmed the schedule after discussions with CM Siddaramaiah.
- Visvesvaraya Technological University will convert the non-functional AICTE office in Bengaluru into a quantum computing lab to boost research. Work on the centre is set to begin next month, following VTU's request.



INDIA UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh has mandated barcodes and QR codes on medicines supplied to government hospitals to ensure transparency and prevent counterfeit drugs. This new system will help monitor all medicines listed under the Essential Drug List (EDL).

Mumbai

- Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation has sent the proposal for the second underground metro, Line 11, to the Centre for approval. The ₹23,487 crore, 17.4-km line will run from Sion to Gateway of India, passing through congested south Mumbai areas.
- The Maharashtra government has pushed for the ₹3,800 crore Gargai dam project to boost Mumbai's water supply ahead of civic polls. The dam will add 440 MLD, submerge six villages, and require compensatory afforestation to offset forest loss.
- The Bombay High Court directed MMRCL to deposit ₹250 crore awarded to L&T-STEEL by an arbitral tribunal for GST reimbursement and additional work on metro tunnels and stations. The court ruled the award was valid and ordered payment within eight weeks.

Pune

- During Diwali, Pune Municipal Corporation collected 18,591 tonnes of waste, with daily generation rising by 150 tonnes due to festive activities. PMC deployed extra staff and vehicles to manage the surge, ensuring smooth collection across the city.
- PMC fined M/s Chafalkar Karandikar Developers ₹80.46 lakh for illegally excavating 220 metres of road in Mohammadwadi without prior approval. The work, done to lay power cables, was flagged by activists and violated civic regulations.
- Heavy post-Diwali return rush caused massive traffic jams on Pune's major highways, especially the Mumbai-Pune Expressway. Despite additional police deployment and patrols, congestion persisted throughout the day due to the high volume of commuters.

Punjab

- Punjab reports 60 new farm fires, taking the total to 621 this season, with Tarn Taran topping the list at 196 cases followed by Amritsar with 144, as air quality in Bathinda and Ludhiana remains poor.

Rajasthan

- Rajasthan CM announces that MNREGA will again allow the construction of water tanks on farmers' fields, reversing last week's ban imposed after directions from the Union Rural Development Ministry.
- After the Bihar elections, Rajasthan BJP is preparing to make over 10,000 political appointments across 100 boards, corporations, and commissions, with leaders like Rathore, Poonia, Kataria, and Yadav among the key contenders.

Tamil Nadu

- Tamil Nadu secures ₹4,271 crore in investments under the first round of the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme, bagging five of seven approved projects and reinforcing its leadership in India's growing electronics manufacturing sector.
- NHAI has shelved the 10.3 km Madhavaram-Cholavaram highway expansion and other key projects in North Chennai due to land issues and trader opposition, causing severe traffic bottlenecks and frustration among commuters and industrial groups.

Telangana

- Telangana Excise Department receives 95,137 applications for 2,620 liquor shops, earning ₹2,854 crore in fees; the draw of lots for licences under district-level supervision to ensure transparency.
- CEO C Sudharshan Reddy reviews preparations for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, directing officials to complete pending activities within deadlines. The next review meeting is scheduled for November 1 to assess progress.

Uttar Pradesh

- CM Yogi Adityanath orders a major revamp of the state's drug control system, with drug control officers to be appointed in every district and inspector recruitment to be done through written exams to ensure medicine quality and transparency.
- The IMD predicts unseasonal rain or light showers in several parts of Uttar Pradesh, especially Bundelkhand and western districts, due to combined weather systems from the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, likely causing a 2–4°C drop in day temperatures starting Oct 27th.

Upcoming News/Events

Madhya Pradesh

- Madhya Pradesh will conduct a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter lists, similar to Bihar, with verification of every voter. The voter lists will be frozen and documents will be sought from suspicious individuals.

Mumbai

- Mumbai's Sion and JJ flyovers will undergo 15 days of essential maintenance later this year, involving replacement of expansion joints. Partial closures, mainly at night, may cause traffic disruptions while ensuring structural safety.
- The Bombay High Court directed BMC to clear debris and garbage from the defunct Sion cycling track and set up regular cleaning, while questioning the bona fides of the PIL filed by activist Payal Shah.
- Panvel MLA Prashant Thakur urged a halt on new housing projects in Navi Mumbai until the ongoing water shortage in Kharghar, Kamothe, New Panvel, and Taloja is addressed. He accused officials of negligence despite full dams and heavy rainfall.

Pune

- MSBSHSE extended the HSC exam form submission deadline to November 3, allowing students to apply with a late fee. The move aimed to ease the process for students and junior colleges, with related documentation due by November 7.
- Maharashtra issues a health alert amid a surge in Scrub Typhus cases, reporting 132 infections and five deaths till September, the highest in a single year. Districts have been directed to intensify surveillance, ensure diagnostic readiness, and raise public awareness.
- PMPML will launch a campaign to install 'No Parking Within 50 Meters' boards near bus stops across Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad. The initiative will improve commuter safety and reduce congestion with enforcement from Pune Traffic Police.

Punjab

- Farmer bodies have urged the Punjab government to increase the sugarcane support price to ₹450 per quintal, citing low returns due to rising input costs, as the current rate stands at ₹401–₹391 per quintal based on crop variety.

Rajasthan

- Rajasthan's brick industry is expected to retain about 25% of Punjab's market as local kilns face high costs from the mandatory zig-zag technology. The number of kilns in Punjab is likely to fall further due to increasing competition and expenses.
- Rajasthan will conduct a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of its voter list with Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar announcing that voter lists will be frozen from midnight and official transfers will be prohibited during the process.

Tamil Nadu

- The Rural Electrification Corporation sanctioned Rs 850 crore to Tantransco for setting up 54 new substations across Tamil Nadu to meet rising power demand, even as officials flagged high interest rates and mounting debt in the state's power sector.
- TNSCST launches a project to uplift SC/ST families in nine Tamil Nadu districts by bridging livelihood gaps through science-based interventions like fish processing, dairy farming, and millet-based food production to enhance income and job stability.

Telangana

- Following the Kurnool bus tragedy that claimed 19 lives, TGSRTC will enhance passenger safety by equipping all buses with fire extinguishers, emergency exits, hammers, and alert systems while reaffirming its commitment to strict safety standards.
- The Telangana Board of Intermediate Education will revamp its syllabus from the 2026–27 academic year, aligning it with NCERT standards, introducing a new AEC group, and revising outdated science, humanities, and language subjects for the first time in years.

Uttar Pradesh

- The government aims to raise its per capita income to ₹26 lakh by 2047 under the "Viksit Uttar Pradesh 2047" vision, with the planning department preparing a roadmap to sustain an annual growth rate of at least 15% over the next two decades.
- UP will host the 69th National School Games from November 11 to December 24 across cities like Lucknow, Varanasi, and Gorakhpur, featuring events such as athletics, volleyball, wrestling, and archery for boys and girls in U-14, U-17, and U-19 categories.



GLOBAL UPDATE

Highlights of this week

Africa

- Mali has suspended all school and university classes for two weeks due to a fuel shortage caused by an al-Qaeda-linked blockade. The crisis has led to fuel station closures and disrupted daily life across the country.
- Namibian President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah dismissed Deputy PM and Industry Minister Natangwe Ithete and took direct charge of the ministry to ensure continuity in the key energy and mining sector.

America

- Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva stated that U.S. President Donald Trump had “guaranteed” the two nations would finalize a trade deal soon, following their recent bilateral meeting aimed at strengthening economic ties.
- Venezuela accuses the U.S. CIA and Trinidad and Tobago of staging a “military provocation” through joint Caribbean drills, claiming captured mercenaries planned a false-flag attack to incite confrontation, amid rising regional tensions and U.S. military buildup.

Asia Pacific

- Afghanistan and Pakistan continue peace talks in Istanbul after failing to secure a lasting truce, as U.S. President Trump renews mediation offers; both sides remain divided, with Islamabad blaming Kabul for inaction on cross-border terrorism and the Taliban denying obstruction.
- East Timor, Asia’s youngest nation, joins ASEAN as its 11th member after a 14-year wait, marking a symbolic victory for its independence leaders and opening new avenues for trade and investment in its \$2 billion economy.

China

- Foreign Minister Wang Yi urged the U.S. to meet halfway ahead of a possible Xi-Trump meeting at the APEC summit, stressing dialogue over pressure amid renewed trade frictions as both sides work on a framework deal covering soybeans and TikTok.
- China’s commerce ministry criticizes the UK’s Russia-related sanctions on 11 Chinese firms, urging London to withdraw them immediately, saying the move harms bilateral economic and trade relations.

Europe

- EU nations are negotiating a flexible path to achieve the 2040 goal of cutting emissions by 90%, allowing reviews every two years and preventing extra burdens on industries if CO2 absorption or technology targets lag, as leaders balance green goals with economic and defence priorities.

Middle East

- Saudi Arabia’s tourism minister said the kingdom already meets FIFA’s hotel requirements for the 2034 World Cup but is expanding domestic tourism projects like Red Sea Global, while ruling out current investment plans along Egypt’s Red Sea coast.
- Turkey signs an £8 billion deal with Britain to purchase 20 Eurofighter Typhoons, strengthening defence and NATO ties, while also planning to buy 24 more jets from Oman and Qatar, despite analysts calling the deal’s cost “outrageously high.”

Pakistan

- Pakistan’s central bank keeps its policy rate unchanged at 11% for the fourth time, citing improved growth, stronger reserves, and easing inflation risks after floods had a milder impact on crops; GDP forecast for FY2026 is raised to the upper half of 3.25–4.25%.

United Kingdom

- King Charles unveiled the UK’s first LGBT armed forces memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum, honouring personnel affected by the pre-2000 ban on LGBT service members and marking his first official engagement supporting the LGBT community.

United States

- U.S. announces a merit-based, global search for the next U.N. secretary-general in 2026, challenging Latin America’s expectation that it’s their turn, as Russia backs merit over gender and several nations push for the first female U.N. chief.
- U.S. signs new trade and critical minerals deals with Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Vietnam to reduce reliance on China and address trade imbalances, with plans to cut tariffs to zero on select goods and enhance market access across Southeast Asia.

Upcoming News/Events

Africa

- Venezuela plans to suspend all energy agreements with Trinidad and Tobago, including the Shell-led Dragon gas project. The move comes amid worsening ties with Trinidad’s new U.S.-aligned government.
- Morocco aims to phase out coal power entirely by 2040, contingent on international climate finance, as part of its commitment under the Powering Past Coal Alliance. The country has already reduced coal’s share in its energy mix to 59.3% and targets 52% renewable capacity by 2030.

America

- Canadian PM Mark Carney says he is ready for trade talks with Donald Trump whenever the U.S. is prepared but will reject any deal against Canadian interests; he will also meet Chinese President Xi Jinping this week at the APEC summit to strengthen Indo-Pacific trade ties.
- The U.S. has escalated its military presence in Latin America by deploying the Gerald Ford aircraft carrier group amid rising tensions with Venezuela, marking Washington’s largest regional buildup yet as President Maduro warns of mass resistance against any U.S. intervention.

Asia Pacific

- Australia and China aim to maintain stable ties despite recent military tensions in the South China Sea, as leaders Li Qiang and Anthony Albanese reaffirm cooperation and friendship while addressing regional rivalry and mutual security concerns in the Asia-Pacific.
- Japan’s Akita Governor Kenta Suzuki has requested military assistance for a bear cull as attacks surge, killing one and injuring dozens, with over 8,000 sightings this year amid rising bear populations, rural depopulation, and a shortage of qualified hunters.

China

- China urges open trade and regional stability at the ASEAN summit in Malaysia amid U.S. tariffs, with Premier Li Qiang calling to oppose protectionism, while Canada’s PM Mark Carney expresses readiness to meet President Trump to ease trade tensions.

Europe

- Lithuania will shoot down smuggler balloons from Belarus after repeated airspace intrusions that disrupted flights, with PM Inga Ruginiene calling them “hybrid attacks” and closing most border crossings, as tensions rise over alleged Belarusian and Russian provocations.
- Ukraine and its allies will draft a ceasefire plan within ten days, President Zelenskiy told Axios, following the U.S. proposal to halt fighting along current lines, while urging Washington for Tomahawk missiles and similar weapons to pressure Russia into talks.

Middle East

- Pope Leo will visit Turkey and Lebanon from November 27 to December 2, marking his first foreign trip as pontiff to promote peace and interfaith unity, with meetings planned with Patriarch Bartholomew, Turkish and Lebanese leaders, and prayers at Beirut’s 2020 blast site.
- Israeli PM Netanyahu says Israel will decide which foreign troops are acceptable for the planned Gaza international force under Trump’s ceasefire plan, ruling out Turkish participation while the U.S. considers Egypt, Indonesia, and Gulf states but excludes deploying its own soldiers.

Pakistan

- Pakistan’s Defence Minister Khawaja Asif warned that failure to reach an agreement in the ongoing Istanbul talks with Afghanistan could lead to “open war,” though he believes Kabul seeks peace; the discussions aim to solidify a ceasefire after deadly border clashes earlier this month.

United Kingdom

- Finance Minister Rachel Reeves says she is confident a trade deal with Gulf nations can be finalized “very soon” after productive talks in Riyadh, marking the first British finance minister visit to the region in six years to boost post-Brexit trade and investment ties.
- Britain has cut its offshore wind auction budget to £900 million, down from £1.1 billion, to attract more investment but analysts warn it may miss its 2030 clean power targets, as the reduced funding could secure only about 4.9 GW of new capacity versus the 7–9 GW needed.

United States

- U.S. Vice President JD Vance will visit Kenya from November 24–27 after attending the G20 summit in South Africa. The visit follows Kenya’s designation as a major non-NATO ally and aims to strengthen bilateral ties amid growing Chinese influence.

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